



# Hunter Bird Observers Club

NEWSLETTER NO. 1/85. February, 1985. (Released monthly at Club Nights)

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1. NOTES FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING: - 12/12/84.

a) Attendance - an excellent 43.

b) BIRD CALL OF THE EVENING: Jim Imrie

Following Ray Walker's Kingfisher presentation in November, Jim played the call of the northern White-tailed Kingfisher (TANYSIPTERA SYLVIA). The call was harsh and repetitive, not dissimilar from the call of the Sacred Kingfisher which was played for comparison.

c) NEW CLUB LECTERN

Our special thanks to Charles Mann for making our new lectern. Speakers in the future will appreciate this facility.

d) BIRD OF THE EVENING : Ed Hamonet.

Ed christened the lectern by waxing into homily with the lesson from Pizzey about John Gould's discovery in 1839 of the Crimson Chat (EPHETHIANURA TRICOLOR). Ed showed slides indicating red rumps on birds of both sexes and all ages. Other chats were shown along with Red-headed and Scarlet Honeyeaters and Red-capped Robins for comparisons. The Crimson Chat is distributed Australia-wide, west of the Divide, excluding northern and south-western coasts. It inhabits open plains with low scrub, mulga and spinifex. The chat feeds on the ground as it walks. Its flight is strong and bouncy. Breeding may occur up to five times in a season if food is plentiful. Both sexes share all duties during breeding.

We compliment Ed for his well-prepared and researched "lesson".

e) MAIN FEATURE: Members' Night.

Mathew Stephenson presented a display of King Quail - a female and several young, one of which was white. Jim Imrie spoke about red rumps on fledgling White-throated Treecreepers. Wilma Barden confused everyone with a hybrid bird call and then displayed her "bird in a gilded cage". Slides were shown by Michael Noonan, Nigel Walker, Ted Jones, Ray Walker, Bill Cambridge and Arthur Williams.

f) CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Once again the Hon. Treasurer was happy to see our finances receive their annual boost from the Christmas raffle. Thank you to those members who donated the prizes. Winners were Ray Walker, Michael Noonan, Brian Hare and Kay Imrie, who managed to draw out her own ticket. (There were a few murmurs from the audience).

g) SUPPER.

The evening concluded with a social get together and a tasty supper, nicely rounding off our year's activities.

Jim Imrie

2. FIELD DAY- Swan Bay Outing- Sunday 9th December, 1984.

Several adventurous members departed from Hexham for a day which was to become very fine. Our first stop was at the property of Ian and Narelle Cox. Here we saw several honeyeaters as well as a Southern Emu-wren.

Next we called at Tom Price's property. He has created a refuge on his land with animals from Nature Wonderland. In the vicinity of his home he has at least ten aviaries, one tranquil bushwalk - for botanists -, and there are kangaroos running free and even two baby Emus.

The aviaries contained Long-billed Corellas, Black-breasted Button-quail, Superb and Red-winged Parrots, Gang-gang Cockatoos, Little, Scaly-breasted and Rainbow Lorikeets as well as some domestic fowl.

Finally we reached Swan Bay township. We had lunch and then walked up to the mouth of the Karuah River. Here we saw Bar-tailed Godwit, a Pied Oystercatcher and many Silver Gulls. On the way we noticed a back-to-front house.

Some members visited another wildlife refuge but most fatigued members travelled home. The total number of bird species seen was 84.

Mathew Stephenson. Aged 11.

3. FIELD DAY - Flaggy Creek - Glenrock Lagoon. Sunday 20th January 1985.

Sixteen members enjoyed a half day outing to Flaggy Creek on a very pleasant day. Conditions in the area were extremely dry and to begin with the birds were very quiet. As we progressed down the track, which follows the creek, the bird life became more apparent.

Arthur Williams was leading the majority of us and took us off the track, down to the creek, to observe a Black-faced Monarch sitting on a nest. Two eggs were seen with the help of Arthur's mirror when the monarch left the nest. We watched it return a few minutes later. A pair of Rufous Fantails were also in the same area with one young.

Other highlights were a Scaly Thrush, Regent Bowerbirds and a Figbird in a fig tree, which was loaded with fruit and attracting a number of birds. Also seen were several possum nests.

A total of 51 species were recorded for the day and we thank Arthur for all his help and information.

Rosemary Waymark.

3. LONG WEEKEND CAMP. - Rowley's River- January 26th-28th, 1985.

I woke suddenly. An eerie growling noise brings me quickly to my senses. Torch on, check around.....nothing. Time .....2.30am.. Relax. Settle back. The noise again. I freeze, gather my wits, grab torch, another search.....nothing. Unsatisfied I crawl out of my sleeping bag and nervously open the tent. I flash the light in the darkness when.....but let's start at the beginning.

After a long, rough and dusty road I arrived at the campsite. Three tents and three campervans were already installed but devoid of human life. Jim Perry walked in soon after I had started to unpack and

although he had to leave early due to previous commitments was excited about just sighting a Masked Owl. Hopefully a sign of things to come.

Tent up, a quick lunch, then a walk to find my way around. Birds abounded; some I was able to name, many I could not. A swim, dinner and then to evening bird call. Spotted Nightjar, Speckled Monarch and Red-backed Wren (for an elite few) were just a small number of birds mentioned that had been sighted. Later we celebrated Jim Imrie's birthday, much to his surprise.

Joe and Julie Fogarty arrived on Sunday and stayed for lunch. It is with thanks to them that we were able to camp in such beautiful surroundings.

Henry also came to lunch that day, but uninvited. After accepting our offerings and with his hunger still unsatisfied, he proceeded to ransack our campsite and take what he wanted. Not that we felt him bad-mannered or overly greedy but he was rather large and we were all fairly overwhelmed because Henry was a very big goanna.

At bird-call that night Diamond Firetail and a variety of pigeons were mentioned, and then surprise, surprise another party..... Fred van Gessel, who had joined us whilst on holiday from Darwin, is now an Australian citizen.

Monday morning found most of the camp out in search of the elusive Red-backed Wren. I had a long walk, but no luck with the wren. It was far too hot to continue the search for this aloof bird so opted for a swim. Lunch then another assault on the long, rough and dusty road home.

Oh! By the way, I never did discover the source of the strange noises. Probably hot red wine disagreeing with my digestive system!

A great weekend - 112 species were recorded.

Brian Hare.

#### 4. INVITATION.

The H.B.O.C. which is a member of the N.S.W. Bird Atlassers, has received an invitation to attend an Easter Camp 1985 to be held on private property about 93km north of Hillston. The area is mallee country and highlights could include Striated Grasswren, Grey-fronted Honeyeater, Gilberts' Whistler and Mallee Fowl.

The camp will operate from 4th - 10th April. Any member who would like to attend contact Kay Imrie for further details.

#### 5. COMING EVENTS.

WEEKEND 16/17 February. NATIONAL SUMMER WADER COUNT.

SUNDAY 24th February.- Field Day to ALLWORTH.  
Contact: Sue Hamonet. 581023  
Leader : Jim Perry.  
Meet : 6.30 a.m. McDonald's Car Park, HEXHAM.

SUNDAY 24th March. - Field Day to GRAHAMSTOWN DAM.  
Contact ; Wilma Barden. 573928.  
Leader ; Wilma Barden  
Meet : 6.30 a.m. McDonald's Car Park, HEXHAM.

EASTER CAMP: April 5-8. Details in next Newsletter.

SUNDAY 21st April. - Field Day to HEXHAM/MINMI  
Contact ; Kay Imrie. 524524.  
Meet : 7.00 a.m. McDonald's Car Park, HEXHAM.

Monday 4th March. - Management Committee Meeting. Garden Suburb Public School

WEDNESDAY 13th March. - Club Night. Garden Suburb Public School  
7.30 p.m.

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