



# Hunter Bird Observers Club

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at club nights.)

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## 1. NOTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER MEETING 11/9/85.

a) Attendance-45, including four guests, and we welcome as a new member Ron Douglass.

b) Bird Call of the Evening-Presented by Wilma Barden.  
Wilma played and compared the calls of the Black-eared Cuckoo, the Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo and the Shining Bronze-Cuckoo. The former has a mournful descending call, the Horsfield's is similar but shorter and higher pitched and the latter is more or less a reverse of the Horsfield's. Next time we hear them in the field we should'nt have any doubts about which cuckoo it was.

c) Bird of the Evening-Presented by Rosemary Waymark.  
Rosemary chose a bird seen on the recent Northern Territory trip-the Green Pygmy Goose (*Nettapus pulchellus*). As she explained the term "goose" is rather a misnomer as the Pygmy Geese are in fact perching ducks, closely related to the Wood Duck. The name is probably derived from the bird's short, strong bill, -an adaptation to grazing - which resembles the bill of the true geese of the Northern Hemisphere.

d) Scientific Nomenclature-Presented by Ed. Hamonet.  
In a new segment for the club night Ed. gave us an entertaining and informative dissertation on a subject which remains a complete mystery to some people, that of scientific names. Every type of plant or animal that lives or has ever lived is distinguished by a scientific name which is unique to that particular type and, being in Latin transcends all language barriers. The system is called the Binomial System of Nomenclature and was devised by a brilliant Swedish botanist, Carl von Linne (1707-1778). It was so successful that many names which he originally used remain unchanged since he devised them in the 18th. century. He was so keen on the scheme that he even Latinised his own name to Carolus Linnaeus. Thanks to Ed. Hamonet (*Homo sapiens*) for his talk which could become a regular club night feature. Any more budding Latin scholars willing to have a go?

e) Main Feature-Presented by Jim Ralston.  
Many members, not having seen examples of Jim Ralston's work before, were very impressed by the series of slides which he showed this evening. Dating back to the 1960's and all taken around the Hunter region they showed a wide selection of the birds to be found in this area. Jim showed his versatility by not confining himself to one type of setting, but showed birds at the nest, at rest, in flight and some action shots. Many of the photos must have required a great deal of patience and time and we congratulate Jim and thank him for sharing them with us.

## 2. FIELD DAY TO MARTINSVILLE, Sunday 22nd. September.

After poor weather the preceding day most people must have anticipated similar conditions for the Sunday outing to Martinsville. As it turned out those who stayed in bed were the losers and the six people who went along enjoyed perfect conditions for birdwatching. Martinsville Oval was bathed in sunshine and the grass heavy with dew as we made

our first stop. A leisurely stroll around the timbered edges of the park revealed over 50 species. The air was ringing with the calls of the numerous Scarlet Honeyeaters and we got many good views of them. A walk along the lane took our total to over 60 before morning tea was taken in the park. Here we puzzled over a black tail and white rump which was all we could see of a bird poking out of a stick nest up in a nearby tree.

We then moved onto a private property where the house overlooks a magnificent rainforest gully. <sup>3462</sup>Regent Bowerbirds, King Parrots, Crimson Rosellas and more fed in the back garden while a plump Wonga Pigeon strolled to and fro keeping an eye on things.

During lunch a Wood Duck walked in a rather harassed manner across the paddock in front of us closely followed by an Echidna or Spiny Anteater earnestly plodding along. The duck seemed unable to move out of the way - like a rabbit caught in headlights - until it eventually took flight to leave the Anteater to finish his trek and disappear into the bush on the other side of the clearing.

We finished the day off at the Avondale College picnic area where the trees were full of Rainbow and Little Lorrikeets.

All in all a magnificent day out , perfect weather, good birding (76 species) plus a few surprises. That should teach you all to stay in bed.

Nigel Walker.

### 3. COMING EVENTS.

- 5th.-7th. October - Long weekend camp at WOLLAR. Camp fee of \$2 per site, per night will be charged. Route details see Ed. Hamonet.
- SUNDAY <sup>20</sup>~~30~~th. October- Field day to Martins Creek. Meet McDonalds', Hexham, 7am. or on the Gresford road at the Dungog turnoff at 7.45am. Contact- Jim Perry 432496.
- 23rd.-24th. November- Weekend camp at CRAVEN STATE FOREST, approx. 35kms. north of Stroud. Contact- Ed. Hamonet.
- SUNDAY 8th. December- Field day to Bennets Green. Meet car park adjacent Charlestown Library, 7am. Contact- Kay Imrie, 524524.
- MONDAY 4th. November - Management Committee Meeting, Garden Suburb Public School, 7.30pm.
- WEDNESDAY 13th. November- Club Night, Garden Suburb Public School, 7.30pm.

### 4. LIKE GOULD DUST.

Mr. Scott Sandilands became the talk of the antiquarian book world recently when he outbid Mr. Robert Holmes a Court to pay a record \$215,000 for the eight-volume collection of John Gould's "Birds of Australia".

Gould laboured for 20 years to complete the book which was published in London between 1848 and 1869.

Mr. Sandiland plans to break the collection up and offer the 681 plates for sale. They should fetch from \$300 each up to \$5000 for the double plates!