



NEWSLETTER NO. 4/88 MAY 1988
Hunter Bird Observers Club

President: Jim Perry
Secretary: Rosemary Waymark
Correspondence: P.O. Box 24, New Lambton 2305
Telephone enquiries: Wilma Barden 573928
Newsletter Editor: Ruth Parker 295569

1. NOTES FROM APRIL MEETING.

a) ATTENDANCE: 48. Apologies from Auriol Royds and Michael Noonan.

b) SPECIAL MEETING: The Special Meeting advertised in the March Newsletter was then conducted to approve of the Hunter Bird Observers Club becoming incorporated. The following resolutions were carried unanimously:

1. That the Club be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act (1984) as the Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc..
2. That the Secretary be authorised to take the necessary action to apply for incorporation;
3. That the constitution of the H.B.O.C. be repealed at the time of incorporation, and
4. That the rules tabled at this meeting be adopted as the rules of the Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc.

Discussion re family membership and entitlement to one vote was held. The matter was referred to the Management Committee for final decision. The Special Meeting was then closed.

c) BIRD CALL presented by Rosemary Waymark.

The Rainbow Pitta is a colourful, ground-feeding inhabitant of remnants of monsoonal rain forests and scrub and mangroves along rivers on the n.w. coastal edge of the Northern Territory. It is smaller than its cousin, the Noisy Pitta, which lives along our eastern coast, but its strong, whooping call is similar. Easily imitated, the 3-note ululation may be syllabalized as "walk-to-work"; it also makes a sharp 'keow' repeated at intervals.

d) BIRD OF THE EVENING presented by Bevan McGregor.

Striated Heron (Butoroides Striatus), commonly called Mangrove Heron or Mangrove Bittern. As these common names imply, this bird appears to be dependent on mangroves for food, habitat and breeding, and its stance and outline is similar to that of a bittern. Plumage colour distinguishes it from the bittern, being greenish dark grey on back and wings, streaked brown-black and white on throat and chest, with black crown or cap and black crest over nape of neck. Like egrets, the Striated Heron stalks its prey of crabs, frogs, molluscs, fish and insects, pausing with neck retracted and then striking suddenly and rapidly. It is a shy bird and will adopt a cryptic stance when one approaches. It is almost always alone; over the many years Bevan has been observing this bird at Blackalls Bay and Stoney Creek he has only once seen two together. Striated Herons can be found among mangroves at Lemon Tree Passage, Teralba, Buttaba, and Black Neds Bay.

e) MAIN FEATURE: Film on Wild Rivers National Park, Tasmania.

This film was made when bulldozers had started preliminary excavations for the controversial dam on the Franklin River. However, nationwide protest resulted in stopping any further work, and the Franklin remains as we saw it on film, a truly wild river, flowing through a grand sweep of gorges and mountains. Dr. Bob Brown went down the river in a rubber dinghy, a journey which he said changed his life. We saw his moments of danger and peace as he fought through tumbling rapids and floated along halcyon pools. One can only hope that, even if there is little chance of one 'going down the Franklin', this river will forever remain in its pristine state.

2. CAMP AT SMITHS LAKE.

The N.S.W. University Field Station on Smiths Lake was the venue for this year's Anzac weekend camp. The weather was really good, the days warm and sunny and the nights at 2-blanket level. The facilities at camp were good and the presence of an urn for the "cuppa" between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. was appreciated, as was the warmth from a cast iron stove during bird call meeting in the evening.

Banding was demonstrated numerous times by Wyn Filewood as he attended to a variety of birds caught in his nets. The surprising thing to the writer was the apparent docility exhibited by the birds during the operation.

No nocturnal birds were noted, but bats and wallabies were spotted. Finally, a total of 74 bird species were seen during the weekend by the 14 campers and the 6 visitors.

-- Bill and Gillian Knight.

3. PROJECTS:

There are many projects on birds being conducted in Australia presently, and we, as members of bird clubs, have a very important part to play. Without our help, one person has not much hope of discovering all the secrets and wonders of bird life. With this in mind I ask for your help with the following projects:

1. Little Terns are now on the endangered bird list. Information is required on the these questions: Do Little Terns migrate, and, if so, where? Do some populations remain in the same area year-round? Is there more than one sub-species of Little Tern regularly visiting Australia? Are there significant breeding populations in Northern Australia?

2. Little Corellas are to be banded by N.P.W.S. in Quorn and Wilmington areas of S.A. Approx. 1,000 will be banded with blue aluminium wing tags and sprayed on nape and chest with a black dye (Quorn area) and red dye (Wilmington). N.P.W.S. would appreciate help from birdbanders and watchers throughout Australia during 1988.

3. Four types of Egret are being banded at Shortland Wetlands and Seaham. Anyone seeing coloured wing-tags should note sequence of colour and numbers on tags. Also note shape of tag as banding work is currently being done in other States.

4. Old World Warblers such as Clamorous Reed Warbler, Little Grassbird, Tawny Grassbird and any other bird that accidentally flies into Bob Reed's mist net are also being banded on both legs. Colour should be noted, as well as metal band.

PROJECTS contd.

5. Double-banded Plovers are being banded in New Zealand. Look out for these waders and note colour-banding on both legs and position of metal tag on leg.
6. Information is required on Osprey in its southern range, also on any Raptor, e.g. display, breeding behaviour, plumage, moulting or anything else observed.
7. The following surveys are in progress: Birds of Prey, Rolling Bird Survey, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Nest Records. Anyone interested please contact me.

-- Diane Rogers, (049) 761686.

4. Vacancies for Wardens at Barren Grounds Bird Observatory.

Richard and Pat Jordan are leaving Barren Grounds Bird Observatory after six years. There will therefore be vacancies for two Wardens from the beginning of September. Closing date for applications is 31st May. Full details are available from Rosemary Waymark 751819.

5. COMING EVENTS:

SUNDAY 22ND MAY

FIELD DAY TO CLARENCETOWN.

MEET: McDonalds Hexham.

TIME: 7 a.m.

CONTACT: Kay Imrie 524524.

QUEENS BIRTHDAY WEEKEND
CAMP 11-12-13TH JUNE

MUNGHORN GAP NATURE RESERVE

CONTACT & DETAILS: Sue Hamonet 581023.

WEDNESDAY 8TH JUNE

CLUBNIGHT AT SHORTLAND W.CENTRE.

TIME: 7.30

Study night on Raptors.

SUNDAY 19TH JUNE

FIELD DAY TO TOMAGO.

MEET: McDonalds Hexham.

TIME: 7 a.m.

CONTACT: Alan Stuart 528569.

SUNDAY 24TH JULY

FIELD DAY TO MORPETH, BOLWARRA,
WALKA WATER WORKS.

MEET: McDonalds Hexham.

TIME: 7 a.m.

CONTACT: Kay Imrie 524524.

WEEKDAY OUTINGS:

MONDAY 16TH MAY

Grahamstown Dam. Meet S.W.C. 8 a.m.

MONDAY 30TH MAY

Pelaw Main. Meet Kurri Kurri Bowling
Club 8.30 a.m.

THURSDAY 16TH JUNE

Shortland Wetlands Centre 8.30 a.m.

* * * * *