

Blackburn Creeklands Bird Survey 2021

Purpose:

1. To provide meaningful, monthly, bird survey reports to Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee and to Birdlife Australia Birdata.
Refer <https://blackburncreeklands.wordpress.com/activities/bird-counts/> and record pages - Blackburn Creeklands_WestSection_Bird Survey 2021 record page rev 8 April 2021.doc and Blackburn Creeklands_East Section_Bird Survey 2021 record page rev 8 April 2021.doc.
Bird Survey reports include observations of bird feeding, drinking and nesting activity as well as weather, available water conditions and environment changes, to document what birds are present and how they use the Blackburn Creeklands. This information can then used in order to best determine maintenance planning and practices to conserve and improve the biodiversity of the Blackburn Creeklands.
2. To observe possible effects on bird species and their distribution in the Blackburn Creeklands survey area resulting from;
 - any Whitehorse City Council development projects such as playground redevelopments and bridgeworks, and Whitehorse City Council Park Maintenance resulting in noticeable changes in track widths/locations.and
 - the ongoing Blackburn Creeklands maintenance program of weed removal and vegetation regeneration.
3. To compare bird survey observations for the East and West Sections of the surveyed areas of Blackburn Creeklands given that their noticeable differences in landscape, vegetation, dryness and maintenance practices.
4. To provide an opportunity for increasing community involvement in the Blackburn Creeklands through a study of birdlife in the surveyed areas. Bird surveys are to be on the 4th Wednesday each month starting at 8am - start at Laburnum Cricket Club located at Kalang Park Oval.

Pre Bird Survey - Group organisational practice:

Survey participants to meet at 7:50am on survey day to arrange group split for East and West Section Bird Surveys prior to survey start time of 8 am. Each group is then to nominate a participant to record observations on pre-printed record page during survey and to collate final tally numbers. Each group is also to nominate a participant responsible for the record page post survey distribution.

West Group [Refer Map p4] Starting and Finishing at the Laburnum Cricket Club building.

East Group [Refer Map p5] Starting at departure from north south track east side of Kalang Oval and Finishing at Pakenham St to avoid duplication with West Group.

A public toilet is available at Laburnum Cricket Club, Kalang St Blackburn. Car parking is also available there and in nearby streets.

NOTES:

1. Broadcast bird call playback **will not** be used at any time in the bird survey area.
2. No surveys on Total Fire Ban days, during thunderstorms or when persistent rain is forecast for survey time.

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Post Bird Survey - Group reporting practice:

Nominated person in each bird survey group to photograph record page and email to Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee [BlackburnCreeklands@gmail.com]. Nominated person in each bird survey group to photograph record page and arrange for entry into Birdlife Australia Birdata

Group Bird Survey protocol detail:

Consistency of data collection is required to have reliable survey data from which meaningful conclusions might be made.

- **Same survey route travelled in same direction.**

Refer maps pages 4 and 5 for Blackburn Creeklands West Survey route [distance approximately 1.9km], and for Blackburn Creeklands East Survey route [distance approximately 2.2km].

Blackburn Creeklands East Survey route starts at departure from north south track east side of Kalang Oval and finishes at Pakenham St. Walk distance approx. 2.4km, survey distance approx. 2.2km.

GPS Start S 37deg 49 608min, E 145deg 08.588 min. Finish S 37deg 49 563min, E 145deg 08.472min

Route description for East Section survey. East Section survey route walk distance approx. 2.4km. Record survey Bird List for approx. 2.2km.

Start recording survey from departure point on north south track east side of oval and walk route per map through trees to south track at GPS S 37deg 49.622min, E 145deg 08.666mins. Walk south track to seat, then walk route per map to pine trees on Laurel Gv. North South track. Cross Laurel Gv. North South track then walk route per map along Thelma's Maze south boundary to cut pine tree stumps. Walk route per map to south track. Walk south track to Main St. Cross Main St. [check water level in Gardiners Creek from east side of bridge]. Return to Furness south track and walk route per map diagonal from playground and into next bush area on goat track to Heath St. Walk along Heath St footpath briefly then back to south track near EPA signboard. Walk route per map along south track to creek bend then to Furness Park Bridge to north track. Walk route per map on north track, crossing Main St again to Laurel Grove North wetland [check water level] and Waratah wetland [check water level] then to Pakenham St. Walk back to Laburnum Cricket Club.

Blackburn Creeklands West Survey route starts and finishes at same location which is the northern end of Laburnum Cricket Club building.

GPS Start/Finish S 37deg 49.659min E 145deg 08.568min

Route description for West Section survey route walk distance approx. 1.9km.

Start from Laburnum Cricket Club and walk route per map to Billabong [check water level]. Walk south track to Pakenham St [check water level in Gardiners Creek from west side of bridge]. Walk route per map to near school crossing then turn and walk route per map to Blacks Walk Bridge. From Blacks Walk Bridge walk back to south track and then walk south track to creek confluence with the Blackburn North Drain. Walk in to creek confluence then walk back to south track. Walk south track to Middleborough Rd. Walk north along Middleborough Rd to return north track. Walk north track per map route to Pakenham St [check water level in Blackburn North Drain]. Cross Pakenham St to south track and walk route per map to Kalang Oval Wetland adjacent to Oak tree [check water level]. Walk route per map to Laburnum Cricket Club.

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- **Surveys start and finish at the same time of day.** Surveys start early morning, meeting at 7:50 am to start at 8 am. East section takes approx. 2 hrs 15 minutes: West section takes approx. 2 hrs 10minutes.
- **Same criteria used for identifying species of the observed birds and for counting bird numbers.** Individual birds are to be counted on the Bird List when observed from the survey route, when observed flying toward survey participant group and when overflying the survey area. Be aware of bird movements within the survey area and try to avoid recording the same individual bird's presence more than once. When undecided as to whether the bird under observation has been recorded previously in the same survey event, **do not** record it.

Where survey routes are closer in the more linear narrow park regions and where birds are observed flying from behind the survey participants, these are not to be recorded unless they are identified as being a new species not yet recorded or are in significantly increased numbers to the total count for that previously recorded species at that time in that survey.

- **Same record sheet/s to be used.** One survey participant is to record observations. The standard tallying method of one vertical stroke per bird observed should be used, first 4 observations of individual birds of the same species recorded as 4 vertical strokes and the fifth observation of an individual bird of the same species to be recorded as a crossed line through the first four vertical strokes. Record each species separately in the appropriate line on the Bird List. When a bird is seen directly or from in-survey photography and identified by 2 people in agreement it is marked in the column headed 'seen' in the appropriate line for that species. When a bird is heard and identity agreed by 3 people, it is marked in the column headed 'heard' in the appropriate line for that species. [However when contact calls of a Brown Thornbill, a White-browed Scrub Wren or a Silvereye is heard, record 2 birds being present as they are in communication with each other; when a group of Musk Lorikeets are heard in the canopy of a tree record 6 birds], When birds seen or heard are clearly juveniles, record observation as a J rather than a single vertical stroke. Add new species to Bird List as required. Record birds, which are not able to be identified, on the reverse of the sheet with some description of what was seen or heard.

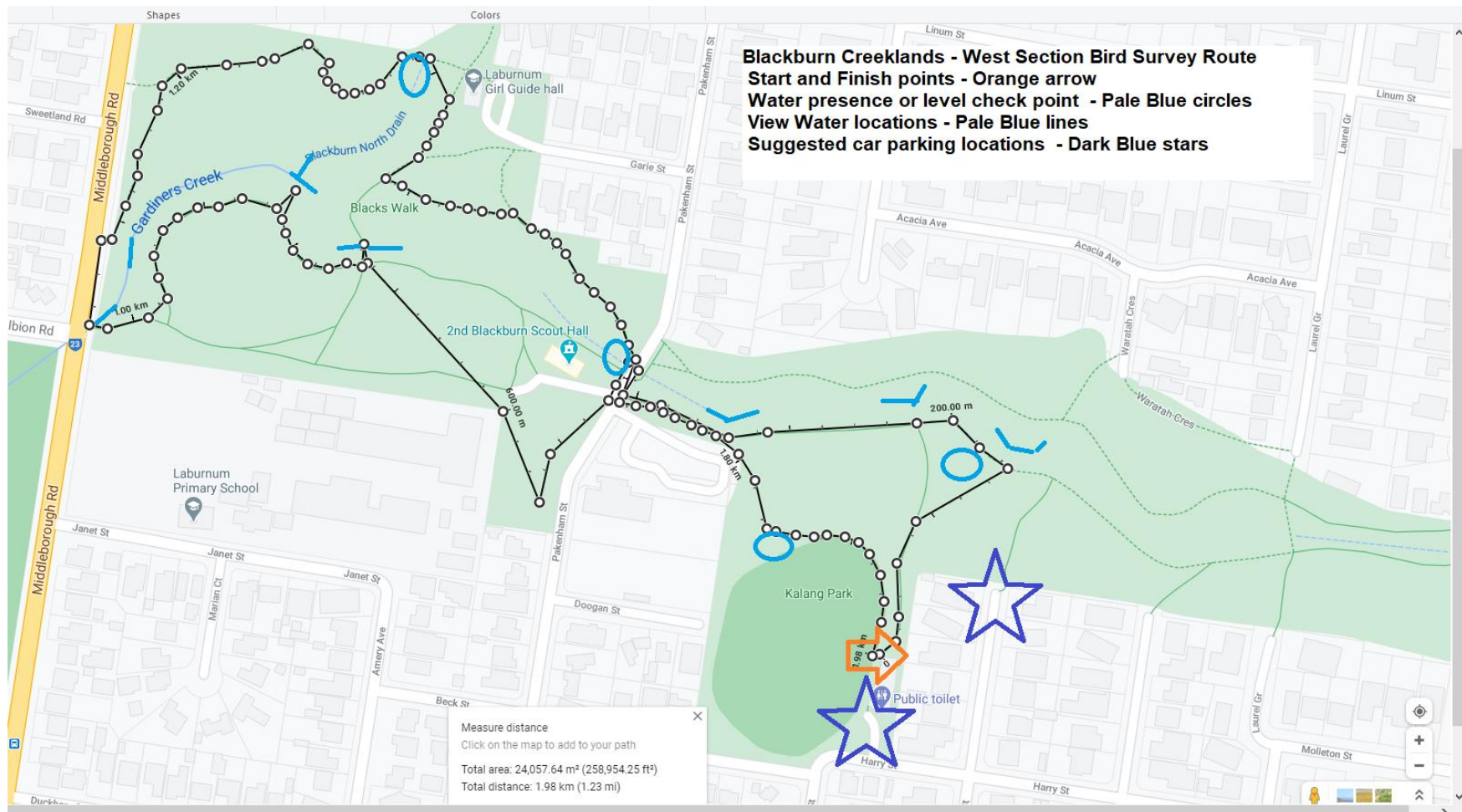
Below the Bird List there are spaces to record park usage. People numbers are recorded in the people space. When recording bikes/prams, tally person on bike in people space and bike/pram in bike/pram space; similarly for dogs tally person/s with dog/s in people space and dog/s in dogs space.

- **Same criteria for recording additional information.** For example, in the comments column record bird breeding [nest building, nest occupation], habitat changes [vegetation and creek/wetland water quality and levels], and survey day weather conditions. Above the Bird List, record weather, water and noise in the appropriate places. Refer BOM Ap for temperature, humidity, wind strength and visibility.
- **Same survey participant behaviours.** The expectation is that participants move relatively quietly as a small group through the landscape observing the birdlife in a manner which avoids disrupting the bird activity. However it is noted that the survey areas are in a public park frequented by numerous pedestrians [walking and running] and dogs [on and off leash], bike riders, park maintenance staff cars and tractor lawn mowers, and Australia Post postal service motor bikes.

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