



*"One Good Tern
Deserves Another"*

The Newsletter of the ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.
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Founded in 1977. website www.iboc.org.au

I.B.O.C. NEWS

CLUB'S AIM: To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the birdlife around them.

Issue No. 313 April 2008



Grey Butcher Bird

Photo Chris Chafer

Chris Chafer, a previous long time Records Officer, now living in Sydney, has agreed to return to his old stamping ground and speak to us in September

came to share our delight and it was happy to swim around us for some time even swimming through Tom's legs at

one stage. My absolute high was to swim a few strokes underwater with it. Magic! Magic! Magic!



Lord Howe Island

Photo Tera Wheway

The trip was also memorable because of the funny, lovable, caring people we went with, so a big thank you to everyone for all the laughs and for sharing the load to organise trips, walks, dinners etc. Thanks also to Pam, (your face said it all) Neil and Tom for catching the fish and Val for cooking it giving us a tasty barbecue night, to Julie for sharing her little purple taxi and yeah the tomatoes were 1'##>*+!! expensive, sorry about the bird poo Anne but it really was funny. Thanks everyone, where to next?

Birding Abroad - Thailand

David and Elizabeth Winterbottom have been going overseas regularly to look at birds and other things. Here is a vignette from a voyage in February 2006.

Although it boasts a huge variety of birds, they are mostly confined to the National Parks. Elsewhere, most have been eaten and poaching in the Parks is still a problem. Nevertheless, to give an idea of the variety, we identified 270 species in 12 days – most of them new to us. Raptors are the most difficult to identify with juveniles, in particular, showing unbelievable variations in size, colour and even shape. Fortunately our guide specialises in them, so we did better than most – some sixteen species in all.

The first thing to strike one in the forests is the incessant racket of the Barbets – so hard to see high in the treetops. The Coppersmith Barbet is reported to send people crazy, but the Great, Lineated,

David Winterbottom

Green-eared, Golden-throated, Blue-throated and Blue-eared were all seen adding their voices to the chorus – or is it cacophony? Bulbuls are also abundant. In addition to the familiar Red-whiskered, we saw another dozen different Bulbul species making it quite bewildering to keep tabs on them all.

Two rare Grey Partridges nearly knocked us over as we flushed them in the forest. Blossom-headed, Vernal Hanging and Red-breasted Parrakeets remind one of Lorikeets in Australia. The very similar Pompadour, Thick-billed and Wedgetailed Green Pigeons all have bright pink feet, but then so do most of the nine or ten other Green Pigeons which we missed. The Rangers' kitchens proved as irresistible to birders as the water draining from them was to the 'hard-to-see' forest birds such as the Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoo, a huge (70 cms – half of this tail) striking un-cuckoo-like bird which skulks in the

undergrowth nearby and the Chestnut-crowned Laughing Thrush. However, more exciting to us were the iridescent Indian Jungle Fowls behaving for all the world like the domestic chickens which derive from them. A Blue Whistling Thrush, Emerald Cuckoo and Canary Flycatcher all added to the colour of the forest edge.

Near the coast, the remaining saltbush pans are being converted to prawn ponds at an alarming rate so the twenty or so wader species we saw may not be there that much longer – always supposing birds like the Black-tailed Godwits have not all been eaten (they are caught in large mist nets) before the habitat disappears. Regretfully we missed the illusive Spoon-billed Sandpiper, and are unlikely to have better luck next time.

FORTHCOMING IBOC EVENTS April 2008

CLUB MEETING – Monday 14th April 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall. Lord Howe Island pictures. The paparazzi were out in force in February when numerous club members descended on Lord Howe. Here is a chance to see the best and some less than the best (Sorry! ‘homely’) shots of the paparazzi. Please remember to bring a plate of goodies to share with the paparazzi and your cup for supper.

MID-WEEK WALK – Wednesday 16th April. 9am – Tom Thumb Lagoon. Leaders Tom and Joan Wylie From Springhill Road, turn south at the lights into Tom Thumb Road. Park and meet at a paddock, some 100m further along on the right

Due to the Club Camp at Grenfell (19-26 April) there will be no **MONTHLY OUTING** in April, or **COMMITTEE MEETING**. The next Committee Meeting will be May 20th

MAY NEWSLETTER Deadline for articles for the next *IBOC News* is Thursday 24th April. Please send items to the editor, cashman5@bigpond.com or mail them to 5 Madden Street, Fernhill 2519

WELCOME to new member **Han (Hong Quin) Liang**. Nice to have you join us

Best Wishes to long time member, **Judith Parkinson**, who is currently unwell, but still enjoys reading about her friends in our Newsletter..

Volunteers Needed at Barren Grounds. Jack Baker has already relocated a number of Eastern Bristlebirds from Barren Grounds. If you can help at weekends in this exciting project, please contact Jack on 0417 663 519

FINANCES. Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer reported that our Bank Balance stood at \$1045.52 at the end of February. With two bills for the Website and PO Box rent approved, the book balance is \$876.52

ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT ! A huge Tourist development is planned for Great Keppel Island, off the south Queensland coast. This will affect various bird species. Worried ?? For more information see the Notice Board and/or Penny Potter

A Swallow's Journey. From "*Country Living*" June 2006 (UK) pp71-74

"One swallow does not a summer make." Many country people would disagree. We know the first fork-tailed arrival before Easter - (Spring, here) will rapidly be joined by dozens of others, symbolizing the true arrival of warmer weather, just as the flocks of twittering young birds on telephone wires in September will loudly declare that the good times are over. Swallows in colder climates are nature's way of punctuating the summer.

They are beautiful, with an iridescent blue-black back and deeply forked tail, complete with two little streamers on either edge, (the easiest way to distinguish them from their short-tailed cousins, the martins.)

Swallows were originally cliff-nesting birds and their association with man probably began when they shared the same caves as our Neolithic ancestors. By the time of the Pharaohs they were depicted regularly in Egyptian hieroglyphs. At about this period they must have begun abandoning their natural habitat in favour of mans' temples and palaces.

Victorians knew them as chimney swallows. Increasing numbers began nesting in outbuildings, particularly on farms (as indicated in their scientific name *Hirundo Rustica*.) As a result, their common name changed to barn swallow. Modern nests, which are rebuilt annually by the same pair, are fashioned from mouthfuls of mud and saliva, but are crude in comparison with the carefully moulded constructions of house martins.

The female lays four to five tiny dark-blotched white eggs. Incubation lasts

barely a fortnight and is done mainly by the female. But once the young hatch, both adults work hard to cope with prodigious appetites, returning every few minutes with food balls of tiny insects (plus larger prey, such as damselflies which are brought back whole.) It has been calculated that in one day an adult swallow catches up to 10,000 insects – one more reason farmers often welcome their presence.

Life alongside man is not without its drawbacks. Journeys to and from Africa take the biggest toll. Quite apart from the rigors of a return trip of up to 15,000 miles, specialist predators such as Eleanor's falcons lurk on route. But the lure of Britain is up to 18 hours of daylight in which to find food for their growing brood, and in a good year, this allows the pair to rear up to three clutches.

Swallows typically hunt in low-flying runs, their long tails giving them great manoeuvrability, scooping up insects as they skim just above the grass – particularly where cow pats have attracted a rich array of insect life to feed on. Similarly, they are drawn to water where they harvest nymphs and midges. The heavy use of insecticides is bad news for swallows. They seem to be holding their own in Britain overall, but numbers are declining in the rest of Europe. The good news is that swallows have proved their ability over the last five millennia to adapt their habits to fit in with man. Provided we modify our farming methods slightly and don't make life impossible for them, there is every chance they will continue to announce both summer's overture and its finale for years to come.

Brokers Nose Walk 12th March 2008 Lorraine Pincus

A new walk attracted 21 keen bird watchers, some being new club members. The parking area was easily accessible. Once the traffic noise faded away, the bird calls were many, but due to the over growth and thickness of the bush the sightings were scarce. The path was difficult in some areas due to the muddy potholes and soil erosion, and a couple of small leeches were flicked from boots. The sun was out, and this helped the Rufous Fantail as it gave a display of its beautiful tail feathers. Lewin's

Honeyeater and Eastern Spinebill are always a welcoming sight too.

We finally reached the top with its magnificent view of Wollongong. Here we were refreshed by morning tea and delighted by the sound of many Silvereyes, as they flew over head before disappearing. The walk down rewarded us with some of the smaller birds, Yellow Robin, White-browed Scrubwren and Red-browed Finch. Joan suggested that we do the walk again in Spring or Summer to compare the bird lists.

25 bird species sighted

Australian Pelican	Striated Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Topknot Pigeon	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
Crimson Rosella	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Raven
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Eastern Yellow Robin	Satin Bowerbird
Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Whipbird	Red-browed Finch
White-throated Treecreeper	Golden Whistler	Welcome Swallow
Spotted Pardalote	Rufous Whistler	Silvereye
White-browed Scrubwren	Rufous Fantail	
Brown Thornbill	Grey Fantail	

Garawarra State Conservation Area Walk 16, 3 2008 Terry Edwell

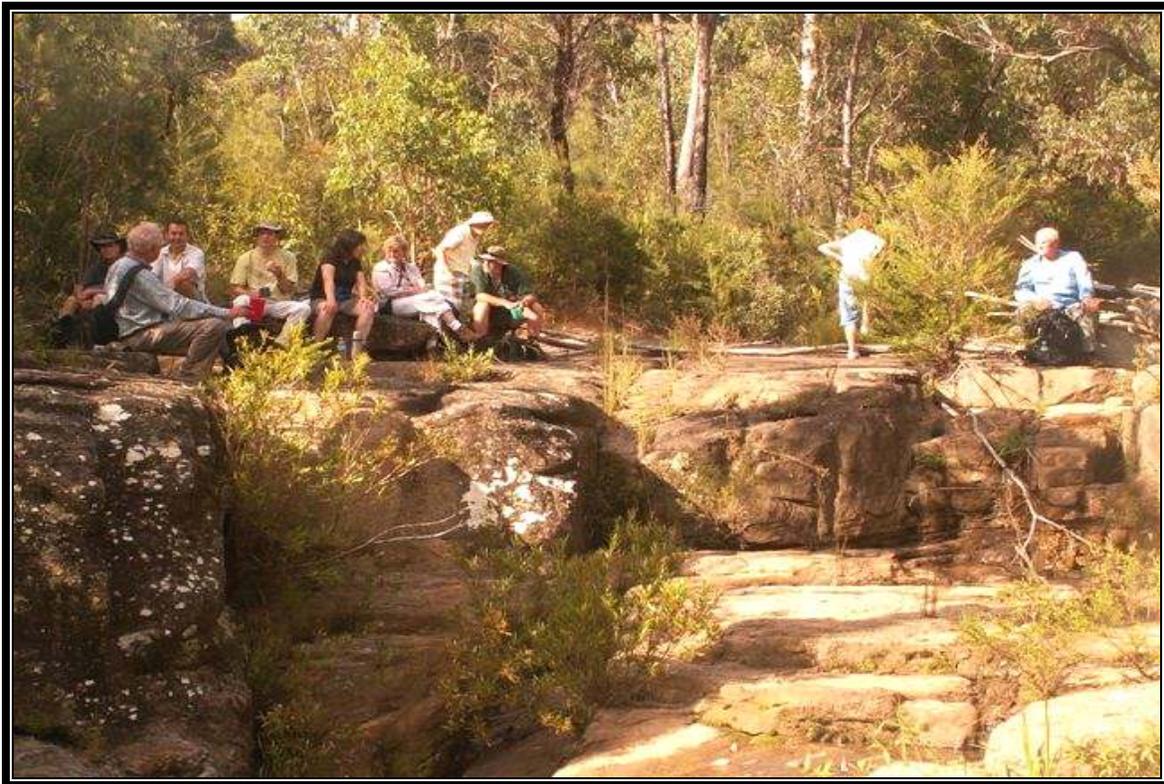
Twelve people came, and we had good weather for this walk. As it was very hot and humid we were glad of the cloud cover for most of the day. The birds were scarce, with thornbills being seen most often. The bush was beautiful with little heaths and flannel daisies out in flower. The dam gave us good sighting of Australasian Grebe in full breeding plumage, with one actually seen on her nest.

having a well earned rest in a tree next to it. Twenty pelicans were seen flying in formation overhead.

An early lunch was taken near a creek where Tera spotted a very large yabbie. There were also some interesting spiders and insects over the track. Back in the car park at Helensburg Station we saw Australian King-Parrots, Superb Fairy-wrens and Red-browed Finches

The track was steep in places and very rocky most of the way. The birds we saw were in little groups along the way. Male and female Rufous Whistlers were good to see. Joan and I saw a young koel cheeping away, with a parent wattle bird

Betty did a wonderful job in leading us with some help from Mike who brought along a more detailed map. Thank you to all my fellow bird watchers for another enjoyable day.



Lunch break

Photo Mike Morphet

38 bird species sighted

Pacific Black Duck	Superb Fairy-wren	Eastern Whipbird
Australasian Grebe	Spotted Pardalote	Golden Whistler
Australian Pelican	White-browed Scrubwren	Rufous Whistler
Masked Lapwing	Weebill	Grey Shrike-thrush
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Brown Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Striated Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird
Australian King-Parrot	Red Wattlebird	Australian Magpie
Crimson Rosella	Little Wattlebird	Pied Currawong
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Noisy Friarbird	Australian Raven
Common Koel	Lewin's Honeyeater	Satin Bowerbird
Laughing Kookaburra	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Superb Lyrebird	Eastern Spinebill	Silvereye
White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Yellow Robin	

March Meeting

David Winterbottom presented an extraordinary series of graphs and maps based on bird sightings that he and Elizabeth made in the last eight years. The sightings were regularly made in six specific areas or walks ranging from East Corrimal, to Windang. Overall they recorded a slight increase in bird numbers over the eight years. Numbers

in individual species varied, with smaller birds generally declining, while larger birds slightly increased. Our thanks for their dedication in observing and making these records.

Martin Cocker with the help of photos and maps outlined the habits and special points of identification of the Bird of the Month: the Red-necked Stint

IBOC UNUSUAL/INTERESTING SIGHTINGS MARCH 2008

Compiled by Martin Cocker

Species	Number	Date	Location	Habitat	Observer
Black Swan	76	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Canada Goose	4	04-Mar-08	Killalea Lagoon	lakeside	Chris Brandis
Australian Shelduck	11	03-Mar-08	Joadja	farm dam	Darryl Goldrick
Darter	3 Juv	17-Feb-08	Primbee Wetlands	swamp	Chas Burke
Little Egret	1	19-Feb-08	Fred Finch Park	Channel	David Winterbottom
Little Egret	up to 4	31-Mar-08	Fred Finch Park, several birds over March	mudflats	David Winterbottom
Eastern Reef Egret	1	01-Mar-08	Nth Port Kembla Beach	Rocky Shore	Chris Chafer
Striated Heron	2	19-Feb-08	Fred Finch Park	Channel	David Winterbottom
Striated Heron	1	02-Mar-08	Shoalhaven River, Nowra	riverine	Martin & Penny Potter
Striated Heron	2	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
Striated Heron	1	05-Mar-08	Macquarie Rivulet	riverine	Lorraine Pincus
Striated Heron	1 and 2	31-Mar-08	Fred Finch Park, several birds over March	mudflats	David Winterbottom
Striated Heron	1 and 2	31-Mar-08	Puckey's Lagoon	mudflats	David Winterbottom
Black-shouldered Kite	2	15-Feb-08	Primbee Oval	overhead	Ron Imisides
Square-tailed Kite	1	02-Mar-08	Shoalhaven River, Nowra	riverine	Martin & Penny Potter
Whistling Kite	1	07-Mar-08	Albion Park Rail	urban	Peter Fackender
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	27-Feb-08	Bulli, Sandon Point	Overhead	Jill Molan
Swamp Harrier	1	17-Feb-08	Austimer Sublime Point	overhead	Jill Molan
Brown Goshawk	2	17-Feb-08	Perkins Beach		Chas Burke
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	08-Mar-08	Barren Grounds NR	bush	Jean Clarke
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	09-Mar-08	Mt. Kembla Ring Track	overhead	Michelle Rower
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	19-Feb-08	Balgownie	Overhead	David Winterbottom
Brown Falcon	1	02-Mar-08	Menangle	Rural	Chris Chafer
Australian Hobby	1	18-Feb-08	Coniston	Golf Course	David Winterbottom
Peregrine Falcon	1	02-Mar-08	Shoalhaven River, Nowra	riverine	Martin & Penny Potter
Peregrine Falcon	1	25-Feb-08	Puckey's Lagoon	overhead	David Winterbottom
Nankeen Kestrel	1	07-Mar-08	Bombo	overhead	Roger Bogaert
Nankeen Kestrel	1	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Bar-tailed Godwit	100+	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Bar-tailed Godwit	55	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
Eastern Curlew	19	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Ruddy Turnstone	1	15-Feb-08	Barrack Pont	coastal	Michelle Rower
Red-necked Stint	60	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Curlew Sandpiper	1	28-Feb-08	Comerong Island	Estuarine	David Marshall
Pied Oystercatcher	5	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Pied Oystercatcher	16	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
Sooty Oystercatcher	6	02-Mar-08	Coalcliff Road bridge	rocky shore	Glennis Wellings
Grey Plover	1	23-Feb-08	Comerong Island	Estuarine	David Marshall

Red-capped Plover	12	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Red-capped Plover	30, 9Juv	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
Double-banded Plover	1	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
Black-fronted Dotterel	2	31-Mar-08	Fred Finch Park, several birds over March	mudflats	David Winterbottom
Kelp Gull	2	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
Caspian Tern	3	24-Feb-08	Shoalhaven Heads	Estuarine	Martin & Penny Potter
Crested Tern	32	03-Mar-08	Windang Estuary	estuarine	Lorraine Pincus
White-headed Pigeon	1	27-Feb-08	Jamberoo 3 separate sightings	Rural	Betty Hudson
Bar-shouldered Dove	2	17-Feb-08	Perkins Beach		Chas Burke
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	1	09-Mar-08	Yatheyattah NR *	rainforest	Marnix Zwankhuizen
Bar-shouldered Dove	1 and 2	31-Mar-08	Windang, frequent sightings over March	scrub	David Winterbottom
Topknot Pigeon	1	16-Feb-08	Mt. Ousley	Garden	Jim Robinson
Topknot Pigeon	6	15-Feb-08	Thirroul	Garden	Mike Morphett
Topknot Pigeon	1	20-Feb-08	Figtree	garden	Melissa Markham
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2	24-Feb-08	Boxvale Track Mittagong	Forest	Chris Chafer
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	2	10-Mar-08	Albion Park Rail	overhead	Brian Hales
Little Corella	100+	10-Mar-08	Bellambi	urban	Tom and Joan Wylie
Little Corella	100	05-Mar-08	Windang Park	urban park	Margaret P.
Musk Lorikeet	20	02-Mar-08	Shoalhaven River, Nowra	riverine	Martin & Penny Potter
Musk Lorikeet	30+	18-Mar-08	Albion Park Rail	garden	Peter Fackender
Powerful Owl	1	11-Mar-08	Excelsior Coalmine	forest	Mike Morphett
Southern Boobook	1	03-Mar-08	Mittagong, dead bird collision with fence	rural	Darryl Goldrick
Azure Kingfisher	1	05-Mar-08	Macquarie Rivulet	riverine	Lorraine Pincus
Sacred Kingfisher	1	02-Mar-08	Budderoo Plateau	forest	Betty Hudson
Rainbow Bee-eater	2	02-Mar-08	Nepean River, Wallacia	riverine	Chris Chafer
Rockwarbler	2	02-Mar-08	Shoalhaven River, Nowra	riverine	Martin & Penny Potter
Noisy Friarbird	1	09-Mar-08	Avondale	garden	Alan Lowis
Logrunner	1	08-Mar-08	Excelsior Coalmine	forest	Mike Morphett
Spotted Quail-thrush	5	15-Feb-08	Bangadilly NP Canyon Leigh		Chris Brandis
Black-faced Monarch	2 M&F	05-Mar-08	Macquarie Pass	Rainforest	Neil Wheway
Black-faced Monarch	1	02-Mar-08	Shoalhaven River, Nowra	riverine	Martin & Penny Potter
Black-faced Monarch	1	17-Feb-08	Perkins Beach		Chas Burke
Leaden Flycatcher	1	01-Mar-08	Bulli	Rainforest	Roger Truscott
Restless Flycatcher	1	14-Mar-08	Thirroul **	garden	Mike Morphett
Leaden Flycatcher	1	03-Mar-08	Bulli	rainforest	Roger Truscott
Rufous Fantail	12+	09-Mar-08	Mt. Kembla Ring Track	rainforest	Michelle Rower
Rufous Fantail	1	05-Mar-08	Jamberoo	garden	Betty Hudson
Rufous Fantail	1	05-Mar-08	Macquarie Pass	Rainforest	Neil Wheway
Rufous Fantail	1	03-Mar-08	Bulli, evidence of successful breeding	rainforest	Roger Truscott

Bassian Thrush	1	17-Mar-08	Scarborough	rainforest	Danie Ondinea
Indian Ringneck	1	27-Feb-08	Albion Park	Playing field	Bruce Coyte

* This record is with the BA Rarities Committee. If confirmed, it is the first sighting in our area for many years. Marnix Zwankhuizen

** "the first record in 28years of local observations" Mike Morphett

Those of you who attended our camp last November will remember our collective excitement at seeing a Wompoo Fruit Dove, a lifer for many of us. This bird has a range that extends from Cape York to the lower Hunter valley and formerly to the Illawarra. In the Illawarra it was moderately common in the 1840's but was last recorded from Mont Cambewarra in 1890 and Mount Keira in 1920, Since then there have been several unconfirmed sightings in 1977, 1982, 1986 and 1994. The current observation is based entirely on the identification of the call that came from a "massive old fruiting fig tree located in a small deep valley surrounded by warm temperate rain forest". This habitat is of course not unknown in our area so some extra vigilance and tuning of hearing skills may be appropriate!

Other news from the grape vine is the presence of a House Crow in Dee Why a species from India and Sri Lanka that sometimes finds its way to Australia by ship assisted passages. According to Pizzey and Knight, "Should immediately be reported and destroyed wherever identified". Those of you still hoping to see the Canada Geese at Killalea have left it too late as the four birds have met the same fate as recommended for the House Crow!

However there seem to be plenty of action in our own neck of the woods judging from the volume and content of the records I have received. Sorry I have not been able to send out any interim reports this month, the domestic move has limited my free time. However things are returning to "normal" in the Cocker household! If you would like to join the 40+ members who have given me their email address and so receive more regular updates than is possible through the Newsletter then please advise me: cocker@speedlink.com.au. Good Birding!



Lord Howe Island's BlackNoddy

Photo Alan Cousins