



HUNTER BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB

NEWSLETTER No. 3/82 - April 1982 (Released monthly at Club Nights)

President: Fred van Gessel

Hon. Secretary: Kay Imrie

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Annual Subscriptions: Family \$6.00. Single \$5.00. School Student \$1.00
Due on 1st January each year.

Meetings: Club Nights: 2nd Wednesday of each month (except January)
at the Garden Suburb School at 7.30 p.m.

Committee Meetings: 1st Monday of each month (public holidays
excepted) at Garden Suburb School at 8 p.m.

1. NOTES FROM THE MARCH MEETING - 10th March 1982.

a) Attendance: 32 and 4 visitors.

A welcome was given to four new members: Lesley Angus, Dulcie and Jack Hartley and Stuart Johnson who is our first Junior member.

b) BIRD CALL OF THE EVENING - this was played by Fred van Gessel. Calls were made of the Sacred Kingfisher and members were interested to hear the variety of calls made by this member of the Alcedinidae family

c) BIRD OF THE EVENING - Speaker: Bill Cambridge.
The bird chosen by Bill was the Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) and was presented in a very thoughtful manner. Bill had thoroughly researched his subject and was able to supplement his reading with observations made from his own personal experiences. Thank you Bill for an excellent presentation.

d) Guest Speaker - ARNOLD MCGILL F.R.Z.S. F.R.A.O.U.
Arnold's subject was the HONEYEATERS OF AUSTRALIA.

The Meliphagidae family (the Honeyeaters) is one of the strongest bird groups in Australia. Of the 700 odd species in this country over 67 belong to the Meliphagidae family. Honeyeaters are characterised by a generally longish curved bill, a long fine tongue with a brush-like process at the end and the adornment (of different colours skin and/or feathers) around the head. They range in size from the 100mm Scarlet Honeyeater of Eastern Australia to the 400 mm Yellow wattlebird of Tasmania.

Arnold illustrated his talk with 60 slides showing males, females and young, nests and eggs of a variety of Honeyeaters. He impressed with his great knowledge of this family and we deemed ourselves to be very fortunate to have the opportunity of hearing such a knowledgeable ornithologist first hand.

Al Gillies moved a vote of thanks which was carried with acclamation.

e) UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS:

Sue Hamonet - a Grey Fantail minus a tail !
- Spotted Quail Thrush - Brunkerville Gap.
Jim Imrie - Little Lorikeet - access road, East Maitland
to Buttai.
Jim Perry - Pheasant Coucal - Awabakal, Dudley.
Wilma Barden- 400 Little Terns on Stockton sandspit.

f) VOTE OF THANKS - a vote of thanks was proposed to our former Secretary, Wilma Barden - the speaker enumerated Wilma's many duties and praised the whole-hearted effort she had put into the activities of the Hunter Bird Group.

2. FIELD DAY TO KOORAGANG ISLAND - Sunday 21st March 1982.

This outing was attended by 15 members and started at Stockton sandspit to catch the migratory wading birds feeding on the falling tide. Many species of birds were seen including 5 species of Terns, but without doubt the highlight of the day came when a large number of wading birds were seen to have changed to breeding plumage. These included Bar-tailed Godwits, Mongolian Dotterels, Curlew Sandpipers, Golden Plovers and Ruddy Turnstones with the latter two considered the most outstanding.

Activities were then transferred to Kooragang where a Musk Duck was among the many additional species sighted. A vote of thanks must go to Ernie Walpole for allowing the use of facilities at the Australian Fluorine Chemicals plant and also to Wilma Barden whose assistance in identifying the migratory wading birds was very much appreciated by the less experienced members. The total number of species for the day was 78. Bill Cambridge.

3. NOTES FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on 5/4/1982.

- a) Car Stickers - After considering quotations for a supply of Car Stickers, it was decided to defer action on this proposal.
- b) Library - our thanks are due to Mr. Charles Mann for his donation of a Records Box for the Library cards. As an initial contribution to the Library, the Committee allocated the sum of \$30.00, this amount to be reviewed when membership increases. A catalogue of books available is to be prepared for perusal by members.
- c) Winter Wader Count - a special meeting of interested personnel is to be held as soon as possible to plan for the Winter Wader Count. Details of this meeting to be announced during the Club Night programme.
- d) Wandering Birds - During a recent F. & F. outing a person wandered off on his own fell down a cliff and wasn't located until 9 p.m. that evening. Our Committee recommends that members participating in outing should:
 - i) Carry a whistle to signal when lost or incapacitated.
 - ii) Notify somebody if leaving the main party
 - iii) In camp, advise if not returning for lunch.
- e) Annual Dinner - tentative date is Friday 25th June; venue: Wallsend R.S.L. Club.
- f) Nomenclature of Birds. It has been finally decided that for recording purposes, our Club will use the 1975 Checklist of the Birds of Australia and the Interim List of Australian Songbirds.

4. COMING EVENTS

Anzac Week-end 24-26 April Camp at Gloucester Tops (Sharpes Creek Campsite)
Prior bookings are essential - for alterations to bookings notify Kay Imrie (524524) no later than noon Friday 23/4/82.

Sunday 25 April Flora & Fauna outing to Blackbutt Reserve
Meet 2 p.m. Carnley Ave. Car Park.

Monday 3rd May Management Committee meeting.

Wednesday 12th May - Club Night.