

THE BIRD BANDER

Organ of The Bird Banders Association of N.S.W.

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PREAMBLE.

For some time past there has been a growing feeling among New South Wales banders that there should be some way for banders to get together to discuss progress, talk about mutual problems and in general compare notes about this and that.

While it is expected that most banders are Members of the R.A.O.U. the monthly meetings of this body in Sydney do not meet this need, and it was thought that there should be some means for banders to get together by themselves now and then.

Of course we have our regional organiser, in the person of Bill Lane, for liaison between New South Wales banders and the Head Office in Canberra, and after a little prompting from one or two of his friends, he arranged the meeting at Lane Cove on 24th March last, a report of which is given on page 3.

It was clear to everyone present that there was a demand for further meetings of the kind, to be held at more or less regular intervals, and a resolution was passed affirming this and authorising Bill Lane to co-opt a committee to discuss further arrangements.

When this committee put their heads together it was soon realised that the only way of maintaining satisfactory and continuous contact was to form a society or association, one of whose functions would be the circulation of bulletins or newsletters at regular intervals and another would be the holding of periodic meetings.

This then is the first number of the proposed newsletter and it is mainly concerned with presenting the reasons for the formation of such an association, and what we consider should be its aims and objects. It is hoped to issue further numbers of this newsletter at approximately quarterly intervals, and it is intended that it should serve for the exchange of information on all topics related to bird-banding, for the publication of bird notes and for any other items which might appeal to banders. It is felt that most banders will find something to say once they find their pens. Now read on - - - - -

## AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE N.S.W. BIRD BANDERS ASSOCIATION.

CLOSER CONTACT AMONGST BANDERS. The situation now is that each of us is in direct contact with the Headquarters of the Scheme in Canberra, but in a position of relative isolation as regards other banders. Publication of the names of individual banders and the work they do will provide opportunities for direct contact and exchange of information amongst individuals working on similar or related problems.

TRAPPING AND BANDING TECHNIQUES. Since bird-banding on a large scale is relatively new in this country, it is safe to assume that methods and equipment will be constantly evolving to meet the peculiar needs of the Australian birdlife and environment. The Association will seek to keep members abreast of the latest developments by means of its newsletters.

SUCCESS STORIES. Nothing succeeds like success and in a field like ours, where so many bands must be placed for each significant recovery, the successes of others can provide a tonic for faltering enthusiasm as well as imparting fascinating knowledge of the habits and lives of our birds. We feel that in this respect the Association can help its members to enjoy the fruits of our common labour.

WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO BAND. Most of us must have faced the problem of how to plan that annual leave or long week-end expedition so that the most effective banding will result. Collectively, banders must possess a formidable amount of information as to local and seasonal concentrations of various species and the conditions likely to be encountered in various parts of the State, favoured localities and so forth. This mutual fund of knowledge can be effectively shared through the medium of the Association, to the benefit of all.

SPECIAL STUDIES. From time to time ornithological problems arise which require a specialised study. In some cases these problems will be the direct outcome of initial banding results and will involve investigations posing fascinating challenges. By pointing up such mysteries in our paper, we hope to evoke the interest of individual banders in specific problems and thereby help to initiate deliberate campaigns directed to their solution.

REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS. Members' attention will be directed to as much as possible of the literature of bird-banding by reviews of books and articles on the subject. In some cases it may be possible to reprint material of particular value.

TO SUM UP. From the above it can be seen that we aim to stimulate the fellowship of banders as a group; to gather and distribute as much information as possible on the technique, results and literature of our common interest and to provide a mutual service which will assist us all.

#### REPORT OF FIRST MEETING OF N.S.W. BIRD-BANDERS.

A meeting of Bird-Banders and others interested, arranged by Bill Lane, the Regional Organiser for N.S.W., was held on 24th March, 1962 at the Old Council Chambers, Lane Cove, 43 persons were in attendance.

Bill, as Chairman, welcomed those present giving a special mention to -

Mr. Warren Hitchcock - Secretary of the Scheme  
Mr. Doug Gibson and Mr. Arthur Mothersdill, of Thirroul  
Mr. Bill Dowling of Dungog  
Mr. Jim Gray of Blackhalls Park  
Mr. Harold Brenton of Wyong  
and all the younger people present.

Apologies were received from -

Mr. Keith Hindwood  
Mr. Allan Strom - Chief Guardian of Fauna  
Mr. Michael Leslie of Adaminaby  
Mr. Hans Verboog of Jenolan  
Mr. and Mrs. Newbould of Oatley.

An extra special welcome was given to Mr. Jack Doyle who had offered to screen films for the meeting. Jack had selected two films and screen these using his own projector. The films were -

The Mutton Birds of Bass Strait  
Birds and Billabongs.

The first film dealt with aspects of the Mutton Bird Industry, Banding, Control and Conservation of the Shearwaters. An interesting point made in the film was that through the returning of bands taken from those chicks harvested it is estimated that upwards of 60% of the birds hatched are taken on the islands which have been commercialised. Despite this high percentage, the Shearwaters return in their millions every year and it has been proved that their greatest danger lies in the destruction of their habitat (e.g. by uncontrolled grazing of sheep) rather than by the inroads made on the population by the commercial interests.

The second film gave a brief but pleasing glimpse of some of the birds inhabiting the billabongs of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. There were many delightful shots of Magpie Geese, Green Pygmy Geese, Burdekin Ducks, Darters, Jacana (Lily Trotters) plus a host of others that had the audience enthralled.

The Chairman expressed sincere appreciation to Jack for obtaining and screening the films and was enthusiastically supported by those present.

Bill then presented an outline of the co-operative Silvereye banding scheme, bringing to notice some of the interesting developments which have occurred during the course of the study.

Bill had gone to great lengths to prepare charts showing data on numbers of birds banded, recovered, etc., together with an interesting range of skins showing the many plumages to be found in the species plus selected colour slides which were screened. All this material provided the basis for much lively discussion amongst those present.

General matters brought to the attention of the meeting included comments on the following subjects :-

1. Care in correct banding
2. Conservation
- 3/ Care in the use of mist nets
4. Control of sales of mist nets
- 5/ Proposed colour banding control

Banders, by now, should have received circulars from Canberra regarding these items.

Thanks were expressed to the following :-

- Durno Murray - for his assistance and guidance as Regional Organiser from the inception of the scheme.
- Joe Hewitt - for his assistance in producing the notices for the meeting.



S. G. LANE

Bill, who is "just beginning life at 40" is a clerical supervisor in the Sydney County Council and has been interested in birds for many years. He is a Member of the R.A.O.U. and the R.Z.S. and has been banding for over four years. In his spare time he is a Major in the C.M.F. Hon. Fauna Ranger.

C. B. CAMPION F.A.S.A.

Clive is 42 and is Secretary of Cottees Ltd. His interest in birds goes back a considerable number of years and he has more recently been associated with Bill on many banding escapades during the past four years. He is a Member of the R.A.O.U. and in addition is interested in dog breeding. Hon. Fauna Ranger.

B. CARTER

Brian, aged 27, studying accountancy and is Assistant Accountant with the Hartford Fire Insurance Company. Interested in birds from early years ("Mother helped trap 'Spadgers' in back yard when I was a five-year old") Member R.A.O.U. and R.Z.S., also Oatley Flora and Fauna Society. Hon. Fauna Ranger. Extra keen "nigger" fisherman.

R. G. LONNON B.Ec., A.A.S.A.

Ray is 26 and is a clerical officer with the Sydney County Council. He is a Member of the R.A.O.U. and has been a bander for nearly four years. He is currently studying Arts at night. Hon. Fauna Ranger.

A. M. GWYNN M.B., Ch.B.

Arthur, born and bred in the Emerald Isle. Started out as an entomologist in Africa; thought better of it and retired to study medicine. Later wandered again, this time to Antarctica, via Australia, where he counts himself no longer a bird of passage but a permanent resident. Now Deputy Editor of the Medical Journal of Australia. Member R.A.O.U.

H. J. de S. Disney M.A.(Cantab.)

John has extensive trapping and banding experience, began in 1935, in England, a drop trap on his house master's lawn, worked by a string from one of the prefect's windows. Later also used a clap net by day, bat-fowling nets by night, drag nets, and in East Africa banded 60,000 Weaver Finches (*Quelea* spp.) taken in funnel traps, etc. Recently appointed Curator of Birds at the Australian Museum, Sydney. Member R.A.O.U. and R.Z.S. of N.S.W., M.B.O.U.

If any bander in Sydney or visiting Sydney wishes to make any bird or banding enquiries, or contact other bird banders he only has to visit or ring the Museum and John Disney will do all he can to help him.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS. Now for the sting. It is hoped that all New South Wales Banders will support the Association by becoming members, and we invite their friends who may be interested to become associate members or junior members according to their status.

The three categories of membership are (a) Full membership, for those who are licensed banders; (b) Associate membership, for anyone else interested; (c) Junior membership, for those aged less than 18 years - this group we look to as the banders of the future. All categories of membership entitle the member to receive this newsletter - which it is proposed to bring out quarterly and to attend meetings. But to carry on these activities, it is felt that active banders might reasonably be asked to contribute initially a subscription of £1 per year (10/0 for the first half-year) to put the Association on it's feet. Postage and the costs of producing the newsletter (even though the work involved is contributed free) will absorb a substantial proportion of this. Later it is hoped that we may have the choice of reducing the subscription or expanding our activities (e.g. by purchase of equipment and/or support of group projects.

Subscriptions for associate membership is 12/6 per year (6/3 a half year), and for junior membership 7/6 per year (3/9 a half year). Those intending to join are asked to fill in the accompanying enrolment form and post it with a postal order or cheque for 6 or 18 months subscription, as for administrative reasons it is convenient to start the financial year on January 1st.

(Reprinted 1967)