



CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

AUGUST '87

Vol 12:7

#126

OLIVE WHISTLER AT SPRING GULLY

The first of the Tuesday afternoon excursions proved to be memorable. The weather was inclement, and Spring Gully was chosen as the excursion locality because of its fairly sheltered position. A surprising number of birds were seen, but the highlight was the sighting of an Olive Whistler by two of the party.

Olive Whistlers are similar in size and shape to the much more locally common and showy Golden Whistler, and has a similar whitish throat. The upper parts, however, are olive, and the underneath parts are buff-grey.

Olive Whistlers are generally found south of the divide, and along the coast as far as Queensland. Habitat is in tall wet forest, woodland and alpine heath. A number of Olive Whistlers were seen by Club members near Falls Creek earlier this year. Olive Whistlers are believed to migrate to lower altitudes during winter, so the birds at Spring Gully could possibly be residents of Falls Creek, and have been seen by the same observers!

A check of the Bendigo Field Naturalists booklet, "The Birds of The Bendigo District" shows that Olive Whistler is not included.

Some of the other interesting birds seen during the excursion were

Flame Robins - a small flock, with bright flame breasts.

Scarlet Robins with contrasting scarlet breasts.

Hooded Robin - quite tame, and sitting on a nearby fence.

Maned Geese - a small flock.

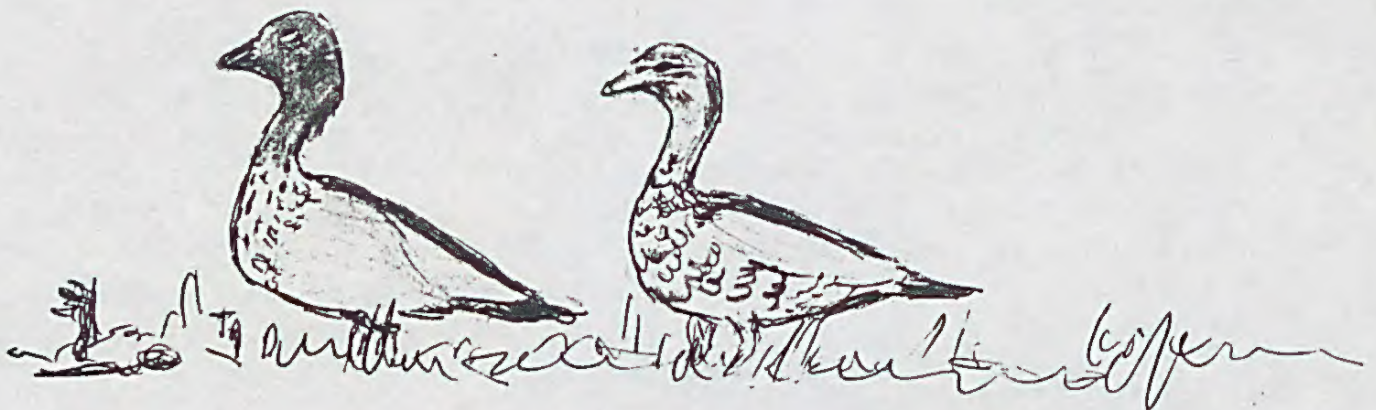
Whiteface - several seen - a new Spring Gully record.

Crested Shrike-tit - another new record for Spring Gully.

White-plumed Honeyeater - a single specimen seen, and a new record.

Little eagle - one observed moving quickly in the wind.

The creek bed at Spring Gully has some fine Silver Wattle, just coming into flower. It will be a place to visit in a few weeks when they are in full bloom. Two additions to the locality plant list were Wiry Mistletoe (quite common on some of the wattles) and the introduced Large-flowered Wood Sorrel.



JUNE/JULY OBSERVATIONS FROM BARKERS CREEK

Fox making off with someone's chook in broad daylight.

Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo calling (1st week in June).

First few Golden Wattle blossoms (1st week in June).

Coral fungus up.

various Honeyeaters enjoying the Pincushion Hakea flowers.

Brown and gold bracket fungi on tree trunks.

Masses of large funnel-shaped fungi under pines (Saffron milk-caps?) (Yes. Ed.)

Red Iron-barks flowering, attracting Wattlebirds and other Honeyeaters.

Fairy Wax coming into bloom.

Sarsparilla flowering.

Scarlet Robin hen, Brown, and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters all plucking at wool on sunny days - preliminary display?

Plovers calling as they fly over at night/

Mountain Grevillea in flower.

Little Pied Cormorant at waterhole.

Cootamundra Wattles flowering.

Common Hovea in flower.

Golden Bronze Cuckoo calling (3rd week in July).

First Dwarf Greenhoods in bud.

First Scented Sundew flower opening.

Wyn Palmer

WESTERN VICTORIAN FIELD NATURALISTS CLUBS ASSOCIATION

CAMPOUT 28TH - 30TH AUGUST 1987

LITTLE DESERT LODGE (053) 91 5232

Program and Activities (Pick one of the following six activities each half day). Participants arrive Friday evening or Saturday morning. Please advise Maureen or Wimpey Reichelt of your expected time of arrival.

Friday afternoon - Wander through the Lodge grounds at your leisure.

Friday evening - Dinner (booking necessary) and conviviality around the open dining room fireplace. Lodge has BYO licence and cool room for storage.

Saturday morning - 9.00 to 9.30 a.m. start for planned activities.

- 1 Walk guided by Wimpey to Lodge mallee fowl aviary. See birds working and feeding. Adjacent mallee scrub area with mallee birds.
- 2 Ranger guided walk from Lodge to National Park Stringybark walk and loop. See mallee and heath vegetation, wildflowers and birds. Pamphlet supplied.
- 3 Guided walk with Ranger at National Park Campground through vegetation types different to the above. Red gum swamp, yellow gum area as well as mallee and heath. Great variety of birds. Pamphlet. Requires a short drive of 20 km in your vehicle.
- 4 Half-day guided Tour by 4 WD bus to the Central Block of the Little Desert. See Red gum swamps and sandstone outcrop area known as The Crater. \$13.00 per person - minimum 5 passengers. To be booked Friday evening.

Saturday afternoon - about 1.30 p.m. start. Choose one:

- 2 Stringybark walk and loop (as above).
- 4 4 WD tour (as above) to be booked Friday evening or Saturday morning.
- 5 Guided walk by Wimpey around private mallee fowl scrub block. See mounds in various soil and vegetation types. Good bird area. Requires short drive of 10 km in your vehicle.
- 6 Ranger guided walk around original Lowan Sanctuary. (Now part of Little Desert National Park). Part unburnt for 90 years, now over-mature vegetation, causing mallee fowl to move out. Pamphlet. Requires drive of 15 km in your vehicle.

Saturday Night

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 7.00 p.m. | W.V.F.N.C.A. meeting |
| 8.00 p.m. (approx) | Eileen Courtney will launch the Wimmera Study Area book, "The Distribution and Conservation of Vascular Plants in the Wimmera" by A C Beaglehole, O.A.M. |
| 8.30 p.m. (approx) | Evening program, Horsham Club. Audio - visual slide presentation, "Some Victorian Orchids" by acclaimed nature photographer Mr Con Kroker, A.P.S.A. Includes slides of several native orchids now possibly extinct. |

Sunday morning - 9.00 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. start. Choose one of the following.

- 1 Mallee fowl aviary (as above).
- 3 National Park campground walk (as above).
- 4 4 WD tour (as above). To be booked Friday evening or Saturday.
- 6 Sanctuary walk (as above).

Campout concludes after lunch

DON'T FORGET TO BRING BINOCULARS AND CAMERAS TO ACTIVITIES

Alternative activities

Optional extra three-quarter or full day 4 WD tours can be arranged if required, Minimum 5 passengers. Three quarter day \$17.00, full day \$20.00, both including lunch.

Drive yourself to Mt Arapiles or Jane Duff Reserve or visit on the way home Sunday afternoon. Information and directions available.

Personal bush rambles with plenty of opportunity for bird and flower photography.

From "Habitat", April 1983.

Birds and Trees in Rural Victoria.

"The importance if the ecological micro-habitat can be observed along disused roadways and waterways where significant scrub or understory vegetation still exists. Here strong populations of small birds were evident and the vegetation showed insignificant tree decline. This is in marked contrast to the scattered single stand of trees which harboured almost no bird life and were under heavy attack [from insects]. Hence small birds, encouraged by water and relatively dense understory vegetation appear to be a key factor in the control of insect pests and hence the decline of trees." Robert Campbell.

From "The Bird Observer" July '87

HELP WANTED

"Rehabilitation of Sick and Injured Birds

"I am preparing notes on the rehabilitation of birds for a Refresher Course for Veterinarians on Fauna (No3) being organised by the Post-Graduate Committee in Veterinary Science, University of Sydney, for 15-19th February, 1988.

"I should appreciate help from any B.O.C. members who have information on:

*published material, reference lists, etc. which may be useful

*personal experiences on attempts to rehabilitate wild birds

*the existence and identity of similar interest groups

*the identity of any other sources of help for me and others in the future who may be involved in bird rehabilitation

*places suitable for release of partly incapacitated birds, such as protected lakes, private or public aviaries and nature reserves

*names of anyone involved in species specific captive breeding programmes of endangered and otherwise threatened species: and especially if this is with the intent of subsequent release of healthy stock back into the wild.

"I am also trying to gather information on disease, injuries and rehabilitation of cuckoos in Australia.

"Ross A Perry, 74 Cooyong Road, Terrey Hills, N.S.W. 2084 "

I am sure that Mr Perry would welcome help from any Field Nat who has information, as well as B.O.C. members! Ed.

NOTES FOR JULY

KOALA AT SANDON. E. Perkins reported a koala ambling across the Newstead-Creswick road at the Sandon Forest on July 9th. K. Turner said that a Koala had been seen crossing the road at the base of the Gisborne hill.

LITTLE EAGLE had been observed by R. Mills at the pine plantation at Barkers Creek on July 8 and 9th.

PARADOXICAL ACACIA PARADOXA. F. Blake exhibited an unusual sample of wattle from Kalimna. It was identified as *Acacia paradoxa* (the Hedge Wattle), but it had some unusual characteristics, such as longer and hooked "leaves", and conspicuous bracts in the buds, similar to those of the Rough Wattle. It was thought that it might be a hybrid between *A. paradoxa* and *A. aspera*.

GALL PIPE. An unusual gall at the end of an eucalypt twig was displayed by G. Evans. The whole had the appearance of a smoker's pipe, but the gall looked very like the cone of a Bull Oak.

ACACIAS IN FLOWER included Cootamundra Wattle, Rough Wattle, Golden Wattle, Bent Leaf Wattle (from Greytown), Deane's Wattle (from Mt Terrick), Gawler Range Wattle (from Kaweka) and Mt Morgan Wattle (from Kaweka)

OTHER SIGNS OF SPRING include Tall Greenhoods and Hovea in flower in Kalimna.

BIRD LIST ADDITIONS are for Sandon (s) and Muckleford Forest (m)

Brown Treecreeper	sm	White-winged Chough	s
Willy Wagtail	s	Chestnut-breasted Shelduck	s
Jacky Winter	s	Diamond Firetail	s
Kookaburra	s	Crimson Rosella	s
Cockatoo	s	Yellow-rump Thornbill	s
Australian Raven	s	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	s
Red-rump Parrot	s		

PLANT LIST ADDITIONS are for Sandon (Q), Muckleford (M) and Barkers Creek (L)

Spiny Rush (*Juncus acutus*) L
Variable Sword-sedge (*Iepidosperma laterale*) L
Saloop (*Rhagodia hastata*) Q
Red Ironbark (*Eucalyptus sideroxylon*) L
Bull-oak (*Casuarina luehmannii*) M

BASKET FUNGUS IN CASTLEMAINE have again made an appearance. Some come to attention each year or so.

93 MAGPIES AT MUCKLEFORD. A paddock with 93 magpies was noticed on 23rd July, at the corner of Muckleford School Road and the Muckleford-Walmer Road. There were a number of other magpies in the area. Would this be a congeation of local birds, or a nomadic group?

BIRD NEST RECORDS

A letter from the Roal Ornithologists Union asking for records about bird lists is included in this newsletter.

However, participants need to take extreme care. Even in an undisturbed environment, many nests, eggs and fledglings are lost because of predators. Interference (even by well-meaning people) can increase greatly the chance of disaster. As well, some parents will leave a nest if it is disturbed.

SUPPER ROSTER

Aug: T & B Collins Sept: R & M Holden
Oct: E. Duffin, B. Maund Nov: M & M Willis.

CASTLEMAINE TOWN PLAN

The club will make a submission to the City Council about the Town Plan. Main features of the submission are

*Kalimna bushland (excluding Gold Course and Kalimna Point) should be designmated as Wildflower Reserve, rather than open space.

*The triangle of land to the east of the High School has been designated as High School Extension. We recommend that it should be included as part of the Kalimna reserve.

*All of the Kalimna/Kaweka should be included in the Landscape area. In the current plan, only the eastern section is included.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1987

Pensioner/student	\$3	Single	\$5
Family	\$8	Supporting	\$12
Newsletter posted	Membership subscription plus \$5		



Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union

Headquarters: 21 Gladstone Street,
Moonee Ponds,
Victoria, 3039
Tel: (03) 370 1272

19 June 1987

Dear Mr. Perkins,

The Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union Nest Record Scheme aims to provide comprehensive data on the breeding biology of Australian birds. Although little such information is at present available the Nest Record Scheme (NRS) has, since its inception in 1963, begun to achieve similar success to that enjoyed by other schemes throughout the world. The breeding information in the scheme is used for research and management and can be particularly valuable as a tool for ecological and conservation studies. Several papers have been written based exclusively upon data from the scheme. All contributors to the scheme receive a Newsletter which outlines developments within the scheme and brief results of any analysis currently being carried out. Contributors can thus feel that their efforts will be put to good use.

In order to increase participation in the scheme all natural history groups such as your own are being contacted in the hope that you may be able to promote the scheme amongst your members. Any records, on any aspect of breeding activity; whether it be a complete account of a particular nest, or simply of nest building or the feeding of dependent young, is valuable and even one or two records per year are welcome.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could promote participation in the Nest Record Scheme amongst your members. If any member is particularly interested in the scheme we are also looking for Regional Representatives to organise and promote the scheme in their region, to act as an avenue of communication between NRS contributors in regional areas and the NRS Committee and to liaise with the NRS Committee where the scheme can assist in local conservation matters.

If we can assist with any further information please feel free to contact us. We look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

per NRS Committee RAOU

CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. AGENDA

Excursions leave promptly at the times shown. Date, time and locality of the excursion may be changed at the monthly meetings.

Monthly meetings at the High School at 8.00 p.m.

Fri 14 Aug BIRDS OF CASTLEMAINE DISTRICT with the Bird Observer Club slide set.

Sat 15 Aug WELSHMANS REEF/CAIRN CURRAN. Birding in the Seers Road area, led by K. Turner. Meet S.E.C, Mostyn St at 1.30

Fri 28 Aug-Sun 30 Aug LITTLE DESERT LODGE. August Campout of W.V.F.N.C.A. Book directly with Little Desert Lodge, Winiam, 053 915 232. Twin Room share \$28.50 per person per day; motel type \$35.00. 30 powered sites. Program includes guided and self guided walks in Little Desert, visits to Mt Arapiles, Mallee Fowl at work, etc. Details from the president.

Sat 12 Sept. MT TERRICK via Mitiamo. All day excursion. Leave S.E.C. at 9.30.

Sat 3 Oct. BRISBANE RANGES. All day excursion. Bring lunch, and possibly tea too. Leave S.E.C. Mostyn St, at 8.30 a.m. or Clarkes Road turnoff on Ballan-Anakie Rd at 10.30. Leader: Ted Errey of Geelong F.N.C.

Frid 9 Oct. CHINA with John Zwar.

Frid 9 - Sun 11 Oct. St ARNAUD CAMPOUT of W.V.F.N.C.A.

Sat 10 Oct. Bird Observer Club excursion to Bendigo.

Sat 10 Oct. MUCKLEFORD Meet S.E.C. at 1.30.

Frid 16 - Sun 18 Oct. RUSHWORTH CAMPOUT. Springtime get together of V.F.N.C.A. at Rushworth. Accomodation at Waranga Holiday Camp (camp building with bunks) or overnight vans. For bunks or meals book with Marie Allender (19 Hawthorn Av, Caulfield North 3161, 03 527 2749). For camp sites and vans book direct with Mr & Mrs Houghton (Waranga Holiday Camp, Tatura Rd, Rushworth, 058 66 1243). The campout will start with slides and social evening on Friday. There will be a Saturday excursion and a half-day Sunday excursion.

Sun 18 Oct MUCKLEFORD FOREST with Bendigo F.N.C. Meet Market Car Park at 10.00 a.m. Bring your lunch.

+++++

Tuesday afternoon excursions - meet 27 Doveton St at 1.30. Locality decided at the meeting place.