

March 1981.

NEWSLETTER of the HUNTER (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVER GROUP.

Issue No. 2/81 - 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 (57 3928)

1. Notes from the February Meeting - 11/2/81

- (a) Attendance - 25 - A good roll-up to commence the new year.
- (b) Wetlands Survey - assistance is being sought of bird numbers in wet lands areas of our locality - information to Wilma Barden. Sandy Yates is particularly interested in the Wentworth Swamps area - entry on the western side of East Maitland. Sandy is concerned with the effect of fluoride and other chemicals which may be dumped into this area from the Alcan Smelter.
- (c) David A. Goode from the University of California will be in Newcastle during August 1981 and anyone who can assist in showing him our bird areas is invited to contact Wilma Barden.
- (d) A major cannon netting exercise is to be carried out at Kooragang on the week-end 21/22 March in conjunction with the B.O.C. of Victoria and the F.O.C. of New South Wales.
- (e) Backbenchers' Reports:
 - (i) Jim Imrie reported a sighting of 3 Jabirus at the Williamstown Airport Sewerage Farm.
 - (ii) Three pairs of breeding Painted Honeyeaters reported at Bulga.
 - (iii) A Banded Land Rail sighted at Teralba by Ray Walker.
 - (iv) Dominican Gulls sighted at Moon Island.
- (f) Tentative arrangements were made for a SEA BIRD OUTING in August 1981.

2. CANNON-NETTING.

In view of the exercise to be carried out at Kooragang on 21/22 March an appropriate talk and discussion on the techniques of Cannon-Netting was led by Fred van Gessel. In addition to the mechanics of Cannon-netting, details were given on the methods used to identify banded birds; in Australia, two methods are used: colouring with picric acid or, on larger birds, wing tags.

3. SURVEY of BIRD LIFE IN COASTAL SWAMPS.

Members are asked to check and report on sightings in coastal swamp areas.

4. MARTINSVILLE - GAP CREEK OUTING, Sunday 22nd February.

Participants on this outing numbered 11 and included Graham Logan and Bill Dolan who are engaged in bird-banding in the Toukley area; Penny Field from Sydney also came along. Despite the very wet conditions underfoot, it proved to be a most interesting day. Probably the highlight of the outing (apart from the spectacle of the guy who fell into a swollen creek) was the visit to Fred Hullmann's property at the foot of the Watagan mountains. Fred, who owns 120 acres is a keen nature lover and provides food for the wildlife which abounds in his remote locality. Another visit to this area is planned for the near future.

Gap Creek Outing Continued.

The number of species recorded for the day was 56 - most interesting being a male Regent Bower-bird and a Crested Shrike-tit. Many thanks to Ray Walker who was our leader for the day.

5. IRON RANGE (Cape York Peninsula) SAFARI.

Some members have expressed interest in the Safari which is to be conducted by the Bird Observers Club of Victoria - details are as follows:

The Group will leave Cairns (Qld) on Saturday 15 August at 1.00 p.m. for a two week base camp in the Iron Range, returning Sunday 30th August. Costs: Iron Range Camp, all inclusive ex Cairns \$550 plus air fare. Send four S.A.E's to Mrs. L. Feather, P.O. Box 360 South Yarra Vic. 3141 plus deposit of \$50.00/

Incidentally, a lecture on the BIRDS of IRON RANGE is to be presented by John Waugh at the meeting of the Cumberland Bird Observers Club on Tuesday 17 March at the Primary School, Church St. West Pennant Hills at 8 p.m.

6. HISTORICAL BIRD BOOK

Noticed an advertisement for an historical bird book entitled 'COMPANION TO GOULD'S HANDBOOK: or SYNOPSIS OF THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA' by S. Diggles. Quite a handsome volume apparently, printed in 1877 and contains for the most part examples from the original drawings. the price: a mere \$12,500 !

7. ELECTION of OFFICERS FOR 1981/1982.

This is due to take place in April but our Secretary, Wilma Barden, who has held the position since the formation of the Group, has announced that she will not be available for re-appointment.

Present indications are that the Editor of the Newsletter will be out of the district for approximately six months in the coming year and it would therefore be advisable for a replacement to be found for that position also.

Early notification is being given to enable members to give some thought to possible appointees.

COMING EVENTS

March 21/22 (Sat/Sun) KOORAGANG ISLAND - Victorian Wader Study Group - Bird Banding and Cannon-netting. Enquiries: Wilma Barden.

April 4/5' Sat/Sun. Atlas Camp to the CURRICABARK area: Enquiries: Jim Imrie.

April 17 - 20 Easter Co-camp with the Flora and Fauna Society. BLACKWATER CREEK, Widden Valley - Enquiries: Wilma Barden.

FLORA & FAUNA PROGRAMME

23 March, Monday, 8 p.m. Natural History of the Pipeclay Creek area, Port Stephens by Graeme Bartrim. Room 11 Wickham Public School.

5th April, Sunday: Exploring one of the endangered wetlands in the Hunter Valley.

NEXT MEETING - Wednesday 8th April 1981 at 7.30 p.m.