

THE NOVOCASTRIAN WARBLER

October 1980

NEWSLETTER of the HUNTER (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVER GROUP.

Issue No. 9/80 - 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 September Meeting:

- (a) Attendance 24 - another best for 1980; a warm welcome was extended to new member Arthur Williams - Arthur comes from Highfields and has been a keen bird Observer for many years.
- (b) Wader Study Group - our Chairman gave a very interesting report on the inaugural meeting which was held in Melbourne on 23 August - all States of the Commonwealth and New Guinea were represented; we should hear more about the activities of this group in due course.
- (c) Unusual sightings: White-breasted Sea-eagle at Muswellbrook; Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Red-kneed Dotterel on the Krui river (near Cassilis); Spotted Quail thrush and Southern White-face in the area 21 kms south-west of Merriwa.
- (d) The FRECKLED DUCK reported last meeting has since been seen by several members but the previous lone duck now has a mate.
- (e) FEES - Annual fees are now due to the Flora & Fauna Society but some confusion exists as to the amount payable - no doubt this problem will be clarified in due course.

2. BIRD CALL OF THE EVENING

The taped call, again presented by Fred van Gessel, was that of the ROCK WARBLER (*Origma solitaria*). Because this shy member of the bird world is so seldom seen, much less heard, it was no small wonder that members present failed to recognise the call.

3. GUEST SPEAKER

Once again we were privileged to have as our Guest Speaker that well known conservationist - Brian Gilligan.

Brian spoke about his studies of the Japanese snipe (*Gallinago hardwickii*) and the Nankeen Night Heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) both of which he had observed in the Seaham swamp Nature Reserve.

The Japanese Snipe breeds in Japan and considerable numbers are known to migrate to Australia - their flight path apparently passes through New Guinea and along the east coast of Australia. Comparatively few of these birds have been banded and therefore specific knowledge of their movements is not well known.

The Night Heron because of its habit of roosting during the daylight hours, very little is known of its habits; nesting for instance is apparently difficult to locate.

Brian also spoke of his suggestions for the management of the Seaham swamp Nature Reserve. In his opinion, the area of the Reserve should be enlarged and 'tied' to the existing park situated at the southern end of the Reserve. He proposed that Nature trails be constructed so as to take in the historical features of the area such as an old slab-built house; the old stone church and the Edgeworth David quarry.

The talk was followed by an interesting discussion regarding the submissions put forward. Many thanks to Brian for an informative and stimulating evening.

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Little Grebe, Pelican, Little Pied Cormorant, White-faced Heron, Plumed Egret, White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Black Duck, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, White-eyed Duck, White-breasted Sea-Eagle, Dusky Moorhen, Swampen, Coot, Masked Plover, Pied Stilt, Japanese Snipe, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Silver Gull, Bar-shouldered Dove

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Crested Pigeon, King Parrot, Eastern Rosella, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Red-rumped Parrot, Rufous-tailed Bronze Cuckoo, Kookaburra, Rainbow Bee-Eater, Welcome Swallow, Pipit, Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike, White-winged Triller, Scaly Thrush, Hooded Robin, Eastern Yellow Robin, Jacky Winter, Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Black-faced Monarch, Leaden Flycatcher, Restless Flycatcher, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Eastern Whipbird, Rufous Songlark, Blue Wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Warbler, White-throated warbler, Brown Thornbill, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Varied Sitella, White-throated Tree-creeper, Brown Treecreeper, Red Wattlebird, Little Wattlebird, Noisy Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Lewin Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, White-cheeked Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Mistletoe Bird, Spotted Pardalote, Silvereye, Red-browed Firetail, White-winged Chough, Magpie Lark, Dusky Woodswallow, Pied Butcherbird, Raven, Magpie, Pied Currawong.

5. COMING EVENTS.

(a) October 12- 19 W.E.A. BIRD SCHOOL at the WARRUMBUNGLES National Park.

(b) Sunday 19th October - Outing to MONKERAI
Meet at the OAK at Hexham at 0700 hours.

(c) October 25/26 ATLAS OUTING to OWENS GAP.
Note: This is a change of venue from that published in the 1980 programme.

(d) November 8/9 ATLAS OUTING to MURRURUNDI.

(e) FLORA & FAUNA Meetings/Outings.

Saturday 11 October - BLACKBUTT RESERVE.
Meet Carnley Ave. Car Park at 2 p.m. Leader: Kevin McDonald.

Monday 27th October - Room 11 Wickham School at 8 p.m.
Courtney SMITHERS to speak on the subject:
' MIGRATION MOVEMENTS OF BUTTERFLIES '

Sunday 9th November - KOORAGANG ISLAND.
Meet Northern approach to Stockton Bridge at 0900 hours.
Leaders: Tom Kendall and Fred van Gessel.