

"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.

EDITORIAL MARCH 1986.

"AND HE SOLD HIS BIRTHRIGHT FOR POTTAGE."

As the old saying goes, "You learn something every day." Until recently I had always defined a National Park as an area of land set aside by the State to preserve its natural beauty, flora and fauna, in perpetuity for the enjoyment and education of the people.

However, Messrs. Peterson, Lyons and McKechnie have altered that definition to read: "National Park: an area of land for which developers have no immediate use and which is set aside, as a sop to the people, until such time as your millionaire betting mate rustles the magic dollar and the land is converted into a monstrous real estate development".

This re-definition, of course, comes about because of the latest deal between the Premier of this sovereign state and his crony from East-West Airlines, involving the revocation of the status of Lindeman Island from National Park to millionaires playground. In seeking an adjective to describe this business I first thought of "disgusting", but consulted my thesaurus for another, perhaps more appropriate. I found so many that I thought it best to let readers make their own selection from the following: disgusting, detestable, distasteful, foul, gross, loathsome, nauseating, nauseous, objectionable, obnoxious, odious, offensive, repugnant, shameless, sickening, stinking, vile, vulgar. Use any one of them, or if you feel as I do, use them all.

The people of Queensland have a right, a birthright, in this matter and ought to be consulted before such a (adjective from above list) move is made. I do not suggest, even for one nanosecond, that one could justify selling off a National Park, but if in the devious, dollar happy thinking of our governing party there appeared to be a justification, then it ought to be done by tender.

The pathetic little objection by the State President of the National Party, Sir Robert Sparkes, was based solely on how it could affect the political fortunes of his party and had nothing to do with the deplorable moral aspect as it affects the people who are the real owners, Australians.

To further insult our intelligence the Premier tells us that it will create "thousands and thousands of jobs". That is so patently dishonest that its utterance denigrates the office of Premier. Naturally some work would be generated, in the short term, for surveyors and the building trade and later the catering industry but I suggest that even to say "hundreds" would be an exaggeration.

Over the years of his term as Premier we have had some truly monumental schemes put up for our betterment. We were going to cure cancer, drive around in steam cars, make oil from seed, make oil from shale and save the people of Barron electorate from ravenous crocodiles. Would it be too much to hope that the Lindeman Island tragedy would join this list?

We, in this Sovereign State of Queensland, appear to be governed by people who never let up chasing after the almighty Dollar, except when they are asleep or in Church, or both. To get those dollars they will sell off the Heritage, the Birthright, of Queenslanders, or for that matter, all Australians. For surely the Barrier Reef and its islands belong to the whole nation; Queensland merely has stewardship.

There is no denying that the tourist industry can be of great value to our economy, but there are limits, surely, to how much of ourselves we will sell to gain the tourist dollar.

Hopefully the day is not too far distant when someone with the political talents of Mrs. Aquino might appear on the Queensland scene.

Ron Hopkinson.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRD.

245. Forest Kingfisher. (*Halcyon macleayii*). 2/3/1986.

Hood's Lagoon area (Sector 7). Rod Hobson. Ron Hopkinson.

A single male specimen-- crown rich blue-- prominent white spot in front of eye--back and wings blue-- underparts white, continuous with broad white collar-- pale buffish wash on lower flanks.

First sighted on overhead wires near site of old cottage--plunged to earth and came up with a mouse in its beak-- flew to nearby tree and proceeded to beat the prey against the branch--driven off (still with mouse) by two Willie Wagtails.

CLUB BRIEFS.

As we go to press we as yet have no exact details of directions to the Easter camp site when we combine with Chinchilla Field Nats. The venue is still Isla Gorge but the camping area will be on a nearby property. However, if you are planning to attend phone Lesley or Ron for final directions, nearer the time.

*** **

The Toowoomba Field Nats. are conducting their Easter camp at Cann's Plains in the Mt. Colliery district. This is near the area our Club visited on the November Field Day. T.B.C. members are welcome to join in and could make a day trip there if you do not wish to camp. More detail can be obtained from the Field Nats.' Secretary, Diana Ball (phone 353920).

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Two film evenings are being planned for this year. The first will take place on the evening of Wednesday May 14th at 7.30pm. The venue will be the Maths Centre which is a part of the Toowoomba Education Centre in Baker Street.

Members at previous film evenings have always enjoyed the films as well as the chance to meet with other bird watchers. We hope you can join us for some interesting films and a little supper afterwards. We will have more detail regarding the programme in next month's issue.

*** **

Toowoomba's Green Week this year will be held over the period April 25th-28th. As part of the activities the Toowoomba Photographic Society will conduct a photographic competition around the theme, "Gardens". We have been provided with entry forms for the contest. Entries may be in the form of colour slide, monochrome print or colour print. First prize is seven nights accommodation for a family of four at Newport Apartments at Mooloolaba, (value \$330.00). If you would like an entry form contact the Editor.

*** **

Issue Number 2 of this News-Sheet (November 1975), welcomed as new members Ron and Viv Wilson. Their membership was thirteenth on the list. Since then, although ill health prevented their attendance at Field Days, they have maintained their membership and interest in the Club through contributions to this journal in which they posed and answered questions of value, and they were regular participants in the Club's recording scheme. I regret that this issue, Number 123 (March 1986), must record their resignation from the Club, again because of ill health. We are sorry to lose you, Ron and Viv, and wish you better health for the future.

*** **

PASSERINE AND NON -PASSERINE. AN EXPLANATION.

PASSERINE.

PASSERIFORMES : Perching Birds.

This is by far the largest and most complex order of birds in the world and contains over half the living species.

Although an extremely diverse order, containing such widely differing species as the Birds of Paradise and the Honeyeaters, there are a number of characteristics which link them all together.

The primary common feature is the perching foot, from which the group derives the name Passeriforme or Passerine. Passerines have four toes, three pointing forward and one directed backwards, none being webbed. It is a foot admirably suited and developed for perching- able to curl around a branch and grip tightly. The tendons of the leg are so arranged that as the bird relaxes- squatting lower- the toes are pulled into a tighter grip. So even while sleeping a passerine bird is safe upon its perch.

All species in the order hatch naked, or nearly so, helpless and with their eyes closed. They are reared in the nest and do not leave it until the feathering is well developed; on leaving the nest they are fed for some time by their parents.

Passeriformes are found on all the major land masses and most islands throughout the world, being absent only from Antarctica. Their origins in terms of evolution are something of a mystery as are their relationships to other land birds. They appear to have originated during Tertiary times or even before, from a number of parent stocks. Skeletal remains of such small birds are scarce, and the few fossils discovered have helped relatively little to unravel the perplexities of antecedents and relationships between the families.

The order has developed and multiplied into many successful forms since its origins. This development is still in progress, and lines of demarcation between families are in many cases vague. Thus there is a good deal of disagreement amongst ornithologists and taxonomists through the world on classification within the Passerines.

The sub-ordinal arrangements seem to be universally agreed upon. In the nineteenth century the German anatomist Muller showed that the order could be divided into four sub-orders, on the basis of the differences in the birds' syrinxes, or voice-boxes. The first three sub-orders are known as the sub-oscines, and they have four pairs, or less, of muscles in the voice-box. We have representatives of two of these sub-orders in Australia in our Pittas, Lyrebirds and Scrub-birds.

It is interesting that The Lyrebird, powerful singer and wonderful mimic that it is, should have such a simple syrinx, and be classed as a sub-oscine (that is to say, a sub-singer!).

The fourth sub-order are the Passeres- the true oscines or singing birds and these have from five to eight pairs of muscles in the voice-box. They number something like half the world's species of birds and the same proportion applies in Australia. Of the seven hundred and seventy-three species and forms treated in this book, three hundred and eighty-nine are perching song-birds, which is over half our birds.

From "AUSTRALIAN BIRDS", by Robin Hill. Published by Savvas Publishing.

Angela Kilmartin.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

Members involved with the Club's recording scheme or simply referring to our Checklist, or their Field Guides have met with the terms, "Passerine"

PASSERINES C/td.

and "Non-passerine". It was felt that it would be worthwhile to explain the differences. As seen above, the word "Passerine" refers to the one Order of birds. "Non-passerine" refers to the remaining 26 Orders, giving the total of 27 recognized world-wide, which, of course, are further divided into Family, Genus, Species.

Ron Hopkinson.

BIRDS TO LOOK FOR IN APRIL.

Herewith a short list of birds that have all been recorded in our Local Study Area in the month of April. The numbers refer to the number given to the species in the "Field Guide to Birds of Australia" by Graham Pizzey. Passerine.

Varied Triller. (*Lalage leucomela*) Pizzey 433.

Rose Robin. (*Petroica rosea*) Pizzey 440.

Red-capped Robin. (*Petroica goodenovii*) Pizzey 444.

Hooded Robin. (*Melanodryas cucullata*) Pizzey 445. Not yet on our list but should be in our area.

White-throated Honeyeater. (*Melithreptus albogularis*) Pizzey 621.

Non-passerine.

Hoary-headed Grebe. (*Podiceps poliocephalus*). Pizzey 5

Buff-banded Rail. (*Rallus phillipensis*) Pizzey 174.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*). Pizzey 311.

Angela Kilmartin. Records.

GLIDERS AND BIRDS.

We usually observe birds from our back verandah, but last week we were surprised to see a large model glider plane flying above the valley instead. It was quite windy, but the glider had no difficulty looping the loop and went so high up in the sky that we wondered if it would disappear forever.

However the operator of the "remote control" had no trouble bringing the glider in, and it landed right at the operator's feet. On the second run a Kestrel appeared from nowhere and began following the glider, mostly staying above it all the time. The Kestrel was really looking over this big new "White Bird" and wasn't going to let it out of his sight. When the glider landed the Kestrel disappeared, but I still think he was a bit bewildered about this new "bird" in his territory.

Nancy Belcher.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

Magpie Goose. 3.3.86. Approx. 85. Crestwood Estate, Glènore Grove. LB. AK.

Australasian Shoveller. 2.3.86. Dyer's Lagoon. RH. REH.

Whistling Kite. February 85. (Pair). Wilson property, Withcott. LW. JW.

Australian Hobby. 30.8.85. " " " " LW.

2.3.86. Hood's Lagoon. RH. REH.

Australian Brush-turkey nest mound. 11.8.85. 24" high. JW.

" " " " " 6.9.85. 48" high. AS. LW.

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. 2.3.86. Flagstone Ck. Road. Uprange. RH. REH.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. 22.2.86. (2) Hood's Lagoon. LB. JB.

9.3.86. (3) " " " " LB. JB.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. 18.8.85. (Group of 6) Withcott. LW.

Channel-billed Cuckoo. 17.11.85. Airborne over 15 Dunmore St. LB.

JB: John Ball. LB: Lesley Beaton. RH: Rod Hobson. REH: Ron Hopkinson.

AK: Angela Kilmartin. JW: John Wilson. LW: Lorraine Wilson. AS: Ann Shore.

FIELD DAY REPORT. 23/2/1986. TOBRUK DRIVE AND WATERBIRD PARK.

Fifteen members and seven visitors met at our usual place for the February Beginner's Field Day. From there we moved to Tobruk Drive to begin the search for birds.

As is often the case on such forays there are birds one hopes to be able to show off to visitors. For this trip it was Rufous Fantails, several of which had been present a couple of days previously. As is often the case on such forays they were conspicuous by their absence. However, several good views of a Black-faced Monarch were sufficient compensation. This bird, plus Eastern Yellow Robin, Pale-headed Rosella and, for some of the group, Australian King Parrot provided interesting sightings.

The highlight of the walk came while the party was "taking five" at the South Street end of the track, when a flock of 100+ Great Cormorant made its appearance overhead. The flock circled for long enough to afford a good viewing, and caused some humorous conjecture as to whether it might be heading for our second stop.

After morning tea back at the parked cars, we moved off to visit the recently re-named Bi-centennial Waterbird Park. Here Lesley and Marilyn, with the aid of a plan of the lay-out, explained a good deal about this most exciting project. The acquisition of such a park is one giant step for bird-watchers (and, more importantly, birds) and congratulations are certainly in order for all who played a part in it.

All in all, it was a satisfying morning with several visitors expressing interest in our next Field Day.

Ron Hopkinson

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Merv. Baxter	Flo Hamilton	Cath McGrath
Lesley Beaton	Bob Hamilton	Betty Porter
Nancy Belcher	Ron Hopkinson	Les Porter
Joe Deuble	Marilyn Jacobs	Lyn Rowan
Bradley Drennan	Angela Kilmartin	Ann Shore

VISITORS:

Les Barlow	Angus Eagle	Justin Mogg
Jean Claydon	Joshua Howarth	Jan Robbins
		Carol Tompkins

SPECIES LIST, TOBRUK DRIVE: 28 SPECIES.

Great Cormorant	Eastern Yellow Robin	Noisy miner
Straw-necked Ibis	Golden Whistler	Lewin's Honeyeater
Galah	Black-fcd. Monarch	Yellow-fcd. Honeyeater
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	Eastern Whipbird	Spotted Pardalote
Austn. King Parrot	Variegated Fairy-wren	Striated Pardalote
Pale-hded. Rosella	White-browed Scrubwren	Silvereye
Laughing Kookaburra	Brown Thornbill	Red-brwd. Firetail
Sacred Kingfisher	White-thrtd. Treecreeper	Grey Butcherbird
Cicadabird	Noisy Friarbird	Pied Currawong
		Torresian Crow

WATERBIRD PARK: 15 SPECIES.

White-faced Heron	Welcome Swallow	House Sparrow
Pacific Black Duck	Fairy Martin	Common Starling
Maned Duck	Willie Wagtail	Common Mynah
Masked Lapwing	Yellow-rmpd Thornbill	Aust. Magpie-lark
Scaly-brstd. Lorikeet	Brown Honeyeater	Aust. Magpie

EXECUTIVE NOTES.

There is no new business from the Executive meeting this month. Although we have had no reply from the Laidley Shire Council about Lake Dyer, it was reported in both "The Gatton Star" and "The Chronicle" that our letter had been received and no action taken.

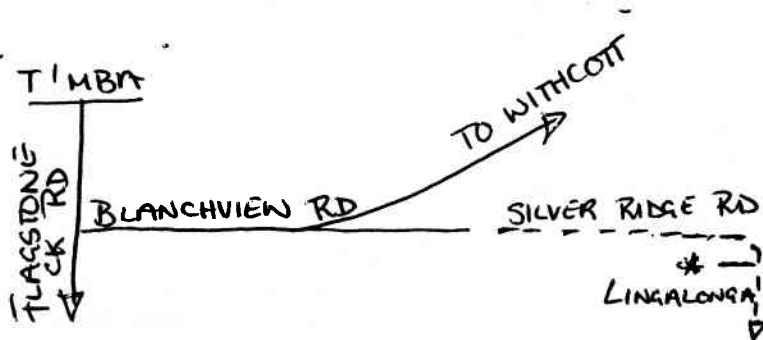
Lesley Beaton, President.

BIRD BANDING.

A bird banding week-end has been organised for the week-end of March 22nd/23rd. It is to be held at Audrey Sorensen's property, "Lingalonga", which is on the Silver Ridge Road.

Mike Hines, Queensland regional representative of the Bird Banding Scheme is coming up from Brisbane.

This is an opportunity to be involved in this activity, especially as the Club is keen to start its own scheme. A great deal of valuable information is collected from such projects all over Australia.



Name on roadside mail box.

Lesley Beaton, President.

FIELD TRIP FOR MARCH.

The March Field Trip will take the form of the camp-out with Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club at Isla Gorge.

The alternative is the camp with Toowoomba Field Naturalists at Cann's Plains (see note in Club Briefs).

FIELD DAY FOR APRIL.

Date: Sunday, April 27th. 1986.

Place: Welcamp area.

Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park.

Time: 7.15am for departure 7.30am Sharp.

Leader: Lesley Beaton.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

The Darling Downs Naturalist Newsletter. #379. February 1986.

Nancy Belcher, Librarian.

SUPPLEMENT TO NEWS-SHEET No. 123, MARCH 1986.

SEASONAL SPECIES SURVEY. OCTOBER 1985.

Herewith are the results of the Seasonal Species Survey for the month of October 1985. As you know we record species present every month but the seasonal surveys invite special effort in the middle months of each season -- J A J O = January, April, July and October. During those periods participating members make extra effort to visit sectors so that between us we cover all eight sectors.

The results of January's survey will be published later and this will be followed by the Annual Summary based on sightings for every month of 1985.

The numbers against each bird, of course, refer to the sector in which the species was recorded. 1/2/3/4 are the Uprange (Western) block and 5/6/7/8 form the Downrange (eastern) block.

Ron Hopkinson.

		<u>NON-PASSERINE</u>	
Australasian Grebe	1/5/7	Feral Pigeon	1/2/3/4/5/7
Darter	7	Spotted Turtledove	3
Little Pied Cormorant	1/3/4/5/7	Brown Cuckoo-dove	3
Pacific Heron	1/3/4/5	Common Bronzewing	5/7
White-faced Heron	1/3/4/5	Crested Pigeon	1/2/3/4/5/7/8
Sacred Ibis	1/3/4/5/7	Wonga Pigeon	3
Straw-necked Ibis	1/3/4/5/7	Yellow-tailed Blk. Cockatoo	3
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	5	Galah	1/2/3/4/5/6/7
Black Swan	7	Sulphur-crst. Cockatoo	4
Pacific Black Duck	1/2/4/5/7/8	Rainbow Lorikeet	3/4
Grey Teal	1/5/7	Scaly-brstd. Lorikeet	1/3/4/5/7
Pink-eared Duck	7	Little Lorikeet	4
Hardhead	1/7	Australian King Parrot	3/4
Maned Duck	1/4/7	Cockatiel	1/3/4
Black-shldrd. Kite	1/2/3/4/6/7	Budgerigar	2
Wedge-tailed Eagle	5	Pale-headed Rosella	1/2/3/4/5/6/7
Australian Kestrel	1/2/4/5/7/8	Red-rumped Parrot	1/2/4/5
Australian Brush-turkey	3	Pallid Cuckoo	5
Brown Quail	7	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	3
Little Button-Quail	5	Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo	7
Dusky Moorhen	4/5/6/7	Common Koel	1/3/4/5/7
Purple Swamphen	5	Channel-billed Cuckoo	3/4/5/7
Eurasian Coot	7	Pheasant Coucal	3/5
Masked Lapwing	3/4/5/7/8	Southern Boobook	3/4
Black-fronted Plover	5/7	White-throated Needletail	1
Black-winged Stilt	7	Laughing Kookaburra	1/2/3/4/5/6/7
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	5/7	Sacred Kingfisher	1/2/3/4/5/7
Whiskered Tern	7	Rainbow Bee-eater	3/5/6/7
Top-knot Pigeon	3	Dollarbird	1/3/4/5/7
White-headed Pigeon	3/4		

59 Non-passerine species.

SUPPLEMENT - SEASONAL SPECIES SURVEY C/td.

PASSERINE

Noisy Pitta	3	Yellow-rmpd. Thornbill	2/3/4/5/7
Singing Bushlark	1/2	Yellow Thornbill	2
White-backed Swallow	3/6/7	Striated Thornbill	7
Welcome Swallow	1/2/3/4/5/7	White-thrtd. Treecreeper	3/4
Tree Martin	1/2/5	Striped Honeyeater	5
Fairy Martin	5/7	Noisy Friarbird	3/4/5/6/7
Richard's Pipit	1/2/4/7	Little Friarbird	3/4/5/6/7/8
Black-fcd. Cuckoo-shrike	1/2/3/4/5/6/7	Blue-fcd. Honeyeater	5
Cicadabird	3/4	Noisy Miner	1/2/3/4/5/7
Eastern Yellow Robin	3	Lewin's Honeyeater	3/4/5/6
Golden Whistler	3	White-naped Honeyeater	4/6/7/8
Rufous Whistler	3/4/5	Brown Honeyeater	3/4/5
Grey Shrike-thrush	3/4/5	Scarlet Honeyeater	3
Black-fcd. Monarch	3	Mistletoebird	3/5
Satin Flycatcher	4	Spotted Pardalote	3/4/5
Restless Flycatcher	5	Striated Pardalote	1/2/3/4/5/6/7
Rufous Fantail	3	Silvereye	2/3/4/5/6/8
Grey Fantail	4	House Sparrow	1/2/3/4/5
Willie Wagtail	2/3/4/5/6/7/8	Red-brwd. Firetail	3/4/5/6
Eastern Whipbird	3/4/5/6/7	Zebra Finch	2
Grey-crowned Babbler	5	Double-barred Finch	4/5/7
Clamorous Reed Warbler	4/7	Common Starling	1/2/3/4/5/7/8
Golden-hd. Cisticola	1/2/4/7/8	Common Mynah	1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8
Rufous Songlark	2	Olive-backed Oriole	1/3/4/5
Brown Songlark	2	Figbird	3/4/5/7
Superb Fairy-wren	3/4/5/6	Spangled Drongo	3/4
Variegated Fairy-wren	3/4	Regent Bowerbird	3
Red-bckd. Fairy-wren	7	Aust. Magpie-lark	1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8
White-brwd. Scrubwren	3/4	Grey Butcherbird	3/4/5/8
Speckled Warbler	5	Pied Butcherbird	1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8
Brown Gerygone	3	Australian Magpie	1/2/3/4/5/6/7
White-thrtd. Gerygone	1/2/3/4/5/6/7	Pied Currawong	3/4/5/6
Brown Thornbill	3/4	Torresian Crow	1/3/4/5/6/7/8

66 Passerine Species.