

THE NOVOCASTRIAN JARSLER

DECEMBER, 1979.

NEWSLETTER of the NORTHERN (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVER
GROUP.

Issue No. 10/79 - Released monthly at General Meetings.

Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Garden Suburb Public School at 7.30 pm.

OFFICERS: Chairman: Fred van Gessel; Secretary: Mrs. Wilma Barden (57 3929); Activities Officer: Mrs Sue Hamonet (58 1023)
Newsletter Editor: Ed, Hamonet.

NOTES FROM THE OCTOBER MEETING - 10 . 10. 79.

1. Annual Migration members returned from Queensland. Highlights of this trip to be presented at the December monthly meeting by Ed, Hamonet and Fred van Gessel.
2. Bird of the Evening: Dot Bates spoke about the Yellow Tufted Honeyeater (*Meliphaga melanops*). There are now four races included in this classification including the Helmeted Honeyeater, a species which has shown a marked decline in Victoria due to destruction of its habitat. The bird is a sedentary one and occurs in open forest and woodland with dense undergrowth. The nest is usually found low to the ground in tangled scrub, not far from a stream. There are usually two eggs. Both male and female are similarly coloured and have a harsh agitated call when observed near the nest. Food consists of insects and nectar.
3. Interesting Sightings: Northern Logrunner (*Orthonyx spaldingi*) five males and one female, near Cairns.
Scarlet Honeyeater (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) near Stroud.
4. Regulation of the Animal Population was the topic for a discussion led by Fred van Gessel. Such regulating factors as predators, accidents, disease and starvation were mentioned. However, the most important one appears to be territory. With respect to birds, members compete for territory rather than food. The threat of starvation tomorrow rather than hunger today seems to be the regulating factor in animal population. Detailed studies of the grouse population on the heather moors in Scotland have been made and these give support to the territory idea. If there is not enough territory birds go elsewhere/ die/ are preyed upon. There can also be competition for membership of the group: white-winged chough - always about 10; apostle birds; babblers. The key to the whole regulation of population is real estate.
5. Coming Events.

Sunday 25th November Kooragang Island. Meet at Stockton side of bridge at 9 am.

Monday 26th November 7.30 pm Flora and Fauna important meeting No. 2 Committee Room, City Hall. Agenda for 1980 Programmes and Activities to be discussed. Guest Speaker Colin Driscoll - Natural History of the Watagans.

Sunday 2nd December Atlas outing. Venue to be decided. Contact Wilma. Could be Stockton Sand Dunes or Howes Valley.

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