

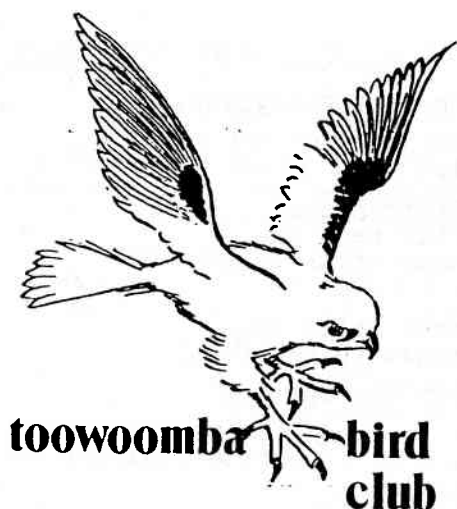
TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

POSTAL ADDRESS

P.O. Box 67
Darling Heights. Q. 4350

CLUB OFFICERS

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Editor:	Ron Hopkinson	Ph 35 4952



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

No. 139 JULY 1987

THE HABITAT

Easily the most exciting and welcome event for the birding fraternity of Toowoomba, in recent times, would be the establishment of the Waterbird Habitat. We would all be familiar with the origins of the concept and its adoption by the Toowoomba City Council as this city's chief project for the Bicentenary year. Most of the work has now been completed although some yet remains.

Presently a visitor is faced with fences and locked gates and wonders why. The fence is an unfortunate necessity in this vandalistic age, and the locked gates exclude visitors, for the time being, to give the park time to settle down before the official opening next year.

We birders would all understand that no guarantee can be given that there will necessarily be scads of birds on opening day. It has to be realized that we cannot wave a wand and instantly populate the place with waterbirds. It will take time, perhaps a good deal of time, before we can go there and confidently expect to record heaps of species.

I know that, so far, I have been preaching to the converted. We know what a good thing it is; but we also know that one can visit a place one day and see nothing and next day record all sorts of species. That is the way it is with birds. However recent letters to "The Chronicle" reveal that there are numbers of people who do not know these things. They visit the park, peer through the fence, see no obvious bird life and decide the whole thing is a waste of money. Someone even made the ludicrous suggestion that the domestic ducks presently domiciled on Lake Annand be re-located at the Habitat! (Ugh! Shudder!)

The point of all this is that I believe it is time we Club members began preaching to the un-converted. If in the course of conversations with friends or others, you meet this "only a duck pond" idea, you ought to take the opportunity to point out the Habitat's good features and the fact that it will take time to come to fruition. Our Club has been involved with the project right from the beginning and this is one more way to stay involved.

Between us we can "sell" the Habitat to the people who do not have the same interest in birds that we share. The idea is to get other people on side and help them to appreciate and accept the Habitat for what it is: preservation of a piece of Toowoomba's authentic and natural history.

Good Birding
Ron Hopkinson

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS

The Checklist Committee has added the following birds to the Club Checklist:-

254. Red-necked Avocet. (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*).
February 8th. 1987. Helidon Spa. Lesley Beaton, John Ball.

Four adults wading and feeding in the large lagoon at the Helidon Spa. The chestnut-coloured head and neck and the long, upswept bill were unmistakable as the birds waded through the water sweeping their bills from side to side.

Their white bodies were slightly plumper than the Black-winged Stilt also present. The black markings on the wings were in stark contrast to the body.

Since the first sighting larger flocks have been seen at both the Spa and Hood's Lagoon by other members.

255. Wompoo Fruit-Dove. (*Ptilinopus magnificus*).

May 18th. 1987. 16 Rodway Crescent, Toowoomba.
Lesley Beaton, Ron Hopkinson, Marilyn Jacobs.

Large pigeon which crashed into a window of the Rodway Cres. residence. The dead bird was retrieved by the householder and passed into the Club's possession. Unlike any other pigeon in colour patterns-- light grey head and neck-- back and upper wing surfaces green with golden yellow slash across wings-- Underwing and undertail coverts golden yellow.

Breast and throat a deep plum colour with small splotches of green present.

The frozen specimen has since been viewed by other Club Members and will be passed on to the Queensland Museum.

CLAMOROUS REED-WARBLER SURVEY

There is currently under way a project to study the migration patterns of the Clamorous Reed-Warbler, as part of research being carried out by the Shortland Wetlands Centre.

Birds have been banded on both left and right tarsus. The left carries one coloured band above a metal band and the right has three coloured bands. If you see such banded birds please record the colours of the bands as well as the date and place of observation. All reports will be acknowledged. Send your information to:

Bob Reed, Co-ordinator,
Old World Warbler Project,
Shortland Wetlands Centre,
Shortland, NSW. 2307.

DEATH OF A GREY TEAL

In Issue No. 42 (June 1979) we carried a report of an Australian Pelican taking an Australasian Grebe as prey at Apex Lake, Gatton.

An interesting account of a similar event was reported in the May, 1987, issue of "The Bird Observer". At a Kinka Beach lagoon, on the Capricorn Coast, a birder saw a Grey teal swimming with a number of ducklings. A lone Pelican swimming past them wheeled about and scooped up some of the ducklings, leaving the adult and four young to swim away.

A second lunge by the Pelican took one more duckling. The big bird then lunged and scooped a third time and collected the adult and three remaining ducklings and swallowed. The episode took less than one minute, during which space of time the parent and brood all disappeared.

NEW MEMBERS

The Club is very pleased to welcome the following new members:-

Chris Gibson	Keith Treschman & Family	Lisa Maloney
M.S. 435	17 Butler St.	26 Federal St.
TOOWOOD, Q. 4311	TOOWOOMBA, Q. 4350	OAKEY, Q. 4401

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SEASONAL SPECIES SURVEY

The Records Officer would like to remind members that July is the middle month of the Winter season and is therefore an S.S.S. month.

This simply means that members are asked to make an extra effort to visit their favourite birding spots in the area and record their sightings for our records.

If you do not already participate in this scheme why not contact the Records Officer? We would be pleased to send you a monthly checklist on which to record your birds.

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BIRDING NOTES FROM WITHCOTT

Firstly, it was once again the Superb Fairy-wrens which caught my attention. The garden was still brown and dry but after an overnight shower I watched a little group of brown birds (the male being in eclipse plumage then) bathing in the raindrops amongst the leaves on top of the honeysuckle outside the kitchen window. They remained for some minutes, fluttering their wings and twittering in obvious enjoyment.

Next, a Wren again, but this time a male in perfect new dress of sky blue and black velvet, chasing round the garden with a brilliant yellow flower in his beak. I hoped his wife was as impressed as I was! It made a striking picture that I've only once seen mentioned in a book.

Lastly something very different. One mid-June morning (15th) I happened to notice a large bird flying in the distance and reached for the binoculars hoping it might be a Heron or Spoonbill, which I hadn't seen recently. Luckily it came closer, in slow and rather tight circles, obviously gaining height to cross the Range. Certainly it was no Heron or Spoonbill, nor even a Pelican. What, then? As it flew overhead I realised its huge size and real shape. Only one bird could look like that, surely- a Black-necked Stork- a Jabiru! Yes, there was no alternative, although I'd never seen one in flight before. Size, shape, distinctive black and white distribution of colour and especially the long, long legs, long neck, black head and powerful, long bill. It was a very special sighting for me and for Withcott! Did anyone chance to see it flying over Toowoomba?

" WHEAT TODAY - WHAT TOMORROW "

Ann Shore

Barry Oldfield, architect of the Farm Tree Project in W.A. will present his latest film, "WHEAT TODAY--WHAT TOMORROW", on Saturday, July 18, 1987 at 7.30pm.

WHERE? At the Resource Material Centre Lecture Theatre, D.D.I.A.E.
This is the brick building on the Northern side of Central Quadrangle.

An entrance charge of \$2.00 will cover costs and supper.

This film had its World Premiere in Brisbane and Barry is now showing the film in Queensland and promoting the Target-200 Million Tree Program by 1988.

For further information contact:- Neil McKilligan. Office Ph. 31 2229. Home. 35 8815
or Sofie Tod. Ph. 30 9272.

LIBRARY NOTES

The Club Library has received the latest publications of "Wildlife Australia", "Birds" magazine (RSPB), "Sunbird" (QOS journal), and newsletters from other clubs. These and other publications are available to members, on loan.

Nancy Belcher, Librarian

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

- Australian Pelican: Nine birds circling above Lake Dyer--3.5.87.--AHS.
- Black-necked Stork: Circling above Withcott-- 15.6.86.-- AHS.
- Australasian Shoveler: Seven birds on Hood's Lagoon--13.6.87.-- REH. WHJ.
- Brown Goshawk: Q.A.C. Gatton-- 24.5.87.--REH. AHS.
Also "Tara Park", Gowrie Jcnctn.-- seen several times, emerging from hay shed-- from 1.6.87.-- DB. EB. GG.
- Wedge-tailed Eagle:Glencoe Rd.,Gowrie Jcnctn.-one bird 1&9.6.87.--DB. EB. GG.
and two birds 2.6.87.--
- Australian Hobby:"Tara Park", Gowrie Jcnctn.-- 5.6.87.-- GG.
- Brown Falcon:"Tara Park"-- 16.6.87-- DB. EB. GG.
- Red-necked Avocet: Eight birds at Hood's Lagoon-- 13.6.87-- REH. WHJ.
Eleven birds at Helidon Spa-- 18.6.87-- EVJ. WHJ. AHS.
- Tawny Frogmouth: Two birds, Glencoe Rd. Gowrie Jcnctn.--From 31.5.87 through June
DB. EB. GG.
Two birds, Baxter's Rd.,Rosalie Hts.--From 12.6.87.- DB. EB. GG.
- Ground Cuckoo-shrike: "Ringmere", Withcott--5.6.87 and through June-- EVJ. WHJ.
- Rose Robin: Cooby Ck.-- 28.5.87-- DB. GG.
- Rufous Whistler: McIntyre St. (first)-- 14.4.87-- LR.
- Yellow-throated Miner (White-rumped form): Five birds, Oakey-- 11.5.87- EVJ. WHJ.
- Regent Bowerbird: Mt. Berryman-- 24.5.87-- AHS.

DB: Diana Beal. EB: Enid Beal. GG: Gloria Glass. REH: Ron Hopkinson.
EVJ: Eileen Jolly. WHJ: Bill Jolly. LR: Lyn Rowan. AHS: Ann Shore.

Annual Subscription

Ordinary Membership \$10.00
Family Membership \$12.00
Student Membership \$ 5.00



FIELD DAY FOR JULY

Date: Sunday, July 26.
Place: Upper Flagstone-Silver Ridge.
Assembly: McDonnell & East car park
Time: 7.15am-Depart 7.30 SHARP
Leader: Angela Kilmartin.

FIELD TRIPS FOR AUGUST

The camp is still on for August 22/23. Next month we will publish details of travel directions. Meanwhile, check over the gear and be sure to go prepared for possibly chilly nights. The camp leader is Gloria Glass and if you need more information in the interim you could contact her on 30 7054.

Also in August is the visit to the Haigslea area undertaken annually by the Q.O.S. This will be on Sunday August 9. The leader is Graham Leach of Q.O.S. Meeting place is the Haigslea State School. The School is 1km East of the Sundowner Hotel, on the Southern side of the Warrego Highway. Meeting time is 7.45am.

For members not attending the camp in August an alternative Field Day has been arranged.
Date: Sunday August 23. Time: 7.45am.
Place: Withcott Area. Leader: Ann Shore.
Assembly Point: Withcott Hotel car park.

This will be a half-day trip concluding before lunch time, so members need only bring morning tea.

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FIELD DAY REPORT-- JUNE 28th. 1987--Ma Ma and Heifer Creeks.

For the fifteen people who came on our Field Day, it was a very enjoyable day. It was sunny and clear, though to begin with, very cold.

The first stop (except for a brief call at Helidon Spa to see the Red-necked Avocets), was on George Miller's property at Mt. Whitestone. The dry creek bed we followed is just inside the Club's study area's South-East corner, a section not often visited.

It was a very sheltered area and a number of bush birds were seen; the Speckled Warbler being one of the more elusive ones. A Wedge-tailed Eagle soared overhead and was clearly seen by everyone. A good two hours was spent here, culminating with morning tea in the sunshine.

Our next stop was at Fordsdale where Ma Ma Creek has become a small billabong. Here again small bush birds were in evidence, with perhaps the Fan-tailed Cuckoo being the most interesting. However, both the male Rufous Whistler and Golden Whistler perched in the same tree so that newer members could admire their rich colours and make note of their differences.

Lunch was taken at the rest area on Heifer Creek. Here, too, was a little water and after an initial lull there was a frenzy of bird activity. To our delight a pair of Rose Robins flitted around the scrub at the water's edge. The vibrant pink of the male's breast allowed everyone to get good sightings.

65 species were recorded on the day.

Members present:- Diana and Enid Beal: Lesley Beaton: Frank and Nancy Belcher:
Chris Gibson: Gloria Glass: Ron Hopkinson: Lisa Maloney:
Lyn Rowan: John and Ann Shore: Keith Treschman:

Interstate Visitors:- John and Pam Kirton:(B.O.C. members).

Activities: Field Day and Monthly Meeting-- 4th Sunday of each month.
Usually depart McDonnell & East car park at 7.30am SHARP.

Newsletter: Published monthly, prior to the Field Day. Contributions should be mailed to the P.O. Box. Deadline is the last day of the month.