

HUNTER BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB.

NEWSLETTER No. 6/82 July 1982 (Released monthly at Club Nights)

President : Fred van Gessel

Hon. Secretary: Kay Imrie

Enquiries: Wilma Barden, 19 Carisbrooke Ave. Kotara. Phone (049)573928

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 month (public holidays
excepted) at Garden Suburb School at 8 p.m.

1. NOTES FROM THE JUNE MEETING - 9th June 1982.

- a) Attendance, in addition to our Guest Speaker, 24 members were in attendance together with four visitors, making in all 29 - in view of the very wet conditions on the night, this was considered to be quite good.
- b) Bird Call of the Evening - Wilma Barden
Two calls were played - the LITTLE TERN and the very rare BLACK TERN. Only two sightings of the latter have been recorded, one in Newcastle in 1968 and one at The Entrance in 1958.
- c) Bird of the Evening - Speaker: Tom Douglass
It was pleasing to see Tom back in action again after his recent sojourn in Hospital. His subject was the RED-NECKED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) which has been sighted on many occasions at Kooragang. Tom had obviously researched his 'bird' and gave us a very good 'run down' on this very attractive member of the *Recurvirostridae* family. Thank you Tom.

d) Observations

Ted Jones reported a decline in the number of species in the Nambucca Heads area feral cats believed to be the main cause. At Urunga, Ted sighted an OSPREY together with a number of GODWITS and TATTLERS.

Jim Perry at Seal Rocks, 2 OSPREYS also an OSPREY, a WHITE-BREASTED SEA EAGLE, a WHISTLING KITE and a KESTREL all within binocular range at the one time.

Ted Felton. PINK-EARED DUCKS and SHOVELERS at Kooragang.

Kay Imrie. At Kooragang about 500 COOT formed into a raft with a SWAMP HARRIER overhead; also a WHITE-BREASTED SEA EAGLE in the same area.

Fred van Gessel at Kooragang, a flock of 900 BLACK SWANS reduced to 600 within one week - also sighted about 400 PIED STILTS.

Sue Hamonet reported large numbers of YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATERS passing through the Speers Point area.

David Waterhouse: several YELLOW-TAILED BLACK COCKATOOS observed in a flock of SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOOS flying towards the Sugarloaf Range. Cormorants breeding (in June !) near a waterhole on the Steelworks Golf Course at Shortland.

e) GUEST SPEAKER - W. ROY WHEELER M.B.E.

Hearing that Roy Wheeler a noted ornithologist was to be in Newcastle at the same time as our June meeting, our live wire Secretary, Kay Imrie, arranged for him to be our Speaker for the evening.

Roy chose as his subject the BIRDS of SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND and illustrated his talk with some 200 colour slides most of which were of a very high standard particularly some of the shots of fledglings. In the course of his presentation he demonstrated his great knowledge of Australian birds and impressed everyone with his retentive memory. In moving a vote of thanks to our Guest, Ted Jones echoed everyone's approval when he thanked Roy for giving us such a splendid presentation.

2. FIELD DAY - Sunday 20th June 1982. MORPETH and WENTWORTH SWAMP.

Nine members braved the wintry day to take part in this outing which was led by Fred van Gessel. The morning session, although cool was fine and sunny; however, after lunch a south-west front moved in with strong winds blowing straight off the polar ice cap. In all 65 species were recorded, the best area being the Morpeth sewerage farm. No less than 6 species of Duck were sighted in the one stretch of water. These were: Black Duck; Chestnut and Grey Teal; Shoveler; Pink-eared Duck and the White-eyed Duck. Wentworth swamp area was something of a disappointment as far as numbers were concerned and this would have been due mainly to the blustery conditions. Thanks Fred for an interesting day.

3. THE WADER SURVEY - Sunday 4th July.

Nine members participated in the first day of the National Wader Survey. Kooragang and the Swansea district being the two areas covered. Over 1500 Waders were recorded with the Pied Stilts being easily the largest group. The survey in our area is to be concluded on the week-end 10/11 July.

4. NOTES FROM THE JUNE/JULY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

- a) Quotes are being obtained for Club Letterheads.
- b) Fred has compiled an INFORMATION SHEET - same to be used to record details relative to bird counts on Field Days and Camps.
- c) Wilma Barden has initiated a 'scrapbook' of Bird Cartoons - she will be pleased to receive any you may happen to have.
- d) The Membership report discloses that we now have 58 members - an increase of 29% on the 1981 figures. Members to date are: Lesley Angus, Brian Archer, Arthur Austin, Wilma Barden, Dot Bates, Clive & Marit Beilby, Bill Cambridge, Tom Douglass, Ted and Ilma Felton, Annette Forster, Al and Mavis Gillies, Dulcie and Jack Hartley, Bob Heaney, Ed and Sue Hamonet, Paul & Mrs. Huloahan, Jim and Kay Imrie, Stuart Johnson, Ted and Kua Jones, Brian and Mrs. Howe, Annette Kilshaw, Tom Kendall, Charles Mann, Bevan and Mrs. McGregor, Lynette Millington, Jim Perry, Allan Raine, Ian and Faith Reid, Jim and Olga Kalston, Herma Reedman, Gordon and Mrs. Ross, Bob and Joan Sargent, Jeanette and Jim Stephenson, Fred van Gessel, Eva van de Werken, Ernie Walpole, Marion and Ray Walker, Nigel Walker, Gary Weber, David Waterhouse and Arthur Williams, Keith and Mrs. Howard.
- e) Club Badge - advice from the Cumberland B.O.C. indicates that we may soon have our own Club Badge. The minimum order is for 100 and to avoid too heavy a drain on Club finances we would need to have a firm indication that at least 40 would be taken up as soon as possible. Please advise Kay Imrie or Ed Hamonet if you are interested in purchasing a Club Badge - cost would be \$2.50 per badge.
- f) Annual Migration. Several years ago the 'Annual Migration' formed part of our regular programme. In 1978, ten members spent a week on Lord Howe Island and in 1979, the Cairns area in North Queensland was the venue. Several members have requested that we re-introduce this aspect of our activities. Long range planning is necessary and it is hoped to decide at our August Committee meeting, the possible venue for the 1983 Migration. If you have a suggestion please pass it on to any member of the Management Committee. Possible venues suggested to date are: Tasmania, Norfolk Island, Kangaroo Island, The Corner Country, Carnarvon Gorge, Iron Range, Alice Springs. For the longer trips, the party would travel by air and hire suitable vehicles on arrival. For closer areas such as Western New South Wales or Southern Queensland, we would hire a bus.

5. THE ANNUAL DINNER.

Thirteen members attended the Annual Dinner which was held at the Wallsend R.S.L. Club on Friday 25th June. Numbers were down on previous occasions - possible due to its being held in Winter time - however, all present thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

6. THE SUMMER WADER COUNT.

The National Summer Wader Count held in February reveals that 658,000 waders were counted in Australia. South Australia returned the largest count - 305,509 and over 200,000 of these were recorded in the COorong. The three most common abundant species were the RED-NECKED STINT (156,538); the BANDED STILT (100,028) and the SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER (93,972)

7. COMING EVENTS

Sunday 25th July FIELD DAY to Redhead/Dudley/Belmont Lagoon.

Meet at the Charlestown Motor Registry Car Park in Frederick Street at 9 a.m.

Leaders: Bill Cambridge and Arthur Williams.

Monday 2nd August - Management Committee Meeting at 8 p.m. at the Garden Suburb School - all members may attend.

Wednesday 11th August - CLUB NIGHT.

Guest Speaker: Al Gillies - 'THE BIRDS OF ECUADOR'.