**Put our bird on it**

**by CatHacks**

**Project Description**

Have you ever noticed how many phones, apps and programs use tweet, chirp and cheep sounds as ringtones or notifications?

Exhibit A: the Twitter sound - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nB59EVmizo>

Exhibit B: Samsung Galaxy S3 chirps - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoxaklrV4l4#t=15m42s>

Did you know that in Australia, there are some 828 species of birds![[1]](#footnote-1) So wouldn’t it be nice if our gadgets could tweet, chirp and cheep Australian bird sounds? Australia represent!

At CatHacks, we thought we should literally ‘put a bird on it’ and made some ringtone and notification sounds of some of Australia’s finest. And many of these live in the Australian Capital Territory too!

Honeyeater

According to the ACT Wildlife Atlas, sighted species in the ACT include the White-plumed Honeyeater (5 sightings in 2010), the Regent Honeyeater (8 sightings in 1998), and Lewin’s Honeyeater (1 sighting in 2015).

Lyrebird

ACT data reports that the Superb Lyrebird was sighted in 2012.

Pied Butcherbird

Pied Butcherbirds are rare in Canberra, and usually seen in the north of the ACT. ACT is however home to the Grey Butcherbird, which has been officially sighted several times since 2010.

Reed Warbler

The Reed Warbler spends the summer in ACT tablelands for breeding. ACT data reports it was sighted in 2010, though the Speckled Warbler is more often seen in the territory.

Brolga

No reported sightings in Canberra through they are located elsewhere around Australia.

Great Bowerbird

Now, if you’re looking for something different, and a truly unique gadget alert sound, check out the call of the Great Bowerbird. Its call is not so pretty compared with the others! While the Great Bowerbird isn’t resident to Canberra, the Satin Bowerbird has been sighted quite a few times over the years.

**How to install**

To use these sound bytes, just download the files at the links provided and change your phone settings to play them for ringtones or notifications! Here’s the instructions.

The ‘Put our bird on it’ files are available at <https://github.com/AcousticCardigan/AcousticCardigan.github.io>.

Android

<http://www.androidauthority.com/set-own-music-mp3-custom-notification-ringtone-166052>

iPhone

<http://www.macworld.co.uk/how-to/iphone/how-set-any-song-as-iphone-ringtone-new-3635061>

**How we did it**

We wanted to share the beauty of Australian bird calls so drew our main content from the Bird Songs Online dataset. It contains more than 250 recordings of Australian birds from Western Australia, Canberra and Queensland from 1962 to 1988.

The samples used were from recordings with only one type of bird call in the file, so we knew what we were listening to.

This information was then supplemented with information from the Atlas of Living Australia data portal, where the population maps and images came from. Last, we sought to link this up with the ACT Wildlife Atlas to locate where they were sighted!

**Next steps**

With more time and resources, we’d love to expand the scope of these notifications to include many more of Australia’s native birds, such as Bellbirds, Cockatoos, Cormorants, Emus, Galahs, Herons, Kookaburras, Parrots, Thornbills and Willy wagtails.

We’d also like to visually pinpoint where these species have been sighted, say on Google Maps or using more ACT terrestrial data.

**Conclusion**

We think this was a fun exercise that helps bring people closer to Australian fauna, with a focus on Canberrans. We hope you like it too!

**And check out our inspiration!** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHmLljk2t8M>

**CatHack Team members**

Elizabeth McAnulty (Team Captain)

Tom Saunders (CatHacker Extraordinaire)

Cat Gomer (Design Specialist)

Chris Mitchell (CatHacker Extraordinaire)

Allison Sonneveld (BirdHacker)

Nick Sonneveld (CatHacker Extraordinaire)

Poppy (Cat)

Rosie (Cat)

**Prize Category Nominations**

International

* Storytelling Hack
  + Eligibility criteria: all Australian and New Zealand teams are eligible. Must use at least two Official GovHack Datasets. Open Government data must be used.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.

Major Category Prizes

* Creative Humanities Hack
  + Eligibility criteria: Entries must use at least 2 official dataset that are Open Government data. Video entries must explain how data is used and demonstrate progress of your creative hack over the competition weekend.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.

Australian Capital Territory

* Best Data Visualisation
  + Eligibility criteria: Must use some ACT Government data sets from data.act.gov.au.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.
* Best Data Wrangling
  + Eligibility criteria: Must use some ACT Government data sets from data.act.gov.au.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.
* Best in ACT
  + Eligibility criteria: Must use some ACT Government data sets from data.act.gov.au.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.
* Best Use of ACT Government Spatial Data
  + Eligibility criteria: Must use the ACT Government spatial data. Available at data.act.gov.au.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.
* Most Fun Use of ACT Government Data
  + Eligibility criteria: Must use some ACT Government data sets from data.act.gov.au.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.
* Most Innovative Project for Canberrans
  + Eligibility criteria: Must use some ACT Government data sets from data.act.gov.au.
  + ‘Put our bird on it’ uses the following datasets:
    - The ‘Bird Songs Online’ dataset, made available by the State Library of Western Australia and available here <http://catalogue.beta.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/bird-songs-online>; and
    - The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal, available here <http://www.ala.org.au>.
    - ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset, available at <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.

**Data Used**

* Bird Songs Online
  + Link to dataset: <http://portal.govhack.org/datasets/2016/wa/state-library-of-western-australia/bird-songs-online.html> (CSV file used)
  + The audio files linked within this data set were sampled, mashed up and looped to make ring tones and message alerts of native Australian birds recorded in Western Australia, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory.
  + No data reuse eligibility requirements.
* The ‘Atlas of Living Australia’ data portal
  + Link to data portal: <http://www.ala.org.au>.
  + Links containing biodiversity information about the six bird species sampled were drawn from this data portal.
  + Data reuse eligibility information for the images used are acknowledged in the video.
* ACT Wildlife Atlas dataset
  + Link to dataset <https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>.
  + This data was searched against the audio files sampled to identify sightings of species, or relevant species.
* Canberra Birds website at <http://canberrabirds.org.au/birds>

**Software used**

* Audacity – Audio file editing
* Adobe Photoshop CS2 – logo design, web page graphics
* Microsoft Excel – Data management
* Github – Evidence repository and web page hosting
* Microsoft Word – Project development
* Slack – Team talk

**Evidence Repository URL**

The ‘Put our bird on it’ files and information is available at <https://github.com/AcousticCardigan/AcousticCardigan.github.io>.

**Video Entry**

The ‘Put our bird on it’ video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OfffKdWk9I&rel=0>

**Demo URL**

Link to web page

**Notes**

<https://www.data.act.gov.au/Environment/ACT-Wildlife-Atlas-Records/e9ux-7djy>

Some of the bird songs are recorded in Canberra

ACC 8661A/5

ACC 8661A/10

ACT – Yes

WA – Yes

QLD - Yes

**Kinds of birds [solo birds]:**

Lyrebirds – yes in cbr

Brolgas – extinct in cbr

Canaries – not in cbr

Cormorants – cbr has great cormorant (common), little black cormorant (common), little pied cormorant (common), pied cormorant (rare), plus many in family group like the Australasian Grebe.

Ducks – like the Pacific Black Duck (common),

Great Bowerbirds – not in CBR?

Honeyeaters – Eastern Spinebill, Fuscous Honeyeater, Nosy Friarbird, White Naped Honeyeater, White Plumed Honeyeater.

Magpies – common to CBR

Reedwarblers - Common breeding summer migrant in suitable habitat on the tablelands. Odd birds remain over winter.

Pied Butcherbird – rare in CBR, mostly in north

**Future direction**

Expand scope of birds

Image of Nagra IV-S portable stereo 6.35mm analogue tape recorder

Recorded using Fi-Cord 202 portable reel tape recorder.

Recorded using a Ficord 202 recorder.

Recorded using Fi-Cord 1A portable reel tape recorder.

Image of John Hutchinson

Who is John Hutchinson?

1. Christidis and Boles 2008, cited in A. D. Chapman, 2009, *Numbers of Living Species in Australia and the World*, 2nd edition, available at https://www.environment.gov.au/node/13867. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)