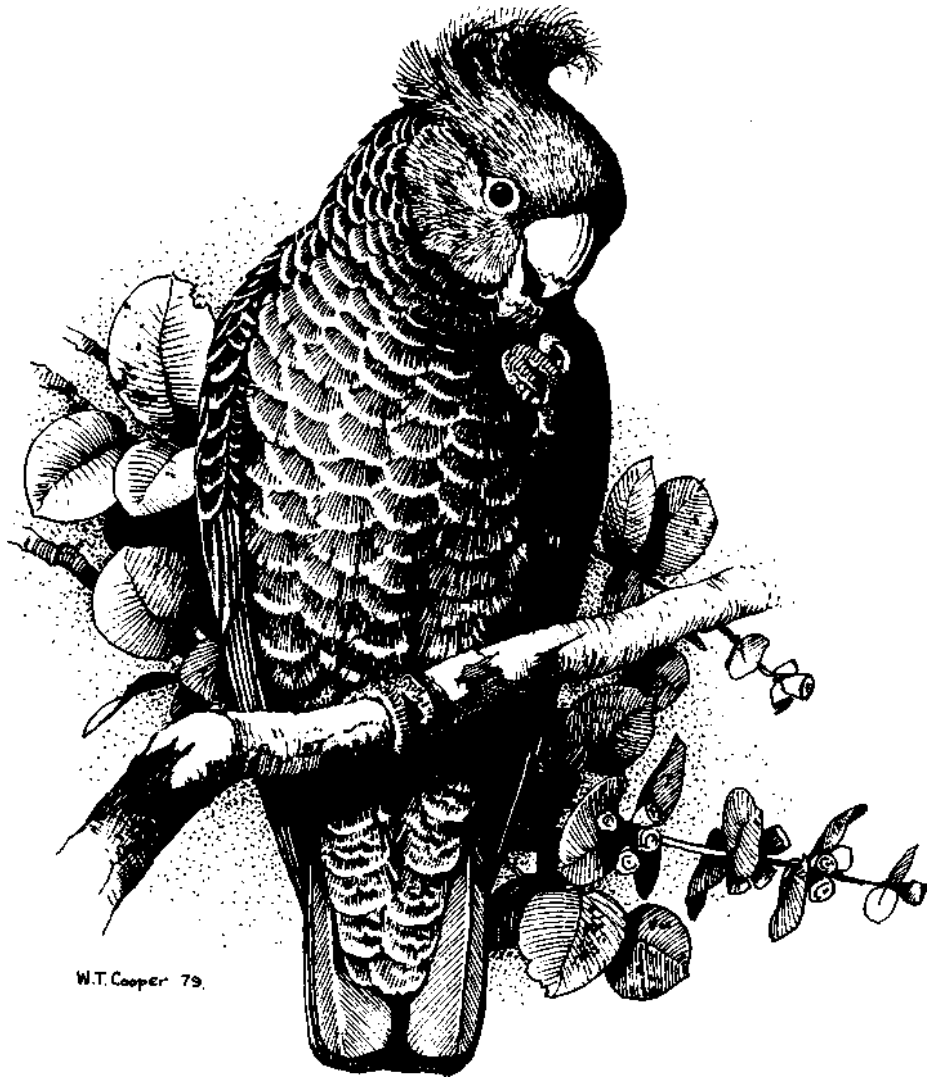


CANBERRA BIRD NOTES

Volume 19
Number 1
March 1994

Registered by Australia Post - publication No NBH 0255



W.T. Cooper 79.

CANBERRA ORNITHOLOGISTS GROUP INC.

P.O. Box 301, Civic Square, ACT 2608

Committee Members (1994)

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The following people represent Canberra Ornithologists Group in various ways although they may not be formally on the Committee:

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<i>Gang Gang, Editor</i>	Barbara Allan	--	254 6520
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(Continued inside back cover)

OBSERVATIONS OF A PAIR OF RED-CAPPED ROBINS NESTING NEAR MACGREGOR

Joan Price

On 25 December 1992 I observed what I thought to be a female Red-capped Robin *Petroica goodenovii* on the hill in front of Fassifern Equestrian Centre - by the old Chamwood Road, MacGregor. I say thought because she did not have the rust-brown patch on her forehead that females usually have. She also appeared to me to be quite young. A couple of weeks previously I had observed a male Red-capped Robin in the area.

After watching her for a while from the road, I noticed that she appeared to be sitting on a nest. I climbed through the fence and confirmed that she was and also, after waiting a while. I observed the male Red-capped Robin.

He would sit on the edge of the cluster of trees where the nest was located and call her. whereupon she would fly to him and be fed. After a couple of minutes she returned and settled back on the nest. This was repeated about every 10 or 15 minutes.

I went down early morning and late afternoon each day following and on Sunday, 3 January 1993. I noticed there was a little bit more activity. The male twice visited the nest and appeared to be looking into it. Also, when the female returned from being fed, she settled very carefully on the nest, shuffling around several times before finally sitting down. I had the feeling there was at least one fledgling in the nest.

That night there was a storm but when I went down on Monday 4 January, all seemed well. At one stage she stayed away from the nest for quite a period so I climbed the tree, peeked into the nest and saw one very tiny, feathered youngster who did not seem to appear to react to noise, but rather to the vibration of me moving the branch. I didn't observe the male or female feeding the youngster, although on two occasions I got the impression the female was regurgitating food. She would lift herself slightly, bend down and appeared to feed the youngster.

There was also an unhatched egg in the nest with the fledgling. At no time did the fledgling make any noise.

On one occasion whilst the female was away from the nest, the male flew in and sat by the nest, I presume to ensure the safety of the youngster. There were a couple of Grey Fantails *Rhipidura fuliginosa* in the vicinity but he made no attempt to chase them off. I also noticed several Australian Magpies *Gymnorhina tibicen* in the area with youngsters.

It is interesting because the male Red-capped Robin I observed in 1990 behind the Chamwood Playing Fields, when the pair were nesting, would not only have chased off the fantails but would have chastised me as well.

When I went down at five o'clock on Tuesday, 5 January, to my dismay I could not locate either the male or female. I stood around by the nest for quite a while but neither came near. In the end I climbed the tree, peered in the nest and found that the fledgling was gone but the unhatched egg was still there. There was no damage to the nest. I walked quite a large area around the nesting site but was unable to locate either parent.

On Thursday, 7 January I decided to remove the nest, along with the egg, to place in the COG exhibits. On driving down to the site to do this, I discovered there had been a bush fire and the nest had been damaged therefore had the fledgling survived until then it would surely have died in the fire!

I have been down to the area on several occasions to attempt to locate the robins but have been unsuccessful so far, the hill covers rather a large area. I have also been checking out the small wooded area behind the suburb of MacGregor.

From the way the male Red-capped Robin behaved I would say it was not the one that nested behind the Charnwood Playing Field in 1990. The female was definitely a newcomer - the previous female having a lovely rust-coloured forehead and appearing much more mature. The new pair seemed to me to be very inexperienced parents.

Joan Price, 6 Winder Place, CHARNWOOD ACT 2615

ODD OB

VARIED SITTELLAS HAWKING FOR INSECTS

Isobel Crawford

On 5 April 1990, at 1600 hrs, I saw a flock of five or six Varied Sittellas *Daphoenositta chrysoptera* hawking for insects east of Bruce Stadium and north of the bicycle track. The vegetation was open forest dominated by Brittle Gum *Eucalyptus mannifera maculosa*, with Red Stringybark *E. macrorhyncha* and Scribbly Gum *E. rossii*. There was a sparse shrub understorey to 2 m. The insects were assumed to have been termites, as the weather was warm and very humid, and locally such conditions are required for the emergence of termites in late summer or late spring.

Isobel Crawford, PO Box 31, O'CONNOR ACT 2601

SUPERB PARROT SIGHTING IN MELBA

Mary Ormay

While working in my garden on the morning of 27 September 1992, an unfamiliar parrot call caught my attention. It was not the familiar call of the Eastern Rosella *Platycercus eximius* or Crimson Rosella *P. elegans*, but a distinctly high-pitched "ree--ree--ree--ree" call. High above, in the next door's Blakely's Red Gum *Eucalyptus blakelyi*, appeared the beautiful long-tailed pale blue-green form of a female Superb Parrot *Polytelis swainsonii*. She surveyed the tree in a hurried nervous fashion, branch by branch. for no longer than two minutes, then launched herself off in a south-west direction.

I remember having heard similar high-pitched calls during the preceding winter, the inconspicuous bird circling about in the vicinity of my home. Could this have been the same Superb Parrot, perhaps an escapee, as the species is not normally seen in these parts?

On 14 October a nest box (made from a hollow log) which had been successfully used for Galahs *Cacatua roseicapilla*, was placed in the Blakely's Red Gum. A female Superb Parrot appeared about 8.15 a.m. the next morning and while she took a quick look at the nest box a male Eastern Rosella sat a few metres away. Both then flew off together. Similar nest boxes designed for rosellas have since been placed in the tree, but the Superb Parrot has not been seen again.

Mary Ormay, 27 Clifford Crescent, MELBA, ACT 2615

ODD OB

SILVEREYES MIGRATING AT NIGHT

Isobel Crawford

At 5.30 a.m. on 31 March 1990 a flock Silvereyes *Zosterops lateralis*, estimated to number from about 30 to 50 birds, was heard flying north above Bendora Hut which is at an altitude of 1260 m in the Brindabella Range, ACT. It was pre-dawn and the moon had set.

Isobel Crawford, PO Box 31, O'CONNOR ACT 2601

GANG-GANGS GRAZE WATER MILFOIL

Malcolm Fyfe

Recently, when relating our experiences during a visit to the state forests around Tumut, NSW. to David Purchase, he brought to my attention an article by Henry Nix which appeared in *Canberra Bird Notes* in July 1985 (10(3): 92). There Henry describes exactly the feeding activity which my wife and I observed in two locations during our excursion. However, it was not only the food source, but also the numbers of birds which we found interesting.

At Emu Flat, Buccleuch State Forest, 33 km ESE of Tumut on 18 January 1994, we were enjoying an early stroll on a very bright and fresh morning when we noticed that not only were there numbers of Gang-gangs *Callocephalon fimbriatum* already in the immediate neighbourhood but also others were constantly flying in. On reaching higher ground we gained a view down onto an open area of tussock grass through which Emu Flat Creek flowed. There we could clearly see that some of the birds were congregating in a tree overlooking the creek while others were actually in, or more precisely, on the edges of the creek "wading out on mats of aquatic weed and feeding voraciously, with water up to their midsection" as Henry so well described the scene. Again the much sought-after plant was Water Milfoil *Myriophyllum* sp.

We counted as many as 60 birds either by the creek or perched in the tree above. Clearly this was a favoured feeding location or the one for the day, but whatever the significance of this particular point on the creek, all birds headed for and fed together at the one spot. The numbers of red- and grey-headed birds were about equal.

Next morning, having moved on, we camped at Paddy's River Dam reserve in the Bago State Forest, 21 km S of Batlow. Again we witnessed the early morning arrival of Gang-gangs to feed by the river. This time some 40 birds were present

Feeding behaviour at both locations was as described by Henry Nix, although he did not mention an aspect referred to in an article on the previous page of the same edition of *Canberra Bird Notes* (10(3): 91-92) "Gang-gangs: left-footed all?". For those with a particular fascination for feet, I can report that our observations supported the peculiarity described by Hew Prendergast in his article. All the birds we saw used the left foot to hold the weed on which they were feeding.

Malcolm Fyfe, 27 Kilby Crescent, WEETANGERA ACT 2614

SIGHTING OF WHISKERED TERNS AT LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN

Geoffrey Dabb

On Sunday, 28 November 1993, at 1430 hrs at the swimming enclosure on the small beach in Yarralumla Bay (about 100 m east of the YMCA Sailing Club) I observed a gathering of about a dozen Whiskered Terns *Chlidonias hybrida*. They were seen over a period of about one hour, during which time more were seen flying over the lake. I did not have binoculars with me.

The birds were at distances from about 30 m to 100 m and were either sitting on the buoys around the perimeter of the swimming area or flying and swooping down to the surface of the lake. The birds were obviously terns and much smaller than the Silver Gulls *Larus novaehollandiae* which were also present. They had black caps and different configuration and flight than the gulls. At a distance I separated them from gulls by size (when able to be compared), shape and flight. I have seen Whiskered Terns elsewhere on other occasions and I identified these by range and previous recorded occurrence. About one third of the individuals showed the distinctive very dark grey underparts of breeding Whiskered Terns which was quite striking, giving them an almost pied appearance when seen front-on in flight. Their voice was an insistent chatter which was lower pitched than a Silver Gull.

I counted the birds several times when they were settled on the buoys during the hour. Usually there were between 11 and 13. I also noticed some groups flying further out over the lake. At the time this part of the lake had quite a few small sailing craft on it and there were also a few people noisily frolicking in the swimming enclosure. The highest number of terns in view at any one time was 25.

The flying birds showed typical tern behaviour when looking for food opportunities - possibly large insects blown onto the surface of the water. This involved slow beating against the wind then flying downwind to re-position. The birds around the buoys occasionally squabbled over sitting spaces - sometimes with Silver Gulls (which later retreated to the beach in a group) and sometimes very noisily.

The day before had been unusually warm (maximum 30° C with a 26 kph WNW wind). The day of the observation was cooler (24° at 1500 hrs with a light southerly wind). Both days were clear and sunny.

I visited the area the following day at 1400 hrs and again on 3 December. No terns were in sight on either occasion.

Geoffrey Dabb, 24 Brockman Street, NARRABUNDAH ACT 2604

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 1993

This has been a year of consolidating activities and further streamlining COG's administration after several frenetic years producing the Atlas of Birds of the ACT, when some Committee members were heard to remark that working for COG was becoming 'onerous'. It has nonetheless been a full year for all those holding official capacities, with much effort put in by many members. I have very much appreciated the work which has been done and the cooperative spirit of Committee members, members of COG's various Subcommittees, and others who have undertaken tasks for COG. Many of the contributors are mentioned in this report, but there are others who assist in small ways which is also appreciated.

For 1994, I would like to encourage more members to survey birds in our area. We now have a database for storing COG's records and there are still many 'cold' spots which do not have comprehensive coverage. This is very important for the future conservation of our birds and their habitats. I wish all members happy birding in 1994.

Administration and Finance

In 1993, Committee meetings were reorganised to a regular after work, monthly meeting at the Griffin Centre. This has enabled a large volume of business to be dealt with quickly, particularly approving expenditure. The Executive Committee (four principal members) has dealt with urgent matters out-of-session. This arrangement has worked well and will continue in 1994.

Robin Smith and Sarah Martin (Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively), who joined the Committee in 1993, have done a wonderful job handling the correspondence, minute taking and associated tasks.

The Committee has particularly focussed on monitoring finances. Noel Luff, COG's Treasurer, has oversighted the accounting with his usual diligence and professionalism and deserves much praise for his efforts. Unfortunately, subscriptions had to rise in 1994, to meet basic administration costs, for the meetings venue, publications and general administration. At the same time, subscriptions were rationalised at a uniform rate for singles and families, as there is no difference in the cost of servicing single and family members.

Meetings

In 1993, COG had to move its meeting venue to the Canberra School of Art because of steep rental increases at the former venue. Barbara Allan has continued to organise top quality guest speakers. As in previous years, there has been a varied program of speakers, including COG members. Thank you to those members, particularly Dick Schodde, who have given 'bird of the month' talks, an important part of COG's education program.

Although meetings will remain at the School of Art in 1994, the Committee will be examining alternative meetings venues for 1995.

Field Trips Program

In 1993, a Field Trips Pamphlet with the program for the year was produced for the first time. The Field Trips Subcommittee of myself, David McDonald and John Avery has produced a similar program and pamphlet for 1994. John Avery is now managing the day trips program. In 1993, we experimented with a bus trip and will have more bus trips in 1994. We will be looking at ways to better facilitate transport for some members to attend field trips.

In 1993, a number of joint field trips were run with other groups, Hunter BOC, Cumberland BOC (at Jervis Bay) and Eurobodalla Natural History Society. I believe it is important to foster the links with such groups and we will continue to do so in the future.

Thank you to the many members who have led walks this year, particularly a number of members who have done so for the first time.

Education and Exhibitions

In 1993, COG participated in the Science Festival, demonstrating the Bird Finder at the Botanic Gardens. Bruce Lindenmayer coordinated this event, assisted by a team of members. Arm McKenzie, with assistance from Paul Fennell and Pat Muller has continued to undertake a program of participation in various fairs and exhibitions, such as Arbour Week, Heritage Week, and to organise programs of bird walks. The walks program for Bird Week in October was very well received and Ann McKenzie deserves special praise for her efforts.

COG has responded to a number of requests during the year for speakers at community groups etc. Pat Muller, a Committee member, has been compiling an inventory of leaders for walks and talks, in response to the increasing demand for speakers and members to visit schools, community groups etc. Pat will be coordinating requests of this nature in 1994.

COG has been without an Education Officer for a couple of years. COG's education efforts have therefore been centred around exhibitions and public walks. COG has been developing an Education policy to better coordinate educational activities, which will be finalised in 1994.

Projects and Surveys

The Projects Subcommittee (Malcolm Fyfe - Secretary, Chris Davey, Michael Lenz, David Purchase, and Nick Nicholls) has met regularly throughout the year.

A new Observation Record Sheet and Instructions for recording bird observations were produced in 1993. The Garden Bird Survey (GBS), which had operated for ten years was continued; Phillip Veerman and Kirk Rockett revamped the GBS chart and designed a very smart new version. The Projects Subcommittee is examining how the results from the GBS might be published.

COG has collaborated with Greening Australia in a survey of Superb Parrots in COG's area, to establish whether they are breeding and where, and ultimately to restore habitat in these areas. This work was ably coordinated for COG by Chris Davey and will continue in 1994. Breeding records of Superb Parrots in COG's area were obtained for the first time during the survey. Other projects/surveys which will involve members are being developed.

Michael Lenz has continued his long-term work surveying Lakes Bathurst and George with a team of volunteers.

Bird Interest Groups Network (BIGNET)

In 1992, the various bird clubs and related interest groups in NSW/ACT began meeting for the first time and meetings have continued on a regular twice yearly basis. These have been valuable for exchanging information and networking, establishing joint projects etc. COG has been a leader in many respects, e.g. the COG Garden Bird Survey has been adopted by Hunter BOC, a Hotline has been set up by the Sydney Bird clubs, and COG has contributed substantially to ongoing work on database activity, and annual bird reports. All these projects are important for the future of bird conservation, to ensure consistency in approaches by the different groups. In 1993, COG attended two BIGNET meetings held at Barren Grounds Nature Reserve.

Hotline

Richard Thomas, the Hotline coordinator, left Australia in November 1993, and Ian Fraser has taken over the Hotline. The Hotline continues to be well used. Thank you to Richard for his contribution to COG.

Natural History Centre (NHC)

The NHC which COG established as an office and public outlet has now been operating for over a year and the Management Committee undertook an evaluation of its operation late in 1993. It has been decided to continue the NHC for another year. Generally the NHC has served a useful purpose as a convenient contact point for members, for Atlas sales and for public promotional purposes. However, in 1994 we would like to boost its use and more volunteers are needed to run it. We have been fortunate to secure a small government grant for 1994 to subsidise the cost of running the NHC.

The NHC was very capably managed by Sarah Thomas until she left Australia to return to the UK in November 1993. Wally Brown and Gwen Hartican then took

over as joint managers of the NHC. Graham Browning did an excellent job of cataloguing the COG Library. There is good reference material in the Library, including bird lists from various localities and members are encouraged to use the facility. Thank you to all the volunteers who have worked in the NHC this year.

Records and Database Management

In 1993, a new Subcommittee (Grahame Clark - Chair, David McDonald - Secretary, Reid McLachlan, Tony Harding, Ian Baird and Ken MacLeay) was set up to manage COG's newly developed database. There has been much work done by Malcolm Fyfe and Ian Baird to get COG's paper records on to computer. Malcolm Fyfe deserves particular thanks for his work as Records Officer.

A user-friendly data input program has been developed by Tony Harding to enable interested members to undertake data-entry tasks of COG bird records.

In 1993, COG has been able to respond to a number of external requests for bird data for various Environmental Impact Studies and similar requests. I am hopeful that, in the future, COG will be able to make a positive contribution to the conservation agenda, by providing comprehensive information from its records.

The COG Rarities Panel under Grahame Clark's Chairpersonship, with Sarah Martin doing a valuable job as Secretary, has quietly gone about its business of vetting and endorsing rare/unusual bird records and ensuring the endorsed lists are published in CBN. In 1993, Graeme Chapman, a long time member of the panel retired, and Brendan Lepschi joined other panel members, (Barry Baker, Mark Clayton and Bruce Male).

Environment and Conservation

In 1993, the Conservation Subcommittee (Bruce Lindenmayer - Chair, Ian Fraser, Bill Handke, David Pfanner and Phillip Veerman) continued to handle conservation matters on COG's behalf. COG was able to provide submissions to the Parliamentary Committee on feral pests and the National Botanic Gardens Management Plan.

COG also assisted Society for Growing Australian Plants in lobbying the ACT Government to change its policy of planting predominately exotic, deciduous trees in the new suburbs of Gungahlin, to ensure that native species are planted adjacent to Reserves and in potential wildlife corridors.

The ACT Government has agreed on the final boundaries for the Mulligan's Flat Nature Reserve, (which COG and other groups proposed in 1992) and the draft variation to the Territory Plan to secure the reserve was released for public comment in March 1994. COG will maintain its interest in the future management of Mulligan's Flat.

Publications

Barbara Allan has continued to edit the Newsletter *Gang-gang* maintaining high quality standards. David Purchase and Grahame Clark continued their good work as editors of COG's Journal. *Canberra Bird Notes*. 1993 'saw the long awaited revision and publication of the fourth edition of the *Field List of Birds of the Canberra Region*. This is a useful pocket guide and has been produced in colour this time. Particular thanks are due to the editing team which revised the text and tables (Grahame Clark, Malcolm Fyfe and Brendan Lepschi), and to the publication team (Paul Fennell, Robin Smith, Tony Lawson and Ron Butters).

Jenny Bounds, 8 April 1994

OUT AND ABOUT

G. Tibicen

The views expressed in "Out and About" do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc.

The Dodo *Raphus cucullatus*, which once inhabited the island of Mauritius, has always had a bad press. Not only has it been depicted as stupid, but also as overweight and slow. The stupidity arose from the fact that evolution had not equipped the Dodo to deal with starving sailors and introduced rats, pigs and monkeys. As a large ground-nesting bird it succumbed quickly to the above factors and was extinct by the end of the 17th century. However, was the bird overweight and slow? Recent work by Andrew Kitchener, a curator at the Royal Museum of Scotland, has suggested that it was not.

Andrew recently assessed the bone structure of the Dodo and looked at sketches made of living birds in the wild, as opposed to paintings of captive birds. His findings brought him to the conclusion that it was not overweight and slow. but lithe and active (from the reconstructed drawings something like a Brush Turkey with a large head). However, no doubt Dodos will continue to be depicted as large fat birds since it is very hard to change a well established belief, even if it is a myth.

The name Dodo comes from the Dutch *doddaersen* ("round bottoms") because they did have a well padded posterior.

The issue of lead poisoning in waterfowl is one I have written about before. Last year, in the March issue of *Wingspan*, the RAOU Conservation Committee produced an article covering the Australian experience. The article summarised the situation as it then stood in regard to the use of lead shot. State by State. I include that summary for the interest of readers who have not already seen it.

New South Wales. No restrictions on lead shot and no plan to introduce any in the near future.

Northern Territory Following the measurement of unacceptable lead levels as well as deaths of Magpie Geese from lead poisoning there will be restrictions on the use of lead shot at three out of the four hunting reserves. There are no plans at present to extend the restrictions to other areas such as aboriginal land.

Queensland No present restrictions. The Department of Environment and Heritage is formulating a conservation plan regarding recreational hunting of waterfowl. It is possible that this will include a ban on lead shot from 1994 onwards.

South Australia Because of severe poisoning at Bool Lagoon, the use of lead shot is banned there. A general statewide ban on the use of lead shot in duck shooting planned for 1993 will probably be postponed until 1994 to allow hunters to use up existing stocks of lead cartridges and change or proof old guns not considered usable for steel shot.

Tasmania A report recommending a phase-out of lead shot has not been acted upon by the Minister following opposition from shooters. The situation is under review and it is possible a phase-out will be implemented in 1994.

Victoria The change of government aborted a planned phase-out of lead shot. The situation was again to be reviewed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Western Australia The ban on recreational duck shooting means that one important source of wetland pollution has been removed.

I find the different responses made to this problem by the states somewhat incongruous. Australia is involved in several international agreements and treaties designed to protect migratory birds that move from one country to another, and their habitats. It is incredible that, despite playing this role on the international stage, Australia is unable to achieve uniform agreement on the action to be taken that will protect species such as ducks which move between states within Australia itself.

Last year in *Canberra Bird Notes* there was an article about the sighting of an "Italian" sparrow in Canberra. This raises in my mind two interesting questions. Can those people who observed this bird "tick" the record on their life list? Is this a "first" record for Australia? After all, if the bird is the same species and it looks identical to an Italian sparrow, is it an Italian sparrow and can it be counted as such? Could an experienced "twitcher" please enlighten me why this bird was not an Italian sparrow? It was wild, the right species (*Passer domesticus*) and it looked like the subspecies (*italiae*). Is there someone out there who can answer this vitally important question for any right minded tinker?

COMPUTER SOFTWARE REVIEW

The Aussie Bird Watcher's Log Book by Budgie Systems (1992). Available from: Andy Carnahan, Unit 14, 197 Pacific Highway, Lindfield, NSW 2070.

This program provides a simple way for a bird enthusiast to compile and store a log book of personal sightings on a computer. No great experience of computers is required, and the small number of commands needed to use it can quickly be learnt.

The program is designed for IBM PCs or compatibles, and may be run directly under DOS or under DOS invoked from Windows. It requires about 500 kb of free disk space. It does not use a mouse.

Upon starting the program, the main screen presents two panels, left and right listing the common name and the taxonomic name respectively of each bird in the RAOU listing. By selecting either panel and entering the first few letters of the bird name required, the cursor will be placed over the first bird name to fit the letters entered. The Up/Down cursor keys can then be used to select the name required.

If a spelling error is made, the program beeps at you and then starts the search again beginning with the letter after the error. After a little practice the wanted bird can be found easily and quickly. The process is assisted by the listing of many birds twice, e.g. Magpie, Australian or Australian Magpie.

After selecting the correct name, pressing ENTER **will show you the options** to Add or View a sighting. After selecting the View option one can edit or delete entries from the Log.

The main screen is always accessible by entering ESC one or more times, and a help line near the bottom of the screen gives a brief indication of the action which will occur when you make a selection. The F1 key will display a simple help file, and the F10 key gives you the choices for printing.

As the program is quite compact. it could be used on a notebook type computer in the field, thus avoiding filling out data sheets or notebooks, although some people may regard typing into a computer as an even greater labour! At least it would avoid rewriting or retyping the data again at home, and once data is on disk the potential exists to sort in a variety of ways or combine it with data from other sources

It should be noted that this program provides no sorting facilities other than allowing the operator to view or print the logbook entries in alphabetical order. or all the entries for a particular bird species.

A few minor technical defects must be mentioned. To install the program it is necessary to select the A: drive first. Entering A:install from the C: drive will not install the program correctly. Upon exit the program does not return the screen to its previous colours. Some users may wish that entering F1 for help would work at all times, not just when the main screen only is active, particularly as the instruction to use F1 is always visible.

No indication is given as to the exact function of the index option on the F10 menu, other than to select it if the program "behaves erratically", nor is the number of sightings which the program can store given.

Overall I think this is an excellent program. It does a simple job well in a straightforward manner. My only reservation would be whether the information that can be stored for each sighting is a bit too restricted. Something like what was required for the Combined Bird Clubs Currawong Count would encourage people to record more details if they have obtained them. Maybe the author could be prevailed upon to produce a version for COG's Data Sheet!

Ken Macleay

ACT BIRDWATCHERS HOTLINE

Telephone 247 5530

An up-to-date five minute recorded message with interesting news such as returning migrants, rarities, meetings, outings, and bargains for bird-watchers in Canberra. twenty-four hour service regularly up-dated.

RARITIES PANEL NEWS

The most unusual record in this report is the Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis* at Lake Bathurst. This bird is uncommon in Australia as a whole and not just in our region. Therefore, rather than assessing the record ourselves we forwarded the details to the Records Appraisal Committee of the RAOU who assess unusual records on a national basis. In the case of national significance we believe the RAOU Records Appraisal Committee should be the paramount body, not the local Rarities Panel.

The most interesting record on a local basis is the breeding record of Regent Honeyeaters *Xanthomyza phrygia* at the Norwood Park Crematorium. It seems these birds breed in our area on an occasional basis.

The itinerant Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* turned up again this year after missing last year, and there is another winter record of a White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*. There are also still a few records of Long-billed Corellas *Cacatua tenuirostris* and Little Corellas *C. sanguinea*. The records of a single Turquoise Parrot *Neophema pulchella* could have been a bird moving through our area as it appeared to be in the "correct" habitat. On the other hand it may have escaped from an aviary.

There continue to be occasional records of Red-capped Robins *Petroica goodenovii* in the area below the Scrivener Dam extending down to the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre.

Finally, an interesting record was forwarded to the Rarities Panel of an unusually coloured Eastern Spinebill *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*. This record has been filed with our other records and is available for members to look at if they wish.

RARITIES PANEL ENDORSED LIST NO 38

Spotted Harrier

1; 13 Mar 93; M.Butterfield; Grid L14.

Black Falcon

1; January 92; T. Ross; Paddys River on road to Tidbinbilla Tracking Station.
1; January 92; T. Ross; 5 km N. of Hall.

Ruddy Turnstone

1; 7 Oct 93; J. Nicholls; western half Lake Bathurst.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

1; 7-16 Jan. 27 Feb 93; M. Lenz, R. Thomas; E. side Lake Bathurst.

Peaceful Dove

11; 1 Apr 91; B. Lepschi; "Kirawin" area 15.5 km ENE Wee Jasper.
2; 17 Jan 94; M. Fyfe; Tumut road, 2 km S. Wee Jasper (Grid A10).

Long-billed Corella

1; 8 Feb 93; J. Nicholls; Canberra Grammar School, Red Hill.

Little Corella

2; 2 Dec 92; J. Nicholls; Canberra Grammar School, Red Hill.
2; 31 Aug 93; J. Nicholls; Canberra Grammar School, Red Hill.

Superb Parrot

1; 27 Sep, 15 Oct 92; M. Ormay; Clifford Crescent, Melba.
2; 1 Jan 94; B. Anderson; Bamford Street, Hughes (Grid K15).

Turquoise Parrot

1; 9 Oct 93; R. Smith; Campbell Park.
1; 10 Oct 93; I. McMahon; Campbell Park.

Common Koel

1; 27,28,29 Nov 93; J. Bissett; Bendigo Street & Namatjira Drive, Fisher.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike

1; 20, 26 Jul, 4 Aug 93; H. Perkins; Andamooka Street, Fisher.

Red-capped Robin

1; 15 Aug 93; E. Tulip; S. of Southwells Crossing, Molonglo River.
1; 4 Dec 93; E. Tulip; Deeks Drive, Stromlo Forest, 400 m S. Southwells
Crossing.

Black-faced Monarch

2; 24 Oct 93; N. Luff et al.; Marble Arch.

Little Friarbird

6; 6 Dec 93; J. Bounds; Mulligans Flat.

Regent Honeyeater

2 adults; 4 Jan 94; M. Clayton; Norwood Park Crematorium, Gungahlin.
1 adult; 10 Jan 94; M. Clayton; Norwood Park Crematorium. Gungahlin.
2 adults & 3 dependent young; 11, 12, 13 Jan 94; M. Clayton; Norwood Park.
Crematorium, Gungahlin.
1; 19 Jan 94; B. Lindenmayer. Norwood Park Crematorium, Gungahlin.
1; 20, 23 Jan 94; J. Bounds et al.; Norwood Park Crematorium,
Gungahlin. 2 adults & 1 juvenile feeding independently; 27 Jan 94; J.
Bounds et al.;
Norwood Park Crematorium, Gungahlin.
1 juvenile; 29 Jan 94; J. Bounds et al.; Norwood Park Crematorium,
Gungahlin.

Escapees

Cockatiel

1; 19 Oct 93; M. Clayton; CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology,
Gungahlin.

Yellow Rosella

1; 4 Sep 89; T. Ross; north of Radio 1 building, Gungahlin Hill.

Records noted by the Rarities Panel

Brown Quail

4; 26 Mar 93; M. Butterfield; E. side of Lake Ginninderra.
1; 26 Dec 93; J. Bissett; Kellys Swamp, Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

Little Lorikeet

6; 14 Jan 94; B. Lepschi; Old Canberra House, ANU. Acton.

Eastern Spinebill (unusually coloured)

1; 10, 12 Jul 93; J. Barr; Lalor Street (10/7) and Hannan Crescent (12/7).
Ainslie.

Common Myna

1; 17 Oct 93; D. McDonald; Booroomba Road, near track leading to
southern/eastern sides of Castle Hill.

(Continued from inside front cover)

<i>Publications</i>	Tony Lawson	264 3125 288 9430
<i>Records Officer</i>	Malcolm Fyfe	254 3310
<i>Shopfront Managers</i>	Wally Brown	--
	Gwen Hartican	281 3622
<i>Waterbird Survey,</i> <i>Coordinator</i>	Michael Lenz	246 4143 249 1109

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Malcolm Fyfe.

Shopfront Management Subcommittee:

Paul Fennell (Convener - 254 1804). Wally Brown, Bob Ecclestone (FNAC), Pat Muller, Gwen Hartican.

Production and distribution of *Canberra Bird Notes*:

Typing: Louise Russell

Camera-ready Copy: Cedric Bear

Printing: Lowes - Printer

Distribution: Ann McKenzie and helpers

Annual Subscriptions for 1994 are: Student (18 years of age and younger) \$15.00; Individual \$25.00; Family \$25.00; Institutions \$25.00. All receive one copy of *Canberra Bird Notes*.

Canberra Bird Notes is published quarterly by the Canberra Ornithologists Group. Contributions are welcome. These should fit into one of the following categories: major articles (up to about 3000 words); short notes and "Odd Obs" (up to about 300 words); reviews of books and articles (up to about 500 words); and where to watch birds (up to about 800 words). The articles and notes should cover matters of the distribution, identification, and behaviour of birds in the Australian Capital Territory and surrounding area (i.e. New South Wales coast north to Jervis Bay, and west to the Riverina). Contributions can be sent to the editors c/o David Purchase, 5 Orchard Place, Melba, ACT 2615 (Tel 258 2252).

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(Printed April 1994)