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5 September 2016

Aussie Backyard Bird Count — Australia's real life 'Pokemon Go'!

- Third #AussieBirdCount fast approaching; National Bird Week, 17-23 October
- More than 1 million birds counted during #AussieBirdCount in 2015
- Aussie Backyard Bird Count is a real life 'Pokemon Go' – get out and count

Sick of *Pokemon Go*? Now Australians have a much better reason to explore their local streets, backyards, parks and gardens with their smartphones: the third annual Aussie Backyard Bird Count, which takes place from 17-23 October.

Just like *Pokemon Go*, birds will pop up in different places right across the country during the Aussie Backyard Bird Count, which is designed to get people out and about exploring their local areas and discovering birds of all shapes and sizes.

The real life characters in the Aussie Backyard Bird Count are much more exciting than *Pokemon Go*'s Pidgey and Spearow, and can be seen without faking reality. BirdLife Australia is encouraging everybody to head outdoors to look, learn and get involved in the count.

While the virtual world of *Pokemon Go* may be limited to 151 species, Australia's real world offers more than 800 species for you to find during the national challenge giving children and adults alike a chance to experience the thrill of birdwatching in their own backyards.

The aim is to count 1.5 million birds during National Bird Week from 17–23 October, making it one of Australia's largest citizen science projects.

With a great app (available for download on 1 October), specially designed to help people find and count as many birds as they can, Australia's growing community of *Pokemon Go* players can help count 1.5 million birds in record time.

"BirdLife Australia needs everyone's support to count 1.5 million birds during National Bird Week, and we believe that the thousands of *Pokemon Go* players across Australia can help make this Australia's biggest count yet," said Holly Parsons, from BirdLife Australia.

'Gamification' elements transform the task of valuable scientific data collection into a fun learning experience with screen time helping BirdLife Australia be the voice for threatened birds, and achieve outstanding conservation results for our native birds and their habitats.

In 2015, more than 42,000 nature-loving Australians took time out of their busy schedules to enjoy the birds around them, counting more than 1 million birds, including the Rainbow Lorikeet which took out the number one spot for the second year running.

Download the app and join the count at aussiebirdcount.org.au. It's easy!

Leader boards and results will be updated daily.

Start spreading the word with #aussiebirdcount.

For more information about Aussie birds visit birdlife.org.au.

MEDIA CONTACT ONLY

Contact Jack Walden on jack@thecword.com.au or 0428 300 090 to arrange an interview or for high quality images, sounds and video. Request the Bird Week media kit with more story ideas and images.

Visit the #AussieBirdCount Media Centre at <http://aussiebirdcount.org.au/media>

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