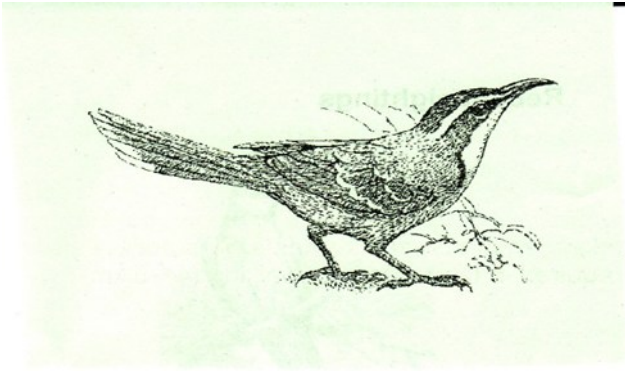




THE BABBLER



News from Gluepot Reserve Spring 2025

Gluepot Christmas Celebrations

The annual Christmas Party proved an opportunity for volunteers and supports of Gluepot to renew friendships and celebrate achievements.

The keynote speaker at this year's Christmas dinner was Professor Chris Daniels who analysed the success of avian species as being "*Brains With Wings*". Explaining their specialist body structure, function of various feather types and shapes combined with aerodynamics and flight, Professor Daniels analysed their capabilities to immediately react to their environment, flying in a tightly packed flocks and to migrate vast distances.

Concluding his talk, Professor Daniels highlighted well known species that have become urban adaptors and urban exploiters.

He also warned of the risks when species congregate in large numbers focusing on the unknown impact on Australia's species through bird flu.

His presentation was greatly appreciated by all who were present.

Many volunteers then stayed overnight, some combining this visit with their ongoing specialist projects.

As always, there was much discussion regarding bird sightings as well as plant observations which enables the building of knowledge on habitats, species and their interdependence.



Professor Chris Daniels



Kitchen Preparations. Sue Bradtke, Rosemary Mackenzie, Anne Morphet



BBQ Preparations. Rod Bradtke, John Nettlefold, Andrew Humpage

Snap shots from the Christmas Dinner



Welcome Chairman and MC
Ian Falkenberg



Previous Rangers. Carmel and Ted Meissner



Charlene Santos with Dave Georg



Sue Nettlefold, Margaret Falkenberg and Chris Lill.



A bird sighting. *Did you see that?*



Thanking our tireless Chairman. *Ian Williams*



Social science project

Gluepot is currently participating in a project titled “More than a Reserve? Understanding the benefits of Private Protected Areas”. The project is being run by researchers from RMIT (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) University.

The aim is to develop an approach to understanding and measure the socio-cultural, ecological and economic benefits resulting from PPAs. Birdlife Australia, Bush Heritage Australia, Trust for Nature and the Australian Land Conservation Alliance are all partners in this project. The researchers are collecting and analysing data, obtained from interviews with volunteers who are



Jasmine Pearson explaining the RMIT project

involved with these organisations.

Gluepot is the first organisation to embark on this study. A preliminary workshop had been held to help the researchers understand the way Gluepot works and to give an overview of the contribution from volunteers.

They were invited to attend the Committee Meeting held in November. In addition to addressing that meeting, they were warmly welcomed by Ian Falkenberg prior to their presentation at the Christmas dinner.

The following day, they were able to interview some of the volunteers present at the dinner. More interviews will be carried out over the coming months.



Researchers. *Ascelin, Kylie, Jasmine and Saed with Ian Falkenberg.*

The Gluepot Committee

The Gluepot Management Committee formally meets every second month with many members travelling to the Reserve from the Riverland, Adelaide Hills and suburbs. Zoom enables contributions from those unable to attend in person.

In addition to the all-day meeting, many Committee members, as well as their partners, also contribute in a myriad of other ways such as road maintenance, prescribed burning, telecommunications, IT, revegetation, weed control and pest control.



Committee Members unable to attend in November:-

Rebecca Boulton	Greg Johnston
Danielle Packer	Glenn Pascoe
Vic Breeding	Justin Jay
Petra Hanke	Christian Scholz

November 2025 Gluepot Committee Meeting

Left to Right: Chair Ian Falkenberg, Terri Randle, Dennis Matthews (hidden), Dave Georg, Belinda Kuchel, Patron Duncan Mackenzie, Sue Nettlefold, John Glover, Chris Grant, Ian Williams, Volunteer Ranger Mark Darter.

Gluepot in Pictures.



Visitor Centre 2017



Visitor Centre 2025



Regent Parrots and Ringnecks *Old Gluepot*



Parrots and an emu *Old Gluepot*



Playing Games *Sue Glover, Sue Bradtke, Rosemary Mackenzie, Georgia Darter*



Good Morning Gluepot *Ian Williams*



The Breezeway



Recording the position of an "incidental" Malleefowl mound *Di Georg*

Thank you Tim Pascoe



Tim Pascoe

Tim with his wife Shirley, became involved with Friends of Gluepot Reserve in 2008. From the beginning they were enthusiastic members, helping out with many of the groups' activities.

In 2011, Tim was invited to join the Gluepot Management Committee, and has served on this committee until his very recent retirement.

He and Shirley were volunteer Rangers many times, usually undertaking this task in the hottest months. They coped with all the challenges they met which included heat, fire and flooding rains. They mentored and cared for students when they came to Gluepot to undertake research. When Tim's beloved Shirley died in 2022, he continued to undertake Ranger duties.



Shirley Pascoe

Tim coordinated the bird atlassing volunteer programme. His love for birds and his excellent photographic skills led to him pioneering the practice of using stealth cameras to monitor the bird troughs, the active Malleefowl mounds, animal activity related to the electric fence and the fox baiting sites. He watched many hours, (days, weeks) of footage collected by these cameras. He also introduced the use of drones to Gluepot, and he became adept at identifying Malleefowl mounds from the images obtained. This was a ground breaking skill and he learned to fly the drone along specific transects to identify the GPS marked mounds on Gluepot.

He was always wanting to learn more and his innovative skills were put to good use when he embraced the Pygmy Possum project in partnership with Mid-Murray Landcare and DEW. He installed 10 nesting boxes around Gluepot and monitored them regularly using an endoscope. He is truly a pioneering Citizen Scientist.

He also undertook the Photo Point project, checked the pitfall lines, helped out with the on-ground Malleefowl monitoring and carried out all the electrical tag testing at Gluepot.

Tim is highly respected for his dedication and commitment to Gluepot. He has made an outstanding contribution and will always be a valued member of the "Gluepot Family".

Sandy Dam Project.

In keeping with the strategy of filling in dams to discourage feral animals, particularly goats, Gluepot had filled in nearly all dams by 2003. The water run-off entrances into Sandy Dam were closed but the remnant depression was then used as a refuse area for large rubbish. As previously reported, thanks to *Sims Metal*, this rubbish has been removed.

We can now move on to the next step to rehabilitate the area.

Thanks to a submission from Toby Galligan from *Landscapes SA*, Gluepot has received a Grant from the Native Vegetation Council to help with this process.

The dam site will need to be correctly flattened and then measures taken to revegetate the area.

The first step was a seed collecting and identifying work shop held at Gluepot on Friday 28th November and Saturday 29th November. The workshop was facilitated by Mitchell Livingston from *Trees for Life*.

The aim will then be to grow native plants from local seed collected. These plants will eventually be planted into basins dug in the area. "Branching" will also occur. This involves layering cut branches from woody vegetation on the soil. As well as helping to disperse seed if these branches are flowering, they prevent further erosion and act as a natural silt trap. This promotes natural revegetation. As with previous revegetation projects, these plants will require watering for at least the first 2 years. It is envisaged that a structure will be built in the area to collect rain water.



Sandy Dam

Obituary: John Arthur Rideout

14th March 1950 to 2nd October 2025

By Ian Falkenberg



John Rideout

It is with great sadness that I write this article for the Babbler on John Rideout following his passing suddenly on the 2nd October 2025 after a short illness and operation to remove a non-cancerous tumor in early September 2025.

John was born at the Tannachy Hospital, Rockhampton, Queensland, the third child of Louis and Muriel Rideout. The two older children, John's sisters, were Hilda and Marion. All have predeceased him.

In John's early life he had a keen interest in Chemistry which continued at the tertiary level initially at the Capricorn Institute of Advanced Education (now CQU University of Australia). Following that, he attended the University of Queensland, St Lucia, where he obtained his Doctorate in Organic Chemistry. This took John for Post-doctoral studies, to Arizona State University US, and to Southampton University in England for some years. Arriving back in Australia, he held lecturing positions in Organic Chemistry at the University of Adelaide

and at the University of Sydney, NSW.

In 1987, he commenced lecturing in Organic Chemistry at CQU University (now CQU University of Australia) until his retirement in 2006. During this time he was promoted to the position of Associate Professor.

John had a passion and genuine interest in bushwalking, birding, travelling (especially in the Deserts of Australia), reading, electronics, computing, and in Conservation. His contributions to the Capricornia Bushwalking Club included; Walks' Leader, Holder of numerous Management positions including President, Member of the Committee and Web page Manager.

John was a valuable contributor to and volunteer for Bush Heritage Australia, Australian Wildlife Conservancy (New Haven in the NT), the Friends of the Cays and Landcare. One of John's favourite places to visit and work was Birdlife Australia's Gluepot Reserve.

John was a person who simply got on with the job, no fuss, just got the job done. This approach and work ethic was instilled in John during his early life which was spent on his parents' dairy farm at Bajool where his love for the outdoors and for the Australian bush was fostered. He was known to comment that on the farm he acquired the valuable experience of having to "make do" with whatever was on hand when vital repairs were needed – something that stayed with him for the rest of his life.

What also stayed with John from his early life on the farm, was the hard work required by his parents to maintain a viable dairy farm through drought and hard times in an environment where rain was variable and not a reliable commodity.



John and Barbara with

Margaret Falkenberg

John and his partner Barbara became the Rangers at Gluepot in 2016 and have remained regular Rangers for 10 years. One only has to look closely at some of the tasks John completed at Gluepot to realize that his early life on the farm were so important in developing a strong work ethic. Most jobs are not simple and straight forward on an old pastoral sheep property like Gluepot. In fact many tasks are quite difficult and a considerable amount of pre- planning went into many of the more difficult tasks before John would commence work on them. I recall one such task involved the replacement of the old deteriorated timber beams supporting a large elevated water tank over three meters above the ground. The timber beams were very old and needed urgent replacement to minimize any safety issues.

In the meantime, the Gluepot management committee considered a number of options and methods to resolve the problem but this process would take some time.



John and Barbara

However some weeks later during one of my routine visits to Gluepot, I noticed the old timber beams supporting the water tank had been replaced with very strong steel beams. John had completed this task single handed using some very creative thinking and ingenuity. Not only had the job been completed safely and professionally, but with minimal cost to Gluepot.

Another example of Johns ingenuity, involved the now redundant Thuraya satellite phones which were initially purchased by Gluepot at considerable cost. Last year the Thuraya satellite system was decommissioned which meant the four Gluepot satellite phones which were critical for the safety of our volunteers working remotely in the field were redundant and would not work. John quietly made some enquiries and investigated a number of options to recoup some of the funds spent on initial purchase. Earlier this year John managed to sell these phones on Gluepot's behalf to overseas customers (Thuraya phones are still viable and can be used in parts of the northern hemisphere). In essence John managed to recoup some of the costs from the initial purchase of these satellite phones.

John's many innovative ideas for improvements on the Reserve were always most welcomed. His problem solving skills are exceptional and his innovative approach to infrastructure maintenance and repair are a good example of thinking outside the box.

John has also guided, mentored and assisted internship students and other volunteers involved in Gluepot activities. John is highly respected and his dedication, commitment and outstanding contributions to Gluepot and will be remembered. John will also be remembered as being a quiet, calm, patient, capable, confident and a non-judgemental person.

John and Barbara are some of the most beloved members of the 'Gluepot Family' and we will miss John deeply.

We have indeed lost one of nature's true gentlemen.

The Malleefowl monitoring 2025

As always we had plenty of helpers for our Malleefowl monitoring exercise this year—a big thanks to all these volunteers.

There are 7 Malleefowl grids on Gluepot, each measuring about 2Km by 1Km. Each grid has approximately a dozen previously worked Malleefowl mounds which are located by GPS and the finding confirmed by the presence of a tag on a dropper.

Many of the mounds on Gluepot have not been worked for a long time, but all needed to be checked this year as this was a 5-year exercise. None of the mounds that we checked this year had been reactivated. However, during 2025, volunteers doing bird atlasing and undertaking prescribed burns had come across other recently worked Malleefowl mounds. This gives us evidence that there is a Malleefowl population on Gluepot.

Gluepot has now been involved with this National Malleefowl Recovery project for 20 years. All the data goes to this body as well as GPS readings for any mounds that are found incidentally. The Malleefowl Monitoring involves a very enjoyable walk through beautiful mallee bushland but it may be time to reassess how we monitor these cryptic birds, possibly using drones or Lidar technology.

Team 2025 (Around the table Left to Right)

Sandy Dickson, John Nettlefold, Andrew Humpage, Di Georg, Di Gillatt, Dennis Matthews, Craig Oliver, Rod Bradtke, Darren Schunke, Vian Pettit.



Breaking News

On Monday, November 24th, dry lightning started 2 fires on Gluepot.

The larger fire was on the boundary of Gluepot and Taylorville. The fire control break burnt by Chris Grant and his team along this Gluepot Boundary a couple of years ago has worked well, as illustrated by the photos below. Both were taken from the same spot, one facing Gluepot and the other facing Taylorville. An estimate of the area burnt on Gluepot is <20ha, whereas the burnt area on Taylorville covers an approximate area of 200ha.



Aerial photo of the fire

A big thankyou to CFS for their quick response and protection of Gluepot and its assets.

Thanks, and well done, too, to Rangers Mark and Georgia Darter for assisting with the coordination, ensuring that visitors were safe and making sure that important information was relayed to all relevant personnel.



*Fire damage on Gluepot from
boundary with Taylorville*



*Fire damage on Taylorville from
boundary with Gluepot*

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Photographs for this Newsletter have been supplied by:-

Ian Falkenberg, Rod Bradtke, Duncan Mackenzie, Sandy Dickson, Margaret Evans, Bronwyn Mart, Sue Nettlefold

[illegible]

For the Diary

The **Annual Working Bee** will be held from Friday April 17th 2026 until Monday April 20th 2026.

[illegible]

GLUEPOT RESERVE

Gluepot Reserve is a Reserve of Birdlife Australia. ABN: 75 149 124 774

Ranger Contact details: Email: gluepot@gluepot.org Telephone: (08) 8892 8600

Postal address: PO Box 345, Waikerie, SA 5330 **Website:** www.gluepot.org **On Facebook.**

Gluepot is a not-for-profit conservation reserve, managed and operated entirely by volunteers.

It is funded through donations and bequests from its supporters, and by grants for capital works and projects.

If you wish to support the Reserve by being a donor or providing a bequest, please contact the Chairman:

Ian Falkenberg E-Mail: hawknest2@bigpond.com Phone: 0428842873

This 'Gluepot' Newsletter is produced as an e-newsletter, and is not available as a printed version.

Contributions, comment, and feedback may be forwarded to the editors—Sue Nettlefold and Bronwyn Mart

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