

I. B. O. C. NEWS

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FEBRUARY, 1985.

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No N8H 3848.

POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
SALGOWNE NSW 2519
84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
63 Dymock St.
SALGOWNE NSW 2519
84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Senior Citizens' Centre, corner Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 11th February, at 7-30 pm.
GUEST SPEAKER for the evening will be Arnold McGill. Arnold is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union, and has made a tremendous contribution to Australian ornithology over many years. His topic for the evening will be 'Honeyeaters', and members can look forward to an informative, entertaining and humorous talk.

MID-WEEK OUTING. As has been the practice over past years, we will commence our 1985 activities with a late afternoon outing to Windang estuary. We will meet in the park on the north side at the entrance to Lake Illawarra on Wednesday, 6th February at 5-30 pm. Bring a sandwich and a drink and enjoy an evening of birdwatching and good fellowship.

FIELD OUTING - SATURDAY, 16th FEBRUARY. - will be at Canyonleigh on the property "Coowong" owned by Dr. Hughes. "Coowong" was the location of an earlier IBOC October camp. To get there you travel 16 klm up the Tugalong Road, which turns off the Canyonleigh Rd. 9 klms from the intersection with the Hume Highway. We are meeting at the property gates at 8-30 am. Bring a carry lunch.

PAYMENT OF FEES. Fees are now due for the 1985 calendar year. These are Family \$8, Single \$5, and Students \$2. Prompt payment of fees is essential to enable early compilation of our 1985 membership list. Any member unfinancial at time of preparation of list will not be included.

If you have any alterations to your address or telephone No. as shown on 1984 list, please give details to the Secretary.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES. Contributions to the Newsletter should be posted to P.O. Box 56, Fairy Meadow, 2519 N.S.W. or handed direct to Wal Emery. If you have made an interesting observation, write it down and send it in. It doesn't have to be a long article, just a paragraph if that's all it takes to tell your story.

DECEMBER FIELD OUTING - BAMARANG, NOWRA.

On 8th December, 1984, 40+ members enjoyed the last excursion for the year. We met at the home of Barry & Carol Virtue at Berry at 3 p.m. and drove to Bamarang, a delightful spot just south-west of Nowra on the Shoalhaven River with Barry leading the group.

An exciting couple of hours was spent firstly doing a detour into the bush where 3 Olive-backed Orioles were observed feeding in a small tree and Rufous Whistlers were singing. However, the majority of birds were seen as we walked along the quiet dirt road which was mainly bordered by tall trees on the southern side and open river flats to the north.

It was exciting to watch a Dollarbird flying from tree to tree, and a Sacred Kingfisher and a Mistletoebird spent some considerable time resting in a small bare tree and gave people an excellent opportunity to observe these beautiful birds at very close quarters, some for the first time.

Little Lorikeets were zooming through the tops of some very high eucalypts making identification almost impossible and very frustrating, but they were finally seen feeding and were then identified along with the Scarlet and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and Dusky Woodswallow. A Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike was seen sitting on a nest.

On the return walk to the cars a male Common Koel gave several people some excitement flying along the river flats making his less known call on more than one occasion. A Blackbird was also heard calling.

A couple of members walked through the grass on the flats towards a large and interesting swamp and flushed 5 Latham's Snipe and some Stubble Quail several times. The swamp proved very interesting and rewarding with Australasian Grebe, Black-fronted Plover, Grey and Chestnut Teal, Black Swan and Pacific Black Duck plus others.

The drive back to Berry was also very exciting as 5 Channel-billed Cuckoos were seen feeding and flying in and around some figtrees on the Bomaderry Road and were seen and heard calling by everyone. The White-bellied Sea-Eagle and Peregrine Falcon were also seen by some members along the same road.

On arrival back at the farm we were greeted by Carol, Andrew and 10 other IBOC members where we shared the Virtue family's hospitality and the use of their BBQ facilities and everyone enjoyed their meal while chatting and watching the full moon rise over the trees.

Just before we were to leave to go spotlighting, the heavens opened and the evening came to an abrupt end. Many thanks indeed to Barry, Carol and Andrew for a very happy afternoon and evening which concluded a great year of birding in the field for IBOC.

59 species were recorded for the day.

Nola Williams.

DECEMBER MEETING.

It was standing room only as 88 members packed the hall for our December Christmas social. The President quickly dispensed with the necessary general business then it was on with the show.

'Christmas Countdown' revealed a disturbing relationship between a respected lady member and an Irish gentleman. By the time the act was over there was some indecision as to whether we should seek the services of a doctor, a marriage guidance counsellor or an RSPCA inspector.

In true show business tradition an awkward situation was averted by switching to a commercial break. Ron and Wendy introduced two new products designed to remove all those embarrassing stains which birds tend to collect. A must for every IBOC's laundry in 1985.

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The beautiful 'Parrot Sisters' made their debut on the IBOC stage. A new twist to an old song bought squawks of delight from the audience. IBOC talent scouts are already negotiating for a return performance in 1985.

Obviously the Hales' family thought there were too many yobbos in the IBOC line-up, so they decided to demonstrate their idea of culture. I'm sure every IBOC worth their binoculars will try to emulate this high standard in the future.

Commercial time again and Ron Hanks returned with a new pet food on the market, 'Slow Cat'. One suggestion, Ron, if you want to sell it to birdos, maybe you should change the name to 'Dead Slow Cat'.

The tempo slowed a little as Laurie showed a documentary film on the changing landscape of the Mudgee district, the boyhood hometown of our illustrious President. Not the usual birding film we've become accustomed to seeing, although I'm sure there were three unnamed cuckoos outside the local pub.

Our newer members listened intently to find out just 'What the Hell a Birdo is'. I'm sure they learned quite a bit as some of the older hands emerged with a bit of egg on their faces.

The annual bird parade as usual produced a good response and showed that you don't have to look beyond the IBOC membership to find a few rare birds.

Finally Santa's helper produced his 1984 list of misdemeanours and the defaulters paraded in 'tern' to receive their 'booby' prizes. I understand he has already commenced his 1985 list.

With the frivolity over we adjourned to the serious business of supper. One member was overheard to remark that it all looked too good to eat. Judging by the empty tables at the end of the evening, it was apparent that the remaining 87 members did not share this view.

The obvious success of the evening topped off an equally successful year, and the committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their participation and fellowship throughout 1984.

With your continued support we will endeavour to make 1985 an equally successful year.

Wal Emery.

A BIRD BY ANY OTHER NAME.

When we read bird stories and reports produced by other clubs, we occasionally come across an unfamiliar name only to find it belongs to a quite familiar bird - Black-necked Stork for Jabiru, Spotted Owl for the Boobook, Leatherhead for the Noisy Friarbird and so on. Each bird organisation adopts a set of bird common names which it sees as best. We've been using the Readers Digest names, some clubs use the R.A.O.U recommended names and other clubs use other recognised lists or mixtures. There is clearly a need for all of us to 'speak the same language'. The principal bird organisation in Australia is the R.A.O.U. and theirs is the list most followed.

It was with this background that our Club Committee resolved that, from now, we will adopt the "Recommended English Names for Australian Birds" of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, as published in the Emu of May, 1978. That list shows a common English name for each of our birds, shows also the scientific name and sets them out in a recognised order.

Because the Readers Digest names were based on earlier R.A.O.U. lists, most of the names in the R.A.O.U.'s 1978 list are the same as we've been using - but there are differences. Some of the differences are trivial and some quite significant. Hyphens and capitals have been added or taken away, the blue wrens have become Fairy-wrens, the Warblers are now Gerygones, most of the Dotterels are Plovers, the Rock Warbler has become an Origma, and so on. The order of the birds has changed a little in some places.

We'll use the R.A.O.U. names in the Newsletter, in our Club records and so on. Any articles being written for the Newsletter should of course use these names. There are in the Club library a few copies of the May 1978 Emu, although Barbara will sell you your own for about \$3.

Dave Thomson.

CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOOS AT NOWRA.

At 4-30 p.m. on November 14, my attention was drawn to a hullabaloo in my garden by Australian Magpies, Red Wattlebirds and Noisy Friarbirds. Investigating the cause of all the fuss I found a Channel-billed Cuckoo perched about 4 metres up in a large gum tree. As this was my first sighting of the cuckoo I was elated at such a wonderful view.

However, after about 5 minutes the 'buzzing' of the 'local mob' became overbearing and with one loud "Awk" the cuckoo flew off and was joined by its mate who had apparently been sitting unharassed in a nearby gum. Both birds circled around and landed in another gum which contained the nest of a pair of wattlebirds. Both cuckoos moved to the nest and the female endeavoured to sit on it. By this time the wattlebirds had reached screaming point and I am afraid sympathy for them overtook my instinct to 'let nature take its course' and I clapped and shouted "get off that nest"! At this the cuckoos flew off to a nearby casuarina, one perched a few metres above the other. One bird, which I took to be the male, broke off a twig and flew down next to the female and gently offered it to her. When the twig wasn't taken he gave a side-kick and nearly pushed her off the branch, causing her to move to another limb.

After some minutes both birds took off, circled around, and came to rest in separate gum trees. The male landed on the opposite side of his tree to a female and fledgling magpie, thus placing himself between them and his mate who had landed in the gum which contained the 'spent' magpie's nest. The female cuckoo then stealthily moved through the 'nest' tree until she was on the side of the trunk blocking her from the magpies view. She slowly worked her way up until she was in reach of the nest and quickly moved on. However she only stayed for a few seconds and flew out followed by her mate. They then went back to the wattlebird's nest on which she again sat for a few seconds before they both took off and left the area, followed by a 'seeing off' party of resident birds.

The next two days I was away from home during the daylight hours but at 8 a.m. on the third day the pair of cuckoos arrived back, calling loudly, and stayed for an hour and a half feeding on a Moreton Bay Fig with only minor harassment from the resident birds. I was again away from home on day four but on day five and day six, (the time of writing), one cuckoo was observed sitting quietly in the fig tree, I wonder if it was the male or female.

I certainly had a wonderful 'first' sighting of the Channel-billed Cuckoo although my observations have left me with a number of queries on the actions of these birds.

Diana Wright, Nowra 20/11/84

BIRDSTOWN AND BACK.

The Birdstown Track isn't a place to be taken lightly, especially for those who are not familiar with the problems that are associated with the isolation of outback Australia. The 'track' represents some of the harshest conditions to be found anywhere in the world.

So after much preparation Ron Imisides and myself headed off on Sunday September 12th, 1983 on a journey that few people will ever undertake. It was to become a real adventure for Ron and myself.

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We considered that 200 species for the trip would be a reasonable total to aim for. Leaving early in the morning we headed out through Katoomba, Bathurst and Lucknow for a brief look at the old gold mines of this area. Near Dubbo we sighted our first Cockatiels and reaching Nyngan at 5 p.m. we made camp for the night. Here the severity of the long drought was quite obvious and it was hard to believe we were only on the western plains and not central Australia.

After a good sleep we left Nyngan at 7 a.m. and Ron soon got his first new bird, a Mallee Ringneck. A little further and we recorded Blue Bonnets and Crested Bellbirds. Our next stop, just south of Bourke proved to be very exciting; Black-backed Fairy-wren, Purple-backed Fairy-wren, Yellow-throated Miner, Red-capped Robin, Singing Honeyeater, Southern Whiteface and a pair of Weebills nesting.

After minor car repairs in Bourke we headed for Cunnamulla. An hours walk 170 km. south of Cunnamulla produced Inland Thornbills, Striped and Spin-cheeked Honeyeaters, Common Bronzewing and Mulga Parrot, probably the prettiest of all the parrots. Upon arrival at Cunnamulla we were saddened to hear of the death of Monty Shrader a good friend and a most respected birdo.

The next morning we walked around the towns sewerage treatment works, always a good place for birdwatchers. Here we found White-backed Swallow, Australian Crake, Red-necked Avocet, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Spotted Sowerbird. By midday we had left Cunnamulla and headed for Eulo. Some 48 km. along the road we stopped to look around and had immediate success finding Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush and Varied Sittellas. 20km. past Eulo we found a party of Hall's Babblers while around Lake Sindegolly we added Pink-eared Duck, White-winged Fairy-wren, and a magnificent female Peregrine Falcon.

In the evening we set up camp at Thargomindah and here we found Crimson and Orange Chats, White-browed Woodswallows and a pair of dark phased Little Eagles. On Wednesday a Spotted Harrier joined us for breakfast, after which we had our first taste of dirt road as we headed for Quilpie. After lunch in Quilpie, we set off towards Windorah. Along the way we saw six Australian Bustards and a very dark phased Brown Falcon. We spent the rest of the day on a fruitless search for the Inland Dotterel.

Next morning we were visited by a flock of Australian Bustards. They made a magnificent sight as they wheeled in on their huge wings. From here on the road deteriorated quite rapidly and the countryside turned to a great expanse of sand and rocky plain. Either side of the road, red sand dunes and low ridges were dotted with spinifex bushes and the only birds observed were Crimson and Orange Chats and the odd Richard's Pipit.

After a fuel stop at Betoota we headed through the gibber plains for Birdsville, by far the worst section of road on the trip. We eventually arrived in Birdsville early that evening and set up camp on the Diamantina River.

On Friday a walk along the river turned up 150 Plumed Whistling-Ducks, Glossy Ibis, Marsh Sandpiper, Australian Pratincole and Curlew Sandpiper. After checking road conditions at the local Police station we headed down the 'track'. About 150 km. south of Birdsville we came across a pair of Gibberbirds right where one would expect to see them, in the middle of a gibber desert. The area was well described by the explorer Bourke when he wrote "We have come across a place that I am sure, on the face of the earth has no equal". Nothing but stones for hundreds of kilometres.

Unfortunately it started to rain and the road quickly turned into a quagmire and even though we were equipped with 10 inch wheels it soon became impossible to stay on the road and eventually we were bogged to the axles. We decided to leave it till the morning, and so covered in mud, we tried to get some sleep.

Saturday saw us awoken to a poor dawn chorus but amongst it a most unusual call. After a brief search we turned up our first Cinnamon Quail-thrush and found 3 more before returning to the bogged vehicle. We were underway by 10-30am and found that the worst of the track was over and soon reached Sore Lagoon. Here we listed nearly 40 species including Australian Crake, Marsh and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and a Marsh Harrier.

About 4-30 p.m. next day we arrived in Maree at the end of the track. We were shocked to find that Maree had become a ghost town. Later we found that this was caused by the relocation of the railway. We continued on to Slinman and here we spent the night in a nostalgic 140 year old cottage at the princely sum of \$2 a night.

Monday was spent touring around this fine old town which boasts many magnificent old buildings many of which are still in use. Tuesday and Wednesday were spent driving to Broken Hill, minor car repairs and then off to Kinchega National Park. After talking to John Neavelly, the senior ranger and his wife, we made camp at campsite No.35 right on the banks of the Darling River and complete with a pair of Little's Eagles nesting on the opposite bank.

Next morning we headed off to Lake Cawandilla where we recorded Chestnut-crowned Babbler, Chirruping Wedgebill, Australian Shelduck, Australian and Saiton's Crakes, Little Grassbird, Collared Sparrowhawk and Freckled Duck.

On returning to our camp we were dismayed to find that something had stolen our complete supply of lollies. Everything that moved was thoroughly cursed and the culprit eventually proved to be an Australian Raven nesting some 200 metres away.

We left the park with a total of 99 species including Ron's first Yellow Rosella. Next stop was Hattah Lakes and again the severity of the drought was clearly visible. Sunday 26th saw an early start off to Sunset country. Here we found Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, Rufous-crowned Emu-wren, Crested Bellbird and a pair of Regent Parrots. The following day was again spent here and we added Southern Scrub-robin and Striated Grasswren.

Monday afternoon was spent around Lake Lakie. Here we found large numbers of Red-necked Avocets, Black-winged Stilts, Sharp-tailed, Curlew and Marsh Sandpiper and White-bellied Sea-Eagles nesting. We concluded our stay at Hattah with 106 species which surprised both of us.

We left Sunset country on Wednesday and headed for Temora in the hope of finding the Superb Parrot. While freshening up at the Temora Caravan Park, I found a Black-eared Cuckoo, a bird I had spent many years searching for. A brief walk after breaking camp the next day produced Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Little Lorikeet and Diamond Firetail. Heavy rain forced us to leave, but luck was with us when suddenly a pair of beautiful Superb Parrots burst past the car and alighted in a dead tree nearby. This was another 'lifer' for Ron and brought a big smile to his face.

From here we headed for home and finally picked up our 200th species when we found a Spotted Pardalote at Paddy's River. Here we also added White-throated Gerygone and Crested Shrike-tit to finish up with 218 species for the trip. Ron finished with 42 lifers and I added 3 to my life list.

Lindsay E. Smith.

ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

PROGRAM FOR 1985.

Wed. 6th February 6.30 pm	Outing	Windang Estuary
Mon. 11th February 7.30 pm	Meeting	Arnold McGill O.A.M.- Honeyeaters
Sat. 16th February 8.30 am	Outing	Canyonleigh
Mon. 11th March 7.30pm	Meeting	Stephen Wilson - Raptors
Sun 17th March 9.00am	Outing	Sassafras
Fri. 5th April - Sun 14th	Easter Camp	Macquarie Marshes.
Mon. 15th April 7.30pm	Meeting	Members Night
Sat. 20th April 9.00am	Outing	Meryla Pass
Sat. 4th May 6.00pm	Film Night	Robinson's
Mon. 13th May 7.30pm	Meeting	
Sun. 19th May 7.00am -	Coach Trip	Mt. Victoria - Honeyeater Migration
Sat, 25th May-Sun 26th	R...O.U. Scientific Day	Wollongong
Sat. 1st June	Autumn Bird Count	
Sat. 1st June 6.00pm	Film Night	Hales'
Mon. 10th June 7.30pm	Meeting	Dick Turner - Tree Identification
Sat 15th June 8.00am	Outing	Dombarton
Sat. 29th June 6.00pm	Film Night	Emery's
Sat. 6th July 9.30am	Outing	Jervis Bay
Mon. 8th July 7.30pm	Meeting	Alan Sefton - John Douglas Gibson -
Sat. 13th July - Sun. 11th August	Kakadu Coach Trip	His life & His Work.
Mon. 12th August 7.30pm	Meeting	David Fischer - Birds of Costa Rica
Sat. 17th August 6.00pm	Film Night	Williams'
Sun. 18th August 8.30am	Outing	Wingecarribee Swamp
Mon. 9th September 7.30pm	Meeting	Athol Colemane - Nests, Eggs & Young.
Sat. 14th September 8.00am	Outing	Yellow Rock
Fri. 4th October - Monday 7th.	Family Camp	Conjola
Fri. 18th October - Monday 21st	Camp	Numeralla
Sat. 2nd November	Spring Bird Count	
Mon. 11th November 7.30pm	Meeting	Norm Robinson - Mammals of Illawarra
Sun. 17th November 8.30am	Outing	Corrimal Escarpment
Sat 7th December 3.00pm	Christmas Barbeque	Hoskins Reserve, Bowral
Mon. 9th December 7.30pm	Christmas Meeting	

Note that the timing of events around Easter and July/August are a little different to other years because of the date of Easter and because of the Kakadu trip. Note also that at the November meeting we conduct our brief Annual General Meeting and elect our principal office-bearers for 1986.

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NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Senior Citizens' Centre, cnr. Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday 11th March at 7-30pm. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Stephen Wilson. Stephen will talk to us about raptors. This will be a great chance for members to increase their knowledge of this difficult and complex group of birds with their many and varied plumage phases.

FIELD OUTING - Sunday, 17th March. Will be to Sassafras which is south of Nowra. We will meet on the main Nerriga Road 8klm. west of Tianjara Falls at 9-00am. The meeting place is on the top of a hill with a large shed on the left-hand side. We will then drive a few klms in off the main road. Bring a carry lunch. The walk is through a variety of habitats. Some of the highlights seen on the reconnaissance walk included Turquoise Parrot, Common Bronzewing, White-throated Needletail, Southern Emu-wren, Origma, Chestnut-rumped Hylacola, Crescent Honeyeater, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater and Beautiful Firetail.

EASTER CAMP. Friday 5th to Sunday 14th April. Our camp this Easter will be to the Macquarie Marshes in north western N.S.W. Members will recall this area was the subject of an excellent talk given to us last August by Alan Morris. At this stage it appears we will be camping on a stock route alongside the Macquarie River and travelling short distances to interesting places within the Marshes. Exact details and maps will be printed in the April newsletter.

COACH TRIP - Sunday 19th May. The coach will leave the County Council Car Park, Bridge Street, Coniston at 7-00am. We will travel to Mt. Victoria expecting to arrive there between 10-00am and 10-30am. Here we will spend 2 to 3 hours observing honeyeaters as they move northward across the range on their winter migration. We will then return to Glenbrook in the Blue Mountains National Park, where we will partake of a late lunch and a walk through the park before returning to Wollongong at approximately 6-00pm. The cost will be \$10 adults and \$3 children. Please Note - this is our May Field Outing.

R.A.O.U. SCIENTIFIC DAY. The Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union has chosen Wollongong as the location for its 1985 Scientific Day.

It will be held at the University of Wollongong on Saturday 25th May and is expected to attract up to 150 people from many parts of Australia. Our club has been asked to provide morning and afternoon teas and assist with the registration of those attending the lectures.

On the Sunday we will be guiding groups on two half day and one full day outing. To ensure the success of this weekend we will require the services of up to thirty volunteers for all or part of the weekend. If you are able to assist with either the manning of the tables or by attending the walks, please contact Dave Thomson.

MEMBERSHIP LIST. The 1985 membership list will be included in the next newsletter. Only financial members will be included in the list. If you have had any change to your address or telephone No. since the publication of the last list please give the details to the Secretary.

MID-WEEK OUTING TO WINDANG.

For I.B.O.C. the year 1985 got off to a good start, with 35 members attending our annual afternoon outing to Windang.

The weather was a typical summer afternoon with a strong north-east wind sweeping over the area, and bright sunlight.

Some good sightings were made on our walk to the entrance to the lake. Bar-tailed Godwits lined the near shore of the lake, with Silver Gulls and a few Crested Terns. A little further on 40 Little Terns were on a sand bar and at the entrance looking over the ocean a few Australasian Gannet were observed. On our way back a group of about 40 Red-capped Plover were sighted on the beach.

We finished the walk at 7-30pm. with a small total of 11 species observed.
H. Ward.

FEBRUARY MEETING.

Any lecture given by Arnold McGill is an exciting and rewarding experience, and the lecture on honeyeaters at the last meeting was no exception. In the limited time available and with the assistance of many excellent slides, we were taken from the smallest honeyeater to the largest with a continuous commentary of personal experiences. Where difficulties or conflict in the classification of some birds arose these were highlighted and briefly commented on.

Arnold stated that honeyeaters can be characterized as having a prolonged tongue which protrudes beyond the beak and is curled on the edges near the base. It is divided into four parts at the tip and each part is then frayed into a brush with which the bird reaches the nectar. They are considered the most typical of all Australian birds and are found in all areas of the continent from the most arid parts to the tropical rainforests.

A slide was shown of the Brown Honeyeater with comments on its distribution and abundance in the Sydney region. The Dusky Honeyeater was shown to be the odd member of the group, because of its drab plumage, when compared with its close relatives, the Red-headed and Scarlet.

The slide of the Black Honeyeater prompted Arnold to tell the tale of David Johnston digging a well in the Pilliga during a drought to produce the only water for 20 miles around. The use of a hide and a strategically placed branch gave excellent photographic conditions.

The Black Honeyeater slide was one of many taken from the hide. A characteristic of this bird is that it usually builds its nest in a dead bush close to the ground. The Pied Honeyeater has been grouped with the Black Honeyeater but the very different behaviour of the two birds in Arnold's opinion makes this relationship doubtful.

Arnold continued on with slides of the Painted and Regent Honeyeater discussing their irregular movements and feeding habits. He expressed his thoughts on the beauty of the plumage of the Regent Honeyeaters. His knowledge and expertise was evident as he progressed through the group talking freely and convincingly without the aid of notes. The coverage of the White-eared Honeyeater was amusing as he discussed the many times he had involuntarily contributed some of his hair to this species for nesting material.

Arnold reported a personal experience in the 1940's when he observed the migration of Yellow-faced Honeyeaters intermixed with White-naped Honeyeaters during a holiday he took in the Blue Mountains. He estimated that 1,000 birds an hour were migrating continuously for a period of 17 days.

I'm sure I.B.O.C. members will be hoping for a similiar experience when they take their coach trip in May.

An interesting species discussed was the Strong-billed Honeyeater. Found only in Tasmania, this species appears to have adapted its life-style to fill the gap left by the absence of treecreepers and sittellas, choosing to probe the bark of trees for its main source of food.

Particular interest was shown in the closely related Bar-breasted and Brown-backed Honeyeaters. These birds are unusual in that they are the only two honeyeaters that build domed nests. A slide showing a Blue-faced Honeyeater nesting in an old babblers nest after a little restoration work also attracted great interest.

The lecture concluded with a slide showing the distribution of honeyeaters in the Pacific area, illustrating that New Guinea and Australia are the main locations to find honeyeaters. If a line is drawn to include places such as New Zealand which has only three honeyeaters, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Hawii and along the Wallace line then all the honeyeaters are enclosed in that area. There is only one exception to this and that bird occurs in Bali. The honeyeaters in Hawii are now largely extinct with one particular honeyeater being regarded as the rarest bird on earth.

Thanks once again Arnold, for an informative and enjoyable evening.

Ron Simcock.

FIELD OUTING - CANYONLEIGH SATURDAY, 16-2-85.

Forty one members met at the gate of the property "Coowong" owned by Dr. Hughes, the location of a previous I.B.O.C Camp over the October long weekend.

The day was hot and windy and I was surprised to see just how dry the ground was, it looks as if it hasn't rained in the area for a long time. We set off on our walk in the direction of a dry creek. A good sighting of a Rufous Fantail was made as we progressed down the gully, along with the usual species you expect to find in this habitat, Brown and Striated Thornbill, Rufous Whistler and Red-browed Firetail etc. A little further down the gully a pair of Spotted Quail-thrush were sighted plus an Origma and a flock of White-winged Cnoughs.

A few klms. further on we came upon a farm dam where we saw a number of waterbirds, Little Grebe, Eurasian Coot, Hardheads, Maned Duck and Grey Teal with Pied and Little Pied Cormorants roosting along the bank. We had a good sighting of the Sacred Kingfisher sitting on a fence near the edge of the dam.

A few yards further on we decided to have our lunch under some shady trees, while one of our members thought the water looked good and cool, so decided to go in for a swim. Moving on, we walked over the hilly terrain in the direction of the road leading back to the cars some 3 klms. distant, and on the way, sightings were made of Diamond Firetails, Dusky Woodswallow and Common Bronze-wing.

Sitting under some shady trees we looked back to where we had been, it was a lovely view and some farmhouses could be seen on the next hill.

Some of our members who felt the effects of the heat were driven back to the cars. When the various lists were compared, a total of 50 species of birds had been observed for the day.

Ron Hanks.

THE PERILS OF THE PARROT SISTERS.

We had been told about the presence of a pair of Australian Crakes on Killalea Swamp and so, Margaret Parkinson and I decided to see them for ourselves that afternoon.

On the walk down to the swamp we saw the usual Superb Fairy-wrens, Red-browed Firetails and Eastern Yellow Robin. We approached from the western side and the minute we became visible scores of ducks stamped into the air and made for a spot where they felt safer. Margaret and I settled down in a hollow close to the lake edge and enjoyed a sandwich and coffee whilst scanning the muddy foreshores for the crakes.

Spotting a small bird on the western side of the swamp, we walked in a wide arc to avoid scaring some grazing cattle, as they were close to where we had seen the bird. After five minutes of observation we found our crake. Our delight however, was short lived as a calf had wandered into the swamp and could not find its way back from under a barbed wire fence. His frantic mooing frightened the crake which took cover in a clump of reeds. Margaret and I waited patiently, the calf having rescued itself, for the crake to reappear. Ten minutes went by and so I waded out into the mud to see if it was feeding where it could not be seen. I happened to stand right next to the spot where the crake was hiding. All this was too much and he took off and made for the middle of the swamp.

I noticed we had been joined by a group of horses that had been grazing some distance away. Margaret had seen another small bird about 15 yards away and we stealthily crept closer. An Australian Crake! We were overjoyed. I was just focusing my binoculars when I felt a nudge on my elbow. A horse was nuzzling me as though to say "What have you got for me to eat?"

He then proceeded to chew the sleeve of my jumper. Another horse decided the back of Margaret's neck looked like a tasty morsel and his big lips munched on her hair and collar. Our laughter scared the crake into hiding and we decided to abandon our efforts to birdwatch.

By the way, Margaret is still trying to convince Allan that those bite marks on her neck really did come from a horse.

Denise Strickland.

WETLANDS IN THE A.C.T.

During the weekend of the 12/13th January, 1985 a visit was made to a number of wetland habitat areas in the Australian Capitol Territory. These were the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (40 km by road south of Canberra), the Jerrabomberra Wetlands (between Lake Burley Griffin and Fyshwick) and Lake Ginninderra (in Belconnon to the north-west of Canberra City).

A total of 30 waterbird species were observed in these areas, with a further three species introduced, but not native to, the Tidbinbilla Reserve waterbird enclosures, and the Clamorous Reed-Warbler and Golden-headed Cisticola bringing the total wetland bird species to 35.

Lake Ginninderra has little edge vegetation associated with it as yet and few waterbirds were observed here. The most common species being the Silver Gull and Eurasian Coot.

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The Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve waterbird enclosures besides being used for breeding and other research on waterbirds is a good area for wild waterbirds, particularly as the A.C.T. has so few wetland habitat areas. The three species introduced to the reserve which were seen were the Black-necked Stork, Cape Barren Goose and Magpie Goose. Many other common waterbirds were also seen here (see list below).

The most interesting, and possibly the 'best' wetland area in the A.C.T., is the Jerrabomberra Wetlands, which is almost in Canberra itself. Many species were present here and some unusual sightings were made. Good sightings of Australian Crake were obtained on the two visits to the area, on the second morning seven were observed feeding along the edges of reed beds. Other interesting species seen, particularly for Illawarra observers, were Red-kneed Dotterel, Black-fronted Plover, a Glossy Ibis and some 25 Australian Shelduck. Three species of cormorant, three heron and the two spoonbill species were also seen. Five species of duck were present, the most common being the Pacific Black Duck. A good view was also obtained of the Latham's Snipe.

All these wetlands are easily accessible and are well worth a visit when in the Canberra area. The waterbird species seen at each location were as follows (T - Tidbinbilla, J - Jerrabomberra, G - Ginninderra):

Australasian Grebe (T, G) Australian Pelican (T) Little Black Cormorant (J) Great Cormorant (J) Little Pied Cormorant (J) Pacific Heron (J) White-faced Heron (J) Great Egret (J) Rufous Night Heron (J) Black-Necked Stork (T) Straw-necked Ibis (T,J) Royal Spoonbill (J) Yellow-billed Spoonbill (J) Cape Barren Goose (T) Black Swan (T) Australian Shelduck (T,J) Pacific Black Duck (T,J) Grey Teal (T,J,G) Chestnut Teal (T) Australasian Shoveler (J) Maned Duck (T,J,G) Magpie Goose (T) Australian Crake (J) Dusky Moorhen (T,J) Purple Swamphen (J) Masked Lapwing (J,G) Eurasian Coot (T,J,G) Red-kneed Dotterel (J) Black-fronted Plover (T,J) Black-winged Stilt (J) Latham's Snipe (J) Silver Gull (J,G) Clamorous Reed-Warbler (T,J) Golden-headed Cisticola (J) Glossy Ibis (J).

Kevin Mills.

PLAINS WANDERER AND MORE.

At the invitation of Phil Maher, from Deniliquin, Chris Chafer and I decided to spend a few days in the Deniliquin area, to look for the Plains-wanderer and Red-chested Button-quail.

The drive down to Deniliquin was quite pleasant, with some interesting sightings along the way. South of Goulburn, on the Hume Highway near Yarra, we observed a flock of 150+ Whiskered Tern. They appeared to be feeding in the open paddock area, at the side of the highway. I can only assume that they were feeding on grasshoppers or other insects.

A little further south, near Breadalbane we were very fortunate to witness a pair of Peregrine Falcons pass a Galah in flight. This entailed one bird turning on its back and snatching the Galah from its mates talons.

On our arrival at Deniliquin we checked in at the local caravan park and headed off to meet Phil. After talking with Phil, we found out what interesting birds were present in the area. We also made arrangements to visit the local saltworks and spotlighting for the elusive Plains-wanderer. With all the necessary plans made, we set out to some of the local 'hot spots'. An afternoons birding turned up some interesting species, these included Painted Moneysater, Black-eared Cuckoo and Spotless Crake.

Friday 11-1-88. We picked Phil up at 5-00am and headed out to the salt works. On our arrival at the saltworks, we found thousands of ducks, Grey Teal Australian Shelduck Hardhead, Pink-eared Duck and about 50 Freckled Duck.

Some of the salt pans had been drained, making conditions ideal for waders, which were here in thousands. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Red-capped Plover were most abundant, here we also observed a flock of 100+ Marsh Sandpiper, most unusual. Large numbers of Red-necked Avocet and Black-winged Stilt were also present here, along with a flock of 500+ Whiskered Tern.

Gull-billed Tern were breeding here in a colony of 130+ pairs with eggs and young at various stages of development. In all we visited 3 Gull-billed Tern colonies, which consisted of a total of 500+ pairs.

We returned to Deniliquin in the afternoon, to rest up before heading out to Boonake Station at 7-30pm, to search for the Plains-wanderer. For the purpose of catching these unique birds, we used Phil's Mazda ute. The ute has a large spotlight mounted on the roof and is swivelled from inside the cabin.

On our arrival at the black sandhill paddock on Boonake Station, we flushed a single bird from in front of the ute. The white windows in the wings showed clearly as it rose from the ground. Once darkness had set in, we began spotlighting. This entailed driving around in circles in areas of suitable habitat. Once a bird was spotted in the light it was simply a matter of catching it in a net. However if the bird flushed, then the chase was on.

I can assure you that the chase is very exciting and not for the faint hearted. The chase entails driving at speeds up to 80km/hour and keeping the bird in the spotlight, meanwhile dodging obstacles such as sheep, bushes and steel marker posts. During the evening we managed to capture and band 3 of these unusual birds. We had to give up the chase on 4 more which managed to elude our attempts to capture them.

During the night we also captured Little Button-quail, Red-chested Button-quail and Stubble Quail. On our return trip to Deniliquin we observed several Barn Owls along the road.

Next day it was off to Hazeldean, a property just south of Deniliquin. Here we visited a colony of Pacific Heron and Little Pied Cormorants. Some of the bird species seen were; Plumed Whistling Duck 150+, Red-kneed Dotterel, White-breasted Woodswallow and Long-billed Corella.

A stop at the old sand quarry on our way back to town revealed the presence of Baillon's Crake, White-backed Swallow and Little Bittern.

I would like to thank Phil for a most exciting and interesting weekends birding.

Lindsay E. Smith.

VISIT THE BOTANIC GARDENS - WE CAN RECOMMEND IT!

On Sunday 13th January we went to the Botanic Gardens in Sydney for a family picnic with no thoughts of birdwatching in our minds.

The main aim of the day was to see the May Gibbs exhibition which was most enjoyable and brought back many happy childhood memories to some of the group. However, as some of our grandchildren were with us, their aim was to feed the ducks - a very popular pastime.

On the walk to the duck pond we were very surprised to see a Sacred Ibis perched on the edge of a garbage tin and on arriving at the duck pond we were even more surprised to see several Sacred Ibis sitting on top of the palm trees growing on the island in the middle of the pond. Then we noticed a nest on one of these trees with 2 immature birds who got very excited when one of the parents arrived with food, we were amazed!

The following week an article appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald, written by Joseph Glascott their environment writer, and I quote;

"The heart of Sydney has become a nesting place for a rookery of ibis birds. The birds, normally found on isolated coastal and inland waterways, have found a home in the Botanic Gardens.

..../7

In the shadow of high-rise towers and amid the busy scene of garden visitors and lunchtime joggers, the birds have created a prolific breeding ground.

Since the first pair arrived at the Botanic Gardens lagoon in the early 1980's, the rookery has increased to more than 50.

This summer, the poenix or date palms on the lagoon islands are alive with ibis and their young.

Yesterday, the chicks were being fed by their parents or were stretching their wings ready for flight.

Mr. Ed Wilson, public relations officer for the Botanic Gardens, said 'It is most unusual to find ibis breeding in settled areas let alone the centre of Sydney. It appears they have come to the Botanic Gardens because it is a safe haven from predators such as cats and rats. In the inland the birds feed on insects, but here they find food scraps and they often seem to be scavenging garbage bins.

The ibis is a long-legged bird with white and grey feathers and a long curved bill. The Botanic Garden birds however seem to have a dirty grey colour which may result from the City smog!''.

We have a friend who works for the Sydney Morning Herald and who is responsible for sending me the above article and also for many of the articles that appear on our notice board, he tells me the herald has it's own bird-watching group of about 14 very active members.

The following weekend we paid a visit to the Wollongong Botanic Gardens, once more with the grandchildren to feed the ducks.

On this occasion we were rewarded with very close views of several different types of duck, some of the "Heinze" variety, but especially our own native Pacific Black Duck as it came out of the water and right up to our feet to get the bread.

A large flock of Maned Duck were feeding on the grassy bank on the opposite side of the pond and of course, several Silver Gulls were nearby all the time squabbling over the pieces of bread. It is interesting to note what a beautiful bird the clean fully matured Silver Gull really is with its Persil white head and body, black-tipped silver grey wings and red beak, legs and eye-ring. It is such a common bird to us that we often tend to overlook it.

On both occasions we had a thoroughly enjoyable day as the sun was shining and we enjoyed the atmosphere of the family picnic, the activities on Sydney Harbour on the first occasion and the beauty of Mt. Keira and the pink, lemon and white water lillies on the pond on the second day, with the unexpected bonus of some pleasant bird watching thrown in for good measure!

Laurie & Nola Williams.

CORMORANTS AND EELS. (IT DOESN'T PAY TO BITE OF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW!)

While observing ducks at Killalea Lagoon I noticed a Little Pied Cormorant struggling with a 3ft. eel. It had the eel midway along it's length and appeared to be trying to kill it by shaking, but the weight kept dragging the bird's head under the water only to come up again still shaking. Then the eel wrapped it's body about the bird's head and they both went under. I watched the spot for another 5 minutes or so but neither the cormorant or the eel appeared again.

Chris Brandis.

During an afternoon outing to Kurnell, I observed a Great Cormorant surface off shore with a struggling eel. The eel was at least as long as the cormorant, and equal in diameter to the bird's neck. I thought to myself 'Good catch mate, but what are you going to do with it'.

The cormorant released its grip on the eels body and quickly took hold of it around the gill area apparently trying to choke it.

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During the next few minutes as the eel reduced its struggling, the bird dropped it on the water and retrieved it several times, then proceeded to swallow it.

I was amazed to see this large eel disappear down the cormorant's throat, and even more amazed to see it take off a couple of minutes later with at least a 25% increase in its weight.

Wal Emery.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR DECEMBER, 1984, & JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1985.

Status uncommon, Scarce and Rare within the County of Camden.

U. Crescent Honeyeater	1	Fitzroy Falls	31-12-84	K. Mills
S Logrunner	1	Woonona Heights	14-12-84	"
R Common Koel	1	" "	14-12-84	"
S Satin Flycatcher	1	" "	29-12-84	"
U Cicadabird	1	Mt. Pleasant	4-12-84	D. Thomson
R Common Koel	1	"	13-1-85	"
U Ruddy Turnstone	6	Bellambi Point	19-1-85	"
U Restless Flycatcher	1	Lake South	9-2-85	"
U Buff-banded Rail	5	Lake South	29-1-85	M. Parkinson
R Glossy Ibis	2	Albion Park	28-1-85	"
S Figbird	1	Killalea	15-12-84	"
U Black-winged Stilt	4	"	23-1-85	"
R Australian Crake	6	Killalea Swamp	9-1-85	L. E. Smith
R Red-kneed Dotterel	6	"	9-1-85	"
R Baillon's Crake	6	"	5-1-85	"
R Terek Sandpiper	1	Windang	22-12-84	"
MC Dollarbird	2	Corrimal	30-1-85	B & P McKinlay
MC Rufous Fantail	1	"	27-1-85	"
U Flame Robin	1	Jamberoo	18-1-85	R. Almond
U Scarlet Robin	1	Jamberoo	18-1-85	"
S Beautiful Firetail	1	Gerringong Falls	18-1-85	"
MC Little Tern with Chick		Coniston Beach	1-2-85	"
U Cicadabird	2	Marshall Mount	8-12-84	A & A Knowlson
S Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	Bomaderry	11-12-84	C. Chafer
MC Barn Owl	1	Bass Point	13-12-84	"
R Large Sand Plover	1	Comerong Island	22-12-84	"
S Satin Flycatcher	2	Puckey's Reserve	1-2-85	"
U Rainbow Bee-eater	20	Goodmans Ford	31-12-84	"
R Mottled Petrel	1	Beachwashed, Pt. Kemble	18-12-84	D. Fischer
R Australian Brush-turkey	1	Mt. Keira Scout Camp	15-1-85	R. Fielding
R Striated Heron	1	Towradgi Creek	29-1-85	Hales Family
R Black Bittern	1	Balgownie	20-1-85	W & H Emery
U Grey Goshawk (White Phase)	1	"	7-2-85	"
S Greenshank	40	Lake South	29-1-85	W. Emery
U Australian Hobby	1	Blackbutt	14-2-85	"
S White-headed Pigeon	2	Corrimal Escarpment	17-2-85	"
S Logrunner	4	" "	17-2-85	"
U Marsh Harrier	1	Robertson	16-2-85	P. Ewin, W. Emery & L. McGettigan
R. Streaked Shearwater		Continental Shelf off Wollongong.	27-1-85	L. E. Smith
R Gould's Petrel		" "	27-1-85	"
R Long-tailed Jaeger		" "	27-1-85	"
R Sooty Tern		" "	27-1-85	"

I. B. O. C. NEWS

APRIL, 1985.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
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CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
 84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
 84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
 63 Dymock St.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
 84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
 2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
 29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
 STUDENT \$2.

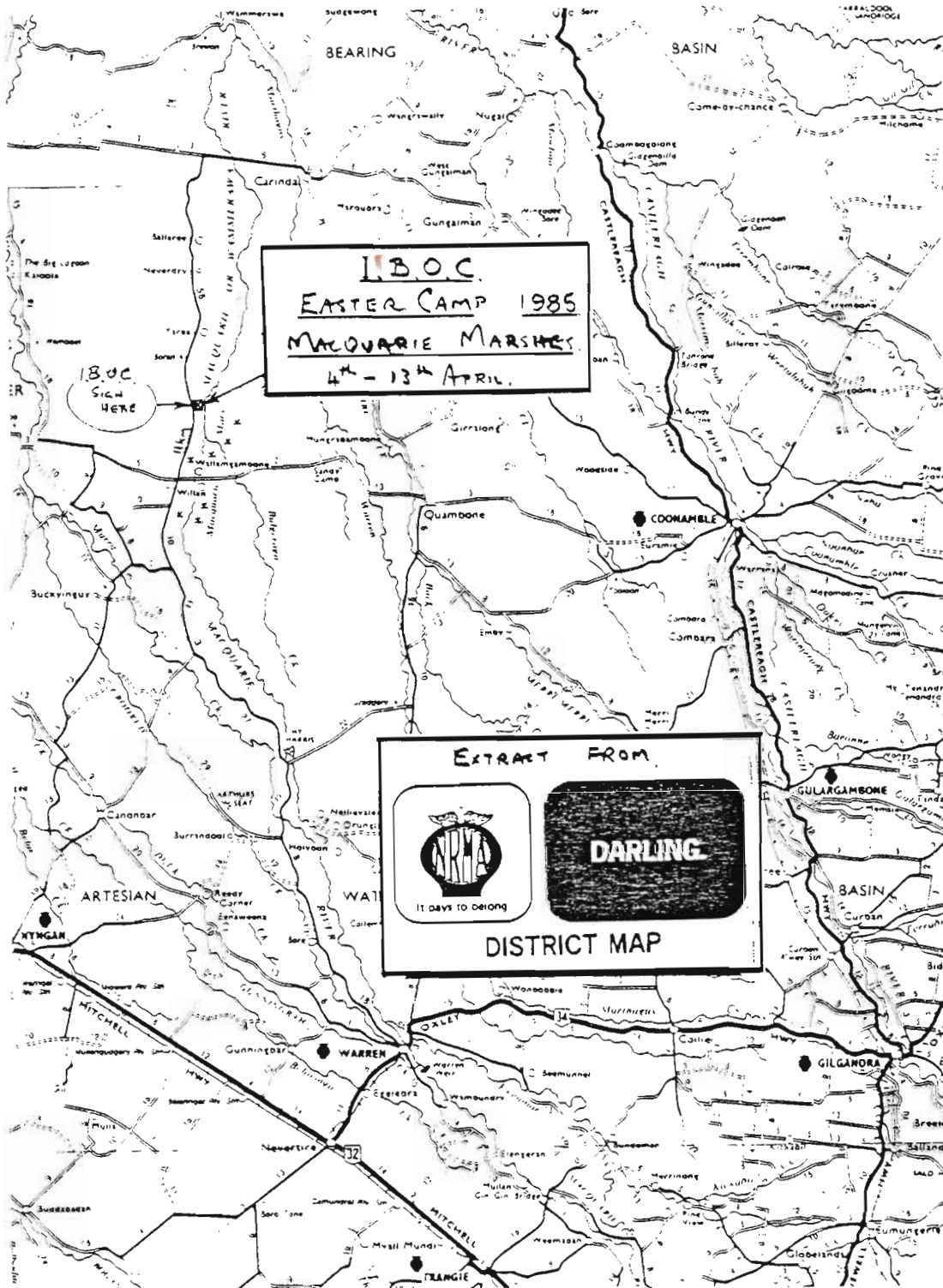
NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Senior Citizens' Centre, cnr Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday 15th April at 7-30pm. Please Note, due to the Easter camp, this meeting is on the third Monday of the month not the second Monday as is the normal practice. It is our annual members night and all members are invited to make a contribution to the programme. This can take the form of slides of birds, field outings, camps or holidays associated with birding. Crafts, hobbies, bird calls or just a short summary of an interesting place you have visited. Your contributions will ensure a successful evening.

FIELD OUTING - Saturday 20th April will be to Meryla Pass. The meeting place for this outing will be at the T intersection with the Illawarra Highway marked Fitzroy Falls, Nowra Route 79. Note this intersection is not the cross roads marked Bowral, Fitzroy Falls, Nowra. It is 4.4 klms west of there and 17.9 klms past the Robertson Hotel.

Meryla Pass is the route the early settlers travelled from Moss Vale to Kangaroo Valley. It is now cut by the backwaters of the Tallowa Dam. The area has habitats of sandstone heath, rainforest and wet sclerophyll. Bring a carry lunch.

COACH TRIP- to Mt. Victoria & Blue Mountains National Park. Please Note change to details as printed in March Newsletter. The trip will now be on Saturday 18th May not Sunday 19th. After viewing the honeyeaters at Mt. Victoria we will return to Wentworth Falls not Glenbrook as previously stated. Access to this area has proved too difficult for the limited time we will have available in the afternoon. Cost will be Adults \$10, Children \$3 payable at April meeting. Seats will be allocated on a first paid basis.

MEMBERSHIP LIST. The enclosed membership list contains the names and addresses of all financial members as of 25th March, 1985. It is used as a mailing list for the circulation of the newsletter to members. Please check! If your name does not appear on this list you are unfinancial and you will not receive any further newsletters till payment of fees are made to the Treasurer, Ron Almond. Subscriptions are Adults \$8, Children \$5 and Students \$2.



EASTER CAMP - 4th to 13th APRIL - MACQUARIE MARSHES.

We'll have the usual conveniences - toilet and hot shower. We expect plenty of shower/washing water but bring your own drinking water. Nearest place for provisions is Quambone, about 50 kms. We're camping on a travelling stock-route about 11 km north of the Quambone road and running between the Warren to Carinda road and the Macquarie River - we'll put up an I.B.O.C. sign on the road.

The first campers are expected late afternoon Thursday 4th April. Best route appears to be Bathurst, Dubbo, Nevertire, Warren and straight up to the camp - bitumen all the way. Let Hazel or Dave know if you're coming.

MARCH MEETING.

Our March speaker Stephen Wilson from the Department of Agriculture and Veterinary Research Station at Glenfield gave a lively and informative talk on the rehabilitation of injured birds of prey and falconry techniques sometimes used in achieving this.

Stephen has had an interest in raptors for the past 7 years and has been working with them for the past 4 years. He started his career with the banding of immature raptors at Glenfield and is presently involved with the study of blood parasites in these birds. Birds of prey are affected by round, tape and thread worms and also the less common thorny headed worm. Stephen described an incident where a male hawk was in intense pain but, luckily an overseas expert was present and so they were able to diagnose and effectively treat the presence of this parasite.

Stephen admitted that he is no great photographer but had many wonderful slides of raptors given to him by the Cuppers of "Hawks in Focus" fame. He worked with the Cuppers in 1982 on a documentary called "Hunters of the Skies" which they filmed together at Mildura.

Stephen showed us slides of a Brown Goshawk that had mated with a white phase Grey Goshawk to produce 3 brown chicks and one grey chick. Another slide was of a Black-breasted Buzzard raising an Australian Kestrel chick. The theory is that when the buzzard brought back an uninjured kestrel chick to feed to its own chicks, the kestrel adopted a begging pose and aroused the maternal instincts of the buzzard.

We also saw slides of the rare Square-tailed Kite, the Red Goshawk, Grey Falcon and Pacific Baza.

Stephen visited Lahore in Pakistan where there is a tradition of falconry. The not so kind methods of training and trapping birds were explained to us. Pakistan falconers sell their birds to rich Arabs for up to \$5000 each. Stephen talked about natural attrition in birds of prey. There is a 50% - 70% natural attrition in the first year of development, 20% in the second year and by the third year birds are usually mature enough to survive. Birds of prey are on the decrease as they have many new dangers to contend with. Man encroaching on their environment, the heavy usage of pesticides and hoodlums who trap and shoot are all contributing to the decline in numbers.

Stephen gave us heart by showing slides of some of the birds that they were able to nurse back to health and release in the wild. It is good to know that there are people dedicated to the preservation of these beautiful birds.

Our thanks to Stephen Wilson for such an interesting insight into his work.

Denise Strickland.

MARCH FIELD OUTING- Sunday 17th March.

After a dusty bumpy trip from Nowra, 31 members gathered at Sassafras at 9-00am, on Sunday, 17th March. We then drove a few kilometres down a rough bush track to a forest area where the cars were parked. The occupants of the leading vehicles were fortunate to observe a pair of Spotted Quail-thrush crossing the track. In the few minutes spent around the cars, Magpies, Kookaburras, Australian Ravens, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos Gang-gangs and a Satin Flycatcher were seen or heard as well as a Spotted Pardalote and a Chestnut-rumped Hylacola.

The day was warm and slightly overcast with a cool breeze, ideal for walkers and for birds. As we moved along the track in the forest we noticed Crimson Rosellas, Golden Whistlers, Grey Fantails and a Scarlet Robin. We also had good sightings of a Fan-tailed and Shining Bronze Cuckoo. In the same area three Tree-creepers - White-throated, Red-browed and Brown were observed.

By morning tea-break we had moved from the forest to an area of open heath-land and as we drank our cuppa a Brown Falcon soared overhead while Welcom Swallows Tree Martins, Fork-tailed Swifts and White-throated Needletails flew about.

The heath area was the home of the honeyeaters. There were many New Hollands and we found three nests in low ti-tree not more than a metre from the ground. One had three eggs and the others two.

We were able to get a close look at a Tawny-crowned Honeyeater as she circled her nest with food in her beak. Eventually she braved the watchers and fed her two young in a nest in a hakea bush only half a metre from the ground.

Our lunch was taken on a little rocky knoll with a magnificent view of the gorge area in the foreground, Jervis Bay and Point Perpendicular in the distance to the east and Pigeon House Mountain way to the south.

The most exciting find of the day was Calamanthus or in old terms, the Field-wren. This was a first sighting for the club and Pizzey says Sassafras is the northern-most fringe of its range.

On the return walk both male and female Scarlet and Flame Robins were watched as they moved about just a few metres ahead.

In all 43 birds were seen on a very pleasant walk but I'm sure we would all be hopeful that the move to up-grade the Nowra-Braidwood road is successful.

Peg McKinlay.

A NEW TERN IN THE ILLAWARRA.

On the afternoon of 22nd February while doing my regular walk around the Windang sand flats, I came across an unusual small tern roosting among a group of about 25 Little Terns. Although it was only slightly larger than the Little Terns, its plumage was distinctly different. Immediately I sat down and began taking notes.

The head was generally white with a black cap starting just above the dark eye, continuing down over the ear coverts and again down the nape. The bill was shorter than that of the Little Tern and was wholly black. A white collar separated the black nape from the slatey-grey upper body. The wings at rest were slightly upswept and dark grey becoming almost black on the primaries. The shoulder had a large brownish mark extending well back from the bend. The birds underparts were almost completely white. The legs were dark red. In flight the very short nearly square tail was diagnostic. The wings were also distinctly marked with a pale grey band running along the middle of the wing up to the primaries. The feathers were very worn looking, particularly on the trailing edges.

After going home and studying various texts, I came to the conclusion that the bird was an immature White-winged Tern probably in first winter plumage.

I then met Lindsay Smith and we went looking for the bird in question. The search was however in vain and we gave up as night crept closer.

Several days later I was pleased to hear from Lindsay, saying that Dave Fischer and he had just been to the sandflats and located the bird which they agreed was a White-winged Tern. This is the first record for this species in the Illawarra.

The White-winged Tern -Chlidonias leucoptera- breeds in swamps across southern Europe and Asia. During the northern winter it migrates south to Africa Australia and New Zealand. It is regarded as a regular visitor to northern Australia and is regarded as scarce in N.S.W. It is found near swamps and shallow coastal waters where it feeds on insects including termites, locusts, dragonflies and moths, taking food from slightly below or on top of the water's surface.

The photograph of the White-winged Tern in Readers Digest 'Complete Book of Australian Birds' is very similar in appearance to the one which was found at Windang.

References: Harrison - Guide to Seabirds of the World
Simpson & Day - The Birds of Australia
Blakers, Davies & Reilly - The Atlas of Australian Birds
Morris, McGill & Holmes - Handlist of Birds in N.S.W.
Chris Chafer.

Footnote: Sightings of a single bird at Windang have also been reported by Kevin Wood and Chris Brandis. Editor.

AN ORIENTAL CUCKOO IN SARREN GROUNDS NATURE RESERVE.

Species - Oriental Cuckoo - Cuculus saturatus.

Location - Sarren Grounds Nature Reserve, Jamberoo, New South Wales.

Lat. 34° 40' Long. 150° 43'

Observer - Lori Willimont, Sarren Grounds Bird Observatory and
3930 SE Grant Street, Portland, OR 97214, U.S.A.

Confirming Observers - Jill West, 59 Strickland Street, Christchurch 2, New Zealand.

Dr. Larry Field, University of Canterbury, Christchurch 1, N.Z.

Ross Goldingay, Dept. of Biology, University of Wollongong.

Dates of Observations - 15 - 17 December, 1984

Ms. Jill West and Dr. Larry Field reported seeing an Oriental Cuckoo on December 15th 1984 at a point roughly midway between the Lodge and the Griffiths Trail - Cooks Nose Junction. The bird was observed at a distance of 8 - 10 metres for a period of 20 minutes, commencing at 1800 hours.

I returned to the same place at 1800 hours on the following day (16/12/84) and observed a bird with the following description.

Bird with jizz of a large cuckoo. A dark-grey back and a white breast with black bars. Chin and throat were a darker grey than the breast, though not as dark as the back. The feet were yellow, the eye had a yellow ring around it, and there was a yellow area at the base of the bill.

The bird was perched on the dead limb of a tall eucalypt in an area of sparse eucalyptus woodland surrounded by open heath.

The bird was quiet; shying away when approached. The bird was again seen briefly at 1200 hours on 17th December 1984, when it was perched on a tree with foliage. It flew away with a loud, distinct, 'squawk'.

Conditions on 16th December were sunny, with excellent visibility.

Observations were made with Tascoe 10 x 50 binoculars. I observed the bird for a period of 5 minutes.

I have no experience with the species in question. I am confident (100%) that the bird is an Oriental Cuckoo. The yellow feet, and white breast with black barring distinguish it from the Pallid Cuckoo. References consulted were Pizzey, Simpson & Day, Readers Digest, R.A.O.U. Atlas.

Personal background - working as a research volunteer at Sarren Grounds Bird Observatory and previously studying the Satin Bowerbird in Northern N.S.W. under Dr. Gerald Borgia. I have been carrying-out avian research in California since March 1984. I have watched birds as a hobby, and also as part of my degree course at Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

Lori Willimont, 26/12/84

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS IN SHOALHAVEN.

It has been a "cuckoo summer" in the Shoalhaven area this year. Along with the usual number of Pallid, Brush and Fan-tailed Cuckoos, Horsefield's and Shining Bronze-Cuckoos and the Common Koel, there has been a number of sightings of the Chanel-billed Cuckoo. Now, at the end of the summer, the Oriental Cuckoo has been sighted twice!

On 15/2/85 at 6-30pm., Julie Hale, a fellow member of The Shoalhaven Bird Group, was fortunate enough to have an adult Oriental Cuckoo in her garden at Pyree, on the Culburra Road east of Nowra.

Last Tuesday, 19/2/85, Julie Hale, Judy Wilson and myself sighted a sub-adult bird of this species whilst birding along Somaderry Creek, north of the Shoalhaven River. The upperparts of this bird were rufous-brown with black bars, this colour continued down the uppertail which was white spotted and white tipped. The underparts were rufous with strong brown bars becoming mottled towards the throat. The undertail was a grey-brown and tipped white.

Other sightings of interest, although not necessarily unusual, have been;

25/1/85 at Nowra Creek, a family of Southern Emu-wrens, (a most unlikely habitat)
 25/1/85 At Nowra Creek, 1 Black Bittern, fishing off a dead tree fallen over
 the creek.

2/2/85 on Worrigea Swamp, 2 Glossy Ibis, (fairly uncommon for this area)

2/2/85 at Culburra, 1 Buff-banded Rail with 3 downie chicks crossing over a
 cleared track on the edge of Lake Wollumboola.

Diana Wright.

Footnote: The only other record of the Oriental Cuckoo in the County of Camden
 records, is of two sightings by Mr. Arthur Elliott at Meroo near
 Somaderry on the 18/1/78 and March 1979.

Editor.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR JANUARY - FEBRUARY - MARCH, 1985.

Status uncommon, scarce and rare within the County of Camden.

S	Beautiful Firetail	2	O'Hares Creek	28-2-85	I. Rowles
U	Brown Quail	11	" "	28-2-85	"
MC	White-throated Needletail	20+	" "	28-2-85	"
U	Large-billed Scrubwren	2	Bass Point	3-3-85	C. Chafer
R	White-winged Tern	1	Windang	22-1-85	"
U	Buff-banded Rail	1	Why Juck Bay	1-3-85	"
U	Bell Miner	5	Goodman's Ford	31-12-85	"
S	Sooty Oystercatcher	3	North Wollongong	26-2-85	R. Almond
MC	Black-shouldered Kite	1	Figtree	13-1-85	D. Green
MC	White-throated Needletail	31	Figtree	5-2-85	"
U	Green Catbird	2	Stanwell Park	17-2-85	J. Hyslop
R	Pied Oystercatcher	2	Mt. Warrigal	19-1-85	P. Bath
U	Rufous Night Heron	1	Logbridge Farm	25-1-85	"
S	Eastern Reef Egret	1	Bass Point	28-1-85	"
R	Great Crested Grebe	1	Imm. Hoskins Reserve	30-1-85	"
R	Common Sandpiper	1	Fitzroy Res.	15-11-84	"
R	Common Koel	1	Corrimal	1-3-85	P & B McKinlay
U	Ruddy Turnstone	31	Bellambi Point	1-1-85	K. Mills
U	Skylark	2	Bellambi	1-1-85	"
S	Eastern Bristlebird	2	Budderoo	5-1-85	"
S	Logrunner	1	Woonona Heights	2-2-85	"
U	Cicadabird	1	" "	2-2-85	"
S	Blackbird	1	Robertson	28-2-85	"
U	Buff-banded Rail	1	Koonawarra Bay	7-3-85	W. Emery
R	Little Raven	30+	Robertson	10-3-85	L. Smith & D. Fischer
R.	Buller's Shearwater	1	East of Wollongong	24-2-85	L. Smith
R.	Grey Ternlet	2	Boat Trip.	24-2-85	& D. Fischer
R.	Streaked Shearwater	1	" "	24-2-85	& Others.
R.	Sooty Tern	3	" "	24-2-85	" "
R.	Black Petrel	1	" "	24-2-85	" "
S.	Long-tailed Jaeger	12+	" "	24-2-85	" "

I. B. O. C. NEWS

MAY, 1985.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
 Registered by Aust. Post Publication No N6H 3848.
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<u>CLUB MOTTO</u>	<u>PRESIDENT</u>	<u>SECRETARY</u>	<u>TREASURER</u>
"One Good Tern Deserves Another"	Dave Thomson 84 Mt. Pleasant Rd. <u>SALGOWNIE NSW 2519</u> 84-2876	Hazel Emery 63 Dymock St. <u>SALGOWNIE NSW 2519</u> 84-0139	Ron Almond 2 Shoobert Cres. <u>KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500</u> 29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5 STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be at the Senior Citizens Centre, cnr. Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway Fairy Meadow, on Monday 13th May at 7-30pm. Our GUEST SPEAKER for the evening will be John Waugh. His talk will cover the places and birdlife along the route to be taken by the I.B.O.C. Kakadu coach trip. John will be our guide on the coach. He has made this trip about 8 times and is very familiar with the birds and the route we are taking. John is a very experienced bird-watcher and I'm sure his talk will hold great interest for all members, not only those going on the trip.

FIELD OUTING - Saturday 18th May will be the coach trip to Mt. Victoria & Blue Mountains National Park to view the northward migration of honeyeaters. The coach will leave the County Council Car Park, Bridge Street, Coniston at 7-00am SHARP, returning at approximately 6-00pm. There are still some seats left on the coach. These will be allocated on a first paid basis. Members are invited to bring friends if they wish to do so. Please ring Hazel Emery on 84-0139 to confirm bookings. Cost adults \$10, children \$3.

FILM NIGHT - Saturday 4th May will be held at the home of Jim & Gwen Robinson, 16 Burling Avenue, Mt. Ousley (ph. 29-4213) There will be two sessions commencing at 6-00pm and 8-00pm. An invitation is extended to all members to attend especially our newer members who have not attended a previous film night. Bring along a plate of goodies for supper and enjoy an entertaining social evening. The programme is as set out below:

(1) OUR NATURAL HERITAGE 24 mins

Shows 3 ways the National Parks & Wildlife Foundation are involved in protecting our environment. Firstly at Mungo N.P. in the S.W. of N.S.W. we see the 'Walls of China' and aboriginal artifacts. Then to Booligal Swamps in southern N.S.W. to watch feeding habits of the many waterfowl. Finally at Lord Howe Island we see the work being done to save one of the rarest birds in the world, the Lord Howe Island Woodhen.

(2) PROTECT YOUR BIRDS 6 mins

A farmer explains to two boys caught shooting birds, with catapults, how important birds are to man.

(3) WATER BIRDS OF THE INLAND 14 mins

Birdlife around Narran Lake in Western N.S.W.

(4) NEW SETTLERS

28 mins

New species of birds in New Zealand, blown across the Tasman from Australia's eastern coast.

(5) WINGS OF FIRE

15 mins

Shows the great flamingo colonies which assemble every few years on the shallow waters of the Gulf of the Rann of Cutch, north-west coast of India.

R.A.O.U. SCIENTIFIC DAY - Saturday 25th May, 1985, Pentagon Building, University of Wollongong. The R.A.O.U. has chosen Wollongong as the location for their 1985 Scientific Day. There will be a full weekend of activities, commencing at 9-00am. Saturday with a full day of lectures & ending with a discussion session between 4-30 & 5-00pm. and broken by morning & afternoon teas and lunch. The topic for discussion is Studies in Breeding Biology of Birds. Cost for the day is \$15. Those wishing to attend can obtain a registration form from Hazel Emery or register at the Pentagon Building at the University at 8-30am. on the day if vacancies exist. The lectures will be followed by a dinner at 7-00pm at the Union Bistro. Cost to be announced. Sunday will provide participants with a choice of three excursions.

I.B.O.C. has been asked to help with the registrations and morning and afternoon teas and to provide guides for the Sunday outings. To ensure the success of the weekend we will require the services of up to 20 volunteers. Ring Hazel Emery if you can assist for all or part of the weekend. Please don't leave it to just a few to carry the load.

THE AUTUMN BIRD COUNT:- will be held this year on the 1st June. For those not familiar with the bird count it is a twice yearly event when we combine with the N.S.W. F.O.C. & the Cumberland B.O.C. to do a census of the birds within an 80 Klm radius of Sydney. If you wish to take part in this event, ring Kevin Wood on 29-6514.

APRIL MEETING. The April members night provided an interesting programme of both slides and commentaries.

Peter Fackender commenced the evening with his usual high quality slides, in particular a beautiful slide of the White-throated Treecreeper. Laurie Williams read an article written for the B.H.P. Review in 1956 by the late Doug Gibson and Alan Sefton on birding in the Illawarra in the 1950's. Whilst superficially things appear not to have changed too much, for those who listened closely, there are significant changes like the loss of Tom Thumb Lagoon, population pressure on places like Bellambi Point and loss of wetlands and rural areas particularly in the northern suburbs. The increase in species in 1985 on the 1956 list reflects the increased interest in ornithology in our district.

Lindsay Smith showed some slides from Hattah Lakes and Deniliquin and a sampling of local birds in their various habitats, the Pelican choir causing much amusement among members. Chris Chafer showed members some of the birds they can expect to see when they venture to sea on the monthly boat trips. His slides of the Red-chested Button-quail and Plains-wanderer taken at Deniliquin left some of us feeling more than just a little bit envious.

Peter Ewin's account of his trip around Australia proved very interesting and added a few more names to my list of places I must visit. Athol Stuart brought back memories of our October camp at Kangaroo Valley and Ron Almond's slide of the early morning viewing of the Channel-billed Cuckoo at Sandy Hollow showed the most comical pyjama parade you're ever likely to see. Nola Williams' account of two trips to Michaelmas Cay and Green Island, one by birds and the other by her hairdresser, showed just how differently people with different interests view these places. I'm sure we will never again see any of our I.B.O.C ladies dressed in long green shorts.

Ian Rowles gave an all too short showing of some of his excellent slides. His magnificent slide of the Red-browed Firetail illustrated how often we tend to overlook our beautiful common birds.

Thanks to all those who contributed towards making the evening a success.

Wal Emery.

APRIL FIELD OUTING. 33 IBOC'S were greeted by a crisp autumn morning when they alighted from their cars for the April field outing to Meryla Pass. As they waited for the late arrivals they were visited by several Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoos, a flock of White-naped Honeyeaters and a pair of Black-shouldered Kites. The short drive to Bundanoon Creek provided some members with a sighting of the Origma.

After parking the cars we walked through a sandstone heath habitat to a rocky outcrop overlooking the backwaters of the Bundanoon Dam. An hour and a half was spent exploring this pleasant area. Australasian Grebe, Eurasian Coot, Maned Duck and an Azure Kingfisher were seen on the dam, while Eastern Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, White-browed Treecreeper and Grey Shrike-thrush were some of the species seen in the wooded heath along with flocks of up to one hundred Yellow-faced Honeyeaters migrating northwards. In general the birds remained well hidden and the highlight of the morning was probably the sighting of 2 Platypus swimming in the Bundanoon Creek.

The walk down Meryla Pass through wet sclerophyll and temperate rain-forest provided members with scenic views of the surrounding landscape, but again the birds were less than co-operative, with some Australian King Parrots and the mimicking calls of a Superb Lyrebird attracting the most attention.

Gales Flat at the bottom of the steep descent provided an ideal location for lunch, after which some time was spent wandering about the area. Sightings were made of the Eastern Whipbird, Mistletoebird, Rose Robin, Collared Sparrowhawk and the usual mixed flocks of thornbills, fantails etc. One member wandering further afield was fortunate to come across two Wonga Pigeons. The return walk up the pass produced Yellow-throated Scrubwrens, Brown Cuckoo-Doves and a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles overhead. A very low total of 38 species was recorded for the day, most of these, the exception being the migrating Yellow-faced Honeyeaters were in small numbers. None the less the pleasant autumn weather and the scenic surroundings provided members with an enjoyable days birding.

Wal Emery.

EASTER CAMP. 27 members including 4 children made the 710 klm journey to our campsite at the Macquarie Marshes, which was set up on a beautiful spot beside a free running arm of the Macquarie River on a stock reserve between Warren and Corinda.

In the areas surrounding our camp we encountered flocks of Emus, sometimes up to 40; also wild pigs kangaroos, hares and foxes. Our campsite was visited by many birds. The first exciting find was a Rufous Night Heron. We watched the antics of the White-plumed Honeyeaters as they squabbled and bullied the Restless Flycatchers. Hordes of Yellow-throated and Noisy Miners kept up their chatter. Our visitors included Eastern Yellow Robins and Hooded Robins Jacky Winters, a Grey Shrike-thrush, Black Kites, White-faced Herons and a Spotted Harrier. In the trees above rested Mallee Ringnecks and the brilliant Red-winged Parrots. On the far bank 7 quails wandered, fairy-wrens in eclipse, including the White-winged Fairy-wren were in great numbers and a Brown Treecreeper flitted from tree to tree. Flocks of Plum-headed Finches fed nearby. The air was constantly filled with the sounds of the Pied Butcherbirds.

In the water a native Water Rat dived and swam and carp regularly broke the surface. All this and so much more we watched from the comfort of our chairs as we rested under the trees in the 35°+ heat of the day which was the general temperature of the days for the whole holiday. However as the theme of I.B.O.C. camps is involvement, our field trips were many and varied. With the dramatic changes in vegetation we were able to see so many birds in their own habitats.

Around the river with its gum trees and casuarinas, the ground was covered with tussock and dried grasses (prickles too). Less than 2,klms west the red soil was arid with saltbush and stands of lignum. Here were occasional stands of Wilga trees and sparse gums. 10 klms south and east were swamplands and marshlands with stark dead gums and reeds.

.... /4

The men who owned or managed these huge holdings were very helpful in advising the best locations for birds, especially when they knew we weren't shooters. Those who missed the morning call of the Pied Butcherbirds and Kookaburras were woken by the dulcet (?) tones of a thong hitting a shovel at 6am. At 7-30am to the call 'Right! move em out,' from Dave we set out for our morning walks. Each trip yielded yet another exciting find.

One morning on the reserve it was Merv's sighting of a Spotted Bowerbird which delighted us. There were also Golden-headed Cisticolas and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters and always Crested Pigeons. Other morning trips yielded Mistletoebirds Western Gerygone, Blue-faced Honeyeaters and White-fronted Chats. On another morning walk to the arid saltbush and lignum area we saw the lovely Red-capped Robins and Southern Whitefaces. In the sky above several raptors were observed, Australian Hobby, Brown Falcon and Black-shouldered Kites.

We would return to camp hot and thirsty. Here now for R & R. We usually took our chairs to Dulcie's prime waterfrontage and in the shade, lazed - binoculars at the ready of course! The swimmers took advantage of the cool running water. The children had the right idea. Bronwyn and Ian built themselves a mud slide which looked the greatest fun. They were soon joined by Timothy.

Then to the marshlands by car for afternoon jaunts. Here were the wonderful waterbirds by the thousands. A pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles were spotted flying over. The larger birds included both species of spoonbills, the ibis family including the beautiful Glossy Ibis, 2 species of heron, 4 species of cormorant, Great Egret were perched in the dead gums. In the swamps were a great variety of ducks - Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Australasian Shovellers and Pink-eared. The trips on the way to the marshes yielded special sightings of 3 Ground Cuckoo-shrikes, Banded Lapwings and Australian Crake, and a walk along the river bank located a pair of Blue-winged Parrots.

Monday morning we truly walked through marshland. At least ankle deep - sometimes deeper, in the slush and mud. (After all, this is what we came for we convinced ourselves.) After about a kilometre we rested on a log whilst 5 energetic souls high stepped at least another kilometre to a shed in the distance. We who stayed behind were rewarded by the lovely waterbirds rising and circling and also a Marsh Harrier hunting overhead. On the way back to camp we sighted 4 Brolgas and darting into the reeds were Purple Swamphens.

Along the way we encountered Wal & Ian who had found an Australian Pratincole by a dam. The party returned as this was the first sighting for most of the people. Next day saw most of the party depart. Those lucky stayers paid another visit to the swamps - this time with dry feet. There we sat quietly and observed at close quarters a flock of 100 shy Black-tailed Native -hens, also Red-kneed Otterrels and Black-fronted Plover. Slight movement would stir the masses of birds, ducks and swans would rise, circle and land again. A wonderful sight! On our last outing we were invited to the property of Peter and Betty Hall. There we sighted the Singing Honeyeater and were shown the Spotted Bowerbird's bower which was decorated with white bones. Dave presented Peter with a Pizzey's for being so gracious and helpful. We then drove to "Fairholme", a deserted property. 2 dozen Chestnut-crowned Sabblers were seen and a Crested Bellbird, as well as Zebra Finches and Diamond Firetails.

We relived our field trips around the campfire at night in the company of the Owllet Nightjar and Tawny Frogmouth. The final tally was 136 species. The highlights of our Easter camp? The comradeship, fun, the Easter bunny calling with Easter eggs, the campfire chats and lovely hot showers under starry skies, and of course the birds.

Tribute must be paid to Captain Dave for the amount of hard work which he applied to the organizing of our camp, and many thanks to those who helped in so many ways to make it the success it was.

Gwen Robinson.

THE SAGA OF "DOLLAR BILL". During the spring of 1981 the daughter of our neighbor brought to us a young Dollarbird, feathered but too immature to fly, asking us if we could save it.

Apparently it had fallen out of it's nest during a severe rain storm earlier that day near the shop at Farmborough Heights where she worked. We took the young Dollarbird in and christened it "Bill" after "dollar bill", perhaps we should have called it "Billy" which would have been more appropriate if the bird had been a female. We put Bill in our son's empty finch aviary which has a large flight; he like us would rather see birds in the wild than caged.

All that summer Dorothy and I were fully occupied in catching moths and insects for Bill. Our garden had the most digging that summer it has ever had, as Bill's appetite grew. Bill flourished, then the flying lessons started by throwing the food for Bill to catch on the wing. Then in late summer I released Bill early one morning near where Bill was found, in time for the northern migration to New Guinea.

The next spring 1982 on a damp misty day we saw a Dollarbird perched on the uppermost dead limb on a high pecan nut tree in our backyard. Dorothy called out "Bill" to the bird and to our amazement Bill answered back, flapped the wings, and dived and swooped and returned to the perch. This went on for about an hour and then Bill departed. This occurred again several times during the summer and again the following spring and summer of 1983-84 usually on a wet day.

During the spring of 1984 Bill appeared with a mate swooping and rolling, but only once, then to our delight 3 Dollarbirds appeared during January 1985, swooping and rolling very spectacularly. They had brought their baby to show us. It has been raining and as it is damp I will go to the back door and look for the Dollarbirds. No, they are not there. As it is April, they must be on their way north. I feel sure they will visit us again next summer.

Gordon Payne.

JACKY WINTERS AT STUART PARK. Gibson (1977) notes that within the County of Camden, the Jacky Winter Microeca leucophaea is moderately common but avoids the heavily settled areas. Blakers et al (1984) describes it as generally scarce along the coast of Australia and more often present in open eucalypt woodland. In the twelve Sydney Bird Counts conducted to date the species has been recorded in the Illawarra sub-region on nine occasions with an average of four individuals per count (max. ten, min. zero). Most sightings were either at West Dapto or on the Water Board catchment area. By comparison, in the West sub-region, centred around Wallacia, an average of 24 individuals per count have been seen (max. 38, min. eight).

It is with surprise therefore, that I sighted two Jacky Winters on 12th April 1985 at Stuart Park, Wollongong, sallying insects from small isolated trees adjacent to Fairy Creek. Both birds were seen together and each at various times during 15 minutes observation showed territorial aggression, giving chase to a Welcome Swallow Hirundo neoxena, a Willie Wagtail Rhipidura leucophrys and a Superb Fairy-wren Malurus cyaneus. A thorough search of the same area on the following two days failed to locate any Jacky Winters.

References: GIBSON, J.D. 1977. Birds of the County of Camden. Australian Birds. Vol. 11 P.65.

BLAKERS, M., S.J.J.F. DAVIES & P.N. REILLY. 1984. The Atlas of Australian Birds. R.A.O.U. p378.

Kevin Wood.

BOAT TRIPS AN INSIGHT. Like many people interested in birds, most of my observations have taken place on TERRA FIRMA. My experience with seabirds has been limited mainly to those species that come close in-shore around headlands etc. This and the occasional beachwashed specimens, found after storms, represented almost the total extent of my knowledge of seabirds.

This however, all changed after a few early boat trips organized by the I.B.O.C. Due to the small number of members these trips were few and far between.

Since November, 1984, Mr. David Fischer in conjunction with the Sydney based N.S.W. Field Ornithologists Club, has been organizing regular monthly boat trips out of Wollongong Harbour. Like 90% of the people on these trips I have a chronic fear of seasickness. At first I was a bit reluctant to set foot off good old TERRA FIRMA. Since then with the use of tablets I have found my fears to be unfounded.

These boat trips have added a new dimension to my birding, as well as a few new species to my life list. They have also brought forward a great deal of information about these little known visitors to our waters. Since these trips have been going out beyond the continental shelf on a regular basis, they have also given us a greater insight into the status of the seabirds of our region.

Some species formally regarded as scarce or rare, have been found to be more abundant than was first recorded. These trips attract people from as far afield as Darwin, Brisbane, Hay and Melbourne. Among this group of people are some of the most experienced seabird people in Australia. I have found these people to be friendly and only too willing to help the less experienced observers. With their wealth of experience they can make identification far easier for the less experienced, simply by pointing out the various field characteristics of each group or species, and the things to look for.

Winter trips are probably better for those that are less experienced, as it is in the winter that the albatrosses visit our waters. Albatrosses are very large and most species are relatively easy to identify. They are easily attracted to the boat and many make fine subjects for photographs as they come to within feet of the boat.

Many other species of seabirds visit our region in winter and we are all looking forward with anticipation as to what we may see this winter. The boat chartered for these trips is the "Sandra K" out of Wollongong Harbour. The owner Mr. John Lovering has set the "Sandra K" up especially for this kind of charter work. It is ideally suited to our needs with plenty of room for up to 35 people.

Boat trips such as this are both exciting and very rewarding. I can recommend them whole heartedly to any bird enthusiast and urge all interested to attend at least one of these boat trips. Not only will it be adding to your own knowledge of birds in general, you will be helping us to learn more about these fascinating and little-known birds. Please support these trips. Special thanks to Dave Fischer for organizing these trips.

Lindsay E. Smith.

Birds seen on Boat Trips off Wollongong.

Little Penguin	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	Kelp Gull
Wandering Albatross	Buller's Shearwater	Sabine's Gull
Black-browed Albatross	Sooty Shearwater	Common Tern
Yellow-nosed Albatross	Short-tailed Shearwater	White-fronted Tern
Shy Albatross	Streaked Shearwater	Sooty Tern
Giant-Petrel	Fluttering Shearwater	Grey Ternlet
Cape Petrel	Hutton's Shearwater	
White-headed Petrel	Wilson's Storm-Petrel	<u>Mammals Observed.</u>
Great-winged Petrel	White-faced Storm -Petrel	Sei or Fin Whale
Providence Petrel	Australasian Gannet	Humpback Whale
Gould's Petrel	Brown Booby	Short-finned Pilot Whale
Cook's Petrel	Great Skua	Common Dolphin
Fairy Prion	Arctic Jaeger	Bottle-nosed Dolphin
Black Petrel	Pomarine Jaeger	Russo's Dolphin
Flesh-footed Shearwater	Long-tailed Jaeger	

Recommended Reading. Southern Albatrosses & Petrels Harper & Kinsky, 1948
Seabirds Peter Harrison, 1983.

VIEW FROM THE KITCHEN WINDOW. Glancing out of the kitchen window I saw a Mullet. A second look revealed a bird with a tail like a fish. Knowledgeable Birdo's will now know what I saw, but I did't and perhaps others may not.

..../7

I had a good look at the bird before dashing off for my binoculars. It was perched on the handle of a shovel left in a heap of sand in the backyard. The bird was about 30cm in length, maybe slightly more and was very black about the head and back, seeming to shade to a grey underneath. It remained perched with its back to me but, as it was preening, I had a good look at the head and beak. After about 30 minutes it flew to the ground and away almost in the same movement.

When I consulted my Bird Bible the only bird to fit the description was the Spangled Drongo, with special reference to its fish-like tail. It seemed unlikely according to its usual habitat and I decided to enquire of a more experienced member when the opportunity arose.

The next day, at about the same time (3-30p.m.) I was delighted to see the bird had returned and was perched in a small, almost leafless, Liquidamber. From there it made several trips to the ground and back though not always to the same branch. Having on this occasion some idea of what it might be and also being able to observe it from several angles I realised that the apparent lighter shading was probably the effect of the light on its shiny coat, as it was not evident on the second viewing. I have no doubt now as to the bird's identity -

I lost sight of the bird about 4-30 p.m but about 5-30 p.m I walked to the back fence to visit a neighbour and, looking back, saw the bird perched at the back of the same tree!

I looked in vain for it the next day but had to be content with a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike which settled in the same trees. By the way, whilst in the garden on the second day the Drongo was 'buzzed' first by one of the ever present Pee Wees (Magpie-larks) and then by a Silver Gull - the bird took no notice of either.

M. Ward. 10th & 11th April, 85

SPIDER 'CATCHES' BIRD. During the early months of 1985, the bushy areas of Balgownie were decorated with the large webs of the Golden Orb-weaving Spiders, The Nephilas. We had for some weeks been watching one particular spider near our back gate - a female with body the size of a marble, sitting day and night in the middle of her golden web with an insignificantly small male wandering the outer edge.

On the morning of 30th March we found entangled in the bottom of the web a young female (?) House Sparrow. It had a foot well wrapped and both wings bound to its sides by the sticky threads. The spider, about 300 mm away, showed no interest, even while I disentangled the sparrow. With the threads carefully removed, it flew quickly away, apparently no worse for the experience. While this spider seemed not interested in the sparrow, there are records of spiders, believed Nephilas, eating small birds caught in their webs ("Australian Spiders" McKeown).

Footnote: Late April we were disappointed to find our spider gone and the web falling into disrepair - perhaps the tables had been turned.

Dave Thomson.

THE BELL MINER IN THE BERRIMA DISTRICT, N.S.W. In, A Checklist of The Birds of The Berrima District (C. Sonter, 1976, Bowral, unpub.), it was stated that the Bell Miner Manorina melanophrys was represented by two colonies. The colonies, though widely separated from each other being near Tallong (Badger's Lookout) and the junction of Tomat Creek with the Wollondilly River 'east of Barralier', were precariously situated on the boundary of the Berrima District. A further known colony existed west of Tallong below Long Point near Lake Louise on the Shoal-haven River but was too far off the boundary for inclusion.

The rather tenuous hold this species had within the Checklist's birds has been strengthened considerably by the addition of a further colony.

On 31st December 1984, I accompanied Chris Chafer on a birdwatching trip to Barralier and return. En route to Barralier, but still some distance upstream from Goodmans' Ford and opposite Bowman's Flat, I detected the calls of Bell Miners coming from a steep and thickly vegetated gully.

Subsequently the vehicle was stopped and the area and population assessed. Some six Bell Miners could be seen openly as they foraged in the foliage of the trees and bushes.

However, because of the ventriloquial powers of their calls, other birds may well have been hidden from our view. I believe calls were coming from within denser vegetation at the foot of the gully below our position.

Probably the colony would have been quite small containing from 10 - 15 individuals, and of recent origin since it was not there in January 1984. Future monitoring of this colony could be of interest and thus enable knowledge to be shed on population growth, area utilised by colony and duration of occupancy. Colonies, even after many years of seemingly permanent existence in the same area, will abandon and relocate elsewhere. The reasons for such abandonments and why so much distance is covered before re-establishment is still mystifying to ornithologists.

Chris Sonter 18/4/85.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR MARCH - APRIL, 1985.

Status uncommon, scarce and rare within the County of Camden.

U	Stubble Quail	2	Killalea Swamp	2-2-85	P. Bath
MC	Rufous Fantail	1	Blackbutt	7-3-85	"
MC	Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	Barrack Heights	10-4-85	"
R	Wandering Tattler	1	Windang Island	13-3-85	L. Smith & C. Chafer
R.	White-winged Tern	1	Windang	14-3-85	C. Chafer
MC	Brush Bronzewing	1	Thirlmere Lakes	9-3-85	"
U	White-cheeked Honeyeater	2	"	9-3-85	"
U	Cicadabird	3	"	9-3-85	"
U	White-throated Nightjar	1	"	16-3-85	"
R	Red-rumped Parrot	1	No 10 Fire Road	30-385	I. Rowles
U	Spotted Quail Thrush	2	O'Hares Catchment	12-3-85	"
U	Tawny-crowned H'Eater	15+	"	12-3-85	"
U	Grey Currawong	1	No 10 Fire Road	15-3-85	"
U	Brown Quail	8	"	27-3-85	"
U	Brown-headed Honeyeater	1	"	27-3-85	"
MC	Rufous Fantail	2	Mt. Keira	22-3-85	D. Green
U	Little Grassbird	2	Dapto	3-4-85	P. Ewin
U	Grey Goshawk	1	Mt. Keira Scout Camp	24-3-85	L. McGettigan
R	Red-kneed Dotterel	8	Killalea Swamp	22-3-85	R. Almond
S	Little Eagle	1	"	22-3-85	"
MC	Leaden Flycatcher	1	Keiraville	30-3-85	"
R	Red-rumped Parrots	7	(2 pair, 3 imm.) J.J. Kelly Park	24-3-85	L. Smith
S	Fork-tailed Swift	1	Wollongong Golf Course	18-3-85	D. Fischer
S	Great-winged Petrel	6	Port Kembla (beachwashed)	27-3-85	"
R	Streaked Shearwater	1	"	27-3-85	"
R	White-tailed Tropic Bird	1	"	27-3-85	"
R	Gould's Petrel	1	"	27-3-85	"
MC	Little Penguin	1	"	27-3-85	"
MC	Flesh-footed Shearwater	1	"	27-3-85	"
R	Brown Booby	1	East of Wollongong	23-3-85	D. Fischer
R	Sabine's Gull	1	Boat Trip	23-3-85	L. Smith
R	Providence Petrel	4	"	23-3-85	C. Chafer & Others.
S	Great-winged Petrel	4	"	23-3-85	"
R	Long-tailed Jaeger	8	"	23-3-85	"

I.B.O.C. NEWS



JUNE, 1985.

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No NBH 3848.

POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
63 Dymock St.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be at the Senior Citizens Centre, cnr Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway Fairy Meadow on Monday 10th June at 7-30pm. Our GUEST SPEAKER for the evening will be Dick Turner. The theme of his talk will be Tree Identification. Dick is employed by the N.S.W. Forestry Commission and has an extensive knowledge of this subject. Tree identification plays an important part in bird studies. Knowledge of particular species of trees is extremely helpful in understanding the feeding habits and nesting locations of birds. Many I.B.O.C. members will remember Dick for his excellent talk in August 1983 on the Tanami Desert. I'm sure we can again look forward to an equally interesting and informative evening.

FIELD OUTING - Saturday 15th June, will be to the Mt. Kembla - Dombarton area. We will be meeting at the Kembla Lookout State Recreation Area at 8-00am, then driving on a short distance. The Lookout is located along the dirt section of Cordeaux Road, Mt. Kembla 1.6 klms past Harry Graham Drive. Bring a carry lunch.

FILM NIGHT - Saturday 1st June. The venue for this night will be at the home of Brian & Barbara Hales, 39 Lake Parade East Corrimal. We will have the usual two sessions commencing at 6-00pm & 8-00pm. The programme is as follows;

1. THE DIMINISHING RAINFOREST 31 mins.
Shows the world of the rainforest - one of Australia's undervalued and diminishing resources.
2. THE LIVING BIRD 13 mins.
The biology of birds. Describes the structure, and function of feathers wings, eyes and bills. Gives details of food, nesting, courtship & breeding habits, metabolism and the senses of sight and hearing.
3. WILD WINGS 34mins.
The part played by the Wildfowl Trust in the struggle for survival is illustrated by observation and protection of wildfowl at Slimbridge.
4. SWALLOWS 14mins.
The life cycle of the swallow .

An invitation is extended to all members. Bring a plate for supper and join in an entertaining social evening.

AUTUMN BIRD COUNT - Saturday 1st June. Members who have not previously taken part in a bird count and who wish to do so please contact Kevin Wood on 29-5514.

KAKADU TRIP - We will be holding a meeting at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre on Friday 14th June at 7-30pm. to discuss the trip. The meeting will be addressed by the tour operator Bert Bolton. He will be there to talk about the trip and answer any questions you may have concerning luggage, bedding, clothing requirements etc. So if you are booked on the trip come along and get the answers to all those questions you have been wanting to ask.

The 14 th June will also be the deadline for the payment of the \$1,000 owing on the fare. If you are not able to attend the meeting please make sure your payment reaches the Treasurer, Ron Almond, 2 Shoobert Crescent, Keiraville, 2500 before 14th June. Payment should be by cheque not cash payable to the Illawarra Bird Observers Club.

ATTENTION MEMBERS. Dave Thomson has indicated a wish to stand down from the position of President at the end of 1985. As it is desirable to have at least one person willing to accept the vacant position before the November election of office bearers, we are asking any member willing to accept nomination to make his/her thoughts known to a member of the committee. They will then be invited attend the remaining committee meetings for 1985 in order to gain an insight into the running of the club.

Your club needs your support! Please come forward if you feel you have the ability to fill the vacant position. You will be well supported by the existing committee.

Editor.

MEMBERSHIP LIST.

Please add the following to your membership list:

Mr. Stuart <u>ALMOND</u> , 8/4 Peckham Avenue, Chatswood, 2067	Ph 02-41-2750
Mrs. Roxy <u>JANETZKI</u> , 28 Euroka Street, West Wollongong, 2500	ph 29-4495
Mr. Richard <u>JORDAN</u> , Mrs. Pat, Barren Grounds Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 3, Jamberoo, 2533	Ph 042 36-0195
Kay <u>LLOYD</u> , 34 Georges Avenue, Bulli, 2516	
Mr. Patrick W. <u>MEDWAY</u> , P.O. Box 144, Drummoyne, 2047	ph 02 240-8862
Mr. Kevin <u>MILLS</u> , 28 Stephens Drive, Woonona Heights, 2517	
Mr. Mike <u>MORPHETT</u> , 15 Coast Street, Thirroul, 2515	ph wk 27-1555 ph hm 67-3558
Mr. Geoffrey <u>PARKER</u> , Mrs. Joy 5 Wandoo Avenue, Ryde, 2112	ph 02 80-1264
Mrs. Deborah <u>PERRY</u> , "Tree Tops" Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Stanwell Park, 2509	
Mr. Mick <u>O'ROURKE</u> , Cottage 4, H.M.A.S. Penguin, Balmoral. 2091	
Mr. Don <u>RODGERS</u> , Mrs. Vera, 42 Dovers Drive, Port Kembla, 2505	ph 74-1960

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Mr. David WINTERBOTTOM, Mrs. & James,
16 Mountview Avenue, Gwyneville, 2500

To Mr. Horace WARD, Please add Mrs. Betty,
" Mr Ben CAUCHI, " " Mrs. Joy & Family.

Change of Phone No. Mr. Jim ROBINSON, Mrs. Gwen should be 29-4213.

MAY MEETING - 73 members filled the hall to hear John Waugh speak about the birds and habitats we can expect to encounter enroute to Kakadu National Park. His talk was accompanied by many slides, some of birds and others of the fascinating and picturesque landscape. Our day 4 campsite at No 2 Bore, Coorabulka looked interesting. John showed slides of the Yellow Chat and the nest of the Gibberbird taken at this location. On past the Pictorella Mannikin and Painted Firetail at Mt. Isa, the Hooded Parrots at Pine Creek and the magnificent Rainbow Pitta at Howard Springs.

John's comprehensive coverage of the Darwin area left me feeling I could spend the rest of the trip there without even going to Kakadu. This thought was quickly dismissed as we travelled into Kakadu to Obiri and Nourlangi Rock with their Aboriginal art, not to mention the Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeon and the Banded Fruit-Dove. Off again past the Carpentarian Grasswren at McArthur River, the White-throated Grasswren at UDP Falls and a chance at the beautiful Purple-crowned Fairy-wren at Borroloola. When will we ever find time to swim in John's first, second and third favourite swimming holes.

Thank you John and Pauline for venturing out on a cold night to show us these beautiful places. Thanks also to Wal and Val Nuske for hosting John and Pauline with bed and breakfast.

Wal Emery.

MAY FILM NIGHT - Jim & Gwen Robinson were our hosts for the first film night of 1985. Five interesting films were shown. "New Settlers" which showed five species of Australian birds, Welcome Swallow, Black-fronted Plover, Eurasian Coot, White-faced Heron and Masked Lapwing, all of which have introduced themselves naturally, showed how much better nature is at this sort of thing than man. All species have filled vacant niches in the New Zealand eco system without pressuring the local species.

The breeding colonies of flamingo in "Wings of Fire" was an amazing and beautiful spectacle. This colony numbered some 200 thousand birds. The film showed their incredible conical shaped nesting mounds raised above the shallows looking like hundreds of termite mounds. The interesting communal habits of the flamingoes was evident when the huge flock migrated before the fledglings were ready to fly, leaving several nannies behind to care for their offspring. A fascinating film. Thanks to Gwen & Jim for hosting us and thanks once again to Richard Miller for selecting these interesting films.

Wal Emery.

MAY FIELD OUTING - On a cool but pleasant morning at 7-00am on 18th May, 48 IBOC members boarded a coach for Mt. Boyce in the Blue Mountains. Upon arrival at our destination, the bleak, cold conditions prompted one member to ask if we were looking for honeyeaters or Arctic Terns.

The migrating honeyeaters were in much smaller numbers than we had seen on previous trips. We appear to have caught the end of the migration this year, the date of our outing being a week or two later than other years. The small numbers however were compensated by variety, a total of eight species were found; White-naped, Yellow-faced, White-eared, New Holland, Brown-headed, Eastern Spinebill, Red Wattlebird, and Noisy Friarbird.

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Most were feeding on the three species of Banksia, Spinulosa, Ericifolia, and Collina, all of which were flowering profusely. Twenty four species were recorded in the Mt. Boyce area, among them the melodious Superb Lyrebird, his beautiful call rising from the valley below.

We then went on to Wentworth Falls where we had lunch and strolled down the many walks in the falls area. Birds once more were there in variety if not numbers. The Crescent Honeyeater was added to our honeyeater list. Our walk around the undercliffs was rewarded by the sight of the Bridalveil Falls with the wind blowing the water spray into a rainbow forming a kaleidoscope of colour.

As we walked down the stairs we saw an Origma drinking from a water grotto in the side of the cliff while Red-browed Firetails and Spotted Pardalotes flew around the trees. Above us were eight Royal Spoonbills, a beautiful sight with the rays of the winter sun filtering down upon them. As we walked back up the path to the coach, the White-browed Scrubwren scurried through the undergrowth, while the Grey Shrike-thrush called out it's melodious song in contrast with the harsh sound of the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo.

We once more took our seats on the coach for home, all very happy at such a delightful outing. Although a little different to our usual field outings, we are looking forward to the same next year.

Wendy Hanks.

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME. On Monday 24th May, 1982 Laurie & I set out on a trip to Kakadu National Park & Central Australia which was to take 4 months and cover nearly 18,000 klms. During that time we saw 307 species of birds including 39 new species for us and many others for only the 2nd time, and we shared the wonderful experience of visiting many new places and meeting many different people as we travelled through our very diverse country. We drove a 4WD Subaru Station Sedan and pulled a Cub Drifter fold-down van and spent nearly \$1,000 on petrol and oil.

The first 4 nights were spent at Surrendong Dam in the Eagle Beagle camping area where we enjoyed watching Turquoise Parrots, Little Lorikeets, Crested Shrike-tits, and our first new bird, a Plum-headed Finch, while sitting in front of our van. Musk and Pink-eared Ducks, Hardheads, Red-kneed Dotterels and Black-fronted Plovers were also seen at the surrounding waterholes. We had a very good list of birds to start the trip.

Saturday we were off to Bourke and felt we were really off on our adventure. We saw a flock of 6 Emus just out of Nyngan and also our first Black Kites (of which we were to see hundreds,) Masked Woodswallows, Mallee Ringnecks, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos, Yellow-throated Miners and Striped Honeyeaters. We camped at Bullamunta Caravan Park, 16 km north of Bourke on the Darling River. On the banks of the river we watched 8 Black-tailed Native-hens being continually harrassed by a Brown Goshawk.

White-winged Fairy-wrens were hopping through the salt-bush, including the very beautiful fully coloured male. Our first Little Woodswallow was seen here - so different to it's cousin the Ducky Woodswallow when you finally see it! We were to see so many Woodswallows sitting on the telegraph wires during our travels they made the trip very interesting! Blue Bonnets, Little Crows, Grey-crowned Babblers and flocks of Pink Cockatoos were also firsts for the trip.

Monday we were off to Charleville and our morning tea stop was in the company of the Red-capped Robin, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill and Chestnut-crowned Babbler. It was very cold overnight in Charleville - 0 with a heavy frost on the ground in the morning. Here we saw our first kingfishers for the trip, Azure and Sacred, also Variegated Fairy-wren, Singing, Spiny-cheeked and Brown-headed Honeyeaters.

Wednesday it was on to Barcaldine in sunny weather and between Augathella and Tambo our first Australian Bustards, what excitement! Brolgas, Pied Butcher-birds and Red-winged Parrots also added to the pleasure of the day. We spent 2 nights in Winton much to everyone's amazement as there's nothing to see or do at Winton, so we were told. We found a pamphlet of a 62 km drive-yourself-tour of Winton which we found extremely interesting and really introduced us to the Great Australian Outback - spinifex, claypans, and a new bird - the Grey-headed Honeyeater.

The trip to Boulia was very flat and tree-less in most parts, especially coming into Middleton which has a population of 4 humans, 1 dog and a pub-come-store-come-petrol station. There were lots of grids across the road and occasionally small rocky hills which just had to be photographed. It was another exciting day as we saw 8 Australian Bustards and Crimson Chats along the way and the Rainbow Bee-eater was waiting for us at Boulia camping ground. Our next stop was Mt. Isa (little Wollongong) we almost felt we were back home! Lake Moondarra is a beautiful spot and we spent some very pleasant hours there birdwatching and photographing a lovely sunset. We recorded 51 species there including the Painted Firetail on our return visit. Our first Budgerigars were recorded in the Copper City Caravan Park and a large flock of Little Corellas flew in as we were packing to continue on our travels.

Tuesday 8th June saw us off to the Northern Territory. Before crossing the border we saw our first Red-backed Kingfisher for the trip and 3 Brolgas. Our first Black-breasted Buzzard was seen between Barry Caves and Frewena in the Northern Territory and we saw more Crimson Chats at Frewena. The flowering grevilleas, wattles, gums and native hibiscus became very noticeable on this road and the full moon at Frewena was a sight we will remember for a long time. Leaving Frewena we travelled 39.5 klm without a bend in the road and then another 55 km before the next bend. I had always imagined Australia to be flat and treeless once you cross the Great Dividing Range, but my IBOC travels have proved me wrong, and now I discovered that even in N.T. there are lots of trees and hills. Lubra Lookout, just south of Renner Springs, has its own legend and is quite a landmark on the righthand side of the road. We had our first flat tyre nearby but as a result of stopping saw a White-gaped Honeyeater in the flowering grevilleas.

Lunch that day was at Elliott where we saw the Wollongong Coach - a reminder of home. We stopped at Dunmarra to have a look round Milners Lagoon and found it such a rewarding area that we decided to stay in the little camping area and went back to the lagoon where we saw 41 species of birds in a very short time. The Yellow-tinted and Rufous-throated Honeyeaters and Diamond Dove were new birds for us and also the Double-barred Finch with a black rump which makes it's tail appear much longer.

The next day was just as exciting as we added a further 5 new birds to our list. We stopped at Warlock Ponds - a lovely spot, and saw 27 species including the Black-capped Sittella, Black-tailed Treecreeper, Rufous Shrike-thrush, Blue-winged Kookaburra and the nominate race of the Masked Finch; further on we added the Long-tailed Finch. Katherine Gorge was our destination and we arrived there very happy to set up camp and stay put for the next 8 days, and we could have stayed much longer. It is a beautiful spot spoilt only by the continual drone of the generators which were to keep us company through the north as this is the land of the generator, both commercial and domestic and it made us appreciate our quiet power supply at home!

The birdlife there is fantastic and we left with a list of 69 species for the area which included Katherine & Edith Falls. The Red-collared Lorikeet, Northern Rozella and Golden-backed Honeyeater were new to us, and the Pale Yellow Robin, Lemon-bellied and Shining Flycatchers, Northern Fantail, Red-backed Fairy-wren, Silver-crowned & Little Friarbirds, White-throated, Brown, Bar-breasted Rufous-throated, Banded and Dusky Honeyeaters, Crimson Finch and Torresian Crow were all good to see again. The Red-winged Parrots spent a lot of time in the little tree at our kitchen window and to think of the search we had to see one at Cobar! Blue-faced Honeyeaters, Magpie Larks and Great Bowerbirds ate bread almost from our hands and were photographed many times along with the huge bower decorated with grey treasures near the camping area.

We went on a day boat trip up the gorge achieving a lifetime ambition and weren't disappointed - it is absolutely beautiful, and we saw our first fresh-water (Johnson) crocodiles. The weather was fine and warm and we had our first swim for the trip (and it needs to be warm for us to swim!)

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We visited the Cutta Cutta limestone caves and saw a huge flock of fruit bats in Katherine at the low level crossing. The camping area at Edith Falls is beautiful and we spent a very lovely day visiting the area. There are so many things to see and do around Katherine, it is a spot we will remember always.

All too soon the time came for us to move on again and on 18th June we set off along the track.

(end of Part 1)

Laurie & Nola Williams

LITTLE TERNS - POPULATION SURVEY, December, 1984.

As part of a survey of Little Tern populations in south-eastern Australia, organised by the Victorian Fisheries & Wildlife Division, for the three states concerned, a count was conducted in New South Wales on 9 - 10 December, 1984. Results of the survey will be published elsewhere but it is worthwhile briefly recording the results for the benefit of all the members of Ornithological Societies who took part. Both breeding birds and non-breeding birds were counted.

Breeding was proved at the following localities (the number in brackets represents the number of breeding pairs present on that date): Belongil Creek, Byron Bay (1p), Jerusalem Creek, Bunjalung NP (2p), Woolli River, (1p), Red Rock (7p), Sawtell (1p), Nambucca (7p); 5 km's south of Smoky Cape (2p), Manning Point, Harrington, (8p), Forster (24p), Big Gibber, Myall Lakes National Parks (8p) Port Botany (15p), Airport Runway, Botany Bay (2p), Coniston (1p), Tuross South (5p), Lake Narrawallee, near Milton (2p), Wallaga Lake (7p), Salt Lake, Nadgee Nature Reserve (2p).

In addition, breeding birds were present at the following locations but nesting was not proved although it may have taken place:- Letita Spit, Tweed Heads; Hastings Point; Brunswick Heads; Station Creek, Yuragir National Park; and Lake Conjola.

Total non-breeding birds	=	1119
Total breeding birds	=	189
Total nests	=	40
Total eggs	=	66
Total hatched offspring	=	30

A further survey took place in South-eastern Australia on 19 - 20 January, 1985, and the N.S.W. totals for breeding and eclipse plumage birds were as follows:- 87 & 1522 respectively with 11 flying juveniles counted on the N.S.W. Central & South Coasts as well. Due to people being absent fire-fighting, many South Coast centres were missed in the final count.

My thanks to those I.B.O.C. Members who took part in the survey.

A. K. Morris.

8th May 1985.

A SUMMARY OF THE BREEDING OF LITTLE TERNS AT STH. WOLLONGONG/CONISTON BEACH & BELLAMBI POINT since 1950. From records compiled by J.D. Gibson, A. Sefton & R. Almond.

Entrance Tom Thumb Lagoon. 8/11/50 one nest, one egg. 8/11/55 15 nests: 1/12/55 approx. 50 nests, some 1 to 2 eggs, some 1 to 3 chicks: 9/11/56 abundant nest scrapes, only 2 with eggs: 26/12/56 Rookery washed out by big tide. Another rookery discovered south of sewer outlet, 50 pairs with eggs & young.

Bellambi Point 24/1/59 2 young being fed by adults. No other nests discovered between Tom Thumb & Windang. 25/11/62 1 nest 3 eggs: 28/1/63 1 nest 2 eggs, 1 chick.

Tom Thumb: 3/2/63 near coal loader. Several pairs nested, 1 runner found, several young immatures flying: 21/11/63 some dozens have already laid on bulldozed flat of dredged sand, 1 to 3 eggs in various nests.

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Bellambi Point: 21/11/63 3 pair nesting: 27/12/64 20 nests, eggs & runners.

South Wollongong/Coniston: 5 nests 1 to 3 eggs: 23/11/77 1 nest 3 eggs.

Bellambi Point: 27/11/77 1 nest 2 eggs: 22/12/77 2 nests, 1 chick each.

South Wollongong/Coniston: 5/11/78 1 nest 1 egg: 13/11/78 nest gone: 27/11/78 1 nest 2 eggs: 6/12/78 1 chick hatched: 23/12/78 1 nest 3 eggs: 18/1/79 2 chicks hatched: 28/12/79 1 nest 2 eggs north end: 1/1/80 1 nest 2 eggs south end: 11/1/80 chicks at north end and eggs at south end washed away by big seas. 2/12/80 2 eggs at southern end on top of low bulldozed mound: 17/11/81 1 nest: 21/11/81 3 eggs: 7/12/81 3 chicks hatched: 15/11/82 1 nest 2 eggs: 2/12/82 2 chicks hatched: 6/12/82 chicks running: 13/12/82 only one chick seen (banded) 1/1/83 1 nest 2 eggs: 18/1/83 2 chicks hatched: 26/1/83 2 chicks running (banded) 14/2/83 2 banded immatures flying with adults. 12/12/83 1 nest & egg north end: 26/12/83 chick hatched: 12/11/84 nesting sight divided by sewerage outfall, no birds present. 19/1/85 1 nest 2 eggs on mound south end of existing beach: 1/2/85 1 chick hatched: 5/2/85 still only 1 chick, remaining egg appears infertile: 11/2/85 chick seen running: 15/2/85 adults present, no sign of chick.

These records show how the reclamation of Tom Thumb Lagoon and industrial pressures on Coniston Beach coupled with population pressures at Bellambi Point have caused a steady decline in breeding numbers at these two sites. Long term survival of these two breeding colonies must be considered extremely doubtful.

Ron Almond.

GOLD PANNING ON THE SHOALHAVEN RIVER. It was a glorious Saturday, 25th March when we met Bob & Peg McKinlay at Robertson for the start of our weekend trip to Oallen on the Shoalhaven River for our first ever lesson in gold panning. After discussing our route we set off through Moss Vale, Sutton Forest, Marulan and Bungonia which is very picturesque with some delightful convict built sandstone cottages. Even though the earlier bush fires had badly burned this area, the greys, black, browns, orange and new green colours made a spectacular picture. We travelled on through Windellama, Sandy Point and finally to Oallen Ford, in all some three hours drive from Wollongong.

After setting up camp, real bush stuff, none of your IBOC five star shower and toilet amenities, it was time for lunch and of course you can't ignore the birds. Red-browed Firetails, Wattlebirds, Eastern and Crimson Rosellas, Grey Butcherbirds and Noisy Friarbirds and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos entertained as we had our meal.

After learning the fine art of burning our pans with gum leaves we set off along the river bank for a likely spot to pan. This area is just so beautiful and we had a marvellous afternoon in the river actually striking gold too, though we are not giving up our week-day jobs yet. All too soon it was time to return to camp. Gold panning is hard on the spine and also gives one a great appetite for food. After an evening meal the rest of the time was spent playing Trivial Pursuit accompanied by every flying creature within miles. The next morning we decided to walk the area having a very pleasant and fruitful 2/3 hours seeing the following, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Pied Currawong, Golden Whistler, White-winged Chough, Maned Duck, Silvereye, Australian Magpie, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Spotted Pardalote, Kookaburra, Australian Magpie Lark, White-eared, Yellow-faced, White-naped Honeyeaters, Superb Fairy-wren, Little Pied Cormorant, Welcome Swallow, Common Starling, Pacific Black Duck, Eastern Whipbird, Grey Shrike-thrush, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, and we had our first sighting of a beautiful Grey Currawong. Russell spotted it on the ground only four metres away as we returned to camp. We were able to observe it at our leisure and it hopped onto a fence giving us an even better view. This area is truly worth a trip. We had first class weather, a first class location and first class company another tick for being a Birdo. Oh, and we also learned how not to load a trailer.

The Hales Family (bird list compiled by
Bob & Peg McKinlay)

NOTES FROM A BATEMANS BAY MEMBER. While birding with two friends on Thursday 18th April 1985, we were very surprised to find three Glossy Ibis feeding on the edge of a very large swamp near Moruya. The swamp called Old Man Bed Swamp is on private property several kilometres off the main road; 55 species were observed during the day, including 4 Australian Shelduck, several Australasian Shovelers, and about 100 Eurasian Coot at one stage being attacked by a White-bellied Sea-Eagle.

Could it be possible the Glossy Ibis were the same ones observed at Dunmore and Worrigeer Swamp, making their way southwards.

Janet Scrivens.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR APRIL - MAY, 1985.

Status uncommon, scarce and rare within the County of Camden.

S Hooded Robin	1	Avon Sub. Station	16-4-85	P. Bath
MC Double-barred Finch	7	Yallah	9-5-85	"
U Scarlet Robin	1	Yallah	9-5-85	"
R Pied Oystercatcher	2	Lake Illawarra Ent.	9-5-85	"
MC Topnot Pigeon	30+	Bellambi Sub-Station	10-5-85	"
R Wandering Tattler	1	Windang Island	28-3-85	C. Brandis
S Whimbrel	1	Windang Island	28-3-85	"
U Caspian Tern	6	Lake Illawarra Ent.	10-5-85	"
U Grey-tailed Tattler	4	Lake Illawarra Ent.	12-4-85	"
MC Black-fronted Plover	2	Kully Bay	13-4-85	R. Imisides
U Brown Goshawk	1	Primbee	6-4-85	"
S Spangled Drongo	1	Primbee	7-4-85	"
U Grey Goshawk	2	Stanwell Creek	14-3-85	J. Hyslop
R White-tailed Tropicbird	Specimen	- Pt. Kembla Sch.	28-3-85	C. Chafer
R Red-necked Avocet	12	Comerong Island	11-5-85	"
S White-headed Pigeon	1	Bass Point	4-5-85	"
R Great Crested Grebe	126	Wingecarribee Dam	5-5-85	"
R White-winged Tern	1	Windang	12-5-85	"
S Crested Pigeon	4	Calderwood	20-4-85	R. Almond
U Gang-gang Cockatoo	7	Mt. Pleasant	14-4-85	D. Thomson
MC Rufous Fantail	1	Mt. Pleasant	27-4-85	"
S Rose Robin	1 pr	Bulli	22-4-85	I. Rowles
S Logrunner	1	F+Lchick Corrimal Air Shaft	11-5-85	"
U Large-billed Scrubwren	6	Gibson Track	5-5-85	"
U Pink-eared Duck	16	Killalea Swamp	9-5-85	W. Emery
U Black-winged Stilt	11	Killalea Swamp	9-5-85	"
R Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	1	Thirrourl	24-5-85	"
U Musk Lorikeet	1	Thirrourl	24-5-85	"
MC Barn Owl	1	Nth. Wollongong	1-5-85	L & N Williams
Gould's Petrel	100+	Boat Trip east of	21-4-85	C. Chafer
Black-winged Petrel	5	" Wollongong.	21-4-85	D. Fischer &
Cook's Petrel	1	"	21-4-85	Others.
Kermadec Petrel	7	"	21-4-85	"
Arctic Tern	1	"	21-4-85	"
Huttons Shearwater	2	"	21-4-85	"
Red-tailed Tropicbird	1	5 miles off Bulli	21-4-85	"

MAY NEWSLETTER: Corrections.

Beachwashed Specimens Port Kembla Beach, D. Fischer please read South Wollongong Beach.

Meryla Pass Field Outing report; White-browed Treecreeper please read White-throated Treecreeper.

I. B. O. C. NEWS

85



JULY, 1985.

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
Registered by Aust. Post Publication No NBH 3848.
POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
63 Dymock St.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway Fairy Meadow, on Monday 8th July at 7-30pm. Our GUEST SPEAKER will be Mr. Alan Sefton. Alan needs no introduction to anyone with an interest in the natural history of the Illawarra. He has been prominent in this field for most of his life and has earned the respect of many people, both for his vast knowledge of natural history and for his willingness to share that knowledge.

The subject of his address will be "John Douglas Gibson - His Life & His Work." Alan worked alongside the late Doug Gibson for many years. Together they compiled many of the significant ornithological records of the Illawarra, in particular the sea birds. Alan eventually moved into a wider field of natural history whilst Doug specialised in ornithology. Members can look forward to a very interesting evening as Alan reminisces over their early days of birdwatching in the Illawarra.

FIELD OUTING - Saturday 6th July, Jervis Bay Area. Please Note - Due to the 13th July departure of the Kakadu trip our field outing is being held on the Saturday before the monthly meeting not the one after as is the usual practice.

We will be meeting in the parking area of Summer Cloud Bay at 9.00am. Travel via Nowra & Huskisson Road towards Jervis Bay. Turn off right to Summer Cloud Bay just past the Rangers Headquarters. It is approximately a 2 hours trip. Bring a carry lunch. The walk will be through a variety of habitats and should prove very rewarding.

FILM NIGHT - Saturday 29th June, at the home of Wal & Hazel Emery, 63 Dymock Street, Balgownie. Two sessions 6.00pm & 8.00pm. All members are invited to attend. Bring along a plate and enjoy a pleasant social evening. Richard Miller has done a great job in selecting a programme of particular interest to the Kakadu trippers, and I'm sure it will also be of general interest to those who are not going on the trip. The programme is as follows;

(1) AGAINST THE ESCARPMENT

30 mins

A view of wildlife, mainly birds in their natural surroundings in Arnhem Land. Includes a discussion of local ecological interactions and threats to the environmental balance.

(2) WILDLIFE RANGER 20 mins
Rangers in the Kakadu National Park, Northern Australia.

(3) WATERHOLE 10 mins
Shows a waterhole, west of Broken Hill, through one day, the trees that border it and the creatures who come to drink.

(4) WILDLIFE IN THE DRY. 27 mins.
Shows the principal birds of the Northern Territory in the dry season and other life of the region.

POSITION VACANT - As mentioned in the June Newsletter, Dave Thomson in retiring from the Presidency at the end of the year. So far we have received no indication from anyone willing to accept the position. If you feel you can help the Club by filling the vacancy, please make your position known to a member of the committee.

R.A.O.U. SCIENTIFIC DAY. 20 members from our Club attended the Scientific Day. I think most would have found it very absorbing and appreciated the detailed study and research that had been required for each speaker to present his/her paper.

It was interesting to note that Australian birds differ from their Northern Hemisphere counterparts, so their study is important in many ways, such as national conservation, pest management, etc.

Mr. S. Marchant was informative and amusing about parasitic cuckoos, this bird being difficult to study by its habit of laying in other birds nests, and a variety of hosts. Australian cuckoos require much study, as little is known of them.

Mrs. M. N. Brown from W.A. presented a study compiled since 1978, in association with her husband. It was so detailed and interesting, covering the breeding biology of White-breasted Robins and Clamorous Reed-Warblers. Mrs. Brown made the observation that through land cultivation and clearing, one species gained, and the other lost.

We all enjoyed the day and hopefully, increased our knowledge. It was stated that studies of the Breeding Biology of Birds, and the Nest Record Scheme, require many more participants.

Esmé Gay.

The committee would like to thank all those members who contributed their time in helping with the registrations, morning/afternoon teas and field outings. A special thanks to Lilo and Sigi Freund for their efforts in estimating and purchasing the catering requirements.

Editor.

JUNE MEETING. In years gone by a tree was just a tree, very impressive and pleasant. But these days trees are interesting, in fact fascinating. The more I learn about trees, the more I find there is to learn and Dick Turner certainly pointed this out in his knowledgeable talk.

Trees are like a conglomerate of different parts and functions all very individual and specific. Like different types of leaves, a maze of shapes and sizes, textures and shades of colour, even the smell. Some trees even change the shape and size of their leaves with age. And then there's the bark, is it stringy, flaky, grooved or smooth, hard or soft and what colour is under the bark. Is it a scribbly gum with no scribbles?

Dick's slides showed us some of the beauty of the flowers of trees, really spectacular. The fruits and nuts also come in such a variety of shapes, sizes, colours and textures. It's no wonder the birds are always singing with such a smorgasboard of delicious food just waiting to be eaten.

Dick is obviously very knowledgeable in his profession and very willing to share this knowledge. Thanks to Dick we certainly appreciate this information, adding to our bird watching pleasure.

Margaret Parkinson.

JUNE FIELD OUTING. 'Twas eight in the morning and 33 IBOC's had gathered for the fray with the frost on the ground a short way along the Picton Road. Well, actually there were 30 IBOC's to start with, being joined by 3 more later on along the track who had been redirected by President Dave, following a late change of venue from Mount Kembla. It was also felt that there may have been a few who had slept in and so had missed a most perfect day.

With dire warnings from Leader Laurie not to venture within a 100 metres of the mine shaft we started off along the trail which meant following the power line which provided an easy and visible means of keeping our location and not becoming lost. It wasn't long before we were being regaled by the mimicry of a Superb Lyrebird. Attempting to sight him by chasing from one side of the track to the other soon disclosed that there were two that were calling and the chase was given up after 1 was sighted.

Proceeding up ridges and down and across creeks and finally after about 100 klms (?) we stopped for lunch at the 'major creek' - a very picturesque place with a waterfall and stream that flowed beneath the rock and then gushed out a further 10 to 15 metres downstream. The area was surrounded by diverse flora with Scribbly Gums and Swamp Banksia being dominant. Following Dick Turner's very interesting talk the previous Monday evening on 'Trees and Plants' quite a few members were very conscious of the different species along the way - as well as the birds. Whilst having lunch we were visited and observed by a number of species, these included Southern Emu-wren, Beautiful Firetail, Brown-headed Honeyeater and Origma.

After lunch during which some of the men spun a few stories and some of the ladies decided to form a choir after a practice run, Laurie 'John Wayne' gave the command "For'ard" or more precise "Retreat" and we retraced our steps, climbing the ridges and abseiling down to the creeks. Interest on the return journey was provided by the numerous sightings which included Grey Fantail, Bronzewing Pigeons White-eared & White-naped Honeyeaters, White-throated & Red-browed Treecreepers, Crested Shrike-tit, and the common but beautiful Eastern Yellow Robin.

On arrival back at the rainforest the party dispersed, some going upstream and some downstream. 4 Logrunners were sighted also several Wonga Pigeons, Yellow-throated Scrubwrens and two more Superb Lyrebirds. Returning to our cars about 3-30pm. and after rounding up the stragglers, a brief meeting was held and it was voted a most interesting, successful and most pleasant day. A fitting and parting farewell was the sighting of a Grey Goshawk which alighted briefly nearby and was last seen being pursued across Mount Dusley Road by two Australian Magpies.

Don Rodgers.

PLEASE NOTE - Due to publication of Barren Grounds programme, May - June Interesting Sightings will appear in August newsletter.

OF SPARROWS & SPIDERS. I was interested in Dave's account in the May issue concerning a sparrow caught in a spider's web. There is a large, fawn coloured spider that spins its webs in our garden and I have had to train them not to place their webs across pathways. This is quite simple, after a couple of knockdowns they usually get the message.

One particularly persistent specimen didn't and being unable to touch a spider, I collected it in a prawn net (when nobody was looking) and transported it to another part of the garden. Did I have a job to get it out of the net!

From time to time I have noticed an apparently vacated web with a large hole in the middle and one day the answer came. I saw a sparrow flying towards a web and go right through it, result was a large hole in the middle and no spider.

I have often watched sparrows hovering along the eaves and cover strips feeding on the spiders that make their homes there. However one day as I watched a hovering sparrow near the eaves, a large spider dropped on a short web and fully extended its legs and appeared to puff up its body to enormous size. The sparrow changed its mind and flew off. I was reminded of Miss Muffett.

Margaret Ward.

.../4

A TRIP TO THE OCEAN BLUE. Although I have done a fair amount of birding I know virtually nothing about offshore birds so I took advantage of a trip offered as part of the very successful R.A.O.U. Scientific Day at the University of Wollongong. The six a.m. start was a little hard but everybody was on time and we set off with rain threatening, but a calm sea. Once out of the harbour the boat bobbed about a good deal and we soon got our first, and fortunately, our only shower.

Someone was busily cutting up bits of fish to feed the Silver Gulls over the stern. This was to ensure that they stayed with us well offshore and so act as a lure for the deep sea birds to come in and investigate. Very soon the first of the albatrosses arrived and we had both the Yellow-nosed and the Black-browed with us competing with the gulls for the rest of the trip.

By this time the boat was bouncing so much that I had trouble keeping my balance let alone picking up and focussing on the minute specks dodging in and out of the waves which were confidently being identified as Providence, Great-winged or Southern Giant Petrels by the experts all around me. In fact my confusion was almost complete until I discovered to my relief that the reason I couldn't tell the difference between the Providence and Solander's Petrel was because they are the same bird!

At this point a real note of excitement crept into the voices of those on the upper deck. An Albatross with a darkish head came towards us and then veered away. A great debate ensued as to its identity. It then returned and to the delight of all it proved to be a Grey-headed Albatross which has only twice before been identified in New South Wales waters. It flew round the boat several times before being tempted to try for some of the pieces of fish. Then, to the amazement of all, a second and a third Grey-headed Albatross appeared! Our fish pieces were greatly appreciated and I wish I could report that they were hand fed but we didn't quite reach that stage of familiarity with them. All the birds were juveniles at slightly different stages of development which was most instructive.

Wandering Albatrosses meant that we saw four species of these magnificent birds in all. The delicate Wilson's Storm Petrel together with Fairy Prions, Fluttering Shearwater and Gannets were added to my list as well as Southern Black-backed Gulls, Crested Terns and a Great Skua.

We got back to Wollongong harbour at about 5 pm. having been some 50 miles off shore and having had a splendid, if exhausting day. These trips are proposed to be monthly affairs and are being organised by David Fischer who can be contacted by telephone on Wollongong 27-1704 if you are interested. I can certainly recommend the experience.

David Winterbottom.

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME- (Part 2)

Driving along the main road heading north we were intrigued by the continual burning off of the bush while there were signs everywhere saying "This is a fire protected area." However, the Black Kites were making the most of it, circling overhead in large numbers waiting to feast on the insects or small animals fleeing the fires. We found this to be a common sight on our travels in the north of the territory. Our destination for the day was Daly River Crossing, which is north-west of Pine Creek and west of the Stuart Highway, about 4 hours drive from Katherine. We saw our first Partridge Pigeons and Water Buffalos on this drive. We enjoyed wandering around Red Lily Lagoon watching Radjah Shelducks, Comb-crested Jacanas, Black-necked Storks, Pelicans, egrets and Koels, in fact 30 species of birds in $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour. Alongside this lagoon is another that is an Aboriginal sacred area and only women can enter - you have to watch these special areas and not stray! On dusk a huge flock of 200+ Rainbow Bee-eaters circled the camping area and roosted in the trees - it was a sight to behold.

We moved on to Darwin the following day making camp at Howard Springs and spent 4 very enjoyable days travelling around the area. The highlight was 2 visits to Fogg Dam - a must for every birdwatcher. Originally the area was established for the experimentation of rice growing, but the birds moved in and took over and it is now a nature reserve. Australian Pratincole were wandering everywhere along

the road to the dam and Forest and Red-backed Kingfishers sitting on all available telegraph wires. What a sight when we arrived - we didn't know where to look first! Magpie Geese and Pied Herons were there by the hundreds, Comb-crested Jacanas, Black-winged Stilts, Glossy, Straw-necked and Sacred Ibis, cormorants, spoonbills, ducks, egrets, terns, pygmy-geese, finches and our first Yellow-rumped Mannikin were some of the birds we saw, it was so exciting! We were there in the morning and again in the afternoon and photographed a glorious sunset in the company of many mosquitos.

Yarrowonga Sanctuary had recently been taken over by the Conservation Commission and is a haven for sick and injured birds and animals. We arrived there about 9-30am. for feeding time and a lot of visiting birds arrived to partake of the feast, especially Pied Herons. We also visited Marraki Conservation area, Berry Springs, Howard Springs picnic area and of course Darwin including the Botanic Gardens where we saw the Yellow Oriole. Berry Springs is a good spot for a swim and also a great birding spot, here we saw the Yellow Figbird, Spangled Drongo, Varied Triller, Large-billed Gerygone and Rufous-banded and Red-headed Honeyeaters. There are large flocks of Magpie Larks in the north, they seem to take over from the Australian Magpie which is not recorded around the Darwin area, and we had a flock of 50 Magpie Larks in the caravan park where we were staying.

Thursday 24th June we set off for Kakadu National Park and what a wonderful experience that proved to be. We set up camp at Malabanbandju for the first few days, a lovely little camping area beside a beautiful lagoon complete with pit toilets. Here we had lovely sunrises, saw a Dingo, heard Bush Thick-knee calling at night, and enjoyed sitting in front of the van watching honeyeaters bathing in the lagoon and a family of Brown Quail wandering by. There were lots of birds around including the Pheasant Coucal, Brown, Bar-breasted, White-throated and White-gaped Honeyeaters, Forest and Sacred Kingfishers and Masked, Long-tailed and Crimson Finches to name a few.

We visited Obiri Rock, famous for it's Aboriginal paintings and wandered in the monsoon rainforest, being careful not to trespass onto Aboriginal sacred ground. Here we saw an Orange-footed Scrubfowl, figbirds, orioles and Emerald Doves and nearby Brolga and another dingo.

Lunch was beside the East Alligator River where several people were fishing for Barramundi and we saw several Aboriginals driving across the causeway into Arnhem Land where white people can only go if they have a permit. We spent a day on the Kakadu Princess cruising the South Alligator River and saw our first salt-water crocodiles - 26 in all. We sampled Barramundi and Buffalo steak for lunch and on arrival back at the floating pontoon wharf noticed that the river had risen 30feet since our departure in the morning.

Jabiru is the main township in the area. The shopping complex had just been constructed and the tradespeople were just moving into modern, air conditioned shops from very cramped air conditioned portable buildings. Some very modern brick homes had been built for the uranium miners working nearby.

June 29th saw us move to Yellow-waters, another lovely camping spot within the park. Here we enjoyed a 2 hour boat trip through the lagoon seeing hundreds of birds, some crocodiles and lots of fishermen. Magpie Geese and Pied Herons were everywhere, also Striated and Rufous Night Herons, Caspian and Gull-billed Terns, Green Pygmy-Geese, ibis, egrets, swamphens, plovers, Darters, Wandering Whistling-Duck, Olive-backed Orioles, Shining Flycatchers, Bar-shouldered Doves, Buff-banded Rails, Black-necked Storks - the list seemed endless. We saw a Whistling Kite swoop down and take a snake from a mangrove tree and fly up to a nest with it. Peaceful and Diamond Doves, White-breasted and Little Woodswallows, Mistletoebirds, Willie Wagtails, corellas, and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were also in the area.

A couple of days were spent at Nourlangie Rangers Camp along with the mosquitos and a very noisy generator, but the Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove and Tawny Grassbirds were there so we soon forgot any problems. From here we visited Nourlangie Rock and saw the famous Blue Paintings done by the Aboriginies many years ago, as well as lots of other paintings. The highlight of this spot was the sighting of 2 Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeons wandering around the Blue Rock area, but we had to

be careful as there are several areas of sacred ground.

Saturday 3rd July we packed up and set off for UDP Falls driving through some very interesting creek crossings and seeing a lot of termite nests. What a pleasant sight the lovely clear pool and 100metre high waterfall was to us - we couldn't wait to have a swim, our first for some time. We climbed to the top of the falls and saw several species of honeyeaters including our first White-lined Honeyeater. The area at the top of the falls was beautiful with lots of lovely waterholes, little orchids and flowering grevilleas. There were several Great Bowerbirds in the camp and a large decorated bower in use.

On 6th July we were once more on the road heading for Pine Creek and looking for the Hooded Parrot. The Ranger at Pine Creek suggested we camp at the roadside rest area at Edith River where we could find the parrot but we had no luck. However, Cockatiels, Galahs, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos, Rufous Whistlers, Crested Pigeons and a White-bellied Sea-Eagle were seen there.

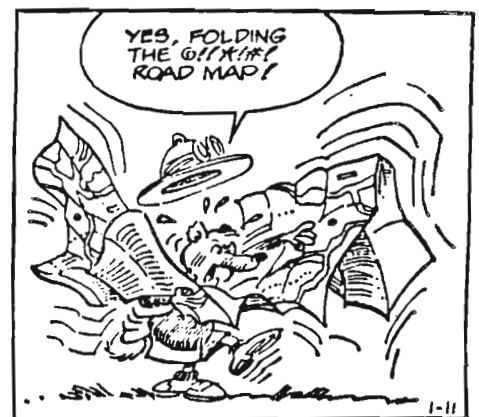
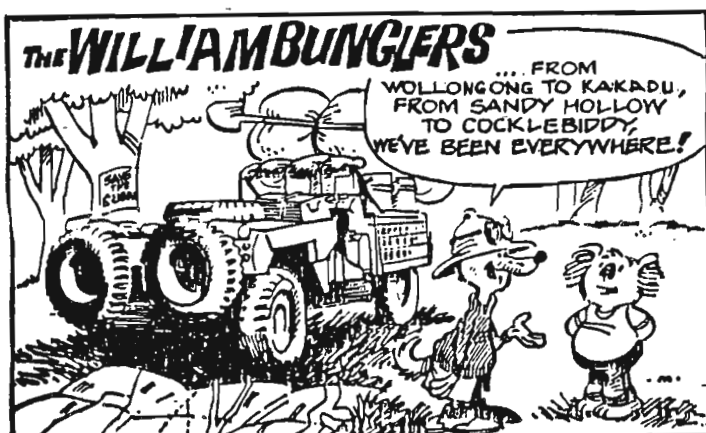
Springvale Homestead on the Katherine River at Katherine was our next stop-over for 2 nights. The homestead had been built by the explorer Giles, who drove the first cattle there from South Australia over 100 years ago and there were some very interesting trees growing there including Indian Rain, Boab, Custard Apple, Native Fig and Jew Jew Trees that produces fruit containing quinine. Here we saw 3 kingfishers, the Azure, Sacred and Red-backed as well as the Blue-winged Kookaburra.

Mataranka is another lovely old homestead, just over 100 km. south of Katherine with beautiful thermal pools. This was our home for the next 2 nights and we relaxed and enjoyed the warm water. We photographed a waterhole with mauve waterlilies and as we packed up to leave 13 Great Bowerbirds sat in the trees above us. Crossing the high bridge at Warlock Ponds we were amazed to see how the water had dried up since we'd been there a month before. South of Elliott the trees are shorter and the growth more stunted, quite a contrast to the taller trees and shrubs that grow further north where there is more rain.

We had continually been frustrated by the swift flight of lorikeets in the north and it wasn't until we arrived back at Mt. Isa on 5th August and camped in the Moodarra Caravan Park that we were able to identify these birds as the Varied Lorikeets. The bloodwood trees were in full flower and the birds were content to stay and feed thus giving us a very good sighting.

It was 12th July and as we drove southwards towards Three Ways and Tennant Creek with our next goal in mind, we reflected back on our adventures up north and all the lovely places, plants and birds we'd seen since we turned this corner a little over a month before, how fortunate we were to be able to share this wonderful experience together, and now we were heading south to new experiences and excitement.

Nola & Laurie Williams.



A FUNNY DUCK.

On 1st June Lindsay Smith and I went to Comerong Island in an effort to find an unusual duck that Barry Virtue had told me about a few days before. The duck was first sighted by Diana Wright and Judy Wilson from Nowra on 21st May, 1985. It was sighted again the next day by Barry and Diana and again by Barry on 29th May.

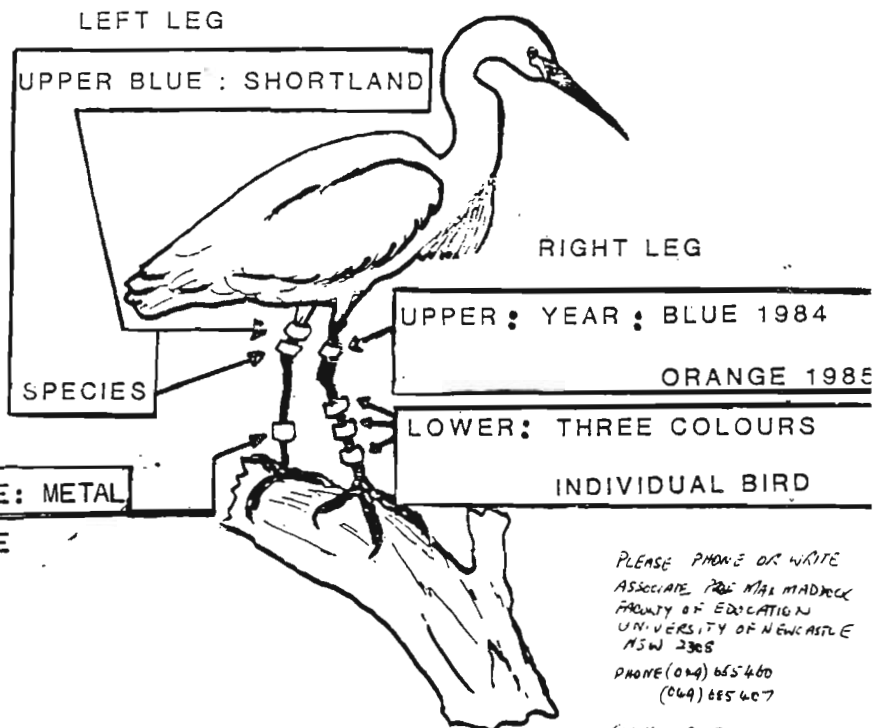
The bird was situated on the south-west corner of the lagoon, on the northern side of Comerong Island. Here the water is fairly deep and has a heavily vegetated bottom. A fresh water channel drains from the island's swamps and enters the lagoon here thus making the water brackish.

The bird was found almost immediately upon our arrival at the lagoon. It was associating with a group of about 50 Eurasian Coot as it had been doing since its discovery ten days previously. In size it was similar or slightly smaller than the coot. It sat very low in the water similar to the Musk Duck. The colour was a dark grey-brown with the head tending to be a darker brown. The body was laterally aligned with pale scalloping. It's bill was a greyish-blue while it's shape was best described as shovel shaped. It's tail was long and fanned out over the water, or when the bird became alert it was cocked up vertically, the quills of the tail feathers were very thick and extended beyond the feathering giving it a spine-tailed appearance. Barry and Diana observed it diving however all it wanted to do while we were there was sleep. There is no doubt as to the birds identity, a female Blue-billed Duck. As to why it has appeared in such an unusual location we can offer no explanation. They are usually found on deep freshwater ponds with dense vegetation around the edges or vast open water areas. The bird allowed us to approach to within twenty metres which is also against their general behaviour, which is shy and retreating. This all goes to prove that birds have wings and they don't read books!

Several other unusual sightings were also found while we were there. A Yellow-billed Spoonbill was sighted in the adjacent swampy ground, while on the sand flats were over 270 Bar-tailed Godwits, an unusual number for this time of year. When we put the Godwits up we had another surprise; 5 Black-tailed Godwits which is also very unusual for this time of year. Also present were 14 Pied Oystercatchers and a Sooty Oystercatcher which is usually found on rocky outcrops. Overall it was a fascinating day and as usual Comerong Island proved to be one of the most interesting places in our area to go birding.

Chris Chafer.

BANDING SHORTLAND EGRETS



LOWER: AUSTRALIAN BIRD BANDING SCHEME: METAL

WHITE: CATTLE. ORANGE: LITTLE
BLACK: PLUMED. PALE GREEN: LARGE

PLEASE PHONE OR WRITE
ASSOCIATE PROF. MAZ MADRICK
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE
NSW 2308
PHONE (049) 665 400
(049) 665 407

GIVING LOCATION
BANDING PATTERN OBSERVED
TIME OF DAY AND DATE
WHAT BIRDS WERE DOING
EG. RESTING, FEEDING

BIRD OBSERVATORY COURSES

BARREN GROUNDS

Programme of Courses - July 1985 to March 1986

Nests - Changes shown are for all tuition, meals and accommodation. The Observatory is also open for "casual" visits from Sunday to Thursday nights at a cost of \$20 per night (\$18 RAOU members & \$12 children under 16 years). Rates include accommodation and all meals. Special reduced rates on some courses for full-time students - ask for details.

'CASUAL' MONTH AT BARREN GROUNDS

Dates: 1-31 July 1985
The Wardens are on holiday and Annie Schofield is taking over for a while. Come for a day, a weekend or a week - and explore Barren Grounds with the help of an enthusiastic young naturalist.

BIRDS FOR BEGINNERS

Leaders: Richard and Pat Jordan
Dates: 2-5 August 1985
Cost: \$72
A long-weekend course to introduce beginners to the world of birds. How to identify common birds, learning about bird calls, and the books and equipment needed. Another of our popular courses to increase understanding and awareness of bush birds. A close look at some species by name-calling and banding.

THE WORLD OF THE HONEYEATER

Leader: Dr Graham Pike
Course fully-booked

SPRING COMES TO BARREN GROUNDS

Leaders: Richard and Pat Jordan
Dates: 6-8 September 1985
Cost: \$64
A look at the birds, wildflowers and mammals at the start of the spring. This is the time of the year when the bushland wildflowers come into flower, and birds are commencing breeding activities. Mainly for beginners.

SOUND RECORDING WORKSHOP

Dates: 13-15 September 1985
Cost: \$58
A workshop for amateurs and professionals involved in the field of natural history sound recording. A chance to share ideas, practice techniques and test equipment. An opportunity not-to-be-missed for the sound recorder. This workshop continues the work of two earlier ones at Rotamah Island Bird Observatory, when the Natural History Sound Recording Society was established.

BIRD CALLS AND THEIR MEANING

Leader: Richard Jordan
Dates: 20-22 September 1985
Cost: \$64
This is the time at which Barren Grounds birds are most vocal. Learn how to identify birds by their calls, and the significance of the wide variety of sounds that birds make. A beginners look at how to make recordings of bird calls.

WILDFLOWERS OF BARREN GROUNDS

Leaders: Denise Black and Pat Jordan
Dates: 4-7 October 1985
Cost: \$88
A long-weekend course to learn about bush-land flora at a time when many plants are in flower. Look at classification and identification of the multitude of species in Barren Grounds Nature Reserve through the eyes of two botanists.

ORCHIDS, FERNS AND WILDFLOWERS OF THE HEATH

Leaders: Leo Cady and Pat Jordan
Dates: 11-13 October 1985
Cost: \$64
Leo Cady is an expert on orchids and ferns. This course will include a close look at plants in these groups, as well as a general study of the spectacular springtime wildflower display with Pat.

GROUND PARROTS AND BRISTLEBIRDS

Leaders: Richard Jordan and Alan Leishman
Dates: 1-3 November 1985
Cost: \$64
A close look at two endangered species found in good numbers in Barren Grounds Nature Reserve. Course members will learn various techniques for both species and assist with projects to increase our understanding of them. Attempts will be made to capture both species for banding and further study.

BIRDS FOR BEGINNERS

Leaders: Richard and Pat Jordan
Dates: 22-24 November 1985
Cost: \$64
Another practical introduction to the world of birds, to be organised along the same lines as the one in August. Many birds are nesting at this time of the year, and course members will learn how to find nests and record the details on a Nest Record Card. We shall also be looking at breeding behaviour and territories.

THE FROGS OF BARREN GROUNDS

Leader: John Butler
Dates: 6-8 December 1985
Cost: \$64
Barren Grounds Nature Reserve is home for many frogs. Learn about their lives, and how to identify them, with an expert from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Hope for rain on this course!

practical instruction in the skills of the preparation of bird skins. The course leader is an ornithologist with the Australian Museum.

AN INTRODUCTION TO NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Leaders: Richard and Pat Jordan
Dates: 27-31 March 1986 (Easter)
Cost: \$98
This is a course for beginners to serious photography. Some basic photographic theory - camera, lenses, films etc., leading to an introduction to techniques of nature photography. Some darkroom work that you can do at home. How to avoid expensive mistakes with equipment.

Barren Grounds Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 3, Jamberoo, N.S.W., 2533 Telephone: (042) 36 0198

EYRE COURSES

For information about the following courses contact Nick Dymond at the address below.
All courses will run from Sunday afternoon to the following Saturday morning. Cost of courses is \$120.00 (inclusive of food and accommodation). Families are welcome.

BIRD BANDING

Leader: Nick Dymond
Dates: 1-7 September 1985
Learn how to catch, age and sex birds. This course will demonstrate how a banding project is run and the usefulness of gathering this type of information.

EYRE BIRD OBSERVATORY

Leader: Nick Dymond
Dates: 11-17 August, 1985
The course will describe the history of Eyre as a telegraph station and observatory. Studies of the landscape and scenery of the Great Australian Bight will be a feature of the course.

NESTS AND TERRITORIES

Leader: Stephen Ambrose
Dates: 13-19 October, 1985

A course aimed at increasing the knowledge of the birds breeding in this area. How and where to look for nests, and the pointers provided by the behaviour of nesting birds.

FILMING WILDLIFE

Leader: Bob Goodale
Dates: 3-9 November, 1985
For details contact the warden.

FIELD ORNITHOLOGY

Leader: Stephen Davies
Dates: 8-14 December, 1985
The course will include name-calling as a means of studying birds in the hand, census techniques and counting birds, nests and territories and the interpretation of data gathered.

Eyre Bird Observatory Cocklebirdy Via Norseman

Telegrams: EYRE OPRBWSB, Kelgoortle
Phone: (090) 393 450

ROTAMAH COURSES

For information on the following courses contact Tony Howard or Iobel Crawford at the address below.

Courses begin with lunch on the first day and end with lunch on the final day. The costs shown cover tuition, accommodation and all meals. Please try to arrive at Trupper Point between 11.30 and 12.30.

The Observatory is open at other times for casual visits at a cost of \$32 per night (\$30 RAOU members) for accommodation and all meals.

BIRDS FOR BEGINNERS

Leaders: Iobel Crawford & Tony Howard
Dates (four courses):
24 August, 1985
20-22 September, 1985
11-13 October, 1985
16-18 November, 1985
Cost: \$95
How to find birds, how to identify them by

appearance and call, how to use field guides and binoculars, a practical introduction to the birds of Rotamah. Bring binoculars if possible.

PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Leaders: Jane & Malcolm Calder & Iobel Crawford
Cost: \$95
Dates: 10-12 August
The course will explain the use of botanical keys and will introduce the language of botany and the books treating the plants of this part of Victoria. At least half of each day will be spent in the field. Please bring any relevant plants books plus a magnifying glass, if you have them. There are many types of vegetation on the island (saltmarsh, Melaleuca thickets, woodland and forest) and on the dunes of the Ninety Mile Beach, providing an interesting diversity of plants for study.

BIRDS IN THE HAND

Leaders: David Pezer & Ivor Preston
Dates: 6-8 December, 1985
Cost: \$95
Bird banding is a useful technique for studying birds and it also allows you to see what the birds are really like. You can compare the distinctive fieldmarks and see how the sexes differ or compare young birds with the adults. Learn how to handle and to band birds and how to determine their age or sex.

A BIT OF THIS AND A BIT OF THAT

Leaders to be announced
Dates: 13-17 January 1986
Cost: \$180
A relaxed introduction to names at Rotamah birdwatching plant identification, a look at the 'roos' and other mammals, beachcombing and searching for Aboriginal middens along the Ninety Mile Beach, ear-waxing away from the lights (Haley's Comet will be visible). Plenty of free time to explore or be lazy.

Rotamah Island Bird Observatory
P.O. Box 75,
Paynesville, Vic., 3880
Telephone: (051) 686 398.

Visitors are welcome at other times at all Observatories. Bird Observatories offer a range of interesting activities. Great places for a holiday for those interested in natural history. For general information phone the RAOU - (03) 370 1272.

I. B. O. C. NEWS

AUGUST, 1985.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
 Registered by Aust. Post Publication No NBH 3848.
POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

<u>CLUB MOTTO</u>	<u>PRESIDENT</u>	<u>SECRETARY</u>	<u>TREASURER</u>
"One Good Tern Deserves Another"	Dave Thomson 84 Mt. Pleasant Rd. <u>BALGOWNIE NSW 2519</u> 84-2876	Hazel Emery 63 Dymock St. <u>BALGOWNIE NSW 2519</u> 84-0139	Ron Almond 2 Shoobert Cres. <u>KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500</u> 29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, cnr of Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday 12th August at 7-30pm. The GUEST SPEAKER for the evening will be David Fischer. David has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the University of Redlands, California, A Master of Science Degree in Wildlife Management from Texas A & M University and has partly completed a Doctorate at Texas Tech University. He will speak to us about the Wildlife of Costa Rica and illustrate his talk with a selection of slides from this interesting part of the world.

The evening will provide members with the opportunity to gain an insight into the diverse wildlife of this interesting Central American country with many species so different from our own. We can all look forward to an informative and entertaining evening.

FIELD OUTING - Sunday 18th August to Wingecarribee Dam. Proceed to Robertson and take a right-hand turn onto the Kangaloon Road. Proceed to the dam wall parking area approximately 14 klms from Robertson. We will be meeting there at 8-30am. and visiting several spots in the area.

FILM NIGHT - Saturday 17th August. PLEASE NOTE - this film night will be held at the home of Norma & Ron Almond, 2 Shoobert Crescent, Keiraville not at the Williams' as shown in the 1985 programme. Two sessions 6-00pm & 8-00pm. Bring a plate and enjoy an informal social evening. The programme is as follows;

- (1) CREATURES OF THE DAWN 16 mins
Various Australian birds and animals seen in their natural surroundings.
- (2) THE STARLING 20 mins
A look at its life cycle.
- (3) LOOK AGAIN AT GULLS 25mins
Describes and identifies ten species of gull commonly found around the British Isles

(4) RIPPLES IN THE REEDS

20mins

Looks at birdlife on the Leighton Moss marshland in Lancashire, U.K.

OCTOBER CAMPS ADVANCE NOTICE

Family Camp - Friday 4th October to Monday 7th. Location Conjola approximately 2 hours south of Wollongong.

Long Distance Camp - Friday 18th October to Monday 21st. This camp will be located at Numeralla, 20 klms east of Cooma on a property named 'Tarcoola' approximately 5 hours drive from Wollongong.

Detailed maps locating both camp sites will be published in the September newsletter.

DUE TO EARLY PREPARATION of this newsletter because of Kakadu trip, there will be no summaries of July meeting and field outing.

JULY FILM NIGHT - A total of 43 members attended the two sessions at the home of Wal & Hazel Emery. All the films dealt with outback and northern Australia, and showed the diversity of the flora and fauna in both the wet and dry seasons. They heightened the enthusiasm of those preparing to go on the Kakadu trip and probably left those not going feeling a little envious.

Thanks to Richard Miller for selecting the films, to Jim Robinson for organizing the projector and to all members who attended and contributed to a pleasant evening.

QUAILS AND GURLEWS!

Yuraygir National Park is situated between the townships of Red Rock and Angourie on the N.S.W. north coast. It was formerly divided into three separate parks, Red Rock N.P. in the south Minnie Water Nature Reserve in the centre and Angourie N.P. to the north. Due to recent additions to these parks, they are now joined together and are collectively known as Yuraygir N.P.

During early April we paid a visit to the southern Red Rock section of the park. Intending only an overnight stop we were so impressed with the varied habitat that we spent four days exploring this interesting environment.

The focal point of the park is the Station Creek Rest Area, set among a beautiful selection of angophoras, banksia, casuarina and melaleuca. A good variety of camping spots are made more pleasant with the provision of pit toilets picnic tables, fire places and plenty of wood in the wood pile.

A 16 klm dirt road leads to the rest area, leaving the Princes Highway approximately 40 klms north of Coffs Harbour. It passes through pine forest, eucalypt forest and open grassland. At the northern end of the rest area is a nature trail. Initially this leads down to Station Creek where we observed White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Striated Heron and Azure Kingfisher. After climbing back up the creek bank the track veers westward and takes the walker through a surprisingly diverse variety of tree types. Along this section we found Red-backed Fairy-wrens, Glossy Black Cockatoos, Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets. After another five hundred metres of forest, the track turns south and gives way to open grassland. While we were there the grasses varied in height from a half to one and a half metres, and were very wet. Along this section we found many Brown Quail ranging from chicks (little more than a small black ball of fluff) to adults, Tawny Grassbird, Singing Bushlark, Diamond Firetail and eight tiny King Quail. The track then comes out onto the main access road about a kilometre from the rest area. Almost directly opposite this point is an old farm dam, now overgrown with reeds and small trees. Here we found White-throated and Brown Honeyeaters, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin and a Pheasant Coucal. On two spotlighting ventures we found a White-throated Nightjar at this point.

Common birds through the park include Blue-faced and White-cheeked Honeyeaters Torresian Crow and White-breasted Woodswallow.

Going east from the rest area you travel over a few hundred metres of sand dunes eventually arriving at the beach. The creek also enters the sea here and on its northern side is a rocky headland. Species found here included Sooty Oystercatcher, Eastern Reef Egret, Little Tern, Double-banded Plover and Black-fronted Plover.

About 1.5 Kms west of the camping area a 4WD track heads off to the south. This track passes through open grassland and crosses several small creeks before turning east, once again coming to the dune system. Here are several large lagoons fringed with reeds and casuarinas and partially covered with lillies. They provide ideal habitat for many waterbirds including Egrets, Musk Duck, Hardhead, Herons and the Comb-crested Jacana.

Once on the beach a further 2 klm walk to the south brings you to another estuary on the northern edge of Red Rock township. It was here on a small sand islet in the middle of the stream that we found the highlight of our stay, the Beach Thick-knee. In fact three birds were found, two adults and an immature bird. Wanting a closer look at this odd looking species I waded out to the isle. Upon wading ashore I was quite surprised to find that instead of running away the birds actually ran towards me and after sitting down and squeaking I enticed the birds to within five metres of me. Belonging to the wader family, they are quite large standing over half a metre tall. They are mainly nocturnal, feeding on crabs and other marine invertebrates which occur in estuaries and beaches. It was quite strange to have these odd looking waders standing a few metres away bobbing their heads, flicking their tails from side to side and calling in a high pitched whistle. Other species present at this location included Pied Oystercatcher, Whimbrel, Osprey, Black-shouldered Kite and Gull-billed Terns.

In all we recorded over 90 species during our stay and much more habitat went unexplored. I can thoroughly recommend this area as a stop-over point or indeed a destination for anyone travelling to the north. I doubt that you will be disappointed.

Chris & Kerry Chafer.

SOME NOTES ON FIVE NEW SPECIES FOR THE HOSKIN'S NATURE RESERVE.

The addition of five species to the Bird List of the Cecil Hoskin's Nature Reserve near Moss Vale brings the total to 102. A summary of the birds was made in a report; The Avifauna of the Cecil Hoskin's Nature Reserve (C. Sonter, Bowral 1976, Unpub.) which formed the basis for intended Public Relations literature by the N.S.W. National Parks and Wildlife Service. Since the production of that Report 11 species have been added and their details published or made known through a wide source of papers. It is the writers intention to summarise and give added notes to five more species in this short paper.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE Podiceps cristatus. The presence of this species in the Berrima District has been documented in; Cumberland Bird Observer's Club Newsletter, 5:1, Sept/Oct 1983 (Sonter, C) and Illawarra Bird Observer's Club News, November 1984 (Smith, L). Further observations have appeared since in both these publications (Unusual sightings). Smith (loc.cit) saw them on the Wingecarribee Dam, "... in past years and even found the odd pair breeding there.." is remarkable to say the least. The dam was still under construction in 1978 and certainly was unfavourable to most species for sometime after it filled.

On 17th January while birdwatching in the Hoskin's Reserve I observed a Great Crested Grebe in breeding plumage. The bird appeared to be "spinning", in a fashion not unlike that performed by the Phalarope sp., in a dense patch of surface-floating water weed. After clearing the weed cover it dived, remained submerged briefly before returning to the surface. This action being performed several times during my period of observation. Just as I was leaving I noted a small striped chick emerge from between the folded wings of the adult bird. The chick jumped from the adults back, swam a short distance between the water weed and watched the spinning and diving technique of the adult.

The chick was not seen to be fed nor did it submerge. I left my viewing spot to observe birds elsewhere but on my return saw another adult Grebe tending the chick. During another five minutes of observation I noted both adults to "spin" and dive and also proffered food items to the chick. The chick, in my opinion was five to seven days old.

Of further interest is that P. Bath observed one immature Great Crested Grebe at Hoskin's Reserve on the 30th January 1985 (IBOC News, Apr.'85). It should be noted that the fledging to adult period for this species is 71 - 79 days (Handbook of the Birds of Europe the Middle East and North Africa, Cramp, et al, 1977). Therefore, the observation of a downy chick on 17th January 1985 would not reach "immature" stage in the next 13 days and the observation of P. Bath may well refer to another bird from a different pair.

In any event the Great Crested Grebe of 17th January 1985 marks not only the first record but also the first-known breeding of the species in the reserve.

NOTE: Fledging to maturity is for that period between hatching to when the young are independent of the adults.

MALLARD Anas platyrhynchos On 17th January 1985, while watching birds from the walking track in the reserve, I noted some birds perched on fallen dead timber in water opposite me on the south-eastern edge near an animal shelter. This group of birds contained two Grey Teal A. gibberifrons, two Pacific Black Ducks A. superciliosa, one Little Pied Cormorant Phalacrocorax melanoleucos and a duck "dabbling" under the branches in the water.

The dabbling bird emerged to perch and preen with the other birds but was then seen to have a more chestnut hue to the plumage, no noticeable eyestripe and feet of a bright orange-red. Later, when the bird preened under the left wing the speculum showed rich purple. Another species which could perhaps be confused with the Mallard would be the Australasian Shoveler A. rhynchotis because of wing speculum, feet colour and female/eclipse plumage being similar to a true Mallard.

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE Haliaeetus leucogaster. This species, though a breeding resident of the Berrima District had not been recorded at the Hoskin's Reserve. On 26th August 1984 a single adult-plumaged bird was observed to harass resting waterfowl and other birds on the open water and nearby pastureland at the north-eastern end of the reserve. The species has probably been overlooked since a pair regularly patrol the Wingecarribee River just downstream of the reserve.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER Calidris acuminata. Not only is this a new record for the reserve but also for the district. Because of the former topography (now changed by large dams etc.) of the Berrima District it is not surprising that the Charadriiformes were poorly represented. With the construction of the two large dams of the Wingecarribee and Fitzroy Falls creating some suitable habitat, it is now attractive to this family. An example of this has been that of a Common Sandpiper Tringa hypoleucos being observed at Fitzroy Falls Reservoir by P. Bath (IBOC News April 1985, p6). However, at Hoskin's Reserve there is little wader habitat for birds of the Calidris genus, so the observation of two birds on 26th August 1984 is significant. Both birds were observed foraging over a large floating mass of aquatic weed and sedges on the eastern edge of the reserve.

COMMON MYNAH Acridotheres tristis. It was only a matter of time before this species would find its way onto the Bird List of Hoskin's Reserve. In many parts of the district this species has shown it can survive well away from human habitation. On 26th August 1984 three birds were observed in trees on the edge of the walking track near the gate at the northern end. One bird was seen to inspect two tree hollows in a dead tree.

Chris Sonter.

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MY TRIP AROUND AUSTRALIA.

We left at 3.00am on Saturday 5th May 1984. Stopped at Toowoomba but no special sightings except 1 Flame Robin (male). 1st Brolga for trip near Rockhampton on the next day, also heard both Laughing and Blue-winged Kookaburras at Rockhampton caravan park. Red-winged Parrot, Pale-headed Rosella, Magpie Goose and Black-necked Stork were all seen on the next day while 2 new species, the Red-backed Fairy-wren and Pheasant Coucal, were seen in Townsville.

By the 3rd day we were in Cairns and we decided to stay a few days. Brown and Yellow Honeyeaters flourished in the caravan park. We also went to the Low Isles, 2 beautiful islands off Port Douglas where tropical fish can be seen and Brown Booby and both phases of the Eastern Reef Egret abound. Sooty Tern and the yellow race of Figbird were also seen at Cairns. We then crossed the Atherton Tablelands where I spotted a Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Australian Brush-turkey. We stopped at the crater in Mt. Hypipamee National Park where a Grey Whistler and Atherton Scrubwren were seen. On the other side of the range, a Squatter Pigeon and Red-backed Kingfisher were seen.

The next day we stopped at Normanton near the Gulf of Carpentaria where Australian Pratincole are very common. Australian Hobby and Plumed Whistling-Duck were also seen. We left Normanton the next day and headed for Burketown. In 25 klms of road we counted 282 Australian Pratincole. The 1st Great Bowerbird and Varied Lorikeet of the trip were seen and Diamond Dove, Sarus Crane, Spotted Harrier and Wandering Whistling-Duck were new species seen. As we left camp the following day I saw my first Green Pygmy-Goose. Later that day an Australian Bustard with an immature crossed the road in front of us.

We were now in the Northern Territory. We stayed at Katherine a few days and no birds were sighted except the occasional Black Kite. We left Katherine on the 18th May, 2 weeks after we started, for Inverway Station on the Victoria River downs. On the way a Black-breasted Buzzard was viewed. We stayed there a few days and Little Button-quail were flushed. We left for Kununurra on the Tuesday, Spinifex Pigeon were seen on the way. We stayed there a few days and Radjah Shelduck, Collared Sparrowhawk, Yellow-tinted Honeyeater, Crimson, Long-tailed and Masked Finches, Tawny Grassbird, an Osprey, Comb-crested Jacana and Little Shrike-thrush were all seen. We then travelled to a place where I have seen Purple-crowned Fairy-wrens and Red-headed Honeyeaters but instead we saw Red-backed Button-quail, Banded, Bar-breasted and White-throated Honeyeaters, White-quilled Rock Pigeon and Spotted Nightjar to name a few. We then travelled through Hall's Creek to Geikie Gorge where Grey-headed, White-gaped and Golden-backed Honeyeaters were all viewed at close range.

We then went to Derby and from there to Broome. On the way both Black and Grey Falcons were seen. We stayed at Broome for a couple of days and then we travelled south through Port Hedland to Dampier. We went fishing here and saw Wilson's Storm-Petrel, Roseate Tern and another Osprey. By the 9th June we were at Canarvon and Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, White-backed Swallow, Wedgebill and a Blue-and-white Wren had all been seen. It took 2 days to get to Perth and on the way, Laughing Turtle-Doves and Brown-headed Honeyeaters were seen in banksia. White-tailed Black Cockatoo, Port Lincoln and Regent Parrots, Inland Thornbill and Australian Shelduck were all seen in and around Perth. Albany was the next destination and White-cheeked Honeyeater, Western Rosella and Rock Parrots were all seen here. We then travelled to Esperance and White-browed Babbler were spotted as well as Pacific Gulls. Then up to Kalgoorlie and across the Nullarbor, where Pink Cockatoo were seen, to Adelaide; the Adelaide Rosella was seen here. From here we went through Victoria through Pinnaroo and Ouyen and back through Narrandera and Yass. Blue Bonnets and Crimson Rosella were the last 2 species seen.

The trip lasted 2 months covering approximately 18,000 klms. 198 species were seen, 66 of which were new species. The bird most seen was the Magpie-lark and the most abundant in its range was the Australian Pratincole.

Peter Ewin.

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INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR MAY - JUNE, 1985.

MC Barn Owl	1	Ill. Yacht Club	19-5-85	R. Imisides
U Pacific Heron	4	F6 Kanahooka Road	4-6-85	"
S Spangled Drongo	2	Primbee	21-5-85	"
PE Peaceful Dove	1	"	19-5-85	"
S Little Eagle	1	Korrungulla Swamp	27-5-85	"
R Great Crested Grebe	90	Wingecarribee	18-5-85	C. Chafer
U Hoary-headed Grebe	200+	" "	18-5-85	"
R White-winged Tern	1	Windang	20-5-85	"
R Blue-billed Duck	1	Comerong Island	1-6-85	"
S Black-tailed Godwit	5	"	1-6-85	"
R Pied Oystercatcher	14	"	1-6-85	"
S Eastern Reef Egret	1	Barrack Point	9-6-85	"
U Rufous Night Heron	1	Windang	9-6-85	"
S Australasian Bittern	1	Shellharbour S.W.	9-6-85	" & L. Smith etc.
S Darter	1	Towradgi Creek	2-6-85	Hales'
MC Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo	1	Stuart Park	3-6-85	R. Almond
C Sacred Kingfisher	1	" "	17-5-85	"
MC Jacky Winter	1	" "	8-6-85	"
MC Gang Gang Cockatoo	6	Bulli Pass	16-5-85	I. Rowles
MC Little Tern	1	Sandon Point	7-6-85	"
MC White-fronted Tern	1	" "	7-6-85	"
R Red-rumped Parrot	2	J.J. Kelly Park	10-6-85	"
MC Yellow-throated Scrubwren	1	Mt. Kembla	8-6-85	L & J McGettigan
U Emerald Dove	2	Mt. Kembla	8-6-85	"
U Crested Shrike-tit	1	"	8-6-85	"
S Australasian Bittern	1	Shellharbour S.W.	17-5-85	P. Bath
MC White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	Primbee	22-5-85	"
S White-headed Pigeon	1	Bass Point	27-5-85	"
MC Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	Albion Park	4-6-85	"
U Azure Kingfisher	1	Unanderra	30-5-85	"
U Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	9	Keiraville	3-5-85	E. Gay
U Australian Hobby	1	Mt. Warrigal	8-5-85	P. Fackender
U Kelp Gull	1	Russellvale Tip	4-5-85	K. Mills
U Grey Currawong	1	Meryla Pass	5-5-85	"
U Little Grassbird	1	Hoskin's N.R.	5-5-85	"
U Grey Goshawk	1	Woonona	11-5-85	"
S White-headed Pigeon	3	Bass Point	25-5-85	W & H Emery
U Collared Sparrowhawk	1	Balgownie	30-6-85	"
R Striated Heron	1	Oak Flats	17-6-85	W. Emery
R Striated Heron	1	Fairy Creek	18-6-85	"
S Rose Robin	1	Balgownie	2-7-85	H. Emery
<u>Boat trip off Wollongong</u>				
Sooty Albatross	1	" "	25-5-85	D. Fischer,
Northern Giant-Petrel	2	" "	"	L. Smith,
Cape Petrel	6	" "	"	C. Chafer,
White-headed Petrel	4	" "	"	& Others.
Kermadec Petrel	1	" "	"	
Arctic Tern	1	" "	"	

JULY NEWSLETTER "A Trip to the Ocean Blue"

Article reads three Imm Grey-headed Albatrosses. Please correct to two only.
Editor.

I.B.O.C. AUTUMN BIRD COUNT - 1 JUNE 1985 - COUNT NO.13

Weather

Sat 1 June: Heavily overcast all day, cool 18°C, no wind.
 Sun 2 June: Heavily overcast with occasional mist in morning, very strong winds in afternoon.

Area 1 - North

Team one: Horace Ward, Ron Almond, Esme Gay, and Peg McKinley on Saturday
 Team two: David and James Winterbottom on Sunday.
 Two teams: 13.5 hrs, 78 kms, 60 species (cumulative).

Area 2 - Thirroul

Ian Rowles and Jeff Smeaton

One team: 9.5 hrs, 105 kms, 80 species

Area 3 - Corrimal

Team one: Wal Emery, Hazel Emery and Chris Chafer in morning, Hazel Emery and Nola Williams in Botanical Gardens and Rhododendron Park in afternoon.

Say two teams: 13 hrs, 46 kms, 101 species (cumulative).

Area 4 - Mt Keira

Kevin Mills and Jacqueline Jakeman

One team: 7.5 hrs, 138 kms, 70 species

Area 5 - Mollongong

Dave Thomson, Laurie and Nola Williams, Don Rogers (Sunday count)

One team: 7 hrs, 38 kms, 62 species

Area 6 - Dapto

Team one: Ron Imisides and Brian James
 Team two: Lindsay Smith, Phil Bath and Chris Brandis
 Two teams: 14 hrs, 82 kms, 86 species (cumulative)

Area 7 - Lake

Kevin Wood and Peter Facender all day, Peter Ewin half day (pm).

One team: 9 hrs, 50 kms, 84 species

Cumulatively: 9 teams, 25 people, 73.5 hours, 537 kms, 155 species, 21556 individuals.

Commentary

Below, I have tabulated some statistics of interest drawn from our last seven counts, all of which have been conducted very similarly.
 The number of species recorded for our Lillawarra area during each of these Autumn counts falls within the range 141 to 155, while the corresponding range for Spring counts is 161 to 165.

Within each sub-area, more than 100 species has been recorded twice, once in Spring 1984 in Dapto, and this Autumn 1985 in Corrimal. Some sub-areas produce fairly consistent species totals for the same season while others fluctuate. The Thirroul, Corrimal, and Mt Keira sub-areas fluctuate more than others with Autumn ranges of 59 to 80 (21 species), 66 to 101 (35 species) and 65 to 88 (23 species) respectively. Comments on the possible reasons for these fluctuations are most welcome.

Count	Mt SPECIES										Total Species Individuals
	North	Thirroul	Corrimal	Keira	W'gong	Dapto	Lake	Total	Species	Individuals	
May '82	52	63	83	61	61	61	78	68	141	18,646	
Oct '82	75	65	89	73	62	62	96	82	165	16,491	
May '83	69	59	84	65	57	57	75	71	149	22,867	
Oct '83	65	82	91	76	54	54	98	74	163	23,615	
May '84	63	69	66	88	61	61	88	80	147	19,168	
Nov '84	64	85	94	74	57	57	101	81	161	18,606	
Jun '85	60	80	101	70	62	62	86	84	155	21,556	

Some features of this count which deserve special mention are as follows:

- Twelve raptors were observed out of a total of 17 which have been previously recorded (GIBSON 1977). The Osprey, Crested Hawk, Letter-winged Kite, Black Kite and Peregrine Falcon were not seen.
- A large number of Cattle Egrets (200+) were seen in the Corrimal sub-area roosting in swampland at the rear of the I.C.C. Depot in York Road, Bellambi. This swampland has not previously been surveyed.
- Of a total of 66 Satin Bowerbirds, 56 were in the Dapto sub-area and 50 of these were observed feeding on Giant Stinging Tree fruit near Huntley Mine.
- 29 Crested Pigeons were counted in the Dapto sub-area. Since 4th November 1978, the previous twelve counts of this species have yielded 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 0, 3, 7 and 3. These results support Doug Gibson's view in 1977 when he stated that the species was "increasing" yet in that year he knew only of its occurrence "in the extreme northern corner of the County on each side of the Nepean River". (GIBSON 1977).

I hope I have not overlooked any other highlight and conclude again by thanking those 25 people who participated. By so doing, we are all pleasing the late highly-recorded ornithologist H.L. Bell, who in one of his most recent papers "Forty Years of Change in the Avifauna of a Sydney Suburb" urged us to be involved in long-term counts of common and introduced species (Aust. Birds 1963 Vol. 18 No. 1).

K. A. Wood
LOCAL ORGANISER

GIBSON; J.D. 1977 birds of the County of Camden
Aust. Birds Vol. 11 No. 3



Logrunner

(13) 1st JUN 85 (P1)

	NORTH	THIRROUL	COORIMAL	MT KEIRA	W/BONG	DATA	LEGS	TOTAL
Little Grebe	5			1	17	34	1020	57
Hoary-II Grebe					6			1026
Blk-B Albatross			1					1
Toucan				1			2	3
Gt-CRESTED GALEE							3	3
Nankeen N Heron							4	4
Aust Gannet		1	2		1		1	5
Pelican		7			17	7	116	149
Lge Blk Cormorant		3	5		11	2	38	59
Little Blk Corm		4	4		14		57	79
Lge Pied Cormorant					2			2
Little Pied Corm	2	4	16	3	25	11	320	381
Wh Faced Heron	4	1	15	1	3	29	22	75
Cattle Egret		6	216		4	227	10	459
Large Egret			1		4	6	11	22
Little Egret					1		9	10
Straw-Neck Ibis			1			99	6	106
White Ibis	1		4			75	87	167
Royal S/B					5	5	53	63
Yellow-B S/B						1		1
Black Swan					6	2	270	278
Black Duck	2		26	5	34	65	65	197
Mallard (I)			4				2	6
Grey Teal			30		155	22	1060	1267
Chestnut Teal	2		1		2	14	600	619
Wood Duck	89		35	54		323	244	525
Musk Duck				2			12	14
Wh-Eyed Duck					3	13		16
Black Sh Kite	1	2	2			4	3	12
Nankeen Kestrel	1	1			3	8		13
Dusky Moorhen		2	25	21	54	54	8	164
SPOTTED CRAKE							1	1
Mangrove Heron							1	1
Bl-wing Shoveller							10	10
MOUNTAIN DUCK							1	1
Reef Heron	1							1
Wh-necked Heron						5		5

(P3)

TOTAL

	NORTH	THIRROUL	CORIMAL	MT KEIRA	WONG	DARTO	LAKE	TOTAL
King Parrot		4	8	5		26		43
Crimson Rosella	32	31	12	32		45		152
Eastern Rosella			14	11		38		63
Fan T Cuckoo			2		3	3		8
Kookaburra	15	3	9	6	2	25	1	61
Sup Lyrebird		4	9	6		11		30
Welcome Swallow	6	51	92	40	9	194	28	420
Tree Martin		5						5
Pipit		2	6	2	8	29	2	49
Blk F Cuckoo Shr	1	2	2		2	7	8	22
Red Wh Bulbul	6	9	43	8	22	23	5	116
East Whipbird	6	12	46	3	5	17		89
Reed Warbler			1					1
Golden H Cisticola	1	7	19		10		14	51
Little Grassbird			2					2
Sup Blue Wren	11	20	33	4	34	58	52	212
Variegated Wren	2		3	6		12	2	13
Yellow T/B			15					15
Striated T/B	1	60	26	4		17	6	108
Brown T/B	8	3	5	11	4	36	3	73
Y-Rumped T/U	4					5		12
Buff Rumped T/B				3				3
Brown Warbler	4	17	44	4		103		172
Grey Fantail	12	4	16	3	6	36	24	101
Willie Wagtail	3	2	4	1	1	29	13	53
Yellow Robin	3	3	9	2	2	8		27
Wk.-Brow Scr Wren	3	12	32	2		24	5	78
Horsefield Cuckoo							1	1
Rose Robin			4	1				5
Scarlet Robin	1		1			1		3
Large-billed Scr Wren		2	11			2		15
Rock Warbler		3						3
Yellow-th Scr Wren		13	16	1				30

(13)

1st JUN 85

	NORTH	THIRROUL	CORIMAL	MT KEIRA	WONG	DARTO	LAKE	TOTAL
East Swamphen		1	23	2	8	67	2	103
Coot				35	136	280	56	507
Pied O/C							1	1
Sooty O/C		4	8		8		1	21
Spur W Plover	16	4	19	4	30	46	28	147
Pied Stilt					17		2	19
Red Capped Dot			1				9	10
D Banded Dot			3				16	19
Blk Fronted Dot					15		4	19
Bar T Godwit							20	20
Red Knot							5	5
GREY-TAILED TATTLER							1	1
Dominican Gull		4	9		3		4	20
Silver Gull	115	500	1121	43	1690	1036	2650	7155
Caspian Tern		1					9	10
Crested Tern	3	5	1		3		2	14
Topknot Pigeon				4				4
Domestic Pigeon	81	1	6		77	7	46	218
Brown Pigeon		2	2			4		4
Wonga Pigeon			6	3				13
Sp Turtledove	13	6	46	4	18	14	22	123
Y T Blk Cockatoo	7		24	15		4		50
S Cr Wh Cockatoo	53	17	36	7		39	2	154
Galah	17	16	28	3		45	3	112
Grey Currawong		2		1				3
Crested Pigeon						29		29
Jacky Winter			2	1		2		5
Shrike Tit			5			3		8
Spotted Q Thrush				2				2
Shin Logrunner		6	11	1				18

(13)

1st JUN 85

15

13

13

1st JUN 85

NORTH

THIRLOOL

CRIMAL

MT KEIRA

WONG

DAPD

LKME

TOTAL

Golden Whistler

Grey Thrush

Wh Throated T/C

Mistletoe Bird

Spotted Pardalote

E Striated Pard

Silvereye

E Spinebill

Lewin H/E

Y Faced H/E

New Holland H/E

Noisy Miner

Little Wattlebird

Red Wattlebird

Goldfinch (1)

Red Browed Finch

Sparrow (1)

Starling (1)

Indian Myna (1)

Maggie Lark

Dusky W/S

Grey Butcherbird

Maggie

Pied Currawong

Catbird

Satin Bowerbird

Aust Raven

Zebra Finch

Brown Quail

Skylark

Shining-Bz Cuckoo

Brush Cuckoo

Double-bar Finch

1st JUN 85

NORTH

THIRLOOL

CRIMAL

MT KEIRA

WONG

DAPD

LKME

TOTAL

Wh-Br Sea Eagle

Brown Falcon

Brown Goshawk

Little Falcon

Grey Goshawk

Wedge-T Eagle

Wh-eared H/E

Tawny-crowned H/E

Wh-plumed H/E

Wh-naped H/E

Scaly Thrush

WEEBILL

Common Br-wings

Red-browed T/c

Emerald Dove

Sthn Emu Wren

Rainbow Lorikeet

Olive-backed Oriole

Swamp Harrier

Collared Sparrowhawk

Little Eagle

Whistling Kite

TOTAL SPECIES

60

80

101

70

62

86

84

155

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS

21556

14

1st JUN 85

NORTH

THIRLOOL

CRIMAL

MT KEIRA

WONG

DAPD

LKME

TOTAL

Golden Whistler

Grey Thrush

Wh Throated T/C

Mistletoe Bird

Spotted Pardalote

E Striated Pard

Silvereye

E Spinebill

Lewin H/E

Y Faced H/E

New Holland H/E

Noisy Miner

Little Wattlebird

Red Wattlebird

Goldfinch (1)

Red Browed Finch

Sparrow (1)

Starling (1)

Indian Myna (1)

Maggie Lark

Dusky W/S

Grey Butcherbird

Maggie

Pied Currawong

Catbird

Satin Bowerbird

Aust Raven

Zebra Finch

Brown Quail

Skylark

Shining-Bz Cuckoo

Brush Cuckoo

Double-bar Finch

1st JUN 85

NORTH

THIRLOOL

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TOTAL

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Brown Falcon

Brown Goshawk

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Wedge-T Eagle

Wh-eared H/E

Tawny-crowned H/E

Wh-plumed H/E

Wh-naped H/E

Scaly Thrush

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Common Br-wings

Red-browed T/c

Emerald Dove

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Olive-backed Oriole

Swamp Harrier

Collared Sparrowhawk

Little Eagle

Whistling Kite

TOTAL SPECIES

60

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TOTAL INDIVIDUALS

21556

I. B. O. C. NEWS



SEPTEMBER, 1986.

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No NBH 3848.

POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
63 Dymock St.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
29-3612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday 9th September at 7-30 p.m. Our GUEST SPEAKER for the evening will be Athol Colemane. Some members will recall Athol having led our club on past field outings to the Windsor and Camden areas. He is a member of the Cumberland Bird Observers Club and a very knowledgeable and experienced bird observer. His subject for the evening will be 'Nests, Eggs and Young'. Come along and enjoy an interesting informative evening.

FIELD OUTING - Saturday 14th September to Yellow Rock. We will be meeting at Mr. Mayo's property at 8-00 a.m. The property is situated 2.9 klms along the Yellow Rock Road, off the Illawarra Highway west of Albion Park. Enter the property on the left hand side just past a stock crossing sign. It is envisaged that this walk will only last about half a day and members will have the alternative of a short day or visiting some adjacent areas. Bring a carry lunch if you intend to stay all day.

KAKADU TRIP - A get together has been organized on Friday 20th September at 7-30p.m. at our regular meeting hall to show some slides and talk over our very successful trip. An invitation is extended to all those who went on the trip and their families to attend and bring a selection of slides. Please cull your slides down to an interesting practical number as we expect much of the scenery will have been duplicated many times over. Any members not involved with the trip but wishing to view the slides are cordially invited to attend. Please bring a plate for supper.

OCTOBER CAMPS. Conjola Camp - Friday 4th October to Monday 7th. This camp is located on the property of Stan & Lois Sperring. It fronts the Princes Highway and is about 22 klms south of Wandandian approximately 2 hours drive from Wollongong.

Numeralla Camp - This is a long distance camp to a property named 'Tarcoola' approximately 20 klms east of Cooma. It will be held from Friday 18th October to Monday 21st October. Some members will possibly stay longer.

Hot showers and toilet facilities will be provided at both camps. Members are advised to take drinking water. If you have not previously attended any of our camps grab some camping gear and come along. Caravan access is available to both sites. Detailed location maps are on following page.

SPRING BIRD COUNT - 2nd November. For members new to bird counts this is a bi-annual event where in conjunction with the Cumberland B.O.C. and the N.S.W. F.O.C. we survey the birdlife within an 80 klm radius of the G.P.O. If you wish to be part of a team surveying the birdlife of the area, please contact Kevin Wood on 29-5514.

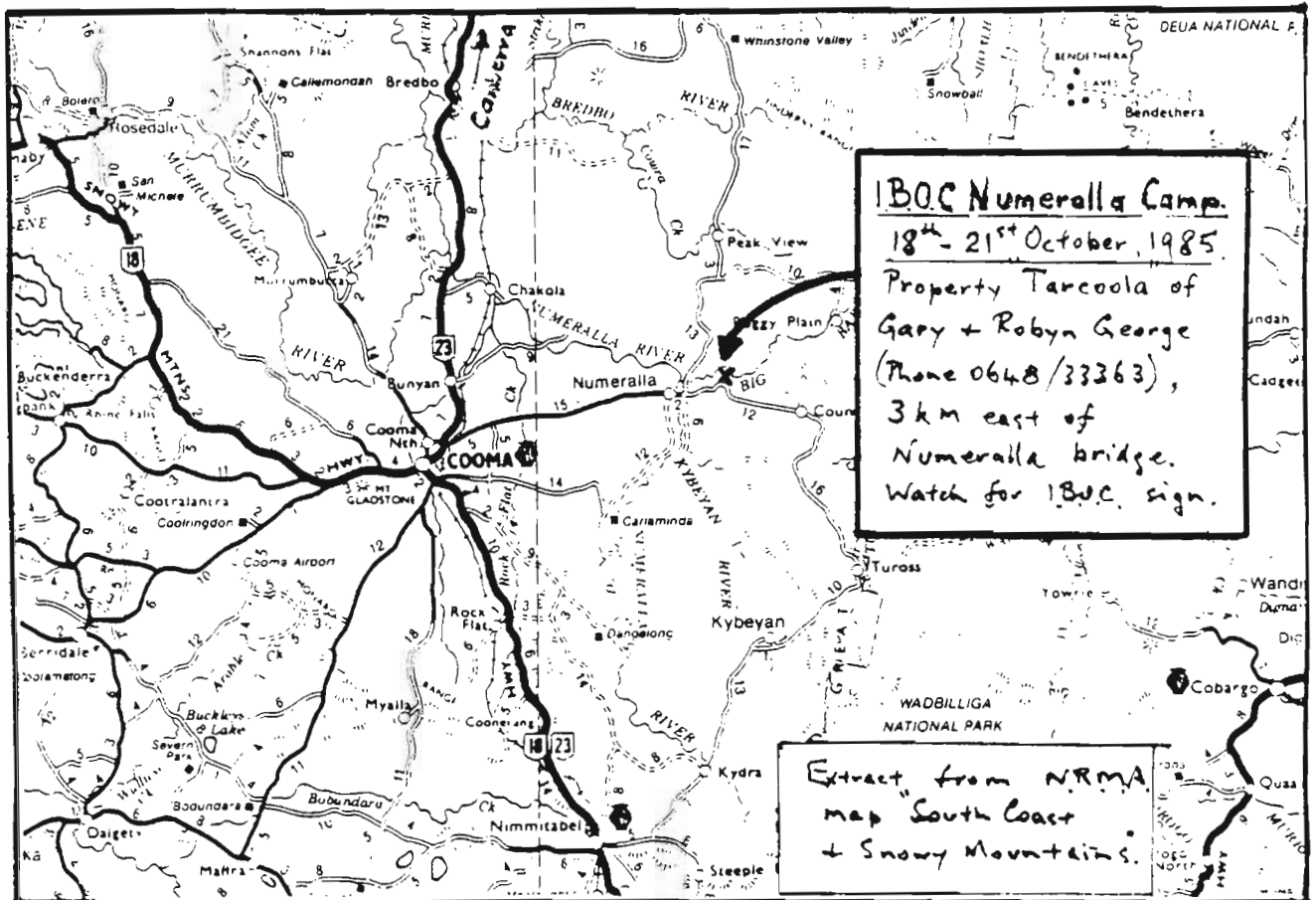
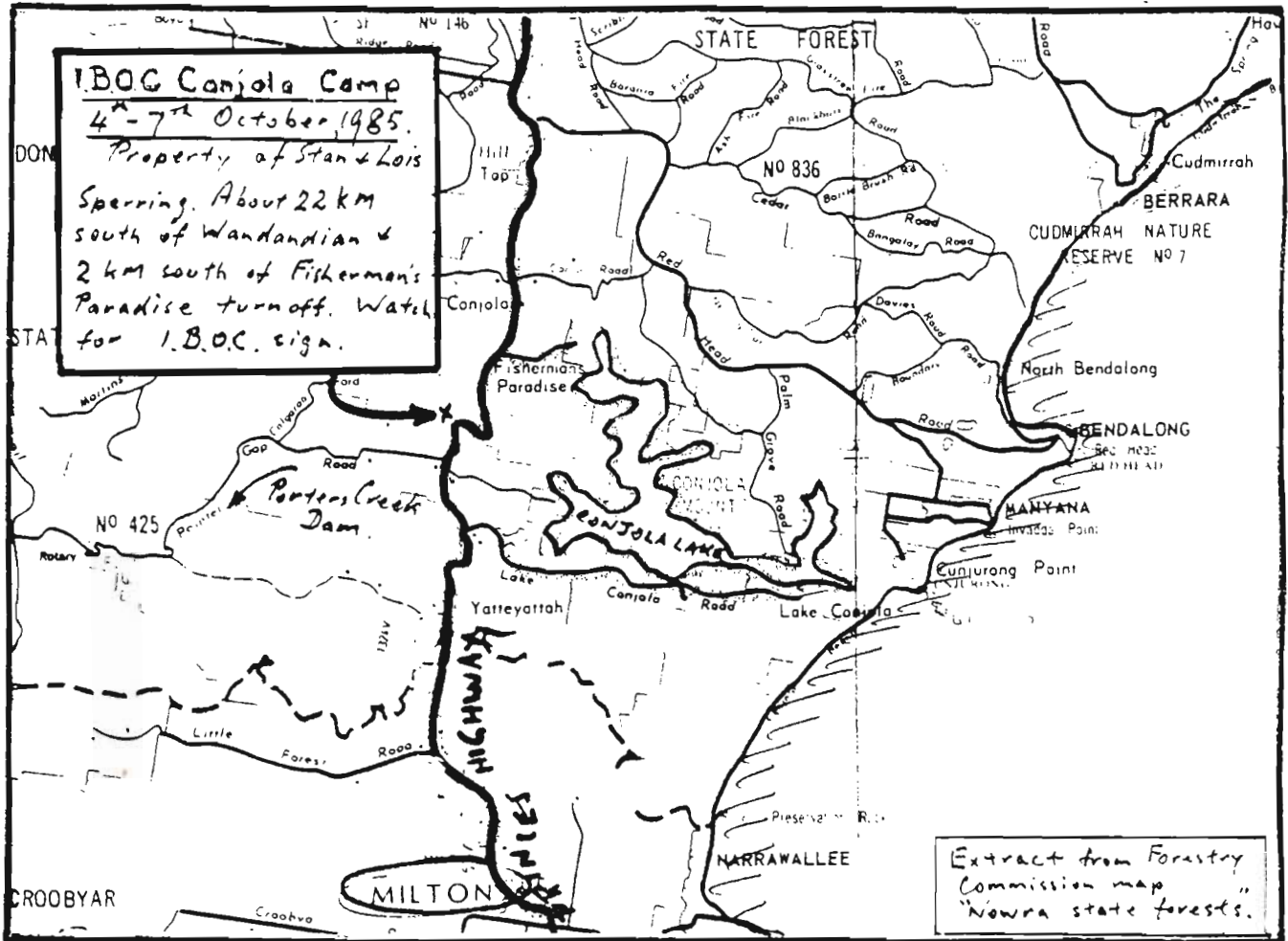
ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS - Both President Dave Thomson and Secretary Hazel Emery have indicated they will not be standing for re-election at the November election for office bearers. If you feel you could contribute to the running of your club by filling either of these vacant positions please make your thoughts known to a member of the Committee.

JULY MEETING REPORT. Like IBOC's logo tern, our guest speaker and club member, Alan Sefton skimmed over the surface of the 58 years life span of the late John Douglas Gibson, plunging here and there to relate some amusing anecdotes from their long association. In their formative years in Thirroul, Alan and Doug came closer together after the death of Doug's mother, so that competition between the cousins became almost a sibling rivalry, conducted on the friendliest of terms - often over crosswords - and cementing their partnership in all kinds of pursuits and adventures, beginning with astronomy. The discovery of beachwashed birds developed into their interest in ornithology, leading to Doug's specialization and Alan's broadening out into natural history. Their early mentors were K. A. Hindmarsh and Arnold McGill.

Alan's tales of the banding trips for Wandering Albatrosses sounded like Jerome K. Jerome's 'Three Men in a Boat'. Arthur Mothersdill's coinage of such cautionary words as 'scrapers' and 'cakehole' for the bird's powerful wings and beak added to the inventiveness of Doug's devices for catching the albatrosses and the comical picture of their submerging under the weight of metal until the successful cane hoopla with netting was constructed. Quite obviously Doug and Alan would delight in mastering the challenges posed them by nature, using skills gained from electrical and mechanical engineering at the steelworks, together with their imagination and ingenuity in those early beginnings before the advent of technology: the boat and camera were basic tools then.

Following on from Doug's scholastic achievements, Alan spoke of his versatility: his command of the English language by jovially employing repartee, innuendo and double entendre or by formally writing detailed studies and records; his ability as a lecturer and photographer, though somewhat camera-shy himself; and his expertise in conservation issues and ecology, understanding how the vital links in the chain ultimately affects each bird. Doug's perfectionism was well evidenced in taxidermy in the preparation of bird skins. Alan's mention of fifteen minutes for the two of them to complete a specimen reminded us of Doug's demonstration sessions at Treetop Glen. The skins and countless painstaking records have been referred to the museum and various organizations. Regularly Doug and Alan critically read through each other's material. In his paper 'Birds of the County of Camden' (March 1977), Doug acknowledged Alan's contribution: "whose past beach-combing activities have helped augment the seabird tally".

As well as mentioning Doug's association with the Sulli Pass Scenic Reserve Trust, RAOU and Barren Grounds Bird Observatory, Alan described their Fairy Penguin studies on the Five Islands, but warned us of the dire consequences through increasing invasion of Silver Gulls. He also spoke nostalgically of the wealth of wader-life, particularly the Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, that used to frequent Tom Thumb Lagoon.



We all shared Alan's feelings of being thwarted by Doug's untimely death: they had planned so much more work and study together after their retirement from their jobs. Similarly, we have commiserated with Doug's wife, Betty, and daughters, Jacky and Terrie.

This eulogy from Alan was delivered almost fourteen months after Doug's death. His memory and inspiration, however, have remained vividly alive within each one of us, and, above all, his infectious sense of humour, which Alan emphasized. For Doug fun and learning were inseparable. Unfortunately perhaps, there was only a handful of film slides accompanying the talk, but enough to bring back swiftly images of Doug's pipe, haversack, blue jeans and white sandshoes on club outings and his quiet, witty conversations. Ironically, it was the unshakeable reality of an insidious disease and not the feigned and seemingly innocuous ailment of the "gurnicle" concocted by Doug which brought to a sudden end his achievements and potentialities in both the human and natural worlds. But what a legacy he has left behind for us all!

Mike Morphett.

JULY FIELD OUTING REPORT. On a chilly Saturday morning 41 ISOC members made the 1½ hour trip to Jervis Bay. After cheery welcomes and G'days we set off down the 9 klm track. A good sighting of the male Satin Bowerbird was made as we progressed down the track, as well as the usual species such as the Rufous Whistler, Silverback Laughing Kookaburra and the Brown Thornbill.

At Blacks Waterhole, Grey and Chestnut Teal were observed feeding quietly as well as an excellent view of the Wedge-tailed Eagle. Some of the front leaders were fortunate enough to see a pair of Gang-gang Cockatoos feeding methodically on the blossom while the Crimson Rosellas and the King Parrots played 'tag' in the Scribbly Gum. Further on in the low banksia the Red Wattlebird and the New Holland Honeyeater were observed.

At Brooks Lookout; our morning tea break, as older members reminisced about the "good old days" the only sighting was of a far away White-bellied Sea-Eagle. However, it was back on the track again as Laurie wished to keep a tight schedule and the group retraced its steps back to the sandy intersection.

It was along here that a sly Red-bellied Snake was seen catching the last warm rays of the sun. After several minutes of observation of us, it decided that this strange motley, binocular-bearing group was too much, and it slid away into the heath. Also observed was the Little Wattlebird, the Brown-headed and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters.

In the following couple of kilometers only the Golden Whistler and the Grey Shrike Thrush were seen in the coastal scrub. But soon the vegetation changed and the track wound down to the picturesque Kittys Beach. As we emerged onto the white sandy beach the sighting of the day, although not ornithological was observed. Three whales heading out to the open sea dived and swam a few hundred metres away for several minutes. Almost directly after that the majestic White-bellied Sea-Eagle re-appeared and swooped across the bay only pausing to catch a fish.

While Timothy, our youngest member, played amongst the rocks and caves, our older members stretched out on the beach like great walruses sunning themselves. Some of the group wandered around the headland and spotted an Australasian Gannet and the Eastern Reef Egret. As the "all aboard" was given by Leader Laurie, a Fairy Prion and Sooty Oystercatcher flew past.

The walk back to Summer Cloud Bay was uneventful besides an occasional sighting of the Sea-Eagle. And as the last of the group stepped out of the orchid strewn path, a quick conference and tally of the day's birds came to around 33 species. And as the convoy of ISOC vehicles pulled out of the parking area a flock of White-naped Honeyeaters and a pair of Beautiful Firetails ended a tiring but most pleasant day.

Luke McGettigan.

AUGUST MEETING REPORT. Our speaker for the August meeting was Mr. David Fischer, a local member of American origin who has been with us now for about two years. David spoke to us about the wildlife of Costa Rica, a small independent nation in Central America.

While this country is only about 400 klm by 200 klm at its widest points, its diverse habitats provide a home for over 600 species of birds as well as a multitude of mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

David spent many months in this beautiful little paradise while studying for his degree in Biology in the United States. With the aid of a good variety of slides David took us from the wet rainforest clad east coast up through cloud forest, oak forest and the sparsely vegetated heights of the country's volcanic mountain ranges, to the west coast where the trees are mainly deciduous, losing their greenery in the dry season to a mass of flowers.

The beautiful Scarlet-rumped Tanager, Black-throated, Tiger Bittern, Indigo Bunting, Painted Bunting, Long-tailed Mannikin, many types of hummingbirds and other species unique to the area were all illustrated by David. He also showed a wide variety of vegetation types, mammals and reptiles including some beautifully coloured sea snakes and frogs.

David has proved to be a valuable asset to Australian ornithology since coming to our country mainly with his organization of pelagic boat trips from Wollongong which are helping to understand the movement and occurrence of seabirds within Australian waters.

His talk was listened to by a packed hall and his excellent narration was only excelled by the beautiful flora and fauna of this small tropical paradise.

Chris Chafer.

AUGUST FIELD OUTING. 36 people turned up at the Winger-carribee Dam Lookout, on a rather chilly morning. White's Thrush and a Blackbird were seen near the lookout and the three species of Grebe, Great Crested, Hoary-headed and Australasian were all seen on the dam with Little Pied Cormorants. A Black Swan glided over the dam showing its beautiful white wing patches.

A short walk through a forest provided little bird life but as we arrived back at the cars a flock of Straw-necked Ibis flew over and a Marsh Harrier glided majestically overhead. It was then a short drive, and we were at Fitzroy Falls. At the car park, Pied Currawongs, Laughing Kookaburra, Superb Fairy-wrens and White-browed Scrubwrens were viewed. We then started along the East Trail where Brown and Striated Thornbill were seen and White-throated Treecreepers were heard.

We were hoping to see a Superb Lyrebird and Pilotbirds in a wet gully, but a group of people came along at exactly the wrong time and none were seen. The many lookouts along the track provided beautiful views of the valley and the waterfalls falling into it. At one of these lookouts a Peregrine Falcon was seen.

Grey Shrike-thrush, Eastern Spinebills and Eastern Yellow Robins were all seen along the trail. At lunch, at an unused car park at the end of the trail Flame Robin, Striated Pardalotes, Golden Whistlers and two Peregrine Falcons were seen. After watching the latter alight and fly at a stupendous rate, the cry of "They don't do anything, except go fast" was heard.

On the return walk to the ranger's office, Brown-headed Honeyeaters, a Varied Sittella a White-bellied Sea-Eagle and Grey Butcherbirds were seen or heard. A Superb Lyrebird was also heard in the gully. After enjoying a snack at the kiosk we had another short drive to the Fitzroy Reservoir to see if we could observe some Musk Ducks. They were found, as were the Australasian Grebe and Southern Emu-wren. Eastern Whipbirds were heard in nearby bush.

While we were there, two fishermen came in and on the first cast, one caught a fair-sized Rainbow Trout raising many speculations. Many believed it was a fluke and some even suspected the fish was tied to the line before it was cast.

A Purple Swamphen and a large flock of Eurasian Coot brought the total to 44. It was an enjoyable day and I would like to thank Chris Chafer for leading us.

Peter Ewin.

AUGUST FILM NIGHT. Our thanks go to our hosts Norma and Ron Almond for a most enjoyable night. The four films selected by Richard Miller were diverse and interesting.

Creatures of the Dawn showed our well loved animals and birds, mostly in the lovely natural setting of Healesville Sanctuary of Victoria.

The Starling - This English film was well documented and graphically showed the world spread of the ubiquitous and pesty starling. It makes one look again and admire the tenacity of the bird. And to think that only 36 pairs were released in Australia in the 19th century!

Look again at Gulls - This also was a well documented English film showing the relationship to gulls and population explosion of man.

Ripples in the Reeds looked at the birdlife of Leighton Moss Marshlands U.K., and featured the beautiful Mute Swans. It was interesting to see the warden, John Wilson whom most of us met when he lectured at Wollongong University last year.

38 members and friends attended and contributed to an enjoyable night.

Gwen Robinson.

THE 1985 WINTER WADER SURVEY. This years winter coverage was held over the weekend of 6th and 7th July, with the exception of Jervis Bay which was covered on 30th June. The total number of birds was almost twice as many as last years count (1,049 to 560). This was mainly due to a big increase in overwintering transequatorial migrant species i.e. Bar-tailed Godwit (323 - 130) and Red-necked Stint (111 - 12). The endemic Red-capped Plover increased three fold (220 - 70). Increases were also noted in other endemic species Pied Oystercatcher (21 - 9), Masked Lapwing (173 - 118), Red-kneed Dotterel (10 - 0) and Black-winged Stilt (31 - 0). The overwintering Black-tailed Godwits (5) were a most unexpected find and their continued appearance within the Illawarra in recent years suggests that this species has been largely misidentified by past observers.

In 85 census' of the Windang and Shoalhaven estuaries I have found it on 26 occasions, while prior to 1983 there were only a handful of records.

The low count in Sooty Oystercatcher (15 - 23) was due to poor coverage north of Windang rather than a reduction in numbers. The increase in native species is encouraging, particularly Black-winged Stilts and Pied Oystercatcher. Pied Oystercatchers have bred at Comerong Island over the past two years and this has undoubtedly contributed to the sudden increase in this species over recent years. In 1977 it was regarded as rare (Gibson, 1977). In 1981 5 were present in the Shoalhaven estuary (Pegler 83). 12 were present in February 1984 increasing to 15 in March 1985. I have recorded them in all census' since June 1983 along the Shoalhaven estuary. Successful breeding has been observed at three sites on Comerong Island while at least two attempts have been made at Macquarie Rivulet and Duck Creek on Lake Illawarra. I have recorded a pair at Windang on 27 occasions since January 1983, generally after heavy rain creates flooding along the creeks feeding the lake. It is essential to protect the sand-bar breeding sites at Comerong Island if this species is to continue its increasing status within our area.

I would like to thank Lindsay E. Smith, Phillip Bath, Wal Emery and Diana Wright for assisting in this survey and I hope that the continued interest in waders continues to increase within the club.

Chris Chafer.

References: Gibson J.D. 1977, The Birds of the County of Camden, Australian Birds, Vol 11

Pegler J. 1983, A Brief survey of the Waterbirds in the Shoalhaven-Crookhaven estuary. Australian Birds Vol 17, 38-42

.../7

RESULTS FOR 1985 WINTER WADER COUNT - ILLAWARRA.

Species	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL.
Pied Oystercatcher				21		21
Sooty Oystercatcher	3		8	4		15
Masked Lapwing	27	22	36	76	12	173
Lesser Golden Plover		1		2		3
Red-kneed Dotterel		5	4	1		10
Hooded Plover					4	4
Double-banded Plover	6	8		90	11	115
Red-capped Plover	3	14	2	195	6	220
Black-fronted Plover		2		2		4
Black-winged Stilt	11	11	9			31
Ruddy Turnstone				3	1	4
Eastern Curlew		1		1		2
Grey-tailed Tattler		2				2
Greenshank		3		2		5
Black-tailed Godwit				5		5
Sar-tailed Godwit		51		272		323
Red Knot				1		1
Red-necked Stint		5		106		111
TOTAL	50	125	59	781	34	1049

A - Bellambi Point - Tom Thumb Lagoon D - Shoalhaven River estuary
 B - Lake Illawarra E - Jervis Bay.
 C - Bass Point - Dunmore

SUPERB PARROT SURVEY The Commonwealth Government has recently provided funds to the New South Wales National Parks & Wildlife Service under the States Assistance Programme for a one (1) year survey of the breeding habitat of the Superb Parrot. The Service has contracted a consultant, Mr. R. Webster, to undertake the survey. The Service is now seeking the assistance of bird watchers to provide observation data to assist the project.

It would be appreciated if club members holding any records of Superb Parrot sightings anywhere in New South Wales or Victoria could contact Mr. J.W. Hardy, Administrative Officer (Wildlife), National Parks and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box N 189 Grosvenor Street, Sydney, 2000 (Telephone No. 02-237-6650). All information received will be passed on to the consultant.

MORE RECORDS FROM HOSKINS NATURE RESERVE, MOSS VALE.

Following Chris Sonter's notes on new species records for the Hoskins Nature Reserve, at Moss Vale, the following records may be of interest.

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)

This species has been reported as rare in the County of Camden (Gibson 1977), although in recent years it is often reported (see IBOC News - Interesting Sightings), probably due to the increase in observers in the district more than anything else. I have one record of a bird in breeding plumage at Hoskins Reserve on 12 November 1983. My only other Tablelands record is of a bird on the Wingecarribee Dam on 23 January 1983.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

This species, also reported as rare by Gibson (1977), was recorded from a number of locations in 1982/83 in the district (see IBOC News for the period). On 23 January 1983 one bird was observed probing muddy banks at the Hoskins Reserve. The near coastal records of this species at this time were almost certainly the result of inland drought conditions.

Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*)

The yellow-billed spoonbill is uncommon in the district but I have recorded it from most areas at one time or another, not always during drought years, although it is more common then. Seven birds were recorded at Hoskins Reserve on 17 July 1982, five on 23 January 1983 and three on 5 May 1985.

Red-rumped Parrot (Psephotus haematonotus)

I have recorded this species twice from the Hoskins Reserve, both in 1982, on 24 January and on 17 July, the latter record was of five birds. Gibson (1977) reports the species as rare in the County of Camden. I also have records for Wilton to the north, for January and February 1982. These records could have been due to the drought conditions at the time.

Brown Gerygone (Gerygone mouki)

The brown gerygone is a common bird of the moist forests of the escarpments in the district, although it is found 'foraging further afield in winter' (Gibson 1977). The two records I have for the Hoskins Reserve are both winter records: 4 June and 21 August 1983. The species is probably not usually found in such open habitats as that present at Hoskins Reserve.

Common Myna (Acridotheres tristis)

I have a number of records of this species before that of Chris Sonters on 26 August 1984. These are 17 July 1982 (1 bird), 24 October 1982 (1), 21 August (1), 12 November (2) and 11 December (2) all in 1983. Gibson (1977) commented that the species is spreading southward onto the Tablelands and will probably increase here in the future.

Kevin Mills

Reference: J.D. Gibson (1977) Birds of the County of Camden, Aust. Birds,
11 (3):41-80.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR JULY - AUGUST, 1985.

U	Buff-banded Rail	8	Lake Illawarra Sth	11-7-85	L. Smith
MC	Black-fronted Plover	7	Albion Park	20-7-85	"
MC	Double-banded Finch	20	Yallah	20-7-85	"
C	White-throated Gerygone	1	Imm "	20-7-85	"
R	Red-kneed Dotterel	1	Albion Park	20-7-85	"
U	Little Grassbird	1	Why Juck Bay	1-7-85	C. Brandis
U	Varied Sittella	1	Stanwell Park	Jul-Aug	D. Perry
U	Grey Goshawk	1	" "	June 85	"
R	Red-kneed Dotterel	4	Dunmore	6-7-85	C. Chafer
U	Pink-eared Duck	25	Pig Island Shoalhaven	7-7-85	"
U	Hardhead	763	Nowra Sew. Treat. Works	7-7-85	"
U	Australasian Shoveler	137	Shoalhaven estuary	7-7-85	"
R	Pied Oystercatcher	21	Comerong Island	7-7-85	"
S	Black-tailed Godwit	5	" "	7-7-85	"
U	Musk Duck	40	Ash Ponds	6-7-85	L. Smith &
U	Australasian Shoveler	128	Lake Illawarra	6-7-85	C. Chafer
U	Pink-eared Duck	142	" "	6-7-85	" "
U	Pacific Heron	7	Jamberoo	20-6-85	P. Bath
U	Grey Goshawk	1	Mt. Keira	23-6-85	"
U	Australian Hobby	1	Barrack Heights	24-6-85	"
U	Spotted Quail-thrush	2	Picton Road	1-6-85	K. Mills
U	Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	1	" "	1-6-85	"
U	Spotted Catbird	2	Scout Camp	1-6-85	"
C	Sacred Kingfisher	1	Nth. Wollongong	5-7-85	L & N Williams
	Yellow-nosed Albatross	30	East of Wollongong Boat	29-6-85	D. Fischer,
	Sabine's Gull	1	" " " Trips	30-6-85	L. Smith,
	Juan Fernandez Petrel	1	" " " "	10-8-85	C. Chafer &
	Soft-plumaged Petrel	1	" " " "	10-8-85	Others.

I. B. O. E. NEWS

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NOVEMBER, 1985.

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No N8H 3848.

POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
63 Dymock St.
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, Cnr. of Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday 11th November at 7.30
GUEST SPEAKER for the evening will be Mr. Norm Robinson. Norm is a member of our club and a long standing member of The Illawarra Natural History Society. He has a comprehensive knowledge of the natural history of the Illawarra and is well regarded in this field throughout the district.

Norm's topic will be 'Mammals of the Illawarra'. This will be a great chance to learn more about these fascinating creatures of our area.

FIELD OUTING- will be on Sunday 17th November. We will assemble at Balgownie Public School on the corner of Balgownie Road and Chalmers Street at 8-30am. From here we will drive a short distance to Gore Street to the foothills of the escarpment. Our walk up the escarpment will follow a well made track as we pass through wet sclerophyll forest, rainforest & sandstone heath. The track is moderately steep in some sections but is relieved at regular intervals by long level stretches. It is envisaged that the walk will last all day so bring a carry lunch. Anyone wishing to come for half a day can readily retrace their steps at any point of the walk.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS - The positions of President, Secretary, Treasurer & Vice-President will be declared vacant at our November meeting and Office Bearers for 1986 will be elected. Nominations for all positions will be welcomed. Please note President Dave Thomson and Secretary Hazel Emery will not be standing for re-election.

1986 PROGRAMME. Planning is well advanced for our 1986 programme. Several times a year it becomes necessary to host guest speakers with bed & breakfast and occasionally an evening meal. To make this task easier to organize, we have decided to create a register of members willing to host guest speakers. If you have a spare bed and are willing to help in this area, please register your name with the Secretary. It is envisaged that no member will be asked more than once a year to host a speaker.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL - As has been the practice over past years our December meeting will take the form of a social evening. Our Theme this year will be the best hat in the form of a bird's nest, with or without birds. This opens up a range of ideas for the imaginative mind. Birds build nests out of many materials, sticks, grass, mud, hollow limbs and leaves. We will accept all these plus manufactured material like cardboard, fabric, paper and plastic. So get your minds into gear and start creating some millinery masterpieces. We also require some acts for the programme, e.g. sketches, monologues, songs etc. If you're good the audience will applaud, if you're bad they'll laugh. What ever way it goes you can't lose. This could be your chance for stardom. If you are willing to perform please contact the editor so he can prepare the programme. Don't hang back and leave it to just a few, stand up and have a go, you don't know what you can do till you try.

SEPTEMBER MEETING. "Nests, Eggs & Young". That was the theme of the talk given to us at the September meeting by Athol Colemane. Athol commenced his talk with a brief history of how he developed his interest in birds. Raised in the Braidwood area, the son of a Eucalyptus distiller, Athol developed a natural affinity with the bush and it's birdlife at an early age as he helped his family harvest the eucalypt leaves. His slides of the workings of the eucalyptus still created such interest among members that for a time it seemed we wouldn't get to the birds. As the slides went through Athol discussed with us the various habitats in which the nests were found, often pausing for the audience to identify the nests and eggs. He spoke freely and informatively about his subject and entertained us with his dry sense of humour. Thanks, Athol for an enjoyable evening. Thanks also to Ron & Alicia Simcock for hosting Athol and John for the night.

Wal Emery.

SEPTEMBER FIELD OUTING. 29 born optimists assembled at Mr. Mayo's property at Yellow Rock on Saturday 14th. We were all sure the threatening rain would hold off and leave us to get on with our outing. After picking our way through the cow pads in the dairy yards we walked up the open slopes at the base of the escarpment. We could clearly see the bush orchids in flower on the rock face above us. Four Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flew towards the hills. At a small waterhole some of us saw a Little-pied Cormorant and some Dusky Moorhens and overhead was seen a Wedge-tailed Eagle.

Grey Fantails and Fairy-wrens were numerous in the lantana bushes which grew all over the slopes. At our morning tea break we saw a Boobook Owl sitting on a dead tree some distance away. He caused quite a discussion about what he was until we managed to get closer and positively identify him. From this point the weather gradually got worse. As we headed back towards the roadway there were several sightings of Crimson Rosellas and one of an Eastern Rosella. We continued down into the gully by which time it was raining heavily and we decided to call it a day. Nevertheless we continued to see birds - 3 Australian King Parrots sheltering in a big tree, a Pacific Heron flying overhead and a Laughing Kookaburra.

Our outing was abandoned about 10-30am., but in the short time we had, we were fortunate enough to identify 42 species of birds including (besides those mentioned) the Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Wonga Pigeon, Galahs, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Common Skylark, Australian Raven, Noisy Friarbird, Yellow, Striated and Brown Thornbills, Variegated and Superb Fairy-wrens, Grey Shrike-Thrush, Spotted Pardalote, Pied Currawong, Grey Butcherbird, Richard's Pipit, Golden Whistler, Lewin's and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and the male Satin Bowerbird.

Despite the rain we had a successful morning and one we will remember for some time to come. I would like to thank Ron Almond for being our leader.

Olive Rodwell.

.../3

OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND - I.B.O.C. CAMP.

The days leading up to the long weekend were promising good weather and a number of campers arrived on the Friday in preparation. Many thanks to those who gave up the previous weekend to set up the portable IBOC comfort facilities (shower and toilet) which rivalled any 5-star campsite.

By midday Saturday the majority of the 45 strong, hardy, IBOC's were settled and we headed inland by car through forest, into Morton National Park and our first walk to Porters Creek Dam. The habitats varied from open woodland to heath and a moist gully at the dam giving full opportunity to see the birds in these habitats. To some it seemed the birds didn't appreciate this opportunity to be observed by a captive audience. However, a good variety of birds were seen when the species were tallied up, including Southern Emu-wren, Fantail Cuckoo and Australian King Parrot. The wildflowers were also worth viewing. On the way back to camp we stopped at a lookout with panoramic view to the coastline.

The evening was whiled away with a warm shower, and chat around the campfire. After a hot dusty day, shower attendants Michael Grey, Russell Hales and Justin Rowles were kept busy topping up the hot water - a good effort, chaps. (Lost your job, Ron Hanks)

Our hosts at "Myrtle Gully Farm" near Conjola, Stan & Lois Sperring, sat with us at the camp fire where Dave Thomson showed our appreciation by presenting them with a china plate, beautifully painted by Hazel Emery, depicting a pair of Rufous Whistlers. During the evening a prominent IBOC member - who shall remain nameless (though within hearing) gave a weather report of 'fine and sunny' for the remaining days.

Sunday arose raining....so the morning walk was put off till the afternoon, when the group went to Little Forest to walk through a wet forest habitat. A selected few were fortunate enough to see a Rose Robin; the majority of the rest were too busy fighting off leaches to look for birds. (It wasn't really that bad!) On the Saturday morning a Powerful Owl had been seen in this area of forest; unfortunately it had decided to move on.

Sunday night (still raining) was spent in the barn playing games brought along by the Hales family and - luxury of luxuries - watching a TV programme about birds on a portable TV. (Some needed their binoculars!)

Monday morning, still showering, started with birdsong from the bush on the property. Here Black-faced Monarch, Leaden Flycatcher, Scarlet Honeyeater and Olive-backed Oriole were easily seen and heard.

Those who remained for Monday's walk were most amazed to hear the mastery of Esme Gay's mating call of a Channel-billed Cuckoo. It must have been a good call, as shortly after three Channel-billed Cuckoos flew over calling in vain. The Monday walk was through the immediate coastal habitat including swamp, nicely rounding off the habitats visited.

Despite a little rain, the camp was thoroughly successful and enjoyable. Thanks to the organisers!

Andy Knowlson.

NOTES ON THE WOLLONGONG BOTANIC GARDENS DUCK POND.

I read with interest the Williams' article on the birdlife associated with the duck pond in the Botanic Gardens a few circulars ago.

My son, Joel and I have been "pramdriving" around the gardens regularly for the past 10 months and have watched with interest as last season, 2 Maned Duck chicks were raised there, and this season, 9 chicks to 1 couple and 1 chick to another. This current batch have survived to "young adolescent" size and are still being tended and guarded carefully by their parents.

This, despite current removal from the ponds of the noxious weed, Cumbungi, which forms the thick, protective reed beds in which these ducks breed. The Dusky Moorhen population has also been busy producing chicks in the shelter of the Cumbungi.

.../4

I did my best to make the Gardens staff aware of the jeopardy in which they were placing the survival of these chicks by removing their bed of reeds during the nesting season. Thanks to the sympathetic attitude of the Gardens Curator, Dr. Ugo Grassano, it is probable that no further Cumbungi will be removed until after the breeding season is over. When removed, it is hoped that it will be replaced by Phragmites, the native reed which grows around ponds and along backwaters in the Illawarra.

The native waterbirds in the Gardens have taken their cue from the "Quakka-ducks" in looking to human beings as a friendly source of food, and have become quite tame. One can approach quite close to the Maned Duck, and this is unusual, because these birds, are, in my experience, usually very shy. I would recommend the Gardens Duck pond to anyone wishing to have a closer look at these birds.

Denise Black.

I.B.O.C. KAKADU TRIP - A FEATHERED FUN RUN.

Saturday 13th July 1985 and forty three birdo's plus a driver and a cook left Wollongong on a thirty day coach safari to Northern Australia.

The first day to Nyngan proved uneventful with everyone settling into the routine which would become our way of life for the next month. We encountered a very cold night in which one members false teeth froze solid in a glass of water, then off to Charleville.

By the time we had reached Charleville everything was running like clockwork. Gwen, our cook had left no doubts in anyones mind as to who was really in charge of the trip. As we unloaded our tents we were surprised to find they were still iced up from the previous night.

Next morning we left for Winton with our trip list now in the eighties. First sightings of Brolgas and Ground Cuckoo-shrikes south of Tambo created great interest, then north of Tambo our first Australian Bustards. Our campsite was at Winton swimming pool and the weather was now warm enough for some to swim. The male and female showers with double recesses and no doors revealed a few hidden IBOC secrets.

From Winton we travelled to Coorabulka via Boulia. The trip through the channel country produced many bustards to a point where they became quite common. Unsworth Bluff, a magnificent camera stop before Middleton gave us our first experience of the beautiful red earthy colours of the outback, plus a flock of Spinifex Pigeons as a bonus. We filled the coach with fire wood after lunch at Boulia with the ever present Black Kites then set out across the treeless plains to Coorabulka No2 Bore. Disappointment surfaced for the first time as we discovered the bore drain had been re-routed and the reed bed habitat of the Yellow Chats dried up and trampled flat by cattle. A 2 Klm walk along the new drain at last produced a large reedbed and the much sought after Yellow Chats. Orange Chats nearby and the appearance of a Black Falcon hunting along the drain added to our excitement.

More excitement as we headed out for Mt. Isa. A sudden coach stop for four Inland Dotterels by the side of the road. At Mt. Isa Caravan Park the N.T. bloodwoods were in full bloom. Our first Varied Lorikeets and seven species of Honeyeaters including the Grey-fronted, Grey-headed and Yellow-tinted, new birds for most of us.

Day six - off to Renner Springs. Some Crimson Chats at Camooweal, then west towards Avon Downs. A chorus of 'stop the coach!' as we sped through the Mitchell grass plains. The magnificent sight of 1,000+ Flock Bronzewing rising and wheeling on their grey wings, then settling close by for all to see. How can we top a sight like that?

It was goodbye dustbowl as we left Renner Springs bound for Springvale Station. A short stop at Dunmarra produced excellent birding. Long-tailed Finches, Crimson Chats, Great Eowebirds and the rare Grey Falcon. Off again to Warlock Ponds. No water but still the new species keep coming. Black-tailed Treecreeper, Red-browed Pardalote, Sanded Honeyeaters and some Pictorella Mannikins.

.... /5

On again through Kathrine to Springvale Station. Another exciting experience, a beautiful Pacific Zaza posing in full sunlight for the cameras. White-gaped and White-throated Honeyeaters, Northern Rosellas, Lemon-bellied and Shining Flycatchers. A good breakfast and off again to Hayes Creek. Our first Black-necked Storks, a Bar-breasted Honeyeater and Grey Whistler kept the list ticking over, then off to Darwin with 150 species recorded.

An afternoon trip around the waterfront and the list soared to 223 with the addition of a few goodies like Red-headed Honeyeater, Osprey and Beach Thick-knee. A tickers paradise but little time for anything else.

A magic day at Fogg Dam. Thanks to Doug and Horrie for the birds of the day. White-browed Crake and Rainbow Pitta, topping a day list of 97 species. Merv and Jim missed first prize with the Large-tailed Nightjar for wandering off by themselves. John's statement that the Water Buffalo were semi-domesticated left some people wondering if that meant they could run only half as far or half as fast. Howard Springs proved to be a lovely oasis in very dry country giving another chance at the Rainbow Pitta for those who missed it at Fogg Dam.

Eleven days out and at last we're off to Kakadu N.P. John's knowledge of the birds of the top end proved spot on again when he organised a stop at the Adelaide River to view a resident pair of Mangrove Whistlers (in a bamboo thicket). A great afternoon! The walk from the camp to the area around the East Alligator River produced Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeons, Partridge Pigeons, Black-eared Cuckoos and the White-lined Honeyeater.

An interesting morning was spent viewing the cave paintings at Obiri Rock and searching unsuccessfully the rainforests along Magellan Creek for the Banded-fruit Dove, a place where John had seen five birds in 1984. Rainbow Pittas were again sighted along the East Alligator River, the third location in which we found this beautiful bird. A large lily lagoon covered with a myriad of birdlife 15 klms from camp showed the face of Kakadu that most expected to see, a sharp contrast to the dry brown areas surrounding our last camp. Yellow Waters proved to be a birdwatchers paradise. Almost all the species of egrets, heron and water-fowl you would expect to find at Kakadu, including the elusive Great-billed Heron, plus a crocodile for good measure. Next a trip to Nourlangi Rock to view the blue paintings, then off to U.D.P. Falls. We left Kakadu with a trip list of 272 species.

3-00am and we headed out up the escarpment at U.D.P. Falls to search for the elusive White-throated Grasswren. Only two people managed to see the wren, but those who missed out were adequately compensated by repeated sightings of the Banded-fruit Dove, a bird we had failed to find at two previous locations.

With half the trip over we left U.D.P. Falls for Katherine Gorge. Phil kept the list ticking over when he scratched a pair of Masked Owls out of a hollow. The trip up the Katherine Gorge was a marvellous experience topped off by five Johnson River crocodiles and a Black Bittern. The beautiful sunset as we returned to the wharf ended a perfect day.

Off to Kununurra. Our first stop was a waterhole 15 klms west of Katherine. Here we had our first sighting of the Gouldian Finch. Our campsite at Kununurra produced the most beautiful sunset of the trip. Kununurra proved to be a great experience, one of the best days of the whole safari. There were six species of finch and two mannikins all within 300 metres of the Caravan Park. Throw in three species of crake and some White-quilled Rock-Pigeon at Hidden Valley. All this plus the marvellous scenery of the timeless landscape produced another perfect day.

A long hot drive back to Katherine due to the failed air-conditioning was rewarded when we stopped at Chinamans Creek waterhole & found four Hooded Parrots, our last chance at this bird before we left its range.

Great fun was had in the thermal pool at Mataranka, a chance to relax and enjoy a different type of birdwatching. The morning at Warlock Ponds gave us a feel for the history of the area when we visited the We of the Never Never cemetery at the old Elsie Homestead. The Gouldian Finch posed well at the pond giving most of those whomissed it at Chinamans Creek a second chance to see it.

During our overnight stay at Daly Waters, we were entertained by the locals, then off to a bush camp at Little River. Our species list now stood at 293. Near Borroloola we made an unsuccessful search for the Carpentarian Grasswren through a very interesting but difficult habitat. Next a lunch stop at Ryan's Bend waterhole where everyone managed to see the Purple-crowned Fairy-wren and the White-browed Robin. A quick look at Borroloola and another swim at Bessie Springs then back to camp where Bert Solton entertained us with a history of the aboriginal tribes of Arnhem land.

Borroloola to Mt. Isa proved a long day as we made our way down the beef road and across the Barkly Tablelands. A distance of 866 klm it left little time for birdwatching. A very successful morning at the Tailing Dam at Mt. Isa turned up the Spinifexbird and at last good looks by all at a Grasswren, the Dusky. Although secretive in its habits a much easier bird to find than its White-throated and Carpentarian Cousins. The afternoon at Lake Moondarra produced excellent birding but no Pictorella Mannikins, our last chance to find this bird.

From Mt. Isa we retraced our steps through Winton and Charleville to Nyngan. It seemed hard to accept that a month had passed by since our first night camp at at this location. We spent our last night in the showground pavillion and celebrated with an IBOC style concert. Our trip took us into three states and the Northern Territory, covered a distance of 12,500 klms and produced a species trip list of 317. Limited space does not permit me to relate all the humorous incidents like Dee's frozen teeth, Dornacilla's striptease spurred on by a nest of green tree ants, Dave Walsh's red key at Kununurra, Esmes attempt to learn Cookie's secret damper recipe and many more, plus all the birthdays and anniversaries we celebrated along the way, but I would like to sincerely thank everyone who shared in the good fellowship that made the trip such a success, and on behalf of the club I would like to extend a special thanks to John Waugh for patiently sharing his vast knowledge of the birds of the top end with us.

Wal Emery.

A SQUARE-TAILED KITE AT BARREN GROUNDS BIRD OBSERVATORY.

On a recent visit to the Barrens Grounds Bird Observatory with fellow ornithologist John de Heume, a surprise sighting awaited us, arriving at the shelter near the lodge at 12.pm we decided to have lunch before birding, as luck had its way a wise decision. We had just began to eat, when the alarm calls of a raven were heard north of the wardens residence; as the call became more aggravated we thought it time to check out the disturbance, leaving the hot drinks to cool we took off binoculars in hand, and headed in the direction of the call.

At the point of sighting, the ravens were just retreating from a raptore which was heading in our general direction. As it came closer gliding all the while, I could see a slightly forked tail, but the wings were upswept like a Harrier, my first impression was of a Black Kite, however they do not (according to noted field guides) have upswept wings. This created a minor problem, luckily the raptore passed by us approximately 400 metres south-west in a continual glide across the heathland until out of sight. When nearest to us we could see light patches near wing tips, and as it passed the tail was at times fanned, looking square, then as it relaxed it became slightly forked.

After observing the tail and pale windows in the wing it was just a matter of checking out other field guides to know that what we had was a Square-tailed Kite. This is probably the first record for the Camden County. It is amazing that with so many bird books and field guides around on Australian Birds how frustrating it can be to find the right information that you seek, as I mentioned earlier in my notes, the tail was slightly forked, but the raptore had up-swept wings.

All guides state that only the Square-tailed Kite has upswept wings, and that the Black Kite has flat or drooped wings.

..../7

Naturally the Black Kite has a forked tail, and the Square-tailed Kite, has according to field guides a square-tail. QUESTION? Did we encounter a Square-tailed Kite with a forked tail of a Black Kite or does the Square-tailed also have a fork. ANSWER: The following well known books give no mention of the Square-tailed Kite having a forked tail, whatsoever. "The Readers Digest" - "Hawks in Focus" - "David Hollands Raptore Guide" - or Ken Simpson "Birds of Australia". The only two I could find that enlightens one, was "Slaters Aust. Birds" and F.T. Morris "Birds of Prey of Australia". This book actually shows in illustrated form the slight fork. So two books out of the six mentioned, are the only real help to what I feel is a very important field guide to the Square-tailed Kite as well as the upswept wings and wing windows. I also rang Walter Boles of the Australian Museum, to check this point out and he assured me that the Square-tailed Kite, certainly has a shallow fork, not square at all times as some people seem to think.

One point of interest in David Hollands "Eagles, Hawks and Falcons of Australia" that I thought of interest as far as the record goes is that he mentions on Page 42 that in the last ten years there have been a number of sightings of Square-tailed Kites in coastal far-east Victoria. He further states that some of the sightings were of adult birds in the spring and early summer, he thought that this was a strange time for adults to be on the move and he wondered if some could be nesting.

In 1981 nesting was confirmed when a pair raised two young near Orbost in Victoria. When not breeding the Square-tailed Kite is solitary in its movements.

Details of our observation in brief:

LOCALITY: Barren Grounds Bird Observatory.

HABITAT: Heathland

WEATHER: Mainly overcast with light showers.

OBSERVERS: Athol Colemane/ John DeHeume.

TIME 12,50p.m DATE 9-9-85

Athol Colemane.

STUSLE-QUAIL (Coturnix pectoralis) ALIGHTING ON THE SEA.

During recent literature perusal I discovered a short communication with the above title in The South Australian Ornithologist, Vol X Part 7 July 1930. It was written by Mr E. S. Rymill of Adelaide. I hope you find it as interesting as I did.

"In October, 1927, when on a yachting cruise in St. Vincent's Gulf, S.A. we anchored overnight at a point about 12 miles north of the Port Adelaide River entrance, on the eastern side of the Gulf, about a mile and a half from the shore. During the night a very strong south-easterly wind set in, blowing off-shore towards the yacht, and was still blowing hard at 8-00am. Going on deck at this time the writer noticed a Quail of the stubble variety sitting in one of the yacht's dinghies which was hanging from the davits. Later, when the boat was being lowered into the water, the Quail flew out, and circled round the yacht several times, and then alighted on the water about 20 yards away. It rode the waves, which were short and steep at the time, very easily, and floated buoyantly on the water. It then lifted easily from the surface just as a Duck would rise, and flew round to the other side of the yacht, settling again on the water in a similar manner. After a few moments it rose once more and flew in a straight line shorewards, disappearing from sight in the distance. During the time the bird was sitting in the boat it allowed us to make a close inspection, and had evidently rested there for some time before being observed. It would be interesting to learn whether there are other know cases of Quail alighting on the ocean."

* The Editors commented that they could find no previous record of Quail alighting on the sea.

Kevin Wood.

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INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR AUGUST - SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER. 1985.

U	Emerald Dove	1	Minnamurra Falls	2-8-85	P. Ewin
U	Collared Sparrowhawk	1	" "	3-8-85	"
U	White's Thrush	3	" "	3-8-85	"
R	Australian Crake	2	Broughton Creek	19-8-85	P. Bath
U	Brown-headed H' eater	1	Bomaderry	19-8-85	"
S	Eastern Reef Egret	1	Shellharbour	27-8-85	"
S	White-headed Pigeon	2	Bass Point	6-9-85	"
R	Powerful Owl	1	" "	22-10-85	"
R	Australian Crake	1	Kully Bay	16-8-85	C. Chafer
U	Yellow-billed Spoonbill				
		1	Comerong Island	31-8-85	"
MC	Mongolian Plover	1	" "	31-8-85	"
MC	Olive-backed Oriole	1	Stanwell Park	15-8-85	D. Perry
MC	White-bellied Sea Eagle	1	" "	15-8-85	"
U	Australian Hobby	1	Figtree	24-8-85	D. Green
U	Grey(white) Goshawk	1	Mt. Keira	7-9-85	"
C	White-throated Gerygone	3	Stuart Park	8-9-85	"
U	White-browed Woodswallows				
		300	Barren Ground	4-10-85	Richard Jordan
R	Masked Woodswallows	100	" "	4-10-85	"
R	Common Koel	1	Balgownie	5-10-85	W & H Emery
MC	Brush Bronzewing	1	Staffords farm track	2-8-85	K Wood
R	Marsh Sandpiper	1	Koona Bay	10-9-85	"
U	Grey Currawong	5	Sudderoo Track	10-9-85	"
S	Scarlet Honeyeater	1	Mangerton	14-9-85	K. Wood
R	Pheasant Coucal	1	Sellambi Creek	19-8-85	K Mills (Road Kill)
U	Musk Duck	7	Hoskins Nature Res.	24-8-85	"
U	Marsh Harrier	1	" "	24-8-85	"
U	White-winged Chough	5+	Appin	22-9-85	"
U	Diamond Firetail	1	Goodmans Ford	3-9-85	"
R	Brush Turkey	1	Woonona Heights	25-10-85	J. Pollard
S	White-headed Pigeon	1	Mangerton	11-9-85	D. Fischer
	Light-mantled Sooty Albatross	1	Seabird Group	per D. Fischer	21st September.
	Southern Fulmar	1	East off Wollongong.		
	Kerguelen Petrel	1			
	Black-bellied Storm Petrel	2			
	White-bellied Storm Petrel	2			

I. B. O. C. NEWS

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DECEMBER, 1985.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

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POSTAL ADDRESS P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

Dave Thomson
84 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
SALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-2876

SECRETARY

Hazel Emery
63 Dymock St.
SALGOWNIE NSW 2519
84-0139

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cres.
KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500
29-8612

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 1st January each year, FAMILY \$8, SINGLE \$5
STUDENT \$2.

MERRY CHRISTMAS 1985.

AN INVITATION TO ATTEND THE

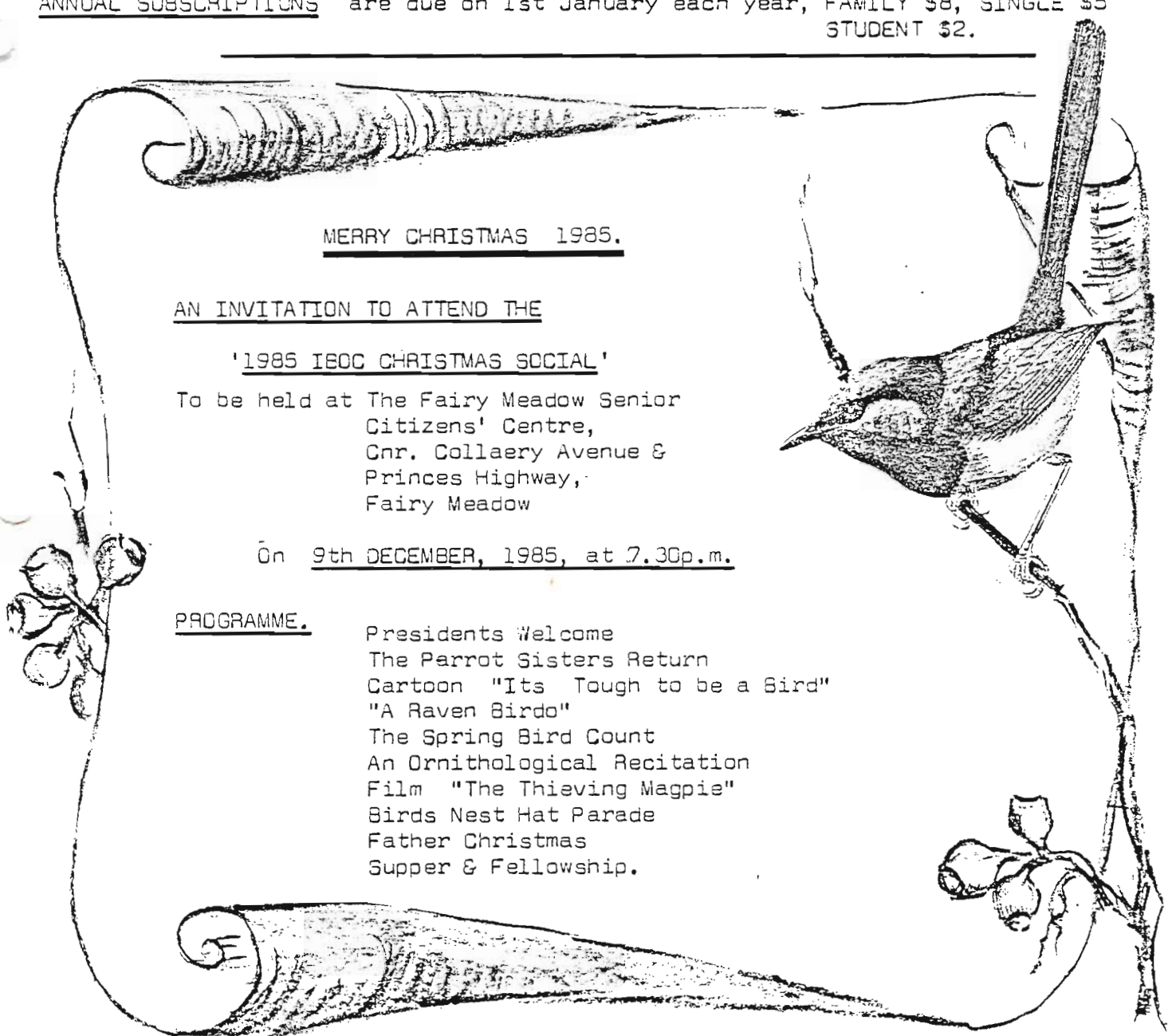
'1985 IBOC CHRISTMAS SOCIAL'

To be held at The Fairy Meadow Senior
Citizens' Centre,
Cnr. Collaery Avenue &
Princes Highway,
Fairy Meadow

On 9th DECEMBER, 1985, at 7.30p.m.

PROGRAMME.

Presidents Welcome
The Parrot Sisters Return
Cartoon "Its Tough to be a Bird"
"A Raven Birdo"
The Spring Bird Count
An Ornithological Recitation
Film "The Thieving Magpie"
Birds Nest Hat Parade
Father Christmas
Supper & Fellowship.



Additional information on December meeting - As has been our past practice, there will be no guest speaker at our December meeting. The evening will take the form of a relaxed social evening with the entertainment being provided by a number of IBOC members. Although the programme has been published we are still able to slot in extra acts if anyone wishes to participate. The chance for overall membership involvement comes with the "Birds Nest Hat Parade".

Members are urged to become involved with this segment of the evening. Please participate to help insure a successful night. Your hat can be a serious replica of a particular nest or a comical reproduction of some of the more out-landish nests that birds build.

They can be made from natural material like grass, mud, leaves or sticks or manufactured materials like cardboard, plastic, cloth, metal etc.

It will be appreciated if, as in the past, a special effort is made with the supper goodies.

FIELD OUTING - Saturday 7th December to Hoskins Nature Reserve. Meeting time 3-00pm. PLEASE NOTE this outing will be held on the Saturday before the meeting, not after as is the normal practice throughout the year. Some time will be spent observing the waterfowl and other birdlife of the Reserve. This will be followed by an evening barbecue. We have been advised by the ranger in charge that most of the barbecues have been vandalised and are in a poor state of repair. Wood may also be difficult to obtain. Members with portable gas barbecues are requested to bring them along. In the event of a total fire ban, barbecues will not be permitted.

The Nature Reserve is located on the Wingecarribee River towards the Moss Vale end of the connecting road between Moss Vale and Bowral - the entrance is well signposted. If sufficient interest is shown after the barbecue we will drive to a wooded location and do some spotlighting.

PAYMENT OF FEES - Fees are now due for the 1986 calendar year. They remain unchanged at Family \$8, Single \$5, Student \$2. Payment can be made to Hon. Treasurer, Ron Almond or posted to Hon. Treasurer, Illawarra Bird Observers' Club, P.O. Box 56, Fairy Meadow, N.S.W. 2519. Ron Simcock has kindly offered to computerise our 1986 membership list. Early payment of fees will assist all involved and will ensure continuation of your newsletter.

LIBRARY NOTES - All outstanding books must be returned at the December meeting. Continual turnaround of books enables all members to participate equally in borrowing.

BOAT TRIPS - Some excellent records are being obtained by the Seabird group on their monthly trips out of Wollongong on the "Sandra K". It is an ideal vessel for the purpose with an upper deck providing 360° observation. The dates for the next two months are as follows - December 1985 Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th, January 1986, Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th. A full 1986 programme will be published in our February newsletter. For bookings and further information ring David Fischer on 27-1704. (042)

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1986. - All positions were declared vacant and elections for 1986 Office Bearers were held at our November Annual General Meeting. President Dave Thomson and Secretary Hazel Emery did not stand for re-election. The following members were elected for 1986:-

President - Jim Robinson
Secretary - Anna Knowlson
Treasurer - Ron Almond
Vice President - Wal Emery

Congratulations to Jim and Anna, new faces on the committee. I'm sure members will give them their full support throughout 1986. Special thanks to Dave and Hazel for their efforts in guiding the club through past years to the strong position it enjoys today. Thanks also to the remaining committee members and helpers whose labour adds to the successful running of the club.

OCTOBER CAMP - NUMERALLA. On Friday 18th October, twenty two IBOC members arrived at the property of Robyn & Gary George at Numeralla.

The view from our camp site on the banks of the Big Badger River was truly beautiful. Soft ground after a good deal of heavy rain over the past week caused a few problems for some of our members. A few of the cars and vans became bogged, but after a tremendous effort by all concerned the cars were able to be pulled clear. After this minor mishap we all settled down to enjoy the birds which were seen in great numbers. The valleys and farms with a large number of sheep, some with twin lambs, made bird watching even more delightful.

The Flame, Scarlet and Eastern Yellow Robins sitting in the bright green willows along the river were a sight to behold. A great number of Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters were sighted.

On the Sunday we all walked along the banks of the river towards Numeralla where a market was being held in the local hall. Of course we did some bird watching on the way. The camp fires at night were the usual happy times where members could talk. Monday saw us driving to Rose Valley where we saw a very vocal Hooded Robin which put on a real performance for us. The little rain we had did not dampen our spirits in any way. The two younger "birdo's" Aaron and Timothy helped add to the delight of our weekend camp. Those of our members who haven't as yet been to one of our camps don't know what they're missing as we always have a wonderful time together.

Wendy Hanks.

NOVEMBER MEETING - Mammals, are they those little furry critters that creep around in the dark, yes, and creatures that bound, glide, fly, run and swim, from the tiny Sugar Glider to the great Humpback Whale. The world of mammals at our door was opened up to us by Mr. Norm Robinson, who with over 20 years of experience in observing and studying, gave us a small insight into these complex creatures in a most fascinating hour.

Mammals are somewhat harder to observe in the wild than birds, many being nocturnal and secretive, and although most of the slides were of road victims and museum specimens, we could still appreciate the beauty and diversity of these creatures.

So we went through the egg layers, the carnivora to the herbivorous, the seals and the whales, the number of species affected by man and his actions became more and more apparent. Species after species have disappeared from the Illawarra area which once supported one of the most diversified populations in Australia with its varied habitats and the meeting of the warm and cold currents. Introduced animals such as foxes, cats and rats along with roads and suburban sprawl has reduced breeding populations into non-viable numbers that can not survive the normal and increased mortality rates.

It's sadly fascinating to learn that some animals such as the Greater Gliders were so dependant on their immediate habitat, that if the area was felled, they would stay with their home tree and die. Some animals such as Wombats do benefit from the spread of pasture but unfortunately consider roads as part of their territory. To the little echidna, a four lane highway might as well be the Indian Ocean in its effect on their movements.

Mr. Robinson spoke passionately of the lack of apparent concern by the authorities who did not heed the experiences of overseas countries in their efforts to protect their own vanishing wild life and completely disregarded evidence from years of research for the short term economy of politics.

One thing I will remember is not to let the kids have a pet Wombat, doors are no barrier to these friendly mammals if they decide to come in to watch Fatso on T.V. Thanks to Norm Robinson for an interesting and informative evening and for awakening our awareness to the plight of these beautiful creatures caused by the unplanned senseless destruction by man of their habitat.

Chris Brandis.

NOVEMBER FIELD OUTING - CORRIMAL ESCARPMENT 17th November.

Thirty seven members met at the Balgownie School for the November outing to the escarpment. The sky was overcast and rain threatened but this soon cleared to a fine sunny day. Good to see a few new members join us on the walk. Driving along a short distance to Gore Street we parked the cars.

The first sighting of the day was of a Dollarbird sitting on a dead tree a short distance away. The colours were more pronounced in the sunlight. A twenty minutes survey of the area produced Logrunner, White's Thrush, Catbird and more. As we climbed the track to the rainforest, wild gooseberries and raspberries were seen growing, food for the fruit eating birds and some IBOC's. The call of the Catbird was heard along with Eastern Whipbirds and Golden Whistlers.

Many of our members found the leeches a problem but this was soon overcome with an application of repellent. Morning tea was taken on a mossy rock under the rainforest canopy. It was a beautiful, peaceful place to have a cup of tea. You really don't have to travel great distances to see some wonderful scenery, we have it all here in Wollongong. A good sighting of the Brown Cuckoo-Dove and the call of the Wonga Pigeon added to our list. A short distance along the track we saw a Yellow-throated Scrubwren's nest, and later on in the day saw many of these lovely birds. The call of the Golden Whistler and the Grey Shrike-thrush added to our enjoyment. We saw a lot of Red Cedar trees regenerating after the devastation caused by the timber cutters who invaded the area last century in search of the rich harvest. Not many large trees are left now along the escarpment because of this. Wal, our leader for the walk, pointed out that the pit ponies were brought out of the Corrimal Mine down the escarpment track to graze on the grassy foothills in years gone by.

Those members who were only walking with us for half a day left us, then fifteen birdo's tackled the steep track to the top of Brokers Nose. The ranger Warren Robinson joined us and spoke to us about the history of the area. Arriving at a lagoon we decided to stay for lunch before the hike to the top of the range. Arriving at the top near the T.V. aerials a magnificent view unfolded before our eyes. The wind was pretty strong so we didn't venture too far near the edge of the rock. After seeing our destination down below us we walked th short distance to the power lines and the steep track down which we had to walk, or do I mean slide. Some members found the seats of their slacks a little threadbare by the time they reached the bottom.

Afternoon tea was taken in a cleared spot at the bottom of the track. Walking back past the mine buildings we headed for the cars after spending a wonderful day birdwatching. Our thanks to Wal Emery for leading the walk and pointing out places of interest along the way.

Some of the sightings for the day consisted of - Lewin's Honeyeater/male Satin Bowerbird/ King Parrot/ Mistletoebird/ Eastern Yellow Robin/ Black-faced Monarch/ Grey Goshawk/ Large-billed Scrubwren/ Rufous Fantail. In all another great day of birdwatching enjoyed by all who attended.

Ron Hanks.

SOME BREEDING OBSERVATIONS FROM WIRIMBIRRA

In October, a pair of Yellow-faced Honeyeaters began building a nest in a small shrub outside my house. They have not built so close to the house before, and I was looking forward to watching them raise their family.

When the framework of the nest was complete enough for the bird to stand in it, I watched something that I have never seen before. The bird stood in the nest, did some construction work with its bill, and then ran on the spot in the nest. It did a bit more nip and tuck with its bill, and had another run. I presume this was to get the right shape and tension for the nest.

The shrub happens to be next to the bird bath, and is used regularly as a lookout, before the birds fly down to the water. The smaller birds suddenly found that wanting a bath had become dangerous. There were several sorties as the honeyeaters ran off larger birds, then one morning I was attracted by a real commotion. One of the honeyeaters had a Brown Thornbill actually pinned to the ground. It was shrieking in terror, the honeyeater was yelling in rage (I suppose) then the second honeyeater arrived to give moral support, and several other thornbills arrived to hover ineffectually around the struggling pair on the ground. I try to maintain a non-interference policy, but it is hard sometimes.

A couple of days later, I went to investigate the louder than usual Noisy Friarbird calls. These birds are nesting close to the buildings for the first time, and I have been watching with interest the increasing size of their nest. I soon found why the friarbird was sounding so noisy. It was in the bush removing spider webs from the honeyeaters nest. Again it was hard not to interfere, and had I known then that the honeyeaters would abandon the nest after the interference, I may have broken my rule. Now I am sitting looking at a tattered nest, and the friarbird is calmly sitting on her nest.

S. Rooke, Bargo.

INTERESTING NESTING RECORD OF SUPERB FAIRY-WRENS.

Early in the spring of 1984 we were pleased to see a pair of Superb Fairy-wrens building a nest near our kitchen door. The nest was being built in an exotic vine thicket growing around a downpipe. It was 1.8 metres high, the highest Superb Fairy-wrens nest we had ever observed. The nest was very poorly built for a wren's nest and both birds appeared to be young and inexperienced breeders.

Eventually four young were hatched. When they were ready to leave, the nest location proved to be a real problem. Because of the height, the birds were unable to hop from the nest. They had to launch themselves to clear the swimming pool and at the same time gain enough height to clear a 2.1 metre courtyard wall.

Three out of four cleared the pool, the fourth one being removed and dried by human intervention. None cleared the courtyard wall. The parents called vainly from the other side as the fledgelings made repeated tries to find a way over. Human intervention opened the gate and the male entered the courtyard and led his offspring to the shelter of some shrubbery. After a few days it was evident that only one fledgeling had survived.

Within a month the female was again observed at the nest with feathers and was soon sitting on eggs. After hatching the surviving immature from the previous brood joined with the parents in feeding the young. Time to leave the nest and a repeat performance of the previous departure with three clearing the pool and the fourth again having to be fished out and dried.

The fledgelings this time seemed stronger, perhaps the efforts of the immature helping the parents to feed them played a part in this. The party remained in the garden throughout the summer. During the winter of 1985 it became necessary to replace the downpipe to which the vine containing the nest was attached. Not a lot of care was taken as the birds appeared to have completely abandoned the old nest.

A new pipe and the vine was tied back, with the nest this time 300mm. lower than before. Early spring and to our surprise the pair of fairy-wrens began to show an interest in the old nest. A few rearranged feathers with no work at all to the outside and the female was again sitting.

Feeding commenced and after a few days the female was observed entering then leaving the nest still with food in her mouth. Human intervention revealed one only dead chick in the nest. This was physically removed. It is strange for wrens to only lay one egg and we wondered afterwards if perhaps we had overlooked a young dead cuckoo.

Within a few days the female had laid again and within a short while four more chicks were being fed by the breeding pair. None of the fledgelings from the previous year were present and we don't know if they perished or if they had been enticed away to a new territory as an old male with black wings had been present in the garden on and off throughout the year. This time the fledgelings left by a westerly route and all gained the safety of the shrubbery without the customary swim.

Our elation at seeing our charges safely away turned to despair as their departure was followed by three days of cold wind and rain. Alas, only one survived but within a month our fairy-wren super mum was again sitting on eggs, the fifth brood in the same nest over two seasons. The surviving immature, itself less than two months old, as did the one the year before, helped feed the young.

As we write this a week has passed since the four fledgelings left the nest via the western route. They all appear strong but it is again raining and the ever present currawongs are prowling the garden in search of an easy meal. Out of seventeen chicks hatched over two years we can only be sure that five are alive and four of these are less than a week old. Will they survive? We don't know, but if they don't it won't be for lack of trying by our busy little, now very experienced, fairywren parents.

Hazel & Wal Emery.

SUMMERTIME BIRDING IN NORTH QUEENSLAND.

Three days travelling with overnight stops at Girraween Nat. Park and Mundubbera saw us arrive in Rockhampton with a sizeable list of sightings, although at this stage it contained no species we could not have found in N.S.W.

This was soon to change as we headed off toward Mackay & Cape Hillsborough National Park. Keen eyes located eleven Australian Bustards scattered through the grasslands north of Rockhampton, but somehow failed to detect the two operating the radar speed trap on the side of the road. A waterhole south of Mackay produced the first Brolgas of the trip intermixed with 400 Magpie Geese.

If the sunny humid weather at Cape Hillsborough wasn't sufficient indication that we had arrived in the tropics, the change in the birdlife certainly was. Australian Brush-turkey mounds new and used were scattered at fifty metre intervals along the hillside behind the camping ground and the mournful wail of the Bush & Beach Thick-knees pierced the tranquility of the night as they patrolled through the camping ground.

Dusky, White-throated & Yellow Honeyeaters foraged through the gums in company with the beautiful little Yellow-bellied Sunbirds. A Large-tailed Nightjar calling in the dawn chorus was lured to a perch above the tent by replaying his call. A new addition to the Cape Hillsborough N.P. list. Starting at 6-00am. to beat the heat, our walk to Hidden Valley was rewarded with sightings of Orange-footed Scrubfowl, White-browed Robin, Wompoo & Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove and a family of Black Butcherbirds. An interesting sighting several klms outside the park was a breeding colony of 300+ Metallic Starlings with their large bulky nests stacked up to six deep on top of each other like avian home units.

The hottest Mackay Christmas/New Year for twenty years forced us to retreat to Eungella (Land of Clouds). Here we were surprised to find a sub-tropical flora and fauna producing a species list similar to, though less diverse, than Northern N.S.W. On a morning walk to Platypus Pool we located Wompoo, Rose-crowned and Superb Fruit-Doves and no less than eleven Noisy Pittas over a 2 klm track.

From Eungella we passed through a dry, parched landscape, with the only excitement being the sighting of another six Australian Bustards.

North of Ayr the country became greener, with most creeks and lagoons holding water. Several stops along the way produced hundreds of Wandering Whistling-Duck and large numbers of Intermediate and Great Egrets. From a roadside observation at Horseshoe Lagoon we recorded both Green and Cotton Pygmy-Geese, Black-necked Stork, Comb-crested Jacana, Brolga and Magpie Geese estimated in the thousands. Further north the country dried again, forcing the closure of Mt. Elliot National Park to campers. At Townsville Common we suffered our first disappointment. The dry conditions had turned the vast wetlands into a huge bed of baked mud completely devoid of any birdlife. However, the dry surrounding grassy areas produced 3 species of finch.

Lunch at the Botanic Gardens added White-gaped Honeyeater and Helmeted Friarbird, then off to Mt. Spec. This tropical highland rainforest is the southern limit of a number of species, reflected in the addition to our list of Chowchilla, Australian Fernwren, Grey-headed Robin, Tooth-billed Catbird and Bower's Shrike-thrush. Good sightings were made of the Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrikes tending their nest in the picnic ground. Although we spent some time in an area where we had heard the Red-necked Crake calling we failed to sight this secretive rainforest dweller. However our disappointment was quickly forgotten next morning when we located the termite nesting mounds of two pair of Buff-breasted Paradise-kingfishers. We were able to manoeuvre our van to within ten metres of one nest and spend two hours observing the comings and goings of these magnificent New Guinea migrants, from the comfort of our bed. This bird must surely rate among the top ten of our most beautiful birds.

The dense tropical lowland rainforest at Mission Beach, with its almost impenetrable jungle-like vegetation of lawyer canes and fan palms again produced changes in the bird life. The echoing calls of the Orange-footed Scrubfowl dominated above the calls of the smaller birds. Double-eyed Fig-Parrots and Yellow-breasted Boatbill were recorded and a brief sighting was made of the Southern Cassowary as it fled into the jungle.

A surprise sighting was made of a Torresian Imperial-Pigeon nesting 25 metres high in the top of a eucalypt tree. This bird usually breeds in colonies in mangrove or paperbark swamps mostly on offshore islands, flying daily to the mainland to feed on the fruiting trees of the lowland rainforests. Crimson Finches were also sighted in this open habitat.

The mud flats on the Cairns waterfront were literally crawling with waders. Out of this mass of birds the only species we recorded not commonly found in the Illawarra was the Common Sandpiper although more experienced wader watchers could probably have found more.

At Port Douglas an early morning walk through the mangroves while waiting to board a boat to the outer Barrier Reef located our only Shining Flycatchers. The trip to the reef produced good sightings of Brown Booby, Common Noddy and Black-naped Terns, which had taken up residence on the mooring platforms. Several other sightings were made along the way but the 30 knot winds and 2 metre swell made positive identification almost impossible.

From Port Douglas we travelled up to Mount Molloy, across the Atherton Tablelands and down to Palmerston National Park. Several additional species were recorded along the way, including Macleay's Honeyeater, Bridled Honeyeater, Little Treecreeper and 5 Buff-banded Rails. The camping area at Henrietta Creek, Palmerston N.P. set in a rainforest clearing, was frequented by many species of birds, and provided us with the most idyllic rainforest camp of the whole trip. Henrietta Creek also provided us with our last chance to find the Little Kingfisher before we commenced the long trip home. After an hour long search of the creek, which produced 3 more Azure Kingfishers, 15 in all for the trip, and still no Little Kingfishers, I returned to camp to find Hazel had had a visit from two Red-necked Crakes, a bird for which we had searched long and hard and spent many quiet hours at mosquito infested waterholes. I resigned myself to the fact that they might return the following evening, and we set out next morning in yet another attempt to find the Little Kingfisher, this time with more success.

First a sighting of an immature bird, then a klm. further down the creek an adult bird quietly feeding from a low perch. 200mm. of rain overnight heralded the start of the wet and prevented any further sightings of the Red-necked Crake.

The 3 day return trip home provided little time for birdwatching but we managed to add Marsh Sandpiper, Squatter Pigeon and Plum-headed Finch from meal stops along the way. A long trip like this, 7,000klm in all, gives a good insight into the dependence of birds on habitat variations and leaves one wondering what prevents them from crossing these sometimes visible but often invisible barriers which confine so many species.

Wal Emery.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER & NOVEMBER, 1985.

R Spectacled Monarch	1	Bass Point	9-11-85	C. Chafer
S Satin Flycatcher	2	Stanwell Park	-10-85	D. Perry
MC Variegated Fairy-wren	4+	" "	-11-85	"
U Yellow-tailed Blk Cockatoo	12	" "	-11-85	"
U Marsh Harrier	1	Albion Park	10-9-85	P. Bath
U Pacific Heron	7	Gerringong	11-9-85	"
MC Topnot Pigeon	30+	Bellambi Creek	27-9-85	"
S Whimbrel	1	Lake Illawarra	2-10-85	"
U Pink-eared Duck	6	Lake Illawarra South	11-9-85	M. Parkinson
S Eastern Bristlebird	1	Barren Grounds	14-9-85	"
U White's Thrush	1	Macquarie Pass	15-9-85	"
R Great Crested Grebe	11	Wingecarribee	22-9-85	"
U Yellow Spoonbill	1	Hoskins Reserve	22-9-85	"
U Ruddy Turnstone	4	Lake Illawarra	5-11-85	"
U Sooty Oystercatcher	2	Belmore Basin	12-9-85	Ron Almond
U Peregrine Falcon	1	Keiraville	23-9-85	"
U White-headed Stilt	1	Tom Thumb Lagoon	16-11-85	"
MC Barn Owl	1	Marshall Mount	7-11-85	A. Knowlson
MC Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	Mt. Kembla	1-9-85	R. Simcock
U Cicadabird	1	Balgownie	1-11-85	W & H Emery
S Australasian Bittern	1	Bellambi	1-11-85	W. Emery
S Whimbrel	1	Towradgi Creek	1-11-85	W & H Emery
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Light-mantled Sooty Albatross	1	East of Wollongong	27-10-85	A. McBride
Buller's Albatross		Boat Trip	2nd & 3rd November	Seabird Group
Black Petrel		East of Wollongong	"	Records per
White-chinned Petrel		" "	"	D. Fischer
Buller's Shearwater		" "	"	"

H A P P Y
N E W
Y E A R !

