

Bird Photography from a Westernport Farm

by Peter Rogers

The 88 different species of bird in this display were all photographed on our 320 acre farm over the past 5 years. As shown on the map, we are located between the South Gippsland Highway and Westernport Bay, to the southwest of Lang Lang. We are fortunate in having a diverse range of bird species within a small geographic location.



1989



2015

About Our Farm

We purchased a 100 acre block in 1989, adding another 220 acres about 10 years ago. Most of the land was originally covered in impenetrable swampy paperbark thickets, although by the time we started almost no trees were left. We started a program of tree planting with the initial aim to provide a wind break and some shade from the sun for our cattle in every paddock. Over the next 20 years we achieved this goal through planting approximately 17,000 trees. The 2 photos to the left were taken 26 years apart from the same spot and show how the trees have grown.

Nearer the highway the land is slightly higher with stands of swamp gums. Adams Creek runs through the property for 2-3 kilometres before joining the Lang Lang River just before Westernport Bay. Most of Adams Creek was fenced 5-10 years ago and now has varied tree and other vegetation that has established since cattle were excluded.

Adams Creek



2007

2015

Lang Lang River



Different Bird Habitats

We have a number of different habitats on the property that accommodate a diverse range of bird species. Westernport Bay to the south is an internationally recognised coastal habitat for ducks, waders and other water birds. We see many of these when our paddocks are wet during winter, as well as on our main dam. The paddocks provide habitat for a number of grassland birds, as well as a food source for many others. The numerous tree rows provide branches for nesting and shelter, and the understory is home to wrens, thornbills and other small foragers. The stream and river bank is home to a number of species, including herons, egrets, spoonbills and a variety of smaller birds.

Taking the Photos

All the bird photos were taken with a Cannon 5DMkII and a 400mm lense. This combination is light enough for hand held and in-flight shots, but has enough resolution for good quality photographs. A number of bird species have been sighted on our property, but not yet photographed. Hopefully we will get to 100 soon!

