

About Perricoota Road

Perricoota Road leaves the Cobb Highway (B75) in Moama. It is located on the north-eastern side of the Murray River and is also called Moama-Barham Road. The roadsides are wide as this is a travelling stock route. Because stock rarely walk the route these days, much natural revegetation has taken place. Direct seeding and tree planting has also taken place.

The Brown Facon is often observed sitting on fence posts along the road.

Another species often observed on fence posts or in grass at the edge of Perricoota Road is the Australasian Pipit. This bird resembles a skinny House Sparrow. House Sparrows (introduced) are usually in a large flock but Pipits are usually either alone or in a small group.

Other birds to look for along Perricoota Road include Crested Pigeon (often sitting on wires), Grey-crowned Babbler (near dams north-west of Womboota), Black-shouldered Kites (which often hover over or near the road) and, alas, flocks of introduced Starlings.

Good birding spots alongside Perricoota Road include the lake estate between Moama and the Rich River Golf Club, lake estates near the golf club, Five Mile Reserve, Benarca Forest, the wetland opposite the Perricoota woolshed, Womboota village and Perricoota Forest. Perricoota Forest is not covered in this guide.

Apart from the Five Mile Reserve, perhaps the best birding spot of all is the Moama Wetlands alongside the Echuca-Moama Bridge.

At least two other brochures about Perricoota Road are available from the Murray Shire Office in Moama.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

Above: Australasian Pipit (Murray Chambers)

Front panel: Brown Falcon (Murray Chambers)

This is one of a series of bird guides produced by BirdLife Echuca District that can be downloaded from the branch's website, a link to which is on the BirdLife Australia web site www.birdlife.org.au

Other local birding guides:

- Barmah Forest
- Bendigo
- Cohuna-Gunbower Island
- Deniliquin
- Echuca-Moama
- Gulpa Island, Mathoura
- Kamarooka Forest
- Kerang
- Terrick Terrick National Park
- Wyuna and Kanyapella

For more information, email echuca@birdlife.org.au

Birding Guide to Perricoota Road Moama



A day birding along Perricoota Road

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

Area One: Merlot Boulevard

It is sometimes worth turning right at the second roundabout and stopping briefly near the entrance lake. An Australasian Grebe is often sighted near the fountain in the lake. Look for Purple Swamp Hen, Eurasian Coot and Masked Lapwing. There is another large lake in this estate.

Area Two: Around Rich River Golf Club

Return to Perricoota Road and look for the turnoff to the Rich River Golf Club. Turn left into 24 Lane.

If the wetland at the Perricoota end of 24 Lane contains water, it is worth stopping in the car park of the winery and making use of their observation structure. Waterbirds make use of this shallow wetland when it contains water.

Continue along 24 Lane and turn left into Rich River Estate. Near the start of Kingfisher Drive West is a parking area alongside a swimming pool. Park here and bird at the wetland opposite. Please do not park elsewhere in this estate. After birding here, continue north along 24 Lane.

You may wish to take the next drive left to look for ibis and other water birds before returning to 24 Lane.

Continue along 24 Lane until you reach Tataila Road. Turn right and look for eucalypts in flower. Bird from the roadside. The plantation on the golf club usually has some eucalypts in flower and is one of few places locally where Singing Honeyeater can be observed.

After looking for birds here, return to Perricoota Road.

Area Three: "The Five Mile"

Located about 7km north-west of Moama between Perricoota Road and the Murray River, "The Five Mile" (Moama Precinct, Murray Valley National Park) is a bushland area about 2km in length that extends to both sides of Perricoota Road. Turn south (left) at a track to a boat ramp and bird in the bushland for an hour or two.

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. You may wish to walk alongside the Murray River downstream (GPS 36° 04' 00S; 144° 41' 28E). Whistling Kites and waterbirds often cruise along the river. Look for Buff-rumped Thornbill and other bush birds in the wattles. Eventually you come to a lagoon. Head north up the slope and toward Perricoota Road. Look for Varied Sittella climbing down the Box Trees growing on the slope of the river terrace. On higher ground, in a fenced enclosure, look for Peaceful Dove, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, robins and other bush birds.

We suggest that you walk alongside the fence, then (at a gully) down the slope back to your vehicle. Look for Diamond Firetail and robins.

Drive back to Perricoota Road and turn left.

Area Four: McKindlay Road bushland

About 15km along Perricoota Road, at the McKindlay Road turnoff, is another wider section of the stock route. Turn onto McKindlay Road and park alongside a bushland track. Search for Grey-crowned Babbler and bush birds.

Area Five: opposite Perricoota Woolshed

Continue along Perricoota Road. About 20km from Moama is a large woolshed, opposite which is a wetland and an adjoining area of Box Forest. (GPS 36° 00' 00S; 144° 35' 00E). Before driving past the wetland, take the unsealed road on your right for a short distance. Park and spend about an hour birding here. In the Box Forest, look for Diamond Firetail, Hooded Robin, Brown Tree-creeper and other bush birds. Years ago, the wetland provided great habitat for waterbirds but it is often dry and overgrown with reeds. Nonetheless, Australian Reed Warbler, Little Grassbird and some waterbirds might be observed.

Area Six: Womboota Village

Continue along Perricoota Road to Womboota Village. You may wish to visit the School House Pottery. The arboretum alongside Perricoota Road and opposite the old school house is worth checking (35° 10' 34S; 144° 14' 50E). Look for a renovated hall (Womboota School of Arts). It is worth parking outside the hall and spending some time looking for robins and other birds, e.g. in the plantation alongside and behind the hall.

Area Seven: Beyond Womboota

Continue along Perricoota Road for 4km where a dam on the left is home to a colony of Grey-crowned Babblers (35° 54' 00S; 144° 02' 49E). Eventually the bitumen ends at a depression, Green Gully. This is a former course of the Murray River. Farmers have planted Old Man Saltbush to combat erosion and to provide feed for sheep. Look for chats and Wedgetailed Eagle. Then do a U-turn and head back toward Moama.

Area Eight: Benaraca Forest

Continue along Perricoota Road until you again reach the McKindlay Road intersection. This time, turn south (right) and continue until you reach the entrance to Benaraca Forest, a precinct of Murray Valley National Park. The strip alongside just before the entrance is often a good birding spot. Look for robins. Return to Moama or, if time permits, you may wish to explore Benaraca Forest. The fenced sandhill area often yields some good sightings. Diamond Firetail may be observed in that vicinity.

