



# TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

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

No. 449  
March '17

## Editorial

Sandy Robertson

Hi all,

Wow! Hasn't it been a stinker of a summer? Hopefully some rain and cooler weather is on the way soon.

Please note, the March outing has been brought forward a week to coincide with suitable tides. See all the details in "Coming Events" on the back page.

Well I finally got a picture (not a very good one unfortunately) of the Spangled Drongos that are frequenting my place. They make an interesting array of calls.



I'm pretty sure they were here until quite late into winter last year so it will be interesting to see how long they hang around for...I'll be watching/listening.

## This Issue

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Please if you have an interesting story to share with other members or some photos you have taken, please send them in. Stories should be in a word document – don't worry about formatting, so long as the words are there, and any accompanying photos should be in a separate photo file such as a jpeg, not already embedded in the story, Deadline for next edition: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April.

Thanks

Happy reading

Sandy Robertson

## Date Claimers 2017

### Proposed outings calendar

March Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Wynnum Esplanade

April Sat 29<sup>th</sup> Ravensbourne National Park

May 27/28 optional camp out Peach Trees, Kilcoy

June 24/25<sup>th</sup> Raptor survey weekend

July Sat 29<sup>th</sup> Highfields Falls

August Sun 27<sup>th</sup> (Rain dependent) Lake Broadwater, Dalby

September 30<sup>th</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Campout Duraki and Coolmunda

October 29<sup>th</sup> /29<sup>th</sup> Census weekend

November 25<sup>th</sup> (rain dependent) Lockyer Wetlands

December TBA



TOOWOOMBA  
BIRD OBSERVERS

P.O. Box 4730, Toowoomba East 4350  
[www.toowoombabirdobservers.org](http://www.toowoombabirdobservers.org)

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

# January Outing Report

## Outing to Lockyer Valley 28 Jan 2017

*By Mike McGoldrick*

Owing to inclement weather conditions of fog and rain on the Toowoomba escarpment, the leader decided to change the venue to the bushlands of the Lockyer Valley rather than aborting the outing.

Proceeding along Ford's Rd., we flushed 2 raptors which on closer inspection revealed themselves as Brown Goshawks, an uncommon sighting for most present. A short distance further on at Ford's Rd. Dam, the group stopped for closer views of a third Brown Goshawk while our youngest member Dakota spied a Wedge-tailed Eagle getting airborne close by – it was beginning to look like a day for raptors!

Moving on to Adare Rd. Dam, we were pleasantly surprised to see a koala in the fork of a nearby eucalypt. We were then treated to excellent views of Jacana and other waterfowl while Penny's eagle eyes spied White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, White-breasted Woodswallow and Fuscous Honeyeater in the trees overhead.

The Redbank Creek site was disappointing but did produce a sighting of a flock of Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo. Moving on to Lake Clarendon for morning tea, we were again treated to a feast of more raptors including Black Kite, Whistling Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle and more Brown Goshawks. Numerous waterfowl were evident on the lake which has receded dramatically during the recent dry spell. Black Swan, Australian Pelican, Grey Teal, Hardhead, Plumed Whistling-Duck, Pink-eared Duck, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant and Australian Grebe were all present.

Despite the false start to the outing, we managed to tick off 58 species and so all those who attended agreed that it had been a pleasant day, both weatherwise and birdwise.

**Bird List:** Plumed Whistling Duck, Black Swan, Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Pink-eared Duck, Hardhead, Australian Grebe, Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Australian Pelican, Little Egret, Great Egret, Australian White Ibis, Cattle Egret, Black Kite, Whistling Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Brown Goshawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Eurasian Coot, Comb-crested Jacana, Black-winged Stilt, Black-fronted Dotterel, Masked Lapwing, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Pale-headed Rosella, Red-rumped Parrot, Pheasant Coucal, Laughing Kookaburra, Sacred



Jacana  
Photo: Kev Williams

Kingfisher, Dollarbird, Superb Fairy-wren, Red-backed Fairy-wren, Noisy Miner, Fuscous Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Grey-crowned Babbler, Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, Olive-backed Oriole, Figbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Spangled Drongo, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Torresian Crow, Golden-headed Cisticola



**Lockyer Valley Outing birds. Clockwise from top left:  
Sacred Kingfisher, Olive-backed Oriole, Brown Goshawk, Grey-crowned Babbler  
Photos: Kev Williams**



## ***Bits and Pieces***

### **TBO Online**

**Forum:** [toowoombabirdobservers.org.au](http://toowoombabirdobservers.org.au)

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

### **Website of Interest**

If you are interested in the night parrot a website has been developed

<https://nightparrot.com.au/>

They have also loaded up a selection of the most commonly heard calls

<https://nightparrot.com.au/index.php/resources/night-parrot-calls/>

# Fresh fish or soggy bread?

**By Al Young**

Recently I was walking along West Creek in Toowoomba when I saw some people tossing bits of bread to a few Pacific Black Ducks which they were eagerly gobbling up. There was a single Little Black Cormorant dashing around among the ducks but it was not apparently interested in the bread. There was plenty of bread to go around but I didn't see the cormorant grab any bits of bread. I presume it was looking for small fish attracted to the bread so, what would you prefer for lunch-fresh fish or soggy bread? Like many predators, cormorants are opportunistic hunters and will take advantage of any opportunity for an easy meal. I have seen Little Black Cormorants swimming among a group of Australian Pelicans in 'fishing mode'. The pelicans all move together in a fairly tight formation, usually in shallower water, with their wings partially extended and plunge their heads in unison into the water. This fishing mode by pelicans can encircle fish and also stir-up and disorientate smaller fish and invertebrates (shrimp and crayfish). I presume the cormorants were picking up the smaller fish and invertebrates that the pelicans missed or were not interested in. I have seen this behaviour on Cooper Creek in south-west Queensland on several occasions.



**Little Black Cormorant. West Creek Toowoomba. 29/01/17.  
Photo Al Young**



Little Black Cormorant. West Creek Toowoomba. 29/01/17.  
(Note cormorants emerald green eyes).  
Photo Al Young



Australian Pelicans and a Little Black Cormorant (arrow) fishing in Cooper Cr. 08/09/97.  
Digital photo from a 35mm slide. Al Young.

# February Outing Report

## GOOMBURRA STATE FOREST

*By Al Young*

Eleven club members and two very welcome guests, Hugh and Kay Krenske met at the junction of the New England Hwy and Forest Springs Rd at 6:30 am on Sunday, February 26th, 2017 for an outing to Goomburra State Forest which is part of the Main Range NP. We decided to travel on the back roads to Goomburra via Forest Springs Rd-Upper Forest Springs-Goomburra Rd/Inverramsay Rds. This would improve safety while travelling in convoy and allow us to see bird species often found in areas modified for grazing and cropping. Along this route there are areas of remnant woodland/forest vegetation along creek lines and some roadways.

The Goomburra Valley was quite green after recent rain and there were certainly a lot people camping along Dalrymple Creek outside the park and also in the park campgrounds. After morning tea we walked along the Dalrymple Creek short circuit and then back to Manna Gums Campground for an early lunch followed by a drive up to rainforest where there are tracks to Sylvester's Lookout and Castle Rock. (Parking was at premium here!). We decided to walk along the Winder Track which follows a ridge line between tall open forest and rainforest. Part of the tall open forest on the eastern side had been burnt but was in recovery mode.

The Winder Track was not very productive for birds but we did see an interesting dragonfly, called a Sigma Darner (*Austroaeschna sigma*) and four different butterflies.

Sorry for the digression but now back to the birds. During the outing we saw 72 species which is very good considering we didn't include any major wetlands during the trip. It was a very good day for raptors with five species seen- Black-shouldered Kite, Pacific Baza, Brown Goshawk, Spotted Harrier and Nankeen Kestrel. For me the best bird of the day was a male Rose Robin seen briefly along Dalrymple Creek. Unfortunately it was gone before I could get a photo. I'm not sure how many others saw it because most people were strung out along the track.



**Bird Species List for Areas En Route to Goomburra SF:** Maned (Wood) Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Brown Quail, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Eastern Cattle Egret, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, Black-shouldered Kite, Pacific Baza, Brown Goshawk, Spotted Harrier, Nankeen Kestrel, Dusky Moorhen, Rock Dove, Crested Pigeon, Laughing Kookaburra, Cockatiel, Galah, Little Corella, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Red-rumped Parrot, Pale-headed Rosella, Eastern rosella, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Noisy Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Striated Pardalote, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Willie Wagtail, Magpie Lark, Torresian Crow, Jack Winter, Fairy Martin, Little Grassbird, Golden-headed Cisticola, Common Myna, Common Starling, Doubled-barred Finch, Chestnutbreasted Mannikin and Australian Pipit.

**Bird Species List for Goomburra SF & Nearby Areas:** White-necked Heron, Pacific Baza, Brown Goshawk, White-headed Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Wonga Pigeon, Channel-billed Cuckoo,



Red-rumped parrots, male and female  
**Photo: Kev Williams**

Laughing Kookaburra, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Crimson Rosella, Satin Bowerbird, White-throated Treecreeper, Superb Fairywren, Scarlet Myzomela (Honeyeater), Red Wattlebird, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Bell Miner, Noisy Miner, Lewin's Honeyeater, Spotted Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Gerygone, Eastern Whipbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Australian Golden Whistler, Willie Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Rufous Fantail, Torresian Crow, Eastern Yellow Robin, Rose Robin (adult male) and Red-browed Finch.

Although not surprising there was a different suite of birds seen in the areas modified for agriculture compared with those found in the Goomburra area. There were only nine species common to both areas: White-necked Heron, Brown Goshawk, Laughing Kookaburra, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Noisy Miner, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Willie Wagtail and Torresian Crow. Thanks to all members and guests for making it a good birding day.



Photos by Kev Williams

## Members' Photo Page

For all bird photographers... amateur, professional and anywhere in between, please send your photos to [sandy.robertson6@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.robertson6@gmail.com)

## Coming Events

### March Outing

**Date:** Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March

**Where:** Wynnum Esplanade

**Details:** This outing has been moved forward one week to suit the tide times. We will meet at the wading pool on the Wynnum Esplanade (UBD Ref. Map 143 K19) around 9:30am, leaving Toowoomba approx. 7:00am. This should give us time to have our refreshments before searching along the shoreline after 10:00am on the rising tide. If this isn't productive, we will travel to Queens Esplanade at Thornside (UBD Ref. Map 164) for more shorebirds. I suggest we meet at The Range Shopping Centre in Toowoomba at 7:00am for carpooling purposes (I will have room for 3 passengers). As there will be heavy traffic on the highway, I don't anticipate travelling in convoy so vehicles should make their way independently to the designated rendezvous at Wynnum. Attendees may bring their own spotting scopes if they own one. Hopefully the weather will be favourable on the day but it might be advisable to take a light jacket.

**Leader:** Mike McGoldrick

Ph 46357371

Mob. 0417802817

## Committee Members

<b>President</b>	Olive Booth	4633 0553 <a href="mailto:o.booth@bigpond.com">o.booth@bigpond.com</a>
<b>Vice-President</b>	Sandy Robertson	<a href="mailto:sandy.robertson6@gmail.com">sandy.robertson6@gmail.com</a> 46972133/ 0415277145
<b>Secretary</b>	Col Hughes	0409 058 275 <a href="mailto:colinhughes646@gmail.com">colinhughes646@gmail.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Marie Gittins	0432960709 <a href="mailto:marie77gittins@gmail.com">marie77gittins@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:marie.gittins@aue.salvationarmy.org">marie.gittins@aue.salvationarmy.org</a>
<b>Editor</b>	Sandy Robertson	<a href="mailto:sandy.robertson6@gmail.com">sandy.robertson6@gmail.com</a> 46972133/ 0415277145
<b>Records Officer</b>	Nikki Thompson	<a href="mailto:thompson.nicolette8@gmail.com">thompson.nicolette8@gmail.com</a>
<b>Media Officer</b>	Vacant	
<b>Outings Coordinator</b>	Mike McGoldrick	<a href="mailto:michael.mcgoldrick@westnet.com.au">michael.mcgoldrick@westnet.com.au</a>
<b>Committee Member</b>	Sacha Dyson Holland	00458551864 <a href="mailto:sachadysonholland@hotmail.com">sachadysonholland@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Librarian</b>	Margie Easton	46338338 0419667432 <a href="mailto:rmeaston5@bigpond.com">rmeaston5@bigpond.com</a>
<b>Web/ Facebook coordinator</b>	Mick Atzeni and Judi Grey	

**Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017**  
Please e-mail or post articles and photos to the Editor.

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

**Surface Mail**