

## TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

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

No. 163 - August 1989.

### Report on July Outing - Sunday 23/7/89.

It was a small group of seven birders who met at the Toowoomba Water Bird Habitat on what turned out to be a fine warm morning. The birding started with a quick walk around the habitat with members being rewarded by the close up antics of a pair of Red Wattlebirds. It also looks as though a pair of White-faced Herons will nest there.

From here the group headed out along Ramsay Street to a small patch of scrub near Echo Valley. What was only going to be a ten minute stop turned out to be more like an hour as the local birdlife put on a fantastic show of colour. In attendance were Emerald Dove, male Rose Robins, Superb and Variegated Wrens, Eastern Whipbirds and Spinebills, and Satin and Regent Bowerbirds. All agreed that this stop had already made the outing worthwhile.

The next stop was Glen Lomond Park where we did two walks. One off Zupps Road and the other from Dorge to Burraway Streets. The scenery was pleasant but the birding slow with birds of interest being Topknot Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-dove and several more male Rose Robins.

Altogether 56 species were seen on the day !!

Pat M<sup>c</sup>Connell

## Have you been here?

### Bool Lagoon

#### Broadwalk Amongst the Birds

Bool Lagoon Game Reserve is the most important wetland in the south-east of South Australia. Comprising 2,500 hectares, it is designated Wetland of International Importance, providing habitat for a vast array of waterbirds in all but the driest of summers.

It is situated 24 km. south of Naracoorte, easily accessible by road. Tea-tree Broadwalk meanders for 485 metres out into the mature tea-tree stand which provides nest sites for many birds. A comfortable hide at the end seats 25 people. A second broadwalk offers a self-guided tour of 1.5 km. around an island which is the home of the elusive Water-rat.

The Bool Lagoon birdlist contains 140 species, including thousands of breeding Ibis in the spring. Magpie Geese have been raised there and are now free-flying. Thousands of Whiskered Terns have bred there along with many other different species which nest within close proximity of the hide.

From the Bird Observer, July 1989.



Photo: South Australian Parks and Wildlife Service

20th International Ornithological Congress  
Christchurch, N.Z., 2nd - 9th December 1990.

The Congress programme will include seven plenary lectures, 48 symposia, contributed papers (spoken and poster), workshops, round-table discussions and films. There will be a mid-Congress excursion day. Longer tours are planned to interesting ornithological sites in New Zealand before and after the Congress, including the post Congress cruises to sub-Antarctic islands.

The second and final circular will be available from 1st October 1989 and will include the registration papers and forms for submitting papers. In late 1990 New Zealand will also host the 20th World Conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation in Hamilton on 21st - 27th November 1990 and a Pacific Festival of Nature Films in Dunedin on 27th November - 1st December 1990. Requests for this final circular, which includes information on the above events, should be sent to :

Dr. Ben D. Bell, Secretary-General,  
20th International Ornithological Congress,  
School of Biological Sciences,  
Victoria University of Wellington,  
P.O. Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand.

From the Courier Mail, 29/5/89.

"Kamikaze Pigeons hit back."

LONDON - Pigeon fanciers in Wales are superglueing poisoned pellets on to some of their birds and sending them on suicide missions to kill Peregrine Falcons. According to newspaper reports, pigeon owners believed the falcons were killing prize birds.

Doboy Wetland

Please write to the Brisbane City Council to support the preservation of the Doboy Wetland which is the nesting site for Cattle Egrets. The Council needs public support in its initiative in calling for public submissions for its Wetlands Management Study (recent Courier Mail advertisement). The T.B.C. Inc has supported these moves but individual interest is valuable too.

Future Outings

Sunday, 27th August 1989.

Meet at the Toowoomba General Cemetery at side entrance in South Street at 7.00 a.m. for 7.30 a.m. departure. We will be visiting a private property and birding areas west of Toowoomba. Leader Ann Shore. Ph303207

Sunday, 24th September 1989.

Killarney area. Meet at the first service station over the bridge on the northern approach to Warwick at 7.30 a.m.

Sunday, 22nd October 1989.

Bird-a-thon will be held. We plan to meet at the Waterbird Habitat for lunch and will view the notice board which should be completed by then.

Sunday, 26th November 1989.

Lockyer Valley Wetlands. More information later.

Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Tuesday 17th October at the Toowoomba Education Centre, Baker Street. The meeting will take the format of fermented nectar and bird crackers at 7.00 p.m. followed by election of office bearers and slides and/or films. So come and unwind with a leisurely drink in pleasant company before the meeting.

Members Bird Notes

Australian Pelicans (15)	13.4.89	Hood's Lagoon	M.A. P.M. K.T. L.A. L.H
Marsh Harrier	13.4.89	" "	" "
Glossy Black Cockatoo	16.4.89	Glen Lomond Park	M.A. P.M. L.A.
" "	22.4.89	Helidon Dip	M.A. P.M.
Musk Lorikeet	30.4.89	Toowoomba Showgrounds	M.A.
Western Gerygone	13.5.89	Helidon Dip	L.A. M.A.
Glossy Black Cockatoo	13.5.89	" "	L.A. M.A.
Crimson Rosellas (4)	9.6.89	Stonehaven St; T'mba	B.W.
" "	12.6.89	" "	B.W.
Satin Bowerbirds (4 female)	9.6.89	" "	B.W.
Brown Pigeons	11.5.89	Sylvan Court	S.P.
Glossy Black Cockatoo	12.5.89	" "	S.P. M.J.
Boobook Owl	.5.89	Gilmour Court	F.B. N.B.

M.A. - Michael Atzeni; P.M. - Pat M<sup>C</sup>Connell; K.T. - Keith Treschman; L.A. - Laurie Atzeni; L.H. - Lonnie Hogan; B.W. - Barbara Weller; S.P. - Sandy Pottinger; M.J. - Marilyn Jacobs; F.B. - Frank Belcher; N.B. - Nancy Belcher.

The Behaviour of Birds - The Living Bird (part 1 of a series)

There are over 8 600 species of birds alive today and as a group of animals they are very successful in that they have colonized virtually all habitats except the deep ocean. The major reason for the success of birds is their power of flight, a freedom of movement that man has always envied. It permits birds to move about much faster than other animals so that they can cover huge distances, taking advantage of feeding opportunities when and where they arise. Some birds even exploit two distant and contrasting habitats as part of their yearly cycle, migrating thousands of kilometres between their winter and summer homes.

The behaviour of most species of birds is flexible and adaptable in response to the continuously changing environment. All behaviour uses energy through muscular activity and other body functions such as digestion, manufacturing the eggs and keeping the eggs and themselves warm. The study of energy inputs and outputs allows an evaluation of the actions of birds and the time spent on them. Energy for any bodily processes comes from food, so all living things are faced with a basic economic equation if they are to survive: they must maintain an input of energy greater than expenditure. They can exist for a short time on their fat reserves but a shortage of food can cause a fatal deficit. Flying is expensive in terms of energy use but there are ways in which a bird can make savings. At night, when feeding stops a sheltered roost saves energy which would otherwise be needed to keep the bird warm. This is the most obvious explanation for the huge communal roosts which starlings join in winter. By looking at a bird's behaviour in terms of gains and losses of energy not only can the ways it arranges its everyday activities be appreciated but the entire annual cycle is put into perspective.

The most important activity is breeding and it constitutes a substantial drain of energy lasting for several months. The second vital activity is the moult. Regrowth of feathers is not only expensive in terms of raw materials and energy required for their manufacture, but flying and keeping warm is more costly while feathers are missing. Migration is the third energy draining activity. These three activities usually do not overlap and of the three, breeding requires the greatest expenditure of energy and therefore takes place when food is most plentiful. When energy expenditure is greater than intake, as during migration birds have to draw on their fat reserves laid down in less strenuous times. The time when the young are becoming independent is taxing as parents need to maintain themselves as well as meet the demands of their offspring. After the young have fledged, food needs to be in good supply because the population is at its maximum, the fledglings need easy meals while they learn to fend for themselves, and the parents must make good the weight losses sustained during the breeding season.

by Barbara Weller

Adapted from "Bird Behaviour" by Robert Burton, Granada Publishing 1985.

Answer to last month's scramble:

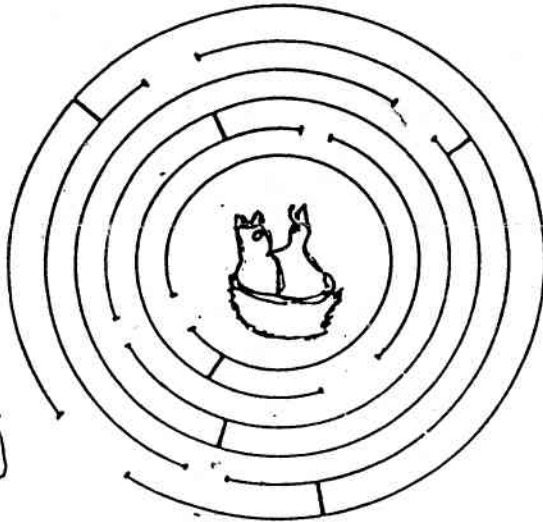
four, porous, contour, air sacs, song box, rachis, vane,

Feathered Bipeds

This month's puzzles:

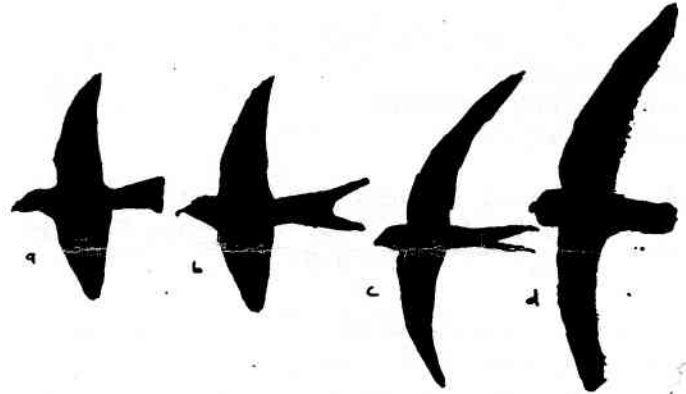
FLIGHT PATH

Can you help Mrs Bird get to her chicks without crossing any lines?



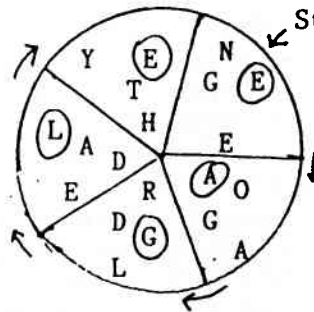
SILHOUETTES

Can you name these bird outlines?



BIRD WHEEL

Start at the arrow and going clockwise ring one letter from each segment to spell the name of a bird. The first one is done.



Start here

1. EAGLE
2. N \_ \_ D \_ \_
3. E \_ R \_ \_
4. G \_ \_ \_ H

PAIRS

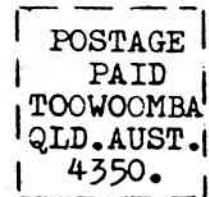
Can you match the food to the birds?

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Pitta          | a. Mistletoe Berries |
| 2. Mistletoe Bird | b. Grass Seeds       |
| 3. Redbrow Finch  | c. Flying Insects    |
| 4. Woodswallow    | d. Snail             |

Can you match the habitat to the birds?

- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 5. Scarlet Honeyeater | e. Ocean      |
| 6. Gannet             | f. Wetlands   |
| 7. Spoonbill          | g. Gum Trees  |
| 8. Cassowary          | h. Rainforest |

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