

# 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. 216 February 1999

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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 3<sup>rd</sup> February, meeting at the eastern end of the pine trees on the northern side of the Lake Illawarra entrance at 5.30 p.m. Here is your chance to brush up on the 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, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1999, at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at 7.30 p.m. Following on from our last guest speaker Richard Major (November 1998), long standing I.B.O.C. member Jack Baker will be presenting "More Birds on the Edge".

This will cover a variety of studies carried out by Jack on both the natural and anthropogenic edges. You can be assured that this will be an interesting night and you will learn many things that you did not know in the past.

**NEXT OUTING** : will be on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February to Abrahams Bosom at Currarong. Meet at 8.30 a.m. at the junction of the Princes Highway and Greenwell Point Road. All cars will then drive to Currarong to commence the walk. Features of the reserve are its beach, natural rock pool, creek and scenic walking tracks. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Next Committee Meeting** : This will be held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February, at the house of Kevin and Fae McGregor starting at 7.30 p.m.

Reminder that Annual Subscription for 1999 is now due. Please save your committee extra work by paying your subscription now.

The deadline for articles for the March newsletter is 22<sup>nd</sup> February.



## DECEMBER MEETING

The traditional Christmas meeting lived up to its usual high standard of joviality and entertainment thanks to the creative minds of Brian and Barbara Hales.

Brian kicked off proceedings with the annual awards and Kerri Lewis was duly rewarded for her overall contribution throughout the year with a special Gold Award. The 'bully' award was this year awarded to the recipient: a consequence of a severe (purely accidental) beating at the hands of El Presidente, we all sympathise for Jessica Chafer. Betty Hudson and Betty Ward were acknowledged for their tireless contribution in preparing the suppers at club meetings. Peter McKinlay was rewarded for his unsurpassed bowling (BOUCCE) skills at the Christmas B.B.Q. at Barren Grounds. A special bravery award was presented to Wal Emery for his leadership at the Dungong camp despite being severely handicapped by back pain - this could be the precedent for establishing the IBOC IRON CROSS FOR VALOUR (just a thought!).

Betty Hudson then delighted the members with two short bird poems.

No expense was spared for the next segment as a special guest of honour to host the Birdo's Wheel of Fortune Quiz, by none other than Adrianna Xanadies, the popular hostess from that infamous T.V. series. I'm sure that no one will ever take Brian seriously again although Tom Wylie will be giving Brian a very wide berth in future (oh what a kiss!- I'm told that Tom has still not washed his forehead).

Kerri Lewis provided us with a very animated rendition of CJ Dennis' poem "The Silvereye" and Fay McGregor's birding version of "The Twelve Days Of Christmas" was extremely imaginative.

The hat-t-shirt competition was again popular and for sheer effort, there was no doubt that Jan Stuart's creation was deserving of first place.

Barbara and Brians cryptic bird quiz proved to be more challenging this year as the traditional exponents (Joan and Bill Zealey) were unplaced. Low scores indicated the degree of difficulty with Alan Lewis declared the eventual winner closely followed by Chris Chafer and Betty Hudson. Russel Hales and his musical friends (Rod and Nathan) again provided us with a great musical interlude including the ever popular Beatles song "I saw her standing there"- great stuff boys, we look forward to next years segment.

Before adjourning for supper, incoming President Kevin presented Brian with an inscribed clock and stand for his outstanding contribution to the club in his ten years of presidency. This award was received and accompanied by generous and spontaneous acclamation from club members.

Darryl Goldrick



### News from a Friend

"I will sign off now as I'm going to The Gambia in a couple of days and I have to pack. I can't wait to get my hands on those Palearctic species, which winter in Africa. One of the most interesting aspects of the expedition has been the frequency with which some winter visitors are retrapped year after year. Some of these birds, Olivaceous and Subalpine Warblers in particular, are being trapped not just at the same site, but in the same net! It really does show how important a locality can be for certain species - Africa is a very large place, but these birds are returning to winter in the same bush. Aren't birds amazing things?"

Barbara Hales



## SPOTLIGHTING at BARREN GROUNDS

### *A postscript to Horrie Ward's report on the December 12th outing*

After the slide show, I stayed on to join Raoul, the warden, and a small party to go for an hour and a half's spotlighting, starting off about 9 pm and heading down Jamberoo Pass Road for a kilometre or so, with only a few passing vehicles to disturb our mission.

At first it seemed the tree canopies were alive with moving and masticating animals, but these continual noises, we discovered, stemmed from bark peeling off trunks and branches. Whenever the occasional gust of wind blew through, leaves and fragments and shreds of bark came floating down, as the former English comedian, Tommy Cooper might well have described it: "Just like that: flutter, flutter". It was a strange phenomenon, possibly brought about by the cooling down of the night temperature after the sudden, extreme heat of the day, which has been a rare event this past spring and summer to date.

Moths and mosquitoes were as plentiful as butterflies, notably the sword-grass browns, had been during the club's afternoon walk. Birds caught in the spotlight were a sleeping, fluffed-up female golden whistler and, high up, a vocal boobook. Some distance away down the slope a tawny frogmouth oom-oomed. Mammals sighted were two species of petaurids. Positioned near a hole at the end of a broken-off branch was a ringtail possum. At the end of our walk we came across three greater gliders in dark phase and distinguishable by their lengthy lemur-like tails. A real bonus as, according to the *Australian Museum Complete Book of Australian Mammals 1988*, they are essentially solitary. Very high up, they shifted only a little during our viewing, so we were denied a glide, which, the book adds, can be up to a distance of 100 metres.

At this point Raoul led us just a short way up a creek for another highlight: glow-worms. In the very shallow water lurked yabbies of various sizes (one of the party knew them only as marrons) and on the surface scudded whirligig beetles. The vertical mass of bluish lights of the glow-worms were for me a greater spectacle than the Christmas-illuminated houses behind Magnolia Green at Woonona I detoured to see on my way home. Close up we could observe the sticky threads hanging down the side of the rock, made by the fungus gnat larvae to capture their prey, attracted by the light emitted from the tip of their abdomen. Raoul remarked that the eastern embankment had housed many more glow-worms than the opposite side had until its collapse in the heavy rains of August 17th that caused so much havoc to human dwellings in the Wollongong district.

Just as I reached my car to head off home, a koel called out, bringing to an end another enjoyable and memorable experience at Barren Grounds.

Mike Morphett  
13th December 1998

WANTED : The Club is in dire need of a heavy-duty stand for the club slide projector. If there is anyone prepared to sell a such a stand please contact The Hales on 42574431.

Unusual Records December 1998 - January 1999 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
Stubble Quail	1	03/1	Killalea Lagoon	grassland	CB
Freckled Duck	1	03/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Pink-eared Duck	1	08/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CP
Pink-eared Duck	20	20/1	Tallawarra wetlands	wetland	DG
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	05/1	Oakdale	farm dam	CJC
Brown Goshawk	1	02/1	Keiraville	garden	ME
Brown Falcon	1	20/1	Tallawarra wetlands	overhead	DG
Wood Sandpiper	2	03/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Pied Oystercatcher	5	31/12	Sussex Inlet (mouth)	estuary	KM
Black-winged Stilt (breeding)	20+	20/1	Tallawarra wetlands	wetland	DG
Black-fronted Dotterel	8	08/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CP
Gull-billed Tern	1	02/1	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	RB
White-winged Black-Tern	1	03/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Brush Bronzewing	1	08/1	w of Mt Kembla	forest	CJC
Glossy Black Cockatoo	4	28/12	Sussex Inlet	forest	CJC
Pallid Cuckoo	1	24/12	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Pheasant Coucal	2	06/1	Jamberoo Golf Course	13/14 <sup>th</sup> tee	per BH
Tawny Frogmouth	4	01/12	Fairy Meadow	urban	BD
Tawny Frogmouth	1	07/12	Balgownie	urban	PM
Azure Kingfisher	2	06/12	Crooked River	riparian	CP
White-plumed Honeyeater	3	07/12	Dapto	urban	RF
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	18/12	Conjola SF	woodland	KM
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	08/1	w of Mt. Kembla	woodland	CJC
Crested Shrike-tit	1	02/1	Toolijooa	riparian	CP
Cicadabird	1	18/12	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
White-winged Triller	6	05/12	Avondale	rural	DG
Australian Magpie (white-backed form)		06/12	Jamberoo	rural	DG

CB - Chris Brandis; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; BD - Bob & Lydia David; ME - Mary Eskdale; RF - Richard Fackender; BH - Brian Hales; DG - Daryl Goldrick; KM - Kevin Mills; PM - Peter McKinlay; CP - Chris Presland

Comment: Happy New Year. Killalea Lagoon was clearly the place to be in January, with several people getting good views of the Wood Sandpipers and Freckled Duck. The White-plumed Honeyeaters are a new location. Gull-billed Tern is a rare visitor to the region, this sighting is only the 13<sup>th</sup> record. The Black-winged Stilts have recently nested at Tallawarra wetlands with at least ten fledglings being observed. Pheasant Coucals are also rare and have not previously been recorded from Jamberoo.

Chris Chafer

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**NEXT MEETING:** will be held on **Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1999**, 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 **Chris Brandis** who will be talking about his visit to the top of Cape York during bird week. As well as this, Chris will be sharing some of his slides on bird watching in the Philippines.

**NEXT OUTING:** will be on **Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> March** to Wirrimbera Sanctuary located on the Old Hume Highway between Bargo and Tahmoor. Meet at the car park just inside the gate at **9.00 a.m.** The area is marked with an extensive network of trails and has a large plant nursery, as well as picnic and barbecue facilities. Lunch will be held in the picnic area. Anyone who would be interested in car pooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact The McGregors. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** will be held on **Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March** to the Tallawarra Power Station No 3 ashponds. Drive along the road leading to the power station for about 1km after turning off the Princes Highway, south of Dapto. Meet at the open paddock on the left at **4.30 p.m.** Darryl Goldrick will lead the walk.

**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 16<sup>th</sup> March**, at the house of **Kerri Lewis** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**Reminder that Annual Subscription for 1999 is now due.** Please save your committee extra work by paying your subscription now.

**The deadline for articles for the May newsletter is 27<sup>th</sup> April.**

## February Meeting

Jack Baker, former warden at Barren Grounds and IBOC member of eight years standing, again provided us with an enlightening presentation on the "Edge Effect" which seemed to be a natural extension of Richard Majors talk late last year, titled "Birds on the Edge". Ecology is complex, given the interactive processes that operate between the differing elements that contribute its makeup. Jack defines ecology as the "study of things at home" and unlike the theories of physics, which are fundamental and universal, ecological theories are not robust and need to be tested. Bird studies are frequently used to test these theories but their subjects can be tricky. Many ecological theories are Northern Hemisphere focused and abnormalities can arise when applying them to Southern Hemisphere situations.

The ODUM THEORY subscribes to two concepts: -

- (1) The edge effect where the hypothesis is that there is increased richness and abundance in the number of species present, and
- (2) The ecotone zone (two habitats overlapping) where two special species predominately and exclusively exist.

Jack then went on to test these theories in one of his research projects by studying the number of species and individual population numbers on two test sites in the Illawarra - South Coast region. His first site was a person-made edge in a powerline easement (with underlying low scrub) and adjoining woodland. His second site was a natural edge setting at Jervis Bay with a natural heathland adjoining woodland.

In the case of the powerline easement, Jack's studies concluded that there were few species and numbers at the interface when compared to the centralized sections of the adjoining woodland. So much for that theory!!

His second test site on ecotone specific was equally inconclusive. Of the species recorded, (86 in all), there was no statistical evidence that any of these were purely ecotonal. However, Jack concluded his presentation with statistical data that showed that the Eastern Bristlebird is the only species that has strong ecotonal characteristics.

Given that there have only been two studies worldwide on testing the ecotonal theory, it is clear that Jack is at the leading research edge of this topic and more extensive research is warranted to test the ODUM THEORY which was first promulgated in 1958. The conclusion that I came to was that things are not always as they seem to be or what we

would anticipate to be logically so- this is what makes the study of ecology and its interactive process complex.

DARRYL GOLDRICK



Just a little note to say that Wendy Grahame, the owner of the property "Muddenyeri", wishes to thank the members of the I.B.O.C. club for her lovely sign, which now hangs with pride above her front verandah. (It certainly looks great from the road - Ed. )

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS !!!

A very warm welcome is extended to the following people

Valerie Cooper, Brenda Davies, Lee Caspersonn, Don Clucas, Judy & Ben Draper, Andy & Robyn McGarva, Hipolita Medin, Ray Mathieson and Denis Riley.

Hopefully, we will be able to catch up with as many of you at our next meetings and outings.

### HELP!

Anyone able to provide assistance in paving a small section at Barren Grounds, please contact Darryl Goldrick on 02- 42961316



## EASTER CAMP - MYALL LAKES

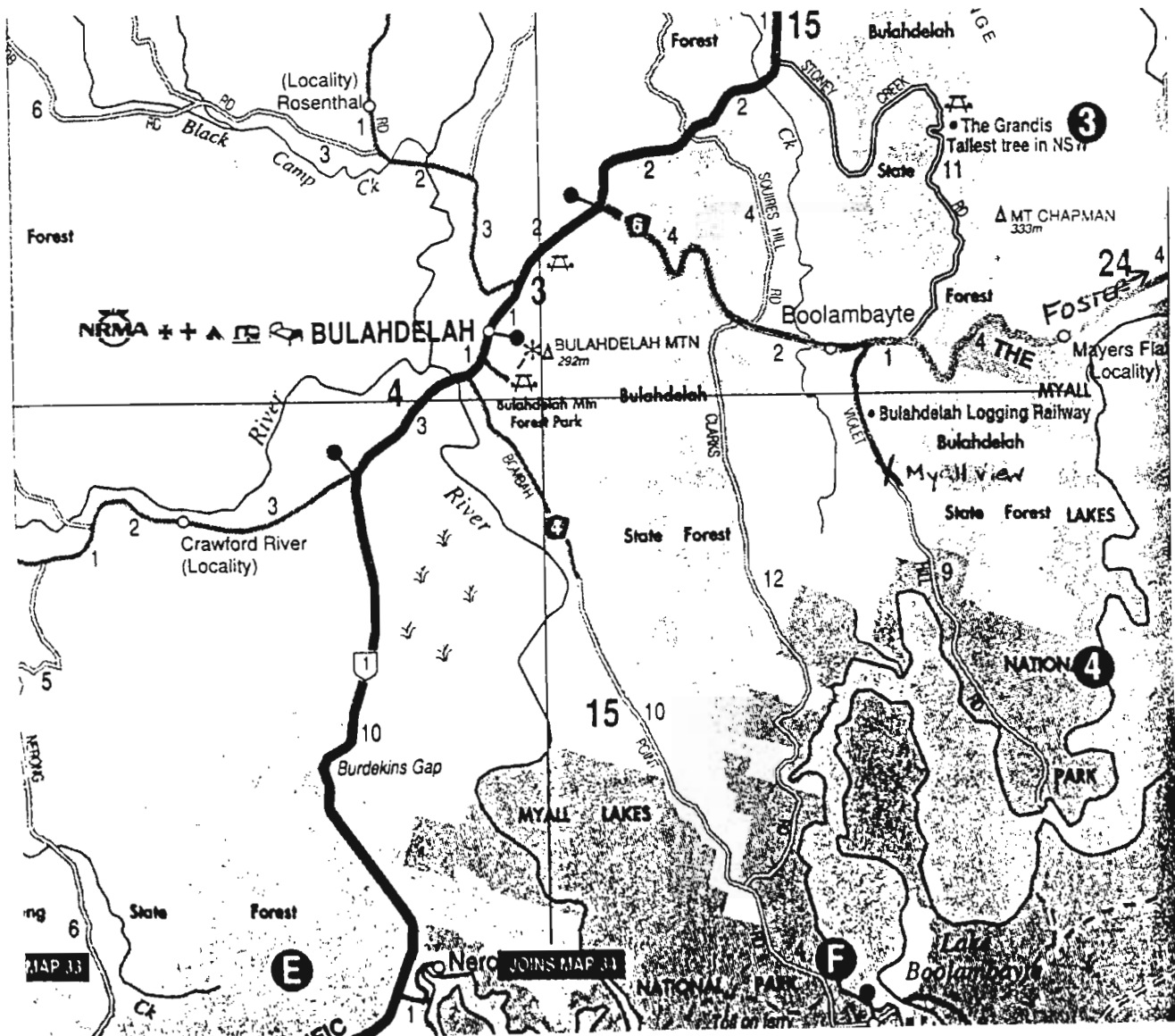
Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> ---Sat 10<sup>th</sup> April

This years Easter camp is at "Myall View", 9 km east of Bulladelah ,on the property of Michael and Rosemary McNiece.

Follow the Pacific Hwy. north of Bulladelah and turn onto The Lakes Way ( the road to Forster), this turnoff being 4.1 km north of the Bulladelah bridge. Follow The Lakes Way for 6.8 km and turn right into Violet Hill Rd. (signposted "Violet Hill"and "Steam Railway Turn Here") - our IBOC signs will start here. "Myall View" is 3.4 km down Violet Hill Rd. and on the left - the name is on the gate. It is about 330 km from Wollongong and bitumen except for the last 3.4 km.

Of course we will have our usual 1<sup>st</sup> class facilities - toilet, hot shower, good company and birds. Rember to bring your own drinking water.

The cost of the camp will be \$10 per adult, whether you stay for 1 night or the whole camp. Most importantly, if you intend going and haven't put your name on the list please ring Kevin McGregor on 02-42713762 NOW.



We had 15 members present for the outing, meeting in the usual place at the end of the pine trees. The weather greatly favoured us. There had been showers in the morning, but the afternoon was fine. The heavy clouds lingering in the east and over the mountains in the west produced a beautiful sky with highlighted edged clouds as the sun shone through.

A number of birds were observed as we arrived at Windang. These included the Spotted Turtle-Dove, Golden-headed Cisticola and Little Grassbird in reeds along the lake-edge. The Superb Fairy-wren, New Holland Honeyeater and Willie Wagtail were sighted along the path leading out to view the lake.

For those of us who had not visited the area for some time had a surprise when we viewed the area. A large part of the sand flats have been reduced by a channel of deep water on the northern side. When the tide is low as it was on our visit, there was a wide area of sand flats where waders were usually seen. The bird population is still similar, but they have moved out onto the sand islands and on the south side of the estuary. There were hundreds of birds there over the lake. The largest number of a single species was the Silver Gull, being scattered over the lake. Other birds resting on the sand were the Caspian, Crested and Little Tern, Masked Lapwing and Kelp Gull. In the shallows towards the bridge were the White-faced Heron and the Bar-tailed Godwit.

After spending a lot of time observing the birds out over the lake, we returned to the picnic area to enjoy our meal in the late afternoon. While returning 3 Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos flew over and an Australian Raven was heard calling. In all, we recored 20 species during the afternoon.

Species List for the afternoon

104	Australasian Gannet	981	Kelp Gull	529	Superb Fairy-wren
100	Little Pied Cormorant	125	Silver Gull	631	New Holland Honeyeater
096	Great Cormorant	112	Caspian Tern	364	Willie Wagtail
106	Australian Pelican	115	Crested Tern	930	Australian Raven
188	White-faced Heron	117	Little Tern	522	Little Grassbird
153	Bar-tailed Godwit	989	Spotted Turtle Dove	525	Golden-headed Cisticola
133	Masked Lapwing	267	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo		

Horrie Ward



**Abraham's Bosom Reserve, Currarong**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February**

There were 23 members who came along to enjoy the day at Abraham's Bosom Reserve, near Currarong. It was a hot and humid day. As we neared our destination a few drops of rain fell on the car windscreen for a couple of minutes but then it stopped and, although the sky remained partly cloudy for most of the day, the weather remained fine.

The carpark at the beginning of the walk is in a lovely setting with tall Eucalypt trees surrounding the area. We made our way to the beginning of Croomie's Walk, a marked trail, which we followed for most of the day through the reserve. After a few minutes walk, we came to a junction which directed us along the Wreck Walk. There had been fires a few years earlier through areas of the reserve, leaving some very stark looking bushland consisting mainly of dead low growth banksias and tea trees. Fortunately it doesn't take long for the revegetation process to begin. *Banksia serrata*, *Banksia ericifolia*, some Casurina and Leptospermum were present, interspersed with other smaller plants.

The Red Wattlebird was often heard calling from various parts of the walk. Early into the walk we recorded the Eastern Spinebill, Pied Currawong, Crimson and Eastern Rosella, Rainbow Lorikeet and Spotted Turtle Dove.

As we neared the coast, we walked through a Eucalypt forest, though not very tall, and then the scenery changed into a lovely sea-scape at Whale Point. There the rusted remains of the S.S. Merimbula lies stranded on the rocks, which came aground in 1928. Here, while we were looking over a large bay with a rocky shoreline, an Eastern Reef Egret flew by and landed on the rocks a short distance away. Other birds sighted were the Silver Gull, Australasian Gannet, Crested Tern and Wedge-tailed Shearwater.

We returned to Croomie's Walk, a distance of a couple of hundred metres, and continued walking through the fire-ravaged bushland again. The track followed along the edge of the ocean, which was visible through the dead vegetation. We headed towards Honeysuckle Point, where we stopped for morning tea. It was a beautiful spot on the beach between two rocky headlands.

After morning tea, we continued along Croomie's Walk and spotted a Scared Kingfisher sitting on a low open branch, where everyone could get a good view of it. Although the track became rough in patches, the vegetation continued to change. There was a mixture of Eucalypts and Old Man Banksias, eventually leading into an area of open heathland.

As we headed towards Mermaid's Inlet, the sound of crashing waves on the rocks became louder. What a beautiful and thrilling experience to view the scene before us looking down into Mermaid's Inlet. (Alas no mermaids here!!) Nothing could survive in the wild, rolling, boiling surf as we saw it at the time. The inlet is not very big, but the waves are guided into the inlet and crash onto the rocks with great force. We appeared to be about 30 to 40 metres above the water and about halfway up the cliff face on a narrow walking track, looking into the chasm. All the rock face on the opposite side was gouged by the force of the wind and water, with the stratum where the softer layers being worn out and leaving only the harder layers projecting. While viewing the inlet, a White-bellied Sea Eagle glided over the opposite cliff and circled a number of times until it was out of sight.

Once again we returned to the trail and continued walking on an ever-increasing incline through the heathland. The day was beginning to get quite hot. When we reached the highest point of the walk, being at the Trig station, we stopped to have lunch. The vegetation was not tall, but we found what ever shade was available under the small growth. The spot was lovely as we sat on a crest overlooking a large expanse of the reserve, including the area we had just walked. Directly beneath us was some Eucalypts, where several birds were observed while we had lunch. Some of them were the Crimson Rosella and Grey Shrike-thrush while the Golden Whistler and Eastern Yellow Robin were heard calling. Previously, the New Holland Honeyeater, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Welcome Swallow, White-cheeked Honeyeater and King Quail had been sighted in the morning.

After the steady climb uphill, the next part was on a decline through Heath along a much smoother part of the track, leading to a creek with a boardwalk crossing. Here there were some lovely silver-white barked Scribbly Gums as well as Banksias, reed clumps, Bracken Fern and fallen branches. A number of birds were observed here including the Superb Fairy-wren, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Yellow Robin, Rufous Whistler, Grey Fantail, Spotted Pardalote and Australian King Parrot.

We had a short rest at the Aboriginal Rock Shelter after encountering a steep section of track with a few rocky obstacles to negotiate. We were then only about 20 minutes from the carpark which we arrived at about 3.00 p.m. Everyone had a thoroughly great day thanks to Diana Wright, our leader for the day.

We recorded a total of 42 species for the day

012	King Quail	344	Shining Bronze Cuckoo	591	Eastern Spinebill
069	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	322	Laughing Kookaburra	392	Eastern Yellow Robin
104	Australasian Gannet	326	Sacred Kingfisher	421	Eastern Whipbird
096	Great Cormorant	558	White-throated Treecreeper	398	Golden Whistler
188	White-faced Heron	529	Superb Fairy-wren	401	Rufous Whistler
191	Eastern Reef Egret	536	Variiegated Fairy-wren	408	Grey Shrike-thrush

226	White-bellied Sea Eagle	565	Spotted Pardalote	361	Grey Fantail
131	Sooty Oystercatcher	424	Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	475	Brown Thornbill
125	Silver Gull	470	Striated Thornbill	702	Grey Butcherbird
115	Crested Tern	638	Red Wattlebird	705	Australian Magpie
989	Spotted Turtle Dove	637	Little Wattlebird	694	Pied Currawong
254	Rainbow Lorikeet	645	Noisy Friarbird	930	Australian Raven
281	Australian King Parrot	631	New Holland Honeyeater	693	White-winged Chough
282	Crimson Rosella	632	White-cheeked Honeyeater	357	Welcome Swallow

Horrie Ward



### The New Atlas of Australian Birds - Just a Reminder.

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** (there's one in our Club library) containing for each species a map of its distribution over Australia. Our Club was active in that exercise. In NSW, the work was continued after '81 by the NSW Atlassers and again our Club has been involved.

Now Birds Aust has started gathering 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 is 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.**"*

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. 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..

25 people have already "signed on" as Atlassers in our area but only 9 of those are IBOC members, and only 3 of those members have sent in records. We need more Club members, many more, to get involved and to be active so as to bring a greater degree of experience and bird knowledge into the project.

There's no charge for being an Atlasser. If you think that you might like to be involved, give me a ring and I'll tell you more about the scheme and get an explanatory kit into your hands. It's great fun, not expensive in dollars or time, improves your knowledge of birds and adds a very tangible and rewarding purpose to birdwatching.

Dave Thomson 02 / 4284 2876.

p.s. The first of the Atlas newsletters, has just arrived. It has some interesting information on progress to date and on a few other things. It's to be produced 3 times a year and will be sent to all Atlassers. When prospective Atlassers ask for information kits, the newsletter is being included.

# **BARREN GROUNDS BIRD OBSERVATORY COURSES**

**March to June 1999**

## **Bats & Bat People**

Date : 12 - 14 Mar

Leaders : Nancy Pallin (Ku-ring-gai Bat

Colony)

Margaret Turton (bat researcher)

Acquaint yourself with the fascinating mega and micro bats of Australia. On this weekend you'll meet some captive, hand reared, educational flying foxes as well as helping trap and release tiny insect eating bats. You will discover just how beautiful and delicate these mammals are when you see them in the hand. Bat biology, ecology, evolution, research and conservation will be covered by well known bat people with a story or two to tell. Dispel those bat myths and learn about bat reality on this fun and friendly weekend.

## **Ground Parrots, Glow Worms & Gliders - Special Courses**

Dates : 2 -5 Apr & 11-14 Jun

Leader: Raoul Boughton

A special weekend for friends and family with a great discounted price! Join us on this action packed weekend for bushwalks, bird watching, small mammal trapping, picnics, mist-netting and bird banding, frogging and spotlighting. There will be walks, talks and slide shows for you to attend. A great outdoors Easter experience enjoying all the flora and fauna of Barren Grounds. Make sure you are well rested as this is a weekend guaranteed to wear out even the most energetic of people.

Family price - \$490 (2 adults, 2 children)

Individual Adult price - \$195

Individual Child price (<15 years) - \$95

## **Photographing Birds**

Date : 7 - 9 May

Leader : Graeme Chapman

Graeme is a professional wildlife photographer and ornithologist who has worked for the CSIRO. His work is of international repute, and has been published in many magazines world wide. This course is for photographers of all capacities who want to gain special expertise in the field of nature photography. The focus of the course will be on bird photography which is Graeme's main area of interest. Bring your own equipment and learn the techniques you will need to photograph your favourite birds. Book early as numbers will be restricted.

## **Identifying Eucalypts**

Date : 14 - 16 May

Leader : Dick Turner

Learn more about those great Australian trees commonly known as gums. This course for the naturalist, bushwalker, birdwatcher and botanist will explore forests, roadsides & woodlands for a variety of species of Eucalypts. Dick, a consultant forester and ornithologist, will help you learn the very difficult process of distinguish these amazing indigenous plants. This course is also good for birdwatchers. Knowing your plants is an invaluable skill when trying to find a particular bird species. You will go home with a greater respect of the uniqueness and diversity of the Australian bush.

## **Birds for Beginners**

Date : 28 - 30 May

Leaders : Brian Hales

& Raoul Boughton

A weekend to introduce you to the wonderful world of native birds. Brian, the president of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club, will help you learn about the major bird groups, including those elusive 'little brown birds'. Find out about the books and equipment used for bird watching and how to attract a variety of birds to your garden. On Sunday Raoul will show you birds in the hand and guide you around the reserve using and developing your new found skills. A *great* weekend for beginners who wish to discover a whole new pastime.

## **Potoroos, Quolls & Radio Tracking**

Date : 4 - 6 June

Leaders : Debbie Andrew & Raoul Boughton

Potoroos and Quolls are two types of marsupials with a cryptic nature and therefore extremely difficult to observe and even harder to study. Barren Grounds is one of the few places in NSW where Potoroos can be seen and trapped without too much trouble. This is a great opportunity to get a close up peak at these amazing creatures. Debbie is an experienced researcher who has just recently conducted an extensive study on Quolls and she will share her specialist knowledge with us. Join this course to experience the difficulties with trapping these shy creatures, and learn about the technique of radio tracking.

**Weekend Cost : \$160 per person (Birds Australia & BGF \$145), children < 15 years are ½ price.**

Unusual Records **January & February 1999** 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	1	27/1	Bomaderry Creek	heathland	KM
Blue-billed Duck	3	15/2	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	PF
Australian Shelduck	5	22/2	Hoskins NR	wetland	per RB
Chestnut Teal	5000+	24/1	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Pink-eared Duck	5	24/1	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Darter	6	18/2	Dunmore Lakes	wetland	DG
Striated Heron	1	01/1	Koona Bay	lake shore	GB
White-necked Heron	28	13/2	Toolijooa	paddock	CP
Square-tailed Kite	1	08/2	Vincentia	heath/forest	GC
Square-tailed Kite	1	27/1	Bomaderry Creek	overhead	KM
Grey Goshawk (white form)	1	10/2	Kiama	perched	CP
Grey Goshawk (white form)	1	03/2	American Creek (Figtree)	overhead	DG
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	30/1	Coledale	overhead	GB
Collared Sparrowhawk	2	16/2	Warragamba Dam	forest	CJC
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	20/2	Botanic Gardens	overhead	MJ
Collared Sparrowhawk	3	20/2	Cordeaux Dam	forest	CJC
Lewins Rail	2	23/2	Barren Grounds NR	wet heath	RB
Spotless Crake	1	31/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Latham's Snipe	1	23/2	Barren Grounds NR	wet heath	RB
Bar-tailed Godwit	72	24/2	Windang	sandflats	DG
Marsh Sandpiper	2	24/1	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Wood Sandpiper	1	07/1	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Red-necked Stint	500+	31/1	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	RB
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	24/1	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Lesser Sandplover	4	14/2	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	DG
Greater Sandplover	4	14/2	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	DG
Gull-billed Tern	6	31/1	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	RB
Little Tern	160	31/1	Lake Wollumboola	sand flat	RB
White-winged Black Tern	4	24/1	Lake Wollumboola	sand flat	DG
Peaceful Dove	2	27/1	Bomaderry Creek	woodland	KM
Bar-shouldered Dove	12	18/2	Darkes Forest	woodland	CJC
Gang-gang	15-20	31/1	Mangerton	urban	IM
Superb Parrot (imm)	1	20/2	Botanic Gardens	parkland	MJ
Tawny Frogmouth	1	24/1	Kieraville	urban	ME
Azure Kingfisher	1	28/1	Cudmirrah	lake shore	KM
Rainbow Bee-eater	12	27/1	Bomaderry Creek	woodland	KM
White-plumed Honeyeater	6	03/2	Dapto	urban	BO
Brown-headed Honeyeater		7	28/1 Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Brown Honeyeater	1	10/1	Bulli Pass	forest	JB
White-fronted Chat	40+	24/1	Lake Wollumboola	saltmarsh	CJC
White-winged Triller	1	01/1	Primbee	woodland	GB

GB - Graham Barwell; JB - John Bissett; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; MJ - Michael Jarman; PF - Peter Fackender; DG - Daryl Goldrick; KM - Kevin Mills; IM - Ian McKinlay; BO - Bruce O'Brien; CP - Chris Presland

**Comment:** Well, waterbirds and shorebirds dominate this months report. Anyone who hasn't been to Lake Wollumboola should make the effort. I'm sure you won't be disappointed with the selection currently on show. Killalea Lagoon was also a good place to be in February, with several people getting good views of the Spotless Crake, Wood Sandpipers, Pink-eared and Freckled Duck, while one lucky observer found the rare Blue-billed Duck. The White-plumed Honeyeaters at Dapto are still there. Bomaderry Creek Reserve is one of the best bushland reserves in the region as is indicated by a few of the species Kevin found. The Bar-shouldered Doves were feeding on a freshly mowed road verge, along with six Spotted Quail-thrush, a most unusual occurrence. Brown Honeyeaters have not been observed in the Illawarra since 1965 at Thirroul! A good number of Sparrowhawk observations, possibly brought about by the completion of the breeding season, when the birds call much more frequently than at other times of year. Just for the record, the largest recorded gathering of White-necked Heron is 75 in a flooded paddock on the western side of Lake Illawarra in December 1976, though Chris' record is the second largest.

Chris Chafer

# 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. 218

May 1999

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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**

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☺☺☺☺ COMING EVENTS ☺☺☺☺

**NEXT MEETING:** will be held on **Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> May 1999**, 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 **Brian Hales** who will be talking about "The Road to Bempton Cliff", a look at British Birds in different habitats, in and around Yorkshire, both local and migrant.

**NEXT OUTING:** This months walk will be to **Macquarie Pass National Park** on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May**. We will meet at the intersection of Macquarie Pass NP and Clover Hill Road at **9a.m.** This intersection is about half way up the pass on the west side of the road. From here we will walk to Rainbow Falls, the site of several television commercials. A late lunch will be had at the bottom of the pass. After lunch we will walk to The Cascades. Be prepared for leeches and if it is raining this walk will be cancelled. Anyone who would be interested in car pooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact The McGregors. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** will be held on **Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> May** to the Blackbutt Reserve, Shellharbour. Meet at the carpark at Blackbutt Reserve, off Shellharbour Road at **8.30 a.m.**

**Next Committee Meeting :** This will be held on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May**, at the house of **Esme Gay**, starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**Reminder that Annual Subscription for 1999 is now due.** Please save your committee extra work by paying your subscription now.

**The deadline for articles for the June newsletter is 27<sup>th</sup> May.**



## MARCH MEETING

Our very own Chris Brandis provided members with an interesting and informative discourse on his trips to Cape York (Jan 98) and the Phillipines (mid-late 98).

His trip to the Cape coincided with the rainy season, with prolonged periods of overcast and misty conditions—much of his birding was under the cover of an umbrella and/or knee-deep in water—all very trying conditions but these discomforts were forgotten with the elation of new sightings of the wonderful species that inhabit this part of the world.

Some of his more favoured locations included Pajinka Lodge, Lucinda Beach and Kingfisher Park at Cairns. This latter site is rich in bird life and included sightings of Red-necked Crake and Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher. A visit to the Lockerbie Scrub is a must for all birders. This dense eucalypt woodland/rainforest vegetation community is home to species such as Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, Black-winged Monarch, Yellow-bellied Pitta, Shining Starling, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Sunbird and Palm Cockatoo. This remnant flora/fauna association is clear evidence of the mainland's previous linkages with New Guinea during the last Ice Age.

Chris's visit to the Jardine River disappointingly did not yield any special sightings and he sadly missed the Silver-backed Butcherbird. A special trip to Nicolas(?) Cay near Cairns yielded good sightings of Lesser Crested, Black-naped, Roseate and Sooty Terns.

Later in the year, Chris was engaged as a consultant (this is life after you retire!!) to Steel Corp, 100km south of Manila in the Phillipines. The climatic conditions were typically equatorial and birding was done early am/late afternoon to escape the high temperatures/humidity conditions. His identification/observation skills were truly tested in the absence of a local field guide which he only acquired a few days before his departure!!

Some of his more notable sightings included Black-naped Oriole, Malaysian Pratincole, Temminck's Stint, Rufous Bitten, White-throated Kingfisher and a range of dotterel's, crakes and rails—in all he identified 90 species, not bad for a bloke in a foreign country and without a field guide!!!

The cultural and socio-economic conditions are, as one might expect, markedly different to good old Aussie-rubbish and general littering was prolific especially in the mangroves (waterways and the sea are typically dumping grounds), development is unregulated with infrastructure up to the high water mark, dynamite is used for fishing resulting in extensive damage to reefs and coral systems and goat populations prolific. Water buffalo are still the most common form of transport though tricycles are becoming more popular. Living conditions are primitive, cock fighting is still the most popular sporting/gambling past-time and traffic is typically 'Raffertys Rules'.

Five months was a long absence from Marlene and home/family and he welcomed the delights of a baked dinner.

Our thanks to Chris for an enjoyable evening.

Darryl Goldrick

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### Midweek Walk Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March

#### Tallawarra No3 Ashpond, on the West Shore of Lake Illawarra

Seventeen members arrived at the carpark to visit the No3 Ashpond at Tallawarra for some late afternoon birdwatching. It was a beautiful afternoon, the sun was shining with a clear sky and very little wind - a perfect day. The carpark was about 500 metres from the old Princes Highway and was directly opposite the road that led to the track around the ashpond. The midweek walks had previously been suspended in December 1995 due to lack of interest.

We began the walk at 4.40 p.m. along the road to the ashpond through some lovely vegetation of Casurinas, with a few Eucalyptus interspersed. It was a beautiful sight as the grass was green and the trees looked clean and fresh from the regular rain and humid conditions we had experienced recently. To complete the scene there were some



healthy cattle grazing, with a Willie Wagtail darting about after the insects near the cattle. An Australian Magpie was also sighted in the area.

A few members had arrived early and parked further along the road observing the Crested Pigeon and Masked Lapwing before driving back to the recommended carpark. At the beginning of the walk we sighted some Yellow Thornbills in the Casurinas beside the road. Soon after the Black-faced Cuckoo -shrike was seen to fly overhead.

When we crossed over the bridge, the landscape opened out, with very few trees, as we walked to the track around the ashpond. When the ashpond came into view, it is now a basin with a number of ponds and grass covered, much different to what I has seen many years ago when it was in use to collect the light grey ash being pumped from the now non - existent powerhouse. There was no grass covering on it then, just a level area containing a lot of water. There was not so many birds there then either, only a few waders. It is quite a large area, a quick estimate by Darryl came to approximately 112 hectares. The embankment around the pond was built up many years ago and wide enough to drive around, about 8 metres wide and 4 or 5 metres high.

There was a large area of water with many birds on it at the northern end of the ashpond coming into view as we approached. Using our binoculars and Chris' telescope, we identified many birds. Some of which were the Pacific Black Duck, Australasian Shoveler, Hoary-headed and Australasian Grebe, a large number of Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal (approximately 30) and about the same number of Australian Wood Duck. Some other birds recorded there were the nankeen Kestrel, Eastern Rosella observed on a few occasions, the Superb Fairy-wren, Australian Raven and a few flocks of Common Starlings and the Common Myna.

We walked onto the southern end of the ashpond where there was another large area of water, divided into smaller ponds by grasses and Cumbungi. There were many birds there, including the Black Swan, who out numbered all others, counting 110+ over a large part of the pond. On a spit were 30 Australian Pelicans grouped together. Welcome Swallows were constantly flying over the southern part of the ashpond. Other birds observed were the Black-winged Stilt, Pink-eared Duck, Red-kneed Dotterel and Black-fronted Dotterel. We saw a Willie Wagtail being chased off by a Red-capped Plover, which seemed a bit unusual at first, but then the reason became apparent when two little Plover chicks were sighted near a clump of dead grass. The parent bird was protecting the young. As we walked around the south of the pond basin the birds were fewer so our progress became quicker as we were looking into the setting sun. Some of the vegetation noted was purple Native Statice which was about the only bit of colour over the landscape growing among Rhodes Grass and Bearded Whisky Grass. The walk around the pond was completed about 6.45 p.m. It was a very pleasant walk and I recommend it to anyone who has not made it previously, but one must get permission first. We arrived back at the cars about 7.00 p.m. Thank you to Darryl for organizing and leading the walk. We recorded 39 species during the afternoon.

203	Black Swan	240	Nankeen Kestrel	471	Yellow Thornbill
202	Australian Wood Duck	056	Dusky Moorhen	634	Noisy Miner
208	Pacific Black Duck	149	Eastern Curlew	408	Grey Shrike-thrush
212	Australasian Shoveler	146	Black-winged Stilt	415	Magpie-lark
211	Grey Teal	143	Red-capped Plover	364	Willie Wagtail
210	Chestnut Teal	132	Red-kneed Dotterel	424	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
213	Pink-eared Duck	133	Masked Lapwing	702	Grey Butcherbird
061	Australasian Grebe	125	Silver Gull	705	Australian Magpie
062	Hoary-headed Grebe	043	Crested Pigeon	930	Australian Raven
100	Little Pied Cormorant	273	Galah	357	Welcome Swallow
106	Australian Pelican	288	Eastern Rosella	525	Golden-headed Cisticola
188	White-faced Heron	322	Laughing Kookaburra	999	Common Starling
232	Black-shouldered Kite	529	Superb Fairy-wren	998	Common Myna

Horrie Ward



**Wirrimbirra Flora and Fauna Sanctuary Walk**

**14.3.99**

The drive to *Wirrimbirra* a 90 hectare Nature Reserve between Bargo and Tahmoor was most pleasant with a clear sky on a warm day. 18 met in the carpark under the tall Eucalypts from where we began our 4km. walk under past president Brian's leadership. It is lovely area to walk in. Very quiet and peaceful with Butterflies flying across our path. A hive high up in a gum was busily being serviced by lots of bees and a Ringtail Possum's nest was seen in another. The bush track was well defined and cushioned by leaf litter. We were surprised how dry the area was at the beginning of the track however it then opened up into a damper area with a reed filled bog, moss covered rocks and, small pools of water. After passing through the tunnel under the railway line we were again in drier terrain. A Black Snake was sighted by our "*Fearless Leader*" who sent the warning back through the group. However the poor snake set off at a slithering pace when he heard the chattering IBOCers and was not seen again. The busyness of the railway line was surprising with the sounds of the fast moving trains shattering the tranquillity from time to time. The tall Paperbarks and the various Eucalypts provided good resting spots for the birds to be observed while the understorey of native shrubs of Banksia Boronia and the colourful Mountain Devil gave haven to the smaller birds who were often heard and not seen. The various wild flowers in bloom delighted us all and we were thankful to those in the group who had the knowledge of the flora and shared it with us. Morning tea was enjoyed on a rock outcrop at *Wattle View* while watching the antics of a Bush Rat playing on a nearby tree. Another shady resting place was at the *Four Ways* before making our way back across the railway line and to the native garden with flowering Acacias around the cabins and education centre for a picnic lunch. Birds seen during the morning walk totalled 33.

***Brush Bronzewing Galah Australian King Parrot Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo  
Brush Cuckoo Laughing Kookaburra White-throated Treecreeper Spotted Pardalote  
White-browed Scrubwren Brown Thornbill Striated Thornbill Little Wattlebird  
Red Wattlebird Noisy Miner Yellow-faced Honeyeater Yellow-tufted Honeyeater  
White-eared Honeyeater [feeding a chick] Brown-headed Honeyeater Immature  
Eastern Spinebill Eastern Yellow Robin Eastern Whipbird Sittella Golden  
Whistler Rufous Whistler [also an immature] Leaden Flycatcher Restless  
Flycatcher Rufous Fantail Grey Fantail Olive Backed Oriole Dusky Woodswallow  
Grey Butcherbird Red-browed Firetail Silvereye***

Goodbyes were said to half the group while the remaining 9 drove to Cordeaux Dam to see the Collared Sparrowhawk. We found an immature sitting high in a tree [where we'd been told to look] screeching *KiKiKiKiKiKi* for it's dinner....a great sighting! We then walked to look over the Dam area and took a leisurely stroll to the DamWall. The sandstone is lovely in this area with Boronias, Lesser Flannel Flowers and other small native flowers blooming amongst it. There were 10 birds seen here.

***Musk Duck Pied Cormorant Immature Collared Sparrowhawk Yellow-tailed Black  
Cockatoo Musk Lorikeet Crimson Rosella Eastern Rosella Noisy Miner Yellow-  
faced Honeyeater [nest with young] New Holland Honeyeater***

This had been a great day, enjoying nature at it's best with good company. Thank you Brian.

Fae McGregor

## **BIGNET meeting at the Hunter Wetland on 13 - 14 of March**

Dave Thomson, Kevin MacGregor and myself, also representing SOSSA, attended the Bird Interest Group Network meeting which is a meeting of nearly all the NSW and ACT bird clubs, NP and WLS, Forestry etc fostered by the Southern NSW branch of Birds Australia (SNAG) to get in contact and communicate. Representatives from as far as the Far South Coast and Dubbo were present with Dr Geoff Barrett of the BA Atlas Project.

Presently two sub groups meet before the main meeting, one for the Atlas, attended by Dave, and one for conservation with which we just keep in contact with but do not officially participate. One item of local interest was the mooted international airport for Newcastle to be sited on Kooragang Island with Newcastle birdos rallying in opposition. The various Clubs in attendance reported on their activities, other Clubs offering advice and or assistance to help in projects such as tree planing in Capertee Valley for the Regent Honeyeater and Glossy Black Cockatoo surveys near Dubbo.

SNAG has a website which IBOC will be able to display Club information and anyone wishing to visit the site try <http://web.one.net.au/~rosella> and your comments would be appreciated. Discussions on fund raising, specially the twitchathon and where the monies raised would be directed, Bird Week in October with a display in the Museum's biodiversity gallery and on the final day, what was the future of BIGNET, both in the short and long term. The secure future of birds requires a combination of information, conservation, funds, education, publicity, people to participate and above all the activities must be enjoyable to those participating.

IBOC will be co-hosting the next meeting in September and we will keep members informed of progress and any assistance required.

Chris Brandis



### **Barren Grounds Volunteer Roster**

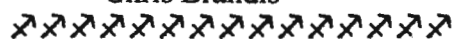
Barren Grounds has a small visitors' information centre/shop that is manned by volunteers on weekends from 10 am to 4 pm. The volunteers come from Sydney and local bird clubs and the Friends of Barren Grounds to raise funds to ensure the site remains active in providing services to the community and we always need extra volunteers. Currently about 2 days a year is all that is required and any members that would like to spend a relaxing day in prime birding habitat giving easy assistance to visitors please contact Darryl Goldrick, our Club representative on the BBO committee, or myself to make arrangements for training. For those keener there are always small jobs required to increase the comfort to visitors and the wardens.

Chris Brandis



The annual Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot survey is to be held on the weekend of the 22-23 of May and 7-8 August. Please visit flowering eucalyptus such as coastal Swamp Mahogany and note the conditions on that date, habitat, how many Regent Honeyeaters and Swift Parrots, what the birds were doing such as feeding, resting, passing through and what other nectar feeding birds were there. I have forms to fill out if any are found. Remember more eyes are more successful.

Chris Brandis



## IBOC EASTER CAMP AT "MYALL VIEW" 2-4-99 to 9-4-99

"Myall View" is a 50 acre property belonging to Michael and Rosemary McNiece at Myall Lakes. Early campers arrived there on Wednesday to set up the usual amenities. We were not there long before the rain began which combined with clay soil set a challenge for those digging the toilet pit. However in true blue IBOC spirit they soldiered on!

The campsite was a large open area, which Michael had slashed, surrounded by tall Eucalyptus trees of many varieties. The campfire and water boiling facility was set up close to the shower and toilet, set among the trees. The water tank that was meant to be full had sprung a leak so we were grateful to the rain for providing us with plenty of water. The two friendly horses who inhabit the property kept their eye on us.

There were 25 campers who all declared it a great camp despite the tremendous rain [in excess of 12 inches] the ever present ever hungry Leeches, the fastidious Bush Ticks who seemed to prefer Gwen and Bull Ants who also found Gwen to be a tasty morsel! Gum Boots were the fashion accessory best able to negotiate the soggy grounds but did not keep out Leeches. In fact so many remedies were tried to keep the Leeches off with all failing except for "Wal's Woolies Plastic Bags".

The campfires were great fun, when we could have them, with lots of chatter, roasting marshmallows, sucking on lollypops, playing games and much laughter. Wal enjoyed the campfires so much he sat up all night gazing into the flames and listening to the Cricket Test on radio from the West Indies.

We invaded the "pub" at Bulahdelah for lunch, which was delicious, and came back to camp for "Happy Hour" - playing games and relaxing and having a good time together.

The rain continued to pour down so that even the ants had to move to higher ground finding dry accommodation in among clothes, up in tubular tent and annex posts and in tubular legs of camp chairs.....oh! the joy of life in the bush! Still, there wasn't a grumpy face in sight with everyone taking it in their stride -even the 5 children had a great time.

And yes, we didn't forget what IBOC is all about we ended up seeing 96 different birds. A great effort considering the conditions over the whole week of the camp. To see the thousands of bats going over the campsite each evening out on their nightly raids was a wonderful experience too.

We had a drive into the tallest tree in NSW "The Grandis" and walked the Forest Walk in the Bulahdelah State Forest with lunch in the Bulahdelah Mountain Forest Park. Mainly our walks were confined to the area in and around the property due to the weather.

Because the rain looked like it was there to stay the decision was made to pack up and leave on Friday. That was easier said than done! The two 4WD vehicles had to tow most of us out. It was quite a sight...but with great togetherness we all got out safely thanks to Bob David and Ron Imisides.

Oh yes, I almost forgot - the EASTER BUNNY/BILBY did come in the rain and deposited eggs on every door step. Thanks to all who made this camp another experience to be relived and relived time and again around future campfires. Especially we thank Michael and Rosemary for their generosity in allowing us to use their beautiful property. It's a lovely spot.

### List of Birds observed at Easter Camp

Black Swan	Australian Wood Duck	Pacific Black Duck
Australasian Grebe	Little Pied Cormorant	Australian Pelican
White-faced Heron	White-necked Heron	Great Egret
Cattle Egret	Australian White Ibis	Straw-necked Ibis

Whistling Kite  
 Wedge-tailed Eagle  
 Comb-crested Jacana  
 White-headed Pigeon  
 Peaceful Dove  
 Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo  
 Musk Lorikeet  
 Eastern Rosella  
 Pheasant Coucal  
 Azure Kingfisher  
 White-throated Treecreeper  
 Southern Emu-wren  
 Large-billed Scrubwren  
 Brown Thornbill  
 Red Wattlebird  
 Noisy Miner  
 White-naped Honeyeater  
 Scarlet Honeyeater  
 Peace Robin  
 Varied Sittella  
 Rufous Whistler  
 Magpie-lark  
 Willie Wagtail  
 Grey Butcherbird  
 Pied Currawong  
 White-winged Chough  
 Chestnut-breasted Mannikin  
 Silvereye

White-bellied Sea-Eagle  
 Purple Swamphen  
 Masked Lapwing  
 Brown Cuckoo-Dove  
 Bar-shouldered Dove  
 Rainbow Lorikeet  
 Little Lorikeet  
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo  
 Southern Boobook  
 Laughing Kookaburra  
 Superb Fairy-wren  
 Spotted Pardalote  
 Brown Gerygone  
 Yellow Thornbill  
 Noisy Friarbird  
 Lewin's Honeyeater  
 New Holland Honeyeater  
 Jacky Winter  
 Eastern Yellow Robin  
 Crested Shrike-tit  
 Grey Shrike-thrush  
 Rufous Fantail  
 Spangled Drongo  
 Pied Butcherbird  
 Australian Raven  
 Satin Bowerbird  
 Mistletoebird

Brown Goshawk  
 Dusky Moorhen  
 Crested Tern  
 Crested Pigeon  
 Topknot Pigeon  
 Scaly-breasted Lorikeet  
 Australian King Parrot  
 Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo  
 Australian Owlet-nightjar  
 Superb Lyrebird  
 Varigated Fairy-wren  
 White-browed Scrubwren  
 White-throated Gerygone  
 Striated Thornbill  
 Blue-faced Honeyeater  
 Yellow-faced Honeyeater  
 Eastern Spinebill  
 Scarlet Robin  
 Eastern Whipbird  
 Golden Whistler  
 Leaden Flycatcher  
 Grey Fantail  
 White-breasted Woodswallow  
 Australian Magpie  
 Little Raven  
 Red-browed Finch  
 Welcome Swallow

Fae McGregor [camp scribe]



### Twichathon Early Notice

Interested in participating in the annual Twichathon to be held in October? It is possible that we could organise two teams - one local and one at the October camp site. More information will be available in later newsletters.



### Shoalhaven Bird Club Outings

May 16 <sup>th</sup>	Camping Depot Beach
Jun 20 <sup>th</sup>	Burma Fire Trail Meet 9 a.m. Illaroo Rd., north end of bridge
Jul 18 <sup>th</sup>	Yalwal Road Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m.
Aug 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mt Bushwalker Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m. Bewong 9.30 a.m.
Sep 19 <sup>th</sup>	Currumbene Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m.
Oct 17 <sup>th</sup>	Bundanoon Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m.
Nov 21 <sup>st</sup>	Braidwood Road Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m.
Dec 19 <sup>th</sup>	Hales, Pyree. Meet 5 p.m. for walk/picnic/barbecue

For further information contacts: Barry Virtue 02 44641389 or Diana Wright 02 44218426

## WOLLONGONG, NSW Pelagic Trip Report 28th February 1999

### Conditions,

Departed at 7.15 am and returned at 5.00 pm. Sea slight, winds variable and light 5 -10 knots.

Reaching 28 Nautical Miles E of Wollongong. Water temperature 24.1 degrees.

Primary chumming location 34.34'S 151.24'E

### Those on Board,

Barry Burton, Pauline Burton, Sue Bresnhan, Peter Crabtree, Chris Corben, Anna Glasser, Leonard Glasser, Malcolm Goodman, Dion Hobcroft, Lisa Hugg, Alister Lethbridge, Kerri Lewis, Pete Milburn, Chris Padley, Helen Padley, Tony Palliser, Lindsay Smith, Andrew Stafford and Louise Tierney

### Summary,

A brilliant February trip with some great birds. A very pleasant day with slight seas and very warm conditions. A trip that contrasted remarkably with the Sydney trip only a few weeks earlier. A lot more birds present this time including large numbers of Flesh-footed Shearwaters. The Kermadec Petrel and the Streaked Shearwater being the highlights for most on board, even though the sightings were somewhat brief. The Kermadec Petrel was an intermediate plumaged bird, first thought to be a Tahiti Petrel due to similarities in plumage. The pale shafts visible on the upperwing and the overall shape and flight mannerism finally clinching the identification. Although one or two on board felt that they saw Tahiti Petrel? and it was suggested by several that two birds may have been in view at the same time. Overall though a fabulous and most memorable day.

### Birds,

(numbers in brackets = highest count at any one time)

(numbers before the name assist in the recording process)

073-Great-winged Petrel 40-60(15+)

853-STREAKED SHEARWATER 1

075-Buller's Shearwater 1

070-Sooty Shearwater 5(3)

068-Fluttering Shearwater 2-4(2)

104-Australasian Gannet 6-10(3)

106-Australian Pelican 2 Near harbour

128-Arctic Jaeger 5(2)

981-Kelp Gull 3(2)

115-Crested Tern 5+ inshore

982-GREY TERNLET 2

922-KERMADEC PETREL 1

069-Wedge-tailed Shearwater 20+(12)

072-Flesh-footed Shearwater 250+(100+)

071-Short-tailed Shearwater 6-10(3)

913-Hutton's Shearwater 6(1)

100-Little Pied Cormorant 2 Near harbour

945-Pomarine Jaeger 30+(10)

933-Long-tailed Jaeger 3-4(1)

125-Silver Gull 20+ inshore

120-Sooty Tern 1

### MAMMALS

Risso's Dolphin/Pygmy Killer Whale? 2

Sydney Pelagics depart on the 2nd Saturday of each month, Wollongong Pelagics depart on the 4th Sunday of each month and Eden Pelagics on the 3rd Sunday of each month thru 1999. If you would like to join one of these trips please contact either Tony Palliser or Pete Milburn to make a booking.

Tony Palliser

P.S. I had the best time -great birds and great company. I am looking forward to my next outing in the winter months to see the Albatrosses - Ed.



## The Atlas of Australian Birds - Again.

Over recent months we've mentioned a few times that we all have now the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of maps of the distribution of our Aussie birds. The scheme is called "The Atlas of Australian Birds" and is being managed by the RAOU, now called Birds Australia. It's to run for 4 years and quite a few of us are already involved. **But, we need more Club members** to get involved so as to bring more depth of knowledge of birds into the scheme. If you'd like to be in it, (and it's cheap, easy, and satisfying), give me a ring.

For those already Atlassing, a few pointers:

1. **If you're not certain of a birds identity, just don't record it.** We've had quite a few queries which, on being pursued, were recorded because they were "maybe's". Better to concede defeat in trying to identify a bird and then study it in the books and with other birdos so that next time you **can** be certain. Recording doubtful birds makes work for those vetting the records and discomfort for them and yourself.
2. Some Atlassers are doing regular 2 hectare/20 minute searches inside larger search areas and that's very good. The rules about conducting such searches have been changed a bit. If a bird is seen in the 2ha area during the 20mt search but not outside it in the larger area, then it should not be recorded for the larger area **unless** it is also seen in the 2ha area outside its 20mt search time.
3. We hold a "Special Permit" from the NSW State Forests. It permits "Up to 1,000 volunteer bird watchers" "To document the distribution and relative abundance of Australian birds. etc ". I've no idea why we need such a permit because movement and birdwatching in our NSW forests has always been quite free. But, if anyone is questioned about their right to be Atlassing in a NSW Forest, we have a bit of paper.
4. While Melbourne will accept a location expressed simply as "2 km north of Wollongong", it's much more useful if reasonable latitude and longitude can be determined. This is best done with a GPS instrument but we don't all have access to one. A good alternative is a 1 in 25,00 map from which lats/longs can be calculated without too much difficulty.
5. When you're filling in the forms, don't forget to fill in the boxes/bubbles for time spent on survey, GPS used?, datum, accuracy, location distance/direction/town/state, number surveying, size of search area. We've been missing some of these occasionally. If you're not sure of how to deal with a question, ring me. And use a soft pencil, preferably 2B, (not pen) keeping the bubble infills within the bubbles - the automatic scanning machine has convulsions if the blobs are too large or show through.
6. Don't forget that if you are doing a 2ha site and have prepared a Habitat Form, you'll have been given a Site Number. From there on you don't need to complete the "Positional Data" part of the Record Form for that site, you need only to show the Site Number.
7. When Atlassing in NSW National Parks, you may be invited by NP staff to add your observations to their internal atlassing scheme (done usually in 1km squares). Melbourne warn us that this risks (probably guarantees) duplicating records and thus biasing data, because the NP people contribute their records to Melbourne also. The advice is, only one or the other, preferably of course Atlassing in your own right.
8. If you're searching wetlands and like counting birds (apparently some people do), the counts can be pencilled after the bird's name on the Record Form (but watch you don't pencil too close to a bubble). See page 4 Atlas News 1.
9. **And, again, if you're not certain of a bird's identity, just don't record it.**

Dave Thomson 02 / 4284 2876.

Mine is an interesting sighting rather than one for Chris' list. Recently, from my vantage point behind the washing machine, I saw a satin bowerbird in all his "wholly glossy blue-black" glory pluck a bill full of petals from a large yellow dahlia and fly off in the direction of the Botanic Gardens. I had thought that they only decorated the bower in blue, but the book told me "blue, blue-green or yellow display objects". With this new knowledge, I expected him to return for more and indeed with my second load of washing he did arrive back only to ignore the lovely yellow dahlia and indulge in a very vigorous bath! Now did his lady love not appreciate the "yellow" and told him to "go have a bath", or was it a winner and he was sprucing up for further favours?

Norma Almond



## Barren Grounds Courses

### ***Birds with a Sweet Tooth***

**Date : 18 - 20 June      Leaders : Keith Egan & Raoul Boughton**

At this time of the year the Banksias are in flower and Barren Grounds is host to flocks of migrating honeyeaters. This weekend offers you a closer look at honeyeaters through mist-netting and banding. Keith is a dedicated naturalist who has a wealth of experience and knowledge about this beautiful family of birds. Come on early morning walks to observe feeding habits and fierce territorial behaviour! Learn about native nectar sources, conduct pollen sampling and identify the food plants of these sweet toothed birds.

### ***Capturing Birds on Paper***

**Date : 25 - 27 June      Leader : Peter Marsack**

Learn how to observe and sketch birds in nature with well known wildlife illustrator Peter Marsack. The combination of Peter 's talent and the beauty of Barren Grounds will inspire you to sketch and paint, or to complement your field notes with beautiful and informative drawings. A must for serious birdwatchers and naturalists with a keen eye for detail, or for those wishing to learn important observational skills in the field. This course will also allow you to observe birds in the hand and discover the finer details of a birds look. Bring your own materials.

### ***Birds-Eye-View***

**Date : 2 - 4 July      Leader : Raoul Boughton**

Join us on this weekend exploring the beauty of Barren Grounds and its hidden wonders. The warden will take you on a special guided tour of the Reserve visiting all the wonderful places that often remain undiscovered by many visitors, as well as the inspirational lookouts, waterfalls and splendid vistas that the region is renowned for. This is a weekend for the adventurous at heart and those who appreciate the beauty of nature. Come fly high this weekend on top of Jamberoo Mt. and get a birds-eye-view of Barren Grounds.

**How about a weekend especially  
for your club or group of friends ?  
Contact us to discuss your ideas.**

### Barren Grounds News Update

1. Chris Brandis assisted Raoul in paving the 'courtyard' at the Lodge in late March--still a small section to complete(ran out of pavers).
2. Darryl and Chris Brandis commenced construction and installation of fly screens on windows at the residence.
3. A fund raising raffle to raise \$2000 for solar heating/lighting the Lodge will start in June--I'm sure the club will be supportive of this venture.
4. Course bookings to date for 'Birds with a Sweet Tooth' and 'Capturing Birds On Paper' are low-- any members interested should contact Raoul for details and bookings(ph.02-42360195).
5. Jenny Smith has been appointed as the second Warden and is settling in very well and will be an invaluable asset in assisting Raoul and sharing a tremendous workload that Raoul has shouldered for the last twelve months.

Darryl Goldrick  
IBOC rep. to BGO C'mittee.



## Unusual Records April 1999 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
Streaked Shearwater	1	28/2	off Wollongong	pelagic	KL
Intermediate Egret	3	17/3	Swan Lake	lake shore	KM
<b>Pacific Bazza</b>	2	Feb/Mch	Bulli	urban/forest	RT,DG,GB
Grey Goshawk	1	14/3	Tahmoor	urban	CJC
Grey Goshawk	1	06/3	Albion Park	overhead	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	05/3	Farmborough Grove	creek	ND
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	05/4	Pelican View Res.	overhead	GB
Brown Falcon	1	07/3	Bass Point Rd.	rural	GB
Lewins Rail	1	March	Corimal	creek	GR
Spotless Crake	1	21/2	Dunmore	creek	JB1
Common Sandpiper	1	02/3	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	RF
<b>Buff-breasted Sandpiper</b>	1	March	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	RB,CB,RI
Pied Oystercatcher	7	13/3	Lake Conjola	estuary	KM
Sooty Oystercatcher	11	04/3	Nth Bendalong	beach	KM
Black-winged Stilt	50	22/3	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CP
Pacific Golden Plover	40	22/3	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CP
Double-banded Plover	57	13/4	Comerong Island	wetland	CP
Lesser Sand Plover	4	14/4	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CB,DG
Hooded Plover	3	13/3	Cunjurong Point	beach	KM
White-winged Black Tern	1	27/3	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
Grey Ternlet	2	28/2	off Wollongong	pelagic	KL
Emerald Dove	1	15/3	Albion Park	rainforest	KM
Peaceful Dove	1	13/3	Cunjurong Point	parkland	KM
<b>Superb Fruit-Dove</b>	1	21/4	Gerroa	hit window	per RB
Gang-gang	7	10/2	Port Kembla	urban	OR,SM
Long-billed Corella	9	27/3	Stuart Park	parkland	DW
Long-billed Corella	20+	14/3	Calderwood	rural	GB
Rainbow Lorikeet	2	14/3	Tahmoor	urban	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	5	15/3	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	35+	March	North Nowra	eucalypts	KM
Musk Lorikeet	20	March	Lake Heights	urban	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	300+	March	Primbee	urban	RI
Musk Lorikeet	few	13/3	Cudmirrah	urban	KM
Musk Lorikeet	few	16/3	Parma Creek	overhead	KM
Musk Lorikeet	30+	07/3	Lake Illawarra South	parkland	DG
Musk Lorikeet	25	14/3	Bulli	urban	JB
Musk Lorikeet	20	15/3	Fairy Meadow	urban	DW
Powerful Owl	2	18/4	Bundanoon Creek	forest	MB
Sooty Owl	1	18/4	Bundanoon Creek	forest	MB
Southern Emu-wren	6	07/3	Killalea Lagoon	bush	JW
Bell Miner	20+	14/3	Tahmoor	urban	CJC
Scarlet Honeyeater	few	09/3	North Nowra	spotted gums	KM
White-fronted Chat	100	22/3	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CP
Leaden Flycatcher	1	12/4	Lake Heights	urban	CJC
Logrunner	8+	14/3	Bulli Pass Reserve	forest	JB
Spangled Drongo	1	March	Primbee	garden	RI
Little Cuckoo-Shrike	2	14/3	Tahmoor	urban	CJC
Dusky Woodswallow	20	16/3	Darkes Forest	woodland	CJC
Dusky Woodswallow	9	19/4	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Grey Currawong	1	01/3	Cordeaux Dam	picnic ground	CJC
Little Raven	30+	23/2	Kangaloon	paddock	CJC
Beautiful Firetail	10+	02/4	Cook's Nose	heath	RT
Beautiful Firetail	few	April	upper Avon Dam	heath	MR

GB - Graham Barwell; MB - Mike Belshaw; JB - John Bissett; JB1 - John Blomstedt; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; ND - Nancy Dryden; ME - Mary Eskdale; PF - Peter Fackender; DG - Daryl Goldrick; RI - Ron Imisides; KL - Kerrí Lewis; KM - Kevin Mills; SM - Sue McGregor; IM - Ian McKinlay; BO - Bruce O'Brien; CP - Chris Presland; GR - Gwen Robinson; MR - Mark Robinson; OR - Olive Rodwell; RT - Roger Truscott; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Lots of records with the highlight being the 4<sup>th</sup> NSW record of a Buff-breasted Sandpiper. Also largest number of Stilts and Chats from Lake Wollumboola. 10<sup>th</sup> record of a Superb Fruit-Dove in the region, lots of records of Musk Lorikeets and 10<sup>th</sup> regional record of a Pacific Bazza.

## **L.B.O.C. PROGRAMME FOR 1999**

<b>FEB</b>	Wed	3rd	Outing	Windang Estuary
	Mon	8th	Meeting	Jack Baker "More birds on the edge"
	Sat	13th	Outing	Abrahams Bosum, Currarong (Diana Wright)
<b>MAR</b>	Mon	8th	Meeting	Chris Brandis - Cape York Trip
	Wed	10th	Outing	Tullawarra Ash Ponds (Daryl Goldrick)
	Sun	14th	Outing	Wirrimbirra Nature Reserve Tahmoor (Brian Hales)
<b>APRIL</b>		<b>2nd to 10th</b>		<b>Easter Camp - "Myall View" Bullahdelah</b>
<b>MAY</b>	Mon	10th	Meeting	Brian Hales "Birds of England"
	Sat	15th	Outing	Macquarie Pass National Park. (Chris Chafer)
	Wed	19th	Outing	Blackbutt Reserve, Shellharbour (Kevin McGregor)
<b>JUN</b>	Mon	14th	Meeting	Members Night
	Sun	20th	Outing	Korringulla Re serve, Primbee (Ron Imisides)
	Wed	23	Outing	Mt.Keira Guide Camp (Mary Eskdale)
<b>JUL</b>	Mon	12th	Meeting	Enn Muller "Woodcarving Aust. Flora & Fauna"
	Sat	17th	Outing	Yarrawa State Forest (Chris Brandis)
	Wed	21st	Outing	Macquarie Rivulet. (Barbara Hales)
<b>AUG</b>	Mon	9th	Meeting	Lindsay Smith "Albatrosses of the Illawarra"
	Sun	15th	Outing	Killalea State Recreation Area (Chris Chafer)
	Wed	18th	Outing	Puckeys Estate Fairy Meadow (Horrie Ward)
<b>SEP</b>	Mon	13th	Meeting	Trevor Quested (TBA)
	Sat	18th	Outing	Wilson Creek Dam Helensburg (Jack Hyslop)
	Wed	22nd	Outing	Grevilla Garden, Bulli - (Joan Wylie)
<b>OCT</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>2nd to Mon 4th</b>		<b>Weekend Camp at Lake Conjola</b>
	<b>Sat</b>	<b>23rd to Sat 30th</b>		<b>Camp at Temora (To be confirmed)</b>
<b>NOV</b>	Mon	8th	Meeting	To be advised
	Sun	14th	Outing	Fitzroy Falls Area (Siggy Freund)
<b>DEC</b>	Sat	11th	Outing	To be advised
	Mon	13th	Meeting	Christmas Fun/Awards night

# 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. 219

June 1999

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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, 14<sup>th</sup> June 1999**, 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 in birding experiences. Your Club needs you, your fellow members want you, so bring along something to show and talk about, read something, sing, dance or act! What ever makes you feel comfortable! A good night of fun is assured if you are prepared to do your "bit". Our President Kevin awaits your response so a program can be prepared. Please contact him on 42 713762. All members are also invited to bring a plate to share in supper afterwards and, if possible, to bring their own drinking vessel for or coffee.

**NEXT OUTING:** This months walk will be to **Korrongulla Reserve, Primbee on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June**. We will meet at the eastern end of **Nicolle Road, Primbee at 9.00 a.m.** From there we will circuit the Korrongulla Wetlands and arrive back at the cars for morning tea. After morning tea we will walk along the high dune area towards Windang and have lunch at the picnic area opposite the driving range, after which we will walk along the edge of the lake. Our leader for the day will be **Ron Imisides**. Anyone who would be interested in car pooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact The McGregors. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** will be held on **Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June** to Mt. Keira Guide Camp. Meet at Byrong Park, near the gates of the camp at **8.15 a.m.**

**Next Committee Meeting:** This will be held on **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**, at the house of **Jan and Athol Stuart**, starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**The deadline for articles for the July newsletter is 28<sup>th</sup> June.**

## MAY MEETING

Our guest speaker this meeting was ex- President Brian and in his usual manner opened the proceedings, (with a little help from his lighting assistant), in a spectacular fashion with a map of the British Isles and a musical refrain of 'Land of Hope and Glory'. The only thing missing was a couple of Beefeaters 'changing the guard'!

Brian then zoomed in on Yorkshire and Kingston-On-Hull, both his and Barbara's birth place. An interesting family chronology including snapshots of their English home, children and their newly adopted domicile at Towradgi, Australia. Funny thing was there were no photos of the boat trip--I have a suspicion that it was not an altogether pleasant experience. If only he had the birding bug in those days he would have captured all those pelagic spp. and may have made the trip more pleasurable.

Brian then showed us some great slides of a range of British breeds such as Blue Tit (with a fetish for silver foil milk bottle tops and putty from newly glazed windows), Grey Tit, Yellow Hamlet Bull Finch, Blackbird, Green Plover, English Magpie Jay, Common Pheasant, Grouse (considered by many to be the only indigenous spp.), Song and Mistle Thrush, Hooper Swan, Magellan Goose and many more.

Bempton Cliffs (my apologies if misspelled--my atlas didn't show it) has the largest sea- bird nesting colony on the east coast with up to 13,000 pairs of Gannets. Other spp. include Razorbills, Skuas, Shags, Guillemots and last but by no means least Puffins!!!

Thanks for an entertaining evening Brian--though the joke about the dog applying for the plumber's job was lost on many in the audience--we might need a rerun on it sometime!

Darryl Goldrick



### **Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands**

by C.J. Chafer, C.C.P. Brandis & D. Wright. 1999.

I am pleased to announce that the long waited book has finally been completed. Some 18 months in the making, it is 140 pages packed with information covering the 413 species of bird that have been recorded in our region since 1839. The region covered by the book extends from Lake Conjola north to Stanwell Park, west and north to Warragamba Dam, then south along the Wollondilly and Shoalhaven Rivers to Corang Peak near Nerriga, then east to the coast, an area of over 886 sq. km. Coverage also extends to a distance of 50 km off shore to incorporate the valuable seabird data that has been collected over the past 30 years. Each species is illustrated with a map of its known distribution and text covering its status, abundance, conservation value and basic ecology. The maps are divided into 40 sub-areas that can be used by individuals to create "local lists" for favoured birding areas. For species with restricted distributions, or are rare, specific location data and population estimates are provided. The book also features a comprehensive bibliography of over 260 references on birds of the region and is fully indexed.

The book will hopefully be on sale at the June IBOC meeting for \$15, or you can order by mail for \$20. Mail orders should be directed to the secretary and cheques made payable to IBOC. All profits from the sale go IBOC.

Chris Chafer



Midweek Walk  
Blackbutt Forest Reserve, near Shellharbour

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 1999

Lat. 34 34' S. Long. 150 51'E.

We had a wonderful morning for the first midweek outing after a break of about 3 years. A quick check of the records showed we have visited the Reserve on 8 previous occasions. Thirteen turned out to experience the delightful weather and the beautiful surroundings of Blackbutt Forest. It was a lovely calm, mild, sunny morning, with not a cloud in the sky. We met in the main carpark at 8.30 a.m. to the call of the Grey Butcherbird and Australian Raven coming from several places in the trees around us.

We began our walk through the eastern firegate along the Red Gum Trail that runs along the ridge through the forest that is dominated by Forest Red Gum tress, with a mixture of Stringybark trees and Coastal Grey Box along the trail.

The birds were in good voice from the start of the walk and being mostly the larger ones were easy to see. The Australian Raven, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Currawong, Sulfur-crested Cockatoo and Crimson Rosella were all observed a number of times, while the Lewin's Honeyeater and Spotted Pardalote were heard calling nearby, as we walked along the trail. The southern slopes going down to the dam is dominated by Blackbutt trees; it is wet sclerophyll on the moister side of the hill with a patch of rainforest on the lower slopes; to a marshy area along the waterway leading to the dam, where some Melaleucca trees grow. It was noted that Lantana had a strong hold along parts of the trail also.

As we progressed along the trail, the Yellow and Brown Thornbill were observed in the higher branches while the Red-browed Finch, Superb Fairy-wren and Variegated Fairywren were sighted in the scubby area on the floor among the grasses and fallen branches. Some other birds observed were the Willie Wagtail, Grey Fantail, White-browed Scubwren, Eastern Yellow Robin, Eastern Spinebill and Australian Magpie. At the end of the trail the landscape opened out into a large grass area with a few stands of mainly wattles, where we decided it was time for a cup of tea. Here, Jack Hyslop sighted a fox taking cover in some more trees down the hillside, as he walked around a stand of wattle trees.

We then walked down the hillside towards the southern boundary and met up with the trail that led to the dam. Part way down the hill, we observed the Laughing Kookaburra and a female Golden Whistler. The trail now lead around the southern side of the dam and viewing from a higher perspective, one gets a good sighting all over the dam. After a showery weather of recent weeks the dam looked in good condition and supported a good number of birds. These were the Pacific Black Duck, Purple Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Australasian Grebe and Hoary-headed Grebe, which is one of the best numbers of sightings we have had at one time.

We walked along the power line easement bordering the rainforest and up the rather steep slope back to the carpark, arriving back at 11.45 a.m., ending a most pleasant walk.

For the morning, we recorded a total of 36 species.

208	Pacific Black Duck	338	Fantailed Cuckoo	408	Grey Shrike-thrush
061	Australasian Grebe	322	Laughing Kookaburra	361	Grey Fantail
062	Hoary-headed Grebe	529	Superb Fairy-wren	363	Willie Wagtail
058	Purple Swamphen	536	Variegated Fairy-wren	424	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
056	Dusky Moorhen	565	Spotted Pardalote	702	Grey Butcherbird
059	Eurasian Coot	488	White-browed Scrubwren	705	Australian Magpie
989	Spotted Turtle Dove	475	Brown Thornbill	694	Pied Currawong
267	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	471	Yellow Thornbill	930	Australian Raven
269	Sulfur-crested Cockatoo	605	Lewin's Honeyeater	662	Red-browed Finch
281	Australian King Parrot	591	Eastern Spinebill	357	Welcome Swallow

282 Crimson Rosella  
288 Eastern Rosella

392 Eastern Yellow Robin  
398 Golden Whistler

990 Re-whiskered Bulbul  
574 Silvereye

Horrie Ward



### SNIPPETS FROM THE PAST

I have had a need to research the clubs old newsletters and in so doing have been enlightened on many facets of the 'early days'. So for the edification of the newer members and a refresher for the long established ones I will provide extracts from 'days of old' in upcoming newsletters: -

1. Esme Gay sighted a Purple-crowned Pigeon in her Cottoneaster tree on 31 May 1979---a first in the County of Camden since 1939.
2. Early club sightings were categorised into passerines and non-passerines.
3. Naturalist Vincent Seventy addressed the club on 13 August 1979.
4. Cumberland Bird Club formed in Oct/Nov 1979.
5. The first bird atlas of Australia started on 1.1.1977 and ran for 5 years.
6. Membership as of 30.4.1980 was 129 - of these 27 were single memberships, the remainder was husband's wife &/or family children.
7. The club had its own Theme Song first sung at the Xmas meeting by the IBOC TRIO- Nola Williams, Norma Almond and accompanied by Betty Thomson--- perhaps Nola might be encouraged to recruit a few and give us a rendition this Xmas!!
8. Freckled Ducks were sighted at Kanahooka in 1981--how times and habitat have changed!
9. First meeting held in the Fairy Meadow Senior Citizens Club was 8 June 1981.
10. Fourteen smuggled Alpacas were walked from Sydney to Wingello and then to Avondale via Bong Bong Pass in 1886 - they were valued at 15000 pounds but the industry didn't flourish due to unsuitable coastal conditions and the Chilean government banned their export.
11. Chris Sontter reports the first ever sighting of Red-whiskered Bulbul at Barren Grounds in Nov 1981.
12. Unusual sightings column first introduced in May 1983

Stay tuned for the next exciting installment in future issues

Darryl Goldrick



### Card Swapping

A request to swap KINKARA TEA BIRD SERIES cards has been received from Mrs. Margaret Ward. She is requesting any other members who may be collecting the cards and have excess cards they may wish to swap. She is particularly interested in acquiring card number 34. Interested members are asked to contact Margaret at 19 Terry Ave. Warilla or phone 42951249. There are five volumes to this series and her inquiry is not limited to just the above card number. She would ultimately like to donate this set when completed to a school or local library.



### GROUND PARROT CENSUS

Barren Grounds Nature Reserve, Jamberoo Mountain Road, Jamberoo (8 km east of Robertson)

**8 August 1999 - 9 a.m.** (at the main carpark)

## Conservation Corner

Climate warming could be pushing birds father north to breed, a new study suggests.

Ecologists Chris D. Thomas and Jack J. Lennon of the University of Leeds in England analysed the distributions of nesting birds in Britain over 20 years, roughly between 1970 and 1990. The northern boundaries of the ranges of many species appear to have moved northward, on average by 11.7 miles, the scientists' report in this week's journal Nature. Previous studies have suggested that changes in climate are spurring many organisms - including butterflies, amphibians, and plants - to head to cooler regions either by moving northward or climbing mountains.

But many of these studies were unable to prove that the shifts were caused by true migrations rather by changes in total area occupied, as occurs when populations grow or shrink.

Using data from two atlases of breeding birds in Great Britain, Thomas and Lennon measured changes in the boundaries of breeding areas of more than 100 bird species and compared them to changes in breeding ground area.

"This sort of creativity in analyzing what little data we have is extremely important" says ecologist Camille Parmesan of the University of Texas in Austin.

Thomas and Lennon estimate that, on average, the northern edges of species that breed in southern Britain have moved almost 12.4 miles north in 20 years. Surprisingly, they did not observe a corresponding shift in the southern borders of northerly species. For now, nobody is exactly sure why.

The researchers blame climate warming for the northward shift because the shift coincided with a period of warming, because other studies indicate that changes in temperature affect bird reproduction, and because the distribution of bird species in Britain is correlated with temperature.

"I'm surprised the (northward) changes were so slight," says ornithologist Jeff Price of the American Bird Conservancy in Colorado, who is conducting similar studies in North America. "On its own, it isn't really strong evidence for climate warming shift," Price says. "He says he's measured a 45.3 mile northward shift in a warbler population over 24 years, for example.

"It's when you put all the studies together that you start building a picture of what's happening," says Parmesan. "And that picture is increasingly saying that very small changes in climate make quite large changes in natural systems.

By Marina Chicurel, Discovery [Extract from Birding Australia, May 24<sup>th</sup>]



When ornithologists are mutually attracted

(from the FAR SIDE COLLECTION)



The following is an article received from John Lochlannaigh-Blomstedt about his trip in Queensland last year in July and August.

I have only included the first half and will continue the article in the next newsletter. Happy reading -Ed.

#### WINTER TRIP BUNDABERG - MARLBOROUGH. JULY - AUGUST 1998

##### Preamble

Firstly we would visit bird localities south of, in and east of Bundaberg. Then making a sightseeing and bird observation trip inland of Bundy and along the Burnett Hwy. Places of interest are old gold mining towns. After that travelling thro Rockhampton up Bruce Hwy to Marlborough and out on Torilla Peninsula to Stanage. Return to Bruce Hwy, visit Yeppoon and the scenic drive back to Rockhampton. Bruce Hwy southward diverting to Seventeen-Seventy and lastly the country roads down to Koolan and the cane farm at Electra where we were staying. Observation sites and bird list in the appendix.

After spending a week around and in Bundaberg we set out for a trip visiting areas of cultural interest and making bird observations.

Leaving our friend's - Edna and John Hannah - canefarm we drove the Isis Hwy and Bruce Hwy to Booyal and then southwest to Burnett Hwy. Our first stop was to be Coalstoun N.P. Didn't see any sign before or after Coalstoun village. Turned back and got info where the N.P. turnoff is. Found it at last. Only a tiny road sign-pointer shows the direction to a paddock track beyond a grid. The big American limosine of ours manage to ride over the 'hillocks' between the two tracks. Even turning succeeded on a slight grassy slope at the foot of the old volcanic mountains.

There are two of them. We climbed the closest. Very steep. At the top is the rim of the crater, forested. The crater bottom is flat. Grassy even after the long drought. Panoramic view of the surrounding area. Well down at the limo we enjoyed the flight play of a pair of kestrels tumbling in the blue sky.

We passed Ban-Ban Springs which lie on a wide plain. In time long passed drovers and stockmen watered their herds here and camped.

In the north the hill rises, the Burnett Hwy is winding among blossoming trees to Gayndah. The town is Queensland's oldest. Originally settled to serve the sheep country. To-day famous for its orange orchards along the Burnett River. The river has taken its name from the surveyor who first surveyed the area. Gayndah competed with Brisbane and Ipswich to be the capital of Queensland.

Along the highway to Eidsvold the forests close in and timber is added to the agricultural production, mainly beef cattle. The name of the town comes from the Archer brothers' station established in 1848. Called so from their home town Eidsvoll in Norway. It, like so many, grew during the gold mining times in the latter part of 1800. Here as in too many country towns the railway closed some years ago. A morning walk with our dog around the railway station revealed the beginning decline of buildings and machinery. We visited the museum - recommended - with an interesting slabhouse - they lived, then, indeed in fresh air judging from the gaps between the slabs - and equipment and photos from time passed by.

Burnett Hwy led us thro mostly forested tracts over Auburn Range into Dawson River valley. Cattle stations over rolling hills. We turned off towards Mount Morgan and road and hills got steeper.

A walk in the afternoon around the M.M. showed us many buildings and objects from its grand old days as one of the largest copper mines in the world.



It started with gold being mined in 1882 by the Morgan Brothers. Gold yields fell at the turn of the century. But deeper in the mine copper deposits were found and mined to 1927. Never to go in production after a prolonged strike; It is registered as a heritage town. We enjoyed a sight-seeing tour of the town and the mine by a jestering guide. The open mine is filled with water, copper red in colour. It's a good preservative for everthing that falls into it, inclusively bodies. Will be a great palaeozoic site in million years ahead. But who are then around? Not present days Homo for certain. High up on the peak there are another palaeozoic trace, namely foot prints of dinosaurs in the rood of a cave. That was excavated to get shale for the brickfield. Many of the buildings of the mining area were demolished wholly or partly before the heritage council stopped the robbery.

After the tour the panoramic winding road - forbidden for large caravans - took us down to the coastal plains around Rockhampton. Marlborough, a cattle centre or was, 102 km to the north would be our stay for the night and our turning point.

At the turn-off 23 km south of M. the highlight of the trip - birdwise - started. There starts an over 100 km dirt road northward to Stanage at the top of the Torilla Peninsula. In the east lies the Berserker Range - old viking name for fighters drugged with dried toadstools - the watershed between the coast and the vast plain occupied by large cattle stations. Areas around and upland of Rockhampton are known to be the Beef Area of Australia. Hardly would we believe that when driving along those empty brown burned paddocks.

Due to the prolonged drought most birds were drawn to the few swamps and water holes. We drove in a very slow speed frequently stopping and observing. (observing 5A)

The observation highlight was the following.

After having passed thro a low ridge of sparse forest a flat stretch lay to the right like a bay cutting in between the ridge we passed and the ridge ahead. Two whistling kites were coming over the inner part and another bird swooping, taking height, swooping again, and again. It was a peregrine falcon. The whistling kite attacked every time turned on its back and gripped with the talons at the peregrine. Neither of the kites carried anything. They passed straight above us and out to our left. The peregrine gave up its attacks.

Reminds me of an event in the late seventies when passing Glebe Island Bridge in Sydney on a clear blue sky day I saw a peregrine swoop and take a pidgeon out of a flock. In Forties at a Swedish ornithological club meeting the members were told by one of the foremost ornithologists of Sweden at that time how he observed the simil ar thing a bright winterday in central Stockholm. The most remarkable he said, was, however, that there was no reaction among the crowds waiting for the trams at that square on the shore of the Målar Lake. Obviously no-one else observed it.

At Stanage we made camp close to the shore and enjoyed a pleasant sunset. Next morning we watched the shores at ebb north of the point and around the straight. (Site 5B)

At noon we drove south. Now much faster but with some stops at few interesting places. The broлга pair we saw the day before was still at the same swamp.

To BE CONTINUED

## Unusual Records May 1999 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
Buller's Albatross	1	23/5	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Pied Cormorant	3	24/5	Red Point	marine	CJC
Little Black Cormorant	65	24/5	Kanahooka Bay	lake	DG
Straw-necked Ibis	600+	05/5	Jamberoo Valley	rural	RB
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	2	24/5	west Dapto	farm dam	DG
Swamp Harrier	1	25/4	Woonona	overhead	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	03/4	Bewong	rural	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	04/5	Bulli Tops	on power lines	NW
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	07/5	Mt. Ousley	overhead	DT
Grey Goshawk	2	09/5	Primbee	overhead	GB
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	19/5	Bombo	overhead	CP
Peregrine Falcon	2	08/4	Bulli	overhead	IM
Double-banded Plover	56	22/5	Windang	sandflats	DG
White Tern	1	23/5	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Topknot Pigeon	30	22/5	Pleasant Ridge	overhead	MR
Topknot Pigeon	50	15/5	Barren Grounds NR	overhead	RB
Topknot Pigeon	60	16/5	Macquarie Pass NP	overhead	IBOC
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	02/4	Sussex Inlet Road	overhead	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	May	Hanging Swamp, Penrose	woodland	per MR
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	10/5	Robertson bus stop	overhead	RB
Eastern Rosella	1	02/5	Windang	urban	GB
Eastern Rosella	2	May	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Common Koel	1	13/5	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	RB
Powerful Owl	1	14/5	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RB
Australian Owlet-Nightjar	1	14/5	Yalwal	woodland	DG
Australian Owlet-Nightjar	1	14/5	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RB
Azure Kingfisher	1	03/4	Cudmirrah	lake shore	KM
Southern Emu-wren	3	26/4	Maddens Plains	heathland	GB
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	1	03/4	Cudmirrah	heathland	KM
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	2	26/4	Maddens Plains	heathland	GB
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	50+	14/5	Yalwal	woodland	DG
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	09/5	Primbee	woodland	GB
Brown-headed Honeyeater	1	03/4	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	10	26/4	Maddens Plains	heathland	GB
Rose Robin	2	22/5	Bulli	forest	RT
Satin Flycatcher	1	04/5	Mt. Ousley	garden	GR
Crested Shrike-tit	2	02/5	Bulli	forest	RT
Crested Shrike-tit	2	22/4	Thirroul	rainforest	IM
Crested Shrike-tit	1	15/5	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	RB
Spangled Drongo	1	26/4	Berkeley	urban	CJC
Spangled Drongo	1	26/4	Primbee	woodland	GB
Spangled Drongo	1	28/4	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Figbird	2	25/4	Wollongong CBD	figtrees	KM
Grey Currawong	1	03/4	Cudmirrah	woodland	KM
Beautiful firetail	2	26/4	Maddens Plains	heathland	GB

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; KM - Kevin Mills; IM - Ian McKinlay; CP - Chris Presland; GR - Gwen Robinson; MR - Mark Robinson; DT - Dave Thomson; RT - Roger Truscott; NW - Nola Williams.

**Comment:** An interesting array of records for a usually quite time of the year. Topknot Pigeons were observed heading north along the escarpment by a number of observers in May, a bit later than usual. Quite a few Grey Goshawks, especially along the seaboard. Glossy Black Cockatoos are now turning up at bus stops to get around! Its good to see that heathwrens are again being observed, and that the Tawny crowned Honeyeater population at Maddens Plains are still going strong. Eastern Rosella have started to appear in eastern Lake Illawarra suburbs and the elusive Owlet-Nightjar was observed at a couple of locations. Yalwal is always good for Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, though 50+ is exceptional. The Common Koel at Barren Grounds was apparently a new record for the reserve. Most of the Musk Lorikeets reported last month have moved on, who will see the first Swift Parrots of the season? The Buller's Albatross is the ninth record for the region. The White Tern is the 10<sup>th</sup> record from the region and the first since 1993.

# 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. 220

July 1999

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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, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1999**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** Enn Muller of Oak Flats is highly regarded and awarded wood carver and specialises in Australian flora and fauna. Details of one of his carvings representing the "Spirit of Jenolan Caves" has been featured in a carving magazine in the USA. Enn exhibits his work locally and interstate and is currently teaching carving. His current project featuring 6 galahs and a goanna will be displayed at our meeting. Come and see a masterpiece in the course of construction.

**NEXT OUTING:** Due to unforeseen circumstances please note that our scheduled walk to Yarrawa State Forest has been postponed to next month as our leader Chris Brandis is unavailable. Instead, this month's walk will be to **Killalea State Recreation Area on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July**. We will meet at **9.00 a.m.** at the first carpark past the entrance to Killalea Park. If you are heading south along Shellharbour Road to Dunmore, it is the first left after the roundabout at Shell Cove. Our leader for the day will be **Chris Chafer**. Anyone who would be interested in carpooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact The McGregors. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** will be held on **Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> July** along **Macquarie Rivulet** and part of Lake Illawarra at **Koona Bay**. Meet at 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail at **8.30 a.m.** If you need to know how to get there please ring Barbara Hales, 42574431

**Next Committee Meeting:** This will be held on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July**, at the house of **Kevin and Fae McGregor**, starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**The deadline for articles for the August newsletter is 26<sup>th</sup> July.**

## June Meeting – Members Night.

Members night has traditionally been a great night and this year was no exception, though the lack of power to drive all the electrical equipment prior to the meeting commencing had President Kevin a little anxious but thanks to Ron Imisides sleuthing skills he managed to locate the power board in the storeroom, power was restored – Let the show begin!

Chris Brandis gave members a run down on the history and role of BIGNET and advised that IBOC was hosting the next meeting on 11/12 September 1999.

Richard Miller then provided us with a very amusing cartoon sequence on the new French made washing machine specially for birds who have been soiled with oil slicks. With the aid of non-harmful suds, birds can now be cleaned in a mere seven minutes. This has been a magnificent invention as the birds are quickly cleaned, compared to the traditional and time consuming manual methods of the past. Overall stress levels are greatly reduced and the birds chances of recovery much enhanced.

Next on stage was Betty Hudson with a selected poem from ‘The Poetry of Birds’ published between 1793 – 1864. Betty, as usual, recited ‘ The Thrushes Nest’ with quiet yet passionate tones – Well done Betty!

What a great slide presentation by Ron Imisides. The quality of the pictures and the magic of the moment are certainly an outstanding feature of Ron’s photographic skills. I have no delusions about my skills even if I do increase my telephoto capacity from 200mm to 400mm. It will simply magnify my errors by a factor of x2!!

Barbara Hales recited a poem on the Starling and showed us her ( or Brian’s ) latest Puffin nick-nacks. Brian then took us on a return trip to Lord Howe Island , first visited by an IBOC group 10 years ago. Obviously, some very pleasant memories for all concerned and who will ever forget Gwen Robinson in her ‘Ben Cropp’ skin diving apparel.

New comers Monica and Brenda then enchanted the group with a simulated camp fire reflections of two poems – The Crane and Galah.

Richard Fackender gave us a fascinating insight of nests and eggs – and aspect of birding that is often out of reach and out of sight for the average birder. Great pictures Richard. Chris Chafer then provided us with slides from his collection which included great shots of the Plains Wanderer – once again like Ron, Chris proves to be a very competent photographer.

The evening concluded with supper while watching some footage of Kevin McGregor’s Cape York trip. A great evening of entertainment and our thanks to all who contributed to it. Despite the foul weather conditions which prevailed outside , there was an extremely good attendance- I think the evenings program was a just reward for those who braved the inclement conditions.

Darryl Goldrick.



**FOR SALE:** Club badges (studs and pins), cloth badges, key rings, and car stickers are available and will be display at the next meeting.

Also "The Claremont Field Guide to the Birds of Australia" (Simpson and Day) is available. Price \$15.

The 3 Volume publication of "Outings - 1977 to 1998" is available. Price\$50.

## Twitchathon

Anyone interested in forming teams for the annual Twitchathon to be held on the last weekend in October please contact Bruce O'Brien on 42627529. It is hoped that two teams could be formed - one here in Wollongong and the other at the Temora Camp.



### June Walk to Korrongulla Reserve Primbee

On Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> June twenty-eight members of I.B.O.C. met at Korrongulla Swamp for our monthly walk. The weather was perfect. The sun shone out of a clear blue sky and the wind, which had been icy for days, had taken its elsewhere and there wasn't even a breeze.

We went through the little gate, which never seems to be shut, and over the little bridge. There were dry seed beds either side of the sandy track and the reeds had recovered from the burn off. It was strangely quiet - no chirps or tweets - and only one frog was emitting a gentle "ribbit, ribbit" occasionally.

It is with that swamps and marshes have been recognised as having great ecological importance perhaps Korrongulla will continue to exist for hundreds of years instead of being filled in with rubbish. When the sand mining finishes perhaps we will be able to walk around the eastern perimeter of the water and see more species of birds if not just more of the same.

We saw Pacific Black Duck, Chestnut Teal, Hardhead and Australasian Grebe. Members of the Cormorant family - Pied, Little Pied, Little Black and Giant - were practicing togetherness on the same couple of trees that they had sat on during our last visit, the only difference being that the trees looked even sicker. This is due to the fact that the trees are Casuarinas and as such are used to soil of low fertility. The continual droppings from the Cormorants are just too much of a good thing!

The vandalism that so horrified us on our last visit has been tidied up but not repaired and the chopped trees have recovered. From the viewing platform, we saw large expanses of open water, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot as well as male and female Superb Fairy-wrens.

The native vegetation is having a hard time, with introduced weeds mostly doing very well. The lantana appeared to have been sprayed and was mostly dead but the bitu bush and turkey rhubarb is rampant in the area.

When we came to the shadow of the tall sandstone cliffs on the northern side of the swamp, the temperature dropped appreciably and there were huge Figtrees, their roots going down between boulders and draping over them, Pittosporums and Eucalypts. We saw New Holland Honeyeaters, who were extremely noisy. There were also some quite large patches of droppings but we saw no nests or the evidently large birds that had left them. Soon we were back in the warm sunlight and a gentle waft of breeze from the west carried with it a whiff of the cormorants' perches. We couldn't mistake it for being lavender!

We passed the sand dredge and also a small bank where some bitu bush had been removed but had re-seeded, so we stopped and removed the seedlings. We were soon back to the sandy path, bordered by the reed beds. The lone frog was still "ribbiting" away and still getting no answer. Perhaps frogs and humans have more in common than we think. That frog was just as hopeful, persistent and persevering as any birdwatchers trying to get a sighting.

We had morning tea back at the cars - most of us perching on the rails and feeling quite at home, just like the birds. We saw 40 species for the morning. Many thanks for leading the walk Ron.

Peggy Merrett



After morning tea back at the cars the group commenced the second part of the walk. This involved following the roadway along the western boundary of the Korongulla Wetlands, crossing the highway, or Primbee Deviation, and then following the cycleway east along the boundary of Port Kembla Golf Course. At the north-eastern corner of the golf course a track commences southward, running between the dunes behind Perkins Beach and the golf course. Just as we arrived at this junction a Grey Goshawk flew into a nearby tree, and after several minutes flew towards the wetlands, affording most of the group good views.

We were soon in quite dense coastal woodland, made up of predominantly of swamp mahogany, casuarina, and banksias. Many of the banksias and swamp mahoganies were out in flower, attracting large numbers of honeyeaters, especially New Holland Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and Red Wattlebird. Whilst there were many flowering blossoms, apparently they were not as profuse as the previous year, and there was no sign of the Swift Parrots that were in this area about twelve months ago. However, a few of the group were able to observe Scarlet Honeyeaters feeding, and a Spangled Drongo was sighted by most of the group. At one point a pair of Musk Lorikeets flew overhead, and Fan-tailed Cuckoo was both heard and sighted.

At several points track junctions allowed access to the beach, and some members followed these a little way before rejoining the main group. On at least one of these we sighted Red-whiskered Bulbul and Variegated Fairy-wren. As we came towards the higher dune area a Brown Goshawk was sighted in the distance.

Eventually we came to the southern end of the track, which allowed access to the short roadway along the southern boundary of the golf course. The vegetation along here produced Spotted Pardalote, Superb Fairy-wren and a striking male specimen of the Variegated Fairy-wren. Following this roadway we came back to Windang Road, which we crossed with care, and came to our lunch spot south of Oasis Caravan Park, and right on the shore of Lake Illawarra.

This spot has obviously had some work done by the Lake Illawarra Authority, and information was posted about the Aboriginal history in the area, including an informative and entertaining story about Windang Island. There were also platforms into the lake allowing good views of the waterbirds on the lake's eastern shore, and it was here that we were extremely fortunate to see Pink-eared Duck, Australasian Shoveller, Little Pied Cormorant, Black-winged Stilt, and hundreds of Black Swans.

After we completed our lunch we began working our way north again, and for much of the way we were able to walk on public access land behind the houses, continuing to look for more waterbirds, and any among the foliage of nearby vegetation, mainly casuarinas. At one point two Willie Wagtails seemed to be frolicking with two Grey Fantails, being watched by Yellow Thornbills.

We came back to Nicolle Road, making our way between the houses by another public thoroughfare. As we arrived back at the cars we noted a flock of 22 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, demonstrating clearly how this species has become more common on the Illawarra Plain in recent years. All had a good time, and we look

forward to meeting some of the newer members of the club on future outings. The avian tally for the day was 59 species.

**Birds for the day**

Black Swan	Black-winged Stilt	Scarlet Honeyeater
Pacific Black Duck	Masked Lapwing	Eastern Yellow Robin
Australasian Shoveler	Silver Gull	Grey Shrike-thrush
Grey Teal	Spotted Turtle-Dove	Magpie-lark
Chestnut Teal	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Grey Fantail
Pink-eared Duck	Galah	Willie Wagtail
Hardhead	Rainbow Lorikeet	Spangled Drongo
Australasian Grebe	Musk Lorikeet	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Little Pied Cormorant	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Grey Butcherbird
Pied Cormorant	Laughing Kookaburra	Australian Magpie
Little Black Cormorant	Superb Fairy-wren	Pied Currawong
Great Cormorant	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Australian Raven
stralian Pelican	Spotted Pardalote	Richard's Pipit
White-faced Heron	White-browed Scrubwren	House Sparrow
Great Egret	Yellow Thornbill	Red-browed Finch
Australian White Ibis	Red Wattlebird	European Goldfinch
Brown Goshawk	Little Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow
Grey Goshawk	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Dusky Moorhen	White-naped Honeyeater	Silvereye
Eurasian Coot	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Starling
Common Myna		

Bruce O'Brien

⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦⌘♦

**Proposed IBOC Camp to Temora                    23.10.99 - 30.10.99**

"**he Pinnacles**", a 4 000 acre property 30 kms. out of Temora, is the superb venue for our October Camp thanks to the generosity of the owners Irene and Jim Ricketts.

The property runs sheep and cattle and grows wheat and oats. It could be shearing time during our stay.

There are 3 sites suitable for our campsite and a decision on the most suitable one will be made closer to the camp time. There are dams, paddocks to wander in and hills to climb, including the pinnacles, with good bird life in all habitats. Plenty of timber for our campfires and good water supplies although as always we encourage you to take your own drinking water supply. Off the property there are good areas to visit within easy travelling time.

It is hoped as many members as possible will consider coming to this camp and intentions of interest will be sought soon. For further information please contact Kevin McGregor on 42 713762.

So please make a make a note in your diaries for the October Long Weekend camp to Lake Conjola and the *week* camp at the end of October to Temora. Particulars of directions and other camp matters will be in the August and September newsletters.

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## June Midweek Walk

On Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, twelve members of I.B.O.C. met on a calm, dull day after a night of heavy rain at the Mt. Keira Guides' Camp for a mid-week walk.

We soon left the paved road and headed into the rainforest. The path we followed was carpeted with fallen leaves, which were soft and attractive underfoot. There were Giant Maidenhair Ferns for ground cover, large boulders covered with moss, lichen and other species of fern, very tall trees which would have completely blocked the sun had there been any, and of course the damp smell, always associated with rainforests and worm farms.

There were plenty of monkey vines but alas no small boys with us so we crossed the creek by a bridge composed completely of railway sleepers. By this time the vegetation had changed and there were Casuarinas, Pittosporum still carrying a few seeds and Bush Cherries without fruit, as well as some amazing fungi.

We passed through the rainforest and came to a level clearing. High in a tall gum we spotted 10 Topknot Pigeons. We were all most impressed with this until a bit later on we saw a flight of at least 40! In the middle of this clearing small group of native trees had been planted and mulched - Illawarra Flame Trees, White Cedar, Broadleaf Wattle and Large-leaved Figtrees. On the far side, a large Red Cedar had lost most of its leaves. Where we had morning tea there were quite a few Red-browed Firetails and Superb Fairy-wrens.

Soon we were out of the clearing and into another rainforest. There was a multitude of young Cabbage Tree Palms and also the largest Bracket Fungus we'd seen. It was at least 60cm by 45cm, black on top and white underneath and at least 20cm thick. We spotted a nest, neatly constructed and sturdy looking, hanging well down from a smallish tree and swinging in a gentle breeze. A Yellow-throated Scrubwren may have made it. Towards the clearing again was a Tawny Frogmouth doing its usual excellent imitation of a broken tree branch. The markings on its wings perfectly matched in colour, size and shape, the lichen on its perching tree.

Our walk came to an abrupt end at 11 a.m. when steady rain commenced but not our birdwatching. Through the rain we saw a flock of at least 60 Spotted Pardalotes, an Australian Raven, Crimson Rosella, Laughing Kookaburra and Grey Butcherbird.

We saw 27 species for the morning and enjoyed it immensely. The leeches were only selective - some people are lucky! Many thanks to Mary.

Peggy Merrett



### LAKE ENTRANCE MONITORING PROJECT

The Lake Illawarra Authority has now agreed to our monitoring protocol and it is anticipated that the project will start in late July – August.

We now **desperately** need volunteers to participate in the program and we will be calling for expressions of interest from club members at the meeting. It is proposed that for those who are interested, Chris Chafer will provide a special briefing session on the methodology and reporting protocols. Kevin and Chris will elaborate on this matter on Monday night but the first and most important need is for people to join the monitoring team. If you are not able to make the meeting but are interested please register your name with either Chris or Kevin.





THE REST OF THE  
WINTER TRIP BUNDABERG - MARLBOROUGH JULY - AUGUST 1998

In Yeppoon we found a cara-park where we spent our night. Certainly the tourists collect themselves along this coast. On the scenic drive the next day we stopped at Emu Park township and visited the Singing Ship at Churchill Lookout. The monument for the famous captain named James Cook, is built with flutes which catch the wind and give singing sounds. Most unusual, but it works. We had lunch in the Botanic Garden, which we visited in 1988 on the Cape York tour. South of Rockhampton we turned towards Port Alma. But that was a great disappointment. Miles of miles of salina and salt works. Salt is an important source for chemical industries. At the port nowhere to go and nothing to see. Not even gulls.

We took in at a caravan site along the Bruce Hwy. It didn't have any guests. Thought it would be nice. But soon we realised, why no guests. The railway line is just on the other side of the highway. The traffic on the line is immense due to the coal trucks to Gladstone power stations and for export. Every half hour or less they rattled up empty to the open coal mines and loaded downwards. Tremendous noise.

Continued midday next day after the repair of the door to the camper travelling south having our sights on the Seventeen-Seventy, where the same captain repaired his ship. The name commemorates the year of the repair and is so named from 1953. At one shore cara-park we managed to get the last site. Had a nice dip in the blue. (site 6A).

Areas north-west Seventeen-Seventy looks interesting but hard to enter. We could not. Went around Agnes Water birdwatching in the morning before the last day's drive back.

The road is under improvement and soon - say a few years ahead - it will be sealed the whole way. The tourist stream will be even bigger.

The tract east of Bruce Hwy out to the coast down to Burnett River is tranquil with its broken landscape and mixed farming. Near to the river the canefields will be common on the better soil. At noon we stopped at Rosedale. Another small town on the way out of the map. The hotel was still open - for how long or the last to go? - where a glass of Golden Brew tasted awfully well.

Having had sunny weather most of the trip it was now in the afternoon cloudy and when we diverted to the coast towards Miara (pronounced Ma:ra) it was a chilly wind blowing. Miara is a very good birdwatching spot. We came at the ebb. A pair of Osprey rested on a mudbank. The tube could not reveal what they were eating but crows were very interested in their meal; A Seaeagle flew up the broad estuary. Waders, gulls and terns surrounded us. Mangrove Kingsfisher <sup>put</sup>a touch of colour in the drab landscape. The cara-park there seemed good but, alas, no animal permitted.

Back to the main road and later we turned off to the south-west passing Stony Creek. There are two reasonable large private dams along the road to Koolan. They were great from bird watching point of view. Among good sightings were Cotton and Green Pygmy Goose at the same dam. Passing Burnett River and the short-cut to the farm we enjoyed a Brown Falcon at close range on a wire-line.

No rain, mostly sunshine but cooler nights than expected. Not much traffic. The Southerners were not present in usual numbers was the complaint from many a Sunshine Colonial.

WINTER TRIP BUNDABERG - MARLBOROUGH JULY- AUGUST 1998.

Bird observations at particular sites and during driving.

Site 1 Childern Balancing Dam.

The dam is situated south of Isis Hwy about 30 km SW of Bundaberg. It's purpose is to balance the watering of Childern district cane farms.

The dam is large. There are two points where the dam can be approached. One is at the common boat ramp, used by amateur fishermen and for trail carried sailing boats. There it is a wide view of the dam. Looking out of the water to the right there is a long stone wall where all four cormorants and the darters were sitting drying and warming their plumage and wings. Pelicans too. Straight forward is the wide open area. opposite the ramp on a point with tall dead trees raptors perch. To the left one can see the eastern end of the dam which inner part is concealed by a peninsula. The dam is surrounded by forest. Along the shores at some parts there are reeds and water plants. At some other places swamps cling to the shores.

At the outlet there is a gate. The area behind is not permitted to enter. Safety reason. The sandy and muddy shores at the entry of the outlet canal and the swamp farther in the background are easily watched from the road. They are well accepted by birds. The peninsula early mentioned lies to the right. Thro openings among the trees the reed and water lily covered bay beyond can be observed. Jacanas were walking there among swimming waterbirds.

Site 2 Burnett River at the bridge over it along the South Koolan Rd fr. Isis Hwy. One can walk along the river up-streams. There are here pockets of still water, low alluvial areas and adjacent gum forest.

Site 3 Baldwin Swamp Park SE of CBD in Bundaberg.

Here are open grassy parkland with several dams. A hill in the east where grass is not cut. There on the south of it is a large dam surrounded by forest and open grassy areas. At the foot of the hill to north lies a Swamp forest. The area has a large variety of birds - passerines and non-passerines.

Site 4 Burnett Head.

When the mud flats at Non Repos now is invaded by and overgrown with mangrove - the observation hut demolished - the small dams and canals covered with weed, all thing preventing waders to seek food; the only spot worth to visit is the Burnett Head at ebb and there especially the mudflat north of the harbour. It is large mudflat surrounded towards the river by stone walls. Best observation spot is from the parking area where mudflat, river and mangrove areas can be watched.

Site 5A Bruce Hwy - Stanage.

This is a gravel road of 110 km length. It passes thro cattle stations, dry eucalypt forests, flood plains. At various places ponds and swamps with open waters. This during drought periods.

Site5B Sea flats at Stanage.

The point is protected from the open sea by islands to the north, forming a huge sound. The sandy flats are huge, at parts muddy. The tube is necessary here.

Sites 6A Yeppoon-Rockhampton; 6B Agnes Water; 6C Agnes Water - Miara; 6D Miara.  
Site 7 Two dams along the Koolan Rd fr.South Crossing.

For observations see tables.

Bird observations sites 5 - 7 in order of appearance on the stage.

Site 5A. 30 - 31 July. Sunny

Grey Babbler; Little Friarbird; Blue-winged Kookaburra; Ground Cucko-shrike; White-eyed Duck; Laughing Kookaburra; Black-faced Cucko-shrike; Striated Pardalot; Strawneck Ibis (flock 30+); Whistling Kite, Peregrine, (see text); Pied Butcherbird; Brown Falcon; Masked Lapwing; Wood-swallow, white breasted; Paleheaded Rosella; Rajah Shelduck; Wood duck; Grey Teal; Little Grebe; Brolga, pair; Black-fronted Dotterel; Blue-faced Honeyeater; Rainbow Lorikeet; Pacific Baza; Pacific Heron; Pied Cormorant, little; White-faced Heron; Marsh Harrier; Pelican; Black swan; Spoonbill Yellow; Spoonbill Royal; White Ibis; Fig-bird; Silver Gull; Pee-Wee; Magpie; Raven; Willie Wagtail; Welcome Swallow; Crow; Sulphur-crested Cockatoo; Currawong; Long-necked Turtle, c:a 30 cm; Kestrel; Brahmini Kite; Black Kite.

Site 5B. 31 July Sunny.

Reef Heron, white phase; White-faced Heron; Restless Flycatcher; Varied Triller; Laughing Kookaburra; Figbird; Pied Oystercatcher; Red-capped Dotterel; Gullbilled Tern; Whimbrel; Little Curlew; Brush Turkey; Bartailed Godwit; Sulphur-crested Cockatoo; Crow; Raven; Welcome Swallow; Willie-Wagtail; Silver Gull; Rainbow Lorikeet.

Site 6A. 1 Aug. Sunny.

Brahmini Kite; Osprey; Black Kite; Kestrel; Blackfronted Dotterel; Darter; Magpie Geese; Cormorant, Little black; Coot; Spoonbill Yellow; Spoonbill Royal; Jacana.

Site 6B. 3 Aug. Sunny.

Bush Stone Curlew; Currawong, pied; Lewins Honeyeater; Mangrove Kingsfisher; Peacocks; Brush Turkey; Red Winged Parrot; Black duck; Rainbow Lorikeet; Willie Wagtail; Cormorant, Little Pied; Crow; Little Eagle.

Site 6C. 3 Aug. Changeable, sunny to cloudy.

Fairy Martin; Kestrel; Laughing Kookaburra; Magpie; Pheasant Coucal; Pied Butcherbird; Figbird; Black-shoulder Kite; Brahmini Kite; Strawneck Ibis; Pee-Wee; Wood swallow, whitebreasted; Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike; Crested Hawk; Golden Whistler, fem; Grey Fantail.

Site 6D. 3 Aug. Cloudy, windy.

White Ibis; Crested Pidgeon; Pelican; Silver Gull; Crested Tern; Whimbrel; Eastern Curlew; Pied Oystercatcher; Interm. Egret; Strawneck Ibis; Mangrove Kingsfisher; Osprey (see text); Reef Heron, grey phase; Noisy Miner; Crested Pidgeon; Rainbow Lorikeet; White-breasted Seaeagle; Scaly-breasted Lorikeet; Bartailed Godwit; Pied Butcherbird.

Site 7. 3 Aug. Cloudy.

Pheasant Coucal; Cormorant, Little Pied; Wood duck; Strawneck Ibis; Cormorant, Little Black; Pelican; White-eyed Duck; Little Grebe; Swan; Cotton Pigmy Goose; Green Pigmy Goose; Swan; Grey Teal; Black Duck; Black-backed Stilt; Jacana; Little Grebe; Little Egret; Whistling Kite; Moorhen; Kestrel; Cattle Egret; Brown Falcon.

### Winter trip Bundaberg 1998

Bundaberg Birdwatching areas	Children Balancing Dam 1; Burnett River 2 & 4; Baldwin Swamp 3;	
Days of Observation	24.7 at 11-15.30 hr.	25.7 at 10-17 hr.
Weather	24.7 Changeable, Showers	25.7 Changeable, strong winds.

<u>Birds observed</u>	<u>Place No.</u>	<u>Birds observed</u>	<u>Place No.</u>
Brown Quail	1	Comb-crested Jacana	1
Plumed Whistling Duck	3	Red-capped Plover	4
Australian Wood Duck	3	Lapwing	1,3,4
Pacific Black Duck	1,2,3	Black-fronted Dotterel	1,4
Grey Teal	1,2,3	Silver Gull	1,4
Black Swan	1,3	Caspian Tern	1
Magpie Goose	1,3	Crested Tern	4
Hardhead	1,2,3	Black-naped Tern	1
Hoary-headed Grebe	1	Common Tern	4
Australasian Grebe	1,3	Spotted Turtle-Dove	3
Darter	1,3	Peaceful Dove	2,3
Great Cormorant	1	Bar-shouldered Dove	1,2,3
Black Cormorant	1,3	Crested Pigeon	2,3
Pied Cormorant	1	Rainbow Lorikeet	3
Little Pied Cormorant	1,3	Forest Kingfisher (male)	1
Australian Pelican	1,3,4	Collared Kingfisher	4
White-faced Heron	1,3,4	Laughing Kookaburra	1,2,3
Eastern Reef Egret	4	Rainbow Bee-eater	3
Great Egret	1,3	Superb Fairy-wren	1,2,3
? Egret	1,3	Red-backed Fairy-wren	2
Little Egret	1,3	Blue-faced Honeyeater	1,2,3
Cattle Egret	1,4	Lewin's Honeyeater	2,3
Straw-necked Ibis	3,4	Brown Honeyeater	2,3
Australian White Ibis	1,3,4	Noisy Miner	1,2,3
Royal Spoonbill	1,3	Willie Wagtail	1,2,3,4
Black-shouldered Kite	1,2,3,4	Grey Fantail	2,3
Whistling Kite	1	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	3
Brown Goshawk	1,3	White-breasted Woodswallow	1,2,3,4
Brahminy Kite	1,2,3,4	Pied Butcherbird	1,3,4
Osprey	1,4	Magpie-lark	1,2,3,4
Little Eagle	1	Australian Magpie	1,2,3,4
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	Australian Raven	1,2,3,4
Nankeen Kestrel	1,3	Little Crow	1,2,3,4
Purple Swamphen	1,3	Mannikin	3
Dusky Moorhen	1,3	House Sparrow	3
Bar-tailed Godwit	4	Welcome Swallow	1,2,3,4
Eastern Curlew	4	Fairy Martin	2,3
Whimbrel	4	Common Myna	3

More passerines may have been observed if we worked to put more effort into it. But we didn't!

John Lochlannaigh-Blomstedt

# **Barren Grounds Bird Observatory**

## **Courses July – September 1999**

### **Gourmet Lyrebirds**

Date : 16-18 July

Leader : Ed Slater

A brilliant course of great food and spectacular birdwatching. Come and enjoy the fascinating Superb Lyrebird. Named the world's great mimic by David Attenborough's recent TV series 'The Life of Birds'. Now see and hear this amazing bird for yourself. July is the peak the breeding season with male lyrebirds displaying and singing full force. Ed now retired from CSIRO Wildlife & ecology has been studying lyrebirds and their calls for 50 years. Join Ed for a chance to observe breeding displays as we guide you through the winter world of the Superb Lyrebird.

### **Ground Parrots, Glow Worms & Gliders – Special Courses**

Dates : 10 – 12 Jul & 18 – 20 Dec

A special weekend for friends and family with a great discounted price! Join us on this action packed weekend for bushwalks, bird watching, small mammal trapping, picnics, mist-netting and bird banding, frogging and spotlighting. There will be walks, talks and slide shows for you to attend. A great outdoors experience enjoying all the flora and fauna of Barren Grounds. Make sure you are well rested as these couple of days are guaranteed to wear out even the most energetic of people.

**Family price - \$400** (2 adults, 2 children)

**Individual Adult price - \$140**

**Individual Child price (<15 years) - \$70**

### **Elusive Birds**

Date : 6 – 8 August

Leader : Mark Clayton

Each year the Observatory carries out a Ground parrot census to assess population numbers. This is *the* chance for you to see this elusive parrot up close. Over the weekend join Mark from the *Australian Bird Study Association* and be involved in the ongoing bird banding projects aimed at Ground Parrots, Eastern Bristlebirds, Pilotbirds and Southern Emu-wrens. On the Sunday *do* the Ground Parrot census with many other keen volunteers and collect valuable information for the observatory's longest running research project. Join this fabulous weekend and discover the elusive and often threatened species of Barren Grounds.

### **Birds of the Ocean**

Date : 28 – 29 August

Leader : Tony Palliser

Birds have adapted to occupy nearly all of the inhospitable places on earth, and the ocean (or pelagic zone) is one of them. Many of the birds live most of their life at sea far from the eyes of the terrestrial birdwatcher. Join Tony Palliser a leading authority on birds of the ocean for a weekend, and become hooked on pelagic birds. On Saturday you will be introduced to pelagic birds and most importantly tips on identification. On Sunday board the 'Sandra K' for a guided trip to the continental shelf and the home of the pelagics. If you have never been on a pelagic before it is great way to see a lots of new species !

Special Price : \$190.00 (includes boat trip fee

(Birds Aus & BGF \$175.00)

### **Stars, Comets, Clouds & Storms**

Date : 10 – 12 Sept

Leaders : Rob McNaught & Geoff Knott

Astronomy – the study of the mysterious outer world that fascinates us all. Rob McNaught from the *Anglo-Australian Observatory* and Geoff Knott, two very experienced astronomers will take you on a trip of the skies. They will guide you through the night sky using telescopes, binoculars and the naked eye. During the day learn about the objects revolving within the universe and open your eyes to whole new worlds ! Find out about stars, planets, nebulae, meteorites, satellites and even astrological star signs. Come on a great weekend and become a traveler of the skies.

### **Raptors and Rehabilitation**

Date : 17 – 19 Sept

Leader : Peter Nolan

To all bird lovers there is something special about birds of prey. As birds on top of the food chain they are intriguing and very adept predators. Join Peter a local who has a passion if not an obsession with raptors for a weekend of learning and observing. Peter has been rehabilitating raptors for sixteen years and his passion has taken him around the world. Gain an insight into the various techniques used and problems encountered in order to release birds back to the wild. Visit Peter's rehabilitation aviary and see raptors as you've never seen them before.

Unusual Records **June 1999 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
Musk Duck	15	13/6	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	DG
Musk Duck	3	2/5	Swan Lake	wetland	KM
Australasian Shoveller	30+	20/6	Windang Peninsula	lake shore	RI
Pink-eared Duck	40+	20/6	Windang Peninsula	lake shore	RI
Eastern Reef Egret	1	18/6	Werri	rock platform	MR
Great Egret	22	14/6	Windang	estuary	CB
Grey Goshawk (white)	1	15/6	Tabbagong Forest	overhead	MR
Grey Goshawk (white)	1	17/5	Mangerton	overhead	JB
Little Eagle	1	9/5	Bulli escarpment	overhead	JB
Brown Falcon	2	13/6	Killalea Lagoon	over wetland	DG
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	50+	24/6	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	30	11/6	Werri Beach	banksias	MR
Musk Lorikeet	20	23/6	W'gong Botanical Gardens	parkland	JW
White-headed Pigeon	3	13/6	Whispering Gallery	rainforest	DG
White-headed Pigeon	4	21/6	Toolijooa	rainforest	CP
Topknot Pigeon	20	15/6	Bass Point	rainforest	MR
Topknot Pigeon	28	14/5	Bulli	rainforest	JB
Topknot Pigeon	30	7/6	Stanwell Park	rainforest	DG
Topknot Pigeon	50+	12/6	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Topknot Pigeon	50+	23/6	Mt.Kiera Girl Guide Camp	rainforest	BH
Topknot Pigeon	25	13/6	Dunmore	figtrees	DG
Sooty Owl	1	24/6	Jamberoo Pass	rainforest	RJ
Tawny Frogmouth	1	23/6	Mt.Kiera Girl Guide Camp	forest	BH
White-plumed Honeyeater	3	9/6	Shellharbour Square	parkland	DG
White-winged Chough	5	12/6	Toolijooa	garden!	CP
Green Catbird	1	21/6	Toolijooa	rainforest	CP

JB - John Bissett; CB - Chris Brandis; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Barbara Hales; RI - Ron Imisides; RJ - Richard Jordan; KM - Kevin Mills; IM - Ian McKinlay; CP - Chris Presland; MR - Mark Robinson; JW - Joan Willey

Comment: The congregation of Great Egrets at Windang is the largest recorded gathering in the region from a single location. The Pink-eared Duck along Windang Peninsula is a first for that site and a most unexpected occurrence. The only other record of this species on the eastern side of the Lake was from Picnic Island in July 1985. White-plumed Honeyeaters continue to turn up in new exotic locations along the coastal plain. There have now been three records of this species taking up residence in eucalypts planted in urban car parking lots, Wollongong, Dapto and Shellharbour Square! The White-winged Chough continue their slow northward expansion up the coastal plain after being observed in Bomaderry only a few years ago.

# 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. 221

August 1999

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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**

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☺☺☺☺ COMING EVENTS ☺☺☺☺

**NEXT MEETING:** will be held on **Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> August 1999**, 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 **Lindsay Smith** who will be talking about "Albatrosses of the Illawarra", a look at the early days of albatrossing in N.S.W. as well as current issues.

**NEXT OUTING:** This months walk is to **Yarrawa State Forest** on **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August**. We will meet at **8.30 a.m.**, after the frost has thawed, at **Robertson Rainforest**. To reach the rainforest **turn left** just after the hotel to the **Belmore Falls** and it is about 100m just after the railway crossing. We will have morning tea back at the cars and then drive towards **Belmore Falls**. We will stop about 3kms before reaching the falls and do another walk leading towards a great view into **Kangaroo Valley**. Anyone who would be interested in car pooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact **The McGregors**. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** will be held on **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> August** to **Puckeys Estate Wollongong**. Meet at the carpark at the back of the **Lagoon Restaurant, Stuart park** at **8.30 a.m.**

**Next Committee Meeting:** This will be held on **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August**, at the house of **Kevin and Fae McGregor**, starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**The deadline for articles for the September newsletter is 30<sup>th</sup> August.**



## JULY MEETING

As I said in my vote of thanks to Ern Muller – Master Carver, I have the greatest admiration for people who can carve paint or draw because it's not only a physical skill but it's also an ability to express in a third dimension – almost a spiritual sensitivity so to speak.

Ern delighted members with his 'show and tell' presentation on the intricacies of his current project involving a carving of six life-size Galahs.

In any project, Ern claims that you need to plan carefully and the process has to be clear 'in your mind's eye' on what you want to create. He spends considerable time in studying his subjects in their behavioural traits and body movements.

The first stage is to draw your subjects which shows all the technical detail (eg number and rows of feathers) and given that he cannot draw (so he modestly claims) he commissions an artist to provide this foundation work. Templates are then made by laminating with ply to achieve a three dimensional model. Two inch timber is used to shape the wing. He explained that bird carvings are often with elevated wings because it's easier to carve with the up and down direction of the grain. Arched or flexed positions requires more skill and work given the opposing wood grain orientation.

He mostly uses native timber – predominantly Queensland Maple and occasionally Brazilian Mahogany. Ern has had great success in fine wood exhibitions taking out first prize in his very first exhibition in Wollongong and then a second at a showing in Oberon.

Carving faces is a special skill that needs to be worked on – at least every three months to keep your feel and touch.

Finishing is the key to success – it doesn't matter how good you carve, it's the final sanding etc that's important. Almost a quarter of his total time on a piece is devoted to 'finishing off'.

Ern was apprenticed as a young teenager to an old blind woodcarver in Germany who obviously taught him those special skills of 'feel and touch' – a sensation that cannot deceive you.

An enthralling and awe inspiring presentation that delighted the members. Keep up your magnificent work Ern Muller.

Darryl Goldrick



SMH SAT 24/7/99

**Early Notice**

The November walk to be lead by Siggy Freund will be to Cedar Vale Health Resort on the Mossvale to Nowra Road. More details to follow.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to Athol Stuart who has been appointed as Vice President to our club.



**HELP!!!**

Volunteers are urgently required to join the monitoring team for the Lake Illawarra project to record sightings of our lake birds. No experience is necessary as training for the observer will be provided. Anyone interested in learning more please contact Kevin McGregor (42713762) or Bruce O'Brien (42627529) **immediately**.

TEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEET

**BIGNET UPDATE**

I.B.O.C. is hosting the next BIGNET meeting at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre on the weekend 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> September. Invitations have been issued to all organisations involved. More information will be available in the next newsletter.



**OLD NEWS**

**Snippets from the Port Macquarie News**

"**The Bird Protection Act:** The act provides that the following birds are absolutely protected for five years and after t period during a closed season: Fish hawkes or sea eagles, lyre birds, regent bird, rifle bird, bellbird, black cockatoo, native companion, nankin crane, laughing jackhass, kingfishers, emu, seagulls of every description. Australian game birds protected during a closed season from August 1 of every year to January 31 and then next succeeding inclusive: Brush turkey, mallee hen, land curlew, bittern, laud rail, black swan, bustard or plain turkey, wild duck of every species, pigeons, doves of every species, wild geese of every description.

**Port Macquarie News July2, 1893"**

Of special interest is of course the date of the original article and the species which were then recognised as "Australian game birds "and afforded a closed season.

Dave Thomson



## A QUESTION of QUARRIES on a GOOD WICKET

### *A REPORT on the CLUB'S WALK in KILLALEA STATE RECREATION AREA on 17 July 1999*

Gathering at the kiosk car park, a group of nine Ibocers drove to the southern end car park to begin the morning's walk, by descending the ridge to the western perimeter of the area. The hot sunny weather conditions were a welcome relief after a week of much rain, the heaviest since the mid-August floods of last year. Not surprisingly, there was much surface water within and outside the reserve. On the sand quarry pond just beyond the fence line five resting Australian Pelicans in a row cast photogenic reflections in the still water and over on the far side stood a pair of Royal Spoonbills. A lone Domestic Goose advanced along the edge of the pond, honking at our intrusion. Overhead at regular intervals flocks of Silver Gulls squawked their transit path between the shore (presumably the Five Islands) and Minnamurra Tip. Whilst they may have had the monopoly in numbers, there were several other bird species contending in the vocal and activity stakes inside Killalea. New Holland and Lewin's Honeyeaters targeted the coral and banksia blossoms. Australian Ravens cawed aloft, mainly in the four figtrees at the site of the old Condons farmhouse, and a band of five Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos squealed its way into the pines.

At the north-west corner we stopped for morning tea out in the open in the warmth of the sun, by which time we had notched up our half-ton. More callings and restless activity came from a Spangled Drongo in a casuarina at mid-on and a Pied Butcherbird among the wattles at deep third man. The lagoon linking up with the quarry pond presented us with a more laid-back scene with quietly feeding waterfowl, notably Musk Duck, Australasian Shoveler and Grebes, and at the fringe a flock of Australian White Ibis.

Before completing the first loop of the walk, we spotted the Eastern Rosella and glimpsed a Southern Emu-Wren and took in views of the Illawarra Escarpment, Dunmore Quarry and Barren Grounds. We then made the steady descent to Minnamurra River through the generally taller, thicker vegetation of the spit. Here again the New Holland Honeyeaters were in abundance and Spotted Pardalotes popped up quite often. Crossing over the dune, we then completed the second loop along Minnamurra Beach and up to the car park, enjoying views of Bass Point, Stack Island and Kiama.

Lunch was taken at the kiosk car park, where we looked from a picnic table across to Port Kembla Steelworks at deep mid-wicket, Bass Point Quarry, and down to Killalea Lagoon and Beach, and then further right at gully to the scene of the bonding ritual of a pair of humans being witnessed by other ebullient members of homo sapiens, including the marriage celebrant.

Two-thirds of our group then stayed on for the steep descent to the lagoon, which yielded one more bird species: a lone Golden-headed Cisticola. Our leader, Chris Chafer informed us that the fullness of the lagoon tended to discourage more species from feeding there; all the mudflats were submerged. On the other side

adult Black Swans were accompanied by two grey cygnets, and a hovering Nankeen Kestrel, one of four raptor species observed during the day, was in search of quarry, making a number of swoops.

I later reflected how the word 'quarry' had acquired the divergent meanings of prey and pit, only to unearth yet others connected with the latter: a variant of the word 'quarrel', referring to the square arrow shot from a crossbow or a small square pane of leaded glass in a latticed window. In each instance the word is traceable through the respective Middle English *querre*, *quarey* and *quarel* and Old French to the different Latin roots of *corium* (skin, hide) - and not *cor* (heart) as some have argued - and *quadrus* (square). Historically, quarry was the entrails of a slain animal, such as a deer, wrapped in the skin and given to the hounds as reward for their part in the chase. And the Roman *quadraia* was the place where stone was squared and dressed for use as building material. I wondered whether during courtship the bride of our newly married couple might have delivered the arrow to pierce the groom's skin and heart of stone or he had bowled a maiden over.

By the time we returned to our cars more cloud was gathering from the west and the breeze had increased somewhat, but conditions were still fine. Thanks, Chris, for a top outing with a wide variety of bird species (the day's tally was 64) and scenery to stimulate our senses.

Mike Morphet  
(Not in the hunt for stonewalling)

## KILLALEA STATE RECREATION AREA

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July 1999. Lat. 34° 37'S. Long. 150° 52'E.

217	Musk Duck	989	Spotted Turtle Dove	415	Magpie-lark
203	Black Swan	267	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	361	Grey Fantail
208	Pacific Black Duck	273	Galah	364	Willie Wagtail
212	Australasian Shoveler	269	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	673	Spangled Drongo
210	Chestnut Teal	254	Rainbow Lorikeet	424	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
061	Australasian Grebe	282	Crimson Rosella	702	Grey Butcherbird
100	Little Pied Cormorant	288	Eastern Rosella	705	Australian Magpie
097	Little Black Cormorant	338	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	694	Pied Currawong
106	Australian Pelican	322	Laughing Kookaburra	930	Australian Raven
188	White-faced Heron	529	Superb Fairy-wren	679	Satin Bowerbird
185	Little Egret	536	Variiegated Fairy-wren	647	Richard's Pipit
187	Great Egret	526	Southern Emu-wren	995	House Sparrow
179	Australian White Ibis	556	Spotted Pardalote	662	Red-browed Finch
181	Royal Spoonbill	488	White-browed Scrubwren	357	Welcome Swallow
232	Black-shouldered Kite	454	Brown Gerygone	990	Red-whiskered Bulbul
228	White-bellied Sea Eagle	471	Yellow Thornbill	525	Golden-headed Cisticola
224	Wedge-tailed Eagle	637	Little Wattlebird	574	Silvereve
240	Nankeen Kestrel	605	Lewin's Honeyeater	999	Common Starling
058	Purple Swamphen	631	New Holland Honeyeater	998	Common Myna
059	Eurasian Coot	591	Eastern Spinebill		
133	Masked Lapwing	421	Eastern Whipbird		
125	Silver Gull	408	Grey Shrike-thrush		

### Mid-week walk

On Wednesday 21st July, nine members of I.B.O.C. met at 32 Shearwater Bvd. for our mid-week walk. It was a bright sunny day, however a westerly wind was blowing a gale. At least it wasn't blowing off snow!

The view from the back of the back of Barbara and Brian's house is a joy to behold, encompassing as it does large expanses of clear water across Lake Illawarra. An equally large area of helophytes, sedges and reed-like plants which when viewed from even a short distance appears to be a homogeneous brown mass. On closer observation, it turns into individual tough little plants that can withstand inundation and drying out with equal aplomb. There are many and varied leaf forms and flowers, some with succulent shiny leaves and tiny white starry flowers while others have dry looking stalks with pink daisy-like flowers.

The bird watching was good from the start. We saw Black Swans, White-faced Heron, Chestnut Teal, Masked Lapwing and Little Egret. We walked along over mown grass at the back of the houses past Casuarinas, which were growing along the edge of the lake at Koon Bay, until we came to a little creek bordered with Sydney Golden Wattle. Here we expected to see Superb Fairy-wrens and Fantails but didn't, so we turned back and saw a Royal Spoonbill and a pair of White-fronted Chats.

We continued along the edge of Koon Bay and there was a sprinkling of fireweed so those of us who are not so good at seeing birds removed it. Here we saw European Goldfinch, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Yellow-rumped Thornbill and Mudlark. We also saw a species of *Euphorbia* which will, after another flowering period, be a real menace in spite of its beauty.

By now it was morning tea so we wandered back to Barbara and Brian's place and sat in their delightful barbecue area in the sun and out of the wind. We lingered longer than usual while learned members checked bird identities.

After we got going again, we went up the street, through an attractive park and children's play area and into a landscaped walking area along the edge of Macquarie Rivulet. We saw Purple Swamp Hen, Darter, an Australian Raven, a, Australian Pelican as well as large areas of garden covered with wild violet in full bloom. The area on both sides of the paths were well planted with Australian Natives. Although only the lomandra, violets and banksias were flowering, it all looked attractive and well maintained. As a bonus in the Banksias there numerous Silvereyes, plus some visiting cousins *Race lateralis* from Tasmania.

By this time the intense planting had ceased but the paths were quite well maintained. Along one side was a long row of River Red Gum which, while not native to the area, looked well established and healthy. As these trees grow to approximately 50 metres in 20 years or so , with luck, they may look quite spectacular. We continued on until we came to a private property, where cattle were being raised. As a result we saw plenty of Cattle Egrets and in a little thicket, just where you would expect to find them, we saw Superb Fairy-wrens and Grey Fantails. The walk back was quicker than the walk out as we stayed on the main path and soon we were back in Shearwater Bvd. We saw 40 species for the morning and had a most enjoyable time. Many thanks Barbara for leading us. It was a delightful time.

Peggy Merrett

## Books for Sale

The Cumberland Bird Observers Club is having a book sale and auction on 21 September 1999 at its club premises at Community Centre, Corner Old Northern & Old Castle Hill Roads, Castle Hill at 8 p.m.

Anyone is welcome to attend the sale. If you are unable to attend, you are welcome to contact any member of CBOC's committee to make appropriate arrangements for purchasing or bidding for a book. A list of books will be available from (Secretary of your club) upon request, together with contact telephone numbers of CBOC's committee members. As books may continue to be donated to the Cumberland Club after 31 July 1999 (when the book list was published), there may well be other books for sale also.

Frances Czwalinna

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## ***Barren Grounds Bird Observatory***

### ***Courses October – December 1999***

#### ***Barren Grounds Bird Race***

**Date :** 29 – 31 Oct

**Leader :** Jenny Smith

Join the Barren Grounds Champagne team for a weekend of relaxed bird watching around all the hotspots in the Illawarra region. This is a fundraising event and all proceeds will go towards the 1999 Birds Australia Twitchathon. Come and support the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory and Birds Australia in conserving birds and their habitat. Meet the other twitchathon teams for a social barbecue as they finish on Sunday afternoon.

#### ***Wildflowers of the Heath***

**Date :** 5 – 7 Nov

**Leaders :** Alan Fairley

You would be mad to miss this opportunity of meeting and spending a weekend with one of Sydney's most famous botanists. Alan Fairley the co-author of the spectacular book "Native Plants of the Sydney District" will be giving talks on identification & rare species. Walk the heath in the peak of spring and marvel at the splendor as acres of heathland wildflowers display in brilliant colours. Not only will you see this display but will learn about the heaths that are the most diverse plant communities in the world.

#### ***Butterflies and Moths***

**Date :** 12 – 14 Nov

**Leaders :** Ted Edwards & David Rees

Australia has spectacular moths and butterflies and Barren Grounds is home to many species including some that are endangered. Come and join Ted & David from the *CSIRO Department of Entomology* for a weekend that will broaden your horizons. Ted is responsible for the collecting and maintaining of the Lepidoptera section of the Australian National Insect Collection. If you thought bird diversity was amazing wait to you start learning about moths. Come and learn about the techniques used to capture, identify, sort and preserve moths and butterflies.

#### ***Slitherers & Croakers***

**Date :** 26 – 28 Nov

**Leader :** Ken Griffiths

This is a very popular course so be quick to book. Come and bask in the sun with lizards and snakes slithering around Barren Grounds by day and by night explore froggy haunts for nocturnal amphibian loud mouths. Ken your guide and author of the recent book "*Frogs and Reptiles of the Sydney Region*", has a way of knowing just where to find all those special skinks and frogs. The course has previously found several new species for the reserve, help us find more !

## Unusual Records July 1999 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
Musk Duck	5	06/6	Swan Lake	lacustral	KM
Pink-eared Duck	1	06/6	Swan Lake	lacustral	KM
Southern Fulmar	1	09/7	off Austinmer	marine	TW
Kerguelen Petrel	2	27/6	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Soft-plumaged Petrel	1	27/6	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Blue Petrel	2	03/7	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Antarctic Prion	60+	27/6	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Slender-billed Prion	2	27/6	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Grey-headed Albatross	1	27/6	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Grey-headed Albatross	3	03/7	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Buller's Albatross	5	03/7	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Sooty Albatross	1	03/7	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross	1	27/6	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Grey-backed Storm-Petrel	2	03/7	off Wollongong	pelagic	TP
Darter	1	21/7	Macquarie Rivulet	riparian	BH
Collared Sparrowhawk	2	18/7	Cordeaux Dam	forest	CJC
Grey Goshawk	1	20/7	Mt. Ousley	attending road kill	RJ
Little Eagle	1	24/7	Toollijoa	overhead	CP
Emerald Dove	1	20/7	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RJ
Crested Pigeon	14	10/6	Shoalhaven Heads	rural	KM
Topknot Pigeon	12	23/6	Pointer Gap	overhead	KM
Topknot Pigeon	30+	07/7	Foxground	overhead	DG
Topknot Pigeon	25	24/7	Toollijoa	rainforest	CP
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	23	01/6	Curramore	overhead	KM
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	14	10/7	Thirroul	overhead	MM
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	75+	22/7	Cordeaux Dam	forest	CJC
Eastern Rosella	2	30/6	North Wollongong	garden	LW
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	06/6	Swan Lake	forest	KM
Powerful Owl	1	20/6	Excelsior mine (Thirroul)	forest	MM
Southern Emu-wren	3	06/6	Swan Lake	lake margin	KM
Southern Emu-wren	2	April	Picnic Island (L.Illawarra)	sedgeland	MM
White-plumed Honeyeater	5	12/6	North Wollongong	garden	LW
Spangled Drongo	1	09/6	North Wollongong	garden	LW
Figbird	1	11/6	North Wollongong	garden	LW
Green Catbird	5	11/7	Toollijoa	rainforest	CP
Bassian Thrush	1	07/6	Excelsior mine	forest	MM
Bassian Thrush	1	11/7	Toollijoa	rainforest	CP

CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Barabara Hales; RJ - Richard Jordan; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphett; TP - Tony Palliser; CP - Chris Presland; TW - Tom Wylie; LW - Laurie Williams

**Comment:** Seabirds dominate this months records, and with good reason. The last few trips off Wollongong have been nothing less than incredible. All the trips have included over 25 species and the highlights above speak for themselves. The best of the pick were undoubtedly the first live Blue Petrels recorded in NSW. There have been a number of beach-cast specimens recorded over the years, but these were first real observations, and included the capture and banding of an individual. The Light-mantled Sooty Albatross is the 5<sup>th</sup> regional record, the Sooty Albatross is the 6<sup>th</sup> regional record and the Grey-backed Storm Petrel is also the 5<sup>th</sup> regional record. If you have access to the Net, then Tony Palliser's seabird page is well worth a visit. It contains a vivid pictorial of some of the greatest seabird shots you'll find anywhere, many of them taken off Wollongong. The address is <http://www.zip.com.au/~palliser/>. Apart from the regular seabird trips, Tom Wylie's Southern Fulmer is the 8<sup>th</sup> regional record.

Away from the ocean, things have been fairly quite, though some good-sized flocks of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo and Topknot Pigeons have been observed. The Southern Emu-wrens on Picnic Island most probably originate from the increasing adjacent mainland population at Pelican View Reserve. Nevertheless, they would have had to fly at least 50m over open water, quite an effort for an Emu-wren.



# 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. 222

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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**

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☺☺☺☺ **COMING EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

**NEXT MEETING:** will be held on **Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1999**, 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 the very popular **Mr. Trevor Queded**. Many of you may have heard Trevor address us last year and his animated style of delivery and diverse bird watching locations make his talks very interesting. Tonight, Trevor will speak to us about "Birds from North America", in particular Canada, from a recent visit.

**NEXT OUTING:** This month's walk is on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September** to **Wilson's Creek Dam** in **Garrwarra State Recreation Area**. We will meet at **9.00 a.m.** at the car park at **Helensburgh Station**. If travelling by **Princes Highway**, turn right at **Ampol Service Station**, **Helensburgh**, into **Parkes Street** and then through the roundabout at the shopping centre. If travelling by **Lawrence Hargrave Drive**, turn right into **Walkers Street** just after **Kellys Creek**, **Stanwell Tops** and then turn right at the above roundabout. From the roundabout drive **2.4 km** and turn left into **Tunnel Road** and then right into the carpark. It will be a one way walk with morning tea, lunch etc. away from the cars. The walk will be lead by **Mr. Jack Hyslop**. Anyone who would be interested in car pooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact **The McGregors**. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** will be held on **Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September** to **Grevilla Gardens**, **Bulli**. Meet at the carpark near the gates at **8.30 a.m.**

**Next Committee Meeting:** This will be held on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September**, at the house of **Kerri Lewis** starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**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.**

**The deadline for articles for the November newsletter is 25<sup>th</sup> October.**

## AUGUST MEETING

Unfortunately our Guest Speaker for August, Lindsay Smith was unable to attend due to illness and we wish Lindsay a speedy recovery. As a credit to the quality of our membership, Ron Imisides agreed to step in and showed a selection of his own personal slides of seabirds found off our local coastline.

Ron explained that over the last couple of months the number of sightings of rare seabirds had increased. He delighted the group with fabulous shots of Albatrosses, including Wandering, Sooty, Yellow-nosed, Grey-headed and Buller's. Ron's ability to capture the detail required to distinguish between the birds was incredible. For the less experienced, we saw clearly the differences between the numerous Shearwaters, such as the Flesh-footed, Short-tailed and Wedge-tailed. The sighting of live Blue Petrels over the last few months has caused great excitement for those who regularly attend the monthly pelagic trips off Wollongong. Other seabirds included Great-winged and White-headed Petrels, Storm -Petrels, various Gulls and Terns.

Many thanks Ron for your excellent photos and talk.

Kerri Lewis



### Election of 2000 Office Bearers

**Early Notice:** Election of Office Bearers for 2000 will be held at the November meeting. All positions including President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor and four committee members will be declared vacant.

Please seriously consider if you would like to nominate for any of the above positions to assist with the running of the club. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Also if anyone would like to make any changes to our current constitution, a resolution must be given to one of the committee members for consideration by the September committee meeting.



### Twichathon Is Coming Soon!!!

Contact Bruce O'Brien immediately if you would like to be part of the team. Ph: 02 - 42627529

### Robertson Nature Reserve and Yarrawa State Forest Outing 15.8.1999

The 12 who gathered at the entrance to the Robertson Nature Reserve could not believe how fortunate we were with the weather. It was a clear sunny morning. This was incredible because the night before was cold windy and rainy and the weather forecast was for more of the same today. In fact we had been told that it was sleeting snow here last night. So we enjoyed the sunshine as we awaited the arrival of everyone. Luckily though everyone was wise enough to wear plenty of warm gear into the reserve because once we entered the denseness of the brush it was very chilly and even gloves and socks and good solid walkers did not keep the cold out.

However despite the cold it was a lovely walk along a well-defined pathway winding through this 4ha. last remnant of the Yarrawa brush which once covered all of this Robertson area. This has been kept as a memorial to the pioneers who in 1881 cleared this dense impenetrable brush without the use of mechanical assistance and as we walked here today we had to marvel at their achievement. The large hard and soft wood trees are entwined with thick vines and covered with lichen and moss and the floor is covered with beautiful green dense ferns. The sun has a real hard time penetrating the thick growth so no wonder we were cold.

There was lots of bird life and a list is provided at the end of this report. A great start for our bird observing was right at the entrance to the reserve where a beautiful Eastern Yellow Robin sat on the gate to welcome us and was in no hurry to move on.

When we emerged from the brush we soaked up the sunshine and enjoyed morning tea before driving 8kms to the Yarra State Forest. Unfortunately some in our convoy got lost.....but as I'm not a snitch I won't say who! However that gave those of us who weren't lost time to observe Flame Robins while awaiting the arrival of the "lost ones". What a wonderful sighting that was.

We walked along a cleared track which showed sign of the nights rain with flowering Wattle down one side and the peacefulness of grazing cattle on the other for 1km. before getting into the State forest of woodland and heath. We observed many birds and a list of these will follow.

Lunch was enjoyed in a clearing in brilliant warm sunshine. We then ventured further into the forest and delighted at the Banksias in bloom and the many other small wildflowers of every colour coming into bloom. To walk this same path in the weeks ahead would be through a riot of colour.

Because of time we retraced our steps and went off along a sandy track hedged in by very dense heathland growth to a rocky outcrop where we sat and marvelled at the view over Kangaroo Valley. It was truly breathtaking..... Then it was time to head for the cars. It had been estimated that we had walked between 7-8kms. Thanks to Chris Brandis who surveyed the walk for us before going overseas and to Bruce O'Brien who led us today on what can only be described as another great Birdo outing.

Fae McGregor



15 August 1999. IBOC Outing Bird List (Sighted and Heard)

Robertson Nature Reserve (and neighbouring township)

Wonga Pigeon	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
Crimson Rosella	Laughing Kookaburra
Superb Fairy-wren	White-browed Scrubwren
Large-billed Scrubwren	Brown Gerygone
Brown Thornbill	Striated Thornbill
Lewin's Honeyeater	New Holland Honeyeater
Eastern Yellow Robin	Eastern Whipbird
Golden Whistler (female)	Rufous Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush	Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong	Australian Raven
Satin Bowerbird	Silvereve

Yarra State Forest (and driving down Belmore Falls Road)

Australian Wood Duck	Pacific Black Duck
White-faced Heron	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Nankeen Kestrel	Purple Swamphen
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Eastern Rosella
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Laughing Kookaburra
Superb Lyrebird	White-throated Treecreeper
Red Wattlebird	Little Wattlebird
Noisy Miner	Lewin's Honeyeater
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	White-naped Honeyeater
New Holland Honeyeater	Eastern Spinebill
Flame Robin	Golden Whistler (male)
Grey Shrike-thrush	Magpie-lark
Grey Butcherbird	Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong	Satin Bowerbird
Richard's Pipit	Beautiful Firetail
Welcome Swallow	Silvereve
Common Starling	

## OCTOBER CAMPS

### *Saturday 2nd to Monday 4th - Myrtle Gully Farm, Conjola*

The October family camp will be held on the property of Stan and Lois Speering on the abovementioned dates. Travel along the Princes Highway to the Conjola sign and then continue until you see the "Myrtle Gully" sign just prior to the bridge and **immediately put your right hand blinker on**. You turn right onto the Old Princes Highway and turn right into the second gate. The entrance is marked with a green mail box with a red roof and the name of the property is on it. The trip should take approximately 90-100 minutes from Wollongong. Previous camps on the 8th October 1985 and 7th October 1991 netted 93 and 78 species respectively. Please register your intention of going to the camp with Kevin [Phone 02 4271 3762] and soon as possible. Please bring your own drinking water.

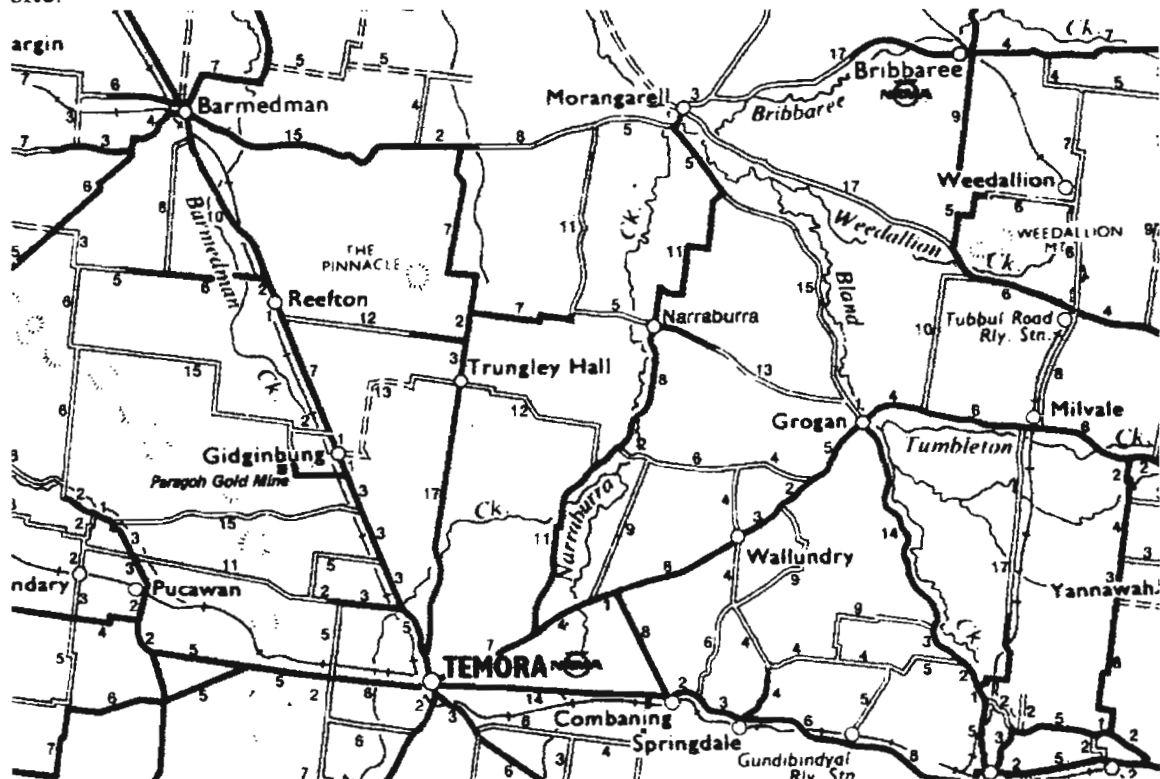
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### *Saturday 23rd to Saturday 30th - "The Pinnacle" Temora*

The 4000 acre property owned by Jim and Irene Ricketts is situated 30 kms north of Temora and shown on the map is the venue for the week long camp and is expected to reward us with a large number of bird sighting. There are a possible three sites for our campsite and a decision will be made on our arrival there. It appears shearing will be going on during our stay. Dams, paddock to wander and hills to climb will give a variety of habitats in which to view the birds. There will be timber for our camp fires and plenty of good tank water, but it is recommended that you bring your own drinking water as usual.

Please register as soon as possible as we desire to confirm the numbers with Jim and Irene as soon as possible.

Camp fees of \$10 per adult, children free, will be payable on arrival at the site.



## Mid-week Walk Puckey's Estate Fairy Meadow

On the 18<sup>th</sup> August, 12 members of I.B.O.C. met at the carpark behind the Lagoon Restaurant for our mid-week walk. It was a perfect winter's day and the number of birds visible in and from the carpark gave promise of a good days viewing. There were Superb Fairy-wren, House Sparrows, Australian Raven, Rainbow Lorikeet, Common Myna, Laughing Kookaburra, Willie Wagtail, Spotted Turtle Dove and White-browed Scrubwrens. On the lagoon were Silver Gulls, although not as many as usual.

We set off on time (almost) and walked through a dark grove of Casuarinas, over the bridge and into Puckey's Estate, which covers 20 hectares and is one of only two remaining areas of hind dune growth between Port Hacking and Lake Illawarra. It was resumed by Council in 1953 and is part of the Botanic gardens. The catchment of Fairy Creek and lagoon extends from Mt. Keira to Broker's Nose, and the dunes and drainage system were developed 6 000 to 7 000 years ago at the end of the last Ice Age.

There are various plant communities here, each growing in areas to their liking, and they range from mangroves to rainforest. Courtney Puckey who lived here in the early 1900's brought the Marram grass, which helps to stabilise the dunes, here from South Australia.

The long walkway is still completely unvandalised but there is an amazing amount of rubbish, mainly plastic, around the high tide mark and scattered through the nasturtiums, which are the predominant ground cover in the area. The mangrove trees that were planted here some years ago are mostly still in their protective plastic pipes and are only growing slowly. The lagoon, which is usually very well populated, only had Silver Gulls, a Little Black Cormorant and an Intermediate Egret, which we hadn't noticed earlier.

As we came off the walkway, the track was level and surfaced with crushed granite that made for easy walking. There we saw an Eastern Yellow Robin's nest swaying in the breeze, complete with Eastern Yellow Robin. There were Pittosporum starting to flower, smelling sweetly, tea trees with trunks so convoluted they looked as if they had been plaited and a cement block which may have been the remains of Mr. Puckey's salt extraction experiments.

Little Wattlebirds and Spotted Pardalotes were singing in chorus and busily flitting around on their domestic duties. There were two Spotted Pardalote nesting holes in a little bank but alas no water birds on the Towradgi arm of the wetlands along which we walked. There were plenty of coastal wattle, lantana and sweet smelling Lomandra all flowering. Another Eastern Yellow Robin was sitting on her nest, regarding us suspiciously with a bright dark eye, as well as Yellow Thornbill, Silveryeye, Grey Fantail and New Holland Honeyeater, which were as common in the area as the Little Wattlebirds.

We had morning tea in the little gazebo on the island, unfortunately surrounded by only rubbish and no water birds.

There were no plovers or galahs on Dalton Park which was unusual. This area was the site of the local sanitary dump and the reed beds to the west were filled in to make Dalton Park. How times have changed!

We walked over the dunes to the beach but were disappointed as there was apparently no birdlife there apart from what may have been an albatross well out to sea. We turned back and took the high track back where all the vegetation had been pruned by the wind, and where Carpobrotus and running postman were flowering, their colours clashing horribly but here it didn't seem to matter at all.

In a shrubby area, just where you would expect to find them, we saw a flock of Superb Fairy-wrens. A male was going to great lengths to impress the females. As he flitted from sunlight to shade, he certainly lived up to his name.

Whether he impressed the Jennies we don't know but he certainly impressed us birdos! In a more sheltered area we saw a bees' nest in a tree hollow but whether they were native or imported bees we couldn't see.

The Eastern Yellow Robins, Spotted Pardalotes and White-browed Scrubwrens were still doing their duty so it augurs well for next years' bird watching. We saw 38 species for the morning out of a total of the 48 species that

have been recorded here. Many thanks to Horrie for leading us as we all had a most enjoyable walk on a glorious day.

The following item may be of interest to various members. Whilst it is hoped to bring Puckey's Estate back to its original state, the Norfolk Island Pines, Washingtonia, Coral Trees, Monterey Pine, the Marram grass and Aloes, are going to remain near the original house site because of their long association with the area. There are also rabbits here but no mention was made about them or their future.

Peggy Merrett



Puckey's Nature Reserve.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 1999.

100	Little Pied Cormorant	254	Rainbow Lorikeet	631	New Holland Honeyeater
097	Little Black Cormorant	288	Eastern Rosella	392	Eastern Yellow Robin
096	Great Cormorant	338	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	421	Eastern Whipbird
106	Australian Pelican	322	Laughing Kookaburra	415	Magpie-lark
186	Intermediate Egret	529	Superb Fairy-wren	361	Grey Fantail
193	Striated Heron	536	Variiegated Fairy-wren	364	Willie Wagtail
058	Purple Swamphen	565	Spotted Pardalote	930	Australian Raven
056	Dusky Moorhen	488	White-browed Scrubwren	995	House Sparrow
059	Eurasian Coot	475	Brown Thornbill	357	Welcome Swallow
981	Kelp Gull	471	Yellow Thornbill	574	Silvereve
125	Silver Gull	470	Striated Thornbill	999	Common Starling
989	Spotted Turtle Dove	637	Little Wattlebird	998	Common Myna
268	Gang-gang Cockatoo	605	Lewin's Honeyeater		

BIRD LIST FROM MIDWEEK AUGUST : BIRD SIGHTING FOR MACQUARIE RIVULET

Bird sightings for Koon Bay, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1999.

203	Black Swan	179	Australian White Ibis	448	White-fronted Chat
208	Pacific Black Duck	181	Royal Spoonbill	415	Magpie-lark
211	Grey Teal	219	Swamp Harrier	364	Willie Wagtail
210	Chestnut Teal	146	Black-winged Stilt	424	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
099	Pied Cormorant	133	Masked Lapwing	705	Australian Magpie
097	Little Black Cormorant	125	Silver Gull	930	Australian Raven
096	Great Cormorant	989	Spotted Turtle Dove	995	House Sparrow
106	Australian Pelican	269	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	996	European Goldfinch
188	White-faced Heron	529	Superb Fairy-wren	357	Welcome Swallow
185	Little Egret	486	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	998	Common Myna
977	Cattle Egret	471	Yellow Thornbill		

Bird sightings for Macquarie Rivulet near Koon Bay.

101	Darter	056	Dusky Moorhen	361	Grey Fantail
186	Intermediate Egret	273	Galah	574	Silvereve
058	Purple Swamphen	631	New Holland Honeyeater	999	Common Starling

### Birdwatching! Rare art at the State Library.

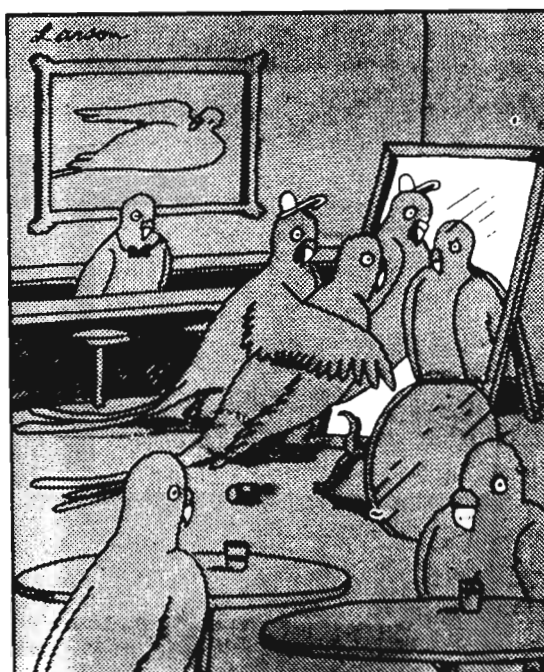
A collection of priceless, 19th century images of Australian and American birdlife will be seen for the first time in an exhibition, opening at the State Library of NSW on 13th September, 99. Birds: The art of Audubon & Gould is an exhibition showcasing John James Audubon's extraordinary four-volume masterpiece, Birds of America - each book standing over one metre tall and weighing a massive 24 kilos - and John Gould's endeavours in the new colony with Birds of Australia.

State Librarian & Chief Executive Dagmar Schmidmaier said "The large and lavishly illustrated volumes by Audubon and Gould are particular treasures of the State Library's collection of more than 100,000 rare books. The exhibition also features Audubon's five volume Ornithological Biography, the descriptive companion to Birds of America (1826-38); Gould's "Patterns" set (used as a colour guide for hand colouring the plates), and original botanical drawings by his wife Elizabeth, for Birds of Australia (1840-48). John James Audubon's early desire to capture the beauty of America's birds saw him travel through the American wilderness, where he observed and recorded species in their natural habitat. From small bird varieties, to the striking American flamingo and crow, the etchings from Audubon's original drawings appear life-size on unfolded sheets of paper. Hand coloured lithographic prints by John and Elizabeth Gould are presented in large leather bound volumes, and capture familiar fauna - such as the Banksian Cockatoo and the Lyrebird - in rich detail against a sketchy landscape.

The exhibition explores the influences and links between Audubon and Gould, who were contemporaneous, yet from very different backgrounds and continents. Audubon's popularity continued into the 20th century, spawning hundreds of Audubon societies worldwide. The Gould League, Australia has 5,000 members. Exhibition dates 13th September, 1999 to 12th January 2000. Admission Free.

We are currently looking for expressions of interest from members to travel up to the exhibition by train as a group. At the August meeting, members had an opportunity to indicate if they would be interested in a midweek trip and also a Saturday trip. Any members not at the meeting but wishing to go should contact Kevin to add their names to the list.

Barbara Hales



FROM  
FAR-SIDE COLLECTION

"Whoa, back off, Bobby Joe. That's just your reflection."



## Unusual Records August 1999 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
<i>Auss birds</i> Brush Turkey	2	29/7	Mt. Kiera (bottom)	forest	MJ
Pink-eared Duck ✓	20+	05/8	Budjong wetland	wetland	JB
Australian Shoveller	10	05/8	Koong-burru Bay	lake shore	JB
Southern Giant Petrel	6	08/8	Sandon Point	inshore	JB
Grey Goshawk	1	Aug	Albion Park Rail	garden	PF
Brown Falcon	2	13/6	Dunmore	powerpoles	BOB
Kelp Gull	1	05/8	Lake Conjola	sand flats	KM
Pied Oystercatcher	6	05/8	Lake Conjola	sand flats	KM
Pied Oystercatcher	2	29/8	Sussex Inlet	sand flats	KM
Sooty Oystercatcher ✓	5	28/8	Berrara	rocky shore	KM
Double-banded Plover	75	13/8	Windang	sand flats	RJ
White-headed Pigeon	16	26/7	Nowra	urban	KM
White-headed Pigeon	3	13/6	Whispering Gallery	rainforest	DG
Topknot Pigeon	5	26/7	Huskison	overhead	KM
Bar-shoulded Dove	1	12/8	Jamberoo	forest	DG
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	20	07/6	Fern Hill	garden	RT
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	28	23/8	Toollijoa	overhead	CP
Long-billed Corella	100	30/7	Calderwood	rural	DG
Eastern Rosella	4	01/8	Primbee (1 <sup>st</sup> local record)	garden	RI
Eastern Rosella	2	13/6	Corimal Heights	garden	PM
Powerful Owl (dead)	1	28/8	Berrara	forest edge	KM
Powerful Owl	1	30/8	Blackbutt Forest (1 <sup>st</sup> record)	forest	CB
Azure Kingfisher	1	29/8	Huskinson	estuary	KM
Brown-headed Honeyeater		5	06/7 Vincentia STP	forest	KM
Eastern Whipbird (1 <sup>st</sup> local record)	1	31/8	Budgong Creek	forest	KC
Crested Shrike-tit	4	29/7	Mt. Kiera	forest	MJ
Spangled Drongo	1	05/8	Berkeley High School	garden	AL
Varied Sittella	5	26/7	Wandandian	forest	KM
Green Catbird	1	13/6	Whispering Gallery	rainforest	DG
Skylark	12	12/8	Shell Cove	urban/rural	DG

JB - John Bisset; BOB - Bruce O'Brien; CB - Chris Brandis; KC - Kerry Lewis; PF - Peter Fackender; DG - Daryl Goldrick; RI - Ron Imisides; MJ - Michael Jarman; RJ - Richard Jordan; AL - Alan Lewis; KM - Kevin Mills; CP - Chris Presland; RT - Rebecca Taylor

Comment: The first record of Powerful Owl from Blackbutt Forest is the highlight of this reporting period. It will be interesting to see how long it hangs around. The 75 Double-banded Plover from Windang is the largest recorded population for that location, the previous best being 65. Its a pity that most of the habitat being used by this species will disappear when dredging starts next year. Eastern Rosellas are continuing their invasion of the eastern Lake Illawarra suburbs.

### Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven & Adjacent Tablelands

Two months ago I announced the imminent release of the long awaited book. Unfortunately, the Printers who had promised me they could deliver, failed. Since then I have tried two other printers, but they too were equally unable to produce the book at an affordable price. We have now found a printer who can produce and the book will be available this month. To those of you who have paid in advance, thanks for being patient.

Chris Chafer

# 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. 223

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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, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1999, 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. Please provide all nominations to Kevin McGregor before the commencement of the meeting.

Our Guest speaker for the evening will be Wal Emery and his topic will be "Find the habitat - find the bird". Wal has been a member of our club since 1977 and is certainly one of the most travelled members having seen almost the whole of our wonderful land (a little bit in the middle has eluded him to date). As a true bird observer goes to places to find "that bird", Wal's presentation will be a guide to newer members and will be a refresher to our older ones. See you there.

**NEXT OUTING:** This month's walk is on Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> November to 'Cedarvale Health Centre'. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre Car Park (located on the Nowra /Moss Vale Road).

From there we will go by car to the entrance of the 'Cedarvale Health Centre' which is also on the Nowra/Moss Vale Road on one of the hair pin turns about 6.8 km toward Nowra and already 1/3 down the Barrengarry Mountain pass road. There is a sign on the entry advertising 'Cedarvale Health Centre'.

The Walk is on the property of the Cedarvale Health Centre and is a fair way below the escarpment. There is lots of rainforest but also some open areas that are used for growing fruit and vegetables. It was mentioned that we could buy lunch from the centre but we would need to tell them at least on the day of the walk before we actually start walking. The manager told us they make a vegetarian hamburger -sounds interesting? could be so!. There is some steep dirt road to be negotiated but for those who'd rather not do that cars can be taken down to the more or less level walking area. From memory it is about 5 km but could easily be extended by walking to the reception area through lovely rainforest on a level dirt road.

For those coming through the Kangaroo Valley they might want to stop right at the entry, about 8.4 km from the Hampden Bridge, instead of coming all the way up the Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre.

Our leader for the day will be Mr. Siggy Freund. Anyone who would be interested in car pooling or needing a lift on the day, please contact The McGregors. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

**Mid-week Outing:** This month there will be **no** mid-week walk. Instead, our proposed visit to the **State Library** will be held on **Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> November**. We will travel on the train departing: Dapto (9.10am) Unanderra (9.17am) Coniston (9.20am) Wollongong (9.25am) and Thirroul (9.35am) arriving at Central 10.45am. It is suggested that members travelling meet in the second carriage on the train, however we will all meet on the platform at Central and get a train to Martin Place for a short walk to the State Library which will open at 11.00 am. The return train departs Central at 3.38pm and will arrive at Thirroul (4.50pm) Wollongong (5.00pm) Coniston (5.03pm) Unanderra (5.08pm) and Dapto (5.16pm). If you are travelling to Sydney by car meet at the Library at 11.10am. If you want to bring your own lunch, arrangements will be made to visit the Botanic Gardens. Members wishing to eat out will be guided to eating places within the CBD area. Look forward to a pleasant and interesting outing.

**Next Committee Meeting:** This will be held on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November**, at the house of **Peg McLinlay**, 24 Lyndon St. Corrimal starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**The deadline for articles for the December newsletter is 24<sup>th</sup> November.**

**December Meeting:** Polish the vocal chords, flex the fingers and activate the memory cells !! That special occasion - 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 Kevin McGregor if you can participate in anyway.

### September Meeting

Our guest speaker for this month was the very popular Mr Trevor Quested who showed us how popular birdwatching is overseas. He featured Birds of North America in particular Canada.

Trevor showed slides of the multitude of birdwatchers and how they are encouraged to participate in this past time by having constructed paths and walkways.

Trevor's excellent photos showed Blue Jays, Cardinals, Oriole, different varieties of Woodpeckers and Hummingbirds at their best. The ever popular native squirrel was represented as well.

Thanks for an entertaining evening Trevor and we look forward to hearing from you again.

Lorraine Pineus



### MYRTLE GULLY FAMILY IBOC CAMP...CONJOLA .2.10.99 - 4.10.99

When we arrived at Myrtle Gully Farm on the Thursday to prepare the campsite it was fine and very hot....a positive outlook for the days ahead.....however within hours we had experienced very heavy rain accompanied by thunder and lightning....not one storm but at least 3 [I gave up counting ]. As the rain would stop and the rumbling and flashing disappear to the North new storm sounds would build up in the South and move in on us again. However we had been able to set up in the dry so we were cosy and comfortable throughout all of the above....and always the optimists tomorrow would be dry .

Well tomorrow did start out fine and warm...but as the first of the campers began to arrive the rain returned and that was pretty much the story of the whole weekend...rain coming and going.

**Did that stop us having a good time ? No way IBOC campers are made of sterner stuff !**

Myrtle Gully Farm is situated on the Highway at Conjola [2 hrs. south of Wollongong ] and owned by members Stan and Lois Sperring. It is a lovely spot and we happily shared our campsite with "Angie" an ex trotter who is a much loved member of the Sperring family. There was 11 acres to explore with many birds visible and invisible. A list of the birds seen on the property and on outings away are listed at the end of this report. Thanks to Andrew Knowlson for being our recorder. 23 attended the camp [which included 9 children ] and Lorraine joined us for the day on Sunday.

A new Tarp. measuring 20ft.x24ft. became the Camp meeting and sheltering place which was appreciated by everyone. The fire was lit just outside the Tarp area so even at night when it was raining we could gather and be dry. This Tarp will be a great asset to the camp equipment for future camps. The camp shower was erected but we were spared the effort of putting up the camp toilet as there was a Pit Toilet available to us. Stan had provided lots of wood for our fire and we had a good supply of water....besides the rain water!!! A most generous host .

Drives were taken to Porters Creek Dam , Pointers Gap Lookout and to the Nature Reserve at Ulladulla and walks through the wildflowers and along bush tracks enjoyed despite the drizzly rain . The children enjoyed planned activities and participated in competitions as well as playing in the rain and mud .....all said they had a good time. There was even a Treehouse for the Mums Dads and the children to enjoy as well.

So then came time to pack up with most doing it in the wet unfortunately . Luckily there was a shed to hang the Tarp to dry so it could be packed up dry the following day. Most were able to negotiate the wet incline under their own steam however Stuart's 4wd. came in handy to pull one van up and the fellows used their brute strength to push our "Nessie" out onto firmer ground.

Thanks to all for their involvement in the camp activities and their help in so many ways It was a good camp with good bird sightings and good fellowship despite the rain and heartfelt thanks to our generous hosts Lois and Stan for sharing their piece of Paradise with us.

**Kevin guarantees a dry Temora Camp!!!**

Fae and Kevin McGregor

**CONJOLA CAMP BIRD LIST**

Black Swan	Australian Wood Duck	Pacific Black Duck	Chestnut Teal
Australasian Grebe	Hoary-headed Grebe	Little Pied Cormorant	Great Cormorant
Australian Pelican	White-faced Heron	White-necked Heron	Great Egret
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Nankeen Kestrel	Purple Swamphen
Masked Lapwing	Silver Gull	White-headed Pigeon	Common Tern
Spotted Turtle-Dove	Crested Pigeon	Wonga Pigeon	Galah
Gang-Gang Cockatoo	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Rainbow Lorikeet	Musk Lorikeet
Little Lorikeet	Australian King Parrot	Crimson Rosella	Eastern Rosella
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Southern Boobook	Laughing Kookaburra	Superb Lyrebird
Superb Fairy-wren	White-throated Treecreeper	Variegated Fairy-wren	Spotted Pardalote
Brown Thornbill	White-browed Scrubwren	Red Wattlebird	Little Wattlebird
Noisy Friarbird	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	New Holland Honeyeater	Lewin's Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill	White-cheeked Honeyeater	Jackey Winter	Flame Robin
Rose Robin	Eastern Yellow Robin	Eastern Whipbird	Golden Whistler
Rufus Whistler	Grey Shrike-thrush	Black-faced Monarch	Magpie Lark
Rufus Fantail	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Willie Wagtail	Grey Fantail
Olive-backed Oriole	Australian Magpie	Pied Currawong	Green Catbird
Australian Raven	Satin Bowerbird	Red-browed Finch	Silvereye
Welcome Swallow			

## Garrawarra State Forest and Kelly's Falls Walk 18.9.99

On a fine morning, 17 members of I.B.O.C. meet at the Helensburgh Station new carpark at approximately 9.00 a.m. We heard numerous birds including Lewin's Honeyeater and Eastern Whipbird. In the trees above the cars we saw an Eastern Spinebill and Satin Bowerbird. Our leader for the day, Jack Hyslop, advised us that the original walk would need to be modified as the recent heavy rains had made many parts of the track in the Garrawarra State Forest impossible to traverse. Instead Jack suggested we walk straight to Wilson's Creek Dam and then drive to Kelly's Falls.

We walked along a track parallel to the railway line and then up a very steep and rocky path. The constant calling of Eastern Whipbirds filled our ears. The Gynea Lilies were abundant and in various stages of flowering. When we reached the top of the path we waited as a "splinter" group had sighted a Crested Shrike -tit in the trees near the railway tracks.

The track now passed behind houses and Superb and Varigated FairyWrens and Brown and Striated Thornbills were spotted among the bushes. As we walked a Spotted Pardalote was sighted as well as its nest on the bank. Pied Currawongs and Crimson Rosellas were merrily singing in the trees. Many native plants were in flower along the track. The Little Wattlebirds were noisily feeding amongst the Coral Tree flowers as well as the Gynea Lily flowers.

The track started to head downwards and several members of the group were lucky enough to see a Superb Lyrebird heading off into the forest. A Brown Thornbill was spotted entering its nest, and a Golden Whistler and Eastern Yellow Robin were heard and later sighted.

We reached a little creek just before the dam and we decided it was just the right place to have morning tea. A lazy little lizard was sunning itself on the rocks and was happy enough to stay put. Several members saw a water dragon slip away. The sun was also welcoming to us as the wind had been quite cool. After a brief stop we continued to the dam and were delighted by the synchronised swimming of the Australian Black Ducks. Little Pied Cormorants and Australasian Grebes were also on the dam. The wind here was quite strong and very cool.

We headed back along the same track and saw a female Golden Whistler in the branches of a tree. It was quite difficult going back up the track so we took our time and enjoyed watching the antics of the Little Wattlebirds chasing each other in the flowers of the Gynea Lilies. Several Australian King Parrots were spotted in the tall angophoras.

Upon our return to the carpark we drove to Kelly's Falls, which is on the road from Helensburgh to Stanwell Tops. We stopped to have lunch at a couple of picnic tables near the carpark. Here we heard a Little Corella and we were entertained with lively conversation (notably the BBPE).

After lunch we walked to Kelly's Falls. There were lots of orchids on both sides of the path. The bridge to the falls had been washed out so we retraced our steps and took an alternative path to the falls. Here Kelly's Creek becomes the Hacking River and we all enjoyed the great view out to sea over the tops of the trees.

We took the Princess Marina Cliff walk built by Henry Halloran in 1931. We passed lots of Hardenbergia in flower, tall Australian Grass Trees and masses of Gynea Lilies out in flower. It was truly spectacular. The scent of Lomandra filled the area and Flannel Flowers grew around the man-made seats and lookout made from the local rock. A Yellow-faced Honeyeater was sighted.

Below us in the valley, a Top-knot Pigeon was spotted feeding on the fruits of a Cabbage Tree Palm giving us all a good opportunity to view it in detail. About five minutes later a flock of about 20 or more Topknot Pigeons flew overhead. We continued along the track, sighting a Grey Shrike-thrush, until we reached another lookout from which we could see Stanwell Tops and several hang gliders out to sea. We stopped at the Lovers' Seat, which was just large enough for two to sit and enjoy the view.

The path now headed back to the main road. As we walked through the mainly Casuarina Forest we saw many lovely Caladenia Orchids and flowering Kennedia. We followed the main road for a few metres until we reached a fire trail that took us back to the carpark. Along this trail we stopped to smell a lovely lily with a strong vanilla scent.

The day was most enjoyable and thank you once again Jack for leading us on such a beautiful walk. We sighted 37 species for the day.

Bird List for Garrawarra State Forest and Wilson's Creek Dam(sighted and heard)

Lewin's Honeyeater	Satin Bowerbird	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Eastern Spinebill	Spotted Pardalote	Grey Teal
Sulphur -crested Cockatoo	Crimson Rosella	Grey Butcherbird
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Eastern Whipbird	Little Wattlebird
Superb Fairy-wren	Australian King Parrot	Welcome Swallow
White-browed Scrubwren	Silvereye	Striated Thornbill
Crested Pigeon	Grey Fantail	Superb Lyrebird
Crested Shrike-tit	Wonga Pigeon	Pied Currawong
Grey Shrike-thrush	Red-browed Finch	Australian Raven
Brown Thornbill	Golden Whistler	Variiegated Fairy-wren
Eastern Yellow Robin	Pacific Black Duck	White-throated Treecreeper
Australasian Grebe	Little Pied Cormorant	Yellow-faced Honeyeater

Kelly's Falls

Eastern Yellow Robin	Spotted Pardalote	White-throated Treecreeper
Grey Shrike-thrush	Brown Thornbill	Topknot Pigeons
Little Wattlebird	Crimson Rosella	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Sulphur -crested Cockatoo	Eastern Whipbird	Long-billed Corella
Australian Wood Duck	Eastern Spinebill	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail	Australian Raven
Lewin's Honeyeater	Brown Honeyeater	

Kerri Lewis

### Bird Interest Group Network (BIGNET)

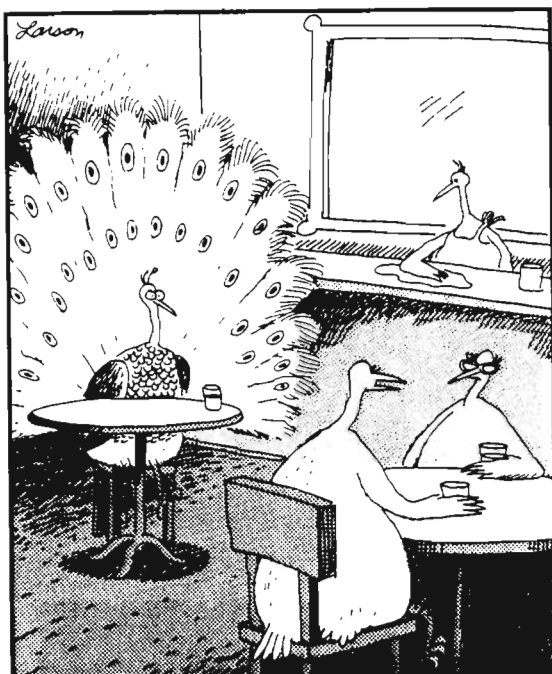
IBOC hosted the September meeting of BIGNET which is a gathering of all the bird groups in NSW and ACT promoted by the Birds Australia Sydney group. Some 30 bird interest groups have been meeting every six months since 1991 to meet and exchange ideas, standardise how we do things, coordinate conservation issues, discuss large projects such as the current atlas and generally get to know the birders around NSW.

President Kevin opened the meeting and welcomed 12 representatives, a quite small gathering as normally 25 to 30 is normal these days, and some of the ladies provided refreshments and lunch. Conservation issues were discussed first with Aimee Hutchinson from the BA Sydney Office coordinating the Conservation Officers from the major clubs and updates from members included IBOC participation in the development of the Tallawarra Power Station and Windang Estuary. The large proposed silicon refinery that will require large amounts of timber for charcoal from the western forests had a recommendation to the State Government drafted by the members.

General business was limited and the meeting covered only the one day instead of the normal two as the big issues of atlas data and record data base protocols had been resolved by separate meetings since the last meeting held at Shortland Wetlands. It was also revealed that the Wetland centre is in financial difficulties and may have to close unless new management can solve the problems of lack of patronage and funding.

The next meeting will be held in March 2000 at Richmond with birding activities planned after the business is completed. Anyone interested in being involved in the bigger birding picture is welcome to attend as I have been the only regular IBOC representative, only missing one meeting, and am ready to retire.

Chris Brandis



FROM THE  
FARSIDE COLLECTION

"Don't encourage him, Sylvia."



## OUR WOODLAND BIRDS ARE DISAPPEARING!



**Birds Australia**  
CONSERVATION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Did you know that the birds of our woodlands are disappearing? My guess is that, if asked that question, most people, even birdwatchers would say, "No... are they really?"

I'd guess that because, until recently, that's what *I* would have said. I'd read a few articles that predicted a number of birds would disappear altogether, and there were some that told of certain species being absent from some areas... but I didn't take that to heart. I was still seeing most of my usual feathered friends every time I went birdwatching - and if I didn't, I figured it was "just me", or "the weather", or "the time of day".

I knew I hadn't seen as many babblers around lately, and I knew that I wasn't seeing Red-capped Robins much any more. Yet the alarm bells weren't ringing for me.

I suppose we fail to be alarmed by such things because we don't properly understand the process of extinction. Victorian biologist, Dr Barry Traill, explains that process in such a way that, when I first read his words, the hair on the back of my neck actually stood up!

Dr Traill writes, "... extinction is very, very rarely a 'wham bang' event, with the bulldozers clearing some bush and quickly eliminating the entire population of a species. Extinction is a process, often in human timeframes a very slow process, by which a common and widespread species becomes slowly less common, then less widespread, then localised but still common in places, then quite explicitly rare and nearly extinct. If this process is sufficiently slow people simply don't notice - until it is too late."

Having digested this concept, I followed up by reading several papers on recent studies of bird distribution in the wheat-sheep belt of New South Wales - the former 'temperate woodlands'. Scientists working in this field agree - birds of the woodlands really are in serious decline. Species like Jacky Winter and Eastern Yellow Robin - that we are used to thinking of as 'common', are known to be declining in many districts.

So, it's true! But does it matter? Well, it matters to the birds... nobody wants to go extinct! And it matters to people like you and me who love birds - people who love to see birds, who love to hear their song, and who want the joy of birds for their children, and for *their* children.

The decline of, specifically, *woodland* birds can have economic consequences as well. The birds that have been noted as declining are mostly the insect-eaters! Thus, we are losing the birds that are needed to keep trees, crops and pasture healthy. The list of more than twenty 'decliners' includes Speckled Warbler, Grey-crowned Babbler, Brown Treecreeper, Red-capped Robin, Striated Pardalote and other insectivorous species.

If you would like more information about the project contact me on 02 6882 2056 or email [miworld@bigpond.com](mailto:miworld@bigpond.com). Alternatively, contact the Birds Australia office on 03 9882 2622 or at 415 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorne East 3123, or your nearest office of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

We would especially like to hear from people who can assist in passing information on to other individuals and groups about the problems facing woodland birds.

Judie Peet

Unusual Records **September-October 1999** 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
<b>Amsterdam Albatross</b>	1	26/09	off Wollongong	marine	TP
Brown Falcon	2	19/09	Toolijooa	rural	CP
Grey Plover	1	19/09	Comerong Island	sandfalts	CP
Great Knot	1	20/10	Bellambi Point	beach	GB
<b>Arctic Tern</b>	1	29/08	off Wollongong	marine	TP
<b>Black Noddy</b>	1	26/09	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	14/09	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Topknot Pigeon	35	16/10	Korongulla Swamp	forest	RI
Long-billed Corella	25	03/10	Bong Bong	rural	GB
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	10/09	Coledale	overhead	GB
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	14/09	Thirroul	overhead	RM
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	22/09	Lake Conjola	overhead	KM
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	27/09	Keiraville	overhead	ME
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	13/10	Primbee	garden	RI
Common Koel	1	27/09	Nowra	overhead	CB
Common Koel	1	14/10	Keiraville	garden	ME
Common Koel	1	15/10	Primbee	garden	RI
Striated Fieldwren	2	19/09	Little Forest Plateaux	heath	KM
White-cheeked Honeyeater	1	19/09	Little Forest Plateaux	heath	KM
White-cheeked Honeyeater	4	22/09	Lake Conjola west	forest	KM
White-browed Woodswallow	100+	09/09	Jamberoo Mountain	overhead	RJ
Masked Woodswallow	50	09/09	Jamberoo Mountain	overhead	RJ
Green Catbird	1	18/09	Slacky Flat	forest	GB
Common Blackbird	1	16/10	Korongulla Swamp	forest	RI

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Daryl Goldrick; RI - Ron Imisides; RJ - Richard Jordan; RM - Richard Miller; KM - Kevin Mills; TP - Tony Palliser; CP - Chris Presland;

Comment: Not a great deal of entries this month, but nevertheless some pretty interesting ones. Two new species for the region were an Amsterdam Albatross and a Black Noddy. The Amsterdam Albatross is a very rare species with less than 100 known individuals and is possibly the first record of this species in Australian waters. The bird was captured and photographed and then released. The Black Noddy is rarely observed south of the Queensland border. The Arctic Tern was in full breeding plumage when observed. Plenty of Koels and Cahnnel-billed Cuckoos around those above are some of the earliest returns.

Chris Chafer

# 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. 224

December 1999

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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, 13th December 1999**, 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. If you would like to sing,dance, recite, act or entertain your fellow members in any way contact the McGregors for a place in the programme, all offerings gratefully received, so please put on your thinking caps. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards and also bring your cup or mug.

*Seasons Greetings*

**NEXT OUTING** : includes our Christmas Barbecue and it will take place at **Grevilla Gardens, Bulli on Saturday 11th December**. Please meet at the entrance at **4.30 p.m.** There will be a walk around the garden and this year I.B.O.C. will provide the sausages, onions and bread for the barbecue. Please bring your own salads and drinks. To assist in catering, please contact The McGregors asap if you intend attending. We will finish before dark.

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

**Next Committee Meeting** : This will be held on **Tuesday 18th January 2000**, at the house of **Kerri Lewis**, 14 Tolson Place Balgownie starting at **7.30 p.m.**

**Subscriptions are now due**: Please pay promptly as it saves committee members a lot of extra work.

**January Walk**: On **Sunday 16th January, 2000** to **Seven Mile Beach National Park** and will include walking in the dune forest as well as along the beach. Meet at **9.00 a.m.** in the picnic area at the end of Beach Road. When travelling south from Wollongong, travel approximately 3 km. south of Gerroa, with the National Park on your left. When you reach Beach Road turn **left** into the picnic area. If you turn right you will be on the road to Berry.

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

### **1999 Annual General Meeting**

The AGM was held at the November meeting and Brian Hales 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** : - Bruce O'Brien

**Committee members** : - Peg McKinlay, Kerri Lewis, Lorraine Pineus, Robyn Wilson

A very special thanks go to outgoing treasurer Bronwyn Wilson and committee members Esme Gay and Horrie Ward for their many years of service to the club.

**Editor** : -Mike Morphett

Please send any items for the February Newsletter 2000 to

15 Coast Street, Thirroul, 2515

## NOVEMBER MEETING

Like many of our longstanding members. Wal Emery is a much travelled bird watcher and he shared with us, a comprehensive selection of his trips. "If you find the habitat – you will usually find the bird" was his theme for his presentation. Naturally you also need a little bit of luck factored into this equation to be entirely successful in tracking down that 'special kind'.

Wal explained that contemporary field guides usually list birds in taxonomic order – in earlier days they were invariably described according to their habitats.

Wals most favoured habitat is the rainforest and he described his sheer delight at his first sightings in this environment on his trip to Cape York in 1981. His slide presentation took us through a wide range of habitats and these were matched with the bird species most likely to be encountered in these environments.

Habitats such as mangroves, rainforest (tropical and subtropical), mallee, saltbush, Mulga/ Belah, lignum, spinnifex, canegrass, paperbark/ pandanus were well represented with their associated bird species.

Wals enthusiasm for birding is infectious and his presentation reflected how much effort he put into structuring his talk and selection of ~~slides~~<sup>slides</sup> studies. His unique humour interspersed throughout his anecdotal stories were classic and proved to be the magical ingredients for what was a thoroughly informative and entertaining evening. Richard Miller vote of thanks was in my view, something very special.

Cedarvale Health Resort    Sunday 14/11/99

It is Jude who writes :

Greetings to you : those who searched for soaring, secretive or sitting avian creatures and those unable to swell the crowd of binocular bearing bodies!

There were 21 members of mature age - no children were present, but there may have been many who were/are still very young at heart!? - met at Fitzroy Falls car park. First name badges were attached to everyone. What an excellent idea! Not only to help the shy and reticent like me, but of great assistance to short term memory claimants. Were, or are there any? I forget.

Ziggy and Kevin McGregor - the Big Boss! - briefed us. The wind was up, so was the temperature as evidenced by lots of bare, white knees. It was a good idea to meet at the car park because there was no sign at the entrance of Cedarvale fronting the Barrengarry Mountain Pass on quite a sharp bend. Ziggy bent over backwards to flag us off the Pass. He was a beacon because of his knickerbockers not bare knees.

As was mentioned in the walk announcement in the last I.B.O.C. Newsletter Cedarvale does have a lot of rainforest. The property consists of 150 acres of forested and cleared benches about 1/3 to 1/2 way below Kangaroo Valley escarpment ridges. The timber is very tall and straight, hence we were protected from the strong winds overhead.

Cars were parked at the lodge: lunch order numbers counted and 2 cars made available to take those who thought the descent to another bench level maybe too trying. We embarked on our exercise agreeing to return for lunch at 1 p.m.

The most common bird call and then frequent sightings was from and of the Golden Whistler - both sexes. It seemed to be as prolific as sparrows are or were in a suburban setting. The greatest strain for me and I'm sure for many others was a pain in the neck ( no not a person!) from trying to locate the callers or identify the movements among leaves and branches of very, very tall timbers: also from looking at numerous stag horn and bird nest ferns thereon. Some large specimens of native tamarinds - *Diploglottis australis* were heavy with blossom.

The Eastern Spinebill was sighted in quite a few locations as was the Grey Fantail and the Brown Thornbill. Plenty of Fantail Cuckoo calls were heard.

Not long after crossing a bridge over a flowering crystal clear creek we emerged on a large cleared bench area where we stopped for morning tea. We squatted in little groups wherever there was maximum shade. That was the way we seemed to travel throughout our bird search - like Brown's Cows. Hence some saw sights others didn't see. Viz:- the Echidna; Grey Goshawks; Rose Robin; Rufous Fantail; Black-faced Monarch; Yellow-throated Scrubwren; Large-billed Scrubwren; Laughing Kookaburra; Black-Cockatoo; Superb Lyrebirds; Superb Fairy-wren; Red-browed Finch; the naked woman in the creek; Spotted Pardalote; Eastern Whipbird; Satin Bowerbird and a bower and Eastern Yellow Robin.

On the cleared area is an orchard - a mixture of citrus, stone fruits and kiwifruit vines at the eastern end. The fruit hadn't yet developed enough to attract parrots. Not one was to be seen here nor any raptors. From this bench views of Budderoo Plateau to the

to be seen here nor any raptors. From this bench views of Budderoo Plateau to the North-east and a couple of waterfalls and rock falls could be enjoyed. On the southern slopes of this area were many showy, shrubby trees in very heavy blossom. I have since identified them as *Clerodendrum tomentosum*, in the Verbenaceae family. When fruit develops the calyx is red and seeds are black which, to quote Leon Fuller, provide "another ornamental dimension".

We arrived back at the car park and settled in various shady spots, none large enough to accommodate all except in the middle of a roadway just down from the circular drive. Four people lunched here and saw the Rose Robin, whilst seven lunched at the lodge and saw each other. Several of the rest of the groups saw Pied Currawongs feeding one young in a nest nearby.

After lunch some purchased fruit - only citrus available - Yumm! The grapefruit and oranges are sweet and juicy. Then we left like Brown's cows. One group that broke into two groups who met a third at the entrance walked from the lodge to the gate. It was on this walk that quite a few birds were sighted. Viz:- a second Pied Currawong's nest This time with only one adult feeding two young.

At the entrance area there was a lot of bird activity. We saw a male Golden Whistler attack a juvenile Eastern Yellow Robin. It was here that we sighted the bower with its numerous blue objects. Just as well the birds were active because the traffic noise was very deafening.

I forgot to mention an unusual flora sighting which was a first for me. It was a ground orchid (one only!) - *Gastrodia sesamoides*. Lorraine Pineus noticed this "stem with little bells on it" beside the road on the way down to the cleared area. On the return journey we were looking at it when Wal Emery came along and said :- "It's called Cinnamon Bells. I'll look it up and phone you", which he did. It has another common name - Potato Orchid. Mike Morphett and Lorraine photographed it. Several examined it with reversed binoculars and with a hand lens. It really was very interesting.

With reluctance the last of the group departed. The total number of avian species sighted as only 27, maybe because of the weather, time of day and year?! The tranquility and ambience of the place as well as communion with all those attending more than compensated for the low number. Thankyou to everyone - organisers and attenders.

Judith Parkinson.

Bird List for Cedarvale Health Centre

Grey Goshawk	White-browed Scrubwren	Golden Whistler
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Yellow-throated Scrubwren	Rufous Fantail
Sulphur-crested White-Cockatoo	Large-billed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail
Yellow-tailed Black- Cockatoo	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Monarch
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Laughing Kookaburra	Red-browed Finch	Satin Bowerbird
Superb Lyrebird	Eastern Spinebill	Welcome Swallow
Superb Fairy-wren	Rose Robin	Eastern Yellow Robin
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Whipbird	Silvereye

Lorraine Pineus



### ***“The Pinnacle” Temora 23-30 October Camp.***

When I arrived on Friday morning there were already four members encamped in the picturesque setting of green grass, large Eucalyptus, with the wonderful sound of bird song and a delightful old cottage. All cosily set with the splendour of the Pinnacle in the background.

The usual amenities were in place, with the campers about to enjoy a little bit of pampering with the shower erected on the cottage verandah.

By mid afternoon most members had arrived and set up camp. Birds called, we responded and there, just outside the camp we found Crimson Chat, as well as other birds. Saturday dawned cold and damp with rain threatening. We organised our first walk, quickly finding Eastern Yellow Robin, White browed Babbler, Thornbills, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater. As we moved out of scrub into a flat grazing paddock we were able to admire unusual Wildflowers of many colours and shapes. In another spot we gazed in awe on “Nature’s Terraced Garden” of low shrubs and wildflowers - *beautiful*. Our return walk brought us back into timber at the base of the Pinnacle, seeing Re-capped Robin, Western Gerygone, Variegated Fairy-wren. We were back at camp when the rain started and continued all afternoon and night.

Still raining on Sunday. Because of the wet conditions a couple of members were driven to set up camp in the cottage, ignoring their earlier worries about Bush Rats, bird spattered walls and resident bees. We managed a short walk between showers seeing plenty of birds, one of the Speckled Warbler.

Monday was clear and sunny. Our all day outing started by viewing Eastern Rosellas in a nest in the gate post, then Common Bronzewing, Grey Butcherbird. After that we quickly added numerous birds to our list. Thrill of the day for Sigi was finding a little garden of tiny Spider Orchids.

Barbara and Brian and their guest (Barbara’s sister Shirley and her husband George) joined us for our campfire, making a final total of 28 persons for our camp.

Tuesday we drive to Ingalba Nature Reserve. By this time rain was falling. A Fae persisted for a short time and came up with some birds including Crested Pigeon, Rufus Whistler. We headed back to Lake Centenary, a man made lake covering an area of 22 hectares. We found good shelter sheds in which to eat an early lunch, and as the weather cleared we were able to see a great many water birds. From here we went to sewage works and garbage dump, adding Pink-eared Duck, Little Grassbird and many more. On our way back to camp Brian had his first sighting of the Crimson Chat.

Tom led the first expedition up the Pinnacle early Wednesday morning. A small group had a short walk after lunch while others rested in preparation for our night out at the Grand Hotel in Temora, where Irene and Jim were our guests. A delicious meal was enjoyed by all, chosen from a large varied menu. An excellent night.

Again walking within this vast property, we set off on Thursday in a different direction, Black Honeyeater, Diamond Firetail, Rainbow Bee-eater were some of the birds we found.

Irene and Jim joined us for a night of hilarity in the cottage, ending with coffee and pikelets courtesy of Gwen, after which Jim entertained us all at the campfire with a variety of stories. One in particular of his unbelievable heroism with an Emu!!!!

A morning walk on Friday turned in a trek in vehicles towards the back boundary of the property where we witnessed the majestic sight of 7 EMU's running through a crop paddock. We returned to camp for lunch. Some of us walked another lane later and bot the White throated Treecreeper.

Early morning risers went out on their own short excursions each day with plenty of birds to see. The area was excellent for one young fellow, he must have throught it was Christmas, getting so many "lifers" Alistar was also the first one to climb the Pinnacle to discover the Wedge-tailed Eagle's nest with a young one in it. By the end of the week the majority of campers had climbed up to examine nest and baby.

Thank you to Joan and Tom for organising our excursions. Many thanks to Kevin and Fae for seeing that things were running smoothly, checking on anyone needing held and for all the little fun things that we enjoyed so much. I'm sure all would agree that it was a great camp. We especially thank Jim and Irene for allowing us to use their beautiful property for our camp. Thank you Jim for the slashing and tidying done at the campsite. Also for the tank you provided, which gave us an unlimited supply of beautiful fresh water.

On the property 103 different species were recorded. 129 in all, and a complete list is recorded below

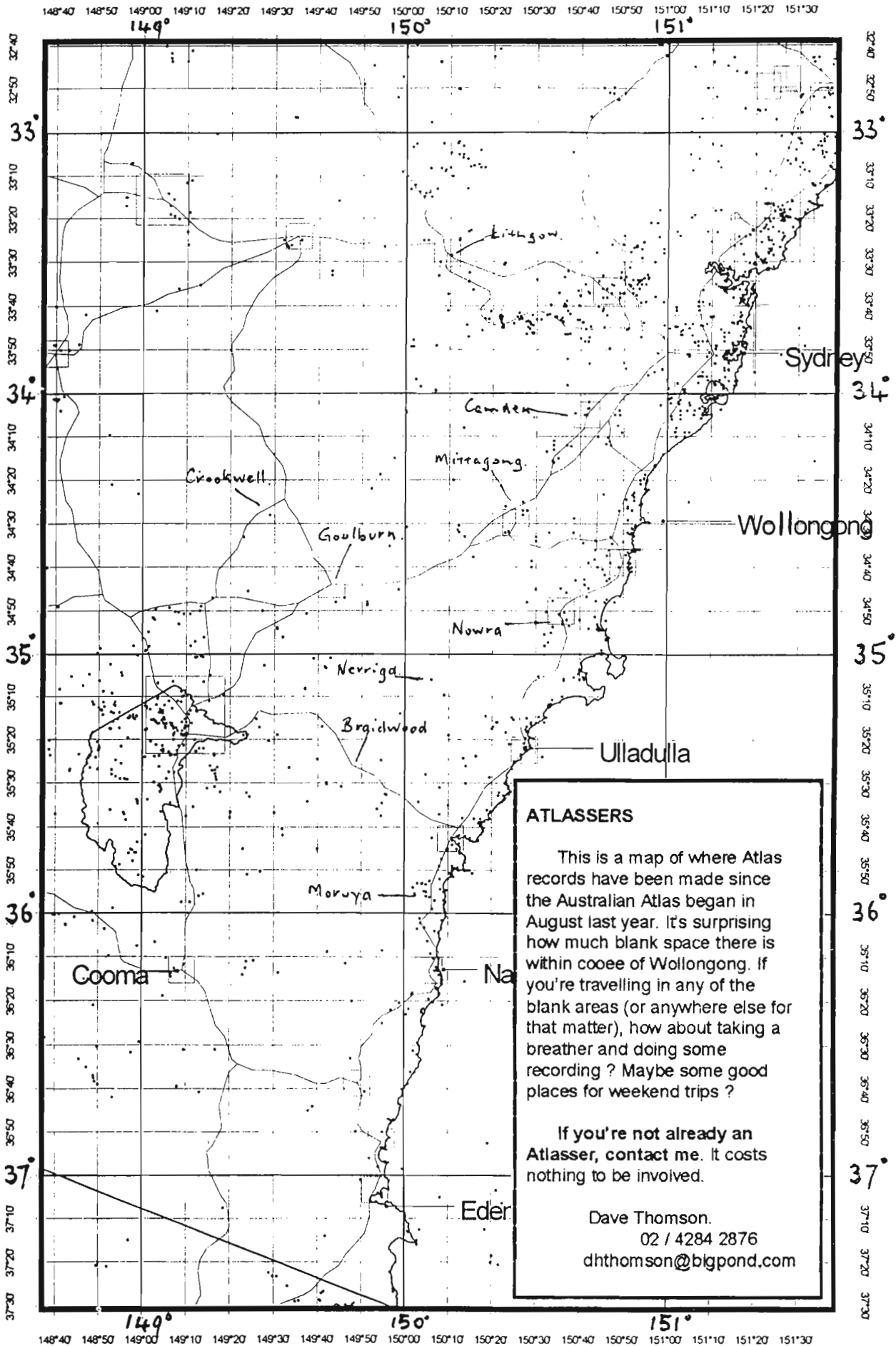
Pat Jones  
Camp Reporter.

Col No	Location	Lat. ° S.	Long. ° E.	Year 1999.
1	The Pinnacle.	34° 14'	147° 32'	23 / 10 to 30 / 10
2	Inglebah Nature Reserve	34° 26'	147° 28'	26 / 10 to 30 / 10
3	Temora township.	34° 27'	147° 32'	26 / 10 ----

		Column 1	2	3			Column 1	2	3
001	Emu		X		565	Spotted Pardalote	X		
009	Stubble Quail		X		976	Striated Pardalote	X		X
011	Brown Quail		X		504	Speckled Warbler	X		
217	Musk Duck			X	465	Weebill	X		
203	Black Swan			X	463	Western Gerygone	X		
202	Australian Wood Duck		X	X	475	Brown Thornbill	X	X	
208	Pacific Black Duck		X	X	476	Inland Thornbill	X	X	
212	Australasian Shoveler				481	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	X	X	
211	Grey Teal		X	X	484	Buff-rumped Thornbill	X		
213	Pink-eared Duck			X	486	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	X		
215	Hardhead			X	471	Yellow Thornbill	X		
061	Australasian Grebe		X	X	466	Southern Whiteface	X		
062	Hoary-headed Grebe			X	638	Red Wattlebird	X	X	
101	Darter			X	640	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	X		

097	Little Black Cormorant			X	645	Noisy Friarbird	X		
096	Great Cormorant			X	646	Little Friarbird	X		
106	Australian Pelican			X	641	Blue-faced Honeyeater	X		
188	White-faced Heron	X	X	X	634	Noisy Miner	X	X	X
189	Pacific Heron	X		X	617	White-eared Honeyeater	X	X	X
178	Glossy Ibis			X	625	White-plumed Honeyeater	X		
179	Australian White Ibis			X	593	Brown-headed Honeyeater	X		
180	Straw-necked Ibis	X		X	589	Black Honeyeater	X		
181	Royal Spoonbill			X	449	Crimson Chat	X		X
182	Yellow-billed Spoonbill	X			377	Jacky Winter	X	X	
234	Pacific Baza	X		X	381	Red-capped Robin	X		
222	Collared Sparrowhawk	X		X	385	Hooded Robin	X		
224	Wedge-tailed Eagle	X			392	Eastern Yellow Robin	X	X	
225	Little Eagle	X			443	Grey-crowned Babbler	X		X
239	Brown Falcon	X		X	445	White-browed Babbler	X		
240	Nankeen Kestrel	X			401	Rufous Whistler	X	X	
058	Purple Swamphen			X	408	Grey Shrike-thrush	X	X	
056	Dusky Moorhen			X	365	Leadend Flycatcher	X		
055	Black-tailed Native-hen			X	369	Restless Flycatcher	X		
059	Eurasian Coot			X	415	Magpie-lark	X	X	X
168	Latham's Snipe			X	361	Grey Fantail	X	X	
146	Black-winged Stilt			X	364	Willie Wagtail	X	X	X
132	Red-kneed Dotterel			X	424	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	X	X	
133	Masked Lapwing			X	430	White-winged Triller	X		X
957	Rock Dove			X	544	Masked Woodswallow	X		
034	Common Bronzewing	X	X		545	White-browed Woodswallow	X		
043	Crested Pigeon	X	X	X	546	Black-faced Woodswallow			X
030	Peaceful Dove	X			547	Dusky Woodswallow	X	X	
273	Galah	X	X	X	702	Grey Butcherbird	X		
274	Cockatiel	X		X	700	Pied Butcherbird	X		X
288	Eastern Rosella	X		X	705	Australian Magpie	X		X
291	Mallee Ringneck	X			930	Australian Raven	X		X
297	Blue Bonnet	X			954	Little Raven	X		X
295	Red-rumped Parrot	X		X	693	White-winged Chough	X	X	X
302	Turquoise Parrot	X			675	Apostlebird	X		
337	Pallid Cuckoo	X			647	Richard's Pipit	X		
338	Fantailed Cuckoo	X			995	House Sparrow			X
342	Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo	X			655	Double-barred Finch	X		
344	Shining Bronze Cuckoo	X			652	Diamond Firetail	X		
242	Southern Boobook	X			564	Mistletoebird	X		
313	Tawny Frogmouth	X			358	White-backed Swallow	X		
319	Azure Kingfisher			X	357	Welcome Swallow	X		X
322	Laughing Kookaburra	X	X		359	Tree Martin	X		
326	Sacred Kingfisher	X	X	X	360	Fairy Martin	X		
329	Rainbow Bee-eater	X			522	Little Grassbird			X
558	White-throated Treecreeper	X	X		509	Rufous Songlark	X		X
555	Brown Treecreeper	X			574	Silvereye	X		
529	Superb Fairy-wren	X			991	Common Blackbird			X
536	Variegated Fairy-wren	X			999	Common Starling	X		X

# Atlas surveys in SE New South Wales - Oct 99



**ATLASSERS**

This is a map of where Atlas records have been made since the Australian Atlas began in August last year. It's surprising how much blank space there is within cooee of Wollongong. If you're travelling in any of the blank areas (or anywhere else for that matter), how about taking a breather and doing some recording? Maybe some good places for weekend trips?

If you're not already an Atlasser, contact me. It costs nothing to be involved.

Dave Thomson.  
02 / 4284 2876  
dthomson@bigpond.com

### Trip to Broome and out to Ashmore Reef

I flew to Broome at the end of October with the first bird seen being a Little Curlew, one of many to be seen later, on the Airport lawn. As I had a day to spare before the vessel sailed I had arranged a day out with local bird guide and tour organiser George Swan. The day started at 5 am driving out onto the Roebuck Plains for the Yellow Chat and there were about a hundred, some of the males glowing in almost full breeding plumage. As well there were waders in the tidal pool, in some grassy patches, Oriental Plovers and a small quail which turned out to be Red-breasted Button-quail while Barn Swallows flew about over head. We then went into the mangroves for the Redshank and saw White-breasted Whistler, Mangrove Golden Whistler, Dusky Gerygone and Mangrove Grey Fantail as we waded knee deep in the grey mud to Big Crab Creek. It was worth the effort as when we looked out onto the muddy banks a Redshank was spotted feeding about 50 m away giving us great views. Then back to the shore as the tide started to come in and after a bit of a clean up we started scanning the thousands of waders that cram on to the shores of Roebuck Bay for rarities. We did find a Broad-billed Sandpiper but could not find an Asian Dowitcher among the Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits, the Great and Red Knots, the Greater Sand Plovers and many others so we left to visit to the Broome sewerage farm. These can be great places for waders, ducks, terns and many others and with a Long-toed Stint found, proved to be no exception. The day ended after 6 pm and I thoroughly recommend George to any one for his vast local knowledge and obvious birding skills.

We boarded the Jodi Anne 2, a 27 m sailing/motor vessel and headed up the coast on private charter with 9 birds and 4 crew. The weather was great with a mild sea breeze and plenty of terns, boobies and gulls to keep us busy as well as trolling some lures we caught a Northern Blue-fin Tuna and a Spanish Mackerel for later meals and threw back several other fish like barracuda that, we were told, were not as good to eat. The next day we were in deeper waters when a small brown seabird passed by about 20 m away which turned out to be the first Australian record, if confirmed, of a Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel. Birds were rather scarce and, unlike trips off Wollongong, the birds did not approach or follow the boat so that many of the views were at some distance. We did manage to see Wilson's Storm-Petrel, Masked Booby, Bulwer's Petrel, Streaked Shearwater and a few others while the odd Lesser Frigatebird flew high overhead as well as a few dolphins and tropical whale species.

The next morning we landed on Scot Reef, a 300 x 50 m sandy quay, for an hour or so to watch the last of that night's laying Green Turtles go into the sea. The sand looked like a bombing range with deep holes every where as each new turtle dug a hole, often though another's earlier nest with the Reef Egrets standing by for a quick meal of turtle eggs. We then headed back to sea with only a couple of Bulwer's Petrels sighted and at one time had 2 hours without a bird sighting. The next day proved a little better as the sea became shallower and we sighted a large feeding flock of Brown Boobies and headed over to check out. We found a Masked and a Red-footed Booby as well as many Brown Boobies, Common Noddies and Sooty Terns, feeding on fish being attacked from below by a school of predatory fish like tuna making the water boil.

We reached Ashmore Reef about lunch time and were visited by the quarantine people who spent some 9 months on the reef dealing with Indonesian fishermen slaughtering seabirds and turtles as well as conducting illegal fishing acts and now boat loads of illegal immigrants rotting the system. The main island is less than a kilometre in diameter and access is restricted to the beach on one side and a track to an old well in the centre. There are 2 m tall woody shrubs around the edge just above the high tide mark and the centre is grass, dry at this time of year but lush in the wet, and totally devoid of any surface fresh water. Apart from seabirds such as both Red-tailed and White-tailed Tropicbirds, Lesser Crested Terns and Black Noddies we found a number of Oriental Cuckoos, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Rainbow Bee-eater, Sacred Kingfisher, Buff-banded Rail and, to our surprise, 3 Magpie-larks. Waders were also present including Pied Oystercatchers and the only Sanderlings sighted on the trip while Barn Swallows flew over and a probable Yellow Wagtail flushed and flew off.

We then headed off to Adele Island and, while in shallower waters, saw our first Matsudaira's Storm-Petrels, some more Tahiti and Bulwer's Petrels as well as a Whimbrel and a Ruddy Turnstone heading in our direction. The shallower waters also had a number of sea snakes swimming slowly along and a couple of herpetology experts aboard did their best to identify them from these brief glimpses. When we reached the island it was low tide and we had to walk across the reef for what we thought was 300 m but, due to the mirage effect, what turned out to be over 1½ kilometres. This was through knee deep water flowing against us back to the sea with small turtles, blue-spotted sting rays, White-tipped, Black-tipped and Grey Reef Sharks swimming around us after fish. There were a number of Masked Boobies coming in from fishing with the Great Frigatebirds swooping down and harassing them until they disgorged a fish or two and were then allowed to continue on. The interior of the Island had a type of spinifex grass with Tawny Grassbirds amongst the nesting seabirds, a Tree Martin and a Black-shouldered Kite over head.

From here we travelled overnight and arrived at the Lacepede Islands, just off the WA coast, seeing our first Roseate Terns fishing out to sea. These terns later descended onto the island in their thousands with Brown Boobies, Common Noddies and Bridled Terns nesting every where amongst the tussock grass with a small colony of Lesser Frigatebirds with chicks almost ready to fly. There were a number of dead turtles that had strayed to far inland or tipped over coral cliffs while negotiating their way to and from the sea. Again travelling overnight we arrived back at Broome early in the afternoon, picked up a hire car, bought supplies and headed for the Bird Observatory.

Next morning after an early morning chorus and a leisurely breakfast watching the Long-tailed Finches come in to drink at the bird baths, we headed for the Crab Creek mangroves as the tide was coming in. After much searching we again found Common Redshanks and this time Asian Dowitchers amongst the hundreds of milling feeding waders that were being pushed closer to us by the incoming tide until they finally departed for the high tide roosts. We checked the Golf Course and the sewerage farm again and a few other local spots gave all a sighting of some of the local specials.

The next day we travelled to Derby and spent most of the time at the sewage farm and the over flow ponds which were full of waders, including Ruff, Australian Pratincoles, Long-toed Stints, a flock of Brolgas and 2 Black-necked Storks. We

thought that we would find Swinhoe's Snipe, the common snipe of the area in summer, but only one possible bird was flushed. After a quick trip to the mangroves at Derby wharf we departed but stopped along the way seeing Black-tailed Treecreeper and a few bush birds that appeared to be affected by the 40 plus degrees heat. An early morning start and out onto the Roebuck Plains for another look at the stunning Yellow Chats while flocks of Fork-tailed Swifts hawked overhead. We travelled out to a couple of lakes about 30 kilometres away, patches of lush green in a very dry dusty land. The number and diversity of waders and waterbirds was extraordinary including hundreds of Brolgas, about a hundred Green Pygmy Geese, with a range of raptors overhead with some great sights of Black-breasted Buzzard and a Brown Goshawk trying to ambush finches and honey-eaters that were coming in to drink. After watching several flocks of Australian Pratincoles arrive we noted some with larger white rumps and found our first Oriental Pratincoles that were apparently late in arriving into the area. After returning to the Observatory we went out into some grass land and were successful in flushing some Red-breasted Button-Quail and a covey Brown Quail before calling it a day. After dark we had a spot light around but found no nightbirds at all but our spotlight was having brightness problems and we had no tapes of owls, mainly the Grass Owl, that could be expected to be in that habitat.

On the last morning before flying out we checked out the sewerage farm with George Swan and a small flock of Oriental Pratincoles turned up as well as several Yellow Wagtails in partial colour. This area, in summer especially, is certainly different from other parts of Australia with many Asian bird migrants common to scarce. So after seeing some 186 species, including a number of different sub-species to those of the eastern Australia, of which 13 were lifers, I departed for home thanking the others for making it such a memorable time and happy I had made the trip.

Chris Brandis

### **An Ideal Christmas Present**

The Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands 1999 is now available from the Club at a cost of \$20.