



TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

No. 437
February '15

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

Editorial

Sandy Robertson

Hi all,

Welcome to the first edition of the TBO newsletter for 2015. If you have any articles, stories, experiences or photos you would like to share with members please email them to me. For ease of editing and inserting into the newsletter, please send stories in a word document and the photos in a jpeg file (not already embedded in the document).

Please note the proposed May outing to Bunya Mountains has been changed to the Queen's Birthday weekend in June and will now be an outing to Bribie Island led by Esther Townsend. Please see details further in the newsletter about this proposed outing and let one of the Executive committee know if you are interested in attending.

On behalf of the TBO membership, the executive committee would like to extend our congratulations and acknowledgement to TBO members Neil McKilligan, Bernice and Don Seton, Malcolm and Marjorie Wilson and Gloria Glass who were presented their Life Membership of Birdlife Australia by Steve Baker (Vice President) and Rae Clark (Secretary) at an event in the Bunya Mountains on Sat 13th December.

Happy Reading
Sandy Robertson



My daughter Kimberley was doing some homework on the front verandah recently and was visited by this very curious young King Parrot, whilst I was fortunate to observe a couple of Osprey who were happy to pose for photos, during a recent trip to Hervey Bay (more photos in the member photos pages).



2015 Challenge

For full challenge list, go to:
<http://toowoombabirdobservers.org.au>

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Date Claimers 2015

Proposed outings calendar

March 21/22 Toorbul Waders

April 26th (Sun) Lockyer Valley – Lake Apex, Adare Rd

June 5-8 Bribie Island

June 27/28 (Sat/Sun) Raptors

July 25 (Sat) Stevenson Street

Aug TBA Saw Pit Gully

Sept 26th (Sat) Lockyer Wetlands

Oct 23-26th Census

Nov Christmas breakup TBA



TOOWOOMBA
BIRD OBSERVERS

P.O. Box 4730, Toowoomba East 4350
www.toowoombabirdobservers.org

MEMBERSHIP: Adult/family \$45
Pensioner/student \$40

January Outing Report

On Saturday 31st January the Toowoomba Bird Observers held their first outing for 2015 at Ravensbourne National Park. Twenty nine keen Birdwatchers, of whom at least 10 were visitors, met up at the Blackbean picnic area. The day began relatively cool and cloudless with little or no breeze, making the conditions perfect for bird watching, as any movement in the thick rainforest will give away the presence of any birdlife. Reports of leeches in abundance had us all spraying on liberal amounts of different types of repellents, and tucking trouser legs into socks in an effort to combat the bloodsuckers.

King Parrots, Rainbow Lorikeets and White-browed Scrubwrens were among the first sightings to be had as we left the Blackbean picnic area car park and headed off along the Rainforest Circuit path. This walk is normally designated to take about 40 minutes to complete, but it eventually took our group over 2 and 1/2 hours to do.

Some quick glimpses of a pair of **Noisy Pittas** hopping their way across the forest floor had some of us spellbound and others very disappointed not to have seen this very colourful and rarely seen, secretive bird.



Eastern Yellow Robin

Photo: Gayle Lee

A charismatic **Eastern Yellow Robin** was perched sideways on the side of a tree trunk ready to pounce on his breakfast below as we continued along the path. This bright fellow is one of my all time personal favourites of the Australian birds.

Lewin's Honeyeaters and Large-billed Scrubwrens fed in the same trees overhead and around us. **Brown Cuckoo-Doves** could be heard constantly calling as well as a very loud **Green Catbird**. The loud and distinctive call of this bird allowed us to track it down quite easily and some of us had a good view of it before it flew off.

Movement off to our left alerted us to a mother bird feeding a youngster high up on a branch.

This was identified as a **Paradise**

Riflebird, a first for some of the few who managed to get a look at them before they quickly disappeared. What a shame that the beautiful male bird was nowhere to be seen. The rainforest is one of the most difficult areas to go bird watching as the thick forest offers great camouflage and protection for the birds, but it can also be one of the most rewarding places to see rarities, if you are lucky and patient.

A pair of **Brown Cuckoo-Doves** swung on the tangled vines above our heads, allowing photos and admiration of their colour before they too went on their way. When we reached a palm filled gully about 2/3 the way along the circuit, a pretty **Wampoo Fruit-Dove** flew off to find a quieter place to feed. Later we caught another pair, high up in the trees, happy to pose prettily for an extended period of time.

Next a **Black-faced Monarch** whistled loudly and constantly from a low perch in a small sapling close to the pathway. This bird sat and posed long enough for many portraits to be taken by the photographers in the group and for every one to get a very good look at him or her.

A **Rufous Fantail**, **Scaly-breasted Lorikeets** and **Silvereyes** were amongst the last group of bird seen before we made it back to the car park, where some of the group went on their way to accomplish the inevitable weekend tasks.

Morning tea was enjoyed at Gus Buetel's lookout where we socialised and compared notes on what we had seen or missed for the morning. Field guides were delved into to find the birds which were heard calling but not seen, such as the **Common Koel**, **White-throated Treecreeper** and the **Cicadabird**. One lucky member of the group reported that he had seen four new birds on the day. A few strays like **Splendid Fairy-wren**, **Spotted Pardalote** and an **Australian Magpie** were added to the list during our smoko session, giving a total of 35 birds.

Some more of the group called it a day at this point and the remainder decided to go around the much shorter Cedar Block Circuit. Here we added another five different species to the day's list making a grand total of 40 birds for the day. Altogether a great day was had out in the Ravensbourne rainforest.



Black-faced Monarch
Photo: Gayle Lee

Rain forest circuit list:

Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet,

Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Australian King-Parrot, Crimson Rosella, Common Koel, Channel-billed Cuckoo, Pheasant Coucal, Laughing Kookaburra, Noisy Pitta,

White-throated Treecreeper, Spotted Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren,

Large-billed Scrubwren, Brown Gerygone, Brown Thornbill, Little Friarbird, Lewin's Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robin, Eastern Whipbird, Golden Whistler; Grey Shrike-thrush. Black-faced Monarch, Rufous Fantail, Grey Fantail, Cicadabird, Figbird, Australian Magpie, Torresian Crow, Satin Bowerbird, Silvereye, Wampoo Fruit-Dove, Paradise Riflebird.

The Cedar Block Circuit:

Wonga Pigeon, White-browed Scrubwren, Large-billed Scrubwren, Eastern Spinebill, Brown Gerygone, Eastern Yellow Robin, Black-faced Monarch, Rufous Fantail, Spangled Drongo, Pied Butcherbird

Members' Photo Page

Bunya Birds.

Photos by Alastair Silcock

Clockwise from left: 'Birds and bins', Satin Bowerbird; Crimson Rosella; Noisy Pitta; King Parrot; Paradise Riflebird; Satin bowerbird (female);





'Who are you looking at' Tawny Frogmouths

'Five in a Tree' Tawny frogmouth family

More photos by Alastair Silcock, this time in his backyard at Pittsworth

Noisy Pitta Cunningham's Gap
Al Young.



Pair of Osprey, one feeding and one enjoying the sea breezes. Taken at Hervey Bay, Jan 2015

Photo: Sandy Robertson



Members' Bird Notes

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.

Species	Date	Location	Observers
Great Cormorant	4/01/2015	Lockyer Siding	MA, EC, IC
Square-tailed Kite	2/01/2015	Highfields	JS
Grey Goshawk	8/02/2015	Highfields	PM
Collared Sparrowhawk	4/01/2015	Ashlands Drive Reserve	MA, EC, IC
Peregrine Falcon	1/02/2015	Murphys Creek	MA
Brown Falcon	4/01/2015	Lockyer Siding	MA, EC, IC
Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo	22/01/2015	Highfields	PM, KO
Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo	12/02/2015	Rockville Toowoomba	OB
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	4/01/2015	Upper Lockyer	MA
Brown-headed Honeyeater	4/01/2015	Upper Lockyer	MA
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	4/01/2015	Ashlands Drive Reserve	MA, EC, IC
Cicadabird	4/01/2015	Ashlands Drive Reserve	MA, EC, IC
Dusky Woodswallow	4/01/2015	Upper Lockyer	MA

MA, M. Atzeni; **OB**, O. Booth; **EC**, E. Caudell; **IC**, I. Caudell; **PM**, P. McConnell; **KO**, K. O'Donnell; **JS**, J. Scanlan.

If anyone wishes to submit bird notes they can do this directly to me at mconnel@usq.edu.au or via the Club's mailing address.

Thanks
Pat McConnell



Brown Thornbill
Balgownie
charles dove 02/2015



Rainbow Lorikeet
Balgownie
charles dove 02/2015

Brown Thornbill and Rainbow Lorikeet
Photos: Charles Dove

Bits and Pieces

Proposed Bribie Island Outing – Friday 5th - Monday 8th June

The outing would be based at Bribie Island where there is lots of accommodation to suit every budget but most of the bird watching would be done at other places.

The outing would begin about midday on the Friday and end at about midday on the Monday but people would be able to come and go whenever it suits them.

On the Friday arvo and Monday morning we would bird on Bribie Island and especially at Buckley's Hole and Banksia (Kakadu) Beach but at other places as well.

One whole day (Saturday or Sunday) would be spent at Beachmere which is about 25 km from Bribie. Beachmere is much like Bribie but is on the mainland and is a place that I know well because my mother lives there.

We would spend another whole day (Saturday or Sunday) away from Bribie with the morning at Mary Cairncross Park at Maleny and the afternoon at Caloundra.

We might be able to do some owling sometime during the outing.

We would NOT go to Toorbul because the club goes there regularly.

The actual places that we visit and when would depend on the tides.

The attractions of this extended outing for TBO members would be:

Even though it would be winter, it is generally a lot warmer along the coast than it is in Toowoomba at that time of year.

We should be able to see the coastal raptors (Osprey, Brahminy Kite, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Whistling Kite) and the mangrove birds (Mangrove Honeyeater, Striated Heron, Collared Kingfisher, Mangrove Gerygone).

Even in winter there are still lots of species of waders around Bribie and Beachmere (though not in large numbers) and this is the time of year to see Double-banded Plover (often in full breeding plumage); also Lesser Crested Tern regularly turn up at Bribie in winter.

Mary Cairncross Park is a good rainforest site.

At Caloundra there is a good chance of seeing Australasian Gannets Eastern Reef Egret, Sooty Oystercatcher, the odd true seabird (but I do not have much experience in identifying seabirds) and humpback whales.

There are other coastal species that we might well see including White-cheeked Honeyeater and Beach Stone-Curlew, as well as a whole lot of species that you are familiar with in the Toowoomba region.

Please let one of the Executive members know ASAP if you are interested in attending this event so that Esther can make some enquiries with regards to accommodation.

TBO Online

Website and facebook:

toowoombabirdobservers.org.au

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Toowoomba-Bird-Observers/175472075881350>

Coming Events

21/22 March **Toorbul wader outing**

Wednesday, April 1st - General Meeting

7:30pm Dr Price Room (Little Street)

Guest speaker: Dr Dave Berman, QMDC; re Indian Myna control program.

For club outings, please advise the Outing Leader if you will be attending so that car pooling can be arranged where possible and Leaders can start the outing when all attendees have safely arrived, (or advise everyone of any last minute cancellations due to inclement weather.

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Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is Friday 20th March 2015
Please e-mail or post articles and photos to the Editor.

**If undeliverable return to
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Surface Mail