

I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 110 February, 1988.



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.

Printed by Courtesy of BHP Illawarra Collieries.

CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

PRESIDENT

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WOLLONGONG NSW 2500
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TREASURER

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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 \$10 SINGLE \$7
STUDENT \$2

EDITOR Mary Shaw, 6 Bloomfield Avenue, CORRIMAL, 2518
84-1680

NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, cnr. Collaery Avenue & Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday, 8th February, 1988 at 7.30 pm. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Fred Spiteri who will deliver an address "Birds of Prey". Fred's hobby is the rehabilitation of raptors and he is planning to bring along a young Wedge Tailed Eagle which is being trained to take it's place back in the wild. This is your opportunity to see one of these magnificent birds close up. Members can be assured of an entertaining evening.

NEW YEAR OUTING - Our annual outing to Windang will be held on the evening of Wednesday, February 3rd. We will meet under the pine trees on the Northern side of the Windang estuary at 5.00 p.m. After a stroll around the sand flats we will have a short supper, so bring a bite to eat and a cuppa! For those who haven't been to this outing before, we usually find a good variety of waterfowl, waders, gulls and terns.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - Our February field outing will be held on Saturday, 13th February. We will be meeting at 9.00 a.m. at the car park adjacent to the look-out on top of Camberwarra Mountain. From here we will undertake a short drive to Red Rock Nature Reserve. Our leader for the day, Barry Virtue, will then take us to an area of wet forest where he found the rare Olive Whistler last year. Lunch will be at the cars after which we will walk through an area of heath to look at some Aboriginal drawings and scrapings. Camberwarra Mountain can be reached by taking the Kangaroo Valley turn off (from Princes Highway) at the Southern end of Berry or the turn off just North of Bomaderry. Habitats we will encounter during the day include rainforest, wet and dry sclerophyl forest, open eucalypt woodland and heath. Allow 1½ hours travel from Wollongong.

READY FOR TAKE-OFF - FOOTNOTE.

In the December Newsletter we mentioned the Great Cormorant that disgorged a 200 mm Brown Trout before taking off. We've since established that the cormorant would have weighed about 2,500 grams while the trout would have been about 200 grams. Hardly worth unloading?

Dave Thomson.

FROM THE NEW EDITOR - I would like to thank Wal & Hazel Emery for the excellent News Letters we have had in the last few years. I'm sure all the club stand behind me when I say that I appreciate the work you have put in to making it an interesting and readable paper. As your new editor I would like to ask for your support in writing articles for your newsletter. I would like to start a column about birds observed in your garden. Many of us take a great deal of pleasure and time watching our feathery visitors and little snippets exchanged (just a line or two) may be beneficial to others.

Also helping me to produce your Newsletter is Barbara Hales who has the arduous job of typing. Ron Simcock uses his computer print out to provide the name/address tags stuck on the envelopes - they are compiled in order of post codes. Dulcie Rose stamps each envelope four times - 126 of them - then sticks the computer print out onto the envelopes and delivers them to Bob and Peg McKinlay. Bob and Peg collate the sheets, staple and then fold the Newsletters, place them in the envelopes and mail them at the P.O. Ron Almond oversees the membership list, making sure visitors and new members receive a copy and deleting names. Rodney Doyle of B.H.P. prints our Newsletter for us. So you see there is quite a workforce behind the monthly Newsletter.

THIRLMERE LAKES OUTING, SATURDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 1987.

The final outing for the year 1987 was attended by 31 members, meeting at the picnic area at Thirlmere Lakes, was the usual afternoon outing and B.B.Q. tea with spotlighting after dark. The weather was calm and cloudy. The dull afternoon made conditions a little difficult for birdwatching but we still had a great walk and observed a good number of birds.

At the picnic area the Sacred Kingfisher was observed carrying food to a nest, along with the Mistletoe bird, Yellow-faced and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, Variegated Fairy-wren and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos.

We began our walk about 3.15 p.m. North back along the road then taking a walking track through the forest close by the lake. When we came to a point about opposite the picnic area where we started we had a choice either to continue on which was a longer walk or turn around which we did, except two who continued on around the lake.

It was a beautiful day for walking through the bush surrounding the lake. Some of the vegetation consists of Bloodwood, Banksia, Woody Pears, Blue-berry Ash, Wattles and Tea Trees. The lake is shallow with reed growth around the edge. The clear water is used for boating and skiing keeping the birdlife at bay until dark when some ducks came in and settled. The call of the Clamorous Reed-Warbler could be heard frequently from the reeds.

Some of the birds observed during the walk around the lake were the Wonga Pigeon, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Leaden Flycatcher, White-throated Gerygone, Olive-backed Oriole, Golden-headed Cisticola and a Noisy Friarbird feeding young in a nest.

After tea we gathered together beside the boat launching ramp absorbing some of the beauty of the lake in the quiet of the evening while waiting for full darkness to do a spotlighting walk along the road. The wait was worthwhile for about one hour and a half we observed a total of eight ringtail possums in the tall eucalypts and on our return, a Crested Shrike-tit was eventually identified on a leafy branch of a eucalypt about five metres up in a tree.

When we arrived back at the boat ramp a search of the shallow sandy lake revealed a number of small fish and two small toroise moving slowly over the sandy bottom.

The outing proved to be very successful with a total of 56 birds observed and a good time had by all for the final outing of the year. Thanks are due to Chris Chafer for leading and choice of venue.

Horace Ward.

BUTTERFLIES, BIRDS AND BIRDOS.

At the meeting on 14th December there possibly were more butterflies present than birds, that is, in the Birdos presenting incredibly funny and well thought out acts. The evening was started off with a sing-a-long with Gwen Robinson, Val and Jim Shurley and Wendy Hanks. I believe Jim is canvassing for negatives of all photos taken of him in his underpants and sportscoat with the idea of buying them off the market.

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It certainly got everyone into a participatory mood which assisted the next act - "What Birdo is that", presented by Margaret Parkinson, Denise Strickland and Mary Shaw. Their act required the audience to guess which Birdo they were presenting in each small skit and the audience were indeed very clever - didn't miss a Birdo. Laurie Williams presented an amusing act - "A Meritous Award". The Hales set up stiff competition with Tony Barber in "Sale of the Bi-Centenary" - the major prize being Russell's colour t.v. set - would he have had to save his pocket money for a replacement had Wal given the correct answer? "One Good Tern Deserves Another" presented by Wal & Hazel Emery was an amusing and clever act. There were seven entrants in the "Mime a Bird" competition. The winners were:

- First..... Spectacled Monarch.....Ray Elford
- Second..... Bronze Cuckoo.....Dave Thomson
- Third..... Jabiru.....Bob McKinlay

Santa Jim presented gifts to Birdos who earned recognition through deed or speech during the year. Jim Robinson was our most eloquent compere - thank you Jim for binding it all together. Supper of course was the usual banquet; a happy and festive evening was had by all.

Mary Shaw.

NEWS ITEMS

Jack Hyslop spent a few days in Bulli Hospital over the New Year. Good to see him well again but he was disappointed in missing the Moscow Circus.

Peter Ewin sent a card to I.B.O.C. wishing all members a "Merry Exmas and good birdwatching in the New Year". In his accompanying note he writes "I have been accepted in the Australian Maritime College in Launceston, Tasmania, doing a Bachelor of Applied Science (Fisheries Technology). As this involves a number of trips into Bass Strait I am hoping to do some seabird observation as well as seeing some of the Tasmanian birds."

Many of our members will remember Sean O'Malley, a member in the early years of the club. It is with sadness that we learnt of his death at the end of last year.

A reminder that 1988 fees are now due and also that as from the next meeting name tags will be issued and collected at the end of each meeting. If you have a name tag please bring it with you.

A LOCAL TREAT

I decided to ride my bike around Barrack Point with my binocs of course; I hadn't seen much bird life there for a while but thought the waders would come in soon.

I usually start from Warilla Sports & Social Club and follow the creek around to the headland. Right at the club's back door were Curlew Sandpipers galore. I watched intently as they fossicked for worms in the exposed mud flats, when a worm was caught they immediately ran into the water and appeared to wash their catch before swallowing it.

Further along, Grey-Tailed Tattlers, more Curlew Sandpipes, Bar-tailed Godwits and lots of Greenshanks darting about, also three Royal Spoonbills. These birds were all feeding happily among plastic bags of every colour, plastic bottles of every shape and beer and cordial cans of every brand. It's a lovely little creek, just needs a clean up and I feel a few trees planted along the bank.

I rode on down to Barrack Point headland and there were hundreds of dark coloured birds flying South. I watched for ages but couldn't see well enough to identify them. They were still flying past, gliding in and out of the waves as I pedalled for home, a bit late as usual.

Margaret Parkinson.

PROGRAMME FOR 1988

- February 3 Wed 5.30pm - Evening Outing to Windang.
8 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - F. Spiteri - "Birds of Prey".
13 Sat - Outing to Red Rock Nature Reserve.
- March 14 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - H. Whitmore - "Aerodynamics of Bird Flight".
20 Sun - Outing to Bulli.
- April 1 Fri - Mon 4 - Easter Camp - Upper Horton.
11 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - Members Night.
16 Sat - Outing - Tarrawa State Forest.
22 Fri - Mon 25 - Combined Bird Watching Clubs N.S.W. Camp, Forbes.
30 Sat 6 & 8pm - Film Night.
- May 9 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - R. Whelan - Pollination.
15 Sun - Outing - Strong's Reserve.
- June 4 Sat 6 & 8pm - Film Night.
13 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - Dr. M. Cannon - "Aviculture".
18 Sat - Outing - Jacks Corner.
- July 2 Sat 6 & 8pm - Film Night
11 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - R. Turner - "Birds in State Forests".
17 Sun - Outing to Mt. Keira.
30 Sat 6 & 8pm - Film Night.
- August 8 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - P. Smith - "Bushfires and Birds".
13 Sat - Outing to Primbee.
- September 12 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - J. Miller - "Wildlife of Tasmania".
18 Sun - Outing to Royal National Park.
- September 30 Fri - Family Camp - Wingello
October 3 Mon - October Camp - Goonoo State Forest.
14 Fri - Sun 23
- November 14 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting - C. Chafer - "Northern Queensland".
19 Sat - Outing - Bus Trip to Kurnell Peninsula.
- December 10 Sat - Christmas B.B.Q. - Budderoo National Park.
12 Mon 7.30pm - Meeting

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NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday, 14th March, 1988 at 7.30 p.m. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Peter Smith who is an independent Consultant on Flora and Fauna Studies; previous to this he was on the staff of the National Parks & Wildlife. Peter will talk about Bushfires and Birds - covering work conducted on the South Coast and the Blue Mountains.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - The March field outing will be held on Sunday, 20th March. We will meet at 8.30 a.m. at my home, 6 Bloomfield Avenue, Corrimal and walk to the top of Lynden Street where we will enter the mine property and travel up through the paddock to the fire road; along this to and up Rixon's Pass Road then along to Broker's Nose which is a good place for carry lunch. (There are a few pleasant spots for morning teas along the route). From there we will come down by the telegraph wires to the fire road thence through the rainforest to Glenlea Street. A short walk along a couple of roads will bring us back to the cars. There are a few up hills - but no need to rush them - all along fairly clearly defined tracks and roads - the hardest part will be the telegraph wire track but that is down hill. Our leader will be Mary Shaw.

MID WEEK OUTING - always held on the first Wednesday of each month. This month it will be held on March 2nd. Meet under the powerlines at the lookout at Mount Kembla at 9 a.m. Any enquiries please ring Horace Ward or Ron Almond.

FROM THE EDITOR. Once again we are launching into an exciting birding year. Kevin Woods has compiled a complete set of Newsletters from the first one issued and has bound them most attractively into three volumes. We are going to present a small section each month from the "archives" which will take some of you down memory lane to some outing, camp or meeting from the past. At the last meeting Richard Jordan once more reminded us that anyone interested could get a card from him to record nest sightings. Information can be recorded if you have seen a bird carrying nesting materials, have seen a nest or seen birds carrying food to feed baby birds. So, see Richard and he will tell you what to do and then see that the information gets to the people who are collating it. Keep writing articles for the newsletter, they are very interesting.

1988 MAILING LIST.

1988 fees are now overdue if you haven't paid them. The 1988 mailing list will be compiled after the March meeting; only financial members will receive the Newsletter after this date. If there is a x in the box at the end of this sentence, you are unfinancial!



LIBRARY NEWS.

It was great to see everyone's smiling faces at our first meeting for 1988. The library was again popular with old and new members alike. We have several new arrivals added to our already comprehensive library.

"The Shorebirds of Australia" by John Douglas Pringle - very popular with our more advanced Birdos. If you are keen to borrow this book I suggest you ask me to write your name down to hold it for you. Indeed if there is any particular book you want I will hold it for you for the night.

We now have the third cassette in the series of eight cassettes "A Field Guide to Australian Bird Song". This is an excellent series arranged in the same order as they appear in "Recommended English Names for Australian Birds". An explanatory booklet accompanies each cassette.

- Cassette 1 - Side 1 - Emu to Mottled Petrel.
- " Side 2 - Gould's Petrel to Striated Heron.
- Cassette 2 - Side 1 - Rufous Night Heron to Black-breasted Buzzard.
- " Side 2 - Brahminykite to Chestnut Rail.
- Cassette 3 - Side 1 - Red-necked Crake to Double-Banded Plover.
- " Side 2 - Large Sand Plover to Black-naped Tern.

LIBRARY TIMES.

The library will be open for twenty minutes before and twenty minutes after each meeting. If you need help to find or select a book, don't hesitate to ask me. Hope you all have enjoyable reading.

Olive Rodwell.

ILLAWARRA LAKES ENTRANCE OUTING, WEDNESDAY, 3rd FEBRUARY, 1988.

We got off to a good start with the year 1988, with 38 members attending the annual outing to Lake Illawarra Entrance at Windang, where we have been making an annual visit beginning in February, 1980.

The weather was warm and sunny with a North-Easterly breeze blowing until about 6 p.m. when the wind changed to the South which brought a considerable lowering in temperature.

We spent the time searching the large sandflat area and scanning the lake before walking to a spot where we could look over the ocean for sea birds. There among the Silver Gulls the Australasian Gannet was identified.

Over the sand-flats there was the usual large number of birds in their respective groups. One group consisted of the Silver Gull, Crested Tern and Kelp Gull and a large flock of Little Terns were moving about the area when disturbed by people moving about. Then another group of Red-capped Plovers, Red-necked Stint and a couple of Double-banded Plovers were observed feeding on the wet sand at low tide.

Then looking over the water of the lake we observed the Bar-tailed Godwit, Greenshank, White-faced Heron, Great Knot and Australian Pelican. In the reeds on the lake shore the Clamorous Reed Warbler was busy, possibly attending to young, but could not verify that. For the afternoon a total of nineteen species were observed. Australian Pelican, Australasian Gannet, Great Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, White-faced Heron, Double-banded Plover, Red-capped Plover, Greenshank, Bar-tailed Godwit, Great Knot, Red-necked Stint, Silver Gull, Kelp Gull, Little Tern, Crested Tern, Clamorous Reed Warbler, House Sparrow, Australian Magpie.

Horace Ward.

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FEBRUARY MEETING.

Fred Spiteri was our guest speaker for the February meeting and he proved to be a real treat for all those who attended. Fred is one of only a few people to hold a licence for the rehabilitation of birds of prey in Australia and what a dedicated and caring young man he is, devoting hours and hours of his leisure time to return sick, injured and abandoned birds back to freedom whenever he can.

His interest in Falconry began at the age of fourteen and as the time went by he decided to "go legal" and approached the National Parks and Wildlife Service to see what he could do and he was granted the licence.

Fred's talk was extremely interesting and very informative as he went through the points of training and diet, weight is critical in the exercising of the birds to build up and tone muscle tissue, they are weighed every day in training. His techniques for teaching them to hunt are fascinating.

This was an exceptional evening for all those present as Fred didn't accompany his talk with the usual slides but instead he brought with him an immature Sea Eagle who, unfortunately, due to a wing injury restricting his flight, is destined to become an exhibit but nevertheless could possibly breed when rehabilitated, offspring of which would be released.

The other bird he brought was an absolutely magnificent, majestic, Wedge-tailed Eagle. She was stunning in her beauty and although fully grown, size wise, she was still immature and her colouring has to be seen to be believed she is just so beautiful and attractive. Fred wasn't worried as she occasionally nibbled his neck or sweater but said that he had great respect for her massive talons which turn in and lock onto prey. She had been abandoned by her parents after falling out of the nest and Fred has raised her to her present glory.

When her upbringing is complete Fred will have to make a decision, will she be transferred to San Diego Zoo to compliment their breeding programme or will he release her into the wild and let her take her chances against man? He hasn't decided yet and I am thankful I don't have to make that choice as I would find it heartbreaking to part with such an incredibly beautiful creature.

Our thanks to you Fred for giving us such a memorable and enjoyable experience and for sharing your time and knowledge with us. I am sure all our members wish you well in your future work.

For those who missed out on this treat, be sure to see the videos which will feature some of Fred's birds, they include some fantastic footage of birds hunting and are due to be shown at the first film night in April.

Barbara Hales.

FEBRUARY OUTING TO CAMBERWARRA MOUNTAIN.

It was raining steadily as we pulled into the Camberwarra Mountain Lookout car park and even though we were fifteen minutes early, we could make out three other cars through the fog, obviously IBOCers oozing positive vibes. By 9 a.m. there were about a dozen cars with occupants peering through fogged up windows looking for that forecast break in the scattered showers while sipping on cups of coffee. As conditions remained dismal, discussions held under umbrellas concluded that we should at least have a look down the track that Barry Virtue was going to guide us, so a convoy set off into the Red Rock Nature Reserve. When we arrived at the relay station the rain had eased slightly so we walked a hundred metres along a track to see some Aboriginal rock scrapings. When the rain began again we decided to try the lower areas and headed off to the Bomaderry Nature Trail, and under threatening conditions seventeen stayers arrived at the car park.

The walk starts off through eucalypt forest towards the creek with small signs under trees and bushes with their names on and it was surprising to see such a scenic area existing adjacent to a major town. The track went along under sandstone overhangs and up onto the cliffs overlooking the creek where Yellow-faced Honeyeaters were quickly spotted with some good views of Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters that seemed to be confined to this locality.

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FEBRUARY OUTING CONTD.

Other birds included White Cockatoo, Red Wattle-birds, Noisy Friar-bird, Spotted Pardalote and Brown Thornbill. During a brief shower we sheltered under a rock overhang and studied the labelled plants in the area and chatted. Walking back to the car park a White-browed Scrubwren was seen to be chased out of its bush by a Yellow-faced Honeyeater and for a while they changed habitats.

Lunch under the shelters in the car park proved interesting with four or five Double-bar Finches coming in to feed and an Eastern Yellow Robin that had been heard calling nearby coming out to investigate. Then as the rain came down again it was decided that the Red Rock area showed too much promise to be missed and another IBOC visit should be planned in the near future.

Thanks to Barry and Chris for organising the day were expressed by all with hope that the weather would be more benevolent next visit.

Chris Brandis.

BIRDS AT BOOMERANG BEACH.

During January we spent a week camping at Boomerang Beach, near Forster, with members of our family. Although the main interests of the group were surfing and sailboarding we did manage to introduce them to a little birdwatching.

The camp area was well shaded with native trees and adjoined a beautiful area of bush which contained Angophoras, Melaleucas, Banksia Serrata, Palms and many other shrubs.

Birds were plentiful in the park, the most common being Scaly-breasted Lorikeets and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters which fed in the trees above the van. Others seen each morning were Red Wattlebirds, Eastern Rosellas and King Parrots. Kookaburras and Magpies came daily and shared our barbecue scraps.

On a walk through the bush we saw a pair of Sacred Kingfishers, a Dollar Bird, Whipbird, Cuckoo Shrike, Satin Flycatcher, Little Friarbird, Sittellas and Figbirds. While in the area on three different occasions we watched a White-breasted Sea Eagle flying overhead.

One morning while sitting quietly by the van we were visited by a number of Variegated Wrens including two fully coloured males. They hopped about just a few feet from our chairs and gave us the perfect view - no binoculars required.

Bob & Peg McKinlay.

A TRIP TO THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS.

The last time I did any bird watching in the Snowy was while skiing, so I thought a trip during Summer to check what I could see in the open Eucalypt forests on the lower slopes, the Snow Gum area which is often snow covered in Winter and on the alpine meadows on the upper slopes.

During a walk around one of the National Park tracks on the lower slopes at Sawpit Creek we saw 31 species, including 5 Honeyeaters, Yellow-faced, White-eared, Brown-headed, White-naped and Red Wattlebirds, Spotted and Striated Pardalotes while overhead hundreds of White-throated Needle-tails hawked. On one of the river flats we came across a "colony" of Satin Flycatchers, at one time I counted four males and a female feeding and in 300 metres I found two nests. One of the nests had three young, the nest being so small only two fitted in and one was forced to sit a little way down the branch. It was interesting to note that when the female brought a large insect and tried to feed the young in the nest, the male came up, took the insect and fed it to the nestling on the branch, yet a few minutes later he brought another similar insect and fed it to a nestling in the nest. A little further down the track a Collared Sparrowhawk was seen flying from tree to tree and heading towards the Flycatchers, it was the only raptor seen in the mountains.

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A TRIP TO THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS CONTD.

In the Snow Gum area the same birds that I saw during the Winter were there, such as Brown Thornbills, White-browed Scrubwrens, Little Ravens, four Crimson Rosellas, which were more orange in colour than the birds of the Illawarra, with the Flame Robins, Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos and a few other immigrants, a total of fourteen species being noted.

The alpine meadows were vast, but almost devoid of birds, during a 5 klm. walk to the Blue Lake we saw only a few Richard's Pipits along the walking track and six Little Ravens feeding on one of the slopes.

In all, the number of species is low compared to many other areas, but it is interesting to note which birds stay for the Winter and which ones come into an area to take advantage of the rich insect life then move out when the area freezes over.

Chris Brandis.

A WEEK AT POLBLUE.

Just on ten years ago Laurie and I stayed overnight at Gloucester and the following day drove along the Barrington Tops Forest Road for 140 km to Scone. The road had only been open for three months and as it was early September it was very cold with mist and sleet, so the day didn't lend itself to too many stops, but we put it on our list of places to go back to.

Wal and Hazel Emery camped in the area for a couple of days last Christmas/New Year and spoke of it in such glowing terms that we decided it was time for a re-visit.

On the 27th December, at 4 a.m., we set off driving along the Putty Road - always an interesting drive since our IBOC camp at Putty - looking for Turquoise Parrots or Wonga Pigeons feeding on the side of the road. No such luck this time, however we did enjoy several sightings of Common Bronzewing Pigeons. We drove through Warkworth and Jerrys Plains joining the New England Highway at Muswellbrook then on to Aberdeen turning off to head for Moonan Flat and the mountains to our destination.

It turned into quite a hot morning and the 11 km. climb from Moonan Flat has some very steep pinches, not recommended for most conventional vehicles towing a caravan, however by using 4WD and taking a couple of breaks, the Subaru pulled the drifter up well.

Our stops proved profitable as we enjoyed watching Rufous Songlarks, Willy Wagtails and Superb Fairy Wrens and a pair of Australasian Grebe on a dam with a nest which they continually covered up and left whenever a vehicle drove past even though they were several metres from the road.

At the dingo fence and entrance to the State Forest we stopped, admiring the view from Moonan Outlook where most days Mt. Dangar at Sandy Hollow can be seen in the distance, and the temperature was several degrees cooler.

We arrived at Polblue Swamp camping area in Stewarts Brook State Forest, 1,500 metres above sea level, at 11.30 a.m. after travelling 430 km. from home and set up camp for the week. It is a lovely area with a meandering creek and trout for the fishermen, Snow Gums, Eucalypt Stellulata, beautiful alpine flowers and a good camping area.

A one hour walking is constructed around the Spagnum Moss Swamp giving excellent views of the surrounding area, winding through various habitats as well as the lovely Polblue picnic area. The wildflowers are especially beautiful and include hundreds of white and purple Donkey orchids, Greenhood orchids, Mountain Buttercups, paper daisies and violets in every shade from purple to palest mauve. Unfortunately the exotic Scottish Broom has spread and is threatening to take over several of the native plants but an eradication scheme is underway.

Contd.....

A WEEK AT POLBLUE CONTO.

Wild horses and wallabies visit the area and we observed several species of birds but none as exciting as four Tawny Frogmouths, two parents and their well grown young, which Laurie discovered early in our stay, roosting in a tree very close to our camp. They changed trees most nights and first job of the morning was to spot the frogmouth. We enjoyed watching them and hearing their soft call especially on dusk as they woke up and started to move about for the adults to gather food for their young. One night while we were in bed we heard them land on the roof of our van and call.

The Red Wattlebirds were the common bird of the camp and some were nesting but in our travels around the area we saw Brown Thornbills, Pied Currawongs, Magpies, Kookaburras, Crimson Rosellas, Flame Robins, Golden Whistlers, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, Tree Martins and Topknot Pigeons among others. Also an English Blackbird was seen and heard near the picnic area.

We experienced Polblue in all kinds of weather except snow and that was well depicted in photographs at the Forestry Office in Gloucester. We had sun, wind, mist, rain and seemed to be in the centre of an extremely fierce thunder and rain storm one day. We soon discovered the mood could change very quickly in the mountains. Each change added its own special beauty to the area and none so well as the misty rain when we walked through the Negrohead Beech Forests. The trees looked beautiful with their festoons of lichen dripping with droplets of rain while the buttresses of the majestic Beech trees covered in moss looked so grand that we expected to see fairies and gnomes living amongst them. The National Park people talk of the fabled Yowie but we preferred to think of it as Pixie O'Harris country. Tree ferns also added their beauty to the area.

There are many lovely places to walk, picnic or camp. We visited the Firs Picnic site, a forestry experiment area where Radiata, Mexican and Ponderosa Pines and Douglas Firs are growing. The walking trail through the trees is well sign-posted - it would be easy to get lost. It is a very silent area and quite dark except for the odd ray of sunshine filtering through, but well worth a visit. The pine needle carpet makes it quiet to walk on. We watched a Lyrebird standing on a fallen log going through his repertoire for more than ten minutes. We went back another day for a second concert - quite an experience.

Lyrebirds were also seen and heard calling in the Beech Forests and under a huge tree in the drier area at Thunderbolts Lookout one hot sunny day.

We drove across the headwaters of both the Hunter and Manning Rivers with just a little hill between them and both small creeks, so different to the large waterways they are when they reach the sea at Newcastle and Taree. The Barrington and Gloucester Rivers also originate in these mountains and a drive into Gloucester supplies proved to be very scenic.

During our stay, Wal and Hazel joined us which was a bonus for us as a walk through the forest is greatly enhanced by Wal's knowledge of the trees and orchids and Hazel's ability to hear and spot the birds. The Sydney Field Ornithologists Club set up camp on the opposite side of the road to Polblue and several of the members visited us to see Laurie's frogmouths.

The area is well worth a visit and although there were several beautiful smaller places to camp, at no time was Polblue crowded with only an average of ten camps per night and it is well serviced by the Forest Rangers. All Wal said was true and we can add our recommendation now - it is a great place to relax and enjoy the beauty of the mountains. We'll be going back again someday.

Nola Williams.

GARDEN SNIPPETS.

On the 25th January we had two Dollar Birds on our t.v. antennae, they flew off and then I saw one fly overhead with food in its beak. I saw the bird land on a dead branch in the big pine tree in the North Wollongong Hotel where it fed another Dollar Bird. A little later two more birds flew in making a total of four. It's the first time we've seen Dollar Birds around our home.

Nola Williams.

contd.....

GARDEN SNIPPETS CONTD.

The Honeyeaters really love to feed from the Kangaroo Paw which this year has sent its flowers up on very long stems. I saw a little Red Wattle Bird having a feed and its weight on the end of the flower brought it swooping down nearly to the ground. I wondered if it enjoyed its ride. The Little Wattle Birds have left the area now and I miss their raucous entry to the garden and their cheery conversation.

MARY SHAW

For the first time this Spring we had a pair of Little Wattlebirds nest in the garden. We watched with interest as they fed their young on a variety of insects up to the size of a dragonfly. After the young fledged they all continued feeding around the garden for several weeks and then the adults commenced to build a new nest. The nest appeared near completion, then to our surprise one morning we realised there were no noisy, chattering, Wattlebirds in the garden. What caused them to leave along with their juveniles and desert a near completed nest? Did the small number of nectar producing flowers in the garden during the Summer months prove an insufficient food source, there were certainly still plenty of insects available, or was the breeding pair broken up by our unfriendly resident Collared Sparrowhawk? I guess we'll never know and I must admit we weren't sorry to see them go for a while as they tend to dominate the garden at the expense of the smaller honeyeaters.

Wal Emery.

NATURES CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

When digging out foundations for a carport and putting dirt in the wheelbarrow we noticed the next day a pair of Pardalotes tunnelling into the fresh soft soil in the barrow. There was also a large pile of dirt and the Pardalotes decided to tunnel into this. We left the pile of dirt there for them, however they seemed to lose interest and started tunnelling into my wire basket pot plants instead. These were too small however as they tunnelled in one side and out the other. So Allen decided to fill a large plastic pipe, one foot round, two feet long, with soil and hung it in the tree. They ignored it completely so I tied some paper bark around and in front of it with a little hole at one end. They immediately started tunnelling, shooting in and out like rockets. The windows nearby drove them mad, they could see their own reflection and attacked them continually until I blacked out the windows with bon ami.

Next problem was the car coming in and out so close to them - so we left the car out of the carport. Then whammo! A gale of wind came through and the whole thing fell down. So we shifted the nest to a quieter spot in amongst lots of foliage in front of our lounge room window, with a much better view for us.

They have continually flown in and out since last March. We thought they had young twice as we noticed them taking food in sometimes. On Christmas Eve in the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations with a stiff Southerly breeze blowing I heard a loud clunk on the window and there it was. What was it? A baby Pardalote sitting slightly stunned on the window sill and up in the tree, facing the wind, hanging on tight, two more little Pardalotes, the parents up in the tree calling incessantly. Eventually they flew up with the parents. We saw them for a few more days then they must have moved on so I hope they all survived.

MARGARET PARKINSON

FROM THE ARCHIVES.

Friday 28th January, 1977. Day by Day with Paddy Ginnane.

"A new group calling itself The Illawarra Bird Observers' Club will hold an inaugural meeting at the WEA, 79 Corrimal St next Tuesday, February 1 at 7.45 pm. I believe this group grew out of a WEA course on "ornithology" for beginners last year. The contact is Laurie Williams, 18 Achilles Ave, North Wollongong."

Contd.....

SOME NOTES ON CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOOS.

For the past two years, sightings have been recorded in the Keiraville - Mount Pleasant - Balgownie areas of Channel-billed Cuckoos. In early January, 1986 two young birds were observed being fed by foster parents in the Greenslopes Avenue area. On 25th December, 1987, a pair of Pied Currawongs were observed feeding possibly two young in bushland South of Greenslopes Avenue. A week later, one young was seen. Below is a note received from a friend, who lives not far from us in Hopewood Crescent.

" An unusual syndrome has smitten the residents of Hopewood Crescent, Fairy Meadow. Young and old alike have taken to gazing intently up the gum trees. It all started on 18th January, 1988, when the bird calls and occasional cicada drum-song were suddenly replaced with a new sound - extremely loud WARKS! Enter a young Channel-billed Cuckoo, telling its foster parents (two Pied Currawongs) and everyone else, "I'm famished". An offering of raw meat was gratefully accepted.

For ten days the trees along the creek line witnessed the wing flapping, bill gaping antics. (What a marvellous subject for the not so keen of sight, I can find that large bundle of feathers - no trouble at all). Then on 25th January it spread its wings and favoured a new group of admirers around the park and down Dymock Street with its wonderful carry on. Constantly complaining about the meagre supply of good nourishing food those poor overworked foster parents were providing for their over-sized chick.

The family of Common Mynas and Magpie Larks that frequent the area were most upset with the new arrival. Then two Magpies arrived on the scene and really got nasty about the whole thing, dive bombing and pecking the culprit, all the way back to the willows on the creek edge. The desperate escape was accompanied with a new call - loud raucous cry - HONK! The rest of the day was spent skulking in the willow thickets. Have heard these attacks on a number of occasions since. 2nd February - only hear our friend early morning and evening when he returns to the original gum tree hanut." (Gloria Kearnan)

Following on from my friend's observations, at approximately p a.m. on 4th February, 1988, an awful call heralded the arrival of a Channel-billed Cuckoo, flying along our garden chased by two irate Magpies. It flew East but returned ten seconds later, this time pursued by four Common Mynas and one Silver Gull. These gave up the chase and the bird flew low over the house and headed West. It tried to land in several of the high gum trees on the hill above us, but each time it was harrassed by several birds. Finally it flew back over the house heading East, pursued by four Crimson Rosellas, two King Parrots, fifteen plus Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, six Common Mynas and one Silver Gull, all giving their alarm calls.

It disappeared but five minutes later another call and it landed in a Spotted gum, twenty feet from the ground and right in front of me, where I had a perfect view. After calming a, by now, hysterical dog, who wanted to give chase, I was able to observe the bird, with binocs., for approximately five minutes.

It was an immature bird, the bill was greyish and the bright red around eye and bill of an adult was not noticeable. The abdomen was more grey and the head and upper back buff speckled grey.

The dog moved her position and the Channel-billed Cuckoo flew off, this time without calling and so was able to escape without an escort.

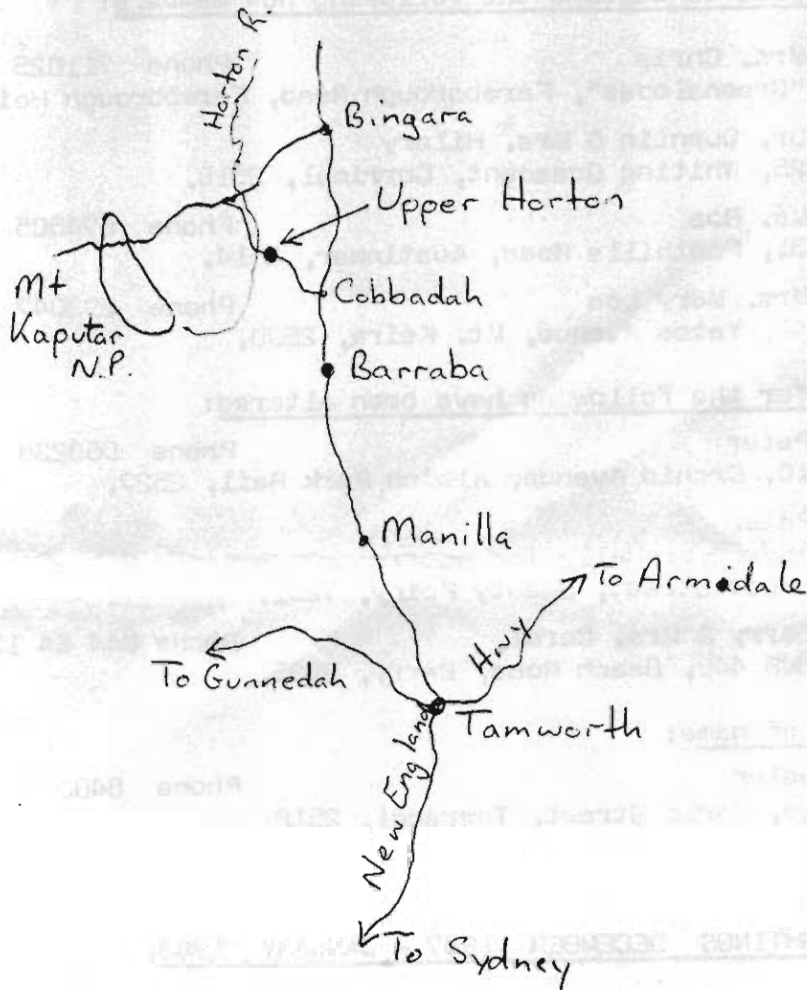
Hazel Emery.

COMBINED CLUB CAMPOUT - BACKYAMMA STATE FOREST - ANZAC LONG WEEKEND.

A special campout is being arranged at Backyamma State Forest near Forbes for the Bicentennial Celebrations. The camp is being organised by Canberra Ornithologists Group, Cumberland Bird Observers Club, Illawarra Bird Observers Club and N.S.W. Ornithological Club as a combined camp for their members and anyone else who is interested in birds. The campout will be a great opportunity for people to meet members of other clubs and perhaps renew old friendships. Further information and map will appear in the April Newsletter. If it is necessary to have prior information ring Chris Chafer.

Contd.....

EASTER CAMP - FRIDAY 1st TO MONDAY 4th APRIL, 1988 - UPPER HORTON.



This year's Easter camp will be held at Upper Horton, a small rural town situated approximately 127 km. North West of Tamworth. We will be camping in the grounds of the local school where toilets and showers will be available as well as water however we suggest you bring your own drinking water.

The camp is some 50 km. East of Mt. Kaputar National Park and we will visit part of the park during our stay. The surrounding area is mainly eucalypt woodland and farmland although wet eucalypt forests are found on the mountain slopes and snow gums on the mountain tops. The nearby Horton River and it's tributaries provide riverine vegetation. Bird life is prolific with many birds of prey, parrots, honeyeaters and robins. It should be a great weekend.

To get there follow the New England Highway North to Tamworth then take the turn off to Manilla and Barraba. The turn off to Upper Horton is approximately 18 km. North of Barraba at Cobbadah on the left with a small white church on the corner. The campsite is approximately 20 km. from the Cobbadah turn off. The school is the first building at Upper Horton, an easy route to follow, approx. 8 hours driving time, well worth the drive.

FROM THE ARCHIVES. Was this position ever filled? Newsletter July 1979.

"A human scarecrow is wanted by the Plant Breeding Institute, Trumpington, near Cambridge, to pace a ten-acre field of maize flapping his arms to scare away rooks. Local rooks follow the drill and pick out the maize seeds. The lucky applicant will be paid \$1.20 an hour and start at 4 a.m."

MEMBERSHIP LIST.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- BLATCH Mrs. Chris Phone 711025
"Greenslopes", Farmborough Road, Farmborough Heights, 2526.
- de HAVILLAND Dr. Quentin & Mrs. Hilary
25, Whiting Crescent, Corrimal, 2518.
- FRASER Ms. Ros Phone 674805
31, Foothills Road, Austinmer, 2514.
- REID Mrs. Mary Loo Phone 293047
41, Yates Avenue, Mt. Keira, 2500.

Addresses for the following have been altered:

- FACKENDER Peter Phone 563238
10, Orchid Avenue, Albion Park Rail, 2527.
- EWIN Peter
Endeavour Hall, The Australian Maritime College,
Bagot Street, Beauty Point, 7251.
- VIRTUE Barry & Mrs. Carol, Phone 044 64 1389
RMB 449, Beach Road, Berry, 2535.

Correction of name:

- MACQUIRE. Helen Phone 840387
15, Marlo Street, Towradgi, 2518.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS DECEMBER 1987 - JANUARY 1988.

U Buff-banded Rail	1 W'gong Botanic Garden	6-1-88 J. & G. Robinson.
U Cicadabird	1 Mount Ousley	10-1-88 G. Robinson
R Common Koel	1 Austinmer	3-1-88 K. Mills
U Diamond Firetail	1 Bullio	6-1-88 K. Mills
R Powerful Owl	1 Royal National Park	30-1-88 K. Mills
U Cicadabird	1 Mount Kembla	27-1-88 W. Emery
S Channel-billed Cuckoo	1 Balgownie	4-2-88 H. Emery
R Common Koel	1 Balgownie	11-12-87 H. Emery
U Rufous Night Heron	1 Balgownie	15-12-87 W. & H. Emery
U Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	8 Figtree	10-11-87 D. Green
U Green Catbird	1 Byarong Park	26-1-88 D. Green
R Common Koel	1 Corrimal	16-12-88 B. & P. McKinlay
MC Tawny Frogmouth	2 Corrimal	1-2-88 B. & P. McKinlay

I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 112 APRIL, 1988.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

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CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

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Jim Robinson
16 Burling Avenue
MT. OUSLEY NSW 2519
29-4213

SECRETARY

Robyn Wilson
4/18 Smith Street
WOLLONGONG NSW 2500
29-1184

TREASURER

Ron Almond
2 Shoobert Cresc.
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 \$10 SINGLE \$7
STUDENT \$2

NEXT MEETING will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 11th April at 7.30pm. This will be our annual members night. All members are invited to contribute an item to the programme. This can be done by bringing along your slides, photos or recite a piece of poetry about a bird - anything as long as it has to do with birds. Last year some members brought along handicrafts that they had made. Come along and show or tell and help make the evening an entertaining one.

NEXT FILM NIGHT This is our first film night for the year and will be held at the home of Brian & Barbara Hales, 39 Lake Parade, Corrimal East, on Saturday, 30th April. There will be the usual two sessions commencing at 6.00 & 8.00 pm. All members are invited to attend. Bring along a plate for supper and be part of a pleasant social evening. We will be showing two videos, courtesy of Fred Spiteri, The Hunters of the Sky, parts two and three. Having already seen some of Fred's work in this area you are assured of an extremely enjoyable and interesting night's viewing.

NEXT FIELD OUTING The next outing will be on Saturday, 16th April, we will be going to Yarrawa State Forest. To get there, proceed to Robertson, turn left at the Belmore Falls Road (next to the pub) and follow the signs to Belmore Falls. Approx. 7 km. from Robertson you will come to Wallaby Hill Road on the left. Turn here and follow this road until you reach a sharp left hand elbow. Directly ahead is a gate with a gravel pile next to it. We will be meeting here at 9 am, bring a carry lunch. Yarrawa State Forest contains a variety of eucalypt types, open grassland, heath, sandstone outcrops and rainforest remnants on the escarpment slopes.

MID-WEEK OUTING Several of the members who go on the mid-week outings will be away on the 6th April when the next one is due, accordingly anyone who would like to join a walk that day please phone Mary Eskdale on 291650.

LIBRARY NEWS Thanks to the efforts of Kevin Woods we now have a copy of each of the first 99 I.B.O.C. news publications. They have been copied, retyped, collated and bound into three volumes - quite a big job. It is most interesting to browse through them to recall the early days of our club. The books will be available in the library. BORROWING Books and cassettes are available to be borrowed by club members. Date, particulars of book and name of borrower are written in the borrowing book. Borrowing time is for one month and for the convenience of everyone I would request that you try to return your books in that time. Hope you all have enjoyable reading.

MARCH OUTING

Sunday the 20th started out a very wet morning; fifteen Birdos turned up and had discussion about the weather dressed in an assortment of rain gear. It was decided to start out on the walk anyway. It was a fairly long walk, forty eight species were seen - some of the interesting birds that were seen were Rose Robin, Golden Whistler, Large-billed Scrubwren, Origma, Catbird, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Wonga Pigeon, Brown Pigeon, White-naped Honeyeater, Black-faced Monarch and Black Duck.

We tried to imagine the coaches and wagons being pulled up and down the old Rixon's Pass Road - pulled by sturdy oxen it must have taken early travellers and traders a long time. I think there would have been some very stiff bodies at the bottom of the pass. The view from Broker's Nose was impressive.

It didn't rain for very long and bears out what seems to be another one of our club's mottos - that you don't allow the weather to spoil the day.

Mary Shaw.

MARCH MEETING

A very interesting talk about birds and how they are affected by bushfires was given by Mr. Peter Smith. He discussed an area somewhere near Bega that he had been studying and the effect of the fire on the bird life. It appears that if the fire is a ground fire that the birds lift above the fire and settle back after it has gone through.

Mary Shaw.

MID-WEEK OUTING

On a beautiful, warm, sunny morning we met at the Mount Kembla Lookout for the March mid-week outing. We set out about 9.00 am, to walk along the Mount Kembla Ring Track. At the beginning of the track is a flight of steps going down to an undulating track through a beautiful section of rain forest where we spent most of the morning. While descending the steps we paused for a while to identify the birds in the trees around us. Some of the birds observed were the Lewin's and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Brown Thornbills, Silvereye, Green Catbird and Rufous Fantail. Also the Superb Lyrebird could be heard calling nearby.

In this part of the forest some of the trees are Red Cedar, Brown Beech, Pittosporum and groups of Cabbage Palms. The tall trees on the slopes there create a quiet beauty and a closed in feeling and although the weather was getting quite warm the temperature there was still cool.

As we walked along the track the Yellow-throated Scrubwren was sighted going through some low trees. The Large-billed Scrubwren was observed soon afterwards and the White-browed Scrubwren and Eastern Yellow Robin were also sighted. The Brown Cuckoo-dove was heard on a number of occasions and observed twice, the first time near the lookout and again along the rain forest trail on our return walk. During the morning within the rain forest we observed 22 species.

Horace Ward.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Newsletter - July, 1982 - Atlassing. Just a snippet about the recently completed survey of the distribution of Australian Birds. In the 80 km. square area around Wollongong the bird most frequently recorded was the Magpie, closely followed by the Kookaburra, Superb Blue Wren, Australian Raven, Grey Fantail and so on with the Starling coming in eleventh and the House Sparrow nineteenth. In all 973 Record Sheets were sent in with the Magpie recorded on 740 of them. (The House Sparrow on 494).

Contd.....

A WEEK OF TRANQUILITY

Gloucester River camping area in the Barrington National Park is one of those places you want to tell everyone about, but feel reluctant to do so for fear of it becoming too popular and overcrowded. It is reached by a 33 km. drive from the Bucketts Way, the turnoff point being 9 km. South of Gloucester. One third of the road is sealed, the remaining section is reasonably good gravel. The drive is very scenic as it follows the winding, tree-lined Gloucester River through a rural landscape. A lack of bridges makes it necessary to ford the river in six places and a heavy downpour of rain in the Gloucester Tops area can close the road for a day or two. There is however, a high level track for emergency vehicles.

The camping area which is on the river was the site of an old Forestry camp before the National Park was gazetted. It is divided into three sections with a total of about 40 sites. The first area is cleared and mowed and is suitable for caravans as well as tents whilst the remaining two areas are set in regenerated, warm temperate rainforest with cleared individual sites.

Pit toilets are provided and drinking water is available from the nearby crystal clear Gloucester River. Several varied walks lead out of the camping area. One is a 1½ hour return along Sharpe's Creek through moss festooned temperate rainforest. For the more energetic I can recommend a knee deep crossing of the Gloucester River followed by an 8 km. return walk along an old disused logging trail.

This trail has been out of service long enough to become partially reclaimed by the forest. It abounds with birdlife and although easy walking it has regenerated sufficiently so as not to give one the feeling they are walking along a road. Four km. along the track you come to a low level log crossing where the timber cutters used to snig the logs across the river with bullock teams. We were told there was an old mill site in the area but we were unable to locate it. Perhaps we did not walk far enough. The area around the crossing is very picturesque, the river inviting you to swim after a long walk in the warm January sun. Bird-nest ferns and Elkhorns grow profusely in the cool gullies running off the river and epiphytic orchids abound in the ancient casuarinas and tristanias that line the river bank. Within the area bounded by the camping area and the river crossing I was able to locate no less than eleven different species of epiphytic orchids. Most of this area is outside of the National Park but has been preserved by the Forestry Commission as a Flora Reserve.

I suppose I should talk more about the birdlife of the park but the beauty of the area makes it impossible to concentrate solely on birdwatching. We were however able to sit on the river bank and watch Spinebills, Scarlet, White-naped and Lewin's Honeyeaters plunge bathing where the rushing cascades gave way to tranquil still pools. In the Tristanias above our heads a pair of White's Thrushes were busily feeding young. Back at camp Black-faced Monarchs, Rose Robins and Rufous Fantails were in abundance, the latter being so common as to easily outnumber it's less showy cousin, the Grey Fantail.

A feed table set up outside our tent proved rewarding and was regularly visited throughout the week by Yellow Robins, Grey Thrush, Lewin's Honeyeaters, White-browed Scrubwrens and a family of Superb Fairy-wrens which were feeding young in a nearby nest. A Brush Turkey visited the camp for four days feeding on the wild raspberries which were growing around the edges of the forest. If this is not enough to whet your appetite I must add that the campsite is set in the middle of a Bell Miner's colony. Their beautiful tinkling calls wake you at dawn and continue throughout the day, giving way at dusk to a melodious chorus of frogs singing in unison from a nearby pond.

Spotlighting was hardly necessary as the Brush-tailed Possums came to the tent to be hand fed at night.

A stay in the area would not be complete without spending a day at Gloucester Tops. Eighteen kms. of gravel road climbing through State Forest takes you to several lookouts, the magnificent Gloucester Falls and a walk through an ancient Nothofagus Beech Forest.

contd.....

A WEEK OF TRANQUILITY CONTD.

We visited the area during the first week of January and were surprised and delighted to find only eight other camps. Perhaps the lack of Forestry roads discourages the serious four wheel drivers. I hope this remains so! We will certainly return again when the native orchids are in bloom. Maybe in the future I.B.O.C. can arrange a camp in this lovely section of the Barrington National Park.

Wal Emery.

NOTHING LIKE NATURE.

There have been Sulphur-crested Cockatoos around Blackbutt for many years now, they come screeching around at five in the morning and late in the evening, music to the ear. This year more than ever, and what do you think they have found in our yard? My vegie patch, especially the corn.

They perch up in the gum tree, then down onto the clothes line, then into the corn. They love it, not fussey if it is ripe or not; even had a go at a cabbage I noticed but mustn't have liked it.

They don't mind t.v. antennae to nibble at either as my brother, a few doors up the road, found out. We were having a bit of a party New Years Eve sitting around talking when part of the aerial landed at our feet and cocky sat up there looking very innocent as a few rocks were hurled his way.

Margaret Parkinson.

A RETURN FLIGHT.

For the fourteen years we have lived at our present address, we have been fortunate to have a pair of Eastern Yellow Robins feeding and breeding in and around our garden. During this time I have spent many pleasant hours watching these beautiful birds going about the business of daily survival. I thought by now that there was nothing new I could learn about their feeding habits and flight patterns. This assumption proved to be wrong as I sat watching a bird feeding one evening last September. It was perched sideways on the trunk of a wattle tree in a typical Robin feeding pose, dropping to the ground and returning each time an insect showed itself in the leaf litter. Then to my surprise it launched itself from the trunk, flying a metre to the foliage of a brush cherry where it hovered momentarily as it plucked an insect from a leaf. It then turned 180° and returned to the wattle trunk without landing on the brush cherry. This is the first and only time I have seen this species either in the garden or in the wild incorporate hovering in its flight pattern.

Wal Emery.

NEW MEMBERS.

We welcome the following new members:

BARBER	Ms. Ann, P.O. Box 143, Warrawong, 2502 (Ann was a member several years ago)	Phone 271469
SPITERI	Fred 6, Reid Place, Dapto, 2530.	Phone 741683 Work Phone 617909 Home
WEINE	Mrs. Anne, 125, Panorama Drive, Farmborough Heights, 2526.	Phone 716597
ROBERTS	Mrs. Jean change of phone number	Phone 613203
Correction of name:		
MCGUIRE	Helen (Not as advised in last Newsletter) 15, Marlo Street, Towradgi, 2518.	Phone 840387

Contd.....

COMBINED CLUB CAMPOUT - BACKYAMMA STATE FOREST.

ANZAC LONG WEEKEND - 23rd to 25th APRIL, 1988.

A special campout is being arranged at Backyamma State Forest near Forbes for the Bicentennial Celebrations. The camp is being organised by Canberra Ornithologists Group, Cumberland Bird Observers Club, Illawarra Bird Observers and N.S.W. Ornithological Club as a combined club for their members and anyone else who is interested in birds. The campout will be a great opportunity for people to meet members of other clubs and perhaps renew old friendships.

THE FOREST Backyamma State Forest covers an area of 4,473 hectares (11,000 acres) and is predominantly native White Cypress Pine (*Callitris Glauca*). Although the forest has been logged for over 100 years it has regenerated naturally and the evidence of logging is barely noticeable.

THE CAMPSITE The campsite will be on a large semi-cleared area which was originally the Forestry Headquarters. The buildings have long since gone but some of the trees that were planted at that time still remain. There is a small dam nearby where birds, including Common Bronzewing, come in to drink. The area around the campsite is excellent for birdwatching.

HOW TO GET THERE Travel from Orange along the Forbes road to about 5 km. past Eugowra and turn right at a sign saying Parkes. Travel another 12 km. and take the gravel lane leading off to the left. Head due West, go through a gateway into the forest, over a ramp on top of a hill and through another gateway. The campsite is on the right just past a small dam on the left about 5 km. from Parkes Road. If you are travelling from Forbes, take the Newell Highway towards Parkes and turn right at approx. 9 km. from Forbes, continue along this road until you reach the campsite which will be on your left about 15 km. from the highway.

FACILITIES You will have to bring everything that you will need including water and garbage bags. Temporary toilets will be erected for the camp. Camp fires are permitted provided that there is not a total fire ban. Please note that there is no water of any kind available at the campsite.

FEES There will be a fee of \$3. per adult to cover costs. Any remaining balance will be donated to Barren Grounds Bird Observatory.

MOTELS AND CARAVAN PARKS Motels and caravan parks with on-site vans are available in both Forbes and Parkes but should be booked well in advance to avoid disappointment. The campsite is approx. 24 km. from Forbes and 29 km. from Parkes. If you intend staying in either Forbes or Parkes why not have your evening meal at the campsite. I'm sure someone will have room on their barbeque for your steak.

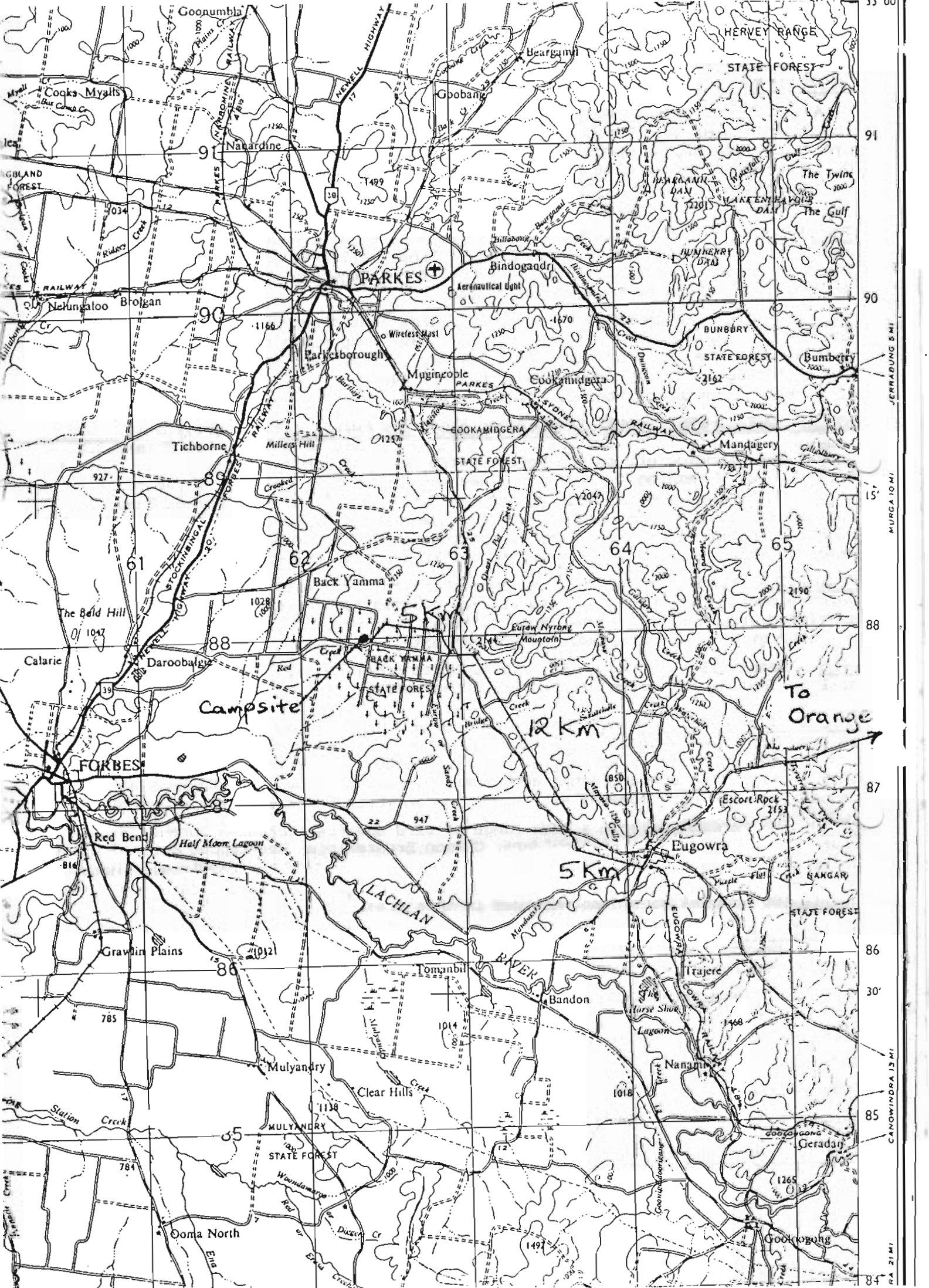
BIRDS The forest supports a wide range of bird species including Turquoise and Blue Bonnet Parrots, Owllet Nightjars, Common Bronzewing, Red-capped Robins, Gilbert Whistlers, Diamond Firetails, Southern Whitefaces and Speckled Warblers. Honey-eaters include Fuscous, Spiney-Cheeked, Black-Chinned and Little Friarbirds. nearly 150 species have been recorded in this area.

WHAT TO DO Activities will include visits to various spots within the forest as well as nearby areas such as Gum Swamp at Forbes. Spot lighting will be organised for one evening. A communal campfire and get-together will be held each evening.

For further enquiries, please phone one of the club activities offices listed:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Allan Richards | (02) 660 8062 | N.S.W. F.O.C. |
| Chris Chafer | (042) 752339 | Illawarra B.O.C. |
| Tony Dymond | (02) 639 7346 | Cumberland B.O.C. |
| Malcolm Fyfe | (062) 54 3310 | Canberra C.O.G. |

HAVE A GOOD WEEKEND AND GREAT BIRDING



91

90

15'

88

87

86

30'

85

84

JERRARDUNG 5 MI
MURGA 10 MI
CANOWINDRA 13 MI
RA 21 MI

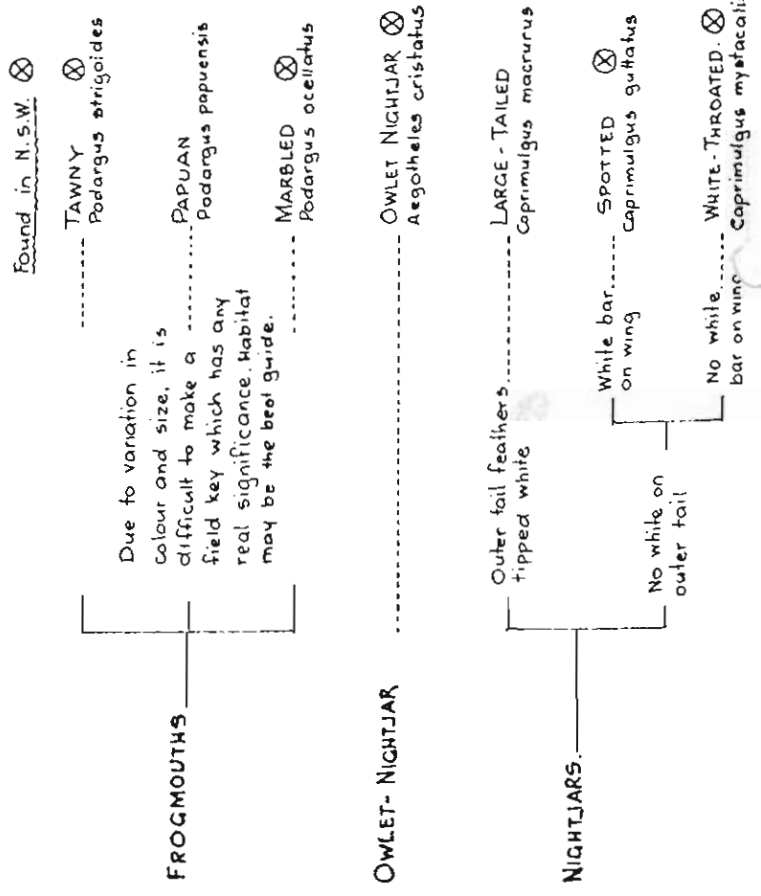


NEW SOUTH WALES BIRD ATLASERS

A group established to monitor the distribution of Australian birds in New South Wales

Information Sheet on the FROGMOUTHS AND NIGHTJARS

found in N.S.W.



Order CAPRIMULGIFORMES get their name from the Latin *capri* (goat) and *mulgus* (milker). Their European cousins were once thought to live by milking goats with their large mouths, causing them to dry up. This notion grew from the birds' habit of flying around goats in search of food attracted by the herd.



Some common characteristics link the three Australian families. They are: their small, weak feet, huge gaping mouths, plumage that is used superbly for camouflage and nocturnal insect-eating habits.

Acknowledgement:
R.O.U. Newsletters 6, 7, 8,
1978 Information by
P. Menckhoff.

ATLAS NUMBER	① TAWNY FROGMOUTH	② MARBLED FROGMOUTH	③ OWLET NIGHTJAR	④ WHITE THROATED NIGHTJAR	⑤ SPOTTED NIGHTJAR
M' Donald	p. 256	p. 257	p. 258	p. 260	p. 259
Slater	p. 395	p. 396	p. 397	p. 398	p. 398
Pezzey	p. 206	p. 207	p. 207-8	p. 208	p. 209
Readers Digest	p. 310	p. 308	p. 311	p. 312	p. 313
Caley (Revised)	Plate 5 p. 88	Plate 5 p. 86	Plate 5 p. 84	Plate 7 p. 124	Plate 7 p. 124
Simpson, Day	p. 156	p. 156	p. 156	p. 156	p. 156

Illustrations Plate 129

Compiled and illustrated by Ken Schaefer, 1986.

TAWNY FROGMOUTH

313

Flat crown.

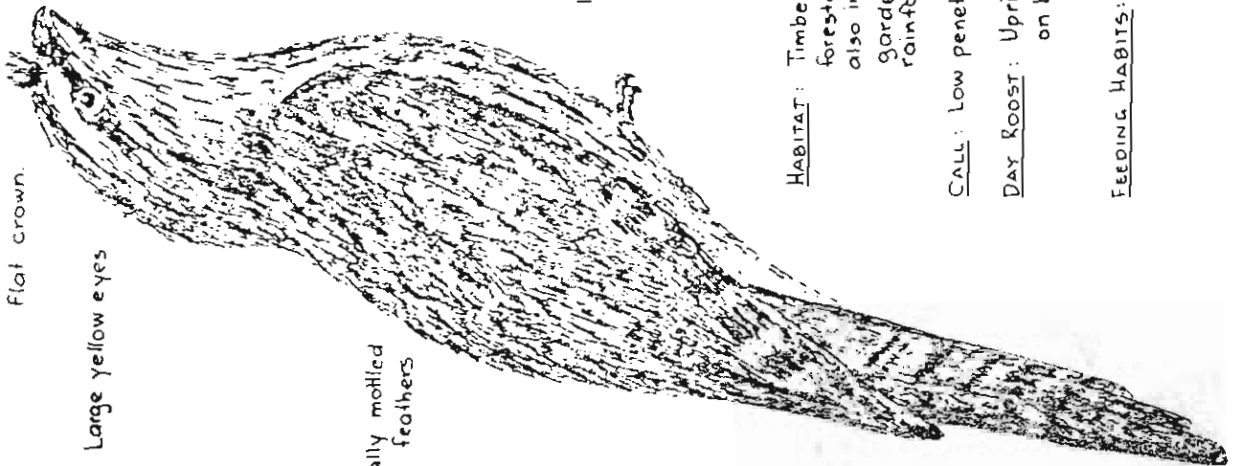
Large yellow eyes

Usually mottled grey feathers

Very broad bill

Underparts grey with darker streaks.

In flight, looks very large and pale in car headlights.



HABITAT: Timbered country, heavily forested to open woodlands, also includes city parks and gardens. Rare or absent in rainforest.

CALL: Low penetrating 00-00-00-00-00

DAY ROOST: Upright or semi-upright position on branch of tree.

FEEDING HABITS: Aboreal, but often feeds on ground on insects and mice.

MARbled FROGMOUTH

314

Rounded crown.

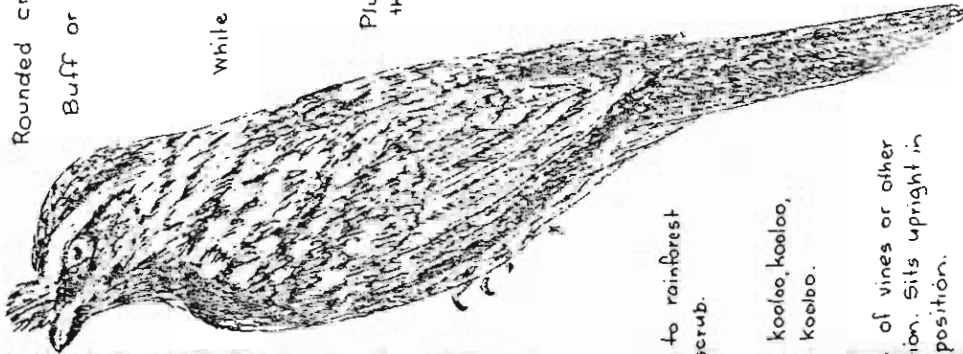
Buff or white eyebrow

White spots on shoulders

Plumage marbled rather than streaked

Females usually reddish-brown.

Bright orange eyes



HABITAT: Restricted to rainforest and vine-scrub.

CALL: Soft repeated kooloo, kooloo, kooloo.

DAY ROOST: In mass of vines or other vegetation. Sits upright in cryptic position.

FEEDING HABITS: Hunts at night in scrub. Ground feeder. Food - insects, chiefly beetles.

White patches on side of throat



Plumage mainly blackish, mottled grey and brown.

Belly barred dark brown.

HABITAT: Coastal ranges - areas with dense leaf litter. Open forest country keeping to the stony ridges.

CALL: Loud 'kook' repeated with increasing speed and ascending scale. about a dozen times Suggests weird laughter.

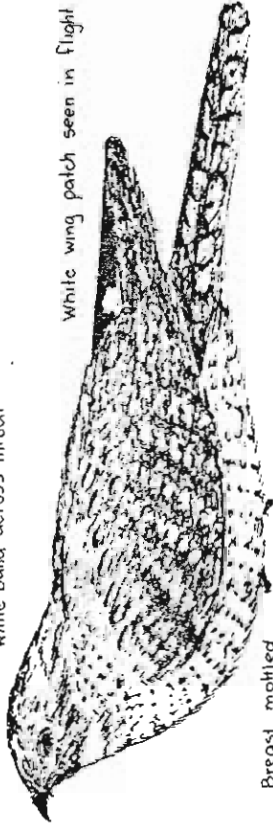
DAY ROOST: On ground or sometimes in low tree. Relies on cryptic colouration to avoid detection.

FEEDING HABITS: Feeds on wing at night. Catches insects with wide mouth helped by bristly hairs. Flight is wheeling, noiseless and graceful. Pointed wings give hawk-like appearance. Often feeds on tracks or roads.

EYESHINE: Large and very bright red in spotlight beam. Can appear white from side.

Once a haunt has been discovered, an observer can be fairly sure of finding the bird again.

White band across throat



White wing patch seen in flight

Breast mottled brown and black.

HABITAT: Drier eucalypt forests - mostly on ridges. rich in litter.

CALL: Peculiar 'Caw-caw. Gobble, Gobble, Gobble. (Diminishing in volume. Call mainly at night

DAY ROOST: Mainly on ground under tree or bush. Sometimes on low bough

FEEDING HABITS: At twilight they begin to hawk for insects above the tree-tops or grassland. They are attracted by insects to streetlights or campfires. Noiseless erratic flight

EYESHINE: Blazing bright red when viewed straight on - but can appear white from side on

OWLET-NIGHTJAR

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Large eyes -
forwardly directed

Long bristles around
broad hooked bill.

Breast and belly
dark grey or brown.

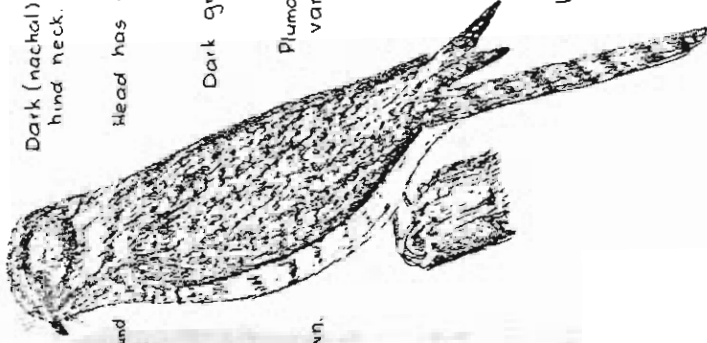
Dark (nacht) collar on
hind neck.

Head has owl-like mobility

Dark grey above.

Plumage extremely
variable

Long barred tail



HABITAT: Forest lands generally. Mature woodland with plenty of hollow dead trees. Rare in wet forests.

CALL: Double note 'chirk-chirk'. Often uttered from roosting hollow. Also grating, strident churring.

DAY ROOST: In hollow in tree. Sings itself in winter at entrance to hole.

Feeding Habits: Feeds on wing and on ground as night approaches. Flight silent and erratic - rather like butterfly. Food: Moths and beetles.

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WHITE THROATED NIGHTJAR

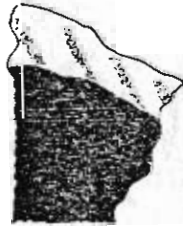


RAOU ATLAS 330

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SPOTTED NIGHTJAR



RAOU ATLAS 331

I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 113 MAY, 1988.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

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CLUB MOTTO

"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

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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 \$10, SINGLE \$7,
STUDENT \$2

FROM THE EDITOR Despite the rain, there has been a lot of Birdo activity this month. At our March meeting the possibility of having an evening to learn something of first aid was discussed. At the April meeting Denise Strickland spoke on the desirability of our members being well versed in the procedure of C.P.R. - Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation or in layman's terms, mouth to mouth resuscitation and heart massage. On any of our outings that take us away from the quick medical support of the city it is important to have members in the group able to commence immediately - preferably two people - one doing the cardiac massage and the other doing the mouth to mouth and most desirable to have others prepared to take over while help is being procured. It is a system that has been modified recently and attempts are being made to have the system standardised. Denise has asked Graham Tuckerman who conducts training courses for hospital staff who has agreed to bring his model and to demonstrate and talk about the subject. This will take place on Monday, 16th May, at 7.30 p.m. at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre and will be free to all those who come. Our president was concerned that some people thought he had implied that there would be a charge.

Thank you for your interesting contributions - how about a few more small snippets.

Mary Shaw.

MEMBERSHIP Each year some members leave the club but new members join, so maintaining the status quo. Do you know anyone who would enjoy our club and fit into it and perhaps add to the friendly atmosphere. Perhaps a workmate, a neighbour or a relation? A love of birds is the only requirement. Bring them along as a guest to a meeting or an outing to help them make up their mind. I am sure that there are many in our community who would welcome the chance to join our club and become another I.B.O.C. Birdo.

Jim Robinson, President.

NEXT MEETING will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, on Monday, 9th May at 7.30 p.m. Our guest speaker will be Hugh Whitmore talking and showing slides on the Aerodynamics of Bird Flight - of their flying and soaring.

NEXT FIELD OUTING Our next outing will be to Strongs Reserve about ten klms. West of Nowra, on Sunday, 15th May. Our leader for the day will be local expert Diana Wright. I wish to stress at this point that it is essential to stay behind the leader of the walk as failure to do this will result in you becoming lost by taking wrong turns etc. Also, we would like people who leave outings early to inform the leader of the day or one of the committee members present so that we can keep a check on where people are. Both these misnomers occurred on the last outing and, considering the adverse weather conditions and unknown territory, could easily have turned into an unhappy incident. So, remember, keep behind the leader and inform someone if you are leaving the main body of the outing.

Strongs Reserve is a relatively new area set aside for public recreation. It is the remains of a very old property with a wide selection of available habitats and associated fauna. We will pass by a couple of creeks, the Southern shore of the Shoalhaven River, sandstone out crops, acacia woodland, eucalypt forests with a heathy understorey and a couple of pockets of remnant rainforest with a large number of fig trees. Species we may encounter include Drigma, Red and Scarlet Robin, Green Catbird and up to eight honeyeaters. We will be meeting at the Navy Jet Monument at Nowra at 9 a.m. This is situated on the corner of Kalandar Street and Kinghorne Street. To get there proceed to Nowra. After crossing the Shoalhaven River Bridge follow the by-pass past the Nowra Fair shopping centre. Approx. 1.5 klms. further you come to a set of traffic lights, turn right and the Jet is a few hundred metres down the road adjacent to the cemetery.

Chris Chafer

MID-WEEK OUTING The next mid-week outing will be on 4th May and will be to Coomaditchy Lagoon and Windang. Meet at the lagoon at 8.30 a.m. Phone 29 8612 for further enquiries.

APRIL OUTING Yet again our monthly outing was dogged by bad weather, still twenty two enthusiastic and cold members met at the entrance to the fog enshrouded Yarrawa State Forest near Robertson. The fog remained with us most of the day and occasional light rain made birding rather difficult. Non the less most of those who stayed had a fairly good day exploring an area which few people had know was there. We began by heading through a small cleared area before entering the eucalypt forest itself. We then passed through a regenerating section which had been burnt out a year or so ago before descending through a natural pass on the edge of the sandstone escarpment. As we descended, vegetation became thicker and a number of Lyrebirds were heard practicing their vocal repertoire for the coming breeding season. Our morning tea spot was set in a ferny glade surrounded by tall eucalypts, tree ferns and cabbage palms. On the reconnaissance a few months earlier this area had revealed Brush Bronzewing, Rose Robin and a number of Pilotbirds. On this particular venture all these species proved to be elusive although we did find Brown Gerygone, Golden Whistler, Satin Bowerbird. We continued back up the pass and headed South toward Hindmarsh Pass. The cold weather, fog and drizzle hampered our birding efforts and after lunch we decided to call it a day arriving back at the cars around 2.30 p.m. Our efforts for the day produced only 35 species. Highlights included Scarlet Robin, Chestnut-rumped Hylacola, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Gang Gang, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo and White-naped Honeyeater. The area looks like it would be a good place to go in late Spring when the large variety of heath plants should be in flower and we will return sometime in the future hopefully in better weather.

Chris Chafer.

ENTERPRISE One of my favourite callers is the Lewin's Honeyeater. The cheery bird makes its presence heard with its bright, cheery call. Over the last couple of years I have observed it taking raw woll fleece from under my pergola. At first it was taking it from a frayed bit of home spun wool used to tie a vine. It tugged and tugged until bits came off in its beak and it returned repeatedly to get more. The next year I placed unspun fleece in the same area and noticed that parts of it disappeared.

Mary Shaw.

Contd.....

EASTER CAMP REPORT This year our Easter Camp was held at Upper Horton, a small rural town about 127 klm. North West of Tamworth. We camped in the schoolground and had the use of bore water and the toilets. Because of the rain we only managed one night around the campfire so we were very grateful for the use of the schoolroom and t.v. on the rainy nights. When we arrived at the school we were greeted by a huge sign painted by the children and taped onto the school building. It read "WELCOME BIRD WATCHERS". It made us feel most welcome and indeed everyone we met was friendly and helpful and offered us the run of their land.

Around the camp we had a host of birds. Most prolific and outstanding were the Red-rumped Parrots, Red-winged Parrots, Galahs, Willie Wagtails, Magpies, Yellow-rumped Thornbills and Jacky Winters. Some of us even saw Emus about to fly on the first of April. Also in camp we had a white cat which was determined to make friends. It sneaked under the floor into our vans, slept on our beds, crept into our tents, jumped on our laps, sat on our tables, sharpened its claws on our canvas and cleared out with our tent ropes. We yelled and cursed at it but it was like Henry Lawson's "Loaded Dog" - just kept coming back. Horrie, Wal and I seemed to be its main targets. It loved us.

Our first walk was on Reg Kelly's property "Cobbraball" on which they raise beef cattle. The country was very dry and the farmers were looking forward to some good rain. Here we added Crested Pigeons, Wrens, Apostlebirds and White-winged Choughs to our list. We walked down through the paddocks to Cobbadah Creek and after climbing through two electric fences returned to the road and back to the camp. On Saturday we tried to drive to Horton Falls but the roads were too wet and slippery. Rain was setting in again so our convoy turned around and returned to camp. From the cars we saw Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Galahs, Ibis and a White-faced Heron.

Sunday saw us all hopeful again and off to the Glacial Area. This is an area of conglomerate rocks in the river bed. We had a wonderful morning's viewing here with the Brown-headed Honeyeater, Rainbow Bee-eater, Grey Fantail, Golden Whistler and Rufous Whistler added to our list. We also found two Weebill nests with young inside. Finally on Monday the sun appeared. We did a long walk through the common and back along the stock route. It was a rewarding time. We had a good view of a Tawny Frogmouth from the high bank of the river looking down on the bird perched in a tree. Also saw a Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Grey-crowned Babblers, Brown Treecreeper, Zebra Finches, Little Friarbird and two Wedge-tailed Eagles circling above. Our total bird count for the camp was 102 which was good considering the inclement weather.

Thank you to Janine Digby and her six pupils for making us so welcome. Also thanks to Brian and Barbara Hales for making the necessary arrangements for this camp. Finally, thanks to the other 21 campers for your friendship and teamwork during the big wet. Despite the rain I think we all had a great time. Quotes of the camp, "this camp is different. Nearly did a walk this morning and we might do one this afternoon".

Olive Rodwell.

NUNDLE STOPOVER On our way to Upper Horton, six members visited Nundle spending two nights in the Nundle Caravan Park which gave us one full day there. The Nundle district turned out to be a delightful area with good birding and other interesting aspects as well. In the area is a state forest, some wet gullies, the Sheba and Chaffey Dams. The area is also well known for its diverse mineral deposits which makes way for fossicking. Bob and Peg McKinlay tried their hand and came up with two small, would one call nuggets?

Nundle is settled in a low farmland area with part of the Great Dividing Range within a few klms. extending from South to West of the town where the Peel River has its beginnings. With the combination of farmland, rivers, forests with some wet gullies we enjoyed a great day birding with a wide range of species. The drive we had was on the way to Barry past the Sheba Dam situated on top of the range and down the other side to a valley along the Barnard River. During our short stop-over we observed a total of 61 species, some being the Collared Sparrowhawk, Eastern and Crimson Rosellas, Red Wattlebird, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Dusky Moorhen, Rufous Night Heron, White-faced Heron, Golden & Rufous Whistler and Restless Flycatcher.

Horace Ward.

Contd.....

FEEDING OBSERVATIONS While the aim of every garden should be to provide natural food for the birds, interest can be added if you provide a safe, secluded feeding station near a window where you can sit in comfort and quietly enjoy the birds at close range. I have tried a variety of foods but the two I've found the most successful are finely grated cheese and raw rolled oats. These foods are enjoyed by most small birds that feed on or near the ground. One interesting surprise I had was to see an Eastern Spinebill eating rolled oats, a long way removed from nectar and hardly the right shaped beak I would have thought to pick up a dry oat flake. A small amount of sunflower seed keeps the Crimson Rosellas coming on a regular basis and they feed on other natural food in the garden like wattle and eucalypt seeds. Another beneficiary of the parrots feeding on the sunflower is the White-browed Scrubwrens. They hop into the dish after the parrots leave and clean up all the fine bits of seed that the parrots have crushed and left.

W. Emery.

PIED CURRAWONGS NOTORIOUS NEST ROBBERS The greatest threat to birdlife in Wollongong's far Northern suburbs is not the gun, feral predation or the destruction of natural habitat but the the Pied Currawong. In the Illawarra Natural History Society Circular No. 254, published in 1974, I recorded that these highly intelligent avian scallywags pierced and reamed the foil tops of milk bottles before helping themselves to the choice creamy top couple of inches in each bottle. The problem was finally solved when the superior cunning of homo sapiens overcame that of Strepera graculina and effective preventative measures were introduced.

Since that time however there has been a considerable increase in Pied Currawong numbers and they have become notorious nest robbers. They keep a watchful eye on the nests of prospective victims then take the young as they hatch. Predated species around Thirroul have included the Magpie-lark, Little Wattlebird, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Red-whiskered Bulbul. No doubt there are many more. The Pied Currawong has recently been described as the 'Mafia of the Birdworld', a nefarious title it thoroughly deserves. The species has probably always been a bushland nest robber but its adaptation to a more urbanised habitat in recent decades is making its repugnant feeding habits all that more obvious.

Allan Sefton.

PELICANS FEED AT NIGHT Pelicans are fascinating birds to watch, in flight, foraging for food or just sitting in the water waiting for a hand-out. Although a scavenger in our area they do seriously fish for their supper. Perhaps you may have seen them working as a group, herding the fish before them as they dip their bills in and out of the water in unison.

Did you know they fished at night? Certainly I didn't until I happened to be fishing at the Lake Illawarra entrance one night in February - and catching fish. It was an overcast night with no moon with the only light coming from street lights reflected in the water and the prawners lights. It was about 10 p.m. and near the end of the tide run-out that I saw the pelicans float by in the gloom, working the water in their traditional way. There were 12 or 13 arranged in a semi-circle and quickly they disappeared into the blackness of the night. Later on I saw a couple of pelicans flying overhead, hardly recognisable against the clouds.

I was surprised at the time, but on reflection, it is logical for pelicans to fish at night - and perhaps other fish eating birds since in my personal experience there are more fish present at night, particularly in the shallow waters and near the surface. Furthermore, if prawns are on their diet, then they must hunt at night, since prawns bury themselves in the mud and sand during daylight hours. As most prawners know, the run-out tide on moonless nights are the most productive for prawns. P.S. On the night in question, prawns, mullet, tailor and whiting were plentiful in the shallow channel.

Jim Robinson.

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BIRDWATCHING AT MT. WARRIGAL. When I first moved to Mt. Warrigal in 1969, the area being developed was an old dairy property with only a few casuarinas along the lake and some eucalypts and banksia on the top of the hill left. In developing a garden I, like others in the area, planted mostly exotics, but I did include an unknown eucalypt, a Melaluca Linarlifolia and a Callistemon Citrinis along the back fence, that are now the centre pieces of the yard.

With a renewed interest in birds I decided to birdscape the yard and asked many questions and visited a few of the well known gardeners like Ron Imisides. The Eucalyptus Leucoxylon was recommended by Lindsay Smith, so two were planted and are now flowering, attracting my first Yellow-faced and Yellow-winged Honeyeaters and Eastern Spinebills. This confirmed the hints given by George Adams at our March 1987 meeting so I have since planted another, plus an E.Sideroxylon, which should complete the forest. Over the last few years there were some casualties due to some water logged conditions, non performance and accidents requiring replacements by some more suitable wet footed and bird attracting species. A well maintained bird bath is also a must and in the dryer times it attracts some passers-by, such as the Grey Shrike-thrush and Sacred Kingfisher.

After only three years, many of the plants are still small and produce the odd flower or cone, but the B. Spinulosa and Ericifolia with the G. Honeygum have had a few callers, but the G. Robyn-Gordon, although producing many flowers, is not. The whole area is now becoming established and as the gardens mature, the increased range and intent of foods for the birds has brought about an increase in the species being noted. With loss of habitat the Cisticolas that used to nest in the vacant block behind are gone, but we get Thornbills, Pardalotes, Crested Pigeons and now Pied Currawongs and Grey Butcherbirds have moved in. There used to be a family of Superb Fairywrens that ranged up and down the backyards cleaning up the spiders from the fences, but after a pest controller did a letter drop and getting some extra business, they disappeared.

With the increased number of birds now supported by the area there has been an increase in the raptors being sighted, Peregrine Falcon, Hobby and Brown Goshawks have been cruising through at odd intervals. Overhead there are Swallows, Needletails, Lorikeets migrating through, Pelicans and sometimes a White-bellied Sea-eagle soaring on a thermal. So overall its a continuing interest to see what can be enticed into the garden as a home or a refuge and what plants they prefer so that more can be planted.

C. Brandis.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF TASMANIA. Unexpectedly, my husband and I were able to spend from March 28 to April 17 in Tasmania. Having been to Tasmania before, it was decided that we would concentrate on species we had either not seen before or had rarely had a chance to view closely. Various factors influenced the outcome of our birdwatching.

- 1) Tasmania was suffering a severe drought. Trees and ferns were drooped and dying even in rain forests.
- 2) Easter came within the period and brought crowds to Mt. Field National Park making viewing difficult.
- 3) We had non-birding commitments for several days.

Highlights of our tour proved to be:

- 1) Birding at the small camping and picnic ground at Scottsdale where we had good views of the Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Dusky Robin, Goldfinch, White-browed Scrubwren (Brown Scrubwren), Brown Thornbill. I stress the Brown Thornbill because it is difficult to distinguish this from the Tasmanian Thornbill so any sightings of either species helped us eventually get to the stage where we could distinguish them providing we had good sightings.
- 2) Shortly after leaving the park we saw 8 Blue-winged Parrots. This was our only sighting despite searching and we concluded that drought conditions may have led them onto the mainland earlier than normal.

contd.....

A BIRDS EYE VIEW CONTD.

- 3) At Elephant Pass we saw and heard the Clinking Currawong. Incidentally our sightings of the Black Currawong showed us that its range was more extensive than we had previously encountered.
- 4) Blackbirds were numerous and not only in gardens and parks but in tracts of woodland. An English birdwatching friend had formed the opinion that they were more common in Tasmania than in England. They flew up into trees far more often than I remembered them doing in England.
- 5) Maria Island proved to be excellent for birdwatching: Tasmanian Thornbill, Cape Barren Goose, Forty-spotted Pardalote, Beautiful Firetail, Robins and one Emu. Overnight stay is desirable to appreciate Maria Island fully.
- 6) Port Arthur produced excellent birding. At Eaglehawk Neck we saw the Crescent Honeyeater, Shy Albatross, Black-faced Shag and the Spotted Pardalote. In what we considered one of the best caravan parks in Australia at Garden Point, Pt. Arthur, we enjoyed excellent views of the Strong-billed Honeyeater, Dusky Robin, Dusky Woodswallow, Green Rosella, Yellow Wattlebird and Flame Robin. We woke to the twittering of Eastern Spinebills and the call of the Yellow-throated Honeyeater. Unfortunately the bad weather off the coast prevented a planned sea excursion.
- 7) The Superb Wrens. None of the thousands we saw all over the island was in full plumage. The plumage was universally in eclipse apart from the blue tails of a ~~some~~ or so.
- 8) Early church on Easter morning produced the Swift Parrot. A birdwatcher from St. Helens who had been involved in the recent Swift Parrot survey had predicted that we might see them at Kingston and so we did. We chuckled over John Waugh's comment: "Always plan to visit places the day before you get there to see this bird".
- 9) North Bruny Island found us searching for the ~~Forty-spotted~~ Pardalote. A lunch stop produced Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo, Striated and Spotted and Forty-spotted Pardalotes (careful observation is necessary as the female spotted can be confused with the Forty-spotted), Olive Whistler, Dusky Robin and other birds. The influx to this vicinity could have been related to this area having ~~the~~ only good water as Bruny was very dry. The next morning one km. from the ferry we found another dam and watched various birds take turns at watering, Black-headed Honeyeaters (over 20 in 5 minutes) and a flock of over 50 greenfinches wheeling and settling like golden canaries in the morning sunlight. The Greenfinch here seemed to be more yellowish green than in Victoria. South Bruny produced good views of flying and nesting Short-tailed Shearwaters and advanced young.
- 10) In Mt. Field we had excellent views of the male and female Pink Robin. However record crowds with screaming children made it almost impossible to get good sightings of the scrubtit.
- 11) Sisters' Beach and Trevor Waite's birdbath enticed the Crescent Honeyeater to within a few feet.
- 12) Stanley Sewerage Treatment Works had flocks of goldfinch and one Gold and one Greenfinch fed together within feet of our campervan.
- 13) Asbestos National Park gave us the highest birdcount of any one day, (55) compared to a daily average of 39, much lower than in a number of other parts of Australia. The Flame Robins played around the van also Yellow-rumped and Brown Thornbills, White-fronted Chats and Tasmanian Native Hens. We saw also White's Thrush, Brush Bronzewing, Crescent and Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, Brown Scrubwren and various waterbirds. A flock of about 40 wood duck were observed. I have never stood beside a wombat while birdwatching!
- 14) Our best views of the Scrubtit were among the manfernns (Dicksonia Antarctica) at Milkshakes Reserve. Apart from a friendly Black Currawong we were alone and birdless until 3 p.m. when Thornbills, Scrubtits and a Golden Whistler appeared to delight us. I suppose mention should be made of the large numbers of Masked Lapwing. I counted over 40 in one field near Stanley. Our thanks go to John and Pauline Waugh who gave us helpful advice and lent us 2 Tasmanian birdbooks. Our search for the scrubtit was expedited once we realised John Waugh's Sharland had a much better illustration than our own birdbooks. Trevor Waite's photographs confirmed this opinion.

LEWIN'S RAIL IN THE WOLLONGONG AREA AND A RECENT RECORD FROM WOMBARRA.

The Lewin's Rail (*Rallus pectoralis*), also known as the Water Rail, is found in Indonesia, New Guinea and Australia. In Australia three subspecies are recognised: *pectoralis* in eastern Australia, *brachipus* in Tasmania and *clelandi* in the south-west of Western Australia (Blakers et al. 1984).

The eastern Australian subspecies occurs from north Queensland to South Australia (Blakers et al. 1984), being most common in southern New South Wales and Victoria. The Atlas of Australian Birds contains records of the Lewin's Rail in only 7% of the 1° blocks covering Australia. In New South Wales, Morris et al. (1981) reports the species as uncommon, with most records from the Hunter, Central Coast and Illawarra districts. Not surprisingly, perhaps, is that this is where most of the bird observers in New South Wales live.

In the County of Camden, including the Illawarra District, Gibson (1977) reported that the species is scarce, noting that the bird often falls prey to domestic cats. This point was also noted in Blakers et al. (1981).

The Lewin's Rail inhabits low dense vegetation near wetlands, such as saltmarsh, swamps and streams in forest areas. In these areas birds are reported to feed on insects, molluscs, crustaceans and vegetable matter (N.P.I.A.W. 1985) although little is apparently known.

On the 19th March, 1988, I was handed a specimen of a recently dead bird to identify by Adrian and Lin Robinson of Wombarra. The specimen was a Lewin's rail which had died that morning after being found wet and cold in a nearby drain. The location is the northern side of Wombarra between the railway line and the main road (34° 16' 25"S 150° 57' 20" E). The specimen will be given to the Australian Museum, Sydney.

This is one of several records of the Lewin's Rail in the Wollongong area in the last few years. These records are summarised in Table 1. Most records have been in areas along the base of the escarpment, with one from the coastal plain at Primbee. The foot of the escarpment contains many small creeks with adjacent dense vegetation. To the north of the Wollongong area, the species has been recorded in Royal National Park in January, 1977 and August, 1978 (N.P.W.S. 1982).

It appears that the species is perhaps more common in the Wollongong area than previously thought. The increased number of records in recent years may also reflect the increased number of bird observers in the area.

Table 1.

Summary of Recent Records of Lewin's rail in the Wollongong Area.

Location	Date	recorder	Source
South Bulli, Corrimal	18/ 7/1986	I. Rowles	IBOC Newsletter No. 97 Sept. 86.
South Bulli, Corrimal (with three chicks)	6/ 8/1986	I. Rowles	IBOC Newsletter No. 97 Sept. 86.
Corrimal	1/11/1986	W. Emery	IBOC Newsletter No. 99 Dec. 86.
Korrongulla, Primbee	2/ 8/1987	R. Imisides	IBOC Newsletter No. 107 Sept. 87.
Wombarra	19/ 3/88	K. Mills	This note.

contd.....

LEWIN'S RAIL CONTD.

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N.P.I.A.W. (1985) The Waterbirds of Australia. National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife/Angus & Robertson, Sydney.

N.P.W.S. (1982) Royal National Park - a Checklist of Birds. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Audley.

Kevin Mills.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS FEBRUARY - MARCH, 1988.

R.	Black Bittern	1 Balgownie	18.3.88.	W. & H. Emery
R.	Brush Turkey	1 Balgownie	20.2.88	W. & H. Emery
R.	Brush Turkey	1 Balgownie	19.3.88	W. & H. Emery
U.	Sotty Oystercatcher	15 Coledale Beach	18.3.88	W. Emery
U.	Green Catbird	1 Woonona	22.2.88	K. Mills
U.	Logrunner	1 Woonona	22.2.88	K. Mills
MC.	Painted Button Quail	2 Meryla	24.2.88	K. Mills
R.	Long-toed Stint	1 Comerong Island	29.1.88	C. Chafer
S.	White-headed Pigeon	1 Foxground	11.2.88	C. Chafer
R.	Common Koel	1 Lake Heights	13.2.88	C. Chafer
U.	Blackbird	2 Robertson	5.3.88	C. Chafer
U.	Black-winged Stilt	32 Warrawong	10.3.88	C. Chafer
R.	Bar-shouldered Dove	3 Minnamurra Spit	30.1.88	C. Chafer
	Variegated Wren	1 Corrimal	10.3.88	B. & P. McKinlay
	Rufous Fantail	1 Corrimal	13.3.88	B. & P. McKinlay
S.	Spangled Drongo	2 Corrimal	8 & 13.3.88	B. & P. McKinlay
	Immature Female Figbird	1 Corrimal	12.3.88	B. & P. McKinlay

I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 114 JUNE, 1988.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TEARN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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

These are due on 1st January each year
FAMILY \$10 SINGLE \$7 STUDENT \$2

FROM THE EDITOR. Judith Parkinson reported seeing twice on the same day a creamy white currawong with no black markings at all, on the very wet day of Saturday, 9th April. It was on the ground looking for worms with a large group of ordinary Pied Currawongs near the rainforest section in the Botanical Gardens. Two hours later she saw it again near the herb garden, it was pouring with rain so maybe its colour had washed out.

Dave Thomson has asked me to mention that two wardens are required for the Barren Ground Bird Observatory as Richard and Pat Jordan will be leaving there soon. Any enquiries should be directed to Dave Thomson or the Observatory, 360195.

People who come into regular contact with leeches should make sure they are up to date with Tetanus injections as leeches carry tetanus spore.

Mary Shaw.

ACTIVITIES OFFICER. We are seeking an Activities officer for next year as Chris Chafer has advised that he will not be continuing in the job after this year.

Duties of the Activities Officer are to co-ordinate the programme of outings and camps for the year. Although Chris made up the programme, researched most of the outings and camps, and lead most of the outings, I must stress that this is not a necessary part of the job. To make the job easier and thus attract a candidate, I look to club members to volunteer their services to nominate and lead an outing. Just one per member. It might be a repeat of an outing from past years or even a new walk. Come on - let's have your ideas and support by November this year, so that a programme can be organised by the February newsletter setting out venues, leaders names and nominated months.

Jim Robinson.

NEXT MEETING. This will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, on Monday, 13th June, at 7.30 p.m. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Dr. Michael Cannon who will be addressing the meeting on the subject "Aviculture". Dr. Cannon is a Veterinary Surgeon practising locally and professionally he has a special interest in wild life, both animals and birds. He is an aviculturist breeding birds. Aviculture is another side to the study of birds and members can look forward to an interesting evening on this subject.

NEXT FIELD OUTING. This will be to Beehive Point on the Kangaroo River in the Morton National Park. Our meeting place will be outside Kangaroo Valley Pumping and Power Station on Jack's Corner Road, Bendeela.

To reach this meeting place you approach the Hampton Bridge in Kangaroo Valley from Berry on the eastern side. Cross the bridge and take the first road on the left heading for Bendeela. Follow this road to the pumping station where we will meet at 8.30 a.m.

Allow no less than 1½ hours travelling from Wollongong. You will require a carry lunch and the necessaries for an appropriate amount of morning and afternoon teas. The outing will be led by Laurie Williams and will be through mixed Eucalypt woodland with a healthy understorey and creek side vegetation

IBOC FILM NIGHT - SATURDAY 4th JUNE. Our next film night will be held at the home of Jim and Gwen Robinson, 16 Burling Avenue, Mount Dusley on Saturday, 4th June. Sessions will as usual be held at 6.00 and 8.00 p.m. with a break for a snack and a cuppa. However, as the films allocated to us for this evening are more than our usual 90 minutes showing you may need to plan a longer stay at our hosts to enable you to see the full programme.

King of the Seabirds. 30 mins.

The albatrosses of Torishima Island, Japan.

How the Kiwi lost its wings. 12 mins.

A Maori folktale.

'Tancho' - Japanese Cranes. 30 mins.

Of the several species of cranes found in Japan, only the 'Tancho' or Japanese Crane, which inhabits the swamps of Kushiro in Hokkaido, stays all the year round. This film shows this beautiful bird through the four seasons.

'Low Mynor' - Our Land. 48 mins.

Called Low Mynor by one tribe of Tasmanian Aborigines, the island of Tasmania retains large wilderness areas. These areas are home to unusual and exotic species of birds and animals including Tasmanian Devils, the monotremes and the kookaburra.

STRONG'S RESERVE - MAY OUTING. The May outing was attended by 26 members meeting at the Navy Jet Monument, Nowra. The weather was calm, with patchy light cloud in the morning, building up a bit as the day progressed but remained fine.

We set out driving along the waste disposal road and turned right about 9 km out leaving the cars about 1 km along a bush road leading to Strong's Reserve then walking through a eucalypt forest with a ground cover of banksia, wattles and heath, many of them in flower. Near the Shoalhaven River Casuarinas grew among the eucalypts. When in sight of the river the track dropped away down to the river flats where we walked along close to the sandstone cliffs which follow much of the Shoalhaven River. The river flats form Strong's Reserve which is now set aside for public recreation.

Up in the forest some of the birds observed were the Yellow-faced Honeyeaters in large numbers, also the White-eared, Yellow-tufted, White-plumed, Lewin's and White-naped Honeyeaters, Eastern Spinebill and Red Wattlebird making eight honeyeaters sighted in the short forest walk.

We continued on in Strong's Reserve to Nowra Creek which we crossed and walked along Bens Walk to the Suspension Bridge which we crossed back to Strong's Reserve and back to the cars. It was a delightful walk through beautiful bush and some great scenery overlooking the river.

Some good sightings were the Yellow and Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Red-browed Firetail, Origma and Rose Robin. For the day we observed a total of 40 species.

VIDEO NIGHT AT THE HALES. The first of our Film Nights for the year was held at the home of Brian and Barbara Hales on Saturday, 30th April. Thirtyfour members braved the wet evening to view the videos "Hunters of the Skies" shown per courtesy of Fred Spiteri.

The videos showed each of the Australian Raptors hunting, nesting and rearing their young. The audience was enthralled with the close-ups of the birds taking their prey. There were spectacular shots of Wedge-tailed Eagles capturing rabbits, Osprey and White-Bellied Sea Eagles taking fish from the water and Spotted Harriers flushing and catching a quail. The audience marvelled at the nesting sequences and the work involved in obtaining such close-ups of the young being fed.

Members really enjoyed the evening and many thanks to the Hales and Fred Spiteri for making the evening such a success.

Jim Robinson.

ANZAC WEEKEND CAMP. Around 120 people from seven N.S.W. and A.C.T. bird watching clubs attended the Anzac weekend camp at Backyamma State Forest near Forbes. The camp was an immense success and it is hoped to make this an annual event.

The forest floor, responding to the recent rain, was a carpet of short green grass, providing us with a perfect camping area on the site of the former Forestry Depot. The immediate surrounds were dominated with White Cypress Pine interspersed with Grey Box, White Box and Stringy Barks. Birdlife was prolific around the camp with Kerry and myself recording over 60 species within a radius of about 3 km of the camp site. Highlights included Red-capped and Hooded Robins, Speckled Warbler, Turquoise Parrot, Blue Bonnet, Spiney-cheeked, Striped, Black-chinned, Brown-headed and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Varied Sittella, Brown Tree-creeper, Black-eared Cuckoo, Eastern Shrike-tit, Grey-crowned and White-browed Babblers, Inland and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills and perhaps the greatest attraction of all, an Owlet Nightjar which roosted in a tree hollow right in the middle of the camp area and was observed by nearly everyone.

Drives throughout the forest were organised each day to a number of hot spots. One such spot we were taken to by June member, Marj Cochrane, produced stunning views of a male Gilbert's Whistler. Marj was armed with a tape recording of the bird's call and was able to keep it around long enough for everyone to have one of the best views I have had of this species.

In another spot we were treated to a large area of flowering Ironbarks. Honeyeaters were prolific here and we added Fuscous Honeyeater to the list as well as Little Lorikeet, Silvereye, Red Wattlebird, and Noisy and Little Friarbirds.

At a secluded dam site we watched a number of species come down for a drink while Peregrine Falcon flew overhead.

On the Sunday, Dick Turner took a convoy of cars on a 100 km round trip to Bogan Gate and a number of smaller State Forests which supplied a variety of habitats. This trip produced around 80 species for the day with highlights including Mallee Ringneck, Ground Cuckoo-Shrike, Little Eagle, Splendid and White-winged Fairy Wrens, Cockatiel, White-backed Swallow, Mistletoebird and White-rumped Miner.

Parkes Sewerage Works was also visited by a number of people and provided a good variety of waterbirds and waders including Pink-eared Duck, Australian Shoveller, Black-tailed Godwit, over 100 Black-fronted Plover, a Double-banded Plover, Red-kneed Dotterel, and a roost of several hundred Little Red Fruit Bats.

Forbes provided Gum Swamp and we found Blue-billed Duck, Marsh Harrier, a nesting pair of Pacific Heron, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Little Grassbird, Plumed Whistling-Duck and Plum-headed Finch.

Spotlighting was organised each night and most people who went enjoyed views of Boobooks, Owlet Nightjar, Tawny Frogmouth and Sugar Gliders. The weather throughout the weekend was warm and sunny and a total of 130 species was observed.

Chris Chafer.

Contd.....

MAY MEETING REPORT. Hugh Whitmore gave a very informative and entertaining talk on the finer mechanics of what makes a bird fly. His talk was illustrated with slides courtesy of Ron Imisides and transparencies made up by Hugh on the flight patterns of various birds. The explanation for the various shapes was interesting such as the long, narrow wing spans for the birds of long flight compared to the broad wings for the soaring birds such as the raptors. Although his talk was fairly technical Hugh did not lose his audience. Ron Simcock gave a vote of thanks from club members at the end of the talk.

Jim Robinson.

C.P.R. OR CARDIO-PULMONARY RESUSCITATION.

On 16th May about 40 members were present at a talk and demonstration of resuscitation given by Mr. Graham Tuckerman. Everyone had ample opportunity to practice the techniques which had been explained very clearly by Graham. I have decided that I'll either walk with the Hales because Barbara appears to be excellent value or with Margaret Parkinson as she must have had 20 turns on all of the dummies. We were wondering if she was becoming addicted to the alcohol used to swab the mouth. Just to refresh everyones memory and to enlighten those who didn't come, here are the main pointers.

First you will need a victim.

Assess - check level of consciousness - pinch ears or fingers - hard.

Check breathing - put your cheek to nose to feel and observe chest. Call for help.

Note time - even writing it in the dirt - very necessary for when ambulance arrives and takes over.

Preparation - place patient supine (medical term for lying flat on back) - clear airway - turn head on side and put fingers inside mouth to excavate any matter - put teeth in place - do not remove unless they are broken or you can't get them in place - safely open airway.

Expired Air Resuscitation - close off nose or mouth (if mouth is injured you will need to close off mouth and use nose) - tilt head back - make secure seal around victims mouth or nose with your own mouth - inflate persons lungs with a volume of at least 800 ml - provide 2 inflations in 10 seconds - observe rise and fall of chest wall.

External Cardiac Massage.

Feel for the carotid pulse (side of neck) if present continue above(EAR) at rate of 15 breaths/min. If absent - apply ball of hand to the sternum. It is important that you apply the pressure to the correct place - so feel for the top where the collar bones meet at a V - feel for the bottom of the sternum where the ribs start - measure half way and apply pressure to the lower half with a rocking motion - apply pressure to depress sternum 5 - 6 cm (1½-2 inches) repeat once per second to achieve compression rate 80/min. 15 compressions then 2 inflations. This should continue until help arrives - it may be necessary for someone to relieve the operation.

Evaluation.

Check for effectiveness of cardiac compressions at carotid pulse after 3 minutes.

Check resuscitation - once spontaneous breathing occurs stop resuscitation - place patient on the side. Continue to observe airway, breathing and circulation.

Mary Shaw.

MEMBERSHIP LIST. We welcome the following new members:

DOWN, Mrs. Ruth, Phone 96 1515, 293 Reddall Parade, Mt. Warrigal, 2528.

GORDON, Peter and wife Bronwyn Evans, Phone 293469, 15 Georgina Avenue, Keiraville, 2500.

GRAHAM, Peter & Mrs. Isabel, Phone 717193 - 14 Govett Crescent, Figtree, 2525.

MIDWEEK OUTING. This outing will be held Wednesday, 1st June, to the Bellambi area, meeting at the parking area for the boat ramp at Bellambi Point at 8.30 a.m.

contd.....

NEW SOUTH WALES BIRD ATLASSERS Inc.

A group established to monitor the distribution of Australian birds in New South Wales



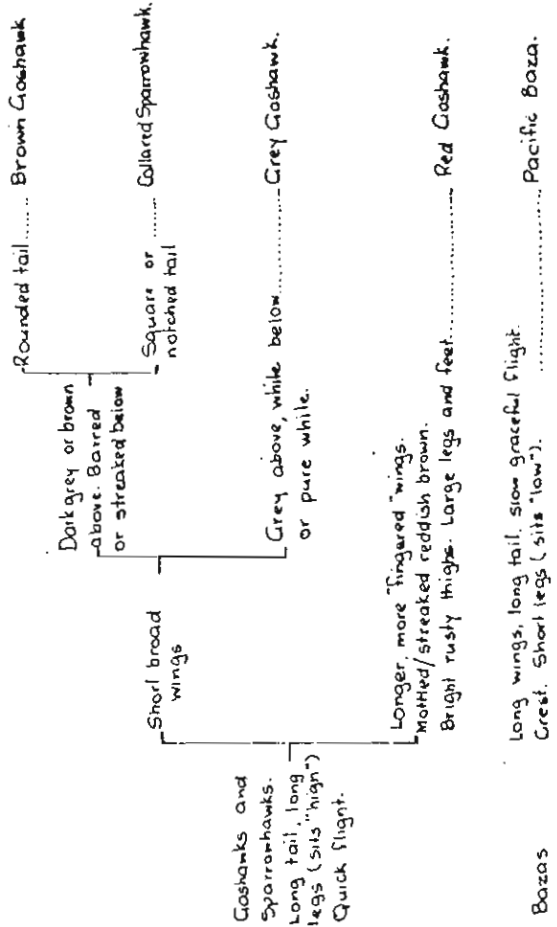
Information sheet on the RAPTORS of N.S.W.

Information: Stephen Debus.
Illustrations: Ken Schaefer.

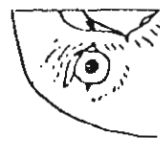
VOLUME 2 - FOREST HAWKS

Brown Goshawk, Grey Goshawk, Red Goshawk,
Collared Sparrowhawk, Pacific Baza.

All have transverse barring under wings and tail, some also on abdomen.



ATLAS NUMBER	GOSHAWK				ATLAS NUMBER
	GREY GOSHAWK	BROWN GOSHAWK	COLLARED SPARROWHAWK	RED GOSHAWK	
220	221	222	223	234	PACIFIC BAZA
112	111	111	110	103	
548	550	545	550	558	
70	70	70	70	66	
80	71	67	91	29	
82-3	81-2	82	83	78	
139	128	134	192	175	
124	125	123	127	118	
244 43/51	244 43/51	245 43/51	246 45/51	239 43/51	
49/98	45/94	47/96	51/100	33/82	



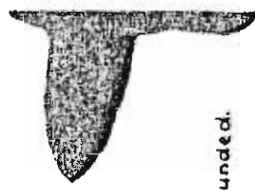
Eyes heavily hooded



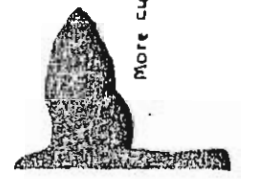
Head rounder and smaller.

Eyes more staring.

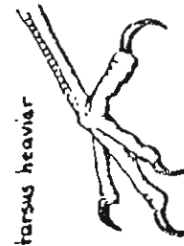
Bill smaller.



Tail longer and rounded.



More curved tailing edge to wing.



Claws and tarsus heavier



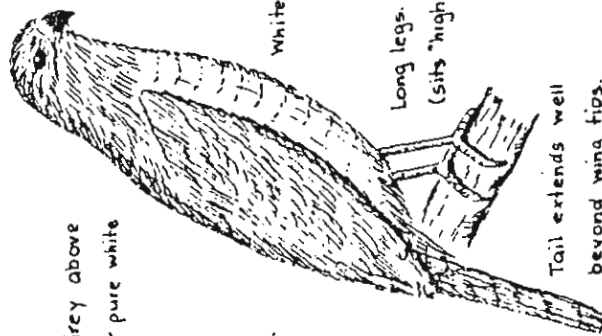
Very long middle toe.



Bowed when gliding



Flat when gliding



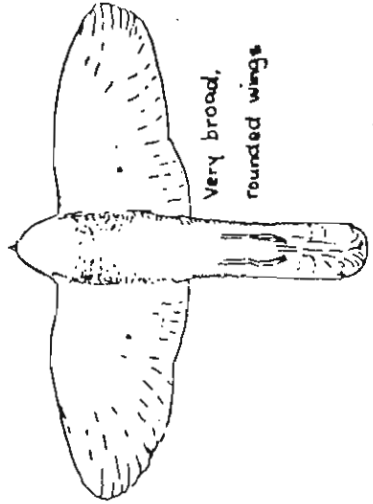
Grey above or pure white

White below.

Long legs. (sits "high")

Short wings

Tail extends well beyond wing tips.



Very broad, rounded wings

Long tail.

Rapid flight, somewhat shallower and more laboured than Brown Goshawk. Soars and glides on bowed wings.

Habitat: Tall wet forests, rainforests, occasionally drier forests and woodlands (especially white form which may associate with White Cockatoo).

Call: Drawn-out, rising two-note whistle - repeated.

Feeding Habits: Waits in ambush on concealed perch, glides or flies out to take prey on ground or from canopy. Sometimes soars or flies slowly over canopy. Takes birds, mammals, reptiles, insects and occasionally carrion.

Size: ♀ 50-55cm ♂ 38-42cm.

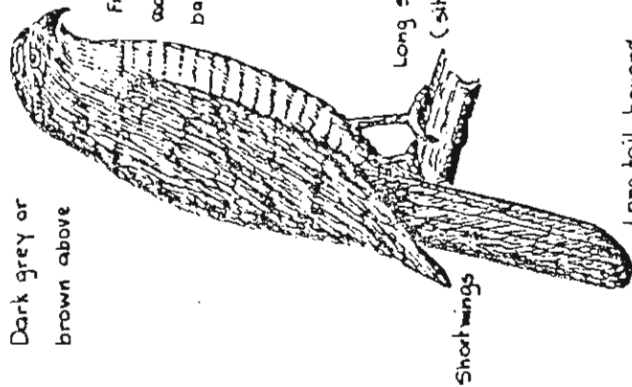


Acknowledgment: "Australian Birdwatcher" Vol 12(2) June 87. *C. G. Lunn, Julius & Moomy.*

BROWN GOSHAWK

221

Dark grey or brown above



Short wings

Finely barred or coarsely streaked and barred below.

Long sturdy legs (sits "high")

Broad wings

Long, slender, rounded tail.

Flies with quick, deep flaps.

Wings slightly bowed when gliding to slightly upswept when soaring.

Long tail beyond wing tips.

Habitat: Any well-wooded area, including parks and gardens.

Call: Various chattering calls, rapid and shrill or slower and mellow; drawn-out rising mew like Grey Goshawk. (sounds like Noisy Miner).

Feeding Habits: Like Grey Goshawk but in more open situations; sometimes flies rapidly at low levels.

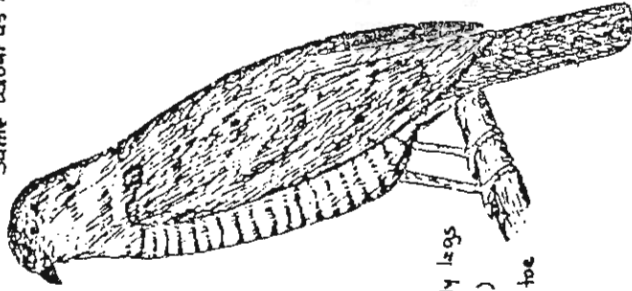
Size: ♀ 45-55 cm ♂ 38-45 cm.

Found throughout

COLLARED SPARROWHAWK

222

Same colour as Brown Goshawk

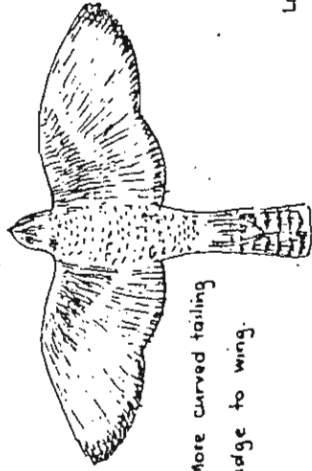


Long, spindly legs (sits "high")

Very long middle toe

Short wings

Like Brown Goshawk, but smaller head.



More curved tailing edge to wing.

Broad square or notched tail.

Flight often more winnowing or flickering than Brown Goshawk. Low direct flight sometimes undulating like cuckoo. Wings flat when gliding to slightly upswept when soaring.

Long square or notched tail.

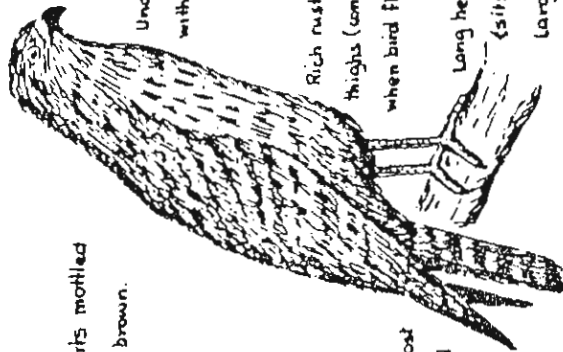
Habitat: Forests, woodlands, sometimes well-treed urban areas.

Call: Very rapid chittering like White-plumed Honeyeater alarm call. Other slower calls like Brown Goshawk.

Feeding Habits: Small birds taken in flight by sudden dash from concealed perch or low fast flight ("hedge-hopping"), or sometimes by stoop from high flight. Also insects, rarely lizards and small mammals.

Size: ♀ 35-38 cm ♂ 29-33 cm.

Found throughout.



Upperparts mottled
reddish brown.

Pale face

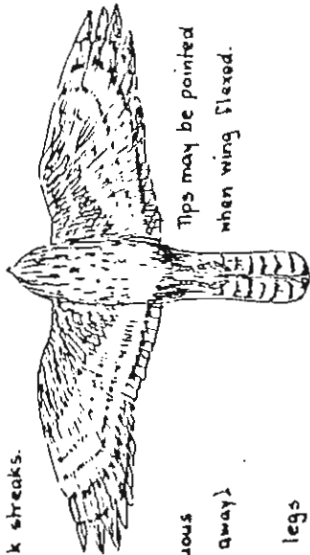
Underparts rufous
with dark streaks.

Rich rusty
thighs (conspicuous
when bird flies away)

Long heavy legs
(sits "high")
Large feet.

Wings almost
reach tail
tip.

Long
barred tail.



Longer, more "fingered" wings
than other Goshawks.

Tips may be pointed
when wing flexed.

Reddish brown with boldly barred
flight and tail feathers.

Wing beats quick, deep & powerful.

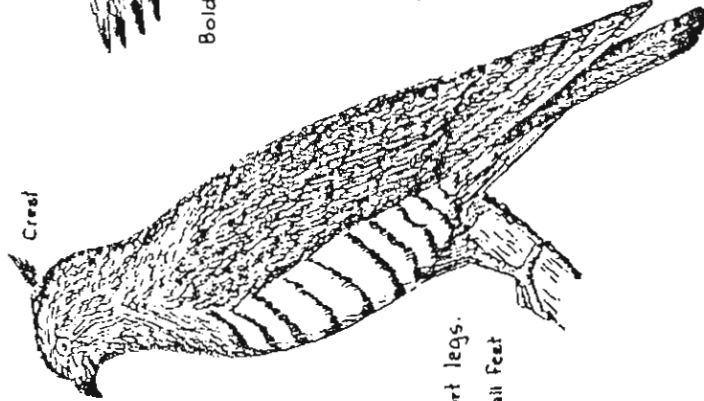
Wings bowed when gliding to slightly
upswept when soaring. (soars with much
flapping).

Habitat: Open forest, woodland, edge of rainforest.

Call: Deep, harsh chatter, somewhat like Peregrine Falcon or Masked Lapwing.

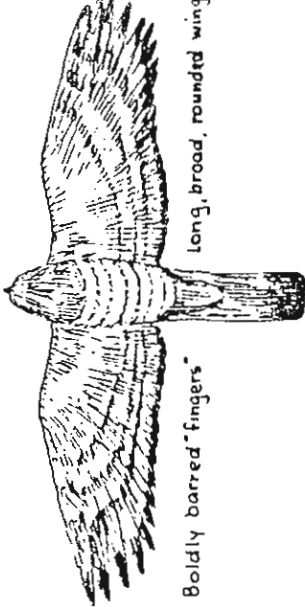
Feeding Habits: Hunts birds from concealed perch. slow or fast flight low over or
through trees, or stoops from soaring flight. Also takes reptiles,
insects and, rarely, small mammals.

Size: ♀ 57-61 cm ♂ 46-51 cm.



Crest

Short legs.
Small feet



Boldly barred "fingers"

Long, broad, rounded wings

Long, slender, square tail.

Wing beats slow, loose and shallow.
Glides on flat or bowed wings.

Long wings almost
reach tail tip.

Habitat: Woodland, open forest, edge of rainforest, sometimes parks & gardens.

Call: Mellow two-note whistle, rising and falling.

Feeding Habits: Soars or glides slowly among or over tree tops, drops into
foliage. Sometimes hovers or hangs from foliage with beating
wings. Snatches insects and tree frogs from canopy. Sometimes
eats rainforest fruit, such as figs.

Size: ♀ 43-46 ♂ 35-40 cm.



1. B. O. C. NEWS

NO. 115 JULY, 1988.



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.

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"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"

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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 \$10 SINGLE \$.7
STUDENT \$2

Next Meeting - Will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 11th July, at 7.30 pm. The 1988 programme lists the Guest Speaker as Dick Turner - "Birds in State Forests".

Due to the fact that a large number of the membership is away at Cape York and Dick has to travel a long distance to address the meeting, the committee felt it would not be fair to ask him to come such a long way to address a reduced audience. The evening programme will consist of an Audio Visual display presented by Sigi Freund titled "In The Shadow Of The Didgeridoo". It covers Sigi and Lilo's trip to Kakadu National Park and Central Australia. Club member Sigi is also a member of the Illawarra Camera Club and an experienced photographer and I'm sure he will present a high quality insight into this fascinating part of our country. The display lasts around 30 minutes. The remainder of the evening will consist of an Australia wide selection of slides from the B.O.C. slide library. It should give members a chance to view slides of some species they rarely if ever see. The slides will be presented by Wal Emery.

Next Field Outing - Will be on Sunday, 17th July to Mt. Keira. We will meet in the carpark at the Mt. Keira Summit Lookout at 9.00 am. The walk will proceed via the Dave Walsh track to the Mt. Keira Ring Track where we will turn right and proceed in a clockwise direction around Mt. Keira. It covers a distance of about 7 km passing through rain forest and eucalypt forest. The grades are generally level to easy. By walking clockwise we will descend rather than ascend the few steeper areas. Bring a carry lunch.

July Film Night - Will be held at the home of Hazel and Wal Emery at 63 Dymock Street, Balgownie on Saturday the 2nd July. Again we will have the usual two sessions commencing at 6.00 and 8.00 pm. All members are welcome. Bring a plate for supper and partake in a pleasant, social evening.

The June film night was successfully hosted by Jim and Gwen Robinson. Thank you Jim and Gwen for your hospitality.

July Film Night Programme

St. Kilda - The Lonely Islands

25 minutes

Shows the unique bird and animal life of the St. Kilda Islands, which lie 110 miles west off the Scottish mainland.

Night Flight.

15 minutes

A study of the sugar glider.

Film Programme Contd.

A Voice for the Wilderness.

58 minutes.

A film about all rainforests and remaining wilderness areas, focusing on the untouched forests of the Hastings River on the East coast of Australia.

July Mid-Week Outing - July 6th to Blackbutt Reserve, Shellharbour. Meet at the picnic area off Shellharbour Road at 8.30 am. For further information ring Mary Eskdale 29-1650, Horace Ward 84-3473 or Esme Gay 29-3463.

+++++O B I T U A R Y+++++

It is with deep regret that we advise members of the death of May Westmore. May passed away a few weeks ago. Although a member for several years, May did not attend a lot of meetings due to the fact that she lived in Gerringong. She did however maintain a keen interest in the club through the newsletter. Our deepest sympathies are extended to May's family.

+++++O B I T U A R Y+++++

June Meeting Report - At the June meeting we were fortunate to have as our guest speaker, a local veterinary surgeon, Dr. Michael Cannon. The subject of his talk for the evening was Aviculture. We were thoroughly entertained and informed by the slides shown of some of his friends attempts at reproducing a rainforest environment and installing a variety of birds that live in the same circumstances all within their own back yards, a truly great effort.

Mike also made it clear that certain birds can be quite happy in cages providing that they are given similar area to that in which they usually live. From his talk I feel that aviculturists play an important part in preserving our endangered species. Their efforts have retained various birds which could, by now, be extinct. Mike is obviously a very knowledgeable and caring person who has an empathy with the birds and animals he discussed. I hope, in the future, to invite him back to our club to speak of his work as a vet as I am sure we would find this as interesting as his last talk.

Brian Hales.

June Outing Report - Twenty one members met at the Bendeela Power Station, Kangaroo Valley, on a glorious still morning. They then proceeded on to the start of the Beehive Point 4.W.D. track in the Morton National Park. Here we abandoned the vehicles and commenced the 5.5 km walk to the point, under the leadership of Laurie Williams.

The lovely Yellow-tufted Honeyeater was present at the start of the walk and stayed with us throughout the day. Like so many of our common birds we tend to dismiss them at times and fail to appreciate their true beauty as we tramp miles in search of the rarer, more elusive, species.

The habitat consisted of steep mainly eucalypt covered ridges with the wetter gully slopes dominated by Turpentine. Several small creeks crossed the track. Tree Ferns and ground ferns lined these creeks and it was at one of these creeks that we first heard the call of the Pilotbird.

With Laurie as leader it was a foregone conclusion that it would not be long before we had a morning tea stop. An appropriate log was found and it was noted that although Nola was not present Laurie's pack was as full as ever. It was at this point that Ian Rowles drew our attention to the calls of the Pilotbird in the distance. Further along the track we were to have good sightings of this species feeding in the open, with its tail cocked in characteristic fashion.

A pair of Gang Gang Cockatoos alerted us to their presence as they called from a tall eucalypt. As we traversed along a ridge a flock of Brown-headed Honeyeaters caught our attention as they gleaned through a clump of eucalypts in search of insects. At this point the eucalypts thinned giving way to an understorey of Banksia Spinulosa and Lambertia Formosa, common species in this type of poor sandy soil. Several species of honeyeaters were feeding here, including White-naped, Yellow-faced, White-eared and Eastern Spinebill. As we approached Beehive Point Eastern Yellow Robins became quite common whilst an Origma fed on the track, allowing us to approach to a point where we were able to view it without the aid of binoculars.

Contd.....

June Outing Report Contd.

What a lovely quiet little bird, but what a terrible name. I'm afraid it will always be a Rock Warbler to me.

Laurie did us proud as we perched for lunch on a lovely sandstone outcrop overlooking Lake Yarrunga. Surprisingly there were no waterfowl on this large body of water. We spent 1½ hours at this spot but the only new species recorded was the Azure Kingfisher sighted by Brian Hales, although most of the friends we had met along the track were present, including the Rock Warbler, oop's I mean Origma!

On the return trip a flock of Red Wattlebirds were sighted by Len Klumpes and the Superb Lyrebird was heard calling several times at close range. Good reputations are hard to come by and Laurie had no intention of damaging his as he called an afternoon tea stop on the same log on which we had morning tea. Hazel Emery spotted what our nest experts said was a Striated Thornbill's nest during this stop and we wondered why twenty one birdo's hadn't found it on the morning stop. Too interested in the contents of their haversacks perhaps?

A total of 39 species were recorded for the day. Not a large number but fairly typical for this type of habitat at this time of the year. Thanks to Laurie for leading the excursion and to all those who attended to make it a very pleasant outing on a beautiful Winter's day.

Wal Emery.

Silver Gull Project.

The N.S.W. National Parks and Wildlife Service is seeking interested persons to assist with our Silver Gull monitoring programme in the Newcastle-Sydney-Wollongong region. The focus of the project is to gather information on the biology and ecology of the Silver Gull, which can be used to make rational decisions on the management of populations. The management strategy will aim at alleviating problems that gulls pose to:

- * human health, such as the risks caused by the species feeding on refuse tips and then flying to reservoirs that provide drinking water, where they can pollute the water with dangerous micro-organisms;
- * aircraft movements, when they either hit aircraft or are sucked into engines, causing crashes and loss of human life;
- * rare fauna.

There are three areas in which help is required:

1. Monitoring of breeding Silver Gulls at the Five Islands. This will require that you accompany us on one or several of our regular visits to these islands.
2. Counting of gulls at specific times of the year between August 1988 and February 1991. These will include pre-breeding (first weekend in August), breeding (first weekend in October), post-fledging dispersal (first weekend in February) and pre-winter (first weekend in April) counts. We hope to enlist as much help as possible so that we can cover a wide area and make our population estimates reasonably accurate. If you would like to make more counts than at the above times, then we would appreciate the data.
3. Reporting of sightings of colour-marked birds. Marking has been carried out using wing tags and coloured leg-bands.

If you would like more information on the project or you can help at any time, please contact Geoffrey Smith or Phillip Straw (Phone 02-237 6695). Data should be recorded on data sheets which we can supply on request.

Please mention our programme to friends who may be interested in assisting.

David Sheppard
Manager Natural Resources Management Division
for Director.

Contd.....

Behaviour of Pied Currawongs.

It is well known that Pied Currawongs capture and devour nestlings of other species. This activity is often seen as repugnant to Australians but another point of view has recently been expressed by Eleanor Brown, PhD, a visiting researcher from overseas. In the Sydney Morning Herald on 12th December, 1987, she wrote as follows

"I have been doing research on the behaviour of pied currawongs since June of this year. Currawongs are indeed versatile opportunistic generalists in their feeding habits, and take occasional nestlings of other species in addition to seeds, berries and other vegetable matter, insects, small mammals, table scraps, etc. However, there is no scientific evidence whatsoever, to my knowledge, to support the contention that their depredations have resulted in the decline of small songbirds. Further, any study designed to address such an issue would have to take into account several factors, namely, (1) wholesale destruction of natural habitat; (2) predilection for planting gardens of English flowers (e.g. roses), which provide no nectar food, rather than Australian native plants; (3) widespread use of pesticides, which kill birds that eat poisoned insects; and (4) introduction of cats and other non-native predators.

A more likely explanation for the alleged increase in numbers of currawongs, and concomitant decrease in numbers of small songbirds, is that the currawong can adapt successfully to changes induced by humans, whereas many other birds may not be able to. Instead of execrating the currawong, we should rejoice that at least one Australian native can survive and prosper in our urban environment.

It is fundamental in science that the mere simultaneous occurrence of two events does not prove cause and effect. I suggest that this guiding principle be kept firmly in mind by anyone considering the implications of the supposed rise of the currawong and decline of other birds."

On 22nd February, 1987 I saw a Pied Currawong take one of three nine-day-old Red-whiskered Bulbul chicks from a nest in my garden. The history of this nest was well known since initial establishment. On 27th February another chick fledged successfully. Inspection of the nest on the following day revealed that the third nestling had died in it about four or five days before; cause unknown.

It is interesting to note that the predatory Currawong did not return to take other nestlings after the first plunder. Maybe Pied Currawongs have short memories.

Kevin Wood.

Currawongs Versus Bulbuls - Third Time Lucky.

During the summer of 1986 a pair of Red-whiskered Bulbuls nested in an ornamental Plum tree in our garden. They hatched a brood and commenced feeding. I noticed a lone Pied Currawong hanging around the general area. After a few days the Red-whiskered Bulbuls abandoned the nest. With the aid of a ladder I checked the nest only to find it empty. I assumed the Pied Currawong had taken the young. Because the nest was above eye level I had not bothered to check the number of young in the nest.

It wasn't long before the Red-whiskered Bulbuls built a new nest and hatched a brood of four, this time in an exotic Liquidamber tree. A lone Pied Currawong was again soon eying off the nestlings. I walked out the door soon after just in time to hear the Red-whiskered Bulbuls becoming agitated and to see the Pied Currawong taking a nestling. That was the only one I actually saw taken but the number reduced by one each day till there were none left. I think it is fair to assume that the Pied Currawong took the remaining chicks. Apparently this Pied Currawong had quite a long memory.

Undaunted, the Red-whiskered Bulbuls crossed the creek and built a third nest under several layers of Tree Fern fronds. This time they hatched and fledged another brood of four. Maybe the Pied Currawong didn't find this nest or maybe it just decided on a change of diet.

Wal Emery.

Contd.....

IT HAS always surprised me that so many birds should be killed by motor cars. Their eyesight is excellent, and their coordination and reaction times are equally impressive. Thus, a small bird can fly through a hedge or even through a piece of chicken wire at 5 to 10 metres per second. Yet birds seem unable to recognise the approach of a perfectly enormous object moving in a straight line at a constant velocity only a few times their own.

The reason may lie in the way in which birds on the wing judge distances. This must differ significantly from our own way of gauging distance. At moderate distances, up to 50 metres or so, our best source of information is stereopsis, or the ability to obtain a three-dimensional image by comparing the slightly different images provided by our two eyes. In good conditions, we may be able to use this capacity up to considerably larger distances, though with poor discrimination. Because our eyes are well separated, and have a common field of view of over 100°, the method is extremely effective.

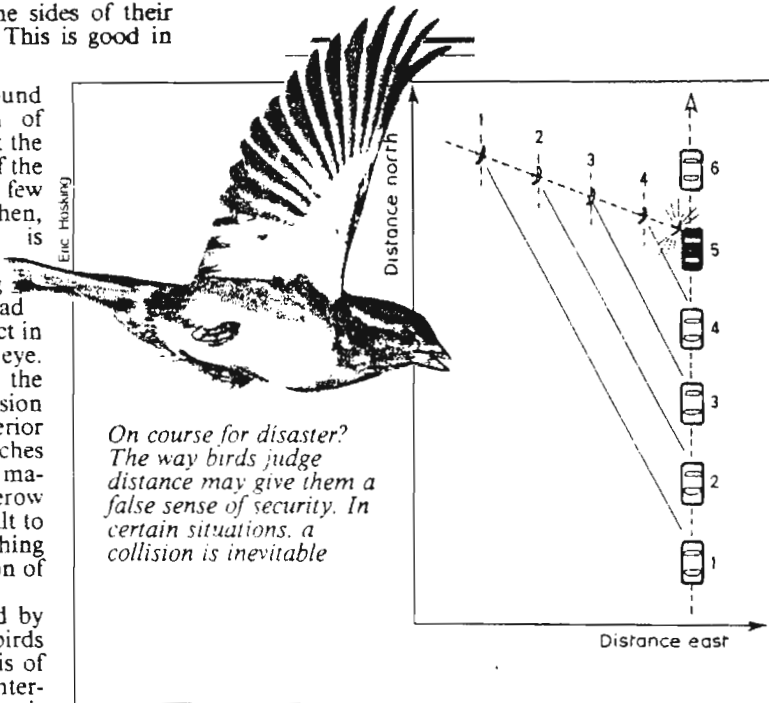
Most small birds, on the other hand, have their eyes well to the sides of their heads, looking outwards. This is good in

that it gives nearly all-round vision for the detection of enemies, but it means that the range of common vision of the two eyes may be only a few degrees. For each eye, then, this common vision is peripheral; when a bird wishes to see something really clearly it turns its head sideways to study the object in the central field of a single eye. All of this means that the binocular stereoscopic vision of such birds must be inferior to our own. When one watches the skilful, split-second manoeuvres of small hedgerow birds, however, it is difficult to believe that there is anything wrong with their perception of depth.

The paradox is resolved by supposing that, in flight, birds judge distance on the basis of parallax rather than interocular difference. (Parallax is the name of the familiar phenomenon that, as we move forward, very distant objects to one side of our direction of movement appear to fall behind slowly, while nearer objects appear to fall behind rapidly.) We know nothing about a bird's subjective view of the world, but the information available from parallax would certainly allow it to build up a picture in depth. Indeed, if the bird is moving fast, the use of parallax will be better for this purpose than binocular vision, except for the region straight ahead. Even a small bird will fly 50 centimetres or more in a tenth of a second. In that time, the change in the appearance of the world to one side will be as great as that seen by a pair of eyes 50 centimetres or more apart.

In suitable circumstances, we ourselves can use parallax to obtain a subjective appearance of depth. When flying as a passenger in an aeroplane among or over cumulus clouds, these stand out clearly in three dimensions at distances for which binocular stereopsis could not possibly be responsible. Confirmation of this can be obtained by shutting one eye, when the three-dimensional appearance remains unchanged. The same effect can be observed from a car.

The next point to consider is that a bird's brain is small, so that it cannot afford to attend to too many things at once. Only if a signal of major importance is received from a distant object will that object be attended to. Such signals, recognition of which must be built into the bird's brain, could include the distinguishing features of a potential mate, the characteristic shape of a hawk, or, of course, any moving object big enough and near enough to be potentially dangerous. To distinguish this last, the image of the object on the bird's retina must be moving with respect to the images surrounding it, all of which, of course, are moving when the bird is flying. If an image on the retina is not moving at all when the bird is flying in a straight line, it would seem to be of some distant object and hence not an immediate threat. This simple rule would enable the bird to neglect clouds, distant mountains or distant trees.



On course for disaster? The way birds judge distance may give them a false sense of security. In certain situations, a collision is inevitable

Unfortunately, there is a loophole. Every sailor knows that, if you are travelling in a straight line, another ship whose course crosses your own and which is observed to maintain a constant bearing with respect to oneself is necessarily on a collision course. Similarly, if a bird is flying on a diagonal collision course with a car, which it can then see with only one eye, then the image of the car on the bird's retina will not move with respect to that of the distant background (see diagram). Thus, the bird will not register the car as significant until it is very close to it. If the car and bird are not on a collision course, then the image of the car on the bird's retina will move and the alarm will be triggered in good time, though quite unnecessarily.

Why do birds

collide with cars?

John Fremlin takes a bird's-eye view

John Fremlin is emeritus professor of applied radio-activity at the University of Birmingham.

The misleading constant-bearing clue is, of course, in direct conflict with the clue presented by the increasing size of the retinal image of the whole car. The bird's final desperate attempt to dodge the car could well represent a belated change of response from a clue significant at large distances to one more compelling at short distances.

A human being, in the bird's position, but with binocular stereoscopic vision, would not make the bird's mistake of assigning the car to the distant landscape. There are occasions, however, when a motorist may not use his binocular vision, and I believe that one rather common type of road accident may arise in exactly the same way as I have described for birds.

When one comes up the stem of a British T-junction, with the intention of turning right on to a major road, it is natural to start one's turn before coming to rest. Looking left, then, one may well be using only the left eye in a quick scan, before looking right with both eyes for the more immediate danger of vehicles in the lane that has to be crossed. Then, if one has not stopped, the image of a fast car coming up from the left shows no parallax and may not be registered as a moving object. Most drivers will have experienced the shock, as they accelerate out into the turn, of finding a car suddenly appearing as if by magic on their near side. The solution, of course, is simple: when you come to a junction and the road sign says stop, it is best to act accordingly. □

Carnarvon Gorge.

Anyone who has banged and bashed their way into Carnarvon Gorge over corrugations and creekbed washouts in the past, or has been stuck there after as little as 5 mm of rain, will be pleased to read the following article published in the Binna Burra Lodge April newsletter.

"The road network servicing Carnarvon Gorge Oasis Lodge is steadily being bought right up to scratch. Over the past twelve months there has been \$1.5 million spent on the main Injune - Rolleston Road wherein about 12 km in the Molayembar Range area has been completely rebuilt, cutting out all of the worst part of the dirt road. They even moved a whole creek to do it! Further to this, the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service has given the Council about \$1/2 million for road upgrading and this has led to the building of an all-weather section of the road into the Gorge for the last 14 km from a new Carnarvon Creek causeway plus an almost totally new link road - all weather again - from Wyseby to Rewan. This is the shortcut when coming from the south. It now means that it really takes flood rains before the roads become impassable - and this is rare."

Nola Williams.

Membership List

Changes of address.

- O'Rourke, R. c/o 9, Greenwell Point Road, Nowra, 2451.
- Parker, G. & J. 58, Greta Street, Gerringong, 2534. Ph. 042 341654

New Member

- Mrs. Marg Jarrett. 20 Cypress Avenue, Figtree, 2525. Ph. 284670.

Interesting Sightings, April, May, June, 1988.

U	Australasian Shoveler	2 (male)	Killalea Lagoon	1/4/88	G. Barwell
MC	Double-banded Plover	1	Shellharbour Swamp	16/4/88	"
U	Crescent Honeyeater	1	Fitzroy Falls	24/4/88	"
U	Spotted Quail-thrush	2 (male)	Robertson Area	24/4/88	"
U	Sooty Oystercatcher	5	Bass Point	11/6/88	"
R	Bar-shouldered Dove	2	Bass Point	13/6/88	"
R	Hooded Plover	1	Windang Beach	9/4/88	C. Brandis
U	Kelp Gull (imm.)	2	Dunmore	3/5/88	K. Mills
S	Eastern Bristlebird	1	Barren Grounds	15/5/88	"
U	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	25	Balgownie	20/5/88	"
R	Australian Brush Turkey	1	Balgownie	20/6/88	W. H. Emery
S	Rose Robin	1	Balgownie	5/6/88	"
U	Collared Sparrowhawk	1	Balgownie	19/6/88	"
R	Great-crested Grebe	15	Fitzroy Reservoir	28/5/88	"

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I.B.O.C. NEWS

No. 116 AUGUST, 1988.



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CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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

These are due on 1st January each year
FAMILY \$10 SINGLE \$7 STUDENT \$2

Next Meeting - Will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 8th August at 7.30 p.m. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Mr. Rob Whelan who will address the meeting on the topic of "Pollination". Rob is an Ecologist who lectures at the Wollongong University. Members can be assured of an interesting evening on the pollination of Flora and the part birds play in this.

Next Field Outing - Will be to Korrongulla Swamp on Saturday, 13th August. From there we will walk to Windang so some cars will be taken and left there to provide a ferry service at the end of the day. The leader for the day will be Ron Imisides. Bring a carry lunch and meet at 9 am at Korrongulla Swamp which is situated in Nicol Street, Primbee.

Midweek Outings - Wednesday, August 3rd, O'Briens Road, Figtree. Meet at the Park, corner Princes Highway and O'Briens Road at 8.30 a.m. Wednesday, September 7th, Bass Point. Meet inside entrance at gates at 8.30 a.m.

From the Editor - August sees I.B.O.C. office bearers back again to continue with their duties. Those who went on the Cape York trip are enriched by the adventure & bird sightings that we shared. For me the most exciting sightings were the Eclectus Parrot, Cassowary and the rifle birds. I don't think I could have chosen a better group of people to be away with. I enjoyed their company and the laughs we had together as much as the birding. More next month about the trip. I would like to thank Wal Emery for putting the July newsletter out and of course Barbara for typing it.

Mary Shaw.

Next Film Night - Will be held at the home of Norma and Ron Almond, 2, Shoobert Crescent, Keiraville, on Saturday, 30th July. There will be two showings, at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. and there is ^{no} truth in the rumour that the Hales had any part in choosing the titles.

Bring a plate and enjoy a pleasant social evening.

Film Night Programme.

<u>A World Within Itself.</u>	col. 38 mins.
Looks at life in an English wood.	
<u>Chalk Grassland.</u>	col. 15 mins.
Looks at life in the English countryside.	
<u>Look Again At Garden Birds.</u>	col. 25 mins.
Looks at life in an English garden.	
<u>The Swimming Pool.</u>	col. 6 mins.
Looks at life before and after. Was it really worth it?	

July Meeting Report.

Owing to the scheduled absence of several members from the meeting the programme was altered and two of our club members were guest speakers for the night. This will allow a much larger audience to appreciate Dick Turner's lecture at a later date.

Sigi Freund spoke to us first and showed his excellent audio visual, "In the Shadow of the Didgeridoo", of a trip he and Lilo made to the Northern Territory in September/October last year. The photography was excellent, showing some of the beautiful rugged scenery that is only found around the Top End and in Central Australia. Kakadu National Park, Katherine Gorge, the Devil's Marbles, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock and the Olgas were all seen and brought back happy memories to those who had visited these areas and must surely have whet the appetite for anyone who hasn't been there.

Sigi and Lilo were very fortunate to see and photograph many lovely wildflowers in their travels and were also able to record some of the wildlife on film. The close slide of a crocodile brought many exclamations from the audience but Sigi assured us he was quite safe when taking this shot. It was lovely to see the Jabiru, Pied Heron and Fork-tailed Kite which are birds significant of the area. The music and accompanying commentary added to the performance and we all hope we will be privileged to see this audio visual again some time and share it with those who were away.

Our second speaker was Wal Emery who showed us some 90 bird slides he had borrowed from the Melbourne B.O.C. film library. These were mainly birds that live out of our area and possibly some of us will never have the opportunity to see. They included the rails and crakes, owls, frogmouths, nightjars, kingfishers, pittas, robins and finches and it gave us an excellent opportunity for comparison. Once more it gave some members the chance to recall trips away and the exciting experience of seeing some of these birds for the first time and Wal related several incidents of his own first sightings.

A very interesting night was had by all and Dave Thomson passed the vote of thanks.

Nola Williams.

July Field Outing.

Twenty four I.B.O.C.'s met at the Mt. Keira Lookout on a crisp Sunday morning for the July field outing around the Ring Track including a detour through the Scout Camp.

A pair of Gang Gangs bid us good morning and a big A for effort must go to Gwen who arrived home from holidays at 10.30 on Saturday night and turned up full of beans for the outing.

contd.....

The walk around the lookout track afforded spectacular views of the coastline but very little in the way of birdlife. We then descended the Dave Walsh Track and walked into the Scout Camp where a morning cuppa was taken in a sunny area near the lodge.

Hunger pangs satisfied, we then set off on the next section, a walk through the magnificent rainforest area along the outdoor Chapel track. This is truly a beautiful area - the large moss and fern covered boulders showing their best face after the recent freshening rain.

Huge fig trees towered above us whilst various other rainforest giants played host to countless birdsnest ferns. Assorted climbers snaked their way ever upwards through the gloom to the sunlight. No amount of money on earth could ever compensate for the loss of these beautiful areas. How good I felt inside knowing that this little natural wonderland at least, is safe from the chain saws. Some of the birds encountered at the Scout Camp included Green Catbird, Brown Cuckoo Dove, Superb Lyrebird, Large-billed Scrubwrens and Golden Whistler.

Back on the Ring Track at 11.30 a.m. we set off on the LGN----G 7 km walk around the mountain. Along under the power lines and down into a stand of turpentine. At this point, the deputy leader succumbed to pressure from the ever hungry horde and called a lunch stop an hour's walk short of the designated spot. Not much chance of her becoming a leader! It was however a pleasant spot and White-throated Treecreepers, White-naped Honeyeaters, Grey Fantail, Wonga Pigeon and assorted thornbills were recorded during the break. After climbing out of the gully we traversed around under the cliff face. This section of track is being regenerated with rainforest trees by the State Recreation people and in years to come should be an attractive area with its good views out over the Rhododendran Park to the north east.

With heavy cloud developing above us we descended into the rainforest. A Shining Bronze Cuckoo was an unusual winter record in this area. The next obstacle on the course was a long boggy section of track and it was interesting to stand back and study the antics of the I.B.O.C. Logrunners as one by one they tiptoed along a 100 mm log, not always successfully. On through the rainforest and across Mr. Keira Road we reached the Byarong Park Track junction. At this point the group split into two some opting for the short downhill walk to the park, while the remainder set off for the cars at the summit. Half a kilometre from the finishing point an amazing supply of reserve energy was discovered as the clouds above began to leak and we covered this final stretch in record time, arriving back at the cars at 3 p.m. A low count of 33 species was recorded but pleasant company and some interesting habitat made it an enjoyable day. Thanks to all those who took part in the outing.

Wal Emery.

October Camps.

Family camp - commences on 30th September and will be at Wingello.

Friday 14th to Sunday 23rd October camp will be at Goonoo State Forest. We camped in this forest on the last night of our Cape York trip and I can recommend it as an attractive setting with many bird species to observe. More details along with maps will be in the next newsletter.

Source, New Science, taken from the Sydney Morning Herald.

Frontiers. New Findings that affect us all.

From a hole in the head to a babble-beating hearing aid. A tiny Australian bird with a hole in its head has inspired a new device that could improve the social lives of many thousands of people with hearing defects.

The aptly named Aviphone is a new hearing aid developed to prototype stage at the University of Queensland. It exploits the special hearing system used by the Plains Wanderer, a bird which lives in open country where sounds don't carry very far over the ground unless they have very low frequencies and hence very long wavelengths.

contd.....

Frontiers contd.

The Plains Wanderer has baffled physicists by being able to figure out the direction of sound waves (the mating calls of other Plains Wanderers for instance) as much as 100 times larger than its one centimetre-wide head.

A conventional antenna of that size could not perform the same feat but the bird manages it with an acoustic trick. A hole through the middle of its head connects its ears, effectively producing a pattern of vibrations equivalent to that produced by a much bigger head or antenna.

This system has advantages over those hearing aids which amplify all sounds rather than those of special interest and others which cannot separate a number of simultaneous human voices. The Aviphone, worn on both ears, should enable the wearer to focus on one sound from a particular direction and distinguish it from background babble.

Esme' Gay.

New Member - Fred Ramsay - 3550 NW Glenridge Place, Corvallis Oregon 97330 U.S.A. Fred was a member a few years ago when he was living in Wollongong; he has been on the Cape York trip and has renewed his membership. It would be nice if he could join with us on some of our outings or camps - hopefully he will next time he is here.

Midweek outing, Wednesday, 6th June, 1988. Bellambi Bush and Lagoon.

The outing was attended by seven members, meeting at the boat ramp carpark at 8.30 a.m. The morning began with a light shower of rain but had cleared by 9.30 and the rest of the morning was a beautiful mild morning for the first day of winter. We have had many visits to this beautiful spot, walking firstly along the beach where we observed the Red-capped Robin which is always found there on the point. Also the Silver Gull, Little Pied Cormorant, Kelp Gull and near the swimming pool three Sooty Oystercatchers.

Then we drove around to the sporting ground car park and walked through the bush and over the sandhills onto the beach, then around the southern end of the lagoon and back to the car park. The bush area was very productive as it usually is. The large number of New Holland Honeyeaters there would be very difficult to count, then the Little Wattlebird and Red Whickered Bulbul and Lewin's Honeyeater were very numerous too. Some of the other species observed were the Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Spotted Pardalote, Olive-backed Oriole and Golden Whistler. As we walked past the lagoon the birds there were few, observing only the Black-fronted Flower, White-faced Heron, Intermediate Egret and Pacific Black Duck. We observed a total of 32 species for the morning.

Horace Ward.

Interesting Sightings, May, June, July.

R. Striated Heron	2	Tallawarra Power Station	23/5/88	D. Thomson
MC. White-bellied Sea Eagle	2	" " "	"	"
U. White-fronted Chat	15	" " "	"	"
U. Zebra Finch	2	" " "	"	"
U. Kelp Gull	6	Bellambi Point	23/6/88	"
R. Pacific Gull	1	" "	"	"
S. Spangled Drongo	1	Keiraville	28/4/88	R. Almond
U. Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	15	"	9/5/88	"
S. Grey Goshawk (White Phase)	1	Bulli Pass	12/6/88	K. Mills
U. Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	10	Woonona	30/6/88	"
R. Pied Oystercatcher	2	Oak Flats	18/7/88	W. Emery
U. Rainbow Lorikeet	2	Balgownie	18/7/88	H. Emery
R. Little Corella	5	Balgownie	19/7/88	W. Emery

I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 117 SEPTEMBER, 1988.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
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CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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

These are due on 1st January each year
FAMILY \$10 SINGLE \$7 STUDENT \$2

Next Meeting - Will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Prince's Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 12th September at 7.30 pm. Our Guest Speaker will be Ms. J. Miller who will show slides and talk on the "Wildlife of Tasmania". It will be a pleasant change to go to Tasmania for an evening.

Next Field Outing - Will be on Sunday, 18th September, in the Royal National Park. Jack Hyslop will lead this outing as he is very familiar with the area. We will meet at 8.30 am. in the Waterfall Railway Station car park which is on the Eastern side of the Prince's Highway, not far from the toll gates. There will be a shuffle of cars, some being taken to be left at Heathcote Railway Station - hence the early start. Although we will be walking about 11 km after the first few which have a few hills (nothing like Rixon's Pass) the rest of the way to Heathcote will be fairly level, on a good track. We will walk through very pretty Heath country and some rain forest and pass Ulula Falls (which is good for skinny dipping) and Karloo Falls. There should be plenty of birds and wild flowers to enjoy. So, put on your walking shoes and a hat and bring binoculars and a carry lunch. We'll have a great day.

Mary Shaw.

September Mid-Week Outing - 7th September at Bass Point. Please meet inside the gateway to the reserve at 8.30 am. Follow Bass Point tourist road which is a continuation of Boollwarroo Parade, Shellharbour. For further information contact Ron Almond - 298612.

October Mid-Week Outing - 5th October at the Girl Guides Camp. Meet at the entrance gate on Mt. Keira Road at 8.30 am. One of the Guides' leaders will be present and a bird list for the camp area will be commenced. For further information contact Ron Almond - 298612.

From the Editor - The order form for the 1989 R.A.O.U. calenders has arrived and will be posted on the notice board at the next meeting. These calenders are said to be very attractive by those who have had them before. At the committee meeting in August, Robin Wilson was nominated to represent I.B.O.C. on the Management Committee of the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory. Dave Thomson has held this position previously and has just resigned.

Mary Shaw.

August Field Outing - Twenty seven people met at the entrance to Korrongulla Swamp at Primbee on Saturday, 13th August. The weather was delightful - a taste of early Spring. Upon discussion, plans were changed. We decided to leave the cars at Korrongulla Swamp 'til after lunch and then those interested would drive down to Windang to view the shore birds.

We followed an elevated sandy track through the swamp which divided into several separate ponds each surrounded by reeds. There were also some large trees and small clumps of bush in the area. This bush was attractive with the Coastal Wattle, Rice Flower, Hardenbergia and Running Postman in flower but it is being taken over by Bitu Bush. We saw Australian Ravens, a Little Friarbird, Kookaburra, Little Grassbird, Masked Lapwings and Little Pied Cormorants here. At several places we stopped and played a cassette of the call of the Lewin's Rail. We waited, quiet and still in the hope that this elusive bird would appear from out of the reeds. He did not but we were delighted to have good sightings of the Azure Kingfisher and Royal Spoonbill. Also sunning himself on a bank was a Snake Neck Turtle.

On the swamp we saw Coots, Dusky Moorhens, Swampheens, Black Ducks and flitting amongst the reeds Golden-headed Cisticolas. Darting about on a sandy bank at the back of the swamp were Red-browed Firetails. Also saw a Black Swan in flight and Welcome Swallows, Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike, Fan-tailed Cuckoo and Reed Warbler.

After morning tea back at the cars we took a carry lunch with us on the sand track. We entered this track at the northern end of the Port Kembla Golf Course. What a pleasant walk! Coastal bush all around with Flannel flowers all in bud. Unfortunately the Bitu Bush again is threatening. We saw a Spangled Drongo, Superb Blue Wrens, Brown and Yellow Thornbills and Spotted Pardalote. We walked through to Perkins Beach and then north along this beautiful beach. We cut back inland and had lunch at an open area near the Soil Conservation Depot. Here we saw a Brown Goshawk, Richard's Pipits, Willie Wagtail and flying overhead, Pelicans.

Back to the cars and a short drive to Windang. Here a group of eleven stayers saw sixteen species of birds including Pied Oystercatcher, Hump Gull, Eastern Curlew and Red-capped, Black-fronted and Double-banded Plovers. Total number of species for the day was 59 and I'm sure we all had an enjoyable and interesting outing. A big thankyou to Ron Imisides who was our leader for the day. I would also like to commend the residents of Primbee for saving part of the Korrongulla Swamp. It is certainly worth preserving.

Olive Rodwell.

August Wednesday Outing - This outing was attended by 9 members meeting at the park on the intersection of Princes Highway and O'Briens Road at 8.30 am. After a quick walk around the park we drove up to the top of Mt. Nebo near the water tower. From there we walked along the road which follows the spur to the escarpment. Some of the grades are very steep.

At the park in the Coral Trees were a number of Bulbuls, Silvereyes and Superb Fairy-wren in some lower scrub. It was a very pleasant, calm and mostly sunny morning for the outing along the road which follows a spur between Mt. Nebo and the escarpment with extensive views of the escarpment, Mt. Kembla and the Wollongong area. In the scrubby vegetation along the road the Superb and Variegated Fairy-wrens were observed. The Little Wattlebird, Lewin's Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill and Silvereye were sighted in the Coral trees along the roadside.

As the forest trees became more abundant the Brown Thornbill, Spotted Pardalote, Eastern Yellow Robin and Fantail Cuckoo were observed. Then an unexpected sighting was made of the Rose Robin as it went through the trees across the road. Frequently during the morning the call of the Lewin's Honeyeater and Eastern Whip-bird was heard and on two occasions the Wonga Pigeon was heard calling.

On our return a sighting of the Whistling Kite was made soaring high over the escarpment. During the morning a total of 26 species were observed.

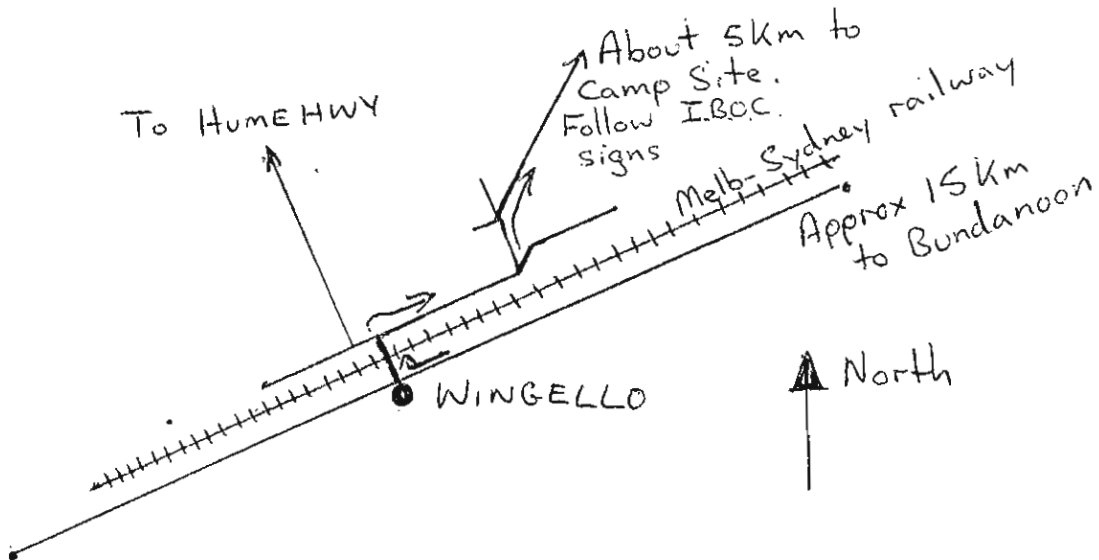
Horace Ward.

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October Family Camp.

This years camp will be on the property "Spring Valley" at Wingello. It will be conducted from Friday, 30th September, to Tuesday, 4th October. The camp site is on the banks of Paddy's River and during similar camps here five years ago we recorded over 100 species for the area including Hooded Robin, Scarlet Robin, Flame Robin, Azure Kingfisher, Crested Shrike-tit, Rufous Songlark, White-throated Gerygone and White-winged Triller. The property makes an excellent base with riverine vegetation, eucalypt woodland, open fields and a number of farm dams and small lagoons. Two large State Forests, Wingello and Penrose are also close by and offer a good range of habitats to explore.

FAMILY CAMP AT 'SPRING VALLEY'
WINGELLO 30 Sept - 4 October



November Field Outing.

Just a reminder that our November field outing consists of a coach trip to the Kurnell area on the south side of Botany Bay. Approximate cost of the trip will be \$11 per adult. Prominent Sydney birder Jim Francis will lead this outing taking us to a number of excellent spots. Further details will be in the next newsletter and payment should be made to the treasurer no later than the night of our November meeting.

Chris Chafer.

Book Sales.

Several members have expressed an interest in a new book on the market "Where to find birds in Australia" by John Bransbury. The publishers have donated the club a copy which is in the library. The retail price is \$35 but if we place an order for ten or more copies they will supply at a much better price - approx. \$24. Anyone interested please contact me at the next meeting or on 84 5719.

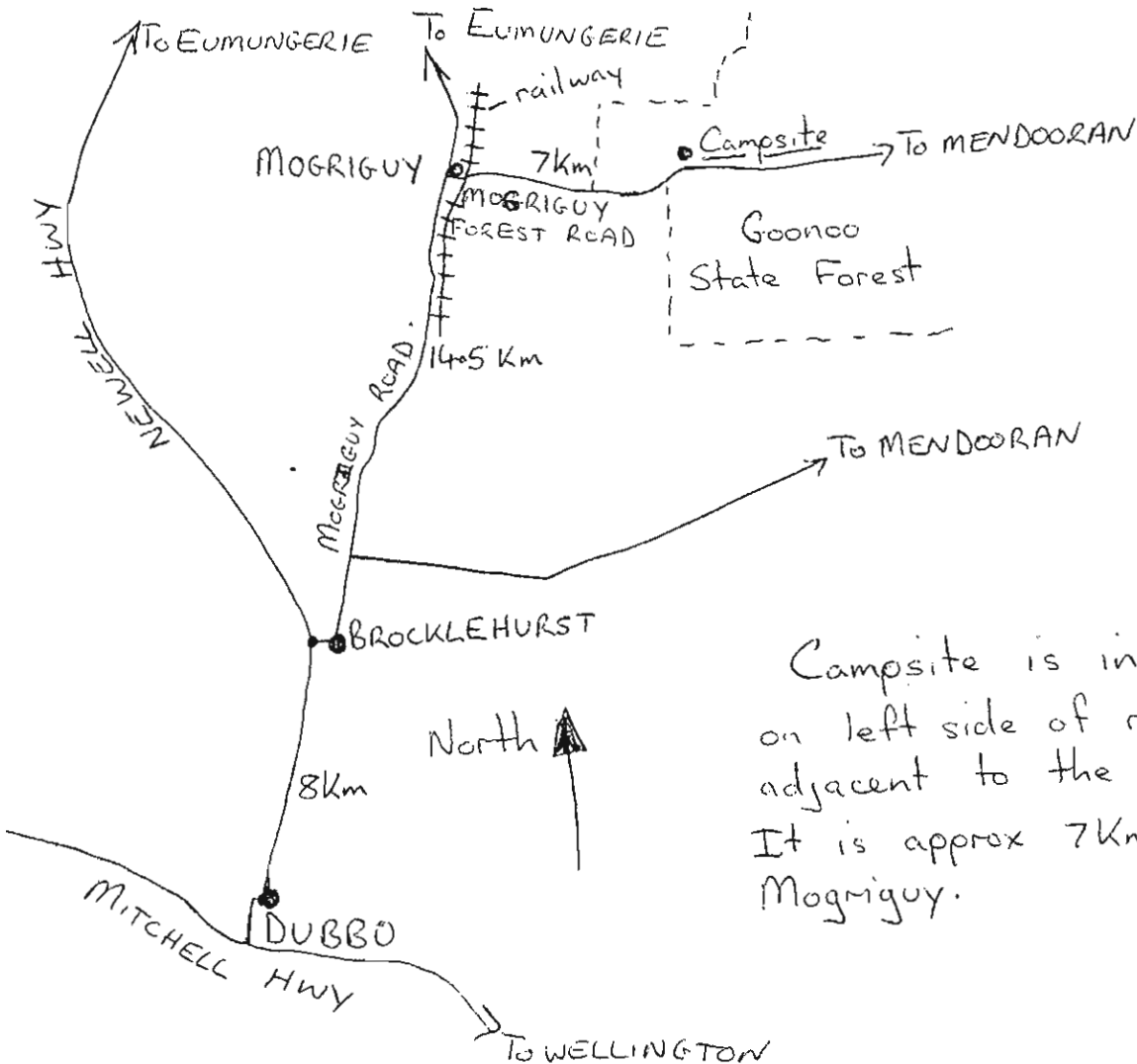
Peg McKinlay.

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Late October Camp.

The late October camp will be held from Friday, 14th October to Sunday 23rd October at Goonoo State Forest near Dubbo. The forest contains a wide range of habitats including open fields, mallee, open eucalypt woodland, Cyprus Pine areas, Iron Bark areas and heath areas. Nearby are several good waterbird habitats and being only about 30 km from Dubbo, you are close to the Western Plains Zoo. Coolbaggie Nature Reserve and several other State Forests are also nearby. The area holds a wide range of bird life with some of the more interesting species being Malleefowl, Blue Bonnet, Black Falcon, Mallee Ringneck, Yellow-plumed, Singing, Black-chinned and Spiney-cheeked Honeyeater, Crested Bellbird and Red-capped Robin. For those wishing to join the camp but do not want to 'rough it', there is a variety of hotels, motels and caravan parks in Dubbo. Please make sure that you bring your own drinking water. Naturally the club's bush shower and toilet will be present.

OCTOBER CAMP AT GOONOO STATE FOREST 14-23 OCTOBER



Campsite is in clearing on left side of road adjacent to the dam. It is approx 7km from Mogriguy.

Spring Bird Count.

This will take place 29th October to 6th November. Anyone who is interested in taking part should please contact Kevin Wood on 29 5514.

contd.....

ARNOLD ROBERT MCGILL, OAM, FRZS, FRAOU. 1905 - 1988.

Arnold Robert McGill died on July 29th and history will record that Australia lost one of its great amateur ornithologists. He was 83.

The published works of Arnold McGill are legion. I will not attempt to collate them here but will leave his monumental bibliography to the editors of senior ornithological publications such as The Emu, the official organ of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union, of which Arnold was a Fellow, Past President and long-time Assistant Editor of its journal.

Those fortunate enough to have access to a complete set of The Emu will comprehend the magnificent contribution Arnold McGill made to Australian ornithological literature, including the arduous and painstaking task undertaken in the compilation of the fifty year index and subsequent supplements to Australia's senior avian journal. His Birds of Sydney with Keith Hindwood as co-author, published in 1958, and Australian Warblers, published in 1970, remain valuable textbooks to the birdwatcher today.

Arnold McGill was a Fellow of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales and the proud recipient of the Order of Australia Medal. He was a member of numerous birding groups and societies and was currently Patron of the New South Wales Field Ornithologists Club and of course he was a Life Member of our own Illawarra Bird Observers Club.

Although we briefly met in 1953, I really got to know Arnold McGill when he accompanied his great friend and oft-time co-author Keith Hindwood to Thirroul to inspect seabird derelicts Doug Gibson and I had collected on Wollongong beaches after severe on-shore gales in July, 1954, and I can still see the stunned disbelief on the faces of the two leading Australian Ornithologists as Doug and I produced Silver-grey Petrel (now the Antarctic Fulmar), Blue Petrel, Kerguelen Petrel and Broad-billed Prion. We were to meet again a few months later at the RAOU Congress and campout at Mount Keira. Doug Gibson and I later submitted additions to the species recorded at the campout for publication in The Emu by Arnold and S.G. Lane and so complete a comprehensive list of the birds of the Illawarra region at that time.

Most established birdwatchers have a group in which they specialise and Arnold McGill was no exception. He had a profound knowledge of the waders, that group of insignificant little brown birds many species of which are migrants from the distant Tundras of Northern Siberia. His Field Guide To The Waders, with H. . Condon, was published in 1952 and is still of great assistance to those endeavoring to sort out a very difficult avian group.

Arnold McGill was always prepared to impart his great knowledge and was much sought after as lecturer and speaker. His effervescent and inimitable style will be sorely missed by a plethora of societies and associations.

Arnold McGill was a devout practising Christian and a pillar of the Methodist, now Uniting, Church. I still vividly remember a trip to the Five Islands with Keith Hindwood, Doug Gibson and Arnold in Arthur Mothersdill's boat over thirty years ago. We could not make it back to Bellambi after being caught in a black nor-easter on the return journey and limped into Port Kembla Harbour thoroughly exhausted with a boat half full of water. I can still see Arnold with one arm on the tiller and the other feverishly bailing whilst offering a little prayer for our safe return - one of those little lifetime incidents that one never forgets.

To son Don, daughter-in-law Ruth and grandchildren Geoffrey, Simon and Megan, we extend profound condolence in your sad loss and fervently hope you gain some comfort from the realisation that your loving father and grandfather was a wonderful friend to all who knew him and his name is justly enshrined in the Annals of Australian ornithology.

Allan Sefton.

1988 Cape York Expedition, Part One.

We began our trip north on Friday evening 17th June embarking on the coach at various points between Nowra and Sydney. The atmosphere on board was one of excitement as people realised they were finally on their way to one of the most exciting birding places in Australia. After a nightcap at Berowra everyone settled down to sleep the night as best they could. It was interesting to note that persons who had been apprehensive about sleeping on board the coach were mainly the ones who had the best sleep.

The night passed without incident, although we experienced a lot of fog around Tamworth and Armidale and we stopped for a break at dawn in the small township of Guyra. Shortly after continuing our journey we recorded our first bird for the trip, an Australian Magpie. Continuing northward we breakfasted at Tenterfield finding Pacific Heron, Grey Butcherbird and Olive-backed Oriole. Further north we stopped for lunch at the Palms National Park near Nanango. This delightful park is dominated by a huge stand of Picabeen Palms enclosed in a small area of rain forest which includes several magnificent figs and an enormous Flooded Gum. Birds were quite good and included Rose Robin, Varied Sittella, Large-billed Scrubwren, Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Double-barred Finch. From here we drove quickly north to Maryborough, then to Wongi State Forest where we spent our first night camping. We had driven some 1,600 km in this first leg taking 23 hours.

An early morning walk around the camp area was quite productive and species included White-throated Gerygone, Bar-shouldered Dove, the black headed form of the Striated Pardalote, Forest Kingfisher, White-throated and Fuscous Honeyeaters, Pale-headed Rosella, Scally-breasted and Rainbow Lorikeets. We were eventually to record Rainbow Lorikeets on every day of our venture except three. We continued north having a break 60 km north of Gin Gin adding Tree Martin, Whistling Kite, Blue-faced, Scarlet and Lewin's Honeyeaters and Little Lorikeet. Near Rockhampton we found our first Brolga and Black Kite. Lunch was taken at Rockhampton Botanic Gardens where we found Rufous Night Heron, Grey-crowned Babbler, Figbird, Darter, Gull-billed Tern, White-throated Needle-tail and Leaden Flycatcher. Further north we added Blue-winged Kookaburra, Bustard and Red-winged Parrot near Clairview before stopping for the night at Miriam near Mackay. Thus far we had recorded 113 species for the trip.

Next morning most people went for an early morning walk exploring the banks of the Pioneer River which was opposite the camp site. Here we recorded Red-backed Wren, Chestnut-breasted and Nutmeg Manakin, Figbird, Osprey, Yellow and Brown Honeyeater and Rainbow Bee-eater. From here we headed west up the Pioneer Valley before ascending the escarpment of the Clarke Range to Eungella N.P. Along the way we sighted Spangled Drongo, Bustard, White-breasted Woodswallow, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Topknot Pigeon and Pheasant Coucal.

Before going to the national park proper, we headed down the Dalrymple Road in an unsuccessful attempt to locate the Eungella Honeyeater. Around midday we gave up our search and headed back towards the park. Most people got off the coach just past the township and walked the 6.5 km track to the camping area. Passing through lush dense rainforest dominated by Mackey Tulip Oaks and Packabeen Palms, the walk gave us our first look at real tropical rainforest and its avifauna. The temperature was quite cool and birdlife was correspondingly scarce. The most frequently encountered species were Large-billed Scrubwren and Brown Gerygone while we also recorded Shining Bronze Cuckoo, Brush Turkey, King Parrot, Grey Goshawk and a number of magnificent Wompoo Fruit Doves.

The following morning we headed south to Credation Creek where the coach dropped us off and we walked the 9 km back to camp. Birds were once again rather scarce but the walk through the rainforest which is rich in epiphytes was none the less rewarding. Birds for today included Noisy Pitta, Russet-tailed Thrush, Varied Sittella, (white-headed form), Little Shrike-thrush, Golden Whistler, Dusky & Blue-faced Honeyeaters, Azure Kingfisher, the yellow form of the Buff-rumped Thornbill, more Wompoo's, several Bush Thick-knees which regularly roost near the picnic ground, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove and perhaps the biggest surprise, a Torresian Imperial Pigeon which several people saw about half way along the Credation Creek track. The other highlight was of course viewing the numerous Platypus which inhabit the streams of the park. Our trip total had now risen to 141.

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The fifth morning saw us heading north once again, this time terminating at the beautiful Mt. Elliot N.P. near Townsville. Along the way we made stops near Proserpine adding Marsh Harrier, Tawny Grassbird, Buff-banded Rail, Black-necked Stork, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Pallid Cuckoo, Brown Goshawk, Yellow-spotted and Scarlet Honeyeaters and Chestnut-breasted Manakins, while another stop, this time for lunch, was made near Ayr. Here we found Magpie Goose, Yellow-billed & Royal Spoonbill, our only Zebra Finch for the whole trip, Wandering Whistle Duck, Black Kite, Brolga, Pacific Heron and Intermediate Egret. We arrived at Mt. Elliot mid afternoon and people scattered everywhere, many being rewarded with sightings of Varied Triller, Yellow Honeyeater, Emerald Dove, Spectacled Flycatcher, Leaden Flycatcher, Olive-backed Oriole, White-browed Robin, Helmeted Friarbird and Scarlet Honeyeaters. As dusk fell we began to locate the many mammal species which inhabit the area and spotlighting later in the evening produced a good selection with Agile and Whiptailed Wallaby's, Unadorned Rock Wallaby, Brush-tailed Possum, Rufous Betong and one of the highlights of the trip, a beautiful Rufous Owl which perched only ten metres away totally unconcerned with our presence. The next morning we spent a couple of hours walking around the park before leaving for the Atherton Tableland. We added White-bellied Cuckoo Shrike, Sunbird, Large-billed Gerygone, Little Corella and Lemon-bellied Flycatcher.

We arrived at 'Ty Gwyn' near Ravenshoe in mid afternoon and after setting up camp we walked around the splendid grounds and rainforest of the property. Highlights included Crimson Rosella, Brown Cuckoo Dove, Atherton Scrubwren, Pale-Yellow Robin, Topknot Pigeon, Spotted Catbird, Bridled Honeyeater, Forest Kingfisher and Orange-footed Scrubfowl. Spotlighting that evening in the rainforest on the property produced several coppery coloured Brush-tailed Possums, 2 Lemuroid Ringtails, 2 Herbert River Ringtails and 1 Green Ringtail Possum.

Next morning we visited the lush tropical rainforest of Tully Gorge N.P. where we spent most of the morning walking through dense jungle like forest to several spectacular lookouts which offer panoramic views of the gorge below. Birding was excellent and we recorded Grey-headed Robin, Large-billed, Yellow-throated and Atherton Scrubwrens, Victoria's Riflebird, Chowchilla, Mountain Thornbill, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Fernwren, Spotted Catbird, Little Treecreeper, Satin Bowerbird and Macleay's Honeyeater. We then went to a spot near the Crater N.P. where I took people to see a Golden Bowerbird's impressive bower. Usually at this time of year the bird is difficult to find although we spent 30 minutes here not a sign of its presence was evident. We did however record Bower's Shrike-thrush. Upon leaving the bower site and walking back to the coach we stopped to view a Golden Whistler. Unbelievably as we were watching this bird, a male Golden Bowerbird flew onto the branch below the Whistler. Nearly everyone was able to get a good view before it flew back into its dense habitat. We moved from here to the Crater itself and spent an hour and a half birding in one of the best spots in the country. Here we found Fernwren, Atherton Scrubwren, Tooth-billed Catbird, Superb Fruit Dove, Yellow-spotted Lewin's and Bridled Honeyeaters, Chowchilla, Grey-headed and Pale-Yellow Robins, Orange-footed Scrubfowl and Spotted Catbird.

Unfortunately it then began to rain and although it was no more than drizzle it fell consistently through most of the next day. We had planned to visit Palmeston N.P. but due to the rain we decided to drive around Lake Tinaroo Forest Drive instead. The day was cold and windy and wet, however, we did stop at a number of locations which included Malanda Falls and Hasties Swamp N.P. Thus, although it was a miserable day we recorded a number of species that are worth mentioning, Pied Monarchm Grey Swiftlet, a number of rainforest species mentioned above, Wandering Whistle, Plumed Whistle Duck, Magpie Goose, Sarus Crane, Comb-crested Jacana, Sunbird, Cattle Egret, Little Grassbird, Hardhead, Yellow-faced and White-cheeked Honeyeaters and Black Shouldered Kite. Although it rained in the evening we went spotlighting at the Crater and found four Herbert River and one Green Ringtail Possum. We then went to a private property to view Lumholtz Tree Kangaroo that was recuperating from a road accident. The woman who was looking after the animal was a former zoologist from Germany and she gave us a most interesting talk on the various types of Tree Kangaroo in Australia and Papua New Guinea. While we were engrossed in this lecture a former patient, in the form of a Green Ringtail Possum, strolled in and demanded a quick meal of muesli before heading back out into the forest.

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Day nine saw us descend from the Atherton to Cairns where we met twelve extra persons who had flown in for the Cape York section of the trip. During the afternoon people went birding along the Cairns foreshore and to the Botanic Gardens. Birds included two recent American arrivals, a Laughing Gull and a Franklins Gull, while other species included Pacific Golden, Double-banded, Mongolian and Red-capped Plover, Grey-tailed Tattlers, Whimbrel, Black-winged Stilt and a number of other common waders and water birds. At the gardens we found Little Kingfisher, Striated Heron, Shining Flycatcher, Metallic Starling, Graceful Honeyeater, Brahminy Kite, Sunbird, Osprey and Grey Swiftlet. Our trip total had now risen to 222 species.

The next day was spent on the Great Barrier Reef and Michaelmas Cay. On the Cay we found Common and Black Noddy, Crested and Little Tern, Turnstone, Brown Booby, a pair of Least Frigatebirds and Sooty Terns. On Green Island we found Torresian Imperial Pigeon, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, Emerald Dove, Silvereye, Sooty Oystercatcher both colour phases of the Reef Egret and White-breasted Woodswallow.

Tuesday morning saw us change to our 4 w.d. vehicles and begin our trip up the Cape itself. Morning tea was had at Rifle Creek where we found Little Bronze Cuckoo, Grey Whistler, a number of honeyeaters and Yellow-breasted Boatbill. Just after turning onto the Peninsular Development Road at Lakeland we saw a flock of about sixty Red-tailed Black Cockatoos. From here on the road deteriorated and our progress was slowed by the rough corrugated condition of the road! Lunch at Palmer River Roadhouse produced Great Bowerbird, Squatter Pigeon and Black-chinned Honeyeaters. We arrived at Mary Valley Station late in the afternoon and after setting up camp we had only a short time to explore the surrounding area. Spotlighting produced a Spotted Nightjar hawking over one of the large lagoons on the property which were inhabited by many Freshwater Crocodiles. We spent a couple of hours looking around these lagoons the following morning and found White-winged Triller, Little Woodswallows, Wood Sandpiper, Rajah Shelduck, Green Pygmy Goose, Hoary-headed Grebe, Rufous-throated and Yellow Honeyeater, Black-necked Stork, Wandering and Plumed Whistle Duck, a pair of White-bellied Sea-eagles, Red-winged Parrot and Little and Helmeted Friarbirds. Morning tea was had at a creek south of Musgrave Station where just after disembarking from the bus we encountered a beautiful two metre King Brown Snake followed shortly by a pair of Golden-shouldered Parrots. We scoured the surrounding area and ended up finding 15 individuals which included a few juveniles being fed by parent birds. A promising sign for this rare and endangered species. We also found Masked Finch and Dusky Honeyeater. Lunch was at Coen where we found Black-backed Butcherbird, Diamond Dove, Silver-crowned Friarbird, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Sunbird. We arrived at Archer River Roadhouse where we camped the night around 3 pm. A walk along the river produced Black Butcherbird, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, Fairy Gerygone, Orange-footed Scrubfowl and a single Palm Cockatoo which gave most people excellent views. The trip total had now risen to 257 species.

Well thats the first part of the journey and I will continue the story in the next newsletter when we venture into the jungles of Iron Range, savannah woodland at Lakefield N.P. and sandstone gorges of Carrarvon Gorge N.P.

Chris Chafer.

TRIP TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

On our recent trip to New Guinea opportunities for bird watching were limited. The local bird club in Port Moresby are a helpful lot who take their bird watching most seriously. Outings mean a start of 5.30 am to 6.00 am. so as not to miss the first light of day. A visit to the Waigani Swamp produced a long list of birds, most of which can be seen in Northern Australia. Wandering Whistling Ducks, all three Egrets, Comb Crested Jacana, Buff Banded Rail and many others were observed. The Bush Hen was heard but not seen. Roger Hicks, P.N.G. Bird Society said that the Bush Hen is only seen in the Wet Season.

In suburban Port Moresby, the common birds are Willie Wagtail, Figbirds, White Breasted Woodswallows, Yellow Tinted Honeyeaters, Fawn Breasted Bowerbirds, Rainbow Lorikeets and Grey Shrike Thrush. They are all most numerous. The song of the Grey Shrike Thrush predominates and its repertoire of calls are much wider and varied than in Australia. There are no Sparrows, Starlings, Common Mynas or Dulbuls.

contd.....

Of the new birds seen in P.N.G., the most memorable was the displays of the Raggiana Bird of Paradise. We spent the weekend at Variratu National Park, about 50 km from Port Moresby. Getting up before daylight, a 20 minute walk along the rainforest track brought us to a tree showing a sign "Bird of Paradise Display Tree". Prior reading about the Birds of Paradise and their habits stopped me from being a sceptic. The sun was just coming up and sure enough, there were already two birds in the display tree. Over the next hour, these beautiful birds put on a magnificent display, there being as many as seven males and three females in the tree at one time. It was worth a trip to New Guinea for this one event alone. We understand that we were indeed fortunate to observe these lovely birds, as they only display on infrequent mornings during June to early August.

Jim Robinson.

SILVER GULL COUNT.

Thanks to everyone who contributed Silver Gull count data to our co-ordinated survey on the first weekend in August. Please return your data sheets as soon as possible. We gather that few birds were encountered in the Sydney region. This is probably because breeding has begun early at the Five Islands, off Port Kembla and at Moon Island, off Lake Macquarie.

Our next count is during the first weekend in October. If you require more forms please contact us at our new number at Hurstville, Phone 02-585 6401. Count the same area as you did last time. If counting at a roost, we have found it easier to count Silver Gulls as they depart in the morning, rather than count them coming into the roost in the evening.

By the way, to all Eagle-eyed binocularists, we have now been colour-banding gulls at the Five Islands with blue over red colour-bands on the left tarsus. Keep your eyes out and please report any sightings. Thankyou.

Geoffrey Smith,
Survey & Research Branch,
N.S.W. NPWS,
P.O. Box 1907, Hurstville.

WHO WILL FORGET. CAMP COOK CAPE YORK TRIP.

The platypus bubbles as he foraged in the creek,
The colour, shapes and sizes of each bird's beak,
The trunk, pods and flowers of the huge black bean,
The huge brown pods were the largest we'd seen.
Our stay in the rainforest among the vines and palms,
The cluster figs, the lawyer vines and scratches on your arms.
Who would have thought that we would see,
A tree kangaroo in a kitchen, instead of a tree.
A little tame possum eating muesli for a meal
Then up the stairs and into the night, away he'd steal.
The Eclectus Parrots so elusive coloured red and green,
They were the most beautiful of all we'd seen.
Our nights istting around the fireside,
Some said the dampers were the best they'd tried.
Lunch and toilet stops always in a park,
Sometimes a day's travel lasted until dark.
The open plains, the woodland heath,
The Rufous Owl up high and turkeys underneath.
Cockatiels flying and galahs eating grain,
Peaceful Doves cooing and plovers in the rain.
The Barking Owl, the Mopoke calling in the night,
The Budgerigars flashing green in their flurried flight.
Those rain drops dripped from every leaf
And new flowers unrolled like a sheaf.
Green ants, tree snakes and leeches too,
Crawled up into the trees and onto our shoe.
The unscheduled stay at a deserted farm -
The beautiful walk among Licuala Palms.

contd.....

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I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 118 NOVEMBER, 1988



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848
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CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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

These are due on 1st January each year
FAMILY \$10 SINGLE \$7 STUDENT \$2

From the Editor. It is time to bring the printing press out and set it to work. There has been lots of club activity since our September issue and the newsletter is full of interest. One couple who have been busy and whom I would like to congratulate is Kerry and Chris Chefer on producing a daughter on the 9th October, 1988 and who is called Belinda Kobi Uyre.

A visit to the Wollongong University would be worthwhile to view the excellent stained glass panel at the front of the library. Apart from being an attractive piece of artwork it is of about twelve birds. The piece is by Andrew Schultz and well worth having a look at.

I would like to recommend a walk in the Blue Mountains at Blackheath. To start off with one should be somewhat fit as it is very steep. If you start off from Evan's Lookout and walk down to Beauchamp Falls - a good place for a lunch stop probably having one or two morning tea breaks on the way down it is not necessary to go to the valley floor which is still a lot further down and then walk back to the top through Grand Canyon to Meat's Glen. The views and canyon can equal any seen at Carnarvon Gorge. Being Birds and equipped with field glasses to give the excuse to stop very frequently should allow you to complete the walk at your own pace - it is very steep but the grade has well made steps and no ladders or dangerous spots to negotiate. Good idea to choose cooler weather and to carry water. There are plenty of birds to observe.

Articles for the December Newsletter need to be in by the 21st November at the very latest to be included.

Mary Shaw.

Election of Office Bearers.

A reminder that elections for Office Bearers will be held at the November meeting when the positions of President, Vice President, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer are declared vacant. Jim Robinson and Robyn Wilson advise that they will not be standing for re-election. Canvassing among members to stand for election has so far brought little response. Nominations are urgently sought for vacancies so that the club can continue to function.

Next Meeting - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Colleary Avenue and Princess Highway, on Monday, 13th November, at 7.30 p.m. Chris Chafer will be the speaker and will show slides of birds and fauna of tropical Queensland. Come along and view an array of interesting creatures and beautiful birds.

Next Field Outing. The next field outing will be on Saturday, 19th November. This month's outing will be in the form of a bus trip to the Kurnell area on the southern side of Botany Bay. Well known Sydney ornithologist, Jim Francis, will be our guide for the day taking us to several good birding spots in the area. Cost will be \$11 per person and must be paid to the treasurer no later than Monday, 14th November. The main pick up point will be at the western side of Wollongong railway station at 7.30 a.m. while southern members can join the coach at Stuart's Coaches depot in Nowra at 6 a.m. or Oak Flats railway station at 7 a.m. As we may be exploring some swampy ground it is suggested you bring along a pair of gum boots or a change of footwear.

September Field Outing - Royal National Park.

It was spitting rain all the way to Waterfall Station car park where nineteen members assembled for a walk into the heathland of the Royal National Park, led by one of the most knowledgeable birdos of the area, Jack Hyslop. Due to the overnight rain Jack suggested a change of venue as the proposed track to Heathcote would be very wet underfoot, so it was agreed that we would walk the Couranga Trail.

As we set off there were Red Wattlebirds and Pied Currawongs in the flame trees by the park and we could hear the New Holland Honeyeaters in the banksias. In a more open section of heath we had good views of Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters and we glimpsed the only raptor of the trip, a Peregrine Falcon. We passed a small memorial to the five fire fighters who lost their lives in a fire some five years ago and then turned down the trail which was fairly rutted and wet, but by picking our way down we kept our feet mainly dry. As the bush thickened and with our eyes looking down, many birds were missed although we could hear Crimson Rosella, Eastern Whippoorwill and White-eared Honeyeater, but we did see Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes flying overhead. The heath was in flower and the variety and colour kept the flower watchers busy identifying the blooms.

As the trail headed down and into the valley a large flat rock became an ideal spot for morning tea with the sound of a Fan-tailed Cuckoo in the background. Towards the bottom of the valley rain forest trees became more abundant with a change of birds, here we noted Brown Gerygone, Golden Whistler, Lewin Honeyeater and some saw the beautiful Variegated Fairy-wren.

We stopped for lunch by the river with a begging Pied Currawong that took crusts and apple off to feed a young one and saw Brown Thornbills and White-browed Scrubwrens in the bushes about us. As we walked slowly back up the valley, a Yellow-throated Scrubwren was noted and we were overtaken by a young Canadian who had walked from Mullaly and chatted with us for a kilometer or so before heading off. When we reached the top the wind and rain seemed to start again and after a quick cuppa and a vote of thanks to Jack we headed back to Wollongong with a count of thirty three species for the walk.

Chris Brandis.

October Mid-week Outing - Mt. Keira Guides Camp.

The October mid-week outing was attended by thirteen members and we were escorted by Roslyn Parsons, a guide member, and her son Peter. During the three hours we spent there we covered a large part of the camp along some well developed walking trails, through eucalypt forest, rain forest and through some rocky outcrops and creeks. Much work has been done there to cover the diverse habitat there through this beautiful spot allowing one to observe the flora and fauna in a natural, well preserved, environment. We walked from the car park along a trail through a eucalypt forest passing a beautiful rocky creek then back onto the road for a short distance before joining a track which led up to an old closed coal mine entrance through a rain forest. Some of the birds we observed along the way were the Green Catbird, Satin Loricbird, Brown Gerygone, Black-faced Monarch, Eastern Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, Nickerbird and Grey Goshawk. 31 species total.

Week-end October Camp.

This years camp was held on the property of Bob and Barbara Doag, Spring Valley, set up on the banks of Paddy's River, several kilometres north of Wingello. Most of the members had arrived by Friday lunchtime, leaving the afternoon for observing the prolific bird life in the immediate camp vicinity. Honeyeaters were most numerous - White-eared, Yellow-faced, White-naped, Brown-headed and Lewin. Other species were, just to mention a few, Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Fantails, Pacific Black Duck, White-browed Scrubwren and White-throated Treecreeper. Australian Magpies were feeding their young in a nest built in the tree overlooking the Hales camp. We were particularly excited by the find of a Blackbirds nest with three young located just across the river from the camp. Patience was needed to observe the parents as these are very "touchy" birds with people around. Those prepared to sit patiently on the river bank were rewarded with sightings of the beautiful Azure Kingfisher.

Forty seven species were recorded within a few hundred metres around camp on that first afternoon and we all looked forward to a super weekend of birding. Alas, it was not to be! Saturday was a very windy day. It was not for birdwatchers and only a few species were added to our bird list.

Sunday was much better although still windy. By now our camp numbers had grown to twenty one; not counting the day visitors for each of the three days. The two walks on Sunday were not very productive with only several new species being recorded, notably the Scarlet Robin and White-throated Gerygone. Still, the walks in the pleasant surroundings of Spring Valley were most enjoyable.

Monday dawned sunny and windless and the members made the most of the day, a long walk in the morning and for those not going home, an enjoyable lazy afternoon around camp and on the river bank. Quite a number of nests were found during the weekend; of note were White-faced Heron with three well-developed young in nest; White-eared Honeyeater with two eggs; Grey Shrike-thrush sitting on three eggs only several metres from our camp shower. We were most disappointed to find that the three young Blackbirds had been taken by a predator, probably a Pied Currawong.

Total number of species recorded was sixty five; this comparing with ninety-seven species recorded by the camp of 1982 at the same spot. What a difference weather conditions can make.

Jim Robinson.

Late October Camp - Goonoo State Forest.

Eighteen members took part in a camp in the Goonoo State Forest between 14th and 23rd October. The forest, which covers an area of 62,500 hectares, is situated about 40 km northeast of Dubbo. The trees are mainly ironbark, black cypress, acacias and casuarinas with some areas of mallee. The terrain is flat and the whole area is criss-crossed by forest roads. The region is experiencing a wonderful season and though normally a dry area, we found water in all the creeks and dams. Our camp was 7 km from Dogriguy beside a dam that supplied us with "carrot" coloured water. Fortunately a cleaner supply was located or we may have turned into Red Indians. Some of the many birds about the camp were Galahs, Noisy and Little Friarbirds, Red Wattlebirds, Striped Honeyeaters, Eastern Rosellas, Rufous Whistlers and our early morning calls were made by the lovely notes of the Pied Butcherbird.

On Saturday morning, 18th, we were visited by Tony and Fay Dischoff. Tony is the President of Dubbo Field Naturalist and Conservation Society and a keen birder. He brought with him detailed maps of the area and lots of advice on how and where to find birds in the forest - especially the elusive Mallee Fowl. On a short walk with Tony we found a Boobook Owl and the nest of a Spotted Pardalote. On Saturday afternoon we went searching for the Mallee Fowl. Three inactive and one active mounds were located but in spite of a 45 minute silent vigil no bird appeared. We did find some very fresh droppings and a few feathers and as compensation two Little Woodswallows.

On Sunday afternoon we visited another active mound where a hide has been erected. Hazel caught a glimpse of the bird as we searched for the mound but again he did not return while we watched.

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Bird Week, 23rd October to 30th October, 1988.

To mark Bird Week our club organised two activities in conjunction with the Wollongong Library and The Advertiser. 1. A Display. 2. Colouring Competition. Display. Bird posters, Calendars, books and our recent Newsletter were arranged in a display at the Wollongong Library.

Colouring Competition. This year we were fortunate to have the help of "The Advertiser" for our competition. The Advertiser promoted the competition, published the picture, donated twelve T-shirts for consolation prizes and published the results on Wednesday, 26th October. We had entries from Wombarra to Jamberoo and as far west as Wilton. The standard was very high and it gave our team of judges a most difficult job to select the winners. I would like to thank our judges and all the children who sent in entries. The competition was run in eight age groups, five to twelve years. Winning entries were displayed at the Wollongong Library and will also be displayed at our November meeting.

Winners - Book Prizes.

Jenny Potts 5, Simon Jones 6, Luke Trevithick 7, Bianca Lambert 8, Katrina Poder 9, Jonathan Willis 10, Steven Bloom 11, Tracy Sauerbier 12.

2nd Prizes - T-shirt.

Nicholas Baldwin, Jason Miller, Daniel Rickleman, Belinda Hamilton, Craig Potts, Kate Fletcher, Natalie Carrasco, Annabel Stender, Michelle Chaseling, Scott Fitzgerald, Paul Temple, Paul McDonald.

Certificate of Merit. There were 61 Certificates of Merit awarded.

Congratulations to all these young people.

Olive Rodwell.

Cape York Expedition Part Two.

After a pleasant nights sleep at the Archer River Roadhouse we went for a short morning walk along the magnificent Archer River. Many of the melalucas were in flower and these attracted a number of honeyeaters including Yellow, Yellow-spotted, Dusky, White-throated and White-gaped, while other species included Fairy Gerygone, Little Bronze Cuckoo, Leaden Flycatcher, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Varied Triller, Diamond Dove, Black Dutcherbird and Silver-crowned Friarbird. Departing around 9.30 am we left the main Cape track and headed east along the Portland Roads track. After an hours travel and a minor break down we arrived at the ruins of Wenlock on the Wenlock River. Earlier this century over 10,000 people lived here trying to earn a living with gold prospecting. Now all that is left are a few rusting vehicles and the remains of a giant ore crusher. Birdlife was rather quiet although we found Striated Pardalote (black-headed form), Pale-headed Rosella, Black-backed Dutcherbird, Mistlebird and Red-winged Parrot.

From here we continued east over the Tozer Pass and into the superb lowland rainforest of Iron Range. After setting up camp in our delightful creek side camping area we began to explore the surrounding area. Mainly consisting of lowland rainforest interspersed with isolated patches of acacias and eucalypt woodland. Within a couple of hours we had compiled an impressive list of fascinating species including Frilled Monarch, Dusky and Green-backed Honeyeaters, Magnificent Riflebird, White-faced Robin, Wompoo Fruit Dove, Spectacled Monarch, Fairy Gerygone, Yellow Oriole and Eclectus Parrot. After dinner we went spotlighting and thanks to Roger we found a Spotted Cuscus high in the canopy and a Large-tailed Nightjar. During the night we were kept company with a loud squadron of Wood Frogs in the adjacent creek.

Next morning we walked for several kilometres east along an old mining track which proved to be very productive. We had reasonable looks at Red-cheeked Parrots perched on a dead tree before taking off like little rockets. Further on we found Graceful and Yellow-spotted Honeyeaters, Brown Cuckoo Dove, Emerald Dove, White-faced Robin, Yellow-legged Flycatcher, White-eared Monarch, Orange-footed Scrubfowl, Little Shrike-thrush and Green-backed Honeyeaters. The highlight of the morning was discovering a nesting pair of Eclectus Parrots which over the next few days was visited repeatedly by most people.

Cape York Trip contd.

Wednesday was an interesting day. After packing up we headed back towards Tozer Pass. Several of us went ahead in the Land cruiser while the bus toiled away along the muddy road. We ended up digging some 250 metres of the road by hand taking about half a metre of mud and slush off the top. Eventually the bus turned up and with the help of the National Park Ranger's vehicle and its winch we made it out and reached Archer River around 7 pm. Needless to say little birding was done that day. Our six days in Iron Range had been most rewarding with nearly everyone seeing most of the endemics restricted to this area, the only ones we missed entirely were Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo and Black-winged Monarch.

From Archer River we drove south to Musgrave then east to our base camp in Lakefield National Park, the Hann Crossing on the Kennedy River. The new birds for today were a flock of Black-throated Finches at the Moorhead River and a Spotted Nightjar which flew lazily over the camp at dusk. Unfortunately much of Lakefield had been burnt by an out of control, controlled fire and it was with some trepidation that we headed out for a days birding around Saltwater Creek crossing. Habitats around the crossing consisted of mangroves along the creek, open eucalypt woodland, savannah grassland and a freshwater lagoon with low sedges and reeds. It was this combination of habitats that produced one of our best days with some 104 species being recorded. Highlights included, Brolga, Black-necked Stork, Bustard, Singing Bushlark, Black-throated, Double-barred, Masked and Star Finches, Chestnut-breasted Manikins, Spotted Nightjar, Brown Quail, Rufous-throated, Rufous-banded, Yellow, Brown, Brown-backed, Lined, Red-headed and Varied Honeyeaters, Red-winged Parrot, Rufous Night Heron, Mangrove and White-throated Gerygone, Varied Lorikeet, Brahminy Kite and Black-breasted Buzzard. This swelled our trip list to 296 species.

Saturday saw us heading south through Lakefield to eventually camp the night at McLeod River near Mt. Carbine. Lakefield was in the middle of a drought and many of the roadside swamps were bone dry. At Kenedy Bend we found Rajah Shelduck and the rare white bellied race of the Crimson Finch. At the McLeod River we found Apostlebird, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Banded Honeyeater, Weebill, Black-faced Woodswallow and Scarlet Honeyeater. On Sunday we made our way back to Cairns via the beautiful Mossman Gorge part of Daintree National Park. The new 3 km walk through lowland rainforest is something everyone should experience. Yet again rain spoilt the walk and birds were few, none the less this walk was voted to be one of the best we encountered on the trip.

Monday finally dawned a fine day and we headed off to the Cairns foreshore looking for waders and waterbirds. Species were similar to those we recorded on the way north and again we found the Laughing Gull. From here we headed south to Edmonton where a quick ten minute walk produced the black-bellied form of the Crimson Finch. We continued south and had lunch at Lacey's Creek near Mission Beach. Here we found Wapoo Fruit Dove, Yellow-breasted Coatbill, White-eared Monarch, Pale Yellow Robin, Sunbird, Yellow Oriole and thanks to June Southwell superb close up encounters with a male Cassowary and his single offspring which was already over a metre tall. After lunch most people went on the six km walk through the Tam O'Shanter State Forest. This fabulous example of tropical lowland rainforest is dominated by Licuala Fan Palms and a wide variety of heavily fruiting trees. Birds were likewise impressive with sightings of Victoria Riflebird, White-eared and Spectacled Monarch, Spotted Catbird, Superb Fruit Dove, McLeays Honeyeater and Yellow-breasted Coatbill.

After camping overnight at the serene Mission Beach we headed south to Townsville then inland to Charters Towers. Morning tea was taken near an open grassy paddock west of Innisfail. Here I had promised people something special. After sending several persons on a walk through the open field, David Winterbottom found what we were looking for and everyone except two (who went the wrong way at the wrong time) were able to get good views of a pair of Eastern Grass Owls which were flushed out and flew slowly west into the surrounding cane fields. Lunch was taken at Jourama Falls National Park near Townsville which proved to be one of our most popular lunch stops for the trip and the usual hour break was stretched to two hours. The combination of dry open eucalypt woodland with a grassy understorey and dense rainforest along the creek provided an interesting variety of species including Northern, Rufous and Grey Fantails, Lined, Yellow-spotted, Graceful, Scarlet, White-throated and Dusky Honeyeaters, Emerald Dove, Lemon-bellied Flycatcher, Pale Yellow Robin, Eastern Whipbird and Forest Kingfisher. Our trip list had now risen to 305.

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Cape York trip contd.

July, 13, saw us drive from Charters Towers to Carnarvon Gorge. At Calyando River Roadhouse we found Red-winged Parrot, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Budgerigar, Brown Noddy, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Spotted Dovebird, Yellow-throated Miner. Lunch at Clermont Lagoon produced Cotton Pygmy Goose, Little Corella, Tree and Fairy Martin, Reed Warbler and Yellow-rumped Thornbill. Along the road between Clermont and Carnarvon we saw Drolga, Spotted Harrier, Squatter Pigeon, Common Bronzewing, Bustard, and Cockatiel. The next day was spent walking up the gorge with one intrepid member doing the 30 km walk to Battleship Spur - not a bad days outing. The superb scenery was the main reason for stopping here, none the less birds were well represented, Variegated and Red-backed Fairy Wrens, White-eared and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters,onga Pigeon, Little Lorikeet, Apostlebird, King Parrot and Shining Bronze Cuckoo. Spot lighting over two nights was successful sighting Barking and Boobook Owls as well as Yellow-tailed and Squirrel Gliders, Rufous Betongs and Pretty-faced Wallaby. The last three days was more or less a straight drive home the only highlight was our last night camping in Coonoo State Forest near Dubbo. Here Diana Wright was awarded with a Crocodile Cooler for being the person with the highest individual tally for the trip through Queensland, 306 out of 317.

So after some 14,100 km and nineteen days where we encountered rain, we achieved a total of 335 species, over twenty species of mammals and a number of frogs, geckos and reptiles. I'm also happy to say that there were no arguments amongst the passengers. Stuarts Coashes provided an excellent service and an extremely comfortable coach, a highly experienced cook and crew and a trip I'm sure nobody who went on will ever forget.

Chris Chafer.

Counting Cattle Egrets.

On a recent trip to Newcastle I managed to visit the Shortland Wetlands Centre. This place is a real eye-opener and any birds with time to spare on a trip north would be well advised to visit. While there I got talking to a chap counting Cattle Egrets. He turned out to be Max Maddock the Chairman of the Shortland Wetlands Centre. He outlined some of the points of Project Egret Watch and mentioned that new observers were always welcome. On page 7 of July 1985 of I.B.O.C. News there was an article on Egret banding but there has been a change in tagging since then.

The scheme is called "Project Egret Watch" and people interested in becoming observers are encourage. Project Egret Watch needs volunteer observers Australia wide, in New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and other places where Australian Egrets are likely to migrate. The observers are needed to look out for and report sightings of individually marked egrets (colour banded or wing tagged) and to provide information about unmarked egrets on a regular year round basis. Information on seasonal or intermittent usage of particular locations and habitat is needed. In the case of seasonal or intermittent visits, numbers and dates of arrival and departure are particularly important.

People interested can contact Project Egret Watch by either writing to Shortland Wetlands Centre, P.O. Box 130, Wallsend, 2207, N.S.W., or telephoning 049-576 466. The centre is open 9 am to 5 pm seven days per week except Christmas Day and Good Friday. Or see me at the next meeting to read the brochure with further information.

Phil Bath.

Pelican Scavenging.

We have seen Pelican numbers increasing in the Illawarra area with examples of their scavenging behaviour such as frequenting boat ramps and harbours where fish are cleaned, professional fishermen while emptying their nets and even at the Dunmore garbage tip. While checking for early wader arrivals at Windang estuary I noted a Kelp Gull trying to eat a fish a little too large to swallow by taking it up in the air and dropping it, probably to soften it. This attracted a passing Pelican who crash landed in just after the gull had picked up the fish and tried to snatch the fish from the gull's beak. The gull then took off with the Pelican in hot pursuit twisting and diving around the lake entrance showing that Pelicans can perform aerobic manoeuvres. As a second Pelican joined the chase the gull decided to adopt the gull vs Skua technique and began to climb as hard as possible.

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The Pelicans stayed with the gull for about 100 metres up, but unlike the fast climbing Arctic Skuas, the Pelicans began to tire and one by one dropped back to the lake surface leaving the gull to glide out to Windang Island to finish the fish in peace.

Chris Brandis.

Unusual Sightings - What They Mean.

After a number of year of being recording officer for "unusual records", Wal Emery has had to give up the job due to ill health and other commitments. Wal has done an excellent job of labouriously checking sightings by club members and had been instrumental in encouraging people to record what they see on cards and in a book for the same purpose which is present at each meeting. These records are then transferred onto an individual species card and a report is then compiled at the end of each year and forwarded to the records officer of the N.S.W. Field Ornithologists Club. Eventually they make their way into an annual report for the whole of N.S.W. which is published by the N.S.W. F.O.C. in their journal Australian Birds. These records have also played a big part in the revision of the late Doug Gibson's work, "The Birds of the County of Camden", which makes up the basis for our birding area. This work was published in 1977 and the I.B.O.C. has seen fit to review and up date it as a memorial to the Club's founding member. It is hoped that this revision will be ready for sale to members early next year.

Each month a list of the more unusual sightings is published in our newsletter. This report is only possible if contributions are obtained from you. Chris Chafer has volunteered to take over the position for the time being. If you have a sighting you would like to submit it can be done in any of the three following ways.

- 1) Obtain a sightings card from Chris at any meeting and fill it out appropriately, returning it at the following meeting.
- 2) Record your sighting in the unusual sightings book which is present at each meeting.
- 3) Send or phone your sighting to Chris personally, his address is - Chris Chafer, 69 Lake Heights Road, Lake Heights, 2302. Phone 75 2339.

There are several things that you need to supply with your record; the birds name, the date you saw it, where you saw it and how many of the species were there.

The area covered by this system extends roughly from the Royal National Park south to Jervis Bay and west to Karulan, Goodmans Ford on the Wombeyan Caves Road, Thirlmere Lakes National Park and Bents Basin S.A.A. in the N.W.

The birds recorded for the system are generally those which are listed as rare, scarce and uncommon in the Birds of the County of Camden. As mentioned this work is not generally available and a new edition should be available early next year. A copy is present in the clubs library but if you are not sure record it anyway.

So if you see something you think is unusual record it and send it in. This way you will be helping everyone by increasing our knowledge of one of the best bird watching regions in Australia. At present some 393 species have been recorded.

Unusual Sightings.

August, September and October saw the end of a mild winter and the return of warmer days and nights as spring once again came to the region. Migratory waders and terns began to return with a Large Sand Plover, Great Knot and six Red Knots arriving on 17th August, a Latham's Snipe at Saltwater Swamp near Nowra on 19th August, two Whimbrels were at Windang on 10th September, five Common Terns, two Grey Plovers and two Grey-tailed Tattler arrived on 10th September while seven Grey Plover were at Windang on 20th September. White-fronted Terns were still present at Bellambi Point and Five Islands at the end of September while the first Little Tern returned to Windang on 12th September. Sanderlings were at Bellambi Point on 17th September and Windang on 26th September and 11th October. A record five Pied Oystercatcher were at Windang for most of August and September. Six Whiskered Terns and Sixty five Common Tern were at Windang on 5th October and a Common Sandpiper was found in the Great Southern drain at its entrance to the Inner Harbour, Port Kembla 7th October.

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Immature Pacific Gulls were observed at Gellambi Point, Wollongong Harbour, Comanditchy Lagoon and Windang in August and September.

A Black Bittern was found in a "duck pond" on the southern end of Cerry in September, a Blackbird was observed in suburban Nowra for the first time, flocks of Topknot Pigeons were at Comerong Island and Minamurra Spit in August and September, White-headed Pigeons turned up in Corrimal and Bass Point in September and the Powerful Owl made a welcome re-appearance at Bass Point in Sept. A Pink Robin turned up in Bulli during September, a Long-billed Corella at Kangaroo Valley on 26th September and three Glossy Black Cockatoos were found at Woollamia near Nowra in September/October, Crested Pigeons were recorded on Comerong Island for the first time on 19th August. This brings the total species list to 198 for Comerong Island.

Finally there was a minor influx of Figbirds to the region during September. Individuals and groups up to six were observed at Barrack Heights, Lake Heights, central Wollongong, Minamurra and several locations in Port Kembla Steelworks. Apart from isolated occurrences each year this species is a very uncommon visitor to the area, the last major occurrence being in 1953 when they bred in fig trees on the Shellharbour foreshore. Pied Currawongs are breeding Wollongong Mall.

A Gallions Crane was located on a small dam near the Berkeley Crematorium on 13th October. A Gull-billed Tern was at Comanditchy Lagoon on 15th October.

Contributors: L.E. Smith, C. Brandis, C. Chafer, M. Parkinson, P. Bath, D. Fischer, S. Wright, M. Shaw and D. Thomson.

Chris Chafer.

December Meeting.

An early reminder that the theme for our Christmas meeting in December will be "Bird Clothes Fashion Parade". Members are asked to wear some article of clothing displaying a bird or associated subject. Look through your wardrobe for that T-shirt, dress, hat, scarf, tie etc. with a bird motif.

If you haven't anything, this reminder will give you plenty of time to do some shopping, or for the artistic, create a little something just for the night.

As in past years, acts by members are also sought. Come on, you members, who can sing, compose a poem, tell a story or put on a skit.

POSITIONS VACANT - WORKERS WANTED.

Success of our club activities depends largely on a dozen or so members putting in a lot of time and work.

At present we are looking for a volunteer to type the monthly newsletter. Barbara Hales does the job at the moment but wants a break next year.

A couple to manage Book Sales each meeting are also wanted. Bob and Peg McKinlay are temporarily handling this job at present in addition to their other jobs of setting up the meeting hall seating and the collation and posting of the newsletter.

Please can you help?

Contact Jim Robinson.

I. B. O. C. NEWS

No. 119 DECEMBER, 1988.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB
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CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TEAN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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

These are due on 1st January each year
FAMILY \$10 SINGLE \$7 STUDENT \$2

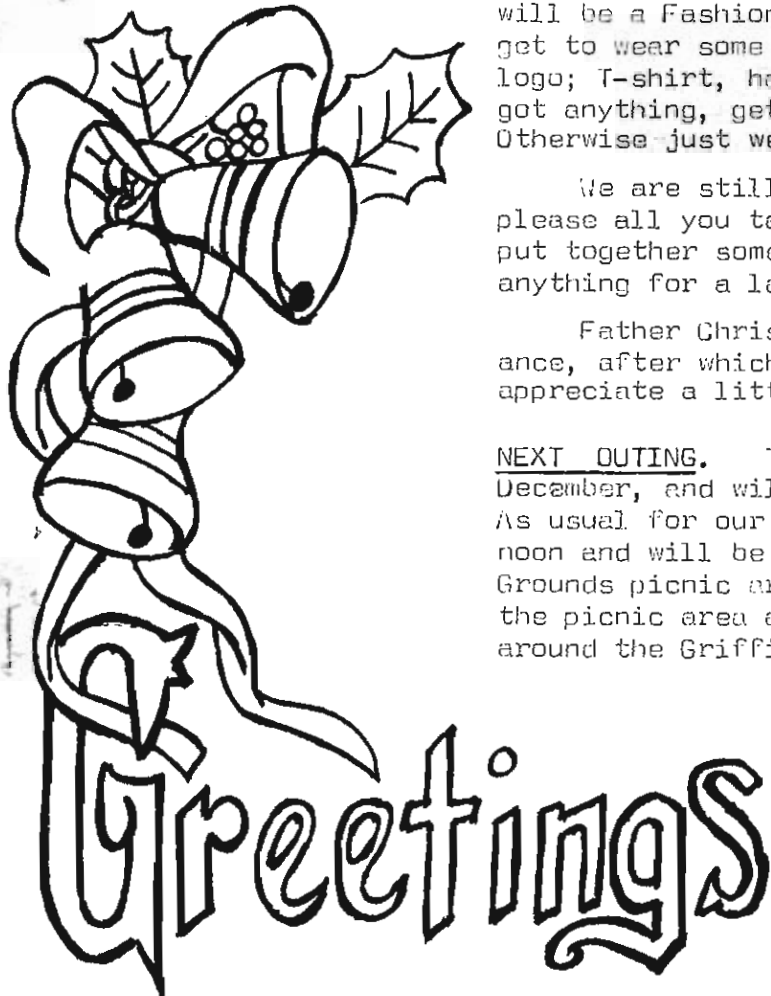
NEXT MEETING - CHRISTMAS MEETING. Will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, Corner Colleary Avenue and Princes Highway, on Monday, 12th December, commencing at 7.30 pm. This will be the final meeting for 1988 and following past practise there will be no guest speaker. Instead we will relax, have a good laugh and just enjoy the evening. There will be a Fashion Parade of Birdo's Gear so don't forget to wear some article of clothing showing a bird logo; T-shirt, hat, tie or something. If you haven't got anything, get to work and make or buy something. Otherwise just wear a feather. Prizes for best!

We are still short of acts for the evening so please all you talented people make an extra effort to put together something - a joke, a song, a dance - anything for a laugh and some fun.

Father Christmas will be making his usual appearance, after which we will have supper. We would appreciate a little extra with the supper goodies.

NEXT OUTING. The next outing will be on Saturday, 10th December, and will be at Darren Grounds Nature Reserve. As usual for our December outing it will be in the afternoon and will be followed by a barbecue at the Barren Grounds picnic area. We will meet at the car park at the picnic area at 3 pm. and will go on a walk either around the Griffiths Trail or out to Crooks Nose.

This outing should give us an opportunity to meet the new wardens at the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory. So come along and bring a bite to eat and enjoy the birds of this marvellous spot. Barren Grounds is situated on the south side of the road at the top of Jamberoo Pass. If weather permits we may go spotlighting after dusk.



NOVEMBER OUTING contd.

The last stop was at Botany Bay National Park border on Captain Cook Drive from where we walked through the park to the beach overlooking the Pacific Ocean, via the Muru Trail. The vegetation there consists of tall eucalypts which change to a stunted growth near the beach of mainly banksias and to the south an area of heath. The bird population in the forest appeared to be poor except for the Australian Magpie, Noisy Miner, Variegated Fairy-wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Grey Shrike-thrush and some parrots which gave some interest among our members. An Eastern Rosella on a branch beside another parrot which could only be described as an Eastern Crimson???. The plumage had a mixture of both parrots, a long blue tail, a dark cheek patch, then a general appearance of an eastern but a little larger. It caused a bit of excitement among the group.

We arrived back at the coach about 3.15 pm. for the journey home when Lennie told us of an Eastern Rosella's nest in a tree beside the road where the coach had been parked since lunch time. It was in a broken off tree trunk about 5 metres from the ground. When Barry climbed up to have a look he found four young in it. For the days outing we observed a total of 60 species.

We thank Chris Chafer for organising the outing and Jim Francis for leading our group for the day and showing us around Kurnell area which some of us had not seen before.

Horace Ward.

SPOTTED PARDALOTE.

Those of you who have visited Wirrimbirra, and have seen our Spotted Pardalotes nesting in the nursery, may be interested to know that they began nesting on Schedule again this year - the eleventh year that I have observed them in this general area. They once again chose the black coke breeze instead of sand or loam. A couple of weeks after the female had been sitting on the nest, I noticed through my kitchen window, approx. 12 metres from the nest site, a bird slowly fluttering to the ground. I went on with my work, but when I saw a repeat performance a few minutes later, I thought the time had come to investigate.

When I went outside, I found a dead male Spotted Pardalote lying on the ground. It had possibly flown into the open window and killed itself, but it showed no marks or injury. The fluttering bird was a second male bird, which was fluttering down then attacking the dead bird. I thought it interesting that the bird did not dive in attack, merely fluttered. A female was sitting in a nearby tree, and after a sortie, the live male flew to the tree and joined her. He then flew down again and tried to savage the chest of the dead bird. This was all done in silence. There were no alarm calls.

I stepped in at this stage and picked up the deceased. I knew that a class of school children who were to visit the Field Studies Centre in a couple of days had bird observing as one of their activities and I thought they may be interested in a close look at the beautiful markings of the little dead bird. So it was put in the freezer until required.

I was then left with the puzzle - was the dead bird the male of the nesting pair or was it another bird who happened to be passing by. I thought it may have been a passer by, because there was an obvious pair resenting it being in the area. This little drama took place at 11 am, and I expected that the pair would settle down and go back to their nest. I was rather surprised to find at 1 pm. that day that a new nest was being excavated with great vigour, about 1 metre from the existing nest. The pardalotes on the Sanctuary are not very territorial at nesting time, so this reaction made me very curious.

After the new nest was completed and the female settled down again on her new eggs, I dug out the old nest to see what they had abandoned. I found four eggs, all cracked, containing partly developed embryos. So now I had a new puzzle. Had the eggs cracked because of weakness in the shells and the new nest was just a coincidence to the death of the bird, or had the eggs been damaged by an intruder and if so what?

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Spotted Pardalote contd.

A pair of E. Yellow Robins, who had their first nest, built at a regular height, raided, built their second nest 9 metres high in a eucalypt. I have not seen such an elevated robin's nest here before. I did not bother trying to count the eggs in this one. Unfortunately, height did not mean success either, as I found the nest empty on the ground one morning.

For the first time since I have been here, the Pied Currawongs did not raise a family either. A bird was sitting on the nest late one afternoon, but next morning when I started work (yes, I still do some occasionally) I noticed a tuft of black feathers on the ground near the nest tree and the birds never came near the nest again. Last year when their nest was dislodged, they very quickly built a new nest and had a family of three, but I could find no new nest this year.

S. Rooke, Wirrimbirra Sanctuary, Bargo.

THE NEW SOUTH WALES BIRD ATLASSERS INCORPORATED.

The New South Wales Bird Atlasers was formed to continue the accumulation of information on the distribution of birds occurring within the boundaries of New South Wales, and that includes the Australian Capital Territory, Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island.

The Australian environment has undergone great changes since European settlement and this, in turn, has placed enormous pressure on our wildlife. Any native species, unable to adapt has, in less than 150 years, had its population decreased, its range contracted and its potential to adapt to further alterations severely constrained. Factual information about distribution, habitat preferences, movements, conservation needs and other aspects central to effective species management is lacking. The members of NSWBA consider that atlas information can be used to provide a sound and effective foundation for conservation planning.

Anyone can become an atlasser and each member's level of participation is left to the individual to determine. Over a period of time members will build up a strong list for each area surveyed. About 500 people contribute to our records, either as members of the NSWBA or as members of participating groups. Our data base already contains a significant level of information on the 540 species of birds reported in NSW, and it is being increased at a rate of about 60,000 records per annum. However much more needs to be done to obtain a complete coverage of the state. We are aiming at a minimum of 25 visits per 10' block. To do this we need many more supporting members. Perhaps you might like to join us!

Our present goal is to produce a loose-leaf "interim" atlas showing in detail the distribution of each species occurring in NSW. Distribution maps will be kept to-date with replacements as soon as any significant level of change is obvious. A revised list of the rare, endangered and threatened birds of NSW is also underway, and our long-term aim is to produce an Atlas of the Distribution of Birds in New South Wales.

Regular activities include atlassing field trips to various parts of western NSW and a camp based in the Wombeyan Caves area will be held from 27.12.1988 to 1.1.1989. Annual subscription of \$7.00 includes a quarterly newsletter. For further information contact the publicity officer:- Jennifer Southeron, "Old Dromana" Moree, 2400. Phone 067 538822.

NEW MEMBERS. We welcome the following new members:

Tony Adlidge, 38/105A Darling Point Road, Darling Point, 2027.
Ph. Home (02) 328 7393 Work (02) 648 5800.

Col Lock 33 Warrangarree Drive, Woronora Heights, 2233.

Shaun Austin 43 Walkers Road, Carrum, 3197.

contd.....

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS.

October and early November saw the area in the middle of a dry spell with some very hot days and strong westerly winds. This combination saw some very interesting species turn up. Firstly though some belated records from Aug./Sept. Single White-checked Honeyeaters were sighted at Figtree on 8th August and Sandon Point 31st August. A Barn Owl was found in a Figtree garden on 22nd August. A Painted Button Quail was observed in a Woonona Garden on 13th September and another in Budderoo N.P. on 28th November.

The boat trip off Wollongong on 22nd October produced 2 Black Petrels, 1 Soft-plumaged Petrel, which followed the boat for some time and a White-winged Tern. Another White-winged Tern was at Windang on 1st November. An Arctic Tern was found roosting with other terns at Windang on 29th October. A Banded Lapwing was at Shellharbour Swamp on 29th October, the first local record since October 1979. A Marsh Sandpiper was found in Why Juck Bay (L. Illawarra) on 29th October and 35 Greenshanks at Windang on 6th November.

Probably the best sighting of the month was a pair of Sooty Owls at Jamberoo Pass on 24/25th October. This is the first Illawarra record since April 1990. Channel-billed Cuckoos have turned up in a number of locations including Woonona, Thirroul, Bulli, Balgownie, Mt. Pleasant, Kieraville and Berry. The Powerful Owl was sighted again at Bass Point on 26th October. Duff-banded Rails were recorded from the Botanical Gardens on 7th November and a fern dam at Bargo on 4th November.

A Ground Parrot was recorded in heathland near Vincentia on 25th October. A Little Button Quail flew into a house window at Furberborough Heights 25th October. A Red-capped Robin was recorded at Sirribirra Sanctuary on 31st October, this appears to be the first local record for ten years. Crested Pigeons continue to increase on the coastal plain with birds sighted at Calderwood and Port Kembla Golf Course. A pair of Regent Honeyeaters were found in suburban Nowra on 25th October and a White-plumbed Honeyeater was in central Wollongong on 19th November. Figbirds were recorded from Bomaderry, Port Kembla Steelworks and Warri Beach at the end of October.

Brush Turkeys have built a mound and are possibly breeding on the escarpment above Balgownie. Pacific Herons are breeding at Bomaderry, the first record since they bred at Moss Vale in 1973 and finally a hard to find nest of Topknot Pigeons has been found at Jamberoo Pass. This is apparently the first breeding record for the area.

Contributors: L. E. D. Virtue, D. Wright, K. Mills, D. Rogers, H. Santamarie, L. E. Smith, D. Fischer, J. Pollard, J. Hooke, R. E. P. Jordan, G. Chafer, J. Emery, D. Thomson, D. Green, J. Pollard, C. Latch, R. Almond, J. C. J. Parker, C. Brendis.

FLIGHT INTO OBLIVION.

Bird lovers believe that, with each species becoming extinct, a nation loses a small part of its personality. By 1939 it appeared as if the disappearance of the flock pigeon, perhaps the most mysterious of all our birds, was going to cost Australia a very large personality loss indeed. Although discovered by English birdman John Gould on the plains of northern NSW in December, 1839, it was later established that this bird inhabited the grassy dry interior of the continent.

Named by Gould the Harlequin Bronzewing it became soon widely known as the flock pigeon. After enjoying the sight of countless numbers rising from the grass the pigeons suddenly disappeared - and Gould never again saw a flock pigeon. Six years later they reappeared when John Gilbert, the naturalist with the Leichhardt exploring expedition, saw enormous numbers of them on the Mitchell River on Cape York Peninsula and again on the Mackenzie River inland from the present city of Rockhampton. He recorded that the noise of such vast flocks taking off resembled the roar of distant thunder.

Few people have seen flock pigeons further south than where Gould discovered them, yet the Aborigines of the Miradjuri tribe which hunted and fished along the Currumbidgee where Jappa Jappa now stands had a word, Jirrenon, which meant flock pigeon. This indicated that, at intervals, these birds must have visited the area.

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FLOCK PIGEONS. Then they disappeared again until, during the 1860s and 1870s, station hands on isolated sheep and cattle stations reported seeing flocks estimated in their thousands rising from the Flinders and Mitchell grass plains of north-west Queensland. Settlement was still pushing westward and as the cattle population grew, that of the flock pigeon diminished. By the year 1900 its disappearance was again so complete that it was felt the flock pigeon, if not facing extinction must be on the verge of it.

Naturalists pointed out that the extermination of America's passenger pigeon showed how quickly and effectively this could be done. The sole surviving passenger pigeon died in the Cincinnati Zoological Gardens on September 1, 1914, yet as late as 1877 a nesting colony of these birds was reported as extending 40 km with an average width of about 6 km. Fortunately, America's use of the passenger pigeon as a table bird - 12 million were sent to New York alone in three years - had not been repeated here. On the other hand, the passenger pigeon nested in the safety of trees whereas flock pigeons simply lay two eggs on the ground and makes no nest. The damage done by cattle and horses trampling the eggs on the ground can easily be imagined.

It was generally believed that heavy over-stocking the land had so weakened the flock pigeons that they no longer had the numbers necessary to survive prolonged droughts. By the 1920s they had still not reappeared. In 1933 Dr. W.U.K. MacGillivray, a former president of the Ornithologists' Union sought news of the pigeon in the Darling River area of Queensland where, in the 1860s, a flock 4 km in length had been seen. He failed to find a single flock pigeon. This information so intrigued Roy Hohnke, a legal trapper of budgerigars, and his mate Alf Richmond, that they decided, in October, 1935, to try and obtain some flock pigeons to take back to the Brisbane Botanic Gardens. They set out by truck from the railway at Cloncurry in n.w. Queensland, their objective being to be well clear of possible flock pigeon country before the monsoonal rains set in. The first likely place, Bluey waterhole on the Leichhardt River, had eight dead crocodiles floating on the surface. They concluded that any sensible flock pigeon would keep away from drinking where there might also be live crocodiles. Their next base was on the spring-fed Gregory River where brumbies came to water in the fading evening light. Although bird life was plentiful, nothing resembling the flock pigeon was drinking there. The pigeons still eluded the trappers, who, now turning westward, spent some days observing myriads of small birds drinking at a waterhole in the open pastoral land on the eastern edge of the Barkley Tableland.

Stockmen camped nearby told Hohnke that the smaller birds, mainly painted finches and budgerigars, had broken away from the tyranny of regular breeding seasons, nesting twice following good rains and not at all in times of drought. The flock pigeon, they said, still held fast to a system of following the seeding of grasses upon which they nested after the summer rains.

About six weeks after starting out the two trappers camped near a waterhole known locally as Redfords. Through binoculars Roy Hohnke was amazed to see six flock pigeons walk quickly to the water's edge, drink, and fly off. Huge flocks flew over the area by day but only a few stragglers drank at the shrinking waterhole.

Patience was all that was necessary to net five stragglers for Brisbane's Gardens. Flock Pigeons apparently did not give in so easily however. On the return journey those five shy, timid pigeons never gave up hope of regaining their freedom. Night and day they pecked continuously at the gauze of their cage. It was too much for the trappers. Near the Black Mountain on the Cloncurry River they released them.

Neither Roy Hohnke nor Alf Richmond ever saw a flock pigeon again.

Les Dingham.

HAPPY NEW YEAR