

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. 225

February 2000

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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

☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

NEW YEAR OUTING Wednesday 9 February 2000. See below under President's message for further details.

MEETING Monday 14 February 2000 at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be Roger Truscott, who, after about 15 years club membership, will deliver his maiden IBOC talk, titled '*Adventures in Photography: Australia and North Borneo*'. Roger will be sharing his enthusiasm and, no doubt his frustrations, in experimenting with bird photography over the past 12 months or so; for example, the non-legal problems one can encounter when stalking birds.

OUTING Saturday 19 February 2000 to Booderee National Park, led by Di Wright of the Shoalhaven Bird Group, whose outings program is listed below. Meeting point is at 9 am in front of the Information Centre barrier on Jervis Bay Road. We recommend that participants pool vehicles, preferably at the start of the journey from home, for companionship and to cut down on fuel costs and the park entry fee of \$5 per vehicle. Please contact Kevin McGregor in regard to the need for transport or the availability of car space. Besides eats, make sure you have sufficient drinks and protective gear as some of the walk will be out in the open. We will explore the circular track area that takes in Murrays Beach and Governors Head and after lunch a track from Greenpatch to include Bristol Point. Di reports that vegetation will be a mixture of heathland and forest and we should look out for the Eastern Bristlebird, Spangled Drongo, Southern Emu-wren, Red-browed Treecreeper, and Peregrine Falcon.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 22 February 2000 at 7.30 pm at Kevin & Fay McGregor's home (address above).

MARCH NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for this issue will be Friday 25 February. After 22 years with IBOC, I'm pleased and privileged to take over the position of editor and look forward to receiving and publishing a steady stream of stimulating material from club members. Thanks, Kerri, for your excellent work in this role over the past two years and for your tuition. Mike.

From the President:

Welcome to the New Year, Century and Millennium.

We can now look to the future and endeavour to carry on the objects of the Club *to join people together with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.*

1999 revealed an increase in membership and well attended meetings, outings and camps. The fellowship at each of those activities has been wonderful and it has been a pleasure to lead you with assistance from the executive members and many other members. Thanks to all.

The publication of Horrie Ward's "Reports on Outings 1977 to 1998" and Chris Chafer's "Handbook of Birds found in Illawarra Shoalhaven and adjacent Tablelands" have been significant milestones within the life of the club and thanks to all those who assisted the authors. These books are available from the Club at \$50 (3 Volumes) and \$20 respectively.

I confirm the recording of Unusual Sightings will continue, and you are requested to provide your details to Chris Chafer and to assist in that regard we have produced report forms and these can be collected from the club. You are reminded that particulars of your unusual sightings should be communicated to Chris at 69 Lake Heights Road, Lake Heights, 2502 or E-mail: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Phone No.4276 3871 as soon as possible after the sighting.

To assist your Committee during the year 2000 we require a ***Vice President*** and an ***Excursions Officer*** and request you give urgent consideration to filling both these positions. If you would like to volunteer to write a report on a Club Meeting please let me know.

I hope that the program set out in this *Newsletter* will allow you to enjoy the activities of our Club and look forward to seeing you throughout the coming New Year.

Bronwyn Wilson has now been re-appointed Treasurer and your membership fees can be forwarded to her.

All the best for your birdwatching.



WEDNESDAY 9th FEBRUARY - PICNIC DINNER/WALK AT LAKE ILLAWARRA

This annual event will be held on **Wednesday 9th February, 2000** when we will meet at **5.00pm** on the South Western side of Windang Bridge, Lake Illawarra for a walk along the southern foreshores of the lake (areas being surveyed by our Club in the study for the Illawarra Lake Authority over the next three years) and then enjoy a dinner together (BYO). Park in Reddall Parade and we will meet at the **Bar-B-Ques, Pelican View Reserve** adjacent to Shellhabour Road near the small footbridge to Picnic Island.

CLUB NEWS

LAKE ILLAWARRA STUDY:

Discussions have been held and completed with the Lake Illawarra Authority [LIA] in relation to the Bird Monitoring at Lake Illawarra Entrance and Whyjuck Bay over the next three years.

A monitoring protocol has been agreed to and to date a team of eleven members has been established to carry out the survey. We will provide the Authority with reports of the monitoring results on a six monthly basis after collection and analysis of the Austral summer or winter surveys. Payment for the surveys will be received on a 6 monthly basis once the reports have been submitted to the LIA. A minimum of 4 surveys each Austral summer and winter is required, however we are confident that more surveys during these periods will be possible.

Payment for the surveys will be based on a rate of \$10 per hour with each survey taking approximately 3 hours.

A data base is already on hand thanks to early surveys and for further details of the important ecological project contact Chris Brandis (Telephone 4296 2837) or Kevin McGregor (Telephone 4271 3762).

* * * * *

PROPOSED EASTER CAMP - 21ST TO 25TH APRIL, 2000. CEDARVALE HEALTH CENTRE MOSS VALE ROAD, FITZROY FALLS

It has been proposed that the 2000 Easter Camp be held at Cedarvale Health Resort, Moss Vale Road, Fitzroy Falls between 21st to 25th April, 2000.

We walked on this property last November and found it a quiet peaceful site close to many areas which are also wonderful birdwatching places.

The site contains a recreation hall (meeting and eating facilities), hot showers and toilets which will be made available to us during the camp. A fee of \$5 per person per day is payable to the centre. Vegetarian meals can be provided at the Centre's Reception Facility, by arrangement, if required.

If you are interested in this proposal please register at the next meeting or telephone Kevin McGregor as soon as possible.

MONTHLY AND WEEKLY OUTINGS:

Please let the Club know of any new sites you think would be interesting to our members.

I.B.O.C. DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR 2000
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JAN	Sun 16th	Outing	Seven Mile Beach (Bruce O'Brien) Committee meeting
FEB	Wed 9th	Outing	Lake Ilawarra (PM Picnic Dinner)
	Mon 14th	Meeting	Roger Truscott (Trip to Borneo)
	Sat 19th	Outing	Booderee National Park - Di Wright
MCH	Mon 13th	Meeting	Lindsay Smith - Albatrosses or Oyster catchers
	Wed 15th	Outing	Bellambi Lagoon (Doug Rickers)
	Sun 19th	Outing	Tallawarra Ash Ponds (Darryl Goldrick)
APR	Mon 10th	Meeting	Graham Chapman - Bird Photography
	Wed 12th	Outing	Macquarie Rivulet - Barbara Hales
	Fri 21/25	Camp	Cedarvale Kangaroo Valley (?)
MAY	Mon 8th	Meeting	Members Night
	Sat 14th	Outing	Mitchell Park - Sydney Trevor Quested
	Wed 17th	Outing	Mt.Keira - Horrie Ward
JUNE	Mon 12th	Meeting	Raul Broughton (Barron Grounds)
	Sun 18th	Outing	Bargo Gorge - Lorraine Pincus
	Wed 21st	Outing	Minnamurra NP - Kevin McGregor
JULY	Mon 10th	Meeting	Peter Knowlan (?)
	Sat 15th	Outing	
	Wed 19th	Outing	
AUG	Mon 14th	Meeting	Sue Briggs - CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology
	Sun 20th	Outing	Darkes Forrest - Chris Brandis
	Wed 23rd	Outing	
SEPT	Mon 11th	Meeting	
	Sat 16th	Outing	
	Wed 20th	Outing	
	Sat 30th	Camp)	
OCT	Mon 2nd	Camp)	?
	Sat 21/28	Camp	Rawdon Vale
NOV	Mon 13th	Meeting	
	Sun 19th	Outing	
	Wed 22nd	Outing	
DEC	Mon 11th	Meeting	
	Sat 16th	Final outing (Christman celebration)	

SHOALHAVEN BIRDWATCHING OUTINGS 2000 [3rd SUNDAY]

FEB	20	Wright's Beach	Meet Erowal Bay Rd at 8 am
MAR	19	Comerong Island	Meet Ferry 8 am
APR	16	Culburra	Meet Archgate Nursery, Pyree 8am
MAY	21	Parma Creek area	Meet Navy Jet 8 am
JUN	18	Burrier	Meet Navy Jet 8 am
JUL	16	Yalwal	Meet Navy Jet 8 am
AUG	20	Mt Bushwalker	Meet Navy Jet 8am, Bewong 8.30 am
SEP	17	Currumbene S.F.	Meet Navy Jet 8 am
OCT	15	Jervis Bay N.P.	Meet Hyams Beach Rd 8 am
NOV	19	Braidwood Rd [Penda Rd]	Meet Navy Jet 8 am, Turpentine Rd 8.30 am
DEC	17	Bamarang	Meet Treatment Works 5 pm for walk/barbecue

Suggested western tour for May or June: Peter will lead group to good birding around Deniliquin, Hattah and Glue Pot. Contacts: Barry 4464 1389, Diana 4421 8426, Peter & Julie 4447 1318

DECEMBER 1999 MEETING

Once again the festive season was upon us, and the program for this year was action-packed, as has been the tradition.

President Kevin opened with a general note of welcome and encouraged members to please submit unusual sittings to Chris Chafer to enable him to complete the customary last page of the newsletter. This page can be compiled only if members submit their monthly sightings.

The T-Shirt competition was as colourful and imaginative as previous years, with Peter McKinley taking out the children's category and Lorraine Pincus and Wendy Hanks were joint winners of the seniors group. Betty Hudson delighted us with her two poems – "Beware the Cuckoo" and "The Muttonbird Man".

The Hales bird quiz lived up to its usual reputation – it seems so easy when you hear the answer – the ultimate winner was Bill Zealy (surprise, surprise!) with an all time low score of 12.5.

Jack Baker entertained us with a Puffin poem, while the Wetland Warblers Choral Group gave us an interesting recital of the IBOC version of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Bruce O'Brien had a 'show and tell' of his family Yowie collection. The annual awards of achievement / misdemeanors took on a 'legal court' setting this year, with Santa as stipendiary magistrate and Fay McGregor being a very capable and entertaining clerk of the court. Whilst Santa didn't have cause to rule any member in contempt of court, the gallery had to be brought to order on several occasions. Members accused of frivolous and silly actions during the year were Betty Hudson, Brian Hales and Gwen Robinson. The award for persistence and endurance went to Jim Robinson for "de-ticking" his wife Gwen at the Myall Lake camp - all 142 of them!!!

Ziggy was awarded the Institute of Engineers Award for improvised engineering skills in fixing the camp toilet and the Robinsons' annex. Athol and Jan Stewart were nominated for the 'putting up the tent in the rain and dressed in yellow raincoat' award, while Bruce O'Brien was acknowledged as the 'guide of the year'.

Chris Brandis was awarded the 'Fanatic Bird Watcher' award – drove all the way the Ballina non-stop to catch a 15-minute sighting of the N.Z Pied Oystercatcher. Ron Hanks was dubbed "Little Lucifer" for keeping the campfires burning, while Alan and Kerri Lowis were acknowledged for their community environmental landcare work.

Special awards were presented to Chris Brandis, Chris Chafer and Diana Wright for their new publication of "A Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands", and Horrie Ward for his outstanding publications - Club Outings 1977 – 1998.

A very special segment - 'Reflections on the lives of Karen and Jack Hyslop' kept the members enthralled – a very special night for Karen, who was celebrating her 90th birthday – a fitting conclusion to a memorable evening, as members then enjoyed good food and fellowship following the cutting of the Christmas cake.

Darryl Goldrick.

President's Note: Thanks Darryl for your report on the Christmas meeting, but thought you dozed off during the musical item.....the ladies sang a IBOC version of "Camping in the Rain" and a copy of the words are included in this edition.

Our special segment was carried out to celebrate *the 90th birthdays of both Karen Hansen and Jack Hyslop* and I enjoyed interviewing them and thanks to both Karen and Jack for appearing.

SEVEN MILE BEACH N.P.

On a warm sultry morning on 16 January 2000 at 9am seventeen members of IBOC met at the Beach Road Picnic Area in Seven Mile Beach National Park for our January walk. This early in the day the picnic area was fairly empty, despite the holiday season, and a few birds were observed, including Crimson Rosella, Australian Magpie and Dollarbird. From the picnic area we followed the Old Sand Track to the north, which is not signposted, but can be found at the north-eastern corner of the picnic area. From the picnic area the track heads toward the main road (Gerroa-Shoalhaven Heads), which it parallels for most of its three kilometres. In fact, the track is only about 100 metres from the road, the traffic being heard and sighted. Nevertheless, the track itself traverses littoral rainforest, and some birds were seen, if at times it was difficult to see them. Birds seen on this section included the Grey Fantail, Golden Whistler, White-throated Treecreeper, Lewin's Honeyeater, and Mistletoebird. At the northern end the rainforest becomes more clogged with lantana, which may in time block the track. The Old Sand Track then arrives at the bush camping area in the national park. At this point about half the group retraced their steps along the track, while the remainder proceeded to the beach itself, and returned to the picnic area by wading in the breaking waves and enjoying the sea breeze. The day was still warm, but was beginning to cloud over. On the beach and at sea were sighted the Silver Gull, Crested Tern, Pied Cormorant and out to sea a flock of more than fifty dark shearwaters, which I would hazard a guess as being Wedge-tailed Shearwaters. The group returning along the beach arrived back at the picnic area about the same time as the others, despite a lengthy wait and leisurely stroll, because the route via the beach was in fact much shorter. Back at the picnic area we had lunch, people having partaken of morning tea during their walk if they felt the need. Most of the group decided to call it a day at that point, leaving six of us to experience the afternoon session. This was also along the Old Sand Track, this time to the south, along a very overgrown track that is difficult to locate from the picnic area, but commences from the south-western corner. South of the picnic area the vegetation is very different, being more open woodland and including much more ground cover such as bracken fern. Fortunately, the track can still be navigated, and we were able to proceed. It is interesting to note that the Old Sand Track is actually the original road between Gerroa and Shoalhaven Heads, used by horse-drawn wagons and bullock teams in the old days. Birds seen along this section included the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Red Wattlebird, Noisy Friarbird, Rainbow Lorikeet and Musk Lorikeet. The friarbirds and lorikeets were very numerous at the end of the overgrown section, feeding on flowering eucalypts. Also seen along this section was the Burrawang palm (*Macrozamia communis*). About two kilometres south of the picnic area the Old Sand Track crosses a short road giving access to the beach from the main road. We followed this so that we could again return to our cars via the beach. Along this section we were rewarded with a sighting of a female flycatcher very high in the branches, but not being able to sight the male, we were unable to decide whether she was the Leaden Flycatcher or the Satin Flycatcher, both of which do occur in the National Park. Along the beach section we sighted a flock of seven Australian Pelicans, an immature Australasian Gannet to sea, and a White-bellied Sea-eagle. Towards the end of the day a few spots of rain were felt, but we all agreed we could do with cooling down anyway. At the end of the day everybody agreed that they had enjoyed their walk, and particularly enjoyed the variety provided by walking through both the forest and along the beach.

Bruce O'Brien

TWO SIDES of SPRINGHILL ROAD

On the tenth day into this new millennium, while Carol, my significant other, and three close friends were exercising their jaws in women's talk over a seafood lunch in a Wollongong restaurant, I decided to take a stroll on the southern side of the city to explore two areas within about a kilometre of each other in the adjoining suburbs of Coniston and Mt St Thomas and which I had often passed in the course of my work duties. Parking the car in Tate Street, I spent about two hours in the Tom Thumb Lagoon wetland area, firstly walking up the winding track to the lookout. I then proceeded up further, past the closed builders' tip, where I had a much better, 360 degree view of the contrasting scenery: anticlockwise, the greyness of Australia's Industry World, the blue of the Tasman Sea, and the greenery of the golfcourse and residential areas broken up by the predominant whiteness of the CBD and houses. Retracing my steps, I then walked both ways along the AIW cycleway, crossing the creek bridge to Port Kembla Road, conscious of the steady stream of semi-trailers to and from the Coal Loader and what seemed to be circular trial runs overhead of the rescue helicopter from its base behind the hill.

Of note among the 21 species in this locality was the abundance of European Goldfinches, Superb Fairy-wrens and Golden-headed Cisticolas. A not uncommon behaviour of the Cisticolas was their perching twenty feet or more at the tops of casuarinas, by far the most common tree. I was amused by a House Sparrow that made several visits through the grille of a stationary Freightcorp engine and wondered how much loss of seed would thus be incurred at the Grain Terminal. In between on the mudflats were several Black-winged Stilts along with other non-passerines facing into the gentle nor'easter.

I reparked off Drummond Street and, skirting a grazing paddock, entered the thickly wooded area on the corner of Springhill and Masters Roads, for which I haven't yet been able to find a name. Parts of the boardwalk, constructed under the LEAP scheme, had collapsed near the entrance and so too had a wooden bridge over a creek in the middle of the wood, which substantially blocked out the din of the nearby traffic. In places the trails were overgrown or contained youth-made humps for mountain bike circuits. The tall eucalypts, paperbarks and pittosporums, however, provided a pleasant coolness from the increasing heat of the sun. In a little under an hour I observed nine species, two of which featured at the previous site: the White-browed Scrubwren and Spotted Turtledove, and included the Eastern Whipbird.

I suspect there are plenty more bird species to be found in both areas and suggest they would be worth further study and a visit by the "mid-weekers" in IBOC, if they haven't already sussed out these two contrasting sides of Springhill Road. I also wonder what plans Wollongong City Council might have for the former builders' tip site, which seems to me to have enormous potential for eco-tourism and would serve as a logical extension to the wetland and of the Greenhouse Park Program, already implemented along the Springhill Road border. Despite the apparent neglect, a sign indicates Council's concern to have the sensitive bush area bound by Springhill and Masters Roads and the railway conserved.

Mike Morphet

WRAPPED ABOUT A WRAPPER

The other afternoon Max Gray called round to my house with a grin and a sheet of newspaper. The latter bore this article about the Night Parrot and had formed part of the packaging of a consignment sent to him from Queensland. Had the supplier known of its significance to Max, they might have billed (no pun intended) him extra for the additional service provided by their despatch department. Or else, like the gist of the story, Max's finding might have been another instance of serendipity, which seems to play an important part in the study of wildlife. - Ed E. Torre

Wanted: dead or alive

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN July 19 1999



The Wild Side

Mike Bamford

DEAD animals on the roadside are a sad feature of country highways but such deaths are not significant to the conservation of a species unless the species happens to be extremely rare.

Sometimes animals killed on the road can even provide useful information for conservation.

The only night parrot handled by a scientist since 1912 was found on a roadside in outback Queensland in 1990 by Walter Boles, of the Queensland Museum.

The museum team was returning from a research trip and, quite by chance, stopped on a highway south of Mt Isa to look at some birds.

After getting out of one vehicle and walking back to talk to the occupants of the other vehicle, Mr Boles happened to glance down and there, beside his foot, was the dehydrated carcass of a bird that some considered to be extinct.

The Queensland night parrot has provided scientists with the only complete skeleton of the species, which will be useful when comparing it with related parrots.

But it had been dead for at least three months, was completely dried out and most of its body tissues had been eaten by ants. So it is not known if the bird was a male or a female, or even what it had eaten for its last meal.

Although presumably hit by a car, it is not known if it had fallen immediately after being hit, or if it had been carried by the vehicle for maybe hundreds of kilometres.

The countryside where it was found was stony desert with little vegetation, whereas records of the night parrot from the late 19th



Illustration: KEITH LONG

The night parrot.

century, when it was considered to be moderately common, came from areas of spinifex and saltbush.

So perhaps the unfortunate bird had been carried along from where it had taken its last flight.

Although the dead night parrot confirmed that the species was not extinct in 1990, it did

not provide the sort of information which could have helped scientists find living birds.

Perhaps more remarkable and useful in terms of species conservation was the 1992 rediscovery of Australia's only reptile believed to be extinct: the pygmy bluetongue.

A small relative of the bobtail, the pygmy bluetongue was found only in a small part of

South Australia, close to Adelaide, and much of its habitat has been developed for agriculture.

Last seen in 1959, it was believed to have died out because of habitat loss but was rediscovered in a most remarkable way during a fauna survey of the region.

Two of the scientists involved in the survey took an unscheduled detour to refuel and stopped to examine a recently run-over eastern brown snake, a relative of the dugite.

Although dead, the snake was not badly damaged and had a conspicuous bulge, suggesting that it had eaten recently.

The scientists dissected the snake on the bonnet of their car and found inside it a fresh and very recently living pygmy bluetongue.

Because this specimen had been eaten by the snake very close to where it was found, the South Australian Museum and the Department of Environment were able to focus further studies on a very small area.

But the next three pygmy bluetongues they found were all dead: two killed by falcons and one inside another brown snake. Predators seemed better at finding the rare lizards than were the scientists.

It was a month after the first discovery before a live pygmy bluetongue was caught and it has now been found that the species is common in a very small area.

Recent studies have found that it lives in grasslands, even where these are very disturbed, and that it shelters in the burrows of spiders, having first eaten the rightful occupant.

As a result of the chance examination of a dead snake, an "extinct" lizard was rediscovered and can now be protected.

For the night parrot, however, scientists will just have to keep hoping to find another. Alive would be good but even another dead specimen on the roadside would be useful.

●Mike Bamford is a consultant ecologist, wildlife artist and occasional lecturer in zoology.

"Camping in the Rain."

[to the tune "singing in the rain"]

*We're camping in the rain
Yes...it's happened again
What a miserable feeling
We're wet thru' again.
We hope rain won't last
But it has in the past
So we're camping and birding in the rain
 Let stormy clouds chase
Everyone from the place
But not I.B.O.C campers
We're a much tougher race.
With new birds to find
It's on with the grind
Of tramping and squelching in the rain [mud]
 Where did the birds go?
They're not stupid you know
They shelter in trees
And they're under the leaves.
They're so hard to see
And we all agree
They're Twittering at the twits in the rain.
 If your place is in drought
We will rent Kevin out.
With his special charm
It will rain on your farm.
With I.B.O.C in tow
You'll soon get to know
You'll be singing and dancing in the rain.
 So we're camping in the rain
Next year wont be the same
We'll try for some dry camps
And get lucky again
It was wet ninety-nine
But two thousand will be fine
And we'll be camping and birding without rain.*

*Words written and used by kind permission of Mrs.
Gwen Robinson 1999.*

Unusual Records November-December 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
Emu	5	15/12	Lake Burragorang	woodland	CJC
Great Crested Grebe	50+	15/12	Lake Burragorang	lake	CJC
Striated Heron	1	4/11	Koona Bay	lake margin	GB
Striated Heron	1	16/11	Berkeley Boat Harbour	groyne	CJC
Striated Heron	1	4/11	Pelican View Res.	lake margin	GB
Nankeen Night Heron	1	14/11	Swamp Road	river margin	GB
Brown Falcon	1	29/11	West Dapto	overhead	DG
Brown Goshawk	2+1j	20/12	Bulli	forest	RT
Collared Sparrowhawk	2+1j	all/12	Cordeaux Dam	forest	CJC
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	17/12	Berrara	overhead	KM
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	25/12	Coledale	overhead	GB
Painted Button Quail	1	26/10	Avon Dam Rd.	woodland	GB
Pacific Golden Plover	160	28/12	Comerong Island	mudflats	CP
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	6/11	Curramore	rural	KM
Common Bronzewing	2	21/11	Swan Lake west	woodland	KM
Topknot Pigeon	14	3/12	Coolangatta	overhead	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	20	15/12	lower Nattai River	forest	CJC
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	4	31/12	Cudmirrah NP	forest	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	3	end/12	Culburra	forest	DF
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	7/11	Mt. Alexander, Mittagong	forest	GB
Musk Lorikeet	20+	31/12	Sussex Inlet	forest	KM
Black-eared Cuckoo	1	24/11	Wilton Oval	parkland	JZ
Tawny Frogmouth	1	16/11	Figtree	garden	JZ
White-throated Nightjar	1	14/12	lower Nattai River	forest	CJC
White-throated Nightjar	1	22/12	Thirlmere Lakes	forest	GB
Azure Kingfisher	1	21/12	Woodside Park, Berry	wetland	KM
Azure Kingfisher	1	7/12	Tongarra	riverine	DG
Varied Sittella	4	30/12	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Cicadabird	1	14/12	Turpentine/Braidwood Rd	forest	KM
Green Catbird	2	15/12	Farmborough Heights	forest	GP
Green Catbird	1	23/12	Toolijoa	figtree	CP
Green Catbird	1	all/12	Austinmer	garden	JB
Diamond Firetail	2	27/10	Carters Creek, Bargo	woodland	GB
Beautiful Firetail	2	14/12	Yerriyong Trig	woodland	KM
Common Blackbird	2	16/12	Wollongong Golf Course	parkland	ME

GB - Graham Barwell; JB - John Bisset; CB - Chris Brandis; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Daryl Goldrick; KM - Kevin Mills; GP - Gordon Payne; CP - Chris Presland; RT - Roger Truscott; JZ - Joan Zealey

Comment: The Black-eared Cuckoo observation is the second known record for the region, with the previous sighting coming from Camden in January 1977. The Diamond Firetail record is also a significant observation, with very few records coming from the region since the 1980s. The Painted Button-quail is the first record I can find for many years. The Emu record comes from the only known population in the region around Murphys Crossing on the southern tip of Lake Burragorang.

Chris Chafer

UNUSUAL BIRD SURNAMES

Who were the eminent people with bird-bearing surnames and pursuing the following occupations? –

1. An English architect
2. An English nurse
3. An Anglo-Australian film actor
4. An Australian politician
5. An English author of satirical novels who died in a fire.
6. An English author who died with a brain disorder
7. An American novelist
8. An American artist

Two of the above have/had the same surname. Answers next issue.



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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 13 March 2000 at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker, subject to his state of health, will be **Lindsay Smith**, returning after his last talk two years ago about The Five Islands, and his topic: '*Albatrosses and Stuff*'. Along with Harry Battam, who may be called upon to deputise for him on the night, and his wife, Janice, Lindsay has developed extensive knowledge and expertise on Albatrosses and other pelagic birds, training a small group of birdos in this field, but he readily admits there is still much to be discovered, adding that over the past seven years the Albatross taxonomy has been "turned on its head". Lindsay and Harry are currently preparing a paper for an albatross conference to be held in May in Hawaii.

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 15 March 2000 at 9 am to survey the rainforest area in particular of the **Wollongong Botanic Gardens** under the leadership of **Doug Rickers**. Please note that this venue is in lieu of Bellambi Lagoon, as planned in last month's *IBOC News*, because of much disturbance caused in this area by vandals and car thieves. Folks will therefore miss out on the nesting Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos. Participants are asked to meet at the Murphys Avenue car park on the southern side and to bring morning tea as usual.

OUTING Sunday 19 March 2000 at 8.30 am to **Tallawarra Power Station Ash Ponds**, which over the past 12 months has been one of the Atlassing project sites of **Darryl Goldrick**, who is our guide for the day. Among the notable bird species that should come into view are the White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Whistling Kite and Brown Falcon (all successful breeders in this area), Peregrine Falcon, Pink-eared Duck, and Rufous Whistler. Darryl also reports that a slight change will be made to the usual route sequence, as there will be about 200 Girl Guides on camp near Ash Ponds 1 & 2 until midday: the pre-lunch walk will entail Pond 3, and returning to the cars, we proceed to lunch at Ponds 1 & 2 entrance and do this route in the afternoon. Members travelling from the Northern Suburbs take the Princes Highway through Dapto, past Mt Brown Public School and take the Power Station entrance (2nd turn on left after you pass under the freeway). For those south of Dapto, travel north and take the Dapto offloading ramp past Yallah and turn right onto the Princes Highway. Then take the 2nd turn on the left after you pass under the freeway. See map in this issue. Don't forget eats, drinks and protective gear.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 21 March 2000 at 7.30 pm at Horrie & Betty Ward's home at 34 Cabbage Tree Lane, Fairy Meadow.

APRIL NEWSLETTER Deadline for the next *IBOC News* will be 29 March 2000.

A BIRDO TOLD ME...

HOMING to HARCOURT: We would be happy if you could include a message in the next IBOC Newsletter. We have been members for just 12 months and we are both impressed with the hospitality received at the Monday night sessions and the outings we have attended. A year ago we knew only of sparrows and things – now we have sighted some beautiful birds with the help of club members.

In April we are heading to Harcourt in Victoria for six months of house-sitting (it is between Bendigo and Castlemaine) and hopefully catch up with some bird observers in that area. If any members have any contacts in this area, we would appreciate any info.

Would it be possible to get the IBOC News by e-mail? Regards, **Robyn & Andy McGarva**

650 NOT OUT: Can you add a congratulations to Ron Imisides for reaching the magic 650 Australian bird species with the spotting of a White-throated Nightjar at Berowra at 10.15 pm 31/1/00. Cheers, **Chris Brandis**

RAPTOR RECTIFIED: Thank you, **Wal Emery** for pointing out an error in the bird list for last October's "The Pinnacle" camp at Temora published in last December's newsletter (p.8). For Pacific Baza please read Black-shouldered Kite.

The BILBY LAMENT: A little poem by Frank Manthey of *Save the Bilby Fund*. This is to build a fence around some of Currawinya NP in Queensland to reintroduce Bilbies into the area.

I was born in a sunburnt country, in a time long ago.

Before rabbits, cats and foxes, I was free to come and go.

So come on all you Aussies, it makes darn good commonsense,

To help these guys that are trying to build our saviour fence.

Aussies stick together, in fire, floods and drought,

Support this fund to help us, our time is running out.

- **Chris Brandis**

Of BANDERS and BANDED: **Dave Thomson** has sent in some articles from the January 2000 edition of the ABBBS (Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme, GPO Box 8, Canberra, ACT 2601) *Flightlines* newsletter. For our publication I have extracted the major portion of Belinda Dettman's obituary on Bill Lane, the reputed father of bird banding in NSW, and précised the reports on the Pacific Black Duck and Wandering Albatross. –Ed.

UNUSUAL RECORDS: **Chris Chafer** thanks everyone for the heaps of response as this month's back page now contains an excellent spread of interesting records. Two other recent records of note, Chris reports, were an Emerald Dove at Toolijooa and 5 White-breasted Woodswallows on Culburra Road on 14 February – the 4th known regional record.

ANOTHER POEM: **Darryl Goldrick** picked this up on an e-mail from Roy Cleveland, who recognises it as being "not original, but interesting":-

A wise old owl sat in an oak;

The more it listened the less it spoke;

The less it spoke the more it heard.

Why can't we be like that wise old bird?

FEBRUARY CLUB MEETING

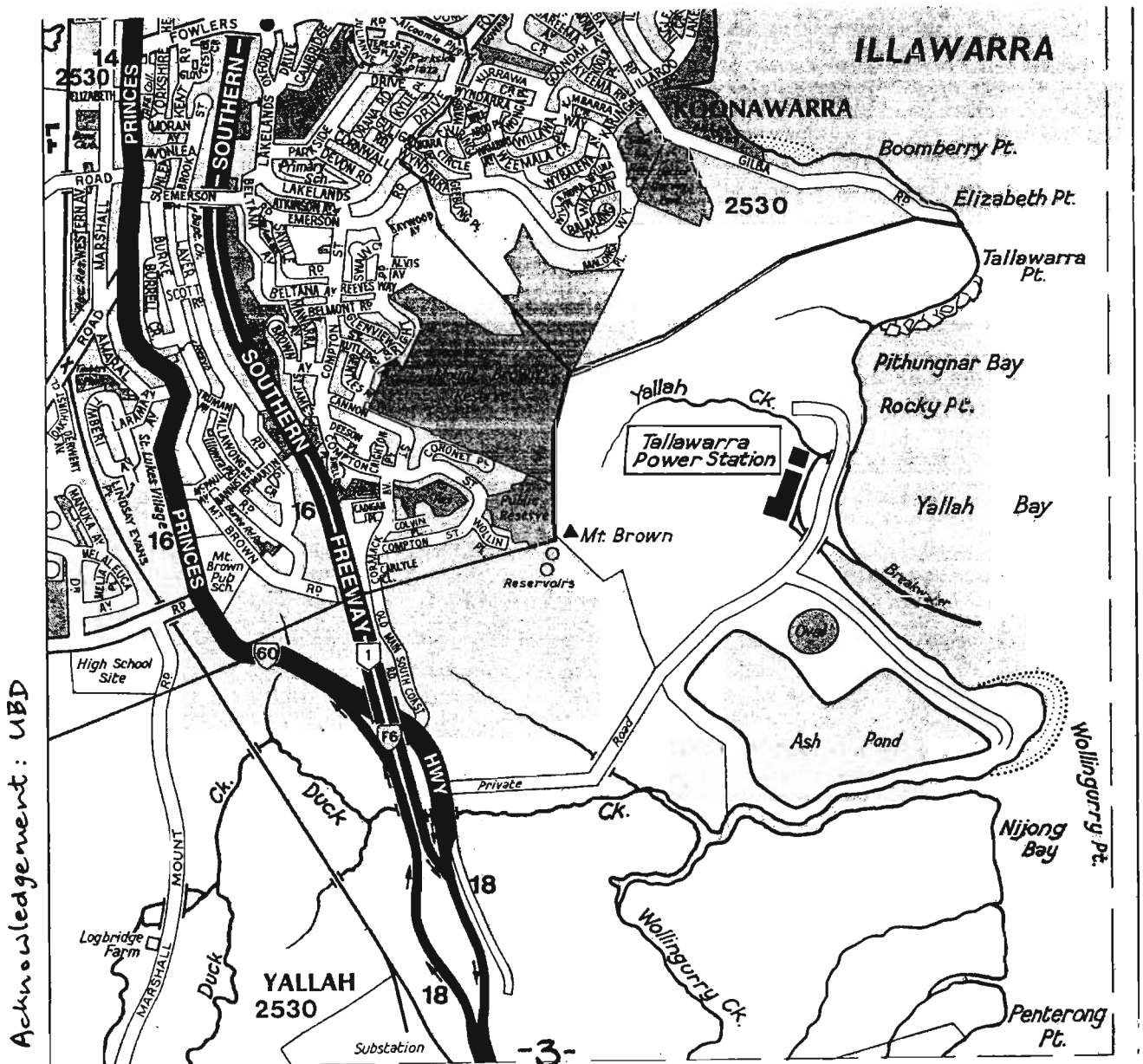
Roger Truscott provided members with a very entertaining insight to a recent scientific expedition to Borneo. Roger joined an international gathering of scientists to map the biodiversity of the Crocker Range Park in Sabah (far north of Borneo/ Kalimantan). A slide selection depicting reptiles, ants and flying squirrels were great despite Roger's apologies for his photographic skills. Though Borneo is famous for its Pittas and Hornbills, Roger was not fortunate to see any of these. The Hornbills are especially secretive given they are frequently hunted. Great photos of Grey Wagtail, Ashy Drongo, Chestnut-Capped Laughing Thrush and Ashy Bulbul.

More great slides of plants, such as ginger, and dragonflies, butterflies and blowflies on the buffalo cow pat. Borneo has eighteen species of Woodpeckers (Omen birds) and is equally famous for its Sunbirds. Birds from Sarawak included the Red-eyed Bulbul and Magpie Robin, and we saw great pictures of the famous Niah Caves where locals exhibit great athleticism in scampering (abseiling?) cave walls to collect swiftlet nests for the restaurant trade (worth \$US 1000/ kg!!)

Roger concluded his presentation with slides of birds from his own backyard which included White-headed Pigeon, Large-billed Scrubwren, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Eastern Yellow Robin, Green Catbird and Variegated Wren.

A very pleasant and interesting presentation; our thanks and congratulations to Roger.

Darryl Goldrick



BOODEREE NATIONAL PARK - JERVIS BAY

19 February 2000

At 9.00 am twelve IBOC and two Shoalhaven Bird Group members gathered at the entrance to Booderee National Park, which by the way is an Aboriginal name and means 'bay of plenty' or 'plenty of fish'.

It was a beautiful Saturday morning, very warm and not a cloud in the sky, one of those summer days, where the second item in the backpack after a bottle of water is the sunscreen.

As introductions were made all round, being a relative newcomer to the club, I reflected on how all the members and visitors are made to feel very welcome and how everyone gets along so well. Barbara and Brian Hales handed us the maps for the park and everyone set off to Murray's Beach car park, where the local Crimson Rosellas greeted us.

There was a cool sea breeze and we were sheltered from the sun by the overhanging trees as we started our main walk of the day, Murray's Walking Trail. The views of the bay were glorious with aqua blue water glistening in the sun and almost pure white sand on the beach.

While some of the group went bush bashing to find a Noisy Friarbird the remainder had an unexpected sighting on the beach. Obviously the fellow sunbaking in the nude did not realise there was a group of birdwatchers around. It was agreed he must be a regular as there were no tan lines!

As the group headed towards Governor Head, two immature Sea Eagles flew overhead, what a treat it was to watch them soaring on the breeze. Soon a Peregrine Falcon was seen, it was amazing to watch such an awesome bird in flight.

Further on at the cliff face the views of the coastline were nothing short of spectacular, we could see the entrance to the bay and marvelled at the colours in the sandstone cliffs. It was on the track to the cliffs some of the group saw a pair of Scarlet Honeyeaters.

The trail led us through changing vegetation and soon we were no longer sheltered from the sun, though the sea breeze was refreshing. As we followed the coastline New Holland Honeyeaters, chased each other through the bushes while Welcome Swallows swooped and dived over the cliffs. The ruined lighthouse could be seen in the distance against a backdrop of beautiful blue ocean.

The last section of the walk allowed us to move back into sheltering Eucalypts and we were very lucky to see a pair of Leaden Flycatchers. Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets made their usual riotous appearances on our return journey. The sight and sound of Yellow Thornbills and Superb Fairy Wrens provided a very happy finish to the first half of our day.

Booderee Botanic Gardens was chosen as our lunch site. The garden covers 80 hectares with an emphasis on the coastal flora of south-eastern Australia and includes Lake McKenzie, a natural freshwater lake.

Lunchtime reflected the atmosphere of the day and was a very happy occasion with lots of laughter and pleasant company. We were joined for lunch by a Pied Currawong and very friendly Crimson Rosellas, who made short work of the apple and banana that was offered.

The afternoon was spent following a trail along the edge of the lake. Hoary-Headed Grebes, Pacific Black Ducks and Chestnut Teals were making their way across the water. As the group walked the garden's sprinkler system provided welcome showers of relief from the afternoon heat. (I don't know about anyone else, but the sprinklers brought back happy childhood memories of playing under the sprinkler, back in the days when there were 'real' summers.)

Watching immature King Parrots feasting on Pittosporum and a White Throated Treecreeper methodically searching under loose bark for tasty morsels at close range was very interesting.

Our group returned to the car park at approximately 3.30 pm. Everyone enjoyed the day and I am sure they are all looking forward to the next outing as much as Sid and I are. Thank you to the organisers, members of the Shoalhaven Bird Group and all who attended.

Chris McDonald

Bird List- 38 in Total

Pied Currawong	Crimson Rosella	Noisy Friarbird
Kookaburra	White Browed Scrub Wren	Australian Raven
Brush Wattlebird	Red Wattlebird	Spotted Pardalote
Australian Magpie	Eastern Whipbird	Welcome Swallow
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	Olive Backed Oriole - Juv	Lewin's Honeyeater
White-Bellied Sea Eagle-1st yr	Peregrine Falcon	Eastern Spinebill
New Holland Honeyeater	Musk Lorikeet	Rainbow Lorikeet
Scarlet Honeyeater - M & F	Eastern Yellow Robin	Golden Whistler - F
Leaden Flycatcher - M & F	Yellow (Little) Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Superb Fairy Wren	Grey Butcherbird	Australian King Parrot
Red-Browed Firetail Finch	White-Faced Heron	Chestnut Teal
White-Throated Treecreeper	Pacific Black Duck	Hoary-Headed Grebe
Yellow-Faced Honeyeater	Brown Thornbill	

Postscript: Thanks, Chris and Sid McDonald and Brian Hales, for leading the morning and afternoon walks respectively in the absence of Di Wright. Afterwards I backtracked 10 km in the car to the ruin of Cape St George Lighthouse, glimpsed on the first walk. Information boards there tell us of the bureaucratic bungling in the 19th century that led to its poor siting and the eventual need for its demolition, though there are enough relics there to give us an idea of what life was like during its operation. Sightseers were bracing themselves against the strength of the nor'easter, whilst below an adult White-breasted Sea-Eagle took full advantage of the wind. It dived into the sea, but missed its fish catch, and skimmed over the rock platform, then steadily rose up the face of the cliff, over the heath towards the area we had traversed earlier, and out of sight. This species is Booderee's logo, and reportedly there are five breeding pairs in the Park.

Mike Morphet

Wednesday Walk at Lake Illawarra South: 9 February 2000

The Club's walk at the Lake Illawarra entrance was held on the southern side this year as the channel had carved away some of the track to the beach from the Windang Caravan Park. We met at Pelican Reserve with BBQ and toilet facilities on a very hot afternoon and had a short walk through the casuarina forest just to the west. We were lucky enough to get good sightings of the resident Southern Emu-wrens as well as Superb Fairy-wrens on the way to the observation pier. There were only a few Eastern Curlews and White-faced Herons to be seen with a very low water level exposing large areas of sea-grass. We then returned and walked under the bridge and observed progress of the construction of a permanent entrance of the Lake to the sea which unfortunately restricted our views of many of the birds present. We did see Bar-tailed Godwits, a number of cormorants and terns with the ever present Silver Gulls.

Many were getting a bit peckish by then and so we retired to the picnic tables for a meal. Even with all the construction disruptions we managed to see 26 species of birds and get an idea of the massive sand works required to modify the Lake entrance channel. This work should be finished by next year and we may be able to return to the normal walk on the northern side although the southern side is planned to link permanently to Windang Island.

Chris Brandis

TESTING the WATERS for MONTAGUE ISLAND NATURE RESERVE

In this newsletter we have included a copy of a fairly recent *Illawarra Mercury* article about an international award gained by the National Parks and Wildlife Service for park tourism management, whereby tourism is being made compatible with ecology. It sounds like NPWS is following American environmentalist David Brower's CPR program for our planet's survival: Conservation, Protection and Restoration (as quoted by David Suzuki in *The Sacred Balance* 1997 p.151), but incorporating an additional 'R' strategy – Research.

IBOC members are invited to show expressions of interest in forming a party of between 8 and 35 for a pre-GST (1 July 2000) outing to include travel by hired bus and guided tour of the island. The latter is currently priced at \$60 per adult, but we would aim for a discount with a bulk booking. Narooma Charters operates morning and evening trips of 4 hours and 3 hrs 30 mins duration respectively. Kevin McGregor will continue to make enquiries, if warranted.

Whilst such an outing would take up several hours, it has the potential of being a most stimulating experience, naturally, culturally and historically. Those members unable to attend the March club meeting can phone in their yesses to Kevin.

Mike Morphet

ANSWERS to UNUSUAL BIRD SURNAMES in LAST NEWSLETTER

1. Christopher WREN
2. Florence NIGHTINGALE
3. Peter FINCH
4. Andrew PEACOCK
5. Thomas Love PEACOCK
6. Jonathan SWIFT
7. Stephen CRANE
8. James WHISTLER

How tourism can help conservation

ILLAWARRA Mercury 14/1/2000

International award for Montague Island tours

By LAURELLE PACEY

A recent international award to Montague Island shows how commercial tourism can co-exist with conservation.

That's the view of rangers and scientists associated with the island as well as an independent panel of judges.

Montague Island Nature Reserve won a special British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Award - the World Conservation Union (IUCN) award for the best entry in the world from a national park or protected area.

National Parks and Wildlife Service ranger for Montague Ross Constable said they were going one better than environmental sustainability on Montague.

"We are actually putting more back into the environment than we are taking out," he said.

Montague Island, off Narooma on the far south coast, has been managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW for more than 10 years.

Their guides conduct tours of the island in conjunction with local charter boat company Narooma Charters, pointing out the variety of wildlife and the island's rich and fascinating history.

The award will be presented on February 22 to NPWS representatives at a special ceremony in London hosted by Professor David Bellamy and British Airways chairman Lord Marshall.

IUCN's Professor Paul Eagles of Ontario said the judges were impressed with the NPWS's "careful and thorough policies on tourism within such a sensitive site".

"It serves as an example of best practice for park tourism management all over the world," he said.

Professor Eagles said Montague Island stood out from the 27 entries in the category because of the way tourism helped pay for the reserve's management, the cooperation between the NPWS and the local community and universities, and the continual monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the reserve's operation.

This included the impact of tour boats on the seals and penguins.

They also liked the tour program, the tours' top national accreditation with the Ecotourism Association of Australia, and the professionalism of NPWS staff.

Montague Island has a high concentration of both natural and cultural resources in a small area and these are highlighted during the tours.

Its isolation makes it a natural sanctuary.

Ninety-three bird species have been seen on the island. Thousands of seabirds live there during their breeding seasons and Little Penguins are permanent residents.

Six bird species breed there. Four are burrowing nesters - Little Penguins and three species of shearwater - and two ground nesters - Silver Gulls and Crested Terns which are extremely susceptible to human disturbance during the breeding season.

Montague Island is also the only remaining haul-out site for Australian fur seals along the NSW coast and increasingly a haul-out site for New Zealand fur seals.

Culturally Montague Island has one of the finest examples of light-station architecture anywhere in Australia.

It was officially opened in 1881 and was



Guided tours of Montague Island by National Parks and Wildlife Service staff in conjunction with Narooma Charters help fund conservation work. Judges recognised this by giving Montague Island Nature Reserve a special award in the recent British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow competition.

INSET: NPWS ranger Ross Constable (left), discusses the construction of a new walkway on Montague with NPWS senior field officer Rod Goldie.



home for three families for more than 100 years.

The island also has strong Aboriginal significance.

NPWS ranger Mr Constable said protective conservation cost money.

"Conserving things doesn't necessarily mean locking them up and throwing away the key," he said.

"The money we receive from tours of Montague funds conservation work on the island and restoration of the light-station."

That conservation work includes species research for the future management of the island's species, bush regeneration and the removal of noxious weeds.

Charles Sturt University and the CSIRO Division of Wildlife Ecology will do further research according to management needs.

"We are also providing the public with insights into the conservation process undertaken by the NPWS through our professional guides," Mr Constable said.

Dr Nick Klomp, associate professor at Charles Sturt University at Wagga Wagga, said Montague Island was "a brilliant example of how commercial tourism can co-exist with conservation".

"Ten to 15 years ago such a concept caused a lot of concern, but humans are often part of the ecology of a place," he said.

Dr Klomp heads much of the research being done on Montague.

"The NPWS tours not only have a major education component. People get to see these animals in their natural ecosystems and also gain an appreciation of the management problems of such a site," Dr Klomp said.

"Every boatload of visitors goes away knowing a bit more about Montague Island. They are then ready to fight for it should it ever come under threat."

The British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Awards recognise organisations and projects in the tourism industry that have made a positive contribution towards improving the impact of tourism on the environment.

There were a total of 115 projects from 41 countries entered in the 2000 awards' eight categories. Montague Island was the only entry from Australia to win one of this year's awards.

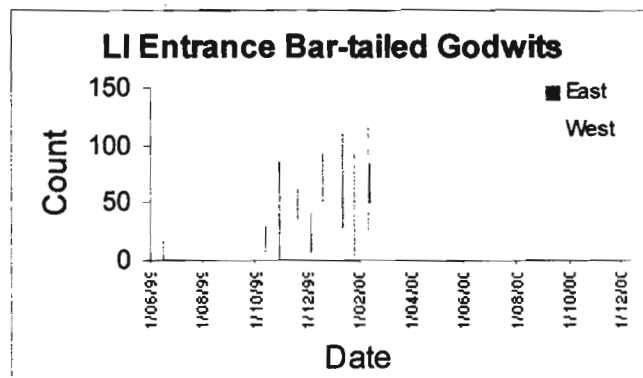
Club's bird survey of the Lake Illawarra Entrance

The Club has been contracted to monitor the effect the Lake Illawarra entrance modification works has on the birds using the Lake entrance. We are using Whyjuck Bay as a control site and monitoring separately the western and the eastern sides of the bridge. So far we have conducted 11 surveys of the entrance and 7 of Whyjuck Bay with all but 2 being carried out before the entrance sand works started. This should give us a good base line data to compare future results against. This with the 18 years of data of Bar-tailed Godwits and Double-banded Plovers collected by Chris Chafer and myself we should be able to determine quite quickly if there is any adverse effects on any of the bird species using the Lake Entrance caused by the changes.

The surveys have shown large variations in the number of species and total number of birds depending on the water levels which have been very high after heavy rain to very low with the effect of tides. The Lake entrance has been open all the time during this period with the strong flow washing away some of the track from the Windang Caravan Park to the Beach via a channel about 2 meters deep. When the water level is low the number of White-face Herons was remarkable with up to 85 birds counted stalking the sea-grass beds for fish. The Little Pied Cormorants are always present in large numbers as are the scavenging Silver Gulls and Australian Pelicans. So far the sand works do not appear to have affected the Bar-tailed Godwit population with some of the birds being observed alongside the diggers and the dredge outlet foraging through the disturbed sand for tit bits. With the Double-banded Plovers due to arrive from New Zealand next month we should start to see if there is any effect on these open sand feeders.

Counts of bird numbers has varied from 64 to 486 on the western side to 168 to 1007 on the eastern side, Silver Gulls making up the bulk of the eastern side numbers. The number of species using the area varied from 6 to 18 on the western side to 7 to 17 on the eastern side. It was interesting to see that only 1 Red-capped plover was sighted and that Little Terns only appeared mid February.

Thanks to all those who have participated in the counts and for those who have volunteered their time and with the survey to cover the next 3 years and any extra assistance could always be used.



A Chart of the Bar-tailed Godwit numbers sighted during the survey

Chris Brandis

OBITUARY: SG (Bill) Lane, 1922-2000

We were saddened to hear of the death of Bill Lane on Friday 7 January 2000 after a long battle with cancer.

Selwyn George Lane, known to his friends as Bill, played a major roll in the history of bird banding in Australia. He received his Banding Authority (number 84) in July 1958. Over the next forty years he banded about 60,000 birds representing all major species groups, wrote more than 170 papers on his work, and trained more than 50 of our leading ornithologists in the art of banding.

He was instrumental in the formation of the Bird Banders Association of NSW (now the Australian Bird Study Association) in March 1962 and was the association's first President. He edited the *Australian Bird Bander* from 1967 to 1977, when it had a name change to *Corella*. Bill then became assistant editor and continued to assist with the publication of *Corella* thereafter. In October 1972 he started the feature called Seabird Islands, with the aim of documenting all Australian islands on which seabirds breed, and wrote many of the early articles. He was still active as editor of the Seabird Island Series when he died, by which time details of more than 250 islands had been published.

Bill's interests were wide-ranging. He organised an Australia-wide project to elucidate the migratory movements of Silveryeyes and wrote several seminal papers on this topic.

He was interested in banding migratory waders to track their movements and in the early days he used mist nets to catch them. Then he heard of an ancient cannon net and became proficient in the art of cannon-netting waders. As an artilleryman in the Army this was right up his alley and he introduced a number of other local banders to this difficult art.

Bill also pioneered the establishment of area surveys, in which regular banding visits were made to predetermined sites to capture birds by mist net with a view to monitoring movements and any changes in species diversity and abundance of common local species. Records were kept on cards, for each locality, of the band number and certain key measurements of all birds of each species noted on each visit. The success of Bill's area surveys in the Sydney region led to the establishment of projects at a number of sites, now known as cooperative banding stations, throughout the country.

Other interests included albatrosses and shearwaters and his banding efforts on both families revealed priceless information on their international movements.

Bill acted as Regional Organiser for bird banding in NSW from 1962 until 1997. He knew practically every bander who worked in the state and gave help, advice and support to them all.

Belinda Dettmann
Canberra

An ALLIGATOR TRANSPORT THEORY

Back in March 1991 Alan Leishman banded a Pacific Black Duck in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney. Its ABBBS band was recovered last October from the bottom of an alligator pond at the Australian Zoo, Beerwah, SE Queensland. How come? Did the duck fly all the way to Beerwah and there fall victim to the alligator? Could it have flown across Sydney Harbour and then met the reptile's jaws in Taronga Park Zoo? The latter scenario is favoured, as an American Alligator had been recently transferred from the southern zoo to the northern one, where, presumably, it expelled the band during the final stage of its digestive system. (This could give a new meaning to the term 'ducking stool'. - Ed)

The TIME of the ANCIENT WANDERER

Last October a Wandering Albatross was found dead on Windang Beach, bearing a French band from January 1971 after having been caught at its nest on the Crozet Islands in the mid- Indian Ocean. However, at that time this bird had been carrying an Australian band which was found to have been attached by our late Doug Gibson off Bellambi in September 1960. As Doug had then recorded the albie as having been an adult bird, it quite probably lived overall for at least 45 years.

(Incidentally, this colloquialism reminds me of the late Arthur Mothersdill, who often used to accompany Doug on banding trips, one of which I had the pleasure of sharing with them both. Arthur would speak with eagerness and fondness about the "albies". - Ed.)

Unusual Records January-February 2000: 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
White-faced Heron	79	13/2	Lake Illawarra entrance	mudflat	BOB
Striated Heron	1	all/1	Berkeley Harbour	lake margin	CJC
Nankeen Night Heron	1	25/1	Cecil Hoskin NR	wetland	RJ
Square-tailed Kite	1	03/2	Bomaderry Creek	overhead	RJ
Grey Goshawk	1	30/1	Seven Mile Beach	forest	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	06/1	Kiama	overhead	CP
Wedge-tailed Eagle	3	26/1	Berry	overhead	CP
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	21/2	Figtree	overhead	KMc
Little Button-Quail	2	Jan	Jamberoo	farmland	CR
Latham's Snipe	2	25/1	Cecil Hoskins NR	grassland	RJ
Marsh Sandpiper	1	15/1	Lake Wollumboola	mudflats	CP
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	15/1	Lake Wollumboola	mudflats	CP
Great Knot	6	Jan	Lake Wollumboola	mudflats	RB
Sooty Oystercatcher	6	03/1	North Bendalong	rocky beach	KM
Sooty Oystercatcher	5	30/1	Berrara	rocky beach	KM
Pacific Gull	1	17/1	Thirroul, Sandon Pt.	beach	JB
Common Tern	2	Jan	Lake Wollumboola	lake	RB
White-winged Black Tern	1	Jan	Lake Wollumboola	lake	RB
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	1	12/2	Mt. Kembla	garden	RM
Little Corella	65+	03/2	Primbee	garden	RI
Long-billed Corella	2	30/12	Puckeys Reserve	woodland	DW
Little Lorikeet	4	19/1	Barren Grounds NR	overhead	RB
Ground Parrot	2	29/1	Little Forest (Rusden Head)	heathland	KM
Turquoise Parrot	1	16/1	Barren Grounds NR	heathland	JB
Pheasant Coucal	1	19/2	Barren Grounds NR (lodge)	heathland	RB
Tawny Frogmouth	1a2j	25/1	Cordeaux Heights	garden	DP
Azure Kingfisher	2	30/1	Fred Finch Park, Berkeley	riverine	DW
Rainbow Bee-eater	4	18/2	Bomaderry Creek	overhead	RJ
White-winged Chough	2	10/2	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Southern Emu-wren	4	24/1	Bulli	garden	RT
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	1	18/2	Buderoo Fire Trail	heathland	RJ
White-plumed Honeyeater	2	02/2	Berkeley Pool	parkland	CJC
White-plumed Honeyeater	1	17/2	Warilla Grove	parkland	CB
Large-billed Scrubwren	1	07/1	Bulli Pass Reserve	rainforest	JB
Spangled Drongo	1	14/2	Keiraville	garden	JP
Spangled Drongo	1	16/2	Windang	dune forest	DW
Dusky Woodswallow	9	26/1	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Beautiful Firetail	6	16/1	Barren Grounds NR	heathland	JB
Common Blackbird	1	02/1	Towradgi Retirement Village	garden	per BH

JB - John Bisset; CB - Chris Brandis; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Barbara Hales; RI - Ron Imsides; RJ - Richard Jordan; RM - Robyn McGarva; KMc - Kevin McGregor; KM - Kevin Mills; BOB - Bruce O'Brien; CP - Chris Presland; DP - Dave Price; CR - Cedric Rutledge; RT - Roger Truscott; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Square-tailed Kites now appear to be regular summer visitors to the Nowra-Bomaderry area. The Turquoise Parrot is the first local record for a few years. The Emu-wrens were definitely in an usual location; however, it's not the first time they have been observed between the escarpment and the coast, with a population known from along the track that runs between Bulli Pass and Corrimal. The Drongo is certainly early, though there have been other records from February. The Little Button-Quail is the 8th local record, with all records coming from the coast and foothills between Mt. Keira and Cambewarra. Little Corellas continue to build their numbers through the area. The Pheasant Coucal record is also very significant, being the only one since a *Vincentia* record in 1997; the last Barren Grounds record being in 1992.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

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April 2000

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POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56, FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519.

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

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

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 10 April 2000 at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be **Graeme Chapman** of Vincentia, who is a professional ornithologist and photographer for the past 43 years. Graeme will be presenting "**Bird Photography: How to do it and how not to do it**". Graeme has travelled extensively throughout Australia with work (CSIRO) and for pleasure. He states he has the biggest collection of bird photographs in this country.

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 12 April 2000 at 8.30 am to **Macquarie Rivulet and Koon Bay**, where it's good even on a bad day and you might get to see the Golden Plover. Meet at 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail, and don't forget your morning tea. The leader for the day is **Barbara Hales**. Phone her on 42574431 if you don't know how to get there.

OUTING Please note none this month on account of our **Easter Camp**, details of which are overleaf. Just to add that **Cedarvale Health Centre's** phone no. is 044.651362 and, with ample notice, they dish up some very tasty vegetarian meals.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 18 April 2000 at 7.30 pm at **Mike & Carol Morphett's** home at 15 Coast Street, Thirroul. Last street right off Phillip Street and first house on the left. Parking available on green strip on t'other side o't road.

MAY NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions for the next *IBOC News* will be 28 April 2000. Please add your name at the foot of your article.

--ooOOoo--

"Photography is truth. The cinema is truth twenty-four times per second." - Jean-Luc Godard: *Le Petit Soldat* (1960 film)

FROM OUTGOING PRESIDENT:

I would like to thank all the members and in particular our Committee Members who have assisted me over the past fifteen months when I had the pleasure of being your President. I have enjoyed the experience, especially the fellowship and friendships both Fae and I have made. A special thanks to Barbara and Brian Hales for their guidance and assistance in the conduct of meetings and programs for our club. My resignation is for personal reasons and I look forward to Lorraine taking over the role as President. I will be remaining a member of our Club and look forward to seeing you on the "back bench"

Regards, Kevin

FROM INCOMING PRESIDENT:

As your new President, I would like to introduce myself. I know only a small number of you, but I am looking forward to meeting the rest of you in the future. I would like to be able to further my knowledge and enjoyment of bird-watching with your assistance.. With the aid and support of a hard-working committee and supporting members, I am looking forward to a fulfilling and enjoyable year.

Regards, Lorraine

UPDATED I.B.O.C. DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR 2000

APR	Mon 10th	Meeting	Graham Chapman - Bird Photography
	Wed 12th	Outing	Macquarie Rivulet - Barbara Hales
	Fri 21/25	Camp	Cedarvale Kangaroo Valley
MAY	Mon 8th	Meeting	Members Night
	Sat 14th	Outing	Mitchell Park - Sydney Trevor Queded
	Wed 17th	Outing	Mt.Keira Scout Camp - Horrie Ward
JUNE	Sun 4th	Outing	Montague Island Narooma (Boat trip/Walk)
	Mon 12th	Meeting	Raoul Boughton (Barron Grounds)
	Sun 18th	Outing	Bargo Gorge - Lorraine Pincus
	Wed 21st	Outing	Minnamurra NP
JULY	Mon 10th	Meeting	Peter Nolan - Raptors
	Sat 15th	Outing	Waterfall Via Kingfisher Pool Bullawarring
	Wed 19th	Outing	Doug Gibson Walk
AUG	Mon 14th	Meeting	Sue Briggs - CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology
	Sun 20th	Outing	Darkes Forrest - Chris Brandis
	Wed 23rd	Outing	Tom Thumb Lagoon
SEPT	Mon 11th	Meeting	Alan Leishman
	Sat 16th	Outing	Mt.Annan Botanical Gardens
	Wed 20th	Outing	To be advised
	Sat 30th	Camp)	Wanganderry Via Mittagong
OCT	Mon 2nd	Camp)	
OCT	Sat 21/28	Camp	Strathford Via Gloucester
NOV	Mon 13th	Meeting	Alan & Kerri Lowis
	Sun 19th	Outing	Killalea State Recreation Park
	Wed 22nd	Outing	To be advised
DEC	Mon 11th	Meeting	Members Christmas meeting
	Sat 16th	Final outing (Christmas celebration)	Grevillea Gardens

EASTER CAMP 2000 - 21st - 25th APRIL
"CEDARVALE", MOSS VALE ROAD, FITZROY FALLS

"Cedarvale" has been booked for our 2000 Easter camp and todate 26 members have registered to attend either for whole of the period or have indicated they will be there for two or three days. Day visitors will also be welcome.

The camp site is a very peaceful place on the escarpment overlooking Kangaroo Valley and consists of an amenities block with both ladies and gents toilets and showers. The amenities block can also be used for overnight sleeping accommodation, if required, and you dont wish to bring your tents, but please let Kevin know if you wish to use this facility. Walks will be held onsite, Fitzroy Falls and Kangaroo Valley during the camp.

The "Cedarvale Health Centre" entrance is on one of the hair-pin bends about 6.8 km towards Nowra from Fitzroy Falls and you should watch for the sign. There is a parking bay on the left side of the road just prior to the bend and you should stop there to check if there is traffic coming up the mountain before you cross the road into the entrance. If you are travelling from Kangaroo Valley the entrance is about 8.4 km from Hampden Bridge.

There are no power sites and you should bring your own drinking water. As this is a privately owned site a daily fee of \$5 per person will be payable.

Please telephone Kevin McGregor on 02 4271 3762 if you would like to register for the camp. Everyone is welcome and it is hoped a variety of bird life will be seen.

MONTAGUE ISLAND NATURE RESERVE - SUNDAY 4TH JUNE 2000

Montague Island is around 80 hectares in size and 8 kilometres offshore from Narooma..

A charter boat has been arranged to take us to the island at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday the 4th June and you can join us to enjoy the half-hour sea voyage and then a tour of the island to see the birds guided by a National Parks and Wildlife Ranger.

Cost; \$60 per person for boat trip and a charge to cover the cost of transport from Wollongong to Narooma which will be determined when the final numbers of persons wishing to travel by bus is known. You will appreciate it will be a very early morning start: 5 am.

If you wish to come on the trip please phone Kevin 02 4271 3762.

MARCH MEETING

Our scheduled speaker Lindsay Smith was unable to join us due to his hospitalization. The club wishes Lindsay a speedy recovery and trusts he is back on his feet very soon. Nonetheless Harry Battam proved to be as informed as Lindsay is--- he should be, given he is Lindsay's co-researcher.

Harry provided an important insight into the importance of energy sources and marine energy flows and its relationship to pelagic birds, especially the albatross. The currency of all life and living objects is based on the prime energy sources such as the sun and plants. Within the marine energy flow cycle we have the sun, phytoplankton, zooplankton, crustaceans, some cretaceans, some small birds, small fish, large fish then sharks and seabirds.

A mere 10% of energy flows from one level to the next. Albatrosses work at the top level and they are worse off than ocean dwellers as they can only forage in a two dimensional world. To maintain viable populations they need special adaptations particularly those spp. that cannot dive. Top level operators need enough food to support reasonably large populations which are strewn over a large area and consequently require "low transport costs".

Food quality at the surface for large birds is not always quality forage and often includes a lot of carrion—spent squid and cuttlefish are poor quality nourishment with high protein/ low fat/ low energy. Albatrosses have a high dependency on the integrity of the food chain --- if the energy flow upwards is blocked, they are affected and move elsewhere.

Albatrosses have late maturation (first breed at 9-12 yrs) and don't moult while breeding (spread moult over 4-8 yrs). They are frugal with energy; i.e. they glide – don't flap , have low transport costs, use wind energy, not their own reserves, and they have a high annual survival rate (92%-- 97%). This means that if they have a poor breeding season, it does not threaten the overall population numbers.

Harry the showed some terrific slides of net catching-banding techniques and several species of Albatrosses—the shots of the Grey and Antipodean were especially great. All members were, I'm sure, enlightened by this scientific insight into the intricacies of the pelagic world and our thanks to Harry for his presentation. Chris Brandis extended a formal vote of thanks and concluded by informing all that Harry and Lindsay's banding techniques were at the "cutting edge" of research and they were to be congratulated. He was also pleased to be able to announce that SNAG had allocated funds to allow this research to continue.

Darryl Goldrick

MIDWEEK 2000 OUTINGS

Wollongong Botanic Gardens

Wednesday 15th March 2000. Lat. Long.
30°34' 150°54'

The group of 10 members and two visitors met at the carpark on Murphy's Avenue at 9:00am to walk in the Botanic Gardens. The weather was mild and cloudy but fine for the outing.

The entrance carpark is situated in the south-east corner of the Gardens where service roads lead off to various parts of the Gardens. Our first stop was at the lake where there were some Black Ducks and Moorhens on the water with about 12 Purple Swamphen in a group on the grass surrounds with a number of Australian Wood Duck over the grass area. The Silver Gulls were there in large numbers all through the Gardens but mostly over the Grass area near the lake. The Sulphur-crested Cockatoo was present too, scattered over the area of the Gardens, air-borne and perched in the trees. Other birds observed near the lake were the Crested Pigeon, Common Myna, Noisy Miner, Australian Raven and Australian Magpie.

With a cloud cover walking was comfortable, but made it difficult to identify the various species of birds in the trees, which for the first part were rather scarce when we entered the rainforest.

The rainforest has been developed a great deal in recent years and now covers a very large area. The rainforest is in three main sections - the Illawarra Rainforest, Sub-Tropical Rainforest and the most westward is the Exotic Rainforest and then on the eastern end is the Bog Garden with a creek running through and eventually flows into the lake. The forested area is joined as one with intertwining tracks. It is a lovely restful area to walk through with the overhanging trees. The Bog Garden is somewhat different with rock pools covered with bright green algae creating as water always does the restful and relaxing atmosphere. This was the area where the lovely Rufous Fantail and Leaden Flycatcher were observed along with the Brown Thornbill and a number of White-browed Scrubwrens were sighted in the trees, also the beautiful Eastern Yellow Robin was seen nearby.

We came out onto a service road and walked back to the entrance over a grass area, which was more open landscape with scattered trees and shrubs, many in flower where we observed the Rainbow Lorikeet going through the blossom in the vegetation. Then the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo was living up to its name when there were about 20 in a couple of Flame Trees severely pruning them. Leaves were dropping down as the cockatoos tore them from the trees with short branches up to 30cm long being broken from the trees, after a short time chewing the little branches dropped them to the ground also. They were making quite a mess of the trees..

We arrived back at the entrance about 12:00 noon after a very pleasant walk. Through the morning we recorded a total of 35 species. A couple of lizards and a rabbit were also sighted.

Thanks to Doug Rickers for leading us through the maze of tracks through the Botanic Gardens and we didn't even get lost.

202	Australian Wood Duck	281	Australian King Parrot	365	Leaden Flycatcher
948	Mallard (cross breed)	282	Crimson Rosella	415	Magpie-lark
208	Pacific Black Duck	288	Eastern Rosella	362	Rufous Fantail
188	White-faced Heron	322	Laughing Kookaburra	364	Willie Wagtail
058	Purple Swamphen	565	Spotted Pardalote	424	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
056	Dusky Moorhen	488	White-browed Scrubwren	705	Australian Magpie
125	Silver Gull	475	Brown Thornbill	694	Pied Currawong
989	Spotted Turtle Dove	634	Noisy Miner	930	Australian Raven
043	Crested Pigeon	605	Lewin's Honeyeater	679	Satin Bowerbird
273	Galah	392	Eastern Yellow Robin	574	Silveryeye
269	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	421	Eastern Whipbird	998	Common Myna
254	Rainbow Lorikeet	398	Golden Whistler		

Horrie Ward

MARCH OUTING

It's not often that an organisation pursuing its own interests should actually be of assistance to the natural world. Inadvertently, the Tallawarra Power Station appears to have provided an environment suitable to many species of birds when they created the ash ponds near Lake Illawarra.

Darryl Goldrick led about 20 followers around the ash ponds on Sunday, 19 March. We began the walk to the entrance to Pond 3 and continued walking until morning tea which was taken on the grassy coal banked edge of the pond. Tea, however, did not interrupt the bird watching and discussion as to which species was which. Darryl's spotterscope was put to good use, and for those of us totally inexperienced in bird watching was greatly appreciated.

We proceeded with the circumnavigation of this pond, which took quite some time. Mike Morphett gave a demo of the call of the Little Grassbird – a short duet ensued. This appeared to frighten four Brown Quail who took flight from the grass right in front of us. Presumably, they had no musical ear!

As the list of birds grew, so did the number of clouds in the sky. We finished Pond 3, returned to the cars and proceeded to the entrance of Ponds 1 & 2. It was nice to sit on the grass, have a little rest and some lunch.

As we began our walk to Ponds 1 & 2, it began to rain very heavily. At this point, some people left as it was becoming very, very wet. Those of us left continued our walk through the rain and managed to spot more birds, who seemed quite oblivious of the weather.

Ultimately, the rain was just too heavy and by this time it was around 1530 so we returned to the cars and said farewell. Could I just say, from someone who has never been on a bird walk before – the help from all those experienced members was greatly appreciated. It was a lovely day, and successful. The total of 71 birds spotted is listed below.

Anne Lavery.

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Black-fronted Dotterel	Pied Cormorant
Welcome Swallow	Little Black Cormorant	Striated Heron
Australian Magpie	Black-shouldered Kite	Rufous Whistler
Noisy Miner	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-browed Scrubwren
Magpie Lark	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Red-browed Firetail
Grey Butcherbird	Satin Flycatcher	Caspian Tern
Eastern Rosella	Black-winged Stilt	Superb Fairy-wren
Dusky Moorhen	Royal Spoonbill	Eastern Spinebill
Common Starling	Australian White Ibis	Australasian Grebe
Australian Wood Duck	White-fronted Chat	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Common Myna	Silver Gull	Little Grassbird
Crested Pigeon	Masked Lapwing	Darter
Laughing Kookaburra	Chestnut Teal	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Pacific Black Duck	Grey Teal	Galah
Little Pied Cormorant	Australasian Shoveler	Long-billed Corella
Australian Pelican	European Goldfinch	Eurasian Coot
Whistling Kite	Brown Quail	Spotted Turtle-Dove
Purple Swamphen	Red-capped Plover	Red-kneed Dotterel
Nankeen Kestrel	Double-banded Plover	Golden Whistler
Willie Wagtail	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Grey Shrike-thrush
Great Cormorant	Yellow Thornbill	Brown Falcon
Black Swan	Grey Fantail	Golden-headed Cisticola
Australian Raven	Silvereye	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
White-faced Heron	Dollarbird	

For myself the highlight was the aerial ballet of a feeding young Satin Flycatcher. Also of note was the cygnet on the first pond; Black Swan approaching 200 in number on the southernmost pond; the vocal display of Rufous Whistlers in the rain; and Darryl's sudden descent down the bank of the last pond we walked round! –Ed.

WATCHING OUT for IDEAS from WATCHING BIRDS

Richard Miller very kindly presented me with an old gem of a book he had picked up from an English second-hand bookshop during his recent overseas trip. It was Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald's *Background to Birds*. Childhood memories of this writer came flooding back to me: he used to have a regular feature on topics of natural history in the British press that my parents enjoyed reading too. At random I firstly read through the final chapter, which contained his comments and advice about speculations we might make about bird behaviour, warning us that the greatest problem facing us birdwatchers is our interpretation of the behaviour we observe. It seemed to me his words still had much relevance for us half a century on.

Those who play the stock market may well have a different notion of speculation. The meaning BVF had in mind is conjecture or guessing on a given subject or situation without knowing all the facts. The word comes from the Latin *speculari*: to watch, observe, spy out, which in turn derives from *specula*: watchtower. Interestingly, it is etymologically linked with the word 'species', from the Greek *skeptomai*: to look closely at, which we use to refer to the taxonomic classification of a group of animals (or plants) capable of interbreeding, that falls between the terms 'variety' and 'genus'.

When observing birds, BVF states, we are often not content with a simple description of what we actually see. Our curiosity makes us want to know why they behave in a certain way. However, because more often than not we can't say for sure why a bird does this or that, the scientist would argue that we can't speculate at all as nothing can be believed that can't be proved. There is the further danger, according to the author, of anthropomorphism when we try to put our mind into the mind of the bird. We don't know that the bird thinks or feels the same way we do. Furthermore, we lack the precise language to describe their various modes of behaviour.

Whilst we humans and birds live in the same world, we occupy very different worlds. With our over-developed brains we can live in the three worlds of past, present and future, whereas birds live only in the present and very much "on their nerves" in order to survive. Lacking imagination or the power of deductive thought, birds react to various stimuli in an immediate way. They are, however, not automatons, but are individualistic in their responses, which makes bird-watching so fascinating. BVF goes on to draw a distinction between the larger birds (e.g. rook, jackdaw, magpie, raven) which tend to have greater intelligence (the "rudimentary beginnings of a brain") than the smaller ones and so generally follow a slower pace of life.

BVF tells us that in the course of observing birds, we will begin to form our own ideas, but that we should not worry when we find these don't agree with those that are generally accepted or if most of them are ultimately proved wrong. This is all part of the very exciting process of learning and "exploring a world about which we really know very little despite all the books that have been written". Because we are so far away from complete knowledge, he concludes by offering us one golden rule about studying any living creatures such as birds: "Never be dogmatic. Never say, 'This cannot happen' or 'This will happen'".

Mike Morphet
010400



Haw,
haw!



This bird isn't
going to drop
something on me...

I was wrong:
it got my 'glasses
instead!



Unusual Records: February-March 2000: Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	2	14/3	Barren Grounds NR	heath	RB
Australasian Shoveler	50+	27/2	Tallawarra	wetland	DG
Pink-eared Duck	8	27/2	Tallawarra	wetland	DG
Pink-eared Duck	1	18/3	Lake Wollumboola	lake	CJC
Striated Heron	1	27/2	Swan Lake	estuary	KM
Striated Heron	1	18/3	Little Lake	estuary	CJC
Square-tailed Kite	1	27/2	Vincentia	overhead	RJ
Buff-banded Rail	2	06/3	Robertson	wetland	CJC
Lewin's Rail	1	14/3	Barren Grounds NR	near lodge	RB
Painted Button-quail	2	15/3	Barren Grounds NR	heath	RB
Grey-tailed Tattler	6	19/3	Little Lake	estuary	CJC RB
Great Knot	2	18/3	Comerong Island	sand flat	CJC RB
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	18/3	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC RB
Pomarine Jaeger	2	18/3	Crookhaven Heads	off shore	CJC
Banded Stilt	1	26/3	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	JPe
Emerald Dove	1	04/3	Balgownie	garden	TE
Emerald Dove	1	04/3	Mt. Pleasant	garden	TE
Emerald Dove	1		Upper Avon	rainforest	CJC
Bar-shouldered Dove	6	19/3	Windang	dune forest	DW
White-headed Pigeon	1	22/3	Bulli Pass	forest	RM
Long-billed Corella	50+	27/2	Lake South	playing field	DG
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	8	20/2	Austinmer	urban	JB
Sooty Owl	1	29/2	Jamberoo Pass	rainforest	RJ
White-throated Nightjar	1	24/2	Yalwal Road	forest	KM
Chestnut-rumped Hylacola	2+	March	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	RB
Crested Shrike-tit	2	02/2	Mt. Keira	forest	DG
Spangled Drongo	1	25/2	Toolijoa	garden	CP
Spangled Drongo	1	22/3	Keiraville	garden	ME
Spangled Drongo	1	18/3	Fred Finch Park, Berkeley	parkland	DW
Spangled Drongo	1	19/3	Windang	dune forest	DW
Cicadabird	1	02/2	Mt. Keira	forest	DG
Green Catbird	2	28/2	Jamberoo Pass	rainforest	RJ
Green Catbird	2	March	Austinmer	garden	JB
Green Catbird	1	28/2	Keiraville	garden	JPa
Bassian Thrush	1	17/3	Bulli Pass	rainforest	JB

JB - John Bisset; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; TE - Terry Edwell; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Daryl Goldrick; RJ - Richard Jordan; RM - Richard Miller; KM - Kevin Mills; CP - Chris Presland; JPe - Joy Pegler; JPa - Judith Parkinson; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Another good set of records from the region, with the highlight being the Banded Stilt. This is the first regional record of this species since 1981. The 3 Pectoral Sandpipers is the largest group of this species ever recorded from the region. One of the Great Knot from Comerong was colour banded in Queensland. The Buff-banded Rail record is from a new location and one of only a few known records from the Southern Highlands. Scaly-breasted Lorikeets are rare visitors to the region. Hylacola are rarely recorded in recent years. Barren Grounds NR is proving to be a place to go at the moment. Eastern Bristlebirds are everywhere and there have been numerous records of observers encountering Ground Parrots on track verges. Other goodies that are being regularly observed at the reserve include Beautiful Firetail and Crescent Honeyeater. There was also good numbers of Bar-tailed Godwit being reported in full breeding plumage from Windang, Lake Wollumboola and Comerong Island. Thanks for all the email records, it makes compiling this page a much easier task.
Please note the new phone number.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 228

May 2000

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

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 8 May 2000 at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. We will be holding our **23rd Annual Club Members' Night**, hopefully without electricity disruptions, as happened at last June's event. The emphasis, as usual, will be on spontaneity and fun, whereby members entertain each other with anything to do with bird- and wildlife, sharing experiences involving studies, hobbies, interests, passions and talents. Over the years we've enjoyed seeing &/or listening to a wide range of items: slides, photos, movies, paintings, embroidery, other arts and crafts, music, poetry and so on. So don't be shy, like a certain albatross, and take part, giving president Lorraine (42259789) prior notice so that she can plan the evening's program. Bring a supper plate to share comestibles afterwards. And as a bit of trivia for you to digest: Members' Night has previously been held 9 times in April, 6 in June, 3 in July, and twice each in March and May.

OUTING Sunday 15 May 2000 to **McGraths Hill & Mitchell Park, Marayla**. Well known international bird observer, **Trevor Quested** will lead this walk at 9 am opposite Windsor High School, Mulgrave Road, McGraths Hill. Parking (not barking) will be at the Dog Pound. The walk will consist of seeing numerous water birds in the a.m. and then travelling to Mitchell Park, which backs on to Cattai Creek, to see many other species, including hopefully the Powerful Owl, in the p.m., finishing about 3 pm. If you intend taking this walk, please contact **Kevin McGregor (42713762)** to make a **booking** and arrange final **transport** details. We are endeavouring to "car pool" & reduce the number of vehicles going. We will travel to the site by going along Picton Road to F6 Freeway to Campbelltown, turn left off to Narellan, then right to The Northern Road to Kingswood (cross Great Western Highway) & then continue to Windsor; finally along George Street & Macquarie Streets to Windsor Road, turn right & travel to McGraths Hill, & just past lights at T-intersection turn right into Mulgrave Road.

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 17 May 2000 at 8.30 am to **Mount Keira Scout Camp**. Meet at the camp car park at 8.30 am and bring morning tea. The wearing of shorts, badge and toggles is not obligatory. **Horrie Ward** will lead the expedition.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 16 May 2000 at 7.30 pm at **Brian & Barbara Hales'** home at 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail (42574431).

"Talent develops in quiet places, character in the full current of human life." – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Torquato Tasso* (1790)

JUNE NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 1 June 2000. Please add your name at the foot of your article.

The FUTURE of BASS POINT RESERVE

In a letter dated 12th April last, Shellharbour City Council's Director of Economic Development, Phil Woodcock has invited comments from IBOC about the Draft Plan of Management for Bass Point to be made before 4.30 pm 24th May. The plan has been placed on public exhibition until 10th May at the Council's Administration Centre and at Warilla Library.

Accompanying the letter are two volumes of the Draft Plan, comprising of (A) planning considerations, terrestrial and marine ecology, cultural significance, visitation, and external factors including urbanisation, tourism and the gravel quarry, and (B) basis for management, action plan, and summary and key recommendations.

As the area in question abuts Killalea State Recreation Area and has over many years been visited by IBOC members as a group and individually, they may well wish to respond to the Draft Plan. Committee member, Bruce O'Brien (42627529) would welcome IBOCers to contact him to form a think-tank and make a collective response. Otherwise, some members may prefer to make private submissions to "Bass Point", General Manager, Shellharbour City Council, PO Box 155, Shellharbour Square, Blackbutt 2529.

BIRDS AUSTRALIA PROPOSED PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Most members would recall that Birds Australia (RAOU) almost two years ago purchased a property in South Australia - Gluepot Reserve, which is now a centre for threatened mallee bird research. IBOC made a donation like many other clubs throughout Australia towards its purchase.

A new property acquisition project is on the drawing boards - Newhaven Station, 2626 sq. km, north-west of Alice Springs. It is a stunning piece of country with a wide range of habitats ranging from parallel dunes in the south, to calcareous grasslands, salt lakes, woodlands and rocky ranges. The area is extensive, complex, intact and very accessible. When Birds Australia's biodiversity scoring system was applied to Newhaven, it scored an exceptionally high 91%, slightly more than Gluepot Reserve (88%).

Birds Australia will be launching an appeal in May to raise funds. I will provide more details when they come to hand. However, I would encourage all members to make a contribution---- the amount is inconsequential; it all adds up in the long run. Aside from the environmental benefits, contributors will have automatic access rights--- as is the case with Gluepot (I and a few other club members have had the privilege).

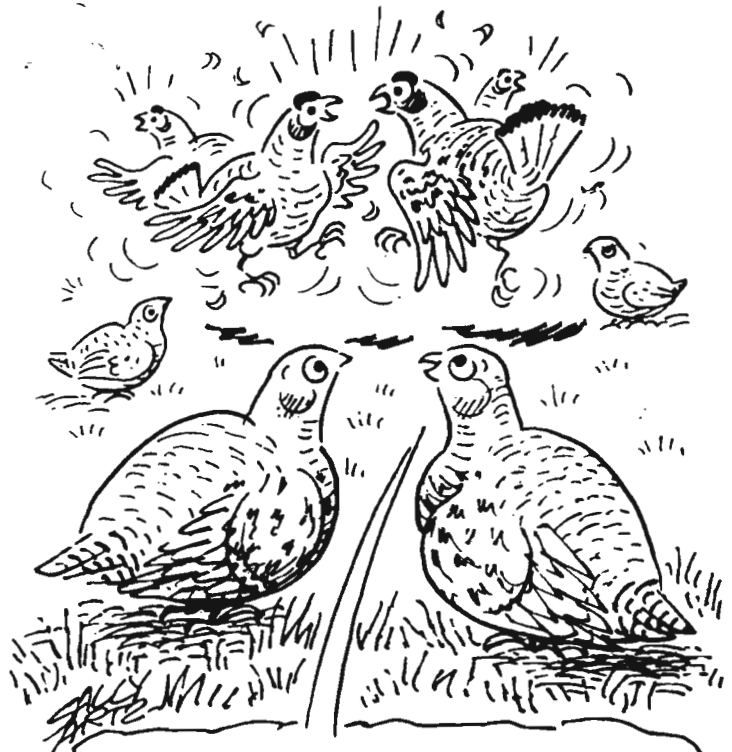
Darryl Goldrick.

BARREN GROUNDS NEWS

As the club's representative on the BG Management Committee, I report any outcomes that may be of interest to the club or its members from time to time. There are a number of matters that I will elaborate on at the next meeting, but a few brief items are as follows:

1. Jenny Smith (assistant warden) has resigned. Jen has accepted a position at the Bicentennial Park Field Study Centre. Jenny was a tremendous asset to BG and she will be sadly missed. IBOC wishes her all the very best in her future career.
2. Raoul does an ABC radio talkback segment every second Thursday between 8.30 - 9.00 am (FM 97.3).Next segment is on 11 May---- it is an excellent program, so tune in and phone in if you have any birding questions.
3. Barren Grounds has an excellent new website (includes bird calls)--- www.users.bigpond.com/barren.grounds
4. More volunteers are needed ---- not only to staff the information centre (only twice/ year), but people who have database skills. There is a growing amount of research data being collected at the Reserve and this has to be entered onto the database. Anyone who would be interested please give Raoul a call Tel:42360195.
5. There are some major fund-raising projects in the pipeline to carry out major facility improvements (I will speak more of this at the meeting), but there are concept plans prepared. Raoul is seeking someone who has drafting / drawing skills who may be able to convert these into a more professional format as a promotional tool. I know we have a number of members who possess these special skills ----- would you be interested in helping Raoul on this matter? Please contact me and I will pass your name and contact no. to Raoul.

Darryl Goldrick

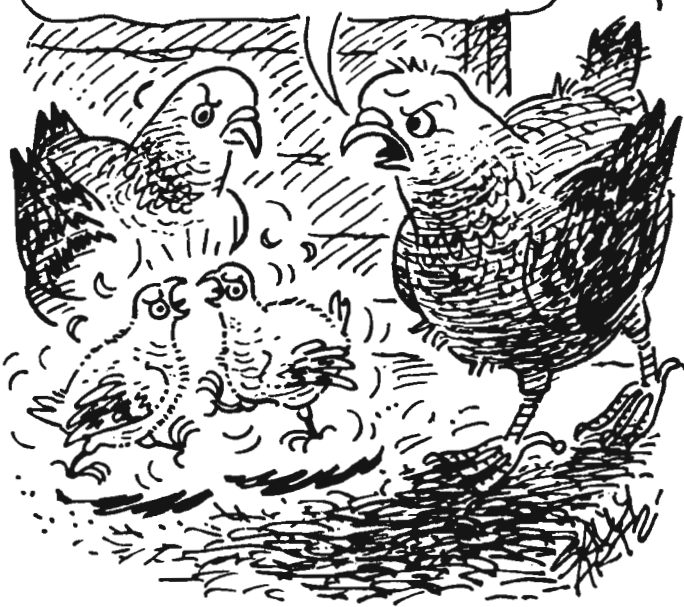


He's a flashy, vain, loud-mouthed show-off — and you can't get more attractive than that!



The **IN** colour is pale speckled brown, but some of us have to learn the hard way...

Don't ask me to sort it out, girl, I'm worn out! I've been pecking at lights all day just to earn us a bit of birdseed!



If he wants to have a swim, that's no skin off our beaks



'Comparative Psychology, Human & Animal Behaviour: A Sociobiological Approach' - Malim, Birch & Hayward - Macmillan 1996

APRIL MEETING:

Our long standing member Graeme Chapman was our guest speaker for the night and has been a professional ornithologist for the past 30 years with a wonderful gift in photographing birds. Graeme presented an entertaining night with slides he has taken over the years in many places and gave hints on "what to do and not what to do when photographing birds".

Graeme presented a wonderful set of slides which showed how, when and where a photograph should be taken and all aspects that should be taken into regard with each photo. The majority of slides shown were of excellent quality and excellent shots of birds, some of which a lot of our members have not had the pleasure of seeing in real life.

The night commenced with details of the lenses and film Graeme uses in his work and highlighted that the lenses do not have to be expensive and recommended 400 metre lenses and Kodochrome film. Lenses now made by computers have improved depth of field, horizontal and vertical aspects. Be careful all lenses flair in the direct sun light, and watch background when using long lenses. The basics should be followed in the selection of the aperture used when taking a photograph, fast or slow films should be selected to suit your own skills and the type of photo you wish to take. Graeme gave details of cost of mirror lenses, 2 times converters, and explained there are many types of lenses that can be used. Camera shake is a constant problem when photographing birds and a tripod is one way of overcoming the problem. Use camouflage when seeking to photograph a bird in its natural habitat. Walk straight at the bird you're trying to photograph and do not walk sideways....this can disturb the bird more quickly.....don't move fast. A tape recording of the bird's call can assist in getting the bird to come to you. Watch your exposure settings and camera speed to reduce movement, watch the light....soft light is better. Always watch the background and this was demonstrated in Graeme's slides and the ranges of colour were beautiful. The birds stood out against the background and highlighted the colour of the bird. Details of how to use a flash was explained and if you are filming a bird in captivity you should try and make it look as natural as possible.

The slides shown by Graeme were too varied to list in this article however, they were from sites all around Australia and most habitats. The night was enjoyed by all who attended and many questions were fired at Graeme after his presentation. A vote of thanks to Graeme was extended by Kevin. A wonderful night. Thanks Graeme.

* * * * *

VOLUNTEER REQUIRED

Would you like to record the proceedings of our monthly meetings, for inclusion in the *Newsletter*? If so, please contact the Editor as soon as possible.

* * * * *

MID-WEEK OUTING: MACQUARIE RIVULET

On Wednesday 12th April 10 members of IBOC met at 32 Shearwater Bvd. for our half-day walk. The day was a little cloudy, but quite mild and calm; vastly different from our last walk in the area when it was blowing a gale. There wasn't as much water in the Koono Bay backwater as on our previous visit, but quite enough to add another dimension to the tapestry of swamp plants that flaunt their varied colours behind the Casuarinas on the shoreline and enough to encourage various birds to visit. When we started off, we had already seen Silver Gulls, Peaceful Doves, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Indian Myna, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Fairy-wrens, and further on saw Crested Pigeon, Willie Wagtail, European Goldfinch, Chestnut Teal, Masked Lapwing, Superb Fairy-wren, Sacred Ibis, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, and Grey Shrike-thrush, all where we would expect them: on the grass, in the trees, or further out and on the water.

We turned back at a small creek and then went out along the spit of land created by the Macquarie Rivulet bringing down silt and depositing it at its mouth. The Euphorbia that was growing here and was trying to emulate the Triffids the last time we were here was but a series of dried sticks; however, the Lantana was flowering freely. Here we saw Little Black Cormorants, Pied Cormorants, and across the water a Caspian Tern. We straggled back to Brian and Barbara's in our usual strung-out fashion and had morning tea, which was most enjoyable, and it wasn't only birds and birding that were discussed; and as soon as we'd organised the way the world should turn, we were off again, along the street, past the children's playground and into the attractive picnic areas and the bike and walking tracks alongside the Rivulet. Here the gardens flourished as before, likewise the mosquitoes. There wasn't much flowering, only a Bottlebrush or two and some Lomandra; and the way the Cockies were attacking the Bottlebrush, shortly the Lomandra would be on its own. The large spikes of the Lomandra certainly are a wonderful protection.

We passed by the Holding Pond, on which there were Purple Swamphen and in the Sheoaks nearby were Red-browed Firetails. In the paddocks over the pond were well-fed healthy-looking cows with their attendant Cattle Egrets. When we reached the area where the factories are, the gardens still looked good and the grass was neatly cut, but what looked like an awful example of vandalism appeared on one of the factories. The large letters proclaiming that it was the Homeclad Industry was full of large holes. As the sign was very high up, at least the vandals would have had to exert themselves. Later on it occurred to us that as the Sulphur-crested Cockatoos had eaten the lettering on the Palm Court Hotel at Corrimal, perhaps they were busy demolishing the Homeclad [polystyrene] sign. Just imagine Cockatoos giving vandals a bad name.

The River Red Gums that line one side of the track in this area had grown well since our last visit, but alas there was a cluster of Sawfly larvae on one of them, which Judy promptly dispatched. Hope any others take the hint and go elsewhere. Here we saw Little Wattlebirds, Grey Fantails, Dusky Moorhens, Purple Swamphens, and Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Boobook Owl, New Holland Honeyeater, and a White-plumed Honeyeater, Grey Fantail and a Darter. By now we'd gone under both bridges and reached the area where the new amenities block is being built and it was time to turn back, which we did. We saw 41 species for the morning, had a delightful walk and enjoyable social occasion. Thanks for leading us, Barbara – it was lovely.

Peggy Merrett



DIFFERENT LINES of THOUGHT over CEDARVALE

Apart from the Brown Falcon and Southern Emu-wren, I had seen all the bird species at the 'backa my place' at Thirroul which were recorded on the 150 acre property of Cedarvale Health & Lifestyle Retreat during the Easter camp. It could thus be argued: Why then bother to drive the nearly 180 km round trip? I don't, however, share the view of Rudyard Kipling's Just-so Stories cat that "all places were alike to him". Cedarvale presented me with a range of stimulating sense-perceptions that more than compensated for the apparent sameness of bird species.

Included in a Superb Lyrebird's mimicry in bush overlooking the orchard was its rendition of the Laughing Kookaburra and Large-billed Scrubwren, the equal of which I had not heard before. I'm sure too that the calls made by the Crimson Rosella and Brown Pigeon in this locality differed slightly from those I had tuned into back home. A dialect variation, I wonder? Among other wildlife species of interest were Kangaroo, Wallaby, Wombat and Brushtail Possum. At night there were the spectacles of the scattered lights of Glow-worms along and up the bank bordering the two tracks crossing the watercourse that runs through the rainforest between the Centre's lodge and our campsite.

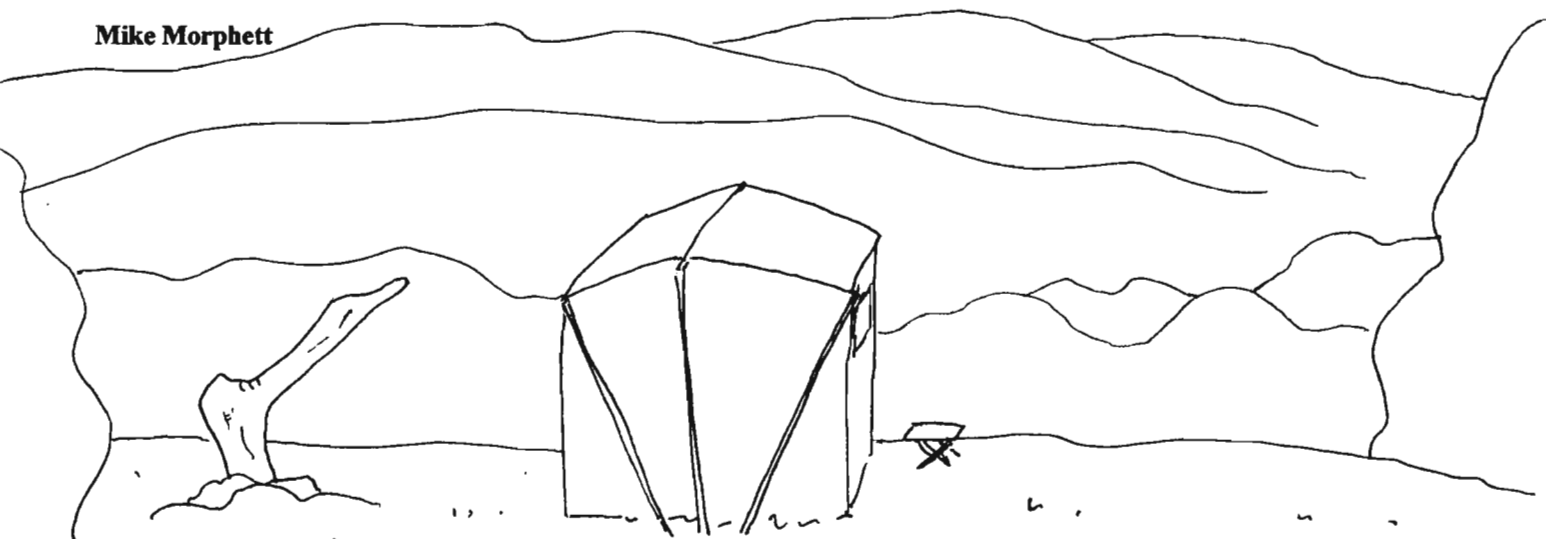
Cedarvale's brochure refers to the smell of open fields, rainforest and mountain streams that all combine to provide the unique environment you need for relaxation and health recovery. My varied encounters with the natural environment during this camp stay were a real tonic for me. Relieved of the pressures of work deadlines, I relished the chance of resetting my body and mind clocks to the slow, steady pace of the place. Periodically the sounds of a farm tractor and cattle drifted across the valley of 'glow-worm' stream that feeds into Trimbles Creek, which in turn joins Millers Creek; to the north can be seen the high waterfall of that creek between Barrengarry Pass and Blakemans Lookout on the fringe of Morton National Park. Even the noise of heavy vehicles wending their way up the main road over Barrengarry Mountain wasn't obtrusive, but instead gave rise to weird echoes that at times reverberated above the southern cliffs behind our camp. Barely discernible by day amid the forested slopes, the winding path of the main road became more obvious at night with the flickering headlights. Those of Kangaroo Valley-bound vehicles at one point along that route shone across to my tent for just an instant.

The clear night sky revealed the countless constellations; twice I glimpsed a shooting star. After eight o'clock the moon appeared over the farmland rise to the east and illuminated the entire area, following a westward arc high above me. About a quarter to seven the following mornings the sun would begin its lower trajectory to the north-east, rising behind Hindmarsh Ridge of Yarra State Forest and competing with the fading moon. It descended late afternoon towards Mount Carrialoo, bringing about a sudden drop in temperature over the campsite, which until then had been bathed in sunlight.

Early both mornings a thick blanket of fog concealed Barrengarry and Kangaroo Valley below. As it began to lift, languid white smoke crawled up the slopes of Barrengarry Mountain; the scene was continually changing, as when certain clumps of trees stood out like hilly islands set in a sea of mist. Intermittently dewdrops fell from my tent canopy. And then for a few brief moments I stood in awe of a natural phenomenon I had not encountered before: what I would term a fogbow, like an anaemic rainbow. Against the backdrop of the timbered vertical cliffs extended a wide, whitish arch formed by the sun through the clouds of mist ascending the slope and over our camp.

Shortly after first pitching my tent, I sat down to take in the view and fresh air and felt inspired to sketch a drawing of the flow of lines formed by the ranges, slopes and timber. The contours stood out plainly and, though fixed, suggested some rhythmical movement. It was not until those observations of the pathways of the sun and moon that I conceived the idea of a three-dimensional model with these additional lines like time-lapse photography, together with the archway of the fogbow. And in among these composite lines I imagined the criss-crossing of the flightpaths of the birds I had spotted, not to mention my own movements, during the course of my camp stay. I'm sure this imagery will linger long in my mind and will not be repeated in my further field studies back home.

Mike Morphett



Spread your wings and learn that a ...

Fledglings' career is for the birds

By HANNAH EDWARDS

JUDY Harrington finds bird-watching an addictive pastime.

Catching a glimpse of an elusive rufous night heron, admiring a graceful darter or watching hundreds of cormorants fly in to roost each night is reason enough for Ms Harrington to don her binoculars.

Working at Bicentennial Park, Homebush Bay, gives Ms Harrington plenty of opportunities to indulge her love for the bird world.

It also helped inspire her to go back to school to examine our feathered friends in greater scientific detail.

Studying by correspondence, Ms Harrington recently completed a two-year graduate certificate in applied science (Ornithology) from the Bathurst campus of Charles Sturt University.

Ms Harrington said: "This particular course gave me a deeper look at biology and the evolution of birds. It was only offered to distance education students.

"It gave me more knowledge about a subject I have become increasingly

interested in. Considering I have been involved in bird monitoring since the Bicentennial Park opened, I have also found it extremely helpful for my career."

Ms Harrington, a mother of three, found the option of distance education gave her the opportunity to balance the commitments of work, study and her home life.

"After I had my children I decided to pursue other interests with a course I was not able to do after I originally finished school," she said. "However, the hardest part of studying by correspondence was disciplining myself."

Although the study guides were comprehensive and reading guidelines very helpful, it seems a regular study program is essential for distance students.

"In reality, studying by correspondence can be very hard. I had my fair share of last minute cramming for exams and dashing off written assignments," Ms Harrington said.

However, such problems have not deterred Ms Harrington from adding her latest certificate to a Bachelor of Arts degree completed in the evening

while working full-time as a teacher, as well as an associate diploma in environmental studies, also completed by distance education.

In accordance with course requirements, students submit assignments, do weekly readings on set topics from scientific journals and papers, and attend a compulsory three-day on-campus residential.

"The residentials were very important," Ms Harrington said.

"We did field work which was a necessary part of some of our assignments.

"We also met others, allowing us to discuss topics we were studying. It was very helpful."

During her high school years, Ms Harrington remembers a career path that had been automatically set.

"You could study subjects such as English or French but there were never any biology options," she said.

"It was very streamlined with no variety in the courses, which you find today.

"Later in life, the opportunity to study in a field I love and am interested in has been wonderful."



EAGLE EYE: Judy Harrington zooms in.

Picture: DANIELLE SMITH

Of CSU, I have further Internet details on request - Ed.

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Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

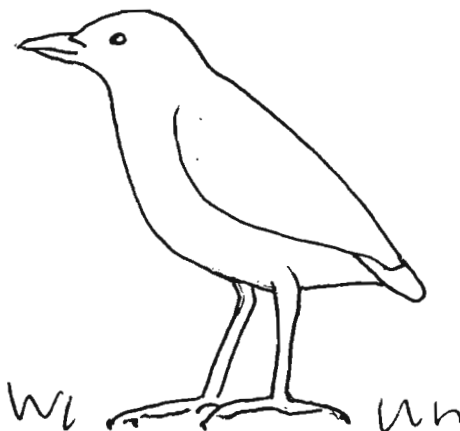
Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush Turkey	1	24/4	Mt. Keira (Ashburn track)	forest	GB
Buller's Albatross	1	22/4	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Darter	1	28/3	Bellambi Lagoon	wetland	GB
Grey Goshawk	1	28/4	East Corrimal	Dune forest	DW
Lewin's Rail	1	28/3	Dunmore Railway Station	reed swamp	RJ
Painted Button-quail	3	14/3	No.1 fire trail, Nepean	woodland	CJC
Bar-shouldered Dove	6	15/4	Windang	Dune forest	DW
Rainbow Lorikeet	8	19/4	Barren Grounds NR	overhead	RB
Musk Lorikeet	30+	11/4	Beaton Park	urban	JB
Musk Lorikeet	50+	11/4	Austinmeer	urban	JB
Musk Lorikeet	40+	16/4	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	03/4	Towrang	overhead	JB
White-throated Nightjar	1	03/3	Yalwal Road	forest	KM
Noisy Pitta	1	23/4	Mt. Kembla ring track	rainforest	DF
Rainbow Bee-eater	few	03/3	Yalwal Road	woodland	KM
Red-browed Treecreeper	2	21/4	McGuire's Ck, ESE Mittagong	Riparian	GB
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	21/4	McGuire's Ck, ESE Mittagong	Riparian	GB
Flame Robin	1	23/4	Budderoo fire trail	woodland	RB
Rose Robin	1	30/4	Fred Finch Park	Riparian	DW
Black-faced Monarch	1	13/4	Jamberoo Mountain	forest	RJ
Little Raven	26	21/4	Range Rd., SSE Mittagong	rural	GB
Green Catbird	1	11/4	Barren Grounds NR (lodge)	forest	RB

GB - Graham Barwell; JB - John Bisset; RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; DF - David Fischer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; RJ - Richard Jordan; RM - Richard Miller; KM - Kevin Mills; CP - Chris Presland; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment:

The Noisy Pitta record is the seventh local record since 1983. This species will respond to mimics of its call early in the morning and near sunset. If anyone finds it, please ring at work on 46401000, as an aging IBOC member would love to see this species! The Large-billed Scrubwren record is a new location. The Flame Robin is the first record from that location for some years. The Channel-billed Cuckoo and Black-faced Monarch are very late records for these summer migrants. The Rainbow Lorikeets are only the 2nd known record from Barren Grounds NR.

And a word from the lucky birdwatcher himself: I observed the Noisy Pitta along the eastern section of the ring track of Mount Kembla. The bird was foraging beneath a tangle of vines in a patch of rainforest. When disturbed, it flew to a low branch and remained in full view for several minutes before vanishing. – **Dave Fischer**





I.B.O.C. NEWS

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June 2000

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

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

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

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 12 June 2000 at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be **Raoul Broughton**, warden at Barren Grounds Bird Observatory, who will be talking about **Bird Identification in the Hand**. As the wise ornithologist might have said: A bird in the hand is worth two walks in the bush – one to set up the mistnets and the other to see what's been caught. Raoul plans to use slides featuring field trips within Cape York Peninsula as well as the Barren Grounds. Also to test your knowledge, he will run a simple quiz; so bring along pen and paper, in addition to the usual eats for afters.

OUTING Sunday 18 June 2000 to **Bargo Gorge** under the leadership of **Lorraine Pincus**. Meet at 9 am at the signposts that say "Dingo Farm" and "Pheasants Nest". To reach these signposts, leave Wollongong by going along the Picton Road to F6 Freeway; turn left and travel along the Freeway to Avon Dam turn-off, and turn right over the bridge over the Freeway. Then take the first right turn, where Lorraine will be waiting. The party will then travel by convoy, as the way to the start of the walk isn't well signposted: covered by trees and another sign is lying in the grass. Lorraine doesn't want to lose anyone on her first walk! If you intend going on this outing, please contact her on 42259789 or Kevin McGregor on 42713762. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 21 June to **Minnamurra National Park**. Meet **Kevin McGregor**, the leader, at the park car park at 9 am and bring morning tea. Members are invited to bring along a friend too.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 20 June 2000 at 7.30 pm at **Fae and Kevin McGregor's** home: address and phone no. above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and contact Kevin beforehand.

JULY NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 27 June 2000. Please add your name at the foot of your article.

--ooOoo--

"Whist upon whist upon whist upon whist drive, in Institute, Legion and Social Club. Horny hands that hold the aces which this morning held the plough."
- Sir John Betjeman : Dorset (1937)

CLUB TRANSFER

The position of President has changed once again: I have stepped down from the President's position, as I was not fully aware of the total responsibility and personal demand the position requires. **Kevin McGregor** is once again your President. I am Vice-President, a position that has not been filled for some time. By being Vice-President, I intend to help and learn from Kevin as much as I can. Regards **Lorraine Pincus**

HANDBOOK on HAND AGAIN

The *Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands* by Chris Chafer, Chris Brandis and Diana Wright has been reprinted and copies are available at \$20.00 each at the next club meeting.

POINTING the WAY to BASS POINT RESERVE

With assistance from **Chris Chafer**, **Bruce O'Brien** has returned a submission from IBOC to Shellharbour City Council with certain recommendations, which club members are welcome to peruse.

IBOC MAY MEETING – MEMBERS NIGHT

The annual members night was, as usual, very entertaining.

Peter Fackender showed his wonderful selection of 'birds-at-nest' slides, which undoubtedly would have required countless hours of stalking patiently to get the right shot (not to mention the number of rolls of film!). Peter concluded his session with a fabulous sequence of shots of the Cuckoo badgering the Willie Wagtail for food.

Ron Imisides then delighted members with film of birds that he has recorded in his backyard at Primbee over many years. Who says that urban gardens are not attractive to birds? — Ron's images are testimony to the value of native vegetation species, no matter what your living environment may be, and we did learn that there is one native bird that is not on his Christmas list: the Currawong.

Wal Emery then unassumingly took the centre stage, and what a "show and tell" performance did he produce. Firstly, there was his wife, **Hazel's** paintings, both on canvas and china/porcelain plates. Then followed his highly amusing reflections on the eccentricities of camping — the sharp contrasts of the usual and secure comforts of your usual abode to the urge to go bush and rough it! Even though Wal (Hazel?) has a passion for going bush, he still couldn't reconcile with the Tasmanians who had been caravanning for over two years (in the same van) — he claims they were permanently stooped in their posture! Then came the pièce de résistance: his recitation (self-composed) titled *Poppin' Ya Top* — the emotional conflicts that sometimes arise when one spouse is not all that keen on going where the other is dead keen on. A fabulous recitation — very reminiscent of *The Sentimental Bloke* style of C.J. Dennis. I intend to have the poem typed up (Wal has kindly given permission). Any members who are interested in a copy, please see me.

Betty Hudson then provided us with a reading of a poem titled *Ten Tall Oaktrees*, while **Fae McGregor** gave us three bird anecdote stories: Magpie vs Currawong cheese test, Mistletoebird's method of seed dispersion, and finally the Masked Lapwing's preference for exposed and vulnerable nest sites.

Brian Hales concluded the evening with a fitting tribute (by way of a slide presentation) to the 'founder' Doug Gibson and a selection of present and deceased members who were instrumental in the development and survival of the club — now 23 years old — and Doug didn't think the club would survive. A fitting tribute to all those Brian showed. It's important to the newer members to be aware of the club's roots. I was a bit wary when he showed the picture of the four presidents — I was afraid that he might suggest that, as the bird guardians of the Illawarra, they should have their features cut into the sandstone cliffs of the Escarpment, à la Mount Rushmore!

A fabulous night — congratulations to all contributors.

Darryl Goldrick

At approximately 9 am on 15 May 2000 a group of bird observers, 19 in all including the leader of the walk, met at McGraths Hill sewage ponds. The day was lovely and warm, not a cloud in the sky; a perfect day to walk around the sewage ponds and other areas. After all receiving our name badge and introducing ourselves to the new members and also the leader, Trevor Quested, we were welcomed to the area by the Red-rumped Parrot, which flew overhead. To the right of us there was a full dam and we could closely observe the Welcome Swallows flying back and forth over the water; they were not distracted by the Noisy Miner, drunk with nectar from the bottlebrush growing on the banks of the dam.

Upon our commencing the walk, a Dusky Woodswallow was sighted in the pine tree ahead. Trevor had two spotting scopes, which were positioned for everyone to see the finer colours of the bird, including the eye. Some seconds later the woodswallow flew away with about 15 or so others; we were all surprised at the number of them hidden in the tree. While we were getting ready to move on, a male Restless Flycatcher caught our attention. It gave us a wonderful aerial display, in and around the wire fence; then it flew up into the pine tree to meet his mate, and together they continued their active, erratic flight while catching insects. Trevor pointed out to us the row of trees to our right were swamp mahogany, which are foreign to the area; thus there are rows where some trees are missing. Ahead of us were large ponds surrounded by grassy banks. Some ponds had large reeds growing in them, whilst others were an expanse of water with water-birds, including Sacred Ibis and Black-winged Stilt. There was a lot of noise in the reeds, where a Little Grassbird and Golden-headed Cisticola were seen for fleeting seconds.

At approximately 10.30 am we left the sewage farms behind and travelled about 10-15 minutes to Mitchell Park in the Cattai National Park. The history of the park is that it was a public park with a lot of horse-riding and it became known for its bird life. When changed to a national park, there was a fee to enter it, so no-one came except the bird observers. The fee was removed, but the toilets and picnic tables remained, and now it is a lovely quiet area to visit, great for the birds and watchers. While we were driving to Mitchell Park, a raptor was seen flying high above us. The raptor expert, Peter Nolan, was travelling in the same car as me, but it is most difficult to watch a raptor and identify it when the car is turning corners. Thankfully, the lead car stopped to identify the bird, and we all stopped. The decision was a White-bellied Sea-Eagle 1st year, plus two Whistling Kites.

Morning tea was enjoyed upon our reaching the park, where we all sat in the warm sunshine. From there we walked a short distance away, where the spotting scopes were set up to view the Nankeen Night Heron, three in all. We all noticed Jude observing something different in the scrub: to everyone's delight an Azure Kingfisher, which sat on a limb over the water, long enough for the scopes to be used on a wonderful little bird. The creek we were standing near is the Cattai Creek, which flows into the Hawkesbury River. We followed the creek for a while through the rainforest. Unfortunately, lantana has shown itself here; the flowers were a beautiful orangey-pink. The rainforest was thick and dark, the paperbarks were very tall, and the wind was audible in the tops of the trees. Trevor was specifically looking for the Powerful Owl, but unfortunately we were not to see it or the Rose Robin. [We trust Trevor Quested's unmet quest didn't cause unrest for the birdo guests! - Ed.]

I would like to thank Trevor for the time he took with the scopes to show us the Varied Sittella, and the White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, immature and black morph. We walked through the scribbly gum forest, yellow box, blackwood forest and, close to the rivers, the wetlands. We had a wonderful day. While walking along the sandstone area, we noticed a female ranger examining some scribbly gums, which had deep horizontal marks or scratches on them. She told us they are the possum sap lines, showing the movements and numbers of possums and gliders. Once again thank you, Trevor, for a great outing.

Bird list for McGraths Hill (36)

Musk Duck	Black-fronted Dotterel
Black Swan	Masked Lapwing
Australian Wood Duck	Spotted Turtledove
Grey Teal	Galah
Pacific Black Duck	Red-rumped Parrot
Chestnut Teal	Welcome Swallow
Australasian Grebe	Richard's Pipit
Australian Pelican	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
White-faced Heron	Restless Flycatcher
Great Egret	Willie Wagtail
Australian White Ibis	Little Grassbird
Straw-necked Ibis	Golden-headed Cisticola
Royal Spoonbill	Superb Fairy-wren
Black-shouldered Kite	Noisy Miner
Nankeen Kestrel	White-plumed Honeyeater
Dusky Moorhen	Common Sparrow
Eurasian Coot	Dusky Woodswallow
Black-winged Stilt	Australian Magpie-lark

Bird List for Mitchell Park (34)

Black Swan	Brown Gerygone
Little Pied Cormorant	Brown Thornbill
Nankeen Night Heron	Yellow Thornbill
Whistling Kite	Varied Sittella
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Bell Miner
Brown Goshawk	White-throated Treecreeper
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Lewin's Honeyeater
Crimson Rosella	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Azure Kingfisher	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Laughing Kookaburra	Silvereye
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	Red-browed Firetail
Red-whiskered Bulbul	Common Starling
Eastern Yellow Robin	Indian Mynah
Golden Whistler	Olive-backed Oriole
Grey Fantail	Satin Bowerbird
Willie Wagtail	Australian Magpie
White-browed Scrubwren	Australian Raven

EASTER CAMP 2000 * 21ST - 25TH APRIL
"CEDARVALE" MOSS VALE ROAD FITZROY FALLS

"Cedarvale Health Centre" as it is described in its brochures "A new Beginning - Stop Revive and Enjoy". It certainly is a peaceful and quiet place to camp and observe birds with people with a common interest joining together, as did 13 campers, 1 guest in the Lodge and 10 visitors (including 5 children under the age of 7 years) for one of the most pleasant outings one could experience. The camp site situated on a large well mown grassed area about half way up the escarpment of Kangaroo Valley well off the main road gave us a wonderful view down into the valley (in the early mornings clouds below us) and glorious sunrises and sunsets. The sun shining on the escarpment cliffs and trees changed the colours each minute and was great viewing all day long.

The resort lands consists of rainforest, eucalypt forests, dense gullies, clearings, regrowth with berry-bearing shrubs, orchard and small wetland. Walking was easy due to well formed roads and tracks.

The camp was set up on Thursday night with six members arriving during the day and our observing on the site commenced immediately with sightings of large numbers of Satin Bowerbirds and Crimson Rosellas flying over the camp site. Our walks commenced on Good Friday morning and covered a route along the eastern side of the orchard and then along a track beside a creek to the maintenance depot on the resort and returned along the low road back to the camp site for lunch. The afternoon walk was on the main road into the resort. Our list of sightings commenced to grow and will be revealed at the end of this report. Late in the afternoon we were visited by the Kellys' and their friend and had the pleasure of celebrating Jim Robinson's birthday (cake and all). Weather was fine and lovely peaceful day was had by all present.

Easter Saturday we travelled into Fitzroy Falls and met up with Sigi and Lilo Freund. We commenced a walk from their place and led by Sigi. The walk was along the Moss Vale Road and then turning left, staying on made roads for about 3 kilometres. The weather was cool due to a wind blowing early but the viewing was varied and included Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, Gang-gang Cockatoos and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos - also in the 3's - Scarlet Robin, Flame Robin and Eastern Yellow Robin and many others. The walk was a circular one and we were delighted after travelling along a walking track we came out at the cliffs above Yarrunga Creek at Twin Falls and then returned to the Freund's for lunch. After returning to the camp site in the mid afternoon we were joined by 5 new arrivals. They were immediately introduced to the site and commenced their viewing. On Saturday night we had the delightful pleasure of visiting the glow worms on the track back towards the resort.

Sunday was a day when some of the team had other offsite duties to attend and the remainder of the group remained on site and continued their viewing in glorious weather. One of the highlights was the finding of the Southern Emu-wren within 50 metres of our vans and tents. The day was a relaxed day and enjoyed by all. The glow worms were seen by new arrivals at night. Our resident wombat was also around and made his daily visit plus there were two other visitors for the day.

Easter Monday - The day started out with all members remaining in camp loaded into two cars and we travelled down into Kangaroo Valley where we travelled along Bendeela Road/Jacks Corner Road to the intersection of the 4 Wheel Drive (Beehive Point Road) and the gateway to "Cooyong". A short walk along the 4 wheel drive road was in a wonderful forest where honeyeaters were seen in large number in particular the Yellow-tufted, Yellow-faced and White-naped. We then retraced our steps to Griffins Fire Trail where we walked north for a couple of kilometres and there also saw the honeyeaters and were entertained by a group of Crested Shrike-tits. Again a great day out with weather perfect. All but four members returned home late in the afternoon and then the final four returned home early Tuesday morning when the light rain appeared.

Kevin McGregor.

BIRD LIST - "CEDARVALE" EASTER CAMP 2000

"Cedarvale"

Australian Wood Duck
 Pacific Black Duck
 White-faced Heron
 Wedge-tailed Eagle
 Brown Falcon
 Brown Cuckoo-Dove
 Wonga Pigeon
 Gang-gang Cockatoo
 Australian King Parrot
 Crimson Rozella
 Eastern Rozella
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo
 Southern Booboo
 Laughing Kookaburra
 Superb Lyrebird
 White-throated Treecreeper
 Superb Fairy-wren
 Variegated Fairy-wren
 Southern Emu-wren
 Spotted Pardalote
 Striated Pardalote
 Yellow-throated Scrubwren
 White-browed Scrubwren
 Large-billed Scrubwren
 Brown Gerygone
 Brown Thornbill
 Yellow Thornbill
 Noisy Miner
 Lewin's Honeyeater
 Yellow-faced Honeyeater
 Eastern Spinebill
 Rose Robin
 Eastern Yellow Robin
 Eastern Whipbird
 Golden Whistler
 Grey Shrike-thrush
 Magpie-lark
 Grey Fantail
 Willie Wagtail
 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
 Grey Butcherbird
 Australian Magpie
 Pied Currawong
 Australian Raven
 Green Catbird
 Satin Bowerbird
 Red-browed Finch
 Silvereeye
 Bassian Thrush
 Common Blackbird

Fitzroy Falls

Australian Wood Duck
 Pacific Black Duck
 Australasian Grebe
 Pied Cormorant
 Wedge-tailed Eagle
 Crested Pigeon
 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
 Gang-gang Cockatoo
 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
 Crimson Rozella
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo
 Laughing Kookaburra
 White-throated Treecreeper
 Superb Fairy-wren
 Spotted Pardalote
 Brown Gerygone
 Brown Thornbill
 Yellow-rumped Thornbill
 Striated Thornbill
 Little Wattlebird
 Noisy Miner
 Yellow-faced Honeyeater
 New Holland Honeyeater
 Eastern Spinebill
 Scarlet Robin
 Flame Robin
 Eastern Yellow Robin
 Varied Sittella
 Grey Shrike-thrush
 Grey Fantail
 Willie Wagtail
 Dusky Woodswallow
 Grey Butcherbird
 Australian Magpie
 Pied Currawong
 Australian Raven
 Satin Bowerbird
 Red-browed Finch
 Welcome Swallow
 Fairy Martin
 Common Starling

**Kangaroo Valley
 BeehivePt.Road "Cooyong"
 [45 minutes walk]**

Australian King Parrot
 Crimson Rozella
 Superb Lyrebird
 Spotted Pardalote
 White-browed Scrubwren
 Brown Thornbill
 Lewin's Honeyeater
 Yellow-faced Honeyeater
 Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
 Eastern Spinebill
 Easter Whipbird
 Golden Whistler
 Grey Shrike-thrush
 Grey Fantail
 Satin Bowerbird
 Welcome Swallow

**Griffin Fire Trail
 [90 minutes walk]**

Gang-gang Cockatoo
 Australian King Parrot
 Crimson Rozella
 White-throated Treecreeper
 Spotted Pardalote
 Brown Thornbill
 Lewin's Honeyeater
 Yellow-faced Honeyeater
 Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
 White-naped Honeyeater
 Eastern Spinebill
 Eastern Yellow Robin
 Crested Shrike-tit
 Grey Shrike-thrush
 Red-browed Finch

MID-WEEK WALK: MOUNT KEIRA SCOUT CAMP

Peggy Merrett

On Wednesday 17th May 14 members of IBOC met at the car park at the Mt Keira Scout Camp for the half-day walk. The day was cold, clear and bright, and as the camp is 310 metres above sea level, where the trees weren't too thick to see anything but trees, we had excellent views of the coastline, the towns, and of course the Steelworks. Before we left the car park we had sighted the Laughing Kookaburra, Golden Whistler, Grey Fantail, and Yellow and Brown Thornbills.

The Scout Camp was opened in 1940 and came into being due to the efforts of Sid Hoskins, Charles Jackson and Sir Cecil Hoskins. The roads into the camp and the first buildings were made with great effort; picks and shovels and horses and drays being the only tools available at the time. Bulldozers and their ilk didn't arrive in the district until halfway through WW2. Just imagine a world without bulldozers to do the hard and dirty work. Platypus, spiny anteater, bandicoot, ringtail and brushtail possums, and rat kangaroo inhabited the area, and, although we didn't see any, we didn't see leeches, ticks, flies or mosquitoes. In the early days native vegetation was held in no esteem, or what was considered more suitable exotics were introduced. Some, such as cestrum, both red and yellow, still flourish, as do yellow ginger, various maples, jacaranda and even an Aleppo pine, descended from the original Galipoli lone pine, and of course lantana, whether planted here or just a blow-in, is rampant around the edges of the clearings.

We passed the Lodge and swimming pool without a thought as to the effort that went into their construction and instead admired the huge fig, lilly pilly and red cedar and kept well clear of the equally big stinging tree. As we started into the rainforest area, there were orchids, bird's-nest ferns, ground-hugging ferns and rock-hugging ferns, and there was moss everywhere, all looking lush and green despite the dryness of the ground. The further we went into the forest, the taller and straighter the tree-trunks became. Some, such as cedar, fig, scrub ash, coachwood, pittosporum and sassafras, are survivors of a long time gone, when a more tropical climate prevailed, but they have adapted wonderfully well to our more temperate times. Here we heard the Brown Cuckoo-Dove calling, saw Grey Fantails and Lewin's Honeyeaters, and dozens of small cabbage tree palms. If they all grow, we'll have a real palm jungle here.

The fallen leaves provided us with a wonderfully soft carpet underfoot, and at the Chapel, where we sat for a while, we could see a huge fig tree, with equally huge buttress roots, and monkey vines were twining over everything. But as it was quite cold here in the deep shade, we wandered back to a clearing, where we perched on warm rocks or logs and had morning tea and watched cabbage tree palms, which must have been nearly 100 feet high, swaying wildly in the wind.

After morning tea it was back to the shaded area, where Judy saw a Superb Lyrebird, and the rest of us saw an Illawarra flame tree with its timing quite out of sync. It was in full flower on one side, which poses the question: Did it flower at a more appropriate time on the other side?

Past the car park we went into "Adventure Valley", where some of the more

Adventurous, agile, younger, sillier members tried out various pieces of apparatus, all of which are designed to try various muscles, which they did very well, and then it was back to the car park for the bird count. We saw 23 species in all and had a great morning. Thanks, Horrie. The following is a list of the sightings:

Brown Cuckoo-Dove
 Wonga Pigeon
 Crimson Rosella
 Laughing Kookaburra
 Superb Lyrebird
 Eastern Yellow Robin
 Golden Whistler
 Grey Shrike-thrush

Grey Fantail
 Eastern Whipbird
 Large-billed Scrubwren
 White-browed Scrubwren
 Brown Gerygone
 Brown Thornbill
 Yellow Thornbill
 Lewin's Honeyeater

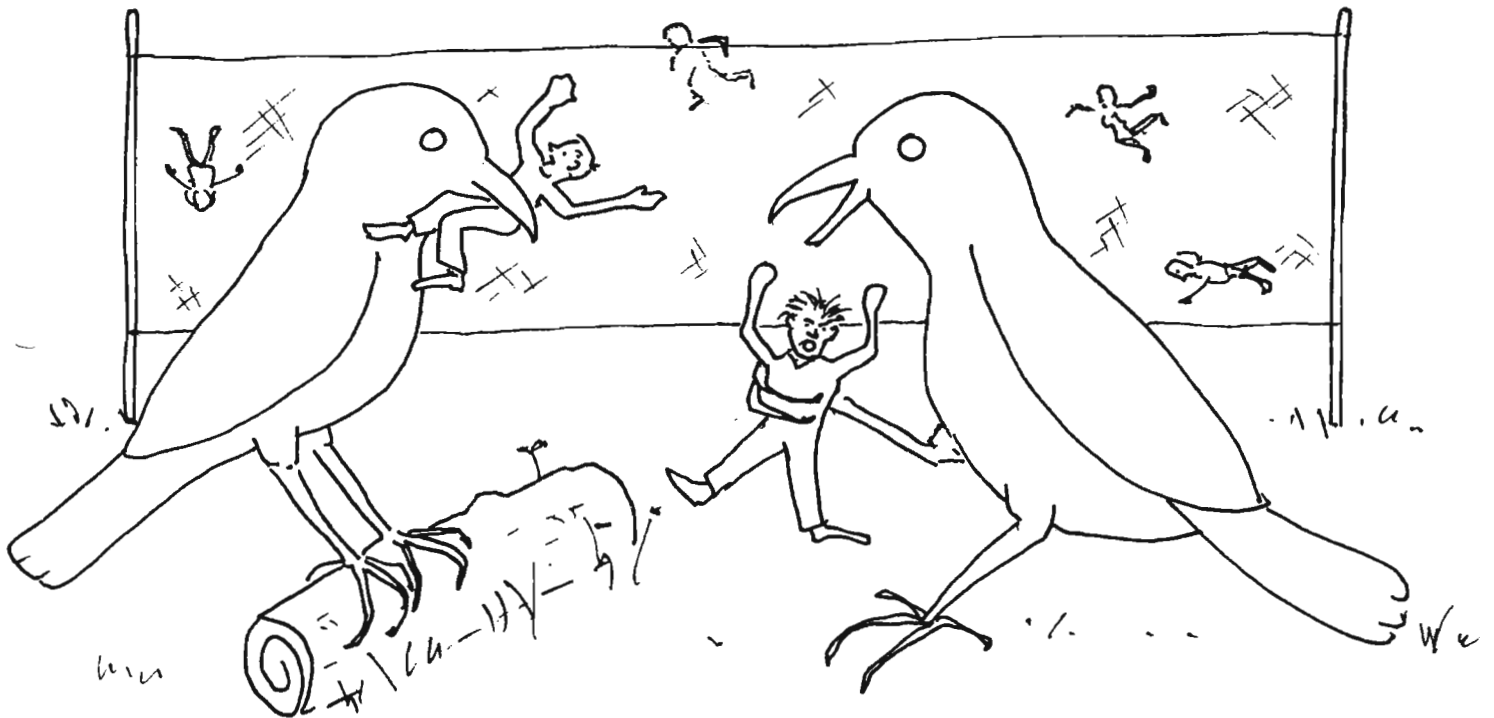
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
 Eastern Spinebill
 Silveryeye
 Satin Bowerbird
 Grey Butcherbird
 Pied Currawong
 Australian Raven

PAYBACK TIME

Mike Morphett

This utter waste of space
 that we d love to squeeze
 in our beaks and feet, inflicting pain.
 Not many of the human race
 are worth recording and setting free again.
 Without them, life would be a breeze.

John Gamblin's poem and the theme of Raoul Broughton's forthcoming club talk got me to picturing this scenario. Or perhaps I've seen too many Michael Leunig cartoons.



This precious gift of life,
 That we can cup in our hands,
 We watch their moving wings,
 Their brightly colored bands,
 We look into their eyes,
 Search for friendship and delight,
 How one day we hope to copy,
 Their wondrous acrobatic flight.

But if all that we can give them,
 Is buttered bread and some seed,
 With clear pure cool water,
 Or some fruit to meet their need,
 Then we will not have failed them,
 We will have done our little bit,
 Given our love to them,
 Told them they are our big hit.

So let us all go and gaze,
 Peer and laud at the homes they build,
 Be awestruck and amazed,
 As they construct their weather shield,
 But let us take a moment,
 To gather in this precious sight,
 A young mother with her children,
 The first day of magical flight.

John Gamblin <jagamblin@yahoo.com>

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush Turkey	3	May	Wollongong Botanic Gardens	rainforest	MJ
Brown Goshawk	1	14/5	Wollongong Botanic Gardens	overhead	MJ
Grey Goshawk	1	20/5	Primbee	dune forest	RI
Red-rumped Parrot	70+	18/5	Picton golf course	woodland	CJC
Red-rumped Parrot	1	01/5	Gwynneville	garden	DW
Rainbow Lorikeet	8	22/4	Barren Grounds NR (lodge)	overhead	RB
Musk Lorikeet	100+	May	Wollongong Botanic Gardens	eucalypts	MJ
Musk Lorikeet	4	22/4	Barren Grounds NR	forest	RB
Musk Lorikeet	60+	21/5	Toolijoa	rural	CP
Musk Lorikeet	20+	19/5	Wollongong Uni	parkland	RM
Little Lorikeet	2	05/5	Barren Grounds NR	forest	RB
Common Bronzewing	1	30/4	Primbee	dune forest	RI
Eastern Whipbird	2	20/5	Primbee	dune forest	RI
Crested Shrike-tit	2	21/5	Seven Mile Beach NP	dune forest	RI
Restless Flycatcher	1	18/5	Picton Golf Course	woodland	CJC
White-cheeked Honeyeater	3	04/5	Barren Ground (stonebridge)	heath	RB
Southern Emu-wren	3	28/4	Hewitts Creek, Thirroul	wetland	IM
White-winged Chough	14	28/4	Toolijoa	rural	CP
Beautiful Firetail	25	04/5	Barren Grounds NR	heath	RB

RB - Raoul Broughton; CJC - Chris Chafer; RI - Ron Imisides; MJ - Michael Jarman; IM - Ian McKinlay; RM - Richard Miller; CP - Chris Presland; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Some interesting observations to report this month. First up, Michael Jarman reports that up to 3 Brush Turkeys are being regularly observed by staff at the Botanic Gardens and there are good numbers of Musk Lorikeets frequenting the flowering eucalypts. Upward of 70 Red-rumped Parrots were observed at Picton Golf Course, which I thought was pretty impressive. Ron Imisides has found a Common Bronzewing at Primbee dune forest, the first known coastal Illawarra record for this species. He also found a pair of Eastern Whipbird there, again a first for this isolated bushland reserve - the question is where did they come from? The nearest populations I know of are at Berkeley and Cringila, over 5km away! At Barren Grounds, the Rainbow Lorikeets were the 8th known record, the Musk Lorikeet is the 5th record, and the Little Lorikeets are the 6th record for the reserve. The 25 Beautiful Firetails reported from between the lodge and the stone bridge is a pretty impressive total for this normally elusive species.

A MIMIC or TWO SHORT of a LOAD

Intrigued over time by the mimicry performed by the Superb Lyrebird and Yellow-throated Scrubwren in the old Excelsior Colliery and Lady Fuller Reserve and also by the Satin Bowerbird in my garden, I have been delving more into this aspect of bird behaviour. I did read somewhere that among the Australian passerines there are over fifty species capable of mimicking others. Having read through various field guides, it seems I still haven't been able to compile a complete list. I'd be grateful if someone can come up with a comprehensive list and also point me to some good articles about mimicry. It would be good, too, if an expert in this area could give us club members a talk, perhaps extending the theme to include visual, not just vocal, imitation among various animal species.

Mike Morphett



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 230

July 2000

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

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

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

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 10 July at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be **Peter Nolan**, whose topic will be **Raptor Rehabilitation**. Peter's rapture over raptors goes back to the late 1980s, at which time he teamed up with Fred Spiteri, who has since moved to the Taree district. Together they had a trip to the USA last year and hope to have another later this year. To illustrate his talk, Peter will bring along some stuffed bird of prey specimens and slides taken on his visit to some of the American wildlife parks.

OUTING Saturday 15 July to **Heathcote National Park**, visiting Kingfisher Pool and Camp Coutts areas in **Waterfall**, under the leadership of **Lorraine Pincus**. Meet at 9 am at the start of the walking track, situated at the northern end of the cul-de-sac, Warrabin Street on the western side of the Princes Highway. To reach that point, northbound vehicles should take the Royal National Park turn-off just before the overhead bridge, which is Bundarra Street and turn right into Warrabin Street. A UBD map appears in this issue to assist. If you intend going on this outing, please contact her on 42259789 or Kevin McGregor on 42713762. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day. Jack Hyslop reports we may well come across plenty of Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, which may be no stranger to some of us of late!

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 19 July to the **Doug Gibson Walking Track, Lady Fuller Reserve**, back of Austinmer and Thirroul. Meet **Jude Parkinson**, the leader, at 9 am at the southern end of Foothills Road, Austinmer. From Austi Railway Station head west along Balfour Road just a very short distance and turn left up the quite steep Hill Street; at the top turn left into Foothills Road. On the walk, if you pick the right spot, Logrunners might serenade your morning tea. Members are invited to bring along a friend too.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 18 July 2000 at 7.30 pm at **Fae and Kevin McGregor's** home: address and phone no. above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and contact Kevin beforehand.

AUGUST NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 2 August 2000. Please add your name to your article/item.

--ooOoo--

JUNE MONTHLY MEETING

Due to weather conditions a below average attendance of members had a wonderful entertaining and enlightening night with our guest speaker Raoul Boughton, Warden from the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory showing us a varied collection of birds "in the hands". Raoul's talk centred around slides of birds taken for banding and identification purposes from many sites throughout Australia. Raoul identified each of the birds by their colour, size, age and variable distinctive items that applied to each bird. There were changes in the colours of feathers on the young birds that most of us present had not realised. The sizes of male and females were pointed out in various species.

As indicated a lot of the slides shown to us on the night were taken in the northern half of Australia and we learned from each of the slides matters we did not know before.

Raoul then changed the pattern of his presentation by dividing the meeting into four groups where we were shown a variety of slides and we had to identify the species, the sex, age and give reasons for our choices. Time was allowed for the groups to search out their choices from field guides and this provided us the opportunity to check our methods of identification and we all certainly learned from the exercise. How often do you have a doubt about what you have observed and then go *immediately* to reference materials to check the colours, size and other details that take away that doubt?

Raoul was also accompanied by Shaun Capararo, who is also a Warden at Barren Grounds and had only just arrived to take up his position there.

Chris Chafer passed a votes of thanks to Raoul for his presentation and in his words "I have really enjoyed this meeting and I go away from it having learned a lot."

Raoul is currently away on a trip with a group of bird observers and one of their aims is to sight all of the 10 Grasswrens known in Australia. We wish them the best in their search and some of our members have sponsored Raoul in his quest.

Kevin McGregor

FROM THE PRESIDENT: *What would you like included in the 2001 Program that we have not had in past programs? Are you interested in going on a bird observing holiday (trip) either in Australia or overseas? Do you have any sites you would like to take club members to, to observe birds?*

If you have any answers or suggestions to the above questions please let me know so your ideas can be included in the planning for 2001. Please see me at the meetings or outing or telephone (4271 3762) me as soon as possible,

Welcome aboard to Joan Wiley, who has volunteered her services as library assistant.

Kevin McGregor

In marked contrast to the recent spate of strong winds and seas, the day (Sunday 4 June) dawned fresh and clear. A few wispy white clouds were around, but the sun quickly burned them away. By 9.30 am a group of about 28 people (17 IBOC members, 2 Outdoor Club members, and a group separate from us) eagerly boarded the chartered boat, *Dreamtime*. Brief instructions were given by Mark, the NPWS ranger/guide, on how to put on life-jackets that are required by law for the crossing over the notorious sandbar, which took all of 2 or 3 minutes without incident. We then settled down for a 30 minute ride across to Montague Island, and binoculars were soon utilised to observe the grace and magnificence of the Black-browed Albatross.

Upon coming closer to the island, we could see a White-bellied Sea-Eagle, gliding above the waves. We continued to circumnavigate the island anti-clockwise. From the "dark side" of the island the lonely lighthouse looked majestic up on the hill, with the smooth brown boulders in the forefront, the contrasting green hillside, and the two white buildings sitting either side of it, and a back-drop of blue sky. The north island, barred from the public, is separated from the south island by a rocky isthmus, called The Gut, and the two parts comprise different rock formations. As we continued on around the northern end, we came upon an Australian fur seal colony of all ages, either lying on the rocks in the sun or diving and swimming in the surf. About 25 seals stay there all the year round, and about 700 during the breeding season. As we sailed further around, we observed a small colony of New Zealand fur seals, sunning themselves. Mark pointed out the differences in the two species.

The 1-2 metre swell didn't cause too many problems when we were landing. With great enthusiasm, Mark gave us the history of the island, including the Aboriginal influence (they named it Burunguba) and legends and also the more recent improvements and research that the NPWS and Charles Sturt University have been doing. As a group we were allowed to walk around the south island, as long as we kept to the tracks, as there are Little Penguins' nest off the walkways and Shearwater burrows. Kikuyu grass was introduced some years ago, which is very thick and spongy. The Penguins don't appear to have problems with it, but NPWS have made it easier for these birds to walk down to the sea by mowing special walkways. There are only one or two trees (*Banksia integrifolia*) on the island which have been planted; all of the other native trees were cut down and used for firewood.

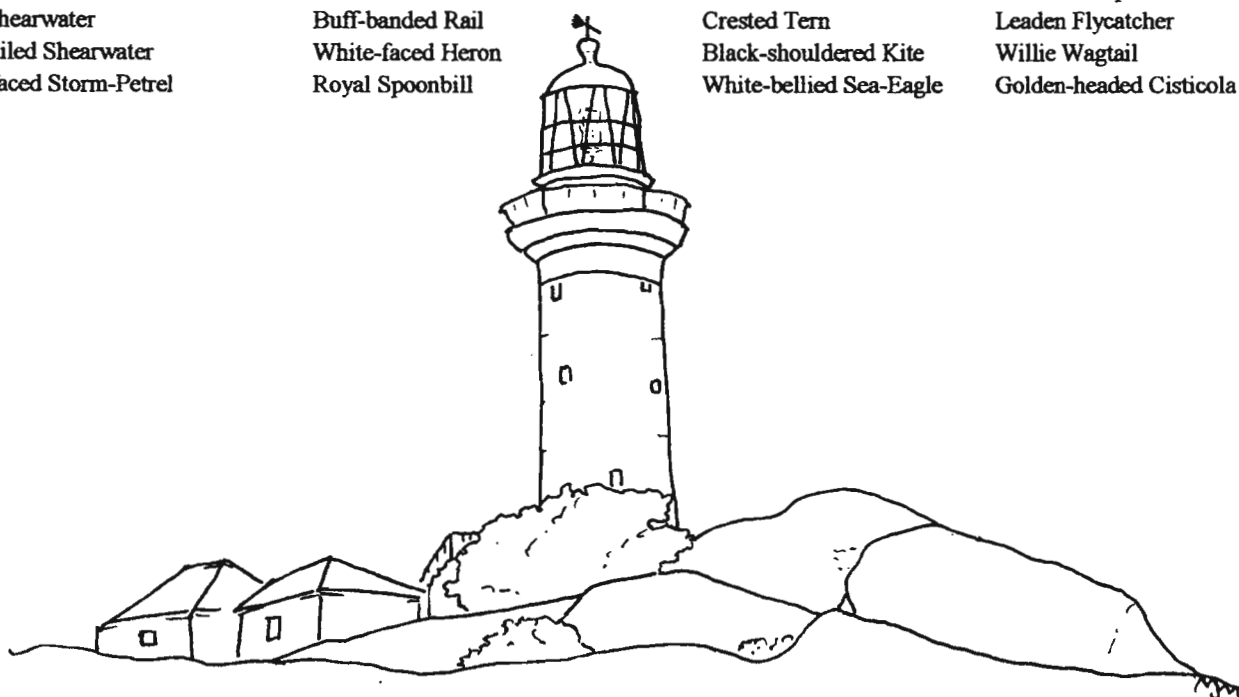
We went to the old stables (where they were once) and saw a Richard's Pipit. One of the buildings that is not lived in is now a museum "in the making". Here we had a break over a complimentary cup of tea or coffee. We then walked to the southern end of the island and the graves site and headed back to the boat. We sailed back to Narooma Town Wharf and once again we were able to view the ocean birds, Fairy Prions and White-faced Storm-Petrels. Our bird tally for the day was 24 species. A special thanks goes to Kevin McGregor for organising the trip with Narooma Charters, and hopefully it won't be too long before he gets the chance to discover for himself what he missed on this 'offshore adventure'.

Little Penguin
Black-browed Albatross
Fairy Prion
Sooty Shearwater
Short-tailed Shearwater
White-faced Storm-Petrel

Australasian Gannet
Pied Cormorant
Little Black Cormorant
Buff-banded Rail
White-faced Heron
Royal Spoonbill

Silver Gull
Caspian Tern
White-fronted Tern
Crested Tern
Black-shouldered Kite
White-bellied Sea-Eagle

Brown Falcon
Nankeen Kestrel
Richard's Pipit
Leaden Flycatcher
Willie Wagtail
Golden-headed Cisticola



On Wednesday 21st June 14 members of IBOC met at the Minnamurra Falls car park for our mid-week outing. It was a glorious day, with a promise of spring in the air despite being the winter solstice. Before leaving the car park we had seen a Superb Lyrebird and an Eastern Yellow Robin. On our way through the Visitors Centre some members stopped to collect literature, but we were soon on our way along the Rainforest Walk, the day being too good to waste time indoors reading. The boardwalk makes walking very easy and although rotted boards were being replaced, it didn't inconvenience us at all. The Minnamurra Rainforest contains various types of rainforest, but is mainly sub-tropical and warm temperate, and it was the Aboriginal equivalent of a modern supermarket. Here they found food, medicine, material to make twine for dilly bags, baskets, and fish-traps, and sandpaper to smooth the handles or shafts on weapons and tools. The water dragons hadn't come out to play – there was no sunlight to tempt them as yet, so we passed over the suspension bridge with one of the main attractions missing; but there were huge rocks completely covered with ferns, others covered with moss. Two-thirds of all the recorded fern species in NSW grow in this area and they put on a lovely show. We heard Lewin's Honeyeater calling and also male and female Eastern Whipbirds singing their duet, and later saw them; also Yellow Thornbill and Striated Thornbill, which were hard to distinguish in the still dim light.

There are some enormous fig trees here, the largest having its own special walkway, designed not only to lead visitors to it, but also effectively blocking them from getting too close. This tree used to be known as a wishing tree and as a result was nearly loved to death. Adults used to drive pennies into the bark to make their wishes come true, and to children it was a real money tree; they further damaged the bark getting the pennies out, to say nothing of the copper in the pennies. A different form of copper is used to this day to kill tree roots in drains. Of course everyone walked around it three times, because that is what you have to do with wishing trees, compressing the soil in the process. Perhaps the tree got revenge by causing sprained ankles occasionally, when people tripped over the enormous buttress roots, which not only help support the tree, but also assist in the exchange of gases in soggy ground. However, the tree has long since lost its reputation as a 'wishing tree' and is now recovering from its brush with fame. On the north-facing slopes, where the tree canopy is deficient, lantana is flourishing despite lantana-eating beetles having been released here decades ago. Now, however, locally bred seedlings are being planted to rebuild the canopy and cut out the sunlight, without which lantana does not thrive. There were large numbers of cabbage tree palms, quite small still, but each claiming their space in the scheme of things and competing with bird's nest ferns, tree ferns and maidenhair ferns for light, water and nutrients. By the side of the walkway stood a giant stinging tree, complete with small buttresses thrust upwards into the canopy, its big leaves out of sight and out of harm, and near it a dead tree-trunk completely covered with small bracket fungus, the same colour as the bark.

We had morning tea in the classroom, seats for all, and information on placards around the circumference, and an interesting outlook as well. The Rainforest Walk is only 1.6 km long, but it is surprising how long it can take to amble along, stopping as we do, to look for and at birds, rocks, ferns and mosses, and to read the helpful notices. When we came to the Falls Walk, some of us elected to go to the falls, although considering the general dryness of the area, we didn't expect to see great volumes of water coming over the top; but we did see an Eastern Yellow Robin sitting on a little bush by the side of the path, not six feet from us. After we commented on how beautiful he was, he flittered over to the left side of the track and allowed us to see his left profile: vain little creature indeed and not without cause. Along large areas of this track, the ground was completely turned over by Superb Lyrebirds, but we didn't see any here or indeed many birds at all. We did, however, see at least two busloads of children, mainly of Asian appearance, who were just as children should be, bright, happy, chirpy, sociable, energetic and obedient to their teachers. They came from Cabramatta and were a credit to their race, their parents, their school and their upbringing. As we had thought, there wasn't much water coming over the top, but as the Minnamurra River has its genesis in the swamps of the Budderoo Plateau at the top of the range, at least some wetlands are in good shape, as the water looked pure and clean and without a trace of chlorine. This river is of vast importance to the people of Jamberoo Valley and beyond; long may it be uncontaminated. As the Falls Walk is only 2.6 km, we were soon back at the car park. Thanks for a delightful morning, Kevin, and everyone else. We saw 21 species of birds:

Crimson Rosella	Large-billed Scrubwren	Striated Thornbill	Satin Bowerbird
Laughing Kookaburra	Yellow-throated Scrubwren	White-throated Treecreeper	Pied Currawong
Superb Lyrebird	White-browed Scrubwren	Lewin's Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Eastern Yellow Robin	Brown Gerygone	Spotted Pardalote	
Grey Shrike-thrush	Brown Thornbill	Silvereye	
Eastern Whipbirds	Yellow Thornbill	Olive-backed Oriole	

Above the Murray River and in the South Australian side of the NSW/SA border is a group of properties that form the Bookmark Biosphere and include Danggali NP, Calperum, Chowchilla and, with Gluepot, form a large expanse of mallee-type areas. The properties were once sheep stations, and the presence of water ensured many exotic species, both indigenous and non-indigenous, to expand into the generally waterless sandy mallee dunes. This included the Yellow-throated Miner that is hybridising with the very rare Black-eared Miner (currently split from the Yellow-throated, but mooted to be re-lumped as a sub-species). There is work being carried out at Gluepot on the effect of removing permanent water supplies on both the natural and exotic species populations, with the intent to remove bird and animal access to this permanent water. As it was raining and apparently had been quite a wet winter, there were few birds or animals using the tank near where I camped, except Common Bronzewing and a pair of Major Mitchell's Cockatoos.

Ron Imisides visited Calperum in 1997 with some good sightings of the rarer mallee species, so I decided to visit the area during some beautiful autumn weather in May. Unfortunately it turned out to be the week winter decided to start out in earnest this year with freezing wind and rains. But as I was at Renmark, I pressed on and enquired at the station headquarters about access. It turned out that Calperum is now run by a number of service groups, each having an area at least about 15 by 15 km, with responsibility for feral animal reduction, mainly foxes and goats, and fence maintenance. Permission must be obtained from these people if you wish to camp in their area, or even to leave the main circuit track, as shooting may be in progress. I managed to get permission to visit and camp in an old mallee section visited by Ron and set out along narrow sandy tracks that had not been used in months. The good area is about 60 km from the main road on straight tracks that are easy to follow and great mallee that is difficult to get lost in while the sun shines or you have a compass. The wind made birding, especially for wrens, near impossible, but I did find Black-eared Miners amongst 4 small groups, one of pure birds and 3 mixed with some just a stage or so off pure. These hybrids had the correct facial features, but some lightness to the rump. Another large group nearer the cleared section had grey sides to the chin and quite pale rumps, showing a lot more Yellow-throated hybridisation.

I took advantage of a small break in the weather and saw a number of Shy Heathwrens, Chestnut Quail-thrush and a glimpse of a Striated Grasswren amongst a small feeding flock of Variegated Fairy-wrens and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills. I also saw a Southern Scrub-robin, the mallee form of the Jacky Winter, and many black-winged form of the Grey Currawong as well as numerous Yellow-plumed and White-fronted Honeyeaters. In a stand of belah near the camp were White-browed Treecreepers, Southern Whiteface and a few Regent Parrots flying through, but little else. To go birding in the area is hard work but great, with 47 species recorded and, as nextdoor is Gluepot, it would be easier to go there with more civilised camping facilities and more people about, if a problem was encountered. I am told that Danggali is also very good and access suitable for 2WD. With the forecast for strong wind and rain to continue for at least 4 days, I packed up a wet tent and headed home via Mildura, where I dropped in on an old IBOC member, Chris Sontor, who still dabbles a little in birds.



The outing on Sunday 18 June was led by Lorraine Pincus and with six others we started out from Rockford Bridge on a "gorgeous" (MM) day along a narrow track beside the Bargo River. Kevin spotted a Yellow-tufted Honeyeater as soon as we arrived and by the end of the day it was "Oh, only another Yellow-tufted". Along the River we sighted an Azure Kingfisher and could hear Peaceful Doves and watched about 3 Crested Shrike-tits feed in the foliage. It was fascinating to watch them as they pulled leaves, bark and a caterpillar nest apart to search for food. On the return the hind group saw about seven birds feeding and after seeing Shrike-tits at least 5 times this month after not having seen any for years, is it luck or a population explosion? After a quiet morning tea we pressed on to almost the end of the track running above the gorge wall and ended up with great views across the Tahmoor valley to the freeway where we had a leisurely lunch taking in the scenery.

On the return we spotted two pairs of Rock Warblers, a White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike and a pair of unidentified quail, probably Painted Button-quail, that flew across the river. All told 34 species were recorded in ideal winter conditions and many thanks to Lorraine for showing us this area as it will be well worth visiting again in spring.

Bird List

Little Pied Cormorant	Cattle Egret	Peaceful Dove
Eastern Rosella	Azure Kingfisher	Superb Lyrebird
White-throated Treecreeper	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Spotted Pardalote
Striated pardalote	Rock Warbler	White-browed Scrubwren
Brown Thornbill	Striated Thornbill	Little Wattlebird
Bell Miner	Lewin's Honeyeater	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	White-naped Honeyeater	New Holland Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill	Rose Robin	Eastern Yellow Robin
Eastern Whipbird	Crested Shrike-tit	Grey Shrike-thrush
Grey Fantail	White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	Australian Magpie
Australian Raven	Red-browed Finch	Welcome Swallow
Common Blackbird		

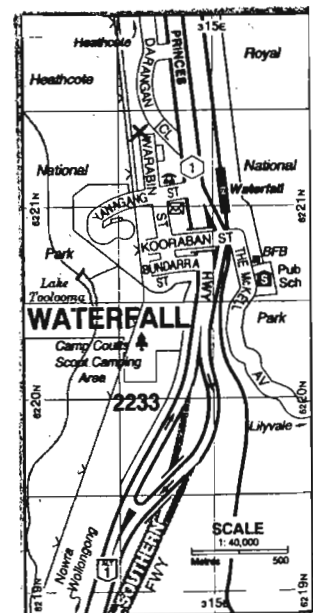
BARREN GROUNDS BIRD OBSERVATORY SHOP

The shop at BGBO is staffed by volunteers from 10 am to 4 pm Saturdays and Sundays and is always in need of new people willing to spend a delightful, if it is not raining, or a quiet, if it is, day watching the bird life around the education centre. It is an easy job selling the merchandise, giving directions and generally having a chat about birds and the area. In the quiet times there are plenty of books to browse through and when courses are on you can join in from the side.

Any one wanting to give a hand a few days a year just give myself or Darryl Goldrick a ring and training or assistance for the first time can be arranged.

Thanks **Chris Brandis** 4296 2837

Here's the UBD map - trust you didn't need another map to find it! X marks the meeting place for the July 15 walk.



In the workplace some occupations have almost vanished, particularly those of craftsmen who wrought objects with care and deliberation, shaping them by hammering with tools rather than by casting. The use of the mould, it seems to me, has brought about standardisation and conformity in production on a giant scale, stifling individuality. The Anglo-Saxon *wyrtha* (worker) gave rise to the Middle English 'wright': one who constructs and repairs. As with certain crafts, such as that of the wheelwright, cartwright and wainwright, this word has become almost obsolete, with the notable exceptions of surnames and the profession of playwright.

Just this month (June 25) has died an Australian poet, and conservationist, **Judith Wright**, whose life spanning 85 years was principally spent on the New England tablelands, in Queensland, and finally, closer to us in the Illawarra, at Braidwood. Her poems demonstrate the close relationship she had with, and concern and passion for, the natural environment. Prefacing her *Selected Poems: A Human Pattern* (1990), she made the comment: "[Poetry] is certainly in danger, just as the earth is in danger, from the philosophies generated by greed". Littered throughout her poetry are references to birds, both non-specific and by species name, indicating the strong importance and appeal they had for her and her individual skill in observing and portraying their appearances and behaviours. Deafness over almost the last quarter of her life must have deprived her of so much joy from birdsong. Space here permits only a tiny extract from her works, which, I hope, will long survive, in contrast to those of most of the other wrights.

CAMPING AT SPLIT ROCK

Red mounting scales of cliff lead the eye up;
but the rock has spaces of tenderness
where light and water open its heart. A lip
of narrow green shows where the creek-banks bless
a niche for trees and birds. So many birds!
Outside our tent they cross and recross our patch
of vision, hatch the air and double-hatch
in diving curves and lines. Each curve has words;

each flight speaks its own bird. The slowly strong
deep-thrusting heron's stroke; the glittering
daring rush of the swallow and the long
poise and turn of hawk on a still wing;
the quick low scuttle of wren, the coloured wind
of finches, blue-jay's wide noble rise and fall—
we read each bird from its air-written scrawl,
the bird no stranger than the interpreting mind.

The finger of age-old water splits the rock
and makes us room to live; the age-old word
runs on in language and from obstinate dark
hollows us room for seeing. The birds go by;
but can name and hold them, each a word
that ystals round a more than mortal bird.

THE WAGTAIL

So elegant he is and neat
from round black head to slim black feet!
He sways and flirts upon the fence,
his collar clean as innocence.

The city lady looks and cries
"Oh charming bird with dew-drop eyes,
how kind of you to sing that song!"
But what a pity—she is wrong.

"Sweet-pretty-creature"—yes, but who
is the one he sings it to?
Not me—not you.

The furry moth, the gnat perhaps,
on which his scissor-beak snip-snaps.

THE BLUE WRENS AND THE BUTCHER-BIRD

Sweet and small the blue wren
whistles to his gentle hen,
"The creek is full, the day is gold,
the tale of love is never told.
Fear not, my love, nor fly away,
for safe, safe in the blackthorn-tree
we shall build our nest today.
Trust to me, oh trust to me."

Cobwebs they gather and dry grass,
greeting each other as they pass
up to the nest and down again,
the blue wren and the brown wren.
They seek and carry far and near,
down the bank and up the hill,
until that crystal note they hear
that strikes them dumb and holds them still.

Great glorious passion of a voice—
sure all that hear it must rejoice.
But in the thorn-bush silent hide
the nest-builders side by side.
"The blue wren's nestlings and his wife,
and he himself, that sprig of blue,
I shall kill, and hang them safe—
the blackthorn spears shall run them through!

Still and still the blue wren
sits beside his cowering hen.
There they wait like stone by stone
until the butcher-bird is gone.
Then soft and sweet the blue wren
titters to his anxious hen,
"Trust to me, oh trust to me;
I know another blackthorn-tree."

EGRETS

Once as I travelled through a quiet evening,
I saw a pool, jet-black and mirror-still.
Beyond, the slender paperbarks stood crowding,
each on its own white image looked its fill,
and nothing moved but thirty egrets wading—
thirty egrets in a quiet evening.

Once in a lifetime, lovely past believing,
your lucky eyes may light on such a pool.
As though for many years I had been waiting,
I watched in silence, till my heart was full
of clear dark water, and white trees unmoving,
and, whiter yet, those thirty egrets wading.

SATIN BOWER-BIRDS

In summer they can afford their independence,
down in the gullies, in the folds of forest;
but with the early frosts they're here again—
hopping like big toy birds, as round as pullets,
handsomely green and speckled, but somehow comic—
begging their bread. A domestic,
quarrelling, amateur troupe.

Ordinary birds with ordinary manners,
uninteresting as pigeons;
but, like the toad, they have a secret.
Look—the young male bird—
see his eye's perfect mineral blaze of blue.
The winter sea's not purer
than that blue flash set in a bird's head.

Then I remember
how ritually they worship that one colour.
Blue chips of glass, blue rag, blue paper,
the heads of my grape-hyacinths,
I found in their secret bower; and there are dances
done in the proper season,
for birth, initiation, marriage and perhaps death.

Seven years, some say, those green-brown birds
elect blue for their colour
and dance for it, their eyes round as the sea's horizons,
blue as grape-hyacinths.

And when those seven years are served?
See, there he flies, the old one,
the male made perfect—
black in the shadow, but in the caressing sun
bluer, more royal than the ancient sea.

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Striated Heron	1	21/5	Swan Lake	estuary	KM
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	9/6	Dunmore	forest	PN
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	18/6	Kiama	rural	JBi
Grey Goshawk	1	20/6	Bulli Pass	forest	JBi
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	11/5	Hell Hole, Parma Creek	forest	KM
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	3/6	Bulli	overhead	JBi
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	18/6	Berry	overhead	JBi
White-headed Pigeon	4	1/5	Bomaderry	urban	KM
Peaceful Dove	1	27/5	Thirroul	garden	MM
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	10/6	Bellambi	dune forest	JW
Bar-shouldered Dove	6	10/6	Windang Peninsular	dune forest	DW
Glossy Black Cockatoo	12	23/5	12km se Nowra	forest	SK
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	70	13/5	Picton Rd.	overhead	JZ
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	50	8/5	Penrose	pine trees	KM
Swift Parrot	1	22/5	Primbee	dune forest	SK
Swift Parrot	28	23/5	12km se Nowra	overhead	SK
Red-rumped Parrot	20	26/5	Canyonleigh	rural	KM
Tawny Frogmouth	1	10/6	Figtree	garden	JBr
Azure Kingfisher	1	23/6	Fred Finch Park (Berkeley)	riverine	DW
Sacred Kingfisher	1	20/6	Tahmoor	powerline	CB
Noisy Miner	2	25/6	Austinmer	urban	Jbi
Eastern Whipbird	1	19/6	Windang	dune forest	DW
Eastern Whipbird	1	22/6	Coniston Beach (sth)	dune woodland	DW
Varied Sittella	1	25/5	Canyonleigh	forest	KM
Crested Shrike-tit	2	22/5	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Crested Shrike-tit	2	28/5	Lady Fuller Res. Thirroul	forest	MM
Crested Shrike-tit	7	18/6	Cordeaux Dam	forest	CJC
Crested Shrike-tit	7	20/6	Bargo Gorge	forest	CB
Spangled Drongo	1	19/6	Windang Peninsular	dune forest	DW
Grey Currawong	2	25/5	Canyonleigh	forest	KM
European Goldfinch	60	9/6	Figtree	garden	KMg
Bassian Thrush	1	13/6	Balgownie	garden	WE
Common Blackbird	1	14/6	Mt. Pleasant	garden	DT
Common Blackbird	1	1/6	North Wollongong	garden	LW
Common Blackbird	1	all May	Thirroul	garden	MM

Jbi - John Bisset; JBl - John Blomstedt; JBr - John Brown; RB - Raoul Broughton; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; WE - Wal Emery; RI - Ron Imisides; SK - Simon Kennedy; KM - Kevin Mills; KMg - Kevin McGregor; MM - Mike Morphet; PN - Peter Nolan; DT - Dave Thomson; LW - Laurie Williams; DW - David Winterbottom; JW - Joan Wylie; JZ - Joan Zealey

Comment: I think this is the first back page I've prepared with only one unusual waterbird on it!

Bar-shouldered Doves are populating the northern dune forests quite nicely now, probably an indication of the successful mass re-vegetation works undertaken in the 70s and 80s of last century. Great to see masses of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo on the highlands and smaller groups along the coast. Swift Parrots have not invaded this year, and the above records are the only two observations from the Illawarra this year. Both Azure and Sacred Kingfisher rarely overwinter in the Illawarra. Noisy Miner are rarely seen north of the Wollongong Botanic Gardens and this record is only the second from John Bisset's area. I think it's always nice to see the elusive Shrike-tit. The recent expansion of Whipbirds into the coastal dune forests between Windang and Bellambi is also very interesting. I don't think it's going to be too many more years before we will be able to regard the Blackbird as common in the Illawarra! European Goldfinch also seem to be making a come-back on the coast, with the above record the largest number ever recorded from Figtree.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

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August 2000

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

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

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

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 14 August at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be **Julian Seddon**, whose topic will be **Birds in Woodland Remnants of Central Western NSW**. Julian is a project officer with NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, currently based with the CSIRO, Canberra, and acting as research assistant to Dr Sue Briggs in the Woodland Ecology Unit.

OUTING Sunday 20 August to **Darkes Forest**, covering O'Hares Creek and part of the Dharawal State Recreation Area, under the leadership of **Kevin McGregor**, deputising for Chris Brandis, who is away overseas again. Meet at 8.30 am at the car park on the southern side of Darkes Forest Road 5.1 km in from the Old Princes Highway turn-off. If you intend going on this outing, please notify Kevin on 4271 3762, so that car pooling arrangements can be made and allowances for latecomers. Don't forget your eats and drinks for the day.

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 23 August to **Tom Thumb Wetlands, southern Wollongong**. Meet **Kevin McGregor**, the leader, at 8.30 am at the car park about 60 metres along Inner Harbour Access Road on the left hand side. Southbound travellers along Springhill Road should pass the golf course, pass under the railway bridge and turn left at the next set of traffic lights. Kevin states that during the short walk, taking about 2½ hours, folk should expect to see quite a few water-birds and small passerines.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 22 August at 7.30 pm at **Kerri & Alan Lewis'** home at 14 Tolson Place, Balgownie (Ph 4285 2736). Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and contact Kevin beforehand.

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 30 August. Please add your name to your article/item.

--ooOOoo--

"This was among my prayers: a piece of land not so very large, where a garden should be and a spring of ever-flowing water near the house, and a bit of woodland as well as these."
- Horace(68-5 BC): *Satires* Book 2'

ACTIVITIES PROGRAM at BARREN GROUNDS BIRD OBSERVATORY

Course Name	Date	Leader
<i>Birds of the Ocean</i>	Aug 11-13	Dion Hobcroft
<i>Let's Burn Barren Grounds!</i>	Sept 1-3	Chris Chafer
<i>Fables, Yarns & Folkstories</i>	Sept 15-17	Anna Jarrett
<i>Ground Parrots, Glow Worms & Gliders</i>	Sept 22-24 Dec 15-17	Raoul Boughton
<i>Birding the Illawarra</i>	Sept 25-29	Raoul Boughton
<i>Waders of the Illawarra</i>	Nov 3-5	Chris Chafer
<i>Wildflowers of the Heath</i>	Nov 17-19	Alan Fairley
<i>Slitherers & Croakers</i>	Nov 24-26	Ken Griffiths
<i>Capturing Birds on Paper</i>	Dec 1-3	Peter Marsack
<i>Photographing Birds</i>	Dec 8-10	Graeme Chapman

For course bookings & enquiries and/or to become a Barren Grounds Friend, please contact the Field Studies Centre staff:

PO Box 3, Jamberoo NSW 2533

Phone - (02) 4236 0195

Fax - (02) 4236 0537

Email - barren.grounds@bigpond.com

Our apologies to Peter Nolan and Dick Turner, whose respective courses on *Raptors and Rehabilitation* and *Identifying Eucalypts* had already passed before the program schedule could be advertised in this month's issue of *IBOC News*.

TWITCHATHON 2000 - 28/29 OCTOBER

"Twitchathon" is a noun with several meanings: It can mean (1) participating in a fun race against time to find as many species as possible, and (2) obtaining donors who will sponsor you and your team (2 or more people) for every species of bird you find in that period. Or it could be (3) just supporting a team by being a donor, but most importantly it is (4) - fund raising for real research and/or conservation of our native birds with tax deductible status (for donations over \$2).

This year's event aims to raise funds for Birds Australia's purchase of "Newhaven Station", 335 km north-west of Alice Springs, a property with very diverse landforms, many threatened birds and mammals and some vegetation with special conservation significance.

So it will soon be time to have a fun day chasing as many species as you can. You might like to enter the Main Race and set your target on 200+ species - not easy, but fun all the same! Or you might like to take it easier and go into the Champagne Race where you could just watch birds in your back yard or spend a day with your children or grandchildren - your species list being whatever you can comfortably manage. Think of the prestige of winning a prize! Or you might like just to sponsor one of the teams and feel the buzz of putting your dollars into real conservation.

Whatever of these options you prefer, please do contact me for either a Twitchathon registration kit, a sponsorship sheet on behalf of any team or information on Newhaven Station and the significance of its purchase for birds and their conservation.

Frances Czwalinna
5 Lipsia Place
Carlingford, NSW 2118
Telephone/Fax: (02) 9872 4185
Email: secretarybird@bigpond.com

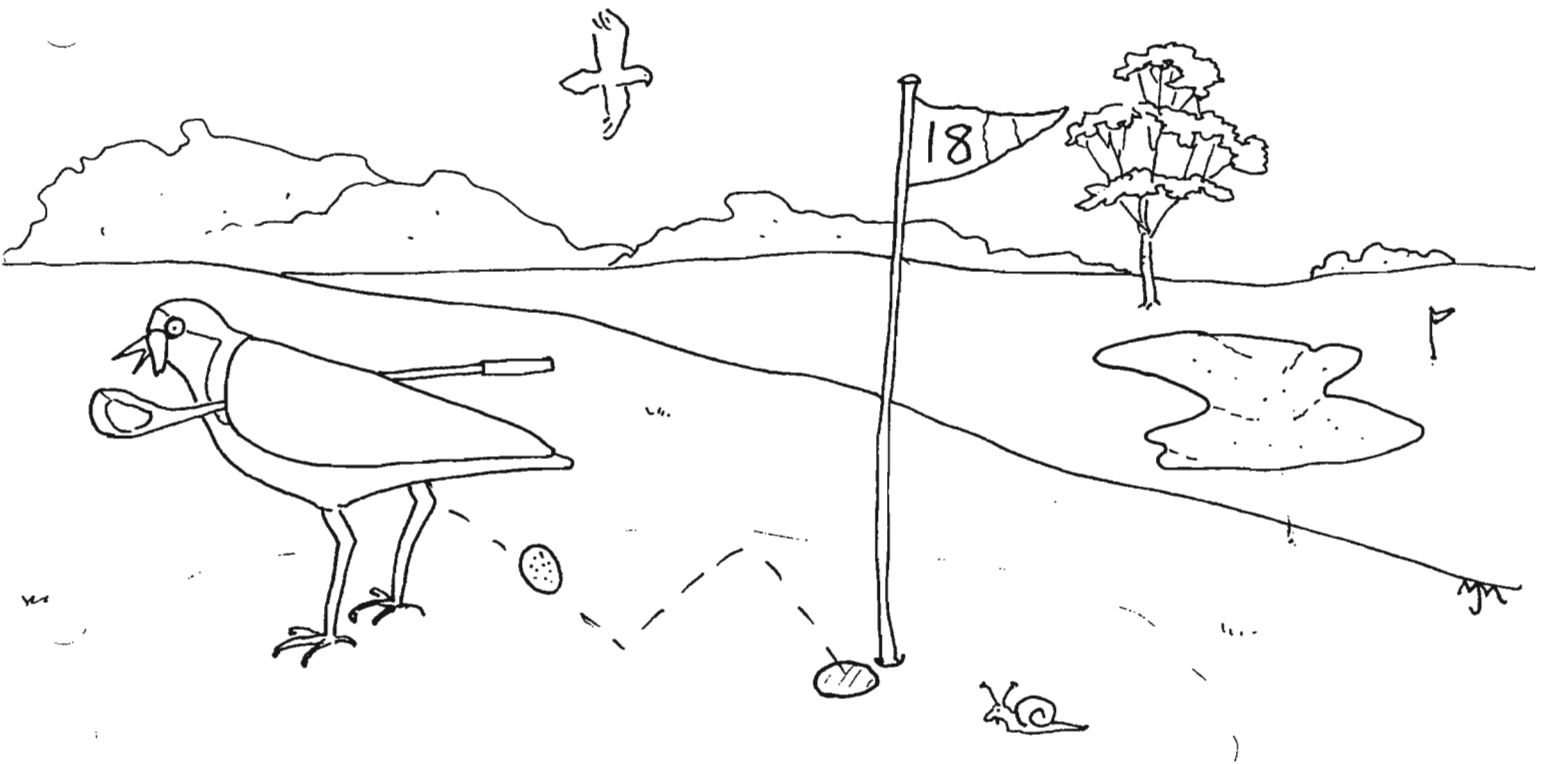
BIRD(Y)ING in a FAIR WAY

Birds Australia is in the process of reactivating the **Birds on Golf Courses** project and is considering enlisting the assistance of Atlas regional organisers. Our local rep, Dave Thomson, however, is unavailable for quite a while because of his interstate field trip. Any club member interested in striking while their number 7 iron is hot is welcome to make their own application to take part in this scheme.

Without indicating any time-frame, Birds Australia in its correspondence, dated 13/6/00 and passed on to IBOC, mentions the possibility of training workshops at golf courses for green (inexperienced) participants with practical instruction in the field and also seeks information as to the number of golf courses in their area, those recently developed, and those with established environmental policies and activities (e.g. Land for Wildlife).

Further details can be obtained from BA research coordinator, **Dr Janey Jackson**: ph (03) 9882.2622; fax (03) 9882.2677; email j.jackson@birdsaustralia.com.au.

I fancy the Masked Lapwing, otherwise known as the Club-winged Plover, particularly the race *Vanellus carriewebbis*, may score very well in the golf-course survey, aiming for an eagle, with its handicap of wearing a mask and so not being able to see clearly where it's putting its eggs on the green. – Ed.



HOODED PLOVER SURVEY

Chris Brandis

The next Hooded Plover Survey for the south-east will be held over the weekend of 11–12 th November and in case of bad weather the backup weekend the 18–19 th November. Those who remember the previous one 2 years ago know that we did not find any on the beaches north of Sussex Inlet, but a number of Pied Oystercatchers were recorded as well as some interesting beach-washed birds. Bherwerre Beach has been the traditional regular northern limit of this endangered plover, but the previous survey indicated that the numbers were still dropping and the range shrinking southwards. Unfortunately, there is talk of removing it from the threatened species list based on a large Western Australian population, which is thought to be a subspecies. The main threat to the species is illegal and legal beach vehicular traffic which runs over the nests and chicks on the high tide line so a management plan needs to be prepared based on current data.

Volunteers are needed to check beaches from, say north of Bherwerre Beach. Maps and instructions will be provided. Anyone interested checking beaches from Shoalhaven Heads south can ring me on 4296 2837 and I will arrange a beach or two.

JULY MONTHLY MEETING

Chris Brandis

The speaker for the evening was fellow member **Peter Nolan**, who has been involved in the rehabilitation of injured raptors for many years through groups such as WIRES. He started assisting Fred Spiteri and now works on his own, receiving some 15 to 25 injured or orphaned birds a year. Most of these are the result of injuries from car collision, but only about 1 or 2 manage to survive through the rehabilitation process for release back into the wild. At previous talks live birds could be brought along, but with the many restrictions placed on the handling of native birds and their parts, it is now not allowed. Peter still brought in several of the unfortunate ones that had been expertly taxidermed by Damien Stanioch, giving us a good look at some of our more common local hawks, kites and falcons in somewhat natural poses, all specimens of which are registered with the NPWS. Peter told us of some of the interesting facts, such as the ability of Peregrine Falcons to withstand 20 G forces compared to our 5 and that the Concord jet intakes designs are based on the Peregrine nostrils with baffles to slow down the air intake.

Australia is well behind the USA when it comes to bird rehabilitation and the saving, captive breeding and reintroduction of endangered species back into the wild. Peter visits the USA regularly to keep up with the latest technical advances made at the various donation-funded institutes across North America, where breeding and rehabilitation takes place on a grand scale. The captive breeding program for Peregrine Falcons eventually released a massive 7,500 birds back into the wild and moved it off the endangered species list, thus allowing many Americans now to see this magnificent bird in the wild, where it breeds successfully. Big business appears to fund the research with huge donations, allowing large complexes to be built, whilst Peter has to make do with 3 small cages in his back yard and fund his own work, with a little help from friends, like local vet, Mike Cannon.

Roger Bogart gave the vote of thanks from us all for an enjoyable and educational talk and we hope that things will improve in Australia, but with the current political attitude to conservation, don't hold your breath.

A GULL CULL

Richard Miller

Last year we were showing overseas visitors some of our favourite spots around the Illawarra. Last stop was a late afternoon stroll along The Lake entrance at Windang.

My attention was caught by a flight of birds heading east along the Warilla side, a white-breasted sea-eagle was seemingly being mobbed by a number of silver gulls. I noticed that the sea eagle was twisting and turning in a most uncharacteristic flight, which I was able to observe quite clearly through binoculars.

Whether out of annoyance at the encircling mob or in culmination of its original purpose I do not know, but suddenly the sea eagle plucked a gull from the air with its talons, turned and headed in the opposite direction. The mood of the rest of the silver gulls changed as their mate screeched in horror at its impending fate. They pursued the eagle mobbing and calling loudly in protest. This continued for several hundred metres along The Lake entrance until on reaching the Windang Bridge the flock finally gave up the chase and left their mate to become another evening takeaway, as the sea eagle continued its westward journey.

As peace and quiet settled once more over The Lake entrance we watched as the sun set behind the escarpment with the silhouette of the bridge creating a most picturesque scene with which to conclude our tour of the Illawarra and time to start thinking about what we would be having for an evening meal that night - takeaway perhaps!

I wonder if others have also seen sea-eagles take other birds in flight.

On Wednesday 19 July ten members of IBOC met at the southern end of Foothills Road, Austinmer for our half-day walk. The day was dull and cool with rain forecast for later. Before we started off, we were serenaded by a couple of Laughing Kookaburras, and a flock of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos made their presence heard. Our morning walk was to be along the Doug Gibson Walking Track in the Lady Fuller Reserve in the larger area known as Bulli Pass Scenic Reserve.

To get to the start of the track, we went along a graded dirt road, passed the disused old dam, which is showing its age and is falling into disrepair, saw fine tall straight trees, healthy-looking crofton weed all budded up waiting for spring, and red ginger, and among the birds, Australian Raven, White-throated Treecreeper, and Brown Thornbill, and then passed the former Excelsior Colliery turn-off. The wrecked car which resembled a wrecked car last time we did this walk now is only a small heap of debris rapidly being absorbed by the bush. We made a little detour along Mike Morphett's favourite track in the hopes of seeing Logrunners. We saw some quite enticing logs, some with moss covers, some with ferns, others with fungus, but none with Logrunners.

By the time we reached the Scout Camp the sun had come out, so we had an early morning tea and sat with the sun warm on our backs and it was lovely. While here we saw Eastern Spinebill, Brown Thornbill, Lewin's Honeyeater, White-browed Scrubwren and Grey Fantail. At the northern end of the Scout Camp we went into the shade of the rainforest, crossed Flanagans Creek, and started along the Gibson Track. For the benefit of new members of IBOC who may not have known him, Doug Gibson was one of the great naturalists of the Illawarra region. He loved birds, wrote articles and papers on them, and spent a great deal of time banding and studying Albatross and other seabirds, and was also interested in all aspects of nature, and his "backyard", the area between mountain and sea, gave him great joy for many years. The Gibson Walking Track is in memory of the contributions he made to the community in which he lived.

The track is short, only 1 km long, but is interesting and varied and with rocks, trees, ferns, fungus, and even birds to look at; it is quite surprising how long it can take to traverse it. The track itself is in excellent condition, with formed steps where needed and is carpeted with fallen leaves, making it very quiet and soft underfoot. Mosquitoes didn't trouble us on our walk, but leeches did. There were plenty of tiny cabbage tree palms, and some huge ones and a lot in-between, and when we weren't in rainforest, the eucalypts took over, mainly blackbutt and a cross between blue gum and bangaly, also lillypilly and turpentine and rosewood. In the understorey lantana and bracken flourished. We heard male Eastern Whipbirds calling and not always being answered and saw Crimson Rosellas, Red-browed Firetail, White-throated Treecreeper, Golden Whistler, Green Catbird, and Brown Gerygone, and presently came to the hanging swamp, which is quite a feature of this walk.

Sadly the seats which once adomed the trackside are no more, so we had to stand to admire the splendid view of Sublime Point, which can be glimpsed over the swamp. The swamp itself is now full of bulrushes, and we saw no water-birds, neither did we see the red cedars which grow here. They'd lost their leaves and blended in with all the other vegetation. A boardwalk has now been built over the boggy ground at the northern end of the swamp. This is the start of Hicks Creek, which flows at the side of The Grove and down to the beach at Austinmer. A Bassian Thrush sat on the track near here for long enough to allow all of us to get a good look. To get back to the cars on Foothills Road we had to go down 117 steps, all well made and surprisingly easy to descend, but thanks anyway to Jude Parkinson for organising the walk so that we went down them and not up. Good thinking. The promised rain started when we were about 200 yards from the cars, but intrepid birds that we are, we all stood in the rain like dills while we tallied the bird count, which was 22 for the morning. Thanks for a delightful morning, Jude and fellow walkers.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Golden Whistler	White-throated Treecreeper	Red-browed Firetail
Rainbow Lorikeet	Grey Fantail	Lewin's Honeyeater	Green Catbird
Crimson Rosella	Eastern Whipbird	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
Laughing Kookaburra	White-browed Scrubwren	Eastern Spinebill	Pied Currawong
Bassian Thrush	Brown Gerygone	Spotted Pardalote	Australian Raven
Eastern Yellow Robin	Brown Thornbill		

Surround-sound is not always provided by Sturman Electronics - sometimes it can be found in the bush.

On Saturday 15th July a small group of IBOC members gathered in the cool shade of Warabin Street cul-de-sac, Waterfall, for the club outing to Heathcote National Park. As we poured over the local area map spread out on Mike Morphett's car bonnet, it was clear that the leadership, guidance & planning which Jack Hyslop has provided to our club for many years through his in-depth knowledge of the Royal & Heathcote Parks was sadly missing. While Jack is recuperating remarkably well from a serious operation and had hoped to join our group for at least part of the walk, a temporary setback the day before inconvenienced him from fulfilling an opportunity to get back to his favourite stamping grounds. We welcomed Lee Casperson, a member from Engadine on her first outing with the club. In Jack's and Lorraine Pincus' absence Mike Morphett took on the role of excursion leader and we thank Mike for playing truant from work on our behalf, midweek, to plan the route and ensure that club members had an enjoyable and rewarding outing.

As we left the cars, we were soon into bright sunshine and a 'perfect winter's day'. The first part of our walk took us along a vehicular access track and across Heathcote Creek, heading alongside the powerlines in the direction of Mt Westmacott. Progress was slow as we were surrounded by so much birdlife. The honeyeaters particularly were taking advantage of the bright sunshine, no wind and the abundance of flowering banksias and wattles and it was difficult to pinpoint our glasses on the perpetual movement. Along the way Brian & Cherry Hardaker were bemoaning the lack of more botanical knowledge within our small group, as several other native plants coming into bloom could not be confidently identified by the group, even though some offered seemingly scientific and educated, but unconvincing suggestions.

Along the track Joan Wylie was our most avid and successful birdwatcher and her assistance was much appreciated by our newcomer Lee. While they lingered at the back of our group, they were able to watch a large group of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo whose calls were reverberating around the valley. As we walked up the dry track from Heathcote Creek towards our morning tea stop, we all looked back towards the skyline at Mount Mooray and were able to watch many of the cockatoos as they moved over the tree-tops, groups of 2 or 3, parties of 10 or 20; we saw 30, 40, 50 and more, up to a hundred birds as they moved around the bush, their calls filling the sky.

After morning tea we returned to Heathcote Creek; Joan & Lee, again bringing up the rear, sighted a Scarlet Honeyeater, with doubting Brian unwilling to accede to the sighting through a fit of jealousy. The narrow track along Heathcote Creek forced us to walk in single file and curtailed our vistas, though the heath around us was just as active with birdlife, and approaching Bondel Pool we were excited to be able to watch Beautiful Firetails. After a short reflective break over the pool reflections had inspired the budding photographer in our group, we continued in the morning sunshine to Kingfisher Pool. On approach Mike was able to spot a Mistletoebird masquerading as a Scarlet Honeyeater. In the excellent viewing conditions we were all able to watch several birds moving around the area, and even doubting Brian had to admit that this was a great day for spotting scarlet honeyeaters.

Mike had picked out a lovely lunch spot on the banks of Kingfisher Pool with the sounds of a small waterfall in the background and plenty of bird calls still filling the air. It was a pity to forsake the spot, but a walk over the rocks and pools of Kingfisher Creek to Yelgun Cave was ahead. The

honeyeaters were still in abundance, and we had our first sightings of White-naped and Yellow-tufted (as promised in the newsletter) and more sightings of Scarlet Honeyeaters. At Yelgun Cave we inspected the 20th century rock paintings by Eric, Sue and friends and searched in vain for a rock warbler which Joan had led us to believe was another likely sighting. We then doubled back. Mike mentioned that on his recent recce he had heard a Superb Lyrebird in this area, and on cue some started calling all around, though a sighting eluded us.

Leaving Bullawarring Track, we crossed Heathcote Creek. A new NP sign advised us that we had 2.4 km for our walk back to Waterfall. The track up Bondel Ridge proved that most of the group were rather less fit than they thought, and we were all puffing by the time we crossed the divide. In the late afternoon the bird calls and activity were less enveloping and, as we headed down the Mooray Track, there was a marked change in the vegetation. Large angophora trees with their contorted branches and pockmarked bark were features, while the forest floor had changed from dry heath to a carpet of ferns and lush gymea lily plants, a few of which were coming into bud.

With the coolness of the late afternoon quite a change from the warmth of the day, the pace quickened downhill as we headed to the cars. The next NP sign informed us we were only 1.6 m away! We reflected on the abundance of bird life and the many different types of honeyeaters we'd seen, though surprisingly no Lewin or a Grey Fantail, when right on cue we saw the latter criss-crossing our track ahead. Then a call from Mike at the front of our line 'White-eared Honeyeaters' pass it down the line - wait eared honeyeater- wait heard honeyeater- wait hered honeyeater- wait here-whereupon Joan Wylie still bringing up the rear stopped in her tracks, thinking Mike was unsure of the route and was heading off to scout ahead! In fact Mike did dip into the bush and from his bag of tricks produced a Scarlet Robin; we were only 50 metres from the cars! What a way to finish a great day's birding, an enjoyable bushwalk and some lovely weather. As Barbara H surmised as we got back to the cars - "You'd have to have a darned good reason not to have been on the IBOC walk today". The tally for bird species for the day was 35. Those marked * were seen on 12/7/00 recce walk.



Australian Pelican
Crested Pigeon
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Rainbow Lorikeet*
Crimson Rosella
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Superb Lyrebird
Rose Robin
Eastern Yellow Robin

Golden Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush*
Grey Fantail
Eastern Whipbird
Superb Fairy-wren
Variegated Fairy-wren
White-browed Scrubwren
Brown Gerygone
Brown Thornbill
Yellow Thornbill

White-throated Treecreeper
Red Wattlebird
Little Wattlebird
Lewin's Honeyeater*
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
White-eared Honeyeater
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
White-plumed Honeyeater
White-naped Honeyeater

New Holland Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill
Scarlet Honeyeater
Spotted Pardalote
Silvereye
Beautiful Firetail
Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong
Australian Raven

The WATERY SOLUTION to a LASTING LEGACY

Richard Miller

One of last year's Club outings was a two-part excursion to Macquarie Pass National Park. In the afternoon we took a short but pleasant stroll from the foot of The Pass up through the rainforest to The Cascades. The Creek we followed runs off Macquarie Rivulet and is unnamed on the 1:25.000 scale topographic map for this area. Questions were asked as to its official name. Back at work the following Monday I scanned other maps of the area but none showed a name, leaving me to follow this up further.

First call was to Shellharbour Council - 'Your request is being investigated and a reply will be forwarded to you as soon as possible'. A follow-up phone call explained that the Council did not recognise a name or code for this creek and suggested that I approach NSW NPWS as the location fell within their management.

The local area Parks & Wildlife Service officer I was put in contact with said he knew of no official name for the creek, but, if they had to refer to it, they would probably do so as Cascades Creek.

My third enquiry was to the Geographical Names Board of NSW, which was established in 1966 'to assign names to places and geographical features and to alter or discontinue geographical names'. Prior to the Board's establishment there was no formal registry of names, which meant that many places and features had several different spellings or names - not so our creek, which apparently didn't feature in their register.

However, the Geographical Names Board would consider a proposal should any of our members like to offer a suggestion, preferably with some association to its geographical/historical background. Other possibilities would be considered, although the explorer/discoverer from IBOC has only a remote possibility of having a claim to fame and would at best not find their name on the maps until after their passing!

Until then an 'unofficial Cascades Creek' is the best I can do for you.

BIRDWATCHING/HOUSE-SITTING in HARCOURT

Andy & Robyn McGarva

On these five acres in Victoria the Yellow-rumped Thornbills and Superb Fairy-wrens are as common as Sparrows and Indian Mynas are at home in Figtree. We are enjoying every day and especially the beautiful frosts in the mornings, (although we have had only a handful). Almost every day the Little Eagle flies overhead, telling the White-backed Maggies to get ready to dive-bomb him with talons and voice. Two Wedge-tailed Eagles are nesting not far away, and a friend is building a hide for photos. Falcons and Kites are seen often, but we aren't very good at identifying them. Some of the birds we have seen for the first time (beginners) have been Restless Flycatcher, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, White-faced Heron, Whistling Kite, White-throated Treecreeper, Purple-crowned Lorikeet, and also the Long-billed Corella, which is in quite big numbers and causing a bit of havoc.

The Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club has welcomed us as guests, and we have attended a few walks with them; also gave them our *IBOC News*. They are off to Gluepot in Sept., but unfortunately we can't accompany them. Hoping all is well at IBOC. Regards until October.

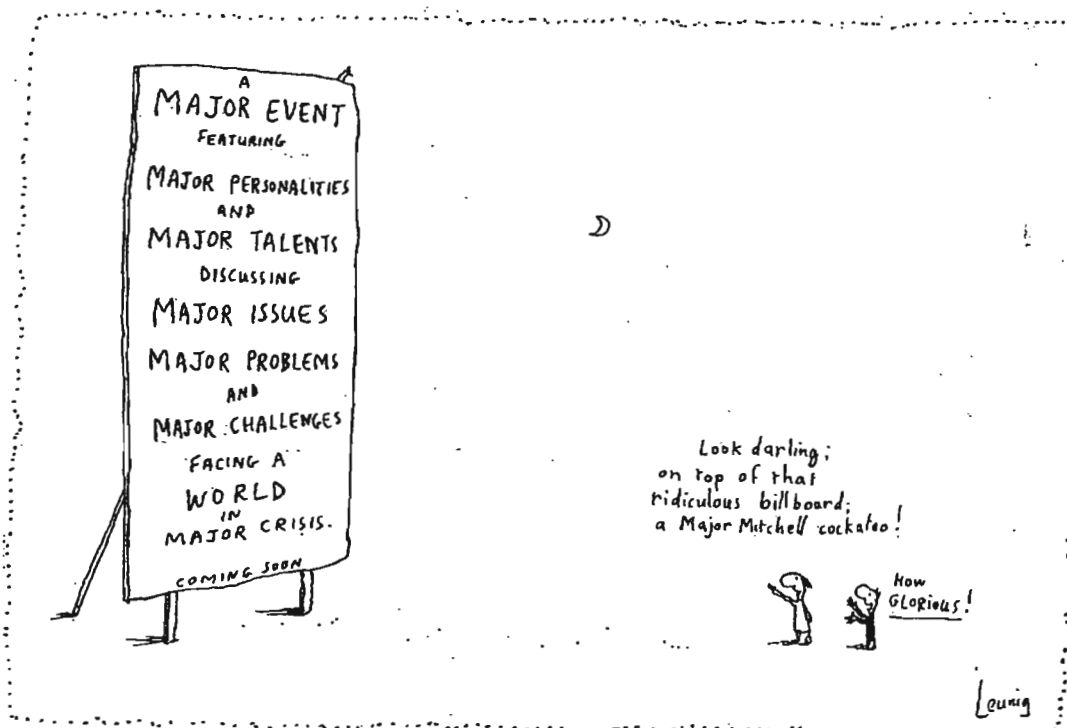
While we have over the years planted an array of native plants around our garden to help attract the native bird life, there is little doubt that the corner which has always been the biggest attraction has been our fruit and vege patch. While we have on occasions been able to rescue some of our crop by netting the area, this does restrict our access for regular maintenance and harvesting.

Over these years Emily has tried many different methods to try and keep the birds away including a hawk silhouette suspended nearby, plastic bags hung from strings and a child's toy whirligig. They have only had limited success.

One Christmas, however, we were lucky to receive a most welcome Christmas present from a longtime IBOC friend, a large box of Quality Street chocolates. I have always been partial to 'Quality Street' and it is only by taking time to smooth out the foil wrappers that I am restrained from having seconds and thirds immediately.

It was Emily who decided that these wrappers could be put to good use. Threaded out along some nylon line and tied out over our fruit and veges, these flashing foil lines helped keep our garden poachers away and meant that year we had a bumper crop to harvest.

Yes, there's no doubt that after so many years of fruitless endeavour, it was an IBOC friendship that finally bore fruit!



Thanks go to Judy Parkinson for digging this Leunig cartoon out of 26 June 2000 edition of the 'Sydney Morning Herald'. Hope it major birdos smile!

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Yellow-nosed Albatross	9	20/7	Sandon Point	near shore	DG
Darter	1	7/6	Macquarie Rivulet	river	BH
Square-tailed Kite	1	6/7	Booderee NP	overhead	JC
Swamp Harrier	1	18/6	Cudmirrah	overhead	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	2/7	Windang	dune forest	DW
Pied Oystercatcher	2	22/7	Windang	sand flats	DG
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	2/7	Windang	dune forest	DW
Rainbow Lorikeet	6	12/7	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Rainbow Lorikeet	12	July	Jamberoo	urban	BHu
Rainbow Lorikeet	2	20/6	Canyonleigh	rural	KM
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	50+	20/6	Bulli	forest	BHa
Powerful Owl	1	30/6	Wollongong Botanic Gardens	forest	JC
Noisy Miner	3	26/7	Austinmer	urban	GM
Fuscous Honeyeater	2	6/7	Booderee NP	forest	JC
White-plumed Honeyeater	6	4/7	Dapto	urban	DG
Crested Shrike-tit	2	6/7	Booderee NP	forest	NB
Crested Shrike-tit	1	29/7	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Spangled Drongo	1	7/7	Lake Heights	garden	CJC
Green Catbird	2	30/7	Thirroul	garden	MM
Green Catbird	1	12/7	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Green Catbird	2	20/7	Mangerton	garden	MW
Bassian Thrush	2	6/7	Bulli Heights	garden	RT
Bassian Thrush	2	22/6	Corrimal	garden	PM
Bassian Thrush	2	29/7	Wongawilli	rainforest	DG

NB - Norma Burke; CJC - Chris Chafer; JC - Jean Clarke; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Brian Hales; Bha - Brian Hardaker; BHu - Betty Hudson; GM - Graham Meany; PM - Peg McKinlay; KM - Kevin Mills; DP - David Price; MM - Mike Morphett; RT - Roger Truscott; MW - Murray Wilson; DW - David Winterbottom;

Comment: The Powerful Owl in the Botanical Gardens has given quite a few people good views of this endangered species over the past month. The White-plumed Honeyeaters seem to have established a small colony near the railway station at Dapto. Rainbow Lorikeets continue to spread through the region, the Canyonleigh record probably the first for that area. The Scaly-breasted Lorikeets are the 14th record for the region since they were first recorded in 1973.

Late news includes a probable Superb Fruit-Dove at Wongawilli.

Several people have asked for a list of species to report for this list. I am working on that, but if you think it's unusual then just report it. All records are kept, even if they don't appear in this column. They help build a bigger picture of our avifauna, and add to the regional knowledge that appears in the book "Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven & Southern Highlands". I am happy to announce the book (135pp) has recently undergone a second printing, so if you missed out, copies can be purchased at any IBOC meeting or from the secretary for only \$20.

LATE OCTOBER IBOC CAMP

Our camp will be a revisit to "Woodlands" property at Rawdon Vale, owned by Norm Bignall and situated 47 km west of Gloucester, beside the Barrington River. Homie Ward's report in *IBOC News* (No. 123) of the Easter 1989 camp should whet folks' appetite to attend again or anew for this one, which will be held from Saturday 21 to Saturday 28 October; the latter date coincides with the Twitchathon 2000. Kevin & Fay McGregor, Peg McKinlay, and Barb Hales surveyed the area the last weekend in July and forecast another successful camp with improved facilities. Please register at the next club meeting or make arrangements with Kevin if you can't.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 232

September 2000

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

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

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

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 11 September at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be **Lindsay Smith**, whose topic will be **Albatrosses of the Illawarra**, looking particularly at the latest taxonomical developments. Lindsay got a mention in a recent local newspaper article, featured in this issue, in regard to the blood testing of these birds off our coastline. Unfortunately, because of ill-health, Lindsay wasn't able to make our March meeting as scheduled, and we're very pleased and grateful that he has been able to step into Alan Leishman's shoes at very short notice.

OUTING Saturday 16 September to **Mount Annan Botanic Garden**, Mount Annan Drive, Campbelltown. It is a clearly signposted venue off Narellan Road, and there are signs on the Hume highway and Expressway indicating the exits to take. We will walk through the gardens with **Alan Leishman** to see a diversity of habitat and a large variety of birdlife. We are to meet in the car park at 9 am sharp. Latecomers will have to wait for the gate to be opened an hour later. Car pooling is suggested and, if you are coming, please let the McGregors know on 02 4271 3762. Bring your usual food and drink for the day; there's a kiosk for those who wish to supplement their rations, and a bookshop.

MID-WEEK OUTING None has been scheduled for September on account of the Olympic Games or October because of the two camps, details of which appear elsewhere in this issue.

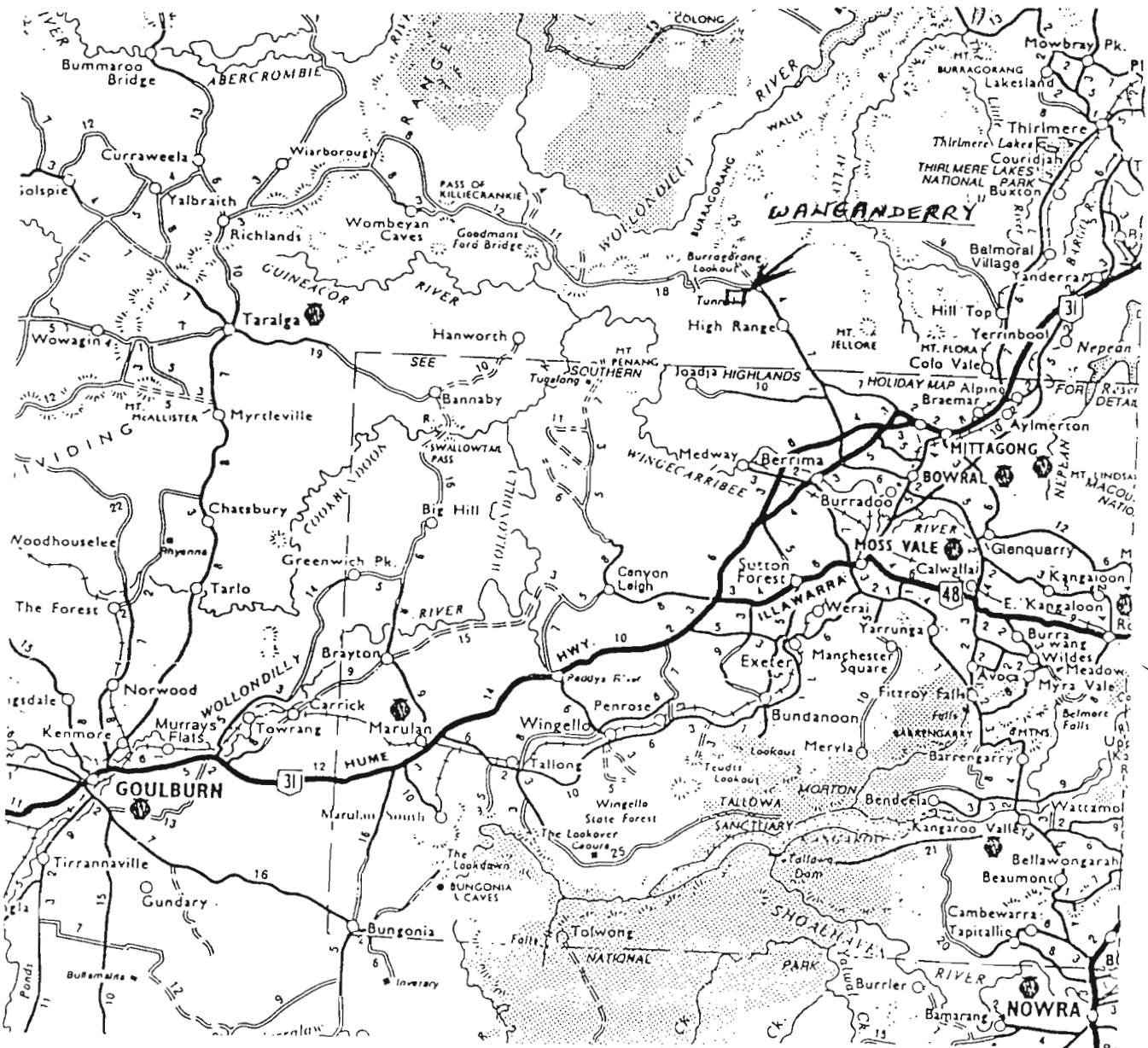
COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 19 September at 7.30 pm at **Fae and Kevin McGregor's** home: address and phone no. above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and to contact Kevin beforehand.

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 1 November. Please add your name to your article/item.

"Mountains are the beginning and the end of all natural scenery." - John Ruskin: *Modern Painters* (1856)

EARLY OCTOBER IBOC FAMILY CAMP

Our camp will be held from Saturday 30 September to Monday 2 October at 'Wanganderry', the 2500 hectare property of Miss Rosalind Badgery at Bullio. We're breaking the seven year cycle: very successful camps were held there in 1983, 1990 and 1997. The access gate is on the southern side of Wombeyan Caves Road, 19 km in from the Old Hume Highway; so don't take the Berrima Bypass road, and keep an eye out for the familiar, and reassuring, IBOC signs. The map (courtesy of NRMA) that featured in *IBOC News* issues number 137 and 204 has been reproduced below. Take sufficient drinking water for the long weekend, and perhaps some wet weather gear. All the usual facilities will be provided: toilet, shower, campfires and meeting tent. There will be a fee of \$10 per adult. Day visitors are welcome to go along too. As before, a good number of bird species is anticipated, including the Glossy Black Cockatoo, in addition to a variety of mammals that thrive in a beautiful area. If you haven't placed your name on the registration list circulated at previous club meetings, please inform Fae & Kevin McGregor if you'd like to join us.



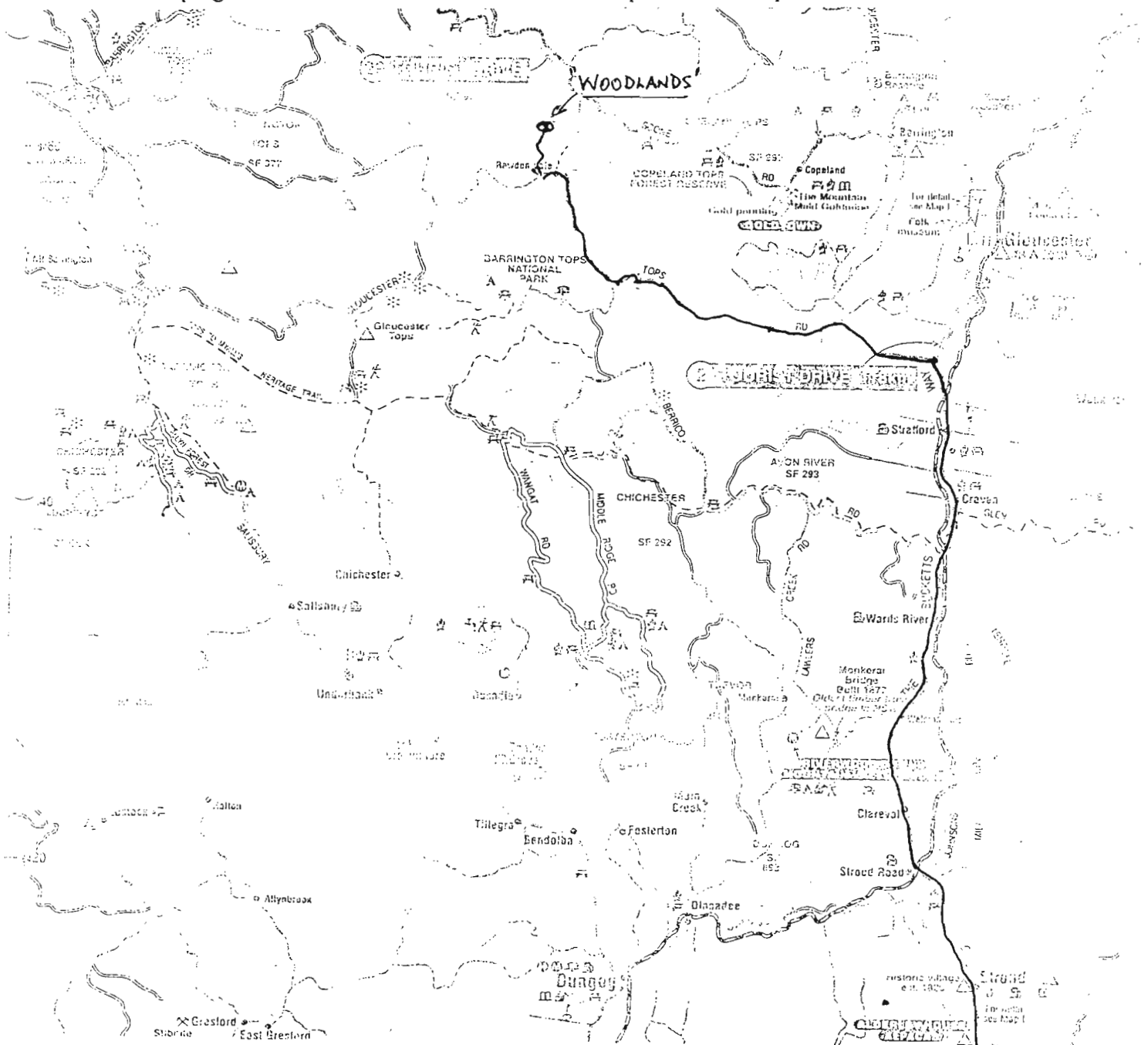
TWITCHATHON REMINDER

As mentioned in the last issue of *IBOC News*, this event will be held on 28 & 29 October. The contact person is Frances Czwalinna: phone/fax 02 9872 4185.

2000 OCTOBER CAMP
'WOODLANDS' VIA RAWDON VALE NEAR GLOUCESTER
21ST TO 28TH OCTOBER

This camp site is on the banks of the crystal clear Barrington River west of Gloucester and close to the beautiful Barrington Tops National Park, Copelands State Forest, Chichester State Forest and Gloucester Tops. Our Club has been to this site twice before and enjoyed by all those who attended.

The trip from home takes you along the Sydney/Newcastle Expressway to Hexham, turn left onto Pacific Highway and proceed north to 18 km past Raymond Terrace. Turn left and travel along Bucketts Way through Stroud, Stroud Road, Wards River, Craven and Stratford. 4 km past Stratford, turn left and proceed along Gloucester Tops Road 21 km, then travel north along Rawdon Vale Road for 8 km. At Rawdon Vale follow Moppy Road west for 1.2 km and then turn right north along Bignells Road to the entrance of "Woodlands" 4 km in. IBOC signs will be along the latter part of the journey. All camping facilities will be available on site. Camp fees are \$10 per adult



DARKES FOREST HIGHLIGHTS

Martin Potter

At 8:30am on Sunday 20 August I was one of a very small group of IBOC members assembled with the leader at an entrance to the **Dharawal State Recreation Area** on Darkes Forest Road. A larger group had assembled at the correct meeting-place further up the road. Fortunately we joined up, and my very first outing with IBOC was under-way. I quickly learned, the hard way, the first rule of participation: keep your head down when the leader's looking for someone to write the report. I mistakenly thought that being a novice and not having a pen would exempt me from the task; please therefore excuse any glaring errors and omissions.

The leader by double default, through Chris Brandis' absence and Kevin McGregor's unfortunate illness, was Mike Morphett, and due to short notice no reconnaissance had been possible. It was a fine but chilly morning; rain was predicted for the afternoon and people were attired accordingly. The main body of the walk according to the map, sketched on the back of an envelope I think, was fire trail 10H which was of good width and easy, level walking. The area was mainly of open woodland with plenty of shrub cover. A leisurely pace was set, and an initial lack of birds was compensated for to some extent by the lavish display of shrubs and flowers in bloom. Especially impressive were waratahs about to burst into life.

As a complete novice it was easy for me to rack up a string of personal first sightings; even before arriving at the site Mike had pointed out my first Grey Shrike-thrush in the middle of Darkes Forest Road. It gave a contemptuous look over its shoulder before reluctantly giving way to the car. More firsts soon followed: a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike perched obligingly in a eucalypt beside the fire-trail; a Golden Whistler a few trees further up. Steady progress along the trail was made for two hours, during which time I witnessed Mike's Pied Piper impersonation, charming from the undergrowth not rats but wrens, these being of the variegated variety. A halt was called for the taking of tea and the removal of outer layers of clothing, as the sun refused to disappear as predicted.

We continued on the main track that soon took a left turn, leaving the original trail to peter out in the distance. Heading down towards O'Hares Creek we were serenaded with an unwelcome distant roar, heralding the approach of two trail-bikes. A general muttering and shrugging of shoulders ensued; what was not anticipated was the arrival of the cavalry to save the day, in the form of a NPWS ute with two rangers. "They're scaring away our birds", we reported. The rangers confronted the bikers, demanding their ID. There followed a very ugly scene in which the rangers bravely obstructed the revving bikes trying to make good their escape. One rider got past and returned to aid his companion by hurling rocks at the rangers; luckily his aim was not too good and serious injury was avoided.

Amidst much animated conversation, the walk continued to the creek down the now very steep path; it was not made any easier by having been churned up by motor bikes. The vegetation changed to tall forest which opened out to reveal O'Hares Creek; it was a beautiful spot which conveniently appeared just in time for lunch. Eastern Spinebills were in evidence, and many other birds were heard over lunch but not seen. I was assured that this was a perfect spot for Azure Kingfishers; perfect it seemed but for the complete absence of Azure Kingfishers.

The original plan had been to walk a loop and join up with another fire trail, but the rangers advised that this might be too ambitious. Lunch was therefore a prolonged affair as members built up the reserves required for the steep ascent back to the original trail. The climb was not enough, however, to exhaust zealots like Mike and Bruce O'Brien, and I was drawn into a brisk march to explore the far end of 10H; it only looked a short distance on the map, but wasn't. It turned out to be a dead end, however, both geographically and ornithologically.

So as not to retrace our steps completely, the group had arranged to take a side trail on the return leg, and here the woodland became taller and denser. The main party had long since passed through, and as Mike was investigating a smaller, untrodden path to the side, I noticed behind him a largish spotted thrush-like bird on the ground. Bruce froze and whispered what sounded like "Spotted Trail-thrush - that's one rare bird!" I thought this *must* be a rarity - it's not in my field guide... What he actually said, of course, was Spotted Quail-thrush, and there followed much tiptoeing around to relocate the bird which had disappeared into the undergrowth. Suddenly the bird exploded from the ground beside me and I could feel the air displaced by its powerful wingbeats. A second bird fled in the opposite direction.

We continued back onto 10H and towards the cars, expecting everyone else to have long since gone home after our lengthy detour. There were a few diehards left, however, and they had been rewarded with the sight of about 40 Dusky Woodswallows in the area. A late appearance of Beautiful Firetails and the distant call of a Peaceful Dove rounded off a good day for all in general, and in particular for me, being a very enjoyable introduction to bird-watching with the Club. I know that next time I will enjoy it even more, because someone else will be doing the write-up. [No chance, Martin - Ed.] The day's bird species tally of 35 was as follows:

White-faced Heron
Chestnut Teal
Peaceful Dove
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Crimson Rosella
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Superb Lyrebird
Welcome Swallow
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike

Eastern Yellow Robin
Golden Whistler
Rufous Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush
Eastern Whipbird
Spotted Quail-thrush
Variegated Fairy-wren
White-browed Scrubwren
Brown Gerygone

Brown Thornbill
Striated Thornbill
White-throated Treecreeper
Red Wattlebird
Little Wattlebird
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
White-eared Honeyeater
White-naped Honeyeater
New Holland Honeyeater

Eastern Spinebill
Spotted Pardalote
Beautiful Firetail
Dusky Woodswallow
Grey Butcherbird
Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong
Australian Raven

Postscript: An amusing sight was that of the Raven flying in our westerly direction and carrying in its beak a golf ball, no doubt purloined from the Maddens Plains course. The sandy track revealed countless mammal footprints, suspiciously like those of cat and fox, and a few trees bordering the track bore the incision marks of gliders. All this and the array of flowers and pockets of birds contributed to the day's interest for the seventeen walkers.

MID-WEEK WALK

Peggy Merrett

On Wednesday 23 August 14 members of IBOC met at the **Tom Thumb Wetlands Park**. It was a cool, cloudy day with a chill wind blowing, but nothing that keen birdos like us couldn't handle.

Tom Thumb Lagoon is a recent geological phenomenon. It was formed about 6000 years ago when the sea levels rose after the last Ice Age and was originally about 500 hectares in area. It was a large tidal inlet with a large range of plant life, each occupying an area in its appointed place: reeds, saltmarsh and mangroves with swamp oaks and paperbarks higher up. From here the Dharawal people collected mussels, oysters, crabs and shellfish, and caught fish and wildfowl. This they did till the early 1900s when dredging and filling of the area began to accommodate the future expansion of the industrial sites being established in the area. The wetlands are now a tiny, rather sad reminder of their former glory. Indeed, in times of heavy and prolonged rain the lagoon spread to the southern end of Wollongong township. Bass and Flinders gave the name of their boat to what is now Lake Illawarra, but by 1818 the name had migrated further north to where it is today.

The ditches, runnels and creek that the area consists of now give the appearance of having been cleaned out recently and, while stormwater and run-off passes through here on its way to the sea, the whole area was remarkably clean and still provides feeding and breeding grounds for diverse species of creatures. We set off after seeing a White-faced Heron, Peaceful Dove, White-browed Scrubwren and Masked Lapwing and passed a couple of hardenbergas flowering profusely and a wattle with large flower-balls acting as a foil, but, alas, these were the only flowers we saw apart from fireweed, lantana and bitou bush.

There were viewing platforms and seats in strategic positions; one of the first overlooking what appeared to be marshalling yards for the coal trucks. Each train had three engines and were coming and going in a continuous stream, a sight to gladden the heart of any small boy, but, alas, we had no small boys with us, so we settled for looking at a Pied Cormorant on a light-pole and a Royal Spoonbill looking for lunch.

We wandered along well-made asphalt paths which led uphill over what was previously the builders' dump and passed aniseed, bitou bush, date palms and wattle trees. The top of the hill has been thickly spread with mulch by the Mangerton Landcare Group and is now called Greenhouse Park and from here we had a great 360 degrees view: first the ocean, which looked flat, grey and sullen, then The Five Islands, Heliport, Sewerage Works and Golf Course; then to the south there was the Steelworks, Grain Terminal and Coal Loader; the mountains were wonderfully clear because of the wind; and to the north the City of Wollongong with beaches, cliffs, and headlands behind. We also saw a Black-shouldered Kite, European Goldfinch, Feral Pigeon, Spotted Turtle-dove, a Great Egret, and two Australian Raven being as selective as the rest of us about nesting material.

We came downhill by a steeper, shorter route and soon found a place in the sun, which had started to shine, and protected from the wind, which was still blowing, and had morning tea while being entertained by a Superb Fairy-wren. We were more entranced by the male's antics than the Jenny wrens. We crossed a bridge over quite a wide stream and continued along a substantial path, planted with swamp oaks on one side and mainly paperbarks on the other, and arrived back at the car park after an enjoyable walk and having seen 35 species reported in the area. We also saw a rabbit. Thank you, Fae, for leading us on a most enjoyable walk.

On Monday 14 August our guest speaker was **Julian Seddon**, Project Officer from CSIRO in Canberra. Julian is apparently an expert in penguins, having spent 6 months in Antarctica earlier in his career. Under the heading of **Birds in Woodland Remnants of Central Western NSW**, he spoke on research he has conducted together with Sue Briggs and Stuart Doyle for the NSW NPWS in the area defined as the slopes and plains west of the Great Dividing Range and known as the wheat/sheep belt. It includes the Lachlan and Bogan Rivers and has an annual average rainfall of 300 – 600mm. The vegetation is a mosaic of eucalypt and cypress pine woodlands and open woodlands and grasslands. Europeans first settled the area in the mid 1800s when clearing for agriculture began. The native vegetation of hills and watercourses is relatively intact. Clearing has concentrated on the fertile soils of the lower slopes and plains. In some areas 95% of native vegetation has been cleared. The remaining woodlands are isolated remnants. Some larger patches are state forests or travelling stock reserves. Most remaining vegetation is however on private lands. Some areas have been over-cleared, leading to land degradation through soil erosion and tree dieback. However, dryland salinity is the major problem. Millions of hectares will be lost to this problem in 50 years time and will lead to the salinization of rivers. Habitat for native species has been further degraded through the introduction of stock to some of the remnant areas and through firewood collection.

A survey of locals suggested that 20 bird species are declining. These include emus, painted buttonquail, brown treecreeper, speckled warbler, chesnut-rumped thornbill, southern whiteface, jacky winter, red-capped robin, hooded robin and the eastern yellow robin. It is thought that remedial action primarily targeting salinity through the reestablishment of deep root vegetation and wildlife plantings to create wildlife corridors and fence off remnant woodlands. Not a great deal is known about the best ways to go about focusing revegetation and woodland efforts.

The project aimed to look at remnant size, develop predictive models for bird diversity and develop guidelines for revegetation management. The study involved over 30 sites, where researchers looked at canopy cover, shrub cover, and amount of cypress pine regrowth, tree hollows, ground cover, fallen logs and ground cover. Bird surveys found that some species are widespread (galah, noisy miner, magpie) and some are sensitive to size of the remnant (thornbills, robins). The cockatiel is a specialist of small, degraded remnants. The eastern yellow robin is found in sites greater than 20 hectares. The rufous whistler is found in small sites with large shrub cover and in large sites of varying cover. The brown treecreeper is found in sites larger than 20 hectares and close to another patch. Diversity was greatest in large remnants in good condition.

Mathematical models involving area, shrubs and hollows have been developed to predict numbers of woodland species. This information can be used to work out where we can have the greatest impact on bird community structure. We know from the study that there are fewer species in small degraded remnants and a greater dominance of a few species in small remnants. Insectivores are also lost in small remnants. Large areas have 60+ species, whereas small remnants have approximately 40 species. Grainivores dominate in small remnants.

Information on management guidelines is to be passed onto Landcare groups and other local vegetation management projects. Remnants of 20+ hectares and greater than 20% shrubs are best. It is recommended that small remnants be increased to 10 hectares first rather than starting to isolate new patches. These areas should be fenced to allow tactical grazing (at certain times of the year). Vegetation should be planted in blocks, not in narrow strips. Blocks need to be at least 25 metres wide. The understorey is important for our flora and fauna. It is best to make the understorey patchy to promote species diversity.

Many questions remain unanswered. What factors are important for successful breeding? Are Travelling Stock Reserves (linear) useful as habitat or corridors? Do birds use revegetated areas? Are birds a good indicator of other biodiversity? What can be done about noisy miners? Even though we now know more than we did, we need to offer financial incentives so that farmers have viable options to implement revegetation. Julian's report contained much detail and was very well presented to a very interested audience. Perhaps we can encourage him to return to speak on his experience with penguins at a later date.

Obituaries I have read on the recent (5 August) death of the British actor, Sir Alec Guinness each referred to his various stage and film achievements, notably his performance as spy hunter, George Smiley in John Le Carre's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor*.

The title of this television mini-series reminded me of a ritual chant that was not uncommonly carried out among my childhood peers in England during the late 1940s and in the 50s. It was easy to recite and remember with its four beats in a line. Whilst being an amusing pastime, it was often uttered with some apprehension in the belief that one's fortune would be accurately foretold by this exercise. I recall it was usually done at the meal table at home or more likely at school, where two-course lunches were provided, termed school dinners and with some mixed reactions, generally derogatorily. After devouring a helping of prunes, plums or cherries in particular, the young person would place the stones round the edge of their dessert bowl and count out each one by name, repeating the sequence of names if need be: tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief. The name given to the final fruit stone revealed what social status that child would ultimately become in adult life. If they were going to end up with an undesirable occupation, they would invariably try to fob off to any other young persons present whatever number of stones were needed to lead to their reaching a much better future.



From a skim through Elaine Martin's *Kids' Games: Creative Games and Activities* (1996) I have just found out that in Canada this children's chant became traditional with the addition of two more lines: doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief, Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Just like the first mentioned occupation, the rhyme, I believe, has gone out of custom in England. To help resurrect it for usage in this country, especially for young birdos, I thought I'd devise a variation on this theme; perhaps to enable them to predict what avian species they might next come across on their travels or else might become through reincarnation:

Stinker, tailor-bird, soldier-bird, whale-bird,
 Richard's pipit, moorhen, megapode, ruff,
 Dog-tern, lowry, marsh crake, chough,
 Royal penguin, mountain thrush.

The language of the original chant shows an obvious bias towards males in English society in those days. To counteract that in this revised ornithological version and in our gender-conscious times, people might prefer to substitute ruff with the female, reeve, which would then entail using something like weaver and bee-eater or teal to replace chough and thrush in the final two lines.

And on the theme of utterances made in an attempt to influence the future, I'll conclude by quoting Guinness' *Star Wars* character, Obi-Wan Kenobi: "May the Force be with you".

NETTING an INDECENT PROFIT

Wendy Hanks sent in this extract from Ernestine Hill's *The Great Australian Loneliness*, relating this journalist's journey round Australia in 1930, in particular when she was at Wyndham and met a man called Riddell. "shipping eight tons of Birds to London. With a few whites and blacks employed to help him. he had been snaring them at the billabongs at the end of 'the dry', when the desperate little things came in for water.

'A throw-net at a pool in the early morning snared as many as seventy dozen of the brilliant little painted finches and love-birds and doves, and the lubras caught emus and brolgas for him. He sold them to Continental bird-merchants, to be caged as curios in London fogs, and for over twenty years they had provided a trip to Europe for him every year. He told me that before the psittacosis scare, the glamorous parrots of the region had netted him a revenue of \$800 (metric) per annum."

No wonder these beautiful birds are few and far between these days, says Wendy.

Seabird study complete

Lots to learn from albatross

By KILMENY ADIE

Californian genetic scientist Gary Nunn has returned to the United States after a week in the Illawarra with the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association.

Mr Nunn, 33, has been examining information and blood samples from the species of albatross that live off the coast.

He is now waiting for a permit to ship the samples to the US and hopes the samples will provide him with new data on the diversity of local birds.

Mr Nunn, who was trained as an evolutionary biologist in DNA sequencing, will use databases of information collected from blood samples to trace the different species.

"I have spent five or six years studying these seabirds, checking out the different species," he said.

"For a time we didn't really know what bird species were out there because they are on these remote islands around the Southern Hemisphere.

"Genetics will help put all the pieces of the puzzle together."

Mr Nunn said he had developed an applied genetic test which allowed comparisons between birds.

"You end up with unique genetic profiles where you can tell one individual from another," he said.

"The information found in those genetic profiles is actually enough to trace them back to their original home. It's actually an identical technique to that used in forensic analysis.

"The albatross has been the hardest hit in terms of being killed in the fishing industry."

Mr Nunn said he hoped to finalise the study of the blood samples within two months and be able to give the



Californian genetic scientist Gary Nunn with a blood sample from an albatross
Picture: ROBERT PEET

association (SOSSA) further information about the birds off the Illawarra coastline.

Some of the birds located here could be some of the rarest species in the world, he said.

SOSSA vice-president Lindsay Smith said Mr Nunn's visit was an important step in international research.

ILLAWARRA MERCURY 16/8/00

IBOC END of YEAR and CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

A fun night of games, entertainment and music to celebrate another year in IBOC will be held on Monday 11 December. If you could help make this night one to remember by providing entertainment or music, Fae McGregor would be pleased to hear from you with your ideas. This is an opportunity to invite your family and friends too. Please put on your thinking caps... December will be here before we know it. •

Graduate Certificate in Ornithology

A course designed by ornithologists for professionals requiring a tertiary qualification or the interested amateur seeking to gain a thorough understanding of ornithology. This is the only specialised course in ornithology offered by an Australian university.

The Graduate Certificate in Ornithology has four subjects:

- Avian Biology
- Evolution, Taxonomy & Biogeography of Birds
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This course is offered by part time distance education from the Bathurst campus and can be taken over one or two years.

Fees currently \$600 per subject.

On completion graduates may be eligible for entry into the Graduate Diploma of Ornithology.

Successful graduates have gone on to:

- establish ornithological consultancies
- coordinate regional bird surveys
- employment in natural resource agencies

For Brochure and Application Form:

1800 334 733

www.csu.edu.au/student/contact

For Course specific enquiries:

Dr Al Gibbs Ph 02 6338 4382

e-mail: agibbs@csu.edu.au

CHARLES STURT
UNIVERSITY



The major objectives of the course are:

- to provide detailed and current knowledge of the functional biology of birds,
- to elucidate the origins and descent of birds and current systematics in a biogeographical context,
- to investigate the influences on the status, behaviour and ecology of birds, including conservation measures;
- to provide knowledge in the use of scientific methods in avian biological research;
- provide a conceptual framework for either commencing a career in ornithology or for productive involvement in amateur ornithological pursuits.

Admission requirements

Applicants are expected to hold a University degree or diploma or five years minimum relevant experience in a natural resource industry or five years minimum part-time project experience with a recognised Ornithological Society or other equivalent as deemed appropriate by the Faculty

Residential school

Students are required to attend compulsory residential schools (six days) held at the Bathurst Campus each session, if undertaking two subjects a session; viz 22 - 27 April 2001.

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush Turkey	2	18/8	Wollongong Uni	parkland	RT
Musk Duck	2a2j	19/8	Boxvale Track, Mittagong	dam	BH
Antarctic Prion	100+	24/6	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Wilson's Storm Petrel	1	24/6	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Yellow-nosed Albatross	1	mid Jul	off Black Head	inshore	CP
Nankeen Night Heron	1	18/8	Little Lake	estuarine	DG
Grey Goshawk	1	6/8	Albion Park	urban	RF
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	23/8	Figtree (eating Common Myna)	garden	KM
Great Skua	1	24/6	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Pacific Gull	1imm	9/7	Bellambi Point	rocky shore	GB
White-headed Pigeon	2	3/8	Picton	urban	CJC
Bar-shouldered Dove	few	7/8	Windang	dune woodland	DW
Peaceful Dove	2	20/8	Bargo, Pots Hole crossing	woodland	GB
Red-rumped Parrot	2	30/7	Dapto	garden	RF
Musk Lorikeet	4	7/8	Austinmer	urban	JB
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	1	26/8	Thirroul	urban	MP
Azure Kingfisher	1	5/8	Fred Finch Park	riparian	DW
Azure Kingfisher	1	5/8	Maldon Bridge	riparian	RM
Eastern Bristlebird	10	5/8	Budderoo trail	heath	CJC
Bell Miner	few	5/8	Maldon Bridge	riparian	RM
Scarlet Honeyeater	2	1/8	Bulli	garden	RT
Rose Robin	1	21/8	Toolijoa	garden	CP
Crested Shrike-tit	1	20/8	Bargo, Pots Hole crossing	woodland	GB
Crested Shrike-tit	1	27/8	Bulli Pass	rainforest	PP
Double-barred Finch	3	5/8	Bargo, Rockford Rd. bridge	woodland	JH
Double-barred Finch	12	20/8	Bargo, Pots Hole crossing	woodland	GB
White-winged Triller	2	20/8	Avondale	rural	DG
Figbird	1j	13/8	Gwynneville	garden	DW
Figbird	6	19/8	Kiama	urban	CJC
Grey Currawong	10	5/8	Budderoo trail	woodland	CJC
Grey Currawong	2	7/8	Cordeaux Dam	woodland	CJC

GB - Graham Barwell; CJC - Chris Chafer; RF - Richard Fackender; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Brian Hales; JH - Jack Hyslop; RM - Richard Miller; MP - Martin Potter, PP - Penny Potter; CP - Chris Presland; RT - Roger Truscott; DW - David Winterbottom;

Comment: Brush Turkeys at University !!!; that's got to be first. White-winged Trillers at Avondale is a very early return. The Antarctic Prion observation is the largest concentration of this species thus far recorded for our region. Our president was lucky enough to have the Sparrowhawk in his backyard devouring a Myna for over half an hour of priceless observation. The Red-rumped Parrots at Dapto are the first coastal record for four years.

HONOURING JOHN HOBBS

John was a keen birdo who lived in the Shoalhaven as well as the Mildura district and was guest speaker at the August 1977 IBOC meeting on the topic of Babblers and Chats.

A memorial service to John, arranged by community participation, will be held at 10.30 am on Monday 30 October, ten years after his death. The Lions Club of Coomealla, PO Box 2, Dareton NSW 2717, will act as collectors of donations towards John's memorial. Tea and coffee will be provided, and folks attending are asked to take a plate to share. For further enquiries phone/fax Joe Murray on 03.5027.4887 and for tourist information and advanced bookings contact Gabby on 03.5027.3624.

ERRATUM

The final paragraph of the Heathcote National Park walk report in the last edition of *IBOC News* (p.7) should read **Rose Robin**, not the Scarlet. Thanks, Barbara and Brian Hales, for spotting this.

**ILLAWARRA BIRD ORSERVERS CLUB INC.
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING
13TH NOVEMBER 2000.**

The 23rd Annual Meeting of the Club will be held at the Community Centre, Cnr. Cambridge Avenue/ Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on Monday, 13th November, 2000 at 7.30 p.m.

AGENDA:

Annual Report

Election of Office Bearers:

*President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Committee Members (4)*

*(Nominations of candidates for election as office bearers of the Club and Committee Members shall be made in writing signed by 2 members of the Club and accompanied by written consent of the candidate [which may be endorsed on the form of nomination] and shall be delivered to the Secretary not less than 7 days before the meeting date.
[Article 16 (a) and (b)] – Nomination forms available from the Secretary*

Notice of Motion - Life Memberships. [See below]

K.J.McGregor
President.
1st September, 2000.

NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Special Resolution shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting on Monday 13th November, 2000.

“Brian Hales, Barbara Hales and Horrie Ward be elected as Honorary Life Members of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club Incorporated”

* * * * *

Brian and Barbara Hales have been members of the Club since 1980 and during that period Brian served as President for a period of ten (10) consecutive years and Barbara supported in the background with the designing of programs, arranging guest speakers and leaders of outings and camps. Many hours of time and hard work was provided by them in the efficient running of the Club during that time. They both were instrumental in gaining new members to the Club through activities outside the normal running of the Club. Both continue to be supportive to the Committee. Brian is involved in presenting Bird Courses at WEA and Barren Grounds Nature Reserve.

Horrie Ward joined the Club in its second year and has held continuous membership. Since 1981 Horrie has held the position as Recorder of the Club's outings and camps and this has involved hundreds of hours of his time and effort. In 1998 he published 3 Volumes containing all records dealing with the outings and camps since the Club's inception. Horrie is a quiet achiever and was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by the Club in 1998.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 233

November 2000

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

"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

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

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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 13 November at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Street, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speakers will be club members, **Kerri & Alan Lewis**, who will talk about their birding adventures during their tour of Britain last April through to July under the title of 'In Search of the Elusive Puffin'.

OUTING Sunday 19 November to **Killalea State Recreation Area**, which the club visited July last year. The leader this time is **Chris Brandis**. Meet at the car park just beyond the office at 8.45 am. Car pooling is again suggested and, if you are coming, please let the McGregors know on 4271 3762. Those heading south along Shellharbour Road to Dunmore should take the first left after the Shell Cove roundabout; Killalea is well signposted. Bring your usual food and drink for the day.

WEEK OUTING Wednesday 15 November along the level section of the **Mount Kembla Ring Track**. Meet the leader, **Kevin McGregor** at 8.30 am at the northern approach 400 metres south along Cordeaux Road from the Harry Graham Drive turn-off and adjacent to the cottage at no. 141. There is parking space on the western side of the road. What you may expect to come across on the walk can be gleaned from a report on this area in this newsletter.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 21 November at 7.30 pm at **Fae and Kevin McGregor's** home: address and phone no. above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and to contact Kevin beforehand.

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however miniscule, for the next *IBOC News* will be 29 November. Please add your name to your article/item.

"A man travels the world in search of what he needs and returns home to find it." – George Moore: *The Brook Kerith* (1916)

WANGANDERRY CAMP Unfortunately, the camp planned for the long weekend last month had to be cancelled because of lack of numbers for the camp itself. Our apologies go to those day visitors who tried in vain to find other birdwatchers or the location.

EASTER CAMP This is scheduled for 13 to 16 April next year, and we are looking for suggestions as to a good birding and camping site.

23rd AGM No nominations have yet been received for the positions of office bearers, who are vital for the smooth and successful running of the club.

DECEMBER CLUB MEETING A reminder that we need members, ideally with their "significant others", to perform or make some form of contribution to the Family Fun Night. As yet Fae hasn't received any offers. The excuse of stage fright can't be accepted, for if bowerbirds can perform on stage, then so can you!

ON the NET. Gluepot can be reached on www.riverland.net.au/gluepot. We're hoping it won't be too long before IBOC itself can be accessed.

The LATEST FIELD GUIDE A copy of Michael Morcombe's *Field Guide to Australian Birds* will be on display at the next club meeting. Negotiations held with Sussan Bacon, Marketing Administrator for Steve Parrish Publishing P/L, give the promise of a healthy concession rate to club purchasers if a minimum of five orders can be lodged. So comprehensive is this excellent field guide that IBOC gets a mention on page 435!

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Gwen & Jim Robinson

Our guest speaker, **Lindsay Smith**, a fellow member, addressed the meeting on the subject "**Albatrosses of the Illawarra**". His slides, which are an integral part of his address, were quite spectacular; some showing the ability of these birds to sail almost endlessly on motionless wings over the seas. He was able to point out the infinite variations of colour changes in plumage, in beaks and size of various named species. He also showed the bravery of his wife, Janice, who helped hold the huge birds to be photographed.

Currently, Lindsay is president of SOSSA (Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association). For Lindsay the study of albatrosses started with the Wandering Albatross, which visit the waters off Bellambi each winter, where they gorge on cuttlefish; this was in the seventies. In those days they were numerous, but now the birds are somewhat scarce in these waters. This is due mainly to the activities of long-line fishermen. Lindsay spoke with regret of the general decline in numbers of all species of albatrosses and was fearful for the future of these birds.

Lindsay described the catching, banding and measuring of the albatrosses and of the extensive study of the data collected. He touched on the blood sampling and revolutionary DNA study by genetic scientists as an important step in international research.

Albatrosses are conveniently divided into three groups:

1. Great – Wandering, Royal and Amsterdam – by far the largest birds, some with a wingspan of 3.5 metres;
2. Mollymawks – which include Shy, Black-browed, Buller's, Yellow-nosed, Grey-headed, and other named species; and
3. Sooty – Sooty and Light-mantled.

It is good to know also that for his pioneering work done on the study of albatrosses, the late Doug Gibson has a bird in this family named in his honour.

The audience greatly enjoyed the address and many questions were asked. Lindsay has a well deserved reputation as an ornithologist; he is the author of a number of published articles and is frequently quoted in the media. A vote of thanks from us all was given by Gwen Robinson.

Here are some extracts from the September 2000 issue of *Corella*, the bird-banders' magazine. In each case the record is for the oldest (greatest time since banding) and/or longest (greatest distance from banding site) recovery so far recorded for the species concerned. If nothing else, they give a feeling for species' lifespan.

Musk Duck. Banded near Ballarat, Vic, and seen near there 6 years 2 months later.

Australasian Shoveler. Banded near Joanna, SA, and recovered dead at Vineyard, NSW, 982 km ENE and 10 years 6 months later (oldest and longest).

Chestnut Teal. Banded near Longford, Tas, and recovered dead there (near power wires) 6 years and 5 months later.

King Penguin. Banded at Ile de la Possession, south Indian Ocean, and recaptured at Heard Island, Antarctica after 6 years 10 months and 1735 km SE (oldest).

Little Penguin. Banded at Phillip Is, Vic, and found dead at Sandringham Beach, Vic, 21 years 2 months later and 64 km NNW (oldest).

Southern Giant-Petrel. Banded at Macquarie Is. and recaptured there 19 years 10 months later.

Northern Giant-Petrel. Banded at Macquarie Is. and recaptured there 29 years 5 months later.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater. Banded at Coffs Harbour and recaptured there 21 years later.

Sooty Shearwater. Banded at Lion Is., Broken Bay and recaptured there 7 years 3 months later.

Royal Albatross. Banded on Campbell Is. near NZ and recovered dead (long-line fishing) off Tasmania 27 years later and 1904 km WNW (oldest).

Ruddy Turnstone. Banded at Broome and recaptured there 12 years 5 months later.

Great Knot. Banded at Broome and recaptured there 14 years 6 months later.

Beach Stone-curlew. Banded at Nambucca and seen at Sandon River, NSW, 13 years 8 months later and 111 km N (oldest).

Double-banded Plover. Banded at Werribee, Vic, and recaptured there 13 years 10 months later.

Tasmanian Thornbill. Banded on Flinders Is., and recaptured there 5 years 11 months later.

Black-headed Honeyeater. Banded near Hobart and recaptured there 8 years 7 months later.

White-breasted Robin. Banded at Manjimup, WA, and recaptured there 6 years 3 months later.

Logrunner. Banded at Maleny, Qld, and recaptured there 6 years 9 months later.

Varied Sittella. Banded at Sandy Creek, SA, and recaptured there 6 years 11 months later.

Golden Whistler. Banded at Bridgewater, SA, and recaptured there 18 years later.

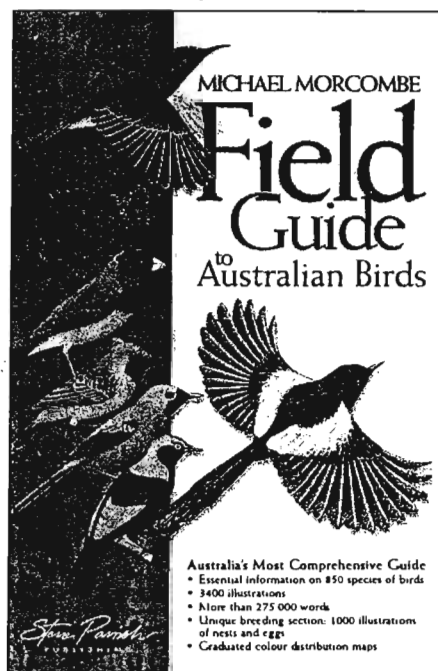
Figbird. Banded at Buderim, Qld, and recovered there dead 16 years 8 months later.

Black Currawong. Banded Cradle Valley, Tas, and seen nearby 6 years 11 months later

Identification system Double-page design and presentation of information are unique: identification information in note form beside the illustration on the right-hand page; more extensive information on behaviour, calls and song on the left.

Page layout Authoritative identification text is horizontally aligned with the illustration on the right to facilitate comparisons. The horizontal alignment is complimented by vertical alignment where appropriate. There are 4 to 6 species per page, on average.

Geographical coverage This guide covers the wider Australian territories, not previously included in any Australian field guide (but included in the *Birds Australia Handbook*): Norfolk, Lord Howe, Christmas and Cocos Islands, Torres Strait islands, Heard Island.



Unique breeding section For the first time in Australian guides, nests, as well as eggs, are shown a 68-page breeding section cross-referenced to species text.

QuickFind feature Bird families are amalgamated into about 30 groups, listed on the back cover and introduction. Colour tags in text and on cover flap lead to the position in the book.

Maps This guide includes almost 800 maps, showing in colour and detail the range of each species. A unique feature is the use of light, medium and dark tints of colour to define the variances in range. Where a species has more than one race, different colour is used for each race.

The book 448 pages, 245 x 169 mm; fully indexed by scientific and common names; contents page; comprehensive introductory soft cover with flaps for extra strength, QuickFind colour tags and page marking.

Saturday 16 September provided great weather for the first day of the Olympics and a beautifully mild spring day for a great day of birdwatching in **Mount Annan Botanic Gardens**. White Ibis, Masked Lapwings, Crested Pigeons, Red-rumped Parrots, Long-billed Corellas and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were all to be seen while we waited in the carpark for the 9 a.m. start. We were soon off in convoy, led by **Alan Leishman** to the first stop of the morning: a drop-in visit on **Graham Friar** and **Sue Kozanski**, who were doing banding work. When we arrived, they were processing their morning mist-net captures, and we were immediately treated to in-hand views of the male and female Variegated and Superb Fairy Wrens – amazing how different the two species look when you compare them side by side! Next out of the collection bags was a White-browed Scrub-wren, who scolded us from the undergrowth on gaining its release. Other birds captured included Silvereyes and Red-browed Finches. While we were there, Alan was called away to disentangle an entire flock of Silvereyes caught in one of the nets – definitely work requiring a delicate touch and a bit of patience, as the little guys can really get tangled up. It's always nice when you see a lifer, and the view of the Weebills which turned up in the other net some time later was a pure delight!

We left the banders to continue their work, and the convoy headed off. Alan had a treat in store at our next stop, when we were directed to the site of a Tawny Frogmouth family. This year's brood seemed well underway with parent no.1 atop a nest in a narrow-leafed ironbark and parent no.2 and last year's child one tree over, trying to outdo each other in a tree-stump impersonation competition. A quick stop at Lake Fitzpatrick added Australasian Grebe, Purple Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants, several Hardheads, Wood Ducks, and a Chestnut Teal. On to morning tea on a nearby hillside, where Double-barred Finches, European Goldfinch, Yellow-rumped Thornbills, and a Restless Flycatcher were seen. Tales of Latham Snipe down at Lake Gilinganadum beckoned, and we were off again. Alan was soon dashing about in the lakeside vegetation and in no time managed to flush out 5 or 6 snipe, giving all members good views, as long as they were quick enough. A few more Dusky Moorhen and Eurasian Coots, some Pacific Black Duck, a White-faced Heron, and a stately lone Yellow-billed Spoonbill; then similar waterbirds in store as we drove to Lake Nadungamba – Masked Lapwing and Pacific Black Duck both seen with chicks, with Australasian Grebe on a nest nearby.

A leisurely lunch was had at one of the picnic areas amidst more Restless Flycatchers (one pair nesting), a Pallid Cuckoo and a White-plumed Honeyeater having a bath in the midday warmth. A brief stop back at the banding area produced a nice sighting of a Black-faced Monarch before a quick drive to the Bottlebrush and Callistemon Gardens. Loud calls of protest by a Masked Lapwing intimated a nearby nest, and it wasn't long before someone had located the small scrape and single egg which the lapwing had been trying to divert us from. Although there were many different species of callistemon, they were not flowering; but we were treated to beautiful splashes of gold and green in the Wattle Garden, which was lovely. More driving, and we arrived at the Banksia Garden – no flowering here either, but a short walk along a refreshingly cool gully track revealed a fine example of a red-bellied black snake, which seemed quite oblivious of us as it went about looking for something to eat amongst the leaf-litter. Back at the Visitors Centre for a quick snack and a quick look at steel-caged Wollemi pine and several dozen waratahs (even a white one) in full flower. We finished the day by tackling the Terrace Garden: definitely a must-see if visiting Mount Annan. Gorgeous massed display of wildflowers in pink, white and yellow hues – even a few flowering Sturt desert peas. A delightful meandering pathway up the hillside, where near the top we encountered a covey of most confiding Brown Quail. A much enjoyed birding day with a great final count of 73 species, as listed below.

Brown Quail	Spotted Turtledove	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail
Australian Wood Duck	Crested Pigeon	Weebill	Willie Wagtail
Pacific Black Duck	Galah	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Chestnut Teal	Long-billed Corella	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Dusky Woodswallow
Hardhead	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Yellow Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Australasian Grebe	Rainbow Lorikeet	Little Wattlebill	Australian Magpie
Little Pied Cormorant	Musk Lorikeet	Noisy Friarbird	Australian Raven
Little Black Cormorant	Eastern Rosella	Noisy Miner	Richard's Pipit
White-faced Heron	Red-rumped Parrot	Lewin's Honeyeater	Double-barred Finch
Australian White Ibis	Pallid Cuckoo	White-plumed Honeyeater	Red-browed Firetail
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Eastern Spinebill	European Goldfinch
Black-shouldered Kite	Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo	Eastern Yellow Robin	Welcome Swallow
Brown Falcon	Tawny Frogmouth	Eastern Whipbird	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Nankeen Kestrel	Laughing Kookaburra	Golden Whistler	Clamorous Reed-Warbler
Purple Swamphen	Superb Fairy-wren	Grey Shrike-thrush	Silvereye
Dusky Moorhen	Variegated Fairy-wren	Black-faced Monarch	Common Blackbird
Eurasian Coot	Spotted Pardalote	Restless Flycatcher	Common Starling
Latham's Snipe	Striated Pardalote	Maggie-lark	Common Myna
Masked Lapwing			

By the time this goes to print, the Olympics will have been and gone, but weren't they wonderful? And much as I would have liked the prize for the Magic Moment, I have to content myself with the Simple Birdo's Magic Moment.

As with the Olympics, my garden has been "The Best Ever", filled with flowers, blossoms and BIRDS, from the little brown thornbills to the king parrots and, yes, of course, the occasional sulphur-crested cockatoo, though I don't give him any encouragement to share in the rations, which I consider to be only the after-dinner mints.

The shy satin bowerbird loves to have a really good splash in the bath, but not if anyone is looking, thank you, whereas the sparrows, with their unfortunate cultural background of the bath-house at the end of the street, needs must all be in together, even in the 8 cm flower saucer on the patio.

The aggressive little wattlebird, thinks he owns the Ned Kelly grevillea at the back door, so occasionally there's a confrontation with a bowerbird. How *do* they miss the branches! Indeed, the same aggressive wattlebird thinks he owns the whole garden! Investigating the even noisier racket than the one which wakens my visitors at daybreak, I discovered a wattlebird going berserk on one end of a branch of the tobacco plant, tree size, while at the other end was a grey butcherbird quite unperturbed. Frustration was eventually too much, so the wattlebird moved along and poked the butcherbird in the chest (breast) until it suited him to move to the bird-bath, have a drink and fly off. What the heck!

The white-browed scrubwrens and the superb blue wrens take turns to perform a dance down the window pane, landing with delicate precision to take their bow from the yellow banksia rose, conveniently growing across the window. And a bonus, with the solar-cool windows I was able to watch the change from two jenny wrens to a boy and a girl!!

Only this morning, I saw a bowerbird, bathing in the bath under the grevillea, looking as with the superb blue wren, as if he'd spilled his dinner down his shirt, so I guess it's another case of the manly inheritance.

So – Magic Moments for the Simple Birdo? A male king parrot pausing momentarily in the thick double white blossoms of the prunus? The grey shrike-thrush ALMOST taking cheese from my hand? Or the male superb blue wren and a male scarlet honeyeater, drinking at the same time from either side of the aforementioned flower saucer? What do *you* think?

HOODED PLOVER SURVEY Details of this were given in the last August edition of *IBOC News*. Chris Brandis has not received any response to his request for beach-checkers. Time is running out, so please phone him on 4296 2837 without delay if you want to take part.

BACKYARD BIRDS SURVEY Contrary to the reproduced newspaper articles, this survey can be carried out on any seven days during this month of November, but with the proviso not during periods of rain or windy weather. There is a separate form for experienced birdwatchers to complete, which IBOC members might care to obtain from Holly Parsons. The other forms seek information as to the composition of your garden, the pets that have access to it, and food and water availability, and are returnable to the University of Wollongong's School of Biological Sciences. It will be interesting to see how each of our individual studies compares with overall conclusions reached.

Watch the birdies to map out full picture

WOLLONGONG ADVERTISER 18/10/00

By NATHAN SIMPSON

Don't be surprised to see residents perched in their backyards equipped with a pen, paper and bird wildlife books next month.

Birds Australia is seeking 2000 willing residents to spend 20 minutes a day, each day (between 7am-10am), during November to monitor birdlife in their yards. The survey, titled Birds in Backyards, also covers Sydney and Newcastle.

"We expect to find an unusual abundance of birds due to the fact we are so close to the escarpment," Birds in Backyards project leader Holly Parsons said.

"The main focus of the survey will be to find where all the birds have gone and which ones are the real urban survivors.

"If people find they do not have many birds around their area this can also be helpful as we can then attempt to reintroduce bird life in those regions.

"We've already received an amazing response from the community but we're looking for more people from our region to become involved."

Wollongong University representative Dr Kristine French said the study was also geared to finding residential pockets where, some birds - once common across the area - still existed.

"We are particularly interested in locating some of the small birds



Illawarra residents have been urged to keep a lookout for bird species in their backyards during November. The exercise is part of a bird survey undertaken by Birds Australia.

which appear to be declining, species like the eastern yellow robin, superb fairy wren and the red-browed finch," she said.

The Australian Museum's Dr Richard Major said bird life in our cities was changing, thus the importance of the project.

"This change may be related to garden fashions or loss of surrounding bushland," he said.

"But it also appears that some

larger birds that thrive in suburbia exclude the smaller birds.

"Pied currawongs and noisy miners are well suited to gardens dominated by lawn and scattered trees but currawongs eat eggs and miners attack small birds."

Ms Parsons said the key to the program's success was community involvement.

"We would like residents of urban areas between Newcastle

and Wollongong, with all types of gardens, including inner-city terraces, to participate," she said.

Photographs of the 20 target species can be viewed on the project's web site at www.austmus.gov.au/biodiversity/backyardbirds.

For more information or to register for the project contact Holly Parsons on 4221 3436 email backyardbirds@uow.edu.au.

Flock to join survey - appeal

By DANIELLE WOOLAGE

Wollongong residents are asked to keep an eagle eye on any fowl activity in their gardens.

Wollongong University biology lecturer Kristine French, who is involved in one of the biggest bird surveys ever to be undertaken, has appealed to the community to help collate evidence for the survey.

Dr French said bird life in urban areas was constantly changing and the survey aimed to discover the real estate preference of 20 bird species in the Wollongong area.

"We want to know which

gardens particular species of birds live in and if residential pockets popular with some species still remain so," she said.

Dr French said a decline in the population of smaller birds, particularly in urban areas, was a cause for concern. Attacks on smaller birds from aggressive predators such as the miner bird and the currawong (pictured) could be responsible.

Dr French said people could help determine the reasons smaller birds were being driven out of urban gardens by participating in the survey.

"All people have to do is count

the number of birds (from the list of 20 species) they see in their backyard over a consecutive seven-day period in November," she said.

"We are particularly interested in locating some of the small bird species like the eastern yellow robin, superb fairy wren and red-browed finch."

To register for the project call Holly Parson on 4221 3436 or email backyardbirds@uow.edu.au.

Pictures of the 20 target species can be viewed on the project's web site at: www.austmus.gov.au/biodiversity/backyardbirds



ILLAWARRA MERCURY 11/10/00

In all my years of Illawarra residency I had never walked the lengths of the **Mount Keira** and **Mount Kembla Ring Tracks**, just certain sections of the former, two of which had been covered on IBOC outings. So in fine afternoon weather on Friday 22 September last, I set off on the **Mount Pleasant Track** from Parrish Avenue on the south side of the Rhododendron park. Up the slope I eventually hit the powerline; the only shock I received was the blocked trail with overgrown vegetation. However, retracing my steps a few metres, I found the track marker at ankle height, directing me into the more densely timbered area to the Mount Keira Ring Track. On the way I encountered the first of five NP&WS signs advising of rehabilitation work done under the Bush Regeneration Program (phone 4229.5214) and, among the boulders, the first of three Scaly Thrushes in separate locations. Higher up I enjoyed views across to Broker's Nose, Corrimal and Towradgi Beaches, and Wollongong before detouring right for The Jumpers (are they associated with certain marsupials or items of clothing or what?); this track comes out at the entrance gate to Mount Keira Summit, which I visited with an overseas friend at a later date.

I continued on the Ring Track on the other side of Mount Keira Road, with which I was familiar. A dead ringtail possum lying by the side of Camp Road seemed in keeping with the derelict state of the cottage nearby and the abandoned vehicle wrecks in this area. Damage previously caused by trailbikes has, however, been significantly prevented by log barriers set across the track. A table and seats under a fig tree and boardwalk over watercourse sections are respectively long-established and recent user-friendly measures that have been introduced. I had splendid views across to the Nan Tien Temple and Lake Illawarra before making the short Byarong Park detour down to the archery range. I wondered if Simon Fairweather's Olympic gold might lead to an increase in participants in this sport.

Back on the Mount Keira Ring Track I descended to Geordie's Flat (anyone know who Geordie was?) to the accompaniment of the cries of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, about six in number. At the elbow of the main road I bypassed the Ausburn Track (Ken was a former head of the University of Wollongong's Physics Department and a foundation member of the South Coast Conservation Society) and started climbing again through the tall timber, reaching the Mount Pleasant Track inside half an hour. Not far from my initial thrush sighting I was thrilled to come across an echidna.

During the walk of about seven kilometres in less than four hours I recorded 28 bird species (22 passerines), all of which, except for the Yellow Thornbill, are regular sightings in my study area in the foothills of Thirroul. In addition to the prevalence of the White-browed Scrubwren, of note were its Large-billed relative, Wonga Pigeon, and, above all, the Scalies, each of which foraged silently, but warily, and in full view.

Seven days and six centimetres of much needed rain later, I tackled the Mount Kembla Ring and Summit Tracks, again in bright afternoon sunshine. I took the first vehicular track south from the corner of Cordeaux Road and Harry Graham Drive, after observing a pair of Wood Ducks with 13 (a quacker's dozen?) youngsters and then a nervous deer, both species seeking refuge on opposite sides of the road. I discovered my error when, after a steady descent along a narrow footpath, I struck a wide, cleared track under a powerline and a large shed housing hundreds of trays of cement tubes for use in the local coalmines. Backtracking, I found a bridle path which soon brought me on to the Ring Track. Within half an hour I detoured left down a track through coral trees with steps in need of maintenance and had lunch on an old wooden seat in a clearing. Here, with muted calls of King Parrots behind me, I watched a pair of Whistling Kites high over the treetops and peered into the openings of an old coal mine, which I'm told was called PK2, almost concealed by vegetation, notably flowering crofton-weed and wild tobacco.

Beside a pond, occupied by frogs and dragonflies, the Ring Track turned off right from the vehicular track and took me through a long stand of cabbage-tree palms before the quite steep ascent up well-hewn steps to Mount Kembla Lookout. Here, I veered right on to the Summit Track for a further climb to Mount Kembla Summit at 534 metres, 65 higher than Mount Keira. On the way I stopped to view the suburbs of Dapto and West Dapto and tried to spot the freight train as it snaked and braked its way down the Moss Vale line through the dense timber. Bush irises were in profusion near the top, where I had my first unobstructed sighting of a Pilotbird as it crossed the track, called regularly and stopped to preen itself while waiting for its mate to catch up. From the

trig point I looked across to Port Kembla Harbours with the Nan Tien Temple in-between. Heading back to Kembla Lookout, I followed parts of the inner original Summit track, blocked in many places by fallen timber. Back to my car down the Cordeaux Road, I found the official northern access to the Ring Track by the side of a cottage at no. 141, but the only sign I could see was a faded one, rusted into a tree and indicating prohibited entry into the patrolled area of Australian Iron & Steel Collieries. Along the combined walks of about 8.5 kilometres taking me four and a half hours, I clocked up 37 bird species (27 passerines).

Both the Mount Keira and Mount Kembla Ring Tracks could extend to separate day's outings for the club, but for those members who are not mountain goats and prefer to descend, I'd suggest a clockwise route for the former and anti-clockwise for the latter, so as to avoid the steepest climbs on the northern and southern sides respectively. Whilst there is a fair degree of similarity in vegetation and birdlife along the Ring Tracks, the Summit areas are in marked contrast, particularly in respect of the much less human impact that has been made upon Mount Kembla.

On a roll with walks round Mounts Keira and Kembla, I spent another three afternoons exploring other tracks in this region. On 5 October last, my travels along the **Kembla Ridge Track** were brought to a halt after less than two hours on account of a bushfire up the side of a deep gully between Cordeaux Road and the mount, **Kembla West**; one of many fires in the State deemed to have been deliberately lit during this period. Having seen my Subaru at the entrance gate, the convoy of firefighters that came through were concerned that my safety was ensured. Among the 22 bird species I recorded, most noteworthy was an Australian Raven that was giving a Whistling Kite much curry.

Not to be outdone, I headed north and for two hours traversed the **Stafford's Farm Track** and investigated part of the rainforest at the end of it. The approach is across from Mount Kembla Scramble Circuit just below O'Brien's Gap. The walk is very easy-going, opening out into wide grassed areas and would be ideal for a mid-week outing. A fine view can be had of the face of **Mount Brisbane**. Among the tally of 29 bird species, most conspicuous was the Wonga Pigeon, appearing and disappearing at a number of spots.

Five days later I walked the Sydney Water Access Road from Kembla Heights, that for a while runs parallel with the Stafford's Farm Track on the eastern side (what a pity there isn't a link between the two through the forest to form a circular route) and meets **O'Brien's Road**, Figtree at the reservoir above Nareena Hills. After passing a sign warning of 1080 fox baits and then the relics of the old pipeline, I reached the locked gate, bypassed by the trailbikes, inside half an hour and made the steep descent down the sealed section of the road. Further on I had excellent views through the coral trees of Kemira Colliery valley. Such a shame that this location and the magnificent views of the coastline from the reservoir (through a parade of dragonflies) should be so marred by the sight of dumped and discarded rubbish. This whole area, I feel, has great potential for walkers and tourists alike. I then turned north and west, picking up the wide green track that comes up from Terrie Avenue and Sleigh Street, Figtree and leads up to **Mount Nebo** at 250 metres. Interesting to see the spelling of Nibo on the Central Mapping Authority's geodetic station trig point. On my way down the western slope I stopped to observe an active Leaden Flycatcher among the 25 species I jotted down during the two and a half hours reccy, while overhead the Raven and Whistling Kite were at loggerheads again.

On 12 October I tackled the **Bridle Track**, which perhaps should be renamed Barrier Track as it's far from being the easy walk of old. Obstacles I encountered were the much overgrown sections of lantana and crofton-weed, tree-falls, rock-falls, troughs made through water erosion, and two adult red-bellied black snakes that after much reluctance relinquished their sun-spots. It was with mixed feelings that I heard the wailing calls of a small flock of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos in the nearby timber, as one of their common names is funeral cockatoo! After all this struggle, I was amused by the old sign at the foot of the descent near the Moss Vale railway line which read: walkers and authorised vehicles only. Still, the trek wasn't without its rewards: more tremendous views across to the Tasman Sea, a startled Superb Lyrebird, and the very close sighting of an inquisitive group of four Large-billed Scrubwrens. An investigation of the wooded area along and below the railway line and bordering the powerline along a series of vehicular tracks at the back of West Dapto helped bring my total of bird species to 21. Back at the car I watched the Whistling Kite circling in the sky unharried this time, and then I drove to Robertson's Lookout to survey, with some satisfaction, the areas that had become much more familiar to me during the recent five outings.

Epilogue: A story is never really over, is it? As Emerson remarked: Experience is unlimited, but it is never completed. Wanting to suss out more of the **Mount Kembla Ring Track** area, I spent another warm afternoon there on 26 October. Ignoring the demolished 'no through sign' just past the pond and turn-off of the Ring Track itself (nearby I glimpsed five goats up the bank – they must have come to see if I were one of the mountain kind), I proceeded south and east down the vehicular track. Just beyond a locked gate (yet again circumvented by trailbikes), marking the boundary to the escarpment area, stood a Farmborough Fire Trail sign, a derelict stables enveloped by lantana and wild tobacco, and a disused tennis court. Behind this a horse/bike trail led downhill under a telegraph line, where I disturbed an echidna and a red-bellied black snake, on to a sealed road, the top end of Farmborough Road. Again the Nan Tien Temple occupied my view across to the Tasman. On my return to the northern approach to the Ring Track and on a bend north of the historic mine site, I detoured down a steep bridle track, which I suspects leads to Cordeaux Heights.

Among the 30 bird sightings, I picked up four extras to the previous walk, including a pair of Large-billed Scrubwrens and the Green Catbird. The following day I read in the local newspaper that Mount Kembla has a colony of tiger snakes. If I make another foray into these parts, I doubt it will be with the same blissful ignorance.

BIGNET SYNOPSIS

Jack Baker

Here are the highlights of the BIGNET meeting held on 9 & 10 September last at Glen Davis.

Conservation Sub-Committee

- Nature Conservation Council (NCC) has a conservation network and an internet site to highlight current conservation issues. NCC requires volunteers with bird expertise to make contact through the internet site.
- Concern about the threat of clearing native vegetation in NSW. BIGNET to write to the NSW Scientific Committee to enquire about listing as a key threatening process.
- Discussion about a BIGNET conservation coordinator and ways to fund such a position.
- Birds in Backyard project of Birds Australia (SNAG) volunteer surveyors required; registration form distributed.
- Conservation Information Kits are being developed.

BIGNET meeting

- Promotion of bird clubs, birding and conservation through bird clubs: a presentation by Charlie Andrews, Publicity Officer, NSW FOC.
- Report from Pat Tap, Western region NSW State Forest, establishing a research advisory group with BIGNET representative. Alan Morris nominated provisionally.
- Shortland Wetland Centre financial problems and threatened closure. Many thanks to IBOC members for letters of support.
- Twitchathon 28 & 29 October: registration forms available at IBOC meeting or from Frances Czwalinna (Ph 9872 4185). Proceeds to the Birds Australia appeal for Newhaven.
- Birds Australia Atlas co-ordination: Tony Saunders; ongoing.
- BIGNET structure. Is there need for an electronic or human secretariat?
- Birds Australia have launched a threatened species appeal.
- Hunter BOC and Birds Australia: continuing concern regarding wader habitat loss in the Kooragang Island area.
- Tony Diamond (Cumberland BOC) to form a steering committee for a project involving the Welsh TV birdman, Iola Williams coming to Australia; maybe BBC/ABC involvement in making a TV series and promoting birdwatching and conservation.
- Next BIGNET meeting proposed for 17 & 18 or 24 & 25 March 2001 in the Hunter Region.

To help set the stage for Alan and Kerri Lewis' forthcoming presentation, I thought I'd delve into a few books for background information on *Fratercula arctica* and associated seabirds. As a lad I loved to draw and colour this unusual bird. The Puffin is one of the Auk family of the northern hemisphere that includes the Razorbill and Guillemot and are medium in size, with plumage of black above and white below, and that propel themselves under water with their wings rather than their feet. On land it adopts an upright posture, like the Penguin, its southern counterpart, which occupies a similar evolutionary niche thousands of miles away, but has given up flight to become one of the best avian swimmers.

There is much doubt as to how the Penguin acquired its name. It seems it may have first come from the Latin nomenclature for the Great Auk: *Pinguinus impennis*. Another suggestion is the Welsh *pen gwyn*, meaning 'white head', but this would have likely first applied to one of the Auks, quite possibly the Puffin, which was common (and still is?) in North Wales, as, in contrast, the Penguin's head is black. The word Puffin with its obsolete alternative, Puffing, is thought to have arisen in Anglo-Norman England in connection with the trade in salted birds and until the 18th century was applied to the cured carcass of the nestling Shearwater, a prized delicacy supplied from the Scilly Isles and the Calf of Man. In its fattening for slaughter, the young bird's body was puffed up to become swollen. The Puffin is still a traditional source of food on the Faeroe Islands, where it is caught in long-handled pole nets.

The Puffin is easily recognisable by its chunky, triangular bill, which during the courtship and breeding periods develops horny outer coverings and brightly coloured stripes of yellow, red and blue. This body part has attracted other names with the analogy of something hewn or chipped off. From Northumberland we have Coulter Neb from the Celtic, literally meaning 'ploughshare bill', and from the Shetland and Orkney Islands Norie or Norrie, an Icelandic borrowing. Along the east coast of Britain it has been referred to as the Sea Parrot.

In addition to its distinctive bill, the Puffin has white face patches, small wings, short thick legs set far back, and red feet, and is clumsy in its movements on land and through the air; all of which adds up to a clownlike appearance. Coincidentally or not, the word clown is derived from the Old Norse *klunni*, meaning a clumsy, boorish fellow.

Not surprisingly, there is a tragic counterpoint to the comical side of the Puffin story. Concerns have been raised for the future of this bird and its relatives. Puffin population numbers have significantly diminished over time through the overfishing of herring stocks, on which it depends. In the habit of laying only a single egg, it may not be able to raise any young for several years. Capable of diving to considerable depths, it has been a victim of drowning when caught up in fishing nets and also of starvation when unable to swim or dive for food because of feathers heavily clogged with oil through tanker-spills.

Living way downunder, should we be too bothered about the survival of the Puffin up towards the Arctic, especially when we have so many threatened bird and other animal species on our own front? The situation and relationship between us and this bird might evoke words from Stephen Sondheim's haunting song from his 1973 stage show *Send in the Clowns*: Isn't it rich?! Are we a pair?! Me here at last on the ground, you in mid-air.



A MOULT JOKE

Richard Miller sent in this little story of a novice birdwatcher who was desperate to see a ruff. Finding a waif with its feathers badly faded and worn, he exclaimed excitedly, "That's so scruffy, it *must* be a ruff." "Er, sorry," replied the mystery wader. "I'm a frayed knot."

We do not wish to know that!



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 234

December 2000

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

" One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$25 SINGLE \$20 JUNIOR \$5

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A MESSAGE from the PRESIDENT

Kevin McGregor

The end of 2000 is approaching fast and finishing another satisfactory year for our club. Thanks again to the Executive Committee and our members for their support and assistance during my two years as President (with that short break at the beginning of 2000). Our membership is growing and the midweek and day walks have been successful and we have certainly fulfilled the objects of our Club. The two camps at Kangaroo Valley and "Woodlands" Rawdon Vale were enjoyed by all those attending.

The Annual Meeting saw the election of the following officers to our Club:

*Vice President: Lorraine Pincus
Secretary: Darryl Goldrick
Treasurer: Bronwyn Wilson
Executive members: Peg McKinlay, Kerri Lewis, Chris Brandis and Bruce O'Brien
Editor: Mike Morphett
Library: Joan Wylie.*

Life Membership was bestowed upon Horace (Horrie) Ward, Barbara Hales and Brian Hales.

You will note that the position of President was not filled and the Executive is looking into filling that as soon as possible. If you feel you would like to fill that position, be assured that it is not an onerous job and you will enjoy it. You have the full backing and support of the Executive members and the program will be completed for 2001 before you take over..

Thanks again for allowing me to lead the Club for the past two years.

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

MEETING Monday 11 December at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Avenue, Fairy Meadow. This will be our usual very informal **Christmas Get-Together** with the emphasis on fun and entertainment. To quote Wal Emery, it will be a real beauty, which is a cryptic clue as to one of the items on the program. That's the only cat we're letting out of the bag. Please read on for Fae McGregor's reminder.

MONTHLY OUTING (1) Saturday 16 December to **Byarong Park**, Mount Keira Road at 4.30 pm. It is located next to the Kum-ba-yah Girl Guides Camp and across from the archery range. There will be no organised walk; people will be able to explore the area, such as the Mount Keira Ring Track, at random and then get together for a Christmas sausage sizzle put on by mine hosts, **Kevin & Fae McGregor**. So bring your own salads and Chateau Binocular. Don't be put off by the precipitation that's been around the past month and caused the cancellation of the Mount Kembla Ring Track and Killalea State Recreation Area outings – Kevin will have the large tarpaulin erected if need be.

MONTHLY OUTING (2) Sunday 14 January 2001 to **Mount Alexander**, Mittagong. Meet at 8.30 am at Lake Alexandra Reserve, near the end of Victoria Street, Mittagong (i.e. within the town). The reserve and lake are approximately 500 metres north of the Hume Highway and from the centre of Mittagong's shopping centre. Several tracks lead from Lake Alexandra, including a Mount Alexandra summit track and a circuit track. We will decide on the day which track to take, but it is likely that we will follow a part of each. Lake Alexandra Reserve contains picnic facilities, and we will probably return here for lunch. Our walk leader will be **Bruce O'Brien**.

MID-WEEK OUTING There will be no such outing this month or next, but on **Wednesday 7 February 2001** the Club will stage its annual visit to **Windang Estuary**, meeting at 5.30 pm at the eastern end of the pine trees on the northern side of the entrance to Lake Illawarra. After a walk, under the leadership of **Darryl Goldrick**, round the sand flats to observe an avian assortment (which might inspire folk to respond to Chis Brandis' invitation, if they haven't done so already – see his 'Lake Illawarra Entrance Survey Update' report in this newsletter), members and friends can stay on for the usual supper at the picnic tables; so bring along your eats and drinks of whatever vintage.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 23 January at 7.30 pm at **Horrie and Betty Ward's** home at 34 Cabbage Tree Lane, Fairy Meadow. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and to contact Lorraine Pincus, Vice President, beforehand.

FEBRUARY 2001 NEWSLETTER Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 24 January. Please add your name to your article/item.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due and, as you will note above, have been increased for family and single adult rates, to help offset rising costs. The last increase arose five years ago. As before, your prompt payment will save the committee much extra work.

I TOUGHT I TAW A PUDDY TAT

Dave Thomson

On a recent trip, we came on a conservation exercise in the north of South Australia. It's called "The Arid Recovery Project" and seems to be run jointly by the Olympic Dam mine people and other organisations. They're fencing areas, clearing out feral animals, restocking original natives etc.

A publicity leaflet pictures a feral cat shot during this work and found to contain, undigested, 33 small lizards, a House Mouse and a Zebra Finch. And that, they say, was only one of the estimated 12 million feral cats in Australia.

Kerri-Anne & Alan Lewis led us on a search through the British Isles for that elusive Puffin and we experienced slides of all the places visited by them in the "funny" little left hand drive French car. The slides showed us a picturesque view of their holiday including castles, buildings, churches, landscapes and of course the birdlife they encountered on their journey.

The running commentary by both Alan and Kerri enlightened us of the wonderful time they had during their stay in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland and included some disappointments in going to sites to find that Puffin and discovering the area was closed off or the birds had left.

The birds seen by them during the holiday were varied and the slides were excellent.

A vote of thanks for their presentation was moved by Fae McGregor and our members certainly enjoyed themselves.

The birds shown to us on the night were:

Blackbird	Chaffinch	Eider	Puffin [Got it!!!!]
Canada Goose	Common Gull	Oystercatcher	Black-headed Gull
Blue Tit	Wood Duck	Rook	Common Pheasant
Crested Tit	Lapwing	Guillemot	Barn Owl
Mute Swan	Marsh Harrier	Razorbill	Common Kestrel
Red Robin	Magpie	Kittiwake	

PUFFINS - NORTH and SOUTH?

Richard Miller

Recently received: a vacation postcard from my sister Christine, holidaying on the Scottish Isles. "Glorious weather everyday, lots of boat trips and fresh air walks, seabirds and wildlife, including golden and white-tailed sea-eagles, otters, seals, adder etc. We were as near puffins as on this postcard."



In a subsequent letter reflecting on her holiday experiences, she wrote – "Where do you go in Australia for close-ups of them or is it not their territory?"

I was part-way through my letter of response, explaining that many of the northern hemisphere birds were just that and didn't occur on the southern oceans and sea coasts, when I suddenly remembered that there is an 'established breeding colony' further south, which has been increasing over recent years despite the pressures of urban development in the area, and where similarly one can get very close to puffins. Although I can't find any record of this southern distribution in the *Breeding Atlas of Australian Birds*, I have had chance to view many of the birds myself at close quarters and observe the variety of form and plumage. While the location of this colony is not widely advertised, if any members have not had chance to see the birds, it may be possible to organise an outing to the site. Contact any of the committee members for further details.

Thursday 19: Welcome to 'Woodlands', Rawdon Vale. The rain that had dogged us all the way from Wollongong has finally cleared and the sun is shining. We are seven in camp tonight with the late arrivals sighting a Pheasant Coucal on Bignells Road as they drove the last few miles into camp. Dollarbirds have been calling all afternoon. We ended with a tally of 30 species around the campsite.

Friday 20: After a good night's rest lulled by the gentle sounds of the Barrington River we awoke to a fine sunny day and the calls of Rufous Whistlers in the river oaks. We got ourselves and the rest of the amenities organised and checked out the birds and other inhabitants around the campsite. Unfortunately the bridge over the river was closed to all but foot traffic. This gave the two resident water dragons a peaceful time sunbaking. Vehicles had to wait to cross until the level in the river fell after the recent rain and use the rocky ford.

Another arrival, but where were the Wyllys with the shower buckets & boiler? Everyone was hanging out for a hot shower after the warm day. They eventually arrived at 6.30 pm, having had car problems on the way. How everyone scurried to get the fire going and fill buckets for a shower. We are now 12 in camp. Dinner was eaten all together under the large tarp, which was christened "Woodlands by the River Restaurant". A convivial evening was had by all.

Saturday 21: Another fine, if cloudy day. We spent the morning walking upstream along the banks of the river. There was a large number of small birds flitting about, but they proved very difficult to get a good enough look for positive identification. No such trouble with a large water dragon that was disturbed from its sunbaking, swimming rapidly across the river. On a large boulder in the river, by some very strong rapids, was a brass plaque to a canoeist who drowned just after our previous camp in 1995.

A lazy afternoon was spent by the river, watching and listening to the Whistlers, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and the Azure Kingfisher, while the later arrivals got organised. The Hales & Peg arrived in time for afternoon tea. (They stayed in town & came out daily). The day finished with our first campfire. A very pleasant evening by the river and no mosquitoes!

Sunday 22: Our luck is still holding. Another fine warm day after the thick early morning mist had cleared; perfect for the all-day excursion to the rainforest gully on the adjacent property. We hoped to see the Crested Hawk that had been seen nesting in 1995.

A stop for morning tea at the bottom of the gully was rewarded by a visit from a Rose Robin. It was also feeding time for the local leeches. A small group of six walkers then proceeded up the steep track, while the others had a leisurely walk back to camp. We were disappointed that the track had been widened and the edge vegetation cleared. Although we saw Black-faced and Spectacled Monarchs, there was no sign of the Crested Hawk and it was very difficult to decide which tree had had the nest, as the creeper had grown over everything.

Climbing further up the track produced several Rose Robins, a Red-browed Treecreeper and the White-throated Nightjar at exactly the same spot in which it had been flushed in 1995. Everyone was able to see it as it flew down the track and circled back, only to be flushed out again. On reaching the crest of the hill, we turned off to find the return track on the other side of the gully, but it was so overgrown that we had to settle for lunch by the creek and returning by the same track.

On our return to camp a welcome shower and afternoon tea was followed by dinner at "Woodlands by the River". Another convivial evening was had by all with Fae taking photos of every table.

Monday 23: Still our luck is holding, another fine clear day. The river having fallen considerably, Ron was able to clear the ford of the larger boulders and take his FWD across. Chris Chafer drove the farm ute, kindly loaned by David, across as well. Passengers walked across the bridge and were picked up the other side. With rides available everyone went to the top of the ridge above the river. This was very dry, open forest, where we hoped for some different birds. Only saw a Scarlet Robin to add to the list. Wal carried on over the fence into an adjacent rainforest gully and was rewarded by both seeing & hearing a Noisy Pitta and Wonga Pigeon. On the return trip we scattered fairly widely over the slopes & gullies, but new birds were hard to find. We returned to camp for a late lunch and a lazy afternoon before farewelling the Hales & Peg.

Tuesday 24: The day of our trip to Gloucester Tops and you guessed it: it's cloudy & threatening to rain. After farewelling Wal & Hazel and Chris Chafer & family, the remaining 12 in four cars started for our destination. After negotiating seven fords across the Gloucester River, we stopped at the bottom of the track to Gloucester Tops for morning tea, in a pleasant N.P. picnic area. Once again birds were hard to come by. We proceeded up the climb to the top with light rain falling. At the top we walked the short rainforest walk and were rewarded with the most beautiful mossy waterfall & gully, looking very fresh after all the rain. Just like the photos. No new birds were sighted in this area. When we returned to the cars, we saw Tree Martins and a Striated Pardalote nesting in the adjacent trees. We then moved on to a delightful lunch spot with

cheeky Pied Currawongs looking for hand-outs. After much persuasion a group photo was taken by Ron. After lunch we took the track to the waterfall. There were again plenty of small birds in the thick scrub, but identification was very difficult. The waterfall was well worth seeing after all the recent rain, and was followed by a stroll along the river track back to the cars. Again few new birds were seen. The trip back to camp started in light rain, but, as we descended, we ran into better weather. When we arrived back at camp there were two new arrivals

Wednesday 25: This was our free day with no excursions planned. We all met in Gloucester for lunch with our hosts, David & Narelle and the children. The portions served for lunch were huge, so everyone needed only a light tea .

Red-backed Wrens had been sighted by the gate into the property the night before, so on the return from Gloucester I stopped to try and see them as I keep missing out. The wind was so strong that they would all have been blown back to Gloucester if they had poked a beak above the grass. The southerly had also visited camp while we were away, and there were a few loose items to be collected up when we returned.

After tea the wind died and we finished the day with a campfire on a perfect evening with brilliant stars. We were unable to locate the southern cross and had to assume that it was so low in the sky that it was hidden behind the hills.

The bird list now stands at over 100.

Thursday 26: Our luck is still holding, but the weather is much cooler with a stiff SW breeze. We split up to investigate our favourite spots; with one group going back by FWD over the river to the rainforest we had visited on Sunday, and the others off in ones & twos. I went up to the rainforest gully above the river and actually managed to hear a Noisy Pitta and almost step on a black snake. A nasty shock, a timely warning to watch where we step.

Again up to the gate to try to see the Red-backed Wrens. No luck, but saw the Hobby riding the wind up the gully alongside the road. It ended as a race to get back to camp before the thunderstorm broke. Despite the storm we all made tea in the restaurant.

Friday 27: Again fine, clear and warm with a brisk wind. When everyone was finally organised, we went down along the river, where we saw a Brown Falcon hunting. Everyone had a really good look at an Olive-backed Oriole while we had morning tea beside the river. After this break, we left the river and turned up the hills, where the stiff breeze was providing excellent thermals for the raptors. There were now two Brown Falcons, a Wedge-tailed Eagle, and a Hobby. The Hobby stooped - chasing a bird at enormous speed over the river. We were very lucky to find the nest of the Brown Falcon with one chick in a lone tree in the paddock. While watching the Falcons' nest, we realised that the curious lump in the same tree was a koala. Did we move to get a closer sighting, as it was only about 20 feet from the ground in full view. Ron headed straight back to camp for his cameras and returned in the FWD with all those who had taken the river walk back to camp earlier. A small group climbed up the ridge to the top of a small gully and were rewarded with a small family of wallabies grazing quietly by a dam. There were also a number of Wrens & Red-browed Firetails. But we were very wary of black snakes in the long damp grass! We returned to camp for lunch and then reluctantly started getting prepared to leave the next morning.

After supper we all gathered by the campfire and then piled into David's ute to cross the river & go spotlighting; 11 on the hay bales in the back and 2 plus David inside. No wonder we bottomed out crossing the river. We drove to the far rainforest gully, where we stopped at the beginning of the steep climb to listen and play the tape of the Masked Owl. A distant call was heard. We went right to the top of the track, stopping to play the tapes periodically. No luck. On the return trip a sudden bang on the roof & David stopped on the steepest section of the track. Everyone was quiet and listened as the tape was played and the Owl replied. A shadow flew across the track, circled and perched high up on an exposed branch of a gum tree over the track. Held in the beam of two spotlights, the Masked Owl watched us as we watched it. Even at that distance it was a great sight, and its huge powerful feet were very clear. A wonderful sighting and a first for many. We carried on back towards camp and then turned up the ridge above the river, but had no further luck. Back to camp for a late supper. Our thanks to David for a great night.

Saturday 28: We all were very reluctant to leave, but everyone was away by eleven as no one wished to get home too late.

Our thanks to David & Narelle for allowing us to camp once again on their lovely property and enjoy the peace and quiet by the river. Also our thanks to Kevin & Fae for their hard work in planning and organising such a great camp and putting on the fine weather. Considering the weather we had both before and after the camp, we were exceptionally lucky with our week. My thanks to everyone for their company and a highly enjoyable and relaxing week. Roll on next year!

**BIRDS RECORDED AT 'WOODLANDS' RAWDON VALE I.B.O.C. CAMP
19-28 OCTOBER 2000 WITHIN 5 KLM RADIUS**

Australian Wood Duck
Pacific Black Duck
Grey Teal
Little Pied Cormorant
Little Black Cormorant
Great Cormorant
White-faced Heron
Black-shouldered Kite
Wedge-tailed Eagle
Brown Falcon [Chicks in nest]
Australian Hobby
Nankeen Kestrel
Dusky Moorhen
Masked Lapwing [With chick]
Crested Pigeon
Bar-shouldered Dove
Wonga Pigeon
Topknot Pigeon
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
Galah
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Rainbow Lorikeet
Australian King Parrot
Crimson Rosella
Eastern Rosella
Brush Cuckoo
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo
Channel-billed Cuckoo
Pheasant Coucal
Southern Boobook
Masked Owl [The bird of the camp]
Tawny Frogmouth
White-throated Nightjar
Azure Kingfisher
Laughing Kookaburra
Sacred Kingfisher
Rainbow Bee-eater
Dollarbird
Noisy Pitta
White-throated Treecreeper
Superb Fairy-wren
Varigated Fairy-wren
Red-backed Fairy-wren
Spotted Pardalote
Striated Pardalote
Yellow-throated Scrubwren
White-browed Scrubwren
Large-billed Scrubwren
Brown Gerygone
White-throated Gerygone
Brown Thornbill
Buff-rumped Thornbill
Yellow-rumped Thornbill

Yellow Thornbill
Red Wattlebird
Little Wattlebird
Noisy Friarbird
Bell Miner
Noisy Miner
Lewin's Honeyeater
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
White-naped Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill
Jacky Winter
Scarlet Robin
Rose Robin
Eastern Yellow Robin
Eastern Whipbird
Golden Whistler
Rufous Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush
Black-faced Monarch
Spectacled Monarch
Leaden Flycatcher
Restless Flycatcher
Magpie-lark
Rufous Fantail
Grey Fantail
Willie Wagtail
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Cicadabird
Olive-backed Oriole
Grey Butcherbird
Pied Butcherbird
Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong
Australian Raven
Little Raven
Torresian Crow
White-winged Chough
Green Catbird
Satin Bowerbird
Richard's Pipit [Nesting]
Red-browed Finch
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin
Mistletoebird
Welcome Swallow
Tree Martin
Rufous Songlark
Golden-headed Cisticola
Silvereye
Bassian Thrush
Common Starling
Common Myna

Total: 106

Since June 1999 IBOC members have been surveying the entrance of Lake Illawarra and the nearby control site at Whyjuck Bay under contract to the Lake Illawarra Authority. The survey is to monitor the effect on the bird life of the \$4.5 million works designed to make the entrance a permanent opening to the sea. The works are intended to assist in flushing out the build-up of nutrients that run into and pollute the Lake and to minimise flooding at Windang and Lake Illawarra and have been completed in November 2000.

Up to November 2000, 11 members have participated in 18 surveys that took some 41 hours and have boosted the Club coffers for the benefit of the members. So far we have covered the months before the construction, the construction period, and now we will need to continue to cover the next 18 months to assess if there have been any adverse effects. If there does appear to be any adverse effects, then remedial action can be planned by the LIA to overcome these effects for the benefit of the birds using the areas.

The surveys have covered large variations in the dynamic condition of the Lake from very full to very empty. This has affected both the number of species and the total number of birds using the area, both for roosting and feeding, as shown in the table below.

Area	Species	Birds
Entrance	13 - 25	333 - 1431
Whyjuck Bay	8 - 19	33 - 186

Key species used as guides to the effect on waders are Double-banded Plovers for the winter period and Bar-tailed Godwits for the summer period as, thanks to Club members' records, we have maximum monthly counts of both species going back to the early 1980s. The Bar-tailed Godwits last summer and Double-banded Plovers this winter were at normal numbers, with up to 95 and 62 birds each respectively.

This is good news for the birds, as currently there is still plenty of tidal sand exposed for roosting and feeding. The effect of the sand movement from the dredging and increased tidal action on the food supply for waders will take another season or so to determine, and IBOC has this job for the next 18 months.

Thanks to all those who have assisted in the design of the project and the gathering of the information that will keep earning the Club much needed funds. A new roster will be drawn up and sent out shortly to those that have already nominated to participate. Any members willing to assist on these 2 to 3 hour surveys are welcome to contact me and plan to have an enjoyable walk around the Lake entrance, with training provided.

SUN-HERALD 12/11/00

Great bird in jeopardy

A MAGNIFICENT tropical bird, the southern cassowary, was chosen for the front cover of the Federal Government's *The Action Plan For Australian Birds 2000*.

But a few weeks after it launched the 700-page report, the Natural Heritage Trust has cut funding to a program which could save the cassowary by rebuilding its habitat.

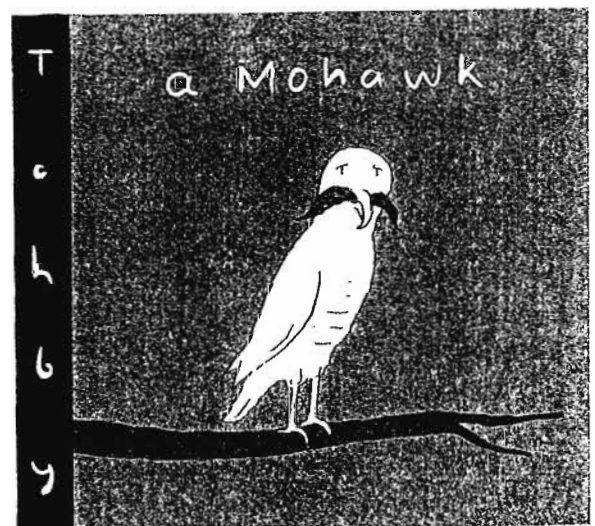
The \$140,000 program, run jointly by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the State's Centre for Tropical Rehabilitation, aimed to plant 18,000 native trees

in the Walter Hill Ranges over the next three years, providing habitat for the cassowaries.

But the project is at risk because the nursery which grows the rain-forest species for the cassowary corridors is no longer being funded.

The Action Plan For Australian Birds 2000 details more than 1,200 Australian varieties.

The cassowary is among 41 which are endangered. Another 32 are listed as critically endangered, 82 vulnerable, 155 threatened and 81 near-threatened.



SMH GOOD WEEKEND 23/9/00

In our March 2000 *IBOC News* we published a story about a bird band recovered from the bottom of an alligator pond at a zoo in the south of Queensland. That article in the banding organisation's *Flightlines* has prompted mention of a couple of other unusual recoveries in a later issue of the magazine.

In November 1982, a crocodile caught at Purari River in Papua New Guinea was found to contain a band which in June 1981 had been attached to a juvenile Masked Booby at Raine Island off the Queensland coast.

In April 1968, a Great White Shark caught at Portland, Victoria, was found to contain a band which in December 1967 had been attached to an Australasian Gannet chick at Lawrence Rocks (off Portland).

ILLUSTRATION MERCURY 29/11/00



Plastics and other debris pose huge risks for Australia's seabirds such as this gull with a wooden skewer embedded in its neck.

SOS to save birds

More than 70 per cent of coastal birds rescued by volunteer groups such as the Wildlife Information and Rescue Service have been found entangled with fishing line, hooks or plastics.

Coastcare is issuing an SOS to all Australians to help "Save Our Shorebirds" as part of Coastcare Week, which starts on December 1.

According to spokesperson Mimi Macpherson, Australia's shorebirds are under increasing pressure from human activity and coastal development.

"Many shorebirds feed and nest in Australia in summer when many Australians holiday and actively use the coast for swimming, fishing and other recreational pursuits," Ms Macpherson said.

"Coastcare encourages beachgoers to always walk on the wet sand to avoid destroying shorebird nests, and always keep dogs on a leash to protect vulnerable eggs and chicks.

"And make sure you take home your litter, especially fishing line and pack plastic," she said.

It is not just resident shorebirds and seabirds that face peril living in Australia.

Two million migratory shorebirds regularly visit our shores between September and April, with some species travelling up to 25,000km to enjoy an endless summer.

Birds such as hooded plovers and pied oystercatchers, pelicans and seagulls are particularly at risk from six pack and other plastic rings.

In Australia nearly 60,000 Coastcare volunteers are involved in projects and awareness raising activities to help protect our coastline.

For further information, phone Environment Australia's Community Information Unit on 1800 803 772 or visit web site www.environment.gov.au/marine/coastcare.

YOUR TAKE on THESE SAYINGS

from Darryl Goldrick, our Web Watcher

*The early bird....
Birds of a feather....*

*A bird in the hand....
....tomorrow a feather duster*

*Kill two birds....
Fine feathers do not....*

*One swallow....
Sauce for the goose....*

In BIRDING-AUS last October Geraldine McCarthy raised these eight bird sayings for a little word play from potential poets, and in a little over three hours back came this response from Bob Cook:-

The early bird obviously suffers from insomnia.
A bird in the hand is gunna get banded for sure.
Kill two birds, but only if they are ferals.
One swallow after you gargle.
Birds of a feather may still be different sub-species.
Today a feral, tomorrow a feather duster.
Fine feathers are not enough to get you accepted by BARC, not even a video.
Sauce for the goose, but only if a Green Pigmy.

Can any of our members come up with variations on this theme for inclusion in next year's opening *IBOC News*? - Ed.

Inspired by IBOC's field trip to **Dharawal State Recreation Area** last August, I took advantage of fine weather and a day off from Olympics duties to explore more of this area on 13 September, accessing it from an unnamed track off Darkes Forest Road, just 400 metres south of Fire Road 10H, along which club members had walked. This trail eventually connects with Fire Roads 10R and 10B, which lead on to Appin Road.

The walk took me along the north and west perimeters of 'Kinread' farm property and through woodland, forest and a rainforest gully. The locked gate with faded, corroded 'private' sign, like so many others one comes across, was easily bypassed, bringing me out on to the original O'Hare's Creek Crossing. Here and up the other bank, water erosion had exposed the telegraph cable. In this area there were other signs of human impact. Long past were the remains of a fireplace, sink unit, dunny and some other construction in a forest clearing; I couldn't determine whether occupancy and usage had been temporary or permanent. And higher up there was a landing-strip with rusting rim markers. In current usage there are well-worn horse-trails to the south, some crossing the creek, quite likely followed by the Darkes Forest Riding School. On my journey I picked up three horseshoes. A break for lunch on a rock ledge overlooking a large pool presented me with a continuous motion picture made by water beetles scudding round on the surface and casting shadows of their bodies and the outcircling ripples they made. A little further downcreek I could have done with Tom Wiley's help to identify the fish that were leisurely swimming in the clear water.

On the other side of O'Hare's Creek I stood in wonder at the sight of a lone and delicate blue sun-scented orchid nestled against a stark and large dark-grey boulder. Overhead a Brown Goshawk circled a few times and then headed west. Of note too among the 31 bird species (21 passerines and 10 non-passerines) I recorded during the five hours reccy were a breeding pair of Australasian Grebes on a large dam, adding pondweed to their nest; their yellow facial markings became almost luminescent in the sun. Also, the Australian Ravens were very active and vocal both in the paddocks and the bush. As with the wallabies, I caught just a glimpse of a Superb Lyrebird; I didn't have time to listen out for any farm noises among his repertoire of mimicked calls.

Although this area borders on that covered on the recent club outing, I found it had something additional of interest to offer and would recommend it for other club members to walk through, particularly as the ascent from O'Hare's Creek is much gentler than the 10H track, with greater tree cover and leafy underlay. However, a word of warning: the route I took is not as straightforward as my account or maps might suggest, and the horse-trails can be a bit of a maze. Because of the excitement and enjoyment one can gain from sussing out a new territory for possible club walks and camps, I'm surprised that over the years we haven't had more takers for the role of excursions/field officer. As I'm 'in the darkes forest', could someone enlighten me as to who was O'Hare and anything else about the history of this area?

SWEETCORN PUZZLE

From the word 'sweetcorn' can you find three bird species and three bird body parts, by reforming other words of four letters or more, using each letter once only. Solution in the next issue of *IBOC News*.

BIRDHOUSE HOWLER

This advertisement appeared in a local newspaper early last September. We trust the enthusiastic aviculturalist will take much greater care of their caged birds than the sub-editor did with the spelling of their planned enclosures!

WANTED

BIRD ENTHUSIAST REQUIRES HOME north of Wollongong on 1000m² plus block. Price range \$300,000 - \$400,000. Must be suitable to erect bird aviaries. Will consider vacant land and building. Cash buyer.

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-Turkey	1	11/11	Mt. Keira archery range	forest	RM
Australian Brush-Turkey	1	11/11	Keiraville	forest	LP
Australian Brush-Turkey	1	4/11	Mt. Keira	forest	JB
Buller's Albatross	2	28/10	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Northern Royal Albatross	1	29/10	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Common Diving Petrel	1	28/10	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Striated Heron	2	5/11	Little Lake	mud flats	CJC
Striated Heron	2	5/11	Berkeley Harbour	lake edge	CJC
Striated Heron	1	1/11	Lake Entrance	sand flats	DG
Striated Heron	1	25/9	Hooka Point	lake edge	JBi
Buff-banded Rail	1	25/10	Wigram Rd. Thirroul	-	PY
Swamp Harrier	1	9/11	Jamberoo valley	rural	RS
Swamp Harrier	1	5/11	Saltwater Swamp	wetland	CJC
Great Knot	2	4/11	Lake Wollumboola	mud flats	CJC
Latham's Snipe	1	24/9	Woodland Ck., Thirroul	wetland	JBi
White-plumed Honeyeater	5	Oct	Wollongong TAFE	parkland	JR
Satin Flycatcher	1f	5/11	Keiraville	garden	ME
Satin Flycatcher	1m	21/10	Bulli Pass Reserve	forest	JBi
Eastern Whipbird	2	27/11	Korongulla Swamp	forest	RI
Barred Cuckoo-shrike	1	25/11	Thirroul	garden	IM
White-winged Triller	2	1/10	Thirroul Beach	grassland	JBi
Figbird	2	2/11	Windang, Sanitary Lane	woodland	DG
Figbird	2a,1j	12/11	Lake Wollumboola	pine trees	DM

JBi - John Bisset; JB - John Blomsteadt; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Darryl Goldrick; RI - Ron Imisides; RM - R. McGarva; DM - Daryll McKay; IM - Ian McKinlay; LP - L. Pincus; CP - Chris Presland; JR - Jim Robinson; RS - Ron Simcock; PY - P. Youll

Comment: The Barred Cuckoo-shrike is the obvious highlight of this report. This is the second record for the region, with the previous record coming from Wollongong Botanic Gardens in December 1998 (p115 *Birds of the Illawarra, Shoalhaven & Adjacent Tablelands*). The White-winged Trillers on Thirroul Beach is also pretty exciting and certainly an unusual location for this species. Brush-Turkeys are certainly making a strong appearance in the Mt. Keira region. Eastern Whipbirds continue to move into the Windang Peninsula with a pair at Korrongulla Swamp.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this page over the past 12 months. The only reason this page is possible is due to your contribution. I look forward to receiving your records in the year to come.

REMINDER FOR THE CHRISTMAS MEETING:

What do you need to do:

1. Invite someone to come with you.
2. Wear "Christmassy" gear (e.g. Tinsel in your hair)
3. Bring a plate of party fare - your cup/mug [For a festive supper]
4. Have fun.

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY CHRISTMAS
and a SUCCESSFUL 2001 BIRD SPECIES ODYSSEY!