

TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

POSTAL ADDRESS

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

CLUB OFFICERS.

President: Lesley Beaton Ph 32 6262
Secretary: Ann Shore Ph 30 3207
Treasurer:
Records: Angela Kilmartin Ph 38 2404
Librarian: Nancy Belcher Ph 38 4047
Editor: Ron Hopkinson Ph 35 4952

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

No. 144 DECEMBER 1987

THE SECTORS

THE CASE AGAINST

In October issue I took up the cudgels against the use of sectors in our recording system. Based on research I did for that article, and conversations with various members since then, I did a little more research. I offer here some observations and questions which seem to me to be pertinent.

- a). Begun in 1983, apparently at the behest of the then Records Officer, to enable his production of a book on Toowoomba's birds. It was improper to alter the Club's record system for such a purpose.
- b) At the same time, this R/O. and the R/O. for 1984/85, did not maintain the records on the sector basis, but clung to the proven Uprange/Downrange idea. When the office changed hands in October 1985 the incoming R/O received a set of records which made no mention of sectors! What happened to all the members' monthly checklists, based on sectors, which were submitted in the two years, October 1983 to October 1985 ?
Were these lists discarded after compilation of the Annual Summaries for '83 and '84? If so, then all the sector information was simply wasted.
Were the lists retained by one or both of the R/O's concerned ?
If so, why ?
Any answer to these questions means that although the sectors began in 1983 there was no attempt to maintain Club records on that basis until October 1985 !
Ergo, two years of sector records were lost, with no adverse effect on the Club !
- c) If there was any value in sub-dividing the LSA, it would come from division on the basis of habitat type. The eight sectors were arrived at simply by drawing arbitrary lines on the map. Hardly scientific !
Why should, for example, there be any difference whether a bird is seen East or West of Greenwattle street, or North or South of Alderley street ?
There seems to be mis-understanding about the original sectors, used prior to 1983. They were devised simply as a means of co-ordinating teams for the Annual Census. They were not intended, or used, or necessary for the separation of Club records.
- e) The end result of the Club monthly checklist scheme is the Annual Summary. This is produced as a statement of a bird's presence, or absence, for each month in the Local Study Area. So all the fussing with sector divisions is totally un-necessary for the final result. Ergo, what is the point of sector records ?
- f) Having compiled the Annual Summaries for 1985 and 1986 I had an excellent comparison of the two systems of recording. The records for 1985 were in Uprange/Downrange form which made for simple extraction of summary information. Those for 1986 were in sector form (the first thus kept). This consists of eight separate sets of recording sheets, each of five sheets. It was a chore to have to wade through all this to establish a bird's presence. Then, of course, it was necessary to check and re-check. All of which means that I certainly would not bother with that needless confusion of records again.
- g) Members would be more disposed to participation in the checklist scheme if it was a simple matter of indicating 'up' or 'down'. By simplifying the checklists more members would benefit from participation in the scheme. And the Club would benefit from the extra observers.

C/td

THE CASE AGAINST SECTORS. c/td

h) As the reason for sectors was purportedly the publication of a book, why has nothing been planned or decided in any positive manner in four years ?

Such a book would seem to be best attempted by an individual rather than a group. However, it does not seem feasible, or proper, for an individual to publish as representing the Club. And Club records ought not to be manipulated to suit an individual.

The alternative of forming a committee to write a book would be quite un-workable. "A giraffe is a horse designed by a committee".

The proper function of Club records is to publish the Annual Summary and Annual Census. Budding authors can draw on this information and their own experience.

I put it to you that in 1983 this Club took two gigantic steps backwards.

Let's now step away from the trees and see the forest.

Ron Hopkinson

FORWARD! NOT BACKWARDS

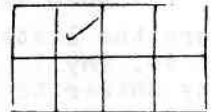
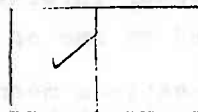
As staunch supporters of the present recording system, we wish to express our opinion of the views put forward by Ron, our Editor, on reverting to the "uprange/downrange" system.

The eight sectors were introduced to directly facilitate Seasonal Species Surveys (S.S.S.) to ensure that, for the main, all parts of the Local Study Area were monitored at least once a season. By doing so, the data provides a more accurate and consistent record of species in the LSA. In the days of "uprange/downrange", a number of areas were seldom, if ever, visited. Members tended to only visit their favourite haunts and as a result the records were generally biased towards these areas.

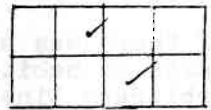
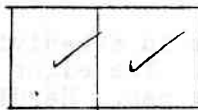
With the long-term goal of condensing the Club's records into a publication in mind, S.S.S.'s were introduced to assist in determining the occurrence, status and distribution of birds in the LSA.

Obviously, the smaller the sector, the more accurately the distribution of a species can be mapped. To illustrate this point, the following species, based on known observations have been 'mapped' under both the original and present systems.

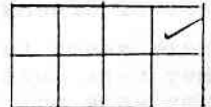
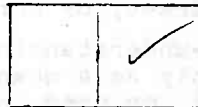
(a) Noisy Pitta



(b) Rose-crowned Fruit-dove



(c) Western Gerygone



The RAOU Atlas Scheme could not survey Australia using our present sized sectors because of the total area involved, a lack of observers and the remoteness of many areas. Fortunately, our Club is in a position to do so, having a relatively small coverage area, the observers and easy access to all sectors. The LSA contains a good range of habitats and, consequently, a high species diversity. Therefore, the division of the area into eight sectors is justified and far more practical for mapping purposes. To revert back to two larger sectors would be retrograde, and the past efforts of those involved in S.S.S.'s would not gain recognition.

The complexity of recording over eight sectors was recognized from the outset and it was pointed out that those who preferred to record 'up' and 'down' were welcome to do so on the condition that they gave the location of sightings of unusual species so a sector could be assigned later. Therefore, members should not be reluctant to participate. Familiarity with the boundaries is only a matter of practice.

From here it is important to determine which species need to be studied further looking for anomalies and inconsistencies, distribution gaps and evidence of seasonal influences. This will continue to generate enthusiasm and participation in S.S.S.'s and monthly recordings. We're adamant this scheme is of far greater benefit and is in the best interests of the Club.

Michael Atzeni. Pat McConnell. Lesley Beaton.

CLUB BRIEFS

BIRD - A - THON

The B-A-T was exceptionally successful, with 22 participants and 128 species sighted. It was a very enjoyable day lasting from 6.00am to 6.00pm. Almost \$260 has been collected with some more promised. Please send any outstanding donations to PO. Box 29, DARLING HEIGHTS, 4350.

*** **

SITUATION VACANT

There exists a vacancy for Treasurer. If anyone is willing to give the time of one Executive meeting each month and keep the accounts, it would be much appreciated. At the moment your hard-working President is doubling up which is a little arduous. Phone Lesley - 32 6262.

*** **

NATIONAL PARKS DAY

If you are planning to join the celebration of N.P. Day on the week-end of March 25, 26, 27th at O'Reilly's, would you let Ann know at telephone 30 3207.

*** **

JANUARY FIELD DAY

Redwood Park tracks. Meet at Bridge Street entrance at 7.30am, Sunday January 24th.

*** **

INFORMATION BOARD

Anybody able to help with the supply of timber, the construction and/or erection of the Waterbird Habitat notice board, please contact Lesley, 32 6262, or Ann, 30 3207.

We would very much like to have it in place for the official opening on Australia Day.

*** **

INCORPORATION

There is a growing public feeling towards the necessity for incorporation. It was decided at the October Ordinary General Meeting that the Executive should investigate the matter and bring its findings to a special meeting to be notified next year.

*** **

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Rufous Night-heron. 10.11.87. Lockyer Creek. EVJ. WHJ.
Black-necked Stork. 2. 8.87. Near 'Roseneath', via Pittsworth. DM. BM.
Sacred Ibis (8 Birds). 24.11.87. Flew past Gilmour Court in windstorm. NB. FB.
Brown Goshawk. 3.11.87. 15 Dunmore St. LB. and Mabel St. 24.11.87. AK.
Brown Quail (2 birds). 29.11.87. Gilmour Court. NB. FB.
Lesser Golden Plover. 15.11.87. Hood's Lagoon, Helidon. LB. PMcC.
Common Sandpiper. 20.11.87. Helidon Spa. WHJ. AS. and 27.11.87. at Spa. EVJ. WHJ.
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. (3 birds) 20.11.87. Helidon Spa. WHJ. AS.
" " " (2 birds) 27.11.87. " " WHJ. EVJ.
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo (3 birds). 7.10.87. Duggan Park, Leslie St. SP.
Crimson Rosella. 27.11.87. Zupp's Road. AK.
Eastern Rosella (2 birds). 2 - 30.8.87. 21 Sylvan Court. MJ. SP.
White-throated Needletail. 28.11.87. Area 3&4. AK.
Ground Cuckoo-shrike. 28.11.87. Two birds feeding fledged young. Withcott. EVJ. OHJ.
Varied Triller. 4.11.87. 15 Dunmore St. LB.
Leaden Flycatcher. 10.10.87. QAC grounds, Gatton. AS.
White-plumed Honeyeater. 22.11.87. Warwick. AK.

Red-necked Avocets are still in residence at Helidon Spa. Numbers varying from nine to 16 were seen during November.

LB: Lesley Beaton. FB: Frank Belcher. NB: Nancy Belcher. MJ: Marilyn Jacobs.

EVJ: Eileen Jolly. OHJ: Owen Jolly. WHJ: Bill Jolly. AK: Angela Kilmartin.

BM: Bruce Muirhead. DM. Di Muirhead. PMcC: Pat McConnell. SP: Sandy Pottinger. AS: Ann Shore.

Members' bird notes serve many purposes. It is a place where you can share any sightings which interested you or which you think are sufficiently important to publish.

Over the years the notes have often been of great value in tracing various birds seen in the area. Don't hold back or wait until you see the Paradise Parrot. Share your sightings with others. Let the Records Officer know them.

FIELD DAY REPORT - Mt. COLLIERY DISTRICT - 22.11.87.

After Lesley had first taken Antony, Jane and Angela on a circuitous route to Mt. Colliery, we went, by four-wheel drive vehicle, further up the valley to a gorge, where huge Moreton Bay Figs grow at the base of a cliff. The area is secluded and on the way in Jane saw a dingo at a freshly killed wallaby. The vehicle had disturbed him and he crept off into the scrub.

We loitered for a long time under the figs, where the big Top-knot Pigeons gather each year to gorge on the fruit. They were to be seen in dozens and though usually wary, eventually accepted us sitting quietly, so that their " seldom heard, soft, low, rumb-ling grunt" (Pizzey), was plainly audible.

Meantime, Satin Bowerbirds flew to and fro, Crimson Rosellas and King Parrots fed on variegated thistle heads and Wonga Pigeons called near at hand in the undergrowth around the figs' buttress roots. Brush-turkeys are fairly numerous here, but only two were seen that day. Angela saw a Wompoo Pigeon in flight, one of the four or so residents, but at rest on a branch it was hard to identify.

As we moved down the creek only Lesley saw an Emerald Dove drinking at a rock pool, though we saw several whizz past.

The Satin Bowerbird had his bower decorated with the yellow feathers from a cockatoo's crest, as well as the usual blue items, though not larkspur, as I have sometimes seen.

Lunch was on the lawn at the homestead and the fluffy Eastern Rosella fledglings were taken out of the log and admired. Unfortunately the two Kookaburras that hatched in the other Pepperina tree, disappeared within a couple of days.

An afternoon drive along the crest of a eucalypt ridge was scenic, but produced few birds. It capped a pleasant, relaxed day.

*** *** *** *** Nancy Gooding

NEW MEMBER

The Club is pleased to welcome the following new member:-

Richard Thomis

C/- Toowoomba General Hospital
West St. (phone 31 6211)

*** *** *** ***

AN EXPLANATION AND APOLOGY

As is evident in this issue, opinion on the sector system is strongly divided for and against.

I apologize if we seem to be dragging this matter through these pages but, after all, this is our common forum. Conversations with some members since the October issue raised the matter, have evoked support for my view. If you are concerned about the issue, one way or the other, please feel free to let us know.

The Editor

* TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB *
* ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:- Members \$10.00. Families \$12.00. Students \$5.00 *
* ACTIVITIES:- Field day and monthly meeting - fourth Sunday of each month. *
* Camping trips and film and slide evenings. *
* NEWSLETTER:- Published monthly, prior to the field day. Contributions are *
* invited and should reach the Editor by the end of the month. *

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB.
held on Tuesday, October 13, 1987, at 15 Dunmore St. Toowoomba.

1. The President, Lesley Beaton, opened the meeting at 7.45pm and welcomed all present to her home. Attendance as per book.
2. Apologies: Received from Enid and Diana Beal, Gloria Glass, Laurie Atzeni, Joe Deuble, Roy and Peggie Beaton, Mary-Ann Law, Margaret and Kevin McPhee, Frank Belcher.
3. Minutes of previous AGM: These had been printed in Newsletter of November, 1986, and were on the table for members to read, said Lesley.
Moved by Lyn Rowan that the minutes be adopted.
Seconded by John Shore. All in favour. Carried.
4. Business arising from the minutes: Nil.
5. President's report: Lesley Beaton reported on the Club's activities for the past year:
(See separate report)
The President moved that the report be adopted.
Seconded by Marilyn Jacobs. All in favour. Carried.
6. Treasurer's report: Lyn Rowan reported:- (See separate statement)
Lyn moved that the report be adopted.
Seconded by Angela Kilmartin. All in favour. Carried.
7. Election of Officers: The President reported that only three nominations had been received, which were as follows:
President: Lesley Beaton, nominated by Roy and Peggie Beaton.
Secretary: Ann Shore, nominated by John Shore.
Editor: Ron Hopkinson, nominated by Bill Jolly.
There being no further nominations these were declared to be duly elected. The President then called for other nominations from the floor:-
Records Officer: Angela Kilmartin, nominated by Marilyn Jacobs.
Treasurer: No nominations.
Librarian: Nancy Belcher, nominated by Marilyn Jacobs.
There being no further nominations for the offices of Records Officer and Librarian, these nominees were duly declared elected.
The office of Treasurer would be left vacant for the present.
8. The Annual General Meeting was then closed by Lesley, at 8.20pm and she then moved on to open the Ordinary General Meeting -- for which, see minute book.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Toowoomba Bird Club is only small. There are only 54 memberships. It is with pride, therefore, that I look at all the achievements our Club has made.

Four new birds were added to the Club list, making our total 255. These were Gull-billed Tern, Spotted Nightjar, Red-necked Avocet and Wompoo Fruit-dove. It will be interesting, if the drought continues, to see what 1988 will bring. Already most of our good birding areas that normally have water, are dry.

Our monthly outings have been well attended and even with the adverse conditions we always turn up a good number of birds. These field trips are excellent for keeping up with the birding news, helping with identification and finding good birding areas.

The Club is becoming more well known and I believe this is due to consistent publicity over the past few years. In 1986 we had a display in the Toowoomba City Council Library for Bird Week and will do so again this year, and a bird walk in conjunction with the Lockyer Valley Peace and Folk Festival. 1987 also saw us participate in the Hobby-n-Craft Spectacular, World Environment Day, National Parks Weekend, and the RAOUDIary of Bird Events. We also advertise in the Toowoomba Tourism booklet.

Our newsletter is another form of publicity and continues to be an excellent voice for the Club.

Overseas and interstate visitors have got in touch with us and enjoyed bird-watching with the members that were able to spend some time with them.

One issue we took up early in this year was the proposed licensing of aviculturalists for the keeping of blue wrens. This was opposed with great vigour and many letters written. We have heard, on the grapevine, that this proposal is to be shelved.

As I mentioned at the end of last year's President's Report, I see the Bicentennial Waterbird Habitat as a major project, and this has proved to be so. I have been a member of the sub-committee concerned with the Habitat which ensure that the Bird Club is to the forefront in this.

The Club has offered to donate an information board to the Habitat. To that aim, most of our effort is channelled towards this at this time. We have already raised over \$200, and with the grant of \$400 from the Australian Bird Environment Fund, another \$200 only, needs to be raised to fund the project. Hopefully, the Bird-a-thon will raise this. Later this year, we'll be asking for some able-bodied people to help us build and erect it.

Finally, thank-you to all those people that have helped through the year - leading outings, hosting displays and delivering newsletters. Thanks to John Ball for collecting the Club mail every day. Last, but not least, thanks to the long-suffering members of the Executive. There is a large volume of work done behind the scenes which allows the Club to run smoothly.

Lesley Beaton

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
FOR YEAR ENDED 16 SEPTEMBER 1987.

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>INCOME</u>	
Printing	181.60	Subscriptions 1986/87	502.00
Postage	143.60	1987/88	10.00
Stationery	30.16	Sales merchandise	193.50
Library	11.00	Raffle takings	17.10
Calendars 1987	158.00	Donations	14.00
1988	150.00	Interest received	7.26
P.O. Box rental	23.00	Waterbird Habitat	210.35
Stall rental, (Green Watch)	27.00	(collection for donation to that body)	
Advertising	3.80		
T.E.C. membership	30.00		
Fed. Govt. tax	3.65		
Art Union permit	10.00		
Excess for year	182.40		
	<u>954.21</u>		<u>954.21</u>

NATIONAL AUSTRALIA SAVINGS BANK LTD.

Balance at September 8, 1986	76.46
Add deposits during year	954.21
	<u>1030.67</u>
Less cheques drawn during year	771.81
	<u>258.86</u>
Add unpresented cheques	
297 10.00	
298 150.00	160.00
Bank balance at 16.9.87	<u>418.86</u>

Lynette P. Rowan
Hon. Treasurer

AUDITOR'S COMMENTS.

1. All receipted monies have been banked to A/C No. 20504.9529 at National Australia Bank.
2. No receipts appear to be missing or lost from receipt books given to me.
3. All expenditure appears to have been made by cheque.
4. Invoices and/or receipts have been sighted for majority of expenditure.

From the books and papers of the Club the above represents a true and correct view of income and expenditure.

L.B. Atzeni. Hon. Auditor

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer advised that there was no reason to increase the subscription at this stage.