

THE NOVOCASTRIAN WARBLER

September 1980

NEWSLETTER of the HUNTER (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVER GROUP.
Issue No. 8/80 - Released monthly at General Meetings.
MEETINGS: 2nd. Wednesday of each month (except January)
at the Garden Suburb Primary School at 7.30 p.m.
Principal Officers: Chairman: Fred van Gessel
Secretary: Mrs. Wilma Barden (573928)

1. Notes from the August Meeting.

- (a) Attendance: 23 with ~~4~~ apologies - this was our best attendance figure for 1980; present for the first time were John & Sue O'Malley from Hamilton South - welcome to the world of bird lovers.
- (b) Lyrebird Survey - Arthur Austin reported on an interesting week-end during which many lyrebirds were in evidence.
- (c) Wader ~~Study~~ Study group. - Fred van Gessel advised that a group had been formed to study wetland areas. Any members wishing to participate ~~xxx~~ may contact F. van Gessel, W. Barden or Brian Gilligan.
- (d) Wader Habitat, Banding and Census Programme - our Chairman ~~ka~~ attended meeting of R.A.O.U. re same on 22nd August.
- (e) Wader Census - Port Stephens area.
To be undertaken in conjunction with N.S.W. Field Ornithological Club on week-end 6/7 Dec - camping/caravanning to be arranged at Lemon Tree Passage.
- (f) Annual Migration - for 1980 scheduled for Norfolk Island - at this stage would appear to be a non-event due to lack of participants and unavailability of leader. Venues for 1981 now being sought - two suggestions to date:
1. Kinchega National Park (Broken Hill/Menindee Lakes); 2. Rockhampton - Atherton Tableland area.
- (g) Support for ~~political~~ environmental issues.
Discussion on whether our Group should support such issues as an independent entity. Proposed that since the Bird Observers Group was constituted in an informal capacity, members should present ideas or issues with points of view and letters be sent where appropriate by individuals with the support of the group.

2. BACK BENCHERS' SPOT.

- (a) Marion & Ray Walker reported a rare sighting of a FRECKLED DUCK in the wet area on the west side of the Northern approach to the Hexham bridge.
Jim Imrie reported a flock of 50+ Glossy Ibis in the same area.
- (b) Arthur Austin presented a report on a record set by a North American bird watch - 698 species in one year.
- (c) Ted Felton presented a series of coloured slides of waders taken on Kooragang Island.
- (d) A keen bird photographer, John O'Malley would be interested to hear if any members were aware of nesting Rock Warblers (*Origma solitaria*) in the Wattagan Mountains area.
- (e) Al. Gillies presented interesting information on a management programme concerned with the endangered Whooping Crane in North America.
- (f) Chairman reported that the translation of several pairs of Lord Howe Is Woodhens had been successfully accomplished.

3. BIRD OF THE EVENING.

Ted Jones presented an interesting and informative talk on ~~the~~ OWLS and in particular the BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*). ~~xxx~~ To illustrate his talk, Ted produced several wings of Owls which he had found dead on the roadside. This enable us to observe the cryptically beautiful colouration of the feathers. The well-defined, white facial disc gives the bird the classical 'wise old owl' appearance. Many thanks Ted.

4. BIRD CALL OF THE EVENING.

Fred van Gessel presented a trilogy of calls:
White-cheeked Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris niger*)
Little Wattlebird (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*)
Eastern Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*)

5. GUEST SPEAKERS

Alison Martin and Graeme Bartram shared with us some observations on a recent trip to Singapore and Bali. Graeme and Alison painted for us a gloomy picture of a people so preoccupied with the task of eking out a day-to-day existence that they seem sadly unaware of the natural resources they have had and lost.

6. OUTING TO WOLLOMBI and the YANGO TRACK. Sunday 24 August. - Attendance - 7.

A fine mild morning gave early promise of good birding conditions but this was not to be fulfilled as the cloud soon gathered and an unpleasant gusty wind had taken control by lunchtime. Where some water still remains in patches of the Yango Creek fairly good bird populations were observed, however, the overall sadly dry conditions are reflected by a noticeable lack of birds. Compared with 58 species recorded on the last visit to the area in the Spring of 1978, our daily count of 62 species seems quite comparable. Species listed for the day:

Lyrebird, Welcome swallow, Fairy Martin, Pipit, Rose Robin, Yellow Robin, Jacky Winter, Grey Shrike Thrush, Restless Flycatcher, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Whipbird, Grey-crowned Babbler, Reed Warbler, Golden-Headed Cisticola, Blue Wren, Variegated Wren, Brown Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, White Throated and Brown Treecreeper, Noisy Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Lewin Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Mistletoe Bird, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Red-browed Firetail, Starling, Common Myna, Olive-backed Oriole, Satin Bower-bird, White-winged chough, Magpie-lark, Pied Butcherbird, Magpie, Pied Currawong, Raven, Little Grebe, Pied Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, White Ibis, Black Duck, Wood Duck, Black-shouldered Kite, Dusky Moorhen, Coot, Masked Plover, Black-fronted Dotterel, Domestic pigeon, Spotted Dove, Galah, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Eastern Rosella, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Kookaburra.

COMING EVENTS

- a) Sunday 21 Sept. Outing to ALLWORTH - Meet at the OAK at Hexham at 8 a.m.
(Intending participants please notify Activities Officer)
- b) Week-end 4-6 October (Labour Day Holiday) Camp at Boggabri - details at September meeting or from Sue Hamonet.
- c) October 12-19 W.E.A. Bird School at the Warrumbungles National Park.
- d) November 9 - 16 Bird Week at O'Reilly's - Lamington National Park.
- e) FLORA and FAUNA Meeting/Outings.

Monday 22nd Sept. Brian Gilligan: The Challenge of Earth Week
Room 11 Wickham School at 8 p.m.

Sunday 14 September. The Awabakal Field Studies Centre, Dudley
meet at 2 p.m. Leaders: Brian Gilligan & Kevin McDonald.

Sunday 28 Sept. Earth Week Tree Planting Project at the Awabakal Field
Studies Centre, Boundary St., Dudley at 10.30 a.m.

- f) Next Meeting: Wednesday 8th October at 7.30 p.m.
Guest Speaker: William T. Cooper 'Birds of Paradise and Upland New Guinea'