



# TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

No. 415  
May 2012

To encourage the observation and study of the birds of the Toowoomba area.

## Editorial

Steve Burke

With the recent run of bad luck with weather on outing weekends I hope that this weekend will prove to be the great weekend we have been hoping it to be.

We will meet at the Karara Hall at 7am for a refreshment break before we head off to Durikai Forest and our first stop over the railway tracks where some got their first sight of **Diamond Firetails** last year.

Kay has organized a key to the area of Lake Coolmunda where the **White-winged Fairy-wrens** are always seen and which has been locked off since the floods of 2011.

We will stop overnight at the Coolmunda Caravan Park and begin again at 7.30 am Sunday morning with a run down the Inglewood/Texas road to visit some state forest where I did some interesting birding last year.

Some attendees have space available in their vehicles so give a Committee member a ring to talk about availability & cost.

The Club now has a Facebook page and our deepest thanks go to Mick Atzeni and Judi Gray for the massive amount of work they have put into this development. Have a look.



Whistling Kite.  
Photo: Steve Burke.

## 2012 Challenge

Tally: 203 spp as of May 7

## This Issue

Australian Ringneck  
*Chris Watson*

McEwan State Forest  
*Lesley Beaton*

The Naturalist  
*G. Glass & R. Hobson*

New Members  
*Steve Burke*

## COMING EVENTS

May Outing  
Sat/Sun 26<sup>th</sup> & 27th  
Venue: Karara/Lake  
Coolmunda  
Leader: Steve Burke

June Outing  
Sat/Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24th  
Venue: Raptor census  
Leader: Pat McConnell

July Outing  
Sat/Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24th  
Venue: Raptor census  
Leader: Pat McConnell



TOOWOOMBA  
BIRD OBSERVERS

(An affiliated member of Bird Observation and Conservation Australia)

P.O. Box 4730, Toowoomba East 4350

[www.toowoombabirdobservers.org](http://www.toowoombabirdobservers.org)

MEMBERSHIP: Adult/family \$30,

Pensioner/student \$25 (Subscriptions due 31 August)

## Australian Ringneck colour aberration.

By Chris Watson



Australian Ringnecks.  
Photo: Chris Watson.

After a recent post about our famous white Crested Pigeon, I found this bird the very next day. At the sewage ponds in Alice Springs, this **Australian Ringneck** *Barnardius zonarius zonarius*, was in a flock with five other birds. The bird in question instantly attracted my eye as a bright speck of gold among his mainly green friends.

I guess this another one to put down to the vagaries of plumage genetics. It has to be said

though; I think the golden-backed look could catch on. Keep an eye out and let me know if anyone else spots this bird around the poo ponds in coming weeks.



Australian Ringnecks.

Photo: Chris Watson.

## McEwan State Forest May 2012

By Lesley Beaton & Steve Burke

It was more bird-listening and searching rather than bird watching at McEwan State Forest. However there were some interesting sightings. A eucalypt which seemed alive with **Pardalotes**, both **Spotted** and **Striated**, caught our attention, especially as the males were really colourful.



Common Dunnart.

Photo: Kevin Williams.

Some of us were lucky enough to see a small flock of **Speckled Warblers**. The **Rufous Whistlers** and **Golden Whistlers** were in fine tune, and while we were enjoying a little refreshment Rod sighted a **Collared Sparrowhawk** over the open paddock.

The Toowoomba Field Naturalists invited members of the Toowoomba Bird Observers to attend their outing to the McEwan State Forest and there were a couple of us that joined the 25 or so TFN members on this beautiful Spring morning. After a welcome

by Lesley and a general introduction to the park by Rod Hobson we made our way past Jack's old hut and some of the remnant machinery left in the park. Rod turned over a log at random and was fortunate to uncover a **Common Planigale** underneath, which was a treat for everyone to see and photograph.

We then made our way past the old piggery and down the track toward the grassy open area down the back. There were lots of stops to investigate and comment on **Jewel Spiders**, **Golden Orb Spiders** and **Dew-drop Spiders** (which I had never seen/noticed before) and also various plants that were new to some attendees.

Bird Species - compiled by Lesley Beaton from members' & visitors' sightings.



Eastern Yellow Robin.

Photo: Kevin Williams.

Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Collared Sparrowhawk, Lorikeet sp., Laughing Kookaburra, Speckled Warbler, Weebill, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Lewin's Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Striped Honeyeater, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Torresian Crow, Silvereye, Mistletoebird, Double-barred Finch, Superb Fairy-wren.

## **The Naturalist**

Extract from *The Queenslander*, Saturday 12 September 1874, page 6

*By Gloria Glass*

Diana found this article when she was researching Charles Coxen, who was an early squatter on the Darling Downs, and happened to be Gould's brother-in-law, Elizabeth Coxen being married to John Gould. It was the Coxens who persuaded Gould to come to Australia to study the birds here.

*Ornithologists will be pleased to learn that another new parrot has been discovered, and that the only known specimen in existence will shortly be added to the valuable collection of the avifauna of Australia now growing under the direction of Mr Charles Coxen, in our young museum, in Queen-street.*

*The bird is allied to the King Lory (*Aprosmictus Scapulatus*), corresponding to it in form and size, except as to the length of wing, in which striking characteristic it exceeds that well-known cage pet.*

*In the varied the gorgeous display of its plumage, this rara avis has a great advantage over its favourite and familiar congener. The crown of the head, the throat, neck, and abdomen are velvety crimson; the cheeks are green, and the occiput and neck are ringed with green and crimson, indicating a transition state. The crimson is far richer than the decided scarlet of the King Lory.*

*Instead of the light verditer green patch on the scapularies of that bird, which is so remarkable in the adult, the new parrot bears on each shoulder a broad yellow shield, lightly edged with scarlet. On the rump is a mingling of vivid blues and purples, contrasting with the bright graduated greens of the primaries and the tail feathers; the latter are not spread so much as those of the King Lory. The under tail coverts are green with scarlet edgings; while in the King Lory they are scarlet with black centre. The beak is orange mainly, and pink at the tip; the upper mandible lacking elevation.*

*More minute details are omitted for obvious reasons. The distinctions here noted are sufficient for ordinary sight-seers, while to scientific observers they will indicate that a second species is likely to be added to the genus *Aprosmictus* defined by Gould; though, perhaps, the question will not be settled without dissection, which cannot be made if a skin.*

*The specimen was first brought under Mr. Coxen's notice by Mr. Waller, the taxidermist, who caused a drawing to be made of it, which he sent to Mr. Gould; but Mr. Coxen, at considerable pains, secured it for the national collection from the person who shot it, Mr. Shaw. It was shot in May last, in Bunjeemie Water-hole Scrub, on Jimbour run, Darling Downs.*



Mystery parrot near Kingaroy.  
Photo: Supplied.

If anyone has any idea what this bird might be please contact the Editor or a Committee member.

### **New Members**

*By Steve Burke*

The Club extends a hearty welcome to new members **Paul Laurie** and **Steve & Diane Rayward** as the Club's newest members.



Gouldian Finches on a fence in the Northern Territory.  
Photo: Supplied.

## **Gardenfest** *By Hugh Krenske*

Well GardenFest is over. But I would consider the weekend quite successful. We had an excellent position – just across the road from the Speaker’s Tent.

Thanks to all those people who helped over the weekend and also those that took the time to put a display together for the parks. The bird/animal display put together by Kay and Kevin Williams was certainly a drawcard.

We ended up with some new members. Ray will have the exact numbers. One person donated \$20.00 to FEP. Neil McKilligan donated \$40 to FEP as part of the proceeds for the sale of his book about walking tracks around Toowoomba.

We got a reasonable amount of interest in the work we were doing in our bushland parks. I tended to focus on inviting people to Redwood Park this Saturday to see what we do and if possible join our gardening group there. While we did try to get the people interested in the other parks, I think that we can get another shot at this by targeting the local community around the parks via a letter drop inviting them to a BBQ/meeting in the park to generate a bit of enthusiasm and interest. I think we will try to do this for Panorama Cres, Neilsen and Duggan Parks. I doubt that this strategy would work for Redwood, as I consider it more of a regional park with no identifiable immediate neighbourhood. Echo Valley South is similar to this.

I did two presentations in the Speakers Tent. We only attracted a handful of people on each occasion. Part of the reason for this was the title of my talk “Rainforest gardening in Redwood Park” was not displayed anywhere. The first talk on Saturday was an adlib affair as the organizers provided an Overhead Projector rather than a data projector. On Monday I was able to present my planned talk as the correct equipment was available.

On the Saturday, I took the opportunity to talk on ABC’s Gardening Show with Penny and Rod. The 2 to 3 minutes that I spoke for appeared to gain quite a bit of interest. A number of people approached us in the FEP tent and referred to the ABC program.

This Saturday we have another “Rainforest Gardening” activity in Redwood Park. It will be interesting to see if we can turn the interest into actual visitors to the park and then turn the visitors into participants and members.

## Members' Bird Notes

*By Steve Burke*

**MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES:** All sightings seen by, or reported to, members of the Toowoomba Bird Observers. Accuracy not vouched for by the TBO. Please check with observer before citing. \* Rare or unusual locally.

Species	Date	Location	Observers
Little Eagle	1/05/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ
Blue Bonnet *	15/5/12	Old Goombungee Rd, Cranley	PM
Red-capped Robin	13/5/12	Frew St, Darling Heights	MW
Osprey *	12/5/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ
Australian Owlet-nightjar	11/5/12	Redwood Park	MW
Eastern Spinebill	11/5/12	Middle Ridge	BL
Striated Thornbill	10/5/12	Highfields Falls	MW & KW
Black-winged Stilt	7/5/12	Ashlands Drive, Postman's Ridge	CD & MA
Plum-headed Finch	7/5/12	Ashlands Drive, Postman's Ridge	CD & MA
Restless Flycatcher	27/4/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ
Black Bittern *	23/4/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ
Cotton Pygmy-goose *	18/4/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ

Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	15/4/12	Fifteen Mile Rd, Fifteen Mile	MA
Rose Robin	13/4/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	12/4/12	Magpie Lane, Gowrie Junction	GG
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	11/4/12	"Abberton", Helidon	BJ
Long-billed Corella	8/4/12	Teschner Rd, Woolmer	CH

**CH**, C.Hanney; **MA**, M. Atzeni; **BJ**, B. Jolly; **PM**, P. McConnell; **GG**, G. Glass; **CD**, C. Dove; **K W**, Kev. Williams; **BL**, B. Learmonth; **MW**, M. Wood;

Bird notes can be submitted by email to [mcconnel@usq.edu.au](mailto:mcconnel@usq.edu.au), by post, or via the forum [www.toowoombabirdobservers.org/forum/index.php](http://www.toowoombabirdobservers.org/forum/index.php)

Thanks

Pat McConnell

## COMING CLUB EVENTS

### May Outing

**Sat/Sun 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

**Venue:** Karara/Lake Coolmunda

**Time:** 7.00 am

**Meet:** Karara Hall

**Leader:** Steve Burke

**Phone:** 4693 3811/0434397532

### June Outing

**Sat/Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

**Venue:** Raptor census

**Time:** When suitable

**Meet:** Where suitable

**Leader:** Pat McConnell

**Phone:** 4631 5573

### July Outing

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

**Venue:** Highfields Falls

**Time:** 7.30 am

**Meet:** Dau Rd carpark

**Leader:** Gayle Lee

**Phone:** 4696 2727

## Committee Members

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**Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is 20th June 2012**

Please e-mail or post articles to the Editor.

**If undeliverable return to  
Toowoomba Bird Observers Inc  
PO Box 4730, Toowoomba East Q 4350**

**Surface Mail**

**January Outing**

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

**Venue:** Prince Henry Drive

**Time:** 7 am

**Meet:** First picnic area

**Leader:** Mick Atzeni

**Phone:** 0458 948 955

**February Outing**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

**Venue:** Spring Bluff

**Time:** 7 am

**Meet:** Top carpark

**Leader:** TBA

**Phone:** TBA