



# Newsletter

Hunter Bird Observers Club

*Affiliated with BirdLife Australia*

Issue No. 2/14 April 2014

- The Club aims to:**
- encourage and further the study and conservation of Australian birds and their habitat
  - encourage bird observing as a leisure-time activity



Eastern Curlew are among the first migratory shorebirds to depart the Hunter Estuary each autumn, flying north to their breeding grounds in eastern Siberia, northern Mongolia and northern Manchuria. The birds in this photo are part of this year's over-wintering flock of 30 Eastern Curlew, which will stay in the Hunter Estuary all year - approximately a third of the over-wintering flock present in the Hunter Estuary in 2000. HBOC's regular monthly wader surveys are documenting a population decline in this species.  
Photo - Chris Herbert

## CONTENTS

<b>President's Column</b>	2
New Members	2
BirdLife benefits from shoppers	2
<b>Club Activity Reports</b>	
Port Stephens Waterbird Survey	3
Hunter Estuary Wader Survey	3
Tomago Wetlands Survey	3
Second Great Sharpie Count	4
Old Brush	5
Morpeth and Tenambit	5
Ash Island & Stockton Sandspit	5
Broughton Island Surveys	6
Port Stephens Pelagic	7
Grahamstown Dam	7

## Birding Features

Soldiers Point Beach Stone-curlew update	8
Powerful Owl - a personal encounter	9
Red Knot flagged CUE	9
Research Project on Striated Pardalotes in the Hunter Region	10
Trans-Tasman Birding Links 1967 - 2000	11
Pre-school birding	13
<b>Future Activities</b>	
Tree-planting in Capertee Valley	14
BirdLife Seminar on IBAs	14
Directions to Easter Camp near Barraba	15
Directions to May outing at Hawks Nest	15
Directions to June Long Weekend Camp at <i>Windy Station</i> near Quirindi	15
September Midweek Camp at Old Bar	15
<b>Club Night &amp; Hunterbirding Observations</b>	16
<b>Club Activities April to June</b>	21

## President's Column

I had a bright idea recently about the pelagic birding trips I organise out of Nelson Bay. On so many occasions (including the pelagic that literally went out the day before I am writing this column) we find that activity is highest at the time that we arrive at the continental shelf. "We need to get out here earlier" I have thought to myself. So to that end I organised with our skipper for a 6am departure, rather than a 7am departure as we would normally do. Then someone reminded me that Daylight Saving ends the week before this "early leave" and that the net result would be that we'd be arriving at the shelf at the same time as the pelagic 2 weeks earlier – I'd been foiled by Daylight Saving! Oh well, it will mean we get an extra hour out there...

It made me realise that we birders go to a lot of effort to place ourselves at the best times to find birds, whether those times be a product of tides, the weather, the time of day in relation to sunrise etc. The birds are just going about their daily business and yet we have to make grand plans and set alarms and study tide timetables (hoping

that Daylight Saving has been taken into account!). It's refreshing to know that the birds are oblivious to all this fuss. I do wonder sometimes though if they are actually oblivious or if they become accustomed to having wide, glass circles aimed at them with a pair of beady eyes at the far end, or bits of chicken mince thrown their way. I'm sure our birdwatching does result in a lot of behavioural differences in the birds that we observe – but I'm also sure that this pales into insignificance compared to how the birds change our behaviour, especially some of us – I mean, I wonder if a rare or out-of-range bird feels all important as people arrive from far and wide for a look, often having more photos taken of it than some of us may have taken of us in a lifetime!

Just some musing thoughts as we enter the cooler months. Have a think about it – there are some amusing concepts in there.

**Mick Roderick**

## New Members

**The Club extends a warm welcome to:**

Norma Crawford of Salamander Bay  
Jarn Hodgson of Beresfield  
Steve Merrett of Budgewoi  
Margaret Pearson of Pelican  
Gerard Satherley of Forresters Beach  
Gary Tong of Valentine

**We hope to see you at Club meetings and outings.**



Golden-headed Cisticola at Hexham Swamp - Rod Warnock

## BirdLife benefits from supermarket shoppers

BirdLife Australia has teamed up with Ritchies (trading here in NSW as IGA) Supermarkets to support bird conservation!

When shopping at Ritchies (or IGA) using a community benefit card or keyring tag linked to BirdLife Australia, Ritchies will donate money back to us. These cards/tags can be used at ANY Ritchies store throughout VIC, NSW and QLD by BirdLife supporters and their families, friends, neighbours and so on. Use your card every time you shop, even if you only purchase a couple of items, it all adds up. Remember you can use your card at ANY Ritchies store, supermarket or liquor.

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If you would like a Ritchies Community Benefit card to support BirdLife Australia please contact Tanya Pyk on 03 9347 0757 or email [tanya.pyk@birdlife.org.au](mailto:tanya.pyk@birdlife.org.au) and include your postal address. A Community Benefit card, already linked to BirdLife Australia, will be sent to you.

Go on shop at Ritchies and BirdLife Australia will benefit!

**Tanya Pyk**

Fundraising Officer for BirdLife Australia

## Activity Reports

### Port Stephens Waterbirds Survey

14 February 2014

Doesn't time roll around quickly! All of a sudden it's mid February and time once again for the summer survey of Port Stephens waterbirds. For anyone who is not familiar with these surveys, we do a boat-based survey of all the important habitat for waterbirds (especially waders) in the Port. The survey is done in conjunction with the National Parks & Wildlife Service and is assisted by the Great Lakes-Port Stephens Marine Park Authority. Those organisations provide most of the boats and the skippers – we just have to kick back, count birds, and enjoy ourselves!

This year, there were 13 surveyors from HBOC, in 6 boats. As in previous surveys, the Kooragang Wetland Rehabilitation Project provided one of the boats. Because of the tide time, we had the luxury of a later start than usual. Everything went very smoothly on the day, and we recorded more than 3,000 waterbirds including 1,230 shorebirds and 1,799 cormorants, egrets and herons, gulls and terns.

We found a total of 162 Australian Pied Oystercatchers – once again confirming the importance of Port Stephens for this species which is classified as Endangered in NSW. HBOC's regular surveys have shown that Port Stephens is the NSW stronghold for Pied Oystercatchers. We also found 37 Sooty Oystercatchers (classified as Vulnerable in NSW) – this was one of our highest summer counts of them. Their numbers have risen in recent years and Port Stephens has become important for this species too. For both the oystercatcher species, most of the birds in the Port seem to be adults and I think this reflects that Port Stephens is a holding zone for birds waiting for a breeding site to become available. Their NSW status appears to be constrained by a lack of undisturbed beaches where they can breed.

We found almost 1,000 migratory shorebirds, in most cases in numbers similar to previous years. However, only 190 Eastern Curlews were present. For many decades, Port Stephens has been an internationally significant location for this species, with an average summer count in recent years of 300 birds which corresponds to 1% of the total world population. The low count this time partly reflects environmental pressures on the species throughout its flyway route. What is of additional concern is whether the decline may also reflect that conditions within Port Stephens have become less suitable for them. We can but hope that 2014 is an aberration.

After the survey, we went to the NPWS office in Nelson Bay to debrief while enjoying lunch overlooking the marina. Then we met with the new NPWS local operations manager to talk about the Port Stephens surveys, opportunities to tweak them, how to make better use of the results, and how they linked with other waterbird surveys that HBOC does (Hunter

Estuary, Worimi Conservation Lands). It was an open and productive discussion that will lead to positive outcomes.

**Alan Stuart**

### Hunter Estuary Wader Survey

15 February 2014

2014 is the 15th year of our monthly wader surveys - what a fantastic achievement for HBOC - and many thanks to the dedicated members who have assisted with surveys over the years and especially to those who are stepping up to take on new areas.

Surveys started in April 1999, when Big Pond on Kooragang Island was still a viable site for shorebirds. Gradually industrial development took over the site and it is now completely obliterated by Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group's (NCIG) huge coal loader. Deep Pond, also on Kooragang Island, is facing a similar fate - it is being cut in two by a new rail line to service the increasing appetite of the NCIG Coal Loader. And, if PWCS' Coal Terminal 4 goes ahead, Deep Pond will be further developed. In addition to the destruction of these habitats, part of Swan Pond on Ash Island will be filled to support a new industrial rail line, also servicing the coal loaders.

However, there is some good news too - thanks to the opening of floodgates on Hexham Swamp and Tomago Wetlands, these areas are being inundated by tidal waters on a regular basis and shorebird habitat is being regenerated.

So, HBOC now monitors six areas in the Hunter each month: Ash Island (several locations); Kooragang Dykes (by boat); Stockton Sandspit (plus Fern Bay, Stockton Channel and Fullerton Cove beach); Deep Pond; Tomago Wetlands; and Hexham Swamp. In addition to the Hunter surveys, HBOC also monitors shorebirds around Swansea Channel (the inlet to Lake Macquarie) and Girumbit National Park (the western end of Port Stephens).

Help with surveys is always appreciated - don't hesitate to get in touch with any of the contacts listed in the Activities if you would like to assist or get some practice with identifying shorebirds.

**Liz Crawford**

### Tomago Wetlands - now part of the monthly Hunter Estuary surveys

15 February 2014

An enjoyable survey at Tomago this morning for Peggy and me. Started with great views of a Grey Goshawk before we even got to the wader sites. At Crake Swale

## Activity Reports cont.

between 1500 and 2500 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers appeared from the reeds in the distance and headed east in three high swirling flocks (a great sight and sound). They left us at 8.45 am and were recorded at Kooragang Dykes by another survey team after 9.10am, when 1810 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper were counted. Then the highlight of the survey, 3 Black-necked Storks (1 adult pair and a juvenile) dropped in on Samphire Flat while we were finishing Rice Paddy. On the drive out we also got great views of a juvenile Striated Heron.

Some of the numbers for Tomago:

- 588 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper + 1500 to 2500 that headed east
- 501 Grey Teal
- 119 Chestnut Teal
- 70 White-faced Heron
- 54 Masked Lapwing
- 42 White Ibis
- 25 Pelican (although only 1 on the ground)
- 23 Common Greenshank
- 5 Marsh Sandpiper
- 1 Red-necked Stint
- 1 Pacific Golden Plover
- 16 Purple Swamphen
- 2 White-fronted Chat
- 3 Southern Emu-wren
- 1 Eastern Great Egret
- 1 Pacific Black Duck
- and 3 Black-necked Stork

A great day at Tomago.

**Steven Cox**

### Second Great Sharpie Count

15 February 2014

On the February wader / waterbird surveys we had teams at all of the key sites in the Hunter Estuary. Therefore, in theory, it was a good opportunity to try and get close to a total count of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers in the estuary. Unfortunately the theory had some major holes; namely that Sharpies are almost impossible to count using 'traditional' counting methods (i.e. stand

and count them on the ground). We did get at least one significant result and one very interesting result.

The significant one was that we had >1500 at two locations. The interesting one is that we had identical counts at those two sites. As I wrote a few days ago, I counted 1718 Sharpies on Hexham Swamp. Nev McNaughton nearly fell over when he tallied up his count for Tomago - 1718 Sharpies! He also thought that was an undercount as the birds were feeding and were widespread, but he didn't get the feeling that it was as big an undercount as Hexham, which I am confident was in the 100s.

So, with the two counts of 1718 combined with the 2 birds at Stockton Sandspit we had 3438 Sharpies on Saturday 15 February 2014. On 10 December 2013 we had counted 3558 Sharpies (see February 2014 Newsletter for details)

On the topic of counting Sharpies, I have since had a chat with very experienced shorebird observers / counters who have done this for many years in several countries and they said that the only way to get a full count of Sharpies is to count them when the entire flock flushes. When there are so many this is impossible so capturing them in images is the best way.

**Mick Roderick**

**Footnote:**

On 26 February 2014, we observed thousands of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers on the sandbanks exposed as the tide falls in the North Arm of the Hunter River, opposite the Kooragang Dykes (see photo below). They were foraging and roosting on the sandbank and provided an ideal opportunity for counting. The birds were counted rapidly in order to cover the entire flock before they took off to fly into Fullerton Cove for foraging. At least 4,500 Sharpies were counted. Mick Roderick checked Hexham Swamp shortly after this count and found 304 Sharpies there. So the minimum count for the Hunter Estuary on that day was 4,804 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers.

**Liz Crawford & Chris Herbert**



A small portion of the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper flock on the sandflats in the North Arm of the Hunter River on 26 February 2014 - Chris Herbert

## Activity Reports cont.

### **Old Brush**

16 February 2014

Despite the iffy weather forecast, twelve brave birders gathered along Lieberts Lane keen for a Sunday morning stroll around *Old Brush*. Once we were sure that there were going to be no late arrivals, we made our way to the end of the lane, parked the vehicles and gladly provided our gold coin donations. Although it was damp underfoot, we managed to avoid the rain until we were within the rainforest, which then kept us largely protected.

Having picked up both Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Wonga Pigeon around the studio, the rainforest goodies continued to be collected once under the canopy. A few Bassian Thrushes were observed hopping around the leaf litter and some skulky Yellow-throated Scrubwrens were seen by those persistent enough amongst us. Birding as a dozen-strong procession along the narrow forest trails presented some difficulties in locating birds and communicating their whereabouts to each other, but we managed reasonably well given the circumstances.

There were several “heard only” ticks, as one would expect in the dense gloomy environment. These included Superb Lyrebird, Green Catbird, Satin Bowerbird, Crested Shrike-tit, Leaden Flycatcher, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo and a single call from a Noisy Pitta. Rufous Fantail, Black-faced Monarch, Eastern Yellow Robin and Large-billed Scrubwren were seen well by most. These observations were all made in between the obligatory routine leech inspection stops. With the wet ground the slimy homing missiles were out in force. Many were intercepted before gorging themselves, but there were unfortunately one or two casualties!

Some of the more interesting occurrences of the day included a Grey Goshawk which perched briefly in a tree and several Rainbow Bee-eaters, which seemed a little out of place buzzing around in the mist above the forest canopy. Perhaps the most exciting encounter though was that of a Brown Antechinus going about its business in a tree next to the track. With the rain persevering throughout our stay we were forced to take shelter under cover by a pond where many of us indulged in a late morning tea. The miserable weather made people reluctant to hang around for any further birding, but those that did were rewarded with views of an Azure Kingfisher. All up it was a thoroughly enjoyable morning despite the elements.

**Dan Williams**

### **Morpeth and Tenambit**

Tuesday 4 March 2014

The midweek birdwatchers met at Ray Lawler Park, Morpeth for an early morning stroll around the ponds and parkland. Recent rains greatly improved the bird

count of previous weeks and apart from the many species of common waterfowl and ducks were Nankeen Night-Herons, Australasian Grebe, Rufous Whistler, Olive-backed Oriole, Rufous Fantail, Spangled Drongo, lots of Silvereyes and a Mistletoebird.

We then backtracked to Earthcare Park at Tenambit which was quite a contrast to the previous location being in a naturally kept state. The tall Spotted Gum / Ironbark forest housed many parrot species including a pair of Galahs busy doing some house cleaning. Also spotted were Australian King-Parrots, Rainbow Lorikeets, Long-billed Corellas, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Eastern Rosellas and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets. Some of the group saw a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo and a Spangled Drongo was also at this site.

The ponds by the pipeline were disappointing, yielding only a pair of Black Swans, although Little Grassbird and Golden-headed Cisticola were heard in the reeds. It was near midday.

After lunch some stalwarts continued onto the Bolwarra wetlands. The water level was much higher than in early February and there were very few waders. Several Pink-eared Ducks remained. Our overall total for the day was 65 seen and 2 others heard.

**Dinah Stehr**

### **Ash Island and Stockton Sandspit**

Sunday 16 March 2014

Despite the big storm on the previous Saturday night, 14 keen people, together with our leader, Ann Lindsey, turned up at Ash Island. Our first excitement was seeing a White-bellied Sea-Eagle fly over with an eel (brekkie). For convenience (?) and car safety, we moved to the Radar Hut and car pooled to Swan Pond.

Along the way, we had good views of White-breasted Woodswallows, Rufous Whistler, a Pacific Baza and Brown Goshawk and several (juvenile) Sacred Kingfishers.

At Swan Pond, the majority of birds were Black-winged Stilt but there were also some Black-tailed Godwits, a couple of Avocets, Marsh Sandpipers – all better viewed through the scopes that had been brought along. As well, we had wonderful close views of a cheeky White-fronted Chat and a roosting Brahminy Kite.

We then adjourned to Stockton Sandspit as Ann wanted us to be there for the highish tide. And it was well worth forgoing our morning tea (maybe). We had several hundred elegant Red-necked Avocets on the lagoon and many Bar-tailed and some Black-tailed Godwits –in varying degrees of breeding plumage. A couple were really brilliant .

A quick visit around the corner to closely view 21 well-

## Activity Reports cont.

disguised Grey-tailed Tattlers on the rocks then back to the beach area as the tide receded. Ann estimates we had around 3000 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers as well as Curlew Sandpipers and even at least 3 Marsh Sandpipers – which really stood out against the others. As well, we had several hundred Pacific Golden Plovers – again, many were in various degrees of breeding colour – especially, the eye line and gold flecking in the feathers.

We had sunny and pleasant conditions to start but later a very healthy wind blew up, moving the birds along and leaving a couple of hardy birds to have lunch and reflect on a beautiful day's birding – around 65 bird species in total.

**Anthony Gooden**

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### Broughton Island Surveys

24 - 26 March 2014

How do you report on the autumn survey of bird life on Broughton Island, coordinated by National Parks and Wildlife Service, with surveyors from HBOC?

It was:

- fairly long - 3 days and 41 surveys (there are 11 sub-areas to survey);
- quiet, peaceful, quaint accommodation;
- exciting - boat ride on the open sea;
- beautiful milky soft sunrises over the Pacific Ocean;
- spectacular, irregular landscape with dramatic cliffs, islands and secret beaches;
- stingrays and turtles swimming near the beach;
- surprising number of raptors - constantly challenging to compare and identify the juveniles and the mature birds.

We set off from Nelson Bay at 10am in overcast weather with 4 experienced twitchers (3 veterans of Broughton) and me, a “fledgling” of HBOC. Fortunately, no sea-sickness. Very comfortable accommodation - far better than camping. Orientation is confusing - paths are overgrown and littered with shearwater holes and tripping vines.

Then we started surveying - four sessions over 3 days. Similar habitats produced similar birds. The ones in grass and shrubbery were commonly Golden-headed Cisticolas, Tawny Grassbirds, Silvereyes and Brown Quail (often noted by their distinctive calls before being sighted). The beach residents included Crested Terns, Silver Gulls, Red-capped Plovers and Sooty Oystercatchers. Raptors included Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Osprey, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Black-shouldered Kite, Swamp Harrier, Spotted Harrier and Whistling Kite.

But then there were some little surprises: the Pipits - mostly flitting around our beach campsite - were very

tame and with a lonely Willie Wagtail. The Ruddy Turnstones scratching about the dying kelp, busy turning over the litter, followed by tiny Red-capped Plovers and a few Double-banded Plovers - with us carefully noting their distinctive markings. Over three days we came to know them, where we might expect to see them, what they would be doing and what they might call.

I learnt that a Spangled Drongo is not a dumb person in an Elvis suit... But I do love that name ‘turnstone’ - because that's the kind of thing they do - turning over the beach... And I have a new bird to add to my list.

If you get a chance to go to Broughton Island, take ankle-protecting boots, long pants, a good hat, bug spray and a head torch if you want to see penguins at night. At times it is physically challenging but it's well worth the effort.

Thank you Alan Stuart, Neil Fraser, Greg Little and Tony Adlide.

**Judy Smith**

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### Broughton Island

24 - 26 March 2014

Broughton Island is an island that is recreating itself following eradication of rabbits and rats. After returning on Wednesday, I realised how privileged I was to be part of the group that surveyed the island. Bird watching in a group creates an experience that you can talk about later on, whenever you reconnect with that person. We bird-watched and talked birds continually. How can you explain the thrill of seeing a new bird or reconnecting with one not seen for a long time? A bit like the feeling you get from meeting up with old friends you haven't seen for ages.

I'd like to share with you my bird of the trip. It was the Spangled Drongo. I saw it in one of the few trees on the island. It was easily spotted because of its unusual display flight and of course its fish tail. I immediately recalled previous sightings and thought of how it had earned the name. In the past, sightings of this bird had always brought me good luck and this sighting was no exception. When Alan later dropped me off at Broadmeadow, my train home to Sydney was waiting.

I like to think of birds as special friends that I have come to know and love, some more than others and that's OK. Birds never get to ask for anything, but sometimes they do need our help. It's always rewarding to be with people who share a common interest.

**Tony Adlide**

Note: The Spangled Drongo was a first sighting for Broughton Island. It was seen on both 25 and 26 March 2014.

## Activity Reports cont.

### Port Stephens Pelagic

Sunday 9 March 2014

Boat: M.V. Argonaut, skippered by Ray Horsfield

In contrast to the pelagic in late February, this pelagic enjoyed classic early autumn conditions with east/north-east winds experienced for the entire day with very little swell and mild seas. A strong downhill current out wide combined with the northerly winds pushed us rapidly southwards, with us drifting nearly 5 miles in the first hour at the shelf. Water temperature at the shelf was a very warm 26 degrees. In stark contrast to our last trip, no one was seasick today.

This was possibly the best pelagic run out of Port Stephens, laced with highlights that we would normally be happy to see on any given day by themselves, but combined they made for an exceptional day at sea. There were more cries of “stop the boat!” than a Tony Abbott election campaign speech. Easily the stand-out for the day was a totally unexpected adult Light-mantled (Sooty) Albatross that gave frustrating ‘going away’ views as it flew south en route to the shelf. The other highlights were more ‘expected’ at this time of year in warm water and included singles of Streaked Shearwater, Tahiti Petrel, an intermediate phase Kermadec Petrel and a White-necked Petrel (the latter 2 seen now on consecutive trips). A Black Petrel was photographed but not actually seen or called on the day. An adult Sooty Tern was nice, as were 2 Long-tailed Jaegers including a stunning adult with tail streamers half grown out. “Good” numbers of Flesh-footed Shearwaters was another highlight.

It was an extremely enjoyable autumn pelagic with 23 species seen outside of the heads, including 14 species of Procellariiformes with 5 species of petrel and the Light-mantled Sooty Albatross to cap it off nicely.

**Mick Roderick**

### Grahamstown Dam

Tuesday 1 April 2014

Perhaps the sighting of the day as we set off along Rangers Road, Raymond Terrace, was a family of Cicadabirds flying around in the treetops on the western side of Grahamstown Dam. Most of the group managed to see them, but only a couple of lucky people spied a Southern Emu-wren. Despite much vigilance this did not reappear. A light fog descended on us and made it difficult to identify which particular grebes were in the rafts we could see on the dam.

The fog lifted by morning tea and we went around to Ferodale Road, Medowie, on the eastern side of Grahamstown Dam, where we disturbed a Pheasant Coucal. A nearby farmer came to check on why we were on Hunter Water land. When he discovered that we



Light-mantled Sooty Albatross. Photo: Michael Kearns



Streaked Shearwater. Photo: Dick Jenkin

Editor's Note: If you would like to go on a pelagic, please contact Mick Roderick by email: [mick.roderick@birdlife.org.au](mailto:mick.roderick@birdlife.org.au)

were innocent birdwatchers he showed us his Diamond Python living in the top of one of his orange trees. Both Rufous and Golden Whistlers were also seen in this area.

A total of 69 species were either seen or heard for the day including many waterbirds on the dam. There were also a good number of raptors recorded – Grey and Brown Goshawks, Black Falcon, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Whistling Kite and a Black-shouldered Kite hovering nearby as we had lunch. Thanks to Ray McLean who has done the Hunter Water induction course and led this outing.

**Margaret Stewart**

## Soldiers Point Beach Stone-curlew update

The Beach Stone-curlew (BSC) pair that has been resident in Port Stephens for about 4 years now has again returned to feeding on the western shore of Soldiers Point after their summer 'breeding absence' during which time they reside on Dowardee Island.



The adult Beach Stone-curlews on Sunset Beach Feb 2014 photobombed by a Chestnut Teal. All photos - Trevor Murray

I saw the pair on 27 February 2014 feeding and just standing around on the tidal flats in front of Sunset Beach and Pearson Park. I assumed that their breeding attempts this year were unsuccessful but was happy to be proved wrong a few days later when on 2 March 2014 an immature bird was seen with the two adults in the same area.



This year's chick with adults March 2014. Immature bird is at rear of group. To me the most obvious markings of an immature bird are the patterning on its feathers.

By the time they appear on the mainland, the immature birds are at a stage where they seem to be just tolerated by the adult birds rather than being actively nurtured. I have observed in previous years an adult striking with

its beak to 'encourage' further independence and quite submissive behavior on the part of the younger bird. This independence of immature birds is, by this time of year, also demonstrated by several days' sightings over a week of adult BSCs on the mainland but no sign of the younger bird. The immature bird did however return to the mainland some days after this period of sightings.

Even though the young bird is capable of flight of at least 200 m and independent feeding, the photo below may show that some life skills are learned regarding danger. The photo shows the adults looking up at a White-bellied Sea-Eagle that was at least 200 m away, while the chick is not showing the same interest.



Adult Beach Stone-curlews watching a White-Bellied Sea-Eagle.

I have no doubt that the BSCs breed on Dowardee Island. I have observed them on the island often during the period when they absent themselves from the mainland. When I see the adults on the island they exhibit their head-bobbing nervous behaviour and nervy single-note calls when I have been much further away from them than would cause the same behavior when they are on the mainland beach. The BSCs have also been recorded on Dowardee Island during at least one Port Stephens Waterbird Survey. 2014 is now the third year in a row in which the birds have returned to the mainland with a grown but immature chick.

**Their Future.** The Beach Stone-curlew is critically endangered in NSW and the pair at Port Stephens are the southernmost breeding pair in NSW. I think the reason why the Soldiers Point / Dowardee Island combination is so good for these birds is the easy plentiful feeding (mainly Soldier Crabs) provided on the tidal flats coupled with a short flight to the relative isolation of Dowardee Island. Dowardee Island has been home to a significant oyster enterprise, now abandoned, and currently it doesn't get many visits from people or their pets.

For the past three years there has been a proposal before Port Stephens Council (PSC) to extend the Soldiers Point marina across the channel toward Dowardee Island. If successful, this proposal will reduce the natural isolation that the island has enjoyed. There has been significant community opposition to this proposal on many grounds



## Soldiers Point Beach Stone-curlew update cont.

apart from environmental ones. There have been many submissions on environmental grounds including those from HBOC, Cumberland Bird Observers Club, Port Stephens Econet and many individuals. There are two signs in place along the western shore of Soldiers Point with both Council and National Parks (NPWS) logos on them (as well as one of my photos of the BSC).

The signs declare that the area is critical habitat for the BSC. Yet even though there is acknowledgement of critical habitat, as of my last recent contact with PSC there has been no requirement placed on the developer to provide a species impact statement. The council is the assessing authority who will make a recommendation to the Joint Regional Planning Panel which makes the

final decision. The Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage gets no say on this issue unless they are invited to have a say by PSC. NPWS also don't get involved as it is 'off park' to quote a term used by them. I don't have a lot of confidence that the welfare of the Beach Stone-curlew will be placed as high on the agenda as it should be.

Should this development proceed and the birds become displaced by human activity I would hope that somewhere nearby would appeal to them as they are always a pleasure to see.

**Trevor Murray**

## Particular birds



Powerful Owl -  
Chris Herbert

### Powerful Owl - a personal encounter 13 December 2013

At 3:34am this morning I had the pleasure of being awoken from my slumber by the forlorn call of a Powerful Owl. I had great views of the bird for 30 minutes from my back verandah as it perched in an *Angophora costata*. It called pretty much for an hour straight until the Kookaburras drowned it out with their regular summer 4:30am pre-dawn cacophony.

The bird was very attentive to every noise, bird call or other, and I was really quite surprised at how flexible and agile it was in the head and upper body. It didn't appear to be hungry either as at one point I could see eye-shine from four ringtails and one brushtail possum. The possums were 'carefully' active in lower vegetation, including at the base of the tree from which the owl was calling!!

All this under the light of the Milky Way and 5 shooting stars.....

**Lucas Grenadier**

Right: Red Knot flagged on Siberian breeding grounds with white flag engraved CUE - photographed in the Hunter Estuary by Chris Herbert

### Red Knot Flagged CUE

As documented in the October 2013 Newsletter, a Red Knot with a white flag engraved CUE and a lime band above the flag was observed in the Hunter Estuary on six occasions between 18 September and 9 October 2013. This bird had been caught and banded as a 4-day-old chick on 7 July 2012 near Meinypilgyno, South Chukotka, Siberia (62deg 33 min 33 sec N; 177 deg 08 min 05 sec E).

From geolocator information, it was known that this bird's father spent the 2011/12 northern winter (austral summer) in New Zealand. So it seemed likely that the young bird might follow in its father's footsteps and migrate to New Zealand to spend the rest of the austral summer there.

Tony Habraken, a keen wader watcher and flag searcher in New Zealand, finally found Red Knot CUE on 24 March 2014, at Karaka on the North Island. It was in company with "at least 4000 Red Knot rearing to head north on migration" and had well-developed breeding plumage.

Pavel Tomkovich, the Russian researcher who banded the bird as a chick, will be watching for this Red Knot on the Siberian breeding grounds and we will be watching for its safe return to the Hunter in September 2014. Let's hope we can track the life stages of this international traveller.

**Liz Crawford and Chris Herbert**



## Research Project on Striated Pardalote subspecies in the Hunter

I would like to ask you to help me in a Research Project I would like to start.

My recent sightings in the Singleton area of the Striated Pardalotes *Pardalotus striatus substriatus*, which is commonly thought of as a 'Western Bird', have aroused my curiosity. The Handbook of Australian and New Zealand Birds (HANZAB) gives the range description as "east to the upper Hunter Valley". Therefore, are these birds, which are south east of their known expected range, uncommon or perhaps overlooked? I think overlooked. I have seen mention in the NSW Handlist (Morris *et al.* 1981) which gives "east to Maitland" as part of their range.

The Hunter Region is unique in many ways. On this occasion I can think of nowhere else in Australia where so many subspecies of Striated Pardalote occur.

I am keen to work out the distribution and status of the various Striated Pardalote subspecies in the Hunter Region. To do this, I need people to submit their records to me. Note that I am only interested in records where you have actually **identified the bird to a subspecies level**. Please do not tell me that you saw a Striated Pardalote but couldn't work out which one it was.

What I would like to do is start collecting records specifically on the 3, or possibly 4, types of Striated Pardalotes we get in the Hunter Region. These could be either written records or perhaps photographs or a combination of both. The information I would like to collect would first and foremost be: date; number of birds present; and location (co-ordinates are best, road and post number if you prefer).

Secondary information: it is also thought that these subspecies interbreed so gathering any records of this in the Hunter would also be very useful; also any information on displaying, aggression to one another/ other birds or breeding activity would be more than welcome.

I don't mind if you use the scientific name when reporting your findings or if you prefer the common name. I have included a list below - please use whichever name you are most comfortable with bearing in mind the most important thing I need to clearly know is which bird you are sending information on.

Yellow-tipped Pardalote or *Pardalotus striatus striatus* or simply *P. striatus*

Western Striated Pardalote or *Pardalotus striatus substriatus* or *P. substriatus*

Eastern Striated Pardalote or *Pardalotus striatus ornatus* or *P. ornatus*

Black-headed Pardalote or *Pardalotus striatus melanocephalus* or *P. melanocephalus*



*Pardalotus striatus substriatus* October 2012 - Trevor Murray

Identification can be a 'little tricky' in the field, but of help may be an article first posted on Hunterbirding by Mick Roderick and then reproduced by Dan Williams in the Hunterbirding section of the October 2012 Newsletter. This can be found on the HBOC website or by following this link:

[http://www.hboc.org.au/resources/documents/HBOC\\_Newsletter\\_Oct12.pdf](http://www.hboc.org.au/resources/documents/HBOC_Newsletter_Oct12.pdf)

Summary of features provided by Mick Roderick:

- Striped crown + yellow wing spot = *striatus* = migrant from Tassie.
- Striped crown + red wing spot + broad white wing-stripe = *substriatus* = 'western bird'
- Striped crown + red wing spot + narrow white wing-stripe = *ornatus* = our 'common local bird'
- Black crown = *melanocephalus* = 'northern bird'

Data collected will be made available to the BirdLife Australia Atlas and HBOC.

I believe this may further our understanding of what we probably see as 'just a common bird' so please lend a hand. Next time you see a Striated Pardalote please consider treating these birds as separate species, taking an extra few minutes to specifically identify the bird and send your sighting to [petealexander@bigpond.com](mailto:petealexander@bigpond.com) Thank you

**Peter Alexander**

*Pardalotus striatus substriatus* feeding young at a site near Broke in November 2011 - Trevor Murray



## Trans-Tasman Birding Links - 1967 to 2000

Since 1967, we have made several visits to New Zealand. We have met ornithologists, volunteer environmentalists and bird watchers, and a number of people with strategies for conservation. This article deals with various aspects of these encounters from 1967 to 2000. Much of the text is based on Max's reports in the *Hunter Wetlands Trust* until 1990 and its successor, *The Wetlander* up to 2000.

Max's first trip to New Zealand was in 1967, when as a High School Inspector in Papua New Guinea (PNG), he represented the PNG Department of Education at the ANZAAS conference in Christchurch. He still remembers the shock from changing from the heat of Port Moresby to the windy chill of Christchurch and cold feet when he had to take off his shoes for examination by Customs. A walk to the beach, wearing a jumper and a jacket, in the hope of seeing a few birds, revealed a few Red-billed Gull (Tarapunga - our Silver Gull) and men, women and children in bathers, despite the freezing wind.

The conference presentations were interesting, but from a birding point of view, the few days spent on an organized bus tour with other people from the conference, provided valuable information on bird habitat. We travelled from Christchurch across the flats, up the mountain to Arthurs Pass, down through the glacier country to Queenstown, across to the coast and back to Christchurch, with an expert New Zealander to keep us informed. Max has memories of seeing Keas in the mountain and glacier country. He fished the braided Rakaia River and caught a couple of very big fish, that we call Australian Salmon, at the mouth of the Rakaia, where he saw Black-backed Gulls nearby. Another trip to Lake Ellesmere, where he caught a large brown trout, did not foreshadow how very important Lake Ellesmere would become for birding in the future.

Max and the Wetland Centre's Project Egret Watch forged new links with New Zealanders when tagged Cattle Egrets began arriving in NZ in winter and departing in spring. A Cattle Egret, tagged Number 80 as a nestling on 22 January 1987 at Shortland, was the first Cattle Egret tagged at the Wetlands Centre to make its winter migration overseas. After crossing the Tasman it was seen by two scientists on 27 May 1988 at Lake Ellesmere. Kathleen Harrison, of Canterbury, reported that Number 80 had been seen in the same area in March 1988 and again in early April. She became a long-term member of Project Egret Watch, reporting the happenings at Lake Ellesmere. In 1990 she made a month-long birding trip to Australia and her report was published in the *Hunter Wetlands Trust*. Tagged Cattle Egrets from Queensland and Northern NSW had been reaching the land of the Long White Cloud but no tagged bird had been seen in consecutive years.

We first came in contact with Barrie Heather through his leadership of the NZ Ornithological Society's Cattle Egret Project, and as Editor of the NZ Journal *Notornis*.

He wrote a letter suggesting a coordinated approach across the Tasman to try to solve the mysteries of trans-Tasman migration. *Notornis* published four Project Egret Watch articles on issues from our research that were critically important for NZ: *Maddock (1990) on Cattle Egret: South to Tasmania and New Zealand for the winter, Notornis 37(1):1-23; Maddock and Bridgman (1992) on Cattle Egret Migration and Meteorological Conditions, Notornis 39(2):73-86; Maddock and Geering (1993) on Cattle Egret Migration in South-eastern Australia and New Zealand, Notornis 40(2):109-122; and Bridgman and Maddock (1994) on Meteorological conditions and Cattle Egret Migration: an update, Notornis 41(3): 189-204.*

August 1995 was sad for both NZ and Australian bird watching and research when Barrie Heather passed away after a long illness. He was a stalwart of NZ Ornithology, and co-author of *Heather and Robertson: Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*, and was still listed with Robertson in the later *1999 Hand Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*, which introduced key bird-watching sites. He and his team made an important contribution to the Project Egret Watch study of the movement of Australian Cattle Egrets across the Tasman. We had enjoyed meeting them on a number of occasions and learned a lot from a field trip that he and his wife Rosemary took us on. Rosemary, who is still active in NZ field work, has hosted us on our subsequent NZ trips, and spent time with us on her visits to Australia.

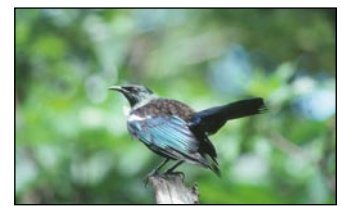
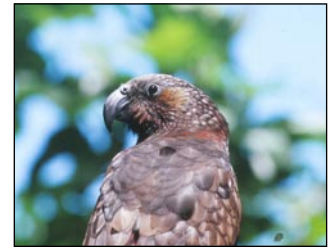
Chris Gaskin (illustrator) and Philip Temple (author), who produced children's books involving birds in NZ requested permission from the Wetlands Centre for Chris to collect information and images on the Cattle Egret at Shortland to use in a book on the history of how an egret in Australia flew to NZ, became established there and joined the nesting Kotuka (White Heron). Chris's work was welcomed and the beautifully written and illustrated book was published in 1995, an example of bird studies helping education of children.

In 1990, we had our first introduction to New Zealand's complex environmental programs to save populations of native birds from precipitating to extinction. Until the invasive arrivals of Maoris and Europeans, native species did not have to cope with being eaten by humans or being devastated by feral bird and animal species introduced by immigrants. We have read and heard admissions from Maoris of their role in the extinction of species such as the Moas, referred to in literature as "flightless birds endemic to New Zealand". Our first encounter with the NZ efforts for conservation was in a trip to Kapiti Island, off shore from Paraparaumu Beach (north of Wellington). It was referred to in the *Robertson & Heather 1999 Hand Guide to the Birds of New Zealand (p.11)*. It was the "*1965ha New Zealand premier nature reserve, cleaned of all mammalian pests and a large range of forest birds abound*". Kapiti was run by the Department of Conservation with strict conditions to maintain the quality of the reserve. We

## Trans-Tasman Birding Links - 1967 to 2000 cont.

were privileged to be granted a place on the boat from Paraparaumu Beach to the island, where we spent a day. We disembarked from the boat, walked past a large number of Black-backed Gulls (Karoro) on the shore and noted a flightless Weka (Woodhen) (a species with little known about its behaviour), pottering about the walk up to the buildings (see photos). We learned that Australian Brush-tailed Possums and rats were pests wiping out wildlife. Essential plants for native birdlife in NZ had been completely destroyed on the island and the NZ Christmas Bush (**Pōhutukawa**) which provided nectar for birds, was in the process of restoring the forest. As well as the Black-backed Gull and the Weka, our camera captured a Tui (a popular traditional honeyeater) and the large parrot Kaka (see photos). The **Heather and Robertson Field Guide** (Plate 60) reported that the Kaka, a protected threatened endemic, abundant when Europeans arrived, had declined to localised flocks by the early 1900s and that numbers on Kapiti had increased in the decade since possums were eradicated. A search revealed some Red-crowned Parakeets (Kakariki) but not in an easy place for a photo. A Saddleback surprised us in a way that was too fast for the camera. We had sat down for lunch and Heather was opening a biscuit wrapped in a crackling paper when a Saddleback (Tieke) appeared out of the bush, landed on her hand, grabbed a crumb and flew off!!! We also caught glimpses of a Bellbird (Korimako) calling.

In 1990 Max attended the International Ornithological Congress, held in Christchurch, where he presented a poster on Project Egret Watch research. Barrie Heather had organised a get together of NZ Cattle Egret-watchers to meet with Queenslander Neil McKilligan, who was tagging Cattle Egrets in the Toowoomba area and Max who was tagging at Shortland and Seaham (NSW). The eleven New Zealanders who were interested in Cattle Egrets and had come to the Congress, came from both the North and South islands. It was great to meet so many. It was a particular thrill to catch up with Kathleen Harrison from Canterbury, who had found our Shortland No. 80 in 1988 and reported it again in 1989 and Stella Rowe (Waikato) who reported the bird tagged in Ballina she had seen at Rangiriri. The Congress field trip started at 8am under grey blustery conditions, changing, at Mount Hutt, to a howling, freezing gale, screeching down the Rakaia River from the mountains (the same river that Max had fished in 1967). Morning tea enabled him to watch South Island Pied Oystercatchers (Torea) being colour banded at a farm, and have a close view of Wrybills and breeding Black-backed Gulls. We had lunch at Lake Heron, so named because an early explorer found numbers of Kotuka there. Unfortunately none were present, most likely because they were all at the nesting colony on Waitangi Taona River on the west coast. At Lake Clearwater, he had a close view of a Great Crested Grebe (Puteketeke) nesting – only one of 250 in NZ. The nest was on the shore, protected by willows and a wire-netting fence, through which three busloads of Congress people peered. Max finished his day in a jetboat with other Congress people, skidding



Clockwise from top left: Heather stepping aboard the boat for Kapiti from Paraparaumu Beach; Black-backed Gull, one of the first birds seen by Max & Heather on Kapiti; Kaka, a large, somewhat inquisitive parrot; Tui, which benefited from the recovery of flowering plants on Kapiti; Tui, which can defend its feeding areas and aggressively drive off intruders; Weka, a flightless bird. All photos Max Maddock.

round shallow fast runs between shingle banks at high speeds, with a gale blowing to sting eyes and freeze noses. After the conference Barrie Heather and his wife took us to Horowhenua to meet one of his colleagues who showed us round the Cattle Egret haunts there, as well as some migratory waders.

Later in 1990, Max was in NZ again to present a keynote address at the opening of the Miranda Naturalists Trust Centre. During lunch, a Pied Stilt (Poaka, our Black-winged Stilt) could be seen pottering outside on the new artificial island in the pond called 'Lake Widgery'. During the visit Max met several egret watchers, including one who had seen the bird tagged by Jack Willows at Ballina, NSW, which had the tag on only one wing. Stuart Chambers took Max to view the large flock of Cattle Egrets at Churchill Road, in the Waikato, where Jack's bird had been seen very frequently. The flock was sheltering in a hollow from a very strong wind and generally facing left. Unfortunately Jack's tags were only on the right wing.

In August 1991, Max attended the environmental education conference and afterwards spent a wonderful day with the Palmerston North Representative for the NZ Ornithological Society and two others tracking down a flock of 120 Cattle Egret which had been frequenting the flats around the Whirokino Bridge near Foxton. Eventually we found the flock across a farm by stalking ankle deep in sloppy mud, churned up by Friesian Cattle, which the egrets had adopted. A careful study confirmed at least 120 egrets but alas no tags. A bonus

## Trans-Tasman Birding Links - 1967 to 2000 cont.

for the day was a visit to the Manwater Estuary mouth near Foxton to see a flock of overwintering godwits and four Wrybills. One or more Cattle Egret-watchers had seen a Cattle Egret chick, Shortland Tag No.322, arrive in the Northland area of NZ and Shortland's Tag No. 256, which had not been seen since 1988, had been located at Rangiriri.

Year 2000 was the most intensive one to date for our birding in NZ. It involved taking a car on the ferry to the South Island, exploring the east coast to Christchurch and across to Queenstown via Wanaka, diversions to Doubtful and Milford sounds, north to the West Coast via Haast, then north via the Glaciers to Greymouth, Westport and return to the ferry for the trip home. En route we saw plenty of feral bird species originally imported by immigrants or by Acclimatisation Societies. For example, Mallards were first introduced from Australia in 1867 and Acclimatisation Societies liberated many species up to about 1918. About 100 Black Swan were introduced between 1864 and 1868. By 1880 they were well established in the wild (*Heather and Robertson Field Guide* p.267). Feral species were prominent and often were mixed with the fewer native species. For example, the beach of the lake at Wanaka had large numbers of native Red-billed Gull (Tarapunga) in the water and loafing on shore in company with large numbers of feral Mallards.

The highlight of the trip was our visit to the Wautanguoto Nature Reserve near Okarito on the Southwest Coast, the only breeding colony of the Kotuka, or Great White Heron (we called it Great Egret, or more recently Eastern Great Egret) and the supporting habitat of the species. The colony was first discovered in the 1860s, suffered destruction by vandalism, survived the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and was gazetted in 1967 "for the preservation of fauna and flora in order to safeguard the habitat of the white heron". As it was close to the end of the season when we visited, there was only one active heron pair and 7 pairs of Royal Spoonbill. Getting to the colony involved a minibus ride to the Waitangir-taona River, 20 minutes in a very fast jet boat, a tractor ride across a small peninsula, a trip on a pontoon boat and then a forest walk to a view across the river to where the egrets and spoonbills were nesting. Craig Miller from the NZ Department of Conservation (Hotiki Office) took us on a follow-up visit in a flat-bottomed roofed boat to the large shallow tidal Okarito Lagoon. It was still relatively undisturbed, protected from threats of development and had extensive flats at low tides for the Kotuka colony to forage for chick food. We had to battle a strong, bitterly cold westerly (a not unusual NZ situation) and saw only one Kotuka, but the flats were thronged with oystercatchers and godwits.

**Max and Heather Maddock**

## Pre-school Birding - from a proud Grandfather

### Extracts from St Stephen's Pre-school Newsletter **Birdwatching Week Two**

The interest in birds continues. Some lovely books are coming in and collections of feathers. Amanda B. read us some of her own. Milly brought in a bird whistle which made a lovely sound when filled with water. It looked very much like a Channel-billed Cuckoo. She also used her mum's phone to take photos of some cockatoos outside her house. Well done Milly! We tried writing with quills as they would have done in the 'olden days' using black paint instead of ink. Noah told us he had watched a Lyrebird on TV making the sound of a chainsaw. It was a David Attenborough film so we watched it as well. Amazing - so definitely worth looking on YouTube at this one.

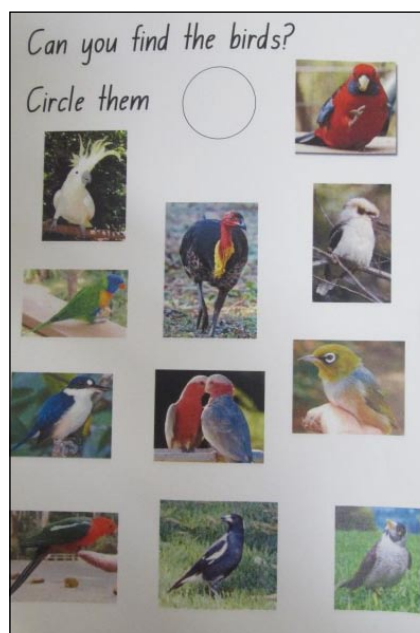
To further this interest the children have talked about making a list of birds. They are excited to become 'St Stephen's Twitchers'. We will use binoculars and have a clipboard with pictures of birds for them to check as they see them (some may just happen to be pictures of that bird placed in our trees and bushes)! They are very excited about this project.

### **Birdwatching Week Three**

What a busy week it was with all our bird watching. There has been so much interest in the birds so I would really like to thank the parents for contributing and helping your children collate their lists. They were so excited to arrive at pre-school with their bird lists and then to head off with their bird sheet to mark off as they discovered pictures of birds in trees around the garden. This was a wonderful exercise in developing observation skills. They worked both individually and as small groups.

We have been drawing birds, looking at and reading bird books, taking note of nests and nest boxes as well as lots of bird photos provided by parents. Sophia even shared a number on a USB with us from her grandfather. Gabrielle showed us some lovely photos of a Butcherbird's nest that had been in their garden during Spring.

This has been an amazing topic which will continue next week as we tally the different birds found in their lists. What will be the number one seen?



## Future Activities - BirdLife Southern NSW

### Tree Planting in the Capertee Valley

2 - 4 May 2014

Why not join us in the beautiful Capertee Valley in May for a weekend of fresh air, spectacular scenery, and fun while making a positive contribution to the future of the Regent Honeyeater and other threatened and declining woodland birds. New recruits are always welcome.

**When:** Planting on Saturday 3 May 2014. As always, we are looking for volunteers to help prepare and lay out the planting stock and guards on Friday 2 May and help with any follow-up work on Sunday 4 May.

**Where:** Capertee Valley which is west of Lithgow, NSW. The property on which we will be planting is in Huntingdale Road (not far from the Glenowlan bridge) and the planting site is on the Capertee River, adjoining important riverine habitat that is regularly used by Regent Honeyeaters.

**Food:** While you will need to cater for your own breakfasts and lunches, a Saturday evening meal is available in the Glen Alice hall at a cost of \$31 for adults and \$6 for children under 12. The evening meal, which is provided by the Glen Alice Community Association, is a great opportunity to socialise with your fellow planters, meet the locals and support the community.

**Accommodation:** Options range from camping at Glen Davis (free) to staying in one of the cottages in the valley that have been booked by us for the weekend. The cost of cottage accommodation in May will be \$80 (i.e. \$40 per night per person for 2 nights' accommodation) or \$45 pp for a single night. Alternatively, you may prefer to arrange your own hotel, motel or other accommodation in the nearby towns of Capertee, Kandos or Rylstone and environs. Please note that camping in cottage grounds is not permitted except with the express approval of the owner(s).



### Free Woodland Bird Identification and Survey Methods Workshop!

On Sunday 4 May (8:30am-11:30am) there will be a BirdLife Australia Woodland Birds workshop in the valley for FREE. Come and help us plant some trees for woodland birds and then enhance your birding skills on the Sunday. The venue is the Glen Alice hall. You will need to register separately for the workshop; please contact [mick.roderick@birdlife.org.au](mailto:mick.roderick@birdlife.org.au) 0421 761 237 or [dean.ingwersen@birdlife.org.au](mailto:dean.ingwersen@birdlife.org.au) 0409 348 553.

**RSVP:** If you would like to join us in May, please contact Pixie at [southernnsw@birdlife.org.au](mailto:southernnsw@birdlife.org.au) as early as possible, particularly if you want to book cottage accommodation.

**Questions:** If you have any queries about the weekend please contact Pixie at BirdLife Southern NSW on 02 4376 1001, 0429 464 403, or email [southernnsw@birdlife.org.au](mailto:southernnsw@birdlife.org.au)

**Iain Paterson**

### BirdLife Southern NSW Seminar

#### “Protecting Our Birds: Research & Important Bird Areas”

**When:** Saturday 26 July 2014, 9am to 4pm

**Where:** Building 22 Newington Armory, 1 Jamieson Street, Sydney Olympic Park

**Cost:** \$25 Students \$20

**Registration:** email [southernnsw@birdlife.org.au](mailto:southernnsw@birdlife.org.au)

#### Program

**Registration:** 8.30am - 9.00am

**Morning Sessions:** 9.00am - 1.00pm

**Guy Dutson** *Why monitor Important Bird Areas; and a review of the Australian IBA program*

**Julie Kirkwood** *Monitoring and conservation of Australian IBAs – working with Birdlife branches*

**Morning Tea** 10.30am -11.00am (provided)

**Graham Pyke** *Masked Lapwings in suburbia: Rescue and Research*

**Richard Major** *Declining bird populations inside salt marsh nature reserves*

**Mike Newman** *Addressing the challenges facing amateur groups monitoring IBAs*

**Lunch** 1.00pm -1.45pm (Not provided - bring your own lunch)

**Afternoon sessions 1.45pm - 4.00pm**

**Mike Newman** *Rufous Scrub-bird *Atrichornis rufescens* monitoring at the extremities of the species' range in New South Wales (2010–2012)*

**Rod Kavanagh** *Mudgee-Wollar IBA: a case study*

**Carol Proberts** *Monitoring honeyeaters at a migration bottleneck - The Greater Blue Mountains IBA*

**Alan Stuart** *IBA monitoring in the Hunter Region – a horses for courses approach*

**Forum with all speakers.**

## Future Activities - HBOC

### Directions to Easter Bird Camp near Barraba

Friday 18 April to Monday 21 April 2014

From Newcastle travel along the New England Highway (15) to Tamworth. Follow road signs to Manilla. From Manilla follow signs to Barraba for about 14km.

For those staying at the Oakhampton Homestead shearers' quarters:

Turn right at signs reading Split Rock Dam and Oakhampton Road.

Travel 5km then turn left at signs reading Oakhampton.

Travel another 1km then turn left into Oakhampton Homestead.

For those camping at Borah Travelling Stock Route go past Split Rock Dam sign towards Barraba.

About 10 km north of the Split Rock Dam and Oakhampton Road signs you will come to a bridge. Before you cross the bridge, immediately turn left into Borah Creek Road, signposted Tarpoly Reserve. Tarpoly Reserve begins 100m over the first grid. Borah Reserve is 6.5km south of Tarpoly Reserve. Cross the second grid at the western end of Tarpoly Reserve, proceed 6.5km across two more grids and enter Borah Reserve which is 0.9km long. At the southern end of Borah Reserve, take track to left down to the creek (before a fifth grid), where there are mature riverine trees. This is where we will be camping.

It could be possible to collect a Bird Routes of Barraba brochure at Tamworth, Manilla or Barraba information centres.

**Lorna Mee**

### Directions to Outing at Hawks Nest

Sunday 16 May 2014

Drive to Tea Gardens and continue along Myall Street to Hawks Nest over the Singing Bridge. Turn left at the T-intersection at the Hawks Nest Golf Course and drive north along Mungo Brush Road for about 700m to the northern end of the golf course. Park beside the road. This is the meeting place.

For further information, please contact **David Bertram** on 0428 431 188

### Directions to Windy Station for June Long Weekend Camp

Saturday 7 - Monday 9 June 2014

Drive via the New England Highway to Willow Tree and 2km further north turn left onto the Kamilaroi Highway towards Quirindi. 1.2km along this road you leave the

**Hunter Region.** The total distance from Newcastle to Quirindi is approx. 228km which could take about 3 to 3.5 hours. There is a nice coffee shop in Quirindi called the Coffee Pot.

If you drove into Quirindi you will need to head back south out of town and take the Kamilaroi Highway turn to the right; if you do not want to go into Quirindi take the left turn before town (follow signs to Gunnedah). Travel 6.4km northwest on the Kamilaroi Highway, then turn left into Bundella Road, which is also signposted to the Airport. Travel approx 12km to Pine Ridge village. About 1 km beyond Pine Ridge village and immediately before the Mooki River, turn left onto Windy Road. Travel 10km along Windy Road to *Windy Station*. This is a Romani Pastoral Company property. As you enter the property you are re-entering the **Hunter Region**.

Camping location: Just before the homestead and "station" grounds turn left at Karrabee cattle sheds. When you have turned left, there are little yards and a cattle feed lot on your right; go through 2 grids. Travel 9.2km. GPS camping location is 31° 35' 13"S 150° 26' 07"E. Please bring all your own water and take all your rubbish home with you.

If you get to gates, you are in Pine Ridge State Forest, and you have gone too far.

If it is raining we call it off and find a new location as the Black Soil becomes gluey in rain.

If anyone wants to stay in town instead of camping, Quirindi is the closest town to *Windy Station*.

**Lorna Mee**

### Midweek Sept Camp at Old Bar

Monday 15 Sept to Wednesday 17 September 2014

We will be basing ourselves at Lani's on the Beach, Old Bar Road, Old Bar which has the following accommodation:

- Two-bedroom villas (sleep 5), cottages (sleep 4), and family lodges (sleep 4)
- Powered and unpowered campsites

Prices for cottages etc. range from \$99 to \$125 per night for two people. Bookings can be made by phoning 6553 7274, online at <http://www.lanisonthebeach.com.au/> or emailing [info@lanisonthebeach.com.au](mailto:info@lanisonthebeach.com.au)

We will be organising a trip to Cattai Wetlands on the Tuesday. Among other sites to visit are Saltwater National Park and Mudbishops Point.

Enquiries to **Robert and Margaret Stewart** 4963 2029.

# Club Night & Hunterbirding Observations

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 published 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	Source
Australasian Bittern	1	14/02/2014	Edgeworth	G. O'Connor	Hunterbirding
Australian Crane	4	8/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Australian Hobby	1	11/02/2014	West Toronto	T. Marsh	Club Night
Australian King-Parrot	3	25/12/2013	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Australian Owllet-nightjar	4	1/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	162	14/02/2014	Port Stephens	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Australian Shoveler	c.40	1/02/2014	Muswellbrook WWTW	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Australian Shoveler	158	15/03/2014	Kooragang Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Australian Wood Duck	2+7juv	18/12/2013	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Australian Wood Duck	2+6juv	25/12/2013	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Australian Wood Duck	c.180	2/02/2014	Ringwood Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Azure Kingfisher	1	27/03/2014	Gloucester	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Banded Lapwing	17	2/02/2014	Ringwood Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Banded Lapwing	5	2/02/2014	Phoenix Park	Richard	Hunterbirding
Banded Lapwing	2	5/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Banded Lapwing	5	5/02/2014	Phoenix Park	D. Stehr	Club Night
Banded Lapwing	5	8/02/2014	Phoenix Park	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Barking Owl	1	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Beach Stone-curlew	2	27/02/2014	Soldiers Point	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Beach Stone-curlew	2+1imm	28/02/2014	Soldiers Point	R. McNeil	Hunterbirding
Black Falcon	2	11/03/2014	Scone	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Black Honeyeater	2	2/02/2014	Ringwood Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Black Kite	1	2/02/2014	Phoenix Park	Richard	Hunterbirding
Black Kite	1	6/02/2014	Bolwarra Wetlands	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Black Kite	1	7/03/2014	Scone	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Black Kite	1	10/03/2014	Wallalong	P. Slack	Club Night
Black-fronted Dotterel	3	9/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Black-necked Stork	1	11/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	J. & B. Cockerell	Club Night
Black-necked Stork	2	7/03/2014	Hexham Swamp	G. O'Connor	Hunterbirding
Black-necked Stork	1	15/03/2014	Hexham Swamp	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Black-winged Stilt	18	5/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Blue-billed Duck	1	6/02/2014	Warka Water Works	R. McDonald	Club Night
Blue-faced Honeyeater	2	31/01/2014	Belmont	G. Feletti	Club Night
Blue-faced Honeyeater	1 imm	28/02/2014	Speers Point	S. Hamonet	Club Night
Blue-faced Honeyeater	5	12/03/2014	East Maitland	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Blue-faced Honeyeater	3	31/01 - 07/03/2014	Belmont	G. Feletti	Club Night
Brahminy Kite	1	5/02/2014	Ash Island	N. McNaughton	Club Night
Brahminy Kite	1	24/02/2014	Hexham	J. Smart	Hunterbirding
Brahminy Kite	1	16/03/2014	Ash Island	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1	8/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1	4/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Brush Bronzewing	3+	15/01 - 08/02/2014	Fernleigh @ Belmont	R. McDonald	Club Night
Buff-banded Rail	1+dy	22/12/2013	Elmore Glen Ret. Vill.	K. Imrie	Club Night
Bush Stone-curlew	heard	2/02/2014	Singleton Heights	A. Simple	Hunterbirding
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	13/02/2014	Dungog	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	1	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	27/03/2014	Gloucester	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Comb-crested Jacana	2	8/02/2014	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Comb-crested Jacana	2	17/03/2014	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Common Blackbird	2+1dy	28/03/2014	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Common Greenshank	7	15/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Diamond Firetail	1	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Dollarbird	2+2dy	10/12/2013	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Dollarbird	6	3/02/2014	East Seaham	J. Musicka	Club Night
Double-banded Plover	1	4/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Double-banded Plover	3	13/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Double-banded Plover	1	20/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Double-barred Finch	20+	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Dusky Moorhen	1+1juv	16/01/2014	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Dusky Woodswallow	5+1dy	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding



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Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer	Source
Eastern Barn Owl	2	1/02/2014	Ringwood Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Eastern Grass Owl	1	7/02/2014	Ash Island	L. Mee	Hunterbirding
Eastern Koel	1juv	8/02/2014	Kotara	J. Nicholls	Club Night
Eastern Reef Egret	1	25/03/2014	Diamond Head	J. Cockerell	Hunterbirding
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	1	8/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	5	15/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Emu	4	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Emu	1	9/03/2014	Widden Valley	G. Ayre	Hunterbirding
Flame Robin	40+	17 - 21/02/2014	Barrington Tops NP	T. Clarke	Hunterbirding
Fork-tailed Swift	c.25	16/02/2014	Aberdeen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Fork-tailed Swift	40+	16/02/2014	Singleton Heights	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Fork-tailed Swift	5+	16/02/2014	Tighes Hill	T. Clarke	Hunterbirding
Fork-tailed Swift	2+	7/03/2014	Muswellbrook	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Gang-gang Cockatoo	10	23/03/2014	Laguna	D. Stehr	Hunterbirding
Gang-gang Cockatoo	2	24/01 - 12/02/2014	Freemans Waterhole	T. Marsh	Club Night
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2+1dy	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	10/03/2014	Murrays Beach	P. Struik & T. Marsh	Hunterbirding
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	4	24/01 - 12/02/2014	Freemans Waterhole	T. Marsh	Club Night
Glossy Ibis	18	2/02/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Glossy Ibis	5	21/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	L. Mee	Hunterbirding
Glossy Ibis	c.90	7/03/2014	Hexham Swamp	G. O'Connor	Hunterbirding
Gould's Petrel	1	26/03/2014	Broughton Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Great Crested Grebe	12	28/03/2014	Walka Water Works	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Grey Goshawk	1	22/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Grey Plover	1	20/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Grey-crowned Babbler	2	12/02/2014	Maitland Golf Course	D. Stehr	Club Night
Grey-crowned Babbler	3+	23/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	A. Carlson	Hunterbirding
Hoary-headed Grebe	c.40	28/03/2014	Walka Water Works	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Hooded Robin	2	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Hooded Robin	2	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	1	30/01/2014	Largs	A. Simple	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	1	1/02/2014	Cattle Lane	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	2	1/02/2014	Ridglands Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	2	6/02/2014	Pitnecree	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
House Sparrow	c.50	10/03/2014	Wallalong	P. Slack	Club Night
Jacky Winter	6+1dy	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
King Quail	3	6/02/2014	Ash Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
King Quail	1	7/02/2014	Ash Island	L. Mee	Hunterbirding
King Quail	2	8/02/2014	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	2	14/01/2014	Wallsend	T. Kendall	Club Night
Latham's Snipe	5	6/02/2014	Bolwarra Wetlands	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	4	6/02/2014	East Seaham	J. Musicka	Club Night
Latham's Snipe	5	8/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	2	January	East Seaham	J. Musicka	Club Night
Little Black Cormorant	c.75	2/03/2014	Green Point Reserve	G. Feletti	Club Night
Little Eagle	1	1/02/2014	Muswellbrook WWTW	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Eagle	1	1/02/2014	Scone	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Eagle	1	6/02/2014	Parkville	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Little Friarbird	2	1/02/2014	Windy Station	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Lorieet	14	12/03/2014	East Maitland	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Little Raven	c.40	1/02/2014	Ridglands Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Raven	c.200	2/02/2014	Denman	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Raven	241	2/02/2014	Sandy Hollow	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Tern	59	17/02/2014	Newcastle Baths	A. Richardson	Hunterbirding
Long-billed Corella	8	21/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Musk Lorieet	c.50	26/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Musk Lorieet	20+	28/02/2014	Speers Point	S. Hamonet	Club Night
Musk Lorieet	6+	2/03/2014	Bolwarra	D. Stehr	Hunterbirding
Musk Lorieet	c.30	7/03/2014	Singleton	R. & M. Stewart	Hunterbirding
Musk Lorieet	10+	18/03/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding

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Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer	Source
Musk Lorikeet	c.80	20/03/2014	Broke	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Nankeen Night-Heron	1	9/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Olive Whistler	3	17 - 21/02/2014	Barrington Tops NP	T. Clarke	Hunterbirding
Olive-backed Oriole	4	7/01/2014	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Oriental Plover	1	2/02/2014	Phoenix Park	Richard	Hunterbirding
Oriental Plover	1	5/02/2014	Phoenix Park	D. Stehr	Hunterbirding
Oriental Plover	1	8/02/2014	Phoenix Park	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Pacific Baza	1	30/01/2014	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Pacific Baza	1	10/02/2014	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Pacific Baza	1+1dy	6/03/2014	New Lambton Heights	J. Powers	Hunterbirding
Pacific Baza	2 juv	8/03/2014	Rankin Park	S. Cox	Hunterbirding
Pacific Baza	1	16/03/2014	Ash Island	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Pacific Baza	1	22/03/2014	Cooranbong	E. McKane	Hunterbirding
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	20/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Peregrine	1	1/02/2014	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Peregrine	1	25/02/2014	Dungog	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Peregrine	1	26/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Pink-eared Duck	c.500	1/02/2014	Muswellbrook WWTW	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	2	2/02/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	29	5/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Pink-eared Duck	2	6/02/2014	Melville Ford Road	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	27	8/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	77	15/03/2014	Kooragang Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Plumed Whistling-Duck	c.500	1/02/2014	Doughboy Hollow	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Plumed Whistling-Duck	1	1/02/2014	Muswellbrook WWTW	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Plumed Whistling-Duck	120+	2/02/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Plumed Whistling-Duck	12	12/02/2014	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Plumed Whistling-Duck	c.100	28/03/2014	Doughboy Hollow	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Powerful Owl	1	13/01/2014	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Powerful Owl	1	21/02/2014	Whitebridge	G. & A. Pearson	Hunterbirding
Purple Swamphen	2+2juv	29/01/2014	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Radjah Shelduck	1	15/02/2014	Bulahdelah	P. Hansbro	Hunterbirding
Rainbow Bee-eater	8	12/02/2014	Gosforth	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Rainbow Bee-eater	c.30	5/03/2014	East Maitland	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Rainbow Bee-eater	9	12/03/2014	East Maitland	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Rainbow Lorikeet	c.375	26/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Red Wattlebird	1+dy Koel	8/02/2014	Kotara	J. Nicholls	Club Night
Red-backed Fairy-Wren	4	15/12/2013	Stroud	D. Raine	Club Night
Red-capped Robin	1	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Red-capped Robin	2+2dy	2/02/2014	Ringwood Road	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Red-kneed Dotterel	4	9/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Red-necked Stint	96	13/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Red-necked Stint	130	20/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Red-winged Parrot	4	2/02/2014	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Royal Spoonbill	2+2dy	8/02/2014	Clarencetown	P. Slack	Club Night
Royal Spoonbill	16	9/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Royal Spoonbill	11	11/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	J. & B. Cockerell	Club Night
Royal Spoonbill	40+	23/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	L. Livanos	Hunterbirding
Ruff	1	6/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	T. Dawe	Hunterbirding
Ruff	1	13/02/2014	Stockton Sandspit	A. Simple	Hunterbirding
Rufous Fantail	1	29/01/2014	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
Satin Bowerbird	1ad+3juv	8/02/2014	Kotara	J. Nicholls	Club Night
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	c.375	26/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1718	15/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	c.4500	26/02/2014	Hunter River North Arm	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	4000+	20/03/2014	Stockton Sandspit	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Silver Gull	c.60	26/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Sooty Oystercatcher	45	10/02/2014	Newcastle Baths	R. Nicholas	Hunterbirding
Sooty Oystercatcher	44	12/02/2014	Newcastle Baths	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Sooty Oystercatcher	37	14/02/2014	Port Stephens	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding

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Sooty Oystercatcher	44	20/02/2014	Newcastle Baths	C. Anderson	Hunterbirding
Sooty Oystercatcher	49	27/02/2014	Newcastle Baths	R. Nicholas	Hunterbirding
Southern Boobook	1	23/02/2014	Speers Point	S. Hamonet	Club Night
Southern Emu-wren	3	15/12/2013	Stroud	D. Raine	Club Night
Southern Emu-wren	2	17 - 21/02/2014	Barrington Tops NP	T. Clarke	Hunterbirding
Spangled Drongo	7	3/02/2014	East Seaham	J. Musicka	Club Night
Spangled Drongo	2	7/02/2014	Saltwater NP	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Spangled Drongo	12	12/02/2014	Ash Island	N. McNaughton	Club Night
Speckled Warbler	2	12/02/2014	Gosforth	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Spectacled Monarch	2	7/02/2014	Saltwater NP	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Spotless Crake	1	6/02/2014	Walka Water Works	R. McDonald	Club Night
Spotless Crake	1	8/02/2014	Ash Island	D. Jenkin	Hunterbirding
Spotless Crake	2	15/03/2014	Kooragang Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	2/02/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	17/02/2014	Ravensworth	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	7/03/2014	Wingen	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	11/03/2014	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	21/03/2014	North Lambton	I. Benson	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	27/03/2014	Gloucester	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	28/03/2014	Lambton	I. Benson	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	1/02/2014	Rothbury	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	20/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Square-tailed Kite	2	27/02/2014	Cessnock	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	27/02/2014	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	16/03/2014	Metford	D. Allen	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	17/03/2014	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Striated Heron	1	27/02/2014	Soldiers Point	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Striated Pardalote <i>substriatus</i>	3	14/03/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Wedge-tailed Eagle	5	1/02/2014	Muswellbrook WWTW	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Weebill	3+	12/02/2014	Gosforth	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Welcome Swallow	c.400	26/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Western Gerygone	4	1/02/2014	Windy Station	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	3	28/03/2014	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	25/02/2014	Elernmore Glen Ret. Vill.	K. Imrie	Club Night
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	2/03/2014	Green Point Reserve	G. Feletti	Club Night
White-breasted Woodswallow	1+1dy	7/01/2014	Charlestown Golf Course	G. Feletti	Club Night
White-browed Woodswallow	8	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
White-fronted Chat	2	23/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	L. Livanos	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	100+	2/02/2014	Violet Hill, Myall Lakes NP	P. Struik & T. Marsh	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	c.60	8/02/2014	Swansea	J. Adams	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	12	8/02/2014	East Seaham Rd	P. Slack	Club Night
White-throated Needletail	30+	9/02/2014	Marks Point	G. Ayre	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	82+	9/02/2014	Dudley	J. Powers	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	250+	14/02/2014	Pindimar Bay	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	c.50	26/02/2014	Swansea	J. Adams	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	50+	2/03/2014	Singleton Heights	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	200+	7/03/2014	Muswellbrook	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	150+	7/03/2014	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	juv	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	2	5/02/2014	Bolwarra Lagoon	D. Stehr	Club Night
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	9	6/02/2014	Melville Ford Road	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	5	6/02/2014	Millers Forest	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	5	10/02/2014	Wetlands Centre	R. & M. Stewart	Hunterbirding
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	6	11/02/2014	Hexham Swamp	J. & B. Cockerell	Club Night
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	2	16/02/2014	Wollombi	D. Raine	Club Night
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	31	10/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	Club Night
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	c.60	15/02/2014	Raymond Terrace	G. Ayre	Hunterbirding
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	2+2juv	11/03/2014	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Zebra Finch	15+	2/02/2014	Medhurst Bridge	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding

## Club Activities April to June 2014

DATE	EVENT	MEETING PLACE & TIME	CONTACT
<b>Wednesday 9 April</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: Steven Cox - Aspects of the ecology of the White-winged Chough and why they don't get along with Magpies</b> <b>Bird of the Evening: Dan Williams - Striated Pardalotes in the Hunter</b>
Tuesday 15 April	Tomago Wetlands Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Wednesday 16 April	Hunter Wader Survey  Newcastle High Tide 8.55am 1.6m	8.00am Ash Island  8.30am Other locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 0412 722 644 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Sue Hamonet 4958 1023 – Swan Bay Steven Cox 0409 848 390– Tomago
Easter 18 -21 April	Easter Camp	Borah Travelling Stock Route near Barraba Directions in this Newsletter	Lorna Mee 4987 2913 mobile 0499 015 500
<b>MAY 2014</b>			
Friday - Sunday 2 - 4 May	Tocal Field Day	Volunteers needed to man HBOC display	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171
Tuesday 6 May	Mid-week Outing – Tocal	8.00am Tocal College Visitor Centre off Tocal Road	Ray McLean 4987 4512
Wednesday 7 May	Management Committee Meeting	6.30pm – 9.30pm Garden Suburbs School	Mick Roderick 0421761237 All members welcome
<b>Wednesday 14 May</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: Peggy Svoboda - 20 years of Kooragang Rehabilitation</b> <b>Bird of the Evening: Jim Smart - Mound-builders</b>
Thursday 15 May	Maitland City Council Enviro Youth Forum	Walka Waterworks	Paul Baird 4938 5039
Saturday 17 May	Hunter Wader Survey	9.00am Ash Island 9.30am Various locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 0412 722 644 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Sue Hamonet 4958 1023 – Swan Bay Steven Cox 0409 848 390– Tomago
Saturday/ Sunday 17/18 May	Regent Honeyeater/ Swift Parrot Survey	Various locations as desired or directed	Mick Roderick 0421 761237 <b>Please contact for information</b>
Sunday 18 May	Field outing to: Hawks Nest / Winda Woppa	8.00am northern end of Hawks Nest Golf Course, on Mungo Brush Road	David Bertram 0428 431 188 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Tuesday 20 May	Tomago Wetlands Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
<b>JUNE 2014</b>			
Tuesday 3 June	Mid-Week Outing – Glenrock area	8.00am Carpark, Burwood Road, Kahibah	Rob McDonnell 4962 4258
Wednesday 4 June	Management Committee Meeting	6.30pm – 9.30pm Garden Suburbs School	Mick Roderick 0421761237 All members welcome
Saturday – Monday 7 - 9 June	Long Weekend Camp	<i>Windy Station</i> near Quirindi Directions in this Newsletter	Lorna Mee 4987 2913 mobile 0499 015 500
<b>Wednesday 11 June</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: Alan Stuart - Waders of Harrington and other areas</b> <b>Bird of the Evening: TBA</b>
Saturday 14 June	Hunter Wader Survey	8.30am Ash Island 9.00am Various locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 0412 722 644 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Sue Hamonet 4958 1023 – Swan Bay Steven Cox 0409 848 390– Tomago