ISSN 0314-8211

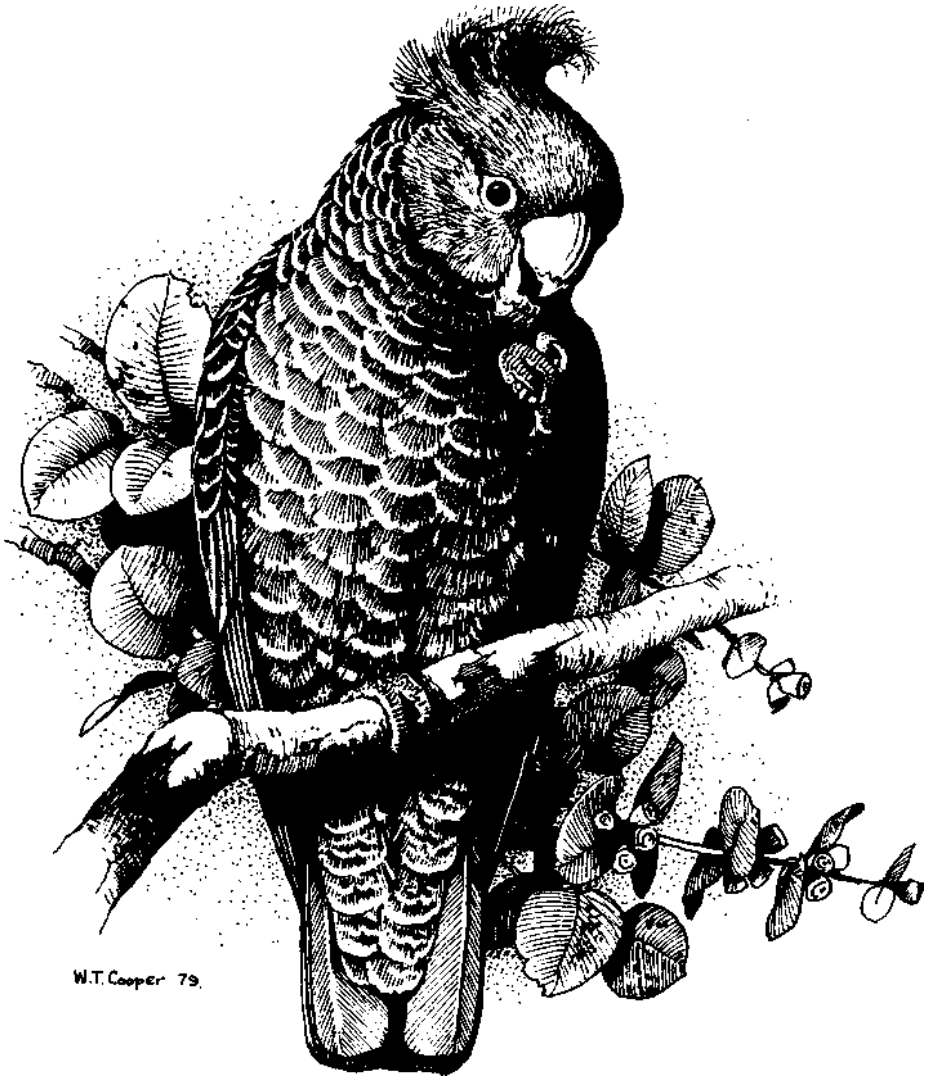
CANBERRA BIRD NOTES

Volume 10

Number 3

July 1985

Registered by Australia Post - publication No NBH 0255



This page intentionally blank

GANG-GANGS: LEFT-FOOTED ALL?

H D V Prendergast

Forshaw (1981a, p.31) summarised findings from two studies on the preferred foot used by parrots for holding food. One species was exclusively left-footed, one bird of another species was almost always right-footed whilst in yet other species the preferred foot varied from individual to individual and to differing degrees.

With regard to such holding by Gang-gangs Callocephalon fimbriatum feeding on berries, Forshaw (1981b, p.90) stated that "if the cluster (of berries) is too cumbersome, the bird will hold it down against the perch under the *right* foot and will bite off smaller sections" (my brackets and italics). Though no mention is made of what happens when the cluster is not too cumbersome, the information suggests that this species may be right-footed.

Table 1 summarises observations I made on part of a flock of Gang-gangs feeding on the berries of a Hawthorn *Cretageus monogyna* in Lyneham. In this case berries were individually picked off the bush with the bill and were then passed, without exception, to the upraised *left* foot. This foot remained upraised holding the berries whilst their fleshy part was eaten away from around the stone. Despite a number of further, but more casual, observations elsewhere and on other food-sources (eg. eucalypt and casuarina seeds), I have yet to see a Gang- gang use its right foot for the same purpose.

TABLE 1: Foot Used by Feeding Gang-gangs to Hold Berries

Date	Left Foot	Right Foot	No. of Birds Observed
13 April 1984	6	0	3
14 April 1984	83	0	3
15 April 1984	25	0	4
TOTAL	114	0	10

The observations of Rogers (1980) support the notion that the Gang-gang (and eight other species of Australian parrots) is significantly left-footed. Left-footedness has also been noted in Varied Sittellas Daphoenositta chrysoptera holding prey its and bark down onto branches (Noske, 1985). Both these studies were based on relatively scant data and it would he interesting to extend documentation of the preferred holding foot especially of other parrots but also of species of other families such as the Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*.

REFERENCES

Forshaw, J M 1981a. *Parrots of the World,* Lansdowne Editions, Melbourne.

Forshaw, J M 1981b. *Australian Parrots,* Lansdowne Editions, Melbourne.

Noske, R A 1985. *Left-footedness and tool-using in the Varied Sittella Daphoenositta chrysoptera and Crested Shrike-Tit Falcunculus frontatus,* Corella: 63-64.

Rogers, L J 1980. *Lateralisation in the Avian Brain,* Bird Behaviour 2:1-12.

H D V Prendergast, 17/25 Mackennal Street, LYNEHAM, ACT, 2602

****

GANG-GANGS GRAZE WATER MILFOIL

Henry Nix

At 0650 on 12 February 1985, a small flock (7) of Gang-gang Cockatoos *Callocephalon fimbriatum* was observed at the margins of the Thredbo River directly in front of the Thredbo Alpine Hotel. This was the first sighting of the species by my companion Sue Heath, a visiting New Zealand ornithologist. Accordingly, the birds were kept under observation for sometime. At first presumed to be drinking and bathing, closer inspection revealed that the birds were grazing the stems of the aquatic plant Water Milfoil *Myriophyllum pedunculatum.*

Individual birds were wading out on floating mats of this aquatic week and feeding voraciously, with water up to their midsection; and very cold mountain water it was! Preference was given to older stems that were relatively free of feathery side branchlets. Long sections of stems were drawn in with beak and claw (like sticks of spaghetti) and chopped into sections 1-2 mm long and swallowed in an almost continuous feeding motion. The resulting bare patches of Water Milfoil were obvious and were observed at other locations along the river.

A possibility that the birds were taking in protein by seeking out older stems that harboured invertebrate larvae was not confirmed by later inspection. The quantity of stems consumed also supported the notion that this was primarily a carbohydrate or energy source. The voracious feeding of the Gang-gangs stimulated our own gastric juices and so we left them to their Water Milfoil while we sought out our own breakfast.

H A Nix, 22 Syme Crescent, O'CONNOR, ACT, 2601

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE RECOLONISATION OF BUSHLAND DESTROYED BY FIRE

Ian M Taylor

On 18 December 1984, a scrub fire destroyed several hundred hectares of bushland on the slopes of Mt Ainslie. Two weeks later, I carried out a brief investigation to determine how the fire had affected the avifauna of the area.

The thick scrub and metre-high grass which were typical of the western slopes of the mountain had been reduced to several millimetres of ash on the scorched earth. Nothing remained except the blackened trunks of the larger eucalypts which were shedding their remaining scorched leaves, and the litter which these formed was blown by the wind into drifts in the lee of fallen branches and in depressions in the ground. In spite of the destruction, the scene possessed an eerie beauty.

To my surprise, the area was not totally devoid of birds, and the 'improved' visibility that resulted from depletion of the understorey allowed ready identification of the few species which were present.

First up was a party of nine White-winged Choughs *Corcorax melanorhamphos* which included two begging juveniles. The group moved slowly across the bare earth pausing to forage occasionally. Closer inspection revealed that the ground was not bare at all, but supported large numbers of ants. I sampled a number of areas on the mountain and found about 10 ants per square metre. One assumes that they were able to survive the bushfire in their subterranean nests, and that they were among the first insects to recolonise the burnt areas.

A group of seven Varied Sittellas *Daphoenositta chrysoptera* moved through the tree-tops, spiralling down the branches in typical fashion. In the course of my investigation, I also found Grey and Pied Currawongs *Strepera versicolor* and *graculina,* White-throated Treecreepers *Climacteris leucophaea* and Noisy Friarbirds *Philemon corniculatus* examining forks and crevices some distance above the ground.

While the trunks of the trees were blackened to a height one or two metres, and the rising heat from the flames searched the leaves, the upper branches were relatively untouched. Apparently the insects such as those on which the sittellas were feeding were high enough above the flames or sufficiently protected to survive, and the insects, dead or alive, concealed in tree forks all served to encourage some recolonisation of the forest.

In addition, I saw a single Australian Raven *Corvus* coronoides carrying what appeared to be a witchety grub in its

bill. Clearly, scavengers can find pickings where falling trees have exposed large clods of earth and where weaker, grub-infested branches have split and fallen.

A female robin, most likely the Red-capped *Petroica goodenovii,* was also seen perching quietly on the burnt skeleton of a casuarina.

A number of larger species of insect were present, including several species of butterfly, dragonfly, and cicada. These may have come in on the wind or they may have flown in unassisted. While large insectivores such as the Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* and Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae* could be expected to recolonise the area soon, none was sighted.

None of the small birds such as the Striated and Buff- rumped Thornbills *Acanthiza lineata* and *A. reguloides,* Weebills *Smicrornis brevirostris,* Superb Fairy Wrens *Malurus cyaneus,* Grey Fantails *Rhipidura fuliginosa* and Rufous Whistlers *Pachycephala rufiventris* which were very common in the tracts of untouched bushland around the foot of the hill were recorded in the burnt areas. These species appear to be heavily dependent on thick, scrubby vegetation, and it seems unlikely that they will reappear on the mountain until there is considerable regrowth.

Species whose food and shelter requirements have been least affected were among the first to recolonise the burnt areas of Mt Ainslie. Choughs were able to feed on ants which survived underground, branch-feeders and some larger species which do not require thick cover found insects that sheltered in cracks and crevices. There were also some pickings for scavengers such as the raven. On the other hand, many smaller birds of the understorey whose preferred habitat has been utterly destroyed, have perished or were driven out.

Ian M Taylor, 69 Tyson Street, AINSLIE, ACT, 2602

****

JERVIS BAY OUTING

Kay Hahne

Twenty-six members and their families from COG and the Field Naturalist Clubs had a wonderful outing together on the weekend 22-24 February 1985. Accommodation was at the CCAE Field Station at Jervis Bay and was found to be quite pleasant and adequate with bunk beds, hot showers, and a big hall with plenty of refrigeration, cooking facilities and eating space where being sociable and getting better acquainted was the natural thing to do.

Tony Lawson, our undaunting and tireless leader (routing us all out of bed at 0630 each morning) led us on a total of six walks through a variety of habitats: coastal heath, dense forest, rocky cliffs, sandy beaches, even along the edges of Ryans Swamp. Collectively the groups identified 79 species, adding a few new ones to the list of 168 provided by the ACT Conservation Service.

Some of the highlights of the weekend were: a lone Fairy Penguin *Eudyptula minor* swimming under water very close in to Murrays Beach (1-2 m), going about his business of searching for fish, bobbing up like a cork every so often to look at the strange row of *Homo sapiens* along the beach, pointing, shouting and goggling at him through strange, big "eyes"! Both the White-faced Heron *Ardea novaehollandiae* and the grey form of the Eastern Reef Egret *Egretta sacra* were seen, which gave us an excellent view of the contrast between the uniform dark grey of the Reef Egret as opposed to the two shades of lighter greys of the White-faced Heron. Also four Sooty Oystercatchers were seen on Murrays Beach, which we added to the list of 168.

Above Murrays Beach, on the high cliffs of Governor Head overlooking Bowen Island, we stood for a good 45 minutes on Sunday morning from 0730 with a tremendous view of several Australasian Gannets *Morus serrator,* many Crested Terns *Sterna bergii,* an Arctic Jaegar *Stercorarius parasiticus,* a small flock of Shearwaters *Puffinus sp* flying just above the surface of the water, and high overhead an adult White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* clutching a large fish over 12 inches long. The eagle flew near the cliffs to give us a closer look, but we failed to identify the fish! On Saturday afternoon, two adults and one immature Sea-Eagle were engaged in a spectacular aerial courtship (?) display.

The forest provided views of one male Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula,* both White-throated and Red-browed Treecreepers *Climacteris leucophaea* and *C. erythrops,* a Lewin's Honeyeater *Meliphaga lewinii,* one male Fan-tailed Cuckoo

Cuculus pyrrhophanus, several female Satin Bowerbirds *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus* and a Grey Butcherbird *Cracticus torquatus* calling in the distance.

Jervis Bay is not only excellent for birds, but if you have the right equipment for spotlighting at night, such things as owls, greater gliders, sugar gliders and ring-tailed possums can be seen. A great variety of plant life is present - trees, shrubs, wildflowers.

Kay Hahne, 5 Gingana Street, ARANDA, ACT

****

SPARROWS GLEANING

Henry Nix

Our living room overlooks mature street trees of Argyle Apple *Eucalyptus cinerea.* The silver-grey-blue foliage harbours a healthy crop of scale and psyllids with their by-products of honeydew and lerps. This year-round food source attracts a wide range of native bird species that glean their food from the leaf surfaces in the outer canopy of the trees.

At 1020 on 2 March 1985, I observed active gleaning by a large number of what, at first, appeared to be large brownish pardalotes. Closer inspection revealed the ubiquitous House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* with over 30 birds foraging through the outer foliage. All types of gleaning action, including hovering, were observed. At the time few native species were present.

Now that wintering populations of honeyeaters, pardalotes, silvereyes and thornbills are returning the incidence of gleaning by sparrows has declined. Now I find them feeding among the cones of *Banksia integrifolia!* The sparrow shall inherit the earth!

Although I had not observed gleaning by the resident sparrows previously, I did observe active gleaning by sparrows, on lerps, in Eucalyptus trees in the Fellows Garden at ANU during the last severe drought period in 1983. On a number of occasions the sparrows were observed gleaning the sugar-rich lerp in preference to the normal lunch-time tidbits.

H A Nix, 22 Syme Crescent, O'CONNOR, ACT, 2601

INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD OF THE COMMON MYNA IN CANBERRA

Richard Gregory-Smith

"Gimme the town an' its clamour an'clutter;
I ain't very fond of the bush;
For my cobbers are coves of the gardens and gutter - A
tough metropolitan push"

C J Dennis - "The Indian Myna" from
"The Singing Garden" 1935

The Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* was first introduced from Asia into Australia in 1862 (Cayley, 1967) to Melbourne, and further introductions to Victoria followed (Ryder, 1905). In 1883 a number were transported from Melbourne to Townsville and to the area of the Herbert and Johnstone Rivers to combat locusts and cane beetles on the sugar-cane properties (Chisholm, 1926). They thrived in Queensland and extended north to Innisfail and Cairns. By 1949 Mynas were common in Sydney, south of the Harbour, very common in the Melbourne area, plentiful along the Queensland coast from Mackay north, but not present in Tasmania.

The Myna was originally introduced to deal with caterpillars and other insects which were pests to market gardeners. It performed this function well, but became itself a minor pest to fruit growers. The Myna is a scavenger and is appreciated as such in the urban areas which it favours.

The Myna spread north and south from Sydney. It progressed along the Hume Highway through Mittagong, to Marulan (Hone, 1978) and was reported at Collector (1980). Mynas were reported in Queanbeyan in 1969 and a small colony continues to flourish there. There is an unconfirmed report of a possible juvenile Myna being seen as early as 1943 in Canberra in the area of State Circle. In May 1968 a pair was reported in the suburb of Campbell (Catcheside, 1969) and there was a further reported sighting in Acton.

It was not until 12 November 1968 that the first release of 12 Common Mynas was made in the suburb of Forrest. Mynas continued to be released in batches until September 1971 when a total of 110 birds had been distributed.

The maps are based on reports from several sources. The validity of the information available varied considerably over the period and records were particularly poor over the years 1973-77. Reporting varied with the number of observers, their distribution and their interest in Mynas. Since 1981-82, however, a broader, and more reliable data base has been introduced in the Canberra Ornithologists Group Garden Bird Survey. Table 1 summarises the records upon which the study was based.

After early sightings north of the city there were no further observations for a decade. Expansion of the Myna population centred upon the releases in Forrest, spreading mainly south and south-west towards Weston Creek and the southern suburbs. It was not until 1980-81 that the species started colonising to the north, but by 1983-84 it had extended its range to some of the furthest suburbs and was present in significant numbers in central Belconnen.

Observations indicate a fall-off in numbers during the spring and summer and an increase in population to a maximum in May (Taylor, 1983). The Myna is known to be a sedentary species and this fluctuation in observed population is probably due to retirement to breeding sites over the nesting season (October- March).

It is true that there is competition between the Myna and hole-nesting native species for sites, but the Myna is confined to suburban areas unlike its cousin, the Common Starling. An omnivorous species, the Myna is primarily a scavenger, but it will take all that comes including insect pests such as grasshoppers in large numbers. There is much going for this confiding city slicker, which although not renowned as a songster, entertains many of the community.

Our records indicate a continuing increase in the numbers and range of the Common Myna as it follows the growth of our national capital, but I consider that it will not create the problems attributable to the Common Starling of nesting site appropriation, pollution and fruit predation. My forecast is that it will attain a state of equilibrium in the capital which will not disadvantage the human or avian population.

REFERENCES

Cayley, N 1967. *What Bird is That?*
Catcheside, D G 1969. *CBN* 1:4.
Chisholm, E C 1926. 'Birds Introduced into NSW', *EMU* 25:276-279.
Hone, J 1978. 'Introduction and Spread of the Common Myna in NSW', *EMU* 78:227-230.
Ryder, Col C S 1905. 'Presidential Address on European and Other Birds Liberated in Victoria', *EMU* 5:110-119.
Taylor, I 1983. 'Annual Bird Report', *CBN* 8:52.

Richard Gregory-Smith, 13 Astelia Place, RIVETT, ACT,

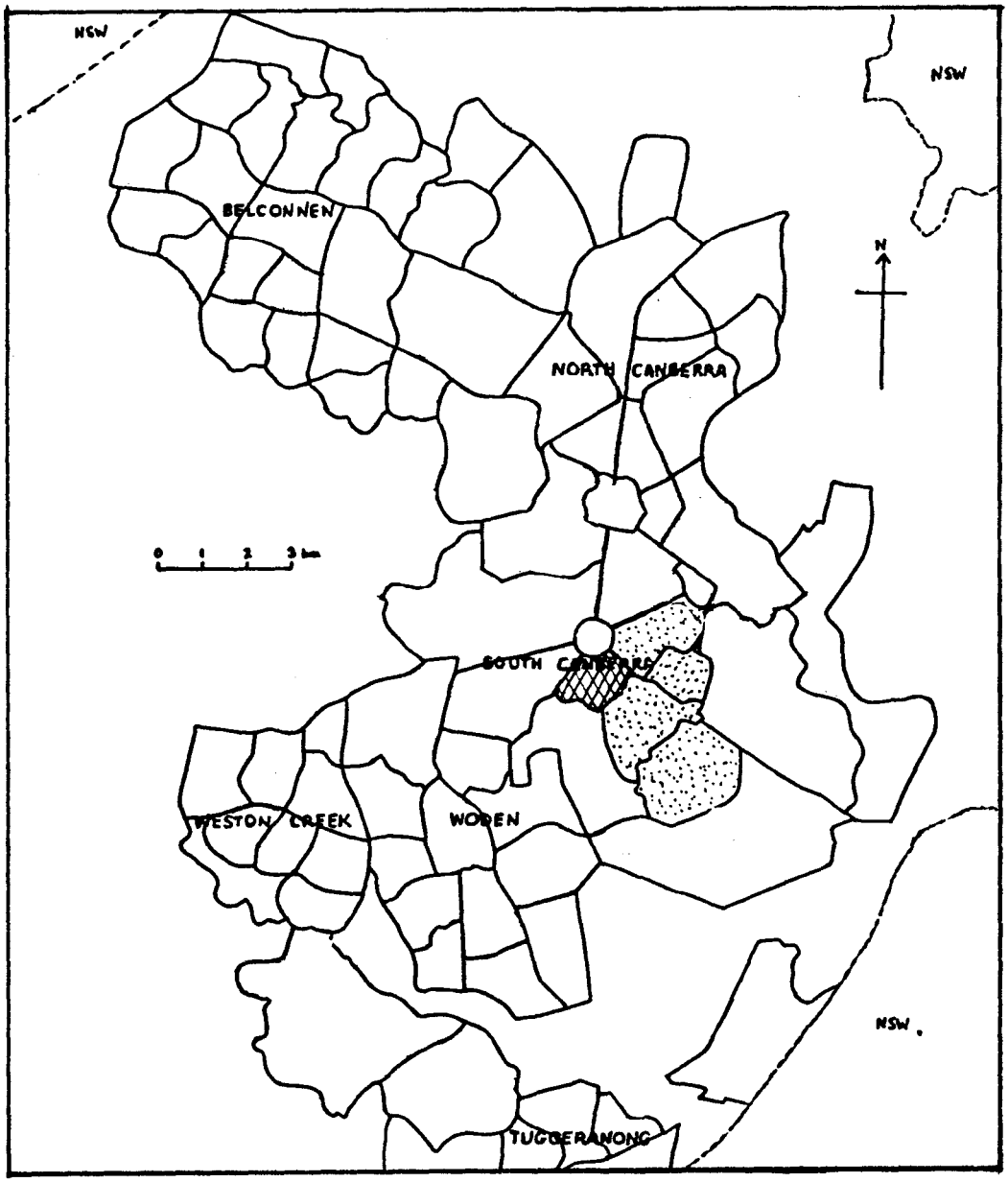
TABLE 1: Occurrence of the Common Myna in Canberra Suburbs

	68/69	69/70	70/71	71/72	72/73	77/78	78/79	79/80	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84
Lyneham	A	A	A									
Narrabundah	A	A						B			B	C
Barton		A	B	A	C	C		C	C	C	B	C
Forrest		C	C	C	C	A	A	B	B	B	B	A
Griffith		A		A		A	A	B	A	A	A	
Kingston		A	A					A	B	A	A	A
Mawson			A				A	A				
Hughes				B		B	B	B	A	C	B	C
Red Hill				B	B		A	B	B	A	B	A
Yarralumla				A	B	B	C	A	C	A	B	B
Weetangera						B						
Page						B						
Scullin						B					A	C
Garran							A					
Deakin							C	C	C	B	C	C
Farrer								A	B	A	B	C
Lyons								B		A	A	C
Pearce								A	A			
Fisher								A		A		
Curtin								A				
Chifley									A			
Ainslie									A			A
Waramanga										B		A
Weston										A		
Charnwood										A		
Macquarie										A		
Torrens										B	B	
Mitchell											A	
Kambah											A	
Acton											A	
Holt											A	
Holder											A	
O'Connor											A	
Chapman											A	B
Rivett											A	A
Duffy											A	
Stirling											A	
Philip												A
Latham												A
Fyshwich						A	A		A	A		
Queanbeyan	A	B			B			A	A			
Collector									A			

A - Occasional reports
B - Average 1-2 present throughout year or breeding
C - Average over 2 present throughout year and breeding

Canberra Suburbs

1969-70



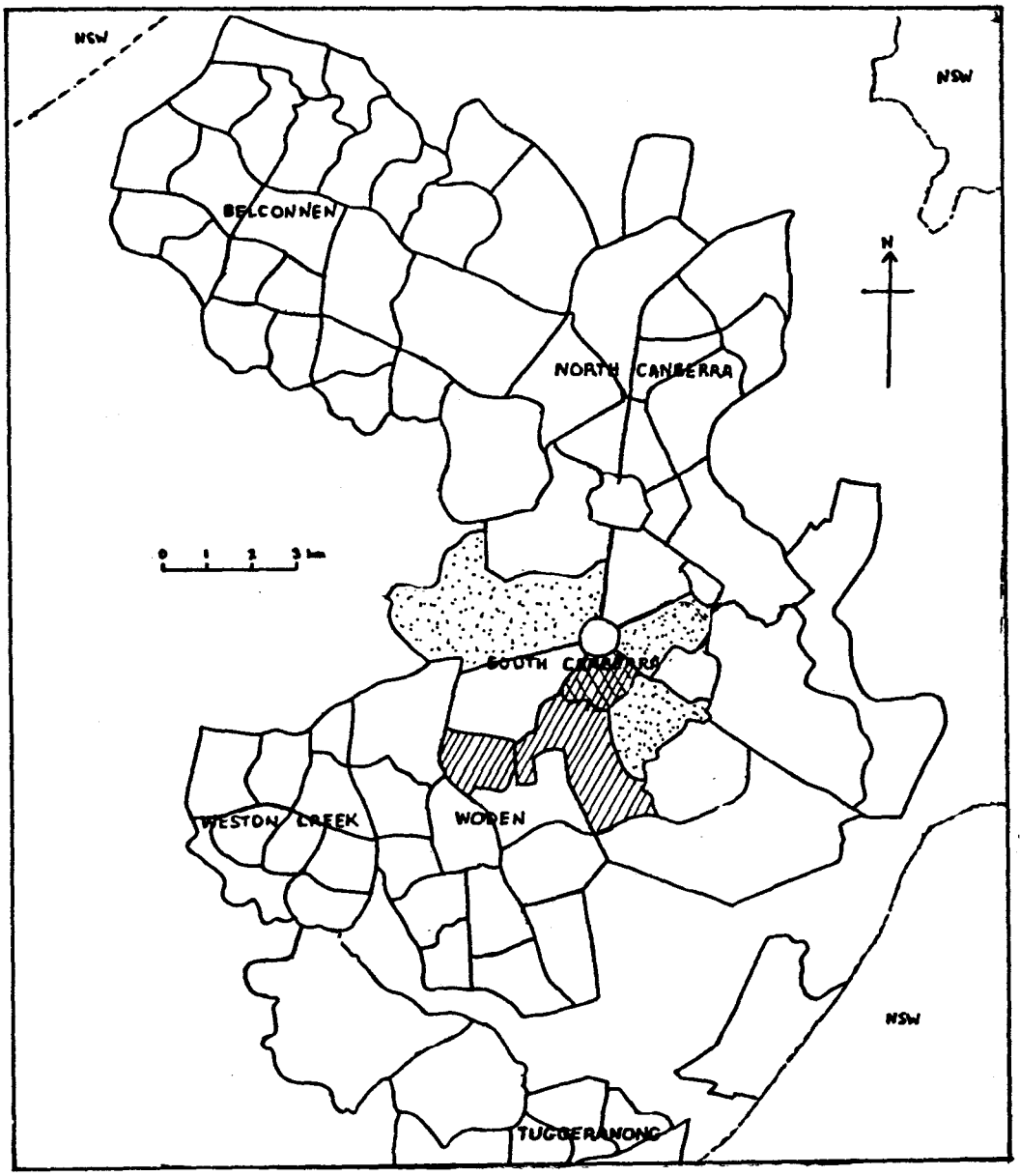
A Occasional reports

B Average 1-2 present throughout year or breeding

C Average over 2 present throughout year and breeding

Canberra Suburbs

1971–72



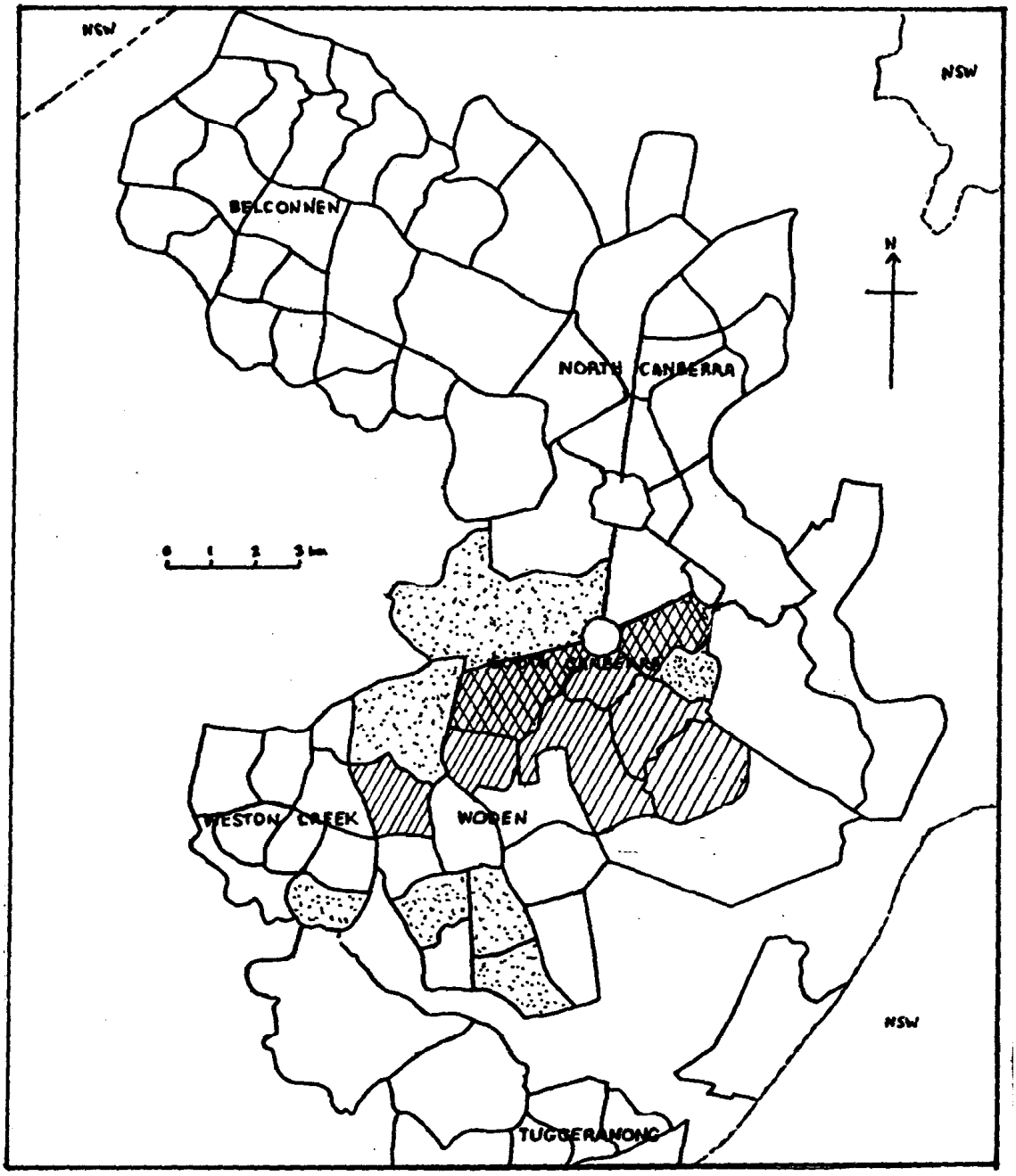
A Occasional reports

B Average 1–2 present throughout year or breeding

C Average over 2 present throughout year and breeding

Canberra Suburbs

1979-80



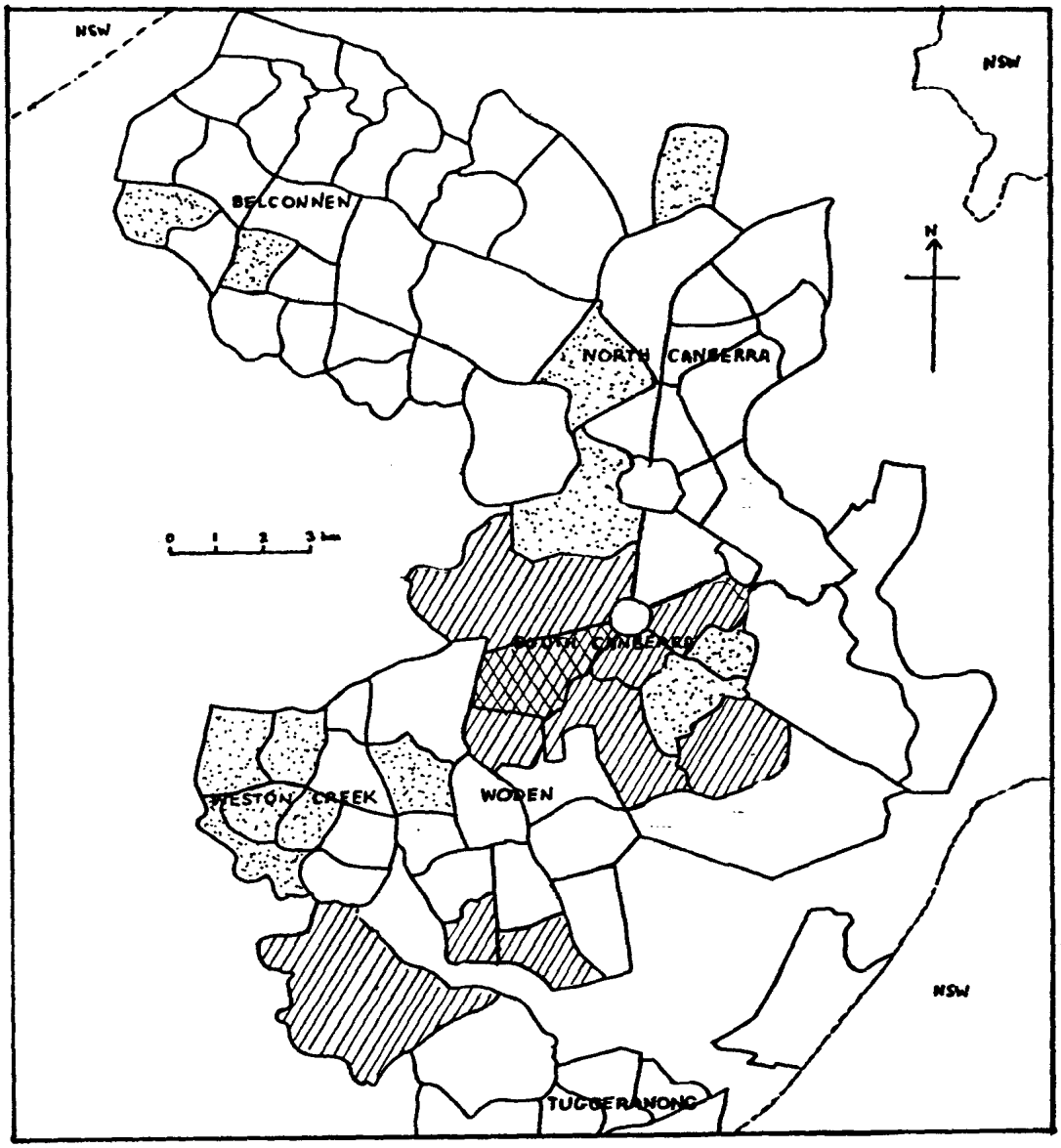
A Occasional reports

B Average 1-2 present throughout year or breeding

C Average over 2 present throughout year and breeding

Canberra Suburbs

1982–83



A Occasional reports

B Average 1–2 present throughout year or breeding

C Average over 2 present throughout year and breeding

ODD OBS

WHITE-NECKED HERON IN THE SUBURBS *Brendan Lepschi*

At around 1130 on 9 February 1985, I noticed a large bird, a White-necked Heron *Ardea pacifica,* flying very low over our house in Weston. I watched it to see where it was heading, and to my surprise, it landed in the backyard of a house about 50 m away from our block. As the block is unfenced at one side and backs onto a path, I went to take a closer look at the bird, but when I arrived it took off and flew in a westerly direction towards the Horticultural Centre on Heysen Street.

On 12 February 1985 at around 1830, I again noticed a White-necked Heron (perhaps the same bird?) flying roughly north-westerly, in the same direction as the bird I observed on 9 February.

A friend also living in Weston informed me that a White-necked Heron had been 'paddling about' in their fish pond on 13 February 1985 at about 0800.

****

GRAMMAR GREENFINCHES *R H P Mason*

For many years, while in or around my home in Griffith, I heard a clear, at times 'buzzing', bird-song coming from the direction of the Boys Grammar School, and sometimes idly wondered if it could have been made by European Greenfinches *Carduelis chloris.* Last November (1984), inspired by having heard and seen these birds during Museum Site surveys, I decided to check. As a result, I can confidently report that a small, but obviously established colony of greenfinches does indeed inhabit the Grammar School grounds, chiefly, it would seem, the mature exotic trees (oaks, pines, cypresses, etc) on the Monaro Crescent side. This summer, I have also noticed the odd bird at the Flinders Way end of Manuka, in the cypresses between the car-park and the Occasional Care Centre.

****

LITTLE CORELLAS ON SOUTH COAST *Richard & Judyth Gregory-Smith*

On 29 December 1984, while driving through the township of Casey's Beach, 9 km south of Bateman's Bay we glanced up and saw five Little Corellas *Cacatua sanguinea* on the telegraph lines. It was possible that these were escapees, but unlikely in view of their number. We saw the Corellas later that afternoon in the tops of some high gum trees arguing with resident Australian Magpies, and anyone else who would join in. Had the Corellas, in common with

many other Western residents, decided to visit the coast for Christmas - or were they the vanguard of an extension of the Little Corella's range?

THE ARRIVAL OF CANBERRA'S SUMMER MIGRANTS - A RE-EXAMINATION

Ian *M Taylor*

As early as 1974, it was pointed out with reference to the Pallid Cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus* that 'no doubt further study would help in fixing arrival and departure dates more accurately' (Anon, 1974). In this article, the dates of arrival in Canberra of this and other species are examined, and certain amendments to previously published estimates of dates of arrival are proposed.

Frith (1984) was the first to describe systematically the dates of arrival of Canberra's summer migrants. These dates were subsequently revised in the series of articles entitled 'Status of Birds of Canberra and District'. Dates given in these two sources has been summarised in Table 2.

This article will restrict itself to those species which rarely, if ever, overwinter in Canberra, as the first spring record of an overwintering bird has no particular relevance. For this reason, species such as the Noisy Friarbird *Philemon carunculata* and Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris* have not been included.

Dates of departure have not been examined as there is insufficient data.

COG Observations Books (begun in 1964), Annual Bird Reports, unpublished records forwarded by COG members over the years, past issues of Canberra Bird Notes and Garden Bird Survey data were scanned, and the date of the first spring record for each species was noted. These dates are shown in Table 1.

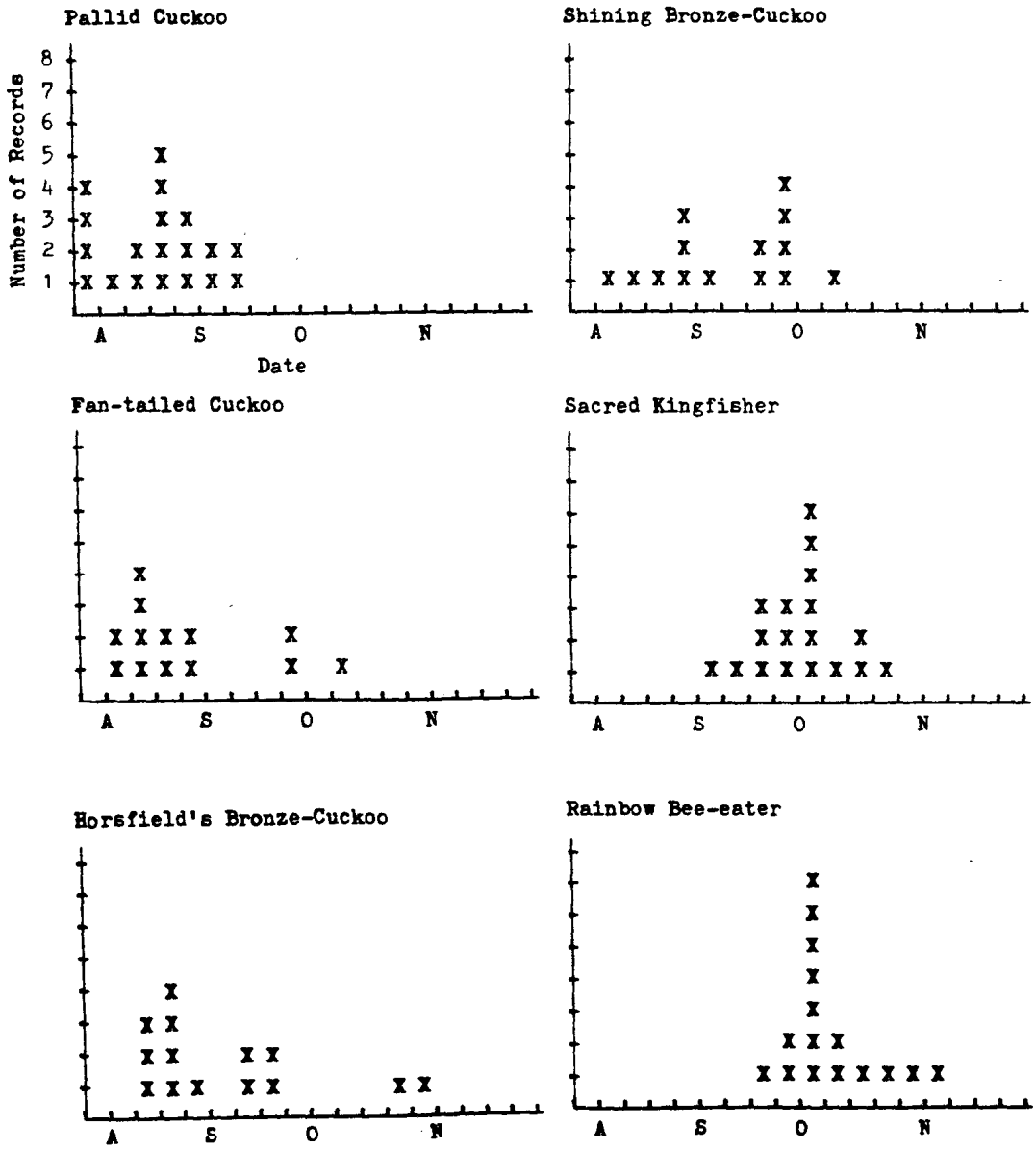
Jones (1929) listed the dates of arrival for a number of species in 1927 and 1928. These have not been included because it was thought preferable to restrict the study to the period for which continuous records are available.

Dates of arrival to the nearest seven-day period are shown in the figures below for each species. These intervals have been selected to accommodate data from the Garden Bird Survey. In the figures below, the dates of the first seven-day period in each month are as follows:

August - 31 July

September - 4 September
October - 2 October
November - 30 October

FIGURES: Dates of arrival of selected summer migrants, 1964-83. Arrows indicate arrival dates before or after the period covered by the figures.



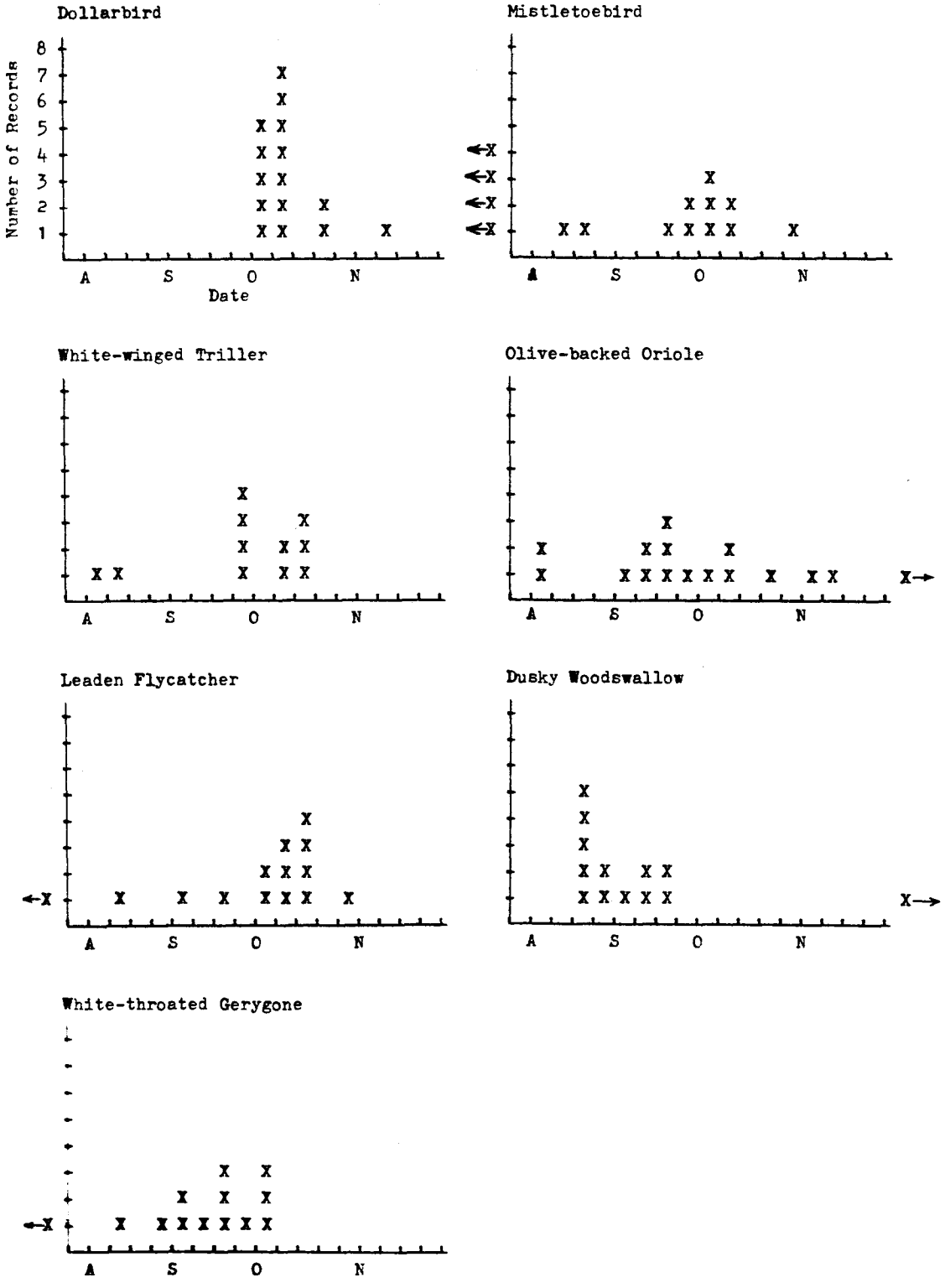

Dollarbird
Number of Records
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
A
S
O
N
Date
Mistletoebird
A
S
O
N
White-winged Triller
A
S
O
N
Olive-backed Oriole
A
S
O
N
Leaden Flycatcher
A
S
O
N
Dusky Woodswallow
A
S
O
N
White-throated Gerygone
A
S
O
N

TABLE 1: Dates of Arrival of Selected Summer Migrants, 1964-83

Yr	PC	FTC	HBC	SBC	SKF	RBE	DB	WWT	LFC	WTG	MB	OBO	DWS
64	31.8			10.10	3.10				13.10	5.10	26.8		
65	5.9	30.9	19.9			20.10	11.10	9.10	31.10	29.9	19.9	10.10	27.8
66	12.9	15.10	24.9	1.10	1.10	26.10	29.10	22.10	18.9	3.10	15.10	11.9	12.9
67	5.9	19.8	26.8	1.10	7.10	3.11	28.10	16.9?	11.10	22.7*	8.7*	25.9	25.8
68	5.8	11.8	17.8	6.9	M 9	6.10	8.10	28.9	9.9		5.10	6.11	5.9
69	5.8	17.8	17.8	29.9	5.10	6.10		29.9			19.8	8.8	29.8
70													
71	10.8		15.9		24.9	4.10	14.10	29.9		7.10		11.10	
72	17.9								11.7*			10.12	
73	24.8	1.10	28.10		9.9	1.10	7.10					6.10	14.9
74	11.9			23.7	6.10		4.10				20.10	17.11	
75	21.6#	10.8	25.8	10.8	18.10	11.11	12.10	8.8	M 9	15.8	20.7*	10.9	
76	30.8	23.8		19.9	20.10	4.10	12.10		17.10	21.9	13.6*	26.10	19.9
77	27.8	6	1.9	25.9	1.10	28.9	14.10	9	6.10	3.9			30.8
78	6.8				2.10	3.10		19.10	16.10		18.6*	23.9	
79	25.8	L 8	11.9	3.6+	26.9	10.10	13.10	9.10	10.10	16.9	7.10	18.9	24.8
80	22.8	18.8	27.8	30.8		6.10	15.11	9	21.10	10.9	27.9	8	24.8
81	3w.8	4w.8	3w.8	4w.8	1w.10	1w.10	1w.10	2w.8	1w.10	3w.9	1w.10	3w.9	4w.1
82	3w.8	2w.8	16.8	3w.9	2w.10	12.10	1w.10	3w.10	3w.10	1w.9	2w.10	2w.9	22.8
83	5w.7	3w.7	52.10	4w.9	3w.9	3w.10	2w.10	4w.9	2w.8	1w.9	4w.9	1w.8	3w.9
	19	14	14	14	17	16	15	14	15	13	15	17	13

KEY TO TABLE 1:

PC Pallid Cuckoo
FTC Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cuculus pyrrhophanus*
HBC Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalis*
SBC Shining Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*
SKF Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta*
RBE Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*
DB Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*
WWT White-winged Triller *Lalage sueurii*
LFC Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula*
WTG White-throated Gerygone *Gerygone olivacea*
MB Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*
OBO Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus*
DWS Dusky Woodswallow *Artamus cyanopterus*

Notes:

* = winter records

+ = First spring record: 16.9

= First spring record: 2.9

M = Mid, L = Late, w = week

In the light of data summarised in the figures above, the dates of arrival as estimated by previous authors may now be revised. These proposed revisions appear in the right-hand column of Table 2.

It is interesting to compare spread in the date of first records of two species such as the Dollarbird, which is the most regular migrant studied here, and the Olive-backed Oriole, the first arrival of which appears to be spread over a four-month period. Even species as closely related as the two Bronze- Cuckoos apparently arrive at quite different times. Further study of the food requirements and breeding biology of migrant species will, no doubt, cast some light on these variations.

REFERENCES

Anon, (1974-76). 'Status of Birds of Canberra and District', *CBN* 2(12):2-24: 3(2):14-16; 3(3):13-19; 3(6):6-15; 3(7):7-10.

Frith, H J (1984). *Birds of the Australian High Country.*

Jones, D P (1928). 'List of Birds of Canberra, the Federal Territory', *EMU* 28:252-4.

TABLE 2: Dates of Arrival: Proposed Revisions

Species	Frith (1984)	Anon (1974)	Proposal
Pallid Cuckoo	Late Aug-Sep	Late Aug	Aug-early Sep
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Aug	Aug	Aug
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	Early Spring	Early Aug	Mid Aug-Sep
Shining Bronze Cuckoo	Early Oct	Oct, some Sept	Aug-Sep
Sacred Kingfisher	Late Sep-early Oct	Oct	Sep-Oct, usually Oct
Rainbow Bee-eater	Late Sep	Mid Oct	Late Sep-Oct, usually Oct
Dollarbird	Mid Oct	Mid Oct	Early Oct
White-winged Triller	Mid Oct	Oct	Late Sep-Oct, some Aug
Leaden Flycatcher	Mid Oct	Early Oct	First half of Oct, some earlier
White-throated Gerygone	Early Oct	Sep	Sep, some Aug
Mistletoebird	Early Spring variable	Sep	Spring, variable
Dusky Woodswallow	Aug	Oct, some Aug	Late Aug-Sep
Olive-backed Oriole	Early Sep	Sep	Usually Sep-Oct variable.

Ian M Taylor, 69 Tyson Street, AINSLIE, ACT, 2602

****

This page is intentionally blank

Canberra Bird Notes is published quarterly by the Canberra Ornithologists Group. The subscription rates are: Student (under 18) $4.00; Single $8.00; Family $10.00 all with one copy of CBN; Institutions $10.00.

Editor: Mr P M Davidson, PO Box 301, CIVIC SQUARE, ACT, 2608

Rarities: C Bear (583169 H); G Clark, B Baker, R Gregory-Smith

CANBERRA ORNITHOLOGISTS GROUP COMMITTEE

President	Bryan FitzGerald	48514 (H)	
Vice-President	Chris Davey	54632 (H)	411211 (W)
Secretary	Bob Digan	51181 (H)	467451 (W)
Assistant Secretary	Leonie Andrews		722434 (W)
Treasurer	Doug Ross	95604 (H)	633826 (W)
Editor	Peter Davidson	58371 (H)	685436 (W)
Assistant Editor	Alison Rowell	47739 (H)	685469 (W)
Assistant Editor (Annual Report)	Hew Prendergast	49659 (H)	494666 (W)
Records	Ian M Taylor	47631 (H)	
Expeditions	Graham Browning	88945 (H)	436374 (W)
Education	Mathew Larkin	58904 (H)	541311 (W)
Conservation	Philip Veerman	1345442-	896581 (W)
Exhibitions	Volunteer Required		
Newsletter	Joan Lipscombe	73394 (H)	
Publications	Tony Lawson	88943 (H)	643125 (W)
Member	Graham Barwell	54086 (H)	
Member	Jack Holland	88784 (H)	467401 (W)
Member	Peter Roberts	88458 (H)	

****

CONTENTS *PAGE*