



TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

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toowoomba bird club inc.

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" TO ENCOURAGE THE OBSERVATION AND STUDY OF THE BIRDS OF THE TOOWOOMBA AREA "

No. 161 - June 1989.

Outing Report 28th May 1989 Helidon

Early morning rains probably deterred some members and it was only a small group of six which met at the Helidon rest area. Luckily the weather fined up and stayed so for the outing. Right from the start the birding was great with the first stop near the Helidon Dip which produced Squatter Pigeon (excellent looks), Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Rose Robin, Red-capped Robin and Tawny Grassbird. A quick walk a little further up the road turned up a splendid male Variegated Wren in full colour.

God's Lagoon was quiet but nearby we were entertained by the antics of a family of little Cuckoo-shrikes. The first hour or so nearly reduced six members to four as Lesley and Barbara managed to fall down every hole in the Helidon area. -Not surprising with so many birds to keep your head in the air. From here a quick check was made of Lockyer Creek and the Spa-Iredale Road on the round about way to the Spa which was our last stop. Birds of interest were White-backed Swallow, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Plumed Whistling Duck. In all eighty-eight species were seen.

Members Present: M.Atzeni, L.Beaton, P.M^CConnell, R.Thomis, K.Treschman, B.Weller.

Pat M^CConnell

Three Bird Firsts for Gowrie Junction

King Parrots were seen for the first time at Gowrie Junction by member Gloria Glass. They were in lightly timbered country by the Glencoe Road. Then an Owelet Nightjar in the same bit of bush was flushed out of its tall hollow tree stump by one of the dogs and observed by all of us.

The continual sighting of the other bird species makes an interesting story. The Beals came to Gowrie Junction sixteen years ago. They had left a leafy part of Brisbane where Magpies and Kookaburras were common, and the morning call of Kookaburras a normal sound.

At Gowrie Junction, the Magpies were present, but the Kookaburras were absent. The country near the house, however, was practically devoid of tall trees. Sixteen years later and with over one thousand trees planted in the immediate vicinity (many of these in co-operation with the Darling Downs Koala Society), a group of three Kookaburras has arrived and apparently staked out a territory.

The trees aren't exactly commanding presences yet, but are they the reason for the Kookies? Perhaps it's the mice plague!

Diana and Enid Beal

Report on a recent holiday by Ron and Nancy Gooding.

Gouldian Finches were high on the list of birds Ron and I hoped to see when we travelled to Kununurra last year. But the trip turned out to be a bird watchers paradise!

Singing Honeyeaters seemed to lure us halfway across Australia. Pratincoles added a touch of beauty to the featureless inland plains, and we marvelled at the thousands of Zebra Finches anywhere near water in the Tanami Desert area. By the time we reached Hall's Creek we were in Northern Rosella and Yellow Tinted Honeyeater country. There were plenty of birds around Kununurra and the Ord River - thousands of Bee-eaters, Diamond Doves like mice and clouds of Corellas and Black Cockatoos - but it was in the occasional oasis formed where crystal clear water bubbled out of the harsh, rugged terrain, to form a beautiful small stream where we found a great variety of Honeyeaters - Blue Faced, Bar Breasted, White Throated, White Gaped, Rufous Throated, Brown, and, at last, far west of Kununurra one Gouldian, and numerous Crimson, Star, Long Tailed, Masked and Pictorella Finches as well as Red Collared and Varied Lorikeets.

About 40 km north of Katherine we found Gouldians! Following the directions of a Katherine Gorge ranger, we camped in a harsh, rocky, inhospitable area overlooking a small waterhole remaining in the gully, amongst big basalt rocks. Making camp consisted of clearing enough rocks to roll out our swags, and no sooner had we done so in the early afternoon then flocks of birds descended on the hole. Yellow-tinted Honeyeaters led the way. As soon as they alighted Masked and Long Tailed Finches swarmed onto the sandy surrounds and eventually one more Gouldian Finch.

After a very peaceful night under the stars, we were at our observation rocks but in this case much too early. However when the birds did come in to drink we counted ten Gouldia, some with red heads. While we were excitedly observing and counting Northern Rosellas, Hooded Parrots came into the trees close by. They were easy to observe in the trees but when they eventually did come to the water they were very alert and ready to take flight, which they did several times although not because of us. Our count was about 20 Hooded Parrots and 24 Northern Rosellas.

That camp produced the highlight of our birdwatching, although we nearly walked over a Rainbow Pitta at Barramundi Gorge; and Chestnut Quilled Rock Pigeons fed at our feet at Obiri Rock. White Quilled Rock Pigeons could be seen in Hidden Valley, not one kilometre from Kununurra, and a family of Spinifex Pigeons lived at the old Argyle Homestead which has been moved out of the reach of the waters of Lake Argyle.

I could go on and on - Black Breasted Kite, Sarus Cranes - but perhaps you would like to go and see for yourselves!

Nancy Gooding

Future Outings

Sunday 25th June - Stockyard/Rockmount area. Meet at Helidon Picnic Area at 7.30 a.m. Leader Angela Kilmartin.

Sunday 23rd July - Glen Lomond Park and Escarpement. Meet at the Water Bird Habitat at 7.00 a.m. Leader Pat M^cConnell.

Sunday 27th August - Meet at Toowoomba General Cemetry near the main gate for birding west of Toowoomba. Leader Ann Shore.



The R.A.O.U. Australian Bird Count - The Atlas with Numbers.

The most exciting and challenging national bird project - the R.A.O.U. Australian Bird Count (or ABC) is here at last! And the R.A.O.U. invites you to enjoy the fun and thrill of being a CABBIE (counter of Australian birds).

In complementing the Atlas Project, the ABC aims to investigate seasonal and year to year changes in the abundance of land birds in a broad range of habitats throughout Australia. The project has immense scientific and conservation value because it will be the first of its kind to identify on a national scale those bird species which are endangered, common or even those which have reached pest status. Secondly, it will help identify those habitats which should be conserved to ensure proper management of all our birds. Analyses of results will also improve our understanding of seasonal bird movements within Australia, which are poorly known at present.

What are the Benefits of being a Cabbie?

This is your opportunity to learn first-hand about the status of Australian land-birds on both a local and national scale. You will be given regular and frequent feedback on the project's progress through published articles, reports and seminars at local and national bird meetings.

What will be your Involvement as a Cabbie?

Observers are asked to count birds regularly in defined areas, using identical procedures on each visit. The survey site can be in your local area, but the emphasis is on nature reserves, national parks, state forests or any other site where the natural vegetation is uniform and of stable tenure. The minimum number of surveys per site we request from each observer is two in spring/summer and two in autumn/winter. Each visit to your site will require at least three 20 minute surveys.

What do you need to do to become involved in the Australian Bird Count?

Write to the address below to become a registered Cabbie. Provide your name and address, and the name(s) of the sites you wish to survey. You will be sent the Project Kit complete with instruction booklet, data sheets and a list of other project participants in your local area.

Write to

Stephen Ambrose (Co-ordinator R.A.O.U. Australian Bird Count)
c/- R.A.O.U. Office, 21 Gladstone St; Moonee Ponds, Vic.
(if before 28th July 1989) 3039

c/- Dept. of Vertebrate Ecology, The Australian Museum,
6-8 College Street, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000
(if after 28th July 1989)

Members Bird Notes

Crested Shrike-tit	23.4.89	Redwood Park	A.H.S.		
Glossy Black Cockatoo	16.4.89	Glen Lomand Park	P.M.	L.A.	D.G.
Large Billed Scrub Wren	16.4.89	" "	"	"	"
Brush Turkey (6 in tree)	30.4.89	21 Sylvan Court	M.J.	S.P.	
Satin Bowerbirds (10+)	4.5.89	40 Mabel St.	A.K.		
Stubble Quail	8.5.89	" "	"		
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	13.5.89	" "	"		
	15.5.89				
Regent Bowerbird	28.5.89	" "	"		
Blue Bonnets (pair)	23.2.89	Mt. Colliery	R.G.	N.G.	
	25.2.89				
Magpie Geese (pair)	10-17.3.89	S.W.Killarney	"	"	

A.H.S. - Ann Shore; P.M. - Pat McConnell; L.A. - Laurie Atzeni; D.G. - David Greeson; M.J. - Marilyn Jacobs; S.P. - Sandy Pottinger; A.K. - Angela Kilmartin; R.G. - Ron Gooding; N.G. - Nancy Gooding.

BRINGING YOU THE BIRDS OF THE WORLD

BIRDS INTERNATIONAL is a new and exciting, full-colour quarterly magazine produced by "bird people" for "bird people". It is directed to the broad, cross-section of those interested in birds, and caters equally to the interests of the professional ornithologist, the dedicated aviculturist, and the weekend birdwatcher.

Whenever a publication like this is launched, the standard response is, "But what type of magazine is it, and how does it differ from other bird magazines?" We answer by pointing out that the emphasis on international coverage, in both authors and subject matter, is the feature that immediately sets apart **BIRDS INTERNATIONAL**. Quite simply, it is a quarterly Journal devoted to the birds of the world.

The international scope is further emphasised through the association between **BIRDS INTERNATIONAL** and the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), which is the pre-eminent international organisation for the conservation of birds.

A feature in each issue will be the "ICBP News Pages", in which the director and staff of ICBP will present coverage of the council's activities together with reports from field researchers working on ICBP projects in many countries.

The contents of the 96-page magazine combine informative, technically-sound texts, presented in an easy readable style and supported by high-quality photographs and design.

The major groups of birds, such as seabirds, birds of prey, waterfowl and

game birds, parrots, pigeons and doves, and finches, feature regularly. We also focus attention on the little-known, the strange and bizarre, and even "pest" birds.

This approach is reflected in the first issue of the magazine which contains a variety of articles on birds including, for example, the Greenland White-fronted Goose, Africa's Bee-eaters, Australia's Golden Bowerbird, the Mauritius Pink Pigeon, New Zealand's flightless parrot, the Kakapo, and that amazing desert bird, the Roadrunner.

In addition, sections of the magazine are devoted to news and views, book reviews, and letters to the editor. As an added bonus, from time to time specialist books, videos and the reproduction of paintings by the foremost bird artists will be on offer to subscribers.

Above all, we try to relate to readers the excitement, fascination, and sheer pleasure that are so much a part of our interest in, and love for, birds.

To keep the cover price as low as possible, **BIRDS INTERNATIONAL** is available only by subscription and through a number of selected outlets such as wildlife sanctuaries, zoos and museums. So, to be certain of your copy of **BIRDS INTERNATIONAL**, please fill in the accompanying coupon and mail it with your subscription.

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JOSEPH M. FORSHAW

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