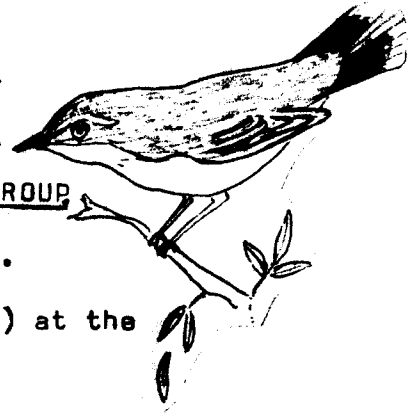


June 1981



NEWSLETTER of the HUNTER (Newcastle) BIRD OBSERVERS GROUP

Issue No. 5/81 - 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

1. Notes from the May Meeting - 13/5/1981.

(a) Attendance 14 - a drop in numbers is usual for the May Meeting when a number of members are away over the school holidays.

(b) Election of Officers: Fred van Gessel was re-elected as Chairman.

A proposal put forward by Wilma Barden that a Committee be formed to attend to the business and running of the Group for a 12 month trial was agreed to by members present - the first Committee Meeting to be held on Monday, 1st June, 1981 at the home of Jim and Kay Imrie.

(c) Letter of thanks received from Arnold McGill for condolences sent on behalf of the H.B.O.G. on the recent loss of his wife.

(d) Enquiries re venue, bookings and date for Annual Dinner to be made.

(e) Mr Bob Preissey, commissioned by the National Parks & Wildlife Service to undertake a survey on the coastal wetlands of the Hunter Region addressed members giving an outline of information required.

(g) Back-benchers Spot: Fred van Gessel reported the sighting of 34 Freckled Duck and 30-40 Shovellers on Kooragang Island. Also a number of Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits and 3 Great Knots in breeding plumage on Stockton Sandspit.

2. Bird Call and Bird of the Evening: - GILBERT'S WHISTLER (*Pachycephala inornata*). Delightfully presented by Sue O'Malley who has observed this species in its natural habitat, the mallee and surrounding borders of dry sclerophyll areas. Concern was expressed that with the wholesale clearing of mallee areas and the resultant loss of habitat for the Gilbert's Whistler, the future survival of this species was under considerable threat.
Thank you Sue.

3. Speaker of the Evening: - John O'Malley who spoke enthusiastically about some of the areas visited on their trip to Queensland in October, 1980. Illustrated with excellent slides taken mainly by Tony Balfour who assisted John in his presentation, members were impressed by some of the delightful areas visited and the bird species seen. Areas such as Cairns, Julatten, Mt Spec, Townsville Common, Atherton Tablelands, Normanton and Karumba on the Gulf whetted the appetites of some members and brought back nostalgic memories for others. A round of applause for John and Tony.

4. Field outing Sunday, 24th May - Morpeth, Maitland Sewerage Treatment Works, Nature Wonderland and Pokolbin areas.
Once again heavy rains and strong winds made this a non-event.
5. Atlas outing to Mt Rivers - Sunday, May 31
Despite the cool and overcast weather conditions, an early start of 7 a.m. enabled the four atlasers to chalk up 63 species before, once again, rain set in and further observations were abandoned.
6. June long weekend
Again - a non-event.
7. Notes from 1ST COMMITTEE MEETING held on Monday, 1st June, 1981 at home of Jim and Kay Imrie.
- 10 members present.
 - Committee to operate on a 12 months trial.
 - Committee to plan meeting programme 3 months in advance.
 - that any member may attend the Committee Meetings and present any items of business either in person or in writing.
 - probable date for Seabird trip to be about mid-September.
 - further information and survey forms given by F van Gessel for assistance for the Hunter Wetlands Group survey of wetlands. Data is required for any future demands or proposals on Hexham Swamp.
 - Next Committee Meeting to be held on Monday, 6th July at 8 p.m. Venue: Fred van Gessel, 33 Elcho Street, Hamilton (upstairs at rear).
- ** N.B. Members to consider and comment on, either in person or in writing, at next Committee Meeting, the pros and cons of autonomy for the H.B.O.G.

8. Coming Events:

- June 21 Sunday - WATAGANS (and hopefully Lyrebirds)
Meet: Oak, Freeman's Waterholes 8 a.m.
- July 5 Sunday - Atlas outing - GIRVAN - BULAHDELAH
Meet: Oak, Hexham - 7.30 a.m.
- July 4/5 Weekend, is a national WADER COUNT. It is hoped that members of the H.B.O.G. will assist in this worthwhile project.
Enquiries and Particulars from Fred van Gessel
Phone: 690556 (about 9.30 - 10 a.m.)
or business hours.

Port Stephens
Kooragang
Coon Island - Swansea.

4. Field outing Sunday, 24th May - Morpeth, Maitland Sewerage Treatment Works, Nature Wonderland and Pokolbin areas.