



Canberra bird notes

No.4 June 1969

EDITORIAL

This is the final part of Canberra Bird Notes for its first year of issue. We hope you have found the first volume up to expectations and that you will continue to support us by sending your subscription for the coming year (Hint - \$1.00). Our new Secretary/Treasurer is -

Mr. Grahame Clark

24 Adair Street

SCULLIN ACT

Mention should be made here of the important function of the small, local newsletters such as this; local members may be surprised to learn that we already have quite a few interstate subscribers to Canberra Bird Notes. Not only does it serve the function of keeping local members in touch with current events, but it flies the local "flag", letting others all over Australia know just what's doing ornithologically in the A.C.T. In addition, it serves as a medium for publishing all of the less important records which do not merit the now expensive space of "The Emu". How nice it would be if there was a string of local bird notes from all the regional centres of the Commonwealth. Already, many of the cities have a similar publication and next issue, we intend to list all those known to us for your information. Meanwhile, to save our new editor some headaches, how about some contributions?

NOTES ON BIRDS OF THE KOSCIUSKO HIGH COUNTRY

by Graeme Chapman

The following notes have been compiled from experience gained on regular field trips to alpine areas of the Kosciusko National Park during the spring and summer in the years 1962 to 1968. As no attempt was made to keep systematic notes, the following account is rather superficial, but because of the dearth of published information on the area, it was considered worth recording.

The area covered was a strip of about ten miles long and about 4 mile each side of the main road to Mt. Kosciusko. Rennix Gap 5,200 ft. and Charlottes Pass 6,200 ft. were the lower and upper limits of the transect respectively. The intervening country is an alpine complex and lies under snow during the winter months. It is characterised by rocky granite outcrops, steep slopes supporting Alpine Woodland of Snow Gum, *Eucalyptus pauciflora*, *E. niphophila* and associates, intersected by grassy valleys largely clothed in snow grass, *Poa* spp. Many of the wooded slopes also support a dense shrub layer up to 6 ft. high, consisting of such species as *Hovea longifolia*, *Bossiaea foliosa*, and *Styphelia suavedens*. This shrub layer is the main haunt of most of the smaller passerine species.

JAPANESE SNIPE (*Gallinago hardwickii*) - Seen most frequently above the tree line at about 6,500 ft. where single birds were regularly flushed from small pools in alpine herbfield.

WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE (*Aquila audax*) - Only seen floating over the highest peaks near Mt. Kosciusko where there is a steep "drop to lower altitude country to the west. The highest point at which rabbits were seen was the Hotel Kosciusko (5,100 ft.).

Notes on Birds of the Kosciusko High Country (Ctd.)

BROWN HAWK (*Falco berigora*) - Single birds seen most frequently over the open country above the tree line, but not regularly in the one territory.- Probably does not breed in the alpine zone.

KESTREL (*Falco cenchroides*) - The most frequently seen bird of prey. Large areas of dead snow gums provide ample nesting hollows but no nest was ever seen.

YELLOW-TAILED BLACK COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) - Parties of up to a dozen seen in the denser areas of snow gum between Rennix Gap and Perisher Valley.

GANG-GANG COCKATOO (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*) - A common species in the woodland, between 5,000 and 6,000 feet. Always seen in small groups usually with one fully coloured male and several plain birds. Suitable nesting hollows would only be available in the larger eucalypts found about the 5,000 ft. mark and below.

CRIMSON ROSELLA (*Platycercus elegans*) - Common at lower altitudes, particularly around the golf course at the Kosciusko Hotel; not often seen above 6,000 ft.

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO (*Cacomantis pyrrhophanus*) - Very plentiful throughout the denser stands of second growth snow gums up to about 5,500 feet.

GREY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) - Occurs on wooded slopes up to about 5,500 ft. where a dense shrub layer is also present.

FLAME ROBIN (*Petroica phoenicea*) - The most common small bird; occurs in pairs throughout the area right up to 7,000 ft. The brilliant colour of the males seems to glow like a jewel when seen against a white snow background.

Notes on the Birds of the Kosciusko High Country

(Ctd.)

OLIVE WHISTLER (*Pachycephala olivacea*) - The only whistler recorded. It is common and widespread in thick shrubby areas, particularly along the steeper gullies between 5,000 and 6,000 ft. They are regularly found in the same small areas year after year; it would be interesting to know if they are able to maintain the territories during the snow season, or whether they move to lower altitudes. The main call is a loud tew-wit-tew, uttered at about ten second intervals. The birds in this area seem to have a limited repertoire compared with birds from Tasmania and northern N.S.W.; they do not give any of the more mellow calls which are typical of the species elsewhere.

GREY THRUSH (*Colluricincla harmonica*) - Only seen in the denser woodland around Rennix and Daner's Gap.

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) - Only odd birds recorded, probably just passing as no nesting pair was ever seen.

STRIATED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza lineata*) - Only seen in the dense regrowth type woodland and thick shrubby areas below Daner's Gap where it was regular in pairs & small parties.

BROWN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza pusilia*) - Widespread and common in short dense shrubby areas, even up above the tree line. Pairs recur year after year in the same territories and as the shrub layer must be covered with snow for several months of the year, the birds presumably forsake their territories during winter. This alpine form is a very dull bird; the rump hardly differs from the back in colour.

WHITE-BROWED SHRUB-WREN (*Sericornis frontalis*) - Pairs were often seen in the more sheltered shrubby gullies where they nest. Much less frequent than the Brown Thornbill.

Notes on the Birds of the Kosciusko High Country (Ctd.)

BLUE WREN (*Malurus cyaneus*) - Only one record - a party of three were seen in creek side shrubs near Rennix Gap at 5,200 ft. They had probably wandered out from the nearby forest in Wilsons Valley as they did not remain.

EASTERN STRIATED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus substriatus*) - Widespread in Alpine Woodland between 5,000 and 6,000 ft; the sides of road cuttings are favoured nest sites.

EASTERN SILVEREYE (*Zosterops lateralis*) - Inhabits much the same areas as the Brown Thornbill. Only two nests were seen, one of these being well above 6,000 ft. and just above the tree line at Charlottes Pass. In both cases, the birds had pale yellow-green throats & dull coloured flanks.

YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga chrysops*) - Plentiful in the more sheltered gullies; rarely seen above 5,500 ft.

WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga leucotis*) - Common and widespread. Shares the habitat of the Olive Whistler and also shorter shrubby areas as far as the tree line.

CRESCENT HONEYEATER (*Phylidonyris pyrrhoptera*) - A small colony exists on Spencer's Creek in dense shrubland at about 5,800 ft. Also, one record of two juveniles at Charlottes Pass out above the tree line.

WATTLEBIRD (*Anthochaera carunculata*) - Common and widespread right up to the treeline. Nests are placed in close proximity from one year to the next, but the birds are definitely not in residence the whole year round. Territories are first occupied in mid-September and first eggs are laid about mid-October. One case of one of a pair lacking the red face wattle was noted, which poses the question "Do Red Wattlebirds attain adult 'plumage' in their first year?"

Notes on the Birds of the Kosciusko High Country (Ctd.)

PIPIT (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*) - Not unexpectedly, the highest-breeding bird in Australia. Pairs occur all through the Poa grassland right up to Mt. Kosciusko.

RAVEN (*Corvus coronoides*) - Only one record - a single bird flying overhead near the Smiggin Holes.

LITTLE RAVEN (*Corvus mellori*) - A common breeding species, from 5,000 ft. right up to the tree line where some nests are as low as 10 ft. in stunted snow gums. Most of the breeding pairs showed little fear of man, a most un-ravenlike trait. Probably, many long years of rigid prohibition of guns in the area has some bearing. One pair were so bold that they would sit within arm's reach when I examined their nestlings and the female even bit me on the hand one year when I was replacing some banded nestlings in the nest.

PIED CURRAWONG (*Strepera graculina*) - Mainly seen scavenging around habitation at Perisher Valley and the Smiggin Holes. Only seen flying over in snow gum country. It commonly breeds in the forest at lower altitudes.

GREY CURRAWONG (*Strepera versicolor*) - Scattered pairs and single birds seen throughout the area. No evidence of nesting in the alpine woodland.

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina leuconota*) - Well distributed, becoming less frequent with altitude. Rarely seen above 6,000 ft. Once, a pair of magpies refurbished and used an old nest built by Little Ravens.

GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) - Occurs at the Hotel Kosciusko 5,100 ft., where introduced pines and roadside thistles are growing.

STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) - Nests throughout the alpine woodland which offers countless suitable nest holes.

AUSTRALIAN PELICAN DIVING

by Mark Clayton

On 29th January, 1969 whilst I was engaged in a regular survey of the avifauna of Lake Burley Griffin, I saw an Australian Pelican, *Pelecanus conspicillatus*, dive into the lake.

The bird was first observed flying about 40 ft. above the water and towards the shallow swampy area at the east end. It remained at about 40 ft. for approximately 200 yards, then glided to within about 4 ft. of the water, rose up sharply and plunged headlong into the lake. Only its head and neck were submerged for about 5 seconds, and it soon returned to a normal swimming position. It was not clear whether the bird caught anything or not.

The incident occurred in about 15 ft. of water near Aspen Island in Central Basin. The weather at the time was fine and mild with little cloud and a light breeze. The bird was first noticed at about 1100 hours and observing finished at approximately 1110 hours. Diving in Australian Pelicans is most unusual.

THE EAST END OF LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN IN THE NEWS

Most Canberra bird observers are familiar with the eastern shore of the lake, an area of low-lying alluvial land which lies between Jerrabomberra Creek and the Molonglo River. At present, the surrounding land is grazed by dairy cattle, but these interfere little with the wealth of water birds which frequent the numerous small ponds and swamps in the area. The local committee of the R.A.O.U. has always been interested in this area with a view to its possible future development as a waterfowl refuge and possible tourist attraction.

It was with some misgivings that we heard last week a contract has been let to 'develop' part of Jerrabomberra Creek. However, this work is only part of an overall master plan for the eastern end of the lake in which it is understood provision has been made for a bird sanctuary. During the construction stages, some disturbance may inevitably be caused to the avifauna but the planned provision of suitable habitat should ensure the future presence of water birds in the area. The committee of the local branch is keeping a wary eye on this aspect and any future developments will be notified

The East End of Lake Burley Griffin in the News (Ctd.)

to members as they occur.

Meanwhile, it seems appropriate to record here the results of many months of weekend observing in the area by Jim McNaughton. This information has been compiled from the regular lists Jim has provided each month in our observation book. We are grateful to him, for this information will, together with the results of a regular survey at present still in progress, provide facts on the bird life of the area as a basis for any negotiations which may later take place with the appropriate authorities.

SOME BIRDS OF THE FYSHWICK AREA

by J. McNaughton

The area is bounded by Kelly's farmhouse, west to Jerrabomberra Creek, along the edge of the lake and Molonglo River to Duntroon bridge, back along Dairy Flat Road to the sewerage ponds and back to Kelly's farmhouse. The sightings along the road have been made as time became available; some have been 3-4 hour periods, others have been only a few minutes while passing by along the road to the airport.

LITTLE GREBE (Podiceps novaehollandiae) - Regular, nests in area

HOARY-HEADED GREBE (P. poliocephalus) - 4 on 3 Jul. 67, 2 on 14 Jan. 68.

AUSTRALIAN PELICAN (Pelecanus conspicillatus) - Common. Roost in shallow water along Jerrabomberra Ck. Max. 100 plus on 14 Jan. 68.

BLACK CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax carbo) - Common.

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT (P. sulcirostris) - Common. Rest in willows on the Molonglo. Max. count 40 plus.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT (P. melanoleucos) - Common.

PIED CORMORANT (P. varius) - 1 on 14 Jan. 68, 1 on 23 Mar. 68, 2 on 4 May 68.

DARTER (Anhinga anhinga) - 2 males on 30 Nov. 68, 1 female on 12 Apr. 68.

WHITE-NECKED HERON (*Ardea pacifica*) - One, recently fledged in small swamp near road on 16 Nov.68.

WHITE-FACED HERON (*Ardea novaehollandiae*) - Regular. From 1 to 9 birds seen.

CATTLE EGRET (*Ardeola ibis*) - One partly coloured, 27 Jan.69.

WHITE EGRET (*Egretta alba*) - Regular; 1 to 7 birds.

PLUMED EGRET (*Egretta intermedia*) - 3 on 2 Feb.69.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) - 2 on 30 Nov.68.

NANKEEN NIGHT HERON (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) 1 on 27 Jan.68, 3 on 30 Nov.68, all in willow trees.

WHITE IBIS (*Threskiornis molucca*) - Common.

STRAW-NECKED IBIS (*T. spinicollis*) - Common.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) - 18 on 1st Jan.66, 20 on 2nd Feb.69.

ROYAL SPOONBILL (*Platalea regia*) - Only single birds seen, always in breeding plumage.

YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL (*P. flavipes*) - Fairly regular. Max.16 on 14 Jan.68.

BLACK SWAN (*Cygnus atratus*) - Not resident. Max.25 on 8 Jun.68.

FRECKLED DUCK (*Stictonetta naevosa*) - One sighting, 20 on 30 Jul.67

MOUNTAIN DUCK (*Tadorna tadornoides*) - 4 on 14 Jan; 2, 27 Jan. & 7 on 28 Jan.68.

BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) - Common. Up to 200.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) - 1 on 13 Aug.67 (female).

GREY TEAL (*Anas gibberifrons*) - Usually small groups of 4 upwards. 17 on 30 Nov.68.

BLUE-WINGED SHOVELER (*Anas rhynchotis*) 5 on 23 Mar.69.

CHESTNUT TEAL (*Anas castanea*) - Fairly common. 27 on 8 Jun.68.

Some Birds of the Fyshwick Area (Ctd.)

PINK-EARED DUCK (Malacorhynchus membranaeus) - 18 on 24 Nov.68.

WHITE-EYED DUCK (Aythya australis) - 1 on 25 May 68, increased to 5 on 30 Nov.68; now regular.

MANED GOOSE (Chenonetta jubata) -Common. Up to 200 plus on 2 Mar.68.

MUSK DUCK (Biziura lobata) - 1 on 16 Feb.69.

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE (Elanus notatus) - One or two regular.

WHISTLING KITE (Haliastur sphenurus) - 1 on 30 Nov.68.

SWAMP HARRIER (Circus approxjman) - Uncommon.

BLACK FALCON (Falco subniger) - 1 on 28 Jan.68.

LITTLE FALCON (Falco longipennis) - 1 on 17 Dec.66.

NANKEEN KESTREL (Falco cenchroides) - Occasional.

BROWN HAWK (Falco berigora) - Occasional.

BROWN QUAIL (Coturnix ypsilophorus) - 1 on 30 Nov.68, 1 on 19 Jan.69.

SPOTTED CRAKE (Porzana fluminea) - 1, 14 Jan; 4, 28 Jan., 1 on 24 Nov.68., 1 on 16 Feb.69.

MARSH CRAKE (P. pusilla) - 2 on 12 Jan.69.

DUSKY MOORHEN (Gallinula tenebrosa) - 60 on 9 Jun.68; est.100 chicks on 30 Nov.68.

EASTERN SWAMPHEN (Porphyrio porphyrio) - Common.

COOT (Fulica atra) - Regular. 90 on 8 Jun.68.

SPURWINGED PLOVER (Vanellus miles)-Common. Often 100+.

BLACKFRONTED DOTTEREL (Charadrius melanops)-Always a few.

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL (Charadrius cinctus) - 7, 14 Jan.68; 7, 28 Jan. 68; 8 on 2 Mar.68; 4 on 2 Feb.69.

Some Birds of the Fyshwick Area (Ctd.)

GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) - 2 on 24 Nov.68. Gale force winds in ACT and along coast.

JAPANESE SNIPE (*Gallinago hardwickii*) - Irregular. Max.50 on 9 Dec.67.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER (*Calidris acuminata*) - 12 on 24 Nov.68; 2 on 30 Nov.68.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER (*Limicola falcinellus*) - 1 on 2 Feb.69. WHITE-HEADED STILT (*Cladorhynchus himantopus*) - 2 on 16 Nov.68.

BED-NECKED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) - One only on 2 Dec.67; 14 Jan.68 and 28 Jan.68.

SILVER GULL (*Larus novaehollandiae*) - Common, up to 200 plus.

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) - 1 on 27 Oct.68, 2 on 9 Nov. 68, 16 on 16 Nov. & 5 on JO Nov.68.

EASTERN ROSELLA (*Platycercus eximius*) - 1 on 23 Mar.68, 3 on 14 Jul.68.

RED-RUMPED PARROT (*Psephotus chrysostomus*) - Fairly common; 40 on 14 Jul.68.

GALAH (*Cacatua roseicantilla*) - Common,

KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo novaeguinea*) - 6 on 12 Apr.68; otherwise uncommon.

AZURE KINGFISHER (*Alcyon azurea*) - 2 on 9 Mar.69.

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Halcyon sanctus*) - Small regular numbers in summer, Breeds in willows on the Molonglo.

SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*) - Common on lucerne paddocks.

WELCOME SWALLOW (*Hirundo neoxena*) - Common. Over 500 on overhead wires on 2 Mar.68.

PIPIT (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*) - Regular, Mostly in pairs.

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coroina novaehollandiae*) - A few sightings; breeds in the area.

BLACKBIRD (*lurdus merula*) - Occasionally seen in willows.

CISTICOLA (*Gisticola exilis*) - 3 on 28 Jan.68; 2 on 30 Nov.68.

Some Birds of the Fyshwick Area.(Ctd.)

LITTLE GRASSBIRD (Megalurus gramineus) - 1 on 30 Nov.68.

REED WARBLER (Acrocephalus stentoreus) - Common in season.

BROWN SONGLARK (Cinclorhamphus cruralis) - Regular in small numbers.

BLUE WREN (Malurus cyaneus)- Common.

YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILL (Acanthiza chrysorrhoa) - Few sightings.

WHITE-FRONTED CHAT (Ephthianura albifrons) - 5 on 23 Mar.68.

GREY FANTAIL (Rhipidura fuliginosa) - Regular in small numbers.

WILLIE WAGTAIL (R. leucophrys) - Regular in small numbers.

FLAME ROBIN (Petroica phoenicea) - One on 24 Apr.68 in willows.

YELLOW-TUFTED HONEYEATER (Meliphaga melanops) - 12 on 12 Apr.68 in willows.

ZEBRA FINCH (Poephila guttata) - 7 on 14 Jan.68.

HOUSE SPARROW (Passer domesticus)-Irregular; small groups.

GOLDFINCH (Carduelis carduelis) - Common.

STARLING (Sturnus vulgaris) - Common, sometimes 1000s.

PEEWEE (Grallina cyanoleuca)- Common.

PIED CURRAWONG (Strepera graculina) - Only occasional birds.

BLACK-BACKED MAGPIE (Gymnorhina tibicen) - Common.

AUSTRALIAN RAVEN (Corvus coronoides) - Common.

RECENT MEETINGS

April 9th.

Dr. Peter Fullagar gave an interesting account of his holiday last year in New Zealand. He saw most of the native species and as a result, showed many fine slides. Some interesting tape recordings were also made and the highlight of these was the elusive Fernbird. He was fortunate to see the last remaining Kakapo in captivity before it died at the Mt. Bruce Fauna Reserve. Recent searches in the last known haunts of this interesting nocturnal bird, which has much in common with both the Night Parrot and Ground Parrot of Australia, have been unsuccessful. We sincerely hope that someday someone will chance upon a small remaining population somewhere in New Zealand's more remote forests, and that it has not gone the way of so many other New Zealand birds.

May 14th.

Peter Fullagar and Graeme Chapman discussed the 1968 Campout of the R.A.O.U. held at Round Hill, N.S.W. Every mallee species was seen except the Mallee Fowl, and those who managed to survive the very hot weather attested to the success of the venture. It was the first time for many years that the R.A.O.U. had held a Campout under canvas.

One of the reasons for choosing Round Hill was so that a survey of the reserve could be undertaken to determine the present status of the Mallee Fowl in the area. Several mounds were found which were judged to be at least 5 years old - no birds were seen. A report of the Campout is soon to be published.

June 11th

The Annual Meeting of the Branch was held and a new Committee was elected. The members are:

Dr. G.F. van Tets, Chairman;
Mr. Grahame Clark, Secretary;
Mr. Anthony d'Andria, Editor, Canberra Bird Notes;
Mr. E.G. Slater, Dr. P.J. Fullagar, Mr. D.E. Peters,
Mr. S.J. Wilson, Mr. G.M. Horey, Mr. D. Purchase
and
Mr. J.M. Forshaw.

Canberra Bird Notes Recent Meetings (Ctd.)

Following the election, the Annual Brains Trust evening was enjoyed by all and put the seal on this as a regular yearly feature.

COMING MEETINGS

July 16th.

N.B. The THIRD Wednesday.

It has been decided that the R.A.O.U. should join with the Canberra Group of the Ecological Society in their SEMINAR ON THE EFFECTS OF FOREST FIRE in place of our usual meeting. This very contentious subject is one which should be of great concern to all conservationists and you are urged to attend. Please fill out the form between pages 8 and 9 and send it in by July 7th.

August 13th.

Mr. Henry Nix will speak on "Bird Distribution in Relation to Habitat in Central Queensland". C.S.I.R.O. Lecture Theatre, Black Mountain, 8.00 p.m.

BOOK PREVIEW - "AUSTRALIAN PARROTS"

The "magnum opus" of our Committee member, Joe Forshaw may have already reached the bookshops by the time this issue is posted. You would be wise to inspect a copy as soon as possible and take advantage of the "pre-publication" offer of \$19.99 which is in force until September 1st. The publishers tell us that the first printing has already sold out to the booksellers and it seems that it will disappear equally as quickly from their shelves.

The price as from September 1st will increase to \$25.00 - enough to make you shudder? Maybe, but it is a book that few will be able to resist, Most of the species have been portrayed in large colour photographs, the remainder being painted by the American bird illustrator, John C. Yrizarry. The treatment of each species includes a detailed description, together with

Book Preview - "Australian Parrots" (Ctd.)

information on classification and nomenclature, flight, call, habitat, distribution, habits and movements. Details of the care and housing of parrots in captivity are also given.

BOOK REVIEW"THE READERS' DIGEST COMPLETE ATLAS OF AUSTRALIA"

Published by The Readers' Digest Association, Sydney.
\$11.50. 161 pages in full colour.

This atlas can be recommended as a useful addition to any bird student's library, if only for the reason that it contains a complete set of the Australian Geographical Series maps, including New Guinea and the surrounding islands, at the useful scale of 1" to 20 miles. The 47 maps alone from the Division of National Mapping cost \$23.50 (at double the scale), so this book is obviously very good value, and much more convenient to use. In addition to the maps, there are useful, rather generalised sections on national productivity, geography, natural resources, geology, climate, population, flora and fauna (includes some of the best paintings recently published of many species) and commerce. The gazetteer contains more than 12,200 place names and a useful bibliography is appended.

GSC

INFORMATION ON EASTERN SPINEBILLS WANTED

Mrs. Ellen McCulloch, one of our interstate subscribers, writes that she is collecting data on the Eastern Spinebill, *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*. She is seeking detailed information on breeding, preferred habitat, seasonal occurrence and species of flowering food plants. Does the long bill allow them to feed from flowers where other species can't reach? Any information will gratefully accepted and acknowledged. Write to Mrs. Ellen M. McCulloch, 6 Bullen Avenue, MITCHAM, VIC. 3132

R.A.O.U. NEWS

Vol.69, Pt.1 of "The Emu" has just been published; if you haven't received it before you receive this issue of C.B.N., you are probably unfinancial. If you are financial, and haven't received it, you had best write to the Treasurer, Mr. N.C. Gove at Box 5236BB, Melbourne, who will iron out any anomalies.

Mr. Steve Marchant, our ex-Chairman and present editor of "The Emu" has left Canberra to live in Melbourne. We wish him all the best.

At the Extraordinary General Meeting held in Melbourne on 21 June, the recommendations of the Review Ctee. were endorsed by a large majority, almost half the total membership of the R.A.O.U. participating in the voting and about 60 members attended in person. A new compact council of 9 members has been elected in place of the previous number of 45. Their main charge is to draw up a new constitution for the RAOU bearing in mind the findings of the Review Ctee. This, together with the running of Union affairs for the next 15 months will keep them very busy. We wish them every success.

RECENT OBSERVATIONS

Tree Sparrow - A new ACT record. On 18 March, John McKean saw a pair of Tree Sparrows at Dickson. The close similarity of this species to the male House Sparrow undoubtedly accounts for a certain paucity of records. Look for brown instead of grey crown. Caspian Tern. - 2nd ACT record, on 1st June, seen over Yarralumla Bay by Peter Fullagar.

Pied Butcherbird - A single bird at Gungahlin on 10 Apr., John Calaby.

Black-shouldered Kites have been reported all over the place, obviously a local increase in numbers. A nice easy project would be for someone to map the number of nesting pairs around Canberra, to compare with other seasons and years.

EDITED BY: G. Chapman, CSIRO Div. of Wildlife Research.
NEW EDITOR WILL BE: Mr. A. d'Andria, CSIRO Div. of
Wildlife Research.