



*" One Good Tern  
Deserves Another"*

# I.B.O.C. NEWS

The Newsletter of the ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.  
POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 56 FAIRY MEADOW, N.S.W. 2519

<http://www.iboc.org.au/>

Founded in 1977

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

<b>IBOC NEWS Contents</b>		<b>Club Contacts</b>	
Club events	p 2	PRESIDENT :	Martin Cocker, tel: 0418 429 132
Seven Mile Beach Crooked River Walk	p 3	SECRETARY:	Betty Hudson, tel: 02 4236 0307 email: elizabethhudson@bigpond.com
Killalea Park Walk	p 4	TREASURER:	Bronwyn Wilson, tel: 02 4283 4744
Logrunner Reconnoitre & June Meeting	p 5	EDITORS:	John Cashman, tel: 02 4284 0538 email: cashman5@bigpond.com
Capturing on Camera	p 5,6		Val Dolan, tel: 02 4229 6737 email: valdolan@tpg.com.au
Tallawarra Ash Pond Walk	p 7		Martin Cocker email:cocker@speedlink.com.au
Lake Eyre Flight & Ecuador	p 8		
Bits and Pieces	p.9		
Unusual and Interesting Sightings	p 10		



**Grey Goshawk**

*Photo Charles Dove*

**WADER COUNT – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July 8.30 am. at Windang.** Meet in the carpark under the pines. All welcome. Come and hone your wader identification skills. Bring morning tea

**CLUB MEETING Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009 - 7.30pm Fairy Meadow Community Hall - Members Night**  
Come along with an item, photos, videos, a story, or a recitation. And bring some goodies, and a cup for supper. There will also be a Photographic Competition The rules are simple: Each member is limited to three bird photographs, prints must not be larger than A4, entries will be anonymous and registration at the meeting will be required, members will register their votes Start snapping or sorting through those files!

**MID-WEEK WALK Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July – Tarrawanna. Leader: Wal Emery. Meet at 9am.** At the roundabout in Meadow Street near Tarrawanna School, turn West towards the escarpment. Proceed to the end of Keira St, then right into Corrimal St, then left into Hawthorn St. Park suitably near the locked gate at the top of Hawthorn St. The walk is circular through eucalypt forest, with steep sections at the start and end of the track, and some track sections are uneven. Time estimated at about 2 ½ to 3 hours, including a morning tea stop. Wal and Hazel's phone number is 4284 0139.

**MONTHLY OUTING Saturday 18th July, Bass Point Reserve Leader Betty Hudson** Meet at the parking area on the left just beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup> entry gates at 9.00am Bring a carry morning tea and lunch. This is a walk through a variety of coastal habitats including some littoral rain forest. I aim to finish no later than 2.00pm. Travel south along the Princes Hwy and turn off at the Oak Flats Roundabout. Turn left and then proceed until you turn right at the 3<sup>rd</sup> traffic lights into Wattle Street. Proceed until you reach the Shellharbour Road (2<sup>nd</sup>) Lights. Go straight across. Look for the large brown road signs to Bass Point to turn right. Follow these signs through several intersections and turns until you are at the top of the beach, then follow the Road into the reserve. Contact Betty Hudson on 4236 0307 or 0432 892 945.

**Logrunner Survey Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> July at 8.30am Leader: Martin Cocker** We will explore the Mt. Kembla Ring Track. Up the Mt. Kembla road, past the pub on the right, then where the road forks, turn left and park at the top.

**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING** will be on **Monday 20th July, 2009 at 7.30pm** at Joan & Tom Wylie's, 4 Daphne Street, Bellambi (ph 4284 2051)

**August 2009 NEWSLETTER** Deadline for articles for the next IBOC News is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009. Please don't leave your contributions to the last minute! Submit them by email to the editor: [cashman5@bigpond.com](mailto:cashman5@bigpond.com). or post them to 5 Madden Street, Fernhill 2519

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS** due 1st January each year: Family \$35, Single \$30, Junior \$10. Please pay Bronwyn Wilson, our Treasurer, by cash, cheque or mail order.



## Film Night

**When**           Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July, starting at 7 p.m.\  
**Where**           32 Shearwater Boulevard, Albion Park Rail.

Barbara and Brian Hales are hosting a film night, as above. Please feel free to come along and bring your camping chair in case we need extra seats and also a small plate to share for supper afterwards. If you intend to join us it would be very helpful if you could phone the Hales on 4257 4431 so that they can get some measure of the number expected to attend.

### ACCESS to Tallawarra Ash Pond 3

Chris Brandis

As Darryl Goldrick and I have keys and it is dangerous for members to climb the gates to gain access, I have arranged with Lloyd Townsend for a key to be made available at the security office inside the power station entrance. If you want to get in ring Lloyd on 042 384 04 10 between 8am and 4pm week days so he can get the key and the name of the person wanting to get in. You will need to return the key so I hope it is not too much of a detour to get and return the key.

On the east side there is a weed controllers' track that goes to the mouth of Duck Creek and returns back through the forest, but the grass is sometimes long so take care.. In summer it is a favorite site for snakes to bask.

At sometime, Lloyd is to prepare a safety induction for the area, but it appears to be a low priority. The main thing is to have a mobile phone to contact security. Get the number from them, in case some thing happens or you spot trespassers, vandals etc.

### Seven Mile Beach & Crooked River Walk. Sunday 14 June - Lyndall Dawson

The promise of another interesting bird outing had us up much earlier than usual on a chilly Sunday morning, but we were rewarded by a beautiful red sunrise and sound of a lyrebird chorus in Austinmer while we drank our cup of tea. A very pleasant drive followed, with little traffic, so Terry and I arrived at the village of Gerroa early enough to enjoy an excellent cup of coffee in a charming little café near the mouth of the Crooked River. Soon after that we met Betty and the enthusiastic group of birdos (19 in all) ready to set off into the littoral rainforest. Betty diplomatically reminded us to try and walk quietly (we never know, we might see something really interesting if we don't scare them away!), so we set off like a group of little mice. It soon became apparent that there weren't many birds around and the light was poor, so before long the usual cheerful conversation began to enliven the somewhat dingy forest.

The track then led us to the great expanse of Seven Mile Beach. The sea was calm and once again, it seemed there were few birds around. It was noted that the calm conditions probably meant that albatross, gannets and petrels that one would expect to see riding the winds at this time of year were probably resting on the surface further out. Eventually we saw quite a few gannets and a Crested Tern was spotted. The clouds began to thicken and there were a few drops of rain, so we didn't linger. But it held off and we enjoyed a pleasant stroll along the beach. We were alerted by their plaintive cry to the presence of a pair of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos that followed us along the beach for a while. Betty eventually found us the path back to the car park, and once we were into the dunes and the flowering banksias there were plenty of birds. Red Wattlebirds, Silvereyes, Yellow Robins and several honeyeaters were there, but the best was a very obliging Golden Whistler that sat still only a few paces away to give me the best sighting I had ever had - what a beauty!

Of course, the keenest eyes and ears among the group soon detected quite a few birds - Lewin's Honeyeater, pardalotes, some gerygones among them. The track ran through forest of blackbutt, swamp mahogany, banksia and quite a lot of lantana, but there was evidence of efforts to control the weed and lantana in quite a few places. Good conversation made the time pass quickly and with few bird sightings to hold us up we reached the picnic ground and morning tea quite early. There we were entertained by a family of kookaburras, who clearly knew that picnicking people were a good source of tucker. Charlie got them started on some scraps of biscuits, but since there wasn't much more forthcoming they sat and glowered at us from the nearby tree, occasionally swooping very near when it seemed as if a morsel had been dropped. One kooka swooped from the tree and snatched a grub or worm from the sand right near my feet at the picnic table. We marvelled at their ability to see a grey worm buried in grey sand from their perch up in a tree about 4 metres away!

We enjoyed lunch in the picnic area where the cars were parked, then the group disbanded relatively early, but very satisfied. Some headed back to Geroa where Betty reported seeing a number of wading birds, including an Eastern Great Egret & Caspian Tern on the mud flats, and to the east towards the sea a number of cormorants and a Swamp Harrier were seen. Several other common birds were around in the park. It seems that the Geroa coffee shop benefited from our recommendation after that. Terry and I headed for Shoalhaven Heads. We were interested to find a very good display by the NPWS about migrating shore birds, and saw (among other things) a huge group of Black Swans, some Pelicans, Black Ducks and Wood Ducks.

Once again, thank you Betty, for a good day out.

**Bird List for Seven Mile Beach and Crooked River Walk 14.06.09**

Chestnut Teal	Silver Gull	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Spotted Dove	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Little Wattlebird
Crested Pigeon	Galah	Red Wattlebird
Australasian Gannet	Rainbow Lorikeet	New Holland Honeyeater
Little Pied Cormorant	Crimson Rosella	Eastern Whipbird
Little Black Cormorant	Eastern Rosella	Golden Whistler
Great Cormorant	Laughing Kookaburra	Grey Shrike-thrush
Australian Pelican	White-throated Treecreeper	Australian Magpie
Eastern Great Egret	Satin Bowerbird	Pied Currawong
White-faced Heron	Superb Fairy-wren	Grey Fantail
Royal Spoonbill	Variegated Fairy-wren	Australian Raven
Swamp Harrier	Brown Gerygone	Magpie-Lark
Masked Lapwing	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin
Caspian Tern	Eastern Spinebill	Silvereye
Crested Tern	Lewin's Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow

### Suburbia before Killalea Park      Wednesday 10th June 2009      Lorraine Pincus

New walks always offer mystery and this one invited 17 keen members on a windy 14 deg C morning. The walk started from the vacant lot (car park) next to one of the large billabongs. Our first sightings were Dusky Moorhen swimming and a Purple Swamphen sitting on a nest. The path was clearly wandering ahead of us through a housing estate following a natural creek which has been improved by adding large boulders to improve the water quality, and by the planting of shrubs, small and large trees. Mother nature has grown reeds around the billabongs and along the creek.

The path takes us further into thicker areas of bush where the neighbour "kids" have bike tracks, which

**Bird List 42 species**

Black Swan  
Australian Wood Duck  
Pacific Black Duck  
Hardhead  
Australasian Grebe  
Australian Pelican  
Cattle Egret  
White-faced Heron  
Australian White Ibis  
Nankeen Kestrel  
Purple Swamphen  
Dusky Moorhen  
Masked Lapwing  
Rainbow Lorikeet

Crimson Rosella  
Laughing Kookaburra  
Satin Bowerbird  
Superb Fairywren  
Brown Gerygone  
Yellow Thornbill  
Spotted Pardalote  
Eastern Spinebill  
Lewin's Honeyeater  
Red Wattlebird  
New Holland Honeyeater  
Eastern Whipbird  
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike  
Golden Whistler

Grey Butcherbird  
Australian Magpie  
Pied Currawong  
Grey Fantail  
Willie Wagtail  
Australian Raven  
Magpie-Lark  
Eastern Yellow Robin  
Silvereye  
Welcome Swallow  
Red-whiskered Bulbul  
Common Mynah  
Mistletoebird  
Red-browed Finch

also made good birding tracks. Here we watched a Lewin's Honeyeater having a bath while a Golden Whistler, Silvereye, New Holland Honeyeater and a Crimson Rosella looked on. We continued to the furthest point of our walk to a park called "The Shallows", here were three large billabongs, on one swam mum and dad and baby Black Swan, the others had Pacific Black Duck and Australasian Grebe.

Back to the covered picnic table we had morning tea where a Mistletoebird enjoyed his mistletoe which allowed us to view him. Barbara Hales thanked Lorraine for an enjoyable and interesting walk.

### RANKIN SPRINGS Birds of the Bush FESTIVAL

2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009. The long Weekend. Rankin Springs is in Central Western NSW, between West Wyalong & Hay. (562km west of Sydney) Guided Bird Tours, Spring Fair & Market Day, Photo/Art Exhibitions & Activities [www.birdsofthebush.com](http://www.birdsofthebush.com) for further details

Enquiries Ph Jenny (02) 6965 3384 or email [birdsofthebush@yahoo.com.au](mailto:birdsofthebush@yahoo.com.au)

Further details are available on the Club Notice board at July Meeting OR on IBOC web site.

**Report: Logrunner Reconnoitre 31 May 2009**

**Martin Cocker**

It was great to find 16 members upright, alert and ready to go as I arrived at the assembly point five minutes late. The grey start to the day and a less than optimistic forecast had done nothing to dampen members’ enthusiasm. Our guide and mentor, Bob Ashford, spoke about the area and his previous sightings of Logrunners and played us a recording of their distinctive call. The walk in Black Ash Reserve is a short one but right from the start the path plunges into rainforest and it takes a few moments for one’s eyes to become accustomed to the very poor light especially at ground level. Our group had not gone more than a hundred metres when, after playing the recording of the call, Charles Dove signalled and pointed into the gloom. A pair of Logrunners feeding on the forest floor among the debris and scattered boulders! A difficult bird to spot because of the low light levels and the well

camouflaged plumage of the back. When the male turns front on then the white upper front and breast is clearly visible otherwise good spotting skills are required. We then continued up the track and before we emerged into more open country another pair of Logrunners were located responding to our recording. The path continued into open fields on one side and a commotion of Magpies mobbing a bird of prey in flight revealed fine views and photograph opportunities of a Grey Goshawk.

After returning to our assembly point for a morning cuppa and a shelter from the rain shower most members retraced their steps into the forest and were rewarded with further views of the Logrunners. A successful start to this informal survey of this species. Many thanks to Bob Ashford for his expertise and local knowledge.

**The full species list is:**

White-headed Pigeon	Yellow-throated Scrubwren	Grey Shrike-thrush
Wonga Pigeon	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Butcherbird
Grey Goshawk	Brown Thornbill	Magpie
King-Parrot	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Red Wattlebird	Grey Fantail
Laughing Kookaburra	Logrunner (2 Pairs)	Eastern Yellow Robin
Superb Lyrebird	Eastern Whipbird	Silvereye
Satin Bowerbird	Golden Whistler	

**June Members Meeting**

**Martin Cocker**

At our June meeting Wal Emery, ably supported by Production Assistant Tera Wheway, gave the bird of the month presentation the Logrunner. Wal was able to give us boyhood memories of finding nests, the types of habitat the birds frequent and the changes that have occurred in their habitat and distribution. Many thanks Wal for giving us some valuable insights into this bird to support the Club’s current surveys.

interesting and entertaining background of the social history of bird watching: why do people watch birds? Which famous people are birdwatchers? What type of bird watcher are you, twitcher or social? What is the language of bird watching? Have you “dipped out” or been “gripped off”? Hopefully none of our members could ever be described as a “stringer”! Terrill obviously has a wealth of expertise and skills to share. Our thanks to him for sharing with us.

Terrill Nordstrom our main speaker spoke on “Birds; Birdwatchers and Pictures” Terrill provided an

**Capturing a moment in nature on camera**

**Mike Morphett**

The day after the June edition of *IBOC News* arrived in the mail, my two books I ordered from Clouston & Hall were delivered. (I’m much indebted to Richard Miller for alerting me to these Canberra discount booksellers many tomes ago.) One was *The Music of Wild Birds*, an American publication with illustrations by Judy Pelikan (interesting surname), based on an original field guide by F. Schuyler Mathews, and the other Michael Snedic’s *Wildlife of Australia: a nature photographer’s journey* (2008).

The latter proved to be a good follow-up to the brief article in our newsletter about the proposed photographic competition on the July Members’ Night. Also, there was some discussion about photography during the June walk in generally poor light through part of Seven Mile Beach National Park and along a stretch of Crooked River. So, I thought part of the foreword to Snedic’s book by Penny Olsen, recently retired *Wingspan* editor, would be well worth passing on:

“Today, good photography is achievable by almost anyone. Digital cameras take care of many of the decisions that formerly had to be made and executed manually. Yet going digital has upped the ante. Not many years ago a well-focused, well-exposed photograph of a perched osprey was exciting. Now we expect to see the one bursting from the water or lugging a fish, torpedo-style. A bird perched on a

branch might be a good representation of the species, but how much more interesting it is to add a hint of movement, personality or ecology; to highlight a pattern, a feature, an interesting shape, juxtaposition or interaction; or to make use of the play of light. Mostly, the result is even better when the animal is unaware or relaxed with the photographer, simply going about its business.”



Little Corellas: looking like leaves on dieback tree in Murray River sunrise



& silhouetted in Windjana Gorge National Park dusk

Michael Snedic, in company with Mark Rayner, runs “in-the-field” Trekabout Photography Workshops, mostly in south-east Queensland, including O’Reilly’s, details of which can be found on the internet. Michael’s book has a host of marvellous photographs of wildlife, particularly birds, and landscape scenery. One I find especially striking is titled ‘Carpet Python eating Wonga Pigeon’. His introductory emphasis on the need for patience and persistence reminded me of the hours spent, often in cramped conditions in a hide, by erstwhile club member Len Klumpes to record birds and for the rest us to enjoy.



Solitary Mute Swan in Auburn Botanic Gardens



Australian Pelican: opportunistic feeder in Kiama Harbour

We could easily be inhibited from taking photos of birds in action after seeing the products of camera professionals like Snedic, who, to my surprise, admits to including birds in captive situations. So, all of us who took scores of photos at Featherdale Wildlife Park on last May’s outing needn’t feel guilty of cheating, particularly as it’s almost impossible to photograph some species in the wild. My feelings of frustration in trying to get an unobstructed camera angle often gave way to loss of

consciousness of cage netting in my wonderment of some of those close-up splendid creatures. I also think it’s good to build our own compendium of snaps, not only to help with identification, but there are all-round personal benefits to be gained from on-the-spot photography when we can be totally absorbed in our passion for birds and focused in the here and now. As Snedic declares, “the camera allows the photographer to capture a specific moment in time”. That experience, however fleeting,

can be one of countless emotional and spiritual peaks

in our continuing connection with nature.

**Tallawarra Ash Ponds Walk Sunday 24th May 2009**

Lorraine Pincus

As usual Tallawarra's attraction had 22 keen members show with spotting scopes, cameras, and binoculars in hand. While Darryl Goldrick was explaining the history of the place a Swamp Harrier was sighted, the first of many raptors. The enjoyment of this walk is the tracks or roads are built up above the ponds, thus we are able to look down on the array of bird life. Our first pond showed Eurasian Coot, Australasian Grebe, Pacific Black Duck while overhead a Whistling Kite perched in a tree. It was noted how dry the ground was even though there had been a lot of rain on previous days.

Just before morning tea we were all surprised to see a large deer, (obviously startled by something) burst out from the undergrowth and then disappear into it again. A Black Swan with one cygnet were swimming on a small pond. The largest pond, at the back of the area, usually has a variety of birds, and didn't disappoint us. Black-fronted Dotterel and

Red-capped Plover were running around in the mud. Black-winged Stilt and Bar-tailed Godwit were feeding and the one Australasian Shoveller was hiding among the sleeping Chestnut Teal.

On the home stretch we made a detour to check out the White-fronted Chat. Unfortunately we didn't see any, but enjoyed seeing a few Double-banded Plovers. Even though no trees were in flower, the bush birds were plentiful. We saw Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Mistletoebird, Spotted Pardalote, New Holland Honeyeater, Lewin's Honeyeater and Eastern Spinebill. The Swamp Harrier was sighted many times during the morning, and at the end of the walk we added a Brown Falcon to our list. Darryl invited anyone to go with him to the outlet channel of the power station, where they saw a female Darter and two Striated Herons. Thank you Darryl for an enjoyable morning. 63 species were seen.

**Bird List 63 species**

Black Swan	Brown Falcon	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Australian Wood Duck	Purple Swampphen	Noisy Miner
Australasian Shoveller	Dusky Moorhen	Red Wattlebird
Chestnut Teal	Eurasian Coot	New Holland Honeyeater
Pacific Black Duck	Black-winged Stilt	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Australasian Grebe	Red-capped Plover	Golden Whistler
Hoary-headed Grebe	Double-banded Plover	Grey Shrike-thrush
Darter	Black-fronted Dotterel	Grey Butcherbird
Little Pied Cormorant	Masked Lapwing	Australian Magpie
Little Black Cormorant	Bar-tailed Godwit	Grey Fantail
Pied Cormorant	Galah	Willie Wagtail
Australian Pelican	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Australian Raven
Eastern Great Egret	Rainbow Lorikeet	Magpie-lark
Striated Heron	Crimson Rosella	Golden-headed Cisticola
White-faced Heron	Eastern Rosella	Welcome Swallow
Australian White Ibis	Superb Fairy-wren	Red-wiskered Bulbul
Black Shouldered Kite	Yellow Thornbill	Common Starling
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Mistletoebird
Whistling Kite	Spotted Pardalote	Red-browed Finch
Swamp Harrier	Eatern Spinebill	House Sparrow
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Lewin's Honeyeater	European Goldfinch

**WILD CAMPING**

As announced at our last Meeting several members have expressed interest in camps in remoter areas than our usual locations. Jill Molan has kindly offered to nurture and organise such an expedition. Jill has suggested two locations; Horse Swamp at Barrington Tops and Coolah Tops NP. Another opportunity has just been identified through a conversation with Birds Australia, this is a private property at Captains Flat east of Canberra, camping is available by the river and there is a toilet. Jill is suggesting the long weekend in January. Please contact Jill on 4283 2581 or at [jill.molan@ozemail.com.au](mailto:jill.molan@ozemail.com.au). Go wild!!

## A Flight over Lake Eyre

I have just come back from the Lake Eyre region. Water is still flowing into Lake Eyre North from Warburton Creek. We took a 70 minute flight from Marree. in a Cessna 206. We flew across the Goyder Channel that links the two lakes, which is still dry, then across Madigans Gulf to Brook Island. We dropped down to 500 feet, and we could see groups of pelicans each consisting of about 20 birds, plus lots of seagulls. The expanse of water is so great and the birds are spread out so we did not see big congregations. Then we flew back to Marree. The lakes look impressive. The North Lake is various shades of pale blue and pinks, whilst the dry South Lake shimmers with salt. We heard that all the bird

## BIRDING ABROAD Ecuador

Here is a vignette from a voyage David and Elizabeth Winterbottom made in January this year.

Ecuador is another of those amazing Latin American countries with a fantastic number of bird species because they have such an incredible variety of habitats. We deliberately sacrificed many species by not going down into the Amazon basin – hot, sticky, we; crane upwards for invisible birds in the treetops, and peer down for invisible birds on the ground! OK, so the Parrots and Trogons are fantastic, but we just had to give most of them a miss.

They keep finding new species - not just splits, real new ones. At one reserve we went to, a local found a Cock-of-the-Rock lek\* on his property and decided to build a track to it to cash in on the tourist trade. Noticing a bird foraging after lunch crumbs along the track, he gradually made friends with it and could call it up by name. Well, when the track was opened ornithologists found that his “friend” was a totally new species of Ant Pitta! He called her up for us – a lovely bird named “Maria“. There are quite a few species of Ant Pitta in Ecuador, of different sizes and hues but the same basic shape as our Pittas, and nearly as hard to see.

Someone must have thought that the undergrowth birds all ate ants. In addition to the Pittas, there are Antbirds, Antshrikes, Anthrushes, Antvireos and Antwrens! However, there are also some very bright birds in the foothills too. Apart from the Parrots there are Motmots and Trogons (a bit like large colourful rollers), Aracaris and other large billed Toucans, and the unbelievable and highly

## Gleniss Wellings

action is up in the Warburton Creek area. I heard this on Macca last Sunday morning. You really have to fly to see the lake. We have heard from other travellers out there that at William Creek there are plenty of pilots just waiting to take visitors on a flight. William Creek is closer to where the Warburton comes into the Lake but I don't know how long it would take to fly to where the bird action is. It is rather expensive flying around out there: the distances are huge. However just 70km or so from Marree is Muloorina Waterhole on Muloorina Station. It is a permanent waterhole and home to over 100 different bird species. Visitors are welcome and a basic campground is provided.

## David Winterbottom

visible Quetzals and Cock-of-the-Rocks. These are much more spectacular than the duller but odder looking Amazonian and Long-wattled Umbrellabirds.

We had a great day in the high Andes. A couple of magnificent Andean Condors paraded past us at quite close quarters. We also had good sightings of the miniscule Tiny Hawk, a real rarity apparently. Then there were Andean Black-faced Ibis, Andean Ruddy Duck, Andean Lapwing, Andean Teal, and Andean Guan, to say nothing of the Highland Elania, Mountain Tanager, and Plate-billed Mountain Toucan (and, of course, Llamas).

Most places provide habitat for a fantastic number of Flycatcher species. Differences are hard to spot and even harder to remember – Olive-chested, Olive-sided, and Olive-striped.... Equally numerous, with even more species are the Tanagers – Golden, Golden-crowned, Golden-eared, and Golden-naped... To cap these, there are the Hummingbirds, myriads of them. A problem here is that most of them are not called Hummingbirds but have the most exotic names like Brilliant, Emerald, Hermit, Hillstar, Lancebill, Sapphire, Sunangel, Sunbeam or Sylph.

We did not spend time on the coast although on the way up to the mountains there were a couple of swamps and small lakes. There were a good few waders and ducks about, but pride of view went to the Horned Screamer, a huge bird reminiscent of a larger but shorter-tailed Pheasant Coucal. But guess what? It screams! The Andean streams have their own specialities. We saw the White-capped Dipper

and the Torrent Duck but this time missed out on the Streamcreeper.

Well worth a visit – over 400 species seen in a fortnight, nearly half new to us, not counting the side visit to the Galapagos.

\*Lek: a show off place for cocks to attract birds

**'Whichity-wheit, whitch-i-wheit, whichit!'**

Bob Beale in the Heckler column in the *SMH* (Monday, 8 June 09) took to task the various authors of bird identification books. His particular gripe was about the calls that these authors say the different birds make. Beale says 'it is a joke the way the many wondrous calls, songs, trills, warbles and hoots of our local birds are described. To be told to listen for "kwipz-t-flurwokit" is ridiculous!'

But he liked Peter Carey's description of the magpie's liquid fluted melody as "like an angel gargling in a crystal vase" and he thought the NZ poet Denis Glover had a pretty good go at the magpie too, with his famous "quardle ardle oodle

ardle wardle doodle." But it was mad to describe 'one of the the mudlark's many calls as "qwoo-zik-wheek" when I hear "Who's this freak?"

Beale has several other bird calls (the heading is supposedly that of a willie wagtail ) including 'a pied butcherbird involved in a Columbian cocaine smuggling racket whose lilting "Bogota, Bogota" is soon followed by a lyrical "Off I go with my suitcase in my hand."

Bob Beale concludes that 'we need a proper guide to Aussie birdsong because the present lot are nothing to crow about.'



Club members try out their Winter Woolies Photo Neil Wheway

**MAGPIE**

**James McAuley**

The magpie's mood is never surly;  
 Every morning, waking early,  
 He gargles music in his throat.  
 The liquid squabble of his note,

Its silver stridency of sound,  
 The bright confusions and the round  
 Bell-cadences, are pealed,  
 Over the frosty half-ploughed field.

Then swooping down self-consciously  
 From the fence-post or the tree,  
 He swaggers in pied feather coat,  
 And slips the fat worms down his throat.

## MEMBERS SIGHTINGS

Compiled by Martin Cocker

SPECIES	No.	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
Musk Duck	1	30-May	Korungulla Swamp	Swamp	Brian Hales, David Garlick
White-headed Pigeon	1	31-May	Black Ash Reserve Bellawongarah	Forest	IBOC
White-headed Pigeon	10	30-May	Mangerton	Urban	Ian McKinley
Wonga Pigeon	1	31-May	Black Ash Reserve Bellawongarah	Forest	IBOC
Pacific Baza	4	23-May	Jamberoo Mountain	Forest	Peter Nolan
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	1	30-May	Spring Creek Reserve. Kiama	Reserve	Bob Ashford
Great-crested Grebe	19	07-Jun	Bundeela Pondage, Kangaroo Valley	Freshwater	Bob Ashford
Brown Goshawk	1	30-May	Spring Creek Reserve. Kiama	Reserve	Bob Ashford
Grey Goshawk	1	31-May	Black Ash Reserve Bellawongarah	Forest	IBOC
Grey Goshawk	1	30-May	Spring Creek Reserve. Kiama	Reserve	Bob Ashford
Swamp Harrier	1	31-May	Coomonderry Swamp	Swamp	Martin and Penny Potter
Swamp Harrier	1	06-Jun	Killalea SRA	Parkland/forest	Bob Ashford
Little Eagle	1	06-Jun	Killalea SRA	Parkland/forest	Bob Ashford
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	13-May	Bellawongarah	Forest/Paddock	Bob Ashford
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	2	06-Jun	Killalea SRA	Parkland/forest	Bob Ashford
Hobby	1	30-May	Spring Creek Reserve. Kiama	Reserve	Bob Ashford
Peregrine Falcon	1	08-Jun	Kiama Coast	Coastal	Lorne Johnson
Spotless Crake	1	10-May	Purrah Bay, Kanahooka	Lakeside	Richard Fackender
Eastern Curlew	5	14-Jun	Shoalhaven Heads	Shoreline	Martin and Penny Potter
Gull-billed Tern	1	14-Jun	Shoalhaven Heads	Shoreline	Martin and Penny Potter
Eastern Barn Owl	1	15-Jun	Wollongong CBD Mobbed by Magpies	Urban Park	Terrill Nordstrom
Logrunner	2 Pairs	31-May	Black Ash Reserve Bellawongarah	Forest	IBOC

Some good sightings of waders still about at Shoalhaven Head. At the last Wader Count at Windang we only managed four Bar Tailed Godwits but the Double-Banded Plovers were plentiful at the estuary mouth. Obviously Purrah Bay in Kanahooka is a good place to spot Crakes,

with this month's sighting by Richard Fackender following on the Spotted Crake that was seen here a few months ago. Also we had a very welcome sighting of a Barn Owl in Wollongong urban area. Other records were sent in by Anne Cousins, Tom and Joan Wylie and Martin Cocker.