

HUNTER BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB.

NEWSLETTER No. 10/82 - NOVEMBER 1982 (Released monthly at Club Nights)

President: Fred van Gessel

Hon. Secretary: Kay Imrie

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

Note: Subscriptions paid by members joining in November or December will carry through to the end of the following year.

Meetings: Club Nights: 2nd Wednesday of each month (except January) at 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 p.m.

1. NOTES FROM THE OCTOBER MEETING - Wednesday 13th October 1982.

a) Attendance - the largest number recorded for the last two years were in attendance at the October meeting - in all 35 persons were present.

b) Bird Call of the Evening - Sue Hamonet.

Sue presented the calls of the Western Warbler (*Gerygone fusca*) and the White-throated Warbler (*Gerygone olivacea*). Both species are found in the Hunter Valley and because of the overlapping range, it was interesting to hear the comparison of the two calls. The Western Warbler's call is one of the sweetest and most oft-repeated but elusive Australian bird songs; a falling silvery thread of sound that seems to finish before the end.

Thank you Sue.

c) Bird of the Evening - Bevan McGregor.

Seeing as he was making his debut in this part of the programme, Bevan decided to make the most of it and dealt with not one but two 'backyard' birds. These were the Yellow Thornbill (*Acanthiza nana*) and the Spangled Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*). Apart from the usual information relative to size, colour, habitat, habits nest, eggs etc. there was some discussion anent the meaning of the scientific names. 'Acanthiza' comes from two Greek words - 'acanthion' (thorny thicket) 'zao' (I live) and a Latin word 'nanus' (dwarf). A literal translation therefore would be - a small bird which frequents thickets. 'Dicrurus' comes from the Latin word 'crurus' (the shin, shin bone, leg) while 'dis' is a prefix which emphasises the word which follows. 'Hottentottus' refers to the Hottentot race in Africa. The Drongo family is found in most of Africa, Southern Asia, the East Indies and Northern Australia extending down the east coast to Victoria. Hence, a strong legged bird which has relations in Africa. Thank you Bevan for an interesting, original and entertaining talk.

d) Observations

Ray Walker: 5 Ruddy Turnstones at North Creek, Warners Bay

Indian Mynahs sighted at Cardiff, Warners Bay and Edgeworth.

Ted Felton: Reported that a Reed Warbler spent 4 days in a garden at Stockton. Sightings in South Australia: Mallee Fowl, White-browed Tree-creeper, Gilbert's Whistler and the Regent Parrot.

Fred van Gessel: Spurwing Plovers observed still nesting on 10th October.

Arthur Williams: 3 Spurwing Plovers with clutches of eggs near Bradford Cotton Mills at Kotara; also nesting on the sand at Morna Pt.

e) Main feature - Gary Weber.

Per medium of his colour slides, Gary took us on a ramble through the bushland where we saw items of interest which we usually pass by without a second glance. We were amazed at the colour and shape of various fungi: wild flowers, especially the orchids were much admired; several native animals were also well received; patterns in the bark of some trees were almost unbelievable. As a result of Gary's show, there is no doubt that on future bush rambles, members will be looking for more than birds. To wind up his viewings, Gary showed us some of his excellent bird slides. Thank you Gary for a top class performance.

2. NOTES FROM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

- a) Club Badges - these have finally been received and will be available for sale on Club Nights - cost \$2.50 per badge - see Ed Hamonet.
- b) The Club will donate \$10 towards the establishment of the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory. This Observatory is located on the eastern edge of the southern tableland about 13 kilometres west of Kiama. Details of courses available will be published from time to time in this Newsletter.
- c) Membership - our numbers have now risen to 65. Recent additions are: Auriol Royds from Wangi Wangi and Judy and Bill Tayler from Valentine.
- d) Sea Bird Trip to Cabbage Tree Island - ~~Saturday 15th~~ ^{SUNDAY 9th} January 1983. Bookings for this trip will close on Wednesday 10th November 1982 - members interested please see Jim Imrie.
- e) Iron Range Bird Camp 1983.
Wild Country Safaris will be operating a camp at Iron Range (Cape York Peninsula) in 1983 similar to that conducted for the B.O.C (Victoria) in 1981. Bookings may be made to stay for from one week to one month at a centrally located camp on the Middle Claudie River.
Eight of our members have booked in for 10 days from 16th to 23rd August 1983 and if any other members are interested, please see Kay Imrie for further details.
- f) Annual Migration - tentative arrangements are being made to organise a Two week tour of Western New South Wales by Mini bus in 1983. The probable dates are from 10/9/83 to 23/9/83. The maximum number of acceptances would be 10 and the estimated cost (on current prices) would range from \$120 per person for 10 people to \$190 per person for 6 people plus in each case an additional amount to cover food, ice and L.P. Gas. If interested please notify Kay Imrie.
- g.) The 1983 Programme is now available and members will note that several half day trips have been included in addition to the normal monthly field day. Although the half days have been spread throughout the year, continuation of same for the second half will depend on the patronage during the first half of the year.

3. JUNIORS SECTION

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3. FIELD DAY - Sunday 24th October 1982 - BLACKBUTT RESERVE.

Overcast conditions with some light rain set the scene for the start of this outing; however, nine members braved the elements and were rewarded with some interesting sightings. Wilma Barden who led the outing, pointed out the nest of an Eastern Yellow Robin some 10 metres up - fairly high for the species but they have been known to nest even higher. Other points of interest were the nesting of the Leaden Flycatcher, Grey Butcherbird and White-throated Warbler. The Cicadabird was heard calling several times and for a while appeared to elude us but with great determination was finally tracked down by Jim Imrie. The sighting of a male Regent Bowerbird and a White-necked Heron were also of interest, the latter being a first for the Club in Blackbutt. Undoubtedly, the highlight of the day was the Olive-backed Oriole that poured forth a repertoire of mimicry that could only be surpassed by the master mocker himself - the Lyrebird. Included in his vocabulary were the calls of the Grey Butcherbird, Rufous Whistler, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Magpie, Currawong, Crimson Rosella and the King Parrot to name a few.

Fifty six species in all were recorded for the day. Thanks to Wilma for her knowledge of the area and for leading us on a very eventful day.

Arthur Williams.

4. COMING EVENTS.

Sunday 21st November 1982. Field Day to OURIMBAH STATE FOREST.
Meet at Coles Car Park, Belmont at 7 a.m.
Contact: Marion Walker 585942.

Sunday 5th December 1982. Field Day to Barrington Guest House Area.
Meet at the Entrance Gate at 7 a.m.
Contact: Sue Hamonet - 581023.

Monday 6th December 1982 Management Committee Meeting - 8 p.m.
Garden Suburb School.

Wednesday 8th December 1982 Club Night. This will be the final meeting for 1982 - members are asked to bring along their favourite slides.

BARREN GROUNDS BIRD OBSERVATORY.

12 - 14th November 1982 BIRD-IN-THE-HAND Course (Fee \$45.00)
A beginner's week-end, also for those with some experience.
The scientific study of birds by mistnetting and banding.
For further details; apply to:

The Warden,
Barren Grounds Bird Observatory
P.O. Box 3 JAMBEROO N.S.W. 2533.