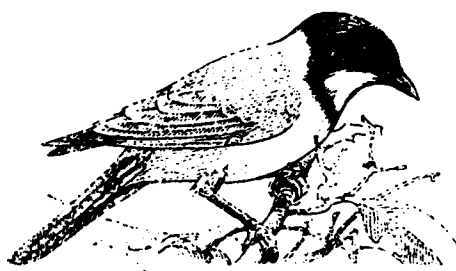


# NEWSLETTER



## Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc.

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Ann Lindsey  
Peter Phillips  
Tom Clarke

*The aims of the club are:*

*To encourage and further the study and conservation of Australian birds and their habitat.*

*To encourage bird observing as a leisure time activity.*

## Bird Watcher's Paradise In No Man's Land.

The highlight of October Club Night was a 'double feature' presentation by Keith Laverick on Birdwatching in South Korea. Keith worked in the capital city, Seoul, for three years from 1989 to 1992 and found that birdwatching in South Korea can be very satisfying.

The passtime is not very well patronised in that country and birdwatching organisations are apparently non-existent. Keith's activities were at times looked upon as eccentric by locals that gave birds and birdlife generally little thought at all.

South Korea shares the majority of its birds with China and Japan and it was a Japanese field guide that Keith found most useful. A Korean field guide could not be purchased and anyway, Keith's Japanese was superior to his Korean. Keith's knowledge of the birds of Eurasia held him in good stead as many examples of those species can be found in South Korea.

Passerines like Great Tit, Tree Sparrow and Greenfinch are common residents. Others like Babax (a babbler type), Azure-winged Magpie

and Common Kingfisher all have close cousins in Europe. And birds like the Drongo and the Broad-billed Roller (Dollarbird) are universal throughout Asia.

Apparently there are 394 bird species recorded in South Korea but only 57 are regarded as residents. The hot, rainy summers in Korea increase the number by 64 while the cool, dry winters attract a further 116 visiting species. Between the seasons a further 157 migrants on passage can be accounted for. The suite of birds is diverse and most types common to Eurasia are represented.

South Korea has a predominantly rugged, mountainous terrain. The principal range is the Taebaek-San Maek, which extends in a generally north-south direction parallel to the east coast. It is virtually impossible to be anywhere in South Korea and not have a portion of these mountains featured in the background. The population of this country is about 45 million and the majority live on the south and south-west coasts. Keith lived with about a quarter of these people in Seoul, the chief industrial centre.

Keith explained how much of the natural countryside had been ravaged as a result of the

To all HBOC members and their families

We Wish You A Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year  
and of course

Happy Bird Watching For 1997

bombing actions during the Korean War. This means that the amount of 'old growth' forest is very scarce. The best areas to be found are those lands that surround the Buddhist temples since they were saved from the conflict. Keith spent a lot of time going to these places but strictly for birdwatching only.

Other mountainous places, especially near rivers and streams proved to be excellent birdwatching sites. A solitary bird, the Brown Dipper can be found in this habitat and it exhibits some interesting behaviour. This bird is noted for its jumping from rock to rock amid stream and for plunging under the water to feed.

An unusual place to go birdwatching but one of the best places in South Korea is the Demilitarised Zone at its northern border. The DMZ is a 4km wide strip that makes its way across the Korean Peninsular and separates North from South. Since no real activity has occurred here since its establishment in 1953 the place has over grown and is essentially a modern wilderness. Limited access is available and the birdwatching rewards are really worthwhile.

Keith made another startling discovery when he tried to get near a beach. Mostly these places are out of bounds and are fenced off - the South is still nervous about troops from the North landing on their beaches. To see shorebirds it is a case of leaving the mainland and travelling to one of the many islands off the west coast. These places have big tides and vast mud flats, ideal for all those waders in breeding plumage as they move through. Keith's favourite island, Kanghwa-Do, is linked to the mainland by road bridge and is easily accessed from Seoul.

The west coast held many pleasures for Keith and the Chinese Egret can be found there. This bird is one of the world's rarest and its last stronghold is in the north east China area. On the west coast of South Korea approximately 50% of the world breeding population hang on in modified wetland areas. Another great sight for Keith was a 10,000 strong breeding population of Baikal Teal on a lake in the south. The male is unmistakable with its striking facial pattern.

Keith's slides also included the Black-faced Spoonbill and the Common Crane. Both these birds are winter visitors and this is the preferred time of year to get out and about in South Korea as the weather is typically fine.

## Obituary Keith Priestley

It is with a great sense of personal loss that I write these words about one of our members, Keith Priestley, who passed away on the 30th October, 1996.

Keith had been a member of the Hunter Bird Observers Club for a number of years but had started to attend meetings on a regular basis only in recent times. His interest in birds, however, spanned his whole lifetime and he had many stories to tell about the birds in the Paterson Valley. Although Keith did not see himself as an expert on avian identity, he was in fact an excellent field observer and we had, from time to time, some incredibly lively discussions about the identity of this or that species.

During 1994 and 1995 I had been running some surveys - in search of the endangered Regent Honeyeater. For the 1995 breeding season we were asked by the national coordinators of the project to switch our activities to the Paterson Valley where there were historical records of this bird. What does all this have to do with Keith?

Well, firstly, as a young man he had actually painted the honeyeater from a specimen taken in the valley. And secondly, our group didn't have many friends in the Paterson Valley and I was aware that the land was mostly privately owned. Keith approached me and said that he may be able to help since he knew a few people up that way. What a marvellous understatement! Keith knows everyone in the Paterson Valley and from that point on, and to my great relief, he became the organiser of these surveys though my name may have appeared in the Newsletter.

With Keith we visited many beautiful properties and often we met the owners. I think I can say that through his efforts members of the Hunter Bird Observers Club have made friends in this area and hopefully his beloved birds will enjoy improved habitats as a result.

Keith will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him and especially by the Regent Honeyeater regulars.

Our sincere sympathy goes to his wife Wendy, his children Debora, Lyndy, Greg and their families and to his brother John, who is also one of our members, and his wife Dorothy.

Ann Lindsey  
President HBOC

# Tactical Blunder Fells The Mighty Thickheads.

Many people think a Twitchathon is merely a birdwatching event aimed at raising money for the conservation of birds. Not so! While the fund raising aspect is undoubtedly an important one the Twitchathon is a precisely planned campaign where the slightest tactical error results in your downfall. For example, do you go to "Site A" to possibly see Purple-toed Parrot and Warty-kneed Warbler or do you go to "Site B" and definitely get Great Crested Gannet? The more pressing issue, however, may be that by going to "Site A" there may be more travelling time involved and, yes, that means less birding time.

This was the exact dilemma that the "Hunter Thickheads" faced on this years RAOU Twitchathon and, yes, it was their downfall!! A tactical error resulted in the "Thickheads" not seeing some rather common birds in the Hunter because of time constraints. The number of species involved corresponds fairly closely to the margin between the winning team "The Grey Toilet Thrushes" and the "Thickheads". A lesson learnt the hard way.

Our preparation was not an easy one. Following our trial run (twelve months earlier) we first lost Jill Warner who was visiting relatives in Western Australia. An elaborate ploy, I think, to avoid taking part this year (Jill, after 29 hours of driving, mistaking the accelerator for the brake is an easy mistake to make). We were then faced with Ann Lindsey having to pull out. The loss of our catering officer was a hard blow, particularly as Ann is the only member of our team that can claim some bona fide twitching experience in her past. After some very hard sell we managed to field a revised "Hunter Thickhead" team of David Geering, Peter MacLauchlan and, a somewhat uncertain, Michael Todd.

The 24 hours of the Twitchathon was your standard twitchathon experience. We missed out on birds seen before the official 4pm start (Red-capped Robin, White-backed Swallow, Collared Sparrowhawk and Channel-billed Cuckoo) but picked up some unexpected ones (Spiney-cheeked Honeyeater and, after three years of only seeing them before the start, Cockatiel). Our usual, top secret haunts yielded their usual birds -

Apostlebird, Turquoise Parrot, Wompoo Fruit-dove, Torresian Crow, Brahminy Kite, Osprey, Azure Kingfisher, Red-backed Fairy-wren and Southern Emu-wren. But we were unable to bask in the satisfaction of getting these birds under our belt as we knew we were pushed for time. Mayhem in the Hunter as we rushed to record Greenshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Golden Plover and Japanese Snipe. We missed out on Mangrove Gerygone, White-fronted Chat, Nankeen Night-heron and Tawny Grassbird but to mention a few.

It was, however, nice to see familiar faces waiting our return at The Wetlands Centre and to exchange tales of woe with the other Twitchathon teams finishing there over a very social barbeque. Our thanks to the members of HBOC who were there to help us commiserate. There's always next year. The tactician is already scheming a new, improved route that will certainly break the 200 barrier. Is starting at Bourke too much driving?

David Geering

## RAOU Action In The Woodlands

Clearing the woodlands in our wheat and sheep belt is affecting up to 8,000 birds every day of the year - up to ten million birds killed or displaced annually.

Our temperate woodlands once covered vast areas, yet today only 15% of these woodlands remain, much of it fragmented and degraded.

More than a quarter of our woodland birds are in decline or threatened.

Uncontrolled clearing of what is left of our precious woodlands continues today in many parts of Australia.

In the last twelve months the RAOU has:

- \* Raised funds for the fencing of vital habitat for the Golden-shouldered Parrot in Queensland and the Grey-crowned Babbler in Victoria.
- \* Identified, mapped, helped fence and re-plant areas critical for the Regent Honeyeater in NSW.
- \* Implemented the Birds on Farms and Tree Hollows research projects across all states.
- \* Co-ordinated surveys for the Swift Parrot and Red-tailed Black Cockatoo.
- \* Made representation to government regarding financial allocations for bird protection and habitat restoration.

**The RAOU can only do this with the help, generosity and goodwill of its supporters - please support the Twitchathon.**

## Grassy Heads Caravan Park Birdo's Mecca.

Caryl and I have recently been camping in the Grassy Heads Reserve. Grassy Heads is situated on the North Coast between Scott's Head and Stuart's Point near Macksville.

What makes this such a great spot for bird watching? Without doubt the answer is the habitat variety, mostly, within easy walking from your camp. There are glorious long beaches, sand dunes across the ancient original mouth of the Macleay River, the mangrove lined sea grass beds of the old river, excellent littoral rainforest, Banksia woodland, the heath covered "grassy headlands" and the wet sclerophyll, rainforest regions of the Way Way State Forest only 5km away.

Some of the highlights of our sojourn were seeing the beach and sand dunes patrolled by a pair of Brahminy Kites magnificent with their white breasts and stunning chestnut wings and backs. When they were not in view, Whistling Kites with their distinctive cry we hear so well at Shortland, and the huge White-bellied Sea Eagle took over their air space.

At the end of the road leading to the Reserve is an interesting dam. Alongside this and way up in a very tall Eucalypt was another raptor family. Two Osprey feeding young occupied two large nests, one parent standing in each nest and taking it in turns to feed the youngsters in one of the nests. Around the dam logs and trees were various Cormorants including four species in the one small area - Little Black, Little Pied, Pied and Great.

On the beach on a stormy day a large flock of Crested and Common Tern waited out the wind and rain.

Around the tent we were entertained by a family of Superb Fairy-wrens. They were feeding dependent young and were so tame that a male and female came into the tent and then could not get out. Caryl actually caught the female in her hand to release it. Although we do not agree with hand feeding birds, we couldn't resist frying cheesy breadcrumbs which the wrens couldn't resist. Almost occupying the same territory were families of Red-backed and Variegated Fairy-wrens. The 'red back' seems to be a misnomer as the colour was a vivid orange. I would be interested if any members know if

these wrens of different species can have overlapping territories as it seemed to us that they did.

One afternoon fourteen Dollarbirds soared and rolled overhead joined from time to time by two metallic sounding Drongos. Obviously some tempting aerial insect feast was there for the taking.

A pair of Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes nested above the tents in a tall Casuarina. The winds were roaring with gusto much of the time and I noticed the sitting bird faced north for the noreasters and south for southerlies. I also think we witnessed a shift change between the pair for their egg warming duties.

Behind our tent and just behind, at about 10m only, a pair of miniature moorehen looking birds went paddling completely unconcerned - a pair of Spotless Crakes.

The Banksias were filled with squarking quarreling Little Wattlebirds and White-cheeked Honeyeaters. The honeyeaters were also the main occupants of the heath headlands and joining with Brown Honeyeaters in the mangroves. The River Mangroves, *Aegiceras corniculatum*, were in full flower - white and fabulously fragrant.

If you visit the area make sure you visit the Rainforest Study building in the adjacent Yarrahappini SRA Environment Centre. The caretaker at the front office is pleased to welcome visitors and give permission for birdwatchers to use the Centre. Standing on the verandah, within my visual field, I could see in one Eucalypt, six White-headed Pigeons and just below them four Bar-shouldered Doves. Nearby an Emerald Dove perched on the frond of a Cabbagetree Palm, *Livingstonia australis*, while on the forest floor below, a Wonga Pigeon pecked amongst the litter. Also in the littoral rainforest we spotted Green Catbird, Lewin's Honeyeater, Eastern Whipbird, the gold and black flash of the Regent Bowerbird, and male and female Satin Bowerbird. We found a Satin's bower very close to the camp - of course decorated with campers blue straws, pegs and odd plastic items. We heard the Wompoo and the next day, having travelled the 5km to the Way Way Forest, we saw this magnificent pigeon which has the perfect descriptive scientific name *Ptilinopus magnificus*.

While walking along the creek under the

Wompoo's perch, Caryl located the burrow of an Azure Kingfisher. This was perfectly hidden under the overhanging root of a Brush Box, *Lophostemon confertus*, only a metre off the dry creek bed. On a revisit we watched the bird leaving and flying to a permanent pool nearby.

Want more - Brown Cuckoo-dove, Rufous Whistler, Spectacled Monarch, Black-faced Monarch, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Figbird, Olive-backed Oriole - ah Paradise!

Travelling home we visited Port Macquarie where I walked the creek mangrove board walk and there, to my complete surprise, was a Barred Cuckoo-shrike whacking, with great gusto, a very long stick insect on a Casuarina branch. This must be about that bird's southern limit.

Hunter Birdos, on your next northern holidays make for Grassy Heads, an ornithologist's dream come true!

Paddy Lightfoot

## Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia

GPO BOX 3428 SYDNEY NSW 2001  
TELEPHONE & FAX (043) 43 4708

The annual **Garden Bird Count** will take place on January 1st, 1997.

The Wild Life Preservation Society asks any interested person to walk around the garden between 7am and 8am recording, not only the kinds of birds they see or hear, but also the numbers present in the garden, or flying over.

Post your list with your address and postcode to WLPS of Australia and enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a copy of the results. These may take a long time to evaluate so do not get disheartened if no immediate reply arrives.

Facts obtained will help our study of urban birdlife.

Vincent Serventy  
President

## Tawny Frogmouth Update

This is the third year we have been visited by a pair of Tawny Frogmouths. We hear their call in the late evenings during the last weeks in August. Then by 5th September each year the female (we presume it is the female) has settled permanently in the nest which is always in the same fork of a stringy bark tree about 12m above the ground.

The male by day is perched in a nearby tree keeping watch, becoming aggressive when Noisy Miners or Pied Currawongs harrass the family. At night he disappears, presumably hunting for food.

By 16th October each year two young are clearly visible - by this time they are quite large.

By 3rd November the two chicks are out of the nest, each with an adult, perched in trees nearby. Within 3 or 4 days the birds have all gone, sometimes to reappear for several days in other parts of the garden. December 18th was the last sighting in 1995.

This year they seem to have left early - we haven't seen them for the last four days. Maybe they are not far away and will visit off and on for a while.

Unfortunately one chick died both in 1994 and 1995 - just before the family left for good. In 1994 one was found dead in the middle of the road; in 1995 remains, mostly feathers were found beneath the trees.

Let's hope they both survive this year. Merry Christmas to everyone.

Barbara & Gary Bean

### NEW MEMBERS

The HBOC extends a very warm welcome to the following new members:

Harry Genders of Edgeworth  
Michael Kearns of Lemon Tree Passage  
Ruth & Paul Kelly of Clarencetown  
Harold Tarrant of Bolwarra  
Sarah Warner of Valentine

we look forward to meeting you at Clubnights and field outings during the new year.

## Fair Weather Birdos Missing at Milbrodale.

Field Outing to Milbrodale  
22nd September 1996

This outing saw only a very poor attendance. Three couples took advantage of the opportunity to camp over the week-end, and although the weather on Saturday deteriorated into showers, some quite good birding was possible during the morning. Storms that night cleared by Sunday morning, when the day-trippers arrived and almost perfect conditions prevailed for the whole day.

In all a total of 72 species was recorded for the outing, somewhat less than we would have expected given the good conditions of the area after satisfying Spring rain. Notably absent were birds of prey and pigeons, and although large numbers of Noisy Friarbirds were using the Box and ironbark blossoms, only very small numbers of other honeyeaters were noted.

Sue Hamonet

## For Hardy, Read Crazy.

Field Outing to Stanhope Creek  
20th October 1996

October is one of my favourite months for birding, and I always expect to produce a respectable list of species at this time of the year, when migrants have returned and breeding activity is well and truly under way. It was rather disappointing therefore when the elements decided to test our resolve on this particular occasion. Heavy overnight rain, and rather disconcerting thunderstorm activity kept all but the very dedicated at home. Only four very hardy (see explanation above) souls ventured forth to defy the weather.

After a brief stop at the Elderslie bridge, we pressed on to our favourite Cranky Corner site, where we spent just a short while birding along the roadway in persistent showers and icy wind before the next heavy downpour with accompanying thunder activity forced the group

to abort the outing.

After a morning tea break, however, the rain ceased momentarily, and the two remaining stalwarts, already about as wet as they could be at that stage decided to chance another sortie along the creekside vegetation. It proved well worth the effort, with the birds also taking advantage of the slight break in the weather, and in all a list of 71 species was recorded.

Sue Hamonet.

## Raptors And Turbine Blades

Research has been initiated to try to overcome the killing of birds of prey by the blades of 7000 wind-powered turbines over 800 square miles on the Altamont Pass in California. Mortality of more than 500 raptors over two years pleases neither conservationists nor the wind-power industry, which commissioned a task force to try to resolve the problem.

It was recommended to paint patterns of stripes across the blades of the turbines, thus creating circular patterns when the blades are in motion, making them more conspicuous. Perches on the cross braces of the turbines were made uncomfortable, to discourage the birds from using them as vantage points, and the local population of Golden Eagles and their prey is being studied, with over thirty birds radio-tagged.

Wind-powered turbines are in place in many countries, including Australia, so this research should be carefully considered by everyone involved in decisions about the siting of such electricity generators.

The Bird Observer - September 1996

HBOC members should be aware that wind-power generation is proposed for the Kooragang Island area.

Articles for our Newsletter are always welcomed.

Closing date for the next issue is 1st February, 1997

Mail to:

Tom Clarke

28 Kokera St, Wallsend 2287

Phone: 513872 (h) 411672 (w)

# Where East Meets West

Field Outing to Munghorn Gap

5th-7th October, 1996

Where can you stroll among grazing Emus and then, within a few metres, observe Superb Lyrebirds and Rock Wallabies? - at Honeyeater Flat Field Study Area at Munghorn Gap. Situated on a saddle right on the crest of the Great Dividing Range, the area has an interesting mix of western slopes and eastern coastal avifaunas.

Munghorn Gap is a Nature Reserve immediately south of the Goulburn River National Park, about 35km northeast of Mudgee. Camp was situated in a valley where grassy flats merged into eucalypt forest. Craggy sandstone ridges surrounding the camp resembled a miniature Bungle Bungle topography.

Having arrived late on Saturday we were green with envy at the evening's bird call when those more dedicated (and more observant) had already totted up an impressive list of sightings. Only late on Monday when everyone else had departed for home did we manage to tick off most of the 96 species seen and heard. We were grateful for the transfer of local knowledge already acquired by those first to arrive, such as where to see the Painted Honeyeater and the Hooded Robin, both first sightings for us.

Conditions for bird observing were far from ideal. Grey, overcast skies with frequent showers persisted for most of the time, only fining up after our departure. However, early evenings around the excellent Ed Hamonet camp fires were spared from precipitation and allowed relaxed bird counts and personal accounts to be aired.

Highlights for us were the discovery of a picturesquely situated Superb Lyrebird's nest (unoccupied) in a cave about 2m off the ground and a Rock Warbler's beautiful nest hanging from the domed roof of a sandstone cave at ground level. Frequent visitations by an adult bird indicated the presence of youngsters. Both male and female Spotted Pardalotes were observed feeding young in their nest burrow. Faint piping calls could be heard from the young for a few seconds after the adults had left.

Mistletoe, and hence Mistletoebirds, were

extremely common as were Superb Fairy-wrens and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. Often seen were Satin Bowerbirds, Common Bronzewing, Dusky Woodswallows, Emus, Brown Treecreepers, friarbirds and White-winged Choughs. No red robins were seen nor the elusive Regent Honeyeater. Wonga Pigeons were often heard calling vigorously from high on surrounding ridges.

Birds of prey were rare and difficult to see in the overcast conditions. However, Brown Falcons were commonly spied in the late afternoon, in some cases carrying prey, perhaps to a nest. Other sightings were of Wedge-tailed Eagles and Nankeen Kestrels.

Nocturnal birds were heard only. The constant low 'oom oom' of the Tawny Frogmouth competed with the mopeke calls of several Boobook Owls. The call of a Powerful Owl and possibly a nightjar sparked the dark.

But what do birdwatchers look for after dark? Frogs of course! At least five species were spotted by homing in on their calls using the crossed torch-beam trick. In addition, we illuminated a pair of Wood Duck, several Long-necked Tortoises and even a crayfish ambling across the grass towards a dam!

Strong winds a few weeks before we arrived hadn't blown the birds away, but an amazing scene of arboreal devastation was visible on the sandstone ridges above the camp site. Dozens of large mature, as well as weaker, already dead trees had been felled with roots ripped out of the ground. Broken branches were hanging like swords of Damocles in the still standing trees. Minutes before we departed, loud cracking sounds heralded the resounding crash of another weakened tree on the slopes just above us. A dramatic finale to a most enjoyable long weekend.

Chris & Liz Herbert

# Holes In The Lake Just Waiting To Be Filled.

Main feature at November Club Night was a glimpse at some of the research work being carried out by Michael Todd with regards to establishing a fauna data base for the Lake Macquarie catchment. Michael's effort is just a part of the picture - LMCC are hoping to map all of the area's biodiversity and other aspects of the nature of the catchment.

Michael has been sifting through loads of data obtained from National Parks and Wildlife Service records, Australian Museum records and, of course, Hunter Bird Observers Club records. Having placed much of this information within a data base he is now in a position to carry out various analytical works to determine trends and other features which tell the Lake Macquarie story with regards to its birdlife.

Michael has mapped all sorts of information onto satellite photos of the catchment and some trends are already quite clear. A great lack of data, for instance, from the hinterland to the west of the lake is evident in most cases. Areas about Mount Sugarloaf and Martinsville appear to have been overlooked when it comes to reporting rates of bird observations. Also, it appears that it has only been in the last ten years that reporting our observations has really started to build. People have in the past had good knowledge of what's about but without keeping proper notes. This means that some older records have a question mark on accuracy, especially to the actual location of the sightings.

Michael was able to map certain species against others with some interesting results. For instance, Channel-billed Cuckoo and Pallid Cuckoo are generally only observed in the northern half of the Lake Macquarie area while their respective host species (Pied Currawong, Australian Magpie and Yellow-faced Honeyeater are widely reported throughout the catchment. White-cheeked Honeyeater are recorded widely, however New Holland Honeyeater and Tawny-crowned Honeyeater appear to be restricted to the coastal areas. This is not surprising but it does confirm some habitat preferences.

Gang-gang Cockatoo can be seen in the Wattagans during winter while the Glossy Black

Cockatoo are widespread outside of winter. Low actual observation numbers for these birds may make some assumptions less reliable. Owls generally are sparsely recorded but widespread over the catchment with Sooty Owl only recorded along the escarpment of the Wattagans.

As well as slogging through dusty data sheets, Michael has been carrying out some interesting fieldwork which adds a bit of life to otherwise tedious endeavour. A bird banding study of Lewin's Rail in Murdering Gully has revealed a good population of this species and is designed to shed some light onto the movements of individuals. Michael has also been patiently studying Spotted Quail-thrush and Painted Button Quail habitat in the Mount Sugarloaf area.

*Bird of the Evening* was a multi-media presentation by Alan Stuart on the interesting and handsome Banded Lapwing (*Vanellus tricolor*). The Banded Lapwing is uncommon in the Hunter region but a regular spring visitor and a joy to find. A couple of rare breeding records (one recent) differs from the information published in the Atlas of Australian Birds.

The Banded Lapwing's liking for open grassy places has led to the majority of their local sightings being near places like Williamtown Airport and Kooragang Island.

The range of this bird over Australia has actually expanded since the turn of the century and a widespread population is now established in Western Australia.

The Banded Lapwing is only about two-thirds the size of its more common relative, the Masked Lapwing (*V. miles*). Its striking appearance about the face with its three colours of black, white and red is a stand-out field marker. In flight, The Banded Lapwing reveals a white bar on its wings that is lacking in the wing pattern of the Masked Lapwing. This feature was illustrated by Alan, who showed a little (but not much) artistic flair with a texta and an overhead slide.

Banded Lapwings are regarded as nomadic and usually occur in drier areas with little cover. They tend to breed in localised colonies and breeding usually follows rains.

Other aspects of the Banded Lapwing's biology are common with the Masked Lapwing in that they nest on the ground and use broken-wing display to divert attention from eggs or nestlings.



# OBSERVATIONS FROM OCTOBER MEETING

|     |     |                                    |      |                                |                  |
|-----|-----|------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Jul | 2   | Peregrine Falcon                   | 2    | 10km. West of Gloucester       | T.Tasoulis       |
| Sep |     | Red-browed Treecreeper             | 2    | Dilgry Circle, Barrington Tops | T.Tasoulis       |
| Sep | 6   | White-breasted Woodswallow         | 10   | Steelworks Golf Club           | I.Hamilton       |
|     | 14  | White-throated Gerygone            |      | Steelworks Golf Club           | I.Hamilton       |
|     | 17  | Channel-billed Cuckoo              |      | New Lambton Heights            | I.Hamilton       |
|     | 23  | Black-faced Monarch                | 1    | New Lambton Heights            | M.Hamilton       |
|     | 23  | White-cheeked Honeyeater           | 4    | Metford T.A.F.E.               | P. Durie         |
|     | 23  | Scarlet Honeyeater                 | 1    | Metford T.A.F.E.               | P. Durie         |
|     | 27  | Common Koel                        | 1    | Buttaba                        | B.Kelly          |
|     | 27  | Common Koel                        | 1    | New Lambton                    | A. Stuart        |
|     | 29  | Dollarbird                         | 2    | Buttaba                        | B. Kelly         |
|     | 29  | Sacred Kingfisher                  |      | New Lambton Heights            | M. & I.Hamilton  |
|     | 29  | Red Wattlebird                     | 6    | Warners Bay                    | R. Walker        |
|     | 30  | Channel-billed Cuckoo              | 2    | New Lambton                    | A. Stuart        |
|     | 30  | Grey Goshawk                       | 1    | New Lambton Heights            | M. & I. Hamilton |
|     | 30  | Royal Spoonbill                    | 1    | North Creek, Warners Bay       | R. Walker        |
|     | 30  | Figbird                            | 10+  | South Creek, Warners Bay       | R. Walker        |
|     | 30  | Dollarbird                         | 1    | Lemon Tree Passage             | R. Smith         |
| Oct | 1   | Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo       | 3    | Hillsborough                   | R. Walker        |
|     | 1   | Dollarbird                         |      | New Lambton Heights            | M. & I. Hamilton |
|     | 1   | Channel-billed Cuckoo              | 2    | Woodberry                      | R. Smith         |
|     | 2   | Common Koel                        | 1    | Woodberry                      | R. Smith         |
|     | 2   | Golden Whistler                    | 1    | Woodberry                      | R. Smith         |
|     | 2   | Shining Bronze-cuckoo              | 1    | Shortland Wetlands             | R. Walker        |
|     | 2   | Black-faced Monarch                | 2    | Shortland Wetlands             | R. Walker        |
|     | 3-8 | White-winged Triller               | 3    | Bolwarra, Walka, Paterson      | H. Tarrant       |
|     | 3   | Dollarbird                         | 1+   | New Lambton                    | A. Stuart        |
|     | 4   | Pheasant Coucal                    | 1    | Tanilba Bay                    | M. Blanch        |
|     | 4   | Tawny Frogmouth                    | 1    | Oyster Cove                    | M. Blanch        |
|     | 4   | Pied Oystercatcher                 | 5    | Oyster Cove                    | M. Blanch        |
|     | 5   | Bush Stone-curlew [heard calling]] |      | Tanilba Bay                    | M. Blanch        |
|     | 6   | Leaden Flycatcher                  | Pair | Walka Water Works              | H. Tarrant       |
|     | 8   | Dollarbird                         | 2    | Toronto                        | R. Walker        |
|     | 8   | White-throated Gerygone            | 1    | Toronto                        | R. Walker        |
|     | 8   | Sacred Kingfisher                  | 1    | Toronto                        | R. Walker        |
|     | 8   | White-backed Swallow               | 4    | Arrowfield Stud                | P. Alexander     |
|     | 8   | Rainbow Bee-eater                  | 4    | Arrowfield Stud                | P. Alexander     |
|     | 9   | White-backed Swallow               | 2    | Arrowfield Stud                | P. Alexander     |
|     | 9   | Rufous Fantail                     | 2    | Newcastle University           | H. Tarrant       |
|     | 12  | Pied Oystercatcher                 | 11   | Oyster Cove                    | M. Blanch        |

# OBSERVATIONS FROM NOVEMBER CLUB NIGHT

|         |    |                       |         |                        |           |
|---------|----|-----------------------|---------|------------------------|-----------|
| Aug     | 20 | Grey-crowned Babbler  | 1       | Beresfield             | D.Biddle  |
|         | 13 | Pallid Cuckoo         | 2       | Beresfield Golf Course | D.Biddle  |
|         | 20 | Grey-crowned Babbler  | 1       | Beresfield Golf Course | D.Biddle  |
| Sep     | 20 | Channel-billed Cuckoo | 1       | Beresfield Golf Course | D.Biddle  |
|         | 24 | Channel-billed Cuckoo | 1       | Newcastle University   | D.Biddle  |
| Sep     |    | Magpie [Nesting]      | several | Bolton Point           | S.Eagles  |
| Sep     |    | Satin Bowerbird       |         | Bolton Point           | S.Eagles  |
|         |    | Olive-backed Oriole   | 1       | Bolton Point           | S.Eagles  |
|         |    | Dollarbird            | 1       | Bolton Point           | S.Eagles  |
| Oct     |    | Striated Heron        | 1       | Buttaba                | R.Waymark |
| Oct     |    | Channel-billed Cuckoo | 1       | Rathmines              | R.Waymark |
| Oct/Nov |    | Crested Pigeon        | 2       | Buttaba                | R.Waymark |
| Oct     |    | Channel-billed Cuckoo | 3       | Bolton Point           | S.Eagles  |
| Oct     |    | Common Koel           | 2       | Bolton Point           | S.Eagles  |

|        |                              |      |                            |                 |
|--------|------------------------------|------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Oct    | Eastern Whipbird             | 1    | Marmong Point              | D.Kibble        |
| Oct 1  | Brown Cuckoo-dove            | 1    | New Lambton Heights        | M.Hamilton      |
| Oct 1  | Bar-shouldered Dove          | 1    | New Lambton Heights        | M.Hamilton      |
| 1      | Dollarbird                   | 2    | Jewell's                   | K.Laverick      |
| 1      | Common Koel                  | 1    | Jewells                    | K.Laverick      |
| 1      | Channel-billed Cuckoo        | 1    | Jewells                    | K.Laverick      |
| 2      | Superb Fairy-wren            | 2    | Woodberry                  | J.Smith         |
| 1-4    | White-headed Pigeon          | 5    | New Lambton Heights        | M.Hamilton      |
| 1-4    | Chestnut-breasted Mannikin   | 13   | New Lambton Heights        | M.Hamilton      |
| 5      | Variegated Fairy-wren        | 3    | New Lambton Heights        | M.Hamilton      |
| 5      | Dollarbird                   | 4    | Mirrabooka                 | G.McCulloch     |
| 6      | Pacific Baza [heard only]    | 1    | New Lambton Heights        | M.Hamilton      |
| 7      | Red-winged Parrot            | 1    | Turrill [N.E. of Ulan]     | S.Hamonet       |
| 12     | Dollarbird                   | 2    | Buttaba                    | R.Waymark       |
| 12     | Sacred Kingfisher            | 1    | Buttaba                    | R.Waymark       |
| 12     | Common Koel                  | 2    | Buttaba                    | R.Waymark       |
| 17     | Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo | 25+  | Dora Creek                 | D.Biddle        |
| 22     | Scaly-breasted Lorikeet      | 10+  | Buttaba                    | B.Kelly         |
| 27     | Eastern Reef Egret           | 1    | Catherine Hill Bay         | Matthew Hamonet |
| 31     | Eastern Whipbird             | 2    | Toronto Wetland [Day St.]  | P.Durie         |
| Nov    | Australian King Parrot       | 1    | Merewether Heights         | K.Woods         |
| Nov 1  | Tawny Frogmouth              | 2    | Fishing Point              | Matthew Hamonet |
| 1      | Superb Fairy-wren            | 6    | Woodberry                  | J.Smith         |
| 6      | Rainbow Lorikeet             | 15+  | Mirrabooka                 | G.McCulloch     |
| 6      | White-headed Pigeon          | 1    | Bolwarra                   | H.Tarrant       |
| No v 1 | Common Koel                  | Pair | Toronto                    | P.Durie         |
| 3      | Whistling Kite               | 10   | Dora Creek                 | D.Kibble        |
| 3      | Striated Heron               | 3    | Dora Creek                 | D.Kibble        |
| 3      | Rufous Night Heron           | 1    | Cooranbong/Dora Creek      | D.Kibble        |
| 3      | Little Lorikeet              | 20   | Cooranbong/Dora Creek      | D.Kibble        |
| 10     | Great Crested Grebe          | 2    | Walka Water Works          | H.Tarrant       |
| 10     | Pacific Baza                 | 1    | Carey Bay                  | L.Herbert       |
| 10     | Channel-billed Cuckoo        | 3    | Carey Bay                  | L.Herbert       |
| 10     | White-cheeked Honeyeater     | 1    | Woodberry                  | J.Smith         |
| 10     | White-breasted Sea-eagle     | 2    | Hunter River at Kooragang  | D.Biddle        |
| 10     | Striated Heron               | 1    | Hunter River at Kooragang  | D.Biddle        |
| 13     | Dollarbird                   | 8    | Carey Bay                  | L.Herbert       |
| 13     | White-faced Heron 2+ 3fy]    | 5    | Learmonth Park, Hamilton   | K.Imrie         |
| 13     | White-throated Needletail    | 40+  | Jewells                    | K.Laverick      |
| Nov 11 | Pacific Baza                 | 1    | Rankin Park                | J.Stephenson    |
| 13     | Tawny Frogmouth [2 + 2 yng]  | 4    | Rankin Park                | J.Stephenson    |
| 13     | Red Wattlebird               | 6+   | The Junction Public School | S.Hamonet       |
| 13     | Little Wattlebird            | 6+   | The Junction Public School | S.Hamonet       |
| Oct    | Sacred Kingfisher            | 1-3  | Seaham to Dungog           | J.Smith         |
| 27     | Eastern Reef Egret           | 1    | Catherine Hill Bay         | Matthew Hamonet |
| 31     | Dollarbird                   | 1-3  | Seaham to Dungog           | J.Smith         |
| 31     | Brown Falcon                 | 1-2  | Nelsons Plains Rd. Hinton  | J.Smith         |
| Nov 6  | Barn Owl                     | 1    | Sandgate                   | D.Biddle        |
| Nov 8  | Pallid Cuckoo                | 2    | Beresfield Golf Course     | D.Biddle        |
| 8      | Grey-crowned Babbler nb      | 1    | Beresfield Golf Course     | D.Biddle        |
| 11     | Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo | 3    | Dora Creek                 | D.Biddle        |

Observations in boldface are of Category 3 birds. Unusual record report required.

## Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting of the Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc. to be held at the Shortland Wetlands Centre on 12th February 1997 commencing at 7:30pm.

Business of the meeting: Confirmation of minutes of 1996 AGM  
Annual Report Including Financial Report  
Election of Office Bearers (see separate notice)  
Filling of other positions  
General Business

The AGM will be followed by the February Club Night.

Peter Phillips. Public Officer.

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### Election of HBOC Office Bearers for 1997

Nominations are called for the following positions for 1997:

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Four (4) Ordinary Members of the Management Committee.

Nominations shall be made in writing and signed by two members of the Club and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate. Written nominations shall be delivered to the Secretary by 1st February 1997.

If insufficient written nominations are received by 1st February 1997, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations shall then be received at the AGM.

Peter Phillips. Public Officer.

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### Form Of Appointment Of Proxy

Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc.  
(Incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984)

I, .....(full name)  
of .....  
.....(address)

being a member of the Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc.

hereby appoint .....(full name of proxy)  
of .....  
.....(address)

being a member of that Club, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Club to be held on the 12th February 1997 and at any adjournment of that meeting.

## Coming Events

Please check with the contact person for each outing in case of changed details or suitability of site for the camp or field day.

|                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Sunday 19th January     | Field Day:<br>Meet:<br><br>Leader:                                    | Kooragang Island<br>"Big Pond" on Cormorant Road, K.I.<br>6:30am<br>Tom Clarke                      513872 |
| Tuesday 4th February    | Midweek Outing:<br>Meet:<br>Contact:                                  | Morpeth<br>Corner Swan St & Bridge at 8:00am<br>Max Blanch                      611655                     |
| Saturday 8th February   | Regent Honeyeater Survey - Paterson River Valley<br>Meet:<br>Contact: | Tucker Park, Paterson                      6:30am<br>Ann Lindsey                      512008               |
| Wednesday 12th February | Clubnight:<br>Main feature:   | Shortland Wetlands Centre 7:30pm<br>Annual General Meeting.  |
| Sunday 23rd February    | Field Day:<br>Meet:<br>Contact:                                       | Barrington House<br>McDonald's Raymond Terrace 6:30am<br>Rowley Smith                      641389          |

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