



NATURE TERRITORY

May 2008

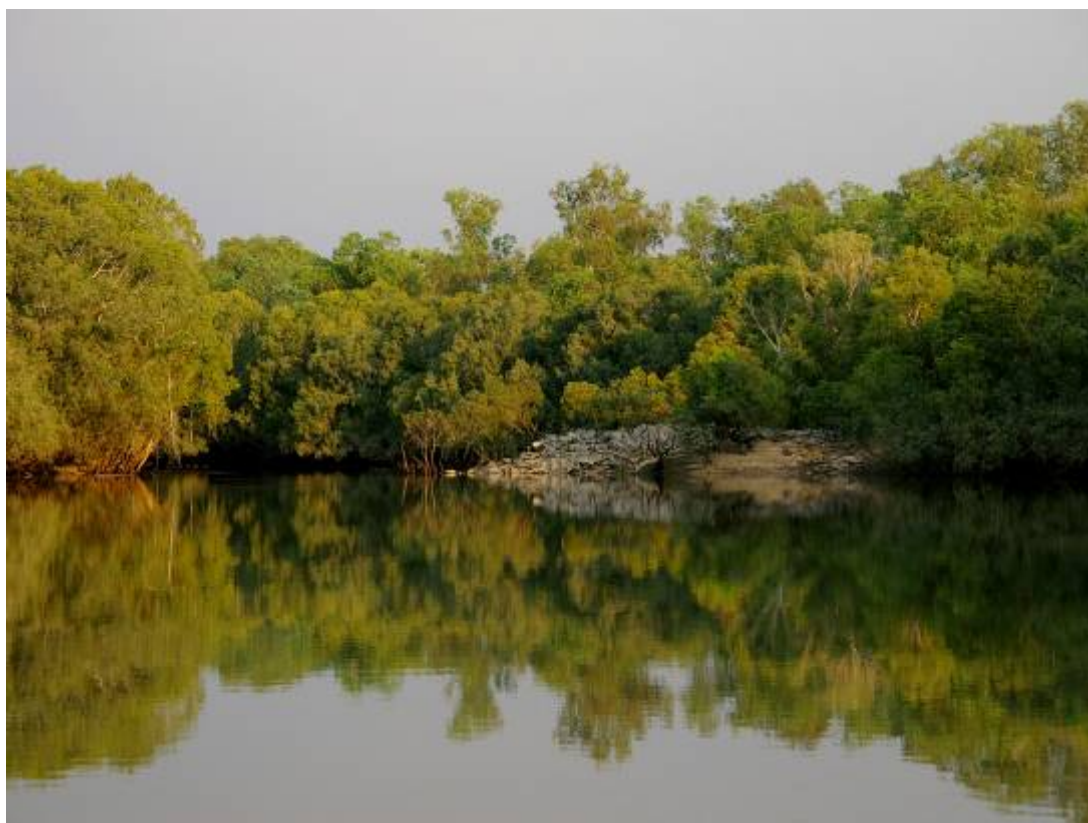
Newsletter of the Northern Territory Field Naturalists Club Inc.
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Club web-site: <http://www.geocities.com/ntfieldnaturalists>

Meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of every month, commencing at 7:45 PM, in room 22.03 (Business Faculty Building) on the Casuarina Campus of Charles Darwin University.

Subscriptions are on a financial-year basis and are: Families/Institutional - \$30; Singles - \$25; Concessions - \$15. Part-year discounts are available for new members from January 1 each year.



A tranquil reach of the Mary River at Mary River Park, setting for this month's get-together of the Australian Naturalists' Network organised by the NTFNC. For more information, see page 2. Photo taken in the dry season by Don Franklin.

Club activities .. p2; Club notices .. p3; mangroves .. p4; plant book .. p5; nocturnal .. p6; marine & coastal .. p7; dolphins .. p8; jungle jaunt .. p9; bird observations .. p10; recent literature .. p11.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in *Nature Territory* are not necessarily those of The NT Field Naturalists Club Inc. or members of its Committee.

Club activities

May meeting. **Note date, time and location: 7PM, Friday May 16 at Mary River Park.**

Combined evening meeting with the Australian Naturalists Network. There will be four speakers:

- Bob Wasson: *Evolution of the landforms of the Darwin and Arnhem coastal plains.*
- Stephen Garnett: *What's happening to tropical birds?*
- Peter Jacklyn: *Termites of the Top End.*
- Don Franklin: *The bizarre life cycle of bamboo.*

May field trip. Combined activities with Australian Naturalists Network - details below.



Meridional ("magnetic") termite mound. Photo: Stephen Garnett.

NTFNC hosts national naturalists' gathering

Several years ago the Club was asked to host the Australian Naturalists' Network biennial get-together. After much work by our organising committee led by Fiona Douglas, the campout will be held between 10th and 18th May, with the group based at the newly renovated Mary River Park. We had an overwhelming response from naturalists from across Australia. Numbers had to be capped at 90 and there has been a waiting list since August last year. The activity program includes a couple of days in Kakadu, the Marrakai track, Fogg Dam, the Territory Wildlife Park, an evening spotlighting, and optional scenic flights. As well as a focus on natural history, the cultural values of the Top End will be showcased. Traditional owners will welcome the visitors to their country, and films will be screened about Aboriginal people's relationship with country.

The Club's monthly meeting will be held on Friday 16th May at Mary River Park (see details above) and we'd love to see as many NTFNC members and others as possible down there. The next day, Saturday, we will be going up the Point Stuart road to several lovely sites, including Brian Creek monsoon forest, Jimmy Creek woodland and monsoon forest and Mistake Billabong. Everyone is welcome to come along and meet the visitors and swap knowledge and ideas. On Saturday night there will be a riverside, spit-roast farewell dinner for the visitors, to which everyone is invited (cost \$40 per head).

There is bunkhouse or camping accommodation for those staying over. The two bunkhouses are air-conditioned; each can sleep between 12 and 16 people and the cost is \$15 per person per night. Camping (unpowered site) is \$11 per person per night.

To help with catering, please let Fiona know, BEFORE 10 May, if you plan to have an evening meal on Friday or Saturday (fiona.douglas@octa4.net.au or 8981 6039). All costs will be payable directly to Mary River Park (www.maryriverpark.com.au).



Magpie Geese: threatened by rising sea levels that will inundate the vast coastal plains and freshwater wetlands of the Top End? Photo: Trevor Collins.

NTFNC members are also welcome to join the Wednesday (May 14) day trip to Marrakai Crossing and/or the Friday (May 16) trip to Fogg Dam. Contact Gay Crowley, phone 8995 5005 during working hours, for more details about these two days.

Club notices

Welcome to new members: Jan Allen; Susan Butcher; Alistair Stewart & Katherine Cornell;
Shane and Samantha Penny.

Thank you

The previous issue was proof-read by Christine Maas. It was printed by Gay Crowley and Don Franklin using equipment kindly made available by the Biodiversity Unit, Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts, Berrimah and the School for Environmental Research at Charles Darwin University. It was collated and mailed by Susan Jacups.

Newsletter contributions welcome

Sightings, reports, travelogues, reviews, photographs, sketches, news, comments, opinions, theories , anything relevant to natural history. Please forward material to don.franklin@cdu.edu.au or the Club's postal address, or contact the editor on 8948 1293. **Deadline for the June newsletter: Friday May 23.**

Club library

Addition to library: Olsen P, ed. 2007. *The state of Australia's birds 2007. Birds in a changing climate.* Birds Australia: Carlton. 32 pp.

The Club's journal, magazine and reference collection is available to members. Lists of books, reports, CDs and journals held can be found on our web-site: <http://www.geocities.com/ntfieldnaturalists>. The library is housed in two sections:

Books, reports and CDs: at the medical clinic of Dr. Lyn Reid in the Rapid Creek Business Village. This can be accessed directly between 9 AM and 2:30 PM Tuesday to Thursday, and 4–6PM on Tuesday, or indirectly by phoning Lyn at work on 8985 3250.

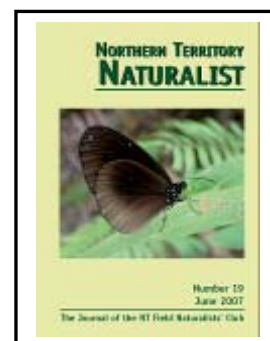
Journals: in the office of Don Franklin at CDU Casuarina (room 31.2.34). These can be accessed directly during working hours, or by ringing Don on 8946 6976 (w) or 8948 1293 (h).

Northern Territory Naturalist

The Club is in the process of registering the *Northern Territory Naturalist* with the Copyright Agency Limited (CAL). This is an Australian library-based system that will make our journal's contents more widely accessible and available for interlibrary re-print requests.

Northern Territory Naturalist is a registered, peer-reviewed. Manuscripts may relate to any aspect of natural history or ecology relevant to the Northern Territory, and may include reviews, papers, research reports, species profiles and thesis abstracts. If possible, manuscripts should be submitted in digital form by emailing to lynda.prior@cdu.edu.au. Editors of the journal are Dr Lynda Prior, Stephen Reynolds and Dr Michael Braby.

Back issues of the *Northern Territory Naturalist* are available individually (some in photocopy only) or as a set. The cost of a set is \$50- for nos. 1-18 or \$60- for nos. 1-19. Contact Don Franklin, don.franklin@cdu.edu.au.



Sewage Pond Keys - Leanyer and Alice Springs

NT Field Naturalists have access to this world-famous bird-watching spot. The key can be collected from Graham Brown (h) 8945 4745. A refundable \$50.00 deposit is required at time of collecting the key, which is available only to members. Conditions imposed by PowerWater Corporation apply to all visitors to the ponds. These are not onerous and are made clear at time of picking up the keys.

Bryan Baker has keys for the Alice Springs Sewage Ponds, available for collection in Darwin by members before they head south. Bryan can be reached in Darwin on 8948 2196.

Boating the Rapid Creek mangroves

Stephen Reynolds

On the morning of 11th April with the aid of a predicted 7 metre tide, I made my way up Rapid Creek by water, starting from the footbridge near the mouth, and penetrating as far upstream as possible. The mangrove system is really quite extensive, and broad channels gradually close in, with overhanging vegetation blocking the way in the upstream portions. I managed to make it as far as a point close to the boundary where there is Holly Mangrove *Acanthus ilicifolius* and the Mangrove Fern *Acrostichum*



speciosum, and the mangroves give way to freshwater riparian plants (*Acacia auriculiformis*, *Lophostemon*, *Carallia*, *Barringtonia*, etc.). [Eds note: behind the Water Gardens]

At the upstream limit of the mangroves on Rapid Creek: Holly Mangrove Acanthus ilicifolius. Photo: Don Franklin.

PS Same genus as Mike Lawes' tall Ugandan herb (March issue).

Of particular note were 6 or 7 Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) roosting in the lower branches of the mangroves, above the water in the main channel. I have heard of only a few wader species

using trees as high tide roosts (Minton 2000), but it is an unusual habit, and possibly only necessary on very high tides.

Other avifaunal inhabitants of the mangroves were a single Whimbrel, a pair of Brahminy Kite, a Striated Heron, Bar-shouldered Doves, and I heard Shining Flycatcher and Mangrove Gerygone. At one point I came across the peculiar pendant nest 'like flood debris' (Slater Field Guide) of Large-billed Gerygone. Mangrove associates included Brown Honeyeater, White-gaped Honeyeater, Peaceful Dove, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, and Double-barred Finch.

In the lower, meandering parts of Rapid Creek, there are fruitbat roosts, and I saw several species of fish, but the only ones I could identify were Milkfish. In the upstream area I saw a species of tree-climbing crab, possibly a grapsid. An unfortunate side-effect of a location in a suburban area, there was plenty of floating rubbish, including a tennis ball and a fire extinguisher in addition to the usual plastic bottles and empty cans.

I was surprised to come across several quite large specimens of the Star Mangrove (*Sonneratia alba*), the mother of all Stilt-rooted Mangroves (*Rhizophora*) with ten trunks, and a tall individual Cedar Mangrove *Xylocarpus australasicus*. In the lower reaches along the banks of the creek there are also plenty of Myrtle Mangrove *Osbornia octodonta*, and much of the estuarine portion of Rapid Creek is backed by extensive stands of the Black Mangrove *Lumnitzera racemosa*.

On my way downstream, with the assistance of the now outgoing tide, I saw a possible harbinger of the dry season, my first Tree Martin of 2008, slicing through the air over the water.

Reference Minton S. 2000. Waders roosting on mangroves. *The Stilt* 37: 23-24.

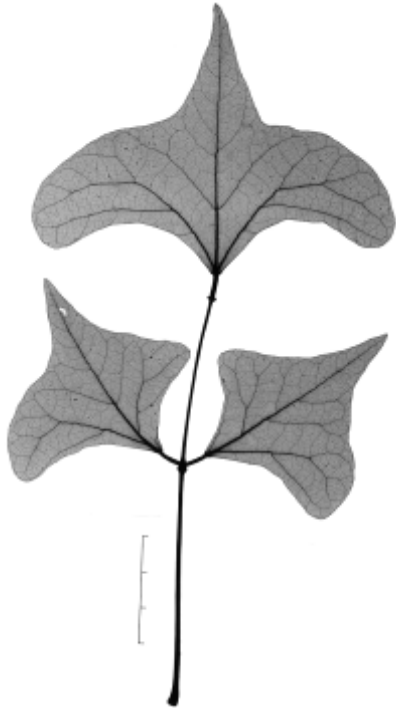


Stilt-rooted Mangrove Rhizophora stylosa. Photo: Don Franklin.

Jabiru plant book

Brennan K. 2007. *A field key to the trees and shrubs in the Jabiru area*. Supervising Scientist Report 187: Darwin. 99 A4 pages, numerous black and white illustrations throughout.

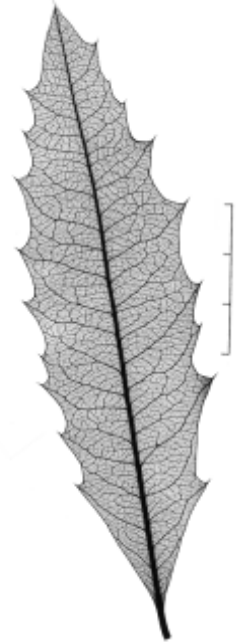
Available as a book (\$25-), CD (\$15-) or free download (series of pdf files); for details, go to: www.environment.gov.au/ssd/publications/ssr/index.html.



*Foliage of the Coral Tree,
Erythrina vespertilio.*

Notwithstanding its limited geographic scope, this is a wonderful identification guide for field naturalists. Whereas most plant keys are based on floral characteristics, which is frustrating when the plant isn't in flower and fruit and tend towards the highly technical, this guide is based primarily on growth form and leaf and bark characters. It is also carefully designed for the non-specialist, with the terminology kept as simply as possible and explained carefully and often with supporting illustrations. Much care has been taken with the layout to facilitate use by anyone and in the field. There are numerous high-quality sketches of key features and numerous delightful and helpful X-ray scans of leaves (two shown) that show shapes and venation well.

The key covers the 177 species of tree and shrub known from lowland savannas and watercourses in a limited area around Jabiru. Specifically, the area does not include any escarpment or monsoon rainforest



*Juvenile leaf of
Denhamia obscura,
a small tree sometimes
known as Orange Root.*

patches. Notwithstanding, used with care it should prove most useful throughout the northern lowland savannas of Kakadu National Park, and as a source of illustrations for species widespread in savannas throughout the Top End. *Highly recommended.*

Backyard arguments

Christine Maas

On the weekend I like nothing more than hanging out in my hammock on the balcony of our Nightcliff unit with a good book to read. Lately, my peace has been disturbed from time to time because I could overhear fighting in the neighbourhood. Not a domestic dispute, but a territorial disagreement between a Northern Brush-tail Possum and a solitary Black Flying-fox. This morning, the flying-fox arrived at 9AM and took a long time to settle in, moving several times, but soon after settling in I heard it screaming and noticed the possum close by though I couldn't see what the possum was doing. The flying-fox flew off. Shortly afterwards, the possum also left and wandered via several trees and branches to a nearby palm where it disappeared from view.

I have observed this interaction once before. The flying-fox scolds and appears to try to frighten off the possum with its wings, but it is always the flying-fox that moves on first.

Some people are armchair travelers – I'm a hammock naturalist.

Mangrove worms

Kristin Metcalfe and Chris Glasby (2008 – see *Recent Literature*, p11) found 76 species of polychaetes and other types of worms in the mangroves of Darwin Harbour. Species richness was greatest in the sediments of seaward fringe mangroves. Thirty species are widespread whilst seven are restricted to Darwin Harbour or northern Australia. Most species were herbivorous, but some were carnivorous and others feed on sub-surface deposits. The fauna differed between peri-urban and undisturbed areas.

An Evening at the Territory Wildlife Park

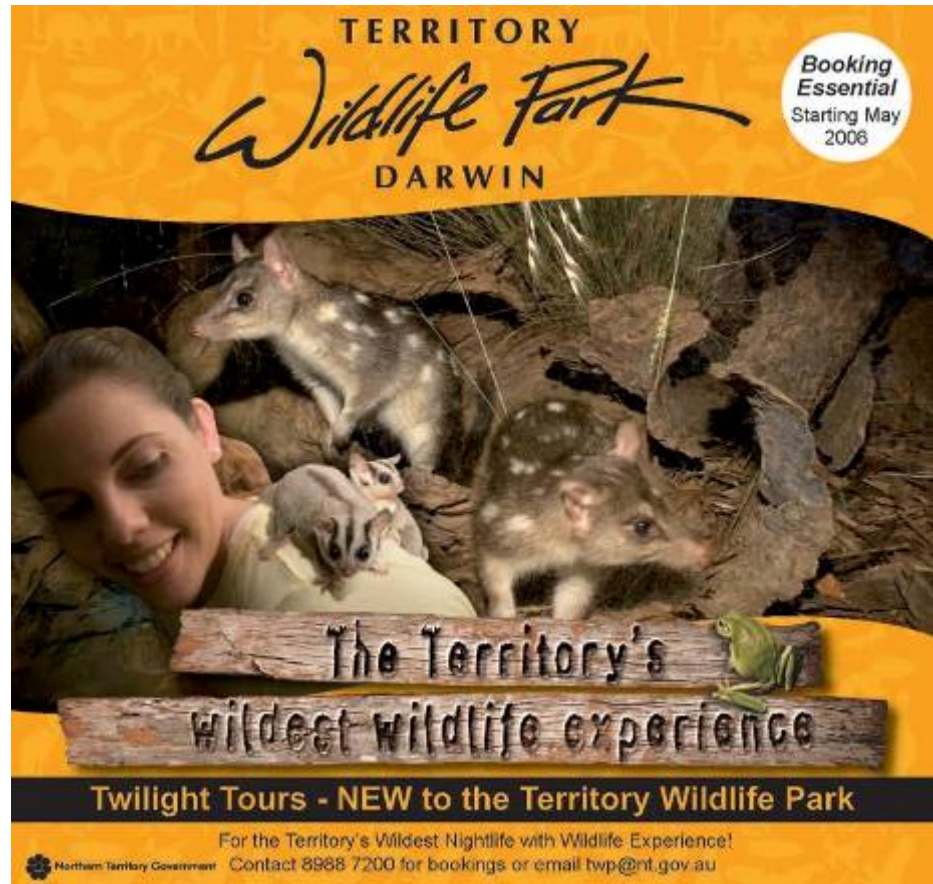
Gabriel Crowley

Australian mammals are mostly crepuscular, active in the hours around dawn and dusk. To showcase this activity, the Territory Wildlife Park (TWP) is setting up twilight tours. TWP invited the Northern Territory Field Naturalists Club to a trial tour. So on Friday 11th April a group of 15 naturalists arrived at the Wildlife Park at the end of the day.

The tour has two components, a walk through a large bushland enclosure and a visit to the nocturnal house. When up and running, the tour will start with a barbecue and end with a light supper.

The animals in the enclosure were not accustomed to being visited in the evening. Even so, Agile Wallabies and Antilopine Wallaroos were happy to preen quietly in the spotlight. Smaller animals such as bandicoots were more difficult to see as they scurried through the grass. The Black Wallaroo was completely elusive, but a pair of Burdekin Duck glistened on the pond. This part of the tour will improve as more animals are introduced to the enclosure.

The lights were just beginning to come on in the nocturnal house, where we enjoyed good views of Rock-haunting Ringtails, Water Rats and Hopping Mice. The Flying-foxes were just hanging themselves up for the day. One display promised a Death Adder, which was alarmingly invisible under the leaf-litter.



Tours such as this depend on the professionalism of the guides, and their sense of when to share information and when to leave people to their own experiences. TWP are advertising for staff to act as guides. So if you are interested in some moonlighting, give them a call.

Antilopine Wallaroos, photographed (not nocturnally!) in the Mary River National Park by Don Franklin.

Marine & coastal matters (From *Recent Literature*, page 11)

Coral bleaching

Victor Gomelyuk (2007) established photo monitoring points at four sites in Garig Gunak Barlu National Park off Cobourg Peninsula in 2000 (see also *Nature Territory* June 2007). Results are analysed digitally to document the percent cover of live corals, and monitoring over time can detect quite subtle changes in cover. From Nov. 2002 to Jan. 2003, a far-from subtle coral bleaching event took place in which 42 – 90% of live coral cover was lost, including 75 – 96% loss of *Acropora* sp.. Near Cobourg Peninsula, sea surface water temperature fluctuates seasonally from c. 26° C or less in about August to c. 30 – 31.4° C in the wet season. The threshold for coral bleaching is 31.0° C. Between December 2000 and April 2006, the threshold was exceeded only during the three month period when bleaching occurred, but temperatures also approached close to the threshold in late 2005.

The trials of being left-clawed, and other fiddler crab stories

Male fiddler crabs (*Uca* sp.) have one enlarged claw used for fighting. In most species, close to 50% are "left-clawed" and 50% "right-clawed". However, in one of many studies conducted on mudflats at East Point by Pat Backwell and students from the Australian National University, Backwell *et al.* (2007) found that less than 1.4% of male *Uca vocans* were "left-clawed". And no wonder. Left-clawed males were less able than right-clawed males to retain ownership of a burrow, and were less likely to initiate or be involved in fights. So why hasn't natural selection eliminated left-clawedness? Perhaps being aggressive isn't always an advantage.

The fiddler crab *Uca capricornis* changes colour both rapidly in response to stress, and over the course of life with successive moults (Detto *et al.* 2008). "Both sexes display a variety of colours on their black carapace, including: blue, yellow, orange and white." Females are more colourful and variable than males. Patterns reduce with age. Detto *et al.* interpret these variations as "consistent with their use in visually mediated mate recognition".

In the world of the fiddler crab *Uca mjoebergi*, males outnumber females so perhaps they can't be too choosy about their mates. However, as males engage in prolonged mate-guarding, and the size of clutches is positively related to female size, males have reason to be choosy. Reading & Backwell (2007) reported that "under both natural and experimental conditions they [males] preferentially courted larger females. They did not, however, forego mating opportunities with small females". Sounds like two-bob each way.

Female *Uca mjoebergi* are choosy too. Mating takes place in the male's burrow, where the female remains until releasing her larvae into the tide. Burrows are placed where they are inundated by only the highest tides, so the timing of larvae release is critical. Mating takes place over 5-day period near the end of a sequence of neap (low amplitude) tides. Reaney & Backwell (2007) found that early in the 5-day period, females prefer larger males which by definition have larger burrows, whereas late in the mating period they prefer smaller males with smaller burrows. Smaller burrows are warmer and hasten the development of larvae, thus ensuring that larvae are ready in time for the ensuing spring tide.

Prawn bycatch

The banana prawn "fishery" in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf catches an estimated 4,934 tonnes of non-target species (bycatch) each year (Tonks *et al.* 2008). By weight, over 90% of the bycatch are bony fishes.

Conference in Darwin – Coast to Coast Collaboration: Crossing Boundaries

If you work around Australia's coastline, on the beaches, in the ocean, rivers, mangroves, on climate change, population change, pollution management, mining, oil & gas, conservation, biodiversity, dredging, coastal reserves, Indigenous planning, community engagement - then you will find this conference exciting, interesting and beneficial....

Coast to Coast 2008 – Australia's biennial national coastal conference – is to be held in the new Darwin Convention Centre from 18-22 August this year. It will focus debate, discussion and learning across the full range of coastal and marine issues - at international, national, state, regional and local levels. For full details of sessions, symposia, workshops, and plenary and keynote speakers, please visit:

<https://www.coast2coast.org.au/>.

Coastal dolphin research project

Reporting back on the talk by Carol Palmer at the April meeting

Michael Stott

Carol works with the Biodiversity Conservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts.

The project has been running for twelve months in Kakadu National Park. Two dolphins are being studied:

1. Australian Snubfin *Orcaella heinsohni*
2. Indo-Pacific Humpback (*Sousa* sp.)

The Australian Snubfin is related to the Irrawaddy Dolphin and Killer Whale, and is Australia's only endemic dolphin. Possibly they eat more squid than fish. Data will also be collected on a third coastal or nearshore dolphin, the Indo-Pacific Bottlenose *Tursiops aduncus*.

Three species of *Sousa* are recognised. The Indo-Pacific Humpback ranges from northern Australia to Asia and east coast of Africa.

Research from north Queensland suggests that the study species are found in seas less than 15 m in depth and within 20 km of land, usually within 10 km of a river mouth. They possibly live to 40 years, reproduce once every four years and gestation is thought to be around 12-14 months.

Little is known about the basic ecology of coastal dolphins. However, coastal dolphins worldwide are among the most threatened of mammals.

Project objectives

Determine abundance and taxonomic status; identify threatening processes at three study sites – Kakadu National Park, Darwin Harbour and Cobourg Peninsula.

Field techniques

- photos of fins used to identify individuals
- modified .22 rifle used to take tissue samples.

Early results

Records of animals within river mouths:

- one school of Snubfin found 40 km up South Alligator River
- *Sousa* up to 30 km up East Alligator River.
- possible seasonality in sightings – more during the Build-up and Wet seasons.

Preliminary data indicate a semi-resident population which use different sections of tidal rivers. These dolphins form a significant part of the mammal fauna of Kakadu National Park.

Fishermen occasionally catch dolphins in nets – is there a need to modify nets?

Carol hopes to recommend management plans for conservation of both the Australian Snubfin and Indo-Pacific Humpback. We thank Carol for a most informative talk and for taking on a challenging project.

Addendum to A New Zealand adventure (April newsletter)

Lyn Reid

The photo labelled as being a Moa keel is incorrectly labelled because Moa don't have a keel (or wings) [did anyone notice!]. It is an avian keel, but probably from either a pigeon or a parrot.

If anyone is interested in thunderbirds, mihirungs or "Killer Geese" (NT News), there is a great book by Peter F. Murray and Patricia Vickers-Rich: *Magnificent Mihirungs : The Colossal Flightless Birds of the Australian Dreamtime*. Well worth a read.



This is my territory! An Indo-Pacific Humpback attacking the much smaller Australian Snubfin. This remarkable photo was taken by Walter Hendrikse in the harbour at Gove.

Jungle jaunt

Report on the field trip to Holmes Jungle, Sunday 13 April 2008

Gabriel Crowley

Two dozen or so field naturalists arose early Sunday morning to meet at Holmes Jungle Nature Park. The dry season had just recently asserted itself - the sky was brilliant azure, with no hint of smoke haze, and dragonflies abounded.

On the edge of Darwin's suburbia, the reserve is little known to many of the city's residents. Even many of the naturalists in our group had not ventured there before. A local treasure, the park has a diverse range of habitats, including open woodlands, magnificent monsoon forest, and the hollowed halls of high-ceilinged Carpentaria Palms (*Carpentaria acuminata*).

There was no specific agenda for this walk, just a quiet ramble with a few "guides" who generously shared their knowledge and enthusiasm.

Ruth Peek, the Parks and Wildlife Ranger, provided information about the park's history and current management. Local Aboriginal people took advantage of the permanent water and good fishing in the area, as did the early Darwin settlers, who came out on horse-drawn buggies. It seemed that to own this parcel of land you needed to have a name beginning with "H". The subdivision was first taken up by Mr Holze, sold on to Mr Holmes and developed as an early ecotourism venture by Mr & Mrs Hall. More information on the park can be found at www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/find/holmesjungle.html.

Denise Goodfellow picked out plants of particular medicinal merit. At one stage, male members were banished as Denise told us of plant gynaecological properties. Graham Brown was equally eloquent, postulating on the philosophy of classification systems and the differences between dragon- and damselflies.

Young Dooley O'Leary's bright eyes alerted us to many interesting species, including two Macleay's Water Snakes (*Enhydrys polylepis*) swimming in the creek, and a minuscule Northern Dwarf Tree-frog (*Litoria bicolor*).

We lost track of the avid bird-watching team lead by Ashley Carlson when they were transfixed by a Rose-crowned Fruit-dove (*Ptilinopus regina*), but were reunited with them nearby an active mound of Orange-footed Scrubfowl (*Megapodius reinwardt*). Other avian highlights included what appeared to be two high-soaring White-breasted Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) in courtship flight and an Azure Kingfisher (*Alcedo azurea*) patrolling the rainforest creek.



But invertebrates definitely won the day, whether it was the St. Andrews Cross Spider (*Argiope* sp.), the Green Tree-ants (*Oecophylla smaragdina*), the Blue Tiger butterflies (*Tirumala hamata*) or the Red-banded Jezebel (*Delias mysis*).

Thanks to all who joined us on this ramble and helped make it a pleasant morning, particularly to our guides.



Invertebrates "won the day". Above: St. Andrews Cross Spider *Argiope* sp.. Right: Green Tree-ants *Oecophylla smaragdina*. Photos by Ella Meumann.

Interesting bird sightings

21 March to 24 April 2008

Compiled by Sheryl Keates

Sightings are as reported (unvetted, unconfirmed) and have been mostly compiled from the e-mail digest of the NT birder website (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ntbirds>) moderated by Niven McCrie.

Species	Date	Location	Observer/s	Nos./Comments
Radjah Shelduck	Mar '08	Batchelor sewage ponds	R Stanton	20 ducklings
Partridge Pigeon	21/03/08	Umbrawarra Gorge Rd	A Carlson	3
	23/03/08	El Sharana Rd Jabiru	M Gardner	3
Tawny Frogmouth	21/03/08	St. Hwy, Pine Ck/Adelaide Rv	A Carlson	2
Australian Owllet Nightjar	21/03/08	St. Hwy, Pine Ck/Adelaide Rv	A Carlson	2
Fork-tailed Swift	15/03/08	Jabiru	M Gardner	c. 10
	5/03/08	Lee Point - Buffalo Creek	A Carlson, A & S Keates	20 - 30
	17/04/08	Nightcliff	R Noske	50+, also 18/4
Black-necked Stork	31/03/08	Batchelor sewage ponds	R Stanton	pair
Great-billed Heron	29/03/08	near mouth of Buffalo Creek	A & S Keates	1 perched
Red Goshawk	26/03/08	Mataranka	L Eclipse	1 juvenile?
Australian Bustard	29/03/08	Vic Hwy, 100k E Timber Creek	L Eclipse	pair
	5/04/08	John Hauser Rd, Elsey NP	P Kyne & M Jackson	pair
Beach Stone-curlew	20/04/08	Nightcliff rocks	J Wright	pair
Broad-billed Sandpiper	12/04/08	Lee Point	A Keates	1
Chestnut-back. Button-Quail	21/03/08	Umbrawarra Gorge Road	A Carlson	1 crossing road
Australian Pratincole	15/04/08	Darwin airport	L Eclipse	1
	18/04/08	Leanyer sewage ponds	A & S Keates	1; 3 on 20/4
Common Tern	12/04/08	Lee Point	A Keates	3
Black-headed Gull	5/04/08	Lee Point - Buffalo Creek	D Binns, A Stewart <i>et al.</i>	1 non-breeding
Northern Rosella	21/03/08	Umbrawarra Gorge Road	A Carlson	2 pair
	14/03/08	Acacia Hills	M Gardner	2
Hooded Parrot	21/03/08	Umbrawarra Gorge Road	A Carlson	numerous pairs
Eastern Koel	24/03/08	Jabiru	M Gardner	2
Channel-billed Cuckoo	30/03/08	Wagaman	A Carlson	1
	30/03/08	Nightcliff	R Noske	1
	30/03/08	Goyder Rd, Fannie Bay	F Douglas	heard at 2.15pm
	16/04/08	CDU, Casuarina Campus	S Keates	1 heard, also 17/4
	19/04/08	Progress Drive, Nightcliff	J Wright	1
	21/04/08	Wagaman	A Carlson	1
Barking Owl	23/03/08	Rapid Creek	H Moorcroft	pair heard, 4.30 am
	29/03/08	Wagaman	A Carlson	1 heard
	29/03/08	Anzac Road, Middle Point	D Binns, A & S Keates	5
Eastern Barn Owl	29/03/08	Anzac Road, Middle Point	D Binns, A & S Keates	5
Little Kingfisher	20/04/08	Buffalo Creek	M Jackson	2
Dusky Grasswren	22/03/08	Hart's Range, central Aust.	S Cooney	3
Banded Honeyeater	5/04/08	near boardwalk, East Point	A Carlson	1
	16/04/08	Nightcliff mangroves	R Noske	3 to 4
Mangrove Robin	1/04/08	Leanyer sewage ponds	S Keates & P Kyne	2, near pump shed
Barn Swallow	24/03/08	Leanyer sewage ponds	A & S Keates	1
Star Finch	6/04/08	Humbles Creek, Buntine Hwy	P Kyne & M Jackson	3
Painted Finch	Mar '08	Hart's Range, central Aust.	S Cooney	2
Gouldian Finch	6/04/08	Buntine Hwy 7k from Vic. Hwy	P Kyne & M Jackson	4 adults, 1 juvenile
Pictorella Mannikin	6/4/08	Buntine Hwy 7k from Vic. Hwy	P Kyne & M Jackson	1
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	19/4/08	Leanyer sewage ponds	M Jackson	4

Turtles on the move

Melanie Hamel *et al.* (2008 - *Recent Literature*, page 11) attached satellite-relayed dataloggers to two female Olive Ridley turtles at a nesting beach on the Wessel Islands off the north coast of Arnhemland in May 2005. The dataloggers provide information about location and diving behaviour. Olive Ridley females nest twice in fairly rapid succession, the interval being 18 and 27 days in these individuals. During the inter-nest interval, the females moved 125 and 200 km respectively, which is quite a long interval for these warm waters compared to records of this species in other parts of the world. Changes in diving behaviour several days prior to the second nesting suggested that the females were searching for a nesting site at that time.

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MARINE & COASTAL

Compiled by Don Franklin

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