

NEWSLETTER

Hunter Bird Observers Club Inc.

P.O. Box 24, New Lambton, N.S.W. 2305

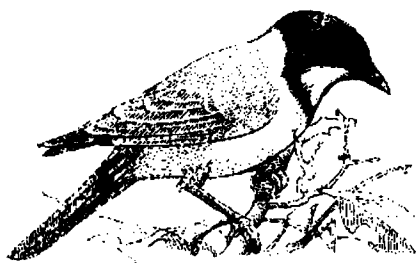
Telephone: (02) 4958 5942

<http://users.hunterlink.net.au/hboc/home.htm>

President: Liz Crawford

Secretary: Tom Clarke

Newsletter Editor: Peter Phillips



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

New Members

Hunter Bird Observers Club welcomes the following new members

Errol Burley of Singleton
Jenny and Malcolm Causley of Singleton Heights
Paul Dixon of Waratah West
Sue and Bob George of Sedgefield
Geoff McFarlane of Newcastle
Saraya Pascalls of Merewether
Christine Phelps of Wybong
Helen and Phillip Thompson of Wangi Wangi
Merelyn Tolmie of Singleton

Membership Fees

HBOC Annual Membership fees are \$22 Family or Single and \$3 for Juniors.
Fees are due 1 January each year.

Newsletter Deadline.

Closing Date for the October/November edition is 27 September.
Newsletter articles are always welcome.

Contact details. Peter Phillips, Editor. 34 McIntyre Street Cardiff 2285.
Tel: 02 49569090, Fax: 02 4954 7118. email: juniper@hunterlink.net.au

AWARD OF FELLOW OF RAOU TO DR. MIKE NEWMAN.

Bird Australia (BA) was founded as the Royal Australasian Ornithological Union (RAOU) in 1901. It is the oldest national conservation organisation in Australia and is dedicated to the study and conservation of native birds and their habitats.

On the 31st of May at the AGM in Hobart, Mike Newman, a member of HBOC, was made a Fellow of the RAOU in recognition of his fantastic contribution to ornithology. The award of Fellow recognises distinguished service to ornithology and is the highest award available to both professionals and amateurs. Only fifteen people at any one time are recognised as Fellows: at present there are nine. Parts of the citation read out at the meeting follow:

Dr Mike Newman has served ornithology in many ways including field work, research, conservation and through official positions.

Mike served on the Council of Birds Australia from 1982 to 1988 and was Vice President from 1986-1988. He returned to Council in 1999 and remains a Councillor today. He served on our Research Committee for eleven years from 1989 until 2000, many of those as Chair of the Committee.

He is a passionate believer in Birds Australia as an association of members who take part in projects and that passion is matched by his own personal participation in those projects, including both Atlases, the Nest Record Scheme and the Australian Bird Count.

He has been active in personal fieldwork adding to our knowledge base to support conservation. He is committed to ensuring that the results of field work by birdwatchers gets published and has shown time and time again that he is ready to put in his own time to help them do so.

Mike himself has published extensively. The Bibliography of Ornithology in Tasmania 1950-1993 (Lord) for example, lists 50 published articles either by Mike alone or in conjunction with colleagues. These include publications in EMU. The range of topics covered include the Eastern Curlew, Fairy Wrens, Long-toed Stint, Whiskered Tern, woodswallows, Hooded Plover and of course, his beloved Pied Oystercatchers.

He became an inaugural member of the Bird Observers Association of Tasmania and was editor of the first seven Tasmanian Bird Reports from 1971-1977.

From 1977 to 1981 Mike became the Tasmanian Regional Organiser for the first national atlas of Australian Birds. He worked hard on the RAOU Field Atlas and, supported by a small group of assistants, also helped to compile Tasmanian data for the Historical Atlas.

The power of cooperative atlassing excited him, highlighting as it did the important role of amateur bird observers. He became a strong advocate of atlassing and its value and contribution to environmental monitoring and scientific knowledge. His ideas and insight in this area are shown in a thoughtful article he wrote in 1983 for the Tasmanian Bird Report in which he stated that the RAOU Field Atlas is "a powerful tool because the data are an index of the collective experience of many bird watchers" and "are available to all ornithologists"

It is therefore no accident that during the 1990s he was instrumental in organising and lobbying for funds to support two later projects, the second Atlas of Australian Birds and The Seabird Atlas of South Eastern Australia. He also took a key role in organising a study of seabirds and marine pollution in Tasmania.

HBOC acknowledges and thanks Mike for his lifetime of work on behalf of birds and congratulates him on his well deserved award.

DONATION

3

The Club wishes to thank Jenny Meynell, our long time active member and Ellalong contact for her generous donation of \$200.

RE: COMMON KOELS

Request for more information.

In our previous Newsletter, Philip Howard of Jewells wrote an excellent article on his experience with Common Koels. The implication was that Australian Magpies acted as hosts to Koels.

Allan Morris wishes to point out that, in the Hunter and on the Central Coast, Common Koel hosts are usually Red Wattlebirds, Little Wattlebirds, Noisy Friarbirds and sometimes Olive backed Orioles, Figbirds and occasionally Magpie Larks. (sometimes Magpies act as hosts to Channel Billed Cuckoos) Allan is unaware of the Magpie – Koel connection and would be most interested to receive confirmation of this relationship. amorris@ceinternet.com.au.

JUDITH COOK

It is with a sense of shock and deep sadness that we inform club members of the death of member Judith Cook on 7 July 2003 after a brief illness. As noted in the April/May Newsletter, her husband Jim died in February this year. Jude and Jim were keen birdwatchers and club members with a real love of the bush. They will be greatly missed by those who knew them. We extend our sympathy to their son and family.

CLUB OUTINGS AND CAMPS

Tuesday 3rd June 2003

Woods Point & Hospital Grounds, Morisset.

We started our morning walk at Pourmalong Creek along the track that leads to Woods Point. An Osprey was seen flying not far from its nest. Then we sighted bowerbirds, mistletoebirds, Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-Thrush, Choughs, Fantail Cuckoo, Royal Spoonbill, Great and Pied Cormorants and Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flew overhead.

After morning tea at the lake foreshore reserve we proceeded towards the western edge of the Hospital grounds near the train line where the regent honeyeaters were sighted last year. Unfortunately we did not see any this time, however there were many Noisy Friarbirds, Wattlebirds, White-naped, Yellow-faced, White-cheeked and Lewins Honeyeaters plus Jacky Winters, Golden Whistler and a Rose Robin. Flying high were three Wedge-tailed Eagles and two White-bellied Sea Eagles flew low over the treetops. A total of 71 species were recorded.

Val Moon.

Sunday 13 July 2003

Lostock Dam – Singleton Bird Observers

Eight people attended and we discovered that this place has enormous potential!! Abundance of cuckoo species, obviously wintering over here. Not all could be logged as it was very hard to work out different call sequences and then identify the bird in dark shady casuarinas. There is a rainforest belt along the creek, which is quite walkable, a large area of grassy paddock and in the dam area, open water and eucalypts. I camped from Friday until Tuesday. I am sure due to my lack of knowledge of calls, I missed lots of species. Recommend another visit, perhaps in summer with some more HBOC experts in attendance. 51 species identified.

Diane Lamb.

Tuesday 15th July 2003
Bangalay Reserve

4

***Tom's terrific then treacherous Tuesday trek
terns tacky. Tony tells tremendous tale.***

An intrepid band of 7 (Tom, Max, Keith, Robert and Margaret, Neville and Anthony) set out at 8am in cold breezy conditions. Pre-morning tea, we inspected the area in from the Pacific Highway. We were aware that much Landcare work is being undertaken and noticed an apparent "scorched earth" treatment of one area (tall trees only left standing: little undergrowth) { I found out later that this had been carried out by council workers helping Landcare !!}

In our first session, we saw and heard plenty of bell miners, wattlebirds, several beautiful variegated wrens, male and female (one male sat on a branch in the sun for us to observe his chestnut saddle), a beautifully coloured crested shrike tit and more.

The road noise was heavy so we decided to have a civilised morning tea at the top part of the reserve – very pleasant in the sun by this stage.

Then the fun. This being Tom's childhood stomping ground, we were completely (and willingly) in his hands. First of all we (he) sighted what we thought was a dove. After much deliberation , he decided it was a "bloody....." We are still waiting for the name. You'll have to ask him.

Then the simple plan. Walk down the hill, across the creek, up the other side, along the ridge, down and across to the cars. Could take an hour or so but definitely worth it. Sounds great – everyone was for it.

Out of the sparser tall gums into the creek and more dense undergrowth. Lots of honeyeaters. Up the other side and then a beautiful sight - 5 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos sitting in gums close to our track. We watched then for quite a while until I got my camera out – you guessed it, they flew (just like the sea eagle at Max's)

Then IT happened. After a bit more decisive walking along a sort of track, we decided to stop in a dead halt and " find ourselves" NO, we were not lost – Tom definitely knew the way. Well, he did when he was a kid and things like that don't change do they (even if these particular tracks haven't been used for yonks).

For 45 minutes to an hour, we needed team attitude. Which way will we head and everyone pointed in a different direction. Hhhmmm?. Tom, after a reconnoitre trip, came back and sensibly suggested we find the creek and head back along it till we found our path (the one we didn't find on the way in)

Along newly hewn track, over and under slippery, wet fallen trees, through lantana clumps, avoiding nasty prickly vines – all the while, at this stage not giving a thingo about birds – even the bloody bell miners we could still hear.

Eventually got onto our track and back to the cars – where we had an impromptu lunch and discussion.

It was an unexpected event and not one we would want with a bigger group – but it was sort of exciting. Should we strike a medal?

On the way, we had also seen white-throated treecreepers, Lewins honeyeaters, Golden Whistlers and Yellow-faced honeyeaters among others. We also heard about 5 Whipbirds reverberating around us at different times in the clear air. And, of course, the constant PING, PING of Bell Miners.

All in all, different. But Tom, some of our members are getting on, just a bit. A few of us were lucky Robert had a small bottle of water. I won't mention I had a full packet of jelly beans in my backpack which I forgot. They would have tasted so good.

Anthony Gooden

WAITUI CAMP 7th to 9th June 2003

June long weekend we spent a very relaxing time at Ann Mannion's place on the Waitui Road via Hannam Vale. The Stewarts River area is largely a rural setting and the last property up the valley before you get into the Comboyne State Forest is the Mannion block. This is the place where Laughing Kookaburra herald the appearance of the morning sun over the distant ridge and the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos perform a final flyover as they head for their roost in the wooded hills behind, just before it gets dark each evening.

In between times of course there are plenty of other great birdwatching opportunities. For those who don't mind getting up early and bracing themselves against the chill (after all it was winter) a walk down the stream could produce a Logrunner without much trouble. Bit of a problem actually seeing any though, as they inevitably go quiet on you just as you're getting close. That's when you start to feel the cold and doubts about your state of mind creep in again.

But you don't have to be mad. Others may choose to hang around the camp and enjoy the morning foraging of Regent Bowerbird from the comfort of the breakfast table with a nice cup of tea to warm the cockles of your heart. So how good is that?!

You can walk as far as you like up the forest road or just around the property and eventually you will see the Green Catbird, Satin Bowerbird, Figbird, Topknot Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo Dove or Australian King Parrot. These birds come and go all day. But you will need to go searching in secret corners to find Yellow-throated Scrubwren, Eastern yellow Robin, Crested Shrike Tit, or Shining Bronze Cuckoo.

It was a pity really that so few of our members took the opportunity to attend. Can you believe only eight HBOC and two Manning Birdos made up the smallest camp I've ever been on.

This fact did not detract at all from the birding and our little group worked well as we searched a couple of local dams for waterfowl etc. One bird in particular prompted plenty of discussion as to its identification – the biggest ugliest, non-descript I've ever seen floating about on a pond. The general consensus was that we had some hybrid form of Mallard and most likely it was a female. To back up one of our assumptions we did find Pacific Black Duck with orange feet indicating some Mallard influence.

The most prolific species on any dam was the Hardhead and out in the paddocks were heaps of Cattle Egret. A closer inspection of any paddock bordered by trees would reveal Red-browed Finch, Silveryeye and an occasional Restless Flycatcher.

Now we didn't have the traditional camp fire but a lively get-together (happy hour) each evening indoors was most enjoyable. Add to that the luxury of a hot shower and I reckon we had it made.

Tom Clarke.

Mapping The Genetics of Australian Owls

Les Christides (of Christides and Boles) Head of Science at Museum Victoria has a project to determine the distribution, patterns of genetic and biological variation of Australian Owls. Greater understanding of these seldom seen birds is useful in planning conservation efforts.

Through Australian Geographic he is asking that owl feathers from dead owls be sent to the Museum. The DNA from these specimens will be analysed (as will Museum and other samples). Feathers should be sent to Museum Victoria Owl Project, Department of Sciences GPO Box 666E, Melbourne Vic 3001.

Australian Geographic is selling an Owl identification kit through AG shops (proceeds to the study) for those uncertain which Owl they have found. This has the potential to be a great community project. Now you know what to do with the next Owl road kill you find.

Woodland Birds at Tomalpin Field Outing. 20 July 2003

6.

Tomalpin is in the news a fair bit these days but what do we know about the place? Not that much I feel. The outing to Tomalpin proved to be a bit of an eye opener for me as a local birdwatcher. Andrew Zoneff filled in as guest leader for the day and managed to find lots of real good things to see and admire

Tomalpin is largely an area of continuous bush lying between the townships of Kurri Kurri, Abermain Neath and Kearsley. It is a combination of State Forest, National Park, vacant Crown land and freehold land mostly owned by Coal & Allied. In the centre of this area is Mount Tomalpin. Andrew led our group of 17 birdwatchers around the Abermain end of the area just off Hebburn Road. This is a place where Andrew has spent a lifetime of birding and is currently Crown Reserve Land and freehold.

The first place we explored looked like poor habitat indeed with little understory to speak of, but Andrew insists it is regularly used by Chestnut-rumped Heathwren. The tree tops, however, were the domain of nectivores today and we all had fun identifying White-naped, Black-chinned and Brown-headed Honeyeaters. These birds dominated the canopy but were also found down low at times. One great find was the nest of a Yellow-tufted Honeyeater complete with three sepia blotched eggs. This nest, amazingly, was built in the fork of a fallen twig that lay in the tangle almost on the ground at the base of a sapling.

Then there were the robins. Brilliant views of Scarlet and Rose Robins possibly were the highlight of the day for most observers. One particular patch of bushland seemed to be preferred and the thought of getting the fold-up chair and spending the rest of the day seated was very tempting. This hot-spot was also producing Buff-rumped Thornbill and Weebill so with Honeyeaters constantly above the place was crawling with good woodland birds.

Fleeting glimpses only of Brown Treecreeper and Spotted Quail Thrush were not so satisfying for birdwatchers but surely indicate the value of the habitat. It is nothing but bad news that the controversial proposed access road cut right through all this. Andrew kindly pointed out the surveyors tape indicating the route. The most unfortunate thing is that the best habitat we explored today appears to lie within the area earmarked for rezoning to allow the construction of the Tomalpin Industrial Estate.

There is obviously more to Tomalpin than at the Abermain end and HBOC needs to organise more outings to other parts in the future. Another great attraction out there is the Neath Hotel and its friendly publican. Andrew will testify to the great value of the \$5 lunch and I can recommend a particular beer on tap

Tom Clarke.

WALKA WATER WORKS Tuesday 4th March 2003

This Report was initially submitted for a the June/July edition and inadvertently omitted.

At 7.30am on a cool overcast morning 22 people (20 members and 2 visitors) gathered for a look around this excellent birding spot. Conditions were very pleasant for walking around and the light was good. Towards the end of the morning the clouds began to lift and it became quite warm, though not unpleasantly so.

Starting off clockwise along the Lake Trail we soon encountered a flock of European Goldfinches including several juveniles. Whilst an exotic, they still caused considerable excitement within the group, due in no small part to their beautiful colouring and pleasant song.

As we worked our way round the dam, we saw many of the usual Hunter water birds including all three Grebes, various ducks including Musk and Pink Eared, Darters, Nankeen Night Heron and various cormorants and egrets. There was no sign of the Little Bittern and Lewins Rail which had been seen there in the previous few weeks.

(Walka Water Works Outing –cont'd) 7.

No crakes were seen – in the words of one wit it was a rather Crakeless Spot on the day. In this regard, we probably would have had more luck with a smaller group and more time just sitting and waiting.

Other birds seen at various places along the way, included Grey and Pied Butcherbirds, Yellow and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Shining Bronze Cuckoo and White-throated Gerygone. Parrots were well represented with Sulphur Crested Cockato. Little Corella, Galah, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet. Eastern Rosella and Red Rumped Parrot. Only three Honeyeaters were identified – Red Wattlebird, Yellow-faced Honeyeater and the ubiquitous Noisy Miner.

At about 10am, after completing the water circuit, we returned for morning tea. There awaited the highlight of the day - a great view of an adult Peregrine sitting on top of the chimney, then in the trees behind the main building.

After morning tea we headed away from the water, following the Bush Trail. Not a lot of small birds, but we did get a good look at a perched Collared Sparrowhawk and a group of White-winged Choughs.

We arrived back at base at about 11.30am, bringing to an end a very pleasant morning's birding, with a total of 68 species.

Nick Livanos.

Cumberland Bird Observers Club present
The Inaugural Annual Bird Week Lecture

OLYMPIANS OF THE WETLANDS
"Conserving migratory shorebirds in a resource –hungry world." By Mike Barter, past Chairman of the Australasian Wader Studies Group.

Tuesday 14th October. 7.00pm at Sydney Olympic Park Cost \$15. (\$12 concession)
Tel: 02 9714 7509 for bookings
after 1st September. 2003

BIRDS AUSTRALIA

Congress and Campout
Coonabarabran 6-12 September 2003

Closing Date for Registration 22 August 2003
Registration Forms available from Secretary or at Club Nights.

A great fun event. Inexpensive, lots of interesting and stimulating speakers and optional field trips to the National Park, the Pilliga and Macquarie Marshes .

Australasian Shorebird Conference
ANU Canberra 13 to 15 December 2003

"Status and Conservation of shorebirds in the East Asian –Australasian Flyway"

Information and expressions of interest
pstraw@optusnet.com.au or
Phone 02 9597 7765

FILM REVIEW by Peter Phillips

During the school holidays I saw the film Travelling Birds at a Sydney Cinema (it is at several Sydney venues). I thoroughly recommend it. It covers the extraordinary journeys of bird life migration. The cast list includes Puffins from Iceland, Cranes in Japan, Geese across New York City, Ibis in Vietnam, Bald Eagles in Alaska, Andean Condors, Swans in France (Camargue) and Flamingos in Kenya.

Almost as interesting as the birds is the technology used to film over three years. The shots are not due to special effects but reflect the cameraman using balloons, ultra lights and other techniques for "real" shots.

The documentary was originally produced in French which means the film is mercifully light on commentary – the occasional subtitle – so you can watch the pictures in awed silence.

GOULD LEAGUE BIRD STUDY CAMP

GRENFELL: 30 September to 9 October.

Limited to 50 campers. Special invitation to those with children as the Club seeks to encourage a love and knowledge of Australia's birds and other wildlife amongst the young.

Information: Ann Lindsey Tel: 4951 2008 or The Organiser. John Seale, 12, Ti-Tree Road, Sandy Beach NSW 2456.
email: johnsealeoz@yahoo.com.

DROUGHT IN THE HUNTER

In times of drought many bird species are forced to head where water still exists, particularly for breeding purposes. While the Hunter River itself can cease to be a visible asset, the country round about has artificial waters serving various purposes (domestic water supply and irrigation, sewage ponds, farm dams.) Down below is an abundance of water for irrigation, and there are many wetlands from Maitland east as we meet the first tidal reaches.

Some species head here from drier regions. The passage through the divide into the Hunter region is no real barrier. To the north of Maitland the Barringtons rise to 1585 metres; to the south west the hills get to a peak of 1274 metres in the Wollemi NP. Yet follow the Hunter and Goulburn Rivers and you can get well west of 150'E at a height of less than 200 metres, roughly in a straight line between Bathurst and Inverell. The road west through Merriwa stays below 500 metres with cleared land affording a route for open country birds.

While many species mainly found west of the divide appear here regularly, both Pied and Black Honeyeaters are newcomers. Red-backed Kingfisher (near Denman) made another addition to the Hunter list.

White-browed and Masked Woodswallows were found in large flocks. Easterly bird movements appear to have involved all sizes from Western Gerygones and Buff-rumped Thornbills, both of which I found more often and nearly as far east as Seaham, to Emus.

While a few Brown Songlarks and Singing Bushlarks can occasionally be tracked down in our south west in normal conditions these species have been found along with more numerous Rufous Songlarks in locations between Maitland and Newcastle this year, moving into irrigated flood plain areas or close to drying wetlands. Irrigation areas fared well with Stubble Quail heard early on a dull morning in thicker low growth.

Their audible presence attracted species that prey on ground feeding birds including Black Falcons near Morpeth (which may if I am right have raised an immature) and widespread Spotted Harriers.

Drying wetlands produced an influx of species such as Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Yellow-billed Spoonbills and Whiskered Terns. While the Black-tailed Native Hen has been around for a couple of years now, it may have settled here and there.

There have been plenty of crake and rail sightings at the margins of progressively more permanent waters. Banded and Lewin's Rail, Spotted, Spotless and Baillon's Crake, were all found at Maitland's Walka Water Works, a haunt of the hundreds of Pink-eared Ducks that flocked to the Hunter. More unusual Duck reports include Freckled, Blue-Billed (f) Australian Shelduck and Cotton Pygmy Goose.

It was an interesting spring and summer in the Hunter but let us not forget that it was caused by considerable disruption to the birds themselves.

Harold Tarrant

July 2003 Postscript (to Drought story)

By the end of June the east of the region seems to have settled down to normal - less exciting but as things should be. There are sightings of Black Kites being reported around Maitland tip, but maybe we are simply on their itinerary now. Further west a Spotted Bowerbird has been reported at Merriwa and Black Falcons can still be found. It was already June when I stopped to inspect a bird perched on power lines near Sandy Hollow and was greeted by the song of Rufous Songlarks from two directions. I made sure I saw the plumage patterning and orange rump just in case there was an argument but I've no idea whether these birds were late or early.

Clearly there is still some confusion among the birds.

Harold Tarrant

A version of this article was first published in the June 2003 Edition of the Cumberland Bird Observers Club Newsletter.

Allan Morris, who has excellent knowledge of historical bird sightings, made the following comments in response to the CBOC article.

Red-backed Kingfishers were observed in the Hunter in the early 1970's and there is a pattern of this species coming to the coast in drought.

The Black Honeyeater is not new to the region. It was seen by A.J.Keast at Wallsend in 1945!

The Western Gerygone was found nesting at Belford SF as long ago as 1959 and have been sighted at various Hunter locations since then.

Allan is particularly disappointed by the lack of Grey Falcons in the Hunter this drought (one was shot at Bulga in 1897) Oh, well, there's always another drought to look forward to.

9.

BIRDS AUSTRALIA TWITCHATHON 25/26 October

It's the 10th NSW & ACT Twitchathon this year. So don't chill out this winter and forget the birds. Warm yourself up for another fantastic twitchathon. Just imagine how many species you could find and how many \$\$ you could raise if you plan your Twitchathon team's campaign now. Maps? Notebooks? Literature on the best birding spots? Where to find the quickest MacDonald's breakfast?

For those of you with no idea what a twitchathon is, it's a real fun activity. It's so simple. Find as many species of birds as possible between 25/26 October 2003 participating within a team category and/or raise the most money by sponsorship and a great prize could arrive in your mail box. And above all, you really will have helped to make a difference for our birds,

The tenth Twitchathon project assists the birds of the Mighty Murray Catchment. The fund raising target is \$12,500.

The project aims to measure the success of Greening Australia's NSW Murray Catchment Fencing Incentives Program in terms of benefits to woodland birds. Sites that were fenced and protected in the last 2-7 years will be surveyed for bird species looking at how size shape, age of tree plantings, tree species and shrub layer affect the responses of woodland birds. We should be able to recommend how best to conduct future fencing programs and give essential feedback to participating landowners. Coordinated by a Project Officer, local conservation or bird groups will continue to monitor these sites to gauge long-term bird responses. There is a great potential for the production of community education material based around the findings of this project.

Contact: Frances Czwalinna, Birds Australia
Tel/Fax : 02 9872 4185
Email secretarybird@bigpond.com.
Website: <http://snag.birdsaustralia.com.au>

The following is a brief account of some twitching sojourns undertaken in 2002 by Richard Baxter and others.

January 2002 was a slow month with no rare birds seen anywhere near Newcastle. There was a report of a Macaroni Penguin in Tassie, but it didn't hang around for long and the Long-toed Stint in Melbourne was of no interest as I had seen several in Derby WA only a few weeks before. The same applied to the Red-necked Phalarope at Geelong; I had seen 53 of these at Port Hedland Salt works only 2 months prior, which allowed me to stay home. A couple of HBOC members travelled to Uralla to see an Oriental Pratincole which stayed for a few weeks, but I had already seen these up north. I did plenty of local birding around the Hunter Region but January ended without a single trip to see anything new to add to my OZ list.

The first big twitch of 2002 came halfway through February. One Saturday night, I had an email from Mike Carter and it read something like : "There has been a Kentish Plover seen at Old Bar near Taree, must dash" This meant that Mike was already on his way from Melbourne and that I had some quick planning to do. The bird was found by Chris Herbert and Phil Straw on a wader survey a few days earlier. The only other Kentish Plover ever seen in Australia was in Darwin - Nov.1988. My first call was to Alan Stuart, who had not yet heard the news and also commenced to make plans for a trip the following morning.

With low tide at Old Bar at 7.30am I departed Newcastle at 5am and arrived a couple of hours later. With three kids, 2 bins and a scope in tow we headed off across the sandbars in search of the Kentish Plover. After a few hundred metres we came across a dejected looking Tony Palliser who had searched unsuccessfully the previous afternoon and since dawn. He had to be back in Sydney, so his search was unfortunately over.

After two hours of searching we also had failed to find it, but at 9am the cavalry arrived in the form of five other HBOC members, Alan Stuart, Ann Lindsey, Liz Crawford, Peter Phillips and Steve Roderick. We could now search in numbers and surely with 9 of us looking we couldn't miss it. How wrong I was. We searched every sandbar in the area and by lunchtime the tide was in and the sandbars had all disappeared, without any trace of a Kentish Plover.

After lunch we decided to check the beach for a possible high tide roost and after walking several hot and windy kilometres, we finally found our bird. Alan Stuart actually found it. His exact words were " I've got something over here with a white collar. Yes, **Kentish Plover!** Another major rarity for the Hunter Region and my first twitch of 2002.

I didn't have to wait long for the next. It was only a week later that a Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* was found at Motts Beach near Marlo in Eastern Victoria. Marlo is at the mouth of the Snowy River, which these days should be called the Snowy Stream as only a trickle of water reaches the coast. It had been seen a couple of days earlier and first identified as a Little Ringed Plover. Mike Carter went out to check that it wasn't a Semi-Palmated Plover, only to discover it was neither! On the 9th March Phil Hansboro, my son Damian and I left Newcastle at 4.30am and travelled down to Marlo via Cooma and Bombala, arriving 1pm.

In company with Rohan Clark from Melbourne we set off across the river and sandbars in search of the second rare plover of the year. After half an hour of Hooded Plovers and waders I was beginning to worry. But I had nothing to worry about, as within another 10 minutes we had our scopes on an immaculate **Ringed Plover**. A tick for all of us and my second new plover in three weeks.

We arrived home at 1am tired but ready for the next twitch. We had to wait slightly less than a month for the next major rarity to arrive, in the form of a Laughing Gull on Bribie Island in Queensland. (Continued)

After work on 5th April Phil Hansboro, Damian Baxter and I headed north up the New England Highway to Bribie Island. About 10pm we had dinner in Scone and after a 6am stop just north of Brisbane for breakfast we were on the island by 6.30am.

A quick scan of the foreshore revealed a large flock of Silver Gulls feeding about 50 metres offshore and several birds roosting on a sandspit 500 metres further along the waterfront. A search through the gulls revealed nothing other than Silver Gulls and we headed for the spit. Fifteen minutes later the flock of gulls came within 20 metres of shore and right in the middle of them was our **Laughing Gull**. It flew with the Silver Gulls for another half an hour giving us great views before heading up river on its own and into the distance. We waited another 15 minutes, but it never returned. If we had been one hour later we would have missed it! It was now about 8.am and with the Laughing Gull successfully located we decided to head home.

I had heard from Sean Dooley that he had seen a Wandering Tattler in full breeding plumage at Hastings Point, which is just south of Kingscliff only a few days before, so we detoured on our way home with a new target in our sights. We had only been out of the car 10 minutes and had located a spectacular summer plumaged **Wandering Tattler** complete with heavily barred underparts and content to feed on the rocks directly in front of us. We arrived home about 9pm that night very happy with our Laughing Gull and Wandering Tattler and wondering where our next twitch would take us.

The next rarity to arrive in OZ was the Hudsonian Godwit in South Australia. It stayed for about 2 weeks and I could not get down there as I was busy at work. Not long after the Hudwit there was a report of a White Wagtail at Nareen Lakes near Walgett in NSW. This was an uncertain sighting but made somewhat believable by a previous record of a White Wagtail about 5 years ago in the same place.

I was ready to drive up with two other birders when at the last minute I rang the Narrabri NPWS and they informed me that the park was closed for three days due to aerial pig shooting. Unfortunately after three days my travel window had closed and I could no longer go and by this time the original sighting was about three weeks old. Three HBOC members travelled via Nareen Lakes a week later and visited the site and only found White-fronted Chats.

The only interesting rarities near Newcastle in the next few months were a few sightings of a Northern Shoveler between Ulmarra and Clarencetown. This bird had twice previously eluded me at MacLean and Werribee and again disappeared from Kempsey the day before I could make the trip. The Northern Shoveler appears to be a bird that doesn't hang around in one spot for long. If it's sighted you virtually have to be there that day or it will be gone the next morning. (except for the Werribee bird in late 2001)

On the evening of 2 July Alan Stuart posted an email stating that a club member had seen a Northern Shoveler on Ash Island in the deep pond over the railway line. The next morning at 9am I was standing on the bank of the pond peering through a wet scope in the pouring rain desperately trying to turn teals into shovelers, but alas there was no Northern Shoveler in sight.

After two hours I was cold and drenched and totally unsuccessful. This bird had eluded me again. On the way out I checked the swan pond without success and decided to head home. Nearly off the island I stopped at the last pond just before the bunkers and with my window wound up due to the rain I looked desperately across the pond and there, miraculously, in the middle of my bins was an immaculate male **Northern Shoveler**. Unbelievable! I'm also pretty sure it had a partner and of course the next day it was gone, which was disappointing for the carloads of Sydneysiders that travelled up on the Saturday.

After this I was sure that luck was now on my side and two days later a Franklins Gull turned up in Salisbury, South Australia. I made a dash for the airport and caught the next Virgin flight to Adelaide and was at the Salisbury North oval at 6am the next morning. The gull had turned up at this oval for the last 3 mornings with a flock of seagulls and fed for about 30 minutes before flying off to who knows where. At 6am, three of us, Phil. Maher, Tony Russell and I stood and waited and waited and waited. Yes, you guessed it, the gull didn't show.

I spent the rest of the day driving 400km around every likely spot near Adelaide where there would be seagulls and didn't find it. Decision time! Do I stay another night in Adelaide and hope that it shows up again in the morning OR has it gone for good and I may as well go home? I opted for going home and by 10pm I was back in Newcastle with nothing to show for my trip. Did the gull turn up again next morning? Yes, of course it did. AHHHHH

Two weeks later I was on another plane, this time to Saibai and Boigu Islands in the Torres Strait, between Cape York and New Guinea. These islands are part of Australia but only 4km and 6km from mainland New Guinea. My targets here were Singing Starling and Collared Imperial Pigeon and any other rare birds we might find. My birding partners were Mike Carter, Tony Palisser and others from Sydney and Melbourne.

We found the **Singing Starling** on our first afternoon on Boigu Island. The starling is best seen of an afternoon around the only township on the island and during the day disappears into the island interior. There were hundreds of Pied Imperial Pigeons constantly flying over the island and occasionally a darker pigeon too. These were **Collared Imperial Pigeons** and it took 4 days to see one in good enough light to happily identify it.

After a couple of days on Boigu we headed off to Saibai Island. My first target was Papuan Flowerpecker and I had reliable information that the place to find it was at the cemetery in the early morning. So the next morning I spent 2 hours searching Saibai cemetery for a bird about 10cm long. At 8.20am the Papuan Flowerpecker arrived and perched 20m up a tree, staying for about 1 minute before being joined by a female and departing into the rainforest. The following afternoon on a trip up a mangrove creek on the other side of the island we had good views of a **Gurney's Eagle** soaring with Whistling Kites over tall mangroves.

Things were pretty quiet over the next month so Phil Hansboro and I started planning our next target species. We had our sights on Cook's Petrel and Mottled Petrel. Both these seabirds are extremely rare in Australia and in fact there has never been a confirmed sighting of Cook's Petrel in Australia. Our plan was to wait until mid October when both these birds migrate from the Northern hemisphere down to sub antarctic waters. The problem was that these birds generally migrate down through the Central Pacific and only occasionally get blown over near Australia.

On the 12th October we chartered our pelagic boat to go out to 80km offshore from Newcastle. This is significantly further than any other East Coast pelagic trips go and our only real chance of our two target species. It was perfect pelagic weather, calm waters, bright and sunny. We had seen storm petrels four kinds of Albatross, prions and White-headed Petrel and by mid afternoon we were ready to go home when Matt Hughes yelled from top deck "What's this!" We all spun round and there it was, flying past the back of the boat and up the side before returning back along the same path. A Cook's Petrel! I quickly took 13 photos of it as it leisurely sailed past before continuing its journey southward. This was the first ever confirmed sighting of Cook's Petrel in Australia and the first time one had ever been photographed in Australia; our plan was a brilliant success. (continued)

A later examination of the photos and some help from some New Zealand seabird experts revealed that the bird was in fact the much rarer **Pycroft's Petrel**.

Our next twitch was for the Canada Goose at Shoalhaven Heads near Nowra. Myself, Phil Hansboro and Damian Baxter set off from Newcastle at 0030 hours on the 28th October. After picking up Dion Hobcroft in Sydney we made it to the caravan park at Shoalhaven Heads at 0400. At 0600 we found the Canada Goose following a brief search. There was no apparent damage to either wing tip and there was no ring on the right leg and probably no ring on the left. The bird was consistent with the subspecies *maxima*, which is the common subspecies in New Zealand.

The Canada Goose was previously on the Australian list as a result of vagrants from New Zealand previously occurring at Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands. The south east coast of NSW would be the most likely location for a mainland migrant from New Zealand. Feral Canada Geese in the UK frequently undertake moult migration. Taking all of these factors into consideration along with the observation that the bird is of the most appropriate subspecies for a vagrant strongly suggests that this bird is an excellent candidate for the first genuine mainland vagrant Canada Goose from New Zealand.

Later in the year a Blue and White Flycatcher visited Broome Bird Observatory for a few days and an Isabelline Wheatear was seen at Mount Carbine (FNQ) but unfortunately I was very busy trying to finish off my new house and couldn't get away.

But there's always 2003.

Richard Baxter

BLACK FALCON BLUES

I had become separated from the rest of the Wybong atlassing team, and had a walk down to the end of our host's property.

The raptor flew down and perched in a tree on the adjacent property. Though it shifted its position a little, particularly when receiving the unwelcome attention of magpies or pied butcherbirds, all that I had to go on to start with was size, a fairly long tail, trousers and back plumage. A turn of the head revealed a raptor's beak and the impression of some indistinct markings that would have been incompatible with a Peregrine.

Grey back plumage. Hardly a grey goshawk, for it was too deep a grey and a grey falcon shouldn't be that dark either. Besides the wingtips were no darker than the rest and the tail was rather long. My best guess at that stage was an adult male brown goshawk, thinking it about the right depth of grey. But I felt uncomfortable with such an identification, so I got up to the fence, sat down and waited. After all, the moment that a raptor takes off can be the key time for identification: flight pattern is really important.

Eventually the mobbing birds shifted it, so that it flew round in a wide circle a couple of times, but still returned. As it left the perch or returned to it its flight did not immediately strike me as wrong for a brown goshawk and the long tail agreed, but at times the bird went into glides causing it to display elegantly tapered wings, held flat or very slightly drooped. That could only be a Falcon. Though the back plumage was not dark enough to have alerted me sooner, the primary candidate must now be a Black Falcon.

I didn't get any clear impression of colour on the underside, suggesting that this was fairly dark too as long as I could trust the light, which I thought fairly good. One more onslaught from mobbing birds, and the raptor flew a little further away at a leisurely pace, confirming the flight patterns so far observed. (continued)

I scribbled "Bl.Falc". on my list and walked a hundred metres, past a white-necked Heron on a dam, looked to my right into the adjacent property again and there in a dead tree the raptor was perched. Surely the same one.

Slowly my confidence became shaken. First of all there was a fair bit of leg showing beneath the trousers. Then, when the bird turned its face it looked to have the Brown Falcon 's double cheek mark. When it flew (this time disturbed by Ravens) the brown underside was typical of a brown falcon and the wings were held upward in a shallow V. Clearly this was a brown Falcon.

Perhaps I had been wrong. I crossed out "Bl Falc" and changed the entry to "Br Falc", as the raptor settled in a dead tree beyond the opposite boundary still having to cope with the attention of Ravens. But then I thought again. I had been quite sure of the shape and flight pattern that I had originally observed, was fairly confident of the legs and quite sure that the bird had been at best brownish on the back without what I'd call a true brown. There must have been two birds. I restored "Bl Falc" now in addition to "Br.Falc"

Obligingly, with the brown falcon still in sight, the original raptor reappeared and settled in a convenient tree in this very property. Checking every ten metres or so as not to miss the best view , I walked towards it at a slight angle. Now I was able to check off the details: pale chin, but very dark sooty grey underparts below it; slight pale cheek patch behind a suggestion of a single mark down from the front of the eye, blue eye ring and an impression of blue-grey from the beak. The legs were feathered down to the perch itself, except that it seemed to be holding a pale foot up a little.

No, that was just a bit of the branch. The ravens came a disturbed it, but I had all I wanted, so I decided I'd better go and alert the rest, who should be eating lunch by now, as it had only flown a little way into the original property. As I walked back three quarters of an hour after first sighting it, the bird obligingly set about circling

overhead, not too high, and everybody had by this time gathered to watch, thus ensuring that I didn't need to fill out any forms

The story illustrates just how annoying Black Falcons can be to identify at least with the certainty needed to write a good report. This one, at the grey end of the possible plumage spectrum, was easier than the true dark brown birds. I perhaps feel totally sure of about 25% of my suspected black falcon sightings, and assuming others have the same experience, this may be resulting in under-reporting and a low approval rate.

One of the troubles is becoming preoccupied with the field mark that one cannot see , because the bird is at the wrong angle, or partly obscured by a power pole and forgetting to go through the list of field marks in a systematic fashion. Another problem is not being called upon to make the identification often enough. A good suggestion would be to closely observe the commoner brown falcon when one see it, so as to instinctively feel something is different when the Black Falcon comes along and to be able to work out what the difference is. Obviously, to be able to see both birds at once is a rare bonus.

Harold Tarrant.

Companions Wanted.

My son Nicholas and I are going to Gluepot Station and other nearby places with a local guide – Bob Goodfellow from 13 to 17 October. Cost at \$670 per head ex-Berri includes meals and shearers quarters style accommodation.

Bob still has room for one or two more in his 4WD at this price and I can send you a copy of the itinerary by email, mail or fax. Or call me on 02 4956 9090.

Likely birds include Black-eared Miner, Redstart, Orange and Crimson Chat, Striated Grasswren, Red-lored and Gilberts Whistler, Malleefowl and other Mallee specialists.

Peter Phillips.

MEMBERS TRAVELS (1)

A Fax from the Archer River Roadhouse in Farthest North Queensland.

Today we started heading south from "The Tip" of Cape York and we are now camped on Cockatoo Creek on the old Telegraph Line. Lots of Sulphur Crested Cockatoos career around the treetops squawking. Squadrons of Rainbow Lorikeets whizz through at regular intervals. A solitary Graceful Honeyeater (diminutive version of the Lewins Honeyeater) calls " chip...chip" as it explores gums and paperbarks for insects while Torresian Crows call desultorily in the background.

It is wonderful having birds as a focus while travelling- it hones your appreciation of different types of vegetation and sharpens your curiosity at each new location. They provide exciting surprises too – like the double eyed Fig Parrots we found in a small fig tree when we stopped to look at a pile of black algae coated granite boulders called Black Mountain south of Cooktown. And binoculars expand your world too – we saw lots of crocodiles loafing like dead logs around the far sides of lagoons in Lakefield National Park, simply because we were scanning for birds. People without binoculars didn't see them.

Twitching takes hold of you too – it's a bit of a challenge to see how many new species you can add to your "list". Travelling from the Hunter to Far North Queensland makes you aware of sub-species too. An obvious one is the humble Brush Turkey (campground gleaners in North Qld) which has a purple-tinged white collar at the base of its red neck in North Queensland, instead of the yellow collar of its southern counterpart.

Birds in rainforest at Iron Range National Park were often difficult to see, especially the Magnificent Riflebirds. However, Fred Van Gessell's tapes of bird calls tuned us in to various calls and with time and persistence we tracked down most of the 15 sought-after species in this delightful environment.

Although it is the Dry Season there are plenty of passing showers to keep the rainforest at Iron Range moist. The vegetation is fantastic with lots of different fruiting trees and loads of epiphytes.

Apart from the rainforest at Iron Range, Cape York has miles of open woodlands, areas of swamps and billabongs, special grassy plains and gallery rainforest along rivers and creeks especially in Lakefield National Park. Along the coast are mangroves and broad mudflats – plenty of variety to explore.

Our next destination is Mungkan Kaanju National Park about halfway down Cape York. We're still chasing the Bar-breasted Honeyeater (among others) so we'll be targeting paperbarks along watercourses hoping to find it.

In between birds are seemingly endless stretches of corrugations and some interesting creek crossings. We'll never complain about roads in the Hunter again.

Happy birding
Liz Crawford and Chris Herbert.

MEMBERS TRAVELS (2)

John Goswell spent some time at the Easter/Anzac period in Western Queensland. He discovered a Farmstay property called Bowra where the hosts, Ian and Julie McLaren, are keen and knowledgeable birdwatchers.

The 40,000 acre property is 17km North East of Cunnamulla and has camping sites and renovated shearers quarters.

John says the birds are beaut and likely to be even better in Spring. The parrots included red-winged, blue-winged, Bourke's mulga, Australian ringneck and blue bonnet and there is a good chance of Halls Babbler.

Contact ph. 07 4655 1238, fax 07 46552368 or Email: gumholes@bigpond.com

MEMBERS TRAVELS (3)

A Lithgow Holiday

When the July holidays came around the Brosie Clan made our regular pilgrimage to the beautiful Central Tablelands city of Lithgow for a fortnight stay with the grandparents. Why else would you go to Lithgow in the middle of winter? I, unfortunately, had to be back in Newcastle for a friends birthday so only had a short time to do as much birding as possible and as I was to be the driver I had full control of which route was to be taken and how many birding stops were to be made.

Monday. We started our trip along the Putty Road through Wollemi and Yengo National Parks, This is a very picturesque drive and was quite enjoyable despite the lack of birds. Some of the highlights included a well coloured Rose Robin, many Spotted Pardalote, Striated Thornbill noisily feeding and a large flock of Red-browed Firetail. We had a quick pit stop at Colo where I stumbled upon a large patch of weed that was covered in purple berries and which was alive with Silvereyes, hundreds of them, as well as Eastern Spinebill, Lewin's Honeyeater and great views of an Eastern Whipbird.

Tuesday. Took a trip out to Lake Wallace 10km north-west of Lithgow on the Great Western Highway. It was surprisingly quiet. On the lake there was one lonely looking Musk Duck along with a few Hoary-headed Grebe. I then headed to the historic Lithgow Blast Furnace with the hope of seeing a Flame Robin. I wasn't disappointed with 6 birds (4 male, 2 female) feeding on an open field.

Wednesday I took a gamble and decided to take a trip up to the Capertree Valley despite the thick grey cloud, steady drizzle and the freezing temperature and it paid off. By 11am there was blue sky and it was quite warm.

The Capertree is one of the best birding spots I've ever been to with lots of birds being seen at every stop.

There were plenty of highlights including three species of Treecreeper (White-throated, Red-browed and Brown) Hooded, Scarlet and Yellow Robins, Gang-gang Cockatoo, a very photogenic Striated Pardalote, lots of Yellow tufted, Fuscous and Black-chinned Honeyeaters, White-browed Babbler at a couple of spots, Crested Strike-Tits, Restless Flycatcher and four species of finch including many young Diamond Firetails.

Friday. Thursday went by without birdwatching so I had to make up for it on Friday. This was also the day I had to head home so I decided to take the long way up through Mudgee to Wollar and then across to Denman, Broke and Cessnock. I left Lithgow at 9.30am and got home at 6.30pm and saw 74 species on the way.

I stopped at Munghorn Gap for lunch where I got Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Shining Bronze Cuckoo, four Brown Treecreepers, a male Spotted Quail-Thrush and more young Diamond Firetails. Between Munghorn and Bylong I pulled over several times with great results. Lots of Little Lorikeets, Speckled Warbler, Striped Honeyeater, many other honeyeaters especially White-naped, Fuscous and Yellow-tufted, White browed Babbler, Crested Strike Tit and more Diamond Firetails.

The very last stop I made produced a male Superb Lyrebird surrounded by flowering wattle singling beautifully in the late afternoon sun, which gave me enough reason to start singing the national anthem on the way back to the car.

Over a period of five days I managed a pretty impressive list of 107 species

Grant Brosie

OBSERVATIONS FROM CLUB NIGHTS –JUNE/JULY 2003

2003				
May 17	Blue-faced Honeyeater	1	Glen Oak	M.Maddock
May 15	Tawny Frogmouth	1	"	"
May 16	Long-billed Corella	5	Nelson Plains	"
May 31	Brown Falcon	1	Salt Ash	T.Clarke
	Black-shouldered Kite	1	"	"
June 3	Black Kite	2	East Maitland Tip	S.Roderick
June 4	Black-necked Stork	1	Black Hill	"
June 7	Osprey	1	Teralba (5 Islands Bridge)	W.Barden
June 7	Square-tailed Kite	2	Raymond Terrace Golf Club	W.Barden
June 9	Fuscous Honeyeater	Sml Flock	Jones Res. Road	H.Tarrant
June 9	Rufous Songlark	2	Sandy Hollow	"
	Brown Treecreeper	2	Doyles Creek	"
	Collared Sparrowhawk	Pair	Bolwarra	"
June 3	Barn Owl	1	Warabrook Station	"
June 1	Rose Robin	1	Botanic Gardens	"
May 31	Rose Robin	1	Grahamstown Dam	"
June 9	Rose Robin	1	Jerry's Plains	"
June 14	Black Kite	4	East Maitland Tip	D.Jenkin
June 17	Black-necked Stork	1	Miller's Forest	H.Maddock
June 18	Southern Emu-wren	1	Teralba	S.Hamonet
June 19	Pink-eared Duck	20	Borehole Swamp, Teralba	R.Walker
	Australasian Shoveler	4	"	"
June 2	Plumed Whistling Duck	~120	Doughboy Hollow	G.Newling
June 21	Diamond Dove	1	Kayuga (NW Muswellbrook)	R.Waymark
June 12	Pink-eared Duck	42	S.W.C.	R.McDonald
June 23	Australasian Shoveler	>50	"	"
June 24	Fuscous Honeyeater	1	"	"
June 17	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	4	"	"
June 16	Swift Parrot	7	Whitebridge	C.Goodenough
	Rainbow Lorikeet	23	"	"
June	Black-necked Stork	1	Milbrodale	D.Lamb
July 1	Australian Hobby	1	Wallsend	T.Clarke
July 5	Brown Goshawk	1	Whitebridge	"
July 3	Restless Flycatcher	1	S.W.C.	P.Lightfoot
July 9	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	2	Cardiff	J.Westphail
July 5	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	2	Pambalong N.R.	D.Johnson
June 13	White-necked Heron	10+	Thornton-Metford	H.Tarrant
July 5	Forest Raven	1	Vacy	"
	Black-chinned Honeyeater	1	"	"
June 26	Swift Parrot	9	Wallsend	P.Ekert
June 27	Swift Parrot	1	"	"
June 9	Grey Goshawk	1	West Wallsend	P.Freeman
	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	>200	Mt.Vincent	"
	White-naped Honeyeater	>100	"	"
June 10	Brown-headed Honeyeater	1	Barnsley	"
	Peregrine Falcon	1	"	"
June 10	Buff-rumped Thornbill	~20	"	"
	Varied Sittella	Flock	"	"
April 15	White-winged Black Tern	1	Newcastle Baths	"
April 26	Rose Robin	1	Barnsley	"
May 18	Striated Heron	1	Galgabba Point	"
May 19	Striated Heron	1	Edgeworth	"
May 29	Musk Lorikeet	>10	Toronto	"
Jun 9/10	Rose Robin	1	Barnsley	"

Coming Events

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

Sunday 10 th August	Singleton Group Outing Warkworth Reserve	10.00am. Old Public School Warkworth	Diane Lamb 6574 5205
Saturday 16 th August	Hunter Wader Survey	11.00am Various locations as directed	Alan Stuart 4952 8569 You must ring to confirm
Saturday 16 th August Sunday 17 th August	Pelagic Trip (one each day)	6.00am Swansea Wharf	Leader: Richard Baxter 4954 0212
Tuesday 19 th August	Midweek Outing Richley Reserve	8.00am Car park off Freyberg St, New Lambton	Leader: Keith Woods 4963 3070
Sunday 24 th August	Field Outing Morriset Area	8.00am Morriset Station	Leader: Alan Richardson
Saturday to Sunday 30 th – 31 st August	Wildflowers at the Wetlands Theme: Threatened Species	Shortland Wetland Centre	Tom Clarke 4951 3872
Tuesday 2 nd September	Midweek Outing Jesmond Park & Hospital	8.00am Car Park off Robinson Ave, Lambton	Leader Ken Gibson 4955 9866
Saturday 6 th September	Pelagic Trip	6.00am Swansea Wharf	Leader: Richard Baxter 4954 0212
Wednesday 10th September	Club Meeting	7.30pm Shortland Wetland Centre	Malcolm McNaughton Bird Illustrations: One Man's approach to birds.
Saturday 13 th September	Hunter Wader Survey	9.30am Various locations as directed	Chris Herbert 4959 3663 Alan Stuart 4952 8569 You must ring to confirm
Sunday 14 th September	Singleton Group Outing Lake Liddell Recreation Area	10.00am Ring for directions if unsure	Leader Diane Lamb 6574 5205
Sunday 21 st September	Watagans Birdroute Sooty Owl twitch	2.00pm Boarding House Dam. 5.00pm BBQ - BYOE	Leader: Chris Herbert 4959 3663
Weekend 4 th – 6 th October	Laguna Camp Private property	Directions available from Di Johnson	Contact: Di Johnson 4975 1777
Tuesday 7 th October	Field outing to Belmont Swamp and Little Pelican	8.00am cnr. Lakeview & Ninag Streets Belmont.	Leader: Keith Laverick 4947 1304
Wednesday 8th October	Club Meeting	7.30pm Shortland Wetland Centre	Speaker: Mike Fidler The Gouldian Finch
Saturday 11 th October	Hunter Wader Survey	8.30am Various locations as directed	Chris Herbert 49593663, Alan Stuart 4952 8569 You must ring to confirm
Saturday 11 th October	Pelagic Trip	6.00am Swansea Wharf	Leader: Richard Baxter 4954 0212
Sunday 12 th October	Singleton Group outing Milbrodale		Leader Diane Lamb 6574 5205
Sunday 19 th October	Catchment Day HBOC display	Shortland Wetland Centre	Tom Clarke 4951 3872
Sunday 19 th October	Field outing to Bulga	TBA next newsletter	
Saturday 25 th October	Pelagic Trip	6.00am Swansea Wharf	Leader: Richard Baxter 4954 0212
Weekend 25 th – 26 th October	Twitchathon – join a team and raise money for birds.	4.00pm Saturday to 5.00pm Sunday (24 hours)	Contact: Steve Roderick 4932 6727
Sunday 26 th October	Twitchathon BBQ – bring your own everything	5.00pm Wetlands Centre Entry fees apply.	Contact: Steve Roderick 4932 6727