

## Members' Page

### AN APPREHENSIVE-LOOKING YOUNGSTER

This photo was taken during a *Land for Wildlife* visit to Alec and Kath Trendall's nine ha property 'Springhaven' in January. The property borders the Lowland Coastal Reserve half way between Albany and Denmark. They love the peaceful environment and spectacular coastline.

The southern part of the property sits on top of the old aeolian dune system and contains bushland typical of the coastal heathland of the area. However the northern part of their property is very different in landform and contains woodlands of bullich, yate and peppermint trees. The swale areas at the base of the dunes have a natural permanent supply of water. In the late 1920s this area was targeted for potato production. An old irrigation drain runs through the property providing the 'tell tale sign' that the Trendall property was also cleared at this time and used for potato production. When the Trendalls purchased the property in 1995 they received a letter from the



Agriculture Department informing them that there were possibly organochlorides still residing in the soils. This does not appear to have affected the local native wildlife. There are large populations of kangaroos, southern brown bandicoots, western bushrats, water rats etc. They have also recorded at least thirty species of bird.

During our *LFW* property visit, Kath and I came across a young

raptor sitting on one of the firebreaks. It was obviously a juvenile because it still had some soft down feathers poking out. We asked the Threatened Species Conservation Officer at DEC Albany, Cameron Tiller, which species he thought it might be.

He replied: "The bird is a very scruffy looking juvenile brown falcon. This picture would have possibly been taken on the fledgling's first attempt to leave the nest (it is not often that raptors able to fly would have the remains of down on them) or else the fledgling may have even fallen from nest (would have to check around the site to find out). Also, given the apparent proximity the photographer was able to approach, I would assume that the bird was not at all an experienced flier. The first defense of birds of this age would be to flip on its back and strike out with its legs rather than flee".

*Sylvia Leighton*