

The Lewin's Rail

Rallus pectoralis:

Lewin's Rail is a seldom observed bird inhabiting vegetated wetlands. It is found in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia with eight known subspecies (Clements 2007). In Australia there are three recognised sub-species; *Rallus pectoralis pectoralis* which occurs on the east coast of mainland Australia, *Rallus pectoralis brachipus* - in Tasmania and *Rallus pectoralis clelandi* - once occurring in south west Western Australia but now considered extinct (Marchant & Higgins 1993, Simpson & Day 1996; DEC 2010).



photo by Charles Dove

The Lewin's Rail is a small to medium sized rail between 20 and 27 cm in length. It has a wingspan ranging from 31 to 35 cm. The top of the head and back of the neck is a chestnut colour with black streaks. Upperparts are black with an olive edge on the feathers giving a mottled and striped appearance. The chin is light grey and the underside of the neck and chest is olive-grey. It has a long, thin bill which is black towards the tip and a reddish tinge towards the base. The abdomen is barred black and white. The legs and feet are grey-brown.

The Australian subspecies do not vary greatly from each other and are mainly distinguished by size; *R. Brachipus* (the Tasmanian subspecies) and *R. Clelandi* (the Western Australian subspecies - now considered extinct) being slightly larger than *R. pectoralis*. The Western Australian sub-species had a darker chestnut colouration on the head and the olive-brown than the eastern sub-species. The Tasmanian sub-species is similar to the eastern mainland species but the colour of head and breast is still more obscured by olive tips to the feathers, and the belly, which is white in the other subspecies (Harrison 1975).

Habitat

The Lewin's Rail mostly inhabits wetland areas with dense vegetation, including wetlands, farm dams, swamps, saline lakes and river flats where they usually forage around the waters edge in shallow water and close to cover for a variety of aquatic plants and invertebrates (Marchant & Higgins 1993; Blakers et al. 1984). The Lewin's Rail spends most of the day amongst the dense vegetation and is most active at dawn, dusk and low light, for example cloudy days (Gilbert 1936). Saucer shaped nests are created amongst the dense vegetation like tussock grasses, reeds and associated vegetation. The nest is situated above the water line with vegetation pulled overtop for cover (Kingsford 1991). Tunnels are created for

quick retreat in the dense vegetation (Barnby Smith 1915). The bird will not often fly but prefer to retreat into the vegetation (Marchant & Higgins 1993).

Threats

The Lewin's Rail is very elusive and hard to observe which makes it hard to define if populations are declining or if they are presently low (Blakers et al. 1984). There have only been 154 sight records in 149 years of data (SAC 1997). The extinction of the western subspecies *R. clelandi* serves as an example of what could possibly happen to other populations within Australia.

Habitat destruction;

This is a major threatening process for the species with the occurrence of grazing, removal of wetland plants, drainage of wetlands and fire (SAC 1997). The occurrence of fire in areas of the Lewin's rail habitat is highly undesirable, because it would change the vegetation structure that the bird requires (SAC 1997).

Habitat fragmentation;

This species has shown that it is subject to fragmentation because of unavailable habitat. This is demonstrated with the presence of subspecies on mainland Australia and there is a current possible risk of further fragmentation (Blakers et al. 1984).

Introduced predators; predation by foxes, domestic and feral cats on chicks and adult birds is a major problem for this species (Marchant & Higgins 1993).

CONTENTS:

Club Activities	Page	2
Club Reports	Page	3 - 7
Articles of Interest	Pages	7 - 10
Feather Tales	Pages	10 - 13
Monthly Bird Sightings	Page	14



Founded in 1977

Club's Aim:
To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the bird life around them.

ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.

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July ACTIVITIES

Club Meeting:

Monday 14th

7.30pm at Fairy Meadow Community Hall, Cnr. of Cambridge Avenue & Princes H'way Fairy Meadow.

Garth Rankin with a presentation and display from **The Illawarra Reptile Society**

Please bring a plate of 'goodies' and a cup for supper after the meeting.

Midweek Walk:

Wednesday 16th

Leader Rupert Jarvis

Mt Kembla

Meet at 8.45 on Cordeaux Road. To get there drive through Mt Kembla village, past the Dendrobium Mine and at the start of Harry Graham Drive turn left into Cordeaux Road. This turn off is 1.6 km after passing the Mt Kembla Hotel. 499 metres up Cordeaux Road there is a white house on the left and just beyond there is parking on the right side of the road. This was on the programme last year but curtailed by heavy rain so fingers crossed for more favourable weather this year.

If the weather is bad a decision to cancel is made by 7.15am to enable people to travel to the venue. It is your responsibility to contact the Leader 0403 932 635 or Alan on 0413 869 534 after 7.00am to check if the walk is still on.

Weekend Walk:

Saturday 19th

Leader Betty Hudson

Bass Point & Shell Cove Wetlands

The July Monthly Outing will be to Bass Point Reserve with an afternoon visit to Shell Cove Wetlands. Meet at 9.00am at the picnic area car park at Bass Point. Bring and carry morning tea and lunch to be eaten in the picnic area- chairs &/or stools would be handy as there are limited tables etc. After lunch we will drive to the eastern end of Shell Cove Wetlands and check on bird life on the ponds and the creek.

To reach Bass Point travel along the Princes Hwy to the Shellharbour exit and follow the signs to Shellharbour. Turn right at the traffic lights immediately after the large Shell Cove roundabout. Follow the signs for Bass Point turning right at the next roundabout, then a left turn followed by a right turn. The car park is at the end of the road.

Phone Betty on 4236 0307 or text on mobile 0432 892 945 or Alan mobile on 0413 869 534.

If the weather is bad a decision to cancel is made by 7.15am to enable people to travel to the venue. Remember mobiles do not always have reception at the places we meet or walk. It is your responsibility to contact either Leader or Alan after 7.00am to check if the walk is still on.

Committee Meeting -

Monday 21th

The next IBOC Committee Meeting will be held on Monday 21st July 2014 at 7.30pm at Sue & Ken Brown's home, 12 Meads Avenue Tarrawanna 2518.

Any members with anything they wish to raise are welcome to attend the meeting.

Newsletter:

Deadline for articles and photos in the next IBOC newsletter is **24th July**

Email contributions to Charles Dove newsletter@iboc.org.au or post to 32 Martin Avenue Ulladulla 2539. Ph: 0417 422 302.

IBOC has pleasure in welcoming all our New Members



CLUB REPORTS

Report for Club Meeting 9th June 2014

Alan Cousins

Our June presentation given by our club Secretary Betty Hudson about her trip to Tasmania. The presentation commenced with a map showing Tasmania followed by a list of birds that are endemic to the Island.

Black Currawong, Strong-billed Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Tasmanian Native Hen, Dusky Robin, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Forty-spotted Pardalote, Tasmanian Thornbill, Green Rosella, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Scrub-tit, Yellow Wattlebird.



Dusky Robin



Tasmanian Thornbill



Black-headed Honeyeater



Yellow-throated Honeyeater



Forty Spotted Pardalote



Tasmanian Scrubwren

We were treated to a tour of Tasmania starting at Devonport where the Spirit of Tasmania docked at 7 am. Betty was driving herself for the first and last parts of the trip going through Burnie via Seabrook to Wynyard, too windy to linger but managed a good cup of coffee (there are one or two coffee lovers in IBOC!), then on to Port Arthur with some good bird sightings including Crescent Honeyeater. We were shown a photograph of the 'George Robinson', an old wooden hulled boat in which Betty went for a cruise on the Arthur River where she spotted a Sea-Eagle catching fish. The boat stopped at Turks Landing, an old well hidden picnic area for a BBQ which was attended by a Spotted Tail Quoll who liked sausages and a Tasmanian Pademelon who preferred apples. Next stop following the river cruise was Stanley with plenty of European Goldfinches in evidence on the campsite, the following day spotting a Yellow-throated Honeyeater at Smithton. Betty joined her tour bus at Launceston and they proceeded to Sheffield seeing Native Hens on the way and in the town had to wait for a parade of traction engines to pass, next stop Cradle Mountain. Woke next day to showers then snow! But did eventually get out to sightsee. Next day still snow on the roads but did see Flame Robin and Yellow Wattlebird then on to Tullah and a Tasmanian Thornbill and to Strahan, Queenstown and Lywell Highway seeing a Tasmanian Scrubwren at the Nelson Falls Nature Trail on way to Hobart and Mount Wellington, going to the summit, seeing the views then back to Hobart. The next day off to Kingston and Peter Murrell Reserve and saw large numbers of Forty-spotted Pardalote then on to Kettering for the ferry to Bruny Island, but Betty was unable to take photographs as she was laid up with a bad leg. Leaving the Island, we saw from the ferry the snow-capped Mount Wellington. From ferry via Hobart to Richmond, an old convict town with beautiful sandstone buildings and a bridge from 1823 then on to Launceston at the end of the tour. As Betty was now able to drive she went to West Tamar Wetlands and Bell Bay, she left Launceston for Scamander where the campsite had lots of birds but all very camera shy. At the Scamander Lagoon Betty met the shorebird recovery team checking Little Tern nests but unfortunately all but one nest had been destroyed by floodwater. On to St Helens/Binalong and plenty of sightings then back to Scamander and on to Triabunna Caravan Park, then headed to Bicheno and Freycinet National Park and lookouts. Next day on to Tasman Peninsula via Sorrel and the Seacliff Coast lookout at Eagle Hawk seeing plenty of birds. Following day went to Mount Fields National Park which has the only ski fields in Tasmania and amazing sights, spending some time and seeing Tasmanian Scrubwren, then along to Wynyard on the Northwest Coast. The next day she drove to Rocky Cape lighthouse which is still operational. Back to Devonport for the last night but had the following day to visit Narawntapu National Park where there were plenty of birds in the bush around the lagoon but hard to see and the recent high tides had inundated the entire beach even over the grass. Betty caught the 6 pm ferry back to

Melbourne and was able to visit the Healesville Sanctuary which helps with captive breeding of endangered birds and animals. All in all a wonderful trip with many experiences thank you for sharing it with us Betty.

List of birds recorded

Masked Lapwing, Blackbird, Red Wattlebird, Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatcher, Starling, White-faced Heron, Silvereye, Superb Fairy-wren, Welcome Swallow, Galah, Pacific Gull, Silver Gull, Red-capped Plover, Swamp Harrier, Green Rosella, Black Currawong, Crescent Honeyeater, Fuscous Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Spinebill, Little Black Cormorant, Great Cormorant, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Little Wattlebird, Grey Thrush, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Silvereye, Tasmanian Native Hen, Cattle Egret, Australian Shelduck, Eurasian Coot, Kookaburra, Wood Duck, Tree Martin, Tasmanian Thornbill, Grey Currawong, Blue-winged Parrot, Yellow Wattlebird, Flame Robin, Pink Robin, Australian Pipit, Scrubtit, Forest Raven, Striated Pardalote, Strong-billed Honeyeater, Hoary-headed Grebe, Australian Grebe, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Musk Duck, Black-faced Dotterell, Hardhead, Forty-spotted Pardalote, European Goldfinch, Purple Swamphen, Eastern Rosella, Grey Butcherbird, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Black Duck, Black-faced Cormorant, Little Grassbird, Crested Tern, Galah, Brown Thornbill, Black Swan, Great Egret, Dusky Woodswallow, Little Tern, Eastern Curlew, Pelican, Red-capped Plover, White-Bellied Sea- Eagle, Grey Fantail, Kelp Gull, Gannet, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Common Greenshank, Gull-billed Tern, Royal Spoonbill, White Ibis, Short-tailed Shearwater. If I have missed any I apologise.

Midweek Walk – Hooka Creek & Fred Finch Park Wednesday 11th By Richard Miller

A Morning made for Fantails

When 13 club members gathered for this mid-week walk we couldn't have hoped for a better morning for bird watching and enjoying the great outdoors. It was still and clear with a warm sun, mostly behind us. Not often the birdlife is so well lit, highlighting the colours and patterns of the birds instead of our usual headache of looking into the light and picking up dark silhouettes. It was a pleasant surprise to be meeting up with Charles and Janine knowing they had only recently migrated south. They must have been up with the birds to have made it from Ulladulla in time for the morning walk. Charles's knowledge and camera work is always an asset to The Club especially when there is an element of doubt in our sightings.

The other bonus to the day was the effect that the gorgeous weather seemed to be having on the birds. They were behaving like it was the first day of spring rather than the start of winter, full of song, actively feeding, moving around and posing for us in the sunshine, occasionally not quite long enough!

Gathering at the car park at the end of Holborn Street while the dew was still on the grass, there were plenty of water birds visible on The Lake while 'the early birds' waited for the stragglers to arrive. Sue Brown pointed out the Pelican and Black Swan acknowledging that these were the sort of birds she liked (no labels needed). There were Masked Lapwing, Chestnut Teal, a Great Egret and a raft of Hoary-headed Grebe which scampered across the water and took off low towards the first of the outer islands which was ?? Well luckily for those of us not sure which was which, part of the foreshore landscaping included a large boulder alongside the track with outlines and names etched in, pinpointing both Hooka and Gooseberry Islands. Off the shore one of the lake fishermen was hauling in his nets watched with hopeful anticipation by a group of Pelicans.

Rupert, as guide for the walk, diverted initially down to the timber bridge which crosses Hooka Creek. To our right a Grey Butcherbird was exercising it's voice using what I at first thought was some of the exercise apparatus set up by Council to keep us fit but which turned out to be the frame of a sign with the sign missing. We lingered long on the bridge as it was both a lovely setting in the morning sun but also a great viewing platform up and down the creek and the embankments. 6 Chestnut Teal flew in close to the bridge while a Great Egret and White Ibis were spotted along the banks and a Royal Spoonbill was sweeping the edge of the creek in it's search for a feed. Crossing over the bridge into



Fred Finch Park, Australian Magpie and Magpie-lark were active on the open grass of the adjoining baseball field. We initially followed the cycle track through some casuarina woodland where there was a flock of Yellow Thornbill, luckily low enough to aid our identification. When the vegetation open up allowing the sunlight to bathe the track and surrounding area the Grey Fantails were also in situ, hawking for insects. While some of us were trying to pinpoint the Wrens, mostly Superb, but was there a Variegated in there too, Charles spotted a Golden Whistler, Betty picked out Red-browed Finch and Terry capped off our stop with a male Mistletoe Bird, again all our views made the more enjoyable from the sun on each birds plumage. We were also able to enjoy plenty of butterflies on our walk, here the Monarchs were also enjoying the still sunny environment to flutter by.

We left the dry cycle track and headed out to The Lake foreshore on a more muddy track which brought us out to the mouth of Hooka Creek. This provided us with views of many waterbirds. A group of 6 Royal Spoonbill busy feeding, more than 20 Black-winged Stilts, lots of Silver Gull, Little Black Cormorant, Pelicans, White-faced Heron, Great Egret, Pelicans and a couple of Darter, one of which caused a certain amount of discussion as it was looking unusually white in the bright sun. The Cormorant were very active, roughing up the water as they fished as a flock, the commotion attracting the gulls and pelicans to join in the party.

With all the birds having a good feed it was time for us to stop on the jetty at Hooka Creek for our own morning tea. The Chestnut Teal were

still there, their numbers added to when Rupert in telling a good story was waving his arms around making others think that it was feeding time for ducks so several more pairs flew in. Sadly we didn't see an Azure Kingfisher at what looked a likely spot nor did we see any Night Heron which Charles mentioned having seen in this location previously.

Leaving our morning tea spot there were lots of small birds in the casuarinas along the bank but also plenty of interest in some mistletoe which looked more like it's host casuarina plant than the usual form we see on many walks. Betty & Mary Eskdale wondered if it was a different species or whether the plant has the ability to adapt to look more like its host. We then completed our walk taking the circular track around Hooka Creek Park. The trees provided lots more sightings including a Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Brown Thornbill, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Grey Shrike-thrush and Spotted Pardalote, the sun again showing this beautiful little bird off to it's best. A stop was made at the lookout tower where the extra height provided views of many water birds while 2 Caspian Tern cruised back & forth. As we returned to the cars we saw our first Little Wattlebird for the outing, though perhaps most of us had seen them in our gardens before setting out, and also a Common Starling. Tom took up the 'call of the card' at 51 species not quite a full pack but then a well trained Australian Hobby timed it's fly past to complete the set, 52 species in 3hrs, a wonderful morning for a bird watching walk.

Thanks Rupert for organising the walk
(and the weather??).

Hooka Point and Fred Finch Park		11 th June		52 species	
Chestnut Teal	Australian White Ibis	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Fantail		
Pacific Black Duck	Royal Spoonbill	Yellow Thornbill	Willie Wagtail		
Hoary-headed Grebe	Australian Hobby	Brown Thornbill	Australian Raven		
Spotted Dove	Black-winged Stilt	Spotted Pardalote	Magpie-lark		
Australasian Darter	Masked Lapwing	Eastern Spinebill	Silvereye		
Little Pied Cormorant	Caspian Tern	Little Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow		
Great Cormorant	Silver Gull	Red Wattlebird	Red-whiskered Bulbul		
Little Black Cormorant	Galah	New Holland Honeyeater	Common Starling		
Australian Pelican	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Common Myna		
Eastern Great Egret	Rainbow Lorikeet	Golden Whistler	Mistletoebird		
Cattle Egret	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Grey Shrike-thrush	Red-browed Finch		
White-faced Heron	Laughing Kookaburra	Grey Butcherbird	House Sparrow		
Little Egret	Superb Fairy-wren	Australian Magpie	European Goldfinch		

Monthly Outing – Saturday 14th June: Dharawal National Park

Mike Morphett

It had been nigh on two years since I had made forays into Dharawal National Park from both the Wedderburn and Darkes Forest sides, just a few months after this park's upgraded status from that of State Conservation Area. So, I had no hesitation in joining the club's June outing from our eastern end. Weather conditions didn't augur too favourably, though, with substantial overnight and breakfast-time showers, grey sky and a crispness in the air; so the group numbered only nine.

We had three not too long walks along the 10Z, 10 and 10H trails with refreshment breaks in-between, beside the park's information shelter across from Glenburnie Orchard. A Willie Wagtail clinging to Betty's car aerial made for some brief amusement at lunch-time. The Orchard is now reportedly a thriving cider business under the name of 'Apple Shack'. Some of the group planned to have a tasting or two there after the 10H walk, which

I continued on for a while, recording only one more species: a trail-bike rider. In all, 33 bird species were seen or heard on the three trails and along Darkes Forest Road; namely,

Australian Wood Duck	Variigated Fairy-wren	New Holland Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
Pacific Black Duck	Brown Thornbill	White-naped Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
White-necked Heron	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Whipbird	Grey Fantail
Masked lapwing	Eastern Spinebill	Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	Willie Wagtail
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Golden Whistler	Australian Raven
Crimson Rosella	White-eared Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush	Eastern Yellow Robin
Superb Lyrebird	Little Wattlebird	Dusky Woodswallow	Silvereye
White-throated Treecreeper	Red Wattlebird	Grey Butcherbird	Red-browed Finch
Superb Fairy-wren			



No sooner had we left our cars for the walk towards Maddens Falls than we were greeted by much bird activity and calls, mostly amongst the tree canopies. Visual identification was initially made difficult in the poor light created by the overcast sky, but as the day wore on, weather conditions significantly improved with the odd patch of blue turning into large expanses of that fine, comforting colour; however, Murphy's law came into play, for the presence of birds began to steadily dwindle. Towards the end, the long-anticipated Eastern Yellow Robin was some compensation, when two appeared on the final walk, their chests brilliant in the sunshine. The Maddens Falls walk proved by far the most productive. The 'wee-lar' calls of the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo suggested a sizeable flock somewhere in the central area of the park, but only one or two came within sight on the treed horizon. Similarly, we heard Superb Lyrebird calls from afar. Not surprisingly, given the habitat, birds of the Meliphagidae family, particularly Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, were the most representative and vociferous. Birds darting across the trails ahead of us at varying height levels and into foliage created some further identification frustration, but were a joy to watch nonetheless.



Whilst no other animal species was spotted during the day, some cloven hoof-prints were evident in a sandy section of the track leading to the falls, indicating the recent presence of feral deer, which are known to frequent Dharawal. I get the impression debate continues as to their posing a threat to our wild environment by way of browsing and also spreading the Phytophthera pathogen, which causes root rot and dieback. If that did occur in this particular national park, it would, from my viewpoint, be disastrous. In this State, Victoria and Tasmania deer are protected game, but deemed a pest elsewhere.

After the mild autumn and recent rain, Dharawal appeared to be flourishing, with rejuvenated growth superseding burnt sections and a vast array of colours of flowering plants and shrubs. Of note was a sole Blandfordia (Christmas bells) and many Gynea lilies, whose red beacon-like heads were beginning to open up; both species suggesting further evidence that something is happening with our climate. No less resplendent, or perhaps more so, and miniscule in size in comparison with the spear lily flowers, were the scarlet eyebrows of the red-browed finches observed flitting among the seeding grasses. *Neochmia temporalis*, the Greek and Latin nomenclature of this species, means novel or unusual temple (of the head, that is; nothing to do with a sacred

building). Another form of stark redness of note on the walks, and becoming blackish in parts, was the sap that had run down the trunks of some scribbly gums.

My personal thanks go to Betty, not only for organising this most enjoyable field trip, but also for her longstanding contribution to IBOC's activities.

NOTICES

Attention members of IBOC

For some time BirdLife Southern Highlands members and members of other birdwatching groups, have enjoyed open access to **Charlton Dam at Moss Vale**. This dam is on private property. Recently, the inconsiderate manner in which unknown members of the public have been accessing the property and the dam, have caused concern to the owners and has resulted in a change of policy. After consultation with BirdLife Southern Highland, the owner has decided to restrict access to organised outings sanctioned by BirdLife Southern Highlands.

The owner and manager have been given a copy of the BirdLife Southern Highlands current membership list and will be advised in advance when a group outing is to take place or a survey is to be conducted. All BirdLife Southern Highlands member will now be required to wear their official branch name tags when visiting the dam. This will enable unauthorised access to the property to be monitored.

We would ask that your members are made aware of this change of policy and encouraged to comply with the owner's wishes.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN A VISIT TO HUNTER ESTUARY WETLANDS TO LOOK FOR WADERS?

We are planning a possible 2-3 day outing to the Hunter Estuary Wetlands at Stockton, Ash & Kooragang Islands and Hexham Swamp amongst other places to look for waders. These locations can be feeding & roosting sites for large numbers of waders on their winter migration to Australia. The best months to see them are over summer.

The proposed trip would be in February once schools have resumed and accommodation is more readily available.

It is also proposed that the trip would be either over a weekend, arriving Friday pm or Saturday am and leaving Sunday pm or Monday am, giving 1-2 days for bird watching. An Alternative would be for a midweek trip arriving Monday pm or Tuesday am and leaving Thursday pm or Friday am. This option would leave 2-3 days for bird watching. Accommodation could be available at Tomago Van Village (caravans & cabins), or Pacific Gardens Mobile Home Park (caravans & possibly cabins) or the adjacent Country Comfort Sir Francis Drake Motel on the Pacific Hwy, all with easy access to the wetlands.

If you are interested please either write your name and preference for the trip on the board at the July Meeting or contact Betty on 42360307. Sorry still no email to date courtesy of Telstra/NBN

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

NancyeDryden

by Richard Miller

Those of us who were with IBOC from it's formative years may well remember Nancye who joined The Club in 1977 and was a regular for many years at meetings, walks and camps. In her later years Nancy moved from her Mangerton home to Farmborough Grove Retirement Village and died in 2012. Those of us who knew Nancye were aware of her frequent trips to SE Asia but, like me, may not have been aware that during these travels she was also pursuing an interest in woven textile fabrics. The textiles came from Laos, Malaysia and particularly from Indonesia. Nancye had a story for every cloth; including the fun she had purchasing the pieces from remote villages and markets on the many islands which she had visited, sometimes directly from the weavers. Nancye compiled a large collection of material which she bequeathed to Wollongong Art Gallery in 2004.

An exhibition of some of Nancye's collection is currently (until 29th June) on display at Wollongong Art Gallery and photos from the opening were shown in The Mercury (Good Life pp30, 30th May). Hopefully some who knew Nancye took the opportunity to look at her woven textile collection. Her son, Geoffrey has written an introductory piece in which he acknowledges the times Nancye spent exploring Australia with The Illawarra Bird Observers Club.



Australasian Bird Fair and Birding Groups

Working together for bird conservation

The inaugural Australasian Bird Fair (www.birdfair.com.au) has been designed specifically to raise awareness among the public about the conservation of so many of our wild bird populations that are in decline. It will raise funds for threatened species recovery programs in line with the 'BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Program', with all profits going towards species conservation. We will be promoting the philosophy of everyone 'acting locally, but thinking globally' as the only way to succeed against the odds and protect our birds across national and international boundaries. The Australasian Bird Fair will be held over the weekend of 25-26 October however ticket sales will go online 1 July 2014. You will automatically go in the draw for some great prizes for each ticket purchased, plus an additional draw for each month you are registered up until the event! This will be the first Bird Fair of its size to be attempted in Australia and has no connection with earlier Australian events.

The Australasian Bird Fair is not just for dedicated birdwatchers. It will be offering activities for the whole family, from children's activities to talks by world experts from across the globe. Some of our most iconic birds will be highlighted in some of the most ambitious programs ever attempted. We have attractions catering to a wide range of interests, from feeding birds in your backyard, touring the most impressive landscapes, choosing binoculars to suit your needs and pocket, selecting works of art for the home or learning about wildlife photography from the experts.

Your voice

Although the event will be focused on the Sydney Olympic Park, we would like to offer an opportunity for all bird clubs and individuals in Australia and New Zealand to have a voice at the Australasian Bird Fair. Australasian Bird Fair 2.

We would love to see you there personally at your own group's stall, to show everyone something about your birds and birding areas, and particularly your efforts to conserve birds and their habitat.

Your presence to spread the word

Although a venue in the centre of Australia's most populous city comes with significant costs, it should be a major advantage, as we aim to bring our message to as many people as possible. As we do not have an overall sponsor for the event we have to share costs for display spaces. However we have kept these to a minimum by dividing some of the larger marquees into smaller stall spaces. These will normally be areas of 9m² (e.g. 3m x 3m) with options of additional items such as trestle tables and chairs. We will help where we can with the design and printing of posters at favourable prices if required. You are welcome to sell appropriate items at the event to offset some of the costs of being there. In addition there are special rates for accommodation for the event to help you with the expense involved. If you are interested in taking up this offer please contact us at your earliest convenience at admin@birdfair.com.au or speak to Phil on 02 9567 9743 or 0411 249 075 so that we can work out costs with you.

Your virtual presence

If you cannot attend the Bird Fair you may be able to come to an arrangement with one of the bird clubs who will have a stall to display some of your material, including posters and handouts. We will have a list of participating groups in due course and will contact you if you have registered your interest.

Volunteers

Perhaps some of your members would like to help at the Australasian Bird Fair as volunteers? If you have communication skills and are keen to help others this could be a rewarding opportunity. We have lots of interesting jobs for you while you enjoy the atmosphere generated by so many passionate people. All volunteers will be given a volunteer pack including a high visibility vest branded with the 2014 Australasian Bird Fair, a souvenir of your participation in this historical event.

Volunteers will of course have free access to the event. Contact admin@birdfair.com.au with your details and why you would like to help or ask for a list of volunteer roles. Australasian Bird Fair 3

The Australasian Bird Fair is an opportunity for us all to get the message across to the largest gathering of people passionate about birds and the environment yet experienced in Australia.

"In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we have been taught."

That famous saying, by the Senegalese conservationist Baba Dioum, sums up why education plays a vital supporting role in wildlife conservation. Through educational outreach we empower our members, the public, the media and decision-makers to effectively weigh in for birds and their conservation.

If we can match the attendance of just one of the many hunting expos held annually in Australia that typically attract 15,000 passionate hunters we would be doing well for our first event. We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbours in October.

Keep an eye on our website and newsletters for up to the minute updates and for early bird ticket sales. Be in the draw to win some great prizes, the earlier you buy your ticket to more entries you will receive.

William Beach Bushcare Group is once again hosting a National Tree Day event in 2014.

It's on Sunday 27th July, from 10am; in the Reserve at the end of Prince Edward Drive in Brownsville. More information is on Planet Ark's website.

We are a small dedicated group of local residents, keen to improve this popular park, replacing weeds with locally indigenous plants to encourage more habitat for fauna and increase usage of the reserve.

In previous years we have been extremely surprised and grateful for all the help we have received from the many volunteers, and the results have been amazing. The increase in bird and animal wildlife has been wonderful. Many more people (and their pets) are using the new bush tracks and enjoying the ever-changing sight of new flowers and wildlife.

This year our main focus is to re-vegetate an area along the original pathway which was previously overgrown with various vines and woody weeds, which we have been steadily clearing and preparing. We will be planting over 300 tube stock of grasses, ground covers, shrubs and dry rainforest trees.

People of all ages will enjoy participating in this community event, and everyone is invited to a sausage sizzle afterwards.

Can you please pass along this message to your family, friends and Group? Also can you let me know if possible, if you will be able to attend so I can get an idea of numbers?

You can contact me on 0423 698 000 for more information.
Sandra Wheeler

William Beach Bushcare Group

We have a number of IBOC club polo shirts to shift that we have had a fair while.

FOR SALE

Bottle Green club polo shirts

Size M (3 available)

Size XL (3 available)

All at \$10 to clear

Please contact Anne Cousins on 42833197 or 0413869534 or approach at July club meeting.

I.B.O.C. JULY TO DECEMBER 2014 PROGRAMME

Month	Action	Date	Speaker/Leader	Venue
July	Meeting	14.07.14	Reptile Group	Talk & Display of reptiles
	School Holidays	28.06.14-13.07.14		
	Mid Week Walk	16.07.14	Rupert Jarvis	Mt Kembla Ring Track
	Outing	Sunday 20.07.14	Betty Hudson	Bass Point & Shellcove Wetlands
	Committee Meeting	21.07.14		
August	Meeting	11.08.14	DVD on Rainforest	
	Mid Week Walk	13.08.14	Rupert Jarvis	Byarong Creek Figtree
	Outing	Saturday 16.08.14	Betty Hudson	Bangadilly N P & Cecil Hoskins Reserve
	Committee Meeting	18.08.14		
September	Meeting	8.09.14	Leon Fuller	Birds & Trees
	Mid Week Walk	10.09.14	Charles Dove	Barren Grounds
	Monthly Walk	Sunday 14.09.14	Betty Hudson	Danjerra Dam Yalwal
	Committee Meeting	15.09.14		
	School Holidays	20.09.14-6.10.14		
October	Meeting	13.10.14	TBA	
	Mid Week Walk	15.10.14	Rupert Jarvis	Karoo Bay & Macquarie Rivulet
	No Outing due to camp			
	No Committee Meeting due to camp			
	Spring Camp	19.10.14-26.10.14 Nb Sunday to Sunday	Betty Hudson	Lake Cargelligo
November	Meeting/ AGM	10.11.14	TBA	
	Mid Week Walk	12.11.14	Rupert Jarvis	Little Lake Area

	Outing	Sunday 16.11.14	Betty Hudson	Budderoo Fire Trail & Barren Grounds
	Committee Meeting	17.11.14		
December	Christmas Picnic	6.12.14		Integral Park
	Christmas Meeting	8.12.14		
	School Holidays	20.12.14-26.01.15		
January 2015	Committee Meeting	12.01.15		
February 2015	Mid Week Walk	4.02.15		Lake Illawarra
February 2015	Meeting	9.02.15		



Purple-crowned Fairy-wren m



Purple-crowned Fairy-wren female



Great Bowerbird

Pam Hazelwood sent some more photos from their travels.

We are now in Winton and are looking for jumpers. There is a cool breeze which makes looking for birds difficult but the temperature is more agreeable than the 35C we had further north. Here are a selection of our new birds for you to enjoy. From the top there is the buff sided robin, Purple-crowned Fairy-wren male, then female, Northern Fantail, Great Bowerbird berating me and the Rufous-crowned Emu-wren. We found the emu wren in some spinifex and grass in the driest barest most inhospitable place imaginable

Pam Hazelwood, Neil McKinley, Anna & Andy Knowlson



Northern Fantail



Buff Sided Robin

Rufous-crowned Emu-wren



Terry Edwell managed to gets some great Pics of the Logrunner (m&f) at Mt Kembla as well as the Golden Whistler in her backyard

A few birding highlights from Joan & Bill Zealey second month away from home.

A brief account of our second month's birding away from Wollongong, in which we proceed north from Rockhampton. Cape Hillsborough is a jewel of a campsite. Brush Turkeys, Pale-headed Rosellas and an Orange-footed Scrubfowl wandered around the caravan, while 8 Laughing Kookaburras lined the fence for a share of steak trimmings. On a brief wander around the Aboriginal heritage trail, we encountered small groups of Spectacled Monarchs, Little Shrike-thrushes and Rufous Fantails, and disturbed a pair of Pacific Bazas which wheeled overhead. Not all was so idyllic. At Airlie Beach our car rear door refused to open, and then to close. Bill inspected the underside of the car and found cracks in the chassis on either side of the towbar. Very gingerly we drove on to Townsville, where we arranged to get the car repaired. Fortunately we had booked a week's coach camping trip with Heritage Tours up Cape York, so we caught the bus to Cairns and off we went leaving the extensive welding job in the hands of a local garage. This was one of the first tours of the season and because of abundant food and water, the birds were thinly spread. We added several to our life list - Black and Black-backed Butcherbirds, Banded and



A Palm cockatoo at dusk in Siesia camp ground [Cape York]



A huddle of Little Bent-Wing Bats in Chillagoe Caves.



Banded Plover near Sount Surprise



Black Butcher Bird at Cohen

Brown-backed Honeyeaters, Masked Finches and at Seisia, Beach-stone Curlews (which we missed in the Illawarra), and Papuan Frogmouths, which serenaded each other predawn just behind our tent. On our return to our daughter's house in Townsville we were able to eat lunch and watch Figbirds, Great Bowerbirds, Dusky, Blue Faced and White-gaped Honeyeaters, Helmeted Friarbirds, Spangled Drongos and Yellow Bellied Sunbirds flying in and out of the purple flowers of the tree in her garden. National Parks in the hills surrounding Townsville hills added to our bird list – Lemon breasted Flycatcher and White-browed Robin at Alligator Creek, and McLeay's and Yellow-spotted Honeyeater at Crystal Creek. Reunited with our car, we headed north-west and into the rain. It poured at Lake Eacham Caravan Park, but there were Bridled Honeyeaters in the flowers so we drove west until we broke through the cloud. The spectacular caves at Chillagoe are home to\ eight species of microbat and three were still in residence. They are also home to a breeding colony of White-rumped Swiftlets, some of which, accompanied by Glossy\ Swiftlets were still flying around the caves area and the town weir. Then we headed for Agate Creek via Inhot Hot Springs for a spell of fossicking. Along the way Cumberland Chimney Dam, near Georgetown is always worth a visit and we were not disappointed. There were lots of Magpie Geese, Green Pygmy Geese and Mountain Whistle Ducks in residence as well as a handsome Sand Goanna which appeared just beside Bill. Today, at Mt Surprise we added another species to our life list - ten Banded Lapwings -as we headed off on an unsuccessful search for topaz. Now to head back south for a bit of R&R around Winton.....more later

I.B.O.C. Spring Camp 2014 Lake View Caravan Park, Lake Cargelligo

I.B.O.C.'s Spring 2014 camp will be held at Lake View Caravan Park, Naradhan Street, Lake Cargelligo

Sunday 19th October to Sunday 26th October 2014.

Phone 02 6898 1077. *(no email or website)* When phoning to make a booking please **ask for Liz the Park Manager** & tell her you are from the Illawarra Bird Observers Club.

Colin Markam
sent us a few pics of paptors
from their trip up northwest in
the Kimberly

White-bellied Sea Eagle
Whistling Kite
Brahminy Kite
Osprey



We have just finished a cruise from Broom to Darwin 10 nights.
We called into the Lacepede islands on our first day what a great bird place, Colin Markham



Frigatebird (maybe lesser)



Eastern Curlew



Brown Booby



Caspian Tern

Roger Bogaert was lucky to come across a couple
of Young Kestrels a while ago at Bombo
Cathedral Rocks



Observations of prey provisions at the nest by the EagleCAM team

Further to the report for the May meeting report presented by Judy Harrington are the following observations:-

From previous observations and from incidental observations and photography, the main prey of this pair of Sea-Eagles has been various fish species and Silver Gulls. Small numbers of other species, including other birds, rats and Flying Fox have also been recorded.

Close analysis of the nest renovation stage in 2009, 2010 and 2011, prior to laying to observe the nest during those years, indicated that the male brought the greatest proportion of food to the female on the nest and that the prey was mainly fish, (as observed from CCTV at the nest). Similar observations were made in 2013. After hatching in 2012, by comparison, a wider variety of prey was brought to the nestlings, by both parents

Other studies indicated elevated levels of POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) in fish, Silver Gulls and Australian White Ibis caught in Homebush Bay and a fishing ban remains for the bay area.

Although the eagles in 2013 did not attempt to re-lay, they continue to occupy the area and are frequently recorded at the nest. They have not been recorded bringing prey to the nest since the eggs were removed but observations in the river and bay area continue. Both adults have been photographed taking fish from the Parramatta River.

From the observation charts it is observed that with this pair of Sea-Eagles the majority of their diet is Bream and Mullet. These two fish tend to be bottom feeders among the sediment. POPs tend to be residual in the sediment of the Eagles home range. The POPs when consumed are mostly stored in the fatty tissue. The Mullet tend to be fatty fish so it would be expected that they in particular would have elevated levels of POPs. The Mullet is also seen swimming on the surface in schools so presenting itself as an easy prey for the Sea-Eagles. From observations the male Eagle tends to bring most of the fish to the nest. In most cases he eats the head and innards and only delivers the body of the fish to the nest, which may help to explain the reason for his higher levels of POPs, from the tests in 2004.

The future? We shall continue to observe the eagles and monitor their breeding and consider questions such as: What food are the eagles catching – before and during nest renovation? What prey are they bringing during incubation? What prey is brought to the eaglets? Is the species of fish caught significant? Other aspects of the Study including time budgets for nest renovation, incubation, nestling period etc.

Charles and Janina Dove are settling into Ulladulla and have sourced a few good birding spots in the local region, with birds like the Hooded Plovers 100metres down the road to the beach.



Hooded Plovers



Lewin's Rail



Freckled Duck



White-bellied Sea-Eagle juvenile

MONTHLY SIGHTINGS: May/June 2014

compiled by Darryl Goldrick

SPECIES	No	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
White-headed Pigeon	9	11-May-14	Jamberoo	Lilly Pilly regen area	Betty Hudson
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	1	13-May-14	Jamberoo	Garden	Betty Hudson
White-necked Heron	1	03-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	Paddocks	Brian/Barbera Hales
Cattle Egret	34	06-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	Paddocks	Brian/Barbera Hales
Black-shouldered Kite	1	03-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	Powerlines	Brian/Barbera Hales
Black-shouldered Kite	1	08-Jun-14	Belmore Basin	Harbour	Neil Wheway
Black-shouldered Kite	1	6/06/2014	M1 Kanahooka	Hovering over M1	Anne Cousins
Black-shouldered Kite	1	09-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	Powerlines	Kara Eddington
Brown Goshawk	1	06-Jun-14	Albion Park Rail	O'head	Peter Fackender
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	09-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	O'head hunting	Kara Eddington
Grey Goshawk	2	26-May-14	Bellambi	O'head	Tom/Joan Wylie
Swamp Harrier	1	03-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	Paddocks	Brian/Barbera Hales
Australian Hobby	1	09-Jun-14	Swamp Rd , Jamberoo	Powerlines	Kara Eddington
Eurasian Coot	10-20,000	22/06/2014	Cudmlirrah	Swan Lake	Kevin Mills
Sooty Oystercatcher	10	8/06/2014	Coledale	Beach seaweed	Mike Morphett
Kelp Gull	2	late May	Stuart Park Lagoon	Beach/Lagoon	Ken Brown
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	8	08-Jun-14	Albion Park Rail	Lakeside Casuarina	Brian/Barbera Hales
Little Lorikeet	8	7/06/2014	Brownsville	O'head	Peter Fackender
Rockwarbler	1	03-Jun-14	Bombaderry Creek	Rock O'hang	Gleniss Wellings
Noisy Friarbird	2	09-Jun-14	Jamberoo	Garden	Betty Hudson
Golden Whistler	1m	11-Jun-14	Thirroul	Yard	Mike Morphett
Spangled Drongo	1	06-Jun-14	Jamberoo	Powerlines	Kara Eddington
Rose Robin	1	29/05/2014	Jerrara Dam	Bush	Anne Cousins
Mistletoebird	2	6/06/2014	Balgownie	Garden	Terry Edwell
Red-browed Finch	5	Early June	Kanahooka	Residential garden	Gleniss Wellings

Kevin Mills sighting of the Eurasian Coot at Swan Lake is extraordinary. Kevin is a regular visitor to the area and he states the numbers have been increasing over the past three months. These numbers surpass his 2003 posting of 5,000+ for the same location.

Darryl Goldrick



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