

Unique Birds of Australia: The Aussie Backyard Bird Count

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It's that time of year again, time for the Aussie Backyard Bird Count (Backyard Bird Count). Now in its 6th year, the Aussie Backyard Bird Count is occurring between 21st till the 27th of October and is facilitated by Birdlife Australia. Over the course of the week participants are encouraged to observe birds around them for 20 minutes using the Aussie Backyard Bird Count app. What is cool is you don't have to stay in your backyard, you can visit your local park, nature reserve or head to the beach. Who can't find 20 minutes, to stop and observe bird occurring in your local area?



Who is BirdLife Australia?

Birdlife Australia is the largest, independent, non-profit bird conservation organisation in Australia. They run the Backyard Bird Count each year to obtain valuable data on bird communities throughout

Australia. The trends extrapolated from this data can be used to get a glimpse into the changes bird populations are undergoing, and subsequently the environment, as changes in populations are a reflection of changes in the environment. The count is held in October each year to capture migratory birds which are returning to Australia from the northern hemisphere for nesting, breeding and flocking. Many of these migratory birds are water birds that flock to our coasts where most human populations are situated, making it an ideal time of year for counts.

Backyard Bird Count Results 2018

In 2018, 76,918 people in Australia counted 2,751,113 birds over the 7-days period. The most recorded birds observed across Australia in 2018 was the Rainbow Lorikeet with a grand total of over 305,000 counted!

The top ten in order:

1. Rainbow Lorikeet
2. Noisy Miner
3. Australian Magpie
4. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
5. House Sparrow
6. Galah
7. Silver Gull
8. Common Myna
9. Welcome Swallow
10. Red Wattlebird



Australia's Unique Birds



Australia has over 800 species of birds that are crucial to our ecosystem, providing valuable services including dispersing seeds, pollinating flowers and controlling insect populations.





Here in Western Australia, the top 3 birds were the Australian Raven, the New Holland Honey Eater and the Rainbow Lorikeet. In Victoria and the ACT the Australian Magpie took out the top spot. In Tasmania it was the House Sparrow, in the Northern Territory it was the Magpie Goose and in QLD, NSW and South Australia the Rainbow Lorikeet wore the crown.

Not only do individual people participate but schools also get involved, in 2018 386 schools nationally got on board and helped out with this great cause, undoubtedly not only getting outdoors for a count but also gaining knowledge in Ornithology and how we can attract more birds for future years counts.

To see more amazing statistics from past years and gain insight into the future of this program, visit the website! <https://aussiebirdcount.org.au>

Want to encourage Birds in Your Backyard?

Australia has over 800 species of birds that are crucial to our ecosystem, providing valuable services including dispersing seeds, pollinating flowers and controlling insect populations.

To encourage birds in your backyard you need to have a diverse array of local plants ranging from ground cover and different sized shrubs to trees. The key is to create a multi-layered habitat. This provides shelter and food for the whole year round and if you're looking to attract a particular kind of bird, choose plant species that provide its specific food (Australia 2019).

Remember, water is also a great attraction to birds and other wildlife such as bees. Install a birdbath or 2 to gain some attraction from your local nesters (HomestoLove 2019). To keep your garden bird-friendly, reduce the use of any herbicides and insecticides or stop using them altogether, the more creepy crawlies there are around the more food for the birds.



How to get involved

1. Download the App on your phone.
2. Between the 21st-27th of October head outside with your phone and pick a spot to observe birds (this can be a park, local bushland or your front yard)
3. Record the birds you see over a 20 minute period in the app
4. Submit your results.

Don't be shy, grab your family, a group of mates or your four-legged friends and head out for some fun in the sun.

If you or your organisation have any questions regarding Australia's unique wildlife or require any assistance please contact Integrate Sustainability on 08 9468 0338 or enquiries@integratesustainability.com.au.





Aussie Bird Count

BirdLife Australia Education

★★★★★ 155

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References

- Australia, Birdlife. 2019. *Aussie Bird Count - Bird Friendly Gardening*. Accessed 2019. <https://aussiebirdcount.org.au/gardening/>.
- HomestoLove. 2019. *Attracting Native Birds to your Garden*. Accessed 2019. <https://www.homestolove.com.au/attracting-native-birds-to-your-garden-australia-6368#targetText=Bird%2Dattracting%20basics,the%20water%20fresh%20and%20clean.>

IMAGES

- Red WattleBird – Image: Duncan McCaskill sourced from [Australian Museum](#)
- Common Myna – Image: Andrew Tatnell, Big Island Photographics sourced from [ABC](#)
- Welcome Swallow – Image: Mark Gillow sourced from [Australian Museum](#)
- Noisy Miner - [Wikipedia](#)
- Australian Magpie – [Wikipedia](#)
- Sulphur-crested Cockatoo – [Australia Zoo](#)
- House Sparrow – Image: Robyn Knox sourced from [Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development \(WA\)](#)
- Galah – Image: A D Trounson sourced from [Australian Museum](#)
- Silver Gull – Image: K Vang and W Dabrowka © Bird Explorers sourced from [Birds in Backyards](#)
- All other sourced from the Aussie Backyard Birdcount Official Page



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