



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 245

February 2002

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

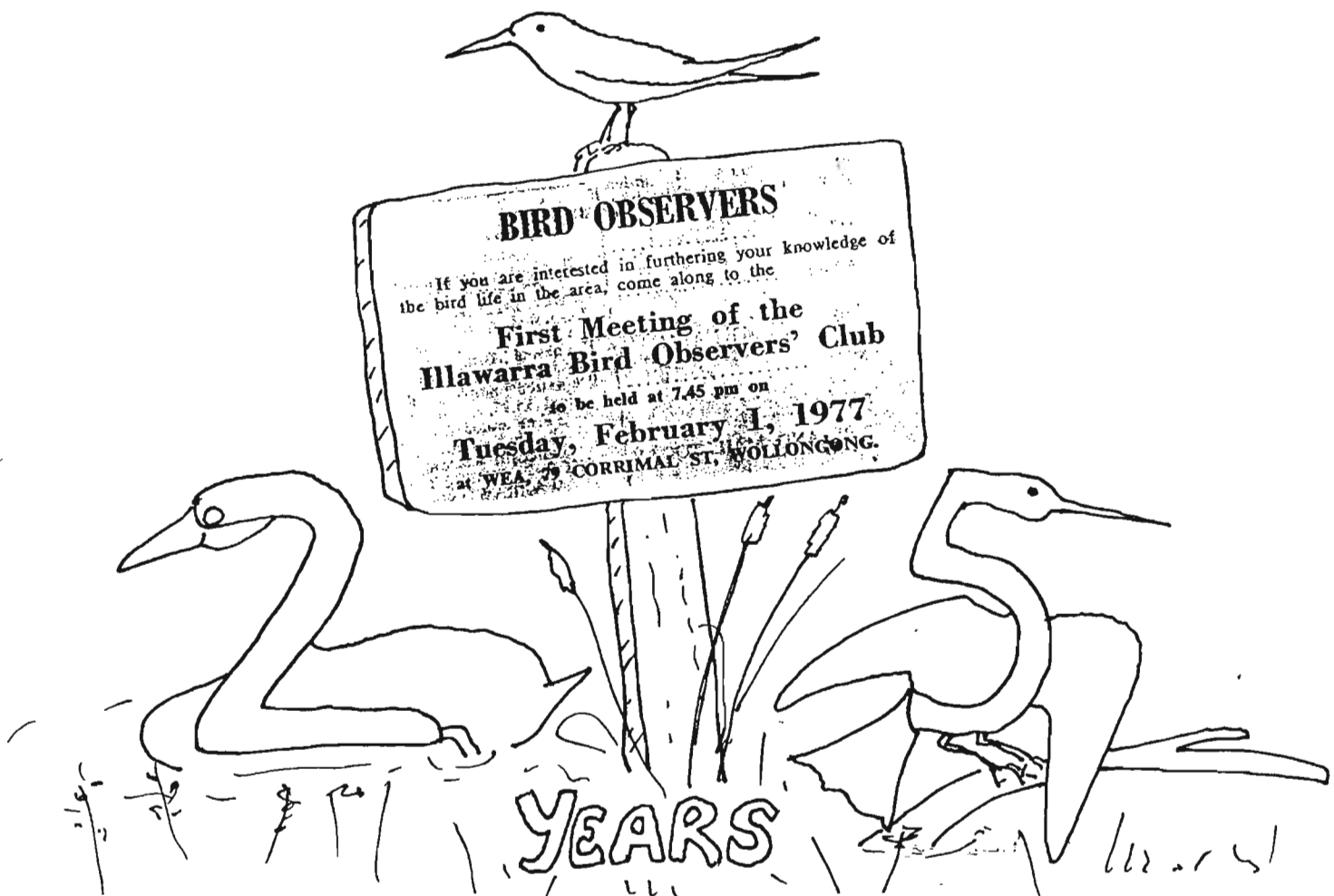
"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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
Darryl Goldrick	Roger Bogaert	Betty Hudson	Bronwyn Wilson	Mike Morphet
149 Reddall Parade	61 Meehan Drive	1 Drualla Road	8 Wellington Drive	15 Coast Street
Lake Illawarra 2528	Kiama Downs 2533	Jamberoo 2533	Balgownie 2519	Thirroul 2515
Phone 4296 1316	Phone 4237 8742	Phone 4236 0307	Phone 4283 4744	Phone 4267 3558

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567



CONTENTS

(p2) President's Column; Obituary – Graham Pizzey; Shoalhaven Birdwatching Outings for 2002. (p3) Forthcoming IBOC Events; Comerook Camel Station. (p4) Draft IBOC Program for 2002. (p5) October Camp at Bald Hill, Trunkey Creek. (pp6&7) Rampion Hills [Murrawoollan] Revitalised. (p7) Trees Bring Birds. (p8) Unusual Records: Nov-Dec 2001.

Firstly, I wish to thank the members who attended the AGM and endorsed my Presidential nomination. The club has a history of wise and solid leadership and I trust I can sustain this high standard. We have, I believe, an enthusiastic committee and this augurs well for the future administration of the club. A draft program for 2002 has been included in this newsletter and it provides a variety and good mix for both walks and guest speakers. Any suggestions for changes will be most welcome, but please advise me before the deadline for the March newsletter in which the final program will be printed.

I trust you and your families had a pleasant Christmas and we look forward to a rewarding and enjoyable year both from a club and personal perspective.

OBITUARY

Cumberland BOC Nov-Dec 2001 Newsletter

Author and photographer Graham Pizzey was highly regarded among professional and amateur ornithologists for his books and newspaper columns on Australian wildlife. Graham was a member of the Order Of Australia and Honorary Associate in Ornithology at the Museum of Victoria; he was also a council member of the Australian Conservation Foundation and Birds Australia. Best known for his *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*, Graham will be missed by all. Graham Pizzey died on 12 November 2001 at his home in Dunkeld, Victoria. He was 71.

SHOALHAVEN BIRDWATCHING OUTINGS for 2002

Barry Virtue

IBOC members are invited to join the Shoalhaven group on their outings, which are held on the third Sunday of each month. Contacts are Diana on 4421 8426, Peter & Julie on 4447 1318, and Barry on 4464 2541. You will note from the respective programs that we plan to join forces for the August excursion.

Date	Venue	Meeting Point
Feb 17	Lake Wollumboola	Archgate Nursery 8.30 am
Mar 7 (Thurs)	Video/picture night	Peter & Julie's 6pm. Short walk and dinner; BYO barbecue and salad to share
Mar 17	12 Mile Road/Granite Falls	Jet 8 am, Bewong 8.30 am
Apr 14 (2 nd Sun)	Red Point	Archgate Nursery 9 am
Apr 15-26 (?)	Weddin Mtns/Tottenham/Parkes	Suggested birding/camping trip
May 19	Cecil Hoskins Reserve Moss Vale	Glendon Motors 8.30 am
June 16	Barren Grounds	Jamberoo Pub 9.30 am
July 21	Hawthorn Road Wandandian	Jet 8.30 am, Bewong 9 am
Aug 18	Coppercup Point	Archgate Nursery 8.30 am
Sept 15	Gerringong Falls	<i>Seahaven Café Gerroa</i> for breakfast 8-9 am or Jamberoo Pub 9.30 am
Oct 20	Pender Road	Jet 8.30 am, Braidwood Road 9 am
Nov 17	Goodmans Ford	Weekend camp or at Ford 9.30 am
Dec 15	Bamarang	2 pm to circuit dam or 5 pm for short walk/ barbecue. BYO

FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS

FIRST OUTING will be held on **Wednesday 6th February at 5pm**. Members and guests will meet in the eastern section of the car park at the **Windang Caravan Park** to view the waders/shorebirds at Lake Illawarra Entrance. At the conclusion of the walk we will gather in the picnic grounds for a 'high tea'. Bring your drinks and eats (salads etc) for what is traditionally a very pleasant and relaxing start to the new birding year.

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 11th February** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30pm SHARP**. This is a very special occasion in which we will be celebrating the **25th ANNIVERSARY** of the club. This will be a dinner meeting and will not be in the usual meeting format. New members in particular are encouraged to join us, as it will provide some insight into the history of the club, and socialise with our founding members, who will be doing some reminiscing. Children are most welcome. Photographs will be taken to record this happy, historic occasion. You are asked to be punctual given that hot food is on the menu. Each past President will be giving a special presentation between courses. Whilst a punch-type drink will be available, members and guests are welcome to BYOG. We will be needing some willing hands to wash and wipe up at the conclusion. **FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET PURCHASED THEIR TICKETS (WE NEED TO KNOW NUMBERS FOR THE CATERERS) PLEASE DO SO ASAP.** You should contact **Fae/Kevin McGregor (42713762)** or **Bronwyn Wilson (42834744)**. Cost is \$10 per person.

FIELD OUTING will be held on **Saturday 16th February** at the **Tallawarra Power Station Ash Ponds**, commencing at **8.30 am**. Members travelling from the north should take the Princes Highway through Dapto, past Mount Brown Public School, and then the power station turn-off (2nd turn on left as you pass under the freeway). For those south of Dapto, take the Dapto offloading ramp on the freeway, then turn right on to the Princes Highway and take the 2nd turn on the left after you pass under the freeway. *IBOC News* No. 226 contains a map to assist. We will meet at a point about 0.5 km from the entrance. Don't forget eats, drinks and sunscreen. For enquiries, please contact the outing leader, **Darryl Goldrick (4296 1316)**.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be held at President, **Darryl's** house at 149 Reddall Parade, Lake Illawarra on **Tuesday 19th February at 7.30 pm**. Club members are welcome to attend. **Please park on the grassed area opposite the house**, as it is a busy road and it's much safer for you when getting in and out of your vehicles.

MARCH NEWSLETTER: Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* will be **Wednesday 27 February**. Would members using email please send their articles as an attachment. Merci bien.

COMEROO CAMEL STATION

Chris BRANDIS

We have received an invitation to survey birds and a summary for their advertising on this 100,000 acres station 65 miles NW of Burke in Hall's Babbler country. It has a permanent water of Cuttaburra Creek, a tributary of the Warrego River, camping, B & B, camel tours etc. Any one interested can visit their web site at www.lisp.com.au/~come or email at come@lisp.com.au or write to Bruce and Chris Sharpe, Comeroo Station, Burke, NSW 2840, Ph 02 6874 7735. I presume that the advertised rates of \$25/day/car will apply, but it does look interesting.

DRAFT IBOC PROGRAM for 2002

Feb **6** (Wed) Lake Illawarra Entrance
 11 Meeting -25th Anniversary Dinner
 16 (Sat) Tallawarra Power Station Ash Ponds

March **11** Meeting- Peter Nolan: Alaskan Raptors
 17 (Sun) Budderoo Trail/Gerringong Falls
 24 (Sun) Puckeys Estate (David Winterbottom)

EASTER CAMP: TBA

April **8** Meeting - Dept. of Environment: Wildlife Permits & Enforcement
 10 (Wed) Blackbutt Reserve
 13 (Sat) Wirrimbirra Sanctuary/Reserve

May **13** Meeting - Lindsay Smith (S.O.S.S.A)
 15 (Wed) Mt. Keira Girl Guide Camp
 18 (Sat) Yarrawa State Forest

June **10** Meeting - Jacky Jansen (Illawarra WIRES coordinator)
 12 (Wed) Mangerton Park Rainforest
 16 (Sun) Bomaderry Creek

July **8** Members' Night
 10 (Wed) Stanwell Park Recreation/Reserve
 13 (Sat) Featherdale Wildlife Reserve

Aug **12** Meeting - Mike Cannon (local veterinarian)
 14 (Wed) TBA
 18 (Sun) Coppercup Point/Lake Wollumboola.

Sept **9** Meeting - Trevor Qusted: Sri Lankan Birds
 11 (Wed) TBA
 14 (Sat) Mt. Annan Botanic Gardens

OCTOBER CAMP: TBA

Oct **14** Meeting - Colin Markham (MP): National Parks of South Africa
 16 (Wed) TBA
 20 (Sun) Maddens Plains Heathland

Nov **11** Meeting - Dr.Kevin Mills: The Effects of Bushfires and Bird Recovery
 13 (Wed) TBA
 16 (Sat) Shoalhaven District (checking for non-fire affected sites)

Dec **6** (Fri) Minnamurra Falls Rainforest
 9 Christmas Meeting

[Continuation of Betty's report in December 2001 edition of *IBOC News*]

Thursday

An early start for the area by the gatehouse cottage. We walked alongside a creek with very high timbered banks. Plenty of birds with several new species for the day. On returning to camp we were greeted by four new arrivals. The men visited on old goldmine on an adjacent property.

After lunch we went chasing the Specked Warbler again, this time walking down the creek to the cottage on the river, where we had a good sighting of Rainbow Bee-eaters sitting in the sun. A late return for a quick shower, tea and then campfire. We were treated to a splendid fireworks display courtesy of Craig & Paul. The bangs could be heard echoing all round the valley.

Friday

Today Jessica had a special treat. She was taught how to ride the four-wheel motor bike by Craig and allowed its use for the rest of the camp. Her smile had to be seen to be believed! Saying goodbye to the early departures, we headed back along the road to Box Ridge. We entered the property where we followed the hill down to a river with waterfalls & rapids. This was an old goldmining area, and we followed the old water race down the slope to the site of the batteries. Once we escaped the cold wind there were plenty of small birds in the brambles, including Leaden Flycatchers. As we reached the site of the old batteries we saw a Common Blackbird, and a fruit bat with rusty wings and a black body.

We had morning tea by the old settlers' cottage where there was an edible fig-tree, which may have been the attraction for the fruit bat. Otherwise, there were very few birds.

We then climbed back to the road and walked through the open forest on the other side where a Little Eagle gave everyone a good look after several teasing glimpses. We also had a pair of Sacred Kingfishers pose, one facing & one back to us while all the party had a good look.

After lunch we again went looking for the Speckled Warbler, but again no luck. No birds at all. Had all the insects been blown away by the wind change in the night?

During the campfire we spotlighted bent wing bats hawking over the dam for insects.

Saturday

After farewelling more campers we had a day walk! We were driven by Craig & Chas to the airstrip where we all had instructions to hold our arms out of the windows & flap like mad. They drove like mad along the strip and veered off just before the end. Not enough flapping to achieve take off!

After driving down a steep rough track we were dropped off by a waterfall on the creek while the vehicles took a group fishing.

Due to the wind which was strong & cold, the only birds we saw were in the sheltered gullies. We did, however, get very expert at crossing & recrossing the creek. We saw several raptors but were unable to get a positive identification, while one person, our newest birdwatcher, saw a Red-capped Robin, while the rest of us were looking for Varied Sittellas. We ended our walk at the cottage for afternoon tea and a social gathering. On the return trip we saw the Pallid Cuckoo on the powerlines by the shearing shed. Back to camp for a hasty shower before it was pulled down to dry & be packed.

Sunday

Everyone packed up and we were all on our way by 10.30am.

Our thanks to Craig and Pauline for their hospitality and for making this a memorable camp, during which we recorded 110 bird species.

“Just as a species is a product of its habitat, so is the habitat a product of all the living organisms that make it up.”
 - *Saving Australian Wildlife with Earth Sanctuaries* (online).

I had forgotten about the existence of Earth Sanctuaries Ltd. until last October, when I read a very short article in the *Illawarra Mercury* about the release of six rare Mala (Rufous Hare-wallabies) into its Scotia Earth Sanctuary back of Broken Hill. Chris Brandis had previously visited Scotia (see *IBOC News* No. 235). Turning to ESL’s web-site (<http://www.esl.com.au/>), I learned that ESL has nine other wildlife sanctuary projects, all in the southern half of mainland Australia, and one of which is located in the NSW Southern Highlands, called Murrawoollan.

With its beginnings in the Adelaide Hills in 1969 through Dr John Wamsley, ESL has a mission to save endangered wildlife from extinction by reintroducing selected species into acquired areas of land after revegetation and protection (the entire perimeter with vermin-proof fencing) programs. On the basis that biodiversity loss has come about through land mismanagement and introduced species, ESL sets out to manage land sustainably, both ecologically and economically, and to be a private sector alternative to the national parks system.

Having obtained permission from Mark Edwards at ESL’s Mylor HQ (PO Box 1135, Stirling, SA 5152), Carol and I visited Murrawoollan Earth Sanctuary “at our own risk” on 17th November last. It was formerly a sheep-grazing property named Rampion Hills. Occupying 682 hectares, it lies between Narambulla property and Chowne V.C. Rest Park on the western side of the Hume Highway between Marulan and Goulburn. ESL is unlikely to begin restorative work here until its Little River Earth Sanctuary near Melbourne is up and running. Plans include the reintroduction of the Red-necked Pademelon, Rufous Bettong, Eastern Quoll and Platypus, with a lake for the latter.

Walking through the property, Carol and I were surprised at the extent of vegetation, fallen timber, and surface water. Offsetting the paddocks are stands of scribbly and brittle gums, blue-leaved stringy-bark, yellow box, ploughshare wattle, wire grass and curly sedge. We counted at least eight dams, one of which lies at the back of the humble homestead, which stands at the top of the gravel roadway in. There, to the serenade of the Rufous Whistler among the pines, we had lunch on the front verandah, disturbing a pair of Spotted Pardalotes that suddenly flew out from under the floorboards. All about vestiges of past human activities were clearly visible: derelict sheds to do with sheep farming and including chook pens, children’s swings, kitchenware, discarded furniture, rusty wire coils, and empty cans and bottles. It looked as if the last occupants had left in a hurry. Particularly round the shearing sheds area sheep skeletons were scattered. Much time and effort will be needed to tidy up all the debris, which spoils the appearance of this beautiful place, as signified by the Aboriginal name behind Murrawoollan.

We walked a fair distance right and then left along the tracks that form a T-intersection at the homestead. The first was more profitable, with a series of dams of increasing size and a four-foot Lace Monitor that shinned up a tree. On the other side a flock of at least thirty feral goats took off into the timber, as did Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Swamp Wallabies generally. ESL had had a flora and fauna assessment done in September 1999, and among the thirty bird species recorded was the vulnerable Grey Falcon, which we did not see among those listed below during our four-hour visit. Certainly Murrawoollan has much potential as a wildlife sanctuary, especially given its size, and ESL hopes to make it even more beautiful by returning the landscape to its pre-white settlement state. In the meantime it would be good if IBOC could gain permission for a field outing and/or camp (even just an overnight stay) for a further bird survey to be done. I suspect dusk and dawn reccies would be rewarding.

Stubble Quail	Eastern Rosella	Yellow Thornbill	Magpie-lark
Australian Wood Duck	Laughing Kookaburra	Little Wattlebird	Grey Fantail
Mallard	Sacred Kingfisher	Noisy Friarbird	Willie Wagtail
Australasian Grebe	White-throated Treecreeper	White-eared Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
White-faced Heron	Superb Fairy-wren	White-naped Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Latham’s Snipe	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Raven
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-throated Gerygone	Rufous Whistler	White-winged Chough
Crimson Rosella	Brown Thornbill	Grey Shrike-thrush	Clamorous Reed-Warbler

Postscript: the Earth Sanctuaries Foundation is an independent body, working with ESL and supporting such projects as the conservation and protection of the Malleefowl and Bush Stone-curlew. However, since I wrote this article it has come to light (ABC Radio 15/01/02, *Sydney Morning Herald* 19/01/02, & *Illawarra Mercury* 24/01/02) that Earth Sanctuaries has been struggling on the stock market. While hoping for a "white knight to bail us out", John Wamsley has calculated that donations of just two dollars per family in this country will ensure its commercial management of its private conservation areas. With the apparent uncertainty of ESL and its properties, perhaps my heading should be followed by a question mark.

The LAND 6/12/01

Trees bring birds

Quick bonus from farm plantings



By IAN PATERSON

ON-FARM tree plantings are bringing birds back to rural landscapes much more quickly and in greater numbers than was thought likely, a survey of the Southern Tablelands has found.

Volunteer bird-watchers, guided by Greening Australia and the CSIRO, recorded 103 species, including many threatened woodland birds, in revegetation sites that were as little as two years old.

Greening Australia ACT and South-East NSW chairman, Mark Butz, said the results were heading because birds were a good indicator of biodiversity.

"If it's good for the vulnerable birds, then it's probably good for a lot of other species," he said.

The two-year Birdwatch survey covered 132 sites on 55 farms and 15 public reserves stretching from Boorowa and Burrinjuck to Bungonia and Braidwood.

Volunteers from the Canberra Ornithologists Group identified 2933 birds from 103 species, the most common being small insect-eaters like the Superb Fairy Wren, Yellow-Rumped Thornbill, White-Plumed Honeyeater and Grey Fantail.

They also recorded 13 species of declining woodland birds including the Crested Shrike-Tit,



Birdwatch project officer, Nicki Taws, and project manager, Sue Streatfield, seek out farm birds using Greening Australia's new "Bringing Birds Back" glovebox field guide.

Jacky Winter, Red-Capped Robin, Restless Flycatcher and Speckled Warbler.

Birdwatch project manager, Sue Streatfield, said it did not matter whether the sites were direct seeded or grown from tubestock.

"Some of the best scientists in the country are amazed that these patches of revegetation have made a difference to bird populations in such a short time," she said.

"The replanting of trees, shrubs and grasses is literally bringing landscapes back to life."

The Southern Tablelands is one of the most heavily cleared parts

of Australia and over the last decade Greening Australia has direct seeded 5000 kilometres of treeline on 400 properties in the region. It coordinates the planting of 70,000 native trees, shrubs and grasses annually.

Birdwatch has provided the first hard evidence that plantings — established mostly for salinity and erosion control or shelter belts — are also improving biodiversity.

Greening Australia last week released "Bringing Birds Back", a glovebox field guide to the 20 most common birds found in revegetated areas and a further 10 "birds to watch out for" — species

known to be in decline but found in the survey. The free booklet also lists the top 10 ways to create bird habitat, including protecting remnant vegetation, planting local species, making windbreaks wider, and leaving internal "open spaces" for birds to feed in.

Pictured below are birds that are returning to the Southern Tablelands as a result of the increased number of trees planted there. They are (from left) Superb Fairy Wren, White-Plumed Honeyeater, Yellow-Rumped Thornbill, and Grey Fantail.

■ Contact Greening Australia's regional office, (02) 6253 3035.



Send your records to: email: 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
Darter	2	21-Nov	Gerroa	wetland KM
Eastern Reef Egret	2	31-Dec	Bendalong Point	rocky shore CJC
Nankeen Night Heron	1	16-Dec	Swan Lake	estuary KM
Nankeen Night Heron	1	28-Dec	Cudmirrah	estuary KM
Black Bittern	2	15-Nov	Swan Lake	estuary KM
Osprey	1	21-Oct	Shoalhaven Heads	overhead DM
Osprey	1	31-Dec	Bombo	overhead CJC
Pacific Baza	1	19-Dec	Bellambi Ck./Mt. Ousley Rd.	forest JBI
Square-tailed Kite	1	31-Dec	Wandandian	overhead CJC
Little Eagle	1	20-Dec	Nepean River/Hume Fwy	overhead CJC
Little Eagle	1	6-Nov	Jervis Bay Rd.	overhead KM
Brown Falcon	1	1-Dec	2km NW Mt. Keira	forest CJC
Brown Falcon	1	7-Dec	2km n Molly Morgan's crossing	overhead CJC
Peregrine Falcon	1	28-Oct	West Dapto	overhead BO
Peregrine Falcon	1	22-Dec	Warrawong (killed domestic pigeon)	overhead CJC
Buff-banded Rail	1	1-Nov	Cudmirrah	estuary KM
Baillon's Crake	1	30-Dec	Blackbutt Dam	wetland CB
Marsh Sandpiper	1	20-Dec	Lake Wollumboola	mud flats CB
Great Knot	2	4-Nov	Windang	sandflat GB
Banded Stilt	1	15-Dec	Comerong Island	sandflat CP
Sanderling	3	24-Nov	Lake Wollumboola	sandflat DM
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	73	20-Dec	Lake Wollumboola	mud flats CB
Pied Oystercatcher	4	31-Dec	Lake Conjola	sandflat CJC
Sooty Oystercatcher	5	31-Dec	Bendalong Point	rocky shore CJC
Hooded Plover	pr	31-Dec	Monument Beach (nesting)	beach CJC
Hooded Plover	2	14-Nov	Cudmirrah	beach KM
Little Tern	70	20-Dec	Lake Wollumboola	over lake CB
Whiskered Tern	1	28-Oct	Tallawarra	wetland BO
Brush Bronzewing	1	6-Dec	Calderwood Trig, Avon catchment	heath CJC
Brush Bronzewing	1	6-Dec	Summit Tank station	heath CJC
Peaceful Dove	1	28-Dec	Erowal Bay east	forest KM
Little Corella	15	31-Dec	Warrawong	lake edge CJC
Little Corella	15	12-Nov	Yallah	overhead KM
White-throated Needletail	20+	25-Dec	Warrawong	overhead CJC
Red-browed Treecreeper	2	6-Dec	Mt. Murray	forest CJC
Eastern Bristlebird	1	30-Nov	Vincentia west	shrubland KM
Eastern Bristlebird	1	28-Dec	Erowal Bay east	heath KM
Regent Honeyeater	8	3-Dec	sth of Goodmans Ford	riparian DT
Brown-headed Honeyeater	2	6-Dec	Macquarie Hill, Avon catchment	forest CJC
Tawny-crowned H/eater	2	2-Nov	w of Vincentia	shrubland KM
Scarlet Honeyeater	few	28-Oct	West Dapto	woodland BO
Scarlet Honeyeater	few	19-Nov	Gerroa	forest KM
Spotted Quail-thrush	nesting	7-Dec	Mt. Cotapaxi, Nepean catchment	forest CJC
Varied Sittella	5	6-Dec	Macquarie Hill, Avon catchment	forest CJC
Olive Whistler	2	6-Dec	Macquarie Hill, Avon catchment	forest CJC
Cicadabird	2	6-Dec	upper Flying Fox 3 Creek	rainforest CJC
White-winged Triller	1	28-Oct	Koona Bay	grassland BO
Grey Currawong	1	7-Dec	Molly Morgan's crossing	woodland CJC
Grey Currawong	1	18-Dec	Cordeaux colliery	woodland CJC
Grey Currawong	2	21-Dec	Cordeaux Dam	woodland CJC
Beautiful Firetail	2	30-Nov	Vincentia west	shrubland KM
Bassian Thrush	1-3	all Nov	Excelsior mine, Thirroul	forest MM

GB - Graham Barwell; JBI - John Blomstedt; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; DG - Darryl Goldrick; DM - Daryll McKay; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphett; BO - Bruce O'Brien; CP - Chris Presland; DT - Dave Thomson.



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PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	EDITOR
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogaert 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphet 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

Editor's email: lmorphet@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl GOLDRICK

Gauging members' feedback, it appears that the 25th Anniversary Dinner was a very pleasurable and memorable occasion. My special thanks are extended to all those willing helpers who assisted in the preparations, serving of meals and clean-up. A very special thank-you to Fae and Kevin McGregor for their extraordinary contribution. The photo prints have been developed and I will arrange a display over the next few meetings to give members the opportunity to view them and, if desired, place orders for personal copies.

The program for the year has now been finalized (with the exception of the mid-week walks for August onwards). The **camp** dates are **25th - 28th April** and **26th Oct - 2nd Nov**. The location of the April camp is either Kangaroo River or Braidwood/Majors Creek. More details will be available at the meeting. A further amendment to the draft program which appeared in the last edition of *IBOC News* is the **May field outing** to Yarrawa State Forest, which is now scheduled for **Sunday 19th**.

The Committee resolved to have two film evenings (mid & late winter) on a trial basis to monitor the level of member interest, looking at Friday &/or Saturday. Dates and locations will be published in the next issue.

Public Liability insurance is an issue which is impacting on not only our club but other bird groups as well. Chris Brandis and Phil Straw from BIGNET are examining opportunities for group cover at half the current premium rates.

Just a reminder that some membership fees are overdue, so those defaulters who still want to be a part of the club please cough up pronto!

CONTENTS

(p2) Forthcoming IBOC Events. (pp3&4) IBOC's 25th Anniversary Dinner. (p4) Barren Grounds Weekend Programs. (p5) The Forest Walk; Capertee Valley Tree Plantings. (p6) Lake Illawarra Entrance; Seabirds Seminar. (pp7&8) Tallawarra Power Station Ash Ponds. (p8) Twitchathon 2001 Results. (pp9&10) Unusual Records: Jan-Feb 2002.

FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 11th March** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker will be **Peter Nolan**, whose topic **Alaskan Raptors** will be based on his 120 km trip last November and December from Anchorage through the Kenai Peninsula with its “spectacular scenery”. Slides, Peter tells us, will include goshawks and bald eagles and also illustrate how not to photograph hummingbirds! As usual, please bring a plate of victuals for a shared supper and a receptacle for your beverage. Those enraptured by Peter’s passion for birds of prey can see him again in action on 8th June at Barren Grounds on the topic of ‘Raptors & Rehabilitation’. Any resemblance between Peter and Spike Milligan’s cartoon character below is coincidental.

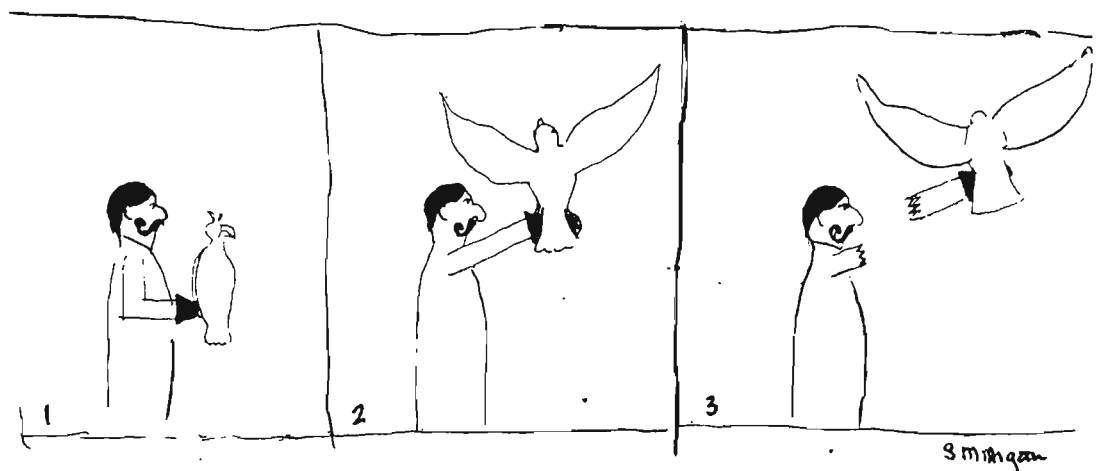
FIELD OUTING is timetabled for **Sunday 17th March** to the **Budderoo Trail/Gerringong Falls** area. Members are asked to assemble at the lower car park of the Barren Grounds Observatory (adjoining the Information Centre) at **8.30 am**. Depending on the number of participants and cars, we will most likely car-pool before proceeding up the road to the Budderoo trail turn-off. Don’t forget eats, drinks and sunscreen/repellant. Sections of the track are wet, so wear sound and appropriate footwear. For any enquiries please contact the leader for the day, **Darryl Goldrick** on 4296 1316.

‘MID-WEEK’ OUTING is in fact taking place on **SUNDAY 24th March** to link in with Senior Citizens Week, when **David Winterbottom** will lead the hybrid group of IBOC members and senior citizens through **Puckey’s Estate**. After meeting at Fairy Meadow Surf Club at **7 am**, the party will proceed north to the lagoon and bridge and back to the meeting-place to enjoy breakfast for a “nominal sum”. David reports usually picking up 30-odd bird species in this area.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be hosted by **Joan & Tom Wylie** on **Tuesday 19th March** at **7.30 pm** at their home at 4 Daphne Street, Bellambi (Tel 4284 2051). As before, meetings are open to all members (the Wylies’ lounge permitting, of course).

APRIL NEWSLETTER: Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* will be Tuesday 26 March; a little sooner than usual on account of the early Easter break.

Incidentally, dear readers, had the thought occurred to you that July should see the 250th issue of the club’s newsletter? It was originally named *The Circular from the Illawarra Bird Observers’ Club*, then the *from* was dropped and subsequently replaced by *of*. In April 1982 the current title *IBOC News* first appeared, and March 1986 marked the first numbered edition: No. 91. It would be great to make the 250th edition something special as another kilometre-stone in the history of the club. So, please don your cogitation caps and conjure up what interesting contributions you can for the July issue.



*The Milligan Book
of Records 1975
Spike Milligan
(Apr 1918-Feb 2002)*

Twenty-five years – my, how times flies when you are having fun, and having fun has in no small part been an important ingredient in the success of our club. This was again evident at our anniversary dinner, where a pleasant meal was enjoyed, interspersed with entertaining summaries of the club's history by past presidents.

Laurie Williams kicked off the proceedings with a run-down on the original W.E.A. class run by the late Doug Gibson and went on to expand on the difficulties encountered in forming a bird club with no capital and, with the exception of Doug, very little experience in bird observing. He acknowledged the help received from a small group around him, in particular Richard Miller; but as someone who came on the scene in the latter half of the formation year, I can assure members, particularly those who weren't around in the early years, without Laurie's driving force there would have been no I.B.O.C.

Next cab off the rank was Dave Thomson, who was solely responsible for the club's participation in the Bird Atlassing Scheme, which, with the involvement of some three thousand contributors around Australia over five years, produced the data for the publication of *The Atlas of Australian Birds*. As Dave acknowledged, it's a dry subject and a bit difficult to talk about in an interesting fashion, but it has been a very important part of our club's history and has given great purpose and focus to our club outings and camps. Again, as someone who has been around and about for a long time, I have been able to observe over many years the huge effort Dave has put into compiling the hundreds and hundreds of record sheets he has submitted on behalf of the club, always striving for the utmost accuracy, as indeed these records must be in order to maintain the credibility of the publication.

Jim Robinson continued on building the club from the foundations laid by the two previous presidents, involving the club in activities with other bird groups. He arranged some very interesting and entertaining guest speakers through these contacts. As someone who enjoys camping, he took a particular interest in organising some great camps.

Brian Hales brought a fresh enthusiasm to his presidency and, towards the end of his term with his involvement in the W.E.A. classes, was able to attract some younger members to the club, something that needs to be continued, although his slides in general did not reflect this. What a great trip down memory lane they were for the older members. Great memories from the past, great friends, great people, some sadly no longer with us.

Kevin McGregor did not speak at the dinner, but played a large part behind the scenes helping to organise the night. Like those who had gone before him, he did a great job at the helm, despite having to overcome some personal health problems. In particular, with the support of his wife, Fae, he put a big effort into rejuvenating the camps. How much fun can you have with a block of chocolate and a handful of clothes pegs. If you don't know what I'm talking about, I'm afraid you're going to have to come to the next camp to find out.

I mentioned Fae, but it would be remiss of me not to mention the other partners, Nola, Betty, Gwen, and Barbara, all of whom gave tremendous support over the twenty-five years.

One thing common to all the presidents was the great camaraderie that engendered through the membership, producing not only acquaintances that met at meetings and outings, but in many cases

forging life-long friendships. People working quietly behind the scenes to ensure the success of the club. If I start to mention names, I will fill another page.

Perhaps I'm the wrong person to write this article, as I don't know where to stop. Twenty-five years of great times and memories; I could write a book. So I'll just finish up with a few funny incidents that have occurred over the years: like the lady who awoke one cold June morning at Nyngan to find her false teeth set solid in a glass of water. Ever tried eating bacon and eggs with your gums, as the driver warms up the coach for an early getaway?

The gas stove in the shearers' quarters at Tilpa that had five outlets and only four knobs. With several people cooking it became a game of musical knobs, to the point where no-one knew what was on or off. In the midst of dinner a smell of gas became apparent, which in turn resulted in a large explosion, sending lamb chops hurtling all around the kitchen.

I'll rely on anonymity to save embarrassment for this one. A lesson in forestry was learnt at the Narrandera camp: never tie a shower to a brittle cypress pine branch. A lady was showering in the background as the group relaxed around the campfire. A loud crash was followed by a chorus of "What's that?" and twenty-five torches focused on the spot. Thank goodness for long singlets, modesty was preserved. Many stories like this have become part of the folklore of the club as they are retold to newer members around the campfires.

Whilst we have been fortunate in having some great presidents in the past, they were successful only because they were fully supported by the members. So to ensure the future of our club, support the ongoing presidents, come to the meetings, attend the outings, go to the camps, and live a bit rough for a few days, and then maybe your stories will become part of the club folklore for the next twenty-five years.

WEEKEND PROGRAMS at BARREN GROUNDS January to June 2002

Date	Topic	Leader
15-17 March	The New Nature	Tim Low
22-24 March	Aboriginal Environments	Dr Jim Kohen
5-7 April	Rocks, Roots and Rainfall	Dr Peter Mitchell
19-21 April	A Warden's Life is Never Dull	Brendon Neilly
26-28 April	Rainforests of the Illawarra	Mark Robinson
10-12 May	Introduction to Botany	Lucy Nairn & Hannah McPherson
24-26 May	Bird Banding Workshop	Alan Leishman
8 June	Raptors and Rehabilitation	Peter Nolan
21-23 June	Birds for Beginners	Brendon Neilly

Some brochures with registration form will be on display at the club meeting; otherwise, folk wanting to attend any of these courses can contact Brendon, the warden on 4236 0195 or obtain further information on web site www.birdsaustralia.com.au/barren.grounds.

The Forest Walk from the Boomerang Golf Course to Stanwell Park Beach on Sunday 20th January 2002, despite the devastation of recent bushfires, provided for the sighting of 46 species of birds (the Brown Falcon eluded us). The company of 5 members and 1 guest was enjoyable and the contrasting scenery breath-taking. The success of the walk, led by Bruce O'Brien, came about principally because of Bruce's pre-walk organisation and investigation into access to tracks, along with his good navigational skills on the day and his attentiveness to the needs of the group. After some initial confusion as to the designated meeting-place, the group drove to Maddens Plains and along the track to the escarpment. From there the group commenced at 10 am the marathon walk along fire-affected trails before proceeding down the steep, and sometimes "hairy", descent to Stanwell Park Beach, reaching there about 4 pm. The company was congenial, gracious in sharing and ensuring safety for each other, especially the straggler who will remain nameless!

The weather on the day was quite hot, but a cool breeze was to be felt in the rainforest and gave relief. The scenery was awesome and spectacular – the Pacific Ocean providing a good "marker" for our location and a backdrop to the bird-inhabiting slopes and gullies as well as the parched bush (whew!) There was a certain beauty and fragility in the charred remains of the fires – the "undressed" tree trunks in contrasting colours; the precariousness of some of the trunks left standing; the melted power-lines; the slippery carpet of leaves underfoot. Amidst the devastation it was inspiring to see the signs of life surviving and new growth – the intermingled Christmas bush; the opened seed pods; the deafening cicadas; the fresh greenery showing its head. The birds to be seen were found in the green gullies, rainforests and slopes that were spared. It was heartening to see that life continued despite recent events.

After our descent along the tracks and through suburbia, the drivers were "ferried" back to where the walk began to collect their cars. Thank you to Bruce for leading the walk. His attention to detail ensured it was a rewarding experience for everyone. Thank you to all who came along and made the day.

Australian Wood Duck	Little Corella	Red Wattlebird	Willie Wagtail
Mallard	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Little Wattlebird	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Pacific Black Duck	Rainbow Lorikeet	Noisy Friarbird	Pied Currawong
Darter	Crimson Rosella	Lewin's Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Little Pied Cormorant	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	NewHolland Honeyeater	Satin Bowerbird
Little Black Cormorant	Channel-billed Cuckoo	Eastern Spinebill	Red-browed Finch
White-faced Heron	Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Yellow Robin	Welcome Swallow
Masked Lapwing	White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Whipbird	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Kelp Gull	Superb Fairy-wren	Golden Whistler	Silvereye
Silver Gull	White-browed Scrubwren	Magpie-lark	Common Myna
Crested Tern	Brown Thornbill	Rufous Fantail	
Crested Pigeon	Yellow Thornbill	Grey Fantail	

CAPERTEE VALLEY TREE PLANTINGS 2002

Established in 1993, the Capertee Valley Regent Honeyeater Recovery Group invites volunteers to help plant 3,500 trees and shrubs on a property near Glen Davis over the weekend of 13 & 14 April, to add to the 37,000-plus that have greened the valley and helped conserve the Regent since plantings began in 1994. Accommodation can be arranged by way of camping at Glen Davis or on a local property, a cottage stay for about \$20 per night, or hotel or motel in Kandos or Rylstone. For about \$25 you can enjoy a Saturday evening meal and the company of fellow planters at the local community hall. If you can't make this weekend, another is scheduled for 10 & 11 August, when you might get a better chance of seeing the endangered Regent. [So far it has eluded me -Ed.]

For bookings & further enquiries, please contact David Geering, the co-ordinator on 1800 621 056.

LAKE ILLAWARRA ENTRANCE

CHILL BRANDIS

The annual Windang outing on 6th February 2002 was a bit wet both above and below, with only one member turning up. The Lake water was lapping at the end of the sand track, but a wade through water just over ankle deep and with a wide umbrella the small remainder of the sand flats was reached. The water was rushing through the channel and should remove some of the sand shoal that was building up again against the rock wall. About 300 Australian Pelicans were forming a barrier across the entrance snaring any fish that tried to get out to sea. There were also a few cormorants and gulls, and 21 Caspian and 23 Crested Terns also taking advantage of the fish movement.

The only waders sighted were several Red-capped Plovers scattered along the shore and the beach and 5 Red-necked Stints feeding on the other side of the channel. Just over the crest of the shore dune there was a flock of about 90 Little Terns coming and going with some 40 in breeding plumage and 5 immature and 1 juvenile bird still begging for food. About 10 had small coloured flags or bands, but in the bad light and binoculars at 20 plus meters I could get only 2 birds' colours.

Next day I checked Lake Wollumboola for the NSW Wader Study Estuary Survey, and the bustling Little Tern colony of 50-plus birds with runners and eggs mid-January had been all but deserted, probably as a result of the rain and the rising water level that flooded about half of the area. It appears that the birds had moved north and stopped at Windang for a feed.

SEABIRDS - Do We Hear the Sounds of Silence? SEMINAR - Frances OZWALINNA

Birds Australia (SNAG) is holding a half-day seminar to discuss the status of seabirds from an international, national and local perspective. What environmental messages are they sending us? Are we hearing them? It promises to be a quality seabird afternoon without the sea-sickness of a pelagic trip! You are welcome to attend on Saturday 27th April 2002 between 1.30 pm and 5.30 pm at the Norman Nock Lecture Theatre, Royal North Shore Hospital, St Leonards 2065.

Guest speakers:

- Eric Woehler**, Australian Antarctic Division. Working in the Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic since 1980, Eric will present an international perspective on population trends and the environmental signals seabirds are sending us.
- Barry Baker**, Environment Australia. Presenting a national overview of seabird status in Australia, Barry has been actively involved in the conservation of seabirds over the past 10 years.
- Harry Battam**, University of Wollongong. Albatrosses – an energetic perspective.
- Peter Fullagar**, Hon research Fellow, CSIRO. The Montague Island story.
- Tori Wilkinson**, Environment Australia. Australian Government Policies – “The Way Ahead”.

Cost (including GST):

Students/other concessions: \$15; Birds Australia members: \$20; others: \$25.

Registration by 22nd April 2002. Expressions of interest &/or request for registration forms should be directed to: “Seabirds”, Birds Australia Sydney Office, PO Box 1322, Crows Nest 1585.

Ph 9436.0388; fax 9436 0466; email rosella63@bigpond.com; website

www.users.bigpond.com/rosella63.

Saturday 16th February 2002: a rather hot and sultry but otherwise fine day for those 14 members who ventured out to the Tallawarra Ash Ponds, where the diversity of habitat surrounding the old power station site typically offers good birding opportunities. This again proved to be the case when, just inside the main gate, we were serenaded by the calls of the Grey Butcherbird, while provided with great views of a pair of Nankeen Night Herons roosting in some creek-side Casuarinas. The sharp, metallic calls of Golden-headed Cisticolas, and a flyover by a patrolling Swamp Harrier greeted us as we arrived to survey the first ash pond. The effects of recent heavy rains were clearly evident – there was much water, but very little exposed mud and so little expectation of waders. However, quick scanning soon revealed numerous Black Swans (about 90, plus later one dead and decaying), Hoary-headed Grebes, Pacific Black Ducks, Eurasian Coots and Purple Swampheens. Although water levels were also high at the second ash pond, a few Black-winged Stilts were present and with the abundance of reeds/bulrushes, the aural backdrop for our morning tea was provided by Little Grassbirds and Clamorous Reed-Warblers. Here we were also treated to a second formation of Darters circling high in the sky, raptor-like on thermals.

The huge power transmission towers surrounding the old Tallawarra Power Station marked our lunch stop and the start of our walk. As on previous visits to this site, the towers were again found to be popular raptors' perches, with an Australian Hobby making the most of the view. The return walk to the nearby point between Pithungnar and Yallah Bays also provided some good sightings, including a Leaden Flycatcher bathing, a fleeting glimpse of a Southern Boobook, a lone Caspian Tern off the point, and relatively close views of a Little Eagle. In all 70 avian species were recorded, of which raptors constituted 14%. Our thanks go to our leader, Darryl Goldrick for a "raptorous" outing round the Tallawarra ash ponds.

Brown Quail	Great Egret	Caspian Tern	Grey Fantail
Black Swan	Nankeen Night Heron	Crested Pigeon	Willie Wagtail
Australian Wood Duck	Australian White Ibis	Little Corella	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Pacific Black Duck	Black-shouldered Kite	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Grey Butcherbird
Australasian Shoveler	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Eastern Rosella	Australian Magpie
Grey Teal	Swamp Harrier	Southern Boobook	Australian Raven
Chestnut Teal	Brown Goshawk	Laughing Kookaburra	Double-barred Finch
Hardhead	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Dollarbird	Red-browed Finch
Australasian Grebe	Little Eagle	Superb Fairy-wren	European Goldfinch
Hoary-headed Grebe	Brown Falcon	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Welcome Swallow
Darter	Australian Hobby	White-browed Scrubwren	Clamorous Reed-Warbler
Little Pied Cormorant	Nankeen Kestrel	Brown Thornbill	Little Grassbird
Pied Cormorant	Purple Swamphean	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Golden-headed Cisticola
Little Black Cormorant	Dusky Moorhen	Yellow Thornbill	Silvereye
Great Cormorant	Eurasian Coot	Noisy Miner	Common Starling
Australian Pelican	Black-winged Stilt	White-fronted Chat	Common Myna
White-faced Heron	Black-fronted Dotterel	Leaden Flycatcher	
Little Egret	Masked Lapwing	Magpie-lark	

WETLAND EDUCATION & TRAINING (WET) PROGRAM

A four-day workshop on Wetland Restoration & Management is being held at Millennium Parklands, Sydney Olympic Park on 9th – 22nd March; fee \$396 or individual sessions \$110 each. For further enquiries phone Judy Harrington, Volunteer Program Co-ordinator, on 9714 7534 or visit web site www.sopa.nsw.gov.au.

TWITCHATHON 2001 RESULTS

Frances C. WALTON

The total received for Birds Australia's 2001 Twitchathon was \$14,000. The Cumberland Bird Observers Club won the prize for the club whose members raised the most funds (\$3,566.30) and this prize was presented to the Cumberland Club at its February meeting.

My sincerest thanks go to all Twitchathon friends, Cumberland Bird Observers Club, members of very many bird clubs, and members of Birds Australia for helping us to establish such a fantastic seeding fund to get our Cowra woodlands project underway! It is one of those wonderful moments in a Twitchathon co-ordinator's life!

[IBOC was represented by Bruce O'Brien, Lorraine Pincus, Julie Mitchell and Chris Brandis in the Twitchathon.]



Send your records to: email: 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
Emu	4	23-Jan	Sassafras	rural	KM
Little Penguin	2	26-Jan	Killalea beach	inshore	CJC
Little Penguin	few	Jan	Bombo	inshore	BN
Tahiti Petrel	1	26-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	RG
Brown Booby	1	26-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	RG
Darter	7	9-Feb	lower Macquarie Rivulet	riparian	BH
Eastern Reef Egret	1	10-Feb	Little Lake	estuary	CJC
White-necked Heron	1	9-Jan	Foxground south	paddock	KM
White-necked Heron	1	28-Jan	Wandandian	paddock	KM
Striated Heron	1	9-Feb	lower Macquarie Rivulet	shore	BH
Nankeen Night Heron	1	9-Feb	lower Macquarie Rivulet	overhead	BH
Nankeen Night Heron	3	16-Feb	Tallawarra	woodland	IBOC
Glossy Ibis	1	28-Jan	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CB
Glossy Ibis	1	10-Feb	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CJC
Australian White Ibis	4pr	13-Jan	nesting on Big Island	island	LES
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	20-Feb	Douglas Park	farm dam	CJC
Pacific Baza	2	18-Feb	Mt. Kembla Ring Track	overhead	DG
Pacific Baza	2	19-Feb	Bulli	overhead	RT
Square-tailed Kite	1	27-Jan	Cudmirrah	overhead	KM
Square-tailed Kite	1	3-Feb	Nowra	overhead	DM
Spotted Harrier	1	9-Jan	Robertson	overhead	CB
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	20-Jan	Wilton	overhead	CJC
Little Eagle	1	22-Jan	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Little Eagle	1	16-Feb	Tallawarra	riparian	IBOC
Little Eagle	1	16-Feb	Bulli	overhead	RT
Brown Falcon	4	23-Jan	Bomerang Golf Course	woodland	CR
Brown Falcon	1	8-Feb	Cordeaux Dam	woodland	CJC
Brown Falcon	1	16-Feb	Tallawarra	woodland	IBOC
Australian Hobby	3	16-Feb	Tallawarra	woodland	IBOC
Australian Hobby	1	23-Feb	Warrawong	overhead	CJC
Australian Hobby	1	24-Feb	Comerong Island	overhead	CJC
Peregrine Falcon	1	9-Jan	East Corrimal	dune forest	DW
Peregrine Falcon	1	23-Feb	Crookhaven Heads	overhead	CJC
Buff-banded Rail	4	1-Jan	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Buff-banded Rail	1	9-Feb	lower Macquarie Rivulet	wetland	BH
Eurasian Coot	300+	10-Feb	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CJC
Black-tailed Godwit	1	9-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	DM
Black-tailed Godwit	2	24-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	CJC
Common Greenshank	25	10-Feb	Windang	sand flat	CJC
Great Knot	4	24-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	CJC
Sanderling	1	9-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	AR
Red-necked Stint	120	20-Jan	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	13-20 Jan	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	JP, CJC
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	35	20-Jan	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Beach Stone-curlew	1	7-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	DM
Beach Stone-curlew	1	23-Feb	Orient Point	beach	CJC
Sooty Oystercatcher	6	20-Jan	Callala Point, Jervis Bay	rocky shore	CJC
Banded Stilt	2	9-24 Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	DM, CJC
Red-capped Plover	120	24-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	CJC
Red-capped Plover	45	24-Feb	Windang	sand flat	CJC

continued

continued

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Pacific Golden Plover	35	20-Jan	Lake Wollumboola	mud flat	CJC
Pacific Golden Plover	120	24-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	CJC
Hooded Plover	1	28-Jan	Lake Conjola	sand flat	MZ
Australian Pratincole	1	9-Feb	Comerong Island	sand flat	DM
Pomarine Jaeger	2	20-Jan	Callala Point, Jervis Bay	inshore	CJC
Pomarine Jaeger	2	26-Jan	Killalea beach	overhead	CJC
Little Tern	90+	8-Jan	Windang	sand flat	CB
Little Tern	70+	20-Jan	Lake Wollumboola	sand flat	CJC
Little Tern	29	28-Jan	Lake Conjola	sand flat	MZ
Fairy Tern	1	19-Jan	Lake Conjola	sand flat	DM
White-winged Black Tern	7	13-Jan	Lake Wollumboola	sand flat	JP
White-headed Pigeon	2	20-Jan	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Common Bronzewing	5	21-Feb	Sassafras	woodland	DG
Peaceful Dove	1	20-Jan	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Bar-shouldered Dove	few	27-Jan	Windang	dune forest	DW
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	9	24-Jan	Bulee Mt., Nerriga	forest	KM
Long-billed Corella	40	19-Feb	Albion Park	airstrip	WE
Little Corella	20+	26-Jan	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	grassland	DW
Little Corella	5	17-Feb	Oak Flats	urban	CJC
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	2	17-Jan	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Little Lorikeet	few	15-Feb	Bulli	forest	RT
Turquoise Parrot	2	28-Jan	Little Forest Plateaux	woodland	MZ
Channel-billed Cuckoo	7	7-Jan	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Powerful Owl	2	9-Jan	Mollymook	forest	KM
Tawny Frogmouth	2	18-Jan	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Tawny Frogmouth	2+2j	15-Feb	Keiraville	garden	ME
Southern Emu-wren	10+	28-Jan	Little Forest Plateaux	heath	MZ
Pilotbird	1	24-Jan	Bulee Mt., Nerriga	shrubland	KM
Bell Miner	10+	22-Feb	Avondale	forest	GB
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	16-Feb	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
Scarlet Honeyeater	few	29-Jan	Bulli	forest	RT
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	20-Feb	Bulli	garden	RT
Scarlet Robin	1	24-Jan	Bulee Mt., Nerriga	woodland	KM
Eastern Whipbird	2	27-Jan	Windang	dune forest	DW
Crested Shrike-tit	2	28-Jan	Minnamurra Spit	forest	CB
Cicadabird	1	24-Jan	Endrick River	forest	KM
Figbird	2	27-Jan	Windang	dune forest	DW
Dusky Woodswallow	3	19-Feb	Primbee	golf course	DG
White-winged Chough	9	24-Jan	Endrick River	woodland	KM
White-winged Chough	9	20-Feb	Douglas Park	woodland	CJC
Beautiful Firetail	2	28-Jan	Little Forest Plateaux	heath	MZ
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	12	22-Feb	Woodlands, Shellharbour	railway verge	DG

GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; ME - Mary Eskdale; WE - Wal Emery; RG - Rod Gardner; DG - Darryl Goldrick; BH - Barbara Hales; DM - Daryll McKay; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphet; BN - Brendon Neilly; JP - Joy Pegler; CP - Chris Presland; DP - David Price; CR - Chris Ross; LES - Lindsay Smith; RT - Roger Truscott; DW - David Winterbottom; MZ - Marnix Zwankhuizen.

Comment: The year has started with a spate of excellent records. Two new regional species, Australian Pratincole and Fairy Tern, and rarities such as the Beach Stone-curlew, Banded Stilt, Tahiti Petrel, Turquoise Parrot, Pacific Baza and Chestnut-breasted Mannikin have provided the keen observer with plenty to see. On top of this is the return of Bell Miners to the Illawarra escarpment after an 80 year absence and the first observation of Peaceful Dove east of the escarpment. Kevin Mills has found a third location for Emu in the region, while I have also had a belated record of 12 Channel-billed Cuckoo from Figtree (Dec 01) by Kevin McGregor - an unprecedented aggregation for this species.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 247

April 2002

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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Phone 4296 1316	Phone 4237 8742	Phone 4236 0307	Phone 4283 4744	Phone 4267 3558

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl Goldrick

I would like to thank Peter Nolan for his wonderful presentation at the last meeting. Peter has a unique style and his sense of humour is second to none --- he certainly injected a great deal of mirth to the evening --- Well done.

I would like to welcome Don Jephcott, Tera Wheway and Bruce Watt (Condobolin) as new members to the club and hope we see you at meetings or at our outings in the future.

Betty Ward and Betty Gibson have not been in the best of health lately. I and all club members/friends wish you both a speedy recovery.

The April camp has now been finalized, but not without a great deal of effort, I might add. Wal Emery deserves special thanks for his reconnaissance trips in the Braidwood district and assisting me in the organization of this event. Any member intending to go on this camp should attend the forthcoming club meeting to be acquainted with the details. Those who can't attend the meeting, but intend to go on the camp, should contact Wal (4284 0139) or myself A.S.A.P—I need to advise the property owner of numbers anticipated. Details on the camp are included in a special section in this newsletter.

CONTENTS

(p2) Forthcoming Events inc. late April Camp. (p3) April Camp Map; Tom Thumb Lagoon Wetlands. (p4) Alaskan Raptors. (p5) Puckey's Estate; Research Funds. (pp6&7) Gerringong Falls-Budderoo Fire Trail. (p8) Cowra BIGnet Meeting; Seabirds Seminar. (pp9&10) Unusual Records: Feb-Mar 2002.

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 8th April** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker will be **Vicki Cronan** from the Department of Environment, Canberra and she will be providing insight into wildlife permits and enforcement and all the illicit attempts to bring flora/fauna into and out of the country. It promises to be a most enlightening evening.

FIELD OUTING on **Saturday 13th April** in **Wirrimbirra Sanctuary**, which is situated on the Hume Highway, Bargo, between Bargo and Tahmoor, where we will meet at **9 am** in the car park inside the gates. The area is marked with an extensive network of nature trails and it also has a large plant nursery as well as picnic and barbecue facilities. On a previous visit there was also a compound containing **Tammar Wallabies**, the subject of a research project being carried out by the University of Wollongong. Birds seen then included **Yellow-tufted, White-eared, White-naped** and **New Holland Honeyeaters, Olive-backed Oriole**, and a **Rose robin** among the 33 species recorded. As usual, bring your eats and drinks for the day. For any enquiries, particularly in regard to car-pooling, please contact **Brian Hales** (phone 4257 4431), who will be the leader.

MID-WEEK OUTING on **Wednesday 10th April** to **Blackbutt Forest Reserve, Shellharbour**. Participants are requested to meet in the main car park off Shellharbour Road (adjoining the Motel on the northern side of Ocean Beach Drive) at **8.30 am**. **Joan & Tom Wylie** will lead the group.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be hosted by **Joan & Tom Wylie** on **Tuesday 16th April** at **7.30 pm** at their home: 4 Daphne Street, Bellambi (ph:4284 2051). As always, members are most welcome, particularly if they have suggestions or issues to raise.

MAY NEWSLETTER: Deadline for contributions for the next *IBOC News* will be **Monday 29th April**. Have you begun any brainstorming yet for the "big'un" in July? One topic all readers could contribute to is: When I leave this mortal coil and when/if I am reincarnated, the bird I would want to return as would be ... because The editor and his helpers would collate all the responses and publish the most original/thought-provoking/humorous ones. 'Twould be interesting to conjecture which species got top vote. Just let your imagination take flight!

Mr. **Nevin Ellis** of 'Bendoura' has kindly agreed to permit the club to camp on his property at **Braidwood**. The camp site is in very close proximity to the Shoalhaven River and will be in a moderately timbered section. This is a special event for the club as it will be the first occasion that Mr. Ellis has permitted camping on his property. He is a keen bird enthusiast himself and he knows that the club is a responsible group --- we should feel privileged at his concession, and I encourage as many members as possible to participate --- a poor 'turnout' may jeopardize future camps in this area. The property is approx. 16 km south-west of Braidwood on the Captains Flat Road --- Keep a lookout for the IBOC signs. Bring your own drinking water and provisions. Fresh supplies will be available in Braidwood if required. Wal &/or I need to finalize names/nos. and style of camping intended (van/tent etc) as a matter of urgency, so please contact either of us as mentioned in my earlier column. Wal has agreed to be the camp leader as I will be away in the Hunter attending to personal matters at this time unfortunately.

Illawarra Mercury 27/03/02

Volunteers flock to improve bird habitat

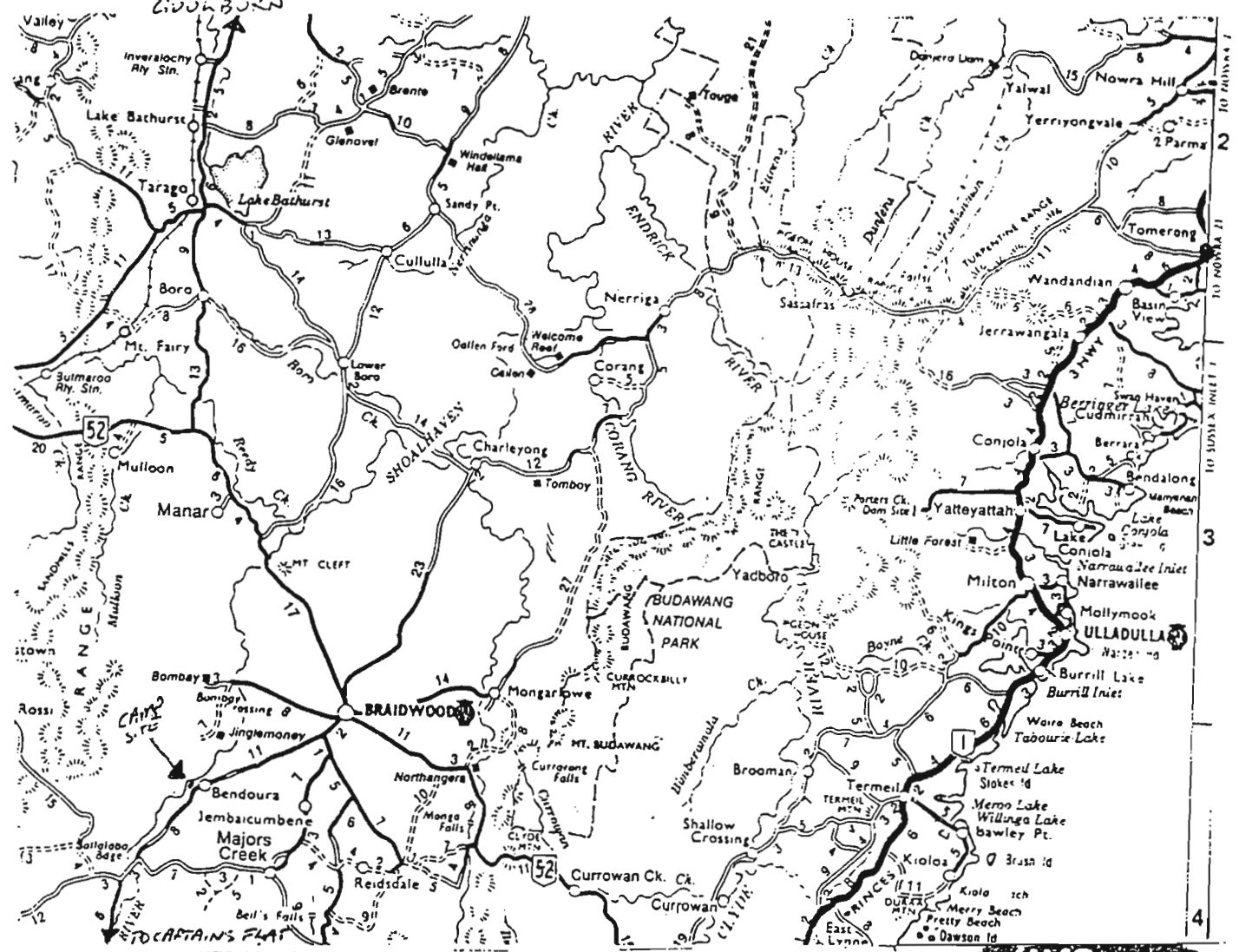


HABITAT RESTORATION: Consultant avian ecologist Phil Straw and Anna Grounds. Volunteers took part in migratory bird habitat restoration at Tom Thumb Lagoon wetlands on World Day for Water. *Picture: ROBERT PEET*

Wetlands are for the birds. And volunteers flocked to Tom Thumb Lagoon at the weekend to improve the habitat for hundreds of migratory birds who visit the waterway to breed. The restoration of the 500ha lagoon was also celebration of World Water Day on March 23. Tom Thumb Lagoon project

officer Anna Grounds said the restoration day was an opportunity for Conservation Volunteers Australia to monitor the Illawarra's migratory birds as well as improving their habitat. "Tom Thumb Lagoon wetlands is a remnant of an extensive shallow coastal lagoon that was a haven for waterbirds," she said.

"Until the 1960s the lagoon contained one of the largest little tern breeding colonies in the state. "Today only 5ha remains." Ms Grounds said renowned migratory bird specialist Phil Straw visited the lagoon to monitor the bird habitat and help restore it to its former glory.



On Monday 11th March last, club member and raptor enthusiast, **Peter Nolan** presented the members with a talk about his latest trip to the United States, which he invariably visits annually to take in the latest developments regarding raptor breeding, care and policies. This time Peter visited the far northern state of Alaska last December, being coaxed there by promises of good sightings of wild Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), a species of both North America and Eurasia, and Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), the veritable symbol of Americana. Such magnets were needed, as the daytime temperatures were around -9° to -6° Celsius. Peter spent about ten days in Alaska, based in Anchorage, but was also able to include some sight-seeing and birdwatching on the Kenai Peninsula, to the south of Anchorage, an area which includes the Kenai Fjords National Park and the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Views of Northern Goshawk and Bald Eagle were forthcoming, Peter and his guide discovering five individuals of the latter species together in one tree, and so intent on their fishing that they didn't even mind when Peter's vehicle stopped under the tree and their photographs were duly taken.

Anchorage is set beside a body of water, which Peter named as the Kenai River, which flows year-round, but also contains large chunks of ice in it, which made a continuous noise as they rubbed against one another. In Anchorage itself human intervention has altered migration patterns of duck species. Human-made canals are present in the city and are kept ice-free, thus providing the ducks with suitable habitat even during the winter months, when they would previously have flown south from such northerly latitudes. The presence of populations of ducks, and also Feral Pigeons, in Anchorage, has encouraged raptor species such as the Northern Goshawk to remain present year-round also.

While it was possible to make out the Bald Eagles in Peter's photos, not all of his shots proved such successes; the finer points of photography, he acknowledged, not being his speciality. Several times we were asked to use our imaginations to determine where in the photo the bird was, but Peter more than made up for this apparent lack by his amusing anecdotes of his finding of the birds and his knowledge generally of raptor behaviour. His photos were further enhanced by having the stunning scenery of the wild Kenai Peninsula contained in them, a truly magnificent vista replete with snow-capped mountains above the tree-line, and native conifers in the valleys and along the roadside. One of those mountains, we were told, was the highest in the Kenai area, but it remains a mystery as to which it was. Peter's photos also included some slides of Moose (be sure to give way when they are crossing the road!), and his talk included an account of Snowshoe Hare frolicking and escaping across snow that Peter found several inches thick and impossible to run in.

As well as his ten days in Alaska, Peter also spent some time with friends in the lower states of California and Colorado, and included some slides from these states. These included Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and Harris' Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*), but these were usually specks in trees or in flight. Perhaps a more successful photographic endeavour for Peter was his photos of hummingbirds in California. Spending three hours in front of a hummingbird feeder, he managed to take about five shots, but, as Peter discovered, birds that can fly backwards can be exceedingly elusive, and while they were definitely in the viewer screen when the photo was taken, only one or two photos came back with an apparent hummingbird. Again it was not possible to identify the species, and Peter did not offer a suggestion, but I will make a brave statement by suggesting that it would have likely been either a Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*) or an Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), apparently the two more common hummingbirds in California suburban areas.

Peter's talks always bring a smile and a laugh, and this evening was no exception. Thank you very much, Peter for an entertaining and informative session that I am sure was enjoyed by all present.

Half a dozen Club members joined about thirty seniors at 7 am on Sunday 24th March last for the now traditional Seniors Week Bird Walk. We had a lovely, bright day for the walk from Fairy Meadow Surf Club through Puckey's to the boardwalk on the lagoon and back.

An identification handout illustrated smaller field birds – Welcome Swallow, House Sparrow, Common Starling and Mynah, and Magpie-lark; bigger field birds – Silver Gull, Galah, Australian Raven, Masked Lapwing, and Australian Magpie; and water birds – Golden-headed Cisticola, Pacific Black Duck, Dusky Moorhen, and Great and Little Pied Cormorants – all of which we saw, plus a Great Egret, a White-faced Heron, Crested Terns, and a party of Little Black Cormorants at the lagoon, with an Australian White Ibis and a Royal Spoonbill flying overhead.

Moving through Puckey's, the handout offered little bush birds – Superb and Variegated Blue Wrens, White-browed Scrub-wren, Spotted Pardalote, Silvereye, and Eastern Yellow Robin; medium bush birds – Red-whiskered Bulbul, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, and Lewin's and New Holland Honeyeaters; and bigger bush birds – Laughing Kookaburra, Spotted Turtle-Dove, Little Wattlebird, Eastern Whipbird and Rainbow Lorikeets – all of which we identified excepting a Kookaburra. In addition there were Yellow Thornbills, Red-browed Finches, Eastern Spinebill, Pied Currawong, Yellow-tailed Black and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and the Little Corella. The prize went for the identification of a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo (Horsfield's is often seen here, but not the Shining), but unfortunately not many people saw it.

We returned to the Surf Club to a serenade from a Grey Butcherbird and a magnificent breakfast, donated by the Club and cooked by Joe Wright and friends from the Seniors' Week organisers. Just before arriving there were good views of two Black-shouldered Kites perched on a light standard, one of which was also seen atop a Norfolk pine in full sunlight.

The handout illustrated 30 birds, of which we expected to see 25, plus 5 to 10 extras. In fact we identified 29 of the 30 and had 15 'extras' not counting a Logrunner claimed by one club member, nor the response from another member "Well, if you did, then I saw Emus!" The list was much longer than on previous years principally because Bird Club Members were present to help in identification and enthuse the Seniors, some of whom have been coming year after year. I suggest that Club makes this an annual event as a good way of generating interest from the wider community in birds.

[Thanks, David, for organising and leading a very rewarding morning's outing. The senior citizen walkers sure kept up a cracking pace! I was more than ready for that fried egg and crispy bacon – Ed.]

RESEARCH FUNDS

FRANCIS CAVALLINNA

Applications for research funds from the proceeds of Twitchathon 2002 (October 2002) will close on 30 April, 2002. If your club is interested in putting in an application for any project under the guidelines provided in the March issue of SNAG's "Bird Notes" and by me at the BIGnet meeting on 3 March, I need to get that application in by 30 April so that the SNAG committee has time to make a decision and get that decision published in "Bird Notes" - deadline for which is about 6 days later!

Southern NSW & ACT Group, Birds Australia
2/399 Pacific Highway
Crows Nest, NSW 2065

P.O. Box 1322, Crows Nest, 1585
Telephone 02 9436 0388
Fax: 02 9436 0466
Email: rosella63@bigpond.com
Website: www.users.bigpond.com/rosella63

From beginning to end. From "Front" of Falls to "Behind" (or "Rear" of) Falls. Read on...and you will get the "bare" facts. I thought I would report back to front by giving the bird list first.

Wedge-tailed Eagle	Eastern Bristlebird	Eastern Yellow Robin	Australian Magpie
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	White-browed Scrubwren	Eastern Whipbird	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Brown Thornbill	Varied Sittella	Beautiful Firetail
White-throated Needletail	Striated Thornbill	Golden Whistler	Welcome Swallow
White-throated Treecreeper	Little Wattlebird	Grey Shrike-thrush	Fairy Martin
Variegated Fairy-wren	New Holland Honeyeater	Rufous Fantail	Bassian Thrush
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Spinebill	Grey Fantail	

Eight persons - Barbara, Brian, Betty, Darryl, Richard, Ron, Alistair and Jude - met in Barren Grounds lower car park. The weather was very pleasant – clear skies, lovely temperature and a little wind. We used two cars to convey us to the numerous stops along the Budderoo Fire Trail.

The first stop was at the junction of Robertson Road and the fire trail. The wind strength had suddenly increased – almost to "blow a dog off a chain" force. Consequently no bird song or sight. At the second halt same story. The birds had "done a bunk" or were lying low. Both of these sites were emu-wren territory. I think that disheartened and delusional feelings were surfacing. One of the party suddenly exclaimed, while bringing binoculars into focus, "Quick! Look! What bird is that?" Just as suddenly there was a peal of laughter at the realisation that it was a lump of lichen on a limb.

A few twitters were heard at the third stop, which revealed our first three bird species for the outing. Next stop brought the tally to six and the one after that to a total of fifteen species. Optimism began to enter our thoughts as we parked the cars to commence the 2-2.5 km walk to the Falls.

Since the December-January fires the track had been graded and widened in places with several large areas cleared of vegetation. Maybe they are parking areas for tankers or helicopters like 'Elvis' for future fires! It seemed like over-clearing to me. Maybe the areas 4 or 5 are for campsites?! Hope not. The driveable trail ends abruptly at a swampy area. Goodness knows if plans exist to continue clearing?!

When we commenced our walk, two Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos cruised by calling either approval or warning of our presence. They were to check us out four more times during our outing. Near the swampy area is an unofficial lookout where we viewed many Martins (Fairy ones, not Martins & McCoys!). Prior to that we sighted numerous Needle-tailed Swifts. Were they swift?! Aptly named. Another sighting of a Beautiful Firetail happened here.

After negotiating the swampy area with feet still dry, we encountered the first creek crossing. Footwear and socks off here and a paddle downstream, and a left turn through the dense scrub to emerge at the huge pool behind Gerringong Falls. Between the Falls to Kangaroo Valley and the large, deep pool is a sizeable, submerged-in-parts sandstone shelf. The water is shallow and safe to cross to the other side, unless it is flood time. There is a lookout to the south of the Falls that can be accessed by a narrow track on the left of the shelf area. Excellent view of full drop of Falls from here. Only two observers went there and viewed two Wedge-tailed eagles high in the heavens. One of the party had several swims in both pools. Bathing became better than bird-watching; at least there was an abundance of aqua purée!

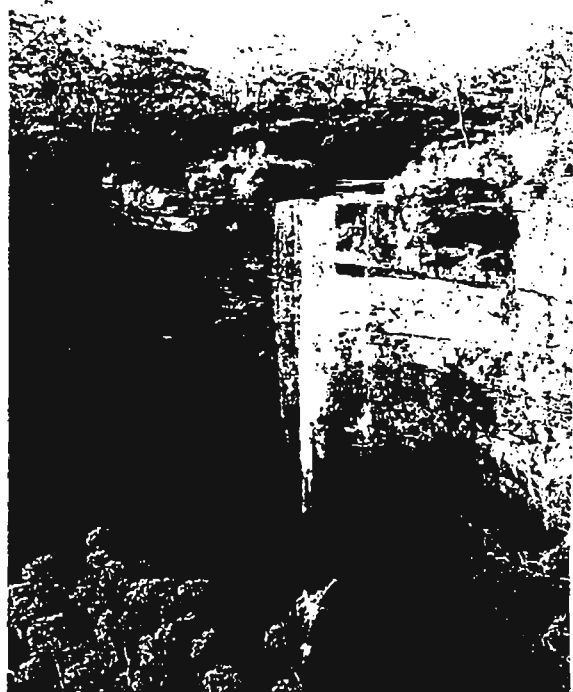
The walk back to the vehicles was hot and yielded no additional species; neither did a walk by a few along the road out. When the vehicles finally arrived to collect them, they claimed to have seen sea-eagles, sooty oystercatchers, mute swans and an emu or two. Was it from the sun? Was it from frustration? Or was it an illusion of "liar" birds?

An addition to the day's tally was made by the occupants of one vehicle on the way out. A bird in the bush was at hand; that is, quite close to the trail. It turned out to be a Bassian Thrush. One final stop after this produced two more species: Eastern Whipbird and Rufous Fantail, thus totalling 27 for the day.

Back to Barren Grounds. All agreed it was a very enjoyable outing (they always are!), despite the absence of avian occupiers and itinerants. For me the most abundant species (not including Swifts and Martins) were New Holland Honeyeaters, Little Wattlebirds, and White-throated Treecreepers. Gratitude to Darryl for organising and leading the outing and to everyone attending for their additions of conversation and laughter.

[Jude's reprinted photos below could serve as a different approach to the current media campaign against 'tossers' who degrade our environment with their butts. Any offended observer may harbour a desire to give the culprits a shove over the Falls. -Ed.]

Are my binocs too tinted
or is the caudal plumage
of this species that blue?



On 2nd & 3rd March last, this biannual meeting was held in conjunction with a Woodland Seminar in which speakers explained some of their research findings that have put a little light on why about 50% of woodland birds are disappearing at an alarming rate, even from the larger remaining woodland remnants. The reasons included the most fertile and sustainable areas are now under agriculture with no bad time refuges left from which repopulation can occur; the undisturbed sameness of remnants; the fragmentation of areas without adjoining corridor; and other contributing factors.

With representatives of Greening Australia, Landcare and Cowra Council we heard of some of the good work being done in the area, with comparisons made between replanting by direct seeding and tube stock on bird life. Birds are considered to be an easy measure of biodiversity but the rate of which these rehabilitation projects are initiated may have to increase 20-fold just to stem the current rate of decline. Understandably economic factors on farmers have a large influence on their willingness to participate with both State and Federal Governments seeing few votes in natural habitat protection and regeneration, which means birds.

This is the start of the Cowra Woodland project to be organised through Birds Australia Southern NSW and ACT Group with Jack Backer in the chair and bringing the local community onside and volunteering to have parts of their properties included in the project. Birding volunteers will be needed to survey the area for birds, to develop a database-line from which to measure the improvements, and any assistance will be appreciated.

The meeting then moved into the general business of Club conservation reports, Birds for the Future follow-ups, the Millennium Parkland developments at Homebush, Public Liability Insurance, data exchange, BA Atlas continuation, and a few other smaller matters. All in all a very interesting weekend with also some birding around the Cowra area and Conimbla NP, good food provided by the local ladies, and the company of those with a similar interest. The next meeting will be held probably on the 14 & 15th September at Homebush, the following March in Canberra, and the next September in Tamworth. Any one wishing to participate in these gatherings of the many NSW and ACT Clubs is most welcome.

[Unfortunately, details of this meeting Chris attended reached our club too late for publicity at our meeting and in *IBOC News* - Ed.]

Further to the details given in last month's edition of *IBOC News*, Frances reports there are two important new additions to the program. Firstly, the seminar will now be opened by the Hon Dr Sharon Stone, MP, Federal Secretary to the Minister of the Environment. Dr Stone is very highly regarded within the conservation family as being very supportive and pro-active. Secondly, Lisa O'Neill, PhD student and soon to be a new member of the BA-SNAG committee, will be presenting some research into the breeding ecology of Sooty Terns which she is currently undertaking at Lord Howe Island. Registration for the seminar is timed for 1 pm on 27th April.

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	4+3juv	12-Jan	Belanglo State Forest	pine forest	DW
Emu	1	22-Feb	Sassafras	woodland	CP
Emu	3	15-Mar	Sassafras	field	CJC
Emu	1	25-Mar	Belanglo State Forest	woodland	CJC, CB
Emu	2	25-Mar	Sassafras	paddock	CJC, CB
Brown Quail	8	24-Mar	Booderee NP	roadside	MZ
Brown Quail	5	25-Mar	Killalea Lagoon	grassland	CJC, CB
King Quail	4	25-Mar	Killalea Lagoon	grassland	CJC, CB
Plumed Whistling-Duck	1	21-Mar	Bowral	farm dam	CB
Australasian Shoveler	20+	25-Mar	Cecil Hoskins Reserve	wetland	CJC, CB
Pink-eared Duck	1	19-Mar	Bellambi Lagoon	wetland	DW
Great Crested Grebe	50+	25-Mar	Wingecarribee Reservoir	wetland	CJC, CB
Tahiti Petrel	1	23-Feb	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Black Petrel	1	23-Feb	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Red-tailed Tropicbird	2	23-Feb	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Darter	1	10-Mar	Tramway Creek, Thirroul	wetland	RT
Darter	2-8	March	lower Macquarie Rivulet	riparian	BH
Eastern Reef Egret	2	2-Mar	Killalea Lagoon	rocky shore	CJC
White-necked Heron	1	22-Mar	Hyams Beach	waterhole	MZ
Striated Heron	1	24-Mar	Crooked River	estuary	CJC
Nankeen Night Heron	1	22-Jan	Fairy Creek	riparian	LW
Straw-necked Ibis	200+	11-Mar	Dunmore	paddock	DG
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	3-Mar	Yallah	farm dam	CJC
Whistling Kite	2	17-Mar	Lake Wollumboola	overhead	EV
Whistling Kite	1	24-Mar	Cape St. George	overhead	MZ
Brown Goshawk	1	11-Mar	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Brown Goshawk	2	25-Mar	Sutton Forest	overhead	CJC, CB
Grey Goshawk	1	24-Mar	Drawing Room Rocks	forest	CJC
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	25-Mar	Tianjara	forest	CJC, CB
Wedge-tailed Eagle	3	8-Mar	Dunmore Lakes	overhead	DG
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	16-Mar	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Australian Hobby	2	20-Mar	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Beach Stone-curlew	1	22-Mar	Orient Point	beach	MJ
Red-kneed Dotterel	2	17-Mar	Comerong Island	saltmarsh	EV
Long-tailed Jaeger	1	23-Feb	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Common Tern	4	10-Mar	Bellambi Point	rocky shore	TW
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	1	5-Mar	lower Macquarie Rivulet	riparian	BH
Bar-shouldered Dove	few	17-Mar	Windang	dune woodland	DW
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	30+	9-Mar	Dapto	overhead	BO
Long-billed Corella	10	2-Mar	Albion Park Rail	urban	BHu
Rainbow Lorikeet	30+	March	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Little Lorikeet	4	24-Mar	Booderee NP	forest	MZ
Ground Parrot	1	24-Mar	Hyams Beach	heath	MZ
Common Koel	1	9-Mar	Fairy Meadow	garden	HW
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	8-Mar	Figtree	overhead	KMc
White-throated Needletail	200+	2-Mar	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Azure Kingfisher	1	2-Mar	Windang	hind dune pond	DW
Azure Kingfisher	2	3-Mar	Bens Walk, Nowra	riparian	RM
Azure Kingfisher	1	25-Mar	Oallen Crossing	riparian	CJC, CB
Fork-tailed Swift	5	15-Mar	Nerriga	overhead	CJC
Eastern Bristlebird	1	24-Mar	Drawing Room Rocks	heath	CJC
Eastern Bristlebird	2	24-Mar	Hyams Beach	heath	MZ

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Eastern Bristlebird	3	24-Mar	Booderee NP	woodland	MZ
Bell Miner	10+	Feb	South Avondale	forest	GB
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	13-Mar	Albin Park	garden	PF
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	18-Mar	Albion Park	garden	PD
Crested Shrike-tit	2	23-Mar	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Spangled Drongo	1	23-Feb	Keiraville	garden	ME
Spangled Drongo	1	24-Feb	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Figbird	2	27-Jan	Windang	fig tree	DW
Figbird	3	22-Mar	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Dusky Woodswallow	5	3-Mar	Calderwood	golf course	CJC
Pied Butcherbird	1	26-Feb	Engadine	urban	JB
Grey Currawong	2	25-Mar	Belanglo State Forest	pine forest	CJC, CB
Little Raven	30+	25-Mar	East Kangaloon	paddock	CJC, CB
Little Raven	20+	25-Mar	Wingecarribee Reservoir	paddock	CJC, CB
Common Blackbird	1	24-Feb	Dunmore (upper Rocklow Ck.)	woodland	JB

GB - Graham Barwell; JB - John Blomstedt; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; PD - Pauline Dure; ME - Mary Eskdale; PF - Peter Fackender; DG - Darryl Goldrick; BH - Barbara Hales; BHU - Betty Hudson; MJ - Michael Jarman; BO - Bruce O'Brien; DM - Darryl McKay; PM - Peter Milburn; KMc - Kevin McGregor; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphet; CP - Chris Presland; RT - Roger Truscott; EV - Edwin Vella; HW - Horrie Ward; LW - Laurie Williams; TW - Tom Wylie; DW - David Winterbottom; MZ - Marnix Zwankhuizen.

Comment: I had several reports of "raven" flocks of 20-50 birds that are not included above. Although they were most probably Little Raven, the observers couldn't be absolutely certain. In our region, Little Raven is regular, if not resident, in the Bowral to Robertson area. Once familiar with their identification nuisances, it's not too hard to pick them out. Little and Australian Ravens occur together in the aforementioned area, so go test your skills. Emu have now been recorded breeding at Bellanglo State Forest, the first record since a flock with chicks was reported from south of Camden area in the 1830s. The Fork-tailed Swifts (amongst a flock of Needltails), were the first regional record since 1986. Although the Pied Butcherbird is slightly outside the normal reporting range, I have included it to alert those in the northern suburbs to keep an eye out. The King Quail is also the first regional record since 1986, which was also at Killalea Lagoon. The Plumed Whistling-Duck appears to be the first record from the highlands and hasn't been observed regionally since 1977. Eastern Bristlebird range appears to be expanding in the Jervis Bay area.

Channel-billed Cuckoo - an update

Alan Morris (Birding NSW Records Officer)

In the last newsletter, and at the March club meeting, mention was made of aggregating Channel-billed Cuckoos. Chris Chafer queried this behaviour through the Birding-Aus web site, and Alan provided the following reply.

Recently Chris Chafer queried how many Channel-billed Cuckoos have been seen together, quoting 12 flying/feeding together recently in the Illawarra Region and 20 feeding together in a fig tree at Milton.

In the records of the Birding NSW (previously the NSWFOC) Annual Reports, published since 1970, the highest aggregation that I have been able to find was 23 roosting together on Susan Island, a rainforest reserve in the Clarence River, on 28 October 1998. The observation was made by Greg Clancy and it would appear that this island is a regular roost site. However, I have recently received a report of 50+ flying together over Wallis Lake, near Coomba Park on 14 September 1999 heading south, seen by Maret Vesik, who lives there. On 21 October 2001 a much smaller flock of 20 was seen, also flying south.

HANZAB discusses this issue and mentions that larger flocks of up to 50 Birds have been recorded either feeding together or on migration (North 1901); McCulloch (1980), who lived at Reserve Creek, Murwillumbah NSW, reported up to 20 feeding together; Bardnard (1926) in Queensland reported up to 60 in evening, flying from feeding sites; while Coates (1985) in Papua New Guinea, reported on 60 birds in Nov, suggested to have been a pre-migratory gathering (bit late for that I would have thought!).



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 248

May 2002

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

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PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	EDITOR
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogaert 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphet 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl GOLDRICK

Wal Emery reports that the **Braidwood Camp** was a great success. Seems as though we have shaken the rain 'monkey' off our back at last (I 'betcha' this statement ultimately comes back to haunt me!!!). Some brave-hearts even ventured for a swim in the Shoalhaven River. Our host, **Nevin Ellis** spared nothing to make our stay a most memorable event --- my unreserved thanks to the Ellis family for their warm hospitality and to Wal Emery and Dave Thomson for their pre- and post-camp organizing efforts. Wal will include the official camp report in the June newsletter.

A 24-seater bus has been booked with Peevers for the **Featherdale Wildlife Park** trip on **Saturday 13 July**. Cost will be \$17/person. The rule will be: 'first in - best dressed'. The clipboard will circulate at the next two meetings for registering of names. Those not able to attend these meetings and who wish to go, please contact me on 42961316 in the evenings. **Moneys will be payable to Bronwyn Wilson by no later than 14 June. If you register a seat and then withdraw, you will be required to find your own replacement.**

Subject to the owner's approval, the **October Camp** has been put back one week to now be on **Nov 1 - Nov 8**. This will allow approximately 8 of our regular 'touring' members to join us on their return from birding in South Australia. Please amend your program dates accordingly.

I am now looking to put together a **draft Program for next year**, so I am extending an invitation to 'one and all' for suggestions of guest speakers, walks and camp-sites. Please ring, write or talk to me with your thoughts/ideas. Would you like to see a change in meeting format? New segments?---C'mon get those creative juices flowing!

CONTENTS

2...Forthcoming Events. 2...Swift Parrot & Regent Honeyeater Survey. 3...April Club Meeting: Environment Australia & Wildlife Protection Act. 3...Blackbutt Forest Reserve Outing. 4...Wirrimbirra Sanctuary Outing. 5...Year of the Outback Twitchathon. 6&7...A Letter from Kiribati. 7...From Bird Droppings to Word Jottings. 8...Tautonyms that taught me a thing or two. 9&10...Unusual Records: Mar-Apr 2002. 10...A New Illawarra Web Site.10...Cowra Woodland Bird Project.

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 13th May** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker will be **Lindsay Smith**, fellow member and president of SOSSA (Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association); he will be talking about **Oystercatchers and 'other interesting projects'**. Lindsay last addressed the club in September 2000 about albatrosses. Further information about SOSSA, formed in 1994, and its projects can be obtained from web site <http://members.ozemail.com.au/~sossa/>. The postal address for this organisation is PO Box 142, Unanderra NSW 2526.

MID-WEEK OUTING on **Wednesday 15th May** to **Mount Keira Girl Guide Camp** area. Morning walkers are requested to meet at **9 am** in the car park of Byarong Park, Mount Keira Road, the location of the Christmas 2000 get-together (*IBOC News #235*). Keep an eye out, perhaps two, for the Bassian Thrush. For further enquiries please get in touch with Joan & Tom Wylie on 4284 2051.

FIELD OUTING on **Sunday 19th May** is to **Yarrawa State Forest**, which the club last visited in August 1999 (*IBOC News #222*), when in addition to the magnificent view across north Kangaroo Valley, walkers had the joy of seeing Flame Robins among the 33 species recorded that day. Participants are to meet at **8 am** beside the main road in Robertson, in front of the hockey fields opposite the School of Arts and the Wollongong side of the traffic lights. There are public toilets at this spot. From there the group will drive directly (about 10-15 minutes) to the start of the forest walk. If time and inclination permit, **Belmore Falls** will be surveyed afterwards. As usual, bring your eats and drinks for the day. For any enquiries, particularly in regard to car-pooling, please contact **Bruce O'Brien** (phone 4262 7529), who will be the leader.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be hosted by **Bronwyn Wilson** on **Tuesday 21st May** at **7.30 pm** at 8 Wellington Drive, Balgownie (ph:4283 4744). As always, members are most welcome, particularly if they have suggestions or issues to raise.

JUNE NEWSLETTER: Deadline for contributions for the next *IBOC News* will be **Monday 27th May**. How's the inspiration going for features for the 250th edition? Maybe a drop or two (extra) of Chateau Ibc will do the trick.

Each year surveys are carried out throughout eastern Australia and the next one is on 25/26th May, but any sightings can be reported to:

Debbie Saunders

Swift Parrot Project Officer

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Threatened Species Unit, Southern Directorate

PO Box 2115 Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Ph: (02) 6298 9733 Freecall: 1800 66 57 66 Fax: (02) 6299 4281

email: debbie.saunders@npws.nsw.gov.au

With the promise of some coastal swamp mahogany to be in heavy flower there is a good chance that swifties will again visit areas such as Primbee sand hills; so keep your eyes peeled.

Vicki Cronan is an Environmental Officer with Environment Australia and was our guest speaker at our April 8th meeting. Vicki travelled from Canberra to speak to us that evening, and it was great to see the meeting room full of members.

Vicki spoke about the role of **Environment Australia** in protecting Australian wildlife and plants, and also about the legislation and enforcement used to protect threatened and endangered species from all over the world under the aegis of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (C.I.T.E.S). The legislation was established to prevent international trade from threatening species with extinction. Australia is one of more than 150 countries that are parties of CITES. Within the framework of the Wildlife Protection (Regulation of Exports & Imports) Act 1982, one of Vicki's many jobs is to issue export and import licences to zoos and scientific institutions wanting to bring threatened species into Australia. They have to show that by bringing the animal into this country, it will benefit the conservation of that species. The enforcement of the legislation is the responsibility of the Australian Customs, Federal Police, and Australian Quarantine Service. As they have limited resources to monitor the smuggling of wildlife into Australia, the illegal trade in animals is difficult to control. Vicki showed us items seized by Customs which were brought by tourists from overseas. There was a beautiful wolf skin (shot) as a souvenir, stuffed turtle, and a snake in a bottle. There were many other stuffed animals which had been purchased by people visiting overseas. Members were given the opportunity of inspecting the exhibits and experiencing the loss of another animal from the wild.

Vicki's message to us all at the meeting was that there is still a long way to go before we can feel secure that our wildlife is protected in the wild. The good news is that Customs are arresting more people for illegal smuggling, and the penalties have been increased. We appreciate Vicki's time and trouble in coming over to discuss what is a very important issue.

[Environment Australia has a comprehensive web site via <http://www.ea.gov.au/>, and the Biodiversity segment on Threatened Species & Ecological Communities makes interesting reading. – Ed.]

BLACKBUTT FOREST RESERVE

Chris BRANDIS

Wednesday 10th April was a beautiful autumn day for the nine members who met in Blackbutt Forest Reserve, near Shellharbour, for a morning stroll through this large remnant eucalypt forest. Some started at the eastern car park, but we met others up at the central car park just as the birds came to life.

With screeching Sulphur-crested Cockatoos giving acrobatic displays in the branches a number of immature Olive-backed Orioles were spotted feeding in the foliage overhead. Birds were a bit thin until an area was found with a number of small birds in a feeding party moving across the path. The highlights would have been the Rose Robin in full colour and a male Golden Whistler, both giving excellent close views on open perches. Birds were a bit scarce again until we reached the dam, where Black Swans, several ducks, grebes and Purple Swamphens with two pairs of fluffy black chicks gave a change from forest birds. It was good to see the absence of most introduced species, but surprisingly we did not see any scrubwrens, which appear to have almost disappeared from the reserve. We continued up the power-line track for morning tea in the central picnic grounds, after which we wandered off to the various parking sites with a little more birding on the way. The tally of bird species for the morning was 36.

Black Swan	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Lewin's Honeyeater	Olive-backed Oriole
Pacific Black Duck	Rainbow Lorikeet	Eastern Spinebill	Grey Butcherbird
Hardhead	Crimson Rosella	Rose Robin	Australian Magpie
Australasian Grebe	Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Yellow Robin	Pied Currawong
Australian Pelican	Variiegated Wren	Golden Whistler	Australian Raven
Purple Swamphen	Spotted Pardalote	Magpie Lark	Satin Bowerbird
Dusky Moorhen	Brown Gerygone	Grey Fantail	Welcome Swallow
Eurasian Coot	Brown Thornbill	Willie Wagtail	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Spotted Turtle-Dove	Red Wattlebird	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Silvereye



On Saturday 13th April nine of us met at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary after a misty trip. The sun shone just as we arrived and a beautiful day followed.

The Sanctuary between Bargo and Tahmoor has a list of 106 birds. These were listed by both amateur and professional birdwatchers since 1969. There is also a research project by Wollongong University being carried out on Tammar wallabies. There is a meal room (a few of the birds had a Devonshire tea there), a native plant nursery and cabin accommodation available.

We started our official birdwatching before we even left the car park. First sighted were a few Common Bronzewing. Then we were delighted to see a family of three Gang-gang Cockatoos - mum, dad and baby (as big as the parents) being fed by its mother, as a large flock of Pied Currawongs flew over.

We continued down on to the track. Noisy Miners were abundant, and beautiful Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. Grey Butcherbirds were heard and eventually seen, and all kinds of Thornbills - Brown, Yellow and Striated - whistling away up high and hard to identify, but not for our experienced birds. A little further and we were welcomed by the sight of a Rose Robin bathing in the creek, then preening itself on a branch. We saw a couple of Rose Robins in that area. This was all quite close to the starting-point. We had to double up and go through a tunnel built under the railway line. Coming out the other side, we saw Silvereyes, Red-browed Finches, Eastern Spinebills, an Eastern Yellow Robin and a Satin Bowerbird.

We continued on down the track amid beautiful scribbly gums and other rough-barked gums and all manner of typical Aussie bush. Along the way we saw a Wedge-tailed Eagle soaring on high, and also a lone Darter. Alistair was lucky enough to see a Chestnut-rumped Heathwren in a bit off the track hunting after hearing a different bird call. We had lunch near a stream with seats provided, and a few of us had a look around the area for more birds. I shared my apple core with a Grey Shrike-thrush, who waited till I was at a safe distance before coming down the tree. After lunch we straggled back to our starting-point, enjoying the bush and sighting various birds.

We had a wander around the nursery and a garden, seeing a few more common variety birds: Australian Raven and Magpie, and Magpie-lark. We were all happy to have a good look at a Tawny Frogmouth, sitting about ten feet from the ground and blending in with a rough-barked gum.

We all enjoyed a beautiful day. Thank you for the company of Tom, Joan, Brian, Barbara, Alistair, Bronwyn, Richard and Jude. The 46 bird species we sighted are listed below.

Darter	Striated Pardalote	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Wedge-tailed Eagle	White-browed Scrubwren	Fuscous Honeyeater	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Common Bronzewing	Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	Brown-headed Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
Peaceful Dove	Brown Thornbill	New Holland Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Yellow Thornbill	Eastern Spinebill	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Striated Thornbill	Rose Robin	Australian Raven
Eastern Rosella	Red Wattlebird	Eastern Yellow Robin	Satin Bowerbird
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Little Wattlebird	Eastern Whipbird	Red-browed finch
Tawny Frogmouth	Noisy Friarbird	Varied Sittella	Welcome Swallow
Laughing Kookaburra	Noisy Miner	Golden Whistler	Silvereye
White-throated Treecreeper	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush	
Spotted Pardalote	White-eared Honeyeater	Magpie-lark	



What is it? A Birds Australia activity: a bird race for everyone! The idea is for people to form into teams (minimum number per team – 2 people) and go out into outback Australia and find as many bird species as possible in the 36-hour period described below. Each team member is encouraged to find sponsorship for each species seen or heard by the team, or to find straight-out donations for the team. If you aren't interested in forming a team, then you may care to sponsor one. There are great prizes for race participants to be won. Moneys raised will help support Newhaven Station, 335 km NW of Alice Springs and which is home to at least 15 nationally threatened species of animals and plants. Regionally threatened birds include Major Mitchell's Cockatoo, Black-breasted Buzzard, Australian Bustard, Bush Stone-Curlew & Grey-crowned Babbler. This is an opportunity to draw attention to our birds and their habitat both to country and city folk.

When? Any 36-hour period commencing at 6 am on the first day and ending at 6pm on the second day between Saturday 27 July & Sunday 18 August 2002. The weekend of 27/28 July is advocated, if possible.

Where? You can start in any part of arid Australia and finish in any part of arid Australia! You'll be sent a map defining the outback boundaries.

What to do? By 21 July 2002 just register a race team by contacting the BA Sydney office (PO Box 1322, Crows Nest 1585; Tel/Fax 9436.0388; Email: rosella63@bigpond.com), and you'll be sent an Outback Twitchathon kit immediately.

Plan your trip well and remember to take care: plenty of water & food, sun block-out cream, insect repellent, hat, sensible clothing and shoes, plus maps & a compass or GPS unit. For really remote areas be sure to register in & out at the local police station or a suitable outback post. Roads - those on black soil in particular - may be impassable after rain. Check for the weather; if unsuitable, change your route or participate on another occasion during the time-frame. This twitchathon is that magic, outback experience you've been waiting for!

[Frances is the national co-ordinator for this event, while David Geering (David.Geering@npws.nsw.gov.au) is the promoter through the regional, and hopefully national, media.]



The Uncharismatic

HOWDYDOWDY

(*Howardia San Magnetis*)

The *Howdydowdy* is not a bird of the charismatic variety. It does not easily gather admirers marvelling at its feathered beauty or scintillating song. On camera its appearance is ordinary, even dull, and it gives the impression of being smaller than its actual size. There is a suggestion of a whine when it warbles. Because of this the *Howdydowdy* lends itself to easy lampooning and is eagerly set upon by impersonators, satirists and cartoonists. Unflattering comparisons can be made of the *Howdydowdy*, by birdwatchers, with the perfectly gorgeous plumage of a proud *Parakeet* or the backslapping bonhomie and belligerent bombast of *Bobwhisk*. In short, it is not the ideal bird for television.

Some birdwatchers however believe it flies a truer course, less affected by the fussy winds of public opinion and political expediency. Ironically the *Howdydowdy* would almost certainly have flown to the top of the Prime Ministerial tree but for the job for PM campaign and mathematical mishap.

The *Howdydowdy* has been savagely pecked and clawed, not only by its known predators the *Bobwhisk* and the *Keating*, but by birds of its own flock. But with a rare courage it picks itself up, with a minimum of self-pity and nary a tear, ready to continue the battle.

Source: Allan Langouant (Orin Books 1990):
Political & Business Birds of Australia

After all that time how would Allan Langouant have treated the *Howdydowdy* now, say vis-à-vis Kim Bee-eatersley or Simon Preen or Peter Costadollarbirdorso?

Sister Patricia has been associated with IBOC for many years. Early last March she wrote to Fiona Pearce, Nola and Laurie Williams' grand-daughter, from the Good Samaritan Centre, Abaokoro, North Tarawa, Kiribati (formerly the Gilbert Islands). Laurie and Nola passed on an extract from Sister Patricia's letter for the information of club members who recall her and for the interesting pen-picture of a Micronesian island community.

Well, I live on a wonderful little atoll in the Pacific called Tarawa. East of Nauru, it is the capital of the Republic of Kiribati, which is itself a series of about 33 coral atolls straddling the Equator. It's only about 3- or 400 metres wide and is divided into North and South Tarawa. I live in the North (it's considered an outer island) – the South being the actual capital – you know, seat of government kind of thing. The outer islands are rather primitive by Australian standards. For instance, if you want to go out looking all spruce and ironed-up – forget it. No irons. So you have to get used to that *crumpled* look. And you don't go looking for a washing machine, microwave, toaster or T.V. But it's one of the most delightful places I have ever lived in. There is something very special; about it. Maybe it is that the ocean is all around us, and I *love* the ocean. As a matter of fact, I am studying a book on oceanography called *Mapping the Deep*, and the info in it has had my eyes popping and my mouth open. But, most of all, I love walking with a people of another culture. They are a simple, happy, basically subsistence-living people. Oh, I know the western world has encroached on this little republic as well, bringing with it not only good things, but things that have damaged these people. However, on the outer islands, life, for the most part, is very simple. Yes, there are many problems, as in any culture – health and education being two main ones. Junk food and poor hygiene have made inroads into the health of these people who are loathe to go to a doctor. They, therefore, often leave it too late – and then they die. Education, I think, is the bottom line. There is so much to be done in the field of educating the people re health and hygiene. Not enough money is spent on this. And then the children don't rock up to school with great alacrity at the primary level! If they don't want to go to school, no-one forces them. With the onset of the 21st century and the fact that life is changing all around, it is inevitable, indeed, that there be problems.



As I said before, the answer, I think, is in education. And by that I mean a basic education. If these people are to survive in today's world, then along with their own language and culture, both vitally important, there has to go an increase in the skills that will enable them to govern their country, preserve the health of their people, and to be a part of the wider world in which they live. Although people on the outer islands are still basically subsistence living and fish, coconuts, breadfruit, pandanus and rice (only a comparatively recent addition, but now important to them) form the greater part of their food. Inevitably western foods have become a part of the scene, and consequently health is suffering dramatically, and the death rate is high – and a lot die young. Lots of junior-secondary schools are springing up on the outer islands in an effort to stem the flow of people to South Tawara as they come for schooling for their kids. South Tawara is bursting at the seams, and so pollution is increasing. Indeed, I see that at present the pollution problem (cans, plastics, batteries, etc) as being a more pressing concern than global warming. After all, just where *do* you put all this junk on an island 400 metres by about 60 kilometres (30 kilometres, if you take only South Tarawa). You bury it, and it pollutes the water table. You tip it into the sea, and it pollutes the ocean and kills the fish. And anyway, after a big tide it is all washed back again, especially from the lagoon. In one part of the island the water table has hit the salt and so to get fresh water is a very real problem. (If only some of these millions of tons of sea water could be converted into fresh water –desalinization! But, of course, the cost is prohibitive.) It is a situation that saddens me considerably.

I'm a bit incapacitated at present, having just broken my left wrist. (So this has been a one-finger job on the computer!) Yes, we *do* have computers, because we have solar power; but no Internet. However, we often have problems because of parts rusting in the salty atmosphere. Re the wrist, six weeks in plaster on the Equator is *not* a nice thought. But it is an experience I have never had before, and therefore it's another area in which I can empathize with people who have the problem of broken bones or other disabilities. Would you believe it – I tripped over a crab in a *big* knobby mobile home that happened to be travelling along the same path as I was! Well, such is life!

From BIRD DROPPINGS to WORD JOTTINGS **Mike MORPHETT**

The receipt of Sister Patricia's letter spurred me into delving into books and surfing the net and reminded me of school, where one of the set text-books was *A Pattern of Islands*, written by Sir Arthur Grimble, who spent many years in the then Gilbert Islands, becoming Resident Commissioner; coincidentally, one of his descendants was in my year.

Eighteen years after Captain Cook's landing in Botany Bay, Captain Thomas Gilbert sighted Tarawa, and the islands collectively first bore his name in the 1820s. Later that century the island group became a British protectorate. One of the island communities, the Banabans, fought hard against the British Phosphate Commission for compensation for the destruction of their original Ocean Island home (and administrative capital) in the course of the mining for phosphate deposits, a product of bird droppings. Mining ceased in 1979, the year the islands became an independent republic under the name of Kiribati (pronounced 'Kee-ree-bus'). Further damage is now reported in the form of 'bleaching' of the coral reefs through global/water warming, with some people forecasting the evacuation of some of the islands, particularly the low-lying ones on the eastern side, by about the year 2050. Coral bleaching (the loss of colour through the exodus of the living microalgae) is also becoming a major problem in the Great Barrier Reef.

Mike Wright's *English to Kiribatese On-line Dictionary* (2000) lists in excess of 50,000 words. The Kiribatese (or Gilbertese) language has an alphabet of only thirteen letters, five of which are vowels. For readers who might fancy a trip to this part of the central Pacific, I have extracted words that might be a birdwatching aid! No doubt Sister Patricia could add some more.

bird	<i>te man ni kiba</i>	peck	<i>kateba</i>	duck	<i>te take</i>
beak	<i>te wi ti man ni kiba</i>	sing	<i>anene/katangitang</i>	gull	<i>te man ni kiba ni marawa</i>
wing	<i>te bwai ni man.</i>	whistle	<i>katangibwerei</i>	heron	<i>te kaai</i>
feather	<i>te burae/riri ni man</i>	croak	<i>karara</i>	rail	<i>te kai I aon te o</i>
tail	<i>te buki</i>	nest	<i>te ngao</i>	rooster	<i>te moa mwaane</i>
claw	<i>te uki bai</i>	egg	<i>te bunnimoa</i>	swallow	<i>te onga</i>
claw	<i>te ukini waen te man ni kiba, ae kanang</i>	droppings	<i>te kitoko</i>	notebook	<i>te boki bukin koria</i>
fly (v)	<i>kiba</i>	chicken	<i>te moa</i>	pencil	<i>te bentira</i>
flap	<i>tio/kamakuri baina/roba</i>	crow	<i>te koko</i>	binoculars	<i>te kai ni kataratara/</i>
hover	<i>tio</i>	dove	<i>te taobe</i>		<i>te specs i bukin nora raroa</i>



Imagine this scenario:-

Interviewer: What is your surname, please?

Interviewee: Martin.

Interviewer: And your given name?

Interviewee: Martin.

Interviewer: No, your given name.

Interviewee: Martin.

Interviewer (with discernible frustration): No. I've already got down your SURname; I now need your GIVEN name.

Interviewee: Martin.

(silence from the interviewer, who looks heavenwards and closes eyes.)

Interviewee (innocently): My full name IS Martin Martin.

Interviewer (trying to swiftly swallow arrogance): I see – a son of imaginative parents.

The doubling up of Martin is an example of a tautonym, which from its Greek roots literally means 'identical name'. It is a device now confined to zoology as a taxonomic designation in which the italicised Latinised genus and species names are the same; for example, *Rattus rattus*, the black rat. Across the world there are 82 species of birds whose scientific names are tautonyms. Of these only eleven have been recorded in Australia and its territories, and they include only the one passerine, and that has been introduced. Below I have listed these Oz birds with their historical and linguistic origins.

Southern Cassowary	<i>Casuarius casuarius</i>	Malay native kesuari/suwari
Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>	Latin: farmyard cock. Junglefowl is the wild ancestor of all domestic breeds
Hoary-headed Grebe	<i>Poliiocephalus poliocephalus</i>	Greek: grey-headed
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	English puffin. Originally cured carcass of nestling shearwater, a delicacy until end of 18 th century
Red-footed Booby	<i>Sula sula</i>	Norwegian
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Greek authors Aristotle, Hesychius: a bird of evil omen
Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	Latin: purple
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	Latin: muddy – from habitats of non-breeding godwits
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Greek: strap-foot from metaphor of slender & pliant legs of wading bird as if cut out of thong of leather
Corn Crake	<i>Crex crex</i>	Greek authors Herodotus, Aristotle, Aristophanes: a long-legged bird. Onomatopoeic.
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Latin

Among the other 71 bird species with tautonymous taxonomic names there are two that appeal to my whimsy: the Harlequin Duck and the Greater Honeyguide. The former is *Histrionicus histrionicus* - Latin: theatrical, which sounds like my teenage daughter; and the latter is *Indicator indicator* - Latin: a guide. This bird leads mammals to bees' nests, which are broken open by the mammals for them to consume the honey whilst it feasts on the grubs, bees and wax. I recall my long-suffering driving instructor exclaiming these words out on the road with me – a double jeopardy in his mind, I guess.

Sources: (online 2002) <http://www.birdwatching.com/tips/tautonyms.html> (Thanks, Darryl)

Leslie Christidis & Walter E. Boles (1994): *The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and Its Territories*

James A. Jobling (1995): *A Dictionary of Scientific Bird Names*

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	1	16-Apr	Wilton	rural	GM
Little Penguin	1	23-Apr	Wollongong harbour	inshore	PM
Streaked Shearwater	1	23-Mar	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Red-tailed Tropicbird	1	23-Mar	off Wollongong	marine	CB
Darter	1	20-Apr	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CJC
White-necked Heron	1	16-Apr	Wangenderry	farm dam	GM
White-necked Heron	2	21-Apr	Meroo Meadow	paddock	CJC, CB
Striated Heron	1	26-Mar	Windang	mud flat	RI
Square-tailed Kite	1	7-Apr	Bomaderry	overhead	CB
Little Eagle	2	7-Apr	Killalea Lagoon	overhead	RJ
Lewin's Rail	1	23-Mar	Tramway Creek, Thirroul	wetland	JM
Pied Oystercatcher	6	21-Mar	Lake Conjola	sand flat	VC
Sooty Oystercatcher	19	30-Mar	Coledale Beach	beach	GM
Double-banded Plover	84	18-Apr	Comerong Island	sand flat	CB
Hooded Plover	2	21-Mar	Lake Conjola	sand flat	VC
Common Sandpiper	1	27-Feb	Shoalhaven R. (nr bridge)	river flat	MJ
Gull-billed Tern	2	18-Apr	Comerong Island	sand flat	CB
Grey Ternlet	1	23-Mar	off Wollongong	marine	CB
White Tern	1	23-Mar	off Wollongong	marine	CB
White-headed Pigeon	1	19-Apr	Keiraville	garden	ME
Crested Pigeon	3	8-Apr	Thirroul	urban	MM
Superb Fruit-Dove	1	9-Apr	Jamberoo Mountain	rainforest	RJ
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	3	9-Apr	Tollwong Rd (Nerriga)	woodland	CJC
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	42	18-Mar	Primbee	overhead	RI
Little Corella	78	29-Mar	Primbee	garden	RI
Common Koel	2	13-Mar	Primbee	garden	RI
Barn Owl	1	13-Mar	Primbee	garden	RI
Southern Emu-wren	15+	21-Apr	7km sth Kangaroo Hill	heath	CJC, CB
Pilotbird	2	9-Apr	Belue Pass (Nerriga)	woodland	CJC
Large-billed Scrubwren	1	11-Apr	Excelsior, Thirroul	rainforest	MM
Large-billed Scrubwren	3	20-Apr	Minnamurra Spit	forest	CB
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	1	21-Apr	7km sth Kangaroo Hill	heath	CJC, CB
Striated Fieldwren	1	21-Apr	7km sth Kangaroo Hill	heath	CJC, CB
White-throated Gerygone	1	27-Mar	Primbee	garden	RI
Crescent Honeyeater	2	21-Apr	12km sth Kangaroo Hill	forest	CJC, CB
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	4	21-Apr	7km sth Kangaroo Hill	heath	CJC, CB
Scarlet Robin	2	17-Apr	Paddys R./Hume Hwy	woodland	CJC
Scarlet Robin	2	21-Apr	Tianjara Falls	woodland	CJC, CB
Flame Robin	1	6-Apr	Budderoo Plateau	woodland	RJ
Flame Robin	1	9-Apr	Sassafras	woodland	CJC
Logrunner	2	2-Apr	Excelsior, Thirroul	rainforest	MM
Spotted Quail-thrush	2	9-Apr	Tollwong Rd (Nerriga)	woodland	CJC
Rufous Fantail	2	6-Apr	Robertson NR	rainforest	RJ
Spangled Drongo	1	12-Apr	Austinmer	garden	GM
Spangled Drongo	1	21-Apr	Primbee	dune woodland	PE
Spangled Drongo	1	21-Apr	Bellambi Point	dune woodland	PE
Dusky Woodswallow	3	9-Apr	Tollwong Rd (Nerriga)	woodland	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	17-Apr	Paddys R./Hume Hwy	woodland	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	21-Apr	3km s Tianjara Falls	woodland	CJC, CB
Grey Currawong	1	21-Apr	7km sth Kangaroo Hill	woodland	CJC, CB
Beautiful Firetail	2	21-Apr	Kangaroo Hill	woodland	CJC, CB
Beautiful Firetail	1	21-Apr	10km sth Kangaroo Hill	heath	CJC, CB
Tree Martin	4	9-Apr	Tollwong Rd (Nerriga)	woodland	CJC
Bassian Thrush	1	17-Apr	Excelsior, Thirroul	rainforest	MM

continued

Contributors:

CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; VC - Val Cooper; ME - Mary Eskdale; PE- Peter Ewin; MJ-Michael Jarman; RJ- Richard Jordan; GM - Graham Meany; PM - Peter Milburn; JM - Jill Molan; MM - Mike Morphet;

Comment: In recent times I have been visiting the Tianjara Plateau and Nerriga regions for work purposes. It has been a long time since I visited this area and I was pleasantly surprised to be reacquainted with old haunts. Quite a bit of the area was burnt in the Christmas bushfires east of Sassafras, but there is still plenty of habitat that's in tact. For those of you with a 4WD, the Tianjara fire trail, which goes between Braidwood Road and Porter Creek Dam, must be one of the most scenic in the region, with sweeping views of Jervis Bay to the east and deep gorges and mesas to the west – it's highly recommended. This area is the only place you can find Striated Fieldwren in the region (indeed it's the northern limit for the species), and we were successful. A couple of species that seem to have diminished in recent times include Flame, Hooded and Scarlet Robins and White-headed Pigeon. I would be happy to receive any records for these species. The pigeon seems to have declined again after making a big comeback during the 80s and 90s. The Superb Fruit-Dove is the 11th regional record for this species since European settlement. Don't forget to keep your eyes open for Swift Parrots in dune woodlands, especially those with flowering swamp mahogany and coastal banksia; they are expected in good numbers this autumn and winter.

Over the past few months I have been busy building a WEB site to house all the region's bird information and make it available to the global birding community. The WEB site has an introduction, map of the region, a comprehensive bibliography of the 250-odd scientific manuscripts on the region's avifauna, and of course detailed accounts of all the 417 species recorded from the region since 1839. All species have a map showing their distribution, and 350-odd species are illustrated with photographs captured by local photographers. There are also annual bird reports for 1999 and 2000, with 2001 coming soon. Some time in May I will start adding info on the best birding locations in the region. So log on and go have a look. For those who don't have an internet connection at home, don't forget that most regional libraries provide internet service, and there is an increasing number of internet cafes where you can get access for around \$5 an hour. The address is www.ezy.net.au/users/cchafer/index.htm

[Chris omitted to mention a further feature on his web site, which I found to be really helpful: *Links to other Illawarra regional data sites*. They comprise the Illawarra Remnant Bushland Database, compiled by Mark Robinson; Tony Palliser's Seabird Page; and the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association – Ed.]

This project has just got underway. We are planning to have our first bird survey at Cowra on the weekend of 18/19th May. We need some more bird surveyors, so if anyone is interested, could you get in touch with me on 9634 3883 [or Jack Baker on 4284 5740] for further details. Basically, it will mean surveying on the Saturday and Sunday mornings, with the rest of the time free to do more bird-watching! We would probably need surveyors to be at Cowra on the Friday night. We are planning to carry out the surveys again in winter, spring and summer and hope most people will be able to take part in these as well. We are also hoping we may be able to arrange some cheap accommodation and car pooling.

[Chris Brandis adds that the bird survey will help to develop a base-line for measuring the benefits of planting projects. Also, as Cowra is only about 3½ hours away and a nice spot, it would be a great weekend.]



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 249

June 2002

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
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogaert 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphet 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

DARRYL GOLDRICK

The response to bookings for the *Featherdale Wildlife Park* on Saturday 13th July bus trip has been very, very slow—only 3 starters to date. There are 24 seats to fill, so please contact/send moneys ASAP to Bronwyn Wilson, whose contact details are on the header page of the newsletter. The clipboard will again be circulated at the next meeting.

The close-off for photo orders of the 25th Anniversary Dinner will be at the next meeting --- please nominate your prints on the clipboard located at the display by the hall entranceway.

The *July Meeting* is **MEMBERS' NIGHT**: that means it is the night on which members contribute to the evening's program. You may wish to conduct a quiz, recite, sing, perform a musical interlude, fashion parade, or whatever. To assist me in putting a program for the night together, please contact me to let me know what you would like to do. The invitation is open to all members (new and present as well as young and old). Please contact me no later than July 1st. The Club Committee thought it a good idea if some members did a mini-presentation on specific bird species they had been studying or had a special interest in.

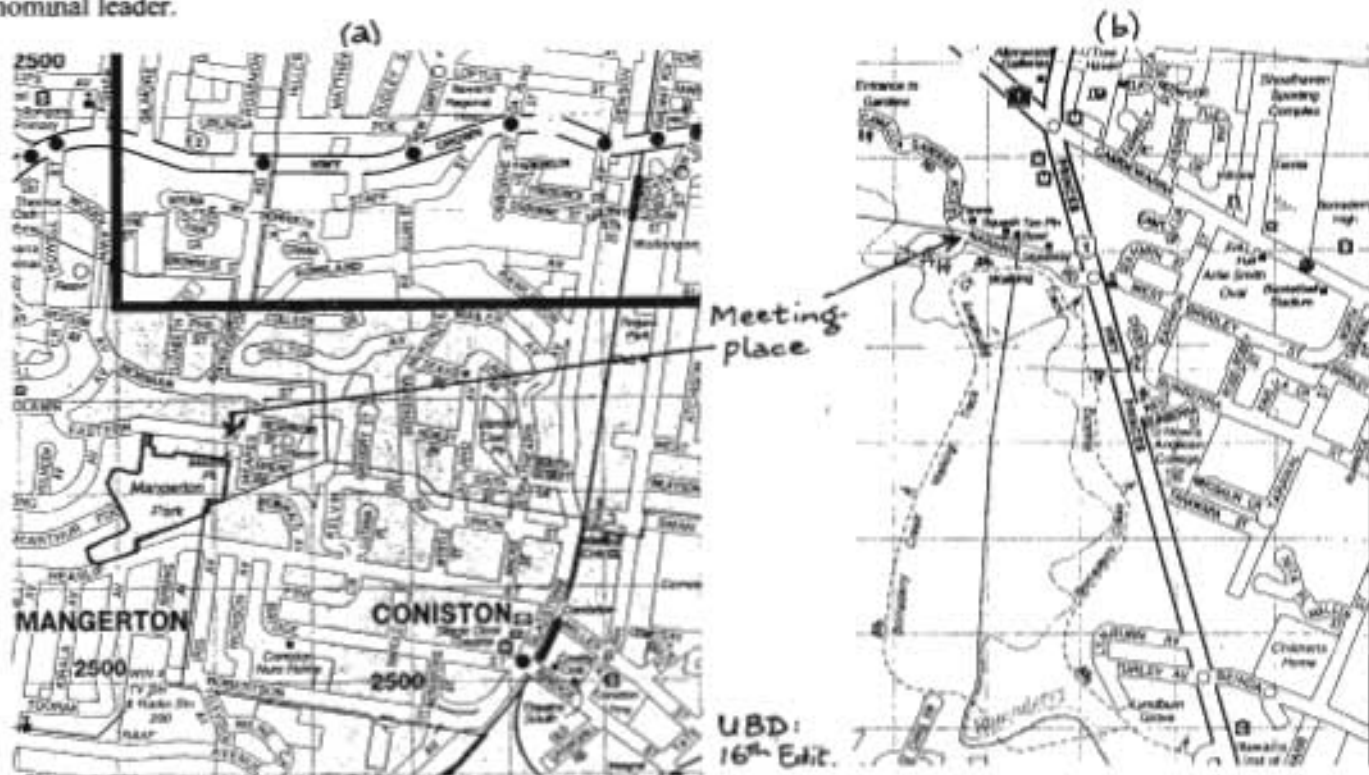
I regret to inform members that **Horrie Ward** has relinquished the 'hall opening-setting up' duties he has been undertaking for many years now. On behalf of the members I wish to thank Horrie for this outstanding effort - I cannot ever remember Horrie being AWOL on any meeting night: not a bad attendance/ performance in anyone's language - wouldn't you all agree? **This will necessitate a couple of replacements to fill Horrie's shoes — Volunteers please step forward** (otherwise we'll have to sit on the cold, hard floorboards!!)

The Lake Illawarra Authority has agreed to an extension of the Entrance Wader Survey - Chris Brandis will advise on the modified format. Any current 'surveyors' or new participants should contact Chris (4296 2837), so he can prepare a roster. I am still seeking additional volunteers for the survey of the Spring Creek wetland at Kiama .
Yours in Birding, Darryl

2...Forthcoming Events. 3...Sooty Oystercatcher Talk. 4&5...April Camp at Bendoura. 5...Banded Bird Recoveries
6...Yarrawa State Forest Outing. 7...Mt Keira Girl Guide Camp Outing. 7...2nd Atlas of Australian Birds. 8...Wonga Wetlands. 9&10...Unusual Records: Mar-May 2002. 10...Bird Scratchings.

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 10th June** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker will be **Jacky Jansen**, who will be talking about **Bird Rehabilitation back into the Wild**. She will discuss the importance of selecting the right food and habitat for raising and releasing young birds through knowledge accumulated about each species' characteristics. Other major considerations are flight and hunting behaviours. The type and extent of injuries sustained by a bird often entails the hard decision between its survival and euthanasia. Jacky has been a member of WIRES for five years, whose interest in birds evolved out of her pursuits of fishing and canoeing.

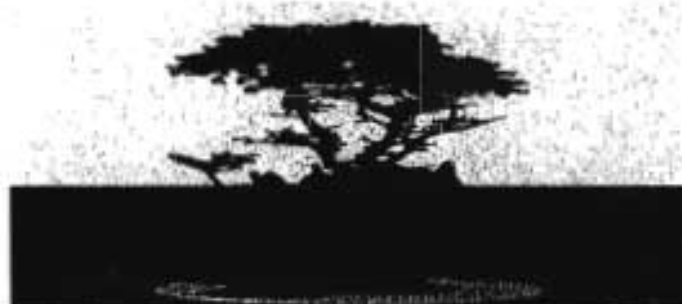
MID-WEEK OUTING on **Wednesday 12th June** to **Mangerton Park** [see map (a)]. Meet at **9 am** at Meares Park, located at the corner of Meares and Eastern Avenues, Mangerton. Access to the track is in the right hand corner beside a house with a Laughing Kookaburra and Galah in an aviary and kangaroos in an enclosure. The track divides to Heaslip Street and Arthur Parade through bush that has been undergoing a regeneration program through Friends of Mangerton Park and Wollongong City Bushcare. Subject to his work commitments, **Mike Morphett** will be the nominal leader.



FIELD OUTING on **Sunday 16th June** is to **Bomaderry Creek Bush Reserve** [see map (b)], which the club visited in April 1994 and August 1997 (*IBOC News* #171 & #204). On the former outing the White-headed Pigeon and Azure Kingfisher were recorded out of 35 species, while the latter yielded the Scarlet Robin among the 28 species noted. The Rockwarbler and Rose Robin were seen on both occasions. Meet at **8.30 am** at the trackhead about 300 metres west along Narang Road, Bomaderry, which runs off the next roundabout south of the Kangaroo Valley turn-off. The entrance gate is kept locked because of repeated vandalism in the interior parking area, where there is a picnic spot and toilets. A notice suggests that cars be left in the car park to the tennis courts on the opposite side of Narang Road. As usual, bring your cats and drinks for the day. For any enquiries, particularly in regard to car-pooling, please contact **Bruce O'Brien** (phone 4262 7529), who will be the outing leader.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be hosted by **Joan & Tom Wylie** on **Tuesday 18th June** at 7.30 pm at 4 Daphne Street, Bellambi (ph:4284 2051). As always, club members are most welcome, particularly if they have suggestions or issues to raise.

JULY NEWSLETTER - 250th EDITION of IBOC NEWS! Deadline for contributions for the next, and special, edition is **Monday 24th June**. Your editor eagerly awaits the flood....So far not a trickle.



Long-term member of IBOC, and president of SOSSA (Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association), **Lindsay Smith**, was our guest speaker for our 13th May meeting. Our topic for the evening was ... no, not the Sooty Albatross, but a friend much closer to home, the **Sooty Oystercatcher**.

Lindsay has been working with these birds for at least the past decade and had numerous facts and anecdotes concerning their behaviour and biology. Sooty Oystercatchers are listed as vulnerable on the N.S.W. and Australian threatened species lists. There are believed to be about 200 individuals in N.S.W., and a national population of about 4,000, with most located in Bass Strait. Interestingly, the Sooty Oystercatcher appears to be common in the Illawarra to the uninformed observer. This is because there seems to be a pair on every rocky headland, and can sometimes congregate in flocks of 20 in places like Coledale. In fact, there are only 16 breeding pairs on the Five Islands, with the next major breeding area being the islands off the Murramarang coast near Kioloa and Durras.

Sooty Oystercatchers are specialised feeders, feeding only in the littoral zone between the ocean and the high-tide mark. They feed on a variety of sea creatures that be obtained from the surface or in rocky crevices, such as sea urchins, chitons, cunjevoi, limpets and barnacles. The female has a longer bill than the male so that each can exploit a different feeding niche, and provide their chicks with a greater variety of foods. Unlike the Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatchers do not use their bills for probing sand to find food.

Sooty Oystercatchers are generally only successful at nesting on offshore islands. The nest is located just above the high-tide line, and can be vulnerable in times of stormy weather. Typically one or two eggs are laid, but there is invariably only one chick, because of the extremely high mortality of the second chick. Chicks are semi-precocial when they hatch; they can move around for themselves, but still require parental care for food. If danger is lurking, the chick can hide in crevices and allow the tidewater to wash over it. The Sooty Oystercatcher is a long-lived bird once it survives its infancy, the oldest recorded being 34 years. It is believed that the Sooty Oystercatcher's population is so widespread that despite low numbers, it is unlikely to have its overall numbers affected by localised pollution problems.

Of course, Lindsay had many other interesting comments about the Sooty Oystercatcher, such as their bills keep growing, like fingernails, because of the constant wear upon their use. If anyone sees a Sooty Oystercatcher, please note if it is banded. A blue band above metal on the left leg means the bird originates from the Five Islands. A yellow band above metal on the left leg means the bird originates from the Murramarang coast islands. Please let Lindsay know if you see an Oystercatcher in a distant location from its origin. There are other breeding sites further north and south, but they do become rarer in tropical and sub-tropical Australia. Lindsay showed some wonderful slides of Sooty Oystercatchers at all ages, and couldn't help including some slides of other interests, such as frogs and mammals. Thank you very much, Lindsay for a very interesting, very informative presentation.





Six hundred IBOC-friendly acres in the Braidwood district were the setting for our late April camp. The property, 'Bendoura', a wildlife refuge, owned by our hosts, **Netta & Nevin Ellis**, was bordered by the Shoalhaven River with the Great Dividing Range as a backdrop, its heavily wooded slopes forming part of the Tallaganda State Forest. Our large, level campsite was ideal, backing on to a small creek and surrounded by a variety of vegetation. A great spot to spend an hour or two birdwatching, when no organised activities were taking place.

Our first planned walk was on the Thursday afternoon, circumnavigating the camp paddock and up into a *Eucalyptus sieberi* (Silver-top Ash) forest to familiarise ourselves with the surroundings. Bird activity was very quiet till we arrived back at the creek behind the camp. A good variety of birds was found in this area, particularly honeyeaters taking advantage of the flowering *Banksia marginata*. Of special interest was the Crescent Honeyeater, a bird most of us are used to seeing in wetter fern gullies. Another surprise was the Cicadabird; the end of April seemed a bit late for it to be so far south. A pleasant day was topped off with a quiet chat around a warm campfire. It was great to see some new faces around the fire: the Langham family, hardy souls, who swam daily in what the rest of us thought were the icy waters of the Shoalhaven River.

Friday morning we set off to walk down to the river, stopping at the house to pay our respects to our hosts, who were absent from the property when we arrived. Nevin kindly supplied us with half a dozen copies of the bird list for the Braidwood district with a separate listing for 'Bendoura', which he had compiled over a number of years.

The walk to the river provided the usual selection of bush birds with nothing out of the ordinary. A few water birds were added along the river and after the mandatory morning tea, we returned to the road via the Bows and Yokes paddock. The paddock was an overnight camp for the bullock teams, as it was a day's journey from Braidwood. Whilst camped there, numerous repairs were carried out to the harness and equipment, and the area became littered with discarded bows and yokes, hence the name. The return to camp via the road produced good sightings of the Scarlet Robin, always a delightful bird to see.

Jack Frost paid us a light visit during the night, causing the doonas and sleeping-bags to be pulled a little tighter round the ears. The weather dawned bright and clear on Saturday morning, as it usually does after a frost. After the arrival of the Zealeys, we set out for Lowden Forest Park in the Tallaganda State Forest. Here we found the temperature markedly cooler, as the sun's rays struggled to find their way down through the tall trees. Two beautiful short walks were taken through lush fern gullies with a good variety of birds seen along the way. Upon our return to the picnic ground, the engineering merits of the water-wheel were discussed in great detail, and one or two practical experiments were carried out.

From Tallaganda we drove to Deua National Park, where lunch was partaken before we embarked on our walk to the Big Hole. After removing shoes and socks and paddling across the Shoalhaven River, we continued on to view the ninety-six metre deep hole, birding as we went. On the return to the cars an Owlet Nightjar was heard calling from a hollow, which was being mobbed by a variety of small birds. Once again the day was topped off with a cosy campfire, where subjects as diverse as Astrophysics and the weather were discussed.

After bidding safe journey to those leaving early on Sunday, the remainder of the group again visited the house. As a token of our appreciation, a hand-painted plate of a pair of spinebills by Hazel Emery and a copy of *A Handbook of Birds Found in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Adjacent Tablelands* were presented to Netta and Nevin.

Nevin then led us to an area where Glossy Black-Cockatoos are seen, although he did not expect to find them as it was the wrong time of the year. We did, however, find some very interesting fungi, which seemed to have a relationship with the pines that lined the drive. Our final walk was topped off with a pair of Spotted Quail-thrush, a good way to finish what was a very pleasant, relaxed camp, in a delightful setting, hosted by two friendly, genuine people.

In summary, 23 members attended the camp, including 7 children, showing the value of synchronising with the school holidays. The weather was unbelievably kind to us, considering the time of the year. 72 species of birds were seen during the camp - 62 at 'Bendoura'. Not a lot compared with some camps, but the late date meant no migratory birds. There were, however, some notable exclusions. I think it is probably the first camp in southern Australia that we have not recorded an Australian Raven. There was no Southern Boobook or Tawny Frogmouth, no pigeons or doves on 'Bendoura', and only three raptors. I'd like to finish now by thanking on behalf of IBOC our kind hosts, Netta and Nevin, and hope we can get back again at another time of the year to find some birds we missed this time.

A FEW MORE SPECIAL RECOVERIES OF BANNED BIRDS Dave THOMSON

In our Nov 2000 and Nov 2001 newsletters, we listed some records of birds banded and then recovered after long periods or far from the banding place. The March 2002 issue of the banders' magazine *Corella* contains some more records of interest. Again the expression "oldest" means longest time since original banding and "furthest" means greatest distance from the banding place for the species concerned. And again we're given a sense of the longevity and mobility of these species.

Red-tailed Tropicbird. Banded at Raine Is, Qld, and recaptured at banding place 16 years 11 months later. Oldest.

Brown Booby. Banded in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Qld, and found dead at Clohesy Rivér, Qld, 669 km away and 16 years 2 months later. Oldest.

Sooty Oystercatcher. Banded Curlew Is., Tas, and band sighted on Green Is., Tas, 28 km away and 16 years 10 months later. Oldest.

Galah. Banded at Helena Valley, WA, and found dead at banding place 27 years 2 months later. Oldest.

Australian King-Parrot. Banded near Coffs Harbour, NSW, and found dead 2 km away and 5 years 2 months later. Oldest.

Brown Thornbill. Banded at Rotamah Is Bird Observatory, Vic, in 1991 and recaptured at banding place 9 times since.

Yellow-faced Honeyeater. Banded at Minnie Water, NSW, and found dead at Tumut, NSW, 16 months later and 770 km SSW. Furthest.

Eastern Yellow Robin. Banded at Mount Annan Botanic Gardens, Campbelltown, NSW, and recaptured at banding place 7 times since.

Chowchilla. Banded at Mt. Lewis, Qld, and recaptured at banding place 10 years 11 months later. Oldest.

Black Currawong. Banded at Fern Tree, Tas, and band sighted 3 km away and 12 years 4 months later. Oldest.

Diamond Firetail. Banded near Grenfell, NSW, and found dead at Michelago, NSW, 3 years 7 months later and 238 km SSE. Furthest.

Getting up at 6 a.m. on a cold, blustery, Sunday 19th May morning to go and look at a bunch of birds, when it was so warm and cosy in bed. Was I mad? This was my first ever birdwatchers' walk and I was anxious. What with lunch, water, rain-jacket, camera, shorts (very optimistic) and the bible according to Simpson & Day, my backpack was already weighty, but I felt like chucking it all out in favour of a thick blanket and a hip-flask of Jameson. It turned out I should definitely have included the latter, as all present said they could do with a nip. A party of ten huddled together for warmth on a roadside in Robertson, and leader, Bruce O'Brien took us to the edge of Yarrawa State Forest (now part of Budderoo National Park). Fox and wild dog baiting with 1080 is being carried out there every month. The fiery banksia candles looked magnificent as the overcast early morning gave way to uninterrupted sunshine for the rest of the day. Having made the effort, we were hoping the birds would do the same.

The first rule of bird-watching I learnt is to walk slowly. As someone with a tendency to career through the bush in the hope of covering as much ground, and therefore, seeing as much as possible, this was a bit of a revelation. We ambled and shuffled along in twos and threes like grazing wallabies - I, in search of my first officially spotted bird. Already, before the walk even started, the more experienced had seen Straw-necked Ibis, Eastern Rosellas and Australian Magpies. The second eye opener was, in hindsight, logical. Just because upwards of twenty birds would be sighted over the course of the walk didn't mean that I would necessarily see them. I wonder how many before me have felt the increasing anxiety as they fail to either spot a bird themselves or locate a bird on a branch as described to them by an eager companion. The urge to lie is unbearable.

Where? Where?
I can't see any
humans...I can
hear them though



Our walk took us over a leaf-shaped promontory which afforded spectacular views of Kangaroo Valley. In essence, Bruce took us down the main stem of the leaf, and we also explored the different veins leading off it, all of which ended with us finding ourselves on the edge of the escarpment and its uninterrupted panoramas of virgin bushland and emerald-green farmland. Wind and cold meant birds were few and far between at first. By mid-morning tea-time, the "thrill-bills" had been a pair of Fuscous Honeyeaters, just posing on a bare branch, jutting out of the bush. After a welcome cuppa and a joke from Jude that was even bluer than we were with the cold, we loped back to the main avenue, and on the next section the weather was calmer. Ear-muffs and fingerless gloves started to come off, and we could finally use our ears as well as our eyes.

In addition to the one mammal, a swamp wallaby, the total bird tally came to 26, eight of which I can honestly say I saw myself; in every case thanks to such tolerant and patient company, one of whom responded to my repetitive "Where? Where?" with "You see that tree over there..." In a forest? Thanks, Martin! Oh, and the first bird I spotted - the Red Wattlebird! Hence, the title!

Australian Wood Duck
Wedge-tailed Eagle
Nankeen Kestrel
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo
Eastern Rosella
White-throated Treecreeper
Southern Emu-wren

Brown Thornbill
Yellow Thornbill
Striated Thornbill
Red Wattlebird
Little Wattlebird
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
White-eared Honeyeater

Fuscous Honeyeater
White-naped Honeyeater
New Holland Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill
Eastern Yellow Robin
Golden Whistler
Grey Shrike-thrush

Grey Fantail
Grey Butcherbird
Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong
Silveryeye

MIKE'S CAMP - 15th May 2000

Wednesday 15th May was an overcast day with very light rain falling for short periods. Three members, Doug, Jim and I met at 9 am and decided we would take a short walk (timewise) into the camp site. There was birdlife in the carpark area with the usual Laughing Kookaburra, Grey Butcherbird, Eastern Rosella and Crimson Rosella present. The walk through the camp was peaceful, except for some chopping and banging from the NPWS depot adjacent to the site near the roadway. The birds were not that active, and, during the walk down to the bridge, we saw only thornbills in the forest and rosellas, Australian Raven, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo and Rainbow Lorikeet overhead. In the forest surrounding the cleared areas we came upon the locals; in particular, the Easter Yellow Robin, Lewin's Honeyeaters and Eastern Spinebills. Jim, who had seen only glimpses of the Superb Lyrebird, had his day made when we heard one scraping in the litter and then it flew up, and we were able to view it in very good light, which captured all its beauty for a considerable time. There were no unusual sightings. In all we saw 14 different species and enjoyed the stroll through the escarpment forest, which is a peaceful experience.

The SECOND ATLAS OF AUSTRALIAN BIRDS by Dave THORNTON, Regional Organiser for BOC

From 1997 to 1981, the RAOU (now known as Birds Australia [BA]), using mainly amateurs like most of us, mapped the distribution of the birds of Australia. The result was a sizeable book containing some text and a map of distribution in Australia for each of about 650 of our birds. The book is known as the *Atlas of Australian Birds*. In August 1998, they began gathering records for a second Atlas, this aimed mainly at showing changes in the 20 years since the first Atlas. The Federal Government gave BA a grant of \$1.2M to get the scheme off the ground, conditional on the gathered information being made available to them and on their having substantial influence on some of the record-gathering methods.

The report to the Government was so timed that the records used in that report had to be closed off at the end of February this year. That meant that records arriving with BA later than then didn't become part of the report to the Government.

Preparation of the (second) Atlas Book comes next, and it's expected that it will use records arriving with BA up to about the end of May (just gone). So if you're sitting on some records, you've probably missed The Book, but not the continuing database (see below).

It is expected that, dependent on the availability of funds into the future, the Atlas database at BA will remain open for some considerable time, hopefully for ever. BA will not, however, be promoting Atlassing as much as during the last 4 years but the open database will provide a (hopefully permanent) repository for records from those interested in continuing to atlas. To relieve the burden on Regional Organisers (our Club is the RO for this area) and as part of a move to minimise the cost of keeping the system going, BA is encouraging Atlassers to deal directly with them (BA) and avoid involving the ROs. Each RO is to be involved only several times a year when he/she will be asked to check the developing distribution map for each species recorded in the RO's area.

So, though there is now less pressure on Atlassing, if you want to give it a try, ring me on 4284 2876 and I'll get you going. If you are already an Atlasser, please send your records direct to Melbourne, and ask them for additional forms etc. when you need them. And if you're sitting on some records, you just may be able to have them included in The Book, but hurry. And of course, ring me if you want to yarn about anything on Atlassing.

Our thanks to **Ian McKinlay**, who recently visited this area and passed on two brochures, which have been placed in the IBOC library. One of them is entitled 'Bird Lover's (sic: only one?) Paradise'; the other 'Environmental Management'. Further information can be obtained from Albury City Council (Tel 6023 8234 or web site www.wongawetlands.nsw.gov.au). From the internet you can enjoy a 360° panoramic view with zoom option of the wetlands from photography by Peter Merritt, who also has 24 bird photos on the same site and in the brochure.

"For me," comments Peter, "the thrill of wildlife photography is the time I get to spend interacting with nature, witnessing events and behaviours that most people rarely, if ever, see.... The biggest challenge is trying to capture on film what you see with your eyes....It takes time, a lot of patience and good photographic equipment.... You also have to learn to overcome elements like poor light, wind, heat, rain, cold, cramps, flies, mozzies, and the odd black snake visiting your hide!" The picture of Peter's preparing for a photo shoot in the floating birdhide gives some indication of the lengths a birder has to go to capture that perfect shot.

The construction of the Hume Dam in 1919 disrupted the natural flow of the Murray River and its flooding cycle. In addition to the drying out of the area, degradation was increased by the introduction of effluent and industrial waste downstream. Albury City Council developed a wastewater management and re-use system which channelled effluent and stormwater from the treatment works into the rehabilitated wetlands, a pine and hardwood forest and a lucerne farm. Last year the Council won a national award for excellence in environmental management, and the February 6th edition of *The Australian* bore the heading: 'From Pariah to Pollution Pin-up' to encapsulate this metamorphosis. Through the Murray Darling Freshwater Research Centre at Thurgoona, the Rotary Murray Darling School of Freshwater Research and the Charles Sturt University are conducting ongoing studies and learning programs.

Wonga Wetlands Interpretive Centre Site



Within the Murray River floodplain of 108 hectares the Wonga Wetlands consist of seven lagoons with a surface area of 80 hectares. They are a five minute drive from the centre of Albury along the Riverina Highway (the Howlong-Corowa Road) with public access from Waterview Road.

'Wonga' is stated to mean the black cormorant in the Wiradjuri language. Over 130 bird species have been recorded at these wetlands, including the threatened Brolga. This area, described as a "unique ecological experience" in the brochure, would appear to warrant a visit from IBOC members, be it individually or collectively.

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	9	23-Mar	Bangadilly NP	forest	KM
Plumed Whistling-Duck	12	17-May	Bomaderry Sewage Farm	wetland	BA
Musk Duck	6	11-Apr	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	GB
Darter	1	25-Apr	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	riparian	DW
Darter	1	9-Mar	Orient Point	river	GB
Swamp Harrier	1	13-Mar	Berry south	paddock	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	20-Apr	Bulli	overhead	RT
Grey Goshawk	1	29-Apr	Tom Thumb	wetland	DW
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	2-May	Darkes Forest	overhead	CJC
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	9-May	Rocklow Creek, Dunmore	overhead	JB
Little Eagle	1	24-Feb	Shellcove	overhead	GB
Little Eagle	1	9-May	Dunmore	overhead	JB
Peregrine Falcon	1	25-Apr	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	overhead	DW
Peregrine Falcon	1	13-May	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Marsh Sandpiper	5	13-Mar	Ryans Creek	mud flat	MJ
Common Sandpiper	1	13-Mar	nr Nowra Bridge	river bank	MJ
Grey Plover	1	10-Mar	Lake Conjola	sand flat	CH
Hooded Plover	2	31-Mar	Berrara	beach	KM
White-headed Pigeon	2	2-May	Helensburgh	urban	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	2	9-Apr	Nowra	urban	RM
White-headed Pigeon	2	16-May	Kangaroo Valley	urban	BH
White-headed Pigeon	6	16-May	Jamberoo	urban	DT
White-headed Pigeon	2	2-Mar	Bomaderry East	urban	KM
White-headed Pigeon	3	2-Mar	Jamberoo	urban	KM
White-headed Pigeon	1	1-Apr	Nowra	urban	KM
White-headed Pigeon	1	5-May	Kiama	rural	MM
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	28-Apr	Windang	dune woodland	DW
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	1	1-Apr	Cudmirrah	woodland	KM
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	142	14-May	upper Cataract River	overhead	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	2	24-Apr	Gwynneville	garden	DW
Powerful Owl	1	4-May	Mangerton (dead on road)	urban	DF
Powerful Owl	1	20-Mar	Bangadilly NP	forest	KM
Australian Owlet-Nightjar	1	21-Mar	Bangadilly NP	forest	KM
Azure Kingfisher	2	25-Apr	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	riparian	DW
Azure Kingfisher	1	21-Mar	Bangadilly NP	riverine	KM
Bell Miner	30+	22-Apr	Stonequarry Ck, Thirlmere	riparian	CJC
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	13-May	Primbee	dune woodland	RI
Scarlet Honeyeater	4	13-May	Primbee	dune woodland	CJC
Scarlet Robin	1	20-Mar	Bangadilly NP	forest	KM
Spotted Quail-thrush	2	2-May	Darkes Forest	woodland	CJC
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	5-Apr	Bangadilly NP	forest	KM
Crested Shrike-tit	2	22-Apr	Blue Gum Ck., Thirlmere	woodland	CJC
Spangled Drongo	1	23-Apr	Gwynneville	garden	DW
Spangled Drongo	1	28-Apr	Windang	dune woodland	DW
Spangled Drongo	1a,1j	13-May	Primbee	dune woodland	CJC
Spangled Drongo	1	21-Apr	Thirroul	urban	RM
Spangled Drongo	1	11-Apr	Alne Bank	rural	KM
Dusky Woodswallow	2	7-May	Primbee	dune woodland	CB
Grey Currawong	2	30-Apr	nr Cordeaux colliery	woodland	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	5-Apr	Bangadilly NP	forest	KM
Green Catbird	2a2j	29-Apr	Bulli	garden	RT
Bassian Thrush	1	28-Apr	Bulli	forest	RT
Bassian Thrush	1	14-Mar	Budjong	forest	KM

[over]

URS Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; GB - Graham Barwell; JB - John Blomstedt; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; DF David Fischer; BH - Brian Hales; CH - Chris Herbert; RI - Ron Imisides; MJ - Michael Jarman; RM - Richard Miller; KM - Kevin Mills; MM - Mike Morphett; DT - Dave Thomson; RT - Roger Truscott; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: As some members would be aware, a Black-necked Stork was reported from Kangaroo Valley area in recent weeks. A number of members went looking without success and conversations with local farmers indicate that the bird was probably a mis-identified White-necked Heron in flight. I have therefore omitted it from the records at this time. Highlight for this reporting period is the arrival of a dozen Plumed Whistling Duck at Bomaderry. This species has not been observed in the Shoalhaven since 1978. Other goodies include Emu, a Powerful Owl and Owllet-Nightjar from Bangadilly National Park, a relatively remote area west of Bellanglo State Forest. The 142 Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos is the largest gathering ever recorded in the Illawarra, beating the previous best of 120 at Penrose SF in 1982 and 120 at Darkes Forest in 1994.

CRACKLINGS

It is hoped that this feature will provide an opportunity for club members to make a contribution, however small, to the 250th edition of *IBOC News* and then make a regular appearance in subsequent issues. As the heading attempts to convey, this is a forum for members and other readers to submit very short pieces that aren't detailed enough to be treated as separate articles, but are more like mini fill-ins. Writers are invited to send in snippets on anything related to our avian companions on this planet, which perhaps they haven't been able to air at birdo gatherings or else they consider worth sharing with a wider audience. Some people may also want to use this avenue as a sounding-board for their observations or speculations in regard to birds. Please, no anonymous contributors! To start the ball rolling, like a dung beetle, I've included a few items that took my interest over the past month or so. – Ed.

Long John Satin: A different adult male **Satin Bowerbird** appeared at my front garden feeder on 28th April, hobbling rather than bouncing along the branches. Despite having lost his right foot, he was still very active. Whilst at least four other adult males have since paid a visit, I haven't seen him again.

Catfoodbird: Over the past eight years the **Green Catbird** has been a regular visitor at the same feeder. During the first half of this period its flying in attacking mode against the front window was not uncommon. A new behaviour recently appeared: its pecking at leftover whiskas in the cat's bowl on the front steps.

Pigeon High: Australian Pelicans have long been a familiar sight on top of the overhead lights along Windang Bridge. In recent times **Feral Pigeons** have adopted a similar roost at the intersection of the Northern Distributor and Rothery Street, Corrimal. Any advance on about 30?

Where have all the Gang-gangs gone? Apart from the months of April to July, the Gang-gang Cockatoo used to be a quite regular visitor to my home suburb of Thirroul; however, its last recorded appearance was in March 1999. Our *Handbook* treats it as moderately common, but the Unusual Records segment of past issues of *IBOC News* would suggest otherwise: the last two records are Mount Ousley in March 2001 and Port Kembla in February 1999. Any info, anybody?

Musical Antipodean Landscapes: On 21st May ABC FM Classic radio presenters played two interesting, contrasting pieces of music during the afternoon: *Cantus arcticus* by Finnish composer, Rautavaara and *Majestic Range: Part 1* by Bruce Emsley, which featured the Flinders Ranges with the natural calls of the Laughing Kookaburra and Galah. Pleasant sounds to accompany my long hours behind the wheel at work.

Paraplegic Mopoke: Late last night (29th May) Carol discovered an adult Southern Boobook below our front steps, flat on the ground with wings outspread. No visible abnormality except curled-up talon. Today our local vet, Rick Prowse quickly diagnosed a broken back. Sadly WIRES won't now be required to carry out rehab work. Carol and I will long remember its alert, penetrating eyes and magnificent markings.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

The 250th EDITION

July 2002

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
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogaert 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphett 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

DARRYL GOLDRICK

* The response for the **Featherdale Wildlife Park** excursion on **Saturday 13th July** has not been overwhelming and consequently I have had to cancel the 24-seater bus and replace it with a 13-seater. At the time of print all seats are booked. Should you be interested, however, please ring me on my home number as there is every chance there may be last minute cancellations. Details on departure times and pick-up locations are listed in the Forthcoming Events section of the newsletter.

* My phone has been deathly silent on members wishing to participate in the **Members' Night** meeting. This has necessitated my approaching a few of the 'old faithfuls' in presenting on the night. Further contributions will be received up to 9am on the morning of the meeting – so it's not too late to participate; otherwise, we'll be having a very early supper!

* I'll be circulating the clipboard for registrations of interest for the **November 1-8 Camp at Jingellie**. Members wishing to attend, but who will not be at forthcoming meetings, please ring me so that I can register your names.

* **Tom Wylie** has kindly volunteered to fill **Horrie Ward's** shoes in setting up the hall on meeting nights, but he has requested a couple of assistants, particularly for those odd occasions when he may be absent. Could interested persons please approach Tom on this matter.

* I extend a very warm welcome to five new IBOC members: **Alison Foley & David Bourne** of Fairy Meadow; **John & Robyn Cashman** of Fernhill; **Bob Ashford** of Belawongarah; and **David Stephens** of Ulladulla. Good to have you all on board.

* Whilst I am delighted with the efforts and contributions by a few new members and the trusted 'old hands', I am a little concerned at the lull we are experiencing of late. Interest in field excursions, general meetings and Members' Night appears to be at a low ebb. I hope this is simply a seasonal anomaly and not the start of a downward spiral. A lot of effort is made in preparing and organising a program just simply to achieve a mediocre response. I therefore appeal to all members for a "self, but painless, injection of enthusiasm" for the remainder of the year's program.

CONTENTS

- 2...Forthcoming IBOC Events. 3...Jackie Jansen's Native Bird Rehabilitation Talk. 4...Mangerton Park Outing.
5...Bomaderry Creek Outing. 6...Barren Grounds Courses. 7...Bird Scratchings 7...SNAG Cowra Woodland Project.
8...Tasmania's Treasures. 9...Forrest Beach Allingham. 10...Poem: Name of the Game. 10...Lake Illawarra Census.
11...The Willie Wagtail. 12...Unusual Records: May-June 2002. 12...Capertee Valley Tree Plantings



FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 8th July** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm.** It will be **Members' Night**, when individuals or small groups have the opportunity of sharing their knowledge and enjoyment of birds by way of a short talk, poetry, music, whatever. Please refer to the 'President's Column' in this newsletter and contact a committee member if you need help with your presentation; e.g. audio-visual aids.

MID-WEEK OUTING is on **Wednesday 10th July** to **Stanwell Park Recreation Park and Stanwell Avenue Reserve**, an area well studied by Jack and Mona Hyslop before they moved north. Meet at 9 am at the kiosk car park at the foot of Station Street [see UBD map extract (i)]. Joan and Tom Wylie will be the leaders.

(i)



(ii)



FIELD OUTING on **Saturday 13th July** is to **Featherdale Wildlife Park**, Kildare Road, Doonside [see UBD map extract (ii)]. Club members made a successful trip to Featherdale in May 1994, as recorded by Peg Merrett in *IBOC News* #172. There will be two pick-up points for the bus – Albion Park Rail Railway Station at 7.30 am and Fairy Meadow Community Centre car park at 8 am. Feel free to bring your own eats/drinks for the day, but there are facilities to purchase eats at the Park. President Darryl is informed there is an entry fee, but he is unsure as to the exact amount. The bus fee will now be \$20/person. We should be home by 4-5 pm. Could you please arrange to pay Bronwyn Wilson before the trip. If payment isn't received by **Monday 8th July** (meeting night) from those persons who have listed their names on the clipboard, Darryl will assume they are cancelling.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be hosted by **Norma Almond** on **Tuesday 16th July** at 7.30 pm at 2 Shoobert Crescent, Keiraville (ph:4229 8612). As always, club members are most welcome, particularly if they have suggestions or issues to raise.

AUGUST NEWSLETTER : Deadline for contributions for the next edition is **Monday 29th July.**



Our guest speaker at the June 10th Meeting was **Jackie Jansen**. Jackie has been a member of the **Wildlife Information & Rescue Service (WIRES)** for 5 years. She is an authorised native bird rehabilitator.

Jackie related the stories of her early training in wildlife observation which has led her towards her involvement in wildlife rehabilitation. Jackie grew up close to the beachfront at East Corrimal. She spent many hours fishing the beach and lagoon. The fishing gave her the opportunity to observe the local wildlife. She spoke of the changes to the East Corrimal area with the development of the Bellambi Point area by the Dept of Housing in the 1960s and the impact on the Bellambi Lagoon. The Lagoon is now being revived through the work of Bushcare Groups and the construction of an island refuge for birds and trash racks on the creek, and piped drains that flow into it, by Wollongong City Council and various government agencies. She is pleased to report that there is a pair of Black Swans on the Lagoon. She told stories of fishing and observing an Australian Raven eating her catch, and of catching and transporting injured Australian Pelicans, definitely a two-person job. As many as 1 in 5 pelicans have fishing hooks embedded in their feet. Jackie offered the observation that the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo attack on the Corrimal Hotel façade, which occurred during January, when many families are away on holidays, may have been by birds that had been feeding at garden feeders and found that their food supply was cut off. Or could it have been a critical review by the Cockatoo Architectural Assessment Panel?

Regarding her wildlife rehabilitation activities, Jackie outlined the WIRES training for its volunteers. The training program stresses the importance of understanding the natural behaviour of birds in the local area. The WIRES rescuers use the following checklist to assist them to decide whether the species that is presented for rehabilitation can be cared for to achieve a satisfactory result:-

Is it territorial or social? Is it migratory? Is it breeding or a juvenile being fed? Is it nocturnal or diurnal? How does it get its food? At what height does it feed? Does it live on the ground? Does it sit in the open or does it normally hide? Can it catch food? Can it evade predators? What treatments can it cope with?

When the WIRES rescuers decide that the bird can be helped, they then need to find members with suitable experience and suitable facilities to house it during the rehab period.

Jackie outlined that it was necessary to carefully handle the bird to assess its condition. A v-shaped breast indicates the bird is underweight and usually in a precarious condition. It normally takes two weeks to mend broken bones. Basic first aid is to restrict movement of the injury; keep the bird quiet and isolated; control the temperature; and re-hydrate every 6 hours.

Jackie described how she was able to obtain confiscated fish from the local Fisheries Inspector to keep fresh fish up to a recuperating pelican; otherwise, the cost would have been prohibitive.

When raising individual baby birds, she introduces a mirror to the enclosure so the birds know what they look like. Their food has to contain a portion of naturally occurring wild food, so that the birds know what to look for when released; and it is important to provide a habitat that simulates their wild environment. As baby birds develop, they should be exposed to wet weather and sunlight. To simulate the mother's warmth, Jackie uses a terracotta pot with a light globe inside and suspends a mop head beside it that the birds can shelter under. The water source is regularly moved around the enclosure so the birds have to search for it. When she gets nestlings in, it is sometimes quite difficult to recognise just what species they are until they start to develop their plumage.

Jackie showed a series of overhead slides of the enclosures that she uses and the way she adapts them to suit the species that she has in from time to time. Thank you, Jackie for an interesting and informative presentation.



On 12th June under a cold grey sky seven members met at Mangerton Park beside the house in Eastern Avenue with kangaroos in the yard and birds, including a Common Starling and a Laughing Kookaburra in cages, to walk through this remnant patch of forest with leader Mike Morphett. The track was steep and rough in places, looking like it had been made by kids making short cuts through the place; and the place was full of all sorts of weeds, many from the residents chucking their cuttings over the fences. There was some evidence of regeneration work having been done by locals, but the task looks massive.

Spotted Pardalotes could be heard overhead, but hardly any birds were seen until we reached McArthur Parade and spotted birds around the houses - typical, isn't it? - like New Holland Honeyeaters, a friendly female Rose Robin, and an obliging Brown Cuckoo-Dove. Overhead a Swamp Harrier flew towards the south-west. Back into the forest again and a small feeding party went through, adding Grey Fantail and Golden Whistler, as we headed up to Heaslip Street, where about 100 Silvereyes flew past - well, who was counting? We then headed back up to the start, and again a small feeding party went through, with a nice male Rose Robin and a Yellow Thornbill.

We did find an interesting small pile of snail shells with the backs opened up beside some stones, giving the hope of a Noisy Pitta; it did not eventuate, but was worth members keeping their eyes open for. The scant remains of a ring-tailed possum were also found, producing some speculation of the presence of a Powerful Owl, one of which had been found dead in Mangerton on 4th May: a roadkill still clutching a Pied Currawong. Mangerton Park, with an area of about 8 hectares, would likely be much livelier in the warmer weather and a rewarding study project for a birdo. A total of 28 species were sighted on the walk, with a further 3 recorded on reccies made by Mike Morphett (*) on 27th May and Tom & Joan Wylie (+) on 9th June.

Swamp Harrier	Brown Gerygone	Eastern Whipbird	Australian Raven
Spotted Turtledove	Yellow Thornbill	Golden Whistler	Satin Bowerbird
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Red Wattlebird *	Grey Fantail	House Sparrow
Rainbow Lorikeet	Little Wattlebird	Willie Wagtail	Red-browed Finch
Crimson Rosella	Lewin's Honeyeater	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike*	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Laughing Kookaburra	New Holland Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird	Silvereye
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Magpie	Common Myna
White-browed Scrubwren +	Rose Robin	Pied Currawong	

[Among the Work For The Dole Achievement Awards 2000, the regeneration project of Mangerton Park received a highly commended award. It was the first in Australia to involve the participation of reformed drug addicts on the methadone program. Friends of Mangerton Park meet at 10 am on the third weekend of each month (except January) at the end of McArthur Parade. Contact person: John Carver 4229.9989. It looks like help might be needed to remove the woody vine, Cat's Claw Creeper *Macfadyena unguis-cati*, an invasive weed which also grows at Mount Ousley.]

Extracts from Column 8 of *Sydney Morning Herald* 18th May 2002 ~

Emus abroad. "On exchange in France," says Catherine Berry, of Newcastle, "I spent three months in the Ardennes. I made friends with a guy from the tiny town of Atruche, meaning ostrich. Appropriately, the mayor had acquired a collection of ostriches and emus. It was strange to see emus wandering through the snow, but apparently they did just fine. From all reports the eggs made particularly good quiche."



Another intelligent bird. Nigel and Nerissa Grebert, of Castle Hill, bushwalking at Neates Glen, near Blackheath, came across a lyrebird, putting on "an amazing display" mimicking numerous bird calls. "We recognised some - rosella, kookaburra, currawong, whip bird, galah, mynah, cockatoo," Nigel says. "But one of the calls was unmistakably a computer game - with machine-guns and explosions, and intermittent crescendo blip-blip-blip sounds, presumably when bonus points were scored! Either that, or somewhere in the Blue Mountains is a Sega-bird we didn't know about."

We had a beautiful day for our walk on 16th June through Bomaderry Creek Reserve. Ten of us walked anti-clockwise round the track, whilst a latecomer proceeded in the other direction. Meeting a third of the way along, we exchanged greetings and compared notes. It is a magnificent area with huge spotted gums and tall swamp oaks. The wattle was full of buds, so the gullies would be out in golden flower in a few weeks.

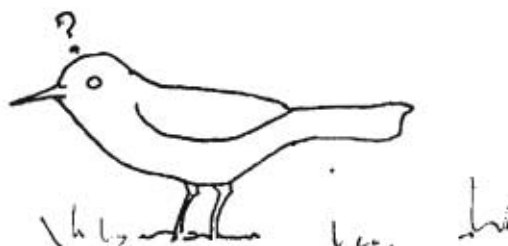
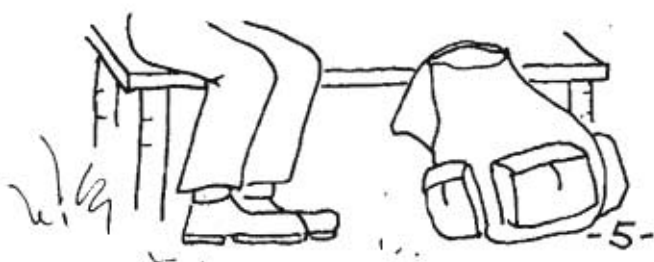
We met in the car park of the skating rink, which seems to be a very big pastime in Nowra, as at 8.30 a.m. it was full of promising young people dressed for what looked like a competition. We started our walk sighting birds in the car park and on the way to the gate: mainly common varieties, such as mudlarks, maggies, rainbows, wattlebirds and a small flock of unidentified parrots, probably Musk Lorikeets. Just inside the track we saw a good number of Honeyeaters – Fuscous, White-naped, Yellow-faced, and the beautiful Yellow-tufted.

We were all amazed at the beauty of the area. We reached a creek not far along the track, where two Crimson Rosellas were bathing, along with Rockwarblers, Eastern Spinebills, and a Yellow Robin. A Grey-Shrike-thrush came to see what was happening and decided it wasn't a bad idea and had a bath itself on the other side.

Continuing on, we had a good sighting of a Bassian Thrush which we startled out of the bush. The shrubs were a good mixture with plenty of berries. The Australian Christmas bush was very thick among the sandstone. We sighted various birds along the track. White-throated Treecreepers were heard and seen. Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and Grey Fantails were the most common. One little fantail actually flew right around a couple of us. We watched a White-browed Scrubwren and a couple of Eastern Spinebills diving in and out of the creek. Then a Rose Robin - a beautiful little male bird - was spotted flitting about in a swamp oak.

After lunch we continued on into a very spectacular area with high overhanging rocks and little caves. Beautiful moss and orchids covered the rocks and ledges, which inspired some of us to remember a poem (minus *Bellbirds*). On the way back we saw the Golden Whistler, Red-browed Finches, and Variegated Wrens. Four Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters along a branch was a pretty sight. All in all a truly beautiful place and a lovely day. The most outstanding birds for me among the 43 species recorded were the Rose Robin, Rockwarblers (one of which came out to inspect the lone walker's picnic bag on the ground), Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, and, of course, the Golden Whistler, which really takes a lot to beat.

Pacific Black Duck	Spotted Pardalote	Fuscous Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Australian Pelican	Rockwarbler	White-naped Honeyeater	Willie Wagtail
Spotted Turtledove	White-browed Scrubwren	New Holland Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
Galah	Brown Gerygone	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Magpie
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Brown Thornbill	Rose Robin	Pied Currawong
Rainbow Lorikeet	Yellow Thornbill	Eastern Yellow Robin	Australian Raven
Australian King-Parrot	Striated Thornbill	Eastern Whipbird	Satin Bowerbird
Crimson Rosella	Red Wattlebird	Golden Whistler	Red-browed Finch
Laughing Kookaburra	Lewin's Honeyeater	Rufous Whistler	Silvereve
White-throated Treecreeper	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush	Bassian Thrush
Variegated Fairy-wren	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Magpie-lark	



Bristlebirds, Ground Parrots – High in the Heath 9-11 Aug Dr Jack Baker \$150 ad (\$140 mem)

Join Jack & the staff of BG for our annual Ground Parrot census. This is one of the longest running monitoring programs in Oz and is always a fun event. Spend Fri night learning the ways of these cryptic birds & spotlighting around the Observatory. Sat will be spent in the field experiencing BG from Jack's unique perspective on the BG birds, inc Eastern Bristlebird. Sun is the day: walk the 1 km transect through the heath – your best chance to see Ground Parrots.

Star Light! Star Bright! 16-18 Aug Vince Ford

Vince has been a research astronomer at Mt Stromio Observatory for more than 36 yrs. Research projects have included interstellar magnetic fields, the structure & evolution of the Magnetic Clouds, supernova remnants, & the large-scale structure of the universe. In 1999 he received the Michael Daly Eureka Prize, Australia's top award for science communication to the public. Join Vince for a w/e of stargazing, astronomy & information of universal proportions.

Nature Writing 27-29 Sept Bill Lines

Bill has been working as a full-time writer for 14 yrs, with 5 books under his belt, inc *Taming the Great South Land: A History of Nature in Australia*. Join Bill exploring nature writing, using the wonders of BG as inspiration. A must for anyone wanting to capture the beauty of nature in Oz on paper.

Wildflowers of the Heath Sun 15 Sept & Sat 9 Nov Alan Fairley \$80 for 1day, \$150 for 2

With several books on the plants of the Sydney region & publications on bushwalking in the Sydney region under his belt, who better to spend a day with in the heathland of BG? Alan has an amazing knowledge of the flora of Oz & a gift for making this information accessible to everyone.

Wildlife Survey Techniques 11-13 Oct Anthony Overs & Brendon Neilly

Australia's fauna doesn't usually make itself easy to observe & survey. There is a huge range of specialist techniques used to find out exactly what's out there. This course will cover everything from mist-netting to harp-trapping & will discuss the ethical & scientific merits behind each of the techniques. A must for biology, ecology or environmental students, consultants, researchers & anyone interested to find out more about our amazing fauna. Student rates apply.

Song and Dance 18-20 Oct Win Filewood

Duets, mimicry, warbles, wobbles & whistles: have you ever wondered what all the noise is about! Australia's birds have some of the most magnificent calls & displays in the world, & this is your opportunity to start to understand what they are all about. Win has been involved with birds, banding & research since 1968. He has 2 books on birds to his name, & even a sub-species of the Crimson Rosella named after him. With a unique perspective on birds & a great sense of humour this w/e will be fun & informative.

A Warden's Life is Never Dull 1-3 Nov Brendon Neilly

Well, it's not all fun & games at BG, although you may not know it after this w/e. This will be an intro to all of the fun things we get to do at BABG. Great activities will include spotlighting, bush walks, story-telling, & birdwatching. A great w/e for families with a focus on bringing out the best in our budding young naturalists out there.

Slitherers and Croakers 15-17 Nov Ken Griffiths

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

Wildlife and Wild Places 6-8 Dec Brendon Neilly

Join Brendon for a w/e of bushwalks & wildlife-watching. We will visit some of the less visited locations around the reserve & the local area, looking for all manner of wildlife: frogs, lizards, snakes, birds, mammals, & even crustaceans. A fun course for those who are prepared to do a bit of work & then relax & take in the views. Great for families with children aged 10 & over.
[Further course info on 4236.0195 or barren.grounds@bigpond.com]

[Under the heading of 'A world-class sanctuary on the region's doorstep' Danielle Woolage filed a report on the Barren Grounds in the Saturday 15th June 2002 edition of the *Illawarra Mercury* (pp12 & 13), touching on the area's history, climate, fauna and flora, courses, and Brendon himself.]



Keeping Cockatoo for the Gang-gang: In response to the question of the possible less evidence of the Gang-gang in our district, **Ian McKinlay** has produced three records of this species: Norman Street, Mangerton (c20) 24/01/99; Boomerang Golf Course 19/04/01; and Bendalong North 22/12/01 & 16/03/02. Your editor was thrilled to spot three such birds feeding atop tall gums in the Excelsior #2 Colliery area, on the Austinmer side, on 4th June last. Hopefully, this won't prove to be just a flash in the gang!

Recognising the Small Birds: I have lamented over the past couple of years about the absence of small birds from the garden, states **Mary Eskdale**. However, over the past month there have been a couple of Eastern Spinebills, a Grey Fantail and a Lewin's Honeyeater to be seen regularly. To my delight during the past week, I have seen a flock of small birds pass through about midday on a daily basis. The flock consists of Yellow, Brown and Striated Thornbills, Silveryeyes, and a female Golden Whistler plus a Fantail. A similar flock used to pass through the garden every afternoon about 3 pm till 2-3 years ago, and I took them for granted. Never again! I hope that I am lucky enough to continue seeing them.

Spring has sprung at K.T.H.S: It's great that schools are encouraging students to show an interest in their environment and its nature, comments **Bronwyn Wilson**, who sent in this article from a local high school newsletter which appeared at the end of last year:

"All the hard work over the years by students and staff of the school to plant trees and beautify their surroundings is being observed at the moment. Many species of birds are rearing young in the trees close to our classrooms. These include the mud nests of Peewees (Magpie-larks), the spider web-covered nest of the Willie Wagtails [Grey Fantails?], and larger nests of the Wattlebirds and Currawongs. It is so good to see the native species instead of the Indian Mynas and Starlings that still live here. The rainforest pond has had frogs spawning, and skinks and bearded dragons are often sighted there. All this wildlife makes our school a much more pleasant and enjoyable place, and many students enjoy taking an interest in these activities."

There was an example, adds Bronwyn, of urban high-rise living, with the Willie Wagtail, Magpie-lark and the Pied Currawong all sharing the same tree. It was also reported at the last club meeting that these three species also built their nests in the same tree in the Dapto area.

Birds: Home Reference Library – (2002) Consultant Editor: Joseph M. Forshaw, Fog City Press, San Francisco: A slightly larger than pocket book with very compact information in 311 pages, with three sections covering Understanding Birds (How birds evolved; How birds are built; Feathers; How birds fly; A world of birds; and Classifying birds), Bird Behaviour (Bird song; Establishing a territory, Reproduction; Finding Food; and Migration), and Kinds of Birds (Birds of prey; Seabirds and shorebirds; Waterbirds; and Land Birds). The book concludes with a Classification Table and Glossary. A useful precursor to the voluminous texts and scientific papers the serious bird student will be delving into. It begins with a quotation from a former American ornithologist, Roger Tory Peterson: "In a world that seems so very puzzling is it any wonder birds have such appeal? Birds are, perhaps, the most eloquent expressions of reality".

The SNAG COWRA WOODLAND PROJECT

Chris BRANDIS

After a leisurely atlassing trip via the back roads, I arrived in Cowra and met up with some of the birders, all rugged up for the cold, at the caravan park just out of Cowra. The project coordinator, a university student using this for her masters, had selected enough woodland sites around Cowra for the dozen or so pairs of volunteers from Sydney, Canberra, Wollongong and Cowra to survey 3 sites on each of the mornings of Saturday and Sunday [18th & 19th May]. It was a very cold weekend, but the teams set out early to do their 2-hectare sites for 20 minutes, mainly on the properties of participating farmers of the district, before 11 am. This left Saturday afternoon free for personal birding and a visit to the surrounds of Conimbla NP, which provided sightings of several of the rarer birds, such as Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail, Brown Treecreeper and Gilbert's Whistler. That evening we had a BBQ at the caravan park, despite the chill in the air, and then did a little spotlighting for mammals; we found only a couple of half-frozen Australian Magpies. All the groups saw Superb Parrots in at least one of their sites and we picked up Black-chinned Honeyeaters on a well-treed travelling stock route.

The next survey of the 4 to be carried out will be on the 4th & 5th August, and a good weekend is almost guaranteed to any one volunteering to help. The surveys will then provide the base data for improvements in bio-diversity by Landcare and Greening Australia projects.

TASMANIAN TRIP

Laurie always says there's a lot of luck in birdwatching. Others may say it's a case of being in the right place at the right time. I guess both are true, and below are a couple of our "lucky" experiences.

We set off in February 1999 to realise a lifelong dream of mine. The destination was Tasmania, with the aim all birdwatchers have when visiting that beautiful island: to see the 12 endemic bird species along with other attractions. The first seven endemic species were fairly easy to see and were added to our life list within the first few days of our arrival. Two more "lifers" were added shortly after, but it took a lot more searching to find the other three.

We spent a day on Maria Island and, with advice from the ranger, set off to see the beautiful sandstone cliffs, where we had our morning tea while marvelling at the patterns in the stone. Then it was time for some serious birdwatching, so we made our way to the start of the Mt Maria walk, where we saw our first Strong-billed Honeyeater – that made number 10 – only two to go!

The Forty-spotted Pardalote proved much more difficult to find. After a lot of walking and searching, without success, we lay on the grass with our binoculars pointing heavenward into the tall eucalypt trees and **finally** we were rewarded with views of the Forty-spotted Pardalotes! After a late lunch we made our way back toward the Ranger's Office, turning off to wander along the reservoir track prior to catching the ferry to return to the caravan park and our van. We were casually walking along, feeling rather pleased with our day, when suddenly two little birds flew across the track and landed in a shrub beside us, where they proceeded to preen themselves, oblivious of anyone. They were at eye-level – we could have almost reached out and touched them, and, yes, they were Forty-spotted Pardalotes! What luck! We hardly dared to breathe and we watched them for ages, noting every detail. **What a day!** All told, we saw 26 species of birds on Maria Island, including eight other endemics.

Later in our trip we camped at Russell Falls for four days, doing several of the walks in the area and visiting the falls many times, always on the lookout for the elusive Scrubtit, our last endemic bird to see. On our final afternoon and our very last visit to the falls, we suddenly saw two of those beautiful little birds! We followed them as they moved through tree-ferns, trees and undergrowth, actively feeding as they went, at times too close for us to use our binoculars. We also showed the birds to several other walkers as they stopped to ask us what we were looking at, and we were there with those birds for a long time.

Toward the end of our time in Tasmania we saw another Scrubtit in the Cradle Mountain area, and this was certainly one of those lucky finds. It was a cold, wet, misty day. After two trips to Dove Lake in an attempt to do the circular walk with each time the complete area shrouded in mist and no sign of the lake or, for that matter, Cradle Mountain either, and with the rain increasing in intensity, we changed our minds and went on the much shorter Enchanted Walk beside the Visitors' Centre.

As we set off, the first bird we saw, in the bushes right beside us, was a Scrubtit. What luck was that? It was a last minute decision to do that walk and all because it was raining (pouring actually) at Dove Lake.

We were so pleased we had made the decision we did, as the walk certainly was enchanted. We followed a swiftly flowing creek through incredibly beautiful rainforest. Nature's artist had painted a brilliant picture, using every shade of green in her pallet to colour the moss and lichen, with the raindrops adding to the beauty of the scene. It was a superb conclusion to our stay in the Cradle Mountain area.

Our total bird list for our Tasmanian trip was 110 species, including the 12 endemic species and also the Swift Parrot, which was also a "lifer" for us. Another 13 bird species we added on our trip to and from Melbourne gave us a grand total of 123.

We also had one of life's mysteries occur on that trip. While camped at Mt Field National Park one night, one of my thongs disappeared from under the back of our caravan while we slept; and search as we might, we never found it!



SE of Ingham, Queensland: days around 9th August 2001. We're sitting on a fallen trunk of one of the shore she-oaks which, mingling with pandanas, line the beach upon the single sand dune. Here the dune is wide, seventy metres or so, almost flat from its low escarpment-like rise from the recent sandwall drawn up by the summer cyclones. From where we're sitting the dune slopes slowly down to a lake in the gully between this dune and an earlier one, now forest-clad, shaped when the sea-level was higher than now; created certainly any time during the last millenium when the sea-level records show a variation up to six metres from the present. The lake is not deep, though it supports a few cormorants. A Hoary-headed Grebe was seen. The lake is about 400 metres long, north to south, 50 metres wide at the widest part. It has no drain - drained through the sand. Neither are there any rivulets into it, only supplied by the run-off from dunes and a small adjacent coastal forest in the north.

At this time of the day in early morning there is abundant birdlife on, around, and above the lake. In the blue cloud-free sky most common are Black Kites. Whistling Kites visit often. One Osprey glides low over the lake for fish. Only two attempts are registered, and then it gains height and disappears. Along the dune a Black-shouldered Kite tries to find a prey. A Little Eagle makes a turn around the lake and then lands opposite the shore in a tree a few metres above the lake surface with its back to it. A while later the dark morph makes another lap around the lake and flies away over the forest canopy.

On the lake a large flock of Australian Pelicans is fishing, like well-drilled marines parading along the lake, turns, and goes back. Behind them Royal Spoonbills plod the churned water. Here and there White Ibises seek their food on the mudflats or in the water. Their cousins, the Straw-necked, on the other hand are not here but abundant in the village to the north. White-necked and White-faced Herons are seen here and there. We notice the Masked Lapwings are the intermediate with not so large facial wattles as those at the Kurrimine Beach in the north, standing in several pairs along the lake shore. Small waders, the Black-fronted Dotterels, run over the mudflats. All three egrets are present, spread around the lake. On a big bowed log opposite, a Little Black and a Pied Cormorant dry their wings and bodies, sharing the space on the log with a female Darter and two Black Ducks. A gaggle of Magpie Geese is grazing on the south shore. Black-winged Stilts forage along the shores of the mudflats.

Peewees are the character birds here around the lake as well as in the village. Here they run on the mudflats. Forest Kingfishers have taken the powerlines as a hunting look-out. A Leaden Flycatcher visited the tree above us. A Nutmeg Mannikin flock of twenty is in the grasses. To watch the passerines, though, the village is the place. By midday the lake is practically deserted of the larger bird species. Geese and Pelicans are gone. Few White Ibises still there, one or two egrets. The lake surface without a ripple.

One afternoon we diverted from routine and walked along the ocean shore far to the south. Again we saw Gull-billed Terns - breeding and non-breeding one each - and Common Terns. On the way back we walked up to the lake and saw a Jabiru lifting and circling the lake before leaving over the forest. In the latter part of the afternoon we walk around in the village, watching the many species of passerines and parrots. Everywhere on the lines there are White-breasted Woodswallows. Most common are the Peewees. Here and there Common Mynas are seen. One afternoon - unfortunately alone - I was watching a pied bird on the line over the opposite curb. It was sitting with its back towards me. Size like a Pied Butcherbird, but it was not. Then it turned around and showed the characteristic bare yellow skin behind the eyes. It flew off, and all white parts of a Myna - body and wings- were clearly seen. A melanin! We could not find it later, though we searched several afternoons.

Both Silver-crowned and Helmeted Friarbirds are often seen. Sometimes in mixed flocks of 5 - 10 birds - immatures and adults. Both species of Mannikins - Chestnut-breasted and Nutmeg - are present in flocks. Figbirds, Olive-backed Orioles, Great Bowerbirds, Spangled Drongos, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos, Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets, finches etc. One afternoon we saw an immature Red-winged Parrot eating seeds on a gravel bank. We closed in to about five metres before it moved away a short distance. Cries of "Whales in sight!", and caravan tenants flock along the shore to watch a great show of a pod of humpbacks, old and young, moving northwards through the strait, frolicking with jumps, rolling, and with spectacular tail dashes.

Forrest Beach is a good birdwatching area. So is Midge Point further south with a sizeable dam, fields, rainforest and wide shore flats at ebb. Midge Point is a reliable place to see Beach Stone-curlews on the north rocky-sandy point. Both caravan parks are of a good standard.





NAME OF THE GAME

WONG JIP

Although I wasn't seeking fame,
To be a good birdo became my aim;
So with past knowledge I'd accumulated,
I decided to find out how I rated.

When I cried out aloud, "I can see a Blue Jay!"
A tubby chap said, "It's going to be a lovely day;
Though before we continue with our hike,
I really must correct you: it's a Cuckoo-shrike."

Now though I'm not a learned bloke,
I was sure I was right when I cried out, "Mopoke!"
But a voice in the group with a bit of a scowl
Said, "You're wrong, you know: it's a Spotted Owl."

Well, we all can be wrong. Then I saw in a tree
What I knew for a fact was an old Peewee.
Another voice from the crowd came like a bark,
"You're wrong again: it's a Magpie-lark."

Undaunted, I began to glow,
Pointing skyward, I shouted, "There's a Crow!"
Again came a reply, but with a finger wavin',
"Surely you can tell an Australian Raven?"

Although frustrated, I wouldn't quit;
Look in that bush, it's gotta be a Tomtit,
But someone mumbled, "What a dill -
He can't even pick a Brown Thornbill."

Well, here I go with another try:
Any fool can tell that's a Buck White-eye.
Then a lady spoke, and though the tone was sweeter,
The message came the same: it was a Lewin's Honeyeater.

It was one of those days when you just can't win.
At this point in time I should have thrown the towel in,
But though my eyes were strained and sore, I focused even harder,
And I'm still sure there were feathers on that orange cicada.

The walk has ended; all check your card.
I thought to myself, that won't be too hard -
Surprise and joy: "Hey, I've got twenty-seven."
Then pipe-smokin' gent said, "One hundred and eleven."

Now here's my advice to birdos new,
who think they may know a thing or two:
Don't try to name every species that you see from afar,
Or you may find the group staring at a big Galah.

LAKE ILLAWARRA CENSUS

WONG JIP

The Lake Illawarra Authority has invited IBOC to continue on with the Lake entrance surveys that we have been doing for the last 3 years. To lighten the load on the volunteers, I propose to do only 4-6 a year: 2-3 in the summer and again in the winter, as the base data should be good enough to show any trends. Thanks to all of you who provided your valuable assistance and for your efforts in providing data as well as adding to the Club finances.

Some of the highlights from the 35 surveys were the high numbers of some species sighted during these surveys; such as 222 Chestnut Teal, 223 Grey Teal, 348 Little Pied Cormorants, 93 Little Black Cormorants, 231 Australian Pelicans, and 1087 Silver Gulls. The highest number of birds (and species) counted were 392 (19) in Why Juck Bay, 818 (21) west of the bridge, and 1444 (21) east of the bridge.

The entrance works did not appear to affect the bird populations, as the entrance shoals are still present for roosting and feeding areas; and from the number of Cormorants and Pelicans recorded, there seems to be plenty of fish. The situation at the site for migratory waders over the past 20 years is not so bright. These surveys have confirmed that Bar-tailed Godwits are still in decline since the summer of 1992/93 and that Double-banded Plovers have been in a slow decline from their dramatic increase in 1998. The reason for these decreases, as well as all the other waders that use to be seen regularly, is not known, but current surveys of most of the estuaries in the State by the NSW Wader Study Association may give some indication as to whether the decline is local or state wide.



A couple of months back, Editor Mike asked for contributions on the theme "If you were to be reincarnated as a bird, which bird would you be?". Despite my fondness for the Galah and the Snowy Owl (Harry Potter has a lot to answer for), I would have to be the Willie Wagtail, the Australian Willie Wagtail, naturally. The European version pales in comparison. Now, as some of you know, I am a newcomer to birdspotting, so perhaps when I become acquainted with the cute smile of the Zitting Cisticola or the beliefs of the Apostlebird, I will have a change of heart. I very much doubt it.

Firstly, the Aussie Willie Wagtail a.k.a. *Rhipidura leucophrys*, Deereeree, Illipili, and a host of other Aboriginal names depending on tribe, is so familiar. Looking at a distribution map, Willie inhabits the whole of Australia's mainland. A walk anywhere (parkland, forest, suburban, coastal) will nearly always mean an encounter with one. The other day, I saw Willie virtually in the sea at Towradgi. Their abundance is enhanced further by their inquisitiveness. Willie is easy to spot because he wants to spot you, too. He often seems to be just one step ahead of me on my walks, waiting for me to catch up before flying on a little further.

But my favourite thing about Willie is his antics. The bobbing way of flying, the crazy twists in the air just over the grass, the landing, and the insane tail-wagging. It makes me laugh every time. He's such a cheeky fellow!

In Aboriginal lore, the Willie Wagtail is very important, and different stories are told concerning him by different tribes. For the Luritja tribe of Central Australia, he came to give the people warning of a great storm that was at hand. Some believed that killing a Willie Wagtail would result in the spirit of this bird becoming angry and to the creation of storms of violence which could destroy others. In a story called 'Kalpartu the Dreamtime Snake', the Willie Wagtail man came to visit a ceremonial ground where people were having a corroboree. These people teased him and made him feel unwelcome, so the Willie Wagtail man solicited help from his cousin brothers who were Dreamtime snakes. The snakes caused a big flood and all but one of the people were killed. In another story, Deereeree, a widow with four children, used to call out through the stillness of the summer night when she was frightened, "Deereeree, wyah, wyah, deereeree" to Bibbee, who wished to marry her. Eventually, he built a rainbow for her and she accepted. When they died, Deereeree was changed into the little Willie Wagtail and Bibbee, into the Woodpecker.

But my favourite story of all was one passed on by word of mouth, so if anyone already knows the story, sorry if it's inaccurate!

Whyallee, a young Aboriginal warrior, lived in Barkindji country along the Darling River. He was a bit of a show-off, always clowning around to make others laugh. When it was time for the tribal ceremonies, the elders would dress up in their finest feathers and perform a ceremonial dance around the fire. Whyallee could never resist joining in, even though he was far too young and making a nuisance of himself. He would imitate the elders' movement, but he would exaggerate them by flapping his arms and wiggling his behind, in order to make everyone laugh. The children would say "Oooh, look at Whyallee. Isn't he naughty? He shouldn't make fun of the elders," but they would end up laughing and Whyallee was happy.

But the elders were not happy. After repeated warnings, they told the boy, "Next time you start your crazy dancing when we are performing our ceremony, we will throw you into the fire as punishment for being such an extrovert!". But when the next tribal ceremony took place, Whyallee paid no heed to their threat and flapped around with feathers he'd gathered, wiggling his behind more than ever. So, the elders caught him and picked him up and threw him in the fire.

Next morning, one of the children woke up early and went outside where the remains of the fire were still smoldering. In the middle of it, she saw a little black bird, flapping its wings and wagging a long tail. It flew away. But people say that whenever you see a Willie Wagtail, it is the spirit of Whyallee, the boy who could not help being a clown.

[Thanks, Alison; your article was the sole response to my suggestion! You get to win the "Pullet Surprise" (Pulitzer Prize) for literature – Ed.]

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	7	21-Jun	Bellanglo State Forest	woodland	CB
Brown Quail	3	16-Jun	Killalea Lagoon	grassland	CJC
Plumed Whistling-Duck	12	26-May	Bomadery Sewage Farm	wetland	GB, BA
Eastern Reef Egret	1	12-May	Little Lake	estuary	GB
Striated Heron	1	12-May	Little Lake	estuary	GB
Striated Heron	1	12-May	Pelican View Reserve	lake edge	GB
Striated Heron	1	16-May	Bellambi Lagoon	wetland	GB
Striated Heron	1	7-Jun	Berkeley	lake edge	CJC
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	12-May	Pelican View Reserve	lake edge	GB
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1	9-Jun	Hooka Point	lake edge	CJC
Whistling Kite	4	19-May	Macquarie Rivulet	lake edge	GB
Swamp Harrier	1	16-Jun	Killalea Lagoon	overhead	CJC
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	3-Jun	Byrong Ck./F6, Unanderra	riparian	CJC
Little Eagle	1	14-Jun	Picton	overhead	CJC
Red-necked Avocet	1	11-Jun	Lake Wollumboola	lake edge	CB
White-headed Pigeon	7	4-Jun	Nowra	urban	CP
Bar-shouldered Dove	3	26-May	Primbee	dune woodland	MJ
Little Corella	80+	16-Jun	Warilla	playing field	RI
Little Lorikeet	5	2-May	Primbee	woodland	GB
Little Lorikeet	few	26-May	Primbee	dune woodland	MJ
Swift Parrot	25+	7-Jun	Warrawong	overhead	CJC
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	12-May	Berry Mountain	forest	BA
Azure Kingfisher	1	26-May	Budgong Creek wetland	wetland	MJ
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	1	16-Jun	Coomaditchy Lagoon	woodland	GB
Fuscous Honeyeater	6+	13-Jun	Primbee	dune woodland	RI
Scarlet Honeyeater	2	2-May	Primbee	woodland	GB
Scarlet Honeyeater	2	26-May	Primbee	dune woodland	MJ
Rose Robin	1	May	Toolijooa	garden	CP
Crested Shrike-tit	1	17-Jun	Excelsior, Thirroul	forest	MM
Spangled Drongo	1	12-May	Pelican View Reserve	lake edge	GB
Spangled Drongo	1	16-May	Bellambi Lagoon	woodland	GB
Spangled Drongo	1	20-May	Warrawong	urban	CJC
Spangled Drongo	3	26-May	Primbee	dune woodland	MJ

Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; RI - Ron Imsides; MJ - Michael Jarman; MM - Mike Morphett; CP - Chris Presland

Comment: The Red-necked Avocet is the first record for that location. Emu continue to be recorded in Bellanglo State Forest. The Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater is the second regional record; the previous was from Primbee in 1986. The Swift Parrots are the only record from the region thus far this winter, with a large proportion of the population being located on the NSW Central Coast. The Shining Bronze-Cuckoo is an interesting late record. Although the Little Corella flock has been at Warilla for most of June, it pales with the record of over 1,000 found near Richmond!

CAPERTEE VALLEY TREE PLANTINGS

As forecast in last March edition of *IBOC News*, the weekend of August 10th & 11th has been set aside for the second batch of tree plantings in the Capertee Valley this year to enhance the habitat in that locality for the Regent Honeyeater. Volunteers are again being invited to assist with the planting of about 5000 young trees on selected farm properties in the north-west section of the valley. Funding for the project comes by way of the Natural Heritage Trust. David Geering, the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Coordinator and Planting Organiser, reports that planting should be considerably easier on account of the "lovely alluvial soil". Your newsletter editor has had a taste of the clay stuff, not literally, but near enough!

Accommodation arrangements range from camping at Glen Davis or on a local property to staying in one of the cottages available in the valley. Otherwise, a hotel or motel stay at Kandos or Rylstone can be booked independently. The Saturday evening meal for about \$25 at the local community hall is well worth attending, giving planters the opportunity to yarn and ale. To register, please contact David: Tel 1800.621.056 or email david.geering@npws.nsw.gov.au.





I.B.O.C. NEWS

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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
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogaert 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphett 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

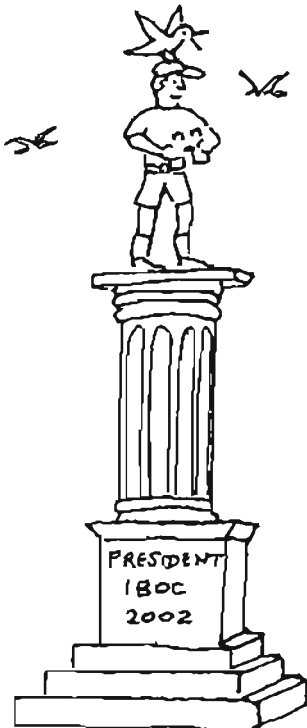
President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl Goldrick



Birds Australia Barren Grounds are re-establishing a management committee and the Club has received an invitation for possible nomination either as a formal member or alternatively non-voting membership. I will not be able to nominate due to time constraints, but any club member who is interested should contact **Brendon Neilly** on 4236 0195.

I am seeking further expressions of interest from members who wish to participate in the **Spring Creek Wetland** survey. **Roger Bogaert** is the only southern member to date who has 'put his hand up' and he would like some company.

The clipboard went around the room at the last meeting for registration of names for the **November Jingellic Camp** (November 1-8). Those interested and who were not at the meeting please contact me so your name can be included on the list.

With the onset of warm weather conditions and the prevailing drought conditions in western NSW keep a look-out for the 'unusual' birds that could possibly turn up on the coastal zone. Should you be uncertain as to a possible sighting, take a note of as much detail as is possible and contact our Records Officer, **Chris Chafer**.

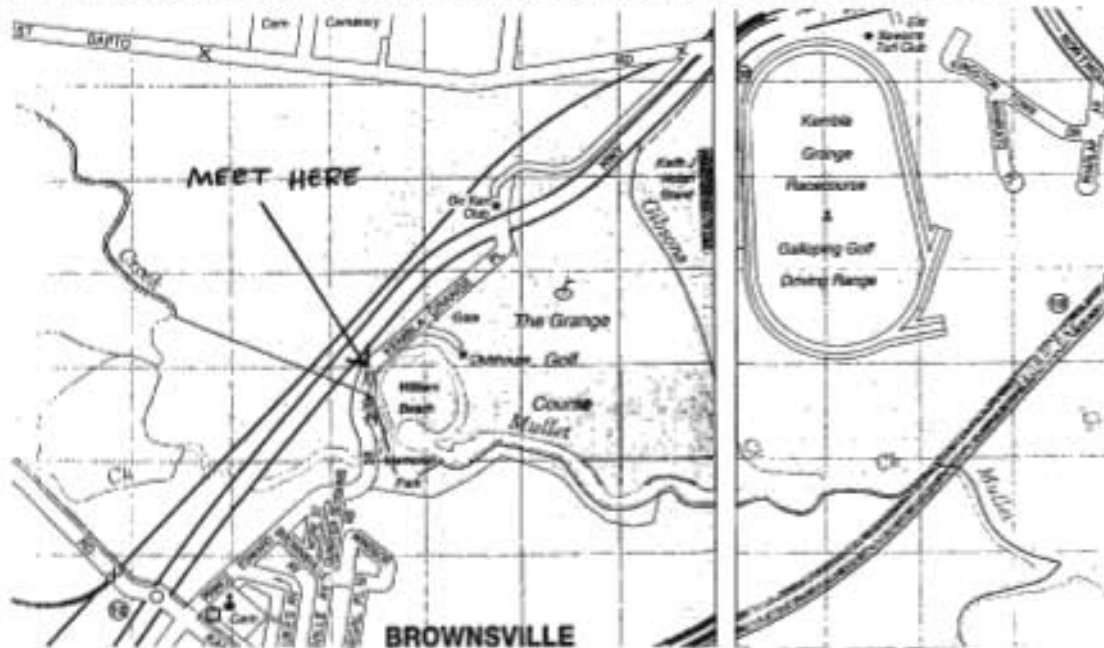
CONTENTS

2...Forthcoming IBOC Events. 2...Reading Feathers 3...Featherdale Wildlife Park Excursion 4...Stanwell Park Recreation Area Walk. 5&6...Unusual Records: June-July 2002. 4... Bringing Birds Back

FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 12th August** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker will be **Mike Cannon**, a local veterinarian. Amongst other topics he will be talking on the **treatment of injured birds and other fauna** and the imminent changes to legislation on the treatment of native and exotic animals.

MID-WEEK WALK is on **Wednesday 14th August** to **Mullet Creek, Kembla Grange/Brownsville**. Meet the leaders, **Joan & Tom Wylie** at **8.30 am** along the former Princes Highway route: about midway between Prince Edward Drive and Kembla Grange Place (see UBD map extract).



FIELD OUTING is on **Sunday 18th August** to **Coppercup Point – Lake Wollumboola** area. We will be joining up with our sister group from the Shoalhaven, and **Peter Hales** will be leading this walk. The designated meeting point at **8.30 am** is at the Archgate Nursery on the corner of Coonemia Road and Culburra Road south-east of Nowra. IBOC members should allow at least **1½ hours** travelling time. Take the Greenwell Point turn-off left on the Princes Highway at Nowra, then the Culburra turn-off right at the Pyree Literary Institute building and proceed to the Callala Bay turn-off right (Coonemia Road).

COMMITTEE MEETING will be on **Tuesday 20th August** at **7.30 pm** at the home of **Darryl Goldrick** at **149 Reddall Parade, Lake Illawarra** (Tel 4296 1316). For safety, park on the lake side of the road.

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER: Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* will be **Monday 26th August**.

Reading feathers

SUN-HERALD 24/3/02



TRACKING migrating birds over thousands of kilometres was a tricky exercise involving leg bands and luck.

Tired of working under such hit-and-miss methods, researchers in the US are now analysing feathers.

In the journal *Science*, they describe how they're looking at the ratio of hydrogen to deuterium, which is another form of hydrogen.

These naturally occurring chemicals fall in rain, the ratios creating a distinctive worldwide pattern. They get into the birds' food, then into their feathers, making it easy to tell where a bird is from.

Following flocks, and sampling feathers along the way, means the scientists can sort out not only exactly where the birds go, but also where they might be having problems with food, predators or pollution.

The morning of 13th July was crisp, but the skies gave every indication that we were in for a magnificent sunny day for our trip to Sydney. Thirteen members in a 12½ seater bus made for a very cosy trip, but the constant chatter and banter of the passengers preoccupied all when unexpectedly we were pulling into the carpark at Doonside.

It was agreed that everyone should stroll at their own leisure and the group would reassemble in the cafeteria gardens for lunch at midday – although Penny and Martin headed straight for a bacon burger and coffee: a belated breakfast they missed before leaving home.

Though space prevents listing all the interesting birds, the highlights for me included the fabulous sections which housed the owls and raptors. In the owl section there were Barn, Rufous, Powerful, Sooty, Lesser Sooty, Masked (Tasmanian form), Grass and Barking. Alistair and I had only momentarily turned our back on an 'incident' when the Rufous had attacked and killed a Grass Owl – we witnessed the wardens retrieving the hapless victim and, to me, the menacing look of the Rufous following this incident will always remain vivid in my mind – the eyes were ablaze! This owl looked far more menacing than did the Powerful.



The raptor section was equally as impressive, though one wonders at the relatively small enclosures these magnificent birds are confined to. The Whistling Kites were whistling and the Brahminy, Osprey and Black-breasted Buzzard were spectacular while the Wedge-tailed was busy putting finishing touches to its nest.

The Refuge has numerous Bush Stone-curlews (Thick-knees) and a wide variety of parrots including the magnificent Electus, Red-tailed Cockatoo, Swift, Regent, Princess and the 'Cloncurry' form of Ringneck. The finches were well represented by those from remote sections of Australian, i.e. Red-eared, Star, Painted, Plum-headed, Blue-faced and Gouldian. The hissing call of the Great Bowerbird was intriguing and the displaying Spotted (including the lilac-pink crest on the nape) was eyecatching.

Though it seemed we had only just arrived, there came the call 'back on the bus' for the homeward journey. The four or so hours seemed to fly and all agreed that one needs a full day to take it all in. This is a remarkable oasis in the midst of suburbia, and I encourage all members to plan a trip to Featherdale in the near future. A most enjoyable outing was had by all, and, for some, many lasting memories of birds (and animals) they may not be fortunate enough to see in the wild.

Our Wednesday outing on 10th July had a rather chilly start, but was a lovely clear day. There were 13 birdos. First sightings were a couple of Laughing Kookaburras sunning themselves. Little Wattlebirds and Lewin's Honeyeaters were in the same trees. The distinct calls of the Wattlebirds were heard most of the day, and the little Grey Fantails were quite prominent. Once out of the sun it was very cold. We next came across quite a feeding party of Silvereyes, Brown Thornbills, Spotted Pardalotes and the Grey Fantail. Australian King-Parrots, both male and female, were in the same area with their beautiful bright colouring, which somehow blends in so well.

We continued our wandering. The lagoons didn't have much to offer – only Australian Wood Ducks, Little Black Cormorants, and a couple of Masked Lapwings. The sea was rough with the wind, so no ocean birds were sighted, only the ever-present Silver Gulls. Each track we took seemed to end in a backyard. At one stage we went down a garden path right into someone's yard. A rather startled man offered a "coffee lolly" as payment for entry and exit to his property.

At lunch we were joined by a cattle dog pup which chased a Willie Wagtail and wasn't too popular. A Superb Fairy-wren showed himself off, hopping along a fence, and a Jenny Wren was dancing around minus a tail. It was hard to figure out what it was at first. After lunch we went up some steps and managed to lose the pup to a jogger. We saw much the same birds as before, but were happy with a good sighting of two Green Catbirds eating berries. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Rainbow Lorikeets were present here as well. We all ended up sunning ourselves on a grassy patch and agreeing it was a tough life. Just as we added up our list of birds sighted, we saw nine Australian Pelicans very high up, soaring on the thermals. This brought the number of sightings to 36. No, we didn't add on nine. Another enjoyable day.

Australian Wood Duck	Crested Pigeon	Red Wattlebird	Willie Wagtail
Pacific Black Duck	Galah	Little Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Pied Cormorant	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Noisy Miner	Pied Currawong
Little Black Cormorant	Rainbow Lorikeet	Lewin's Honeyeater	Green Catbird
Australian Pelican	Australian King-Parrot	Eastern Spinebill	House Sparrow
White-faced Heron	Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Whipbird	Welcome Swallow
Nankeen Kestrel	Superb Fairy-wren	Golden Whistler	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Masked Lapwing	Spotted Pardalote	Magpie-lark	Silvereye
Silver Gull	Brown Thornbill	Grey Fantail	Common Myna



BRINGING BIRDS BACK

Greening Australia

'A Glovebox Guide for Bird Identification and Habitat Restoration in ACT & SE NSW' was published by Greening Australia in November 2001 and may still be available free of charge by contacting that organisation: PO Box 538 Jamison Centre ACT 2614 or Tel 6253 3035. In the foreword Toby Jones writes: "In our hearts and heads we know that to care for birds is to care for our landscapes and for ourselves at the same time. Perhaps that's why so many landholders today are farming under the influence of birds....One reason why we must bring our native birds back is simple: there are over 86,000 species of insect in Australia, and insectivorous birds provide free, safe and highly effective pest-control services." Through the Birdwatch project regional surveys recorded 103 bird species using the revegetated sites. The 20 most common ones (measured by percentage) were as follows:

74 Superb Fairy-wren	31 Brown Thornbill	21 Grey Shrike-thrush	13 Yellow-faced Honeyeater
48 Yellow-rumped Thornbill	27 Yellow Thornbill	19 Eastern Rosella	13 Striated Thornbill
41 Crimson Rosella	24 Rufous Whistler	17 Striated Pardalote	12 Buff-rumped Thornbill
39 Grey Fantail	24 Willie Wagtail	14 Silvereye	11 Common Bronzewing
34 Australian Magpie	22 White-plumed Honeyeater	13 White-eared Honeyeater	11 White-browed Scrubwren

Ten points are given for designing the landscape to help bring birds back, with the encouraging message that "some of the region's model bird havens started out as barren and degraded landscapes".

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Freckled Duck	5	17-Jul	Saltwater Swamp (Crookhaven R.)	wetland	SE
Hardhead	5,000+	1-Jun	Swan Lake	lake	KM
Hardhead	14	14-Jul	Goodmans Ford	riverine	BA
Little Penguin	few	23-Jun	off Wollongong Harbour	inshore	PM
Antarctic Prion	3	23-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Little Shearwater	1	23-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Buller's Albatross	1	23-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
"Pacific Albatross"	1	23-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Eastern Reef Egret	1	1-Jun	Monument Beach	beach	KM
Eastern Reef Egret	1	8-Jun	Cudmirrah	beach	KM
Black Bittern	1	10-Jun	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Pacific Baza	1	21-Jul	Balgownie	urban	BN
Brown Goshawk	1	14-Jul	Tall Timbers, Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	BA
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	23-Jul	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
Little Eagle	1	25-Jun	Joadja	woodland	CJC
Brown Falcon	1	23-Jul	Picton	powerline	CJC
Australian Hobby	1	29-Jun	Bellambi Lagoon	overhead	MP
Peregrine Falcon	1	3-Jul	Wingecarribee Reservoir	overhead	BA
Peregrine Falcon	1	21-Jul	Figtree	overhead	CJC
Peregrine Falcon	1	22-Jul	Windang Bridge	overhead	BA
Peregrine Falcon	1	1-Jun	Shellharbour	overhead	PF
Peregrine Falcon	1	7-Jul	Oak Flats	overhead	PF
Peregrine Falcon	1	17-Jul	Albion Park Rail	TV antenna	PF
Ruddy Turnstone	4	2-Jul	Nth Port Kembla Beach	rocky shore	CJC
Sooty Oystercatcher	6	1-Jun	Monument Beach	beach	KM
Double-banded Plover	30	18-Jul	Windang	sandflats	JC
Pacific Gull	1imm	23-Jun	Flinders Island	inshore	PM
Caspian Tern	1	20-Jun	Puckey's Res. N. Wollongong	wetland	KM
White-fronted Tern	3	30-Jun	Kiama	inshore	CJC
White-fronted Tern	4	23-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
White-headed Pigeon	4	18-May	Spring Ck., Kiama	rural	KM
Crested Pigeon	2	23-Jul	Goodmans Ford/Barrallier	woodland	CJC
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	23-Jun	Curramore	garden	KM
Topknot Pigeon	5	7-Jul	Bulli	urban	RT
Topknot Pigeon	5	7-Jul	Bulli	forest/urban	RT
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	6	30-May	West Nowra	overhead	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	7	13-Jul	Goodmans Ford	overhead	BA
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	4	16-Jul	Goodmans Ford	overhead	BA
Yellow-tailed Blk-Cockatoo	130+	14-Jul	Barren Grounds NR	overhead	MJ
Little Corella	80+	27-Jun	Windang	lake edge	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	50+	14-Jul	Tall Timbers, Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	BA
Musk Lorikeet	50+	22-Jul	Wollongong Uni	parkland	RT
Little Lorikeet	20+	14-Jul	Tall Timbers, Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	BA
Swift Parrot	4+	6-Jul	Wollongong Uni	parkland	GB
Swift Parrot	20+	21-Jul	Wollongong Uni	parkland	MJ
Red-rumped Parrot	3	23-Jul	Mowbray Park	rural	CJC
Budgerigar	200+	May	Goodmans Ford	woodland	SG
Budgerigar	6+	11-Jul	Goodmans Ford	woodland	CB, SG
Barn Owl	1	29-Jun	Hewitts Creek, Thirroul	urban	DM, JM
Barn Owl	1	26-Jun	Wingecarribee Reservoir	dead on road	BA
Azure Kingfisher	1	17-Jul	Goodmans Ford	riparian	BA
Yellow-throated Scrubwren	14+	21-Jul	Farmbough Heights Fire Trail	forest	CJC

continued

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	7-Jul	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Speckled Warbler	2	11-Jul	Goodmans Ford	woodland	CB, SG
Fuscous Honeyeater	few	14-Jul	Tall Timbers, Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	BA
Crescent Honeyeater	many	Jun	Barren Grounds NR	forest	BN2
Scarlet Honeyeater	8+	14-Jul	Tall Timbers, Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	BA
Rose Robin	1	20-Jun	Curramore	garden	KM
Hooded Robin	1	25-Jun	Joadja	woodland	CJC
Hooded Robin	6	11-Jul	Goodmans Ford	woodland	CB, SG
Varied Sittella	2	14-Jul	Tall Timbers, Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	BA
Restless Flycatcher	2	13-Jul	Goodmans Ford	woodland	BA
Figbird	4	16-Jun	Coniston	urban	CJC
Green Catbird	2	12-Jul	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Zebra Finch	20+	23-Jul	Goodmans Ford/Barrallier	woodland	CJC
Diamond Firetail	20+	23-Jul	Barrallier	woodland	CJC
Beautiful Firetail	2	14-Jul	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	MJ
Bassian Thrush	7	21-Jul	Mt.Kembla Ring Track	forest	CJC
Bassian Thrush	1	22-Jul	Bulli	garden	RT
Bassian Thrush	2	15-Jun	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Common Blackbird	1	11-Jul	Kangaroo Valley	urban	BA
Common Blackbird	1	8-Jul	Berry	urban	BA
Common Blackbird	1	1-Jun	Oak Flats	urban	PF

Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; GB - Graham Barwell; CB - Chris Brandis; CJC - Chris Chafer; SE - Sheila Emery; JC - Jean Clarke; PF - Peter Fackender; SG - Shane Green; MJ - Michael Jarman; DM - Daryll McKay; PM - Peter Milburn; KM - Kevin Mills; JM - Jill Molan; MM - Mike Morphet; BN - Bett Neal; BN2 - Brendon Neilly; MP - Martin Potter; CP - Chris Presland; RT - Roger Truscott

Comment: This is usually the poorest time of the year for contributions, but not this year. The list above is an excellent spread of records from almost the entire area of our interest, and a number of new members have contributed, which is great to see. It was great to see many birds rushing to Goodmans Ford to find the Budgerigars, only the 3rd regional record, the previous two being in 1895 and 1972. Some good records of Hooded Robin (an endangered species), from the Ford and at Joadja, and it's a long time since Speckled Warbler appeared on these pages. Another highlight is the Freckled Duck on Saltwater Swamp and later on the nearby Archgate Dam. The last time Freckled Duck were in the Illawarra was January 1999 at Killalea. Swift Parrots turned up at Wollongong Uni and were observed by numerous people. Another first was the Pacific Albatross. This "new" species is still awaiting taxonomic recognition - formerly a subspecies of Buller's Albatross, and I have included it herein for your interest. Another goodie was the Pacific Baza. This species doesn't usually turn up till late spring; however, there have been several observations in Sydney suburbs this winter, so it's not completely out of character. If you're looking for a Black Bittern, the entrance to Swan Lake seems to be a regular haunt of this crepuscular species, and I have observed in years gone by in the Crookhaven River estuary. Swan Lake is also good at the moment for Hardhead. With the recent records of western species in the region, and assuming the drought continues to grow, we can expect more western species popping into the region as winter wanes and spring arrives. So this year it will pay to keep your eyes open and expect the unexpected.

Don't forget, email is the best method to send me records. If you're phoning, it's best to wait till after 8pm. You can also receive regular updates of the latest unusual observation via email. Newer members interested in learning more about the region's birds can visit my web site at www.ezy.net.au/users/cchafer/index.html The book, *Birds of the Illawarra, Shoalhaven & Southern Tablelands* is now out of print. I will be undertaking a review of the book in late 2003, so until then the web site is the best way to keep up to date.





I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 252

September 2002

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
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogart 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphet 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Barbara Hales, Sub-Editor's email: bhales@bigpond.com & phone: 4257 4431

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl GOLDRICK

Thanks to everyone who participated in the last outing to **Coppercup Point** – the 16km hike would have undoubtedly produced some stiff joints the next day! Thank you to **Peter Hale** from the Shoalhaven Group for an excellent outing and his amusing commentaries.

I encourage as many members as possible to attend the next meeting as we have a special guest in **Trevor Queded**, who will show and tell on his recent Sri Lanka trip.

Most club members would be unaware of the dramas of bird clubs' attempts to renew **public liability insurance cover** – some clubs have even had to suspend outings and field trips as a consequence of not being offered re-insurance. Fortunately IBOC is now covered for the next 12 months – so it's business as usual.

I am pleased that the **mid-week outings** are proving to be popular again. A combination of factors I believe: new locations and fine sunny winter days.

This is a final call for registration of names for the **Jingellic Camp** (November 1–8). Please contact me on my home number so that the list can be finalised.

We will resume the **film nights** on a trial basis. The first film evening will be held on **Thursday 19th September** at the hall of the **Uniting Church, Fisher Street, West Wollongong** commencing at **7:30pm**. Please bring a supper plate – tea and coffee facilities are provided. This venue has been arranged by courtesy of **Fae & Kevin McGregor**.

CONTENTS

2...Forthcoming IBOC Events. 3&4...Mullet Creek Walk. 4...Mike Cannon August Talk. 5...Pittas & Platypus: Eungella National Park. 6&7...Lake Wollumboola-Coppercup Point Outing. 8...Unusual Records: June-August 2002

FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 9th September** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker will be **Trevor Queded**, who will be talking about his recent trip to Sri Lanka.

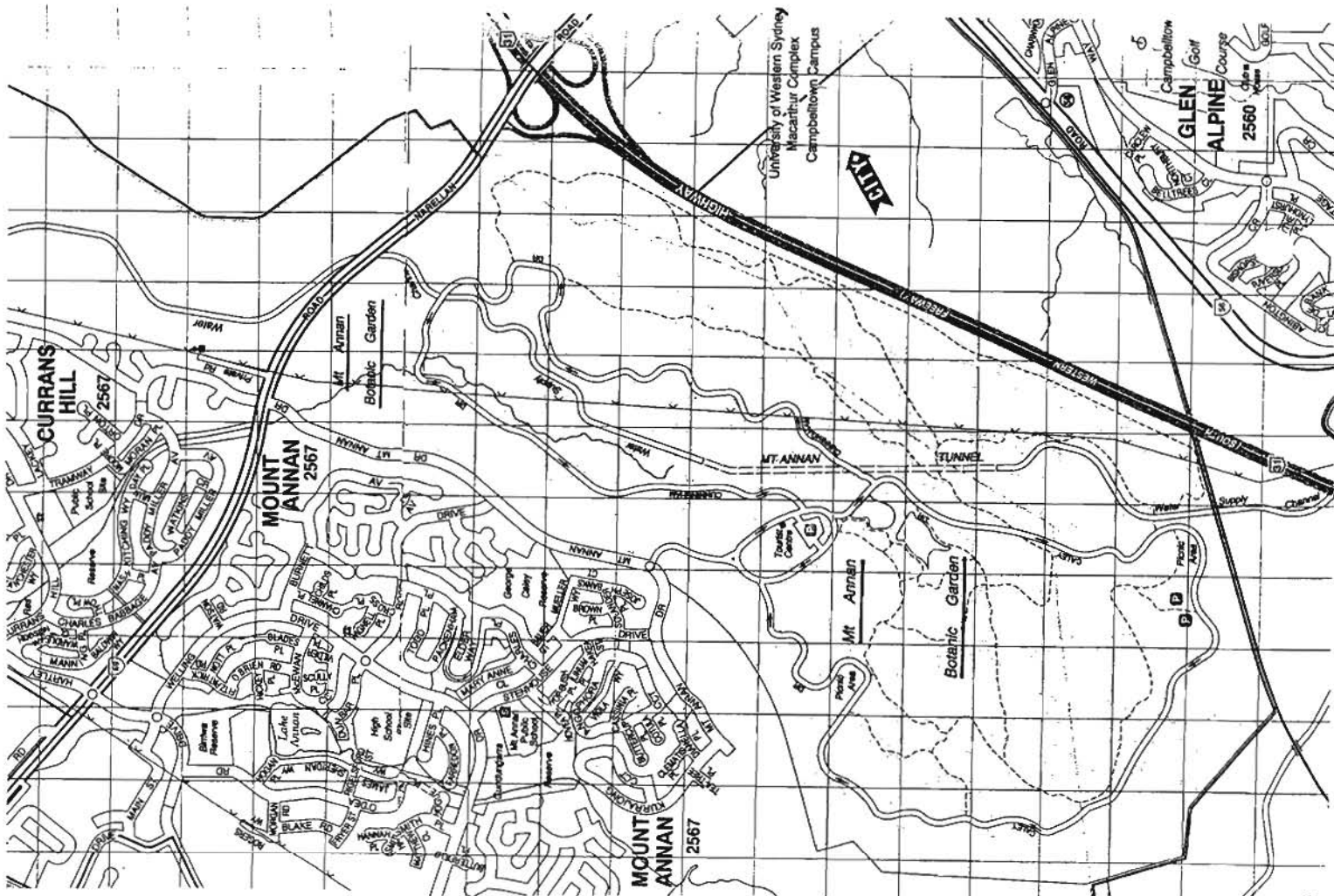
MID-WEEK WALK is on **Wednesday 11th September** to **Bulli Grevillea Park**. Meet **Joan & Tom Wylie** at **8.30 am** at the park gates. Turn west off the Princes Highway at Slacky Flat between the bowling club and J.P. Orvad Grove.

FIELD OUTING is on **Saturday 14th September** to **Mount Annan Botanic Garden** (see the UBD map extract for the layout). Meet **Alan Leishman** at **8 am** at the main gate and take enough victuals and protective gear for the day. The venue is clearly signposted along the Narellan Road out of Campbelltown.

FILM NIGHT is on **Thursday 19th September** at **7.30 pm** at the Uniting Church Hall, Fisher Street, West Wollongong.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be on **Tuesday 17th September** at **7.30 pm** at the home of **Joan & Tom Wylie** at 4 Daphne Street, Bellambi (Tel 4284 2051). If any member wishes to attend to raise any particular issue, would you please contact the Wylies or any other committee member beforehand.

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER: Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* will be **Monday 30th September** and should be sent to **Barbara Hales** at 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail or via her email: bhales@bigpond.com. [My thanks go to Barbara for deputising for me for the October and November issues of our newsletter – Ed.]



On Wednesday 14th August 14 members met at William Beach Memorial Park for our half-day walk along Mullet Creek, Brownsville. The creek banks are being stabilised in a couple of places, with large areas graded back and planted with sedges, reeds and other natives.

William Beach, after whom the park is named, was quite a man. At the age of 3 he was left with twin sisters when his mother died. His father asked a neighbour to mind the children and was never seen again. The neighbour obliged, but William had to work for his living from an early age. He became a blacksmith by trade and, as Dapto was a tiny town, thought he'd try his luck in Goulburn. He didn't like the place, so returned to Dapto in a week after having walked both ways. He was a champion weightlifter, a good runner, and the aquatic champion of the world for some years, retiring undefeated in 1857. He trained initially on Mullet Creek. His wedding day was very wet, and Mullet Creek was in flood; as William was walking to the church, he saw someone being washed away. He dived in and rescued the man, then continued on to his wedding. History doesn't record how long he kept his bride waiting or what her reaction was when he arrived bedraggled and late.

As soon as we arrived at the park, it seemed we were in for a good day's bird-watching: there were Australian Pelicans in profusion, Black Cormorants, Pacific Black Duck, Little Egret, White-faced Heron, Willie Wagtails and Magpie-larks. After listing all the birds here, we wandered along Mullet Creek, views of which were painted by Conrad Martens, who was official artist on Darwin's *Beagle* in the 1830s. He painted a beautiful, lush and romantic scene no trace of which remains here now, but as the first land grantees retained their grants only on condition that they cleared 50 acres in record time, it's quite understandable.

The soil here is greyish silt brought down by successive floods and looks very poor, and the vegetation reflects this, with coral trees still flowering and complete with Eastern Spinebills, Red-whiskered Bulbuls, and Red and Little Wattlebirds, all being noisy, and casuarinas, acacias and lantana. While the lantana is never welcome, it did provide protection from the wind and shelter from predators for small birds, such as Red-browed Finches and Superb Fairy-wrens. High in the sky was a Brown Goshawk being harassed by Australian Ravens, or perhaps it was the other way round; but no matter, no damage was done.

The day that had started off being warmish and sunny, but with a cool breeze was now dull and with a freezing wind that blew over large expanses of water before blowing over us; but as we peered into the wind, we could see a Black Swan looking majestic, Purple Swamphens, Eurasian Coots and Australian White Ibises to add to our considerable tally.

Past here the ground changed, and the grass was long with plenty of cow-pats (but no cows) and fireweed which previous to this had been seen only in the cow paddocks. There was also a large thicket of a different species of acacia, still not showing any signs of flowering. The creek banks were quite high and looked most unstable – a few big floods will possibly alter things considerably.

By now we were almost at the freeway, so we turned back, having seen no sign of the large number of piles that were driven into the creek bed to support a sandstone arched bridge to make things easier for travellers. Alas, Governor George Gipps, who governed from 1838-1846, passed this way on one of his many travels and refused further funding for the project. Many, many years later Mr Brown of Brownsville is reported saying that the piles were uncovered in a long drought and were still almost all in excellent condition.

We had morning tea in a ditch, which provided excellent protection from the wind, and here the chatter of the birds was equalled only by the chatter of their observers. Perhaps the birds were talking about us. However, the time soon came to start off again, and Jude made a diversion into the cow paddock, where the large stretches of water were, and, as she turned back, the cows followed her. She walked faster...and so did they. Jude ran...and so did they. It was quite a race, but fortunately Jude won.



Instead of returning to the cars, we went to the left and followed the route of the old Princes Highway and crossed a small, low bridge, which carried all the north- and southbound traffic until the road was realigned in the early 70s. The vegetation here has grown practically undisturbed ever since and perhaps in 30 more years will resemble the beauty of Conrad Martens' painting. There were plenty of fishermen standing at intervals all along the creek. They didn't seem very busy winding in their catch mullet or otherwise. We birdos had a much better day, having seen 58 species of birds and had a very pleasant walk as well. Many thanks, Joan and Tom for leading the walk and to other members for their company.

Black Swan	Australian White Ibis	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Eastern Whipbird
Australian Wood Duck	Straw-necked Ibis	Superb Fairy-wren	Maggie-lark
Mallard	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Spotted Pardalote	Grey Fantail
Pacific Black Duck	Grey Goshawk	White-browed Scrubwren	Willie Wagtail
Chestnut Teal	Purple Swamphen	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Australasian Grebe	Dusky Moorhen	Yellow Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Darter	Eurasian Coot	Red Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Little Pied Cormorant	Silver Gull	Little Wattlebird	Australian Raven
Little Black Cormorant	Caspian Tern	Noisy Friarbird	Red-browed Finch
Australian Pelican	Spotted Turtle-Dove	Noisy Miner	Welcome Swallow
White-faced Heron	Crested Pigeon	Lewin's Honeyeater	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Great Egret	Galah	White-plumed Honeyeater	Common Starling
Cattle Egret	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Myna
Striated Heron	Rainbow Lorikeet	Eastern Spinebill	
Nankeen Night Heron	Eastern Rosella	Eastern Yellow Robin	

AUGUST CLUB MEETING

Darryl GOLDRICK

What a pleasure to hear someone speak of his work with such passion and enthusiasm - **Mike Cannon**, one of our resident vets, certainly provided us with both an entertaining and thought-provoking insight into his day-to-day practice activities.

Mike is a very skilled practitioner and at the same time has finely tuned animal (and human!) psychology-behavioural intuition. His preliminary slides highlighted a selection of animals that he commonly treats: ranging from parrots, raptors, pigeons (including the racing variety), albatrosses, fairy penguins, etc. He did note that there are more and more albatrosses coming into the surgery for treatment as a consequence of long-line fishing techniques.

His observations of the exotic parrots is that due to their close association with humans, the more 'wacko' they behave (I think there is a message here). The breeding of exotic parrots is becoming more prevalent, given the rate of deforestation in countries such as South America and the subsequent decline/extinction of wild species.

Some of Mike's helpful hints included:

- Don't put parrots on your shoulders – it's a dominance position and they think they are the boss.
- Never kiss and exchange saliva – it transfers disease to the animals.
- As a pet, birds generally live longer than dogs/ cats.

We are all aware of the advances in modern medicine for humans, and the surgical treatment of animals has greatly benefited from this research, particularly the low or non-invasive surgical methods which ultimately cause less stress, blood loss, and trauma to animals.

The slides of the x-rays of the diamond python, frog, and bearded dragon were intriguing to say the least.

A wonderful presentation which captivated the interest of all present – great stuff, Mike!

PITTAS and PLATYPUS: A VISIT to EUNGELLA NATIONAL PARK
WAL EMERY

In July this year Hazel and I made our third visit to Eungella National Park. Our two previous visits had been in January and September. The January visit provided us with a rainforest full of fruit pigeons, with Superb Fruit-Doves and Wompoo Fruit-Doves calling from what seemed like every fruiting tree: a wonderful experience as we walked around the well-graded walks. In September, with not so much fruit, there were not many fruit pigeons, but in one 2½ km walk we encountered no less than eleven Noisy Pittas feeding and calling. We were even fortunate enough to find an anvil stone where they smashed the native snails, as described in the field guides.

This was to be our first winter visit and we wondered what we would find. After obtaining a camping permit at the Ranger's Office, we proceeded to our designated Site 16, only to find out it was occupied... by a Noisy Pitta. What a great start! We switched off the truck and watched and watched and watched. This bird was going nowhere, and we needed to set up camp before dark. Then came the embarrassing situation of Hazel out in a fauna-protected national park chasing a Noisy Pitta off our site so we could set up camp.

Next morning as we sat out in the sun reflecting on the beauty of our surroundings, out of the ferns hopped our Noisy Pitta, right up around our feet looking for crumbs. Hazel got up cautiously to get the camera. She need not have worried; the bird wasn't the least bit disturbed by our movements, allowing her to poke the camera right into its face. This sort of activity continued all day, with the bird at one point pecking crumbs embedded in the tread of my shoe.

The next day we noticed our bird was a bit more wary, coming to within 40 or 50 cm, but always ready to take off if we made a sudden movement. Suddenly it dashed off up the hill and, to our amazement, we saw it chasing another bird. We had two Noisy Pittas: one tame enough to be hand-fed and the other a bit more wary and aggressive.

It wasn't long before we learnt to individually identify them by the variations to the shape of their belly patches. The area around the vent of both birds was quite red, so we determined they were both males and named them Placid Pete and Flighty Fred. Never at any time did we have two birds together except for that first encounter, although we always heard them calling at night from opposite ends of the camping ground.

Immediately behind our camp was a pool containing Platypus, so when we tired of pittas and didn't have the energy to go walking, we sat and watched platypus. Almost every large pool in the Broken River seemed to contain platypus; I've never seen so many. On one walk following the river at the Crediton Creek end, the water was clear, and we were high enough to look down and watch them dive and forage for food amongst the rocks and sunken logs.

We walked about 50 km in our five days and saw perhaps six or eight other pittas secretively hopping about on the rainforest floor; but after our close encounters with Fred and Pete, it was just a case of "Ho hum, there's another pitta over there".

We found the Eungella Honeyeater during our stay - a new bird for us - but somehow after five intimate days with Fred and Pete, it didn't seem to rate the same excitement that a new bird usually does.

On our final morning as we sat in the van eating our breakfast, we heard a tapping sound and looked down to see Pete cleaning up our toast crumbs from the floor of the truck. I must admit at this point I had thoughts of quickly shutting the truck door and heading for home. How pleasant it would have been to have Pete hopping around in my little rainforest at 63 Dymock Street! Discretion prevailed, however, and Pete is still there.

So during some cold southern winter, if you're feeling a bit bored and find yourself suffering from the mid-winter blues and you don't mind sharing, I can thoroughly recommend a visit to Site 16, Fern Flat, Eungella National Park. Take plenty of film and be prepared for a few distractions from your schedule.



Weatherwise it was overcast and cool while we waited until the word went around to say: "Well, I think that's it. We'll all drive a couple of kilometres down the road [Coonemia Road] to the council gate. I'll open it for you to park up near the reservoirs. We will walk from there to Coppercup Point. So take your lunch and all you need for the day." By 8.45 – 9 am on 18th August 27 persons from IBOC and the Shoalhaven Club had congregated on the corner outside the Archgate Nursery. All persons accounted for! That's how our day began, but ended for five very differently: along the lines of that famous old song 'Oh, dear! What can the matter be?' More on that later.

After leaving the secure parking, we crossed the road and went into densely forested property through a barbed-wire fence. Fortunately for us fire-breaks had been slashed along all of the fence-lines we followed. The timber was quite tall; hence necks were stretched and strained. Many bird calls were heard in the intervals between passing noisy traffic at the beginning. A right-angled turn was soon made, and mechanical noises were left behind for the rest of the walking day. The grey-light backdrop to the aerial foliage made bird-spotting and identification very difficult for the first couple of hours, during which time the group strung out like Brown's cows. The Golden Whistler, though heard numerous times, remained screened for some considerable time. Snippets of sunshine started to illuminate bits of the bush to reveal Scarlet Honeyeaters; Striated Thornbills – one entering and leaving its nest just above our heads at another right-angled bend; Brown and Yellow Thornbills; and Grey Fantails. Frisky Noisy Friarbirds (not Boilers or Chipmunks!) seemed to be frolicking everywhere (and we weren't in a monastery garden!), as were Yellow-faced Honeyeaters. Where is or was the Rose Robin? Julie thought she heard one as I was passing by. (No I wasn't stripped down to my rose woollen singlet at that stage!). Of course, there was the usual abundance of Rainbow Lorikeets, and it seemed like millions of Musk Lorikeets – all on the move, particularly when binoculars were about to be positioned. It was as if that action was the signal for take-off. *Eucalyptus robusta* was still in heavy blossom throughout the forest. No wonder the lorikeets were lured here! Woollybutts, *E. longifolia*, had finished flowering and were now festooned with plenty of pinkish-reddish seed capsules that looked like blossoms at a distance.

At one stage Barry was assigned the task of hurrying along the stragglers (not strugglers!). We still had a long way to go. The closing of the ranks didn't last very long, especially when the tail-enders caught sight of four Glossy Black-Cockatoos. Bruce and Josh had a video camera and super-duper still camera equipment, and love capturing nature on film. A short while later we all had emerged from the forest and finally congregated at cleared paddocks, cattle-yards and gates. Peter wanted to move the mob on. There was almost a mutiny. A morning stop was requested because it was nearly lunch-time. Any comments were all in good fun. From this junction frequent glances at the ground were necessary to prevent an "oops" or a sudden slip in the slop from the plentiful pats (not on the head!) on the path and paddocks. We saw a couple of birds of prey in this open area; more to come later.

We finally got glimpses of part of Lake Wollumboola. A joyous sight for me was to see scores of Black Swans. They now seem so scarce in the Illawarra. Long gone are the experiences when huge V-formations of them were seen or their distinctive calls heard as they flew overhead almost every night. It was passage through another barbed-wire fence here and then through remnant rainforest to Coppercup Point. Eastern Whipbird, Variegated Wrens and Red-browed Finches were encountered here, plus various cormorants, and White-faced Herons, Masked Lapwings and Black Ducks. A very cool breeze was felt near the water's edge, so not many persons lingered long. We wandered in clumpy kikuyu between low scrub at water's edge and a sloping bank of remnant rainforest for a little while and then returned up slope to a cleared paddock. Lunch stop was around a small dam.

After lunch we returned to the terrain between the lake's edge and the forest. A second black snake was glimpsed along here. The exciting sighting in this area was that of a White-bellied Sea-Eagle that took off from a HUGE nest in a tree. It was joined by its mate to put on an aerial display above us. Accompanying that dancing duo were four Whistling Kites and a Wedge-tailed Eagle. It was like an orchestrated event.

Shortly after that we reached Coonemia Creek whose banks were lined with casuarinas which were festooned with *Dendrobium terditifolium* – 'rat's tail orchid'. What a sight! After following Coonemia Creek, where we

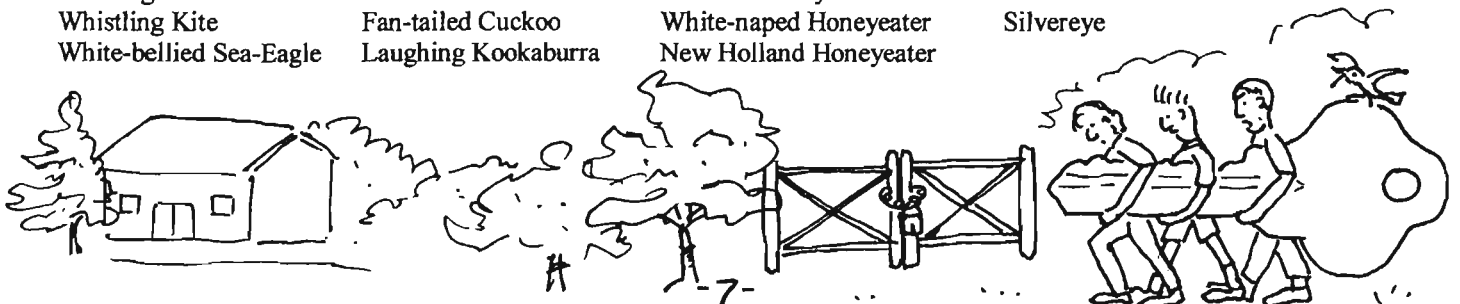
saw some Chestnut Teal and Hardheads, we returned to forest conditions and followed another fence-line. This one had had wire removed; the coils hanging on fence-posts. This area is now part of the Jervis Bay National Park. The pace along this section was brisk; we stopped only once to view two more Glossy Black-Cockatoos. On another corner Peter Hale suggested we head just straight through the bush, thereby eliminating a couple of kilometres. A couple of us checked our compasses and away we went, emerging at a fence-line we had walked that morning. It seemed only a brief blimp on the time scale until we emerged on to Coonemia Road and back up the hill to the cars. It's not known the exact distance we walked; it could've been 12 km or more. It was certainly worthwhile and rewarding.

Peter said he would open the gates to the Callala Treatment Works down the hill past the reservoirs, so that we could view what water-birds might be paddling on the pond. We didn't locate any Freckled Ducks as hoped, only Australasian Grebes, Dusky Moorhens, Wood Ducks, and in the surrounding forest, Gang-gang Cockatoos, Laughing Kookaburras, and of course Red Wattlebirds plus Welcome Swallows sweeping over the sewerage ponds and over our heads. In the amenities block the toilets were opened; the jug switched on; and a video of the whole scheme (treatment plant and water reticulation to the surrounding farms. Purple markers in paddocks and along roadsides denote pipeline. The scheme cost \$29 million and was completed in December 2001.). People did their own thing here; viz bird-watched, turd-watched, 'coffeed' or 'tead' on the lawns in the sunshine, tallied up bird lists or paid their respects and departed for home. All very casual and enjoyable until...not yet.

Goodbyes and thank-yous were exchanged by some. I didn't get into the car to take me home straightaway. The driver, Tommy said, "They're up the hill looking at gang-gangs." I wandered up the hill looking at the structures and contents. The aroma was not my favourite kind. Joan called down to Tom, "Drive up here," to which he dutifully obeyed. Eventually Terry, Alison and Joan had enough of gang-gang-gazing, and the five of us were seated and belted. At this stage a thought passed through my mind: 'It's very quiet here. I think that we might be locked in'. That was confirmed as we drove down the hill and saw the closed and chained huge gates. Tommy tooted, alighted from the car, bellowed Peter's name in case he or somebody was still up near the reservoirs or roadside gate. No response. We could see cars on the Culburra Road across at Pyree, but it would have been impossible to see us without telescope or binoculars. My mind had a myriad of thoughts about spending the night. There was no alternate way out of this compound, except by astral travel or helicopter lift. Then Joan announced she had her mobile phone. Ah! What number to ring? We finally got Peter Hale's number. Julie answered. Peter then realised he had said to Tommy that he could drive up there. It was an illustration of 'out of sight, out of mind'. Peter returned and released us from our imprisonment with profound apologies [and a key -Ed.].

The whole experience added to the enjoyment and variety of the whole day and gave me something extra to write about. So, at the end of the outing one more species to add to the list of 63: five jailbirds! Thank you, Peter for a bounteous day of joyous dissolving of boundaries – even that last metallic one.

Black Swan	Swamp Harrier	White-throated Treecreeper	Scarlet Honeyeater
Australian Wood Duck	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Superb Fairy-wren	Rose Robin
Pacific Black Duck	Australian Hobby	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Eastern Yellow Robin
Grey Teal	Dusky Moorhen	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Whipbird
Chestnut Teal	Masked Lapwing	Striated Pardalote	Variied Sittella
Hardhead	Silver Gull	White-browed Scrubwren	Golden Whistler
Australasian Grebe	Crested Tern	Brown Thornbill	Grey Shrike-thrush
Little Pied Cormorant	Crested Pigeon	Striated Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Pied Cormorant	Glossy Black-Cockatoo	Red Wattlebird	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Little Black Cormorant	Gang-gang Cockatoo	Noisy Friarbird	Olive-backed Oriole
Great Cormorant	Galah	Noisy Miner	Grey Butcherbird
Australian Pelican	Rainbow Lorikeet	Lewin's Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
White-faced Heron	Musk Lorikeet	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Great Egret	Crimson Rosella	Fuscous Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow
Whistling Kite	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	White-naped Honeyeater	Silvereye
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Laughing Kookaburra	New Holland Honeyeater	



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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Freckled Duck	3	25-Jul	Archgate dam, west Culburra	dam	BA
Australasian Shoveler	2	25-Jul	Saltwater Swamp (Crookhaven R.)	wetland	BA
Hardhead	600+	25-Jul	Archgate dam, west Culburra	dam	BA
Darter	1	25-Jul	Saltwater Swamp (Crookhaven R.)	wetland	BA
Darter	8	23-Jul	Crookhaven Heads	estuary	KM
Darter	1	25-Aug	Port Kembla Harbour	breakwater	CJC
Eastern Reef Egret	1	10-Jun	Bass Point	rocky shore	GB
Striated Heron	2	25-Aug	Port Kembla Harbour	breakwater	CJC
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	3	25-Jul	Pyree	wetland	BA
Spotted Harrier	1	27-Jul	Oak Flats interchange	overhead	CJC
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	28-Jul	Mt. Ousley	forest	CJC
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	10-Aug	Minnamurra Falls	overhead	CJC
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	10-Aug	Minnamurra Falls	overhead	CJC
Little Eagle	1	29-Jul	Stanwell Park	overhead	MJ
Brown Falcon	1	27-Jul	Killalea Lagoon	powerline	CJC
Australian Hobby	1	26-Jul	Fairy Meadow	overhead	AF
Australian Hobby	1	29-Jul	Bellambi	overhead	MJ
Peregrine Falcon	1	29-Jul	Clifton railway station	overhead	MJ
Double-banded Plover	61	2-Aug	Windang	sandflats	CJC
Pacific Gull	1imm	10-Jun	Bass Point	rocky shore	GB
White-headed Pigeon	2	4-Aug	East Nowra	powerline	NW
Peaceful Dove	1	12-Aug	Balgownie	garden	WE
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	4-Aug	Comerong Island	garden	NW
Topknot Pigeon	1	15-Jul	Kiama	figtrees	KM
Swift Parrot	12	19-Aug	Wollongong University	parkland	RT, GB
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	19-Jul	Bulli	urban	JM
Southern Emu-wren	4	3-Aug	Pelican View Reserve (Lake Sth)	forest	CJC
Pilotbird	1	15-Jul	BuleeGap, nr Nerriga	forest	KM
Rose Robin	1	3-Aug	Jamberoo	parkland	CJC
Figbird	6	15-Jul	Kiama	figtrees	KM
Skylark	1	25-Jul	Pyree	paddock	BA
Brown Songlark	1	18-Aug	Warrawong	field	CJC
Bassian Thrush	2	23-Aug	Minnamurra Rainforest	forest	MM
Bassian Thrush	1	25-Jul	North Bendalong	forest	KM
Bassian Thrush	1	25-Jul	Manyana	forest	KM

Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; GB - Graham Barwell; CJC - Chris Chafer; WE - Wal Emery; AF - Alison Folley; MJ - Michael Jarman; KM - Kevin Mills; JM - Jill Molan; MM - Mike Morphett; CP - Chris Presland; RT - Roger Truscott; NW - Nola Williams

Comment: Although this month's selection can't surpass last month's, there are still some good observations. Freckled Duck again make the list, this time from the dam next to Archgate Nursery at Culburra. Darters, which have increased their coastal population tremendously in the past decade, are now being observed in marine conditions at Crookhaven Heads and Port Kembla Harbour. The Brown Songlark is yet another western bird to hit the coast, as was the Peaceful Dove and the Spotted Harrier. Swift Parrots continued to be observed at Wollongong University through August.

"The Ulladulla Wildflower Reserve Trust has received a welcome funding boost. The \$500 State Government grant will help the Trust repair a timber birdwatch observation tower, a ramp and a concrete step. Signage posts and barriers would also be installed to improve safety. The funding comes from the Public Reserves Management Fund to support the maintenance and development of NSW Crown reserves. More than \$500,000 is available to improve parks and reserves in the 2001-2002 financial year."



I.B.O.C. NEWS

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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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149 Reddall Parade	61 Meehan Drive	1 Drualla Road	8 Wellington Drive	15 Coast Street
Lake Illawarra 2528	Kiama Downs 2533	Jamberoo 2533	Balgownie 2519	Thirroul 2515
Phone 4296 1316	Phone 4237 8742	Phone 4236 0307	Phone 4283 4744	Phone 4267 3558

President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

Robyn Wilson, Sub-Editor's email: robynw@hotmail.net.au & phone: 42291184

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl GOLDRICK

The film night, kindly arranged by Fae and Kevin McGregor, met with modest success – 11 members were present. Given the gale force wind conditions on the previous evening it wasn't surprising that many may have been deterred from venturing out. The woodland and shore bird films were excellent and Kevin's big screen gave an added dimension to the viewing. Many thanks to Fae and Kevin for organizing the venue and supper. We will have another evening in early December.

On the topic of winds (gales!), Bruce O'Brien suffered house damage but thankfully his family escaped injury. The club extends its best wishes to Bruce and trusts that the necessary repairs are underway and life is returning to some normality.

Please note there has been a change of venue for the October field outing. Details are described further on in the newsletter.

The Committee will be discussing next year's program at the next meeting – if you have suggestions on speakers, camp locations or field trips please contact me.

Please note that Robyn Wilson has very kindly agreed to compile the November 2002 Newsletter so all contributions for inclusion in that issue should be forwarded to her. Robyn's email and phone number are shown above. Your help is much appreciated Robyn, thanks for filling in the gap. Mike Morphett should be back on line for the December 2002 issue.

The deadline for articles for the November Newsletter is Monday 28th October

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 14th October** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. Our guest speaker for the evening will be **Colin Markham MP** who will speak to us about his trip to National Parks in South Africa. This is reported to be an excellent talk so come along and enjoy a very entertaining evening. Please bring along a plate to share for supper, tea and coffee will be provided.

FIELD OUTING is to be held on **Sunday 20 October** to **Dharawal Reserve** at **Maddens Plains**. We will walk **Fire trail No.10**. Members are asked to assemble at **8.00 am** at the entrance on **Maddens Plains Road**. To get there take the Helensburgh offload ramp on the F6 at **Bulli Tops** and proceed to the Maddens Plains Road turnoff- turn left and proceed for 2.4 km – entrance is on the left-hand side. Parking space is a bit tight so try and car pool with other members. Bring your usual eats, drinks and sunscreen/hat.

MID-WEEK OUTING Wednesday 16th October 2002, 8.30 a.m. to Macquarie Rivulet and Koon Bay. This is an easy, level walk where 40+ species of birds were sighted on the last outing. Meet at 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail and be sure to bring your morning tea. The leader for the day will be Barbara Hales and if you don't know how to get there ring her on 42574431 or 0409574439.

COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 22nd October at 7.30 p.m. at Bronwyn Wilson's home at 8 Wellington Drive, Balgownie, Ph: 43834744. If any member wishes to attend to raise any particular issue please contact Bronwyn or any other committee member.

* * * * *

IBOC MEETING REPORT – MONDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER **RICHARD MILLER**

Thirty-nine people attended the September Club meeting including newcomers Marion, John and Mark Demol from Corrimal. It was lovely to welcome back Betty Gibson after a long absence through illness – we hope your health continues to improve Betty – and it was good to have Horrie Ward back with us again, we hope that Betty Ward will soon be well enough to share our meetings. Compared to the previous couple of months when we have had so many unusual sightings reported, notable records from the last month were few and after confirming details of future outings and camps, Darryl introduced our guest speaker for the evening, Trevor Qusted, who with his wife Annie, had travelled from Sydney to share slides and stories of a recent bird watching holiday to Sri Lanka.

We enjoyed a varied, entertaining and educational talk, well illustrated with numerous slides capturing many aspects of Sri Lanka's history, culture, fauna and flora. Trevor and Annie had purposely 'stretched' a two-week itinerary to three weeks to leave them with extra time to take in the many other sights and sounds of a country which they found to be peaceful, friendly and full of birds. Their personal driver/tour guide proved to be skilled in finding and identifying the birds for them besides organising the travel, accommodation and introducing them to the local culture, history and food.

Their journey took them through many different habitats and it was not always National Reserves that provided the best bird watching. The rice paddies, patches of rural woodland and tea plantations, together with their early morning starts, all contributed to their seeing so many species, and despite preferring to be a bird watcher first and a photographer as an extra we enjoyed many excellent slides of birds new to most of us, as well as a close up of some of the other fauna and flora, elephants, leopard, warthog, mongoose, orchids and eucalypt trees. His slide of nit-picking monkeys was humorously followed by one of nit-picking Homo sapiens. We also shared pictures of the Common Myna and a displaying Peacock in their native environments, a hoopoe looking more like a toy bird and a series of shots of different rainbow birds to conclude his presentation. All told, a most enjoyable talk.

Brian Hales thanked Trevor on behalf of all in attendance, noting that he had had the pleasure of sharing several presentations by Trevor to our club over recent years from his round-the world bird watching holidays. A visit to Tibet and China last year could be Trevor's next presentation and one to eagerly look forward to.

Another enjoyable evening of fun, food and feathers. Pity if you missed it.

MOUNT ANNAN BOTANIC GARDEN - Darryl Goldrick

- Once again we were blessed with another fine sunny day for our monthly walk yet on the other hand there would be many who would agree that we'd love ex-president Kevin McGregor to invoke his rainmaking powers to provide some desperately needed relief to the continuing drought conditions.

Situated southwest of Sydney, the Mount Annan Botanic Garden is the native garden of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

- It is one of the largest botanic gardens in Australia and, although still a young garden, it is fast becoming both a magnificent, extensive landscape and showcase for Australia's unique flora. Over 118,000 native plants have already been established, 9000 of them being trees.
- The garden has an area of 410 ha and occupies a dry valley at the head of a tributary of the Nepean River. The soils are mostly of low fertility, being derived from shales and have an annual rainfall of approx 700 mm and temperatures range from -4°C to 40°C. These factors provide conditions suitable for the cultivation of a very wide range of Australian species.
- The recorded history of the Garden site dates back to 1818. It is part of a land grant of 3000 acres given to William Howe, who is thought to have named Mount Annan, now the highest point in the Garden and after which it in turn is named, as he came from Annandale in Scotland. The area was farmed until acquired by the state government in early 1970's. In 1984 a decision was made to create a botanic garden for native plants as a bicentennial project. The Duke and Duchess of York opened the Garden in 1988.

On my arrival, everyone was congregated at the entrance gate with our host Alan Leishman in readiness for the day's birding. Betty Hudson was the only member with a pen and notebook and was appropriately assigned as the official recorder. Our first stop was at the education buildings where Alan pointed out a pair of Frogmouths sunning themselves in the morning's rays and another sitting on a nest – a great start to the day.

Alan then proceeded to the Local Woodland Conservation Area (Cumberland Woodland community) where the early morning air was alive with typically woodland birds. Members got great views of Red-rumped Parrots, a fleeting glimpse by a few of the White-throated Gerygone - but all heard its call. A bird-banding group was mist netting and measuring birds and this proved to be a fascinating insight of field research activity.

The group then proceeded to Lake Nadugamba ('Lake of Many Flowers') and aside from the usual Coots and Hardheads and the first of the season calls by Reed Warblers, no crakes/rails were observed.

A circumnavigation of the fringing vegetation of Lake Giliganadum ('Lake of Noisy Frogs') successfully flushed out half a dozen Latham Snipe – much to the delight of the newer members. These birds do frequent swampy areas in the Illawarra; so keep a lookout in the next few months. We got obscure views of a Buff-banded Rail, which was secreting under a grassy overhang on the western bank of the lake. Raptors were surprisingly inconspicuous throughout the day with the exception of the Nankeen Kestrel and Black-shouldered Kite.

Several stops along Cunningham Drive towards Lake Sedgwick gave members a good look at the Mallee Eucalypt plantings though bird sightings were scant in these localities.

Lunchtime was well and truly due and as Alan had to depart due to other commitments the group proceeded to the Visitors Centre to have lunch and coffee.

For those who didn't have to depart early, the remainder sauntered through the Terrace Garden with many species coming into the spring bloom.

An enjoyable day and many thanks to Alan in leading us around this wonderful location.

Bird List Mount Annan Botanic Garden

Little Pied Cormorant	Black-shouldered Kite	White-plumed Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Great Egret	Nankeen Kestrel	Golden Whistler	Grey Butcherbird
White-faced Heron	Crested Pigeon	Olive-backed Oriole	Spotted Pardalote
White-necked Heron	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Striated Pardalote
Straw-necked Ibis	Rainbow Lorikeet	Silvereye	Grey Shrike-thrush
Masked Lapwing	Crimson Rosella	Eastern Yellow Robin	Striated Thornbill
Australasian Grebe	Eastern Rosella	White-throated Warbler	Yellow Thornbill
Australian Wood Duck	Galah	Clamorous Reed-warbler	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Pacific Black Duck	Long-billed Corella	Golden-headed Cisticola	Red-browed Finch
Hardhead	Red-rumped Parrot	Willie Wagtail	Australian Magpie
Grey Teal	Laughing Kookaburra	Superb Fairy-wren	Magpie-lark
Purple Swamphen	Tawny Frogmouth	Variegated Fairy-wren	Common Starling
Buff-banded Rail	Fan-tailed Cuckoo		Common Blackbird
Latham's Snipe	Welcome Swallow		Pied Currawong
Eurasian Coot	Red Wattlebird		Australian Raven
Dusky Moorhen	Noisy Miner		Common Myna
Goshawk			

11th September 2002 Mid-week Outing Bulli Grevillea Park Alistair Lethbridge

It was a delightfully sunny spring morning for the IBOC members who attended the mid-week walk at Bulli Grevillea Park. The massed plantings of the Park's namesake shrub were flowering in a profusion of reds, yellows and oranges and proving quite an attraction for the local honeyeaters – every grevillea seeming to have at least one Little Wattlebird, Eastern Spinebill or New Holland Honeyeater taking advantage of the abundance of flowers. The non-grevillea sections of the park were relatively bird-quiet but the diversity of species increased as we followed the walking track that exits at the rear of the park. Despite the reminder of the drought conditions gripping much of the state (the local creek was barely flowing and the undergrowth looking particularly dry) we were treated to hotspots of activity. There were small mixed flocks of Brown Gerygones, Thornbills and Silvereyes, the screeching of passing Rosellas, Lorikeets and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, and a number of Brown Cuckoo-Doves enjoying the fruits of the many Tobacco plants. Other highlights included excellent views of a Grey Butcherbird as it stood watch while it's mate sat on a rather scrappy nest of twigs and brief glimpses of both Grey and Brown Goshawks. On a more reptilian note, the large reed-fringed pond in the centre of the park now appears to be the home of at least 3 quite large Eastern Water Dragons!

Grey Goshawk	Brown Gerygone	Grey Fantail
Brown Goshawk	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Striated Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird (Nesting)
Galah	Little Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Rainbow Lorikeet	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Crimson Rosella	New Holland Honeyeater	Green Catbird
White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Spinebill	Red-browed Finch
Superb Fairy-wren	Eastern Yellow Robin	Silvereye
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Whipbird	
White-browed Scrubwren	Golden Whistler	

BIGNET MEETING SATURDAY 14/15th SEPTEMBER 2002

Roger Bogaert

On Saturday 14th September I attended the Bignet meeting at the old Armaments Depot, Millennium Parkland. The Depot has been taken over by the Sydney Olympic Park Authority as a Nature Reserve.

The Ranger Judy told me that the two resident sea eagles have recently laid two eggs. If the hatching is successful, it will be the first time in twelve years that sea eagles have successfully raised their young in the Sydney Park.

Bird clubs representatives discussed a number of agenda items, which are briefly mentioned below. If you wish to obtain more information on any particular subject mentioned, you can contact Roger or Betty.

The first item on agenda was public Liability Insurance.

- (a) All bird clubs have obtained public liability insurance. The cost of the insurance ranged between \$600 and \$3,500.
- (b) The next item was the draft Memorandum of Understanding. What you may ask is a MOU. The MOU is a written document, which clubs can sign, it is not legally binding. The objective of the document is to foster cooperation between bird interest groups across a range of activities which these groups undertake, including bird studies and surveys, field trips, conservation initiatives, and exchange of information and sharing resources. Draft MOU is available to individual members or you can contact a Committee member if you wish to comment.
- (c) Birds Australia is also investigating the possibility of creating a web site for clubs to promote their clubs.

The afternoon was taken up with seminars on Urban Birds. Dr Richard Major from the Australian Museum talked on the importance of urban birds. He believes that if we can get the general public interested in birds in their backyards, they will become more involved in protecting bird habitats, not only in their own gardens but in the urban environment.

Junko Kondo Research Assistant ANU talked about the effect the Indian Myna is having on the small bird population. Junko demonstrated a bird trap to catch Indian Myna's. They can catch up to fifty Indian Myna's in one back garden. The trap is designed to catch only Myna's. Unfortunately the trap cost is \$500 to make and is not available to the general public.

The following day, members discussed the next Twitchathon. The last Twitchathon raised \$14,000.00. Birds Australia is seeking suggestions from members on how to spend the money. For example a research project if you have any suggestions, contact Darryl or myself.

Lastly the Sydney Olympic Park Authority will be calling for submissions from Bird Clubs on proposed use of the Olympic Park wetlands and reserve. They are seeking input from people who use the Park. A draft management report will be available in October 2002.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss anything mentioned above. I will be happy to take your comments back to the next Bignet meeting. The next meeting will be in Canberra.

Beach Nesting Bird Survey: 9-10 November 2002

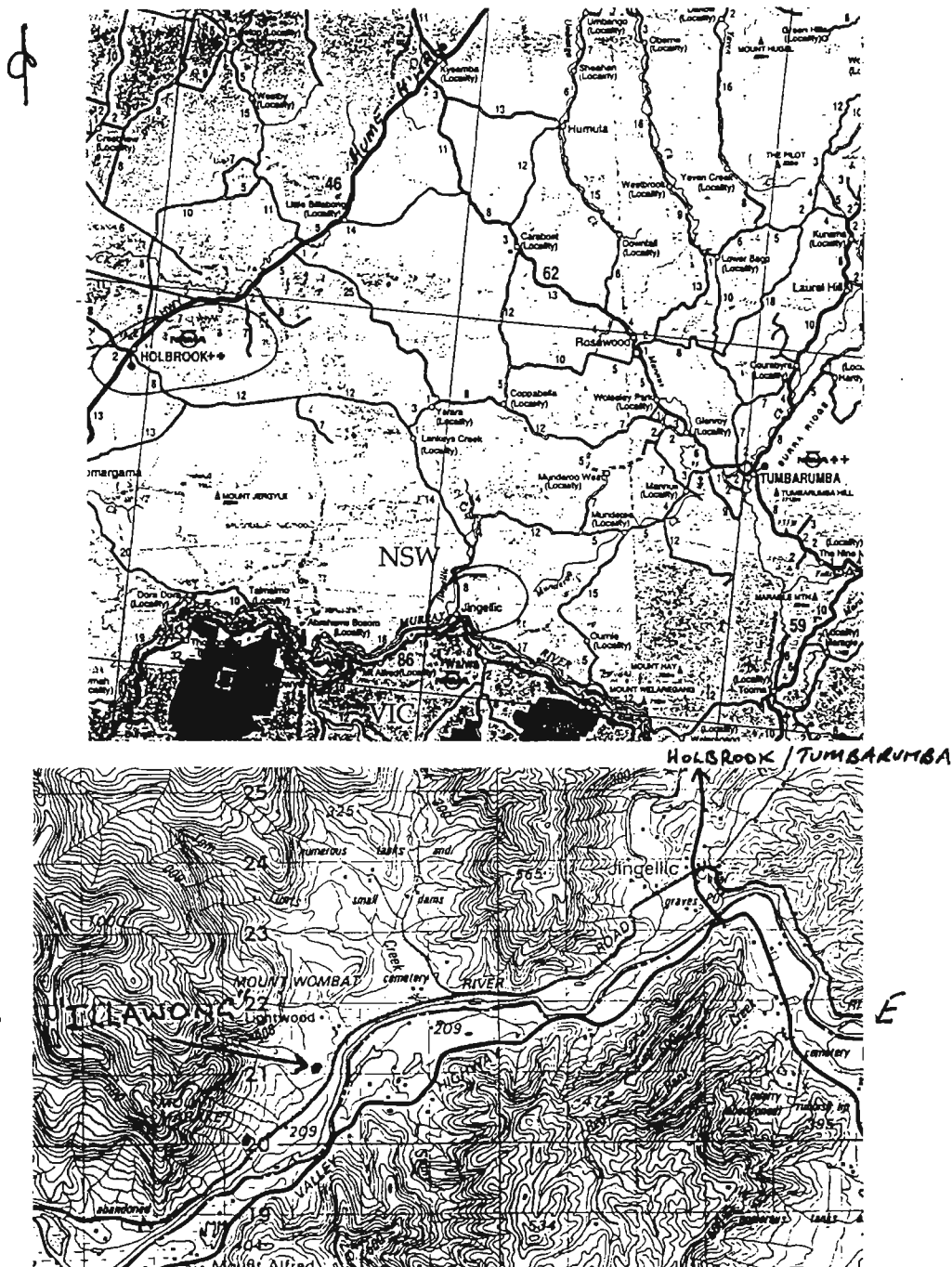
By selecting a stretch of beach to walk on this summer you could be helping in the conservation of some of our most threatened species. If you are interested in becoming involved in this worthwhile project contact the NSW co-ordinator, Beach Nesting Bird Survey at P.O. Box 2006, Rockdale Delivery Centre, NSW 2216 or at: waders@optusnet.com.au. You will be put in touch with the local coordinator and other volunteers in your area and given a list of beaches that need to be surveyed plus maps and recording sheets.

JINGELIC CAMP: 1-8 November.

This camp will be held on the 'Illawong' property of Joe and Kath Jefferies and their son Curl. The club last visited at Easter in 1986. The attached map shows the general location. The best way to get there is via the Hume H'way to Holbrook (approx 290 from Goulburn) The Jingellic turnoff at **Holbrook** is to the left (east) and proceed for approx 55 km to Jingellic. At Jingellic and before crossing the Murray River turn right (west and in the direction to Abrahams Bosom) on the **River Road** (you will be travelling parallel to and on the north bank of the river.) Proceed for approx 6.5 km to '**Illawong**' on the right hand side. The club signs will be strategically placed to guide you.

You are advised to bring your own drinking water though Joe says its ok and if you want to be cautious you can boil it. The Murray has good flows at the moment and this location has not yet felt the drought conditions – though you don't have to go too far west before it is evident. Joe claims there are plenty of birds about at present.

For those not camping there are hotels at Jingellic and Walwa (across the river in Vic.) and other very good cabin accommodation according to the Corryong Tourist Information Centre. If you require contact details please ring me.



Unusual Records August-September 2002 Chris J. Chafer

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	6	13-Aug	Sassafras	Rural	KM
Pink-eared Duck	23	9-Aug	Dunmore wetlands	wetland	DG
Hardhead	1000+	all Aug	Swan Lake	wetland	KM
Hardhead	16+	29-Aug	Wollongong golf course	wetland	ME
Hardhead	400+	14-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	lake	DM
Great Crested Grebe	5	14-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	lake	DM
Great Crested Grebe	1	8-Sep	Bendella Pondage	dam	BA
Great Crested Grebe	19	22-Sep	Fitzroy Falls Reservoir	water storage	CJC
Great Crested Grebe	3	22-Sep	Terrara (Shoalhaven R)	river	BA
Great Crested Grebe	1	22-Sep	Cordeaux Dam	water storage	RT
Darter	1	16-Aug	Bolong	wetland	BA
Darter	1	24-Aug	Sussex Inlet	estuary	KM
Darter	3	23-Aug	Swan Lake	estuary	KM
Darter	1	9-Aug	Dunmore wetlands	wetland	DG
Striated Heron	1	8-Sep	Hooka Point	riparian forest	CJC
Nankeen Night Heron	5	20-Sep	Orient Point	pine trees	DG
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	1-3	July	Hooka Point	lake edge	DW
Pacific Baza	1	20-Aug	Yallah	powerline	PN
Spotted Harrier	1	Aug	Oak Flats interchange	overhead	JC
Spotted Harrier	1	22-Sep	Killalea SRA	grassland	CJC
Swamp Harrier	1	22-Sep	Worrigea Swamp	wetland	MPP
Brown Goshawk	1	5-Aug	Albion Park Rail	overhead	PF
Grey Goshawk	1	27-Aug	Blackbutt	overhead	CJC
Grey Goshawk	1	1-Sep	Carrington Falls	overhead	CR
Grey Goshawk	1	13-Jul	Windang	overhead	DW
Grey Goshawk	1	13-Sep	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	1-Sep	upper Avon catchment	woodland	CJC
Brown Falcon	1	16-Sep	Oak Flats	overhead	BA
Australian Hobby	1	20-Sep	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Peregrine Falcon	1	25-Aug	Cataract Dam	overhead	RT
Eurasian Coot	1,000+	22-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	lake	DG, BA
Beach Stone-curlew	1	20-Sep	Orient Point	beach	DG
Pied Oystercatcher	1	30-Jul	Consiton	beach	DW
Black-winged Stilt	5	2-Aug	Pattimores Lagoon (Conjola)	wetland	KM
Black-winged Stilt	35	15-Sep	Purry-burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	MPP
Grey Plover	1	21-Sep	Shoalhaven Heads	sandflats	DG
Greater Sand Plover	1	8-Sep	Windang	sandflats	CJC
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	15-Sep	Gerroa	beach	BA
Red-kneed Dotterel	9	18-Jul	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	mud flats	DW
Red-kneed Dotterel	8	15-Sep	Purry-burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	MPP
Australian Pratincole	1	10-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	lake edge	BG
Gull-billed Tern	3	14-Sep	Shoalhaven Heads	sandflats	CP
Gull-billed Tern	2	20-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	beach	DG
Peaceful Dove	1	1-Sep	upper Avon catchment	woodland	CJC
Bar-shouldered Dove	4	13-Jul	Windang	dune forest	DW
Topknot Pigeon	5	20-Sep	Bulli	garden	RT
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	6	18-Aug	Copper Cup (west Culburra)	forest	RT
Gang-gang Cockatoo	14	23-Aug	Cudmirrah	forest	KM
Little Corella	20	2-Aug	Fred Finch Pk, Berkeley	overhead	DW
Common Koel (early)	1	27-Aug	Stanwell Park	urban	PE
Channel-billed Cuckoo (return)	2	7-Sep	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Channel-billed Cuckoo (return)	1	19-Sep	Bulli	overhead	RT, RM

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Southern Emu-wren	2	14-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	lake edge	DM
Southern Emu-wren	2	14-Sep	Sandon Point, Bulli	wetland	DM
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	21-Aug	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Fuscous Honeyeater	2	13-Jul	Windang	dune forest	DW
White-cheeked Honeyeater	several	24-Aug	Sandon Point, Bulli	urban	RT, JM
White-cheeked Honeyeater	4	14-Sep	Sandon Point, Bulli	wetland	DM
Scarlet Robin	1	25-Aug	Albion Park Rail	garden	PF
Rose Robin	1	4-Aug	Gerroa	riparian	MPP
Rose Robin	2	25-Aug	Cataract Dam	woodland	RT
Rose Robin	1	July	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Rose Robin	4	Sept	Bellawongarah	garden/forest	BA
Rose Robin	2	22-Sep	Barrengary Pass	rainforest	CJC
Logrunner	2	13-Sep	Bellawongarah	rainforest	BA
Spotted Quail-thrush	1	23-Aug	Conjola NP	woodland	KM
Crested Shrike-tit	3	19-Sep	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Spangled Drongo	2	27-Jul	Windang	dune forest	DW
Figbird	1-3	Aug	Nowra	urban	BA, KM
Figbird	3	15-Sep	Gerringong	figtrees	BA
Figbird	3	13-Sep	Windang	figtrees	DG
Masked Woodswallow	3	24-Sep	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
White-browed Woodswallow	30	24-Sep	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Little Woodswallow	15	24-Sep	Cordeaux Dam	overhead	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	29-Aug	Cordeaux Dam	woodland	CJC
Green Catbird	?	all Aug	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Green Catbird	1	17-Aug	Foxground	rainforest	KM
Bassian Thrush	?	all Aug	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Bassian Thrush	3	17-Aug	Foxground	rainforest	KM
Bassian Thrush	2	20-Sep	Bulli	garden	RT
Common Blackbird	1	27-Aug	Bellawongarah	rural	BA
Common Blackbird	1	22-Sep	Terrara	rural	BA

Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; GB - Graham Barwell; CJC - Chris Chafer; JC - Joshua Coyte; ME - Mary Eskdale; PE - Peter Ewin; PF - Peter Fackender; DG - Darryl Goldrick; BG - Bob Gosford; BH - Betty Hudson; MJ - Michael Jarman; DM Darryl McKay; RM - Richard Miller; KM - Kevin Mills; JM - Jill Molan; MM - Mike Morphett; PN - Peter Nolan; MPP - Martin & Penny Potter; CP - Chris Presland; CR - Chris Ross; RT - Roger Truscott; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Some pretty amazing records of late. The Australian Pratincole is only the 2nd regional record, with the first coming from Shoalhaven Heads earlier this year. The Beach Stone Curlew was observed on the small beach near the boat ramp at Orient Point where it was observed several times earlier this year. The Little Woodswallow is only the 2nd regional record, the previous was in 1983, also from Cordeaux Dam. An unusually large number of Great Crested Grebe from a number of locations is possibly a result of the worsening inland drought. The Logrunner is from a new location and the first record south of Jamberoo for many years. Although Coot are not rare in the region, a gathering of over a thousand is a pretty spectacular sight. The White-cheeked Honeyeaters at Sandon Point is the only coastal location for this species in the Illawarra. Spotted Harriers at Oak Flats and Killalea are another reflection of the drought, as are the Red-kneed Dotterel from Primbee and Berkeley.

ELECTION OF 2003 OFFICE BEARERS

The election of office bearers for 2003 will be held at the November meeting. All positions including President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and four committee members will be declared vacant. A nomination form is included or nominations can be raised from the floor. Please consider nominating for one of the above positions to assist with the running of your club. Your help would be greatly appreciated.



I.B.O.C. NEWS

Issue No. 254

November 2002

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
Darryl Goldrick 149 Reddall Parade Lake Illawarra 2528 Phone 4296 1316	Roger Bogaert 61 Meehan Drive Kiama Downs 2533 Phone 4237 8742	Betty Hudson 1 Drualla Road Jamberoo 2533 Phone 4236 0307	Bronwyn Wilson 8 Wellington Drive Balgownie 2519 Phone 4283 4744	Mike Morphet 15 Coast Street Thirroul 2515 Phone 4267 3558

President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Darryl GOLDRICK

Aside from our usual Christmas meeting night (9 December) we will be visiting Minnamurra Rainforest for a 4 to 8 pm boardwalk and B-B-O on Friday 6 December. The NPWS has agreed to allow us entry after hours but I have been asked to provide numbers to them. Please ring me or advise me at the November meeting if you intend coming along so I can advise them accordingly. Please don't leave it to me to chase people up - you contact me. If I can't provide the numbers to NPWS the approval will be withdrawn. The arrangements will be notified in the next newsletter but at this stage it will be a 4.00 p.m. start and bring your own food (barbecue or otherwise) and drinks.

I apologise if anyone was inconvenienced with the directions for the last outing to Dharawal Reserve. The newsletter indicated the Maddens Plains turnoff -- it should have read Darkes Forest Rd. Notwithstanding this hiccup six members did arrive and the walk had to be shortened due to the National Parks & Wildlife closure of all walking trails that day due to a high fire danger (the closure included all trails north to Gosford and south to Wollongong).

By the time members receive this newsletter we will be looking forward to the safe return of the campers from Jingellic and reports of their experiences.

The directions for the November outing with Kevin Mills are described further on in the newsletter.

Camp dates for next year have been set as follows:

- 13-17 April
- 18-25 October

The locations are very tentative with the April camp being regionally local (max 3 hrs drive) and the October one being out west (possibly Condobolin/Lake Cargelligo). Setting these dates should allow members to make suitable leave/holiday arrangements well in advance if necessary.

Haven't been inundated with walk/talk suggestions for next year yet---- could be a quiet one if I don't get any.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Club Meeting will be on **Monday 11 November** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at 7.30 p.m. Our guest speaker will be **Kevin Mills**, who will be giving a talk entitled "Butterflies of the Illawarra: the 'Birds' of the Insect World".

Field Outing is on **Saturday 16 November** to the recently dedicated Bangadilly National Park, to the north of Canyonleigh. Meet leader Kevin Mills at 8.00 a.m. just west of the crossroads of the Illawarra Highway and the freeway to Goulburn. Follow the Illawarra Highway through Moss Vale to the overpass with its junction with the Freeway. DO NOT ONLOAD to Sydney or Goulburn; proceed west over the Freeway and park at the safest suitable location on the left-hand side of Canyonleigh Road. Lunch will be at the cars. Several interesting birds have been seen in this area (Kevin has recently completed a survey for the National Parks and Wildlife Service) including Emu, Powerful Owl, Speckled Warbler and Peregrine Falcon.

Midweek Walk has not as yet been decided on. Advice will be given at the November meeting.

Committee Meeting will not be held in December. However there will be one in January, with the date to be announced.

OCTOBER MEETING

Darryl Goldrick

Colin Markham, our guest speaker, gave members a vivid insight into the other passion in his life (aside from his charming wife Melissa and state politics), namely photography of wildlife and in this showing, National Parks and Reserves of the African continent. Colin certainly displayed great photographic skills (and patience) in capturing his subjects with the added constraint of not being able to alight from his vehicle due to the dangers of probable attack from the wild animals.

Col has a particular interest in indigenous cultures and his petroglyphs of San Bushman rock art (Eland gazelle and Sun being the most prominent) were fascinating and not unlike our own ancient aboriginal rock art with their use of ochre.

The birds shown were great and included Pale Chanting Goshawk, Giant Eagle Owl, Secretary Bird, Tawny Eagle, Longtailed Shrike, Burchell's Coucal, Hoopoe, Pied Kingfisher, Little Bee-eater, Redbilled Oxpecker, Doublebanded Sandgrouse, African Fish Eagle and Ground Hornbill .

The Cheetah, Impala, Giraffe, White Rhinoceros and Elephant photos were equally as impressive. A great presentation with an equally impressive collection of photo albums for all to browse through during supper. Our thanks to Col and Melissa for sharing their experiences with us.

MIDWEEK WALK TO MACQUARIE RIVULET

Peggy Merrett

On 16 October fifteen IBOC members met at Brian and Barbara Hales' Shearwater Boulevard address (an excellent one for bird observers) for our half-day walk. It was a wonderful, warm, sunny spring day - with not a cloud in the sky and a gentle north-easterly breeze blowing to keep us cool and keen. Before we headed off we saw a raptor of sorts, high up and seeking its breakfast, but no-one was sure of the species.

This time we headed off to the north, to Macquarie Rivulet, instead of going to Koon Bay as usual and along to Albion Creek. The main path has been concreted over since our last visit, and in a way it is an improvement - not so many tiny stones to find their way into our shoes, but of course there are plenty of enticing small side tracks still surfaced with pinkish decomposed granite.

There were Pied Cormorant and Darter on the water as expected, and a male Superb Fairy-wren hopping around, looking superb as they always do. On the western side of the track there was a dam/lagoon/billabong or whatever covered in red azolla and a bull having a dust bath. With prevailing weather conditions he'd have had trouble if he'd wanted a mud bath.

Aniseed plant looked the freshest and healthiest of all the vegetation and it was followed closely by *Lomandra suave* which was just coming into flower, but not yet living up to its botanical name of 'sweet-smelling'. There were Eastern Rosella brightening the day, as well as Grey Fantail and Striated Heron.

There were lillypilly, two-veined hickory, which just to be confusing often has three veins, and white cedar, which is not a cedar at all but a melia, looking very beautiful dressed in panicles of two-toned purple flowers plus some of last year's yellow berries and a few new season's light green leaves. There were callistemons with red brushes and melaleucas with yellow brushes brightening the path and looking most attractive, not only to us but also to the birds as they'd been busy pruning the blossoms off.

The flood plain across the rivulet is still being built up by coal wash, steel works refuse or whatever and is now higher than the height of the trucks. Under the railway bridge was even drier and dustier than in earlier visits, and the dead trees and rubbish brought down by previous floods were still piled high against its piers.

There were privet and lantana flowering their heads off and a Scotch thistle telling everyone to "touch me not with impurity", but away from the water towards the industrial buildings the gardens were flourishing and the trees are now high enough to block off the sight of the buildings, if not dense enough to block off the noise. The fig tree in its own little circular garden bed looks fine but the river red gums are coming along only slowly as they are badly infected with lerps. There were also weeping willows and coral trees, both foreigners but both looking as if they owned their place in the sun, and an Illawarra flame still in full leaf - no flowers this year, apparently.

contd

A flock of Galah flew overhead and a Reed Warbler in its nest didn't take fright (or flight) as we ambled past. By this time we'd reached the end of the Darcy Dunster Reserve, so we retraced our steps and saw White-naped Honeyeater and Red-browed Finch on the way to Brian and Barbara's where we had morning tea at their delightful barbecue area.

After this break everyone except Esme and myself set off along Koono Bay to Albion Creek. The pair of us, being the senior citizens of the group, decided we'd had enough exercise so we just sat and admired the view, which was delightful. The others were thoroughly pleased with the extra walk.

The day's efforts gave us a total of 56 species, which was excellent and more than last time. Thank you, Barbara, for leading the walk and thank you, fellow walkers, for your company.

From Barbara Jones, Secretary, Far South Coast Birdwatchers

The trip report in IBOC Sept 2002 Newsletter, which included a visit to Callala Treatment Works, reminded me of a similar incident at the Bega Treatment Works several years ago.

I was taking a keen Sydney birder friend for a full day out, showing him the 'hot spots' in my new territory. Last on the list was the Bega STW where the settling ponds can be rewarding. My guest was not able to walk any distance hence the need to drive across the paddocks to reach the ponds. There was no one in attendance and we were out of sight of the gate, which we found locked on completing the day.

The mobile phone, often non-functioning in this area when it is most needed, was getting a signal - the spare phone book in the back finally came into use. The council after hours number directed me to the supervisor's home and I was told he was on holidays but his replacement had the key. Only trouble was he lived further away and at that time was in the pub. Thinking the simple message 'I'm locked in the Treatment Works, with my car and want to get out' would bring results, we settled down to drain the last cups of tea from the thermos and share the remaining food, with no knowledge of how long we would be there. Eventually help arrived from a young man who to this day probably cannot understand why we would want to be there.

My friend assured me that to be locked in the STW signalled membership of an elite group of birdwatchers, so welcome Judith and co - you have joined the famous club!

Barbara Jones

Sunday 20th October appeared a perfect day for birdwatching, but every silver lining has a cloud, in this case the news coming on the radio that National Parks were being closed because of the fire risks arising from the extreme drought. The planned walk was along fire trail 10, which starts 2.4 kilometers up Darkes Forest Road; it was hoped that the small turnout of six brave souls was because of the announced closures, and not through being directed to assemble at Maddens Plains Road (which exists only in the imagination of a certain Club President!) Rather than abandon the proceedings altogether it was decided that a short walk up the fire trail should not pose too great a risk, staying within running (and screaming) distance of the road should a wisp of smoke appear.

The terrain consisted of open sclerophyll woodland with a reasonable understorey but with intermittent evidence of recent fire damage. We sauntered forth and soon crossed the upper reaches of O'Hares creek, wondering where on earth the water was coming from.

The birding peaked early with the sighting overhead of a magnificent Peregrine Falcon, it's blade-like wings at full stretch, soaring imperiously and effortlessly into the distance. Thereafter it was a case of frustratedly trying to trace numerous ventriloquial and invisible woodland birds on each side of the path. Fortunately the lack of distance to cover afforded us the luxury of being able to stake out the birds eluding us, and our patience was rewarded with the sighting of a pair of Rufous Whistlers that would have remained unseen with less time available. Had we stayed all week we might still not have seen the hidden Fan-tailed Cuckoo that taunted us continuously wherever we walked. Slow progress was made along the fire trail, with intermittent sightings of usual suspects such as Yellow Robins, Spinebills, Thornbills and Grey Fantails.

Prudence eventually dictated that we turn back, and the same blistering pace was maintained (about 1km per hour, we later calculated). A White-naped Honeyeater and Diamond Firetail provided new sightings for some, but otherwise the going was sparse. (You know that you are not having the most memorable birdwatching day when a New Holland Honeyeater sets your pulse racing.)

Lunch was taken by the creek and, although replete with food, we were still feeling peckish in the birding department. Terry took a stroll to the other side of Darkes Forest Road and found a path that looked promising, leading north along the boundary fence of an orchard. The rest of the group followed, and immediately a whole new landscape opened up, with the trees doubling in height, the canopy closing in, but with plenty of open grassland around. Within minutes we spotted nine further bird species.

Two Pallid Cuckoos kindly allowed themselves to be studied at fairly close quarters, and an Olive-backed Oriole showed off it's deep green plumage in the sunlight. Another pair of Rufous Whistlers conducted a frenzied, noisy courtship above us. A male Golden Whistler was seen which then flew back to take up incubation duties on its nest. For such a brightly-coloured bird, he became very difficult to spot and remained motionless on the nest. (Who says males can't make good parents?) Satisfied, we returned to our cars, happy to snatch a reasonable bird list (below) from the jaws of cancellation. Special thanks are due to Darryl for leading and for providing us less experienced members with the benefit of his vast knowledge.

contd

Finally, having been derided in *this newsletter* for a lack of clarity when pointing out to others the location of birds I had spotted in the bush, this article would not be complete without a vote of thanks to *that author* (who shall remain nameless, Alison) who, on trying to do likewise, told us that the bird she could see was “in the green tree”. Really narrowed down the search, that – touché!

White-necked Heron	White-naped Honeyeater	Superb Fairy-wren
Peregrine Falcon	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	White-browed Scrubwren
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	New Holland Honeyeater	Yellow-throated Scrubwren
Crimson Rosella	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Eastern Rosella	Eastern Spinebill	Spotted Pardalote
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Golden Whistler	Brown Thornbill
Pallid Cuckoo	Rufous Whistler	Australian Raven
Little Wattlebird	Olive-backed Oriole	Beautiful Firetail
Noisy Friarbird	Eastern Yellow Robin	

BROKEN HILL & KINCHEGA NATIONAL PARK (OUTBACK N.S.W.)

Alison Foley

I am now at Stage Two of becoming a competent bird-watcher (there are 183 stages). Stage 1 consists of an inability to see anything even when it is pointed out to you. Stage 2 consists of being able to locate, at least, some birds on your own but not being able to identify them with 100% certainty. Was it a Richard's pipit or a singing bushlark or even a sparrow? You note down its most outstanding feature ("oo, it's got a red eye") only to find 50 pairs of red eyes staring back at you when you open the book. I know I should be looking at nostrils, lores and alulas but the damned things won't stand still! Certainly not cricket!

David and I recently spent 18 days in Outback Australia, most of it in Broken Hill as David was based at the hospital there for 2 weeks. However, we did have time to spend 4 glorious days and nights camping on the banks of the Darling in Kinchega National Park near the town of Menindee.

I spent most of my days walking around the Hill and the ghost town of Silverton (25k north west) armed with binoculars, bird bible, tape recorder, camera, video camera and diary and staggered round the streets looking for feathered strangers with whom to become acquainted.

The infamous drought currently being experienced has perhaps changed wildlife encounters, both in numbers and species. We were living on Oxide St., in the midst of suburbia, and were delighted to find emus and big red kangaroos often crossed our path. However, locals said this occurrence had never been known in their lifetime. As all creatures struggle to find water and food, they are forced closer to settlements. The most abundant birds in Broken Hill were sparrows, blackbirds, white-plumed honeyeaters, ravens (can't tell them apart) and black kites. The latter divided up the sky between them so there was always one overhead, wherever I went.

Other common town dwellers were the black-faced cuckoo-shrike, yellow-throated miner, little corella and crested pigeon. A trip to Imperial Lakes (5k south-east of town) and Umberumberka Reservoir (40k north-west) produced my first sightings of a musk duck, as well as a plethora of other birds I couldn't positively identify. Firsts for me were the spiny-cheeked honeyeater and apostlebird.

We arrived at Kinchega N.P., courtesy of the Menindee Health Care Service bus, which kindly detoured from its normal route and took us right into the park. Just as the sun was setting, we reached our camping area (one of 34 spread over 22k along the banks of the Darling, which forms the park's eastern border) and were privy to the best camping I've ever had. The majestically deformed river red gums were the venue for an orchestral dawn chorus, which made it impossible to stay in one's sleeping bag a second longer. The gently flowing, Willy Wonka-style chocolate Darling was our umbilical cord, providing us with water for cooling down, cooking, drinking, washing, playing and not least of all, bird watching.

Human presence did not interrupt the daily routine of all the animals that came out of the depths of the park for their morning and evening ablutions. At first light, a pair of emus drank and swam across, the male leading the way. Then, a solitary sheep,

contd - . . .

followed by a small cluster of black-tailed native hens, which, in turn, moved off to make way on the banks for two pairs of amorous black-fronted dotterels. Meanwhile, in the trees, a pair of willie wagtails would see off a threatening crow; despite their name, the brown treecreepers spent the mornings picking through the leaf litter, making their identification initially difficult; and red-rumps and mallee ringnecks flitted in for a brief matudinal visit. The water police was headed by the pelican cruise, which unceasingly patrolled our section of river, night and day. At dusk, they formed a group and, amongst their numbers, was a baby, out for the evenings to learn his trade. We were often reduced to tears of laughter watching him lunge at anything from a fly to a log, invariably missing in his enthusiasm. Darters were also posted on sentinel duties at equal intervals along the river, sitting there most of the day, drying their wings and echoing their ak-ak calls along the watery corridor. Our most faithful companion was an egret, appearing permanently inclined and motionless in the same spot all day, every day. At 1200k from the sea, three silver gulls were a surprising sight. Here, they seemed to know their place - no ugly begging for food. In fact, they made no sound at all, except for the beating of their wings over the water. They insisted on flying along the very centre of the meandering river course and cut no corners.

We took many walks over the few days, the most memorable – a failed attempt to reach the shores of Lake Menindee, which has shrunk over the last 8 years dramatically to now 1% of its size, having serious implications for all the surrounding community – human and animal alike. The lakes provide all the water for Broken Hill and other settlements in a 200k radius. We spent at least 2 hours walking along the lakebed, now a semi-arid plain with vegetation that has grown quite high over the dry years. On the dead trees that poked out of the lake when it was full, the benchmark can be clearly seen and, as it is the same height on all of them, the panorama causes the optical effect of a line drawn across the eyeball, which was quite unnerving. After a few hours, the blue fringe of lake in the distance appeared no nearer as sunset approached, so we reluctantly turned back. However, the journey was worth it for the sight of thousands of emus and kangaroos that inhabit this lakebed to be close to the shrinking waterhole. An impressive sight and one we hope to see again in December. We're going back!

<i>House Sparrow</i>	<i>Little Crow</i>	<i>Rock Dove</i>	<i>Black Kite</i>	<i>Crested Pigeon</i>
<i>Little Corella</i>	<i>Magpie-lark</i>	<i>Galah</i>	<i>Glossy Ibis</i>	<i>Australian Magpie</i>
<i>Welcome Swallow</i>	<i>Emu</i>	<i>Musk Duck</i>	<i>Black Swan</i>	<i>Black-winged Stilt</i>
<i>Willie Wagtail</i>	<i>Darter</i>	<i>Silver Gull</i>	<i>Eurasian Coot</i>	<i>Wedge-tailed Eagle</i>
<i>Peaceful Dove</i>	<i>Blue Bonnet</i>	<i>Grey Teal</i>	<i>Great Egret</i>	<i>Pacific Black Duck</i>
<i>Pied Butcherbird</i>	<i>Blackbird</i>	<i>Pacific Heron</i>	<i>Apostlebird</i>	<i>Mallee Ringneck</i>

<i>Brown Treecreeper</i>	<i>Little Friarbird</i>	<i>Common Starling</i>	<i>Masked Lapwing</i>
<i>Straw-necked Ibis</i>	<i>Crimson Rosella</i>	<i>Australian Pelican</i>	<i>Red-rumped Parrot</i>

<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	<i>Little Black Cormorant</i>	<i>Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater</i>
<i>Yellow-throated Miner</i>	<i>White-plumed Honeyeater</i>	<i>Variiegated Fairy-wren</i>
<i>Sulphur-crested Cockatoo</i>	<i>Black-tailed Native Hen</i>	<i>Black-fronted Dotterel</i>
<i>White-winged Chough</i>	<i>Laughing Kookaburra</i>	<i>Crested Shrike-tit</i>
<i>Pied Cormorant</i>	<i>Australian White Ibis</i>	<i>Australian Wood Duck</i>
<i>Intermediate Egret</i>	<i>White-faced Heron</i>	<i>Australian Shelduck</i>

Unusual Records September - October 2002 Chris J. Chafer

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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	3	1-Oct	Sassafras	rural	CP
Stubble Quail	3	27-Sep	Jaspers Brush	rural	BA
Plumed Whistling-Duck	3	26-Sep	Bomaderry sewage ponds	wetland	BA
Freckled Duck	5	27-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	BA
Pink-eared Duck	2	27-Sep	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	BA
Spotted Harrier	1	28-Sep	Maddens Plains	heath	CJC
Swamp Harrier	1	14-Oct	Killalea Lagoon	overhead	CJC
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	13-Oct	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
Australian Hobby	1	2-Oct	Toolijooa	overhead	CP
Australian Hobby	1	6-Oct	Albion Park Rail	overhead	PF
Australian Hobby	1	14-Oct	Killalea Lagoon	overhead	CJC
Australian Spotted Crake	1	14-Oct	Purry Burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	DG
Latham's Snipe	8	27-Sep	Horsley (Mullet Ck.)	wetland	DG
Grey-tailed Tattler	2	13-Oct	Little Beach, Gerroa	beach	CP
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	30+	14-Oct	Purry Burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	DG
Curlew Sandpiper	10	14-Oct	Purry Burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	DG
Red-kneed Dotterel	12	14-Oct	Purry Burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	DG/MPP
Whiskered Tern	46-50+	28-Sep - 14/10	Purry Burry Point (Primbee)	wetland	MPP/DG
Whiskered Tern	4	14-Oct	Killalea Lagoon	wetland	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	2	10-Oct	Coachwood Park	garden	DP
White-headed Pigeon	2	Sept	Balgownie	garden	TE
Topknot Pigeon	3	Sept	Balgownie	forest	TE
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	2	Sept	Balgownie	garden	TE
Sooty Owl	1	13-Oct	Jamberoo Pass	rainforest	RJ
Noisy Pitta	1	14-Oct	Mt. Keira ring track	rainforest	DF
White-throated Gerygone	1	28-Sep	Bulli (return)	garden	RT
Scarlet Honeyeater	5	13-Oct	Bellawongarah	garden	BA
Scarlet Robin	1	7-Oct	Albion Park Rail	garden	PF
Flame Robin	1	14-Oct	Budderoo Track/Jamberoo Mtn Rd.	woodland	RJ
Zebra Finch	5+	12-Oct	Killalea SRA	grassland	BA
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	12+	12-Oct	Killalea SRA	grassland	BA
Bassian Thrush	2	Sept	Balgownie	garden	TE
Common Blackbird	1	5-Oct	Bargo	urban	PF

Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; CJC - Chris Chafer; TE - Terry Edwell; PF - Peter Fackender; DF - David Fischer; DG - Darryl Goldrick; RJ - Richard Jordan; MPP - Martin & Penny Potter; CP - Chris Presland; DP - David Price; RT - Roger Truscott;

Comment: A shortened back page due to my holiday commitments, but some great records. The Noisy Pitta is the 8th regional record since 1983 and at the same location it was observed in 2000. Plumed Whistling-Duck have turned up again at Bomaderry, only the 6th regional record since 1977. The Freckled Duck are from a new location and only the 12th regional record. The Australian Spotted Crake is rarely recorded from the region (circa 25 records) though it has been previously recorded from Purry Burry Point in the 1980's. With one exception, we have no records of this species between the Shoalhaven River and Lake Conjola despite the large number of freshwater swamps in that area. Emu continue to be observed in the Sassafras region. Chestnut-breasted Mannikin are an elusive species which turn up in grasslands through the coastal plain. The Whiskered Tern from Primbee is the largest aggregation of this species recorded from the region and Martin & Penny were able to get pictures and video of the terns and shorebirds foraging over the algal mats that have formed as the lake begins to dry out. Finally, many of you have sent records of White-necked Heron in the region over the past few months. This species invades coastal areas during dry periods inland and I will produce a summary of these observations later in the year. All records are kept even if they don't make it into this page. They go into the regional annual reports (published on the WEB site) and are submitted to the NSW wildlife atlas and the NSW annual bird report.



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The CIRCULAR of the ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.
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PRESIDENT

Darryl Goldrick
149 Reddall Parade
Lake Illawarra 2528
Phone 4296 1316

VICE PRESIDENT

Roger Bogaert
61 Meehan Drive
Kiama Downs 2533
Phone 4237 8742

SECRETARY

Betty Hudson
1 Drualla Road
Jamberoo 2533
Phone 4236 0307

TREASURER

Bronwyn Wilson
8 Wellington Drive
Balgownie 2519
Phone 4283 4744

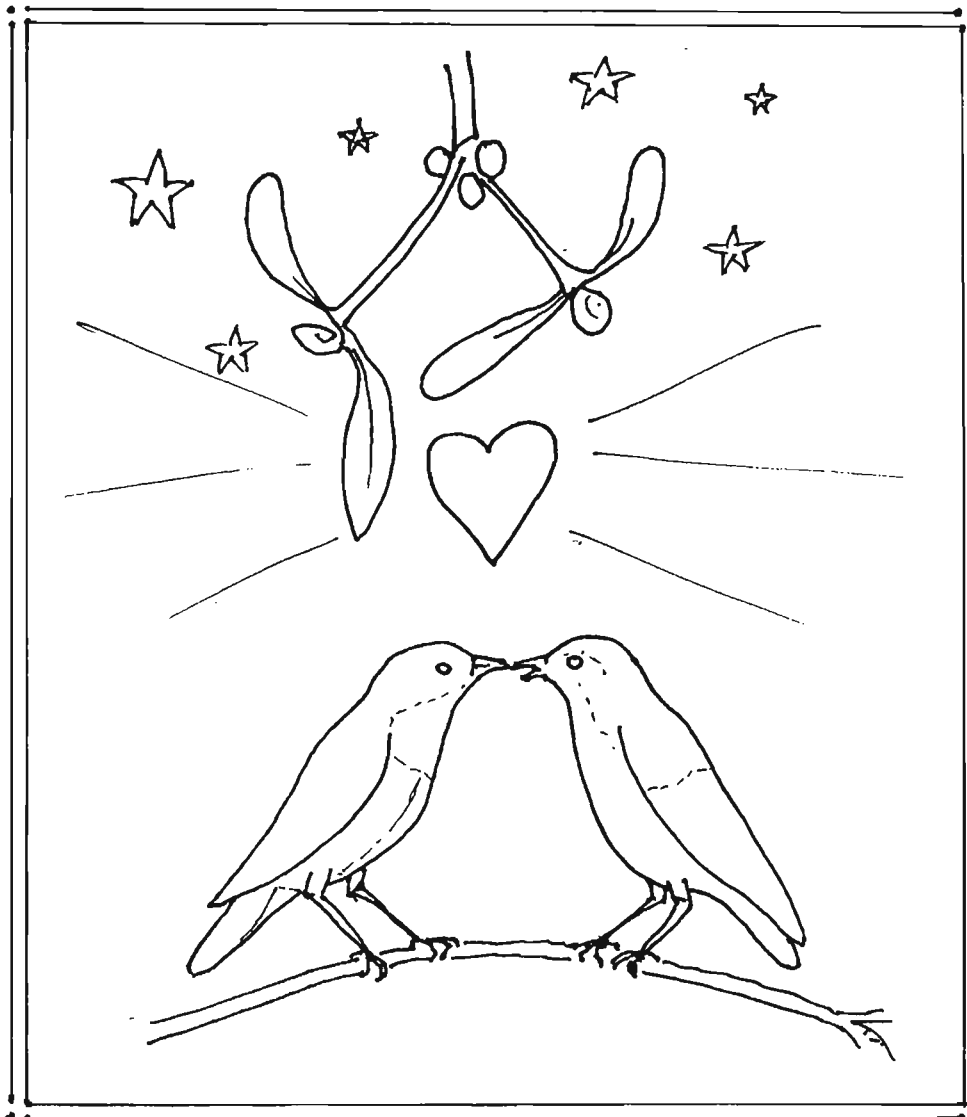
EDITOR

Mike Morphett
15 Coast Street
Thirroul 2515
Phone 4267 3558

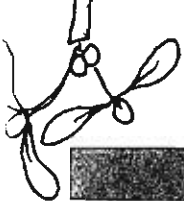
President's email: goldrick@fishinternet.com.au

Secretary's (work) email: bettyhudson@menziesgroup.com.au

Editor's email: lmorphett@speedlink.com.au and work phone no. & fax: 4226 1928 & 4226 9567



CONTENTS 2...A Mistletoe Message. 2&3...President's Annual Report. 3&4...Forthcoming IBOC Events. 4...November Club Meeting. 5...Bangadilly National Park. 6...Cecil Hoskins Nature Reserve. 6&7...Jingellic Camp. 8...Was His Goose Cooked? 8...All the Wildbirds of Australia & New Zealand. 9&10...Unusual Records: Oct-Nov 2002.



EDITORIAL THE MESSAGE

Etymological dissections of the word *mistletoe* have yielded 'birdlime' or 'dung'-on-a-'twig', conjuring up pictures of stickiness and earthiness. Certain birds are the main agents of the plant's propagation, notably the Mistle Thrush in Europe and, more familiar to us in mainland Australia, the Mistletoebird. The latter is a nomadic flowerpecker, which stands lengthways on a branch when depositing its droppings containing the sticky seed, which may then germinate on the host tree. This process underlies the age-long belief that life sprang out of darkness (the original meaning of the Anglo-Saxon *mist*) and by extension death. In Australia there are 85 species of mistletoe. Besides the Mistletoebird, the Brushtail Possum eats its berries, as do the caterpillars of several species of butterfly, including Jezabels and Azures.

There has been much debate as to whether this plant harms trees or, in fact, kills them. The questioning of the good of the mistletoe goes back centuries, but generally with a positive outcome. On account of the colour and sticky consistency of its berry juice, this hemi-parasitic plant has been treated as a sexual symbol. It has also been credited with mystical, magical and medicinal powers of life and fertility, as an aphrodisiac, an antidote against poison (though considered poisonous itself in certain instances) and disease in cattle, and as a protection against evil spirits and the forces of thunder and lightning. Stories abound from the folklore of the Ancient Greeks, Celtic Druids and the Norse. The Norse god Balder was unwittingly slain by his blind brother with a mistletoe dart. The plant was viewed with hatred until Balder was restored to life, when it became an emblem of love instead, reflecting that shown by Frigga, Balder's mother. Over time the mistletoe has generally been viewed as a sign of friendship and goodwill and came to be used as a decoration in the home, particularly at Christmas. In France, though, it has been hung for New Year's Day only. In that country it is named *l'Herbe de la Croix* from the ancient belief that it was poisonous because of its having grown on a tree used to make the cross upon which Jesus Christ was crucified. It was cursed and denied a place to grow in the earth, and so became a parasite.

The custom of kissing under the mistletoe appears to have originated from the Roman Saturnalia festival and also primitive marriage rites. The prevailing etiquette about this practice requires that the man should pluck a berry when he kisses a woman and should stop when the last berry has been picked. Accompanying this is the belief that an un-kissed woman will not marry the following year. According to Scandinavian folklore, whenever enemies met under mistletoe in a forest, they had to lay down their arms and observe a truce until the next day. Perhaps the leaders of countries currently in conflict should convene under a branch of mistletoe in order to achieve peace, but not just for a day though. May IBOC members and their significant others have a terrific, terrorism-free Christmas and 2003.



As the end of the year is close at hand, it is appropriate to reflect on the year 2002's club activities and operations. Being my inaugural presidential year it has been both exciting and challenging, but at the same time hectic and demanding.

I trust that I have succeeded in providing a balanced program for this past twelve months. The key objective was to capture and sustain members' interest with monthly and mid-week walks in a broad range of habitats and a spectrum of guest speakers with a diverse ecological/environmental background. I sincerely thank all the speakers and leaders of walks for their invaluable contribution. A special thanks is extended to Wal Emery, Dave Thomson, Kevin McGregor, and Tom Wylie for their gracious assistance in leading the Easter and October camps.

The mid-week walks proved very popular - my thanks to Barbara Hales and Tom & Joan Wylie, who were regular leaders of these events. The movie night was moderately successful, and I intend to include more of the same in the 2003 program. Thank you to Fae & Kevin McGregor for your input.



We should not forget the 'silent brigade' of helpers in setting up the hall and library and distribution of name tags on meeting nights and the ladies for their sumptuous suppers.

The newsletter has been an outstanding publication, and the club is very grateful to have a dedicated and skilled editor- bravo Mike Morphett. A special thanks to Robyn Wilson and Barbara Hales for their assistance during Mike's absence on holiday. The sightings page is without doubt the most popular section, and I thank Chris Chafer for his 'perpetual' efforts in preparing the back page each month as well as maintaining all records on the main database.

The Committee has been a cohesive group throughout the entire year and has been a tremendous support to me. It has had a few 'sensitive' issues to deal with, and I'm pleased to report that it has resolved these matters with a great deal of integrity, fair-mindedness, and commonsense.

To the new members who joined during the year, I trust that you have felt welcomed and comfortable in your new surroundings - the Club values your membership and continued participation. Our latest additions are Nancy Urban and John Demol: welcome!

I trust that 2003 will be as rewarding as this past year and I wish all members and their families a very Merry Christmas and safe holiday season.

CLUB MEETING will be held on **Monday 9th December** at the Fairy Meadow Community Centre, corner of Cambridge Avenue and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow, commencing at **7.30 pm**. As is our tradition, this will be our annual and informal **Christmas variety get-together**. Those members, plus rels or friends, who would like to be part of the fun, with contributions of singing, recitation, dancing, or any other talent, please contact our President or anyone on the Committee, preferably before the night so that a program can be devised. Don't forget to wear something Christmasy along a birding theme for the usual hat and T-shirt competition. Also bring food items for the festive occasion.

ENTRANCE WALK This will be held on **Wednesday 3rd February 2003** commencing **5.30 pm** at the **Winnah Club** end of the estuary at the car park under the pines. As before, **Darryl Goldrick** will lead the walk, which will be followed by the customary bring-your-own supper under the pines. Hopefully, the walk and victuals won't get washed out like the last occasion. Look out for further details in the February edition of *IBOC News*.

FIELD OUTINGS: (1) As mentioned in last month's newsletter, our pre-Christmas walk and BBQ will be in the **Minnamurra Rainforest** on **Friday 6th December**, commencing at **4.45 pm**. Please note that the main gate will close at 5 pm, so you need to be there beforehand. The Minnamurra Rainforest Centre's barbecue is gas and complies with regulations, even if there is a total fire ban. Members and their guests will assemble at the centre and proceed along the boardwalk before dark (no spotlighting is permitted by the NPWS these days) and return for the barbie. **Peter Kennedy** will be our host. In the event of extreme fire hazard conditions, the centre may be closed. Peter has advised that this will be well publicised on the radio and in the newspapers. If in doubt, ring the centre on 4236.0469.



(2) to **Morton National Park** on **Sunday 12th January 2003**. Meet at **8.30 am** at the **Bundanoon** entrance to the park (not the Glow-worm Glen access) south of the shopping centre, following the signs through the town. There is an honour-system fee for entry. **Bruce O'Brien** will lead the walk in an area yet to be determined. Much will depend on weather and bushfire conditions and the number of walkers. For example, if the park is closed, Bruce will likely explore the parks and streets of Bundanoon, and if that's not viable, he will have some other contingency plan up his sleeve. Bruce can be contacted on 4262.7529 for further details. As usual bring eats and drinks and slip-slop gunk.

COMMITTEE MEETING will be on **Tuesday 21st January 2003** at **7.30 pm** at the home of **Kerri & Alan Lewis** at 14 Tolson Place, Balgownie (Tel 4285.2736). If any member wishes to attend to raise any particular issue, would you please contact the Lowises or any other committee member beforehand.

FEBRUARY 2003 NEWSLETTER: Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* will be **Thursday 23rd January**. [My thanks go to Barbara and Robyn for deputising for me for the October and November issues of our newsletter. – Ed.]

The **AGM** saw the re-election of Darryl Goldrick as President, Roger Bogaert as Vice President, Betty Hudson as Secretary, and Bronwyn Wilson as Treasurer, with committee members Kerri Lewis, Bruce O'Brien, and Tom and Joan Wylie. Of course, any member is welcome to attend a committee meeting or have input into the running of the Club. The Editor remains Mike Morphett, who extends an invitation to anyone who would like to take over this enjoyable and creative role, and Chris Chafer the Records Officer.

The speaker for the evening was fellow member **Kevin Mills**, who enthralled his audience with his new presentation: '**Butterflies of the Illawarra: the 'Birds' of the Insect World**'. The difference between moths and butterflies, under the order of Lepidoptera, is most easily seen in the nobbed antennae of the butterfly whilst moths have variable, often feathery antennae. There are other things such as moths preferring the night, being less colourful, having the wings flat at rest and wings coupled in flight, but there are always exceptions to the rule.

For anyone interested in the field study of butterflies there are now some excellent field guides set out similar to the bird ones. There are five families in the butterfly group and twenty-two in the moths. Of the 385 species in Australia 67 are to be found in the Illawarra, where the numbers peak between October and April. Queensland, due to its tropical conditions, accounts for 86% of the total species, 45% of which are endemic. There are often many sub-species with colour and size variation, like birds, and the identification of some is like separating those LBJs, (Little Brown Jobs), and they do not sit still, hide behind the foliage and are just seen out of the corner of the eye disappearing into the distance.

Kevin's segment on laval food plants was particularly fascinating. Caterpillars of the Common Brown, Australian Admiral, and Wanderer have a preference for kangaroo grass, stinging nettle and cotton bush respectively. The Common Jezebel and Wood White prefer mistletoe, whilst the Blue Triangle and Macleay's Swallowtail have a liking for sassafras and camphor laurel. After giving examples of sexual dimorphism in certain species, Kevin highlighted some of the threats to the butterfly diversity. Like birds, typical threats are destruction of habitat, pesticides and herbicide use, introduced predators and, of course, the human influence on their habitat that affects their breeding cycle. Cars must also kill a lot judging from what is in the grill after a trip through the country side.

The vote of thanks from Kevin McGregor echoed the feeling of all the members for a most interesting talk, and we are sure that many of us will now be looking more closely at those other flying creatures, equally beautiful but more fragile, as we do our birding.



It was a surprisingly cool morning on November 16th that greeted the IBOC members at the car park just over the freeway on the Illawarra Highway towards Canyonleigh. Most of the members, two hardy souls in shorts, had travelled up Macquarie Pass and had hit heavy fog at Robertson. We waited until 8.20 am for any stragglers and then headed off to the newly formed **Bangadilly National Park**. The countryside was showing evidence of the drought gripping our State, with local dams nearly empty and pastures looking very brown. The dust soon covered our convoy as we drove along the dirt road till we arrived at the most northern end of the National Park.

The first walk involved a gentle walk to a lookout, the western-most outcrop of Sydney Basin sandstone, along an easy sandy path. Right from the start birding was easy with all members sighting Brown Thornbills, Grey and Rufous Fantails, White-eared Honeyeaters and White-throated Treecreepers. Above, a Wedge-tailed eagle and a pair of Gang-gang Cockatoos were seen. The path was filled with the Common Brown butterflies, which was marvellous, as Kevin Mills, our leader for the day, had just given us a talk on these creatures earlier in the week. The scats of possums, Common Wombat, and Emu littered the path.

The vegetation was showing evidence of stress. Many of the great eucalypts had long cracks going up their trunks, 'old-man' banksias were dying, and only one lone orchid was spotted. Even the boronias didn't have their usual display of flowers. Kevin explained to the group about the 'saw-cuts' on trees where the Yellow-bellied Glider had attacked the bark looking for food.

The view at the top of the lookout was spectacular. We sat on the rocks overlooking a very brown countryside while we tried to spot a Scarlet Robin heard by Chris Chafer. On the way back the elusive robin was spotted and all (except myself and a couple of other unlucky people) enjoyed seeing it through the scrub. Oh well, maybe next time! Around this area a Varied Sittella was observed. Its actions were a direct contrast to the treecreepers' movements.

The pace was quickened on the way back as the weather, which had been quite cool and at times drizzling, started to rain. It didn't last long, and the ground was only slightly dampened. The 'creaking door' Gang-gang Cockatoos were back and were spotted in the tops of the trees, the male's red colouring making it easy to see.

We arrived back at the cars about 11.30 am, and a decision was made to drive to the next site and have a late morning tea/early lunch. This was back in the direction we had originally driven to a spot where Telecom was laying some cables. A gigantic bulldozer assisted us in entering the park by filling in the open trench, which blocked our way. We drove alongside a private property to reach the park's other entrance. (The park is divided into three separate sections.) Just as we arrived at the lunch spot, an Eastern Grey Kangaroo mother and her joey bounded off. All enjoyed lunch and, leaving Avril Chafer asleep on a blanket, we headed off into the park.

Birding was a little more difficult here, but to our delight a Grey Shrike-thrush was spotted sitting on a nest inside a hollow of a tree. She sat there for ages, but took off as the cameras came out. (Obviously not a movie star!) Common Ringtail Possum dreys were spotted in trees. Leader Kevin gave his best goanna impersonation (apologies to K. Packer) by shaking a grey-bearing casuarina, but to no avail. A little later a Swamp Wallaby was disturbed out of hiding and hurriedly bounded away. We stopped to inspect a lightning-struck tree that had all but disintegrated with the explosion.

We arrived back on the track where the cars were parked a little distance away. While standing on the road, we saw a Short-beaked Echidna scuttling as fast as its little legs could go across this same road just down the hill. The return trip along the road yielded Tree Martins in the adjacent paddocks. We arrived back at the cars about 2.30 pm to see 'Sleeping Beauty' Avril had moved into the car, still fast asleep! Because of prior arrangements to attend to that afternoon, I was unable to continue on with the group to Cecil Hoskins Nature Reserve. In all a total of 43 bird species were noted, and all agreed that this new walk had been extremely interesting. A big thank-you to Kevin Mills for arranging and leading the walk and to everyone for their company.



A postscript to Kerri's report on the Bangadilly walk. It was agreed that we should call into this wetland given it was on our way home, and what a bonanza it turned out to be! In all 48 bird species were sighted, including 3 Freckled Duck, Great Crested Grebe, Whistling Kite, Long-billed Corella, Australasian Shoveler, and White-necked Heron. Interestingly, the water level in the wetland appeared unaffected by the drought conditions.

I dropped into Wingecarribee Reservoir [not literally we hope - Ed.] on his way home and recorded 30 Great Crested Grebe at this location.

In the interests of saving space and paper, the full bird lists for this and other outings reported in this issue of *IBOC News* have not been incorporated. Should you require a copy, please contact myself or Mike Morphet.

The drive down the Hume Highway through drought-ravaged fields was depressing. We turned at Holbrook, heading east to Jingellic. We climbed the range steadily for about 40 km and, on reaching the top, were confronted with a breathtaking sight of green hills, grassy paddocks and trees. Healthy cows were munching contentedly on the grass. Such a wonderful contrast!

Our camp was held at 'Illawong', a property 5 km down-river from Jingellic and set up on the banks of the Murray River. This was the same place as our 1986 Easter Camp, which was a great success. The huge trees around our campsite were alive with birds and their calls. Some of the species were Dollarbirds, Striated Pardalotes, Rufous Whistlers, White-throated Gerygones, Grey Fantails, Crimson Rosellas, Red-rumped parrots and Gang-gang Cockatoos. Tree Martins were busy nesting in the sandy river-bank. The campsite had been surveyed earlier by Darryl, Kevin and Tom. Then five members, Betty, Bronwyn, Graham, Tom and Joan set up camp a few days earlier and they surveyed more walks. They had identified almost 70 bird species before we all arrived. Their best find was the Western Gerygone, new to some and was seen again by most members.

Joe, the owner of 'Illawong', is still the same happy character and visited us for a chat. Now much older, his son Curley manages the property and was most helpful. He provided us with the most ingenious hot water system, which was set up on part of the dried river bed. He is also the local fire officer and kept us informed when it was safe to light a fire under the drum. We sat around this fire at night to call the bird list and generally chat. The night skies were velvety black, lit with brilliant stars. One night we counted eight satellites going over in different directions.

On Saturday we welcomed three vans of the intrepid travellers who had been birding and atlassing in some of the driest areas in South Australia and Victoria for the past seven weeks. They were happy to rest in this green oasis. Unfortunately, Dave had to leave after a few days, followed by Ziggy and Lillo. Lillo suffered badly with hayfever from the variety of grasses. With three of the early arrivals who had to return to work, they were all missed by us.

A morning walk to a spot several kilometres downstream revealed a good variety of birds. Examples were Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Noisy Friarbird, Crested Shrike-tit, Mistletoebird, Golden Whistler, Red-browed Finch, Red-capped Robin, White-throated Treecreeper and Brown Falcon.



Next trip by car was to the Victorian side to a ridge. We gazed in awe at the green hills and valley. In the distance the Murray River turned and flowed eastward for a few kilometres. Looking down on Plants Lagoon and surrounding small lakes, we saw many water-birds: Hardheads, Australian Shelducks, Grey Teals, Australian and Hoary-headed Grebes, Purple Swamphens and Eurasian Coots, just to name a few. A Buff-rumped Thornbill, sitting on its nest in a tussock up from the roadside, evoked great interest while efforts were made to identify it.

We had morning tea in town by the river and added Mallards and Australian Pelicans to the list with the Brown Falcon and Little Eagle. Then back to camp for a swim for some and a leisurely lunch, while watching Black-fronted Dotterels, searching for food on the riverbank, Little Black Cormorants drying on river logs, and a White-faced Heron stood quite still surveying us. Sheer bliss! Two Masked Lapwings kept reminding us of their presence; they spoil the solitude somewhat.

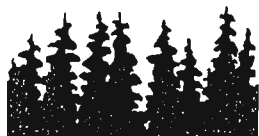
On Wednesday we had a day trip to Burrowa Pine National Park in Victoria. On the way to Bluff Falls, we explored a couple of the walking tracks in the park. White-throated Gerygones were feeding their young in a nest. An Echidna wandered across the path, but quickly curled itself into a defensive ball of spines. We lunched at Bluff Creek picnic area, a pretty spot adjacent to the creek and full of birdlife: Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Dusky Woodswallow, Satin Bowerbird cadging a handout from our table, and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike sitting on its nest. A short walk showed up Olive-backed Oriole, Sacred Kingfisher and Eastern Spinebill, just to name a few again. Afterwards we visited the picturesque Bluff Falls, where we added the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo to our now growing list of birds.

Friday: our last birding day. We spent that morning on a nearby farm and the heavily wooded area of the adjacent small mountain range. Here was plenty of evidence of mining carried out early last century and again in the late 1970s. The farmer gave us the rundown on its history, telling us that tungsten and tin were mined. This was an excellent area for birds – Fuscous Honeyeater, Jacky Winter, Varied Sittella, with the White-naped Honeyeater being the last bird to be added to the trip list, bringing the total to 109, one more than our trip sixteen years ago.

Not only was this a serious birding trip, it was also a fun holiday. On Melbourne Cup Day we held a sweep and were able to watch the race on Ron and Rita's TV. Not only that, but some of the race day's hats were most ingenious: from Nola's and Pat's hats, highly decorated with leaves, Robin's high fashion and hard to describe, and Joan's tea cosy-type with feathery grass. Even the men got into the act, with Tom's hat hung with fishing lures and John's with bark; both dangerous-looking. Even Laurie wore a smart bow tie. Joan won the sweep and, with her "huge" winnings, treated us all to after-dinner chocolates when we dined at the local hotel on Thursday night.

The most fun was with Tom's canoe, which he sometimes used for fishing. There was always someone taking it up-river for a quick trip down. The swimming was led by John and Robin, our new members and enthusiastic campers. The current was strong, but it was good to cool off on the hot days after bird walks. Upstream on Thursday the Khancoban Dam was opened to let out the melting snows from the Snowy area. The swift-flowing Murray River rose about a metre, going against the drought trend where elsewhere rivers, creeks and dams are drying up.

So with all this, we were in the most delightful place. We broke camp on Saturday. Probably speaking for all the seventeen campers, Tom declared we would certainly be here again much sooner than it took us this time.



Remember ~~Vetrinarian~~ ~~Veternarian~~ ~~Veter~~ Dog Doctor, Mike Cannon, at our August 2002 club meeting, showing us an X-ray of a Diamond Python containing the remains of a Ringtail Possum? There'd been a radio collar around the possum's neck; the collar was still inside the snake and was still "beeping".

Well, there was recently in the press a story about a Brent Goose, called Kerry, which was one of six released near Ireland and being tracked by satellite on their migration to the Canadian Arctic. Kerry negotiated 7240 km and appeared to come to a halt on Cornwallis Island. The people managing the tracking, the British-based Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, co-opted a local researcher with a hand-held radio tracker to try to find the goose. The beeps led him to an Inuit's home and eventually to his freezer, where lay the goose, still unplucked and still wearing the \$A8600 radio tracker and still "beeping". The Inuit had been out hunting and had shot the goose on another island, Bathurst Island. Kerry's last move while being followed by the satellite tracker had been the islands and in the Inuit's boat, dead.

Dave sent in this small story of unknown source. His introductory sentence alludes to the first slide accompanying Mike Cannon's talk, which was of a coffee mug bearing an inscription, something like "I'm proud to be a etc, etc" in the fashion of the "world's best fisherman".

Kerry's demise reminds me of one of the secular songs, *Olim lacus colueram*, from Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, based on a late 13th century manuscript collection of songs (mostly in Latin) found in a monastery at Benediktbeuern in southern Bavaria.

In the second of three main sections of Orff's work, entitled *In the Tavern*, amid the drinking and gambling with dice, a solo tenor imagines himself, while gazing into his cup, to be a roast swan on the table ready for carving: "Once I dwelt on lakes, once I was beautiful when I was a swan... Now black and roasting fiercely! The kitchen-lad turns and turns the spit again... Now on a dish I lie, and cannot fly. I see champing teeth." Fortune is perceived as a cruel mistress, and drowning one's sorrows considered the best way to cope with her fickleness, which is the general theme of the work. Enjoy your Christmas Day as you dive into a bottle or two of 'Cold Duck' and gobble down your roast turkey! – Ed.

The title is the name given to a collection of 170 gouache paintings created by environmental artist, Kevan Henry Hardacre over about a five-year period, which can be seen at the *Art on Argyle Gallery & Café*, Old Post Office, Menangle Street, Picton. The gallery is owned by his son, Mark. Some 1200 birds have been depicted in full colour in groups of five to eight, posturing, mostly on foliage. Kevan, now in his mid-seventies, is quoted to be keen to promote a "wider interest in art, this land and our beautiful birdlife". His art clearly demonstrates his passion for birds. His *Buddha and Blue Magpies* was my favourite on display. Kevan has bequeathed his work to the Australian Museum, where he has been a frequent visitor to study bird specimens, augmented by his field trips to observe birds in the wild.

Special arrangements, including discounts, are possible for IBOC members in the purchase of art or artgift prints from Kevan's collection. In addition, letter cards and tapestries can be bought, and a 'delicious meal' had on the Old Postmaster's Verandah with a 'free coffee of choice'. For sale there are also works by other artists. For further details phone/fax 02.4677.1034 or email: hardacre@acay.com.au. According to Mark, Kevan, who resides at Neutral Bay, would be very keen to speak to IBOC about his bird art. Rather than have him attend one of our Monday meetings, I strongly recommend that, as a group, we visit him at the gallery, where we can view and discuss his compositions for a few hours, followed by lunch and a field outing in the Picton area, where Mark himself lives.



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

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Emu	1+ 6ch	11-Oct	Sassafras	paddock	KM
Australian Brush-turkey	2	18-20 Oct	Keiraville	urban	MPP, MJ
Australian Brush-turkey	1	28-Oct	Stafford's Farm, Mt. Kembla	forest	MJ
Blue-billed Duck	1	4-Nov	Toolijooa	farm dam	CP
Freckled Duck	3	29-Oct	Cecil Hoskins Reserve	wetland	LS
Canada Goose	1	17-Oct	Shoalhaven Heads	estuary	LS
Pink-eared Duck	2	10-Nov	Warrawong	wetland	CJC
Jouanin's Petrel	1	27-Oct	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Great Crested Grebe	30+	15-Nov	Wingecarribee Reservoir	lake	DG
Grey-backed Storm-Petrel	1	27-Oct	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Black Bittern	1	19-Oct	Cudmirrah	estuary	KM
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	3	13-Nov	Orangeville	farm dam	CJC
Pacific Baza	2	18-Oct	Barren Grounds NR	forest	BN, JC
Pacific Baza	2	14-Nov	Kangaroo Valley	woodland	BV
Spotted Harrier	1	9-Nov	Kemblawarra	paddock	CJC
Swamp Harrier	1	3-Nov	Lake Wollumboola	overhead	CJC
Swamp Harrier	1	2-Nov	Broughton Village	overhead	BA
Brown Goshawk	1	22-Oct	Cringila	overhead	BA
Brown Goshawk	1	5-Nov	Spring Ck., Kiama	wetland	BA
Grey Goshawk	2	7-Oct	Windang (male - white phase)	dune forest	DW
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	27-Oct	Mt. Murray	forest	GB
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	31-Oct	Cambewarra Mountain	overhead	BA
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	31-Oct	Cambewarra Mountain	overhead	BA
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	1-Nov	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	15-Nov	Tongarra	overhead	AC
Brown Falcon	2	20-Oct	Crooked River, Gerringong	overhead	BA
Brown Falcon	2	6-Nov	upper Avon catchment	woodland	CJC
Brown Falcon	2	15-Oct	Sassafras	woodland	KM
Brown Falcon	1	2-Nov	Broughton Village	overhead	BA
Peregrine Falcon	1	30-Oct	Calderwood	overhead	DG
Buff-banded Rail	3	9-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CJC
Buff-banded Rail	1	10-Nov	Kanahooka	wetland	CJC
Baillon's Crake	3	31-Oct	Blackbutt Reserve (dam)	wetland	CB
Latham's Snipe	2	10-Nov	Warrawong (Kully Bay)	wetland	CJC
Black-tailed Godwit	1	3-Nov	Comerong Island	mudflats	SB
Marsh Sandpiper	7	9-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CB
Great Knot	3	3-Nov	Lake Wollumboola	lake edge	CJC
Red Knot	50	3-Nov	Comerong Island	mudflats	SB
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	13-17-Oct	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	LS, GB
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	18-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CJC
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	600+	9-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CJC
Curlew Sandpiper	54	9-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CJC
Black-winged Stilt	125	9-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CJC
Hooded Plover	2	31-Oct	Berrara (breeding)	beach	MJ
Red-kneed Dotterel	4	10-Nov	Warrawong	wetland	CJC
Long-tailed Jaeger	3	27-Oct	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Gull-billed Tern	1	3-Nov	Shoalhaven Heads	sandflats	CJC
White-fronted Tern	2	29-Oct	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Common Tern	6	5-Nov	Werri Beach	beach	BA
Little Tern	125	3-Nov	Comerong Island	sandflats	CJC
Whiskered Tern	1	13-Oct	Lake Wollumboola	lake edge	GB
Whiskered Tern	13	23-Oct	Little Lake	wetland	GB
Whiskered Tern	150+	18-Nov	Windang Peninsula	lake edge	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	15	12-Oct	Saddleback Mountain	rural	KM
White-headed Pigeon	1	4-Nov	Corrimal	garden	JD
White-headed Pigeon	3	11-Nov	Corrimal	garden	PM
White-headed Pigeon	6	Nov	Farmborough Heights	garden	NU



Peaceful Dove	1	21-Oct	Vincentia	woodland	KM
Bar-shouldered Dove	7	7-Oct	Windang	dune forest	DW
Topknot Pigeon	29	3-Nov	Stanwell Park	overhead	MPP
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	15-Nov	Fire Rd. 6A, Cordeaux catchment	forest	CJC
Long-billed Corella	6	30-Oct	Calderwood	rural	DG
Long-billed Corella	9	10-Nov	Kanahooka	parkland	CJC
Long-billed Corella	20+	5-Nov	Bomaderry Sewage Farm	wetland	DG
Eastern Ringneck	2	Nov	Dapto shopping centre	urban	BO
Turquoise Parrot	9	6-Nov	1km n Stockyard Swamp, Avon R	woodland	CJC
Pheasant Coucal	1	1-Nov	Maddens Plains	heath	KMa
Red-browed Treecreeper	9	4-Nov	Macquarie Hill	forest	CJC
Southern Emu-wren	2	4-Nov	Macauley Beach, Thirroul	wetland	IM
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	24-Oct	Bellawongarah	forest	BA
White-plumed Honeyeater	3	22-Sep	Nth Wollongong, Achilles Ave.	urban	GB
White-plumed Honeyeater	2	Nov	Berkeley High School; nesting	parkland	AL
Scarlet Robin	1	15-Oct	Sassafras	rural	KM
Red-capped Robin	2	28-Oct	Fire Rd. 6F, Cordeaux catchment	woodland	KMa
Logrunner	1	24-Oct	Bellawongarah	rainforest	BA
Logrunner	1	13-Oct	Tarrawanna escarpment	rainforest	JD
Varied Sittella	4	21-Oct	south Nowra	forest	KM
Leaden Flycatcher	1	30-Oct	Primbee	dune forest	DG
Spangled Drongo	2	13-Oct	Windang	dune forest	DW
Spangled Drongo	1	26-Oct	Wollongong Botanical Gardens	parkland	MJ
White-winged Triller	1	30-Oct	Primbee	field	DG
White-winged Triller	4	6-Nov	upper Avon catchment	woodland	CJC
Figbird	3	Nov	Berkeley High School	parkland	AL
Masked Woodswallow	6	Oct	Vincentia	heath	MJ
Masked Woodswallow	100s	6-Nov	upper Avon catchment	woodland	CJC
Masked Woodswallow	20+	24-Oct	Gerringong	overhead	KM
Masked Woodswallow	20+	9-Nov	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
White-browed Woodswallow	500+	Oct	Vincentia	heath	MJ
White-browed Woodswallow	100s	6-Nov	upper Avon catchment	woodland	CJC
White-browed Woodswallow	200+	23-Oct	Little Lake	overhead	GB
White-browed Woodswallow	80+	4-Nov	HMAS Albatross	overhead	CP
White-browed Woodswallow	20+	9-Nov	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
Dusky Woodswallow	6	30-Oct	Primbee	golf course	DG
Dusky Woodswallow	9	6-Nov	Stockyard Swamp	woodland	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	6-Nov	Chalker's Crossing, Nepean R	woodland	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	10-Oct	Maddens Plains	heath	JD
Green Catbird	1	13-Oct	Tarrawanna escarpment	rainforest	JD
Brown Songlark	1	8-Nov	Meroo Meadow	rural	KM

Contributors: BA - Bob Ashford; GB - Graham Barwell; SB - Simon Blanchflower; CB - Chris Brandis; AC - Avril Chafer; CJC - Chris Chafer; JC - Josh Coyte; JD - John Demol; DG - Darryl Goldrick; MJ - Michael Jarman; AL - Alan Lewis; PM - Peter Milburn; KM - Kevin Mills; KMa - Kylie Madden; IM - Ian McKinlay; PM - Peg MacInlay; MPP - Martin & Penny Potter; CP - Chris Presland; LS - Lindsay Smith; DP - David Price; RT - Roger Truscott; NU - N. Urban; BV - Barry Virtue; DW - David Winterbottom

Comment: Good to see new members contributing to this column, and there were too many records to publish everyone's observations. Two potential new birds for Australia (subject to acceptance by Australian Rarities Committee) are reported above. The Canada Goose, which appears to have come from the New Zealand population, and the Jouanin's Petrel, which normally occurs in the northern Indian Ocean. Plenty of regional goodies too, especially the Bazas and Woodswallows, Coucal, Red-capped Robin, a new location for Logrunner, breeding Emu, Turquoise Parrot, another Spotted Harrier, lots of shorebirds, and a huge influx of Whiskered Tern to Lake Illawarra. It seems that Pacific Baza are becoming regular summer visitors to the region and moving south. Eastern Ringnecks had a small breeding population in Horsley a couple of years ago, but the above record is the first I've had this year. The Bar-shouldered Doves appear to be consolidating their population in the Windang-Primbee dune forest. The Whiskered Terns from the Lake are by far the largest number ever recorded to visit our region. Finally the Spangled Drongo were quite late leaving this year. Keep those records coming in over summer.

