



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 28 June 2006

**BIRDWATCHERS SET TO FLOCK TO BANROCK STATION'S
POPULAR BIRD DAY OUT**

One of the largest gatherings of birdwatchers assembled in South Australia will converge on internationally-acclaimed Banrock Station next month for the property's popular Bird Day Out event.

Ten of the State's most authoritative bird experts are expected to be joined by more than 200 bird lovers for one of the biggest bird-watching extravaganzas held in South Australia.

This year's event will be held over two days (29 and 30 July 2006), following the outstanding success of Banrock Station's inaugural Bird Day Out last year.

Bird enthusiasts in attendance will be able to access about 10 different guided tours and/or seminars at the property, at Kingston on Murray, in South Australia's Riverland.

"The emphasis is on education and entertainment to learn more about the birdlife in the region," Banrock Station Manager, Mr Tony Sharley, said.

"Novice or beginner bird watchers will learn how to spot and identify a wide variety of the region's birdlife, including endangered species, and gain insights into bird habitats and behaviour," he said.

"We have been fortunate to enlist the support of some of the most authoritative bird watchers and ornithologists in the state and/or region for this year's event.

"Bird watching is a challenging and exciting hobby which has rapidly increased in participation in recent years.

"The use of high quality binoculars and spotting scopes is an important part of successful bird watching, and several will be on display during the course of the weekend for people to utilise.

"Banrock Station is a hive of constant bird activity – the difficulty for many of us is knowing how to identify the different bird species, and where to find them.

"The Bird Day Out weekend provides a wonderful opportunity for bird lovers and watchers from around South Australia to learn from some of the State's most authoritative experts, all in one location on one weekend."

Highlights of the weekend include a presentation by one of Australia's leading ornithologists, Dr David Paton, from the University of Adelaide, who will speak about the migration strategies of Australian birds, as well as eco-cruises along the River Murray on the MV Loch Luna.

Mr Sharley said with more than 160 species of birds recorded at Banrock Station during the year, the opportunity for bird lovers to spot and identify many mallee and wetland birds was high.

These include the endangered Regent Parrot, the colourful Mallee Ringneck parrot, tree creepers, butcher birds, sacred kingfishers, whistling kites and swamp harriers.

Other birds on the water and inhabiting the shallow margins of the wetland include spoonbills, herons, egrets, several species of ducks and a number of waders.

Other seminar speakers include:

- ❑ Wildlife Officer and Guide, Mr John Gitsham;
- ❑ Birds Australia Gluepot Reserve Manager, Mr Duncan MacKenzie;
- ❑ Jolly Goodfellows Bird Tours Proprietor, Mr Bob Goodfellow;
- ❑ Local expert on Regent Parrots, Mr Kevin Smith, and;
- ❑ River Murray Catchment Board scientist, Mr Peter Waanders.

All seminars are free of charge, while the river eco-cruise costs \$25 per person. Bookings are essential by Wednesday, 26 July, as numbers are limited for all seminars/tours.

Bookings are also required for lunch (\$15 pp) and nibbles (\$15) at sunset on Saturday on the deck of the Banrock Station Wine and Wetland Centre, by contacting Banrock Station Tourism Manager, Ms Sandy Iosefellis, on (08) 8583 0299 or fax (08) 8583 0166.

Visitors to the Bird Day Out weekend are encouraged to wear warm, casual clothing and footwear, and bring binoculars if possible.

To register, further information is available on: www.banrockstation.com. Brochures are also available from Riverland Visitors Information Centres.