

birdwatch

august 1998



FOR YOUR DIARY

WEDS AUG 12 Mt Compass Boardwalk and Scott CP. Meet at boardwalk.

SAT AUG 22 Manning Scrub at Blewitt Springs. Meet in park at corner of Main Rd and Kangarilla Rd, McLaren Vale (see fantastic map—thank you, Karen!).

FRI SEPT 11 **MEETING** Guest speaker is Colin Rich on Bird Banding.

SUN SEPT 13 Cox Scrub with Colin Rich for bird banding demos. Meet in car-park at northern end of park off the Ashbourne Rd.

WEDS SEPT 23 Newland Head CP. Meet at the campground.

SAT OCT 3 Onkaparinga Wetlands. Meet at the park by the old Institute at Old Noarlunga.

WEDS OCT 14 Amaroo Water Gardens and/or Kema CP (to be advised in next Newsletter).

OUTINGS: Meet at 8.30am. Bring lunch and chair.

MEETINGS: Start at 7.30pm at Glendale Christian School, Goolwa.

CONTACT: Judith Dyer, 3 Egret Ave, Goolwa, ph 8555 2736

Kate Bruce, PO Box 403, Goolwa ph 8555 020

NARACOORTE CAMPOUT 30TH OCT TO 2ND NOV



Accommodation details:

Naracoorte Caravan Park, 81 Park Terrace, Naracoorte, SA 5271. Tel: 8762 2128

Members are asked to arrange their own accommodation. A deposit will be required.

- It is recommended that you book ASAP
- Please mention the name of our group when booking
- A list of available accommodation and prices is given below:

Holiday units: \$57 double per night, \$7.50 extra person

En-suite Cabins: \$48 double per night. \$7.50 extra person

Cabin Vans: double per night. \$6.50 extra person

On-site Van: \$34 double per night. \$6.50 extra person

Powered Site: \$15 per night

Unpowered Site: \$13 per night.

A Games Room will be available for get-togethers and evenings.

Proposed Programme:

Fri afternoon: Birdwatching in the Naracoorte Caves CP.

Sat: Bool Lagoon.

Sat night: BYO BBQ gathering in the caravan park followed by informal talk by Pat and Jack Bourne about their local activities.

Sun am: Mary Seymour CP.

Sun early pm: visit to Bourne's Birds nearby. The mounted bird skins rival Adelaide Museum's and they're not behind glass! Also a wonderful egg collection which Judith is sure he'll open up for us!

Mon: Big Heath CP which is in the same area.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS!

Maureen Kutcher of Mt Barker
Brian and Maureen Ginno of Goolwa.

May you enjoy many happy hours of birding and friendship with us!



REPORTS

JULY 12TH MT BILLY—HINDMARSH VALLEY RESERVOIR RESERVE.

Nineteen birdwatchers, divided into two groups, braved a very cold, overcast morning at Mt Billy. Perhaps the birds were too cold because sightings were hard to come by in the early part of the walk. Midway through the morning conditions improved somewhat, so that by the time we met for lunch, between both groups we had a total of 34 species including Scarlet Robin, White-throated Tree-creeper, Crested Shrike-tit, Wedge-tailed Eagle and four species of Honeyeaters. We also heard the Fan-tailed Cuckoo and the Bassian Thrush.

Jean Boomer

JUNE 17TH NURRAGI CORRIDOR

On this cold, frosty Wednesday, the coldest morning for the year, five of us rugged up. We left the cars at the Nurragi Road end and came into the corridor at the other end. As usual, the first few metres were quite rewarding with Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Superb Fairy Wren, Magpie, White-plumed Honeyeater and female Golden Whistler. Soon the sun was glistening on the spider-webs and thawing out both us and the birds. As they twittered and flittered around us we found Zebra Finches, Silvereye, Peaceful Dove, Crested Pigeon, Pardalote, noisy White-browed Babblers by the dozen, and quite a few White-naped Honeyeaters.

It wasn't until further down the track that the ubiquitous 'Guess-whats' made their appearance, and of course, they stayed with us right to the end — definitely a 'D'!

A distant bird of prey caused some speculation, but it wasn't until we flushed it out later that we identified it as a Brown Falcon.

The last part of this walk is through quite dense mallee, but it was surprisingly quiet except for the New Holland Honeyeaters. But then! The *piece de resistance* for the day—a Red-capped Robin perched obligingly on a bare bough just above the track in front of us!

And we could all have stayed in bed!

Verle Wood

JUNE 27TH HINDMARSH RIVER

On an overcast day and with an icy wind at our backs 18 members set out from Greenhills Recreation Park. We crossed the river by the Greenhills

Bridge, greeted by a couple of Kookaburras. A pair of parrots had us scratching our heads, but we later identified them as Superb Parrots, which had also been seen at a nearby property (probably aviary escapees).

We all had a good look at the mud nest of a Magpie-lark overhead in a tree. A shrub-covered bank across the river was host to a large group of Silvereyes and a couple of Red-browed Firetails. We also saw Spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Golden Whistler, Pacific Black Duck, Yellow Thornbill, Straw-necked Ibis and a very good view of a Mistletoebird as well as an Australian Hobby enjoying his meal of Silvereye! We crossed the main road over to the foreshore and saw a group of seven Hooded Plovers, Caspian Terns, Little Pied Cormorant, Welcome Swallows, Black-faced Cormorant, Singing Honeyeater and plenty of Silver Gulls, bring the day's total to 45 species.

Lunch was enjoyed on new member Pat Mawby's verandah! The day was enjoyed by all and the good count was a surprise given the cold and windy conditions.

Thanks to Pat and her husband for the use of their verandah and some very welcome hot tea and coffee!

Mark Filkin

JULY 22ND GILBERTS SIDING

Nine members wrapped up against the cold met for this outing which started off very slowly with birds waiting for the sunshine! The sun made a big difference and we saw White-plumed, White-naped and New Holland Honeyeaters, Spotted Pardalote, Yellow-rumped Thornbills and a Little or Yellow Thornbill. Only one Blackbird was heard, but several Noisy Miners are in the area.

Some of our highlights were: Horsefield's Bronzecuckoo, male Mistletoebird, Grey Butcherbird and Jacky Winter. The big excitement of the morning was a male Flame Robin! He was quite bold and gave us a good display on the ground and low branches. We spent some time enjoying his company!

We saw 49 species for the morning with several more common birds not being seen. Although we searched while having lunch we couldn't make the 50 even though we saw Tree Martins, Wood Swallows and welcome Swallows there was no 'welcome' Common Sparrow.

Ann Turner

AUGUST 1ST HINDMARSH ISLAND

Saturday was very cold with a light breeze and good visibility. We started on the causeway then went to the Marina where we saw two Black-winged Stilts feeding in puddles in the samphire. At the Lookout we saw 20 Musk Ducks, a large group of Hoary-headed Grebes and a Skylark overhead.

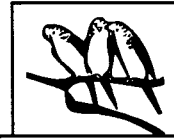
Off Denver Road in the reeds were Superb Fairy Wren—one male in full breeding plumage, and a couple of Cape Barren Geese amongst a herd (sic!) of Swans feeding in a paddock. A small number of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Curlew Sandpipers were feeding on the edge of a waterway. These birds were obviously wintering in Australia instead of returning to the Northern hemisphere.

At Sugars Beach and the Mouth Lookout we saw Red-capped Plover, Greenshanks, and a large number of Avocets on a sandbar with Caspian, Crested and Fairy Terns and Grey Teal. There were also Pelicans and Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers.

There was great excitement on Mundoo Channel Drive when the cry of 'Neophema!' caused us all to double back. After some searching several Elegant Parrots were identified—not without some disappointment as Orange-bellied Parrots had recently been spotted further south-east!

A Horsefield's Bronze-cuckoo by Scab Creek, a Little Egret and Darter at Mundoo Reserve and a Dusky Moorhen at the end of the Birdcall brought our total number of species to 67 (including five species of Raptors) —with 18 tired, cold and hungry but very happy birdos!

Kate Bruce



HELP NEEDED

The Friends of Scott Conservation Park are appealing to our members, as a group who use and appreciate this park, for help.

They are having a working bee on Monday 31st August starting at 10am. Bring BYO lunch and gloves to work in. Meet on the northern boundary by the Brochure box. If this day proves too wet we will meet on Monday 7th September.

The Friends' aim to revegetate some areas and to build a marked walking trail through the north-west corner of the park. They are also trying to reduce the weeds which threaten the native vegetation. Bridal Creeper (*Mysiphyllum Asparagoides*) has been increasing for a number of years, and more recently an area of African Orchid Weed (*Monadenia bracteata*) has become established. It is hoped to do some weed spraying on this day and, given sufficient workers, to spend some time on the walking trail. Later in the year it is hoped to gather seed from indigenous plants to raise seedlings for planting.

Scott is a very special place for our group and any help that you can give will be of value. Contact Judith (8555 2736) with any queries or to register your intent.



ATLAS OF AUSTRALIAN BIRDS

The first Atlas of Australian Birds was produced following a survey conducted from 1977 to 1981. Since then, there has been great change to habitat with 10 million hectares of native vegetation being cleared and 100,000 hectares being revegetated.

On the 1st August a new survey has begun and will continue for the next four years. *WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?* What is needed is your willingness to survey a very small area (or areas) four times a year (each season), or more frequently if you would like.

Anyone with a pair of binoculars, a Field Guide and an interest in birds can take part.

Help with identification will be available if needed. Birds can be recorded if *seen* or *heard*, but if in doubt—omit! Kits with full instructions and recording forms will be available within the next two weeks.

I ENCOURAGE ALL OUR MEMBERS TO CONSIDER BECOMING INVOLVED. IT WILL NOT BE ONEROUS. YOU CAN DO AS LITTLE OR AS MUCH AS YOU WISH—BUT DO BE A PART OF THIS WORTH-WHILE PROJECT.

PLEASE RING ME ASAP TO REGISTER AND DISCUSS YOUR CHOSEN AREA/S. I WILL DISTRIBUTE KITS AS SOON AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE. **YOUR SRO (SUB-REGIONAL ORGANISER) JUDITH (8555 2736)**

SOUTHCOAST BIRDWATCHERS MEETING

10 JULY 1998

There were twenty members present, also two visitors and our guest speaker, Duncan McKenzie.

Denzel took the chair and opened the meeting with a welcome to all present. Apologies were received from Kate Bruce, Pam Crancher and Alwyn Dolling. An attendance sheet was passed around. This included expressions of interest and caravan park preferences for the Naracoorte Campout on the weekend of Oct 31 to Nov 1.

Chris Wastell reported on the Effluent Ponds Project. He had spoken to David Banks, Works Manager, at the council, who didn't expect any problems in council with acceptance of the proposal.

Judith had spoken with Joan Paton who was interested in sightings of the Flame Robin and who also expressed interest in the Effluent Ponds Project.

The brochure, a 'Birdwatching Around the Southern Fleurieu' being prepared by Gail Maloney, is nearing completion.

Bird call: The display table included specimens of the Powerful Owl (at least, pieces of!) Black-shouldered Kite and Spotted Crane. Other interesting sightings reported were of White-eared Honeyeater, Red-capped Robin, Boobook Owl and White-

backed Magpies nesting - is this a portent of an early spring?

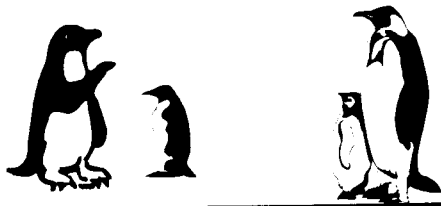
Judith then introduced Duncan McKenzie, Project Manager for the survey of undeveloped roadsides in which she and Ann had helped. Duncan spent a number of years on Macquarie Island which was discovered by sealers in the early nineteenth century and, by the evidence of the wreck of an ancient ship then reported, probably much earlier.

At different times Duncan worked on projects with penguins

and seals. With some very fine slides he explained his work, showing us the base as it was then (1960s). We were treated to wonderful views of the Royal, Emperor, and Rockhopper Penguins with glimpses also of Gentoo, Adelie and Little Blue. Duncan's commentary on their lifestyles and breeding habits was thoroughly informative and entertaining.

His pictures and stories of the various species of seals were likewise fascinating and he concluded with a series of slides on the magnificent seabirds which visit the island. To whet our appetites for more the finale was a sample of his slides of mainland birds. This was a really special evening's entertainment and education - an excellent presentation, full of interest lightened with amusing anecdotes. Can we hope for more?

Verle Wood



SEA TRIPS OUT OF ROBE!

John Hatch of the SAOA organises pelagic trips every year and is willing to take bookings from our members. Would you like to go on one of these trips to find some very interesting sea bird? Albatross, Petrel and Storm-petrel, Shearwater, Skua and Prion are among sightings in recent trips.

TRAVEL Travel to Robe Saturday afternoon. Tradition is to share petrol costs (\$10 - 15 per head return).

ACCOMMODATION Unless advised otherwise, John arranges cabins, separate men's and women's, at Long Beach Caravan Park. Cost varies, usually \$8 -12 per head. You will need sleeping bag and pillow.

Saturday pm meal: Caledonian Hotel for socialising and discussing the foreboding etc! Cost about \$15.

Sunday am: Rise 6am approx. Bring breakfast (quick and easy). Muster and drive to Boat Harbour about 1km.

Departure 7am approx (back about 3pm)

Dress: Gum boots, boots or sneakers, spray proof jacket as minimum. Bring a full change of clothing. Bring easy to eat food and drink. Time at sea 8-9 hours. No toilet (only a bucket).

Cost: \$50.

If in doubt take Quells or use sickness ear patches.

Don't forgot **binoculars and camera.**

Next trip (and last for 1998) in September. First trip in 1999 will likely be 1st Sunday in May.

John's number for bookings 5983622820.

Footnote: I would like to go, maybe next May. Is there anyone out there who will come with me?
Judith.