

I.B.O.C. News



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.

Club Motto: *'One Good Tern Deserves Another'*

Issue No.207

February 1998

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THE CLUB'S AIM IS TO JOIN TOGETHER PEOPLE WITH A COMMON INTEREST WHO WISH TO FURTHER THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE BIRDLIFE AROUND THEM

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

****** COMING EVENTS ******

NEW YEAR OUTING: The annual outing to the Windang Estuary will be on **Wednesday 4th February**, meeting at the eastern end of the pine trees on the northern side of the Lake Illawarra entrance at **5.30p.m.** Here is your chance to brush up on waders, terns and gulls, which are usually there in good numbers, as we walk around the sand flats and enjoy a pleasant evening of easy (for some) birdwatching by the lake. Bring along your eats and drinks to have back at the cars after the walk and catch up on the news with your Birdo friends.

NEXT MEETING: will be held on **Monday, 9th February**, at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, commencing at **7.30p.m.** Our **Guest Speaker** for the evening will be **Tony Saunders**. Tony is currently studying for a Ph.D. in Honeyeater Ecology but has had an interest in native plants and birds for 20 years and to that end has been a member of the Society for Growing Australian Plants for the same length of time. Tonight he is kindly going to share some of his knowledge with us and will speak to us about Birdscaping the Garden and attracting bird life and other wildlife into your garden using native plants.

NEXT OUTING: On **Sunday 15th February**, we will do a tour of Tallawarra power station foreshores, wetlands and ash ponds. Meet at the car park at the end of the drive adjoining the cooling water outlet canal at **8:30 am**. Darryl Goldrick will lead the walk. If traveling south take the Dapto turnoff from the freeway at Yallah and then turn right onto the old highway and proceed under the freeway (heading south) and take the second turn on the left into the Power Station drive. If coming from the northern suburbs, proceed down the Princes Highway through Dapto passing under the freeway and take second turn on the left. The entrance is well sign posted. Be careful- the first turn on the left is immediately after you pass under the freeway- Tallawarra is the next one. If you should miss the turn off- rejoin the freeway at the Yallah Woolshed, proceed to the roundabout at Albion Park Rail and come back up the freeway and take the Dapto turnoff and follow directions as described above. Don't forget your eats and drinks.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: will be held on **Tuesday 17th February** at the home of **Sue Proust**, starting at **7.30 p.m.**

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE. Please save your committee extra work by paying your subscriptions now.

FILM NIGHTS: It is felt that these were not sufficiently supported last year (perhaps due to the amount of excellent documentaries now showing on television and available on video) to warrant running them again this year. However if we receive sufficient feedback in their favour they can be reinstated. Please let your committee know.

The deadline for articles for the March newsletter is Monday 23rd February.



BARREN GROUNDS NEWS

Barren Grounds BirdBrain Indoor Twitchathon to be held at Mt Annan Botanic Garden Education Centre on 28th March 1998. More details in the next newsletter.

Barren Grounds Bird Observatory Raffle

The Barren Grounds Bird Observatory Raffle was drawn on the 13th December at the Christmas barbeque held in appreciation of the work of volunteers at the observatory throughout the year.

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|-------------|----------------------|----------------|--|
| Ist Prize : | Pierre Charbonneau | Ticket No 0386 | Accommodation at Gypsy Point Lodge (\$400) |
| 2nd Prize : | Ian Endersby | Ticket No 4777 | Weekend Course for 2 at BGBO (\$280) |
| 3rd Prize : | C. Blades | Ticket No 2827 | Birds Australia Gift Pack (\$250) |
| 4th Prize : | R. Hand & C. McGrath | Ticket No 2681 | Case of wine donated by Emu Tours |

Congratulations to the winners.

Thanks to all who participated in the raffle.

Thanks to those who generously donated prizes.

The money raised will be used to upgrade the BGBO Kitchen.

Upcoming Courses: Over the next 3 months there are a variety of very interesting courses to be held at Barren Grounds. More details in this newsletter.

Sue Proust



December meeting

The Christmas meeting maintained it's 'birdy' theme and though numbers were slightly down on last year, President Brian provided a very interesting program in the absence of his usual co- host Barbara who was holidaying in England. Despite Brian's announcement that he had only purchased a one way ticket, I'm pleased to report that Barbara has returned fit and well.

The bird quiz had a smattering of general knowledge questions and again proved quite a challenge and the scoring was considerably lower than last year. It seems as though the Zealy's have a mortgage on this event as Joan was the eventual winner. The prize was a beautiful original oil painting donated by fellow member Jenny Taylor- well done Joan and Jenny.

The T-shirt competition was again a close contest with Jenny Taylor's Smokin' Puffin getting the nod from the three judges- no, Brian wasn't a member of this panel, though there is some doubt whether he was able to influence them with the subliminal body language (the occasional wink wink, nudge nudge!).

Brian 'Father Christmas' Hales distributed Santa's sack of goodies including licorice to keep Horrie Ward as sprightly and as regular as ever. Special award to Olive Rodwell for her long and dedicated contribution in maintaining the library, Peggy McKinlay for her behind the scenes work including the stapling and posting of the newsletters, Betty Hudson for her post- meeting suppers and directing walks. A special award to Chris Chafer in an attempt to motivate him into real bird watching- a book on Puffins.

Alister Zealy provided a musical interlude on the piano, Betty Hudson recited a poem on the Duck and Kangaroo. Kevin and Fay McGregor claimed to be new bird watchers and displayed the collar and walking stick presented to them by their Grandchildren. Kevin then conducted a cryptic bird quiz which was won by Robyn Wilson. Robyn clearly demonstrated an exceptional ability to be able to think far more laterally than the rest of us.

Russell Hales (Brian's son) and his two friends, Rob and Nathan concluded the evening with a song/ guitar session to the enjoyment of all- three very talented young men- in fact one has to ask the question as to where Russell's musical talents originate- I've never heard Brian and Barbara even whistle!

A very pleasant evening was had by all as we tidied up and dined on the Christmas treats.

Darryl Goldrick.



December Christmas Outing

Held at The Illawarra Grevillea Park, Bulli Saturday 6th December 1997

Our final outing for 1997 was attended by 29 members at the entrance to the park at 4.00pm, and finally got started about 4.30pm when Ray Brown came to our assistance and lent us a key to open the top gate so that we could do the complete walk. We walked up the south side firstly to keep clear of a wedding party at the chapel.

We walked in the shade of the trees with the hazy sun giving a red tint to the soft light, because of the smoke in the air from the recent bushfires, and with a mild temperature, walking was pleasant. Birds were scarce in the fenced area of the park, although we did observe four Black-shouldered Kites, two of which were immature, also two Brown Cuckoo Doves. The area is a delight to walk through being on the slope of the mountain but at birdwatchers pace is still easy walking. The lower part has been fenced to keep out vandals and foxes which roam the area. Vandalism is an ongoing problem there.

It is great to be able to walk through an area of bush which is free of all weeds of any kind. Within the fenced area the gardeners there have done a wonderful job and left only native plants and trees. In recent times a lot of rain forest plantings have been carried out amongst the existing eucalypts.

When we left the fenced area some birds appeared in the tall eucalypts, some of which were the Grey Butcherbird, Australian King Parrot, Gang-gang Cockatoo, and Lewin's Honeyeater with a few other little brown birds which were not identified.

The main track we were following went on up the hillside, but we turned off to walk the circular track which firstly led down over Slacky Creek which runs down a wet gully, although in a very dry period still had a trickle of water running. This supply of water attracted the birds which we observed there, some being the Grey Fantail, White-throated Scrubwren, Eastern Yellow Robin, Brown Gerygone, and Silvereye. This circular walk winds around the mountainside and comes back over Slacky Creek a little higher up then rejoins the main track. A number of birds were recorded along this part of the walk, some of which were the Laughing Kookaburra, Eastern Whipbird, Golden Whistler, Striated Thornbill, Black-faced Monarch, and Fantailed Cuckoo.

From there we walked back down the track where the walk finished at the Chapel where we had our tea, in the cool of the evening about 6.30pm, concluding a lovely afternoon in such a beautiful area. It is a credit to all the workers who have given their time and effort preparing all the gardens and bringing the area to such an area of beauty that it is now. Much credit to Mr. Ray Brown who is the driving force behind the whole venture there, and to whom we owe our thanks for being able to enjoy our visit there.

For the afternoon we recorded a total of 33 species.

Black-shouldered Kite	Striated Thornbill	Australian Raven
Silver Gull	Lewin's Honeyeater	Silvereye
Spotted Turtle Dove	New Holland Honeyeater	Brown Cuckoo-Dove
Eastern Spinebill	Wonga Pigeon	Eastern Yellow Robin
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Logrunner	Rainbow Lorikeet
Eastern Whipbird	Australian King Parrot	Golden Whistler
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Black-faced Monarch	Common Koel
Grey Fantail	Laughing Kookaburra	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
White-throated Treecreeper	Grey Butcherbird	Yellow-throated Scrubwren
Australian Magpie	Pied Currawong	White-throated Scrubwren
Brown Gerygone	Brown Thornbill	

Horrie Ward



Late October Camp 1997

The late October campsite was chosen for us by Dave and with the help of Lola and Laurie, made a preliminary survey of walks and drive locations in quite cold conditions, I believe. It was a very successful camp held at Mt. Seaview Resort. Dave had prepared a collection of information, maps and a field bird list which he handed to each group as we arrived and was much appreciated by the 27 members at this camp. Although we missed our I.B.O.C. campfire, a large shelter with tables and stools was there for our use for our nightly bird call list and discussion of outings and atlasing.

Three kilometres further into the property from the main resort, where Horrie and Betty stayed, was the camping area. Those who preferred power to their vans had a fine view of the mountain and were closer to the amenities. The more hardy campers had our vans or tent besides a swiftly running stream. The water ran under a rustic bridge, tumbled over smooth rocks and into a succession of deep pools. Thick bush on the opposite side of the stream gave way to grassy fields where cows contentedly grazed. A truly idyllic spot! This stream is actually the upper reaches of the Hastings River. The deep pools were great for swimming and cooling off as most days the temperature was over 30°C. Tom caught a good sized bass which provided a lovely fresh fish meal for them.

The tall old casurinas and eucalypts which shaded our vans was a haven for so many birds, we were on their patch so they chose to ignore us - well mostly anyway. Superb Fairywrens, many in full colour were hopping amongst us. White-throated, and occasionally Brown, Treecreepers moved up and around the tree trunks while Varied Sittellas headed down in their characteristic way. Olive-backed Orioles, Satin Bower

Birds in full blue black hue, Bee-eaters, Dollarbirds, Lewin's Honeyeaters, Brown and Striated Thornbills, Leaden Flycatchers were some of the birds who were with us constantly. The air was filled with their calls. The beautiful calls of the Rufus Whistler and Grey Shrike-thrush added to the melodies. Of the Cuckoo family, the Fantail Brush, Koel and Channel-billed kept us informed of their presence. An Azure Kingfisher, from a low branch successfully fished the stream. The two resident Willy Wagtails spent most of their time hassling the larger birds with little success. A Noisy Friar bird fed its young at its nest, much to the delight of Betty Hudson who was able to watch from her tent and Betty Ward had a surprising encounter with a Tawny Frogmouth.

Young Currawongs watched us eating with hope in their eyes but as they were way down in the pecking order, after the Kookaburras then Magpies, they were often out of luck. It was interesting to watch a Kookaburra catch and kill a Brown Snake, fortunately on the other side of the creek, and to see the young Currawongs crying and begging to be fed, the same bird then caught and killed the only frog in the stream. I felt sad as it's ages since I had heard a frog calling. Next this thieving "Crookaburra" swooped down and stole Wendy's lamb chop off her plate and knocked over her dinner. He flew to his perch, tried to kill the bone before eating the meat. After that we were all alert when barbecuing and eating our meals.

We set off early Sunday morning for the "Rain Forest Walk", a publicized feature of the Resort. The weather was warm and by midday, very hot. Birds sighted included Black-faced Monarchs, Crested Shrike Tit, Varied Triller and we heard the Noisy Pitta with its "walk-to-work" call. We had morning tea under an enormous Figtree, a typical rainforest scene. We walked past ancient Grass Trees before returning to camp. Other birds sighted were Golden Whistlers, Yellow Thornbill, Yellow Robin and Red-browed Firetails.

Next morning a reported sighting of Red-backed Fairywrens by Kevin had many of us hurrying to look, particularly the striking male. We also saw White-throated Geryones flying to and from their nest, feeding their young. The Scarlet Honeyeater was also added to the list. On other walks around the property Pale Yellow Robin, Yellow Tailed Black-Cockatoos, King Parrots, Crimson Rosellas and a Regent Bowerbird were seen to name a few.

Tuesday we headed off for a 170 km round trip to Boongana Nature Reserve, via Doyles River and Bulga State Forests, Bulga and Comboyne Plateau. Most of this area had been cleared early in the century and is now a rich dairying area. We had morning tea at Blue Knob Lookout, seemingly on top of the world, spoilt a bit by heat haze and smoke but beautiful never the less, then out to Boorgama Nature Reserve for lunch. A very easy track led down to Rawson Falls Lookout. This pretty rainforest walk showed signs of past logging with some of the forest giants left standing being named for us - Coachwood, Rosewood etc. Whipbirds called and answered in their inimitable style.

Large-billed and Yellow-throated Scrubwrens, Rose Robins and Green Catbirds were added to the list. Then an all too quick trip to Ellenborough Falls and onto the highlight

of the day - Devonshire Tea in Mrs. Fisher's beautiful cottage garden. Mrs. Fisher is a legend around Comboyne. Large freshly baked scones, lashings of jam and cream and a pot of really good tea. It was just as good as Jim and I tasted 20 years ago. Dave had quite a time, trying to get the keen gardeners away as around every corner was a colourful delight.

Next day, the very keen Birdos took their cars to Port Macquarie where they added the Brown Honeyeater, Wompoo Fruit Dove, then onto the Sewage Ponds where they sighted Musk Duck, Grey and Chestnut Teals, a pair of Australasian Grebes with their striped babies, and Black Swans with four goslings in grey downy feathers. An Eastern Curlew and Bar-tailed Godwit were seen at the seafront. The best sighting of all was a Regent Bower Bird at its bower at Sea Acres.

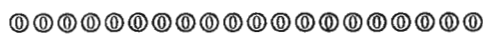
Approximately 60kms from Camp is Wirrikimbe National Park, our Thursday outing. Glossy Black-Cockatoos showing their brilliant red tail feathers was sighted on the way to Plateau Beech. After morning tea we followed the walking track through the picturesque forest down to King Fern Falls and Filmy Fern Cascades. Ancient Beech trees and ferns dominated the varied flora. An Olive Whistler repeatedly called but this elusive bird managed to stay out of everyone's sight. We drove to Grass Tree Picnic area for lunch and after took a further walk among the eucalypts, grasstrees and a good many wildflowers. There a Flame Robin was seen and on our return a Wonga Pigeon was added to our growing list.

It's no doubt we all scrub up well and looking good we fronted up to the Resort for a delicious meal and some unsolicited entertainment from the Eastwood Ladies Probos, who were guests at the Resort.

On Friday, some of our members departed and most rested after three heavy days of sightseeing and birding. Others walked the trails or climbed the Jasper Ranges. Four intrepid birdies in their four wheel drive took off in search of that elusive Olive Whistler. It was almost nightfall when they returned, to our consternation. But that's another story - just ask! (Were they successful? Ed.)

The final hurrah for Jim and I was a juvenile Marsh Harrier with its dark brown and bluish feathers as we left the camp on Saturday. With a total of 145 birds for the week, good company, good weather and great scenery, this was voted a very successful camp.

Jim and Gwen Robinson



Lake Murphy

On a recent trip to north Queensland we travelled up through central Queensland instead of the usual coastal route. On the way we stopped overnight at Lake Murphy National Park which is situated 30km north west of Taroom. Access is dirt road which is fairly well graded, however wet weather could make access difficult. The drive to Lake Murphy travels through grazing and crop lands and when we were there in October, the wheat was ready to harvest and plenty of emus were doing a bit of harvesting of their own.

Lake Murphy is a natural lake surrounded by remnant forest and it remains pretty much how Ludwig Leichardt's expedition of 1844 saw it. The party camped here on their long journey from the Darling Downs to Port Essington in the Northern Territory. The lake is seasonal, and it may pay to check the years rainfall before venturing in. The free campground is a pleasant surprise- it has level sites set among gum trees, with pit toilets and tank water available. Adjacent to the campground is a grassy picnic area with a shelter shed.

The bird life was interesting with a mix of northern and southern species. The lake didn't hold as many birds as I expected however we did see Straw-necked Ibis, White-necked Heron, Black Swans, Masked Plover and Pheasant Coucal. The highlight of our stay was sitting down to eat tea and watching Brolgas flying into the lake after a day out foraging on the fields. We saw plenty of woodland birds including Pale-headed Rosellas, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Red-winged Parrot, Cockatiel, White-Plumed Honeyeater and Grey-crowned Babbler. At night we spent sometime spotlighting without success even though we could hear Boobook Owl and Tawny Frogmouth calling. There is a 4km circuit walk which wanders through the woodland and along Robinson Creek which feeds Lake Murphy.

The area is supposed to be good for koalas, all we saw were goannas, Red backed Wrens and lots of *Cymbidium canaliculatum* in flower. Overall the area looks very good for birds with such a diversity of habitats, and a longer stay could turn up some interesting species. Incidentally, the road to Expedition N.P. runs past Lake Murphy so birdos with a 4wd could venture to this isolated national park.

Steve Popple

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Pied Butcherbirds and the Illawarra

Last month I reported John Blomstedt's record of a Pied Butcherbird from Engadine. Several people commented on the validity of the record. Prior to this observation, there were six known records of the Pied Butcherbird from the County of Cumberland, with the last two records being at Box hill in August 1992 and Helensburgh in October 1992 (Hoskins 1991, Morris & Burton 1994). Furthermore, the great ornithologist John Gould wrote of his travels through the Illawarra and Cumberland Plain in 1839 :

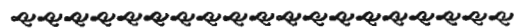
“districts of rich land known as apple-tree flats, and low open undulating hills studded with large trees, are the kind of districts to which it [the pied butcherbird] peculiarly resorts: hence the cow-pastures at Camden, the fine park -like estate of Charles Throsby, Esq., at Bong-bong, and the entire district of the upper Hunter are among the localities in which it may always be found” (Gould 1865)

Gould spent some time in the Illawarra during his visit to Australia, collecting and observing many species. It would seem from the above extract of his handbook, that the Pied Butcherbird was not an unusual species during the late 1830's. Thus occasional observations of this species from the Cumberland Plain and its periphery should not be totally unexpected.

References

- Gould, J. 1865. Handbook to the Birds of Australia, The Author, London.
Hoskin, E.S. 1991. The Birds of Sydney, Surrey Beatty, Chipping Norton.
Morris, A.K. & Burton, A. 1994. New South Wales Annual Bird Report 1992. *Australian Birds* 27, 97-139

Chris J. Chafer



RECORDS OF BIRD SIGHTINGS ON TRIPS/CAMPS - STURT NP/COONGIE LAKE

The party on the recent Club trip to Sturt NP/Coongie Lake (Aug/Sept 97) has prepared lists of sightings made in 12 locations outside N.S.W. These lists are now held in Club records. Lists (120) for locations in N.S.W. are with the N.S.W. Atlas. For further information on these lists contact Dave Thompson on 02 - 4284 2876.

Dave Thompson

UPCOMING COURSES AT BARREN GROUNDS

BATS AND BAT PEOPLE

Date : 27 Feb - 1 Mar

Leaders : Nancy Pallin and Margaret Turton

Come and meet some captive hand - reared flying foxes and help trap tiny insect - eating bats and learn all about the biology, ecology, evolution and conservation of these fascinating creatures from two well- known bat people.

AUTUMN ORCHIDS

Date : 13 - 15 March

Leader : Leo Cady

Leo Cady, a local orchid expert, has recorded over 60 orchid species at Barren Grounds. On Saturday there will be walks, talks and pressings and on Sunday you will be exploring the heathland, looking for orchids. Come and find out about these precious and beautiful flowers.

BIRDS FOR BEGINNERS

Date : 20 - 22 March

Leader : Brian Hales

This is a great course for those starting out. Brian will introduce you to the major bird groups and help you with those " little brown birds". Find out about books and equipment and see Brian's extensive bird slide collection.

SPECIAL EASTER COURSE

Date : 10 - 13 April

Leader : Raoul Boughton

A special long weekend course for friends and family, with a special family price. Join Raoul for small mammal trapping, mist netting for birds, bushwalks, birdwatching, picnics, spotlighting, talks and slide shows. A great outdoor long weekend.

Special family price \$450 (2 adults, 2 children)

Individual Adult price \$160

Individual Child price \$85

PELAGIC BIRDS

Date ; 24 - 26 April

Leader : Lindsey Smith

Join Lindsey Smith on Saturday for an introduction to Pelagic birds, with some tips on identification. On Sunday, join the "Sandra K" for a trip to the continental shelf and a chance to add to your bird list. You could see up to 15 new birds.

Special Price \$160 (includes boat trip)

Weekend courses cost \$140 per person fully catered (children under 15 1/2 price)

Birds Australia members and Barren Grounds Friends \$130

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	1	30/11	Berrara	wetland edge	KM
Hardhead	60	29/11	Tallawarra	wetland	DG
Great Crested Grebe	1	07/12	Shoalhaven River	riverine	RM
Macaroni Penguin	1	10/12	Pretty Beach, Kioloa	beach	LES
Osprey	2	07/12	North Nowra	riparian	RM
Square-tailed Kite	1	12/12	Woollamia	overhead	CJC
Grey (white) Goshawk	1	05/12	Jaspers Brush(Hwy)	overhead	CB
Grey (white) Goshawk	1	24/11	Figtree	overhead	KZ
Grey (white) Goshawk	1	15/12	Kiama, Spring Ck.	overhead	CJC
Brown Falcon	1	22/12	Jaspers Brush	grassland	CJC
Australian Hobby	1	13/11	Port Kembla Steelworks	overhead	JZ
Buff-banded Rail	1	12/12	Key's Farm, Macquarie Rivulet		RF
Baillons Crake	1	12/12	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	SP
Emerald Dove	2	20/11	Curramore	graden!	KM
Topknot Pigeon	200	22/11	Willow Vale	figtree	GW
White-headed Pigeon	1	06/12	Kieraville	garden	MF
White-headed Pigeon	1	18/12	Honeymoon Bay	rainforest	MR
Crested Pigeon	35	26/11	Harry Graham Park	parkland	KZ
Glossy Black Cockatoo	1	01/12	Falls Creek	forest	KM
Little Corella	8	29/11	Lake Heights	overhead	CJC
Long-billed Corella	20+	02/12	Meroo Meadow	grassland	CJC
Rainbow Lorikeet	6	07/12	Jamberoo	urban	BH
Turquoise Parrot	1	01/12	Conjola SF	woodland	KM
Powerful Owl	2a+2j	18/12	Honeymoon Bay	rainforest	MR
White-throated Needletail	100	12/12	Woollamia	overhead	CJC
Rainbow Bee-eater	1	06/11	Terara	riparian	KM
White-plumed Honeyeater	1	13/12	Warrawong	urban	CJC
White-winged Triller	20+	29/11	Avondale	woodland	DG
Dusky Woodswallow	50+	29/11	Avondale	woodland	DG
Rufous Songlark	1	06/11	Terara	grassland	KM

CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; RF - Richard Fackender; DG - Daryl Goldrick; EH - Betty Hudson; KM - Kevin Mills; RM - Richard Miller; SP - Sue Proust; MR - Mark Robinson; LES - Lindsay Smith; GW - Geoff Walker; KZ - Kirsty Zealey; JZ - Joan Zealey

Comment: Thanks to everyone who is sending observations via email. Those who are doing this, also get the latest observations of really unusual sightings as soon as they are reported to me. Obviously the most interesting record for this period was the Macaroni Penguin recovered from Pretty Beach. Although outside the usual reporting area, several readers were lucky enough to see the bird at Lindsay's before it went to Taronga Zoo for rehabilitation. Osprey are very rare in the region and the pair from the Shoalhaven River is an excellent record. There are very few coastal records of Turquoise parrots, while Bee-eaters have not previously been observed east of Nowra bridge on the Shoalhaven. Daryl's observations of Trillers and Dusky Woodswallows at Avondale are the greatest congregations recorded from the Illawarra for both species. Another great observation was Kirsty's 35 Crested Pigeons, the second highest regional gathering. Kevin Mills has recently published (in Australian Birds) an interesting interpretation of the spread of the Crested Pigeon through the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions. Powerful Owls have not previously been recorded from the Beecroft Peninsula.

Please NOTE: Observations can now be sent to me via e-mail at: cchafer@ezy.net.au

PROGRAMME OUTLINE FOR 1998

FEB.	Wed.	4 th	Outing	Windang Estuary
	Mon.	9 th	Meeting	Mr. Tony Saunders, Birdscaping Your Garden
	Sun.	15 th	Outing	Ash Ponds, Yallah, Leader, Mr. Darryl Goldrick
MAR.	Mon.	9 th	Meeting	Mr. Lindsay E. Smith
	Sat.	21 st	Outing	The Crags
APR.	Fri.	10 th - Sat. 18 th	APR.	Easter Camp, Kildare, Upper Horton.
MAY.	Mon.	11 th	Meeting	Dr. Michael Cannon, Veterinary Aspects of Birds
	Sun.	17 th	Outing	Boys Lookout/Granite Falls - Ms. Diana Wright
JUN.	Mon.	8 th	Meeting	Members Night
	Sat.	13 th	Outing	Taronga Park Zoo, Coach to be confirmed*
JUL.	Mon.	13 th	Meeting	Mr. Peter Nolan, Raptors
	Sun.	19 th	Outing	To be advised, Leader Mr. Chris Chafer
AUG.	Mon.	10 th	Meeting	Mr. David Zeims, Falkland/Galapagos Islands
	Sat.	15 th	Outing	To be confirmed, Sussex Inlet, Leader Dr. K. Mills
SEP.	Mon.	14 th	Meeting	Mr. Trevor Queded. Birding in Equador
	Sat.	19 th	Outing	To be advised, Leader, Mr. Jack Hyslop
OCT.	Sat.	3 rd - Mon. 5 th	Oct.	To be advised
OCT.	Sat.	24 th - Sat. 31 st	Oct.	To be advised
NOV.	Mon.	9 th	Meeting	Mr. C. Brandis/Mr. D. Goldrick, Carpertee/Cape York
	Sun.	15 th	Outing	Bundanoon Creek, Leader, Mr. Ziggy Freund
DEC.	Sat.	12 th	Outing	Barren Grounds Barbecue
	Mon.	14 th	Meeting	Christmas Fun

*Free Flight Bird Show, 12 noon, reported to be excellent, plus free time to view other exhibits. If we can get 22 takers we can run a coach to the Zoo otherwise it will be a case of providing your own transport. Cost of coach will be \$14 each, entry to the Zoo on a group booking, which also has to be pre-arranged, is \$13.50 adults, \$6.75 children 4 - 15 years of age. The Coach has to be booked early to ensure that it is available on the date we want it so we need definite takers. If you will not be at the February meeting but are interested in this trip please phone Barbara Hales, 42574431.

A huge "THANK YOU" goes to all the above people who have offered their time to our 1998 programme, your commitment is greatly appreciated. We are still desperately in need of an excursions officer to coordinate our outings, please consider helping out. If you know of any walks or campsites please contact any committee member.

I.B.O.C. News

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.



Club Motto: *"One Good Tern Deserves Another"*

Issue No. 208

March 1998

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THE CLUB'S AIM IS TO JOIN TOGETHER PEOPLE WITH A COMMON INTEREST WHO WISH TO FURTHER THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE BIRDLIFE AROUND THEM

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

☺☺☺☺ **COMING EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

RECEIVED

4 - MAR 1998

NEXT MEETING: will be held on **Monday, 9th March**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** Our **Guest Speaker** for the evening will be our own local, well known, dedicated "Birdman" and longtime I.B.O.C. member **Mr. Lindsay E. Smith**. Lindsay and his wife, Janice, devote a tremendous amount of their time to rehabilitating injured birds and relocating them. Their work in the fight to save the endangered albatross species with the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association (SOSSA) is known worldwide. Tonight Lindsay will share with us his wealth of information and another of his passions **The Five Islands**, located off Port Kembla, which have become a second home to him.

NEXT OUTING: PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE TO THAT PRINTED IN THE PROGRAMME OUTLINE FOR 1998: the outing will take place **Saturday, 14th March**, on a private property known as The Craggs which is in the Nattai district about three miles (as the crow flies) from Mittagong. Please meet at the corner of the old Hume Highway and the Wombeyan Caves Road at **8.30 a.m.** To get there proceed through Mittagong and take the old Hume Highway towards Berrima keeping to the right hand lane as you approach the freeway - this keeps you on the road to Berrima and the Wombeyan Caves Road will be on the right hand side. Do NOT GET ONTO THE FREEWAY or you will have to double back through Berrima. Please be prompt as we have to drive on from the meeting point and, where possible, share cars. As well as birds, with a bit of luck, we may see the huge goanna again. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

PLEASE NOTE THAT BECAUSE OF THE DATES OF THE EASTER CAMP THERE WILL NOT BE A NEWSLETTER, MEETING OR OUTING FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL.

Next Committee Meeting: This will be held on **Tuesday 17th March** at the house of **Kerri Lewis** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

The deadlines for articles for the May Newsletter is 21st April.

Illawarra Lakes Entrance, Windang

Lat. 34° 32' S Long 150° 52'E
Wednesday 4th February, 1998

We had a great afternoon for the traditional first outing for the year 1998. A good attendance of 26 came along to enjoy the beautiful area on a very humid afternoon. The light south easterly breeze made conditions very pleasant as we began our walk out onto the sand flats. The walk began about 5.40p.m. from the eastern end of the pine trees, as planned, along a narrow walking tracking which led out onto the sand flats, which has mainly low shrubby growth to the north and reeds on the opposite side.

As we began the walk, an early sighting was a Golden-headed Cisticola perched on top of a casurina calling as we all walked by beneath it. A short distance along were two Willie Wagtails and a party of Superb Fairy-wrens in the low growth. We then walked out onto the sandflats, which is quite a large area and the sand appears to be building up on the southern side. As the tide was going out at the time, much of the flats were exposed, which increases the shallows for the waders. Some of the birds observed were the White-faced Heron, Australian White Ibis, Great Egret, Cormorants- Little Black, Great and Little Pied, Crested and Caspian Terns.

We walked along the beach front and looked over the ocean and towards Windang Island, but due to the dark cloudy sky, birds were difficult to observe and identify. In fact we were fortunate not to experience rain, which was threatening, but we got through the afternoon without any. From the beach we walked back to the picnic area in very pleasant conditions, with a cool southerly breeze blowing in. It was a change from the hot weather earlier in the day. The walk finished about 6.40 p.m. and we had tea together before returning home.

There was a total of 23 bird species recorded.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Australian Pelican | Kelp Gull |
| Great Cormorant | Silver Gull |
| Little Black Cormorant | Caspian Tern |
| Little Pied Cormorant | Crested Tern |
| Great Egret | Crested Pigeon |
| White-faced Heron | Superb Fairy-wren |
| Australian White Ibis | New Holland Honeyeater |
| Black-shouldered Kite | Australian Raven |
| Masked Lapwing | House Sparrow |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | Golden-headed Cisticola |
| Eastern Curlew | Common Greenshank |
| Pomarine Jaeger | |

Horrie Ward

Barren Grounds News

Barren Grounds Bird Brain Indoor Twichathon

On Saturday 28th March, at Mt Annan Botanic Garden Education centre, Barren Grounds Bird Brain will be held. Commencing at 2.30 p.m., team registration starts at 1.45pm. Teams consist of 3 to 8 people, with an entry fee of \$10 per adult, or \$8 for students, pensioners or unemployed. Please contact Sue Proust if you have a team or wish to be included in a team. An optional organised bird walk, led by Alan Leishman, starts at 10.15am, meeting at the main Information Centre Car Park.

Please note: As there is a garden entry fee of \$5 per car it is suggested that participants meet at the gates and car pool.

Upcoming Courses Please refer to February's Newsletter regarding the current courses to be held at Barren Grounds.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The level of interest in our guest speaker's topic, "Attracting Birds To Your Garden" was obvious by the excellent attendance at our first meeting of the year.

Tony Saunders' presentation highlighted important elements for those who may have simply had interests in establishing native gardens and/or those who had an interest in providing suitable habitat for native fauna.

Tony emphasised that 'birdscaping' gardens has evolved significantly in recent years as an artform with present day emphasis on more ecologically sustainable principles. Planning and designing native gardens knowing what the different bird species preferences are is a fundamental element in its ultimate success or otherwise.

He then went on to describe the preferred habitats for a number of species e.g. Fairy Wrens' preference for privet and oleander, Willy Wagtails' preference for single trees with plenty of surrounding open areas, Redbrowed Finches' fondness for seeding grasses, Grey Fantails' preference for a mixed canopy cover. The latter habitat comes later in the development of the garden as it matures and provides important cover for the smaller birds. The placement of rocks, logs and mulch amongst the groundcover encourages skinks and lizards which in turn attract Kookaburras and Butcherbirds.

Tony strongly discouraged the use of seed trays to attract parrots such as King Parrots and Rosellas. Birds tend to become dependant and lose their natural foraging abilities especially when rearing young.

Some of his gardening tips included:-

- (1) Don't plant too many large flowering plants including grevilleas as these attract the very aggressive Noisy Miners, Friarbirds and Red Wattlebirds.
- (2) Plant dense finer flowered plants that can't be harvested on by these larger birds.
- (3) Select plants carefully - a mix of tall, medium and low shrubs and grasses.
- (4) Don't provide food supplements but a waterbath is a must.
- (5) Choose plants that produce seeds and attract insects. Prickly-type bushes provide excellent shelter for the smaller birds.
- (6) Use species that are endemic to your local area.
- (7) Banksias should not be overlooked. Heath Banksia is good for the smaller honeyeaters and provides abundant nectar. Banksia marginata is an excellent insect attracter while Banksia serrata and Banksia integrifolia is loved by the larger honeyeaters such as the Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets.

Tony provided great insight and many helpful hints and he attracted many questions at the conclusion of his presentation which was supported with some great slides. President Brian concluded by moving a vote of thanks to Tony for his time in travelling from the Blue Mountains to share his knowledge and experiences with the club.

Darryl Goldrick

TALLAWARRA ASH PONDS, IBOC OUTING 15.2.98

It was a very hot Sunday morning when 19 IBOC members arrived at the public carpark at the breakwater in front of Tallawarra Power Station at 8.30am, and the day showed every sign of becoming hotter. In some ways this seemed a blessing, because there was no absence of avian life. In the broad channel formed between the breakwater and the mainland we spotted Little Pied Cormorants roosting, White-faced Heron and Great Egret fishing, and Black Swans and other waterfowl flying overhead.

The Tallawarra Ash Ponds are currently owned by Pacific Power, and being on private land they are not normally accessible. They are regularly patrolled, even on Sundays, and during the walk we had to make way for the patrolling vehicles a few times. On this day the club had been granted special permission to make the visit, and even without the birds it was interesting to walk around this little known area south of Dapto. Our leader for the day was to be our new secretary, Daryl Goldrick, but unfortunately he became sick soon after arrival, and the walk leader duties fell to Chris Brandis. The walk was done in two stages, the first circumnavigating the two ash ponds closest to the lake and the carpark, and then a short drive back down the road followed by a walk circumnavigating ash pond no. 3.

From the carpark we walked back across the breakwater channel, spotting two Striated Herons, Chestnut Teal and Pacific Black Duck. The ash ponds regularly contain large numbers of waterfowl, and as we walked along the roadways separating the individual ponds the ducks would frequently be flying overhead from one pond to another. Having crossed the channel we turned right to follow a roadway towards Wollingurri Point, and parallel to the channel and breakwater on the opposite side. While the entire area of the Tallawarra Ash Ponds is relatively open, there are also significant stands of woodland, especially casuarina and melaleuca interspersed with eucalypts. Along this roadway, and with views to the channel as well, we saw Willie Wagtail, Australian Pelican, Dollarbird, Superb Fairy-wren, Grey Butcherbird, Crested Pigeon, Silvereye, Yellow Thornbill, Greenshank and Great Cormorant. From Wollingurri Point looking into the lake we saw Grey Teal plus cormorant and duck species we'd already seen, but here a flock of about 15-20 Little Ravens flew overhead, which must be a fairly rare sighting for the Illawarra coastal plain.

We then turned inland, with the course of Duck Creek on the left-hand side and an ash pond on the right-hand side. While Duck Creek may have been aptly named originally, most of the waterfowl were settled on the ash ponds, mostly Chestnut and Grey Teal, plus quite a few of the Pacific Black Duck, but also seen were Australasian Shoveller, Purple Swamphen, Hardhead, and Dusky Moorhen. In and around the vegetation were more Dollarbirds and flocks of Red-browed Firetails, and overhead an Australian Hobby was circling.

As the day became hotter, and we continued our way around the ash ponds, crossing an old oval and returning to the initial roadway, it became evident that the conditions were very suitable for raptors. We had seen the Black-Shouldered Kite early during the walk, and upon the return towards the carpark the Australian Hobby reappeared, settling at the top of one of the large power line structures, and we were able to obtain

good views of it perched, the angles and the light being just right, and the roadway we were traversing being at about the right height.

We returned to the carpark for morning tea, and by this time everyone was very hot and debating whether to participate in the second half of the outing, or to call it a day and return home. While considering these options a Whistling Kite flew past over the water of Yallah Bay, swooped down near the breakwater, catching a fish and flying on to perch not far from the carpark to enjoy its meal.

Only ten members braved the second part of the day, the remainder submitting to the heat of the day and decided to look for somewhere cooler. Those who stayed drove back to a gate closer to the highway where we could cross Duck Creek and circumnavigate Ash Pond no. 3. This area was more open than the first, having more a feel of farmland, and indeed there were cattle grazing on agistment. Nevertheless, there was some vegetation which afforded views of a female Mistletoebird, Golden-headed Cisticola, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. All the ash ponds have suffered from the recent heat reminiscent of tropical climates, and most had water levels that were considerably low. Ash Pond no. 3 in particular had long stretches of bare ground, and here it was possible to see White-fronted Chat, Red-capped Plover, Black-fronted Plover, Masked Lapwing, Silver Gull, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Welcome Swallow, and Australian White Ibis. Some of the smaller birds were really too distant on the sandflat for some of us to see clearly without the assistance of a telescope, being more like moving specks against a light sandy background. There were also Australasian Grebe, Hoary-headed Grebe and Australian Wood Duck.

The thermals were still suitable for raptors, and we were accompanied for a good stretch of this circuit by a Brown Goshawk. On the return leg we saw Royal Spoonbill, Darter, Pink-eared Duck and Eurasian Coot as well as the waterfowl species we'd seen earlier. And back at the bridge over Duck Creek we were graced with the presence of the Grey Fantail and Yellow-rumped Thornbill. It will be interesting to revisit the Ash Ponds in future years, as I understand there are some efforts to transfer at least some of the area to a recreation/conservation park.

The day finished not long before 2.00pm, which was just as well, because with the continual heat of the day storm clouds had come up, and a downpour arrived after everyone had left. Just before this the last raptor of the day, a Nankeen Kestrel, was seen while we were recovering from our walking with a few drinks beside the cars.

A good tally of birds was reached, with a total of 63 species for the day. Thank you to Daryl and Chris for arranging the outing.

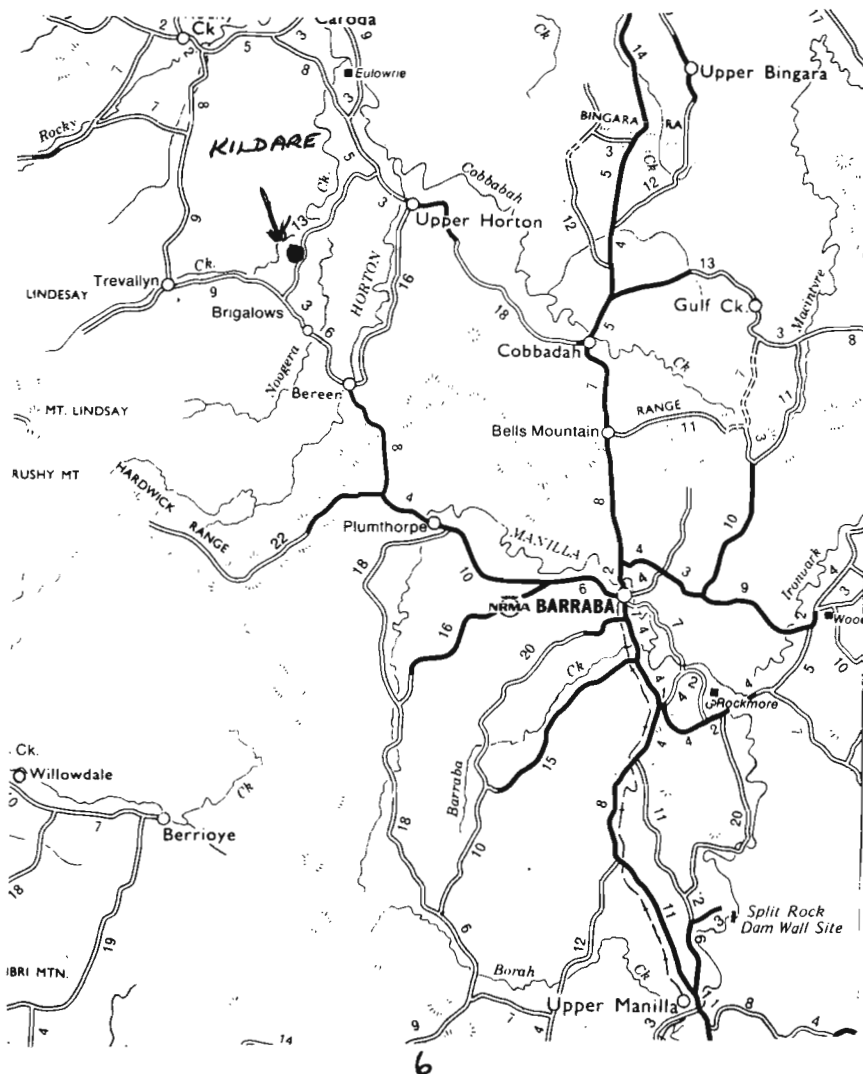
Bruce O'Brien

Epilogue: One member and I stayed until it actually started raining, returning to the bridge along Duck Creek, and were lucky enough to see a pair of Rufous Night Herons, an adult and a juvenile. This was a very special sighting for me, but unfortunately not included in the day's tally.

EASTER CAMP UPPER HORTON

10th - 18th April 1998

Our Easter Camp this year will be held at Upper Horton, a small rural town situated approximately 127 km north west of Tamworth. We will be camping by the side of a creek on "Kildare", the property of Sue and Rick McDouall. We visited Kildare from our last campsite at Upper Horton in October 1991 and it was here that we saw the Turquoise Parrot and Singing and Brown Honeyeaters in the total of 133 species of birds for the camp. Since our last visit a network of "Bird Routes" has been established along the travelling stock routes (look for the signs as you travel to and through Barraba) and we have a local contact to get first hand information. The survey team picked up a list of birds seen in the Barraba District since 1990 which numbers 140 species but on cross checking we find we can add another 23 from our list. The Regent Honeyeater, an endangered species, is also now present in the Barraba District. To get to Kildare follow the New England Highway north to Tamworth and then take the turn-off to Manilla and Barraba which is signposted a left hand turn soon after crossing the river bridge in town. 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. From the church drive to and through Upper Horton to the Kildare turn-off, close to 23 km, the left hand turn is signposted Dunbeacon, Currangande, Kildare. From this turn-off the right hand entrance to Kildare is 8.6 km and it is then approx. 1.4 km further on to the camp site. Look for the usual IBOC signs and allow approx. 8 hours driving time, well worth the effort. **Please bring your own drinking water**, the usual shower and toilet facilities will be available. The nearest food, petrol, supplies etc. will be in Barraba. If you intend going to this camp but have not added your name to the list handed around at the prior meeting please inform Barbara or Brian Hales.



Birds Australia - Purchase of "Gluepot Station"

Each year, I.B.O.C. makes a financial contribution to Birds Australia, and with this support Birds Australia has purchased "Gluepot Station" in the Murray Mallee of South Australia. This is a very important habitat and six of Australia's rarest mallee birds now have a brighter future. It is envisaged that the reserve should open in June 1998 as volunteers are busily working to secure an adequate water supply, preparing tracks and campgrounds as well as upgrading the house for the volunteer ranger. I.B.O.C. members wishing to visit or stay at "Gluepot" are welcome to contact Birds Australia National Office, 415 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn East, VIC 3123. Ph (03) 9882 2622 or Email raou@raou.com.au

Kerri Lewis

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TARONGA PARK ZOO TRIP: The coach transport for the trip has been booked and the cost is \$15 per person (an increase of \$1 each on the previous estimate). Would those people with their name on the list please pay for this at the **March** meeting. If you will not be at the meeting on 14th March please send your money directly to the treasurer, Bronwyn Wilson, by that date. If you wish to take advantage of the discounted group booking \$13.50 (instead of \$15) , Seniors \$9, children \$6.75 (4- 15 years) for the zoo entry, that money will be payable no later than the May 11th meeting. At the present time, there are still two more seats available, bringing our party of travellers to 34. We intend leaving from Wollongong Station Car Park at 7.00 a.m. Please contact Barbara Hales if you require any further information.

THANKYOU I would like to thank Kerri for the good job she did with the production of the February newsletter, a job completely new to her. There were a couple of little hiccups and apologies go to those members whose names were spelt incorrectly (sorry -Ed.). I feel sure that this will not be a problem as Kerri becomes more familiar with peoples' names and handwriting. Did you spot the "deliberate mistake" of the newsletter, goslings which should have read cygnets? The big booboo of the course was the date of the March outing, which as we all know, takes place the weekend after the Monday meeting and should have read Saturday 14th March. That was entirely my fault.

Barbara Hales

Editor's Note: A special thanks to those members who regularly contribute to the Newsletter and to everyone who has given me so much encouragement, especially Brian and Barbara Hales.

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Pink-eared Duck	10+	27/1	Long Swamp, Yallah	wetland	CJC
Red-tailed Tropicbird	1	08/2	Windang	over lake entrance	LR,MD
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	27/1	Long Swamp, Yallah	wetland	CJC
Nankeen Night Heron	1	18/2	Dunmore Lakes	wetland	DG
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	12/12	Macquarie Pass	overhead	SPo
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	02/2	Fitzroy Reservoir	fishing	SPo
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	25/1	Macquarie Rivulet	fishing	BH
Little Eagle	1	09/1	Werri Lagoon	overhead	CJC
Little Eagle	1	13/2	Hill 60, Red Pt.	overhead	DG
Buff-banded Rail	3	02/2	Stanwell Creek	wetland	PP
Baillons Crake	1	02/2	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Spotless Crake	3	02/2	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Ruddy Turnstone	30	21/1	Bellambi	rocky shore	DG
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	09/1	Comerong Island	mud flat	CJC
Beach Thick-knee	1	07/2	nr Tramway Ck.	S. Thirroul beach	M&PE
Sooty Oystercatcher	19	23/1	Bass Point	rocky shore	DG
Double-banded Plover(return)	1	04/2	Windang	sand flat	CB
Little Tern	41	13/2	Windang	sand flats	DG
Barking Owl	1	01/1	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RJ
Sooty Owl	1	02/1	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RJ
Tawny Frogmouth	1	26/1	Kieraville	garden	ME
Tawny Frogmouth	1	26/1	Rose Valley	rural	MR
Emerald Dove	1	25/1	Saddleback Mountain	forest	RJ
White-headed Pigeon	1	27/1	Rose Valley	rural	MR
Wh-throated Needle-tail	60+	17/1	Barren Grounds NR	overhead	CJC
Eastern Bristlebird	1	17/1	Cooks Nose	heath/woodland	CJC
Little Raven	40+	14/2	Tallawarra	overhead	IBOC
Green Catbird	1	11/1	Kieraville	garden	ME
Bassian Thrush	1	5/1	Mt. Keira	forest	SPo

CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; MD - Mike Dunlop; M&PE - Mahn & Phillip Enland; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Barbara Hales; RJ - Richard Jordan; PP - Peter Phillips; SPo - Steve Popple; MR - Mark Robinson; LR - Lou Rodgeron

Comment: Well, despite there being few contributors to this months list, some of the observations are significant. Clearly the Thick-knee is a most unusual record, only the third record for the region. Obviously the bird didn't hang around for long, probably disturbed by people walking dogs. The tropicbird was also unusual, but clearly unmistakable with its long tail streamers, and it flew right over the heads of these lucky biologists! Those of use who were on the Feb IBOC walk were rewarded with the first known observation of Little Ravens from the Lake Illawarra basin. Although they are irregular visitors to the highlands and Shoalhaven regions. Finally the Spotless Crakes have given several observers good views of this rarely observed cryptic species.

Please NOTE: Observations can now be sent to me via e-mail at: cchafer@ezy.net.au

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☺☺☺☺ **COMING EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

NEXT MEETING : will be held on **Monday, 11th May**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** Our **Guest Speaker** for the evening will be **Dr Michael Cannon**. Dr Cannon is a well known local Veterinary surgeon with a great interest in wildlife, both animals and birds. Since his last address to our club, in 1988, he has also started using his skills, two days a week, at Taronga Park Zoo. You may have also seen Michael via your Television screen, in clips shot at the Zoo or at his local practice, attending the various creatures he deals with on a daily basis. Tonight, Michael will share with us the "**Veterinary Aspects of Birds**", which I am sure you will find very interesting, rewarding and entertaining.

NEXT OUTING : the outing will take place on **Sunday, 17th May**, when we will visit **Boyd's Lookout**, south of Nowra. This walk will be lead by **Ms Diana Wright** and we will meet Diana, and others from her group, at the Navy Jet, in Kalandar Street, Nowra at **9.00 a.m.** Travelling from Wollongong, pass over the Shoalhaven River, at Nowra, and continue on, passing Nowra Fair Shopping Centre on your left. Kalandar Street is at a set of traffic lights further on and you will turn right into it. Please be prompt as we will meet Diana and then move on to start the walk. Don't forget to bring your eats and drinks for the day.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 19th May at the house of **Horrie Ward** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

FINAL REMINDER FOR OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS : All members are reminded that subscriptions are due at the beginning of January. If you have yet to pay for the current 1998 year, please send your payment to the Treasurer immediately.

The deadline for articles for the June newsletter is 25th May.

March Meeting

Lindsay Smith's presentation on "The Five Islands" certainly presented us with an interesting paradox - between the fog, smog, grog and blackout on shore, the marvels of nature offshore proceed seemingly oblivious to these distractions.

I am sure we were all as amazed as I was, that this is reputed to be the richest seabird breeding ground along the coast. Equally fascinating were the individual characteristics of each of the islands and the bird species present. White- faced Petrels only nest on Toothbrush Island, and it has the largest inter-tidal zone, which is preferred by the Sooty Oystercatcher.

Bass island is very rocky, with little vegetation , and is the predominant nesting area for Kelp Gulls while Martin Island is mainly granite and contains little area for foraging and breeding birds.

Not all the islands support Silver Gulls. The 20 000 breeding pairs are mainly confined to N^o. 1 and N^o. 2 Island, and there are none on Toothbrush. The present numbers are a significant reduction of the 150 000 pairs that were evident some years ago. N^o. 1 and N^o. 2 Islands used to be known as Rabbit Islands and the warrens were often confused with Penguin and Shearwater burrows.

There are 3 000 pairs of Wedgetail Shearwaters that breed between August and April. 1500 breeding pairs of White- faced Storm Petrels nest on Toothbrush Island, yet are rarely recorded on pelagic trips!

Pelicans first appeared on the Islands in 1983 and today there are 700 pairs that breed all year round. Due to their fearless nature they could be a "numbers problem" in future years. The Pelicans have taken over areas previously occupied by the Crested Terns, whose numbers have now swelled to 1 500 pairs, which breed between late August to November. This year, 700 chicks hatched, and the colony is both noisy and smelly.

The Sooty Oystercatcher is an endangered species and the breeding regime of some birds is something to be believed - some individuals are >30 year and have not bred yet! Generally, two eggs are laid, but usually only one chick is raised/ fledged.

Lindsay is very proud of the new boat, which will facilitate access to the islands. The research work he undertakes includes banding to determine the range of the birds, identifying areas of revisitation from year to year, and weighing birds to determine growth rates. He has a particular interest in the banding and study of the Sooty Oystercatcher.

A fascinating talk on all these happenings just a few yards off shore. Well done Lindsay, keep up the good work.

Darryl Goldrick



TARONGA PARK ZOO TRIP

At present, there are still **2 more** seats left on the coach and if you wish to join the travellers on the bus, please contact Barbara Hales as soon as possible as it will be "first in, best dressed". Would the people who have not paid for their seats please send your money to Bronwyn Wilson **immediately**.

VALE - ARTHUR MOTHERSDILL

The I.B.O.C. members who knew Arthur were much saddened by the news of his passing after a long illness. Arthur was a foundation member of the Club.

Doug and I first meet Arthur in the mid fifties when he called to see Doug, who was keen to start banding albatrosses off Bellambi. Arthur offered his wooden boat, "Mabel", and his help. The Albatross Banding Scheme was under way.

In those days Arthur was extremely fit and very strong. Also, he was wise in the moods of the sea. He made the camouflage nets for the hoops and was always there, often with a brother to help. Arthur never sought recognition for all he did. He was a man of great character, with a shy, gentle nature and a loyal, wonderful friend.

Arthur had a great love of birds and plants, in fact all things living. He enjoyed spending time in the bush along the escarpment. His quiet, modest manner often belied the knowledge of these things, which he accumulated over the years.

Arthur worked at the Coke Works for many years. In his early forties he developed Chronic Asthma and was forced to retire. His health deteriorated quickly and he has endured a long illness. Arthur was 81 when he passed away. He will be sadly missed by his family and all his friends.

Our thoughts are with his wife, Tess, and daughters, Helen and Julie, and sons, Mark and Arthur Jnr, and their families. To them we express our deepest sympathy.

I.B.O.C.

The Craggs in the Nattai District near Mittagong, N.S.W.

Saturday, 14th March 1998

The Craggs is a property of a communal nature, where the land is owned by a group of people who formed a company. Each family built there home on their own personal property and all live happily there. We were welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, who have made their home there. Being so isolated they have little in the way of mod cons. The electricity is solar generated, with some gas and wood for fuel. The beauty of the surrounding area makes up for any shortcomings.

Mrs. Joan Stevens gave us a great welcome to the place and explained to us where to go for our walk.

We had an attendance of only 11 members for our outing which started about 9.00 a.m.. As we left the arranged meeting place on the Old Hume Highway and Wombeyan Caves Road, we drove to a spot a short distance from The Craggs. We went for a short walk in a thinly vegetated area of mainly eucalypts, with a few small tea trees and wattles. The area was very dry with the only ground cover being fallen leaves and sticks, which crunched under foot. The trees were not really robust growing in the rocky ground. Birds were few and those there were difficult to see in the grey-green foliage. A few of those that we did observe were the White-throated Treecreeper, Grey Butcherbird, Red Wattlebird, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Fan-tailed Cuckoo and Crimson Rosella. Of course a couple of those elusive brown ones.

We then drove down to the Craggs, along a very rough, steep and winding road which gets graded only on very rare occasions. Arriving about 10.00a.m., we met Joan and John, who showed us a very beautiful spot to have our morning tea in front of their home overlooking the valley which sloped steeply down to the Nattai river. We then set off on our walk over an area of grassland and along a trail through a dry sclerophyll forest of mainly eucalypts, with little understory - only some reedy tussocks among the stunted growth trying hard to survive. This track led down to the

Nattai River. The valley is unique, with very rugged scenery. Rocks of various sizes, some very large, scattered throughout the valley, broken originally from the cliff face which extends along much of the valley. The beautiful cliff face, with its many shades of brown and yellow and old weathered grey colour, shows signs of rock falls in recent years. It is truly a beautiful place. We arrived at the river and wandered around the area for a while before we had lunch, sitting on the bank of the river. The water was flowing, though not strongly, and as it trickled over and around the rocks in the river bed. It sounded very restful. A pretty waterfall was located about 100 meters upstream.

While having lunch, we discussed the sightings of the area along the river - some of which were the Yellow Robin, Rockwarbler, Pied Currawong, Rufous Fantail, White-browed Scrubwren, Superb Lyrebird and Brown Greygone.

Along the river some other wildlife observed included a black snake, water dragon (reported on 3 occasions) and some yabbies in the river.

After lunch we set off back up the hillside, joining the track which we had come down, but going up it seemed quite a bit more steeply inclined. When we reached the grassy area, we followed the treeline around to the road, adding nearly an hour to the walk. On the walk back we added the Willie Wagtail, Eastern Rosella, and White-eared Honeyeater to our list for the day. We arrived back at the cars about 2.00p.m. after a very pleasant walk through some beautiful countryside.

For the day we recorded a total of 30 species.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	Noisy Miner
Crimson Rosella	Lewin's Honeyeater
Eastern Rosella	White-eared Honeyeater
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Eastern Yellow Robin
Laughing Kookaburra	Golden Whistler
Superb Lyrebird	Grey Shrike-Thrush
White-throated Treekeeper	Magpie-lark
Superb Fairy-wren	Rufous Fantail
Spotted Pardalote	Grey Fantail
Rockwarbler	Willie Wagtail
White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Butcherbird
Brown Greygone	Australian Magpie
Brown Thornbill	Pied Currawong
Yellow Thornbill	Red-browed Finch
Red Wattlebird	Common Myna

Horrie Ward



BIGNET Meeting of the 7 - 8 March

The Bird Interest Group Network met in Dubbo at the Western Plains Zoo and hosted by the CBOC with the Dubbo and Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists attending for the first time. Both myself and Sue Proust were representing several groups including IBOC.

The main item for discussion was the upcoming Atlas that Birds Australia are running for Environment Australia. Suggestions and concerns were raised for those who will attend the work shop in April. One of the main differences atlasers will notice this time is the 2 or 2 1/2 minute blocks in some areas compared to the old 10 minute blocks and active atlasers will probably need the assistance of a GPS unit. It is hoped some 10,000 will volunteer Australia wide for at least 5 years and hopefully to carry on the activity.

Other topics for discussion included the CBOC atlas for the County of Cumberland, a proposed Birds in Backyards project by SNAG, Bird Week activities for the 18 - 25 October in which includes the twitchathon, conservation issues and various Club activities. It was good to hear the Murrumbidgee group had successfully saved the Fivebough and Tuckerbill wetland just out of Leeton from developers, a great place for Marsh and Wood Sandpipers plus many more marsh and water birds.

Some assistance would be appreciated by the Dubbo group in counting Glossy Black Cockatoos and finding nest sites in Goonoo State Forest and counting Regent Honeyeaters in the Capertee Valley for Birds Australia. Darryl Goldrick and myself spent a great weekend in the Capertee staying at a property just off the Glen Alice Road which is available at very reasonable rates.

Suggestions for Club activities for Bird Week would be appreciated as this is a time bird watching is promoted. A few small outings to get others interested; say, at the Botanic Gardens, Barren grounds and may be, Tallawarra could be arranged and promoted on the local media.

The next BIGNET meeting will be in Leeton on 12-13 September and anyone interested in furthering relationships with the other club members in NSW is most welcome to represent the Club.

Chris Brandis



EASTER CAMP, PLUMTHORPE T.S.R.

An I.B.O.C. camp without a campfire? It was unexpected but unavoidable. Drought conditions meant that we had to substitute a big gas lamp. Nevertheless, there was good fellowship round the "campfire" for twenty-six members each night.

The drought also meant a change of venue for the camp.

The preliminary camp survey chose a grassy patch on the banks of a beautifully flowing creek on Kildare, owned by Rick and Sue McDouall. By Easter, the creek had lost most of its water and the camp was transferred to the Plumthorpe T.S.R. (Bird Route 5) on the banks of the Manilla River. This beautiful river of pools linked by streams rippling over the rocks, lined with

casuarinas and with shady eucalypts nearby, proved a great camp site - plenty of shade if we happened to be about in the heat of the day.

True, being a T.S.R. meant that cattle were also able to share it but they kept their distance and troubled us not at all.

Birds enjoyed the campsite as much as we did. Every morning the melody of the Pied Butcherbirds provided a great sound to wake to. Of course, Laughing Kookaburras were not to be left out of the dawn chorus.

There were resident Willie Wagtails, Restless Flycatchers (harried by Wagtails), Noisy Miners, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Diamond Firetails, Red-browed Finches, Peaceful Doves, Superb Fairy-wrens, Apostlebirds, Dusky Woodswallows and many others. Not so common were the Diamond Doves seen at the gate. The bird I enjoyed most (not seen around June) was the Azure Kingfisher which worked its way along the river each day. On Tuesday, four of these were seen.

Barraba residents are proud of the bird life in the district. "Birds abounding" said a headline in the local paper. We were often asked if we had seen the Regent Honeyeater there yet.

Local bird experts Russell and Jenny Watts spent a day with us, taking us along the Bundarra road and showed us some good birding spots. Chris Chafer saw the White-backed Swallow over the old asbestos mine at Woods Reef and that was only one of the beautiful birds to be seen.

Sue and Rick McDonnell on Kildare offered us tremendous hospitality. A trip up the paddocks to the hills and along the creek added more birds to the camp list, waterbirds on the dams and Brown Quail and Grey-crowned Babblers by the creek.

Sue and Rick invited us to dinner one night and that was a very pleasant evening. Rick has a very interesting theory regarding the Min Min light in the Bouliia area. It has to do with the presence of the Letter-winged Kite in the district. I look forward to returning to Bouliia sometime to test his theory.

We appreciated the time shared with us by Jenny and Russell, and Sue and Rick.

Every night around our "campfire" Ron Imisides would go through our list of birds for the camp - strictly in taxonomic order, of course. The total was 114 on the Tuesday night and I am sure such a bird rich area (drought or not) would have produced more by the end of the camp.

It was with regret that I pulled my tent in the rain on Wednesday and left because of prior commitments. It was a great camp.

Marjorie Cochrane



EASTER CAMP CONT'D: UPPER HORTON

On Wednesday we met Russell Watts, a resident of the area, who led us on an outing to Bora Creek. Russell lives south of Barraba and so he met us on the turnoff to Bora Creek. The drive was along a dirt road in a westerly direction. We set off, stopping about 300 metres to see a Choughs nest in a eucalypt near the road. Then moving on we arrived at Bora Creek Reserve, about 14 minutes of slow driving along the dirt road.

Bora Creek flows through the reserve and it was a very pretty place, where the grass was really green. Although only very short, it was pleasant to see after all the dry brown grass through the district. The weather was calm with light rain and we were pleased to see it as it was so badly needed. Bora Reserve is a beautiful area, with the creek flowing through the valley of low hills. Scattered trees, some quite tall, including Yellow Box, *Angophora florabunda*, Red Gums and small wattles. The creek had some waterholes between rock beds, over which a good flow of water was running through crevices in the rocks.

We had a cup of tea before setting off on a walk along the creek. We crossed after about 300 metres, over one of the rock beds where the water was shallow. We had to take care as it was inclined to be slippery on the smooth rocks. Once over the creek, we walked over a hill towards a gap and then returned. The light was poor and made it difficult for bird watching but we added the Striped Honeyeater, not previously recorded. Some other sightings were the Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, White-winged Chough, Apostlebird, Red-browed Finch and Willie Wagtail.

We were fortunate that the weather cleared while we had lunch besides the cars, but it didn't stay fine for long. The clouds came soon after and blocked out the sun and some more rain began to fall, lasting most of the way back to camp.

It is a very promising area and would be worth another visit in the future, even to camp there.

Bob and Lydia returned on Friday to the area and on the way they recorded the red-winged Parrot and Black-chinned Honeyeater, two birds not previously recorded.

Horrie Ward

(Please note, the rest of the Easter Camp report will be continued in the next newsletter - Ed.)



New Editor Needed

At the end of November this year, the newly appointed Editor will be jetting off with her husband, Alan, to work for 12 months in Ontario, Canada, as part of the Teacher Exchange program that operates between the two countries. As a consequence, another Editor will be needed. If there is anyone interested on taking on the job from the end of this year, please speak to either myself or Brian. I can recommend it!

Unusual Records for **Feb-March 1998 Chris J. Chafer** 69 Lake Heights Rd. Lake Heights 2502

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Blue-billed Duck	2	26/3	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Musk Duck	20+	26/3	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Black Swan	700+	15/3	Swan Lake	wetland	KM
Spotless Crake	3	Mch	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Buff-banded Rail	1	06/3	Puckies Reserve	reed bed	DW
Buff-banded Rail	1	21/2	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Cattle Egret (1 st return)	1	01/3	Jamberoo	paddock	KM
Eastern Reef Egret	1	29/3	Windang Island	rocky shore	GB
Nankeen Night Heron	1	18/2	Dunmore Lakes	wetland	DG
Nankeen Night Heron	1juv	28/3	Duck Creek	wetland	DG
Wedge-tailed Eagle	3	02/3	Stockyard Mtn	overhead	MR
Little Eagle	1	13/2	Hill 60	overhead	DG
Hobby	1	17/2	Gwynville	garden	DW
Black-fronted Dotterel	6	03/3	Shellcove	sediment pond	DG
Black-winged Stilit	21	29/3	Why Juck Bay	lake shore	SPo
Wood Sandpiper	1	26/3	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	RI
Great Knot	2	13/2	Windang	sand flats	DG
Little Tern	41	13/2	Windang	sand flats	DG
Arctic Jaeger	2	08/2	Cudmirrah	inshore	KM
Yellow-tailed Blk Cockatoo	38	28/3	Barren Grounds	<i>Hakea teretifolia</i>	RJ
Turquoise Parrot	1	14/3	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	COG
Musk Lorikeet	few	22/2	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Musk Lorikeet	20+	19/3	Warilla Grove	car park trees	CB
Musk Lorikeet	150+	Feb/ Mch	Primbee	forest/garden	RI
Musk Lorikeet	20+	29/3	Lake Heights	parkland	CJC
Emerald Dove	1	25/3	Terragong Hills	forest	MR
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	Feb	East Corrimal	hind dune	DW
White-headed Pigeon	8	15/3	Mt. Keira	urban	GB
Powerful Owl	2	23/2	Narrawallee	forest	KM
Barn Owl	1	21/3	Coledale	urban	GB
White-throated Nightjar	1	20/1	Dhruwalgha Mtn.	forest	JO'S
White-throated Nightjar	1	21/1	Dhruwalgha Mtn.	dead on road	JO'S
Fork-tailed Swift	1	19/3	Puckies Reserve	overhead	DW
Restless Flycatcher	1	02/3	Rose Valley	rural	MR
Satin Flycatcher	2	05/3	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	RB
Leaden Flycatcher	2	06/3	Terragong Swamp	woodland	DG
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	28/2	Wollongong east	garden	RW
White-fronted Chat	1	04/3	East Corimal	beach	DW
White-fronted Chat	11	24/2	Yallah	lake shore	DG
Spangled Drongo (return)	1	28/2	Primbee	garden	RI
Beautiful Firetail	few	28/3	Barren Grounds NR	heath	RJ

GB - Graham Barwell; RB - Raoul Boughton; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; RI - Ron Imisides; RJ - Richard Jordan; KM - Kevin Mills; JOS - Jim O'Shea; SPo - Steve Popple; MR - Mark Robinson; DW - David Winterbottom; COG - Canberra Ornithologist Group

Comment: Killalea Lagoon and the dunes behind Primbee Golf Course are very productive at the moment, while the heaths of Barren Grounds are full of life. The track between the car park and Stone Bridge is excellent for Beautiful Firetails at the moment. All waterbodies should be checked for unusual waterfowl and crakes.

Please NOTE: Observations can now be sent to me via e-mail at: cchafer@ezy.net.au



I.B.O.C. News

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.

Club Motto: "One Good Tern Deserves Another"

Issue No. 210

June 1998

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THE CLUB'S AIM IS TO JOIN TOGETHER PEOPLE WITH A COMMON INTEREST WHO WISH TO FURTHER THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE BIRDLIFE AROUND THEM

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

☺☺☺☺ COMING EVENTS ☺☺☺☺

NEXT MEETING : will be held on **Monday, 8th June**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** Tonight will be the annual **Member's Night** when IBOC members are invited to share birding experiences - be they in the form of slides, photographs, arts and crafts, poetry, music, shared information on bird locations, or just a good yarn etc. Please try and participate and give your name to Brian Hales as that he can set out some kind of timetable for the evening. All members are also asked to bring a plate to share in supper afterwards and, if possible, to bring their own drinking vessel for tea or coffee.

NEXT OUTING : will be held on **Saturday, 13th June**, when we have a trip to **Taronga Park Zoo**. There will be free time at the zoo to see other exhibits but our main aim is to take in a special presentation of the **Free Flight Bird Show** which commences at 12 noon and promises to be excellent. For those people who are travelling by coach you will need to be on the **western** side of **Wollongong** railway station and be on board in time for the coach to leave at **7 a.m. sharp**. We should be leaving the Zoo at 3.30 p.m. for the return journey. To take advantage of group discounts we have to pay in one lump sum so please pay Barbara Hales at the Monday meeting. (It would help if you have the correct money.) Adults \$13.50, Seniors \$9.00, Students \$10.50 and Children 4 -15 yrs \$6.75. There are food outlets at the zoo but in the past we have taken our own lunches and eaten together in one of the picnic areas.

Owing to cancellations, there are five more seats available on the bus so if you would like to join us ring Barbara on 42574431.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 16th June at the house of **Brian and Barbara Hales** starting at 7.30 p.m.

The deadlines for articles for the July newsletter is 25th June.

MAY MEETING

How refreshing to hear from someone like Mike Cannon, our resident veterinarian, who has a passion not only for his “routine” daily work situation but his active interest in the research and conservation of native fauna.

The science and technology in treating birds in particular has certainly undergone radical changes in the methods of now treating sick or injured animals. There are now ways of treating animals that were not possible in years gone by.

Mike has an obvious passion for raptors and his slides on the treatment of these magnificent creatures were fascinating. To handle and manage these birds successfully, one must have a high degree of “falconry” skills. He likened falcons to a “superb athlete” and given their swooping speeds of up to 200km/hr, the treatment of these birds and in particular their wing parts, has to be at the highest level for them to be able to perform at the optimum effect and efficiency.

The slides on case studies of Beak and Feather disease were graphic for this genuinely Australian condition that is prevalent in the parrot species.

Michael explained the benefits for diagnostic purposes, of blood and food sampling in detecting diseases such as *Coisiodosis* and microscopic examination to determine the identification and intensity of worm infestation. Culture testing is commonly used to ascertain what antibiotic (oral or injection) will perform the best in the treatment of a specific condition. The ability to X-ray birds has enabled more specific diagnosis and prognosis in the treatment of birds for wing and leg injuries in particular. The slides on X-rays of birds who had ingested shotgun pellets and zinc from wire cage netting were indeed spectacular.

Michael also explained how birds had an ability to “mask” a disease condition in that their natural survival instinct is to not show obvious outward signs of distress until the advanced stages of the condition. One generally had to act quickly in diagnosis and treatment under these circumstances should the bird have any chance of survival and recovery.

In the wild most birds die in big numbers in the first two years of life – this was the natural cycle in the balance of nature.

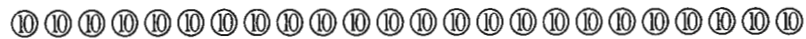
Alternative medicines such as Sturts Desert Pea, Illawarra Flame and Dagger Hakea oils are now accepted treatments as a complement for traditional methods.

Michael is a representative on the Non -Indigenous Animal Advisory Committee, a body who reports to, and advises, the Minister for Agriculture. Issues such as legal/illegal importing and exporting of birds are much debated. He explained how his representation on this committee, like others, offers community participation and support in these debates, and ultimate policy decisions by government.

The question time following his formal presentation was lively and covered a broad range of issues. He concluded by highlighting the importance for people to develop and promote opinions on the conservation of the environment in general. Whilst birds per se are important, the environment in

which they live is crucial to their survival. The ongoing destruction of fundamental habitat poses the greatest threat to the sustainability of individual species and bird population numbers. Processes that threaten the sustainability of native birds (and other flora/faunal assemblages) should be strongly and openly argued against.

Darryl Goldrick



UPPER HORTON CAMP

Upper Horton report for Thursday 16th and Friday 17th April, 1998

On Thursday, it was arranged for the campers to travel to the property entrance of Sue and Rick McDouall, "Kildare", and meet Barbara and Brian, and Betty and Horace for the days outing.

While we were waiting for the group to arrive, we witnessed a most unusual performance of three Black-shouldered Kites defending their territory from the intrusion of a Brown Falcon which lasted for a couple of minutes. As the falcon approached, a dogfight began, the falcon dodged from side to side, defending itself as the kites attacked. After a few attacks the falcon turned on its back and its talons reached out for an approaching kite (and very nearly got one) but this didn't deter the kites. The other two kites came to defend and attacked again and again. Working as a team they kept harassing the falcon until it gave up and made off, still being attacked until it was well out of the kites' territory.

The camping folk turned up at about 9:30 and the weather was bright, sunny and calm as we drove to the glacial area. It was a very beautiful spot in a wet gully with conglomerate rock along the creek bed. There was a good flow of water, although the country was in the grip of drought, and it was good to hear the wash of water. The vegetation was a mixture of some tall eucalypts and cypress pine, with some tall casuarinas along the creek. The area was inclined to be rocky and dry with little ground cover. We spent some time along the creek and then walked up into the trees on the hillside where we observed a good number of birds. These included the Grey Fantail, White-plumed Honeyeater, White-eared Honeyeater, White-throated Gerygone, Fuscous Honeyeater, White-faced Heron and the lovely brightly coloured Eastern Yellow Robin. To see three of them sitting side-by-side on a branch was a wonderful sight. An unusual sighting was made of a koala in a casuarina tree.

We had our lunch at the cars and there moved on, stopping at a cypress forest on the Narrabri to Cobbadah Rd., about three km. from the Bingara turn-off. The forest there was very dry, brown and crunchy underfoot. We spread out over the area in an attempt to find as many birds as possible. Sightings were few so we moved on after 30 min. By this time it was 3 p.m. so we headed back to camp to prepare for a night out at the Upper Horton Sports and Social, which was a very good night with excellent food, service and good company.

On the way to dinner we sighted two owls as they flew off from the roadside. Almost immediately, a third owl was sighted on another post and Rick stopped to shine his headlights on it. It was a Tawny Frogmouth, and it just sat there. We had a perfect view of it from about 5 m and all its markings were very clear. Owls were seen on a number of occasions whilst traveling at night, but not always identified. Later that night a Barn Owl was sighted perched on the “Kildare” sign at the entrance to Rick and Sues’ property.

Then, as we were driving on the property near their home, Rick sighted a fox in the long grass. He made a quick turn and took off after it as it dashed through the grass. The fox dodged left and right and made off into another paddock. It was an exciting end to a wonderful day.

Friday, the last day, came around quickly. We arranged to go to Plumthorpe Dam and arrived at 9:30. Rick spent some of his time taking members of our group out onto the dam in his two-man runabout. This helped us view more closely the Masked Lapwing and Red-kneed Dotterell on an island in the middle of the dam. There were a large number of water birds, including the Black Swan, Australian Pelican and the Great, Pied, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorants, Black fronted Dotterels, Australasian Coot, Pacific Black Duck and Straw-knecked Ibis. The visit was very successful as it improved our species list with birds not previously recorded.

We had a great time at the camp with birds in good numbers at most places visited. In total we recorded 131 bird species. Many thanks to Rick McDouall and Russell Watts for introducing us to many good areas, and to Sue for all she did for us while we were there.

Horrie Ward



Outing to Boyd’s Lookout and Granite Falls on 17th May

19 members of IBOC and Nowra enthusiasts headed into the cloudy skies along the highway south of Nowra. We turned up 17 Mile Road then down Tin Mine Road and stopped at the small car park in drizzling rain that did not seem to want to clear. After a spot of morning tea in the shelter of the cars, we donned wet weather gear and set off to Granite Falls. It was a little slippery on the wet rocks so we did not climb down to the rain forest at the bottom of the Falls but stayed in the eucalypt forest on the top. Birds were rather scarce and a White-throated Treecreeper, a small flock of Striated Thornbills and a couple of Golden Whistlers in female plumage were among the 6 species spotted.

We then drove to the Lookout car park amongst Turpentine and cool rainforest trees and headed around the rainforest track. The track under the escarpment was spectacular with many ferns appreciating the wet conditions but birds were again scarce until we reached the heathlands on the top. Here we could hear and catch glimpses of honeyeaters as they darted around the flowering Banksias giving only fleeting glimpses. Crescent and New Holland Honeyeaters were

every where, with Yellow-faced and White-naped passing through. At the lookout Darryl and Bruce spotted a Rockwarbler as the rest of us headed back to the cars ahead of a heavy shower. After lunch, under the sandstone over-hangs in a pleasant rainforest setting, we decided to call it a day with 15 species on the list.

Darryl, Bruce and I decided to head further south and visit Porter's Creek Dam on the Little Forest Plateau, where again the heath on the top was alive with birds, mainly honeyeaters, but the highlight was a Brush Bronzewing feeding on the road. We also spotted what we thought was a couple of Brown Antechinus crossing the track and as the rain returned we decided to head back, stopping at Bomaderry treatment works to see what ducks were present. A few Hardheads were the most notable birds present and as the rain came again we finished the day off joining the Sunday traffic jam at Bombo.

Many thanks to the Nowra group for sharing some excellent areas to return to on a better day weatherwise.

Chris Brandis



Bird Week at Pajinka Wilderness Lodge, Cape York Peninsula

After 2 days driving and a wettish over night stay in Charters Towers I dropped down the mountains to Giru into overcast and patchy rain to search for the Zitting Cisticola. The area had been eaten out by cattle and a dry winter, and all I could find were the ever present Golden-headed Cisticola wherever I searched all the way up to Proserpine. While wading through some rank grass and water, I flushed a Bush Hen, and by the road there were two Pacific Bazas looking down from a small gum tree. A quick side trip to Lucinda gave me Lesser Crested Terns and a Beach Thick-knee while the tidal sand flats contained hundreds of waders. Returning along the road a Black Bittern flushed in front of the car ahead only to be hit and killed. At Proserpine the rain became incessant and searching for owls that night was out of the question.

Early next morning I stopped at the Cairns Turf Farm where Yellow Wagtails had been seen recently but all I found was a 100 mm of water, with Tawny Grassbirds in the cane fields and Buff-banded Rails in the rank grass on the edges. Off to the famous Crocodile farm down the road and I was the only visitor due to the continuing rain. I quickly learnt how to bird watch under an umbrella, the legs get wet but the bins stay dry. One of the friendly keepers showed me around and we quickly spotted White-browed Crakes and Crimson Finches but many of the other specialties had left with the wet. I kept checking any group of swallows seen on overhead wires for vagrants from Asia but at this stage only Welcome Swallows were identified, some with tantalisingly short tails.

Arrived at Cairns and checked out the foreshore for the Broad-billed Sandpipers but I seemed to miss the tide but Penny Drake-Brockman from the FOC found one a few days later. Over to the Centenary Lakes and a pair of Double-eyed Fig-Parrots, plenty of Pied Imperial Pigeons but I

could not call up the Red-necked Crake along the rain forest board walk with all the pedestrian traffic despite the mozzies. The caravan park had Bush Thick-knees wandering around under the lights after dark. After another wet night I got up at dawn to re-visit the board walk before the joggers arrived and while quietly walking along I finally saw a Red-necked Crake bathing in a sheltered pool in dappled light, the red head and neck is truly a magnificent colour.

Up to Yungaburra on the Atherton Tablelands to collect an American bird-watcher, Diana Churchill, who I had met on the Wollongong boat trip, and drive up to Kingfisher Park for a few days stay. The friends with whom she was staying had a huge fruiting fig in the yard and Barred Cuckoo-shrikes feeding in it. A quick side trip to Lake Tinaroo to search for a Little Ringed Plover was largely uneventful.

Arrived at Kingfisher Park, a beautiful patch of rainforest but unfortunately now surrounded by cane fields with cane farmers trying to buy it for clearing. There were a team of Japanese documentary makers filming the Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher and while being shown around by the friendly new owner, Ron Stannard, a number of these striking birds were sighted as there were a number of nests in use and they eventually became almost, but not quite, common place. The area was alive with birds and I picked up Pied Monarch and Diana the Red-necked Crake (? Ed.) but was continually stumped between the Yellow-spotted and the Graceful Honeyeaters unless they called. On the first night a Lesser Sooty Owl called but as I had not yet unpacked the spot-light I decided to wait until the next night, a big mistake as we did not hear it again.

Ron made a booking for us on the Chris Dahlburg Daintree River cruise that especially caters for birdos and we were there, in the rain, at 6 am. It was a great trip with a brief sighting of a Bush Hen, a Great-billed Heron on a nest with a large chick, Black Bitterns, Little Kingfisher flashing by and lots more within that hour. Chris is renowned for his birding ability and suggested stopping at the Red Mill Guest House for the Little Kingfisher, and there it was, in perfect view on the ornamental pond. We also checked the swallows carefully around the Daintree Cape Tribulation cross roads. There was nothing in sight on the first try so we looked around the ferry area before returning to see a number of swallows on wires a little way into a cane farm. There amongst Fairy Martins was a Barn Swallow and 3 Red-rumped Swallows and it was not yet lunch time. Back at Kingfisher Park in the afternoon and the weather lifted slightly so Ron took us up Mt Lewis with another fleeting glimpse of a Bush Hen on the way. After quietly walking along the forest track to the Golden Bowerbird bower, a Blue-faced Finch popped up to give us a great view. A memorable day as I picked up 5 lifers which easily justified a small celebration at the nice restaurant just down the road on the Mt Lewis turn-off. Next day was spent searching unsuccessfully for the Buff-breasted Button-quail but we did see Squatter Pigeon plus some other drier country birds.

Next morning off to Cairns and onto a flight to Bamaga with 18 other keen birdos from around the world and into the first real sun-shine for a week. As the plane was full some were unlucky to have their luggage left behind but we all shared what we had and as no binoculars were left behind every one managed OK. The guides for the week were Klaus Uhlenhut "every effort made to get the bird for you" Gordon Beruldsen, with fantastic knowledge of the local bird habits, and Peter Slater whose knowledge of Australian birds is remarkable. The itinerary at Pajinka was explained as: up early, bird till 11, back for lunch, rest till 4 and out till about 6:30 and back for

dinner with a night for spotlighting. The service was excellent, food nice and plain but plentiful, the birding great and the company very pleasant. Some of the local assistants were a bit lackadaisical but our main guide, an Injino elder, was always on time and quick with a quip. The week flew by with only the odd scattered shower, but out to sea the wind was very strong and the temperature remarkably pleasant for the tropics.

The rainforest, called the Lockabie Scrub, was surrounded by open forest and typical of rain forest, you had to work for the birds. We found the Red-bellied Pitta way up the top of a tree by following the call, Frilled Monarch, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Northern Scrub-Robin, a lucky sighting of a Black-winged Monarch, Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo, Magnificent Riflebird and a brief look at Yellow-legged flycatcher near a completed but not used nest. One night we went spot-lighting, quickly finding the Papuan Frogmouth and Barking Owl. It was then into the rainforest and a tape quickly had a Marbled Frogmouth sitting just 10 meters away.

The beaches had a large range of waders and a nearby creek provided good mangrove habitat for Red-headed Honeyeater, Little, Azure and Collared Kingfishers and Large-billed Gerygones not to mention plenty of sand flies. Some people flew to Sabai Island for a day trip but it was dry and extremely hot with not much seen. I stayed but the wind did not abate enough for a trip to Mt Adolphus Island, some 7 Km off-shore, where Pale White-eye lived, an excuse to go back again some time.

We returned to Cairns and the rain. I gave the tent a miss and stayed at a backpacker hostel for only \$5 more than a tent site and it was right on the water front. Still missed the tides but a day trip on the "Seastar 11" to Michaelmas Cay with the captain, being interested in birds and not bad at identifying them, was very helpful taking us around the Cay in a dingy, pity it was pouring rain. We found plenty of Lesser Crested Terns nesting and some Black-naped Terns on the mooring buoys at Hastings Reef with the Common Noddies and Sooty Terns being common with the odd Bridled and Roseate Tern spotted through the passing rain storms.

As the rain continued I decided to head home but as the road after Charters Towers was cut I followed the coast through Townsville as the floods were receding and the sun started to appear but again no luck with Zitting Cisticolas or Yellow Wagtails. Following the coast provided me with the chance to seek out the Eungella Honeyeater and after arriving early in the morning, with the mountains still in cloud, I spent several fruitless hours along a forest track. The guide book "Thomas and Thomas" suggested trying the flowering umbrella trees by the Range Road Sky View Lookout as an alternative summer site and after a couple of hours and a number of Honeyeater species later I had a short but good view of one in the bushes under the umbrella tree. With that I headed back home to a drier but no hotter climate with 17 lifers out of the 230 species for the trip and many great memories of summer in the Cape.

Chris Brandis



Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush Turkey	1	7/5	Bulli Heights	garden	RT
Australasian Shoveller	30+	11/4	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Australian Shelduck	1	11/4	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB,DG
Pink-eared Duck	2	11/4	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Darter	1+3y	8/4	Dunmore Lake	wetland	KM
Osprey	1	11/4	Cudmirrah	overhead	KM
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	8/4	Mt. Pleasant	overhead	DT
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	26/2	Keiraville	overhead	ME
Buff-banded Rail	1	3/5	Balgownie	urban	AL
Red-capped Plover	100+	9/5	Windang	sand flats	DG
Double-banded Plover	50+	9/5	Windang	sand flats	DG
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	5	19/4	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Musk Lorikeet	100+	May	Primbee	urban-dune forest	RI
Little Lorikeet	few	May	Primbee	urban	RI
Little Lorikeet	8	4/4	Budderoo NP	forest	RB
Superb Parrot	1+	May	Albion Park	urban (nesting?)	BH
Swift Parrot	35	11/5	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Barn Owl	1	6/4	Lake South	garden	DG
Barking Owl	1	21/3	Jamberoo Mtn Rd.	forest	RB
Tawny Frogmouth	1	12/5	Cudmirrah	forest	BH
Azure Kingfisher	2	19/4	Swan Lake	lake edge	KM
Southern Emu-wren	2	8/5	Reed Park, Dapto	wetland (new location)	DG
Little Friarbird	2	12/4	Primbee	dune woodland	CB,DG
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	27/4	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	RB
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	12/4	Primbee	dune woodland	CB
Crescent Honeyeater	many	May	Barren Grounds NR	woodland-heath	RB
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	4	8/4	Maddens Plain	heathland	DG
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	50+	16/4	Tallowa Dam	woodland	DG
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	April	Keiraville	garden	EG,BW
Scarlet Honeyeater	20+	14/4	Primbee	dune forest	SPo,CB
Scarlet Honeyeater	6+	10/5	Keiraville	garden	NA
Rose Robin	2	9/5	Minnamurra	mangroves	TW
Rose Robin	1	7/5	Mt. Murray	forest	DG
Rose Robin	1	10/5	Albion Park Rail	woodland	GB
Rose Robin	1	18/5	Uni. Wollongong	urban	GB
Spangle Drongo	1	1/5	Corrimal	urban	JW
Spangled Drongo	1	14/4	Keiraville	garden	ME
Spangled Drongo	3	13/4	Primbee	urban/woodland	GB
Spangled Drongo	1	9/5	Lake Heights	garden	KC
Figbird	6	10/5	Wollongong	urban	PB
Dusky Woodswallow	6	14/4	Primbee	dune forest	SPo
Green Catbird	1	22/3	Kieraville	garden	ME
Green Cartbird	1	20/4	Mt. Pleasant	parkland	DT

NA - Norma Almond; PB - Phil Bath; GB - Graham Barwell; RB - Raoul Boughton; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; EG - Esme Gay; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Barbara Hales; RI - Ron Imisides; AL - Alan Lowis; KM - Kevin Mills; SPo - Steve Popple; RT - Roger Truscott; DT - Dave Thomson; BW - Bronwyn Wilson; JW - Joan Wylie; TW - Tom Wylie

Thanks to all those people who now send observations via email and/or fill in the unusual observations book. This column would not exist without your contributions. CJC

Please NOTE: Observations can now be sent to me via e-mail at: cchafer@ezy.net.au

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Club Motto: *"One Good Tern Deserves Another"*

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

☺☺☺☺ **COMING EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

NEXT MEETING : will be held on **Monday, 13th July 1998**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** The Guest Speaker for the evening will be Mr. Peter Nolan who will enlighten us on his work in "Rehabilitating Raptors". Peter has been involved in this work since 1987 and has also been a member of WIRES since 1993. Some members will no doubt recall meeting Peter when he accompanied Fred Spiteri on previous talks. Fred has now left the area but Peter is continuing the work and you can be sure that his talk will be fascinating and informative.

NEXT OUTING : will be held on **Sunday, 19th July**, to the varied habitats of Windang Peninsula. We will begin our day at Korrongulla Swamp, where hopefully we will view the ever increasing cormorant rookery. We will then wander through the Primbee dune forest where there have been a lot of lorikeets and honeyeaters lately. There is a chance of seeing Swift Parrots, Bar-shouldered Dove and Spangled Drongo. We will then have a look at the new viewing platforms the Lake Illawarra Authority have constructed on the shores of Lake Illawarra. After lunch we will drive to Windang and maybe walk out to Windang Island if the entrance is still closed. Bring a carry lunch and expect to walk around five kilometres, weather permitting. Meet at the southern side of **Wetherall Park, Nicolle St., Primbee** at **9.00am**. Our leader will be **Chris Chafer**.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 21st July at the house of **Peg McKinlay** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

The deadlines for articles for the August newsletter is 29th July.

June Meeting

The members night was a true 'show and tell' evening with participants showing a preference for slide presentations all related to birds but in a range of 'moods' so to speak.

'El Presidente' Brian took us through a true spectrum of Ayres Rock under differing light conditions- personally the cascading runoff flowing over & down 'The Rock' was the most spectacular as were the shots of the Sturts Desert Pea flower. Brian's quiz certainly proved those of us who were well read or traveled in respect to non Australian birds.

Jenny Taylor certainly demonstrated that she is getting the hang of taking slides- her "piccys" of our trip to Shoalhaven Heads were great. We are looking forward to her next showing (slides or paintings) of the Taronga Zoo trip. Richard Fackender certainly showed up all us amateur photographers with his excellent photos of birds on his previous property around the Armidale district.

In terms of effort & quality Gwen/Jim Robinson's audio/visual presentation on the 'Symphony of Aust. Birds' was perhaps the highlight-well done!, though Alan & Kerri Lewis' 'Silhouette' quiz was a quiz with a difference! It certainly showed those who were experienced at night birding or looking at them into the sun.

Despite being handicapped with a slightly less than optimum 'telephoto lens, Darryl's shots of waders and Turnstones were graphic. The hovering Black-shouldered Kite and the Kelp Gull eating a fish on the rock 'platter' were great.

Barbara Hales collection of Puffin pieces was extraordinary- almost enough to qualify her home as a museum! Betty Hudson showed a beautiful painting given to her as a gift on a recent trip to New Zealand- the N.Z. Bell Bird.

Kevin McGregor concluded the evening with excerpts of his video from their trip to Cape York last August. The segment on the 6-wd's effort crossing the creek brought "oohs & arhs" from the audience though I think Fay, who was inside the vehicle at the time was probably saying a lot more 'unrepeatables' during those anxious moments. The champagne and rousing rendition (& in very fine voice I must add- I could'nt hear one out of tune- must be attributed to all those hours spent in sing song around the piano in days gone by) of the national anthem.

A very entertaining evening and a special thankyou to all who contributed.

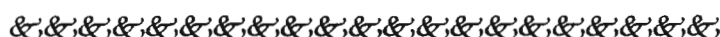
Darryl Goldrick



Atlas of Australian Birds (at last, the next one !)

Remember the fun we had "sussing" out birds for the Australian Atlas back in 1977- 1981? Well, we are into it again from the 1st August this year. This will be in addition to our continuing contribution to the N.S.W. Atlas. When the details are settled they will put into a newsletter and I will also be talking about it at the July meeting.

Dave Thomson



It was a beautiful morning, cool and clear, and the good weather lasted most of the day.

Thirty – four members met at the western side of Wollongong railway station for the bus to take us to Taronga Zoo. We left at 7.00am and arrived at the Zoo at 9.00am. As we entered the gate, we heard the sounds from the animals and birds. This report deals mainly with the birdlife within Taronga Park Zoo although there were many other interesting things to see.

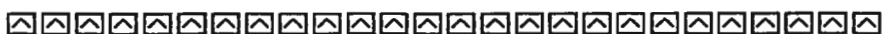
For bird lovers, birds were everywhere – in their enclosures and flying free in the diverse vegetation of the park. Those flying free included Rainbow Lorikeet and Noisy Miner, in reasonably large numbers, and with so many people about, they became quite tame and would land within a couple of metres away. Others were the Australian Magpie, Crested Pigeon, New Holland Honeyeater, Australian White Ibis and Common Myna. The gardens are well designed and beautifully landscaped with a large variety of native plant species. Besides some lovely old fig trees, many species of wattle, grevillea, banksia, bottlebrush, melaleuca, eucalypt, and palm provided shade for ferns, grasses and other rainforest plants.

As we entered the zoo, the first attraction was a small lake with a number of water birds. Those identified were the Plumed Whistling Duck, Blue-billed Duck, Black Swan, Radjah Shellduck, Pacific Black Duck, Australian Shoveler, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Darter, Black-necked Stork and Dusky Moorhen. It was interesting to see so many birds at close range. We then moved into the large enclosed aviary where we observed the Buff-banded Rail, White-headed Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo Dove, Topknot Pigeon, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, Wonga Pigeon, Rainbow Lorikeet, Australian King Parrot, Superb Lyrebird, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and Silvereye, again also at close range. We then visited the new Reptile area, which was very interesting, and then made our way to the picnic area to have lunch.

After lunch, we went to the Free Flight Bird Show. The presenter gave an introductory talk, after which a Black-breasted Buzzard flew in very low over the heads of the audience, landing on the gloved hand of the presenter. It picked up a small stone, which had previously been placed on the grass near a Emu Egg, and proceeded to try and break the egg with the stone. This is normal behaviour for this bird to do in the wild. A Barking Owl was then released flying only a few centimetres above the heads of the audience to land again on the presenter's gloved hand. It flew a few more times back and forth in the same fashion before returning to an assistant. Next, a Galah flew down and the presenter asked if anyone had a dollar coin. Barbara kindly held one up, and after a few words, it flew up and rested on Barbara's arm, picked up the coin and flew off with it back to the presenter. Barbara was lucky for the Galah brought it back again after a few words from the presenter, placing it on her hand. The presenter then threw a small fish into a small pond in front of him. A White-bellied Sea-Eagle flew down and plucked it out of the water and landed on the presenter's gloved hand. The show had many aspects of humour - one being the four rats which ran along the top of the fence behind the presenter before the release of an Andean Condor, a huge South American bird. The show ended with a Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo flying around. All of the birds in the show had previously been injured and were unable to return to the wild.

After the show, the group slowly made their way down to the lower entrance for the return trip home, seeing the bears being fed. It was a very pleasant and interesting day, with all enjoying the good weather and company.

Horrie Ward



**WADER IDENTIFICATION-LEG FLAGGING PROGRAM IN THE
EAST ASIAN -AUSTRALASIAN FLYWAY**

What is a leg flag?

A leg flag is a sort of modified plastic colour-band. It differs from normal colour bands in that a rectangular tab projects from it. This tab makes a leg flag on a wader much more conspicuous than a colour band. Most leg flagged waders have a leg flag on the right tibia, and a metal band on the right tarsus (above and below the "knee" respectively). There are also a few waders with leg flags on the tarsus rather than the tibia (this was the practice used when leg flagging was piloted, and is still standard practice for Sanderlings and Turnstones)

Who puts leg-flags on waders?

Several teams of wader banders in Australia and one in Asia routinely places a leg flag on each wader they band. Different colours are used in different localities:-

1. **ORANGE** leg flags (a rather dark shade of orange, sometimes mistaken in the field for red). Flagging occurs on the Victorian coast mainly in Port Phillip Bay, Westernport Bay and Corner Inlet; a few birds (especially Sanderlings and Turnstones) are flagged in the extreme south-east of South Australia. (*Victorian Wader Study Group*)
2. **BRIGHT YELLOW** leg flags are placed on birds caught in North-west Australia, at Roebuck Bay, Eighty Mile Beach and Port Hedland. (*Australasian Wader Studies Group*).
3. **GREEN** leg flags are placed on birds caught in South-east Queensland. (*Queensland Wader Study Group*)
4. **WHITE** leg flags are placed on waders caught in New Zealand. (*N.Z Wader Study Group*).
5. **BLUE** leg flags are placed on birds in Japan (*Bird Migration Research Centre*).

Why do this?

The idea is to unravel the movements of waders in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, with the ultimate aim of identifying the breeding and non-breeding areas of every population of waders, and the migration routes between them. It is an interesting field of research in itself, but the main motive behind it is **conservation**: an essential first step in protecting and managing the migratory staging areas of waders is to find out where they are. Leg flags were piloted in Victoria in 1990 and quickly caught on because they are easy to see in the field: unlike band recoveries, which are nearly always made by banding groups or Asian hunters, leg flag sightings can be made by any birdwatcher. The reporting rates for **orange** (Victorian) leg flags are much higher than they are for band recoveries: 17x higher for overseas sightings and 39x higher for sightings within Australia. The combination of leg flagging, banding, and counts is rapidly improving our knowledge of wader movements between Australia and their breeding grounds. Their migration strategies are proving to be beautifully intricate and diverse: the fine details differ between all species, there are different routes for different populations of the same species, different routes for different age categories, different choices of staging area depending upon weather conditions etc

What to do if you see a leg flagged wader.

Tell someone (Chris Chafer or Chris Brandis). Sightings of leg flagged waders outside their banding areas are genuinely helpful and well worth reporting. **Place, date and colour** of leg flag are the key things to report but other details such as **age, % of breeding plumage**, and the number of **unflagged birds accompanying** it would be useful. It is worth checking the bird(s) for other bands: if such a bird is encountered it is important to note the **relative positions** of leg flag, colour band and metal band. Leg flag sightings can be sent to **AUSTRALIAN BIRD AND BAT BANDING SCHEME, G.P.O BOX 8, CANBERRA, ACT 2601 (email: lisa.hardy@ea.gov.au)**

There used to be a lot of banding of waders in NSW but this had started to wind down by the time leg flags were developed. (Extract from 'birding- aus' -- Danny Rodgers, 11th June 1998)

Darryl Goldrick.



REGENT HONEYEATER RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Capertee Valley Regent Honeyeater group are organizing surveys for Regents over the coming months. Dates are:-

- 4/5 July
- 1/2 August
- 5/6 September
- 10/11 October

Accommodation is provided with participants expected to arrive Friday evening and to bring bedding and food. You will be expected to assist in surveying 10 sites-normally this means small groups doing 3-4 sites on the Sat-am. Once these are completed other sites are searched for 'Regents'. Time is available on the Sun for general birding. Places are limited and will be allocated on a 'first come' basis. For further information contact Penny Drake-Brockman on (02) 9698 7263 (evenings & weekends).

Darryl Goldrick



In mid May we spent a week at Cunjurong Point. After being "rained in" for some days, we were delighted to find that the water level in nearby Lake Conjola had risen considerably and the bird population had increased immensely.

We counted over forty Black Swan and many Chestnut Teal. One of the surprises was a group of seven Black-winged Stilt. In the twenty odd years I have been observing the birds there I have not seen a single stilt before.

There were also Great and Pied Cormorants – as usual – two Little Terns and two Bar-tailed Godwits, and on a nearby beach, two Sooty Oystercatchers. We observed several different Plovers - Red Capped, Red Kneed, Black-fronted and Lesser Sand. The biggest thrill of the week was the sighting of nine Hooded Plovers – four at the edge of the lake and five on the beach near Manyana. I have from time to time seen two or three of these beautiful birds there but I was overjoyed to see so many.

In early June, I sighted about sixty Long-billed Corella in a tree in Bowral. I am hoping to join your outings soon.

Val Cooper



Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Fairy Penguin	1	25/4	Kiama harbour	marine	NW
White-necked Heron	3	6/6	Berry	ephemeral wetland	SPo
Osprey	1	5/6	Lake Conjola	estuary	WIN TV
Brown Goshawk	1	7/6	Lake Heights	overhead	CJC
Peregrine Falcon	2	9/6	Avondale	overhead	CB
Hooded Plover	2	23/5	Cudmirrah	beach	KM
Red-kneed Dotterel	2	18/5	Haywards Bay	foreshore	DG
Red-kneed Dotterel	2	25/5	Hooka Point	foreshore	CJC
Black-fronted Dotterel	20+	18/5	Haywards Bay	foreshore	DG
Pacific Gull	5	9/5	Black Head (Gerroa)	rocky shore	PM
Pacific Gull	2	24/5	Windang	sand flats	PM
Pacific Gull	2	6/6	Windang	sand flats	SPo
Common Tern	6	14/5	Windang	sand flats	CB
White-fronted Tern	2	14/5	Windang	sand flats	CB
White-fronted Tern	2	8/6	Windang	sand flats	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	6	28/5	Jamberoo	urban	KM
Little Corella	50+	28/5	Shellharbour pool	foreshore	JP
Long-billed Corella	100+	1/6	Calderwood	rural	DG
Superb Parrot	1imm	16/6	Keiraville	garden	JP
Barn Owl	1	12/5	Broughton Creek	dead on road	KM
Barn Owl	1	13/5	west Kiama	on fence post	KM
Barn Owl	1	30/5	Wollongong harbour	overhead	LES
Barn Owl	1	6/6	Kiama bypass	dead on road	CJC
Scarlet Honeyeater	6-8	May	Keiraville	garden	JP
White-fronted Chat	20+	18/5	Haywards Bay	foreshore	DG
Scarlet Robin	2	20/5	Avondale	woodland	DG
Crested Shrike-tit	1	1/6	Claderwood	rainforest	DG
Spangled Drongo	1	11/5	Bomaderry Creek	woodland	JP
Diamond Firetail	1	27/5	Nerriga	rural	KM
Diamond Firetail	1	9/6	Avondale	rural	CB/DG
Bassian Thrush	1	8/6	Nth Wollongong	foreshore scrub	NW

CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; PM - Peter Milburn; KM - Kevin Mills; JP - Judith Parkinson; SPo - Steve Popple; LES - Lindsay Smith; NW - Nola Williams

Comment: The past few months have provided so many interesting records that the comment section has been short and sweet. The ultimate lazy birdo's record goes to the Osprey observed on WIN TV when they did a story on flooding at the entrance to Lake Conjola. This observation and the regular occurrence of a pair at Swan Lake is very encouraging of a species that disappeared from our region for many decades. Diamond Firetails are extremely hard to find in our region these days, the Avondale record appears to be the first east of the escarpment since the early 1960's. Pacific Gulls have once again made their way to our shores with up to 5 birds being observed at Black Head and a number of observers have found them at Windang. The entrance to the Lake has been closed for some time now, and this has provided suitable habitat for large numbers of Red-capped and Double-banded Plovers, indeed the 100+ Red-caps reported in last month's newsletter is the largest number of this species reported for many years. The two Corella species continue to increase their numbers in the region. One wonders if they will follow population trends of the Galah, which was rare in the region prior to the 1950's! Finally, there have been quite few Barn Owl records, unfortunately all too many of them being of road kills.

Update: As I write this column, I have once again been visited by a flock of 30+ Swift Parrots in my back yard. This time a male Brown Goshawk flushed them out of a eucalypt but failed to catch the one it pursued. Life can be tough for an endangered species!

Please NOTE: Observations can now be sent to me via e-mail at: cchafer@ezy.net.au
phone: 4276 3871

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

☺☺☺☺ **COMING EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

NEXT MEETING : will be held on **Monday, 10th August 1998**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** The Guest Speaker for the evening will be **Mr. David Seims**. You may recall that David addressed a packed house in September '96 when we listened to and saw slides of his "Birding in South Africa" trip. David visited the Galapagos Islands in 1996 and the Falkland Islands in November 1997 and tonight we are very pleased that he is paying us a return visit to share those experiences with us too.

NEXT OUTING : will be held on **Saturday, 15th August 1998** to **Cudmirrah National Park** and our leader for the day will be **Dr Kevin Mills**. Meet at **9.00a.m.** at the shop at Cuddmirrah, on the edge of Swan lake. There will be a morning walk from the meeting place on the lake out to the beach and back via a different route. The whole walk is quite flat. After lunch, either at the cars on the lake or if windy then on Berrara lagoon, there will be a walk through the forest on the lake foreshore. All walking is on fairly level ground. Lunch will be at the vehicles - basic needs can be obtained from the Cuddmirrah shop.

To get to Cuddmirrah travel **south** from Wollongong through Nowra and Tomerong via the Princes Highway. Turn **left** onto the Sussex Inlet road (approx. 33 km south of Nowra). Cudmirrah is signposted and is about another 16 km from this point. This is a very beautiful area and well worth the drive.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 18th August, at the house of **Kevin and Fae McGregor** starting at 7.30 p.m.

The deadlines for articles for the September newsletter is 28th August.

JULY MEETING

What an entertaining speaker Peter Nolan proved to be-his casual yet enthusiastic manner captured everyone. Fred Spiteri has certainly tutored his protégé well, and all the raptors in the Illawarra are in capable hands.

Peter was interested to know whether any members had had sightings of 'old regulars'- the Grey Goshawk in Kiama, the Sea Eagle around Dapto/Yallah and the Spotted Harrier in the Jamberoo Valley.

The majority of injured birds of prey that come to Peter and other WIRES members generally do not survive. Most are the result of vehicle impact or gunshot wounds and operations, with the exception of Goshawks, are not overly successful in the bird being able to fully recover and survive in the wild. He recalled a 'Wedgy' that had been hand fed for three months before coming to him-a release was unsuccessful and it is now awaiting despatch to Taronga Zoo.

The American system is so much more resourceful in the treatment and management of injured and endangered/vulnerable birds-there is ample funding available to both government agencies and community groups to assist them in their endeavours. Our governments (state and federal) are far less sympathetic and committed to native bird rescue/recovery and protection of our avifauna.

The Yanks on the other hand, providing you have a license, allow you to breed and rear any bird. They have A.I programs for Peregrine's and Condors. Of the 400 or so Grey Falcons world-wide we have one lone male being held in W.A in a special rehabilitation unit and the National Parks and Wildlife Service wont allow it to be mated with a female 'cause they don't have the latter in captivity-how draconian can one be! Peter explained the hunting range of Wedgetails in W.A to be in the order of a100 km circle. In NSW it is roughly 10 km and is extended to 20 km in drought - and the hunting range is directly proportional to the size of the bird.

Unlike many birds of prey the Brown Goshawk is a pure killing machine- it will kill for the pure sake of a kill rather than need (food).

His 'disregard ' for pigeons was obvious- as carriers of Hepatitis B and other viruses they are easy prey to raptors and the probability of disease transmission is high.

Peter also provided some interesting facts on Peregrines-as the fastest bird in the air the lack manouverability and are generally only successful in 'captures' once in seven attempts. Their survival rates are less impressive- out of 10 born only 3 survive by the end of the first year and at 3 years only one manages to survive-and it's to do with their inefficient hunting techniques!

Then it was hands on time as Peter produced his frozen specimens (its illegal to have live birds on show) for all to examine at close quarters- about 12 in all, the Peregrine, Brown Goshawk, Collared Sparrowhawk and Barn Owl were my pick-how about you?

A fascinating presentation and great member interaction reflected everyone's enjoyment. Congratulations to Peter and all the great work done by WIRES.

Darryl Goldrick

XX

JULY OUTING

On Sunday 19th July, 16 members of I.B.O.C. and one boy met at Primbee for our monthly walk. The day was cloudy, cool and calm; good walking weather in fact, but without colour either in the landscape or easily visible in the birds.

The walk was to start off in the Korrungulla Swamp and when Chris Chafer, who was to be our leader, and his son arrived wearing gum boots, we wondered what they knew that we didn't! However, we were quickly on our way, through the gate, which always seems to be open, and over the little bridge. On the way we past Bitu Bush, which was flowering, Bracken and Coastal Wattle, "Old Man" Banksia and tall Eucalypts all flourishing in dirty looking sand (particularly the Bitou Bush). We saw Spangled Drongo, Red Wattlebird, Rainbow Lorikeet and saw, and heard, Golden Whistlers.

There was a recently built viewing platform with a seat beside it and here we stayed a while and did our viewing in comfort. The platform looked out over quite a large, clear and calm body of water to a Cormorant rookery, which has only been used since the 1980's but is now so popular and the birds so profuse, that their droppings are killing the Casuarinas that they roost in. The trees that aren't dead are looking strangely pale and neglected.

The resident Sea Eagle gave a couple of "fly pasts", the second time while being harassed by a raven.

The track from here was formed by coal washery refuse and bordered by slag from the steelworks which gave an excellent surface after the rain but was at least six feet above the water and an unknown amount below. On the right hand side of the track was the sandmining equipment, which was quiet due to the fact that it was a Sunday, and completely ignored by the Eurasian Coots, HardHeads and Grebes.

Shortly we were off the slag and in place of the scruffy Casuarinas and Coastal Wattle, we saw Magestic Figs, their branches straining skyward and their roots flowing down over vertical rock faces. All was quiet and dark as is common in rainforest areas.

Just past here, we saw a very sad sight. Trees that had been planted by Bird Club members on a previous visit had been chopped down, a new viewing platform had been chopped into and set alight and the reeds had been burnt out over an extensive area. But nature is very forgiving and bright new growth was to be seen, already quite advanced in places. A couple of comparatively new bridges had been spared from the general predations and we were able to finish our walk of Korrungulla (and dry shod too!). On the way back to the cars we saw Superb Fairy Wrens, Grey Fantails and Silvereyes. We had morning tea at the cars with some more provident members bringing collapsible seats to sit on, while the rest of us sat on the curb to eat.

The second part of the outing was across the Windang Road and into the hind dune woodland. The vegetation consisted of Coastal Wattle, Running Postman, Pimelea, Bitu, Lantana and Tea- tree, all cobbled together with Devils Twine, and looked over by tall Eucalypts and Banksias. There was the remains of a battered "big bad Banksia man" scattered along the track. Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo the "feasters" perhaps. The last time the Bird Club had walked in this area, the place was infested with Pampas Grass but not now. Perhaps the next time we come, there will be no Bitu or Lantana either.

We passed the old sanitary dump, much more "sanitary" now as it is no longer used, and although the vegetation is slowly encroaching it will be many years before it is completely revegetated. We did a quick detour over the dune to the beach and were rewarded by a sighting of Pied Oystercatchers. Then as we went along a tarred road we saw Bar-Shouldered Dove, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and had an excellent view of a large flock of Swift Parrots, high in the tree tops and darting swiftly about.

We had lunch in a most delightful spot to the south of the Oasis Caravan Park(courtesy of the Lake Illawarra Authority). Even the parking area had been designed with sensitivity and forethought and was completely

unobtrusive (if you can imagine an unobtrusive car park!) If not, drive there and see this one, but take your binoculars, *Prizzy* and plant identification books. Be prepared to stay a while and read the inscriptions on the plaques that abound in the area and learn about the legends, the food and utensils of the first people, their history and plants, all in one area.

All around the parking area are angular garden beds, all planted with vegetation once common to the area and used by the Kooris for food, medicines and the necessities of life. There are Gynea Lilys and Cabbage Tree Palms, Bracelet Honey Myrtle, Coastal Rosemary, Casuarinas, Grevilleas, Bottlebrush and Banksias; all in varying shades of green, different textured leaves and looking very healthy. There were areas of lawn that were well sheltered no matter which way the wind blew. Figtrees had been planted in the lawns to provide shade in the future.

Small birds could be heard twittering in all this lavish planting and at the ends of the red granite paths, there were bird observation platforms. In one place, a well constructed hide was located, which overlooked another Cormorant perching tree, again looking extremely pale and sick. From here we could see, besides Cormorants, Black Swans, HardHead Ducks and Ibis. Many jellyfish, both large and small, were also observed.

After lunch I had to discontinue the walk but the morning was delightful. Thank you for your company everyone and especially to Chris for leading the walk.

Peg Merrett



Bird Week

Bird Week will be held from Sunday 18th to Sunday the 25th October finishing in the Twitchathon on the 24th and 25th. This year the funds raised by the twitchathon will go towards the conservation and study of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo (75 %) and the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo (25 %), the sponsorship is tax deductible of course.

Peter West, the Liaison Officer of SNAG, volunteered at the last BIGNET meeting in Dubbo to coordinate activities by various bird clubs for bird week to promote interest in bird watching in NSW. If any one has some ideas for activities such as conducting a guided walk in the Botanic Gardens for beginners then please let myself or Peter West, ph 02 9634 3883 (h) or 02 9833 5469 (w) and they can be coordinated and promoted.

A longer term aim is to have a Bird Fair as in the UK, say in 1999 or 2000 but let us start with something smaller to gauge current interest.

Chris Brandis



The New Atlas of Australian Birds.

From 1977 to 1981 the RAOU (now called Birds Australia) gathered information on the distribution of our birds, all 7 or 8 hundred species, and produced a publication called **The Atlas of Australian Birds** containing for each species a map of its distribution over Australia. Our Club was active in that exercise. In NSW, the work has been continued since '81 by the NSW Atlassers and again our Club has been involved.

Birds Aust. started a few days ago, 1st August, the gathering of information for a new Atlas of Aust Birds. It's expected to take 4 years, though it's hoped that Atlassing will continue indefinitely after the 4 years. Again our Club will be contributing records from Club outings, camps, trips and so on. **But**, as with the 77/81 Atlas, each of us has the opportunity to contribute records from personal observations around home and from walks, holidays and trips anywhere in Australia. Quite a few of us did that with the 77/81 Aust Atlas. We enjoyed it that much that we kept going with the NSW Atlas when it took over in NSW. It's very satisfying, knowing that you are contributing directly to the community's understanding of bird life and influencing the recognised distribution of our birds. It's summed up well in the Introduction to the 77/81 Atlassing publication :

*"People who had passively watched birds in their own backyards from Cairns to Perth, Wyndham to Oodnadatta, caught the spirit of excitement. With the more densely populated areas covered, people trekked into the outback. To each there was a sense of achievement, of belonging. The justification for the labour is **The Atlas of Australian Birds.**"*

One of the reasons for the new Atlas is simply to give us another "snapshot in time" of the distribution of our birds. But an even more pressing influence is the knowledge that, in the 15 years since the last Atlas, we've cleared about 10 million hectares of bushland (half the size of Victoria) and as a result, have lost about 150 million birds. And in that same period, we've revegetated about 100 thousand hectares of bush (1% of what we've lost). With birds being recognised as valuable indicators of biodiversity and ecosystem health, we need to know the effects of these changes. To help us answer such questions, the Federal Government, through its Bushcare and Wetlands units, is injecting some \$1.2m into the project. It's estimated that the financial value of the "in-kind" work of volunteers like us in the project (Atlassers, office helpers and others) will be about \$50m.

In a nutshell, Atlassing will require that you record, using a special sheet, what birds you see in any identifiable geographic location. These sheets will then be sent to the body responsible for the area concerned (our Club for records around the Illawarra) so that they can be checked for obvious errors and omissions before being passed on to Melbourne (Birds Aust.) for preparation of the database. In the 77/81 Atlas, we recorded sightings in 10minute x 10minute geographic squares (about 16km x 16km). A similar system will be used in the new Atlas, though they're encouraging recording on a finer scale, preferably with records made at points. We'll also be required, as in 77/81, to make records of breeding, so that the Atlas will show not only where a species is present, but also where it's known to breed.

There's no charge for being an Atlasser. If you think that you'd like to be involved, then give me a ring and I'll tell you more about the scheme and get an explanatory kit into your hands. The kit will show you, among other things, how to follow up if you decide to be an Atlasser. It's great fun, not expensive in dollars or time, and adds a very tangible and rewarding purpose to birdwatching.

Dave Thomson 02 / 4284 2876.



OCTOBER CAMP 1998

This October the camp will be held at Dungog, situated in the Hunter Valley near Newcastle. The dates of the camp are from Friday 2nd October to Saturday 10th October. This coincides with the school holidays and incorporates the October Long weekend. The camp fees will be \$10 per adult. If you think you might be interested in attending the camp, please contact Brian or Barbara. The following is a report about the site.

REPORT ON DUNGOG CAMP SITE

Travelling time from Wollongong to Dungog was 4 hours, though it would probably take extra time for pulling vans. We went up via the City to Raymond Terrace and came back via Maitland. Both ways take the same time so it is a matter of personal choice, however "off peak" would be better if going through the City.

Dungog was much bigger than expected. It is a nice friendly country town, with a good shopping centre and all services. The weather was good – fine and warm. Everywhere was green due to heavy rains and floods in the previous weeks.

Wendy Grahame's property "MUDDENYERI" is situated on a loop road 10 kms. from town. It is a peaceful area covering 120 acres with a creek, open and wooded paddocks and plenty of bird life. Wendy was a most hospitable hostess and is looking forward to sharing her property with us in October. Wendy has built her own mud brick home and is a very talented artist. There is also a small wooden church on the property that Wendy uses for storage, with electricity and water connected. Beside the church is a caravan in which Wendy lived for 4 years while building her home. She is happy for both the church and van to be used if necessary. The church is one room and the water is pumped up from the creek and would need to be boiled for drinking.

There are 3 possible campsites

- 1) In the paddock between the house and the church. It is level and large enough for our purposes. At present it has long grass which could be slashed. There is easy access and would be the preferred site if it is wet prior to the camp.
- 2) Across the road with 2 dams and nice trees. The area is big enough but not as level and with a natural spring at the gate access, this could be a problem.
- 3) This is the pick of the sites on the creek. Easy access from the road with flat areas to camp. 4WD vehicles could cross the creek on the opposite bank to a large open area, leading to the river and creek junction. There is plenty of wood and water available. Access could be difficult if wet.

Suggestions : Sunday October 4th is Dungog Picnic Race Day.
A midweek meal outing to Dungog R.S.L. Club.
Possibility of a free bus trip of Dungog.
Bird watching and walks on "MUDDEN YERI"
A circular drive of 85kms into Telegraphy Forest and Chichester Dam.
Many other drive possibilities into the Barrington Tops area.

Finally, it was a real joy to "sus" out this campsite and we are looking forward to a week in the peacefulness and beauty of Dungog and particularly to sharing time with Wendy on "MUDDEN YERI" (mud in your eye) in October.

Fae and Kevin McGregor



Barren Grounds Bird Observatory Information Centre

Volunteers from Cumberland Bird Observers Club, the Field Ornithologists and Friends of Barren Grounds with IBOC members are manning the Centre on Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm to answer questions, promote the area and sell goods to raise funds for the centre. We are always after new volunteers as the more that are available the easier it is for the rest, with may be only one or two mannings a year required. Some weekend are very interesting with courses or bird banding being conducted - the other month I was entertained by a group from COG who netted over 200 birds with great in-hand sightings of Crescent Honeyeater, Eastern Whipbird and Pilotbird. I also had the chance of a really unusual species for while outside the Centre, I watched as 4 Red-browed Treecreepers foraged under the bark for food. So if you fancy a relaxing day at Barren Grounds watching the birds from the Centre just let me know and I can arrange for training for a roster position or just as a standby.

Raoul is currently on a working holiday promoting the Observatory and Anthony Overs, from COG, is minding the fort so that everything keeps working smoothly and all the good promotion bears fruit for our local Observatory.

Chris Brandis



Barren Grounds Program of Activities

The Barren Grounds Observatory offers a regular program of weekend nature courses. In the next couple of months there are several great courses being offered.

Sex and the Single Banksia

Date: 18-20 September

Have you ever wondered how plants find mates? Being stuck in the ground might limit your options! Most plants have to have sex via a third party – a pollinator. Professor Rob Whelan and other researchers from the University of Wollongong have been examining the pollination biology of many plants in the family Proteaceae (e.g. Banksias, Grevilleas, Waratahs). If you would like to delve into the private world of Banksias and discover the truth, Rob is willing to reveal all. Come along to this course to catch and observe birds, marsupials and insects visiting Banksias flowers and help determine the effectiveness of each group of animals as pollinators.

Spring Wildflowers

Date: 2-5 October

Come along this weekend but don't forget the off-spring, as this is a great time (and all the big kids) to run about in the reserve admiring the spring time wonders. Join in this action packed weekend for bushwalks, picnics and wildflowers: spotlighting, frogging and small animal trapping; mistnetting, bird banding and bird watching. Raoul Broughton will be our leader for this weekend.

Rainforest Ecology

Date: 16-18 October

How do rainforests exist and why are they special? Join Dick Turner, a consultant forester, to explore the different rainforest types of the Illawarra. Learn to identify species common to littoral, warm-temperate and sub-tropical rainforests. For the birdwatcher, there are chances to see Superb Lyrebirds, Logrunners, Large-billed Scrubwrens, Brown Gerygones and Top-Knot Pigeons.

Contact Barren Grounds Bird Observatory on (02) 4236 0195 or P.O. Box 3, Jamberoo N.S.W.

Unusual Records for **June-July 1998** **Chris J. Chafer** 69 Lake Heights Rd. Lake Heights 2502

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Fairy Prion	20+	12/7	east of Bellambi	marine	TW
Southern Giant Petrel	1	12/7	east of Bellambi	marine	TW
Shy Albatross	2	12/7	east of Bellambi	marine	TW
Little Eagle	1	21/6	Coledale	overhead	GB
White-faced Heron	45	04/7	Rose Valley	paddock	CJC
Great Egret	6	04/7	Werri Lagoon	wetland	CJC
Bush Thick-knee	1	June	Shoalhaven Heads	caravan park	DW
Red-necked Avocet	16	18/7	Windang	sand flats	CJC
White-fronted Tern	10	05/7	Bass Point	rocky shore	GB
White-headed Pigeon	1	03/7	Lake South High	School grounds	GM
Swift Parrot	25	23/7	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Swift Parrot	20	17/7	Primbee	dune forest	DG.
Barking Owl	2	03/7	Rose Valley	overhead	MR
Azure Kingfisher	1	12/7	Albion Park	riparian	BH
Rose Robin	1	June	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Rose Robin	1	06/7	Wollongong Uni	park	GB
Logrunner	2	21/6	Bulli Pass	rainforest	CP
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	12/7	Towradgi Creek	Riparian	JW
White-plumed Honeyeater	3	13/7	Guest Park, Fairy Meadow	park	JW

GB - Graham Barwell; BH - Brian Hales; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; GM - G. Meaney; CP - Chris Presland; MR - Mark Robinson; JW - Wylie; TM - Tom Wylie; DW - Diana Wright

Comment: Not many records received for this reporting period. Nevertheless, there have been good numbers of Swift Parrot reported from the Primbee dune forest (southern end of golf course) and from around my neighbourhood at Lake Heights. The Rose Valley Barking Owls have turned up again. The Red-necked Avocet record is only the second known record from the Lake, the previous being in 1984. The White-plumed Honeyeater record is a new location. The Bush Thick-knee is the first regional record since 1981 (Appin) and the first Shoalhaven record since 1937.

I.B.O.C. News

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.



Club Motto: *'One Good Tern Deserves Another'*

Issue No. 213

September 1998

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NEXT MEETING : will be held on **Monday, 14th September 1998**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** The Guest Speaker for the evening will be **Mr. Trevor Qusted**. Many of you have heard Trevor address us at previous meetings and his animated style of delivery and diverse bird watching locations make him an ever popular speaker. So come along and enjoy another evening with Trevor as he tells us of his birding experience in Equador.

NEXT OUTING : will be on **Saturday 19th September** to the George's River Nature Reserve. There will be three separate walks to the George's River from cars parked at different spots for the start of each walk. Meet at **8.30 am** in Woodlands Road, Bradbury. After passing through two roundabouts on the Appin Road approach to Campbelltown, turn **right** at the traffic lights into Woodlands Road and park in the clearing on the left, opposite St Helen's Park Drive. The walk will be lead by **Mr Jack Hyslop**. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 22nd September, at the house of **Kevin and Fae McGregor** starting at **7.30 p.m.** The August committee meeting was cancelled due to the heavy rains in August.

PLEASE NOTE THAT BECAUSE OF THE DATES OF THE OCTOBER CAMP THERE WILL NOT BE A NEWSLETTER, MEETING OR OUTING FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER.

Early Warning : Election of Office Bearers for 1999 will be held at the November meeting. More details can be found in this newsletter.

The deadline for articles for the November newsletter is 27th October.

AUGUST MEETING.

David Siems' presentation took us on a wonderful trip to the Galapagos Islands and then across to the Falkland Islands. David's very relaxed manner and beautiful slides certainly made everyone feel at ease.

Tower Island was the first of the islands we viewed with great slides of Frigatebirds, Masked Boobies, Black and Bluefooted Boobies, the rare Lava Gull (400 pairs only), and the Swallowtail Gull, which breeds here and then migrates to Mexico and for a gull has the unusual habit of predominantly feeding at night. Unlike its white Australian counterpart the Redfooted Booby in this part of the world is brown. The guide rules on this island are very strict- one must keep to the designated tracks and the guide remains in the lead at all times. The lava tubes are a special and favourite place for the birds--Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels, and the very prolific Short-eared Owls. The Galapagos Hawk was magnificent, given that they are invariably difficult to get close to. The Blue Heron, Yellow Warbler, American Pied Oystercatcher and Brown Pelican were equally as impressive. The Darwin Centre is a special research facility for the breeding of turtles and when up to size they are released into the wild.

We then journeyed to Hood Island with its Grey Albatross Blue-footed Booby, American Flamingo (what a spectacular bird!), Galapagos Flycatcher (only species of flycatcher in the Galapagos islands), Red-billed Tropicbird and Vermillion Flycatcher.

David then took us on the Argentinian leg of his tour -the Falklands with its 1400- odd islands and their meagre population of 2000 people.

The Falklands have a long standing sailing-maritime history and the bays are littered with old boat-ship wrecks. The one noticeable feature of the birds here is how tame they are - they are unafraid of human presence and close observations are commonplace. Great shots of Steamer ducks, which are flightless but use their 'rotating' wings as paddles to propel themselves across the water. The Longtailed Meadow Lark was interesting with its very long bill and bright red chest/throat. The Common Snipe and Redchested Dotterel are particularly docile to allow good closeup views.

Sea Lion Island is noted for its extensive peat deposits, which can be a problem if struck by lightning-they are difficult to extinguish and can burn for lengthy periods. Special birds on this island included Rockhopper Penguins, King Cormorants, Dolphin Gulls, Snowy Sheathbills (will eat anything including droppings!), King Penguins with very large flippers and Turkey Vultures. David had to fly all the way to the Falklands to see his first Peregrine--an expensive bird David!

What was surprising to hear was there are no introduced species in the Falklands- what a pleasing thing to hear and long may it remain this way.

David claims that if you are contemplating a trip the best time is Nov-Feb and you do need to save a few extra \$s as it is not the cheapest place to visit.

Thankyou David for a pleasant evening.

Darryl Goldrick

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OCTOBER CAMP 1998
'MUDDENYERI' FOSTERTON VIA DUNGOG

Final arrangements have been made for the camp from Friday 2nd October to Saturday 10th October and we require confirmation from those members who would like to attend. As you will recall details of a survey of the area were included in the last Newsletter. If inclement weather is around during the period of the camp two alternative sites are available which are Frying Pan Creek within the Telegraphy Area (established Forrestry picnic camp site) and/or the Showgrounds in Dungog (43 power sites available - Cost \$5 per person per night). Both sites have toilet accommodation available. Interesting walks will be available and several other activities have also been been arranged.

Please telephone Brian/Barbara Hales 02 42574431 or Kevin/Fae McGregor 02 4271 3762, as soon as possible to confirm your booking and advise if accomodation other than camping is required.



1998 October "Long-weekend" Camp – Fosterton, Dungog

As in 1995, this year we are breaking a little with tradition by having our October long-weekend camp a long way from home and are arranging it for a whole week – it fits in with the school holidays.

Details about the campsite have been provided in the August newsletter and this newsletter. Please remember to bring your own drinking water. Watch out for the usual I.B.O.C. signs when approaching the property. It would be wise to contact the Hales or the McGregors to confirm that there are no changes to the original plans about 2 days before the camp commences.



AUGUST MONTHLY OUTING

On Saturday 15th August, 16 members of I.B.O.C. met at Cudmirrah on the edge of Swan Lake for our monthly walk. It was a dull, cold and breezy day with a slight drizzle – nothing we couldn't handle.

For a place called Swan Lake there were very few Black Swans around, but there were Wood Ducks, White Geese, Chestnut Teal, Crimson Rosella and King Parrot. We heard a Masked Lapwing in the tall Eucalypts near the lake and saw six Spotted Pardalotes on the ground in the short grass of the picnic area. All these sightings in such a short time and in a small area augured well for the day's count.

We set off promptly through the town, passing what looked like holiday houses, and then through a caravan park, which looked dismal with rain lying around in puddles and dripping off caravan awnings and annexes. Entering Cudmirrah National Park, we looked at the lake entrance, which was still closed despite heavy rain in the previous few days. We walked past Coastal Wattle, Banksia, Bracken, Native Cherry, Pittosporum and Casuarinas. Whilst we didn't see Bitou Bush or Lantana, there were a couple of species of Asparagus plant infesting quite a sizeable area. We also saw a White-bellied Sea Eagle, a flock of Rainbow Lorikeets, a Galah in a nesting hole, White-naped Honeyeater, Great Egret and a Superb Fairy Wren.

We arrived at an excellent, unvandalised viewing platform which looked out over a beautiful crescent of golden sand stretching north past Sussex Inlet to St. George's Head. Here we saw Crested Terns, Hooded and Doubled-banded Plover, Sooty Oystercatchers and Gannets. An easy gradient led down to the beach and after walking a short distance in a freezing wind we climbed to another viewing point. Under the shelter of some distorted Coral Trees we saw Black-browed Albatross, Willy Wagtails and an Eastern Spinebill.

Back in town, we passed a huge Bangalay, one twisted branch bending down to reach the ground then shooting straight up again. The bark on this tree felt soft and damp although it had stopped raining. The bark on the other trees was dry to the touch.

We were all intrigued to see a couple of kangaroos crossing the road. They appeared to be sure they had the right-of-way, and a car using the road couldn't hurry them along. We were even more intrigued to see four kangaroos on someone's front lawn, with the "old man" lying on the verandah, totally at ease and master of all he purveyed.

We had morning tea atop a cliff in Berrara, with scrubby Casuarinas providing a windbreak. The township of Berrara had a more permanent, well cared for look than Cudmirrah, although the well-mown lawns

may be due to the kangaroos! A great deal of nifty footwork was required to avoid the kangaroo poo. Look to your laurels Michael Flatley, here comes I.B.O.C.

One of the highlights of this part of the walk was seeing a pair of King Parrots eating leisurely at a feeding table in a front yard. Even at eye level and only 2 metres away, they were completely unfazed by our approach.

By this time we were on our way back to the cars for lunch. We passed Berrara Lagoon, which had flooded one of the many small parks, and a small but exorbitantly priced block of land. We passed a wattle in full golden flower contrasted by an adjacent purple Hardenbergia. We went into open woodland of mainly Blackbutt, then interspersed with Scribbly Gum. Here we saw more kangaroos, a White-browed Treecreeper and a Rose Robin. Soon we were back at the lake with the same waterbirds around that we had seen earlier.

We had lunch by the lake at the tables and benches provided where we watched the passing parade. We saw 55 species for the morning – an excellent count. I'm sorry I couldn't do the afternoon walk but I enjoyed the morning immensely.

Many thanks for escorting us, Kevin, and thanks to everybody else for your company,

Peggy Merrett.



The New Atlas of Australian Birds.

In our August Newsletter, we talked about the beginning of the New Atlas of Australian Birds - mapping the distribution of our 7 or 8 hundred species. Well, it got up a head of steam at the beginning of August and is off and running. Quite a few of our members have already started Atlassing. There's no charge to be involved. If you'd like to be in it, give me a ring for more information and an Atlassing Kit.

Dave Thomson 02 - 4284 2876.



Early Warning of Office Bearers for 1999

At the November meeting, the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and four committee members will be declared vacant.

After 10 years as President of our club, Brian has decided not to stand for re-election for 1999. If you are able, please consider nominating for one of the above positions to assist with the running of the club. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like more information on what each position entails, we will be happy to inform you, just phone Brian or Barbara on 02 42574431.



WADER IDENTIFICATION -SEQUEL

In the July newsletter I provided some information on wader identification in respect to **LEG FLAGS**-in this issue I have additional information on **COLOUR BANDS**.

While you may be on the watch for those leg flags, don't forget that there are also colour-banding programs for some of Australia's resident waders and terns. Especially active is the Victorian Wader Study Group-even though you are more likely to see these in Victoria they are known to move to other states.

Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers.

Birds have individual colour combinations with the following codes:

Right lower leg-2 colour bands(site code),same colour above a metal band-greyish.

Left lower leg-3 colour bands, record from top to bottom-**2 bands of the same colour are never next to each other(yby is possible however)**

Make sure you record dark or light green. Colours used are: red,orange, dark blue(B),yellow,light green(LG),dark green(DG),white,black(BK).

Hooded Plover.

Individually banded. Record position of bands/flags on both legs.

Terns.

Little Terns from the Gippsland Lakes are individually colour banded. **Crested Terns** from Mud Island in Port Phillip Bay have enameled metal bands,the colour relating to the year of birth

Other terns caught in Victoria are given orange leg flags and in NSW, yellow.

Sightings of waders in China (by Aussies) during April/May,1998 resulted in 3 Great Knots,a Red Knot and a Bar-tailed Godwit with **yellow flags** and an **orange flagged** Bar-tailed Godwit.

In Korea, a Great Knot with **green flag**, a Terek Sandpiper with **yellow flag**, and 5 Bar-tailed Godwits with **yellow and green flags** were sighted--- based on the information you now have can you identify where the birds were tagged/flagged/banded?

Extract from Galah - June 1996 edition (the in-house newsletter of Birds Australia)

Darryl Goldrick.

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Finding Birds fast with Binoculars

Trevor Quested has published these hints to Birdwatchers in the CBOC newsletter as extracted from an Internet article by E.R. Matthews.

1. Memorise how you turn the focus wheel.
2. Remember the last distance you were focused on then apply 1.
3. Be prepared and adjust the focus for the distance you expect the next bird to be at.
4. Start focusing before the binoculars reach the eyes.
5. Make a mental note of where the bird is. eg. by the main trunk near the yellow leaves.
6. Keep looking at the bird as you raise your binoculars into the line of sight.
- 7 Practise, practise, practise and you will miss identifying *fewer birds*.

(Copied from the I.B.O.C. Newsletter August 1995)



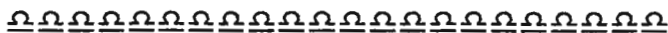
A BRAINTEASER

Focus your binoculars! A total of 16 birds are nesting (backwards or forwards) in the account below.

Howling, the infant ailing, puffing, had swallowed over five narcotics, wanting one variation after another one, lethal against any man, the most rich and dangerous sort – a blatantly crooked case of being too careless, doctors assume.

Answers in the November newsletter – happy bird searching!

(Originally supplied by Mike Morphett, published in August Newsletter 1994)



Please remember to bring your mug and a plate of supper on meeting nights.

Unusual Records August 1998 Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: 69 Lake Heights Rd. Lake Heights 2502. or email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 3871

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	few	06/8	Werri Beach	dune grassland	MR
Hardhead	40	27/6	Coomaditchy Lagoon	wetland	SP
Striated Heron	1	27/6	Kully Bay	lake shore	SP
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	09/8	Berry	wetland	CP
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	23/7	Calderwood	wetland	DG
Grey Goshawk	1	08/8	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	06/8	F6/Allans Creek	perched	CJC
Little Eagle	1	30/7	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Peregrine Falcon	2	08/7	Barren Grounds	overhead	JM
Peregrine Falcon	1	30/7	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Lewin's Rail	1	12/5	Comerong Is.	not recorded	BV
Painted Button-quail	1	28/4	East Berry	garden	BV
Marsh Sandpiper	1	26/7	Tallawarra	wetland	DG
Pied Oystercatcher	12	09/8	Comerong Island	sandflats	CJC
Double-banded Plover	65	01/8	Windang	sand flats	CJC
Double-banded Plover	150+	09/8	Comerong Island	sandflats	CJC
Black-fronted Dotterel	7	26/7	Tallawarra	wetland	DG
Red-kneed Dotterel	3	27/6	Hooka Point	lake shore	SP
White-fronted Tern	6	01/8	Windang	sand flats	CJC
White-fronted Tern	40+	07/8	MM Beach	rocky shore	CJC
White-fronted Tern	2	09/8	Werri Beach	rocky shore	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	20	30/6	Woonona	garden	KM
White-headed Pigeon	7	08/8	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Crested Pigeon	18	02/6	Nr Shoalhaven Heads	rural	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	6	11/5	East Berry	overhead	BV
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	14/8	Mittagong	not recorded	LM
Swift Parrot	6	31/7	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Ground Parrot	3	08/7	Barren Grounds (Fox trig)	heath	JM
Powerful Owl	1	17/4	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Barn Owl	1	10/8	Toolijooa	road verge	CP
Azure Kingfisher	1	23/7	Calderwood	riparian	DG
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	31/7	Deans Gap w of Nowra	forest	KM
Spotted Quail-thrush	2	29/7	Warragamba Dam	forest	CJC
Crested Shrike-tit	2	04/8	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Figbird	3	01/8	Lake Heights	figtree	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	June	East Berry	rural/woodland	BV
Grey Currawong	1	15/7	F6, Bulli Tops	overhead	KM
White-winged Chough	6	19/6	East Berry	road verge	BV
Green Catbird	2	09/8	Thirroul	garden	MM
Bassian Thrush	2	27/7	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM

CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; JM - Janet Mayer; LM - Larry Melican; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphet; SP - Steve Poppel; CP - Chris Presland; MR - Mark Robinson; BV - Barry Virtue

Comment: An interesting spread of records for this usually quite period of the year. Quite a few White-fronted Terns along the coast this year and the largest numbers of Double-banded Plover at Windang I know of in the 20 years I've been observing. White-wing Chough have slowly been advancing up the Illawarra coast since they crossed the Shoalhaven two years ago. 20 White-headed Pigeons in a single yard is also a good congregation of a formerly scarce pigeon. The Marsh Sandpiper is the first local winter record for this scarce visitor to our region.



I.B.O.C. News

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.

Club Motto: "One Good Tern Deserves Another"

Issue No. 214

November 1998

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THE CLUB'S AIM IS TO JOIN TOGETHER PEOPLE WITH A COMMON INTEREST WHO WISH TO FURTHER THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE BIRDLIFE AROUND THEM

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

☺☺☺☺ COMING EVENTS ☺☺☺☺

NEXT MEETING : will be held on **Monday, 9th November 1998**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** The **Annual General Meeting** will be held, with all positions being declared vacant.

Due to unforeseen circumstances please note that our Guest Speaker has been changed. Hopefully Chris Brandis and Darryl Goldrick will be able to address us at a later date. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will now be **Richard Major** speaking on "Life on the edge: the ecology of birds in the New South Wales wheatbelt". Richard is a research scientist at the Australian Museum who works on biodiversity in the Museum's Terrestrial Ecology section. He has two main research interests- the breeding ecology of birds and the effect of habitat fragmentation on animal populations and communities. In addition to his research work, Richard's work at the Museum includes writing critical reviews of biodiversity and environmental policy, legislation, management plans and impact assessments. He also contributes to the production of public programs including exhibitions, documentaries, media interviews and community-based research projects. In this talk, Richard will give an overview of the Australian Museum's research on the ecology of birds in Central Western N.S.W., paying particular attention to the Red-capped Robin.

NEXT OUTING : will be on **Sunday 15th November** to the Meryla State Forest, near Fitzroy Falls. We will enter from Redhills Road and then walk to Gun Rock Creek, with the total distance being about 5.7 km. Please meet at the Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre at **8.30 am**. Our leader for this walk will be fellow member **Siggy Freund**, who has been kind enough to search out this new walk for us including a beautiful little waterfall for our lunch spot. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 17th November, at the house of **Kerri Lewis** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

December Meeting: Polish the vocal chords, flex the fingers and activate the memory cells!! That special occasion - the I.B.O.C. Christmas meeting - is fast approaching and **all** members are invited to have a go at entertaining (or embarrassing) other club members. Please contact Brian or Barbara if you can participate in any way.

The deadline for articles for the December newsletter is 24th November.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

When it came to put pen to paper to write up Trevor Quested's presentation on his Ecuador trip, I quickly realised my limited journalistic capabilities in recapturing the magic of Trevor's talk which was punctuated with repeated anecdotes and witty expressions which kept members thoroughly entertained. Nonetheless I shall attempt to capture the essence of his talk.

Ecuador is smaller than NSW and has 1400 species of birds which Trevor claimed were difficult to photograph in the dense rainforest regions. During his six week tour he managed to identify no less than 700 species --that's almost the total no. of species in Australia and its territories !!!!

Following an expensive air flight (\$3500 return), the rest of the trip was relatively cheap (petrol 15 cents/litre, accommodation \$5. / night). Eucalypts are common in South America and homes are usually shanty-like. Bird watching usually commenced at 4.30 am if one was to get the maximum out of the day when trekking through difficult terrain.

Slides of the White-throated Screech Owl and the Lyretail Nightjar were fabulous. The problems of worldwide native vegetation clearing were also evident as much of the Andes has been extensively cleared. Consequently many of the birds are site specific and the noisy, roaring flows in the rivers make birding by sounds very difficult.

There were some great slides of Tanagers and Jacamars (rainforest bee-eaters) and the Black-cheeked Woodpecker. Woodpeckers are not easy to identify given the wide range of species. The rainforests are abundant in butterflies and make spectacular showings. Amazonian parrots are big, though not as large as Macaws, and are noisy in flight which makes them easy to see as they move through the forest canopy.

The Hummingbirds are plentiful and their whirring wingbeats are spectacular- they are however, difficult to identify. Lizards are plentiful, though snakes are few. Tanagers frequent tops of trees while the highly coloured Jays often scout ahead feeding flocks of many species. This phenomenon can be particularly useful when birding- you just sit and wait for the successive waves of species to come in!

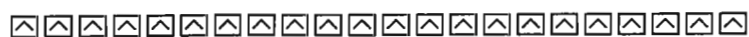
More great pictures of Toucans/Toucanettes, Scaled Fruiteater, Social Flycatcher, Swallowtail Kite, Puffbird, Saffron Finches and Peruvian Meadowlark. The Bluetailed Trogon with its red breast and green back was spectacular.

Trevor's occasional forest encounters with other 'birdos' were often punctuated with " I know you - you' Trevor Quested !!!! " It just goes to prove what a small world we live in and it doesn't matter how far you travel even to the remotest parts, the past is always likely to catch up with you! (just ask Christopher Skase!!!!)

As Trevor quite rightly stated while 'ticking or twitching' is one thing.....it's not only the bird, it's the show that goes with it that really counts. This aspect brings a special touch of magic and wonder to birding.

Thanks Trevor for a fabulously entertaining evening---please come back soon.

Darryl Goldrick



ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE

The answers in order are - owl, fantail, puffin, swallow, dove, crane, swan, raven, heron, galah, myna, ostrich, albatross, rook, coot and emu.

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY OUTING

Georges River Nature Reserve - Freres Crossing and the Woolwash near Campbelltown

On Saturday 19th September, 11 members of I.B.O.C. met at Woodlands Road, Bradbury at 8.30 a.m. The weather was sunny, clear and calm but the wind sprang up through the morning. Fortunately we were protected in the low areas.

We drove through a maze of roads to get there, with Jack Hyslop as our leader. Although “baffelled” a couple of times trying to find the road down to the car park, we arrived safely about 9.00 a.m. at the head of the track to the “Woolwash”, our destination. When we got there it didn’t look like a very good birding spot but one can’t always judge what the birds prefer! The area along the track was dry Sclerophyll – Ironbark and Turpentine were among the many Eucalypts, Wattle and Casurinas all struggling to survive in the rocky and harsh conditions.

Along the track, from the top down to the river, we observed the Red-rumped Parrot, Australian Raven, Grey Butcherbird, White-throated Gerygone, Fantailed Cuckoo (which took a while to see, although it had been heard for some time), Laughing Kookaburra, Olive-backed Oriole and Spotted Pardolote. The track from the car park becomes steep after about 50m and winds down the hillside, taking a hair-pin bend before following parallel to the river for about 300m. It is a very pretty sight, with plenty of water in the river, and the views of the opposite side of the valley show very steep slopes, fully vegetated with beautiful trees. On the last part of the walk we recorded Rockwarbler, Eastern Yellow Robin and Crimson Rosella.

After a quick stop for a cup of tea, we returned to the cars by the same track and were upset to find that Jack’s car had been broken into, with his haversack and its contents taken.

We moved onto Freres Crossing, arriving about 11.15 a.m. at the car park, and set off along a similar track as the Woolwash . It was another steep walk into the valley, along a track overlooking the Georges River all the way down. It, too, is a beautiful area with many Eucalypts, including Angophora, Wattle, Gynea Lily (some with their tall flower heads standing out brightly against the surrounding green) and *Aotus villosa* , a bright yellow pea flower, all decorating the bushland.

As the day wore on, the temperature rose and became quite hot by the afternoon. The birds seemed not so prolific, but we did record the Little Wattlebird, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, White-throated Treecreeper, White-browed Scrubwren, Eastern Spinebill, Brown Thornbill and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike.

We had lunch sitting in the shade, on the rocks along the river bank. It was a very restful place, with the river swiftly flowing by the old “rustic bridge”. The only part left of the bridge were the wooden pylons which supported it in days gone by. The track ends at the river as the opposite side is Military territory and is not open to the public.

We returned to our cars back up the steep track, completing the day with a total of 39 species.

Horrie Ward

SPECIES LIST FOR GEORGES RIVER NATURE RESERVE

Pacific Black Duck	Rockwarbler	Golden Whistler
White-faced Heron	White-browed Scrubwren	Rufous Whistler
Spotted Turtle Dove	White-throated Gerygone	Grey Shrike-thrush
Crested Pigeon	Brown Thornbill	Magpie-Lark
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Striated Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Rainbow Lorikeet	Red Wattlebird	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Crimson Rosella	Little Wattlebird	Olive-backed Oriole
Eastern Rosella	Noisy Friarbird	Grey Butcherbird

Red-rumped Parrot	Noisy Miner	Australian Magpie
Fantailed Cuckoo	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Laughing Kookaburra	New Holland Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Eastern Spinebill	White-throated Treecreeper	Common Starling
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin	Common Myna



OCTOBER CAMP, FOSTERTON, DUNGOG

The preliminary camp survey had chosen a flat grassy site on the banks of a beautifully flowing creek, a tributary of the Williams river, in the Fosterton Valley. The property, 'MUDDENYERI', is owned by Wendy Grahame, a dear friend of Alan and Kerri Lewis. Wendy had recently had the area slashed which made camping very pleasant and the large Ironwood trees, which lined the creek, provided lovely cool shade on the first very hot days of the camp. The children all really enjoyed swimming in the swimming holes located at the junction of the creek with the Williams River.

Birds enjoyed the campsite as much as I.B.O.C. campers. Every morning the sounds of birds filled the air. Superb and Varigated Fairy-wrens were everywhere. Lewin's, New Holland, White-cheeked and the brilliant Scarlet Honeyeaters enjoyed the flowers on the *Callistemons*. The Noisy Friarbirds were constantly calling during the mornings as well as the beautiful call of the Grey Shrike-thrush.

Most of the campers arrived late Friday and Saturday so the first organised outing was up to Wendy's mud-brick house and her gardens on Saturday afternoon, to enjoy the birds and the beautiful sunsets that occurred over the week.

The first organised walk was at 7.00am Sunday morning up Muddenyeri Hill located opposite Wendy's home. As we approached the gate, about 15 to 20 Sulphur-crested Cockatoos flew overhead. The paddock was cleared for grazing but there were several groups of trees which provided good homes for several species of birds, including Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Dollar-bird, Lapwing Plover, White-faced Lewin's and Scarlet Honeyeaters. Eastern and Crimson Rosellas were spotted flying overhead.

About 300m into the paddock, a dam had been located providing a good area for several Black Ducks and White-faced Herons. As we proceeded towards the more wooded hill, Australian Magpie and Laughing Kookaburra were spotted, as well as Willy Wagtail, Rufous Whistler and Yellow Thornbill. A Golden Bronze Cuckoo and Noisy Friarbird were heard.

As we walked up the hill along a track, several Red-browed Firetails were spotted feeding on the ground. Several different calls were heard – Galahs, Grey Fantails, Yellow Robin, Jacky Winter, Golden Whistler, Grey Butcherbird and Grey Shrike-thrush. These were actually sighted at different stages of the walk.

About a third of the way up the Hill, the track disappeared and a bit of "bush-bashing" of lantana was necessary to cut a path horizontally towards a neighbour's paddock for easier walking. Again many birds were heard, such as White-throated Gerygone, Wattlebird, White-throated Treecreeper, Pied Currawong and Spotted Pardalote.

Once we reached the clearing, the slope became quite steep and about half-way up, we stopped for a well earned rest. Below us, a magnificent view of a farming community was observed. Several White-winged Choughs were spotted below in the paddocks. Some members had the good fortune to observe a Spotted Pardalote deliver nesting material to its burrow near in the bank below our track. Much to our delight, a Sacred Kingfisher was spotted in the trees, posing for several pictures before flying off.

We continued climbing, spotting a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Pied Butcherbird and Satin Bowerbird. Once at the top, we crossed back onto Wendy's property, where the walking was reasonably flat. It was lovely to see a large patch of native Donkey Orchids out in flower, as well as several species of *Dampiera* and the classic "Eggs-and-Bacon" plant. It was now about 9.00 a.m and time to return to the camp.

On the way back, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Striated Thornbill, Channel-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Spinebill, Superb Fairy-wren and Australian Raven were also spotted.

Near the campsite, a Forest Kingfisher was spotted sitting on a telegraph pole.

That evening, Wendy invited us to enjoy a bonfire and we were all delighted by the Fireworks display provided by Alan Lewis. We all appreciated the time shared with us by Wendy and her family.

Next morning, we headed off in convoy along Fosterton Road to join Main Creek Road and then onto the Telegherry Forest Drive – a scenic 80km drive through State Forests and Chichester Dam. On the way Pacific Heron, Coot, Black Duck, Little Pied Cormorant, Moorhen and Crested Pigeons were spotted.

The road into Telegherry Forest is mainly gravel and the forest vegetation changes from predominately tall Eucalypts to sub-tropical rainforests, including huge Cabbage Tree Palms. The first stop was at Frying Pan Creek, a very popular camping ground, on the banks of the Telegherry River. Here we went on a 2km walking trail to Problem Creek Falls, which starts at the downstream end of the camping area. Satin Bowerbird, Currawong and Crimson Rosella were sighted in the camping ground. Along the walk many birds were heard – Lewin’s Honeyeater, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Whipbird, Yellow Robin, Scarlet Honeyeater, Warbler, Eastern Spinebill, Grey Shrike-thrush and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. Most walkers were amazed at the size of one leech, about 6 inches! We were fortunate to sight many birds including Golden Whistler (both male and female), Brown Gerygone, Grey Fantail, Rufous Fantail and Superb Fairy-wren.

On our return, we had morning tea and then headed along Middle Road to Telegherry Forest Park. Although we only had a brief stop, a Black-faced Monarch and its nest were added to our morning list.

A short drive to JerusalemCreek Forest Park, our lunch spot, revealed nice falls, tree stumps with board holes from the historic logging days and a few uninvited guests – namely ticks and leeches! A male Satin Bowerbird and Pied Currawong were happy to join us for lunch too!

After lunch, we continued on to Chichester Dam, where a lone Pelican appeared to be enjoying the Dam all by itself. At the car park, Currawong, Kookaburras, Magpie, Welcome Swallow and Lewin’s Honeyeater as well as Azure Kingfisher were observed near the creek. Several of the group walked up the hill to the Dam, which can hold 5000 million gallons at a greatest depth of 121 feet (sorry, no metric measures). At the base of the spillway, a pair of Water Dragons were sunning themselves and what appeared to be a dead kangaroo. A White-faced Heron was also sighted at the base. On the way back to the car park we followed a walking track next to the spillway and saw Brown Gerygone, Red-browed Firetail, Black-faced Monarch, Eastern Whipbird and Brown Pigeon. Back at the car park we had afternoon tea, being entertained by Alan trying to hand feed a Pied Currawong with his apple and Audrey finding a large Black Snake in the Ladies toilet.

We returned via Dungog township and saw a flock of White-headed Pigeons perched on overhead wires just out of town. Unfortunately Starlings and Indian Miners also were common in the town.

That night around the campfire Chris Chafer went through our list of birds found within one kilometre of “Muddenyeri” and we were very impressed to hear that over 80 species had been found.

Unfortunately I had to leave for work commitments on Wednesday but I can truly say I had a wonderful few days at “Muddenyeri”.....to be cont’d, December IBOC News

Kerri Lewis



Barren Grounds is in need of a new I.B.O.C. representative. A big THANK YOU to Sue Proust for all her efforts in this position.

Unusual Records October 1998 Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: 69 Lake Heights Rd. Lake Heights 2502. or email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 3871

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	many	Sept	Burraborang Valley	open woodland	MRu
Brush Turkey	3	16/8	Mt. Pleasant	rainforest	WE
Brush Turkey	1	Sept	Bulli	garden	RT
Black-bellied Storm Petrel	2	26/9	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Reef Egret	1	11/10	Gerringong	rocky shore	MRo
Striated Heron	1	19/9	Wollamai Point (Lake)	rocky shore	CJC
Glossy Ibis	1	27/9	Dunmore	paddock	CJC
Banded Land Rail	1	14/9	Berry East	rural	BV
Spotted Harrier	1	24/9	below Crooks Nose	rural	RB
Brown Goshawk	1	11/10	Albion Park	urban	PF
Brown Goshawk	1	19/10	Lake Heights	urban	CJC
Brown Goshawk	1	19/10	Toolijooa	rural	CP
Grey Goshawk	1	6/9	Curramore	overhead	KM
Collared Sparrowhawk	2nest	Sept	Cordeaux Dam	forest	CJC
Little Eagle	1	26/8	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Great Knot	8	22/10	Windang	sand flats	DG
Sooty Oystercatcher	10	20/9	Coledale	rocky shore	GB
Common Tern	1	4/9	Comerong Island	sand flats	DW
White-headed Pigeon	3	26/9	Kieraville	urban	ME
White-headed Pigeon	8	28/9	Mt. Pleasant	forest	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	2	2/10	upper Cataract River	forest	CJC
Emerald Dove	1	14/9	Curramore	rural	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	19/9	Berrara	forest	KM
Long-billed Corella	2	2/8	Thirroul	urban	RM
Long-billed Corella	10	31/8	Wilton	rural	CJC
Rainbow Lorikeet	2	29/9	Bulli Tops	forest	CJC
Little Lorikeet	few	22/8	Nowra	urban	SE
Sooty Owl	1	8/9	Yalwal	in cave	BV
Common Koel	1	9/10	Kieraville	urban	ME
Common Koel	1	14/10	Albion Park	urban	CP
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	8/9	Balgownie	urban	PH
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	13/9	Mt. Ousley	urban	GR
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	19/10	Cordeaux Dam	woodland	CJC
Channel-billed Cuckoo	6	21/10	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Rainbow Bee-eater	2	7/10	Menangle Weir	riparian	CJC
Large-billed Scrubwren	1	25/9	Toolijooa	forest	CP
White-plumed Honeyeater	6	18/10	North Wollongong	urban	DG
Brown-headed Honeyeater	few	16/9	South Nowra	forest	KM
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	22/8	Nowra	urban	SE
Satin Flycatcher	1	19/9	Kangaroo R/Nuggents Ck.	riparian	MRo
Satin Flycatcher	1	21/10	Bulli	garden	RT
Spangled Drongo	1	4/9	Comerong Island	sand flats	DW
Figbird	2	8/9	Thirroul	urban	IM
Figbird	1	26/9	Coledale	urban	GB
Figbird	1	29/9	Windang	urban	GB
Figbird	6	18/10	North Wollongong	urban	DG
Figbird	1	Oct	Toolijooa	rural	per CP
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	9	20/8	Keiraville	urban	EG
Grey Currawong	2	4 Sept	Cordeaux Colliery Rd.	roadside	CJC
Diamond Firetail	1	4/9	Comerong Island	rural	DW
Bassian Thrush	1	24/9	Toolijooa	forest	CP

GB - Graham Barwell; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; Mary Eskdale; SE - Sheila Emery; WE - Wal Emery; PF - Peter Fackender; EG - Esme Gay; DG - Daryl Goldrick; PH - Pam Hazelwood; KM - Kevin Mills; IM - Ian McKinlay; RM - Rebecca McKinlay; TP - Tony Palliser; CP - Chris Presland; GR - Gwen Robinson; MRo - Mark Robinson; MRu - Michelle Rutkakis; RT - Roger Truscott; BV - Barry Virtue; DW - Diana Wright.

Comment: The 9 BFCs at a single site is very unusual, Emu are common along the eastern Burraborang Valley, the Diamond Fire-tail at Comerong had nesting material. Thanks for all the records. Does anyone know about an alleged Wompoo Fruit-Dove at Mount Kiera or Kembla? If you do, please give me a ring on the above number.

I.B.O.C. News



THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.

Club Motto: "One Good Tern Deserves Another"

Issue No. 215

December 1998

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THE CLUB'S AIM IS TO JOIN TOGETHER PEOPLE WITH A COMMON INTEREST WHO WISH TO FURTHER THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE BIRDLIFE AROUND THEM

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$20 SINGLE \$15 JUNIOR \$5

☺☺☺☺ **COMING EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

NEXT MEETING: will be held on **Monday, 14th December 1998**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway**, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** This will be our very informal Christmas meeting and members are asked to participate in the programme, especially in the fashion parade, so dig out those bird T-shirts or clothing to be in the running for those special prizes. If you would like to sing, dance, recite, act or entertain your fellow members in any way contact The Hales for a place in the programme, all offerings gratefully received, so please put on your thinking caps. Please bring a plate of supper to share afterwards and also bring your cup or mug.

I gave those IBOCs good birding in '98!
What can I bring them for '99?



Season's Greetings

NEXT OUTING : includes our Christmas Barbecue and it will take place at **Barren Grounds Reserve on Saturday 12th December.** Please meet in the car park past the visitors centre at **3.00 p.m.** There will be a short walk before we gather back at the visitors centre for the evening barbecue. Please bring all your eats and drinks. There will be a gas barbeque operating, unless fire restrictions state otherwise, and you may bring a small gas barbecue if you wish. No wood fires will be allowed. After dark there will be a chance for spotlighting (bring a torch) and/or a slide show. This will be an easy going afternoon, so come along and enjoy a social time with your birdo friends.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS OUTING TAKES PLACE BEFORE THE DECEMBER MEETING.

Next Committee Meeting : This will be held on Tuesday 19th January 1999, at the house of **Kevin and Fae McGregor** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

Subscriptions are now due : Please pay promptly as it saves committee members a lot of extra work. An update of the members list will be available from March from any committee member. **(Please make sure all subscriptions are paid for by March).**

The deadline for articles for the February newsletter is 25th January.

1998 Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held at the November meeting and Kevin McGregor declared all the office bearing positions vacant and called for nominations for the positions of : -

President : - Kevin McGregor

Vice President : - no nominations were received

Secretary : - Darryl Goldrick

Treasurer : - Bronwyn Wilson

Committee members : - Bruce O'Brien, Peg McKinlay, Esme Gay and Kerri Lewis

Kevin McGregor expressed a vote of thanks to the out going President Brian Hales and his wife Barbara for all the hard work carried out over the past ten years as President.

APOLOGY

Your Editor humbly apologies for any misnaming of birds in the November newsletter. I welcome members' comments and will try to be more vigilant in the future. I am learning more all the time.

NOVEMBER MEETING

The theme of the last meeting was "Life on the edge : the ecology of birds in the NSW wheat belt." Our guest speaker was Richard Major, a research scientist attached to the Australian Museum. Richard's two main areas of research focus on bird breeding ecology and the effects of habitat fragmentation on animal populations and communities.

Richard's opening slides of a typical western wheat belt scene would have been very familiar to those members who have visited these pastoral areas of N.S.W. The typical sweeping fields of wheat, oats, barley and canola (formerly called rape) with isolated patches of remnant vegetation would naturally evoke pleasant feelings if you were anyone other than an ecologist.

The widespread and intense clearing of our native vegetation since European settlement has reflected the ineffectiveness of government (both State and Federal) to recognise the importance of this natural resource and to direct contribution to sustaining flora and fauna biodiversity values in allowing unregulated land clearing to occur. More recent legislation under the Native Vegetation Conservation Act is an attempt (albeit in many cases much too late) to place stringent controls on vegetation clearing including our remnant grasslands.

Whilst there has been attempts to retain isolated patches and clusters of remnant vegetation, there has been serious doubt about their true ecological value. Bird and fauna populations tend to become isolated as they are reluctant to move across the open unprotected fields of cereal crops to adjoining clusters.

There has been a belief that linking these remnant clusters with corridors such as road reserves would be the saviour in providing migratory paths. Linear corridors have been found to be greatly affected by the 'edge' effect and in some cases exposing some species to even greater threats such as foxes, exposure to herbicide/pesticide chemical use (used in weed control etc. in cereal and crop production). Too often these corridors have been too narrow to develop complete ecosystems to support other fauna and avian populations.

Richard provided the results of a survey conducted in the Central West area (north of West Wyalong) to evaluate linear corridors between State Forest reserves using the Red-capped Robin as the test agent. Some of the more interesting findings were as follows :

- 1) nest predation is greatest at the edges of corridors;
- 2) predation of nests were twice as high on corridors compared to the state forests;
- 3) the main predators were Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Butcherbird, Australian Raven, Pied Butcherbird and Pied Currawong;
- 4) Rose-capped Robin were not detected in roadside corridors which were less than 50m wide;
- 5) survival rates of males were in the order of 30%;
- 6) there was no difference in the survival rates of birds in forests compared to corridors;
- 7) in their first year males, while retaining the female plumage, were still sexually active.

Richard provided a word of warning - under the current landcare/bushcare funding programs, considerable sums of money is being allocated to groups for revegetation of "corridors". This philosophy needs serious reconsideration given recent research. While there is ecological value to improving the cluster type woodland systems along riparian corridors(i.e. watercourses),convincing private landowners is an ongoing challenge.

Darryl Goldrick

NOVEMBER MONTHLY OUTING, MERYLA STATE FOREST.

On Sunday 15th November, 13 bird enthusiasts (the youngest birdwatcher not quite as enthusiastic as the other 12) met in the car park at the Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre at 8.30 am. The Citroen Car Club happened to be meeting at the same location for a social outing and members politely accepted comments about the mental health of those who would spend a Sunday looking for birds.

Car-pooling was required, as parking near the beginning of the walk was very restricted. Not wanting to clutter up the Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre car park with our vehicles, it was decided to clutter up the roadway outside the home of Siggy and Lilo Freund who live only a short distance from the Visitors Centre. We then traveled 7 km to the start of our walk. A car shuffle was required - so before commencing our walk Siggy's Pajero was driven to the end of the walk (via a different route to the actual walk).

While waiting for Barbara and Siggy to return from the car shuffle, the rest of the group started to birdwatch. The bush was rather quiet, but we could hear Grey Fantails and Crimson Rosellas. When Barbara and Siggy returned, we commenced the walk - within a few minutes we saw the Brown Thornbill, Red Wattlebird and male Rufous Whistler. After ensuring that most members obtained a good view of the Rufous Whistler we continued on. Within 15 minutes the bush came alive with birdcalls. A male Flame Robin flew directly down the track, swerved somewhat and then landed on a fence post and posed before darting off. Other sightings of this beautiful bird were made in the vicinity. In this same area we saw Striated Pardalotes. Some members were fortunate enough to see a Striated Pardalote fly in and out of the nest (the Striated Pardalote nests in a small hole high up in the trunk of a tree - quite different to the Spotted Pardalote that builds a nest in an earth bank).

Barbara made one of the best "finds of the day" - spotting a nest which we initially thought belonged to a robin. However after careful observation of the birds flying onto the nest and much consultation with field guides the nest was identified as belonging to the Satin Flycatcher - both male and female spotted on the nest. Leaden Flycatchers were also seen around the nest. Considerable time was spent in this area rich in bird life. Also spotted in this area was the Crested Shrike-tit.

After democratic decision making processes, we stopped for morning tea at 10:32:00 am - the bush had quietened down at this time. After morning tea we continued along the track and reached Gun Rock Creek and the waterfall (our lunch destination spot) at about 11:30. As we approached the cliff line to get a view of the falls, Betty pointed out a small group of delicate Flying Duck Orchids, which would have otherwise gone unnoticed. Siggy invited members to join him for a "side trip" through the bush for a better view of the waterfall - only Kevin took up the offer while the rest of us sat next to the creek to eat lunch. A couple of Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos landed in trees near the edge of the creek - but this sighting was far surpassed by the sighting that Kevin and Siggy were able to get from the cliff line. They were able to watch the Yellow-tailed from above and could see the marking in the wing and tail feathers.

After lunch we continued along the track, spotting the White-throated Treecreeper, the Grey Shrike-thrush, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, New Holland Honeyeater, White-eared Honeyeater and White-cheeked Honeyeater. A wonderful sighting of the day was a family

of Scarlet Robins (mum, dad and junior) - it took most of us a while to locate the well camouflaged juvenile bird "in the fork of that tree"!

Nearing the end of walk we could hear the piercing call of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo. When the bird was located, it was found to be exceptionally (and uncommonly) very high in a large tree above the track. In this same region, a metallic whistler call instigated discussion regarding identification- some members felt that the call resembled a Golden Whistler, but sighting revealed a Rufous Whistler. (Was the Rufous mimicking the Golden? or had the birds in this region not read any of the bird books).

Our walk ended at a track junction (which leads to Meryla Pass). Drivers were bundled into Siggy's Pajero, and driven back to the start of the walk. The drivers then bravely travelled along the four-wheel drive track to collect the weary birdwatchers.

A fabulous day, for both bird sightings and weather. Thank you Siggy for introducing us to a beautiful area.

Roslyn Atkins

Species list for walk:

Grey Shrike-thrush	Eastern Whipbird	Red Wattlebird
Australian Raven	Grey Fantail	White-throated Treecreeper
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Flame Robin	Wonga Pigeon
Superb Fairy-wren	White-throated Gerygone	Rufous Whistler
Crested Shrike-tit	Rufous Fantail	Grey Fantail
Eastern Spinebill	New Holland Honeyeater	Laughing Kookaburra
Leaden Flycatcher	Satin Flycatcher	Striated Pardalote
Yellow Thornbill	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Pied Currawong	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Crimson Rosella	Gang-gang Cockatoo	Noisy Friarbird
White-eared Honeyeater	Scarlet Robin	White-cheeked Honeyeater

OCTOBER CAMP AT "MUDDENYERI"continued

A convoy of 7 vehicles set out for an exciting day to Mt. Allyn on Tuesday morning. Though there was a slight breeze in camp we were not to know the extent of the wind up in the mountain until we found debris all over the road and large trees fallen. One tree across the road posed no problem for this convoy as all hands broke, pushed and shoved enough of the branches out of the way to allow safe passage. The next emergency stop was to view a cute baby echidna as it crossed the road. Morning tea was enjoyed after a long drive at the entry to the Beech Forest. The wind was whistling through the tops of these ancient trees as we made our way through the Burranga Swamp. Wal pointed out the wonderful Beech and Orange Blossom native orchids growing and flowering on the huge trees. The tree ferns and the moss-covered logs gave the forest a fresh coolness. As we prepared to exit the forest we were astounded to witness one of the large Beech trees "breathing". It's huge gnarled roots were lifting 9-10 inches (sorry but I'm an old fashioned scribe) (23-25cm, New Age Ed!). Whilst it was interesting we didn't tarry too long as the results could have been disastrous. Back on the road we headed for our lunch stop only to have our path once more blocked by a freshly fallen tree. This time our "team" could not clear the road so we had to back off and find another spot. The proposed 7km walk down the Williams River was cancelled due to the increasing winds and threatening dark clouds.

Devonshire tea in the cosiness of the 1930 Barrington House and walks down to the river was a nice alternative. By the time we headed back to camp the rain had arrived. Birds seen during the day included Superb Fairy-wren, Crimson Rosella, Satin Bowerbird, Grey Fantail, Rufous Fantail, Black-faced Monarch, Spectacled Monarch, Crested Shrike-tit, Golden Whistler, Willy Wagtail, Eastern Superb, Yellow Robin, Rose Robin, Australian Brush-turkey, Lewin's Honeyeater, White-browed Scrub-wren, Fantailed Cuckoo, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Grey Thrush, Black Swan and a Tawny Frogmouth.

Wednesday was a rest day after 2 days away from camp. Some rested, chatted and slept while others did walks on the property. The Hales introduced Boule and the competition was contested with enthusiasm in the afternoon. That night we put on our "going to town gear" for a lovely meal at the Dungog RSL Club.

On Thursday the Williams River walk that had cancelled on Tuesday was enjoyed by some of the group while others did local walks. Birds seen on the river walk included: Lyrebird, Eastern Superb, Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, Spotted Pardalote, Eastern Whip bird, Wonga Pigeon, Grey Fantail, Brown Thornbill, Grey Shrike-thrush, Green Catbird, Brown Gerygone, Fantailed Cuckoo, Noisy Pitta, Large-billed Scrubwren, Rufous Fantail, Australian Brush-turkey, Spectacled Monarch, White-browed Scrubwren, Pale-yellow Robin, Black-faced Monarch, Logrunner, Sacred Kingfisher, Yellow-throated Scrubwren, Satin Bowerbird, Crimson Rosella, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, King Parrot, Laughing Kookaburra, Brush Cuckoo, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo and Bassian Thrush. There was a cooler change that night so the warmth of the campfire was appreciated.

Friday was us up early to drive the 15mins. to meet Vicky Lloyd on her property "Carawirry Wildlife Refuge" at 7am. The property is situated on the foothills of the Barrington Range. Brian Pearce from the adjoining property was there to welcome us with Vicky. It was a good day for walking, fine but not too hot. The walk took us up hill and down dale, through forests and along the creek, to a waterfall where we sat to draw breath. Then Brian took up "bush bashing" on his property. It was a most interesting walk and we saw Yellow Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Scarlet Honeyeater, Eastern Whipbird, King Parrot, White-browed Scrubwren, Striated Pardalote, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Dollarbird, Brown Thornbill, Satin Bowerbird, Golden Whistler, Lewin's Honeyeater and Red-browed Firetail.

We admired the hard work and the changes the Lloyds are making to their property in getting rid of non local plants and weeds as well as doing lots of new plantings. Vicky was a most generous hostess opening her home to us and a enthusiastic guide. On her verandah, over morning tea, we were entertained by a very friendly Satin Bowerbird, Laughing Kookaburra and King Parrot. Back at camp the rain came, changing our plans for a fun filled final evening together.

On Saturday the rain continued on and off, as folk packed up and left. We took Wendy out to dinner to thank her for allowing us the use of her property. It had been a wonderful campsite. The Die Happy Creek supplied us with water and provided a good swimming hole and the trees along its banks gave us welcome shade. We had lots of grassed area to live and play on the great numbers of birds for easy viewing. Good walks on the property added to the attractiveness of the site. So we are grateful to Wendy for all she did to make this camp so memorable. A gift of a nameplate for Wendy's gate reading "Muddenyerri" will be presented to her in the near future.

We had 47 in camp which included 14 children. They were housed in 4 caravans, 2 campervans, a mobile home, 4 tents, 4 tent trailers, 4 were in a Motel in Dungog and 2 in Wendy's caravan. Not all were there at one time.... there was much coming and going.

Thank you all for coming, for your help and participation. Most of all, when we left you would not have known we had been there.... the site was as we had found it.

Over the week we had seen 109 different bird species and had lots of fun.

Fae & Kevin McGregor.

Editor's Note:

In the last days of the October camp IBOC member Jim Robinson saw and identified the Regent Bowerbird within close proximity of the campsite. Owner of the campsite, Wendy Grahame, has observed this species on many occasions.

It would appear from Simpson and Day's RAOU Atlas #684 that this sighting would be close to the southern limit for the Regent Bowerbird.



EDITORS SILHOUETTE

If you would like to win a tasty prize, be the first to correctly identify the bird from the silhouette on the right (hint: often seen hanging around Dungog). You must tell the Editor in person at the next meeting. E-mail, phone calls or singing telegrams don't count.



Unusual Records November 1998 Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: 69 Lake Heights Rd. Lake Heights 2502. or email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 3871

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brush Turkey	1	04/10	Mt. Ousley Rd.	forest	KM
Brush Turkey	1	31/10	Bulli	garden	IM
Brush Turkey	1	14/11	Gwynville	forest	
Australian Shelduck	3	31/10	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
White-chinned Petrel	1	22/11	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Australasian Bittern	1	01/6	Puckies Reserve	wetland	DW
Osprey	1	25/10	Comerong Island	estuary	CJC
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	20/10	Bomaderry	overhead	KM
Peregrine Falcon	1	18/10	Balgownie	urban	AL
Nankeen Kestrel (eating a sparrow)	1	13/10	Bellambi Lagoon	wetland	DT
Lewins Rail	1	09/11	Puckies Reserve	wetland	DW
Lewins Rail	1	07/11	Barren Grounds NR	heathland	RB
Sanderling	1	14/10	East Corrimal	beach	DW
Grey Plover	1	31/10	Comerong Island	sand flats	CJC
Hooded Plover	2	26/10	Cudmirrah	beach	KM
Crested Pigeon	2	20/10	Lake Heights	school yard	KC
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	19/09	East Corrimal	dune forest	DW
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	7	03/10	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Long-billed Corella	10	01/11	Avondale	rural	GB
Superb Parrot	1	11/10	Balgownie	urban	RM
Koel	1	23/11	Dapto	urban	BOB
Channel-billed Cuckoo	12	01/11	Kiama Bends	overhead	CP
Sooty Owl	1	14/11	Jamberoo Pass	rainforest	RJ
Tawny Frogmouth	1	17/10	Mt. Pleasant	urban	DT
Noisy Pitta	1	30/10	Barren Grounds NR	tall forest	JB
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	03/11	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	24/10	Fairy Meadow	garden	HW
Leaden Flycatcher	1	17/10	Excelsior	forest	MM
Satin Flycatcher	1	20/10	East Corrimal	dune forest	DW
Figbird	5	10/10	Kiama	parkland	KM
Bassian Thrush	3	07/10	Rhododendron Park	forest	DT
Bassian Thrush	1	24/10	Tapitalli	forest	KM
Bassian Thrush	1	26/10	Lady Fuller Reserve	forest	MM
Bassian Thrush	2	15/11	Foxground	forest	CJC
Common Blackbird	1	20/10	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Common Blackbird	1	12/10	Thirroul	garden	MM

GB - Graham Barwell; JB - Julian Bielewicz; RB - Raoul Broughton; KC - Kerry Chafer; CJC - Chris Chafer; RJ - Richard Jordan; AL - Alan Lowis; KM - Kevin Mills; IM - Ian McKinlay; MM - Mike Morphet; RM - Robert McKinlay; BOB - Bruce O'Brien; CP - Chris Presland; MRo - Mark Robinson; DT - Dave Thompson; HW - Horace Ward; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Plenty of Brush Turkeys turning up in the last six months, hopefully the fox-baiting program that is now being operated by NPWS and Sydney Water on the escarpment will further assist in helping this species to prosper. The Noisy Pitta is the 4th known record for the Barren Grounds area and sixth record from the Illawarra since 1984. The 12 Channel-billed Cuckoos flying together at Kiama is a most interesting record. What an impressive sight that must have been. A good number of Bassian Thrush records. Blackbirds are now being reported from throughout the coastal plain, these two records are just a sample of the latest records.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this column over the past 12 months, without your continued support this column would not exist. I also wish to thank the couple of members who never fail to inform me when I make an error, constructive criticism is always welcome.

There are now some 20 members who contribute via the internet. For those people I supply an unofficial birding hotline, so when a hot sighting happens, these members get to know about it instantly. If you want to be on the list, just send me your email address to my email address at the top of the page.

See you next year, and keep those records coming in over the Christmas break

Chris Chafer