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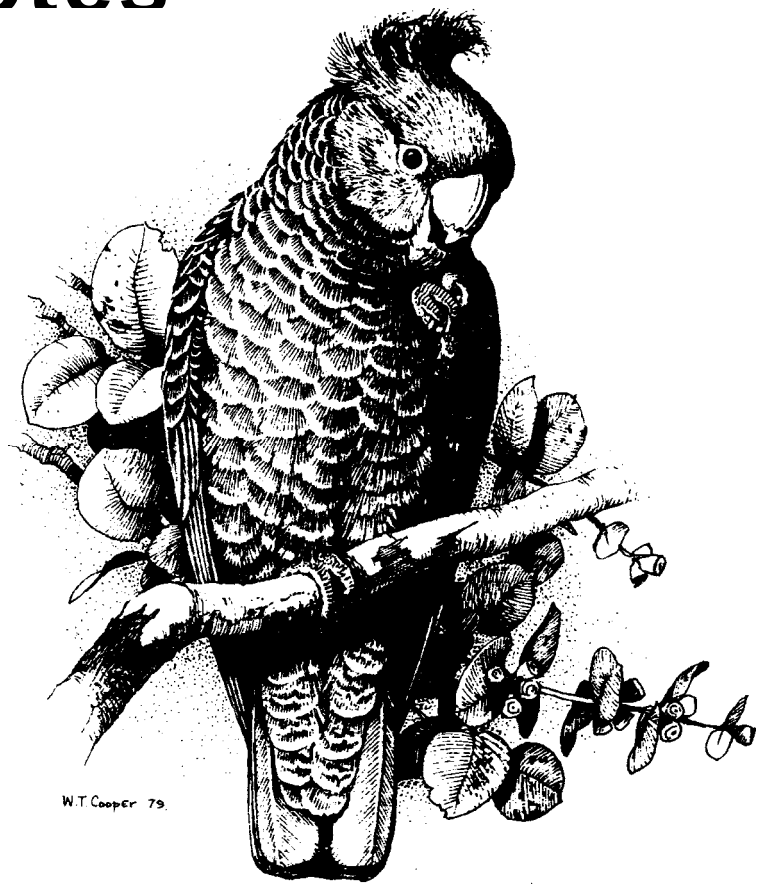

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ADVERTISING OF TERRITORY BY LITTLE EAGLES VERY LATE INTO THE DAY

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On the afternoon of 14 September 2004 1 went to the lower south-western slopes of Mt Majura at a point where the power lines cross the track from the Mackenzie / Grayson St car park (Watson) to the dams in the valley south of Mt Majura. I wanted to observe which birds, such as Australian King-Parrots *Alisterus scapularis*, Crimson Rosellas *Platycercus elegans* and Pied Currawongs *Strepera graculina*, were still flying along the southern flanks of Mt Majura in a general north-easterly direction towards roosts. I arrived at 16:35 h (sunset 17:54 h; cloud cover 80-90%),

My vantage point allowed a full view over the rise immediately to the east of the power lines (and south of Mt Majura) and to the south over the western parts of the range with Mt Ainslie at the southern end. Around 16:45 h, rather late in the day by my reckoning, **I** noticed a pair of Little Eagles *Hieraeetus morphnoides* high in the air near Mt Ainslie (hereafter referred to as the Mt Ainslie pair) and closer to me, a second pair (hereafter referred to as the Mt Majura pair). Both pairs were soaring, helped by a north-westerly wind at 20 km/h. A little while later only the male of the Mt Majura pair was visible. It glided towards the Mt Ainslie pair, but turned back as they approached. The successful chase was followed by the Mt Ainslie pair going through a few aerial displays and calling.

The Majura male was sighted a few more times appearing and disappearing over the rise until 17:57 h, when it landed in trees near the top of the rise and called for the last time. The Ainslie male stayed in the air, mostly soaring, interrupted by short displays with the smaller male positioned just above the larger female. I had to leave at 18:10 **h.** The pair was still in the air although visibility was by now quite poor.

A check of the HANZAB chapter on the Little Eagle (Marchant and Higgins 1993) revealed that Little Eagles, notably the male, spend a considerable amount of time in the air to advertise their territory. Apart from soaring, birds use undulating display, conspicuous perching, and calling as further means of marking their territory towards conspecifics. Debus (1983) recorded at his Armidale study site earliest and latest soaring times 90 minutes after sunrise and 60 minutes before sunset. In the evening birds turn in to roost at or after sunset (Marchant and Higgins 1993).

The local birds were clearly active in the air for a longer time than their Armidale cousins. I went back the next afternoon to check whether they, in fact, may be aerial longer than the 16 minutes after sunset I had recorded the previous evening.

Observations on 15 September started 17:30 h (sunset 17:55 h). Weather

conditions were fairly similar to the previous day: westerly winds at 15 km/h, cloud cover more variable from 50 to 80% with clouds closing in towards the evening. On arrival the Majura male was in the air, flying low, Two Australian Ravens *Corvus coronoides* pursued it. In the end it disappeared among trees; it probably landed in a tree and stayed there for a while. At 17:47 h it was again air-borne and headed towards the rise only to be followed briefly by two Australian Magpies *Gymnorhina tibicen.*

Between 17:58 h and 18:05 h the Majura male showed up twice, gliding from the rise some distance towards Mt Ainslie and returning. On all occasions the bird ventured towards Mt Ainslie: it penetrated the area deeper than on the previous evening where its movements were curtailed by the Ainslie pair. At 18:10 h the Majura male moved again towards Mt Ainslie and circled over the `saddle' north to north-west of Mt. Ainslie. At 18:12 h, a second bird showed up over the same area. I assumed it to be the Ainslie male. Both birds were briefly flying close to each other, but mostly kept some distance apart. The Ainslie male stayed closer to the saddle, the Majura male more to the west over the lower slopes. At 18:13 h the Majura male came back to the rise, then returned to the 'saddle' where the other male was still soaring. From 18:14 h to 18:16 h both birds were soaring over the range but kept some distance from each other. By 18:18 h the Majura male glided back, called briefly and disappeared among trees near the top of the rise. This was the last sign of this bird for the evening. The Ainslie male also called briefly at about the same time. I was able to follow its flight until 18:21 h, though with some difficulty in fading light against a dark band of clouds. It descended towards the `saddle' area and I assumed it was `calling it a day' too, and went to roost.

These observations indicate that Little Eagles can extend territory advertising activities well past sunset (by up to 23-26 minutes), and overall soaring activity towards the evening by about one hour and twenty minutes, over that which has been noted previously (Debus 1983). One of the reasons that this behaviour could be recorded was that the spot from where I observed the birds gave a sweeping view over significant portions of the Little Eagles' territories. From my casual observations it is not possible to say whether this high level of activity is the rule for the Little Eagles from Mt, Majura and Mt, Ainslie or whether it may have been associated with the early part of the breeding cycle, such as producing a clutch, when territory advertising and defence may be more intense. Egg laying in our area, as indicated by observations from Mt, Mugga in the ACT (Mallinson et al, 1990) occurs in the first half of September.

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SPOTTED TURTLE-DOVES' BREEDING ATTEMPT IN DUFFY IN 1995

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Spotted Turtle-Doves *Streptopelia chinensis* are present in low numbers in Canberra, but appear to be on the increase. Records in the COG databases indicate isolated occurrences from locations throughout Canberra's suburbs, but with several locations reporting these birds on a more regular basis (see COG 2001, COG 2002, COG 2003). Spotted Turtle-Doves are also recorded relatively frequently from Queanbeyan, NSW, where breeding has been reported (see COG 2003). Sightings of immature birds (at Kellys Swamp and Watson) are also indicative of local breeding. To date however, there has been no published record of a breeding attempt within the ACT. This short note reports retrospectively on a breeding attempt by Spotted Turtle-Doves in Duffy in 1995, at a time when reports of this species were still scarce.

I was first made aware of the doves' presence on Saturday 23 September 1995 by friends who lived in Eildon Place, Duffy, who sought my advice on the identity of a pair of birds that was nesting in a small wattle near their front door. The garden was very much a `native garden' within which the house nestled. Their description of the birds was unambiguous, and I went around immediately to see them (I had not previously seen the species in the ACT). Initially I only saw one bird - it was sitting on the nest - but later I saw a second bird in another part of the yard. Unmistakably, two Spotted Turtle-Doves. The nest was a scant platform of small twigs, balanced in a fork of the spindly acacia, about 2.2 m above the ground. When the sitting bird left the nest, disturbed by our close attention, two eggs where plainly visible through the base of the nest when observed from below.

Pleased with my observation, but concerned about the presence of yet another potentially invasive feral species in Canberra, I reported the birds to the then COG telephone Hotline, managed by Ian Fraser. His reaction was one of dismay and horror, with an emphatic suggestion that I should do whatever possible to ensure that the breeding attempt was unsuccessful. After consulting several references on Spotted Turtle-Doves in Australia, and re-evaluating my feelings about this attractive species against its potential threat, I relayed my observations, and Ian's and my concerns, to the national Birding-aus email discussion group (26 Sep 1995). I received several responses, all of which were just as emphatic as Ian's had been. 'Do everything in your power to stop them breeding'; 'nip it in the bud'; `terminate'!

So that evening, I dropped around to Eildon Place again and spent some time explaining to Alan and Marg that this was an exotic and invasive feral species that can have a detrimental impact on other native species, and that a quarantine approach to these birds was

appropriate, They had become quite attached to the doves, but eventually they conceded.

We left the adult birds alone, but the two eggs were removed and boiled before being returned to the nest. Had the eggs simply been removed the hen would probably have relayed. By replacing the boiled eggs **I** was hoping the birds would continue to incubate as normal but that the eggs would simply never hatch,

The next day, Alan and Marg and their two kids went away for two weeks on school holidays. I am unsure exactly what became of the nest and eggs, but I believe the two adult birds were still in the area, though showing no interest in the nest, about a month later.

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LEWIN'S RAIL IN COMMONWEALTH PARK

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Throughout August 2004, Canberra birdwatchers were treated to excellent views of a Lewin's Rail *Rallus pectoralis* which took up temporary residence adjacent to Nerang Pool in Commonwealth Park, in the middle of Canberra. This rarely seen species is a notorious `skulker' but this individual was frequently seen pottering about in the open, feeding on a patch of sodden lawn just a few metres from a busy pedestrian walkway.

I was first alerted to the existence of this bird by Peter Miller and Barbara Inglis (Peter's mother-in-law with whom I work) who had watched it for about 15 minutes around midday on 2 August 2004. By the time Peter had checked his field guides, confirmed the bird's ID, and informed me, it was 26 hours later. Nevertheless, I rushed to the site immediately and found the bird in the exact location as described by Barbara, calmly foraging along a muddy strip of lawn where it abutted some dense shrubs. A few other COG members soon joined me for about a minute's rail viewing and photography.

Word got about, and the rail was seen at least daily over the following two weeks as local birdwatchers took the opportunity to see, and see again, this rare species. After the first two weeks, visits, or at least reported sightings of the rail, became more intermittent, but it was seen again at least on 18 and 21 August, with the final reported sighting being on 2 September, a full month after the first sighting. A synopsis of sightings is provided in Table 1 below. At least 25 birdwatchers saw the rail, though nobody seems to have heard it call.

Table 1. Reported sightings of the Lewin's Rail at Nerang Pool

Mon 2 Aug	midday/15 min
Tue 3 Aug	15:14 h/30 sec
	16:30 h/60 sec
Wed 4 Aug	10:30 h/glimpse
	14:30 h/3 sec
	16:00 h/3 min
	16:15 h/5 min
	16:25 h/10 sec
Thu 5 Aug	10:50 h/30 sec
	12:00 h/glimpse
	17:00 h/brief view
	17:15 h/2-3 min
Sat 7 Aug	17:20-17:40 h/20 min
Sun 8 Aug	11:50 h/10 min
	16:30 h/3x 1-2 min
	17:00-17:30 h/30+ min
Mon 9 Aug	17:15W?
Tue 10 Aug	17:00 h/3 min,
	17:35-17:45 h/10 min
Wed 11 Aug	15:15 h/30 sec
Thu 12 Aug	16:30 h/?
	17:00-17:30 h/30 min
Fri 13 Aug	(not seen 7:15-7:30 h)
	16:20 h/5 min
Sat 14 Aug	17:20 h/10 sec
Sun 15 Aug	17:20 h/2 min
Mon 16 Aug	12:00 h/3 min
Wed 18 Aug	17:35 h/5 min
Sat 21 Aug	17:15 hi?
Thu 2 Sep	16:40 h/30 sec

Note: Observations, indicating time of day and approximate duration of observation when the rail was visible, are extracted from postings to the COG email list.

From these reported observations, it is clear that the rail was most commonly seen in the late afternoon and evening, often in fading light. Although this might be due in part to that also being the time when working people had the opportunity to visit the site, the feeling among observers was that evening was preferred by the rail for foraging. Nevertheless, the rail was also frequently seen at other times of day, the earliest being 10:30 h (however it seems that there were few attempts to see the rail in the early morning). These observations fit well with the 'crepuscular, sometimes diurnal' foraging behaviour described in HANZAB (Marchant and Higgins 1993: p. 531). It is also notable that when seen foraging during the day, weather conditions were often overcast, cold and windy.

Though the rail was often seen only fleetingly as it dashed across a path separating two adjacent dense shrubbery beds it used for shelter, the vast majority of more extended observations were of the bird foraging on the narrow strip of water-logged lawn adjacent to the eastern-most of these shrubbery beds. Whenever it was disturbed or startled it characteristically darted back into these bushes and was impossible to see unless it chose to re-emerge. At times foraging appeared fairly casual and relaxed, but several observers commented that it was capable of devouring worms extracted from the boggy ground at a tremendous rate. Often these observations were of just a few minutes duration, but there were several reports of the rail foraging in the open for extended periods, Three reports in particular are noteworthy, when the rail was observed foraging on the lawn for 20 to more than 30 minutes. This appears to be something of a record given the statement in HANZAB (Marchant and Higgins 1993: p. 531) that Lewin's Rails 'Leave cover briefly; exceptionally up to 20 min'.

Apart from skulking, dashing between shrubbery beds, and foraging on the worm lawn, the only other behaviour observed was of the rail having a drink from the small stream behind the shrubbery beds at dusk on 18 August.

Although the habitat choice of this particular bird seems somewhat odd, HANZAB (Marchant and Higgins 1993: pp. 529-530) lists an extensive range of habitats used by Lewin's Rails, the main determinants of suitability being the presence of water, dense vegetation nearby and a soft muddy foraging substrate. More relevantly, Lewin's Rails are 'Occasionally recorded away from wetlands in suburbs, parks and gardens'.

Clearly, one of the major factors which made this site particularly suitable was the water-logged strip of lawn at the edge of the shrubbery bed. It seems that this was not due to overly zealous watering by park staff, but to a broken underground water pipe. On 11 August, the site was fairly radically disturbed when a team of workmen, in an attempt to locate the leak, dug a large hole right in the middle of the rail's main foraging area. However, neither this activity, nor the hole or its protective black and yellow barricade, seems to have deterred the rail. Indeed the rail, despite its ratline furtiveness, was surprisingly tolerant of human proximity and activity.

Conversely, the rail appeared to be particularly wary of the Purple

Swamphens *Porphyrio porphyrio* and Dusky Moorhens *Gallinula tenebrosa* that are common in the area and occasionally foraged on the same patch of boggy lawn. Whenever a swamphen or moorhen came too close, within say two to three metres, the Lewin's Rail would dash quickly back into the shrubbery beds.

Lewin's Rails are only rarely recorded in the ACT. The species was first recorded by Jones in 1928 (Wilson 1999). There were records from Hall in March 1955, from Gudgenby River in February 1968, and from Uriarra in February 1972 (COG 1973). More recent records, taken from the relevant Annual Bird Reports, come from Lake Burley Griffin in January 1985, Kambah in May 1986, Gungahlin homestead from October to December 1987, Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve in Jan 1988 (2 adults with 1 dependent young), and Kellys Swamp in February 1991 (up to 3 adults and 2 dependent young), Most recently the species was recorded from Fyshwick sewage works in Dec 2000, a dead bird from Ngunnawal in Feb 2002 and a bird at Rendezvous Creek in August 2002.

Until two years ago, all records of Lewin's Rails had been from the warmer months, leading to the status of the Lewin's Rail in the ACT being described as a 'rare breeding summer visitor' (Wilson 1999). It is interesting that the latest two records are both from August, the only winter records for the ACT. Little is known about the possible seasonal movements of the species and the preponderance of summer records for the ACT may simply reflect the cryptic behaviour of the birds and the seasonal behaviour of the observers. However, given the paucity and irregular nature of the records for the ACT, it seems likely that the species moves about rather nomadically in response to specific locational and weather conditions, Certainly, the worm-rich patch of waterlogged lawn at Nerang Pool appears to be the particular attractant in this case, but for how long will that remain so? Presumably, if the leak is repaired and the lawn dries out there will be every incentive for the rail to move on.

One other rather drastic change to the site that will surely affect the rail's choice to stay or leave was the establishment of infrastructure, including the erection of boundary fences, in preparation for Floriade, Canberra's spring flower festival. This happened over the first two weeks of September and effectively put a stop to any rail viewing, Floriade itself lasts for a month, finishing this year on 17 October. Many, many people will trample through the Lewin's Rail site during the period, and a large and very loud travelling street organ was installed just a few metres away from the rail's prime foraging lawn. It would be something of a miracle if the rail chose to remain.

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SOME GBS NESTING OBSERVATIONS FOR 2003-04

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We had a good breeding season in our Garden Bird Survey (GBS) site in 2003-04, with 14 species nesting, In chronological order they were: Yellow-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa* (two pairs nesting), Striated Pardalote *Pardalotus striatus* (a double-nesting), Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen* (three breeding events by two pairs), Galah *Cacatua roseicapilla,* Magpie-lark *Grallina cyanoleuca* (a double-nesting), Eastern Rosella *Platycercus eximius,* Crimson Rosella *Platycercus elegans,* Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguineae,* Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* (several breeding events), Weebill *Smicrornis brevirostris,* Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera caruncuata,* Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys,* Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis,* Noisy Friarbird *Philemon corniculatus* (two pairs nesting), and Grey Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa.* The nesting activities observed and their

Week start date	17/7	24/7	31/7	7/8	14/8	21/8	28/8	4/9	11/9	18/9	25/9	2/10	9/10	16/10	23/10	30/10	6/11	13/11	20/11	27/11	4/12	11/12	18/12	25/12	1/1	8/1	15/1	22/1	29/1
GBS week	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	1	2	3	4	5
Y-rump Thornbill A	b nb						nb cf ny ny dy																						
Y-rump Thornbi'' B											cf		dy																
Str Parda'ote 1						ih			h	h on							ny		dy dy										
Str Parda'ote 2																									ny ny				
Aust Magpie A				nb nb nb nb on on on ny ny																									
Aust Magpie B								on on on ny ny																					
Aust Magpie 2												nb nb on on ny ny																	
Galah									on on on			ih							iy dy						dy				
Magpie-lark 1								nb nb on on on ny ny ny dy dy											dy										
Magpie-'ark 2																				on ny ny				dy dy dy					
Eastern Rosella								M on on on on on on																					
Crimson Rosella								ih ih				ih		on on on															
Kookaburra								ih h		ih		ih		hon on on					ny ny ny ny					dy dy				
Common Mynas									of cf dy ny ny				ny		nb ih				nb nb on						dy				
Weebill									nb nb on																				

Our yard backs onto a 'reserve' on the north-east edge of Watson. The back portion of the GBS site includes six old Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* (two of which each have half a dozen hollows in them), lots of grassed area, and a couple of rows of planted natives and exotics (eucalypts, acacias, *Prunus*, oaks and pine trees). Most of the nesting records were recorded from this rear area, but some are from the front street trees. The following comments for several species expand on the nesting chronologies provided in the table above.

Yellow-rumped Thornbill

This was the earliest nesting species, pair A beginning nest-building in late July, the nest being built in the same acacia bush in which Yellow-rumped Thornbills nested the previous year. Young were being fed in the nest in mid-September when we noticed a second active nest, some 60-70 m away, We were surprised not only to see the second nest in a pine tree, when there were so many apparently suitable natives about, but also that it was located right up near the top of the tree, about 15-20 m high. We think their young fledged successfully too, as there were many yellow-rumps with young flying around.

Australian Magpie

There were two pairs of magpies nesting within our GBS site, both nests/nestlings at about the same stage of development, and only about 20 m apart. There didn't ever seem to be any conflict between the two family groups even though their territories, and nests, were so close. After about two weeks of the young being fed in the nest, we noticed a third nest being constructed a further 20 m away. A day or two later we noticed that the first two nests were unattended. Our conclusion was that both nests must have failed, almost simultaneously, and that the third nest was started immediately by one of the pairs of adults. This third nest also produced nestlings, but we didn't ever get to see if they fledged — it was too difficult to tell which were the young of successful nests just outside our GBS boundaries and which were 'ours'.

Laughing Kookaburra

For three weeks in November we had been observing two birds taking food back into the nest hole, gradually getting more frequent and frantic as time passed. However, on 11 December we noticed there were three adults gathering and carrying food back to the nest. We were surprised that three adults would be involved with feeding the young and also wondered why we had never noticed the third bird in the previous ten months (i.e. since the previous summer when there was a dependent young with the adults). The kookaburras were the most shy of all the nesting species and would not go near the nest hole if anybody was within 50 m. This shyness diminished, however, with the increasing need to feed the young more often as they developed.

Willie Wagtail

We first noticed the nest in the week beginning 20 November when there were already young chicks in it. Around 27 November, we saw two grey fluffy chicks sitting huddled together on a nearby branch, like woodswallows do,

and we estimated they had been out of the nest for only a day or so. However, the adults were sharing their time between tending these young and returning to the nest and continuing to sit on it. We thought there must be another nestling which was a bit less mature and still needed warming. For the following two weeks we only ever observed one dependent young at a time, and it was being attended to by both adults, but one of the adults would frequently return to the nest to sit. On 11 December we eventually noticed two dependent young again, and both adults. One of the adults was continuing to sit on the nest, leaving it for much shorter periods than previously. By 27 January, two more large nestlings were evident in the nest, We now think the adult birds started sitting for a second clutch within a day or so of fledging the first chicks, and that they continued to raise the chicks of the first brood throughout the whole nesting period of the second brood.

Common Myna

We could not get excited about putting any effort into monitoring the various breeding efforts by this species. Suffice to say, they seemed to be in breeding mode continuously! For months a pair was seen flying in and out of one of the hollows ─ they were probably having one batch after another. Mynas were also nesting in another two trees on the other side of our GBS site (as well as half a dozen other trees within sight of our GBS site). So, they are far to prolific for our liking!

Despite these myna nest hollows being only 1-3 m away from the nest hollows used by the Galahs and Crimson Rosellas, we believe all three species successfully reared their young.

REPORTING OF BREEDING ACTIVITY IN THE GARDEN BIRD SURVEY

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Introduction

The principle objective of this paper is to comment on the usefulness of the Garden Bird Survey (GBS), organised through the Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG), in providing a complete picture of birds' breeding activity. After some general comments the paper focuses on an analysis of the Galah *Cacatua roseicapilla* and Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen* to illustrate the strengths and weakness of the GBS for this purpose.

Background

Many authorities concerned with the distribution of birds regard breeding as a more important measure than occurrence, However, it appears to be much more difficult to record breeding than occurrence as shown by these examples:

- the Atlas of Australian Birds (Blakers et al. 1984) states that of the 365 species recorded in the Brisbane square only 137 were recorded as breeding;
- the New Atlas of Australian Birds (Barrett et al. 2003) notes that despite it being a better set of seasons than for the original Atlas the proportion of records with breeding indicated declined from 4.5% to 2.1%;
- the Annual Bird Report (ABR) for 2002-03 (COG 2003) notes that 227 species were recorded in the COG area of interest in that year but only 89 species were recorded as breeding.

Obviously some of the species which occur in an area will be migrants which breed elsewhere. However, in many cases the difficulty of recording local breeding is increased by using a 'tight' definition which achieves greater certainty about the breeding event but requires a greater input of time and/or skill to apply. This is suggested as a partial explanation for the decline in the proportion of breeding records between the Atlases, where the definition was stated to have been tightened for the New Atlas (although the nature of the tightening appears fairly minimal). The impact of a tight definition will be greatest where it is applied during the field observation phase since it isn't possible to subsequently examine information about the excluded activities. By way of example:

- The GBS currently includes the following ten activities as evidence of breeding: display, copulation, inspecting hollow; nest building, on/leaving nest; nest with eggs, nest with young, carrying food, faecal sac, dependent young.
- Of these activities only two are fully counted as breeding indicators by the Atlas: nest with eggs, nest with young. Another two are included with qualification: carrying food

(qualified as 'repeatedly, to a nest or nest hollow') and dependent young (qualified by proximity to a nest),

The impact of these differences will be described (to some extent) later. However, it is clear that while the GBS Chart can, with some brave assumptions, approximate the Atlas requirements by simply omitting the less specific activities, the converse isn't possible.

Definitions

`Breeding activity' is currently defined as any one or more of the events described on the GBS Chart (and summarised above) as indicating breeding. In the first 12 years of the GBS a much more aggregate set of codes were used with N being 'nest with eggs or young' and F being `dependent fledglings',

`Breeding record' is defined as a line (species) on a GBS Chart for a year in which an indication of breeding activity is included;

`Breeding event' is defined as an observed event in a week which indicates breeding activity as having taken place. In terms of the structure of a GBS Chart this is a square with a breeding activity code shown within it.

`Breeding episode' is a set of one or more, apparently related, breeding events within a breeding record.

It should be noted that these definitions have been applied, pragmatically, to research reported in this paper. The need for more widely applicable terms, and their definition, is expected to be covered in the forthcoming review of the GBS,

Comparison of GBS and General breeding records

In practice, 'General' records (i.e. those recorded on COG Observation Record forms or COG Incidental Record forms) use the same definitions of breeding activities and could thus also give a wider view of breeding than Atlas reports. However, General records are not constrained to such small areas as the GBS, nor based upon the concept of frequent reports for the same area. Thus it is highly likely that only some elements of the history of a specific breeding episode would be recorded (for example if an observer makes monthly visits to a site and records nest with eggs on one visit it is possible that the young may have fledged by the next visit).

It is interesting to compare the breeding records reported through the GBS and General records in the Annual Bird Report for 2002-03 (COG 2003). Table 1 compares the reports of breeding activity for species reported in GBS and General records for that year (It should be noted that records from COG's Woodland Survey and other specific surveys are also included under 'General records' in the ABR for that year - see the Introduction on p, 125 for details). Fifteen species, recorded as breeding in General records but not even recorded as present in GBS sites, are excluded from this Table since the principal focus of this paper is on the species which were recorded in the GBS,

Table 1. Comparison of reported breeding activity in GBS and general records

Breeding recorded in 2002-03	Parrots and Cockatoos	Passerines	Other	Total
Neither GBS nor general	7	28	38	74
Both GBS and general	7	26	6	38
GBS only	0	5	0	5
general only	3	17	13	33
Total	**17**	**76**	**57**	**150**

The five species reported as breeding on GBS charts but not reported as breeding in general records were Eastern Spinebill *Acanthorhyncus tenuirostris,* Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus,* Grey Currawong *Strepera versicolor,* Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis* and Common Blackbird *Turdus merula.* No obvious reason is apparent for this disparity (and in some cases it appears to run counter to the comments in *Birds of the ACT: an atlas* (Taylor and COG 1992)).

Obviously a large number of species do not breed (even to the extent of feeding young) in the environments covered by the GBS.

Breeding data available from the GBS

A major focus of this note is the extent to which the 'history' of a breeding episode is reflected in the GBS data. In theory it is potentially possible to have recorded for a species the full range of breeding activities described above. Thus the dataset could provide a complete history of the breeding episode from display, through copulation and nesting activities, to the young ceasing to be dependent on the parents. This is, however, probably a rather unreasonable expectation in terms of the amount of observer hours needed (and also the possibility that some of these activities may well take place outside the GBS site).

It is currently difficult to deal with the situation where there is more than one breeding activity by a species going on at the same time (e.g. two pairs of White-browed Scrubwrens *Sericornis frontalis* sitting on eggs within the area), or where different episodes are going on at the same time or in sequence (e.g. one pair of scrubwrens sets up a nest while another pair is only at the copulation phase; one nest is predated before the young are fledged and another immediately commenced). Despite these difficulties some notes in the ABR comment on second broods etc: these are either notes submitted by the observer or there is a clear gap between one episode and the next.

However, multiple breeding episodes are seen as a minor problem for the purpose of this exercise. The core question being pursued is to what extent do GBS records provide a history of a breeding episode?

Breeding records in the GBS

In total the GBS database contains 4600 breeding records (8.5% of the 54,165 `presence' records) to the end, of year 21 (while, at the time of finalising this report, the database contains full records for 23 years, the analysis was undertaken when data for only the first 21 years were available). This proportion is much higher than that stated for the Atlas projects.

The breeding records cover 93 species, but only 14 species have more than 100 breeding records (and between them account for 76.4% of the GBS breeding records). A breakdown of the breeding records in the GBS database for these 14 species is shown in Table 2.

While this list has several species in common with those identified as widespread breeders in the first Atlas (e.g. Australian Magpie, Magpie-lark and Galah) other species shown in the table below are not on the Atlas list of widespread breeders. In some cases this reflects the limited range of the species, It is noticeable that most of the species in the table below are those for which breeding activity is easily identified, especially under the wider definition used by COG,

Table 2. GBS Breeding records for commonly reported species

Species	Breeding Records		presence records		% breeding records
	Count	% of total	Count	% of total	
Australian Magpie	544	11.8	1309	2.42	41.6
Pied Currawong	463	10.1	1299	2.40	35.6
Red Wattlebird	369	8.0	1278	2.36	28.9
Magpie-lark	282	6.1	1293	2.39	21.8
Common Starling	274	6.0	1274	2.35	21.5
Common Blackbird	268	5.8	1207	2.23	22.2
Noisy Friarbird	220	4.8	1238	2.29	17.8
Galah	200	4.3	1307	2.41	15.3
House Sparrow	174	3.8	1267	2.34	13.7
Silvereye	173	3.8	1276	2.36	13.6
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	163	3.5	1153	2.13	14.1
Crimson Rosella	147	3.2	1297	2.39	11.3
Common Myna	134	2.9	806	1.49	16.6
Eastern Rosella	107	2.3	1268	2.34	8.4

Breeding events reported in the GBS for Australian Magpie and Galah

The remainder of this paper examines the nature of the breeding records in the GBS for two species, as an initial attempt to understand what impact the wider definition of breeding has on the level of breeding activity reported in the GBS. I have taken Australian Magpie as one species since it was the most commonly reported breeder, and Galah as the other since it was the most commonly reported hollow-nesting species (and a request has been received from a researcher for information on this species). The following table shows a breakdown of the breeding events contained in the GBS Breeding records database for the two species, This shows clearly the significance of the breeding events out of the nest, particularly dependent young, in explaining the higher rate of reporting in the GBS,

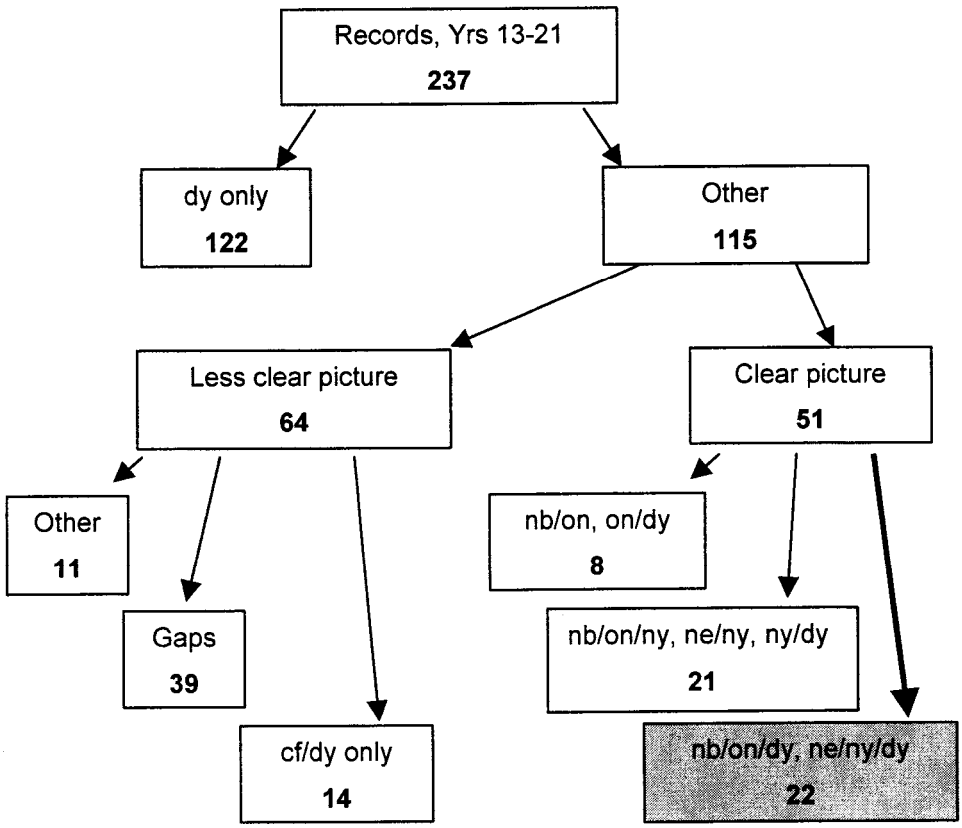
Table 3. GBS Breeding events for Australian Magpie and Galah

Type of event		Number of events		% of events	
		Galah	Magpie	Galah	Magpie
di	display	2	0	0.9	0.0
co	copulation	3	3	1.3	0.1
ih	inspecting hollow	6	0	2.6	0.0
nb	nest-building	9	123	3.9	4.1
Total pre-laying		20	126	8.7	4.2
N	nest with eggs or young	26	434	11.3	14.4
ne	nest with eggs	0	27	0.0	0.9
ny	nest with young	0	102	0.0	3.4
on	on (leaving) nest	4	144	1.7	4.8
cf	carrying food	1	64	0.4	2.1
Total in nest		31	771	13.5	25.6
F	dependent fledglings	70	1056	30.4	35.1
dy	dependent young	109	1054	47.4	35.1
Total after nest		179	2110	77.8	70.2
Grand total		**230**	**3007**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Breeding data for the Australian Magpie

As shown in Table 2 there are 544 breeding records (covering 3007 events) for the Australian Magpie, Of these breeding records 307 (covering 1490 events) are from the first 12 years of the GBS and thus show a more condensed set of codes than those used in later records. **I** have therefore excluded these early records from the following analysis. The objective of this paper is to assess the usefulness of GBS records in showing 'complete breeding activities', By this **I** mean that one or more breeding episodes within the record show a set of events that include the key in-nest activities together with an indication of fledging. To analyse the records for the last nine years of the GBS, a classification of the breeding records was constructed based on the types of breeding events recorded in the breeding record (where more than one breeding episode was indicated, the most complete episode was used), Chart 1 shows this classification diagrammatically.

Chart 1. Longitudinal classification of Australian magpie breeding records



Of necessity, the boundary between `clear' and 'less clear' is blurred; this is particularly so where the record is 'on' since this doesn't indicate what is happening in the nest. The box containing `nb/on' and `on/dy' could be considered the most equivocal but I have decided to regard this as a 'clear' picture,

This classification shows that 51 of the 237 records give a reasonably full picture of what happened in a breeding episode. The bottom right-hand box is highlighted in grey to emphasise that these 22 records provide the most complete picture as they include key nest-related events and evidence of fledging.

Records which show 'dy' only, or `cf/dy' only, provide no explicit evidence that the key nest-related events happened in or near the survey site and it is probable that none of these records (nor the eight in the box `nb/on, on/dy') would have been counted as breeding records in the Atlas, The records classified as 'other' or `gaps' are ones in which the picture is less clear, nevertheless, six of the 'other' records, and 14 of those showing large gaps, included events which would permit the record to be rated as a breeding record for the Atlas.

Thus, there are at least 63 GBS breeding records which would have been included as breeding under the stricter Atlas definition, As there has been a total of 591 GBS records reporting presence of Australian Magpie over the last 9 years, this gives a breeding record rate of 10.7%. Although, due to differing methods, it is very difficult to make the comparison, this compares to a rate of 7.6% (4022 breeding records from 52,944 records) for the same species in the New Atlas (Barrett et al. pp. 791-792),

Using COG's less strict definition of breeding, 237 breeding records from a total of 591 records gives a breeding record rate of 40.1% (cf 41.6% for 21 years' data - see Table 2), though admittedly the Australian Magpie is one of the easiest species for which breeding activity can be recorded.

Summary

The investigation reported above shows that many of the breeding records reported in the GBS only cover events outside the strict definition of breeding used for records reported in the New Atlas of Australian birds. By disaggregating the GBS breeding records it is possible to derive a measure from those breeding records which broadly approximates that from the Atlas. In addition there remains the capacity to use a broader definition if desired in the definition of GBS breeding records.

In a number of cases it is possible to identify a relatively full and continuous history of a breeding episode. While these records comprise a relatively small proportion of the total records in the GBS database, I believe this provides a useful contribution to understanding breeding activity.

In the forthcoming review of the GBS, some thought will be given to ways of making breeding definitions more compatible with those used in the Atlas. This should apply to 'dy' in particular in

view of the high proportion of breeding events with this code,

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ODD OBS

Competitive feeding in large black(ish) birds

For some years we have been feeding Australian Magpies *Gymnorhina tibicen* and Pied Currawongs *Strepera graculina* in our backyard, The diet of choice seems to be generic fritz (Devon sausage for those not from South Australia) which I cut into strips that resemble witchetty grubs.

It is clear that the magpies are the head of the "pecking order" since the currawongs are rarely permitted to enter the yard while the magpies are eating. If a currawong arrives first, and the food is spotted by a magpie, the latter swoops the currawong driving it away until the magpies have gorged themselves.

An interesting sidelight of comparing magpies and currawongs is the difference in their behaviour after collecting the food. The magpies almost without exception take the piece of meat(?) and vigorously wipe it in the dirt before eating near the point of collection. Currawongs never do this, but typically grab as many pieces as they can (four lumps is the current record) and fly away: perhaps escaping before the magpies return.

At least one clan of White-winged Choughs *Cocorax melanorhamphos* are regular visitors to the bird baths and occasionally enter the yard. They don't participate in the sausage eating (obviously intelligent birds) but delight in cleaning up under the parrot feeder. This causes the magpies some distress (even though they do not feed in this area) and swooping flights to drive off the choughs can be launched from 100 m plus away. Smaller birds (including Common Blackbird *Turdus merula* and White-browed Scrubwrens *Sericornis frontalis* or Common Bronzewings *Phaps chalcoptera* which peck around under the feeder do not attract the same reaction from the magpies.

When we first moved into the house (1987) Australian Ravens *Corvus coronoides* also used to investigate the yard. They never managed to get a position in the pecking order and now don't come near the house.

Martin Butterfield
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Odd Pallid Cuckoo behaviour

It's interesting to see familiar birds doing unfamiliar things. On Sunday 19 September 2004, I saw a pair of Pallid Cuckoos *Cuculus pallidus* in what I can only assume was a mating flight. One was chasing the other around Campbell Park, between the offices and the horse gate.
The chaser called repeatedly, giving the commonly-heard ascending notes, The chasee gave many harsh whistles. Around and around the park they flew, just above the tree canopies. Occasionally they would perch for a few minutes and then commence flying again, This performance lasted for about half an hour. They were still going when I departed Campbell Park,

When I went back next morning at about 9:00 h, the male was perched atop a dead

branch and was calling, There was no sign of the female. Perhaps they were waiting for a Regent Honeyeater?

Geoff Duggan

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Confirmation of the start of the Silver Gull breeding season on moored boats on Lake Burley Griffin

In my recent paper (Holland 2004) on the 2003-04 Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae* breeding season on Lake Burley Griffin, I estimated that breeding activity started in mid-July, based on the observation of the first small chicks on 1 September.

This has now been confirmed, After checking regularly throughout the April to July period, I observed the first bird on a nest on a boat moored in Lotus Bay on 24 July 2004, with another nest being built on a nearby boat. In that period there was no breeding activity on boats moored in other bays, but during the COG waterbirds for beginners outing on 8 August 2004 several nests were being built, one in a quite advanced state, on two boats moored in Yarralumla Bay, and another nest had been started on another boat in Orana Bay. A bird was also seen carrying nesting material between these bays. When I checked later that morning at Lotus Bay, there was breeding activity on four boats with up to six nests being built, and with a bird on a nest on one boat,

As I no longer live in the area, I have not been able to keep a regular check on progress as I did last season. However, on 10 October 2004 there were four birds on nests spread over three boats in Lotus Bay, a total of five nests on two boats in Yarralumla Bay, and nesting material on a single boat moored in Orana Bay. No chicks were seen, While this indicates continued breeding, numbers were well down on the over 20 nests and five chicks seen at the same time last year (Holland 2004). Perhaps this reflects a more determined effort by authorities to keep boats clean this season.

Reference

Holland J (2004). Silver Gulls breeding on moored boats on Lake Burley Griffin. *Canberra Bird Notes* 29(1): 9 15.

Jack Holland

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White-plumed Honeyeaters engage in combat

On a sunny morning in August 1996, I was walking along a cycle path near Diddams Close at Lake Ginninderra when I saw what I took to be a single bird fall from a gum tree *Eucalyptus sp* and strike the path 15 metres away, I brought the binoculars to bear and saw two White-plumed Honeyeaters *Lichenostomus penicillatus.*

Each bird lay on its side facing the other. Their bills were almost touching and their feet were entwined. They lay still for a few seconds then, with feet still locked together, began to roll over and over like wrestlers trying to gain the advantage. They completed about five rolls, became still for a couple of seconds and recommenced rolling.

A third series of rolls followed but, when this ceased, one bird reached forward over its opponent's head and began to jab its bill into the nape, The jabs were delivered with a concerted up-and-down action similar to a sewing machine needle, The jabbing attack was followed by another sequence of rolls, a couple of seconds rest, then more rolls. As soon as these ceased a further jabbing assault was launched which appeared more furious than previously. The bird receiving the punishment appeared the weaker and didn't retaliate. Under the rain of blows it drew its head down between the shoulders and closed its eyes.

I watched another series of rolls and wondered how much longer the altercation would continue, Suddenly, the birds stopped rolling, sprang apart and flew away, But the spat seemed to continue as the dominant bird appeared to be in hot pursuit of its opponent. The pair sped through the canopy of a eucalypt and disappeared into another. I investigated but was unable to find them again. Considering the relatively small size of White-plumed Honeyeaters this would be one of the fiercest encounters I've seen between birds.

John K Layton

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Large flocks of White-winged Choughs in western Yarralumla

At 15:20 h on the afternoon of 12 June 2004 **I** observed at least 40 White-winged Choughs *Corcorax melanorhampos* feeding together in a loose flock at the bottom of Lane-Poole Place, Yarralumla. This was a very conservative estimate as they were difficult to count, being stretched out over about 50 metres. They were also very wary and parts of the group kept flying up into the trees and then dropping back to the ground one by one. I suspect there were actually close to 50 birds.

Surprisingly, there was no obvious animosity or bickering between them, though I had heard very loud chough calls nearby a couple of hours earlier, as well as hearing the local magpies harassing them.

Another surprise was that there was no trace of them 30 minutes later. In fact I didn't see or hear them in the area until I heard choughs at the same spot again at 8:50 h on the morning of 14 June, when investigation confirmed there were at least 50 birds. They were easier to count as they moved through the bare trees, and there seemed to be two groups coming from opposite directions. Immediately after another seven were seen feeding in my GBS site about 150 m away, in the opposite direction to which the big group had gone. **I** only observed choughs here after this on a couple of occasions until the end of June,

While they were reasonably common in the area, I was surprised by the size of the two groups, particularly as numbers had been much lower recently compared with the warmer post-Christmas months. These certainly were by far the biggest numbers I've seen together in this area, or anywhere as far as I can recall.

Nadeena Beck (personal communication) confirmed that this species can form large flocks in winter. She explained that if you watch closely it is usually possible to identify discrete groups, as by this stage the fledglings are pretty certain of which group they are in, but other groups have also lost interest in stealing them.

The White-winged Chough is one species that I haven't seen locally since my return to Chapman over three months ago. Before the fires they were occasionally seen in the suburbs, but were common in the former Narrabundah Hill pine forest, They appear to be one of the lesser-recognised casualties of the fires, and it is tempting to link the two observations, i.e, that the flocks in Yarralumla, not that far way as the chough flies, included displaced birds from the Stromlo area.

Jack Holland

8 Chauvel Circle, Chapman, ACT 2611

Migrants or relocators, but not settlers: Bell Miners in Tinderry

Five years ago on 3 May 1999, **I** reported a group of 15 Bell Miners *Manorina melanophrys* on the Queanbeyan River in the Tinderry area (Rarities Panel Endorsed List 47, March 2000, in CBN 25, p. 47). They left soon afterwards,

This year in April I found another group in the same general area. They were not in the previous tall *Eucalyptus viminalis* on the river, but about 1 km west, and uphill around 880 m, and feeding in tall Apple Box *E. bridgesiana.* They stayed at least until the middle of winter (July 15), when two of us saw seven, but heard several others,

By early September their place had been taken by incoming spring migrants, Fuscous Honeyeaters *Lichenostomus fuscus,* Yellow-faced Honeyeaters *L. chrysops,* and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters *L. melanops,* some of which overwinter in the same area.

Most field guides describe Bell Miners as sedentary, or usually sedentary. Pizzey says 'sedentary, with relocations; recent expansion'. The Tinderry group, or groups, seem not to fit these categories readily. My upstream neighbour has heard them sporadically over the years. So maybe they are itinerant relocators, or sporadic migrants?

Muriel Brookfield

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Bird Collectors, by Barbara and Richard Mearns. Academic Press, London, 1998. *A belated book review, by Stentoreus*

When Stentoreus had completed his column for this issue of CBN, the editors said there was room for a further contribution. I therefore offer some comments on a book I mention in my column: *The Bird Collectors* by Barbara and Richard Mearns. It followed their *Biographies for Birdwatchers* (1988) and *Audubon to Xantus (1992),*

All three books are for the bedside or the long air journey; they provide great slabs of information about the history of ornithology. It would be easy for me to go on here for pages, selecting from these smorgasbords of biographical finger-food. There is a lot of interesting stuff that has no or very little direct connection with birds. If I may permit myself one example, from *Biographies,* it will be about Lady Amherst (1762-1838) and her Jane-Austen-like milieu. She got the decorative pheasant named for her.

To compress the tale somewhat, after Sarah's first husband died (the Earl of Plymouth) she married the well-connected Lord Amherst, who later became Governor-General of India. While the Amhersts were in India doing things like trekking to the Himalayan foothills to establish a vice-regal summer residence at Simla, the King of Burma, defeated in a war, presented them with quite a bit of his country and two of the famous pheasants. The latter were eventually taken back to England with their tails cut off for easier transportation, but died a few weeks after arrival. Benjamin Leadbeater, the natural history dealer, named the species for Lady Amherst. Curiously, Lord Amherst, who had married one Countess Dowager of Plymouth, after Sarah died married another one, the widow of Sarah's first son, who had himself become Earl of Plymouth before passing on.

Still under 'A', in the next of the alphabetically arranged entries, we do not, unfortunately, quite penetrate the mystery why Linnaeus chose the Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* to commemorate Aristotle. But enough of that.

Turning to *Collectors, I* will give an idea of the main historical thread, which is about the reasons for, and the uses and excesses of, bird collecting generally, and then mention a couple of points where the book touches on Australian collecting.

As to the first, 'informational' collecting can be divided into 'private' and `institutional'. Private collecting was useful, necessary even, for reference purposes (and finding out 'What bird *was* that?') before binoculars (not invented until the early 1900s), and field guides, became available. Even after the better field guides from the 1940s, 'The new notion that an experienced birdwatcher could confidently identify every species he saw, using binoculars and a field guide, was only slowly and grudgingly accepted by the old shotgun school of ornithologists.'

In the nineteenth century, 'compiling bird collections ... became increasingly popular, as though some latent collecting instinct had suddenly been ignited. Improvements in taxidermy, firearms and mobility combined to make the pastime more widely accessible, though it still remained almost entirely restricted to males. Small non-scientific collections sprang up in thousands of homes as everyone, from the wealthy landowner with his brightly polished Purdey 12 bores to the mischievous schoolboy with his home-made catapult, wanted to have a few stuffed birds to admire and discuss.'

To be frank, some had more than a *few* stuffed birds: 'Whereas eighteenth century collections of more than 3000 birds had been the exception, from the 1850s onwards private museums belonging to a single individual began to hold 5000, 10,000, 20,000, 30,000 and even 50, 000 or 60, 000 birds. At least two of them eventually exceeded 100,000 birds.'

It seems that some 'collections' were the result of 'collecting' as a recreation or pastime. The people who did collecting are grouped according to genera: bird artists, government officials, medical profession, 'professionals', 'women in the field' et cetera. The genus 'Army Officers' was 'by far the largest group of recreational collectors'. 'Soldiers had the perfect excuse for bird collecting: shooting was their business and what better way to practise than against live targets where stealth, fieldcraft (and sometimes a certain amount of bravery) were the main prerequisites? .., There were rarely any problems with access since occupying armies usually went where they pleased .... Besides, there was scarcely a thought that the supply of wildlife would ever run out.'

Of course, a lot more birds were killed than were kept. Tor Audubon and his ilk, it was a case of the more corpses the merrier, for he commonly shot far more birds than he needed, killing for the sheer pleasure of it, and once boasted "I call birds few when I shoot less than 100 per day"'. (If Stentoreus remembers correctly, those things were not stressed within his Chapter of the Audubon Society when he was a member.)

Then there were the museums. 'Public galleries were for the education and amusement of the public', while 'behind the scenes was the powerhouse of specimen-based research'. That kind of research needed lots and lots of skins to cover variations for all kinds of reasons,

The book is generously stocked with black-and-white pictures. I wonder if my readers can visualise the photograph that carries the following descriptive text:

> Laying out study skins side by side to identify species or investigate moult, size differences, and geographical variation, is a time-honoured procedure. (Alexander Wetmore of the Smithsonian Institution (at right) and Alan Duvall of the US fish and Wildlife Service examine an oriole that had started to breed in Florida in the 1950s. It was traced back to a subspecies of Spot-breasted Oriole from tropical Central America.

(If you thought the examiners didn't have crisp laundered shirts and neckties, intent expressions, and more than 25 ex-orioles, you'd be wrong.)

After nearly 400 pages of historical survey, during which we travel with Emin Pasha to Equatoria and General Prjevalsky across the Gobi Desert, there is a final chapter on 'The Importance of Old and New Bird Collections'.

Most museums, we are told, ask visitors to their collections to fill in a form stating among other things their objective. Thus we know that the British Museum of Natural History bird collection, in one particular year, had 206 visitors conducting 'research' (which covers the seeking of any kind of information), Frequent or lengthy visits were made by authors of handbooks and identification guides.

Two curators from Mexico worked there for over a week as part of a project to construct a worldwide database of specimens originating from Mexico. (Stentoreus wonders whether there has been an equivalent project for Australian specimens, I suppose there must have been.)

`Identification' and 'education' are obvious uses of collections. Here is a summary of other uses mentioned.

Systematics: including provision of material for genetic analysis.
Life Histories: plumage stages, use of `unbiased samples' to estimate mortality rates and sex ratios.
Conservation: eg whether distinct populations are breeding in reproductive isolation.
Law enforcement: precisely identifying, and if possible determining place of origin of, items used in illegal trade.
Human health and safety: analysis of specimens for presence of persistent chemicals.

I shall only mention the headings that round off the chapter:
Why continue collecting?

Objections to continued collecting (Sub-heading: Is it morally wrong to harm or kill birds? Answer: Well, it depends, but it is increasingly recognised that the value of the research must be weighed against the cost to the animals.)
Practical and legal restrictions

Current methods of adding to collections
The Bulo Burti Boubou (Not a dance craze, but the scientific describing of a new African bush-shrike, by capture and release, without 'collecting' it.)

There is quite a bit in the book about Australia, including, inevitably, the story of the Goulds and John Gilbert. There is a shortish entry on Gregory Mathews in the chapter on 'The Great Accumulators'. Mind you he was only a second-level player in that company. In the table provided of the top 50-odd accumulators, he comes in 14th with his 30,000 birds. This is well ahead of HL White of Belltrees, Scone, who had 8547.

In accounting for what happened to all those bird remains there might be a bit of double counting. Mathews sold his to Walter Rothschild (who heads the accumulator table with 280,000, including, presumably, the Mathews ones). 'Rothschild had a phenomenal memory. He could locate any of his 300,000[?] bird skins without a catalogue and could perfectly describe a skin's condition, or the exact hue of its plumage, without needing to look at it.'

Later on, that would have been a useful ability for Walter to have had, because in 1931 he sold his skin collection to the American Museum of Natural History when under financial pressure from blackmail by a former mistress.

The Australian component of John Gould's collection went to the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, but HL White's went to the Museum of Victoria, Melbourne, Another collection with a large Australian component was that of JC Godeffroy of Hamburg, which was in the Hamburg Naturhistorische Museum in 1943 when most of the specimens were destroyed by bombing.

As to actual feats of collection in Australia, I shall mention only Mrs Pat Hall, because four pages are devoted to her in the 'Women in the Field' chapter. In 1965 she was given the job of leading the third Harold Hall expedition through parts of central Australia. 'Major Hall (no relation) was a wealthy Australian ornithologist who offered the BMNH £25,000 to run a series of expeditions to build up their collection of Australian birds, which was then remarkably poor ...'. (Well, if the Brits were allowed to explode their nuclear devices there, they might as well have been allowed to bag a few birds.)

The Australian authorities needed to be convinced that all the collecting was really necessary. However, Pat Hall was able to point out that 'four collectors at one camp for four days would kill fewer than 200 birds from an area of at least 25 square miles; hardly more damage than one active cat in a year.' (If this has not become known as the 'active-cat test' for determining collection quotas, the English language has lost another opportunity for enrichment.) At the end of six months after covering 8500 miles `only 120 species' were collected (specimen numbers not given). This is said to have indicated the 'barrenness of the terrain', which is, I suppose, a scientific conclusion of a sort. One hopes that a decent amount of active-cat collecting went on at the same time.

At this point, there is yet another photograph. The scene I ask you to visualise this time is captioned: 'Pat Hall and Dom Serventy lighten up after a hard day's field work in Western Australia,' I do not think I can capture in words all the nuances of this picture,

There is an appendix on the largest study skin museums in existence today, Introducing this, the authors lament the absence of comprehensive computerised information on the composition and history of all the world's collections.

The largest collections are indicated in a table, although in the compiling of this `some museums did not reply to our questionnaire and a few large museums could have been overlooked'. (The entry qualification was 20,000 skins, and about 90 institutions had been approached. 69 returned 20,000-plus responses.)

The biggest listed Australian collection is at the Australian Museum with 48,000 skins, followed by the Museum of Victoria with 36,000.

COLUMNISTS' CORNER

Words for birds: remembering Baillon, forgetting King, wondering about Darth Vader

This Spring, frequent sightings of Baillon's Crakes at Kellys Swamp caused Stentoreus to wonder about the tiny crake's connection with someone called Baillon. A small amount of research revealed that Baillon was not an ornithologist of any great fame, but was, like Richard (as in the pipit), a Frenchman who had provided a specimen of *his' particular bird to Louis Vieillot (1748-1831), the well-known bird-namer.

That information was readily available from a wonderful book by Barbara and Richard Mearns, *Biographies for Birdwatchers: The Lives of Those Commemorated in Western Palearctic Bird Names.* I acquired a copy of that volume soon after its publication in 1988, and have since found it a storehouse of all kinds of interesting trivia. Sadly, it is limited to names of birds that at least include some part of the 'Western Palearctic' in their range. Alas, as a result of taxonomic changes, we no longer count the thrush of the Reverend Gilbert White and the pipit of Monsieur Richard of Luneville, as such, among our own birds.

The Mearns team later produced two other great pieces of historical research, a book on eponymous North American bird names (1992) and a comprehensive history of bird collecting (1998). However, there is no equivalent account of the background to names of Australian birds, specifically, that refer to people.

Most birds 'named for a person' have the person's name embedded in the scientific name. However, here I am looking at the far fewer instances where a person is referred to, either instead or as well, in the vernacular (recommended English) name, `Baillon's Crake' is an example. By my count, there are about 40 such names on the Australian list.

That counting excludes geographically-derived names such as 'Lord Howe Woodhen' and 'Eyrean Grasswren'. There are also some fine — perhaps arbitrary - judgments to be made, In my view, 'Regent Bowerbird' qualifies as a person-name but 'Regent Honeyeater' does not. The reason is that, as pointed out in an earlier column in this series, the bowerbird was intended to be named in honour of the then Prince-Regent, the later George IV, but the honeyeater acquired that name merely on account of a perceived similarity in colouring to the bowerbird.

*Gouldian' (Finch) qualifies as a person-name in my view but `Bassian' (Thrush) and `Torresian' (Crow) do not. While the two latter adjectives denote biogeographical regions, the first is a direct recognition of John Gould's wife, Elizabeth Gould.

The 1978 RAOU bird names report gave a lot of attention to eponymous names and listed the 28 such names it saw on the Australian list, Surprisingly, while `Gould's' petrel and bronze-cuckoo are included in the 28, the 'Gouldian Finch'

is not, John Gould would have been taken aback by that interpretation of his `Gouldian Grass-Finch'. He had written:

> It was with the feelings of purest affection that I ventured, in the folio edition, to dedicate this lovely bird to the memory of my late wife, who for many years laboriously assisted me with her pencil, accompanied me to Australia, and cheerfully interested herself in all my pursuits. The dedication of this bird to Mrs Gould's memory will surely then receive the sanction of every scientific ornithologist.

The 1978 conclusions are significant because they led directly to the present Australian 'standard names', They dealt with the contentious matter of the "s'. Earlier, a pedantic view had been followed that prohibited the "s' on the ground that eg `Lewin's Honeyeater' did not 'belong' to Lewin. Thus the RAOU list of 1928 decreed 'Lewin Honeyeater'. Moreover, the Commonwealth Government's uniform 'style' policy had since removed the "s' from all eponymous place names and other names within its jurisdiction.

However the 1978 report raised two contrary considerations of a practical nature. First, omitting the "s' would lead to absurdity in such names as `White's Thrush', and, secondly, confusion would be caused as to whether names like 'Bourke Parrot' and 'Victoria Riflebird' referred to a person or a locality. Sensibly, the 1978 recommendation was to restore the missing "s's.

In that connection, the report raised the issue whether the (non-brown) 'Brown Honeyeater' should be 'Brown's Honeyeater' as there was reason to think that it might have been intended to commemorate Robert Brown who had collected the type-specimen. However, it decided, perhaps a little too quickly, that the evidence to justify granting the "s' was insufficient, and left the name unchanged.

A couple of other commemorative names also got less than due consideration. One is the Princess Parrot. Gould had named this *Polytelis alexandrae* and had given as the English name 'The Princess of Wales' Parrakeet', This was in honour of Princess Alexandra, eldest daughter of King Christian IX of Denmark, who in the same year (1863) had married the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII. In the 1926 list this became 'Princess-Parrot', a rather different shortening technique from the one that made 'Queen Victoria's Riflebird' into 'Victoria Riflebird' and `Prince Albert's Lyrebird' into 'Albert Lyrebird'.

In 1969, the CSIRO list preferred `Alexandra Parrot' of the various names that had been used for the species, and `Alexandra's Parrot' would have followed naturally from the scientific name. Moreover the fact is unaltered that 'Princess Parrot' is a commemorative name in its origin and purpose, although only better-informed members of the name-using public will know it. No doubt some will assume that someone just thought the bird was as pretty as a princess.

Another issue concerns Philip Gidley King who from 1800 to 1806 served as the third Governor of the colony of New South Wales. As JD Macdonald notes in his little dictionary *Australian Birds by Common Name,* the King Parrot was named for Governor King and was originally 'King's Parrot'. The name in that form was recorded separately by Lieutenant Grant and George Caley.

The opportunity to restore the was not taken in 1978 and King was not listed in the 28 identified eponyms. Instead, King's name is now submerged in the unattractive contrived label `Australian King-Parrot. The trouble with that outcome is not only that this eponymous name does not follow the form used for the others, but that there is likely to be confusion as to what the adjective 'King' denotes.

Many will assume that by reason of appearance or behaviour the bird was seen to have some 'king-like' quality, as in 'King Penguin'. (JD Macdonald attributes the adjective there to the penguin's 'regal size, only surpassed by the emperor penguin'.) Ironically, the parrot's current generic name, *Alisterus,* is an example of self-indulgent name-choosing by Gregory Mathews, Alister being at the time his four-year-old son. (His other generic proposals included `Alisteranus' finches and 'Alisterornis' whistlers.)

What, then, of 'King Quail' for *Coturnix chinensis?* There are two mysteries about that label: first, what does the `King' refer to, and, secondly, why has the name been allowed to persist?

JD Macdonald says that that name was first given in Alfred North's work (1901-1914), but Robert Hall used it in *Insectivorous Birds of Victoria* (1900) and see the reference below to Wheelwright. Gould had used 'Least Swamp-Quail' and gave no other vernacular name for it.

Penny Olsen's *Feather and Brush* presents a pencil drawing from the Mitchell Library of the bird by William Bligh, possibly dated to 1792, inscribed la] Quail of Port Jackson'. On the original another hand has written 'King Quail — Male'. The document suggests that the quail was a locally-known bird in the Sydney colony by the time of Governor King, but no conclusion about its naming can be drawn from the later notation without any dating of it.

One possibility, but only one, is that the quail was called 'King' for Governor King or some other person named King. Another possibility is that it was regarded as strikingly (kingishly?) handsome compared to other quail. Horatio Wheelwright wrote (1861) of his impressions of it when he was a commercial shooter in Victoria in the 1850s:

> Last and least on our list is the little *Chinese* or *King Quail,* which although small in size, for beauty of plumage stands unrivalled among the game birds of Australia. Scarcely so large as the common sparrow, a perfect partridge in miniature, I think we may reckon it as the smallest game bird in the world.

The 1978 review did not question, or even discuss, the name 'King Quail'. This is surprising because the species in

the wild ranges from India through southern China to south-eastern Australia and is known as 'King Quail' only to Australians. A review that under the banner of international uniformity introduced such novelties as 'Masked Lapwing' might at least have considered whether it was appropriate to retain the Australianism 'King Quail', whatever the original reason for the name.

In recent international references, the species has been called 'Blue-breasted Quail' (Monroe & Sibley 1993), 'Indian Blue Quail' (Howard & Moore 1991), and 'Asian Blue Quail' (World Handbook vol 2 1994).

It gets worse. The species thrives in captivity and is a popular aviary species. Indeed, it has been suggested that some King Quail in southern Australia might be the result of introductions of foreign subspecies.

An internet search for 'King Quail' shows that many avicultural quail-fanciers are not too fussed about taxonomic niceties. One Australian website seeks to dispel some of the confusion, thus:

`In Australia these cute little birds are called "King Quail" (also known as Button Quail and Chinese Painted Quail),'

`Just to avoid any confusion — I have found that in the USA and England, King Quail and Chinese Painted Quail are all grouped "generally" as Button Quail, "Buttonquail" are not the same breed as King Quail or Chinese Painted Quail, they are from the genus Turnix.' *Well, OK, and the solution ...?*

`For the purposes of this site, I will be referring to King Quail as "Button Quail" or "Buttons",'

It appears that Buttons mutate readily. For those really interested in names, another website, in Louisiana USA, sets out the 'recognised mutations', of which there are eight including 'Pink eyed Dilute (not well established at this time)'. Then there are 'Recognized legitimate names for combinations of the above varieties'. These include 'Smoky — A combination of Silver, Cinnamon and Blue Face' and 'Splash — A selection from within White for increased spots (this is not a pied)'. On top of this there are 'Illegitimate and/or unrecognized names', From that list I shall mention only `Darth Vader — A selection of Red Breasted in which the male has an entirely black face; the breast may be all red or partially blue',

If any more Buttons are going to be introduced here, my choice would be the Darth Vader. By the way, 'rare True Button Quails' are available from the same supplier.

A. stentoreus

Birding in cyberspace, Canberra-style

In one of the first columns in this series I mentioned the **Ornithological Worldwide Literature *(OWL)*** web site http://egizoosrv.zoo.ox,ac.uk/OWL. The resource has been further developed, with improved functionality. The managers of the site describe it in the following terms:

> *OWL* is a compilation of citations and abstracts from the worldwide scientific

> literature that pertain to the science of ornithology. A major attraction is its coverage of the 'grey' literature, which are not abstracted by commercial databases such as Zoological Record or the Science Citation Index...
>
> *OWL* was previously known as the Recent Ornithological Literature (ROL) or as Recent Ornithological Literature Online (BOLO). The scope of OWL will be more than just the "recent" literature of ornithology. Eventually, the online database wil1 go back 50 or more years to acquire citations to the serial literature. OWL will proceed well into this century with a database of the current worldwide literature that would be of interest to ornithologists.
>
> OWL is a joint effort between the American Ornithologists' Union and the British Ornithologists' Union and Birds Australia. The database is hosted by the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, based in the Zoology Department of Oxford University, UK

It can be searched by topic, author, year of publication, journal and/or keyword, and currently contains over 44,800 entries. I ran a search on the journal name *Canberra Bird Notes*, It returned 30 hits, two of which were to an article that your columnist authored. (A damned fine data base, I reckon!) Unfortunately, all the contributions listed were limited to items published in the 1991-1996 period. It turns out that one of our esteemed *Canberra Bird Notes* editors, Harvey Perkins, is in fact the volunteer OWL abstractor for CBN (as well as several other journals from Australia and New Zealand). When he took over the role, the last volume of CBN to be abstracted was Vol. 18 (1993) and Harvey is working at clearing the backlog.

Regular perusers of this column know how much I enjoy sharing insights published on the national birding email discussion list *BirdingAus*. I was intrigued by this report, a few months ago, of **Mistletoebirds doing what they do best,** this time on a barbed-wire fence, Del, Richards from Mossman, Qld, wrote:

> ...south of Narrabri NSW after a wet summer in the late 80's, Mistletoebirds placed a lot of seeds on one particular section of barbed wire fence. Moreover the season was consistently wet enough for the seed to germinate and sprout rootlets and buds. It goes to show how competent this parasitic plant can be despite the odds.

In the same exchange of emails, someone corrected someone else's **spelling,** pointing out that it is 'Sewerage Pipes but Sewage Treatment Plants and Ponds'. COGites who talk and write about the Fyshwick Sewage Treatment Ponds please take note! (By the way: Google® returns 18 hits on `Fyshwick Sewerage' and 51 on 'Fyshwick Sewage', so the majority of us seems to get it right.)

Do you sometimes find the need for an **online dictionary of birding terms?** I do, and I turn to Weaver, P 2002, *Bird on! Bird dictionary*, Jacobi Jayne & Company <http://birdcare.com/birdon/birdindex/birdindex.html>. This is the online version of Weaver's 1981 dictionary, available free of charge to anyone with access to the internet, and that is all of us, thanks to our public library systems, I searched on my favourite topic, 'jizz', and the *Dictionary* provided the following

definition, one that I fully endorse, except for its attribution to Coward:

> The overall impression which a bird gives an observer, enabling an experienced birdwatcher at least to suspect its identity, even if plumage details and other diagnostic features cannot be seen. Jizz consists of a combination of colour, size, shape and movement. The word was invented by the Cheshire ornithologist T. A. Coward.

It provides a hyperlink to 'plumage', defined as:

> The covering of feathers over a bird's body. It may vary with the age of the bird or the season of the year, and accordingly it may be described as breeding plumage, winter plumage, or juvenile, immature or adult plumage. In detailed descriptions of the external feathers (topography) of birds, standardised names are normally used for the various sections of the plumage, for example malar region and tail coverts.

Each of the underlined terms is a hyperlink to another ornithological expression. A fine resource.

What we birders enjoy most is being in the field, bright-eyed, nocs in hands and ears pricked. Our second best thing to do is to read about birds. That is why I so much enjoy the ***Interpretive Birding Bulletin,*** subtitled *A science magazine for birders*. It is one of my favourite sources of birding information. The *IBB* is published bimonthly (in paper form) and has a fine web site http://www.ibirding.com, A prominent feature of the web site is the table of contents of the most recent issue.

As the editor Wm James Davis explains:

> *Interpretive Birding* is an international science magazine for birders (published bimonthly). Each issue contains *mini-reviews* of specific topics such as caching, UV vision in birds, prey dropping and communal roosting. Also included are *In the field* articles that relate firsthand experiences of interpreting behavior, *selected shorts* that summarize new and exciting research on birds, *notable behaviors* that identify special behaviors to include on one's must see list, and *interviews* with noted researchers in the fields of behavioral ecology, animal behavior and ornithology. All articles are written by knowledgeable observers and experts in their specific areas of research. Most articles include informative illustrations, color photographs and references. Current subscribers include bird watchers, naturalists, wildlife rehabilitators, biologists, and zoo curators.

While it is international in scope, the *IBB* has an Australian associate editor, Gail R. Hill, and each issue contains Australian material. Jim Davis has, in the past, conducted interpretive birding workshops for COG members. His web site and journal is bursting with informative material helping us to move beyond mere bird watching to actively thinking about, and interpreting, the bird behaviour that we observe.

Confused about shorebirds? Reckon they all look alike? Finally, a solution is at hand! We are indebted to *BirdingAus* correspondent David Paterson for simplifying the issues for us. Here goes: the David Paterson 'Quick way to identify waders':

> Can anyone help me with a quick way to identify waders?
> My present method needs improvement:

> If it's big then it's a sharp-tailed sandpiper
> If it's small then it's a red-necked stint
> If it's tall and thin then it's either a greenshank or curlew-sandpiper
> If it doesn't look like a wader then it's a plover or dotterel.

This led *BirdingAus* subscribers to recall Pat O'Malley's *New Field Guide* to the birds of Australia. If you are not familiar with it, do visit http://menura.cse.unsw.edu.au:64800/1998/03/msg00200.html and http://menura.cse.unsw.edu.au:64800/1999/02/msg00155.html . Birding and field guides will never be the same thereafter!

In the past I have mentioned birding portals: web site that are jumping-off places for birding in cyberspace. Another of interest is **Bird Links to the World,** managed by Denis Lepage of Bird Studies Canada in conjunction with BirdLife International: http://www.bsc-eoc.org/links/links.jsp, This is a fantastic site! When I last visited, it has 18,486 birding web site linked to it. They are carefully categorised, so you won't become lost in the detail. Of interest is its continuously updated list of the top ten most visited birding web sites, to wit:

> Birding on the Net
>
> Maps & Distribution of the Birds of the Western Palearctic Region
> Ornithology.com
> Birding Hotspots Around the World
> Birding in Canada
> African Bird Club
> Bird Identification
> Birder.com
> Changes in Clements 5th edition checklist
> Birding the Americas (Trip Reports)

Well worth a visit.

Now let's come closer to home. A favourite area for Canberra birders is the Riverina, and I particularly enjoy the Leeton area, The **Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands Trust** at Leeton have done a wonderful job, providing a nationally important habitat for waterbirds. Fivebough/Tuckerbil is a Ramsar site: a wetlands of international importance. Do visit http://www.fivebough.org.au. The site is skilfully designed, has valuable content and is updated regularly. At the time of writing it provides the following news:

> October 6, 2004. Thousands of waterbirds are present at Fivebough. Although water levels at Fivebough are not to the extent of 2003, many birds have arrived over the past four weeks. Glossy Ibis numbers are ─400. A small number of Black Swans have begun to sit on nests, and given the lateness of their breeding attempt the likelihood of success is low.
>
> Magpie Geese were recorded September 23, with the last record in January 2001.
>
> A pair of Painted Snipe were observed on the western margin of the permanent wetland, October 4.
>
> Raptors continue to use the wetland. Species recorded October 1-4, were White-bellied Sea-eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Marsh Harrier, Little Eagle, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Whistling Kite, Little Falcon, Brown Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Collared Sparrowhawk, and Black-shouldered Kite.

A comprehensive bird list is provided (174 species at Fivebough to date), along with a locality map and other details for visitors. This is another example of wonderful achievements by a small band of dedicated and industrious volunteers

who are concerned about birds and their environments.

As this is the last issue of *CBN* before Christmas, I thought you may be interested in the **depiction of birds on Christmas cards.** Eddie Chapman from Voss, Norway, wrote to *BirdingAus* about this recently. He pointed out that:

> It will soon be Christmas and time to send a Christmas card to relatives and friends. At the moment I am doing some research on what species of birds have been used as motives on Christmas cards. Here in Norway it is the Bullfinch, Yellowhammer and Robin that are the most frequently used. What I would be interested in finding out is what species of bird is associated with Christmas/Christmas cards in Australia.

I have not seen any responses. What are your observations on this matter? Here I propose a challenge: count the number of Christmas cards you receive, record the number that contain bird motifs, and determine the prevalence by species. Then drop a note to our editor for publication in the next issue of CBN. So there's an end-of year challenge: are you up to it?

T. alba

Details on how to subscribe to *Birding-Aus*, the Australian birding email discussion list, are on the web at http://www.shc.melb.catholic.edu.au/home/birding/index.html. A comprehensive searchable archive of the messages that have been posted to the list is maintained by Andrew Taylor at http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/birding-aus.

To join the *Canberra Birds* email discussion list, send a blank email message to canberrabirds-subscribe@canberrabirds.org.au.

RARITIES PANEL NEWS

July-September 2004 was a surprisingly rich period for sightings of birds not usually seen in the Canberra region, Perhaps most extraordinary was the lone female Grey-crowned Babbler, seen on Duntroon Golf Course by large numbers of COG members following the original sighting by Michael Kingsford on 23 September, The nearest known location of a group of these babblers is near Boorowa, though there have been various unconfirmed records of the species in our region in recent years. It will be interesting to see how long the bird remains in our area; the Panel urges everyone who sees it in or around Duntroon to put in an incidental record.

The Swift Parrots reported here were but the forerunners for at least one other flock, details of which will appear in the following issue of this journal. After many years of very occasional sightings, it is good to note that the birds are being seen in our region on their way to their Tasmanian breeding grounds.

The Commonwealth Park Lewin's Rail was, as the article by Harvey Perkins in this issue of CBN indicates, quite a surprise, given the popular and populous location in which it was seen, and especially considering the usually furtive habits of the species. Again, the Panel wonders if this species might be one that is often overlooked.

The Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater with its liquid, bubbling call and orange-pink throat is an unlikely bird to be overlooked, even if it is far removed from its dry inland habitat; these sightings are probably a fair representation of its occurrence in our region. As Steve Wilson said, in *Birds of the ACT: two centuries of change*, 'There seems to be no particular pattern to the sightings in the ACT.'

Another surprise in early October was the sighting near the ANBG of a Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, foraging on the ground. The observer surmised it might have been a young female, dispersing; while it was large for an acanthizid, it had the bright chestnut rump and upper tail, which it held erect, a pale eye-stripe, but was not as heavily streaked on the body as adult birds.

The steady stream of occasional sightings of White-headed Pigeon, Pied Cormorant, Spotless Crake, Long-billed Corella, and White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike poses an interesting conundrum. Are members becoming more familiar with these species and are consequently reporting them more frequently? Or is there a real change in the abundance of these species?

Excellent photos of the babbler, Swift Parrots, the Marsh Sandpiper and other species recorded here can be seen on the COG website photo gallery, at www.canberrabirds.org.au,

While no longer on our 'unusuals' list, Cockatiels *Nymphicus hollandicus* are rarely seen except for the occasional aviary escapee so the sighting of a party of five of these birds at Amaroo on 11 October 2004 by parrot expert Joe Forshaw warrants a mention. In Joe's estimation, they were probably wild birds.

ENDORSED LIST NO. 62

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*
15; 12 Feb 04; Michael Lenz; nr Carillon, Lake Burley Griffin GrL14
1; 22 Aug 04; Martin Butterfield; nr McDermott Place, Lake Ginninderra GrJ12
Lewin's Rail *Rallus pectoralis*
1; 3, 18 Aug 04; Harvey Perkins; nr Nerang Pool, Commonwealth Park, GrL13
1; 2 Sep 04; Martin Butterfield; nr Nerang Pool, Commonwealth Park, GrL13
Spotless Crake *Porzana tabuensis*
1; 2 Sep 04; Steve Holliday; Jerrabomberra Wetlands GrL14
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*
1; 13 Sep 04; Harvey Perkins; Jerrabomberra Wetlands GrL14
White-headed Pigeon *Columba leucomela*
1; 7 Nov 03; Margaret Boots; Jensen St, Hughes GrK14
1; 5 Dec 03; Michael Lenz; Suttor St, Ainslie GrL13

1; 8 Aug 04; Anna Lashko; Clint PI, Macquarie GrJ13
1; 10 Aug 04; Martin Butterfield; Clint PI, Macquarie GrJ13
1; 15 Aug 04; Sue Lashko; Clint PI, Macquarie GrJ13
1; 18 Aug 04; Martyn Moffat; nr Clint PI, Macquarie GrJ13
Long-billed Corella *Cacatua tenuirostris*
1; 11 Oct 04; Jack Holland; Chauvel Circle, Chapman GrI15
Swift Parrot *Lathamus discolor*
15-16; 19 Sep 04; Anthony Overs; Campbell Park GrM13
1; 29 Sep 04; Alex McLachlan; Pennefather St Higgins GrI12
Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae*
1; 7 Nov 03; Michael Lenz; Lumley Rd, Lake Bathurst GrY8
Chestnut-rumped Heathwren *Hylacola pyrrhopygia*
1; 6 Oct 04; Andrew Cockburn; between CSIRO and ANBG GrK13
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater *Acanthagenys rufogularis*

1; 21, 23, Nov 03; Michael Braby; Ginninderra Creek, Macgregor GrI12
1; 15 Sep 04; Nicki Taws; Emu Ridge GrJ12

Grey-crowned Babbler *Pomatostomus temporalis*
1; 24 Sep 04; Anthony Overs; Duntroon Golf Course GrM14
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*
1; 7 Sep 04; Steve Holliday; Mt Ainslie Nature Reserve, GrM12
1; 22 Sep 04; Martin Butterfield; nr McDermott PI, Lake Ginninderra GrJ12

The COG office is located at Room 5, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic, Opening hours are Tuesdays from approximately 10:00 - 12:30; at other times by arrangement with the secretary. Please call the office on 6247 4996 to confirm that it is open or to leave a message.

Canberra Bird Notes is published by the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc and is edited by Harvey Perkins and Barbara Allan. Major articles of **up** to 5000 words are welcome on matters of the distribution, identification or behaviour of birds occurring in the Australian Capital Territory and surrounding area. Contributions on these topics should be sent to Harvey Perkins, 42 Summerland Circuit, Kambah ACT 2902, or via email to cbn@canberrabirds.org.au. Short notes, book reviews and other contributions should be sent to Barbara Allan, 47 Hannaford Street, Page ACT 2614 or to the above email address. If you would like to discuss your proposed article in advance, please feel free to contact Harvey on 6231 8209 or Barbara on 6254 6520,

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