



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

toowoomba bird club

Postal Address

P.O. Box 67
DARLING HEIGHTS Q 4350

President

Lesley Beaton
15 Dunmore Street
Toowoomba 4350
Phone 32 6262

Secretary

Ann Shore
"Shorelands", Withcott
M.S. 224, Toowoomba 4352
Phone 30 3207

Records Officer

Angela Kilmartin
40 Mabel Street
Toowoomba 4350
Phone 38 2404

Treasurer

Diana Beal
M.S. 1049
Toowoomba 4352
Phone 30 7054

Editor

Ron Hopkinson
50 Bass Street
Toowoomba 4350
Phone 35 4952

Librarian

Nancy Belcher
2 Gilmour Court
Toowoomba 4350
Phone 38 4047

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.

EDITORIAL. - FEBRUARY 1986.

ONLY A LITTLE PLANET.

If you have been looking for Halley's Comet lately you have probably been impressed by the sheer number of stars visible to even the unaided eye. These stars in turn are separated by a blackness which seems to stretch endlessly. In fact, it does.

For all the stars you see are just a few of all the stars there are, and all the blackness you see is just a slice of all the blackness there is. Our intelligence, as yet, is unable to define boundaries to it.

The little planet on which we stand to observe all this is Earth, the third planet from the Sun-- and the softest, greenest and mildest of the nine. The only one which can support our life. The only one which we have, thus far, found to be capable of supporting any form of life. It seems solid and rocky and its resources seem limitless but it really is a small, (infinitesimally so), delicate bubble on which we are all passengers.

Each year the number of passengers increases. In the middle 1800's the Earth's population was estimated at 1000 million. Less than a century later, in the 1920's, it had doubled. By 1963 it had reached 3000 Million. The United Nations estimate now is that by the year A.D. 2000 it will have doubled again to 6000 million or even 7000 million.

All these millions (which includes you and me), need food, clothing, shelter from the elements and, as modern life for many of the millions becomes more sophisticated, minerals to provide other needs.

These needs cause us to dig and tear at this bubble to obtain our food, to build our cities, to get the metals for motor cars and the oil to power them. Yet some of us can see dangers to the bubble in unrestricted digging and tearing; we can recognize the risks, in the long term, of destroying bushland to build housing estates. Herein are the basics of the conservation creed-- the necessity to balance our material needs with what is best to preserve the bubble on which we all travel through space.

The fact that you are reading this News-sheet makes you a conservationist to a greater or smaller degree. To be sufficiently interested in one form of life (in this case, birdlife) to join a club devoted to its study means, I think, that you care about the continuation of that lifeform and therefore it follows that you care about the continuation of your own lifeform. This caring is the basis of conservation.

Presently, it is fashionable for the various news media to refer to conservationists as "Greenies" and depict them as unkempt, alternative lifestyle, people who bury themselves in front of bulldozers. I don't say this to denigrate those people or their actions, because they, too, care; but much can also be accomplished by people in suit and tie or evening gown. We need to enlighten others to the dangers, to watch at your local level for digging or tearing which endangers your little bit of the bubble, Earth.

It would be the ultimate stupidity and tragedy if we allowed our little bubble of a planet to burst; for in would rush the unimaginable cold of the blackness.

Ron Hopkinson.

TELEPATHY IN ANIMALS.

In 1944 a popular digest magazine had a story about a group of scientists in Chicago who were experimenting with moths. A female moth of a rare species was placed in a room, and four miles away a male moth of the same species was released. In a few hours the male moth was found beating its wings against the window of the room in which the female was confined. The editor declared that he believed that ideas fly, with the sureness with which the female moth communicated her whereabouts to the male, across incredible barriers to the one mind for which they are originally intended.

Here is a simple experiment that will make you wonder whether the birds too, possess telepathic or clairvoyant power. In the off-season, put some scraps of bread in the backyard. There isn't a bird in sight. But hardly have you entered the house before birds begin to congregate. First come sparrows and wrens, then robins, and in two or three minutes the yard is filled with birds. Put out anything but food and not a bird appears. What brings them to your yard? How do they know the bread is food for them? Science can give no answers.

Edwin C. Hill in his broadcast of February 17, 1947, in talking about butterflies, made the statement that the more scientists investigate, the more they are becoming convinced that birds and insects have a wireless of their own or some other invisible manner of communication with one another. This has long been a theory expounded by nature students, and as a matter of fact, many books have been written on the subject, notably one by William J. Long, "How Animals Talk".

It's interesting to note that during the last war, our Army Signal Corps, in experimenting with carrier pigeons and short-wave radio, found that pigeons were affected by the radio waves and often, when confused, flew in circles and were lost.

When we consider that the swallows of San Juan Capistrano, California, fly away each October 23 and return each March 19 with unflinching punctuality; that tagged salmon released from Columbia River points spend four years in the Pacific Ocean, then consistently return to the spots from which they departed; that dogs and cats taken many miles from their homes have returned; that wild ducks and geese wing their way back to their original localities; that other inexplicable things are too numerous to mention here; are we not faced with the fact that there are wave radiations and telepathic forces also operating in the fish, bird and animal kingdoms, in fact, in everything around us? Some writers claim that all living things have the means of communicating with each other, and in view of the Yale experiments, this may not be so farfetched after all.

(Collected from a book by Claude M. Bristol and contributed here by Joe Deuble).

Editor's Note.

Thank you to Joe for this. Certainly there are means of communication such as described above, and they are not restricted to the lower orders. There have been instances of human capability in this area, sometimes turned to theatrical purposes but nonetheless genuine.

Some members may recall The Piddingtons--a husband and wife team who were subjected to tests for fraud but who confounded their critics. As I remember it one test involved one of them remaining on the ground under supervision while the other was taken aloft by aircraft, and was also

TELEPATHY IN ANIMALS C/td.

supervised. After the aircraft was miles away a message was given to one and before the aircraft landed the correct message had been received and told to the supervisory group. How ?

Many years ago in the days of the British Raj in India a certain fakir had a reputation of being telepathic. Some English officers decided to test him. A few of them remained with the assistant while the others took the fakir several miles away and were to give him a message to communicate to the assistant. After some time the two groups met again and the few who had been with the assistant revealed that he had said nothing to them and that they had tired of waiting so had given him a few rupees for his trouble and sent him on his way.

The twist to this is that the message was "Give him a few rupees for his trouble". How ?

There is evidence that our ancestors had this ability to a strong degree, but in we children of modernity the facility has atrophied. What do you think ?

Ron Hopkinson.

CLUB BRIEFS

Thank you to those members who have renewed their subscription for this year. If you are one of them, please feel free to dispose of the renewal slip which may be attached to this issue. If you are not one, then nudge, nudge, wink, wink.
Please keep the Club strong, renew soon.

--- --- --- ---

The combined field day with Q.O.S. which was set down as the regular Club day for July 27th., has had to be altered to August 10th. Unfortunately the day is not suitable to Q.O.S. So our Club will conduct a local outing on July 27th to preserve the formula of fourth Sunday and the meeting with Q.O.S. on August 10th will be an extra. More details later.

--- --- --- ---

I hope you are a camper. For if so, you will probably now be checking over duffel in preparation for the Easter camp in conjunction with the Chinchilla Field Nats. As you are no doubt aware of by now, Easter this year falls on the week-end of March 28/29/30/31. The venue will be Isla Gorge. Should be an interesting camp. Hope you can make it.

--- --- --- ---

Hopefully, those members who are resident in Toowoomba will be reading this sheet about the same time as the Hobby-N-Craft Spectacular begins. Our Club has combined forces with Greenwatch and Toowoomba Field Nats. this year to present a stand based on the Bicentennial Waterbird Park theme. It is being conducted at the new Showgrounds at Glenvale. What we need is the help of willing members to spend a little time on the stand. Not a lot of work is involved; the requirement mostly is to be in attendance together with people from the other two clubs. If you would like to help please contact Lesley on phone 32 6262 for more details.

--- --- --- ---

Member Michael Atzeni is currently in Toowoomba on holiday from North Queensland. Michael's timing was spot on--- he was here when Winifred made her uninvited appearance near Cairns. He was also here at the same time as two birds which previously were not on the Club list.

--- --- --- ---

January's outing will probably go down on record for the lowest number of bird species seen on a field trip. Members outnumbered birds it seemed.

The late 7.30am start (though normal Club time) I believe is the culprit as far as good birding is concerned. By the time we got to Redwood it was already very hot and muggy. The cicadas were in full voice, and their noise deters bird feeding parties as they cannot hear their own contact calls above the cacophony of the insects, or so the theory goes. Anyway it seemed to be true this time.

It was a pleasure to walk through the vine scrub of Redwood, and not one member regretted making the effort to join the party on the Australia Day weekend.

Many thanks to Ann & John Shore for inviting us to morning tea at "Shorelands". It was great to see Maggie Drabsch join us there.

Members present: Merv Baxter, Diana & Enid Beal, Lesley Beaton, Frank & Nancy Belcher, Joe Deuble, Maggie Drabsch, Gloria Glass, Bob & Flo Hamilton, Angela Kilmartin, Kevin & Margaret McPhee, Ann & John Shore.

Bird species: Redwood - Wedge-tailed Eagle, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Wonga Pigeon, Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey Shrike-thrush, Black-faced Monarch, Spectacled Monarch, Rufous Fantail (feeding two young in a nest), Eastern Whipbird, Brown Gerygone, White-throated Treecreeper, Lewin's Honeyeater, Red-browed Fire-tail, Spangled Drongo, Pied Currawong.

16 species

Shorelands - Straw-necked Ibis, Willie Wagtail, Superb Fairy-wren, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Figbird, Magpie-lark, Pied Currawong, Crow.

9 species

Total 25 species

Lesley Beaton

EXECUTIVE REPORT

There is very little to report this month as most of our business is ongoing.

We still have not had a reply from the Laidley Shire Council about our submission on the increased water capacity for Lake Dyer, so another letter is to be sent. Q.O.S. have sent us a copy of the letter that they have written to the Council in response to our request for support.

There has also been no news from the Water Resources Commission about the future plans for Lake Clarendon, so another letter to them also.

A letter has been sent to the Toowoomba City Council regarding our use and '..extreme concern ..' for the future of Redwood Park. This is in response to an article in "The Chronicle" which reported that the Darling Downs Field Archers Club had requested that they lease 8-12 hectares in the south-east corner of the park.

EXECUTIVE REPORT CONT'D

The Council had already turned down the request, however the Executive felt it was important that Council were aware of our views.

The Hobby-n-Craft Spectacular plans are well under way, with a number of offers to help set up or work on the display. I believe there is a very healthy attitude towards co-operation by the three Clubs involved in the joint display this year, and hope this will continue with mutual support in future ventures.

Lesley Beaton, President

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS.

243. Little Bronze Cuckoo. (Chrysococcyx malayanus). 31.1.1986.
Seventeen Mile Road, Helidon (Sector 7). Michael Atzeni. Pat McConnell.
A single male bird-bronze-brown upperparts with no noticeable contrast between crown and back--red eye and orbital ring--face and underparts white--dark barring across upper breast, throat, facial area and on lateral parts of lower breast--white tail tip--undertail outer feathers white--visible inner tail feathers pale rufous.

244. Australian Shelduck. (Tadorna tadornoides). 4.2.1986.
Hood's Lagoon, Helidon (Sector 7). Michael Atzeni. Pat McConnell.
A single female on the water--very large duck--head dull black--indistinct white neck ring--white eye ring--white line around base of bill--shoulders and upper breast orange-brown--upperparts dull brown--chestnut tertiaries.

FIELD DAY FOR FEBRUARY

Date: Sunday, February 23rd 1986.
Place: Picnic Point-South St. area then Waterbird Park.
Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park.
Time: 7.15am for departure 7.30am Sharp.
Leaders: Angela Kilmartin and Ron Hopkinson.

This a beginners outing so come along and help make beginners welcome.

A DOVE CAN FLY.

We aren't jealous of an eagle's power of flight because we are in awe of the animal.

We can forgive an ibis or an egret for taking wing because they are far lovelier creatures than we will ever aspire to be.

A soaring vulture-- well, it is writing an important message in the sky. But this inferiority of ours really hurts when common birds such as pigeons and doves suddenly lift off and taunt us with the fact that they can do with ease what we can barely do with tons of fuel and machinery.

That a dove and not a man can fly is a message of profound importance.

I am sure we are being told that we have a place and we shouldn't forget it.

Planes and rockets are fine, but a dove can really FLY.

Roger Caras.

"Birds and Flight".