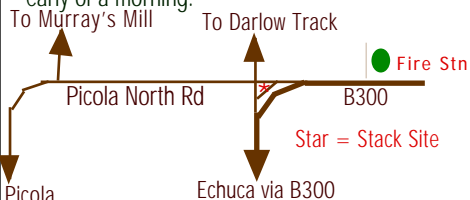


## A trip for a summer morning

- From Moama, travel north on the Cobb Highway (Highway 75) for about 14km and turn right at Shepparton-Barmah Road. Follow this road for 14km to Barmah township. Continue through the township and turn left onto the Barmah-Picola Road. Follow Barmah-Picola Road for 7km, crossing over Broken Creek, and turn left on to Trickey's Lane. Drive slowly along this gravel road, checking roadside vegetation for Superb Parrots. Upon reaching Vale Road, turn right and continue your search. Cross Corry's Mill Road, travel 1.5km and veer left onto Picola North Road. Continue along Picola North Road to the B300.

- At the intersection of B300 (Murray Valley Highway), Picola North Road and Darlows Lane (where there is a 90 degree bend in Highway, north of Nathalia) pull onto the gravel side track (a stack site). Get out of your vehicle and look around. Superb Parrots and Grey-crowned Babblers can often be seen here, especially early of a morning.



- From here you can follow Yielema North Road into Barmah Forest. Then follow its continuation, Darlows Track, north until you see a fenced enclosure near the intersection with Bourke Street. Stop here to look for Painted Button Quail and bush birds.

- The Murray River is a short distance further north. You can either follow the riverside road back to Barmah or retrace your route back to Picola.

## OTHER GUIDES IN THIS SERIES

- Deniliquin
- Echuca-Moama
- Gulpa Creek and Gulpa Forest, Mathoura
- Gunbower Island and Cohuna area
- Kamarooka Forest
- Kanyapella and Wyuna
- Perricoota Road and Perricoota Forest
- Terrick Terrick National Park

## M.V. Kingfisher

MV Kingfisher is a flat-bottomed aluminium vessel which plies the Murray from Barmah Lake. Cruises enable visitors to see a wide range of birds, including waterbirds and birds of prey. In summer, several species of Kingfisher may be observed: Azure Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher and, of course, Laughing Kookaburra. Bookings are needed ~ phone: 03 5480 1839.

## Murray's Mill

In May and June, a wonderful alternative to Area 4 is the site of Murray's timber mill.

Follow the birding route to Area 3 and then return to the Barmah-Picola Road. Turn right to Picola township. At Picola, turn left onto Picola North Road. Follow this bitumen road until it veers right; travel about another kilometre and turn left on to Murray Mill Road (Gulf Road) (See map to left). Cross a cattle grid and stop in the open area, site of Murray's old mill (GPS 35° 55 40S; 145° 06 40E). Little remains of the mill.

Many robins are migratory birds, spending time in the Great Dividing Range over summer. In May and June this is good spot to look for them.

Birds to look for include Hooded Robin (the male has a black hood), Red-capped Robin, Flame Robin (the red on the breast extends right up to the head), Scarlet Robin and Jacky Winter. Other birds often seen here include Southern Whiteface, White-throated Tree-creeper, White-plumed Honeyeater, the yellow form of Crimson Rosella, Golden Whistler, Red-rumped Parrot and White-winged Triller.

To continue to Area 5, drive back to Barmah Town, turn right at the hotel and follow Sandridge Road past the Dharnya Centre to Area 5.

## Birding spots of northern Victoria and southern Riverina

# Barmah Forest



Superb Parrot © David Ong

This tour of Barmah Forest, a Ramsar-listed wetland of international significance, commences at Barmah Town. It is suggested that you use this guide in conjunction with a map of Barmah Forest.

This birding guide is one of a series prepared for you by members of the Echuca and District Branch of Bird Observation & Conservation Australia.

Authors: Keith Stockwell and Bev & Alan Curtis.

## A day outing to Barmah Forest

From Moama, head north on the Cobb Highway (Highway 75). About 5km beyond the railway crossing turn off Highway 75 onto the Shepparton-Barmah Road. This turnoff is about 18km from Moama, There is a large sign, "Shepparton".

Note the indigenous tree plantings alongside the Cobb Highway-Barmah Road and on adjoining farmland. Further along, the road cuts through a sandhill which marks the edge of a once larger Barmah Lake. Moira Forest is on your left.

### Area One: Reserve alongside Murray River, opposite Barmah Hotel

Cross the Murray into Barmah and turn right into the park opposite the hotel near the bridge. Many birds are attracted by the introduced trees and shrubs of this small reserve. Blue-faced Honeyeater may be observed here in summer. If the nearby *Grevillea robusta* are in flower, they are worth checking out.

### Area Two: Broken Creek

Take the Picola Road from Barmah Town toward Picola. After about 3km, immediately after crossing Broken Creek (Cemetery Bridge), turn left and follow the creek downstream for about 2.5km, to a locked entry gate into Barmah Forest labelled "Management Vehicles Only".

Stop here alongside the creek. Sometimes a green plant grows on top of the water so that the water resembles a lawn. Around 40 bird species can usually be sighted here over an hour or so, e.g. Diamond Firetail, Purple Swamp Hen, Brown Tree-creeper, Rufous Whistler, White-plumed Honeyeater, Darter, Whistling Kite, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Yellow (Little) Thornbill, Red-rumped Parrot, yellow form of Crimson Rosella and Little Pied Cormorant. Koalas have been sighted here. The endangered Superb Parrot may be observed nesting in summer.

Bushwalkers: it is possible to walk from here along Broken Creek to its confluence with the Murray, near the lakeside camp ground in Barmah State Park.

### Area Three: Abandoned Quarry Pit

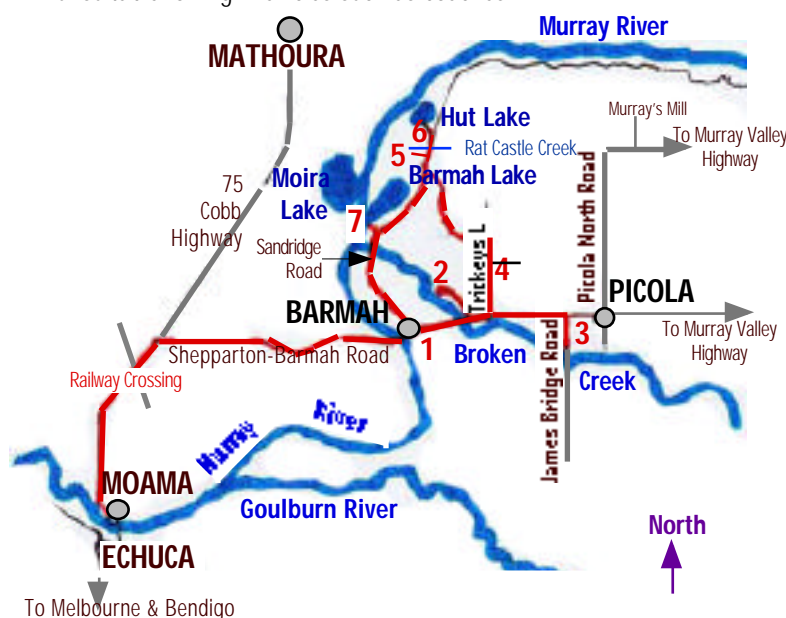
Return to Barmah-Picola Road, turn left and continue towards Picola. Turn right onto James Bridge Road. Continue along this road until you see a water-filled quarry (Baxter's Pit) on your left. This quarry usually affords excellent birding. Watch for crakes, White-backed Swallow and Red-kneed Dotterel.

In times of wet weather and slippery unsealed roads, end the tour here and return to Echuca-Moama.

In June and July, if forest roads are dry, it is recommended that you visit the site of Murray's mill instead of Trickey's Lane.

### Area Four: Trickey's Lane (Trickey's Road)

Return to the Barmah-Picola Road and turn back toward Barmah. Turn right at the next road, Trickey's Lane. Watch for Grey-crowned Babblers and, if you are visiting between late November through to late January, check the roadside vegetation for Superb Parrots. Stop at Lyles Road, which is the first T-intersection. Grey-crowned Babblers nest in this area. Continue along Trickey's Lane, pass Vale Road and turn left at the next road to Trickey's Gate. Enter Barmah Forest taking the right fork in the track. Remain on the main track. Note: Trickey's Lane is unsuitable for high vehicles such as coaches.



### Area Five: Steamer Plain

Trickey's Lane ends in a T intersection with Sandridge Road. Turn right and follow the Sandridge Road for just over a kilometre until where it crosses Rat Castle Creek (there are two parallel tracks just prior to the bridge). Leave your car alongside the creek near the fenced koori middens to the left of the road and find a short track which leads to a large plain of Moira Grass (Steamer Plain). The edge of the plain is a good spot for bush birds. A few decades ago, large areas of the Barmah-Millewa Forest were covered in Moira Grass plains like this one. In late spring, the plain should be flooded. There is another midden on the opposite side of Sandridge Road. Koori groups had three nearby camp sites, one for families, one for single adult males and one for teenagers. Discarded shells and ash formed the mounds we see today. In wet weather, a gate may prevent further travel along Sandridge Road, in which case turn and head for Area 7.

### Area Six: Hut Lake

Return to the Sandridge Road and continue along it for about 3km until the intersection with a track to Hut Lake. Follow Hut Lake track toward the lake (GPS 35° 53' 45S; 144° 59' 45E). As the track may be wet or rough, a short walk may be necessary. Take your scope, if you have one, to see what waterbirds are on or about Hut Lake. Look for Emu, Black Swan, Grey Teal, Coot, White-faced Heron and Peaceful Dove. Return to Sandridge Road and follow it back toward Barmah.

### Area Seven: Barmah Lake

Follow the Sandridge Road until you see the Dharnya Centre. The interpretive displays in its information building are worth seeing. Toilets are located here. Proceed on for a few hundred metres and turn right to Barmah Lake. Check out the waterbirds on and around the lake. It is also worth walking downstream on the walking track to the confluence with Broken Creek, the watercourse you observed at Stop Two. Keen walkers may wish to follow the walking track alongside the creek and return via the Dharnya Centre (6km). Return to Sandridge Road and turn right. Sandridge Road will take you back to Barmah and Area One.