

Perricoota Road

Perricoota Road runs from Moama to Barham.

Murray Shire has produced a coloured brochure on Perricoota Road Tourist Drive. Available from local tourist information centres and Murray Shire offices, this brochure provides information on holiday parks and cottages, motels, restaurants, wineries, clubs, Perricoota Station and reserves.

If you wish to explore Perricoota Forest or spots off Perricoota Road, the following 1:50,000 maps are recommended: 7825 Moama; 7826 Mathoura, 7726 Keely and 7726 Barham.

Stock Routes allow drovers to move cattle and sheep along roads. In places, there are Travelling Stock Reserves, wider roadside areas where cattle can be held overnight. Along Perricoota Road, are TSRs locally known as the Five Mile (adjoining Moama State Forest), the Ten Mile and the 12 Mile. There is also one near Womboota Village.

Because few mobs are driven along the stock routes these days, there is much regeneration of the vegetation along Perricoota Road and in the TSRs. The TSRs along Perricoota Road now provide good habitat for many bird species, including some which are classified as endangered by some States, e.g. Brown Treecreeper, Diamond Firetail and Grey-crowned Babbler.

In places, Gold Dust Wattle (*Acacia acinacea*) is regenerating well. At the Five Mile, there are sometimes drifts of Everlasting Daisies and Drumsticks. Native pines grow near the 12 Mile.

East of Perricoota Forest, between Perricoota Road and the Murray River, is a small forest reserve worth exploring, Benarca Forest. The endangered Sandalwood Tree is still found on a sandhill here. Access is via McKindlay Road, just west of McKindlay's indigenous plant nursery. If there are no noisy boats on the river here, the forest entrance usually affords excellent birding.

A day in Perricoota Forest

To reach Perricoota Forest from Moama, drive 21km along Perricoota Road (refer to 1:50,000 maps).

En route, you may wish to stop at the Five Mile Reserve (8 km from Moama on your left) and at the wetland to the north of the Perricoota Woolshed. (See notes over page).

Immediately past the Perricoota Woolshed, turn left on to an unsealed road. After 8.8km (29.8km from Moama), turn left off River Road into the forest. Immediately after passing over a grid (33km from Moama) turn left and continue on until you see a billabong. The wetlands here are worth exploring. Retrace your journey back to River Road and turn left.

After about 42.5km, turn left into Lock Road. It is worth stopping along this track. The views of the Murray River and the birding are usually good here.

Return to River Road to continue your journey through the forest. It may be worth birding in some of the less-disturbed bush alongside the road.

About 59km from Moama is one of several tracks (lines and arrows are painted on trees) which lead to the Murray. You may wish to drive along or walk along this track to the Murray. This and other tracks in the vicinity are bordered by everlasting daisies, Dwarf Cherry (*Exocarpus*), Red Gum and, on higher ground, Box trees. Some tracks end at sandy beaches.

Return to River Road and continue on past Prices and Penny Royal roads. About 70km from Moama, turn right onto Belbins Road. You are now on your way back to Moama. Slow before the intersection with Corio Road as the surface is loose on the bend. Watch for emus.

After 82km, cross a channel. This is often a good birding spot. Two kilometres further on the track passes a house ("Lovely Gums"). Exit through the gates and drive straight ahead along Lower Thule Road. When it contains water, a wetland on your right supports lots of birds.

Turn right at Perricoota Road. After a while the bitumen resumes. Follow Perricoota Road back to Moama.

Birding spots of northern Victoria and southern Riverina

Perricoota Road Moama



Brown Tree-creeper by David Ong

The commencement of this tour is the corner of Perricoota Road and Meninya Street (Cobb Highway) MOAMA NSW.

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This birding guide is one of a series prepared for you by members of the Echuca and District Branch of the Bird Observers Club of Australia. This and other guides can be downloaded in colour from our web site at http://users.mcmedia.com.au/~stocky/boca_echuca.html

Written by Keith Stockwell. Version 1.1 10 May 2006.

A day outing along Perricoota Road, Moama

On the northern outskirts of Moama, turn off the Cobb Highway (B75) into Perricoota Road.

Area One: Kilkerin and Rich River Lakes

A few kilometres along Perricoota Road from Moama is a turnoff on your right (24 Lane) to the Rich River Golf Club. Take this turnoff and check the birds on the lakes alongside 24 Lane opposite the entrance to the Golf Club. Birds often seen on the lakes include Pelican, Purple Swamp Hen, Dusky Moorhen, Black Swan, Black Duck, Coot, Wood Duck and waders such as Black-fronted Dotterel and Black-winged Stilt.

Area Two: Tataila Lane

Continue on past the Golf Club entrance and turn right into Tataila Lane. The plantation alongside the golf links support a number of honeyeaters. Black Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Singing Honeyeater and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater have all been observed here. See what you can find before returning to Perricoota Road and continuing west.

Area Three: Five Mile Reserve

Located about 7km north-west of Moama between Perricoota Road and the Murray River, The Five Mile is a bushland area that includes a Travelling Stock Reserve. Good regeneration is taking place. The reserve is about 2km in length and extends to both sides of the road.

Downstream of the boat ramp, alongside the Murray, in a thicket of red gum and wattles, a wide variety of birds can usually be found. Leave your vehicle on the higher ground between the Murray and Perricoota Road and walk toward the river and downstream (GPS 36° 04' 03S; 144° 41' 28E) in search of Azure Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Varied Sittella, Brown Treecreeper, White-browed Treecreeper, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Yellow (Little) Thornbill, Zebra Finch, Red-capped Robin, Diamond Firetail, Western Gerygone, Restless Flycatcher, Jacky Winter, White-winged Chough and Red-rumped Parrot. Continue walking alongside the Murray until you come to a lagoon. Check it out for water birds and then return to your vehicle, checking the saltbush and grass for Red-browed Finch and Diamond Firetail.

Area Four: Ten Mile Travelling Stock Reserve

About 15km along Perricoota Road is another wider section of the stock route. This is an excellent spot to search for Grey-crowned Babbler as well as the bush birds mentioned above.

Area Five: Opposite Perricoota Woolshed

Another good spot along Perricoota Road is the swamp and box country opposite Perricoota Woolshed, 20km from Moama (GPS 36° 00' 00S; 144° 35' 00E). Look for Diamond Firetail, Hooded Robin and waterbirds as well as the birds listed for Stop 3. Continue on your journey along Perricoota Road or turn left past the Woolshed if you wish to explore Perricoota Forest. For more information, see the panel about Perricoota Forest.

Area Six: Womboota Village

Continue along Perricoota Road until you reach Womboota Village. The arboretum at Womboota may be worth checking out.

In winter, look for Red-capped Robin and Flame Robin in the adjoining fields. The Old Schoolhouse Pottery and Winery are worth visiting and the School of Arts hall is in excellent condition.

Area Seven: Green Gully

Continue along Perricoota Road beyond the end of the bitumen and stop in a saltbush-covered depression, Green Gully. Look for a huge Wedgetailed Eagle nest. In summer, there is a chance of seeing White-fronted Chats here.

Turn around and return to Moama. Ignore the turnoff into Perricoota Forest as this is a day's outing in itself, and which is best done in dry weather.

Area Eight: Benarca State Forest

Keep an eye out for McKindlay's Road, which is located just west of McKindlay's indigenous plant nursery. Turn toward the Murray and follow McKindlay Road for a few hundred metres until you see the entrance gate into Benarca State Forest. Stop alongside the Murray prior to passing through a gate (GPS 36° 00' 56S; 144° 37' 45E). If there are no speed boats plying the Murray, this is usually a prime birding spot. If time permits, you may wish to explore Benarca Forest before returning to Moama.

