



NEWS-SHEET No. 103

JULY 1984

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

toowoomba bird club

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Annual Subscription

Ordinary/Family membership \$8.00
Student membership \$4.00

Activities

Field Outing and Monthly Meeting - 4th Sunday of each
month - usually leave from Pigott's Car Park at 7.30 am.

Camping trips, film and slide evenings.

News-sheet

Published monthly, before the outing. Articles have a dead-
line of the last day of the month and should be mailed to
the editor.

EDITORIAL

July, of course, is one of our Seasonal Species Survey months. I hoped to get a fair bit of birding done during the Winter vacation, however that ghastly weather drove me inside. I found it very difficult to get out of bed when I had no real need to, especially if there was a good book handy.

Winter brings birds such as the Eastern Spinebills, female Satin Bowerbirds and Figbirds into our garden. Other times of the year they are a rare sight in the neighbourhood.

On that dreadfully bitter Wednesday that Toowoomba had snow (!!?) one could feel very sorry for the poor animals that had to suffer through it. I even had a bit of pity for such species as the Common Mynah, Starlings and Sparrows all birds not dear to my heart. To see twenty odd birds all huddled together on a bare branch playing leap frog so that the ones on the end didn't freeze to death, made me realize what they were putting up with. A Little Pied Cormorant which frequents the area of the proposed Waterbird Habitat was literally crouched in the grass, hunching its wings against the small flurries of snow that swirled around it.

So there are birds out there and Michael would appreciate you taking note of any sightings this month, and let him know any unusual behaviour you observe that could be accounted to the weather.

Lesley Beaton, Editor

--ooOoo--

THANK YOU

Thanks to the members that have volunteered to do the news-sheet typing. It really has taken a load off my mind and things went very smoothly this month.

Lesley

--ooOoo--

RON COLPUS - OBITUARY It is with much sadness that I have to report the death of Ron Colpus following injuries he received when involved in a traffic accident in Toowoomba on 27th June.

Ron joined the Club just four years ago shortly after moving here from Tewantin after losing his wife. Hailing from England, the Colpus family came to Australia after the war and lived mostly in Victoria. While travelling in Queensland Ron had liked what he had seen of Toowoomba and decided to spend his later years here.

He was a keen member of the Club, always willing to lend a hand with Club activities and chores; attending most of the meetings and field outings where he was sure to be seen brewing up his most essential billy at morning tea stops. Always ready with a cheery word or apt story, his dry humour and teasing sometimes left people rather non-plussed but his kindness and especially his encouragement to new and younger members made him a valued friend who will be greatly missed by many people.

ANN SHORE

WET WEATHER WATCHING I'm sure many of you know the value of birdwatching just after rain. Birds seem to be far more active and easier to find. Here are three particular anecdotes I'd like to share.

Last September, when John and I were staying on the Atherton Tableland, we had a couple of days of rainy weather; intermittent heavy showers followed by brilliant sunshine. Nevertheless it did not stop us from visiting some of the local tourist attractions. While cruising along enjoying the scenery we found, to our delight, that after the showers little parties of Banded Landrails would come out and bathe in the pools at the side of the road. One morning we would have seen 20-30 of these birds in a reasonably small area.

If you remember, the end of 1983/New Year 1984 was miserable and wet. On 31st December we went for a short drive, partly to blow the cobwebs out and partly to do the last birdwatching of the year. A heavy shower meant that we didn't even get out of the car at Hood's Lagoon. After we crossed the Warrego Highway, however, the sun came out as we turned down to Lockyer Creek. Bathing in the pools on both sides of the road were a large number of Pipits. As I've only seen one or two there before it was quite a surprise and makes me think of how many birds don't see.

The last little tale happened quite recently when my parents and I went down to Helidon Spa looking for a reported sighting of Long-billed Corella escapees. Again there was heavy rain and we'd almost given up when the flock of Galahs with which the Corellas were keeping company flew in to the surrounding trees. Galahs are the most amazing acrobats and as they landed they proceeded to show off their skills. This time, though, there seemed to be more purpose in the general larking about. Many of the flock, including the Corellas, would hang upside-down with their wings outspread. It was almost as if they were trying to get the rain onto their underwings, a question of B.O.? A most curious sight indeed.

LESLEY BEATON

..... This month's stories about 'wet weather bird behaviour', in particular, 'upside-down Corellas and Galahs' - brings to mind the antics of Budgerigars in a large aviary during summer showers (in Brisbane) - I observed them hanging on wire sides of aviary, (to cool off, or perhaps taking a shower instead of bathing?), either way, they certainly enjoyed themselves.

LORRAINE WILSON

--ooOoo--

TAIL-LESS BIRDS Recently having been intrigued by the antics of a tail-less Grey Fantail during our visit to Jubilee Park on 29th April (News-Sheet No.101), I was particularly interested to read a short note in the Bird Observer (May 1984 No.628) where A. Bushell, Knoxfield, Vic., commented on three tail-less birds seen in 1983; a Grey Fantail, Dusky Woodswallow and a Red Wattlebird. Have any other readers had similar sightings? Is this a very unusual occurrence and to what may it be attributed?

ANN SHORE

FIELD DAY REPORT - CUNNINGHAM'S GAP/MOGERAH DAM. June 24, 1984

Five cars headed down the New England Highway towards Cunningham's Gap and were met there by 'early bird' arrivals, Angela, Gloria and Ron. Two beautiful rainforest walks through the National Park yielded a variety of interesting species. Good sightings of Fan-tailed Cuckoos, Eastern Spinebills, White-naped Honeyeaters, a pair of Scaly (White's) Thrush, a male Golden Whistler, Bell Miners and Musk Lorikeets were made by most members. It was a most rewarding and enjoyable morning in a truly beautiful spot.

Half the group then continued on to Moogarah Dam for lunch, stopping first near the top of the Gap to view a Grey Goshawk along the highway so easily visible against the lush green of the rainforest. What a delightful picnic spot we found along the river just below Moogarah Dam! Neatly trimmed lawn, a tree lined, lazy river and warm afternoon sun were just the perfect combination for a relaxed lunch. Everyone agreed this was one of the best outings we've had in awhile. Apologies to those who did not receive notice of our destination on time.

Those present on this outing were saddened to learn during the week, of the death of Ron Colpus who was seriously injured in a traffic accident on Wednesday, June 27. We were glad Ron was able to join us on this enjoyable day, and will miss him each month on our outings.

Members Present: Michael Atzeni, Lesley Beaton, Ron Colpus, Don Gaydon, Gloria Glass, Angela Kilmartin, Lydia Lyndon, Sandy and Margo Pottinger, Marilyn Jacobs, Audrey and Ray Viljoen and Aino and Christine Tuppurainen.

Species List: Cunningham's Gap National Park. Grey Goshawk, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Musk Lorikeet, Little Lorikeet, King Parrot, Crimson Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Pale-headed Rosella, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Kookaburra, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, White's Thrush, Rose Robin, Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Fantail, Superb Blue Wren, Yellow-throated Scrubwren, White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Warbler, Brown, Buff-rumped and Striated Thornbill, White-throated Treecreeper, Red Wattlebird, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Bell Miner, Noisy Miner, Lewin's, Yellow-faced, White-throated and White-naped Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Spotted and Striated Pardalote, Silvereye, Red-browed Firetail, Satin Bowerbird, Pied Butcherbird, Magpie, Pied Currawong and Crow.

Additional Species at Moogarah Dam and enroute: Little Grebe, Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Pacific Heron, White-faced Heron, Cattle, Great and Little Egret, Sacred and Straw-necked Ibis, Black Swan, Black Duck, White-eyed Duck, Wood Duck, Black-shouldered Kite, Kestrel, Dusky Moorhen, Coot, Jacana, Masked Plover, Black-winged Stilt, Pigeon, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Cockatiel, Red-rumped Parrot, White-backed and Welcome Swallow, Pipit, Jacky Winter, Willie Wagtail, Cisticola, White-throated Warbler, Sparrow, Chestnut-breasted Finch, Starling, Common Mynah, Figbird, Magpie Lark, Black-faced Woodswallow, Grey Butcherbird.

86 species

Marilyn Jacobs

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MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Great Crested Grebe (2)	12.5.84	Lake Clarendon	GG, AK
Great Cormorant (3)	30.6.84	Rangeview Rd., Mt.Kynoch	LB, JB
Black Bittern	5.5.84	Biloela	PM
Chestnut Teal	10.6.84	Fisherman Is. Swamps	GG
Grey Goshawk	23.6.84	Rangeview Road, Mt. Kynoch	LB, JB
Black Falcon (2)	12.5.84	Lake Clarendon	GG, AK
Marsh Harrier (1)	12.5.84	" "	GG, AK
White-headed Pigeon (9)	18.6.84	Wires over the intersection of Mary & Margaret Streets.	LB, PB, RB

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES CONT'D

Long-billed Corella	12.5.84	Helidon Spa (escapes!??)	GG, AK
" " "	13.5.84	" "	LB, PB, RB
Shining Bronze Cuckoo	12.5.84	Prince Henry Drive, T'wba.	GG, AK
White-throated Nightjar	29.4.84	Crows Nest Falls	PM, TR, BF
Barking Owl	17.3.84	Biloela	PM
Red-capped Robin	20.3.84	Maranoa River, Mitchell	PB, RB
Spotted Quail-Thrush	19.5.84	Goomburra State Forest	GG, AK
Brown Songlark	18.3.84	Bungewogarai Ck., Roma	PB, RB
White-winged Cough (6)	3.6.84	Highfields	JD
Australian Raven	12.6.84	West Creek	JD

JB:- John Ball, LB:- Lesley Beaton, PB:- Peggie Beaton, RB Roy Beaton,
 JD:- Joe Deuble, BF:- Brian Foulis, GG:- Gloria Glass, AK:- Angela Kilmartin,
 PM:- Pat Mc Connell, TR:- Terry Reis

JULY FIELD OUTING

Date: Sunday, 22nd July 1984 Place: North Withcott

Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park

Time: 7.15 am. for departure at 7.30 am. sharp.

Ann Shore is the leader for this outing. She'll be taking us to a few of her favourite birding spots, including T.B.C. member, Lorraine Wilson's property. If you need any help with transport, phone Ann on 303207.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Bird Observer. June & July 1984. (Newsletter of the Bird Observers Club)
- The Darling Downs Naturalist. July 1984. (Newsletter of the T'mba Field Naturalist Club)
- Out of the Nest. July 1984. (Bird Observers Club Young Members Newsletter)
- Urimbirra. Ju 1984. (Chinchilla Field Naturalists' Club)

We've had a new newsletter added to our list this month. Out of the Nest is to be issued three times a year and it will be included with the Bird Observer. It is aimed specifically at their younger members. Urimbirra often has contributions by its younger members which make interesting reading.

If any of our young members wish to borrow a newsletter contact Michael. It may stimulate you to make a contribution to your own news-sheet.

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