



AT RISK: The grey-crowned babbler is a threatened species.



ON ALERT: Mick Roderick from BirdLife Australia in the wetlands.

Helpers wanted for Hunter bird count

By **CHRISTAL BRAND**

IT'S not too late to join the first Aussie Backyard Bird Count.

Until Sunday, October 26, people across the Hunter will be spending at least 20 minutes each day observing birds in their backyards.

An app for Android and Apple devices was created for the BirdLife Australia event and contains the top 400 bird species most likely to be spotted. The list was compiled by volunteers who

collected the data before the app's launch.

The Hunter Region is home to more than half of Australia's estimated 800 species of birds.

BirdLife project officer Mick Roderick said the Hunter was one of the most diverse areas in NSW.

"The Hunter Valley has a large number of birds; there's such a diverse array of habitats," he said.

Mr Roderick said the regent honey eater was the group's flagship endangered species, with a

population of about 400 adult birds. Another species under threat was woodland bird, the grey-crowned babbler.

"Its population in the Hunter seems to be doing OK compared to other parts of the country," Mr Roderick said.

The babbler was commonly found in rural areas or outlying suburbs and was easy to identify by sight and sound.

■ To find out more go to aussiebirdcount.org.au and download the app.

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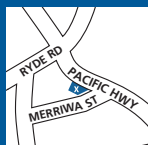
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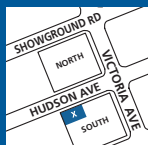
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