



# TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS inc.

p.o. box 67 - darling heights - 4350

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**MEMBERSHIP: Adults/Families \$20 Students \$10**

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**CLUB OFFICERS :**

President -	Michael Atzeni	076 392761	Editor -	Ken McKeown	076 303774
Vice-Pres./Records -	John Harris	074 624676	Librarian -	Sharyn Frederiks	076 331169
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Treasurer -	Gloria Glass	076 307054			

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**'To encourage the observations and study of the birds of the Toowoomba area'**

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**NEWSLETTER No. 245 - July 1996**

**EDITORIAL:**

This newsletter has another Richard Thomis report from the far north. Richard is one TBO member who doesn't have to be coaxed to see his in-laws as they live in beautiful Cairns. Other articles include the Girraween outing report by Sharyn Frederiks and the proposed TBO affiliation with Bird Observers Club of Australia (BOCA).

**OUTING REPORT - GIRRAWEE NATIONAL PARK, 29/30 JUNE 1996**

Girraween would have to be one of our favourite birding places, and because of our familiarity with the area, I suggested this outing. Fortunately for the campers the previously freezing, cold, westerly winds had eased to a slight breeze which allowed us to bird comfortably. However, the cold weather might have been the reason for the poor attendance. Only Ken McKeown braved the elements but we missed him by 15 minutes.

On Saturday, en route, we stopped at Storm King Dam and had some excellent close-up views of the bizarre looking Musk Duck. Between Storm King and Girraween it was lovely to see the Eastern Rosella along the road. After arriving at Girraween we asked the Ranger's advice likely areas to find the Superb Lyrebird as Girraween is the only Queensland habitat of this bird. When we arrived at the base of the Pyramid Rock we heard its unmistakable call from the valley below. However, in descending to look for it, the slope became too steep for comfort so we abandoned our search.

After a not too chilly night, we rose on Sunday morning and went for a drive along Wallangarra Road which had been recommended to us as in the past it had provided some excellent birding. The best birds we saw were Jacky Winter and White-plumed Honeyeater. Our next stop was the camping grounds where we saw Satin Bowerbird, Grey Shrike-thrush, Red Wattlebird and Crimson Rosella. These birds are quite tame and every time we've camped here they've put in an appearance.

At the Ranger's Station we decided on a track that started along the Pyramid Road at Bill Goebel Bridge. The reason for choosing this track was that it traversed lyrebird territory. Whilst on the track, we noticed two extremes of bird activity - either none or plenty. We saw New Holland and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters together which really made our day. The rest of the track was reasonably quiet except for one hot spot where we scored Scarlet Robin, Golden Whistler, Varied Sittella, Eastern Spinebill and White-naped, White-eared and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters. And once again the lyrebird lived up to its reputation of being elusive.

It was a great day in terms of the number of species of honeyeaters observed, some of which are not to be seen in the Toowoomba area. We recorded 35 species in all.

Sharyn Frederiks

### BIRDING with KLAUS

A return visit to Cairns made it easier to tear myself away from the Esplanade waders and venture inland. We had organised a three-day outing with Klaus Uhlenhut who runs Kirrama Tours, generally a little further north.

We were picked up early morning and wound our way up the Gilles Highway. Lake Barrine was our first stop. Rather than going all the way around the lake, we considered the shorter 'Rainforest Walk' to be more productive, especially as the weather had deteriorated a little. Instead of grumbling about rain in rainforest, we pressed on and located a noisy group of Chowchillas. Within a clearing, Grey-headed Robin, Bower's shrike Thrush, Yellow-breasted Boatbill and Victoria's Riflebird were all seen in quick succession, along with the common Pale Yellow Robin and Large-billed Scrub-wren. These finds were considered due cause for a celebratory coffee back at the lake's well-known restaurant. This proved a further bonus, as the owner told us about a Cassowary that regularly fed around his house. We had great views of this fascinating bird before heading on to Yungaburra, our base for the night.

After unloading the vehicle we headed for Hasties Swamp. Plumed Whistling Ducks were abundant on the water and nearby Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were in a flock of hundreds. A Grey Goshawk was seen at close quarters and this area generally provided a large number of raptors. Black Kites were by far the most common, but we had also seen several Swamp Harriers, a Spotted Harrier, Brown Falcon and Goshawk. After breaking for fish and chips we arrived at the Wongabell Botanical Walk. Recent heavy rain meant that several leeches joined us for the walk, but we were adequately compensated with sightings of Pied Monarch, Fan-tailed and Shining Bronze Cuckoos and Mountain Thornbill. Grey-headed Robin were particularly common.

Bloomfield Swamp was our final stop for the afternoon as the visibility was failing. More Swamp Harriers and the less common Wedge-tailed Eagle were seen around the swamp. The few cranes that we had seen had all been Brolgas, and then three more birds flew in before disappearing around a hill. By moving up the road a little we were able to track down these birds, get the telescope on them and confirm that they were Sarus Cranes just before the rains came and brought birding to a close for the day.

Birding for the night, however, was still an option, weather permitting. We had dinner in a restaurant adjacent to the motel, and, despite persistent drizzle, took to the road again, admittedly not with much confidence. I had recent memories of tramping over Mt Glorious on a QOS outing searching for owls that were heard but not seen. From the comfort of the vehicle we saw four Boobook Owls in quick succession before coming across the night's highlight. Only about 3 metres off the ground and in a tree close to the road we had lovely views of a Lesser Sooty Owl, my seventh new bird for the day. On the return trip, fence posts were being utilised by Barn Owls and we also saw a Papuan Frogmouth. Considering the weather it had been a very successful outing.

We started the next day around The Crater in search of the Fernwren and Atherton Scrub-wren. Although unsuccessful on this occasion we had closer views of the Mountain Thornbill than we had managed earlier. The billy was put on for morning tea for which we were joined by honeyeaters of the Lewin's and Bridled varieties, doubling as biscuit-eaters.

Early afternoon we drove down to the Mission Beach area where Forest Kingfishers were seen every 100 metres on the telephone wires. At Lacey Creek Forest Park we saw Fairy Warblers and a Noisy Pitta, but the Red-necked Crake was only heard. Three more Cassowaries were seen crossing the road before quickly disappearing into the rainforest. Night birding that night was less successful, one roosting Scrubfowl, but no Rufous Owls. The same spot the next morning provided great views of a male Victoria's Riflebird and several Spectacled Monarchs.

Just south of Tully, Klaus was surprised to see a Yellow-throated Miner so far east and also a Blue-winged Kookaburra sat on a telephone line. While we had morning tea at the Murray River Falls, we were treated to a wide variety of birds in the trees overhead including Sittellas, Yellow-spotted, Dusky, Scarlet, Macleay's and White-throated Honeyeaters and Yellow-breasted Boatbill. Grey, Golden and Rufous Whistlers could all be seen in the same tree along with Fairy Warblers and Pied Monarchs. Scrutinising all the Grey Fantails finally paid off with our first Northern Fantail.

En route to Cairns, we called in at the mangroves near the Edmonton boat ramp. No Mangrove Robins but we had great views of the contrasting male and female Shining Flycatcher. This was just as a dead tree came down right next to us and the mossies finally chased us out.

We had three lovely days birding. Klaus was great company, very knowledgeable and certainly inspired me to go on one of his regular Cape York Trips sometime in the future. (Contact: Klaus Uhlenhut, Kirrama Tours, 070 655 181).

Richard Thomis

### BIRDS on FARMS SURVEY

The RAOU has forwarded information on its **Birds on Farms Survey**. Birds are good indicators of the health of a farm and if many species occur regularly on a farm then the native ecosystem is still intact and a good balance has been struck. If you wish to volunteer "to adopt a farm" and survey the birds once each season for two years or if you or someone you know would like to put their farm up for adoption please contact Ann Shore on (076) 303 207, for full details.

### AFFILIATION with BOCA

The TBO executive is investigating the possibility of linking with the **Bird Observers Club of Australia** as it could be mutually beneficial by joining with this large network of birders. There are two ways of joining, BOCA Branches or BOCA Groups. This is summarised below. The matter will be formerly raised at the AGM in October. Please feel free to express your views on the proposal in the interim.

<b>BOCA Branches</b>	<b>BOCA Groups</b>
A branch is financially inseparable from BOCA.	A Group is financially independent from BOCA.
All who participate regularly in Branch activities must be members of BOCA.	A group is organized by a leader who is a member of BOCA, plus at least four other financial members.
Name of the Branch must be approved by BOCA and indicate it is part of BOCA.	Name of the Group must be approved by BOCA and indicate it is a BOCA Group.
Members and volunteers on organized outings are covered by Public Risk and Personal Accident Insurance.	BOCA members are covered under BOCA personal insurance. Group activities are covered under BOCA public risk insurance.
An annual financial report is required.	A brief annual report is required.
Branch receives an establishment grant.	Group is self-funding.
Branch forms part of club network of contacts for travellers and receives new member referrals in the area.	Group forms part of club network of contacts for travellers and receives new member referrals in the area.
Branch contacts are printed in <b>The Bird Observer</b> and all BOCA lists and its subsidiaries. Activities publicised.	Group's activities are publicised with other BOCA activities and listed in the <b>Bird Observers Extra</b> .

**NEW MEMBERS** The club wishes to welcome the following new members.

Fr Georges Maurel  
61 Koplick Rd  
Park Ridge 4125

Clare & Ken Gover  
33 Gladstone St  
Toowoomba 4350

Michael Mathieson  
15 Cathro St  
Toowoomba 4350

## COMING EVENTS

### July Outing

**Location:** Lockyer Wetlands  
**Date:** Sunday, 28 July  
**Leader:** John Harris (074) 624 676  
**Time:** 7:30 a.m.

**Info:** Meet at Gatton Lake Apex. Bring your telescope if you have one.

### August Outing

**Location:** Felton District  
**Date:** Sunday, 25 August  
**Leader:** Michael Hirst (076) 32 55 64  
**Time:** 8.00 am

**Info:** Head south from Toowoomba towards Warwick. Meet at the corner of the Cambooya turn-off and the New England Highway. Just past the new BP garage. The property we will be visiting is near Felton. Walking will be rather rough and hilly in places. Later we will explore local lanes and a dam. BYO everything.

### October Outing

**Location:** Annual Species Count  
**Date:** 26-27 October  
**Organiser:** Michael Atzeni

Put some time aside on this weekend to help make the species count as comprehensive as possible. Should be a bumper count this year now that the waterbirds are about.

If undeliverable return to  
Toowoomba Bird Observers Inc  
PO Box 67  
DARLING HEIGHTS Q 4350

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**SURFACE  
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✓  
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