



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 5/10 October 2010 - November 2010

## Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc affiliated with Bird Observation and Conservation Australia

### The aims of the club are:

- To encourage and further the study and conservation of Australian birds and their habitat;
- To encourage bird observing as a leisure-time activity

### Shorebirds return to the Hunter Estuary



Flagged Red Knots are on passage through the Hunter Estuary during September and October, when they are heading south to Victoria and New Zealand. Their flags and bands help tell the story of their amazing journeys. The yellow flag engraved with WD was placed on the Red Knot above in northwest Western Australia and photographed by Darryl Luck at Stockton Sandspit on 25 September 2010. Below are two flagged Red Knot: a bird on the left with blue over red bands also has a white flag on its other leg (not visible in this photo) and was banded in New Zealand; a bird on the right has a black flag over a stained white flag and was banded in China! Both photographed by Mick Roderick at Kooragang Dykes on 24 September 2010.



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## President's Column

At the recent Bird Observation & Conservation Australia (BOCA) forum held in Leeton, Professor Andrew Bennett from Deakin University spoke of the increasing focus on understanding conservation from a landscape scale. One of the ten guiding principles he proposed was the need for conservationists and land managers to plan for resilience within the landscape to large scale disturbance. Resilience was seen to be dependent, not only on the amount and diversity of habitat, but also on the quality of that habitat. High quality habitat positively affects the number of species present, their abundance and the population processes such as breeding. It consequently acts as a source of resources whereas low quality habitat acts as a sink or drain on resources. He went on to say that conservation planning, for factors such as resilience, is dependent on the availability of data from long-term surveys. These surveys are often carried out by volunteer members of the birding community and clubs such as HBOC.

Professor Bennett was not the only speaker to make reference to the importance of acquiring and making accessible bird records and observations; others reinforced the sentiment and concern was expressed that the birder's personal notebook would eventually end up in the "skip" with the subsequent loss of a wealth of valuable long-term data. It was also mentioned that the value of long-term survey work may not be readily evident in the early stages of the survey and that volunteers may experience fluctuations in motivation. However motivation resurges with time as the value of the work materialises as practical outcomes for the birds and the environment. Speaking of practical outcomes, the value of making woodland bird data accessible (in this case through an article in *The Whistler*), was clearly demonstrated at the local level when the Land and Property Management Authority, through the Rural Fire Service, modified a hazard reduction burn in the Butterwick area to accommodate the needs of the birds with resulting positive outcomes.

Also discussed at the BOCA forum was the proposed merger of the two national birding organisations, Birds Australia (BA) and BOCA. The resulting organisation would incorporate the strengths of both existing bodies and it is envisaged to provide a more effective voice for the conservation of birds and also to cater better for members' needs. A working group consisting of three BA and three BOCA representatives has made substantial progress, however much detailed work still needs to be accomplished with the proposal being put to the respective memberships in May 2011. If the proposal to merge is accepted, implementation will take place with the new national organisation being operational in 2012. All members of BA and BOCA are advised to review all materials offered by the respective organisations and are strongly encouraged to vote on the proposal in May 2011.

Good Birding. Keep Looking!

**Paul Baird**

## Local Council acts to protect Endangered Birds

The Little Tern, listed as "endangered" under the *NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, makes rudimentary nests on sand above the high tide mark. Up to three eggs may be laid and are incubated for up to 30 days. Little Tern chicks are cared for within the confines of the nest and are protected by the parents until they are able to fly and become less vulnerable. This may take up to three weeks.

Unfortunately this species nests over the spring/summer period when human activity on beaches is at its highest, causing considerable conflict between beach users and the birds' attempts to raise their young.

Little Terns breed successfully in the Manning Estuary, but there are no recent records for Newcastle, Lake Macquarie or Port Stephens. It was therefore of great significance when in the summer of 2009/2010 the Little Tern attempted to nest on the dunes at Stockton Bight and on a sandy island in the Swansea Channel. Sadly, none of the nests survived and no chicks were hatched.

This summer, Lake Macquarie City Council has taken the initiative to coordinate a multi-authority response to the possibility of Little Terns once again attempting to nest on a sandy island near Swan Bay in Swansea Channel. A small section of the sandy island has been fenced off to help protect any nesting attempt. The success of these protection measures relies entirely on community cooperation – particularly from boat owners who use the sandy island for recreation and dog exercise. It is hoped that people who enjoy the great outdoors for recreation will recognize that part of their pleasure comes from the abundance and variety of bird life, and strive to protect this delightful little bird for future generations.

**Ann Lindsey**

## Rufous Scrub-bird Survey - Gloucester Tops - September

In the 1980's Simon Ferrier found many Rufous Scrub-bird territories in the Gloucester Tops section of the Barrington Tops and Gloucester Tops Important Bird Area (IBA), as did the surveys led by Peter Ekert in the early 2000's, in particular in the high parts of the Gloucester Tops. So, it was with a real sense of excitement and expectation that a team of 9 surveyors headed to the Gloucester Tops for initial surveys over 15-17 September 2010. Would we find any birds? Would we detect any changes, either positive or negative ones? Would the survey methodology be successful? Would the weather be favourable?

Firstly, much praise for Mike Newman who undertook detailed analyses of Simon Ferrier's 1984 PhD thesis on Rufous Scrub-birds and the reports of the later surveys led by Peter Ekert for DECCW/Birds Australia, in order to define a methodology that allowed local organisations to take responsibility for conducting the surveys and interpreting the results. Local ownership, including rapid feedback to local survey teams, is an important consideration, particularly when the surveys are to be carried out year-in year-out and are totally in the hands of volunteers.

Male Rufous Scrub-birds (RSBs) are known to maintain territories for 10 or more years and the number of territories in any given area is a clear indication of how the local population is faring. The methodology proposed by Mike, involved recording the locations of all the calling males within each kilometre of transect through a walking track or road in the IBA. Repeat surveys would: a) confirm those as territories, if birds were re-detected in any given year; b) identify if any territories have disappeared; and c) identify any newly established territories. What's more, the 1 km transects could be treated as 500m area surveys for the BA Atlas.

Nine very eager RSB surveyors assembled at the base of the Gloucester Tops at lunch time on Wednesday 15 September. We reviewed the plans, listened to a CD recorded by David Stewart with RSB calls including mimicry, and then drove up to the Tops to start setting up the transects. We also had a great opportunity there to listen to a live calling bird, and calibrate with one another as to where it was calling from, including how far it was from the track.

On Thursday we set out in 5 teams to survey the various transects – 19km of transects were covered that day, and again on Friday, with the teams swapping routes for the two days. The teams took 5-7 hours to complete their tasks each day – and after that came the paperwork! We filled out 41 BA Atlas survey forms (including a daily

list within 500m of the campsite), covering records for 55 species (including 41 species up at the Tops). Aside from Rufous Scrub-bird, we had records for three supporting species for the IBA nomination – Flame Robin (several) and Pale-yellow Robin up at the Tops and a single Green Catbird near the campsite.

Within our overall survey area, we probably found 22 calling male Rufous Scrub-birds. The uncertainty arises because some records were of birds fairly close together (records from within ~250m) and we are yet to establish if they were records of two distinct birds or a single bird moving around. The October surveys will help us to understand this better.



Most of the RSB Survey Team, L-R: Penny Drake-Brockman, John Cockerell, Faye Hill, Mike Newman, Kathy Wilk, Alan Stuart and Lorna Mee - *Jim Smart*

The survey team included Faye Hill and Kathy Wilk from the Tweed Bird Group, who made the long journey south to learn the methodology and made important contributions to the results and to a subsequent review of the methodology. The remaining seven surveyors were members of HBOC – in addition to the indefatigable Mike Newman, and yours truly, we had: Ann Lindsey and Penny Drake-Brockman, both veterans of the previous surveys with many useful thoughts about how to build upon the past learnings; John Cockerell, who proved to be a master of the intricacies of two-way radio technology; Lorna Mee, who worked out how to do the river crossing in style; and Jim Smart who has since used Google Earth to help us work out exactly where our transects were. It truly was a team effort! And let's not lose sight of the people from BA and DECCW in the background who helped out in ways too numerous to mention.

**Alan Stuart**



# Inaugural Port Stephens Bush Stone-curlew Census

The Bush Stone-Curlew (BSC) is listed as endangered in NSW. The NSW North Coast supports a unique and important population disjunct from the core distribution west of the Great Divide. Locally there is a small population that exists around the western shores of Port Stephens and we know that at least two pairs have reasonable success rearing young birds (certainly they have their problems as well with a number of threats affecting their success rates). This population is currently being studied by a team from the University of Western Sydney, looking at the habitat requirements and to identify key sites for on-ground protection and management.

However, apart from a couple of known breeding pairs, anecdotal records and records on the Birds Australia / DECCW Wildlife Atlases, we really do not have good understanding of the distribution of birds within this population. It was therefore decided to undertake a census of the area in an effort to gain a better understanding. Such surveys have been happening at Gosford for a few years, organised by local environment networks and volunteers (many of whom are part of a "Friends of the Bush Stone-curlew" group).

The census at Port Stephens was held on the evening of 26 August, the night after the Gosford census. It was organised primarily by Susanne Callaghan of the NPWS, Anthony Marchment of Port Stephens Council and yours truly. Shawn Capararo of the CMA was also instrumental in getting the census up and running.

We followed a very similar methodology to that undertaken at Gosford – basically volunteers positioned themselves at pre-determined sites and simultaneously broadcast the call of the BSC. Everyone would then listen and watch intently for a bird / birds to fly in or respond to the call. On the night we had around 25 volunteers stationed at 14 different sites, stretching from Pindimar around the western shores of Port Stephens to the west side of the Soldiers Point peninsula. Two of these sites were on private properties where we already knew birds existed (note that no call-playback was done at these sites to minimise unnecessary disturbance to those birds). **Many thanks to those volunteers who took part!** We had also planned to station some people

in boats, but the fierce westerlies put paid to that idea. The results were reasonably good, if a little predictable, with one potentially exciting outcome. Birds were seen / heard at 4 locations, as follows:

- Bobs Farm – two birds present at a known nesting site.
- Lemon Tree Passage – a single bird was seen on the foreshore.
- Karuah (1) – a single bird was initially heard and then seen on the northern foreshore of the Karuah River.
- Karuah (2) – a pair flew in to a survey site near the south-eastern edge of the golf course.

The Bobs Farm birds are a known pair. Unfortunately the known pair at Swan Bay weren't seen on the census night, which means that the pair seen near Karuah Golf Course (a previously unknown site) could have been those birds, as the golf course is approximately 3 or 4km from the pair at Swan Bay. It is also possible that it could be a "new" pair. Perhaps future surveys will tell us.

The Lemon Tree Passage bird is likely to be the same individual that frequents the vicinity of the enclosure where a pair bred for several years in that area. Some exciting news has just arrived that this bird seems to be "hanging round" with another bird, being the one that was captured at Horseshoe Beach last year and released (twice!) at Bobs Farm. It seems to have made its way up to Lemon Tree Passage now. It will be interesting to see what unfolds as both birds are suspected to be males!

The single Karuah bird was seen at a known location where a pair has nested in the past – we don't know if there is a second bird at this site but it is great to know that there is at least one bird there.

We are hoping to conduct these surveys twice each year in line with the same surveys that happen at Gosford. These will happen in March/April and July/August. If you are interested in being involved come and see me at a meeting or contact me via email:

[mickhbb@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mickhbb@yahoo.com.au)

**Mick Roderick**

## Ibis Nesting Hunter Wetlands Centre Wednesday 25 August 2010

An increasingly important aspect of our Club is the collection of data so that the birdlife of the Hunter Region is documented for all time. Well, the Australian White Ibis were nesting again at the Hunter Wetlands Centre (HWC) at Shortland after heavy rain filled the wetlands following a very long dry period. In 2009 they nested in October, but this year, 2010, with the wetlands full, nesting was well under way in July and by the time

the count took place on 25 August 2010, well-grown chicks could be seen in most nests. Altogether 415 nests were counted. Hunter Wetlands Centre thanks HBOC for leading the survey and we were pleased to have Boyd Carney, the site manager of HWC, join us on the day. Many thanks to HBOC members, Alan Stuart, Mike Newman, Greg Little and Jim Smart for donning gum boots and joining in on the fun.

**Ann Lindsey**

## Trip Reports

### **Will-O-Wynn – Murrays Run**

19 September 2010

After meeting up at Wollombi Park by 8am, seven members set off in convoy for Mulder's Apiaries in the lush green, narrow *Will-o-Wynn* valley off Murrays Run. The winter rains have certainly made this area so inviting to go birdwatching. My niece, Bronwyn, and her husband Greg have a Queen Bee breeding business almost at the end of the valley.

Upon arrival we were greeted by a pair of noisy Masked Lapwings guarding two lively little chicks darting off from their parents in all directions. Liz was soon busy listing the birds in view which included colourful Crimson Rosellas, King Parrots, lots of Willie Wagtails and nearby were White-browed Scrubwrens, nesting along the creekbed.

Bronwyn finished attending to her two spoilt horses nearby and joined us. We set off following the brook trying not to fall down the many wombat holes along the way. We arrived at a beautiful rainforest area at the end of the valley where we were entertained by male Golden Whistlers, Superb Fairy-wrens, Rufous Whistlers, a Crested Shrike-tit, a Sacred Kingfisher as well as Brown Gerygones. The enigmatic call of the Superb Lyrebird could be heard in the bush. On the way back we saw a Fan-tailed Cuckoo and re-spotted a sick Wombat out in the middle of the paddock. He was all mangy and Bronwyn went back to ring Wires, the wildlife carers.

Around midday we drove up the long winding and very steep driveway to Bronwyn's house, superbly perched on the top of the ridge surrounded by magnificent bushland and tall trees. We set up our folding chairs and picnic lunch on her back lawn where the shrubs in her native garden were attracting lots of Eastern Spinebills, Lewin's and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Red-browed Finches and some very active Little Wattlebirds.

Helen was very busy taking photos with her impressive camera especially when a pair of Brown Cuckoo-Doves flew over the house into a tall bottlebrush. Here, only a few metres from us, a courting scene was performed for a few minutes. The male was bowing and cooing, advancing towards the female as she side-stepped away and the next thing off she flew, leaving a very dejected prospective partner.

During the afternoon walk outside the garden by a little rocky gorge, Liz discovered a well hidden tiny neat nest decorated with patches of green lichen. A pair of Brown

Thornbills were busy flying 'to and fro' feeding young within the nest. I saw a family of Variegated Fairy-wrens the next day as well as a pair of beautiful Azure Kingfishers feeding over the brook.

On the way down to a huge lagoon, we spotted a Grey Goshawk in the distance and Eurasian Coots, Dusky Moorhens, Aussie Grebes, a Black-faced Monarch and a Darter kept us happy birdwatching for a while. We all agreed it had been a most enjoyable day and we wish to thank Bronwyn and Greg for their hospitality. We were sorry work demands stopped Greg joining us. Hopefully next time.

### **Melva Fisher**



Brown Cuckoo-Dove male - Helen Windon



Fan-tailed Cuckoo - Helen Windon

## Mid-Week Camp - Dorrigo Nat park

13 - 15 September 2010

Dorrigo National Park is a favourite birding site of mine that I have wanted to share with my fellow “mid-week birders” and other HBOC members for some time. I got the opportunity to do that recently. I don’t think there were any disappointed birders among those who attended. A lot of birds that can be seen fairly easily in Dorrigo National Park are hard work or just good luck around the Newcastle area.

Most “campers” (no one actually camped, but rather stayed in cabins or local motels) arrived on Sunday 12 September. The majority stayed at the Dorrigo Mountain Resort & Caravan Park (base for the camp) and were soon looking at about 10 King Parrots in the pine trees, Satin Bowerbirds including a bower, and Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos flying overhead, inside the park. There were a few minor hiccups with the accommodation in the park but they were sorted out, and attention then focused on bird watching.

There was no organized walk on the Monday so everyone went their own way. Some went down to the Rainforest Centre at dawn and were rewarded with Noisy Pitta, Logrunners, Bassian Thrush and Green Catbirds, amongst other birds. Others went to the Norman Jolly Memorial Grove. This is an area of old-growth forest left in its original state. They didn’t see a lot of birds but were awe struck by the beauty of the site. Another group journeyed up to Platypus Flat Camping area on the Nymboida River, and again were impressed by the place, but didn’t see any birds of note.

On Monday afternoon we all went to the Never Never Picnic Area for a bird walk. It was fairly quiet for most of the walk, although we did see White-throated Treecreepers, Eastern Yellow Robins, Eastern Whipbirds and Brown Gerygone. We all spent various lengths of time searching for a Paradise Riflebird we could hear calling. Despite all our efforts we didn’t spot it. There was a strong wind blowing through the trees above and this made for difficult birding.

At happy hour that night in the park we all recounted our sightings for the day and were all most impressed by the birds seen by those who had been to the Rainforest Centre, where we were to spend all of the next day. It seemed all the “special” birds were to be seen there. A lot of people decided to have an early start at dawn to make the most of the day - it was to be a fairly free-form day of birding at the Centre.

The “official” walk started at 8.30am. In a tree in the Centre car park a Wompoo Fruit-Dove was perched fluffed up against the wind and cold. It was a sunny morning but there was a strong wind and storm clouds were gathering. On beginning the walk we saw Superb Lyrebirds and Yellow-throated Scrubwrens, and shortly after Eastern Whipbirds, Brush Turkeys, and Red-browed Finches. Anthony and others had a good view of a female Paradise Riflebird which we heard quite a bit

about later. Everyone saw plenty of birds on their various walks.

We gathered again at 2pm at the Glade for an afternoon walk. Just before we were to set out the heavens opened and it rained for about 45 minutes. Luckily we were under a large picnic shelter area so were able to stay dry and wait it out. When we did venture back into the rainforest the cloud was blanketing the escarpment and everyone was struck by the sheer beauty of the scene: mist through trees, making it very atmospheric.

After all the sightings were gathered at the bird call that evening we had a total of 85 species seen and an extra 6 heard. Everyone said they enjoyed the scenic beauty of the area and the wide variety of birds to be seen - a successful camp.

**Garth Cooksey**

## Mid-week Outing – Ash Island

Tuesday 7 September 2010

The weather was expected to be overcast and rainy but still 21 faithful arrived in the front carpark for our expedition. It was overcast but no rain.

Our first port of call was Scotts Point and, unexpectedly, we had plenty of birdlife (no Pacific Golden Plovers yet). The trees that were planted several years ago are now fairly mature, flowering and supporting some good birds. We walked around to the casuarina copse and back. We had Mangrove Gerygones, Yellow and Brown Thornbills, 300+ Yellow-faced Honeyeaters (obviously on the move but not sure where to or from), good views of a Bar-shouldered Dove, a Spangled Drongo, a cheeky Golden Whistler (a must on an HBOC day) and plenty of water birds – Great Cormorants, 30 Little Black Cormorants, Pied and Little Pied Cormorants, Great Egrets and a few ducks. As well, we had a Swamp Harrier, Whistling Kite and a juvenile White-bellied Sea-Eagle (maybe a Tomago bird?). We also had a Caspian and Crested Tern.

Then we drove in convoy to the radar hut for morning tea and a walking visit to Nev’s Nook. Nev, who was our leader for the day, has done a tremendous job in his nook and we all hope the birds agree by using it in huge numbers this spring and summer. In the meantime, we had a Rufous Whistler, Olive-Backed Oriole, many Silvereyes (some Tas variety), Yellow Thornbills, a Grey Shrike-Thrush and, out on Milham Pond, 2 Red-capped Plovers dozing then feeding. We heard a loud Shining Bronze-Cuckoo and a Fan-tailed Cuckoo. There were “tons” of Grey Fantails at both spots.

Lunch at the radar hut was the official end of the day (as we can’t go over to Swan Pond, Wagtail Way etc (sob sob – hope the wagtails aren’t there) but some of us did a quick walk around the mangroves near the schoolhouse on the way out. Not much there and getting a little cold so off home. Overall, a total of 67 birds – and lessons on the meaning of pelagic and parameter from Lois.

A great day – thanks, Nev.

**Anthony Gooden**



## Oil spill in Newcastle Harbour affects shorebird roost sites

On 25 August 2010, a 21-year-old Liberian-flagged coal carrier, the *Magdalene*, accidentally pumped thick black oil mixed with ballast water into Newcastle harbour while de-ballasting to take on coal. The ship was moored in the South Arm of the Hunter River at a coal-loading terminal on Kooragang Island. According to the *Newcastle Herald* (27 August 2010) a ...“spokesman for the ship said it seemed a fuel tank had ruptured or leaked internally, sending fuel oil into a saltwater ballast tank”. Port Authorities were notified at about 2.20pm on Wednesday 25 August, and booms were deployed about three hours later. Clean-up crews recovered about 12 tonnes of oil but more escaped the booms and spread up the North Arm, coating mangroves, saltmarsh, driftwood, sand and shoreline boulders over a vertical zone of about 30cm, around the high tide level. As the inflowing tide carried the oil into the North Arm, strong westerly winds concentrated it along the eastern side of Stockton Channel, Fern Bay, Stockton Sandspit beach and even into the lagoon on Stockton Sandspit where its maximum extent was imprinted on saltmarsh. Fortunately, very little oil landed on Kooragang Dykes, the primary shorebird roost, nor the intertidal foraging areas behind the dykes. Also, further up the North Arm, Fullerton Cove, the most important shorebird foraging area, appeared to escape contamination. National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has been ensuring that thorough clean-up operations are conducted within Kooragang Nature Reserve (now part of the Hunter Wetlands National Park), which includes Stockton Sandspit, Kooragang Dykes, the North Arm north of Stockton Bridge and Fullerton Cove. It is a difficult task in a dynamic tidal environment and has necessitated numerous repeat visits to shoreline areas where oil is often covered or re-exposed by waves and tides. Oiled saltmarsh and mangroves have been trimmed, bagged and removed; oiled driftwood has been removed; oil globs in sand have been raked out and removed; oil globs on rocks have been wiped or the entire rocks removed. However, almost a month after the oil spill, more oil globs and oil-saturated sand and mud have been exposed at Stockton Sandspit and oil still needs to be cleaned from many rocks. The clean-up continues 4 weeks after the oil spill.

Sadly, 32 Australian Pelicans became contaminated with this heavy fuel oil, necessitating an extensive rescue and rehabilitation effort by NPWS and Wildlife Carers. Cleaning the fuel oil from the pelicans strips the natural oil from their feathers and it takes 2 to 3 weeks for the birds to re-oil themselves. These birds are being cared for at Taronga Zoo until they are fit for release. They will be banded prior to release so that we can learn more about their movements. Five oiled pelicans have been

observed at the Blackwall Bay, Woy Woy nesting colony – approximately 100km from Newcastle Harbour. In addition, an oiled pelican has turned up at Port Kembla, highlighting the extensive foraging flights these birds may make on a daily basis.

The ease with which this sticky, stinking, heavy, black oil spread into the North Arm from an apparently containable area in the South Arm highlights the need for both a more prompt and a more effective response by the Port Authorities to any future similar accident. It was indeed fortunate that the spill occurred before the majority of shorebirds had returned to the estuary from their northern breeding grounds allowing time for a significant clean-up effort. However, the clean-up continues and it is hoped that there is no long-term impact on the major foraging areas.

Liz Crawford



Oil on Stockton Sandspit - Tom Clarke



Oiled Australian Pelican being cleaned by [L-R] Cathy Gilmore and Jo Bird of Australian Seabird Rescue, Central Coast Branch - Doug Beckers

## Proposed Sisterhood for HBOC

A chance meeting in Blackbutt Reserve earlier this year with a tourist from Nova Scotia has led to a proposal from HBOC to formulate a "Sister Club" arrangement. Recognising a kindred spirit from the binoculars around her neck, I immediately got into talking birds with Pat McKay. She was in Newcastle visiting her daughter and son-in-law and was keen to see as many Australian birds as possible. An invitation to join the Belltrees mid-week IBA camp the following week was quickly accepted and Pat got to enjoy the cultural experience of sleeping in some very basic shearers' quarters, the company of a dozen of HBOC's keen members and the opportunity to see some quality bird species.

During conversation around the fire in the evening, we discovered that Pat was the secretary of the Nova Scotia Bird Society (NSBS). Alan Stuart floated the idea of making HBOC and NSBS sister clubs. This would basically mean that each club's name would appear on the Newsletter of the other club, we would exchange Newsletters and NSBS has also proposed that we exchange electronic introductions from each club featuring some of the birds from our regions, to be shown at a club night. Should club members from either club visit the other country they would automatically have an introduction to members from the sister club and probably some very good birding experiences would result.

Since her return to Canada, I have kept in touch with Pat by email and reported to her the recent oil spill in Newcastle Harbour affecting around 40 Pelicans. This was her reply:

"We have been having a really exciting birding week here in Nova Scotia. Last Saturday Hurricane Earl came roaring up the Eastern seaboard of the US and into Nova Scotia, striking land not far from Halifax. It brought with it lots of Caribbean Birds, including terns (5 different species), Laughing Gulls, Black Skimmers, a Magnificent Frigatebird, and a Brown Pelican! It was amazing to see all these birds which we can usually only see when we go to Mexico or Cuba or suchlike places on holiday, but a bit sad as well as it seems unlikely most of these birds will have the strength to get themselves back home. The Black Skimmer I saw was totally exhausted and was just sitting on a sandbar looking miserable. The Brown Pelican was luckier. He took himself to a local fast food restaurant where people started feeding him food scraps (hamburgers and chips) and the local wildlife carer was able to capture him. He is now in custody, being fed a more appropriate diet of mackerels while plans are made to have him flown back home."

**Joy Nicholls**

## Prevention of neck breaking and death by kamikaze birds

My sister, Jill Harris, who is a member of BA and lives in Tasmania where she is involved with shorebird counts, has recently drawn my attention to a bird protection glass. I have seen a Black-faced Monarch and a Fruit-Dove die from collision with glass. This made me aware of the need to try to prevent this form of bird death.

Apparently an estimation of bird deaths in collisions with glass surfaces is quoted as a staggering 100 million a year. This seems to me to be a huge number and may not be accurate.

Birds see reflections of plants or sky or even the environment on the other side of the glass but not the glass itself so they attempt to fly straight through and the subsequent collision can break their necks.

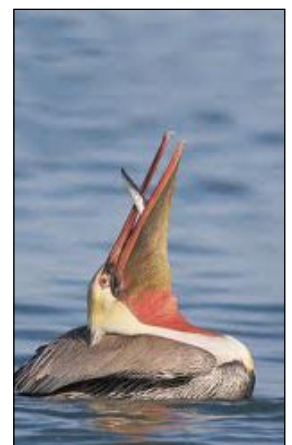
A German company, Glaswerke Arnold, has come up with a simple way to prevent accidents by producing a glass that appears clear to humans but is visible to birds. Birds possess the ability to see light in the ultraviolet spectrum. We do not see this colour spectrum. The company has worked on the principle that Orb-web Spiders protect their webs, which have taken many hours of labour to construct, by using a special UV-reflecting silk that birds can see and avoid. Using this evidence, the company has produced Ornilux Bird-Protection Glass. The glass has a patterned UV reflective coating making it visible to birds yet transparent to us. The glass was first introduced in 2006 and has been subsequently improved with a crisscross pattern.

This latest version has been developed in collaboration with the Max-Planck-Institute for Ornithology. Seems interesting and if effective could be used in buildings which are constructed across known bird flight paths.

### Paddy Lightfoot



Black Skimmer (above)  
Brown Pelican (right)





# Hunterbirding

Hunterbirding is an email group set up by HBOC that is run through the Yahoo Groups. It is a great way to keep in touch with the latest goings-on in Hunter Region birding. Members are able to report sightings, post questions to the group and get involved with group discussions on bird related issues. If you are interested in joining the group then please visit the HBOC website for details on how to sign up: <http://www.hboc.org.au/index.cfm?menukey=27>. You can choose either to receive individual emails or a single daily digest. The following article highlights some of the reports and discussions that have happened on hunterbirding within the last four months.

## June-July

The grip of winter did not make for gripping reading on hunterbirding. It appeared the majority of the membership had gone into hibernation, once the initial excitement of searching for Regent Honeyeaters and Swift Parrots had subsided. There were no further reports of the former, but some Swift Parrots were reported – at Paxton in June and from Wallamba Caravan Park in July. Highlights from limited email activity were largely in the form of observations, including Plum-headed Finch at O'Brien's Crossing in Goulburn River NP, an Eastern Reef Egret frequenting the Newcastle rock platforms, an active Osprey nest at Karuah and Glossy Black-Cockatoos in Medowie. An unusual report (in terms of location) of Banded Lapwing on Kooragang Dykes was of particular interest. The occurrence and possible increased distribution of Brush-Turkey within Novocastrian suburbia was also discussed.

## August

Thankfully the cobwebs were dusted off for August and interesting discussion on hunterbirding was back on the agenda. It appeared that some of the membership were migrating west to escape the doldrums of winter birding. A request for information was put out regarding birding in Round Hill NR and surrounds in central NSW. This was met with a positive response and lots of useful suggestions about where one should visit when making the effort to journey into the heart of the state. One particular individual was dreaming of a fairytale princess, rumored to be hiding a mere hop, skip and jump from Alice Springs. A request for a like-minded adventure-seeking soul was put to hunterbirding, with a successful outcome quickly achieved. Unfortunately, the trip did not come to fruition and there was to be no fairytale ending.

Discussion also turned to the migration of our feathered friends, and in particular to the Baillon's Crake.

Observations were made as to their notable absence during the winter period and the question was asked as to whether they migrate north from the Hunter, to winter in sunnier climes. This sparked an engaging debate as to their status in our region and in southern Australia in general. The outcome of this debate was that they are likely partially migratory, but may also appear to be absent in winter due to their "going to ground". As some birds are recorded in winter both sides of the divide, it is too hard to draw accurate conclusions. More research is clearly required into this enigmatic bird.

A request for information regarding assistance in selecting a suitable telescope with which to part with some hard-earned cash featured this month. As always, the hunterbirding stalwarts came up with some useful feedback and guidance. The big name brands received a hefty amount of recommendation - and rightfully so, as they make some exceptional pieces of optical equipment. In the end, much opinion was given and the enquirer was able to make a well-informed purchase. Other notable discussions included the quality of online weather maps available, with references to BoM, Willyweather and Weatherzone being made. The illegal trapping of parrots featured in the discussions and reference was also made to the rather unfortunate incidence of the Hunter Estuary oil spill.

Reports of interesting birds from around the region were also beginning to trickle in as the warming weather stirred the birders into action once again. Of particular significance was the location of a third site for Singing Honeyeater along Durrigere Rd. It now appears that they have a local stronghold in this distant corner of our region, with many a happy twitcher returning home with another Hunter tick under their belts. Another unusual locality for Banded Lapwing was reported this month, with a bird being located on Stockton Beach on 27<sup>th</sup>. Harrington Rainforest was on song, with Noisy Pitta, Wompoo Fruit-Dove and Varied Triller all present. The Radjah Shelduck was still hanging around in Bulahdelah and a recon trip to Gloucester Tops for the upcoming Rufous Scrub-bird surveys yielded two calling males, along with a host of other goodies. These included Olive Whistler, Crescent Honeyeater, Logrunner, Red-browed Treecreeper and Crested Shrike-tit. Good news was relayed from the Port Stephens Bush Stone-curlew survey as the bird in question was located at two sites, with one relating to a possible "new" pair.

## September

Well, spring had finally arrived this month, after a rather stuttering start. Reports of early spring arrivals featured heavily on the hunterbirding contributions.

## Hunterbirding continued

Channel-billed Cuckoo heralded its arrival on 7<sup>th</sup>, with Pallid Cuckoo and Eastern Koel reported shortly after on 9<sup>th</sup>. Dollarbird made an appearance on 21<sup>st</sup> and what could be Australia's first White-throated Needletail of the season was reported on 27<sup>th</sup> (albeit by an observer of very dubious character, who writes hunterbirding newsletter articles of very dubious quality!)

There were some interesting trip reports circulated this month, the highlight of which was a jaunt up Giants Creek Rd that discovered a second location for Southern Whiteface within the Hunter – and a very eastern location at that. Readers of the earlier articles will recall that until the beginning of this year, Whiteface had not been reported in the region for several years, so this report of a further population was most welcome. A host of excellent birds accompanied the star attraction, including Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail, Brown Treecreeper, Restless Flycatcher and Grey-crowned Babbler. A swag of returning migrants was also reported, such as Pallid Cuckoo, Rufous Songlark, Rainbow Bee-eater and White-throated Gerygone.

A “big-year” chasing mini-expedition included some reports from remoter areas of the region. It ventured into the heart of Wollemi NP, successfully locating Pilotbird, which is at the northern extremity of its range and had been specifically targeted. Painted Button-quail was also reported close to the edge of the NP and the journey back out. The expedition then headed to the north-west corner of the region – the only part of the recording area west of the divide. Here camp was set-up and after an official weigh-in, copious amounts of cheese were consumed,

amongst a host of other delicacies. The next day included reports of Inland Thornbill, Red-capped Robin, Western Gerygone, Brown Treecreeper and a Speckled Warble nest in Pine Ridge SF. A pair of Cockatiel was also seen nearby investigating a prospective nest hole. The return journey back down the Hunter included a visit to Martindale Creek, where an early returning Painted Honeyeater was reported, along with five White-backed Swallows.

Non-observational discussions were thin on the ground this month – clearly everybody was too busy birding! However, a thoroughly interesting workshop on White-fronted and Common Tern identification was had, sparked by a photograph of some “commic” Terns at Soldiers Point. It was noted that at this time of year, both White-fronted and Common Terns could be present within the region, which makes identification particularly challenging. It was great to have such an engaging discussion on what can be a difficult species set to identify and showcased what we can all gain from sharing our collective knowledge in an open forum such as hunterbirding. Other discussion included a perceived increase in Blackbird population within the Lower Hunter, particularly around Kurri Kurri and Cessnock. Finally, a report of Noisy Pitta at Gap Creek in the Watagans NP was very exciting. This species is few and far between south of the Hunter River during the breeding season, so it will be interesting to monitor the developments with these birds over the coming months.

**Dan Williams**

## Ornithological Database

Records for articles in the first three issues of “*The Whistler*” have recently been added to *OWL* (Ornithological Worldwide Literature). This is an entirely online database, located at <http://www.birdlit.org/owl/>. It is a joint effort between the [American Ornithologists' Union](#), the [British Ornithologists' Union](#) and [Birds Australia](#). The database is hosted by the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#), N.Y., USA.

*OWL* is a compilation of citations and abstracts from the worldwide scientific literature that pertain to the science of ornithology. A major attraction is its coverage of the ‘grey’ literature, which is not abstracted by commercial databases such as Zoological Record or the Science Citation Index.

Articles can be searched by author, topic, journal title or subject code. Subject codes are numerical and were devised to get around the problem of word choices in the selection of keyword topics.

**Margaret Stewart**

## Birds Australia's NSW and ACT Twitchathon - 30-31 October 2010

Founded in 1901, Birds Australia is Australia's oldest national conservation organisation, dedicated to the study and conservation of native birds and their habitats. To assist the organisation in raising some of its funds, it conducts a Twitchathon on the last weekend of October each year.

Over the past fifteen years, birdwatchers all over NSW and the ACT have formed into teams and raced about NSW and the ACT to find as many species of birds as possible over the 24 hour Twitchathon period. Each member of the team has found sponsorship from friends, family, colleagues or corporations for each species of bird seen or heard by each team. It has become an extremely competitive race and enormous fun! Team members have won some fantastic prizes, which have been sponsored by very supportive corporations and individuals. They have raised funds for projects associated with endangered species such as the Cowra Woodland Bird Survey, the purchase of a trailer and watering units for the Capertee Regent Honeyeater Volunteer Operations Group, as well as equipment for both the Educational Units at Gluepot Reserve SA and the Birds Australia Discovery Centre, Sydney Olympic Park; funds have been provided for the Hunter Shorebird Roost Site Protection Project on Ash Island and Gosford's Friends of the Bush Stone-curlew. Last year we provided funds for the monitoring by volunteers of the NSW Important Bird Areas. In the last three years the 2007 Twitchathon raised \$17,000, the 2008 Twitchathon \$23,000 and the 2009 Twitchathon raised \$24,000 for these projects.

This year's Twitchathon aims to raise money to assist both the Murray Region's Nature Conservation Working Group **Bush Stone-curlew Captive Breeding and**

**Release Project** and the Kangaroo Island, SA **Glossy Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project**. [See previous Newsletter for details of these projects].

### Alan Morris – Twitchathon Co-ordinator

The Hunter Region has a long and proud history with the Twitchathon. For many years now we have fielded the most teams and have dominated the higher rankings in the competition – it is not unusual for the top 3 teams each year to spend the majority of their time in the Hunter. One area that we haven't dominated is fundraising...maybe we can change that this year?

There are a few ways of becoming involved with the Twitchathon. The best way (in my opinion!) is by fielding a team, whether it be in the Main Race, Champagne Race or Children's Races (see me for details on the race types). This really gets you involved and apart from broadening the fundraising opportunities it is great fun. The next best way is to sponsor a team, either by a "per-bird challenge" or a pledged donation. There are numerous HBOC members that are entering teams so if you ask around enough you'll be sure to find someone who is taking part. Keep in mind that you are very welcome to come along to the Hunter Wetlands Centre on Sunday afternoon to witness the closing moments to several teams' Twitchathon campaigns and then share stories over a BBQ. Generally there are about 10 teams that finish at the Wetlands Centre and the place is a real buzz.

If you would like any more information, come and see me at Club Night or contact me at [mickhbb@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mickhbb@yahoo.com.au) or on 0421 761237.

**Mick Roderick**

### New Members

The Club extends a warm welcome to:

Craig Arms of Dubbo  
Tim O'Meara of Dudley  
Bruce and Lesley Hosken of Mulbring

We hope to meet you at Club outings and meetings

### FOR SALE

Geoma 65A Telescope with Tripod \$380  
Phone Joy on 49573612

### HBOC Membership Fees for January - December 2010

Membership Fees for 2010 are \$30.00 Single and Family, \$5.00 Junior  
Membership forms can be obtained at Club Night or by downloading from the website: [www.hboc.org.au](http://www.hboc.org.au)  
Please pay at Club Night or send cheque or money order payable to HBOC, PO Box 24, New Lambton 2305.



# Observations from Club Nights August - September 2010

Please note that all sighting reports published in HBOC's newsletter or its on-line forum (Hunterbirding) are unofficial and have not been confirmed by the club. Such reports are publicised in order that others can be made aware of the sighting(s) reported and have the chance to help verify them. Official records of bird sightings in the Hunter Region appear in the Annual Bird Report, for which written submissions supported by field notes and photographs are a vital part of the process for acceptance of locally uncommon/rare species.

Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer
Australian Brush Turkey	1	31.7.10	Blackbutt Reserve	C. & R. Goodenough
Australian Figbird	1juv	10.8.10	Wangi [township]	D. Johnson
Australian Figbird	4	11.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre [rainforest]	P. Lightfoot
Australian King Parrot	1	14.7.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
Australian Reed-Warbler	2	11.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Australian White Ibis	400+	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Black Swan	Pr+4dy	11.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Black-shouldered Kite	3	8.8.10	Kooragang [dykes]	M. Kibby
Blue-faced Honeyeater	2	12.7.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
Blue-faced Honeyeater	1nb	31.8.10	Warners Bay	C. Mann
Brahminy Kite	2	19.7.10	Lemon Tree Passage	R. Walker
Brahminy Kite	1	19.7.10	Soldiers Point	T. Clarke
Brahminy Kite	1	31.9.10	Forster	P. Durie
Brown Goshawk	1	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Brown Thornbill	Pr nest	21.8.10	Blackbutt Reserve	J. Nicholls
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	29.8.10	Ellermore Glen	K. Imrie
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	15.9.10	Speers Point [garden]	S. Hamonet
Double-barred Finch	26	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Eastern Osprey	1	5.2.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Eastern Spinebill	1	19.6.10	Wallsend	T. Clarke
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	2	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	2	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	8	Jul/Aug	Narone Ck Rd, Wollombi	J. & R. Grieg
Galah/Corella [hybrid]	1	Aug	Nulkaba	B. Laut
Glossy Black Cockatoo	6	25.8.10	Narone Ck Rd, Wollombi	J. & R. Grieg
Glossy Black Cockatoo	6	28&29Aug	Wye Point	V. Moon
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3	30&31Aug	Wye Point	V. Moon
Grey Butcherbird	2	9.8.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
Grey Goshawk	Pr nest	28.8.10	Blackbutt Reserve	J. Nicholls
Grey Goshawk	Pr	13.9.10	Hillsborough	R. Walker
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Little Corella	~80	Jun/Jul	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Long-billed Corella	40+2dy	20.7.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Magpie Goose	1	18.2.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Magpie Goose	51	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Masked Lapwing	2	30.7.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
Masked Lapwing	4+2dy	27.7.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Masked Lapwing	Pr+nest	18.8.10	Teralba	S. Hamonet
Masked Lapwing	Pr+2dy	14.9.10	Warners Bay	R. Walker
Musk Lorikeet	several	8.8.10	New Lambton	P. Lightfoot
Musk Lorikeet	>10	Aug	Speers Point [garden]	S. Hamonet
Northern Mallard	1	7.6.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Olive-backed Oriole	1	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Pacific Black Duck	10+7dy	11.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Pheasant Coucal	1	9.8.10	Mallabula	P. Hill
Pheasant Coucal	1	11.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre [Ironbark Ck]	P. Lightfoot
Pied Butcherbird	2	9.8.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
Pied Oystercatcher	49	Apr	Hawks Nest	Per M. Roderick
Pied Oystercatcher	2	8.8.10	Wangi Bay	D. Johnson

# Observations from Club Nights August - Sept 2010 cont

Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer
Pied Oystercatcher	2	10.8.10	Carey Bay	M. Turner
Rainbow Lorikeet	15+6dy	July	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Red Wattlebird	2	8.8.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
Red-rumped Parrot	2	9.8.10	Birmingham Gardens	R. Boyce
Restless Flycatcher	1	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Satin Bowerbird	4	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Sooty Oystercatcher	8	25.7.10	Stockton Sandspit	T. Clarke
Southern Emu-wren	Pr	3.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	M. & R. Stewart
Spangled Drongo	1	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Spangled Drongo	1	11.9.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Striated Heron	1	8.5.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Striated Heron	1	21.8.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Superb Fairy-wren	35	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Swamp Harrier	1	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Tawny Grassbird	2	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Variiegated Fairy-wren	7	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
Wedge-tailed Eagle	3	6.2.10	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	11.8.10	Bobs Farm turnoff	T. Clarke
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	2	12&27.7.10	Edgeworth	R. Boyce
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
White-browed Scrubwren	9	15.8.10	Hunter Wetlands Centre	P. Lightfoot
White-browed Scrubwren	1 stunned	14.9.10	Warners Bay	R. Walker
White-fronted Chat	4	6.8.10	Hexham Swamp [Smiths Ck]	D. Hirst
White-fronted Chat	9	13.8.10	Hexham Swamp [Smiths Ck]	D. Hirst
White-headed Pigeon	1	6-10.8.10	Kotara	J. Nicholls
Yellow Thornbill	4	6.9.10	Wingen [garden]	G. Newling
Zebra Finch	68	18.7.10	Mt Arthur Mine site	G. Newling

Please note that all sighting reports published in HBOC's newsletter or its on-line forum (Hunterbirding) are unofficial and have not been confirmed by the club. Such reports are publicised in order that others can be made aware of the sighting(s) reported and have the chance to help verify them. Official records of bird sightings in the Hunter Region appear in the Annual Bird Report, for which written submissions supported by field notes and photographs are a vital part of the process for acceptance of locally uncommon/rare species.

## HBOC Donation to Broome Bird Observatory



Toni Marsh modelling the new binoculars

Following the Club's raffle to raise money for Birds Australia's Broome Bird Observatory, a donation was sent to the Observatory, which was used to purchase four pairs of binoculars. As many of you will know, the current wardens at the Observatory, Toni Marsh and Peter Struik, are members of HBOC.

From Broome Bird Observatory:

*Hello Hunter Birders!*

*On behalf of all the staff and volunteers here at Broome Bird Observatory we would like to thank the club for the donations this year which have enabled us to purchase new binoculars for use in fieldwork and on tours. They have made our life up here so much easier.*

*We hope you all have a chance to come up and visit Broome in the near future.*

*Kind regards,*

*Toni, Peter, Mary, Ray and Margot  
2010 BBO Team*

# HBOC Activities - October to December 2010

DATE	EVENT	MEETING PLACE & TIME	CONTACT
<b>Wednesday 13 October</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: Dean Portelli – Hall's Babblers</b>
Tuesday 19 October	Tomago Wetlands Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Saturday 23 October	Hunter Wader Survey	8.30 am Ash Island 9.00 am Various locations as directed	Alan Stuart 4952 8569 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 4959 3663 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Grant Brosie 4934 7383 - Tomago
Sunday 24 October	Field Outing: Private property at Lochinvar	8.00am corner of Windermere Road and New England Highway, Lochinvar – park in Windermere Road	Pam Durie 4950 4897
Saturday - Sunday 30 - 31 October	TWITCHATHON Join a team & help raise money for Birds Australia	4.00pm Sat to 4.00pm Sun for a BBQ at Hunter Wetlands Centre (\$4.50 entry)	Mick Roderick 0421 761 237
Tuesday 2 November	Midweek outing: The Brush, Brunkerville	7.30am Mulbring Park, Mulbring	Leader: Margaret Stewart 4963 2029 (Note: Approx. \$5 admission)
Wednesday 3 November	Management Committee Meeting	6.30pm – 9.30pm Garden Suburbs School	All members welcome
<b>Wednesday 10 November</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: John and Margaret Samuel – Birding in Costa Rica</b>
Friday – Sunday 12-14 November	IBA monitoring for Flame Robin in Barrington Tops	Camp at Polblue on Fri 12 and Sat 13 November	Alan Stuart 4952 8569
Tuesday 16 November	Tomago Wetlands Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Saturday 20 November	Hunter Wader Survey	7.30 am Ash Island 8.00 am Various locations as directed	Alan Stuart 4952 8569 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 4959 3663 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Grant Brosie 4934 7383 - Tomago
Sunday 21 November	Field Outing to: Ash Island/ Stockton Sandspit	8.00am first car park across bridge on Ash Island	Contact to be advised
Monday – Wednesday 29 November – 1 December	IBA monitoring for Rockwarbler in Yengo NP (Greater Blue Mountains)	Camp on Mon 29 and Tues 30 at one of the Yengo NP camping sites	Alan Stuart 4952 8569
Wednesday 1 December	Management Committee Meeting	6.30pm – 9.30pm Garden Suburbs School	All members welcome
Tuesday 7 December	Mid-Week Outing Dudley/Fernleigh Track	7.30am Car Park at end of Ocean St Dudley	Leader: Max Blanch 4961 1655
<b>Wednesday 8 December</b>	<b>Xmas Club Night</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Topic: Members' Night</b> - bring your slides, anecdotes, videos and a plate to share the festive spirit
Sunday 12 December	Latham's Snipe survey at Pambalong NR and other locations	8.00 am Minmi Pub	Liz Crawford 4959 3663
Tuesday 14 December	Tomago Wetland Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Saturday 18 December	Hunter Wader Survey	6.30 am Ash Island 7.00 am Other locations as directed	Alan Stuart 4952 8569 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 4959 3663 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Grant Brosie 4934 7383 - Tomago