

Western Australian Bird Notes

Quarterly Newsletter of
Birds Australia Western Australia Inc
(a division of Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union)

No 94 June 2000

NAREMBEEN NEWS

Early last year we were asked to survey areas near Narembreen to support the creation of a five kilometre revegetation corridor. The corridor is to extend from a patch of farmland bush to another patch surrounding a grain silo.

Five weekend surveys of farmland and road verges in the district have now been done in the year to February 2000. Unusually heavy rainfall over that period has resulted in the appearance of a well-filled lake for most of that time, with many opportunistic waterbirds. On the weekend of 12-13 February 2000, we saw a Glossy Ibis, Little Grassbird, Dusky Moorhen and Blue-billed Duck. Large Pink-eared Ducklings were on the water last June, three months after the first heavy rains.

Others to apparently take advantage of the good rainfall in the area were Crimson Chats, Budgerigars, Cockatiels, Masked Woodswallows and of course the resident Malleefowl; as described below, four Malleefowl chicks were seen on the edge of a paddock, close to bushland, last February.

The farm bushland is of mixed vegetation, most of it dense enough to make walking through it difficult, and is completely fenced. Its immediate attraction is Malleefowl, ten of which were seen in the surrounding paddocks on one afternoon in January 1996. On that same weekend we caught and banded two, fitting coloured bands to aid in future sightings.

Imagine the delight when one of the colour-banded Malleefowl was seen again! Only 200 m from the place of capture but nearly four years later, it wandered into the view through the binoculars when the object of our interest happened to be a Red Wattlebird!

That was last October. More recently, on the weekend before Valentine's Day, we commenced a 2-hectare search

at the same bushland with a quick look along the fence line from the car. Nearby were four Malleefowl chicks! Appearing little concerned by the snoopers, they nevertheless made their way directly into the safety of the bush.

The next morning the image of those chicks was still etched in our minds as we optimistically checked the site again. At first there was nothing so we did a slow U-turn to move off to our next site when suddenly up they went! This time three chicks. They flew only about 5 metres, then

dispersed quietly into the bush.

Rod Smith and Joyce Hegney



Malleefowl (Gnow) *Leipoa ocellata*.

Photo by Ian F Duncan,
courtesy of Malleefowl Preservation Group

INCORPORATION

After many months of effort and negotiations on the part of various local members, Donald Coventry and BA Council, we are now incorporated — hence the new name, Birds Australia Western Australia Inc. See the Chairman's reports in this and the next issue for further details.

Observations

Compiled by the Observations Committee. Shires are in brackets.

Names and order follow Christidis, L. and Boles, W. (1994) *The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and its Territories*. RAOU Monograph 2.

Observers are reminded that, for rarely seen or difficult to identify species, adequate documentation is required for inclusion in WABN. For example, new records, or records of species rarely recorded in the south-west should be accompanied by a description of what was *actually seen* and reasons for the identification. Note that a statement to the effect that what was seen fitted a description in a field guide is a statement about what is in a field guide, and does not tell the editors what you actually saw. Providing extra details also assists the editors to provide extra information to readers.

SOUTH-WEST (Shark Bay to Cape Arid)

Rockhopper Penguin – 1, 24/04/00, Windy Harbour (weak; now being rehabilitated) (Manjimup) – LH

Southern Fulmar – 1+, late 11/99, beachwashed at Pelsaert Island (Abrolhos) – CS, JB (most northerly record on west coast)

White-headed Petrel – 1, 5/2 and 7/2/00, Point Dalling, Dunsborough (Busselton) – RP

Grey Petrel – 2, 10/03/00, Point Dalling, Dunsborough (Busselton) – RP

Grey-headed Albatross – 1, 17/2/2000, beachwatched at Yokinup Bay, Cape Arid National Park (Esperance) – AR

Royal Spoonbill – 1, 18/4/00, Herdsman Lake (Perth) – MB (details elsewhere in this issue)

Dusky Moorhen – 1, 12/02/00, at lake on farm near Narembeen (Narembeen) – RS, JHe

Galah – 3, 20/4/00, Hirschel Lake, Rottnest (vagrant on Rottnest) – RS, JHe

Rainbow Lorikeet – 4, 18/1/00, Mandurah (Mandurah) – JH * 1+, 3/2/00, Boya (Mundaring) – JM * 20, in Marri, 6/2/00, Darlington (Mundaring) – AIS

Budgerigar – hundreds, 12-13/02/00, Narembeen district (Narembeen) – RS, Jhe

Barking Owl – 1, 8/2/00, Gngara (Wanneroo) – GR (bird seen at night giving a loud screeching call)

Crimson Chat – hundreds, 7-8/10/99, Narembeen district (Narembeen) – RS, Jhe

Hooded Robin – 2 males, 1 female, 31/1/2000, Poison creek Road, Cape Arid National Park (Esperance) – AR

Western Yellow Robin – 1, 19/03/00, Yanchep National Park (near golf course) (Wanneroo) – WS, AS

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

Little Stint – 2, 11/99, Lake MacLeod (Carnarvon) – TK, CD

White-winged Black Tern – 1 (with Whiskered and Gull-billed Terns), 29/12/99, Nallan Lake (Cue) – BE

Fan-tailed Cuckoo – 1, 21/4/00, Rest Dam on Mt Monger Station (at 30.48.32/121.43.51) (Kalgoorlie-Boulder) – CG, MG (north-eastern edge of range)

Dusky Woodswallow – 4, 22/04/00, 1 km north of Main Reef Mine (at 30.36.44/121.37.17) (Kalgoorlie-Boulder) – CG, MG

KIMBERLEY

Square-tailed Kite – 1, 12/2/2000, Argyle diamond mine tailings dam (Wyndham – East Kimberley) – FO (unusual this time of year)

Red-backed Button-quail – 1, 23/04/00, Argyle diamond mine (Wyndham–East Kimberley) – FO (detailed description from bird in the hand) (eastern edge of range) * 1, 04/00, Broome Bird Observatory (Broome) – BBO

Common Redshank – 200, 03/00, Roebuck Bay (Broome) – BBO (possibly the largest flock recorded in Australia)

Asian Dowitcher – 416, 03/00, Roebuck Bay (Broome) – BBO (possibly the largest flock recorded in Australia)

Little Ringed Plover – 1, early 2000, Mandora (Broome) – CH, TS

Masked Woodswallow – flocks of up to 600, early May 2000, heading north over Broome Bird Observatory (Broome) – BBO

Gouldian Finch – 1 or 2 (black-headed adult and possible immature), 6/2/2000, Argyle Diamond Mine Village (Wyndham–East Kimberley) – FO

ASHMORE REEF

Pale-headed Munia – 3, early 2000 – GS (detailed description taken and being prepared for submission to Birds Australia Rarities Committee; if accepted, will be the first record for Australia)

CHRISTMAS ISLAND

Brown Shrike – 1, 4/00, KC *et al.*

Yellow Wagtail – 1, 4/00, KC *et al.*

Grey Wagtail – 3, 12/99, KC *et al.*

OBSERVERS

AR = Allan Rose

AIS = Alex Saar

AS = Aye Aye Sarafin

BBO = Broome Bird Observatory

BE = Barry Evans

CD = Colin Davis

CG = Cheryl Gole

CH = Chris Hassell

CS = Chris Surman

FO = Frank O'Connor

GR = Greg Rance

GS = George Swann

JB = John Blyth

JH = James Howell

JHe = Joyce Hegney

JM = Jenny Muir

KC = Kevin Coate

LH = Leslie Harrison

MB = Max Bailey

MG = Martin Gole

RP = Ross Payton

RS = Rod Smith

TS = Tony Start

TK = Tony Kirkby

WS = Wally Sarafin

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sirs

Tender Loving Care for the Environment

I wish to register concern over a television advertisement being shown in prime time (before 7:30 pm) when children and young teenagers are viewing the box.

This advert which depicts the falling (or throwing to the ground) of dead birds and lizards may well help adults to realise the need for looking after the environment. But with the accompanying pleasant music and the "throwing" to the ground of dead birds and lizards the six to fourteen year olds are getting a confused message.

The message for our young folk should be:

"CARE" Care for one another
 Care for our animals both domestic and native
 Care for the environment.

There is enough violence and cruelty today without reinforcing this principle to children showing not only needless death to birds and lizards but also the careless "throwing" to the ground of these creatures whilst all the time playing such pleasant music in the background.

Television is a great learning medium. Could not the advertisement be replaced by promotion, with animals and birds and scenes from nature, of the principles of "Caring" and "Tender Loving Care" (TLC).

Children need lots of TLC for a balanced development and will only learn to pass on TLC themselves if exposed to TLC both in inter-personal relationships and with animals and the environment.

M H Bremner

WA Group Reports

BIRDS AUSTRALIA – WA GROUP COMMITTEE Annual Report 1999

The year in review provided another busy and generally rewarding year. In my first year as Chairman I have been fortunate to have an enthusiastic team of volunteers dedicated to furthering the aims of the group.

There was some rearrangement of the committee this year following Clive Napier's retirement. While his presence on committee is missed, he continues to contribute his time and expertise generously to many projects. Dr Mike Bamford stepped up to take on the position of Vice Chairman, and he has continued to look

after Research and Conservation issues for the group. Margaret Philippon once more performed with her total efficiency as our Secretary and as the typesetter for *WA Bird Notes*. Mary Vaughan has again filled the role of Bookkeeper and administered the group's finances in tandem with Treasurer Greg Wylie. Sue Abbotts continued on the Excursions subcommittee and provided valuable advice and assistance for the Group's incorporation quest. The Excursions subcommittee was coordinated by Bill McRoberts and a very active calendar of long-distance trips, weekend campouts, and day excursions resulted. The distribution of *WA Bird Notes* was again organised by Rod Smith who exercised tight control on the associated costs. John Blyth's commitment to the group remains strong as joint editor of WABN. The two new members of the committee, Sandra McKenzie and Michael Brooker, have contributed fresh ideas and experience. Sandra has considerable experience in applying for, and more importantly, securing grants funding, and has been a valued addition to the Grants subcommittee. Michael has brought a wealth of experience as a research scientist to the group and has strengthened an already strong scientific presence.

The committee, of course, represents a very small number of the active contributors to the group's activities and successes. The group's monthly meetings are consistently interesting and well attended, thanks primarily to the quality of the speakers and presentations arranged for us by Brian Wilson. Dr Allan Burbidge has continued to serve as joint editor, with John Blyth, of WABN. Allan also continues to advise on scientific issues, helping with oddities reported to the Atlas, and in a more general sense for the local group. We are fortunate to have had our Publicity and Education endeavours in Judy Blyth's hands. Judy has worked tirelessly to provide displays, bird-walks and talks for local organisations. Allan Jones has continued to display his skill at raising funds to ensure that local projects remain active. Colin Davis still coordinates the Wader Studies Group in the west, and the pelagic trips organised by Frank O'Connor remain fully subscribed and most enjoyable. The operation of the group's office has once again been managed most efficiently by Max Bailey, the roster of volunteers has been looked after by Wendy Napier, the library tended by Liz Walker, and the computer systems maintained by Richard Chyne. Valerie Hemsley took on the task of selling our cards and is settling into the position well. Special mention must be made here of the contribution made to the national Atlas project by Cheryl Gole. Cheryl is the WA coordinator for the project, and her boundless enthusiasm and drive have ensured that there is a wealth of data being submitted for the Atlas from WA. Finally there remain the many volunteers, unnamed here, who have spent much time and considerable effort in providing the raw data that is required by the many projects that were conducted during the year.

This report can only accommodate the more important events that occurred through the year. There were many others that I have not mentioned here.

The year saw the devolution of ownership of Perry House, the group's office location, to the Botanic Garden and Parks Authority. Perry House is located on the edge of Bold Park, and the Authority also assumed control of Bold Park. The Authority has been active in improving the immediate surrounds of Perry House with additional fencing and a formalised car parking area. The Authority has also prepared a management plan for Bold Park to which the WA group had, and has, input.

Projects

Early in the year we were notified that we had been successful in our application for funds from the Natural Heritage Trust Centenary Fund. The application, made jointly with three other community groups, was for the construction of a walk trail in Bold Park, adjacent to our office. The trail is due to be completed during 2001. Congratulations to Tony Bennett on his contribution to the submission and its subsequent success.

Three project reports were released during the year.

In June, the 'Hooded Plover Report Number 2 1996-1999' was published, Marcus Singor reporting on the additional research carried out since the first report of 1996. The report shows that it is possible to improve our knowledge of an elusive species, but that it takes time and a great deal of perseverance on the part of the members conducting the surveys. We are now in a position to suggest areas where signs requesting care on the part of beach users may help reduce the level of threat to the breeding success of the Hooded Plover. Special mention must be made here of Phyllis Bentley, who has not only coordinated the data collection since the inception of the original Hooded Plover project, and continues to do so, but has also travelled extensively around the state collecting data.

Also in June, Shapelle McNee authored the 'Report on Western Ground Parrot Survey at Waychinicup and Manypeaks'. This documented the research carried out between April and October 1998. Again, the efforts of many volunteers were harnessed to improve our knowledge of an extremely elusive subject with a very restricted distribution. Shapelle has been very successful in establishing interested volunteer groups in areas remote from Perth, and I hope that the WA group will be able to continue to work with her on Ground Parrot research.

On 24 November the 'Birds on Farms Project in Western Australia 1996-1999' report was launched at our Perry House office by Mr Rex Edmondson, Chairman of both the Soil and Land Conservation Council of WA, and of the Western Australian Landcare Trust. Rex, a farmer from Jerramungup, was an active contributor of data to the project. 'Birds on Farms' started as a national project in 1995, and in 1996 Brenda Newbey was appointed co-ordinator for WA. In 1997, Main Roads WA joined the project by funding the WA group to survey, over two years, the bird populations in roadside vegetation re-established by the department. The complementary nature of the data collected from the farms and from the roadside verges

Birds Australia Western Australia Inc Office, Perry House

71 Oceanic Drv, Floreat WA 6014

Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30 am to 12.30 pm

Telephone: (08) 9383 7749

Facsimile: (08) 9387 8412

Email: birdswa@starwon.com.au

Birds Australia Home Page:

<http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au>

Chairman: Clive Nealon

35 Hilarion Road, Duncraig WA 6023

Tel: (08) 9448 5921

E-mail: clivenealon@bigpond.com

Joint Editors: John Blyth

Tel: (08) 9405 5100 (w)

Tel: (08) 9381 6293 (h)

Fax: (08) 9306 1641 (w)

E-mail: johnbl@calm.wa.gov.au

Allan Burbidge

Tel: (08) 9405 5109 (w)

Tel/Fax: (08) 9306 1642 (h)

Fax: (08) 9306 1641 (w)

E-mail: austecol@cygnus.uwa.edu.au

Notes for Contributors

The Editors request contributors to note:

- WABN publishes material of interest to the WA Group
- contributions should be written or typed with **double spacing**—a copy on disk of word processed documents would assist, especially if in MSWord format; a style sheet is available from Perry House to guide writers regarding format
- WABN uses Birds Australia recommended English names
- except for Observations, contributions will be published unless the contributor is informed to the contrary.
- the full Editorial Policy is stated in WABN 74:10-12

Deadline for the September 2000 Issue
1 August 2000 at Perry House

Advertising Rates

1/4 page \$30.00

1/2 page \$50.00

Full page \$90.00

contributed to an interesting and useful report which could form the base for future studies and management. It is also important that those people who provide the data that makes a project possible be provided with feedback. Following the Birds on Farms project, several presentations were made in the rural areas to those interested in the results, and each farm that was surveyed was presented with a detailed individual report on the results obtained. Congratulations to Brenda on a fine job.

Finances

The group's finances have been maintained such that our income over the year has kept pace with our expenditure. I believe that we have extracted maximum value, in terms of results, from the Grants obtained to support the projects that have been run. Our general revenue, again dependent largely on sales of our cards, has been satisfactory, and has enabled us to run the office and assist in other areas where we can. The group provided \$1,000 to help the observatories attend the British Bird Fair in September, and we again provided funds to students who were attending Observatory Courses. A more detailed financial report is given elsewhere in this issue.

Membership

Our membership in WA is extremely varied, ranging from dedicated professional ornithologists to keen amateurs with varying levels of expertise. I believe, and I hope, that a good balance has been struck to satisfy all tastes. The new year appears to hold the prospect of being equally as busy as 1999, with the added interest of the special projects that will get underway in preparation for our centenary celebrations in 2001. I look forward to 2000 with the knowledge that we will need to be ever more aware of our responsibility to future generations in improving the chances for all of our birds to survive the demands made on their environment.

At the AGM held in February 2000, Margaret Philippon, Sue Abbotts, and Bill McRoberts did not seek re-election to the committee. Their places were taken by Dot Kingston, who took on the position of Secretary, Wes Bancroft, and Jennifer Wilcox.

Our thanks to those standing down for their unstinting efforts in the past, and welcome to the new faces — I hope that you find the job rewarding and worthwhile.

There have been other changes that have taken place.

Judy Blyth has found it necessary to relinquish the role of Publicity and Education Officer that she has performed so well. As a result we are, of course, looking for someone to take on that position, and Judy has generously offered to help anyone who is interested find their feet. Please contact me if you think you would like to learn more about the position.

We have finally 'allowed' Max Bailey to retire from the Office Manager job. Max has filled the position for at least six years and, in fact, continued for a year longer than he intended because we failed to identify a replacement. Max's contribution has been extremely valuable to us all

and we have been able to take the smooth running of the office for granted due to his efforts.

Liz Walker is now the Office Manager and she has passed the Library on to Sue Mather.

We are always looking for volunteers to help ensure the smooth running of the group. If you would like to help in any way please let me know.

Incorporation

Finally, late news — Birds Australia Western Australia Group has finally achieved Incorporation! We officially became incorporated on Wednesday 19 April 2000. The road to incorporation has been long and frustrating but I am sure that the effort will prove worthwhile. Many people have been involved over a long period to achieve this result, and I wish to thank all of them for their efforts. Special mention needs to be made of Brian Wilson, Clive Napier, Sue Abbotts and Margaret Philippon for their efforts in Perth, and also to BA CEO, Donald Coventry and the 1999 BA Council members who helped us to achieve our mutual aims.

Clive Nealon
WA Group Chairman



Shady paperbarks and sedges — ideal habitat for Red-winged Fairy-wrens but ...
Bootline Road Nature Reserve
Illustration by Pam Agar

(see article on page 23)

Birds Australia-WA Group
(a division of Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union)

Extract from Audited Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 1999

Note: If you would like a copy of the complete accounts, please contact our Perry House office.

Independent audit report to the members — Extract

Qualification

As is common for an organisation of this type, much of the income is derived from sales and fees and it is not practicable for the organisation to establish control over these items prior to their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly my audit in relation to these items was limited to amounts recorded.

Qualified audit opinion

In my opinion, subject to the above qualification, the financial statements present fairly the financial position of Birds Australia (WA Group), as at 31 December 1999 and

the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with the basis of accounting as outlined in Note 1 to the accounts.

Dated this 24th day of February 2000.

Signed: *David John Hayman* CPA, Perth WA

Notes

- (a) Income Tax: The organisation is an "approved research institute" and is exempt from income tax.
- (b) Stock on Hand: Stock on hand has been valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.
- (c) Plant and Equipment: Plant and equipment have been brought to account at cost or valuation less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

Balance Sheet for the Year ended 31 December 1999 — extract

	\$	\$	\$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Total Cash on Hand	40,133.41		
Total Stock on Hand	<u>14,711.00</u>		
Total Current Assets		54,844.41	
Non-Current Assets			
Investments	71,126.79		
Equipment on Hand	<u>4,412.00</u>		
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>75,538.79</u>	
Total Assets			130,383.20
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Sundry Creditors	<u>790.00</u>		
Total Current Liabilities		790.00	
Grants			
Healthways – Promotions	276.50		
Main Roads – Road Verges	66.00		
Cape Arid WWF for Nature	2,630.70		
Alcoa Donation	400.00		
Bequest	1,270.15		
C Hassell Donation	210.00		
Cambridge Brochures	<u>1,780.00</u>		
Total Grants		<u>6,633.35</u>	
Total Liabilities			<u>7,423.35</u>
Net Assets			122,959.85
Accumulated funds			
Prior Year's Surplus/Deficit		116,574.40	
Retained Earnings		2,938.13	
Current Year Surplus/Deficit		3,447.32	
Total Accumulated Funds			122,959.85

Birds Australia-WA Group
(a division of Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union)

Profit and Loss Statement — January 1999 through December 1999 — extract

	\$	\$	\$
Income			
Trading Table			
Sales – Trading Table			
Banking – Trading Table	14,251.62		
Cost of Goods Sold			
Purchases – Trading Table			
Total Cost of Goods Sold	<u>-10,880.35</u>		
Total Trading Table		3,371.27	
Books			
Sales – Books	4,316.93		
Total Cost of Goods Sold	<u>-1,999.45</u>		
Total Books		2,317.48	
WA Bird Notes			
Sales – WA Bird Notes	5,439.00		
* Total Cost of Goods Sold WABN	<u>-6,649.25</u>		
Total WA Bird Notes		-1,210.25	
Other Income Received			
Members' Fees	5,843.78		
Donations	820.10		
Interest Received	<u>987.81</u>	7,651.69	
Other Items			
Total Increase in value of Investments	<u>1,351.05</u>		
Total Other Items		<u>1,351.05</u>	
Total Income			13,481.24
Expenses			
Audit Fees		350.00	
Bank Charges		182.74	
Donations		1,865.00	
Dues & Subs		75.00	
Office expenses, eg, rent, power, phone, photocopier, computer		5,339.90	
Functions		566.21	
Insurance		314.67	
Legal & Accounting		562.40	
Write-off Equipment		<u>778.00</u>	
Total Expenses			10,033.92
Net Surplus/(Deficit)			3,447.32

Purchases – WA Bird Notes includes an item for purchase and printing of 4 years' supply of envelopes.

THIRD CORELLA COUNT

Twenty five BAWAG members spent two or so hours on Saturday, 15 April searching a large number of sites from which corellas have been reported in the last few months. The results are summarised in Table 1 below. As far as possible the results are grouped in neighbouring areas, eg along the Swan River from Guildford downwards. Most

observers used a combination of driving to cover as many separate sites as possible and walking at specific sites to cover as much area as possible. After some discussion, I believe that all identifications as to which species was seen are reliable.

Table 1 Results of the Perth metropolitan corella count, 15/4/2000

Observers	Sites	Results
1. Swan River, from Guildford to Fremantle		
Ian and Eleanor Rowley	Parks and open areas on both sides of Swan River from Guildford to Middle Swan Bridge. Ending at Stirling Square, Guildford	600 to 900 Little Corellas At least 50 Long-billed Corellas
Robert Schmidt	Swan River, from Pickering Park, B'dean, to Tonkin Highway Bridge	65 Little Corellas 20 Long-billed Corellas
Mary Vaughan	Ollie Worrel Reserve, High Wycombe	7 Western Corellas
Cheryl Gole	Redcliffe Bridge to Garrett Rd along Swan River	No corellas
Tom Delaney	Swan foreshore; Narrows Bridge to Burswood	4 Little Corellas
Tom Spalding	Tomkins Park, Applecross	No corellas
John and Judy Blyth	Point Resolution,	No corellas
John and Judy Blyth	Blackwall Reach, Chidley Point, Minim Cove, Bicton	About 100 eastern Long-billed Corellas around golf course
Audrey Turner	Lower Swan River, from Preston Point to Point Walter Reserve.	No corellas
2. South of the Swan River, approximately from north to south		
Audrey Turner	Manning Park	Long-billed Corellas in pine trees, but too dark to count (? 6-8). Three weeks prior there were 50 of the species in these trees.
Ken Richardson	North Lake	No corellas
Clive and Wendy Napier	Canning Highway at Point Walter Road	70 Long-billed Corellas, flying in from north west
Clive and Wendy Napier	Fremantle Golf Course	No corellas
Peter Mawson	Royal Fremantle and Fremantle Golf Courses	No corellas
Peter Mawson	Suburban East Fremantle	5 Long-billed Corellas, flying south to north at 1620 hours
Bryan Barrett and Margery Clegg	Canning River; Kent Street Weir to Nicholson Rd Bridge	No corellas
Dick Rule	Anstey Swamp, Baldivis	No corellas
Dick Rule	Mandurah area	No corellas
Sue Kabab	Big Swamp, Bunbury	No corellas

3. North of the Swan River, approximately from north to south		
Allan and Michael Burbidge	Lake Joondalup, eastern side	7 Long-billed Corellas, 27 possible Littles
Neil Hamilton	Neil Hawkins Park, Lake Joondalup	72 Long-billed Corellas, 2 Little Corellas
Neil Hamilton	Mawson Park, Hillarys	110 Little Corellas
Michael Hancock	Carine Open Space Lake Gwelup	No corellas
John and Judy Blyth	Subiaco State School Lake Monger	No corellas Sunday, 16/4, 8pm, no corellas!
Andrew Burbidge	Jackadder Lake, Woodlands	26 Little Corellas
Andrew Burbidge	Herdsmen Lake, Floreat	190 Little Corellas
Jeff Richardson	Perry Lakes	120 Little Corellas
Nora Brockman	Lake Claremont	7 Little Corellas

The total numbers recorded for all three possible species of corella are lower this year than last year, but still considerably higher than the first count in 1998 (Table 2).

Table 2. Total numbers recorded for each species of corella in counts in 1998, 1999 and 2000

Species	1998	1999	2000
Long-billed Corella	About 140	577-627	250-374
Little Corella	About 820	1385 to 1580	939-1451
Western Corella	Nil	7	Nil

I hope to analyse these data in more detail for the next issue of WABN, but at least we can say that there has not been an observed increase this year. It is impossible to say whether this observation is real or an artifact of the birds having moved to other places, that were not counted, this year. Certainly, there were reports, on the day of the count, of no corellas from several sites that only a few weeks previously had supported many hundreds of Little Corellas. Similarly, the number of Long-billed Corellas was lower than might have been expected from reports of numbers from the areas around Fremantle, Canning Regional Park and the Swan River from Burswood to Guildford a few weeks previous to the count. Further, populations of corellas are known from both Mandurah and Bunbury, but none were seen there during the count. It is highly likely that the Mandurah and Bunbury populations have come from aviary escapees in those areas and are not linked with the Perth populations.

This year's count does confirm that both Little Corellas and (eastern) Long-billed Corellas have

substantial populations around Perth and that both species are extremely mobile and opportunistic. I think it is still valid to say that unless control measures are instituted quickly, the south west of Western Australia will have two new, fully established feral species of birds within a few years!

I am still very keen to learn of roosting sites for the Long-billed Corella. At present I know of three that are at least used frequently, if not permanently. These are Stirling Square at Guildford, Canning Regional Park, where birds roost at Kent Street Weir and elsewhere along the Canning where there are large trees, and a site along the Canning Highway where birds feeding come from Point Walter to roost.

Once again, many thanks to all of our counters on the day and to those people who have informed me of possible areas to include in future counts.

John Blyth

GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

A Thanks to Our Sponsors

With the support of members, the community and sponsors, we continue to have a number of successful projects in a variety of fields, in many regions of Western Australia.

* **The Gordon Reid Foundation**, an initiative of the Lotteries Commission, has made a further grant of \$5000 to meet the demand for bird brochures. Brochures are being prepared for Melville City, Bold Park, Onslow, Norseman and Dalwallinu.



Melville City and Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority have given further financial support for their brochures to be A3 size in full colour.

* A brochure on the 'Birds of Cambridge' is now at the printer. Thanks to the **Town of Cambridge** for this grant.

We have just been advised that the Walpole Group has received a **Gordon Reid Grant** for two-colour brochures, the water birds and bush birds of Walpole.

When at the office, be sure to examine the range of similar brochures on birding areas of Western Australia.

* **Healthway** has again sponsored walks, talks and displays and some of the Atlas newsletters.



* A separate article in this issue tells us about the Hooded Plover Project sponsored by **Coast and Clean Seas**. Brenda Newbey and Julie Raines with the Hooded Plover Sub-committee have made a very active beginning to this project.



* Finally, Tony Bennett has the grant from the **Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts** to commence constructing the Centenary Walk from Perry House to Camel Lake which will be ready for the official opening in 2001.

* An application is at present with **Gordon Reid Foundation** to sponsor a survey of breeding areas of Carnaby's (Short-billed) Black-Cockatoo.

Many thanks to all the workers on the above projects.

Allan, Tony, Liz

HOODED PLOVER PROJECT



Birds Australia (WA Group) recently obtained a grant from the Coasts and Clean Seas program of the National Heritage Trust. The application, based on past research by Birds Australia (WA Group), was prepared by Allan Jones and Sandra McKenzie. The project is to continue for two years, with most effort being spent in the first year.

Two part time Project Officers have been appointed. Julie Raines is organising most of the meetings and

research (two days per week for the first year), and Brenda Newbey provides support in various ways (one day per fortnight for the first year). The Hooded Plover Sub-Committee is actively supporting the project. Members are Phyllis Bentley, David Free, Sandra McKenzie and Marcus Singer.

The aim of the project is to improve protection of Hooded Plovers in areas that are important for them. Nesting is a vulnerable time for Hooded Plovers as the nest site is usually an open area of beach or lake shore. Some Hooded Plovers breed on inland lakes, while others breed on coastal and near coastal sites. Where the beach is shared with 4WDs and dogs, breeding is often unsuccessful.

Four shires (Esperance, Augusta-Margaret River, Jerramungup and Waroona), shown in past projects to have areas well used by Hooded Plovers, are targeted. Each area will be visited and contacts made with local bird-watchers and land managers of the Hooded Plovers' preferred sites. Where relevant, contact will be made with other (human) users of the sites. It is hoped that local bird-watchers will undertake a monitoring program.

A brochure will be prepared with Hooded Plover Committee and community input. Where appropriate, beach signs or other aids to protection may be designed. A document with background information and local management strategies for Hooded Plovers will be developed during the course of the project.

The first of the regional meetings has been held in Preston Beach near Yalgorup National Park, with the CALM ranger Steve Dutton, three Hooded Plover enthusiasts Bill Russell, Frank Pridham and Dick Rule, and the two Project Officers. Hooded Plovers have been more thoroughly surveyed in this area than any other in Western Australia. It was decided that a cumulative mapping system for placement of records would be most useful here.

Special assistance requested 23 to 30 September. An important part of the project is to do some broad-scale surveying of Hooded Plover locations and numbers, and to gather as much breeding information as possible. The emphasis for the project is coastal, but any Hooded Plover records over the life of the project will be of value. The first two of three co-ordinated survey times will be late September this year and early February next year. If you can assist with the September survey in southern Western Australia (inland on salt lakes, or coastal areas from Geraldton to Eyre Bird Observatory), please contact Phyllis Bentley (9354 0127) or one of the Project Officers (Julie 9306 1642 or Brenda 9337 5673). It's a huge area and any help will be very welcome. If you are willing to participate in the September survey, and are to be in a particular area at the time, we can supply information about past records in the area, or likely spots to check out.

By the end of the project, information about Hooded Plovers should be more readily available where it will be of most use and some practical aids to Hooded Plover conservation and management should be in place.

Brenda Newbey

ROTTNEST MID SUMMER WADER COUNT, 2000

Rottnest provided a number of bonuses for the BA members who made the trip to the island for the annual mid summer wader count. Once again, thanks to UWA Department of Zoology and Dr Jane Prince, our base during the survey was the research station at Wadjemup Hill.

In contrast to most of the other SW locations surveyed during this year's count, shorebirds were present at the Rottnest sites in reasonable numbers. A variety of rarely seen wader species and regular sightings of leg-flagged birds were some of the highlights that kept birders on their toes throughout their stay on the island.

Early arrivals were barely off the ferry when an obligatory stop at the causeway caused a fumbling frenzy for binoculars due to the sighting of a Red-necked Phalarope feeding on the water approximately 50 m from the road.

The bird was an adult in non-breeding plumage and for the following days of our stay, most members of the group were able to observe this rarely seen visitor on the south side of the causeway between Government House Lake and Lake Herschel.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater Excursion

This was a trip after dark to the west end of the island on Friday evening to view the Wedge-tailed Shearwaters returning to their nesting grounds. It provided the group with an almost hands-on experience, when members viewing the birds from the wooden catwalks were showered with sand as the shearwaters excavated the entrances to their nesting burrows only metres away.

The Rottnest Waders

In contrast to the majority of mainland locations, the Rottnest bird life is reasonably accustomed to the presence of humans. This enabled observers to obtain relatively close up views of most of the wader species. The highlights were sightings of four species relatively rarely seen: Pectoral Sandpiper, Lesser Sand Plover, Whimbrel and Red-necked Phalarope. On two different occasions a group of Greater Sand Plovers was seen loafing at the causeway. Small groups of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were seen at a variety of sites. *(This species had not been seen on our two previous visits.)*

At the end of the program 23 wader species had been seen by most members of the group.

Avian Behaviour Patterns

Heavy rain in early January was influencing the departure of Banded Stilts to newly formed wetlands in the south of the state. This species' numbers could be seen decreasing each day as the flocks broke up and adult birds departed.

A family of Red-necked Avocets were in residence at Salmon Swamp, where good views of the half grown runners and the protective behaviour of the parent birds could be obtained.

Coastal Observations

Ospreys could be seen with very little effort around the beaches, while Bridled Terns were seen around the coasts and selected limestone stacks. Fairy Terns were seen around the coast and there was a colony of nesting birds at Bagdad Lake. Opportunities to witness these day-to-day bird activities were taken up by the group and lively sessions ensued on late afternoons back at our base camp, as the returning parties recounted their experiences.

Bush Bird Survey

In addition to the wader program, early arrivals were asked to monitor resident bush birds at three different locations selected by the Rottnest Environmental Staff. Some extra excitement was provided during these surveys when the odd serpent was encountered. One member I've been told should seriously consider entering for the high jump at the Sydney Olympics.

Snakes aside, the bird count held at the end of each day grew steadily with the number of species on the final day totaling exactly sixty.

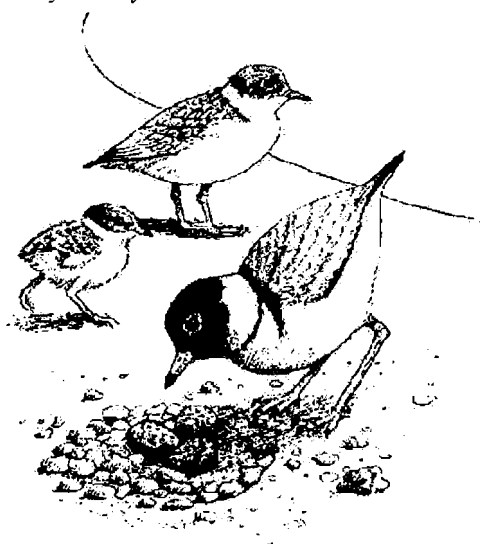
The Wader Count

Participants were formed into groups and each group given a location to monitor. These were the same areas visited during last year's count. Observers were familiar with the sites, having visited them on previous days. New members were teamed up with those with experience gained during last year's count.

On Sunday morning the groups were up early and driven to their allotted locations. This task was made easier by the generous offer of a small bus, by the Rottnest Environment Manager Claire Wright.

At 0700 hrs, with members on station at each site, the count got under way. Care was taken not to disturb birds as observers moved along the shorelines from east to west. On the completion of their counting the teams moved to pick-up areas where they were met and returned to base to log on their sightings and partake of the obligatory cuppa. The count was completed by 1000hrs.

The weather on the day of the count was fine and sunny with a slight easterly breeze. Temperature rose to approximately 27 degrees by 10 am. Water levels in and around the salt lakes were higher than the previous year. Reef platforms that last year were fully exposed, were partially submerged, occasionally washed by a slight sea running over the reefs.



Hooded Plover adult, juvenile, runner and eggs.
Illustration by Judy Blyth

Results

Transequatorial wader numbers and species were generally higher compared to last year's figures, while resident shorebird numbers were low due to factors already mentioned.

Pied Oystercatcher

Scattered birds in pairs at reef platforms occasionally in sandy bays around the coast. Solitary bird seen at Government House Lake.

Banded Lapwing

Three birds on runway verges at the airstrip. Five birds at golf course fairways adjacent to Garden Lake.

Grey Plover

Found at four salt lakes, Salmon Swamp and some coastal sites. Numbers down on last year.

Lesser Sand Plover

One bird at Salmon Bay with Greater Sand Plover.

Greater Sand Plover

Group of nine birds roosting at causeway. Single birds at Lake Bagdad and Salmon Bay. Two birds at Serpentine Lake.

Red-capped Plover

Mainly found at salt lakes and seem to favour the causeway area; smaller groups at other locations. Evidence of breeding (runners) observed at Serpentine Lake.

Black-winged Stilt

One bird at causeway and another at nearby eastern end of Lake Herschel.

Banded Stilt

Significant drop compared to last year when 1107 birds were counted. Two hundred birds were roosting at the causeway on 25th January; numbers fell each day to 20 birds on the day of the count.

The Rottnest Environment Manager reported birds calling and flocks forming after heavy rain earlier in the month.

Red-necked Avocet

Ten birds on the island during the count. Birds seemed to move between Lake Negri/Pink Lake and Salmon Swamp where a pair had raised two runners. Breeding was suspected at the Lake Negri and Pink Lake sites where lone birds seemed territorial. Verification by closer investigation was ruled out at the time due to the presence of ravens, but a subsequent visit to the area by two of our group on 27 February revealed adult birds with downy young, proving there were at least two breeding pairs successful and probably three.

Ruddy Turnstone

Numbers down on last year, but present at most salt lakes. On 28th January a group of 22 were seen at Lake Sirius probing the drying mud, resulting in an area at the edge of the lake resembling a ploughed up field in miniature.

Whimbrel

A lone bird seen at Lake Bagdad. This was probably due to tide influences on the reef platforms resulting in

unfavourable feeding conditions. Two birds at this location prior to count.

Grey-tailed Tattler

Common at the central salt lakes and isolated birds on three coastal sites.

Common Sandpiper

Lone bird seen at Porpoise Bay.

Common Greenshank

Single bird seen at Salmon Swamp on day of count in close company with solitary Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.

A lone greenshank and a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, thought to be the same two birds, were also seen at the western end of Lake Serpentine on 26th January.

Bar-tailed Godwit

Five birds seen at Salmon Bay, plus a lone bird at Porpoise Bay. Numbers down on last year's count.

Red Knot/Great Knot

Individuals of both species were seen on the two days before the count but were absent on 30th January.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

Small parties of this species present at most salt lakes and Salmon Swamp. Not seen during our past surveys.

Pectoral Sandpiper

One bird observed with Sharp-tailed sandpipers at Government House Lake.

Red-necked Stint

Present at all sites. Birds with leg flags, some tagged in Victoria and others at Milyu were seen daily. Two small flocks were seen to leave Government House Lake and fly high towards the mainland. The total of 1504 birds during the count is an increase on last year's numbers.

Curlew Sandpiper

This species was common at all salt lakes, some slightly coloured, with an increase in numbers compared to last year.

Sanderling

Fifty birds seen at Salmon Bay. A total of ten birds were reported from three separate salt lake sites.

Shorebirds require shallow sandbars, mudflats and the shoreline edges of these habitats for feeding. Equally important are roosting areas where birds can rest between feeding activity.

The results of the Rottnest survey are encouraging when compared with other locations in the South West monitored during this year's count. The majority of these areas reported a low bird presence and higher than normal tides.

Wader movement is obviously influenced away from areas of high water and tidal variation to those with a more stable environment.

The Rottnest salt lakes provide both feeding and roosting grounds for many waders.

Colin Davis

YEAR 2000 MID SUMMER WADER COUNT

ROTTNEST ISLAND

	GOV HOUSE	SERPENTINE	CAUSEWAY	HERSCHEL	LAKE BAGDAD	LAKE	LAKE	PINK	SALMON	REEF	SALMON	PORPOISE	TOTALS OF
	LAKE	LAKE	PEARSE. L	LAKE	SOUTH NORTH	VINCENT	NEGRI	LAKE	SWAMP	AREAS	BAY.G.I	BAY	EACH SPECIE
Pied Oystercatcher	1									5	2	4	12
Banded Lapwing	3			5									8
Grey Plover	2			2	1		1		1	3		1	11
Lesser Sand Plover											1		1
Greater Sand Plover		2	9+		1						1		13+
Red-capped Plover	19	9(R)	38	27	7	8						3	111
Black-winged Stilt			1	1									2
Banded Stilt			19	1									20
Red-necked Avocet							2	1	6(R)				9
Ruddy Turnstone	52	5	52	71	30	37	16		8	2		49	285
Whimbrel						1							1
Grey-tailed Tattler			3	10	6	4	1			2	1		27
Common Sandpiper												1	1
Common Greenshank										1			1
Bar-tailed Godwit											5	1	6
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2	9	1		3	1				1			17
Pectoral Sandpiper	1												1
Red-necked Stint	130(T)	95	301	379	159	141	216	1(T)	25	8	8	2	1504
Curlew Sandpiper	67	4	169	34	52	117	4			2			449
Sanderling	1			2		7					50		60
Red-necked Phalarope			1										1
BIRDS AT EACH SITE	279	124	593	542	257	316	237	4	34	21	18	62	2561
SPECIES AT EACH SITE	10	6	9	10	6	10	4	3	3	7	4	7	
	(R) = Evidence of breeding (Runners) seen												
	(T) = Leg-flagged birds seen												

YEAR 2000 MID SUMMER WADER COUNT — ROTTNEST ISLAND

ROAD VERGE SURVEY COMPLETED

In 1997, Main Roads joined the Birds on Farms Project, seeing it as an opportunity to find out something of the success or otherwise of their extensive rural revegetation plots as bird habitats. They saw the advantage in tapping into an already designed project and the benefits of using Birds Australia volunteers.

The surveys were finished last year and now the report has been finalised. It was a very worthwhile project providing actual information where previously only assumptions had existed.

Some of the findings were:

- * Almost as many species were recorded in revegetation sites as remnant sites, including many that have declined in numbers and or range as a result of clearing for farming (decliner species).
- * Many bird species use verges to a varying degree throughout the year, the pattern of use differing between species.
- * Scarce decliner species are more likely to be found in vegetation more than ten years old.
- * Understorey is important to many of the decliner species.
- * Traffic flow to a high of 6350 vehicles per day was not shown to affect the use of verges by birds.
- * Higher bird species richness and bird numbers occur in sites that are near water, densely vegetated, have continuous vegetation, have a diversity of flowering plant species, have a low to moderate invasion of introduced grasses, or are the best available woody vegetation in the vicinity (usually a combination of two or more of these features).
- * Factors other than verge width (to a low of ten metres) tend to determine presence of birds in verges.

A copy of the report *Birds in Rural Road Verges in southern Western Australia 1997 - 1999* has been placed in the Birds Australia (WA Group) library.

Brenda Newbey, Coordinator

PERRY HOUSE OFFICE REORGANISATION

To all the willing volunteers who helped with the rearrangements of the Birds Office, a big thank you! Feedback so far has been very positive. It is hoped that the new arrangement will make life easier for everyone, and enhance the attractiveness of the office for visitors.

**Liz Walker
Office Manager**

LIBRARY REPORT

The resources in the collection are now organised in much the same order as in any library. This means that the resources on, for instance, birds of the world are together at 598.

The resources have also been integrated, although this task is not quite completed. This means that the videos and cassette tapes are with the books at the appropriate number. For example, the books and sound tapes on bird calls are all together at 598.159.

The shelves are labelled, but to find a specific resource there are three available alphabetic avenues:

- by subject (eg, Birds – Papua New Guinea)
- by author
- by title

These lists are in the blue folder, also used to record borrowings.

In time, the journals, pamphlets, slides and display material will all be integrated and organised in the same manner.

Snippets from the Library

The March 2000 edition of *Emu* has an interesting article by Michael Weston and Mark Elgar on Hooded Plovers in Western Australia. Following is a summary of that article:

Summary: Rainfall, and associated flooding, is thought to influence the movements and breeding of wading birds in the interior of Australia. We describe opportunistic data collected before, during and after ex-cyclone Bobby passed over a salt-lake in south-western Australia in February 1995. Rainfall influenced a range of habitat variables: water levels increased, water temperature dropped and pH increased. The substrate became harder and cooler after rain. Hooded Plovers that were at the lake were forced to forage in higher densities, although their numbers did not decline immediately after the rain. Rainfall effected their foraging behaviour: during and after the rain success rate was above pre-rain levels. Other behaviours (aggression, drinking, bathing) are described. Lake Gore is the single most significant site for Hooded Plovers yet discovered and nothing has been previously published on the general and foraging ecology of this rare species on salt-lake habitats.

The contents of the journal are as follows:

Steve Tremont and Hugh A Ford

Partitioning of parental care in the Leaden Flycatcher I

Damon L Oliver

Foraging behaviour and resource selection of the Regent Honeyeater *Xanthomyza phrygia* in northern New South Wales 12

Terrence R Mace

Time budget and pair-bond dynamics in the Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea*: a test of hypotheses 31

V M Saffer, J S Bradley, R D Wooller and C E Meathrel

Patterns of growth in nestling Short-tailed Shearwaters *Puffinus tenuirostris* 42

V M Saffer, J S Bradley, R D Wooller and C E Meathrel

The effect of human activity on the growth rates of Short-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus tenuirostris* chicks 49

Carol Palmer, Keith A Christian and Alaric Fisher

Mound characteristics and behaviour of the Orange-footed Scrubfowl in the seasonal tropics of Australia 54

Michael A Weston and Mark A Elgar

The effect of a major rainfall event on Hooded Plovers on a salt-lake in Western Australia 64

Newhaven purchase

Galah, the in-house newsletter of Birds Australia, in the latest edition has an item on Newhaven which may interest readers.

The Birds Australia Council plans to set up a Bird Habitat Acquisition Fund to facilitate the continuing

purchase and management of significant bird habitats. In May a major appeal will be launched to set up this fund. Newhaven Station, a property in the Northern Territory of 2626 square km, is planned as the first purchase from this fund.

Newhaven has a wide range of habitats ranging from parallel dunes in the south, to calcareous grasslands, salt lakes, woodlands and rocky ranges. This variability arises from the property lying at the junction of three bioregions — Great Sandy Desert, Macdonnell Ranges and Burt Plain. The area is extensive, complex, intact and very accessible. It is surrounded on all sides by lands belonging to the Walpirri people, but is accessible by a public road.

Newhaven has been a pastoral lease for the last 40 years, but has only ever been lightly stocked with cattle. About a quarter of the property has never been grazed by stock. Because of the management history, much of the habitat is unique and not present in any other reserve in Australia. The feral camels living on Newhaven form the subject of a long-term, ongoing research program. There are few rabbits, virtually no foxes, few feral cats but many dingoes. It is likely that the presence of the dingoes is the reason for the few cats and foxes.

Hints on Birding in Asia

The Cumberland Bird Observers Club Newsletter has an article by Nick Dymond on useful hints on birding in East and South East Asia. Apart from sites worth visiting, there is also information on what to take and the relative costs of items such as \$A3.00 long johns.

Noisy Scrub-birds in the new Millennium!

(From *South Coast Threatened Birds*, March 2000 Issue 4) Seeing as everyone else is getting on the millennium bandwagon, I thought I might as well hype up the scrub-bird project for the year, too!

This year we will be running a much smaller census program, but will still have plenty to do with the ongoing translocation work in the Darling Range. In addition to the work in the Two Peoples Bay area an intensive survey of the Darling Range sites will be completed late April/early May (dates to be confirmed).

For the initiated it is unnecessary to mention the essential criteria for involvement in the program. The work is hard, and you must be fit and willing to spend long days out in the bush in the middle of winter. Accommodation at the Two Peoples Bay Research Quarters will be provided, and travel and food costs will be partially reimbursed.

The following dates, which are tentative at this stage, give some idea of the program activities for 2000. There are limited places on the volunteer program, but anyone interested in participating should contact me on (08) 9842 4500 or email: sarahc@calm.wa.gov.au.

Sarah Comer

Program Dates for 2000

May 1-12	June 26-July 7
May 15-26	July 10-21
May 29-June 9	July 24-August 4
June 12-23	August 7-18

Library accessions since December 1999

- Cumberland Bird Observers Club newsletter, Jan-Feb 2000 vol 21.4
- *Natural Heritage* No 6, Summer 2000
- South Coast Threatened Birds, Mar 2000 Issue 4
- *CALM News*, Jan-Feb 2000
- *Galah*, Nos 42 and 43, Jan and Mar 2000
- *The Bird Observer*, April 2000
- *Emu*, vol 100, Mar 2000
- *Wingspan*, vol 10, No 1, Mar 2000
- South Australian Ornithological Association Newsletter, Mar 2000
- Establishment and Growth Performance of Native Submergent Macrophytes in Saturated Waste Sludge at RGC Wetlands: Technical Report No 45, Jan 2000
- Stirling Range and Porongurup National Parks: Management Plan 1999-2009
- Karijini National Park: Management Plan 1999-2009
- Bold Park Draft Environmental Management Plan: 2000-2005

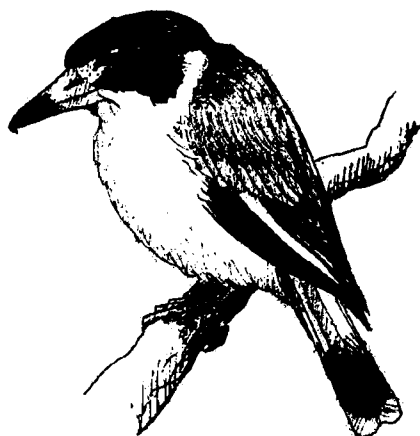
Sue Mather
Librarian

Members' Contributions

GREY BUTCHERBIRD TAKES BAT

While taking the dog for her usual morning walk around Blue Gum Lake in Mt Pleasant (10 April) I heard the resident Grey Butcherbirds calling. Out of the corner of my eye my attention was caught by a fluttering and I turned to see one of the birds perched on a small dead stump poking out of a mass of long kikuyu grass. As I watched, it reached down and came up with something struggling in its beak. Through the binoculars I was amazed to see that it was a bat with bright chestnut fur and dark wings. We used to see and hear bats quite regularly at dusk around here twenty years ago but it has been many years since I have noticed any sign of them. Consequently I felt a sense of outrage at this act of batricide and was unable to stifle a derogatory shout at the bird which took off with the bat still flapping wildly in its beak and disappeared into the bushes.

Valerie Hemsley



Grey Butcherbird

Illustration by Judy Blyth

HIGHWAY BIRDING

People don't go birding on major highways — or do they? The Great Northern Highway in early April, where the road crosses Roebuck Plains, makes for great birding. Due to the huge amount of rain this year the water was still flowing over the road in places, in April. These types of conditions may not thrill the engineering department of the shire but it thrills the birds and the birders!

Roebuck Plains is an open expanse of mostly native grasses on grey silt. It is an ancient river system. This is very obvious during periods of heavy rain as the water flows like a giant river from east to west and ends up in the sea at Roebuck Bay. The plains are bordered by Saltwater Paperbark *Melaleuca acacioides*, which merges with the acacia woodland, the predominant habitat of the Broome region.

The edge of the plains was my first stop and the area was alive with birds. On the bitumen itself were Magpie-larks, Torresian Crows, Willie Wagtails, Black-faced Woodswallows, Masked Lapwings, Black-winged Stilts, Common Greenshanks, Sacred Kingfishers and Rufous-throated Honeyeaters all finding plenty to eat in the middle of the road. A good sighting, for the Broome region, was a pair of Buff-banded Rails preening in the early morning sun.

In the melaleuca the Mangrove Gerygones were calling incessantly, along with Brown and Rufous-throated Honeyeaters. Small flocks of Zebra Finches whizzed by and Double-barred Finches called to one another as they foraged. The distinctive call of the Pheasant Coucal boomed out from the trees and Paperbark Flycatchers were making great use of their paperbark habitat. Small parties of Red-backed Fairy-wrens gave fleeting views as they busily dined on the morning's crop of insects. Six Red-winged Parrots, 'clinked' on their way over my head. White-breasted Woodswallows kept up the challenge for 'cutest bird in Oz' by clumping and allopreening on the fence wire. A less cute Black-faced Woodswallow chased a Sacred Kingfisher around for a while, for no better reason than that it could. Two Great Egrets, two White-faced Herons and a single Australian White Ibis flew gracefully over the plains and off into the distance. Only a few ducks were using the open water, Pacific Black Duck and both Wandering and Plumed Whistling Ducks were present in small numbers. A 'Wanderer' flew out of a melaleuca surrounded by water, possibly from a nest? There were also two 'Aussie Grebes'. The two Great Egrets seen were in contrast to the fifty Intermediate Egrets roosting in the tops of the melaleucas; Intermediate Egrets are rarely seen in the Broome region, except in ones and twos. One of these was nest building, arranging and rearranging the sticks. It joined the others as they took to the wing and drifted south. Later, I counted a flock of one hundred and forty Intermediate Egrets and five Great Egrets further south on the plains: a most unusual ratio.

A further stop, to complete another atlas survey, gave us a Buff-banded Rail with two chicks scurrying across the road and a Golden-headed Cisticola nest building. The cisticola was a very pale individual showing none of the warm buff tones to the flanks or golden head, usually

associated with this species. I tried hard, but could not turn it into a Zitting Cisticola to add to the Broome list.

Singing Bushlarks were numerous here, halfway across the plains, while Richard's Pipits were less so and seemed to prefer the road rather than the grass. Black-shouldered Kites and kestrels patrolled the airspace. Many hundreds of Whiskered Terns in full breeding plumage were present, dipping onto the surface of the water to grab their prey.

The next stop was an abrupt one as a shallow pool of water and mud came into view, smothered in birds. Five hundred yapping Black-winged Stilts, ten Marsh Sandpipers, eight Curlew Sandpipers, 30 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and 12 Masked Lapwings, made up the shorebird contingent. When a Black Kite cruised over the area hundreds of Glossy and Straw-necked Ibis took off out of the tall grasses. Five Pied Herons were standing quietly in the pool. Despite the ease of identification, I looked long and hard at them as this lovely heron is a very rare visitor this far west.

On the pool and in the air all around were Whiskered Terns and just one Gull-billed Tern. Associating with them and roosting in a flock of 200 were White-winged Black Terns. This was the real reason I had planned the Atlas trip to the plains. They often turn up here prior to migration to their breeding grounds in Asia. They looked sensational in their breeding plumage: velvet black head, breast, belly, back and wing lining starkly contrasting with snow-white rump and under-tail coverts. The silvery white leading edge to the upper-wing almost glints in the sun.

A truly beautiful bird on a great habitat — this is what an Atlas survey is all about!

Chris Hassell

HOODED PLOVERS AND FOUR WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES

Many people spend their summer holidays on the coast. This is also the time that many waders and shorebirds use the beaches. In the Esperance area Hooded Plovers frequent the coast during summer and generally move inland prior to and during the winter months to breed. In years of exceptional summer rains (such as this one) many Hooded Plovers move inland much earlier.

In Western Australia vehicles are allowed on many of the beaches and the time of greatest use is summer. This conflicts with the waders and other shorebirds that are also at their greatest numbers at that time. This conflict was obvious for a Hooded Plover that was found dead on the beach at Yokinup Bay in Cape Arid National Park on 2 January. The plover had no external damage and was presumed to have been hit by a vehicle. I have seen Hooded Plovers and other waders use the wheel tracks (at times deep) to roost in. The sand on Yokinup Bay can be hard allowing vehicle speeds of up to 80 kph, giving birds little time to escape.

Allan Rose

HISTORICAL NOTE ON GALAHS

I grew up in Dumbleyung (10 miles east) 1933-1949 and never saw a Galah. However, when I returned in 1954 there were small colonies established. Now they are common and abundant.

Readers may be interested in the following excerpt from Gingin Police Records dated 9 November 1947:

"In company of Fisheries Inspector Trainor and in PC's vehicle, visited the holdings of Bert Dewar and Hillesden Harper re 'Galah' cockatoos about 5 miles NW of Gingin where about 60 of the birds were counted. From inquiries it seems there is a small colony of the birds established on the holding of Dewar but he expressed the opinion that he would not like to see them destroyed at this stage as they were doing no harm."

Hazel Dewar

WADERS IN THE AFTERNOON BUT NOT IN THE MORNING

On 6 and 7 February, I participated in the national wader count by surveying Yokinup Bay in Cape Arid National Park. This is a large bay, with an 11 km shoreline that arches in a SE direction from the mouth of the Thomas River. At very low tides the beach can be up to 80 m wide.

This was the case in the late afternoon of 6 February, when I started the wader survey at the south-east end of the bay. As I moved around the bay many Sanderlings were observed, but only a few Red-necked Stints and Red-capped Plovers. Looking into the setting sun made identification difficult, so I decided to do the survey the following day.

To miss the effect of the strong sea breeze, I started at 8:30 am. I drove the entire length of the beach (which was low tide) and only saw a few Red-capped Plovers. That was surprising given the count the day before. So I decided to come back in the afternoon at low tide, but start at the western end of the bay, which had the setting sun almost behind me. Starting out at 1630, it wasn't long before Sooty and Pied Oystercatchers were observed. Further on, Sanderlings were feeding at the water's edge. As a wave moved up the beach so too would the Sanderlings, their feet moving quickly to keep ahead of the advancing wave. As the wave receded they would move back down the beach feeding in the wet sand. Most were seen to sift through the wet sand but on occasions white worms would be pulled out of the sand. These worms, when being pulled out, would stretch to about 100 mm in length. I have also seen Pied Oystercatchers obtain worms at low tide on this beach.

To my surprise an orange flagged Sanderling was observed feeding amongst a flock of 32 other Sanderlings. The orange flag was on the right lower leg and a metal band on the left lower leg. The grid coordinates of this flagged bird were Latitude 33° 52' 19" S and Longitude 123° 04' 48" E. A total of 443 Sanderlings, 17 Red-necked Stints, 14 Red-capped Plovers, 10 Sooty Oystercatchers

and 55 Pied Oystercatchers were observed. Large numbers of Sanderlings were also seen on the same beach on 3 January (341), 11 January 2000 (550) and 4 March 2000 (491). On 11 January 13 Great Knots were observed on the bay.

On 8 January, a couple of bays further on from Yokinup Bay, my wife and I saw three Great Knots, one Ruddy Turnstone, five Hooded Plovers, four Red-capped Plovers and one Pied Oystercatcher.

Allan Rose

WHITE SPLENDID FAIRY-WREN

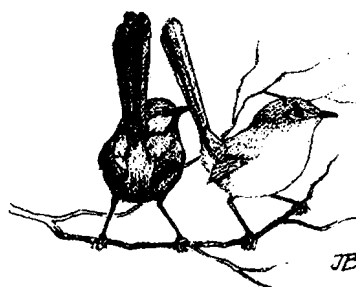
We are very excited about our newest resident, a startlingly white Splendid Fairy-wren.

We live along a gravel road some 18 km north of Walpole on the south coast of south-west WA. This area must surely have been one of the world's most spectacular stands of Karri before being cleared for agriculture from the 1930s onwards. There are still a few Karri trees bordering the road and this family of wrens has made its home among a thick patch of remnant roadside vegetation made up of largely Karri wattle, hazel and sword grass.

We would love to know who else has seen a white, very white, "blue wren" and what are the chances of progeny also being white. We have not been able to ascertain if it has the pink eyes of a true albino but it is totally accepted by its peers and has been seen regularly among them hopping and flitting on the road and verge by several people over the last month or so.

How rare is our marvel? We would be most interested to hear of other instances.

Kate O'Brien



Splendid Fairy-wrens
Illustrations by Judy Blyth

A TALE OF TWO TYPES OF IMMATURE BIRDS

On Tuesday 21 March at about 4:30 pm, I was observing two immature Australian Pelicans at Lake Monger. They were sitting on a pipe on the south side of the lake. A raven was showing an interest in them, and to my surprise, the raven jumped onto the pipe and pulled the Pelican's primary feather with his beak!

On Thursday 23 March at about 4:00 pm, I went to Hillarys Beach (north of the boat harbour) for a swim. Before entering the water I noticed a large bird diving into the water quite close to the shore, ie, 10 m out. I could see that it was an immature Australasian Gannet. I walked along the shore to see it. It continued to dive into very shallow water and I saw it catch a silvery fish about 20 cm long and swallow it. After diving, it sat on the water for around a minute or two and then took to the air again.

I started swimming and then noticed the gannet flew right over my head about 3 m up. I swam about 300 m and then turned to swim back. As the sun was in my eyes on the return journey, I was swimming with my eyes closed, opening them occasionally to see that I was not going in circles. I opened my eyes and the gannet was sitting on the water, 1.5 m from my nose. Far be it for me to anthropomorphise, but he or she appeared to be curious. I, in turn, stared incredulously at the bird and then it took off to fish again. I completed my swim and sat on the beach to watch it, but it had stopped fishing and was sitting on the water about 50 m further out.

Prior to this, on 11 March 2000, I had seen a mature gannet at City Beach, flying over the City Beach groyne.

Margaret Owen

AN HISTORICAL BIRD LIST FOR THE KULARIN CATCHMENT

The Kularin Catchment is about 10 km south of Jingymia, which is about 20 km west of Mollerin on the Bonnie Rock railway line. I worked there in March and the first half of April in 1963 for R & J Smith. Their farm adjoined the Kularin Catchment and its reserve, which was a remnant of what appeared to be good quality mallee bushland. It is some 120 km south-east of Latham for which I provided a bird report from 1961 in an earlier article (Stranger 1999).

In the same article I was able to point out the differences from observations by John and Judy Blyth during the Birds on Farms project for a nearby area in 1997 and 1998.

Of the 49 species of birds observed at Kularin in 1963, 43 were also recorded at Latham in 1961. Six of the 49 species recorded at Kularin were not recorded at Latham, namely, Rainbow Bee-eater, Jacky Winter, White-eared Honeyeater, Western Yellow Robin, Rufous Songlark and White-backed Swallow. Two species not recorded near Latham during 1997 and 1998, the Regent Parrot and the Redthroat, occurred at both localities in 1963 and 1961. And as John Blyth has pointed out the Western Corella is now present in significant numbers near Latham and one wonders if it now occurs in the Jingymia district, too.

A memorable event on the Smith's farm took place one day when very strong and gusty winds were in the process of causing a dust storm. Many Little Crows were playing in the wind and executing "dive bombing". They were flying high and then diving down until they were near the ground. They would then pull out of the dive by using their wings, and their feathers literally whistled as they did so.

FOR SALE

'Corella'—Full set (24 volumes)

'Emu'—33 volumes

Contact—Laurie Smith. Phone (W) 9427 2754

The Birds

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| . Emu | . Brown-headed Honeyeater |
| . Malleefowl | . White-fronted Honeyeater |
| . Australian Wood Duck | . White-fronted Chat |
| . Wedge-tailed Eagle | ✓ Jacky Winter |
| . Brown Falcon | . Red-capped Robin |
| . Banded Lapwing | ✓ Western Yellow Robin |
| . Common Bronzewing | . White-browed Babbler |
| . Crested Pigeon | . Crested Bellbird |
| . Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo | . Rufous Whistler |
| . Galah | . Grey Shrike-thrush |
| .. Regent Parrot | . Magpie-lark |
| . Australian Ringneck | . Willie Wagtail |
| . Mulga Parrot | . Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike |
| . Southern Boobook | . Black-faced Woodswallow |
| ✓ Rainbow Bee-eater | . Grey Butcherbird |
| .. Redthroat | . Pied Butcherbird |
| . Weebill | . Australian Magpie |
| . Inland Thornbill | . Little Crow |
| . Chestnut-rumped Thornbill | . Richard's Pipit |
| . Yellow-rumped Thornbill | . Zebra Finch |
| . Red Wattlebird | ✓ White-backed Swallow |
| . Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater | . Welcome Swallow |
| . Yellow-throated Miner | . Tree Martin |
| . Singing Honeyeater | ✓ Rufous Songlark |
| ✓ White-eared Honeyeater | |

Code

- . Common to Latham 1961 and Kularin 1963
- .. Present at both localities but not near Latham in 1997/98
- ✓ Only at Kularin 1963.

Reference:

Stranger, R.H. (1999). An historical bird list for Latham, Western Australia. *Western Australian Bird Notes* 91: 21-22.

Robert H Stranger

ROYAL SPOONBILL AT HERDSMAN LAKE

It is well-nigh impossible to misidentify a spoonbill even if you do not consider yourself a birder. I was fortunate enough to be walking on the footpath adjacent to Lakeside Road along the SW shore of Herdsman Lake at about 5 pm on 18 April. Opposite the entrance of Falcon Avenue just a few metres into the water is a small tree which seems to be a favourite perching spot for several species of water birds. On this occasion there were several Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants and eight Yellow-billed Spoonbills, some with



Royal Spoonbill

Illustration by Penny Towells

bills under their wings, and near the top and facing me was one spoonbill with a black bill and black legs. The setting sun was almost directly behind me, and at a distance of about 20 m with binoculars, it was as good a view as is possible to have of a Royal Spoonbill.

The deep, yellow eyebrows were quite obvious against the black bill, and the black legs would clearly separate the two species even if all had bills tucked under their wings, as the legs of the Yellow-billed Spoonbill are a very pale green/grey.

Pizzey records the Royal Spoonbill as scarce in the SW of WA.

**“... the deep,
yellow
eyebrows were
quite obvious
...”**

Max Bailey

species of frigatebird were observed. The Great Frigatebirds with their bright red gula pouches puffed out to the fullest, were displaying in the air and from perches on trees. This most manoeuvrable of seabirds was often observed chasing boobies to induce them to drop nesting material, which they would then deftly catch in mid-air for use in their own nests.

While exploring Christmas Island you soon become aware of the vast number of feral cats. While walking around the picturesque golf course, we

saw a cat catch a Common Noddy, that with others was flying low under coconut trees picking up coconut fibre for nesting material. The cat had obviously worked out the bird's behavioural pattern and from its demeanour, this was not its first meal of Common Noddy.

Kevin Coate

BIRD SIGHTINGS ON CHRISTMAS ISLAND, APRIL 2000

On arrival at Christmas Island there were approximately 12 Barn Swallows, but these had all disappeared by the time we left eight days later.

A Brown Shrike, spotted by Fred Smith of Victoria, was a new bird for the group and caused much excitement. This bird breeds in East Asia and migrates to South East Asia, the Philippines, Sundas, Moluccas and New Guinea. It is not normally found in Australia or its territories. Seen most days, and typical of the behaviour of Brown Shrikes, it was in a garden either perched on the top of a small tree or on a power line.

We observed over several days, one Yellow Wagtail. In December 1999, there were three Grey Wagtails and one Yellow Wagtail, but on this visit the Grey Wagtails had all gone.

With the exception of the Goshawk and Hawk Owl, Christmas Island birds are easy to find. While driving through the forest we stopped the vehicle to look at a Goshawk. The bird, a beautifully marked male, flew toward us and landed on the bull bar of our Landcruiser, where it began preening itself in front of the six keen goggled-eyed birdwatchers.

That night when leaving in the vehicle to go spotlighting for the Hawk Owl, we had only driven a hundred metres before spotting one on the limb of an overhanging tree. Shortly after this owl was joined by its mate, to the accompaniment of much chuckling and purring noises by them both. A little later the male was observed copulating with the female. The birds had obviously staked out this territory and had a nest site nearby. We saw them every night of our stay.

Seabirds were in the midst of breeding. We counted eight Red-tailed Tropic-birds nesting (either sitting on an egg or with a chick) within a radius of approximately 20 metres. Red-footed Boobies were waddling in an ungainly fashion on the ground, gathering sticks for nesting. Three



WARDENS REQUIRED!

**Eyre Bird Observatory requires Wardens
as from July 2000.**

Contact Rod Smith or Shapelle McNee.

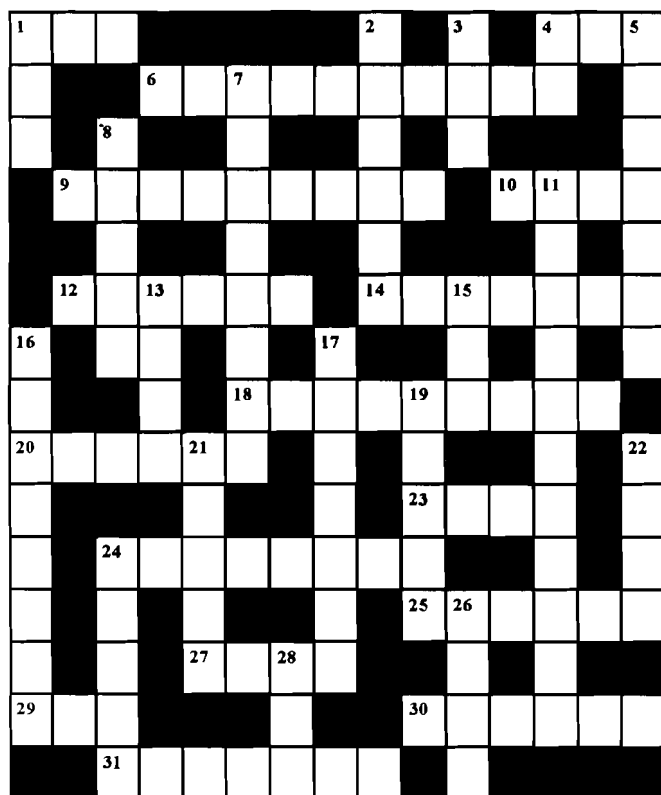
**Please ring soon on either of the following
numbers:**

Rod Smith on (08) 9447 3804

or Shapelle on (08) 9487 1105

Crossword No 21

by Pam Agar



Clues across

- 1 A Collared Sparrowhawk has one which is longer than the others.
4. An insect, not usually eaten by birds.
6. May be necessary to check a remote site.
9. May have resulted in a valuable reserve for the future.
10. A white one behind the eye may be diagnostic.
12. Groove along bill of albatrosses.
14. A local one may provide good birding.
18. A vital part of conservation.
20. May be attractive to female parrots.
23. Sound made by female Emu.
24. Alternative name for a Western Warbler.
25. A government one may be able to provide information or funding.
27. Used to advertise territory.
29. Not usually visible in birds.
30. Food for cockatoo species.
31. Drawing which provides useful information.

Clues down

1. A Dusky Moorhen has a yellow one to its bill.
2. A raptor nest is likely to be ... than a wagtail's.
3. Emergent feather.
5. Migrant wader, one species of which is likely in WA.
7. Useful feeding grounds for ibis.
8. To bring into sharp definition.

11. An agitated one may indicate a nearby predator.
13. Disappearance of a species would be one.
15. To rest on eggs?
16. Character of martins.
17. Local gorge, a regular excursion site.
19. Generic name of a group of herons and egrets.
21. Graceful birds of coast and inland lakes.
22. Food of raptors.
24. May be necessary to keep young safe.
26. Nestlings do so at a rapid rate.
28. Neither Garganey ... Pintail are likely to be seen in Perth.

Country Groups

ALBANY BIRD GROUP

Outing held 8 February

For the first outing for the year, Lake Eyrie was chosen. Eleven vehicles and 29 people set off from the Narrikup Store at 8:00 am.

The early part of the day was ideal weather for birdwatching. We formed two groups, one group moving to the right and the other to the left.

Water levels weren't as high, and the bird numbers were down, in comparison to this time last year.

Both groups met back at the cars, taking two hours to walk around the lake. Of special interest were two Pectoral Sandpipers and a Black-fronted Dotterel. Forty-eight species were recorded.

After leaving Lake Eyrie it started to rain and the cloud cover was dense. Conditions became unpleasant. Our day finished early.

Outings during March and April

A campout of 12 people held at Che Sera Sera in the Walpole region on 13-14 March was organised by Tim Hunt. Seven others joined up with the group on the 14th. Tuesday was Atlas day, again organised by Tim. Monday evening we were treated to a slide evening with some of Michael Nield's beautiful bird slides.

The outing was a success with 56 species seen.

Tuesday 11 April, 22 people met at 8:00 am at the Takalarup turnoff. Another Atlas day was completed with 57 species recorded.

The result of this is that there are more red squares on the map and everybody enjoyed themselves.

Vivian McCormick, Albany Bird Group

Notices

RAFFLE — FUNDRAISER FOR EYRE BIRD OBSERVATORY'S PHOTOCOPIER

Raffle tickets to raise funds for a new photocopier at Eyre are now on sale. The present copier, donated by the late Bill Graham, is on its last legs and must be replaced.

Debbie Brownlie (now Sullivan), an ex-warden of Eyre, is a graphic artist with considerable experience and acclaim. For the major prize she recently donated a framed print of her award-winning painting which depicts a Sea-Eagle at the water's edge, entitled "Examining the Catch". The original was successfully exhibited at several venues in Victoria in 1995, gaining awards including "Very Highly Recommended" (at the Royal Melbourne Show), and "Best Exhibit in Show", "Best Oil", etc, at other venues.

The framed print is one of ten Artist's Prints and is valued at \$400. It will be signed by Debbie.

Second prize is donated by Clive Napier. Clive has crafted a cheeseboard and knife from silky oak to provide a very attractive and useful addition to the household. His work is valued at \$80.

Third prize is a hand-painted cushion made by Pam Agar, and valued at \$40.

Raffle tickets will be on sale from 1st June. The winning tickets will be drawn at the BAWAG General Meeting in September.

Tickets are \$2 each. They are available from the BAWAG office, or from Eyre Bird Observatory, Rod Smith or Shapelle McNee.

THE AUSTRALIAN RAVEN — Request for Assistance

The Australian Raven (*Corvus coronoides*) is implicated as a nuisance for a variety of reasons in urban areas — one of the most important being the predation of, and competition for resources with, other urban wildlife. Certainly the raven can be noisy and destructive, but does it really have a detrimental effect on other urban wildlife?

In association with Edith Cowan University, Professor Harry Recher and the City of Gosnells, I am conducting a postgraduate research project on the Australian raven. I will be attempting to answer this question and many more about the urban ecology of the Australian raven. My project will be conducted within the Cities of Gosnells and Canning and will run from 2000-2002.

Perhaps you have seen ravens foraging and noted what they were eating or have interesting stories or observations of the raven? I would love to hear from you! I am especially interested in the whereabouts of raven nests, and observations of raven foraging and behaviour, including interactions with other wildlife, and where these occurred.

Please feel free to send me notes and observations throughout the duration of my project and to call me for more information. I can be contacted by phone on (08)



9455 7056, by email on s.cumming@cowan.edu.au or by post addressed to Suzanne Cumming, Edith Cowan University, 100 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup, 6027.

Thank You.

Suzanne Cumming

USE OF PERRY HOUSE COMMON ROOM

A reminder to our sub-committees and other groups: If you wish to use the common room at Perry House, bookings must be written in the diary as this area is jointly used by the Wildflower Society.

NEW MEMBERS

The following people joined Birds Australia-WA Group between 1 February and 30 April 2000. We look forward to meeting you at our excursions and general meetings.

P Cale, G Callaghan, E Cross, R Dyster, D Foy, D Haydon, V Howell, H Jolly, S Lake, R Mather, J P Middleton, A M Park, E M Pound, M G Putland, V N Rabel, A Reaveley, P Short, P & J J Towells, J M Workman and E Cross

Birds Australia Western Australia Inc

(a division of Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union)

RESEARCH PROJECT COORDINATORS

Research projects organised by the Western Australian Group of Birds Australia can commence at any time during the year.

Each project will require the appointment of a research project coordinator.

If you wish to be interviewed for any position as it arises, please forward NOW an expression of interest with your qualifications and areas of interest to:

Michael Brooker
Birds Australia-WA Group
71 Oceanic Drive
Floreat WA 6014

Mark the envelope CONFIDENTIAL.

You will be advised of funded projects.

Allan K Jones
Grants Sub-committee

STOP PRESS:

We have just received a grant from the Gordon Reid Foundation for Conservation towards the Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo project.

Snippets

DO BIRDS TEND TO AVOID CLOUDS?

(Taken from *Guardian Weekly*, February 3-9 2000 and sent in by Tom Spalding)

They do. Neither birds nor human pilots can maintain controlled flight for more than a few seconds without a visual horizon or ground reference. Without such information, there is no way of determining whether one is climbing or diving, turning or maintaining a straight course. On the ground we know which way is down even if we are blindfolded, because we can feel the pull of gravity. In the air, even when banked over into a steep turn, there is no sensation of leaning over.

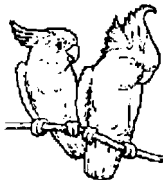
When flying through clouds, the aeroplane is flown with an "artificial horizon" that uses gyroscopes to provide that vital visual reference. Experiments with blindfolded pigeons have shown that birds are no more able to fly without a visual reference than are human pilots.

Vince Chadwick, Wilmslow, Cheshire

Observatory Reports

EYRE BIRD OBSERVATORY

After having worked in the Seychelles on various conservation projects, we have come to Eyre as the new wardens with a strong interest in birds. We have certainly added some new bird species to our list in the last few months!



Along with the 'usual' sightings of the Major Mitchell's (an excuse in itself for a visit to the observatory!), Fan-tailed Cuckoos calling early morning and the hundreds of Welcome Swallows roosting above the verandah, we have been lucky enough to see some of our more elusive residents. The Purple-gaped Honeyeater was seen in March; the Chestnut Quail-thrush, one of our favourite species, is seen regularly along the main track; and a Grey Teal took a dip in the bird-bath in April, causing great excitement among our guests. We are currently trying to locate Malleefowl mounds, but have yet to come across an individual. However, they are around — Alex and Rob, the previous wardens, spotted one just before their departure.

With the beach only one kilometre away, shore birds are another delight of Eyre. The diversity seems to be increasing by the week. Recently, 13 Black Swans were spotted, a group of 19 White-faced Herons, over 30 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, the Double-banded Plover, a solitary Black-fronted Dotterel and we have had various up-close sightings of the White-bellied Sea-Eagle. What with the whale-watching season from May to October, it's certainly a great time to be down on the beach.

In addition to the birds, we have been busy checking Western Pygmy Possum nest boxes. Having found the nest boxes the possums eluded us. However we will be checking them each month to ascertain when they start breeding this year. Visitors are always welcome to join in such activities.

If you are keen to be involved in activities around the observatory for any length of time perhaps you should think about enrolling on one of our courses. Our next course, 'Focus on Winter Birds', will run for seven days (six nights) from 2-8 July. There is no extra charge for the course itself, all you pay is the normal accommodation fee. For more information on our courses or staying at the observatory, please call Sharon or Rob on 08 9039 3450 or fax 08 9039 3440.

Sharon Johnson and Robert Threadgold
Wardens, Eyre Bird Observatory

EYRE'S WISH LIST

Some of the things we could dearly do with if you are happening to come our way or just wish to send:

Car Radio Aerial
Global Positioning System (GPS)
2 Way Radios
Side Table Lamp
Salad Crisper & Servers
Double Doona
Pillows
Car Seat Covers
Sand Paper & Putty
Wheelbarrow
Set of Ring/Open Spanners
Shade Cloth for Roof (100m x 10m)
Microwave Bowls

Donors automatically qualify for becoming a Friend of Eyre (FOE) receiving a twice yearly copy of Eyre Waves — the newsletter of Friends of Eyre Bird Observatory.

BROOME BIRD OBSERVATORY

The wet season ended with a bang, in the form of Tropical Cyclone Rosita, the epicentre of which passed within 30 km of Broome before veering to the south, striking the coast 40 km south of the observatory. It left the two newly installed wardens somewhat fearful as to what they might be returning to, having been evacuated the night before by the powers that be. Incredibly, the observatory survived the experience completely unscathed except for the widespread loss of many Acacia shrubs and some of the Eucalyptus standards. The tidy up, which at the time of writing, is still in progress, will be finished by the time dry season starts. Visitors to the observatory will see a more 'open-plan' vista than on their previous visits to the site, but by the by the observatory was lucky and we got away with it by the skin of our teeth.

A question we were all asking ourselves was how the birds would fare. So far, we have not recorded any



significant losses. Shorebirds were around in their usual large numbers the following day. A few passerine casualties were noted around Broome the following day, but nothing significant. A beach search revealed just one sea bird casualty, a Common Tern. Surprising, was the find of hundreds of reef fish, washed up along the beach, many of which were still alive.

March and April were busy around the observatory with a number of major research projects in operation. Tracking 2000, to give the joint project its full title, consisted of 16 Dutch researchers and a sprinkling of 'Aussies' and 'Kiwis', one of the major themes being the radio tracking of Great and Red Knot. This project hopes to reveal many of the feeding and roosting areas of these two species in Roebuck Bay, and thus aid future conservation measures.

Birding around the observatory has been its usual high quality, the increased coverage due to researches led to some truly amazing finds. Head and shoulders above the rest was the discovery of over 200 Common Redshanks and 414 Asiatic Dowitchers in the bay, both of these counts being the largest ever recorded in Australia to date. Up to ten species of raptor were available for observation around the observatory during March and April, with a few additional species, such as Square-tailed Kite and Wedge-tailed Eagle showing in other parts of the observatory recording area.

Waterbird numbers on Roebuck Plains have been staggering with up to 1200 White-winged Black Terns, 2000+ Glossy Ibis, 570 Intermediate Egrets and 3000+ Black-winged Stilts. The support cast was impressive, including regulars, such as Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Whiskered Tern and Golden-headed Cisticola. As stated previously wind-blown seabirds, as a result of the cyclone were virtually non-existent, but 100 Common Terns were logged moving west back out to sea on the 23rd. Recorded with them was a Sooty Tern, the fifth for the observatory in over 12 years. Unusual passerines recorded during the period included Leaden Flycatcher on six dates in April, Square-tailed Kite regularly over Cable Beach and finally, a Red-backed Button-Quail was seen by one lucky observer on 29 April.

If you are thinking of staying at the observatory during the coming dry season, then please contact us soon as we are booking up quickly. Good Birding,

BBO staff



Thousands of Bridled Terns greeted participants on the Penguin Island boat trip.

Illustration by Pam Agar

Excursion Reports

LAKE McLARTY, 6 February

Driving to Lake McLarty in the early morning produced sightings of several Regent Parrots which were feeding in the profusely flowering eucalypts that line Mills Road. Not so good was the sighting of a fox, crossing the road directly opposite the entrance to the Lake McLarty Nature Reserve.

With the exceptional rains of mid-January, the lake still held a generous amount of water, although the level was much lower than on our previous outing in early December.

Fifteen members spent the morning strolling around the eastern edge of the lake, scanning the flocks of Black-winged Stilts. Amongst the many hundreds of Black-winged Stilts were good numbers of Common Greenshanks and Marsh Sandpipers, allowing good comparison with close views, a group of 11 Black-tailed Godwits and a single Banded Stilt keeping company with numerous Red-necked Avocets. On the exposed mud near the edge of the lake was a group of 20+ Red-necked Stints, which were joined by two Sharp-tailed and one Curlew Sandpiper and several Red-capped Plovers.

A single White-winged Black Tern was seen feeding out in the middle of the lake, and it was good to see a flock of 13 Glossy Ibis amongst the many White-faced Herons. Of course waterfowl were well represented as expected.

A highlight of the day was the sight of a Peregrine Falcon swooping low over the vast flocks, putting each group up in turn, seemingly just for fun! This action was repeated several times during the morning. Raptors featured prominently at the lake, with a total of six species seen: the aforementioned Peregrine, Swamp Harrier, Little Eagle, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite and a White-breasted Sea-Eagle which is often to be seen perched in the eucalypts near the water tank.

A total of 62 species were recorded. Many thanks to Les Harris for leading this most enjoyable day of wader-watching.

Pam Agnew

PENGUIN ISLAND, 12 February

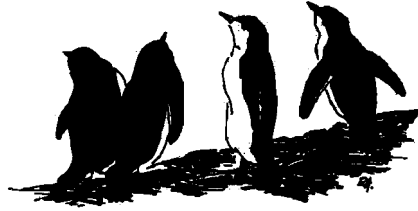
Approximately 50 people enjoyed a one and a half-hour boat trip to various islands within the Shoalwater Marine Park, landing later at Penguin Island. People then explored the island and returned to the mainland in their own time.

Among the highlights were thousands of Bridled Terns in the air, a visit to the Discovery Centre to watch

the Little Penguins being fed, and two rather daring Buff-banded Rails that made repeated forays beneath the picnic tables, allowing frequent very clear view.

Our thanks to Clive Napier for organising this trip.

Pam Agar



'Waiting for lunch' — Little Penguins at the Penguin Island Discovery Centre.

Illustration by Pam Agar

KENT STREET WEIR, WILSON, 17 February

Strong, blustery, easterly winds had been blowing during the days leading up to this bird walk, so we were aware that finding birds in these conditions could be difficult. However, the surface of the Canning River was mirror-like and it was perfect for birdwatching. The bird count climbed steadily as the group of ten observant birders slowly made its way southwards along the densely timbered western bank of the river. A small flock of 12 Long-billed Corellas was seen feeding on the ground in the shade of a sheoak tree. The pink splashes on the throat and sides of the breast confirmed our sighting as we were too far away to discern the long upper mandibles. A fortnight earlier, when making a reconnaissance of this area, we had good sightings of over 200 Little Corellas (race *gymnopsis*) with the shorter upper mandible.

Our group had excellent views of a hovering Black-shouldered Kite, a circling Brown Goshawk, a flock of Rainbow Bee-eaters and several flocks of Yellow-rumped Thornbills, as well as a family of Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes that included a juvenile bird.

The small wooden bridge over the Canning River marked the half-way point and here we were welcomed by three resident Grey Butcherbirds with their beautiful call. On our way back to the weir, fewer sightings were made, although the final distant sighting of a soaring Swamp Harrier caught in a thermal allowed the walk to finish on a high note.

A total of 44 bird species was recorded and I am indebted to the sharp-eared members of our group who alerted the rest of us to the presence of many species well before they were actually sighted.

Neil Porteous

BOOTINE ROAD NATURE RESERVE, 27 February

About 25 members of BAWAG, six non-member atlases and four overseas visitors assembled at 8 am at the entrance of this newly acquired reserve. The day promised to be very hot, and even by eight o'clock one felt that many of the birds had already fed and started to rest for the day.

Much of this 80 ha block has been rolled in the past and grazed for the last few years but much of the native vegetation is coming back. The dense limestone thicket community, now rare and threatened and for which the

land was purchased by CALM, provides excellent cover for many small birds. The block includes some very old and healthy streamside vegetation, including dense patches of a tall, tussock forming sedge (*Lepidosperma* species) and this provides habitat for the reserve's star bird, the Red-winged Fairy-wren.

On the day only one small group was lucky enough to see the red-wings, but most people had good looks at the three other fairy-wrens (White-winged, Variegated and Splendid) present at Bootine Road.

Thirty six species of bird were recorded for the morning, including Southern Boobook and Western Thornbill, both of which are new records for the reserve. One fox and one feral cat were also seen, reinforcing the importance of the dense vegetation in providing cover to small birds. It will be interesting to observe the changes in resident species as the native vegetation continues to regrow.

John Blyth

YANCHEP NATIONAL PARK, 3 March

This was the second of four scheduled walks to be held in the park. See the report for the first walk on 11 December 1999 (*WA Bird Notes* March 2000).

The same areas were surveyed by ten members during the morning which was fine with a strong north-easterly wind. Two new species were added to the park bird list — a small flight of Fork-tailed Swifts, and later a Western Yellow Robin was positively identified near the golf course. Throughout the morning, and while we had lunch, there was a constant clamour of several hundred Short-billed Black-Cockatoos which flew from tree to tree overhead — a fine sight, but a very noisy one!

We looked at the Pipidinnny heath after lunch, but found the strong wind kept most birds out of sight except for a brief glimpse of a female White-winged Fairy-wren. The swamp area was looked at from the top of the escarpment, but was dry except for two small dams. Eight Emus were seen, for the first time, grazing at the northern end of the swamp. They had only previously been seen on the heath.

Bryan Barrett

ALFRED COVE, 11 March

The organised walks for BAWAG to Alfred Cove this wader season have unfortunately been affected by the high tides in the river, probably due to the heavy rain received in January. Consequently, only small areas of the sandbanks, and very little of the river edges, have been exposed. When we went there on the morning of Saturday 11 March, to have a last look at the waders before their

departure, we could only see five species. A small flock of Great Knot was identified, with the aid of telescopes, standing on a sandbank, together with a smattering of feeding Grey Plovers, Pied Oystercatchers and six Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. A few Black-winged Stilts were also seen in the cove. But to our surprise there were no greenshanks, avocets or the usually very numerous Red-necked Stint to be seen.

The 20 members and guests were able to sight 50 species during the morning walk. Apart from the usual bush birds, we were able to watch a Buff-banded Rail pottering between the reeds under the river bank, and observe the resident pair of Osprey being harassed by a Black-shouldered Kite which had taken a fancy to the top of the radio mast.

Our thanks go to Les Harris for again taking this popular walk.

Bryan Barrett

BLACKWALL REACH/POINT WALTER SPIT, 16 March

Visitors from Canada, Broome, Gould League and some new members were among the group of 20+ participants, meeting at the southern side of Blackwall Reach, on a typically fine autumn morning.

This arguably is the most picturesque walk anywhere around the river, with beautiful views through the trees and from lookouts strategically placed on the cliff tops, from which can be seen the caves in the cliff face. Striated Pardalotes have frequented the caves and Pacific Black Ducks find shelter in these secluded spots.

With regret, it was noted that the bees had taken over many of the hollows in the tree trunks. One, however, was safe. Recently, an (Eastern) Long-billed Corella and Galah had paired and nested in this hollow, producing progeny.

A highlight of the walk was the observing of a large family of White-cheeked Honeyeaters, cooperating beautifully, giving good time for study and enjoyment.

There was a break in the spit (sandbar) to which we all walked, but only a few would take off their shoes and brave the waters washing over the bar. It was worth the wade, for we saw a pair of Red-capped Plovers among previously noted Grey Plovers, Crested Terns, Pied Oystercatchers, Little Pied Cormorants, Darters and of course, Silver Gulls. In flight we spied Caspian Terns, Australian Pelicans, White-faced Herons, Welcome Swallows and Great Cormorants.

Through the bush and around the car parks were the usual Brown and Singing Honeyeaters, Red Wattlebird, Australian Ringnecks, Australian Raven, Australian Magpie, Magpie-lark, Galah, Rainbow Lorikeets,



"Birders" at Point Walter, 16 March 2000
Photograph by Molly Angus.

Australian White Ibis, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Laughing Turtle-dove, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Willie Wagtail and Silvereye. Some had a quick glimpse of two raptors: a Hobby and a Collared Sparrowhawk.

Surprisingly, no Rock Doves. They had to be there somewhere! A comment was made, "No fairy-wrens". It hadn't occurred to me that I hadn't seen any in this area for at least the last ten years.

Corellas were there, stimulating the usual debate. What were they? Eastern, Western or Little! With no agreement or conclusion, we had to content ourselves with, "We saw corellas".

A Sacred Kingfisher gave us great joy. Striated Pardalotes could be heard and some did sight them. There were 33 sightings in all.

An enjoyable morning had by all.

Eric Pyatt

BIBRA LAKE, 8 April

A warm, still and cloudless autumn morning meant excellent bird-watching conditions for the 18 participants on the Bibra Lake Walk.

The walk covered the area from the car park, round the north end of the lake as far as the boardwalk and the hide, with a detour to the bird and animal rehabilitation centre so that those who wished could see, at close quarters, Southern Boobooks, Tawny Frogmouths and all three species of corella.

The walk total of 46 species included the expected variety of waterbirds and bushbirds, among the most interesting being a group of about 20 Australian Pelicans, feeding as a single unit, and Yellow-billed Spoonbills feeding along one edge of the lake. Splendid Fairy-wrens were seen on the edge of the bulrush beds at the north end, and good views were had of a Whistling Kite and a Swamp Harrier. Red Wattlebirds were common all round the lake and Clamorous Reed-warblers were vocal among the reeds in at least three different locations.

George and Pam Agar

RAY MARSHALL PARK (BLACKADDER CREEK), VIVEASH, 12 April

A fine, still morning made the river most picturesque for a group of 20 people. We were pleased to welcome five non-members to the walk. The birds were plentiful, with highlights being a beleaguered Barn Owl being harassed

by smaller birds trying to move it away from their area — without success. We also sighted three Tawny Frogmouths who were settled in for the day and not moving.

Others seen were a Swamp Harrier, Black-shouldered

Kite, Rainbow Lorikeets and an extremely large flock of corellas (hundreds) that passed overhead. Finally, a lone Pelican soared along the course of the river.

An enjoyable morning, with a total of 46 species recorded.

Jan Rogers

EASTER CAMPOUT, Corrigin

Beautiful autumn weather gave the Easter Campout at Corrigin a great start. The caravan park manager had gone to great trouble to have everything in excellent condition for our group of 26 members and his efforts were appreciated by all.

Flood rains in January had resulted in all lakes in the district filling and by Easter waterbirds were prolific. Ducks were breeding and many species not usually seen in the wheatbelt were enjoying the conditions.

A total of 97 species were recorded with Pink-eared and Australian Wood Ducks and Grey Teal all with young. Even the Spiny-checked Honeyeaters were confused and had young in their nest. Black Swans were nesting and all species appeared to be pairing for an early breeding season. Apart from some loud music generated by a tennis tournament's after-hours function all seemed to enjoy a relaxed long weekend of birding and hopefully have found a few new places to visit.

Clive Napier

Coming Events

Important note re campouts

Members anticipating attending campouts **must** notify the BA Office of the number in their party and when they will arrive. With this information we will be able to make sure the group will be together and when to expect people.

Saturday–Monday 3–5 June — Campout, Dongara

A previous campout in this area produced a total of 86 species of birds from riverine woodland, low heath and banksias. Some areas to be visited will be Ellendale Pool and the Burma Road Nature Reserve.

Dongara is 358 km from Perth. We will stay at the Seaspray Caravan Park, Church Street, which is on the ocean beach front near the mouth of the Irwin River. To reach the caravan park, turn off the Brand Highway into Moreton Terrace, Dongara, which runs into Church Street.

Two on-site vans are available and 10 cabins: cost approximately \$40 per night for 2 people. Please make your own bookings — phone: 9927 1165.

Leader: Sue Abbotts, phone: 9444 1607

Sunday 11 June — Half-day Excursion, North Mole, Fremantle

Meet at 8:30 am at the end of North Mole, near the lighthouse. We will spend a couple of hours looking for seabirds. Don't forget your telescope.

Leader: Ian Standring

Thursday 15 June — Mid-week Excursion, Blue Gum and Booragoon Lakes

Meet at 8:30 am in the car park at the Scout Hall in Rountree Road, Brentwood. A visit to two interesting lakes that have a variety of water and bush birds.

Leader: Allan Jones

Saturday 17 June — Half-day Excursion, Stinton Cascades Nature Reserve, Karragullen

Meet at 8:30 am in Gardiner Road, about 200 m past the intersection with Brookton Highway (13 km from Albany Highway). This is a CALM reserve of jarrah and a good area for birds. Bring lunch.

Leaders: John and Helen Start

Sunday 18 June — Half-day Excursion, Waterbirds for Beginners, South Perth Foreshore

Meet at 8:30 am in the car park adjacent to the Wesley College boat shed at the end of Coode Street.

Leader: Tom Delaney

Sunday 18 June — Full-day Pelagic Seabird Trip

Meet at Hillary's Boat Harbour at 6:45 am. We will leave at 7:00 am from near Underwater World and return at about 4:00 pm. There is a limit of 23 people. Booking is essential.

The cost is expected to be \$65 and is required one week before the event.

Book by email foconnor@iinet.net.au or by phoning Frank O'Connor on 9386 5694.

Sunday 25 June — Full-day Excursion, Yanchep National Park

Meet in the park at 9:30 am. At the entrance gate say that you are a BA volunteer and there will be no charge. Turn left at the first roundabout and meet in the car park on the right-hand side, near the Park Office. Look for the BAWAG sign.

This will be the third of several regular surveys of the birds in the recreational areas of the park that we have been asked to undertake.

Leaders: Bryan Barrett and Clive Nealon

Monday 26 June Meeting — State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 8:00 pm

Three field coordinators will each speak on their current BAWAG project and explain about interesting developments and their outcome.

Saturday 1 July — Half-day Excursion, North Lake

Meet at 8:30 am in the car park on Progress Drive. About

80 species of both water and bush birds have been seen here.

Leader: Bryan Barrett

Sunday 9 July — Half-day Excursion, Bayswater Bird Sanctuary

Meet at 8:00 am at the Swan River end of King William Street, Bayswater. Parking is available in Slade Road, off King William Street.

The reserve was created in 1977 by Eric Singleton in conjunction with the Bayswater Council. It consists of waterways, paved paths (suitable for wheelchairs), a bird hide and an artificial island. Many waterbirds breed in the reserve; the total species list is about 100.

Leader: Gordon Elliott

Saturday 15 July — Full-day Excursion, Whitby Falls Nature Reserve

It is hoped that a visit to a new area here can be arranged. Contact the Office (9383 7749) closer to the date for further information.

Sunday 23 July — Half-day Excursion, Bennett Brook, Caversham

Meet at 8:30 am at the southern end of Valley Brook Road, off Benara Road, Caversham. Ninety-one species, including 19 breeding species, have been recorded here. We have over a 40% chance of seeing a flock of 250 Little Corellas.

Leader: Ron Van Delft

Monday 24 July Meeting — State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 8:00 pm

Kevin Coate of Kevin Coate Tours will speak on "Kingston Rest: a birdwatcher's paradise in NE Kimberley".

Sunday 30 July — Half-day Excursion, North Mole, Fremantle

Meet at 8:30 am at the end of North Mole, near the lighthouse. A second chance to spend a couple of hours looking for seabirds. Don't forget your telescope.

Leader: To be announced.

Saturday 5 August — Half-day Excursion, Lake Joondalup

Meet at 8:00 am at Neil Hawkins Park, in the car park at the end of Boas Avenue. Lots of bird species should be seen on and around this large lake.

Leader: Neil Hamilton

Sunday 13 August — Half-day Excursion, Thomsons Lake, Beeliar

Meet at 8:30 am in the car park off Russell Road, between Pearse and Hammond Roads. A good area for bushbirds, waders and waterbirds.

Leader: Dee Smith

Thursday 17 August — Mid-week Excursion, Herdsman Lake

Meet at 8:30 am in Maurice Hamer Park. Turn off Pearson Street into Goldfinch Avenue. Turn right onto Lakeside Road and follow it along to the car park near Heron Place.

This is a good spot for viewing waterbirds. Bring your telescope if you have one.

Leader: Norah Brockman

Sunday 20 August — Full-day Excursion, Brookton Highway Reserve

Meet at 9:30 am at the junction of Woods Loop and Brookton Highway (new Travellers Atlas Map 55 B3) approximately 25 km west of Brookton. This reserve is mainly wandoo woodland and contains many species of birds. We hope to see Blue-breasted Fairy-wrens and Crested Shrike-tits. Distance from Albany Highway turnoff is approximately 106 km.

Leader: Michael Brooker

Sunday, 27 August — Full Day Excursion, Paruna Sanctuary

During this visit to the sanctuary, we will walk the new 'Quenda Circuit', a 6.5 km circuit route through varying habitats including virgin bush and creek lines. This walk is for the moderately fit, however we will be making frequent stops to look not only at the birds but also the wonderful views. Wear walking shoes or boots and carry drinks, snacks and a light lunch. Paruna is 45 minutes from the centre of Perth.

Meet at 8:30 am at the entrance gates for the Quenda Circuit and Possum Loop at the end of Avon Road. From Midland, turn right off the Great Northern Highway Bypass onto Toodyay Road. Travel 11 km, past the Red Hill tip, and turn left into O'Brien Road. Travel approximately 15 km to the junction of Ewing Road. Turn right on Clenton Road, travel 2.5 km, then turn left into Avon Road. Travel about 1 km to the end of Avon Road, and follow the Quenda Circuit signs to the parking area. We will meet near the pedestrian gate in the perimeter fence.

Leader: Cheryl Gole

Monday 28 August Meeting — State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 8:00 pm

Marian Massam, Technical Officer of Agriculture Western Australia, will speak on *Eradication of prohibited exotic bird species in WA*.

Sunday-Saturday 3-9 September — Carnarvon Campout

The Carnarvon Caravan Park 4 km east of town on the main road into the centre has been chosen for the group's accommodation. Chalets, caravan, campervan and tent sites are available. The proprietor will make a shed available to us for gatherings. Official excursions will commence on Monday 4 September although some will be on site on Friday or Saturday to give advice as to places to visit. Maps and programs will be circulated on arrival.

You must book your own accommodation and the person to ring is Fred Hoefler on 9941 8101. Advise him that you are a BA Member. Carnarvon is a major town and all supplies, fuel, repairs, etc, can be procured there. There are **NO** unsealed roads on the way to Carnarvon but some excursions will be on unsealed sections. Every effort will be made to organise people into suitable vehicles for each day's trip.

The leader is Clive Napier but he will not be available in Perth between the printing of WABN and the campout. For details of the various excursions and any further information please contact Bryan Barrett on 9457 2335 or Margery Clegg on 9364 5266.

Saturday 2 September — Half-day Excursion, Wungong Gorge, Bedfordale

Meet at 8:30 am at the first car park for Wungong Dam, at the end of Admiral Road (off Albany Highway), Bedfordale.

This is an excellent site for Red-eared Firetails and White-breasted Robins. Ninety-two different species have been seen here.

Leader: Bill McRoberts

Saturday 9 September to Sunday 17 September — Week-long Campout, Muggon Station, Murchison

Birds Australia-WA Group has been asked to provide a bird list for this newly acquired CALM station which contains an extensive system of saltwater lakes and claypans in otherwise semi-arid pastoral country. Nearby Breberie Lake will also be visited.

Camping facilities and basic shearers' quarters accommodation with cooking facilities and showers are available. A small fee may be charged for use of facilities.

Access to the station by 2-wheel drive cars is OK, but we will car pool in 4x4s for birding.

The main survey will be held between 11 and 15 September to allow one or two days travel to and from Muggon.

Anyone wishing to car pool travel to and from Muggon can contact Martin and Cheryl Gole on 9293 4958.

By road the station is 60 km north-west of Murchison Settlement or 140 km east of Billabong Roadhouse, these being the last fuel stops before the station.

Booking with Cheryl Gole (9293 4958) is essential and numbers will be limited if oversubscribed.

Leaders: Martin and Cheryl Gole

Saturday 16 September — Half-day Excursion at Ellis Brook Reserve, Gosnells

Meet at 8:30 am at the corner of Gosnells Road and Bygum Lane, Martin. This interesting site for bush birds, close to Perth, may have some species not often seen in the metropolitan area.

Leader: Neil Porteous

Crossword Answers No 21

ACROSS

1 toe, 4 ant, 6 expedition, 9 foresight, 10 spot, 12 sulcus, 14 reserve, 18 education, 20 crests, 23 druin, 24 gerygone, 25 agency, 27 song, 29 ear, 30 borers, 31 diagram

DOWN

1 tip, 2 higher, 3 pin, 5 tattler, 7 pastures, 8 focus, 11 performance, 13 loss, 15 sit, 16 sociable, 17 Wungong, 19 Ardea, 21 terns, 22 prey, 24 guard, 26 grow, 28 nor

Sunday 24 September — Full-day Excursion from Nanga Bridge along the Murray River

Meet at 8:30 am at the Dwellingup Hotel. From Perth, drive down the South West Highway to North Dandalup. Turn left to Dwellingup. Allow one hour of driving time from Armadale (about 70 km one way).

This will be a 7 km undulating walk down a creek and along the Murray River. We'll follow a good track through Jarrah, Marri and Banksia, with beautiful views of the river.

Bushbirds seen in this area include Striated and Spotted Pardalotes, Red-eared Firetail, Red-winged Fairywren, White-breasted Robin and Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo.

Bring lunch and a minimum of 1 litre of water per person. I'll boil a billy at lunch-time for everyone.

Leader: Sue Abbotts (9444 1607)

Saturday 30 September to Monday 2 October — Campout at Tutanning Nature Reserve, Pingelly

Please phone the Office (9383 7749) for directions, as you will need a map and set of instructions sent out to you. Leave your name, telephone number, contact address, and number of people in your party. Numbers will be limited as the camping area is small.

Leader: Dee Smith

Monday 25 September Meeting — State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 8:00 pm

Speaker to be advised.

Monday 23 October Meeting — State Tennis Centre, Burswood, 8:00 pm

Speaker to be advised.

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