

Western Australian Bird Notes

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Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union

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A Birdwatchers Guide to Vocal Mimicry

Few realise that mimicry, both visual and vocal, is an important part of the learning process and that we all use it with varying degrees of success. So it is with birds.

Many birds learn their calls and songs by mimicking their parents so it is not surprising that young birds reared in captivity should mimic the sounds of their captors and that they rapidly learn that successful imitation brings rewards in attention and food. Consequently some species that mimic only their kin in the wild will acquire a much wider vocabulary in captivity.

This may also happen when birds remain around houses to seek food. Australian Magpies, that otherwise keep to their own 'language', will in this situation mimic neighing horses, barking dogs and human voices, as will lyrebirds and bowerbirds, which mimic also in an entirely different context. This has led to much confusion in the vast and often speculative literature on mimicry and the following is an attempt to set the record straight for some of our Australian mimics that were listed by Chisholm (1932, 1937). His list of WA mimics is:-

Redthroat, White-browed Scrub-Wren, Singing Bushlark, Richard's Pipit, Grey Butcherbird, Silvereye, Mistletoebird, Crested Shrike-tit, Olive-backed Oriole, Yellow Oriole, Jacky Winter, Grey Shrike-thrush, White-browed Woodswallow, Spangled Drongo, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Spotted Bowerbird, Great Bowerbird, Inland Thornbill, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Slaty-backed Thornbill, Western Thornbill, Slender-billed Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill.

Mimicry of bird and mammal sounds is an important element in the vocal display of lyrebirds during the winter breeding season when the models are silent. Mimicry is learned by young birds from adult males and not from the models. Individuals may subsequently add to their repertoire but this seems to be rare. They do not mimic saws, axes etc except in the situation previously mentioned.

Birdwatchers may be fooled by the mimicry but birds are not. For lyrebirds mimicry acts as a non-threatening, unimportant subject to keep the lines of communication open. Lyrebirds

do not mimic Australian Ravens that are predators of lyrebird eggs.

Satin Bowerbirds (in display) mimic Laughing Kookaburras and Ravens at Tidbinbilla and at Lamington, mimic Lewin Honeyeaters and Torresian Crows. Outside the breeding season and when feeding in flocks bowerbirds have a much wider vocabulary.

Spotted Bowerbirds at Exmouth mimic in display only when disturbed by humans or by other bird species. In these situations they often include the calls of predators. This may be to increase threatening behaviour. When feeding in flocks they mimic more freely and in other bowerbirds the pattern is much the same.

Singing Bushlarks mimic in display flight, mainly of ground-living birds. This and the overt visual display prevents confusion. The mimicry serves to enhance the vocal display.

Many of the passerine birds listed by Chisholm (1932 & 1937) as mimics do so only in sub-song. In young birds this is often simply a part of song learning and fragments of the mimicked calls may be used to enhance the learned song. In adult sub-song however the purpose of mimicry is as yet unclear. I have suggested (1991) that it may be a form of phatic communication to strengthen the social bond and that there is no intent to deceive or express aggression.

Vocal mimicry is part of the learning process and occurs in both passerine and non-passerine Australian birds. Deception is not the purpose, but mimicry of predators may serve to increase threatening behavior. It is uncommon in full song where it is restricted to natural sounds of birds and mammals. Mimicry is more often heard in sub-song and when birds are in close contact with humans, when other than bird or mammal sounds may be included.

Present knowledge of mimicry has been ably reviewed by Bayliss (1982). Many Australian passerine birds, including some honeyeaters, are known to mimic the calls of other species but very little is known about the reasons for this.

Birdwatchers can contribute to the existing knowledge by noting the dates and situations in which mimicry is heard and the species mimicked and sending the information to WA Bird Notes.

N. Robinson

References:

Bayliss, JR (1982) *Avian Vocal Mimicry: Its Function and Evolution*. In *Acoustic Communication in Birds*. DE Kroodsma & EH Miller (Eds). Academic Press, New York 51-84.

Chisholm, AH (1932) *Vocal mimicry among Australian Birds*. Ibis 13; 605-624.

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Observations

Compiled by the Observations Committee. Shires are in brackets.

SOUTH-WEST (Shark Bay to Cape Arid)

Yellow-nosed Albatross - 800-1000, mid-July, 93, Canal Rocks (Busselton) - JH

Slender-billed Prion - 1, 2/8/93, Cape Naturaliste (Busselton) - MC, RL

Flesh-footed Shearwater - 7, 7/4/93, North Mole (Fremantle) early for the area - MC

Red-tailed Tropicbird - 1, mid July 93, sugarloaf Rock (Busselton) - unusual time of year - JH

Great Egret - 47, 10/4/93, in 500 m stretch of Phillips River, just N. of Fitzgerald River NP (Ravensthorpe) - MB

Rufous Night Heron - c.40, 15/5/93, "Lowlands", 5 km SW of Mundijong (Serpentine-Jarrahdale) - MR

Freckled Duck - 2, 5/7/93, Blue Gum Lake (Melville) - IB

Australian Shelduck - 1500, 12/4/93, salt lake just W. of Pingrup (Kent) - MB

Black-breasted Buzzard - 2, 20/5/93, 90 km N. Northampton (Northampton) - JRo* 1, 21/7/93, Weld Range (Cue) - DB

Peregrine Falcon - 2, 4/7/93, nr stick nest, Julimar Forest (Toodyay) - GL, IL

Malleefowl - 1, 20/5/93, 120 km N. Northampton on NW Coastal Hwy (Shark Bay) - JRo

Hooded Plover - 2, 2-3/8/93, Cape Naturaliste (Busselton) - MC, RL

Marsh Sandpiper - 7, 22/5/93, McLarty Lake (Murray) (late in year for this species) - JH

Pectoral Sandpiper - 1, 8/5/93, McLarty Lake (Murray) (unusually late in year) - JH

Little Stint - 1, 20/3/93, McLarty Lake (Murray) - TK, JH, JD

Long-toed Stint - 2, 8/5/93, McLarty Lake (Murray) (unusually late in year) - JH

Ruff - 1, 8/5/93, McLarty Lake (Murray) (late record) - JH

Great Skua - 1, 2/8/93, Cape Naturaliste (Busselton) - MC, RL

Roseate Tern - 2, 30/5/93, Woodman Point (Cockburn) - PT, RN

Long-billed Corella - 11, 4/93, Lake Joondalup South (Wanneroo) - NH

Rainbow Lorikeet - 3-4, Apr-May, Canning (Canning) - TS

Ground Parrot ? (possible only) - 1, 22/5/93, Betty's Beach, E. of Albany (Albany) - RG

Western Rosella - 2, 9/3/93, Wembley Downs (Perth) (rare in urban areas; ? aviary escapees) - ACa

Ground Cuckoo-shrike - 8, 23/7/93, Weld Range (Cue) - DB

Red-capped Robin - 1 male, 16/5/93, "Lowlands", about 5 km SW of Mundijong (Serpentine-Jarrahdale) (uncommon on the Swan Coastal Plain) - AB & RAOU excursion

Western Yellow Robin - 5, including 1 immature, 15-16/5/93, about 5 km SW of Mundijong (Serpentine-Jarrahdale) (uncommon on Swan Coastal Plain) - JR & RAOU excursion

Yellow-plumed Honeyeater - 1, 16/5/93, in Flooded Gums, "Lowlands", about 5 km SW of Mundijong (Serpentine-Jarrahdale) (rare on Swan Coastal Plain) - AB & RAOU excursion

Diamond Firetail - 4, 7/93, Fremantle (Fremantle) E. States bird, ? escapees - APB

Australian Magpie-lark - about 60, 20/5/93, Northampton (Northampton) (large flocks not often reported; probably a migratory or nomadic flock) - JRo

ARID ZONE (including the Pilbara, Gascoyne, interior and Nullarbor)

Square-tailed Kite - 1, 17/6/93, near Paraburdoo (Meekatharra) - FO

Little Button-quail - nest with 3 eggs, 9/7/93, Well 33, Canning Stock Route (East Pilbara) - PBT

Alexandra's Parrot - 200-300 (in flocks up to 80), 6-9/7/93, between Wells 37 & 43 - PBT * 40, 13/6/93, between Wells 40 & 41 - VM * both Canning Stock Route (East Pilbara)

Blue Bonnet - 2, 2/7/93 and 3, 20/7/93, near Pannikin Cave and 6, 5/7/93, south-east of Cocklebidy (Dundas) (unusual this far south) - GW, RW

Nullarbor Quail-thrush - 1, 28/4/93, 50 km NNE of Rawlinna (Kalgoorlie-Boulder) - ACh

KIMBERLEY

Australian Pelican - 20 + (breeding also recorded), 24/5/93, Lacepede Islands (Broome) - FO, KC

Masked Booby - 160 (breeding also recorded), 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Red-footed Booby - 3, 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Brown Booby - estimated 5000 (breeding recorded), 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC * estimated 5000 (breeding recorded), 24/5/93, Lacepede Islands (Broome) - FO, KC

Pied Cormorant - 20 (breeding recorded), 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Least Frigatebird - estimated 2000 (breeding recorded), 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC * estimated 2000 (breeding recorded), 24/5/93, Lacepede Islands (Broome) - FO, KC

Great-billed Heron - 1, 12/5/93, Prince Regent River (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC * 1, 21/5/93, Isdell River (Derby-West Kimberley) - FO, KC

Little Bittern - 2, 31/7/93, Lake Kununurra, 2 km SSE of the racecourse (Wyndham-East Kimberley), in Typha with low trees in a deep backwater; one bird giving Advertising Calls (believed to be indicative of breeding HANZAB p 1024), another bird (female/immature) seen in flight - (records of this species at Kununurra at this time of year are few and may

indicate residency) - RJ

Black Swan - 2 broods, 4/7/93, Lake Gregory nr Stafford Bore (Halls Creek) (breeding rare in the Kimberley) - PBT

Red-backed Button-quail - 2, 6/4/93, Jogalong Flat, Parry Floodplain (Wyndham-East Kimberley) (previous records from NE Kimberley have been January-March) - RJ

Australian Crake - 2, 6/3/93, in shallowly inundated ? Diplachne sp. grass at Gooda Gooda (Nile Mile) Claypan, SE of Wyndham (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - BW

Chestnut Rail - 1, 13/5/93, Camp Creek, off Prince Regent River (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Ruddy Turnstone - about 2000, mostly in breeding plumage, 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Redshank - 1, 12/4/93; 9, 9-12/5/93 (including 4 in breeding plumage), 6, 5/8/93, Crab Creek (Broome) - BBO, GS

Snipe *Gallinago sp* - 4, 6/4/93, Jogalong Flat in dry grass and marsh (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - BW, RJ

Asian Dowitcher - 35, 8/6/93, Roebuck Bay (Broome) - BBO * 54, 11/6/93, Richard's Point, Roebuck Bay (Broome) - GS

Black-tailed Godwit - 190, 6/4/93, shallowly inundated claypans near Marglu Billabong (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - RJ, BW

Common Tern - 4, (including 1 in breeding plumage), 10/6/93, Broome jetty (Broome) - GS

Little Tern - about 300, 24/5/93, Lacepede Islands (Broome) - FO, KC

Flock Bronzewing - 12, 28/5/93, Lake Eda (Broome) - FO

Pink Cockatoo - 2, 3/7/93, Wolf Creek Crater (Halls Creek) (rarely recorded in this area) - PBT

Port Lincoln Ringneck - 2, Broome, near cemetery (Broome) (? aviary escapees) - BK

Southern Boobook - 15, 22/6/93, Drysdale River (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - GS

Welcome Swallow - 6, 22/5/93, Gantheaume Point, Broome, with Tree Martins (Broome) - GS * 1, 9/5/93 and 2, 29/5/93, Gantheaume Point (Broome) - FO (rare in the Kimberley)

White Wagtail ? (possible only) - 1, 24-26/2/93, Willie Creek (Broome) - CD

Ground Cuckoo-shrike - 7, 23/7/93, Drysdale River (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - GS

Mangrove Robin - 1, Cygnet Bay, N. Broome (Broome) - GS

Kimberley Flycatcher - 1, 30/6/93 mangroves at Crab Creek (Broome) - FO (at or near southern limit of species)

White-browed Robin - 1, 21/5/93, rainforest near Isdell River (West Kimberley) - FO, KC

Crested Bellbird - 1, 27/4/93, Beagle Bay (Broome) (northern margin of range) - GS

Tawny Grassbird - 5+, 11/5/93, Adele Island (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Spinifexbird - 1, 4/7/93, near Lake Gregory (south) (Halls Creek) - PBT

Rufous-crowned Emu-wren - 3, groups, 4/7/93, near Lake Gregory (south) (Halls Creek) - PBT

Black Grasswren - 2, 19-20/5/93, Sale River (Derby-West Kimberley) - FO, KC

Redthroat - 2, 17/6/93, near Paraburdoo airport (Meekatharra) (at or near northern margin of range) - FO

Green-backed Gerygone - 3, 28/6/93, Point Springs NR (40 km NNE of Kununurra) (Wyndham-East Kimberley) (rarely recorded in East Kimberley) - FO

Grey-headed Honeyeater - 2, 20/5/93, Entrance Point, Broome (Broome) - GS (near northern limit of species)

Bar-breasted Honeyeater - 10+ and many nests, 12-13/5/93, Camp Creek off Prince Regent River (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO, KC

Crimson Chat - 15, 9/5/93, pindan behind Cable Beach, Broome (Broome) (uncommon this far north) - GS

Painted Firetail - 3, 6/5/93, Entrance Point (Broome) - GS * 3, 31/5/93, Geike Gorge (Derby-West Kimberley) - FO (both records near N. margin of range)

Gouldian Finch - 3 juveniles, 4/5/93; 7 juveniles, 5/5/93; 2 juveniles and 1 adult, 7/5/93, near Lombardina (Broome) - BBO * 4 (2 adult, 2 juvenile), 19/7/93, The Grotto (25 km from Wyndham) (Wyndham-East Kimberley) - FO

White-browed Woodswallow - 2, 2/7/93, about 5km E of Ngumban Cliffs, E. of Fitzroy Crossing (Derby-West Kimberley) PBT (not often recorded in Kimberley).

Observer Codes

AB	= Allan Burbidge	JRo	= John Rodger
ACa	= Ashton Cavanagh	JS	= Jennifer Shanks
ACH	= Andy Chapman	KC	= Kevin Coate
APB	= Agriculture	MB	= Mary Bremner
Protection Board		MC	= Michael Craig
BBO	= Broome Bird	MR	= Midge Richardson
Observatory		NH	= Neil Hamilton
BK	= Brian Kane	PT	= Peregrine Bird
Tours			
BW	= Brice Wells	PT	= Pat Todd
DB	= David Barton	RG	= Ray Garstone
FO	= Frank O'Connor	RJ	= Roger Jaensch
GL	= Graham Little	RL	= Romeny Lynch
GS	= George Swann	RN	= Richard Nowotny
GW	= George Watkins	RW	= Rita Watkins
IL	= Ingrid Little	TK	= Tony Kirkby
JD	= John Darnell	TS	= Tony Start
JH	= Jack Hunt	VM	= Vivian McCormick
JR	= Julie Raines		

RAOU Office WA

Telephone
Birding Hotline
Chairman

Editor

Perry House, 71 Oceanic Drive
Wembley 6014 or PO Box 199
Jolimont 6014
(09) 383 7749
(09) 387 8412
J. Blyth, 30 Troy Terrace,
Daglish 6008
B. Buchanan, PO Box 10
Wannamal 6505

Notes For Contributors

The Editor requests contributors to note :-

- *WABN normally only publishes material on WA birds
- *contributions should be written or typed with Double Spacing
- *WABN uses RAOU recommended English names
- *copy will be edited where appropriate
- *contributions will be published unless the contributor is informed to the contrary

Deadline for the December
Issue

14 November 1993

Members Contributions

KLEPTOPARASITISM

On the 21st April Glen Moore and I were at the North Mole Fremantle looking at some skuas. The previous day I had seen 11 Arctic and 13 Pomarine Jaegers from the same spot, but on the 21st numbers were lower and we only saw 8 Arctic Jaeger, although there was a group of 7 Flesh-footed Shearwaters that had not been present the previous day.

In the mid-afternoon we made the following observation. We were both looking at a Crested Tern as it flew shorewards from the ocean. About 200 metres out it was attacked by a dark phase Arctic Jaeger. Fifty metres closer another dark bird, which we presumed to be a skua, joined in the attack and they both chased and harried the Crested Tern for about fifteen seconds. When the tern was about 60 metres from the Mole the second attacker veered away, revealing itself to be a Flesh-footed Shearwater!

The first bird continued to chase the tern to within 40 metres of the Mole, when it also veered away, revealing itself to be a dark phase Arctic Jaeger. The Crested Tern continued on its way, meal intact and made it safely to shore.

We were most surprised to see a Flesh-footed Shearwater chasing a tern. Upon investigation of the literature the only evidence of kleptoparasitism in the Procellariiformes I could find was for a Black-browed Albatross. This confirmed our earlier suspicion that an observation of kleptoparasitism in the Flesh-footed Shearwater is very unusual and may not have been previously recorded.

M. Craig

OFFSHORE PERTH IN MAY

During May 1993 I was involved with a series of sea trials in Cockburn Sound, Gage Roads and an area of sea reaching north to Moore River and out to approximately 30 nautical miles west of Rottnest. There were periods during the trials when I was able to look for sea birds and the following are some of the observations I made.

In early May I recorded small numbers of immature Australasian Gannets, two or three Great Skuas and several Arctic or Pomarine Skuas, the latter eluding positive identification at that time. As the month progressed the number of immature Australasian Gannets increased dramatically, a feature possibly related to the weather conditions which gradually deteriorated during the month. On May 28th, in a strong south westerly blow there were well over 100 immature gannets in the Cockburn Sound. I saw perhaps only 7 adult birds.

On a calm day in mid May there was a Pelican "invasion" which lasted three days. There were about twenty birds, feeding in an area the size of a football pitch in deep water in the middle of Cockburn Sound. With the Pelicans were Pied Cormorants and Little Black Cormorants, together with the usual throng of Silver Gulls. After three days the Pelicans were gone.

A few days later we were motoring southwards in the Parmelia Channel and noticed to our left a huge flock of Silver Gull in a broad band from the channel markers towards Woodman Point. At first I thought they were flying to Carnac Island to roost, but on looking closer they appeared to be

wheeling around in small groups within a whole flock and taking an active interest in something in the sea. The number of birds involved was several thousand and even the non bird watchers on board were impressed with the sight of so many birds.

Great Skuas were always present when other birds were feeding. I watched one relentlessly chase an adult Australasian Gannet low over the water, where the skua attacks eventually forced the gannet into the water. There it was repeatedly attacked, several Silver Gull joining in the melee and adding confusion to the scene. During a brief pause the gannet managed to take-off only to be attacked again: this time a fish was given up to the Great Skua and the Australasian Gannet was left to fly off alone. Great Skuas were the only birds not to be intimidated by the approach of our vessel. If they were swimming in the water they would usually swim as though nonchalantly out of the way. Most other sea birds flew off well before our approach.

My most exciting Great Skua experience occurred when one approached our vessel and flew about 8 metres in front of our wheelhouse and attacked our bow mounted radio aerial, pecking the top of the aerial as it waved around in the wind. This was not a bad effort considering the aerial was on a 40 metre boat travelling at 35 knots (65 km/hr).

Arctic/Pomarine Skua identification continued to be a problem. There were about five birds always present in the same area, broadly in line between Beacon Head on Garden Island to about half a nautical mile south of Woodman Point. I had seen the same species in this area previously during the summer months. I had one good sighting and believe the birds to be Pomarine Skuas. These winter residents may be immature or non breeding adult birds.

Some of our sea trials took us up to 30 nautical miles west of Rottnest, on days characterized by sunny conditions, light south-easterly winds on 2 metre south-westerly swells. Yellow-nosed Albatross and Flesh-footed Shearwaters were numerous. The shearwaters showed very little interest in our vessel: however, the albatross always looked closely and usually followed, quartering our wake and the breaking waves of our wash.

On days without wind the Yellow-nosed Albatrosses would usually be found loafing in the water, usually in the company of two Flesh-footed Shearwaters, as often as not near rock lobster markers. On calm days in early May, we would come up on small rafts of twenty to thirty shearwaters, which would fly off as we approached.

On the 11th and 12th of May while about 10 nautical miles south-west of Cape Vlamingh we noticed what appeared to be a large pod of dolphins about 500 metres in front of us. Dolphin sightings were a daily and always agreeable event. However, the disturbance in the water turned out to be a large fish boil, above which several Australasian Gannet, Crested Tern, Bridled Tern, Flesh-footed Shearwaters and even a few Silver Gulls wheeled. The gannets and terns were diving into the water and the gulls and shearwaters scavenging the sea surface. As we got closer we were fortunate to see several large Yellow-fin Tuna leaping clear of the water in pursuit of the smaller fish.

Whenever I saw Wilson's Storm-petrels (which was daily) I noticed they always flew in front of our vessel for about a minute before veering off to one side and disappearing from view in the wave troughs. Being such a small bird they were almost impossible to see unless within 100 metres of the boat.

During the week of May 26th when the weather was quite rough we were working our vessel between Fairway Landfall buoy and the buoy marking the northern extent of Kingston Reefs, Rottnest. I noticed that each time we turned and motored East we would pick-up two Wilson's Storm-petrels. It seemed as if it was their patch of ocean to patrol for the week.

Inevitably with work to do on board I missed many sightings. My experience has whetted my appetite and I look forward to further sea trips hopefully in the company of fellow RAOU members who can help with identification.

J. Bennett

ALBATROSS AT CANAL ROCKS

In mid July I received a call from Bryan Barrett regarding the potential of seabird watching in the Dunsborough district, particularly albatross.

The next weekend Tony Kirkby and I visited the area. At Sugarloaf Rock there were 20-30 albatross an hour passing by, all Yellow-nosed. During the lulls we were able to whistle up White-browed Scrub-wren in the coastal heath.

One Red-tailed Tropicbird was seen close to the Rock, repeatedly returning to the same spot. Silver Gulls were breeding and there were young in all stages of maturation. A Southern Giant-Petrel flew past.

There were no seabirds at Cowaramup Bay but we were able to get within 3 metres of a pair of Southern Emu-wren in the coastal heath.

At Canal Rocks we noticed activity 500-1000 metres off shore. There were two flocks of birds 500 metres apart resting on the water. Some birds were flying over the group and some flying between the two groups. In total there were 800 to 1000 Yellow-nosed Albatross with the odd Black-browed Albatross.

It was a good day and within easy reach of Perth.

J. Hunt

MORE NESTING TOGETHER

Frank O'Connor's article on Willie Wagtails and Australian Magpie-Larks nesting close together struck a chord in my memory. I turned up a note from September 1988 at Coolgardie. At the rear of our motel, in the one small tree in a barren area was an Australian Magpie-Lark's nest with three well-fledged young being fed by the busy parents. It was some time before I saw a much better concealed Willie Wagtail's nest about 60 cms below.

My notes mention that strict territorial rights were exercised by the magpie-larks and that the Willie Wagtails were chased from nearby branches, fences and other perches, but that no aggression was shown in the area close to the Willie Wagtail's nest.

P. Anson

KORUP SWAMP

After reading about Korup Swamp in the May WABN, we decided to pay it a visit. As we now live in the Albany area, we set off on the morning of Friday, 4 June and found the gate mentioned in the article. The directions in "Bird Notes" were accurate to the tenth of a kilometre. The lake is not visible from the gate/road, but we had no difficulty in finding it.

There had been heavy rain a week before our visit, the ditches were full of water and at one point water covered the road. The "swamp" turned out to be a fairly large lake and the edges were too wet to move around it or get close except at one point.

Bird life was rather disappointing. We saw only two Black Swan and two ducks — too far away to identify.

L. and C. Davies

RUFF BEHAVIOUR

On Saturday 13th March, I parked just off the road near the Argyle Diamond Mine where I could observe a small swampy area created by the heavy rains of late January and February. I observed a migratory wader about 10 metres away standing in some sparse swampy grass (about 20 to 25 cm high) next to some typha reeds, which I was to identify as a Ruff.

After a few minutes, it flew a few metres and landed on the sandy bank of a shallow channel. A second wader immediately flew in and the Ruff cowered (almost sat down in the edge of the water) and then they played 'tag' for a short while, before they flew to an open sandy area behind a small, sparse bush about 25 to 30 metres from me on the edge of the channel. The second wader walked around behind some grassy tufts (and I didn't see it again), but the Ruff sat down on the sand.

I got out of the car and moved to a spot on the road with a clear view of the Ruff at about 20 metres distant. I observed it for several minutes while scanning through a field guide before it eventually stood up.

It walked without any hurry across the few metres of sand, stopping every two or three steps and bobbing its tail very frequently (although its head stayed fairly still.) It eventually walked into fairly dense grass tussocks (about 40 to 50 cm tall) about four or five metres from the water. I did not see it again.

The most remarkable feature of the bird was its behaviour which I was surprised was not mentioned in any reference. The bobbing of the tail (similar to the Wood Sandpiper although it kept its head up), the sitting down on the sand, the standing in the grass, the wading in shallow water along the channel, the stop start walking across the sand and finally the disappearance into long grass out of the water were all behaviour with which I was unfamiliar among other waders.

F. O'Connor

FLOCKING GERYGONES

On a bright windless winter's day during the mid-afternoon of 9 June, I was walking along the east side of Thompson's Lake when a little flock of small, very active birds flew into the top of nearby trees. I assumed them to be Silveryeyes but my squeaker (polystyrene on glass) appeared to attract them to the small tree under which I was lurking to confirm their identity. To my astonishment, they were Western Gerygone, at least twenty and perhaps as many as forty, for their frenetic activity made it impossible to get an accurate count.

I felt diffident about reporting what I assumed to be such an unlikely incident, but I mentioned it to Chris Wilder who said she had heard of two similar incidents of passerine flocking, neither of which had been reported for a similar reason. One of these was of over 30 Golden Whistler at Dryandra.

I mentioned both incidents to Stephen Ambrose as an adjunct to my ABC report and he responded "These are interesting observations....The record of Golden Whistlers at Dryandra is also significant because this species does tend to flock before migration at this time of the year, but is seldom observed in the West."

I was encouraged therefore, to write this account in the hope that other diffident observers might be encouraged to report similar flockings for publication in WA Bird Notes.

P. Anson

A THREE LAKE COMPARISON

The three lakes, Namming, Hurstview and Guraga are close; the centres of the first two being within 3 kilometres of the centre of Guraga. Observations at the three lakes during the day does not appear to show much bird interconnection, except for Black Swan (overnight Namming, day Guraga) and Australian Shelduck (day flights between Hurstview and Guraga).

Having counted the waterbirds at each of the lakes monthly, Guraga 1987 & 1988, Hurstview 1988 to 1991 and Namming 1988 to 1992 some comparison between them seems possible. Comparisons need be made with caution as the data is obtained from non-identical years.

However some comparative patterns are discernible which are of interest. They appear to hinge on the differences in the particular geographical characteristics of each lake during the period considered by this review, 1988 — 1992. All the lakes are at highest water level in August-September and lowest in March-April, like most along the coastal plain.

The following table summarises the main physical features of the lakes.

	Namming	Guraga	Hurstview
Area	about 60 hectares	about 227 hectares	about 65 hectares
Shore length	about 3.5 km	about 5.5 km	about 3.7 km
Surrounds	Bush for over 10 km to N, S & W, Grazing land for 5 km to Brand Hwy on E	Bush for over 10 km to N, S & W, also to E for 2.25 km to Brand Hwy.	Wholly surrounded by grazing land, mainly cattle. Nearest bush 1.75 km strip between Guraga & Brand Hwy.
Depth	Generally deepest of 3. Reaches over 2.5 m each year, lowest about 1 m. Does not dry.	During survey period max. 1.8 m lowest 450 mm. Was dry out of survey period.	Deepest 1.6 m to low under 500 mm. Over 50% dries annually.
Weed	Little ever visible	Considerable quantity	Some 30/40% with weed.
Shoreline Vegetation	Living paperbark & Flooded Gums for over 95% of edge Inundated for much of year	Over 200 m from edge to shrubs. No living plants above water.	Some living Casuarina spp & gums, also in the water, also many dead.
Shoreline	Little shelving sandy shore Little mud, though much beneath trees at low water.	Virtually surrounded by sandy shore, much slightly shelving Not much mud	Mainly muddy shore but some smallish sandy areas.

It may be hypothesised that the physical geographic differences set out in the above table may have the following outcomes :—

Namming might be expected to have more diving species, as it is consistently the deepest and being surrounded by trees many of which become inundated at the deeper times, might be expected to have more breeding species.

Guraga might be expected to have the most shoreline birds, having the greatest length/expanse of shoreline, with Hurstview second.

The presence of both mud and sand at Hurstview might result in a greater number of shoreline species by comparison with Guraga, while Namming with little shelving shore would be anticipated to be poor for shoreline birds.

Guraga might be expected to have about twice + the numbers of dabbling species of each of the others, having about

double the length of shoreline (and four times the area, as well as much greater weed in the water) with Namming and Hurstview similar, by virtue of being of similar size.

To examine these hypotheses the monthly averages over the years of the surveys of diving, shoreline and dabbling species of the three lakes were compared. The species taken into account were those present at one or more of the lakes during the surveys. These were:—

for Diving Species (total 10):— Great Crested Grebe, Hoary-headed and Australasian Grebe, Darter, Great, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorant, Hardhead, Blue-billed and Musk Duck.

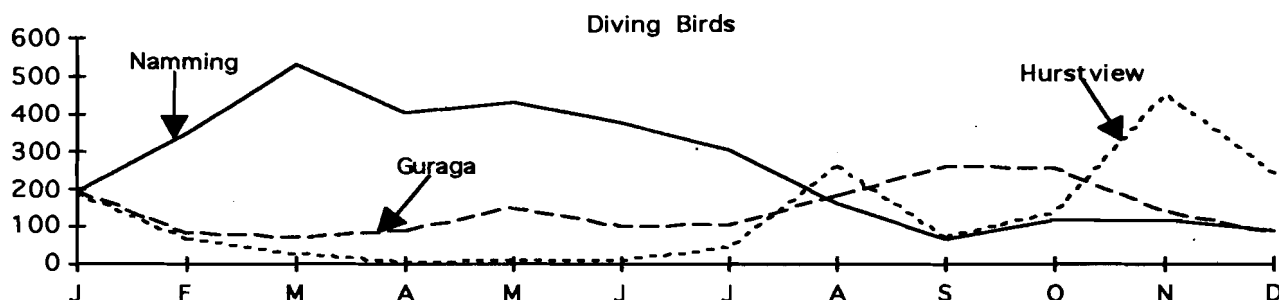
for Shoreline Species (total 25) — Banded Lapwing, Grey and Pacific Golden Plover, Red-kneed Dotterel, Hooded, Double-banded, Large Sand, Red-capped and Black-fronted Plover, Black-winged and Banded Stilt, Red-necked Avocet, Wood and Common Sandpiper, Greenshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwit, Sharp-tailed and Pectoral Sandpiper, Red-necked and Long-toed Stint, Curlew and Broad-billed Sandpiper and Ruff.

for Dabbling Species (total 12) — Black Swan, Freckled Duck, Australian Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Australasian Shoveler, Pink-eared Duck, Maned Duck and Eurasian Coot.

The breeding species hypothesis adhered to expectation: Namming 8, Hurstview 4, Guraga 1.

As a matter of interest, Hurstview had a total of 45 species, Namming and Guraga both 43. While Namming had 20 or more species on 40% of visits, Hurstview had such species diversity on only 24% of visits and Guraga 17%. The greater overall diversity of habitat at Lake Namming may have contributed to this result.

The following chart for diving birds shows Namming to have many more than either Guraga or Hurstview from January to July. Numbers are comparable in August after which both Guraga and Hurstview are ahead of Namming, though mainly



by the numbers of Hoary-headed Grebe. In the low water months of March to June, Hurstview, which is the shallowest of the lakes, is much the lowest in diving species.

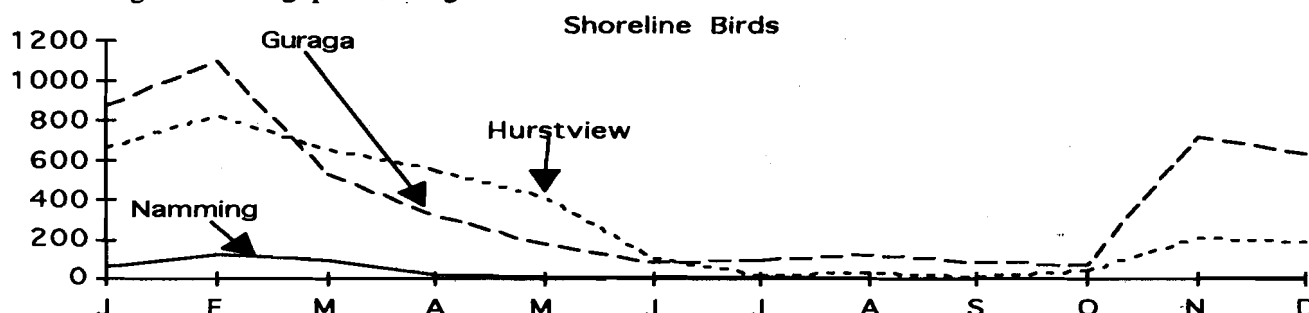
It seems possible that the diving birds leave Namming at the time it is at its deepest (July - December) and move to the shallower lakes (which have a sufficient depth in this period), as the lesser depth at Guraga and Hurstview may make food gathering more effective in relation to the energy expended in gathering it. The warmth of the water, greater in the shallower lakes, may be more favourable for food sources and comfort.

Namming had 10 diving species, Guraga 8 and Hurstview

Hurstview, it is virtually all in the shade and cover of the surrounding trees and it is noticeable that these shaded/covered areas of mud are little used by the shoreline species.

However contrary to hypothesis shoreline species numbers are Guraga 20, Hurstview 15 and Namming 9.

Dabbling bird figures are shown in the chart below. The results are broadly in line with expectation. As predicted, differences between Namming and Hurstview are not significant. All three lakes have a marked increase in September-January, largely accounted for by the presence of Australian



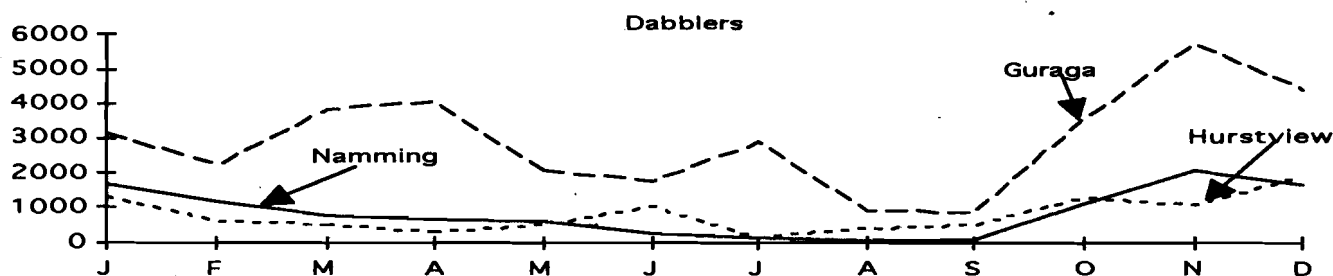
6, in line with expectation.

The chart for shoreline birds also largely illustrates the hypotheses. Namming is poor and only of some significance from January to March inclusive, while Guraga has the greatest numbers except March to May. It is possible that waders, which are a significant proportion of the shoreline birds, prefer

Shelduck which come to the area to moult.

The Guraga trend line is about equal that of the other two lakes combined in January and February and again in August and September. However, Guraga is generally well ahead in the remainder of the year, mainly as a result of the presence of Eurasian Coot and Black Swan.

The total number of Eurasian Coot and Black Swan at



Hurstview on their returning journeys between March and May, as it is at these times that Hurstview has very large areas of mud freshly exposed and also mud areas subject to wind induced wave inundation. These areas of mud are much greater than at Guraga, which essentially has a sandy shoreline with mud only in the area where the creek inflows from Lake Namming.

While Namming also has much mud at the same time as

Guraga is 3.2 times the combined numbers of the other two lakes between January- April inclusive and above 7 times for the rest of the year. With a shoreline length of rather less than double that of the other lakes, though four times the area, this seems to confirm the pre-eminence of the Guraga water-weed supply, for Eurasian Coot and Black Swan are the water-weed consumers par excellence of the dabbling birds in the survey.

B. Buchanan

SOUTHERN EMU-WREN AT MARTIN

In early July 1993 I contacted David James regarding his report of Southern Emu-wrens some years ago at Ellis Brook, Martin (see WABN No 54 June 1990 p 2). I was given directions and set out to look over the area. I had no idea that I

would be lucky enough to find the birds I sought.

Approaching the area, I was feeling a little tired as it is not an easy place to reach. It has a steep hillside covered with dense low heath-like vegetation, broken up with rocks and close to a stream.

I sat on a rock. Birdlife was not prolific, but it was pleasant

to observe some of the commoner species. After 10 minutes I noticed a movement.

A pair of Southern Emu-wrens appeared, the male resplendent in his blue "bib". The birds popped up for a quick look, only staying in view for less than 20 seconds.

I returned to the area numerous times subsequently varying the time of day but did not see the Southern Emu-wrens again until I took Margery Clegg and Bryan Barrett to view the area. It was mid morning when we reached the locality and within less than 10 minutes, we had good, albeit short, views.

J. Hunt

GREY-FRONTED HONEYEATERS

At about 8 am on 31st July 1993, I observed two adult Grey-fronted Honeyeaters feeding two juveniles outside my office at the Argyle Diamond mine. The adults hopped around picking up food lying on the path and then fed whichever juvenile opened its mouth. The adults worked non-stop for about five minutes feeding the young until all four moved out of sight around the corner of the building.

The young had very short tails, yellow lores and gapes, paler bills and almost no yellow/black plumes on their necks. Apart from their short tails, they appeared to be about the same size as the adults.

The adults seemed to be mostly collecting very small yellowish organic material fallen from acacias growing over the path. I went outside later and looked at the material on the path and decided it was probably blossom from the acacias that the adults were collecting. The young occasionally tried to pick up the food for themselves when the parents were absent for short periods.

At one stage, one juvenile was separated by about 4 metres from the other three when one of the adults went to feed one of the other juveniles. The separate juvenile made some three or four quick but unsuccessful attempts to pick up an ant before it flew to join the others.

The young were standing on the path near their parents, or were perched low (within a metre of the ground) in nearby bushes for the remainder of the time.

F. O'Connor

NEWS FROM EYRE

Hello. We have had 235 mm rain so far, the tanks are full and the bush is looking green and healthy. The flowering of the Soap Mallee brought an influx of White-fronted and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters. New Holland Honeyeaters are nesting among the dunes and Singing Honeyeaters and Striated Pardalotes near the house. Two Yellow-rumped Pardalote nests were found beside the track to Cocklebiddy. A Malleefowl mound above the Scarp is being worked. Australasian Gannets have flown past and Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Southern Giant-Petrel, Great-winged Petrel, Fairy Prion and Slender-billed Prion have been beach washed.

During Summer, Pink Cockatoos, Australian Ravens and Brush Bronzewing are continually coming in to drink and we record big tallies on our Daily Bird Log. During winter, they do not need our water supply and numbers dwindle to below 10 a day - some days none at all. However, recently Pink Cockatoo flocks have been coming in, about 30-40 birds, so perhaps spring is on the way. Happy Spring and good birding.

R. and G. Watkins

THREATENED BIRDS OF WA DISPLAY

This RAOU project was made possible by a grant of \$500 under the Social Advantage Initiative programme. A display of "Threatened Birds of WA" is now complete and ready to be used. The project was completed (almost) within budget, largely due to the generosity of Michael Morcombe and Babs and Bert Wells and others who donated photographs.

The display encompasses introductory general statements defining different levels of conservation status, what the threatening processes are and existing or proposed conservation programmes for the threatened birds in WA. This is followed by photographs and captions of 27 of the 39 birds listed in Stephen Garnett (ed) (1992) *Threatened and Extinct Birds of Australia*, RAOU Report No 82. Included in our display are: —

Square-tailed Kite, Freckled Duck, Cape Barren Goose, Malleefowl, Painted Button-quail, Beach Thick-knee, Hooded Plover, Fairy Tern, Lesser Noddy, Partridge Pigeon, Alexandra's Parrot, Blue Bonnet, Ground Parrot, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo, Baudin's Black-Cockatoo, Western Long-billed Corella, Masked Owl, Noisy Scrub-bird, Purple-crowned Fairy-wren, Striated Grasswren, Western Bristlebird, Crested Shrike-tit, Star Finch and Gouldian Finch.

We lack good photographs of 12 birds missing from our display. Can any of our members provide good quality slides or prints of any of the following twelve "wanted birds"?

Australasian Bittern, Red Goshawk, Grey Falcon, Chestnut-backed Button-quail, Lewin's Rail (the WA sub-species has not been seen since the 1930's.), Painted Snipe, Scarlet-chested Parrot, Night Parrot (WA sightings have been reported in the last 10 years), Rufous Bristlebird (the Western sub-species is thought to be extinct), Slender-billed Thornbill, Cinnamon Quail-thrush, Yellow-rumped Mannikin.

Additionally our existing photograph of the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo is unsatisfactory. If any member could donate a better photograph for use in the display, we would be grateful. Telephone 381 6293 for

J. Blyth

B B C B Q

Scopewest results are now published. The following all relate to the Scopewest survey.

- 1) Which wetland had the highest number of species ?
- 2) Which wetland had the highest number of species per survey?
- 3) How many surveys are required at a wetland to provide a complete list of species ?
- 4) Which was the most abundant species found ?
- 5) Approx. how many migratory shorebirds visit the Swan Coastal Plain each summer ?
- 6) Which colour marked species was recorded furthest from the marking site ?
- 7) Which environmental variable has most influence on waterbird numbers — wetland size, water depth, vegetation structure, primary productivity, or all of these ?
- 8) How many species were recorded ?
- 9) Which two Perth metropolitan lakes recorded most Pacific Black Duck breeding ?
- 10) Which lake had the greatest number of waterbirds ?

Excursion Reports

BOYAGIN ROCK 9 May

On a most pleasant Autumn day, 16 people were rewarded with sightings of 3 species of Robin - (Scarlet, Red-capped and Western Yellow), Rufous and Golden Whistler, Splendid Fairy-wrens and a total of 43 species. The thick bush at the base of the rock was negotiated with some difficulty but we saw Western Rosella and Red-capped Parrot as well as a solitary Elegant Parrot. A Fan-tailed Cuckoo which called regularly was finally tracked down.

After lunch in the picnic area, we drove to the Eastern section of the reserve and saw Australasian Grebe, Maned Duck, Australian Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck and Grey Teal on the dams as we passed. The Wandoo woodland in the Eastern part of the Reserve provided excellent views of Rufous Treecreeper and Yellow-plumed Honeyeater. We were accompanied by a bird-watcher from New Zealand who added five species to his list.

W. Napier

WOODMAN POINT 12 May

In perfect conditions, fourteen people participated in the walk in the Woodman Point bush, a remnant of Tuart woodland with some areas of Rottnest Island Cypress. Numerous Inland Thornbill and two Fan-tailed Cuckoo were seen. Excellent views were obtained of such species as a male Rufous Whistler, Western Gerygone and Red-capped Parrot. Two of the Red-capped Parrots appeared to be feeding on Rottnest Island Cypress seeds.

Three birds of prey were seen - at first singly, then all together — an Australian Hobby, a Little Eagle and a female Brown Goshawk. Australian Magpies and Port Lincoln Parrots were feeding voraciously on 1080 poisoned grain left for rabbits.

In all twenty-five species were recorded in the Explosives Reserve area, a figure which included two Tawny Frogmouth seen by late-comers. A few enthusiasts continued birdwatching at the Point, adding a further fourteen species to the list, including a Ruddy Turnstone and a Sooty Oystercatcher.

B. Newbey

LOWLANDS 15/16 May

The groups who came on this excursion were amply rewarded: we recorded 43 species in the woodland and along the banks of the Serpentine. One of the more interesting sightings of the weekend was a group of about 40 Rufous Night Heron, roosting in the dense canopy of the large, old pine trees near the homestead.

Other highlights included several species uncommon to rare on the Swan Coastal Plain: Western Yellow Robin, Red-capped Robin, Golden Whistler and Yellow-plumed Honeyeater. The yellow robin and whistler were in Jarrah-Banksia-Sheoak woodland, the Red-capped Robin on the edge of the woodland and the honeyeater in Flooded Gums on the banks of the Serpentine River.

Many thanks to Midge Richardson and her family for permission to visit the property and use of the shearers' quarters for overnight accommodation.

AH. Burbidge

FLYNN ROAD 5 June

On a clear, crisp morning, approximately 15 people spread out in ones, twos and small groups, with a recall time of approximately one and a half hours. The airways were dominated by the sounds of Striated Pardalotes, Port Lincoln and Red-capped Parrots and the call of a lone White-tailed Black Cockatoo.

Three species of robin were sighted, with the Western Yellow a favourite. The most popular sighting of the day however, was Crested Shrike-tit, seen by all, with a few very envious exceptions. Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters were in abundance and Rufous Treecreepers quite plentiful. Several Elegant Parrots were sighted.

Although I was one of the few unfortunates who failed to glimpse the Crested Shrike-tit I enjoyed close up observation of a Western Yellow Robin and a Splendid Fairy-wren. A formation of approximately 12-15 White-tailed Black-Cockatoos, twisting and turning through the trees about fifteen feet from the ground impressed.

Thirty nine species were sighted for the day and the outing was thoroughly enjoyed.

J. Mack

DRYANDRA 26/27 June

Without the large contingent of searchers at Dryandra our June quest for Malleefowl mounds would have been seriously hampered. The rain was so persistent on Sunday morning that the second day's search was abandoned.

By the close of the previous afternoon, the number of mounds positioned had been extended by 11, taking the tally in the total area searched to 26. In the region surveyed there are 8 mounds per square kilometre. Even a modest extrapolation of this meagre data is suggestive of a total of many hundreds of mounds at Dryandra!

The efforts of all who searched is appreciated. Without the large number of interested participants the huge task of methodically searching the extensive areas involved would be next to impossible. It was heartening to experience the degree of co-operation from all volunteers, who risked some degree of discomfort and who put in a strenuous effort.

The next search at Dryandra is scheduled for the weekend commencing Friday evening, October 29th. It is intended to visit as many of the known mounds as possible to determine their current condition. See "Coming Events".

R. Smith

LAKE MONGER 8 July

Eleven brave people turned out to walk around Lake Monger on a fine but cool, breezy morning. The water bird species list was quite low, as is usual at this time of the year, but a total of 33 species in all was recorded, which included some nice plump geese, Mallards and Muscovy Ducks!

An Australian Hobby, right at the top of a Norfolk Island Pine, was sighted as we were beginning our walk. There were a number of immature Dusky Moorhens, still without their red forehead shield. Ducks included Pacific Black, Blue-billed, Musk and Australian Shelduck, with one Grey Teal and one Australian Shoveler.

Despite the amount of traffic, the proximity of a freeway and railway and the number of tourist coaches, the birds seemed undisturbed. Lake Monger, as always, is a great place to visit.

N. Brockman

NORTH MOLE 25 July

Seven members arrived at North Mole in absolutely perfect weather for seawatching, a howling gale with intermittent showers. Those that turned up were treated to superb views of a Great Skua as it wheeled around the end of the Mole attacking Silver Gulls and Australasian Gannets. About 25 Australasian Gannets in juvenile, immature and adult plumage came very close; several were just 10 metres off the Mole.

Perhaps the most unusual sighting was of two Galah that flew in from the sea from the direction of Carnac Island.

At the end of the morning we could only list 7 species but all agreed it was quality stuff.

M. Craig

ROTTNEST ISLAND 30 July - 2 Aug

Thirteen people braved rough seas/stormy skies to attend the campout, but the weather soon turned fair. Early morning walks to the lighthouse revealed Australasian Gannets fishing and family-minded Australian Shelduck. Our total species list was 40: not bad for a winter outing. Perhaps the highlight of the trip was a lunchtime visit to Cape Vlamingh where we were treated to a show of surfing dolphins.

It was good to see that fencing and boardwalks to protect the shearwater colony had finally been completed; the result of much effort from various volunteers. Eight Ospreys in acrobatic display were sighted and two 'families' of shelduck. An enjoyable trip.

B. and K. McRoberts

WUNGONG GORGE 8 Aug

Some 23 members braved an initially wet and unpromising day for what turned out to be a rewarding half day's walk that produced 40 species and better weather as the morning progressed. There were excellent views of Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Scarlet Robin, Red-capped Parrot and Western Rosella, with brief glimpses of Red-eared Firetail and Varied Sittella. A Wedge-tailed Eagle flew over low but there was no sign of activity at the old nest there.

The track down the Gorge is always good value and certainly lived up to its reputation on this occasion as a worthwhile and reliable venue to see bush-birds. To confuse the issue, a Silver Gull appeared, to scavenge in the car park.

B. Wilson

MARY CARROLL PARK 16 Aug

A small group of birders observed a Red-capped Parrot and its mate drinking at the shoreline. Two young New Holland Honeyeaters were being fed by their parents. Brown Honeyeaters and Little Wattlebirds abounded.

Also seen were a Great Egret, two Musk Ducks, many Dusky Moorhens, a Black Swan with five cygnets, an Australian Pelican and a Rufous Night Heron. Altogether, thirty-seven species were observed.

B. McRoberts

Publications Considered

Marchant, S. 1992. *A Bird Observatory at Moruya, NSW 1975-84*. Occasional Publication No. 1, Eurobodalla Natural History Society 1992. pp 1-99.

A little over two hundred years ago (July 1793) Gilbert White was buried at his beloved Selborne churchyard in Hamp-

shire, England. Gilbert White's book, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* (1789) established him as the first of those who observed, recorded and published accurate, detailed and elegant accounts of natural history. Some of White's observations are still unassailed as the classic studies of the animals and plants he watched in his garden. We are fortunate in Australia to have Stephen Marchant with us, observing, recording and publishing in the same great tradition.

It may seem strange to draw attention in Western Australia to a study of woodland birds in 50 acres (20 hectares) of eucalypt woodland in south-eastern Australia. This publication merits our attention not only because many of the species whose biology is described belong both to east and west, but also because the rigour of the methodology and the careful discussion of the results make reading of the study strongly recommended for all birdwatchers.

Marchant has spent ten years living amongst the birds he has studied. In that time he has examined the effects of fires, drought and environment on the status and movements of his birds. He has measured their breeding seasons, their clutch size, incubation and nesting periods, the sizes of their territories and their longevity. For each measurement Marchant has assessed his methods, highlighted their advantages, limitations and practicality. The result is a readable and fascinating example of the contribution a single person can make to the study of Australian birds going no more than 500 metres from his own front door.

Marchant's analyses of the effects of fire and drought on his bird populations are of great relevance to us in Western Australia. He found that both these environmental factors had short and long term effects, which differed from species to species. For example Eastern Yellow Robins survived the fire but the population declined markedly in subsequent years. Yellow-faced Honeyeaters survived the fires but did not nest in the year of the fire. The following and subsequent years they nested at pre-fire density but used nest sites much higher in the trees than previously, a change in behaviour that persisted thereafter.

Marchant's study has enabled him to correlate movements with such environmental events as the flowering of eucalypts and plagues of insects. In short he became able to understand the natural history of the area and unravel many of its tangled interactions. His results shed much light on previously mysterious aspects of bird behaviour and also raise questions about the validity of other studies and methods, particularly census methods, published on woodland birds.

The book provides many ideas of help to birdwatchers in the field, in highlighting things to note and aids to identification. His diagrams and tables are models for the presentation of results and show the value of keeping quantitative records. These also emphasise the need for colour banding if accurate measures of density are to be obtained in woodland environments.

Together with the good science, the book is also a very personal account, giving glimpses of Stephen's daily routine, his failures as well as his successes, of the activities of his cat and his neighbours and above all of his determination to make a useful contribution to our knowledge of Australian birds.

Stephen Marchant's book can be obtained from him at Box 123, Moruya, NSW, and will provide inspirational and informative reading for all birdwatchers.

S. Davies

Addicted to Birds by Annie Rogers, 1992. Soft cover, 21 x 15 cm, 400g, 240 pp, 16 colour plates, 85 photographs, 3 maps. Cost: \$25 plus \$3 postage and handling in Australia.

NB: The author's royalties will be donated to the RAOU to support their ornithological studies and conservation work.

Every birdwatcher had a tale to tell of their initiation into bird observing. Listening to these stories and swapping yarns is part of the process that unites birdos around the world and reinforces the lessons of every birding adventure. Because they are hardly ever recorded, it is a rare experience to read the story of someone who was gradually engulfed in the pleasures of ornithology.

Annie Rogers provides the opportunity in *Addicted to Birds*. In her own words "It is not an unhealthy addiction; my life has been changed by birds but I don't regret it....Birding has certainly made my life richer." How true for many others also.

The book charts Annie's interest in birds, from her childhood experience of feeding garden birds in England, to being drawn, along with her family, into the rituals of watching and then banding migratory birds in Iran; banding White Pelican chicks in Azerbaijan, to "twinkling" waders along the 80 Mile Beach south of Broome. It describes the kinds of risks that birdos will take in pursuit of their hobby and recounts the many zany misadventures endured along the way, describing people, places and events that will remind every one of us of our own experiences as birdwatchers.

However, this book is not just a collection of amusing stories. It reveals the process by which a fledgeling interest has developed into a commitment to learning more about Australian birds by taking part in data-gathering projects, devoting time and effort to analysing this information and helping to publish results for the rest of the birding community to share.

There is a very useful reference to sources of ornithological research in many parts of the world, much of it dealing with bird banding. There is a list of organisations devoted to the defence of birds and their habitat. The index is especially useful for it lists all people, place names, photographs and events. Birds are listed by common name followed by their scientific name, an excellent method of reinforcing the learning of scientific names of new or familiar species.

Addicted to Birds will entertain, educate, inform and enthuse. It can be ordered from Annie Rogers, 340 Ninks Road, St Andrews, Victoria 3761. Please include payment with your order.

P. de Rebeira

Coming Events

Sunday 5th September Spring Fling, Perry House, 10am to 5pm

Organised by the Wildflower Society of WA as a 'warm up' to the Kings Park Wildflower Festival, in which the RAOU has been invited to participate.

We will offer guided bird walks in Bold Park and Perry Lakes, while staffing our office to answer questions and promote the RAOU.

Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th September Wannamal Wildflower Show

RAOU will mount the 'Threatened Birds of WA' display in the Wannamal Community Hall. Volunteers will be available to answer questions and promote RAOU membership etc to interested people.

Guided bird walks will be considered after the Hotham Valley Express arrives at 10 am on Sunday 11th September.

Monday 13th September Meeting, New Members Night - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre 8 pm

A meeting for those members who joined the RAOU during 1993. The aims of the meeting are to: explain the facilities the WA Group offers, introduce new members to each other and to the committee, give a resume of planned activities, give a short illustrated talk on bird recognition for those new to birding.

It will be a friendly informal affair designed to answer any questions new members might have.

Saturday 18th September - Half day excursion - Big Carine Swamp

Meet at 8.30 am in the car park off Beach Road, Carine. Sixty-six species have been recorded here, including 3 of ibis, 8 of duck and several raptors. Take Wellington boots (it may be swampy) and a telescope.

Leader: Bill McRoberts

Monday 20th September Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, 8pm

Brian Wilson, our previous Chairman and now Hon. Secretary of the RAOU in Melbourne, will speak to us about the birdlife of that part of Antarctica which lies south of South America.

Sunday 26 September - Half day excursion - Wungong Gorge

Our August walk was such a success, we have been asked to repeat it! Meet at 8.30 am in the first car park for Wungong Dam, at the end of Admiral Road (off Albany Highway), Bedfordale.

Leader: Bill McRoberts

Friday 1st to Tuesday 5th October - Kings Park Wildflower Festival

The RAOU will mount a suitable display and volunteers will be rostered over the five days to interact with visitors to the show. More volunteers are required - please ring Judy Blyth (09 381 6293).

Saturday 2nd to Monday 4th October - Campout, Narrogin

A campout on the Hardie property on Clayton Road, between Williams and Narrogin. From Williams, turn left on to the Narrogin Road. 2.4 kms along on the left is the Clayton Road turn-off, a gravel road. Travel 12.5 kms to the property of BG & DY Hardie, on right hand side of road, there turn right and the campsite at the shearers' quarters is 100 metres. Alternatively, if coming from Narrogin, travel 20 kms on Flaeay Road, then Clayton Road to the property (buildings on the left hand side).

There will be ample room for tents and caravans on the

grassed area near the community block. A community kitchen will be available, with a woodstove stoked for cooking, refrigerator and tables for independent camp burners. There are hot showers and sewerage toilets.

The site includes 200 acres of virgin bush - Wandoo and Marri, surrounded by cleared paddocks; birds unknown. The northern boundary ends at 500 acres of forest - Wandoo, Marri and Acacia; birds unknown. The area is approximately 20 kms south of Dryandra.

Meet at 12.00 noon on Saturday (those who wish to arrive on Friday will be most welcome) when Robert Hardie will lead us to birding sites. Spring farming activities will be on during the campout and a tour can be arranged for those interested.

Leader: Bill McRoberts

Saturday 9th October - Half day excursion to Kalamunda National Park

Meet at 8.30 am at the junction of Hummerston Road and Schipp Road at the southern end of Kalamunda National Park. Take Mundaring Weir Road from Kalamunda and turn left into Hummerston Road. A morning walk to see Golden Whistlers and other bushbirds - possibly Red-browed Firetails.

Leader: Brian Wilson

Saturday 9th October to Sunday 10th October - World Birdwatch

World Birdwatch is being organised by Birdlife International in conjunction with the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP). The public and conservation organisations are being asked to take part in birdwatching during the World Birdwatch and send their species list to Birdlife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA England. A report listing all the species seen worldwide will be issued subsequently.

Sunday 24th October - Half day excursion to Roleystone/Darling Scarp

Meet at 8.30 am for an outing in the forest along the Darling Scarp. Park in Coventry Road, south of the Urch Road intersection (opposite Roleystone Nursery). A good bush-birding area. Bring refreshments if you wish to stay for your lunch.

Leader: Rod Smith

Monday 25th October Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, 8pm

Hobby photographer Mavis Norgard will show slides to encourage those members who would like to try bird photography but are deterred by the belief that it is essential to have special equipment and technical knowledge.

Monday 25th to Sunday 31st October - Bird Week

The RAOU has organised three suburban bird walks, which will be advertised to general public in local newspapers and in *The West Australian* Earth 2000 supplement. The walks are:

Wednesday 27th October, Board walk, Lake Booragoon 9 am-10.30 am. Meet 9 am at board walk at Aldridge Street, Booragoon. Guide: Allan Jones.

Thursday 28th October, Bird walk, Mary Carrol Park, 8.30 am to 10 am. Meet at 8.30 am in car park off Eudoria Street, Gosnells. Guide: Bill McRoberts.

Friday 29th October, Bird walk, Bold Park, 8.30 am to

10 am. Meet at 8.30 am in first car park to the right on Perry Lakes Drive after coming from Oceanic Drive. Guides: Peter Anson, Judy Blyth.

Saturday 30th to Sunday 31st October - Twitchathon and BBQ

Twitchathon will coincide with the national event and will commence at 5 am Saturday and finish at 5 pm on Sunday. There will be two categories in WA: North and South of the 26th parallel. Entry cost is \$3 for each team member.

Teams, of 3-4, must stay together for sighting confirmation. Sightings must be recorded on the RAOU WA check-list in ball-point pen. Experienced twitchers are requested to include at least one less skilled if possible. Exotic duck will not be counted.

Eastern States twitchathon participants have obtained sponsorship for some years. Teams may approach friends etc for a donation of say 2 cents for each sighting, but such sponsorship is wholly optional.

Sponsorship monies and entry fees will be applied to the Malleefowl Project.

A BBQ will be held at 5.30 pm on Sunday at Perry House: BYO food, drink and chair. Completed cards and fees/monies to Bill McRoberts at the BBQ.

Saturday 30th to Sunday 31st October - Campout to Dryandra Forest.

Join the Malleefowl mound group for a day or two at Dryandra! Our task is to find as many of the known mounds as possible and assess their condition. We should find a number of active mounds.

Accommodation has been booked: \$10 per person per night, \$2 per day visitor. Meet at the cottages on Friday night or at one of the cottage parking bays on Saturday (or Sunday) morning at 8 am. Later arrivals will be met at the parking bays at 10.30 each morning.

Wear clothing which will give protection from prickly vegetation. Bring a compass, sleeping bag and food. Crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils are provided at the cottages.

Telephone Rod Smith (H 397 5319 or W 293 2777) if you intend to take part.

Leader: Rod Smith

Sunday 7th November - Full day excursion to Austin Bay Nature Reserve, Peel Inlet.

Meet at 9 am at the end of Beacham Road (some older maps show this as Grey's Road). Beacham Road (signposted) is the second turnoff on the right after crossing the Murray River, on the main Mandurah-Pinjarra Road (toward Pinjarra). It is 12.7 kms from Mandurah on the Perth-Bunbury Road and 3.1 kms east of the Murray River. The distance along Beacham Road (winding, but follow your nose) from the Pinjarra Road to the meeting point is about 7 kms.

The area provides a combination of estuarine waters and flats, coastal scrub, woodland, and freshwater wetlands; we should find a good range of birds.

This is Ross River virus country, so bring ample mosquito repellent and long clothes. Wellington boots will probably be needed. Round trip from Perth about 200 kms.

Leader: John Blyth

Saturday 20th to Sunday 21st November - Campout (or full day Saturday or Sunday) to Lowlands Estate, Serpentine.

The owner, Mrs Midge Richardson, has kindly put her shearers' quarters at our disposal for a limited number of people. Lowlands is approximately 1 hour from Perth. Turn off Thomas Road, Oakford into Kargotich Road and travel south for 14 kms to the T-junction with Lowlands Road - a "No Through Road". Turn right; the entrance gate to the property is approximately 3 kms further on.

Meet at 8.30 am on either day at the cottage, which is 2.9 kms from the entrance gate - turn left at the road junction, over a narrow bridge to the cottage, where you will be met. As this is private property, it's important that you arrive only at the appointed time. Those members wishing to stay overnight must contact Allan Burbidge on (09) 306 1642.

Leader: Allan Burbidge

Monday 22nd November Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, 8 pm

Ron Johnstone of the Western Australian Museum is preparing a handbook on the birds of Western Australia and will discuss various aspects of our birds which he has examined in the course of that work.

Saturday 27th to Sunday 28th November - Malleefowl Search Campout, Buntine area.

Malleefowl will be sought in the Buntine area. Meet at Shell Road House, Wubin 9 am on 27th. Contact Rod Smith re accommodation.

Leader/s: Rod Smith/JP. Orsini

No December Meeting

Sunday 5th December - Half day excursion to Alfred Cove

Meet at 8 am at the car park in Troy Park, Burke Drive, Attadale (by the radio mast). Bring your telescope for wader-watching.

Leader: Bill McRoberts

Monday 24th January 1994 Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre 8 pm

Dr Andrew Burbidge, the Director of the Threatened Species and Communities Unit at the WA Wildlife Research Centre at Woodvale, will speak on the birds of the Gibson Desert.

Monday 28th February Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre 8pm

Professor Brian Collins, Head of the School of Environmental Biology at Curtin University and current President of the RAOU on a topic to be announced. Likely to concern either Gouldian Finches or honeyeaters or other nectar feeding birds.

Monday 28th March Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre 8pm

Jeremy Talbot has received several requests for a talk on bird identification. It is hoped to have a panel of experienced birders at this meeting to answer questions from the floor on points of bird recognition. Members are asked to think of questions they would like answered and if possible, send them to Jeremy Talbot, (29, Joyce Road, Lesmurdie, WA 6076, telephone home (09) 291 6563 or work (09) 264 1402.

This meeting is something of an experiment. Audience participation is essential and it is hoped members will rise to the occasion and keep the panellists on their toes.

Notices

OBSERVATIONS COMMITTEE HELP

Please send any Observations to the Observations Committee, not the Editor WABN.

Also, please ensure the location of your observation can be found by reference to the *Travellers Atlas* (or in the case of observations in Greater Metropolitan Perth, by reference to either of the Street Directories.)

Should the specific location of your observation not be marked in the *Travellers Atlas*, give the distance and compass direction from a given location in the *Travellers Atlas*.

Locations which lack the specificity required will not be printed.

'PIKE' AT LAKE GWELUP

WABN No. 65 March 1993 contained a report on page 8 that a "dead pike" was seen at Lake Gwelup. Further enquiry reveals the fish in question to have been (probably) a carp.

B B C B Q Answers

- 1) McLarty Lake with 51 species (p 30)
- 2) Herdsman Lake with mean 27.9 (p 30)
- 3) "to obtain complete species lists wetlands must be monitored over several years and the number of surveys must exceed the number of species recorded" (p 32)
- 4) Eurasian Coot, 56,745 recorded (p 25)
- 5) Approx. 30,000 (p 22)
- 6) Straw-necked Ibis, recorded 2070 kms from the marking site (p 87)
- 7) All of these variables (p 80)
- 8) 79 species (p 11)
- 9) Lakes Claremont and Joondalup (p 12)
- 10) Thomson's Lake with 33,569 (p 11)

All questions derive from Storey AW, Vervest RM, Pearson GB, Halse SA (1993) *Wetlands of the Swan Coastal Plain Volume 7 Waterbird usage of wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain*, EPA & Water Authority of WA, Perth.

Summary of WA Group Committee Activities

Jan-June 1993

The Committee has received requests to report on its activities so as to be more open and accountable to members. This summary is an attempt to comply. Members will realise that much time is taken up with matters of administration too trivial to report but essential to good management.

Finance: The accounts for the financial year 1992 and the budget for 1993 were prepared and presented to the AGM. Attempts to have the accounts audited without cost were unsuccessful and the delay caused the accounts to be presented unaudited. Group finances are sound. The costs of establishing the office in Perry House were absorbed well within the budget and ongoing costs should be met with comparative ease.

For the first time it has become possible to make an allowance for Group projects to which the sum of \$4,000. has been allocated. A loan of \$3,400 to HQ RAOU to provide facilities for the Broome Bird Observatory was made interest free retrospectively in view of the better than expected results of the last financial year.

The half-yearly review presented in June confirms that the Group is operating within budget forecasts.

Conservation: Assistance has been given to several local conservation groups and Councils by giving advice, doing bird counts and where appropriate, preparing support material. We joined in the efforts to save the Shenton Park bushland and were able to present our views in an interview with the Minister.

Plans have been made for the mounting of a Malleefowl census, in concert with the Malleefowl Group Conservation Committee. To date, two searches by organised groups have been made for mounds at Dryandra and one at Birralee Station.

We are maintaining liaison with APB and CALM on matters such as imports of exotic birds, poisoning of feral goats, aspects of feral animal research, poaching of native fauna and the reduction of Silver Gull populations in urban areas.

A submission has been made on conservation aspects of development of the Carnarvon "Fascine".

Reviews were made of several proposals for the management of areas of conservation importance and of allied matters, such as mining in the Rudall River NP and duck shooting in WA.

It was agreed the Group should become a voting member of the Conservation Council but that caution be exercised to obviate any deviation from RAOU policy.

Submissions made by the WA Group on conservation matters are copied to the Convener of the Conservation Committee at HQ RAOU and we have forwarded comments on the draft of the new RAOU Conservation Policy Statement.

Publicity: The Minister of the Environment approved a grant of \$1,000 to prepare displays on "Threatened Species" and "Birds of Perth". The WA Museum was to have taken a copy of the "Threatened Species" display on the "Green Train", an educational project to tour the state for a year, but the tour has been put off due to funding difficulties. The "Threatened Species" display is complete and it will soon be used on our stall. Work is about to start on the "Birds of Perth" display.

A pamphlet has been produced, at \$300 cost, showing the best birding sites around Carnarvon. This has been distributed to the tourist agencies there. We used the pamphlet to support an application for a grant from the Gordon Reid Foundation to prepare similar pamphlets for other sites. We hope also to attract a subsidy from local authorities concerned, so that we shall not be out of pocket.

The RAOU stall has been set up at various functions. It always attracts a good deal of attention and sales from it provide welcome income.

General: The Research Sub-Committee has had several matters under review, including aspects of the Malleefowl Project and the update of the RAOU Checklist of Birds of WA. Details of our National Parks database have been sent to Dr S Ambrose, who is to collate all local databases into a national one.

A grant of \$250 was allocated to update the slide collection.

There is now an excellent selection of fine photographs of Australian birds for members to use. There are two sets of slides, one for loans and one a reference and master set. The final task, to label each slide clearly is now being carried out by our office volunteers: this will not impede borrowings. An enormous amount of labour has been involved in this project and members will appreciate that strict borrowing conditions apply.

There were many reports of the non-delivery of WABN in the early months of the year. No single cause was identified. The Committee appointed a Membership Officer to be the focus of all aspects of membership and WABN subscriber records to solve the problem.

The 50th Anniversary of the WA Group was planned and celebrated with a delightful function held in the grounds of Perry House and a commemorative issue of WA Bird Notes. The gathering also provided an opportunity to make a presentation to Bruce Buchanan to mark his eight years as Editor and now publisher, of WA Bird Notes. Bruce also prepared an index for WABN for which we are most grateful. It was ready for the 50th Anniversary and it is proving to be very popular with subscribers to WA Bird Notes.

Paintings and Photographs

Paintings and photographs of birds by well known artists and photographers are now on sale at Perry House.
Call in to see this lovely collection.
Buy an early Christmas present.

Framed Photographs by Michael Morcombe

Spotted Harrier at Nest	\$295
Bourke's Parrot	\$250
Striated Grasswren	\$295
Eastern Rosella	\$295
Hooded Parrot at Nest	\$295
Hooded Parrot	\$295

Paintings by Martin Thompson

Mulga Parrots	\$600
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Paintings by Val Talbot

Peregrine Falcon	\$300
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Paintings by Michael Morcombe

Brahminy Kite	Neg.
Spotted Harrier	Neg.

FOR SALE

Focal Telescope, 20 X 60, with rotating head to allow 45 or straight. Body only. Rubber armoured. Recently professionally overhauled and cleaned.
Telephone Jack Hunt (09) 451 9982
\$250

W.A. WETLANDS PROJECT - WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The R.A.O.U. wetlands project is producing some interesting results. So far 103 wetlands have been identified as being of outstanding ornithological importance for waterbirds and there are still more to be assessed. Of the 103 wetlands identified only 13 are currently listed on the Register of the National Estate and for some of these the Australian Heritage Commission has little information. As it will not be possible to write nominations for all these wetlands this year, I am focusing on those wetlands which are important for internationally rare birds: the Australasian Bittern, Freckled Duck and Hooded Plover. The Heritage Commission was very happy with our first progress report comprising a scientific methodology, a matrix summarising the wetlands of outstanding importance and their values and four nominations. Thank you to those people who have provided information about wetlands.

A number of volunteers have agreed to assist with fieldwork by collecting supplementary information, photographs and drawing mud maps. However, listed below are several wetlands which still require mud maps and photographs and as yet I have no volunteers to collect this information.

More information about the Register of the National Estate and our project can be found in the next issue of Wingspan. If you are interested in assisting with the project or have general enquires please contact Julie Raines, R.A.O.U. Research Officer, at the R.A.O.U. WA Group Office, P.O. Box 199, Jolimont W.A. 6014. Telephone (09) 383 7749 or (09) 306 1642.

LIST OF WETLANDS FOR WHICH WE NEED MORE INFORMATION

M = mud maps P = photographs all types

Near Perth

Barrett-Lennard Lake
Gibbs Road Wetland System
Lake Joondalup (aerial only)
Thomson Lake

MP
MP
P
P

Narrogin area

Yealering Lake System
Coomelberrup Lake

MP
P

Albany area

Mandurah area

Benger Swamp (ground only)
Lake McClarty
Peel-Harvey Estuary
Yalgorup Lakes

P
P
MP
M

Lake Pleasant View Wetland (aerial)

P

Esperance area

Mortijinup- Nambarup Wetland System
Lake Gore Wetland System (aerial only)
Lake Warden System

MP
MP
M

Manjimup-Cranbrook area

Balicup Lake System

MP

Paynes Find area

Lake Thundellarra

MP

Denmark area

Owingup Wetland System

MP

Broome Bird Observatory Report

Greetings from Broome! So much has happened in past months it is hard to pick a place to start! The 1993 tourist season has been huge in Broome and the Observatory has been attracting record numbers of visitors. They are lucky to see the area at its best, as we had a great wet season, followed by more rain in May and June. The rain has produced profuse flowering and the freshwater lakes are superb. Last year what was dust at lakes Eda and Campion is now perfect breeding habitat for many species of waterbirds, and passerines and raptors are also in abundance.

As I write the waders are arriving back - the numbers of Red Knot, Curlew Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint and most of the smaller species are growing daily and many have good breeding plumage. Welcome back. The dry months have turned up a few surprises in terms of rarities, with up to 57(!) Asian Dowitcher, and Redshank also easily spotted.

Our birdlist continues to grow. Species added recently are: Shining Flycatcher, Port Lincoln Ringneck and Tawny Grassbird (good one Tom!). The Grey Falcon has been seen again, performing the now trademark low-altitude/high speed pass over the Observatory.

We have been receiving plenty more media coverage. Ernie Dingo and the "Great Outdoors" TV show team were here to film us do a cannon-net catch. Fortunately we made a good catch of Godwits, Black-winged Stilt, Gull-billed Tern and a handful of Lesser Crested and Crested Tern. Broome ABC Radio has also been giving coverage to a recent BBO project - the Broome residents (especially children) to become involved in Observatory activities. We have quite a few members and have been mist-netting regularly in town, with a fantastic diversity of birds for the kids to see and hold, including Red-headed Honeyeater, Tree Martin and Olive-backed Oriole.

BBO has landed ANPWS funding to conduct banding and counts at Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach. The first count (earlier in the year) at Eighty Mile Beach yielded one of the largest ever recordings of Oriental Plover - over 18,000 in 13 kilometres! Two weeks later there were just 20!!

The 1994 BBO Course Program is now out. Courses are: APRIL 7-18 WAVE THE WADERS GOODBYE; MAY 15 - 20 BIRDS OF THE KIMBERLEY AND S/E ASIAN FLYWAY; JUNE 6 - 11 FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE SW KIMBERLEY; AUGUST 6 - 11 BIRDS OF THE KIMBERLEY AND S/E ASIAN FLYWAY; SEPT. 5 - 10 WELCOME THE WADERS BACK; OCTOBER 2 - 7 BIRDS OF THE KIMBERLEY AND S/E ASIAN FLYWAY; and NOV 6 - 11 FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE S/W KIMBERLEY. The April course will be a beauty, coinciding with the 1994 AWSG North West Wader Expedition - a two month extravaganza of banding, counts, hide photography and migration watching! Migration watch is amazing! No bird observatory in the world could be better positioned - the flocks fly directly over us, whilst down on the Bay notes are taken on flock size, species, time and state of the tide. A great way to pass the languid Broome evenings! See you up here!

Martina and Vaughan Pattinson

Twitchathon '93

**SATURDAY 30th and SUNDAY 31st
OCTOBER**

The Twitchathon will coincide again this year with the national event taking place in other states, commencing at 5am on Saturday 30th October and finishing at 5am on Sunday 31st October.

You'll need to make up a team of 3 - 4 people who must stay together for confirmation of sightings. Experienced twitchers are asked to include at least one "novice" in their group if possible. This year there will be two categories - one south and one north of the 26th parallel. Sightings must be recorded on the RAOU Checklist of Birds in W.A. (national parks card); a ballpoint pen should be used to mark the cards. Please write your team name (which can be anything) at the top of your card.

Eastern States branches have held sponsored twitchathons for a number of years, where each participant approaches friends, workmates, etc. for a donation of say 2 cents for each bird the participant records. Our group has decided this could be tried in W.A. this year, but that procurement of sponsorship should be strictly optional. If you would like to obtain sponsorship, please collect an official sponsorship form from the RAOU office at Perry House, or ring (09) 383 7749 and one will be posted to you.

A BBQ and prize-giving will be held in the grounds of the RAOU office (Perry House) from 5.30pm on Sunday 31st October (BYO food, drink and chair). Non-twitchers are most welcome!

The twitchathon entry fee is \$3 per head (which will go towards the W.A. Mallee Fowl Project); cards and fees to be handed to Bill McRoberts at the BBQ. (Please note: poultry, exotic ducks, etc. will not be accepted as genuine sightings. Cassowaries are definitely out, and no lyrebirds, please!)