

I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 140 FEBRUARY, 1991



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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

CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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CLUB'S AIM

This is 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, 11th February, 1991 when our Guest Speaker will be Dr. Bula Senapati. Bula joined the British Colonial Service, as a surgeon, in 1958, practising in Northern Nigeria until 1975 and he would like to share some of his "non-surgical" experiences with the Birdos. "Northern Nigeria in the 60's" should provide a very interesting and rewarding evening for everyone. The meeting will commence at 7.30 pm.

NEW YEAR OUTING - Our annual outing to Windang will be held on the evening of Wednesday, 6th February. We will meet under the pine trees on the northern side of the Windang estuary at 5 pm. 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 outing is to the Royal National Park and the leader for the day will be Bryan Kelly, Saturday, 16th. We will meet at the southern entrance to Lady Carrington Drive. Before proceeding we will take some vehicles to the northern entrance to Lady Carrington Drive. We will meet at the southern entrance at 8 am. Please do not be late as we require to get the vehicles to the other end of the walk and then return to proceed into the walk. Take a carry lunch.

FILM NIGHTS. - We are looking for venues for film nights. If you would like to host one in your home please contact any member of the committee. A video player can be supplied if required, all you need is a reasonably sized television set.

FROM THE PRESIDENT. As you will see from the programme for 1991 it looks like we are in for another very interesting year with the Birdos. I would like to thank all members for their support in 1990 especially the committee members who put in so much time to organise our club. I wish you all a very Happy New Year, success in your birding in 1991 and most of all no rain at Easter.

Brian Hales

contd.....

NOVEMBER OUTING.

On Saturday the 17th November the I.B.O.C. had a bus trip to Taronga Park Zoo instead of our usual monthly walk. We left Wollongong bright and early, passed under the new Picton Road bridge, saw a flock of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos at Endeavour High School and a couple of Black Swans forcing their way through the water hyacinths on Botany swamp.

We made the zoo in good time after a smooth ride and were greeted inside by Sacred Ibis looking very bedraggled, Indian Mynahs looking very bossy and pigeons just milling around like pigeons. We had morning tea (our first) and then we were off to see what was offering. The snakes were interesting, repellent or beautiful, depending on our preconceived ideas but the star tortoise and the lace monitor were fascinating. In the dirty ponds by the 'Water Bird Walk' the Magpie Geese and pelicans were most immaculate and there were Shelduck, Wood Duck and a Brolga doing its one legged act and many other species.

In the Nocturnal House, the easiest way to find the animals was to find the shadow and then look for the substance. The tiny feather-tailed gliders were busy sipping nectar from the equally tiny dispensers. The platypus were active and the echidnas lethargic.

In the large rainforest bird enclosure the ground was covered with wild violet in full bloom and in the big trees the birds were surprisingly hard to see. Birds seen included Regent Bowerbird, Cape York Pigeon, Brown Pigeon and Fig Parrot. Nearby in a separate cage was a huge kookaburra looking quite ruffled and opposite this an area with a placard proclaiming 'Rare & Endangered Native Plants'. This was quite interesting, spoiled only by the ground cover of onion weed and wandering jew. These two plants are by no means rare in our garden but they surely are in danger.

We had lunch near the small bird enclosures then wandered along the paths looking at the birds. We saw birds we often see on our outings and birds we don't see on our outings - many beautiful - many strange but all interesting - Double-barred Finch, Masked Finch, Bourke's Parrot, Scarlet-chested Parrot, African Grey Parrot, Madagascar Fody and the Victoria Crowned Pigeon with its crest erect and its red eyes gleaming. The Wonga Pigeon and Noisy Friarbird were busy nest building - no weekends off for them.

Continuing along we passed a stretch of lawn that was edged with topiary. An emu, kangaroo and an elephant were formed out of muchlenbeckia complexa, a New Zealand native, instead of the more common privet. The giraffes, as always, seemed unbelievably tall and the view looking across their enclosure, through flame trees and jacarandas in full bloom, across the harbour to the city beyond was truly lovely.

In the aquarium the Port Jackson shark looked like a cardboard cut out, only its gently moving gills gave it away and the Fiddler crab looked even less alive. After watching the corals, starfish, sea-slugs, sea urchins, sea-horses, jellyfish etc. for a while it was a nice change to see the seals gambolling and generally having fun.

The bus driver had arranged to meet us at the ferry wharf which was an excellent idea as we didn't have to walk back up the hill. This day was completely different to our usual outing but was equally enjoyable. Thank you all.

Peggy Merrett.

contd.,....

A DAY AT PAPPINBARRA.

With the family, I spent five quiet days at Pappinbarra Field Study Centre about 45 km west of Waughope. A group of enthusiasts have transformed an old dairy farm into a comfortable refurbished abode for ten and dormitories for another fifty in a sheltered valley with well marked walking tracks going off into the lowland rainforest and eucalypt woodlands. We were the only ones in residence and from the cool of the three sided verandah we could watch the birds feeding in the wild tobacco trees and surrounding bush in comfort. The Wild tobacco brought many Brown Pigeons, King Parrot and Satin Bowerbird while a family of Superb Blue Wren visited regularly looking for insects under the verandah. Using a scope I watched male Regent Bowerbirds feeding in a nearby flowering gum and preening on exposed dead branches.

The trails through the rainforest were easy to walk along although after some rain the leaches were out in force. I was lucky to see a pair of logrunner feeding alongside the trail in the litter and on several occasions I managed to whistle up several Rainbow Pitta, one male coming and watching me from a log only 10m away from where I sat. Yellow-throated Scrubwren were quite common and Pale-yellow Robin tended to be in the rainforest with Eastern Yellow Robin on the edges.

One day we drove over to the next valley and visited the Wilson River reserve where unlogged rainforest towered into the sky laden with vines and ferns but the birds were difficult to detect in the canopy. Up the road is the Wirrikimbe National Park but time did not permit a visit to the Beech Forest in search of the scrub bird, something for the future. On another day we visited Timber Town to see the old ways and on returning we noted a White-breasted Sea-eagle about 50 km inland and the caretaker has observed them scavenging after-birth during calving. On the return trip we stopped to look at the waders under the Stockton Bridge and a wander around Shortland to observe the egret colony in full swing. At one of the ponds a pair of Baillon's Crake and a Spotted Crake scurried in and out of the reeds while Glossy Ibis fed in the mud nearby surrounded by Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. A small area but full of interest and nearby swamps are still being filled in for "development".

Chris Brandis.

THIRTY TWO BREEDING RECORDS FROM PILLIGA CAMP.

Members obtained 32 records of birds breeding during the recent camp in the Pilliga State Forest. Details of these will be entered on record sheets and forwarded to the R.A.O.U. Nest Record Scheme, which now has many thousands of breeding records from all over Australia on computerised files, available for scientific studies.

Our camp records covered 26 species. Four were building nests, six attending dependent young out of the nest and 22 either sitting on eggs or feeding young in nests. The organisers certainly picked a great place to camp. Twenty of the thirty two records were around the campsite, the Rocky Creek Bore. Of course, with the concentration of observers, more records around the camp were to be expected, but nevertheless it was an exceptional breeding area.

Of interest was a Blue-faced Honeyeater feeding young in a nest it had built inside an old babblers nest, a habit of this species. We found, in a tree beside Marj Cochrane's tent, the nest of a Striped Honeyeater with three nearly fledged young. Gordon Beruldsen in his book A Field Guide to Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds, says this species prefers to nest in the vicinity of a Grey Butcher-bird's nest. Sure enough Marj found one just down the slope with three young butcher-birds which fledged - that is, left their nest - on the same day as the honeyeaters!

It is certainly fascinating and rewarding studying the breeding habits of birds.

Graham Alcorn.

AN EYE TO EYE VIEW WITH A GROUND PARROT.

On Boxing Day I set off for another walking holiday, walking in an area which abounds in interesting birds. Thirteen walkers were let out at Tamboon inlet - which is approx. 100 km south of Mallacoota in the Croajingolong N.P. in Victoria. We took seven days to walk back to Mallacoota - walking along the beach mainly but sometimes through tea-tree and coastal heath. Our days were hot so it was great fun to drop our heavy packs on the beach and have a swim. Believe me, Victorian waters are quite a bit colder than N.S.W. until we had got a bit north of Port Hicks. Some of the many birds that I heard and saw around our campsites or along the way were Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Australian King Parrot, Eastern Yellow Robin, Masked Lapwing, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Black Swan, several different cormorants, Southern Emu-Wren, New Holland, Eastern Spinebill, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Noisy Friarbird and Miners, Red and Little Wattlebirds. I was most surprised to hear Eastern Whipbirds and Superb Lyrebirds in the coastal habitats, I always thought these were birds of the forests. There were many more that I did not identify (that is why I needed you with me). We camped at Thurra River, Wingham Inlet, Red River and Benedore River. The scenery was spectacular. I've been saving my best sighting to last as it happened on the second last day of the walk and was a good birthday present. We were walking through some coastal heath - full of flowers, lots of Epacris Impressa, Victoria's floral emblem, when I got an eye to eye view of a Ground Parrot who jumped out of a bush close to the track; more were seen later that day by other members of the party.

One of the reasons why this holiday was special was shared on the first and last nights we stayed at Gypsy Point Lodge. Alan Robertson the proprietor drove us to the start of our journey and met us at the Mallacoota airport at 11 am to take us back to the lodge for a veritable feast for lunch and HOT SHOWERS. Although he had made his river craft available for the afternoon, I chose to sit on the verandah and read and bird watch - later to walk by the river as the evening cooled. Gypsy Point Lodge is situated at the junction of the Genoa and Wallagaraugh Rivers at the head of the Mallacoota Inlet and has a river frontage. From the verandah of the lodge I saw White-winged Chough, Satin Bower-bird, Lewin's and New Holland Honeyeaters, Superb Fairy Wren, Red-browed Firetails, Grey Shrike-thrush, Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets, Galah and Peaceful Dove. Later sitting by the river under some trees I saw Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Thornbill, Maned Duck and Chestnut Teal on the water and a White-faced Heron. I heard a Whistling Kite.

To my delight an Azure Kingfisher alighted on a branch over the water just two metres away. For ten minutes I was dazzled with its splendour - until it found dinner and dived into the water and then away to another fishing branch. I was then free to wander back to the lodge for dinner. Walking through the small stand of eucalypts near the lodge I heard and saw a whip-bird, White-throated Tree-creeper, White-naped Honeyeater, cuckoo shrike and some Glossy Black Cockatoos flew overhead.

Alan is particularly interested in birds and runs package holidays for Bird Observers and Field Naturalists which include trips by boat up the rivers and four wheel drive day trips to explore remote areas of Croajingolong and Ben Boyd National Parks. He says there have been 270 birds noted in the area and many of which have been seen around the lodge. I can recommend the lodge cuisine and the accommodation is very comfortable having en suite bathrooms - comfortable beds which for us were a change to a mat on the ground. I will leave the pamphlets that I brought home with Barbara - worth looking at.

Mary Shaw.

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DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING.

The Christmas meeting was once again well done with many members participating in the evening and enjoyed by all. We firstly had a cornet solo by Owen Brodal-Robertson followed by Nancye Dryden's slides of Indonesia's Independence festival time in Sumatra with school children in their beautiful costumes. Next there was a "Guess the Member" competition with photos of members from yesteryear with Olive Rodwell and Laurie Williams getting 5 out of 14 correct. A set of Lennie Klumpes slides showing members in embarrassing or humorous situations had all in stitches.

The main competition of the evening was the preparation of a "Birds' Breakfast" by the members with over 14 delicious dishes prepared and shown to the judges who could hardly refrain from taste testing each one. The winner was Wally Hurst with a platter from the Berry Berry Bird wishing us a Berry Berry Christmas just pipping for second the "Zealey's with "A fair deal for caterpillars" go to Macas of course. Third was a "Bark Platter" by Dora Lockrey but after supper most, including worm souffle and the pizza supreme with various toppings, were gone with only crumbs and bits of beetles remaining.

Barbara Hales gave a rap rendition of her latest top forty hit followed by one of her now famous birdy poems. Santa Brian arrived with goodies for many including a plate and face washer for the Robinsons that he had picked up at Maianbar, a mushroom kit for Dulcie Rose, a face cloth for Horrie Ward, Aussie Oddities to prepare Joan Zealey for her new job, a merit for Les Potter for towing a non-broken down Subaru, the Golden Mushroom award to Laurie Williams for his picking speed and the Tweetie-Pie award to Barbara Hales for services to the President. With gift giving in full swing Laurie gave a birthday cake with candles that would not go out to Brian Hales and Lennie gave him a pair of scissors to repair hair cuts. Ron Almond gave Laurie an I.B.O.C. flag and the Lucky door prize provided by Wally Hurst went to Nancye Dryden. With the festivities over a tasty spread including a cake donated by Betty Gibson and cut by the Robinsons was laid out and Christmas Cheer flowed well into the night.

Chris Brandis.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1990.

S	Common Koel	1	Budgong Vale	3/11	K. Mills
U	Cicadabird	1	Tallowa Dam	3/11	K. Mills
S	Little Eagle	1	Shoalhaven Heads	5/11	G. & J. Parker
s	Striated Heron	1	Shoalhaven Heads	5/11	" "
R	Sooty Owl	2	Jamberoo Pass	11/11	R. Jordan.
S	Collared Sparrowhawk	1	Gerringong	19/11	G. & J. Parker.
U	Crested Pigeon	1	Shoalhaven Heads	20/11	" "
MC	Australasian Gannet	50+	Black Head	20/11	" "
S	Bar-shouldered Dove	6	Commerong Island	20/11	" "
U	White-fronted Chat	12	" "	20/11	" "
S	Pied Oystercatcher	2	" "	20/11	" "
MC	Pacific Golden Plover	200+	" "	20/11	" "
C	Red-necked Stint	100+	" "	20/11	" "
U	Grey Currawong	2	O'Hares Creek	23/11	K. Mills
U	Black-fronted Plover	1	" "	23/11	" "
U	Black-winged Stilt	8	Shellharbour	26/11	G. & J. Parker
U	Latham's Snipe	1	" "	26/11	" "
S	Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	Woonona	30/11	K. Mills
S	Common Koel	1	Balgownie	20/12	W. & H. Emery
S	Channel-billed Cuckoo	3	" "	28/12	" "

Thanks to Wal Emery for compiling this list of interesting sightings and to those who contributed. All future records of interesting sightings should be forwarded to Jim Robinson who has offered to take on this job. Jim can be reached on 29 4213 at 16 Burling Avenue, Mount Ousley, 2519

contd.....

ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB

PROGRAMME FOR 1991

FEBRUARY

Wed. 6th	5.00 pm	Outing	Windang Estuary
Mon. 11th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker Dr. B. Senapati
Sat. 16th	8.00 am	Outing	National Park leader Bryan Kelly

MARCH

Mon. 11th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker Neil Skinner
Sun. 17th		Outing	Picton leader Kevin Mills
Fri. 29th- 6th April		Easter Camp	Carcoar

APRIL

Mon. 8th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker Graham Alcorn
Sun. 14th		Outing	O'Hares Creek
Sat. 27th	7.00 pm	Film Night	Hales

MAY

Mon. 13th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker to be advised
Sat. 18th-19th		Camping Trip	Canberra

JUNE

Sat. 1st	7.00 pm	Film Night	
Mon. 10th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker to be advised
Sat. 15th		Outing	Calderwood leader Ron Almond
Sat. 29th	7.00 pm	Film Night	

JULY

Mon. 8th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker to be advised
Sat. 13th		Outing	Mt. Keira
Sat. 27th	7.00 pm	Film Night	

AUGUST

Mon. 12th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker to be advised
Sun. 18th		Outing	Nowra leader Barry Vitruie

SEPTEMBER

Mon. 9th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker to be advised
Sat. 14th		Outing	National Park leader Jack Hyslop
Sat. 28th/29th/30th		Camping Trip	Conjola

OCTOBER

Sat. 26th- 2nd Nov.		Camping Trip	Upper Horton
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+NOVEMBER

Mon. 11th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Guest Speaker to be advised
Sun. 17th		Outing	Jervis Bay

DECEMBER

Sat. 7th		Outing	Berry Christmas Barbecue
Mon. 9th	7.30 pm	Meeting	Christmas Cheer

+ At the November meeting we conduct our brief Annual General Meeting to elect our principal-office bearers for the following year.

Half day walks are organised for the first Wednesday of the month commencing March, details should be ready for the next newsletter.

Committee meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month and announced at the monthly club meetings.

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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, 11th March, 1991 at 7.30 pm. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Neil Skinner, A.F.I.A.P., A.P.R. from Murga, N.S.W. Neil is a member of the Parkes Camera Club and is also a member as well as an Executive Director of the Australian Photographic Society. He will be presenting an audio visual production of Nature, Birds and Humour.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - Our March outing takes place Sunday, 17th March and we will meet at the Thirlmere Railway Museum at 8.30 am. Kevin Mills will be our leader for the day and he will guide us along the Cave Creek Walking Track (near Hilltop) Thirlmere Lakes. Bring along your morning and afternoon teas and your lunch which will be at the cars.

MID WEEK WALK - The first mid-week walk for the year is at Minnamurra Rain-forest. Meet at the parking area at 8.30 am.

CORRECTIONS TO FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER - Programme for 1991 - Camping trip to Conjola should read October 5th, 6th and 7th and not September 28th/29th/30th. Our Guest Speaker for July will be Dr. Antonio Salvadori who will speak of "Birding on the roof of the world". The April outing to O'Hares Creek has had to be changed due to unforeseen circumstances so please check your next newsletter for details of the replacement walk. The article on Pappinbarra read "several Rainbow Pitta". This should have read "several rainbow hued Noisy Pitta". Hope no one went rushing off.

1991 MAILING LIST.

Fees are now due and the mailing list will be compiled after the March meeting. If there is a cross in the box at the end of this sentence, you are unfinancial!



FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING.

The speaker for the night was one of our well known members Dr. B. Senapati, Bula to his many friends. Bula and Rangam have bird watched with the club for a number of years and since his retirement they have seen a bit of Australia in the trusty Tercel with Spacepod. We have heard odd bits of their exploits in Nigeria but this night Bula presented a very good over view of Nigeria in the 60's, during and after the British Colonial rule. Bula and Rangam were seconded by the British to work for the Nigerians as surgeons, two of four serving twenty million people in the northern inland half of the small country. The multi-tribal country, where each tribe proudly wore their specific clothing type, facial scars and performed certain social functions, was ruled over by the Emirs from the basically nomadic herdsmen of the Filani tribe. They had received Islam from the Arabic north while some other tribes had Christian influence from European missionaries with the remainder being classed pagans. At this time Nigeria was one of the richest black African countries with a good agricultural base and some tin mining but after the British left oil was discovered and a series of military dictators led the country downhill.

Bula ran small operating theatres with crude plumbing but good results, this being helped by the peoples' immunity to most of the infection around. To bathe in a river was certain to result in catching the Bilazia fluke that could kill foreigners while every Nigerian lived with it. One problem the expats. experienced while living there was the food being so spicey hot that they could not socialise which left them to their own devices during the little spare time they had. This included a few game shoots and fishing for giant 50 kg Nile Perch, as well as photography to record their experiences. The slides depicted the people and the countryside beautifully and also some of the wild life such as a lizard with a bright yellow head and the Maribou Stork. Unfortunately, or fortunately for us, the unrest drove Bula and his family out, eventually to Wollongong. This pair of travellers will be off again soon to live with their daughter in England and we wish them well and good birding. Olive Rodwell gave thanks to Bula on behalf of the club for this most interesting insight into another world.

Chris Brandis.

WINDANG ESTUARY, LAKE ILLAWARRA.

On a sultry, still and cloudy evening, the 6th February, 25 members of I.B.O.C. met under the lovely Norfolk Island Pines at Windang for our annual walk around the sand flats to observe the various birds of the area. The first arrivals at the estuary had a good sighting of a White-bellied Sea-Eagle and also here were later seen goldfinch and Golden Plover.

In due course we set off at our own pace and wandered along in our usual fashion in ever changing groups and with glasses at the ready. The reeds and coastal wattles seemed a little taller this year and as there was no breeze and no drying, drying water grass piled up on the high water mark there was no smell. There wasn't even any rubbish! What is the world coming to?? The pelicans were numerous (refugees from Lake Eyre perhaps?) but they socialised on the waters' edge with the fisherpersons at a distance from us. Just cupboard love I think.

Further out towards the entrance the ground was covered with bi-valves each separate from its twin and in varied colours and pattern markings. Some were smooth as glass, some had ridges lengthwise and others and others crosswise, all according to plan. Here also were tiny spheres of sand formed by creatures invisible to me. The tern clan was out in force, Caspian, Crested, Black-naped and White-winged all observed. There were Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers, Kelp Gull, Pacific Gull and of course the ubiquitous Silver Gull. Right out on the spit a cool breeze was blowing but by now the dark clouds were louring and the haze closing in and we came back to the cars a little faster than usual and ate our tea a little faster than usual accompanied by rolling bursts of thunder and flashes of lightning and as the first drops of rain fell we beat a hasty retreat home after a very pleasant evening.

Peggy Merrett

FEBRUARY WALK - ROYAL NATIONAL PARK.

After the heat of Thursday, and the storms of Friday night, we were lucky to get such a pleasant morning to start our walk in the Royal National Park. The Park is the oldest National Park in Australia and, interestingly, the second oldest in the world. Our walk was along Lady Carrington Drive, from the southern end to Audley, a distance of 9.5 km. The Drive was named after the wife of Lord Carrington, a Governor of N.S.W. in the 1880's. It is one of the oldest roads through the Park and is now used only as a service road and by cyclists and walkers.

The Drive follows the course of the Port Hacking River and is well shaded by giant eucalypts, turpentines, angophoras and wattles and the banks are lined with a great variety of ferns and shrubs. Nineteen Birdo's arrived at the meeting place and while the drivers were organising the taking of the cars to the Audley end the rest wandered down the track. Many of us had seen Lyrebirds on the drive into the park and a few had seen a Wonga Pigeon and within a few metres we had added magpies, Grey Butcherbird, Currawong, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Lewin's Honeyeater and a Yellow Robin.

A few people walked down the Wallumurra Track which leads down to a creek and a lovely rainforest area where we saw four lyrebirds and listened to them mimic a number of bird calls. Back to the main track and the next stop was morning tea - a cheeky currawong joined us to share the crumbs. As we moved along several beautiful little Rufous Fantails were seen as well as a Scaly Thrush and a Black-faced Monarch. We passed a flowering White Cedar tree which was humming with bees and it appeared as though a Lewin's Honeyeater was feeding on the bees.

On a rock face at the edge of the road we noticed a bronze plaque erected to the memory of a volunteer firefighter who lost his life in the 1988 bushfires. Soon we came across three more Superb Lyrebirds scratching in the litter close by the road. We were able to watch them for quite some time before they were frightened by a group of cyclists. Close by, on the edge of the river, we found a lovely shadey grassed area - the ideal place for lunch. The lyrebirds returned and scratched about ignoring us, two currawongs arrived looking for food and a spinebill and a Little Wattlebird kept us entertained.

In some rocky caves, where orchids were growing, a bird was seen and eventually identified as a Large-billed Scrubwren. Later we saw three more Rufous Fantails and a pair of Variegated Wrens amongst the lantana. At our afternoon tea stop, at another pleasant picnic place beside the river, we were delighted to find a Sacred Kingfisher and an Azure Kingfisher. Close by are two concrete water troughs built in 1892 - no doubt used in the days when people drove from Sydney in their horse drawn carriages.

We were now nearing Audley where the river is tidal and there are lots of picnic areas and plenty of waterbirds. Some of those seen were White-faced Heron, seagulls, Black and Maned Ducks, moorhens and coots. Also in this area we saw a Willie Wagtail and a Leaden Flycatcher.

In all 43 species were seen but the bird of the day was the Superb Lyrebird. We were all surprised at how easy they were to observe - not nearly as secretive as they usually are - in the course of the day we must have seen fifteen birds. It was a most enjoyable walk and our thanks must go to Bryan and Betty Kelly and Laurie Williams for their organising efforts and I also feel grateful to the people of the last century who had the foresight to declare this lovely area a National Park.

Peg McKinlay.

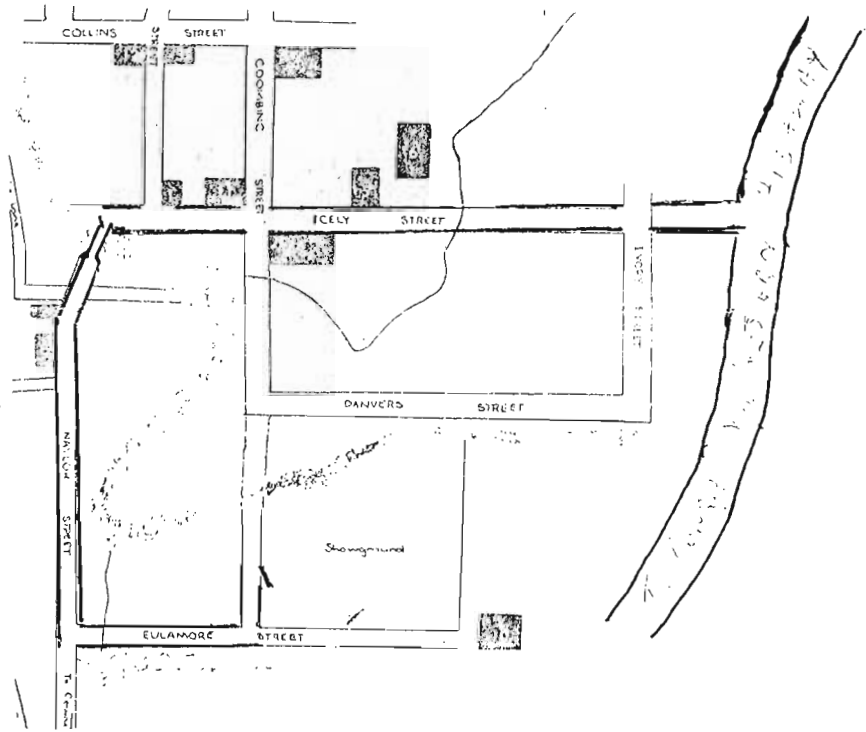
PLEASE NOTE - all unusual sightings should now be forwarded to Jim Robinson 16, Burling Avenue, Mount Ousley, 2519, by letter or phone 294213. Please keep the sightings coming in so that we can keep the records up to date. They can also be noted in the Unusual Sightings book which is placed on a table at the back of the hall on meeting nights.

contd.....

EASTER CAMP

The camp will be at Carcoar Showground from 28th March to 7th April. Carcoar is the third oldest town west of the Blue Mountains and was surveyed in 1838. A walking tour of the historic village includes 31 places of interest.

The village is just over 300 km from Wollongong via Bathurst. Travelling time is 4 1/2 hours not including stops. Follow the signs to Cowra through Bathurst and Blayney on Mid Western Highway. The turn off to the village is 12 km from Blayney and there are 4 "Carcoar" signs and 1 unsealed road to right after second sign before turn off (near bottom of long down hill stretch of road - care suggested). To reach showground proceed along Icely Street, turn left over bridge at end of street into Navlor Street passing Stoke Lane on left and then turning left into Eulamore Street (sign to hospital), taking first turn to left (IBOC sign) and entrance to showground is short distance down road.



Unfortunately 150 or so people will also be using the showground for a family reunion on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 29th to 31st March with some camping one or two nights. There should be no problem in everybody fitting as there is plenty of room and 2 toilet blocks. Bed & Breakfast and one or two self contained accommodation units under the name "Dalebrook" exist but fully booked for Friday and Saturday (29th & 30th March). These units are in close walking distance to showground and historical walk. Anyone interested in accommodation can contact proprietors Robert Dolman and Warren Riolo by telephone No. (063) 673149.

Arrangements have been made to visit several properties near the village in addition to dam and public reserve.

contd. -

WEDNESDAY WALKS PROGRAMME 1991.

- Mar. 6th Minnamurra Rainforest. Meet at 8.30 am in the parking area. There is an entry fee per car so would suggest you fill cars and share cost.
- May. 1st Blackbutt Reserve. Off Shellharbour Road. Meet at parking area at the top of the reserve at 8.30 am.
- Jun. 5th Garrawarra State Recreation Area. Meet at Bald Hill, Stanwell Tops at 8.30 am.
- Jul. 3rd Guide Camp, Mount Keira. Meet outside the gates at 8.30 am.
- Aug. 7th Werong Beach. Meet at Bald Hill, Stanwell Tops at 8.30 am.
- Sep. 4th Guide Camp, Mount Keira. Meet outside the gates at 8.30 am.
- Nov. 6th Freers Crossing, Georges River Nature Reserve. Drive to beginning of road changing to four lanes to Campbelltown and turn right at Woodville Road meeting there at 8.30 am.
- Dec. 4th Douglas Park, St. Mary's Towers. Meet at gates at 8.30 am.

If you require any further details of how to get to any of the above venues please contact Esme Gay, 293463, Ron Almond, 298612 or any committee member.

BARREN GROUNDS BIRD OBSERVATORY.

Below are listed some of the course available Autumn/Winter 1991. If you wish to participate please contact Barren Grounds direct on 042 360195, for bookings, cost etc.

- March, 15-17th, Ground Parrots with Alan Leishman.
- March, 28 - 1st April (Easter) Wildlife painting and sketching with Nicholas Day.
- April, 12th - 14th, The Living Landscape: Introduction to Ecology with the Wardens.
- April 26th - 28th, All about fungi with Dr. Alex Wood.
- May 3rd - 5th, Rainforest in Autumn with Denise Black.
- May, 17th - 19th, Bushwalking with Roger Lembit and the Wardens.
- June, 7th - 10th, Return of the Emus with the Wardens.
- June, 14th - 16th, Sex and the Single Banksia with Rob Whelan.
- June, 28th -30th, Lyrebirds with Iain Paterson.
- July, 7th - 13th, Children in the School Holidays with the Wardens.
- July, 26th - 28th, Creative Journal Writing with Marama Warren.

contd.....

WHAT CHILDREN FOUND ON DISCOVERY BAY.

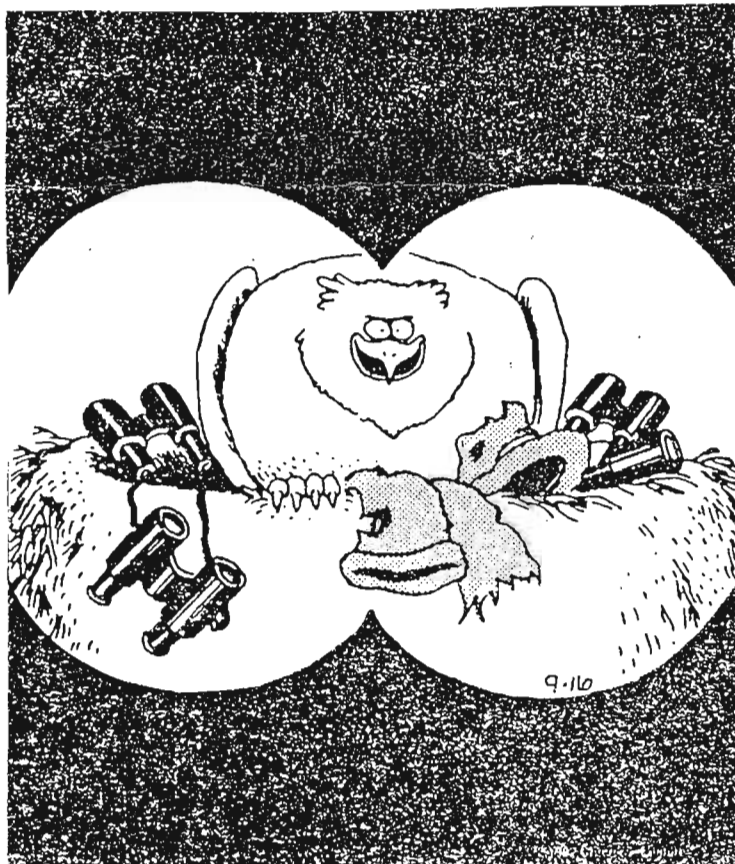
On Wednesday 20th September the Bolwarra School held a beach 'Litterthon' on Discovery Bay near the Bridgewater Lakes at Portland, Victoria. The litterthon involved the children, teachers and a number of volunteer parents and grand-parents from the school. Our aim was to collect as much litter as possible from the beach and then carry it all, bundled in supermarket bags, the 1.5 km back to our bus and rubbish trailer. Discovery Bay is a 'wild ocean beach' with no vehicle access and is not much used by beachgoers except the hardy bunch of beach walkers on the Great South West Walk. The litter on the beach is almost totally beach-washed, coming from ships and fishing boats. You would think that a 'wild ocean beach' would be one place free from human litter as it is so far out of the way. But we wanted to show the children that the sea is being used as a garbage dump by many people and that the situation is very serious.

The children collected 240 bags of litter from a one km stretch of the beach at the south-east end of Discovery Bay. They all worked very hard, especially grade 5 and 6 children who helped the infants with their bags while carrying up to ten themselves strung along beach-washed poles. Back at school we sorted the rubbish into different categories and ended up with:

1.25 woolbales of plastic, 1 woolbale of nylon rope pieces, 1 woolbale of wood pieces (we left most of the wood behind) 0.5 of a woolbale of polystyrene pieces, 0.3 of a woolbale of plastic strapping, 3 crayfish-pot plastic tops, 85 crayfish bait containers, 51 pieces of paper, 27 cigarette lighters, 109 shoes, 67 bottles, 36 light bulbs, 38 metal cans, 24.5 aluminium cans, 1 sock and an accidental 2 supermarket bags of natural rubbish - seaweed, cuttlefish, dead fish etc.

We would like to thank the C.F. and L. in Portland who picked up the sorted rubbish from school. We were amazed and disgusted with the amount of rubbish that we collected. If this much in on one km of beach then how much is on the 60 km of Discovery Bay? How much is on Victoria's beaches? How much is on Australia's beaches? How much is on the world's beaches? We are all appalled the thought. We would like to make you aware of this problem and hope that you may be able to help with the problem.

Brooke Price Grade 1.



WAK
HURST

I.R.O.C. NEWS

NO. 142 APRIL, 1991.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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

CLUB MOTTO "ONE" GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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ANNUAL
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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 April, 1991 commencing at 7.30 pm. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Graham Alcorn and his topic will be "Birds and their nests, with some poetry". Graham, who is now retired, was the head ranger with the Blue Mountains City Council for a number of years, looking after some 240 km of walking tracks and council nature reserves. A long time member of the R.A.C.U. and N.S.W.F.D.C., he has also written a book of poems, "The Bird Baths of Umbigumbi". His presentation of slides, nests and poetry will provide a very interesting and entertaining night.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - This outing takes place Sunday, 14th April, and is to the "Vorwindens" property at Foxground. To reach their property, where we will meet at 8.30 am (allow approximately 1 hour from Wollongong), travel south down the Princes Highway, past Gerringong, until you reach the sign Foxground. Proceed on up the hill, as you start to round the downhill bend you will see the animal park sign on the right hand side. Turn right and travel along the Foxground Road for 2½ km until you reach the cross road which is Freeselectors Road. Turn left and proceed on and up the hill for approximately 3 km where, on the left hand side of the road, near the gutter area, you will see the sign "Vorwinden". You will need a carry lunch and other food and drinks required for the day. You will notice that the venue for this month is different from the programme. This change was brought about by the fact that O'Hares Creek area has been completely devastated by the recent fires.

PLEASE NOTE - Our May outing is in the form of a weekend in Canberra. We are at present formulating details of how we will travel, the type of accommodation and the cost. If you are interested in the weekend please contact President Brian or Laurie so that we have some idea of the number of people that we are considering making arrangements to handle.

Laurie Williams.

MID-WEEK WALK - The next midweek walk takes place, Wednesday, 1st May and is to Blackbutt Reserve off Shellharbour Road, meet at the parking area at the top of the reserve at 8.30 am and take your morning tea.

contd.....

FILM NIGHT.

Our first film night for 1991 will take place at the home of Barbara and Brian Hales, 39 Lake Parade, Corrimal East, Saturday, 27th April, starting promptly at 7 pm. There are two brilliant films to see this month including superb footage of kingfisher fledgelings in their underground nest and the hunting techniques of a Short-eared Owl. For new members and those who have not attended film nights in the past, bring along your camp chair and a plate of goodies for supper and join us for a first rate evening of entertainment and fellowship with your I.B.O.C. friends.

MARCH MONTHLY MEETING REPORT.

The guest speaker for the night was Neil Skinner from Murga, known to many of the members who have stayed on his property during club camps. Neil and his wife, Sue, run a small guest house business on their Murga property and generously extend an invitation to our club to enjoy the areas highlights by camping on the property. He is also a member of the Parkes Camera Club and a Director of the Australian Photographic Society and entertained his guests with some of his work. We were lucky enough for Neil to put together slides to show the members an audio-visual display that was excellently prepared.

The slides changed smoothly with coordinated music and commentary on an array of subjects. At first steam trains puffed through the screen bringing back memories of times when train travel was fun, then on to creepy crawlies where an impressive array of insects, spiders, frogs, slugs, lizards and snakes at various stages of their life cycles kept the audience in awe. A set of slides on some local birds passed all too quickly to appreciate the skill behind the camera, followed by scenes of the central west in some of the extreme moods and scenery. It was said that their inhabitants forefathers saw that the land had promise and that the people on the land today were trying to prove them right. Garden scenes followed, then one on a days ballooning, showing the unloading from the ute, filling the bag with hot air, the ride, the landing and packing up of the equipment. Finally a set of Jolliffe cartoons depicting the farmers' dilemma finished the evening with some humour.

Nola Williams gave the vote of thanks on behalf of all the members present and confirmed first hand that taking a photograph by Neil was much more than point and press with much skill and dedication required to obtain the results we had seen tonight. Barbara Hales described the results of her diligent investigation into Irish-Australian history and presented Neil with a key ring containing the Skinner coat of arms and a tea towel with the Irishmans' philosophy on it

Chris Brandis.

CORRECTION.

In the March newsletter the article on the Windang outing read "Black-naped Tern" for non breeding Little Tern and "Pacific Gull" for immature Kelp Gull.

Chris Brandis

BUSY BIRDWATCHING.

Near my home there are two splendid birdwatching areas, the gravel pits a few miles to the east and the sewage-farm a couple of miles to the south. I am lucky that there is a bus service in each direction, both buses stopping at the same bus stop. Since the gravel-pits and the sewage-farm are equally good for birds, I can never decide which locality to visit - so I just catch whichever bus comes first. The buses arrive equally often - there is a very regular half-hourly service in each direction - but, somehow, I seem to make four times as many trips to the gravel-pits as to the sewage-farm. Why?

Expert solving time: 2 minutes.

contd.....

MARCH OUTING - CAVE CREEK TRACK AND THIRLMERE LAKES.

Sunday, 17th March, 25 members of I.B.O.C. met at Thirlmere Railway Museum for our monthly outing. The first arrivals here had good sightings of King Parrot, Spotted Pardelote, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and three species of thorn-bill. After our first morning tea we set off, by car, to the Caves Creek walking track, one of a network of walking tracks being established by the Department of Lands.

The day was cool and overcast at this stage and the track, which was well defined, although rough in places, led us through an area of Black Ash and Grey Gum with an understorey of Tea Trees and then, as we went down a steep decline, we passed Scribbly Gums showing up starkly against burnt areas of She Oaks and smaller Hill Banksias and Mountain Devils, Drumsticks and Conesticks and Grass Trees thrusting their six feet long flower spikes aloft as they always do after a fire providing nectar for numerous smalls bees and looking remarkably healthy in comparison with the other shrubs, some of which looked very sad.

The track continued downwards and here were Sydney Peppermint and Cedar Wattle and we had an excellent sighting of a male Golden Whistler. He was a most obliging show-off. Next came a metal ladder and there in front of us was the mouth of the cave, no water flowing through in this dry time. Some of our members were prepared, must have been boy scouts before they were birdos, one had a torch and they made their way through to the exit but were unable to get out due to seepage and steep rocks so had to retrace their steps. We made our way around a small spur to the cave exit and passed through stands of Stringybark and Blueberry Ash, past a great, long, dry rock overhang of Hawkesbury sandstone (look to your laurels Wave Rock W.A.) which had no ferns growing on it but was covered with Lichen and moss; on past a wet overhang that had ferns galore where water seeped through the fissures and on down to where the creek emerged from the cave. In this flat area by the creek were Coachwood trees with their distinctive bark, King, Umbrella and Gristle Ferns and then the sun came out and dappled the whole area including the brown and yellow leaves which made a soft carpet underfoot and here in this lovely spot we had morning tea, our second for the day. While doing so we were entertained by the calls of frogs, lyrebird and a Lewin's Honeyeater and the antics of a Rufous Fantail.

We retraced our steps and on the way back saw Eastern Spinebill, Striated Thornbill and Red-browed Treecreeper. We had lunch at the lakes but the only waterbirds seen were two Maned Ducks and a Little Pied Cormorant and on the shore Gang-gang Cockatoo and King Parrot were seen. After lunch we drove to Warragamba Catchment Area and walked the Blue Gum Creek Trail. On the creek side of the road were many Blue Gums practically all without their stockings on - it has been a hot summer - and lower down were many paper barks. On the road edge were yellow Everlasting Daises and blue and mauve Brachycombes and Running Postman living up to its name but not flowering. After seeing wombat droppings all along the road we saw a wombat - suffering from insomnia no doubt - we stared at him and he stared at us, until finally he got bored and turned tail and crashed off through the bush leaving a trail of quivering undergrowth in his wake.

By this time we were back at the cars and in due course back at the lakes. We saw no leprechauns, no four leafed clover and heard no faery pipes on this St. Patrick's day but we heard the song of the birds and saw the beauty of the bush and had a lovely day. Many thanks to Kevin Mills who led the walk and told us what we were looking at and to club members for their company. In all we saw 49 species of bird, one wombat and no leeches.

Peggy Merrett

Contd.....

EXCELSIOR'S AVENUE BUILDERS.

In the law of the wet sclerophyll covering a disused coalmine, the eclectic petty pilfering of human's property by the male satin bowerbirds is minuscule in comparison with the actual and potential indiscriminate rape that humans inflict upon the birds' habitat.

When I first inspected a modest fibro cottage at Thirroul, it was the visit of a glossy-blue male satin bowerbird into the garden that helped me decide to become the new home-owner. Since then, during the course of my nature studies of the immediate neighbourhood and particularly the old Excelsior No. 2 Colliery area, I've developed a growing fondness and fascination for *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*, especially as there had been no comparable bird that featured in my earlier life in England. As it is such an unusual and acquisitive bird I am surprised it has acquired only one other common name, a mere abbreviation, whereas so many other species can boast a variety of aliases. In his 'Birdwatching in Australia' (1977), Ted Schurman refers to the male bird's solo stage performances, providing its own music with mimicry as well as constructing and painting its own stage set.

It's the construction of the bower, always a north-south alignment of the avenue of upright twigs (possibly linked with the path and angle of the sun, like magnetic anthills I've thought) and the motley collection of natural and human-made bits and pieces, predominantly of blue, scattered to form a round decorative mat that have intrigued me about this bird species. Perhaps, too, I might have secretly envied the male's promiscuity and abdication to the females of responsibility for raising youngsters!

Over the past 11½ years I have come across 17 bowers in the Excelsior, situated in three groups, forming a large triangle, the lengths of the sides measuring approximately 600, 700 and 400 metres. The shortest distance lies between the two eastern points, which are within easier flight distances from the residential areas of Thirroul and Austinmer than the western apex. Each bower has been built within a few metres of a walking track, but in well concealed clearings, usually within *lantana*.

I have been amused by the variety of pilfered and recycled goods the male birds in the Excelsior have used to adorn their bowers and have wondered how they managed before the introduction of the human technology of plastics. As you might expect, the blue clothes peg has been by far the most common ornament, about 100 of them at one particular site, followed by the drinking straw.

Some children may have been scratching their heads over the disappearance of the toys I've detected among the blue curios: a doll's cup, jet plane, helicopter and helicopter cabin, wheelless motor cycle, truck, pistol (made in Hong Kong), fish, pig stencil, spanner, fence and construction kit pieces.

Household items have comprised a threadless cotton reel, pencil, pen and aerosol can tops. To this list can be added the fragments of milk bittle tops and rings, plastic strips, twist ties, wool cord, electric wiring, pantyhose, nylon lace bag, shopping bags, ice cream container and Ansell balloons and Milky Way wrappers.

The only natural materials I have discovered have been plumage, predominantly of the Crimson Rosellas and flower petals. And the only other colour has been yellow: a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo crest and *pittosporum* flowers in addition to the several yellow clothes pegs.

Whilst the ornaments often remain long after the bower has fallen into disrepair, I am almost certain that some of them get transferred to new sites. One plastic (that I've been unable to identify: shaped like six spokes of a wheel with cups at each end) I found again 26 months later over 100 metres away. I'm not sure though, about a toy spanner first found near the southern end of the Gibson Walking Track and then again 23 months later near Seafoam Avenue.

contd.....

Excelsior's Avenue Builders contd.

As well as the courtship ritual dancing, I have yet to witness a bowerbird first finding an object and then conveying it to its bower. I can only visualize the looks of the annoyed person whose pegless washing has been dirtied after falling on the ground or the miserable child whose cherished little toy has been taken away without trace. Such victims, like orchardists, might be inclined to use taboo language, rather than the adjective 'remarkable' commonly found in the guide books, to describe the offending bird's behaviour. Because of its devilry, Satan bowerbird might be a more appropriate name for it in some people's view.

Selfishly, I guess, I hope Ptilorhynchus violaceus will continue to violate the property rights of us humans and, being a biased judge, I would sentence the male Satin Bowerbird to perform further offences of dishonesty and ingenuity as a community service. The petty theft committed by the birds in the Excelsior pales into insignificance against the continual threat of destruction to their habitat by indifferent humans, in the form of illegal dumping of household and industrial waste, intrusion of and erosion by trailbike riders, bushfire from torched stolen vehicles, property developers, and now conceivably through the mooted alternative rail link between Thirroul and Helensburgh.

Mike Morphett.

MARCH MID-WEEK WALK - MINNAMURRA RAINFOREST.

Eleven members attended our first mid-week walk for 1991 at the Minnamurra Rainforest. Many improvements have been made at the reserve since my last visit some years ago. There is now a Visitor's Centre and kiosk and a very well laid out picnic and barbecue area. Raised wooden walkways have been built and, although not yet completed, they are well graded and make walking easy for the "Senior Citizens". Perhaps by eliminating the creek crossing some of the adventure has gone out of the walk.

It was a nice sunny morning with lots of birds about. On the way in we saw Galahs, a flock of Crimson Rosellas, a Willie Wagtail and a Black-shouldered Kite. A Grey Fantail fluttered about as we left the cars and a Lewin's Honey-eater and a whipbird were calling. A short distance up the walkway a Wonga Pigeon sat on the rail for some time for all to admire and further on we disturbed a flock of 30 or more Topknot Pigeons, feasting high up in a huge small leafed fig. We saw a yellow robin and a number of little White-browed and Yellow-throated Scrubwrens active in the undergrowth and a lyrebird crossed under the walkway just in front of us.

At morning tea break some people sat on rocks by the stream while others used the benches provided along the way. It was a great spot for birds as a Black-faced Monarch, Leaden Flycatcher, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and Golden Whistler were all seen there. Later on we saw a Satin Bowerbird and a catbird and several water dragons. A couple of them, sunning on a rock in the creek, were quite large.

It was a most enjoyable outing with 28 species recorded during the morning.

Peg McKinlay.

Could you have written a few lines to fill this space. Items are appreciated, no matter how short. Perhaps you might like to send in an article of birds in your garden for a day, week or month of the year or maybe the total number of species of birds that have visited your garden over the years and of course if you have any unusual birds visiting your garden don't forget to inform Jim Robinson for our records.

Editor

contd.....

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS DEC. 1990 JAN-FEB, 1991.

S	Beautiful Firetail	2	O'Hares Creek	23rd Dec	K. Mills
U	Grey Currawong	2	" "	23rd "	"
U	Pilot Bird	1	" "	23rd "	"
U	Cicadabird	numerous	Yadboro Creek	28th "	"
U	Grey Goshawk	1	Woonona	3 /11/22nd Jan	"
U	Rainbow Bee-eater	few	Appin	14th "	"
S	Common Koel	1	Woonona	18th Feb	"
U	Cicadabird	1	Balgowhie	18th "	"
S	Swamp Harrier	1	Toolijooa	21st "	"
U	Musk Duck	1	Towradgi Creek	1st "	B. & B. Hales
S	Lewin's Rail	2	" "	20th "	"
U	Buff-banded Rail	3	" "	7th Feb	"
U	Pacific Heron	1	" "	16th Jan	"
S	Australasian Bittern	1	Botanic Gardens	30th Jan	"

CONSERVATION QUANDARY.

As recent books have shown, birdwatching in foreign parts can be very enjoyable. But there may sometimes be problems.

While I was in Eastern Confusolia, I particularly wanted to see the Giant Skulking Ground-pigeon, which is found in that part of the world. The local representative of the Confusolian Society for the Protection of Birds told me roughly where to go, but warned me that the local Confusolians were equally divided between those who wanted protection for the species by concealing its location and those who thought that visitors should be encouraged to see the bird, so that the international publicity would ensure the species' future. The former would lie in order to misdirect me and the latter would tell the truth to show me the right way.

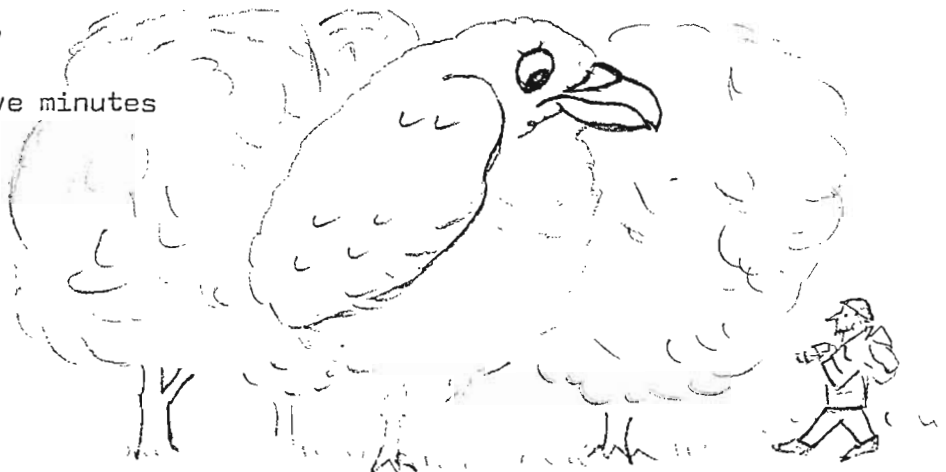
After many hours of driving, I was close to my goal, but I came to a fork in the road. An elderly Confusolian was sitting in the shade and I was just about to show him a picture of the target of my quest, the fabulous ground-pigeon, and find out which fork to take, when I realised that I had forgotten the Confusolian words for yes and no - one was 'yo' and the other 'nes' but I couldn't remember which was which. Neither did I know, of course, whether this particular Confusolian was a 'concealer' or a 'divulger'.

After a moment's thought, I asked the old man one question and he answered me with one word (either 'Yo' or 'Nes'); I then knew which way to go.

What question did I ask?

Expert solving time: five minutes

Answer next newsletter
if we solve it in
time!



I.B.O.C. NEWS

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NEXT MEETING - will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 13th May, 1991, commencing at 7.30 pm. This will be a Members Night which in the past has always proved to be a very popular and entertaining evening. It gives members a chance to show their own slides of birds or camps/walks attended or maybe a trip they have taken. Art, craft or any bird related activities can be shared with other members. So dig out those slides, old or new, bring along your photos or craft items or brush up on the poetry and help to make this a really successful night.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - as mentioned in previous newsletters and meetings the May outing is in the form of a weekend trip to Canberra. Laurie Williams now has the list of people taking part and arrangements are well in hand. Final details will be given at the May meeting.

MID-WEEK OUTING - The June mid-week walk takes place Wednesday, 5th, meeting at Bald Hill, Stanwell Tops at 8.30 am. Jack Hyslop will lead the walk which is at the Garrawarra State Recreation Area. Bring along your morning tea.

FILM NIGHT - Our second film night for the year takes place Saturday, 1st June, at the home of Barbara and Brian Hales, 39 Lake Parade, Corrimal East, starting at 7.30 pm. Two more excellent films will be shown. First, one of Osprey, showing his fishing skills, diving, at a splashdown speed of 70 feet per second, and also following the breeding cycle from the building of the eyrie to the perilous 3,000 mile journey back to the mangrove swamps of West Africa. The second film looks at the birds and wildlife in some of Britains reedbeds including the marsh harrier and the bittern. Don't forget to bring along your camp chair as we may need extra seats and a plate to share at supper afterwards. If you haven't been to a film night before do try and join us you will find it well worth the effort.

FROM THE EDITOR - Thankyou to all the people who have sent in extra bits and pieces for inclusion in the newsletter. Because we had to send out members lists this month the newsletter had to be restricted to six pages but have no fear your articles are greatly appreciated and will be used in future editions, please keep them coming in no matter how small or large.

APRIL MONTHLY MEETING REPORT.

We were fortunate to have that dedicated ornithologist and poet Graham Alcorn as guest speaker for the April meeting. Those who had been to the Piliga and Carcoar camps had experienced Graham's ability to find nests and knowledge of birds and we read the poems in the December news letter about the Piliga camp and the scribblygum moth. Since his retirement from the Blue Mountains City Council as head ranger, he has spent much of his time studying the breeding ecology of birds in the area, which includes filling in the mandatory RAOU nest record sheets and producing a small book of his poetry. It was therefore fitting that the talk was on bird breeding with some poetry.

Graham had a collection of used nests to illustrate some of the intricacies and characteristics of different nests to assist in the camouflage and thus the survival of the inhabitants from predators. This was followed by a series of excellent slides of birds and their nests with Graham explaining the principal used in each case for the nest and contents to blend in to the background. The Rose Robin nest looks like an extension of the lichen covered branch it is built on while thornbills build nests of different shades, light for those amongst reflective eucalypt leaves and dark for placing low down in the bracken. The reed warbler's nest is very deep which allows the parent to leave unattended in the wind without the eggs falling out while the Jacky Winter must sit tightly on the small platform nest out on a tree branch. The sitella as well as camouflaging the nest to look like a part of the upright dead branch that it is built in also approaches the nest from above and continues down the tree as if feeding normally. During the slides and the commentary Graham frequently paused to recite a poem, some very short, others a little longer, that he had composed to fittingly describe the bird, its ways or its habitat.

Jim Robinson gave the vote of thanks for the presentation of the wide range of quality slides plus the entertaining commentary that Graham provided which was seconded by all.

Chris Brandis.

KORRUNGULLA WETLANDS.

With the long hot spell in the district drying up many of the small dams in the area, Korrungulla has become a haven for water birds even though the water level has dropped about 600 mm. This has given the cassuarinas we planted a boost after being nearly drowned in the wet part of 1990 and most of the ones remaining are now over a metre tall and well on the way to being established. The highlight of the Summer was the breeding of the Little Pied Cormorants in casuarinas that the 100^s returning in the evening use for a roost site. About five nests were built and as of the 9th April there were five young birds that had left the nest and flown to the logs in the centre of the lake with two more still clambering about the nest tree.

During this time the track was not kept as open to keep the disturbance to a minimum. With the water in the ground and the abundance of sun the bush has grown well making the tracks a bit narrow in places. This will give us some work to do later in the year when it cools down a bit to thin the bitou and cut back the lantana. The bush bird population is doing well with Yellow-winged Honey-eaters and Red-browed Firetails abounding and if you are quiet the Little Grass-birds are quite tame. Ron Imisides is using this area for the RAOU Australian Bird Count study programme and already has a good list of both residents and visitors. Be prepared later in the year for a little gardening to help maintain the area.

Chris Brandis.

BUSY BIRDWATCHING ANSWER (April newsletter)

The bus to the sewage-farm arrives at the bus stop six minutes after the one that goes to the gravel-pits. So in each half hour there are 24 mins when the next bus due is the one that goes to the gravel-pits and only six mins when the next bus due is the one that goes to the sewage farm. I am therefore four times more likely to go to the gravel pits.

contd.....

MONTHLY OUTING REPORT APRIL.

On the 14th April, eleven members and two visitors met at the Vorwinden property at Foxground for our monthly outing. We parked on a flat, clear area, just off the road, where huge mushrooms grew, bigger and better than in mushroom farms, and cows grazed and horses galloped. On the edge of the clearing grew large Robinia pseudo acacias looking strangely alien in spite of their grey blue foliage. Here also were plum pines, red cedar looking very healthy and well formed, no tip moth in sight, sassafrass, stinging trees and pencil cedar, which isn't a cedar but a Polycias. There were also two large fig trees with small leaves and yellow fruit in great profusion.

Trudy Vorwinden and her two children led us through this rain forest area where we saw Eastern Whipbird, Grey and Rufous Fantail and Green Catbird. Up hill and down we went, alongside creek beds with little water in, past huge rocks covered in moss and liberally endowed with ferns such as bird's nest, hare's foot and kangaroo fern, all flourishing despite the drought. Towards the edge of this area we saw a mighty Red Cedar (which isn't a Cedar but a Toona) so big indeed that it took five of us to give it a hug.

Outside this rainforest area we came to where the land had been cleared generations ago. There was a derelict orchard with its enclosing rock walls, still in excellent condition, a graveyard overgrown with brambles containing the graves of some of Mrs. Vorwinden's forbears and the paving (sandstone) of an old dairy. Continuing on we passed three bunya bunya pines, ten years old and about eight feet in height, looking quite at home although well away from their area of origin. Presently we came to some logs most conveniently placed by the side of the track and here we had morning tea, entertained by the calls of the whip-birds and Lewin's Honeyeater.

Continuing on and escorted by young John Vorwinden we went up a wide track through an area of mixed eucalypts, some of them huge, all tall, straight and beautiful, past lyrebird scratchings, blue plectranthus, yellow everlasting daisies and Hibbertia Scandens doing its scrambling. On coming to a large clearing we decided it was lunch time so we sat in the middle of the cleared area in which thousands of what looked like Lilly Pilly seedlings were doing their tiny best to reclaim the area for forest, looked at the view, which extended through Pencil Cedars, Lilly Pilly and eucalypts to the sea and listened to the birds and watched large flocks of Silvereye darting about, saw a Golden Whistler, Wonga Pigeon and a lyre bird and of course talked.

Then we went up, up, up, along a wide firetrail which must have gone up at 35° to 40°, or so it seemed by this time of the day, through scatterings of Coachwood trees with their distinctive, sweet smelling bark, Red Cedars with their leaves yellow and falling (I said we went a long way up, the cedars where we parked the cars were still in full green leaf) past tree ferns and an occasional Cabbage tree palm and over little burrows about $\frac{3}{4}$ " across. These seemed to be permanent habitations as they were consolidated round the edges with fibrous vegetable matter - not webs, but no inhabitants were seen. What we did see however were leeches. We also felt them later. Large ones, small ones, some with red stripes and some without. Up to five on a shoe at a time. Yuk! However, as we must share the bush with all other creatures, after all we were the ones intruding into their territory and not the other way around, we can't complain - much.

We saw Red-browed Firetail, Grey and Rufous Fantail. The quicker walkers continued up to where there was a large rock overhang and into this was carved an emu foot and around it were faint drawings, too faint to be recognisable, a poignant reminder of a vanished culture and a dispersed race. The way back was downhill and we came back quicker than we went up. We were met by the senior Vorwindens and were given a look around Julian's workshop and saw slabs of cedar in colours ranging from the usual dark red to a bright yellow but all sweet smelling and a large slab of finely grained Silky Oak already polished, bits and pieces of old machinery and new, old stoves, both in working condition and not but all interesting. Many thanks to the Vorwindens for welcoming us to their property and to Laurie Williams for arranging the outing. In all we saw 35 species and had a delightful day. Thank you.

Peg Merritt. contd.....

EASTER CAMP 1991 - CARCOAR.

Our Easter camp 1991 was held at Carcoar on the mid-west highway, 11 km from Blayney. The village itself, with its history and the usual craft and coffee shops, provided us with an enjoyable stroll and browse in our spare time. This 19th century village, preserved by the National Trust, held a fascination all of its own with the church steeples guarding the sleepy village like sentinels and the bell of the church on the hill reminding us morning and night that time hadn't really stood still. Our campsite in the grounds of the showground was more than adequate with plenty of shady trees and town water close at hand. Over the period of our camp the numbers camping reached 34. I think the bell-toll must have drawn our Birds over the mountains as they straggled in each day. The weather was much kinder to us this year with most rain falling at night and lovely Autumn days.

Our daily walks took us to several properties in the vicinity, some being Wildlife Refuges. On Sunday we visited Cooming Park in the area which had been an iron-ore quarry. Surrounded by Radiata Pines around the rim not many species were sighted here but moving on further a few km on the property was more fruitful. Our hosts on Monday were Mr. & Mrs. Glasson who were also bird-watchers. They took us around the bird habitats on their property, Stanfield, starting with their lovely garden with its massive cold climate trees. This was of great interest to the garden lovers amongst us as many tree species were unusual ones that we had not seen before.

The ingenuity of our feathered friends was displayed when we viewed a scrub-wren's nest built right inside the front of the Glassons' tractor. A visit to Carcoar Dam on Monday afternoon proved fruitful for viewing waterbirds, about four or five species of duck were sighted.

Tuesday brought beautiful weather and a lovely morning walk and good bird sightings on the property Cooming Vale about 10 or 11 km out of town. The past was never far away on this camp. As we arrived at the entrance of the property the remains of the small village of Shaw were seen in the ruins of the old schoolhouse and a few headstones in what had been the cemetery reminded us that life was often very short for our pioneering forefathers and their children. We were rewarded with the sightings of quite a few species on this property including quite a few night herons.

The afternoon by contrast was spent back in the township viewing an old world garden inherited along with a beautiful old 19th century home Blenheim by Mrs. Anne Wilson. While the garden now shows many years of neglect because of the advanced age of its past and present owners, it still had beauty in its big European trees and old world roses and the yellow crocus coming into bloom defied the encroaching weeds and heralded the changing season.

We had the pleasure of looking through the old Catholic Presbytery, now the home of Betty and Colin Fitzell, Norma Alford's sister. Their 15 month ownership of this lovely home clearly reflects tireless energy as they add their personality and hard work to what has gone before in this 1877 home and garden. Afternoon tea on the sunny verandah was a lovely finish to a pleasant afternoon.

Wednesday saw a convoy of cars heading for "Penny Royal" the 1,000 acre property owned by Guy and Judy Fitzhardinge. Judy met us at the gate and pointed out the tree where the Superb Parrots had been recently seen - but alas for us after a long slow walk up the hills - no parrots. Next we viewed two Wedgetailed Eagles' nests in some tall gums. A ride on the tray of Guy's 4 W.D. along with the dogs was a great experience for some of our llocs. Waiting for the walking party to arrive we witnessed an unidentified raptor attacking a Crested Pigeon. Feathers flying he managed to escape capture by fleeing into the safety of a dense tree. On the return journey to the cars Sacred and Straw-necked Ibis, Black Duck and Black-fronted Plover were sighted on a small dam. Arriving back at the cars Gwen and Barbara informed us they had seen a Superb Parrot near the gate. Gwen and Barbara had rested while we went up hill and down dale looking for that bird - Oh well, that's life!

contd.....

EASTER CAMP CONTD.

After lunch we all met at the Cowra Japanese Gardens. The gardens are 11 years old and beautifully laid out using the natural topography of the hill and incorporating the large rocks. Seventy species of birds have been seen at the gardens including many migratory birds. A bird list is available at the kiosk.

Our usual gathering around the evening campfire finished each day where the days tally of bird sightings was told, a bit like the fishermen talking about the one that got away! No seriously we responsible I.B.O.C.'s only list birds seen! although a dead barn owl may be a bit suspect to some.

Thursday mornings walk took some of our birds to a public reserve a few km out of town - a pretty spot called Gold Pan Creek. True to its name it produced a speck of gold for Peg McKinlay, hope we don't lose her to gold fever.

Friday saw the break up of the camp as we straggled out in ones and twos and a few stragglers left on Saturday, the final count of 101 species of birds sighted proved a most rewarding camp for 1991.

Val Shurley, with help from
Olive Rodwell.

FASTER WITH THE BIRDS.

My husband and I went south for Easter in our caravan. On Easter Saturday we took an early morning drive from North Durras along a bush road which ends at the Lake. As the car coasted very slowly into a small valley we noticed on the track ahead three lyrebirds and a Wonga Pigeon. The pigeon vanished to the right but the lyrebirds remained walking ahead of us as we coasted for some 50 metres and then went off the track into wet sclerophyll forest to the left but remaining within sight about 5 metres from the track. They then doubled back and one ascended a eucalypt stump and gave his own call. They drew level with our car and then continued uphill. When they reached where we had seen them originally they crossed the road and began ascending three separate trees, jumping from bough to bough until they were about 8 metres from the forest floor, then they took off down into the valley on the right like glider possums. Shortly after they reached the valley we heard a full repertoire of calls and finally from the same place a Wonga Pigeon call. Is this lyrebird behaviour usual and do they often forage with Wonga Pigeons?

Joy Parker.

GARDEN NOTES.

The garden is not always the scene of tranquility. Last Spring I witnessed two currawongs divebombing a spotted turtledove, driving their beaks into its side. On my approach, instead of scaring off the attackers, one currawong lifted up the turtledove and flew away with it.

Later that afternoon, whilst putting out the milk bottles, I heard a very loud thump from inside the house. Rushing back inside I found that two currawongs and a magpie had driven a brown goshawk into the dining room window and as it laid stunned on the patio the attackers were going to continue their campaign 'til my arrival.

Mary Eskdale.

CONSERVATION QUANDARY. (April Newsletter)

"If I asked you whether the left hand fork is the road to take to see this bird, would you say 'Nes'?" (It doesn't matter whether the old man is a concealer or a divulger, or whether nes means yes or no, an answer of 'Nes' shows it is the right road and an answer of 'Yo' shows it is the wrong road.)

contd.....

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS - FEBRUARY/MARCH, 1991.

S Fork-tailed Swift	10 Gerringong	23 Feb	J. & G. Parker
U Skylark	1 Killalea Res.	8 Mar	"
U Kelp Gull	2 Shellharbour	8 Mar	"
S Powerful Owl	1 Bass Point	8 Mar	"
S Square-tailed Kite	1 Shoalhaven River	14/15 Mar	"
S Little Friarbird	1 Primbee	10 Mar	R. Imisides
U Kool	3 "	13 Nov/4 Mar	"
S Figbirds	1-6 "	Nov 90/ Mar	"
U White-fronted Chat	5 Killalea	31 Mar	G. Barwell
U Musk Duck	1 "	31 Mar	"
U Black-winged Stilt	5 "	31 Mar	"
U Grey Goshawk	1 Woonona	14, 20 Mar	K. Mills
S Logrunner	1 "	30 Mar	"
U Spangled Drongo	1 "	21, 26 Mar	"
U Black-winged Stilt	3 Berkeley	29 Mar	"
S Figbird	6 Port Kembla	9 Mar	U. Rodwell
U Peregrine Falcon	1 Nth Wollongong	9 Mar	R. Almond
R Black Bittern	1 Minnamurra	3 Jan	R. Simcock
U Stubble Quail	1 "	10-13 Jan	"
S Australasian Bittern	1 Jamberoo	28 Feb	"
S White-headed Pigeon	1 Minnamurra	21 Mar	"
U Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	17 Woonona	26 Mar	J. Pollard.

Comments.

Members are reporting new, or increased, sightings of some birds, notably honeyeaters such as Friarbirds, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater and Yellow-faced Honeyeater and Figbirds in the vicinity of their homes. Perhaps the dry months combined with bushfires have contributed to this influx of birds into our suburbs.

An unusual sighting of a BUSTARD near Robertson was reported by a member. How did it get there? An escapee? Perhaps a vagrant migration and, if so, it would be a first for the County of Camden. We would like to hear more.

Jim Robinson.

AN AFTERNOON IN THE GARDEN.

It is the third afternoon this week I have heard the short whistle. Hoping it is the male Golden Whistler, I go to check the source of the call. Disappointed I find it is the female. I wonder whether it is the same bird that used to come mid-afternoon last winter, if so does she follow the same route each day?

I decide to clean the bird bath and half a metre away is a blue peg. I assume the Satin Bowerbird has taken it from the peg-box four metres away but then I find a red peg further on. Does the bowerbird remove red pegs too?

Around the corner I go past a small collection of creamy excreta and a pellet of regurgitated material. I look up into the oak tree without success. Carrying some mulch down to the compost heap I suddenly jump out of my skin as the Southern Boobook Owl flies from its perch in the lemon tree two metres above the ground. During the past fortnight I know the owl has spent four days in the oak tree, one in the jacaranda. Where has he spent the other days?

I feel a lot happens in our garden. If only I could observe it all. Once I watched a bulbul hanging upside down flashing his red undertail coverts in front of its companion. Is this the usual courting behaviour?

Stop Press - a neighbour has found a pair of Tawny Frogmouths in her peppercorn. Do look around whilst you are gardening.

Mary Eskdale.

I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 144 JUNE, 1991.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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CLUB'S AIM

This is 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, Monday, 10th June, 1991, commencing at 7.30 pm. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Seth Isenberg, a young American exchange student from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Seth, a native of New Hampshire, is studying for a Bachelor of Science degree at the present time and upon his return to the U.S.A. hopes to undertake doctorate studies in ornithology. Those who have already had the pleasure of meeting Seth know just how enthusiastic a "Birdo" he is and his talk "Lifestyles of North American Birds" should prove to be extremely interesting and entertaining.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - This takes place Saturday, 15th June, to Calderwood, starting time 8.30 am. We will meet at the corner of Calderwood Road and the steep concrete road (where the power lines cross road) to the left, 2 - 3 km west of the junction of Marshall Mount Road and Calderwood Road. Travelling time from Wollongong about half an hour. Don't forget your morning teas, lunch, drinks, etc. The walk will be led by Ron Almond.

FILM NIGHT - The third film night for the year will take place at the home of Anne and Bill Scandritt, 266 Northcliffe Drive, Lake Heights, on Saturday, 29th June at 7.30 pm. Number 266 is on the corner of Northcliffe Drive and St. Cloud Crescent and it is advisable to park in St. Cloud Crescent rather than Northcliffe Drive. Bring along your camping chair if you have one and a plate to share at supper afterwards. This session will feature an award winning film showing the Robin in an ordinary British garden and loudly voicing his opinion on many issues including man and marauding moggies. Film No. 2 The Titmice is a captivating film showing the acrobatic lives of these resourceful little birds. If you haven't attended a film night before why not join us for an evening of first class entertainment.

MID-WEEK WALK - The walk for July takes place at the Guide Camp at Mt. Keira. We will be meeting outside the gates to the Guide camp at 8.30 am, Wednesday, 3rd July. Bring along your morning tea.

MEMBERS NIGHT 13th MAY, 1991

Once a year the club members show other members some of the interesting pastimes they have been involved in and they are appreciated by all, this night was no exception.

Ron Imisides showed slides of some of the birds that have been photographed in his yard, a yard that has attracted some notable records. The native plants in Ron's yard attract Fantailed and Shining Bronze Cuckoos, Scarlet and New Holland Honeyeaters, Boobook Owls, cheese eating Spangled Drongos to name a few. The number of small birds such as Red-browed Firetails have declined markedly since the arrival of those Pied Currawongs to Primbee but I am sure the garden will continue to attract the unusual.

Nola Williams gave us the history of the wall hanging her guild made that now hangs in the Performing Arts Centre. With Trudy Vorwinden as artistic advisor, 44 people worked on the project for nearly two years, all voluntarily. From the basic layout to the final sewn on figures representing the history of Wollongong the four by three netre hanging kept Nola busy for all that time and when finished the media did not even recognise their contribution to the City.

Doug Rickers showed us a range of slides from dozing kangaroos to basking crocodiles. The Irish dog carrier was eagerly copied by many hoping to adapt it to cats while some of the lighting effects were fascinating. Athol Coleman's slides were of some of the camps the club has held and even if a few get bogged we all enjoy them. He caught some of the members in relaxing poses, showed how the young birds that are learning from the actions of the adults and in general what the camps need to operate hygenically. Wally Hurst had drawn a lot of cartoons with a biro during the Clubs 1981 trip to Iron Range and with his commercial artistic background had these put onto slides. This was to bring back memories of some of those that had also been on the trip and show the rest of us his interpretation of the highlights with the little anecdotes we come to expect. Later in the evening Wal unveiled the "Cape Gerry Cuckoo", a realistic piece of driftwood that had character.

Len Klumpes showed us some of his excellent slides of birds including probably the last shot of breeding Little Terns in Wollongong. The shots of the Satin Bowerbird working in the bower were fascinating, why the Varied Sitella was called the Orange-winged Sitella, how to photograph a Noisy Scrub-bird when most of us cannot even get to see one plus many other interesting shots. Wendy Hanks showed some of her beautiful patchwork and Dora Lockrey her embroidered jumpers. All in all it was a most interesting and entertaining evening and all those who participated must be congratulated for giving us a little insight into their hobbies.

Chris Brandis

BOURDA STATE RECREATION RESERVE.

On 3/4/91 we were at Bourda State Recreation Reserve and in the afternoon we walked down from Lake Bourda to Lake Bondi. On the way back we saw a whipbird ahead of us feeding in 70 cm undergrowth at the base of a eucalypt tree on the edge of the track. It had no white on its throat, tail or lower abdomen. We watched it through 10x40 Zeiss binoculars at 30 metres and then through a 25 power telescope. Another whipbird had been there when we first noticed the special bird but we did not get a good sighting. We watched for two minutes before the bird moved off. It did not call. Birding is excellent at Bourda but as the birdlist covers three parks we had a number of sightings not on the list and some on the list seemed unlikely for Bourda.

Joy Parker

contd.....

MAY' OUTING.

Our outing this month was a special treat. It was a weekend trip to Canberra including an overnight stay at the Canberra Motor Village Motel, two half day walks and an evening meal together in the motel restaurant. On Saturday afternoon we visited the Australian National Botanic Gardens which were opened in 1970 by the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. J. G. Gorton. The gardens occupy 90 hectares on the lower slopes of Black Mountain of which 40 hectares are planted with Australian flora gathered from field trips all around Australia. We followed the White Arrow Walk which took us through the Rain-forest Gully. Here the temperature dropped 5° celcius and the humidity doubled to 84% (there is a display board showing the respective readings). We continued through the Rockery and around the lower slopes of the gardens. Best sightings here were the Satin Bowerbird, Blackbird, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Crescent Honeyeater and Rose Robin.

After returning to the motel we had plenty of free time before meeting for our meal together. What a great idea that was! I think we all appreciated not only the meal but the company. We have some enthusiastic bird watchers in our ranks. Feathered birds sighted around the motel included Speckled Warbler, Grey Currawong, Scarlet Robin and White-winged Chough (fed by Barbara).

Sunday morning was an early start and we were well rugged up in the cold misty air. Bruce Lindenmayer, President of the Canberra Club, was our guide for the morning. First he took us to Campbell Park where we walked through open woodlands dominated by Eucalyptus blakelyi (Blakely's Red Gum) and Eucalyptus melliodora (Yellow Box). A short walk brought us to an area where Brown Tree-creeper seemed to be all around us. Further up the slope we came to another spot which simply abounded with bird life - Scarlet Robin, White-plumed Honey-eater, Speckled Warbler, Golden Whistler, Hooded Robin, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Rufous Whistler, White-throated Treecreeper, Crested Shrike-tit, Striated Pardalote and White-eared Honeyeater. They were all around us. It was so exciting.

Our second venue for the morning was Jerrabomberra Wetlands. On the way there Bruce sighted a dead Barn Owl beside the road. We all stopped to admire the beautiful creature whose last resting place will probably be in the Canberra Museum. The wetlands is Canberra's prime waterbird area. It is well furnished with a carpark, two hides and good paths. Here we saw Coot, Black Duck, Purple Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Black-fronted Dotterel, Double-barred Finch, Little Grassbird, Little Black Cormorant and Australian Crake. We had lunch on a grassy hill overlooking the water with a view of Parliament House to one side. The sun came out and the day warmed up and we started seeing the raptors. Two Australian Goshawk played high above. Then we witnessed a Little Eagle harassing a Black-shouldered Kite. A Peregrine Falcon and an Australian Goshawk flew about near them.

The Canberra Sewage Ponds are just across the road so of course we had to go there. The top pond had about 500 birds on it - Coot, Little Grebe, Chestnut Teal, Grey Teal, Pink-eared Duck, White-eyed Duck, Southern Shoveller and Black Duck.

We had a wonderful weekend with good birding and companionship. I would like to thank Laurie and Brian for their organisation and Bruce, Pat and Graham from the Canberra Club for guidance and friendship. Our total species for the outing was 82. We all agreed we must repeat this type of outing.

Olive Rodwell

ERRATA - ILLAWARRA BIRD COUNTS.

Count No. 13, 31.10.87, Newsletter No. 109.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper 24 should read 25
Mistletoebird 34 should read 35
Total individuals 14460 should read 14462

Kevin Wood

contd.....

A plain "no frills" account of my association with two particular birds in my life - an absolutely TRUE account in each case.

THE CONVERSATIONALISTS.

The first encounter took place in 1951 in Launceston. In a large cage, placed near the door of a delicatessen shop, was a very handsome Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. As my friend and I approached I put my hand out toward the bird saying "Hello Cocky". He replied "Hello" but at the same time he put his head to one side and eyed off my finger. "You wouldn't bite me would you" said I. "Nooooooooo" was the long drawn out reply - but before I could say "Kiss my foot" or some such saying, he had my finger firmly in his beak. "You cow!" I said. To make matters even worse, after reclaiming my finger with much difficulty (blood-stained as it was to become) he went into peals of sardonic laughter which continued until we were almost out of ear-shot! That taught me something - probably not to trust handsome males.

The second meeting took place in 1952 in Perth Zoo. Walking, unchained, around the railing of an internal garden fence, was a most dilapidated, near-naked Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. My friend and I had bought a bag of broken biscuits for feeding the birds. "Hello" he said. I replied "Hello Cocky - would you like a biscuit?" Quick as a flash he asked "Got a peanut?" Me - "No I haven't". Anyway, I thought I may as well offer him a biscuit which he took eagerly and apparently enjoyed. Me, "Oh, you do like biscuits?". His reply was "Why not!" A young boy and his dad came along whilst we were still captivated by this naked bit of bird flesh. After the preliminary exchange of "Hellos" they offered him peanuts to which our entertainer replied "Thanks". I was half expecting him to say Grace!

Dora Lockrey.

ERRATA - ILLAWARRA BIRD COUNTS.

Count No. 7, 29.5.82, Newsletter No. 55.

Brown Warbler 47 should read 45
Eastern Spinebill 63 should read 61
Magpie 176 should read 186
Total individuals 18646 should read 18652
Text should read 61 species in Mt. Keira sub-area

Count No. 8, 30.10.82, Newsletter No. 59.

Spur-winged Plover 101 should read 151
Total individuals 16490 should read 16546

Count No. 9, 28.3.83, Newsletter No. 65.

Red-whiskered Bulbul 61 should read 57
Variegated Wren 16 should read 11
Total individuals 22867 should read 22829

Count No. 11, 26.5.84, Newsletter No. 75.

One team Dapto sub-area should read two teams

Count No. 14, 2.11.85, Newsletter No. 90.

Brown Warbler 107 should read 77
Total individuals 13824 should read 13794

Count No. 15, 31.5.86, Newsletter No. 95.

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater 18 should read 19
Total individuals 19116 should read 19117

Kevin Wood

contd.....

WINDOW SHOWS.

Having served in various capacities in the people industry for about twenty-five years I derive more and more pleasure from studying the behaviour of non-humans, offsetting the frustrations of trying to solve people problems. Observing bird behaviour in particular has been a catharsis for me, producing much amusement: for the birds' characteristics and antics are more detached for me from the daily round of human activities, even though the differences between bird and human behaviour are often as fine as filaments of a feather.

The enlarged windows installed in our Thirroul home, just under two years ago, have proved a big plus for bird study, affording a wide-angle vision of the birds without disturbing them, somewhat like the observation of the fish from the tunnel walkways through the aquarium at Darling Harbour or Manly.

In addition to the trees and shrubs in the garden, food and water have been big drawcards for the birds, particularly during the long, dry and hot spell of summer into autumn. A seed feeder and water container at the back bring members of the psittaciformes in front of the kitchen window, while a bread board and bird bath attract Satin Bowerbirds, Pied Currawongs and small passerines before the lounge window.

As you would expect, the kitchen side is much noisier than the front, especially when the King Parrots squabble among themselves; yet, they are ranked third in the pecking order. Rainbow Lorikeets reign supreme, followed by the Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and last in the line-up are the Crimson Rosellas. For a time Little Corellas were in charge, with fleeting visits from Galahs. Other producers of cacophony have been the fledglings in their demand for regurgitated sunflower seed from their parents. We humans would probably have wilted under such pressure from our children. Further sounds of protest used to come from the adult cockies in confrontation with our cat until a compromise was reached, favouring the former.

There has been less jostling for position for a drink or a wash at the bath than at the feeder, although there are signs of a pecking order and that some birds are quicker than others to take the plunge. The Yellow Robins tend to waltz round the edge, often trying to ward off other bathers, whereas the Brown Thornbills seldom hesitate for a dip or a drink. The Eastern Spinbills usually saturate themselves the most but only after several dives into the water and flights between bath and surrounding foliage. The Lewin's Honeyeaters tend to bignote themselves but it's the Yellow-faced Honeyeaters who seem to benefit most from the ablutions. The unassuming bath visitors have been the White-browed Scrubwrens and Grey Fantails, and, just before settling down to type this article, I was thrilled to see for the first time a Rufous Fantail, dancing round the base of the bird bath and flicking wide its beautiful fan before taking delicate sips from the water.

From early last September until mid-November the front and side bedroom windows were targets for the stabbing beaks of a Brown Thornbill and a pair of Superb Blue Fairy-wrens, mostly independent of each other but sometimes together and always with a burst of song. So often when the tap-tapping heralded their presence, Thomas Hardy's short wistful poem 'Something Tapped' came to my mind, although his window-knocker was a pallid moth.

At the first encounter, I thought the thornbill had its claws caught up in the window frame, for it hung unceremoniously upsidedown from the top, pecking furiously at the glass. Later it developed the knack of hanging on to the wirescreen, perhaps to give it a different perspective of its reflected antagonist. Meanwhile, the male wren gave me much amusement whenever it performed its 'kettle dance', on tiptoe it would bounce up and down, circumventing the aluminium kettle, with a ribbon plant growing in it and standing on the barbecue plate for decoration, and stabbing its reflection. How often have we humans made attacks upon ourselves, be it in selfreproach or drug or alcohol addiction, I have mused.

I hope that in the future I don't get rated out of our northern suburbs home and so be able to continue enjoying the window shows each of the bird visitors perform for me.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS. MARCH/APRIL, 1991.

U Pink-eared Duck	10	Tallawarra	7 Apr	G Brandis
U Australasian Shoveller	4	"	7 "	"
U Rose Robin	1	Port Kembla	24 "	"
U Mongolian Plover	1	Windang Beach	24 Mar	"
U Rose Robin	1	Albion Park Rail	3 Apr	G. Barwell
U Leaden Flycatcher	1	" " "	3 "	"
U Australasian Shoveller	6	Killalea Lagoon	31 Mar	"
U Musk Duck	1	" "	31 "	"
U Black-fronted Plover	6	" "	31 "	"
U Black-winged Stilt	5	" "	31 "	"
U White-fronted Chat	5	" "	31 "	"
R Pacific Baza	1	Upper Causeway RNP	3 Apr	K. Mills
U Crested Shrike-tit	1	" " "	3 "	"
U Bassian Thrush	1	Minnamurra Falls	4 "	"
S Spangled Drongo	1	Woonona	7,9,30 "	"
U Spotted Quail-thrush	2	Callala Beach	17 "	"
U Large-billed Scrubwren	1	Woonona	28 "	"
S Spangled Drongo	2	Seven Mile Beach	24 "	J. & G. Parker
U Grey Goshawk	2	Bulli Lookout	16 "	"
U Grey Currawong	1	Fitzroy Falls	25 "	"
U Gang-gang Cockatoo	20+	Mount Ousley	25-30 "	J. Robinson
R Cockatiel	1	Nth Wollongong	1 May	L. Williams
U Rainbow Lorikeet	5	"	1 "	"

Comments - It is always a satisfying moment to sight a bird not previously seen around the home. Quite a few members are experiencing this pleasure judging by comments at the last two meetings.

There is little doubt that Gang-gang Cockatoos are on the increase within the Wollongong District with numerous sightings reported and several instances of flocks of up to 20 birds or more. The most unusual sighting for the month was a Cockatiel at North Wollongong observed by Laurie Williams.

Jim Robinson.

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome the following new members:

Mr. Seth Isenberg,
International House,
P.O. Box 1144,
Wollongong, 2500.

Phone 299711

Mr. Kevin & Mrs. Fae McGregor,
10 White Place
Figtree, 2525.

Phone 713762

please add their names to your list of members together with Lindsay Smith and Kevin Wood who are late renewals.

ERRATA ILLAWARRA BIRD COUNTS.

Count No. 16, 1.11.87, Newsletter No. 99.

Wonga Pigeon 12 should read 14

Total individuals 13201 should read 13233

Number of species in Mt. Keira subarea 88 should read 89

Kevin Wood



NEW SOUTH WALES BIRD ATLASERS

A guide intended to monitor the distribution of Australian Ravens in New South Wales

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

Information: Stephen Debus
Illustrations: Ken Schaefer.

Large, glossy black birds with 'cawing' voices, eyes blue-grey (fledgling), brown (juveniles) or white (adults). All five N.S.W. species are identical in colour, differing in size, shape, voice, length of throat hackles, behaviour and ecology.

CROWS: _____
white bases to feathered
of head and neck.

Small; short bill and legs, short throat hackles.
Voice low-pitched, flat, hoarse, nasal, monotonous ('quacking')
Dry country in far west. Little Crow

(plebeid effect when preening or ruffled
by wind)

Medium-sized; short throat hackles.
Voice high-pitched, very nasal ('honking')
North Coast - Tablelands, inland to N.W. Slopes. Torresian
Crow

Note: Juvenile crows may have grey bases to feathers.

Medium-sized; medium-length throat hackles Little Raven
Voice low-pitched, flat, guttural, harsh.

RAVENS: _____
Grey base to
feathers of head
and neck.

Large; medium-length throat hackles Forest Raven
Voice very deep, rich, powerful. (Ruler Raven)
North Coast - Northern Tablelands.

Large; long throat hackles (prominent when not erect) Australian
Much bare skin on chin. Raven.
Voice high-pitched, child-like, wailing.

QUICK REFERENCE: PAGE NUMBERS

Atlas Number	691	692	954	868	930
	LITTLE CROW				
	TORRESIAN CROW				
	LITTLE RAVEN				
	FOREST RAVEN				
	AUSTRALIAN RAVEN				
<i>Peakers Sigat</i>	580	581	579	579	578
<i>Mc Donald</i>	485	485	486	486	485
<i>Alister</i>	1974 1986	295 334	295 334	294 334	294 334
<i>Piggery</i>	408	409	408	407	406
<i>Caley</i>	148	148	145	145	146
<i>Simpson & Day</i>	270	270	270	270	270
<i>Atter</i>	647	648	646	645	644

This identification guide for
RAVENS AND CROWS (CORVIDS)
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I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 145 JULY, 1991.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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

CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TEEN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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CLUB'S AIM

This is 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, Monday, 8th July, 1991, commencing at 7.30 p.m. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Dr. Antonio Salvadori, one of our overseas members who lives in Canada. Toni will be back in Australia, on holiday this time, and he has kindly offered to share his experience of "Birding on top of the world" with us.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - This will be to Mount Keira on Saturday, 13th July. We will meet at the Mount Keira Look-out car park, Mount Keira Road, at 8 a.m. Be sure to bring your morning tea, lunch, drinks, etc. for the day.

MID-WEEK WALK - The August mid-week walk takes place the 7th August, to Werong Beach. Meet at Bald Hill, Stanwell Tops at 8.30 a.m. and bring your morning tea. Our leader will be Jack Hyslop.

FILM NIGHT - Our fourth and final film night for the year will be at the home of Barbara and Brian Hales, 39 Lake Parade, Corrimal East, on Saturday, 27th July, at 7.30 p.m. We hope to have film of Australian Parrots to show you. Please bring along your camping chair if you have one and a plate to share in supper afterwards.

JUNE MID-WEEK OUTING REPORT. The group attending the mid-week outing met at Bald Hill at 8.30 a.m. on a very wet morning. Under the leadership of Mr. Jack Hyslop they were led to Helensburgh Railway Station where the walk began into the Garrawarra State Recreation Area. We crossed the railway line and followed the road to a picnic area where the fire trail led off the road and finally finished back at the station making a round walk. The rain stopped shortly after leaving the station but the sun didn't shine until some time later. It was difficult to identify birds in the dull light although there were a lot of birds about, the Yellow-faced Honeyeater outnumbered the other species by far. This beautiful area is situated on Hawkesbury sandstone with a thin but varied topsoil which prevents the eucalypts from reaching their normal robust potential in many places. This habitat is suited to the many banksia and many carried their abundant flower heads erect attracting the many honeyeaters to the area. It was well worth braving the earlier heavy rain because the whole area was made even more beautiful when the sun appeared and transformed all the water droplets on the vegetation into hundreds of rainbow coloured fairy lights.

Mid-Week Walk contd.

Other vegetation included various wattles, tea tree and the occasional casuarina and there are patches of heath. Some of the birds recorded were the Grey Shrike-thrush, Eastern Whipbird, Golden Whistler, Eastern Yellow Robin, Satin Bowerbird and Lewin's Honeyeater.

Horace Ward.

JUNE MONTHLY MEETING REPORT.

It was a wet, miserable night but thirteen staunch members arrived at the Fai y Meadow Hall to hear new member Seth Isenburg talk about some of the birds of North America. Seth is currently studying for his science degree and is working in an exchange capacity at the University of Wollongong for a few months before returning to America to continue in a doctorate in the ornithological field on Puffins in the North Atlantic. His home in the north east about New York has a very different birding scene to our area as many of the birds leave for the winter and return again in the spring, moulting into their breeding plumage and filling the woods with song.

There are many representatives of the sparrow family, many similar in looks but inhabiting their own special niche. Warblers are another family that have many look-a-like species that forage in the upper most canopy for food, it is like having thirty-odd species of thornbill about the forest. Most of these little birds breed, fatten up and then migrate to the Caribbean or Central America for the severe northern winter.

Many of the birds hold similar niches to those of Australia, like the black and white warbler that feeds like a sittella, the shrikes that hang their prey about their territory like butcherbirds do or the Blue Jay that is a more brightly coloured member of the crow family. Their kestrel is also similar but has beautiful grey wings while the night hawk is very similar to our night jays. Probably due to a higher small mammal population, the number of raptors and owls is higher than for Australia but generally total variety is less, even more so in winter.

The Club thanks Seth for giving us a good insight into some of the American birds with the help of slides, generously supplied by David Fischer, a night well worth the effort. Seth is off to Cairns this month and we wish him all the best in topping his U.S. species tally with some of the tropical species, the weather there will certainly warm him up before his stint on a Puffin Island.

Chris Brandis.

SCALY THRUSH MORTALITY AND MOVEMENTS.

During April and early May, 1991, Scaly Thrush (or Australian Ground Thrush), were reported in suburban gardens and other localities where not usually found. In addition, during the two weeks 21st April - 4th May, 1991, I know of five birds found dead after having flown into windows, apart from others that were killed and/or eaten by domestic cats in gardens.

I suspect that these movements were not only the usual movement from the highland forests in late Autumn to the warmer lowlands but also the movements out of the coastal rainforests and wet gullies due to the extreme dry conditions pertaining to the Illawarra, Central and Hunter coastal areas. I would therefore welcome any information from people about unusual sightings, dead birds etc., of Scaly Thrushes during April and May and also advice as to whether the birds subsequently disappeared following the rains that commenced after 11th May, 1991. If there is sufficient information I intend publishing a paper on this unusual phenonoma.

Alan K. Morris, 1 Wombat St.
Berkeley Vale NSW 2259

JUNE FIELD OUTING REPORT.

On a fine, dull, winter's morning, twelve members of the I.B.O.C. met at Calderwood for our monthly outing. After a bit of complicated car shuffling we set off on our walk along a road-firetrail. Up, up, up went the firetrail and up, up, up we trailed.

Our first sighting was a Grey Fantail followed by a Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Grey Thrush and a Golden Whistler. We saw lyrebird scratchings and from quite close by we heard their noisy, protracted and complicated calling. They were in fine voice and went through quite a long repertoire of songs. We were accompanied on our walk by Leo Wynnum, one of the land owners whose property we passed through. Leo pointed out items of interest that we may otherwise have missed.

We wandered in and out of small patches of rain forest, dark and quiet, with figs, cedars, cabbage tree palms and stinging trees and then through open grazing land complete with cattle, lantana and blackberries. We crossed a small landslide and dodged through a boggy area caused by the 400 mm rainfall dumped on the area a short time previously still draining off the hills. When we were able to stop watching where we put our feet, we could look down the Calderwood Valley across the lake to Wollongong, a truly delightful view.

Presently the trail changed direction and we were going up Johnson's Spur, one of the many routes suggested and rejected as a replacement for MacQuarie Pass. We had morning tea on a narrow saddle on this spur and had the view to Wollongong on one side and on the other, far down in the valley, Tongarra Road leading to MacQuarie Pass and from the top of the cliffs a waterfall tumbled down. There was not a breath of wind to disturb a leaf while we were there - a most unusual state of affairs I should imagine for this area.

We continued upward at a steady grade through gates as we entered different properties. We I.B.O.C. members are very law abiding. We not only abide by the laws of the land but by the laws of physics, including the one that says "what goes up must come down", and as we had been going up consistently all morning, we now had to come down, which we did, much quicker than we went up. We came straight down through tall eucalypts and a ground cover of wild raspberries - some in flower and some with fruit ready for eating, showing up bright red against the prevailing dull green. The birds here were not keen on being seen but the scenery was great compensation.

We came to a stile which we climbed, passed a dam, blocked by a landslide, and were in the bull paddock. The bull eyed the bird watchers and the birdwatchers eyed the bull but all remained peaceful. By the side of a creek which we paddled through was a small timber house, quite new but built in the style of long ago, surrounded by old lichen covered stone walls and here also were huge fig trees with great buttress roots, very large cedars, stinging trees, a few cabbage tree palms and lilly pilly's and cheese trees carpeting the ground with their fruit. In this large area of rain forest at the foot of the escarpment the rainfall over the recent wet period was 1115 mm. Rain forest indeed. We had lunch sitting on the bridge in this area with water thundering over huge rocks with moss, lichen and ferns, some light green, soft and delicate, others dark and leathery, huge dark trees and monkey vines and one large lantana.

Your correspondent provided a little entertainment by stepping into some quicksand. I thought I'd sunk down to my waist but when I was assisted out by Jim Robinson I found sand only up to my ankles - amazing! Continuing along the road we smelt pigs. Quite a while further on we saw pigs. Our day was made even more enjoyable by a sighting of a large flock - at least 40 - of King Parrots and then an even larger number of Crimson Rosellas.

contd.....

June field outing contd.

We followed a winding road down and each bend allowed us a glimpse of a different view. The clouds remained high and the ridge clear and it was excellent walking weather. We arrived back at the cars in due course after a most enjoyable day.

Our thanks to Ron Almond and Jim Robinson for surveying the route and leading the walk. We saw cows, bulls and pigs, some everlasting daises belying there name by being quite dead, 36 species of birds and a couple of leeches and had a lovely day.

Peggy Merrett.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS.

S Lewin's Rail	1	Woonona	11	May	J. Pollard
U Crested Pigeon	3	Korrungulla Wetlands	24	Apr	R. Imisides
U Rose Robin	1	" "	24	"	"
R Tawny Grassbird	1	" "	28,31	May	"
S Little Friarbird	1	Primbee	5-	14 Apr	"
U Rose Robin	1	"	9-	30 May	"
U Barn Owl	1	"	10	"	"
S Fig Bird	1	"	18	Apr	"
S White-headed Pigeon	1	"	20	"	"
U Musk Lorikeet	50+	"	30	"	"
R Black Bittern	1	Fairy Creek G.Ville	1	Jun	D. Winterbottom
U Black-winged Stilt	1	Gerringong	3	May	J. & G. Parker
S Little Eagle	1	Bombo	10	"	" "
S Little Raven	6	Gerringong	16	"	" "
S White-headed Pigeon	2	Foxground	27	"	" "
S Striated Heron	1	Gerroa	25	"	" "
U Varied Sitella	12	"	25	"	" "
U Fuscous Honeyeater	4	"	25	"	" "

Comments. John Pollard picked up a Lewin's Rail killed by a cat. Another unusual sighting was a Black Bittern in Fairy Creek on the western side of the railway - sighted by David Winterbottom.

Jim Robinson.

"Fowls, by winter forced, forsake the floods and wing their hasty flight to happier lands" - Dryden.

Below are two stories based on reports in a recent issue of the Australian bird banders magazine (Corella. Vol. 15 No. 2, May '91, Pp 44,63,64.)

In Nov. 1957 a female Short-tailed Shearwater (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) was banded while incubating an egg in a burrow on Fisher Island in Bass Strait. She was missed in 1958 but in every subsequent year to Nov. 1988 she was found in the same burrow. She was missed in 1989 but found dead at the banding place in Dec. 1990, 33 years after banding. In that time she had only two known mates (59 to 72 and 73 to 88), she produced 23 chicks and eight of these chicks were recaptured on Fisher Island. The Short-tailed Shearwater is the Muttonbird which nests in huge numbers in burrows on the Bass Strait islands (a recent estimate suggests about 11 million adults) and which, each year between breeding seasons, undertakes a figure eight trip through the Tasman Sea and Pacific Ocean, touching on Japan and Alaska on the way then back to the same burrow in Bass Strait. About 160,000 of these birds are taken legally each year from the Bass Strait islands for their flesh, oil and feathers. In April, 1966, a male Wandering Albatross (*Diomedea exulans*) was banded by French banders on Crozet Island in the Indian Ocean. It was recaptured in July '89 off Bellambi by club member Harry Battam - 23 years after banding and about 8,000 km away.

Dave Thomson.

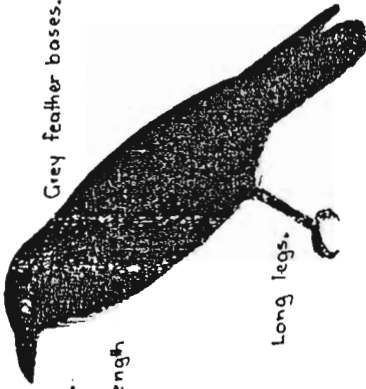
Flat head.

Massive, strongly arched bill.

Grey feather bases.

Medium length hackles.

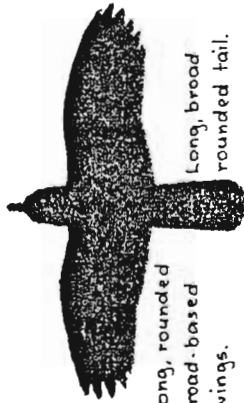
Long legs.



Large and ponderous in flight.

Flight heavy and laboured.

Pairs or single birds soar in spirals. Glides lazily on noticeably drooped, 'fingered' wings.



Long, rounded broad-based wings.

Long, broad rounded tail.

Habitat: Tablelands, escarpment and beaches in northern N.S.W. Often in or near tall eucalypt forest.

Calls: Very deep, harsh, measured 'karr..karr..karr..', sometimes with a dying finish. Has rich, far-carrying quality, 'rolls its R's'. Delivered in flight (aerial wing-flick display), or from high perch in special posture like Aust. Raven but with tail more exaggeratedly depressed.

Habits: Localised and less gregarious than Little Raven, does not perform stationary wing-flip display. Solitary or in small groups (less than 10). Nests solitarily in tall trees.

* NOTE: McAllen and Bruce (1988) separate this corvid as an all-species of *C. tasmanicus*, renaming it the RELICT RAVEN, *Corvus bipicus*. For further details, refer "The Birds of New South Wales, A Working List", p. 69.

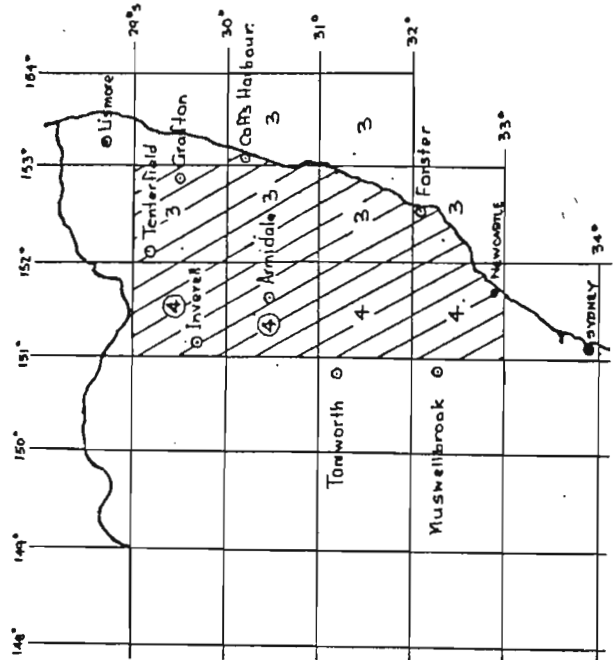


Forest Raven calling. Tail depressed.

Information from Atlas No. 868

3 = Species of Corvids reported in 1° grid.

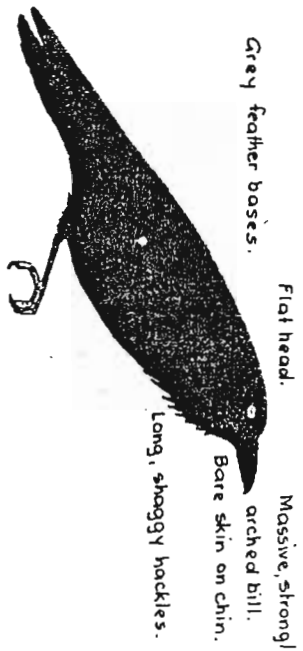
Reporting rate < 40%



AUSTRALIAN RAVEN

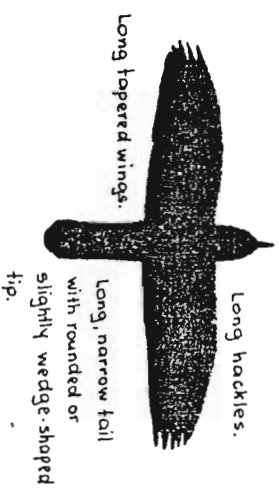
930

Size: Large.
50-56cm.



Large, rangy build.

Glides on almost level, 'fingere'd' wings.



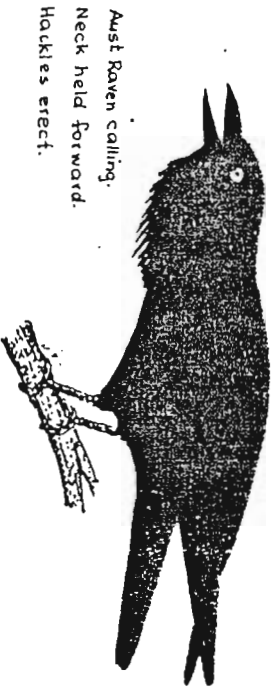
Habitat: Characteristic of sheep country but widespread. Absent or rare on far north coast.

Calls: High-pitched child-like 'aah... aah... aah...' delivered slowly, with drying finish. Given in flight (aerial wing-flick display) or from high perch with neck stretched forward and long hackles erect. Other high wailing calls.

Habits: No special behavioural characteristics, but does not perform stationary wing-flip display like Little Raven, nor 'currawong flight' or wing shuffling of Torresian Crow. Long hackles usually obvious. Extensive bare skin on chin may be visible, especially in juveniles (pink). Solitary or in small groups (usually less than 10). Nests solitary in tall trees.

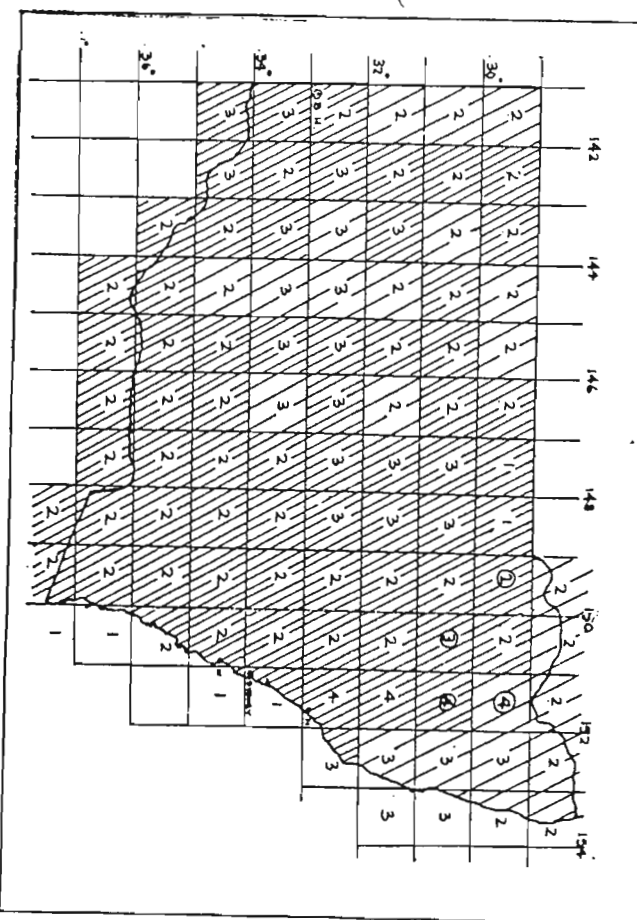
CORVUS CORONOIDES

930



Information from Atlas No. 930.
2 = Species of Corvids reported in 1° grid.

Reporting rate < 40%.
Reporting rate > 40%.



Size: Medium.
50-55 cm.

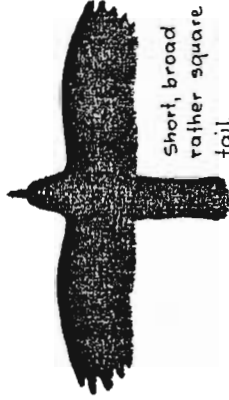
Medium bill.

Short hackles.



Short tail, level with wings.

Compact and blunt-winged in flight.



Short, broad rather square tail.

Often glides lazily on noticeably drooped wings.

Habitat: Characteristic of cultivated areas (grain crops) north of the Hunter River and inland to North-west slopes.

Calls: Most commonly a monotonous, high pitched, very nasal 'uk-uk-uk-uk...' of more than 3 notes, sometimes ending with slower prolonged notes.

May call from a high perch with neck stretched forward, short throat hackles erect. Also a harsh, snarling 'arr-arr-arr..' with slower dying finish in territorial conflicts, given in flight (aerial wing-flicking display) or special posture on perch, with hackles erect.

Habits: Often shuffles its wings several times, cuckoo-shrike style, on alighting. Performs 'curawong flight' display with single note 'owk'. Often gregarious but does not perform co-ordinated aerobatics. Groups may be large (tens) but lack cohesion of Little Crow flocks. Nests solitarily in tall trees.



Torresian Crow calling. Neck held forward.

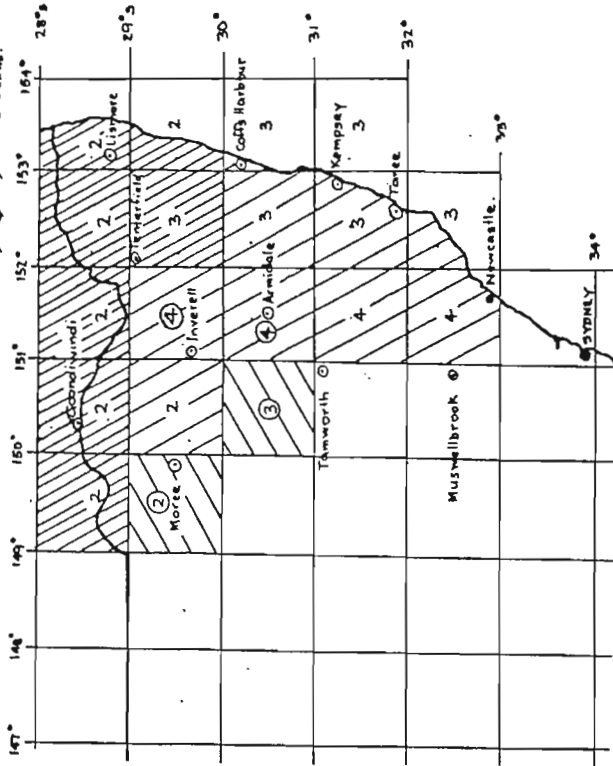
Information from Atlas No. 692.

2 = Species of Corvids reported in 1° grid.

Reporting rate < 40%

Reporting rate > 40%

Additional Records S. Oaking.



Grey feather bases.

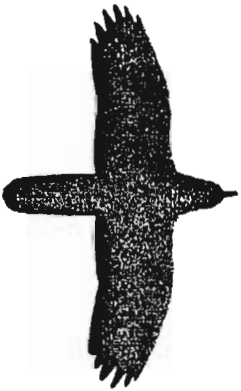


Slender bill.
No bare skin on chin.
Rather short hackles.

Size: Medium.
45-50 cm.

Smaller and neater than Australian Raven + Forest Raven.

Flight more rapid and agile than Australian Raven + Forest Raven.



Similar in shape to Aust. Raven but smaller, more compact, shorter hackles.

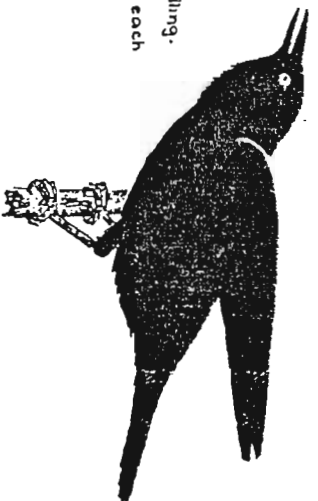
Habitat: Occurs over much of N.S.W., except extreme north-west and north-east, but characteristic of alpine areas, inland sheep country.

Calls: Series of rapid staccato, deep guttural barks 'ark-ark-ark...' No special posture, but perched birds often flip both wings up with each 'bark'. Other deep, harsh calls include dying finish like Australian Raven and Forest Raven.

Habits: Gregarious, nests semi-colonially in low trees. Forages in chough-like groups. Flocks soar and perform co-ordinated aerobatics. Often in large groups (tens to hundreds).

6.

Little Raven calling.
Wing flip with each 'bark'.



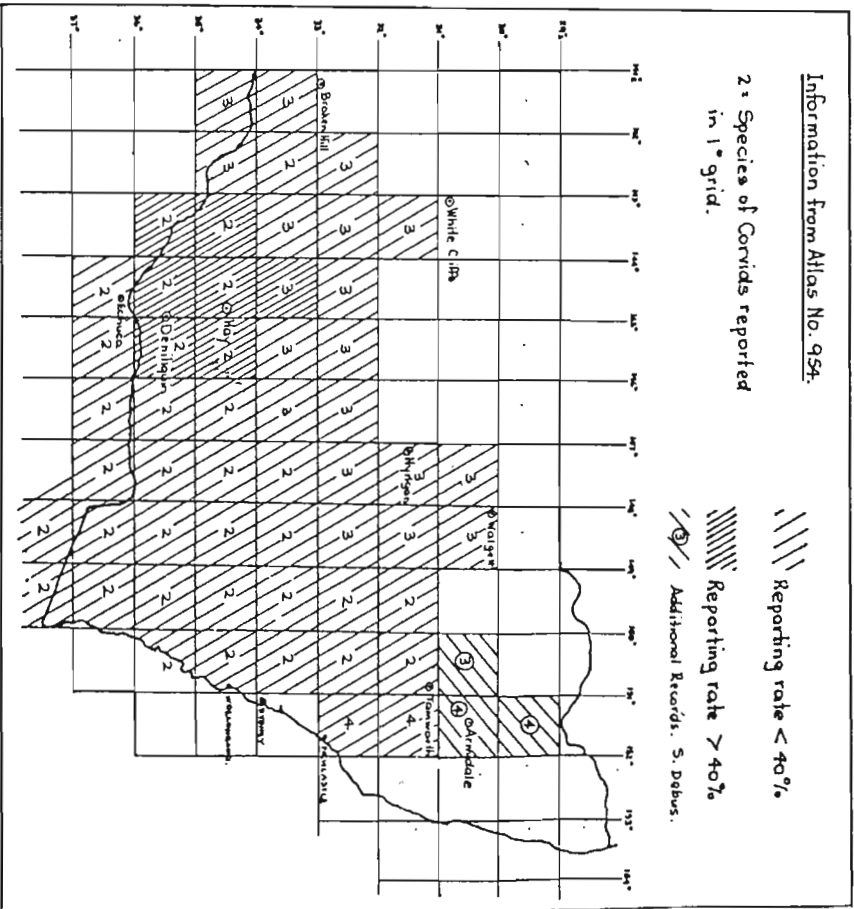
Information from Atlas No. 954.

2 = Species of Corvids reported in 1° grid.

Reporting rate < 40%

Reporting rate > 40%

Additional Records. S. Debuss.



7.

I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 146 AUGUST, 1991.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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

CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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CLUB'S AIM

This is 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, Monday, 12th August, 1991, commencing at 7.30 p.m. The evening will include a special showing of slides taken by a well known local photographer, Ellis McNamara.

NEXT FIELD OUTING - The August outing is to Berry, Sunday, 18th August. We will meet at the Berry Beach Picnic Area at 8.30 a.m. Turn off the highway at Omega Station, travel south through Gerringong then on past the Geroa Camping Ground, a few kilometres on turn left at the crossroads into the Berry Picnic Area. You will need to take a carry lunch and gum boots if we have had rain prior to the outing. The leader for the excursion will be Barry Virtue. Please do not be late as we will be driving off from the meeting place to park the cars at another area prior to starting the walk.

SEPTEMBER MID-WEEK WALK - For the September walk we will be paying another visit to the Girl Guides Camp at Mount Keira on Wednesday, 4th September, 1991. We will be meeting outside the gates to the camp at Mount Keira Road at 8.30 a.m. Bring along your morning tea.

MID-WEEK OUTING REPORT - The mid-week in July was attended by fifteen members meeting at the main gate of the Guides Camp on Mt. Keira Road at 8.30 a.m. on a rather dull morning when the sun only just managed to peep through the clouds only very briefly a couple of times. We walked through the camp until we reached the track to the chapel, which we visited to have a look around. The birds were few and difficult to see in the dull light but, in the beautiful, sheltered rain forest area nearby, the Superb Lyrebird and Eastern Whipbird were heard calling very frequently throughout the morning, also the Wonga Pigeon and Lewin's Honeyeater. Rejoining the road, we walked on to where the Ant Hill Track turned off and led through the rain forest on the hillside above the road and came out above the far end of the grassed area. Making our way back we paused at the Amphitheatre, which is set out with crude log seats, while we had a cup of tea. While quietly sitting here the Grey Fantail, Australian Raven, Spotted Pardalote and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo were observed. A group of about ten Superb Fairy-wrens went through the undergrowth at the other end of the Amphitheatre and some Brown Gerygones passed through the trees overhead. From there we made our way back to the entrance, passing away a very pleasant morning during which we observed or heard a total of twenty five species.

MONTHLY OUTING REPORT, JULY.

On July 13th, a clear, sunny, windy day, ten I.B.O.C. members and one visitor met at Mount Keira for our monthly walk. Before starting off we went to show our visitor, Hans from Germany, the view from the lookout and what a view it was. The air was pristine in its clarity. It was as if Port Kembla had never discharged a puff of smoke and the motor car had never been invented. Our visitor was impressed. So were we!

Our first sighting was of three Gang-gang Cockatoos busily having their breakfast in the tall Eucalypts at the lookout and after we'd had a good look we set off along the road and commenced our walk around the Ring Track in a clockwise direction.

We passed through a rain forest area, the lyrebirds busy going through their repertoire, the leaf litter soft underfoot and the leeches doing as leeches always do and on into an area where the only ground cover was lantana. This upsurge in lantana was a result of the 1968 bushfire destroying the tree canopy and allowing the interlopers to colonize the sunny, bare ground conditions now available, but as nothing in life is static so too the regenerating rain forest cuts out the sun and so weakens the lantana and life goes on, each species seeking its place in the sun or the shade as dictated by nature.

There were many red cedars here. Some with green leaves, some with yellow falling leaves and a couple of large ones bedecked with their bright pink new spring raiment. What confused cedars. It's been a bit warm at times but not that warm. In a very large patch of lantana (from tropical America) there grew a large (25-30 feet high) broad, round domed tree, with largish light green leaves and with large bunches of bright, small purple flowers or perhaps fruit at the end of each branchlet. Is it a native or another foreigner? None of us knew.

Further on the lantana gave way to Japanese knotweed (from India), a large clump of pampas grass (South America) and crofton weed, crofton weed and more crofton weed. The canopy here was Lillypilly with purple fruit and Lillypilly with white fruit and Sassafras completely covered with small white flowers looking like orange blossom but smelling as only Sassafras can.

Until now the track had been surprisingly dry but now came the boggy bit. Fortunately, however, there were wide, long planks laid over the worst of it. We had morning tea on the track in a patch of rain forest which was very dark after the open areas we had been traversing and here was no ground cover except leaf mulch, fern and moss. All this time we had been going down the mountain, now we started going along the eastern side and along a flat - Geordies' Flat, so called because of the miners from Durham who worked the Mount Keira Mine at one stage and lived on this bench.

The trees here were mainly Blue Gum and Bangalay and a cross between the two, the main distinguishing feature of which seems to be that it is the favourite diet of the lerp insect. Here also we saw golden fungus caught in stray sunbeams and a white fungus that resembled the club moss (which isn't a moss but a fern) which had been painted with white-wash, the long deserted nest of a Yellow-throated Scrubwren, more foreign weeds, periwinkle (Europe), ginger (India), Indian Shot (not from India but from the West Indies), and Arum Lillies (from Africa), escapees from miners gardens perhaps? About the only pests missing were Bitu bush and Fireweed - Just give them time.

At various places along the track the views were delightful and were an added bonus. Presently, on the southern side of the mountain, we came to the fig trees, three huge and beautiful small leaved figs, *Ficus obliqua* (syn *erigenaides*) possibly looking much the same today as when Major Thomas Mitchell surveyed this, the original Mt. Keira Road, in 1834. This was also the original track up which the early cedar getters carried their pit sawn planks to Appin or Campbelltown. I know cedar is a light wood but ----- and sometimes we think we have it hard!!! Convicts built this road in 1835 and it remained in use until 100 years later when the road we now know as Mt. Keira Road was built during the depression.

contd.....

Monthly Outing Report, July, contd.

Beneath these trees, some thoughtful soul had built a table and benches and here of course we sat and rested in dappled sunshine and watched the birds, Golden Whistler, male and female Satin Bowerbirds, Brown Warbler, Eastern Spinebill and Lewin's Honeyeater and, to our visitors delight, we heard some Kookaburras nearly split their sides with laughter.

After we'd sat and looked for about half an hour it was lunch time so then we sat and looked for another half hour while we had our lunch ----- excellent organisation. After this delightful interlude, we continued up through rain forest and sclerophyll to the Scout Camp where there were too many people to be too many birds but even so before we arrived back at the cars we saw Spotted Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, White-throated Treecreeper and a pigeon, the species of which was the subject of much debate but no decision.

In all we only sighted 22 species but we had a lovely day. Many thanks to all concerned.

Peg Merrett.

JULY MONTHLY MEETING REPORT.

The guest speaker for the evening was member Toni Salvadori, well known to members in 1984/85 when Toni worked at the University and enlivened the lives of IBOCers. Toni's talk was on his experiences birding at the top of the world, the Himalayan Mountains, where with two other scientists with a National Geographic grant, they climbed to around the 7,000 metres mark. Throughout the trip Toni took photographic slides of the people and places he experienced on the way and during the evening we were privileged to a most interesting and entertaining talk.

The group started at Delhi, India, where there are wall to wall people, travelled by bus, rickshaw and bus again to a town where they hired a jeep to drive to the end of the road. Unfortunately, much of the supplies broke out of the bags and were lost and so they decided they could live off the land and its people as much as possible and pressed on. By hiring porters, often every few days, they started out at about 2,000 metres and started to climb up the valley. At first the land was heavily cultivated and the people had used most of the trees for firewood, making bird life scarce. The bird life changed continually and was most prolific as the population dwindled and the pine and fir belt was traversed. Donkeys were used to carry much of the equipment and caravans of traders continually passed, often over dirty looking snow covered fields, narrow ledges and rickety flying foxes over raging mountain torrents. Even at heights approaching 5,000 metres there were birds such as snow finches and buntings while vultures circled over head.

At the very highest altitudes sheep were used to carry the gear as even the hardy locals found the going tough. The people along the way lived in composite villages and at times had little to spare in the way of food. The women wore the family wealth as silver, gold and precious stone ornaments and the harsh life made the average life span about thirty five years, but they were happy and had little interest in money, hard to come by trinkets were the currency here. The highest pass was about 7,000 metres and at this point the view was astounding with white snow, rocky peaks jutting up through fluffy clouds and glaciers starting the journey down.

To get down the other side they slid on their bottoms several kilometres with the sheep galloping after them. At this point the villagers were unable to supply food and did not want them even camping near by, so for four days they lived on boiled grass and weeds. Finally they made it to town where food was available and Toni became a celebrity being an academic, he gave a talk to the school where several translators retold the words in several dialects. With time running out they finally ended up in Srinigar, the Venice of India, and then home. The information Toni obtained on the bird life and the insect life by one of the other members of the group all were put to good use and the adventure was well worth listening to and watching. Laurie Williams gave the vote of thanks and wished Toni well on his next trip that was up to the Kimberlies and around Australia over the next four weeks.

Chris Brandis.

contd.....

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS.

S Australian Bittern	1	Wingecarribbie Reeds	25 May	C. Brandis
S " "	1	Shellharbour Sewerage	26 May	"
U Australian Shoveller	60	Killalee	26 May	"
U Gang-gang Cockatoo	32	Wollongong University	all May	C. Chafer
S Powerful Owl	1	Bass Point	all Jun	"
R Tawny Grassbird	1	Comerong Island N.R.	5 Jul	"
U Peregrine Falcon	1	Lake Heights	4 Jul	"
S Little Eagle	1	" "	6 Jul	"
S Striated Heron	1	Port Kembla Harbour	8 Jun	"
C White-faced Heron	150+	Minnamurra Spit	30 Jun	J. Jenkins
U Sooty Oystercatcher	9	Continental Baths	3 Jul	L. Williams
U Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	20	Keiraville	29 Jun	R. Almond
U " " "	"	6 Kiama	1 Jun	K. Mills
U " " "	"	5-16 Curramore	16,21,23,29 Jun	"
R Red-rumped Parrot	3	Yallah	11 Jun	"
U Flame Robin	2	Mittagong	13 Jun	"
U Black-winged Stilt	6	Dunmore	18 Jun	"
U Grey Goshawk	1	Helensburgh	18 Jun	"
U Azure Kingfisher	1	Mullet Creek	21 Jun	"

Jim Robinson.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP LIST.

We welcome Mrs. Nona Kelly as a new member whose address is 327 Princes Highway, Gerringong, 2524, Phone Home 341041 Work 322081.

Please note the following new addresses:-

Seth Isenberg, 12 Water Street, Lisbon, NH03585 USA.

Ronald & Joy Smart, 3 Joseph Mitchell Place, Woonona, 2517, Phone 835246.

Don & Vera Rodgers, 42 Vermont Road, Warrawong, 2502.

Fred Ramsay has renewed his membership and his address is as follows:-
3550 N.W. Glenridge Place, Corvallis, Oregon 97330 USA.

BIRD IDENTIFICATION SHEETS.

Over the last couple of years we've reproduced in our Newsletter sets of identification sheets for several groups of birds, these reproductions being from the newsletter of the N.S.W. Bird Atlassers (we're members) and with their kind permission. The Atlassers are now making available these sheets separately for anyone who might want to buy them. The full set covering Owls; Frogmouths/Nightjars; Raptors Vols. 1,2,3&4; Corvids can be bought for \$6 inc. postage (or individual volumes for \$1 inc. postage) from Don Howarth, "Ferndale", Fremantle Road, Via Bathurst, N.S.W. 2795.

Dave Thomson.

BARREN GROUNDS COURSES. Phone 042 360195 Jean and Jack Baker.

NEWS

Oct. 4th to 7th (long weekend) Denise Black & Leo Candy, Wildflowers of Barren Grounds, Cost \$180 (fully catered).

Sep. 6th to 8th, Fred Spiteri, Steve Wilson & David Brown, Raptors & Rehabilitation, Cost \$130 (fully catered).

Rain is always a newsy topic. After a very dry Spring, Summer and Autumn, Winter arrived and with it, more than a metre of rain. On Thursday, 6th June the rain-gauge collapsed from the shock of over 100 mm of rain. Twice in the week that followed, the 150 mm gauge was overflowing in the morning. In the 24 hours to 0900hrs on Tuesday more than 250 mm fell at the Warden's residence. By this time a notice had appeared in the window of the Jamberoo P.O...."Those who are praying for rain are now requested to direct their prayers to other needy causes".

I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 147 SEPTEMBER, 1991.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

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NEXT MEETING - Will be held at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on Monday, 9th September, 1991, commencing at 7.30 p.m. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Steve Pople. After being similarly employed in the Blue Mountains Steve came to our area six years ago to take up a position as Curator of the Wollongong Botanic Gardens. Steve is also a keen "birdman" and over the years he has watched the trees and plants mature attracting various species of birds to the gardens. His talk tonight will be "Birds at the Botanic Gardens".

NEXT FIELD OUTING - This outing to the Royal National Park will take place on Saturday, 14th September. Meet at the railway car park on the eastern side of Waterfall Station at 8.30 a.m. The walk will be via the National Park to Heathcote. You will need to carry your lunch and other necessities for the day. Please be on time as we need to put some cars at the other end of the walk. Our leader for the day will be Mr. Jack Hyslop.

MID-WEEK OUTING - The next outing takes place Wednesday, 6th November and will be to Frere's Crossing, George's River Nature Reserve. Drive to the beginning of the road changing to four lanes to Campbelltown, from Appin, and turn right into Woodland Road meeting there at 8.30 a.m. Bring along your morning tea. Mr. Jack Hyslop will also lead this walk.

PLEASE NOTE - Owing to the two camps that are held in October we do not have an October Club Meeting, Field Outing or a Wednesday walk and the newsletter will not be published.

DONATIONS - The National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife is requesting interested people to sponsor pages in one of the next four books. The cost is \$300, it is tax deductible, your name goes under a photograph and is listed in the alphabetical list of donors. Anyone interested please contact Chris Brandis.

AUGUST MONTHLY MEETING.

With the late cancellation of the speaker for August Brian did a great job in organising the evening's entertainment.

Don and Vera Rodgers provided fifteen slides taken by Len H. Smith of some of the birds, flowers and animal life of Victoria, all of very good quality. Brian had hoped that Len would be able to address our next meeting but due to unforeseen circumstances he has had to decline our invitation.

Brian had managed to obtain slides from Ellis McNamara, a renowned local photographer from the fifties and sixties. Although some of the slides were affected by age very little detail was lost. The overall photographic quality and range of bird species were excellent, covering local, tropical and inland species, resulting in a very interesting evening. They included top shots of four quail-thrush species, all the chats including the Gibber Chat, a large range of thornbills, many of the honeyeaters including the elusive Black and the nomadic Grey-fronted Honeyeaters. There were many of the parrots including the Double-eyed Fig Parrot and the Varied Lorikeet, many of the wrens, a lovely shot of the Black-backed form of the Splendid Wren as well as many other species of rare and common birds indicating that Ellis had travelled extensively in his earlier years. A little interpretation in the names used on some of the birds was provided by some of the members who had been bird watching from the earlier times when a gerygone was a warbler and a Brown Falcon was a Brown Hawke, all changes intended to rationalise and confuse us.

All in all it was a most entertaining evening with many species on my "to be ticked off" list and giving me itchy feet. Thanks to Brian for such good organisation at short notice and to Ellis for lending the slides to the Club.

Chris Brandis.

AUGUST MID-WEEK OUTING.

For the August mid-week outing, ten members met at Bald Hill and drove to Otford Lookout for a walk down to Werong Beach. The weather was cold and windy on the top of the escarpment at the lookout but in bright, sunny conditions the walk to the beach was warm on the easterly slope protected too by the tall trees. It was a rough track and steep in many places, made up with rocks and logs as steps to make it accessible on the steep sections and an occasional large tree with its large roots across the track. There must have been a lot of hard work building the track on such a steep slope.

We began at 9 a.m. and returned at noon. The bush there is beautiful with a variety of eucalypts and many quite large trees with palms scattered all through making up the main part of the tall vegetation with wattles, lantana, reedy grass and ferns. The birds were constantly calling through the morning, some of which were the Lewin's and Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Pied Currawong, Little Wattlebird and Brown Thornbill. In a waterhole just off the track a Little Pied Cormorant was observed and a pair of Spotted Pardalotes were perched in a small eucalypt a few metres off the track and appeared to have a nest in the bank just under the track. When the group arrived at the beach a White-faced Heron was feeding on what appeared to be the flies around a wallaby carcass lying on the sand (very tasty no doubt). There was a group of Topknot Pigeons sighted in the trees near the beach. This beautiful area presented a variety of habitat on the steep slope, incorporating a deep gully within the escarpment leading down to the beach. The birdlife was abundant and active making a very interesting and pleasant walk.

Back at the top the view of the ocean was clear which revealed some Silver Gulls, Australasian Gannet and a number of Crested Terns on some rocks on the shore. For the morning we observed a total of 32 species.

Horace Ward.

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CLUB MEMBER - DAVE WALSH 1913 - 1991.

Most of us from time to time take advantage of the magnificent lookout at Mt. Keira Summit Park, perhaps to show off 'Wonderful Wollongong' to overseas visitors or for a little personal edification to reassure ourselves that despite the daily chores and hassles 'down there' at ground level, we should not forget how lucky we are to live in such a lovely natural setting. A short walk around the western rim of the summit will bring you to Victoria Rock Lookout with a vantage point southwards to the Five Islands, Illawarra Lake, Mt. Kembla and beyond. Tucked in around the corner and largely hidden under a canopy of thriving rainforest trees is the Mt. Keira Scout camp. The most direct route between the two is via the Dave Walsh Track, a short steepish walk through tall turpentine trees which brings you out on the Mt. Keira Road, directly opposite the entrance to the Scout Camp.

The Dave Walsh Track was marked out in 1983 as part of the Illawarra Escarpment State Recreation area and named in honour of Dave Walsh. He and his family and other locals had used this as a route to the summit. Warden of the Mt. Keira Scout Camp for 42 years from 1941 to 1983 he and Marion had raised three sons and three daughters in this beautiful area.

Dave, who has been called Illawarra's 'original greenie', was a co-founder of the Illawarra Natural History Society and a foundation member of the South Coast Conservation Society. He was associated with environmental and conservation issues in the district, particularly the long term proposal for an Illawarra Escarpment Park and was one of the original trustees of the Illawarra State Recreation Area. He was also the catalyst for the formation of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club.

The W.E.A. course on ornithology, tutored by Doug Gibson in late 1976 was nearing completion but certainly not 'winding down'. Those of us whose interest had been encouraged and inspired were wondering 'where now?' For weeks we had been turning up at the Corrimal Street building; later to be known as the Marion Walsh Building in remembrance to Dave's wife for her commitment to the work and aims of the Workers Education Association; getting more and more interested in the birdlife around us. It seemed a pity to see such a developing interest curtailed at the conclusion of the course. It was Dave Walsh who encouraged those of us in attendance to think about continuing our gatherings in a different format and was able to offer his support and guidance. He arranged further access to the rooms at the W.E.A. for us to meet again while an ad in the Illawarra Mercury (27.1.1977) stated 'First meeting of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club to be held Tuesday, February 1, 1977 at W.E.A., Corrimal St., Wollongong'. An 'internal' circular to those who had attended the W.E.A. class said 'At this meeting we will be formulating plans for the activities of the group, so we are looking forward to an interesting and rewarding evening' - that we got and lots more to follow!

It was not Dave's role to be heavily involved in the running of the club, he was already fully committed in many local activities, with family and friends and of course in his twenty-four hour a day job at the Scout Camp. However the Club and its members were always made welcome to observe the birdlife at the Mt. Keira Scout Camp, which had already adopted the Lyrebird as its emblem, and on Sunday, 31st July, 1977 met at 6.30 a.m. at the Scout Camp with lyrebirds in our minds if not in our sights! On a later occasion discussion centred on the possible initiation of a Scrub Turkey breeding program at the Scout Camp site in an effort to reintroduce the birds to the area although this matter was not pursued.

Dave was keenly aware of the successful start and continued development of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club and was always willing to share his local knowledge and experience for the benefit of the Club and its members. A recent publication by Kevin Mills, 'An Historical and Ecological Study of the Five Islands' acknowledges the records and field work done in 1961, 1967, 1969 and 1976 by Dave Walsh. The fact that this information was recorded and kept at this time shows the interest and foresight that Dave Walsh had in the need to record the ecological picture for the historical record, ecological study and future planning and conservation.

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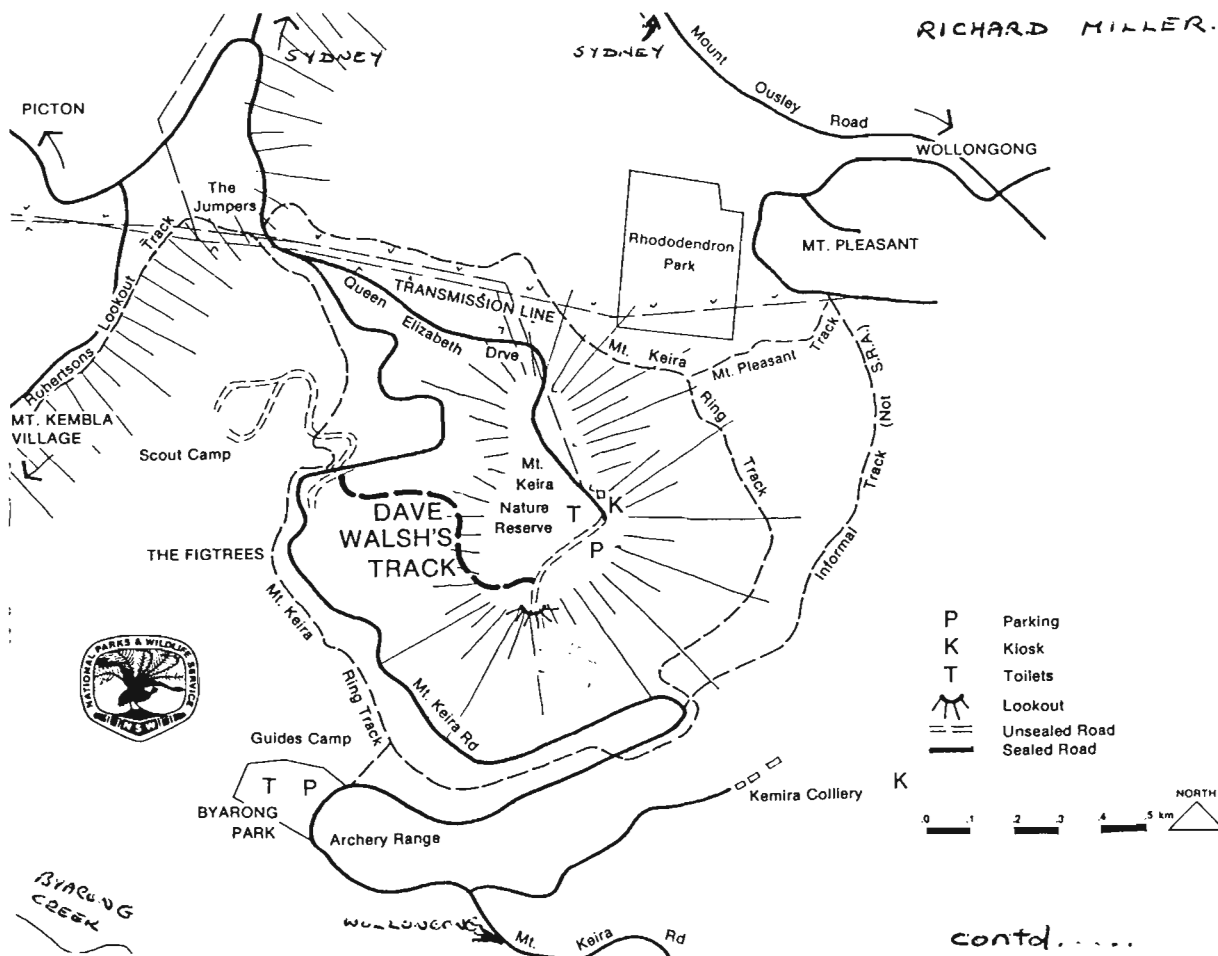
Shortly after retiring from the Scout Camp and moving to Coniston Dave lost his marriage partner. He kept himself very busy, not only in the Illawarra where he had many friends and was still heavily involved in conservation and environmental matters where his local knowledge and expertise were continually sought after, but also continued to explore and enjoy Australia and overseas, go bushwalking, canoeing and sailing and through his interest in the Scout Movement.

Dave Walsh, a former Bondi lifesaver and surfboat oarsman, has had a life full of experiences. He met Lord Baden Powell at a scouting event in Victoria in the 1930's, and set off with other Rover Scouts on a round the world sailing trip which included breaking a mast whilst in the Red Sea - the nearby Arabian and Egyptian deserts not being the ideal environment to search for a replacement! On arrival in London the crew were interviewed as part of the worlds first T.V. broadcast ever made and later found themselves forced to stay on in London by the outbreak of the Second World War. An unexpected bonus to Dave was that he met Marion, then a school teacher in London.

Over recent years Dave has been involved writing a book about his sailing trip aboard the Zjawa III and associated experiences. He heard last year that the same boat was still afloat and made contact with the current owners arranging to join them to go to a sailing Jamboree in Poland. This would have provided him with material for the last chapter in his book. Sadly while in Europe pursuing this goal just a few weeks ago Dave contracted pneumonia and died in Rotterdam, bringing his story to a premature close. Sadly too Dave will not be able to share in the grand celebrations planned for November to mark the 50th year of Mt. Keira Scout Camp, his absence will bring sadness to all who wished to share this occasion in his company.

Our Club members will regret the loss of a true 'local character' who really knew how to get the most from life.

Next time you are near Mt. Keira with a little time to spare take the walk known as The Dave Walsh Track. Dave would be happy just to know that others were taking the opportunity to enjoy the local environment which he had the foresight and drive to work towards being set aside for the benefit of Nature, the Illawarra, and ourselves.



AUGUST OUTING.

Sixteen members met at the Seven Mile Beach car park at 8.30 a.m. on a beautiful winter's morning. Some car-pooling took place and we set off under the guidance of Barry Virtue to our first destination, a large pondage area, off Beach Road, created by a sand quarrying operation which is still in progress at the northern end. On completion of quarrying this area will become a wildlife reserve and should create a good waterfowl habitat adjacent to the National Park. Chestnut Teal and several other species of water birds were sighted at the regenerating southern end of the pondage. A New Holland Honeyeater perched on a dead branch at the top of a 25 metre eucalypt created some interest, unusual to see this species perched so high. Perhaps it was enjoying the early morning sun, although it looked as though it wouldn't be long before some raptor would be enjoying an early morning breakfast. Several sightings were made on the return to the cars, the most interesting of which was a Collared Sparrowhawk being buzzed by other birds.

From the ponds we drove to Moeyan Hill where we left the cars at the commencement of the 11 km return walk to Seven Mile Beach. The track led uphill through a corridor of eucalypt forest bordered on both sides by small rural properties. Quite a lot of sightings were made along this section some of which were White's Thrush, Varied Sittella, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Golden Whistler and Eastern Whipbird. We emerged from the forest and walked down a connecting section of road again through rural properties. Sightings along the way included Satin Bowerbird, Noisy Miner, Grey Butcherbird, and, as we left the road for the walk to Coomonderry Swamp, Musk Lorikeets, managing to conceal themselves very well amongst the foliage of a eucalypt tree.

Richard's Pipit, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Red-browed Firetail and a Marsh Harrier overhead were added to our list as we crossed the open paddock to the swamp. First sighting at the swamp was a Royal Spoonbill. Diana Wright remarked that there should have been two as she usually sees a pair in this area. Further on, a pile of large white feathers deeper in the swamp left us wondering if the spoonbill had fallen prey to some predator. A pair of Australasian Shovellers were sighted and a Cattle Egret with a wing tag was observed, the number duly recorded by Diana to be passed on to the relevant banders. We walked for some distance through farmland bordering the swamp with one brave soul testing if the electric fences were active as we approached each one. Eventually a break in the melaleucas provided a wider view over the swamp and this spot was unanimously voted as the lunch spot. Whilst some enjoyed the picnic watching the Black Swans and other waterfowl others patrolled the melaleucas turning up the Azure Kingfisher and Rose Robin.

Lunch over, we crossed a small creek via a 4" log, a good place to have had a hidden video for the Christmas meeting. Immediately we were in a changed habitat of eucalypts and banksias with a low shrubby ground cover. The birds changed with the habitat as we found ourselves amongst Little Wattlebirds, Noisy Friarbirds, spinebills and the normal collection of thornbills etc. that inhabit these areas. From here we crossed over Gerroa Road to the dune area behind the beach, the taller forest giving way to the hardy tea-tree thickets guarding the more delicate forest plants from the prevailing salt laden winds.

Out on the beach we walked a kilometre back to the car park, the only sighting being a White-bellied Sea Eagle.

In all, seventy-seven species were sighted, illustrating the value of habitat variation. Surprisingly the Silver Gull was not recorded.

Thank you Barry for guiding us through a varied and interesting walk.

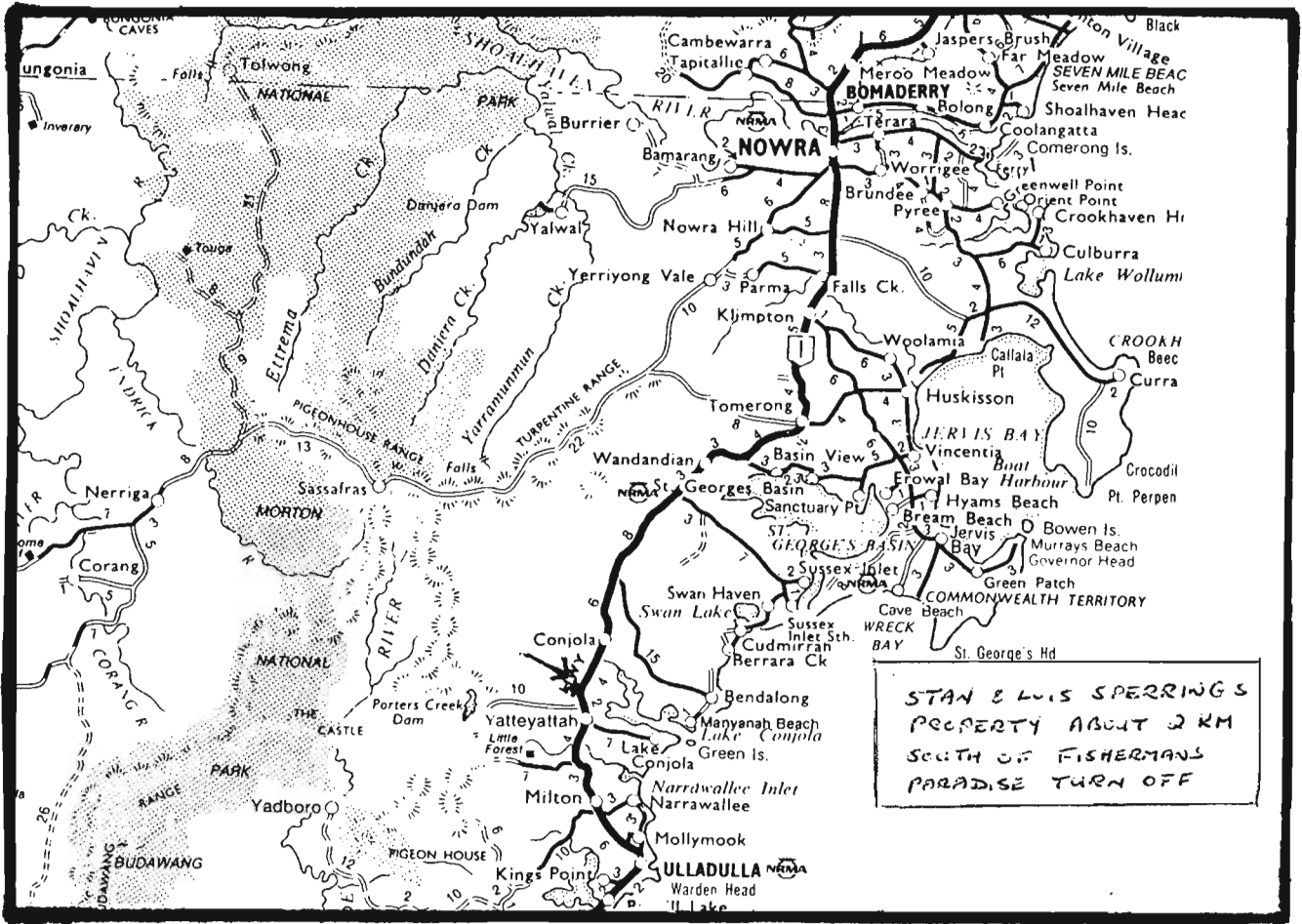
Wal Emery.

OCTOBER FAMILY CAMP - 5th to 7th OCTOBER.

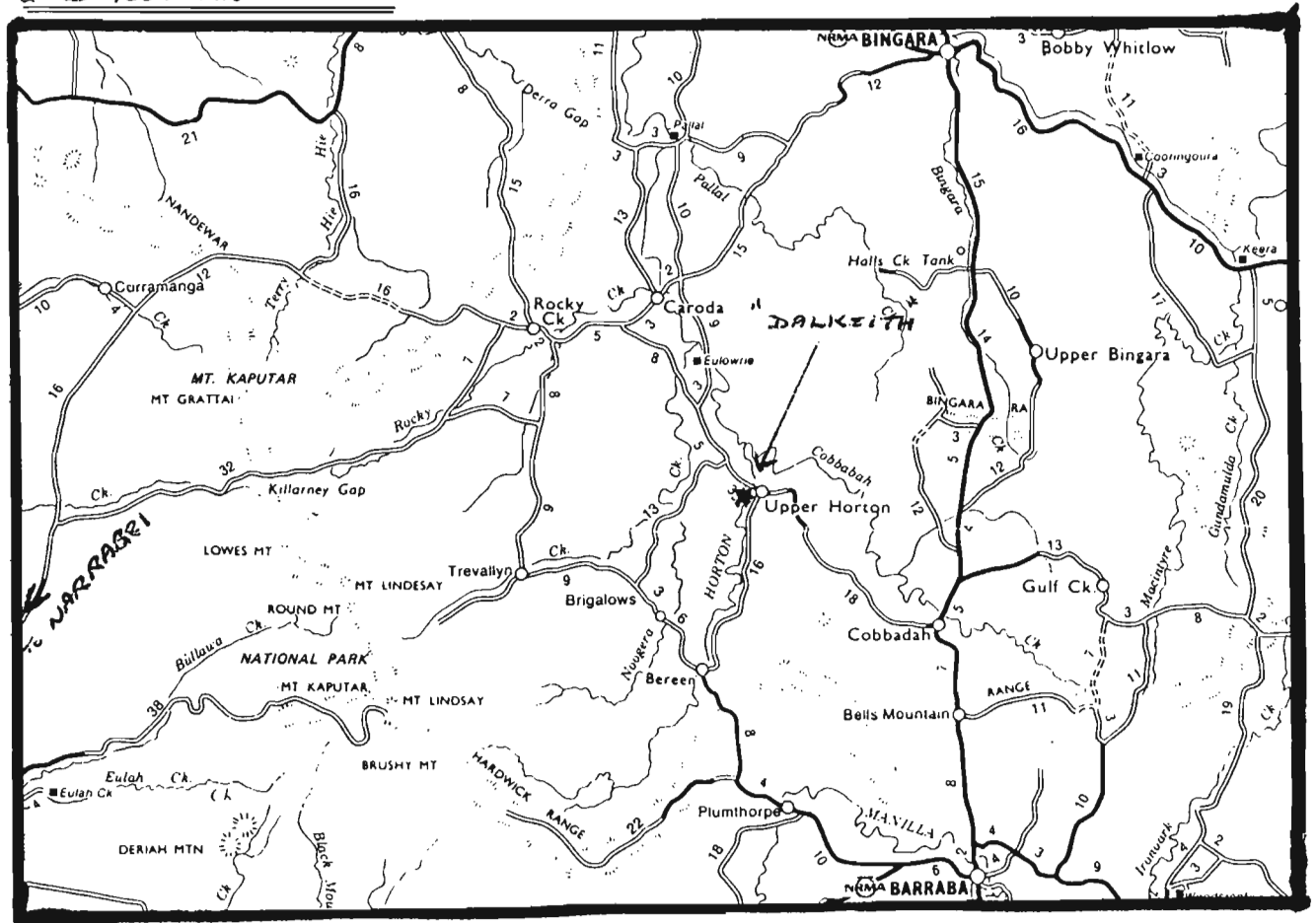
This camp will be located on the property of Stan and Lois Sperring at Conjola. The property fronts the Princes Highway and is about 22 km south of Wandandian, approximately 2 hours drive from Wollongong, look for the IBOC signs.

contd.....

FAMILY CAMP - CONJOLA - 5TH TO 7TH OCTOBER 1991



LATE OCTOBER CAMP - "DALKEITH" UPPER HORTON" 26TH OCTOBER TO 2ND NOVEMBER 1991.



BIRDWATCHING IN NEW ZEALAND'S SOUTH ISLAND.

In our Newsletter of July, 1990, Kevin Mills took us birdwatching around New Zealand's North Island. Now I'll tell you something of the birds of the South Island. Betty and I spent a fortnight in each island in September, 1988.

As Kevin pointed out, there are many introduced birds in N.Z., mostly from Europe but a few from across the Tasman and elsewhere. While we were keen to see the natives, some of the introduced birds were new to us and therefore exciting - Hedge Sparrow (Dunnock), Redpoll, Chaffinch, Yellowhammer and Rook from Europe; Canada Goose and California Quail from North America; Ring-necked Pheasant from Asia and the Barbary Dove.

Probably the most frequently heard of the natives are the two honeyeaters the Tui and the Bellbird - you would have heard their calls dominating the background sounds at the N.Z. exhibit at Expo 88. Both are widely distributed and their calls are loud and pleasant. The Tui is the iridescent black starling-like bird with a pair of prominent white tassels under its chin and with the appropriate common name of Parson Bird. Two other natives which are widely distributed and striking birds are the N.Z. Pigeon and the Paradise Shelduck. The pigeon is iridescent green and purple over white and larger than our Wonga - a beautiful plump pigeon and not surprising that it was nearly shot out in the late 1800's. The shelduck is of the same genus as our shelducks - the male is almost entirely black while the female is chestnut with a white head. They're often seen in moist meadows and usually as solitary pairs.

Now to our trip, which we did in a four person motorhome mounted on a Daihatsu diesel - easy to drive, fairly economical and very comfortable, even in the the cold areas. N.Z. van parks are, generally, fairly good. The route we followed after leaving the inter-island ferry at Picton took us to the Nelson Lakes National Park (Lake Rotoiti) then down the west coast past Punakaiki (pancake rocks), Hokitika (greenstone "capital"), Okarito (waterbird sanctuary), Franz Josef Glacier, through beech forests to the Haast River (about 1 km wide near the coast) and then up Haast Pass to the snow country with Arrowtown (like Sofala but better), Queenstown (rather commercial, it'd be busy in the tourist season), Te Anau, Milford Sound (I don't need to tell you much about Milford Sound except perhaps that the drive there from Te Anau through the Eglinton Valley and the Horner Tunnel is one of the most spectacular we've done), Dunedin (historic but scruffy), Mt. Cook, Peel Forest Park (a small, very quiet state forest reserve with superb camping facilities), Christchurch (a smart, large city) and then Sydney.

At Lake Rotoiti we met our first Black Fantail - it's an all-black South Island form of their Fantail, the other forms looking like our Grey - hard to believe it's the same species as the Grey. A pleasant place Lake Rotoiti with clean water (as in all N.Z. lakes) and snow-capped peaks reflecting in the glassy surface. And plenty of birds - South Island Pied Oystercatcher, Paradise Shelduck, Black-billed Gull, Tomtit (a black and white robin), N.Z. Kingfisher, (same as our Sacred), Grey Warbler (a gerygone) and the musical honeyeaters the Tui and the Bellbird.

At Franz Josef we were awakened by a rattling under our van. It turned out to be a Kea working over our slops bucket - a walk around the park next morning showed most buckets to be overturned. We'd heard how destructive these alpine parrots can be and the worst of the stories was played out a few days later near Milford Sound when we saw a Kea starting to remove the plastic trim from the window of a parked car. The glacier at Franz Josef is impressive but the birdlife around the village not so rich - Welcome Swallow, N.Z. Pigeon, Silvereye, Kelp Gull and a few others.

Near Queenstown we came on a flock of about 30 small dark terns roosting in pastureland. They were Black-fronted Terns, a fairly common inland tern usually associating with farmland. Queenstown is quite large and very tourist orientated while the adjoining mountains (Coronet Peak and the Remarkables) and lake (Wakatipu) are impressive. There was quite a variety of birds in the vicinity including Spurwinged Plover (our Masked Lapwing), N.Z. Scaup (same genus as our Hardhead (duck), Grey Duck (our Pacific Black) and Pukeko (same genus as our Purple Swamphen).

contd.....

Birdwatching in New Zealand's South Island contd.

Our most exciting birding by far was at a van park (Glentanner Park) near Mt. Cook. The park is beside the upper end of Lake Pukaki where it meets the gravelled fan of the Tasman River a kilometre or so below the Tasman Glacier. We had been looking for the extremely rare Black Stilt and knew that our best chance was on the gravel of these glacial rivers. A before-breakfast walk in the straight-off-the-glacier breeze was successful in producing a pair of these elusive stilts - same size and style as our Black-winged but all black. And, while I was taking this in, a pair of Banded Dotterels (our Double-banded Plover) in full breeding regalia came over to check me out - these are the dull, sparrow-sized fellows that leave our coast early spring, fly across the Tasman, dress up in their finery and breed in N.Z's upland river systems. The walk was topped off by the sighting of a Rifleman in shrubs near the park - about the size of our Weebill, green with a bold eyebrow and a very short tail - a pert little fellow. Other birds in the general area included Canada Goose (about 50) Pied Stilt (our Black-winged), Harrier (our Marsh Harrier and one of only three daytime raptors), Grey Teal and White-faced Heron.

On the morning of our flight home from Christchurch we took a run along the scenic Summit Road perched atop the hills between Christchurch and its Lyttelton Harbour - wonderful views over the harbour and inland to the alps - and we saw a Spotted Shag.

We didn't see in the wild a Kiwi, a Takahi or a Kokako and we knew we had Buckley's of finding the terrestrial parrot the Kakapo. But we did see many new birds and renewed some old acquaintances. In the four weeks spent on the two islands and with 5,700 km covered in our van we saw 64 species of which 22 (34%) were introduced. Though the islands are quite different, each is well worth a visit - the landforms and vegetation alone provide special appeal.

Dave Thomson.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS.

U Musk Duck	1 Minnamurra River	4 Aug	R Jordan
S Little Eagle	1 Tabbagong Forest	4 "	"
U Crested Shrike-tit	1 " "	4 "	"
MC Dusky Moorhen	3 Fairy Creek	1 "	L. Williams
U Blackbird	2 Balgownie	May to Aug	W. Emery
R Diamond Dove	1 Figtree	31 Jul	K & F MacGregor & R. Almond
U Port Lincoln Parrot	2 Keiraville	31 "	M. Eskdale
U Rainbow Lorikeet	10 "	31 "	"

Comments.

The pair of Port Lincoln Parrots continue to be sighted by our members, this time Mary Eskdale at Keiraville.

The unusual sighting of a Diamond Dove at Coniston caused some excitement among Bird Club members. However the question remains - was it a vagrant migrating from the dry inland or an escapee from a local aviary?

Jim Robinson.

LATE OCTOBER CAMP - 26th OCTOBER - 2nd NOVEMBER.

This years late October camp is to be held at "Dalkeith", Upper Horton, Max and Enid Kelly's property beside the Horton River. Upper Horton is a small rural town approx. 127 km north west of Tamworth and 50 km east of Mt. Kaputar. 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 approx. 18 km north of Barraba at Cobbadah on the left with a small church at the corner. Drive through Upper Horton and over the bridge onto the Narrabri Road. The entrance to "Dalkeith" is just over the bridge about 100 yards the first gate on the left by the woolshed, an easy place to find. Look for the IBOC signs and allow approx. 8 hours driving time, well worth the effort. Take drinking water. Nearest food supplies etc. will be in Barraba. Happy camping, we've asked the sun to shine.

I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 148 NOVEMBER, 1991.



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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CLUB'S AIM

This is 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, 11th November, 1991**, commencing at 7.30 p.m. Our **Guest Speaker** for the evening will be **Tim Childs**, of the **Threatened Species Network of N.S.W.** Tim comes from England where he spent time with the World Wildlife Fund and Friends of the Earth before coming to Australia six years ago. He spent two years as co-ordinator for the Animal Liberation Movement and is also a member of the National Parks Association Wildlife Committee and his talk this evening will be of **Endangered Species**.

Special Notice - November is also election time when all office bearing positions will be declared vacant at the meeting. If you feel you would like to take on one of the positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary please attend the November meeting and put your nomination forward.

NEXT OUTING - Takes place **Sunday, 17th November**, and is to Jervis Bay meeting in the car parking area of Summercloud Bay at 9 a.m. Travel via Nowra and Huskisson Road towards Jervis Bay. Turn off right into Wreck Bay Road which is past the Visitors Information Centre and then left into Summercloud Bay Road. This is a lovely area with a wide variety of habitats including heath, forest and remnant rainforest and a bird list of 170 species including the Eastern Bristlebird. Take a carry lunch and morning and afternoon tea. We last did this walk in July '85 when we were fortunate enough to see whales in the bay as we made our way onto Kitty's Beach for lunch. Allow approximately two hours travel time.

MID WEEK WALKS - **November 6th**, Frere's Crossing, Georges River Nature Reserve. Drive to beginning of road changing to four lanes to Campbelltown (from Appin) and turn right into Woodland Road, meeting there at 8.30 a.m. Jack Hyslop will lead the walk. **December** mid-week walk takes place **4th December** and is to St. Mary's Towers at Douglas Park. Meet outside the gates at 8.30 a.m. Bring morning tea.

ADVANCE NOTICE - Membership fees are likely to rise for 1992, owing to increased costs, more details in the December newsletter.

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING.

The evenings talk was given at short notice by the Curator of Wollongong Botanic Gardens, Steve Popple. Although Steve's main interest is botany, he has taken note of the inhabitants of the gardens and the surrounding areas to see what visiting birds have been noted in the grounds, many of them breeding in the special habitats in the 67 acres.

Around the small streams the Azure Kingfisher is regularly sighted in the summer while a pair of Little Grebe arrive in autumn and breed in spring before departing at the start of summer. Various ducks and rails live on the ponds being fed by visitors and at least one family of Banded Rail are regularly flushed from the moister areas. This year Steve has noted an influx of Ground Thrush, a phenomenon reported elsewhere by the NSW FOC, as well as the regular migrants from the higher ground, especially on windy days. Other altitude migrants such as the Flame and Rose Robins, Golden Whistler, Wonga Pigeon and Gang-gang Cockatoos. Crested Pigeons have now become residents, as they have elsewhere in the area, frequenting the gravel pathways and the Emerald Dove has been noted feeding on wattle seed in summer.

The White-browed Scrubwrens are now breeding in the nursery area since the use of weed killer in the potting mix was stopped and a family of Superb Wrens are likely to move in. The flowering gums such as the Firewood attract Rainbow Lorikeets in February and March while the banksias and callistemons attract Little Wattlebirds, Scarlet Honeyeaters, Noisy Miners and others. There are predators of course with Collared Sparrowhawk and Boobook Owl being sighted as well as eels picking off the ducklings and the odd fox attack on the bigger ducks and rails.

Norman Gadsby gave the vote of thanks from us all and we expect a few of the members to be sighted in the grounds building up the species tally.

Chris Brandis.

SEPTEMBER MID-WEEK OUTING.

The September mid-week outing was to the Girl Guides Camp when ten members met at the main entrance gate at 8.30 a.m., on a perfect spring morning, calm, mild and sunny. While we were waiting at the gate the birds were active. We recorded the Brown Thornbill, Lewin's Honeyeater, Eastern Whipbird, Noisy Friarbird and Eastern Spinebill. We drove to the car park and from there we walked about 50 metres along the road to Tawny Way, a short track winding through the forest then meeting the road again about 100 metres further on. After the prolonged dry spell the bush was quite dry and the creek we crossed was almost dry, only a few small holes with a little water. Not even any leeches. Near the creek we observed the Golden Whistler and a Satin Bowerbird near its brightly decorated bower. As we came out onto the road the first White's Thrush, Eastern Yellow Robin and White-browed Scrubwren were sighted on a small grassy area on the roadside.

A little further along the road we saw some movement in the lower foliage and there was a cheeky little opportunist Brown Thornbill stripping the nest of a Brown Gerygone, no doubt a bit of good building material for the Brown Thornbill. It would take a portion off and disappear down over the embankment then reappear to tear some more from the nest and so it went on. When we returned later there were only a few pieces of grass hanging on the branch. A little later we made another detour up to the Chapel, beaut spot always worth a visit. A small cleared area surrounded by Pittosporum, Murrogun, Lilly Pilly, Melaleuca styphelioides and a number of tree ferns. From there we made our way to Ant Hill Track which leads off from the large grass area where we sighted a group of Red-browed Firetails and Superb Fairy-wren. The Ant Hill Track goes up the hillside through tall dense forest, past the closed off entrance to the old Kemira Mine, then along the hillside to emerge at the end of the grass area. Along the track was evidence of the scratchings of the Superb Lyrebird among the plentiful ground litter. Wal, hearing the call of the Logrunner, went off in search and found four of them.

When we came out to the grass area again we made our way to the amphitheatre which is surrounded mainly by wattles and eucalypts where we rested in the shade. There we observed the Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey Fantail, Laughing Kookaburra, Brown Thornbill, Brown Gerygone and Little Wattlebird. While making our way back to the car park two White's Thrush were seen and the Green Catbird was in the trees near the roadside. It was a great morning with plenty of birds and lovely weather.

We sighted a total of 30 species for the morning.

Horace Ward.

contd.....

SEPTEMBER FIELD OUTING.

On September 14th, a warm spring day, eleven I.B.O.C. members met at Waterfall Railway Station for our monthly walk. The day got off to an excellent start with the sighting of at least 50 Black Cormorants, heading south in loose formation and a Welcome Swallow sitting on a power line. Then we were off in two cars to Heathcote Railway station to be greeted by Sulphur-crested Cockatoos busily squawking in their fashion. Our itinerary was to walk along the Karloo Track back to Waterfall.

Here the track was wide and sandy and led through open forest of Casuarina and Eucalypts the tops of which were festooned with the spreading tentacles of *Cassytha paniculata* (Devil's twine). The understorey was sparse and varied, *Hakeas*, *Grevillias*, *Waratahs*, just forming pale pink buds, small *Bauera* and *Boronia* and *Darvinia* looking most attractive with its many stamens and flowers of white, pink and red all on the one bush. Small orchids either mauve or white were popping up in the grass. The birds were numerous, Red and Little Wattle birds, Yellow-faced, New Holland and White-eared Honeyeaters, Variegated Wrens and Grey Thrush.

The nature of the terrain here changed quite suddenly and we were on a huge sandstone monolith with no trees and only small patches of stunted herbs and flowers where sand and leaf litter had collected in the depressions in the rock and then it changed just as quickly into an area of sandstone cliffs and overhangs and then into country of jagged broken boulders where the track was narrow and led down steeply between trees and in due course we arrived at the Karloo Pool, a delightful spot of clean white sandy beaches edging a large deep pool of clear green water and in this lovely spot we had morning tea.

After crossing the creek the track started upwards and here were Variegated Wrens in profusion and here, on a warm, northern facing slope, were *Waratahs* fully out and bright red in colour and living up to their botanical name *Telopea* "seen from afar" and *Doryanthes excelsa* which earlier in the walk were just clumps of large leaves, had their full flower stalks extended to their full 12 ft and the flowers well open. So much for aspect. In 1851 cordage made from the leaves of the *Doryanthes* was on display at the London Exhibition but nothing came of this venture and the plants nowadays are only admired for themselves or mistaken for large *Waratahs* (by non-birdwatchers of course).

Here we went up a ridge and through an area of *Casuarinas* and *Banksias* and large *Eucalypts* and across the track lay a huge *Angophora Costata* at least six feet in diameter, only a thin outside shell left - the rest having been eaten by termites but with numerous progeny looking quite healthy scattered about the slope. Soon we were over the ridge and down to the creek again and had lunch at the top of the *Uloola Falls*, another lovely spot - no beaches here but lovely clear water.

Our way now led up a gradual slope, through scattered *Scribbly Gums* and *Angophora castata* where we saw *Fan-tailed Cuckoo*, *Silvereye* and *White-throated Treecreeper*. Then on to typical heath country with the buds of *Angophora hispida* bright, red and furry, *Burchardia Native Rose* and other *boronias*, *Spotted Sun Orchids* and one tall *Leek Orchid*, 3 feet high, the top foot covered with tiny perfect greenish orchids and of course various heaths and *Eriostemons*.

By now the track had turned into a fire trail mainly sand but with quite large boulders of laterite scattered about. We arrived at Waterfall after having walked 12 km and while the birds became fewer as the day progressed and we only saw 30 species altogether including one *Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike* we had a great day (as always) didn't pass through any rainforest, didn't get bitten by any leaches and I didn't get any ticks.

Many thanks to Jack Hyslop for leading the walk.

Peg Merrett.

contd.....

TRAVELLING NORTH.

In late June we set out on what was to be our fourth trip to Nth. Queensland, the last being a summer trip some five or six years ago, to find the Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher. On our third day out we arrived at the beautiful Carnarvon Gorge to find the camping area enlarged threefold from our last visit and chock-a-block, from hike tents to 20' caravans plus three tourist coaches set up in the special area developed just for their exclusive use. The ranger told us we could stay only one night because we had not booked and this would cost us \$7. 50¢. We managed to jam into a small space, a far cry from the leisurely look around for a shady tree on the bank of the creek that we enjoyed on our last visit. I guess it's the price you pay for improving the roads into these isolated places. There had been plenty of rain over the past months and the 25 km walk up the gorge, exploring the side gorges and the beautiful waterfalls, was very enjoyable, although birdwatching along the track was very difficult with the constant flow of tourists trudging back and forth. I use the word tourists deliberately as most people seemed intent on rushing up and back as quickly as possible, never pausing to fully enjoy the beauty that surrounded them.

The next morning we headed out, not sorry to leave the congestion of the camping ground, and headed for Cape Hillsborough. The trip out produced three flocks of Australian Bustards from six to eighteen. It was good to see them still surviving in such numbers. Cape Hillsborough provided us with a couple of quiet days and a bit of space to spread. Plenty of wallabies and possums and an echidna. It was great fun spotlighting the Thick-knees still running around the camping ground as they had done on our previous visits.

We decided rather than head west we would leave Eungella for the return trip and headed for Mt. Spec. Changes had again taken place. The little gravel track to the picnic area had been replaced by a large bitumen parking area and there was the inevitable coach parking and turning area. We awoke next morning in a mist shrouded forest echoing to the sounds of birds. The rollicking calls of the Chowchillas dominated the chorus, much in the manner of our southern lyrebirds while the sweeter calling Shrike Thrushes, Fernwrens, robins, etc. added a more gentle quality to the concert. There is something special about waking up in one of these cloud forests and I was tempted to investigate the real estate market in Paluma village. The day was spent wandering through the beautiful rainforest, encountering old friends like the Grey-headed Robin, Bowers and Shrike-thrush, White-eared Monarch, Australian Fernwren and many more. We only passed five people on our walk and I wondered at the reason for such a large parking facility. At lunch in the picnic area we met a young couple from Victoria in a 4 W.D. headed for the Cape. They spent 15 minutes in the rainforest, asked if you could eat the turkeys, then drove off. How anyone could drive 4,000 km to a magnificent place like Mt. Spec and spend 15 minutes there left me lost for words. We were to encounter many people touring like this, the challenge seemed to be getting there, not being there.

Our next camp was at Wallaman Falls, a place we had not previously visited. It is located 40 km west of Ingham and is the second largest single drop falls in Australia with a sheer drop of 920'. An early morning walk produced our first platypus of the trip. Later in the day in the trackless jungle-like tropical rainforest we encountered two Cassowaries, a new bird for both of us, this magnificent creature had managed to elude us on all our previous trips.

Enroute to Cairns we visited Jourama Falls and The Boulders west of Babinda at the foot of Mt. Bartle Frere. Although this is a popular picnic spot the crystal clear water here was the cleanest we were to encounter on the whole trip and shows what clean water is really like when it flows off an untouched catchment area like Bellenden Ker Range. A new walk has been developed following the river, north of the picnic area. We walked it in the late afternoon, the large, still, crystal pools reflecting, mirror-like, the beautiful tree-ferns and other rainforest vegetation along their borders. A beautiful Azure Kingfisher, sitting motionless on a rock in the middle of one such pool, added to what was to be one of the most beautiful and tranquil walks I have ever done.

contd.....

TRAVELLING NORTH contd.

We arrived late that night in Cairns, just long enough to eat, shower and sleep in preparation for a trip on the Cairns-Kuranda Railway, something I had always promised I'd do, when my birdwatching fever subsided a little. The line took five years to complete, at a cost of 290,000 pounds, is 46 miles long and contains 15 tunnels and dozens of bridges. It employed up to 1,500 men, mostly Irish and Italian, at 8/6d a day. So go the official statistics, but you really need to travel the line to comprehend this incredible feat of engineering performed 100 years ago by strong, hard men, using only picks, shovels and bare hands. The most difficult second section, 16 miles long, was carved around 45° sloping mountains through dense tropical rainforest, where it was not uncommon to receive 20 days continuous rain in the wet season. This section contains most of the tunnels and bridges. Forty miles in five years, a good rate of progress even by modern standards using heavy machinery, makes you wonder about the Malden Dombarton link, doesn't it? As I stood on the back of a carriage, watching the engine entering a tunnel before the rear carriage had left the last one, an Irishman standing next to me remarked that only an Irishman or a fool would ever believe it could be built. Well State Rail management certainly seems to be not short of fools maybe all they need now is 1,500 Irishmen. Although the legendary Barron Falls is now only a trickle of its former glory, due to the Tinaroo Dam and the hydro station, and the steam engine has been replaced by a diesel to pull the 14 tourist laden carriages, the scenery is spectacular and this engineering triumph has to be seen to be believed. A trip I can thoroughly recommend.

Off again, this time to Port Douglas for a Quicksilver trip to the outer Agincourt Reef on the edge of the continental shelf, a distance of 60 km. We arrived at the Marina Mirage booking office to be told there was a three day advance booking needed and the cost was \$98. 00¢ per ticket, a far cry from our last trip, when we wandered down to the wharf, handed over \$30. 00¢ and hopped aboard a third full boat. Fortunately, we managed some standby tickets and got out the same day. The trip out to the reef takes about 1½ hours, during which time you are shown the usual safety drills, followed by an informative talk by an entertaining marine biologist. Once at the reef we tied up to a permanently moored pontoon which contained an underwater observatory. Snorkeling, scuba-diving and helicopter rides were available for those who wanted them, whilst the less aquatic types like myself boarded the semi-submersibles for a 40 minute underwater cruise in and around the coral. Forget all about the T.V. documentaries, until you've been under the water and experienced in three dimensions the ever changing form and colour of the corals, the giant living clams that remain stationary for over 80 years, the slow moving turtles, the spectacular ballet performances of the schools of graceful, rainbow coloured, fish, you haven't seen the reef. How I enjoyed it. How I envied the scuba divers able to get even more intimately involved, swimming in and around the individual coral formations, hand feeding those beautiful fish. I hope they don't serve a seafood lunch, I'm sure I won't be able to eat it. Lunch was served. A sumptuous affair, not seafood, except for the prawns, which I forced myself to eat. We then returned for a second underwater cruise through the reef, just as wondrous as the first. About 3 p.m. a spectacular sight occurred, a low minus tide, caused by the eclipse of the sun and moon over Hawaii, brought the reef fully out of the water. Large coral plates, some with giant clams sitting atop, all fully exposed. Nature's garden in the sea if you can have a living garden and all 60 km from land. What a sight. We later learned from the crew that this phenomenon happens only every five years and most of them had never seen it before. No forward planning, we just cracked it, how lucky. I must apologise for getting away from the birds but every trip to Nth. Queensland should include an excursion to the outer reef.

Farewell Port Douglas, hello Mossman Gorge, the start of the Daintree Rainforest. The by now familiar sight of tourist coaches and 4 W.D. safari tours again dominated the carpark. Fortunately the track system has been extended since our last visit and we were able to get beyond the crowds whose itinerary did not allow them the time to go beyond the first waterfalls. A pleasant walk around some first class rainforest produced the Victoria's Riflebird and the Black Butcherbird, hopping bowerbird-like across the forest floor.

contd.....

TRAVELLING NORTH contd.

On now to Cape Tribulation via the Daintree ferry. Expecting a small 2 car ferry, I was surprised to find one capable of carrying 10 or 12 vehicles. I was also surprised to find about 50% of the vehicles travelling north of Mossman were headed for Cape Tribulation. The 36 km drive to Cape Trib. was on gravel road of varying quality. It contained several small creek crossings, none of which would cause problems for the average family car. I was disappointed to find that this part of the Daintree National Park, about which I had read so much, was not the vast, untouched wilderness I had hoped to see, but rather a number of small sections of rainforest broken every few km by privately owned properties containing horse riding schools, accommodation lodges, orchards and even a failed sugar cane crop. Rainforest blocks for sale by nationally prominent real estate companies dotted the entire length of the road. What an opportunity has been missed here to create a rainforest park of international significance. How can we in conscience tell the developing peoples of Malaysia and South America not to cut down their rainforests. Cape Tribulation itself is just that, a beach and a rainforest headland with a carpark, small picnic ground and a short walking track. No shop, camping ground or services of any kind. The nearest camping area is at Noah's Beach, some 20 km back. We camped the night in the carpark. Next morning the short walk introduced us to the Pied Monarch, Shining Flycatcher, Magnificent Fruit Dove and several others. The Bloomfield Track, which is the name given to the controversial road pushed through by the Queensland government several years ago, leads on from Cape Tribulation through the rainforest to the Bloomfield River. It is signposted 4 W.D. vehicles only but curiosity and the reasonably dry surface enticed us into doing a little bit of exploring. We eventually reached the Emagen Creek, some 19 km along the 32 km track, after negotiating some very steep hills which at first glance left you wondering if you would get enough traction on the loose surface to get back up again. It is a very beautiful spot, representative of the lowland tropical rainforest that covers the area north to the Bloomfield River. For this reason we decided to explore this area and not push our luck trying to cross the creek to go further north. On our return to the ferry we stopped at a section of National Park containing a rainforest walking track and a long boardwalk through a mangrove forest. A walk different to anything I had ever done before, I enjoyed it very much. To be able to walk through this swamp a metre above the sticky mud supporting the large mangrove trees festooned with ferns and orchids was a great experience. An interesting sighting in this area was a small flock of Pale Yellow Robins. Six in number, they flitted in and out of the trees acting more like flycatchers than the usual solitary ^{Pied} we see sitting quietly in the gloom of the rainforest down south. At our overnight stop in Daintree, two flowering Bauhinia trees supported a countless number of Sunbirds. In the past we had only seen this bird in twos and threes. Seeing this large flock of beautiful iridescent blue and yellow birds feeding amongst the mass of pink flowers was a spectacular sight.

Up on the Atherton Tablelands we camped for a rest at one of several quiet forestry camping areas around the shores of Tinaroo Dam. Forest types around the dam ranged from dry sclerophyll to rainforest, providing some diverse birdwatching and the White Pygmy Goose was common on the dam. A circuit drive took us past the Cathedral Fig, Lake Barrine crater lake, the famous Curtain Fig, where we had to compete with four coach loads of tourists, Lake Eacham and on to the Crater National Park. Here, in the picnic area, the birds have become very approachable, landing on your head and hands, the Macleay's Honeyeater actually entering the van seeking crumbs off the cupboard. We thought this was great, but I wasn't so amused when later a couple of saucepans came hurtling out the door as a Brush Turkey thought what's good for the honeyeater is also good for the turkey! The Golden Bowerbird and the Tooth-billed Catbird came in at intervals throughout the afternoon to feed on fruiting trees in the picnic area. It was at these trees that we met four young birdwatchers from Perth. We all decided to camp the night and do some spotlighting. A good range of mammals was observed but we really cracked the jackpot when we located the Lesser Sooty Owl, a new bird for us. Later during the night our friends were fortunate to see a Tree Kangaroo. It doesn't pay to go to bed too early in these places. Next morning, following directions from Chris Chafer, we visited a Golden Bowerbird's bower. The area around it was well trodden and the bower appears to have been abandoned since Chris last visited. Luck didn't desert us entirely however as we managed to find a Green Ringtail sitting high in a nearby tree, another first for us.

contd.....

TRAVELLING NORTH contd.

Our next camp was at Palmeston National Park, a place where on our last visit Hazel had seen the Red-necked Rail, a bird I had only glimpsed and was yet to see properly. On the first morning the people opposite asked if I knew what bird was crossing the track. I turned just in time to see the rail disappearing over the bank, missed it again! That evening we walked down the creek to a quiet pool hoping to see a Platypus. No luck with the Platypus but as we sat watching, out of the forest opposite came a Red-necked Rail. It spent 20 minutes feeding on the edge of the creek in an area disturbed by wild pigs. The bird at times entered the water taking insects from the surface. At last, after four trips I'd cracked it, I'd finally seen my rail. Later that night while spotlighting we came across a Striped Possum, only two metres from the ground. What a sight. About the size of a slim Brushtail, it has black and white contrasting longitudinal stripes, a white tail tip and large black eye patches. Truly the most beautiful possum I have ever seen. Next morning we thought we would have another look for the rail. No luck this time, we had to settle for a Platypus feeding only four metres from us in a crystal clear pool bathed in early morning sunlight. I can recommend Palmeston National Park as a great place to stay and the best part is it's the only free park we found in Queensland. Perhaps that's because you have to carry your own water from the creek. What an inconvenience.

On now to our last major camp, Eungella N.P. 80 km west of Mackay. We arrived on a Sunday afternoon to find that the large camping area had become the day picnic area and the campers have been crowded into two small camping areas, one adjacent to a smelly dairy farm which flushes its dairy waste into the Broken River, which in turn runs through the park. Both picnic and camping grounds were full, again the price you pay for improving the roads into these areas. It seems we were ending our trip the way we had started, idyllic locations buckling under the pressure of tourism. Luckily a camp pulled out and we were able to secure a site on the bank of the river. Platypus are prevalent in this section of the river and we were able to eat our breakfast watching up to three of these extraordinary creatures at a time feeding and playing around us. We enjoyed their antics very much but somehow it wasn't quite the same as when we crept through the pristine rainforest at Palmerston to watch them feeding in a crystal pool with the early morning sun glistening on dewdrops and casting shafts of light across the water as a light mist arose from the surface.

I wonder with population pressures how much longer these special places can survive. The forest walks at Eungella are very good and you can still get away from the crowds if you are prepared to walk far enough, as most seem content just to fry their sausages and do the circuit walks from the picnic grounds. Although we encountered quite a lot of birds as we roamed around, it was much quieter than our previous summer visit when the forest echoed with the calls of the Purple-crowned Fruit Doves and we saw eleven Noisy Pittas in 2 km. Perhaps as this is a cool, high altitude, rainforest it would be best visited in summer.

Come to think of it, perhaps North Queensland may be best visited in the summer, the humidity and the cyclones being preferable to the hordes of invading tourists that now swarm over the area in the cooler winter months.

Wal Emery.

NEWS FROM SETH ISENBERG - After leaving Australia Seth spent 3 weeks on Matinicus Rock, off the coast of Maine, U.S.A. carrying out research work on the Atlantic Puffin. He has now swapped his 1846 lighthouse abode on the island for a "nice, old house to live in with shared kitchen and bath. My room is huge with four windows, two large closets and a desk the size of an aircraft carrier. The location of the house to campus, Collegetown (major social scene) and my friend's houses is superb. Needless to say I am happy with my choice. I haven't had a chance to do much birding since I left the island but I am slowly getting reacquainted with the North American birds. All my birder friends are very jealous of me because of my trip to your beautiful country. Even my professors are genuinely impressed with how many birds I saw. Well I simply explained to them that when one belonged to the Illawarra Bird Observer's Club, you were "really with it." It is good to know that our overseas visitors can gain so much from our club and its members even in such short visits.

Barbara Hales

contd.....

U Bassian Thrush	1	Seven Mile Beach N.P.	3	Jul	K. Mills
U Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	2	" " " "	3	"	"
U Whistling Kite	1	" " " "	25	"	"
S Marsh Harrier	1	Coomonderry Swamp	25	"	"
R Australasian Bittern	1	" " "	1	Aug	"
U Australian Hobby	1	Gerringong	5	"	G. & J. Parker
S White-headed Pigeon	1	Bass Point	6	"	" "
U Spotted Quail-thrush	1	West of Nowra	27	"	" "
U Brown Goshawk	1	Curramore	28	"	K. Mills
U Peregrine Falcon	1	Balgownie	8	Sep	W. Emery
U Rufous Night Heron	1	" "	1	"	"
M/C Variegated Fairy-wren	5	Corrimal	2	"	P. McKinlay
M/C White-naped Honeyeater	1	Port Kembla	3	"	O. Rodwell
U Bassian Thrush	6	Mount Kembla	5	"	W. Emery
M/C Yellow-throated Scrubwren	2	Towradgi Creek	7	"	B. & B. Hales D.Rickers.
U Buff-banded Rail	1	" "	7	"	B. & B. Hales
S Spotless Crake	1	Shellharbour Sewerage	8	"	C. Brandis
U Musk Lorikeet	12	Balgownie	8	"	W. Emery
S Collared Sparrowhawk	1	Mt. Ousley	22,23,25	"	J. Robinson

First sightings for particular localities continue to be reported by members, such as the Yellow-throated Scrubwrens observed in the Hales backyard at Towradgi Creek. Sightings of Bassian Thrush (formerly White's Thrush) have increased over recent months.

ADVANCE NOTICE DECEMBER MEETING.

As most members will be aware, this is usually a fun night and we are looking for entertainers for the evening. So, if you can sing, dance, spin a yarn or put together a sketch with other members the committee is longing to hear from you so that they can put together a programme for the evening. The theme for the evening will be the Kookaburra so dig out any memorabilia incorporating the Kooka - T shirts, books, pictures, hats, badges, stoves, trade marks, stamps, coins - the list is endless - anything that shows a Kookaburra will do or maybe you can imitate his particularly sweet song!!! A successful night depends upon your participation.

We are seeking the following newsletters to add to our archives, nos. 100 to 120 inclusive plus nos. 146 and 147. If you would like to donate any copies please contact Barbara Hales.

NEWS FROM BULA AND RANGAM SENAPATI. In a recent letter Bula and Rangam say they are just about sorted out in their home and are beginning to live their life in England. They have a new set of wheels Turbo-Diesel Citroen BX but the well known space-pod is rather superfluous as they are not camping, fishing or birdwatching. They are taking advantage of their garden which attracts a number of birds, deer, fox and even a badger has been seen. Bula has sorted out the "shed" with son-in-law Christopher so that they both know where everything is?? These ex-Aussies (or new Poms) are obviously taking great delight in sharing their time with grandson Geoffrey, aged 3 years, and catching up with other friends from around the world. They have had a number of guests already and go on to say "England is more a centre of movement for people from all over the world than Australia but we are very far from our Australian friends and family. Can't have everything. We are missing the outdoor life of Australia and our friends there but I'm sure it will not be long before we meet again. Rangam joins me in sending you and our Birdo friends our warmest wishes from the cold. Yours ever Bula."

Barbara Hales

Don't forget to get those thinking caps on for the December meeting.

I.B.O.C. NEWS

NO. 149 DECEMBER, 1991.



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

Registered by Aust. Post Publication No. NBH 3848

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

CLUB MOTTO "ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES ANOTHER"

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CLUB'S AIM

This is 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 \$15 SINGLE \$10 STUDENT \$5

NEXT MEETING - will take place at the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Centre, corner of Collaery Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, on **Monday, 9th December, 1991**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** As is usual for the December meeting, this will be a fun night with the promise of good entertainment, good company and good food. The Zealey children plan to entertain us in dance and a sing along will be led by Athol Stuart. "Pick The Bird Call" will offer all those "no expense spared" prizes the winners of I.B.O.C. quizzes are accustomed to. There should be a classical rendition of the old song "Don't Blame Me" from the president, poetry and more. There will also be the latest offering from the pen of Wal Emery "The Price Of Freedom" (which would have opened to rave reviews had it been reviewed). The "Kookaburra" will no doubt generate its own surprises as individuals interpret the theme for the evening and the jolly man in red is bound to show his bewhiskered face. So come along and bring that extra special plate for supper and be assured of a happy and fun filled evening.

NEXT OUTING - Please note that the December outing takes place before the meeting and will be to **Berry, Saturday, 7th December**. We will meet at the Berry Beach Picnic Area at **4 p.m.** Turn off the highway at Omega Station, travel south through Gerringong then on past the Geroa Camping Ground, a few km on turn left at the crossroads into the Berry Picnic Area. We will go for a walk and then return to

to the picnic area for a barbecue before going spotlighting after dark. Please be aware of fire bans that may be in place on the day in which case you will need to take a picnic meal instead of having a barbecue.

MID-WEEK WALK - The December 4th outing will take place at St. Mary's Towers, Douglas Park, meeting outside the gates at **8.30 a.m.** For further details if required please contact Esme Gay, 293463 or Ron Almond, 298612.



contd.....

OCTOBER FAMILY CAMP.

Day 1, Saturday.

The October long weekend camp was held on the property of Stan and Lois Sperring at Conjola. On Saturday afternoon we pooled cars and drove to Narrawallee Creek Nature Reserve on the coast to the east of Milton, south of Lake Conjola. This 670 hectare reserve is under the authority of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The walking track led us through coastal vegetation where we saw New Holland Honeyeater, Crimson Rosella, Grey Fantail, Golden Whistler, Little Wattlebird, Red-browed Firetail, Noisy Friarbird and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike. We also heard the Eastern Whipbird, White-throated Treecreeper and Pallid Cuckoo.

We came out at the beach where we rested on the grass at Buckleys Point. Here the kids got renewed energy at the sight of the sand and sea. We followed the road back and had sightings of Rainbow Lorikeet, Red Wattlebird and Rufous Fantail. In an old eucalypt near the new houses we watched a pair of Galah feeding young in a hollow branch. A track led us through to the wetlands (which we had just circumnavigated). Here we saw the Variegated Wren flitting amongst the sharp tufts of grass, Masked Lapwing and Pied Oystercatcher feeding on the mud flats and Pied Cormorant, Tree Martin and Welcome Swallow flying above. In the water were Grey and Chestnut Teal, Black Duck, grebe, White-faced Heron, Black Swan and others. It was a very busy area. Back to the cars and the return to camp to prepare for the "Bush Dance".

Kids and grown ups all joined in the fun and a mighty time was had by all. Thanks are due to Athol for his "running the show" and to those who cleaned out the shed and put on the power. A special "Well done" to the kids.

Olive Rodwell.

Day 2, Sunday.

Sunday morning (when we should be ready for walking at 9 a.m.) the signal rings out throughout camp "All aboard", creating panic to any who haven't hurried with their chores. We hoped it would be a cooler day today for walking, the heat yesterday was taxing. Laurie and Nola had especially come down from Wollongong for the day to visit and lead the walk to a rainforest area hoping for some exciting birdwatching. It was a mixed group, oldies, middle aged and littlies that filled the convoy of cars and drove back on the Princes highway and it was nice to relax and take in the view of the beautiful countryside. We turned into the Jerrawangala State Forest at the 12 ml Forest Road sign which branches off to the west leading through the forest and up to the top of the escarpment and George Boyd Lookout. As the road entered the forest it passed through some young Blackbutt re-growth which was logged in 1974/75. We turned off at Tin Mine Road, parked the cars and walked the last part. There was a lovely soft breeze and it was great hearing the rustling of the tree canopy. As we walked there were lots of wildflowers we could admire closely, seeing their beauty, size and shapes, you even feel they have little personalities as they survive.

Being so high the visit to the lookout was well worthwhile for its magnificent view of the vast area from Nowra to Milton. We felt it to be a special privilege being there viewing around, then looking down into the valley and forest, we could see where bushfires had burned. Mother Nature's handiwork of form and beauty was all around us as we stood on a plateau of rock formation and pool-ets in wet weather. The rock formation was formed in a semi circle with a waterfall the Granite Falls. It would be wonderful to see after rain as the pool-ets would overflow and cascade down the rocks.

contd.....

October Family Camp contd.

Two thirds of the way down we saw clusters of rock lillies and ferns growing. The colourings and pattern in the rocks was a speckled looking granite surface, quite attractive, you need to see the view personally to be able to know of its real beauty. We returned for a much appreciated cuppa.

Soon the "all aboard" call rings out! It's amazing how we rally to it. We drove along the other road to Boyd Forest Park picnic area and parked the cars, we would return here for lunch. This was a rainforest area and the walk was a bit steep in places going down into the forest. "Oh! oh!" it tested some of us unfit ones out! We walked along a man made pathway, up and down rocky areas consisting largely of wet and dry eucalypt forest, some being vine-choked, and there were nice palms and we smelt the lovely leaf litter mulch admiring what it could do for our gardens. It was great walking in the forest and looking up at the high cliffs towering above. Often we saw clumps of small, red and yellow orchids clinging to the rocks. We saw a tree growing unbelievably close to the side of a big high rock, an unusual sight, as if the tree had had such a struggle to survive. From the bottom of it, its trunk curved a couple of times then every so often zig-zagged into a winding shape, flat side clinging to the rock and then when it came near to the top it branched out and came into foliage as if to say it had made it to the top! It was another sight to personally see and appreciate what nature can do for itself.

Then came time to ascend the steep man made steps which was a bit of an effort but I.B.O.C. members don't give up easily, will make it so as not to get left behind. Again we were rewarded with another magnificent, panoramic, interesting view across to the horizon. We stood on a plateau of rock formation, great boulders and trees. It was breezy up there and sounding wild in the trees. It was a bit hazy but we could see Pigeon House Mountain, Ulladulla, Sussex Inlet, St George's Basin and also found the area where we camped at Conjola. We started our walk downwards on a different track back to the cars and a well earned lunch.

Again the whistle blew to rally and be organised (good discipline on camps). We drove to another Boyd Lookout sign, there was now a lovely cool breeze, the southerly change was coming. We walked along the road among low heath habitat (a contrast to our other viewing). There were more wild flowers to study and admire. Dark clouds began to develop, we couldn't see many birds, Laurie suggested they had gone undercover because of the heat and wind. So by 2.30 p.m. we returned to camp, Laurie, Nola, Barbara and Brian departed to Wollongong.

Our next experience for the day - when the dark clouds had built up then came the blow of strong wind which had peoples camp tarpaulins flapping madly, campers were busy tying ropes tighter, buckets started to roll around camp, cooking was interrupted. Soon thunder was rolling and now and then lightning was flashing, we were huddled up in our tents or campers, some people brave and some scared! It is different in not being in a protected house. Tea schedule certainly became disrupted and we sat listening to the music rumblings from the sky (mother nature at work again in a different way) some of us envied Lois and Stan in the comfort of their house. The storm passed and we appreciated no harm done to anyone or their camps. Apparently the little children weren't too upset by the experience and were running around outside in raincoats playing.

This day had certainly been an experience and a memorable one for all of us, it was a case of recuperate for tomorrow.

Jan Stuart.

SUBSCRIPTION INCREASES.

Owing to the rise in general running costs (particularly postage) the committee regrets that it has to increase membership fees for 1992 which will be as follows:-

Student \$5, Single \$10, Family \$15.

Fees are due 1st January, 1992, and prompt payment would greatly assist our volunteer administrator.

I.B.O.C. Committee.

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OCTOBER CAMP UPPER HORTON.

In 1988 the Club held its Easter Camp at Upper Horton, but, on that occasion, the weather was not kind and we had a week of rain, so it was decided to try again. This year 23 members camped on the bank of the Horton River at "Dalkeith", the property of Max and Enid Kelly. This time the Birdos failed to live up to their reputation of rain bringers and, apart from one afternoon of thundery showers, we enjoyed a week of glorious sunshine.

Our first walk, on Saturday morning, was a pleasant stroll up the river from camp. The banks are lined with Eucalyptus, Casuarinas and Willows and lots of birds were about. We also noted plenty of carp and a long-necked turtle in the river, a possum hiding behind an orchid and a large goanna. Some of the birds observed were the Black-fronted Plover, Large Black Cormorant, White-faced Heron, Australian Kestrel, Dollarbird, Rainbow Bee-eater, Oriole, Apostlebird, Rufous Songlark and Restless Flycatcher. We had morning tea in the shade of the willows with cows bellowing their disapproval at being disturbed, however a sharp word from Horrie silenced them. The bird of the morning was the lovely Turquoise Parrot, spotted as we returned to camp. In the afternoon Brian and Bob were taken on a tour of the property by Max while the rest of the party welcomed new arrivals and watched the birds in the trees close by. A flock of 50 or more Straw-necked and Sacred Ibis landed on a tree across the river and a Dollarbird hawked from a stump opposite our camp.

On Sunday, while we entertained our family from Moree, the party walked on the Oak Vale property. Among the new species they noticed were a flock of Cockatiels, Eastern Rosella, a Yellow-rumped Thornbill nest building and a Pied Butcherbird attacking a possum. While rolling under a difficult fence they disturbed a couple of dozen Fairy Martins. Then, walking along the river bank, they saw a Collared Sparrowhawk, Striped Honeyeater and Masked Woodswallow as well as a fox, a goanna and our first red-bellied black snake.

On Monday, before setting off for the Glacial Area, we wished Nola a Happy Birthday. The Glacial Area is a wild, boulder strewn gorge where Rocky Creek has carved its way through the hillside. There are many deep holes and small sandy beaches and it is used as a recreational area by the local people. Morning tea was had at the picnic area where Wal's botanical knowledge was tested by the "Adding Tree" - a cypress with an old calculator tacked to it. Our walk took us up an old road and then back along the creek bank and lots of birds were seen. They included Weebill, Western and White-throated Gerygone, Brown and White-throated Treecreepers, White-browed and Little Woodswallows, Leaden Flycatcher, Choughs and a Kookaburra.

After lunch we drove back towards Upper Horton and then along a road which took us past the "Kildare" property towards Bereen Mountain. Many stops were made to identify birds and a Brown Falcon and a Yellow-billed Spoonbill were added to the list. At a lookout on Bereen Mountain we stopped to take in the view of a beautiful rural valley and while there we noticed a pretty, orange flowering mistletoe, a Noisy Friarbird and a Mistletoebird. On then to Little Creek Reserve where a drover was watering a mob of Hereford cattle. Some Noisy Miners, Magpies, White-faced Heron and a Willie Wagtail were noted. A little further on at a dam a Clamorous Reed-Warbler was added to the list. Next stop was at a reserve opposite the gates of a stately mansion "Plumthorpe". Brian had promised a Hooded Robin here and not only did we see it but Nola's keen eye found the nest - a wonderfully camouflaged structure in rough bark of a tree trunk. Jacky Winters were also nesting and Diamond Firetail, White-browed Woodswallow and - another new one for the list - White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, were seen. Home was via Barraba and after tea we shared a birthday cake with Nola.

Tuesday: the walk was to a dam on the Kelly property and then back along the river where they encountered a bull. After causing the group some worry he allowed them to pass peacefully. During the afternoon three male King Parrots flew through camp.

contd.....

Upper Horton Camp contd.

Wednesday, after remembering Athol and Les's birthdays, we drove to "Kildare" where Rick McDouall, the owner, welcomed us. We looked around the garden and had a cup of tea and then Rick led the party up through paddocks and gates to the timber line where we spent a couple of hours. Some of the new birds seen were the Pacific Heron, Australasian Grebe, Channel-billed Cuckoo and Singing and Brown Honeyeaters. We also found a Turquoise Parrot's nest with four young. This was great birding and we would have liked to stay longer but it was back to the house, packed into the four-wheel drive vehicles. Over 70 species were seen at "Kildare" during the morning. Rick was kind enough to ring some of his neighbours with large dams on their properties and, after some wandering, we found the dam on the Wea property. There we watched Coots, teal, grebes, swans with two cygnets, Māed, Black and Hardhead Ducks. On a secondary dam with a large reed bed, Nola and Laurie made the find of the day - both the Australian and Baillon's Crake. Rare sighting, I believe, and we were able to view them both at the same time.

Thursday morning Brian learned that we had permission to visit a large dam at "Plumthorpe". After some searching for the right gate we arrived to see a White-bellied Sea-Eagle taking off - unusual so far from the sea. There were many waterbirds on the dam and three other new species were the Darter, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorants. We walked round the dam - quite a distance - and just reached the cars as the rain came down. The afternoon was thundery with showers and allowed plenty of time to debate whether the lorikeets feeding nearby were Little or Musk. Musk won the day. Rainbow Lorikeets were also about. In the evening the group had a most enjoyable meal at the club with Enid, Max and Stephen Kelly and Brian presented them with a name plate "Dalkeith" for their gate.

Friday: numbers were depleted by now but a small party drove through the paddocks for some distance and then walked to the boundary of the property. Again many birds were sighted including treecreepers, Rufous Songlark, Suberb Wren, Bee-eaters, Sacred Kingfisher, Oriole and a Wedge-tailed Eagle soaring above. Three new ones were added to the score, Azure Kingfisher, Southern Whiteface and two Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoos who sat by a log and gave us a good view. In the afternoon a few people walked along the stock route close to town and Ron and Stuart Almond added the Plum-headed Finch to the tally.

It was a great week with lots of fun and laughs around the campfire and very successful as far as the birds were concerned. Our final tally was 133. Our thanks to Enid and Max Kelly for allowing us to camp and walk on their property and to Rick McDouall for his help and invitation to come back and camp at his place sometime in the future. Also a big thanks must go to Barbara and Brian who worked so hard. Not only were there many letters and phone calls but they travelled to Upper Horton in August to arrange the programme. Thanks Barbara and Brian.

Peg McKinlay.

On Saturday, October 13th, our family went to South Shellharbour Beach. As we walked down the sand I noticed two dark brown birds in the water right in amongst the swimmers and boogie boards. I was very surprised to realise that they were shearwaters. A shearwater corpse washed ashore and a man picked it up, but Bill, scanning the beach through binoculars, discovered twenty more little brown bodies on the sand and I walked along to have a look at them. As I did so I realised that there were at least fifty birds in the water, many of them close inshore, some of them allowing themselves to be tumbled by the waves. When disturbed by swimmers or pushed too close to the beach they would fly rather reluctantly a short distance, legs trailing behind the tail. One though allowed itself to be thrown onto the sand and sat there dazed before flying off heavily. The dead birds had all dark plumage, dark grey legs, fairly small bills and empty guts. They were Short-tailed Shearwaters. We mentioned this to two people, neither bird club members, and both said that the T.V. news had reported an exceptionally large wreck of shearwaters this year.

Joan Zealey.

contd.....

R.A.O.U. Campout 22-27 Sep. '91 following R.A.O.U. Congress at Albany.

9th-15th September spent in Adelaide. Suburbs "infested" with sparrows (*P.domesticus*) no Indian Mynahs or Bulbuls. New Holland and White-plumed Honeyeaters in foothills and suburban gardens. Visited "Warrawong" Sanctuary at Mylor, Adelaide Hills. This area has been completely fenced so that no feral cats, foxes or dogs may predate. Their main concern here is the small marsupials which are disappearing rapidly in all areas. There has been some criticism because the management is introducing some species not indigenous to the area - these may usurp the endemics. Furthermore the fence restricts migratory movements in times of drought etc. We were not able to see any evidence of build-up of bird populations within the area. The birds seen were at feeding tables: New Holland, White-naped and Crescent Honeyeaters, Red Wattlebirds, Red-browed Firetails, Eastern Rosellas, Rainbow Lorikeets.

16th September, Perth. Spectacular wild flowers at roadside near airport, Port Lincoln Parrots, White-tailed Black Cockatoos seen on drive to town. Singing Honeyeaters in city centre, New Holland Honeyeaters common, Brown Honeyeaters in groups, Black-shouldered Kite in back yard at Fremantle.

17th September to Monkey Mia (Shark Bay). Dolphins very tame, 10 or 12 swimming around in 60 cm of water. Zebra Finches nesting, Emus seen alongside roadway, one Malleefowl "frozen" 100 m from bus near Denham. Ospeys, Bar-tailed Godwit, Pied Oystercatchers at Denham Beach.

22nd September to Albany, R.A.O.U. Campout at Frenchman's Bay. Osprey, Little Eagle, Marsh Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Australian Kestrel, Common Bronzewing, White-tailed Black Cockatoo, Regent, Red-capped, Port Lincoln Ring-neck and Elegant Parrots, Fan-tailed and Shining Bronze Cuckoos, Welcome Swallow, Tree Martin, Richard's Pipit, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Scarlet Robin, Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Red-winged Fairy Wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Western Warbler, Inland Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Red and Little Wattlebirds, Yellow-throated Miner, Singing, White-naped, Brown, New Holland, White-cheeked and Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, Western Spinebill, White-faced Chat, Silvereye, Red-eared Firetail, Magpie Lark, Dusky Woodswallow, Australian Magpie, Raven. NO Pied Currawongs here. Raven Common.

Seabirding trip in Albany Harbour 18/9/91. Two Southern Right Whales very close to boat. Birds seen, Yellow-nosed Albatross, Fleshy-footed Shearwater, Australian Pelican, Australian Gannet, Pied, Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants, White-faced Heron (Nesting at campsite) other birds, Straw-necked Ibis, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Australian Shelduck, Black Swan, Black Duck, Grey Teal, Maned Duck, Great Skua, Silver Gull, Pacific Gull, Crested Tern. Waders, Purple Swamphen, Coot, Red-capped Plover, Banded Stilt, Ruddy Turnstone, Marsh Sandpiper, Terek Sandpiper.

25th September, Two People's Bay. No new species seen. Noisy Scrub-bird calling incessantly-very close, Western Whipbird calling, Bristlebird heard but not seen.

26th September, Stirling Ranges. Purple-crowned Lorikeet, Regent and Red-capped Parrot, Western Rosella, Port Lincoln Ring Neck, Elegant Parrot, Pallid Cuckoo, Laughing Kookaburra, Welcome Swallow (nesting), Tree Martin, Richard's Pipit, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Scarlet, White-breasted, and Western Yellow Robin (2 pairs nesting), Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Crested Bellbird (call only), Willie Wagtail, Western Whipbird (call only), Southern Emu-Wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Rufous Treecreeper common and tame, Red Wattlebird (nesting) Yellow-throated Miner, Purple-gaped, White-naped, Brown, New Holland, Tawny Crowned Honeyeaters, Western Spinebill, White-fronted Chat, Striated Pardalote, Silvereye, Magpie Lark, Dusky Woodswallow, Australian Magpie and Raven.

A very pleasant trip, all Birdos helpful and friendly and did their best to show us the Noisy Scrub-bird - one sighting only. Nesting had not started in the Albany (cooler) area. Stirling Ranges area was the most rewarding.

Bryan & Betty Kelly.

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IN SEARCH OF GRASSWRENS.

We left Woonona at 6 a.m. for a trip along the Strzelecki Track hoping to see four species of Grasswren, neither of us having seen any of these restricted habitat birds to date, and drove almost non stop to a small patch of bush just out of Dubbo for a lunch stop where Fairy Martins were nesting naturally on the side of a steep creek bank. The area was alive with birds such as Rufous Songlark, Rufous Whistler, Common Bronzewing, Spotted Pardalote and a White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike. The countryside became noticeably drier as we left Dubbo and at a quick stop out of Cobar we spotted Southern Whiteface with Inland and Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Chirruping Wedgebills and White-browed Babblers. The road to Wilcannia was through very dry country with the edges of the roadside supporting the only green ground cover in sight. This of course attracted kangaroos, goats and parrots with a very high road toll and this in turn brought in Little Crow, Australian Raven, Black Kites and foxes to feed on the remains. During an overnight stop in Wilcannia, where the wind sprang up so strongly, our tent pole bent over and collapsed requiring midnight repairs and a short stop at Broken Hill to replace the pole. The wind was still so strong that at a tank we stopped at for a quick look there was a Wedge-tailed Eagle and several Black Kites sheltering behind the banks with Avocets and Pink-eared Ducks huddled together in a remnant puddle of water.

At Yunta we left the highway and cut across country towards Hawker but unfortunately we turned onto a road that was not on the map, a Moomba gas pipe-line road, and ended up 50 km south of our destination as a cold, wet night approached. The only shelter was a dry dam so we camped in this using the car and the tent for shelter from the wind as we cooked tea and not a bird in sight. The area became greener as we headed south and with the overnight rain looked good, we saw a pair of Blue-winged Parrots while checking a Singing Bushlark and Brown Songlarks were numerous. At a patch of scrub, with Blue Bush understorey, we found Splendid Fairy-wren in full colour, Spiny-cheeked and Singing Honeyeaters as well as White-browed Babblers, Red-capped Robin and Weebills. We arrived at Wilpina pound in time to set up camp and walk along the outer rim through pine and eucalypt forest, here the Inland Thornbills had a very different call from the local Brown sub-species, noting also Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo and Fan-tailed Cuckoo and Australian Kestrels inhabiting the cliffs. The next day I walked to the northern end of the Pound to the Glenora Falls area in search of Redthroat. Here the woodlands turn into heath type country which was regrowing after a fire 18 months ago with Tawny-crowned, White-fronted and White-eared Honeyeaters breeding and a Grey-fronted Honeyeater passing through but no Redthroat. The afternoon was spent searching the rocky spinifex areas about Mt Sunderland in vain for Striated Grasswrens but Eastern Gray Kangaroos were often disturbed resting amongst the clumps of spines and grunting in the effort to move away. The next morning an hours search about the Aroona homestead ruins turned up a single Redthroat in the scrubby growth along the river, not as common as Bransbury states.

A picturesque drive through Brachina Gorge after the recent rains cleaned up the car slightly and led us out of the Flinders Ranges on to the dry plains where little rain appeared to have fallen. We lunched at Leigh Creek South, a leafy oasis of a mining town in the dessert and just south of the huge 20 km long open cut mine. At the end of the mine about 15 km before Lyndhurst a walk into the salt bush turned up a Thick-billed Grasswren which kindly sat on top of a bush and sang for us. Several more walks before reaching Lyndhurst flushed more Grasswrens, White-winged Fairy-wrens and Cinnamon Quail-thrush, the Thick-billed Grasswrens being noted for further 160 km up the Strzelecki Track while the Quail-thrush extended up into the sandhills around Innaminka. Although we spent a day searching areas up to 35 km past Lyndhurst for Chestnut-breasted Whiteface we did not even turn up a Southern Whiteface but Wedgebills were frequently seen in the scrub along the dry creeks. The area had veins of shale type rock protruding vertically through the rocky ground weathering into sharp points like rows of spears and small, almost bare, stony hills, in all a very bleak country side with little live stock present.

Orange Chats became common as we proceeded up the Strzelecki Track, which, thanks to the Moomba gas fields, was in good condition and frequent stops at dry creeks, tanks and cane grass patches did turn up White-backed Swallows and many Brown Falcons resting on small sandhills about Monte Collina bore. We camped at Strzelecki Creek crossing and a walk down the dry creek produced Crimson Chats, Budgerigar, Black-breasted Buzzard, Little Eagle, Variegated Fairy-wrens and Tree Martins.

In Search of Grasswrens contd.

That night we were chorused by Dingos howling at the full moon and next morning spotted 6 at a dead bullock, 4 right inside the carcass. We could not determine which of the tracks was the Strzelacki Track so we continued up the Moomba Road stopping to watch hundreds of Crested Pigeons flying into a small watering spot and then back under bushes with loud whistling of wings. Further along 3 Banded Whiteface crossed the road but moved on before we would get a good look but a straggler following gave us a good sighting. We crossed to the track again at Murty Murty and went back down to the dry Mundibarcooloo water hole to search in vain for the Eyrean Grasswren, a number of further searches in sandhills with canegrass and spinifex cover also proved fruitless so it was one out of three so far. We did flush a Black-breasted Buzzard off a nest getting perfect views as it circled just overhead, saw a pair of courting Red-browed Pardalotes, Chestnut-crowned Babbler, many Crimson Chats, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill feeding young, Little Crow, Australian Raven and more White-winged Fairy-wrens. At Innamincka we camped on the bank of Cooper Creek which had a fair amount of water in it considering the dryness of the surroundings and we sat in the shade of a River Red Gum under a Whistling Kite's nest, watched a Great Egret landing fully in the water to chase food, Black Kites picking up scraps from the water surface, Rufous Night-herons, Pacific Herons and Sacred Ibis feeding on the edge and Darters drying in the sun. In the Red Gums White-plumed Honeyeaters and Little Friarbirds chased each other and any camp left unattended was immediately raided by Australian Ravens and Dingos, one of which looked more like a skinny German Shepherd. It was unusually busy as about 30 Queenslanders on a tour led by their NRMA equivalent were staying overnight on their way to Birdsville giving the public amenities a work out.

After Innamincka, with the most expensive petrol at 94 ¢/l, we searched more sandhills unsuccessfully for Grasswrens and stopped off at the Dig Tree where we spotted Black-tailed Native-hens, Glossy Ibis and a few species of duck including Hardhead. Under a curved bow of a tree Fairy Martins were nesting only a meter off the ground and there also appeared to be Tree Martins coming out of some of the unfinished nests. The area between Innamincka and Tibooburra was a mix of gibber plains and spinifex covered sandhills, very dry having had less than 25 mm of rain this year and few birds were seen until we reached the dry Booloo Lagoon ready to search for Grey Grasswren. The next day was spent around the lignum areas finding Redthroat, Variegated and White-winged Fairy-wrens, Wedgebills, Australian Pratincole and Inland Dotterel but no Grasswrens. In Tibooburra at the NP&WLS headquarters we found a note giving the name and phone number of a property to obtain permission to look for Grey Grasswren, so with a quick phone call, a visit to get directions was arranged for the next day. On the way we saw a Grey Falcon fly from a rock perch on the roadside and on reaching the property obtained directions. The spot we looked in was in between the areas already covered but had more areas of cane grass with the odd lignum bush as well as large lignum patches. After about 1½ hours searching and finding many Fairy-wrens we had almost given up when a Grasswren hopped up to the top of a lignum bush for a look and then darted back down into shelter. We ended up each with a two second look at the elusive Grey Grasswren, not much for the time and effort put in but it was all we were going to get as with further searching we could not sight them again. On the return to Tibooburra a Ground Cuckoo-shrike flew over the road and in trying to get a better look found the only Gibberbirds seen on the trip feeding in a well trampled stock area around an almost dry tank.

We then travelled to Wilcannia via White Cliffs, sighting a few Australian Pratincole on the way, the numerous gates reminding John of his job as a youth on a farm as the family travelled to town. From there we travelled to Ivanhoe and just out of town stopped at a large swamp where Whiskered Terns, Red-kneed Dotterels, Marsh Sandpipers, White-headed Stilts and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers fed in the shallows with Pelican and Grey Teal roosting further out. The country started to get greener as we approached Hillston many Red-rumped and other parrots were seen flying over the road. At Griffith sewerage farm about 12 Blue-billed Ducks were seen on a deep pond with Pink-eared, Hardhead and Black Duck and Grey Teal. The night was spent camped at Cocoparra National Park but with only a short time spent bird watching we turned up Pallid Cuckoo, Western Gerygone, Restless and Brown Flycatcher and our first Eastern Yellow Robin. That night Tawny Frogmouth landed overhead and started that soft but penetrating booming call. The area looked quite interesting and another party of birdwatchers were camped there for a look at the dry country birds, a spot to revisit in the future with more time.

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In Search of Grasswrens contd.

The trip back had a low note as we passed over a road under repair there were 3 green lumps on it and a quick check showed dead Superb Parrots. At that time another pair landed on the road and while we watched them they also nearly ended up as green lumps, oblivious to passing cars, a sorry end for such beautiful birds although we did see a few more as we travelled through the Stockinbingal area. During the holiday we travelled some 4500 km and identified 172 species, 6 new ones for me and 36 for John and learned a bit about those unmarked tracks out west for the next trip to find other Grasswrens.

Chris Brandis & John Pollard.

NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING REPORT.

The guest speaker for the night was Tim Childs, the campaigner for the National Threatened Species Network of NSW. His background of World Wildlife Fund and Friends of the Earth in Britain gave him the credentials required to lobby the powers that be to improve the lot of the many endangered species of plants and animals in NSW. He is also involved in the Animal Liberation movement, sits on the National Parks Association Committee and with sufficient Commonwealth funds available to allow him to be employed for only three days a week he finds life rather hectic.

Endangered species occur due to the specialisation of some, the small vulnerable pockets of others with low mobility and the diminishing and fragmentation of suitable habitat. Australia has the worst record of any country with over 250 animal and 300 plant species endangered as well as those already extinct. For a species to survive a genetic pool is required sufficient to prevent in-breeding and allow for natural disasters with the loss of one species often having a cascading effect through the eco-systems. Even those "nasty" creatures such as snakes and sharks have their part to play and if they go, it is for ever, which may affect the survival of other "nice" species. White colonisation has destroyed 75% of rainforest, 50% of tall woodlands and 65% of open woodlands. This with the introduction of exotic animals such as cats, foxes and rabbits, as well as plants, insects and our agricultural methods have changed the habitats dramatically over the last 200 years.

Of course not all native species have suffered, but birds like the Pied Currawong have increased out of balance putting even more pressure on small birds and animals they prey on, as well as spreading exotic plants. The group is campaigning for the compulsory de-sexing of cats and dogs, except for registered breeding, restricting the areas they can be kept in as pets, fertility control on pest species, more National Parks and less wanton slaughter in the name of sport. We wish them well in their quest and hope that the complacent Australian public (that's us) have a major attitude change to ensure that the nature we enjoy today is still available for future generations and not just exist as skins in the museum.

Richard Jordan gave the vote of thanks as well as adding some of his experiences around the world while conducting his Emu Tour adventures and he has found that overseas they are actually tending to care more for the environment than even the Australian bureaucracy says it does.

Chris Brandis.....

SUMMER CLOUD BAY OUTING.

For our meeting at Summer Cloud Bay, Sunday, 17th November, the morning broke into a perfect summer morning. The rain from the previous night had made the bushlands so fresh and inviting to walk into. Apparently the birds thought so too as they seemed most willing to show themselves in all their beauty. The car park, where 14 of us had gathered, just seemed to be the birds meeting place also as while we sipped our early morning coffee the place was alive with birds enjoying the freshness after rain. We saw King Parrots, Red and Little Wattlebirds, Noisy Friarbirds and Kookaburra. We walked along a good track with rainforest about us so it was cool and still sighting plenty of birds, Variegated Wren, Sacred Kingfisher, Leaden Flycatcher, Golden Bronze Cuckoo and Black-faced Monarch.

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Summer Cloud Bay Outing contd.

Morning tea found us perched on logs in the bush enjoying our snack. Wild flowers were out in profusion even little bush orchids, it was very pretty country. We set forth again to Kitty's Beach when howls were heard from the end of the line - some of our Birdo's had been attacked by, not birds, but big, red bull ants - oh how they sting - looked serious and maybe lunch for them would be upstanding from a fork of a tree. But, one of the party came to the rescue - a good old bottle of vinegar - yes it did relieve the sting - but wails coming from our Pres - who at the smell of vinegar lapsed into remembering good old English fish and chips - with vinegar.

We came to Kitty's Beach - green seas and white sands a very lovely setting. We spotted the Reef Heron, Large Black Cormorant and Sooty Oystercatcher. Just a bit of a shuffle as we sat on the rocks - which the sea had carved out into chairs for us - and watch the seabirds. We certainly had both worlds. Birds in the rain forest and then had a seated view of the seabirds - That's the Illawarra.

Two of our party couldn't resist the lovely blue/green water and with wet suits on they were off to see just what was under that water - came back to tell us just how colourful it was - plenty of life, parrot fish, sea urchins - so many unidentified but so colourful with small coloured fish. We had to leave this pretty beach but the views and other little beaches as we walked along were also worth a little time to linger a moment or two and take in the beauty.

We walked the circle to come back to Summer Cloud Bay and had named 44 species in all - it was a most interesting walk with so much birdlife, natural bush and wild flowers to see. Thank you for a great day.

Roxy Janetzki.

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS.

U Brown Goshawk	1 Curramore	2 Sep.	K. Mills
U Marsh Harrier	1 Coomonderry Swamp	4 "	"
U Australian Hobby	1 " "	4 "	"
S Bar-shouldered Dove	1 Kiama	4 "	"
U Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	2 Maddens Plains	6 Oct.	"
U Spotted Quail-thrush	2 Darkes Forest	10 "	"
U Grey Currawong	1 " "	10 "	"
U Logrunner	1 Woonona	10 "	"
U Grey Goshawk (White Phase)	1 Kiama	11 "	"
U Channel-billed Cuckoo	1 Curramore	12, 23 "	"
U Crested Shrike-tit	1 "	12 "	"
S White-headed Pigeon	1 Woonona	14 "	"
U Pilotbird	2 O'Hares Creek	14, 16 "	"
S Powerful Owl	1 Bass Point	3 Aug. 15 Sep.	C. Chafer
S White-headed Pigeon	3 " "	3 Aug.	"
U Green Catbird	4 Mt. Kembla	3 Sep.	"
S Little Eagle	1 " "	3 "	"
S White-headed Pigeon	2 " "	3 "	"
U Grey Currawong	1 Cataract Dam	5 "	"
R Sooty Owl	4 Royal N.P.	7 "	"
U Brown Cuckoo-dove	1 Bass Point	22 "	"
MC Painted Button Quail	1 " "	30 "	"
U Great Cormorant	525 Berkeley Harbour	5 Oct.	"
U Channel-billed Cuckoo	1 Lake Heights	16 "	"
S Sanderling	1 Bellambi Point	28 "	"
U Sooty Oystercatcher	20 Red Point	28 "	"
U Channel-billed Cuckoo	2 Wollongong Uni.	31 "	"

Comment: Chris Chafer noted that the 20 Sooty Oystercatchers is the largest single congregation ever recorded in the Illawarra/Shoalhaven areas.

Jim Robinson.