



Newsletter

Hunter Bird Observers Club

Affiliated with BirdLife Australia

Issue No. 6/13 December 2013

- 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



The Whistler 7 has been printed and is ready for distribution to members. An electronic copy is available on the Club website. Congratulations to the Editors, Mike Newman and Harold Tarrant, for another fantastic issue and thanks to all the authors who have contributed to this edition.

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Twitchathon 2013

The *Hunter Home Brewers* established a new record of 252 species in the 2013 Twitchathon. In second place, the Hunter's *Menacing Monarchs* came home with 224 species, closely followed by the *Black-necked Stalkers*, a North Coast team, with 221 species. The Hunter's *Dodgy Drongos* were pushed back to fourth place with 218 species. The Hunter's *Dry-throated Buzzards* won the prize for the most birds seen per kilometre travelled, and they cycled 100 of their 135 km!

Other Hunter teams may not have gained significant places in the pecking order, but they all enjoyed a great race and 24 hours of dedicated bird-watching. Thanks to all our generous supporters who have helped raise over \$24,000 for BirdLife Australia's Powerful Owl Project in the Sydney Region.

Detailed reports from two teams are published in this Newsletter and additional reports will be in the February Newsletter.

Please send Newsletter articles direct to the Editor, Liz Crawford at: chrisliz@internode.on.net
Deadline for the next edition - 30 January 2014

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President's Column

Well another (big?) year is nearing completion and what a 'mixed bag' 2013 has been. We have seen first-hand some of the effects that extreme weather events can have on birds, from tropical cyclones to inland droughts to wrecks of seabirds of a number of varieties; 2013 has had it all. I have it on good authority (from the editor of our Annual Bird Report, no less) that 2013 has been a 'bumper' year for the number of species seen in the Region, potentially tipping the scale as the year with the most species recorded thus far for as long as the Club has been keeping records.

More than 7 months after first being noticed, Budgerigars are still present within the Hunter Valley. I still do wonder if they might breed somewhere locally this spring. That would be quite remarkable if it did happen. But their presence in the Hunter this year is surely a result of drying conditions inland after a couple of good breeding seasons before that. One feels that the influx of Black Kites and possibly the perceived influx of Black Falcons and Spotted Harriers in sub-coastal areas may also be related to this. Back in 2010 when the rains were happening in inland Australia, a few people did surmise if we'd start seeing 'western' birds near the coast over the course of the ensuing years and I think that the Budgies and Black Kites, as two of the more mobile species, are probably a reasonable sign of this.

An almost antithesis to this has been a couple of phenomena on the coast, or rather 'at sea'. Firstly there was ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald in late January, which

brought with it a host of tropical seabirds (read about it in the next edition of *The Whistler*), then in winter we saw an unprecedented number of Fairy Prions and (even more unusually) Common Diving-Petrels, the latter normally associated with much colder waters. Many of these were found washed up on our beaches – perhaps they could not handle the water temperatures here? Most recently we have seen one of the most significant wrecks of Short-tailed Shearwaters in years, with many thousands of birds washing up on the Hunter coastline. Although we can only say for certain that "Oswald" was definitely 'weather-related', it is likely that it played a potentially large part in the other two events.

It has been quite a year.

And I would like to finish by acknowledging the aforementioned editor of the Annual Bird Report, Alan Stuart, who produced a landmark report this year. The 2012 Annual Bird Report was the 20th such report and as someone who spends a lot of time with nose between the pages of these publications and who also is involved in reviewing the drafts, I can vouch for just how much work goes into them. I honestly believe that these bird reports are one of the things that separates HBOC from other bird clubs and contributes directly to making HBOC such an incredible and well-respected club in the community. Many thanks and congratulations Alan!

Mick Roderick

New Members

The Club extends a warm welcome to:

Carl Clifford of Gorokan

Paul and Keryl Kavanagh of New Lambton

Karl-Heinrich Lackmann of Tea Gardens

David Paull of Tingira Heights

Owen Prowse of Fortitude Valley, Qld.

Bogden and Thelma Wawrzonek of Marmong Point

Nick, Rudi and Julie Weigner of Belmont North

Barry Williams of Edgeworth

We hope to see you at Club meetings and outings.

AGM in February 2014

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Hunter Wetlands Centre, Shortland, on Wednesday 12 February 2014. Notices relevant to the AGM are available on the website and will be mailed to those who receive their Newsletter by post. Forms for nomination of Committee positions are included and must be submitted to the Committee by Wednesday 5 February 2014. Notice of a motion proposing that Liz Crawford be elected to Life Membership of the Hunter Bird Observers Club is also included.

Meeting Highlights - White Terns

A lot has been written lately about nominating your favourite bird. It seems to be the done thing to select a very common bird, although no one has yet nominated the Common Mynah. One of my favourites is a much less common bird, the White Tern *Gygis alba*. Any animal that has a white face and black eyes has to be appealing. Notice how people will travel hundreds of miles and queue up for hours just to see a panda bear.

So the White Tern appeals, simply on the basis of its appearance. It is a very elegant pure white bird with a large head and a distinctive black eye and black in front of the eye. The bird is even more beautiful in flight when its deeply forked tail and long wings look almost transparent, giving an ethereal quality as it hovers low overhead. It is 28 to 30 cm long, somewhere between the Little Tern and Common Tern with a wingspan of 66 to 78 cm. It has been given an interesting variety of common names, including the somewhat confusing Fairy Tern, Angel Tern, Love Tern and, my favourite, White Bird, a direct translation of its scientific name.

The White Tern is found on tropical and sub-tropical islands around the world, including the Australian territories of Kermadec Island, Cocos-Keeling Islands, Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island where it is a breeding visitor and threatened by rats and the introduced Masked Owl. Its movements outside the breeding period are largely unknown.

Two closely related circumstances make this bird particularly memorable for me: my first encounter with the bird and what I subsequently learnt about its unusual nesting habits. I'm sure many readers have come across this bird while on holidays on Lord Howe Island. On my first day on Lord Howe I came across this sick-looking bird. Next day it was still in the same place just sitting on a bare branch. It let me approach to within two metres and did not move. It was then I realised the bird was sitting on a nest. A White Tern's nest is 'no nest'. It lays its egg on a bare branch, sometimes tearing some bark away, creating a slight depression no more than 1/3 diameter of the egg, but not enough to catch water.



White Terns generally lay only one egg but will lay a replacement egg if the first one rolls off its branch or is taken by a predator. Both adults prepare the nest, incubate and care for young. The chicks are born with long sharp claws to help them cling to the branch in high winds but they are often blown off. It has been reported that they use their

sharp claws and beak to climb up to three metres back up to their branch. They feed on fish and squid picked up from the surface of the sea or just below. Adults catch five or six fish and carry them in their beak back to the chick.

White Terns are rarely seen on the Australian mainland.

On such rare occasions they are usually in an exhausted state. On 13 February 2012, a single White Tern was seen on the Macleay River near Jerseyville. There had been heavy seas and storms off the coast and presumably this bird was driven up river. The most recent Hunter sighting was on a pelagic off Port Stephens on 22 April 2012, and the most recent NSW record I can find

is by David Mitford off Mistral Point at Maroubra. He reported that 'all sightings were from my car, positioned looking north over Lurline Bay to minimise spray/wind from gale force Easterlies that are rare but very productive'.

That is the beautiful, elegant, immaculate and endearing White Tern.

Robert Stewart



Meeting Highlights - Our Brush with Royalty

Surveying Princess Parrots *Polytelis alexandrae* at Newhaven Reserve, NT

In May 2012 we enjoyed a week of blissful camping at Newhaven Reserve, managed by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC). As we were planning to leave, Danae Moore, AWC Manager, came to tell us she had seen a flock of Princess Parrots on a site she had been surveying, but off the usual tour routes. At crack of dawn next morning we found the particular tree, stopped and listened and within a few minutes 40 Princess Parrots landed around us.

We wanted to share the experience on birding-ous, but AWC managers, Jo and Danae, were concerned that once the word got out birders and twitchers may arrive unannounced. At a previous sighting in 2010 at Haasts Bluff, birders chasing Princess Parrots had trespassed on private properties. As they had planned to take a holiday, Jo and Danae then asked if we would stay and help out with tours and crowd management, as well as data collection for research, so we signed on as volunteers with AWC. Soon ABC local radio picked up the story and it was broadcast around Australia. We began taking daily tours, limiting the number of vehicles and people, so as not to disturb the birds.

Where is Newhaven?

Just up the Tanami Track from Alice Springs, take a left at the Tanami Roadhouse and follow the dirt track for 160km. A mere 700km round trip to do the shopping!

Why are Princess Parrots so special?

Princess Parrots live in remote central desert country and have been recorded as far north as The Granites, Tanami Track near WA border. When we checked all the literature on sightings, habitat, feeding, we found that the first sightings were back in 1862 and not much had been recorded since.

Chris Baxter and Rod Henderson wrote an abstract in 2000 on their sightings in SA of a few nesting birds. Mike Carter had the most comprehensive records from 1980s on the Canning Stock Route, but the bird guides and HANZAB had limited records of sightings and behaviour. They all described them feeding on Spinifex seed, although we soon discovered that nothing really eats Spinifex. We also learned a lot of desert plant species during our stay, yet we never recorded Princess Parrots at any of the known waterholes. They seemed to prefer fruits and flowers and having fun leaping in the bloodwoods.

On our first sightings of *Polytelis alexandrae* we were



amazed at the beautiful colours, better than in any bird-guide book, and the tail seemed to go forever! The great thing about the desert is that the trees are stunted, so we were also close enough to see wing spatules on the 8th primary of the male's wings.

To try and find out where the parrots were going we had to explore across the sand dunes. Each day we recorded the direction they flew and what they were doing. Peter developed a Dune Map to collect data and to help us work out best locations to search. The parrots often flew across at eye level as we sat perched, waiting, on a sand dune. They flew fast and low with constant calling, a bit like budgies. When we saw them investigating tree hollows we were hoping for breeding action, but this didn't eventuate.

We had some help from local experts - Chris Watson, ace Alice Springs bird guide; and Dr Chris Pavey, who wrote NT Government Threatened Species info sheet on Princess Parrots in 2006.

Meeting desert royalty was an experience we will never forget! We were just in the right place at the right time. We thank everyone for respecting Newhaven's request to protect the parrots by not revealing the location. Our special thanks to Jim Smart and Lorna Mee for the use of their photos to illustrate our talk, and to the Hunter birders who came to help us.

Peter Struik and Toni Marsh

Activity Reports

Eat Your Heart Out, Honeyeater Flat!

Camp at Durridgere State Conservation Area
5 - 7 October 2013

Our first ever HBOC camp at Durridgere has certainly got everyone talking (28 people attended including 2 day visitors) and what a birdy place it is! We were spoilt rotten with all types (of birds) visiting the camping area while some specials were encountered by those that explored away from the camp.

Durridgere SCA is located east of Ulan Road and is basically the old State Forest centred about an old stock station called *Gumbowee*. The remnants of the house paddock lie on the banks of Pipeclay Creek and make a great camp site. This area is within the Hunter Catchment as Pipeclay Creek drains to Murrumbidgee Creek and then to the Goulburn River so all the birds encountered here can be placed on your Hunter List. The major plant community can be described as Ironbark on sandstone with well-developed ground and shrub layers; ideal dry woodland habitat for some of our threatened species.

So how hard was it to find birds? Well you just had to stick your head out of the tent from time to time and watch the parade really, but a slow meander about the immediate area would produce plenty of close encounters. Within the camp we had Rufous Songlark singing and crowing like mad from several fence posts, Rainbow Bee-eaters wheeling about over the paddock, Musk Lorikeet visiting the Red Gums by the creek, White-throated Gerygone calling from some leafy space above and it was just a matter of waiting around and the cheeky Diamond Firetails would turn up and perch about the tent of some poor person who had decided to go wandering into the bush.

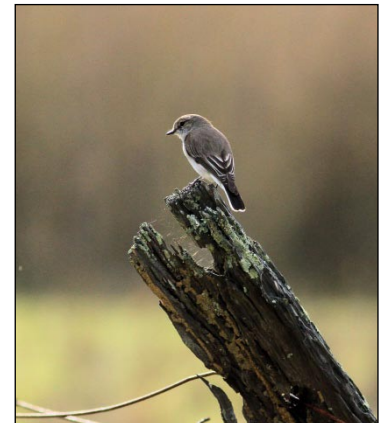
The site of the old house was the designated gathering place each evening and a couple of exotic shrubby trees next to the fence made for excellent perching places. Happy hour lasted much longer as it would be interrupted regularly by new sightings that would get everyone off their chairs and grabbing binoculars, cameras and note books (see photo below).

Sunday evening Happy Hour was interrupted by an



amazing invasion of woodswallows. At first only a few birds were noticed but gradually it became apparent that hundreds were gathering over the treetops for the evening roost. Mostly we could determine White-browed Woodswallows but a proportion of Masked Woodswallows were also present plus the odd Dusky Woodswallow. As the gathering gained strength a feature of the experience was the din of chattering woodswallows even though they were mainly located a couple of hundred metres away across the field. The spectacle was breath-taking and finally we were looking at well over a thousand birds. These birds stayed overnight and as a large proportion took flight the next morning a repeat of the chattering chorus was heard as they left the area. Quite a few of each species remained for the Monday allowing lots of wonderful close encounters as they hawked over the air space and below the canopy.

Other close encounters enjoyed by the writer included the nest-building activities of White-throated Gerygone, the display dance of Painted Honeyeater, a White-browed Babbler calling for its mates and a Jacky Winter sitting on its nest.



Jacky Winter - Juliana Ford

There were so many joyous moments from this camp that we must return here soon for another dose of fabulous birdwatching.

Some lucky types were able to stay an extra day and the following message typifies the weekend; "Our last happy hour with 6 people at the Crab-apple Tree was hilarious. There was a passing parade of the birds we had seen over the camp. It was like the Tall Ships flotilla - all in order. We had (how is this for a limited list) - four mistletoe birds (three males), several Painted Honeyeaters, a group of Brown-headed Honeyeaters, New Holland and White-naped Honeyeaters, Jacky Winter, Diamond Firetails, Red-browed Finch, White-winged Trillers, Rainbow Bee-eaters, Rufous Songlark (singing) and one Crested Shrike-tit".

In all we enjoyed a great list of birds that included 17 species of honeyeater (Honeyeater Flat at Munghorn Gap has been matched for sure), some threatened species like Glossy Black-Cockatoo, Brown Treecreeper, Diamond Firetail and Speckled Warbler but nil woodland robins. About half-a-dozen Eastern Yellow Robins however were doing their best to represent this type.

Tom Clarke

Activity Reports cont.

Speers Point Park and Stockton Borehole Lagoon

Tuesday 5 November 2013

Rain threatened for most of the midweek outing to Speers Point Park but apart from a slight sprinkle at morning tea time, held off and allowed for some good birding. The pond in the park proved to be a good place for sightings which included Australian White Ibis, Royal Spoonbill and Australasian Figbird. In total 51 species were seen and one heard. Also seen was a possum sleeping in a fork beneath a bird box

The move to Stockton Borehole Lagoon late morning gave good sightings and ended with a total of 36 seen and one heard. Parking was only possible by the roadside so viewing had to be done with care. Among birds seen were Chestnut and Grey Teal, Hardhead, Black-winged Stilt and Black-winged Cuckoo-shrikes feeding fledgling young.

Keith Woods

Allyn River, Barrington Tops

Sunday 17 November 2014

I decided it was a good idea to camp the weekend at Allyn River and meet the Sunday outing there. Six people met at Tucker Park, Paterson at 7am for a very early start. Intrepid birders we are as there was rain forecast. In due course HBOC birders arrived at the Allyn River and between showers we did some birding.

The rain did not look like it was going to cease so we adjourned up and over the mountain to a picnic shelter beside the Williams River for morning tea. Some more birding was had between showers. The weather did not look promising for a long day of birding, so a decision was made to go and have an early lunch at a pub in Dungog.

In the meantime I decided to stay on at the camp with the hope of the weather clearing. I did the rainforest walk and between showers I was able to photograph the very confiding Rose Robins, Rufous Fantails and Grey Fantails. During my stay I had Noisy Pittas duetting frequently, Bassian Thrushes flitting around and a fleeting glance of a Regent Bowerbird - 32 species altogether. The group recorded only 10 species.



Male Rose Robin carrying food - Lorna Mee



Female Rose Robin - Lorna Mee

By next morning the rain was bucketing down. I left Allyn River in a hurry. The causeway to get home was running a gusher. I had to wait for someone to supervise my crossing, with the hope that this person would rescue me if I was swept off the causeway. I had a successful journey home.

Thanks to Rowley Smith for leading the outing and lending me a raincoat.

Lorna Mee

Stockton Sandspit

Tuesday 3 December 2013

Our last Tuesday outing in our 2013 program was a successful visit to Stockton Sandspit followed by lunch at The Washtub restaurant at Stockton Wharf. Twenty-seven members enjoyed the near-perfect weather and what turned out to be perfect timing for the tide. Without leaving the immediate vicinity we saw 61 species plus 2 heard. One of these was the Mangrove Gerygone which called constantly but no-one could see.

Species like Red-necked Avocet (est 4,000) and Black-winged Stilt (350) were in large numbers with Eastern Curlews, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits, a few Red Knots, Curlew Sandpipers, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Red-capped Plovers. The highlight was the constant fly-by and back and forth to the dykes as the tide was rising and then began to recede. Three raptors also caused some disturbance: Black-shouldered Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle and a Swamp Harrier. We walked towards Fern Bay to find the Grey-tailed Tattlers, Terek Sandpipers and Whimbrels. The only Pacific Golden Plovers seen were seven on the wreck.

Other late sightings were two Striated Herons by the enthusiasts who didn't come to Stockton for lunch, and a Brown Quail which was near the main sign and carpark. By the time the tide receded there were three Ruddy Turnstone and three Royal Spoonbills down on the shore with the feeding waders.

Twenty-two people enjoyed lunch at The Washtub and the program for next year is now available and was handed out to those present. You are welcome to join us at any of these outings.

Judi Thomas

Superb Fairy-wren Part IV

Diary of Events from 16 June 2012 onwards

At the end of Part III, Bluey had given up persecuting Invader and the clan had settled down to the absence of Leading Lady since February, with just Brownie 1, Brownie 2 and Invader as the team under Bluey's command.



Above left: Invader, recognised by his blue tail, was eventually accepted as a clan member by Bluey, but disappeared on 16 June 2012 and has not been seen since.

Above right: Brownie 2 was the boldest of the two helpers from the previous successful nesting. She disappeared at the same time as Invader. Photos Max Maddock

This situation was sustained until 15 June 2012, when Invader was still a member of the clan and had collected a mealworm. On 16 June, Brownie 2 and Invader both disappeared; they were never seen again and Bluey had to establish a new organisation or abandon the clan. The departure was a surprise to us and we wondered whether it was a case of elopement? Had the couple joined a new clan, or was it a mere coincidence of separate decisions to leave the clan, resulting in its collapse?

Bluey solved his dilemma by choosing Brownie 1 as his new partner, henceforth renamed Brownie. We wondered how the remaining former helper would cope with the new demands and we wonder about the genetic implications.

In a note in my diary on 11 June, I commented that Brownie 1 had been the most hesitant and Brownie 2 had been the boldest of the clan. One of the earliest tasks to emerge for the new head female was the ritual collection of mealworms from the front porch food station and then to move to a shrub for a mixture of individual and mutual preening with Bluey. Cuddling episodes were observed on 6 and 28 June, 25 July, 12 and 21 November and 15 December, showing that the partnership had become well established.

In June-August, Bluey would boldly lead to collect mealworms from the food station. On 4 to 20 August, Brownie was often hesitant, coming to the edge of the porch. She usually withdrew a number of times, but



Brownie 1 was often seen with Bluey at the food station. They were the only members of the clan left after Invader and Brownie 2 disappeared. They became a breeding couple when Bluey chose her as his partner.

eventually collected at least one mealworm. However, there was no such hesitation from either of them when they were very busy taking nectar. Most days both would collect nectar from Grevilleas, Callistemons and the Hakea, before and after collecting the mealworms.

The first sign of producing offspring appeared on 13 August when Brownie vibrated her body when she was perched on top of the old tomato stake frequently used by both wrens. Bluey flew on to her back and they copulated. Subsequently, both of them were busy flying and disappearing next door over the *Melaleuca quinquenervia*, an intense activity which continued into 17 October.

On 18 and 19 October, Brownie was observed pulling fibre from the hanging baskets and both Bluey and Brownie were busily collecting mealworms and were flying to the top of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* and disappearing. On 21 October we had finally tracked their flight to the possible nest site and received permission to closely observe the activities. A dense growth of lavenders, partly surrounded by a broad-leafed shrub, was identified as the nest location and confirmed by observing both wrens repeatedly entering deep into them.

On 24 October, Bluey and Brownie, when close by, would arouse vigorous shaking in the lavenders which continued for some time after the adults had departed, signifying activity by chicks hidden in the foliage. At 1400h we located both adults at the end of the lavenders and watched them encouraging the fledglings to move towards our place.



24 October 2012: Bluey on lavender encouraging the fledglings to leave the nest and move down the street to our house.

One of the chicks chose to take a bold route across the roof of the house next door and another went via the nearby street tree. We did not see number three until it appeared in the small native plant garden in the uninhabited house next door and was visited by Bluey and Brownie where they fed all three. They were guided again to move to our densely foliated Callistemon Taree Pink, where they were fed with mealworms and when all worms were gone, fed with biscuit crumbs. As light faded, they were hidden for the night.



24 October 2012: One of the three fledglings chose to move via the street tree in front of the lavenders. Another chose to travel over the roof of the house between the nest and our house.

Superb Fairy-wren Part IV cont.

On 25 October, all three moved into the adjacent Callistemon Bonfire on the street side, while Bluey and Brownie foraged and ferried food and I was able to obtain a photo of one of the short-tailed babies.



Above left: 25 October 2012 - One of the fledglings hidden in Callistemon Taree Pink. Above right: 26 October 2012 - Another of the three was seen in Callistemon Bonfire near the street.

On 26-27 October, I was again able to take photos without disturbing them and keep track of the three offspring, taking shots of single birds and of three chicks cuddled together in the edge of Callistemon Taree Pink. On 28 October, I found two chicks cuddled together and on the next day observed all three in the street-side undergrowth, being fed by Bluey and Brownie.



27 October 2012: All three fledglings were seen cuddled together in a very open site in Callistemon Taree Pink, sometimes awake and other times sleeping.

Our spirits were high and we were looking forward to watching the three grow to become new helpers in the clan. This optimism was dashed on 30 October when they disappeared and were never seen again.

On 31 October, Bluey and Brownie had no chicks to feed. At 0730h, they made a pair of forlorn parents, cuddling up and engaging in mutual preening in Grevillea Superb.



On 31 October 2012, the parents had no chicks to feed and sat forlornly in Grevillea Superb.

At 0835h, Brownie collected two mealworms from the porch food station and a dried grass stalk, flew off towards the abandoned nesting location and disappeared from view. At 0850h, Bluey and Brownie were back at the food station, collected a mealworm each, dived into the Correa and then flew to the top of the *Melaleuca quinquenervia* and disappeared. There were more mealworm episodes and at 1020h, Bluey chased Brownie in tight circles around the top of the Melaleuca. The chase eventually ceased and both disappeared. At 1210h, I tracked Brownie back to the nesting site, where she disappeared into the adjacent very short hedge in the garden. At 1700h she flew down from the roof of the house and vanished into the lavenders and at 1835h she was back in Garden 2 at our house, pulling grass and then disappeared. In the period 3-10 November, both wrens were still regularly coming to the front porch food station for mealworms, but no observations revealed setting up a new nest.

The permanent loss of the chicks was critical in the context of the future of the clan. We don't know why all three fledglings disappeared at the same time, but such a disappearance is reminiscent of the work of a predator such as a cat – a species not uncommon in the area. The fledglings had spent much time closely hidden, were frequently close to the ground, unaware of cats, were just beginning to move more freely and becoming more vulnerable, when they disappeared. We have no hard evidence of the presence of a cat at that time and wonder whether three offspring was beyond the capacity of only two parents without the traditional helpers. Cumulative evidence of progressive decline in the population of Superb Fairy-wrens in my backyard as well as in the woodlands opposite our house¹, combined with events still to be revealed in Part V of this story, do not provide a promising future for the Great Favourite in South-eastern Australia.

(¹Large clans of Superb Fairy-wrens in the woodlands opposite our house, mentioned in the June Newsletter 3/13, p.10, no longer exist).

Max Maddock

Directions for Australia Day Long Weekend Camp

The Australia Day long weekend camp on 25 to 27 January 2014 will be held again at *Myall View*, a private property at 337 Violet Hill Road, Myall Lakes via Bulahdelah.

Follow the Pacific Highway north and about 4 km past Bulahdelah, turn right onto The Lakes Way. Travel 6.1km along The Lakes Way then turn right into Violet Hill Road. Travel 3.37km along Violet Hill Road and look for the entrance to *Myall View* on your left.

You are required to come fully self sufficient with water and food, and some happy hour food to share if you wish. We will be taking HBOC's pit toilets. PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU TAKE ALL YOUR RUBBISH HOME WITH YOU.

Prepare for wet weather and/or very hot weather.

For further information, please contact Lorna Mee: phone 02 4987 2913 mobile 0499 015 500

Gluepot Tales - 24 October to 31 December 2013

As soon as we met the rangers Tony and Suzi, I realised that I knew them from Tomaree Birdwatchers when we lived in Medowie. I think Tony was the one who first showed me the Golden-headed Cisticola at Fern Bay, way back.

Our Gluepot induction began with a tour of the homestead, accommodation, visitors' centre and sheds. The Squirrel Shed is my favourite, anything you need has to be in there; just like an old farm, nothing has ever been thrown away. There is also a large storage area outside, known as "Gluepot Bunnings", where you can find bits and pieces to fix all sorts of stuff and country people know that you never throw away bits of wire ... or anything, really.

Like the rhythm of the tidal movements we lived with at Broome, here our life will revolve around the weather data. Twice a day, every day, no holidays or breaks, we collect all the weather details and send them through to BoM (on a DOS program, wyb!) We fit all other chores around those readings, for which Gluepot gets paid by BoM. Now we watch clouds and wind changes as well as birds – it's another hobby! We should never have a problem making conversation with the visitors:))

After learning the weather routine, the Malleefowl (MF) survey team arrived so we volunteered to help, as you would if you've never seen a MF, except most birders have never seen a MF either. I joined John, retired surgeon, local native plant whizz and keen birder, to walk the furthest grids in the "Bird's Eye" remote area of Gluepot, only about 10 km he said, but mostly burnt country (i.e., hot, dry, no shade, but including one active MF mound). The mallee walk is tricky and deceptive as you have to meander around the spreading trees and step over spinifex and shrubs in between, making distances longer than you'd think and the need for long trousers. I'm still picking spinifex spines from my legs!

Learning the ropes: Peter has been learning all the tank systems, where the dam water is pumped up for washing and toilets, while the rainwater is used for drinking and cooking. The electric fence to keep feral goats out has some issues and we have to wait until the project owner comes out to make any repairs. Meanwhile goats have been attracted to the evaporation tank, which is part of the weather station near the homestead. The next ranger, Tim, is a local and a licensed shooter, so he will remove lots of goats over the summer. End of the month is time to check all the rain gauges, which involves driving most of the 100 km of roads around the reserve.

Annette Vincent, the Ant Lady and mother of Michael Vincent, ABC Washington Correspondent (*name drop*), arrived with a couple of helpers to do ant traps (micro pitfalls) so we eagerly offered to help. The traps are set on transects 10m apart and marked with flags. The ants fall in and are euthanased with alcohol, so I guess they die happy. Next day Annette taught us how to mount the ants on cork for identification and as museum



Clockwise from top: Toni in the Kubota diesel; Peter driving the Kubota; Toni using the phone and holding the aerial

specimens. This was fun and like being back at school, we all giggled so much.

On our second day as rangers a truckload of furniture, kitchenware and seemingly everything from a large mansion arrived, donated by a friend of the committee, and we spent the day moving stuff around from the house, the rooms and storage sheds. It's all quite flash so we have redecorated the house and have a great new bed. We could start a second-hand business with the rest of the stuff here now.... and there's more to come.

We have use of three vehicles: Triton twin cab for our use, Kubota "toy" ute for running round the homestead area and the Fire Truck for fencing and fires, obviously.

Oh, and there are birds, of course. On a quiet day we love to take some happy hour to a bird hide and watch the evening traffic, but around the homestead is just as good, with three bird baths in the garden.

Don't forget to drop in and visit, the weather is perfect right now.

Toni Marsh and Peter Struik

Editor's note:

Gluepot is a BirdLife Australia Reserve, 1.5 hours drive over well-maintained dirt roads north of Waikerie in South Australia. The Reserve is open to visitors year round and entry fees are payable on arrival. For more information try <http://www.gluepot.org/> or phone the Rangers on (08) 8892 8600.

Twitchathon 2013 - Hunter Home Brewers - Poo Pond Prats

There were few decisions to be made by the Hunter Home Brewers in their preparation for the 2013 NSW Twitchathon. The only “big decision” was where to start and with no grounds to be close to home, as was required due to an expectant Mrs Mick Brew last year, the writing was on the wall – go back to the mallee! The plan was simple – improve on the 2011 mallee run by not making some of the mistakes they’d made that year. However, as they were to discover, what they thought had been their biggest mistake in 2011 actually turned out to be a brilliant strategy in 2013. This surrounded some inefficiencies that prevented them from reaching their key rainforest site on the southern slopes of the Barrington Tops. But as time progressed, the need to visit that rainforest became increasingly queried, problematic and eventually, redundant.

There is a school of thought amongst the more serious Twitchathon teams (i.e. those with the ‘competitive streak’) that a big score hinges (at least in part) on being present at a rainforest during the dawn chorus. The Brewers also subscribed to this way of thinking but alternatives had to be considered if they were to start out in the mallee. The “3-hour rule” states that each team must stop for a consecutive 3-hour period between midnight and 5am. No team that starts as far west as the mallee country can even go close to making it to a rainforest by 2am (after which, if you’re still driving you’re in breach of the rule) so essentially the rainforest dawn chorus is foregone unless you leave the mallee only about 2 hours after kick-off on the Saturday, which defeats the whole purpose of going out there.

Where they thought they’d gone wrong in 2011 was (a) leaving Lake Cargelligo too late on Saturday, and (b) making a rueful detour to Medhurst Bridge en route to the rainforest. They thought that by shaving an hour off (a) and dropping (b) like a hot potato they could go close to buying back nearly 2 hours to get to the gun Barrington Tops rainforest site. Mick Brew however, thought that this 2 hours “saved” + the 2 hours travel time to get to the Barrington Tops and back onto their regular route, could be better spent at other, ‘less remote’ rainforest patches and then still have some spare change left over for other areas on the Sunday. This concept was underpinned by some traditional rainforest remnants that the lads had visited on each Twitch, as well as a new kid on the brewing block – Old Brush at Brunkerville.

All of these strategic quandaries made good brew for thought on the journey out west on Thursday morning. Spirits were high as they left Newcastle under the cover of darkness, stopping only to charge themselves with bakery fare and go for a job interview, as Grena Brew actually did in Dubbo. Whilst there, they had a brief opportunity to catch up with a one-time Brewer and current Dubbo Double Dipper, Farmboy. He delivered the welcome news that the local Barking Owls were still in residence and had in fact reproduced. Their only night-time birding stop was hence justified. Continuing west, Ando Brew opened his new-bird account with a fly-over from a Superb Parrot at Peak Hill before ABC radio in Newcastle tracked them down for a brief interview. Their first question was “Is that crazy guy from *Chasing Birds* in it this year?”

Upon arrival at Mount Hope, the boys set about warming up the rather chilly concrete bar at the Royal Hotel. What they didn’t expect was to get into a conversation with some blokes at the bar that asked in excitement, “Oh, you guys are doing the Twitchathon!?”. It turned out they were in the area working on Malleefowl conservation. Their next question was “Is that crazy guy from *Chasing Birds* in it this year?”.



The Royal Hotel at Mount Hope - the fountain of youth at the edge of the mallee

Friday was spent combing Round Hill to Cargelligo seeking out worthwhile sites and in particular a place to commence the Twitch. Not surprisingly, there was no sign of the Little Woodswallows that had been present on the Mt Hope-to-Euabalong Road in 2011 so an alternative commencement point was required. A very productive patch of mallee ecotoned with callitris-box woodland literally a kilometre west of the “Little Woodswallow spot” looked quite promising but gave way to Whooley Tank as the place to commence the ‘Dummy Run’ that afternoon. The other place they needed to do homework on was the Lake Cargelligo Poo Ponds. This was possibly the most important single site on their Saturday run and a quick reccy showed that it was in ‘solid form’.

The Dummy Run happened on the Friday afternoon and confirmed some quality birds along their route. These included Crimson Chats feeding dependent young, Diamond Doves in a couple of places, scattered Black Honeyeaters, Spotted Nightjar at the Wheat Paddock and a Little Crow seen on the edge of Lake Cargelligo township. But the clear highlight was finding a pair of Ground Cuckoo-shrikes just north of Booberoi Creek. This bird had been dubbed “The Unmentionable” due to the frustration faced over the years by Ando Brew to try and get a look at one. The remainder of the Brewers had learnt that the mention of this bird’s name would be enough to set AB off on a tirade of expletive-laden accounts of denial of the bird’s existence and hence had dared not mention it for several years. A few of the said expletives were used however in a celebratory context once he’d parked his peepers on this particular pair.



“The Unmentionable” - but where was it on the Twitchathon?

The other highlight was the sheer productivity of the poo ponds. It was so good that there was probably justification to work the area for as long as they did in 2011, with Wood and Marsh Sands, White-winged Black Tern, 3 crakes, 10 ducks and fly-overs by things such as Major Mitchells and Black Falcons; the poo ponds could really become their “rainforest dawn chorus” if they worked it long enough. With deliberations over how to approach the rainforest dilemma still up in the air there was much heated discussion during the session of Crackers Disco that evening.

The following morning was spent fine-tuning the sites close to town before they filled the car with fuel and the two eskies, Eric (beer) and Evan (anything that isn’t beer) with ice then headed north and west back to the mallee to find a place to start the main event. Time was running out and the Brewers still hadn’t made a decision on where to start. They decided to check the site just west of where the Little Woods had been 2 years earlier and once Mick Brew came back with reports of Mulga Parrot, Shy Heathwren, Hooded Robin and a likely Little Woodswallow (views just weren’t good enough to clinch it as a definite sighting apparently), the lads agreed this was the spot.

After sampling a 2008 Watervale Grosset, they positioned themselves hot on the tail of a not-so-shy Shy Heathwren and

Steve Brewer – on the job



Twitchathon 2013 - Hunter Home Brewers cont.

as 4pm ticked over it went down as first bird. A series of mallee and quality western birds followed in quick succession, including Mulga Parrot, White-fronted, Yellow-plumed and Grey-fronted Honeyeaters and Western Gerygone. A juvenile Black-eared Cuckoo was discovered by Mick Brew, who quickly dragged two of the others back to confirm and as they were doing so a pair of Major Mitchells flew overhead. The Hooded Robins however had scarpered and there was no sign of the recently vocal Southern Scrub-robin. They spent an unusually long period of 29 minutes at this site before they decided to move on.



Major Mitchell was a 'maiden bird' for the Home Brewers in 2013

The second stop was at the Whooley Tank entry track where 4 pigeons were added, but not the Diamond Doves that had been present the day before. Some decent birds such as White-browed Babbler, Black Honeyeater and Southern Whiteface were recorded before it was time to head to the quality-not-quantity site in the Wheat Paddock. Grena Brew found the Spotted Nightjars again whilst Mick picked out a Chestnut Quail-thrush. A Gilbert's Whistler finally sounded off (the only one heard at this spot during the 3 visits they'd made here) and Splendid Fairy-wrens crossed the track. There was still no sign anywhere of the scrub-robin and then it dawned on them that they hadn't heard a Crested Bellbird either. After what seemed like a very long wait in silence they decided they needed to move on.

A quick stop along the railway line produced a perched Diamond Dove and a calling bellbird at last. Satisfied that they could live with dipping on the scrub-robin with so many other birds to bag, they carried on to the open woodland where the Crimson Chats were feeding young yesterday. They were easily found, along with Painted and Brown-headed Honeyeaters and a well-oiled Speckled Warbler, being their 50th bird.

With the quality wooded habitat now behind them they started seeing open country birds without needing to get out of the car, including some important ones such as Pallid Cuckoo, Brown Songlark and Blue Bonnet. Booberoi Creek failed to produce 'the-bird-that-was-until-recently-not-mentioned' but gave them Little Friarbird as a very small consolation. Their best chance at Emu also passed without a show and Chat Alley only provided the White-fronted variety, as well as White-winged Fairy-wren. However, spirits soared as they drove past the turn-off to the Cargy Airport when Mick at the helm of The Patrol flushed an Aussie Pratincole from the side of the road. An almighty "get there!" was delivered as Ando got his 5th new bird for the trip and a real bonus bird was added to the tally of 74 species.

After a quick stop at Frog Hollow to add Restless Flycatcher, they moved eagerly onto the poo ponds. Grena Brew, as scribe, limbered his fingers ready for the rush of bird names about to be thrown at him. This started with "Aussie Shelduck, Little Grass, Hardhead, Grey Teal, Swamphen...hang on...Black Falcon!", which was followed by a who's who of Australian waterfowl and associated species. Migratory shorebirds were in attendance and onto the list went Sharpies, Marsh and Wood Sands, Greenshank and Red-necked Stint – all but the first of these were not to be seen again on the Twitch. The White-winged Black Tern was easily picked out at the rear of the same pond just as a flock of Zebra Finches flew in. The 100 species mark passed without time to even be aware of the fact, as a Caspian Tern and 6 Glossy Ibis joined the feathered frenzied faecal-fed fray.

Once satisfied that they'd worked the fore ponds well enough, it was time to seek out the duck species lurking out of view in the hind ponds. Before long they picked out the quality trio of Shoveler, Freckled and Pink-eared Ducks but couldn't locate the Wandering Whistling-Duck that they knew was in there somewhere. Finally a Cockatiel made a fly-by, well picked up by Grena despite having his nose in the notebook for so much of the time spent here. The decision to keep working the poo ponds had paid dividends and at just after 7:30pm they had 124 species on the list. It was time to make tracks but then just as they were about to leave Mick heard a tinkling finch call and the suggestion of "are they Plum-heads?" came soon after. Sure enough, a flock of about a dozen Plum-headed Finches had flown in right on dusk. The Brewers rejoiced at the sheer luck of such an unexpected bird right at the dying minutes of their active Saturday birding. Leaving Cargy with 125 species and a long haul of night roads ahead of them, the backseat brewers consulted Eric the Esky while they compared lists to ensure all was in order.

The long drive meant that very few stops could be made to look for nocturnal birds. In fact, in the 450 km to Cassilis they only tried for night birds twice – once in a vain attempt to hear Little Button or Stubble Quails calling in likely habitat and once to find the Dubbo Barker, which they did with ruthless efficiency before jumping back in the vehicle to make the final late night leg to their 'camp' at Cassilis Rest Area. The night was much quieter here than it had been in 2011 and as the lads each chose a picnic table to lie upon, they only managed to hear Owlet Nightjars and Superb Fairy-wrens sounding off!

After their compulsory 3-hour break, the Brewers languidly piled back into the Patrol at around 4:15am, managing to add calling Boobooks and Channel-billed Cuckoos to the list in the process. It was an odd feeling for them as they drove through rural country as dawn broke – the peak of the birding day was here and they were still nearly 3 hours from their first rainforest remnant. Having left Cargy Poo Ponds so late the evening before, the decision had effectively been made to drop the Barrington Tops rainforests and work the nearer remnants and then Old Brush later in the day. As they trucked along as day broke, a variety of roadside species was added and a quick detour to find the Plum-headed Whistling-Ducks at Doughboy Hollow paid off. This part of the Twitch seemed to lag on forever, punctuated only by the occasional addition of a pretty low quality species. Finally, after more than 3 hours in the vehicle they reached their first rainforest patch and the boys jumped out of the car, ears and eyes ready for the new purple patch of birds to be added.

The very first bird seen was a Wompoo Fruit-Dove, followed by Topknot and White-headed Pigeons, Regent Bowerbird, Black-faced Monarch and Rufous Fantail. Brush Cuckoo and Wonga Pigeons were heard calling in the gully whilst a Grey Goshawk was picked up patrolling the airspace above. With this patch thoroughly worked, they headed further up the hill and in the process flushed a small dove off the ground. "Did yez see that?! That was an Emerald Dove!" shouted Steve. He pulled the car over and the rest of the team jumped out to see the bird perched on an overhanging branch. Another bonus bird bagged and one that they had not seen since their debut Twitch in 1999 (about 2km away). It was also their 13th pigeon species for the 2013 run – easily their best haul of Columbiformes on a Twitch.

With the initial rainforest sites sufficiently worked and having 181 species clocked, they headed down the valley towards the dry woodlands, open country and wetlands of the Lower Hunter. In the process they had decided to abandon a visit to one of the Twitchathon staples, Green Wattle Creek and along with that went other key sites such as Seaham and Raymond Terrace. They had failed to hear a Torresian Crow calling in this area but figured they could maybe hear it at either Mulbring or Shortland later. They were also still missing a good number of rainforest birds and had no scrubwrens on their list whatsoever. Old Brush was looking more and more like being a lynchpin site for them and the most efficient way of getting there was en route from the Kurri woodlands to the estuary, where they needed to be by about 12:30 or so.

Twitchathon 2013 - Hunter Home Brewers cont.

Great Crested Grebe was easily found at Walka Water Works but try as they might they could not find a Musk Duck. Banded Lapwing and Horsfield's Bushlark were picked up soon after at Lorn along with a host of common sub-coastal species that added to the ever-burgeoning inventory of birds. Both New Holland and White-cheeked Honeyeaters were in their usual patch not far from the woodland sites and when Double-barred Finches were seen at the same spot, the 198th species went down on their list.

Upon arrival at the woodlands Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters were quickly found amongst wheeling hordes of White-browed Woodswallows before a species that is far from guaranteed was ticked as their 200th bird at about 9:30am in the form of Varied Sittella. There were so many White-broweds that they could not find any Dusky Woods, even at a spot where they'd been seen nest-building only a few weeks earlier. Little Lorikeet, Scarlet and Fuscous Honeyeaters and White-throated Gerygone were found during the hunt for the Duski before a slow drive-by from the Varied Wrenegades occurred...on their brewing turf! After welcoming and 'farewelling' the Wrenegades, the Brewers decided to head west, finally coming across a colony of Bell Miners which was an addition to their list. A 30-second stop at 'Black-chinned Honeyeater Junction' produced the namesake species, though 'Buttonquail Junction' was not as kind to them.

At Buttonquail Junction they noticed the form of a pushbike rider headed up the dirt track toward them. After overcoming the surprise that this wasn't a noisy trail bike as often inhabits these woods, they realised it was Miyagi of the Dry-throated Buzzards. The conversation was skeletal, but he did reveal that they were currently experiencing tyre problems...as the Buzzards often seem to be... and as the brewers zoomed off in their not-so-environmentally-friendly mode of transportation they acknowledged the remainder of the Buzzards, struggling with tyre puncture kits, with the expected flurry of exclamations and 'words of encouragement' for them in their predicament. A rather protracted stop further along Hebburn Road finally produced Dusky Woodswallows as Steve Brew picked a pair perched on a dead branch. The woodlands were going quiet and with 207 down they decided that they had to try for a missing friend that they knew was in the area; Buff-rumped Thornbill. They worked a couple of otherwise 'reliable' sites for them, but eventually had to bite the buffy bullet and head for Old Brush.

After dropping a few gold coins in the donation tin, spying a Great Egret on the dam and flushing some very welcome Brown Cuckoo-Doves from the track in, they stood on the edge of the rainforest and listened. Despite it being close to 11am birds were still calling and they added Noisy Pitta, Lyrebird, Shrike-tit and White-naped Honeyeater before venturing into the forest proper, finding the 2 more difficult scrubwrens in Yellow-throated and Large-billed. A Bassian Thrush feeding near the entry gate on their way out was the 8th quality species added at Old Brush and all agreed the tactic to work the remnants and to 'mop up' here was a good move. Grey-crowned Babblers and an Aussie Hobby were added at Mulbring but there was absolutely no sign of Torresian Crow at all. Frustrated that they'd now missed the best two opportunities for the crow, they headed towards the 'next big thing' in the form of the Hunter River Estuary.

The Mulbring Hobby was backed up by Brown Goshawk, Swamp Harrier and Black Kite, all seen from 'Kite Bluff' and rounding out a double hat-trick on raptors. Little Egret and Yellow-billed Spoonbill were seen at Pambalong, which was the last 'quick stop' before heading to the make-or-break part of every Twitchathon at Stockton. This is the 'rainforest for shorebirds' on each twitch, along with a supporting cast of terns etc. At least on this occasion they had some of the long-legged birds from Cargy that were unlikely to be at Stockton. In contrast to virtually every other Twitchathon they'd done, the Brewers timed this one to be 3 hours *before* high tide, as opposed to 3 hours after, which was not an option anyway as high tide was around 3pm. Rather than go when the tide was higher or lower they hoped to catch a similar 'staging' of birds at the sandspit when the tide was just right so that the beach had a large, mixed flock staging before flying to high-tide roosts.

The nervous period is always the drive over Stockton Bridge, but as they gazed down from the left lane they saw bulk birds and there was an instant fervour. However, that fervour was soon tainted by the fact that a fisherman was wading into the water near one of the mangrove islands. Every bird could have flushed at any minute. Rather than heading under the bridge, they parked on the side of the road and darted back towards the track that led them down to the water. Brown Honeyeaters and Mangrove Gerygones were added by calls and the resident Pied Oystercatchers led their fluffy chicks away from potential danger.

Fortunately the fisherman had moved away from the flock of birds but a new threat had emerged as a small boat had made landfall at the western end of the beach and ready to pounce out of it were two young boys – time was very much of the essence and the Brewers quickly set about picking out the various shorebird species. Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed/Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew Sands and Red Knot were present, along with Little and Gull-billed Terns. A distant Sea-Eagle was picked out up the river whilst a Striated Heron made a very timely appearance...just as the two life-jacket clad brats from the boat ran full pelt into the flock of birds, chasing them as if they were pigeons in a park. There could have been a Great Knot lurking in there but the Brewers were happy with what they'd managed and moved on to find the Terek Sands, Grey-tailed Tattlers and Whimbrels along the Fern Bay foreshore. This was followed by Pacific Golden Plovers along the Stockton foreshore and Wedge-tailed Shearwaters feeding in Stockton Bight. A Gannet was seen by just 2 members so could not go down on the list. 242 species at ten to one – time for the slog into town.

Every year the journey into the Newcastle Rock Platforms becomes more and more tedious and due to the warm weather it was certainly no exception on this particular Sunday afternoon. They had no hope of getting a park near the ocean baths so had to scope down onto the rocks from Fort Drive. As is customary on a Twitchathon Sunday, Sooty Oyes and Ruddy Turnstones were nowhere to be seen and the only new bird sitting on the rocks was Crested Tern. Flocks of Short-tailed Shearwaters peppered the sea in front of them and the occasional Fluttering came in close enough to enable a positive ID. Common Terns were feeding around the Cowrie Hole but frustratingly, no Gannets could be scoped and it was to be a dip for the Brewers.

Still, the Common Tern was the bird that placed them on a level score with their previous best of 246 and it had only just gone one-thirty in the afternoon. The Brewers set to beat their personal best and the record of 250 looked shaky as well. But as often happens with these Home Brewers, the wheels nearly fell off in the last 3 hours of the event. They realised that they were missing two common species; Little Wattlebird and, perhaps remarkably, White-browed Scrubwren. Both of these were gimmies at Redhead and with recent reports of Bulbuls, Brush Bronzewing and Emu-wrens at the same site the decision was made to work that patch. In hindsight that was probably a tactical error because the possible 'bonus birds' were skulkers and it may have been wiser to go somewhere else where they could have added other missing species, such as Scaly-breasted / Musk Lorikeets, Latham's Snipe, Night-Heron, Musk Duck, Tawny Grassbird and of course, that Torresian Crow.

As it turned out, despite a desperate search for the skulkers, they only added the wattlebird and scrubwren on the Redhead run and with the clock showing 2:20pm they needed to make a quick turn-around and hit Ash Island. Things were getting tight and they had to at least nail the "dead cert" Tawny Grassbird on Ash. Of course, upon arrival at Schoolhouse and Ramsar Roads, normally heaving with Tawny Grassbirds like grasshoppers, there was dead silence and not a bird to be seen. Musk Duck was really the only other bird they could target and so they made the long drive through the guts of Ash Island to get a view across Deep Pond where they easily located a Musky. As they did, a Tawny Grassbird fortuitously called from about 10 metres away...and the 250 mark had been reached.

At 3:15 they made a quick dash off Ash Island, not even stopping for a scan of Swan and Wader Ponds they had such little time. They

Twitchathon 2013 - Hunter Home Brewers cont.

did have enough time though to check a harrier floating over Ramsar Road on the way out. Sure enough, it was an adult Spotted Harrier it all its splendour and the brewers went berserk at the fact that they'd just tipped the Twitchathon record score, and with a far more poetic bird than a Wetlands Centre Maggie Goose!

When they got to Shortland they decided they had enough time to park near Mick Brew's house and hope that one of the resident Torresian Crows would call. None did, and it was on to the not-so-wet Wetlands Centre where they had only allotted themselves around 10 minutes birding time as there was little on offer apart from the now-customary stake-out for an Azure Kingfisher along Ironbark Creek. There was little else to look for anyway as virtually every pond at the centre was dry. Maggie Goose was added as #252 but they never even got a whiff of anything else new.

Mick certainly had more than a whiff of victory though as he collected the team sheets and glanced quickly at the Menacing Monarchs'

species sheet to see "224" scribbled down at the top left corner. After announcing the other team scores and hearing from elsewhere in NSW, it was confirmed that the Hunter Home Brewers had finally regained the Twitchathon mantle after 4 years of bridesmaidness with a new record tally. On the job, they'd come up with a strategy that shattered the preconception that a rainforest dawn chorus, or even any type of dawn chorus that wasn't grumbling birders inside a Nissan Patrol, was a mandatory Twitchathon tactic.

Very satisfied with their approach in 2013 (and remembering there are always dips on a Twitchathon) the brewing lads are looking forward to the 2014 campaign and are studying the tide charts already. Some new ideas have emerged, some old ones have faded and some assumptions have moved sideways in the process.

Oh...and there was much rejoicing.

Jacqueline Winter

Twitchathon 2013 - Dry-throated Buzzards (on bicycles)

The BASNA Twitchathon 2012 had seen the Buzzards equal their personal best of 170 that they had set the previous year. They had been let down by the late or non-arrival of spring migrants and the strength of their route was not sufficient to offset the losses. However, they had improved slightly on their sponsorship total, raising over \$1,200. Unfortunately, following the injury that Miyagi sustained en route, it had taken him three months to get back in the saddle and the broken bike had cost a fair amount to fix too. This year the Buzzards were more determined than ever to hit their target of 180 and so they went all out to do so. The conditions seemed to be shaping up for them to achieve their goal. The tide times were ideal for them to start the race at the Sandspit, which meant that they wouldn't be forced to do their woodland sites on the same day as the shorebirds, and suffer from their long distance of separation. The spring migrants were returning in numbers and a number of traditionally western birds were also present in the Lower Hunter. Things were looking good.

The planned route was essentially formed shortly after the close of business in 2012 and so there was a long agonising wait to put it into action. It would begin at Stockton Sandspit to capitalise on the tides and then progress to Newcastle Baths for its offerings. The remaining time on Saturday would be used to grab a few bonus birds at Glenrock before the nocturnal activity began. Sunday would begin with a drive out to Old Brush before... Wait. What was that? Rewind. Did I hear correctly? DRIVE? Er... yes... let me explain...

Despite having cycled every kilometre on the previous three Twitches, the Buzzards had always had a loyal support crew to help them out, be it setting up camp in the Watagan mountains, laying on the most fabulous array of sangers ever to grace the roadside verge of Lenaghans Drive, or driving out to help deliver a new bike to the Sugarloaves in the depths of the night. Despite never driving a single kilometre themselves, the Buzzards had always had driven kilometres associated with their Twitchathon efforts. So from that perspective, what did it matter if they drove across the loaf themselves? The birding would still all be done by bike and the Buzzards would save themselves over 30 km and two hours of cycling in the dark. As well as being a concern from a safety perspective, this would also be downright miserable and the Twitchathon is supposed to be about having fun, right? Anyway, back to the grand plan. Following the dawn chorus at Old Brush the Buzzards would return to HEZ, via their regular haunt of Mulbring. With the bush birding over they would then undertake the long ride around the loaf before embarking upon their wetland birding in the afternoon.

As Saturday afternoon arrived the Buzzards were busy in their workshop - Bagsy's garage in Merewether. With the packing of essentials finalised a few mechanical tinkering were performed. The tyres were inflated to the limit and the chains were well lubricated. All that remained was for the Buzzards themselves to receive their own lubrication. A leisurely cycle down to Honeysuckle was followed by a delicious chicken burger, washed down with a couple

of pints of wheat beer. After the ferry trip across the Hunter and short ride up river there was 20 mins til game time. A quick search of the mangroves failed to yield a Common Sandpiper or Whimbrel and so the Buzzards staked out the Tattler roost.

Play ball! With Tattler and Terek on the list it was on to the Sandspit to await the arrival of the hordes. Thankfully the Oystercatchers were present this year, as were a number of Golden Plover. Then Bagsy pulled a blinder spotting a Striated Heron flying into the mangroves. This was soon followed by four terns before Cliffy picked up a Hobby screaming through the roosting birds. The waders soon began their flight across from the dykes and quickly the Buzzards had amassed most of their targets. With only Whimbrel and Greenshank eluding them it was decided that it would be advantageous to quit whilst ahead, leave the spit half an hour early and catch the earlier ferry back to Newy. White-breasted Woodswallow was gratefully snagged en route to the crossing.

Once city-side, a minor detour was enforced to navigate around Fat as Butter, before heading for the baths. There were masses of Short-tailed and Fluttering Shearwaters close in, Sooty Oycs on the rocks, but not much else of note. With the allotted time at an end Ruddy Turnstone was nowhere to be seen (the tide was still too high) and Pied Cormorant had still not been collected. Thankfully the Buzzards now had some time up their sleeves. Cliffy soon spotted a Gannet, then a quick backtrack to Stony Point provided the Ruddys and to much relief a Pied Cormorant flew past. Next stop was Burwood Waste Water Treatment Plant in search of New Holland Honeyeater - birding is full of pleasant experiences. The quarry failed to be captured, but its less attractive cousin was of some consolation. A lone White-headed Pigeon flying high over the ridge was another welcome addition.

The good birding spots within Glenrock had fortunately escaped the recent bush fire and so the plan was to wait for sunset at Leichhardt's Lookout and hope for a bonus bird or two. However, en route Bagsy delivered once again, spotting a Brush Turkey (not a reliable species in these parts) scrambling away up the slope. The dusk waiting game provided some extra Buzzard-fodder, including some rainforest regulars and Leadon Flycatcher. The best was saved til last though, with Miyagi spotting a Regent Bowerbird flying high over the lagoon in the distance.

As night approached the Buzzards were positioned in the Burwood Road car park awaiting the Tawny Frogmouth that Miyagi had found on an earlier oiling mission. Unfortunately it couldn't be located, despite much searching. Hopefully it wouldn't evade them yet again. Not this time - after travelling all of about 20 metres along the track beside the creek what should pop up in the lights but a Tawny sitting on a nest, complete with chick! It wasn't the only chick the Buzzards would encounter either as who should they bump into around the corner but the City Chicks?! After hanging with the Chicks for a

Twitchathon 2013 - Dry-throated Buzzards cont.

while, chewing the fat and exchanging war stories, the Buzzards were itching to press on. The next target was a biggy and one they were desperate to land – a well-oiled Sooty Owl. After many fruitless minutes of whistling a response was finally heard from a nearby tree. Miyagi soon located it in his head torch and the others gladly ticked up.

All that remained was to grab the Boobook in Murdering Gully and head on home. But the big ticks were not yet over. Whilst riding out towards the headland, in the last stand of trees, there was some eye shine. Another couple of possums thought Miyagi. Nah, fire flies. Hmm. Maybe possums? As the glowing dots were about to be passed Miyagi turned his head to confirm the identity of their owners and put his mind at rest. As he did, something else caught his attention, sitting in another tree closer to the path. Maybe another Tawny? Holy crap – it was a Powerful Owl! There it sat in resplendent glory, within 10 m of the track, on a small dead branch, with nothing to obscure it. Breathtaking. The bird sat there unperturbed, treating the Buzzards to a truly moving experience. The Murdering Gully Boobook rounded out an excellent four-bird nocturnal haul.

The trip back to Bagsy's was made in high spirits. Saturday's run had worked out perfectly and the key decision of the trip had proved decisive. At Buzzard HQ Verity had cooked up a magnificent lasagne that was indulgently devoured, along with a couple of pale ales and another wheat beer. Miyagi tallied up the bird list, finding a total of 90 species. As a rule of thumb the score is doubled on the second day, so the target of 180 was currently on the cards. All that was required was a successful Sunday and the long-term goal would finally be achieved.

After a few hours adrenaline-broken sleep the Buzzards loaded up the car and drove to their starting location at Old Brush. The dawn chorus was already underway when they arrived and the list soon started to grow. Black-faced Monarchs were calling all over the place, Bassian Thrush was soon spotted and Catbirds began to wail. Wonga Pigeon called, followed by Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo and then Lyrebird. It was then decided to leave the creek and embark upon the shorter of the circular walks before returning. This proved reasonably successful as Crested Shrike-Tit was heard and a Common Bronzewing was flushed from the track. Towards the end of the walk a quiet chattering was heard in a tree above. Rosella maybe? A bird was soon spotted, but it was much smaller than a Rosella. Blood hell, it was only a Spectacled Monarch (second lifer for Cliffy)! Old Brush is some way south of this species' typical range and was definitely not on the Buzzards' radar. However, neither of the two better scrubwren species had fallen yet and Miyagi was determined not to leave without one of them, despite setting them some way behind schedule. Yellow-throated was eventually located and Old Brush was departed without Large-billed Scrubwren, Noisy Pitta or Crimson Rosella. A single King Parrot heard on the way out was to be the only one of the race too.

In Mulbring it was pretty much business as usual. Blue-faced Honeyeater was heard on the ride in and a small flock of Long-billed Corella were present. Red-rumped Parrots were very obliging too. "What's that calling?" asked Bagsy. Grey-crowned Babbler was what was calling and a nice tick it was indeed. Torresian Crow was notable by its absence and after not hearing it on the oiling mission either, Miyagi was somewhat suspicious about their current status. Mulbring seemed to be entirely corvid-less and might have lost its population of crows. Four out of five was a reasonable result though and so the Buzzards pressed on to HEZ, keen to make back some of the time they had lost. A tidy little bonus presented itself on the ride out in the form of Double-barred Finch.

Buff-rumped Thornbill was the first woodland target to be claimed, with a group of them heard calling on the road into HEZ. The Buzzards then embarked on a 10 km off-road circuit, designed to optimise their species return. The ride would take about one hour and there was likely another hour available for birding. At the first stop Yellow-tufted Honeyeater was soon added, closely followed by the resident Brown Treecreepers. After picking up an early White-

bellied Cuckoo-Shrike it was time to press on to the next site. They'd not travelled far before a Painted Button-quail was heard calling beside the track. Bonus!

As they approached their next stop Bagsy was busy watching a bird flying over the power easement when he connected full on with a tree root, rock, or some other inconsiderate obstruction. He was thinking that it wouldn't have done his tyre any good and he was right. Not much further on it became clear that he had a flat. Probably just a slow puncture that could be managed through frequent pumping was the initial diagnosis. However, it soon became apparent that it was in fact a full blown puncture and would require repairing. A simple task that hardened veteran bike mechanic Bagsy casually got stuck into, as the others continued to search for new species. Fortunately the spot where they broke down held a vocal Rufous Songlark, Brush Cuckoo and a pair of Dusky Woodswallows, so it wasn't all bad.

Once Bagsy had the tyre off it became clear that a repair job was a no go as the inner tube was torn at the valve. No worries, time to get out the replacement tube. At this moment the Brewmobile appeared over the ridge. Some cagey small talk was exchanged before the Brewers tore off down the hill honking loudly at the stricken Bagsy. Meanwhile the bike repair troubles continued to escalate. No matter how hard he tried Bagsy couldn't get any air into the tyre – the valve must be faulty! Fortunately Cliffy had similar tyres and so his spare tube was called into service. Eventually the fallen steed was good to go again, but at the cost of over 20 minutes additional time lost. Bar-shouldered and Peaceful Doves were the only other additions at this location.

The Buzzards reached their final woodland stop at the end of the cul-de-sac and quickly ticked up Jacky Winter and Little Lorikeet. Miyagi was beginning to fret about the absence of White-browed Woodswallow. He had snagged it en route already but the others were currently dipping. There had been heaps of them here on the oiling mission. Where were they now? Cliffy soon relieved the tension however, spotting a few of them soaring up above. Overall the woodland run had been a little disappointing, especially on the honeyeater front, but with time pressing on it was time to cut their losses and make a move. Unfortunately there was to be no repeat performance of the Budgie flyby that was the highlight of the pre-Twitch oiling. On the ride out to the hospital the location of all the woodswallows was discovered.

There was now a long ride from the woodlands west of the Sugarloaf Range to the wetland habitats to the east. It would take over an hour of solid riding to reach Lenaghans Drive, not accounting for any stopping for rests or birding. The only significant additions en route were Darter and Wedge-tailed Eagle (thanks Bagsy). Brown Goshawk could have been added too if the others were looking up when Cliffy spotted one being chased across the road. It was briefly searched for where it had alighted in the trees, but to no avail.

Along the tough undulating ride of Black Hill Road the Buzzards were starting to tire. This is typical of the Sunday ride as there is inevitably a reduction in ticking rates as the morning draws to a close, which is coupled with rising temperatures. Some dickhead honking as they honed past didn't help matters either. There'd been a few similar experiences already and the Buzzards had long passed the end of their tolerance of such behaviour, especially as they always rode single file and stuck close to the verge. Closer inspection of the offending vehicle revealed it to be another brush with the Brewers and anger was soon replaced with mild humour. It should be noted that encounters with all our other competitors involved pleasant exchanges, catching up on how things were going, what birds were still proving elusive, etc. With the Brewers however, the few encounters all involved a flash of blurry dark green Nissan Patrol, honking horns, crazed shouts of "Get that up ya!" or "Go the Brewers!", accompanied by various gesticulations from both parties. You can't beat healthy competition!

A short stop at Kite Bluff added Whiskered Tern and thankfully the giant Striated Pardalote hole in the list was filled, taking the pressure off having to rely on the Wetlands Centre. Given how dry the swamp

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was the Buzzards soon relocated to the flats off Lenaghans Drive for a much needed rest. It was a good location to recharge at as a few goodies were added to the list, including Black Kite, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo (courtesy of Cliffy) and White-winged Triller. The second Rufous Songlark of the day was also encountered. No snipe though. Now approaching an hour behind the planned schedule Miyagi decided to revert to plan B. This involved ditching Ash Island (which had been particularly poor on the oiling mission) to buy an extra 90 minutes, so now an extra half hour was available. Some of this time was used to take a detour to Pambalong Nature Reserve. Yellow-billed Spoonbill had been present there on Friday and it was hoped these would provide an easy addition to the list. The decision paid off as the birds were still there, furtively feeding in one of the ponds. Even better though was the massive form of a young Black-necked Stork on the ride in, which took flight as the Buzzards approached and settled on a distant water body. Another impressive tick for Cliffy. A Black-fronted Dotterel running along the road on the ride out was a pleasant surprise too.

The next leg of the journey involved another 10 km off-road stint along the length of the abandoned railway through Hexham Swamp and then south along the Chichester Pipeline track. On the approach to Minmi Cliffy reported another bike maintenance issue. The rear wheel was bumping so he suspected a possible broken spoke and asked Bagsy to investigate. The problem turned out not to be a broken spoke but in fact some strange deformation of the tyre. It appeared that the inner tube had somehow become twisted and expanded in one location, creating a large bulge. Perplexed with what he was presented with Bagsy decided that the best course of action was to keep riding on it, albeit after the tyre pressure was reduced somewhat to reduce the chances of puncturing. Cliffy was to be in for an uncomfortable ride, but he'd barely notice it over the terrain the next 10 km had to offer.

It was probably around 5 km along the railway when the others were wondering why the hell Miyagi had made them come this way. A ride along the highway was beginning to seem a much more enticing alternative. The distant buildings on the horizon at the other side of the swamp seemed to never get any closer, the sun was burning and the wind was howling. Fortunately the bridge crossings were dry and it was possible to cycle down and through them, rather than performing a balancing act walking along the rail tracks and rotting sleepers. However, Miyagi was too busy spewing that the Glossy Ibis he had staked out on a flash of water two days previously had decided to relocate. How dare they! However, after bumping along buried sleepers, negotiating barbed wire fences and lifting bikes over rail tracks to navigate around overgrown sections, the hard work finally paid off. Pipit eventually fell and was soon followed by a flushed Brown Quail. The Glossy Ibis were then picked up on a distant patch of water in the middle of the reeds. At last the railway had been successfully navigated and the relative comfort of the aggregate pipeline track awaited. As the weary riders approached the first wet patch something flushed and flew over the track and into the reeds. "Bittern! Bittern!" squealed Miyagi. Get there! The Buzzards' best bird of the Twitch had been upgraded, again. A brief encounter with a flighty male White-fronted Chat underlined the Hexham experience nicely.

With around an hour to go before the end of the race the Buzzards urgently needed to take stock of their position and consume some overdue sustenance. The golden arches were firmly in their sights, standing loud and proud like a vision of loveliness, towering above an expanse of desolation. Never before has a visit to Maccas been so welcome or a cold coke tasted so good. Miyagi soon got down to the business of updating the list and tallying up the score, the latter of which hadn't been done since the previous day. At Minmi he was pretty sure that 180 was not going to be achieved, but by Hexham it seemed like it might just be possible. There were a number of regrettable holes in the list (including Fairy Martin and Brown Thornbill) but a host of cripplers had been amassed along the way. It was difficult to work out where things stood and it was time for the numbers to do the talking. Things were looking good. The total stood at 177. There were two gimmees waiting at the Wetlands Centre – Aussie Grebe and Magpie Goose. That would leave around half an

hour to get one extra tick, of which there were many possibilities to choose from. Too easy. It was done and dusted, surely? Time to chow down the burgers and saddle up.

The sealed road surface sure felt good to ride on, especially with sore behinds. Maybe not so good for Cliffy and his bumpy tyre though. Fifteen minutes later the Buzzards were going through the formalities of entering the Wetlands Centre. They had foregone the option of checking out Newcastle Wetlands Reserve across the road as they already had Darter and the Freckled Ducks hadn't been there on Friday (it turns out they were there on the day though). The mood was buoyant and there was no time pressure. What a pleasant end to the event they thought. If only they knew how badly things were about to derail.

The Magpie Geese littered the pond out the front of the building. One down, two to go. The bikes were then secured before a quick scan for the grebes. Dipping. Scan again. Dipping. "Where the ?#! are the grebes?!" Engage panic mode. Phew. There was one. ONE. There was also one more bird yet to get. Time for a casual stroll around the wetlands. Or should that be drylands? The ponds out front turned out to be the only ones with any water (and hence birds) in them. All of a sudden the realisation of the predicament the Buzzards were facing dawned upon them. They were resigned to walking around aimlessly, hoping that one of the few things they needed would fly overhead or call out to them. To finish on 179 would be devastating. It seemed the unthinkable was about to happen.

Upon reaching the far edge of the wetlands the Buzzards happened upon the egret and ibis colony, which today consisted of a mere four White Ibis. Surely it was wishful thinking that a Night-Heron would be roosting there today? Miyagi began to scan the trees in a last ditch act of desperation. Bang! There it was! The sweetest rufous object that had ever been gazed upon. "Nankeen Night-Heron!" went the cry and the others were soon on to it. What a relief. Spared from the jaws of disaster. There could have been a thousand Night-Heron there and the Buzzards wouldn't have noticed. They had one and that was all that mattered. There was just enough time to make it comfortably back to the finish line and so a brisk walk was made around the other side of the complex, hoping to further add to the total. Celebrations had been restrained for now as there was still the scary prospect of a miscount in Maccas and so an additional tick would help mitigate that possibility.

The three new birds were added to the list and a careful count was undertaken to ensure that the magical total had indeed been reached. The count in Maccas had been true and the final score was 180 on the nose. The Buzzards would claim the prize for best ratio of birds seen to kilometres travelled, when posting a minimum score of 180 (pending official results). Having travelled only around 135 km (100 km by bike, which technically counts as 0 km) there was no prospect of a rival team bettering them. The long-term ambition had been achieved. The planned route had been a success after all. The Buzzards had got all of their key decisions right (we won't mention the Freckled Duck) and in the end every single one of their ticks counted.

It will come as a disappointment to many but the Buzzards will be hanging up their bikes next year. They've earned the right to a well-deserved rest and the chance to do something different. Cycling the Twitchathon is not an easy undertaking. There are logistical challenges, severe constraints on route options and very little flexibility during the race. In addition it is physically and mentally exhausting and much time that should be spent birding is in reality spent recovering from the exertions. Finally, the risk of bike maintenance issues arising is a constant worry but inevitable given the terrain being traversed. These elements can all prove frustrating and sometimes take the shine off the occasion. Despite all this though we've thoroughly enjoyed the last four years and it has been extremely rewarding. We've had some good moments, good birds, good stories, good memories. During our cycling endeavours we have pedalled a distance of around 480 km, some 80 km of which has been off-road and in doing so we have accumulated almost 220 species.

Twitchathon 2013 - Dry-throated Buzzards cont.

It is the end of the chapter for the Buzzards Twitchathon efforts, but not the end of the story. They may decide to have another crack at cycling when the stars align and the conditions seem favourable to significantly improve on their current PB. The challenge is there for someone else to take up. A benchmark has been set and is there to be

broken. If it was, it might ruffle the Buzzards' feathers and provoke some responsive action! As for the next chapter in the Buzzards' story, that will begin in 2014 and who knows what it might bring?

Miyagi Buzzard

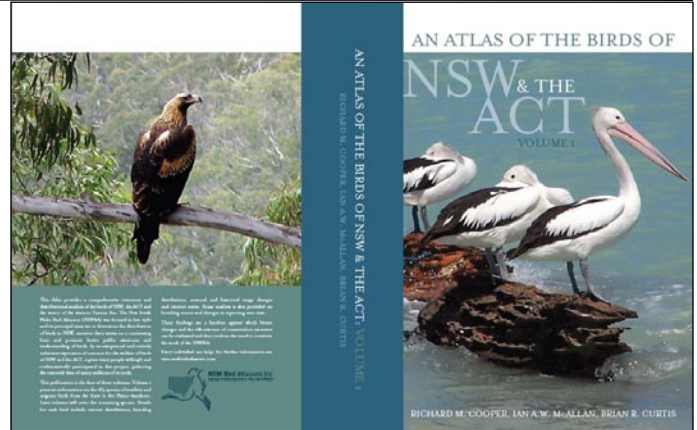
NSW Bird Atlassers' First Atlas

In early-mid 2014, the **Atlas of the Birds of NSW and ACT - Volume 1** will be available for purchasing. This will be the first of three Volumes to be published. A discounted pre-publication price of \$115.00 applies prior to distribution. Retail Price (non-NSWBA members) will be \$135.00, NSWBA members \$95.00, plus postage and handling.

With the completion of the three Volumes, the Atlas will cover all birds found in NSW, the ACT and the waters of western Tasman Sea. Volume 1 covers 183 resident and migrant birds from the Emu to the Plains-Wanderer, Volume 2 will cover the main species from the Comb-crested Jacana to the Striated Pardalote, and Volume 3 the Eastern Spinebill to the Common Greenfinch as well as all vagrant species, and the birds of the Lord Howe group. Details for each bird include current distribution, breeding, seasonal and historical change and current status and provides a baseline against which future studies, environmental trends and conservation efforts can be measured.

Of the birds in Volume 1, the 'good news' is that the reporting rated on 45 species (25%) is increasing (including 12 species determined as threatened by the NSW Scientific Committee). The 'bad news' is that reports of 67 species (37%) are declining at significant levels (including 10 species listed as threatened in NSW). Further monitoring is required to obtain sufficient data to conclusively report on the extent or causes affecting the populations of another 33 species.

The Atlas itself offers the wider community and governments a better understanding of the status and needs of each species and where to best concentrate conservation management efforts.



The text was written by Ian McAllan and Richard Cooper and reviewed by numerous people. Input was sought from others where this was thought valuable. Brian Curtis produced the maps for the Atlas and designed the graphs presented. Everyone who has seen any of the text has commented favourably on the quality of the information therein.

Publication of the Volumes is a tribute to all the past and present NSWBA members who willingly and enthusiastically participated in this community-based project. It will be evident that these 'citizen scientists' individually contributed an enormous amount of time, effort and expense in gathering the volume of data (comprising about 5.6 million records and 526,723 atlas sheets).

To order your copy, please contact Richard Cooper by email origma505@yahoo.com.au or by post to PO Box 717, Woolgoolga NSW 2456.

Remote sensing finds Malleefowl mounds

Local Environmental Management Consultancy, Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd, has developed a system for identifying Malleefowl Mounds using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) data gathered from an aircraft. LiDAR data is obtained when laser light is sent from an aircraft towards the ground and the time it takes for the bounced light to return is used to determine the height and location of objects such as vegetation, buildings and the ground. Several 'returns' may be observed for each laser pulse, amounting to millions of data points.

Umwelt has developed software to search through the LiDAR data for mounds, even those covered by vegetation. The software automatically ranks mound-like objects, with the most likely mounds then presented

visually to the user one by one. The user can then determine if the identified object is likely to be a mound or not.

At one site in the Yilgarn region (WA), Umwelt's software identified 102 potential mounds, of which 99 turned out to be mounds in the field. This approach provides a substantial time saving when searching for Malleefowl mounds within large areas. The complete article on this new technique can be found in the Malleefowl Newsletter at the following link:

http://database.malleefowlvictoria.org.au/forms/Ed_4_2013.pdf

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	27/10/2013	Hexham Swamp	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Australasian Figbird	4+nests	19/10/2013	Mungo Brush	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Australian King-Parrot	2+nest	22/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Australian Logrunner	2+1dy	20/10/2013	Copeland SCA	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Australian Magpie	2+1dy	9/10/2013	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough	Club Night
Australian Magpie	2+2dy	12/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Australian Pelican	c.55dy	10/10/2013	Wallis Lake	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	2+nest	16/10/2013	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	18	16/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	2+2dy	19/10/2013	Stockton Sandspit	T. Clarke	Hunterbirding
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	4+nest	19/10/2013	Mudbishops Point	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Azure Kingfisher	1	19/10/2013	Myall Shores	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Baillon's Crake	1	11/10/2013	Walka Water Works	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Baillon's Crake	2	12/11/2013	Walka Water Works	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Baillon's Crake	3	13/11/2013	Walka Water Works	J. Smart <i>et al.</i>	Club Night
Banded Lapwing	1	7/10/2013	Lorn	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Banded Lapwing	+dy	27/10/2013	Lorn	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Banded Lapwing	1	16/11/2013	Hexham Swamp	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Barking Owl	2	7/09/2013	Goulburn River NP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Bassian Thrush	h	13/10/2013	Minmi	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Beach Stone-Curlew	1	7/10/2013	Soldiers Point	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Beach Stone-Curlew	3	17/10/2013	Dowardee Island	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Beach Stone-Curlew	1	19/10/2013	Mudbishops Point	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Beach Stone-Curlew	2+nest	8/11/2013	Manning Estuary	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Black Falcon	1	5/10/2013	Jerrys Plains	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Black Falcon	1	7/10/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Black Falcon	1	10/10/2013	Shortland	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Black Falcon	1	13/10/2013	East Maitland	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Black Honeyeater	1	6/10/2013	Durrigere Road	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Black Swan	350	19/10/2013	Mungo Brush	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Black-fronted Dotterel	1+3dy	22/10/2013	Tocal	M. Newman	Hunterbirding
Black-necked Stork	1	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Black-necked Stork	1	22/10/2013	Pambalong NR	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Black-necked Stork	1	27/10/2013	Pambalong NR	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Black-necked Stork	1	28/10/2013	Shortland	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Black-necked Stork	1	8/11/2013	Cattai Wetlands	J. Stiles	Hunterbirding
Black-winged Stilt	2+3dy	22/10/2013	Tocal	M. Newman	Hunterbirding
Blue-faced Honeyeater	3+3dy	30/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	7	26/09/2013	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	pers. comm.
Brown Gerygone	5+3dy	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Brown Goshawk	1+nest	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Brown Songlark	h	12/11/2013	Anambah	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Brown Treecreeper	2+3dy	7/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Brown-headed Honeyeater	1+1dy	10/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Brush Bronzewing	1	1/10/2013	Belmont	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Brush Bronzewing	c.6	13/10/2013	Awabakal NR	I. Benson	Hunterbirding
Budgerigar	14	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Budgerigar	c.20	24/10/2013	Singleton Army Base	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Budgerigar	2	25/10/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Budgerigar	1	7/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Buff-banded Rail	1	7/10/2013	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough	Club Night
Buff-banded Rail	2+4dy	18/10/2013	Wangi Wangi	D. Johnson	Hunterbirding
Caspian Tern	12	10/10/2013	Wallis Lake	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	26/08/2013	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	12	12/11/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Cicadabird	1	1/10/2013	Green Wattle Creek	M. Newman	Hunterbirding
Cicadabird	1	1/10/2013	Hawks Nest	S. Gorta	Hunterbirding
Comb-crested Jacana	3+	18/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Comb-crested Jacana	3	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Common Greenshank	49	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Common Sandpiper	1	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Common Sandpiper	1	30/10/2013	Ash Island	N. McNaughton	Club Night
Common Sandpiper	1	6/11/2013	Ash Island	N. McNaughton	Club Night
Common Sandpiper	1	13/11/2013	Ash Island	N. McNaughton	Club Night
Common Tern	20+	10/11/2013	Newcastle Baths	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Crested Pigeon	1+nest	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding

Club Night & Hunterbirding Observations cont.

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Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer	Source
Crimson Rosella	2dy	22/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Curlew Sandpiper	c.100	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Diamond Firetail		24/11/2013	Medhurst Bridge	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Dollarbird	1	1/10/2013	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Dollarbird	26	31/10/2013	Broke	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Double-banded Plover	1	8/11/2013	Harrington	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Dusky Woodswallow	1+nest	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Dusky Woodswallow	2+dy	7/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Eastern Koel	1h	20/09/2013	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Eastern Osprey	2	1/10/2013	Belmont Lagoon	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Eastern Osprey	2	14/10/2013	Stockton Borehole Lagoon	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Eastern Yellow Robin	9+2dy	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Eastern Yellow Robin	1+dy	7/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Emerald Dove	1	1/10/2013	Myall Lakes NP	S. Gorta	Hunterbirding
Emu	1	7/10/2013	Durrigere Road	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
European Goldfinch	2	13/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
European Goldfinch	2	19/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	4+1dy	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Flame Robin	6	20/10/2013	Devils Hole BTNP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Forest Kingfisher	2	18/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Forest Kingfisher	1	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Freckled Duck	5	18/10/2013	Newcastle Wetlands	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	4	1-6/04/2013	Wye Point	V. & D. Moon	pers. comm.
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	3	30/04-2/05/2013	Wye Point	V. & D. Moon	pers. comm.
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	3	23-31/08/2013	Wye Point	V. & D. Moon	pers. comm.
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2+1dy	3/09/2013	Wye Point	V. & D. Moon	pers. comm.
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2+1dy	8-11/10/2013	Wye Point	V. & D. Moon	pers. comm.
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	1+	5/11/2013	Dudley	L. Grenadier	Hunterbirding
Golden-headed Cisticola	+dy	12/11/2013	Ash Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Gould's Petrel	2	24/11/2013	Port Stephens Pelagic	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Grey Fantail	15+4dy	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Grey Goshawk	1	15/10/2013	Fern Bay	N. Fraser	Hunterbirding
Grey Plover	1	15/11/2013	Swan Bay	L. Mee	Hunterbirding
Grey-tailed Tattler	84	11/10/2013	Port Stephens	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Gull-billed Tern	42	14/10/2013	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Hoary-headed Grebe	50+	11/10/2013	Walka Water Works	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Hooded Robin	2	6/10/2013	Medhurst Bridge	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	1	1/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	2	7/10/2013	Largs	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Horsfield's Bushlark	h	27/10/2013	Lorn	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
King Quail	2	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	1	7/10/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	9	15/10/2013	Ash Island	R. McDonell	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	1	18/10/2013	Kooragang Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	15	23/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	5	12/11/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Latham's Snipe	6	12/11/2013	Woodlands Estate	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Laughing Kookaburra	+dy	11/11/2013	Ashtonfield	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Laughing Kookaburra	1+2dy	30/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Leaden Flycatcher	12	6/10/2013	Walleroo NP	P. Slack	pers. comm.
Lewin's Rail	h	16/11/2013	Hexham Swamp	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Little Eagle	1	1/10/2013	Myall Lakes NP	S. Gorta	Hunterbirding
Little Eagle	1	12/11/2013	Luskintyre	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Little Eagle	1	14/11/2013	Shortland	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Little Tern	3	14/10/2013	Stockton Sandspit	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Little Tern	500+	19/10/2013	Mudbishops Point	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Little Tern	12pr+nests	8/11/2013	Manning Estuary	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Long-billed Corella	6	1/10/2013	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough	Club Night
Long-tailed Jaeger	3	24/11/2013	Port Stephens Pelagic	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Magpie-Lark	2+2dy	19/10/2013	Myall Shores	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Marsh Sandpiper	4	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Marsh Sandpiper	11	15/11/2013	Deep Pond	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Masked Booby	1	24/11/2013	Port Stephens Pelagic	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Masked Woodswallow	1+	10/10/2013	Ash Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Masked Woodswallow	1	13/10/2013	Shortland	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding

Club Night & Hunterbirding Observations cont.

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Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer	Source
Masked Woodswallow	c.5	1/11/2013	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Musk Lorikeet	2	9/10/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Musk Lorikeet	21	20/10/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Musk Lorikeet	4	5/11/2013	Eleebana	A. Gooden	Club Night
Nankeen Night-Heron	70	4/10/2013	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	pers. comm.
Noisy Friarbird	2+dy	22/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Noisy Miner	8+1dy	6/10/2013	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough	Club Night
Noisy Pitta	h	5/10/2013	Nabiac	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Olive Whistler	h	20/10/2013	Devils Hole BTNP	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Olive-backed Oriole	2+1dy	19/10/2013	Mungo Brush	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Olive-backed Oriole	1+3dy	25/10/2013	Blackbutt Reserve	J. Thomas	Hunterbirding
Olive-backed Oriole	1+dy	6/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Olive-backed Oriole	1+dy	25/11/2013	Vacy	M. Newman	Hunterbirding
Olive-backed Oriole	1+nest	25/11/2013	Vacy	M. Newman	Hunterbirding
Pacific Baza	1	11/10/2013	Floraville	W. Lambkin	pers. comm.
Pacific Baza	1	11/10/2013	Shortland	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Pacific Baza	1	24/11/2013	Edgeworth	G. O'Connor	Hunterbirding
Pacific Golden Plover	18	19/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Painted Honeyeater	20+	20/11/2013	Widden Valley	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Painted Honeyeater	3	24/11/2013	Medhurst Bridge	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Pale Yellow Robin	2	20/10/2013	Copeland SCA	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Pale Yellow Robin	1	22/10/2013	Sharpes Creek	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Pallid Cuckoo	h	27/10/2013	Seaham	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Pallid Cuckoo	3	4/11/2013	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Pallid Cuckoo	1	24/11/2013	Martindale	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
Paradise Riflebird	1	20/10/2013	Copeland SCA	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Paradise Riflebird	1	24/10/2013	Gloucester Tops	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Paradise Riflebird	h	27/10/2013	Allyn River	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Peregrine Falcon	1	7/10/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Pied Currawong	2+dy	22/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Pied Oystercatcher	2+dy	8/11/2013	Manning Estuary	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Pied Oystercatcher	2+nest	8/11/2013	Manning Estuary	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	411	2/10/2013	Muswellbrook	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	100+	14/10/2013	Earthcare Park	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Pink-eared Duck	62	15/11/2013	Deep Pond	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Powerful Owl	1	28/09/2013	Floraville	W. Lambkin	pers. comm.
Powerful Owl	1	26/10/2013	Glenrock SCA	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Powerful Owl	1	25/11/2013	George McGregor Park	D. Allen	Hunterbirding
Rainbow Lorikeet	2+1dy	7/10/2013	Dora Creek	C. & R. Goodenough	Club Night
Red Knot	c.400	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Red-backed Fairy-Wren	3	19/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Red-capped Plover	3pr+dy	8/11/2013	Manning Estuary	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Red-kneed Dotterel	12	14/10/2013	Stockton Borehole Lagoon	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Red-kneed Dotterel	9	19/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Red-kneed Dotterel	26+4dy	22/10/2013	Total	M. Newman	Hunterbirding
Red-kneed Dotterel	25	23/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Red-necked Avocet	c.2500	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Red-rumped Parrot	4	30/10/2013	Ash Island	N. McNaughton	Club Night
Red-winged Parrot	2	5/10/2013	Cassilis Rest Area	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Restless Flycatcher	2	27/10/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Ruddy Turnstone	13	1/10/2013	Newcastle Baths	A. Richardson	Hunterbirding
Ruddy Turnstone	17	4/10/2013	Nobbys Head	J. Thomas	Hunterbirding
Rufous Songlark	1	7/10/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Rufous Songlark	1	8/10/2013	Walka Water Works	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Rufous Songlark	1	11/10/2013	Carrington (PS)	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Sanderling	2	19/10/2013	Mudbishops Point	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Sanderling	18	8/11/2013	Manning Estuary	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Satin Flycatcher	1	24/10/2013	Gloucester Tops	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	c.1150	16/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	c.2000	19/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	L. Crawford	Hunterbirding
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	c.4000	14/11/2013	Hexham Swamp	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Singing Honeyeater	1	2/10/2013	Lake Liddell	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Singing Honeyeater	2	5/10/2013	Durrigere Road	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Sooty Owl	1	26/10/2013	Glenrock SCA	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Sooty Tern	2	24/11/2013	Port Stephens Pelagic	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding

Club Night & Hunterbirding Observations cont.

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Species	Number	Date	Location	Observer	Source
Southern Boobook	1h	11/09/2013	Rankin Park	T. Kendall	Club Night
Southern Boobook	h	5/10/2013	Nabiac	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Speckled Warbler	1	12/11/2013	Gosforth	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Spectacled Monarch	1	27/10/2013	Old Brush	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Spotless Crake	h	12/11/2013	Tenambit Common	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	1/10/2013	Port Stephens	S. Gorta	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	7/10/2013	Jerrys Plains	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Spotted Harrier	1	27/10/2013	Ash Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Spotted Pardalote	+dy	11/11/2013	Woodlands Estate	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	1/10/2013	Hawks Nest	S. Gorta	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	18/10/2013	Cattai Wetlands	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	20/10/2013	Coopernook SF	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Square-tailed Kite	1	15/11/2013	Beresfield	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Striated Heron	1	7/10/2013	Soldiers Point	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Striated Heron	1	18/10/2013	Kooragang Dykes	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Striated Heron	1	22/10/2013	Soldiers Point	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Striated Heron	1	26/10/2013	Stockton Sandspit	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Striated Pardalote	4+2dy	19/10/2013	Bulahdelah	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Superb Fairy-wren	+dy	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Superb Fairy-wren	2+dy	7/11/2013	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Tawny Frogmouth	1+nest	09-10/2013	Floraville	W. Lambkin	pers. comm.
Tawny Frogmouth	1+nest	19/10/2013	Mungo Brush	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Tawny Frogmouth	1+nest	22/10/2013	Soldiers Point	T. Murray	Hunterbirding
Tawny Frogmouth	1+1dy	26/10/2013	Glenrock SCA	D. Williams	Hunterbirding
Topknot Pigeon	8	10/10/2013	Ash Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Topknot Pigeon	2	19/10/2013	Mungo Brush	M. Kearns	Hunterbirding
Turquoise Parrot	6+	6/10/2013	Durrigere Road	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
Varied Sittella	10	12/11/2013	Gosforth	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Weebill	1+nest	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Whiskered Tern	100+	13/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Lindsey	Hunterbirding
Whiskered Tern	150+	18/10/2013	Deep Pond	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Whiskered Tern	c.145	19/10/2013	Ash Island	A. Stuart	Hunterbirding
White-breasted Woodswallow	2+2dy	15/11/2013	Fern Bay	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-browed Woodswallow	c.55	5/10/2013	Nabiac	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
White-browed Woodswallow	c.30	10/10/2013	Ash Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-browed Woodswallow	c.20	13/10/2013	Shortland	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-browed Woodswallow	c.100	1/11/2013	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-faced Heron	1+nest	31/10/2013	Silveridge Estate	L. Parashou	Hunterbirding
White-fronted Chat	c.6	12/10/2013	Hexham Swamp	S. McKay	Hunterbirding
White-fronted Chat	c.6	12/10/2013	Ash Island	S. McKay	Hunterbirding
White-fronted Tern	2	10/11/2013	Newcastle Baths	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-headed Pigeon	30	3/10/2013	Raymond Terrace	P. Slack	pers. comm.
White-throated Needletail	c.12	10/10/2013	Anna Bay	A. Fawcett	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	2	1/11/2013	Weston	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	c.100	8/11/2013	North Arm Cove	J. Stiles	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	20+	9/11/2013	Warners Bay	G. Pearson	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	5	12/11/2013	Rutherford	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
White-throated Needletail	100s	13/11/2013	Elmore Vale	R. Walker	Club Night
White-throated Needletail	c.100	22/11/2013	Maison Dieu	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
White-throated Nightjar	2	15/11/2013	Minmi	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-throated Treecreeper	1+nest	2/10/2013	Scone	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	2	8/10/2013	Walka Water Works	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	6	10/10/2013	Ash Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	5+	11/10/2013	Walka Water Works	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	3	15/10/2013	Singleton	P. Alexander	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	2	18/10/2013	Kooragang Island	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
White-winged Triller	6	22/10/2013	Lenaghans Drive	M. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Willie Wagtail	2+3dy	12/11/2013	Muswellbrook	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Willie Wagtail	1+nest	22/11/2013	Wingen	G. Newling	Hunterbirding
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	5	14/10/2013	Earthcare Park	G. Brosie	Hunterbirding
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	11	6/11/2013	Broke	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	2+dy	6/11/2013	Hunter Economic Zone	S. Roderick	Hunterbirding

Note: dy means dependent young

Club Activities December 2013 to March 2014

DATE	EVENT	MEETING PLACE & TIME	CONTACT
DECEMBER 2013			
Wednesday 11 December	Xmas Club Night	7.30pm The Wetlands Centre	Topic: Members' Night - bring your slides, anecdotes, videos and a plate to share the festive spirit
Saturday 14 December	Hunter Waterbirds Survey	7.00 am Ash Island 7.30 am Other locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 4959 3663 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Sue Hamonet 4958 1023 – Swan Bay Ann Lindsey 4951 2008 – Tomago
Sunday 15 December	Latham's Snipe survey at Pambalong NR and other locations	8.00 am Minmi Pub for Pambalong / Lenaghans survey 11.00am Minmi Pub for morning tea	Liz Crawford 0412 722 644 Meet at Minmi Pub after surveying your local wetland
Tuesday 17 December	Tomago Wetland Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 Please ring to confirm
JANUARY 2014			
Saturday 18 January	Hunter Wader Survey	9.30 am Ash Island 10:00 am Other locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 – Ash Island Mick Roderick 0421 761 237 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Sue Hamonet 4958 1023 – Swan Bay Ann Lindsey 4951 2008 – Tomago
Tuesday 21 January	Tomago Wetland Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 Please ring to confirm
Australia Day Long Wkend 25-27 January	Long Weekend Camp	Camp at <i>Myall View</i> , 337 Violet Hill Road, Myall Lakes	Lorna Mee 4987 2913 or mobile 0499 015 500 See Directions on page 8 of this Newsletter
FEBRUARY 2013			
Tuesday 4 February	Mid-week Outing - Wangi and Myuna Bay	7.30am Myuna Bay Carpark	Di Johnson 4975 1777
Wednesday 5 February	Management Committee Meeting	6.30pm – 9.30pm Garden Suburbs School	Mick Roderick 0421 761 237 All members welcome
Wednesday 12 February	AGM & Club Night	7.30pm The Wetlands Centre, Shortland	Guest Speaker: Tom Clarke - 20 years of changes to birds at Tighes Hill
Saturday 15 February	Hunter Wader Survey	8.30 am Ash Island 9.00 am Other locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 – Ash Island Chris Herbert 4959 3663 – Kooragang Jack Adams 4971 5334 – Swansea Jenny Powers 4944 7274 – Stockton Sue Hamonet 4958 1023 – Swan Bay Ann Lindsey 4951 2008 – Tomago
February - date to be confirmed	Port Stephens Waterbirds Survey	Various locations as directed	Alan Stuart 0409 978 171 Please ring to confirm - limited spaces available
Sunday 16 February	Field Outing – Old Brush	7.30am Old Brush, Lieberts Lane, Brunkerville	Dan Williams 0408 023 262 Gold coin donation
Tuesday 18 February	Tomago Wetland Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 Please ring to confirm
MARCH 2013			
Sunday 2 March	Clean Up Australia Day	8am - 12noon Stockton Sandspit 8am – 11am Kooragang Dykes Boat Ramp	Tom Clarke 0418 411 785 for Stockton Sandspit Liz Crawford 0412 722 644 for Kooragang Dykes
Tuesday 4 March	Mid-week Outing - Morpeth	7.30am Ray Lawler Reserve Park, Edward St, Morpeth	Dinah Stehr 4933 2134
Wednesday 5 March	Management Committee Meeting	6.30pm – 9.30pm Garden Suburbs School	Mick Roderick 0421 761 237 All members welcome
Wednesday 12 March	Club Meeting	7.30pm The Wetlands Centre, Shortland	Guest Speaker: Lindsay Smith - Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association