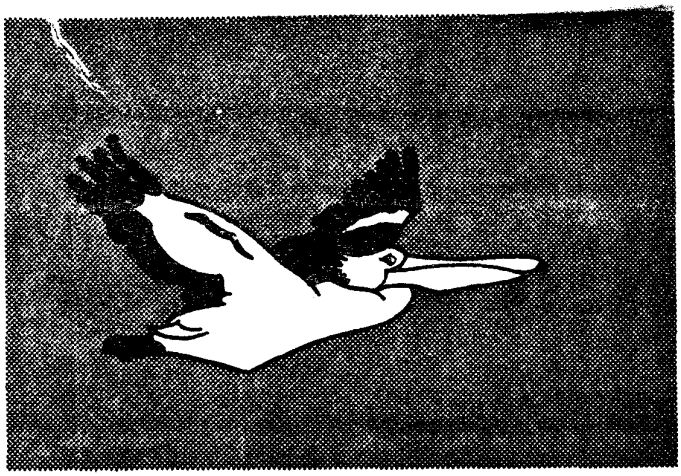


canberra bird notes

Volume 3 Number 4 October 1975

EDITORIAL

Recent issues of *Canberra Bird Notes* have appeared behind schedule but with this number we are again on time. Catching up has proved possible because of the availability of the Annual Bird Report, a considerable volume of the 'Status' material and a number of other articles from many sources. Thanks indeed to those involved.

Material in sight now is more limited, especially as the 'Status' series is nearing completion. Continuation of 24-page issues published on time will depend largely on our general membership, on whom we rely for much of our copy. Have you something to publish? We need your material.

C.O.G. OFFICE-BEARERS

The following are the officers of Canberra Ornithologists Group for 1975-76:

President: Frank Crome *Secretary:* Simon Bennett
Treasurer: Nick Winders *Editor:* Steve Wilson
Records: Graham Clark *Excursions:* Neil Hermes
Committee: Dr Dick Schodde, Dr Gerry van Tets, Mark Clayton, Terry Gourlay, Barry Baker.

A REPORT ON BIRDS OBSERVED AT DAIRY FLAT ROAD

1974-75

Barry Baker & Jim McNaughton

This report summarises the list of bird species recorded at Dairy Flat Road by Jim McNaughton from July 1974 to June 1975. The area covered is bounded by Kelly's Farmhouse, Jerrabomberra Creek, Lake Burley Griffin and the Molonglo River to the Duntroon Bridge, then to the Sewage Ponds and Kelly's Farmhouse.

A total of 36 visits were made to the area during the 12-month period. The records obtained have been placed in quarterly groupings: July to September 6 visits, October to December 8 visits, January to March 12 visits and April to June 10 visits. The resultant figures provide some indication of seasonal abundance for most species.

Additional notes are provided for some species.

Species	*Jul-Sep*		*Oct-Dec*		*Jan-Mar*		*Apr-Jun*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Hoary-headed Grebe	-	-	*	13	0.9	17	*	20
Little Grebe	19	100	9	75	94	100	58	90
Pelican	*	33	0.6	62	*	8	-	-
Darter	*	33	1.4	63	3.2	83	3.1	80
Little Pied Cormorant	3.8	83	8	75	33	100	6.8	90
Black Cormorant	2.5	50	51	100	56	100	21	80
Little Black Cormorant	*	17	1.1	25	3.8	50	5.9	80
White-necked Heron	-	-	0.6	38	*	33	-	-

Species	*Jul–Sep*		*Oct–Dec*		*Jan–Mar*		*Apr–Jun*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
White-faced Heron	3.8	100	19	100	22	92	6.1	100
Cattle Egret	0.8	33	*	12	*	8	1.6	40
Large Egret	*	17	2.9	88	12	100	1.2	60
Little Egret	–	–	*	12	–	–	–	–
Plumed Egret	–	–	*	13	2.3	75	*	10
Nankeen Night-heron	–	–	8.8	25	2.4	75	1.5	50
Glossy Ibis	–	–	–	–	*	17	–	–
White Ibis	–	–	1.8	50	4.2	92	3.9	70
Straw-necked Ibis	–	–	3.4	25	12	92	4.5	30
Royal Spoonbill	–	–	*	13	1.8	60	0.6	60
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	–	–	*	38	5.3	100	4.9	90
Black Swan	7.3	100	15	88	35	100	17	100
Mountain Duck	–	–	7.3	50	13	83	6.5	100
Black Duck	73	100	131	100	521	100	220	100
Grey Teal	30	100	73	100	320	100	118	100
Chestnut Teal	–	–	–	–	*	25	–	–
Shoveller	*	33	*	12	3.3	42	19	100
Pink-eared Duck	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.3	20
White-eyed Duck	3.3	16	2.3	38	1.8	25	25	90
Wood Duck	–	–	22	75	195	92	47	80
Musk Duck	*	16	–	–	1.4	66	2	40
Black-shouldered Kite	1.3	66	*	12	1.2	66	1.6	90
Whistling Kite	*	33	*	25	0.7	58	*	40
Brown Goshawk	–	–	*	13	0.4	33	0.7	60

Species	*Jul–Sep*		*Oct–Dec*		*Jan–Mar*		*Apr–Jun*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Little Eagle	–	–	–	–	*	8	*	20
Swamp Harrier	*	17	*	13	*	42	0.6	50
Little Falcon	–	–	*	38	0.7	58	–	–
Brown Falcon	1	66	*	38	0.6	42	*	40
Nankeen Kestrel	0.8	17	*	38	*	25	*	40
Stubble Quail	–	–	–	–	*	16	–	–
Marsh Crake	–	–	–	–	*	42	–	–
Dusky Moorhen	90	100	64	100	118	10O	215	100
Swamphen	34	100	17	100	59	100	114	100
Coot	47	100	32	100	143	100	930	100
Masked Plover	12	100	61	100	74	100	39	100
Banded Plover	–	–	*	13	–	–	–	–
Red-kneed Dotterel						8	–	–
Black-fronted Dotterel	2.8	50	1	63	5.9	83	11	100
Pied Stilt						8	–	–
Japanese Snipe	–	–	–	–	0.8	17	–	–
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	*	16	*	12	*	8	–	–
Curlew Sandpiper	*	16	–	–	–	–	–	–
Silver Gull	64	100	62	100	170	92	433	100
Galah	12	100	62	100	2.4	66	17	50
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	–	–	–	–	*	8	6.9	70
Red-rumped Parrot	–	–	–	–	–	–	*	10
Kookaburra	*	33	0.9	38	*	8	1	60
Skylark	4.7	100	3.1	100	*	17	4.3	90

Species	*Jul–Sep*		*Oct–Dec*		*Jan–Mar*		*Apr–Jun*	
	No.		*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Welcome Swallow	6	33	1.5	38	7.6	42	5.9	40
Tree Martin	2	17	25	25	–	–	–	–
Fairy Martin	*	17	1.1	13	–	–	–	–
Australian Pipit	4.7	83	1.6	63	0.6	42	1.3	60
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	–	–	–	–	–	–	*	20
Blackbird	O.8	50	1.3	75	1.5	75	1	90
Golden-headed Fantail-warbler	3.2	50	–	–	0.9	33	0.8	30
Little Grassbird	1	33	0.6	50	*	16	*	10
Reed-warbler	1.7	17	18	100	9.6	92	–	–
Superb Blue Wren	4	50	3.25	100	2.6	83	1.9	6O
Brown Thornbill	–	–	–	–	*	17	–	–
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	*	17	*	13	–	–	0.7	30
White-fronted Chat	*	17	*	25	–	–	*	10
Scarlet Robin	*	16	–	–	–	–	–	–
Flame Robin	3.7	66	–	–	–	–	–	–
Grey Fantail	–	–	*	38	*	8	–	–
Willy Wagtail	*	50	–	–	–	–	1.2	60
Rufous Whistler	–	–	*	25	*	8	–	–
Grey-breasted Silvereye	–	–	–	–	1.5	33	–	–
Zebra Finch	6.7	50	–	–	–	–	–	–
Chestnut-breasted Finch	1	16	–	–	–	–	–	–
House Sparrow	37	83	6.1	38	54	59	16	60
Goldfinch	26	100	51	100	56	100	27	100
Greenfinch	–	–	–	–	2.1	33	2.3	40

Species	*Jul–Sep*		*Oct–Dec*		*Jan–Mar*		*Apr–Jun*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Starling	1260	100	346	100	373	92	636	100
Magpie Lark	17	100	7.6	100	6.5	83	19	90
Pied Currawong	3.8	33	–	–	*	8	–	–
Black-backed Magpie	13	100	8.5	100	6.8	92	5.8	100
Australian Raven	4.7	83	4.6	100	3.1	92	3.2	80

* Average of less than 0.5 per trip.

WHITE-NECKED HERON *Ardea pacifica*

This bird, an occasional visitor to the A.C.T., was recorded a total of 7 times between November and March, with a maximum of 3 being present on 29 December.

CATTLE EGRET *Ardeola ibis*

While considered to be a rare vagrant in the A.C.T. (anon., 1972), small groups of from 1 to 9 birds were observed on 9 occasions. No records were obtained during the period December to March.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus*

Single birds were observed on 16 February and 2 March.

ROYAL SPOONBILL *Platalea regia*

A pair were observed on 20 November, and a small group of 1 to 8 birds was present from February to May.

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

Regularly recorded, with numbers increasing in summer (up to 40 birds). Cygnets were observed in August–September and January– March.

SHOVELLER *Anas rhynchotis*

Recorded singly in August and December. A flock, varying in number from 3 to 33, was present from the end of February to June.

PINK-EARED DUCK *Malacorhynchus membranaceus*

Six birds present on 1 June, and 7 on 8 June.

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL *Erythrogonys cinctus*

Two observed on 2 March.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

One present on 18 September.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED FINCH *Lonchura castaneothorax*

A small flock of 6 birds was seen on 4 August. This species has not previously been recorded in the A.C.T.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*

This species, recorded infrequently in the local region, was observed regularly from late January to June in numbers up to 11.

References

Anon. (1972), 'Status of Birds in Canberra and District', *Canberra Bird Notes*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 8-12.

C.B. Baker, 5 Millar Place, Kambah, A.C.T. 2902.

S. McNaughton, Launceston Street, Lyons, A.C.T. 2602.

THE USE OF THE BAL-CHA-TRI IN BANDING

Jerry Olsen & Penny Woollard

The bal-cha-tri is an Indian device that can be used for the trapping of most raptor species in Australia. Nooses are tied with 12-15 pound test nylon monofilament, producing an adequate trap for the Nankeen Kestrel *Falco cenchroides,* the Brown Falcon *Falco berigora,* and all Australian kites and accipiters. Nooses must be tied so that they slip freely open and closed (Fig. 1).

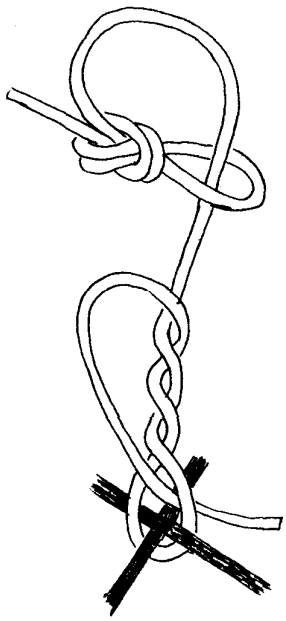


Fig. 1

If a bird breaks a noose from a trap and it doesn't loosen, it will constrict the toe or leg, causing certain damage. This was observed earlier this year in a Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus* which was caught in an improperly made trap.

If the trap is circular the bait (finch, mouse or sparrow) will move underside of the trap and runners constructed from wire coat-hangers are placed on the bottom, it can be dropped from a moving vehicle very near the bird to be trapped (Fig. 2).

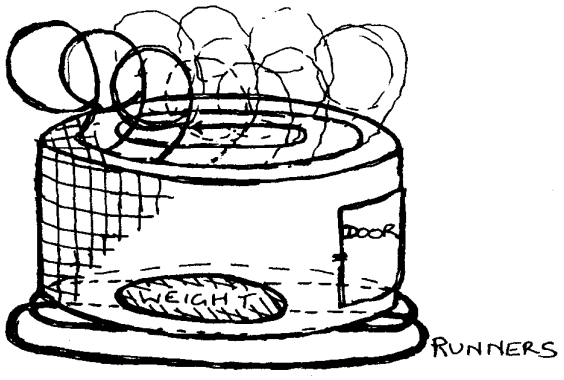
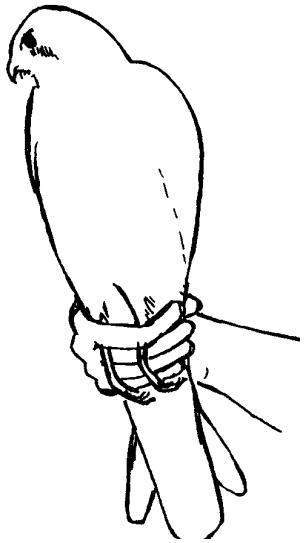


Fig. 2

With the vehicle moving at about 30 km/h the runners at one end are allowed to touch the road, then the bal-cha-tri is gently set down. This prevents the trap from rolling over onto its back. It should be pointed, when dropped, so that it slides off the road. There is much less chance of frightening a kestrel if the trap is dropped from the passenger side of the car with the kestrel across the road on the driver's side. If the kestrel is on the wrong side of the road, drive past the bird without losing speed and turn around further up the road to obtain a proper set. If the car is stopped near the kestrel it will almost certainly fly away.



The majority of kestrels seen on an outing can be trapped after one becomes proficient at placing the trap correctly, although hovering birds are much more difficult than perched birds.

Raptors should be handled as domestic pigeons are handled, with the wings held closed and feet held out behind the bird. This protects the bird from injury and prevents the bander from being scratched (Fig. 3). In addition a falconer's hood is generally used to keep the bird calm during banding.

Jerry Olsen
Poste Restante
Canberra City, A.C.T. 2600

Penny Woollard
Div. Wild. Res. CSIRO
P.O. Box 84

Note: Many of our members are licensed banders under the Australian Bird Banding Scheme, CSIRO, and this information will be of assistance to them. It should be pointed out, however, that it is an offence to trap protected birds unless one is in possession of an appropriate authority. *(Editor)*

THE MUSK DUCK BOOM

Doug Roos

The Musk Duck can regularly be seen around Canberra – personal sightings have mostly been on Jerrabomberra Creek just where it debouches into Lake Burley Griffin – but until recently numbers were quite low. Three was a good haul. Observations commenced in February 1973 and since mid-1975 numbers have risen quite sharply and the main area of sighting has shifted to the Central Basin of the lake, for the most part between Parliament House and Commonwealth Avenue Bridge. Birds have been seen on the Central Basin well after dark; presumably the birds are overnighting on the open water there. Another point to be noted is that the Central Basin birds have often been seen in groups or pairs – formation of breeding pairs? Last year's families? A schedule of recent sightings is appended.

F = feeding R = resting m = male f = female
min = minimum number
Where male numbers only are given, it is not to be assumed that the remaining birds were female.

Date	*Number*	*Activity*	*Sex*	*Place*
17.4.75	1	F	f	Central Basin
10.5.75	5	F	4f	Jerrabomberra Creek
11.5.75	2	F	if	"
25.5.75	1 3 1 2 (min 6)	FFFF	? lm	"
29.5.75	2	F	m	Central Basin
31.5.75	12	F	3m	Jerrabomberra Creek
1.6.75	12 (min)	F	?	
2.6.75	1	F	?	Central Basin
3.6.75	1	F	?	"
8.6.75	4	F	lm	Jerrabomberra Creek
9.6.75	2	F	m	Central Basin
12.6.75	1	F	m	"
15.6.75	5	F	3m 2f	Jerrabomberra Creek

Date	*Number*	*Activity*	*Sex*	*Place*
23.6.75	4	F	3m if	Central Basin
24.6.75	7	F	4m 3f	"
26.6.75	4	F	2m 2f	"
27.6.75	11	F	5m	"
28.6.75	10	F	6m	5 grouped swimming up-lake to King's Avenue Bridge, 5 grouped Central Basin
	1 1	F F	?	Jerrabomberra Creek
30.6.75	4 1	F F	lm ?	Central Basin, down lake from C'wealth Avenue Bridge
1.7.75	4	F	2m 2f	Central Basin
2.7.75	8	F	4m 4f	"
3.7.75	1	F	?	
5.7.75	1	F	?	Jerrabomberra Creek
7.7.75	1	F	?	Central Basin
8.7.75	6	F	4m	"
9.7.75	8	F	?	
10.7.75	2	F	?	
11.7.75	1	F	m	"
14.7.75	1	F	?	off Bowen Park
20.7.75	2	F	?	
21.7.75	11 (group of 7 + 2 pairs)	F	5m	Central Basin
22.7.75	9 (am) 8 (pm group of 6 + pair)	F F	? 4m	"
23.7.75	3 (after dark)	R	?	"
	7 (am) 5 (pm)	F F	2m 4m	
	2 (after dark)	R	?	"
24.7.75	8 (am, group of 5 - 4m, group of 3 - 2m)	F	"	
	1	F	?	off Bowen Park
	3+ (pm)	F	2m	Central Basin
25.7.75	4	F & dis-play	2m 2f	"

Date	Number	Activity	Sex	Place
28.7.75	5	F	1m	Central Basin
29.7.75	3 (am) 5 (pm) (group display)	F F	2m 1f, 4m 1f	"
31.7.75	4	F	1m 1f	"
1.8.75	7 (am) 3 (pm)	F F	3m 4f ?	"
	3+ (after dark	R	?	"
2.8.75	4+	F	2m	"

A.D. Ross, 64 Sprent St, Narrabundah, A.C.T. 2604.

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PREDATOR AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOUR BY DUSKY WOODSWALLOW

Jackie Miles and Bob Elvish

On 18 January 1975, in a well-timbered paddock beside the Captain's Flat Road, an unusual predator avoidance reaction was observed on the part of a Dusky Woodswallow, *Artamus cyanopterus.* We were observing the bird, which was perched in an exposed situation in a small dead tree, from a distance of about 40 feet when an immature Brown Goshawk, *Accipiter fasciatus,* appeared from behind us and flew low over the paddock. When it had disappeared over the brow of a nearby hill we turned back to the Woodswallow, which was then seen to be hanging beneath the branch on which it had been perched. We caught only a brief glimpse of this, for it righted itself immediately with a couple of wing flaps. It gave the impression of having been at an angle of about 45° to the branch, rather than hanging vertically, but this may be because it was already righting itself as we turned back to it.

So far as we can ascertain this type of predator avoidance behaviour has not previously been documented for any species.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS OF THE JABIRU

Steve Wilson

The Jabiru *(Xerorhynchus asiaticus)* is a species, not present in our area, which may be seen with luck as one travels north of the Hawkesbury River along the coastal areas of New South Wales. There are records from the south coast of N.S.W. and from Victoria but the species is rare there.

In July 1975, on a trip to Mitchells Island, an estuary island at the mouth of the Manning River near Taree, N.S.W., the species was seen daily over a two-week period and a maximum of five birds was sighted roosting on a muddy sand bank at dusk, about three miles upstream from the entrance. It was too dark to see how many of this group were immatures but on other days two immatures were seen together.

The Jabiru is a species not frequently written about so these notes of plumage and of feeding behaviour may be of interest.

The adult bird, seen in good reflecting light, is a handsome specimen. Superficially one would say, as do some authors, a black and white bird with red legs. Macdonald (1975) gives an accurate description: 'Head and neck black with dark green sheen and patch of glossy purple-bronze on nape; body white; wing white with broad black band on shoulders; tail black with green sheen ... legs deep pink'. The legs have been described by other authors as coral red, but to the writer in good light they appear a bright orange-red.

Macdonald does not describe the immature bird but Slater (1970) says: 'Immature: dusky-brown with a white breast and abdomen. Bill black, legs and feet red; iris white or yellow. Juveniles iris brown'.

A young bird described by North (1913-14) 'differs chiefly from the adult in being duller in colour and having the head and neck covered with thick light smoky-brown down and the mantle and lesser wing-coverts brown, broadly margined with dusky-brown; the greater wing-coverts more distinctly washed with green ... breast, abdomen and under-tail coverts dull white. Total length 36 inches, bill 7, tarsus 10.75'. North gives the length of the adult as 50 inches.

The Manning River immatures were a little larger than 36 inches

as they were seen beside the Large Egret *(Egretta alba)* which North states is 35 inches long. By this comparison these birds appeared about 40 inches long and were certainly considerably smaller than the adult birds.

When at rest, the adult Jabiru has a white area appearing as a tapering stripe above the dark colour of the wing coverts; this is the upper wing coverts. In the immatures the feathers of this area were off-white with the longer feathers mottled grey, giving the effect of a pale, dull stripe and not a white one. No reflection of green was seen at any time in the plumage of these immature birds. The plumage of the neck did not cut abruptly from black to white as in the adults but became mottled grey and then into off- white upper parts and abdomen. The impression at all times was of dull non-reflecting, non-glossy plumage in striking contrast to the plumage of the adults. The legs appeared dull brown and not red as given by Slater.

The lower Manning River has many oyster leases and these were a favourite feeding ground especially of the immature birds but occasionally of adults also. Each day birds were watched at about 100 yards' distance with 10 x 50 and 6 x 30 binoculars.

Feeding birds walked slowly along the edges of the oyster frames taking about one second per step. They fed in water about as deep as the length of the tarsus, which North gives as 12 inches for the adult. Adults were seen to probe the bottom frequently, obviously interested in non-swimming material. Generally the bill was inserted to its full length which North gives as 12 inches for the adult, but at times the whole of the head was under water. The result of this form of feeding could not be seen.

When hunting swimming fish the birds, both adults and immatures, moved slowly with folded wings till prey was sighted when the behaviour changed instantly. Longer, rapid steps were taken in pursuit and the wings were widely extended and slowly flapped, not in an effort to fly, though occasionally a bird would fly for a yard or two, but apparently in an effort to direct the fish forward and prevent escape to the sides. Immatures were more active in this behaviour than adults. Generally adults caught their prey or the prey escaped quickly and the wing flapping lasted only two or three seconds. Immatures hunted for as long as ten seconds with the wings flapping and with quick steps. Much changing of direction was always involved as the prey endeavoured to escape.

On one occasion a juvenile at about 100 yards' distance was teen to catch what appeared to be a mullet. The fish was caught about 2" above the tail, the fish being longer than the bill and estimated at about 10 inches in length. The fish struggled very little and the impression was gained that the bill pressure firstly paralysed the fish and certainly it was killed quite quickly by the bill pressure. The fish was gradually moved by a quick motion of the bill until it was held horizontally below the gills. Many scales were dislodged during this process. By this time the fish appeared dead and the bird turned it by the same bill motion till it was head first into the bill. It was too large to swallow immediately and it was placed back in the water three times and apparently crushed somewhat by the bill before swallowing was- again attempted. On the fourth attempt the fish was swallowed whole, head first, after which the bird continued stalking. Three minutes elapsed from capture to swallowing.

One immature was seen with a large piece of fish considerably longer than the bill; this appeared to be something discarded by a fisherman rather than a fish caught by the bird. The bird tried for five minutes to swallow the food, all this time being pestered by a large Egret and a White-faced Heron *(Ardea novaehollandiae)* but was unable to get it down. Finally the Jabiru flew off across the river pursued by the other two birds, carrying the fish which was dropped in deep water where none of the three could retrieve it.

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North, Alfred J., C.M.Z.S. (1913-14). *Nests and Eggs of Birds found Breeding in Australia and Tasmania* (Australian Museum, Sydney).

Slater, Peter (1970). *A Field Guide to Australian Birds, Non- passerines* (Rigby Limited).

S.J. Wilson, 2 Scott Street, Narrabundah, A.C.T. 2604.

FIRST AID TO BIRDS

Jerry van Tets

Persons known to be interested in birds receive from time to time inquiries about sick, injured or oiled birds. Outlined below are a few simple procedures which may be used to help the bird recover.

A sick bird should be kept in a corrugated cardboard box in a warm dry place. The box should have ventilation holes in the sides and absorbent paper towels or newspapers on the bottom. A wild bird when first picked up is usually in a state of shock and should not be fed during the first day. On the second day it should be offered appropriate food and water, but *not* white bread soaked in milk. Depending on the normal diet of the species, the bird should be given a mixed diet of shredded fish, mince meat, earthworms, meal-worms, bugs, flies, berries and ripening grass seeds. A hawk or an owl should have some fur, feathers or cotton wool with the food to help it make pellets to clean the stomach. A young bird and a bird with broken bones requires calcium or chalk in the form of tablets, bones of small fish or mice, cuttle bone or crushed shells. Vitamins are best given as a few drops of Pentavite on the food.

If the bird is suffering from a cold or diarrhoea, this may be cleared up by adding some whisky, brandy or other spirits to the drinking water. After the trauma of handling, a seabird needs some salt as a tablet or in the drinking water.

Broken leg and wing bones should be set and splinted as soon as possible after the accident. After splinting the broken limb should be folded and taped to the body in as natural a position as possible with surgical tape. Tape and splints may be removed after about four weeks. Use blunt-tipped scissors to cut the tips of the feathers to remove the tape.

Oil may be washed off with household detergent followed by thorough rinsing with warm water. The bird must be kept in a warm dry cage until the natural oils of preen gland restore the plumage to its natural gloss and its waterproof condition. The RAOU has a pamphlet which deals with the care of oiled seabirds.

Unlike a mammal, a bird does not like to be cuddled, and it should therefore be handled as little as possible. When it is

handled it should be done firmly and gently with the index and middle fingers on either side of the neck and the rest of the hand holding the body (including the folded wings). Care should be taken to hold securely the head and beak of a long-necked bird and the legs of a hawk and other raptorial birds. With some species a leather glove should be worn during handling; a parrot, for example, can give a nasty bite. A large or medium-sized bird is best kept during handling in a laundry or library bag with a drawstring. One limb at a time is then taken out for examination. While the head is in a bag a bird struggles less.

In general, immediate treatment followed by regular attention to the bird's comfort and cleanliness is the key to success. When the bird starts to take food of its own accord, chances of survival are good. The bird should be released when it is able to fly again.

Dr G.F. van Tets, 4 Tasman Place, Lyons, A.C.T. 2606.

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PROPOSED VISIT OF THE B.O.C. TO CANBERRA

S. J. W.

Preliminary approaches have been made regarding a proposed visit of members of the Bird Observers Club (Melbourne) to Canberra, their first visit as an organisation. If this eventuates it will take place over the weekend 12-14 June 1976 and the party will stay at a fairly central motel.

C.O.G. members may be asked to act as guides and to assist with transport. More information will be furnished later.

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C.O.G. EXCURSION T0 MT AINSLIE

Tony Stokes

The C.O.G. excursion on 14 September 1975 proved to be a particularly enjoyable and productive outing for C.O.G. members. Fifteen people took part in the leisurely three-hour walk among the foothills linking Mt Ainslie and Mt Majura. The weather was ideal and the calm, cloudy and warm conditions kept the birds active later in the morning than usual. Many species were viewed at close range.

Altogether 44 species were listed and nesting was noted in four of them. The total list was: Brown Goshawk, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Galah, Crimson and Eastern Rosellas, Pallid Cuckoo, Rufous-tailed Bronze-cuckoo, Kookaburra, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Superb Blue Wren, Weebill, Brown and Buff-rumped Thornbills, Speckled Warbler, Rose Robin, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Golden and Rufous Whistlers, Orange-winged Sittella, White-throated Treecreeper, Mistletoe Bird, Spotted Pardalote, Striated and Eastern Striated Pardalotes, Grey-breasted Silvereye, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Noisy Friar-bird, Eastern Spinebill, Red Wattle-bird, Red-browed Finch, Banded Finch, House Sparrow, Starling, Olive- backed Oriole, Magpie Lark, White-winged Chough, Dusky Wood-swallow, Pied Currawong, Black-backed Magpie, Australian Raven.

Two Buff-rumped Thornbill nests were found containing young. Both were wedged behind the bark of a large tree trunk about 60 cm above the ground. Excellent views were also obtained of a Chough party alternately incubating and feeding their young in the nest, and Kookaburra and Striated Pardalote nests were found but not inspected. Many parrots were inspecting hollows, presumably for nest sites.

All in all, as fine a day's bird watching as one could want.

A. Stokes, 16 Badgery St, Macquarie, A.C.T. 2614.

RANGE EXTENSIONS OF THE GREEN CATBIRD AND THE WHITE-HEADED PIGEON

Ian McRae

During a faunal study of Mt Dromedary (near Cobargo) in southern N.S.W. last year in a patch of depauperite rainforest along the lower north-east slope of the mountain the following observations were made.

On the afternoon of 14 September 1974 accompanied by Michael Chuk in the rainforest we observed a Catbird, *Ailuroedus crassirostris,* and by mimicry we called up another two. Three were observed at the one time but this may not have been the whole population. The birds were easily attracted and with binoculars at distances of five to ten metres identification was definite.

At the same locality we observed three White-headed Pigeons, *Columba leucomela,* at distances of five to fifteen metres, again with binoculars. Once disturbed they flew not more than twenty metres before landing in another tree. We did not see what plant material they were eating and no calls were heard.

The following morning we again visited the site but found only the Catbirds, which were still easily approached.

These observations extend the previously accepted range of the Catbird by seventy kilometres in a southerly direction.

The White-headed Pigeons were previously thought to occur as far south as the Illawarra district, and this observation extends their range by 200+ kilometres southwards.

There are many rainforest pockets along the south coast of N.S.W., and other localities may be found further south than Mt Dromedary which are large enough to support other more northern species. Perhaps with a more intensive study of these areas, from season to season, other interesting records will turn up.

I. McRae, Garran Hall, *A.N.U., Canberra, A.C.T. 2600.*

BOOK MARKET

Following the first Book Market in *Canberra Bird Notes* vol. 3 no. 2 there has been some interest shown in the continuation of this feature. However this will depend on feedback from the members and the use made of the facilities.

Therefore if you want to acquire or to dispose of any books or magazines why not try here?

Further information from Book Market, P.O. Box 301, Civic Square, A.C.T. 2608 or contact G. Clark, phone (062) 541279.

FOR SALE

Tasmanian Birds by M. Sharland. This book is available new at $7.95 plus 48 cents post and packing from Fuller's Bookshop Pty Ltd, G.P.O. Box 153B, Hobart, Tas. 7001.

The following *Tasmanian Bird Reports* are available from the Secretary, B.O.A.T., G.P.O Box 68A, Hobart, Tas. 7001.

Report No. 1 – $1.00 (photostat copy)
Report No. 2 – $0.50
Report No. 3 – $0.50
Report No.4 – $1.00

plus postage on 1 copy at 30 cents, on two or more at 40 cents.

New Zealand Albatrosses and Petrels – an identification guide by Harper and Kinsky. Price $2.50 on sale at meetings.

Birds and Where to Find Them – New South Wales by W. Roy Wheeler. Price $4.00 on sale at meetings.

WANTED

A Hand List of the Birds of New South Wales by A.R. McGill

The Birds of Borneo by B.E. Smythies

Fairy Wrens by N. Cayley

Birds of Western Australia by Serventy and Whittell

DONATIONS

Has anybody any spare back numbers of *Canberra Bird Notes?* The editor would appreciate donations of those numbers containing 'Status of the Birds of Canberra and District'.

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PLANT PROTECTION IN THE A.C.T.

John McKean

Max Gray of the Herbarium, CSIRO, is preparing a list of plants in the A.C.T. to be afforded special protection by a proposed Government Ordinance.

He would like to hear from members with details of any plants thought to be important enough to birds to warrant special protection.

The following are examples already provided to him and are typical of the types of detail he is seeking:

(i) *Dicksonia.* In protecting the wet sclerophyll gully habitat of the tree-fern, protection of the Superb Lyrebird *Menura novaehollandiae,* Olive Whistler *Pachycephala olivacea* and other gully-loving birds would be enhanced. The birds are already protected but undisturbed habitat is the more important aspect.

(ii) *Banksia marginata.* This is a widespread but not a common species in the ranges of the A.C.T. but there appears to be a strong tie between this tree and the New Holland Honeyeater *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae.*

(iii) *Grevillea juniperina.* This spring flowering shrub is important as a source of nectar for various migrating honeyeater species.

Any member who has any further ideas or information should contact Max Gray directly as soon as possible.

J.L. McKean, Division of Wildlife Research, CSIRO, P.O. Box 84, Lyneham, A.C.T. 2602.

BOOK REVIEWS

Bird Life by Ian Rowley; The Australian Naturalist Library, Collins, $9.50.

This book will be interesting and helpful not only for novice birdwatchers but for ornithologists generally, visitors to Australia, students and teachers, and parents who would like to tell their children more about a particular bird they see in the garden than just its name. The book is not about how to identify birds; its principal theme is the variety of ways in which birds live. In addition to the very readable text there are numerous diagrams and both coloured and black-and-white photographs.

The early sections introduce the reader to ornithology in general, to the Australian environment in relation to the distribution of birds, and to bird behaviour.

The heart of the book comprises descriptions of various life styles of birds in a wide range of species including residents, migrants and nomads. All the examples chosen are Australian and many of these birds are well known and easily seen, e.g. ravens, magpies, kookaburras, eastern rosellas and galahs.

Rowley quotes from his own studies on social relationships among birds and also draws on a wealth of information published by others on Australian birds, particularly in the past 25 years. More than 200 references are listed, and as many of these are in journals that many people never get a chance to see, Rowley has performed a useful service by collating this information in summarised form.

A section on methods of study discusses marking techniques including banding, catching birds, hides and other equipment such as binoculars and telescopes.

The final section is entitled 'What to do next', and although it is intended for novice bird-watchers could well be of use for many others including students, teachers, librarians, and ornithologists generally. It lists general reference boots on ornithology and Australian reference books and journals, and also has a list of societies, including the Canberra Ornithologists Group.

Bird Life illustrates the different ways of living that enable

individual bird species to exploit some corner of the environment without conflicting with other species. The obtaining of information of this sort is an essential prerequisite for the rational management of species, whether for conservation, control or harvesting. Rowley's book highlights the progress that has been made in collecting this information, and should encourage all ornithologists to make further contributions to our understanding of Australian birds.

This book is one of a new series, The Australian Naturalist Library, which will cover a great variety of Australian natural history topics in the pattern successfully followed by the Collins New Naturalist Library in Britain.

B. V. Fennessy

New Zealand Albatrosses and Petrels by Peter C. Harper and F.C. Kinsky. Published by the Biological Society, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, as *Tuatara,* vol. 21, Parts 1 and 2, 1974. Available at C.O.G. meetings for $2.50.

This is an inexpensive, lightweight field guide to the Procellariiformes of our area, between 140° East and 160° West, and south of 20° South, that is from New Caledonia to Antarctica, and from southeastern Australia to the Chatham Islands.

The black-and-white drawings are adequate and there are a few photographs, some of which are superb. The text is informal and informative. The drawings are at the back in field guide style and are all of birds in flight.

The species are arranged in declining order of size, irrespective of systematic affinities. This makes it difficult to find the text on a particular species, especially as there are errors in the index. It also hampers a systematic approach to field identification.

Used in conjunction with Slater's *Field Guide to Australian Birds, Non-Passerines,* the Harper and Kinsky guide should make the identification of birds at sea very much easier.

G.F.v.T.

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Secretary: Mr S. Bennett, P.O. Box 301, Civic Square, Canberra, A.C.T. 2608.

Editor: Mr S.J. Wilson, P.O. Box 301, Civic Square, Canberra, A.C.T. 2608.

Editorial Panel: Messrs B. Baker, G. Clark and D. Purchase.