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KALORI

JUNE '69



Conservation Society

Lower Blue Mountains Wildlife

CONSERVE, PRESERVE, INVESTIGATE, EDUCATE

Kalori is published monthly by and for the members of the Lower Blue Mountains Wildlife Conservation Society.

The aims of the Society are, briefly, to:-

1. Educate the members and the community to the cultural values of nature
2. Work for the reservation of areas of natural environment for the refuge and breeding of indigenous flora and fauna.
3. Carry out research into the distribution, population and species of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains.

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Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month in the Springwood Fire Station, commencing 8.00 p.m.

Bulletin No. 26

June 1969.

Our President has been sitting for examinations lately, hence his non-appearance at the May meeting. Let us hope he will soon be back at the helm, or between the shafts, depending on your view of a President's job.

Notice that we have a variety of articles this month. If you have anything to say, on any subject, let me have it; I especially invite our sister Societies for contributions.

A count was made on May 10th of plant species in the quadrats pegged on Campfire Creek. In each 19" square we found 11, 12 and 13 plant species. Many had just germinated and to our inexperienced eyes were unidentifiable, further, it looks as though more plants will appear before the next count. We will peg more quadrats in different habitats soon.

Next meeting 12th June.

G. Croghan.

Hon. Sec.

MANNA

A specimen of Eucalyptus was brought to a meeting recently and I've been asked to answer a few questions. On the leaves and in a bag were conical shaped white shells of an insect. They had been thick on the ground beneath the tree.

Is it manna? and does it appear only on this tree? I quote from A.R. Penfold

"The sweet-tasting "manna" associated with eucalypts is simply the lerp of such psyllids as common Sugar Lerp. Manna is massed thickly on the foliage and eventually falls to the ground."

The aboriginals also ate the sugary "exudations" observed on the leaves of some species, which they named "lerp" or "larp". Despite the study of this substance by early observers who described it as an exudation, it is now known that it is the scale of an insect belonging to a group called the "lerp-scale makers." The Common Sugar Lerp is probably the best known. The scales, which are white and conical, are often found in thick masses upon the buds and foliage of the eucalypts. They fall to the ground and are known by the popular name of "manna". The aborigines used them as food, and often make a sweet drink by steeping the tapioca-like masses in water. Bush children also relish them as sweets. The widely distributed *E.viminalis* derives its common name of "Manna Gum" from the considerable quantities of manna which are frequently found on its buds and leaves. Manna occurs spasmodically on many species of eucalypts such as *E. gummifera*, but not as consistently as on *E. viminalis* and the mallee species. An excellent cider can be prepared from the sap of *E. gunii*, sometimes called "Sugar Gum" on account of the sweetness of its leaves during springtime.

What is the name of the tree?

Without "Gum nuts" I cannot say for sure but its very probably Grey Box Eucalyptus moluccana previously called *hemiphloia*. This is the most common tree around Penrith-St. Marys. It does not grow on the Blue Mountains. It flowers in late summer and autumn. The honey produced from the tree is said to be amber-coloured, poor in density and candies readily. However in Victoria the flavour is said to be excellent, but farther north the honey is regarded as being of fair flavour only. (Penfold).

- Don Perrin.

On the Subject of Fire

Control Burning : Fire Trail System.

In a recent radio broadcast a description was given of method of control-burning in forests of the South Coast of New South Wales. It has been used for some years in Western Australia.

Called the Fire Trail System, it is a method of strip-burning. Fires are ignited by capsules dropped from a plane. The capsules contain permanganate of potash and before being dropped are injected with an infusion of glycerine. This causes ignition in a short while.

A plane flies in a straight line over the area selected for burning dropping the incendiaries at intervals of five to ten chains. It then returns on a parallel line some twenty chains or so from the first, continuing the process. Fire crews are detailed to watch the operation and act against fires if this becomes necessary.

Allowing for failure to ignite or failure to burn after ignition, it is considered that there is approximately 40% of the area burnt off, leaving 60% with original fuel content. Therefore the work is not complete fire prevention but a worthwhile reduction of fire hazard. Combustible areas of forest are so broken-up that an uncontrollable wild-fire cannot take hold.

Burning is done during Autumn or Spring (never Summer) and preferably Autumn when there is less likelihood of a sudden change to warmer weather. With weather growing cooler, burning is shorter.

It is estimated that this method of control is promoting regeneration of vegetation and fauna. Native life is increasing where it has been tried. The destruction of overgrown feed and promotion of regrowth of sweeter plant life is encouraging animal and bird life to inhabit these areas in greater numbers.

The cost of a recent exercise of this nature in the Brogo State Forest was said to be approximately 3 cents per acre. In some instances it has been 5 cents per acre; but it is generally thought that, with further experience it can well be kept at the 3 cent figure.

During this broadcast the question was asked whether the fires in the Blue Mountains last Summer could have been prevented had such strip burning been carried out here previously. The answer given was that fires would probably not have been completely prevented, but most surely would not have gained such force nor done so much damage.

Fellow conservationists, is this method worthy of consideration amongst our ideas of protection for the future?

The following list of birds and animals was compiled on a recent trip to the North Coast in company with Don Perrin. At the risk of boring readers, I am presenting this list for publication, as many of the northern species will perhaps not be familiar to everyone.

In addition to the live list, some of the wildlife road-toll were noted, and examples were Wombats, several of which had fallen victim to the inexorable motor-car along the Putty Road. A dead Fox further north however, did not evoke similar feelings of compassion.

By far the most interesting of the dead animals found was the Brush-tailed Phascagole, near Tabulam. This was of great interest to both Don and myself, as neither had previously seen this small arboreal carnivorous marsupial. Somewhat possum-like, it has very attractive soft blue-grey fur, and a non-prehensile tail with the unmistakable brush of long black hairs.

Some very interesting (live) sightings of birds were made, notable among them being the Glossy Black Cockatoo, Alberts Lyre bird (just a glimpse) the Red Crowned Pidgeon, often heard but usually difficult to locate, and probably best of all, the beautiful Paradise Rifle-bird, a rare sight even to local bushmen. This was a male bird, feeding on a berry-bearing tree in company with Satin Bower-birds and I was treated to a leisurely view of him preening his magnificent plumage after the meal.

By far the most interesting live animal seen was the Pretty-faced Wallaby, which sat up and gazed at us from the middle of the road at Pretty Gully.

In the following list, where the scientific name is not given, we are not sure of the exact species.

1. Indian Mynah	Yarramundi	<i>Acridothera trista</i>
2. Black-backed Magpie	"	<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>
3. Eastern Swamp-hen	"	<i>Porphyrio melanotus</i>
4. Little Pied Cormorant	"	<i>Microcarbo melanoleucus</i>
5. Welcome Swallow	"	<i>Mirundo neoxena</i>
6. Indian Turtle-dove	"	<i>Streptopelia suratensis</i>
7. Black Duck	"	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>
8. Spurwinged Plover	Richmond	<i>Lobibyx novae-hollandiae</i>
9. Peewee	"	<i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i>
10. House Sparrow	"	<i>Passer domesticus</i>

11. Egret	Windsor	-
12. Coot	"	<i>Fulica atra</i>
13. Kookaburra	Roberts Creek	<i>Dacelo gigas</i>
14. Willy Wagtail	" "	<i>Rhipidura leucophrys.</i>
15. Tree Martin (Swallow)	Colo Heights	
16. Noisy Miner	Megalong Range	<i>Myzantha melanocephala</i>
17. Pied Currawong	" "	<i>Strepera graculina</i>
18. Crow	" "	
19. Hawk	" "	
20. Lewin Honeyeater	Putty	<i>Meliphaga lewini</i>
21. White-necked Heron	Bulga	<i>Notophyx pacifica</i>
22. White-winged Chough	Singleton	<i>Corcorax melanorhamphus</i>
23. Straw-necked Ibis	"	<i>Threskiornis spinicollis</i>
24. Nankeen Kestrel	Scone	<i>Falco cenchroides</i>
25. Noisy Friar-bird	West of Scone	<i>Philemon corniculatus</i>
26. Red Wattle-bird	" "	<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>
27. Eastern Rosella	" "	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>
28. Peaceful Dove (heard)	" "	<i>Geopelia placida</i>
29. Galah	South of Tamworth	<i>Kakatoe rosiecapilla</i>
30. Starlings	" "	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
31. Crested Pidgeon	" "	
32. Cockattiel (Quarrian)?	" "	
33.6 Wallabies (at night)	Moonbi Range	<i>Wallabia dorsalis?</i>
34. 8 Wallabies (morning)	" "	" "
35. Grey Butcher-bird	" "	<i>Cracticus torquatus</i>
36. Wattle-bird	" "	
37. Spotted Pardalote (heard)	" "	<i>Pardalotus punctatus</i>
38. White-eared Honeyeater	" "	<i>Meliphaga leucotis</i>
39. Parakeets	" "	
40. Crimson Rosella	" "	<i>Platycercus elegans</i>
41. White-fronted Heron	McDonald Ranges	<i>Notophyx novae hollandia</i>
42. Wood Swallow	South of Uralla	<i>Artamus cyanoptens</i>
43. Hoary-headed Grebe	Armidale	<i>Podiceps podioce phalus</i>
44. Maned Goose (35 birds)	Glen Innes	<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>
45. Jacky Winter	Boonoo Boonoo Falls	<i>Microeca fascinans</i>
46. Little Wattle Bird	" " "	<i>Anthochaera chrysoptera</i>
47. Eastern Spinebill	" " "	<i>Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris</i>
48. Scarlet Robin	" " "	<i>Petroica multicolor</i>
49. Grey Kangaroo (14 animals)	" " "	<i>Macropus major</i>
50. King Parrot	" " "	<i>Aprosmictus scapularis</i>
51. Pied Butcher-bird	Legume	<i>Cracticus nigrogularis</i>
52. Grey-crowned Babbler	"	<i>Pomastomus temporalis</i>
53. Red-browed Finch	Koreelah	<i>Aegintha temporalis</i>
54. Glossy Black Cockatoo	Paddys Flat	<i>Calyptrorhynchus lathamii</i>
55. Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo	" "	<i>Calyptrorhynchus funereus</i>
56. Pretty-faced Wallaby	Pretty Gully	<i>Wallabia parryi</i>
57. Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	" "	<i>Coracina novae-hollandiae</i>

58. Whip Bird	Paddys Flat	<i>Psophodes olivaceus</i>
59. Falcon	Pretty Gully	
60. Yellow Robin	Cherry-tree Forest	<i>Eopsaltria australis</i>
61. Brown Thornbill	Tabulam	<i>Acanthiza pusilla</i>
62. Ground Lark	Paddys Flat	<i>Anthus australis</i>
63. White Ibis	" "	<i>Threskiornis mollucca</i>
64. Blue Wren	Byrell Ck.	<i>Malurus cyaneus</i>
65. Little Grebe	Byangum	<i>Podiceps ruficollis</i>
66. Cuckoo	Mt. Warning	
67. Topknot Pidgeon	" "	<i>Lopholaimus antarticus</i>
68. Silver-eye	" "	
69. Grey Fantail	" "	<i>Rhipidura flabelli fera</i>
70. Albert Lyrebird	" "	<i>Menura alberti</i>
71. Red-crowned Pidgeon	" "	<i>Ptilinopus regina</i>
72. Pademelon	" "	
73. Satin Bower-bird	Tyalgum	<i>Ptilonorhynchus violaceus</i>
74. Yellow-faced Honeyeater	"	<i>Meliphaga chrysops</i>
75. Pied Currawong	"	<i>Strepera graculina</i>
76. Brown Thornbill	"	<i>Acanthiza pusilla</i>
77. Fig Bird	"	<i>Sphecotheres vielloti</i>
78. Brown Pidgeon	"	<i>Macropygia phasianella</i>
79. Paradise Rifle-bird	"	<i>Ptiloris paradiseus</i>
80. Scrub Turkey	"	<i>Alectura lathami</i>
81. Golden Whistler	"	<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>
82. Northern Yellow Robin	"	<i>Eopsaltria pectoralis</i>
83. Pale Yellow Robin	"	<i>Eopsaltria capito</i>
84. White-throated Tree-creeper	"	<i>Climacteris laevigaster</i>
85. Buffbreasted Scrubwren	Tyalgum	<i>Sericornis laevigaster</i>
86. Blue-faced Honeyeater	Paddy's Flat	<i>Entomyzon cyanotis</i>
87. Platypus	Tyalgum	<i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>

Keith King