

## Hollis Taylor: violinist/composer/zoömusicologist



Hollis Taylor conducting fieldwork: Newhaven Station, Central Australia, which adjoins Aboriginal freehold land on all sides. (Photo: Jon Rose)

**Major research:** the pied butcherbird (*Cracticus nigrogularis*).  
(see "Zoömusicologists" page for audio link Pied butcherbird.mp3)



A pied butcherbird, Burleigh Heads, Queensland. (Photo: Hollis Taylor)

**Other research interests:** lyrebirds, bowerbirds, Australian magpies, grey butcherbirds, currawongs, & animal aesthetics.



Left: The interior decorations of a western bowerbird's avenue bower (Alice Springs). His color preferences are green, white, and shiny objects. Right: The exterior decorations of a great bowerbird's avenue bower (Darwin) display his similar color preferences. (Photos: Hollis Taylor)



Satin bowerbirds prefer things blue, with a secondary preference to the color yellow (Blue Mountains, New South Wales). (Photo: Hollis Taylor)

**Hollis writes:** Bowerbird males are vocalists, dancers, architects, interior decorators, collectors, landscape architects, and painters. And bowerbird females are art critics, contemplating what the other sex has created.

## **Selected Publications**

- Taylor, Hollis. 2011. The Australian Pied Butcherbird: The Composer's Muse. *Music Forum: Journal of the Music Council of Australia* 17 (2).
- Taylor, Hollis. 2011. Composers' appropriation of pied butcherbird song: Henry Tate's 'undersong of Australia' comes of age. *Journal of Music Research Online*.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2010. Blowin' in Birdland: Improvisation and the Australian pied butcherbird. *Leonardo Music Journal* 20: 79-83.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2009. Super Tweeter. *Art Monthly Australia* 225: 16-19.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2009. Olivier Messiaen's transcription of the Albert's lyrebird. *AudioWings* 12 (1): 2-5.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2009. Location, location, location: Auditioning the vocalizations of the Australian pied butcherbird. *Soundscape: The Journal of Acoustic Ecology* 9 (1): 14-16.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2008. Long songs of the pied butcherbird. *AudioWings* 11 (2): 4-7.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2008. "Towards a Species Songbook: Illuminating the Vocalisations of the Australian Pied Butcherbird (*Cracticus nigrogularis*)."  
PhD. University of Western Sydney.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2008. "Decoding the song of the pied butcherbird: An initial survey," *Transcultural Music Review* (12).  
<http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans12/art13.htm>
- Taylor, Hollis. 2007. *Post Impressions: A Travel Book for Tragic Intellectuals*.  
Portland: Twisted Fiddle.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2006. Frequency measurements on a phrase of the pied butcherbird. *AudioWings* 9 (2): 15-18.
- Taylor, Hollis. 2005. A call of the pied butcherbird. *AudioWings* 8 (2): 4-8.
- Curtis, H. Sydney, and Hollis Taylor. 2010. "Olivier Messiaen and the Albert's Lyrebird: from Tamborine Mountain to Éclairs sur l'au-delà." In *Olivier Messiaen: The Centenary Papers*, ed. Judith Crispin. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars. 52-79.
- Taylor, Hollis, and Dominique Lestel. 2010. "Music and "music": a cross-species comparison." Presented at Nature Versus Culture, University of Sheffield.

## **Compositions Based on Pied Butcherbird Song**

- Pied Butcherbird Suite* and *Bird-Esk* for string quartet (Taylor 1.mp3).  
*Songmaps: Alice Springs, Riffingbirds 1-4, Saleyards, Nightshift, Macadamia, Briar Ridge, Trailer Park Trash, Waterworks, and Solo-esque* for violin and field recordings.
- Black and White Miniatures* for toy piano and video.
- Cumberdeen Dam V & T* for solo bassoon.
- Lamington Plateau* for flute.
- Banana Paper, Gowrie Creek* (Taylor 2.mp3), *The Bass of Broken Hill*, and *Ormiston Gorge: A Canonic Manipulation* for bass.

An excerpt from a pied butcherbird transcription by Hollis Taylor from a 3½-hour song delivered on Magnetic Island, Queensland, Australia.

This musical score transcribes a segment of a pied butcherbird's song, spanning measures 863 to 875. The notation is presented in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 146. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings. Specific notes are labeled with 'QR' (Quarter Rest) and 'CH' (Chorus). Measures 866 and 875 feature high-speed passages with 32 and 20 notes respectively, indicated by brackets and the labels 'HR' (High Rate) and 'R' (Rapid). The score is divided into measures 863-864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, and 875. The key signature is one sharp (F#).



A crimson rosella (*Platycercus elegans*), native to E and SE Australia.

**Hollis writes:** My formal transcription of pied butcherbirds involves music notation software and various other applications, but I often informally keep tabs on the crimson rosella parrots and other birds and frogs that sing outside my study window.

