

TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS



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

No. 455
June '18

Editorial Sandy Robertson

Hi all,

Our AGM is in October and will be here before we know it.

In the last couple of years we have struggled to get enough people willing to fill management committee positions.

Please consider putting your hand up to take a turn at filling a committee position to help keep the club alive.

We have tried to ease the burden on the management committee by reducing the executive meetings to once every two months rather than monthly and sometimes having our meeting at the monthly outing rather than on another evening.

All positions will be declared vacant at the AGM so please let the current executive know if you are interested in nominating yourself or someone else for a role.

If there aren't enough nominations for the executive positions club members may need to consider what the future of the club may be. One option may be for the

club to become a country branch of Birdlife Southern Queensland with just a local convenor to organise outings. This is just one option. There are others that may be investigated further leading up to the AGM and in the event that adequate nominations are not forthcoming.

August outing to Myall Park:

If you are planning on attending this outing it is important that you please book your accommodation directly with the park caretakers and advise the outing leaders (Ross and Margie Easton) by the end of June.

measton5@bigpond.com

Welcome to the club new members:

- Ann and Allan Parry
- Faye Chambers



TOOWOOMBA
BIRD OBSERVERS

In This Issue

April Outing Report

N1 Sector survey

Members Bird Notes

Rare Bird Report

Bits and Pieces

Coming Events

July – Rogers Reserve/
Charmaine Court Reserve/
Cooby Dam

August Myall Park Botanic
Gardens (weekend Campout)

September – Kingsthorpe –
private property

October 9th (Tuesday) **AGM**
7pm Uniting Church Hall. Cnr of
Tor and North Street

October – Species census
weekend

November – Christmas breakup
– venue TBA

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

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

April Outing Report

OUTING TO GLEN LOMOND PARK

SATURDAY 28TH APRIL 2018

14 Toowoomba Bird Observer members and 3 guests Allan and Ann and Sandy assembled at the Burraway Court entrance to Glen Lomond Park, one of the lesser known Toowoomba escarpment parks on a fine and cool Saturday morning to explore what the park may have to offer in the way of birdlife. A flock of 12 **Australian King Parrots** were seen feeding in the eucalypts near the park entrance as well as **Pale-headed Rosella**, **Laughing Kookaburra**, and a **Pied Butcherbird**. As we started along the track, the birds gradually started to appear from their hiding places and 5 species of honeyeater were sighted: **Lewin's Honeyeater**, **Yellow-faced Honeyeater**, **White-naped Honeyeater**, **Red Wattlebird** and **Eastern Spinebill**. Next a **Satin Bowerbird** was spotted on a high branch above the track while **Grey Fantails** flitted around in the foliage of the eucalypt trees. Up the slope, both **Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets** squabbled for the best nectar in the eucalypt blossom. Good views of both male and female **Golden Whistler** and **Striated** and **Spotted Pardalotes** were obtained with Kevin getting a great photo of the male Golden Whistler resplendent in his golden livery. **Eastern Yellow Robins** and a feeding party of **Silvereye** were moving through the privet scrub on the side of the track. It was noted that the Silvereye were the southern sub-species (evident from the rufous colour on their flanks) presumably migrating north to warmer climes for the coming winter. Towards the end of the walk, a swarm of European honey bees was spotted by the leader in a small tree beside the track and members were keen to get photos of this rare sight but still making sure to keep their distance. **Eastern Whipbirds** were heard calling but stayed out of sight in the undergrowth while a **Grey Shrike-thrush** foraged for its breakfast under the bark of a eucalypt. On the return journey, a pair of **Varied Trillers** were seen making this the bird of the day.

After the walk, the group moved on to Duggan Park for morning tea and bird call and afterwards joined other environmental and conservation groups for their Open Day and the launch of the book "Plants of Duggan Park" by the author Greg Spearritt who has dedicated his book to the hard-working volunteers of the Friends of Escarpment Parks bush regeneration group.

Bird List: 31 species were seen or heard H=heard

Laughing Kookaburra, Galah, Australian King Parrot, Pale-headed Rosella, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Satin Bowerbird, Eastern Spinebill, Noisy Friarbird, White-naped Honeyeater, Red Wattlebird, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Lewin's Honeyeater, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Thornbill, Eastern Whipbird (H), Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Varied Triller, Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-Thrush, Willie Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Torresian Crow, Eastern Yellow Robin, Silvereye

Sacha Dyson-Holland



TBO N1 Sector

Gowrie Junction to Meringandan

Monday 7 May 2018

Gloria Glass

The Labour Day public holiday was a cool and windy day but Esther Townsend and I still managed to have a superb morning's birding in the Gowrie Junction – Meringandan – Meringandan West area. This area is TBO Sector N1, an area that we know quite well from having done many October censuses there in the past.

Before we set off from Magpie Lane, Gowrie Junction, at about 8 am, we were able to list the **Southern Boobook**, whose daytime roost is known to us! Then we headed off on our usual circuit around N1. A couple of hundred metres down Tilgonda Road we saw a pair of **Red-rumped Parrots** beside the road. Then it was off to Paulson's Road West which runs beside the railway line. There was a strong wind from the east which kept most birds low but **House Sparrows** and **Common Mynas** were still about and the raptors were not bothered by the wind. Here we saw a **Black Kite** and a **Nankeen Kestrel** and there was a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** being chased by a **Torresian Crow**.

On our way back to the roundabout at Gowrie Junction, I pointed out to Esther the **White-faced Heron** which is usually in the paddock beside the road whenever I go past. We were so chuffed by all the birds we were seeing including the common birds that we went the wrong way through the roundabout and ended up going straight ahead past the school, and we were disconcerted later when we realised that we were *not* on Gowrie-Lilyvale Road but on Old Homebush Road and we had missed one of our favourite haunts! However, we continued on, stopping for birds here and there, and turning left when we reached the east-west through road, Yalangur-Lilyvale Road. Then when we reached Lavender Road, we turned down it, and then into Reis Road, remembering this little block as another favourite of ours. However there weren't many birds despite our looking all along the fences and examining the bushes and shrubs and the wide grassy paddocks.

Our meanderings led us to back to Gowrie-Lilyvale Road and our favourite haunt, a narrow gravel road that goes through farmland and ends at an area of remnant bush. Because it is a lonely dead end road, we were able to drive along slowly and bird from the comfort of the car. Before long, flying ahead, were some ... wait for it! ... **Bluebonnets**! We *had* seen them here before, and in another place further west, but here they were again. How lovely they were. There were a couple of mobs of red cows near troughs, one with a lovely red Santa Gertrudis bull among them, but no birds. Eventually we saw some wrens, but what were they? Ah, with winter plumage [and the wind!] we decided on **Superb Fairy-wren** for the two of them. And then later on we saw **Willie Wagtail**, **Noisy Friarbird**, **Pied Currawong** and a pair of **Cockatiels**.

Further along we parked the car, and started walking through the wooded-both-sides section. This is usually a good bush bird site and although the birds did not show themselves we heard **Yellow-rumped Thornbill**, **Mistletoebird**, **Brown Thornbill**, **Brown Honeyeater**, **Lewin's Honeyeater** and **Silvereye**. We did manage to see a **Grey Fantail** and a large bird that we flushed from the ground. It flew ahead of us and I could only think it might be a Night-jar! Oh, if we could only see it. Then Esther found the bird again and directed my eyes to it. It was another **Southern Boobook**! So great to see, but I was sorry we had disturbed its daytime sleep. Though was he really sleeping on the ground earlier? There were plenty of shady perches he/she could have used. We quickly retraced our steps to leave the Bookbook in peace.

Back along the regular roads to the Meringandan area, now with lots and lots of new houses, and the Meringandan School opposite, established in 1876, now at last with perhaps many pupils living nearby. We have a couple of good sites in this settlement, the first being the small bridge over Meringandan Creek – usually a good place for Reed-warblers but not today.

On to the Lilyvale sports ground for morning tea. Usually we can find birds on the oval and in the creek to the west. We chickened out of walking down to the creek, thinking it was bound to be dry and with no birds there, and just had our cuppa in the [windy] shelter of the picnic table, attended by an **Australian Magpie**. However, he wasn't interested in the dry coffee and dried milk that spilled out when my cup blew away while I tried to open the thermos! We still had our cakes to eat, however, carefully kept from blowing away too.

N1 Sector continued...

The next stop was the Tom Volp Dam in Garrett Road in Meringandan, usually a good place for reed birds and water birds. The water level was low but we did see some water birds: **Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal** and **Dusky Moorhen**, also **Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Masked Lapwing, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike** and **Welcome Swallow**. The **Chestnut-breasted Mannikins** in the back yard of an adjacent house were a bonus. We were sorry to see that the large dead gum tree was no longer there. Its branches had been such a good place for the large waterbirds to perch on and have a snooze after they had had a swim and a feed. Only the broken stump remained. Perhaps the Council, who have provided a good shelter with a picnic-table, and do a good job slashing around the dam and have recently put up a sign, could look into putting in high perches.

Now on to another special place, the Meringandan West Environmental Park, in Peters Road. This used to be a gravel extraction area. Sadly it had no water but ... in the paddock next door, to the west, the pond there still had some water, **and waterbirds**. This was to be the best birding spot of the day. Most of the waterbirds we saw there we had already seen at the Tom Volp Dam but the **Little Pied Cormorant** was a new one for this site. Other birds we recorded here included **Peaceful Dove, Speckled Warbler, Weebill, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Striped Honeyeater, Grey Butcherbird, Double-barred Finch, Striated Pardalote, Grey-crowned Babbler** and **Apostlebird**.

We stayed for a long time against the western fence of the park, looking across the water body in the next paddock, and into the trees in that paddock, and into the trees along Goombungee Road. We could also see into the house back-gardens beyond, where there were ten **White-winged Choughs** digging and messing about in a house yard, and lots of **Rainbow Lorikeets** and **Scaly-breasted Lorikeets** feeding at a backyard bird feeder. In previous visits to the Council park we were in we had seen the Choughs in the paddock to the north. Obviously the house-owner to the west was providing superior feeding grounds.

We finally dragged ourselves away, and proceeded on our usual way across Goombungee Road and along Boodua-Meringandan Road, turning left into Bowtells Road and eventually into part of Yalangur-Lilydale Road until reaching Gowrie-Lilyvale Road. We had several glimpses of interesting birds in the woodland beside these roads, but were not able to identify any of them. The call of an **Eastern Whipbird** greeted us when we arrived back at Magpie Lane for lunch.

On these morning excursions we set ourselves a total of 80 species but we were pleasantly surprised with 60 species, considering the windy day and the long dry weather in the area.

Species seen: Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Little Pied Cormorant, White-faced Heron, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Black Kite, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Dusky Moorhen, Masked Lapwing, Rock Dove, Spotted Turtle-dove, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Galah, Bluebonnet, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Cockatiel, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Pale-headed Rosella, Red-rumped Parrot, Southern Boobook [at two places], Laughing Kookaburra, Superb Fairy-Wren, Striated Pardalote [h], Speckled Warbler, Weebill, Brown Thornbill [h], Yellow-rumped Thornbill [h], Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Striped Honeyeater, Noisy Friarbird, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Lewin's Honeyeater [h], Brown Honeyeater [h], Grey-crowned Babbler, Eastern Whipbird [h], Magpie-Lark, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Grey Butcherbird [h], Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow, White-winged Chough, Apostlebird, House Sparrow, Double-barred Finch, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Mistletoebird [h], Welcome Swallow, Silvereye [h], Common Starling, Common Myna (60 species)

MEMBERS BIRD NOTES

Emerald Dove	26 March	South end of Rowbotham Street	MG
Wonga Pigeon	28 March	Kearney Street	MG
Spangled Drongo	28 March	Kearney Street	MG
Wedge-tailed Eagle	28 March	Kearney Street	MG

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES:

AY, Al Young; MG, Marie Gittins

Rare Bird Report

TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

Name: Marie Gittins

Other Observers Present: No (identification supported; photographs viewed by Nicci Thompson and Rod Hobson)

Species: Barking Owl *Ninox connivens*

Date of Observation: 25th April 2018

Location: Glen Lomond Park, Toowoomba SEQ

Habitat Description: Remnant patch of dry vine scrub (Regional ecosystem 12.8.13) abutting private residences on cleared land to the west and Narrow-leaved Ironbark on sedimentary rocks (Regional ecosystem 12.9-10.7) to the east.

Sighting Conditions (weather, visibility etc.): dry; cool; intermittent light breeze and light cloud throughout the day. Toowoomba min. 13.1 deg. C, max. 24.7deg. C. Showers to east and south of Toowoomba. Visibility at sighting location very good despite the dappled light of the dry vine scrub locality.

Optical Aids Used (Binoculars, telescope, camera):

Binoculars;

Verano 10 x 42 BGA PC Oasis WP; FIELD 6.0 deg.

Camera;

Sony AVCHD DSC-HX 300

Distance/Height from Bird: approx. five metres from observer to subject. Owl perched approx.three metres high from ground level

Duration of Observation: approx. 30 minutes

Number of Birds Observed: One

Description of Bird: Size: A large owl with a heavily streaked breast; large orange-yellow eyes clearly observed. Feet were large and of very powerful appearance. Body appeared quite elongate with comparatively small head.

How was it distinguished from similar species? Larger than local Boobook Owl *Ninox novaehollandiae* and breast heavily and uniformly dark streaked contrasting with pale base colour and not with the rather denser streaking in the neck and up-

perhaps from the agitated flock of Noisy Miners present at the site?

If required, are you able to provide other evidence e.g. photograph, video or taped call of the bird you saw or heard?

Yes (photographs)

Thank you for submitting your record which will now be distributed to the Club's Rarities Committee. The committee will use various means to assess the record and may seek additional information where necessary.



It is so dry at the moment and the dam is so low, the only advantage is the visitors who like the soupy shallow muck and exposed banks including three Yellow-billed Spoonbills, Black-fronted Dotterels and a regular Pacific Heron. **Photos:** Sandy Robertson



BITS AND PIECES

TBO Online

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

TBO Library

Don't forget the TBO library is now housed at the Landcare Discovery Centre located at 127b Campbell Street. This is on the western side of the railway line opposite the Mill Street Tavern. Not only is the TBO library there and available for borrowing, but so is a whole range of other books and resources on all sorts of environment and natural resource management related topics. The library can usually be accessed between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:15pm.

Club Checklist

If you would like the excel file to use for recording birds for club records please contact the Secretary Col Hughes

August Campout

Please get your accommodation bookings made directly with the park **ASAP** and let the outing leaders know that you are coming measton5@bigpond.com

Myall Park Botanic Gardens

Myall Park Road Glenmorgan QLD 4423

Accommodation available on site:

Avochie Cottage—Sleeps 6 (1 double, 2 twin rooms)

The Quarters—Sleeps 10 (1 double with 2 singles; one twin and 4 single rooms)

Each of these buildings is equipped with crockery, cutlery, cooking utensils, electric stove, refrigerator, fireplace, bathroom and toilet facilities. There is also a BBQ at the cottage.

If required, linen is available for \$5 (one off)

Accommodation needs to be booked individually and directly with the park office.

Phone 07 4665 6705 (leave message if necessary) email myallparkbotanic@gmail.com

There is also The Bottle Tree Inn at Glenmorgan, 10 minutes away.

COMING EVENTS

For all 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 every one of any last minute cancellations due to inclement weather).

Also if car pooling, please offer fair monetary compensation to the driver to be put towards fuel costs for the day.

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Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is Friday 27th July 2018

Please e-mail or post articles and photos to the Editor.

If undeliverable return to

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Surface Mail**

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