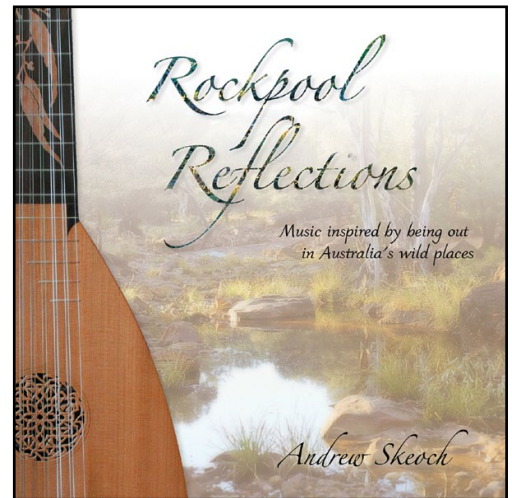


“Rockpool Reflections”

Listening Notes

*Music for the Renaissance Lute
with Outback birdsong from Mootwingee.*

Composed, Played & Recorded by Andrew Skeoch.
Photography by Sarah Koschak



This is the only album in our Listening Earth catalogue that contains music.

It was originally recorded in 1993, and released the following year. It was a very early project for us, and our first experience of recording nature sounds. The music was composed on the lute during camping trips to the outback, and the natural soundscapes were recorded at Mootwingee National Park, in the far west of New South Wales, Australia.

Shortly after completing it, we chose to concentrate solely on creating the pure nature albums that have remained our focus since.

Read more about how we began Listening Earth, and recorded this album (<http://www.listeningearth.com.au/blog/listening-earth-the-early-years-pt1>).

Track 1: **Morning at Homestead Creek** (Soundscape)

It is early morning among the gorges and creek flats of Mootwingee. A pair of Grey Shrike-Thrushes sing and call animatedly to each other (0:00 on...they can be heard calling intermittently throughout the first half of this recording).

The “Crrr” of a Peaceful Dove can be heard (0:14, 0:18, 0:22...), along with the ‘Min & Henry’ mutterings of a Little Corella (0:27, 0:38, 0:45) and the distant rollicking call of a Grey Butcherbird (0:41). A Raven flies overhead with heavy wingbeats (0:48).

Track 2: **Wedgetails (Sarah’s Pavan)**

(A pavan is a style of slow dance from renaissance-period Europe. This is dedicated to Sarah; it was originally composed as a birthday present. It is co-titled, as Wedge-tailed Eagles hold special significance for her.)

A Corella flies past (0:04 - 0:10) and later a small flock of Galahs (1:43...). Also to be heard are the downward whistles of a distant Horsfield’s Bronze Cuckoo (1:48 - 1:55).



Between music tracks: The “Oo-le-goo”s and “Crrr”s of Peaceful Doves can be heard in the background as a family of Variegated Fairy-wrens forage close by, their soft contact calls to be heard before a pair of them duet with rich, rippling song (4:56).

Track 3: **Footprints**

Peaceful Doves continue calling, and the Grey Thrushes can still be heard occasionally in the background (0:38, 1:02, 1:30...), along with White-plumed Honeyeaters (0:54, 2:49, 2:52).

Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters have a diversity of wonderfully wheezy and whiny whistles, here’s one of them (2:56), followed by a Rufous Whistler beginning a series of plaintive “ee-chou”s (3:05).

Track 4: **Reflections in the Rockpool**

Rufous Whistlers are virtuoso songsters, and here one can be heard going through his repertoire of bubbly trills & whistles(0:26, 0:39, 0:59...). The Grey Thrush is still around (0:25, 0:38, 0:58...), as is a White-plumed Honeyeater (“chick-o-wee” 0:36 and “chip!” 4:37), and the “pink-pink” is from a Striated Pardalotte (noticably from 3:05 to 4:20). A Willy Wagtail calls repeatedly in the distance.

Tree Martins nest in the river red gums, and a small group of them are now swooping and fluttering overhead, twittering pleasantly (from around 5:44 on).

Track 5: **The Echidna’s Wanderings**

White-browed Babblers are sociable birds, living together in family groups of half a dozen or so. A family is collecting twigs for a nest in nearby low bushes, and keeping in contact with sneezy whistles (0:02 to 0:04, 0:21, 0:25, 0:27, 0:39 & 0:42...) and cat-like growling “miaouw”s (2:12, 2:22, 3:26 & 3:49).

An ever-active Willy Wagtail sings loudly, fanning his tail from a low branch nearby (from 4:26 on), and a Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater calls again (4:23, 4:29 & 5:15).

Track 6: **Wagtail Antics**

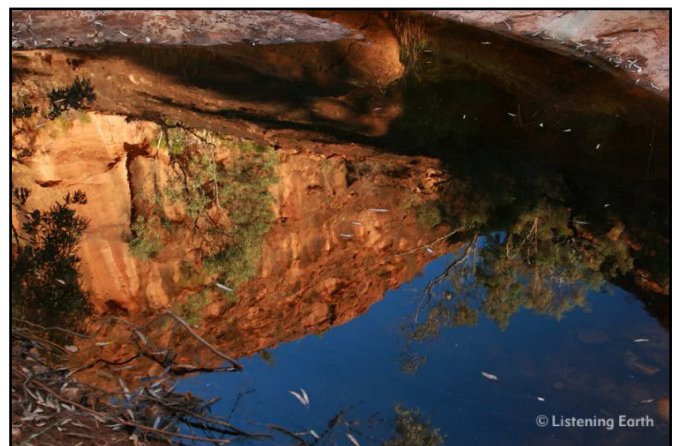
The harsh chattering call is also from the Willy Wagtail (0:07), and the Rufous Whistler can be heard again (0:40, 1:35).

A Cockatiel, a beautiful grey and yellow parrot, gives a few shrill cries from a high branch (2:23 to 2:47), before...

Track 7: **Shared Secrets**

...a small flock of them fly in to join in a communal preen in the sunshine, accompanied by soft contented trilling (from around 0:14 on). A curious Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater flies into a nearby bush, and hops around inquisitively, uttering lovely wheezy whines (1:08, 1:22, 1:39, 1:47, ...).

A small flock of Brown (previously known as Inland) Thornbills, with their characteristic twitterings (3:20 on) and downslured trills (eg: 3:44, 4:05), are gleaning for insects on nearby bushes.



Track 8: **Hidden Gorge**

A Weebill has been tagging along with the flock of Thornbills, and is now to be heard calling its name “wee wee-bill” (0:13, 0:21, 0:44, 0:50, 0:56...), while in the distance a Grey Butcherbird calls (0:14 & 0:35). A spectacular Red-capped Robin appears, giving its ‘telephone ringing’ call (1:00 to 2:00), before a Horsfield’s Bronze Cuckoo alights nearby, recognisable from its distinctive downward whistles (2:19 to 3:00).

It is now mid-morning, and Tree Martins may be heard returning (3:20...). White-plumed Honeyeaters continue to call from the river gums (3:40, 4:03), and the Grey Butcherbird is heard again in the distance (3:57 & 4:17).



This concludes the first half of the album; a soundscape recorded amongst Mootwingee’s gorges and creekbeds.

The second half features the open sandplains, and birds more adapted to the harsh conditions found across the Australian Outback.

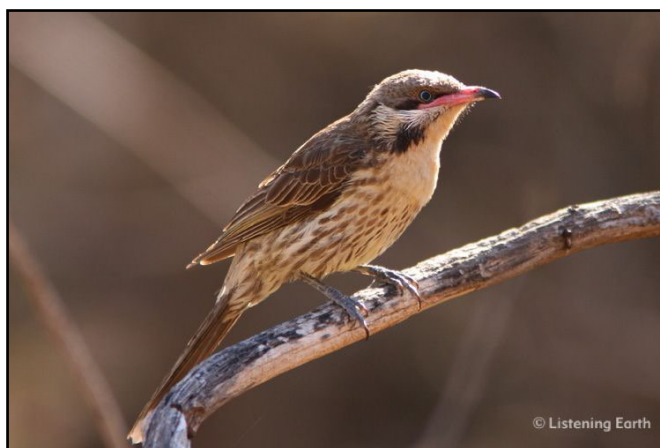
Track 9: **Awaiting the Dawn** (soundscape)

It is first light, and across the ridges may be heard the wonderful sound of Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters awaking (0:00 on). Their characteristic pre-dawn calls blend together to create a sound that is distinctive of the Outback.

Track 10: **From Afar**

The Spiny’s continue, and the bass booming of an Emu may just be heard (0:38 - 0:50 & 2:00 - 2:09).

Many Honeyeaters have pre-dawn calls that are distinctively different from their day-time songs. These dainty calls are from White-plumed Honeyeaters (3:03 on).



Track 11: **Morning Star**

It is still dark, with the full moon palely illuminating the landscape. On such nights Magpies will call from their roosts high in the river gums up and down the riverbed (2:50 ish on...). Also the extraordinary deep booming of a male Emu carries across the plain (3:22 - 3:30 & 3:52 - 4:00).

Track 12: **Dewdrops**

Magpies and the Emu (0:41 - 0:48) continue calling.

A family of White-winged Fairy-wrens have been roosting in a thorny acacia bush nearby, which now burst into song (1:55, 2:07,...). Other groups can be heard in the distance, along with the gradually intensifying call of a Chirruping Wedgebill (1:59).

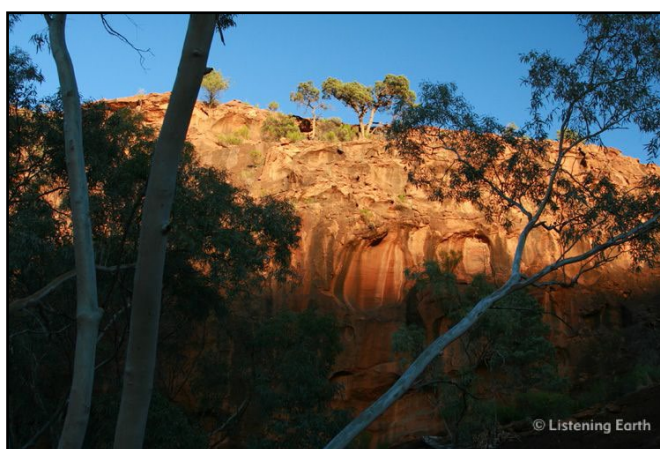
Track 13: **Infinite Sky**

The wrens continue, before the creaky voice of a Brown Songlark (sometimes described as being like the sound of a wire fence twanging) (3:21 to 3:56 & 4:07) is heard from across the plain.

A flock of tiny Zebra Finches are chattering animatedly among themselves as they search for seeds on the ground (from about 4:20), before taking flight (5:32). A Crested Pigeon flies past on distinctively whirring wings (5:16).

Track 14: **Heartland (Red Rocks, Blue Sky)**

A Rufous Songlark sits on an exposed perch, giving a series of twangy whipcracks (3:35, 3:41, 3:51, 3:57, 4:02 ...), before flying directly upwards on a spectacular song flight (4:49 - 4:56), which is concluded by a dive down to a new perch. Also, a Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater calls (3:27, 3:37...), and a family of Chestnut-crowned Babblers return to their bulky stick nest atop a Casuarina tree (5:09 - 5:18).



Track 15: **Twilight**

One of the most vibrantly colourful of all outback birds, the male Crimson Chat, calls from the top of a bush (1:11, 1:28, 1:32...).

A small group of Chestnut-rumped Thornbills fly up from the ground where they have been feeding, to begin a pleasant chorus of their distinctive "teuw"s (2:50 on). A Singing Honeyeater (rather misnamed), flies up to an overlooking branch and gives a series of "tirrup"s (3:29...)

Track 16: **The Homeward Path**

In the distance can be heard Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters and groups of Chestnut-crowned Babblers (around 1:10 on). A Little Crow (short "Aak,aak,aak" 2:50-2:51) is heard here alongside an Australian Raven (in the far background, longer mournful descending "Aaaar,aaaar,aaaar" 2:50 - 2:58). These birds look almost identical, and their calls are one of the few ways of telling them apart.

A Red-backed Kingfisher is also a treat to come across (three piping calls, 3:02). Also the Rufous Songlark is audible again (4:27).

A chorus of morning birdsong concludes the album, including White-plumed Honeyeaters (6:08, 6:36), a Willy Wagtail in the background, Spiny's (5:43, 5:58...), Emus (esp. around 6:00 - 6:18...), and Diamond Doves (5:51, 6:00, 6:13, 6:27...).