

NEWSLETTER No. 4/82 - May 1982 (Released monthly at Club Nights.)

President: Fred van Gessel

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Annual Subscription: 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 (public holidays excepted)
at Garden Suburb School at 8 p.m.

1. NOTES FROM THE APRIL MEETING - 14th April 1982.

a) Attendance: 22 and 4 visitors.

A welcome was given to new members: Jeanette Stephenson, Gordon Ross, Brian Howe, Tom Kendall and Nigel Walker.

b) BIRD CALL OF THE EVENING - Two calls were played, one by Fred van Gessel and one by Wilma Barden. Neither of the calls, by the Crested Grebe and the WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER were identified by the members present.

c) BIRD OF THE EVENING - Speaker Sue Hamonet.
The bird chosen for this segment was the Black-Eared Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx osculans*) This is one of the rarest species of Cuckoos in Australia and it was of interest to hear details of its habits and behaviour. Occasional sightings have been recorded in the Hunter Valley. The talk was enhanced by the playing of the quiet descending mournful call.

d) Main Feature - An AUDIO VISUAL PRESENTATION by Arthur Austin.
This was the first time that such a presentation had been made at one of our Bird Meetings and Arthur was freely complimented and commended for his production. The presentation consisted of four main displays: Wild Flowers, Native Animals, Forest Birds and Birds of the Wetlands and Rivers. Members were naturally more appreciative of the two latter displays but evinced considerable interest in the Wild Flowers and the Native Animals.
Jim Perry moved a vote of thanks to Arthur and this was supported most heartily by all present.

e) UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS:

John O'Malley - a male Brown Goshawk with an injured wing, found in W.A. Inability to fly enabled John to examine this bird very closely.

Ted Jones - a Musk Lorikeet taken by a Sparrowhawk at Bateman's Bay.

Jim Imrie - a Black-chinned Honeyeater sighted on the New England Highway about 2 miles North of the John Renshaw Drive.

Tom Kendall - Developers had 'saved' a Tree at Sawtell, because of its use as a nesting site for Ospreys.

f) LIBRARY: The Management Committee has decided to purchase the book 'HAWKS IN FOCUS' by Jack Lindsay Cupper for the Club Library and this should be available to members at the May meeting.

During the absence 'up North' by our Librarian, Eva Van de Werken, Mavis Gillies has kindly agreed to hold the fort.

2. WINTER WADER COUNT.

Seven members attended the special meeting held on 21/4/82 to discuss plans for the Winter Wader Count. It was decided to conduct two surveys:

1. The Newcastle area to be covered on the week-end 3/4 July - this would take in such important areas as Kooragang and Swansea.
2. The Port Stephens area on the following week-end 10/11 July.

Al Gillies was appointed Co-ordinator and as soon as he is notified of prospective participants, areas will be allotted thereto. Final details should be available at the June meeting.

3. THE EASTER CAMP 9 - 12 April 1982

Blessed by fine sunny weather, albeit a little cool in the evenings, the Easter Camp which was held in the Widden Valley was voted by all who attended to be a very happy and enjoyable occasion.

Fourteen members, two friends and four children made up the complement for the week-end. Camps were spread along a grassy sward adjacent to Table Bay Creek. This year, water was no problem compared with the last two years as the creek was running fairly strongly; the only problem compared with previous years was getting across without wetting feet.

107 species of birds were recorded. This exceeded last year's figure by 10 but did not include some 18 species seen in 1981. The less common sightings included: Collared Sparrowhawk, Wonga Pigeon, Glossy Black and Gang Gang Cockatoos, Turquoise Parrot, Scarlet and Hooded Robin, Rock Warbler, Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, Black-chinned and White-naped Honeyeaters.

Apart from birds, other strange sights were: Dot Bates vehicle securely wedged into a hole in a dry creek crossing; Jim Imrie's descent backwards into the creek and the volume of smoke emanating from Fred's 'fire'.

4. GLOUCESTER TOPS CAMP - Anzac Week-end - 23-26 April 1982

This camp was attended by fourteen campers. The first night was cool while the rest of the weekend weather was perfect with the sun shining for the three days. Due to the camping area being fully occupied there were few birds to be seen near the camp sites with the distinct exception of three Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos which circled over each day so we had a good look at them.

On the Gloucester River walk we were stopped by a group of thornbills in a small stand of trees, very upset and noisy about something. On closer observation we saw a Collared Sparrowhawk sitting on a limb of a nearby tree. We all had a good look then it flew away leaving all the birds safe. Other birds seen on this walk included a Large-billed Scrub Wren amongst a few White-browed Scrub Wrens. The walk through the beech forest was very pleasant with a lovely waterfall surrounded by rocks covered with lichens. On the beech trees there were various types of fungi and these were a delight even though the birds were absent.

The highlight of the weekend was on the Carey's Peak walk through rainforest. Our thanks to Fred van Gessel and Jim Perry who both called up an elusive Olive Whistler on two occasions. After a five year search Wilma Barden has finally had a good look at this bird. The total count for the weekend was eighty birds but conspicuous by its absence was the Green Catbird. I would like to thank the drivers who transported us to these delightful walks. Thanks everyone for a lovely weekend. Jeanette Stephenson..

5. Notes from the Management Committee Meeting held on 3/5/82.

It was decided that:

- (i) the H.B.O.C. become a member of the International Council for Bird Preservation - Australian National Section.
- (ii) the H.B.O.C. support the Newcastle Flora and Fauna Protection Society in its study of the proposed Glenrock State Recreation Area (Merewether Beach to Dudley).
- (iii) that a subscription be paid to the Bird Observers Club so that their newsletter would be available through our library.
- (iv) a letter of thanks be forwarded to the owner of the property where the Easter Camp was held.

6. COMING EVENTS.

Sunday 23rd May Field Day to Booral/Stroud area.
Meet at The Oak, Hexham at 8.30 a.m.
Contact: Marion Walker 58 5942

Monday 7th June Management Committee Meeting.

Wednesday 9th June Clubnight.
Study Night on Pigeons and Doves. Please
do your homework in preparation.

Weekend 12-14 June Queen's Birthday weekend Camp
at Kerrabee. Contact Wilma Barden 57 3928.

Friday 26th June Annual Dinner at the Wallsend
R.S.L. Club. Deposit \$2.00 per head.
Ed or Kay will collect deposits. Booking essential.