



# TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS inc.

(An Affiliated Group of the Bird Observers Club of Australia)

p.o. box 67 - darling heights - 4350

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

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## CLUB OFFICERS:

President-	Ken McKeown	076 303774	Editor -	Michael Atzeni	076 392761
Vice-President -	Jack Lund	076 976390	Records Officer -	Pat McConnell	076 976141
Secretary -	Michael Hirst	076 303207	Committee Member -	Olive Booth	076 325564
Treasurer -	Gloria Glass	076 307054			

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

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**NEWSLETTER No. 260 - October 1997**

## EDITORIAL:

At our AGM on Monday 13 October, we knew it was the end of an era when Ann, our secretary for the past 18 years, was unable to attend. Sadly, Ann passed away in St. Vincent's Hospital three days later. An enormous hole has been left in the Club and Ann will be missed greatly by all those who have had the pleasure of knowing her. Fortunately, we had time to thank her for her tremendous service in a letter after the AGM and she greatly appreciated it. Many past and present members attended her funeral on Tuesday and we will pay a fitting tribute to Ann in a coming newsletter.

On a brighter note, Pat McConnell delivered a thoroughly enjoyable and informative slide presentation at the AGM taking in the birds and fauna seen on his trips to various parts of Queensland including Bedourie, Cairns and Lawn Hill N.P. Thanks Pat for your time and effort particularly when you were still recovering from a week of sickness. We also welcome Olive Booth to the Executive and farewell Sharyn Frederiks. Thanks Sharyn for your contributions and enthusiastic help in your time as Librarian. Thanks to all those members who attended and congratulations to the new Executive. Ken has also asked me to pass on his personal thanks to all contributors to the Newsletter during his stint as editor.

Like Ken, as your new editor, I'm hoping you'll continue to keep me stocked so that I'm never short of material. The articles don't have to be long nor scientific. Small anecdotes of your observations or experiences are always welcome. If you can't help in this capacity how about donating a couple of dollars for bird conservation by **supporting the club's team, the Unleaded Petrels, in this year's QOS Twitchathon**. You can ring me, Ken McKeown, or Pat McConnell to offer a donation.

This newsletter contains Pat Cleary's **Withcott outing report** and the **details of the AGM** which we are obliged to report to you.

The spring arrivals continue with reports of Satin Flycatcher, Koel, Dollarbird, Cicadabird and White-winged Triller but it is my gut feeling that some of the species are a bit tardy this year. At the time of writing, I have not heard of any reports of Brush Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Spectacled and Black-faced Monarch, Singing Bushlark, and Brown and Rufous Songlark. If you've seen any of these this season, please advise me or the Records Officer of the details. Let's hope they appear for the weekend species census.

The other good news is that a **second Atlas of Australian Birds** project looks highly likely to be undertaken, starting next year. More details will be published when they filter through to us.

## OUTING REPORT, WITHCOTT AREA 27 July 1997.

Although the day was overcast, it was cool and pleasant and a small enthusiastic group met at the Withcott Hotel car park. Striped Honeyeaters, Figbirds and Little Friarbirds flitted in and out of the flowering Silky Oaks. A Magpie busily gave breakfast to her offspring in a nest close by. Spotted Turtle-doves and Welcome Swallows were also present. We stopped in Jones Road near a small dam where a Royal Spoonbill and a Yellow-billed Spoonbill had been standing close together earlier in the day. However, they had departed by the time of our return. Two Channel-billed Cuckoos flew over as we drove to Rocky Creek. On our arrival at the creek on Gitten's Road (which is now bitumen), White-throated Gerygones greeted us with their lovely calls and were quite close.

A huge gum was in blossom and the star attraction in this tree was the Satin Flycatcher. The day before we had seen Scarlet Honeyeaters in abundance but not today, perhaps because of the gloomy weather. The creek has a few puddles but was not running. Several Superb Fairy-wrens were seen in the vegetation along the creek as well as the White-browed Scrubwrens and a Striated Thornbill. Two Pacific Black Ducks flew overhead several times while Bar-shouldered Doves, Scaly-breasted Lorikeets and Grey Shrike-thrush were also seen. A White-throated Treecreeper and an Eastern Whipbird were heard.

Several Red-browed Finches were eating along the side of the road as we departed this area. King Parrots were heard calling at the junction of Gittens and Jones Roads and a White-necked Heron was startled as we drove by. On our arrival at Rocky Creek on Jones Road, Rainbow Bee-eaters gave a marvellous display over the fields where a Richard's Pipit sat quietly on a post. The land in the area is now fenced and permission is required to go onto the property and walk along the creek. Variegated Fairy-wrens, Scarlet Honeyeaters, a Jacky Winter, Grey Shrike-thrush and a Varied Triller were seen, to name just a few.

The owner of the property and an Environmental Scientist, Brad McDonald caught up with us. The army is undertaking a fauna survey of its reserve in the area. Brad permitted us to come with him to check one of the Elliott traps. The creek was running and by it sat a frog which Brad identified as a *Limnodynastes* species. The trap was empty. Sadly, tonnes of Blue Metal gravel from the Harlaxton Quarry has been washed down the creek and to date the owner has removed ninety cubic metres of this gravel.

At the close of the day a Red-backed Fairy-wren farewelled us. I'd like to thank Bruce and Janne for allowing us access to their property.

Pat Cleary

**Species list:** Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, White-necked Heron, Cattle Egret, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Masked Lapwing, Spotted Turtle-dove, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Galah, Cockatiel, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Australian King Parrot, Pale-headed Rosella, Channel-billed Cuckoo, Laughing Kookaburra, Rainbow Bee-eater, White-throated Treecreeper, Superb Fairy-wren, Variegated Fairy-wren, Red-backed Fairy-wren, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, Speckled Warbler, White-throated Gerygone, Brown Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Striped Honeyeater, Little Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Lewin's Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Scarlet Honeyeater, Jacky Winter, Eastern Yellow Robin, Eastern Whipbird, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Satin Flycatcher, Magpie-lark, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Varied Triller, Olive-backed Oriole, Figbird, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow, Richard's Pipit, Welcome Swallow, Silvereye.

## SECOND-HAND BOOK FOR SALE

A work associate of mine has a copy of "The Photographic Encyclopedia of Birds" by Richard Coomber (Bramley Books) for sale for \$15. Ring Michael Atzeni if interested (076 392 761 A/H; 076 881 318 WORK)

**MINUTES OF THE AGM of the TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS INC.**  
**held on Monday 14 October 1996 at the QCWA Hall, Withcott.**

1. **Opening of Meeting:** The President, Michael Atzeni, opened the meeting at 7:30 pm and welcomed all those present. Twenty-two members as per Attendance Book.
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Nicci Thompson, Ann Shore, Pat Charlton, Terry Pacey, Kath Watson.
3. **Minutes of the last AGM, 14 Oct 1996:** These had been published in the October 1996 Newsletter. Gloria Glass moved that they be accepted. Seconded by Pat McConnell. All in favour. Carried.
4. **Business Arising:** Nil.
5. **Correspondence :** Nil.
6. **President's Report:** Michael Atzeni read his report and moved that it be adopted, seconded by Jack Lund. Carried by acclamation.
7. **Treasurer's Report:** Gloria read her report, then commented that Mr Thomas Delany, our Auditor, had not charged for his services and it was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent. She also noted that due to our affiliation with BOCA, we were covered by their insurance and thus had no insurance expense. Gloria moved that her report and financial statement be adopted. Seconded Ken Wells. Carried.

In reply to a question by Margaret Krimmer, the Treasurer stated that we were fully covered by the BOCA insurance.

9. **Election of Officers:** As Michael Atzeni was not standing for Presidency, he retained the Chair and called for nominations.

<b><u>President</u></b>	Ken McKeown Nominated M. Atzeni, seconded F. Wells. Elected.
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Ken McKeown then took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

<b><u>Vice President</u></b>	Jack Lund Nominated M. Atzeni, seconded F. Wells. Elected.
<b><u>Treasurer</u></b>	Gloria Glass Nominated M. Atzeni, seconded P. Cleary. Elected.

Prior to the election of Secretary, tributes were paid to the retiring Secretary, Ann Shore, and her dedicated 18 years of service to the organisation.

<b><u>Secretary</u></b>	Michael Hirst Nominated M. Atzeni, seconded M. Krimmer. Elected.
<b><u>Records Officer</u></b>	Pat McConnell Nominated M. Hirst, seconded K. Wells. Elected.
<b><u>Editor</u></b>	Michael Atzeni Nominated K. McKeown, seconded M. Hirst. Elected.
<b><u>Committee Member</u></b>	Olive Booth Nominated S. Frederiks, seconded M. Atzeni. Elected.
<b><u>Auditor</u></b>	Thomas Delany Nominated G. Glass, seconded M. Atzeni. Carried.

10. **Close of Meeting:** The business then being completed, the incoming President closed the meeting at 8.00 pm, inviting them to remain for the talk by Pat McConnell, before enjoying a social gathering and light refreshments.

### President's Report, Annual General Meeting, 13 October 1997.

This year, our first as an affiliated group to the Bird Observers Club of Australia, will be remembered as a relatively quiet and particularly sad year for the club. It was quiet because, for one reason or another, the number of members actively observing and contributing information on the birds of this area I would suggest is at an all time low; sad because of Ann's ongoing battle with cancer which has now left her bedridden in hospital and unable to continue as secretary, and because of the deaths of Mary Cameron and Joe Deuble in June.

On the bright side, the club's ongoing aim to encourage bird observation in the Toowoomba area was more than catered for through monthly outings, displays during Bird Week at the Toowoomba Library and at Lake Annand on World Environment Day. Last year's October species census was well supported as were most outings. Outings included visits to private properties at Oakey, Franklinvale, Pechey and Hampton. Other venues included Braemar State Forest, Coal Creek and Moreton Bay.

In April, Chris Cameron delivered an excellent slide show which clearly demonstrated his photographic prowess and his family's passion for our natural heritage. Following an open invitation to the club, five members went to the Gingham Watercourse near Moree to witness a spectacular waterbird breeding event. Three members took up an offer from the local avicultural society to join them in a guided tour of the research facilities at Currumbin Sanctuary. The legendary Unleaded Petrels, this time comprising Pat McConnell, Ken McKeown and I, came second to a Cairns team in the annual QOS Twitchathon, recording 201 species in 24 hours. A generous donation of books and other equipment was made to the club by Joe Deuble's family.

As has been the trend previously, our membership has remained roughly the same and we send out about 60 newsletters each month. Most of this year's new members have been a result of Michael Hirst's association with the U3A and I congratulate him on his recruiting efforts. Michael also volunteered to become our BOCA conservation liaison officer and has established a good liaison with Toowoomba City Council regarding culling of trees from the bushland parks. Pat McConnell, our Records Officer, has been doing some excellent work behind the scenes on the club's monthly records and published a booklet on the birds of Redwood Park through the USQ. Pat, Michael Mathieson and Kath Watson were either senior author or co-author of two papers of local relevance published in the latest Sunbird journal, one on the diet of the Letter-winged Kites at Bowenville during a mouse plague and the other on the prey of Powerful Owls in Redwood Park. Pat was also involved in a fauna survey of the Government Explosives Magazine at Helidon.

Once again we applied unsuccessfully for funds to conduct research on the habitat requirements and management of the rarer species, viz, Black-breasted Button-Quail, Powerful Owl, Masked Owl and Sooty Owl, recorded in the escarpment parks, particularly in Redwood Park. It appears that funds for this type of research, even under revised criteria, are still difficult to secure and it is unlikely we will try again unless another approach can be taken.

Bird highlights included the Bush Stone-curlew that took up temporary residence in suburban Harlaxton around August. This was only the second confirmed occurrence of this species in our survey area since the club began in 1975. There were also several sightings of Little Corellas in the area. Black-chinned Honeyeaters and good numbers of Red-capped Robins turned up in Helidon this past winter.

Sincere thanks to all those who helped with displays, led outings or contributed monthly records and articles during the year. As I am not seeking reelection as President, I also thank my past and present Executive members for your time, effort and unwavering support during the past 4 years. I have enjoyed leading the club but I feel it is important for the President to lead by example and to be able to attend outings and I am increasingly unable to do so because of family commitments. The bulk of the work falls on the editor and secretary and I thank Ken for his fine job with the monthly newsletter and Ann for attending to her secretarial duties under such duress. It was a sad day for me to hear Ann say we need a new secretary when I know how much it means to her and what a fine job she has done over the years. When I asked her was there anything she wanted to mention at the AGM she immediately said her frustration. Somehow, I think not being able to attend this AGM would have been foremost in her thoughts.

I ask everyone to support this enjoyable club as best you can and I wish the incoming Executive a happy, successful year and good birding to all.

Michael Atzeni, President

**Treasurer's Report****Toowoomba Bird Observers Inc****Statement of Receipts and Payments****Year ended 31 August 1997**

<b>Receipts</b>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>
Bank Interest	5.16	13.51	Auditor		95.00
Donations	20.00		Bank Charges		20.00
Donations for Bird Book		35.00	Laminating pictures		44.40
Other	55.00		Consumer Affairs	21.00	20.50
Raffle	60.00		Hall Hire	10.00	10.00
Subscriptions	850.00	782.00	Insurance		217.00
Subs in Advance	38.00	20.00	Other	70.00	
Theatre Night	108.88	143.67	Petty Cash	43.50	26.85
			Postage & Box	412.00	328.00
			Printing	423.40	346.00
			Subscriptions	107.00	69.00
				<u>1086.90</u>	<u>1176.75</u>
			Operating Loss		-182.57
			Operating Surplus	<u>50.14</u>	
	<u>\$1,137.04</u>	<u>\$ 994.18</u>		<u>\$1,137.04</u>	<u>\$ 994.18</u>

**Toowoomba Bird Observers Inc****Bank Reconciliation 31.8.97**

Opening Bank Balance 1.9.97

Heritage Building Society

440.43

Receipts for year

1137.04

Payments for year

1577.47

1086.90

Closing Bank Balance 31.8.97

\$490.57

Bank Statement at 31.8.97

533.07

Less Outstanding cheques

130 20.00

138 22.5042.50\$490.57

## COMING EVENTS

**Annual Species Count:**                      **Date:**                      25/26 October 1997  
     **Coordinator:**                      Michael Atzeni                      076 392 761

**Info:** Please see article in this newsletter and contact Michael for further help.

**QOS Twitchathon:**                      **Date:**                      01/02 November

**November Outing:**                      **Location:**                      Stradbroke Island  
     **Date:**                      Saturday, 29 November  
     **Leader:**                      Don Gaydon                      07 3822 1684  
     **Time:**                      9 a.m. ferry from Cleveland

**Info:** An outing well worth the effort. Those wishing to attend should contact Don well in advance and book onto the Stradbroke Island Ferry at Cleveland (07 3286 2666) if you are taking a car across.

**December Outing**                      **Location:**                      Ravensbourne N.P.  
     **Date:**                      14 December

**January Beginner's Outings:**                      **Location:**                      Redwood Park/Lockyer Valley  
     **Date:**                      24/25 January

**February Outing:**                      **Location:**                      Gatton area  
     **Date:**                      22 February

**March Wader Outing:**                      **Location:**                      Moreton Bay  
     **Date:**                      29 March

**Reminder to Leaders**

Leaders should take the **Attendance Book** and **First Aid Kit** on all Outings. All attending members and visitors should sign the Attendance book for insurance purposes.

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



P McConnell\*  
 17 George Street  
 HELIDON 4344