

MAY 1985



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

toowoomba bird club

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Annual Subscription

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

Activities

Field Outings and Monthly Meeting - 4th Sunday of each month usually leave from Pigotts' car park at 7.30 am.

Camping trips, film and slide evenings.

News-Sheet

Published monthly, before the outing. Articles have a deadline of the last day of the month, and should be mailed to the Editor.

1985 is an exciting year for the Toowoomba Bird Club. In October we celebrate our tenth anniversary. Ten years - that will be approximately 120 newsletters, outings, a lot of hard work for the officers over the years, and a great deal of enjoyment as well - new birds seen and new friends made.

So all you original Birdos, can I have your remembrances for the October newsletter, which will be a special issue.

Two other things made 1985 special - the Waterbird Habitat and the RAOU Congress to be held in Toowoomba in September.

The Waterbird Habitat looks like being the only Bi-centenary project to be completed, and it is hoped that our Club will be able to make some contribution to this project.

It is a great privilege for our city to host the RAOU Congress, and it is to be hoped that some of our members will be able to attend some part of the Congress or the campout that follows. The Congress is also asking for "contributions from all ornithologists, whether they consider themselves amateurs or professionals". In addition there will be three early morning bird outings on 29th September for Congress delegates and any Club members that wish to join in.

Angela Kilmartin, Editor

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome two new members this month:
Mrs Kathryn Blackburn and Mrs Cath McGrath.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRD

242 Budgerigar Melopsittacus undulatus 28 April 1985

Fifteen, perched in dead branch of Camphor Laurel in Upper Flagstone Creek road, 500 metres from Flagstone Creek Road junction, near entrance to Booker property.

Colouring observed was as follows - yellow face, bright green back, mottling on back and wings, long blue-green tail. All birds were similar in colour, and no differences could be detected, ruling out the possibility of their being escapees from an aviary.

Marilyn Jacobsen sighted the birds flying quietly in a close-knit flock. they perched in a tight group and were observed for fifteen minutes by the eleven members of the April outing of the Club, when the birds quietly flew off.

Sighted by Lesley Beaton, Nancy & Frank Belcher, Kathryn Blackburn, Elaine & Ron Box, Joe Deuble, Gloria Glass, Marilyn Jacobs, Ann & John Shore.

(Editor's note: See also John Walter's sightings of the Budgerigar at Pittsworth and Aubigny in the Members' Bird Notes.)

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Fork-tailed Swift 7.4.85 Echo Valley, Toowoomba DG
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo 16.3.85 Hermitage Rd, Cranley LB
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater 16.3.85 Glencoe Rd, Gowrie Jct LB
Banded Land Rail (with three chicks) 3.2.85 Hoods Lagoon, Helidon LB, JB
Rainbow Bee-eater 24.2.85 Dunmore Street LB
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater 21.3.85 Murphy's Creek DG, DC
Crested Shrike-tit 21.3.85 Murphy's Creek DG, DC
Budgerigar (16)* 20.4.85 Pittsworth JCW
Red-capped Robin (m*& f) 23-24.4.85 Pittsworth JCW
* First sightings in 13 years of residence
Black Kite (3) 24.4.85 Cecil Plains JCW
Budgerigar (20+) 26.4.85 Aubigny JCW

JB John Ball DC Dean Collins JCW John Walter
LB Lesley Ball DG Don Gaydon

APRIL 1985 OUTING - FLAGSTONE CREEK 28.4.85

Although it was quite foggy in Toowoomba, the eleven members on the outing dropped below the cloud once we were on Flagstone Creek Road.

First stop was at the junction of Upper Flagstone and Flagstone Creed Roads where we saw a number of bush birds and the "bird of the outing" - the Budgerigars - which are already described in the New Toowoomba Bird item.

When we approached the camphor laurel, a Peregrine Falcon flew out of the cover of the dense foliage.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and King Parrots were also seen in this area. Joe Deuble had reports of Black Cockatoos on a friend's property adjacent to the junction. Though we searched, we found none. However, we were delighted with a pair of Rose Robins picked up by Ann.

We stopped at the Gorman's Gap cairn for morning tea, and the Helidon rest area for lunch. A marvellous day!

Lesley Beaton

Members present: Lesley Beaton, Nancy & Frank Belcher, Kathryn Blackburn, Elaine & Ron Box, Joe Deuble, Gloria Glass, Marilyn Jacobs, Ann & John Shore.

Species List (Numbers refer to areas sighted) Australasian Grebe 4, White-faced Heron 8, Straw-necked Ibis 8, Pacific Black Duck 4, Peregrine Falcon 4, Australian Kestrel 6,7,8, Dusky Moorhen 7, Feral Pigeon 3, Bar-shouldered Dove 4, Crested Pigeon 4,6, Galah 4,6, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo 4, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet 4, Australian King Parrot 4, Budgerigar 4, Pale-headed Rosella 6,7, Fan-tailed Cuckoo 4,6, Laughing Kookaburra 6,7, White-backed Swallow 7, Welcome Swallow 4, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike 6, Rose Robin 4, Golden Whistler 4, Rufous Whistler 4, Restless Fantail 7, Grey Fantail 4,7, Willie Wagtail 4,7,8, Eastern Whipbird 4,6, Grey-crowned Babbler 6, Golden-headed Cisticola 4,6,7,8, Superb Fairy-wren 4, Red-backed Fairy-wren 4, Variegated Fairy-wren 4, White-browed Scrubwren 4, Striated Thornbill 4, Varied Sitella 4, White-throated Treecreeper 4, Noisy Friarbird 4,6, Little Friarbird 6, Noisy Miner 4,6, Lewin's Honeyeater 4,6,7, Brown Honeyeater 6,7,8, Spotted Pardalote 4, Striated Pardalote 4,7, Silvereye 4, House Sparrow 3,8, Red-browed Firetail 4, Double-barred Finch 4,8, Common Starling 3,8, Common Mynah 3, Olive-backed Oriole 4, Australian Magpie-lark 3,4,6,7,8, Grey Butcherbird 4,6,7, Pied Butcherbird 4,7,8, Australian Magpie 3,4,6, Pied Currawong 3,4,6, Torresian Crow 4,7,8.

LIBRARY NOTES - May

Birds of the Kruger and Other National Parks, Vol. 1-4.
The Bird Observer, April 1985, No. 639.
The Darling Downs Naturalist, April 1985, No. 370.
The Darling Downs Naturalist, May 1985, No. 371.
Out of the Nest, April 1985, No.3 (incorporated in BOC No. 639)
Q.O.S. Newsletter, April 1985, Vol.16, No.3.
Urimbirra, April 1985, Vol.19, No.4.
Wildlife Australia, Autumn 1985, Vol.22, No.1.
World Wildlife Fund Australia newsletter, Jan-Mar 1985, No.22.
World Wildlife Fund Australia 1985 Conservation Programme.

Marvellous to see the number of members using the Library.
Thanks so much for returning all outstanding loans, because
they ARE much in demand.

Lesley Beaton, Librarian.

DRAMA ON THE BRISBANE RIVER

Roy and I are once more in Brisbane and bird watching from the balcony of the unit and finding it as interesting as any far away National Park. The black-faced cuckoo-shrike was bringing up another nestling in the gum trees on the river bank. The egrets weave beautiful patterns as they go up and down river in their strands. And an immature white-breasted sea-eagle circled above us in the thermals over the river.

Today, however, as I was making breakfast, I heard a raucous noise like seabirds fighting. I picked up my binoculars and hurried to the balcony to investigate. The river here is quite wide, and nearly half-way across was a flurry in the water. At first I thought it was a bird in difficulties, but further investigation proved it to be two magpies fighting furiously as they floated downstream. Another magpie was hovering over them. I do not know if it was also a contestant or just holding a watching brief.

It flew away, and two magpie-larks flew around for a grandstand view while a welcome swallow dipped and circled around also.

The fighting stopped after a minute or so, and the birds tried to take off, but could not do so. Thereupon they both started swimming at an angle, using the current to bring them to the bank. They used their wings in a flapping, paddling motion, almost like a butterfly stroke.

One bird was soon within the safety of the bank. The other, however, stopped its efforts and I thought it was gone, but saw the head above the water. The swallow still circled around, but the magpie-larks were watching from a nearby tree. Then three spur-winged plovers arrived on the scene and dived on the magpie, which again started its efforts to get ashore.

Two other magpies, which had been sitting in a tree watching it all, left their perch and drove off the plovers, and then provided aerial cover for a few seconds before returning to their tree, whilst the magpie in the water struggled on, and with one or two more rests, eventually reached the shore.

I heaved a sigh of relief and relaxed. Much more dramatic and heart-stopping than any T.V. soapie.

PEGGIE BEATON

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Angela,

Having been closely involved, both as a recorder for the RAOU Atlas of Australian Birds and as sub-regional organiser of the historical Atlas in Queensland, I feel strongly that individual's sightings should be published for future use.

Until recently my wife and I have sent any unusual sightings to another society that I have been closely involved with over the years. Unfortunately over the last two years for one reason or another any records we submitted have been lost and have never got to print.

Therefore my wife and I have rejoined the Toowoomba Bird Club after several years of non-membership. I would in the future like to use your newsletter as a vehicle to have our unusual bird sightings published.

I would like to compliment Don Gaydon on his "Toowoomba's Terrible Trio". There are two points which come to mind: One thing Don did not mention and which can confuse the issue is the fact that immature White-naped Honeyeaters have a similar dull brown colouring to the Brown-headed. All I can say in this case is to look at the width and length of the nape band - Slater Vol 2, page 62.

John C. Walter
9 Hill Street, Pittsworth, 4356

SIGHTING OF THE WEEK by Vera Simon

Time...12 NOON.. Monday 25th March 1985.

Scene..Front entrance Toowoomba Old City Hall,Ruthven St.

Action..Myself exiting from Town Hall, down the white marble steps.

On my right the high railings of the Council Garden...a pocket sized lawn surrounded by pocket sized garden containing pink and white begonias.

On the pocket sized lawn A POCKET SIZED BROWN BUTTON QUAIL.....

I looked at Quail...Quail looked at me....and'quailed'it back to the begonias just as fast as a quail can go.

Scene as before...except for one excited female speaking to herself.

'A Quail...A Brown button Quail...in Ruthven St.' and similar sounds of amazement.

End of scene.

But what thoughts the sighting conjured up....

Is he (or she) being fattened for a Mayoral Dinner?

Is he (or she) a Council secret attraction?

Where did he (or she) come from?

Hence the poem.(With apologies to A.A.MILNE.)

There once was a Quail,who lived in a bed

Of begonias pink and begonias red.

And all day long, as he 'quailed' he would think

Of begonias red, ...and begonias,pink.

FIELD DAY FOR MAY 1985

Date: Sunday, 26 May 1985

Place: LAIDLEY CREEK

Assembly Point: PIGOTT'S CAR PARK

Time: 7.15 am for 7.30 am SHARP

This area has an abundance of dams and swamps, so we can hope for water birds as well as the usual bush birds on this outing, so bring your lunch and enjoy the day.

Anyone wishing transport, please phone Ann on 303207 or Angela on 321540.

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FIELD DAY FOR JUNE

Date: Sunday 23 June 1985

Place: HOGARTH'S SWAMP, PITTSWORTH

Assembly Point: Pigotts' Car Park

Time: 7.15 am for departure at 7.30 am SHARP

This trip is subject to rain falling in the meantime. The swamp is dry at present, and if it remains dry an alternative outing will be arranged.

ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS UNION

presents

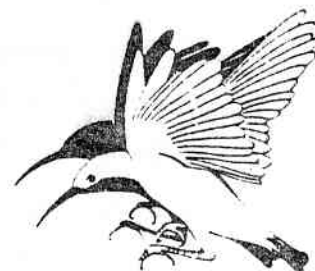
1985 ANNUAL CONGRESS

(27-29 September 1985)
and

CAMPOUT

(30 September-4 October 1985)

CALL FOR PAPERS AND INTENTION TO ATTEND



We have decided against having a theme for the 1985 Annual Congress. Strong themes in the past have doubtless attracted contributions and often much interest, but they have also deterred potential contributors through the mistaken belief that papers outside the theme were not wanted.

For the 1985 Congress, we urge contributions from all ornithologists, whether they consider themselves amateurs or professionals.

Ornithology is one of those rare sciences in which amateurs can be more knowledgeable than professionals in many areas. Both amateurs and professionals in Australia are now contributing substantially to a wide variety of ornithological topics: populations, distribution, community ecology, breeding biology, feeding, migration, behaviour, physiology, taxonomy, field identification, banding, computer applications, techniques of photography, cinematography and sound recording, art and education, and many others of broad interest.

The Annual Congress is the place to share knowledge. Papers are not always the end result of a completed study. They may present a single idea. Often it is those papers that generate most discussion.

A Congress should be an exchange of information and ideas. So let us hear of your current interests.

The Congress is to be held at the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, TOOWOOMBA and Campout at 'Bullamon Plains', THALLON, Queensland.

Approximate registration for Congress - \$35 (3 days)

Approximate camping fee for 5 days - \$5