



Hunter Bird Observers Club

NEWSLETTER

Issue 3/08

June -July 2008

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**Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc.**  
(affiliated with the Bird Observers Club of Australia)

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**Committee**

**President:** Grant Brosie  
**Vice-president:** Paul Baird  
**Secretary:** Tom Clarke  
**Treasurer:** Rowley Smith

**Committee Members:**  
Ann Lindsey  
Liz Crawford  
Robert MacDonald  
Craig Anderson  
Jack Adams  
Colin Goodenough

**Conservation Coordinator**  
Ann Lindsey  
**Activities Officer**  
Lorna Mee

**Life Members**  
Wilma Barden  
Sue Hamonet  
Ed Hamonet (dec)  
Alan Stuart

*The aims of the club are:*

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

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINES FOR 2008**

<b>Edition</b>	<b>Copy Deadline</b>
August/September	3 <sup>rd</sup> August
October/November	28th September
December 2008/January 2009	30th November

**Membership Fees for 2008 are now due**  
\$30.00 Single and Family. \$5.00 Junior  
Please pay at Club Night or send cheque or money order  
(payable to HBOC) to PO Box 24. New Lambton 2305.

## MIDWEEK OUTING Tuesday 1 April 2008

### MURRAYS BEACH & MIDDLE CAMP

from Max Blanch

Over twenty midweekers turned up on an autumn morning at Murrays Beach. A lovely morning at a lovely spot. Murrays Beach is a very new estate on the shore of Lake Macquarie two or three kilometres south of Swansea. It has been landscaped quite sensitively, is charming and warrants a visit, perhaps with the children or grandchildren.

The midweekers were greeted by flocks of Lorikeets, a few Rainbow and everywhere Scaly-breasted and Little Lorikeets. A pleasant walk along the waterfront brought the usual – a Striated Heron, three Sea Eagles (one immature), Variegated Wrens, Whipbirds (heard) and a colony of Bell Miners. We had morning tea on the foreshore

Next to Middle Camp, on the northern edge of Catherine Hill Bay, now a clearing with half a dozen houses still standing, once a thriving mining village. A walk in the woodland brought the expected, Yellow-faced and Lewins Honeyeaters, Golden Whistlers, Swamp Harrier, a profusion of Scarlet Honeyeaters, Black Faced Monarch, White-naped Honeyeater, Shining Bronze and Fan Tailed Cuckoos were heard and again we ended up near a colony of Bell Miners.

Time ran out so we went our separate ways to lunch.

### OTHER PROGRAM NOTES

March Club Night was well attended with 60 people enjoying Lorna Mee's Plains Wanderer followed by Tiffany Mason and a Regent Honeyeater recovery update.

Easter Camp at Coorheide was great although some questions re duty of care were raised. The Club is to issue whistles for those wandering from the main group to help find our (temporarily) missing flock members – or should we say those undertaking quests and searches for the meaning of life in the bush.

## BIGNET MEETING 5 June 2008 Canberra

Liz Crawford and Chris Herbert represented HBOC at this twice a year meeting of Bird Interest Groups - hence BIGNET.

The keynote speaker, Alison Russell French, President of Birds Australia, addressed **communication and networking strategies** for a more authoritative and effective advocacy for bird conservation.

In a wide-ranging debate and workshop the best ways to influence decisions makers were seen to include alliances with other non-birding groups (including conservation and others), better use of databases and research, detailed legislative proposals and the raising of public awareness generally. Of interest was the recognition that a high profile Champion – eg an Australian David Suzuki or Al Gore – would be useful.

Specific issues discussed included **Feral Pests**, the **Shorebirds 2020 program** – long and short-term population trends to be measured by well-conducted and consistent surveys and **data management** with an emphasis on Birds Australia being the central or national database for all clubs to contribute to – with more data that that collected for the Atlas.

**The Alps to Atherton Project (A2A)** is a project in which the NSW State Government is involved designed to create or restore natural links in the landscape north to south. The Kosciusko to Coast (K2C) part is being implemented.

A project facilitator from that Project explained that the aims were to conserve and enhance Grassy Box Woodland by linking the landscape with the landholders. Apparently farmers are being paid to lock our cattle from Grassy Box Woodland for the next 5 years to see if native pasture will regenerate. If successful, they will be offered payment for a further 5 years.

The Upper Hunter to Barrington Connectivity Project is part of the wider A2A program. Our area is one of the weak links in the chain.

## A Purple Swamphen Puzzle from Mike Newman

When I moved to Woodville 15 years ago there were up to 40 Purple Swamphens in the garden during winter. They formed several warring clans moving between the series of dams on adjoining properties. During subsequent years swamphen numbers declined as the area became progressively developed with acreage style properties. Dogs, foxes and road kills contributed to the decline but there continued to be about six to ten primarily frequenting and breeding on my dam which is dog free. However during January 2007 the dam fell to very low levels and the swamphens left. Since that time I have only seen single swamphens and they have left within a couple of days. In contrast a Dusky Moorhen family has remained and bred successfully last summer.

The exodus of swamphens seems to be general in the Woodville area as discussed in my recent paper in the first copy of our Journal "The Whistler". This article describes how the breeding swamphen population on a cattle property at Butterwick near my home also disappeared.

Assuming that the disappearance of swamphens from the Butterwick and Woodville areas was related to the prolonged drought it is surprising that the birds have not returned since the dams were replenished by the storms almost one year ago in June 2007. One possibility is that the swamphens had left the Hunter region for inland areas where suitable conditions existed. However for a number of months there have been large flocks of swamphen, numbering up to two hundred at places like the Morpeth Sewage Treatment Works and the Hexham Swamphen. So why haven't the swamphens returned to the farm dams in our area where they traditionally bred?

The situation is further confused by observations on a very small dam on Black Rock Rd. in the Martins Creek area, which has been the long term exclusive home of a family of Dusky Moorhens. In spring 2007 a pair of Purple Swamphen decided to take up joint residence and successfully raised young bucking the trend on the larger dams traditionally used for breeding in the area. I look forward to the forthcoming spring to see if the swamphens return. I would be interested to learn if other people have noted local declines in breeding populations of swamphen. Sometime what you do not see can be very interesting.

## DOGS and BIRDS

(An article published in the Sydney Morning Herald under the headline "Fido frightens feathered friends" on 11/9/07 and drawn from research in *Biology Letters* by Dr Peter Banks and Jessica Bryant. )

New research shows that dog-walking in bushland significantly reduced bird diversity and abundance.

Until now arguments and debate about the ecological impacts of dog-walking have remained subjective and unresolved because experimental evidence has been lacking, Dr Banks reports.

" We found in field studies that dog-walking in bushland causes a 35% reduction in bird diversity – the number of species – and a 41 % reduction abundance – the number of individual birds. The effect occurs even in areas where dog-walking is common and where they are prohibited, indicating that birds don't become accustomed to continued disturbance by dogs. This evidence supports the long-term prohibition of dog-walking from sensitive conservation areas."

The experiment was conducted at 90 sites in the Hornsby-Berowra-Cowan regions. The area was chosen because it contains remnants of bushland with trails that are either frequently dog-walked or where dog-walking is prohibited. The researcher used three conditions to study dogs' impact on birds (1) a person walking a dog on a lead on a trail (2) a person walking alone on a trail and (3) a control condition with no dog walking or humans.

{ assuming the researchers are human, this last condition must have been particularly hard to achieve and brings up a variant of the old question " if there are no birdwatchers in the forest, are the birds really there" Perhaps they used hides –ED }

Anyway--- it was found that ground dwelling birds were most affected: 50% of bird species observed in control sites were absent in dog-walked sites. The effect of dog-walking was most pronounced in the area immediately adjacent to the site where dogs were walked. According to Dr Banks there were 76 fewer birds within 10 metres of the trail when dog walking occurred compared to control sites, suggesting birds were seeking refuge away from the immediate vicinity of threat"

## Birding in Hawaii

from Neil Fraser

During March this year I holidayed for three weeks on Oahu and Maui islands in Hawaii and also took the opportunity to do some local birding. Hawaii is a fascinating place to study birds as the islands are very young and have only been colonized by fauna and flora in the last few million years. The islands were formed by sea floor volcanoes along the Mid-Pacific Ocean Ridge and become progressively younger from north to south. The oldest island formed about five million years ago and the youngest, the Big Island, is about 0.5 million years old and is still erupting today. The nearest continent is over 4,000 km distant and the species that have arrived there by chance have evolved into unique plants and animals. Good rainfall, rich soil and a tropical climate provided a benevolent environment. Birds had no predators or other competition and some became flightless. There were no mammals, no reptiles, no amphibians and no mosquitoes. Further evolution occurred over time through inter-island colonization.

This unique ecosystem was disrupted about 1,500 years ago with the arrival of the first Polynesians who brought their own animals and plants, and hunted birds and eggs. About half of Hawaii's unique birds including the flightless ones became extinct. The arrival of Europeans further hastened the decline of the native bird species and as they died out the island people imported replacements from around the world. Most of the flowers and trees in Hawaii today are introduced and the native species are mostly restricted to the few remaining wild areas. The bird population in Hawaii today is a unique cosmopolitan community that includes the remaining endemic species, introduced aliens, seasonal visitors and indigenous species that have arrived unassisted and which can be found elsewhere in the world.

The predominant alien species are the Indian Myna and the Zebra Dove (Australia's Peaceful Dove). Other alien species I observed included Spotted Dove (S.E. Asia), Rock Dove (Europe), Grey Francolin (S.E. Asia), Cattle Egret (Florida), House Sparrow (Britain), House Finch (Nth. America), Java Sparrow (Indonesia), Pea Fowl (India), Red Jungle Fowl (S.E. Asia), Northern Cardinal (Nth.

America), Red-crested Cardinal (Brazil), Japanese White-eye (Japan), Nutmeg Mannikin (S.E. Asia), Red-vented Bulbul (India) and the Mallard (Europe).

The earliest bird to arrive in Hawaii is thought to have been a type of seed-eating finch related to current North American species. This bird evolved to become the honeycreepers which are today the dominant group of Hawaiian forest birds. Through adaptive radiation these birds have developed an astonishing variety of foraging strategies with bill types adapted for nectar gathering, ground and arboreal seed eating, insect gathering and bark stripping. Many of these birds are now extinct.

I was able to observe three of the honeycreeper species, the I'iwi, Apapane and Maui Amakahi on Haleakala volcano. The I'iwi is one of the most spectacular birds I have ever observed. Adults are bright scarlet with black wings and tail, and bright orange bill and legs. The bill is long, curved and tapered and is adapted for feeding on nectar from tubular flowers on under-story plants. Hence it is easy to observe. It has a complex endearing song comprising squeaks, creaks, whistles and gurgling sounds. To see the I'iwi also foraging among a large stand of eucalypts was a stark reminder of how extensively Hawaii's original ecosystems have been changed.

The honeycreepers with long curved bills are thought to have co-evolved with many of the plants in Hawaii that produce curved tubular flowers. The pistils in these flowers are ideally located so that they can pick up pollen from the forehead of birds feeding on the enclosed nectar.

A number of indigenous birds have found their way to Hawaii from elsewhere and now breed on the islands. These are mainly water birds and I observed Black-crowned Night Heron, Sooty Tern and Wedge-tailed Shearwater. I also observed a number of endemic Hawaiian water birds including Black-necked Stilt, Hawaiian Coot, Hawaiian Duck and Nene. The Hawaiian Duck, like many other native duck species, is in danger of being bred out of existence through interbreeding with the Mallard. There are no shore birds such as gulls, terns or cormorants along the Hawaiian coast and beaches

Continued next page

photographs, and complete descriptions and other information.

## IMPING

from Sydney Morning Herald 23 February 2008

With six sets of wedge-tailed eagle wings, Gillian Hogendyk's chest freezer is a spare-parts shop for Australia's greatest bird of prey. "I keep them in all different sizes for different birds" Mrs Hogendyk said. At her home at Warren in NSW there are also the frozen wings of other hunting birds such as brown goshawk, boobook owl and whistling kite.

Mrs Hogendyk – a vet and volunteer with the wildlife rescue group WIRES – has become an eagle wing mechanic skilled in the ancient art of "imping: whereby feathers from dead birds help injured ones to fly again. Armed with her spare parts, a knife, a drill, a wooden kebab skewer and Araldite, she can return an injured wedge-tail to the wing in a flash.

Most of this has been done on wedge-tails, but Mrs Hogendyk has also fixed kites and falcons and has used the wedge-tail feathers to repair the wing of a sea eagle.

Imping is important for birds of prey because it reduces immensely the amount of time the birds have to be kept in care before regaining the precision flying skills needed to hunt. You do the operations one day and release them the next.

The flight feathers are the last 10 on each wing and Mrs Hogendyk cuts the wings from dead birds at what is "effectively the wrist joint" for her frozen parts collection. She says that the most common cause of flight feather damage is barbed wire fences. They are pretty fatal for bird feathers. People turn up from all over the place with a wedge-tailed eagle wrapped up in an old towel or blanket.

If a bird has a damaged flight feather, Mrs Hogendyk gets out her spare parts and selects a matching feather. The end of the damaged feather is cut off - as is a matching length of the spare parts feather. Then she uses a drill to clean out the quill of both feathers so that a kebab skewer can be inserted and glue used to join the new flight feather to the base of the old damaged feather that is still attached to the wing.

With smaller birds it can be done with toothpicks.

## Hawaii –continued

The Nene is an amazing native goose which is similar to, and the same genus, as the Canada Goose. Pairs of these birds can be seen wandering through the barren moonscape on the top of Haleakala volcano where it forages for fruit and seeds on low shrubs. The Nene has no fear of predators and was saved from extinction through a program of captive breeding and release. However the population continues to be non self-sustaining due to predation by mongoose and poor nutrition for juveniles in the high altitude volcanic environment.

The last group of birds I observed were migratory visitors that over-winter in Hawaii. These were Pacific Golden Plover, Sanderling, Wandering Tattler and Ruddy Turnstone. These birds breed in Alaska and the Arctic during the northern summer. The Pacific Golden Plover is found almost anywhere on the islands and many birds were developing breeding plumage in preparation for their return to the northern latitudes during my visit.

Of Hawaii's 71 endemic species and sub-species, 31 are threatened or endangered.

Apart from destruction of habitat by man, the main threat to birds in Hawaii comes from black rats, mongoose, feral pigs and cats. The mongoose was introduced from India in the early 1900's to control rats in the Hawaiian cane fields. It was as unsuccessful as the introduction of the cane toad from Hawaii into Australia's cane fields. There is a strange symmetry in these ill-considered actions which gives one a belated sense of justice done!

The areas where I was able to go birding were Kapi'olani Park at Diamond Head on Oahu, and Kanaha and Kealia ponds and Haleakala volcano on Maui. The drive up to the top of Haleakala (10,023 feet) provides an excellent opportunity to observe how bird species change with varying habitat resulting from different rainfall, altitude and temperature. If you visit one of Hawaii's volcanoes, be sure to take a warm jacket. From the top of Haleakala, on one of its few fine days, I could see snow on the top of the distant Mauna Kea volcano (13,784 feet) on the Big Island. The book "*Hawaii's Birds*" published by the Hawaii Audubon Society (Price US\$9.00) is an excellent guide for Hawaiian birding with locations and maps, excellent

## **Birds Australia Conservation Forum 2008**

“Conservation Through Knowledge” is the motto of Birds Australia, whose Sydney branch is now located at the Birds Australia Discovery Centre in the Newington Armory at Sydney Olympic Park. The Centre was officially opened on 24 May 2008, with a spontaneous flypast by chortling galahs and rainbow lorikeets! It will be staffed by volunteers every weekend, when the general area is open to the public.

On the same day, Birds Australia held a Conservation Forum consisting of seven presentations on the theme of “journeys”. Subjects ranged from bird journeys revealed by atlassing data to epic journeys revealed by band recoveries; from personal journeys of landscape rehabilitation and massive social change to reverse decline in woodland birds, to intimate journeys tracking Sooty Owls in the coastal forests of Gippsland. By tracking Sooty Owls, researcher Rohan Bilney found 136 roosts in foliage, 77 roosts in caves and rock clefts and 58 roosts in eucalypt hollows! Band recoveries have revealed long lives and long journeys for many birds: Silvereyes fly over 2000 km every year between Tasmania and the mainland, the oldest aged 18 yr 7 mth; Australian White Ibis aged 26 yr 1 mth; Pacific Black Duck aged 27 yr 1 mth; Short-tailed Shearwater aged 39 yr 10 mth; and a Wandering Albatross aged 44 yr.

Anyone with a love of birds would benefit from membership with Birds Australia. Check out their website on [www.birdsaustralia.com.au](http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au) and support our national birding organization.

Liz Crawford

## **Warkworth Outing 25 May 2008**

Pink and blue dawn broke open a crisp autumn day, beckoning eleven of us west to Warkworth to search for birds in the bush along Pinegrove Road, a favoured place for many Twitchathons and previously a sure spot for Hooded and Red-capped Robins. Today the sky clouded over and a few drops of rain fell, but we forgot the weather in delight at the strong colours of the Silvereyes from Tasmania. They were accompanied by Yellow and Buff-rumped Thornbills, Weebills, a Grey Fantail, a couple of Golden Whistlers, several Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and a pair of Speckled Warblers. An immature Rose Robin with a blush of pink on its breast flicked its wings as it darted between trees, searching for insects. A Brown Goshawk barged in and out of the bushes searching for startled birds. The grey rain cloud moved through as quickly as a foraging flock and by morning tea the day was sunny again. The second stop on Pinegrove Road revealed a brightly coloured male Red-capped Robin and another immature Rose Robin as well as a variety of honeyeaters in a “hot-spot”.

Open-cut coal mines are extending towards Pinegrove Road at a rapid rate – Wambo Coal Mine has already acquired much of the land adjacent to the road and the bush that we have birded for many years seems doomed.

Pinegrove Road ends against cleared grazing land, with views to cliffs edging the Wollemi National Park – here we saw Wedge-tailed Eagles soaring high, Nankeen Kestrels hovering over the yellowing grass, a Black-shouldered Kite consuming its prey and whitewash marking possible Peregrine roost sites on the distant cliffs.

After lunch we moved west past Jerrys Plains to Jones Reserve Road and Doyles Creek Road. Highlights included a flock of Zebra and Double-barred Finches, several Jacky Winters, four Hooded Robins, Brown-headed and Striped Honeyeaters.

An easy-going sociable day yielded 60 species – not bad for autumn.

Liz Crawford

**OBSERVATIONS FROM CLUB NIGHT APR/MAY 2008**

<b>2008</b>				
Feb 2	Great Egret	12+10dy	Toronto Wetland	L.Crawford
	Little Pied Cormorant	36+10dy	“	“
	Australian White Ibis	70+	“	“
Feb 28	Musk Duck	20	Grahamstown Dam	“
Feb/Mar	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	50+	Raymond Terrace	F. Humphreys
Feb 24	Powerful Owl	2	Hunter Region Botanic Gardens	Alison ?
Mar 8	Eastern Osprey	1	Stockton Channel	“
Mar 9	Azure Kingfisher	2	Wallis Ck.[Quorrobolong Rd]	“
	Hite-naped Honeyeater	3+	“	“
	Rufous Fantail	4	Gt.North walk [Wattagans]	“
Apr 5	Eastern Yellow Wagtail	1	Ash Island	A.Lindsey
Mar 3	Straw-necked Ibis	141	Seaham N.R.	M.Maddock
Mar 13	Straw-necked Ibis	1282	Irrawang	“
Mar 12	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	800	Off Fort Scratchley	M.Roderick
	Sooty Oystercatcher	32	Newcastle Ocean Baths	“
Mar 14	Hutton's Shearwater	1	Off Fort Scratchley	“
Mar	Red-winged Parrot	1	Karuah	G.O'Connor
Mar 3	Emerald Dove	2	Raymond Terrace	L.Mee
Mar 6	<b>Pectoral Sandpiper</b>	1	Ash Island [Wagtail Way]	“
Mar 3 & 10	Common Greenshank	9	Marks Point [Baxter Field]	C.Goodenough
Mar 14	Variiegated Fairy-wren	1fy	Green Wattle Creek	M.Newman
Mar 18	Glossy Black Cockatoo	2+1dy	Wye Point	V.Moon
Apr 4to20	“ “	2	“	“
Mar 22	Glossy Ibis	1	Maryland	“
Apr 6	Osprey	1	Woods Point [Morisset]	“
Apr 7	Square-tailed Kite	1	Raymond Terrace	F.Humphreys
Apr 7	Topknot Pigeon	30	Dora Creek	C.Goodenough
Apr 8	Aust. White Ibis	30	Toronto [Croquet Club]	P.Durie
	Straw-necked Ibis	2	“	“
	White-faced Heron	1	“	“
Apr 3	Powerful Owl	1	Carey Bay	C. & L. Herbert
Apr 6	Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo	1	Maitland	H.Tarrant
Apr 8	Black Falcon	1	Morpeth [Thornton Rd]	“
Apr 7	Osprey	1	Stockton [Bridge]	C.Anderson
Apr 4	Indian Ringneck Parakeet]	1	Edgeworth Heights	R.Boyce
	Magpie-lark	Pr nb	“	“
Apr 6	Black Falcon	1	Bolwarra Heights	M.Newman
Apr 16	Rufous Fantail	1	Blackbutt Reserve	P.Lightfoot
Apr 3	Square-tailed Kite	1	North Rothbury	M.Roderick
Apr 4	Square-tailed Kite	1	Pokolbin	S.Roderick
Apr 9	Spotted Quail-thrush	4	Werakata N.P. [London's Way]	M.Roderick
	Grey-crowned Babbler	6	Kurri Kurri	“
Apr 22	Arctic Jaeger	1	Off Fort Scratchley	“
Apr	Red-rumped Parrots	~60	Wingen [garden]	G.Newling
	Noisy Friarbird	15-20	“	“
	Golden Whistler	1	“	“
	Rufous Whistler	1	“	“
	Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo	1juv	“	“
Apr 10	Straw-necked Ibis	1899	Irrawang Swamp	M.Maddock
Apr 28	Straw-necked Ibis	7924	“	“
	Aust. White Ibis	50	“	“
Apr 28	Red-browed Treecreeper	2	Junction Pools [Barrington NP]	T.Clarke
Apr 29	Crested Shrike-tit	1	“	“
May 1	Topknot Pigeon	15	Pambalong NR	“
May 17	Bar-tailed Godwit	85	Salamander Bay	N.Fraser

May 12	Nankeen Night Heron	4	Seaham NR	L.Mee
May 8	Southern Emu-wren	3	Belmont Lagoon	R.Stewart
May 13	Spangled Drongo	2	Belmont Lagoon	A.Taylor
May 13	Scarlet Honeyeater	100+	Belmont Lagoon	A.Taylor
May 4	Pacific Baza	2	Green Wattle Creek	B.Shields
May 2	Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	Pambalong NR	T.Clarke
May 5	Spotted Harrier	1	“	“
	Peregrine Falcon	1	“	“
May 9	Flame Robin	2	Wingen [garden]	G.Newling
	Jacky Winter	1	“	“
	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Several	“	“
May 13	Pallid Cuckoo	1juv	“	“
	Fantail Cuckoo	1	“	“
	Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo	1	“	“
May 16	White-plumed Honeyeater	5	“	“
	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	1	“	“
	Olive-backed Oriole	2	“	“
Mar 20	Red-necked Stint	231	Mudbishops Point	A.Stuart
	Pacific Golden Plover	94	“	“
	Double-banded Plover	55	“	“
Apr 21	Double-banded Plover	111	“	“
	Red-necked Stint	57	“	“
	Little Tern	26	“	“
	Common Tern	2	“	“
Apr 20	Eastern Reef Egret	1	Harrington Breakwater	“
	Striated Heron	3	“ “	“
May 12	Osprey	4	Harrington	“
	Red-necked Avocet	3	“	“
Apr 21	Cattle Egret	500+	Cattai Creek	“
Apr 20	Brown Quail	Pr +dy	Crowdy Head	“
Mar/Apr	Beach Stone-Curlew	2	Mudbishops Point	“
May	Beach Stone-Curlew	2	Harrington	“
May 12	Black Kite	1	Raymond Terrace	“
Apr 21	Black-necked Stork	1m	Cattai Creek	“

## Hunter Estuary Avian Study

In 2006, Newcastle City Council commissioned the Club to compile the Club's data and knowledge on the distribution, abundance and status of birds in wetlands of the Lower Hunter Estuary for the Hunter Coast and Estuary Management Committee (HCEMC). Chris Herbert undertook the task, using Club records provided by Sue Hamonet, our Records Officer, and Alan Stuart, editor of the Annual Bird Report. In addition, many members provided personal observations. The compilation, titled *Distribution, Abundance and Status of Birds in the Hunter Estuary* was completed in June 2007 and an electronic version was supplied to Newcastle City Council and the HCEMC.

The Club Committee has decided to print colour copies of the compilation as HBOC Special Publication No. 4 for sale to interested members at a subsidised price of \$30 (actual printing costs are \$71 per copy). This 230 page report documents all significant Hunter Estuary wetlands and wetland species, ranks the wetlands in terms of the number of bird species and provides information on present and historical abundance of various birds. Aerial views of each wetland are included.

If you wish to purchase a copy, a pre-printing deposit is required by 31 July 2008. Please contact Rowley Smith at Club Night or on 02 4964 1389 or email [rsmith@serck-controls.com.au](mailto:rsmith@serck-controls.com.au).



## HBOC ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

DATE	EVENT	MEETING TIME & PLACE	CONTACT(S)
Thursday 12 June	Mangrove Removal Day	8.00am The Schoolhouse, Ash Is	Robert McDonald 4952 2941
Sunday 15 June	Volunteer Day Stockton Sandspit	8.00am to noon Sandspit car park	Tom Clarke 4951 3872
Tuesday 17 June	Tomago Wetlands Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Saturday 21 June	Hunter Wader Survey	9.30am Ash Island 10.00am Kooragang and Swansea	Alan Stuart 4952 8569 Ann Lindsey 4951 2008 Jack Adams 4971 5334
Sunday 22 June	<b>New Members Day</b> Club to provide BBQ lunch	9.00am Hunter Wetlands Centre Australia, Shortland.	Di Johnson 4975 1777
Saturday 28 June	Hunter Seawatch	2pm – 4pm Fort Drive, Nobbys	Mick Roderick 0421 761 237
Tuesday 1 July	Mid-week Outing Munmorah	8.00am Corner Blue Wren Drive and Pacific Highway	Val Moon 4359 1670
Wednesday 2 July	Management Committee Meeting	7.00pm – 10pm Garden Suburbs School	<b>All members welcome</b>
<b>Wednesday 9 July</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: John McLennan Madagascar</b>
Thursday 10 July	Mangrove Removal Day	8.00am The Schoolhouse, Ash Is	Robert McDonald 4952 2941
Sunday 13 July	Volunteer Day Stockton Sandspit	8.00am to noon Sandspit car park	Tom Clarke 4951 3872
Tuesday 15 July	Tomago Wetlands Survey	7.30am Entry to Tomago House	Neville McNaughton 4951 1265 <b>Please ring to confirm</b>
Saturday 19 July	Hunter Wader Survey	9.30am Ash Island 10.00am Kooragang and Swansea	Alan Stuart 4952 8569 Ann Lindsey 4951 2008 Jack Adams 4971 5334
Sunday 20 July	Field Outing Richmond Vale	8.00am Richmond Vale	Colin Goodenough
Sunday 27 July	Hunter Seawatch	2pm – 4pm Fort Drive, Nobbys	Mick Roderick 0421 761 237
Tuesday 5 August	Mid-week Outing Hunter Region Botanic Garden	8.00am Car park at Hunter Region Botanic Garden, Heatherbrae	Margaret and Keith Woods 4963 3070
Wednesday 6 August	Management Committee Meeting	7.00pm – 10.00pm Garden Suburbs School	All members welcome
Saturday 9 August	BA Atlas Day – Pelton Area	7.00 am at Cessnock MacDonaldis	<b>Please contact to confirm:</b> Ann Lindsey 4951 2008, Nick Livanos 4954 5739, or Mike Newman 49305564
<b>Wednesday 13 August</b>	<b>Club Meeting</b>	<b>7.30pm The Wetlands Centre</b>	<b>Speaker: Alan Morris – Narran Lakes Ibis breeding colony.</b>