



Hunter Bird Observers Club

NEWSLETTER No. 6/83 July 1983 (Released monthly at Club Nights)

President: Fred van Gessel

Hon. Secretary: Kay Imrie

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

Annual Subscriptions: Family Rate \$6.00; Single \$5.00; School student \$1.00
(Due on 1st January each year)

Club Badges \$2.50 - available from Treasurer (Ed. Hamonet)

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

Management Committee: 1st Monday of each month (Public holidays
excepted) at Garden Suburb School at 7.30.

1. NOTES FROM THE JUNE MEETING - Wednesday 8th June 1983

a) Attendance - 34

A welcome is extended to new members: David James, John Clulow, Pat Bell
Aileen Black and Steven Bennett.

b) BIRD CALL OF THE EVENING - Jim Imrie

Jim played the calls of the Crested Bellbird (*oreoica gutturalis*) and the
Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus magnirostris*). Needless to say these calls were
unfamiliar to most of those present.

c) BIRD OF THE EVENING - Michael Noonan.

The RED-WINGED PARROT (*Aprosmictus erythropterus*) was the bird chosen by
Michael as his subject for this segment of the programme. Speaking from
personal experience of this bird not only in the field but also as a successful
breeder, Michael was able to pass on some interesting information about this
handsome member of the parrot family. Probably the most fascinating feature
of this bird is its nesting habits. It nests in the hollow trunks of tall
trees; frequently the entrance to the nesting place is in a hollow limb, often
9 metres or more above the cavity itself, which is almost invariably situated
in debris at the bottom of the main trunk. It would be interesting to know
how the parents manage to get their young out. Do they carry them up the
perpendicular walls on their backs or, do the young scramble out themselves?
Thank you Michael for an interesting and informative talk.

d) GUEST SPEAKER - Mr. S. G. (Bill) LANE.

Bill Lane is the President of the Australian Bird Study Association and has
probably banded more birds than any other Australian ornithologist. He and
his wife, Lorraine have made several visits to the islands off the south coast
of Western Australia and it was experiences in this area that he made the
subject of his talk. His reminiscences were illustrated with slides of the
various islands and their feathered inhabitants - some of the shots of the
chicks being quite entrancing. Ted Felton proposed a vote of thanks and we
are greatly indebted to Bill and Lorraine for honouring us with a visit and
giving us a glimpse of their absorbing and at times adventurous activities
associated with the banding of the seabirds of the southern coast of W.A.

2. WALLINGAT STATE FOREST CAMP. - Queen's Birthday week-end 11-13 June 1983.

Camp was set up near the river road close to the western boundary of the forest. However, by mid morning Sunday, we decided to leave having had enough of a nearby group of campers who created quite a disturbance with the noises of a chain saw, fireworks and trail bikes. A few hours were spent in the Seal Rocks area whence we returned to Wallingat Forest in the late afternoon and found another and more peaceful campsite.

The forest has fine stands of Blackbutt, Flooded gum, Tallow-wood, Sydney Bluegum, Brush box, Turpentine and several other species. In the Sugar Creek Flora Reserve, the largest known occurrence of Cabbage Tree Palms in N.S.W. is to be found.

Eight campers, including a visitor from the Central Coast and one day visitor enjoyed a weekend of excellent weather, although the nights were cold (3 degrees one night). Plenty of wood supplied by the Ranger helped to keep us warm in the evenings.

A total of 53 species was recorded over the weekend. The highlight being a sighting of at least 20 Regent Honeyeaters (*Xanthomyza phrygia*) also several Sittellas, (some seen around our campsite); three crested Shrike-tits; numerous Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets and also in the blossom, many Honeyeater - mostly Yellow-faced with White-naped and Eastern Spinebills.

On the way to Seal Rocks Lighthouse, we had an excellent view of two Tawny Frogmouths and in the surrounding heathland, many Honeyeaters - New Holland, White-naped, White-cheeked and Little Wattlebirds.

The only other wildlife seen during the weekend was a Wallaby and two Ring-tailed Possums who visited the campsite for a handout of food. ROSEMARY WAYMARK

3. CLUB PROJECT - BACKYARD SURVEY

During the June meeting, Eva van de Werken , outlined details of the Backyard Survey which we have decided to set up as a Club Project.

The aim of the survey is to ascertain those species resident in the various suburbs and those that pass through in certain months. Members who wish to participate are requested to record each month, the birds seen in or from their own backyards and also to record any behaviour and the weather. Eva has volunteered to collate the information recorded and she would like to receive the reports each Club night. Set out below is a sample Report Sheet:

MONTH: June 1983

Recorder: May OISEAU

Locality: Wallsend

Day: 1 2 3 4 5 6 9 16 17 19 20

Notes:

- a) Only fill in a date for a day when a sighting is made.
- b) If more than one seen of the same species - record number.
- c) Record behaviour; e.g. 'feeding
- d) Record weather
- e) Use abbreviations.
e.g. B.F.C.S. = Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike.

Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Noisy Miner	✓	✓										
Y.F.H.E.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spotted Pard.	✓											
B.F.C.S.	✓			✓								
Pied Curra.		✓										
Silvereye												
Blue Wren												
Spinebill												
Brown Falcon												

Handwritten notes:
 Fine & cool O'cast (near Spotted Pard.)
 Feeding in Cottonwood (near Pied Curra.)
 Fine & mild (near Brown Falcon)
 Feeding on Cedar berries (near Brown Falcon)
 2 (Feeding mate) (near Brown Falcon)

4. FIELD DAY to the NERONG STATE FOREST - 19th June.

Two inches of rain fell on the Friday night; Saturday continued to be wet and as more rain was forecast for Sunday, it was decided to cancel the outing to the Nerong State forest. Sunday lived up to the forecaster's prediction and there was no doubt the right decision has been made. Birding in the rain is a No ! No !

5. LIBRARY ADDITIONS.

Three new volumes have been added to our growing collection of Library books; CROWS OF THE WORLD - kindly donated by Al and Mavis Gillies. AUSTRALIAN WATER BIRDS by Ted Schurman - this is the second book donated by Lynne Millington - thank you Lynne. AUSTRALIAN PARROTS by Forshaw & Cooper - purchased by the Club.

Our Library is being well patronised and it is pleasing to note that few books are returned to the shelves at the end of Club night.

6. IRON RANGE (Cape York) TRIP.

Ten of our members will be travelling to Cairns in August and then flying on to Iron Range in the Cape York Peninsula for ten days birding in that area. Kay and Jim Imrie took off on the 1st of July and intend to do a tour of the Gulf country before linking up with the main party at Townsville.

En route to Cairns, the travellers hope to visit such well known birding localities as Eungella, the Townsville Common, Paluma, Mt. Spec and Mission Beach. After returning from Iron Range a visit is planned for the Atherton Tablelands before returning home in early September.

In addition to Kay and Jim, the following members are involved: Wilma Barden, Bill Cambridge, Charles Mann, Marion and Ray Walker, Eva van de Werken and Sue and Ed Hamonet.

7. ANNUAL MIGRATION - WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES

This 'expedition' is definitely ON and a meeting to firm up details will be held for interested persons after the Club night meeting on 13th July. The party is to leave on Saturday 10th September, returning on 25th September. Anyone requiring further details, please see Jim Perry or Bill Cambridge.

8. SLIDE LIBRARY

The Management Committee has decided to establish a SLIDE LIBRARY - such slides should be of great value for certain aspects of our programme on Club Nights. Donations of slides from members will be appreciated and a volunteer to act as SLIDE LIBRARIAN is being sought.

9. A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA by Graham Pizzey

The first edition of the above book is now out of stock at the Publishers and is virtually unobtainable from booksellers.

A soft cover edition is expected to be available in the next few months. This edition will retail at \$16.95 but should be obtainable with the Club discount from Arthur Warner for \$14.40.

A new hard cover edition, containing new and additional material is expected to be published sometime in 1984 - price at this stage is unknown.

10. WORLD WILDLIFE FUND AUSTRALIA.

This organisation was formed in 1978 to raise funds for a programme of projects for the conservation of endangered species of native Australian wildlife which includes plants and animals.

A number of projects have been completed, some are in progress while others are awaiting funds. Projects which specifically relate to birds are:

a) Completed:

1. A survey of the Orange-bellied parrot - long term the safety of this species is assured.

b) Projects in Progress:

1. To determine ranges and status of Australia's rarest birds.
2. A study of the Grey Swiftlet in N.E. Queensland.
3. Status etc. of the Yellow-rumped Pardalote in W. A.

c) Projects awaiting funds:

1. Status of the Freckled Duck in Eastern Australia
2. Conservation of the Purple-crowned Wren in Northern Australia
3. Ensuring the survival of the Plains Wanderer.

Information, courtesy of Rosemary Waymark.

11. COMING EVENTS

Sunday 24 July - FIELD DAY to ELLALONG

Meet at the Cessnock Swimming Pool at 7 a.m.

Contact person: Wilma Barden

Leader: Ray Walker

Sunday 7th August - HALF Day outing to BLACKBUTT RESERVE

Meet at the Carnley Ave. Entrance at 9 a.m.

Contact: Tom Douglass (54 8778)

Leader: Ray Walker.

Week-end 20/21 August. Our programme has a camp set down for this weekend but as so many of our regular campers will be up north, it has been decided to make this a Sunday outing - more details next month.

Monday 1st August - Management Committee meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 10th August - CLUB NIGHT - Main feature: Nature films.