

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

President: Bill Jolly

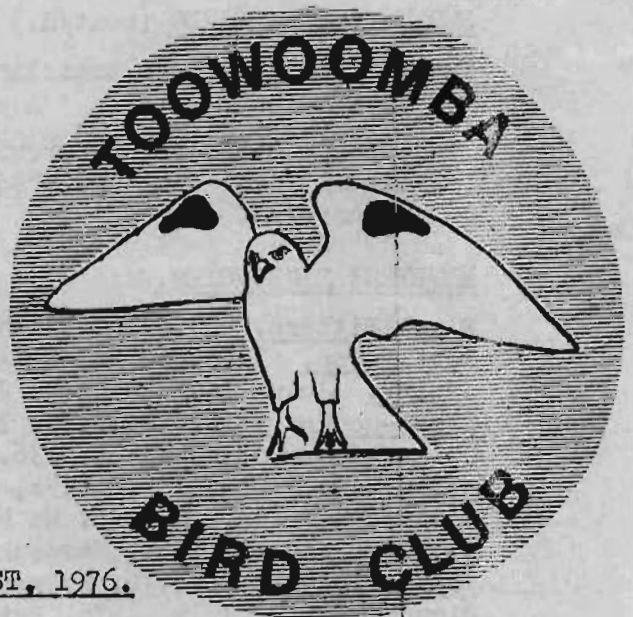
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Ph: 32.9421

Sec./Treasurer: Alan Graham

Naliandrah, M.S. 224, Helidon.  
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Editor/Librarian: Rod Hobson

8, Sir Street, Toowoomba.



NEWS-SHEET No. 10 - AUGUST, 1976.

Outings - that's what a bird club is all about. In our short period as a club we have enjoyed several successful field trips. Just to mention a few of the birds sighted and you'll get the feeling; Marsh Crake, Wood Sandpiper, Marsh Sandpiper, Emerald Dove, Channel-billed Cuckoo, Shoveler, Black Bittern, Tawny Grassbird, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo - got the picture. Our Secretary is at present negotiating with outside individuals and bodies to arrange our itinerary so the Editor shall now endeavour to inform members what they may expect in 1977 should our plans come to fruition.

A night outing to the Bunya Mountains is planned and will entail a camp-out for that week-end. Another area for investigation is the Goomburra-Mt. Mistake region. This may well be a three-day camp-out early in the year encompassing a week-end and public holiday. This area is of particular interest as it is the home of the rare Albert Lyrebird. We are also arranging a sea bird outing and a wader outing to coincide with the migration times of these birds. A western trip to Amby is also in the offing. We have two members living there, Reg and Chris Eley who should be able to guide us to some interesting birds. As well as these "out of the area" outings we shall still have regular outings to local areas. It is envisaged that alternate field days be carried out within the ten kilometre radius of the city centre, thereby compounding a picture of bird life around Toowoomba. Serious consideration is also being given to the holding of two bird counts in the area, one in Winter and one in Spring. This way it is hoped to cover all migratory and resident species in Toowoomba and environs at that period.

Ron Hopkinson and Rod Hobson are embarking on a further venture to ascertain bird population and movement on Dyer's Lagoon. It is hoped to carry out a head count once a month, probably mid-month week-end. The count will commence about one hour after sunrise and continue for two to three hours. The project is expected to run over several years so that in this time, hopefully, definite patterns will emerge. Dyer's Lagoon is soon to be flooded to provide local water supply and the effect on the bird population is also expected to be realised. Any club members wishing to partake in this scheme are most welcome and should contact either of the above members. The progress and results will be communicated in the Toowoomba Bird Club's news-sheet. The project is expected to start mid-October this year.

Rod Hobson,  
Editor.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS.

155 Eastern Rosella (*Platycercus eximius*). July, Toowoomba. Colin Kent. 15.8.76.  
Hodgson Vale. R. & K. Hobson.

Several of these birds keeping company with Pale-headed Rosellas. Head and breast red with white cheek patches as distinct from Pale-headed Rosella which has yellowish white head with white cheek patches bordered with blue.

156 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*). 22.8.76. Flagstone Creek. Members of T.B.C. outing.

Singular bird observed passing overhead.

157 Great Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). 22.8.76. Flagstone Creek. Members of T.B.C. outing.

Approximately twenty birds flying in formation. Different dimensions and

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Approximately twenty birds flying in formation. Different dimensions and yellow base to bill separated these from the Little Black Cormorant.

(cont/d.)

158 Tawny Grassbird (*Megalurus timoriensis*). 22.8.76. Trail Park, Flagstone Creek. Members of T.S.C. outing.

Single bird. Rufous crown, long tail, and streaked back as well as "chuck, chuck" call distinguished this bird from his near relative, the Little Grassbird.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

- Black Bittern. 15.8.76. Flagstone Creek, I.W.S. RGH.
- Reef Heron. 11.8.76. Mudjumba Beach.
- Jabiru. July, 1976. Gatton. JC.
- Straw-necked Ibis. 20.8.76. In home garden Herries St. EVJ, WHJ.
- Collared Sparrowhawk. 3.8.76. Withcott. RGH.
- Wedge-tailed Eagle. 18.8.76, 21.8.76. Withcott. EVJ, WHJ.
- Spotted Harrier. 8.8.76. Ma Ma Creek. RGH, KH. 26.8.76. Herries St. Twba. WHJ, EVJ.
- Osprey. August, 1976. Muroochydore. JC.
- Brown Pigeon. 31.7.76. Redwood Park. JC.
- Diamond Dove. July, 1976. Petrie. JC.
- Emerald Dove. 18.8.76. Curtis St., Twba. (dead). RGH. 31.7.76. Redwood Park. JC.
- Musk Lorikeet. 1.8.76, 21.8.76. Hodgson Vale. RGH, KH.
- Mallee Ringneck. July, 1976. Amby. RE, CE.
- Pallid Cuckoo. 7.8.76. Prince Henry Drive. CB.
- Little Cuckoo-shrike. 16.8.76. Q'ld. Agricultural College. IC.
- Tawny Grassbird. 1.8.76. Grantham. RGH.
- Rose Robin. 10.8.76. Redwood Park. JC.
- Crested Bellbird. July, 1976. Between Augathella and Morven. RE, CE.
- Fuscous Honeyeater. 5.8.76. 3 km. N.W. Helidon. IC.
- White-naped Honeyeater. 10.8.76. Redwood Park. JC.
- Yellow-throated Miner. July, 1976. Amby. RE, CE.
- Spotted Bower-bird. July, 1976. Amby. RE, CE.
- Satin Bower-bird. 20.8.76. Herries St. WHJ, EVJ.

(CB: Chris Bianchi. IC: Ian Cowan. JC: John Coman. CE: Chris Eley. RE: Reg Eley. KH: Kerrie Hobson. RGH: Rod Hobson. EVJ: Eileen Jolly. WHJ: Bill Jolly.)

Speaking Naturally .....

Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed - Francis Bacon.

A PARTICULAR FEEDER.

A friend of mine, whom I consider well acquainted with Australian wildlife, related to me an interesting observation he had made regarding a feeding Jabiru. I relate it here, hoping it may be of interest to readers.

He was sorting bait from a bait net and had thrown several herring (probably Oxeye Herring - *Megalops cyprinoides*) up the beach for later use. At that point a Jabiru descended and began to rifle his catch. Jeff was impressed by the casualness of the bird and was very interested to note that it carried each herring to the water to "wash" it before eating it. Are any readers familiar with this "washing" behaviour in Jabirus or other birds?

This incident took place at Woodgate, between Gladstone and Bundaberg. Apparently the Jabiru is common in this area.

Kerrie Hobson.

"THE WANDERER" IN TOOWOOMBA CITY.

(See Members' Bird Notes - July, 1976.)

On Tuesday morning, June 29th, whilst waiting to commence work, I noticed a bird of prey perched on a television antenna in Gore Street. At first I thought it to be a Little Falcon, a bird which occasionally appears in the central city area. However on comparing it with a harassing Nankeen Kestrel I observed the falcon to be considerably larger. No doubt a Peregrine Falcon, very probably a mature female judging by size comparison and colour.

Unfortunately before I could contact anyone to confirm this sighting the kestrel was joined by several magpies and currawongs and the Peregrine was dispersed amid an uproar of bird call. These measurements taken from "Birds of Australia" by J.D. Macdonald may be of help to anyone confronted with the problem of identifying this bird. Nankeen Kestrel - 30-36 cm. with tail 15-18 cm.

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Nankeen Kestrel - 30-36 cm. with tail 15-18 cm.  
Little Falcon - 30-35 cm. sexes alike but female larger.  
Peregrine Falcon - 38-46 cm. " " " " "

Rod Hobson.

to present a slide lecture on Australian birds and their identification. Armed with numerous books and field guides (including my 'feather' scrapbook) and a T.B.C. news-sheet, I attempted to interest the group with slides on the following topics: common birds and introduced species, nests, colourful species, parrots and rosellas, small birds, birds with unusual habits, ducks and water birds, sea birds and nocturnal birds.

Although bird life around the camp was not as varied as I had hoped for, we did manage to see Noisy Miners, Kookaburras, Rainbow and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets, Olive-backed Orioles, Southern Figbirds, Blue-faced Honeyeaters, Grey Butcher-birds and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes. On the boat trip to Great Kepple Island we were fortunate to see a magnificent Brahminy Kite flying at close range and several Sooty Oystercatchers as well as the usual cormorants and terns. Noisy Friarbirds were in abundance on the island.

While taking a group of bird-watchers along the beach near the camp, I was able to acquaint them with a pair of Sacred Kingfishers, a Red-capped Dotterel and the Brahminy Kite once again. We spotted an Eastern Curlew at nearby Emu Park. On a trip to Olsen's Caves, I pointed out calls of the Lewin Honeyeater, White-throated Warbler, Golden Whistler and the Black-headed Pardalote.

Apart from the usual egrets, ibis, spoonbills and water birds spotted in large numbers in the surrounding area, our only real "find" was a beautiful Darter swimming - in of all places - the Moura open cut coal mine! In spite of any really exciting bird spotting news, I feel there has been an awareness of the variety of bird life and an interest in the same, initiated among the students who attended the Yeppoon camp. I hope I have encouraged new members for our club as well as stimulated interest which will carry through to the children these trainee teachers will soon have in their classes.

Marilyn Jacobs.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON A NOISY MINER.

Recently I was assigned point duty for our school cross country at the end of Wirra Wirra Street. Whilst waiting for the first of the runners to arrive I was watching for birds in the forest to the east. A group of young King Parrots and a pair of Scaly-breasted Lorikeets occupied my attention until the runners arrived and the birds left.

A lone Noisy Miner sat on a branch overhanging the running track completely unperturbed by the activity and noise below. Every so often he would fly out, catch an insect and return to his perch.

A large black beetle droned lazily past the miner's perch. The bird darted out and just as the beetle was about to be caught it opened wide its hard upper wing covers and lowered its abdomen revealing a startling bright yellow colouration on the abdomen. The bird rotated its wings and with the primary feathers spread and straining stopped in mid-air. With mouth agape the bird watched the beetle drone on and appeared to stay suspended in mid-air.

The miner, with one beat of his wings caught up to the insect and gave it a gentle nudge. The beetle lowered its abdomen even more and the bird stalled in mid-air then turned and flew back to his perch leaving the beetle to disappear into the lantana undergrowth.

Besides being a graphic illustration of the usefulness of protective colouration there is, I think, a lesson to be learned from the incident. If the parrots had still been around I would have most certainly been watching them - trying to sort out the differences between the females and the young. The Noisy Miner and this wonderful incident would have gone unseen. Maybe it's worthwhile to sit down every so often and carefully watch the common birds, instead of trying to ignore them and look for the less easily seen and what we might term the "more interesting" birds.

John Coman.

#### FLAGSTONE CREEK OUTING - 22.8.76.

The weather on the day of our August outing proved exceptional for this time of year. Members and visitors enjoyed an excellent days bird-watching in the Flagstone Creek area. We visited two adjacent properties, those of Mr. Rod Turner and Trail Park, the property of Mr. Jock Russell. Both properties afforded excellent bird viewing. Early in the day, whilst parked upon the road in front of Rod Turner's land we were fortunate enough to see approximately twenty Black Cormorants flying in formation

(cont/d.)

## D.D.I.A.E. CAMP.

One hundred level 2 education students from the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education recently attended a one week environmental studies camp in Yeppoon on the Capricorn Coast. As this was my chance to introduce these prospective teachers to bird-watching and perhaps encourage new members for our club, I took the opportunity to present a slide lecture on Australian birds and their identification.

Armed with numerous books and field guides (including my 'feather' scrapbook) and a T.B.C. news-sheet, I attempted to interest the group with slides on the following topics: common birds and introduced species, nests, colourful species, parrots and rosellas, small birds, birds with unusual habits, ducks and water birds, sea birds and nocturnal birds.

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FLAGSTONE CREEK OUTING - 22.8.76. (cont/d.)

high overhead. Their yellow bill bases were immediately visible when viewed through the more powerful binoculars, thus distinguishing them from the Little Black Cormorant. At this same moment a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo passed overhead. As these two species were both new birds for the Toowoomba area their appearance was particularly significant. At this spot we also noted several Restless Flycatchers and hoardes of Double-barred Finch.

Trail Park also provided us with a new bird for our Toowoomba list in the guise of the Tawny Grassbird. He was eventually flushed from a box-thorn thicket along the creek side. Aside to the rufous crown, long tail and streaked back, the "chuck, chuck" call separated him from the similar Little Grassbird, a species which has not as yet been recorded in our area. Here we were also fortunate enough to glimpse a pair of Brush Turkeys and several groups of Satin Bowerbirds. The outstanding sighting of our Trail Park visit was the excellent view of a pair of Red-tailed Black Cockatoos in a Casuarina only some yards from us across a scrubby gully. They remained perched whilst we noted all field markings, especially the red barred undertail and the speckling upon the face of the female. This latter marking separated this species from the Glossy Black Cockatoo which does not possess this flecking. Near the entrance to Trail Park another three "black cookies" were observed wheeling high over a heavily timbered mountain spur. Several lizards and a Yellow-faced Whip Snake were sighted. Trail Park - a sure sign of the advent of warmer weather.

After lunch we returned to Rod Turner's place but as it was mid-afternoon most of the birds were in retirement. However we did see a Striped Honeyeater feeding high on a flowering eucalypt - a new bird for several members. Later in the afternoon some members visited the Irrigation and Water Supply weir near Lillydale. This is an excellent water bird area as was proved this afternoon. We were treated to view of two Black Bitterns, a mature and an immature bird. We observed many tracts of bittern behaviour. The ghost like, silent rising from the reedy waterside, the heavy, labour but short flight, and the cumbersome landing in a pepperina tree. Then the slow chameleon like stalking along the limbs to the uppermost level of the tree was followed by the "bittern freeze" posture which is well known but seldom observed. In all we watched these two birds for soem fifteen to twenty minutes. Here we also saw a Mallard drake in splendid plumage, keeping company with Black Duck, Wood Duck and Grey Teal.

There appeared to be both Winter and Spring visitors in the Flagstone area this day. The Rose Robin was still in evidence, a male and female bird being recorded and Rainbow Bee-eaters were also sighted - another sign of Spring weather. Everyone agreed that this was another satisfying outing despite the Crested Hawk. This hawk had been reported in the area recently but unfortunately did not materialise on that day - but who could complain anyhow.

Lastly, I must thank Jock Rossell and Rod Turner for leaving us go upon their properties and hope we may return in the near future.

Rod Hobson.

Bird List - Flagstone (R.T. & J.R.'s property).

Black Cormorant	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Little Pied Cormorant	Tawny Grassbird	Striped Honeyeater
White-faced Heron	Superb Blue Wren	Little Friarbird
Straw-necked Ibis	Variiegated Wren	Noisy Friarbird
Black-sh. Kite	White-thr. Warbler	Noisy Miner
Aust. Goshawk	Brown Thornbill	Red-browed Finch
Kestrel	Yellow-r. Thornbill	Double-barred Finch
Brush Turkey	White-br. Scrub-wren	House Sparrow
Ferel Pigeon	Jacky Winter	Indian Myna
Bar-sh. Dove	Rose Robin	Starling
Crested Pigeon	Grey Fantail	Magpie Lark
Little Lorikeet	Willie Wagtail	Dusky Wood-swallow
Red-t. Black Cockatoo	Restless Flycatcher	Pied Currawong
Sulphur-cr. Cockatoo	Golden Whistler	Pied Butcher-bird
Galah	Eastern Whipbird	Grey Butcher-bird
Pale-headed Rosella	Spotted Pardalote	Black-backed Magpie
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Striated Pardalote	Satin Bowerbird
Kookaburra	Silvereye	Australian Raven
Rainbow Bee-eater	Brown Honeyeater	Australian Crow.
Welcome Swallow	Lewin's Honeyeater	

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Rod Hobson.

Bird List - Flagstone (R.T. & J.R.'s property).

Black Cormorant	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Little Pied Cormorant	Tawny Grassbird	Striped Honeyeater
White-faced Heron	Superb Blue Wren	Little Friarbird
Straw-necked Ibis	Variegated Wren	Noisy Friarbird
Black-sh. Kite	White-thr. Warbler	Noisy Miner
Aust. Goshawk	Brown Thornbill	Red-browed Finch
Kestrel	Yellow-r. Thornbill	Double-barred Finch
Brush Turkey	White-br. Scrub-wren	House Sparrow
Feral Pigeon	Jacky Winter	Indian Myna
Bar-sh. Dove	Rose Robin	Starling
Crested Pigeon	Grey Fantail	Magpie Lark
Little Lorikeet	Willie Wagtail	Dusky Wood-swallow
Red-t. Black Cockatoo	Restless Flycatcher	Pied Currawong
Sulphur-cr. Cockatoo	Golden Whistler	Pied Butcher-bird
Galah	Eastern Whipbird	Grey Butcher-bird
Pale-headed Rosella	Spotted Pardalote	Black-backed Magpie
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Striated Pardalote	Satin Bowerbird
Kookaburra	Silvereye	Australian Raven
Rainbow Bee-eater	Brown Honeyeater	Australian Crow.
Welcome Swallow	Lewin's Honeyeater	



Bird List - Flagstone (I.W.S.)

Black Cormorant	Bar-sh. Dove
Little Black Cormorant	Crested Pigeon
Darter	Scaly-br. Lorikeet
White-necked Heron	Galah
Plumed Egret	Pale-h. Rosella
Black Bittern	Rainbow Bee-eater
Black Duck	Brown Honeyeater
Grey Teal	Double-barred Finch
Wood Duck	Indian Myna
<u>Mallard</u>	Starling
Black-sh. Kite	Magpie Lark
Nankeen Kestrel	Pied Butcher-bird
Dusky Moorhen	Australian Crow.

MEETING FOR SEPTEMBER, 1976.

Wednesday, 15th September, 1976. 7.30 p.m. at 22, Isabel Street, Toowoomba. (Vera Simon's home). Bob Dorricott will be showing us some of his award winning movie films including "Island Invaders" the story of the nesting of the White-capped Noddy on Heron Island.

OUTING FOR SEPTEMBER, 1976.

Sunday, 19th September, 1976. Withcott.

Meet at 9.00 a.m., outside Withcott Hotel, on Warrego Highway just at the foot of the Range. Alan Graham (leader).

NEW MEMBERS.

The club is pleased to welcome John Coman, 14, Kirk Street, Toowoomba.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Q.O.S. Newsletter, March, 1976.

The Bird Observer, February - March - August, 1976.

STOP PRESS.

The club's first local Bird Count has now been set for Sunday, 10th October, 1976 in order to coincide with the annual Q.O.S. count. It is proposed that results will be published by both the Toowoomba Bird Club and the Queensland Ornithological Society.

The count will take place within our 10 km. area and the assistance of all members is keenly sought. Club Secretary, Alan Graham will be co-ordinating. More details at our next meeting and outing and in the October News-sheet.