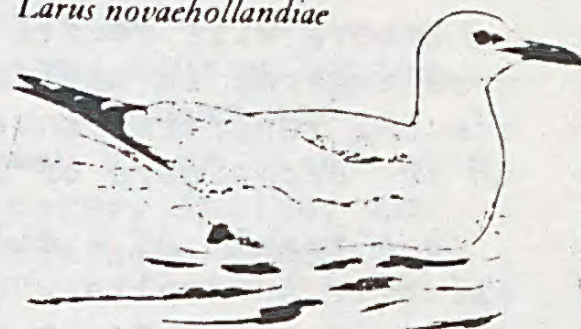


CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

March 1984

Silver Gull
Larus novaehollandiae



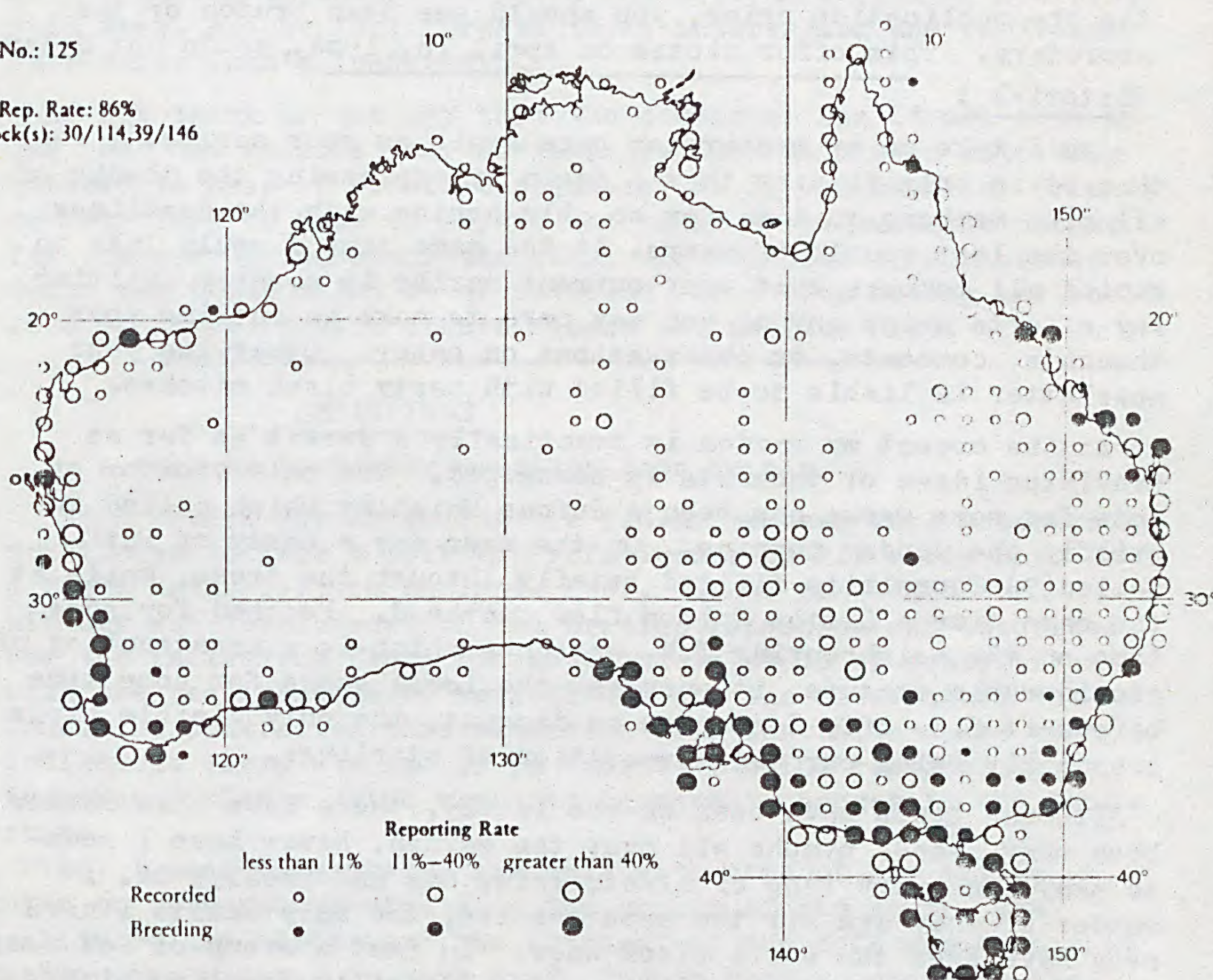
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THE ATLAS OF AUSTRALIAN BIRDS.

Atlas No.: 125

Max. Rep. Rate: 86%

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Special pre-publication offer. See over

Do you wish to save 20% ?

Members will recall that over an extended period, club members were engaged in making bird observations which were recorded on special reporting sheets which were then collated and forwarded to the organisers of "The Atlas of Australian Birds"

As a result of similar activities on the part of bird-watchers all over Australia who made nearly 2.75 million reports, the Atlas is about to be published, in fact in June, 1984.

As a special pre-publication offer, the Atlas is available to birdwatchers for \$39-00, whereas the normal retail price after publication will be \$49-00.

If you would like to secure yourself a copy of the Atlas at the pre-publication price, you should see Stan Bruton or the secretary. This offer closes on April 16, 1984, so do not delay

Editorial :

As I take up my typewriter once again as your scribe, I feel that it is only fitting that I begin by expressing the thanks of all club members to Rita for so ably coping with the deadlines, over the last couple of years. At the same time I would like to remind all members that your current scribe is eagerly awaiting any efforts which any of you may care to make in putting your thoughts, comments, or observations on paper. Otherwise your newsletter is liable to be filled with nasty blank patches.

At the moment my garden is practically a desert as far as providing ideas or thoughts is concerned. The only visitor of note for some weeks has been a Rufous Whistler which called in briefly one Sunday morning. On the same day a party of Buff-tailed(?) Thornbills flitted briefly through the trees, while at the same time a Little Falcon flew overhead. Perched for some time on the neighbouring T.V. antennae which is a construction of considerable stature, it surveyed the local scene for some time before it flew off, I suppose in disgust, the only visible birds presumably being our own murmuration of starlings.

Although birds have been scarce lately, there have this summer been many cicada nymphs all over the garden. Never have I seen so many, on every type of plant, Iris, Oak and Eucalyptus. I wonder if they are all the same species, the only adults I have seen have been the small black ones. In fact a group of Red gums I visited one day on the Coliban were literally crawling with them, and needless to say the sound was deafening. The other main comment is that my lawn and garden has lately been full of holes, the type of mysterious dark hole which has 8 bright spider eyes shining up from the bottom.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The February meeting of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club was also the Annual meeting of the club. Retiring office - bearers, President George Broadway and Secretary Audrey Bruton were replaced by newcomers to the committee, John Dare and Beres Perry. Treasurer Frank Myer and Librarian Frank Blake have agreed to carry on in those roles a little longer. Another new member of the committee is Barbara Dare who has been nominated so that she can keep an eye on husband John.

In his annual report and address before conducting the election, retiring president George made a plea for members to come forward and offer themselves for election as the club is in need of new ideas and the committee membership has been fairly static over the years since the foundation of the club. It is therefore very pleasing to note that there has been an influx of new blood this year, and we look forward to an interesting and rewarding year under John's leadership.

Do not think by the way that the committee has it all sewn up and does not require your assistance. We are always extremely pleased to hear of possible speakers, so if you have any friends or relatives or know of anyone who might prove suitable please let someone on the committee know. If you know of any places which you think might be of interest for a club outing and would like to share it with others please let us know also.

BEGINNINGS

A talk by Professor emeritus John Turner.

As a reward for attending the A.G.M. members were afterwards privileged to hear a talk by Prof. Turner on his early days as a Field Naturalist in England. Prof. Turner explained the history and development of the British landscape and described how the indigenous flora had come into a state of equilibrium with the requirements of agriculture and the clearing of the land. He contrasted this situation with Australia where the indigenous flora was and is in danger of being replaced by introduced plants which may make permanent changes to the landscape.

Prof. Turner illustrated his talk with some of his slides taken on more recent visits to the scenes of his youth. The quality of the slides and the interest of the talk was such that members are anxious to have Prof. Turner back to continue his talk at an early date.

CLUB PROGRAMME

Meetings :

Friday, March 9. Propagation of Native Plants

Speaker, Geoff Sitch.

Mr Sitch is an acknowledged expert in this field and is in great demand as a speaker on this and related topics at clubs and societies over a wide area. This month we are fortunate enough to have him address our own club. This will undoubtedly be a most entertaining and rewarding evening.

Outings : March 10. Creswick.

As the Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs Association is holding a campout at Creswick over the long weekend in March, we are going to take the opportunity to join in on the Saturday excursion. To arrive in time however we will need to leave from the S.E.C. building in Mostyn St, at 12 o'clock sharp.

Members may also wish to participate in campout activities on the Sunday and Monday.

Saturday, April 14; Lyonville. Leader, Stan Bruton.

A trip through the delightful Wombat Forest with vegetation characteristic of a wetter climate than Castlemaine. This trip includes a visit to the very pleasant Lyonville mineral spring and is to be lead by Stan Bruton who has been birding around this area for goodness knows how long.

Saturday and Sunday, 7 and 8 of April.

Western Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs Association Campout at Warrnambool. Those who have been to previous campouts at Warrnambool will know that this campout can be thoroughly recommended. Members who would like to have more details should contact the secretary.

Saturday , May 12. Mt Alexander.

On the western slopes of Mt Alexander there is an area known as "The Oak Forest". This is an area where a large variety of exotic species were planted by the Forest Commission some years ago, and is now a fascinating place to visit, particularly in the Autumn, when the late afternoon sun shines through the yellowing leaves, and a variety of fungi are usually to be found underfoot. Some of these are edible but perhaps it would be prudent to bring your afternoon snack with you.