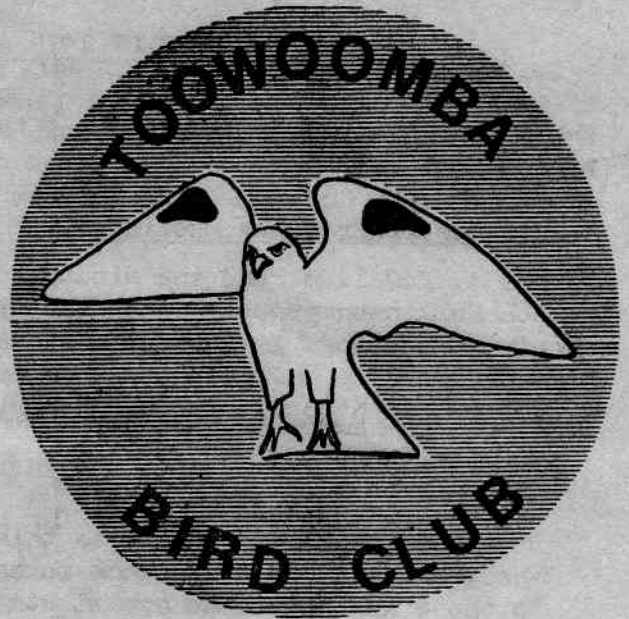


"To encourage the observation and study of the birds of the Toowoomba area."

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NEWS-SHEET No. 35 - NOVEMBER, 1978.

The Club's A.G.M., held at Withcott on 20th October, 1978, was well supported by club members and our thanks go to Marilyn Jacobs for her excellent bird slides and to Eileen Jolly for providing the delicious supper. Officers elected for the year 1978/79 are Bill Jolly - President; Mike Russell - Secretary/Treasurer; and Sue Elmes - Editor/Librarian. One important decision to come out of the meeting is the increase in membership fees to \$4 for Adult/Family membership, with Student membership remaining at \$3. The minutes of the A.G.M. appear later in this news-sheet.

The Third Annual Bird Count on 22nd October, 1978 also proved to be a successful day. The Count provided coverage of the same areas as in 1976 and 1977; by approximately the same number of people as in these past counts. This should provide comparable results over these years. A formal Summary and Report of the Third Annual Bird Count will be printed with the January 1979 News-sheet. The total number of species seen for the day was 128, comprising 6011 individual birds.

Members are reminded that there is a regular informal outing to Redwood Park at 7.00 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month. Everyone is welcome and at least one executive member will always be there. This month the small group who braved the weather, was rewarded by a Powerful Owl, which bodes well for the December Outing to Redwood.

Subscriptions for 1979 are now being received and may be paid to the Treasurer either in person or per post c/- Post Office, Darling Heights, Toowoomba, 4350.

Sue Elmes,  
Editor.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS.

197. Singing Bushlark (*Mirafra javanica*). 22.10.78. Shorelands Drive, Withcott.  
John Shore, Bill Jolly, Eileen Jolly.

Good views of a small long-legged lark, rather blunt bill, showing white outer tail feathers and displaying a distinctive ascend, drop, ascend, drop routine during songflight.

MINUTES OF 1978 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The 1978 Annual General Meeting of the Toowoomba Bird Club was held at "Ringmere", Withcott, at 7.30 p.m. on 20th October, 1978.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting.

M/s A. McCallum read the minutes of the last A.G.M. There was no discussion. Ron Hopkinson proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. David Newlands seconded this and the meeting accepted it.

2. The President presented his Report:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

By tradition a report such as this has several purposes. It serves to review the year past, it allows one formally to place on record a statement of gratitude to those who have made contributions during the year and of course it is widely used as a platform from which to make encouraging noises about future trends and directions.

Although I've never been one for following stereotypes, I do believe it is entirely suitable that something should be said in each of these three areas, and accordingly I found myself last week engaged in the exercise of reviewing this past year by means of consulting news-sheets, my own bird notes, diary entries and the like, with a view I confess of producing evidence to substantiate the claim of "a successful year".

I was delighted of course to find that the evidence is most certainly there. I can confidently assert (and show support for my assertion) that the year just gone has been our most successful on any and every count.

During the year we have gained 35 new members. I should explain how I arrive at that figure. We charge only one subscription per family, but come along to any field day and you will find that husbands and wives and family groups, for the most part participate with equal enthusiasm and I believe it is realistic to recognise that in many families we have not one but two active and involved members who share one News-sheet!

So, while I haven't counted 2 members per receipt issued, neither have I in all cases counted only 1. If we do count receipts rather than heads it will show in fact that more than 20 individuals or family groups have joined the club since our last A.G.M. However we choose to add it up it still represents a very significant gain to the club.

Every bit as satisfying is the realisation that with the exception only of a very few members who have moved out of the area, all of our members of a year ago are still with us. That constitutes, I suggest, a realistic indicator of a successful year.

What has this growing membership done during the past 12 months?

Thirty members and friends applied their energies to our Second Annual Bird Census on 23rd October, 1977 and placed on record the presence of 5947 birds of 130 species within our newly enlarged Local Study Area.

Month by month throughout the year members completed and forwarded to our Records Officer lists of all species observed within that area during each month. This information has been reliable and regular. As our Annual Report for 1977, showed, and as our Report for 1978 will show, we are now in possession of seasonal base-line information regarding bird status in this area that has never before been gathered. What do we do with this basic information? We disseminate it through our News-sheet and our Annual Summary, and continue to build up our own month by month, year by year picture of what birds are here, where and when. Our Records Officer also consolidates this data for forwarding to the R.A.O.U. Atlas Scheme, in which every club member who completes a monthly checklist is participating.



RESIDENT'S REPORT (cont/d.)

During 1978 our club's well-developed "grape-vine" has made it possible not only for members to catch up with new birds in the field but on some occasions to share the experience of close views of birds in the hand - notably a Little Bittern and a Red-crowned Fruit Pigeon both of which were released at Ringmere following their capture in unfortunate circumstances. It is hoped that members will continue to share these exciting moments with a friend, (which usually means up to ten or a dozen).

Field Trips have offered us all some rewarding experiences. I won't list all venues during the year, but will point out that again we have tried to undertake at least half our trips within our local study area.

We were very happy to receive a visit from Mr. Don Vernon in December, 1977. Don offered much encouragement to the club in its infancy and his talk on endangered species, well supported, as always, by a collection of specimen skins from the Queensland Museum was undoubtedly a highlight of our year.

The club organised its first official camp-out in February, 1978, and such was the response that we have now enjoyed three such ventures.

The early part of 1978 saw two changes to the make-up of the club's executive. Our Secretary, Robert Shaw, found himself shedding loads as his involvement in both career studies and other areas continued to increase. We were very fortunate indeed to have been able to find a most competent and active replacement at extremely short notice, when Alison McCallum still new to Toowoomba, and to Bird Clubs, agreed to take up the reins. My thanks go to Robert for his considerable services at the start of the year, and my sincerest gratitude is extended to Alison who stepped in when she was most needed and proceeded to manage the secretarial and accounting affairs of the club in the most capable possible way.

At about the same time the man who had been responsible for the growth of our news-sheet over much of the previous two years, Ron Hopkinson, found it necessary to step down for reasons of health. Ron's contribution to the club and in particular to the consolidation of our News-sheet into its present well regarded format and content has been of major value to our growth and development. I confess it was a great disappointment to lose Ron's services at that time, but again we struck gold when Sue Elmes agreed to undertake the responsibilities of Editor and Records Officer, and I am sure you will all agree that our News-sheet has maintained its already high standard since Sue took over in March. We have been fortunate to retain the involvement of both Robert and Ron as club members while at the same time gaining two new executive officers of the calibre of Alison and Sue. May I formally express my thanks to them both.

It would be remiss to leave out two other important expressions of gratitude. Eileen has been regularly chasing uncatchable deadlines as she attempted to turn copy into News-sheet sometimes within 24 hours. On behalf of all of us Eileen, thanks a lot for your long-sufferance.

The final thank you is to each and every club member for their support, in the form of physical attendance on field days, of copy for the News-sheet and especially for Bird Notes and Yellow Checklists.

We have grown because of your interest and involvement. It is our increasing strength in numbers and accordingly in interest and involvement that will enable us to undertake the Black-shouldered Kite Study proposed by John Coman, and to move on to satisfy in other ways the aims of our club as set down in our constitution.

It is my firm belief that much of our present strength may be attributed to our success during the three years of our existence in maintaining, despite our growth, a quality of efficient informality. The Annual General Meeting remains our only formal business meeting each year, such business as arises at other times being discussed over lunch on field trips or raised in the editorial section of our News-sheet, with members' input invited. It is my most sincere hope that through a continuation of this policy our club will succeed in maintaining the interest and involvement of people who want to get on with the job of finding out, and enjoying, what is happening around us.

3. The Editor presented her Report:

EDITOR'S REPORT.

The Editor, Sue Elmes, thanked members for their contributions during the year, both in the form of articles for the News-sheet and also by the regular return of Yellow Check-lists each month. The Editor pointed out that Members' Bird Notes now appear towards the latter part of the News-sheet in order to allow a few extra days after the end of each month for the gathering-in of check-lists. None-the-less the plea was made for members to assist by returning their check-lists as close as possible to the first of each month.

Thanks were also extended to Eileen Jolly for her valued assistance during the year in typing the club's News-sheets.

4. The Treasurer presented her Report:

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The Treasurer, Miss Alison McCallum delivered the following statement of the club's accounts for the period 23rd October, 1977 - 22nd October, 1978:

Cash in hand, 23rd October, 1977:		\$42.55
<u>Income.</u>		
Subscriptions:	\$141.00	
Donations:	\$ 7.00	
Total Income:	\$148.00	
<u>Expenditure.</u>		
Paper and printing:	\$ 79.76	
Postage:	\$ 23.52	
Miscellaneous - (RSPB subscription, Receipt & Account Books, AGM refreshments):	\$ 31.08	
Total Expenditure:	\$134.08	
Balance of Income over Expenditure:		\$13.64
Cash in hand, 22nd October, 1978:		\$56.19

Miss McCallum moved that the statement of accounts be adopted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Shaw and carried.

5. Business arising from the Minutes.

The Treasurer pointed out that although the Club had a credit balance, rising costs particularly of increased postage would necessitate a rise in subscriptions.

Miss Alison McCallum, the retiring Secretary/Treasurer, moved that the membership fee be increased to \$4 per annum. This motion was seconded by Mr. Ron Hopkinson.

Miss Marilyn Jacobs asked that an amendment to this motion be accepted to the effect that the membership fee be reduced to \$3 for full-time students. Miss McCallum accepted this amendment and Mr. Robert Shaw seconded it. After some discussion the motion and the amendment were put to the meeting and each was passed unanimously.

6. Election of Officers.

The President vacated the chair which was taken by Ron Hopkinson. The following positions were to be filled and the following candidates had been nominated and accepted:-

<u>Position</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Nominator</u>
President	Bill Jolly	Robert Shaw
Editor/Records Officer	Sue Elmes	Alison McCallum
Secretary/Treasurer	Mike Russell	Bill Jolly

These three officers were elected unanimously.



General Business.

The President suggested that the Club move on with the Black-shouldered Kite project. Four members, Bill Jolly, John Coman, David Hope and Mike Russell, could qualify as A Class banders and then other members could become B Class members. The Club would then be in a good position to start trapping.

John Coman said that application had been made to the State National Parks and Wildlife Service. Once a permit had been bought from them, C.S.I.R.O. Div. of Wildlife Research Bird Banding Scheme would register the project and lend us bands and equipment.

Marilyn Jacobs expressed concern that bird-banding requires skill to avoid undue harassment of the birds, a view supported by other members, and suggested that there be a meeting of prospective bird-banders for a talk on the process.

The President asked the Secretary to arrange for a competent bird-bander to talk to the Club.

John Coman asked whether it would be of benefit for the Club to become affiliated with a conservation group since one of the Club's aims is the conservation of birds and their habitats. It was suggested that Miss Barbara Barrett might have relevant information. The Secretary, who is a member of the Australian Conservation Foundation, will make the necessary investigations.

Alison McCallum, the retiring Secretary/Treasurer, reported that there had been 14 responses to the recent questionnaire. She asked for guidance and discussion from the meeting since some responses had been rather equally divided.

The question as to whether members wished to take a part in deciding the venue of field meetings had produced responses from 5 members wishing to do so and 5 members not so wishing.

The President pointed out that currently the executive makes venue decisions based on informal input from club members.

Sue Elmes said that there is a general list of venues. If a new venue is suggested the suggestor must check this out not only for birds but for accessibility, water, resting spots and length, and maybe be prepared to lead the walk.

Alison McCallum said that the next question, as to whether there should be non-field meetings with speakers or films or slides, met with six favourable responses and two anti responses.

The President pointed out that Don Vernon's two meetings had been well attended.

It was generally agreed that such meetings be held three or four times a year and that the first be on bird-banding. A suggestion that such meetings be open to the public was strongly endorsed.

Alison McCallum said that the question on meeting times had given the following results:-

For Saturday - 5 in favour. For Sunday - 6 in favour.  
For morning - 8 in favour. For afternoon - 4 in favour.

Marilyn Jacobs suggested that for specific objects an early start could be made by some people and those unable to start early could meet at the normal time and join up with the early party.

It was thought that this could lead to organisational problems.

Mr. John Shore raised the point that birds are most active at dawn. He quoted the adage 'The early bird catches the worm' (although, for a bird-club, one must assume the reverse). He suggested early starts to meetings.

The President reminded members that there is a regular informal meeting in Redwood Park at 7.00 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month which he always attends. He suggested that this should satisfy earlier risers.

Mr. Robert Shaw pointed out that at week-end camps members have the opportunity for pre-dawn rising.

(cont/d.)

## General Business (cont/d.)

The President suggested that, with these opportunities for early observation available, 8.30 a.m. on a Sunday should continue to be the meeting time.

Mr. John Coman suggested that visits to lakes and such like could be made on Saturday afternoons.

Mr. Phillip Elmes mentioned the very poor attendance on the Queensland Museum trip despite a good initial response from members.

The President said that it had been quite embarrassing in view of the Curator's willingness to sacrifice a Saturday to the club.

It was suggested that there might have been a better response to a Sunday visit.

Hiring a bus was discussed but members felt that they preferred the freedom of their own cars, and John Coman clinched the argument by quoting the hire costs for buses - \$118 for a 45 seater and \$90 for a 14 seater.

Miss Marilyn Jacobs suggested an evening expedition to study nocturnal birds. Neil McKilligan might be able to supply lights.

Marilyn Jacobs reported 29 Whiskered Terns seen at Lake Clarendon and Sue Elmes confirmed seeing them there the week before. Marilyn also reported Black-breasted Quail at Ravensbourne National Park and John Coman confirmed many recent sightings there and in the vicinity.

Bill Jolly told members that, on the Bunya Mountains week-end, a male Paradise Rifle Bird had been watched displaying on its territory near the Rangers hut. He also reported a Stone Curlew (Brush Thick-knee) at Chermside Hospital.

Someone in Toowoomba has an injured Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*) in a cage which he is prepared to let members see.

John Shore recounted his experiences as a long-time resident of this area (Withcott). There are many quail both Wheat Quail and Button Quail, and a pointer dog is useful for finding them.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

After the formal meeting Marilyn Jacobs showed slides of her participation in the Bird School at Heron Island last December run by Peter Slater, Vincent Serventy, Peter Ogilvie, etc. Her photography is first-class and members were thrilled to see many sea birds and waders, as well as unusual birds such as the Banded Land-rail, and some excellent in-flight shots.

Arrangements were then finalised for the Third Annual Bird Census by the Club to be held on the following Sunday, 22nd October, 1978.

## WHITE-THROATED/WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATERS.

Two honeyeaters in the genus *Melithreptus* that are both present in the Toowoomba Grids, and can be confused, are the White-naped Honeyeater (*Melithreptus lunatus*) and the White-throated Honeyeater (*Melithreptus albogularis*). Both have a black head, olive back with white underparts. The observable differences between the two are: 1. The crescent in the White-throated Honeyeater is much more distinct than in the White-naped Honeyeater.

2. The patch of bare skin above the eye is white with a tinge of blue in the White-throated Honeyeater and red in White-naped Honeyeater (in immatures it can be off-white).

3. In the White-throated Honeyeater, the black cap does not extend below the level of the upper mandible while in the White-naped Honeyeater it extends to the bottom level of the lower mandible.

4. The call of the White-throated is described as a pi-pi-pi or pi-pit repeated four to six times while feeding with other calls being rasping and mewing notes. Also tserp-tserp, alarm call si-si-si; single high pitched rising whistle.

The call of the White-naped is described as a harsh grating sherp repeated - also tsit-tsit.

Phillip Elmes.



WHITE-THROATED/WHITE-NAPED HONEY EATERS.

References:- D.P. Vernon, "Birds of Brisbane and Environs", Queensland Museum Booklet, No. 5, 1968.

Readers Digest, "Complete Book of Australian Birds", Readers Digest Service Pty. Ltd., 1976.

UNUSUAL FINCH BEHAVIOUR.

When stopped for lunch about half way down the Flagstone Creek Road on the day of the Toowoomba Bird Count, we were intrigued by the closeness with which a pair of Chestnut-breasted Mannikins approached our resting place.

We were within about 3 metres from a water pool at which the two birds appeared to be drinking. After several minutes, investigation indicated that the birds were not in fact drinking, but pulling pondslime from the water and eating it. For birds that are supposedly seed eaters, this seemed unusual behaviour. Even though we disturbed these birds several times, a pair consistently returned to continue feeding.

Phillip & Sue Elmes.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

- Chestnut Teal. 8.10.78. Dyer's Lagoon. PE. SE.
- Whistling Kite.(nesting) 8.10.78. Dyer's Lagoon. PE. SE.
- Dusky Moorhen. 25.10.78. "Ringmere", Withcott. EJ. WJ.
- Purple Swamphen. Mid-Oct. onwards. "Ringmere", Withcott. EJ. WJ.
- Topknot Pigeon. 16.10.78. Rangeview. JEC.
- Brown Cuckoo-dove. 31.10.78. Range Highway. EJ.
- Glossy Black Cockatoo.(2) 7.10.78. Range Highway. EJ. WJ.
- Channel-billed Cuckoo. 3.10.78. Old Toll Bar. JEC.
- 10.10.78. Rangeview. JEC.
- 22.10.78. Ocean St. JEC.
- Th'out Oct. Gatton. PE. SE.
- White-throated Needle-tail. 31.10.78. Range Highway. EJ.
- Yellow-faced Honeyeater. 7.10.78. Eymard St. MGW.
- Eastern Spinebill. 7.10.78. Eymard St. MGW.

....And some highlights from the Bird Census, (all recorded on 22.10.78)....

- Pacific Baza.(2) Sector 8. JC, ED, JD, BK, WM, DN, MS.
- Comb-crested Jacana.(4) Sector 20. REH, AP.
- Black-fronted Plover.(2) Sector 17. REH, AP. (7) Sector 20. REH, AP.
- Latham's Snipe.(6) Sector 20. REH, AP.
- Emerald Dove.(1) Sector 9. BW, MW.
- Oriental Cuckoo.(1) Sector 10. GC, JEC.
- Shining Bronze-cuckoo.(1) Sector 8. JC, ED, JD, BK, WM, DN, MS.
- Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrike.(1) Sector 8. JC, ED, JD, BK, WM, DN, MS.
- Clamorous Reed-warbler.(3) Sector 5. MB, ER, MR.
- (5) Sector 6. LB, MJ, SP, VS. (2) Sector 17. REH, AP.
- Tawny Grassbird.(1) Sector 18. PB, SE, PE.
- Brown Songlark.(1) Sector 4. MB, ER, MR.
- Red Wattlebird.(2) Sector 11. NM, JV.
- White-thr. Honeyeater.(2) Sector 7. PB, PE, SE.
- Plum-headed Finch.(50) Sector 15. EJ, WJ.
- Aust. Raven.(1) Sector 8. JC, ED, JD, BK, WM, DN, MS. (2) Sector 10. GC, JEC.

LB: Lesley Ball. MB: Margot Barrett. PB: Peter Bostock. GC: Graham Corbin.  
 JC: John Coman. JEC: Jim Corbin. ED: Ed Diery. JD: John Duff. PE: Phillip Elmes.  
 SE: Sue Elmes. REH: Ron Hopkinson. EJ: Eileen Jolly. MJ: Marilyn Jacobs.  
 WJ: Bill Jolly. BK: Barry Kenway. NM: Neil McKilligan. WM: Bill McKenzie.  
 DN: David Newlands. AP: Alwyn Powell. SP: Sandy Pottinger. ER: Elizabeth Russell.  
 LR: Mike Russell. MS: Mark Stewart. VS: Vera Simon. JV: Jan Veacock.  
 BW: Brough Warren. MW: Margaret Warren. MGW: Max Wood.

FIELD TRIP FOR NOVEMBER.

Date: Sunday, 19th November, 1978.

Locality: Oakey.

Meeting place: Pigotts car park at 8.30 a.m.

Meet John Coman at Bernborough Statue, Oakey. Waders should be seen on the Lagoon.

Lunch: Brookvale Park.

Leader: John Coman.

FIELD TRIP FOR DECEMBER.

Redwood Park - 17th December, 1978.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Club is pleased to welcome the following new members:

Alwyn Powell, c/- Post Office, Darling Heights,  
Toowoomba, 4350.

John & Ann Shore, "Shorelands", Withcott, 4344.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Urimbirra, Vol. 12, No. 6 - 9 (June to September).

The Bird Observer, July to October, 1978.

Q.O.S. Newsletter, Vol. 9, No. 10, October, 1978.

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