



*"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"*

I.B.O.C. NEWS

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

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 289 February 2006

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$25 SINGLE \$20 JUNIOR \$5
Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, would be delighted to see you, and take a load off your mind !

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS February 2006

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 8th February. 5.30pm – Wingdang. Leader Chris Brandis. Meet under the pine trees on the north side of Windang Estuary, east of the bridge, at 5.30pm. Our tradition is to bring a picnic supper for after the walk. At Windang take Acacia St east off Windang Rd, then take second right (south), Waratah St. Ahead will be the combined entrance to Windang caravan Park & Windang Surf Club. Follow the arrow towards the surf club and meet at the eastern end of the Norfolk Island Pines.

CLUB MEETING – Monday 13th February - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall Nic and Daphne van Oudshoorn talking about & showing 'Birds (and Insects ?) of Zimbabwe.' Don't forget to bring a mug (No, ladies, that is not your spouse !) and a small plate for supper afterwards.

FEBRUARY MONTHLY OUTING – Saturday 18th February –Abraham's Bosom – Currawong Leader – Betty Hudson Meet at 8.00am in the shopping centre car park at the junction of the Princes Hwy and Greenwell Point Rd. We will then drive to Currarong to start the walk. Features of the reserve are its beach, natural rock pool, creek and scenic walking tracks. Remember to bring a carry lunch, sunscreen and insect repellent. This is an early start to miss the hottest part of the day. Members may like to know it has been seven years since we last did this walk.

Our apologies to Chris Chafer, our Records Officer, for missing out on recording his name in the News.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 21st February 2006, at 7.30pm at the home of Val Dolan, 26 Morandoo Ave, Mt Keira (4229 6737). Turn off Mount Keira Road at Yates Ave, first right heading down hill. All members welcome.

March 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Thursday 24th February**. Procrastinate no longer ! Please submit your contributions early and where possible, submit by email.

From Your Committee	
Finance Balance of IBOC account on 31.12.05 was \$1,529.22. Income \$118.00. Expenses \$96.45	Currently we borrow one from SOSA. Thoughts?
Unusual Sightings Betty Hudson volunteered to collate sightings from our Sightings book and send to Chris Chafer.	Camps Dates for our two Camps are 22 – 29 April at Tumut. 4 hours drive. approx 21 – 28 October, probably in the Myall Lake – Bulladellah area.
Digital Projector Discussion on - to buy for the club or not ? Cost is about \$1000, which would halve our Term Deposit.	Program The Club program for this year has been roughed out, and will be firmed up, and appear in the March IBOC News

Bellambi Lagoon Wanderings 14-12-05

Neil Wheway

Twelve wanderers met at the boat ramp on a not too hot, crystal clear morning. It was high tide with a fairly big swell pushing on to the rocks and sand. This caused some inconvenience for the Silver Gulls and Ruddy Turnstones foraging along the narrow strip of sand left by the high tide.

We walked off in an anticlockwise direction across the cricket oval towards the bush regeneration area that Alan and Anne Cousins have been working in, helping to restore it back to native vegetation. They pointed out one section that they had replanted with two hundred shrubs and trees. Alan explained some of the problems with digging out the noxious weeds, particularly the infestation of asparagus fern and bitou bush. Using roundup has limited control on the asparagus fern, it is hoped to have low level helicopter spraying of the bitou bush. Alan also pointed out two shady spots used for morning tea breaks obviously well used. We wandered through this area of weeds and now regrowing with tea tree and wattle and were rewarded with sightings of Dollar Birds; we reckoned all up about \$20 worth. Flashing of the Sacred Kingfisher was spotted by some, and also in this area were Black-faced Cuckoo Shrikes. After struggling up the steep sand hills we were rewarded with ocean views and a welcome cool breeze.

Wandering past the lagoon we spotted a Royal Spoonbill, Eurasian Coot and White-faced Heron to name a few water birds. Morning tea was taken in a shady spot: the moans and groans of getting down to sit on the grass was a musical symphony. Tom presented Jude with a cake for her 70th birthday followed by singing happy birthday. During our break a Wedge-tailed Eagle was soaring high in the distance and a Grey Goshawk flew overhead.

Back at the car park a Sooty Oyster-catcher was sun baking on rocks. Our morning finished with a short stroll around the headland where we spotted Crested Terns feeding on the receding tide. Our thanks to Tom and Joan for leading the morning walk.

It may have been the time of the year but also spotted were three French Hens, two Turtle Doves, and a Partridge in a pear tree.\To all club members a Happy New Year and good bird spotting for 2006.

Australian Pelican	Silver Gull	Willy Wagtail
Great Cormorant	Kelp Gull	Eastern Whipbird
Little Black Cormorant	Crested Tern	Golden-headed Cisticola
White-faced Heron	Crested Pigeon	Superb Fairy Wren
Royal Spoonbill	Sulphur Crested Cockatoo	White-browed Scrubwren
Mallard	Rainbow Lorikeet	Little Wattlebird
Chestnut Teal	Sacred Kingfisher	New Holland Honeyeater
Dusky Moorhen	Dollarbird	Eastern Spinebill
Grey Goshawk	Welcome Swallow	Silvereye
Wedge tailed Eagle	Richard's Pipit	House Sparrow
Eurasian Coot	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Common Starling
Sooty Oystercatcher	Red-whiskered Bulbul	Common Myna
Masked Lapwing	Eastern Yellow Robin	Australian Magpie-lark
Black-fronted Dotterel	Golden Whistler	Australian Magpie
Ruddy Turnstone	Grey Fantail	Australian Raven

Roger, on Report!

The President's Report at the AGM, November 2005. (Slightly edited)

The past year saw the Illawarra Bird Observer's Club experience an active and exciting birding program suitable for all ages. It included monthly Wednesday and weekend walks led by experienced and committed members. Locations visited included Barren Grounds and Primbee Dunes.

Members had the opportunity to meet with other clubs and non-profit organisations, for example, participating in the bird survey at Lake Illawarra conducted for the Illawarra Lake Authority. The Club has been fortunate to have had speakers at our meetings who have been informative and stimulating.

The Committee is currently exploring strategies to increase our club membership. This includes the creation of a web-site outlining the club's activities.

The financial status of the club is in sound hands, thanks to our Treasurer, Bronwyn Wilson, who has kept a tight reign on our spending.

The Club consults on bird issues with the Big Interest Group Network, or *Bignet*. The group has a direct link with the major bird organisation, namely Bird Australia. A representative has attended meetings to raise various environmental matters on our behalf.

Looking to the Future - An Expression of Interest has been submitted to the Illawarra Lake Authority, on our behalf. The Authority is constructing a Bird Study centre at Warrawong and is looking for interested clubs to participate in organising bird programs for the community.

On behalf of the club and myself, I thank the members of the Committee for their support and commitment. Special thanks to the many individual members who carry out various tasks in the club.

Without their involvement, we would not function so efficiently. I would also like to thank Chris Chafer who each month collates the 'Unusual Bird Sightings', Chris Brandis, who has many roles including representing the club at numerous meetings: and Betty and Mike Morphet and Penny Potter, who give many hours of their time to ensure the birding program is interesting and informative.

To new members who joined us in 2005, welcome. We look forward to you becoming active members in 2006. Finally, the Club cannot exist or function without the active participation of all the members, whether old or new. I hope 2006 will be as exciting and interesting as 2005 !

R Bogaert President

April School Holiday Camp 22nd to 29th April 2006

The camp will be at Tumut Riverglade Caravan Park, which is situated on the banks of the Tumut River on Snowy Mtns Hwy, 1 km west of Tumut Post Office.

Bookings need to be made direct to Riverglade on 02 6947 2528, mentioning that you are with I.B.O.C. The last remaining 6 cabins have been provisionally booked in Betty Hudson's name and you need to mention this. These cabins are only reserved until end February so act quickly.

Powered sites \$20 per night for 2, \$8 for each extra person (7th night free) Plenty of sites.

Unpowered sites \$16 per night for 2, \$8 for each extra person (7th night free) Plenty of sites.

Cabins with ensuite \$60 per night for 2 \$8 for each extra person. Largest cabins sleeps 6 people.

Members intending to go to the camp must make their own booking and payment arrangements with Riverglades. Please advise Betty H if you are booking a cabin so that the ones not booked by early March can be cancelled. All members intending to attend are requested to put their names on the list at the club meetings or to notify Betty on 4236 0307 or by email.

If Caravan Park cabins do not appeal there is a great variety of accommodation available in Tumut. Contact Betty or visit Tumut's web site for more information.

More information and a map in the March newsletter.

Bits and.....

Birds Australia, Southern NSW and ACT group are holding their 2006 Seminar on Saturday 25 March 2006 at 1pm, at the Newington Armory, Sydney Olympic Park. '**Birds in the Urban Landscape**' is the seminar title. You are most welcome. More information and bookings at BASNA (02) 9436 0388 or email rosella63@bigpond.com or at PO Box 1322, Crows Nest NSW 1585

The Christmas Do !

A great time was had by all at the December meeting. The often shy and retiring Kevin McGregor overcame his reserve and with much aplomb guided us handsomely through the entertainment. Brian and Barbara Hales organized a mostly bird quiz, with some esoteric questions thrown in. Martin Potter and Roger Truscott scored the most correct answers, with Roger taking out the decider. Another quiz, identifying bird calls heard in Neil and Tera Wheway's Dapto garden, was won by Peter Fackender

Anne Cousins read a delightful poem about the Christmas turkey being recycled for the 12 days of Christmas, and this scribe contributed two poems. Fae McGregor told some good tall stories, and showed us how to make origami camellias. Some of our creations looked like camellias, others had a distinctly individual look. Jude Parkinson's effort looked like a teeny weeny, itsy bitsy bikini top ! There were more creations on show in the hats and tee shirts. Judy Baker had further added to her club shirt, which now sports several beautifully embroidered birds.

Some great photos from the recent camp were shown and supplied by Brian Hales, Daphne and Nic van Oudtshoorn (excellent insect shots too !), and Josh Coyte (great high flying raptors !)

At supper, Peg McKinlay cut a beautiful cake made by Norma Almond, and there were delights a plenty spread on the table for us. President Roger thanked everyone for coming and especially all who contributed to the entertainment and the supper.



Munch, munch, munch, and still the Christmas cake to come! Betty, Barbara, Brian, Martin and Peg.
Photo: Alan Cousins

Egrets

Once I travelled through a quiet evening,
I saw a pool, jet black, and mirror still.
Beyond, the slender paperbarks were crowding
each on its own white image, looked it's full.
And nothing moved, save thirty egrets wading,
Thirty egrets in a quiet evening.

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

Judith Wright.

BIRDING ABROAD The Zemplin Hills David and Elizabeth Winterbottom May2000

These Hungarian hills are part of the Central Carpathians, the longest and very beautiful volcanic range of mountains of Europe. It features vineyards and the famous Tokay wines. The Zemplin Hills have dense Oak and Beech forests interspersed with upland meadows. In the forest a White-backed Woodpecker made repeated visits to a hole in a dead beech limb. It landed above the hole and backed down. Presumably it had young. Nearby a Black Woodpecker flittered away.

The racket overhead turns out to be some Ravens mobbing an Imperial Eagle both giving as good as they got. Later, the Ravens mobbed a Goshawk so they were having a busy day.

Most exciting was a clear view of a magnificent Ural Owl, which is near the edge of its range here. It barked its disapproval and we retreated. Nearly as good was the sight of a half grown Eagle Owl on an exposed ledge of a quarry. We waited for the adults but they did not show. Meantime a Honey Buzzard and Black Stork flew overhead.

In the meadows we saw a Golden Oriole, Blackcaps, Wood Warblers, and Hawfinches. In the distance a Cuckoo calls. The females parasitise the nests of Blackcaps and Robins. A Lesser-spotted Eagle with its drooping wings flew above and, to our delight, an old African friend, a Hoopoe, landed on a perch and "hoopooed" at us across the field. Red-backed Shrikes hunted from the hedgerows.

A pair of Wrynecks are in an orchard as is a Syrian Woodpecker. Apparently this species, very similar to the Great Spotted Woodpecker (not to be confused with the Middle Spotted nor the Lesser Spotted!), is expanding its range and replacing other Woodpeckers in parts of Hungary.

Quite apart from the wines, we found a number of special dishes in the restaurants. These included cold cherry soup, and, of course, goulash – but different from the version most of us think of as Hungarian Goulash! The traditional gypsy fiddlers at meal times either delighted or irritated depending on one's mood and their ability, and either way virtually demanded their tip.



The December 10th Jerrara Dam walk: and yes ! they saw some birds too ! *Photo Alan Cousins
Oops Sorry Still Learning*

The Third BIENNIAL AUSTRALASIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

Mike MORPHETT

Following on from Bathurst and Canberra, this third conference was held at St Mary's Parish Centre, Blenheim, in the north-east of New Zealand's South Island from 7th-9th December last. Each of the three days was filled with power-point presentations beginning with a plenary lecture. The first was titled: 'Are kiwis doomed?', given by Hugh Robertson from the Department of Conservation, Wellington, and co-author of my newly acquired and revised *Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*. The question was raised in the face of threats of introduced mammals, particularly the stoat, weasel and dog, and habitat clearance. Detailing the birds' biology and continuing conservation efforts, Hugh considered there was

clearance. Detailing the birds' biology and continuing conservation efforts, Hugh considered there was much hope for the survival of each of the three species of kiwi, which has become a national icon. The topic by Richard Holdaway, of the University of Canterbury's Biological and Geological Science faculties, was 'New Zealand Quaternary avian palaeobiology: perspectives and prospects'. He talked about the study of fossils to determine the structure and function of systems pre- and post-human intervention and the use of new technologies such as DNA and stable biotopic analysis. He strongly advocated collaborative work in palaeobiology and modern ecology with greater research funding in order to help conserve and manage surviving bird species and systems. The third lecture was given by La Trobe University's Michael Clarke with the title 'Trying to save the Black-eared Miner: a flagship or a waste of money?' Having paid my first visit to Gluepot Reserve two months previously, I had some grasp of the recovery effort over the past decade to conserve this endangered species in our Murray mallee region. It had taken my group much time and effort to track down this species. Michael covered issues such as ecology research, habitat preservation and restoration, abatement of threats (namely, habitat clearance and degradation, hybridisation with the Yellow-throated Miner, and wildfire), and captive breeding and reintroduction/translocation. Because of the need for ongoing sufficient funding, the choice may have to be made between habitat preservation (not just for biodiversity) or single species conservation; in the latter the Malleefowl could also qualify as a flagship bird. Besides this choice, he stressed we must be better stewards of the land.

The bulk of each day was then filled with contributed papers and symposia, grouped under various themes: the Kiwi; waders; seabirds; wetland birds; birds in developed landscapes (e.g. farms and vineyards); land-bird monitoring; predators, nests and other stuff; breeding and behaviour; bird song; evolution and taxonomy; single species conservation; avian influenza; ornithological miscellany; fragments and corridors; ethno-ornithology; and a final session given by Camilla Myers, *Emu* editor, on 'How to prepare a great journal paper'. I found some choices hard to make and so had to become skilled in timing my exit from one session to cross over to an alternative in another building without missing the guts of the topic. Refreshment breaks were therefore very welcome. The conference dinner on the second evening provided delegates with a good hearty three-course meal and local wines, followed by an absorbing illustrated talk given by Don Merton about his various past experiences with the Department of Conservation both within New Zealand and overseas, particularly on island research and management.

I booked both pre- and post conference day field trips and was far from disappointed. The first was a bus trip from Christchurch to Kaikoura under the leadership of Paul Scofield from the Canterbury Museum (which is well worth a visit and has an excellent avian section). Reaching South Bay at about 10.30 am, we split up into two groups. Jim lead mine through parts of Kaimokehu, the Peninsula seal colony area, to observe the New Zealand fur seals and nesting gulls and terns. After lunch at the Café Encounter, we boarded the *Lissodelphis*, skippered by Ian and with Alistair as guide and set off in overcast conditions and a 2-metre swell. The narrow continental shelf quickly gave way to the Kaikoura Canyon, and within a quarter of an hour various seabirds began encircling the boat, attracted by the fish liver dragged along in our wake. Eighteen species were recorded overall; Hutton's Shearwaters had a clear majority. Unashamedly, I confess to being close to tears in awe of the mass of squawking birdlife; some birds I could almost reach out and touch from the aft top deck. I just marvelled at the beauty of Salvin's Albatrosses and laughed at the one Yellow-eyed Penguin, a local bird with attitude rearing up against the much larger armada fleet of Wandering Albatrosses and Southern and Northern Giant Petrels, thus earning the nickname of Psycho. Rain, which had been threatening for most of the day, began to fall just as we returned to the jetty. Upon reaching Blenheim, the coach dropped each of us off at our accommodation; mine was just a stone's throw from the conference venue.

The post-conference trip was aboard the *Odyssea*, which made a return journey of about 60 km from Havelock, a short bus ride from Blenheim, to outer Pelorus Sound, passing by or through Mahau and Kenepuru Sounds and Hikapu and Popoure Reaches on calm water and in beautiful sunshine. Our first stop was Maud Island, a rodent-free (and snake-free, as is the whole of New Zealand) sanctuary managed by the Department of Conservation, which provided us with Bill as our guide, who teamed up with the two rangers, who were coming near the end of their six months stint on the island. We were shown specimens, alive and dead, of some endangered wildlife: the Cook Island weta (with defensive back spikes and quite different from the cave weta) and click beetle, giraffe and flax weevils, Maud Island frog (which doesn't go through the tadpole stage), gecko, and leaf-vein slug. The walk along the Fort Track gave us sightings of the Takahe (like a giant swamphen), Tui, Bellbird, Grey Warbler and New Zealand (our Richard's) Pipit. Lunch on board gave us some time then to explore just a part of the less "civilised" Chetwode Islands, where we had to anchor out. Our landing on Te Kakaho Island disturbed a pair of Pied Oystercatchers, guarding two young, barely distinguishable from the pebbles. Along the overgrown meandering narrow track to the ridge top, from where we had glimpses of a pair of Yellow-crowned Parakeets, we were inspected by a New Zealand Robin, predominantly dark slaty-grey in colour and which became one of my favourite birds throughout my entire time in South Island. On our return we passed close by to Duffers Reef, the largest colony of the rare endemic King Shag, adding to sightings of other inshore birds, such as Caspian Tern, Fluttering Shearwater, Blue Penguin, Royal Spoonbill, and Black Swan.

I found the conference and its various components and meeting other delegates from far and wide a most stimulating experience and congratulate the organisers, who were able to build on the solid foundation of the two previous conferences. I look forward to attending the fourth, to be held in early December 2007 in Perth, and the chance of catching up with a few south-western endemics; birds, that is.

...Pieces !

A white cockatoo named 'Agro' has recently foiled a daring burglary. The thief climbed the fence of the Fairy Meadow Hardex store at 3am one night. As he was purloining some goods, Agro started screeching 'Get out of here. Get out of here !' This woke a neighbour who rang the Police. They arrived and apprehended a gentleman scurrying away with a roll of wire netting and some star stakes. Agro was feted appropriately as the hero. Agro has a wide vocabulary, some of which can't be printed in a family paper. (But what words would you say if you had been caged for years !!!)

Unusual Records for November-December 2005 - Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species # Date Location Habitat Observer

Stubble Quail	1	5-Dec	Blackbutt, Shellharbour	urban	CB
Brown Quail	3	6-Nov	Jaspers Brush	swamp	GB
Black Petrel	1	26-Nov	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Black Petrel	3	17-Dec	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Little Shearwater	1	17-Dec	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Brown Booby	1	17-Dec	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Osprey	1	12-Nov	Lake Berringer	overhead	MJ
Osprey	2	19-Dec	Lake Conjola	estuary	MJ
Pacific Baza	1	9-Nov	Balgownie	overhead	TB, JH
Pacific Baza	1	14-Nov	"The Glen", Barren Grounds NR	forest	NJ
Square-tailed Kite	1	19-Dec	Bendalong Rd., Bendalong	overhead	MJ
Brahminy Kite	1	20-Nov	Berry (Beach Rd)	overhead	LH

Brown Goshawk	1	12-Nov	Albion Park	overhead	JC
Brown Goshawk	1	13-Nov	Bargo R., Bargo	woodland	GB
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	26-Dec	Bulli Tops	forest	CJC
Grey Goshawk	1	12-Nov	Seven Mile Beach NP	forest	GB
Grey Goshawk	1	15-Dec	Mt. Ousley	overhead	MC
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	11-Nov	Tallawarra	overhead	CB
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	27-Dec	Shoalhaven R.	overhead	LP
Little Eagle	1	11-Nov	Tallawarra	overhead	CB
Little Eagle	1	1-Dec	Menangle	overhead	CJC
Little Eagle	1	30-Dec	Yallah	overhead	NJ
Australian Hobby	1	25-Nov	Warrawong	overhead	MC
Australian Hobby	nesting	14-Dec	Windang	pine trees	CB
Peregrine Falcon	1	25-Nov	Warrawong	overhead	MC
Spotless Crake	1	21-Aug	Killalea SRA	wetland	GB
Latham's Snipe	1	4-Nov	Berkeley boat harbour	wetland	MC
Latham's Snipe	1	25-Nov	Mansfield Res. East Bowral	wetland	TD
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	15-Oct	Little Lake	mudflats	MC
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	6-Dec	Windang	sand flats	NJ
Great Knot	1	22-Dec	Comerong Island NR	mudflats	NJ, NW
Great Knot	1	28-Dec	Windang	sandflats	CB
Sanderling	3	6-Nov	Comerong Island NR	sandflats	GB
Red-necked Stint	150+	22-Dec	Comerong Island NR	mudflats	NJ
Curlew Sandpiper	8	22-Dec	Comerong Island NR	mudflats	NJ
Pied Oystercatcher	2	15-Nov	Perkins Beach, Port Kembla	beach	CJC
Pied Oystercatcher	10	22-Dec	Black Head, Gerroa	rock platform	NJ, NW
Sooty Oystercatcher	11	22-Dec	Black Head, Gerroa	rock platform	NJ, NW
Pacific Golden Plover	200+	22-Dec	Comerong Island NR	mudflats	NJ
Grey Plover	1	17-Nov	Lake Conjola	sandflats	MJ
Lesser Sand Plover	1	14-Dec	Windang	sandflats	CB
Hooded Plover	2	28-Oct	Windang	sandflats	IS
White-fronted Tern	3	22-Oct	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Sooty Tern	11	17-Dec	off Wollongong	marine	PM
White-winged Black Tern	1	17-Nov	Windang	sandflats	CB
White-headed Pigeon	1	25-Nov	Kangaroo Valley	overhead	NJ
White-headed Pigeon	2	22-Dec	Saddleback Mountain	forest	NJ
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	7	1-Nov	Mt. Keira	garden	VD
Peaceful Dove	2	13-Nov	Bargo	woodland	GB
Topknot Pigeon	400+	11-Nov	Kiama	urban	NW
Long-billed Corella	35	23-Nov	Warrawong	playing field	DF
Red-rumped Parrot	7	6-Nov	Wollongong golf course	parkland	DF
Red-rumped Parrot	3	18-Nov	Barrack Point	playing field	MR
Ground Parrot	1	22-Dec	Budderoo fire trail	heath	NJ

Species #	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Tawny Frogmouth	1	22-Dec	Berkeley High School	parkland AL
Azure Kingfisher	1	27-Dec	Shoalhaven R	riverine LP
Southern Emu-wren	12	22-Dec	Budderoo fire trail	heath NJ
Eastern Bristlebird	10	22-Dec	Budderoo fire trail	woodland NJ
Pilotbird	1	21-Nov	Drawing Room Rocks	forest MW
Rockwarbler	2	21-Nov	Drawing Room Rocks	woodland MW
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	few	13-Nov	Bargo R., Bargo	woodland GB
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	24-Nov	Warrawong	garden DF
Spectacled Monarch	1	17-Nov	Lake Berringer	rainforest MJ
Leaden Flycatcher	1	25-Nov	Kangaroo Valley	woodland NJ
Cicadabird	2	25-Nov	Kangaroo Valley	forest NJ
Cicadabird	2	3-Dec	Mt. Kembla	forest CJC
White-winged Triller	3	18-Nov	Mullet Ck. Dapto	playing field TE
Figbird	2	18-Nov	Barrack Point	urban MR
Dusky Woodswallow	5	23-Dec	Barrack Point	urban MR
Skylark	1	6-Nov	Jaspers Brush	grassland GB

Contributors: GB – Graham Barwell; CB – Chris Brandis; CJC – Chris Chafer; TB - Teresa du Bois; MC – Martin Cocker; JC – Josh Coyte; TD – Terry Dunlea; MD Mike Deacon; TE – Terri Edwell; ME – Mary Eskdale; DF – Damien Farine; DG – Darryl Goldrick; JH – James Harris; LH – Lyn Havila; NJ – nigel Jacket; IM – Ian McKinlay; RM – Richard Miller; MM – Mike Morphett; LP – Loraine Pincus; MPP Martin & Penny Potter; MR – Michelle Rower; IS – Ian Shaw; RT – Roger Truscott; NU – Nancy Urban; NW – Nathan Waugh; DW – David Winterbottom; JW – Joan Wylie.

Comment: Good range of records and some good observations amongst them. The Brahminy Kite is the 5th regional record since 1840. The Brown Booby is the regions 11th record. The Spectacled Monarch is the 14th regional record and may be the most southerly location yet recorded in NSW. The Spotless Crake is the first local record for two years. A good number of raptors were reported and its obvious that Wedge-tailed Eagles are much more numerous east of the escarpment than in the latter half of last century. The lone Grey-tailed Tattler from Windang is a rare observation these days, whilst the Grey Plover from Lake Conjola is unusual. The White-winged Black Tern was a regular at Windang in the '80s and '90s but records this century are few. The 400+ Topknot Pigeons is an impressive record and the largest regional gathering for at least a decade. Finally, the Skylark from Jaspers Brush is worth reporting as this (introduced) species and the two quail reported above are clearly declining through the region as farming interests east of the escarpment give way to urbanisation.

Thanks for all the records through 2005. Don't forget, I can't write this page unless you submit your records (email address above is best). All records are kept and eventually make their way in the Birds NSW database and the NSW Wildlife Atlas where they are used by a huge range of researchers, consultants and conservationists. The records also make it into the regions birding website and the second edition of the regional handbook which is nearing completion. The website address is www.speedlink.com.au/users/cchafer or you can just type Wild Illawarra into your web browser and you should get a link to hit. There are also over 100 bushwalks (designed for birdwatchers) described on the website. Thanks again, Chris.

Good Grief !

- Why do Treasurer Ducks put their beaks in the water ?.....To liquidate their bills !
- Why do Treasurer Ducks move from the stream ?.....They get more interest in banks !
- What doctors do ducks go to ?.....Quack doctors !



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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 290 March 2006

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$25 SINGLE \$20 JUNIOR \$5
Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, would be delighted to see you, and take a load off your mind!

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS March 2006

CLUB

MEETING – Monday 13th March - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Teresa du Bois for Jamie Harris 'Pygmy Possums et al in the forests of Tasmania.' Don't forget to bring a mug and a small plate for supper afterwards.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 15th March 5.30pm – Balgownie. Leader – Teresa du Bois. Meet at the corner of Duncan St and Brokers Rd. From Princes Highway turn left (West) into Balgownie Rd at the first lights north of the Community Hall. After 2k approx turn right at a roundabout into Foothills Rd, then turn left into Margaret St, and 1st right into Duncan St. Follow Duncan St until the tee junction with Brokers Rd. We will be walking in the bush near the power lines.

FEBRUARY MONTHLY OUTING – Sunday 18th March –Yarrawarrah State Forest Robertson Leader -Betty Hudson Meet in the main street of Robertson alongside the Showground & opposite the school at **8.00am**. From here we will drive to the start of the walk. Bring a carry lunch and morning tea. Also bring a warm top layer in case it is a little cool.
Please note the early meeting time & the walk will finish around 1.30pm.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 21st March 2006, at 7.30pm at the home of Tom and Joan Wylie, 5 Daphne St, Corrimbal (4229 6737). All members welcome.

April 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Friday 24th March**.

Please submit your contributions early and if possible, by email, otherwise to 5 Madden St, Fernhill 2519. Special consideration for publication will be given to any contributor who wishes to take the scribe and his wife out to tea! And come to think of it, there are a couple of shows we would like to see...

From Your Committee

1. Finance Closing balance for 31.12.05 was \$1,529.22, Receipts \$200.00, Expenses Nil
Closing Balance @ 31.1.06 \$1,729.22
2. The 2006 program is now being finalised and will be in the April Newsletter.
3. Agreement has been reached with SOSSA for IBOC to use their digital projector paying a small fee each time. A lap top is also available on the same basis. SOSSA has first call on the equipment.
4. 2006 camps. Venues in the Myall Lakes area or the Far South Coast of NSW are being looked at for the

Spring Camp. It is hoped to have this finalised by May. The dates are 21st to 28th October 2006.

5. We are still working to get the web site back up and running again.
6. The committee thanked Joan & Tom Wylie and Tera & Neil Wheway for the work they put in over the break compiling an electronic catalogue of all the library items, as well as sorting out the cupboards at the hall.
7. Chris Brandis is to represent IBOC on the Lake Illawarra Authority Community Forum for the northern breakwater.

Wednesday's Annual Windang Outing, 8.2.06

Chris Brandis

Some of the early birds to the meeting area found an Illawarra Mercury reporter there to do an article on the Club, photographs of members peering through their bins into the Lake yonder were taken. Hope we see how it turns out. Then there seemed to be more interest in the pair of Australian Hobbys performing aerial manoeuvres over the pines giving most great views as they perched on the top open branches before darting off again.

Some 29 wader enthusiasts finally headed off past the boulder storage area while a New Holland Honeyeater flew through and some Superb Fairywrens skulked in the vegetation, down to the sandy area. The fenced off area for the Little Terns to nest in was now occupied by Silver Gulls and a couple of Masked Lapwings while a number of small waders were noted sheltering from the strong on-shore wind near the shore line. The first group were all Red-capped Plovers but the next group also had the first Double-banded Plovers of the winter season, exhausted from their flight from New Zealand. There were also many Red-necked Stints, one carrying an orange flag on the upper right leg indicating it had been banded in Victoria, and a few Little Terns that still remained after their fairly successful breeding on the beach.

Some keen eyes sighted a White-bellied Sea-Eagle over the sea and a Nankeen Kestrel hovering motionless over Windang Island. On the walk back a few obliging Bar-tailed Godwits posed, one just changing into the reddish breeding colours and, on cue, some Caspian Terns landed on a sand island while a Grey-tailed Tattler potted around the edges.

Many then settled for the picnic tea under the pines in perfect conditions catching up on the news after the Christmas break while the Hobbys came in chattering away giving more great views.

Bird List :

Australian Gannet	Little Pied Cormorant	Little Black Cormorant
Great Cormorant	Australian Pelican	White-faced Heron

Australian Gannet	Little Pied Cormorant	Little Black Cormorant
Great Egret	Australian White Ibis	White-bellied Sea Eagle
Australian Hobby	Nankeen Kestrel	Bar-tailed Godwit
Common Greenshank	Grey-tailed Tattler	Red-necked Stint
Red-capped Plover	Double-banded Plover	Masked Lapwing
Kelp Gull	Silver Gull	Caspian Tern
Crested Tern	Little Tern	Superb Fairy-wren
New Holland Honeyeater	Willie Wagtail	House Sparrow



Bar-tailed Godwits

Photo: Mike Morphett

How they brought the good News from Gents (& Ladies) to Vous.

*'I sprang for the binocs, and Joris and he
I binoced, Dirk binoced, we binoced all three...'*

While my computer skills are still up the pole, though I have been helped by Penny Potter and Chris Brandis, I am surprised and gratified at the amount of voluntary work that goes into getting the NEWS to you. The process is like this. Contributors send in their articles, lists, photos et al, and I edit, arrange them, and hopefully eventually produce a good 'copy.'

Val Dolan then proof read the 'copy' and when corrected, takes it to a printer in Wollongong, who prints, collates and staples the NEWS. Val hunted round and found a printer who is cheaper than a large firm whose last word rhymes with 'perks.' Val then takes the printed copies to our Dispatch Ladies.

Meanwhile Chris Brandis has printed an up to date list of labels of Club members and he takes these to our Dispatch Ladies too.

Norma Almond, whose husband was the first Treasurer of the Club, and long time member, Peg McKinlay meet, have a chat and a cup of tea, fold all the copies, put them in envelopes, and put on the labels. Norma then takes these to the Post Office, and the postman delivers them to you.

Three cheers for Penny, Val, Norma, Peg and Chris...Hip Pip..

At present Penny is also looking after the email NEWS and there are still some computer problems or scribe comkukterk Ahh! operating problems to be sorted out, but..

Book Review. "What to do about Wild Neighbours?"

Danie Ondinea

There's a great new book around which many bush habitat managers and restorers may find very helpful. Ian Temby's *Wild Neighbours: the humane approach to living with wildlife* (2005) published by Citrus Press has a really clear, accessible, scientific take on some of the problems, and solutions, to community/wildlife interactions. Many species or groups are listed, with some natural history information,

public health issues, problems and solutions such as tolerance, exclusion, habitat modification, repellents, scaring devices and trapping.

As well as other wildlife, there are short sections on Birds of Prey, Brush Turkeys, Butcherbirds, Cockatoos, Crows and Ravens, Currawongs, Ducks, Ibis, Koels, Kookaburras, Lyrebirds, Magpies, Magpie-larks, Mynas, Noisy Miners and Bell Miners, Parrots, Pigeons and Doves, Plovers or Masked Lapwings, Seagulls or Silver Gulls, Sparrows, Starlings, Swallows and Martins, Wattlebirds and Other Large Honeyeaters.

It answers many of the tricky questions and would seem a great reference for Council bushland managers and others who are frequently asked how to deal with perceived problem introduced and native wildlife. It's scientifically-based, really well set out, full of interesting information, thoughtful and respectful of the wildlife.

It can be ordered from Florilegium in Glebe on (02) 9571 8222 or email Florilegium@tpg.com.au
Ian Temby has done impressive work on living with wildlife for Victorian natural resources departments over many years and has recently been working on his PhD looking at the management of Silver Gulls."

Baby Elephant Walk

At the February meeting Nic and Daphne Van Oudshoorn talked about their trip to South Africa and the birds and animals they saw.

They started their journey in Addo to observe and document the elephants in this region. By the 1800's there were about 400 elephants remaining in Addo and this number continued to decline until only 11 elephants remained. Thankfully this herd is increasing in numbers due to the purchase of land and the breeding program. Quite a few of the female elephants in this area are missing tusks due to inbreeding.

Apparently dung beetles have right of way on the roads in this area. I suppose if they were squashed it would give new meaning to: "eat s!*t and die".

Nancy Urban



Nic and Daphne then travelled to the Kruger National Park. This Park is as large as Wales. Some of the birds and animals spotted were: Green-backed Heron, Ox Peckers that spend most of their time on the back of animals, Bee Eaters, Blue Wazbills, Burchills Starlings, Pied Kingfisher, Golden-tailed Woodpecker and the African Paradise Flycatcher that has an impressively long tail. Nic and Daphne saw some amazing animals in the wild. A few they saw were elephants, lions and a leopard that went to all the trouble to kill an animal and drag it up a tree, only for the dead animal to slide back down and get eaten by hyenas.

Nic and Daphne then travelled to Johannesburg and stayed on a property that has the largest collection of fowl. The owner travels the world buying fowl to add to his collection. Some of the birds on the property they saw were: Flamingos, Ross's Goose, Pelicans and ducks. Visiting a place like South Africa, and viewing the landscape and animals in the wild would be exciting and awe inspiring. It was also great to see a video on computer of the elephants and their behaviour, and of ducklings. It was a great talk.

Can't Sleep! Worried! Is it that you haven't paid the Club Subscription yet? See Bronwyn Wilson or send your cheque to her at 8 Wellington Drive, Balgownie. 2519. Then, Ahh! Blessed sleep!

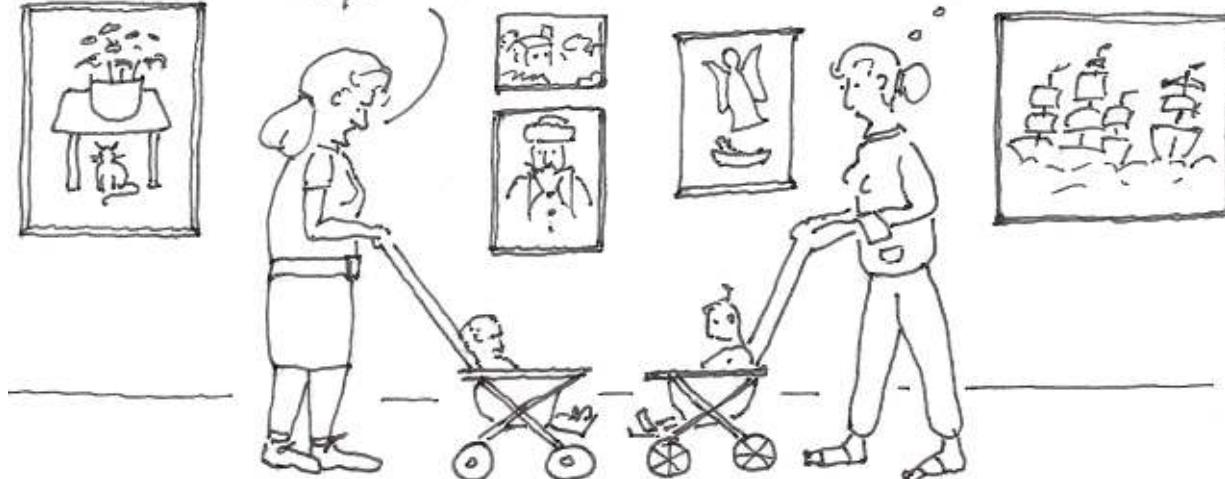
ILLAWARRA'S EPONYMOUS BIRDS

Mike MORPHETT

When engrossed in your pursuit of birds, have you at times wondered how some species or races have been named after certain people and about the identities of those individuals behind the eponyms? Could you imagine your surname being given – probably posthumously, so you didn't have much choice in the matter – to a particular species that you had formed a very close attachment to through your extensive studies and conservation efforts or that you had discovered and verified as new? Here's a challenge for IBOC readers: Which club member would you match with a particular bird, giving it that person's name and why? One example that immediately came to my mind was Hales's Puffin or *Fratercula arctica halesi*. From their research, Bo Beolens and Mike Watkins concluded that the best way to gain such honour is through discovery (though bird extinctions are now outstripping new findings), by being "a Victorian British gentleman with leisure time to spend in quiet study or world exploration, or a Victorian British doctor – either devoting your spare time to natural history or taking paid employment as a ship's surgeon". According to their findings, hummingbirds and antbirds are clearly the bird families that have attracted the most eponyms, whilst John Gould, Charles Darwin, and the two Sclaters, father and son, feature most among the personages, sharing some 66 bird varieties. Worldwide, Beolens and Watkins have catalogued over 2000 bird species and over 1000 individual people whose names have been given to birds. In our geographical region I've traced just 19 recorded bird species, though some of which we'd be lucky to see, and the eponyms of 17 people, one of whom has special significance to IBOC. Of the avians, seabirds comprise the clear majority, whilst there are only two passerines.

We decided to name ours
after the famous 15th century
Flemish painter

Sounds like eponymous
bosh to me!



Audubon's Shearwater: Breeding on tropical islands in the Pacific, it's a rare visitor in our region. Known as the father of American ornithology, John James Audubon (1785-1851) was a notable artist, collector and author. He was born illegitimately to a French naval captain and a French girl who worked at the latter's San Domingo sugar plantation in Haiti and died shortly after his birth. Adopted by Captain Audubon and his wife in France, he was later sent as a teenager to manage the family's plantation near Philadelphia. There he met and married Lucy, who was a pillar of support to him. They moved to England, where he gained much success, especially in the publication of his four-volume *Birds of America 1827-1838*, containing life-size avian illustrations.

Baillon's Crake: Here it is scarce and nomadic, frequenting reedy freshwater wetlands. Jean Francois Emmanuel Baillon (1744-1802) was a French lawyer, collector and naturalist from Abbeville, like his son, Louis. The adoption of his name was recommended by the RAOU in 1978 because of its general use elsewhere.

Buller's Albatross (a rare winter visitor and named Mollymawk in New Zealand, where they are divided into northern and southern varieties) & **Buller's Shearwater** (a scarce summer visitor): Both species breed on islands off New Zealand, the latter confined to Poor Knights Island. The son of a Wesleyan missionary and magistrate in the Bay of Islands, Sir Walter Lawry Buller (1838-1906) became a magistrate himself in Wellington in 1862 and, ten years after his knighthood in 1886, served as a government minister for three years. Besides being much involved in Maori affairs, he became the country's foremost ornithological scholar, publishing his *Essay on the Ornithology of New Zealand* (1865) and *History of the Birds of New Zealand* (1871) before being elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Cook's Petrel: another New Zealand island breeder, where it has the Maori name of Titi. Much has been written about the English navigator and explorer, Captain James Cook (1728-1779), who, accompanied by a group of scientists, including Joseph Banks, discovered our east coast in 1770 after circumnavigating North and South Islands. It was the first of his three South Pacific expeditions for the British Admiralty and en route took in observations in Tahiti of the transit of Venus at the request of the Royal Society.

Gibson's Albatross: This bird is the most abundant of the 'wanderers' in our region and is generally smaller and paler. It was given special status by Robertson and Nunn from *Diomedea exulans* race to *gibsoni*, whilst some consider it conspecific with the Antipodes Albatross. Endemic to the Auckland Islands of New Zealand, it is thought to range across the South Pacific in the non-breeding season. Known to us as Doug, John Douglas Gibson (1925*-1984) had a deep interest in seabirds, their ecology and distribution. His project of banding wanderers off our coastline far from their breeding islands, begun in 1956, was the first successful attempt of its kind with pelagic birds. Together with the NSW Albatross Study Group (out of which grew SOSSA in 1994), he proposed a unified system for describing the plumage of the larger varieties, thus aiding field identification, which became known generally in 1967 as the 'Gibson Plumage Index' (GPI) or 'Gibson Code'. Numerical values were given to particular degrees of coloration on the back, head, inner wing, and tail: 1=solid brown whilst 6=all white. Illawarra's premier ornithologist, skilled in taxidermy and photography, he was the founder member of IBOC in 1977, the same year his *Birds of the County of Camden (including the Illawarra District)* was published; the second edition came out in 1989. [*Beolens and Watkins evidently couldn't ascertain details of Doug's birth year and inserted a question mark

in their book. I will put their records straight!] a later NEWS

To Be Continued in

Bird List for Abrahams Bosom Walk 18.02.06

Pacific Black Duck	Little Pied Cormorant	Great Cormorant
Eastern Reef Egret	White-bellied Sea eagle	Silver Gull
Crested Tern	Rainbow Lorikeet	Australian King Parrot
White Throated Needletail	Laughing Kookaburra	Superb Fairy Wren
Spotted Pardalote	Striated Pardalote	White Browed Scrub Wren
Brown Gerygone	Brown Thornbill	Yellow Thornbill
Red Wattlebird	Little Wattlebird	Lewin's Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill	Eastern Yellow Robin	Eastern Whipbird
Golden Whistler	Grey Shrike-thrust	Black-faced Monarch
Leaden Flycatcher	Grey Fantail	Grey Butcherbird
Pied Currawong	Satin Bowerbird	Red-Browed Finch
Fairy Martin	Red-whiskered Bulbul	Bassian Thrush

Bits and ...

Metal bands used by the US Government to tag migratory birds have been changed. The bands used to bear the Washington Biological Survey address, abbreviated to 'Wash. Biol. Surv' until the agency received a letter.....'Dear Sirs: While camping, I shot one of your birds. I think it was a crow. I followed the cooking instructions on the leg tag and want to tell you that it tasted horrible.'

Readers Digest June 05 , as reported in the Sunraisa B O C The Rainbow Bird Feb 06

Flies, flies and more flies, a trip to Birdsville.

Chris Brandis

Chris Chafer and I set off for a trip to Birdsville on the last day of September, last year, and noted how lush the land appeared through Cowra and on to Cobar where we had a quick look around. There were White-winged Trillers every where, Crimson Chats on the ground and a Pied and a Painted Honeyeater moved through. After a quiet night in the caravan park we headed off through White Cliffs with the country getting drier and drier looking to an overnight stop at Mt Wood, which we remembered from 1988 as a great spot but it was now almost desolate and the flies were becoming a nuisance.

Next day we drove through Sturt NP, sighting Gibberbirds in some larger rocky gibber with some vegetation and had lunch at Fort Grey, where the flies had now forced us to wear nets. Ever tried eating lunch through a net ? The eucalypts at Fort Grey were extremely stressed and virtually the only birds were Yellow-throated Miners who scrounged for tit bits. We carried on through Cameron's Corner to the large dunes past Bollards Lagoon and soon had sightings of Eyrean Grasswrens, thanks to Chris's great hearing, and Banded Whiteface, but the flies had reached plague proportions. We camped on a clay pan by the dunes that night but the threat of a thunder storm had us packing up in the dark at 2 am and then sleeping in the car by the road till day break. A walk around the dunes gave more great views of Eyrean Grasswrens although flies trying to get into your eyes behind your bins, ears and mouth were very aggravating. We spotted the first of many Cinnamon Quail-thrushes at the base of a dune as we made our way past Merti Merti on the Strzelecki Track, now really a road suitable for 2 wheel drives. A brief stop at the Strzelecki Creek crossing indicated how stressed the area was as this was well vegetated when I went through in 1991 and full of bird life. At the Monticollina Bore there were a few water birds such as Black-winged Stilts and Australian Spotted Crake as well as some Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and a Common Greenshank and out in the small sand hummocks a brief view of Eyrean Grasswrens. We settled in for

what we thought would be a peaceful night with a few other travellers until a bash arrived with over 40 cars. They set up a marque and, to our surprise, had a band with an MC that went till nearly midnight with fire works at the interval. Bleary eyed we set off in the morning, stopping at Mt Lyndhurst Station to get permission to enter the property, cost a mere \$20, and then entered at the T&T site. As we entered we noted 2 Thick-billed Grasswrens perched in a low bush for a minute or so before bounding off and then a quick search of the rocky area to the south produced a family of Chestnut-breasted Whiteface, a striking bird with pastel shades of chestnut and grey and some Rufous Fieldwrens along the dry creek. Several more sightings of Thick-billed Grasswrens were glimpses of the birds bounding at high speed between blue bush clumps. As camping here is not permitted on the site we moved on to Marree checking out the ochre pits and the Farina ruins on the way, then booking into the caravan park and, instead of waiting till the sun went down and the flies went to bed before preparing dinner, we had a meal in the fly free hotel.

Heading up the Birdsville Track, again a wide smooth road, visiting some interesting sites besides the road including the Clayton Wetlands where Clamorous Reed-Warblers, Little Grassbirds and a Brolga had found this oasis. They also had a large warm spring water fed bath set up for hot weary travellers, a great way to get relief from the flies. Further on we crossed the 5 Km wide flood plain of the Cooper Creek and latter sighted numerous Gibberbirds beside the road as well as pair of striking Inland Dotterels and numerous Australian Pratincoles but little else. We set up camp at Mungerannie besides the lagoon where Avocets and Black-winged Stilts appeared to be breeding. In the sand dunes behind Mungerannie we sighted more Eyrean Grasswrens in the afternoon but the wind in the morning kept them out of sight but the White-winged Fairy-wrens were still obvious. The kids of the family camped nearby had breakfast in the toilet block to get away from the flies while the parents sat in the van with the motor running and the air conditioner on.

To be continued in a later NEWS

April School Holiday Camp 22nd to 29th April 2006 Tumut Riverglade Caravan Park,

The caravan park is situated on the banks of the Tumut River on Snowy Mtns Hwy 1 km west of Tumut Post Office, on the Main Road. Tumut is best accessed from Wollongong via the Hume Hwy to Yass and then Gundagai. For cars leave the Hwy at Gundagai and take the minor road from Gundagai to Tumut 34km, or for those with caravans the best access is to continue a few km further south along the Hume Hwy to the Snowy Mts Hwy turn off to Tumut. Time approx 4hrs from southern Wollongong. Both roads are well signposted.

Bookings need to be made direct to Riverglade on 02 6947 2528, mentioning that you are with I.B.O.C. The last remaining 3 cabins have been provisionally booked in Betty Hudson's name and you will need to mention this. **These cabins are only reserved until 10th March**, so get in quickly. Please advise Betty H when you book a cabin so that the ones not booked by 10th March can be cancelled.

Powered sites	\$20 per night for 2	\$8 for each extra person (7 th night free)
Unpowered sites	\$16 per night for 2	\$8 for each extra person (7 th night free)
Cabins with ensuite	\$60 per night for 2	\$8 for each extra person
NOTE cabins largest sleeps up to 6 people		

All members intending to go to the camp are responsible for making their own bookings and payment arrangements with Riverglades. All members intending to attend are requested to put their names on the list at meetings or to notify Betty on 4236 0307 or by email.

If Caravan Park cabins do not appeal there is a great variety of accommodation available in Tumut. Contact Betty or visit Tumut's web site for more information.

BIRDING ABROAD

David and Elizabeth Winterbottom have been going overseas to look at birds and other things. Here is a vignette from a voyage in October 2003.

Skeleton Coast

Driving to the coast through arid country from Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, we frequently saw the enchanting Pale Chanting Goshawks, as well as many other raptors – Rock and Greater Kestrels, Black-chested Snake-eagles and a magnificent Martial Eagle. Small herds of Springbok and Oryx grazed near the road, and Ostriches stalked away. A party of Meerkats, always a joy to see, moved quickly out of harm's way.

Once we got to Walvis Bay we found, to our surprise, that it was crammed with birds. There were tens of thousands of Flamingos, both Greater and Lesser, some nearby and others away in pink lines as far as the eye could see. In and among were a few Red-necked Phalaropes and, around the edges of the lagoons, waders. We saw Ruff, Curlew Sandpipers, Little Stints, Greenshank, Sanderlings, Three Banded Plovers and Bar-tailed Godwits. There were also heaps of African Black Oystercatchers and a single European Oystercatcher for good measure.

In the water were Black-necked and Great Crested Grebes with Cape Kelp, Grey-headed and Hautlaub's Gulls overhead. Out to sea were skeins of Cape Gannets and multitudes of Cape Cormorants with the odd Petrel or Shearwater further out. To our delight, an African Penguin and a pod of Dolphins passed by close to the shore.

On a disused pier we found another mass of Cape Cormorants with a few Crowned Cormorants in and among. Over the sea were hundreds of little Black Terns. The land may be a desert, but the sea is super-abundant.

Travelling north we stopped by lichen fields set in a featureless stony desert. Apparently fog drifts inland sufficiently often to keep them alive. A few drops of water brought "dead" plants to life in minutes. Gray's Lark is the common bird, but there were not many about.

We visited the nearby Cape Cross seal colony with animals so close one could almost touch them. It was a hot day and soon most seals were in the water, floating close inshore with their tails out, looking for all the world like a mass of kelp swaying in the swell. Ruddy Turnstones and a White-fronted Plover scavenged through the colony, and with the Black-backed Jackals helping with the cleaning up, the stench was almost tolerable!

What Birdo is that ?

1. This man had a workshop three k in the escarpment, or is he stringing us a line ?
2. This couple celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary at the Cowra Camp ?
3. This lady is studying the brains of rats. Good grief ! What for ?
4. This lady celebrated her 21st by 3.333 birthday at the Styx River camp ?

1 T Wylie Esq. Fisherman, handyman, good friend and the life of the party 2 Tera and Neil Wheway, and Neil knows he is still in seventh heaven. 3 Teresa du Bois is studying possible medical effects of schizophrenia at UOW, for her Ph D 4 Our capable and efficient Secretary, Betty Hudson

Unusual Records for January 2006

Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-turkey	2juv	12-Jan	Balgownie	garden	TE
Brown Quail	1	29-Jan	sth Lake Wollumboola	rank grassland	CJC
Pink-eared Duck	2	28-Jan	Tallawarra	wetland	CB
Black Petrel	1	28-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Buller's Shearwater	1	28-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Pacific Baza	5	24-Jan	Kangaroo Valley	overhead	NJ
Square-tailed Kite	1	21-Jan	Bomaderry	overhead	NJ
White-bellied Sea-eagle	2	9-Jan	Tongara	overhead	CJC
Swamp Harrier	1	29-Jan	Point Perpendicular	heathland	CJC
Grey Goshawk	1	22-Jan	Comerong Is	forest	SB
Buff-banded Rail	1	29-Jan	sth Lake Wollumboola	rank grassland	CJC
Whimbrel	5	2-Jan	Green Point, Jervis Bay	mudflats	NW
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	10-Jan	Windang	sandflats	CJC
Red-necked Stint	250	22-Jan	Comerong Is	sandflats	SB
Pacific Golden Plover	300	22-Jan	Comerong Is	sandflats	SB
Long-tailed Jaeger	3	28-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Sooty Tern	29	28-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Common Noddy	2	28-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
White Tern	1	28-Jan	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
White-headed Pigeon	2	26-Jan	Little Forest Plateaux	forest	MZ
White-headed Pigeon	2	29-Jan	Bomaderry	overhead	CJC
Powerful Owl	1	2-Jan	Green Point, Jervis Bay	forest	NW
Tawny Frogmouth	3	15-Jan	Keiraville	garden	ME
Azure Kingfisher	1	9-Jan	Macquarie Pass NP	riverine	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	1	30-Jan	Douglas Park weir	riverine	CJC
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	9-Jan	Macquarie Pass NP	rainforest	CJC
Crescent Honeyeater	1	26-Jan	Little Forest Plateaux	heathland	MZ
Tawny-crowned Honeyeater	6	29-Jan	Point Perpendicular	heathland	CJC
Crested Shrike-tit	2	30-Jan	Minnamurra Spit	forest	CB
Double-barred Finch	20	22-Jan	Menangle Park weir	woodland	CJC
Beautiful Firetail	2	26-Jan	Little Forest Plateaux	heathland	MZ
Bassian Thrush	4	9-Jan	Macquarie Pass NP	rainforest	CJC

Contributors: GB – Graham Barwell; SB – Simon Blanchfellow; CB – Chris Brandis; CJC – Chris Chafer; TE – Terri Edwell; ME – Mary Eskdale; NJ – Nigel Jacket; PM – Peter Milburn; NW – Nathan Waugh; MZ - Marnix Zwankhuizen.

Comment: Some good shorebird numbers at Comerong Is and few interesting species on the Wollongong pelagic trip and the Powerful Owl at Green Point were the only outstanding observations for an otherwise quiet start to the year. The juvenile Brush-turkeys demonstrates that at least some are surviving predation by cats.



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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 291 April 2006

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$25 SINGLE \$20 JUNIOR \$5
Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, would be delighted to see you, and take a load off your mind!

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS April 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 10th April - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Barry Prior & Ron Parker 'First Aid for Bird Watchers.' Don't forget to bring a mug and a small plate for supper too.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 12th April 8.30am – Macquarie Pass - The Cascades Walk.
Leader – Joan Wylie. Meet at the bottom of Macquarie Pass. There is a small parking area on the right hand side at the lower end of the pass. But should you lose your way, call Joan, 0407 268 279.

No Weekend Walk in April due to the Camp

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 18th April 2006, at 7.30pm at Norma Almond's home.
2 Shoobert Crescent, Kieraville (4229 8612). All members welcome.

EASTER HOLIDAY CAMP - Saturday 22nd – Saturday 29th April 2006, at Tumut.

MAY 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is 8pm **Thursday 20th April**. With the Camp, a rearrangement of the distribution of the News, and some family commitments there is a tight deadline for the May issue. Please submit your contributions early, by email preferably, otherwise by post, to the editor at 5 Madden St, Fernhill 2519.

From Your Committee

1. Finance Closing balance for 31.1.06 was \$1,729.22, Receipts \$855.00, Expenses \$211.10 Closing Balance at 28.2.06 was \$2,373.12
PO Box rental payment was approved in the expenses
2. The Committee decided to roll over the club's term deposit for another 12 months.
3. 2006 camp. Venues in the Myall Lakes area or the Far South Coast of NSW are still being looked at for the Spring Camp. The dates of the Spring Camp: 21 – 28 October 2006
4. We are still working to get the web site back up and running again. Chris Cartledge has taken over this job and attended the training at the PCY. The committee decided that at present we will continue with the current host server for the web site as we will then have support for any problems that arise. Thanks Chris.

LITERARY BIRD QUIZ (Answers – bottom of p.3)

- 1 Harry Potter's owl is called a. Hedwig, b. Wighedge, c. Cut-a hedge, or d. Hedge-your-bets ?
- 2 The teenager's book *Pastures of the Blue Crane* was written by a. Max Fatchen, b. Hesba Brinsmead, c. Enid Blyton or d. Captain W.E.Johns?
- 3 Six of the following eight birds are mentioned in the Bible. Which ones are they? Dove, Eagle, Hawk, Kookaburra, Lapwing, Owl, Robin, Sparrow.
- 4 The children's book *Uhu, the Owl* was written and beautifully illustrated by which one of the Macarthur-Onslow clan? a. Phoebe Macarthur-Onslow, b. Penelope Macarthur-Onslow, c. Annette Macarthur-Onslow, or d. Charles Ponsonby Fauntleroy Waterloo William IV Macarthur-Onslow.

April School Holiday Camp 22nd to 29th April 2006 Tumut Riverglade Caravan Park,

29 members and friends have booked in for the camp for varying periods. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there for a great week.

As the caravan park is close to town there is easy access to the shops (Woolies is only 5mins walk away). All other supplies should be readily available. The area is a trout fishing area so those so inclined bring your rods. The river is at the bottom of the park.

There will be a variety of walks, and included is a visit to Yarrongabill Caves. There is a thermal pool here for those who fancy a dip. Note there is an entrance fee for the caves and pool. Be prepared for both hot and cold weather, as we are near the mountains and the weather patterns can change very quickly. As usual, we will have a get-together each night in the open so bring things to rug up, it will be cold.

If campers wish, we will arrange a meal out one night. Usually this is at the local pub or a club.

PRESENTING PYGMIE POSSUMS Monday 13th March 2006 ALAN COUSINS

The presentation was given by

Teresa du Bois and entitled 'Pygmy Possums et al in the forests of Tasmania.' Teresa du Bois and Jamie Harris went to Tasmania at Christmas – in the middle of SUMMER –the weather on Cradle Mountain was worse than both of the times that Anne and I have visited 'Tassie' in the winter. Cataract Gorge did not seem much better. The photos showed them in capes and hoods on a mist shrouded, rain soaked background not conducive bird watching.

The collection of photos of small birds was rounded off with the picture of a Powerful Owl with a Sulphur Crested Cockatoo in its possession. A sight to behold was an albino Wobbaly (sorry Wallaby).

They are also carrying out research at The Royal National Park, Barren Grounds and Jervis Bay into the life of Pygmy Possums. The pictures of these little mammals in Jamie's hand reminded me of an English Olympic gold medal shot putter (Geoff Capes) who also has large hands and banana fingers and yet breeds canaries!!!

Other mammals etc. in the research areas include Antechinus –Marsupial Mouse, Swamp Rat, Bush Rat, Sugar Glider, Leaf Tailed Lizard, and FUNNEL WEB SPIDERS.

All in all, a fascinating presentation – imagine a tiny Pygmy Possum with a radio transmitter round its neck – looked like something from a space cartoon.

LETTER FROM TERESA

Dear IBOC members and visitors,

Thank you for the interest that you showed in our pygmy possum research. Generally we do fieldwork about once a month at Barren Grounds Nature Reserve and at other times of the year fieldwork is done at Royal National Park. All members and friends are welcome to come along and help set up traps and collect the following morning to experience first hand what these gorgeous little creatures are like in the flesh. The work is normally not intensive and is suitable for all ages. Don't forget to bring your bird watching gear as well! For further details on up-and-coming trapping dates, and to register as a volunteer, please email myself at tmdb66@uow.edu.au or Jamie Harris at jharris11@scu.edu.au or phone us on 4283 2773

Wednesday walk 15/03/06:Foot of the escarpment at Balgownie Teresa du Bois

There was a good turn out of 8 people to the mid week walk despite the bad weather. It was overcast for most of the walk and sprinkled with rain at one point. This walk takes you into some thick forest at the bottom of the Balgownie escarpment. There are several tracks including one which goes up to the top of escarpment and joins to Brokers nose. Other tracks not fully explored possibly link to the Corrimbal mine track. This is a good place to come if you have a few spare hours to explore all the tracks. It is also alive with birds. In the hour that we were there we saw 17 confirmed bird species, plus two unidentified raptors overhead and one huge raptor which we caught a glimpse of as it flew across the gap in the canopy. Most notable was the Yellow-throated Scrubwren and Leaden Flycatcher. Unfortunately we dipped out on the Catbird, Bassian Thrush, and Pacific Baza, and even the Eastern Yellow Robin, which have been seen previously.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Yellow Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Rainbow Lorikeet	Little Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Crimson Rosella	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Laughing Kookaburra	Leaden Flycatcher	Satin Bowerbird
Superb Fairy Wren	Rufous Fantail	Silvereye
White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail	

Literary Bird Quiz Answers

1a Hedwig. 2b Hesba Brinsmead. 3 Dove, Eagle, Hawk, Lapwing, Owl, Sparrow.
4c Annette Macarthur -Onslow

April Meeting Guest Speakers

Neil Wheway

At the April meeting our guest speakers will be Barry Prior and Ron Parker; they will be talking to us about first aid. First I will explain the reason for asking them to become guest speakers and to talk about first aid. During the October camp one of our members slipped during a walk, whilst the fall was not life threatening it was extremely painful. It was then realized that if a serious injury or accident occurs, there is limited first aid experience amongst our members. While a first aid kit is available for walks and camps useful for minor problems, what if it was more serious, a broken limb or a heart problem.

Barry and Ron are extremely experienced in first aid having attended first aid classes and gained their certificates many years ago while working at Wongawilli Colliery. To gain more knowledge and experience they then participated in the annual inter collieries first aid competitions. After progressing to become first aid instructors they conducted classes for many coal mine employees in preparation for their examinations. Now they are among a select group who conduct examinations for first aid courses in the community, so these two gentlemen are well versed and experienced in all aspects of the St John Ambulance First Aid Courses.

While talking about a very serious subject they do so in an entertaining and amusing style this is one meeting members should not miss attending, you can never be sure when you might have to help someone or yourself at a future date.

Yarrawarrah Forest Walk Sunday 19 March 2006

Betty Hudson

18 members met in Robertson on a foggy Sunday morning. After waiting 10 mins for late comers we drove along the Belmore Falls Road to the start of the walk. Once we left Robertson and dropped down the hill we left the fog behind, for a fine day. A Wonga Pigeon was seen feeding beside the road just as we started down the hill.

Leaving the cars in the grassy parking area in Wallaby Hill Road, we walked along a track between paddocks. Birds were varied & plentiful in the trackside vegetation, with a Bassian Thrush and Eastern Yellow Robin seen.

Entering the Buderoo NP Yarrawarrah Forest the vegetation changed to open forest with a shrub understorey. The bird species changed but were still plentiful, a female Rose Robin being seen. The track was easy level walking making bird watching easier.

As we came to an area of heathland a diversion was made to Yarrawarrah Trig for morning tea, where there was a magnificent view of the cliffs on the other side of Barrengarry Creek. This track is getting very overgrown.

Returning to the main track we took the right hand fork to Keenan's Pass. This track slowly descended with the forest gradually changing to wetter forest and then rainforest. Here we had a change in species of birds again and had good sightings of two male Rose Robins and several Rufous Fantails. The Pilot bird proved elusive. In this area we saw all three species of scrub wren, an Eastern Whipbird and heard a Superb Lyrebird.

The track came to an end at a locked gate, which we could have bypassed, but the track started to drop steeply, so we reluctantly returned the way we had come, to lunch at the top of the steeper section of the track on the trunks of fallen trees. By now the weather was hot and very humid making walking arduous.

We returned to the cars around 1.30pm and found we had a tally of 47 species for the day. Some members then went to have a look at Belmore Falls which was only a further km along the road. All agreed that it was a good day's birding.

Bird List for the Yarrawarrah Forest walk

Australian Wood Duck	White-throated Treecreeper	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Pacific Black Duck	Spotted Pardalote	New Holland Honeyeater	Olive-backed Oriole
Australasian Grebe	Yellow-throated Scrubwren	Eastern Spinebill	Grey Butcherbird
Straw-necked Ibis	White-browed Scrubwren	Rose Robin	Australian Magpie
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Large-billed Scrubwren	Eastern Yellow Robin	Pied Currawong
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Brown Gerygone	Eastern Whipbird	Australian Raven
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Brown Thornbill	Golden Whistler	Welcome Swallow
Crimson Rosella	Yellow Thornbill	Rufous Whistler	Fairy Martin
Eastern Rosella	Striated Thornbill	Grey Shrike-thrush	Silveryeye
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Little Wattlebird	Leaden Flycatcher	Bassian Thrush
Laughing Kookaburra	Noisy Miner	Rufous Fantail	Common Starling
Superb Lyrebird	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Fantail	



Lyn and Terry Dawson 'Lunch with a View' on the Yarrawarrah Walk Photo Neil Wheway

...and Pieces

The Capertee Valley Regent Honeyeater Recovery Group will hold their next tree planting on the weekend, 6,7 May. It's a great time. For information contact David Geering, at PO Box 2111, Dubbo, NSW 2830 or at david.geering@npws.nsw.gov.au

And Some More Special Recoveries of Banded Birds.

Dave Thompson

In earlier newsletters, most recently May 2004, we listed some interesting records of birds banded and then turning up a long way from the banding place or a long time after banding. *Corella*, the journal of the Australian Bird Study Association, from which these records were taken, has since then shown some more interesting records and below are a few of them. As before, “oldest” means the longest time since original banding and “furthest” means the greatest distance from the banding place, both for the species concerned. The website of the ABSA, www.absa.asn.au, lists the oldest/furthest records for bird species banded and recaptured.

Southern Giant-Petrel. Banded on 30th March, 2005 in Patagonia, Argentina (Argentine Banding Scheme) and recovered dead on 20th May, 2005 at Mandurah, WA, 11,376 km away. (*Corella Vol 29/No 4*).

Northern Giant Petrel. Banded in 1998 on Macquarie Is and subsequently recovered dead “caught on longline at sea”. And another banded in 2000 on Macquarie Is and recovered dead “caught on longline at sea” in 2001. And yet another banded in 2000 on Macquarie Is and recovered dead “caught on longline at sea” in 2003. (*Cor. 28/3*).

Wandering Albatross. Banded by the much loved “father” of our Club and albatross study pioneer, Doug Gibson, in 1971 off Austinmer and recaptured in 2005 on Ile Des Cochons, South Indian Ocean, 33 years and 6 months after banding and 8,067 km SW. And another banded by Doug in 1971 off Austinmer and recovered in 2005 on Ile Des Cochons, 33 years and 6 months later. (*Cor. 29/2*).

Black-necked Stork. Nestling banded in 2003 at Bulahdelah and recovered dead in 2004 near Casino, 400 km N. Furthest. (*Cor. 28/3*).

Red-necked Stint. Banded at Werribee Sewage Farm, Vic, in 1985 and recaptured at banding place in 2003, 18 years and 9 months later, and presumably after 18 return trips to the northern hemisphere, probably Siberia or Alaska, to breed. This for a bird weighing about 26 gms, the same as a sparrow or 3 one-dollar coins. Oldest. (*Cor. 28/1*).

Pied Oystercatcher. Banded in 2003 at Westernport, Vic, and marking sighted in field in 2004 at The Broadwater, NSW, 1,269 km NNE. Furthest. (*Cor. 28/3*).

Sooty Oystercatcher. Nestling banded on Curlew Is, Tas, in 1983 and marking sighted in field on nearby Green Is in 2000, 16 years and 10 months later. Oldest. (*Cor. 28/1*).

Pacific Gull. Nestling banded in 1983 on Shellback Is, Vic, and recaptured in 2004 “tangled in fishing gear (and later mercy killed)” on Phillip Is, Vic., 20 years and 3 months after banding. Oldest. (*Cor. 28/3*).

Kelp Gull. Nestling banded in 1982 on Green Is, Tas, and recovered dead, beachwashed, in 2005, 29 km NNE and 23 years and 2 months after banding. Oldest. (*Cor. 29/3*).

Caspian Tern. Nestling banded in 1982 at Corner Inlet, Vic, and recovered “tangled in fishing gear” in 2005 at Lawrence, NSW, over 23 years after banding and 1,173 km NNE. Oldest. (*Cor. 29/2*).

Southern Boobook. Banded in 1993 in ACT and marking read in field in 2004 at banding place, 11 years and 2 months after banding. Oldest. (*Cor. 29/1*).

White-browed Scrubwren. Banded in 1984 at Iluka and recaptured in 2001 at banding place, 17 years and 7 months after banding. Oldest. (*Cor. 28/3*).

Striated Thornbill. Banded in 1995 at Winmalee, NSW, and recaptured there 9 times since, most recently in 2005, over 10 years after banding. (*Cor. 29/3*).

Noisy Friarbird. Banded in 1995 at Munghorn Gap near Mudgee and recaptured there twice, most recently in 2005, 10 years and 7 months after banding. Oldest. (*Cor. 29/4*).

Flies, flies and more flies (Continued from the March IBOC News)

Chris Brandis

The country after Mungerannie became more desolate with few sightings of interest although there was some water over the road in places and across the gibber plains from the thunder storm we had seen near Bollards Lagoon. When we reached the Koonchera Dune we left the road and visited the Pandie Burra Bore where we had a lucky sighting of a male Yellow Chat that sat up in front of us before disappearing into the distance. There were quite a few Orange Chats about and trying to sort the flighty female Yellow and Orange Chats proved too difficult so we moved on to the vicinity of the Koonchera Waterhole. The dune was one of the highest we had seen but a quick search could not find any Eyrean Grasswrens, may be due to the sparseness of the vegetation and the strong wind. We ventured out into the lignum of Bollards Lagoon with Chris's ears quickly picking up the sounds of Grey Grasswrens in the large lignum clumps. We waited quietly in the heat and flies near a lignum clump and eventually one could be seen feeding inside the clump and eventually giving some good views as it foraged near the outside edges of the lignum. We camped there overnight and had another successful forage into the lignum in the morning before heading out sighting a couple of Cinnamon Quail-thrush on the way and only then noticing a "Keep out" sign that we must have missed on the way in.

The hot northerly wind had increased and there were dust storms on the way to Birdsville and there we got some respite in the cool of the Birdsville Pub having a Big Red Burger. We spent the afternoon in the shade beside the waterhole but could not find the elusive Red-browed Pardalote. We booked into the camping ground and, with some great perception, Chris decided we should stay in a unit. This turned out to be a great idea as just as we had finished eating dinner a howling southerly buster with accompanying sand storm hit and every thing was quickly covered in fine dust and getting into your eyes and ears, which would have made tenting very uncomfortable. The next morning was still windy but quite cool so we decided to visit the famous Big Red Dune which turned out to be a let down as it was only half as high as the Kooncherra Dune. The track over it though was impassable with the wind having formed a one meter lip on the approach side and the sand was also very loose. Back at Birdsville after another quick search for the Pardalote was unsuccessful, not a hint of a call at any time, we then headed east. The Cordillo Downs road sign said it was open so we set off down this rather rough track and had a good sighting of a family of Bourke Parrots, the only ones on the trip. It was slow going and we had to camp overnight by a dry tank before setting off again next morning stopping to see the largest shearing shed in Australia. The road then started to show signs of the earlier thunder storm with a few boggy bits and some rather deep creek crossings took us to the end of the road where the sign said 'Road Closed.' It was then a short run to Innamincka where again a search for the Pardalote along the Cooper Creek proved fruitless.

Heading west again we visited the Dig Tree which had some interesting history, then we continued on. There were a few interesting waders in the water treatment ponds of one of the oil well complexes and as it was getting late we decided to camp beside the waterhole at Noccundra, a quaint old hotel in the middle of nowhere that provided a community hot shower. The bird life around the waterhole was great with the surprise being a small flock of Flock Bronzewings cruising through and the first sighting of a Pardalote, but only a Striated one. Another search beside the Bullo River at Thargominda was again fruitless, so on to Lake Bindegolly which was dry, but we did find a pair of Painted Dragons. After Eulo we reached Carrawinya NP and camped at a delightful spot besides a waterhole at the Caiwarro ruins site. Here birdlife was quite good but the flies persisted in finding ways under the face nets to ensure maximum annoyance.

After passing through Bourke we camped at Gundabooka NP where the other campers also wore their fly nets. Conditions appeared to be quite good here with Masked and a few White-browed Woodswallows everywhere, probably getting ready to breed as some dive bombed us. In a flowering eremophila we spotted some Black and a Pied Honeyeater and on the side of the small rocky hill Chestnut Quail-thrush, just as Wal Emery had reported some years ago. The next day was a long drive home but leaving us with memories of a great experience with some 170 species sighted, but I do not think I will travel out there again until conditions improve considerably. Even where conditions appeared reasonable there was a noticeable lack of the small sedentary birds such as Thornbills, Weebills and Gerygones, the result of the prolonged drought which will take many years of good conditions to get back to reasonable bird watching times. We saw only a few lizards, mainly Central Bearded Dragons with the orange around the eyes, but no live snakes and only one road kill, very unusual

FILM REVIEW ‘Fly Away Home’

I saw this recently, most of it, missed the first part. It’s a ‘feelgood’ film about a father and daughter, Amy, who become ‘parents’ to 16 baby Canada Geese. Dad and Amy realise that their birds will eventually have to migrate South. Dad is already involved in trying to make an Ultra-light plane, and after numerous experiments and many crashes (fortunately Dad and Amy never get hurt, though the planes can be write-offs) they eventually build two ultra-lights that fly. And they teach the geese to fly with them.

I remember seeing a powered hang glider flying with some migratory birds; a promo for the film ‘Flying Birds’ I think. ‘Fly away home’ is fiction, though they claim it is based on real events. One of the planes is shaped and painted like a giant Canada Goose, and it is impressive seeing the birds and plane flying together.

Eventually the day comes to fly South, and off they go. There are still plenty of problems to overcome – a Park Ranger who locks up the geese, planes running short of fuel, bad weather, another crash, a developer who wants to clear the final landing and breeding site etc, but, you can guess how it ends.

Possibly not a film for purists, but good family viewing. We saw it on a DVD Library copy.

Meetings and Walks for May, June, July 2006

May	Meeting	8.05.06	Holly Parsons	Birds in Back Yards
	Mid week Walk	10.05.06	Joan & Tom	Austinmer 9.00am
	Outing	Sunday 14.05.06	Betty Hudson	Bargo Gorge

June	Meeting	12.06.06 nb Public Holiday	Neil & Tera Wheway	Antarctica
	Mid Week Walk	14.06.06	Barbara	Macquarie Rivulet
	Outing	Saturday 17.06.06	Betty Hudson	Saddleback Mtn & Hoddles Track

July	Meeting	10.07.06	Col Markham (possible)	South America
	Mid Week Walk	12.07.06	Judy Parkinson	Scout Camp
	Outing	Sunday 16.07.06	Betty Hudson	Bass Point &/or Killalea Lagoon

Illawarra Eponymous Birds (Continued from the March IBOC News)

Mike Morphet

Gould's Petrel: Breeding on Cabbage Tree Island and in New Caledonia, it is an uncommon, summer visitor and endangered. The son of a Windsor Castle gardener, John Gould (1804-1881) became known as The Bird Man, becoming a member of the Zoological Society of London. He was a taxidermist and, like his wife, Elizabeth, an artist. His travels took him to Europe, Asia, and Australia, arriving here in 1838 and staying for 19 months, collecting and naming many birds. This particular species he called white-winged, which was changed in honour of him by the RAOU in 1913. During the years 1840-1848 he compiled seven volumes of *Birds of Australia*.

Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo: a moderately common, summer breeding migrant and one of nine species named after Dr Thomas Horsfield (1773-1859), an American naturalist and explorer, collecting plants and animals. His career began in Java, which was eventually taken over by the British East India Company, for whom he continued research at the India House Museum, London, on account of his poor health

Hutton's Shearwater: Breeding only in Seaward Kaikoura Range of South Island, it is an uncommon visitor to our coastline, seen mostly in winter. Originally as a sub-species, it was so named by the Australian ornithologist, G.M. Mathews in 1912. Frederick Wollaston Hutton (1836-1905) was an English geologist and zoologist, who settled in New Zealand and saw military service in the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny and was curator at the Canterbury Museum. He wrote *Catalogue of the Birds of New Zealand* (1871), and the Hutton Memorial Fund was later established to provide grants for research in zoology, botany and geology in New Zealand.

Juan Fernandez Petrel: Recorded here as accidental and in New Zealand a rare sub-tropical vagrant, it breeds on Mas-a-fuera, Juan Fernandez Islands, about 700 km off Chile. This volcanic island group was discovered by chance by the Portuguese navigator, Juan Fernandez (c1536-c1604) for the Spanish crown in 1563 (some state 1574). It seems the uncertainty of the history could be attributed to the Spanish government's restricted dissemination of voyages made in that era and area. Becoming a sailor at the age of 14, Fernandez earned the title 'brujo' (wizard) after accomplishing very quick times for his voyages when circumventing wind forces along the eastern coastline of South America. He is said to have been allowed to settle there, and the introduced goats later provided sustenance for Alexander Selkirk, the inspiration for the novel *Robinson Crusoe*, when he was marooned there in 1704. To promote tourism, two of the islands were renamed Selkirk and Robinson Crusoe Islands. After becoming a hideout for pirates in the 17th and 18th centuries, the islands have been classified as a distinct eco-region, despite the limited varieties of flora and fauna.

King's Parrot (Australian King-Parrot): A moderately common resident, favouring rain and wet sclerophyll forests, but, like some others in the *Psittaciformes* order, also visiting parklands and gardens throughout the year. It acquired its name not for any perceived regal characteristics, but after Philip Gidley King (1758-1808), third Governor of NSW from 1800-1806. Born in Cornwall, he joined the Royal Navy in 1770 and accompanied the First Fleet as second lieutenant under Captain Arthur Phillip. He founded the first European settlement on Norfolk, where he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor in 1789. After introducing many reforms, which strengthened our State's economy, he was replaced by another British naval officer, William Bligh, because of his failing health; he died within a year of returning to England. Labelled as a Tabuan (after an island in the Pacific) Parrot, there is an illustration of this avian species by the engraver, Peter Mazell in the *Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay* collection held in the State Library of Victoria.

(To be concluded)

Unusual Records for February 2006

Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Little Penguin	1	25-Feb	Wollongong harbour	inshore	PM
Tahiti Petrel	1	25-Feb	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Striated Heron	1	3-Feb	Little Lake	mudflats	MR
Osprey	1	28-Feb	Windang	overhead	KB
Square-tailed Kite	2	14-Feb	Nowra	overhead	MJ
Swamp Harrier	1	27-Feb	Dunmore	paddock	RB
Swamp Harrier	1	5-Feb	Comerong Is	sandflats	CJC
Brown Goshawk	1	7-Feb	Dapto	urban	RB
Brown Goshawk	1	24-Feb	Forest Grove, Kanahooka	overhead	MC
Grey Goshawk	1	20-Feb	Tomerong	garden	TN
Grey Goshawk	1	20-Feb	Bulli	overhead	RT
Grey Goshawk	1	21-Feb	Unanderra	urban	MC
Grey Goshawk	1	28-Feb	Coniston	lightpole	MC
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	24-Feb	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
Peregrine Falcon	1	20-Feb	Bulli	overhead	RT
Buff-banded Rail	3	14-Feb	Byarong Ck., Figtree	creek	WZ
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	3-Feb	Little Lake	mudflats	MR
Pied Oystercatcher	20	5-Feb	Comerong Is	sandflats	CJC
Sooty Oystercatcher	17	5-Feb	Crookhaven Heads	rocky shore	CJC
Sooty Oystercatcher	33	24-Feb	Coledale	rocky shore	GM
White-headed Pigeon	3	27-Feb	Jamberoo	urban	BH
Bar-shouldered Dove	3	5-Feb	Comerong Is	rainforest	CJC
Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove	1	23-Feb	Kangaroo Valley	rainforest	NJ
Red-rumped Parrot	4	10-Feb	Barrack Point	playing field	MR
Azure Kingfisher	1	23-Feb	Bargo River track	riverine	MR,TE
Southern Emu-wren	few	3-Feb	Manyana	heathland	IM
Pilotbird	1	26-Feb	Yarrawa State Forest	forest	BH
Pilotbird	1	26-Feb	Bargo River track	forest	CJC
White-plumed Honeyeater	6	28-Feb	Berkeley	urban	CJC
Crested Shrike-tit	3	10-Feb	Mt Kembla	forest	MR
Crested Shrike-tit	few	23-Feb	Bargo River track	forest	MR,TE
Spangled Drongo	1	23-Feb	Kangaroo Valley	garden	NJ
White-winged Triller	1	5-Feb	Tramway Ck. Thirroul	wetland	IM
Tree Martin	200+	5-Feb	Shoalhaven Heads	overhead	GB

Contributors: BA – Bob Ashford; GB – Graham Barwell; RB – Roger Bogart; CB – Chris Brandis; KB – Keith Brandwood; CJC – Chris Chafer; MC – Martin Cocker; TE – Terri Edwell; ME – Mary Eskdale; BH – Betty Hudson; NJ – Nigel Jacket; MJ – Michael Jarman; IM – Ian McKinlay; GM – Graham Meany; PM – Peter Milburn; TN – Tracey Newcombe; MR – Michelle Rower; NW – Nathan Waugh; RT – Roger Truscott; WZ – Bill Zealey

Comment: The Tahiti Petrel is the 15th record of this species in the region since the first one was observed off Wollongong in February 1986. The 20 Pied Oystercatchers at Comerong Island is the largest aggregation there for three years, while the 33 Sooty Oystercatchers at Coledale is the largest gathering ever recorded from a single rock platform in the region. Interestingly, a flock of 19 was recorded at that site in March 2002. The Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove record is the most southerly yet recorded in the Illawarra. The Buff-banded Rails were found breeding at Figtree, while the 200+ Tree Martins is the largest number recorded up until February. However in March a flock of 500+ was observed, but you'll have to wait until next month to find out where.



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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 292 May 2006

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

Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, would be delighted to see you, and take a load off your mind!

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS May 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 8th May - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Holly Lattin will present 'Suburban Superb Fairy-wrens: how they are coping ?' Superb Fairy-wrens show an unusual response to the modification of their habitat. However, where suitable vegetation is available they appear to be living quite successfully in suburban gardens. This presentation will summarise studies examining foraging duration, territory size and food availability in suburban habitats. Don't forget to bring a mug and a small plate for supper too.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 10th May 9.00am – Austinmer. Leader – Joan Wylie. Turn left into Oceania Pde from Princes Highway. Cross the railway and turn left into Hill St. Follow this to Foothills Rd. Turn left again and park nearby. And if you lose your way, call Joan, 0407 268 279.

MONTHLY OUTING – Sunday 14th May – Bargo Gorge. Leader Betty Hudson. Meet at 8.30am at the junction of Avon Dam Road & Arina Road Bargo. Travel from Wollongong via Picton road and then south along the Hume Hwy towards Goulburn. Take the Bargo exit, turn right and immediately right again where we will meet. From here we will drive to the start of the walk. Bring a carry lunch and morning tea. Also bring a warm top layer in case it is a little cool. **Please note that there is no off ramp from the Hume Hwy if travelling north from Mittagong. You will need to travel along the Old Hume Hwy and then Remembrance Drive to Bargo, crossing the railway on the outskirts of Bargo to turn right on to the Avon Dam Road. The walk will finish around 2.00pm.**

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 16th May 2006, at 7.30pm at the Cashman's, 5 Madden St, Fernhill. 4284 0538. To get there. Turn west from Princes Highway at the lights into Caldwell Ave. (shops and car repairs on the north corners) Proceed west to a roundabout, with palms growing in it, at Tarrawanna, continue on 0.2k approx, then turn left into Devenish St and first right into Madden St. We are the third and last house on the left. If coming on the Northern Distributor, turn west at the lights into Towradgi Rd. Keep in the left lane to cross the Princes Highway at a small dog-leg into Caldwell Ave. Then as above. All members welcome.

JUNE 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Friday 19th May**. Contributions from all members welcomed, but please submit your contributions early, by email preferably, otherwise by post, to the editor at 5 Madden St, Fernhill 2519.

Reports of the April Holiday Camp will appear in the IBOC News for June

From Your Committee

1. Finance Closing balance for 31.1.06 was \$2,373.12, Receipts \$596.00, Expenses \$121.20 Closing Balance at 31.3.06 was \$2,847.92
2. A decision on how much to support the publication of a 2nd edition of *Birds of the Illawarra* was deferred for a couple of months.
3. Following a suggestion from Terry Dawson, a reservation has been made at the UNSW Field Station on Smiths Lake for the club Spring Camp. The dates are 21 – 28 October 2006
4. Chris Cartledge has taken over the reconstructing of the club web site, and is continuing this work

April Meeting Guest Speakers

Kevin McGregor

Our April IBOC News introduced our guest speaker Barry Prior and Ron Parker and gave us details of their history and experiences while working at the Wongawilli Colliery and involvement with the St John Ambulance First Aid Courses.

Their presentation of the First Aid material to assist us in our outings with the club was most helpful and will be beneficial to us in the future. The items included were:

Safety: Good communications are necessary while we are on outings (mobile telephone etc);

- Wear protective clothing and good footwear;
- predetermine destination and ETA back to starting point;
- carry ample water;
- if lost, stay together and find a clear spot to wait, light fire if necessary;
- carry a *First Aid Kit*.

First Aid: Should an accident occur:

- Do not panic, stay calm,
- If thought to be serious, call for help,
- check for any danger to yourself and others,
- check casualty's level of consciousness (ask questions), breathing and bleeding.

Demonstrations were given by Barry on Ron (as the patient) on how to treat the casualty by lying them down and getting them rested, controlling the bleeding with pressure bandages and checking their breathing. How to roll a patient over if they were having difficulty in breathing. A further full demonstration was given on CPR treatment necessary in some cases where the patient is not breathing. This treatment is to be given quickly and consists of 30 pushes on the chest following by 2 breaths and as fast as possible. Look, listen and feel is the procedure. Full details of how to treat snake, tick and leech bites were given and a record of these procedures are now available in the library. If someone has a fall, recognising signs and symptoms is most important. These are pins and needles in the limbs or shoulders and loss of movement or feeling in the spine or limbs.

Thanks were given to Barry and Ron for their presentation and great advice. Thanks also go to Neil Wheway for arranging their attendance at our meeting. Great night and certainly very helpful to all who attended. Again reminded full details of the address can be seen in the library.

BIRDING ABROAD

Over the past few years David and Elizabeth Winterbottom have been going overseas to look at birds and other things. Here is a vignette from a voyage in October 2000.

Okavango

We were up for “tea” at 5.30 am so as to be back before it got really warm and the tsetse flies became a nuisance. On the way out we disturbed two silver backed jackals which were stalking a flock of over a hundred Helmeted Guineafowl. Plenty of giraffe, tsessebe, elephant, impala and zebra were seen, but all seemed just a little shy. A cheetah was the highlight. Birds included a Brubru Shrike and White-bellied Sunbirds, Blue Waxbills and Weavers.

Later we saw three lions in some meagre shade. The lioness got up as if to find a better spot, but then froze. The others were immediately alert. She then shot off after a female warthog. She manoeuvred it back past us and on round so that the lion could take up the chase. He did and caught and killed it before our very eyes. He allowed the cub and lioness to feed off the rear end for ten minutes or so, but then shook them off and proceeded to eat his lion’s share. He finished off everything, bones, skin and hair. All that was left were some bloodstains in the sand.

At the river there were heaps of birds about. Blacksmith’s and Crowned Plovers, the occasional cadaverous Maribou Stork, and Water Dikkop (like a Stone-curlew) were on the banks, with Red-winged Pratincoles jerking overhead. Along the edges were Yellow-billed and Open-billed Storks, Common Sandpipers and other waders, and a variety of herons and egrets. On the lily pads amongst the glorious flowers were both African Jacanas and their dainty relatives the Lesser Jacana. Flying were the huge Pied and the diminutive, but startling, Malachite Kingfishers, together with the magnificent but ubiquitous African Fish Eagles uttering their haunting cry.

In the late afternoon we went on a walk; the guide set out the rules. Single file with him and his rifle in the lead, no straggling for any reason. If we meet lion or hyena, stop and stare them down, never turn or run. Stop for elephant and back off if it continues to threaten. Climb a tree from buffalo, if there is time, otherwise lie down – better to be trampled than gored – and with their rotten eyesight they might not see you! We did not see much and had no dramas.

Bits and...

- In *The Bedside Book of Birds* Graeme Gibson (author Margaret Atwood’s husband) writes about an enormous albatross drifting over a ragged wave in a misty southern ocean. ‘It was enough to have seen it at that moment and I was left with an enchanted sense that I had received a gift. At its heightened moments, birdwatching can encourage a state of being close to rapture. It is an ecstasy that is said to accompany the writing of poetry;

sometimes it comes when we are listening to music.' Madelaine Murray 'The joy in the voyeur's eye' Spectrum p17 *SMH* 1,2 April 2006

The CASCADES WALK, 12 April, Leader - Joan Wylie

Val Dolan

On a perfect autumn morning ten IBOC members met at the foot of Macquarie Pass. After seeing many birds while waiting in the car park, Magpie-larks, Magpies, male Satin Bower Birds, Raven, Wagtail (strangely all black and white) a decision was made to first walk the northern track besides the creek. As we entered the forest several Black Cockatoos glided overhead. Then bird life disappeared from sight and hearing as we marveled at the tall, straight turpentines reaching for the sun. Many spiders' webs sparkled in the branches and copious butterflies fluttered high in the canopy or gathered in pools of sunlight on the ground. The babbling brook added to our pleasure. Then keen eyes began to sight many birds and our leader, Joan Wylie, was a great help in identifying these. Ted and I agreed that we need such a leader as small grey or brown birds silhouetted in the trees look all the same to us! And how would you know how to pronounce Gerygone unless you go out with experienced bird watchers? Joan noticed some scratchings on the track and no sooner had we agreed that it was Lyrebird habitat than Chris Cartledge spotted one ahead on the track. Closer to the Cascades we saw several male Lyrebirds dashing through the under brush. Later, on the southern track Judy turned to see another one cross the track behind her. Great that they were so plentiful ! Clearly visible, hanging over the creek was a wonderful large woven nest: home to a Yellow Throated Scrub Wren. Doug Rickers spotted a Flame Robin and Tom Wylie a Yellow Robin. We all heard very noisy Whip Birds but I'm not sure if any were sighted - they're elusive.

Morning tea was welcome on our return to the grassy area near the car park. Red-browed Finches and a family of Superb Wrens entertained us by flying in and out of the shelter. It was such a glorious morning we all decided to cross the road and inspect the southern track. We had an excellent sighting of a White Throated Tree Creeper. I found a small woven nest and tugged the branch to have a closer inspection. Cleverly a single leaf had been woven in to cover the entrance hole. Neil Wheway reminded me that had the nest been in use I'd have driven the parents away. Sometimes my excitement and curiosity override my commonsense. Point taken for the future.

Back at the car park Tom (suffering from a cold) read out our bird list of 34 sightings. Tera suggested that we needed to sing Happy Birthday to him before he went off for a family celebration. Driving off some say Tom was heard to mutter, "I'd rather go fishing."

White-faced Heron	Brown Gerygone	Grey Fantail
Straw Necked Ibis	Brown Thornbill	Willie Wagtail
Crimson Rosella	Yellow Thornbill	Australian Magpie
Black-eared Cockatoo	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Laughing Kookaburra	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Superb Lyrebird	Eastern Spinebill	Satin Bowerbird
White Throated Tree Creeper	Flame Robin	Red-browed Finch
Superb Fairy-wren	Eastern Yellow Robin	Welcome Swallow
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Whipbird	Bred-whiskered Bulbul
Yellow-throated Scrubwren	Golden Whistler	Silvereye
White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Thrush	
Large-billed Scrubwren	Magpie-lark	

...Pieces

* A lady friend has now joined AGGRO, the screeching-thief-stopping sulphur crested cockatoo (mentioned 2 months ago) in his cage at the Hardex Store in Fairy Meadow. In consequence, Aggro has now quietened down quite a bit. Ahh! Domestic bliss !

* ‘Look at that sanderling,’ she exclaims, pointing to an innocuous little grey and white wader whirring along the shore. ‘It breeds in Siberia then flies over 11,000 km back to Australia for the summer. The adult flies back when the chicks are about 3 weeks old. The chicks fly to Australia alone when they are 6 weeks old. Isn’t that the best story in the world ? Don’t you just love it ?

Madelaine Murray ‘The joy in the voyeur’s eye’ Spectrum p17 SMH 1,2 April 2006

* Have you heard about the **BIG SAVINGS !!!** ehh, well, ehh, not actually for you, but for the club. Here’s how you do it. Simply swap to receiving your IBOC News by email ! Sure, lots of people like to have a hard copy in their hand, I do myself, or you may not be on email, and that’s fine. Not to worry at all. But if 10 more members moved to receiving IBOC News by email rather than by post, the club would save \$55 pa on postage. If you do feel like swapping to email, please let Chris Brandis know at cbrandis@speedlink.com.au Thanks.



On the Cascades Walk: ‘Two Innocents Abroad,’ Tom Wylie Esq & Neil Wheway Esq.

Photo : Tera Wheway

Barren Grounds - Ground Parrot Survey 2006

9am to noon Sunday 13 August 2006 Ground parrot surveys at Barren Grounds have been conducted annually since the January 1983 fire. Volunteers from Birds Australia, COG, CBOC, Birding NSW, the University of Wollongong, NPWS and elsewhere have always come along to help.

! WE NEED YOUR HELP THIS YEAR !

The results over the past few years have been quite erratic.

What will happen this year ?? BE THERE YOURSELF AND FIND OUT Bring stout walking gear, wet weather gear, hats or sun bonnets, and a picnic lunch. For more information, contact Jack.Baker@environment.nsw.gov.au

Latham's Snipe: Once moderately common, it has become scarce in our region, owing to habitat destruction, visiting us in summer from northern Japan and eastern Siberia. It was so named by the RAOU in 1975 after Latham's description in 1801. Dr John Latham (1740-1837) was a British physician (practising in Kent until his retirement in 1796), naturalist and author. He helped form the Linnean Society of London in 1788 and became a Fellow of the Royal Society. He subsequently earned the reputation of 'grandfather' of Australian ornithology through his scientific naming and publishing of so many of our birds, including the Emu, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo and Australian Magpie. At the age of 81 he began his eight years work on the *General History of Birds*, designing, sketching and colouring his own illustrations.

Lewin's Rail & Lewin's Honeyeater: These are birds of contrast, apart from being resident here and their somewhat staccato calls. The dense-cover, wetlands rail is scarce, whilst the common honeyeater frequents forests and gardens. John William Lewin (1770-1819) was an English naturalist, engraver and early settler in Sydney, where he later became a portrait artist and city coroner. He made three significant expeditions, firstly accompanying James Grant, surveying areas to Bass Strait and then the Hunter River, and lastly Governor Macquarie on the new Blue Mountains road to Bathurst, drawing events during construction work and plants. He collected wildlife specimens until his death. His re-issued seven-volume *Birds of New Holland* (1808) five years later became the first illustrated book to be engraved and printed in this country. His other major work, *A Natural History of the Birds of New South Wales*, was published 19 years after his death.

Richard's Pipit: A common resident passerine and the most widespread in the world of the Motacillidae family. It is the only avian species to have been named after Monsieur Richard of Lunéville in the region of Lorraine, who was a French naturalist and collector. It was so given and described by his compatriot and fellow naturalist, L.P. Vieillot in 1818.

Sabine's Gull: Listed as a vagrant by Christides and Boles, it hasn't been recorded off our coastline for approaching 20 years. Outside of its circumpolar breeding season on the coasts and tundra, it is essentially pelagic, wintering in the North Pacific south towards Peru and Chile and in the Atlantic. Botanist Joseph Sabine named this species after his brother Edward (1788-1883), who discovered it, nesting among Arctic Terns, on some rocky islands (also later given his name) lying off the west coast of Greenland. Edward was an Irish astronomer and scientist, who researched the earth's magnetic field. He settled in England and joined the Royal Artillery, attaining the rank of Major-General and a knighthood. In 1818 & 1819 he took part in two voyages in search of the Northwest Passage. His interest in natural history and ornithology sprang from his visit to the Niagara frontier, and he eventually became President of the Royal Society (1862-1871). *Birds of Greenland* was one of his major works.

Salvin's Prion: This is one of 15 avians named after Osbert Salvin (1835-1898), an English naturalist, who became a Fellow of the Royal Society. Central America became the main focus of his studies, where he prized, and shot, quetzals. Thousands of their plumes were transported across the Atlantic to meet the demand from collectors and fashionable milliners' shops. He combined with fellow naturalist, Doctor Frederick du Cane Godman to compile the 40-volume *Biologia Centrali Americana* (1879) and later to present their bird collections to the British Natural History Museum over a 15-year period.

Saunders's Tern: Only the one local record, dating back to 1903 and, according to Christides and Boles, unlikely to be valid. It is very similar in appearance to the Little Tern, with which some consider it may be conspecific, and is best differentiated in breeding plumage. The two species regularly overlap around the Arabian Peninsula and nearby Indian Ocean. With estuaries, coastal areas and tidal lagoons as favoured habitats, its range extends from the Red Sea to Tanzania, Madagascar and the Seychelles. Howard Saunders (1835-1907) was originally a British merchant banker, which afforded him much travel, notably Brazil, Chile and Spain, which in turn led to his interest in ornithology and research at the British Museum. He became the foremost expert on gulls and terns, applying strict standards to field identification, culminating in his book *Sternae* (1889).

Wilson's Storm-Petrel: One of the earth's most widespread and abundant birds, breeding in Antarctica and many sub-Antarctic islands, it is an uncommon visitor here, mostly out to sea. It was so named in 1823 by Emperor Napoleon's nephew, Prince Charles Lucien Bonaparte, the 'father of systematic ornithology', who in turn had ten bird species named after him. The first to study American birds in their natural habitats, Alexander Wilson (1766-

1813) was often called the Father of American Ornithology, completing seven volumes of his *American Ornithology* (1808-1813). Born in Paisley, Scotland, he became an itinerant poet and pedlar of muslin. After ridiculing manufacturers, he was gaoled for libel and, after his release in 1794, emigrated to the United States. While working as a Pennsylvania village schoolmaster, he began his research into birds and became an accomplished artist.

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- Leslie Christides & Walter E. Boles (1994): *The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and its Territories*. RAOU
- Barrie Heather & Hugh Robertson (2005): *The Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*. Viking.
- J.D. MacDonald (1987): *The Illustrated Dictionary of Australian Birds by Common Name*. Reed.
- The New Australia New Zealand Encyclopedia* (1982 Bay Books)
- Various web-sites

Venue for October 2006 Camp 21st to 28th October 2006

The IBOC Spring Camp will be held at Smiths Lake Field Station of the UNSW. This is north of Myall Lake and south of Forster on the mid north coast. The surrounding area has a rich bird fauna in a wide variety of habitats, with approx 100-120 species likely to be recorded. Full details will be in the next newsletter..

BOOK REVIEW John Huxley *Dead Parrots*

This is a murder mystery, set in Sydney. The body of the murdered one is found in the sands at Kurnell, head down and half buried ! It's the body of a prominent twitcher.

The detectives investigating the crime have all sorts of things to cope with: getting time with the family, trying to make sense of what clues they have, having some love life, investigating some odd people, keeping the press at bay, and trying to pacify their boss who is threatening, and demanding results, results, results !

The dead man was high flyer – Sydney's answer to David Attenborough – with his own TV show, and his own line of walking boots and socks. He was in the 700 club, but there is little love lost between him and some rivals. 'Little love' is putting it mildly. He has a murky past too, and was engaged in some questionable business deals.

It's not a bad yarn, if you like reading crime. Nice to have it set in Sydney, and nice to have bird observers featured, though the high flying twitchers portrayed are not very nice people. This is John Huxley's first venture into fiction. He is an assistant editor at the Sydney Morning Herald.

Meetings and Walks for June to December 2006

June	Meeting	12.06.06 nb Public Holiday	Neil & Tera Wheway	Antarctica
	Mid Week Walk	14.06.06	Barbara	Macquarie Rivulet
	Outing	Saturday 17.06.06	Betty Hudson	Saddleback Mtn & Hoddles Track
July	Meeting	10.07.06	Col Markham	South America

	Mid Week Walk	12.07.06	Judy Parkinson	Scout Camp
	Outing	Sunday 16.07.06	Betty Hudson	Bass Point &/or Killalea Lagoon
August	Meeting	14.08.06	Peter Nolan	Birds of America
	Mid Week Walk	16.08.06	Chris Brandis	Rocklow Archery Range Dunmore
	Outing	Saturday 19.08.06	Val Dolan	Homebush Bay
September	Meeting	11.09.06	TBA	
	Mid Week Walk	13.09.06	Chris Brandis	Tallawarra
	Outing	Sunday 17.09.06	Betty Hudson	Redhill Fire Trail Fitzroy Falls
October	Meeting	9.10.06	TBA	
	Mid Week Walk	12.10.06	Joan Wylie	Grevillia Park
	Outing	Saturday 14.10.06	TBA	
	Camp	21.10.06 to 28.10.06	Betty Hudson	Smiths Lake
November	Meeting/ AGM	13.11.06	Josh & Bruce Coyte	Bird Photos
	Mid Week Walk	15.11.06	Chris Brandis	Macquarie Pass Clover Hill Road
	Outing	Sunday 19.11.06	Betty Hudson	Gerroa/ Crooked River Seven Mile Beach NP
December	Christmas Picnic	Saturday 9.12.06	TBA	TBA
	Christmas Meeting	11.12.06	TBA	

TWITCHATHON 2005 REPORT OF 11 MARCH 2006

The 2005 Twitchathon was a wonderful success with the greatest number of species seen (229) on any Twitchathon since NSW went it alone in 1994 and the greatest amount of funds raised, viz \$14979.25 gross (so far) with about \$14000 available to be donated to the Gluepot Reserve Education Unit. On this occasion there were 92 registered Twitchers, with 11 Main Race, 13 Champagne and 6 Children's Teams taking part.

The Winning Main Race Team, the Wacked-out Woodswallows (229) lead their opponents, the Hunter Home Brewers by just two species (227), while the Hunter Thickheads & The Black-necked Stalkers tied with 201 species each.

The Champagne Race winners Lessstictum phoradae led with 147, from their nearest rivals Trio Twitchin (134) and the Warbler Specklers (127). In the Children's Teams, the Elegant Eagles with 127 species were well out in front of all others and the Logrunners, in the under 10 years category saw 75 species. I recently went to Sawtell Public School where I presented the winning prizes to the Elegant Eagles and Logrunners and found much support there for the Twitchathon.

The winners in respect of raising the most funds were Keith Brandwood \$3143 which was somewhat below his best year of \$3900 in 1994; second was Tiffany Mason with \$1639 and third was Carol Probets with \$1360. What a sterling effort these three people made in raising all these funds. Overall the Main Race Teams manage to raise about 70% of all moneys raised. Congratulations to all those people who took part. The prizes for the most funds raised were presented at the BASNA AGM on 25 March 2006 at Sydney Olympic Park.

Birds Australia and BASNA thank all those people and the Bird Clubs who encouraged the Teams and helped with the fund raising. We look forward to your continued support in 2006

Alan Morris

Twitchathon Co-ordinator Tel 0243 342776, email: amorris@ceinternet.com.a

More on the Twitchathon in a later IBOC News

The Wagtail

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

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

'Sweet-pretty- creature' – yes, but who
Is the one he sings it to ?
Not me – not you.

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

Judith Wright

Good Grief ?

A blast from the past . 'Ada and Elsie have just been on the air. Ada said, "Dadda has just been mending our cuckoo clock. Now the cuckoo backs out and asks 'What's the time ? What's the time ?" "'

This quote is from a slim but delightful book, *Mother Stayed at Home*. Edited by Toni Mackenzie. It's a collection of letters that her Mum wrote in the early 1950s to her daughter who was away on her big overseas trip: going O/S by sea in those days. It's amusing and entertaining. It drips with nostalgia for more innocent days when Jack Davey ruled the air waves, Menzies ruled the roost, and winning the Davis Cup was really something.



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CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 293 June 2006

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

Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, would be delighted to see you, and take a load off your mind!

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS - JUNE 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 12th June - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Neil and Tera Wheway will present 'Voyage to Antarctica.' NB This Monday is a public holiday. Don't forget to bring a mug and a small plate for supper too.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 14th June, 8.30 am – Macquarie Rivulet. Leader – Barbara Hales. Meet at the Hales' home, 32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail. And bring your morning tea with you.

MONTHLY OUTING – Saturday 17th June. Korungulla Swamp & Primbee Dunes.
Leader Betty Hudson. *Please note the change from the programme*

Meet at **9.00am** at the gate to Korungulla Swamp, which is in Nicole Road, Primbee. We will walk around the swamp before heading over to the dune forest behind the Golf Course. If the swamp mahoganys are flowering there may be the possibility of Swift Parrots. Bring a carry lunch and the walk will finish around 2.00pm.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 20th June 2006, at 7.30pm at Tom and Joan Wylie's, 4 Daphne St, Bellambi. All members are welcome.

JULY 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Friday 22th June**. Contributions from all members welcomed, but please submit your contributions early, by email preferably, otherwise by post, to the editor at 5 Madden St, Fernhill 2519.

WELCOME ! A special welcome to several new, and recently joined members of the club. It's nice to have you with us. Terry and Lyn Dawson, Chris Cartledge, Nerida Hudspith, John and Gwenneth Prior, Greg Knight, Frances Paterson, Carol and Garry Bailey, Myrilyn Googh, Alexander and Caitlin Brown, Shane Spence and family, Tony and Sylvia Loader, Mark Micallef, Jane Kinsella, John and Katherine Brown

TUMUT



*Back: Lyn, Tera, Terry, Neil, Tom, John, Chris C, Daphne, Chris B, Nic Photo: Nic, who sprinted to get in
Middle: Peg, Robyn, Barbara, Catherine, Betty, Bill, Joan Z, Nerida, Myrilyn, Ros, Fay
Front: Brian, Joan W Also at camp were Martin, Penny, Julie, Bruce, Josh, Kevin, Fae, Amy and Lisa*

Myrilyn Googh and Nerida Hudspith's Introduction to the World of Birding.
Between us we had lots of enthusiasm but no knowledge of bird watching. We were made to feel welcomed and included, valuable information was generously shared.
Nerida was kindly lent binoculars by a fellow member.

Camp life: Scheduled meetings around the campfire proved to be informative and a warming social experience. Myrilyn and I forgave afternoon recovery naps and dinners out to fit everything in. The caravan park was postcard picturesque, a well-chosen site, with great amenities. You needed a sound sense of humor and highly tuned negotiation skills to deal with hiccups regarding sudden changes to booking arrangements. Although we had to move cabins midstream it didn't stop us from managing a full day's walk. **Extra camp activities for Nerida** involved a lost dog and a feral cat.

Exciting moments: Seeing the Whistling Kite, looking down on it gliding over the Blowering Dam. Another highlight was seeing at close range a Satin Bower bird
For Myrilyn - the thrill of actually seeing birds for the first time through the binoculars. Another highlight was seeing a Satin Bower bird darting around the picnic area at Yarrangobilly Caves.
For Nerida - tripping over herself to get a better view of the two Wedge-tailed Eagles soaring above the Hume and Hovell track. After hearing about robins for a couple of days, it was sheer disbelief to come across a Flame Robin at the Blowering Dam.

Challenging moments: The suspension bridge - Nerida and co-coaching Myrilyn, in Kath and Kim style "look at me, look at me". This proved to be light entertainment for some. As first timers we felt the camp was well researched and planned by Betty. What a great introduction to the world of birding. **We're hooked !**

Tumut - A ‘Newbie’s’ Impressions

Chris Cartledge

We (Julie Telenta, my partner and I) drove down to Tumut on the Saturday and were soon settled into a cabin by the fast flowing Tumut River. We were not the first there – some arrived on Thursday! Walking around the Riverglade Caravan Park that afternoon I soon saw some familiar faces and a few that were not familiar, but their tell-tale binoculars told me why they were there.

That night at 7pm, around the open fire, I met the rest of the campers. At this time there were around twenty and another ten or so arrived over the weekend. I was not the lone first timer, it was also sisters Nerida & Myrilyn’s, and Lyn and Terry’s first camp with the Club.

In a big circle around the campfire each night (thanks to stokers Neil & Tom) Betty reviewed and recorded the day’s sightings, and then told us of the plans for the following day. Daily excursion included morning, afternoon and full day walks.

What a great job Betty did. I really appreciated the bundle of handouts, particularly the tick list of birds indigenous to the Snowy River National Park. As almost everyone was new to me, including the other ‘newbies’, the inclusion of a list of the names of camp participants would have been helpful. Obviously each excursion was well researched as they went off without a hitch. The Guide Leader has not lost her touch!

Over a suspension bridge at either end, I particularly enjoyed the 5klm walk along the Hume & Hovell Walking Track. I had virtually forgotten about these great Australian explorers and then to find myself walking in their tracks – wow!

We had quail on the floor of our aviary in the 1950’s and I’ve seen them when bushwalking. So the real highlight for me was the Flame Robins in full sunlight at the Blowering Dam. The Whistling Kite patrolling the top of the dam wall was also a special sighting for a beginner. It was close, sat still and it was around for more than a few seconds. Wonderful!

Julie and I had to be home on Wednesday evening so our last campfire was Tuesday night. To my amazement, in the four days we had been in the area a total of 96 species had been sighted, and there were four days to go before the camp concluded. Personally, I only claim sightings of birds I know that I have a good chance of recognising again by sight (not too good on the calls as yet). I ticked-off 26 species about half of which were new to me.

I’m going to enjoy being a member of IBOC if this camp is an indication of its activities. I appreciate the effort that organising such events entails and I thank all those who contributed, especially the camp leader Betty Hudson!

TRAMPING TUMUT

Neil Wheway

Tumut in the autumn was an idyllic place for an Easter camp with the autumn toning. The poplar and elm trees were a burst of colours along with the crystal clear water of the Tumut River. The IBOC members who attended the camp were indeed fortunate with good weather, cool nights and warm sunny days, and were rewarded with good sightings of birds. Although Betty had ice on her bowl of water one morning which had to be lifted off before she was able to use the bowl. Our days kept us occupied looking for that extra bird that was on the list but not yet sighted, nights were around a blazing fire drum discussing birds and the state of the nation in general. Robins when first seen early in the camp caused much excitement, towards the end of the camp when spotted; it was just another “flaming” robin.

Our communal evening dinner at the local RSL Club went off well and was enjoyed by those who went. It was planned to have it on Wednesday night; unfortunately both the RSL and the Bowling Clubs restaurants were closed. The night had to be rescheduled for Thursday, which was unfortunate for some of our members who had to leave Tumut early. Kevin McGregor spoke to me the morning after our night at the RSL and said that the first aid talk from the April meeting came in very useful. He had rendered first aid to a man who had fallen down the stairs in the club. The man had sustained a head injury which was bleeding profusely and Kevin was able to staunch the blood flow until the ambulance officers arrived.

Our day excursions were varied with interesting locations up into the mountains, along the Tumut River bank and of course the local sewerage ponds, where several different species of water birds and ducks were spotted. After much discussion it was decided it was an Australasian Grebe not the Hoary-headed Grebe. These ponds were also filled with European Carp some of which after being caught were left on the bank of the ponds. People were spotted fishing in the ponds! We wondered how people could eat fish out of those waters but were later told they only wanted the carp's eggs for fish bait. Our trip to the Yarrangobilly Caves excited some so much that they had to have a swim in the thermal pool.

We had several of our newer members in camp with us who made favourable comments about our camp life and seemed to have enjoyed the camp. Three grandkids that went to the last Easter camp at Cowra came to Tumut and caused their usual mayhem. We must be doing things right for them to want to come to our camps a second time, it was good to see them and that they enjoyed our outdoor activities.

Our camp leader Betty Hudson did a fantastic job exploring the area for suitable walks arriving two days early. She put in many hours and miles to make sure every thing ran smoothly, like clockwork. Her organizational and map reading skills made for an enjoyable and rewarding week in camp at Tumut. We are all indebted to you. Betty, thank you.

Camp Sidelines

Shared driving. It happens at every camp, but it's nice. On different days we, Robyn and John, were with Neil & Tera, Chris B, Terry & Lyn, and Betty & Catherine. Others did lots of sharing too. Nice company, good conversation & chauffeur driven driving ! What a life!

Local Events. The woodworking group had a display on all week, which several members inspected. On the last Saturday of camp, Tumut had its Festival of the Falling Leaves, with stalls, performances and lots of things to see.

First Aid. Appropriately, it was Kevin McGregor who wrote up the First Aid talk last month, who helped a chap who fell over until an ambulance arrived. Kevin is also a voluntary driver for the Leukemia Foundation, driving patients to various hospitals for treatment. Top marks !

Flame Robins. Seen from the rear or side-on they look nice little birds, but when a male turned to face us, his breast colour was such a knock-out. Stunning ! Talk about 'Glory to God for dappled things...' Indeed Brian Hales, a robin aficionado (not to mention 'puffins'), waxed enthusiastically, 'This has made my day ! This has really made my day !'



Bridge over tumbling waters.

Photo Nic van Oudtshoorn

This was the first suspension bridge (built by Army Engineers), over the Goobarragandra River which flows into the Blowering Dam. This was on the section of the Hume and Hovell track that we walked. The bridge was firm and strong, and only swayed a little: quite the opposite to the challenging second bridge at the end of the walk.

Tumut Camp List

111 species

Emu	Wedge-tailed Eagle	White-throated Treecreeper	Restless Flycatcher
Stubble Quail	Brown Falcon	Superb Fairy-wren	Magpie-lark
Black Swan	Peregrine Falcon	Spotted Pardalote	Grey Fantail
Australian Shelduck	Nankeen Kestrel	Striated Pardalote	Willie Wagtail
Australian Wood Duck	Purple Swamp Hen	White-browed Scrubwren	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Mallard	Dusky Moorhen	Weebill	Dusky Woodswallow
Pacific Black Duck	Eurasian Coot	Brown Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Grey Teal	Black-fronted Dotterel	Buff-rumped Thornbill	Australian Magpie
Australasian Grebe	Masked Lapwing	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Pied Currawong
Darter	Silver Gull	Yellow Thornbill	Grey Currawong
Little Pied Cormorant	Rock Dove	Striated Thornbill	Australian Raven
Little Black Cormorant	Spotted Turtle-Dove	Red Wattlebird	Little Raven
Great Cormorant	Crested Pigeon	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	White-winged Chough
Australian Pelican	Peaceful Dove	White-eared Honeyeater	Satin Bowerbird
White-faced Heron	Wonga Pigeon	White-plumed Honeyeater	Richard's Pipit
White-necked Heron	Gang-gang Cockatoo	White-naped Honeyeater	House Sparrow
Great Egret	Little Corella	New Holland Honeyeater	Double-barred Finch
Intermediate Egret	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Eastern Spinebill	Red-browed Finch
Cattle Egret	Rainbow Lorikeet	Jacky Winter	Diamond Firetail
Australian White Ibis	Australian King-Parrot	Scarlet Robin	European Goldfinch
Straw-necked Ibis	Crimson Rosella	Flame Robin	Welcome Swallow
Royal Spoonbill	Eastern Rosella	Rose Robin	Tree Martin
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Red-rumped Parrot	Eastern Yellow Robin	Silvereye
Black-shouldered Kite	Southern Boobook	Crested Shrike-tit	Common Blackbird
Whistling kite	Barn Owl	Olive Whistler	Common Starling
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Azure Kingfisher	Golden Whistler	
Spotted Harrier	Laughing Kookaburra	Rufous Whistler	
Collared Sparrowhawk	Superb Lyrebird	Grey Shrike-thrush	

The Mothers Day trip to Bargo Gorge was greatly enjoyed by the 14 members who participated. At the meeting point Joan spotted a flock of Varied Sitellas and a flycatcher. We then drove to the start of the track adding a few birds such as Eastern Rosellas and Magpie-larks on the way. Our total bird list was impressive with at least 42 different species spotted throughout the day. We saw a Peaceful Dove and Glossy-Black Cockatoos before we even had left the carpark!!!

The highlight for several of us was a White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike being attacked by at least 4 Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. The honeyeaters dive bombed the cuckoo shrike which went to ground and hopped along until he found cover and a means of escape.

The track meanders along the edge of the Bargo river and there were plenty of beautiful spots to stop for morning tea. Just before morning tea we saw Double barred and Red-browed Finches.

After a short climb to the top of the gorge several people saw the first Rockwarbler for the day. There was a spectacular view of Mermaid's Pool which looks like a great swimming spot for a summer walk. We made sure we did not lose our way back by marking the track with a couple of arrows and a can in a tree.

Lunch was taken at a lovely lookout over a deep section of the gorge. On the return walk several members had sightings of a female Rose Robin and Joan found us a Crested Shrike-tit. Some of our new members really enjoyed a close look at a male Spotted Pardalote as well as a Striated Thornbill. There were some huge carp swimming in the river and when we returned to the car park we saw more Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and two Satin Bowerbirds to top our day off.

Thanks must go to Betty Hudson who did a great job of leading us all once again.

Bird List for Bargo Gorge Walk . 57 species for the day

Australian Wood Duck	Glossy Black-Cockatoo	Bell Miner	Grey Fantail
Pacific Black Duck	Galah	Noisy Miner	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Grey Teal	Little Corella	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike
Hardhead	Crimson Rosella	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Grey Butcher Bird
Little Pied Cormorant	Eastern Rosella	White-naped Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
White-faced Heron	Azure Kingfisher	New Holland Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Straw-necked Ibis	White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Spinebill	Satin Bowerbird
Grey Goshawk	Superb Fairy Wren	Rose Robin	Double-barred Finch
Purple Swamphen	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin	Red-browed Finch
Dusky Moorhen	Rockwarbler	Varied Sitella	Welcome Swallow
Masked Lapwing	White-browed Scrubwren	Crested Shrike-tit	Common Starling
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Striated Thornbill	Golden Whistler	Common Myna
Common Bronzewing	Brown Thornbill	Grey Shrike-thrush	
Crested Pigeon	Yellow Thornbill	Restless Flycatcher	
Peaceful Dove	Red Wattlebird	Magpie-lark	

BITS AND...

The following magazines are offered for free to a good home:

The Bird Observer - 1982 to 2006, and *Wingspan* - 1979 to 2006.

A donation to the Club would be appreciated.

Contact Kevin Mills - k.mills@bigpond.net.au

IBOC Spring Camp. 21st to 28th October 2006. Smiths Lake Field Station UNSW.

This camp is being held at the field station which is approached via Buladelah on the Mid North Coast and is on the coast south of Forster, between Myall & Smiths Lakes (Detailed directions in the August Newsletter). The Buladelah Nat Map gives a good overview of the area

Accommodation is in 7 dormitory rooms with limited accommodation for approx 4 caravans /camper vans/trailers, and plenty of room for tents on lawns, but no vehicles are allowed to park on the grass.

Five dormitories will be reserved for couples/ families or groups who are prepared to share and one other for men and one for ladies. Each dormitory holds up to 10 people in bunks.

Members wishing to attend are requested to let Betty Hudson know by putting their name on the list at the meetings or emailing/phoning, so that accommodation can be allocated.

The charge will be between \$10 & \$15 per person per night regardless of your type of accommodation. This will be confirmed next month.

CLUB MEETING Monday 8 May 2006

Alan Cousins

Holly Lattin's presentation was entitled 'Suburban Superb Fairy Wrens – How are they Coping ?' A bit of a different kind of bird watching, IBOC outings will never be the same – promiscuous females and young males baby-sitting (sexual equality) ? What is the world coming to ?

Holly's research took in suburban and non-suburban areas for comparison and, I would suggest, pretty good eyesight looking for these tiny birds in long grass, let alone catching them and attaching tiny transmitters to them.

Her studies would seem to reveal that these beautiful little birds are coupling (Sorry) coping quite successfully in suburban gardens, where suitable habitat exists, which also gives protection from predators. They also appear to be coping well in non-suburban areas. One reason here would seem to be the spread of Lantana, a weed that is gradually being removed from our environment. It however, gives great protection to little birds from predators, especially raptors due to its dense spiky bush form. The wrens are very territorial creatures, and it was interesting to hear how Holly obtained details of their diet and feeding habits in long and short grass. Their diet consists of bugs, spiders and flies etc.

It was a very interesting presentation by a person obviously enthused with her research, and given in a manner well understood. Let's hope that these magnificent birds continue to thrive.

Austinmer Mid-week Walk - Wednesday 10 May 2006

Chris. Cartledge

Led by Joan Wylie, with husband Tom bringing up the rear, members walked from Foothills Rd, Austinmer into the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area completing a large loop. For a short distance we touched the Gibson Walking Track. There was a good turn-up, twenty four in all, including Tony and Sylvia, and Jane who were on their first outing with the Club. Another nice surprise was five year old Jeremy, Terry & Lyn's Dawson's grandson.

The weather was pleasant enough, although at times the wind whistled through the tree tops. It was quite cold on much of the track but the sun came through in the clearings. It was here that we saw most birds. We enjoyed our usual BYO morning tea sitting on a couple of logs that had fallen across a wider section of the track.

One of the more ‘senior’ walkers commented that in their memory it was the first time that there were more walkers than bird species sighted. As you will see from the list below, seventeen species were sighted. By the time we were into the walk it was around 9:30am and the lack of sun and at times, strong winds meant the birds were elsewhere.

One of the highlights for this recently enlisted birdwatcher was the Eastern Yellow Robin spotted in some lantana. It kept getting closer until it ended up literally at our feet. I suggested to the walker beside me that we should reach out and pat it.

Having heard the Eastern Whipbird on numerous occasions (almost weekly on my morning walks along Fisher and Reserve Sts West Wollongong), I at last spotted this elusive bird. Actually I saw a pair of them, but as one disappeared, the other came closer, eventually scooting across the track in front of us. Wonderful, thanks Joan!

Sightings

- Rainbow Lorikeet
- Australian King Parrot
- Crimson Rosella
- White-throated Treecreeper
- Spotted Pardalote
- White-browed Scrubwren
- Brown Thornbill
- Lewin’s Honeyeater
- Eastern Spinebill
- Eastern Yellow Robin
- Eastern Whipbird
- Golden Whistler
- Grey Fantail
- Grey Butcherbird
- Pied Currawong
- Red-browed Finch
- Silvereye

...Pieces

* Apologies to readers for some glaring mistakes in the last issue – a case of trying to get the News out in a hurry before rushing off to camp, but *mea culpa* !

* Apologies also to contributors. Thank you for your contributions, but with the camp news etc space was well, hard to find, but never fear, your day will dawn.

BIRDING IN SPAIN

Joan Zealey

We didn’t go to Spain to watch birds. We went to spend Christmas with family in Barcelona, holiday in the south and do some sightseeing. Of course we took our binoculars.

Bright green parakeets shrieked at us from the palm trees in Gaudi’s famous Guell Park. There was a Redstart on my sister’s front path and another and Pied Wagtails skittering round the Roman amphitheatre at Tarragona. 100 Grey Herons stood among the gulls and waders in the rice paddies of the Ebro delta. The salt pans north of Cartagena held more waders and a flock of elegant pink Flamingoes, and when we stopped a Hoopoe with its distinctive crest flew into the bushes just past the car.

Common gulls and Herring Gulls wheeled above the cliffs of Gibraltar, and though the Flamingos were far away, there was a whole spill of Mediterranean Gulls at Fuentes de Piede, our only real bird watching stop of the trip. The magnificent gardens of the Alhambra were full of passerines – Greenfinches, Chaffinches, Hawfinches and Blackcaps, and we saw a Spotless Starling, one of Spain’s endemic species, on the roof of the fortress. In the olive groves and pastures were multitudes of little birds. Spain must be the sparrow capital of the world, and we added Crested Larks to our life list as they took off almost from beneath our wheels. Crag Martins flew busily beneath Ronda’s triple bridge. On the road to Madrid we saw six cranes in a paddock, and a pair of Bonelli’s Eagles flew alongside us briefly on the motorway to Barcelona. Altogether we saw about 80 species, including three new ones.

Unusual Records for March 2006

Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-turkey	6	Mar	Balgownie	garden	TE
Australasian Shoveler	6	11-Mar	Yallah	dam	TW
Red-tailed Tropicbird	1	3-Mar	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Brown Booby	1	3-Mar	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Lesser Frigatebird	1	3-Mar	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Little Bittern	1	25-Mar	Bream Beach, Jervis Bay	?	LP
Swamp Harrier	1	27-Feb	Dunmore	paddock	RB
Peregrine Falcon	1	14-Mar	Kanahooka	overhead	MC
Buff-banded Rail	1	18-Mar	Tom Thumb Lagoon	wetland	DW
Black-tailed Godwit	1	26-Mar	Comerong Is	sandflats	CJC
Bar-tailed Godwit	500	18-Mar	Comerong Is	sandflats	CJC
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	28-Mar	Windang	sandflats	MC
Ruddy Turnstone	20	25-Mar	Nth Port Kembla beach	rocky shore	CJC
Pied Oystercatcher	3	25-Mar	Sussex Inlet	estuary	LP
Pacific Golden Plover	300	18-Mar	Comerong Is	sandflats	CJC
Double-banded Plover	175	18-Mar	Comerong Is	sandflats	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	3	27-Feb	Jamberoo	powerline	BH
White-headed Pigeon	1	17-Mar	Thirroul	garden	MM
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	2	11-Mar	Balgownie	garden	TE
Red-rumped Parrot	10	28-Mar	Wollongong golf course	playing field	DF
Turquoise Parrot	2	12-Mar	Barren Ground NR	heathland	CJC
Pheasant Coucal	1	17-Mar	Figtree	garden	LP
Powerful Owl	1	3-Mar	Excelsior Res. Thirroul	forest	MM
Powerful Owl	1	13-Mar	West Cambewarra	forest	GD
Sooty Owl	1	14-Mar	West Cambewarra	forest	GD
Fork-tailed Swift	35+	13-Mar	Kangaroo Valley	overhead	BA
Fork-tailed Swift	20	16-Mar	Nowra	overhead	BA
Azure Kingfisher	2	18-Mar	Jerrara Dam	wetland	IM
Azure Kingfisher	1	25-Mar	Wrights Beach, Jervis Bay	beach	LP
Eastern Bristlebird	4	12-Mar	Barren Ground NR	woodland	CJC
Pilotbird	1	5-Mar	Yarrawa State Forest	rainforest	BH
Regent Honeyeater	1	16-Mar	west Albion Park	woodland	JC
Flame Robin	1	18-Mar	Yarrawa State Forest	woodland	CJC
Logrunner	2	27-Mar	Bellawongarah	rainforest	BA
Crested Shrike-tit	2	12-Mar	Excelsior Res. Thirroul	forest	MM
Spangled Drongo	1	24-Mar	Berkeley High School	parkland	IM
Figbird	1	10-Mar	Albion Park	urban	JC
Figbird	4	17-Mar	South Wollongong	urban	DW
Beautiful Firetail	2	12-Mar	Barren Ground NR	heathland	CJC
Tree Martin	500+	13-Mar	Kangaroo Valley	overhead	BA
Tree Martin	100+	19-Mar	Barren Grounds NR	overhead	GB
Tree Martin	50+	16-Mar	Shoalhaven Heads	overhead	GB

Contributors: BA – Bob Ashford; GB – Graham Barwell; RB – Roger Bogaert; CB – Chris Brandis; CJC – Chris Chafer; MC – Martin Cocker; JC – Josh Coyte; GD – Gary Daly; TE – Terri Edwell; ME – Mary Eskdale; DF - Damien Farine; BH – Betty Hudson; IM – Ian McKinlay; PM – Peter Milburn; MM – Mike Morphett; LP – Loraine Pincus; DW – David Winterbottom; TW – Tom Wylie.

Comment: The 300 odd Pacific Golden Plovers at Comerong Is over February - March was the largest flock known to occur since records began in the 1970s. Similarly the huge flock of Tree

Martins is a phenomenal record. It was also pleasing to see the Fork-tailed Swift records and the coastal Regent Honeyeater in the region for a number of years. Those of you who see the White-bellied Sea-Eagles in the northern suburbs will be pleased to hear that they have a nest on a large property under the escarpment and the owner is pleased to have them there – thanks Richard. Interestingly all the recent records of Turquoise Parrots from Barren Grounds have been in the month of March, presumably something good is seeding there. Finally, it would appear that the Red-rumps are now breeding at or near Wollongong golf course.

LIST of CASES DETERMINED by NSW ORAC 2005

A committee of eight people made up of the four clubs HBOC, IBOC, CBOC and Birding NSW(Chris Brandis is your representative) examines reported Unusual Sightings. Any species on our list of species that are reported by anyone are asked to complete a Unusual Record Report setting out the details. This is then circulated around the committee for Acceptance or Not Acceptance. At least 7 committee members have to agree for the record to be accepted. If the vote is 2 against 6 for then the report is circulated a second time with discussions allowed between members and a summary of their comments of the first round. This produces an Accept or Not Accept result.

Case 380/ B405.	Franklins Gull	Little Bay Sydney	14-12-2003	N/A
Case 385.	Elegant Parrot	Fowlers Gap	13-7-2004	A
Case 388	Kermadec Petrel	off Sydney	11-10-2004	A
Case 389	Soft-plumaged Petrel	off Sydney	9-10-2004	A
Case 391	Grey-backed Storm-Petrel	"	9-10-2004	A
Case 392/B231	Westland Petrel	off Wollongong	July 1996	A
Case 397	Masked Booby	South West Rocks	20-1-2005	A
Case 399	Black-bellied Storm-Petrel	off Newcastle	10-4-2005	A
Case 400	Red-backed Button Quail	Woodford Island	9-2-2004	A
Case 402	Oriental Plover	Lord Howe Island	May 2005	A

Those cases that have two Case Numbers refer to decisions adjudicated by Birds Australia Rarities Committee. A = the record was Accepted, NA = Not Accepted
Send your submissions to the Secretary, NSW ORAC by Email where possible, otherwise by mail. Secretary kbrandwood@bigpond.com or 59, Kurmond Road, Wilberforce, NSW 2756

Good Grief !.....GUARD PARROT

A postie is working on a new beat. He comes to a garden gate marked BEWARE OF THE PARROT! He looks down the garden and, sure enough, there's a parrot sitting on its perch. He has a little chuckle to himself at the sign and the parrot there on its perch. The mailman opens the gate and walks into the garden. He gets as far as the parrot's perch, when suddenly, it calls out: "REX, ATTACK!"



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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 294 July 2006

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

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS July 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 10th July - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Colin Markham will show pictures and speak to ‘Birds of South America.’ Don’t forget to bring a cup or mug and a small plate of goodies for supper too.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 12th July - 9.00am – Keira Scout Camp. Leader – Jude Parkinson. Turn south off the Mt Keira Road and follow the roughish road to the Scout Camp. Park in the field opposite the Camp’s main entrance gates. Bring your morning tea.

MONTHLY OUTING – Sunday 16th July – Killalea SRA - Leader Chris Brandis. Meet at 8:30 am along the road to the Minamurra Spit parking area at the turnoff to the camping area. Take the turnoff on the Shellharbour – Dunmore road, watch the roundabouts, to Killalea entrance then drive through and past the kiosk for about half a kilometre. We will return to have a look at the lagoon after morning tea.
If you need assistance call me on 0427962837

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 18th July 2006, 7.30pm, at Norma Almond's, 2 Shoober Crescent, Keiraville. 4229 8612 All members are welcome.

AUGUST 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Friday 21st July**. Contributions from all members welcomed, but please submit your contributions early, by email preferably, otherwise by post, to the editor at 5 Madden St, Fernhill 2519.

WELCOME ! A special welcome to new members, David and Sylvia Garlick. David and Sylvia have retired to the East coast after 18 years in the hills behind Perth. They have had

extensive experience over there in bird watching, outback driving and camping, and in taking part in various bird and mammal surveys. It's nice to have you with us.

Bits and...

Grevillia Park at Bulli will be open over the weekends July 22-23 and July 29-30. As well as seeing spectacular grevillias, you can also buy various native plants, and there are always plenty of birds to see. (See Mike Morphet's article) The park is located behind Bulli showground. Turn west from Princes Highway into Grevillia Park Rd, which is a little to the north of the shops on the highway at Bulli. There is a small entrance charge.

A Voyage To Antarctica: In The Footsteps Of Shackleton and Scott

Monday, 12th June, 2006

Val Dolan

In spite of the holiday weekend and a very crisp night a considerable audience turned out to enjoy Tera and Neil Wheway's presentation. Leaving Bluff Harbour on the south island of New Zealand, in February, 2005, on board the Russian ship 'Spirit of Enderby', they sailed due south. Life on board was busy with informative daily lectures, five star quality meals and careful supervision of environmental protocols before and after going ashore. Neil experienced some frustration that information about the ship was all in Russian. Tera's interest in bird life led to a rewarding collaboration with a British twitcher, who had enjoyed the January trip so much that he returned for a repeat performance.

First port of call was sub Antarctic Campbell Island where nesting Albatross provided magnificent photo opportunities. One bird even stood to stretch, revealing its single egg. Albatross seen on the journey were Wandering, Royal, Black Browed and Grey Headed. At the Cape Adare landfall to inspect an historic hut many Adelie Penguins were still around. Sadly these remaining birds would not survive the encroaching winter. Already Skuas had killed many and their bloodied bodies littered the area. A happier encounter with Emperor Penguins occurred at McMurdo Sound. For half an hour these amusing animals slid on the ice, rolled in the sea, chattered to each other until chased from the shore by the arrival of a pair of Killer Whales.

Our intrepid adventurers made their way ashore in precarious conditions, trekked single file over frozen sea ice, aroused the unwelcome interest of Sealions, explored islands in pouring rain and seemingly enjoyed every minute of it! Tera compiled a list of 40 birds sighted including the Tomtit, Bellbird, Red Crowned Parakeet, Kelp Gull, South Polar and Northern Skua, Yellow Eyed Penguin and Cape and Antarctic, Snow and Wilson's Storm Petrel.

Peter Nolan thanked the Wheways for their most interesting account of their journey and many of us went home vicariously living the experience .

Macquarie Rivulet Walk. Wednesday 14 June 2006

Terry Edwell

There was plenty of sunshine and plenty of birds for our Macquarie Rivulet walk. Nineteen of us met at Barbara and Brian Hale's home. Their backyard overlooks Illawarra Lake and is an excellent place to see water birds. A grassy reserve had plenty of other birds flying in and around, including a White-bellied Sea-eagle being attacked by ravens.

As we walked we were met with a raucous chorus from the neighboring dogs. Some interesting green parrots are breeding in the reserve. They are probably Indian Ringnecks. Barbara told us there were only two at the start (obviously a pair), and now, a couple of years later, there are nine ! In the same area we were lucky to see White-fronted Chats.

During morning tea, in Barbara's backyard, we watched numerous honeyeaters, mainly New Hollands, take nectar from a banksia shrub. It was a good example of how to encourage birds into the yard. If anyone would like to plant one it is Banksia Spinulosa: a small shrub with upright orange bottle brushes. That is according to my Native Plants book.

We then walked along the pathway on the banks of the rivulet. We saw male and female Darters, drying off their outstretched wings, a Striated Heron, two beautiful Azure Kingfishers, and various water birds. Further along a Rose Robin flittered among the casuarinas showing off his bright little breast. Others saw his little mate. Following up a strange noise which I thought at first was coming from one of the factories along there, we discovered a male Restless Flycatcher. It sounded just like someone sharpening a knife on a steel. It was the strangest noise for a bird so small. He was only a couple of feet off the ground, flying from bush to bush, doing what he was supposed to do – catching flies

A very enjoyable day. Thanks Barbara and fellow bird watchers. It's always a wonderful opportunity to meet together with people of like mind, and enjoy watching our feathered friends in the great outdoors.

Bird Sightings

Black Swan	Silver Gull	Golden Whistler
Pacific Black Duck	Spotted Turtledove	Restless Flycatcher
Australasian Grebe	Crested Pigeon	Magpie-lark
Chestnut Teal	Galah	Grey Fantail
Darter	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Willie Wagtail
Little Pied Cormorant	Rainbow Lorikeet	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Australian Pelican	Eastern Rosella	Australian Magpie
White-faced Heron	Azure Kingfisher	Australian Raven
Great Egret	Superb Fairy-wren	Satin Bowerbird
Striated Heron	White-browed Scrubwren	House Sparrow
Nankeen Night Heron	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Red-browed Finch
Australian White Ibis	Yellow Thornbill	European Goldfinch
Royal Spoonbill	Red Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow
Whistling Kite	Little Wattlebird	Red-whiskered Bulbul
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	White-plumed Honeyeater	Silveryeye
Purple Swamphen	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Starling
Dusty Moorhen	Eastern Spinebill	Common Myna
Black-winged Stilt	White-fronted Chat	
Masked Lapwing	Rose Robin	

...Pieces

* Great Truths for adults: 1. Wrinkles don't hurt. 2. Families are like fudge...mostly sweet but with a few nuts. 3. Laughing is good exercise. It's like jogging on the inside. 4. Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fibre, and not the toy ! the Corrimbal Garden Club Newsletter

Two Twitchers

Bob Ashford

I've been painting the house lately. Wobbling at the top of very long ladders, scraping, filling and 'cutting in.' It's scary stuff and even on cool days my nerves have kept the perspiration flowing. Guiding me through my apprenticeship has been Brian (Hale). He's a Master Painter and a local birder of some renown. He was President of the Illawarra Bird Club for ten years, and is known in the Club as 'The Puffin Man.'

He's a Yorkshireman from Hull. I'm a Yorkshireman from Leeds. The painting might have gone a little slower than expected, but 'By Lad! We've 'ad a couple o' grand weeks!' I have learned a lot about painting, though you'd never know by the state of my shorts and kneecaps! But mostly both of us have spent hours reliving our Yorkshire youth. We didn't know each other back then, but we knew where to find birds in Yorkshire.

We both spent days and nights ploughing through the mudflats at Spurn Point at the mouth of the Humber River looking at thousands and thousands of waders, or hanging over the edge of the frighteningly high cliffs at Bempton looking at thousands of nesting Guillemots, Razorbills and especially, Puffins. These are all members of the Auk family and are only found in the northern hemisphere. In our hemisphere we have penguins, of which the world's smallest, the Fairy Penguin, you might occasionally see off the beaches near Berry.

As we slowly painted our way round the dodgy bits on the roof Brian's professional advice would often be interrupted by a shadow passing overhead. 'It's a Pacific (heron)! It's a Wedgie (eagle)!' Paint dried on the brush as we put names to birdsongs and tried to distinguish between the calls of the Large-billed Scrubwren and the White-browed Scrubwren. 'O, it were grand !'

Our tea breaks were full of birding war stories and Brian's passion for Puffins. Brian's birding prowess developed more after he settled in Australia, but every trip to the UK includes Bempton Cliffs! His home is named 'Puffin Place,' and is filled with Puffin memorabilia – door stops, paintings, mugs, ties, plates, tea-towels, stamps, coasters, figurines, peg-bags, teapot stands – you name it, he's got it with a Puffin on it.

Our wives argue that we are obsessive birders, verging on the psychotic! This is ridiculous when you consider some of the birders Brian and I have known. On a scale of 1 to 10, we may be 7's, whereas the totally obsessed are 10. You'll recognize a 10 instantly, far outpacing the stench of a packed heronry, and their conversational skills, about as monotonous as a Black Duck's 'quack, quack, quack!' 10's do know about birds though and typically are far more involved with the science of birding. But would you want one as a friend?

All Brian's bird banter inspired me to visit Shoalhaven Heads to see one of my favourite birds, a perky wader called the Golden Plover. As a kid they filled the fields behind our house and the mud flats at Spurn Point. These are very cosmopolitan birds and regularly migrate between hemispheres. My Yorkshire 'Goldies' bred in Scotland and Scandinavia. Our Berry 'Goldies' nest in the Siberian Tundra and Alaska, and over the next few weeks that's where they will be heading.

They are at their peak physically now and look stunning in their sparkling golden breeding plumage. This northern migration has a distinct air of urgency about it. Once the birds take off they will fly almost non-stop at a steady 100 k/hour for 7-9 days to get to their breeding sites. Early arrivals get the best mates and breeding sites. The return southern migration is far more leisurely. They arrive back here in September and October having stopped over along the coasts of China and Asia. Some brave ones take the direct route over the Pacific and miraculously find, in the middle of this vast ocean, tiny islands to rest on. I'll be there to wave them off. I'll miss them when they are gone and I'll be there on the mudflats to welcome them back.

Meanwhile if you meet me in town, and I am a bit scruffy and smelly it's because Brian and I have been busy painting and undertaking important scientific research. Really!

This article appeared in the *Berry Town Crier* March 2006



On the Macquarie Rivulet Walk, Barbara, John, Sylvia, Neil and Robyn earnestly discuss the theory of bird watching ? while Graham puts theory into practice, *Photo: Tera Wheway*

SLACKY FLAT PARK

Mike MORPHETT

Bulli Grevillea Park Open Day on 30 April gave me a good opportunity to explore the escarpment slopes and part of the Bulli Colliery area beyond the west gate. A narrow path running left off the main track beside a ‘no camping’ clearing took me up to the end of a very short street, Seymour Street, which runs off Cope Place, accessed from Hospital Road. Back on track I soon reached Slacky Creek; little water running after the minimal rainfall over the past five weeks in the northern suburbs. Nearby Logrunners were calling in the undergrowth. Like most walkers that morning, I proceeded along the Vine Forest Walk in a clockwise direction. Before completing the loop, I turned left through a purposely made fence gap and soon hit a mountain bike track. A right turn brought me out into a wide open grassy area. Back over towards the creek I could hear Crested Shrike-tits and soon located a pair foraging and making a wider range of contact calls than I’d been accustomed to; I later read in Pizzey & Knight of the birds’ mimicry. The female came very close in response to my imitation. After a brief look at the remnants of mining constructions, I headed back into the timber and up the slope and followed two separate bike tracks, one obviously disused and which brought me near the Scenic Reserve area. With the additional access I can recommend Slacky Flat Park for a Wednesday morning walk, particularly during the months of October through to March for the seasonal bush bird visitors to add to the ‘stayers’ I recorded:

Wonga Pigeon	Lewin’s Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush
Rainbow Lorikeet	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Crimson Rosella	New Holland Honeyeater	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Spinebill	Grey Butcherbird
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin	Pied Currawong
White-browed Scrubwren	Logrunner	Satin Bowerbird
Brown Gerygone	Crested Shrike-tit	Red-browed Finch
Brown Thornbill	Golden Whistler	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Little Wattlebird		Silvereye

Good Grief !

A student who has been taking an incredibly gruelling ornithology class comes in for the final identification exam and finds that the professor has set out the legs of different species of

birds for them to identify. This is the last straw as far as the student is concerned and he proceeds to storm out of the classroom proclaiming, "That's it! I refuse to take this exam!" The professor upon hearing this calls out to the student as he is storming out the door "Hey you! What is your name?" The outraged student, chuckling, pulls up his pant leg and replies "take a look at this leg, and you tell me!"

Bird Interest Group meeting in Griffith

Chris Brandis

I represented the Club at the March BIGnet meeting which was hosted by the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist Club in Griffith and very well hosted by their members indeed. The meeting was held in a Dept. of Primary Industry conference room surrounded by gardens and fruit trees with catering carried out by the host members featuring much of the local produce, fresh and delicious.

BIGnet is a loose group of the birding groups in NSW and ACT and loosely aligned with Birds Australia and Bird Observers Club of Australia, which promotes cooperation between the clubs and assists in data sharing, problem solving and conservation issues raised by individual clubs or those affecting Australian birds. This included progress on access to McGraths Hill STW, the function of the Environmental Defenders Office, water allocations to the Macquarie Marshes and Gwydir wetlands, travelling stock routes, membership of the National Conservation Council and Important Bird Areas.

Kylie McClelland from the Dept. of Environment and Conservation gave us an overview of the Departments restructuring, how the NSW Recovery and Threat Abatement Planning and Priorities Action Statement, PAS, tied in with Recovery Plans, Key Threatening Processes, Threat Abatement Plans that lead to the Priorities Action Statement, PAS, for the species most under threat. The PAS captures all the actions in one place and can be used by Catchment Management Authorities, Local Govt. Authorities and State Govt. Departments and can be viewed on the DEC website www.environment.nsw.gov.au. On this site you will be able to search for the actions relevant for specific species, threat or area. This should help define what should be done and who should be responsible for doing it and the structuring was very enlightening.

We were entertained with a BBQ on Saturday evening tasting some of Bill Moller's very good home brew wine, using local grapes of course, making a very convivial evening.

Sunday morning was spent discussing the Memorandum of Understanding between the clubs to make clubs more efficient and effective, a search for a new coordinator, guidelines for conducting field trips raised by PL insurance concerns, the future direction of BIGnet, a proposed Bird Expo in Newcastle and a Fivebough Birding and Nature Fair by the local group, and arranging the next meeting in September, probably in Sydney.

It is very interesting representing the Club at these meetings and anyone can attend and get to understand a little of what goes on behind the scenes to keep birding an active and available interest as well as meeting many of the interesting driving forces behind clubs.

Of course I took the opportunity to do some birding on the way at sites like Ingalba NR, Cocoparra NP, Binya SF and a quick visit to Oolambeyan NP, which has only just been opened but still requires guiding information to navigate the numerous farm tracks. Saw some nice birds like Blue-winged Parrots, Black Honeyeater and Black-chinned Honeyeater as well as lots of White-browed and Masked Woodswallows playing as honeyeaters in the flowering mistletoe.

Korrungulla Swamp Primbee Forest Walk 17 June 2006 Jill Molan

A group of about 20 of us set out to walk around the Korrungulla Swamp Primbee Forest Walk. The bird life in the wetland was abundant, with 39 species in all being seen at the swamp during the morning. A large rookery had Pied and other cormorants busily engaged in breeding activity, not at all concerned about our proximity. Some birds were still building nests with fresh green leafy matter, others appeared to be sitting on eggs, and a small number were observed to be feeding young in the nest. Some of us were quick enough to observe a raven steal an egg from a cormorant nest, fly with it in its bill to a nearby Casuarina and share it with another raven, presumably its mate. Not any noticeable fuss from the cormorants, so clearly this must be a reliable easy source of food for a pair of ravens thinking about breeding themselves at this time of year. On the walk around the swamp we came across several other freshly broken empty eggs on the track, chicken-egg size or a bit larger, presumably also from the cormorant nests. A Darter was seen to be flying above the swamp, but we did not find a Darter nest.

Another highlight of the swamp included great views of a Spangled Drongo, hawking and fluttering over the treetops.

After morning tea we walked across the road to the Primbee dunes. While a small number of swamp mahogany were in flower, many more were in bud so more flower can be expected soon. We did not find any Swift Parrots or Scarlet Honeyeaters, but New Holland Honeyeaters, Eastern Spinebills and Silveryeyes were everywhere. Yellow Robins and White-throated Treecreepers were also present and easy to see. Lunch in the dune in view of the ocean (but out of the wind) was very pleasant in the sun. We finished the afternoon with a total count of 60 species.

Many thanks to Betty Hudson for a great walk

Bird List for Korrungulla Swamp Primbee Forest Walk

60 species for the day

Black Swan	Silver Gull	Eastern Spinebill
Pacific Black Duck	Crested Pigeon	Eastern Yellow Robin
Chestnut Teal	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Eastern Whipbird
Australasian Grebe	Rainbow Lorikeet	Golden Whistler
Australasian Gannet	Crimson Rosella	Grey Shrike-thrush
Darter	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Magpie-lark
Little Pied Cormorant	White -throated Treecreeper	Grey Fantail
Pied Cormorant	Superb Fairy-wren	Willie Wagtail
Little Black Cormorant	Variegated Fairy-wren	Spangled Drongo
Great Cormorant	Spotted Pardalote	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Australian Pelican	White-browed Scrubwren	Australian Magpie
White-faced Heron	Brown Gerygone	Pied Currawong
Great Egret	Brown Thornbill	Australian Raven
Australian White Ibis	Yellow Thornbill	Red-browed Finch
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Red Wattlebird	European Goldfinch
Brown Goshawk	Little Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow
Nankeen Kestrel	Lewin's Honeyeater	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Dusky Moorhen	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Silveryeye
Eurasian Coot	White-naped Honeyeater	Common Starling
Masked Lapwing	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Myna

News from the Committee

1. It was decided to buy two Hand-held UHR Radios for use on Walks and Camps
2. There has been some rearrangement for the weekend walks. In August, the walk will now be at Barren Grounds, and in September the walk will be at Homebush.
3. Bronwyn reported that at the end of May our finances stood at \$3281.17
4. Val Dolan reported that Col Markham said that he would be delighted to write a foreword to the second edition of 'Birds of the Illawarra.'

BIRDING ABROAD Oct 2001 at Madagascar

David Winterbotham

We arrived at the old colonial Hotel Colbert and had an excellent French dinner, with to our initial delight but subsequent horror, the post prandial cognac costing more than the meal! A Madagascar Kestrel was seen from the hotel window together with Mascarene Martins, a Madagascar Wagtail and some Madagascar Fodies to give us four new endemics before leaving the room.

We drove south to Ranomafanta National Park which still retains some undisturbed rainforest. The primeval humus is so thick it is positively spongy to walk on. Plenty of birds with unfamiliar names about: Blue Couas, Chabert's, Red-tailed and Madagascar Blue Vangas, Velvet Asity, and Madagascar Green and Souimanga Sunbirds. At least we could recognise more easily the Lesser Vasa Parrots, Madagascar Coucal and a Crested Drongo.

Here we saw our first Lemurs which are the small primates unique to Madagascar. A troupe of the Red-fronted Brown Lemurs peered down at us, and, later, their smaller cousins, the Red-bellied Lemur. The huge Woolly Indris (the biggest of the lemurs) hooted at us from the hill-top as we saw them swoop through the trees.

Going north and east to the Berenty estate, we met not just the delightful Ring-tailed Lemurs but several parties of Verreaux's Sifaka – a lemur that spends much of its time on the ground literally dancing through the woodland (across the path right in front of us) on their hind legs, keeping a sharp eye on us. Both Giant and Crested Couas were seen to compare with the Running and Blue Couas seen earlier. Spotighting allowed us to see the tiny exquisite Grey Mouse-lemurs as well as the Torotoroka Scops Owl and a Madagascar Nightjar.

Near the coast there were water birds. Madagascar and Common Squacco Herons, Green-backed and Purple Herons, Black and Diamorphic Herons were seen as well as the familiar Great White and Cattle Egrets. Hammerkop, Red-billed and Hottentot Teal, White-faced and Knob-billed Ducks reminded us how close we were to Africa.

However, the countryside is not African. The earliest human colonists came from Indonesia only 1500 years ago. They brought rice and terraced paddy-fields so the landscape is unexpectedly eastern in appearance. The cemeteries have tombs painted in what seemed to us to be a bizarre fashion with motorcars, guns and stories to be told. We were so interested that we nearly missed the little Madagascar Sandgrouse scuttling away.

TAX TIME

official No nothing to do with all that money stuff – but with the Taxonomic order of birds, and their correct names. The order is that used by the Birds Australia Atlas Record form, which groups and lists birds by name and families. This is old hat to experienced bird watchers, but can be quite confusing to newer and social bird watchers. And some of the listings and capitalization can make English teachers scratch their heads. Nevertheless we will do the best to meet the list, and hope sometime in the future

to have guides to help others get birds in the right ‘tax’ order. Then you may be able to place the Bred-whiskered Bulbul ?? straight away!

REVEALING SOME OF EXCELSIOR'S REPTILES

Mike MORPHETT

I've now completed 26 years of walking through the bushland area of the former Excelsior No.2 coalmine, Thirroul, and studying its wildlife, especially birds. Come October there's one man-made item there that's been a stopping-point in my surveys over the past 20 years: a sheet of corrugated iron in my eastern sector, lying in a clearing of tall grasses close to the eucalypt forest and some 50 metres above the middle channel of the Flanagan's Creek system. There was an occasion when someone moved the sheeting some distance away for some reason unknown to me, so I promptly repositioned it to the original spot, where it has since remained. In addition to the growing blanket of dead leaves that now cover most of it, I have placed a few long branches across my pathway to discourage access by others.

So what's so important about this particular piece of metal? Well, at different times, while doing a ‘Harry Butler’ and gingerly lifting it up at one end, I've discovered four types of reptiles lying underneath it for shelter, either on isolated occasions or for periods of up to a fortnight. By far the most common has been the Eastern Blue-tongued Lizard, all full-grown. One I found dead after a burn-off in September 2001. Four days later and some 40 metres away in the middle of the main track was another casualty: this time an Eastern Tiger Snake that had previously enjoyed the sunny warmth of a depression in the ground, but got run over by a trail-bike. Over the next two months another tiger took up occupancy of the sheeting, which was rented for a day, it seems, by another blue-tongue. An identical situation arose the following February. I haven't seen a tiger there since January 2004. In the Excelsior they have appeared between the months of September and March with just two sightings outside this time-frame. From the end of last year until 11 January I was thrilled to find a Diamond Python in the spot where the other two reptile species had curled up. The same one/species reappeared on 10 April, when I was amazed to see a youngish Red-bellied Black Snake in the opposite corner; it didn't hang about. This was my first record of the black snake in the Excelsior since October 2000 after regular sightings, making me wonder if it had been usurped by the tiger.

Over time other questions have occurred to me; in particular, how do the different reptile species determine when or if they will occupy space under the sheeting, especially if another is in situ? Does the maxim that possession is nine-tenths of the law also apply in the Excelsior forest (as opposed to the jungle)? And what impact might these snakes' general presence in the Excelsior have on birds directly or indirectly? In regard to the latter, the following percentage dietary data from Richard Shine (*Australian Snakes: A Natural History* 1991) are a bit dated, I guess, but may still provide a partial answer.

species	max body size: cm	frogs	reptiles	mammals	birds
Tiger snake	82	92	2	4	2
Diamond python	150	1	14	80	5
Red-bellied black snake	106	60	31	9	0

So it appears birds and their eggs are at much less risk than frogs and mammals from these snakes. Other sources indicate that fish also feature in the diet of the tiger and red-bellied. Also, that the blue-tongue, up to 23.5 cm in length, is omnivorous, feeding on plant matter, flowers, fruit, berries, insects, snails and worms. Incidentally, I've not made mention of the Golden-crowned Snake, Blackish Blind Worm, Eastern Water Dragon, two forms of Gecko, or the Common Skink, that also frequent parts of the Excelsior; this is because they haven't been significant in this particular aspect of my studies.

When I make my cautious approaches to the sheet of galvanised iron, I often think of a variation of the ‘Green Door’ song: “Sheeting, what's that secret you're keepin’?” 24.4. 2006

Unusual Records for April-May 2006

Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Brown Quail	1	1-Apr	Bellambi Lagoon	grassland	GB
Streaked Shearwater	2	14-Apr	off Wollongong	pelagic	GB
Great Shearwater	1	22-Apr	off Wollongong	pelagic	GB
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	25+	22-Apr	off Wollongong	pelagic	GB
Eastern Reef Egret	1	19-Apr	Black Head, Geroa	rocky shore	BA
Royal Spoonbill	23	19-Apr	Shoalhaven Heads	estuary	BA
Osprey	1	19-Apr	Shoalhaven Heads	overhead	BA
Osprey	1	21-Apr	Lake Conjola	estuary	GB
Black Kite	1	11-May	Tallawarra	ash ponds	DG
Brown Goshawk	1	8-Apr	Berry	overhead	BA
Brown Goshawk	1	10-Apr	Regal Heights	overhead	JC
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	10-May	Bellawongarah	overhead	BA
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	7-May	Berry Mountain	overhead	BA
Wedge-tailed Eagle	9	19-May	Sassafras	roadside	BA
Painted Button-Quail	1	22-May	Berry Mountain	roadside	BA
Sanderling	1	25-May	Windang	sandflats	CB
Red-necked Avocet	2	11-May	Tallawarra	ash ponds	DG
Peaceful Dove	2	18-May	Mermaid Pool tk, Tahmoor	woodland	MR,TE
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	100+	30-Apr	Maddens Plains	overhead	GB
Red-rumped Parrot	25	7-May	Menangle Park weir	grassland	GB
Ground Parrot	1	21-Mar	Jervis Bay	roadside	JH
Powerful Owl	1	30/5	West Cambewarra	Forest	GD
Azure Kingfisher	1	23-Apr	Koonawarra	creek	LP
Brown Treecreeper	4	27-May	Mermaid Pool tk, Tahmoor	woodland	CJC
Rockwarbler	1	30-Apr	Broker's Nose	woodland	JM
Large-billed Scrubwren	2	25-Apr	Thirroul	garden	MM
White-plumed Honeyeater	2	13-Apr	Warrawong	garden	DF
Black-chinned Honeyeater	5	18-May	Mermaid Pool tk, Tahmoor	woodland	MR,TE
Crescent Honeyeater	few	24-Apr	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	MR
Rose Robin	1	15-Apr	Kangaroo Valley	forest	BA
Rose Robin	1	23-Apr	Thirroul	garden	MM
Rose Robin	1	16-May	Keiraville	garden	ME
Logrunner	2	30-Apr	Slacky Flat Ck	rainforest	MM
Varied Sittella	13	15-Apr	Fitzroy Falls	forest	BA
Crested Shrike-tit	2	30-Apr	Slacky Flat Ck	rainforest	MM
Spangled Drongo	1	16-Apr	Windang	woodland	DW
Spangled Drongo	1	29-Apr	Currarong	urban	RG
Spangled Drongo	1	9-May	Primbee golf course	woodland	ME
Double-barred Finch	few	25-May	Mermaid Pool tk, Tahmoor	woodland	MR,TE

Contributors: BA – Bob Ashford; GB – Graham Barwell; CB – Chris Brandis; CJC – Chris Chafer; MC – Martin Cocker; JC – Josh Coyte; GD – Gary Daly; TE – Terri Edwell; ME – Mary Eskdale; DF - Damien Farine; DG – Daryl Goldrick; RG – Robert Gosford; JM – Jill Molan; JH – Jamie Harris; MM – Mike Morphett; LP – Loraine Pincus; DW – David Winterbottom.

Comment: The Great Shearwater is the 1st record from the Illawarra region. The Black-chinned Honeyeater record is the most easterly ever recorded from the region and is an excellent record for this endangered species. The Mermaid Pool track is also the easterly known location for the Brown Treecreeper, another endangered species. Red-necked Avocets have not been recorded from Tallawarra previously. Black Kites have not been recorded from Tallawarra since 1966.



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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

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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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS August 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 14th August - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Peter Nolan will show pictures and speak about 'Birds of Arkinsaw and Utah.' Peter's special interest is in raptors. Don't forget to bring a cup or mug and a small plate of goodies for supper too.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 16th August - 9.00am – Rocklow Archery Range. Dunmore. Leader – Chris Brandis. Meet at 8:30 am at the gate at the end of Rocklow Road. Travel south along the Princes Highway, just past Dunmore take the left lane to Kiama Downs/Jamberoo then turn right to Jamberoo via Swamp Rd. Just along Swamp Rd. past the stone buildings turn right up Rocklow Rd. for a couple kilometres to the gate. The entry road is steep so have good gripping foot wear.
If you need assistance call me on 0427962837..

MONTHLY OUTING – Sunday 20th August – Buderoo Plateau - Leader, Betty Hudson
Please note the change from the programme

Meet at **8.30am** at the start of the Buderoo Fire Trail, on the Jamberoo Robertson Road approx 2km south of the Knights Hill turn off (if coming via Macquarie Pass) or approx 5km north of Barren Grounds(if coming from Jamberoo.).Turn off Macquarie Pass at the Robertson Pie Shop. The walk is along a fire trail and is relatively flat on a good surface. However it could be quite cold on the top of the mountains, so bring warm clothes. Bring morning tea, a carry lunch and the walk will finish around 2.00pm.

Birds which might be seen include Southern Emu Wren, Chestnut Rumped Heath Wren, Crescent Honeyeater and Ground Parrot

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 22nd August 2006, 7.30pm, at Tom and Joan Wylie's, 4 Daphne Street, Bellambi. 4284 2051 All members are welcome.

September 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Friday 25th August**. Contributions from all members welcomed, but please submit your contributions early, by email preferably, otherwise by post, to the editor at 5 Madden St, Fernhill 2519.

WELCOME Back! To David Bourne and Alison Foley who have spent the last couple of years at Alice Springs. They left here when Keira was a baby and have returned with Keira and a sister for her, Tess,. Nice to have them back.

Welcome back too, to Chris Blatch, a member some years ago, and who has been associated with the club for a while.

South American Birding

Ted Simpson

The members who attended the meeting on Monday the 10th July (approx 35) were treated to a talk and projected display of birds not seen in our neck of the woods, by Colin Markham who, on holiday with his wife Melissa traveled through places like Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Uruguay and San Antonio wetlands.

From water birds to spectacular forest canopy birds, we were shown 156 out of some 1300 shots, all very clear even those in flight and the likes of the humming birds whose wings seem to disappear, were captured well.

The colors of the Macaw's, woodpeckers, and humming birds stood out in my mind as something hard to get on camera, needing lots of light and these shots were excellent. The display also included a variety of animals and scenery including the awesome Amazon and the width of this famous river. A good show.

Looking forward to more.

Bits and....

* Wanted : Suggestions for places for the Wednesday walks for next year. Wednesday walks are often slightly shorter, easier, and closer to home than the weekend Outings. If you have a place in mind that could be a possibility, see Joan or Tom Wylie or phone them on 4284 2051

* Also Wanted : Volunteers to lead the above mentioned walks. Again see Joan or Tom.

* Birdline NSW, which has offered a phone service of recent sightings, is to trial an email site. To see the most recent sightings go to www.eremaea.com and click on the link in the top right hand corner. The recent sightings page also contains a link to a form to fill out with your own sightings. Your sightings will appear once a moderator has reviewed and approved them. It is hoped this will occur daily. You can also receive a weekly digest of sightings from Birdline NSW by email. Sightings from the Illawarra and the Hunter are welcomed.

'Scouting for Birds': Wednesday, 12 July 2006

Judith Parkinson

Thirteen members gathered in the paddock opposite the Scout Camp main entrance. The skies were grey, the air temperature very low, and the silent bush deafening. But greetings were warm. Do you get the setting?

We strolled off about 9.30 after sharing what birds (if any) we had seen since arrival. The exciting sighting was a Wedge-tail Eagle soaring around against the grey background. Birds were absent or silent en route to the chapel, except for a Lyrebird and a Scrubwren. I think the birds had gone away for the school holidays!

On return to the car park after a morning-tea stop, we managed to see a few more species, but not the expected or usual ones. Only the Yellow Robin, little Brown Thornbill, Brown Gerygone and another, or the same female Lyrebird. We decided to stop at Byrong Park and go into the Guide

Camp. We left the Scout Camp early, as there was no point in staying there hoping the birds might finally show. The Guide Camp was rewarding with another 16 – 18 species seen and /or heard. Nerida had a few first-timers and was ecstatic!

Several members had not been to either the Scout or Guide Camp and were impressed. One of the unusual sightings for me was a large flock of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos aloft above the Guide Camp. Not everyone saw them but there could have been 30 (plus or minus a few) in the flock.

I suggest that the Girl Guide Camp be included in the next forays in the Mt Keira area. And I thank those of you who attended. Seeing each other and having a natter was a reward in itself, despite the lack of bounteous birds.

While at the 'Chapel' Jude mounted the pulpit and gave quite a credible performance of those who occupy pulpits. Sadly the photos of her in this role did not turn out. Is there some kind of censor, somewhere?

Bird sightings – 29 species

White-faced Heron	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Whipbird
Wedge-tailed Eagle	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Large-billed Scrubwren	Grey Butcherbird
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Brown Gerygone	Australian Magpie
Australian King-Parrot	Brown Thornbill	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Striated Thornbill	Australian Raven
Laughing Kookaburra	Red Wattlebird	Satin Bowerbird
Superb Lyrebird	Lewin's Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Spinebill	Bassian Thrush
Superb Fairy-Wren	Eastern Yellow Robin	

Watching out for Cassowaries

Val Dolan

To escape the shadowy cold of living on the southern edge of the Mt Keira bush, my neighbours winter in north Queensland. I received a letter from them detailing the devastation from the most recent cyclone. Along Mission Beach majestic palms have been uprooted or snapped in half. Dunk and Bedarra Islands are still closed. Only some of the rainforest walks have been cleared. Innisfail has many homes still covered by tarpaulins and many shops are closed because there are a lot less tourists this season. Many private gardens have been destroyed or damaged and not a banana or mango in sight!

So what of the wildlife? Due to the scarcity of native fruit in the rainforest Cassowaries have been coming into backyards to find food. This exposes them to dogs, cars and food dependency problems. And, Cassowaries can be aggressive and dangerous to humans.

Due to the scarcity of native fruit in the stripped rainforest the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) has introduced a Cassowary Feeding Strategy to keep them out of backyards. Three times each week six kilos of chopped fruit is provided at several feeding stations 500 metres apart in the forest. A community education program provides informative brochures and holds fortnightly community meetings. Local residents support QPWS by chopping the fruit and providing valuable feedback on Cassowary movements. Cameras with sensors monitor the use of feeding stations.

While walking on a cleared rainforest track my friends spied a lone 'teenage' bird. A few days later, while out driving, they spotted an adult Cassowary and two chicks. Isn't it great to hear that at such a tough time a community can rally to assist the local birdlife? I'll never complain about the price of bananas again !

Of Birds and Poems

John Douglas Pringle

The Scot, John Pringle, came to Australia, shortly after World War 11. Pringle was editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, and later editor of the Canberra Times. This essay was published 35 years ago, in his book, On Second Thoughts. Though not quite politically correct, it records his astonishment at seeing the birds of Australia, which we so easily take for granted.

To anyone coming to Australia for the first time one of the great surprises are Australian birds. Englishmen tend to be snobbish about their birds – as about many other things. They are convinced that not only do they have more birds than anyone else, but they are more varied, more beautiful, and sing more melodious notes. And indeed they have much to be proud of. Britain is a wet and fertile land which can support a very large number of birds to the square mile. Any fair-sized garden may boast 20 or 30 different species. It also has an astonishing range of scenery in a small space so that it is possible, without traveling too far, to see such different species as the golden eagle, curlew, and blackcock of the Scottish moors, the marsh harrier, bittern, and avocet of the Norfolk Broads and the many sea birds of the West coast. And since many parts of Europe where Englishmen go for their holidays – though not all – have relatively few birds, they are inclined to assume that in this respect, as in so many others, they have been uniquely blessed by Nature.

I must confess that, perhaps unconsciously, I shared this prejudice on my first arrival in this country. How delightful to be disillusioned so soon! I can still remember vividly my first glimpse of the rich birdlife that awaited me. The ship had stopped in Melbourne on its way to Sydney and a friend took me out for a drive into the Dandenongs – then less built up than now. We walked through the hills marveling at the tall eucalypts and enjoying for the first time the sounds and scents of the Australian bush. I heard a few birds which I could not identify, but, as so often in heavily wooded country, these were not easy to see. On our way back we stopped at a café for tea. The café was not inviting. It had one dingy room with lino on the floor and fly-blown curtains. I felt somewhat depressed. Then I glanced out the window on to a still more sordid cabbage-patch – and could not believe my eyes. There, feeding on the cabbage rows, were 7 or 8 of the most beautiful birds I had ever seen, each one a vivid splash of crimson, blue and green. They were so exotic on that dingy background that they took my breath away. I knew, of course, that they were parrots but I did not know what species, and I had never imagined that parrots could be seen so near a great city and in such commonplace surroundings. They were in fact, crimson rosellas, and in that moment I fell head over heals in love with the Australian bush and the beautiful birds that inhabit it.

Even now, 20 years later, it is still, perhaps, the parrots that astonish me most. I can never quite get over the feeling, born out of childhood visits to zoos in Britain, that parrots are rare and exotic creatures which can be seen only in tropical jungles among heavy purple and scarlet flowers. In fact about one fifth of all the 316 species of parrots, cockatoos and allied birds live in Australia, and many of them are fairly common. Nor does the glory of their plumage have any relation to their background. The marvelous rosellas and lorikeets glow all the more vividly against the khaki, olives and soft greens of the coastal forests, while the galahs and white cockatoos can be seen in hundreds feeding on the seeds of the bare inland plains.

There are, of course, rarer species of parrots, and many of them I still have not yet seen, though I still hope to do so. But it seems churlish to grumble, because one has not yet seen, say, the gorgeous king parrot, when almost every day one can see other species of almost equal beauty. Indeed I sometimes feel like stopping a passer-by in the streets of Sydney, seizing him by the lapels of his coat and shouting, ‘Do you realize that you can see, within a few miles of this city and with a minimum of effort, three of the most beautiful parrots in the world?’ Both the crimson rosella and the eastern rosella are fairly common round Sydney, and both often invade suburban gardens on the North Shore. Every time I see an eastern rosella, a miracle of yellow, scarlet and blue when perched, but a flash of blue and green when flying, I am convinced that *it* is the most

beautiful – until I see my next crimson rosella when I return to my old allegiance. And thousands of rainbow lorikeets, charming little birds with almost ridiculously lavish allowance of colours scream through the trees of Palm Beach and Pittwater, feeding on the flowers of the eucalypts. These have the attraction that they are easily tamed when you offer them their favourite food, honey. We feed them every evening on our balcony, and, the moment they see me, they swoop down in a whirr of scarlet and green wings to perch on the rail until I place the dish for them when they will hop down clumsily - because of the arrangement of their feet, with two claws forward, and two backwards, parrots are marvelously agile in trees, but on the ground they walk like a drunken sailor – and lick up the honey with their brush-tipped tongues. They are enchanting birds, managing, like all parrots, to be both beautiful and slightly comic at the same time, and appear to have absolutely no fear of man. No matter how often I feed them I cannot get over the miracle of sitting on the balcony while 7 or 8 lorikeets feed at my feet, and sometimes, out of idle curiosity, peck at my shoe laces. They are superb flyers with their long narrow wings and tails, and at sunset it is a breathtaking sight to see flocks of them hurling themselves through the branches of the trees, twisting and turning, at what cannot be less than 40 miles an hour.

To be continued

SPIDERPHOBIA !

And why not, especially after you read this, about some massive bird eating spiders in Mexico. The source for the following true story is the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service in Adelaide.

The article was handed in by Doug Rickers

A chap and his family were on holidays in the USA and went to Mexico for a week. An avid cactus fan, the man bought a one metre high rare and expensive cactus. On arrival back home, the Australian Customs said it had to be quarantined for 3 months.

Finally he got the cactus home, and planted it in his backyard. Over time it grew to about two metres. One evening while watering the garden, he gave the cactus a light spray. He was surprised to see the plant shiver all over. He gave it another spray and it shivered again. He was so puzzled that he rang the council, who transferred him to the State Gardens. After several transfers he got onto the State's foremost cactus expert, who asked him many questions, 'How tall was the cactus? What type was it? Had it flowered? etc.'

With more urgency, the expert then asked, 'Is your family in the house?' 'Yes,' the man answered. The expert exclaimed, 'Then get them out of the house NOW. Get on to the front nature strip and wait for me; I will be there in 20 minutes!'

15 minutes later, two fire trucks, two police cars and an ambulance screamed round the corner. A fireman jumped out, 'Are you the bloke with the cactus?' 'Yes!' He said. Then a guy jumped out of the fire truck wearing what looked like a space suit, a breathing cylinder and mask attached to what looked like a scuba backpack, with a large hose attached. He headed for the backyard, and turned a flame-thrower onto the cactus, spraying it up and down.

The flame-thrower man eventually stopped, with the cactus smoking and spitting, half the fence burnt, and parts of the garden well and truly scorched. Then the cactus expert arrived and laid a hand on the man's shoulder. 'What the hell is going on?' asked the man. 'I'll show you!' The expert went to the scorched cactus, and gingerly picked off a burnt crusty bit. The cactus was hollow, and filled with tiger striped bird-eating tarantula spiders, each about the size of two hand spans.

This spider lays eggs in this particular cactus, they hatch and live in it as they grow to full size. Then they release themselves. The cactus just explodes, and about 150 dinner-plate hairy spiders are flung from it, dispersing everywhere. They had been ready to pop! The aftermath was that the house and the adjoining houses had to be vacated and fumigated: police tape was put up outside the whole area, and no one was allowed in for two weeks!!!

I think I'll stick to birds!

Killalea Walk. Sunday 16 July

Chris Brandis

While waiting for all to arrive we were entertained by Superb Fairy-wrens and Red-browed Finches feeding along the roadside but we could only see Silver Gulls out to sea and no whales. 18 of us then walked down the road to the camping area to the plantings that were now nice saplings with banksias in flower attracting plenty of Little Wattlebirds and New Holland Honeyeaters with a White-plumed Honeyeater taking advantage of the fresh foliage.

At this point we became a little strung out with groups finding interesting sightings and eventually became separated with the estimated time taking a longer, well into morning tea time, before we returned to the cars. In the large fig trees a Rose Robin was sighted by Josh but the figs appeared to be a little green yet and promising a good feed for the fruit eaters in a month or so.

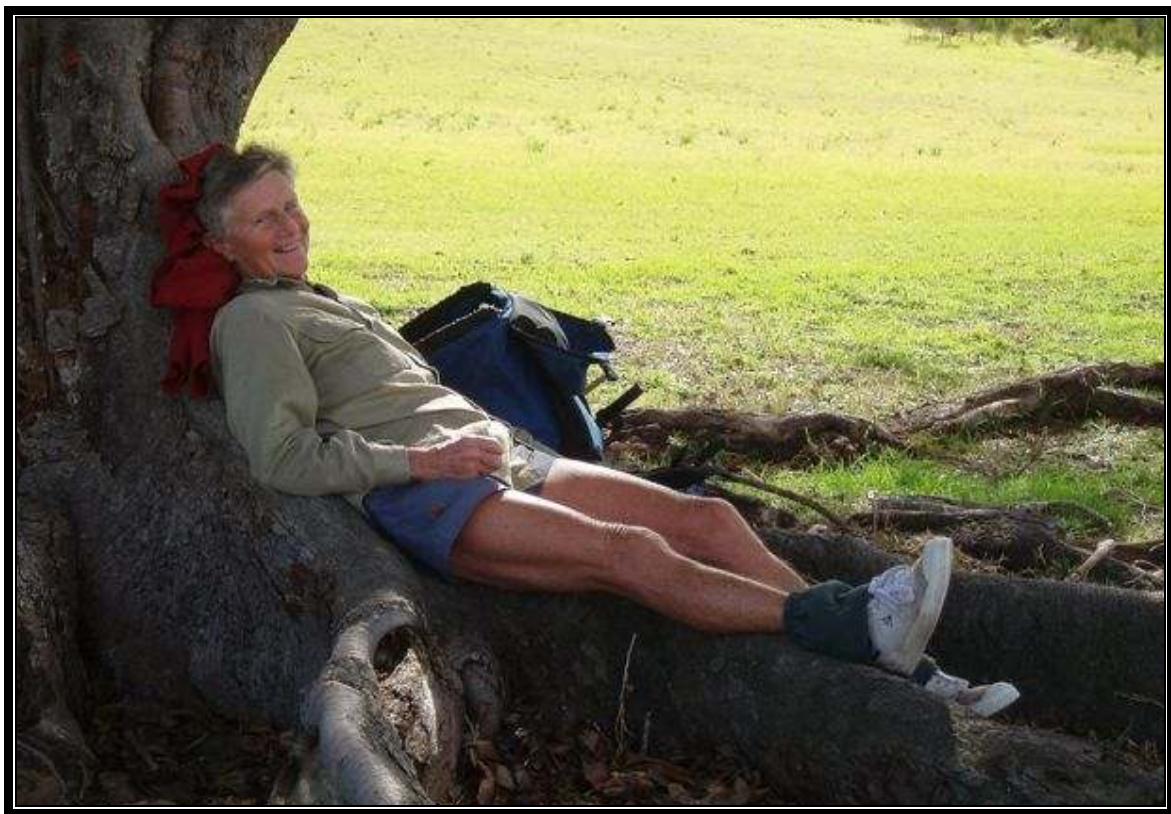
The leading group found their way down to the littoral rainforest between the Minnamurra River and the sand dunes still showing heavy asparagus fern invasion in the moist dark understorey. A Crested Shrike-tit was spotted by Michelle but with the noisy surfers passing through no one heard the call although the bird was unfazed by all the noise. A walk along the beach and then back up to the end car park where one of the "lost" groups waited for us while watching a Little Eagle and White-breasted Sea-Eagle soaring overhead. By this time the sun had come out and the day warmed up requiring the removal of the warm clothing that we started in. A quick walk back to the cars where another group had already started their morning tea and some refreshments while scanning the ocean for seabirds and whales while the last group joined us. With many eyes over a large area the number of species sighted steadily grew to 56, a good winter count.

We then drove back to the Kiosk area and walked down to the lagoon where a number of Black Swans were nesting but the only ducks sighted were several Musk Ducks and two Hardheads with the resident Greylag Goose still present. After making it back to the cars some decided to return to the camping area for a late lunch and perhaps views of Southern Emu-wrens which had eluded us.

Musk Duck	Black Swan	Greylag Goose
Hardhead	Australasian Grebe	Great Cormorant
Australian Pelican	Great Egret	Royal Spoonbill
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Swamp Harrier	Grey Goshawk
Little Eagle	Nankeen kestrel	Purple Swamphen
Masked Lapwing	Silver Gull	Spotted Turtle-Dove
Bar-shouldered Dove	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Crimson Rosella
Eastern Rosella	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Laughing Kookaburra
White-throated Treecreeper	Superb Fairy-wren	Spotted Pardalote
White-browed Scrubwren	Brown Gerygone	Brown Thornbill
Yellow Thornbill	Red Wattlebird	Little Wattlebird
Lewin's Honeyeater	White-plumed Honeyeater	New Holland Honeyeater
Eastern Spinebill	Rose Robin	Eastern Yellow Robin
Eastern Whipbird	Crested Shrike-tit	Magpie Lark
Grey Fantail	Willie Wagtail	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Grey Butcherbird	Australian Magpie	Australian Raven
Satin Bowerbird	Richard's Pipit	Red-browed Finch
Welcome Swallow	Red-whiskered Bulbul	Golden-headed Cisticola
Silvereye	Common Myna	

Good Grief!

A racing pigeon was pacing up and down anxiously in Central Park when he saw his friend hop up on the curb. "Where have you been, I've been waiting here for hours?" he exclaimed. The new arrival looked around, and said, "It was such a nice day, I said to myself -- What the heck, I think I'll walk!"



'Hey Jude !' plus 'I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree'
Judith Parkinson 'trees out' during the Killalea walk Photo: Tera Wheway

Your bid!

One day a man went to an auction. While there, he bid on a parrot. He really wanted this bird, so he got caught up in the bidding. He kept on bidding, but kept getting outbid, so he bid higher and higher and higher. Finally, after he bid way more than he intended, he won the bid - the parrot was his at last! As he was paying for the parrot, he said to the Auctioneer, "I sure hope this parrot can talk. I would hate to have paid this much for it, only to find out that he can't talk!" "Don't worry." said the Auctioneer, "He can talk. Who do you think kept bidding against you?"

IBOC Spring Camp 21st to 28th Oct 2006 at Smiths Lake Field Station UNSW.

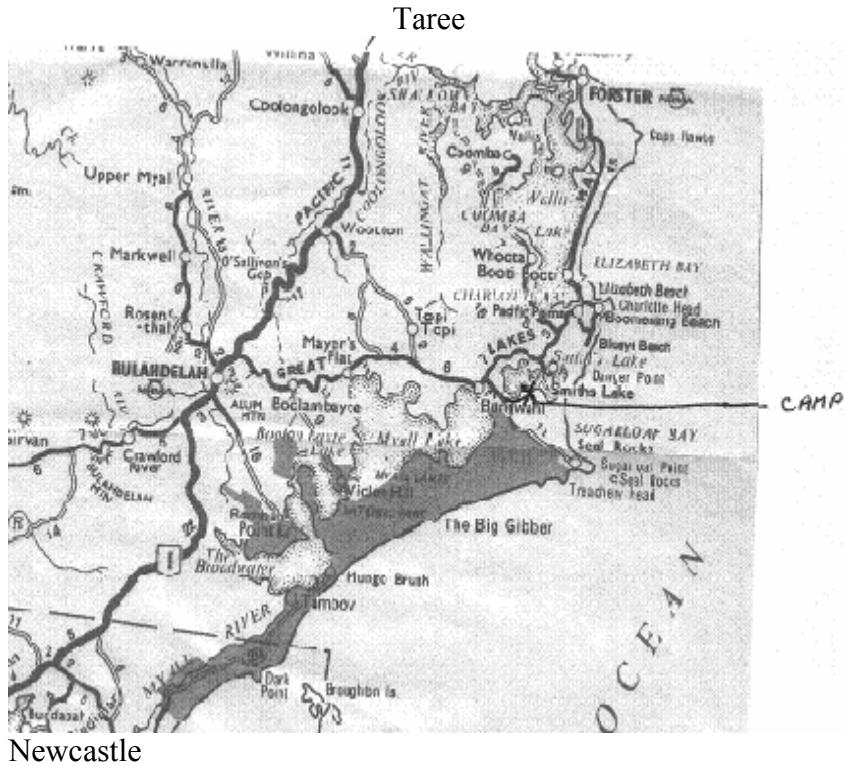
The cost for the camp will be \$12 per night plus a possible additional \$1-\$3 depending on negotiations over entry fees to Myall Lakes NP between NPWS and the University. The field station is a small enclave within the park

The area has a wide variety of habitats freshwater lake, beaches, rocky headlands, swamps, and several state forests and national parks. We can be assured of plenty of variety of birds.

Cooking facilities include gas rings, and wood fired BBQ's. There is also a freezer and fridges available for use. Water is tank water, so you may prefer to bring drinking water from home.

Directions: Travel via the Pacific Highway to Newcastle and then on to Buladelah. Approx 2km north of the town take the turning on the right to Forster Tuncurry along the Lake Way. After approx 25km take the turning on the right to Seal Rocks at Bungwahl, turning left again on a gravel road after 2km. The Field Station "UNSW Research Station" is a further 2 km .(see Map)

For anyone who would like more upmarket accommodation there is Sandbar Bushland & Caravan Park with cabins approx 10km further along the Lakes Way. They can be contacted on 02 6554 4095 or email sandbar@pasipale.com.au. Further information can be found on the Great Lakes Shire web site



Newcastle

News from the Committee

* Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, reported that our finances stood at \$2748.77 at the end of June. Income for the month was \$108, and expenditure was \$678.75, the bulk of which was for more envelopes in which to send out the IBOC News.

* Neil Wheway purchased two Uniden hand-held UHR radios for the club. They are operated on rechargeable batteries, or alternatively use 2A batteries. *It sounds like they could have been useful on the Killalea walk!*

* It was agreed that the September Outing will now be to Homebush Bay.

* Penny Potter has agreed to return as Guest Editor of the IBOC News for October. More about this in the next issue. *Much appreciated Penny!*

IT WORKS WITH CHILDREN AND ANIMALS!

Alison Foley

Adventures in Tropical North Queensland (TNQ)

Our little family of 4 (Keira, 2 and Tess, 5 months) recently had occasion to spend 6 days (well, 5 days and 19 hours according to Budget) between Cairns and Cape Tribulation. Despite being on full-time wedding deploy for 3 of these days, we managed to see a solid 16 new species (49 in total) and being our 1st birding experience with a wriggling package each to carry, we are smugly proud of the outcome. And that's the end of the statistics paragraph.

In fact, we have decided that children are merely a circumstance, just another variable determining which birds you are to see, not a deterrent or hindrance to new sightings at all. Indeed, it was because of them that we saw the two species we most wanted to see (excepting the bl***dy cassowary, of course).

At Radisson Treetops Resort in Port Douglas, the three days and nights of nuptials passed in a blurry haze of wine, swimmin' and song in spite of which, some wingéd ones fluttered through. Dave came back from a dawn fishing trip on the Daintree with a Figbird and a Torresian Pigeon on the end of his binoculars unlike his sister (the only woman aboard and the only one to catch anything) who hooked a Fingermark. Pity she's vegetarian! Baked in the oven with a little butter, it was the most delicious fish I ever tasted. Back at base, on parenting duty, I managed to see a

Helmeted Friarbird from our kitchen window, making a call like it was eating its own hiccups. Dave also saw the first of many Spangled Drongos (and I'm aware that we are also a sort of drongo for not having seen one in 4 years of birdwatching). They are beautiful birds with their black, opalescent plumage, googley red eyes and mermaid-like tail spread.

Then we were off on our own and to accommodation more on our level at \$250 cheaper a night!! We made Pinnacle Village Holiday Park our base for visiting some long-desired places – Mossman Gorge and Daintree NP for a start. Pinnacle Village itself was a haven for our arch-enemy, the mozzie, so while I stored my swatting hands under the pillow and confess to sleeping it in, Dave's valiant break-of-dawn dashes around the van sites were rewarded with a Yellow Oriole and a Great Bowerbird. On our daily drives along cane-field avenues, we frequently saw Pheasant Coucals, on one occasion almost running the bird over as it barely got off the ground crossing from cane run to cane run. Many must get killed in this way. We were thankful to see its magnificent tail in flight and not decorating the bonnet of the car.

Australian Geographic brought out a CD on TNQ to coincide with our visit and we decided to spend a day visiting some of the places recommended, specifically Thylogale Nature Reserve, Mareeba Wetlands and Hasties Swamp. A word of warning to those who, like we used to, read this publication as if it were the Bible. Check before you visit. The unsgnposted Thylogale turned out to be a private residence embarrassing both us and the totally naked owner who came out thinking his wife'd arrived back from the shops; the Wetlands are not open in the Wet (I ask you!) and most birdlife had beaten a Hastie retreat from the Swamp (though at least it was open).

But, as we usually find with birdwatching, when a plan goes astray, improvisation tends to produce even better sightings. So, while searching for the elusive Thylogale near Julatten, we made an unplanned stop at the unattractively-named Abattoir Swamp Environmental Park and found the Honey Tree, so nicknamed because it was drooping from the weight of various species of honeyeaters including two new ones for us - the Yellow and the White-throated.

Then, an impromptu picnic not only featured delicious sandwiches but also clear sightings of a Bar-shouldered Dove, Spectacled Monarch and, highlight of the trip, a BUFF-BREASTED PARADISE KINGFISHER (editor, please leave those capital letters). Keira was the reason we saw it as we were heading back to the car but she wanted to walk a little further and we felt sorry for her, for in truth we'd only done a little walking that day. I said to Dave who had the good binos "Ooh, a huge bird with a white stripe down its back, in that tree, never seen anything like it before". We couldn't believe we were seeing something so exotic. "Look at the tail...pass the binos..Simpson & Day say it's uncommon round here...that's a feather in our caps...yeah, the longest feather ever!!" Keira got special cuddles that day.

Not to be outdone, Tess also wanted to lend a hand and so arranged to need her nappy changed just where she knew there was an Emerald Dove pecking in the grass of a public park in Mareeba. I pointed out a bright green bird of a 'to be sure'-type hue, taking it for a parrot but fortunately, Dave got the coos while I got the poos, and of course, it disappeared simultaneously with the pull of the last zip on the nappy bag.

Next day, our last full one, we ventured north of the Daintree River, taking the ferry and driving first to Jindalba for a few long boardwalks through immaculate rainforest. Needless to say, all the birds worth seeing were in the car park, practically honking the car horns and within seconds of arriving we'd seen a Dusky Honeyeater, Yellow-bellied Sunbird and McLeay's Honeyeater. The sunbirds, reminiscent of spinebills and the nearest thing to a hummingbird I've ever seen, were also in great profusion at Daintree Ice-cream Company, further north again, and were the most beautiful accessory to the lovely gardens they have there and all of it the perfect backdrop to a bowl of wattleseed and jackfruit ice-cream at the end of a great holiday.

Indian Myna	Spotted Turtle Dove	House Sparrow	White-breasted Woodswallow
Magpie Lark	Torresian Pigeon	Rainbow Lorikeet	Orange-footed Scrubfowl
Figbird	Rainbow Bee-eater	Spangled Drongo	Helmeted Friarbird
Peaceful Dove	Indian Peafowl	Red-browed Finch	Helmeted Guineafowl
Black Kite	Pheasant Coucal	Masked Lapwing	Bar-shouldered Dove
Hardhead	Royal Spoonbill	Willie Wagtail	Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher
Emerald Dove	Purple Swamphen	Dusky Moorhen	White-throated Honeyeater
Magpie Goose	Yellow Honeyeater	Pacific Black Duck	Lewin's Honeyeater
Eurasian Coot	White-faced Heron	Laughing Kookaburra	White-bellied Sea Eagle
Yellow Oriole	Great Bowerbird	Spectacled Monarch	Red-tailed Black Cockatoo
Silvereye	Dusky Honeyeater	McLeay's Honeyeater	Yellow-bellied Sunbird
Apostlebird	Grey Shrike-thrush	Australian Magpie	Shining Flycatcher
Brush Turkey			

Unusual Records for June 2006

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Chris J. Chafer

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-turkey	6	8-Jun	Balgownie	garden	TE
Great Crested Grebe	27	27-Jun	Bamerang Dam, Nowra	wetland	BA
Northern Royal Albatross	1	27-May	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Grey-headed Albatross	1	24-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Buller's Albatross	1	28-May	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Buller's Albatross	1	24-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Grey-backed Storm-Petrel	1	28-May	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Striated Heron	1	10-Jun	Little Lake	wetland	MR
Whistling Kite	1	14-Jun	Koona Bay	overhead	BHa
White-bellied Sea-eagle	2	12-Jun	Dunmore	overhead	RB
Swamp Harrier	1	30-Jun	Gerringong	wetland	CJC
Brown Goshawk	1	1-Jun	Mermaid Pool tk, Tahmoor	overhead	GB
Grey Goshawk	1	12-Jun	Balgownie	overhead	RT
Grey Goshawk	1	13-Jun	Excelsior Res. Thirroul	overhead	MM
Grey Goshawk	2	16-Jun	Flanagans Ck, Thirroul	overhead	MM
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	15-Jun	Macquarie Rivulet, lower	overhead	MR
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	8-Jun	Balgownie	overhead	TE
Buff-banded Rail	1	16-Jun	Robertson?	?	DG
Spotless Crake	2	10-Jun	Tallawarra	wetland	CB
Painted Button-Quail	1	1-Jun	Mermaid Pool tk, Tahmoor	woodland	GB
Pacific Gull	1	28-May	off Wollongong	marine	PM
White-headed Pigeon	2	8-Jun	Balgownie	garden	TE
Bar-shouldered Dove	1	9-Jun	Maddens Plains	woodland	DG
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	50+	1-May	Maddens Plains	overhead	JZ
Long-billed Corella	6	9-Jun	Helensburgh	playing field	DG
Red-rumped Parrot	7	18-Jun	Little Lake	grassland	CJC
Barn Owl	1	30-Jun	Dunmore	dead on road	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	1	15-Jun	Macquarie Rivulet, lower	riverine	MR
Southern Emu-wren	2	30-May	Bellambi Lagoon	wetland	AC
Southern Emu-wren	1	19-Jun	Lake Illawarra South	wetland	DG
Eastern Bristlebird	2	16-Jun	Robertson?	?	DG
White-plumed Honeyeater	1	15-Jun	Macquarie Rivulet, lower	riverine	MR
Flame Robin	1	4-Jun	Jamberoo	garden	BH
Rose Robin	2	5-Jun	Keiraville	garden	LP
Rose Robin	1	8-Jun	Balgownie	garden	TE
Rose Robin	1	11-Jun	Thirroul	garden	MM
Rose Robin	1	17-Jun	Croome Rd Park, Albion Park	woodland	MR
Varied Sittella	6	9-Jun	Maddens Plains	woodland	DG
Green Catbird	4	30-Jun	Minnamurra Falls	rainforest	BA
Bassian Thrush	1	2-Jun	Balgownie	garden	DT

Contributors: BA – Bob Ashford; GB – Graham Barwell; RB – Roger Bogaert; CB – Chris Brandis; CJC – Chris Chafer; AC – Alan Cousins; TE – Terri Edwell; DG – Daryl Goldrick; BHa – Barbara Hales; BH – Betty Hudson; MM – Mike Morphett; LP – Loraine Pincus; PM – Peter Milburn; MR – Michelle Rower; DT – Dave Thomson; RT – Roger Truscott; JZ – Joan Zealey.



*"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"*

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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 296 September 2006

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS September 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 11th September - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall.

Chris Brandis will show Chris Chafer's pictures and speak about the birds they saw on their trip along the Birdsville Track in October last year.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 13th September – Tallawarra Ash Ponds. Leader – Chris Brandis. Meet at 8:30 am at the Parking area, some 200m -300m down the (private) road to Tallawarra. Turn left (East) into this road from the Princes Highway. If you need assistance call me on 0427962837..

MONTHLY OUTING – Sunday 17th September – Bicentennial Park, Homebush. Leader, Judy Harrington. Please meet at 7.15am at the car park of Fairy Meadow Community Hall where it is suggested we car pool for the trip. Alternate arrangements (for northern members) can be made at next Monday's meeting or see Val Dolan. We'll leave by 7.30am to meet Judy Harrington on site at 9.00am. Turn off Princes Highway at Engadine, proceed through Lucas Heights and then Bankstown. Head for the Sydney Olympic Park, turning into Australia Ave, and then turn into the one-way road to the lake edge where there is parking and toilets. If you are lost, ring Val on 0408 203 027.

Over 140 bird species have been recorded in the park, including various waders, darters, cormorants, avocets, goshawks, kites and wrens. Boardwalks have been provided through the wetlands. And, if interested you can see the environment provided for the Golden Bell frogs

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 19th September 2006, 7.30pm, at Val Dolan's, 26 Morandoo Ave, Mt Keira. (4229 6737) All members are welcome.

October 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Friday 22nd September**. Contributions from all members welcomed, but please submit your contributions early, by email preferably, otherwise by post.

Please note **Penny Potter** will be helping me out by now editing the November issue of the News. So next month send items to me, John Cashman, and the following month to Penny

Lake Illawarra Entrance Works Project – Stage 2

Chris Brandis

As the Club's representative on the Community Liaison Group for the next 10 months or so I can update members on the current progress of the works.

The first meeting was held on the 25th May after a site visit with some 22 community, contractor and government representatives present. The first stages of the building of a spur wall off the southern rock wall and then the building of the northern rock wall is hoped to start in mid June once the Dept. of Planning give their final approval. This is hoped to get the construction area away from the Little Tern nesting area and if there are concerns then the project will be stopped.

It is hoped that the beach will continue to build up on both the northern and southern sides of the wall, as it is doing now, to provide suitable nesting area for both the Little Terns and the Red-capped Plovers. The channel is planned to be dredged on the southern side leaving sand flats and shallows on the northern bank for wader feeding and roosting although with the lower Lake levels many are now in the western entrance areas. The Club will continue the survey of the bird populations in the entrance as we have done since 1999. This will affect those visiting the area and our February walk at Windang as some of the area will be classified as a construction zone.

For project updates visit the web site www.lia.nsw.gov.au and check the progress.

Any member wishing to know more, make suggestions, assist in surveys, be a relief member please let me know you thoughts.

Other groups that the Club has representatives on are:

- The Bird Interest Group of NSW and ACT, BIGnet, that meets twice a year at various NSW club areas.
- The Ornithological Records Appraisal Committee, ORAC, that assess unusual bird record sightings submitted in NSW and meets one a year.
- The Tallawarra Community Consultative Committee that meets every 2 months to liaise with TRU Energy on the effects of the construction of the new power station at Tallawarra on the community. Construction has now started on the slab and the area around the scout camp site is busy with trucks carting rubble. IBOC have provided a report for the EIS consultants on the bird life on the site from our records.

Check the web site www.truenergy.com.au for updates on the progress.

Dolan on Nolan Val Dolan reports on Peter Nolan's talk on some US raptors et al.

Every November since 1991 Peter Nolan has packed his shorts and sandals and headed for the U.S.A. to enrich his knowledge of raptors. With friends made over the years he is able to travel to places that would not be available to most visiting birdwatchers. In 2005 his first week was spent in Arkansas, where a friend was continuing to regenerate flat farmland for the benefit of wildlife. Landowners are encouraged to improve their land this way with an annual government payment of \$50,000 and further tax credits. River banks were cleared of exotic trees and water plants introduced to replace them, to encourage ducks. Seven species of ducks are now present but the aim is for 12 species. Former rice paddies have been planted with a variety of native grasses. Peter showed us a slide of these and assured us that a flock of White

Throated Sparrows were in his shot. He also sighted Red Headed Woodpeckers, Great Blue Herons and many cormorants that were indicators of a good spot to fish.

While out one night on a deer count Peter pointed out a bird that he fleetingly thought was a quail. This unusual sighting turned out to be an American Woodcock. It was taken home to be weighed, measured and photographed as further proof that the regenerated wildlife areas were in fact working. This nocturnal bird was returned to its habitat 2.30am. That's dedication!

Peter spoke of the contradiction of allowing two weeks hunting at great expense to the shooter, and 50 weeks of nurturing wildlife. But as he said - "it seems to be working". From Arkansas he moved into the spectacular eroded sandstone country of Utah where he expected to find Eagles. The long drought had affected their flight path and not one eagle was spotted, only many crows. Due to local knowledge Peter was able to make a worthwhile detour to a site with petroglyphs thought to be 7000 years old!

The Pawnee National Grasslands, in Colorado, are home to over 300 bird species in summer but in November only 12 species call this home. Peter spotted 7 of these during his stay, one of which was the Whistling Sparrow. A friend invited Peter to assist with his studies of Red Tailed Hawks by throwing down a moose trap to imitate road kill. In one day nine birds were caught; seven were the larger females and two the smaller males, apparently typical of the gender ratio at this time of the year.

While awaiting his flight home in San Francisco Peter drove 40 minutes out of town to visit Muir Woods, a magnificent stand of ancient redwoods that were saved in the 1860's. Peter took 130 shots on his new digital camera but as many new users have done pressed a button and deleted the lot! From the few slides he showed us I'm sure Muir Woods is imprinted on his memory. Kevin McGregor thanked Peter for his presentation and remarked on his obvious enthusiasm for bird watching. He also suggested that a recorder might be a good idea for capturing those pesky Whistling Sparrows!

Dunmore Archery Centre Walk Wednesday 16 th August – Chris Brandis

14 members met at the end of Rocklow Road on a bright sunny day picking up Red-browed Finch and Superb Fairy-wren on the way. Around the parking area Brown and Yellow Thornbills were sighted in the paperbarks before we set off through the gates and down the steep track into the valley leased by the Shellharbour Bow Hunters from the nearby quarry. We could hear the monotonous call of a nearby pigeon and some saw a White-headed Pigeon take off and later a few Brown Cuckoo-Doves were flushed out of thick brush but no good looks were obtained. The wild tobacco bush was still just fruiting and should bring in the fruit pigeons shortly and hopefully a return of the Green Catbirds seen before.

Down on the flat area the Bowhunters have made it a home away from home with shelter sheds, showers and toilets all set out amongst numerous trails and targets. Down one trail some saw a Bassian Thrush scamper off while a White-throated Treecreeper poked about over head and Eastern Whipbirds called from behind the lantana. Lewin's Honeyeaters were quite common as some mistletoe was coming into flower.

While having morning tea in the warm sun a parade of birds soared overhead including Straw-necked and Australian White Ibis, a white phase Grey Goshawk, a pair of Brown Goshawks, Collard Sparrowhawk and a Wedge-tailed Eagle being harassed by a Little Eagle. We then made the slow climb back out of the valley back to the cars and a little way down the road and had a look in a swampy area which had a Black Swan building a nest and Black-winged Stilts wading in the shallows.

Thanks to the Shellharbour Bowhunters who have allowed us to visit the site, but not on weekends when the arrows are flying.

Bird Sightings

Black Swan	Pacific Black Duck	Grey Teal
Little Pied Cormorant	Pied Cormorant	Pelican
White-faced Heron	Australian White Ibis	Straw-necked Ibis
Brown Goshawk	Grey Goshawk	Collard Sparrowhawk
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Little Eagle	Black-winged Stilt
Masked Lapwing	White-headed Pigeon	Brown Cuckoo-dove
Crimson Rosella	Eastern Rosella	Laughing Kookaburra
White-throated Treecreeper	White-throated Scrubwren	Brown Gerygone
Brown Thornbill	Yellow Thornbill	Little Wattlebird
Lewin's Honeyeater	New Holland Honeyeater	Eastern Spinebill
Eastern Yellow Robin	Eastern Whipbird	Golden Whistler
Grey Shrike Thrush	Magpie Lark	Grey Fantail
Willie Wagtail	Grey Butcherbird	Australian Magpie
Pied Currawong	Australian Raven	Satin Bowerbird
Red-browed Finch	European Goldfinch	Welcome Swallow
Red-whiskered Bulbul	Bassian Thrush	

IBOC Spring Camp 21st to 28th October 2006 Smiths Lake Field Station UNSW.

Some further information from Betty Hudson (4236 0307)

The usual IBOC signs will be put at the Seal Rocks road turn and at the turn off that road to the Field Station. This turn is opposite the Fish Co-operative building.

To enlarge on the cooking facilities: there are 5 gas burners in the outside BBQ area, 2 wood burnings BBQ's and a gas stove inside. All crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils are provided. Microwaves are not shown as being supplied. You will need to bring tea towels. IBOC will supply dish washing liquid, dishcloths, scourers etc.

In the dormitories you will need to bring all your bedding needs, as well as a pillow.

Please ensure that you bring insect repellent as the area is notorious for ticks. And after the rain the mossies will be very active.

Supermarket, Butcher, Baker and Fuel within 15min drive.

To date I have confirmed bookings for 6 rooms and possible bookings, for the last 1 rooms, from another 2 groups. Please contact Betty Hudson ASAP if you have indicated that you may possibly come, to confirm or otherwise your booking. There is plenty of room for tents and for 3 more campervans / trailers or 1 caravan.

Bird Sleuthing around Berry

Bob Ashford

Every now and then I get a phone call, or I'm stopped in the street, and I'm questioned regarding the identity of a bird. I enjoy these interactions though sometimes the information provided is sparse. One such question prompted this column. "I saw a black bird. What is it?" My first response is invariably "Oh. How interesting?" However, inside my head a little voice says "Yeah Right!"

I love the detective work required to identify birds - unfamiliar calls, tantalising glimpses of a disappearing tail, unusual behaviours. That intensely satisfying feeling when all falls into place – "Ah! That's what you are." But, I'm hard pushed to hit the jackpot with just 'black'!

Around Berry there are probably a dozen 'black' birds we are likely to see. That's not counting those that look black due to bad light or contrast or who are skulking in thick scrub.

In this case the bird was in fact a Blackbird. This is a non-native bird commonly found throughout the UK and Europe. The female is a drab brown but the male plumage is black. The male also has an orange-yellow bill and a yellow eye-ring. This is often the case with all-black birds, invariably they have some other feature that helps quickly identify them.

The male Satin Bowerbird is a glossy purple-black with an ivory coloured bill. Male Koels are black with a wicked red eye. The Koel is the cuckoo that calls monotonously through the night in early summer. Those they keep awake have red eyes too! You are likely to see each of these birds in your gardens.

In paddocks and dams around Berry there are more black birds. There are Starlings, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos perhaps even a Spangled Drongo. Other subtle features easily identify each of these species. For example, Black Swans can occasionally be seen on the dam alongside Agars Lane. Anyone who has difficulty identifying that one, see me after class! If you head out to the coast you are likely to encounter Sooty Oystercatchers, Little Black Cormorants and Great Cormorants, identified by what is known in birding circles as ‘jizz’.

Jizz is that unique combination of characteristics (size, flight pattern, shape, posture, general behaviour, etc) that allows a parent to instantly identify their child among the 3 o’clock throng at school. Combine jizz with setting (Blackbird-garden, Cormorant-coastal rocks) and you are well on the way to becoming a successful birding sleuth.

Another quite common black bird around Berry is the Australasian Raven. Every now and then there are reports of Little Ravens near Berry. In fact there are five species of Ravens and Crows in Australia, which are wickedly difficult to tell apart. Fortunately, each species inhabits different habitat and parts of the country – mostly! But every now and then two, or more, species overlap!

Many years ago a group of keen birding novices, including me, were out on a field trip in southern Queensland with a very experienced birder when we came across some Raven/Crows. As mild panic swept through the group our guide gave us the low-down on how to identify the two different species of Raven/Crow we were watching.

“One is black with a bit of grey at the very base of its breast feathers and it calls ‘Caw, caw, caawwww’. The other is black with a bit of grey/white at the very base of its breast feathers and it calls ‘Caw, caw, caawwww’. Each of us nodded politely and said “Oh. How interesting” but inside each head a little voice said “Yeah Right!”

Bob wrote this article for the April issue of the *Berry Town Crier*

MONTHLY OUTING – Buderoo Plateau 20.8.06

Nerida Hudspith

There was a good turn out on this chilly morning on Jamberoo Mountain, 17 keen birders, with 3 friends of mine who are potential members, Trish Whitelaw, Marie and Peter Stanley.

At the meeting point on the fire trail there was little bird activity, (a sign of what was to come), as we wandered along the gravel fire trail. This walk took us through low marsh vegetation, to pockets of tall gums, with evidence of a recent fire, with the vegetation in both areas still recovering. As usual the group split into a front and back end, members being engrossed in different birds.

We came across some New Holland and Lewin’s Honeyeaters and some wattlebirds. The Scarlet Robin was an absolute delight, and seeing my first Southern Emu Wren and Grey

Currawong was exciting. Being new to birding there is always something new to see. So I am excited by birds that are significant to me. The bird list gives a full count of birds for the day.

We had lunch on a trail which led down to a river, and after lunch it was decided that we would call it a day and head back to the cars. Being fairly close to the river, Trish, Marie, Peter and I chose to stay and go to the river.

We timed our walk from the lunch spot, 25 minutes. This excluded the time take out when we came across a bathing puddle and had the privilege of watching a Brown Thornbill taking an afternoon bath. Keeping quiet while watching him we soon became surrounded by a small group of 6 to 8 Striated Thornbills who took it in turns to have a bath and preened themselves on a dead Hakea.

Closer to the river it became evident why there was a lack of bird life, as the fire had burnt out large areas of vegetation which were only just beginning to recover. The trails no longer existed due to fallen Banksias and Hakeas. But it would be well worth another visit when the regrowth has happened. We bush bashed our way to the falls and had a welcome afternoon tea break. Trish set a steady pace back, which took us 2 hours from the falls.

Bird List for Budderoo Fire Trail Walk 20.08.06 - 28 species for the day

Nankeen Kestrel	Brown Thornbill	Eastern Yellow Robin
Crimson Rosella	Striated Thornbill	Eastern Whistler
Ground Parrot	Red Wattlebird	Grey Shrike-thrush
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
White-throated Treecreeper	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Currawong
Red-browed Treecreeper	Brown-headed Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Superb Fairy-wren	Crescent Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Southern Emu-wren	New Holland Honeyeater	Beautiful Firetail
Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Spinebill	
White Browed Scrub Wren	Scarlet Robin	

Bits and...

The 2006 Allan Sefton Memorial Lecture will be held in the UniCentre Function rooms of the University of Wollongong on Tuesday, 19 September commencing at 6.30pm with light refreshments and a poster display. The official welcome will be at 7.15pm.

The Lecturer will be Dr John Woinarski, Biodiversity Conservation Group, NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts. His presentation is titled, "Beyond the Pale: An ecological and land management perspective from Northern Australia."

Dr Woinarski is Principal Scientist with the NT's Dept. Of Natural Resources..., a project leader with the Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Unit, and Adjunct Professorial Fellow with Charles Darwin University. He has lived in Darwin for 20 years, and worked across the north on a broad range of conservation and management issues, including the impacts upon biodiversity of fire regimes and pastoralism, reserve design, biogeography; environmental history, and management of threatened plant and animal species. His published works include over 150 scientific papers and book chapters. He was awarded the Eureka Prize for biodiversity research in 2001, and the Seventy Medal for his lifetime contribution to research on Australian birds

More info about this lecture from Penny Potter, whose daytime work number is 4221 3550



'The hand that rocks the cradle' Little Wattle Bird nest : Wednesday walk Photo Tera Wheway

Birding Abroad Sept 2002 At Lesvos, Greece

David Winterbottom

Billed as the autumn migration magic, this proved to be magic but not quite what we expected in the way of migratory birds. This being Greece, the weather was mostly hot and sunny and the first day showed a few Honey Buzzards and Lesser Spotted Eagles and a single Booted eagle riding a thermal. Later, a Long-legged Buzzard joined the eagle.

Near to the hotel the coastal marshes and foreshores yielded a host of waders. We saw Black-winged Stilt, Avocet, Little Ringed Plover, Temminck's Stint, Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Redshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Greenshank, and a couple of Black-tailed Godwits. More exciting for us were Black Storks, Eurasian Spoonbill and thousands of Greater Flamingos.

Driving through the parched landscape, with stone walls around olive groves and vineyards, there were lots of Spotted Flycatchers, with Tree Pipits, Wood Warblers, Red-backed Shrikes and Blackcaps. Amongst the oak trees were a Western Rock Nuthatch and a few Chiffchaffs and amongst the native pines, the rare Kruper's Nuthatch and a party of Long-tailed Tits.

On the other side of the island the scenery is spectacular with a traditional fishing village in the foreground and the Turkish coast not far away across the straits. The local sheep have the curious habit of forming a compact circle with their heads all pointing into the centre. Many of the farm cottages have chimney cowls made from the back end of a mortar or rocket. A Short-toed Eagle with a snake in its claws flew over the road on the way back.

There were more birds of prey to be identified – Elinora's Falcon, Lesser-spotted Eagle, Sparrowhawk, Lesser Kestrel, Kestrel and Red-footed Falcon. Less spectacular sightings were Sombre, Blue and Great Tits as well as a Short-toed Treecreeper. The startling Blue Rock-thrush seemed common enough and Red-rumped Swallows were seen in numbers every day. Crested Larks abound.

We had come hoping for mass migrations of Storks, Buzzards and other large spectacular birds but they were few and far between. It seems they are best seen in the spring going the other way. We did see a good few of the small migrants – Whinchats, Willow, Garden and Cetti's Warblers, Northern, Isabelline and Black-eared Wheatears, amongst others. Never mind, Greek food and wine more than made up for any fleeting disappointment.

...Pieces

- Congratulations to Neil and Tera Wheway who both competed in and completed the Sydney to Surf race with other members of their local Probus Club

- Alan and Anne Cousins have returned after traveling on the Indian Pacific to Perth, holidaying there, and then flying home. Great !
- Transport? New member, Jane Kinsella, top of Hospital Rd, Bulli, would appreciate contact with other northern members who could offer her a lift to meetings and walks. Jane would like to contribute to costs. So phone Jane on 4284 1202 if you can help

FRIENDS

from Lyn Walker, Jamberoo

This tribute's to the feathered friends of many a size and hue
 Encountered golfing intrastate on cared-for courses treed & true...
 I'll mention too the ones I view on regular rounds at Jamberoo,
 Where tinkling thornbills on the sixth converse in easy view.

The acrobatic dollarbird has yearly visitations
 With diving, rolling aerial flights & jarring recitations.
 The cheeky willie wagtail – confident, dictatorial –
 Dressed up ready for the ball – he's swaggering & sartorial.

Wellington has apostlebirds – terrestrial & gregarious -
 Whilst seeking seeds & insects they're noisy & conspicuous.
 Bee-eating birds can be seen on the Gwydir
 Flashing orange plumage & streaming stabilizers.

There's a family of frogmouths at Griffith greeted yearly –
 Father keeps the watch above while babies snuggle warmly.
 I marvel at their strategy to each take turns with food
 Whilst chameleon disguises give protection to the brood.

One Riverina honeyeater's the largest ever seen
 With golden-olive feathers & a turquoise facial sheen,
 And Major Mitchell's cockatoo with fiery-coloured crest
 Displays his crimson beauty at its narcissistic best.

It's hard sometimes to sympathize with rakish, rasping ravens
 Seen swooping down on egg-like balls with slow, descending victory calls!

Time now to address another ball & engage in conversations
 'Bout modern generations or the politics of nations...

Committee News

- * Car Pooling for walks (and meetings) was discussed. Environmentally, and with high petrol prices it makes good sense.
- * Walks in 2007. Nerida Hudspith suggested taking a train to Heathcote and walking back to Waterfall. Tera Wheway suggested going to Mt Annan for September to see the bird banding. Thanks, Nerida and Tera, and more suggestions please. Ring Tom Wylie on 4284 2051
- Mike Morphet has agreed to lead a walk to the Excelsior Mine site next March.
- * Chris Cartledge reported on his work of redesigning and updating the club Website.
- * Kitchen Roster for Club Meetings. Our Secretary and a number of very faithful senior members have been serving us in the kitchen for years. We need to release Betty for her many other tasks, and share the load around. How about putting your name down on the roster for a shift in the kitchen ?

NSW and ACT Twitchathon 2006

Proceeds to go to the Australian Bird Study Associations Research Fund

This year the Australian Bird Study Associations Research Fund will be the recipient of our fund raising conservation efforts. The Research Fund provides grants to students at Australian Universities who are doing research on Australian birds. We aim to increase the value of the investment fund so that more funds can be granted for research. In recent years the Research Fund has been able to provide small grants to two students per year to assist in their field work and research.

In 2006 the Australian Bird Study Association awarded grants to Grant Palmer and Dean Portelli. Grant has a long term study underway investigating the response of bird communities to alternative land uses in the rural living zone surrounding the large regional centre of Ballarat (Vic). Dean's research is part of his PhD studies at NSW University into the social organisation and breeding biology of Hall's Babbler. By increasing the amount of the Investment fund more money will be made available to students like Grant and Dean for important research into the biology and conservation of Australian birds. This Twitchathon Project aims to increase the Investment Fund from the current \$25,000 to \$40,000 or more!

How to join the Twitchathon 2006 October 28-29

1. Contact Alan Morris for your 2006 Twitchathon Kit
2. Form a team with one or even a dozen friends and family and go birdwatching over this October weekend. You can travel anywhere in NSW and/or the ACT. See how many species of birds your team can find from 3 pm Saturday 28 October to 4 pm Sunday 29 October 2006. Note the new starting and finishing time as trialled in 2004.
1. Get sponsors. In the weeks before this event, persuade family and friends to sponsor you so many cents or even dollars for each species your team sees. You just need either lots of little sponsorships or a few big ones!
2. There are prizes for the most species seen by three winning teams as well as prizes for the most money raised, the rarest bird seen by an individual, and prizes for children. The prizes include trophies, a weekend in a motel at Griffith with a personal guided tour of the Ramsar Internationally famous Fivebough Swamp Wetlands (sponsored by the Fivebough Wetland Trust), a weekend cottage stay in the country, a valuable gift voucher to be used to purchase a pair of binoculars (sponsored by ABSA), books, book vouchers, champagne, wine and other prizes to go to the winners in the various categories of the Twitchathon. Contact Alan for a full list.

You don't have to be an A class birdwatcher to take part. Whichever method you chose for your Twitchathon – the laid back (ie the Champagne Race), the deadly serious, or the donor only version, remember it is all about educating others into the importance of nature conservation, particularly the conservation of Australian birds.

Last year we raised \$14000, and the two years before &10,500 & \$13548 respectively! In the past five years we have raised over \$60,000. This is a great achievement and we have been able to make a significant difference for the birds in the Capertee Valley, the Murray Valley, the Cowra District, Newhaven Station (NT) & the Education Unit at Gluepot Reserve. I know that you will join me in making a fantastic contribution one way or another. So, do ask me for your Twitchathon Kit **TODAY** or sponsor a Twitchathon team in your bird club or group! I can put you in touch with a team if you do not know of one in your area!

Alan Morris Twitchathon Co-ordinator (For Birds Australia, Southern NSW & ACT)

c/- 3 Murray St Bateau Bay NSW 2261, Ph 02 43 342776, Email amorris@ceinternet.com.au

Unusual Records for July 2006

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Chris J. Chafer

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-turkey	1	23-Jul	Mt. Keira	rainforest	RT
Brown Quail	1	12-Aug	Bellambi Lagoon	woodland	PMP
Antarctic Prion	1	22-Jul	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Grey-headed Albatross	1	24-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Grey-headed Albatross	1	22-Jul	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Buller's Albatross	1	24-Jun	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Buller's Albatross	1	22-Jul	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
Eastern Reef Egret	1	22-Jul	Cudmirrah	rocky shore	KM
Osprey	1	12-Jul	Berrara	overhead	BA
Whistling Kite	1	12-Jul	Berrara	overhead	BA
Swamp Harrier	2	6-Jul	Far Meadow	overhead	BA
Swamp Harrier	1	15-Jul	Dunmore	overhead	KM
Grey Goshawk	1	1-Jul	Shoalhaven Heads	overhead	BA
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	16-Aug	Kangaroo Valley	urban	NJ
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	3-Jul	Gerroa	overhead	BA
Brown Falcon	1	5-Aug	Dharawal State Recreation Park	woodland	CJC
Peregrine Falcon	1	12-Aug	Albion Park Rail	overhead	PF
Hooded Plover	2	8-Jul	Berrara	beach	KM
Pacific Gull	2	22-Jul	off Wollongong	marine	PM
Caspian Tern	68	24-Jul	Windang	sandflats	TN
Arctic Tern	4	22-Jul	off Wollongong	pelagic	PM
White-headed Pigeon	1	20-Jul	Bulli	rainforest	RT
Common Bronzewing	1	16-Jul	Brundee (e of Nowra)	forest	KM
Bar-shouldered Dove	3	29-Jul	Primbee dune track	woodland	RI
Musk Lorikeet	40	29-Jul	Keiraville	garden	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	20	30-Jul	Wollongong Botanical Gardens	parkland	BO
Tawny Frogmouth	1	6-Aug	Pleasant Heights	parkland	NW
Tawny Frogmouth	1	12-Aug	Lake Heights	dead on road	CJC
Azure Kingfisher	1	8-Jul	Swan Lake	lake edge	KM
Azure Kingfisher	2	13-Aug	Gerroa	riverine	PMP
Weebill	2	12-Aug	Shellcove	pine trees	CB
Scarlet Robin	2	2-Jul	Hill Top	rural	KM
Scarlet Robin	1	12-Aug	Croome Rd Park, Albion Park	woodland	MR
Spangled Drongo	1	29-Jul	Primbee dune track	woodland	RI
Figbird	22	17-Jul	Wollongong	CBD	TN

Contributors: BA – Bob Ashford; CB – Chris Brandis; CJC – Chris Chafer; PF – Peter Fackender; DG – Daryl Goldrick; RI – Ron Imisides; NJ – Nigel Jacket; PM – Peter Milburn; KM – Kevin Mills; TN – Terrill Nordstrom; BO – Bruce O’Brien; PMP – Penny & Martin Potter; MR – Michelle Rower; RT – Roger Truscott; NW - Neil Wheway.

Please keep the Unusual Sightings coming in, but they won't appear in next month's IBOC News as Chris will be taking a brief holiday in Thailand

Good Grief !

* I understand that a crow has one less pinion feather than a raven. Therefore how do you tell a crow from a raven? It's a matter of opinion. (*Ahhh!*)

* Two vultures were in the desert eating a dead clown. The first vulture asked the second vulture: "Does this taste a bit funny to you?" (*Can it get any worse ?*)



*"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"*

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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 297 October 2006

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Please pay Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, by cash, cheque or mail order

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Tallawarra Walk p 2	SECRETARY: Betty Hudson, tel: 02 4236 0307 email: elizabethudson@bigpond.com
To Birdsville and back p 3	TREASURER: Bronwyn Wilson, tel: 02 4283 4744
Alice Springs Desert Park p 3	EDITORS: John Cashman, tel: 02 4284 0538 email: cashmansjr@bigpond.com
'Avalon Station' Coolamon p 5	Val Dolan, tel: 02 4229 6737
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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS October 2006

CLUB MEETING – Monday 9th October - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall.
Brian Hales with “A Pot-pourri of Birds: seen and enjoyed.” Photos from Brian’s collection.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 11th October – Grevillea Park. Leader – Joan Wylie.
Meet at 8:30 am at the Parking area, behind Bulli Showground. Turn West into Grevillea Park Road from the Princes Highway. It's a little north of the shops at Bulli. If you need assistance call me on 0407 268 279.

MONTHLY OUTING – Saturday 14th October –Fitzroy Reservoir & Gunrock Falls Fire Trail. Leader, Betty Hudson. Please meet at 8am at Robertson opposite the Service Station by the railway crossing, and from there, we will travel in convoy to the reservoir.

Club Camp Saturday 21st to Saturday 28th October at the Smiths Lake Field Research Station of the University of NSW

November 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Wednesday 18th October**. Please note: **Penny Potter** will be editing the November issue of IBOC News. So please send items to Penny at penny_potter@bigpond.com or mail them to her at 1/23 Hopetoun Street, Woonona 2517.

The Annual General Meeting of IBOC will be on Monday 13 November at 7.30pm at the Fairy Meadow Community Hall. All Committee positions are open. Please consider serving the club this way. A nomination form is provided, or attached to your email.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 17th October 2006, 7.30pm, at Norma Almond's, 2 Shoobert Ave, Mt Keira. (4229 6737) All members are welcome.

New Website for IBOC

Chris Cartledge

The Club's new website is now up and running at www.iboc.org.au The site was developed by a trainee under the 'Websites for the Community' project which is run by Wollongong City Employment Training and funded by Centerlink.

Web surfers will be able to check on current Club activities (as reported in the monthly newsletter), view and/or print the 2006 Club Program and look up past Newsletters. An on-line membership form allows people to join or renew their membership. There are links to other birding sites and an on-line form for direct reporting of unusual sightings (to Chris Chafer) is under development.

The site is a work-in-progress and future changes will be made by the Club's webmaster Chris. Cartledge supported by Martin Cocker. As reported at the Club meeting on Monday 11 Sep, it is hoped to make the new site interactive, with Club members participating in future development of the site through feedback on the current pages and suggestions for future development. One thought is an area where members can have their latest pictures displayed for the world to view. Please send your ideas to webmaster@iboc.org.au

BITS and....

A 'Birding Essentials' Day will be held on Sunday 22 October at the Coastal Environment Centre, North Narrabeen, Brochures at IBOC Library or phone 9970 6905. \$55 for the day

Wednesday walk at Tallawarra, 13 th September

Chris Brandis

After a short compulsory induction on the safety aspects of entering the TRUenergy ash pond 3 site, 22 members and guests set off under blue skies across the old iron Duck Creek bridge noting a Nankeen Kestrel sitting at the entrance of a large hollow in an eucalypt while Sulphur-crested Cockatoos eyed off other hollows. With the wet weather of the previous week there was plenty of water around the district and, as expected, the number of ducks and species were well down and no dotterels were to be found at all. Black Swans were breeding, two pairs with cygnets and one on a nest while a few Black-winged Stilts needed all their leg length to keep above the water.

There were a few tantalising views of Golden-headed Cisticolas as they popped up and then down before all could get a view, but there was a Whistling Kite watching us for a while from a large gum tree, with a stick nest in it, before taking off as we approached. Although the mournful call of the Little Grassbird could be heard none were spied but there were several obliging Clamorous Reed-Warblers. During the morning tea break a dark crake was spotted skulking in the reeds and then again later being confirmed as a Spotless Crake. The Haywoods Bay housing project was interesting to see from our side with a huge 6 m high pile of coal wash being moved along and smidgen of soil placed over the remaining 3 m thick layer for housing. As we entered the casuarina area a male Mistletoebird was spotted but flew off before all could have a look but the tail enders saw a pair as well as adding Yellow and Brown Thornbills.

It is hoped that with the re-zoning of the 600 ha Tallawarra site, the great wetlands and bush areas will be retained and still available for conservation and nature lovers and we can continue to be permitted to visit this great area for birding.

Bird List

Black Swan	Australian Wood Duck	Pacific Black Duck
Australian Shoveler	Grey Teal	Chestnut Teal
Hardhead	Australian Grebe	Little Pied Cormorant
Great Cormorant	Australian Pelican	Great Egret
Australian White Ibis	Straw-necked Ibis	Royal Spoonbill
Black-shouldered Kite	Whistling Kite	Grey Goshawk
Little Eagle	Nankeen Kestrel	Spotless Crake
Purple Swamphen	Dusky Morehen	Eurasian Coot
Black-winged Stilt	Masked Lapwing	Crested pigeon
Topknot Pigeon	Galah	Long-billed Corella
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Eastern Rosella	Fan-tailed Cuckoo
White-throated Treecreeper	Superb Fairy-wren	Brown Thornbill
Yellow Thornbill	Noisy Miner	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Magpie Lark	Grey Fantail	Willie Wagtail
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Australian Magpie	Australian Raven
Red-browed Finch	Mistletoebird	Welcome Swallow
Clamorous Reed-Warbler	Little Grassbird	Golden-headed Cisticola
Common Starling	Common Myna	

Birdsville & Back with Chris Brandis. 11th September, 2006 Val Dolan

Once again a good crowd braved a cold wet night to be rewarded by a interesting presentation. In October, 2005, Chris Brandis and Chris Chaffer repeated a trip they had made ten years earlier giving them the opportunity to see first hand the poor state of the countryside and how stressed the area was compared to the well vegetated, plentiful birdlife experienced previously. Their journey led them through Wilcannia, along the Birdsville Track, to Cameron's Corner, down the Strezlecki Track, to Marree, along dirt roads and sand dunes negotiable only by four-wheel drives. (Read C.B.'s own report NEWS, March, 2006).

Chris Chafer had a wish list of five birds to add to his sightings and only the Red-browed Pardalote eluded him. Eyrean Grasswrens were seen in the dunes near Cameron's Corner. Grey and Thick-billed Grasswrens perched long enough for identification and excellent photographs. The Chestnut-banded Whiteface (found in a limited area according to Slater Field Guide) completed his previously unseen list. It is a striking bird with pastel shades of chestnut and grey. A whole family was observed in a rocky area. Many varieties of lizards such as Shingle-backs were photographed sunning themselves on the roads. We were also treated to photos of both our intrepid travellers in their fly nets as protection from flies in plague proportions.

Bruce O'Brien thanked Chris for his enjoyable presentation and remarked on our great opportunities for bird watching here in Australia. This was demonstrated by Chris Chafer's great photographs and Chris Brandis' enthusiasm for this journey.

The ALICE SPRINGS DESERT PARK

Mike MORPHETT

Last month (July) Carol and I spent two full days in Alice Springs in perfect weather conditions as a lead-in to our round-trip through the Kimberley. Day 1 we made use of the 'Hop-on Hop-off' Alice Explorer Town Tour and visited the Old Telegraph Station, Alice Springs Reptile Centre and Olive Pink Botanic Gardens among the ten possible locations. Day 2 we caught a cab to the Alice Springs Desert Park, situated west along Larapinta Drive in the foothills of the MacDonnell Ranges. The suggested stay is 2-4 hours; we were there for seven, including a stop at the café for lunch and a rest. At the conclusion we fully agreed with Sir David Attenborough's opinion (who are we to argue otherwise?) that "There is no zoo or wildlife park in the world that can match it". Also, with the Park's claim that "You will never look at deserts the same way again". The management's mission statement included the aim that "We want visitors to leave the Park with an increased desire and ability to respect, enjoy and look after the Australian desert environment and its inhabitants". After

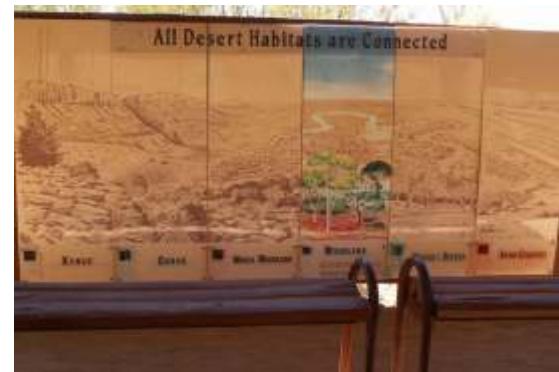
seeing much human detritus, mainly car wrecks and beer cans, during our 5000-plus km trip, we hope many more people will visit and leave with a changed or reinforced attitude towards our desert places.

Opened in March 1997, the Desert Park covers 1300 ha and contains representatives of over 400 plant species (mulga, wattle, melaleuca, hakea, grevillea, senna, ptilotus and spinifex feature prominently) and over 100 arid zone animal species. All are easily accessible within the core exhibit area of 50 ha along the very gentle gradient tracks that interconnect three different habitats: the sand country, woodland, and desert rivers. Needless to say my main focus was on birds. The design of the aviaries with very large glass windows or walk-throughs affords great views and opportunities for photography. In such a setting my digital camera worked overtime. The following species I particularly noted as we don't see them at all in our Illawarra region or are otherwise recorded as rare or accidental:

Emu	White-winged Fairy-wren	Orange Chat
Inland Dotterel	Southern Whiteface	Hooded Robin
Banded Lapwing	Banded Whiteface	Grey-crowned Babbler
Spinifex Pigeon	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	Chiming Wedgebill
Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Singing Honeyeater	Cinnamon Quail-thrush
Princess Parrot	Grey-headed Honeyeater	Black-faced Woodswallow
Australian (Western) Ringneck	Black-chinned Honeyeater	Pied Butcherbird
Budgerigar	White-fronted Honeyeater	Western Bowerbird
Bourke's Parrot	Grey Honeyeater	Painted Finch
Scarlet-chested Parrot	Black Honeyeater	Spinifexbird
Red-backed Kingfisher	Pied Honeyeater	
Splendid Fairy-wren	Crimson Chat	

The Park takes pride in the birth of Cinnamon Quail-thrush chicks last October, the first known captive breeding success of this secretive species. It has also won awards for design and education. We made our first target the Native Theatre bird of prey show at 10 am (another at 3.30 pm), where we marvelled at the majestic movements of the Barn Owl, Hobby and Black Kite. In contrast a Tawny Frogmouth remained motionless throughout on a roof rafter. The raptors weren't the only free-fliers in the Park; a variety of birds, especially honeyeaters, called and flitted through the vegetation.

We were impressed too by the graphics and art-work of the interpretative signage at the various shelters and houses; they complemented the information available at the 26 audio-guide points. The nocturnal house provided a refreshing break from the sun, where, after eye adjustment, we picked out a bilby, quoll, hopping mice, ghost bats, and



various reptiles. While I was outside checking out more birds, Carol enjoyed further 'time-in' by watching a 20-minute film 'The Changing Heart', depicting four billion years of desert evolution, and then beholding the sun-soaked backdrop of the MacDonnell Ranges through the large glass window after the cinema screen was slowly rolled down. A walk through the adjoining Exhibition Centre gave us further insight into the use of natural resources, bush

foods and medicines by indigenous peoples, in particular the Arrente, the traditional custodians of the land. Before picking up the shuttle bus back into town, we browsed through the gift shop, but I was disappointed not to be able to get an illustrated book about what we had seen or missed. The Friends of the Park are still collating information with a view to such a publication. That was my only criticism. I would strongly recommend that club members make the Desert Park a top priority place to spend a day if ever they're in the Alice.

“Avondale Station” Coolamon August 23rd and 24th Neil Wheway

Five of us, Joan and Tom Wylie, Betty Hudson, Tera and I visited Avondale Station at Coolamon to have two days of birding. We all arrived in Coolamon around midday. Tom checked out the lunch menu at the Royal Tavern: prawn cutlets, chips and salad for \$7 was just what we travelers required (good spotting Tom). Upon arrival at Avondale we were given a warm and enthusiastic welcome by the owners, Jan and Col Lucas. After being shown to our accommodation which were refurbished and well appointed railway guard vans, we were driven around the property in their Toyota bird mobile.

Avondale Station is Col and Jan's pride and joy. They have planted hundreds of native trees, providing a diverse habitat for local bird life. Their hard work on their property has been rewarded with several awards of which they are justifiably proud. However, as with many other rural properties they are in desperate need of rain, only one of the dams had any water. In a normal season these dams are hosts to many water birds, today only a few very skittish Pacific Black Ducks. The station is lucky to have town water to replenish the water troughs for the sheep, cattle and of course the bird population also uses this supply. Our first morning Tera and I wandered around the dry water holes and tree plantations and were rewarded with a good sighting of a pair of Little Friarbirds and Blue Bonnet Parrots, both a first for me.

It was overcast and cool the first morning but undeterred we birded on. Col and Jan took us to Kindra State Forest which adjoins Avondale, where we were introduced to Cheryl and Ted Hutton, (long term members may remember them). In the forest which is mainly Callitris (native pines) and some Eucalyptus we had sightings of Tree-creepers, Robins and Thornbills. Lunch was had in the old disused and restored Coolamon railway station to which Ted had a key, even better we had the heater on, to keep out the chill. Close to town is Government Dam now mainly dry. We saw many water birds from a distance, but getting close was not possible again very skittish and wary of people. Maybe they remembered that people carried guns for the duck hunting season; however a few Black-fronted Dotterels stayed behind to taunt us from a distance. This water area was initially used by the railways in the steam train era; it is now part of a traveling stock route.

In the afternoon we drove out to Ganmain the home of the rounded haystacks which unfortunately will no longer be built because they are labour intensive and costly and don't have a place in modern farming. We did see the remaining ones and also an interesting diorama in the town centre. Close to town along Boggy Creek is a walk well worth taking. Amongst the older trees many new trees have also been planted. Two bird hides make viewing water birds easier. Whilst wandering along the path a galah was observed going into a hollow in a gum. Col remarked he had been clearing dead trees from Avondale in the past not realizing that such places were nesting sites for birds. Afternoon tea was taken at Cheryl and Ted's place, ten acres just outside town. Once again, wonderful, hospitable people.

Our second morning's weather was uncooperative with rain overnight, foggy, and a cold wind blowing. Betty ventured out for an early morning walk and bird look but soon hurried back inside to the warmth of the community room which is a converted barn and very comfortable. Unfortunately there was to be no bird watching on our last morning, only a few millimeters of

rain during the morning, enough to discourage visitors but gratefully welcomed by the locals. On Avondale Station there were no sparrows or Common Mynas, but if we suffered from withdrawal for not seeing Common Mynas the Noisy Miners more than compensated. Any bird watcher in the area would find Avondale Station with its unique accommodation a rewarding place for a few days birding.

Bird List for all Coolamon Locations Visited 23-25.08.06. 60 species recorded

Australian Wood Duck	Brown Treecreeper	Magpie-lark
Pacific Black Duck	Spotted Pardalote	Grey Fantail
Grey Teal	Striated Pardalote	Willie Wagtail
Little Pied Cormorant	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Little Black Cormorant	Buff-rumped Thornbill	White-winged Triller
Black-shouldered Kite	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Nankeen Kestrel	Yellow Thornbill	Pied Butcherbird
Purple Swamphen	Red Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Black-fronted Dotterel	Little Wattlebird	Pied Currawong
Masked Lapwing	Little Friarbird	Australian Raven
Rock Dove	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Little Raven
Common Bronzewing	Noisy Miner	White-winged Chough
Crested Pigeon	White-plumed Honeyeater	Apostlebird
Peaceful Dove	Brown-headed Honeyeater	Singing Bushlark
Galah	Scarlet Robin	Richard's Pipit
Eastern Rosella	Red-capped Robin	House Sparrow
Blue Bonnet	Eastern Yellow Robin	Welcome Swallow
Red-rumped Parrot	Varied Sitella	Silvereye
Laughing Kookaburra	Rufous Whistler	Common Blackbird
White-throated Treecreeper	Grey Shrike-thrush	Common Starling

Monthly outing: Bicentennial Park, Homebush – 16 September Penny Potter

Spring was in the air when 16 IBOC members arrived at Bicentennial Park for what proved to be a very fruitful and informative day's birding. Our leader Val Dolan had arranged for ranger Judy Harrington to show us around the site and it soon became clear that she had a wealth of knowledge about the site and birds to share. Originally saltmarsh, Bicentennial Park was built on top of two rubbish dumps and opened to the public in 1988. In 2001 it was incorporated into 430 hectares of Millennium Park to commemorate 200 years of European settlement and includes 60 hectares of nationally significant remnant wetland and 40 hectares of parklands.

First stop was Lake Belvedere where we walked out onto the Belvedere to look at a Darter sitting on a nest through the spotting scope. Fairy Wrens, Swamphens and Reed Warblers could be seen nesting on the island while a White-Plumed Honeyeater went about its business in the nearby trees. Mallards, Coots and Chestnut Teal splashed about in the lake while a Little Pied Cormorant sat sentinel in a branch nearby and Lorikeets flew noisily overhead. Judy was delighted to tell us that a pair of Black Swans had recently nested in the park for the first time and that Lorikeets and Kookaburras nest in the palm trees in the showground. On the other hand Ibis have been nesting in large numbers in the park and are a real problem.

Across the road was the Fishway – a device that enables fish, mainly mullet in this case, to get safely from the saltwater creek to the freshwater lake and back again. Here we disturbed a Striated Heron fishing in the creek bed but most managed to get views of it before it flew off into the reeds.

We drove on to Wentworth Common, stopping on the way to look at a pair of Olive-backed Orioles in the trees, and some Fairy Martins fly over the grassy bank behind them. The

Eastern Water Quality Control Pond is designed to store and slow down storm water, reducing the amount of pollution and sediment spilling into Haslam's Creek and Homebush Bay. Some of the water is recycled and used to irrigate the parkland and landscapes. Judy told us that Snipe had been seen there the week before and Buff-banded Rail could occasionally be seen, but neither were present on this occasion. Instead we watched Hardhead, Australasian Grebe and a White-faced Heron at leisure while we had morning tea and learned about the endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog discovered in the park in 1993. Frog fences have been put up to contain them in various locations throughout the park and it is estimated that they now number around 1500.

Moving on we walked along Haslam's Creek, past the mangroves to the other side of the pond and had another good sighting of a Striated Heron in the open on the gabion wall. The path then took us to the top of a hill giving us clear 360° views of the surrounding parkland, Olympic Site and Badu Mangroves across the Parramatta River (100 hectares of mangrove forest).

Setting off for the Waterbird Refuge, we stopped at Shipwreck Lookout on the Parramatta River – the site of the old shipwrecking yard for the Port of Sydney. Not surprisingly Silver Gulls and Cormorants could be seen congregating on an old coal tanker, but it was a treat to find two very fluffy Silver Gull chicks and their parent nesting precariously on a wooden post near an old dredging barge. The hide at the Waterbird Refuge afforded excellent views of a group of about 10 Red-kneed Avocet and several Black-winged Stilt. Chestnut Teal could be seen dabbling and ‘suzzling’ nearby – that is straining food from the water and mud – and our thoughts began to turn to suzzling, sorry I mean guzzling, our own lunch.

We farewelled our guide and some members also left, but a group of us continued on to the Ring Walk at the Brick Pit – the site of the original discovery of the Green and Golden Bell Frog. When the pit was flooded 19 ponds were constructed around the site in the hope that the frogs would move into them, which happily they did. The elevated circular walk runs 18 meters above the pit and for me was one of the most interesting parts of the walk. The height gives a bird’s eye view of the pit landscape below and also gave new views of familiar birds. Martin and I stood watching an Australasian Grebe diving, fascinated by the fact that we could see his every move both under and on top of the water. All morning we had been hoping to spot a raptor and it was here that we finally had excellent views of a Kestrel, and unexpectedly of a Black-fronted Dotterel feeding in the shadows below.

Thanks Val on behalf of us all for an excellent walk.

Bird List

Black Swan	Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Olive-backed Oriole
Pacific Black Duck	Nankeen Kestrel	Grey Butcherbird
Grey Teal	Purple Swamphen	Australian Magpie
Chestnut Teal	Dusky Moorhen	Australian Raven
Hardhead	Eurasian Coot	Red-browed Finch
Australasian Grebe	Black-winged Stilt	European Goldfinch
Hoary-headed Grebe	Red-necked Avocet	Welcome Swallow
Darter	Black-fronted Dotterel	Fairy Martin
Little Pied Cormorant	Silver Gull	Red-whiskered Bulbul
Pied Cormorant	Superb Fairy-wren	Clamorous Reed-Warbler
Little Black Cormorant	Spotted Pardalote	Little Grassbird
Great Cormorant	Little Wattlebird	Golden-headed Cisticola
Australian Pelican	Noisy Miner	Common Starling
White-faced Heron	Brown Honeyeater	Common Myna
Striated Heron	Magpie-lark	also heard - Figbird*
Australian White Ibis	Willie Wagtail	- Pied Currawong *

...and Pieces

* What is it with some of the ladies? Not only are they able to enjoy a great Wednesday walk, but then they repair to a member’s home to savour more than a soupcon of hot soup! What about us blokes? Is there a queue somewhere where you can join ?

*Birding NSW is running a photo competition. Entries close on 1 December. See Betty Hudson

Of Birds and Poems

John Douglas Pringle

John Pringle, came to Australia, shortly after World War 11. He was editor of the SMH This essay was published in 1971, from his On Second Thoughts Continued from the August News

The citizens of Canberra are even more fortunate. A member of Parliament, leaving the House to walk to the Canberra Hotel, can see on any evening numerous crimson and eastern rosellas with countless red-backed parrots on the stately avenues of the capital. If he drives even a few miles into the country he is bound to see the white cockatoos and galahs, and in winter, when he goes to a diplomatic reception in Mugga Way he will see flocks of the noisy but beautiful gang-gang parrots craning down their rosy heads to peer at him while they scream their harsh sardonic cry from the gum-trees on each side of the road. And if he cares about birds he can drive up into the prickly ranges of the Brindabella and glimpse, as I once did, a flock of giant yellow-tailed black cockatoos, looking almost as large as eagles as they flap heavily through the big timber, calling harshly to each other. In the dark, somber gullies they seemed like evil spirits or huge bats aroused from a tomb;

the wild black cockatoos, tossed on the crest
of their high trees, crying the world's unrest.

Nothing is more difficult than to describe a bird to someone who has never seen or heard it. But here I am lucky. All the poets of Australia seem to love birds and have described them with a vividness and precision I could not hope to rival. I propose to borrow from them shamelessly. Judith Wright, from one of these poems these lines are taken, is the richest source: in 1962 she published a whole volume of poems on birds. But there is hardly a contemporary Australian poet who has not written at least two or three. I think of Judith Wright as the poet of parrots and birds of the forests; of Douglas Stewart as the poet of little finches, scarlet robins and honeyeaters; of David Campbell as the poet of hawks which hang motionless over the bare Monaro hills and 'windy crows' whose harsh melancholy cry is perhaps the most unforgettable of all the Australian bird-sounds. But birds, like flowers and words are the poet's currency: I could fill an anthology with poems on the magpie alone.

Far the commonest of Australia's cockatoos are the sulphur-crested white cockatoos and the galahs. Galahs especially can be seen in enormous numbers almost anywhere in the inland; they are as common as wood pigeons in England – and almost as unpopular with farmers. Indeed because they are so common they are not appreciated. Galahs are something of a joke to people in the country, and, for some reason which I can't understand, the word is used to describe any stupid or idiotic individual – 'You silly galah!' But poets and writers have always been quick to recognize their beauty. Let me quote from Francis Radcliffe's *Flying Fox and Drifting Sand*, one of the best books ever written about the Australian outback

Galahs are lovely things. Their breasts and underparts are of varying shades of rich rose. Their backs and wings are bluish grey. Sometimes, when the light falls on them, this colour looks almost as pale as clean smoke - rather like the colour which the sky assumes when there is a haze on the horizon. At all times of the day galahs can be seen in twos and threes sailing about with their easy but unsteady flight, but it is in the evening that they provide their great spectacle. At the close of the day they gather together in flocks, and fly about in mass formation and fly about like so many of the parrot tribe. And with every swift change of direction the birds take on a different hue. One moment they will be flying down the light, a cloud of grey ghosts barely visible against the eastern sky. Then in a flash they will wheel around towards the sun: and it seems to all the world as if a new flock had suddenly come into being, as though solid bird bodies had been created out of nothing but the thin air and the sunset colours.

To be continued



"One Good Tern Deserves Another"

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

I.B.O.C. NEWS

<http://www.iboc.org.au/>

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS NOVEMBER 2006

AGM & CLUB MEETING – Monday 13th November - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall - Bruce and Josh Coyte will be presenting some of the bird photos taken by Josh over the last few IBOC camps. Please remember to bring a mug and a small plate for supper afterwards. Note: a nomination form for the AGM can be found at: <http://www.iboc.org.au/info/NominationForm2007.doc>

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 15th November – Macquarie Pass, Clover Hill Road – Chris Brandis Meet in the small carpark half way up Macquarie Pass on the left hand side going up, at 8:30 am. As the parking area is rather small I suggest we meet initially at the bottom of the pass in front of the mown area by 8:15am and pool cars to ensure all fit in. We will walk in, have morning tea and then walk out back along the same road. My mobile is 0427962837. Bring morning tea, hats, sunscreen etc.

NOVEMBER MONTHLY OUTING - Sunday 19th November 2006. Shoalhaven Heads / Comerong Island Wetlands - Leader Betty Hudson. Meet at 8.30am sharp in the River Road foreshore car park at the eastern end, adjoining the Holiday Haven Tourist Park. Travel via Gerringong, Gerroa, Shoalhaven Heads Road. Turn off to the left at the second turning to Shoalhaven Heads (just beyond the speed camera). Take the first on the right (Bailey Rd) and then left again at the end into River Road. Bring eats, drinks etc also insect repellent in case of sandflies. Be prepared to get your feet wet to get close up views of waders/shorebirds and to test your identification skills. On the return journey we will call in at Gerroa to check out the estuary there and if time permits to walk along the river through the forest.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 21st November, at 7.30pm at the home of Val Dolan, 26 Morandoo Have, Mt Keira (4229 6737). Turn off Mount Keira Road at Yates Ave, first right heading down hill. All members welcome.

DECEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Thursday 23rd November**. Please don't leave submitting your contributions to the last minute and where possible please submit by email.

REPORT ON OCTOBER MEETING SLIDE SHOW – Brian Hales

Val Dolan

Brian Hales, Life Member and former IBOC president for 10 years, began his slide show with a brief history of our club. We saw Doug Gibson, whose WEA course led to the formation of the club. Many of the slides were taken by Lennie Klump and left after his death, in Doug's care. These slides may be borrowed by club members by arrangement. There are over 2000 of them!

Brian showed an amusing slide of a portable hide with two legs protruding and described how the photographer moved gradually closer until birds accepted his presence. He also spoke of the risk taking behaviour of climbing ladders to take photos of nesting birds before photography was improved by technology.

The first slides shown were all Australian birds such as the White-breasted Sea-eagle at rest and in flight, Peregrine Falcon and Nightjar, or seasonal visitors like the Channel-billed Cuckoo and female Koel. A group of colourful kingfishers began with our local Kookaburra and compared it to a young Blue-winged Kookaburra. Brian showed his particular sense of humour by slipping in a roast chook - 'the sort of bird you buy at Coles'.

When he arrived from Yorkshire 30 years ago Brian was immediately impressed with the variety of avian life in Australia. Featherdale Park provided an excellent setting for viewing a large number of birds that would perhaps take years to spot in the wild.

Brian's English collection began with a Robin whose muted colours contrasted with Australia's more vivid examples. He went on the show us a Green Lapwing, tiny Blue and Great Tits, a Spotted Woodpecker, the Mute Swan, and the endangered Golden Eagle. A breeding program has been most successful in building up their numbers. Brian showed a slide of a pheasant and recalled a visit to a shoot which he described as a 'moronic waste'. The Black Grouse is believed to be Britain's only indigenous bird. And being Brian no slide show would be complete without the much admired Puffin. Kevin McGregor thanked Brian for his presentation and remarked on the pleasure of again seeing the slide of three open mouthed Mistletoebird nestlings, an excellent photograph among many others.

Forbes Interesting Wetland

Neil Wheway

Travelling in late August on the Newell Hwy a couple of kilometres south of Forbes on the way to West Wyalong there is a sign pointing to a bird hide off to the right. Open the barbed wire gate and a short drive of a few hundred metres brings you to the hide situated on the edge of a large wetland which was surprisingly full of water considering the current drought conditions the rest of countryside is experiencing. This area was home to hundreds of ducks, the predominant species we saw being Grey Teals, Pink-eared Ducks, Black-fronted Dotterels and Black Swans. It was possible to see the pink ears on the ducks closest to the hide, (with our binoculars of course). Nesting in the numerous dead trees in the water were Galahs and feral pigeons, the air was alive with flying insects with which the Welcome Swallows were having a veritable smorgasbord. Anyone driving in the Forbes area wanting a rest break from driving then this could be just the place to do it.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 11th October – Grevillea Park
Alan Cousins

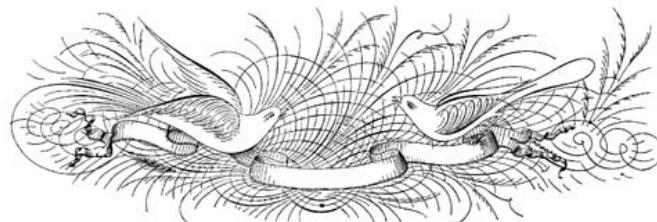
After short introductions by members to guests, 16 said members and guests set off into the Grevillea Park on a beautiful warm spring morning. Our introduction to the park was the wonderful sound of a Golden Whistler and some time was spent trying to get a sighting of said bird, we eventually saw a female. Joan led us up the garden path!! at a slow deliberate stroll and it appeared that we were all as interested in the plants and flowers as the birds. We heard many and saw thirty-four (34) species of bird during the walk through the park and the forest above. At one point we all stood and saw four nests in use, they being the Grey Butcher Bird, Friar Bird, Tawny Frogmouth – an amazing camouflage, (its mate was well spotted in a tree a little further along the track) and the lovely mud nest of the Magpie Lark (Peewee).

We followed up the track by the dry creek bed and stopped for morning tea, some seeking shade and others enjoying the warm sun. We continued on our way after this leisurely stop and heard lots more nice bird songs and not so nice squawking of parrots, and also heard an echidna snuffling in the leaf litter on the high side of the track.

Returning to the entrance to the park we admired the Grevillea that has been cultivated by a member of the park – Bulli Beauty. It was a great morning out and thanks to Joan and of course that WYLIE OLD BIRD Tom.

Bird List

Grey Goshawk	Yellow Robin	Spotted Pardalote
Masked Lapwing	Golden Whistler	Eastern Spinebill
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Black-faced Monarch	Silvereye
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Grey Fantail	Magpie Lark
Rainbow Lorikeet	Whip Bird	Indian Myna
King Parrot	Superb Fairy-Wren	Grey Butcherbird
Crimson Rosella	White-browed Scrubwren	Currawong
Kookaburra	Brown Gerygone	Green Catbird
Dollarbird	Little Wattlebird	Satin Bowerbird
Tawny Frogmouth	Friar Bird	Australian Raven
Welcome Swallow	Lewins Honeyeater	
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	New Holland Honey Eater	



Fitzroy Falls Reservoir walk 14th October 2006 Lorraine Pincus.

The forecast was for a hot 36deg C. 10 keen members met Betty at Robertson Service Station, no early morning heat but very windy, (hat blowing windy). We drove in convoy to the reservoir, a large expanse of water which gave no protection, thus the wind appeared much stronger. While parking and organising ourselves the Noisy Mynas were busily flying around - on closer observation changing positions on the nest, one nest contained young. The surface of the water had developed waves and a small swell,(this from the wind) it was blowing a gale. This was uninviting to only 2 Black Swans, a Black Duck, and a single Australasian Grebe who bobbed up and down with the swell. The walking paths around the reservoir were many and varied; some were small protected areas out of the wind displaying small "donkey" orchids, Dillwynia (eggs and bacon) and in other areas Pattersonia (native Iris). Because of the wind the birds hadn't ventured out except in the protected areas, there were Thornbills Striated and Brown, Yellow Robin, Superb Fairywrens and Scrubwrens. The reservoir was approximately 2kms from end to end. We walked the first km, had morning tea and finished the second half. This had tall eucalyptus and here we observed Crimson and Eastern Rosellas. As the morning progressed we could feel the heat of the day increasing, the decision was made lunch then home.

Thank you Betty for an enjoyable morning, also for showing some of us the start of a future walk.

Friends, planners, developers, lynd me your ears**Mike MORPHETT**

There have been two Robert Lynds of note, whose lives almost coincided on either side of the Atlantic. Robert Staughton Lynd (1892-1970) was an American sociologist who, in collaboration with his wife, Helen, conducted field observations of the social stratifications within the city of Muncie, Indiana and published what became classic surveys, titled *Middletown* (1929) and *Middletown in Transition* (1937).

Robert Wilson Lynd (1879-1949) was an essayist, journalist and Irish nationalist, born and buried in Belfast. In 1901 he moved to London, where he later became literary editor of the *Daily News* (later *News Chronicle*) for 35 years. With his wife, Sylvia, he formed a literary group, hosting writers like J.B. Priestley and James Joyce. He was a staunch supporter of Sinn Fein and the Gaelic League and a critic of English snobbery. In response to the common remark of unpleasant things being un-English, he suggested that some of the activities of the palefaces on the American prairies be described as un-Indian.

So what has all this to do with birds? Well, I was struck by a quote I first came across on the Tangled Wing Wildcare Conservancy (in North Carolina and Tennessee) web-site and which has been attributed to both Lynds on various sites. After further probing, I'm satisfied it came from the latter's publication of *The Blue Lion and Other Essays* (1923), one of his many works spanning over 40 years. In it he wrote: "There is nothing in which the birds differ more from man than the way in which they can build and yet leave a landscape as it was before". It seems to me such sentiment is much more significant nowadays than it was 83 years ago and that we would benefit from having planners working for government departments and developers alike with the observational skills of either Robert Lynd.

BIRDING ABROAD 9.05

Over the past few years David and Elizabeth Winterbottom have been going overseas to look at birds and other things. Here is a vignette from a voyage in September 2005.

Tanzania

We drove Land Rovers and camped in the National Parks of Tanzania. "Stay in your vehicle. Keep to the roads", proclaim the Park rules. Yet we were expected to get out in the middle of nowhere, pitch our tents and cook on an open fire. The loo was a shovel and a walk out of sight! No real dramas during the day, but one night a pride of lions sniffed the back of the little tent and later, Elizabeth, woken by a Spotted Hyena brushing the gauze of our tent door, was not amused. However, finding no soap or boots to chew, it moved on.

Never mind, the birds made up for it. The brilliantly coloured Superb Starlings are as cheeky as the Hyena, if not so alarming, as are the noisy, if a little drab, Arrow Marked Babblers, and Ashy Starlings, all of which seem to haunt most camp sites. Weavers, with their intricate nests, have to be looked at closely to tell a Baglafecht from a Black-necked or Golden-backed which we did see, and from the other half dozen or so yellow with some black weavers which we didn't identify. The all black male Vieillot's is more obvious.

A magnificent Crowned Crane perched atop a thorn tree to supervise our departure from one camp whilst Secretarybirds and Black-bellied Bustards stalked the grassland. Vultures are not uncommon on the plains. African White-backed is the usual one, but we also saw Hooded, Lappet-faced, Palm-nut and White-headed Vultures.

Some swamps were amazing with the surrounding grass, on the sticky black soils, eaten short. That made it easy to see the Great, Little and Cattle Egrets, Egyptian Geese and White-faced Duck, as well as Yellow-billed and Marabou Storks, a variety of Herons and the odd wader. In the longer grass, birds hawked from the back of warthogs or hippos with considerable success.

Perhaps one's greatest joy is to awake to the Francolin and Guineafowl calling and getting up to find we are sharing the campsite not just with birds, but with a mother elephant and her calf (doing their best to hurry us pack up and move as it seemed we had camped under a favourite figtree), two giraffe, a small herd of impala, the odd zebra and a couple of gazelle. One certainly gets close to nature on these trips!

Good Grief!

A Frenchman walked into a bar with a parrot on his shoulder. The bartender asked, "Where did you get that thing?" The parrot replied, "In France. There are millions of them!"

Two novice duck hunters were out on the marsh duck hunting. One hunter said, "We're not having much luck to-day. We're not getting any ducks." The other hunter replied, "Maybe we're not throwing the dog high enough!"



A 'Collective' of Honeyeaters**Bob Ashford**

In mid November, 2004, I was showing Alberta, a delightful lady from San Francisco, around the birding hot spots of the northern Shoalhaven. One morning I pointed out a large bottlebrush bush in our garden and explained that at its flowering peak in October there had been up to eight different species of honeyeater in it at one time, all battling for control of the nectar-rich flowers. Interestingly it wasn't always the biggest species that won.

Of the three biggest species individual supremacy should have gone to the Red Wattlebird but their bullying cousins, the slightly smaller Brush Wattlebirds, won most of the battles through sheer numbers. The Noisy Friarbird, a less frequent visitor, tucked in wherever it could but rarely for long! The mid-sized contestants included the Lewin's Honeyeater, the Yellow-faced Honeyeater and the New Holland Honeyeater. Down a size was the Eastern Spinebill and smallest of all was the stunning Scarlet Honeyeater.

The Scarlet was a smart player using its brilliant colouring to hide in the equally brilliant flowers. It focussed on feeding not fighting. The Yellow-faced meekly gave way to the New Holland which in turn was outpaced by the Lewin's. In spite of their size difference the Spinebills and the Lewin's regularly squared up to each other and both regularly fought their own. Nonetheless, by sheer determination and frenzied activity these last two often gained control of the bush. I was searching for a collective noun to describe this drama to Alberta and came up with 'a hierarchy of honeyeaters'.

Alberta felt that was a good effort on my part and then told me of one they use in California - 'a kettle of vultures'. A *kettle*? It seems that as the vultures gather to check out the menu they continually drop and lift in the thermals giving the impression of being in a 'boiling pot' – hence kettle!

So we started to ponder on collective names for species or groups of birds. Nothing as ordinary as 'a flock of birds', something more along the lines of 'a glutony of gulls'. If you have tried to eat fish and chips at Gerroa you'll know what I mean. Other inspired examples might include 'a packet of fantails', 'an exaggeration of Lyrebirds', 'a poise of pigeons', 'a who of owls' and 'a fistful of Dollarbirds. Another example Alberta gave me I particularly liked - 'a zipper of flycatchers'.

Taking these thoughts a little further we discussed sponsorship of birds, rather like sponsoring whales or orang-utans! Rather predictably 'the Ford Falcon' came to mind while local birds might be 'the Berry Hotel Nightjar', 'the Shell Oystercatcher' and, at a stretch, the Rural Fire Service Red-browed Firet(r)ail.

And as Alberta and I tried to outdo each other so I began to wonder what other birders might have invented for species 'collectives'? A 'Jam of Rosellas'?

Whatever you come up with, have fun !

Originally published in *The Berry Town Crier December 04*

M i s c e l l a n e o u s

For something completely different you might be interested in the following events:

The Song Company 'Free as a Bird' Wollongong Art Gallery, Wednesday 29th November 8pm

Listen to music inspired by nightingale larks, thrushes, cuckoos, kookaburras, willy wagtails and bellbirds. Revolving around two musical collections of bird calls, the Bird Fanciers Delight (English) and the other a new Australian collection by John Rodgers. Recorder played by Genevieve Lacey and the voices of the six Song Company Singers.

A Presence of Bird – Exhibition by Greer Taylor, 14 November-2 December 2006
(Tuesday-Friday 10-5, Saturday 11-4), DeHavilland Gallery, Unit 1, 105-107 Church St, Wollongong

Greer Taylor set up the IBOC web site but her real interest is art and the natural landscape. Her upcoming exhibition might be of interest to members as it is all about birds and landscapes. More details about the exhibition can be found at <http://www.cyphonart.net/happenings/greer-bird/index.html>.

Web Cams Members with access to the internet may like to have a look at the following webcams:

Owlcam http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdhouse/nestboxcam/barn_owl_ca/index.html

This is a free live webcam located in a Barn Owl nest (nestbox) in the historic Benicia Arsenal (Benicia, California). The Barn Owls occupy the nest year round, roosting, preening, mating, laying eggs, and raising owlets. Now Owl lovers outside of The Arsenal in Benicia can enjoy the owls along with the artists of the arsenal who sometimes share their art studios with the owls. The owls are named Frida and Diego after artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera

Isle of May webcam <http://www.seabird.org/web-cam-images.asp?cam=may>

One and a half kilometres long, the Isle of May, a National Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest, is managed by Scottish Natural Heritage. Home to 200,000 nesting seabirds, including an estimated 100,000 puffins; it is also the largest grey seal colony on the East Coast of Britain. This island, often referred to as the Jewel of the Forth, offers a wide variety of seabirds including puffins, shags, guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes and terns.



Wild Illawarra website

Just to let you all know that my website has had its address changed by the ISP (and they didn't even tell me). This is where you can get all the latest info on Illawarra birds. Each of the 400+ species recorded in the region has a picture and info on abundance and distribution map. There is also an extensive section describing 130+ walks you can do in the region. It's been a while since I last updated the site, but that will happen soon. Happy to receive comment on errors and omissions. The new address is: <http://users.speedlink.com.au/~cchafer/>

cheers
Chris Chafer

Unusual Records for August- September 2006

Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-turkey	1	29-Aug	Mt Keira scout camp	rainforest	GB
Black Swan	4,000+	27-Aug	Lake Wollumboola	weland	CJC
White-necked Heron	4	27-Sep	Jaspers Brush	paddock	KM
Pacific Baza	2	2-Sep	Kangaroo Valley	overhead	NJ
Grey Goshawk	1	12-Aug	Shoalhaven Heads	overhead	GB
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	29-Sep	Mt. Pleasant lookout (Kiama)	overhead	NJ
Grey Goshawk (white phase)	1	5-Oct	Killalea State Park	forest	MR
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	16-Aug	Kangaroo Valley	urban	NJ
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	2-Sep	Dharawal State Recreation Park	overhead	CJC
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	16-Sep	Croome Rd Park, Albion Park	woodland	GB
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	29-Sep	Comerong Is	sandflats	NJ
Black-fronted Dotterel	4	23-Aug	Myimbarr wetland (Shellharbour)	wetland	KM
Great Skua	1	26-Aug	off Wollongong	pelagic	GB
Pacific Gull	1 imm	3-Sep	Windang	sandflats	GB
Gull-billed Tern	1	1-Oct	Shoalhaven Heads	sandflats	PMP
White-fronted Tern	6	26-Aug	off Wollongong	marine	GB
Common Tern	10	27-Aug	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
Whiskered Tern	6	27-Aug	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
White-headed Pigeon	2	15-Aug	Jamberoo	urban	KM
Common Bronzewing	4	7-Aug	Falls Creek	woodland	KM
Common Bronzewing	1	7-Aug	St. Georges Basin	forest	KM
Common Bronzewing	2	6-Oct	Bargo gorge	woodland	MR
Peaceful Dove	4	3-Sep	Thirlmere Lakes NP	woodland	CJC
Musk Lorikeet	few	26-Aug	Sussex Inlet	urban	KM
Red-browed Treecreeper	1	4-Oct	Budgeroo Plateau	forest	MR, TE
Brown Treecreeper	2	6-Oct	Bargo gorge	woodland	MR
Southern Emu-wren	4	15-Sep	Budgeroo Plateau	woodland	MR, TE
Pilotbird	2	22-Sep	Barren Grounds NR	forest	MS
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	1	27-Aug	Barren Grounds NR	woodland	JM
White-plumed Honeyeater	12+	19-Aug	Macquarie Rivulet, lower	riverine	GB
Scarlet Honeyeater	few	6-Oct	Bargo River track	forest	MR
Flame Robin	2	31-Aug	Budgeroo Plateau	woodland	MR, TE
Flame Robin	3	15-Sep	Budgeroo Plateau	woodland	MR, TE
Rose Robin	1	7-Aug	Falls Creek	forest	KM
Varied Sittella	5	6-Oct	Bargo River track	forest	MR
Spectacled Monarch	1	27-Sep	Balgownie	garden	TE
Figbird	5	19-Aug	Wollongong	CBD	KM
Figbird	6	30-Sep	Berkeley	urban	CJC
Grey Currawong	1	31-Aug	Budgeroo Plateau	woodland	MR, TE
Tawny Grassbird	1	29-Sep	sth Windang bridge	reedland	NB

Contributors:

GB – Graham Barwell; CB – Chris Brandis; NB – Norma Burke; CJC – Chris Chafer; TE – Terri Edwell;
 NJ – Nigel Jacket; KM – Kevin Mills; JM – Jill Molan; PMP – Penny & Martin Potter; MR – Michelle
 Rower; MS – Mary Shaw; RT – Roger Truscott; NW - Neil Wheway.



*"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"*

The Newsletter of the ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.
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Founded in 1977. Website - www.iboc.org.au

I.B.O.C. NEWS

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Issue No. 299 December 2006

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS due 1st January each year: FAMILY \$30 SINGLE \$25. JUNIOR \$5.
Please pay Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, by cash, cheque or mail order
And it would be a great help if you could pay Bronwyn before Christmas.

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FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS December 2006

MONTHLY OUTING Saturday 9th December 2006 - Rhododendron Park, New Mt Pleasant Road, Balgownie - 4.00 – 8.00pm

This is our Christmas Picnic/BBQ. Sausages, Bread and sauce will be provided. Bring your own salad, drinks etc, and binoculars. There are plenty of tables with benches.

To get to the Rhododendron Park: Turn West from Princes Highway, at Fairy Meadow into Cabbage Tree Lane, then turn right into Dawson St (5th street from Princes Highway) then turn left into Dymock St. Dymock St soon turns right, (Ryan St) then turn left into New Mt Pleasant Rd Follow this up the hill, cross the bridge over the freeway, and continue to the tee junction, where you turn left into Parrish Ave. The Park entrance is approx 100m on right.

CLUB MEETING – Monday 11th December - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Christmas Special with trivia questions, games, tomfoolery, etc with mine hosts, Neil Wheway and Tom Wylie. Please bring a photo of yourself (your name on the back) as a baby/child for an 'Identification Contest.' And bring some goodies for the Christmas supper.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday 16th January 2007, 7.30pm, at Betty Hudson's, 1 Drualla Road, Jamberoo. (4236 0307) All members are welcome

February 2007 NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is **Thursday 18th January 07**. Please send articles, news, and items of interest to the editor at 5 Madden Street, Fernhill 2519, or email to cashmansjr@bigpond.com

The Committee wishes you all the best for a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

BITS and....

- * **Many thanks** to Penny Potter for editing the November *News*. Much appreciated.
- * **Vale Patricia Gordon**, 62, who died at Bundanoon a couple of months ago. Pat and her then husband Richard had an adventurous life, teaching in Kenya, Papua New Guinea, and Australia. Though Pat's primary interest was botany, in 1982, she and Richard established the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory for Birds Australia. They inspired many people with a love for birds and the natural world. The *SMH* published an obituary to her on 31.10.2006

Report on Smiths Lake Camp

Betty Hudson

This was a great camp in a wonderful environment. A total of 137 species of birds for the week including some unusual sightings, especially the Wandering Whistling Duck, Pale-yellow Robin, and Buff-banded Rail as well as a Latham's Snipe which stayed all day and let everyone have a good look at it. Besides the birds, there were two sightings of koalas, a carpet python in the kitchen, a tortoise playing chicken on the road, and many goannas both on the ground and in trees. Dolphins were also seen on Wallis Lake.

The Pied Butcherbird and the Magpies were dab hands at helping themselves to unattended breakfasts and the White-throated Gerygone tried everyone's patience in attempting to locate it. I never did find it despite it calling nearly all day every day close to camp.

My thanks to everyone who helped to make the week such a success, especially Tom for keeping the daily bird lists, Kevin & John for being keepers of the fire and Val and Faye for their housekeeping skills. Bruce made sure that no one got lost on the walks.

The bird list grew thanks to the keen eyesight and hearing of Joan, Pauline, Norma, Josh and Bruce, who shared their sightings with everyone, and Win who was assisting two research students and gave us the benefit of his many years accumulated knowledge of the area.

Camp Delights and some Nostalgia

JC

* Early morning wake-up calls. Da-da-da dah. We woke to the Brown Gerygone practising its scales, like a child doing piano practice: sweet and repetitious, but never a wrong note. It's tinkling scale was the start of another day of bird sightings and good company.

* Cooking together in the kitchen and juggling your turn around the stove. People ducking in and out of the pantry, 'You did bolt the door, didn't you?' (to keep any bush rats out!) Then carrying out the meals to eat together around tables in the huge open-sided dining shed.

* Washing up in another open-sided shed. Not the most sophisticated, but very effective and companionable. And on the last couple of days, asking, 'Is the diamond python about?'

* Sitting around the campfire at night, well, around the pot-bellied stove. Good company and talk of birds, birds, birds, and some jollification – jokes, poems, songs and stories.

* The Fishing Boats. The creek entrance beside the camp was the 'harbour' for several fishing boats – not trawlers, but big open boats filled with nets and floats, with outboard motors on the stern. It was easy to imagine that once such boats would have been rowed out to take their catches. Five fishermen are still licensed to fish the lake commercially. There were once several more, but fishing still continues.

* Not so other occupations. There were two old farmhouses, sadly vandalized now, a couple of km from the camp, now part of the National Park. On other walks we saw the remains of old fence posts and cattle yards, (the wood we burnt in our camp fire had been old fence posts), the left-overs of cattle and dairy farming.

* A small bush cemetery, with the graves of pioneers to the area. Some with headstones, others lying below unmarked. Some were born 1820 - 40s and their deaths were mostly between the 1880s and 1920s. They probably established their farms in the latter half of the 19th century. And there were graves of young children too: 15 months, 2½, 12 years old, Medical help, such as it was then, was often far away. Grief had to be worked through in lonely distant farmhouses. We tread so easily where others, with much hard work and endurance, have trodden before.

Smiths Lake Camp Bird List 21-28.10.06

137 species recorded for the camp. A list breaking it up into days/venues is available from Betty on request. (Too big to put in newsletter)

Emu	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Tawny-crowned Honeyeater
Australian Brush-turkey	Galah	Eastern Spinebill
Brown Quail	Rainbow Lorikeet	Scarlet Honeyeater
Wandering Whistling-Duck	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	Pale-yellow Robin
Black Swan	Australian King-Parrot	Eastern Yellow Robin
Australian Wood Duck	Crimson Rosella	Logrunner
Pacific Black Duck	Eastern Rosella	Eastern Whipbird
Chestnut Teal	Pallid Cuckoo	Varied Sitella
Australasian Grebe	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Crested Shrike-tit
Australasian Gannet	Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	Golden Whistler
Darter	Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Rufous Whistler
Little Pied Cormorant	Common Koel	Grey Shrike-thrush
Pied Cormorant	Channel-billed Cuckoo	Black-faced Monarch
Little Black Cormorant	Pheasant Coucal	Spectacled Monarch
Great Cormorant	Tawny Frogmouth	Leaden Flycatcher
Australian Pelican	Azure Kingfisher	Magpie-lark
White-faced Heron	Laughing Kookaburra	Rufous Fantail
Eastern Reef Egret	Sacred Kingfisher	Grey Fantail
Great Egret	Rainbow Bee-eater	Willie Wagtail
Cattle Egret	Dollarbird	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Australian White Ibis	White-throated Treecreeper	Cicadabird
Osprey	Red-browed Treecreeper	White-winged Triller
Black-shouldered Kite	Superb Fairy-wren	Olive-backed Oriole
Whistling Kite	Variegated Fairy-wren	Figbird
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Southern Emu-wren	White-breasted Woodswallow
Collared Sparrowhawk	Spotted Pardalote	Masked Woodswallow
Little Eagle	Yellow-throated Scrubwren	Dusky Woodswallow
Peregrine Falcon	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Butcherbird
Buff-banded Rail	Large-billed Scrubwren	Pied Butcherbird
Purple Swamphen	Brown Gerygone	Australian Magpie
Eurasian Coot	White-throated Gerygone	Pied Currawong
Latham's Snipe	Brown Thornbill	Australian Raven
Bar-tailed Godwit	Buff-rumped Thornbill	Forest Raven
Pied Oystercatcher	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Torresian Crow
Sooty Oystercatcher	Yellow Thornbill	Green Catbird
Masked Lapwing	Striated Thornbill	Regent Bowerbird
Silver Gull	Red Wattlebird	Satin Bowerbird
Caspian Tern	Little Wattlebird	Red-browed Finch
Crested Tern	Noisy Friarbird	Mistletoebird
White-headed Pigeon	Noisy Miner	Welcome Swallow
Spotted Turtle-Dove	Lewin's Honeyeater	Tree Martin
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Tawny Grassbird
Emerald Dove	White-eared Honeyeater	Golden-headed Cisticola
Crested Pigeon	White-naped Honeyeater	Silvereye
Bar-shouldered Dove	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Myna
Wonga Pigeon	White-cheeked Honeyeater	

Camp highlights for me, Val Dolan, were :

*the Seal Rocks walk with Regent Bowerbirds playing about in the top of a bare tree
(not to mention the koala!)

*an unusual sighting of a Pheasant Coucal perched on electricity wires, and then, as we piled out of the cars, it flew into the only nearby tree

*being able to watch a pair of Bar-tailed Godwits feed on a sandbar with 12 apparently headless black swans providing a background as they, too, fed - then the arrival of a pod of dolphins behind these providing three rows of nature at work and play
*seeing a pair of brilliant Rainbow Bee-eaters while driving alone, after missing an earlier sighting by others in the group

*the variety of environments we explored: beaches, heath country, amazing forests, lake side walks and old farm sites
* the prolific bird life, plus the flowering native plants and brief encounters with goannas, pythons and other wildlife

*enjoying the early mornings, when I usually have absolutely NO reason to rise at 5am!
*last, but not least, the great company of the other members of IBOC

November Meeting Guest Speakers

Fae McGregor

It was with great pleasure that those present at our last meeting warmly welcomed fellow members Bruce & Josh Coyte as they presented " Memories of the IBOC October Camp at Smiths Lake" via Video and Photographs. Josh's great ability to photograph birds and animals has become well-known to our members over the past years and so this presentation was eagerly awaited and no one was disappointed.

Bruce showed a video he had taken at the Camp which showed the different aspects of the week at Smiths Lake. The camp was at the NSW UNI Field Station a lovely quiet property on the shores of Smiths Lake with resident Pelicans, a friendly butcherbird, kookaburras, magpies, a python, wallabies, an antechinus and bush rats .

The various habitats and the many species of birds on this property provided the "happy campers" with great opportunities to enjoy walks, view birds, animals, butterflies and wild flowers while Bruce and Josh captured these occasions and our offsite outings beautifully. We marvelled at the "gear" they lugged everywhere and at their patience in waiting...and ...waiting for the "right shot" But the results were an amazing collection of memories.

With the video we were able to both appreciate the birds and their "songs". Bruce showed the male and female Rufous Whistler courting, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Leaden Flycatcher, Mistletoebird, Tawny Frogmouth on a nest, Pallid Cuckoo invading a Kingfisher's home and Yellow-throated Scrubwren with nest (Bruce & Josh had to endure mosquito attacks to get these shots).

At Seal Rocks a koala enjoyed a \$ 2 million view from the foreign habitat of a banksia while whales and dolphins played offshore and seals lazed on the rocks. Bruce showed us views from Sugarloaf Lighthouse with long beach, rocky shoreline and huge sand drifts.

An outing to Booti Booti NP presented us all with a tremendous experience when we found a grove of red bottlebrush in the middle of the heath which housed a huge number of Tawny - crowned, New Holland, and White - cheeked Honeyeaters and Little Wattlebirds.

Eastern Yellow Robin, Figbird, Channel-billed Cuckoo, Rufous whistler, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Sacred Kingfisher, Pied Butcherbird, Olive-backed Oriole with nest, Figbird (Female with breeding patch), Superb Fairy-wren, Laughing Kookaburra, Spotted Pardalote, Golden Whistler, White-headed Pigeon, Dusky Woodswallow with nest, Green Catbird, Whistling Kite, goanna on a termite nest, bandicoot and Eastern Grey Kangaroo were some of the "stars" of the 500 photographs Josh took. We unfortunately saw only a part of that number (or we would have been there all night !)

Peter Nolan spoke for all present when he complimented Bruce and Josh on their wonderful presentation and thanked them for showing us their photographs. Peter also passed on some of his helpful photography tips to them. Over supper there were many who expressed their delight in the presentation and how it sparked an interest in future camps for them.

Notes from a Trip to NE Queensland, Spring 2006

Dave Thomson

* Camped at Yetman in NE NSW, "behind the tennis courts" and on the bank of the Macintyre River. Visited in the morning by a Pheasant Coucal and given a flypast by a Welcome Swallow being pursued by a creature the size of a bee which trailed it by half a metre, and was still there as they flew out of sight.

* Visited the new Mareeba Wetlands about 14 km N of Mareeba. Established and managed by a community group and they've done it well. Lagoons, many water-birds (both pygmy-geese), bush birds (Black-throated Finch), a smart visitors' centre and they make a good cup of coffee. \$10/p and well worth a visit. Pity they don't allow camping, though they do offer overnight tent-like accommodation for small groups.

* Discovered that, despite rumours to the contrary, camping is still allowed in the large rest area 2 km north of Mount Molloy. Good amenities (inc. cold shower) and asking only \$2/vehicle/night. A good base for Julatten/Mt.Lewis/Maryfarms etc.

* At Maryfarms, north of Mt Molloy, found 7 Australian Bustards over a few paddocks with several of the males in courtship display – full voice with head thrown back, throat filled with air and baggy and hanging almost to the ground, tail cocked up over the back touching the neck, raising the large white "feather duster" from under the tail. An impressive sight.

Maryfarms is an area renowned for raptors. A local farmer was recently bulldozing firebreaks, and for the several days he was at it, had a Red Goshawk sitting on each end of his 'dozer blade feasting on mice, lizards, 'hoppers etc. as they were exposed. HANZAB notes "attend fires or human activities where prey is flushed".

* From near Julatten, drove up Mt Lewis to the walking track to the Golden Bowerbird hide (at 980m) and on the track a startled birdo came face to face with an equally startled Dingo – unusual to get that close to the wily Dingo. Also met there a cassowary. The hide can be accessed by a 2 hour walk from near Maryfarms.

* On The Esplanade at Cairns, a Peregrine Falcon appeared to drop from high among the accommodation towers to hawk over the area. It then rose to be greeted by its mate in a flower box on a balcony at the 14th level of a seafront unit-block.

* Drove "Jo's road" through the Daintree NP rainforest from Cape Tribulation to Bloomfield – that's the road pushed through years ago against very strong protest action. The road goes on past the corrugated-iron Lions Den Hotel (I think the name "hotel" gives the Lions Den more standing than it deserves) to Cooktown. The Club first met the Lions Den in 1981 when we camped nearby (and bathed in the creek behind, only to find later that there was a dead pig a hundred yards upstream). The drinkers of those times would be disappointed by the present day Den – a row of tourist vehicles, female backpacker barhands, a cappuccino machine, a mangy, life sized , stuffed lion (and giraffe) at the gate – lost its character. But it was an interesting drive, though probably not for 2wd's or vans.

* One evening in Eungella NP, had a small party of fireflies around my caravan. Quite a sight. They're beetle-like insects about 10mm long and emit flashes from under their abdomens. Reminded me of the Club outing to the Barren Grounds one evening in December, 1983 when we had our first experience with fireflies. And vehicle-camping is no longer allowed in Eungella NP. You can camp at Fern Flat near the Broken River visitors' centre, but you leave your vehicle in the carpark and carry your camp gear about 300m to the rather small camp area. Really not practicable. There are still good toilets, but the showers have gone.

Wednesday Walk :Macquarie National Park 15 November 2006 Chris Brandis

11 members gathered in the small car park at the start of Clover Hill Road, part way up Macquarie Pass, after a little car pooling at the bottom. We could see the clouds racing across the sky and evidence of strong SW winds but we were fairly sheltered by the escarpment and were lucky that the promised storms were not due till later that afternoon. The rainforest appeared quite dry and the small streams were just trickles, which probably explained the scarcity of birds, but it was a nice easy walk through huge eucalypts and tunnels of rainforest trees.

More birds could be heard in the forest than were seen, and some small birds were high up in the canopy making identification difficult. A couple of Lyrebirds darted across the track giving only a few a glimpse. Through the gap in the trees over the track a Grey Goshawk was seen briefly: the only raptor for the day. We came out of the forest into a cleared area which has the remains of the house built by Mr Walker, who was evicted by the NPWS after they took over the area. This beautifully built house has now been vandalised and partly burnt. We stopped for morning tea at an old picnic table and watched a Grey Fantail building a nest a few meters away. Then before heading down to the Macquarie Rivulet at the top of the small falls, an echidna ambling across the track was spotted.



On the way back we had good views of Black-faced Monarchs and a Grey Shrike-thrush and some saw a Rufous Fantail but it was much the same as on the way in, and another Echidna digging in the track was seen. This is an easy enjoyable walk and can include the short walk at the bottom of the pass to make an enjoyable day.

‘And I’m watching you too.’ Photo Tera Wheway

Bird List

Grey Goshawk
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Superb Lyrebird
Brown Gerygone
Little Wattlebird
Eastern Spinebill
Golden Whistler
Rufous Fantail
Pied Currawong
Mammals

Brown Cuckoo-Dove
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo
Spotted Pardalote
Brown Thornbill
Lewin’s Honeyeater
Eastern Yellow-Robin
Grey Shrike-Thrush
Grey Fantail
Satin Bowerbird
Short-beaked Echidna

Crimson Rosella
Laughing Kookaburra
White-browed Scrubwren
Striated Thornbill
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Eastern Whipbird
Black-faced Monarch
Australian Magpie
Bassian Thrush
Black Wallaby

...and Pieces

Vale. **Betty Ward,** 26.11.0,. after a comparatively short time of not being well. With her husband Horrie, they were long time members of the Club from it's early days. Betty was in charge of the kitchen at Club meetings for many years, and was an enthusiastic supporter for Horrie's meticulous earlier records of bird sightings for the club

Birding Illawarra Brochure The Club is considering producing a brochure to promote birding in the Illawarra, as has been done by many towns and districts. However, we need the services of someone experienced in graphic design to assist putting the brochure together. Once a draft has been prepared we can go out and try to get some sponsorship to prepare and print enough for distribution around the Illawarra. If anyone can help contact Chris Brandis, 4296 2837, and we will see where to go from there.

The Annual General Meeting

This was held last month, and chaired with much aplomb, by Kevin McGregor Esq.
Club officers elected were

President: Roger Bogaert

Secretary: Elizabeth Hudson

Treasurer: Bronwyn Wilson

Committee members: Anne Cousins, Martin Crocker, Fae McGregor, Tom Wylie.

Appointed officers were

Vice President: Kevin McGregor

Publicity Officer: Chris Brandis

Records Officer: Chris Chafer

Librarians: Joan Wylie and Anne Cousins

Webmaster: Chris Cartledge

Editors: John Cashman / Penny Potter

A warm welcome to new committee members, Anne and Martin, and to Fae and Kevin who are rejoining the committee: both having served previously in different capacities. Special thanks to Val Dolan and Penny Potter who are 'resting' from the committee this year, after several years of service. 'Resting' might be an exaggeration, for Penny has volunteered to help out with the *News* when needed, and Val has offered to continue her good work related to the printing of the *News*, but now on a freelance basis. Thanks indeed. Special thanks also to Norma Almond and Peg McKinlay, our faithful *News* 'folders and mailer-outers.'

Roger on Report 2 ! I.B.O.C Annual Report, November, 2006

The IBOC club is now in it's 29th year.

Thanks to the support of club members we are still able to provide a bird club, which provides a variety of activities including annual camps, bird walks each month, and often providing a professional speaker at club meetings. This is demonstrated by the high attendance of members each month.

Our major tasks for the club and committee in the coming year are to increase the current involvement with Bignet, the Lake Illawarra Authority, and the Scout Association, and finally to continue the high level of standards achieved by the club over the last 29 years.

Special thanks to Betty Hudson, Bronwyn Wilson, Chris Brandis, John Cashman & Penny Potter whom have supported me throughout the year. Finally, I can only reiterate my message from last year. That the success of the club has always been determined by its members.

The committee appreciates the support given by members and will seek to continue to provide a proactive and informative program for 2007. Thank you very much. Roger Bogaert

Committee Items

*** Fees.** With some reluctance the Committee decided to increase club membership fees. The fees have been the same for the last five years or so, and now for family membership, it will be \$30 for the 30th year. So in 2007 fees will be, \$30 Family Membership, \$25 Single membership and \$5 Junior membership. Please pay promptly, this month preferably, or first thing next year and be rewarded with the lovely Bronwyn smile.

*** Celebrations.** Next year will be the Club's 30th anniversary, and the ways to celebrate this will be discussed at our first meeting next year

*** Mt Keira Scout Camp.** Kevin McGregor reported that work is proceeding, within the overall upgrading of the Scout camp, to renovate a weather shed and convert it to a Bird Hide. As well as building viewing slits in the walls, it is planned to establish a library of bird books there, and a picture gallery of the 70 plus birds seen at the camp since 1977. The Committee has donated \$100 to the Scouts, towards the conversion of the old weather shed. Donations of old binoculars, and books for the library, especially Field Guides, would be much appreciated.

07 Plans Betty, our Secretary, presented a rough draft of the program for next year. Still has work to be done on it, but it includes camps at Wellington and the far North Coast

Shoalhaven Heads – Comerong Island Walk 19.11.06

13 members met at Shoalhaven heads on a fine still Sunday morning. Martin and Penny arrived much later, hoping to catch up with us. Even at the car park plenty of birds were heard and seen, including Bar-tailed Godwits at the edge of the water. As the tide was already high we set off along the foreshore to the sand flats, meeting the honorary ranger on the way. He informed us that there were few birds on the marshes, but that a pair of Pied Oystercatchers with two chicks was moving towards the edge of the water apparently preparing to take the chicks over to the island at low tide. We were fortunate to get good views of both parents and the chicks. Jill, meeting up with Penny and Martin on her way back, actually saw them cross the narrow channel at low tide, successfully gaining safety on the island

As the sand flats and marshes yielded nothing more, we decided to keep going onto the island forest. In the casurinas we saw an echidna and many birds were heard but few seen. Once we got to the parking area birds became easier to see among them an Olive-backed Oriole . Jill left us here to return as she found it too hot in the forest. As we started along the track to the southern end of the island we came to a good bird area, Black-faced Monarch, both Rufous and Golden Whistlers, Crested Shrike-tit, several honeyeaters and the Shining Bronze-Cuckoo were seen. After lunch at the parking area at the start of the track over the dunes, we headed back to the sand flats at a rapid pace, as Jill had rung Nerida on her mobile to say that the tide was out and all the small waders had returned.

In the sandy vegetation just before we reached the sand flats we saw what was thought to be an albino echidna, however later research by Mike Morphett indicated that it was a "Blonde" echidna. Many of these are apparently found on Kangaroo Island in S.A.

As we entered the marsh vegetation at the start of the sand flats we flushed a Latham's Snipe, and Pacific Golden Plover were seen, so we proceeded slowly nearer to the water's edge as we could see many small birds feeding there. The wind had picked up until it was very strong, making viewing through Josh's scope difficult. We identified Red-necked Stint, Red-capped Plover, while Jill, Martin and Penny found Sanderling, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, and Curlew Sandpiper. After trying in vain to find a spot out of the wind it was agreed to call it a day.

All agreed it was a good days birding with a final total of 65 species. This is an area which always rewards in the summer months when the migrant waders are in the area. It appears that around high tide and as the tide falls are the best times to see them.

Bird List for Shoalhaven Heads – Comerong Island Walk 19.11.06 65 species

Black Swan	Pacific Golden Plover	Lewin's Honeyeater
Pacific Black Duck	Red-capped Plover	New Holland Honeyeater
Chestnut Teal	Masked Lapwing	Eastern Spinebill
Little Pied Cormorant	Silver Gull	White-fronted Chat
Pied Cormorant	Crested Tern	Eastern Yellow Robin
Little Black Cormorant	Little Tern	Eastern Whipbird
Australian Pelican	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Crested Shrike-tit
White-faced Heron	Galah	Golden Whistler
Little Egret	Rainbow Lorikeet	Rufous Whistler
Great Egret	Australian King-Parrot	Black-faced Monarch
Australian White Ibis	Crimson Rosella	Magpie-lark
Royal Spoonbill	Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Grey Fantail
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Common Koel	Willie Wagtail
Swamp Harrier	Laughing Kookaburra	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Latham's Snipe	Sacred Kingfisher	Olive-backed Oriole
Bar-tailed Godwit	Dollarbird	Grey Butcherbird
Eastern Curlew	Superb Fairy-wren	Australian Magpie
Sanderling	Spotted Pardalote	Pied Currawong
Red-necked Stint	Brown Gerygone	Australian Raven
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Brown Thornbill	Satin Bowerbird
Curlew Sandpiper	Red Wattlebird	Silvereye
Pied Oystercatcher	Little Wattlebird	

Website www.iboc.org.au

Chris Cartledge

The statistics on the new IBOC web site are a surprise.

Oct 1 to 31 - 2006

Home page 'hits' = 2,241, and requests beyond the home page = 529

Files downloaded (eg, forms or newsletters) = 96

Nov 1 to 18 - 2006

Home page 'hits' = 880, and requests beyond the home page = 276

Files downloaded (eg, forms or newsletters) = 53

Daily average for November 1-18: Home Page hits 18pd, Requests 18pd, and Downloads 3pd

Good Grief !

Some years ago a chap asked his co-worker, "How do you tell an elephant from a bluebird?" Answer: Elephants are gray. The co-worker put the question on his daughter that evening. The next day he was driving her to school when a flock of gray birds flew across the road in front of them. "Hey, look" she said, "there goes a flock of elephants!"

Unusual Records for September-October 2006

Chris J. Chafer

Send your records to: email cchafer@speedlink.com.au

Species	#	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Australian Brush-turkey	1	21-Oct	Keiraville	garden	ME
Great Crested Grebe	6	16-Oct	Fitzroy Reservoir	wetland	JM
Nankeen Night Heron	1	20-Oct	Dunmore Lakes	wetland	DG

Little Bittern	1	19-Oct	Minnamurra R. Jamberoo	riverine	DG
Black Bittern	1	8-Oct	Ben's Walk, Nowra	creek	PT
Glossy Ibis	1	14-Oct	Comerong Is	wetland	NJ
Square-tailed Kite	1	31-Aug	Burradoo	overhead	DG
Spotted Harrier	1	27-Oct	Dunmore	rural	RF
Swamp Harrier	3	1-Sep	Willow Vale	overhead	DG
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	16-Sep	Croome Rd Park, Albion Park	woodland	GB
Brown Falcon	1	31-Aug	Burradoo	overhead	DG
Buff-banded Rail	1	22-Oct	Kanahooka	wetland	MC
Buff-banded Rail	2	29-Oct	Myimbarr wetland (Shellharbour)	wetland	CB
Baillon's Crake	1	12-Oct	Blackbutt	farm dam	CB
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	30-Oct	Comerong Is	sandflats	NJ
Ruddy Turnstone	10	28-Sep	Wonoona Point	rocky shore	TW
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	29-Sep	Comerong Is	mudflats	NJ
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	77	7-Oct	Comerong Is	mudflats	EV
Pacific Golden Plover	240	7-Oct	Comerong Is	mudflats	EV
Lesser Sand Plover	1	30-Oct	Comerong Is	sandflats	NJ
Banded Lapwing	1juv	30-Oct	Shoalhaven Heads	parkland	NJ
Gull-billed Tern	2	22-Oct	Windang	sandflats	MC
Whiskered Tern	3	29-Sep	Windang	sandflats	MC
Whiskered Tern	6	14-Oct	Lake Wollumboola	wetland	CJC
Whiskered Tern	1	29-Oct	Albion Park Rail	lake shore	BO,KO
White-headed Pigeon	2	6-Oct	Jamberoo	rural	KM
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	15-Oct	Curramore	garden	KM
Bar-shouldered Dove	3	16-Oct	Maddens Plains	woodland	KM
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	14-Oct	Comerong Is	overhead	NJ
Musk Lorikeet	6	26-Oct	Brooks Point Rd, Appin	woodland	GB
Musk Lorikeet	20+	26-Oct	Elladale Rd, Appin	woodland	GB
Channel-billed Cuckoo	7	18-Oct	Albion Park	overhead	BC
Masked Owl	1	4-Oct	Kiama Beach	?	RB
Bell Miner	20+	29-Oct	Avondale	woodland	CB
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	16-Sep	Croome Rd Park, Albion Park	woodland	GB
Restless Flycatcher	1	14-Sep	Keiraville	garden	ME
White-winged Triller	1	15-Oct	Albion Park	rural	CB
White-winged Triller	1	22-Oct	Kanahooka	rural	MC
White-winged Triller	1	29-Oct	Oak Flats	parkland	BO,KO
White-winged Triller	2	29-Oct	Gwynville	garden	DW
White-winged Triller	1	29-Oct	Swamp Rd. Dunmore	rural	GB
Skylark	1	29-Oct	Swamp Rd. Dunmore	rural	GB
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	20+	27-Sep	Dapto	garden	RF
Tawny Grassbird	1	10-Oct	Windang	reedland	NB
Rufous Songlark	2	29-Oct	Swamp Rd. Dunmore	rural	GB
Brown Songlark	6	31-Aug	Burradoo	rural	DG

Contributors: GB – Graham Barwell; RB – Roger Bogaert; CB – Chris Brandis; NB – Norma Burke; CJC – Chris Chafer; MC Martin Cocker; BC – Bruce Coyte; ME – Mary Eskdale; RF – Richard Fackender; DG – Darryl Goldrick; TE – Terri Edwell; NJ – Nigel Jacket; KM – Kevin Mills; JM – Jill Molan; BO – Bruce O’Brien; KO Kelsey O’Brien ; MR – Michelle Rower; MS – Mary Shaw; PT – Paul Taylor; EV – Edwin Vella; DW – David Winterbottom; TW - Tera Wheway.

Comment: Unprecedented numbers of White-winged Trillers on the coastal plain, with more records also in November (next newsletter). The drought will force many species to the coast so keep your eyes open.