

NEW BIRD IN THE GARDENS 22-10-15 - Pacific Koel

The bird in the WBG's is the Pacific Koel, *Eudynamys orientalis*. It used to be called Common or Eastern Koel. (It is NOT the Asian Koel, *Eudynamys scolopaceus*).

During the period of 13th December to the 23rd of January 2014 it seems there were at least 20 to 23 Pacific Koel in Victoria. The range of sightings for these birds was between Ocean Grove to the west of Melbourne, Bendigo in the center of the state and Cann River in the far east.

Koels winter in Asia and return to Aus between Aug - October and move south arriving in Victoria in early October. They migrate north again and are usually gone from Australia by April. They will be gone from Victoria by sometime early in February. They have been recorded in Victoria at least as far back as the mid 1980s but have become much more common in recent years.

They mate and breed in Australia and the calling males are looking for a mate. They are a type of cuckoo and parasitise other species nests and do not feed or raise their own young. They chose a host species that builds an open nest such as Magpie Lark, Grey Shrike-thrush or Red Wattlebird. I do not know of any breeding records in Victoria, yet.

They like heavy, dense foliaged trees like the Moreton Bay Fig. Your bird will likely move around, hoping to find a female so may not stay in the gardens. It may move to another Moreton Bay Fig or similar in town.

The male is all black with a red eye as in the Warrnambool bird. The female are spotted brown as in the attached photo.

They are known to be wary and elusive, despite the loud and monotonous voice. As they become more common in Victoria due to the warming climate we will just have to get used to them in Vic, as they have done in Qld and NSW.

Post script - There was a lot of excitement when this bird arrived because of its interesting call, after a short time the garden staff were wishing it would move on. This bird left the Gardens, there hasn't been another sighting to date 2024

