



# Western Australian Bird Notes

Quarterly Newsletter of the WA Group  
Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union

## Gibberbird in Western Australia

The temperatures at Carnegie Station generally rise out of the 30 C range into the 40 C range in mid December. There is little surface moisture over large areas during the summer months and watering the grass around the Station homestead tends to attract birds.

December 1990 produced the expected temperatures but also some unexpected birds. Crimson Chat were the first of these, with fifteen birds. The numbers seen at any time varied, but they remained about the Station until late January. These were an addition to the Carnegie Station list (published in WABN No. 56 December 1990) and an attractive additional species. However more interest followed for within a few days Orange Chat also appeared and took up temporary "residence". These too were an addition to the Station list. Five Orange Chat were the maximum seen at any one time.

After a few days of seeing these two chat species I noticed another species of bird moving among them. At first glance it appeared to be a form of Richard's Pipit, for it had the same tail bobbing and short running behaviour. Closer inspection however revealed the "pipit" to be no less than a group of five Gibberbird. These Gibberbird seemed to remain in reasonably close proximity to the group of mixed Crimson and Orange Chat, virtually always on the ground among the dry coarse grasses and on the areas of gibber or ironstone. The birds remained in the Station area for over five weeks, when I left the district.

Some days after the first appearance of Gibberbird I found a dead one at the edge of the Carnegie Homestead area. Photographs were taken unfortunately out of focus (see below) and in black and white the colours do not show. J Howell

(As far as can be ascertained this is the first report

of Gibberbird in Western Australia. The main Gibberbird area as shown in Blakers et al (1984) is in South Australia about 1800 km away and the nearest record they show is some 1000 km from Carnegie Station. Blakers et al (1984) comment that "the species is thought to be generally nomadic" (p 573). They also suggest that the species may be more abundant than formerly owing to human modification of the environment. Time and further observation, if observers are sufficiently present in the South-Eastern interior of Western Australia, will help determine whether the recent sighting was an unusual vagrancy, a regular occurrence or the harbinger of a spread of the Gibberbird to new areas. Regrettably, from the birdwatching viewpoint, Jim Howell has left Carnegie Station, so it may be some time before there is further information on the Gibberbird in Western Australia. Ed.)



## Observations

Sightings, with numbers, location and relevant notes (particularly for unusual sightings), should be sent to "Observations Officer" at the WA Office.

Some checking of these observations has been made but further scrutiny should be given prior to inclusion in any official or technical report.

### DOWN SOUTH

**Southern Giant-Petrel** - 1, 23/6/91, North Mole, Fremantle - BS, IS

**Soft-plumaged Petrel** - 1 beach-washed, 2/7/91, Dongara - RJ, AJ

**Rufous Night Heron** - 1 immature, 18/6/91, on wall at Art Gallery of WA - BS, IS

**Freckled Duck** - 1, 11/5/91, Lake Monger - BS, IS \* 3 female and 2 male, 28/7/91, Gibbs Road Swamp - DW

**Chestnut Teal** - 2 Males, 29/6/91, Lake Claremont - PT

**Australasian Shoveler** - c.450, 11/5/91, Lake Monger - BS, IS

**Square-tailed Kite** - 1, 21/10/90, Stirling Range National Park - BS, IS

**Brown Falcon** - 1, 3/7/91, Nollamara - MO

**Malleefowl** - 1 pr, 24/6/91, 3 kms East of Hyden - CP

**Eastern Curlew** - 1, 4/6/91, Mandurah Boat Harbour - JH, TK

**Bar-tailed Godwit** - 1, 15/7/91, Mandurah Boat Harbour - PH

**Red-necked Stint** - 6, 27/7/91, Mandurah Boat Harbour in breeding plumage - BB

**Sanderling** - c.12, 18/5/91, Halls Head Mandurah - BS, IS \* 16, 12/7/91, all with traces of breeding plumage, Halls Head - IS

**Great Skua** - 5, 11/8/90, Koombana Bay Bunbury - BS, IS

**Common Tern** - 2 in non-breeding plumage, 9/7/91, Mandurah Boat Harbour - JH, LA

**Arctic Tern** - 2 non-breeding plumage, 9/7/91, Mandurah Boat Harbour - JH, LA \* 1 in breeding plumage, 25/7/91, Mandurah Boat Harbour - JH, PH

**Roseate Tern** - 10-12 birds, 5 nests, 8/6/91, Point Peron - TK

**Feral Pigeon** - 2, 19/5/91, Lake Namming - BBu

**Barking Owl** - 2, 1/8/91, nr. Wannamal Nature Reserve - BBu

**Red-capped Robin** - 1 female, 14/7/91, Pelican Point - MM

**Crested Shrike-tit** - 1, 11/5/90, Dryandra State Forest - BS, IS \* 1+, 31/12/90, Flynn Road The Lakes - IS, BW \* 1, 16/5/91, Roleystone - LH

**Crested Bellbird** - 2, 28/7/91 - new to the "Atlas" Block - 20 km East of Beermullah - BBu

**Restless Flycatcher** - 1, 2/6/91, Stony Brook - RS

**Yellow-plumed Honeyeater** - 1, 29/6/91, Katanning - RH

**Red-eared Firetail**-1, 22/5/91, Wellard Clay Pits - MB

### UP NORTH

**Square-tailed Kite** - 2, 1/6/91, Broome Jetty - BK

**Ballion's Crake** - 1, 15/5/91, Koolan Island - LV

**Rose-Crowned Fruit-Dove** - 1 with extensive neck injury, 17/4/91, Koolan Island - LV

### Observer Codes

AJ - Allan Jones  
BK - Brian Kane  
BW - Bob Westmore  
DW - Doug Watkins  
JH - Jack Hunt  
LH - Lee Hassan  
MB - Mandy Bamford  
MO - Margaret Owen  
PT - Patricia Todd  
RJ - Rose Jones  
TK - Tony Kirkby

BBu - Bruce Buchanan  
BS - Bev Standring  
CP - Colin Payne  
IS - Ian Standring  
LA - Louise Augustine  
LV - Lee Vernon  
MM - Marion Masson  
PH - Peel Howden  
RH - Robert Huston  
RS - Rod Smith

## Members Contributions

### CALL OF THE RESTLESS FLYCATCHER

Simon Nevill writes to say that it is his view that the "scissors grinding" call of the Restless Flycatcher is a territorial call. In territory, the scissor grind appears to be the predominant call during the breeding season. He says that posture for the call is as described in WA Bird Notes No 58 June 1991 except that, in his observations, a perching Restless Flycatcher stretches forward towards the conclusion of the call.

The triple "chewee" call seems to serve, presumably among other things, as a distant contact call. Restless Flycatcher can be heard "answering" to the call at a distance. I have not heard a "close" response with the "chewee" call. The close contact call appears to be the "zhap" one, and on occasion a "chewee" will be answered close by with a "zhap".

Editor

### AUSTRALIAN HOBBY ATTACK

The Black-fronted Plover is a not uncommon bird at wetlands. It generally appears to favour gently sloping muddy or sandy margins. Hurstview Lake in Dandaragan Shire has a large area of these habitats and as a consequence I was surprised recently (April) to flush a Black-fronted Plover from reed and rush about 20 metres from the water edge. Having risen, the bird quickly returned to the ground. Investigating more closely I flushed a group of 24 Black-fronted Plover in the same vegetation. All, like the first, rose briefly into the air before dropping down again.

This being unusual in my experience I entered the reedy area and in so doing flushed a plover, which flew in the usual way, about 3-4 metres above the ground. An Australian Hobby then "appeared" from behind me in hot pursuit of the plover. The Black-

fronted Plover gained speed, emitted high pitched calls and flew quickly with a series of sharp turns.

The initial attack failed and the Australian Hobby turned rapidly to renew the chase. It was soon apparent that the plover could turn more sharply than the hobby and the tail chase resembled a series of rapid swoops, foiled by sharp turns at the last moment, all at what seemed high speed. On several occasions I thought the plover must be caught, but each time capture was eluded. When the pursuit had taken the pair over the lake, a very rapid attack resulted in the Australian Hobby overshooting it's quarry by a large distance. The Black-fronted Plover then turned and flew in a fairly straight line for the shore and the reedy area.

Immediately a second Australian Hobby joined the hunt and endeavoured to cut off the plover. This attack too was avoided and for a few moments both hobbies were wheeling sharply low to the ground in an effort to prevent the escape. Their attempts failed and the plover dropped into the vegetated area. The first hobby then retired to a nearby dead tree, while the second hovered heavily over the area of the group of Black-fronted Plover, twice descending to within 300 mm of the ground, presumably in an attempt to flush a bird. Neither of these attacks could be reasonably described as a stoop, both descents being slow. These manoeuvres failing, the second bird joined the first on the tree.

When I moved towards the group of plover several flew low to the ground through the reedy area and out into the surrounding grassland. This took them past the tree occupied by the Australian Hobby, but they appeared to take no notice. I had seen two Australian Hobby at the same locality in June 1989, but not hunting.

Hollands (1984) writes "The Australian Hobby is a dramatic hunter and so varied are it's methods of attack that no two flights ever seem to be quite the same.....At first, it may seem strange that it seems to have a very high failure rate until one considers that most attacks are in open country and carried out at high speed against intended victims that have only to dodge a few centimetres at the last moment to make the assailant miss. (p156) .He also writes he has seen Australian Hobbies "hunting together as a pair", "only once" (p159).

B Buchanan

## NEST LONGEVITY

D & M Brown of Manjimup write that Yellow-rumped Thornbill nests survive for at least a year after use (usually multiple brood use). Nests have been built in Pinus pinaster, Willow Peppermint (*Agonis flexuosa*), olive (*Olea Europa*), Karri-hazel (*Trymalium spathulatum*), native wistaria or WA Sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia comptoniana*), and paperbark spp (*Melaleuca raphiophylla* and *Melaleuca preissiana*).

Editor

## RAPTORS AND ROAD-KILLS

A few years ago, the RAOU and the Australian Raptor Association began a project (BOP Watch) aimed at providing better information on the distribution of raptors in Australia, based on the observations of road users. On a recent visit to the Pilbara (25 April 91) my interest in the method was aroused by casual observation of the distribution of Wedge-tailed Eagles.

Altogether, 25 Wedge-tailed Eagle were counted on a round trip of well over 3,000 kms. Apart from Whistling Kite, which were a relatively common sight above the North West Coastal Highway north of Geraldton, they were the most frequently encountered raptor species. However, only five birds were observed between Geraldton and Port Hedland, three of these feeding on recent road kills.

In contrast, a total of twenty birds were seen on the return journey via the inland route through Meekatharra. What was particularly interesting was the large number seen in the relatively short stretch of road between Newman and Meekatharra. The topography here is relatively flat and uninteresting, although the road crosses a few low ridges west of the Collier Ranges. In less than 400 kms. however, a total of 13 Wedge-tailed Eagle were observed, singly or in pairs, after leaving Newman on the morning of 8 May 91.

This compares with only one sighting between Port Hedland and Newman three days earlier, two subsequent sightings between Meekatharra and Mt. Magnet and five between Mt. Magnet and Payne's Find. Apart from two Whistling Kite and an Australian Kestrel, other raptors were absent (only two raptors - Brown Goshawk and Whistling

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### Notes for contributors

The Editor requests contributors to note:-

- \* material concerning WA birds may be published,
- \* sightings etc in respect of non-WA birds will not normally be published.
- \* contributions should be written or typed with **DOUBLE SPACING**.
- \* WABN uses RAOU recommended English names
- \* copy may be edited where appropriate.

**Deadline for December issue -  
25th October 1991**

Kite - were seen in two days spent among the rugged grandeur of the Hamersley National Park).

Given the limitations of the method and the importance of such factors as time of day and weather conditions, it cannot be claimed that a single set of observations provided more than a very rough guide to the numbers of raptors in any given area. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that such marked variations were entirely fortuitous. The most obvious explanation of the difference appears to lie in the availability of food. Although relatively little traffic uses the Great Northern Highway, the number of cattle, kangaroos and wallabies seen to be killed on this particular section of the road was far higher than seen on any other.

Hollands (1984) comments that eagles "frequently work the highways for road kills" (p110) and the number of Wedge-tailed Eagle seen was particularly striking. The same holds true for corvids (Torresian and Little Crow) whose presence invariably signalled another carcass several hundred metres away. Surprisingly, scarcely any kite were seen participating in the "banquet".

The reason for such marked variations in the number of road kills must be speculative. Differences in traffic density can probably be discounted. A more likely explanation is regional variations in rainfall and possibly domestic stocking rates. Run-off from light rainfall often gives rise to new growth along roadsides which presumably attracts both domestic stock and kangaroos. This may account for many deaths, particularly in areas where feed is otherwise in short supply. Another possible explanation is competition between kangaroos and other livestock. Certainly, the number of kangaroo carcasses decreased markedly further south where sheep predominate. On the other hand, average rainfall also decreases southwards (from 360 mm at Newman to 179 mm at Meekatharra). This explanation would not account for the relatively small number of road kills observed in similar country between Port Hedland and Newman.

**S Houghton**

#### **POSSIBLE MALLEEFOWL SIGHTING NEAR PERTH**

Two days prior to the Malleefowl Mound course at Eyre, Lee Hassan had a close look at what seemed to be a Malleefowl as it wandered through her forested back yard in the Canning Valley at Roleystone. This was rather an insult to the course participants who were unable to see the subject of their endeavours after a long journey and a deliberate search.

An earlier incident was experienced by Stephen Davies. About 50 km from Perth on the road to Beverley he hit a Malleefowl (which survived) as it crossed in front of his car. Eighteen months ago there was also a possible sighting of two Malleefowl crossing West Talbot Road near York.

An examination of parts of the Darling Range might produce more evidence of the existence of Malleefowl there.

**R Smith**

#### **UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS OF THE SINGING BUSHLARK**

The Singing Bushlark's reported range in Western Australia does not usually extend further south than the vicinity of the Gascoyne River. However they are of frequent occurrence on the river floodplains and other grassy areas subject to flooding further north. The tussocky swanp land adjacent to the north-eastern end of Lake MacLeod where the Lyndon and Minilya Rivers flood into the lake is particularly favoured by the Singing Bushlark, but they extend into other areas of annual herbage growth through northern parts of the state, often in very arid land.

It was therefore interesting to find at least three of these birds present on 4 September 1990, some fifty kilometres north east of Mullewa in the vicinity of Pindaring Rocks on the Greenough River (28/12, 115/43). In recent times my most southerly previous record was from Edaggee Station (25/20, 114/10) in September, 1978: this was used by Blakers et al (1984). However, I have earlier records of this bird, in both cases breeding, from Jimba Jimba Station on the Gascoyne River, in October 1931 and again near Wooleen Station swamplands on the Roderick River (27/05, 116/10) in September 1938. The Singing Bushlark was well known to the Sharpe family, then owners of the Station.

The first of the birds sighted at the Greenough River in September 1990, in the early afternoon, was engaged in a characteristic tumbling flight on rounded fluttering wings over some ten hectares of open scrub plain adjacent to the main river. The plain was covered with flowering everlasting. (The nymph stages of the subsequent locust plague were moving everywhere in the area).

The bird proved difficult to observe closely. It was not singing and identification was doubtful, since Richard's Pipit were also engaged in their somewhat similar display flights in the same locality. Nevertheless the shorter, thick set bird alerted my interest. Later in the afternoon, two Singing Bushlark were seen and heard singing strongly on an open area of the main river floodplain. Both were engaged in repeated display flights some five hundred metres apart. One of these birds came to ground about twelve metres away and a good view was obtained of this chunky bodied bird, with a somewhat finch like bill and rufous wing patch. All three birds sighted had the cinnamon toned plumage of those seen further north.

**J Masters**

#### **FALLEN BLOSSOM**

On the southern areas of the Dandaragan Plateau (the area between the two escarpments of the Darling Range - broadly between the Brand Highway and the Bindoon - Moora road) there are some

reasonably large areas of native vegetation. The Dandaragan plateau, often called "the sand plain" is, from a tree viewpoint largely dominated by banksia species. The most common of these seems to be *B. menziesii*, which is interspersed with stands of *B. littoralis* and *B. ilicifolia*. *Banksia prionotes* also occurs widely.

In June and July the only one of these banksias in bloom was *B. menziesii*. Walking among these trees it was striking that many of the blossom, at all stages of maturity, were lying on the ground. Inspection revealed they were cut from the tree close to the base of the flower. The larger blossom have stems between 5 and 10 mm in diameter and which to human hand seem very tough and hard.

There seems little doubt that the blossom was and still is being cut from the trees by birds, the most common likely suspects in the area being Port Lincoln Ringneck and White-tailed Black Cockatoo. The cockatoo certainly have bills of sufficient power to fell the blossom and the blossom felling has coincided with the arrival of flocks of White-tailed Black Cockatoo in the area. Whether Port Lincoln Ringneck can cut the stems is more problematic. The issue however is why the action is taken.

It seems unlikely the felling of blossom is what humans might call aberrant or deviant behaviour, or sheer mischief making. It is obvious the blossom is not being collected for nesting purposes for it is not the breeding season, apart from the blossom being left on the ground. Inspection of the fallen blossom shows it to be cut cleanly through, though some are cut at an angle and with some tearing. There does not seem to be any insect at the cuts which birds are obtaining. This would seem to leave the cutting out of a section of stem for eating when the blossom is felled or a process of bill "honing" or "sharpening".

Rowley (1990) describes spray cutting of eucalypts, bark chewing and bill stropping by Galah, stating that "The mandibles of parrots grow continually throughout their life and stropping may be an essential part of bill maintenance" (pp 81-82). It may be that blossom felling serves a similar purpose for other species.

B Buchanan

## SEEDS AND INSECTS

At the beginning of June we counted 1176 Red-tailed Black Cockatoo in a stubble field 3 Kms north of Kununoppin. They were feeding on the seeds of Doublegee (*Emex australis*) keeping their bodies horizontal to the ground, presumably to keep their tails free of the stubble and from a distance, their silhouettes looked like Australian Raven.

Dr. Denis Saunders informs us he has seen flocks of Red-tailed Black Cockatoo many times larger and that the species appears to be increasing in number. He also says that nowadays the diet of Red-tailed Black Cockatoo is over 90% Doublegee. Although a Red-tailed Black Cockatoo can consume up to 3,000 Doublegee seeds in a day, they are unlikely to

provide much control, as in one count there were found to be over 19 million seeds to the hectare.

We also visited Billyacatting Reserve where we watched two Little Falcon, two Australian Raven, one Australian Kestrel and one Pied Butcherbird in aerial feeding on unidentified insects, most likely dragonfly. There were plenty of dragonfly about and no signs of the flying form of either ants or termites. The raptors caught the insects in their talons and transferred to their beaks in flight while the Pied Butcherbird and Australian Raven used their bills only.

While climbing the huge Billyacatting outcrop we saw a Striated Pardalote fly out of an unused Fairy Martin nest. The nest was one of many built under an overhang where the weathering of the granite had formed a large cave. We wondered if Striated Pardalote might use the Fairy Martin nests to rear their own young.

J & H Start

## BREEDING OF COMMON BRONZEWING

On 25th June 1991 while walking the dog in the late afternoon near Lake Taylor (Chittering Shire) I passed close to a *Casuarina obesa* (Swamp Oak) which had branches down to the ground. Two Common Bronzewing flew from the base of the tree. While I noticed one of these seemed to have rather poorly developed wing feathers (or had lost some in some manner or other) I did not look closely for I had passed a flock of eight Common Bronzewing shortly before.

However the dog raced round the tree and then plunged into the foliage at the base to emerge with something in it's mouth. After some effort the capture was briefly disengaged from the dog's mouth and was seen to be a young Common Bronzewing. Presumably the "tattered" bird seen earlier was another of the same brood with an adult.

Simpson and Day (1986), who state (p273) that together with personal and other sources they incorporate into their breeding season information their interpretation of Beruldsen (1980), show no breeding in April, May or June. Beruldsen (1980) gives the breeding season as September to January. However Serventy and Whittell (1976) state "it may nest at any time of the year" (p262). The dog capture appears to support Serventy and Whittell (1976).

B Buchanan

## A WEEK IN THE BUSH

On September 3 1990, Jim Masters and I left Toodyay for a week long trip to the Murchison area to look at the country and birdlife. Approximately 70 kilometres south of Mingenew we reached the first good stands of everlastings and saw 20 Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. Our first overnight stop was at Coalseam Park and on selecting a camping site we discovered the nest of a Chestnut-rumped Thornbill wedged in a small crack in a York Gum.

Yellow everlastings were flowering everywhere. Birds sighted included Red-capped Robin, Crested Bellbird, Galah in nesting hollows, Port Lincoln Ringneck, a flock of 100+ Little Corella, Willie Wagtail, Weebill, Singing Honeyeater, Variegated Fairy-wren and a Richard's Pipit carrying food. A short drive around the park the next morning added the following to the list: Rufous Whistler, Masked Woodswallow, Brown Honeyeater, Pallid Cuckoo, Australian Kestrel, Yellow-rumped Thornbill (nesting in Curara bush at the lookout), Common Bronzewing, Tree Martin, Yellow-throated Miner, Rufous Songlark, Black-faced Woodswallow and Crested Pigeon.

We drove from Coalseam to Mullewa and then towards Gascoyne Junction. We had lunch a short distance from Mullewa at Wooderung River, where Black-winged Stilt and Fairy Martin were nesting. We then continued to a place called "Waterfall", once used as a watering point for stock travelling the De Grey/Mullewa Stock route. (Pioneered by E.T. Hooley in 1866 for the movement of sheep from the Geraldton area to the Pilbara, initially Ajana to the Murchison River). Numerous Fairy Martin were collecting mud and building nests under overhanging rock formations. A pair of Australian Magpie-lark were also preparing a new nest.

We continued to the Greenough River, the country along the way being very picturesque with magnificent stands of mainly white everlastings, with small patches of yellow and pink. Three groups of Budgerigar (largest 20 birds) crossed the road, all travelling in a southerly direction. We set up camp a short distance from the river. Birds seemed to be everywhere, flying and singing, some nesting and others defending territories. Birds sighted included: Richard's Pipit, Red-capped Robin, Black-faced Woodswallow, Black-winged Stilt, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Pied Honeyeater and Torresian Crow. Jim Masters saw a Singing Bushlark, about 300 kms south of its usual range (see article in Members Contributions Ed.) and Brown and Rufous Songlark were also in full display and song: a remarkable collection. Flocks of up to 100+ Masked Woodswallow were observed, with Crimson and White-fronted Chat among the samphire bordering parts of the river. By the following morning when we left this seasonally favoured area we had sighted 50 species of birds.

We then slowly travelled up to the Murchison River. The lush countryside of the previous day all but disappeared, the ground being very dry with little or no stands of annual plants. We camped at the river and a walk along its edge located a nesting pair of Black-fronted Plover on a sand bar in the middle of the river and more Fairy Martin constructing nests under the road bridge. White-plumed Honeyeater were plentiful in the bordering trees.

Because of the dry conditions bird life in the area was very scarce. It was not until early the next

morning when a Pelican, Great Egret, Darter, Australasian Grebe and Little Black Cormorant flew on to the river for a short while that our list for the area was increased.

We then drove to the Murchison Shire Office to refuel. Birds sighted on this drive included Brown Falcon and Spotted Harrier. After refuelling we returned to the Meeberrie turnoff to travel to Mt Wittenoom. We stopped at the Murchison River crossing and the first Chiming Wedgebill was heard. Several groups of Budgerigar were seen flying to the south. The country during this drive looked very good, with fine showings of annual plants.

We turned south at Meka to travel to our overnight camp at Chinaman's Rock. The surrounding country looked in good shape with excellent stands of Mulga, Curara and annual plants. At Chinaman's Rock 20+ species of birds were sighted including Southern Whiteface, Slaty-backed Thornbill, Pallid Cuckoo, Mulga Parrot and White-browed Babbler carrying food.

The following morning we travelled towards Yalgoo. Sighted along the road were Banded Lapwing, Emu, Wedge-tailed Eagle at a road kill and still more flocks of Budgerigar travelling south. Winter rains had been good, with many different coloured everlastings everywhere. Brown Songlark were sighted at Yalgoo as well as White-backed Swallow.

Travelling towards Paynes Find we sighted Pacific Heron, Red-kneed Dotterel and 30+ Grey Teal, all at roadside pools. Twenty five kms from Paynes Find we made the first sighting of a Bourke's Parrot. We camped on the boundaries of Oudabunna and Thundelarra stations, after a disappointing day bird-wise, with the camp site little better. We saw Pied and Grey Butcherbird, Grey Shrike-thrush, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater and Welcome Swallow.

The following morning we stopped at Oudabunna Rock which was magnificent, with Red-capped Robin nesting and first sightings of Grey Currawong, Western Gerygone, Brown Goshawk, White-fronted Honeyeater and Splendid Fairy-wren. We continued to Maroubra Outstation for overnight camp. The area did not appear to have had much rain, as such ground annuals as were seen were very small.

The next day we travelled to Mt Churchman, then to Cleary. On the way 18 Pink Cockatoo were sighted and a Little Eagle. Then to Bunketch Reserve for the night, where an Australian Owlet-nightjar was heard. The next day we went the short distance to Petrudor Rocks and sighted: Australian Raven (flushed from nest), Little Eagle sitting on a nest, Southern Scrub-robin and Yellow-throated Miner. Returning home via the salt lakes at Kondut, we located 60+ Banded Stilt, Hoary-headed Grebe, Black-Swan (on nest), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Australian Shelduck.

A total of 93 species was observed without much effort, 10 of which were at some stage of breeding.

JR Masters & MJ Howard

## FINCHES AT ALFRED COVE

Small flocks of White-fronted Chat are seen frequently at Alfred Cove and along the Attadale foreshore. When hearing them after a fairly long absence their soft sounds remind me of finches.

Towards the end of April, while walking along the foreshore, I heard sounds reminiscent of chat and became aware of small birds in a lone Casuarina near the water. I then realised the birds were not chat but finch. There is always an element of shock in sighting birds far from their usual habitat and I found it difficult to convince myself that I was indeed seeing finches.

While endeavouring to obtain a better view I put the birds to flight and watched with considerable surprise a flock of about 20 Zebra Finch fly from the single tree across the golf practice area towards the shelter of a grove.

After negotiating the practising golfers I failed to relocate the birds. Perhaps they were escapees - or is the species is moving further south?

**N Duff**

(Zebra Finch is additional to the Alfred Cove list WABN No 43 September 1987 Ed).

## MIGRATORY FLIGHTS OF RAINBOW BEE-EATER

Over a four week period between 7 February 1991 and 5 March 1991 large flocks of Rainbow Bee-eater were seen flying very high in a north westerly direction over Salvado Road, Wembley. These flights were usually seen about 15 minutes after sunrise but on one occasion (14 February 1991) it was 50 minutes after sunrise:-

7 February	1991	40
8 February	1991	60
11 February	1991	100
14 February	1991	90
22 February	1991	Heard
28 February	1991	Not seen
5 March	1991	80

The flight was always accompanied by a distinctive noisy chorus. The last of the Rainbow Bee-eater which were flying at "normal" height, were 38 birds on 11 March 1991 seen at 5.30 pm flying in a north easterly direction.

**M Bremner**

## Notices

### RAOU CONGRESS 20 / 22 SEPT 1991

Final preparations are in hand for the Congress and Campout. For those going to the Campout at Albany - 22nd to 27th September, we remind you to meet us at the Panorama Caravan Park and Cottages, Albany at 8pm on Sunday 22nd September. For those who have not yet booked please do so soon.

An outing has been arranged to Flynn Road on the Friday prior to the Congress. See Coming Events for details.

## RAOU WINDCHEATERS & T- SHIRTS

Wingspan No. 2 June 1991 featured some attractive windcheaters and T-shirts. Enquiry with RAOU HQ reveals that these are white with two colours:- Palm Cockatoo black and red, Black Grasswren black and tan and Regent Bowerbird black and yellow. The prices are attractive also - order direct from 21 Gladstone Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039.

## CARNEGIE STATION BIRD LIST

J Howell writes that the reported sighting of a Sacred Kingfisher in WABN No 56 December 1990 at Carnegie was almost certainly erroneous and that the bird seen was probably a Red-backed Kingfisher. A Red-backed Kingfisher was definitely seen at the Carnegie Homestead in January 1991 (it took refuge from the heat in the Homestead bough shelter). The Carnegie list should be amended accordingly.

## MALLEEFOWL AT DRYANDRA

Simon Nevill writes to say that the wording of a recent article in the West Australian concerning both himself and Falcon Tours was not checked with him prior to publication. Consequently he disagrees with the statement attributed to him that the numbers of Malleefowl at Dryandra are increasing. In fact Malleefowl are probably barely maintaining their numbers and if so doing, it is because of the baiting of foxes.

## ECOPLAN: VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Remnant natural bush and wetland in urban areas provide vital refuges for resident and visiting birds. Many such sites have been recommended for protection in the Environmental Protection Authority System 6 study. In Perth, Alfred Cove, Bold Park, the Beeliar wetlands, Star Swamp and Whiteman Park have been so recommended.

The System 6 Red Book made 108 recommendations for the Perth metropolitan area and these are the focus of the Ecoplan campaign, which is one of the EPA's major priorities for 1991. The ultimate aim is to implement outstanding conservation recommendations made in System 6. The immediate focus is to get Perth residents to appreciate that there are special parts of the environment close to them.

To this end Ecoplan volunteers are being sought to help deliver System 6 materials to community groups and schools. An information package, including video, brochure with map and chart, information and contact sheets for all of the Perth System 6 areas has been prepared. Ecoplan volunteers are to play an important role in delivering these materials to the community and in helping stimulate local residents to action. Selected volunteers will attend workshops to learn skills in developing projects to care for the environment, study the Ecoplan materials, deliver the Ecoplan kit to a community group or school and develop a

relationship with the group to help look after a nearby System 6 area.

For further information contact the EPA community involvement co-ordinator **Margo O'Byrne**, telephone (09) 222 7054.

## **NATIVE VEGETATION ON PRIVATE LAND**

CALM aim to compile guidelines for the management of remnant vegetation on private land. The project is to cover all agricultural areas of WA and aims to answer all possible questions.

Consequently CALM wish to know the questions persons wish to be answered - eg. management of grazing, fire, weeds, feral animals; the encouragement of regeneration of fauna and flora; commercial possibilities - timber, honey, wildflowers, seeds; how to prevent future owners destroying preserved remnants etc.

The successes and disappointments of anyone currently managing remnant bush are sought so the experience of one can be passed on for the benefit of all and the most useful format for information presentation (book, leaflets, loose-leaf ) is requested.

Contact **Penny Hussey**, CALM, PO Box 104, Como, WA 6152 or telephone (09) 367 0438 or Fax (09) 367 0466.

## **B B C B Q**

The following questions concern the Australian Shelduck (herein AS) - well known to all.

1. In flight numbers of AS often fly in a manner unlike all other Australian waterfowl. How?
2. A wetland or part of lakeshore brood territory for AS must contain what feature?
3. For how long is this feature vital?
4. AS seem to prefer fresh or saline habitat?
5. After which month in the year do numbers of AS decline at all sites?
6. Which sex AS usually commences repelling intruders from breeding territory?
7. What is the minimum breeding age of AS?
8. What is the usual daily breeding behavior pattern of a paired male AS during early incubation?
9. When are young AS abandoned by their parents?
10. How are flocks of AS usually divided socially?

**Answers on Page 12.**

## **Eyre Report**

A comparison of the results of thirteen beach counts from 1st May to mid-July 1990 with the same period in 1991, has revealed some interesting results. Some species have recorded significantly lower numbers:- Sooty Oystercatcher (116/21), Red-capped Plover (644/359), Pacific Gull (50/15),

Caspian Tern (20/0), Crested Tern (724/0) and Little Black Cormorant (15/1); whilst others have increased:- Grey Teal (13/102), White-faced Heron (80/144) and Hoary-headed Grebe (0/9). The numbers of Silver Gull, Pied Cormorant and Australasian Gannet are similar. Last year two Pied Oystercatcher and two Double-banded Plover were regularly seen while this year there have been three Pied Oystercatcher and only one Double-banded Plover.

Birds banded since April have also been interesting. The second Hoary-headed Grebe ever banded at Eyre, (the first on 21 January 1985) was processed on 17 June 1991. Banding records show Tawny-crowned Honeyeater six in 1985 and three in May 1991; Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, 27 in 1985, one in 1987, one in 1989 and five in 1991. This year twelve Purple-crowned Lorikeet were banded, the first since 1989.

The Malleefowl Mound Course ran last week. Although the Malleefowl kept discreetly out of sight, several active mounds were recorded. Special position-fixing equipment was used to determine the exact location of the mounds and this will be a valuable asset for the continuing research of these unique birds. Course participants were delighted with sightings of Golden Whistler, Chestnut Quail-thrush, Southern Scrub-robin, Yellow-rumped and Striated Pardalote, Weebill, Jacky Winter and Fan-tailed Cuckoo - not to mention the Shy Hylacola.

**G & G Goodreld**

## **Excursion Reports**

### **GEO POSITIONING OF MALLEEFOWL MOUNDS AT EYRE**

Equipment worth \$150,000 was used at Eyre Bird Observatory during the July course led by Rod Smith.

Bob Scharwood, a fourth-year Surveying and Cartography student at Curtin University, accepted the task of using a Geo Positioning System to map some of the some of the Malleefowl mounds found in the searches conducted in 1989 and 1990. The equipment operates by receiving signals from a minimum of three satellites. The relative positions of these with regard to Eyre and each other continuously changes each day so there were different "windows" of time available for the positioning procedure.

Nineteen mounds on the North Track and two on the West Track and their corresponding on-track marker pegs were positioned, by latitude, longitude and for most, by altitude and will soon be mapped. Seven mounds were active. One of these had fresh Malleefowl tracks on it although not active on the first visit. Two days later fresh litter was heaped in the cavity.

There was a high level of success in re-finding mounds that had been located in the last two



sessions, reflecting favourably on the accuracy of the initial mound recorders and this year's recruits. Mounds are up to a kilometre from the track.

While pounding through the bush, bearing tripod, receiver and/or battery so as to catch a window before closing time, it was possible to wonder fleetingly if this was a wise choice of holiday. But everyone seemed to enjoy both the work and the leisure activities. The weather was co-operative, the sand dunes and sunsets as varying as ever. Up to four moons of Jupiter could readily be seen through binoculars and most of us witnessed a splendid Southern Aurora. It reacted unfavourably with satellite signal reception, an unexpected hazard for Bob when he was first trying the equipment.

The food and hospitality were wonderful. Anyone who has not been to Eyre in the past year or so could not fail to be impressed by the improvements Gwen and Graham have made to the track and thanks must go to Bruce Montgomery of Curtin University for his encouragement and assistance.

Oh yes, and as for birds - we saw a Double-banded Plover, a Red-kneed Dotterel and an occasional Pink Cockatoo. No-one's faith in the project was dimmed by the fact that the Malleefowl sighting score was zero

**B Newbey**

(The Malleefowl is one of the "threatened birds of Australia" - see Brouwer & Garnett (1990) Ed.).

## DUCK BANDING - CAPEL.

After arrival we positioned mist nets for use the following day. More participants arrived on the Saturday morning and all commenced opening duck traps and banding from net captures. Frank Doyle was "professionally" assisted by Dick Shore, who is employed by Mineral Sands as a "C" class bander and by Stephen Davies.

The greatest number of mist net captures were Silver eye and Pacific Black Duck were the majority of duck in the duck traps.

After lunch the duck traps were re-examined and the mist nets were removed to a new location. We then took time to look over some of the wet lands that have been planted before returning for the evening meal and discussion around the fire.

We set off again on Sunday at approx. 7.30am though without Dick Shore. There were very few birds in the mist nets possibly due to lack of local blossom. We visited Lake McCarley and watched the ibis arriving.

Some 65 birds were caught - 51 new bandings, 14 retraps. One Pacific Black Duck re-trap was banded by Mandy Bamford on 16 May 1988 at Capel.

A most interesting and enjoyable weekend with a bright and cheerful crew, many of whom learnt much and who hope to participate in future banding.

**J Malcolm**

The figures for the weekend :-

Species	Caught	Re-trap
Australian Shelduck	1	0
Pacific Black Duck	4	7
Eurasian Coot	0	1
Rufous Whistler	1	0
Grey Fantail	1	0
Splendid Fairy-wren	3	1
White-browed Scrub-wren	1	1
Inland Thornbill	1	0
Brown Honeyeater	4	0
Western Spinebill	2	0
Silvereye	33	0
Grey Butcherbird	0	1

## ELLIS BROOK RESERVE, GOSNELLS

This was a most enjoyable outing. The weather was sunny with just an autumnal bite to the breeze to keep us active and there was a lot of bird activity to add interest. Ellis Brook lies in a steep cleft running down the Escarpment with numerous gullies running off it. There are patches of wandoo woodland, stands of Marri and areas of mixed eucalypts. A good undergrowth extends throughout the area and outside the main valley: a thick heath vegetation covers the sides of the scarp. As a consequence the area offers an excellent variety of habitat for birdlife and an energetic scramble full of interest for the observer.

Striated Pardalote were plentiful and the males were already claiming territory with their song and a male of a pair of Galah was presenting nesting material to his mate. It won't be long before the breeding cycle is in full swing here. We had excellent views of Dusky Woodswallow, White-naped Honeyeater, Red-capped Parrot and Golden Whistler. Splendid Fairy-wren were everywhere, though males were only seen in eclipse.

We saw a total of 34 species and whilst this is not remarkable, everyone saw a great deal of activity from a wide variety of species and this made it a most satisfying outing.

**L Harris**

## ELLENDALE POOL

A visit to this area took place during the June meeting and campout to Geraldton. The ruggedness of the landscape, the strong sun and blue sky reminded of the Pilbara.

We were fortunate to see some fine raptors e.g. Whistling Kite (2), Brown Goshawk, Spotted Harrier, Australian Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon (2). We were mesmerised by a noisy flock of 800-1000 Little Corella, appearing especially white in this country. At one stage there was an unusual muffled distant sound, becoming stronger and clearer until the flock burst from behind cliffs. There is something compelling about a very large flock of birds.

The water, reeds and rushes provide habitat for some waterbird species such as Musk Duck, Australasian Shoveler, Clamorous Reed-warbler and Little Grassbird (latter heard only).

Good views were obtained of Mistletoebird. The other highlight was of several Little Woodswallow flying about a cliff face. One was seen at very close quarters perched in a dead tree. Ellendale Pool is at

the southern limit of the range of this species. Serventy & Whittell (1976) give the distribution in part as "a northern species ranging as far south as Kalbarri, the Murchison River gorge (downstream from Galena), Ellendale Gorge, Talling Peak, Gnow's Nest Range (south of Yalgoo), Field's Find and Mt. Kenneth (west of Youanmi)".

#### I Standring

(Blakers et al (1984) do not show Little Woodswallow further south than Longitude 28 and further west than Latitude 117 Ellendale Pool is about 28/50,114/58 Ed.)

### BOYAGIN ROCK NATURE RESERVE - 2/9/90 AND 13/7/91

The highlights of the excursion on 2 September 1990 were Square-tailed Kite (1), Whistling Kite, Brush (and Common) Bronzewing, Brown Quail, Western Yellow Robin and a Crested Shrike-tit. A total of 56 species were seen.

On 13 July 1991 a mostly sunny morning became lightly overcast, dull and cool for the rest of the day. It was a very disappointing day for birdwatching.

A particularly bright male Red-capped Robin was seen in the morning, otherwise the highlight was an animated group of 5 or 6 Dusky Woodswallow descending to a patch of ground, joined quickly by a Grey Shrike-thrush. All appeared to be feeding, but on what we could not establish. 42 species were seen. (Compares with 56 species on the September 1990 excursion).

The WA Group "National Parks Data Base" has a total of 79 species for Boyagin Rock Nature Reserve. Nine reports have been made following RAOU group excursions and private visits (8 March, 9 August and 8 November 1986, 11 January, 1987, 21 August and 10 September 1988, 2 September, 1990 and 9 January and 13 July 1991). If any member has records for the reserve for any other dates please send a card to the office.

#### I Standring

### WALYUNGA NAT. PK.- JULY 1991

Only 10 people will, by now, remember that this day was the most miserable, sodden day of winter, the humidity so high that it was difficult to tell whether it was actually raining or not and the breeze too cold to encourage any lingering. So our small band of optimists trudged up the western bank of the Swan, floundering through the myriad rivulets pouring off the valley slopes, but almost immediately in a mixed flock of busily foraging birds, treecreepers, pardalotes, honeyeaters, whistlers. We saw 11 species in the first few minutes. Admittedly, the activity then slowed and for some time and we heard more frogs than birds.

One peculiar call was dismissed as an unusual frog by all but one of our party. After persistent searching she located a pair of White-faced Heron nestbuilding on the opposite river bank. The nest was

being built in the fork of a tree in a dense woodland patch some seven metres up and almost over the water and would have been well hidden from the east. We had a restricted view through a gap in the foliage. The nest under construction was a small platform of sticks.

It seemed to some of us that the plumes on the back of one of the heron were more conspicuous than usual. One passed a closed bill over the partner's back in a caressing motion, and both made perfunctory attempts at mutual grooming. They also adopted a stylised stance, upper body erect and the bill pressed close to the neck and chest. Both birds remained in a crouched position but my impression was that this was more to maintain balance on the branch than a part of ritual. The only difference I could detect between the birds was that the one who seemed to be the initiator of activity had bright yellow legs and the other had orange coloured legs.

This was our birding highlight, but we enjoyed our walk up to Syd's Rapids which was a mass of boiling rushing water, then up into the western slopes through some very attractive Marri and Wandoo woodland to complete the circuit back to the carpark. After lunch a few of us walked the western boundary of the Park. There is a good stretch of Wandoo along a winter stream. Here were a great many Dusky Woodswallow, pardalote and Weebill as well as individuals from a mix of other species. This proved an interesting stretch of country and our count of 34 species shows that it would be worthwhile visiting both areas again in better weather.

P Anson

(Marchant S & Higgins PJ (1990) refer to the raising of plumes when White-faced Heron are close during courtship and to the other behaviour similar to that observed as 'change over at nest ritual.' Ed.)

## COMING EVENTS

### Hints for Excursion and Campout participants:

As far as we know, no-one has previously had the temerity to put forward hints for excursion participants. However, we trust the following will make your outings more profitable and enjoyable.

\* When unaccustomed to the 'bush' it is very easy to become directionally confused. A bird flies off, you follow, you see another bird in a different direction and again follow - suddenly you are lost! Many of the areas we visit lack distinguishing features and trees and low bushes all look very similar. If you are on your own - stop every few minutes, think from where you have come and listen for sounds of the rest of the group. If you feel unsure where you are, a "cooee" can be heard a long way and this call can save many frustrating hours for both searchers and the lost.

\* Drivers should be certain to have a full tank before leaving home when going on day outings and bush campouts. On a campout topping up at the nearest township is a wise

move. We will endeavour to give an approximate kilometreage for longer trips.

\* Always carry water for both yourself and the car. On campouts be self-sufficient for food.

\* It is a good idea for each car to carry a first-aid kit.

The following excursions programme has been compiled to present a variety of outings to different habitats. All, especially new and prospective members are welcome. Any suggestions for outings should be sent to the Excursions Organiser, WA RAOU Office, with details of habitat and birds likely to be seen. Offers to lead excursions would be very welcome.

#### **B Barrett Excursions Organiser**

##### **Sunday 1st September Half day excursion - Lake Joondalup, Edgewater**

Meet at 8.30am at the first area of parkland adjacent to the lake on the right hand side, just north of Ridge Close, a turning off Edgewater Drive which turns off Ocean Reef Road. Bring telescope if possible.

Leader: Graham Little

##### **Sunday 8th September Half day excursion - North Lake**

Meet at 8am in the carpark on the corner of Farrington Road and Progress Drive. North Lake is part of the Beeliar Wetlands. A good area for both waterbirds and bushbirds.

Leader: John Ashford

##### **Saturday 14th September Full day excursion - Lake Karakin**

Meet at 9.30am 200m along KW Road which is approximately 122km from Perth on the right, off the Lancelin Road. We will lunch by the Lake and go to Doopiter Swamp in the afternoon. Gum-boots or waders would be useful. A round trip of approximately 250km.

Leader: Bryan Barrett

##### **Friday 20th September Half day excursion - Flynn Road**

Meet at 8am on the corner of Flynn Road and Great Eastern Highway, about 1km on the Perth side of The Lakes turnoff (i.e. the York Road turnoff). A chance for visitors to the Congress to do some birding in the hills.

Leader: Bryan Barrett

##### **Friday 20th September/Sunday 22nd September RAOU Congress 1991**

##### **Sunday 22nd September/Friday 27th September Congress Campout - Albany**

##### **Saturday 28th September/Monday 30th September Campout - D'Entrecasteaux National Park**

An opportunity for those returning from the campout at Albany to visit another area of the south-west. Campout activities will include listening for

Ground Parrots after sunset and recording the bird species in the park.

As accommodation may be limited please contact Chris Wilder, after hours on (09) 401 8329 by 13 September if you wish to join this campout.

Leader: Allan Burbidge

##### **Sunday 6th October Full day excursion - East Gingin Shire Wetlands**

Meet at 8.30am at Wannamal Rest Area, on the Wannamal-Mogumber-Moora Road. The Rest Area is nearly opposite Wannamal Community Hall and tennis courts. Look for the sign. One and a half hours drive, 120 kms from Perth GPO. Bring gum-boots/waders. For further information contact Bryan Barrett (phone 298 8245).

Leader: Bruce Buchanan

##### **Saturday 12th October Half day excursion - Serpentine National Park**

Meet at 8.30am at the junction of the South West Highway and Falls Road (the turnoff to Serpentine Falls). CALM has asked for more information regarding the density of bird species in this area. It is intended to visit the park each quarter for 1991/92.

Leaders: Rod Smith & David Lamont (CALM)

##### **Saturday 19th October/Sunday 20th October Campout - Margaret River**

Meet at 9.30am (Saturday) or 8.00am (Sunday) outside the Prevelly Park Caravan Park. Some of the bird species expected in the area on this weekend will be Southern Emu-wren, Red-winged Fairy-wren, White-breasted and Western Yellow Robin and Calamanthus on the coastal heath.

Members wishing to camp should contact the Prevelly Park Caravan Park, telephone (097) 572374, the closest caravan park, which has powered sites, 2 bedroom cottages (sleep 4 \$40 nightly), 3 bedroom cottages (sleep 6 \$45 nightly) and on-site vans (\$36 night).

Organisers: Jenny Hunt (09) 370 1667 & Chris Wilder (09) 401 8329.

##### **Sunday 27th October Half day excursion - Gibbs Road Swamp, Forrestdale**

Meet at 7am on the corner of Nicholson Road and Gibbs Road. (park on the Nicholson Road verge). This newly created reserve is situated off Nicholson Road. Bring waders or gum-boots. It is expected to spend one and a half to two hours wading in thigh-deep water looking for the nests of Freckled Duck which are known to frequent this swamp.

Leader: Rodney Vervest

##### **Monday 28th October Meeting - Herdsman Lake Wildlife centre, 8pm**

Perry de Rebeira, who works at CSIRO's Division of Wildlife and Ecology at Helena Valley and is the State representative of the Australian Bird

Study Association, will speak about bird banding in Western Australia.

**Saturday 2nd November Half day excursion - Jorgensen Park, Kalamunda**

Meet at 8am in the carpark off Crescent Road which leaves Mundaring Weir Road approximately 500m from its junctions with Railway Road, Kalamunda.

Leader: Peter Anson

**Sunday 10th November Full day excursion - Dobaderry Nature Reserve**

Meet at 7.30am at the junction of Canning Road and Brookton Highway, Karragullen, for guidance to Dobaderry Nature Reserve to look for Crested Shrike-tit. Gum-boots could be useful. A round trip of approximately 150km from Albany Highway.

Leader: Doug Watkins

**16th/25th November Annual Waterfowl Count**

**Sunday 24th November Full day excursion - Cape Naturaliste**

The Busselton Naturalists Club has invited RAOU members to join this excursion to look for whales and seabirds. Contact Bernie Masters on (097) 272474.

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

Dr Stephen Davies, who will be known to many for his contribution to the RAOU at both State and national levels, will talk about the rehabilitation of birdlife on Western Australian farms.

**Sunday 1st December TWITCHATHON**

For Teams of 3 or 4, who must stay together for confirmation of sightings. Experienced Twitchers are asked to include at least one "novice" in their group if possible. Team entry fee is \$2 which will go to RAOU projects. Enter at RAOU Office.

The major prize is for the highest total of species recorded between dawn and dark on 1 December.

There are two lesser prizes: for the highest total of species recorded (1) North of a line, Swan River mouth to City and East of the Albany Highway and Welshpool Road and (2) South and West of the line in (1).

All groups and all members (not only Twitchathon participants) meet at 7pm on 1 December at the Napiers, 69 Dean Road, Bateman for gathering and barbecue (two available) when the prizes will be awarded. All attending must provide their own food and drink.

For further information contact Clive Napier.

**Saturday 7th/Sunday 8th December-Campout Lake Muir near Manjimup**

Meet at 12 noon on Saturday 7th December at the CALM office, Brain Street, Manjimup. Rodney Vervest will lead the convoy a further 60km to the area. A cottage will probably be available for a limited number only, booking essential. Bring suitable footwear and be self-contained for the whole weekend. Contact Rodney (09) 364 6202 for further information. It is planned to search for Australasian Bittern in the lake area of Lake Muir and adjacent small wetlands.

Leader: Rodney Vervest

**BBCBQ Answers**

1. In V's or skeins. (p 1211)
2. Freshwater or freshwater seepage - for the ducklings. (p 1211)
3. Six days. (p1213)
4. Saline. (p 1211)
5. February. (p 1213)
6. Female. (p 1213)
7. 22 months. (p 1213)
8. Accompanies female to the nest site each morning, then returns to the breeding territory to defend it. (p 1213)
9. When the young can fly- about 70 days. (p 1214/5)
10. Successful pairs with young are on the outside edge, unpaired adults, sub-adults and pairs without young occupy the centre areas. (p 1213)

Questions are based on Marchant S & Higgins PJ (1990).

**References**

**References made in this WABN are:-**

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- Brouwer J & Garnett S (1990) *Threatened Birds Of Australia* RAOU & ANPWS Victoria.
- Hollands D (1984) *Eagles Hawks and Falcons of Australia* Thomas Nelson Victoria.
- Marchant S & Higgins PJ (1990) *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand & Antarctic Birds* Oxford University Press Melbourne.
- Rowley I (1990) *Behavioral Ecology of the Galah* Surrey Beatty & Sons NSW.
- Simpson K & Day N (1984) *The Birds of Australia* Lloyd O'Neill Victoria.
- Serventy DL & Whittell HM (1976) *Birds of Western Australia* UWA Press Perth WA.

### **Vale - Margaret Wilson**

It is with great regret that we record the death of Margaret Wilson, wife of our Chairman, Brian Wilson.

Margaret died on Sunday 11th August after a short illness and our deepest sympathies go to Brian and his family.

Margaret will be sadly missed on her own account and because of her wonderful contribution to the WA Group through her efforts at the trading table at meetings and at many fairs and shows.

Thank you Margaret for all you have done.

from her friends at RAOU (WA Group)