

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

President: Bill Jolly,  
Ringmere,  
Withcott, 4344.

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Ph: 35.4952



NEWS-SHEET No. 13 - NOVEMBER, 1976.

The highlight of the month for several members was to have in the hand, a bird which has rarely been known to land in Australia - a Spine-tailed Swift (*Hirundina caudacutus*).

On the morning of November 17th., Bradley Durrant, a young resident of Prince Her Drive came upon an apparently injured bird struggling across the road. Aware of the unhappy combination of injured birds and cats, Bradley took the bird home to enlist Mrs. Durrant's aid in caring for it.

News of this reached REH that evening and a visit to the Durrant home brought the agreement to his taking the bird to Bill Jolly for club identification.

The bird was identified as a Spine-tailed Swift and examination showed no discernible injury. In fact, several times during the course of gentle handling the bird readily assumed the head-up, vertical clinging position of this species when at rest.

A joint opinion was formed that some mischance had brought the bird to ground from which, of course, it could not get airborne because of the short, weak legs and swift's wings. The decision was made to release the bird from a suitable place and late that evening it was set free from the high ground at Webb Park. It was last seen flying evenly and strongly in the direction of Redwood Park.

This month saw the start of the Dyer's Lagoon survey mentioned in News-sheet No. (August, 1976). CB, RGH, and REH made the first count on 21st November. Although this is not an official Club project, members wishing to take part would be very welcome.

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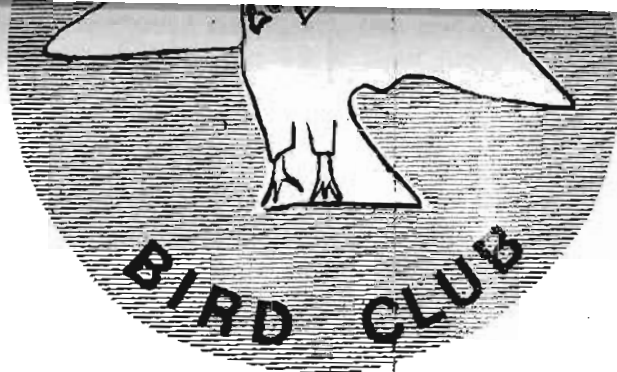
MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

Australian Pelican. 7.11.76. Coolmunda Dam. (50 Birds). MJ. DH.  
Black Cormorant. 17.11.76. Withcott. AG.  
Nankeen Nigh Heron. 7.11.76. Coolmunda Dam. MJ. DH.  
Glossy Ibis. 23.10.76. Maranoa Treatment Works. RE. CE.  
White Pygmy Goose. 21.11.76. Dyer's Lagoon. (3 birds). CB. RGH. REH.  
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Japanese Snipe. 23.10.76. Maranoa Treatment Works. (12 birds). RE. CE.  
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. 23.10.76. Maranoa Tr. Works. (20 birds). RE. CE.  
Whiskered Tern. 23.10.76. Maranoa Treatment Works. RE. CE.  
Spine-tailed Swift. 10.11.76. Over Herries Street. EJ.  
Rainbow Bee-eater. 23.10.76. Miles. JC.  
Tree Martin. 23.10.76. Miles. JC.  
Fairy Martin. 23.10.76. Miles. JC.  
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Plum-headed Finch. 7.11.76. Coolmunda Dam. MJ. DH.  
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin. 7.11.76. Coolmunda Dam. MJ. DH.

CB: Chris Bianchi. JC: John Coman. CE: Chris Eley. RE: Reg Eley. AG: Alan Graham  
DH: Dianne Hayden. REH: Ron Hopkinson. RGH: Rod Hobson.  
MJ: Marilyn Jacobs. EJ: Eileen Jolly.

THE DEATH OF A MUDLARK OR PEEWIT (*Grallina cyanoleuca*).

A pair of Peewits nested here and raised a family every year for many, many years. Then a colony of Noisy Miners (Mickies) *Myzantha melanocephala* came and established themselves in the back paddock. Peewits and Mickies co-existed at first but more and more they spread their domain, that is the Mickies, and they began to attack and plague the Peewits. Their attacks were organised five or six or seven Mickies taking to one Peewit and dive-bombing one after the other. This was worst of all when the young Peewits made their first flights.

Six years or so ago the Peewits stopped nesting here and though we used to see them drinking here for a while they finally abandoned the neighbourhood. Their absence may not have been entirely due to the Mickies attacks, they seem to have been scarce all about Toowoomba lately.

This year, 1976, we began to hope they might be coming back. A few were seen in Moloney Street about half a mile away and then we heard their well-known call in Mt. Lofty Park across Range Street from us.

Shortly after 10th October, Mr. C.E. Nicary saw a Peewit in the trees here being harassed by Mickies as described above. It flew from tree to tree to avoid them but they continued attacking and forced it to the ground and were still attacking it when Mr. Nicary rescued it. At first for temporary protection he put it in a drawer of a desk in the garage leaving the drawer partly open for air. It seemed distressed so he put it on the lawn under a large upturned plastic bin. It was however very weak and soon died.

The body was put in a plastic bag and kept in our deep freeze. It has now been given to Mr. Bill Jolly, President of the Toowoomba Bird Club.

There is also an infestation here of Pied Currawongs *Strepera graculena*. The Mickies pester them by flying after them, sitting near them and screaming at them but they don't attack them.

We have noticed the Mickies harassing the Dollar Birds, a pair of them nests here every year in a hollow in a Blackbutt near the gate.

We would rather be without the Mickies (and the Currawongs too for that matter).

L.O. Boyce.  
6, Range St. Toowoomba.

Editor's Footnote: Don Vernon, Curator of Birds at Queensland Museum was very interested in this account and is now in possession of the body of the bird.

WASH DAY AT EAST CREEK.

I read with interest Colin Kent's note on "Wash Day at Flagstone" (T.B.C. News-sheet No. 5 February 1976) concerning the Azure Kingfisher (*Ceyx azureus*) which was bathing in Flagstone Creek.

One cold, bleak, windy morning this past winter I observed a Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) on a low tree branch overhanging East Creek near South Street. He, too, had a ruffled appearance and for the same reason. He flew down and squatted in the few centimetres of water then flew back to the branch where the body was shaken and the feathers ruffled. This action was repeated several times. There were two other Kookaburras perched in the tree but they did not indulge in the wetting.

A White-necked Heron (*Ardea Pacifica*) had arrived on the scene and while the Kookaburra was squatting in the water the Heron ran from several metres away towards the Kookaburra.

At this point the Kookaburra apparently decided against a water-bird life style and took to the air.

Ron Hopkinson.

QUERY ON A HERON.

A year ago, on checking my records, I observed an unusual heron on the rocks on Bulcock Beach, Caloundra. The date was 19.10.75. and the time approximately 3.30 p.m.

Then a colony of Noisy Miners (Mickies) *Myzantha melanocephala* came and established themselves in the back paddock. Peewits and Mickies co-existed at first but more and more they spread their domain, that is the Mickies, and they began to attack and plague the Peewits. Their attacks were organised five or six or seven Mickies taking to one Peewit and dive-bombing one after the other. This was worst of all when the young Peewits made their first flights.

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I have never been able to identify the bird although, after it landed, I got a very good look at it. I am hoping some member or reader may be able to enlighten me regarding this bird. The bird was similar in build and size to the Mangrove Heron, *Butorides striatus*. The body was dark grey above and lighter grey below. From crown to nape the feathering was black. The legs were pink, darker than those of the Black-

(cont/d.)



QUERY ON A HERON (cont/d.)

Black-winged Stilt, in fact they were verging on red. In flight the bird exhibited the white wing spots on the "shoulders" very similar to those of the White-necked Heron.

I have often wondered what this bird was. Perhaps it was a breeding Mangrove Heron but I cannot find anything regarding the breeding plumage of this bird if it has, in fact, a distinct breeding plumage. Can anyone help me with this problem, it would be much appreciated if I could solve the riddle of the Bulcock Beach heron.

Rod Hobson.

A BIRDING TRIP TO BIRDSVILLE. (Continued from News-sheet No. 12).

Complete list of species in their specific areas.

Charleville to Adavale: Emu, Little grebe, Pelican, Black Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Darter, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, Nankeen Night Heron, White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Black Duck, Grey Teal, Pink-eared Duck, White-eyed Duck, Wood Duck, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite, Swamp Harrier, Osprey, Little Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Hawk, Brolga, Dusky Moorhen, Coot, Black-fronted Dotterel, White-headed Stilt, Peaceful Dove, Common Bronzewing, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Cockatiel, Red-winged Parrot, Ringneck Parrot, Pallid Cuckoo, Barking Owl, Owllet Nightjar, Laughing Kookaburra, Red-backed Kingfisher, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, Australian Pipit, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Grey-crowned Babbler, Rufous Songlark, Black-backed Wren, Purple-backed Wren, White-tailed Warbler, Broad-tailed Thornbill, Buff-tailed Thornbill, Weebill, Speckled Warbler, Brown Flycatcher, Red-capped Robin, Hooded Robin, Willy Wagtail, Rufous Whistler, Grey Thrush, Crested Bellbird, Orange-winged Sittella, Brown Tree-creeper, Mistletoe-bird, Striated Pardalote, Brown Honeyeater, Striped Honeyeater, Singing Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, White-rumped Miner, Spiny cheeked Honeyeater, Noisy Friarbird, Little Friarbird, Banded Finch, Olive-backed Oriole, Peewee, Apostle-bird, Grey butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Black-backed Magpie, Spotted Bower-bird, Australian Crow/Raven.

Adavale to Windora: Emu, Great-crested Grebe, Pelican, Black Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Darter, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, White Egret, Plumed Egret, Straw-necked Ibis, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Black Duck, Grey Teal, Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite, Spotted Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Little Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Hawk, Little Quail, Brolga, Black-fronted Dotterel, Diamond Dove, Common Bronzewing, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Cockatiel, Red-winged Parrot, Ringneck Parrot, Blue Bonnet, Budgerygah, Red-backed Kingfisher, Singing Bushlark, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, Australian Pipit, Ground Cuckoo-shrike, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Little Cuckoo-shrike, White-winged Triller, Grey-crowned Babbler, Brown Songlark, Rufous Songlark, Black-backed Wren, Blue and White Wren, Purple-backed Wren, White-tailed Warbler, Broad-tailed Thornbill, Buff-tailed Thornbill, Yellow-tailed Thornbill, Weebill, Brown Flycatcher, Red-capped Robin, Hooded Robin, Willie Wagtail, Rufous Whistler, Grey Thrush, Crested Bellbird, Wedge-bill, Brown Tree-creeper, Mistletoe-bird, Striated Pardalote, Brown Honeyeater, Black Honeyeater, Singing Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, White-rumped Miner, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Noisy Friarbird, Little Friarbird, Diamond Firetail, Zebra Finch, Banded Finch, House Sparrow, Olive-backed Oriole, Peewee, Apostle-bird, White-browed Woodswallow, Masked Woodswallow, Black-faced Woodswallow, Pied Currawong, Pied Butcherbird, Grey Butcherbird, Black-backed Magpie, Spotted Bower-bird, Australian Crow/Raven.

Windora to Birdsville: Emu, Pelican, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Darter, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, White Egret, White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Black-shouldered Kite, Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Spotted Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Little Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Hawk, Little Quail, Brolga, Australian Bustard, Diamond Dove, Crested Pigeon, Little Corella, Galah, Budgerygah, Pallid Cuckoo, Owllet Nightjar, Singing Bushlark, White-backed Swallow, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, Australian Pipit, Ground Cuckoo-shrike, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, White-winged Triller, Brown Songlark, Rufous Songlark, Blue and White Wren, Purple-backed Wren, Crimson Chat, Orange Chat, Gibber Bird, Willie Wagtail, Grey Thrush, Mistletoe-bird, White-plumed Honeyeater, White-rumped Miner, Zebra Finch, House Sparrow, Peewee, White-browed Woodswallow.

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Birdsville to Monkira: Emu, Pelican, Black Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite, Collared Sparrowhawk, Black Falcon, Little Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Hawk, Australian Bustard, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Budgerygah, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin,

(cont/d.)

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Reg & Chris Eley.

(to be continued).

KARINYA PARK OUTING - 14.11.76.

The November outing was held in rather hot conditions in the Pittsworth area. Four carloads of members from Toowoomba met us at the Pittsworth High School. We went to Karinya Park at Irongate, where we walked through the scrub to an area of 78 acres which has recently been declared an Environmental Park and belonged formerly to Steve and Gloria Temple Watts.

Owing to the heat birds were few but we were treated to a nesting Striped Honeyeater in an Acacia pendula (weeping myall) near where we pulled up. Our other sighting of interest was the Yellow Robin in the Environmental Park. This is a bird we had not seen in the eighteen months we lived at Karinya. But it had been seen on several occasions by Betty Temple Watts.

The bird we had hoped to see there - the White-winged Chough - was missing, but we did see Apostle-birds as we left and on the way to Linthorpe, Pittsworth's other environmental park, we saw choughs near the road and everyone remarked on their distinctive piping call. Lunch was had at Linthorpe and a short walk recorded a few more species for the day - of note were Spine-tailed Swifts.

The following is a list of species seen. (K denotes Karinya Park):-

- |                      |                      |                          |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Black-sh. Kite(K)    | Grey-cr. Babbler(K)  | Striped Honeyeater(K)    |
| Nankeen Kestrel(K)   | Superb Blue Wren(K)  | Noisy Miner(K)           |
| Peaceful dove(K)     | Wh.-thr. Warbler(K)  | Banded Finch(K)          |
| Common Bronzewing    | Little Thornbill(K)  | Zebra Finch(K)           |
| Crested Pigeon(K)    | S. Yellow Robin(K)   | House Sparrow(K)         |
| Galah(K)             | Willie Wagtail(K)    | Indian Myna(K)           |
| Cockatiel(K)         | Rufous Whistler(K)   | Starling(K)              |
| Pale-h. Rosella(K)   | Mistletoe Bird(K)    | Olive-backed Oriole(K)   |
| Spine-t. Swift       | Spotted Pardalote    | White-winged Chough      |
| L. Kookaburra(K)     | Black-h. Pardalote   | Magpie Lark(K)           |
| Sacred Kingfisher    | Gr.-br. Silvereye(K) | Apostle Bird(K)          |
| Singing Bushlark(K)  | Brown Honeyeater(K)  | Black-f. Wood-swallow(K) |
| Tree Martin(K)       | Lewin Honeyeater     | Pied Currawong           |
| Aust. pipit(K)       | Spiny Cheeked Honey- | Pied Butcher-bird(K)     |
| Bl.-f. Cuckoo-sh.(K) | eater(K)             | Black-b. Magpie(K)       |
|                      |                      | Aust. Crow.              |

John Walter.

FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR DECEMBER.

Date: Sunday, 19th. December, 1976. Place: Redwood Park, Koorootang, then to Alan Graham's property at Withcott for annual barbecue and get-together, BYOGG. Assembly Point: Entrance to Redwood, down side of Range highway, opposite Yukana Vale. Time: 8.30 a.m.

Australian Crow/Raven.

Monkira to Windora: Emu, Pelican, Black Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, Straw-necked Ibis, Wood Duck, Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Square-tailed Kite, Little Eagle, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Black Falcon, Little Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Hawk, Little Quail, Brolga, Australian Bustard, Black-fronted Dotterel, Australian Pratincole, Peaceful Dove, Diamond Dove, Crested Pigeon, Flock Pigeon, Little Corella, Galah, Cockatiel, Budgerygah, Pallid Cuckoo, Red-backed Kingfisher, White-backed Swallow, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, Australian Pipit, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Little Cuckoo-shrike, Ealls Babbler, Brown Songlark, Rufous Songlark, Blue and White Wren, Crimson Chat, Orange Chat, Gibber Bird, Brown Flycatcher, Red-capped Robin, Grey Thrush, Striated Pardalote, Singing Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, White-rumped Miner, Zebra Finch, Olive-backed Oriole, White-browed Woodswallow, Masked Woodswallow, Black-faced Woodswallow, Black-backed Magpie, Australian Crow/Raven.

Reg & Chris Eley.

(to be continued).

#### KARINYA PARK OUTING - 14.11.76.

The November outing was held in rather hot conditions in the Pittsworth area. Four carloads of members from Toowoomba met us at the Pittsworth High School. We went to Karinya Park at Irongate, where we walked through the scrub to an area of 78 acres which has recently been declared an Environmental Park and belonged formerly to Steve and Gloria Temple Watts.

Owing to the heat birds were few but we were treated to a nesting Striped Honeyeater in an Acacia pendula (weeping myall) near where we pulled up. Our other sighting of interest was the Yellow Robin in the Environmental Park. This is a bird we had not seen in the eighteen months we lived at Karinya. But it had been seen on several occasions by Betty Temple Watts.

The bird we had hoped to see there - the White-winged Chough - was missing, but we did see Apostle-birds as we left and on the way to Linthorpe, Pittsworth's other environmental park, we saw choughs near the road and everyone remarked on their distinctive piping call. Lunch was had at Linthorpe and a short walk recorded a few more species for the day - of note were Spine-tailed Swifts.

The following is a list of species seen. (K denotes Karinya Park):-

Black-sh. Kite(K)	Grey-cr. Babbler(K)	Striped Honeyeater(K)
Nankeen Kestrel(K)	Superb Blue Wren(K)	Noisy Miner(K)
Peaceful dove(K)	Wh.-thr. Warbler(K)	Banded Finch(K)
Common Bronzewing	Little Thornbill(K)	Zebra Finch(K)
Crested Pigeon(K)	S. Yellow Robin(K)	House Sparrow(K)
Galah(K)	Willie Wagtail(K)	Indian Myna(K)
Cockatiel(K)	Rufous Whistler(K)	Starling(K)
Pale-h. Rosella(K)	Mistletoe Bird(K)	Olive-backed Oriole(K)
Spine-t. Swift	Spotted Pardalote	White-winged Chough
L. Kookaburra(K)	Black-h. Pardalote	Magpie Lark(K)
Sacred Kingfisher	Gr.-br. Silvereye(K)	Apostle Bird(K)
Singing Bushlark(K)	Brown Honeyeater(K)	Black-f. Wood-swallow(K)
Tree Martin(K)	Lewin Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Aust. pipit(K)	Spiny Cheeked Honey-	Pied Butcher-bird(K)
Bl.-f. Cuckoo-sh.(K)	eater(K)	Black-b. Magpie(K)
		Aust. Crow.

John Walter.

#### FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR DECEMBER.

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#### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Q.O.S. Newsletter, November, 1976.

The Darling Downs Naturalist, December, 1976.

#### NOTE FROM THE TREASURER.

Annual subscription of \$3.00 for 1977 falls due on 1st. January but remittances before this date would be acceptable.