

JULY, 1980

Issue No. 6/80 - Released monthly at General Meetings

NEWSLETTER of the HUNTER (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVER GROUP.

MEETINGS: 2nd Wednesday of each month (except January)  
at the Garden Suburb Primary School at 7.30pm.

Principal Officers: Chairman : Fred van Gessel.

Secretary: Mrs. Wilma Barden (57 3928)

1. Notes from the June Meeting.

- (a) Attendance 19, including Navis and Allan Gillies - returned from overseas; and Greg Little - returned from over there! There were five apologies.
- (b) Lyrebird Survey. David Waterhouse reported that further surveys would be carried out and that the 'Gum Leaf Hotel' was booked for three consecutive weekends, beginning Friday night 4th July.
- (c) It was decided to cancel Kinouaber trip in favour of the Lyrebird Survey.
- (d) Areas near Newcastle for preservation were nominated viz., Martinsville, Murdering Gully, Braye Park, Swansea South, area from Rankin Park Hospital to the Skyline Drive-In, (Since last meeting, Myer have proposed moving the Showground to the vicinity of the Drive-In, obviously to encroach on virgin bush), rear of the Gun Club, Mangrove areas at Black Red's Bay, Fullerton Cove, Hexham and Tilligerry Creek.
- (e) Bird of the Evening. The Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) was thoroughly described by Brian Archer. A bird with erratic flight, it catches its insects on the wing or finds them under leaves or bark. Always appears to leave its tail open. Builds a cup-shaped nest, 45 mm diameter, 25 mm deep in a tree 1 to 10 metres high. Nest is well camouflaged. Immature birds similar to adults. Seen mainly in forest understorey. Migrates northwards for winter. Some which stay in the mild winter change to a more open habitat.
- (f) Speaker of the Evening was Len Tolhurst who spoke about his experiences with birds of the Pacific Islands, particularly Fiji, Tonga and Solomons. He noted that the further east one went through the islands the relatively fewer land birds were seen. In Samoa, the museum is helpful with some literature. Len showed pictures of birds of Fiji, many exactly as our own, e.g. Golden Plover and White-bracted Woodswallow.

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island was now reported as having an increased five-fold population increase since 1964's independence. Only one island retained any jungle where a jungle fowl could be found. Thank you Len for a informative talk.

(g) Study of the Night. Two films were shown:

- (1) Ethology of the Sandwich Tern and
- (2) Birds of Central Africa.

The Sandwich Tern breeds on the maritime sandy islet, the Bank of Arguin, at the entrance of the basin of Arcachon, off the French coast. These terns are similar to the Crested Tern. They breed in May-June, quickly develop and are gone from the breeding place by mid July. Their numbers are on the decrease because of predation by herring gulls, interference from tourists and poisoning by organic chlorides.

The Birds of Central Africa was a look at quite a number of birds without a close study of any of them. Many birds were the same or closely related to ones which we know in Eastern Australia. e.g. Cattle Egret, Glossy Ibis, Pygmy Goose, Black Kite, Bee-eaters, to name a few.

- 2. Fees for 1980/81 Subscriptions are now due and may be paid to our Fees Officer, Tom Kendall. Single Membership is \$6.00 and Family \$7.00
- 3. Outing to Corrabare Four people turned out at Cessnock on 22nd June. A total of 80 species were recorded in the Ellalong Swamp, Corrabare Forest and en route from Cessnock. Highlights included Rainbow and Healy-breasted Lorikeets, large numbers of honeyeaters, (white-naped, yellow-faced and white-checked), a Spotted Quail-thrush and Gang Gang Cockatoo(s).
- 4. Coming Events
  - (a) 11-13 July Lyrebird Survey. Two overnights at Gum Leaf Hotel. Details David Waterhouse.
  - (b) 18-20 July Lyrebird Survey. Details as above.
  - (c) 2/3 August Atlas weekend camp. Narrina. Details Jim Iurie (524524)
  - (d) 12-19 October Bird School at Warrumbungles.
  - (e) 9-16 November Bird Week at O'Reilly's Lamington N.P.
  - (f) Flora and Fauna Meeting/Outings.
    - Monday 28th July A.G.N. and Members' Slide Night. Room 11, Wickham Public School. 8 pm.
    - Sunday 13th July Headlands near Glenrock Lagoon. Meet at turnoff to Scout Camp just past Flaggy Creek, Kahibai, 2 pm.
    - Sunday 20th July Brown's Falls, Martinsville. Leader: Greg Powell. Phone 43 4155 for details.
- 5. Next meeting 13th August, 1980.