



Hunter Bird Observers Club

NEWSLETTER NO. 11/85 December 1985 (released monthly
at club nights.)

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1. NOTES FROM THE NOVEMBER MEETING 13/11/85.

a) Attendance - 55, including 3 guests attracted no doubt by tonight's main feature presentation.

b) Bird Call of the Evening - Presented by Sue Hamonet.
Quail are usually fairly hard to see except during the few seconds after they burst out from under one's feet with a whirring of wings. One of the more commonly seen ones is the Brown Quail (*Coturnix australis*) which is usually to be found not far from water, preferring dense margins of creeks and swamps. Its whistled call of 'F-weep' or 'Be-quick', rising at the end, was the call played by Sue this evening.

c) Bird of the Evening - Presented by Tom Kendall.
One of the most commonly seen of the mollymawks off the coast of Newcastle by Tom during his outside fishing trips is the Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Diomedea chlororhynchos*). It is also the smallest of the albatross, with a wing span of just over 2 metres. The bill is noticeably slender with a bright yellow line along the upper ridge ending in an orange tip. They breed in summer on many sub-Antarctic islands and are seen off N.S.W. during their winter migration. The name mollymawk comes from the Dutch word 'mallemok' which literally means 'foolish gull'.

d) Scientific Names - Presented by Ed Hamonet.
The family Anatidae consists of swans, geese and ducks, and it was some members of the latter, in the genus *Anas*, which Ed dealt with this evening. *Anas*, Latin for 'a duck', was the name given to this group by Linnaeus and it has remained unchanged ever since. The local members of the genus are:-

<i>Anas superciliosa</i> -	Black Duck - 'superciliosa' means eyebrow.
<i>A. platyrhynchos</i> -	Mallard, an introduced species, 'platus' meaning wide or flat and 'rhynchos', a beak.
<i>A. gibberifrons</i> -	Grey Teal - 'gibberus' means humped and refers to their rather domed heads.
<i>A. castanea</i> -	Chestnut Teal - 'castanea' is Latin for chestnut.
<i>A. rhynchotis</i> -	Shoveller - again from 'rhynchos', drawing attention to the distinctive beak.

Thanks, Ed, for preparing and delivering another interesting talk.

e) Main Feature - Northern Territory Safari - Presented by Jim Imrie.
Jim Imrie presented a programme featuring a large number of slides encompassing the sites, the scenery, and the birds of the safari, which took place between 19th July and 9th August 1985. The routine was to follow through the tour which started and finished at Darwin.

Extensive views of Aboriginal paintings at Obiri Rock (Kakadu) and Hodgson River near Roper Bar were shown, with the latter set being particularly outstanding in colour and form. Beautiful scenery was vividly illustrated in pictures taken by Bill Cambridge, Rosemary Waymark, Kay Imrie, and Ed Hamonet. Kakadu was brilliant, with scenes from Obiri Rock, East Alligator River, Yellow Water, Jim Jim Falls, and Twin Falls. The Roper River was remembered with views from Mataranka, Roper Bar, Urapunga, and Elsey Falls.

The birds were great! New birds such as White-lined, Rufous-throated, Rufous-banded, and Yellow-tinted Honeyeaters, Black-banded, Chestnut-quilled, and Partridge Pigeons, finches (including Gouldian), and Lilac-crowned Wren, to name a few, were featured. Of the 211 birds seen some 80 were shown this evening.

For contributions of slides, gratitude was expressed to the B.O.C. and H.B.O.C. Slide Libraries and members of the safari. In conclusion, Jim paid tribute to the bird-watching talent assembled for the safari. It would have fared well in any company, and it made many of us very envious that we were not able to participate in such an outstanding trip.

Our thanks to Jim for the time and effort spent in preparing such an entertaining presentation.

2. WEEKEND CAMP AT CRAVEN STATE FOREST 24th - 25th November.

On a dark and stormy Friday night the McLauchlans, Margaret and Peter, braved the elements to set up camp at Craven State Forest. Early on Saturday they were joined by the Hamonets who beat the sparrows at their own game. By late morning the birder count reached its total of twelve. A welcome was extended to new member, Doug Field from Merriwa, who was with us for the first time.

Craven proved to be a marvellous area. Seventy-eight species were observed, many of which were prevalent. Golden Whistlers and Brush Cuckoos were calling almost continually. The habitat was varied, and included some rainforest. Spectacled and Black-faced Monarchs, Log-runners and Brush Turkey were seen. At Saturday night's campfire we all heard the White-throated Nightjar calling (most of us for the first time). Earlier, some campers saw them flying in the evening sky. At bed-time a Sooty Owl's piercing whistle was heard.

All considered it was a great weekend. During the day, the camp was generally deserted, as the weather was kind and the birding good. There were no mosquitoes, other people, or noise, and few flies. A few nasties, such as leaches and ticks, were dealt with summarily! Our conclusion: 'We shall return'.

Jim Imrie.

3. NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY.

The Bird Observers' Club, based in Victoria, has very kindly given our club about 60 copies of the journal 'Australian Bird Watcher' to add to our library. They date from 1962 to 1982, with some numbers missing. We are very grateful to Keith Richards, the B.O.C. Treasurer and speaker at our May meeting, for organising the donation.

4. COMING EVENTS.

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| SUNDAY 19th January - | Field day to MORISSET. Meet Coles Car Park, Toronto, 7am. Contact - Sue Hamonet - 581023. |
| 25th - 27th January - | CAMP. - Private property on Chichester River near Chichester Dam. Hot showers, and toilet facilities provided. Fees payable to owner - \$2.50 adults, 50c children per night. Bookings required by 18th January. Contact - Wilma Barden - 573928. |
| SUNDAY 23rd February - | Field day to RHONDDA and STOCKTON BOREHOLE SWAMP. Half day trip. Meet Teralba Caravan park entrance, Anzac Parade, 7am. Contact - Rosemary Waymark - 751819 |
| MONDAY 3rd February - | Management Committee Meeting, G.S.P.S., 7. |
| WEDNESDAY 12th February - | Club night and Annual General Meeting. Garden Suburb Public School, 7.30pm. |