

Sue Hammett

HUNTER BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB.



NEWSLETTER NO. 8/82 September 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 Primary School at 7.30 p.m.

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

1. NOTES FROM THE AUGUST MEETING - Wednesday 11th August, 1982.

- a) Attendance - 23 including two new members - Bronwyn Taylor and Peter Nelson from Carey Bay also visitor Brett Jones who is preparing for the Duke of Edinburgh award.
- b) Bird Call of the Evening - Fred van Gessel
The ululations of Menura novaehollandiae, the Lyrebird, were played to demonstrate the skills of mimicry for which this species is renowned. Members were asked to identify the calls.
- c) Bird of the Evening - Arthur Williams
One of the most adaptable and abundant of waterfowl species, the Black Swan (Cygnus atratus) was the subject for discourse. This species is the only member of waterfowl to fly in 'V'-shaped "skeins". It was evident from Arthur's portrayal, together with excellent slides, that he knew his subject well. Thank you Arthur for sharing a little of your extensive knowledge.
- d) Back-Benchers Spot/Observations
 - Jim Perry - reported 48 Red-kneed Dotterel on Kooragang Island.
 - Ted Felton - Oriental Dotterel and Superb Parrot at Willandra Nat. Park
 - Ilma Felton - Spotted Crake at Willandra
 - Ted Jones - 6,000 Silver Gulls at Keepit Dam. Ted also brought his collection of owl-wings from road kills for members inspection and another item of interest - a real cobbler's awl.
 - Tom Kendall - a Spangled Drongo imitating the calls of a Pied Currawong and Yellow-faced Honeyeater in his home yard.
 - Fred van Gessel - 40 White-headed Pigeons at Stroud Park also Red-browed Treecreeper, Olive Whistler and 10 Crescent Honeyeaters at Kerrapit, Gloucester Tops
 - Wilma Barden - 7 Plumed Tree Ducks at Seaham Swamp. Also that the Taree Club, now known as the Manning Valley Birdwatchers, have printed their first Newsletter. Exchange copies of Newsletters was likely between Clubs. Bill Cambridge:- Spotted Harrier at Wybung Headland.
- e) FEATURE SPEAKER - AL GILLIES
"The Birds of Ecuador" was the topic chosen by Al and after viewing the presentation of slides and listening to Al's dissertation about the region and particularly of the birds, members did well to refrain from rushing out to purchase a seat on the first flight out to Ecuador - a land where there is no field guide of bird species; a land which contains many, as yet, undescribed species - several of which have now been described since Al's return to Australia; a land where many species

have pronounced sexual dimorphism; where 400 species have been recorded from a verandah overlooking a garden; where a number of species have adapted to feed on teeming swarms of ants; where large feeding flocks of about 30-40 differing species, many of which were vividly coloured, was an enthralling sight; species such as the 'Umbrella Bird', various species of Humming-birds and the nocturnal Curacao which has not as yet been seen by white-man - only heard - certainly whetted the appetite. Needless to say we were most impressed - and thank you Al.

2. FIELD DAY - Sunday, 22nd August - STANHOPE CREEK

The day was pleasantly warm and sunny and eight adults and three children observed a total of 78 species in the Elderslie - Stanhope Creek area. The club last visited this area in February, 1979, when severe drought conditions prevailed and 60 species were recorded. On this outing some quite deep pools of water were present in the upper parts of the creek and it was a little surprising that our species count was not larger. The most note-worthy sightings were of six Banded Plovers - only our second local record. Our first "super spotter" award to Jim Perry. Not to be outdone, Nigel Walker and Arthur Williams also received awards. Nigel, for a male Regent Bowerbird and Arthur, for 25 Topknot Pigeons. En route to the Hexham meeting point Jim Perry and Wilma Barden located three Striped Honeyeaters breakfasting in flowering corall trees at St. Joseph's Home, Sandgate. A local first!

Jim P.
Nigel Walker
Arthur Williams
Wilma Barden
J. Perry
Evan
Alan & the

3. NOTES FROM THE AUGUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

- a) Club Library: Permission granted for a small cupboard for club library books, to be stored in the school library.
- b) October Long Weekend Camp: access to Doyle's Creek no longer permitted so alternative plans are that we will join with the N.S.W.F.O.C. at Munghorn Gap. We can promise an interesting and rewarding weekend with excellent birding and excellent company.
- c) Field Day Programme 1983: That time of year again. Several areas were nominated for consideration for the programme. Wilma Barden will accept members proposals at the September General Meeting.
- d) Junior Group: It was proposed that a Junior section of the Club be initiated on a trial basis. Junior members to be contacted for their comment.

4. COMING EVENTS:

Sunday, 19th September FIELD DAY to WARKWORTH - BROKE - MILBRODALE
Meet: at the Oak; Hexham at 7.30 a.m.
Leader: Ray Walker.

Weekend 2-4 October CO-CAMP with N.S.W.F.O.C. at MUNGHORN GAP
Contact: Kay Imrie Ph: 524524

Monday, 11th October MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING at 8.00 p.m. at Garden Suburb Primary School - all members welcome.

Wednesday 13th October CLUB NIGHT

Gary Weber will entertain us with some of his excellent bird photography.

Wednesday 10th November CLUB NIGHT

Noted artist and author William (Bill) Cooper will be our guest.