

March 1979.

THE NOVOCASTRIAN WARBLER.

NEWSLETTER of the HUNTER (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVER GROUP.

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MEETINGS: 2nd Wednesday each month at Garden Suburb Primary School at 7.30 p.m.

Notes from February Meeting - 8/2/79 - Attendance - 21

It was pleasing to see some new faces at our first meeting for 1979 - among these we noticed Heather McKay, Jean Payne and son Roland and Jim and Mrs. Ralston.- welcome folks, we hope we see a lot of you.

The BIRD of the EVENING was the JABIRU and Ted Felton enlightened us with some interesting information about this Australian 'stork. Ted jibbed on pronouncing its scientific name - *Xenorhynchus asiaticus* - cant understand why. Many thanks Ted for your effort.

In view of our forthcoming migration to Townsville, we were very fortunate to have with us for the evening that learned ornithologist Greg Holmes who gave us a talk on the habitat of the Townsville region and some of the birds which are found there. In view of our proposed trip to that area, Greg's information was very well received particularly by those who hope to make that journey in September/October.

WATERFOWL Identification was the main topic for discussion for the evening. At the December meeting, our Chairman warned us that this was coming but as most of us forgot all about it, Fred was the only one who was prepared to make a significant contribution. Apart from the discussion, Fred tabled a number of books on Wildfowl and for those who are interest, the titles are as follows:

KEY TO THE WILDFOWL OF THE WORLD - Peter Scott.

HANDBOOK OF WILDFOWL BEHAVIOUR - Paula A Johnsgard

WATERFOWL IN AUSTRALIA - H.J. Frith

AUSTRALIAN WATERFOWL - Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife, Victoria.

A GUIDE TO AUSTRALAIN WATERFOWL - National Parks & Wildlife Service of N.S.W.

STOCKTON SAND-SPIT CLEAN UP - Seven keen Birdos turned up on Saturday 11 february to eradicate some of the pestiferous *Salicornia* from the sandspit and thus make it more habitable for the waders which frequent that area. Several new signs were also erected - many thanks from the Goup for your efforts - the birds also thank you.

TOWNSVILLE MIGRATION - The Sub Committee planning this activity, met on 22 february to make some tentative suggestions particularly in relation to WHEN and HOW. It was agreed that the trip should commence after all the Eastern states school holidays and would therefore commence on Saturday 15 September and conclude on Sunday 30 Sept. With regard to transport it is hoped to travel to Brisbane by train and then hire a Microbus to travel to Townsville - whether this will be feasible will depend on the number of participants. A firm decision cannot then be made until we have an indication of likely numbers - please let Wilma know as soon as possible if you are considering going along.

STANHOPE CREEK - 17 members turned out for the outing on 25th February. This proved to be one of the most rewarding days we have ever had. 81 species were recorded for the day, highlights being sightings of the Regent Bowbird, a pair of Topknot Pigeons and a flock of over 60 Pink-eared ducks on the Sewerage farm ponds at Morpeth.

Atlas Outing - ECCLESTON/SALISBURY/CHICHESTER - Seven members participated in this outing - most of the area consists of fenced farming properties, accessibility was therefore rather restricted. However, 51 species were recorded and so another blank on our Atlas map has been eliminated.

PHEASANT COUCAL - for anyone interested, a 5 page article on this bird appears in the March 1979 edition of the AUSTRALIAN OUTDOORS - available at Newsagents.

Rare Bird - the BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER which has been rarely seen in N.S.W. was netted by Fred on Kooragang Island on Saturday 10th March - after being banded and photographed, the bird was released - no doubt we shall see the photographic evidence in due course - congratulations Fred.

COMING EVENTS:

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Sunday 25 March - Group Outing to BLACK HILL, meet at the junction of John Renshaw Drive and Minmi Road at 7.30 a.m.

Sunday April 18 - Atlas Outing - EAST GRESFORD/ALLYN-BROOK area.
Meet at 7.30 at the OAK, at Hexham.