



# *Library* I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 235

February 2001

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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## Editorial: IBOC in DANGER of EXTINCTION?

The heading may sound melodramatic, but it serves as a very real warning. The central problem is that a number of requests have gone out for someone to fill the position of **Club President**, but to no avail.

It is vital that IBOC has someone in the role of figurehead with whom members and non-members can make contact (especially by telephone) to discuss things that happen, don't happen, or need to happen. The President then delegates tasks to other committee members to deal with those matters. In addition, the President sets up and leads club meetings or, as above, makes arrangements for someone to deputise.

Our newly appointed Vice President, Lorraine Pincus will be the front person to lead the first club meeting of the new millennium, but only for that one occasion. We still need someone on a permanent basis to "hold it all together"; otherwise, there is the very real risk of IBOC folding up.

As Kevin McGregor stated in the last edition of *IBOC News*, it is not an onerous job, and whoever takes it on, will enjoy it. Even though the committee has very keen and active members, they cannot serve the club without a linchpin president. How would a hive thrive without a queen bee? As you will observe in this issue, most of this year's program of events has been devised already, so the new appointee will have an easy introduction to the running of the club's affairs.

And on the topic of excursions, we obviously require an **Activities Officer** to coordinate outings, including camps. Any offers for leading the Easter camp?

Because of uni studies, this will be my last edition of *IBOC News*, and for the rest of this year Kerri Lewis will be back in the position of editor. I've very much enjoyed compiling material for the newsletter over the past twelve months, despite some minor frustrations. My apologies for the errors that have appeared. Accuracy, as in the course of my employment, is a top priority; however, with family and work commitments the production of a newsletter adds to the juggling act of reaching deadlines. Retirement sounds very appealing to be able to do the things I really want to do, but is a way off yet. Please keep sending in items of interest. If it is not your own work, then please indicate the source so that we can acknowledge the original thinker and not be in possible breach of copyright. From now on please submit your stuff to Kerri at 14 Tolson Place, Balgownie 2519; phone 4285 2736; fax [alanlowis@eudoramail.com](mailto:alanlowis@eudoramail.com).

In his September 1952 speech in Indianapolis, Adlai Stevenson said, "In America any boy may become President." In IBOC any member may become President. Hopefully, the latter possibility will very soon become an actuality.

☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

**MEETING Monday 12 February** at 7.30 pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Princes Highway and Cambridge Avenue, Fairy Meadow. Our guest speaker will be club member, **Chris Chafer**, who, under the title of '**Birds of the Illawarra – an Illustrated Natural History**', will talk about his experiences in the Illawarra for over twenty years. In that time Chris has published over forty manuscripts and contributed to three books on birdlife in the region. Come and listen to, and view, a journey through our spectacular local birdlife, illustrated with high quality images from local photographers. To whet your appetite, see if you can answer these questions: What was Camillo Ranzani's contribution to our ornithological history? Which bird died by jumping into a well in 1841? What bird eats ascidians? What bird did Avery Elliott find at Meroo Meadow in 1932? What eats cats at Bass Point? What did botanist Robert Brown find at Red Point in 1804? Six out of six, everyone?

**MONTHLY OUTING Saturday 17 February to Drawing Room Rocks in Barren Grounds Nature Reserve.** Meet at Camp Quality Park, Berry at 8.45 am. Southbound travellers should turn right, off Princes Highway immediately after Broughton Mill Creek bridge just north of Berry, into Woodhill Mountain Road. The park is on the left about 100 metres in. We will likely survey the wooded area bordering the creek before driving up the hillside to Brogers Creek Road, where the main walk begins. The track, which may be eroded in parts and slippery in wet weather, ascends the escarpment to a lookout above Foxground with views down the coast to Jervis Bay and out to sea. In issue no.192 you can read Horrie Ward's report of the club's successful visit to this area in June 1996. As before, bring eats and plenty of drink for morning tea and lunch. Also, please contact Kevin McGregor on 4271.3762 or at the club meeting to confirm your intention of attending and car-pooling arrangements.

**MID-WEEK OUTING (1) Wednesday 7 February to Windang Estuary,** details of which were given in last December's issue of *IBOC News*.

**MID-WEEK OUTING (2) Wednesday 14 February to Mount Keira Ring Track.** Please meet the leader, Kevin McGregor at Byarong Park, western side of Mount Keira Road at 8.45 am with your refreshments for the morning.

**EASTER CAMP** Rosalind Badgery has kindly renewed her offer of our use of her property '**Wanganderry**' at Bullio, after the cancellation of the camp scheduled for early last October. Those wishing to attend (dates to be confirmed – see draft program) are asked to register at the club meeting and/or discuss with Barbara Hales (Ph 4257.4431).

**COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 20 February** at 7.30 pm at Bronwyn Wilson's home at 8 Wellington Drive, Balgownie (Ph 4283.4744). Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and to contact Lorraine Pincus, Vice President, beforehand.

**MARCH NEWSLETTER** Deadline for submissions, however small, for the next *IBOC News* will be 27 February. Please add your name to your article/item.

**HOW THINGS CHANGE!**

Norma ALMOND

Among the many photos Ron took of bird camps etc, I remember one of Laurie and Nola Williams, in pyjamas and nightie, outside the canvas with binoculars raised to view a Channel-billed Cuckoo! Such early morning excitement – I'm not sure where.

This week I've had a whinging immature Channel-billed Cuckoo in my jacaranda tree, waiting impatiently and noisily to be fed by a Pied Currawong! I was moved to put an unbroken bread roll on the bird feeder by way of saying "Shut it!"

## I.B.O.C. INC - DRAFT 2001 PROGRAM

JAN	SUN	14	OUTING	MT.ALEXANDRIA - MITTAGONG [LEADER BRUCE O'BRIEN]
FEB	WED	7	OUTING	LAKE ILLAWARRA (NORTH EAST SIDE) - 5.30PM PICNIC DINNER
	MON	12	MEETING	CHRIS CHAFER - Birds of Illawarra etc.
	WED	14	OUTING	MT.KEIRA RING TRACK (1/2 DAY) [LEADER KEVIN MCGREGOR]
	SAT	17	OUTING	BROGERS CREEK ROAD, BERRY (DAY)
MCH	MON	12	MEETING	DAVID GEERING - T.B.A.
	WED	14	OUTING	MT. KEMBLA RING TRACK (1/2 DAY)
	SUN	18	OUTING	BARGO GORGE (DAY) - [LEADER LORRAINE PINCUS]
APL	MON	9	MEETING	CHRIS BRANDIS - China and Turkey Birding
	FRI	13	EASTER CAMP AT WANGANDERRY MITTAGONG (4 OR 9 DAYS) (School holidays 13/4/01 to 29/4/01)	
MAY	MON	14	MEETING	HOLLY PARSONS - Backyard Birding
	WED	16	OUTING	(1/2 DAY) <i>MACQUARIE RIVULET [Leader: Barbara Hales]</i>
	SAT	19	OUTING	TALLAWARRA ASH PONDS [LEADER DARRYL GOLDRICK]
JUN	MON	11	MEETING	MEMBERS NIGHT
	WED	13	OUTING	(1/2 DAY) T.B.A.
	SUN	17	OUTING	(DAY) T.B.A.
JULY	MON	9	MEETING	DR.KEVIN MILLS -
	WED	11	OUTING	(1/2 DAY) T.B.A.
	SAT	14	OUTING	MORTON NATIONAL PARK [LEADER DR. KEVIN MILLS] (School holidays 9/7/01 to 22/7/01)
AUG	MON	13	MEETING	BILL ZEALY
	WED	15	OUTING	(1/2) DAY T.B.A.
	SUN	19	OUTING	WANDANIAN - [LEADER BARRY VIRTUE]
SEP	MON	10	MEETING	T.B.A.
	WED	12	OUTING	(1/2 DAY) T.B.A.
	SAT	15	OUTING	BOTANIC GARDENS SYDNEY [LEADER JOHN MATHEWS]
OCT			CAMP(S)	T.B.A. (School holidays 1/10/01 to 14/10/01)
NOV	MON	12	MEETING	T.B.A.
	WED	14	OUTING	WOLLONGONG UNIVERSITY - LEADER RICHARD MILLER(1/2 DAY)
	SUN	18	OUTING	KILLALEA STATE RECREATION RESERVE
DEC	SAT	08	CHRISTMAS GET-TOGETHER	
	MON	10	MEETING	CHRISTMAS MEMBERS NIGHT [T.B.A. =To be advised]

## Sibling brutality a laughing matter

A KOOKABURRA'S laugh may sound jovial but university researchers believe it may hide a more sinister secret.

Most of Australia's laughing birds have murdered their younger brothers or sisters, in order to survive childhood. And, according

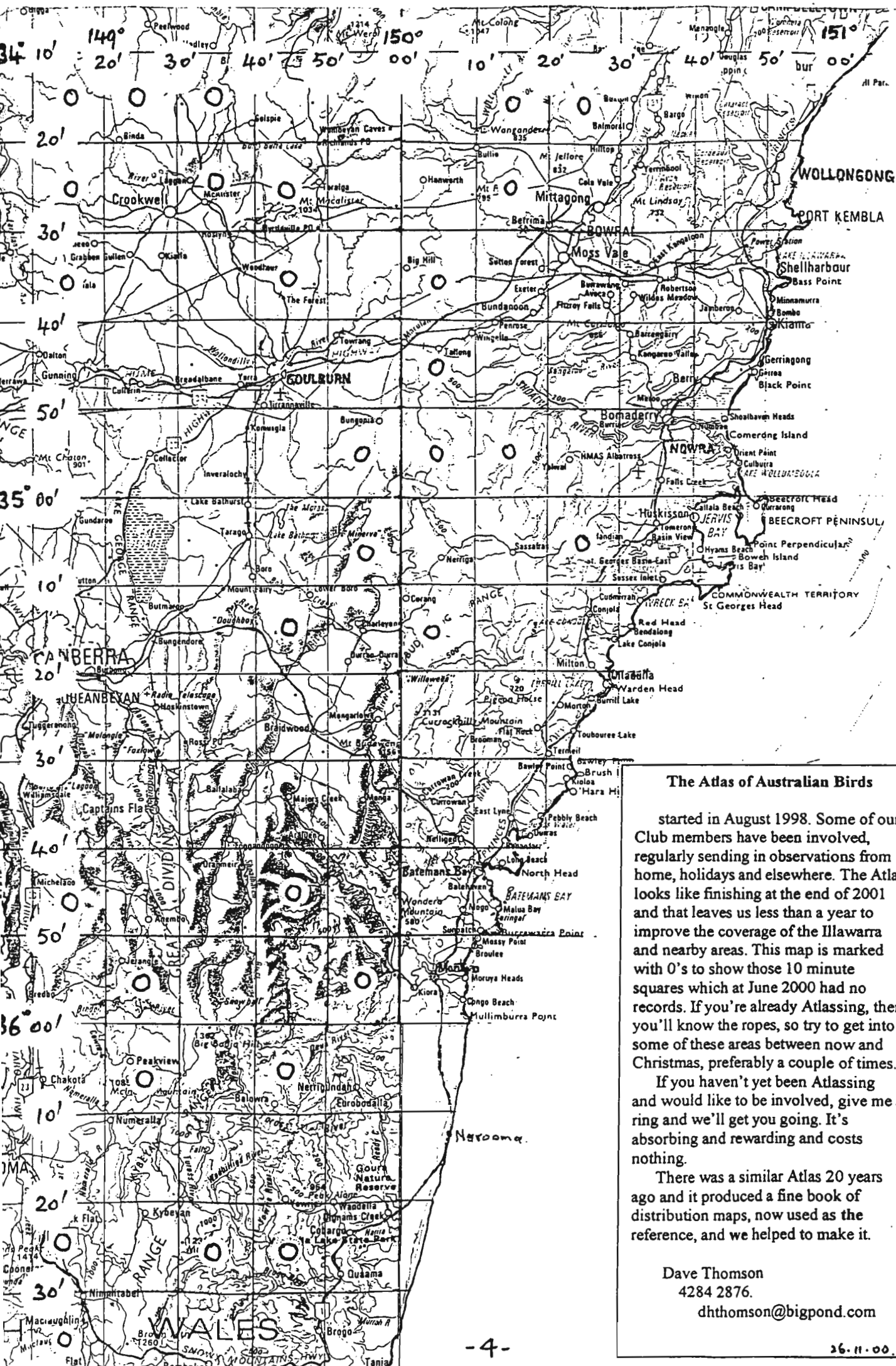
to researchers at the Australian National University, the parents have condoned the behaviour.

In one case observed by Sarah Legge, from the Department of Botany and Zoology, the youngest chick was killed by its siblings.

"Upon her return, the mother

picked up the body, drew back her head and popped it in her mouth," Dr Legge said.

Dr Legge said the practice, called siblicide, appeared to be designed to increase the chances of the first and second-born chicks in times of scarcity.



**The Atlas of Australian Birds**

started in August 1998. Some of our Club members have been involved, regularly sending in observations from home, holidays and elsewhere. The Atlas looks like finishing at the end of 2001 and that leaves us less than a year to improve the coverage of the Illawarra and nearby areas. This map is marked with O's to show those 10 minute squares which at June 2000 had no records. If you're already Atlasing, then you'll know the ropes, so try to get into some of these areas between now and Christmas, preferably a couple of times.

If you haven't yet been Atlasing and would like to be involved, give me a ring and we'll get you going. It's absorbing and rewarding and costs nothing.

There was a similar Atlas 20 years ago and it produced a fine book of distribution maps, now used as the reference, and we helped to make it.

Dave Thomson  
4284 2876.  
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# **AUSTRALIAN BIRD STUDY ASSOCIATION AGM and 2001 SCIENTIFIC DAY: What's becoming of our woodland birds?**

**David Geering**

The **2001 ABSA Scientific Day**, to be conducted before the Annual General Meeting in Dubbo on **Saturday 17 March**, will address one of the most worrying issues in bird conservation in Australia today, the decline of our woodland birds. The theme is: *Beyond the Sandstone Curtain: are we losing our woodland birds?*

Inland of the Great Divide many birds generally thought of as common are being gradually lost from many areas. It comes as a great surprise to many coastal-based birdwatchers that familiar species such as the Jacky Winter, Brown Treecreeper and even the Eastern Yellow Robin are in decline. The question has to be asked: will the Hooded Robin be the next woodland bird to join the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot on the endangered species list?

Held in the **Ibis Room, Western Plains Zoo**, the Scientific Day brings together speakers such as CSIRO scientist Julian Reid, treecreeper researchers Erik & Veronica Doerr, and local naturalists Neville Schrader and Judie Peet. The day promises to be informative, provocative and enjoyable. The program has been specifically structured to allow participants to comfortably travel to Dubbo on the Saturday morning if need be. There will be food facilities at the zoo for a pre-program lunch. Alternatively, bring a picnic lunch and enjoy it in the zoo grounds. The zoo is on Obley Road, just off the Newell Highway, 2 kms south of Dubbo. Once through the zoo ticket booth, the Ibis Room is on the immediate right. Parking is available adjacent to it. Registration fee is \$10, which covers afternoon tea. There will be no zoo admission charge for attendees.

Following the AGM, participants are invited to join the local Dubbo Field Naturalists & Conservation Society in a dam watch in nearby **Goonoo State Forest** to count Glossy Black Cockatoos as they partake in their evening drink. This is a long-term project of the DFNCS aimed at monitoring cockatoo numbers in this forest. An informal BBQ/picnic will be held there afterwards for a cost of \$10.

Further details of the Scientific Day and AGM are available from David Geering, 26 Jack William Drive, Dubbo, NSW 2830, Phone 02 6885 0038 (H) or 02 6883 5335 (W). David can also provide a full listing of accommodation options in Dubbo if required.

## **ABSA Scientific Day Program**

<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	Registration, morning tea, posters.	
<b>13:00 – 13:10</b>	Welcome	
<b>13:10 – 13:40</b>	Woodland birds: going, going ... A review across the five mainland states	Julian Reid
<b>13:40 – 14:10</b>	Changes in bird populations in the mid-Lachlan over 25 years	Neville Schrader
<b>14:10 – 14:40</b>	Brown Treecreeper decline: Isolation, habitat structure and too much family togetherness	Erik & Veronica Doerr
<b>14:40 – 15:10</b>	Community awareness: The beginning of the solution?	Judie Peet
<b>15:10 – 15:20</b>	Further questions to speakers	
<b>15:20 – 15:45</b>	Afternoon tea	
<b>15:45 – 16:15</b>	The Glossy Black Cockatoo in Goonoo State Forest	Matt Cameron
<b>16:15 – 16:20</b>	Plans for the evening: Dam watching for Glossies	Janis Hosking
<b>16:20 – 17:00</b>	ABSA AGM.	

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A day of banding will be conducted at **Burrendong Arboretum Cooperative Banding Station**, near Wellington on **Sunday 18 March** for those interested.

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The warmth of the fellowship was not only due to the goodwill of the Festive Season and a very warm summer's evening, but to the members who generously entertained the seventy who came to the meeting on 11 December. Our thanks are sincerely extended to them and to all who attended.

President Kevin ran his final meeting in the same efficient manner that we have come to expect and appreciate. There were many unusual bird sightings to be recorded from those present, and Kevin brought the members up to date with the walk that had been held and the plans for the end of the year BBQ/Picnic. He also acknowledged with thanks a donation of books to the Library from Mrs Rosalia Salpeter.

The meeting was then handed over to me to MC the evening's entertainment. It was lovely to welcome the younger generation and to be entertained by the musical talents of Alison on piano, Peter on drums and Jessica on violin and then by their cousin Melissa Wilson on flute. Mike Morphett displayed his drawing talent and, combined with his well-known wit, showed us another side to the Olympic events. Gwen Robinson can always be relied on to bring and share some thoughts and fun to our program, and Wendy Hanks not only showed us her latest beautiful patchwork creation, but invited us to sign it as an act of friendship...what a privilege. Barbara and Brian Hales had us exercising our brain and our body with their true/false quiz, which was a lot of fun. Then at great expense the IBOC Beast alias Kerri Lewis and her IBOC Beauties alias Kevin, Mike and Wal (their surnames have been suppressed to protect their families) were able to answer all those questions you always wanted to ask on birds, their habits etc. Thanks were extended to the clients of the "Woodlands by the River Restaurant" for their thought-provoking questions. So after sitting, it was time for everyone to join in the Bird Dance and to be rewarded with a Christmas candy cane, and to finish off this part of the evening, we sang with great gusto 'We wish you a merry Christmas'.

Now it was time to indulge in some serious eating with the supper tables groaning under the weight of all the delicious festive supper and in the midst a beautiful decorated Christmas cake from Betty Gibson. Kevin and I were privileged to cut the cake and to wish all a merry Christmas and a happy bird-watching new year.

Congratulations are due to **Russ Watts**, who deserves all the credit for the National Award for Innovation in Local Government that went to Barraba Shire Council as the overall winner in the environment section, as well as rural winner, because it was Russ who took his plan to that Council. He pushed for the setting up of birdwatching routes throughout Barraba Shire, leaping on the back of the rare Regent Honeyeater as a symbol of the shire. Russ told me of having had such a miniscule budget to work with, that he was out there digging holes himself to erect signs for birdwatchers. Russ comes from a marketing background and is an enthusiastic and inspiring person to meet. I would suggest that to engage Russ as a speaker at a meeting would be an inspired move for the furthering of birding into mainstream recreation. Below is a copy of an article headed 'Bird Routes of Barraba' from the 9/12/00 issue of *The Australian*:

"Once a vast ecosystem, the Grassy White Box Woodland stretched from Victoria to the Queensland border. In just two hundred and something years, it has been reduced to struggling patches of habitat for once-prolific native bird species that are now close to extinction. Faced with extinction, too, are the rural communities – not least Barraba – many of which owe their existences to the clearing of the Grassy White Box Woodland. The 1996 national census put Barraba's per capita income as the lowest in NSW. The once prosperous rural and mining district of 1400, 90km north of Tamworth, was hit by mine closure in the 1980s, drought, and the downturn in wool and livestock. The shire has suffered a net loss of 30% of its population since 1976. Now Barraba has made a virtue of the roads that pass through it, utilising its remnant Grassy Wood Box Woodland to become the birdwatching capital of the state. It is a magnet for "twitchers" from around the world who are drawn to the chance of spotting the endangered Regent Honeyeater or any other of the more than 160 species to be found in the area. The Council believes the 'Bird Routes of the Barraba District'[project] has increased public awareness of the significance of native birds and heightened understanding about the need to preserve the environment. It has also tapped a rich source of tourism dollars, so rich that even the banks, having sighted new businesses popping up along the bird routes, are returning to Barraba."

23 members and friends met at **Byarong Park, Mount Keira** on a sunny afternoon on 16 December for fun and fellowship to end the IBOC year and to walk and observe the birds in the park and surrounding bushland, before enjoying a well-cooked sausage sizzle, with the local Kookaburras also sharing the feast. The remainder of the evening was spent chatting, laughing and reminiscing over IBOC experiences. Below is a list of the 31 bird species recorded:

Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Southern Boobook	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
Wonga Pigeon	Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Magpie
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Dollarbird	Eastern Yellow Robin	Pied Currawong
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Superb Lyrebird	Eastern Whipbird	Australian Raven
Australian King Parrot	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Shrike-thrush	Satin Bowerbird
Crimson Rosella	Large-billed Scrubwren	Black-faced Monarch	Silvereye
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Brown Thornbill	Rufous Fantail	Common Blackbird
Channel-billed Cuckoo	Little Wattlebird	Grey Fantail	

**Scotia**

**Chris Brandis**

In early December I visited the **John Warmsley Earth Sanctuary**, Scotia, and had a chance to compare this with other mallee sanctuaries like Calperum and Gluepot. Like the others it is a couple of old sheep stations adjacent to Dangalli NP, which then merges with the members of the Biosphere and Gluepot in that corner of South Australia. On the way I had a day out in Hattah and Sunset NP with old Club member, Chris Sonter, who now lives just out of Mildura at Gol Gol. Although a hot day, we managed to see Mallee Emu-wrens (I learned that they occur only south of the Murray River) and a glimpse of a Rufous Fieldwren on the Raak Plains. These plains of samphire growing in salty encrusted soil are the floor of an old lake, and the glare makes it extremely hot. The Fieldwren was found sheltering in an old gypsum mine test hole and we also found a Richard's Pipit in an old rabbit burrow out of the sun; only the birds were in the heat. The Mildura sewage treatment works proved to be still a reliable spot for Blue-billed Duck as well as many other waterbirds.

Scotia is slightly different from the other sanctuaries, as they are surrounding huge areas of natural mallee with electric fence enclosures to keep out foxes and cats. Then they are releasing native mammals from their breeding aviaries into these areas so they can become independent and start to breed as wild animals. In three years the initial six, almost extinct, Bridle Nail-tailed Wallabies have increased to about 30 and are outgrowing their enclosure. They still have to fend for themselves against natural predators like Wedge-tailed Eagles, but not against foxes etc. Their main form of defence appears to be camouflage, but foxes, using their noses, easily pinpoint these delightful wallabies and so they are easy prey. They have also released Numbats and Brush-tailed Betongs and are breeding Bilbies, Sticknest Rats, Hopping Mice and a few others that have disappeared from the area. They have made some interesting observations in that these small mammals actually use much of the mallee stick and leaf litter, probably reducing the severity of fire and ensuring old growth mallee survival. There are very few mammals up to the larger mammals like kangaroos, which are grazing animals. Kangaroos also require water to be viable and are therefore not found in the dry mallee areas and do little to reduce the fuel loads.

There are good sandhill mallee/triodia and belah areas with some 60 km of tracks, mainly in EW and NS directions, so with a compass they are easy to find, once you become disorientated in the mallee, and are a good nature walk. In the two days I saw 68 species of bird, including Striated Grasswrens, White-browed Treecreepers, Malleefowl, Chestnut Quail-thrush and Southern Scrub-robin, and at night spotlighted Owllet Nightjar and Spotted Nightjar.

There are good camping facilities plus an old homestead and fully catered quarters. The road in is good and signposted, but if you deviate off this, as I did, some of the "roads" are only faint tracks with the property tracks like main roads and there are no signposts to tell you are going some place else. Summer is also not the best time to visit the inland, but it was a very interesting trip with many good birds seen and atlased on the way there and back.

Six members met at 8.30 am on Sunday 14 January, which was a fine day and the temperature was pleasant during the whole of the walk. The walk, led by Bruce O'Brien, followed "The Red Track", which circumnavigates Mount Alexandra, and commenced from the southern side of the lake, which is well endowed with a variety of ducks. We first entered gullies lined with bracken, ferns and tree ferns, and it was a peaceful area. The birdlife was not that abundant, but we had the pleasure of seeing an Eastern Whipbird and were kept awake by Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos flying overhead and numerous Crimson Rosellas. The gullies then joined onto Gibbergunyah Creek, which deepened, and the ferns and undergrowth got thicker. We then came onto a fire trail and started to climb away from the creek and on the road up a ridge sighted Red-browed Finches and a Beautiful Firetail. The high southern bridges on the F5 Mittagong Bypass then came into view and the traffic noises grew until we went under them to the northern side of the expressway. We then descended a few metres down the mountain-side where we stopped in a cool spot for morning tea. At this stage two of our members returned to Lake Alexandra, leaving the remaining four to travel along the Nattai River parallel to the F5; in this area the going was slightly rougher as the track appears not to be well used and has become overgrown. The traffic noise was not a worry as the road was well above us and we were able to take our time to identify all the birds we found and in particular making sure all the members saw what was found. Mike Morphett found us a nesting pair of Leaden Flycatchers and, when we all saw the small nest, the male decided to make the identification easy for us and alighted about four metres from where we were in the undergrowth on the side of the river. The walk then rises away from the river bank and past "The Big Tree", a river peppermint, then through a callistemon forest and past the remains of an old anthracite coal mine. We crossed to the southern side of the F5 by passing under the northern bridges, where we glimpsed a Brown Goshawk, and stopped at the viewing area above Sixty Foot Falls for a relaxing lunch. We then continued along the track, following the red markers and along the river, then onto a fire trail, up past the Mittagong Swimming Pool on our left and then into Leopold Street back to the starting point. We had first been welcomed to the lake by young Eurasian Coots swimming with their parents and now they were roosting on their nest when we returned in the afternoon. It is an interesting 7 km walk, and all agreed we should do it again in say springtime. Thanks, Bruce, for a job well done. Below is a list of the 40 bird species recorded:

Australian Wood Duck  
Pacific Duck  
Little Pied Cormorant  
Brown Goshawk  
Dusky Moorhen  
Eurasian Coot  
Crested Pigeon  
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo  
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo  
Crimson Rosella

Common Koel  
Channel-billed Cuckoo  
Laughing Kookaburra  
White-throated Treecreeper  
Variegated Fairy-wren  
Spotted Pardalote  
White-browed Scrubwren  
Brown Thornbill  
Yellow Thornbill  
Red Wattlebird

Noisy Friarbird  
Yellow-faced Honeyeater  
New Holland Honeyeater  
Eastern Spinebill  
Eastern Yellow Robin  
Eastern Whipbird  
Golden Whistler  
Grey Shrike-thrush  
Leaden Flycatcher  
Magpie-lark

Rufous Fantail  
Grey Fantail  
Grey Butcherbird  
Australian Magpie  
Pied Currawong  
Australian Raven  
Satin Bowerbird  
Red-browed Finch  
Beautiful Firetail  
Common Myna

## Wine cork loss may kill birds

The trend towards plastic wine stoppers for less expensive wines is having an impact on cork plantations, with possible effects on bird life in Spain and Portugal.

Britain's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) predicted a crash in the cork industry within 15 years that could bring the disappearance of wildlife habitat used by species such as the booted eagle, black kite and turtle dove, along with other threatened animals and plants.

In five years, plastic has seized about six per cent of the \$A1.8 billion global bottle-stopper market. At present growth rates, plastic stoppers were likely to have at least a 15 per cent share of the global market by 2015, according to a report commissioned by the RSPB.

At this stage a fall in the price of cork could be triggered, and this would force cork farmers out of business or force them to switch to less environmentally friendly eucalyptus.

RSPB agriculture policy officer Hannah Bartram said: "It is an outrage that plastic stoppers are replacing natural cork, which is a truly sustainable product which benefits people and wildlife.

"We owe it to future generations to fight this short-sightedness. The Iberian cork forests have taken thousands of years to develop but it will only take a few years for them to disappear," she said.

Environmental researcher Eduardo Goncalves said: "Britain's supermarkets are the most important single force in the global wine market. The future of the cork oak forests is now in their hands."

DPA

ILLAWARRA MERCURY

Tuesday, January 2, 2001



With the final total of 27 teams this year, the 2000 Twitchathon was the best ever effort for NSW and ACT members and friends of Birds Australia! Congratulations teams, and thanks a million for such great support both by participants and donors in this really fun event. Funds raised from this year's event will go towards the purchase and infrastructure required at "Newhaven Station", Birds Australia's second land acquisition. Teams came from as far north in NSW as Tenterfield, as far south as Eden and west to Dubbo, and also included two ACT teams.

The Grey Toilet Thrushes team (Keith Brandwood and Sacha Adin) won the Main Race first prize again this year with 203 species, a new record for them. Second prize was awarded both to The Hunter Thickheads (Ann Lindsay, Chris Herbert, Liz Crawford and Mike Newman) and the Whacked Out Woodswallows with 191 species each, the former team having 192 species, but withdrawing a rarity from their bird list after consultation with the NSW Rarities Appraisal Committee. The Central Coast Champions (Alan Morris, Allan Benson, Robin Benson and Craig Arms) won the third prize. David Geering from those Whacked Out Woodswallows first heard the rarest bird (an Australasian Bittern – Threatened Species List NSW) and, after confirmation of the species from the other team members, is eligible for the rarest bird prize. The Champagne Race was won by the Eastern Whiplashers (Sue Proust, Peter West and David Kelley) with 132 species (my imagination runs wild at their team name - who thrashed whom to obtain the best result?!). Thanks very much to our sponsors: Envirobook, Natural Learning, Barren Grounds Bird Observatory, The Wine Society, Woolloomooloo, and Chorleywood B&B, Bowral. The full race results are as follows:-

**CHAMPAGNE RACE:**

Eastern Whiplashers	132	Champagne Shriketits	100
Spineless Spinebills	126	Batty Babblers	93
Warbled Specklers	123	Bottleforest Birdos	90
Mickey Mouse Birders	121	Sacred Red Rumped Tomaree Twits	88
Lesticum Phoradae ("Let's tick 'em for a day"!)	118	Just Watching	81
Steamed Chats	112	Matheson Mopokoes	80
Wonga Wonga Wanderers	106	Yankees	55
Circus Larus	105	Ryde On	52
Poor Old Bustards	103	4B's Kandos	TBA

**MAIN RACE:**

Grey Toilet Thrushes (first prize)	203
Hunter Thickheads (joint second prize)	191
Whacked Out Woodswallows (joint second prize)	191
Central Coast Champions (third prize)	189
Cheerful Drongos	180
Hunter Home Brewers	175
Bristleheads	155
Dead Parrot Society	121
Tarred and Feathered	65

Let's meet again next year and double the number of teams and dollars! If you have thoughts – good or bad – on how the event was handled, or you would like to assist in the process of encouraging more birdwatchers – beginners to lifetime naturalists – to get involved by participating in a Twitchathon for the benefit of our native birds, please ring or drop me a line [9872.4185; Box 1322, P.O. Crows Nest, 1585]. I see great potential in raising funds for very worthwhile ornithological projects.

**SHELDUCKS at HOMEBUSH**

**Dion Hobcroft**

A bit of a Sydney rarity was the sighting reported to Birdline NSW of a pair of Australian Shelducks in front of the wader hide at Bicentennial Park on 30 December last among several hundred Grey and mostly Chestnut Teal and a few Hardheads.

Birdline NSW covers the entire State and is updated weekly, mostly on Mondays, or as required as rarities break. Recent highlights have been Regent Honeyeaters, Superb Parrots, Painted Snipe, and Pectoral Sandpiper. Please feel free to leave a message with your sightings of anything you consider unusual. If leaving a message, please give your name and contact telephone; speak slowly and clearly with as much information on exactly where you saw the birds. Birdline on 9439.9536 is the cost of a local call and is supported by the NSW Field Ornithologists, and Cumberland, Hunter and Illawarra Bird Observers Clubs.

**SWEETCORN PUZZLE ANSWERS**

Crow, wren, crest; cere, crown, crest.

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Shoveller	6	Dec	Purry-Burry Point	lake	JC&NB
Eastern Reef Egret	1	4/12	Little Lake	estuarine	GB
Great Egret	20	14/12	Yallah	wetland (artificial)	DG
Black Bittern	1	31/12	Cudmirrah	lake edge	KM
Australasian Bittern	1+4eggs	Nov	Wingecarribee Swamp	reedland	MK
Australasian Bittern	1	6/12	Woonona	quarry dam	KM
Glossy Ibis	4	Nov	Hoskins NR	wetland	per CJC
Pacific Baza (nesting)	2	Dec	Nowra	urban	per AM
Square-tailed Kite	1	2/12	Huskisson	overhead	MJ
Brahminy Kite	1	3/12	Comerong Island	overhead	CB
Buff-banded Rail	1	11/11	Cudmirrah	urban	KM
Buff-banded Rail	1	14/12	Windang	estuarine reeds	DG
Common Sandpiper	2	2/12	Lake Conjola	lake	MJ
Sanderling	1	6/12	Lake Wollumboola	lake	DG
Greater Sand Plover	1	15/12	Lake Wollumboola	lake	DG
Hooded Plover (nesting)	pr	31/12	Monument Beach	beach	KM
White-headed Pigeon	1	17/11	St. Georges Basin	urban	KM
Emerald Dove	1	2/11	Curramore	garden	KM
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	15/12	Bendalong	forest	KM
Tawny Frogmouth	3	12/12	Excelsior Mine Thirroul	forest	MM
Cicadabird	1	15/12	Bendalong	forest	KM
Crested Shrike-tit	1	4/12	Excelsior Mine Thirroul	forest	MM
Leaden Flycatcher	1	22/12	Excelsior Mine Thirroul	forest	MM

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; NB - Norma Bourke; CJC - Chris Chafer; JC - Jean Clarke; DG - Darryl Goldrick; MJ - Michael Jarman; MK - Mary Knowles; KM - Kevin Mills; AM - Alan Morris; MM - Mike Morphet

**Comment:** Some pretty amazing records for this period: the Baza pair at Nowra is the most southerly record in NSW; the Brahminy Kite is the 4<sup>th</sup> Illawarra record since 1966; the nesting Australasian Bittern is the first known nesting record for the region; and the Glossy Ibis is the 10<sup>th</sup> regional record. The 20 Great Egret is the largest gathering of this species recorded in the Illawarra.

### Australian Birdsong Collection by Helen Horton

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# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 236

March 2001

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**

PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	EDITOR
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Editor's email: [alanlowis@eudoramail.com](mailto:alanlowis@eudoramail.com)

☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

**NEXT MEETING:** will be held on **Monday 12th March**, at the FairyMeadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, FairyMeadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker tonight will be **David Geering** who will talk about **Regent Honeyeater recovery program** at Capetee Valley between Lithgow and Mudgee. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**NEXT OUTING :** **Sunday 18th March to Bargo Gorge** under the leadership of **Lorraine Pincus**. Meet at 9am 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 travelling over the bridge over the Freeway. Then take the first right turn, where Lorraine will be waiting. We will travel by convoy as it isn't well signposted. If you intend going on this outing, please contact Lorraine on 42259789 or Kevin McGregor on 42713762. for car pooling. Bring your usual food and drinks for the day.

**MID-WEEK OUTING :** **Wednesday 14th March** along the **Mt Kembla Ring Track**. Meet the leader, **Kevin McGregor** , at 8.30 am at the Dapto Lookout (under the powerlines) at the top of Cordeaux Road. (Make sure you turn left after going through Mt Kembla Village).

**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:** This will be held on **Tuesday 20th March** at **7.30pm**, at **Lorraine Pincus'** home : address and phone no. above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Lorraine beforehand.

**APRIL NEWSLETTER :** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 27th March. Editor's address or email is listed above.

**LOST!! PLEASE FIND !!! LOST!! PLEASE FIND !!! LOST!! PLEASE FIND !!!**

A club president for IBOC for this year!! Please consider taking on this very enjoyable position. If interested please contact our Vice President immediately!

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

**EASTER CAMP:** As mentioned in the February Newsletter, Rosalind Badgery has kindly renewed her offer of the use of her property "**Wanganderry**" at Bullio. At this stage however there has been no interest expressed to attend this camp, even for only a day or two. Anyone interested in going please contact **Lorraine Pincus** (42 259 789) or any of the committee members. If you have never been on one of IBOC's camps then here are some of the things to know

1. There are **HOT** showers and toilets provided.
2. You provide your accommodation ie tent, campervan, caravan etc
3. Bring your own food and drinking water.
4. A large covered area is provided for get togethers.
5. IBOC camps are a great way to get to know your fellow members as well as seeing fabulous birds.
6. A small cost of \$10/adult (children FREE!) for the duration of your stay is charged. This helps pay for the essentials provided at the camp and for purchasing a small gift for the owner of the camp site.

**SO PLEASE CONSIDER!!!**

### **Wednesday 7th February 2001 Lake Illawarra Walk.**

The Club's annual walk at Lake Illawarra entrance was held on the North Eastern side of the channel. We all met at the end of the pine trees, 18 in all - new members, old members and visitors. It was low tide which allowed us easy access to the channel. Other than the Sparrows and the Pelicans the first interesting bird of the day was the Golden-headed Cisticola who showed itself as we passed the long grasses on the edge of the water. As we ventured further along the boardwalk and paths, familiar little bush birds showed us they were the Superb Fairy-wren, and Willie Wagtail. Looking over to our right sitting on a sand bank drying their wings were Great Cormorants, Little Black Cormorants, and Little Pied Cormorants. We also observed a small number of Little Terns. The Red-capped Plovers were in abundance running in and out of the Sea Grass, one only Double Banded Plover was sighted with the other plovers. We saw a Red-necked Stint, a large number of Bar-tailed Godwits, Kelp Gulls, Crested Terns and Caspian Terns.

We returned to our picnic tables under the pine trees and all enjoyed the evening meal while watching the sun go down, a colourful show with the sun through the clouds, and then turned to the east and watch the big orange moon rise.

#### **26 species of birds**

Spotted Turtle-Dove	Crested Tern
Little Pied Cormorant	Superb Fairy-wren
Great Cormorant	New Holland Honeyeater
Little Black Cormorant	Willie Wagtail
White-faced Heron	Magpie Lark
Bar-tailed Godwit	Figbird
Red-necked Stint	Australian Raven
Double-banded Plover	Welcome Swallow
Red-capped Plover	Golden-headed Cisticola
Kelp Gull	House Sparrow
Silver Gull	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Caspian Tern	Pelican
Little Tern	Rock Dove

Lorraine Pincus

## REPORT ON CLUB MEETING 12 FEBRUARY 2001

In the absence of a Club President the first meeting of 2001 was conducted by our Vice-President, Lorraine Pincus. Quite a large number of club members were present, plus several members of the community who have noticed our club ads in The Advertiser.

The first guest speaker of the year was long-standing club member and official keeper of unusual sightings, Mr Chris Chafer, who has been a member for over 20 years. Chris has published numerous articles and at least two books, including, in collaboration, The Birds of the Illawarra, a species by species account of birds seen in the Illawarra over the years. For this particular meeting Chris decided to move away from some of his more academic presentations, feasting us to a visual display of a selection of the Birds of the Illawarra, in (or near to) taxonomic order, and providing us with snippets of their history, anecdotes about type specimens, discoveries of his research and commenting about species' disappearance or significant increase in the local area. To whet our appetites prior to the meeting, Chris posed six questions in the February edition of IBOC News that were answered during the course of the meeting.

At the beginning of his talk Chris defined the area in discussion, 'the Illawarra', as essentially the County of Camden plus the area to the south (actually parts of the County of St. Vincent) to Lake Conjola and Nerriga. To the west the area is basically bounded by the Shoalhaven, Paddys and Wollondilly Rivers, and by the Nepean and the Dams in the North. By convention, the southern portion of the County of Cumberland, from Thirroul north to the southern parts of the Royal National Park are also included. The eastern boundary at sea is not so well-defined, but extends at least as far as the regular ornithological boat trips reach in a day from Wollongong Harbour.

Of course it would not be possible for me to recap on every slide that was shown, and Chris himself declined to comment on a number of slides of colourful passerines that were apparently included only to keep some of us awake. However, some of the highlights included the Emu, a species once reasonably common west of the escarpment, especially in the Camden area, which had all but disappeared, but is now slowly making a comeback on the eastern shore of Lake Burragorang. Chris then showed slides of the egret species, pointing out the diagnostic features enabling identification. There were a number of slides of albatrosses and other seabird species, with Chris again pointing out diagnostic features. Especially difficult are the Southern Giant Petrel and the Northern Giant Petrel, the only difference in adults being a red tinge to the front of the bill in the former, which is green in the latter. Chris then discussed the fortunes of several of our rainforest pigeons, with the type specimen of the Wompoo Fruit-Dove coming from Hill 60 at Port Kembla, but now extinct in the Illawarra. An interesting anecdote was that relating to the White-headed Pigeon, which was reasonably common until the Great Depression in the 1930s, when it became a providential source of protein for families who could not afford to buy other food. As a result this species declined rapidly, and has only recovered since the 1980s, gradually increasing in numbers. Unusual sightings have

included the Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, which has appeared in the littoral rainforest at Bass Point in several years. In contrast to the Wompoo, a species which was not at all associated with any part of the Illawarra prior to the 1960s has expanded its range and is now common all over the region; the Crested Pigeon. Chris mentioned that this species is successfully ousting Spotted Turtledoves from towns in the Southern Highlands, and it will be interesting to see if this trend continues into suburban areas.

Although increasing in number in the Illawarra are certain cockatoo and parrot species. The Rainbow Lorikeet for example was virtually unknown in the Wollongong urban area until about 1990, whereas now it is common in all suburbs. Similarly have been increases in Galah, Little Corella and Long-billed Corella numbers, the latter two species sometimes forming huge flocks. The presence of these three species stems from a sudden mass release when it was discovered by those who had trapped and caught birds for the overseas pet trade that they would be subject to severe penalties if they were caught with them. A common species through the region, the Crimson Rosella, is very rare in the immediate coastal zone, such as dune forests, and Chris mentioned he would be interested in sightings right on the coast. More of an enigma is the Gang-gang Cockatoo, which is constantly on the move, making it a difficult species to study.

Some of the slides shown by Chris were attempts to set us testing our powers of identification, particularly with some of the passerines. One memorable slide showed a passerine inside Chris' car beside a closed window. No-one present was willing to hazard a guess, and we were all astounded by the answer – a Rock Warbler. Some species tend to be rare in the Wollongong suburbs and nearby rainforest, but are regular in the area under survey. For example the Rainbow Bee-eater is a regular summer visitor to the Wollondilly valley, but is not usually found further east. The White-fronted Chat is very localised, restricted to certain areas on the western shore of Lake Illawarra, and the southern shore of Lake Wollumboola. Chris felt that the Golden-headed Cisticola was in decline, and invited comment from others who frequented reedy habitats to see if there was agreement. Another enigmatic species was the Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, which was a common species twenty years ago, but seems to have disappeared in the 1990s without any obvious cause.

At the end of his talk Chris made a special appeal. He indicated that in recent years almost all the records provided to him of unusual sightings are from the coast or immediate hinterland, such as the escarpment, and few of us are venturing further west. In Chris's words, please go forth and birdwatch, especially in the western districts of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven areas.

Chris also spent some time in answering the six questions posed in last month's newsletter. With each species there was an interesting anecdote associated with the answer, but I will leave that to Chris himself to retell if the chance ever arises. However, the answers to the questions themselves are as follows:

What was Camillo Ranzani's contribution to our ornithological history? He was a Portuguese naturalist who described for science the Logrunner, based on a specimen taken at Mount Kembla in 1822.

Which bird died by jumping into a well in 1841? This was the Australian Brush Turkey, which John Gould collected while he was staying at Throsby House near Moss Vale. The bird noticed its reflection at the bottom of the well, and assuming it was a rival, jumped in, drowning in the process.

What bird eats ascidians? Ascidians are the cunjevoi or sea squirts one finds on rocky shores. They are eaten by Sooty Oystercatchers.

What bird did Avery Elliott find at Meroo Meadow in 1932? The Singing Bushlark (which looks exceedingly like a House Sparrow, and is frequently passed over as such).

What eats cats at Bass Point? The Powerful Owl. It was Chris' own research that discovered this fact. It was later determined that Powerful Owls eat different prey at different elevations, but will take cats, especially young ones, at Bass Point, and also in Sydney.

What did botanist Robert Brown find at Red Point in 1804? This was the type specimen of the Wompoo Fruit Dove, found at Port Kembla.

Bruce O'Brien



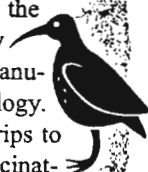
## Programme of Activities

### **Waders of the Illawarra**

Date : 23-25 March

Leader: Chris Chaffer

Wander the Illawarra with Chris Chaffer who has had 20 years of experience watching, identifying and monitoring the populations of shorebirds in the Shoalhaven Estuary and Lake Illawarra. He has published over 20 manuscripts, and both his theses are on shorebird ecology. Chris will increase your skills and knowledge with trips to the best of the Illawarra coastline. Shorebirds are fascinating creatures, some migrating thousands of kilometres in order to spend the summer in Australia. Bring your spotting scopes, if you have one, for a special weekend learning about wader ecology, feeding, migration and protection.

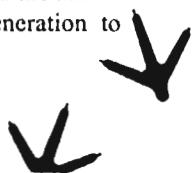


### **Fables, Yarns and Folkstories**

Date : 6-8 April

Leader: Anna Jarrett

The Barren Grounds has always been a place of inspiration for poets, artists and nature lovers. In the company of Anna Jarrett, a world renowned storyteller, come and find your own inspiration on a journey of the imagination. This will be a weekend perfect for introducing adults and children alike to the long lost art of storytelling and the ancient skills used to pass wisdom and knowledge from generation to generation.



### **Birds-Eye View**

Date : 13-16 April

Leader: Observatory Staff

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

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

Dates : 20-22 & 27-29 April

Leader: Observatory Staff

A special weekend for friends and family at a great discounted price! Join us on this action packed weekend for bushwalks, bird watching, small mammal trapping, picnics, mist-netting and bird banding, frogging and spotlighting. There will be walks, talks and slide shows for you to attend. A great outdoors experience enjoying all the flora and fauna of Barren Grounds. Make sure you are well rested as this is a weekend guaranteed to wear out even the most energetic of people  
Family price - \$560.00 (2 adults, 2 children)  
Individual Adult price - \$190.00  
Individual Child price- \$98.00 (<15 years)

### **Bird Banding Workshop**

Date : 4-6 May

Leader : Alan Leishman

Experience bird research first hand by assisting the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory to undertake long term monitoring projects. Course members will be introduced to mistnetting, identification, recording data and colour banding of individuals. You will gain insights into the world of bird banding and enjoy the excitement of mistnetting birds and examining them in the hand with Alan a highly experienced bander and teacher. This is an excellent opportunity for you to sharpen your identification skills as you enjoy the environment Barren Grounds has to offer. You never know but it might be the start of a new career. This course is a must for anybody wanting to learn more about birds especially their finer features.

## Outing to Drawing Room Rock, Berry on 17 February 2001

On a warm cloudy morning with the ever-present threat of a shower, 10 members met at Camp Quality Park in Berry. A quick stroll along the creek showed that bird life was almost none existant, so we moved off in four cars up to the ridge above Brogers Creek Valley.

Before leaving the cars, legs, socks, boots and jeans were liberally dosed with insect repellent as rumour had it that the leeches were hungry. Here again there was an unnatural stillness, few birds moving or calling in the trees above the mist filled valley.

Skirting the edge of a paddock we quickly re-entered the rain forest. Climbing up the steep track required our concentration and it wasn't until the first level section that the first hitchhiking leech was found. Soon we were all constantly being stopped with a shout of "leech" as we watched the boots & socks of the person in front. Birds were still scarce although there were plenty of evidence of Supurb Lyrebird, with scratching beside the track. An Eastern Whipbird was heard and then seen flitting low down through the trees.

The track wound ever upwards, zigzagging past huge boulders and rock outcrops hundreds of feet high. Suddenly the track levelled out and we took a left fork and found ourselves on the top of the cliffs watching as the mist slowly rose from the valley. Morning tea and what a glorious spot. No leeches except those hitchhikers turned off and trying to get another ride.

Leaving the cliff top we headed across the top of Drawing Room Rock through head high tea tree scrub, following a track, which had degenerated into a creek. As the track climbed slowly to the northern side of the rock, the heath became lower and more birds were heard and seen. One in particular was very frustrating - it flew into a low fork in a banksia bush, a flash of green or blue. I was fortunate enough to get the binoculars on it for a few seconds, but only a full back view. No head or beak was visible. I felt it was too green to be a Sacred Kingfisher, it was more the colour of a Noisy Pitta, although the yellow buff underparts were correct. Alas, the one that got away!

Shortly after this, we reached the main lookout complete with "tables & chairs", the eroded rock surface made a perfect picnic area. What I would have given for a camera to take a quick snap of a member, who shall remain anonymous, lounging at their ease in a rock armchair!

As it was too early for lunch we pressed on and tried to find the track leading on to Barren Grounds. The good track we had been following soon petered out in a maze of small animal tracks. We ended in a creek gully with large tree ferns and king ferns but no path. All the multiple paths lead nowhere. We returned to another less exposed lookout for lunch and watched the showers pass along the coast below us missing us in our eyrie.

On the return trip, once we entered the rain forest there were birds everywhere. A movement on huge rock face was a rock warbler, while overhead the creaky door call led us to a Gang-gang Cockatoo. A shadow running up a tree was a Red-browed Treecreeper with the red brow showing up clearly in a shaft of sunlight, while an Eastern Yellow Robin flew to and fro across the track. A little further on a Bassian Thrush sat on a branch to be admired. Downhill we were relieved to find that the beautiful looking black red & gold leeches were too well fed to bother us much.

When we emerged from the trees the sun was shining and it was very hot, but there were birds everywhere. Many small birds were flitting to & fro across the road by the cars and disappearing over the edge of the slope. We spent quite a time watching and trying to work out what the hurtling shapes were before they disappeared over the edge out of sight. Some will remain a mystery. A great end to a very good walk. Our



thanks to Barry Virtue for leading us for the day.

The insect repellent on footwear and vigilant eyes worked wonders with only one person getting bitten by a leech. They do blend in so well with shiny black boots!

A total of 34 species were seen during the day.

White-faced Heron	Lewin's Honeyeater
Masked Lapwing	Crescent Honeyeater
Wonga Pigeon	New Holland Honeyeater
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Eastern Spinebill
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Eastern Whipbird
Galah	Eastern Yellow Robin
Crimson Rosella	Grey Shrike-thrush
Laughing Kookaburra	Golden Whistler
Superb Lyrebird	Grey Fantail
White-throated Treecreeper	Rufous Fantail
Red-browed Treecreeper	Black-faced Monarch
Striated Pardalote	Magpie Lark
Rock Warbler	Australian Magpie
White-browed Scrubwren	Pied Butcherbird
Brown Thornbill	Australian Raven
Yellow Thornbill	Red-browed Firetail
Striated Thornbill	Bassian Thrush

*Betty Hudson*

#### EDITOR CORRECTIONS for UNUSUAL RECORDS.

ISSUE NO. 231 AUGUST 2000 Powerful Owl was sighted at Sydney Royal Botanical Gardens not Wollongong.

ISSUE NO. 235 FEBRUARY 2001 Should be Shelduck not Shoveler

#### SHOALHAVEN BIRDWATCHING OUTINGS 2001 [Third Sunday]

FEBRUARY 18	<b>Grassy Gully /Coolendel.</b> Meet Navy Jet 8, Grassy Gully 9
MARCH 1, Thursday	<b>Video/picture night</b> , Meet Barry's 7.30 p.m.
MARCH 18	<b>Comerong Island.</b> Meet Ferry 8 a.m.
APRIL 15	<b>Pyree.</b> Meet Peter's 8 a.m.
MAY 7	Suggested 14 day Birdwatching Trip Northern Tablelands
MAY 20	<b>Kangaroo Valley</b> Meet K.V. village Pub 8.30 a.m.
JUNE 17	<b>Barren Grounds</b> Meet Jamberoo Village 9.30 a.m.
JULY 15	<b>Burrier;</b> Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m.
AUGUST 19	<b>Wandean Road,</b> Meet Navy Jet 9 a.m. [IBOC]
SEPTEMBER 16	<b>Mt Bushwalker.</b> Meet Navy Jet 8, Bewong 8.30 a.m.
OCTOBER 21	<b>Jervis Bay N.P</b> Meet Vincentia shops 8.30 a.m.
NOVEMBER 18	<b>Braidwood Rd/Tianjara</b> Meet Navy Jet 8.30, Turpentine Rd 9
DECEMBER 16	<b>Berry Beach</b> Meet Picnic Area 5 p.m. walk/barbecue

Contacts; Barry 4464 1389 Diana 4421 8426 Peter & Julie 4447 1318

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	1	19/2	Orangeville	rural	CJC
Musk Duck	1	24/2	Korrongulla Swamp	wetland	CJC
Tahiti Petrel	1	27/1	off Wollongong	marine	TP
Pied Cormorant (nesting)	12pr	24/2	Korrongulla Swamp	wetland	CJC
Brown Falcon	1	21/2	Mowbray Park	rural	CJC
Black Bittern	1	10/1	Nowra	park	KM
Black Bittern	1	27/1	Cudmirrah	lake edge	KM
Buff-banded Rail	1	27/1	Cudmirrah	lake edge	KM
Great Knot	2	25/2	Comerong Island	sand flats	CJC
Sooty Tern	40	27/1	off Wollongong	marine	TP
White-headed Pigeon	5	24/2	Jamberoo Valley Lodge	garden	CJC
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	2	9/2	Keiraville	garden	ME
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	1	18/2	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Little Corella	80+	25/2	Shoalhaven Heads	urban	CJC
Little Corella	60+	Feb	Primbee	urban	RI
Long-billed Corella	11	4/2	Corrimal	urban	TW
Long-billed Corella	4	25/2	Shoalhaven Heads	urban	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	2	25/1	Gerroa sand mine	wetland	KM
Satin Flycatcher	2	23/2	Barren Grounds	forest	CJC
Red-whiskered Bulbul	1	6/1	Greenwell Point	urban	KM
Common Blackbird	1	28/1	Curramore	garden	KM

CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; BH - Betty Hudson; KM - Kevin Mills; TP - Tony Palliser; TW - Tom Wylie

**Comment:** In the December 2000 newsletter the Australian Shoveller should have read Australian Shelduck, my apologies to Norma and Jean for scribing it incorrectly. Not many records for this reporting period, though its obvious the Corella populations are continuing to expand. The two Black Bitterns are also particularly good. The Tahiti Petrel is the first since 1997 and the 40 Sooty Tern is the largest recorded group for the region.

## Volunteer wardens tern the tide for chicks

By LAURELLE PACEY

Little terns travel thousands of miles to Mogareeka to breed at the mouth of the Bega River, one of only three main nesting sites on the Far South Coast.

But their most vulnerable time coincides with the arrival of thousands of holiday-makers to the same area and that is just one of many threats facing these small endangered birds.

Mogareeka's 42 volunteer wardens watch over their small visitors as part of a statewide annual program to boost little tern numbers, coordinated by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

"This is such a precious part of the world and little terns are part of it," Mogareeka warden Gary Whitley said.

"They come thousands of miles to get here and need all the help they can get."

Only 200-300 breeding pairs of little terns are known to visit the NSW coastline for the breeding season - November to February - and they tend to return to the same area each year.

Little terns need help to breed successfully because they nest in the open on sand spits favoured by fishermen, surfers, sunbakers and walkers, and it is extremely difficult to see the eggs and chicks. They are also vulnerable to predators like seagulls, foxes and dogs, and natural events like king tides.

Foxes were a big problem at Mogareeka last season, but a baiting program plus an electric fence around the main nesting site will hopefully prevent a similar occurrence this season.



The little tern is an endangered species largely because of its precarious breeding habits. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is helping their numbers increase. Picture NPWS

Another fence is placed further out with signs explaining why it is fenced off.

"The message we are trying to get across is we are not shutting people out, but sharing the shoreline," NPWS Far South Coast program coordinator Mark Westwood said.

The wardens said the message was getting across to the people of Mogareeka.

"We're finding everyone's really responding to what we're

saying and are anxious to help," warden Jill Whitley said.

"Mogareeka is a magic place with great diversity.

"When you think this bird is so desperately endangered, it's just a good thing to spend a few hours helping."

The volunteers man two shifts a day for the entire breeding season.

Holiday-maker Samuel Nieto of Geelong said he did not mind the area being fenced off.

He was intrigued by the fact

the little terns travelled thousands of miles to get to the area.

"I've only seen one person go behind the fence who wasn't supposed to. Most people respect what is happening," he said.

Mr Westwood does a weekly count of eggs and chicks at the three sites.

"But we won't know how successful they have been for another six weeks when we see how many fledglings have been reared," he said.

ILLAWARRA MERCURY 11/1/01



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 237

April 2001

THE CIRCULAR OF THE ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB

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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**😊😊😊😊 FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS 😊😊😊😊**

**Next Meeting :** will be held on **Monday 9 th April** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Our guest speaker for the night will be **Chris Brandis** who will show some slides from his visits to China and Turkey to work, and of course do a little birding in the locality during time off. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**THERE WILL BE NO OUTING OR MID-WEEK WALK FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL BECAUSE OF THE EASTER CAMP.**

Details of the Easter Camp and map can be found in this newsletter as well as an interesting article about "*Wanganderry*".

**Next Committee Meeting :** This will be held on **Tuesday 17th April** at **7.30pm**. at **Peg McKinlay's** home : - address 24 Lyndon Street Corrimal. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Vice President Lorraine Pincus beforehand.

**MAY NEWSLETTER :** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 30th April. Editor's address or email is listed above.

## March Monday Meeting

Congratulations to Bruce O'Brien for standing as "president" to run the meeting. the committee seems to be managing the Club activities but a central leader is still required.

The speaker for the evening was David Geering, he spoke to us some years ago on Egret banding in the Hunter, but for the last 5 years he has moved to the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Project. Based in Dubbo he is very active in the Australian Bird Study Association and the small, but dynamic, Dubbo Field Naturalists as well as managing the Recovery Project on behalf of Birds Australia's southern NSW branch. Once 100s of Regents were found in the rich soil box woodlands from Adelaide to southern Queensland but with only about 4 % of the habitat left, and that in mostly small pockets, only 3 struggling populations remain.

The Regent Honeyeater is a striking bird and also an indicator of the plight of other birds that are dependant on similar habitat but which are a less marketable "product" to the powers that control the finances of the country. This has helped in obtaining grants to get the recovery team formed and action on the ground started. Most of the activity has been in monitoring the population's breeding success, maintaining present habitat, regeneration of degraded areas and now is expanding on the current pockets of habitat, both river side casuarinas and iron bark/box woodlands. The Capertee Valley has been the site where most of the tree planting has taken place through volunteers from the major NSW bird clubs and the people of Capertee. Many of the local property owners are seeing the benefits of re-vegetating areas to reduce soil erosion, land salination and in providing shelter for stock and are actively assisting in the program. It is to David's credit that he has "sold" the benefits to the locals who now see the crazy birdos destroying good grazing land with trees in a more realistic light and it is hoped that this will continue through out the country to the benefit of all. Around Barraba birding has been promoted with the area adopting the Regent Honeyeater as it's logo and the Chiltern forest area is also being preserved.

If you would like to help the next planting weekend will be on the 5 th and 6 th of May and any assistance will help. Also it is also a fun weekend with other like minded people which hopefully will leave Regent Honeyeaters for future generations to enjoy.

Chris Brandis



### **A Message from Canada.**

The older hands in our Club will remember Tony Salvadori, the enthusiastic birdo from Guelph in Canada. Tony had a couple of stints on the academic staff at Wollongong Uni back in the early 80's, and on each visit Tony and family spent time with us at meetings, outings and camps. He's sent us an Email with greetings and an invitation and here is an extract from that Email.

"I wish that more of you would come and pay us a visit. Let me take this opportunity to extend an invitation to all IBOCers to visit us here in Canada. Now that all our kids are gone we have two spare bedrooms and you are all welcome to stay with us. Why don't you come over for an extended holiday. We could do a nice birding tour here in NA.

My regards to Laurie and Nola, Wal and Hazel, Brian and Barbara, Horrie, Mike M, Chris and K, Ron and Rita, and all our IBOC friends."

There is also a special "hello" for Norma Almond and Betty Gibson.

Tony's Email address is [rosella@snowwhite.cis.uoguelph.ca](mailto:rosella@snowwhite.cis.uoguelph.ca) (Antonio Salvadori)

Dave Thomson

Midweek Outing Wednesday 14th March, 2001 - Puckey's Estate

Due to very wet weather the proposed outing to Mt.Kembla Ring Track was cancelled to avoid the leeches, very low cloud and getting wet. A visit was made to Mt.Kembla at 8.30am the advertised time for the commencement of that walk but the only ones that turned up were Kevin and 3 lyre birds to entertain him while he was there. Kevin then returned to Stuart Park to ascertain if anyone else was keen to go walking in the rain and to his surprise found five members ready to go (two dry weather walkers have turned up but wisely went home). The group wet out, sorry I mean set out and much to their delight the birds also agreed to enjoy the rain that was falling and a pleasant walk was held by all. This walk is a regularly visited area by the club and there has been and is a variety of birds to be seen. The area is now under a clearing and bush regeneration program and this enables members to see the smaller birds on ground level. There a large numbers of wrens and these are always a delight to watch. Wattlebirds were not a noisy as they are on fine days but they certainly let us know they were still there. Two members returned after an hours walk as they had work to attend to and the remaining members pressed on till the rain got heavier. At that stage three returned but Jude continued on in her usual fashion and then reported in later which the sightings she had made and boosted our list for the day which is produced hereunder. Thanks to all those who attended and we certainly had an enjoyable (short) morning outing.

Kevin.

Little Pied Cormorant	Kelp Gull	Silver gull
Spotted Turtle Dove	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Rainbow Lorikeet
Laughing Kookaburra	Superb Fairy-wren	Variiegated Fairy-wren
Spotted Pardalote	White-browed Scrubwren	Brown Thornbill
Yellow Thornbill	Striated Thornbill	Little Wattlebird
Lewin's Honeyeater	Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo	Brush Cuckoo
New Holland Honeyeater	Eastern Yellow Robin	Eastern Whipbird
Magpie-Lark	Grey Fantail	Australian Raven
House Sparrow	Silvereye	Common Starling
Common Myna	White-faced Heron	Golden-headed Cisticola

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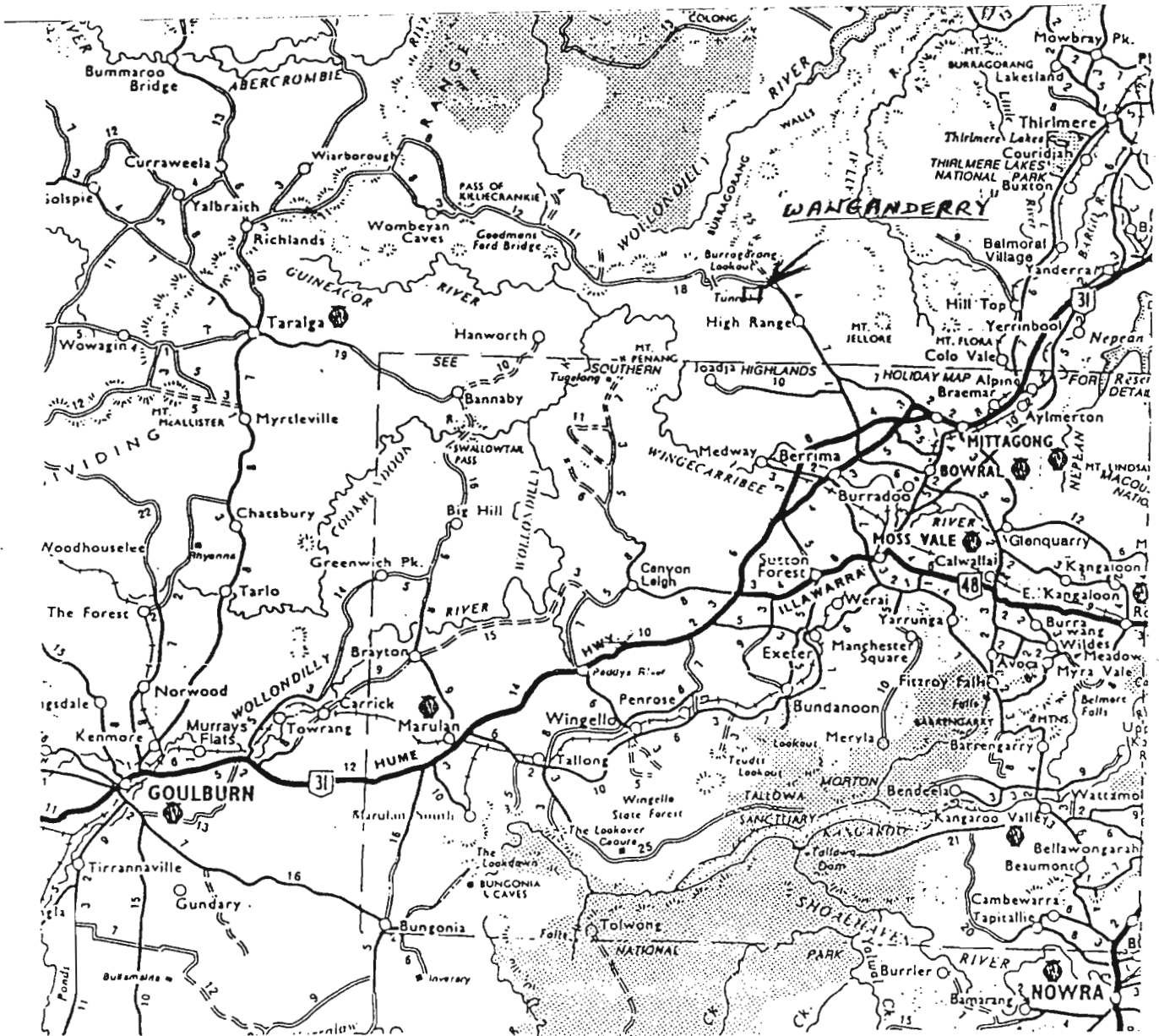
**Who? Wearing pantyhose? I'd like to see that.**

In our March 2001 IBOC News, Betty Hudson told us of the trouble gone to by our party trying to beat the leeches as they walked to the Drawing Room Rock. A few years back I was put onto a trick that works well for me. I use it while banding near rainforest. When heading into leech country, wear pantyhose under your walking sox. Might not stop the little blighters from entering your boots (that's where the repellent or salt can help) but will stop them from making contact with your skin. You've probably heard of Queensland lifesavers using them as defence against "stingers". Actually, I'm a bit sensitive about wearing pantyhose, never know what people might think, so I settle for knee-highs, though I'm not convinced they're much better. But they work.

Dave Thomson.

IBOC EASTER CAMP 2001  
"WANGANDERRY" WOMBEYAN CAVES ROAD VIA MITTAGONG  
13TH TO 17TH APRIL.

This camp will be held from Good Friday 13th April to Tuesday 17th April. Wanganderry is a 2500 hectare property owned by Miss Rosalind Badgery at Bulloo...Camps have been held there in 1983, 1990 and 1997. The map (Courtesy of NRMA) is reproduced below and the access gate is on the southern side of Wombeyan Caves Road, 19 klms in from the Old Hume Highway [don't take the Berrima Bypass road]and keep an eye our for the familiar, and reassuring IBOC signs. Please take sufficient drinking water for the duration of the camp. Shower and toilet will be provided as usual. The camp fee is \$10 per adult. If you haven't placed your name on the registration list please inform Fae & Kevin McGregor (**Telephone 4271 3762**) if you would like to join us. If you would like to be a day visitor, please also let Fae or Kevin known when you are coming. We expect to see a good number of bird species including the Glossy Black Cockatoo and a variety of mammals that thrive in this beautiful area.



MAP SUPPLIED BY NRMA

# WANGANDERRY

*The views are forever*

TEXT: JUDITH O'CONNELL • PHOTOGRAPHS: JOHN PAYNE

**W**anganderry is at the western edge of the Southern Highlands. High country of rolling open pastures. The trig station is at 836 metres, less that 30 metres below the height of Mt Gibraltar, the highest point on the Highlands, and Ice Mountain, the bluff jutting out into the Wollondilly valley, drops 600 metres down to the river. Over the next ridge is Lake Burragorong, with the ridges of the Blue Mountains stretching out to the horizon. On a clear day it is possible to recognise the chimney stack of the old laundry behind the Carrington Hotel in Katoomba. The views are magnificent.

In February 1823 the Cordeaux family were authorised to occupy 300 acres at the place called "Wanganderry" by the local tribe, but in truth William Cordeaux had been living there for two years. After 99 years' occupation, the Cordeaux family sold the land to Thomas Badgery of Sutton Forest. Today it is the home of his daughter, Rosalind Badgery.

"At first", says Rosalind, "the land was

divided by the Wombeyan Caves road and father could only buy 1600 acres. Later he was able to buy the rest of the land, but eventually he sold 300 acres, including the



bluff, and today I have 2000 of the original acres. Just the two families in nearly 200 years." At first Thomas and Enid Badgery lived in a bark hut, but by 1921 when baby Rosalind was brought home from Sydney, there was the comfortable house that stands today, with just bedroom wings added.

"Father, with the help of a bush carpenter, built the house with timber from an old

building in Wingello. There were about 12 men working on the property because there was a lot of fencing to do and the pastures had to be improved. In 1925 father was the

first in the district to fertilise the land with superphosphate and to plant sub-clover. They used a stump-jump plough and big Clydesdale horses. Wanganderry then carried 3000 merino sheep producing good medium wool, and father always dealt in cattle, buying dairy cows and using a beef bull to produce vealers for the market.

"There were always animals, horses and lambs and dogs. Kelpies for working the sheep and a big pack of anything father could find at the local pound. These helped clearing the rabbits. A horrendous problem. One warren they cleared by the

house had over 300 rabbits in it.

"Mother was fully occupied with the house, her garden, the chooks and educating me and my younger sister Cecily. She was a strict teacher and instilled in us a great love of reading that I have to this day. As well as the correspondence course, boxes of books came down on the train from Sydney.

"We were always going off on our ponies

*Wanganderry was settled in 1821 and has had only two families as owners. Rosalind Badgery talks about its history and her life on the land during the great changes of the 20th century.*



to help with the sheep, and I remember one day we were bringing a mob across the creek near the house and mother came racing down with great excitement to tell us all about de Groot cutting the ribbon when the Sydney Harbour Bridge was opened."

This was a top property with a comfortable home. At first there were kerosene lamps and food kept in hanging safes. But there was soon the radio run by a big car battery, the first private phone along the road in 1925, and a kerosene fridge. Rosalind finished her education with three years at Abbotsleigh in Sydney. She wasn't truly happy there, because it was so restricting, but made friends that she sees still. There was just about a year to enjoy adult life before the war. "I spent that year travelling around NSW with father dealing in cattle, but mostly visiting families. James Badgery, one of the earliest free settlers, came out here in 1799, and by 1819 was settled at *Fine Lodge* at Sutton Forest – so all the Badgeries are cousins and they are scattered on the land all over the state. So are my mother's family."

With the outbreak of war, Rosalind, and Cecily when she had finished at Abbotsleigh, returned to *Wanganderry* to work with their father. "We used ponies, and we did everything, though we still had contract shearers for the clip. There had always been cars for the trips to town. I don't remember the first, a T-Model Ford, but I do remember the

two Fiat 508s, and the 1938 Buick Master Six. I learnt to drive on the Buick. In 1939 I had my own Austin Seven and one day it wouldn't start, so I rang the garage in Bowral just near the present ambulance station. But Sandy Moore said with the rationing there was no petrol to come out to *Wanganderry* so he asked questions, told me what was wrong and said I would have to do it myself. I read the manual, and stripped down and cleaned the carburettor. To my surprise everything went back and the car was fine, so I did more and more of the work on the cars.

"We drove the cattle to Mittagong to either Lawson's Paddock – he was the local butcher – or to the railhead to go to Homebush. Dalgety's held the mortgage on the property and handled the wool, and they liked the stock to go to the Homebush sale yards. Father cleared the mortgage during the boom years of the 1950s.

"The doctor and dentist were in Bowral, but Mittagong was our town for shopping, and the mail came out from there at first once a week, and then more frequently. They also brought the bread and the papers. Father became involved with local affairs, and for some time was president of the Mittagong Council. Then I became involved with organisations off the property, the church, Red Cross, Wollondilly Fire Service, Throsby Park, various nature and wildlife groups. I still am. Recently a young cousin asked what it was like in the old days, and I was a bit shaken to realise he was talking about the middle of the last century! He just couldn't grasp the idea of the chip heater for the bath water or the fire under the copper to wash the clothes!

"We were very self sufficient. Mother always had help, but she was an excellent cook herself, and she had a Fowler bottling system so we always had a full pantry. We ☞





⇒ had a big vegetable garden, milk from one of the cows and churned our own butter, and chooks and eggs, fruit trees, and of course, lamb. I really don't remember too much about the Depression, just that money was short and there were always men on the road, calling, as at all the farms, for a meal. It was the same during the war, though then it was difficult to get clothing and we made our work clothes from curtain material, which was not rationed."

"Immediately after the war, mother had sailors from the British ships here for R & R – nothing exciting, just the ones who wanted to stay in a home and eat good food after all the rationing. One day we were all out in the paddock and the dogs put a rabbit into a log. One of the sailors was expert in getting it out and father asked if he was a poacher. The man went scarlet to the ears and never said another word.

"I had planned on going to university. I was going to become Madame Curie and Einstein combined. But the war defined our lives. I was needed here and later, before things settled down, both father and Cecily were ill. When I could have at last flown overseas as all my friends were doing, mother was so terrified of flying it was impossible, and there was never time for the long sea voyage.

"In 1950 an electricity plant was installed, giving 12 lights and one power point to the house. Electricity was connected in 1963, but before that the shearing shed had a big Ister engine for power for the blades. Sadly in a storm two years ago, the shed was badly damaged, and before it could be secured everything was stolen. Equipment, the big wool presses and, saddest of all, our wool bale stencils – TLB over Wanganderry."

Rosalind remembers 1950 well. Her



*I had planned on  
going to university.  
I was going to become  
Madame Curie and  
Einstein combined.  
But the war defined  
our lives. I was  
needed here.*

*Rosalind and Twinkle (far left) and mother's "hardy-gurdy" food cabinet, still in use, was a 1918 wedding gift.*

father suffered a heart attack and the then treatment of six weeks in bed was very distressing for him. They sponsored one of the sailors who wanted to migrate from Britain with his family and just as they settled into the old house on the road, the rains came. "We have a low rainfall here, average about 35 inches. But that year it didn't stop, 60 inches. We got bogged, the new family got bogged, and in the middle of it we had to take father to Sydney for a check-up."

It was exactly 100 miles from Wanganderry to the grandparents' home in Neutral Bay. At first it was a long journey and they stopped for lunch on the way, but by the 1950s it was feasible, and enjoyable, to drive to Sydney for the day. "We would arrive in time for lunch, usually with cousins and then would go to the matinee performance at the Elizabethan Trust Theatre – *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* or *Separate Tables* when Sybil Thorndike and Hugh Casson came out – and then drive back in the evening. But though the roads and the cars improved, it became so difficult to drive around Sydney, and to park, that we stopped going except for big events. We stood with thousands of others in Hyde Park for the first Royal visit. I think my first slide photographs are of the flags and decorations."

Thomas Badgery died in 1957, and Cecily the next year. Rosalind and her

mother continued running Wanganderry, and one year they were in Sydney at the time of the wool sale, so Rosalind went down to the auction. A man sitting beside her kindly explained what was happening, and obviously thought she was a hobby farmer. When Wanganderry wool got the highest price in the district, he sheepishly joined the people congratulating her! But eventually the labor required for sheep became a problem, as the flock was sold. "We got \$18 a head, a shortly after it dropped to \$8 and has never really recovered, so we did well. I now have an agistment company and have about 40 head of cattle here, some of them my own."

There are no horses now. Rosalind has her Australian cattle dog, Twinkle – she thought it a good name for the charming little puppy, if not so suitable for the working dog of today) use a ute.

Enid Badgery died, aged 88, in 1987. Rosalind was not sure she would be able to stay on the property, but was determined to create a nature area before she left. It was a great deal more complicated than she thought, but eventually Wanganderry was designated a nature reserve; it is especially rich in bird life. "I have various bird societies come for the day. Recently a group came from the Illawarra, and for about 20 minutes we watched a group of glossy black cockatoos. When they flew off, one of the men said he was going home, because it could get any better than that. I knew what he meant." **BT**

In January I had a four week visit to Nepal; mainly to Bardia National Park in the Terai near the Indian border and in Langtang National Park in the Himalayas north of Kathmandu.

As well as the spectacular scenery and forests, and an amazing culture, society and village life I was able with the assistance of a good guide and knowledgeable birdwatcher to identify and have good views of about 250 bird species and quite a few animals.

Birdwatching was challenging, particularly with Warblers, Babblers and Laughing Thrushes, for which there were three and four pages of each in the field guide. I also had trouble with groups unfamiliar to Australian birds such as Stone and Bush Chats, Redstarts, Munias, Fulvettas, Sibias, Minavets, Ascentors, etc.

Many species are winter or summer visitors or passage visitors but there is a large list of breeding residents for Nepal also.

We explored a variety of forests; tropical and subtropical broadleaved in the Terai and the temperate and sub alpine forests of the Himalaya, wetlands, grassland and scrub. I used '*Pocket Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*' by Richard Grimmett, Carol Inskipp and Tim Inskipp. It is about the same dimensions as our field guides and I found it quite accurate and easy enough to use considering the number of species [1300] and with so many different to ours and with different names. There is also a smaller to Nepal alone by the same authors. If you are considering going to Nepal it would be much cheaper to purchase a guide in Kathmandu on arrival. There are several good bookshops with new and used guides to birds, animals, plants and Nepal and trekking in the Thamel district of Kathmandu where most tourists stay.

Also, if you are thinking of going, I don't think you could better the agency I used for knowledgeable and English speaking guides. They can be contacted direct by E mail and will arrange your entire trip and birding with a guide. My contact person was Bharat at Explore Alpine Adventure at : [explore@csl.com.np](mailto:explore@csl.com.np), and they have a website: <http://eaa.cjb.net>



"I'm one of those species they describe as 'awkward on land.'"

## The Far Side® September

1886

George Grinnell forms the Audubon Society, the country's first organization for bird preservation. He disbands the group in just two years because more than 38,000 people join in only three months and completely overwhelm him. Being birds of a feather, the members eventually carry on without him.



Wednesday 13

## Bird Eats Dog.

In the February issue of the BOCA's Bird Observer there's an unusual story which is worth repeating. The essence of it is this. Last year (2000) a 9 week old Chihuahua was being walked on a lead along a Victorian beach when its owner let it loose to run ahead. As it passed a party of about 6 pelicans, "one ran up the sand to the dog and swept it into its bill." It took off, the owner in pursuit, flew over nearby trees and then banked towards the water and was last seen flying out over the sea with the red lead trailing behind. HANZAB (our bird "bible") notes under Food for the Australian Pelican - "Probably mainly fish but an eclectic carnivore and scavenger taking anything from insects and small crustaceans to ducks and small dogs". Dave Thomson

### Pelican chow

Dog lovers were recently dismayed when they were told about the tragic end to a tiny Chihuahua dog at Mt Martha, Mornington Peninsula, Vic. It appears that two people took their nine week old Chihuahua puppy for a walk along the Mt Martha beach during September 2000. After walking some distance, the owners let the puppy run on ahead of them, with its red lead trailing behind it. About six Australian Pelicans were standing on the beach and suddenly one Pelican ran up the sand to the dog and swept it into its bill. The owners of the dog chased the bird as it flew over the trees nearby; it was last sighted as it turned towards the Bay and flew over the sea with the red lead trailing out of its bill. Many birdwatchers would perhaps doubt the authenticity of this report, however the *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds (HANZAB)* states that the food of the Pelican consists mainly of fish, but it is an eclectic carnivore and scavenger, taking anything from insects, small crustaceans, to ducks and small dogs.

*These reports have not all been fully authenticated, but every effort has been made to check the accuracy. English names in this report are according to Christidis & Boles 1994. Please ask to see the originals before quoting from them. Send your reports to the BOCA or to Peggy Mitchell, 82 Winona Road, Mt Eliza, Vic 3930. Phone 03 9787 3657.*

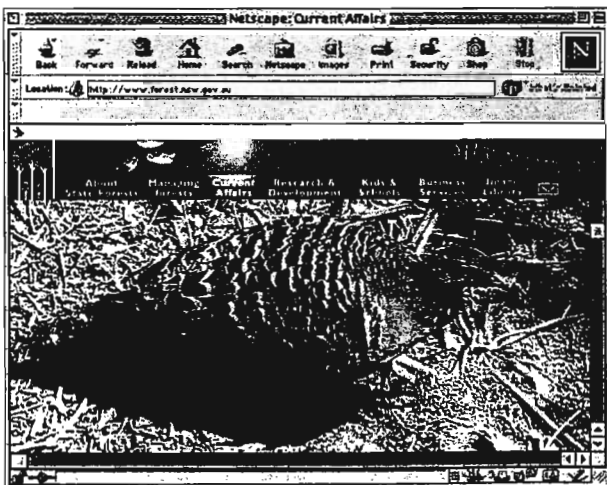
THE BIRD OBSERVER 810-38

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## Malleefowls live on the Web

Bird watching enthusiasts have an unprecedented opportunity to observe the daily life of one of Australia's unique bird species through State Forests' web site - [www.forest.nsw.gov.au](http://www.forest.nsw.gov.au).

The web-cam on State Forests' site will provide live vision from an active malleefowl mound. This is the latest in a *State Forests' new web-cam will enable Internet users to view an active malleefowl mound in Goonoo State Forest near Dubbo.*



series of State Forests initiatives to protect and expand the malleefowl population in Goonoo State Forest near Dubbo.

Western Region ecologist, Patrick Tap, said the web-cam would enable anyone with access to the Internet to observe the daily life of this unique and endangered bird at close quarters.

"State Forests already provides financial support for the malleefowl breeding program at Western Plains Zoo and supplied the program's original breeding pairs from Goonoo State Forest," Patrick said.

"For the past 10 years State Forests has been undertaking intensive fox baiting in the area to minimise this major threat to the malleefowl and the baiting program is set to continue.

The solar powered web cam, being installed with assistance from Advance Energy, will be in operation by the end of March this year.

Bill Frew ■  
Public Affairs, Sydney



Received from Richard Miller

Unusual Records Feb-March 2001 Chris J. Chafer

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Black Swan	5,000+	26/3	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
Pink-eared Duck	4	23/3	Dunmore	wetland	DG
White-necked Petrel	1	26/3	off Wollongong	marine	TP
Streaked Shearwater	1	26/3	off Wollongong	marine	TP
Nankeen Night Heron	1	25/2	Little Lake	wetland	DG
Darter	4	25/3	Tallawarra ash ponds	wetland	DG
Eastern Reef Egret	1	25/2	Little Lake	wetland	DG
Pacific Bazza	nesting	Jan	Nowra	urban/woodland	ML
Pacific Bazza	1	9/3	Mt. Ousley	garden/forest	BN
Pacific Bazza	2	17/3	Balgownie	garden/forest	WE,DT
Square-tailed Kite	1	17/3	Lake Heights	urban	CJC
Grey Goshawk	1	22/2	Figtree	urban	F&KM
Little Eagle	1	19/3	Balgownie	overhead AL	
Australian Hobby	1	3/3	Jerrara	overhead DG	
Australian Hobby	2	23/3	Dunmore	overhead DG	
Spotless Crake	1	25/3	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Ruddy Turnstone	20	1/3	MM beach, Port Kembla	rocky shore	DG
Sooty Oystercatcher	19	20/3	Coledale	rocky shore	DG
Pacific Golden Plover	103	28/2	Shoalhaven Heads	sandflats CP	
Red-capped Plover	100	10/3	Windang	sandflats DG	
Double-banded Plover	100	10/3	Windang	sandflats DG	
Lesser Sand Plover	10	26/3	Lake Wollumboola	sandflats CJC	
Hooded Plover	1	10/3	Windang	sandflats DG	
Black-fronted Dotterel	9	24/3	Saltwater Swamp	wetland	CJC
Caspian Tern	32	10/3	Windang	sandflats DG	
White-headed Pigeon	2	4/3	Mt. Kiera	forest	LP
Emerald Dove	1	3/3	Jerrara	rainforest	DG
Little Corella	35	24/3	Little Lake	sand flats	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	1	24/3	Hewitts Ck., Thirroul	wetland	IM
Azure Kingfisher	1	17/3	Bargo River gorge	riparian	CJC
Brown Treecreeper	5	17/3	lower Bargo River gorge	woodland	CB
Southern Emu-wren	few	24/3	Hewitts Ck., Thirroul	wetland	IM
Pilotbird	1	8/3	Thirroul	garden	SO
Pilotbird	2	2/3	Lady Fuller Reserve	rainforest	MM
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	20/3	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Southern Logrunner	nesting	20/3	Excelsior, Thirroul	rainforest	MM
Leaden Flycatcher	1	11/3	Bulli	rainforest	RT
Leaden Flycatcher	1	17/3	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Satin Flycatcher	1	24/3	Warrawong	garden	CJC
Spangled Drongo	1	24/3	Hewitts Ck., Thirroul	wetland	IM
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	28/1	Nowra Animal Park	woodland	CP
Figbird	3	26/2	Towradgi	garden	JB,JC
Green Catbird	2	24/3	Thirroul	garden	MM
Double-barred Finch	6	4/3	Bargo River gorge	woodland	LP
Double-barred Finch	few	24/3	Hewitts Ck., Thirroul	wetland	IM

JB - Jack Baker; GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; JC - Jean Clarke; WE - Wal Emery; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Daryl Goldrick; ML - Melanie Lawrence; AL - Alan Lewis; F&KM - Faye & Kevin McGregor; IM - Ian McKinlay; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphet; BN - Betty Neal; SO - Sue Owen; TP - Tony Palliser; LP - Lorraine Pincus; CP - Chris Presland; DT Dave Thomson; RT - Roger Truscott

Comment: The apparent southern expansion of Pacific Bazza in NSW continues with the interesting breeding record from Nowra, while the Bazza's around Balgownie and Mt. Ousley provided many people with excellent views. This was exemplified by Betty's prompt call to me and subsequent relay to the 20 odd members on the email hotline. The Square-tailed Kite was an unexpected observation for Minnegang Creek Reserve which has been reforested by the local Bushcare group over the past 6 years. The Kite hung around for 5 minutes of superb viewing before continuing north. The Hooded Plover is the first Windang record since April 1988. The Little Corellas were behaving most oddly, digging in the sand flats and extracting unidentified food items. The Brown Treecreepers appear to be the eastern-most observation ever recorded in the region.



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 238

May 2001

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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**😊😊😊😊 FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS 😊😊😊😊**

**NEXT MEETING :** will be held on **Monday 14th May** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Our guest speaker for the night will be **Holly Parsons** who will be talking about the current Backyard Bird Survey which is part of her post-graduate studies. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**MID-WEEK OUTING :** **Wednesday 16th May 2001 at 8.30 am**, to Koono Bay and Macquarie Rivulet. This will be a pleasant, easy walk along part of Lake Illawarra and the river. Meet at 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail, and don't forget your morning tea. The leader for the morning is **Barbara Hales** please phone her on 42574431 if you need to know how to get there

**OUTING :** **Saturday 19th May at 8.30 am** to Tallawarra Power Station Ash Ponds, which we last visited in March 2000. 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 after you pass under the freeway. Don't forget your treats, drinks and protective gear.

**Next Committee Meeting :** This will be held on **Tuesday 22nd May at 7.30pm**, at **Kerri Lewis'** home : - address and phone number above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Vice President Lorraine Pincus beforehand.

**JUNE NEWSLETTER :** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 28th May. Editor's address or email is listed above.

## APRIL MEETING

The guest speaker for April was club member Chris Brandis who gave us a very interesting talk and slide show from his recent overseas working adventures in China and Turkey.

During July to September 1999, Chris was in the Fujian Province of China. The city of Xiamen is directly across from Taiwan with lots of Taiwanese capital being put into the manufacturing system. The land is a contrast of modern transport, communications and housing amongst the old style farming of fish, ducks and rice. Children are few with young people concentrating on careers and education. Chris showed many slides of the frantic construction going ahead everywhere with very little areas remaining of native vegetation. The most common birds near the hotel were White-shouldered Starlings and Brown Shrikes, as well as Common Wagtails. Chris' close call with "spying" was quickly explained to the local authorities - he was only interested in the White-breasted Waterhen in the swamp viewed from his hotel window and not in the artillery (WW1 guns). Near Xiamen International Airport many duck and fish farms were being filled in for roads and building sites. Even so, Kentish Plovers use the site for breeding and Barn Swallows were common. There were some re-vegetation going on and it was interesting to see that gum trees were a common planting. Xiamen Botanical Gardens were a popular visiting spot but with very few birds, the Common Kingfisher being one. In the gardens, there were headstones of liberation war heroes - Mausi Tung and Chakhi Shek. A nearby local holiday area is Gulangyu Island with some ancient buildings and shops. People enjoy the beach but again very little birdlife except for the Oriental White-Eye. Xiamen Harbour is a major port in the area used for trading with Taiwan (much needed money) and supply of labour from China. Again lots of construction was in progress using traditional bamboo scaffolding. Chris showed a slide of a typical single cylinder hand-wound diesel engine, which was very versatile for the locals. On the hill near the hotel were pillboxes used in the War of Independence, linked with old trenches and foxholes. Here Masked Laughing Thrushes are found with no were to go as well as Green Bee-eaters. At a local duck and fish farm Chinese Pond Herons, Little and Cinnamon Bittern and Pied Kingfishers would pinch the fish from ponds. Little Grebe and Northern Shovellers occurred in the grasses and around old communist barracks Tawny-flanked and Grey-breasted Prinia were sighted. Chris' parting comment was about the "flattening of the land" - where hills were dug out and swamps and fishponds were being filled for 3-lane highways with unused new take-away shops.

Chris' travels to Turkey occurred during March - April 2000 where he stayed at Izmit, Kocalei, located 100km east of Istanbul on the Sea of Marmara. This is the area devastated by a 9.7? earthquake in 1999. The area was made an extension of the industrial area of Istanbul due to air pollution, which now extends the 100km, and visibility is only 2-3 km by the afternoon. This is another country of extremes, with Mercedes cars, and horse and carts sharing the road and shepherds tending flocks outside modern factories. Chris' slides showed high mountains covered in snow, steep roads and narrow alleyways in towns located on the hillsides. Because of the devastation to many buildings, many residents were still living in refugee tents. Chaffinches were found in the new spring growth in forests and Alpine Swifts flew amongst the buildings. The sight of dumped rubbish was common in the park and effluent fouled the port. Even so any birds still appeared to flourish. These included Yellow-legged Gulls (Herring Gulls), Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Lesser Ringed and Kentish Plovers, Spotted Redshanks, Black-headed Gull, White Pelicans (migrating through) and Avocets to name a few. Amongst the spring flowers and grasses in the meadows were Tree, Red-throated and Meadow Pipits and at least 2 species of Yellow Wagtail making identification difficult. Hooded and Black Carrion Crows, as well as Rooks, were common in town. A common sight were White Storks sitting on their nests on chimneys. By the time Chris left in April the trees had fully leafed, making certain birds difficult to see, but Chris managed to see the Cetti's Warbler, Long-tailed Tit, White-throated and Bonelli's Warbler.

Vice President Lorraine Pincus gave a vote of thanks.

Kerri Lewis

## Easter Camp 2001.

What a wonderful camp! The weather was superb, the area spectacular and the birds plentiful.

The camp, held at "Wanganderry" was just over an hour's drive from Wollongong on the Wombeyan Caves Road between High Range and Bullio. The "workers" arrived on Wednesday and set up the usual camp facilities. Thank you (and we hope the thumb heals quickly Ron).

By Friday most campers had arrived and settled in, with a few coming on Sunday for a brief stay. In all we had 27 adults and 9 children. We also had 5 day visitors; 2 joined our walk on Saturday and 3 on Sunday.

On Saturday we set off with morning tea to the east of the camp site. Chris Chafer led us on the walk - in search of "the fortress". We saw some special sightings on the way - the Golden Whistler, the Scarlet Robins, the group of White-winged Choughs harassing a possum. We found the fortress and enjoyed our morning tea on the rocks. This was Miss Badgery's "playground" as a child. The rock "cannon" was a special sighting. We returned to camp for lunch. In the afternoon we explored the area in small groups.

Miss Badgery joined Kevin and Fae for tea on Saturday night and then stayed for the camp fire. She was obviously delighted with the gift - the bird book and a special carry bag made (and donated) by our very talented member Wendy Hanks. Thanks Wendy.

Sunday was another beautiful day. We drove along Wanganderry Road to Ben Har. A brief stop was taken on the high point to appreciate the views. Miss Badgery pointed out the local features and those with a keen eye (and good binoculars) were able to see the outline of buildings and a chimney over at Katoomba. Miss Badgery led the walk through the paddock and up to the ridge. We had morning tea at the Table and Chairs - more spectacular rock formations. We continued on and had lunch out on the point overlooking the Nattai Valley and the Wollondilly River.

There was not an abundance of birds but we spotted a few new species to add to the list. Although not really the flower season there were a few that the enthusiasts identified.

Although many of us had to head home on the Monday, we were keen to make the most of the opportunity to fit in another walk. This time Chris Chafer led us on a walk to the west through a variety of habitats. The walk was an adventure, (as the map was a little out of date). The sighting of the Flame Robin in the sun was a real treat. To Wal's delight we came across some domestic rubbish (one man's trash is another man's treasure!). Over morning tea, we were entertained by stories of the good

old days. The true character of one member was revealed with the stories of his wayward youth (I hope the children didn't get any ideas!!!). The camp provided a variety of highlights to individuals and these were shared around the camp fire - seeing the Greater Gliders climb the gum trees and "fly" from one tree to the next, watching the Scarlet Robins and Thornbills bathing in the water hole, getting to know others around the camp fire, sharing the hospitality as a new participant, enjoying the games.

It was a great camp. A huge thank you must go to the organisers; the workers who set up and packed up; the walk leaders and especially Miss Badgery for sharing her property.

Response to the camps has been dwindling and the committee has had some doubts as to whether they should go ahead.

The camp fulfilled the aim of the club: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them. They are great fun. If you have the chance, join us.

The final bird count was 76 species.

Bronwyn Wilson

#### Wanganderry Lat. 34 21' Long. 150 15'.

Brown Quail	Pilotbird	Leaden Flycatcher
Australian Wood Duck	Rockwarbler	Magpie-lark
Pacific Black Duck	White-browed scrubwren	Grey Fantail
Grey Teal	Weebill	Willie Wagtail
Australasian Grebe	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Little Pied Cormorant	Buff-rumped Thornbill	Olive-backed Oriole
White-faced Heron	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Brown Goshawk	Yellow Thornbill	Australian Magpie
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Red Wattlebird	Pied Currawong
Peregrine Falcon	Striated Thornbill	Australian Raven
Nankeen Kestrel	Little Friarbird	Little Crow
Masked Lapwing	Bell Miner	White-winged Chough
Common Bronzewing	Noisy Miner	Satin Bowerbird
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Richard's Pipit
Gang-gang Cockatoo	White-eared Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Australian King Parrot	White-naped Honeyeater	Beautiful Firetail
Crimson Rosella	Eastern Spinebill	European Goldfinch
Eastern Rosella	Scarlet Robin	Mistletoebird
Red-rumped Parrot	Flame Robin	Welcome Swallow
Southern Boobook	Rose Robin	Rufous Songlark
Australian Owlet-nightjar	Eastern Whipbird	Silvereye
Laughing Kookaburra	Spotted Quail-thrush	Common Starling
White-throated Treecreeper	Varied Sittella	Common Myna
Red-browed Treecreeper	Crested Shrike-tit	
Superb Fairy-wren	Golden Whistler	
Spotted Pardalote	Rufous Whistler	
Striated Pardalote	Grey Shrike-thrush	



### When You're On a Good Thing -----!

The following story is extracted from a recent issue of the local paper in Port Macquarie, the Port Macquarie News.

"Flypaper became the sticky nemesis for three fairy wrens on Sunday when they recognised a meal in the flies already trapped there.

The owner of the Port Macquarie home faced a distressing task when he awoke to find the father and two baby wrens, who live in the backyard, stuck to the Kamoi Fly ribbon.

In his attempt to release them from the paper's glue, one of the baby wrens completely lost its tail, and its wing feathers were glued to its side.

The birds were cleaned up by people from FAWNA. The father bird unfortunately died but the little ones are, happily, back in the trees."

So, it's suggested that we use flypaper indoors only.

We're reminded of the problem faced by noddies on the Barrier Reef islands where they nest in pisonia trees, the very sticky seeds of these trees sometimes rendering the noddies flightless and so unable to feed, leading inevitably to death. And the occasion many years back when Wal Emery, walking a track against the escarpment, came on a Red-browed Finch glued up by pisonia seeds and released it. And the Southern Whiteface set free by Barry Virtue from a spider web in a deserted bush dunny at Munghorn Gap (1978). And the sparrow "Christmas wrapped" in a spider's web at Balgownie and released (1985). And the very recent (Feb. 2001) incident where Laurie Williams untangled a Superb Fairy-wren from a web over his bird-bath. - the spider persisted in rebuilding each time Laurie took down its web so it (the spider, not the bird-bath) was relocated.

Dave Thomson.

## Flypaper poses sticky danger for small birds

FLYPAPER became the sticky nemesis for three fairy wrens on Sunday when they unknowingly flew into the paper after they recognised a meal in the flies already trapped there.

The owner of the Port Macquarie home faced a distressing task when he awoke to find the father and two baby wrens, who live in his backyard, stuck to the Kamoi Fly ribbon.

In his attempt to release them from the paper's glue, one of the baby wrens completely lost its tail and its wing feathers were glued to its side.

Hastings bird co-ordinator for FAWNA, Rosemarie Johnson, was called in to care for the distressed birds. She blotted and bathed the birds in a special detergent in an effort to remove the adhesive material.

"Unfortunately the trauma was too much for the father wren who died the following day," Ms Johnson said.

Not as easily distressed, the young wrens survived their ordeal and are now back in the tree-tops. When returned to their backyard, a few whistles saw the babies surrounded once again by their family members.

Unheard of before in Port Macquarie, Ms Johnson is deeply concerned that this accident may happen again and made an appeal to the public to keep flypaper for indoors only.

"I would hate for others to get caught." Such rescue of native animals is part and parcel of FAWNA's role and in an effort for the public to learn more about what is involved FAWNA are conducting a training course on rescue and emergency care of native animals February 10.

"This course is an ideal opportunity to learn about FAWNA's work with injured, orphaned and disadvantage fauna. If you have thought of joining but are not sure what is involved, come along and meet FAWNA carers and learn the basics of rescue and rehabilitation," said FAWNA president Meredith Ryan.

For more information contact Meredith on 6585 6470.

## Atlas Update

**Last year of Atlas surveys!** So far 146,428 surveys have been done in 78,453 different locations throughout Australia. There are 2.5 million bird sightings of 765 different species. This compares with 2.7 million records of 738 species in the first Atlas. Over 9,000 people are contributing to the new Atlas and surveys are still coming in at around a thousand per week. The Atlas surveys officially stop at the end of December this year.

## Comparison of Atlases

You are of course eager to learn about changes that have occurred since the last Atlas. So here is a brief overview, based on a preliminary analysis of about 50 bird species. The final analysis will be completed in six months time, and may change some of the results presented here.

## Methods

As there were substantial differences in survey design between the two Atlases, it was necessary to exclude some of the surveys, so the methods were as comparable as possible.

- Reporting rates were compared for each bird species (#sightings/#surveys).
- Only one-degree squares with at least five surveys were compared
- Only surveys done within a 24-hour period were included (not the same 24-hour period).
- Only 500 m and 5 km searches from the new Atlas were compared with 10-min surveys from the old Atlas. A comparison of these different survey methods suggests that for most bird species there was no 'effect' on reporting rates due to the type of method used. However, some species were favoured by the 10-minute searches used in Atlas 1, in particular large, open-country birds that are common along roads, such as Magpies, Corellas, Kestrels and Pipits. This means that a reported decline in such species is partly due to them not being detected as easily in the second Atlas.
- Changes between Atlas 1 and Atlas 2 were compared between different bioregions (IBRA Regions).

A general linear mixed model was used, the data being treated as binomial and corrected for non-independence and unequal survey effort (I guess you all knew this).

## Preliminary results

On a national scale, many bird species that respond rapidly to vegetation growth, rainfall and flowering events, such as pigeons, honeyeaters and wrens, appear to have increased, being recorded more frequently in Atlas 2 than in Atlas 1 (see lists). Part of the explanation for such increases is that there is more rainfall between 1998 and 2001 than between 1977 and 1981

(<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/change/rain.shtml>).

By contrast, large bird species that feed or nest on the ground are well represented among species that have decreased. Please note that this analysis was not based on a random selection of birds.

### **Birds less common than 20 years ago:**

#### **\* indicates regional variation inc change**

Balnaded Lapwing\* Black-shouldered Kite\* Brown Falcon\* Nankeen Kestrel\* (under-estimated with new methods) Red-browed Treecreeper\* Australian Pipit\* (under-estimated with new methods) Scarlet Robin\* Wedge-tailed Eagle\* Emu

### **Birds more common than 20 years ago:**

Brown Quail\* Crested Pigeon\* Eastern Yellow Robin\* Galah\* Lewin's Honeyeater\* Little Corella\* (under-estimated with new methods) New Holland Honeyeater\* Peaceful Dove\* Rainbow Lorikeet\* Sacred Kingfisher\* (possibly under-estimated with new methods) Spotted Pardalote\* Sulphur-crested Cockatoo\* Superb Fairy-wren\* Weebill\* White-browed Scrubwren\* White-throated Treecreeper\* Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Spotted Turtle-Dove, Striated Heron, Brown Thornbill, Common Bronzewing, Red Wattlebird, Musk Lorikeet

### **Birds showing no change:**

Australian Magpie\* (under-estimated with new methods, so probably increased since first Atlas)  
Black Swan\* Black-fronted Dotterel\* Brogla\* Brown Treecreeper\* Bush Stone-curlew Diamond Firetail\* Gang-gang Cockatoo\* Hardhead\* Laughing Kookaburra\* Speckled Warbler\* White-eared Honeyeater\* Superb Lyrebird, Noisy Miner, Eurasian Coot, Fuscous Honeyeater, Blue-billed Duck, Black-chinned Honeyeater.

### Regional variation

Of particular importance is that for many of the bird species tested, the change in reporting rate between Atlas 1 and Atlas 2 varied between different biogeographic regions. There are about 80 such regions in Australia, defined on the basis of vegetation, soil, rainfall patterns, and the associated agricultural land use (IBRA Regions – see map below). In the birds species tested, seven out of ten showed strong increases or decreases over the last 20 years, but for many species, these changes were not obvious when considered nationally. Research indicates that birds are disappearing from landscapes where extensive clearing of native vegetation has taken place, and where intensive land uses occur, such as cropping and fertilizer application. On the other hand, landscapes associated with moderate grazing, native pastures and the presence of native tree and shrub cover have probably gained bird species (results from birds Australia's Birds on Farms survey). As mentioned above, bird diversity will also increase where rainfall has been favourable.

### Atlas data and bird migration

In his PhD study on bird movements in Australia, Peter Griffioen from La Trobe University, Bundoora, used Atlas 1 and Atlas 2 data to describe patterns of movement in Australia's land birds. Extensive movements up and down the east coast of Australia by species such as the Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Scarlet Honeyeater and Spectacled Monarch were detected, as well as movements between Victoria and Tasmania by birds such as the Blue-winged Parrot and Flame Robin. As predicted by earlier researchers, birds such as the Glossy Black-Cockatoo, Little Lorikeet, Eastern Spinebill and Red-browed Finch appeared to move into the Carnarvon Gorge in southeastern Queensland during summer. During winter, the Forest Kingfisher moves towards the Queensland coast. It was also found that when heading north to New Guinea in the winter months, inter-continental migrants such as the Dollarbird do not appear to be channelled along the Cape York Peninsula as previously thought: rather, they appear to 'jump off' at numerous points along the northeastern coast of Australia.

DARRYL GOLDRICK.

(EXTRACT FROM BIRDS AUSTRALIA - NEWS UPDATE N° 7 - JAN 2001)

**EARLY NOTICE JUNE MEETING.** This will be a Members' Night and you are invited to be a part of it and share with other members any of your birding experiences whether they are through song, dance, slides, arts, crafts, readings, walks, etc. etc. in fact anything related to birds. Please try and participate and help by giving your name to **Brian Hales** so that he can set out some kind of timetable for the evening.

### Swift Parrot Survey

Once again, on 19th - 20th May, the Australian Swift Parrot and Regent Honeyeater survey will be run by one of our speakers, David Geering. We have seen them in our coastal eucalypts when in flower so any one interested in checking out some areas or of any sightings outside the survey date please let me know on 4296 2837.

Chris Brandis

Unusual Records March-April 2001 Chris J. Chafer

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	7	05/2	Curramore	garden	KM
Pink-eared Duck	4	23/3	Dunmore	wetland	DG
Striated Heron	1	12/2	Tom Thumb pond	remnant wetland	JBs
Australian Hobby	2	23/3	Dunmore	overhead	DG
Pacific Baza	2	March-April	Balgownie	forest/urban	TE
Brown Goshawk	1	28/4	Albion Park Rail	garden	PF
Grey Goshawk	2	26/1	Bulli Pass	overhead	JBs
Grey Goshawk	1	11/2	Austinmer	overhead	JBs
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	04/2	Illawarra Hwy, Albion Park	overhead	GB
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	18/2	Paddys River W of Wendela	overhead	GB
Little Eagle	1	08/4	M. Pleasant	overhead	DT
Buff-banded Rail	1	02/3	Woodlands Ck. Thirroul	wetland	JBs
Buff-banded Rail	1	17/2	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	1	17/4	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Pied Oystercatcher	6	23/2	Lake Conjola	estuary	KM
<b>Hooded Plover</b>	1	11/3	Shoalhaven Heads	sand flats	PC
Black-winged Stilt	31	23/4	Hooka Point (L. Illawarra)	mudflat	JBs
Long-tailed Jaeger	1+	24/2	off Wollongong	marine	GB
White-headed Pigeon	3	04/3	Jamberoo	urban	KM
Emerald Dove	1	05/4	Bulli	garden	RT
Brush Bronzewing	1	28/3	Bulli Pass	forest	GB
Brush Bronzewing	1	23/02	west Bendalong	forest	KM
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	06/4	Dharawal SRA, Darkes Forest	woodland	JBs
Bar-shouldered Dove	4+	02/2	Curramore	garden	KM
Gang-gang Cockatoo	7+	March	Mt. Ousley	garden	EK
Long-billed Corella	11	04/2	Corrimal	urban	TW
Superb Parrot	1	24/3	Mangerton	garden	MW
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	3	March	Balgownie	garden	TE
Musk Lorikeet	few	23/2	Cudmirrah	urban	KM
Azure Kingfisher	1	28/3	Bulli Pass	creek	GB
Southern Emu-wren	1	04/2	Upper Rocklow Ck., Dunmore	Woodland	JB
Large-billed Gerygone	2	24/2	Lady Fuller Park, Austinmer	forest	GB
Red Wattlebird	1	24/3	Bulli Pass	garden	RM
Scarlet Robin	1	22/3	Nerriga	woodland	CP
Rose Robin	1	16/4	Warrawong	garden	CJC
Rose Robin	1	29/4	Thirroul	urban	MM
Rose Robin	1	30/4	Excelsior mine	forest	MM
Varied Sittella	3+	18/2	Dirranbandi, W of Moss Vale	woodland	GB
<b>Olive Whistler</b>	2	31/3	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Olive-backed Oriole	1	25/4	Warrawong	garden	CJC
Figbird	5	04/4	Warrawong	garden	CJC
Figbird	1	17/3	Windang	figtree	GB
Green Catbird	3	21/3	Bulli Pass RM	garden	RM
Common Blackbird	1	20/3	Paddys River W of Wendela	woodland	GB

GB - Graham Barwell; JBs - John Bisset; JB - John Blomstedt; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; PC - Paul Craven; TE - Terry Edwell; PF - Peter Fackender; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Betty Hudson; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphet; CP - Chris Presland; RM - Richard Miller; DT - Dave Thomson; RT - Roger Truscott; MW - Murray Wilson

Comment: The Olive Whistlers are the first local records for a couple of years and a really good find for this often cryptic species. The Wood Sandpiper has yet again showed up at its favourite haunt. The Red Wattlebird was Richard's first observation in 20 years residence at Bulli Pass. Emerald Doves are a good find at any time. Although the Superb Parrot was probably an escapee, this species has attempted to breed at Mangerton in 1995. The Pacific Baza's hung around for most of March and April giving many people great views of this locally rare species.



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 239

June 2001

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**

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>EDITOR</b>
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Editor's email: alanlowis@eudoramail.com

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**😊😊😊😊 FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS 😊😊😊😊**

**NEXT MEETING :** will be held on **Monday 11th June** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Tonight will be the annual **Members Night** when IBOC members are invited to share in birding interests. Your club needs you, your fellow members want you, so bring along something to show, talk about, read, sing, dance or act!! A good night of fun is assured if you are prepared to do your bit. Our Chairperson for the night is ex- President **Brian Hales** so please contact him on 42574431 so a program can be prepared. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**MID-WEEK OUTING :** will be on **Wednesday 13th June** to Puckey's Estate. Meet at the carpark of the FairyMeadow Surf Lifesaving Club at **9.00 am**.

**OUTING :** This months walk will be to **Lady Carrington's Drive** in the Royal National Park on **Sunday 17th June**. We will meet at **8.30 am** at the northern end of Lady Carrington Drive (Audley end). We will need to car pool, driving to the southern end to commence the walk and finish our walk back at the meeting site. There is a \$10 car entry fee into the Royal. Our leader for the day will be Bruce O'Brien so please ring him on 42627529 if you intend on going so travelling arrangements can be organised. Don't forget you eats, drinks and protective gear.

**Next Committee Meeting :** This will be held on **Tuesday 19th June** at 7.30pm, at **Lorraine Pincus** home : - address and phone number above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Lorraine beforehand.

**JULY NEWSLETTER :** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 25th June. Editor's address or email is listed above.

### UPDATED 2001 IBOC PROGRAM

JUNE	MON 11	MEMBERS NIGHT (Brian Hales)
	WED 13	PUCKEY'S ESTATE (1/2 DAY)
	SUN 17	LADY CARRINGTON DRIVE -(Bruce O'Brien)
JULY	MON 9	DR. KEVIN MILLS - Threatened Birds of Illawarra
	WED 11	BOTANICAL GARDENS W'GONG (1/2 DAY)
	SAT 14	MORTON N.P. - (Leader Dr Kevin Mills)
	(School Holidays 9/7/01 - 22/07/01)	
AUGUST	MON 13	BILL ZEALY - Flight
	WED 15	GREVILLEA PARK, BULLI (1/2 DAY)
	SUN 19	WANDANIAN -(Leader Barry Virtue)
SEPT	MON 10	MARJORIE COCHRINE
	WED 12	BARREN GROUNDS (1/2 DAY)
	SAT 22	BOTANIC GARDENS SYDNEY -(Leader John Mathews)
OCT		CAMP
	(School Holidays 1/10/01 - 14/10/01)	
NOV	MON 12	MEETING T.B.A.
	WED 14	WOLLONGONG UNIVERSITY (1/2 DAY)
	SUN 18	KILLALEA STATE RECREATION RESERVE
DEC	SAT 8	CHRISTMAS GET-TOGETHER
	MON 10	CHRISTMAS MEMBERS NIGHT

**ED. CORRECTION.** In the May Issue :-

For the Easter Camp Bird List, please change Little Crow to Little Raven.

### Saturday Outing to Tallawarra

Although the day started out with a chilly westerly wind and the threat of rain, in the end it turned out to be a pleasant day for the seven club members walking around the Tallawarra Ash Ponds and the regrowth casuarina and wattle stands that has covered much of the area. There were waterbirds a plenty on the ponds and generally good views of them through Darryl's telescope to get the finer points on both Australasian and Hoary-headed Grebes, Pink-eared Ducks and Australasian Shovellers. There were quite a few small birds as well in the rank grass and wattle such as Superb Fairy-wren and Yellow Thornbill. Raptors were well represented with great views of a Swamp Harrier as it cruised around the pond edges

searching for a meal. Black-shouldered Kite, Little Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Falcon, Whistling Kite and White-Goshawk were all sighted but we did miss out on the promised Osprey. One of the highlights was Alistar's flushing of a Glossy Ibis from the edge of No 3 Ash Pond, a very rare sighting for the area.

After a bite to eat on the grass just inside the security gate we strolled around the old ash ponds and the scouts area. There were quite a few pampas grass clumps springing up in the area which will need clearing out by Pacific Power but the casuarinas were becoming almost impenetrable in places killing off some of the clumps. The water levels here were low and Black-fronted Dotterels fed on the edges while the Black-winged Stilts could wade about the centre of the ponds. A brief sighting of a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo as well as more Fairy-wrens and Grey Fantails continued our species count with a Whistling Kite giving as a farewell fly past as we were packing up to leave. Late leavers also sighted Striated Herons in the channel and a Restless Flycatcher beside the road.

In all 63 species were sighted, with thanks to Darryl for arranging with Pacific Power for permission to visit the site as it is one of the best wetlands in the area. It is hoped that the coal wash covered development occurring next door will not give developers ideas with this area considering the species diversity we always find there.

Chris Brandis

## **The Birds of Sandon Point - McCauleys Beach**

### **Endangered Species?**

Between Sandon Point, Bulli and the southern edge of Thirroul lies the McCauleys Beach wetland, fed by Tramway, Woodlands and Hewitts Creeks. Despite human efforts to the contrary, the three creeks are still linked for several hundred metres west of the beach, as any walker after rain can testify. Further west is the old Newbolds (B.H.P.) Refractory Site (North) and the Cookson Plibrico Factory (South), both bounded by the Illawarra Rail Line. In recent years Stockland Trust, a national property developer acquired the B.H.P. and other parcels. Ray Hannah owns the the Northen Eastern corner of the site.

So the whole area became an environment v's development issue. Protecting birdlife is only one of the many battlelines in the protracted struggle now awaiting hearings in the Land and Environment Court, but it seems clear to me that removing vulnerable environments and birdlife disappears - it is that simple.

So what birdlife does Sandon Point/ McCauleys beach offer. A birdlist developed from interested local resident sightings exceeds 120 species.

Here are some I've seen in the last year.

White-cheeked Honeyeater (with New Holland)  
Sacred Kingfisher (on the beach below clay cliffs)  
Eastern Whipbird (within 150m of the ocean)  
Grey Shrike-thrush  
Southern Emu-wren (just west of Sydney Water Installation)  
Golden-headed Cisticola  
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo (a September flyby)  
Little Corella  
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo  
Clamorous Reed-warbler (if you're patient)  
Barred Cuckoo Shrike (on McCauleys Hill, in figs)  
Figbirds (ditto)  
Black-shouldered Kite  
Variegated Fairy-wren  
Peregrin Falcon (many appearances last year)  
Grey Butcherbird  
Sooty Oystercatcher (Sandon Point platforms)  
Spangled Drongo (March 2001)  
White-breasted Sea-Eagle (regular tourists in 2001)  
Double-barred Finch (near Sydney Water Installation)  
Azure Kingfisher (March/April 2001 Hewitts Creek)  
Eastern Yellow Robin / Rufous Fantail (both within 150m of beach)  
Ruddy Turnstone (Sandon Point platforms)  
Fan-tailed Cuckoo (May 2001, Hewitts Creek)  
(Australian) Nankeen Kestrel  
Satin Bowerbird

Clearly, there is a habitat capable of sustaining permanent residents and which offers stop-over sanctuary to birds on the move. Open slather urban development will destroy the native grasslands, threaten the waterways, denude the remnant forests and massively multiply human interference and pollutants across this wetland/beachscape. The birds will depart or die, leaving the few dominant species common up and down the Illawarra to fight over scraps in backyards and beachside bins.

So birdos; drive to Sandon Point and walk this area via the beach, bike-track or paths less travelled. You'll recognise the real estate value as you walk down into the wetlands, but their width and fragility makes a vast section of this site unsuitable for urban or park development. Surely we can no longer accept the blind bull-dozing approach of the past - sustainable, sensible ecologically aware developments may produce a future many species can live with.

Ian McKinlay



### Mid week Walk

On Wednesday 16th May, 8 members of IBOC, plus 2 visitors from Canada, met at Brian and Barbara's house in Shearwater Boulevard for our morning walk. The visitors proved to be not only keen bird observers but pleasant walking companions, who were interested in everything about our district that we had to show them. They were also greatly taken with the names of the streets running off Shearwater Boulevard.

Items of interest were seen as soon as we walked around the back of the house. A banksia spinulosa, looking bushy and healthy, had produced one 'candle' at least 30 cm long - a mighty effort - and there was also an Australian Magpie-lark, with fishing line tangled around his foot, but as we couldn't get close to him, nothing could be done to help. From this vantage point we also saw a Butcherbird, Galahs, Grey Heron, Little Black Cormorant, Willie Wagtails and Doves.

We set off as usual along the mown stretch of grass behind the houses. A delightful walk with soft grass underfoot and the sun warm on our backs. The she-oaks held pride of place along the waters edge and on the mudflats, with the little marsh plants doing their 'thing', though not seeming bigger than when we were last here. There were Pacific Black, Little Egrets, Galahs and Chestnut Teals to be seen here. Having come to the creek that we were unable to cross, we turned around and headed towards the second part of our walk, which was to Creole Point.

It is said that Egypt is the gift of the Nile and so too the peninsular we walked along is the gift of the Macquarie Rivulet from the days well before it was named after Lachlan Macquarie. Its composition however will no doubt change, as after the next big flood it will be covered with coal wash brought down from where the flood plain is being built up for housing. The peninsular is 1.8 km from the shoreline and is solid land now, with extensive mudflats along which we carefully picked our way. From here we saw Royal Spoonbill and Yellow Spoonbill - easy to pick out while feeding because of their distinctive head movements. There were also Sacred Ibis, Masked Lapwing, Gold Finches(sic.), Black Cormorant, and of course, Silver Gulls.

We walked past drifts of fireweed and large clumps of lantana, in which Superb Fairy Wrens were hopping in and out of shelter in their usual fashion - looking as beautiful as ever.

We went out on the mudflats, walking carefully because it was slippery. They were well patterned with birds' feet, and in a couple of places, were well covered with feathers. What **did** the feasting and what **was** the feast, we did not know except that some creature had had a hearty breakfast.

By now it was morning teatime, so we retraced our steps and had an enjoyable morning tea in delightful surroundings. Then in no time, we set off again on the third stage of our walk through the pleasant parklands, which would be even more pleasant if vandals ceased with their destruction. We passed white cedars with both leaves and drupes turning yellow, lillypilly with fruit of pale mauve and a pond that had been filled with water last time we were here, but now was almost empty and covered with plastic rubbish. On the way we saw

Eastern Yellow Robin and Rose Robin, New Holland Honeyeater and Yellow Thornbill. There was a large raft of dead vegetation being held back by the piers on the railway bridge and fortunately the noise and sight of the local factories were almost deadened by the plantings. The Red River Gums were flourishing. We went on to the new parking area and shelter sheds before turning back.

We had a lovely morning - thank you to Barbara and fellow walkers for your company. We saw 58 species for the day.

Black Swan	Lewin's Honeyeater
Mallard	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Pacific Black Duck	White-plumed Honeyeater
Grey Teal	New Holland Honeyeater
Chestnut Teal	White-fronted Chat
Hardhead Duck	Rose Robin
Australasian Grebe	Eastern Yellow Robin
Little Pied Cormorant	Golden Whistler
Pied Cormorant	Grey Shrike-thrush
Australian Pelican	Grey Fantail
White-faced Heron	Willie Wagtail
Great Egret	Spangled Drongo
Cattle Egret	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Striated Heron	Grey Butcherbird
Australian White Ibis	Australian Magpie
Royal Spoonbill	Australian Raven
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	House Sparrow
Whistling Kite	European Greenfinch
Nankeen(Australian) Kestrel	Welcome Swallow
Dusty Moorhen	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Black -fronted Dotterel	Common Starling
Masked Lapwing	Common Myna
Silver Gull	Caspian Tern
Rock Dove	Spotted Turtle-Dove
Crested Pigeon	Sulphur -crested Cockatoo
Eastern Rosella	Superb Fairy Wren
Southern Emu-wren	Whited -browed Scrubwren
Yellow Thornbill	

Peggy Merritt

# Sydney for the birds

## Largest number of species in Australia

By SIMON BENSON  
Environment Reporter

ALFRED Hitchcock can't now proudly boast that when it comes to birds — and very large numbers of them — this is the place to be.

Research just published by a Sydney ornithologist has revealed that the Royal National Park on the coastal fringes of the southern suburbs has more bird species than any other park in the country.

It has now set an Australian record putting it ahead of Kakadu National Park which has four fewer species of birds.

A total of 279 different species of birds have been identified in the park — a number which surprised scientists, birdwatchers and more so, the State Government which runs the park. It also plays host to the world's largest and fastest birds.

Despite fires, vandalism and huge volumes of tourists, Sydney's first and largest national park has become the State's largest menagerie.

"I know of no other national park, certainly not in NSW in which so many native bird species have been recorded," National Parks and Wildlife Service director general Brian Gilligan

said. "It is an extraordinary number." A survey by ornithologist Steve Anyon-Smith has been compiled into a guide book to birdwatching in the park.

With maps on how to find some of the often unusual and dangerous birds, the book has revealed secrets that even state authorities and park rangers were unaware of.

Sea eagles, peregrine falcons, satin bowerbirds and superb lyrebirds are just some of the species that live in the park — an unusual mix of birds that would not normally be associated.

"The amazing variety of natural settings allows a diversity that is rarely found in an area of this size combining heath, rain-forest, a mixture of other forest types, ocean, estuarine and freshwater habitats," Mr Anyon-Smith said.

"Where else in the world could we watch the magnificent wandering albatross, admire the speed of the swiftest living thing — the peregrine falcon — or admire the beauty of the world's greatest mimic, the superb lyrebird... all in one day and in the same area.

"Australians sometimes need to be reminded of how important biodiversity and conservation are and just how amazing Royal National and Heathcote parks are."



White-bellied sea eagle

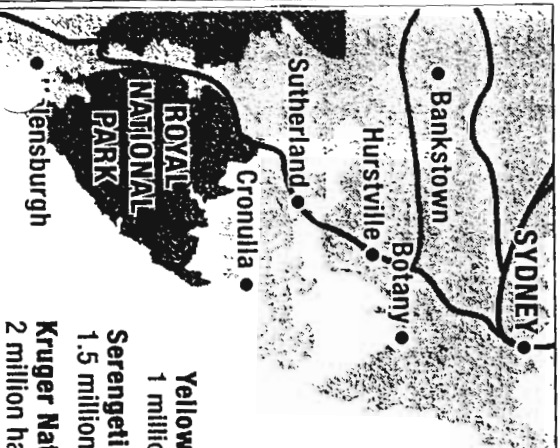


Rainbow lorikeet



### HOW THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK COMPARES

- Royal National Park, Sydney 16,000 ha, 279 bird species
- Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory 2 million ha, 275 species
- Yellowstone National Park (US) 1 million ha, about 300 species
- Serengeti National Park (Tanzania) 1.5 million ha, about 500 species
- Kruger National Park (South Africa) 2 million ha, more than 500 species



## RE the REGENT and the REWARDS of PLANTING TREES

Mike MORPHETT

On 5<sup>th</sup> May last I had my first experience of working on the tree-planting program on farm properties in the Capertee Valley to help boost the Regent Honeyeater population. My connecting with the land by planting the variously selected native 'treelings' and gazing across the paddocks towards the undulating skyline of Wollemi National Park were spiritual experiences indeed. The Saturday night dinner at the Glen Alice Community Hall, which was packed, was a most convivial affair and just reward for the planters of some 7000 trees and shrubs.

Six days later I received a phone call from David Geering, the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Coordinator and our club's guest speaker at our meeting last March. He said he had been interviewed on ABC Illawarra Radio that morning and had received a call from a local resident, stating he had seen birds answering to David's description of the Regent at the Port Kembla Steelworks just recently. David asked if I could follow this up. After obtaining details from the BHP employee, I then had to arrange for the works supervisor to give me security clearance for entry via North Gate the next day. On the Saturday Kevin McGregor and I spent an hour walking through the treed and garden areas near the creek, but there was no sign of the Flying Coachman; a "nil return" was duly emailed to David. Amid the flowering grevillea and banksia, however, there were scores of very active New Holland Honeyeaters, and we suspect this was the species David's caller had mistaken in this area. We noted ten other avian species, including a pair of bold and inquisitive Spotted Pardalotes, during that brief lunch-time spell. It might well prove a useful exercise for the club to have a field outing to the Steelworks, with assistance from the company's Environmental Department, to survey the area, particularly since BHP's own tree-planting program awhile back seems to be attracting plenty of birds. Also, club members able to gain official access may want to see if Kevin and I did in fact miss the Regent Honeyeater.

## BIRD CALL RECORDINGS on CD

Mike MORPHETT

Among the Ornithology students I recently met at Charles Sturt University residential school was Fred van Gessel. He gave a talk on recording bird calls with demonstrations from his own CDs. Three of them I purchased with a view to taping a selection to play in my own local study area to see if I can attract any species I have overlooked or failed to identify. The recordings are of excellent quality. In addition to the two volumes of Bushbirds of the Hunter Region and one of Nightbirds, which I acquired, Fred has one on Honeyeaters and two of Cape York area on sale.

People interested in acquiring any of these CDs should contact Fred direct via 64 Dorothy Avenue, Woy Woy, NSW 2256 or 02.4343.1283 or [fred@trentvale.com.au](mailto:fred@trentvale.com.au). Each CD costs \$18 including GST (that doesn't stand for Great Shrike-thrush!) and postage and packing is \$3 for 2 or \$6 for 5.

## SMH 20/4/01 Giant crows rule the roost in Tokyo

JAPAN

Tokyo is suffering a plague of giant crows, encouraged by growing volumes of rubbish and excessive energy consumption.

A recent survey by the Wild Bird Society of Japan found that Tokyo's crow population has jumped from 20,000 to 30,000 since 1998. In the past 15 years, it is believed to have more than quadrupled.

Japan's capital has been taken over by *Corvus macrorhynchos* - South-East Asian jungle crows - which have wingspans of up to a metre, sharp beaks and a feisty attitude.

The birds reportedly make hundreds of attacks each year, mostly during the April to June breeding season.

During the lean new year period, when the country closes down, they have been known to prey on kittens and small dogs.

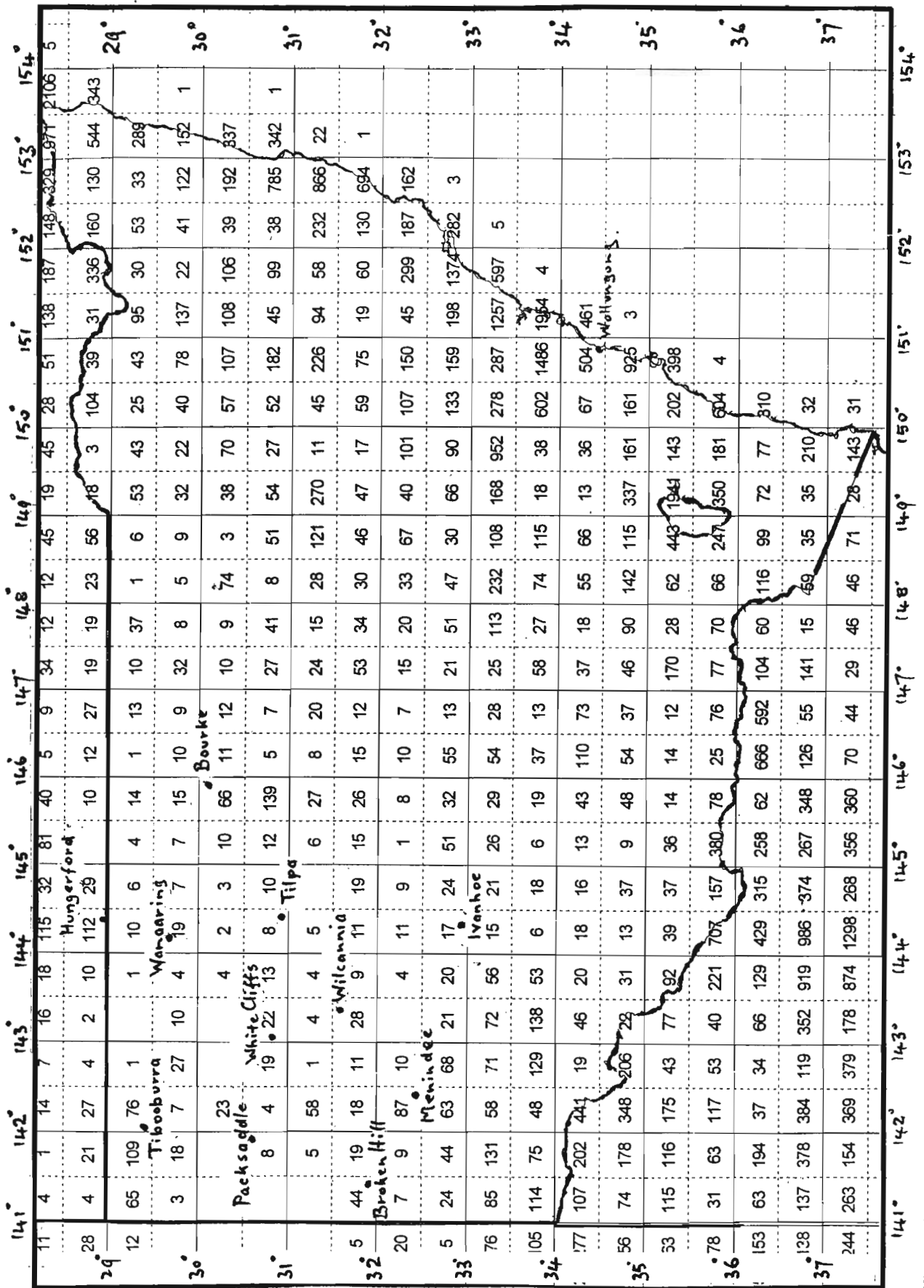
The rise in the number of birds has been attributed to two environmental problems: rubbish and heat.

Tokyo produces a vast and growing amount of refuse, which is carefully sorted by residents. But the authorities' insistence on the use of transparent bin liners to ensure that the rubbish is sorted correctly is believed to have made it easier for the sharp-eyed birds to find food.

The city's temperature is also to their liking, thanks to the "heat island" effect produced by Tokyo's dense population, high volume of traffic and a concrete environment that traps the warmth.

The Guardian

Atlas surveys per 30-minute grid in NSW - April 2001



We've talked before about the **Atlas of Australian Birds**, mapping the distribution of our birds all over Oz. It's to finish at Xmas. Looking only at our own state, there are quite a few areas in the west that have few or no records and the Atlas people are trying to have at least 5 record sheets (surveys) for each 30 minute (about 50km) square. This map shows the position at April 2001. If you've not been out that way before, it's very interesting country and Atlasing gives you a great reason to visit. If you're already an Atlasser, then you know the ropes. If not, give me a ring and I'll get you moving. But go before it's too hot, and fill in some of the poorer squares. Records seem very sparse around and west of Packsaddle, north and south of White Cliffs and along the border east of Tibooburra. Most roads out there are gravel and in fair condition given no rain. But check.

Dave Thomson. 4284 2876.

Unusual Records April May 2001 Chris J. Chafer

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Shellduck	2	30/3	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
White-necked Heron	1	13/5	Bulli	dam	RT
Striated Heron	1	21/5	Hooka Point	lake shore	JB
Striated Heron	2	21/5	Yallah Bay	lake shore	JB
Glossy Ibis	1	19/5	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	wetland	AL
Grey Goshawk	1	01/4	Cudmirrah	overhead	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	03/4	Figtree	overhead	KM
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	14/4	Thirroul	overhead	RM
Little Eagle	1	26/4	Austinmer	overhead	JB
Buff-banded Rail	1	16/4	Cudmirrah	lake shore	KM
Pied Oystercatcher	2	04/5	Austinmer	beach	CL
Long-billed Corella	200+	09/5	Calderwood	rural	DG
Red-rumped Parrot	1	20/4	Illawarra Golf Course	-	IM
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	07/4	Cudmirrah	rural	KM
White-headed Pigeon	1	06/5	Lake Heights	overhead	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	1	20/4	Jaspers Brush	overhead	KM
White-headed Pigeon	4	20/4	Bomaderry	urban	KM
White-headed Pigeon	6	09/5	Jamberoo	garden	RS
Azure Kingfisher	1	01/4	Swan Lake	lake shore	KM
Azure Kingfisher	1	24/5	Upper Slacky Creek, Bulli	dam	DG
Azure Kingfisher	1	27/5	Macquarie Rivulet	watercourse	MPP
Rose Robin	1	16/5	Macquarie Rivulet	rainforest	BH
Rose Robin	2	14/5	Fry's Creek (Jamberoo)	forest	DG
Rose Robin	1	24/4	Curramore	garden	KM
Rose Robin	1	12/5	Balgownie	garden	TE
Rose Robin	1	03/5	Thirroul	garden	MM
Rose Robin	1	04/5	Warrawong	garden	CJC
Logrunner	2	02/3	Macquarie Pass NP	rainforest	PD
Varied Sittella	3	28/4	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Restless Flycatcher	1	16/5	Tallawarra Ash Ponds	woodland	DG
Spangled Drongp	1	May	Albion Park Rail	garden	BH
Spangled Drongp	1	20/5	Macquarie Rivulet	rainforest	MPP

JB - John Bisset; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; PD - Pauline Duran; TE - Terry Edwell; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BH - Brian & Barbara Hales; AL - Alistar Lethbridge; CL - Celli Lloyd; IM - Ian McKinlay; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphet; RM - Richard Miller; MPP - Martin & Penny Potter; RS - Ron Simcock; RT - Roger Truscott;

Many people have commented over the past few months that they are unsure on what species to record for inclusion in this list. To produce a list of species and reporting circumstances would take a page of the newsletter, which is a bit of a waste of space. The best advice I can give is this. If in doubt, check the species' abundance and distribution in the local field guide "*Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands*". This book is the most up to date account of birds in the region and will unequivocally assist you in deciding whether or not to report the record. Basically, if its listed as uncommon, scarce or rare, or outside the distribution illustrated on the species' map, then report it. The book is available through IBOC and is on sale at most meetings.

SEC NOTE:

THE BACKYARD BIRDS SPEAKER REPORT IS LENGTHY ( 2 pages - front & back )  
MEMBERS who wish to avail themselves of the Report can request  
A COPY BY RINGING ME.

DARRYL GOLDRICK  
SEC.



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**I.B.O.C. NEWS**

Issue No. 240

July 2001

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

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Editor's email: [alanlowis@eudoramail.com](mailto:alanlowis@eudoramail.com)

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**☺☺☺ FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS ☺☺☺**

**NEXT MEETING :** will be held on **Monday 9th July** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Our Guest Speaker for tonight will be **Dr. Kevin Mills** who will be speaking on **"Threatened Birds of the South Coast Region"**. The South Coast region covering about 1.4 million hectares is a large and diverse region, containing a broad range of habitats for birds. Over 400 species of bird have been recorded in the region. Of these over 50 have been identified as threatened in New South Wales. The talk will identify the threatened species in the region, particularly those that are critically endangered in the region, and look at the conservation needs of these species through the use of case studies. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**MID-WEEK OUTING :** will be on **Wednesday 11th July** to Wollongong Botanical Gardens. Meet at the carpark of the Garden (Murphy's Ave) at **9.00 am**. Our leader will be **Doug Rickers**.

**OUTING :** This months walk will be to new nature reserves near **Nowra** on **Saturday 14th July**. A few walks will be taken in the newly reserved land near Nowra. These will be quite flat and easy walking. Spotted Gum Forest and Flat Rock Dam are features.

**Meeting place:** Tourist Information Centre, just over the bridge at Nowra (first turn left then right, building can easily be seen from road, behind the helicopter on a stick.)

Time: **9.30am** Return about 3.00pm.

Contact for information: **Kevin Mills** - 42360620

Don't forget you eats, drinks and protective gear.

**Next Committee Meeting :** This will be held on **Tuesday 17th July at 7.30pm.** at **The Hales'** home : - 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail phone no 42574431. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Lorraine Pincus beforehand.

**AUGUST NEWSLETTER :** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 30th July. Editor's address or email is listed above.

### OCTOBER CAMPS

As a result of the responses to the dates for the October Camp, the majority have indicated that a **late October Camp** is preferred. The dates will be 20/10/01 to 4/11/01 at "Bald Hill" Trunkey. Those campers intending to go must register with Kevin McGregor (phone no: 42713762 ) indicating what days they will attend.

For those campers unable to attend is there any interest in organising a long weekend camp in October to Kangaroo Valley (site of Easter Camp 2000)? Also is there anyone prepared to act as camp leader? Please contact Kevin if interested.

**IBOC WEBSITE** For those on-line have a look at [www.wcet.org.au/websites/IBOCinc](http://www.wcet.org.au/websites/IBOCinc)

**Subject:** [BIRDING-AUS] Declining woodland birds recognised in N

Folks

More news from the NSW woodlands. In one sense the news is bad but putting another spin on it could be considered as good news in so much that the problem has been officially recognised. Now comes the time to do something about it!

The NSW Scientific Committee has made a Preliminary Determination to support a proposal to list the following species as a Vulnerable Species on Schedule 2 of the Threatened Species Conservation Act.

Hooded Robin (south-eastern form) *Melanodryas cucullata cucullata*  
Grey-crowned Babbler (eastern subspecies) *Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis*  
Diamond Firetail *Stagonopleura guttata*  
Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies) *Climacteris picummus victoriae*  
Black-chinned Honeyeater (eastern subspecies) *Meliphreptus gularis gularis*  
Speckled Warbler *Pyrrholaemus sagittata*

These Preliminary Determinations are to be gazetted today and are now on display until 22-06-2001 at which time public submissions will be assessed prior to the final determination. The NSW Scientific Committee at NSW NPWS, Hurstville will undoubtedly be able to provide more information on how to view these determinations.

Cheers

David Geering

David Geering  
Regent Honeyeater Recovery Coordinator  
NSW NPWS  
P.O. Box 2111  
Dubbo NSW 2830  
Ph. Freecall 1800 621 056 or 02 6883 5335



## JUNE MEETING

Though the attendance on the meeting was down on usual numbers (school holidays and public holiday was obviously a contributing factor) the small gathering was well entertained by our three club member presenters in Ron Imisides, Richard Miller and Brian Hales.

Ron's slide presentation was a superb collection of highlights of his 1994 birding tour in particular. Not only is Ron an experienced birder but his photographic skills are unsurpassed. Hooded parrots and Gouldian finches at Chinaman's Waterhole and Longtail Finch and Whitebellied Sea Eagle at Kunanurra were outstanding as was the Black-breasted Buzzard at Mitchell Plateau.

Also of interest was the Brushtail Betong at Dryandra State Forest south-east of Perth (a superb location all should visit if going to Perth (only an hours drive from the city according to Ron). The superb sunsets at Parrys lagoon, Derby, Broome and Cable Beach were a fabulous climax to Ron's presentation.

Richards presentation provided a most absorbing insight into the historical development of cartography – production of maps – from the pioneering era to present day. The early maps were all derived essentially from original surveyor recordings which included annotations and sketches (I've seen original survey field books and I can assure you that the surveyors of yesteryear were exceptionally skilled people – not only was their penmanship exceptional but so was their drawing/ sketching prowess).

Today it's all derived from computers and aerial photographs. Digitising all the features from photos in separate 'layers' (eg. Roads superimposed on creeklines, superimposed on contours etc). Consequently you can produce a map of the highest level of detail (providing you have up to date air photos) without even venturing out of the office!! One could well argue that we have lost our sense of adventure!

By comparison with say Europe, Australia is a 'bad case study' for map production – its vast expanse with a relatively low population and endless 'sameness' in outback landscape features, provides logistical (and economic) problems in producing maps at 'small' scale (small scale equates to high degree of detail relative to actual distance on the ground – a 1:25000 map is 'small' scale cf 1:50 000 or 1:100 000 which is 'large' scale).

Roger showed us a series of maps ranging from the old military style (which was the only map type for the Wollonong area up to 1976 at a scale of 1 inch/ mile to the present day orthophoto rectified map which has all the topographic/ cadastral detail on one side of the sheet and the latest aerial photography on the reverse side – a fabulous map style. This absorbing presentation generated many questions from the captive audience.

Brian then showed us a selection of his favourite birds (and the Puffin!) including Cassowary, Bush Stone Curlew, Green Catbird, Noisy Pitta, Electus Parrot and Regent Bowerbird. He was disappointed at missing many target birds on his recent trip to Cairns (isn't it always the way – one of the frustrations of birding). However, his waterfall slides and vegetation photos – especially the Curtain Fig were great.

All in all, it was a most enjoyable evening – very relaxed and informal with great 'bonhomie' which extended through supper time.

A big thankyou to both presenters and audience for a great evening.

DARRYL GOLDRICK

Oooh! It was cool when 7 of us met at Lady Carrington's Drive, Audley end. The first arrival was the man with an Irish name - Brian Kelly, from Bundeena - maybe he set his "potato clock" for "sparrow flatulence"?! - Birding began.

The rose robin was the most interesting sighting of the 8 different species recorded here. Bruce O'Brien, our leader for the day, suggested we not dilly-dally too much longer in case there were more intending walkers out, standing in suspense at the other end, which really was the beginning. Are you now confused? Good. Read on.

We left 2 cars here and travelled in another 2 to the southern end where Jack Hyslop and Richard Miller were waiting. That swelled our group to 9 - 9 swells!! (Seeing that we always publish a bird list, well, I'm adding a people list!) There were the 2 aforementioned plus Penny & Martin, Mari & Roger ("the lodger"- you know the rest!), Bruce O'Brien, Brian Kelly (or is it Bryan?!) and the scribe Jude.

What a lovely leisurely look we had among the limbs and leaves for loud lyrebirds lurking there! We saw and heard many with extensive repertoires along the 9 km. stroll. Richard was fortunate to see a male with fully erect tail dancing on one of its two mounds. All of us saw both males and females scratching in the litter, unfazed by our close proximity and spectating. At the Palona picnic site, where Jack, Richard, Penny and Martin had to leave us to return ( - not because they were sick of us! -) we had an excellent sighting of the Crested Shrike-tit. We heard them at several locations, but this was the only sighting. The distance covered at this juncture was not great. We had taken a long time because of the bush's beauty, the bounteous bird calls, the soothing shafts of sunlight and the numerous B.L.B.B.'s ( bloody little brown birds) that refuse to remain immobile for identification. Plus we had stopped for morning tea at the first picnic spot, Bola Creek.

After departure of the 4 we 5 sauntered on and stopped for lunch at Calala picnic site. A couple of currawongs came flapping about looking for a handout, as did a couple of Eastern Yellow Robins. There is a huge old oak tree here. Now defoliated, it made a huge elk horn fern on its trunk obvious. I cannot remember exactly where we saw a pair of catbirds - before or after lunch?? They were silent. It was their shadows as they flew into dense foliage that attracted interest. Only a couple of us managed to locate them.

The Golden Whistler was heard on numerous occasions but remained hidden all day except for one brief sighting by Mari. It was whilst we were searching for another glimpse of it that Roger spotted an Olive-backed Oriole. Fairy wrens remained secretive all day. Possible sighting of 2 early in the walk as they flew low over the understorey and then they were gone. In this spot, on the opposite side of the road, there were White-browed Scubwrens and also a Broad-billed Scubwren. The most abundant bird of the day seemed to be the Eastern Spinebill. They were noted everywhere along the 9 km. The Yellow-faced Honeyeater and the White-throated Treecreeper also ranged along this distance.

We quickened our pace after lunch because we hadn't yet reached the half-way mark. The number of walkers and family bicycle groups increased from this point on, although lots of bicycle riders sped past us in both directions all day. Only one had the curtesy to ring a bell; whilst another group stopped while we were viewing birds (not them!!). A family of walkers pointed out an echidna to us. Not far from this spot we were able to refresh ourselves and our water bottles at Jersey Springs - not shown on the map. Two concrete troughs, with the date 1892 on them, catch very clear (and pure) H<sub>2</sub>O trickling down sandstone boulders and through dense growth.

No Red-browed Firetails were sighted until approx. 1/2 km from the finish of the walk. Only 2 of us (dawdlers!) saw them in the casuarinas high above the Hacking River. On arrival back at the cars, we saw a White-faced Heron looking at picnickers playing. It was standing on the side-line, like one of the family. The next interesting sighting here was a Wonga Pigeon with 3 Eastern Rosellas and sundry Wood Ducks cleaning up "crumbs that had fallen from the rich man's table". One of the rosellas was quite aggressive towards the pigeon on a couple of occasions. That was one illustration of how all living things fight over resources.

The last sightings here at Audley carpark brought the total sightings for the day to 40. No raptors spotted. Brian Kelly left us here to return to Bundeena and Roger and Mari drove Bruce and myself back to the beginning, which was the end, to collect Bruce's car. Thankyou everyone for a delightful day of fellowship and fun.  
Judith Parkinson

Lady Carrington Drive and Audley, 17 June 2001

Australian Wood Duck  
Little Pied Cormorant  
Eurasian Coot  
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo  
Eastern Rosella  
White-throated Treecreeper  
Large-billed Scrubwren  
Lewin's Honeyeater  
Eastern Spinebill  
Eastern Whipbird  
Magpie-lark  
Olive-backed Oriole  
Green Catbird

Pacific Black Duck  
White-faced Heron  
Silver Gull  
Rainbow Lorikeet  
Laughing Kookaburra  
Superb Fairy-wren  
Brown Gerygone  
Yellow-faced Honeyeater  
Rose Robin  
Crested Shrike-tit  
Grey Fantail  
Pied Currawong  
Red-browed Finch

Australasian Grebe  
Dusky Moorhen  
Wonga Pigeon  
Crimson Rosella  
Superb Lyrebird  
White-browed Scrubwren  
Little Wattlebird  
New Holland Honeyeater  
Eastern Yellow Robin  
Golden Whistler  
Willie Wagtail  
Australian Raven

Bruce O'Brien

**Subject:** [BIRDING-AUS] New Bird Book

Hi Netters,

As I have received numerous requests for info on the new bird book for the Royal and Heathcote National Parks to assist birders.

Royal National Park	Phone:- 02 9542 0632
PO Box 44	Fax:- 02 9542 1420
Sutherland	E-Mail:- smadmroy@npms.nsw.gov.au
NSW 1499	Price:- \$8.25 plus postage.

The launch included the local member of parliament Hon Ian McManus, Regional Manager NPWS Mike Patrick and Peter Hay and other national parks staff, numerous birdwatchers, two newspapers and the ABC radio.

The author, Steve Anyon-Smith was kept busy signing books after the launch for birders including books going to Beijing and Ecuador.

A prepared lunch was enjoyed by all.

All the Best  
David Siems  
Sydney, Australia  
Phone: +61 (0)2 9759 1891  
Email: dsiems@mpx.com.au

Birding-Aus is on the Web at  
[www.shc.melb.catholic.edu.au/home/birding/index.html](http://www.shc.melb.catholic.edu.au/home/birding/index.html)

Podagra comes from two Greek words meaning a catching or seizure of the feet. It is a medical term for a painful arthritic condition, more generally suffered by overweight middle-aged males, especially “white...Englishmen...with a taste for beer, port and red meat.” (1) It is brought on by excess uric acid, which lodges in crystal form in the joints. The usual site of the first attack is the base of the big toe with visible swelling. It is commonly known as gout and has often been a source of amusement, but not for the sufferer. “People wish their enemies dead – but I do not; I say give them the gout, give them the stone!” (2)

I was amused to trace how this unpleasant medical condition had been applied to a family of birds, the Podargidae: the frogmouths. Two different French naturalists have been credited with the nomenclature. According to James Jobling (3), in 1798 Baron Georges Cuvier gave the French name *podarge* on account of these birds’ short, weak legs and feet, which make it difficult for them to walk, just like our patient with gout. But James Macdonald (4) reports that in 1818 L.P. Vieillot coined the genus name *Podargus*, meaning slow-footed, in reference to the birds’ extremely lethargic movements. This latter term was adopted by John Gould, who had earlier employed the name *Batrachostomus* (again from the Greek: *batrakhos* = frog and *stoma* = mouth) for the generally smaller Indo-Malayan frogmouths after their boat-like bills; these genera also have a small oil gland lacking in their Australasian counterparts. In 1898 the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science adopted Jerdon’s translation in *Birds of India* of Gould’s name.

So what prompted my historical linguistic sleuth-work? The Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides* = resembling an owl) has long fascinated me since my settling in this country. In my formative years in the South-East England countryside I was acquainted with the Nightjar, a summer visitor. John Gooders (5) describes frogmouths as “nightjars that have taken to the trees”; namely for roosting, nesting, and pouncing on their ground-dwelling prey from a height, like kookaburras. Around my home at Thirroul the tawny has been far more in evidence during the months of September to December, coinciding with its breeding season. Only twice have I sighted a group of three such birds: January 1982 and last December. Over the past seven years I have come across six dead birds, not on local streets as might be expected in view of the high incidence of roadkills of this species, but within the forested area of the old Excelsior coal mine; the causes of each still remain a mystery to me.

So on a clear sunny Monday morning (21<sup>st</sup> May last) I was in the back garden at the washing-line, like any good househusband would be, when a swaying juvenile Sulphur-crested Cockatoo began its insistent begging calls to the parent bird from ‘Shirley’s gum’, a mature flowering eucalypt around the base of which I had constructed my aviary. This tree has been a popular haunt for a variety of avian species over the years. Both birds then suddenly took off, and moments later I heard a flapping in the gum. Looking up, I was thrilled to see two figures about twenty feet up, one on either side of the main trunk: a pair of tawnies, just as our good handbook (6) states – “singly or in pairs often detected roosting in suburban yards close to forested areas”. The male was to the left in the sun and the female to the right in the shade. That was shortly before 10.30 am. After that they would move now and then, but only to preen or spy the area. They gave minimal response to Fred van Gessel’s recording of this species I played periodically from the back verandah. I was even able to climb on top of the aviary and take a few photographs of them without disturbing them. Perhaps because he was in full sunlight, the male was less active, whilst the female seemed more vigilant. From time to time she would sway from side to side, alternately lifting her feet off the branch (a touch of gout?), much more slowly than did the young cockie. However, as the hours passed by and the sun moved round, she fell into drowsiness like her mate.

Sunset was scheduled for 4.59 pm, but the sun disappeared an hour earlier behind cloud cover that had gathered behind the escarpment. At 5.05 pm there was a stirring, albeit unhurried. The male tawny opened his eyes, gave a gentle shake, preened under both wings, which in turn he stretched out in full. Unhurriedly. His mate stirred very shortly after his awakening and spent more time than he did to preening herself. Then without warning, at 5.18 pm she flew across to my neighbour’s giant cheese tree, which has been a frogmouth-calling base for many years. Within a minute he flew in the same direction, and both were lost from my view in the gloom. During those almost seven hours of intermittent observation I eventually got all the washing hung out, but didn’t make a start on an overdue assignment, which is becoming a pain somewhere other than in the big toe!

1. Dr Joan Gomez (1971) *A Dictionary of Symptoms*
2. W.S. Lewis et al. (eds.) (1973) *Horace Walpole’s Correspondence* vol.35
3. James A. Jobling (1995) *A Dictionary of Scientific Bird Names*
4. James D. Macdonald (1987) *The Illustrated Dictionary of Australian Birds by Common Name*
5. John Gooders (1975) *Birds: An illustrated survey of the bird families of the world*
6. Chris J. Chafer, Chris C.P. Brandis, Diana Wright (1999) *A Handbook of Birds found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands*

# Pesky cockatoos facing the cull

By SIMON BENSON  
Environment Reporter

FIFTY years ago they were regarded as rare species. Today they are bombarding the city and fast becoming a public and environmental nuisance as their numbers continue to increase unabated.

Now for the first time, authorities are considering plans to eradicate and cull both the white ibis and sulphur crested cockatoo — despite their status as protected native birds.

A management plan is now being drafted to look at eradication methods for ibis which could include special hormones in food or the disruption of eggs and nests.

Special permits have already been given to Centennial Park, Botanic Gardens and Taronga Zoo to eradicate ibis by a method involving the destruction of nest eggs.

Authorities admitted the plan may attract criticism but claimed it was necessary for the long term survival of the species as well as pest management.

Macquarie University is at the same time conducting the first ever population study into cockatoo numbers in Sydney to determine whether they need to be culled or controlled as well.

"It's not a hard question to deal with," said National Parks and Wildlife Service officer Geoff Ross who is heading the campaign.

"It is a conservation decision ... if we did nothing about bird densities it could become a big problem.

"We are looking at issues of ibis and cockatoos and there are a lot of local areas having problems with these birds.



American visitor Jana Greuter trying to deal with a cockatoo eager to be fed. Picture: JEFF DARMANIN

"If the ibis are seen to be above levels where they become sustainable, we need to ask how many we need to remove. They are not only having an impact on the human community but also on other wildlife communities."

The NPWS is working with the RSPCA to ensure any culling is conducted in a humane way.

Other agencies such as the

zoo, Botanic Gardens and Centennial Park Trust are also involved in the program.

The birds are responsible for pushing out other wildlife, water pollution through their droppings, damaging trees and "interfering with people".

When populations exceed sustainable levels disease can occur, threatening the future of the species itself and spreading it into other species.

Mr Ross claims the ibis in particular has managed to adapt to an urban environment and have changed their breeding behaviour as a result.

A spokesperson for the Centennial Park Trust confirmed it was looking at culling the birds which numbered up to 850 and had become a major pest.

"But we won't do anything that isn't humane," the spokesperson said.

## Study to stem population explosion

By SIMON BENSON

VISITORS to Sydney's parks and gardens think they look "cute". That is until they descend en masse in an aerial raid that would rival any military manoeuvre.

They are of course our city's gregarious sulphur crested cockatoos which have taken to the suburbs in a population explosion that has outstripped human habitation.

Starting out from a family of four recorded in the Royal National Park in the 1950s, the population is now measured in thousands or tens of thousands across the metropolitan area.

The population explosion has prompted scientists to conduct the first audit of the birds which are beginning to reach epidemic proportions.

In conjunction with the NPWS, Macquarie University is seeking the help

of the public in locating the nests of the cockatoos all over Sydney.

Their growth rate and colonisation of Sydney has mirrored that of the ibis which was first recorded as breeding in Sydney in 1982.

"They are what you would call self introduced," NPWS wildlife protection officer Geoff Ross said.

"They have adapted to our urban environment in a way that suits them and supports their expansion."

Unusual Records May - June 2001 Chris J. Chafer

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Eastern Reef Egret	1	16/4	Little Lake	wetland	GB
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	11/5	Worrigea Swamp	wetland	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	13/6	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest	MM
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	25/5	Coledale	urban	GB
Brown Falcon	1	06/6	Orangeville	rural	CJC
Peregrine Falcon	1	23/6	Bulli	overhead	RT
Pied Oystercatcher	10	18/5	Lake Conjola	estuary	KM
Pied Oystercatcher	2	24/5	Pattimore's Lagoon	wetland	KM
Black-winged Stilt	3	24/5	Pattimore's Lagoon	wetland	KM
Great Skua	1	26/5	off Wollongong	marine	GB
White-headed Pigeon	1	10/5	Rose Valley	overhead	KM
White-headed Pigeon	1	12/5	Lake Heights	overhead	CJC
Glossy Black Cockatoo	4	20/5	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Little Corella	25	10/6	Shellharbour	foreshore	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	1	27/6	Doudles Folly Ck. Glenquarry	riparian	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	1	20/5	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Red-browed Treecreeper	4	27/6	Doudles Folly Ck. Glenquarry	forest	CJC
Southern Emu-wren	2	24/5	Vincentia west	heathland	KM
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	2	15/4	Maddens Plains	heathland	GB
White-cheeked Honeyeater	2	05/6	Maddens Plains	heathland	DG
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	3	05/6	Maddens Plains	heathland	DG
Rose Robin	1	10/6	Keiraville	garden	NA
Logrunner	2	13/6	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest	MM
Spotted Quail-thrush	2	27/6	Diamond Fields Rd. Glenquarry	woodland	CJC
Spangled Drongo	1	13/5	Primbee	woodland	GB
Grey Currawong	1	15/4	Maddens Plains	woodland	GB
Little Raven	12	27/6	Kangaloon	rural	CJC
Zebra Finch	3	June	Albion Park	woodland	NB
Beautiful Firetail	3	15/4	Maddens Plains	heathland	GB

NA - Norma Almond; GB - Graham Barwell; NB - Norma Bourke; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Daryl Goldrick; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphett; RT - Roger Truscott;

**STOP PRESS**

***Barren Grounds are having the Ground Parrot survey on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August.***

***Jack Baker is assisting Brendon in the coordination given it is his first since Raoul departed. Both are desperate for volunteers to assist in the transect surveys, so for those interested (including a chance to see a 'lifer') please contact Brendon on 42-360195 to register--- he would like to have some prior idea on numbers.***

***Darryl***



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 241

August 2001

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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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

**NEXT MEETING** : will be held on **Monday 13th August** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway. Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Our Guest Speaker for tonight will be **Bill Zealey** who will be speaking on "A Flight of Fancy". A trip through the beauty of bird flight as seen by a mere physicist copiously illustrated. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**MID-WEEK OUTING** : will be on **Wednesday 15th August** to **Bulli Grevillea Park**. Meet at the carpark of the Garden at **9.00 am**. Our leader will be **Doug Rickers**.

**OUTING** : On **Sunday 19th August**, a walk along **Parma Creek Firetrail** through heath and open forest. The trail leaves the Braidwood Road about 20 minutes south west of Nowra. **Meeting Place** : Navy jet (which is no longer there) at first roundabout (500m) along the Albatross road. Turn right off the highway at fifth set of traffic lights south of Nowra bridge over the Shoalhaven at **9.00am**. Contact Barry Virtue on 44641389 if any queries. Don't forget you eats, drinks and protective gear.

**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**: This will be held on **Tuesday 21st August** at the home of **Kerri Lewis** at **7.30 pm**. Address and phone no. as above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Lorraine Pincus beforehand.

**SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER** : The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 27th August. Editor's address or email is listed above.

Our guest speaker was **Dr. Kevin Mills**, an environmentalist consultant who has been an IBOC member for approaching twenty years, and his topic was “**Threatened Birds of the South Coast Region**”.

His study area includes the City of Shoalhaven, stretching north to Kiama, west to Joadja, and south to the Batemans Bay-Canberra Road. It encompasses 1.4 million hectares – an increase of 65,000 hectares when new legislation came into force at the beginning of this year, and with it an almost doubling of the number of nature reserves to 52.

Kevin spoke of the introduction of State and Commonwealth legislation. Under the former, the Threatened Species Conservation Act differentiates between the terms applied to species deemed to be endangered, vulnerable, or presumed extinct. The Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act is an example of the latter, under which the Scientific Committee, appointed by the Minister for the Environment, can upgrade or downgrade the status of individual bird species. Making a preliminary determination, the Committee invites public comment within the time-frame of one month in regard to potentially vulnerable species before its final determination. Development applications are now assessed according to a species impact statement, which takes into account critical habitats.

Kevin listed 54 bird species identified as threatened -10 endangered and 44 vulnerable – as having been found in the South Coast Region. Of these, non-breeding seabirds and terrestrial forest birds each accounted for 28%, shorebirds (waders) 24%, wetland birds 11%, and other terrestrial birds 9%. Among the endangered are the Wandering Albatross, Beach Stone-curlew, Little Tern, Hooded Plover, Swift Parrot, Regent Honeyeater, and Eastern Bristlebird. Whilst we usually think of small birds as being among the most under threat, Kevin indicated that in his survey 91% are in fact non-passerines. He also stressed the need for breeding areas to be secured for forest and heathland birds and the problems of land management when habitats come under pressure, highlighting small fragments of vegetation, and of surveillance, such as high-water marks and estuaries. To illustrate his talk, Kevin showed us several overheads with data, tables, maps, and pictures of bird species under threat.

I later came across this passage written by N.J. Collar in his article ‘Risk Indicators and Status Assessments in Birds’ in the *Handbook of the birds of the world*. (Vol.5. 1999), which reinforces the points Kevin was making: “...it is futile to pretend that man and biodiversity are more than modestly compatible bedfellows, for the fate of the great majority of species is directly related to the levels of disruption and destruction inherent in modern human economic activity....So if conservationists, planners, development agents and politicians – the people who most often invoke the term “biodiversity” – *really* want to honour its meaning, then they must understand that their primary responsibility is to defend key areas – and, I repeat, *large* areas – of land and sea from the gross intrusions of the species to which they belong.”

I might be setting the cat among the pigeons by suggesting, with conservation in mind, that our club aim should be: “To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their, *and future generations*’, knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them”.



On Sunday 17th June Club members who were participating in the outing led by Bruce O'Brien along Lady Carrington Drive, stopped for a while at the turn off signposted to Palona Cave. In discussion they were asking why a small limestone outcrop was to be found at this spot. I had previously been asked the same by Jack Hyslop during our wanderings together around his local stamping ground, the Royal National Park. For the interest of members I approached Ann & Bob Young from the School of Geosciences for an explanation. Bob is currently writing a book on 'Landforms of the South Coast' and gives us the following insight as to the 'apparent limestone cave'.

#### Palona Cave, Royal National Park

The very small amounts of calcium carbonate present in some parts of the Hawkesbury Sandstone are rapidly mobilised by seepage. Probably the most outstanding example of its mobilisation and subsequent precipitation as the seepage evaporates is at the "limestone" cave adjacent to the small waterfall on Palona Creek, which can be reached by a track from Lady Carrington Drive in the National Park. The cave itself is in sandstone, not limestone, but the carbonate has seeped from a source somewhere on the adjacent hillside, and has emerged along a prominent bedding plane on the cliff above the cave. As the water emerges and evaporates, it slowly builds stalactites downward from the roof, and where it drips to the floor it has built up stalagmites and flowstones. Some of these features are several metres long and more than a metre in circumference. As impressive as these limestone deposits are, the mobilisation of carbonate even in this small locality is greatly exceeded by the solutional attack on the resistant quartz-rich sandstone. The actively expanding section of the cave is near the floor, behind the limestone decorations, where the sandstone is disintegrating and where small skins of silica on the rock surface attest to the mobilisation of silica. This point is driven home by the fact that the large cave immediately across Palona Creek has no trace of limestone decorations.

(acknowledgement and thanks to Dr R.W.Young)

You may like to include this in your next newsletter after the write-up on the Sunday excursion for the information of members.

R.A.Miller

# WHERE ARE

## Big decline in 30 years

EXCLUSIVE by MARK  
WARD and KATY WEITZ

THERE is nothing more wonderful than waking up to the sound of birdsong and normally this is the time of year for the morning chorus.

But, sadly, this is becoming increasingly rare as Britain's most attractive birds vanish at an alarming rate - as our shocking figures on the right reveal. In 30 years, the TREE SPARROW has declined by a staggering 95 per cent, the GREY PARTRIDGE is down by 84 per cent, the STARLING by 65 per cent and the SONG THRUSH by more than 50 per cent.

Of the 70 species monitored in a huge survey by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), HALF have declined since 1970.

RSPB spokesman Mike Everett said: "It's a great tragedy and one I'm sure many people have noticed."

"You just don't seem to see the variety of birds you used to see."

The main reason for the decline has been changes in farming methods

### Encourage

Modern pesticides are wiping out weeds and insects - leaving many birds unable to find food. And as every inch of every field is farmed, birds are being deprived of nesting places in hedges.

In towns, intensive building work has hit birds like the HOUSE SPARROW - down 43 per cent. Other birds such as the KESTREL (down 15 per cent) are in decline thanks to illegal shooting.

The RSPB is trying to redress the balance by setting up nature reserves and encouraging more eco-friendly farming methods. And we can all do our bit to help by:

- PLANTING shrubs and flowers to encourage birdlife.

- SETTING UP a bird table or feeding station in our gardens.

- BUILDING an artificial nest box - popular with blue tits.

- REPORT any wild bird crime to the local police or RSPB group.

The RSPB's Mike said: "All of us can do something. Birds make a lot of people very happy and if we want to live in a country which values its wildlife then we will all have to make an effort at conservation.

"Otherwise, the future will be very bleak - and very quiet too."

- PeopleHOTlinks

k.weitz@mgn.co.uk  
For more on the RSPB, go to:  
www.rspb.org.uk



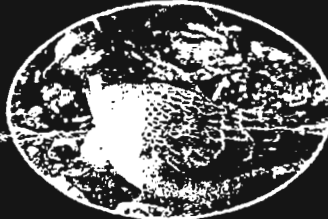
**93% DOWN**  
Redpoll



**71% DOWN**  
Woodcock



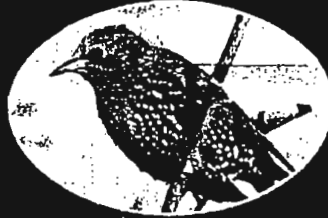
**85% DOWN**  
Corn Bunting



**70% DOWN**  
Turtle Dove



**84% DOWN**  
Grey Partridge



**65% DOWN**  
Starling



**78% DOWN**  
Spotted Flycatcher



**64% DOWN**  
Lesser spotted Woodpecker



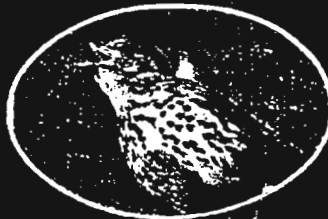
**77% DOWN**  
Tree Pipit



**62% DOWN**  
Marsh Tit



**72% DOWN**  
Willow Tit



**59% DOWN**  
Song Thrush

# ALL OUR BIRDS?



**95% DOWN** Tree Sparrow  
in sad decline



**52% DOWN**  
Bullfinch



**37% DOWN**  
Willow Warbler



**44% DOWN**  
Dunnock



**35% DOWN**  
Meadow Pipit



**43% DOWN**  
House Sparrow



**31% DOWN**  
Cuckoo



**42% DOWN**  
Mistle Thrush



**30% DOWN**  
Curlew



**54% DOWN**  
Linnet



**54% DOWN**  
Reed Bunting



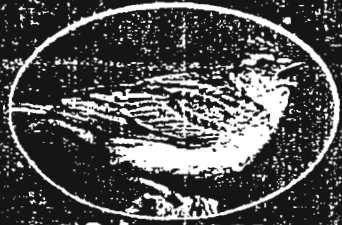
**40% DOWN**  
Lapwing



**30% DOWN**  
Goldcrest



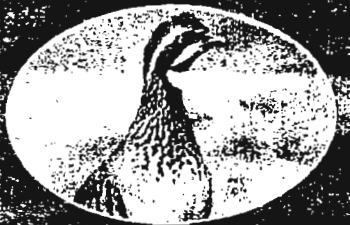
**54% DOWN**  
Yellowhammer



**52% DOWN**  
Skylark



**40% DOWN**  
Grey/Yellow Wagtails



**27% DOWN**  
Red-legged Partridge

**Unusual Records June-July 2001 Chris J. Chafer**

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Striated Heron	1	07/7	Bellambi Lagoon	wetland	CJC
Striated Heron	1	26/7	Why Juck Bay	lake shore	CB
Striated Heron	2	26/7	Windang	sand flats	CB
White-necked Heron	1	23/6	Windang	lake shore	GB
White-necked Heron	1	08/7	Coledale	not provided	GB
Darter	1	30/7	Windang	overhead	CJC
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	18/7	Bellanglo State Forest	farm dam	CJC
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	14/7	Albion Park Rail	overhead	PF
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	July (several dates)	Thirrourl	overhead	MM
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	06/7	Berry	village	BV
Grey Goshawk (white)	1	01/7	Tom Thumb Lagoon	mixed	DW
Sooty Oystercatcher	4	06/7	Austinmer	rocky shore	CL
Pied Oystercatcher	2	26/7	Windang	sand flats	CB
Pied Oystercatcher	1	07/7	Sandspit Point, Bellambi	rocky shore	CJC
White-fronted Tern	1	07/7	Bellambi Point	rocky shore	CJC
Bar-shouldered Dove	5	08/7	Windang	dune woodland	DW
Ground Parrot	3	07/7	Drawing Room Rocks	heath	BV
Powerful Owl	1	03&19/7	Excelsior mine, Thirrourl	forest	MM
Bassian Thrush	1	09/7	Balgownie	garden	TE
Bassian Thrush	1+	July (several dates)	Thirrourl	garden	MM

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; TE - Terry Edwell; PF - Peter Fackender; CL - Celli Lloyd; MM - Mike Morphet; BV - Barry Virtue; DW - David Winterbottom

**Twitchathon 2001**

Each year this event is held to raise money for worthy bird causes and this year the funds are proposed to seed the "Cowra Woodlands" project which is intended to :

- Reverse the decline of woodland birds in the upper Lachlan catchment.
- Main focus to be on the Yellow Box, White Box and Box/Iron Bark woodlands.
- By reverse means aim to build (increase) the bird species and numbers.

Any one who has travelled through this area can testify to the immense loss of natural habitat to intense agriculture, which is still occurring. The Capertee Valley Regent Honeyeater Project is a good example of the birding community helping the people of the area to improve their ecosystems and agriculture efficiency by tackling erosion and salinity while providing birding habitats.

Any one interested in conducting a fun birding weekend or donating to this cause please contact one of the committee or Frances Czwalinna at the Sydney Office of Birds Australia, SNAG, on 02 9436 0388.

Chris Brandis

Members who are interested in being involved in the Twitchathon please contact Bruce O'Brien on 42627529.



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 242

September 2001

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**

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>EDITOR</b>
Position vacant	Lorraine Pincus	Darryl Goldrick	Bronwyn Wilson	Kerri Lewis
	1/16 Grey Street	149 Reddall Parade	8 Wellington Drive	14 Tolson Place
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	Phone(02)42259789	Phone (02) 42961316	Phone (02) 42834744	Phone (02) 42852736

Editor's email: alanlowis@eudoramail.com

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**😊😊😊😊 FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS 😊😊😊😊**

**NEXT MEETING :** will be held on **Monday 10th September** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Our Guest Speaker for tonight will be **Majorie Cochrine**, a mad keen bird watcher, who will be speaking on changes occurring in Inglebar (near Junee). Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**MID-WEEK OUTING :** will be on **Wednesday 12th September** to **Barren Grounds** Meet at the carpark of the Gounds at **9.00 am**.

**OUTING :** On **Saturday 22nd September**, a half-day walk through the **Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney**, with **John Mathews** as our leader. **Meeting Place :** at the Opera House entrance to the gardens at **9.00am**. If travelling by train a suggested train is the 6.35am Dapto, 6.51am Wollongong City, 7.05am Thirroul to arrive at Central 8.16 am. Meet in the first carriage. Contact Kerri Lewis if any queries. Don't forget you eats, drinks and protective gear.

**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:** This will be held on **Tuesday 18th September** at the home of **Peg McKinlay** at **7.30 pm**. Address is as follows 24 Lyndon St, Corrimal. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Lorraine Pincus beforehand.

**PLEASE NOTE THERE IS NO MEETING, OUTINGS OR NEWSLETTER FOR OCTOBER DUE TO SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND OCTOBER CAMP.**

## AUGUST MEETING

Kevin McGregor spoke about the October camp at "Bald Hill", Trunkey Creek. The revised dates will be October 20<sup>th</sup> to October 28<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Kevin if you intend on going.

Nola Williams spoke about an excellent exhibition currently held at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Gympie (see notice in this newsletter).

Bruce O'Brien spoke about the October Twitchathon to be held on Sat 4.00pm to Sun 5.00pm October 27<sup>th</sup> and October 28<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Bruce if interested.

Brian Hales showed us a dead Rose-crowned Fruit -Dove found near Wombarra.

Our speaker for the night was Bill Zealey, a long-standing member of our club, who spoke about "Flight"- an insight from a physicist and astronomer's point of view. Bill has had a passion for aircraft and flight since the age of five and later the magnificent Golden Eagle soaring over Scottish Highlands.

Bill's talk was very humorous as well as highly informative. We were given a simplified explanation of "what keeps birds up in the air" and the magic trick with the ping-pong ball and a very noisy vacuum cleaner entertained us all. The distinction between streamline flow (which assists lift) and turbulent flow (where lift is destroyed) was explained. At slow speed the wing tips of birds will separate and direct air to create a streamline effect. Stability/instability is useful in birds and manoeuvrability, especially in Peregrine Falcons, when the wings are close to the body enables it to perform fast turns. The anatomy of most birds shows a large breast-bone, where the muscles from the wings are attached close to the breast so that contractions make movement in the wings easier. Take-off is not easy, with birds employing a variety of techniques – jumping off cliffs (shearwaters), running very fast (albatrosses) or jump and use a stroke similar to butterfly (pigeons). The length and width of a bird's wings will influence the aspect ratio which determines how fast it can go. When landing birds use their feet and a 'controlled stall position' to kill their speed. The slides of birds Bill used were excellent.

A vote of thanks was given to Bill by Kevin McGregor for a very enjoyable and entertaining talk.

K.Lewis

**NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER:** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 29th October. Editor's address or email is listed above.

## EARLY NOTICE FOR CHRISTMAS MEETING

Your committee needs both ideas and people to participate in this year's Christmas meeting. So please put on your thinking caps and let your committee know your ideas and suggestions as soon as possible!

# WANTED - A PRESIDENT

This year our Club has been without a President. Your Committee has battled on with the program and there have been many difficulties encountered due to the fact that there has not been a leader as the central figure particularly in relation to communications by members to "the Club".

The Presidents role is not a difficult position to carry out as there is a great deal of support from the Executive Committee and the President will not be left to run the club as an individual. He/she will not have to run all Club meetings as this year that role has been shared between the executive members and has been successful. The position entails liaising with members and other persons who have volunteered to be leaders of outings, camps and guest speakers. As we have not been able to get an Activities Convenor for many years the communication line falls within the President's role, but does not require he/she to design and carry out the program. The position is not time consuming.

I hope you will give consideration to filling the position for the coming year commencing on the 1st January, 2002 as there is a possibility that if a President is not forthcoming your club may fall away and become non-existent. That would be really sad as all our members love birdwatching with a common interest. All of our Past Presidents have enjoyed their time as the front person of the Club and if you have any doubts or questions please talk to anyone of them.

Our club is to celebrate its 25th Anniversary in February, 2002 so lets find a President.

  
Kevin  
Past President

\*\*\*\*\*

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING.

The Club's Annual Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 12TH NOVEMBER, 2001** at our usual meeting place.

Elections for the following positions will take place:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Executive Members (4)

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### NOMINATION FORM:

I nominate.....for.....

[Name]

[Position]

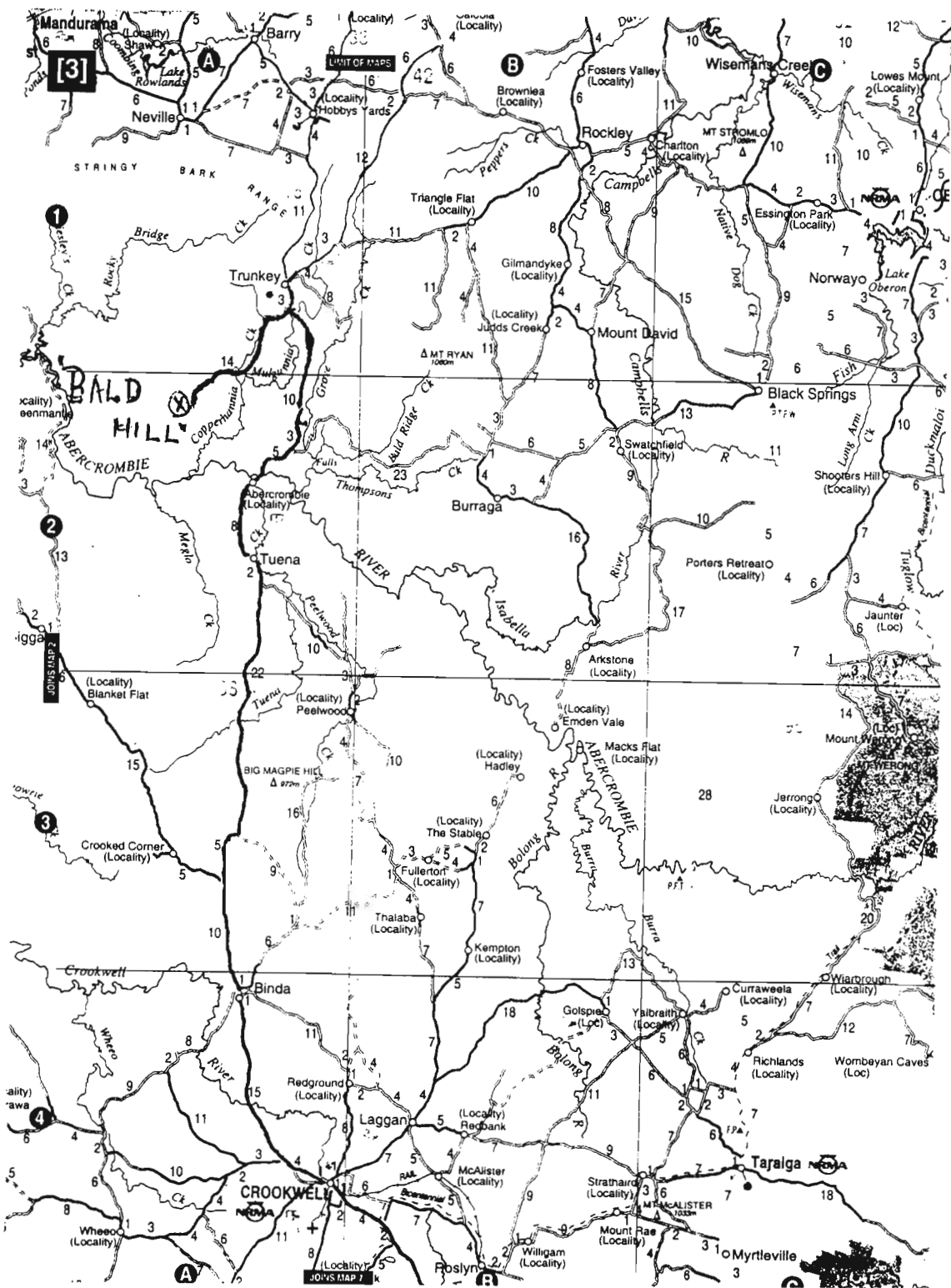
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[Members signature]

[Seconder]

**IBOC CAMP - 20TH TO 28TH OCTOBER, 2001.**  
**"BALD HILL" TRUNKEY**

Please note the change of dates for the camp as shown in the July Newsletter. The period of the camp has been reduced. It is suggested that campers travel to the camp via Goulburn then Crookwell and a map courtesy of NRMA is shown below. It will be noted that you will travel north from Crookwell through Binda then onto Tuena and past Abercrombie Caves to Mulgunnia Creek Bridge where you turn left into Curragh Road. This is a winding dirt road for 15 kilometres to "Bald Hill" where you will be directed to the camp site by the IBOC signs. Camp fees are \$10 per person with children no charge. As usual please **bring your own drinking water** and all other services will be provided. To assist in the organisation of the camp please let Fae or Kevin McGregor (Telephone 4271 3762) know that you are coming and what dates you will be there. To those who do not wish to camp, accommodation is available at the "Blackstump" Hotel, Trunkey Creek and you can phone Mervyn Goodworth, [Licensee] on 02 6368 8604 for a reservation. The hotel is 16 kilometres from the camp site. Another suggestion is to **top up with fuel** at either Goulburn, Crookwell or Tuena (not available on Sundays) on the way in.





## Report on Outing to Parma Creek Fire Trail 19.8.01

On a cold very windy but sunny morning five IBOC and five Nowra birds met at the Navy Jet that isn't in Nowra. Much discussion took place as to where we could go that was out of the worst of the wind. We finally left Nowra in four vehicles, having carefully moved the others away from any danger of falling branches.

Our first stop was at Barmaga Water Supply Dam. There were only a few birds on the water and wattle birds in the surrounding trees. Sometime was spent checking the leeward edges of the dam when suddenly three white birds were seen skimming the water in the middle. These were identified as red necked avocet when they came close to us. A great sight with the sun shining on their chestnut heads. Other birds seen were a musk duck, Australasian & hoary headed grebe.

Leaving the dam we retraced our steps to Yalwal Rd and then turned south along a road to HMAS Albatross. Skirting the airbase we saw a flock of fairy martins and willie wagtails at intervals along the perimeter fence.

We carried along the Braidwood Road, meeting up again with the natural gas pipeline. We stopped for morning tea in a pleasant sunny spot out of the wind. A few birds could be heard calling but getting a sighting was almost impossible.

After morning tea we left the cars by the road and entered a very pleasant if overgrown track through open forest with a heath understory. Birds were understandable scarce but in a few places were plentiful. At one point the yellow tufted honeyeaters were low in the bushes and actually flew between members of the group & the bushes along the edge of the path. A great opportunity to have a good look at them.

Climbing slowly we came out onto a main fire trail where there was a large puddle of water. Beautiful firetail finches and brown thornbills were drinking at the pool.

We kept along this track rising continually to much more open heathland but getting back into the wind again. Birds were very few & far between which gave us time to check out the many flowers beside the track. There was a great variety including several types of orchids both here and later on.

Turning a corner we were back to the Braidwood road & the cars. By this time it was warming up and the layers were coming off.

We drove a short distance to the west to the start of the Parma Creek Fire trail. As we had already walked the other track we drove along the track, entering Parma Creek Nature Reserve, to the top of the hill above the first creek crossing. Going cautiously we negotiated the hill to parking spots almost at the bottom. Barry's car with 4 up not faring as well as the 4 wheel drives.

Barry had arranged a great lunch spot beside the creek with all the birds missing from the higher areas. New Holland Honeyeaters, spine bills, little lorikeets, and a scarlet honeyeater were seen, thanks to Alistair's sharp eyes. Yellow tufted honeyeaters were also having the midday bath.

After lunch we carried on foot along the track through much taller forest. Birds could be heard calling but finding them proved hard. A variegated wren & a pardalotes nest by the roadside were good finds.

Continuing along the track we came to the waterfall which was spoilt by the two derelict cars which had been pushed over the edge. After a rest we walked back the way we had come to the cars with heavy packs as it was now very warm in the sun and jumpers etc were relegated to packs.

This was a very worthwhile day after such an unpromising start. Thanks to Barry Virtue and the Nowra Birdo's for a great day.

Betty Hudson

<b>BIRD LIST for BAMARANG RESERVOIR and PARMA CREEK NATURE RESERVE</b>	<b>19/08/01</b>
--	-----------------

Musk Duck*	Laughing Kookaburra	Red Wattlebird+	Scarlet Robin
Australasian Grebe*	Superb Lyrebird	Little Wattlebird	Eastern Whipbird
Hoary-headed Grebe*	White-throated Treecreeper	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Golden Whistler
Little Pied Cormorant*	Variegated Fairy-wren	White-eared Honeyeater	Grey-Shrike-thrush
Eurasian Coot*	Spotted Pardalote	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Red-necked Avocet*	Striated Pardalote	White-naped Honeyeater	Australian Magpie*
Musk Lorikeet	Rockwarbler	New Holland Honeyeater	Beautiful Firetail
Crimson Rosella	Brown Thornbill	Eastern Spinebill	Tree Martin
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Striated Thornbill	Scarlet Honeyeater	

[\* = Bamarang    + = both Bamarang & Parma Creek    unmarked = Parma Creek]

A male Scarlet Robin was observed on the way home midway between the creek where lunch was taken and the Nerriga Road.

An apparent sign of the dryness of the area was bees descending for moisture in three different locations: a dried-up watercourse and two puddles on the track.

*Mike Morphett*

### NEW EDITOR REQUIRED FOR 2002

This year I offered to fill in since Mike Morphett's studies meant he was unable to continue as our Editor. Previous to that I did the job for 2 years. I'm now unable to continue this role in 2002 and this means a new Editor needs to be found. I assure you that since the advent of e-mails the actual compilation of each month's newsletter has become much easier and quicker. If you are interested please let me know as soon as possible. I will provided as much help as necessary.

## **OK folks, time to put twitching practices into Twitchathon 2001 \$'s!!**

I am so excited about this year's Birds Australia NSW and ACT Twitchathon on **27/28 October 2001!** Read on and share my enthusiasm to realise a conservation dream which **WILL** come true with your help!

The Southern NSW & ACT Group, Birds Australia (SNAG) has commenced work on a project in the Cowra district of NSW to address the decline of birds found in box/ironbark woodlands, such as Hooded Robins, Grey-crowned Babblers, Black-chinned Honeyeaters, Red-capped Robins, Speckled Warblers and Brown Treecreepers. There are many avenues open to address the decline of these species and funding will be applied for from several sources for the various components of the project. The Twitchathon 2001 funds will form the seeding fund to get the first component rolling. It will pay expenses of an honours student to monitor bird populations of remnant woodland patches that have been fenced using Greening Australia funds. Greening Australia and Landcare in Cowra are very keen to work with Birds Australia on this project.

So could I persuade each and every person who reads this article and each and every member of each and every NSW and ACT bird club or group to do one of two things? **EITHER** rally up a team or teams and go birdwatching in the Main or Champagne Races up to a 24 hour period between **27/28 October 2001**. **OR** encourage anyone you know or every member of your club or group to sponsor your team, or your club's team(s), per species heard or seen (or even give a straight out donation)? A \$5 donation by every NSW & ACT club member could raise \$100,000+! Yippee for the birds! You don't need to be super experienced. You can choose the pace of the race suiting you best. You can twitch/tick birds seen all round NSW and the ACT, or all round your backyard, or down at the favourite birding spot for one hour or the whole 24 hours. It's really great fun and great prizes will be awarded to teams in both the **Main Race** and the **Champagne Race**, the person who finds the **rarest bird** and the person who raises **the most \$'s**. Watch out for prize details arriving shortly!!

Whatever your choice of race, it can only be a win, win situation for both you and the birds of the Cowra district! Contact me for your Twitchathon kit **NOW** and start this important project rolling! And remember, both the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Team project in the Capertee Valley of NSW (and all that treeplanting), as well as the Birds in Backyards project (in which many of you assisted with garden surveys), commenced with Twitchathon funds. Look at what they have achieved today: **REAL CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH IN PRACTICE.**

See you on the Twitchathon track in October!!

Members who are interested in being involved in the Twitchathon please contact Bruce O'Brien on 42627529.

BIRD LIST - GREVILLEA GARDENS BULLI  
15TH AUGUST 2001

Australian Wood Duck  
Brown Cuckoo-Dove  
Wonga Pigeon  
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo  
Rainbow Lorikeet  
Australian King-Parrot  
Crimson Rosella  
Fan-tailed Cuckoo  
Laughing Kookaburra  
White-browed Treecreeper  
Superb Fairy-wren  
Variegated Fairy-wren  
Spotted Pardalote  
Yellow-throated Scrubwren

White-browed Scrubwren  
Large-billed Scrubwren  
Brown Gerygone  
Brown Thornbill  
Yellow Thornbill  
Painted Thornbill  
Little Wattlebird  
Lewin's Honeyeater  
Narrow-faced Honeyeater  
New Holland Honeyeater  
Eastern Shrikebill  
Eastern Yellow Robin  
Eastern Whipbird  
Golden Whistler

Magpie-lark  
Grey Fantail  
Willie Wagtail  
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike  
Olive-backed Oriole  
Grey Butcherbird  
Australian Magpie  
Pied Currawong  
Australian Raven  
Green Catbird  
Red-browed Finch  
Welcome Swallow  
Red-whiskered Bulbul  
Silvereye  
Common Myna

Leader: Doug Rickers  
Recorder: Alister Lethbridge

# The Hidden Forest

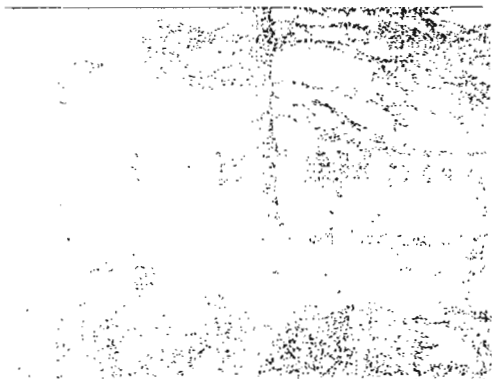
4 August - 23 September



# Rich in the Clarence Valley - Gladstone Valley

4 August - 23 September

Clarence Valley  
Gladstone Valley  
New South Wales



Admission Free  
Open daily 10am-5pm  
(Closed Christmas Day)

hazelhurst@ssc.nsw.gov.au  
Ph: 8536 5700  
Fax: 9542 8592  
782 Kingsway Gympie

REGIONAL GALLERY & ARTS CENTRE





The bandaged peregrine falcon at Taronga Zoo and (right) an X-ray showing the bullet wound in the bird's wing. Picture: JEFF DARMANN

# Bullet too quick for this falcon



By MATT SUN

THIS falcon who was shot in the wing spent four days walking through Sydney's inner west before being found.

The injured peregrine falcon was spotted by Ashleigh Cameron, 13, sitting on a brick fence at his apartment block on Elizabeth St, Ashfield.

"We tried to go near and it took off, but it just wasn't going anywhere," Ashleigh's father Paul said.

"I took off my sloppy joe and put it around her and laid it in the car and then put it in the bathroom."

Mr Cameron then called the Sydney metropolitan wildlife service, who collected the bird and took it to Taronga Zoo.

Libby Hall, a Taronga wildlife supervisor said the bird —

now named Princess — was struck by a pellet which snapped its right wing bone.

Its broken wing was strapped up at the clinic.

Ms Hall said Princess, who she thinks is about three years old, should make a full recovery and be able to fly again.

"The bones are starting to bridge, it's a clean break and the pellet's quite small," Ms Hall said.

"She needs to get full movement back in those wings, so we give her physio by hand."

Ms Hall believes Princess was shot while feeding, as it is unlikely a marksman would be able to hit it while flying.

Peregrine falcons are the fastest animals in the world, diving at up to 300km/h.

Princess is expected to be fit to fly again in six weeks, and

will be released in Ashfield in case she has a mate there.

"They make permanent pairings, but if a mate disappears for any length of time, the male may go looking for another mate," Ms Hall said.

She said Princess was very smart, and knew she was being fed by the same person.

"She likes us when we feed her, but when we give her physio, which causes a bit of stress, she's not too favourable," Ms Hall said.

Princess is not the first falcon to visit the clinic. A pair of peregrines who live in the Sydney CBD have required treatment several times.

"The female who lives in Sydney is intent on catching her prey, and she's followed them into buildings and gets caught," Ms Hall said.

Daily Telegraph 4/7/01

## Unusual Records July - August 2001 Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email: cchafer@ezy.net.au or Ph:4276 1015 or 29 Minnegang St. Warrawang 2502

**Please note new address above for those who send records via Australia Post.**

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	2	23/8	Albion Park Rail (Macquarie R)	rank grass	BH
Australasian Shoveller	6	19/8	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Cape Petrel	1	25/8	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Grey-backed Storm Petrel	1	25/8	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Australasian Gannet	350+	4/7	Sandon Point	inshore	JB
White-necked Heron	1	19/8	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
White-necked Heron	1	24/7	Tom Thumb Lagoon	wetland	DW
White-necked Heron	1	22/7	Windang	field	DW
White-necked Heron	1	19/7	Curramore	dam	KM
Striated Heron	1	7/7	Puckies Nature Reserve	wetland	DW
Striated Heron	1	14/7	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	wetland	DW
<b>Australasian Bittern</b>	1	31/7	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	2	7/7	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	overhead	DW
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	24/7	Tom Thumb Lagoon, Coniston	overhead	DW
Brown Goshawk	2	15/8	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest	MM
Grey Goshawk (white)	1	25/8	top Mt. Ousley	overhead	CJC
Buff-banded Rail	1	15/7	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Painted Button Quail	2	8/8	Yellow Rock	woodland	CB
White-fronted Tern	5	25/8	off Wollongong	marine	GB
White-headed Pigeon	3	7/6	Bomaderry	urban	KM
White-headed Pigeon	2	23/7	low Broughton Creek	rural	KM
Emerald Dove	1	13/6	Curramore	garden	KM
Brush Bronzewing	1	25/8	Dharawal SRA (O'Hares Creek)	forest	CB
Bar-shouldered Dove	3-5	22/7, 5/8	Windang	hind dune	DW
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	4/7	Curramore	garden	KM
<b>Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove</b>	1	13/8	Wombarra (dead on railway)	forest	TVK
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	3	15/7	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Barn Owl	1	5/8	Hewitts/Woodlands Creeks	riparian	IM
Barn Owl	1	13/8	Picton (dead on road)	rural	CJC
Scarlet Robin	1	13/8	Cordeaux dam catchment	woodland	CP
Rose Robin	1	4/8	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Rose Robin	1	5/8	Toolijoa	garden	CP
Rose Robin	1	14/7	Flat Rock (w of Nowra)	forest	KM
Rose Robin	1	14/7	Depot Farm (Nowra)	forest	KM
Rose Robin	1	23/6	Cudmirrah	woodland	KM
Restless Flycatcher	1	7/7	Curramore	garden	KM
Spangled Drongo	1	2/8	Berkeley High School	garden	AL
Dusky Woodswallow	2	13/8	Toolijoa	garden	CP
Grey Currawong	5	1/8	Cordeaux Dam Rd.	woodland	CJC
White-headed Chough	7	3/6	South Nowra	dry forest	KM
Green Catbird	2	18/8	Thirroul	garden	MM
European Goldfinch	9	4/8	Woonona	hind dune	SO

GB - Graham Barwell; JB - John Bisset; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; Bha - Barbara Hales; BH - Betty Hudson; AL - Alan Lewis; IM - Ian McKinlay; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphett; SO - S. Owen; CP - Chris Presland; TVK - Tony van Krevel; DW - David Winterbottom

**Comment:** Thanks for all the records for this reporting period. The two highlights are the huge number of Gannet observed off Sandon Point. Obviously the fishing was fine that day, and this would have been the largest concentration of this species observed in the region. The Fruit-Dove was a great find, even if it was dead. This is the first record from the northern Wollongong suburbs, so those of you who walk the escarpment forests should keep a look out for more. The Emerald Dove is sadly becoming rare in the region with only one or two observations per year. Dusky Woodswallows in August is an early record. The Painted Button-Quail is also a very elusive species in the region even though there is plenty of suitable habitat. It's great to see all the Striated Heron records over the past few months. Clearly this species is increasing its local population.



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 243

November 2001

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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**😊😊😊😊 FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS 😊😊😊😊**

**NEXT MEETING :** will be held on **Monday 12th November** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and the Princes Highway. Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7:30 pm**. Tonight is our **AGM** and positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 4 committee members will be vacated. Also a new Editor will need to be found. Afterwards our Guest Speaker for tonight will be **Brendon Neilly**, the new warden of Barren Grounds . who will be talking about the **future directions of Barren Grounds**. Please bring a plate for supper to share afterwards.

**MID-WEEK OUTING :** will be on **Wednesday 14th November** to **Wollongong University**. Meet at the main entrance to the Botanic Gardens, Northfields Avenue at **8.30 am**. The leader for the half-day walk will be **Richard Miller**. (H: 42672274 & Wk : 42213714)

**OUTING :** On **Sunday 18th November**, to **Killalea State Recreation Reserve**. Take the road to Bass Point , Shellharbour and meet on the left hand side of the first carpark just inside the main gate at **9.00am**. For those heading south along Shellharbour Road to Dunmore should take the first left after the Shell Cove roundabout. Killalea is well signposted. Contact Darryl Goldrick if any queries. Don't forget you eats, drinks and protective gear.

**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:** This will be held on **Tuesday 20th November** at the home of **Kerri Kowis** at **7.30 pm**. Address and phone number above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Lorraine Pincus beforehand.

**DECEMBER NEWSLETTER :** The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is 26th November. Editor's address or email is listed above.

This year I offered to fill in since Mike Morphet's studies meant he was unable to continue as our Editor. Previous to that I did the job for 2 years. I'm now unable to continue this role in 2002 and this means a new Editor needs to be found. I assure you that since the advent of e-mails the actual compilation of each month's newsletter has become much easier and quicker. If you are interested please let me know as soon as possible. I will provided as much help as necessary.

## 25th ANNIVERSARY

At the February 2002 meeting we will be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the club. At this stage the format of the night will be a buffet-style meal with past presidents being invited to attend and talk. Estimated cost for the meal is about \$10 and tickets will need to be purchased prior to the night so numbers for catering can be organised. If you would like to be part of this very special night, please contact either Bronwyn Wilson, Kevin McGregor or Darryl Goldrick as soon as possible to purchase your tickets.

GOULBURN EVENING POST

NEWS

July 2001

# Survey tracks rare Honeyeater to area

A National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) bird survey in the Wollondilly River valley, north of Goulburn in the old Burratorang area, has uncovered native bird species in profusion, including a small population of one of Australia's rarest birds - the endangered Regent Honeyeater.

The National Regent Honeyeater coordinator, David Geering, said that the survey of the area last week counted 26 Regent Honeyeaters, a bird whose numbers may be fewer than one thousand.

"With numbers as low as that, even spotting just 26 birds is an important event," Mr Geering said.

"We know of a population of regent honeyeaters in the Capertee Valley north of Lithgow. We now face the interesting challenge of determining whether the Wollondilly regent honeyeaters are from the same group or are additional.

"The survey team observed 85 species and heard another seven, including more than a dozen woodland species whose habitats, like the Regent Honeyeater's and the Swift Parrot's, have all been severely diminished by two centuries of white settlement," Mr Geering said.

"The best figures for other woodland birds included diamond firetail, hooded robin, brown tree creeper, weebill, jacky winter and white-winged chough.

"Several Turquoise parrots, another endangered woodland species, were also observed - as were glossy black cockatoos and wedge tail eagles; the setting is idyllic," Mr Geering said.

"Disappointingly, there was no sight or



• RARE FIND: The rare Regent Honeyeater found at Wollondilly River valley.

sound of swift parrots - another critically endangered species.

"The survey team - over three days in an area about ten by 15 kilometres - also encountered a healthy population of emus along the river. The team counted 25. They too raise a question: have they been introduced from outside the Wollondilly Valley or are they the descendants of the original emu population.

"Feather-Tailed and sugar gliders, wombats, wallaroos, common ringtail possums and hundreds of eastern grey kangaroos were also counted in passing during the survey.

Mr Geering said the survey demonstrated how critically important habitat was for the survival of the regent honeyeater and the swift parrot.

"We have to preserve - and not necessarily in reserves - the small patches of remnant woodland still existing on the western slopes, most of it in private hands," he said. "We also encourage people to keep an eye out for both.

"There are two national research days every year in which a 'chain' of about 150 volunteers keep an eye out for the two species throughout the birds' range from Victoria into NSW and Queensland and the next one will be in August."

"Several Turquoise parrots, another endangered woodland species, were also observed - as were glossy black cockatoos and wedge tail eagles; the setting is idyllic."



### Trip to Royal Botanic Gardens

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 8 members of I.B.O.C. met at the Opera House entrance of the Royal Botanic Gardens by our guide for the day Mr. John Mathews, a volunteer.

The day started off most auspiciously with glorious weather and departure on time, of the train, which was the suggested means of travel. The train was clean and comfortable and at \$2(plus GST) per return ticket, it had to be the greatest bargain of all time.

We also arrived in Sydney on time and for members, who don't make a habit of traveling by train, to get to the Quay requires no effort at all with escalators and lifts everywhere – no wonder the populace is putting on weight these days.

At the Quay we saw an amazing sight, the most unusual and unexpected of the day. A Red-collared Lorikeet was driving a police car, with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment. Needless to say it was a radio-controlled car about 30cms long controlled by a busker who seemed quite well informed about his charge that he rewarded frequently.

The walk from the Quay to the Opera House was quite interesting with the paving of the area delineating the natural shoreline in 1788 and again in 1844- both were vastly different to the present day.

We went past where Fort Macquarie stood before it came to its inglorious end as a tram terminal and now we were at the gates of the gardens. Here more members and John Mathews, our guide for the day and what a wonderful and informative day it was, joined us.

I'd always wondered why a "tatty" patch of dull old scrub (my words, I ate them later) had been left at the entrance to the gardens, when everywhere else was colour and beauty (and know I know).

This tatty patch of dull old scrub was a chemist's shop, a fruiterer's, a vegetable garden, a rope walk- truly an Aladdin's cave of treasures to the Aboriginal people (and the same source of goodies to the early settlers) and they were all growing in the driest, poorest, rockiest of soils. This area had been re-created to resemble the vegetation that no doubt horrified the convicts, soldiers and few settlers from the First Fleet and probably didn't impress Governor Phillip either, although he was a well-traveled man.

We were invited to taste the fruit (we did), smell crushed leaves and bark, and look at tiny plants we hadn't noticed. There was an immense variety of plant life- gymnosperms from dinosaur days, grasses, sedges, cordylines, dianella and the more familiar eucalypts and Port Jackson fig.

The mangrove swamps that once flourished in the area are long gone and with them the tiny creatures that made their homes in the protection afforded by the swamps.

Adjoining this extremely interesting place, the Botanic gardens as most think of the term really began. There were kangaroo paws of all colours and heights- red, yellow, pink, tan and green, and from 30cm to 240cm high. Also *Doryanthes excelsa* and *palmeri* with their huge flower spikes of bright scarlet but alas no honeyeaters.

Further along in a less rocky area there was an aniseed tree- the crushed leaves of which smelled and tasted, as you would expect them to. *Backhousia citriodora* likewise lived up to its name.

There was a nesting pair of tawny Frogmouths and a pair of Currawongs in an *E. maculata*. An interesting sighting was a Buff-banded Rail. These are increasing in numbers due to the heavy layer of mulch that covers most garden beds here. This mulch

provides homes to various insects, which provide the Rails with breakfast, lunch, dinner and in-betweens. The gardens not only shelter and provide nourishment for 100 species of birds, of which 28 or so can be seen by keen birdos on a good day, but mammals such as Brushtail possums and the more common Ringtail. John knew where their nests were but of course they lived up to their names and we didn't see them.

The Flying Foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) we couldn't miss. They were visible and audible. They were in their thousands, hanging upside down from rainforest trees and making a terrible noise and an awful mess. They were making stripping leaves and new shoots from the trees, which take a long time to recover. Flying foxes have a feeding range of up to 40 kms. so they really earn their living. They eat fruit and blossom of more than 80 species of plants. They spread seeds in their faeces and ensure that dispersal of plants occurs over a wide area, and assist in fertilization of other plants.

We saw 2 culverts, made of sandstone that carried the track from Government House to Mrs. Macquarie's Chair. They had been built in 1816, which makes them part of the oldest bridge in Australia and close by was Governor Macquarie's wall, built in 1810 from Gosford sandstone to protect the government domain and keep the "riff-raff" out.

Our guide was also well acquainted with Aboriginal lore. From an early age Aboriginal children were taught that if they ever got separated from the tribe, to make their way to the nearest clump of casuarinas trees. Their dropped branchlets form a thick carpet where nothing grows. Snakes will not cross this carpet and ground dwelling spiders, such as funnel webs and trapdoor spiders will not nest there so the little ones would be quite safe. If the weather turned cold the children could cover themselves with needles to form a blanket.

There were only two disappointments expressed about the day, the first being that none of us had a tape recorder and the second that the day was too short but as John had been talking non-stop for four hours imparting his wonderful store of knowledge to us, he really was entitled to a rest.

We saw 27 species of birds, innumerable trees, ferns and flowers and heard many interesting anecdotes.

Many, many thanks John Mathews for sharing some of your immense store of knowledge with us and also to Kerri Lewis for arranging such a splendid outing.

Peggy Merrett.

Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, Bird List 21/9/01		Mike Morphett	
Australian Wood Duck	Eurasian Coot	Tawny Frogmouth (n)	Pied Currawong (n)
Mallard	Masked Lapwing	Superb Fairy-wren	Australian Raven
Pacific Black Duck	Silver Gull	White-browed Scrubwren	Welcome Swallow
Little Black Cormorant	Rock Dove	Noisy Miner (nb)	Tree Martin
Australian White Ibis	Crested Pigeon	Maggie Lark	Common Myna
Buff-banded Rail (wj)	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Willie Wagtail	
Dusky Moorhen	Rainbow Lorikeet	Australian Magpie	

[ (n) on nest (nb) nestbuilding (wj) parents with juvenile ]

## Migrants from the North

Every year we in the Illawarra receive numerous migrants. Unlike some well-publicised primate visitors, these avian ones are welcomed by all who are aware of them. At this time of the year I look forward to their arrival which is signalled by hearing their calls as part of the dawn chorus.

Recently I went north to Port Macquarie for a week and was privileged to see several birds that we do not see here. Of special note were excellent views of the Noisy Pitta and Regent Bowerbirds at Sea Acres. This is a remnant of coastal rainforest right on the coast and is well worth a visit. You can pay to walk the elevated boardwalk or you can drive towards the lighthouse (with impressive views down the coast) and enter the rainforest for free. One morning I spent an hour or so on a cliff at the edge of the rainforest, watching four whales frolic and spout in the ocean. From the sizes and pairing I imagine that these aquatic migrants were mothers and babies.

On my return, the calls of the locals were augmented by Black-faced Monarchs. These were not present when I left, so sometime between Sept 29 and August 6 these little migrants had arrived.

October the 13<sup>th</sup> 2001. I awake to the call of a bird that I do not recognise. Donning the binoculars I stumble outside and search for its origin. More often than not, the caller moves on, but on this occasion the bird is sighted and it moves well within range. A male Leaden Flycatcher ! I am often unsure about the differentiation of this from the Satin Flycatcher but the clear slaty grey back and the generally non-pied appearance convince me of its identity. I don't see these two often enough to learn their different calls – which are varied.

This seems an auspicious start, so I continue my walk through Slacky Creek Reserve towards the Grevillea Park. The usual birds are present – e.g. Brown Pigeons (Cuckoo Dove), Eastern Yellow Robins, Red-browed Finch, Golden Whistlers etc. The Yellow-throated Scrubwrens still seem to be feeding young in a nest that overhangs the creek, just below what remains of a bridge once used to transport black diamonds to Sandon Point for export. This is one of many nests that are built in the reserve next to my place, every year. Logrunners are happily calling to one another. I have never found a nest of these engaging floor dwellers but Lenny (an old club member) once told me that he had discovered one along this creek.

While contemplating this I looked at the top of one of the cabbage tree palms and saw a Brown Gerygone busily pulling the palm "fabric" from the base of the frond cluster. It would tear off a piece and fly off in to the greenery. It returned several times in quick succession and I was able to locate the beautifully constructed globular pendant nest. This is the first time that I have discovered the nest of this common resident. If I have time, perhaps I will photograph this at a later date.

Returning from the creek, up a path I have hacked to my block, I hear a Dollarbird call for the first time this season. So they have now arrived too!

As I look skyward to view the caller, I see a pair of Grey Goshawks circling low overhead. This is a rare visitor to Bulli and I have never seen a pair here before. They circle for a while and then disappear.

Later that same day I see a pair of Green Catbirds eating fruit in a rainforest tree that I planted many years ago. It is a nice feeling to think that you have made a small contribution to maintaining the local birdlife. In a patch of lantana I follow incessant tweeting and finally discover a pair of young Eastern Spinebills being fed by their parents. All in all, not a bad day for birding at Bulli.

Roger Truscott

Cold, windy and overcast conditions greeted the six IBOC members who met at the Barren grounds carpark for the September mid-week outing led by the warden Brendon Neilly. Despite the weather, signs of spring were evident, with Brendon able to provide the group with a close-up view of a superbly camouflaged Striated Thornbill nest, and nearby, a pair of Spotted Pardalotes constructing their nest in a dirt embankment. A short walk out along the Griffith Trail failed to produce any Ground Parrot or Southern Emu-Wren sightings but the group was rewarded with excellent views of a lone Eastern Bristlebird sporting a coloured leg band, and a small flock of Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos seeming to revel in the windy conditions. After a most welcome cuppa kindly provided by Brendon back at the Barren Grounds shop, the group were provided with the opportunity of inspecting a Satin Bowerbird Bower (complete with numerous bits of blue plastic - mostly drinking straws) before heading onto the short 'Herbarium walk'. Although many plants including Boronias were in flower, most birds were lying low and little else was seen.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo  
Crimson Rosella  
Fant-tailed Cuckoo  
Eastern Bristlebird  
Eastern Yellow Robin  
Golden Whistler  
Grey Shrike Thrush  
Grey Fantail  
Eastern Whipbird  
White-browed Scrubwren

Pilotbird  
Brown Thornbill  
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater  
Yellow-faced Honeyeater  
New Holland Honeyeater  
Eastern Spinebill  
Silvereye  
Spotted Pardalote  
Pied Currawong  
Australian Raven

Alistair Lethbridge

### Birds for the Future Symposium

Four IBOCers participated in this symposium held at the Taronga Park Zoo lecture theatre, great views to the Opera House, hosted to coincide with the visit of the Old South Welsh ornithologist, Iolo Williams, to film a birding documentary in New South Wales. It was a very informative day with speakers on the environment in general, birders as group, grasslands, woodlands and wetlands, all of which are extremely endangered and dependant on each other. One of the points raised is that the States control much of these areas with little concern for the adjoining or down stream States, a great case for getting rid of States as such for the benefit of all Australians.

Iolo's talk was both informative and entertaining with Britain having many of the same problems such as intensive mono-agricultural systems that have decimated the hedge row habitats, false perceptions by game keepers and pigeon fanciers as well as the dreaded fanatical egg collectors. Even though the RSVP has over a million members and is a major land holder with around 160 native reserves it has become a major business in itself with loss of many of the original charismatic birding characters that started the movement being replaced by non-birding professionals.

After a nice lunch there was a forum of experts, including John Dengate and lead by ABC moderator Bernie Hobbs, to try to identify the major problems in the loss of ecological diversity and develop some solutions that we can all participate in. This was followed by a visit to the free flight show in the Zoo grounds with owls, raptors and of course that smart Galah. We visited the new open flight aviary afterwards and were amazed at the number of Regent Honeyeaters flying around within a meter or so of us.

All in all a very enjoyable day thanks to the hard work of SNAG (Birds Australia) and BIGnet (a combination of NSW bird interest groups).

## Some More Special Recoveries of Banded Birds.

In our November 2000 News we listed some records of banded birds recovered after long periods or far from the banding place. The June 2001 issue of the banders' magazine *Corella* contains more interesting recoveries and here are some of them. Again the expression "oldest" means longest time since original banding for that species while "furthest" means furthest distance from the banding place. These records give us a feeling for the longevity and mobility of these species.

**Australian Brush-turkey.** Banded near Yarraman, Qld, and recaptured 3km away 11 years 11 months later. Oldest.

**Cape Barren Goose.** Banded at Flinders Chase on Kangaroo Is, SA, and recaptured there 18 years later. Oldest.

**Shy Albatross.** Banded in Tasmania and recovered dead at Victor Harbour, SA, 1,122 km NW and 18 years 9 months later. Oldest.

**Bar-tailed Godwit.** Banded in Victoria and seen in Alaska 10 years 5 months later and 12,199 km NNE. Furthest

**Sanderling.** A bird weighing about 50 gms, that's lighter than a Grey Shrike-thrush. Banded in Victoria and seen in Russia 18 months later and 12,623 km N. Furthest.

**Western Corella.** Banded at Kirwan, WA, and recovered (shot dead during pest control programme) at Dalwallinu, WA, 23 years 2 months later and 55 km ESE. Furthest and oldest.

**Yellow Thornbill.** Banded at Mt Annan, Campbelltown, NSW, and recaptured at the same place for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, 13 years 4 months later. Oldest.

**White-plumed Honeyeater.** Banded at Munghorn Gap, NSW, and recaptured at the same place for the 6<sup>th</sup> time, 9 years 9 months later.

**Grey-crowned Babbler.** Banded at Windera, Qld, and recovered dead (taken by animal) at Murgon, Qld, 3 years 2 months later and 25 km SSE. Furthest.

**House Sparrow.** Banded at Two Wells, SA, and recovered dead (collided with window) at Kilkenny, SA, 2 years 8 months later and 32 km S. Furthest.

And there's mention in the November 2000 issue of "Albatross", the newsletter of the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association (thanks Lindsay), of a special recovery. A Wandering Albatross banded off Malabar in 1959 by Bill Lane, recaptured 18 times off Bellambi, 8 of those times by Doug Gibson then 10 times by Harry Battam, the most recent in July 2000. It's the NSWASG's oldest known albatross, at least 41 years, with its actual age, estimated from plumage records, to be close to 50 years.

Dave Thomson

## Unusual Records August - October 2001 Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email: [cchafer@ezy.net.au](mailto:cchafer@ezy.net.au) or Ph:4276 1015 or 29 Minnegang St. Warrawong 2502

**Please note new address above for those who send records via Australia Post.**

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	1	8/10	lower Macquarie Rivulet	rank grass	BBH
Musk Duck	3+	1/10	Porter's Creek Dam	water storage	BN
Australasian Shoveller	6	19/9	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Hardhead	4	20/9	Wollongong golf course	wetland	ME
Grey-backed Storm Petrel	1	25/9	off Wollongong	pelagic	GB
Nankeen Night Heron	3	6/10	Broughton's Creek	riparian	LP
Nankeen Night Heron	2	17/10	Dunmore Lakes (Swamp Rd).	wetland	DG
Nankeen Night Heron	2	21/10	Mullet Creek, Kanahooka	riparian	CJC
<b>Little Bittern</b>	1	21/10	Kanahooka (Jerrets Point)	wetland	CJC
<b>Australasian Bittern</b>	1	19/10	Woodlands Creek	wetland	JM
Osprey	1	19/9	Lake Conjola	estuary	CB
Spotted Harrier	1	2/9	Shellharbour Swamp	wetland/field	CB
Spotted Harrier	1	23/9	Tallawarra	rural	DG
Brown Goshawk	1	6/9	Primbee	dune forest	DG
Grey Goshawk	2	13/10	Bulli	forest	RT
Little Eagle	1	17/10	upper Rocklow Creek	overhead	DG
Australian Hobby	1	21/10	Kanahooka (Jerrets Point)	overhead	CJC
Peregrine Falcon	1	17/10	upper Rocklow Creek	overhead	DG
Lewin's Rail	1	19/10	Tramway Creek, Thirroul	wetland	JM
Painted Button-quail	1f	7/10	Bulli	garden!	RT
Latham's Snipe	6	21/10	Kanahooka (Jerrets Point)	wetland	CJC
Latham's Snipe	2	Sept	Tramway Creek, Thirroul	wetland	JM
Common Sandpiper	1	4/10	Little Lake	mudflat	DG
Great Knot	2	9/10	Windang	sandflat	CB
Sanderling	1	6/10	Windang	sandflat	DG
Grey Plover	1	14/9	Windang	sandflat	CB
Lesser Sand Plover	1	6/10	Windang	sandflat	DG
Common Tern	30	15/10	Windang	sandflat	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	2	25/8	Kieraville	garden	ME
Long-billed Corella	2	10/9	Corrimal	overhead	TW
Little Corella	3	24/10	Cordeaux Dam	picnic ground	CJC
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	1	28/9	Mt. Ousley	garden	GR
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	2	25/8	Wollongong University	parkland	RM
Red-rumped Parrot	2	24/8	Shellharbour	urban	BBH
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	11/9	Thirroul	overhead	MM
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	15/9	Bulli Pass	garden	RM
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	17/9	Mt. Ousley	garden	DT
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	21/9	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	28/9	Kieraville	urban	ME
Powerful Owl	1	21/10	Bulli	garden	RT
Powerful Owl	1	26/10	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RJ
Sooty Owl	1	19/10	Jamberoo Pass	forest	RJ
Barn Owl	1	14/8	Rockdale	urban	GS
Barn Owl	1	15/8	Picton Rd/Nepean R. bridge	dead on road	CJC
Southern Emu-wren	2	21/10	Kanahooka (Jerrets Point)	wetland	CJC
Scarlet Honeyeater	2	17/9	Bulli	garden	RT
Scarlet Robin	1	8/10	Cordeaux Dam	woodland	CJC
Leaden Flycatcher	1	13/10	Bulli	garden	RT
Leaden Flycatcher	1	21/10	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest	MM
Crested Shrike-tit l		9/9	Gibson Track, Thirroul	forest	IM
Grey Currawong	2	8/10	Cordeaux Dam	woodland	CJC
<b>Tawny Grassbird</b>	1	21/10	Kanahooka (Jerrets Point)	wetland	CJC
Rufous Songlark	1	8/10	Flanagans Creek, Thirroul	tall grass	MM

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; DG - Daryl Goldrick; BBH - Brian & Barbara Hales; RJ - Richard Jordan; IM - Ian McKinlay; RM - Richard Miller; JM - Jill Molan; MM - Mike Morphett; BN - Brendon Neilly; LP - Lorraine Pincus; GR - Gwen Robinson; GS - G. Stephens; DT - Dave Thomson; RT - Roger Truscott; TW - Tom Wylie



# I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 244

December 2001

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**

PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	EDITOR
Position vacant	Lorraine Pincus	Darryl Goldrick	Bronwyn Wilson	Kerri Lewis
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☺☺☺☺ **FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS** ☺☺☺☺

**NEXT MEETING** : will be held on **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December**, at the **Fairy Meadow Community Centre**, corner of **Cambridge Avenue** and **Princes Highway**, **Fairy Meadow**, commencing at **7.30 p.m.** This will be our very informal Christmas meeting and members are asked to participate in the programme. If you would like to sing, dance, recite, act or entertain your fellow members in any way contact Brian Hales, 42574431, for a place in the programme, all offerings gratefully received. Your club needs your support so please put on your thinking caps. Please bring that special plate of supper afterwards, as well as your cup or mug.

**OUTING** : will be held on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> December**, at the **Grevillea Park, Bulli** commencing at **4 p.m.** This will be our Christmas Picnic get-together so please bring all the family, your picnic rug, eats and drinks and of course your binoculars for those many honeyeaters. We will meet at the gates of the garden which is located behind the Bulli Trotting Club, Princes Highway, Bulli. We hope to see as many members as possible there.

**NOTE : THIS OUTING IS ON BEFORE THE MEETING.**

**JANUARY OUTING** : will be held on **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2002**, to the **Forest Walk** from the Boomerang Golf Course to Stanwell Park Beach, commencing at **8.30 a.m.** We will meet in the car park (next to Surf Club, Stanwell Park Beach ) where we will need to car pool so that we can start our walk at the Boomerang Golf Course end of the walk. Please contact Bruce O'Brien, our leader for the day, on 42627529 for more details. Don't forget your usual eats, drinks and protective clothing on the day.

**COMMITTEE MEETING** : This will be held on **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2002** at the home of **Bronwyn Wilson** at **7.30 p.m.** address and phone no. above. Other club members are welcome to attend if they have something specific for discussion and need to contact Darryl Goldrick, 42961316, beforehand.

**FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2002** : The deadline for articles for the next IBOC newsletter is **24<sup>th</sup> January 2002**. Please send all items to Mike Morphett, 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515, work phone no & fax 42261928 & 42269567 or email address [lmorphett@speedlink.com.au](mailto:lmorphett@speedlink.com.au)

**AGM NOVEMBER MEETING 2001**

Our AGM was held at the November Meeting and it was wonderful to see so many members come forward to fill the positions declared vacant.

**Congratulations to**

<b>Darryl Goldrick</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Betty Hudson</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Bronwyn Wilson</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Joan Wylie</b>	<b>Committee</b>
<b>Tom Wylie</b>	<b>Committee</b>
<b>Bruce O'Brien</b>	<b>Committee</b>
<b>Lorraine Pincus</b>	<b>Committee</b>
<b>Mike Morphett</b>	<b>Editor</b>

A big thankyou goes to those out-going members who served on the executive committee this year – Peg McKinlay and Kerri Lewis.

Editor's note: I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members who sent in articles for the newsletters this year as without them our newsletter wouldn't be what we have all come to enjoy. I would also like to thank Mike Morphett for standing in again as our Editor for 2002.



**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner**

At the February 2002 meeting we will be celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our club. An invitation is extended to all new and old members of IBOC to attend this occasion when all the past presidents of the club will attend. This will be a great opportunity to hear about the early days of the club, catch up with old friends, and generally have a good time. A buffet meal has been organised for the occasion, for a cost of only \$10<sup>00</sup> BYO drinks and cup. If you would like to come but transport is a problem please contact Kevin McGregor, 42713762, who will assist in this matter. As catering needs to be **finalised by 26<sup>th</sup> January 2002**, all tickets need to be purchased prior to that date. So please bring your money/cheque with you to the next outings in December or January where tickets for the meal can be purchased either from Bronwyn Wilson, Bruce O'Brien, Joan Wylie or Kerri Lewis. If you are unable to attend one of these then please send your cheque to Bronwyn Wilson, 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519.

**We hope to see you there !!!**



**Important Date for February 2002 Outing to Windang :- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February. Please keep this free!!**



## TWITCHATHON 2001

It was a bright fine morning on Sunday 28 October when the IBOC team of twitchers (named the Wollongong Wongas) emerged from their homes to commence twitching. We agreed to start at 6am that day, despite the fact that the Twitchathon is actually a 24-hour "race" that commenced at 4pm the day before. Of course, it's always tricky to meet at an agreed time when that time is on the very first morning following the beginning of daylight saving, and one of our team, who shall remain nameless, was there nice and early, but not for Eastern Summer Time. Not to worry, with three team members present we were legally allowed to commence twitching, which we did at the agreed meeting place (my home) for the local suburban birds. Surprisingly this included a Pallid Cuckoo, sunning itself on a nearby aerial, a species I had never seen in my street before.

For those not familiar with the concept of twitching, this is the art of bird-watchers collecting as many species as possible. For the purpose of the Birds Australia Annual Twitchathon, the idea is to have a team of birdwatchers sight or hear as many species as possible during a 24-hour period (always the last weekend in October) as a fund-raising exercise in which funds are donated to a particular environmental cause for the benefit of birds. Individual team members collect sponsors and ask for a certain donation per bird species sighted (or heard) by the team. This year's cause was for the Cowra woodland, and my understanding is that Birds Australia will arrange for some planting of native species to occur in the Cowra area to encourage the stabilisation or increase for vulnerable bird species in NSW's Central West.

Special thanks must go to Chris Brandis for his efforts during the day. Before the event he plotted a course for us to follow, checking out where the birds were, and deciding which locations would maximise the number of species we saw. He kindly drove us around to each spot, and then was magnificent in actually locating the birds themselves. If anyone has not had the chance to go birdwatching with Chris and you get the opportunity, do it! He is one of a number of birdwatchers in IBOC who have tremendous ornithological knowledge, and he was invaluable in an exercise such as the twitchathon. Basically we circumnavigated Lake Illawarra, but also included rainforest habitat at Bulli, before travelling up to the finishing 'line' at Barren Grounds.

First stop after our suburban beginning was some woodland habitat in West Dapto. Highlights here were the Scarlet Honeyeater, Rufous Whistler, Peregrine Falcon and Sacred Kingfisher. On to Kanahooka Point where I was very pleased to get my first view of an unflushed Latham's Snipe. Then we circuited the Tallawarra Ash Ponds where we checked out a number of waterbirds. Darters were plentiful (flap, flap, glide), as were Black Swans. Also Whiskered Tern, Swamp Harrier and Skylark. Then it was on to Macquarie Rivulet and Koonah Bay where we added White-winged Triller and Pacific Golden Plover. Time was running away from us, but on we went to the entrance of Lake Illawarra to add Kelp Gull, Common Tern and Bar-tailed Godwit. We had lunch on the Windang side of the entrance, and then raced up to the Grevillea Park, to which Chris had arranged access. In this habitat we managed to find Rufous Fantail, Black-faced Monarch, Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Yellow-throated Scrubwren. One special sighting here was the Tawny Frogmouth, which was within arm's reach of the trail, but which we almost all walked past (including Chris). Then time was almost up, and we had to get to Barren Grounds, spend some time trying to add birds there (in which we basically failed), and have a well-earned rest after our 11 hours twitching.

In the end the team located 124 different species of bird, all (except one) within the Wollongong environs and Illawarra Plain. The team made in excess of \$200, but we didn't come first in the count or (presumably) in the fund-raising. Nevertheless, it was an enjoyable day's birdwatching, and I, for one, saw a number of species I had either not seen before, or I do not see very often. Thanks to my team of twitchers, Chris, Lorraine Pincus and Julie Mitchell (our frogmouth spotter), who braved the heat, spider bites, and the inconvenience of having to get up for an early start. Shall we do it again next year?

Bruce O'Brien

**The birds in your garden**

Issue's puzzle is a stinker! If you haven't tried it before, here's how it works:

Every letter of the alphabet is used. Each letter has its own number, 1 to 26. Just to make things a little more difficult, this time no letters have been given to start you off. However, the shaded squares do represent the jumbled letters of the bird pictured in the centre of the puzzle and, to help you a little more,



there are lots of other birds involved too!

A few tips. Usually the letter E

is the most frequently-

used letter. When

you discover a Q,

remember that a U

is usually lurking

nearby. And, finally,

tread carefully –

don't jump too quickly

to conclusions and you will have a great deal of pleasure solving the puzzle.

A	N	14	11	4	20	6	17	14	5	17	7	26	10	19	1	14	
B	O	17		17		7		16		16		17		17	25	4	
C	P	3		14	7	2	2	20		23		19	16	14		11	
D	Q	3		26		14		12				6		19		4	
E	R	4	26	4	21	4	3		22	16	17	7	26	7	3	14	
F	S	5	18			18						3		4	17	11	
G	T		6	11	4	3	12					14			19	7	
H	U	5				12						15		18	10	4	3
I	V	17	21	19	24	1	5					17	4	11	18		4
J	W	10		6	18	11	4				24		8	17	9	9	
K	X	10	17	26	26	17	11	2			23	3	7	5			17
L	Y	16			17		3	16	3		2		5				26
M	Z	1	4	8	11	17		3	18	10	17	2		11	18	24	
			5								6						18
		24	17	3	17	2	17	14	18	18	12	4			13	4	3

Crossword picture courtesy of The CD-ROM Guide to British Birds featured in our Christmas GIB leaflet

## A Trip to South Australia

Chris Chafer and Chris Brandis

Recent taxonomic changes to Australian passerines have resulted in several subspecies being elevated to 'species' level. Amongst these changes proposed by Richard Schodde in his tome *A Dictionary of Australian Birds, Vol 1., Passerines*, several have been formally accepted by Birds Australia. In particular, two 'new' species of grasswren have emerged and the Western Whipbird has been split into two species, Western and Mallee. Most of these changes will be published in a revised *Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and its Territories* (Christidis & Boles) due early next year. Similarly, these changes are being incorporated into field guides, with Michael Morcombe's *Field Guide to Australian Birds* being the first to illustrate them. With this in mind, and the urge to explore new country, we set out early on the morn of 3 November bound for South Australia.

Our first day took us to Willcania, with only short meal and rest stops. Nevertheless we recorded 79 species from the car, including, **Superb Parrots** near Boorowa, **Blue-faced Honeyeater** and around 50 **Little Friarbird** at Nyngan, great views of a **Grey Falcon** 77 km west of Cobar, and 9 **Nankeen Night Heron** feeding on the weir at Willcania.

The second day saw us up at dawn, and we observed our first **Blue Bonnets** after crossing the Darling River. At Metford Tank we added **Australian Pratincole**, **Black-tailed Native Hen** and **Pink-eared Duck**. We crossed the South Australian border and stopped randomly in saltbush scrub 5km east of Olary Creek. Here we found **White-winged Fairy Wren**, lots of **Crimson Chats**, **Pied Honeyeater**, **White-fronted Honeyeater**, **White-winged Triller**, **Chirruping Wedgebill**, **Little Button-quail** and **Red-backed Kingfisher**. Our next stop was 23km east of Yunta, again in saltbush and bluebush where we added **Southern Whiteface**, **Banded Whiteface**, **Chestnut-crowned Babbler**, **Black-faced Woodswallow** and nesting **Redthroat**. At Yunta we turned north towards the eastern Flinders Ranges spending the night near Erudina Station. On the way we added **Masked Woodswallow** and the beautiful **Orange Chat**.

Monday saw us heading to Willow Springs in the Flinders Ranges, and we encountered several goodies on the way including **Mulga Parrot**, **Eastern Ringneck**, **Diamond Dove**, **Inland Thornbill** and **Black-eared Cuckoo**. At Willow Springs we clambered up a 400m hill covered in spinifex and 'thistles'! On its summit we wandered for about 15 minutes before we picked up the plaintive call of our quarry. We triangulated the call and there atop a spinifex bush was a male **Short-tailed Grasswren**. Recently given full species status, this grasswren is superficially like the Striated Grasswren, however it's a much richer rufous-brown overall, has less white on the heavily streaked breast, its black moustache is less obvious and it has a shorter tail, a very handsome bird. We spent an hour or so watching a total of three birds and were very satisfied with our success. It was after climbing down the hill that the wether turned sour, and we were to be plagued by cold, windy and showery weather for the rest of journey (three jumpers in November is ridiculous).

From there we drove to Port Augusta to visit the excellent Arid Lands Botanical Garden, and we added **Black Honeyeater** (also lots of Pied and White-fronted Honeyeaters), **White-browed Babbler** and **Rufous Fieldwren**. We continued west, eventually spending the night in mallee of Lake Gilles Conservation Park, where we spent many minutes watching several resplendent male **Splendid Wrens** and adding **Budgerigar**, **Rainbow Bee-eater**, **Collared Sparrowhawk**, **Yellow-plumed Honeyeater**, **Grey-fronted Honeyeater**, **Crested Bellbird** and grey-brown form of the **Grey Currawong**.

Next morning we again spent several hours birding in this beautiful tract of mallee and added **Western Yellow Robin** and the inland form of the **Variiegated Fairy-wren**. Westward we headed through the gloomy weather, before turning northwest of Ceduna into the Yumbarra Conservation Park on the southern finger of the Great Victorian Dessert. In the late afternoon we set up camp near a granite waterhole protruding the top of a high spinifex-clothed dune; very picturesque, or at least it would have been if it hadn't started raining again. As we sat in the car seeking shelter from the elements, our dreary mood was lifted when a female **Scarlet-chested Parrot** alighted on a branch near the tent. We had crippling views of this rare parrot less than 5m from our presence, totally oblivious to our oohhs and ahhs. Eventually it flew off and we alighted from the vehicle to search the damp surrounds. It wasn't long before we found another female and a subadult male. That night the only **Owlet Nightjar** of the trip was heard calling.

The following morning saw us up before dawn, eager to find the fully plumaged male that we had seen briefly in the dying light of the previous day. Our search turned up more females and subadult males with redy-orange chests. And then, a full coloured male flew directly past us and eventually sat atop a dead tree, radiant in the morning sunshine. Although we've seen this species in captive breeding programs and on film, nothing can replace the incredibly vivid scarlet chest, cobalt blue face, yellow belly and emerald green body of a fully coloured male. It sat there filling our binoculars for what seemed like minutes, before uttering a trill and disappearing back into the dense mallee woodland. Other goodies recorded here included **Purple-crowned Lorikeet**, **Western Gerygone** and **Southern Scrub-robin**.

The drizzle set in again and reluctantly we left the dessert for Ceduna where we added numerous shorebirds of which **Pacific Gull**, **Grey Plover** and **Common Sandpiper** were the highlight. From here we drove to Coffin Bay on the southern tip of the Eyre Peninsular. This must be one of the most environmentally depleted sections of Australia with hundreds of boring kilometres of never ending wheat fields replacing what was once mallee woodland.

Friday morning, and off to Point Aviod. Here we added **Osprey** and super views of the elusive **Rock Parrot**. In the afternoon we headed east for a couple of days in Lincoln National Park. This was the coldest period of the trip, with day time temperatures reaching only 12-14 degrees Celsius. Nevertheless we saw a few interesting birds including **Purple-gaped Honeyeater**, **Hooded Plover**, **Tawny-crowned Honeyeater**, **Diamond Firetail**, **Black-faced Cormorant** and the yellow-

rumped form of the **Spotted Pardelote**. The whipbird that we had come to see however, remained as elusive as its reputation.

After two days of cold we decided to move on, but as we packed the vehicle a whipbird enunciated its peculiar song only metres away. Quickly we played the tape one last time and out popped a **Mallee Whipbird**, affording fantastic unobstructed views only 4 metres from two very happy birds.

Sunday saw us driving north along the eastern side of the Eyre Peninsular through more boring wheat fields. We stopped in at Port Gawler Conservation Park and added **Red-necked Avocet, Whiskered Tern** and **Slender-billed Thornbill**, the latter inhabiting the ecotone between mangroves and samphire flats. The night was spent at Mt. Remarkable National Park where we had long views of a family of **Blue-breasted Fairy-wren**.

We then headed for home via Brookfield Conservation Park and Hattah Lakes National Park, where we spent an enjoyable morning in the mallee, adding **Hooded Robin, Mallee Emu-wren, Shy Heathwren, Chestnut Quail-thrush**, the black-winged form of the Grey Currawong and more great views of Splendid Fairy-wren.

So, after 10 days of birding (223 species in total) and travelling half way across the continent, we had observed every species bar one that we set out to find (Elegant Parrot). But that's what's great about birding, there's always one to go back for and see some more of this great country.

For the past 2 years I've played in the Veteran's Golf Tournament in Griffith, most recently last week (late Oct-early Nov). A rewarding spin-off from the tournament is the feast of bird-watching available between strokes for the vigilant and for those lucky enough to be playing with members of the local bird-watching groups.

Observed were :-

White-winged Triller (male in full breeding plumage and in full voice)

Busy family groups of Grey-crowned Babblers (Yahoo birds)

Red-eyed White-winged Choughs

Blue Bonnets

White-eared Honeyeaters

Lots of Red-rumped Parrots

Last year we were privileged to see beautiful, big Blue-faced Honeyeaters, Major Mitchells and a pair of nesting Tawny Frogmouths. The Frogmouths lost their flimsy nest this year and have moved to other habitats according to the locals.

I hope this might be of interest to members

Lyn Walker

## Report on the October Camp at Bald Hill Trunkey Creek

### Friday

On a cold blustery day I left home and travelled through Crookwell and Tuena to Trunkey where I left the main road for Curragh Road and drove for many miles along a good gravel road. What a relief to see the IBOC sign at the first gate I came to, I was on the right road!

Arriving at the campsite on the banks of a tree-lined dam was a paddock lush with clover, Paterson's curse, and grass. What was that I could see? A Portaloo! We are going to be spoilt. The other members of the camp had already set up and were just about to set out on a tour of the property. I was grateful for help from Kevin & Ron in getting the tent pitched in the strong wind.

After tea everyone retired to escape the bitterly cold wind.

### Saturday

Awaking early and poking a nose out of the blankets I found a world, which had turned white in the night. What a frost. The water buckets had an inch of ice, which could be removed and was patterned like a fancy glass plate they sell in DJ's.

At 9am sharp our "Tour Guides" aka as Craig and Chas, our hosts, arrived resplendent in their safari outfits and standing in the back of the small ute driven by 9 yr old Paul who could barely see over the dash. After introductions and some good-natured banter we all fitted into the 2 utes, including the dogs, and set off for a trip to see some of the birding spots suggested for the rest of the week.

After driving over farm tracks and through paddocks we arrived on the beach on the bank of the Abercrombie River driving literally onto the gravel by the water. Out of the wind we had lunch and looked for birds, while the dogs had a swim.

An Azure Kingfisher posed in the sunshine on a branch over the river looking vivid orange and blue in the sunlight. What a great sight! A Black-fronted Dotterel was exploring the river gravel and an Oriole singing in the Casurinas. Raptors were seen in the far distance but were not identified.

Leaving the river caused a stir as the utes had to get revved up and a good run to make it over the gravel ridge at the top of the beach to the bank

Returning to camp we had a diversion to look for a new calf, which had been separated, from its mother, but no luck.

Tom decided to toss his line into the dam and to his amazement caught a good-sized 18" Yellow-fin Perch.

The hardy ones went spotlighting, as it was still too cold & windy for a campfire. Possums, Tawny Frogmouth and half an owl were seen.

### Sunday

9am start on a fine warm day after a cold beginning. Craig, Chris & Tom in three 4 wheel drives took us on a tour of the timbered section of the property and Copperhania Nature Reserve which abuts the property.

Leaving the house we drove up a paddock and saw a White-faced Heron's nest with well-grown chicks in the branches of a gum tree. They did look rather out of place here.

The country was a sharp rocky ridge, very dry, with open forest of blue gums with little understorey except in the reserve. All the tracks ran on the ridges with sudden sharp descents to creeks. Morning tea was by a tank where the "posties" ghost walks. He left his bike behind. We recorded 20 species here in half an hour.

Moving on we saw a painted button quail right beside the cars as we made our way to a pleasant tree lined creek where the Rufous Whistlers were in great voice.

On again to the upper reaches of Wyangala dam where we had lunch sitting in the shade of the trees with the Dusky Woodswallows, Australian Pelicans, & Cormorants (sp. unknown, Ed.) for company. Walking back along the track we had sightings of honeyeaters but were frequently frustrated by the woodswallows darting in & out of the bushes.

Back up the ridges to the top where Paul & the dogs had some exercise running down a baby goat, later reunited with Mum. These were just some of the hundreds of feral goats on the property that accounted for the lack of understorey in some areas. They seemed partial to the grass trees.

Brush Bronzewing were common beside the tracks, and a large goanna was seen sunning on a tree branch. A great day with varied scenery, great views and of course many varied birds.

The day finished on a high for Paul who caught and nearly landed a large Yellow-fin Perch before he had to reluctantly go home as he had school the next day. At our first campfire we found that we already had recorded 84 species.

### Monday

Pauline and Norma took us by ute to the start of yesterdays drive. The young herons were standing in the nest. We walked along the creek, seeing Beautiful Firetails, Striated Pardalote at the nest hole, Southern Whiteface, and White-throated Gerygone. The White-throated Treecreeper was determined not to be missed with its strident call, as for the Pallid Cuckoo, he sat on the top of a tall dead tree and could be heard everywhere. He just never stopped.

As it was a very hot day a lazy afternoon was enjoyed before tea in Trunkey at the Billabong Restaurant. A good meal and congenial company. In addition mine host told us a little of the history of the area. A very late return 11.30pm to camp.

### Tuesday

5.00am!! Farm life started with vehicles moving on the track alongside the camp. Trucks taking sheep to market.

We all did our own thing. Those who hadn't been before were taken to the Abercrombie River on a very hot day. Everyone returned for a late lunch in the shade. Alistair left to return to work.

Tea was eaten all together in the camp restaurant, 'Peaceful Dive Inn', followed by a quiet campfire.

### Wednesday

A change in the weather brought wind squalls and showers, but by 11.30 am they had cleared to a fine cool day. A small group set off after lunch to look for Speckled Warblers but no luck. Some of us went spotlighting again but saw only the eyes of a possum. Back to the camp for a campfire, when our peace was shattered by the detonation of a large firework. Craig, Chas & Paul had returned.

[REST OF OCTOBER CAMP WILL BE PRINTED IN FEBRUARY 2002  
NEWSLETTER. - Editor]

BETTY HUDSON

**Unusual Records October - November 2001 Chris Chafer**

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Black Petrel	2	24-Nov	off Wollongong	pelagic	GB
Darter	4	18-Nov	Griffins Bay	wetland	CJC
Darter	1	26-Oct	Gerroa sand mine	wetland	KM
Darter	1	23-Oct	Cudmirrah	wetland	KM
<b>Lesser Frigatebird</b>	1	18-Nov	off Wollongong	pelagic	CL
<b>Pacific Baza</b>	1	11-Nov	Barren Grounds NR	forest	DM
Swamp Harrier	1	1-Oct	Cudmirrah	overhead	KM
Swamp Harrier	1	26-Oct	Gerroa sand mine	wetland	KM
Swamp Harrier	1	22-Nov	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
Swamp Harrier	1	27-Oct	Sussex Inlet west	wetland	KM
Black-tailed Godwit	1	22-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	CJC, CB
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	1	18-Nov	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Red Knot	81	22-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	CJC, CB
<b>Banded Stilt</b>	1	17-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	DM
Pacific Golden Plover	78	22-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	CJC, CB
<b>Grey Plover</b>	3	22-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	CJC, CB
Lesser Sand Plover	1	22-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	CJC, CB
Greater Sand Plover	1	22-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflat	CJC, CB
Common Tern	20	21-Nov	Bass Point	rocky shore	CJC
Little Tern	90	17-Nov	Lake Wollumboola	sandflat	DM
Little Tern	30	22-Nov	Comerong Island	overhead	CJC, CB
White-headed Pigeon	3	15-Oct	Saddleback Mountain	rural	KM
Topknot Pigeon	30	19-Sep	Jamberoo	overhead	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	8	23-Oct	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Long-billed Corella	1	3-Nov	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Long-billed Corella	2	9-Nov	Corrimal	overhead	TW
Pallid Cuckoo	1	28-Oct	Dapto	garden	BO
Pallid Cuckoo	1	30-Oct	Dapto	garden	TWh
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	22-Nov	Comerong Island	overhead	CJC, CB
Powerful Owl	1	Oct	Bulli	rainforest	RT
Powerful Owl	1	3-Nov	Barren Grounds NR	forest	BN
Azure Kingfisher	1	1-Oct	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Azure Kingfisher	1	6-Oct	Bangadilly NP	riverine	KM
Azure Kingfisher	1	22-Oct	Swan Lake	wetland	KM
Rainbow Bee-eater	1	6-Oct	Bangadilly NP	riverine	KM
Yellow-throated Scrubwren	1	25-Nov	Bundanoon	rainforest	MZ
Scarlet Honeyeater	few	Nov	Slacky Flat	rainforest	RT
Scarlet Honeyeater	2	10-Nov	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	28-Oct	Gerroa sand mine	forest	KM
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	28-Oct	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Crested Shrike-tit	1	Nov	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest	MM
Leaden Flycatcher	1	28-Oct	Thirroul	garden	MM
White-winged Triller	2	28-Oct	Macquarie Rivulet	paddock	BO
White-winged Triller	1	28-Oct	lower Mullet Creek	paddock	CB
Grey Currawong	2	19-Sep	Sassafras	forest	KM
Green Catbird	1-2	Nov	Thirroul	garden	MM
Skylark	3	28-Oct	Tallawarra	grassland	BO
Bassian Thrush	1-2	Nov	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest	MM
Common Blackbird	1	18-Nov	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Common Blackbird	1	Nov	Thirroul	garden	MM
Common Blackbird	1	1-Oct	Spring Creek, Kiama	rural	KM

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; BH - Betty Hudson; CL - Carl Loves; BO - Bruce O'Brien; DM - Daryll McKay; MM - Mike Morphett; KM - Kevin Mills; BN - Brendon Neilly; SO - Sue Owen; RT - Roger Truscott; TW - Tom Wylie; TWh - T Wheway; MZ - Marnix Zwankhuizen. **Please note:** there were many more records that I couldn't fit in, thanks.