



Hunter Bird Observers Club

NEWSLETTER No. 1/84 February 1984 (Released monthly at Club Nights)

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Annual Subscriptions: Family Rate, \$6.00; Single \$5.00; School Student
(Due on 1st January each year) \$1.0

Club Badges \$2.50)
Car Stickers \$1.50) Available from Club Treasurer
Handlist of the Birds in N.S.W. \$5.25)

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 7.30 p.m.

1. NOTES FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING. - 14th December 1983.

a) Attendance 35.

b) Bird Call of the Evening - Kay Imrie.

Calls were played of the Yellow-spotted (Lesser Lewin) Honeyeater., the Graceful Honeyeater and the Lewin's Honeyeater. The former two are only found in far North Queensland and were seen and heard frequently by our Iron Range tourists.

c) Bird of the Evening - Ted Felton.

The Yellow-plumed Honeyeater (*Lichenostomus ornatus*) was the subject of Ted's talk.

The bird is found in the southern part of the continent extending from Western N.S.W., north-west Victoria and the southern areas of South Australia and Eastern Australia. Ted had some excellent viewings at Eremophila Park near Waikerie in S.A. In addition to the bright yellow neck plume, (hence the name) it has a whitish strongly streaked breast. The talk was well illustrated with Ted's personal slides.

d) Main Feature - Members' Slides

An excellent variety of slides were shown by various members and provided great entertainment for all present. Those who contributed were Bill Cambridge who had some outstanding shots from the western N.S.W. trip; Ted Felton showed a selection with the most striking being the Crimson Chat complete with nest, eggs and hatchlings; Ted Jones had an interesting group taken on his wanderings around Australia; Charles Mann had some shots of the local Egret colony at Shortland and a few from his trip to North Queensland including a handsome shot of the Macleay Honeyeater; Ray Walker, after several attempts finally showed us a shot of a Fairy Penguin, somehow or other a bikini clad bird of the non-feathered variety seemed to take up most of the other slides.

e) Annual Raffle

As is usual at the last meeting for the year a raffle was conducted to augment Club Funds. Prizes were donated by Dot Bates, Ted Felton, Jim Imrie, Ted Jones and Jim Perry and we thank them for their generosity. Winners were: Bronwyn Taylor Jan Hunter, Alan Raine, Sue Hamonet and Auriol Royds.

2. FIELD DAY to BULGA/WARKWORTH - Saturday 10th December 1983.

An early start was made from Hexham. En route at Mt. Thorley we had a rare sight of a LITTLE GREBE on land. When disturbed, it waddled rather clumsily back into the water.

Near Bulga, we entered bushland in search of the Painted Honeyeater. Many birds were observed. Interesting sightings were White-backed Swallows flying into nesting holes, Striped Honeyeaters vigorously defending a fledgling against an 'inquisitive' Noisy Friarbird and nesting Hooded Robins on one egg. Scarlet Honeyeaters seemed to abound.

Morning tea was delayed this morning (Ed. What sacrilege !) because on the stroke of ten, Jim Perry sighted the Painteds. Jim rounded everyone up while Arthur and Jason kept guard. Our thanks to these three because all of us had a good look at the birds, a pair, which were nest building in a eucalypt. When observed they were flying to and from small dead trees collecting cobwebs for binding their nest. The male was noticeably darker on the head than the female. This sighting made our day.

After lunch we travelled to other places between Warkworth and Mt. Thorley. A few observations were made near water but with the birds generally quiet, we departed for home about 2 p.m. Fifteen attended and 72 species were observed. Jim Imrie.

3. FIELD DAY to RILEY's Island and BOUDDI National Park - Sunday 22nd January 1984.

The field day in January although poorly attended provided an interesting day's outing in some new surroundings.

The weather was cloudy early but cleared to a fine warm day. The party of eight spent the morning in the Bouddi N.P. and the afternoon on Riley's Island thanks to the generosity of John and Jan Booth and their son who provided the boat to ferry us across to the island and back.

The tally of observations for the day was 59 - while lower than our usual totals a fair count giving consideration to the din of cicadas and the heavy usage of the N.P. walking track to the beach. Sue Hamonet.

4. Week-end CAMP to WOKO NATIONAL PARK - 28-30 January 1984.

WOKO 1984 will be long remembered by the twenty three people who attended this camp for the three R's - RAIN, a RAGING RIVER, and exaggerated REPORTS.

Our campers arrived in dribs and drabs between 8.30 a.m. and 8.30 p.m. - some no doubt had held off to see how the weather was going to develop. Saturday was overcast with some showers. Sunday was more of the same thing until Sunday night when the heavens opened and the rain came down by the proverbial bucketful.

About three kilometres south of the campsite, the road crosses the Manning River by a low level bridge. On the Saturday, the river was 18" below the level of the bridge but after Sunday night's downpour it rose alarmingly and crossing same was quite out of the question. The river had developed into a raging torrent and had not only increased its depth but also its width considerably; borne down by the rapidly flowing stream was debris, trees, cattle and logs of all sizes including some which could have been used as powerline poles. Several of these logs piled up and presented an impenetrable barrier on the bridge itself.

Naturally the height of the water and the state of the bridge were the main topics of discussion throughout the day; with many people having to report for work on Tuesday, it became a matter of real concern. In addition to the 23 H.B.O.C. campers there were about 50 others camped in the Park. Almost hourly reports filtered in - the water is 3 metres over the bridge; you won't get out for at least 3 days; the river has gouged a great hole in the approach road on the western side!

4. Woko Camp (Cont)

We treated these reports with scepticism and decided to make our own appreciation of the situation.

After lunch, the river commenced to drop and by 5 p.m. only 15" of water was surging over the bridge. A team of campers waded onto the bridge and with the assistance of a chain saw removed the log jam and a barbed wire fence which had been swept across the roadway of the bridge. The water level continued to drop. At 8 p.m our first vehicle crossed the river and by 8.30 we were all on our way home.

Because of the rain, the overcast conditions and the wet going underfoot and through the forest and bushland, it wasn't ideal for bird watching. However, 100 species were recorded - not quite as many as in 1983 (122) but 12 new ones were added to the 1983 sightings - perhaps the most exciting observation was that of the rare ORIENTAL CUCKOO.

5. Fred Van Gessel

Fred's address for anyone who may be interested is:

46 Humbert St.,
Woodleigh Gardens
DARWIN N.T. 5790

6. COMING EVENTS

Week-end 4/5 February 1984 SUMMER WADER COUNT -Newcastle Area
11/12 Feb. 1984 Summer Wader Count - Port Stephens area.
Co-ordinator for both areas: Jim Perry 432496.

Week-end 25-26 Feb. 1984 CAMP DILGRY RIVER AREA.
Intending campers to rendezvous at the Barrington P.O. (6.6 kms. from Gloucester) at 9.30 a.m.
Latecomers should follow the Scone road from Barrington and watch for the H.B.O.C. signs. Contact person: Sue Hamonet 581023

Sunday 11th March 1984 - HALF DAY to Stockrington
Contact: Ray Walker 581942. Meet at Minmi School at 9 a.m.

Sunday 25th March - FIELD DAY to STANHOPE CREEK
Meet at the OAK, Hexham at 7 a.m. Contact: Jim Perry - 432496

Easter Week-end 20-23 April. ~~CAMP at Mt. Bos (near Wauchope)~~ with the Manning Valley Birdwatchers Club. *6 a.m. with 8/11*

Monday 5th March - Management Committee meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 14th March - CLUB NIGHT.
Main Feature: THE WESTERN N.S.W. TRIP - Bill Cambridge & Jim Perry.

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EXHIBITION OF AUSTRALIAN BIRD PAINTINGS.

This exhibition by Malcolm McNaughton will be open until Monday 13th February at the Cook's Hill Galleries, 67 Bull Street at the following times:

Fridays and Saturdays.....	11.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.
Sundays.....	2.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.
Mondays...	11.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.