

TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS



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

No. 462
Jan 20

Editorial Sandy Robertson

Happy New Year everyone.

Wow! 2020!!! Who would have thought it?!?!?

Here's hoping the New Year can bring us some more wet stuff and a reprieve from the heat and bushfires causing so much devastation.

Firstly I would like to apologise for the delay in getting a newsletter out to you all.

If you could contribute something to the newsletter occasionally that would make the job more interesting and easier.

As always Al Young has contributed an interesting article "Gone to Pot" along with some wonderful photos, all taken in Redwood Park. See the members photo page.

The AGM was held in October. We said goodbye and thanks to Nicci Thompson for her many years of service to the club. We welcome to Ann Allcock as our new Treasurer and Shinead Ashe who joins as a committee member. Marie, whilst having given up the Treasurers job, has stayed on as a committee member, Sascha has stayed on as Media Officer/Committee member

and meanwhile our multi talented Tyde continues as Vice President as well as taking on the role of Records Officer. More recently, Suzanne Combes has joined the committee and is taking on the role of Secretary, Also if anyone is interested in taking on the newsletter editor role, I would be most pleased to hear from you.

We still require more members to put up their hands to lead outings. If more people offered to help, you would only need to lead an outing once every 2 years (more if you want to of course) but offering at least once, will help to ease the burden on just a few.

Enjoy
Sandy Robertson

Contributions for next
newsletter to sent in by
Friday 28th February



TOOWOOMBA
BIRD OBSERVERS

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Bits and Pieces

Proposed Events Calendar

Unless advised otherwise all outings are scheduled for the last Weekend of the month.

Whether Sat or Sun to be determined by the outing leader

January: Ravensbourne NP
Cancelled due to poor weather

February: Lake Manchester
Leader Tyde Bands

March 27-29: Bunya
Mountains
Leader Marie Gittins

April: Lakes of the Lockyer
Leader Tyde Bands

May: Jondaryan, Oakey and
surrounds
Leader Tyde Bands

June: Raptor Census

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

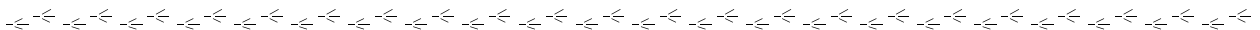
2019 Annual Census Report

Census 2019 ran from 25 to 28 October with at least 23 people participating. A handful of records from 24 October 2019 were also incorporated. 177 species were seen in total, which suggests average diversity and good survey effort. All twenty cells of the club survey area were surveyed; greatest diversity was observed in N2 with 97 species, followed by C7 with 90 and C4 with 88 species respectively. As usual, western cells were relatively low in diversity, and survey effort was not particularly high in these cells either. However, several key species were observed in the western survey area – e.g. White-winged Fairywren, Black Falcon, Greater Bluebonnet, Purple-backed Fairywren, White-winged Chough and Yellow-throated Miner. The escarpment area (generally cells N2, C3, C4 and C6) turned up several good birds in Fan-tailed Cuckoo, White-headed Pigeon, Wonga Pigeon, Brush Cuckoo, Grey Goshawk, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Regent Bowerbird, Brown Gerygone and Barred Cuckooshrike. Other good records included a Peregrine Falcon in the drier parts of N2, a Southern Boobook in N3, Latham's Snipe, Little Bronze-Cuckoo and Red-necked Avocet in C7 (Lockyer Valley near Helidon), Spotless Crake in C3 (West Creek Reserve), and White-throated Needletail in N2. Surprisingly, Banded Lapwing were recorded in two different cells – it is fairly typical to miss this species altogether in latter-day censuses.

Three species – Galah, Australian Magpie and Magpie-Lark – were observed in 19 out of 20 cells but no species was observed in all twenty cells.

Birds that did not make the cut this year included Australasian Shoveler, Horsfield's or Shining Bronze-Cuckoos, Australian Owlet-nightjar, Painted Buttonquail, Spotted Harrier, Azure Kingfisher, Powerful Owl, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Spotted Quail-thrush, Brown Songlark and, surprisingly, Plum-headed Finch.

Thank you to all who participated. For a raw copy of the 2019 Census data please contact Tyde on 0001tlb@gmail.com

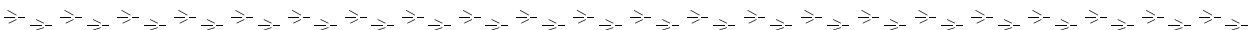


It is with sadness that I pass on the news of the passing of two TBO members.

Neil McKiligan who's passing most of you have already heard about. Neil passed peacefully during the night on the 6th January. A memorial service is being held for Neil on Sat 14th March at 2pm at Picnic Point

More recently (in late January) Rob Collyer passed away. Rob battled Mantle Cell Lymphoma most of last year and had some complete remissions in the last few months of 2019 to enjoy the festive season. It returned early in January to completely invade his body. He passed painlessly and comfortably

Our thoughts and sympathies are with Barb and family at this difficult time.



Gone to Pot

Birds Seen or Heard Near Water Pots in Redwood Park, 2019.

Text and Photos by Al Young

In 2018 I wrote an article for the Toowoomba Bird Observers Club (TBO) newsletter about the birds seen drinking in the few remaining pools of water in Gatton Creek, Redwood Park, Toowoomba. This is somewhat of a sequel but with observations at several earthenware pots containing water placed in the picnic area on the eastern side of Redwood Park. As the drought intensified all the remaining small waterholes in Gatton Creek that I could reach have dried up. So, these water pots provided a unique opportunity to record and photograph birds as they came into drink and 'skinny dip'. Thanks to Hugh Krenseke and the team from the Friends of the Escarpment Parks (FEP) for providing the pots and regular top-ups. The habitat was on the edge of the dry rainforest bordering on the open forest dominated by *Eucalyptus* species.

The main aim of these 'stake outs' was to photograph birds seen in the area but other information was also noted – species seen or heard in the area, frequency of occurrence (as a %) and a crude estimate of abundance of each species of honeyeaters, silvereyes and finches (Red-browed & Double-barred).

Between August 15th and December 13th, 2019 I observed these water pots on 32 occasions, totalling 44.5 hours and recorded the birds seen or heard on each occasion in the vicinity of the water pots. The observation times varied from 20 to 120 minutes. All observations were in the morning between 7:30 and 11:00 am, except for one occasion in the afternoon.

Table 1. A Summary of the Sampling Effort at Water Pots in Redwood Park, 2019.

Month	Number of Visits	Hours
August	4	5
September	9	12.9
October	4	5.3
November	10	14.5
December	5	6.8
Total	32	44.5



I also attempted to count the number of each species seen near the pots. Once the numbers for each species reached more than 20, I just recorded the tally as 20 plus. (Ran out of fingers and toes!). Of course there was no way of knowing if some individuals came to drink more than once because all Yellow-faced Honeyeaters look the same to me. Also, observation time periods were not standardised so the tallies are just a gross estimate of abundance but might provide some estimate of relative abundance of each species or maybe which species needs to drink more often or a combination of both.

Table 2. Summary of birds seen (s), heard (h) or not recorded (0) at water pots in Redwood Park, Toowoomba. Results from August 15th to December 13th, 2019. The number of observation periods

Species	Aug (4)	Sept (9)	Oct (4)	Nov (10)	Dec (5)	Species	Aug (4)	Sept (9)	Oct (4)	Nov (10)	Dec (5)
Pacific Baza	0	0	0	0	s(1)	White -throated Gerygone	h	h	h	h	h
Australian Brush-turkey	0	0	0	s(1)	0	Brown Thornbill	0	s	s	s	s
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	0	s	0	s	0	Eastern Whipbird	h	h	h	h	h
Pacific Emerald-Dove	0	0	0	s(1)	0	Pied Currawong	0	h	h	h	0
Peaceful Dove	h	s	s	s	0	Black-faced Cuckoo -shrike	0	h	0	s	h
Bar-shouldered Dove	0	h	0	s	0	Australian Golden Whistler	s	h	s	h	0
Channel-billed Cuckoo	0	0	0	h	0	Rufous Whistler	s	s	s	s	s
Shining Bronze Cuckoo	0	s	0	s	0	Grey Shrike-thrush	s	s	h	h	h
Laughing Kookaburra	h	h	h	0	0	Australasian Figbird	0	s	0	0	h
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	0	s	0	h	0	Olive-backed Oriole	s	0	h	s	0
Rainbow Lorikeet	0	h	0	0	0	Spangled Drongo	0	0	0	s	0
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	0	h	0	0	0	Willie Wagtail	0	s(1)	0	0	0
Regent Bowerbird	s	s	s	s	s	Grey Fantail	s	s	s	s	s
White-throated Treecreeper	h	h	s(1)	h	s(1)	Rufous Fantail	s	s	s	s	s
Scarlet Honeyeater	s	s	0	0	0	Spectacled Monarch	0	s	s	s	0
Eastern Spinebill	s(1)	0	0	0	0	Black-faced Monarch	0	0	0	S(2)	0
Brown Honeyeater	s	s	s	s	0	Leaden Flycatcher	0	s	s	s	s
Noisy Friarbird	0	h	0	h	h	Restless Flycatcher	0	0	0	s	0
Brown-headed Honeyeater	s	s	s	s	0	Torresian Crow	h	s(1)	h	h	h
White throated Honeyeater	s	s	s	s	s	Eastern Yellow Robin	s	s	s	s	s
White-naped Honeyeater	s	s	s	s	s	Red-capped Robin	0	s(1)	0	0	0
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	s	s	s	s	s	Silvereye	0	s	s	s	s
Fuscous Honeyeater	0	s	s	0	0	Red-browed Finch	s	s	s	s	s
Lewin's Honeyeater	s	s	s	s	s	Double-barred Finch	s	s	s	s	s
Spotted Pardalote	s	s	s	s	s						
Striated Pardalote	h	s	s	s	h						
Speckled Warbler	0	s	s	s	0						
White-browed Scrubwren	s	s	s	s	0						
Large-billed Scrubwren	0	0	0	s(1)	0						

each month are shown in brackets.

During this four month period I recorded 53 species of bird and one species of monitor lizard, Lace Monitor (*Varanus varius*).

Some species were only seen once – Pacific Baza, Australian Brush-turkey, Pacific Emerald- Dove, Eastern Spinebill, Large-billed Scrubwren, Willie Wagtail, Red-capped Robin (female), and Torresian Crow, although the latter species was heard on all occasions.

On many occasions five or six different species were seen drinking from the same pot. For example: White naped, White-throated and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Eastern Yellow Robin, Red-browed and Double-barred Finches. Very little aggressive behaviour, even among honeyeaters was seen. Even Lewin's Honeyeaters tolerated each other with 3 or 4 birds sharing the same pot. Larger species, such as Regent Bowerbird, Grey Shrike-thrush and doves had 'right-of-way' and sent any smaller birds on their way if they wanted to drink at the same pot.

Raptors:

The only raptor recorded was a Pacific Baza seen flying and calling overhead on December 13th.

Doves:

Four species of doves (Table 1) were seen and they were all very wary of my presence and took a long time to approach the pots. Generally the slightest movement on my part sent them fleeing. Peaceful Doves and Brown Cuckoo-Doves were slightly more tolerant of my presence. A Pacific Emerald- Dove was only seen briefly but it was a real treat.

Cuckoos:

Shining Bronze Cuckoos were seen in September (one adult) and November (3 adults & 1 juvenile). Although nine species of Cuckoos have been recorded in Redwood Park (McConnell, 1996) only the Shining Bronze and Channel-billed Cuckoos were recorded during this study. A single Channel-billed Cuckoo was heard in late October.

Cockatoos, Lorikeets, Parrots, etc.

Cockatoos, Lorikeets, Parrots (Australian King-Parrot) and Rosellas were very scarce presumably due to the lack of blossom caused by the prolonged drought. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were heard and seen flying overhead on several occasions but Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets were only heard once. No parrot or rosellas were recorded.

Bowerbirds:

Regent Bowerbirds, both adult males and females were regular visitors to the water pots. Only one immature bird, a male was seen. The Satin Bowerbird which is an uncommon resident was not recorded.

Honeyeaters:

Honeyeaters were the most abundant in terms of species diversity (10 species) and number of individuals. All three species of 'White-naped' Honeyeaters (*Melithreptus* species) recorded in the Park were seen. Included in this group (In order of increasing abundance) were: Brown-headed, White-throated and White-naped Honeyeaters. Of the non-*Melithreptus* group, Lewin's and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters were generally the most numerous honeyeaters on most occasions. They often formed a 'vanguard' prior to other species arriving.

Other honeyeaters that are generally considered rare or uncommon (or under-reported?) in Redwood Park were: Eastern Spinebill (1), Brown Honeyeater (27 individuals on 17 occasions and Fuscous Honeyeater (5 birds in late September and early to mid- October).

Scarlet Honeyeaters were only recorded in August and September (late winter-early spring). They appeared in moderate numbers of between 5 and 15 birds from late August to mid-September but were then absent for the rest of the year. I seem to recall in previous years Scarlet Honeyeaters could be seen or more often heard calling during the summer months. Maybe due to the severe drought they have moved on but to where?

Fig. 1. Frequency of Occurrence (f%-horizontal bars) of Honeyeaters at Water Pots in Redwood Park, Toowoomba 2019. Data from August 15th to December 13th. Total observation periods = 32 or 44.5 hours.

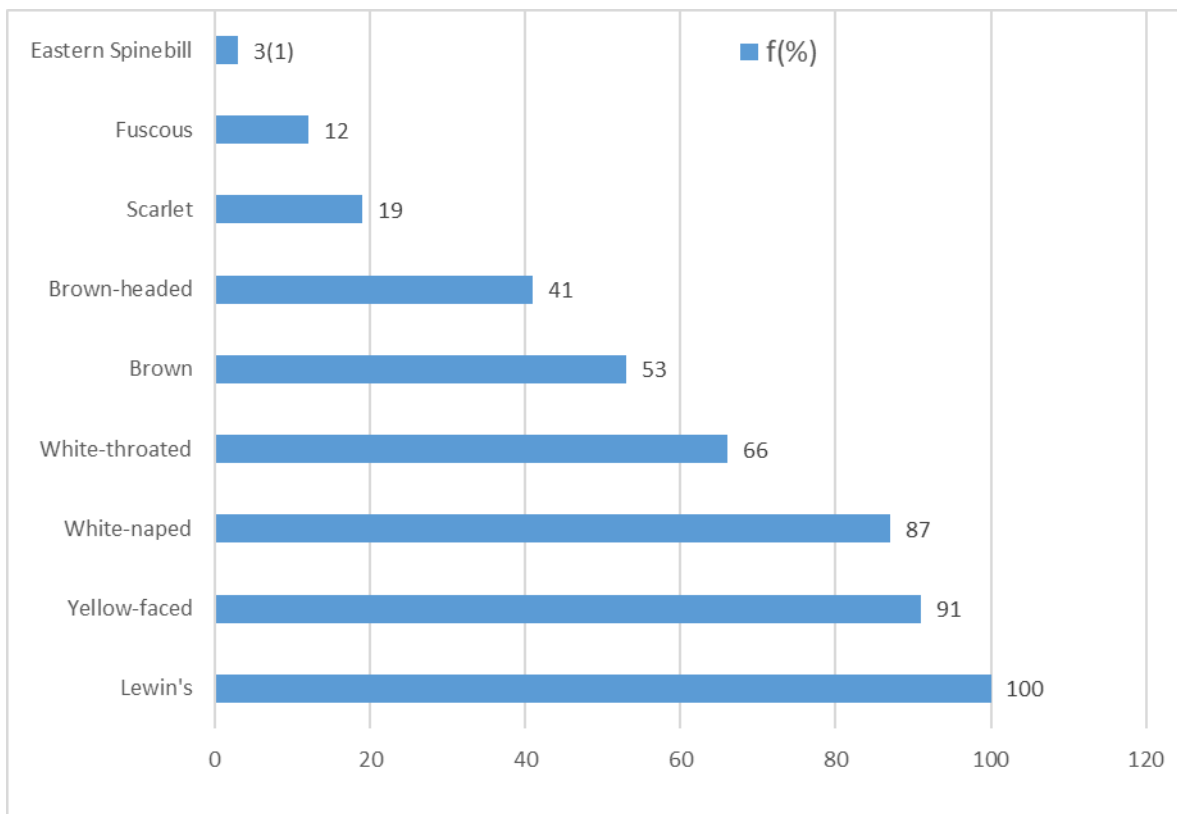


Fig. 1 (Above) shows that the three most frequent visitors to the pots were Lewin's, Yellow-faced and White-naped Honeyeaters. The same three species were also the most frequent honeyeaters seen drinking at the waterholes in Gatton Creek in 2018 (12th August – 23rd September). Scarlet Honeyeaters were more prevalent (f = 100%) and Fuscous Honeyeaters were absent in 2018.

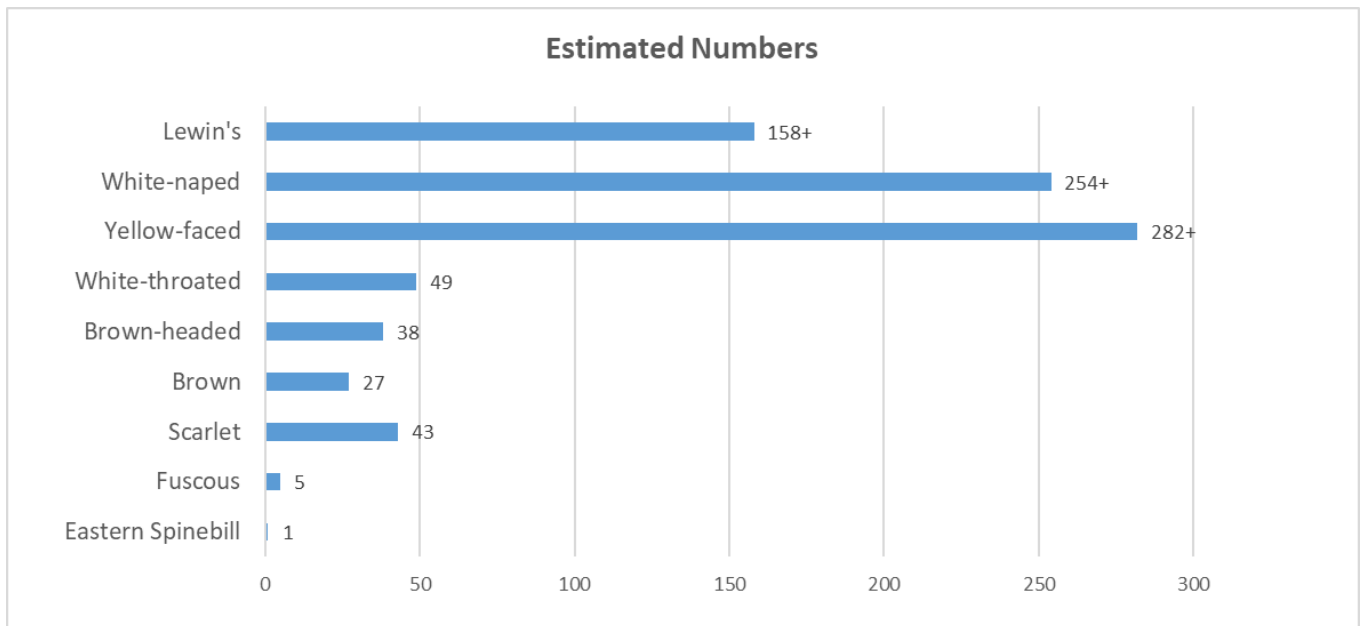


Fig. 2 Estimated Number of Honeyeaters Seen at the Water pots in 2019 (Results for all months combined).

Fig. 2 (Above) shows the three most abundant species of honeyeaters were Yellow-faced, White-naped and Lewin's. It's impossible to know whether these figures represent actual relative abundance or a combination of abundance and water requirements of each species based upon diet, size and water conservation strategies.

Anyway enough about honeyeaters so let's look at some other birds seen.

Pardalotes:

Spotted and Striated Pardalotes were both recorded with Spotted seen more often than Striated. A total of 68 Spotted were recorded compared to 8 Striated. Also, Spotted seem to be breeding with 12 juveniles seen in November and December.

Spectacled Warbler, White-browed Scrubwren, Large-billed Scrubwren, White-throated Gerygone & Brown Thornbill:

Six Spectacled Warblers were recorded but none were observed drinking at the pots. Fifteen White-browed Scrubwrens were seen but most didn't stop to drink or dip. White-throated Gerygones were heard calling in the area 78% of occasions but none were seen near the pots. Twenty One Brown Thornbills were seen drinking or near the pots. Only one Large-billed Scrubwren was recorded.

Monarchs and Flycatchers:

Three species of monarch have been record in Redwood Park (McConnell, 1996) but only the Spectacled (6 birds) and the Black-faced (2 birds) were recorded. The rather rare and/or elusive White-eared

Monarch was not heard or seen.

Leaden Flycatchers were recorded on 10 occasions with 3 females and 7 males seen. Only one male Restless Flycatcher was recorded.

Silvereyes and Finches:

Silvereyes were abundant in August and September but their numbers decreased towards the end of the year, presumably due to the return of northward migrants to southern areas as summer approached.

Red-browed and Double-barred Finches were always present with highest numbers occurring in November.

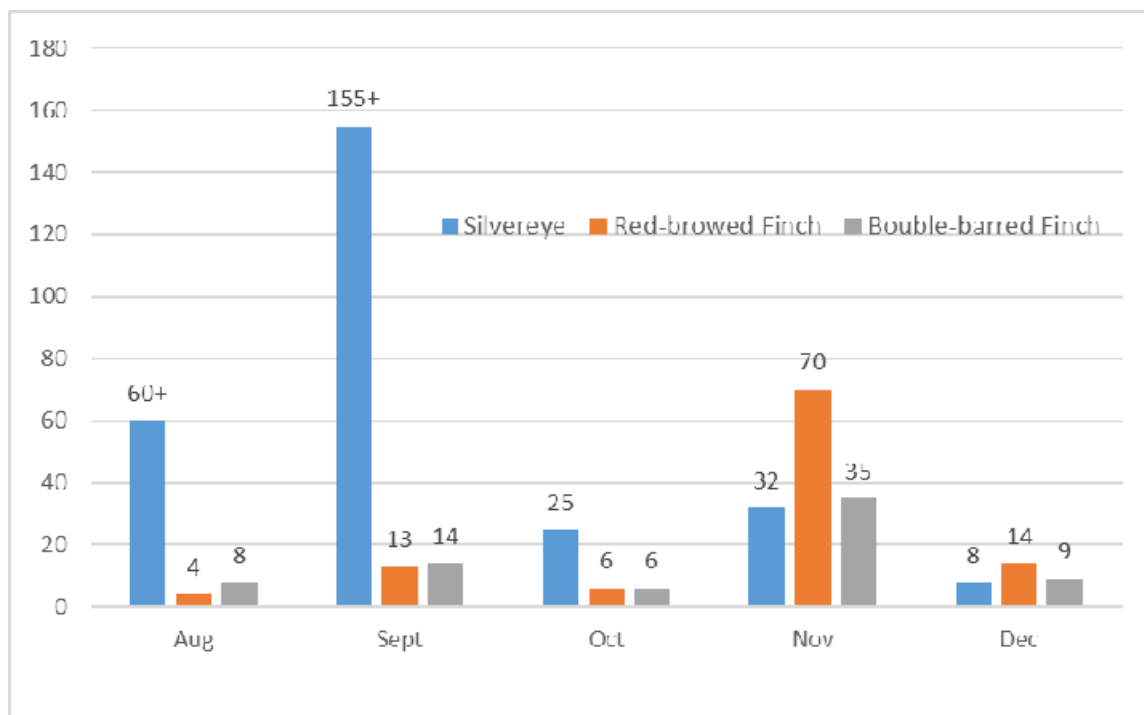


Fig. 3. Estimated Number of Silvereyes, Red-browed and Double-barred Finches seen at the Water Pots for each Month (Results for all months combined).

Heard but not seen:

The following species were heard on at least 50% of occasions but never seen near the pots: Laughing Kookaburra, Noisy Friarbird, White-throated Gerygone, Eastern Whipbird and Pied Currawong.

So, in summary the next time you are birding in Redwood Park look out for the following species which are either rare and/or under-reported: **Powerful Owl, White-throated, Brown-headed, Brown and Fuscous Honeyeaters, Black-breasted Button-quail, White-eared Monarch** to name a few.

References:

McConnell, P (1996). *The Birds of Redwood Park an annotated checklist*. USQ Press.

Menkhurst, P., Rogers, D., Clarke, R., Davies, J., Marsack, P. and Franklin, K. (2017). *Australian Bird Guide*. CSIRO Publishing.

Bird notes



**Powerful Owl Redwood Park 16/01/20
(Al Young)**

Powerful Owl 16/01/2020

Redwood Park, near Gatton Cr.

Al Young, also Kay Krenske

Banded Lapwing 28/10/19

Preston Boundary Road

Ross and Margie Easton

Spotless Crake 13/10/19

West creek Reserve

Ann Allcock (pictured below)

Baillons crake 13/10/19

West Creek Reserve

Ann Allcock



Members Photo Page

To send in your photos for inclusion in the newsletter, email your snaps to sandy.robertson6@gmail.com
Also don't forget to post your rare and unusual sightings on the club **Facebook page**.



Regent Bowerbird male
(Al Young)



Spectacled Monarch
(Al Young)



Brown-headed Honeyeater
(Al Young)



Black-faced Monarch
(Al Young)



Fuscous Honeyeater
(Al Young)



White-throated Honeyeater
(Al Young)



Lewin's Honeyeater - Redwood Park
(Al Young)



Brown Honeyeater
(Al Young)

BITS AND PIECES

Club Membership

TBO Club memberships are due in August each year. If your membership is not up to date please use the details below to rectify.

For direct transfer, please email a note to advise of your transfer:

BSB638070

AC. 4312503

Please post cheques to:

PO Box 4730

Toowoomba 4350

Club email

We have a new email address for club correspondence:

tboc4350@gmail.com

Please use this for any club correspondence as all of the executive have access to it and will be able to address your queries promptly.

Proposed Calendar of Events and Outings

We are looking for people to lead outings. You do not need to be an expert birder to lead an outing, just have a passion for an area and a willingness to share it with others. If more of our members were willing to lead an outing, there would be less burden on any one individual. Members would only need to lead **ONE** outing every two years and the load would be adequately shared around.

Responsibilities of an outing leader:

- Be a contact point for attendees and advise preferred start time, meeting point and weather contingencies;
- Advise of the level of difficulty of the terrain at the outing destination, as well as access to amenities etc;
- Obtain and ensure attendees sign the attendance book;
- Coordinate the groups activity and movement on the day;
- Lead the bird call at the end of the day and ensure someone writes up an outing report for the day.

Please review the draft outing schedule and advise the President or Secretary ASAP if you would like to lead one of the proposed outings or have an alternative site that you would like to lead an outing to.

TBO Online

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

TBO Library

The Library is no longer housed at the Landcare Discovery Centre. Please contact the President Sandy Robertson if you would like to borrow any resources from the library.

Club Checklist

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

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.

February Outing

The February outing is planned for Lake Manchester.

Leader will be Tyde Bands

0402 776256

0001tlb@gmail.com

Further details will be emailed out shortly and posted on Facebook

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is Friday 28th February 2020

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

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