

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

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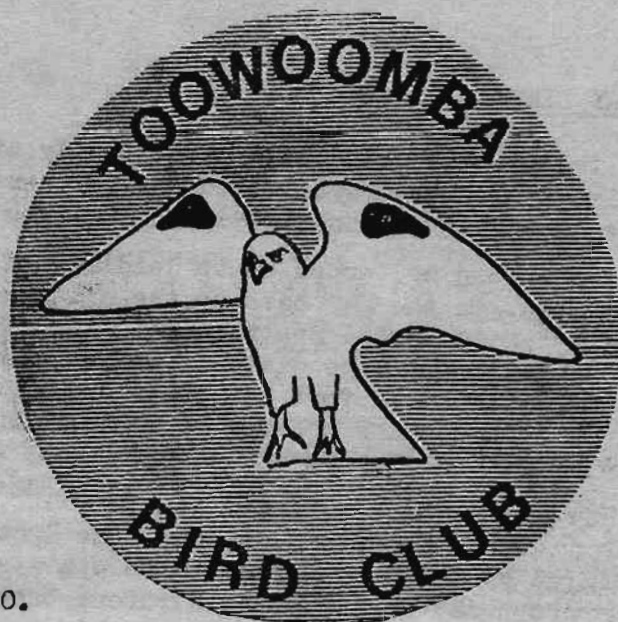
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NEWS-SHEET No. 37 - JANUARY, 1979.

Together with this issue we are presenting the report of the Club's third annual bird census. This is the result of members' labours last October and we hope it is as satisfying to you as it is to the Executive. Thank you for your participation.

Next month we will bring you the Annual Area Bird Summary, and it may be appropriate to mention here that there are several species which have been sighted in the area but which have not as yet been confirmed by the requisite two members. They are Collared Sparrowhawk, Marsh Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Squatter Pigeon, Red-capped Robin and Little Woodswallow. Our Toowoomba list is by no means static and could be enlarged at anytime by the addition of these or other species. As shown by this list there are new discoveries awaiting us within the Club local study area. With this in mind it is still Executive policy to plan Field Days on the basis of approximately half within the area.

The monthly visit to Redwood Park, which is an informal Club look at this most important Toowoomba feature, seems to be well established. At 7.00 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month any members are invited to meet at the entrance opposite Yukana Vale. The park is an area which is close (in more ways than one) to Toowoomba and it is certainly a worthwhile Club project to have a regular look at what birdlife is there.

Apart from gains to our Club bird list we also continue to gain additions to our members list. This is very satisfying because, apart from other considerations, it means more observers contributing to our records.

In an effort to retain current members may we remind you that subscriptions for 1979 are now due. Please forward them to the Club Secretary/Treasurer whose address appears above.

Ron Hopkinson,
Editor.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS.

199. Spotted Quail-thrush (*Cinclosoma punctatum*). 17.12.78. Reid's Rd., Ballard.
Jim, Jane and Graham Corbin.

A female with long curved white eye stripe, rufous crown and deeply mottled rufous back. Long drooping tail with one white feather each side.

HOLIDAY BIRD NOTES.

After the December bird outing our family still felt fresh enough to go to Ballard to climb up to the Wedge-tailed Eagles' nest. Although the two birds were in residence last visit, nest building has now been abandoned.

On the way home we turned on to Reid's Road at Ballard bridge and drove to the end of the road. On the way back up the hill, we were surprised to see a bird later identified as a female Spotted Quail-thrush running up the hill in front of our car. We followed it for some distance before stopping the car, and Dad and I followed it for some distance on foot but it travelled very swiftly and only flew in short bursts. Finally, it hid under a clump of lantana and Mum joined us to observe it from about twenty feet.

This bird runs quickly, flies like a quail, up 1 metre, fast forward, and drops straight down, then runs like mad! The Spotted Quail-thrush is a pretty bird readily identified by the long curved white eye stripe, easily seen from a distance, her rufous crown and deeply mottled rufous back, plus a very long drooping tail with one white feather on each side, making this a very distinctive bird. This is the first time this bird has been seen by our family.

Another interesting find during my holidays was a nesting pair of Pacific Bazas with two chicks on December, 21st. I accidentally found the location of the nest when one of the parents flew across the road at Symes Thorpe aged home (Stenner St.) with a green twig. A closer investigation showed a nest, similar in shape, size and composition to a tidy crows nest with the two chicks, one almost all down but fairly large in size and the other almost fully feathered. Both parents brought back cicadas to the chicks but the chicks did not beg in any form but just sat and the parent gave the cicada to one or the other, usually the smaller of the two.

Another visit a week later showed the smaller of the two chicks had grown most of its feathers so that it was indistinguishable from the older chick. On this visit the parents were not seen until we left the nest area when we saw one of the parents fly to the nest, apparently more cautious now the chicks were older and able to be left alone.

Graham Corbin.

BIRD NOTES FROM HERVEY BAY.

All year our family has looked forward to our holiday at Hervey Bay for various reasons. For Phil and I it's a chance to get to know waders and sea birds again. This year on our very first visit to the beach in front of our flat in the heart of Scarness, we were delighted to see an Osprey circling over us.

In 1977 we had to drive several miles to quieter locations to find Ospreys. This year we've counted 4 on one occasion and have been practically dive-bombed by one while taking our morning swim. I wish I wore my glasses swimming!! Brahminy Kites and White-breasted Sea-eagles are also very common and Whistling Kite have been sighted twice.

A pair of Australian Magpie-larks are nesting in full view of our balcony and a pair of Nutmeg Mannikins built a nest in a mango tree in our backyard. Unfortunately, the tree was chopped down when the nest was just nearing completion.

As usual, after a 12 months break, the waders have provided us with many identification riddles. Those we have confidently identified are Eastern Golden Plover, Mongolian Dotterel, Red-capped Dotterel, Eastern Curlew, Whimbrel, Greenshank, Bar-tailed Godwit and Knot. We think we've seen tattlers, but are unable to confirm!!

Bee-eaters in flocks of 30 plus are present on the margins of mangrove and mud-flats and Rainbow Lorikeets are also present in large numbers.

One sighting we felt was rather unusual was a lone female Red-winged Parrot, seen sitting in a pine tree beside the beach at Burrum Heads, about 30 km north-west of Hervey Bay.

Sue Elmes.

NOVEMBER BIRD STORY.

I have recently been so fortunate as to observe an impressive aerial display staged by a pair of Common Koel. One chased the other with swooping loops and rolls whilst making a tremendous din. On this occasion the amorous male caught sight of what he thought to be a rival for his partner. Having only the frenzy of his mating instincts in mind, he aimed himself on a collision course towards the impertinent intruder. Expecting the other bird to falter, or, at the worst, a feathery turmoil to impress his mate, he accelerated to his top speed, and then collided.

Unfortunately I was occupied at the time of this exciting encounter and was unable to investigate the outcome. Amazingly the window was unbroken; for as you may have surmised, the bird had attacked its own reflection.

Sometime later my attention was drawn to some shrubs close to the location of this incident. A group of 'Peewees' were mobbing what appeared to be the grounded Koel. Deciding to go to the rescue of a bird that was obviously fighting against all the odds, I flushed the four belligerent aggressors. The male was lying helpless, wings askew and evidently paralysed. And there in front of my very eyes, standing resolutely with one leg firmly planted on each side of him, the female Koel was fending off all-comers.

Gordon King.

FIELD DAY REPORT - 17.12.78. - REDWOOD PARK.

For the third successive year our December Field Trip took us to Redwood Park. This large reserve, partly open eucalypt forest and partly vine-scrub clinging to the escarpment and along the creeks, is visited by a number of us at odd times during the year, but usually for only an hour or two at a time. Our field trips however usually allow a goodly number of members to take a longer look at several aspects of the park by spending a morning in the upper forest with an after-lunch investigation of the often exciting area of vine-scrub which adjoins its Eastern boundary.

As in previous years December proved to be a good month for finding cuckoo-shrikes in Redwood with both Cicadabirds and Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrikes demanding our attention in contrast to the many other species which flitted or clambered about the canopy, at best only half-hidden from view, and whose identity needed to be gradually teased out.

Although at least seven club members have now met with Redwood's Powerful Owl since its first sighting in 1975, that bird has never been at home on a field day and once again we could do no more than indicate his/her favourite roosts.

In this corner of Redwood where Noisy Pittas, Brush Turkeys and other rain-forest species are from time to time recorded the naturalist is well-advised to proceed stealthily and on this occasion our cautious progress allowed all present to observe for some minutes an unaware and accordingly unconcerned Wonga Pigeon strolling about the creek-bank. So often all one sees of a Wonga is a greyish rear-end disappearing speedily into the foliage, but this time all present were allowed to take in the finest detail of this bird's white forehead, white "necklace" and generally smart dress-suit plumage.

Bill Jolly.

Species List - Redwood Park - 17.12.78.

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Bar-shouldered Dove | Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike |
| Wonga Pigeon | Y.-eyed Cuckoo-shrike |
| Pale-headed Rosella | Cicadabird |
| Wh.-thro. Needletail | Eastern Yellow Robin |
| Fork-tailed Swift | Rufous Whistler |
| Laughing Kookaburra | Grey Shrike-thrush |
| Sacred Kingfisher | Leaden Flycatcher |

(cont/d.)

Species List - Redwood Park - 17.12.78. (cont/d.)

Rufous Fantail	Scarlet Honeyeater
Eastern Whipbird	Spotted Pardalote
Var. Fairy-wren	Striated Pardalote
White-browed Scrubwren	Silvereye
Brown Thornbill	Red-browed Firetail
White-throated Treecreeper	Olive-backed Oriole
Lewin's Honeyeater	Spangled Drongo
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
White-naped Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Brown Honeyeater	Torresian Crow.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

Emu. 3.1.79. Condamine. EJ. WJ. CB.
Black-necked Stork. 31.12.78. Marlborough. 3.1.79. Townsville. REH.
Maggie Goose. 3.1.79. Townsville. REH.
Wandering Whistling-duck. 3.1.79. Townsville. REH.
Plumed Whistling-duck. 30.12.78. "Ringmere", Withcott. EJ. WJ. RGH.
Pacific Baza. (pair with two chicks) 21.12.78. Sterner St. GC. JEC.
Brolga. 3.1.79. Townsville. REH.
Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. 28.12.78. Sterner St. GC.
Little Corella. 3.1.79. Condamine. EJ. WJ. CB. BW. MW.
Channel-billed Cuckoo. 9.12.78. "Ringmere", Withcott. EJ. WJ.
Singing Bushlark. 3/28.12.78. Shorelands Drive, Withcott. AHS.
Red Wattlebird. 7.1.79. Picnic Point. DN.

CB: Chris Bianchi. GC: Graham Corbin. JEC: Jim Corbin. RGH: Rod Hobson.
 REH: Ron Hopkinson. EJ: Eileen Jolly. WJ: Bill Jolly. DN: David Newlands.
 AHS: Anne Shore. BW: Brough Warren. MW: Margaret Warren.

Editors note: Members bird notes this month reflects the fact that this is the holiday period and some members are still away. Hopefully, next month will see a selection from all parts of the country.

FIELD DAY FOR JANUARY.

Date: Sunday, 21st January, 1979. Place: Goomburra.
 Leader: Rod Hobson. Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park. Time: 8.30 a.m.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Habitat, Vol. 6. No. 6. (Magazine of the Australian Conservation Foundation).
 Annual Report 1977/78. Australian Conservation Foundation.
 Newsletter. Vol. 10. Nos. 10 & 11. Aust. Conservation Foundation.
 G.O.S. Newsletter, Vol. 9. No. 9. September, 1978.
 Urumbirra. Vol. 12. No. 11. November, 1978.
 The Bird Observer. No. 565/66. December, 1978. January, 1979.
 The Darling Downs Naturalist. Vol. 1. No. 2. September, 1978.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Club is pleased to welcome the following new members:
 Victor McNamara & family, P.O. Box 30, Jandowae.
 Mathuen Morgan, "Arubial", via Condamine, 4416.

THIRD ANNUAL BIRD CENSUS - TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB - 22.10.78.

The area over which the Toowoomba Bird Club's Third Annual Bird Census was conducted was, as on the occasion of our 1977 2nd Annual Census, that contained within the two 10 minute blocks on either side of the line of 152 degrees East longitude as it passes alongside Toowoomba. A detailed description of these blocks is to be found in T.B.C. News-sheet No. 24, December 1977. In the following breakdown of species observed the Western, uprange block is denoted "U", and the Eastern, downrange block is denoted "D".

The census thus encompassed two blocks of equal area lying adjacent to each other on the same line of latitude, but for the most part somewhat different in character by virtue of their separation by the Toowoomba Range.

Again this year, the Census was conducted over 20 sectors (T.B.C. News-sheet No. 22 - October, 1977, T.B.C. News-sheet No. 33 - September 1978). No attempt was made to increase our coverage this year but instead to replicate as far as possible the study which we undertook on the 1977 census.

The accompanying statistics will show that having put approximately the same number of participants into the same sectors for approximately the same period of time as we did last year, the numbers of species and individual birds recorded was in fact very close to our previous findings. In order to reduce variables still further, it is proposed to provide a set of guidelines in respect of each sector in order to ensure that the amount of time spent in various habitats and at particular locations within a sector remains approximately constant from year to year.

It is still too early in the history of the Toowoomba Bird Club Annual Bird Census to endeavour to draw comparisons between the records we have obtained thus far. For example, whereas in 1977, 27 species were recorded which had not been noted on the day of the 1976 census, there are 19 species recorded for 1978 which did not appear in 1977, yet the total of 6011 individual birds of 128 species observed on the day is remarkably close to the 1977 figures of 5947 and 130. Clearly we need information from several more years before we can overlay our annual results in order to identify any norms. As a further example - having made the comment last year that sightings of water-birds were uniformly lower than in 1976, we find that this year they are considerably lower again.

Was 1976 a "good" year? Was 1978 a "bad" year? Such assumptions cannot be made from only three sets of figures.

One feature which may validly be commented upon at this stage is the proportion of introduced species present in the up-range block, which includes Toowoomba City. Whereas the five introduced species Feral Pigeon, Spotted Turtle-Dove, House Sparrow, Common Starling and Common Mynah represent less than five percent of the species observed, they none the less account for 42% of the individual birds recorded. By comparison introduced species provide for only twelve percent of the down-range sightings (less than four percent of species). This relationship (I hesitate to use the word balance) between native and introduced species will bear watching in future censuses.

Sincere thanks are extended to the 34 participants listed below for their valuable contributions on the 22nd October, 1978 which, combined, allow us to present the substantial quantity of information which follows.

BILL JOLLY.

Participants:- Lesley Ball, Margo Barrett, Peter Bostock, John Coman, Graham Corbin, Jane Corbin, Jim Corbin, Coranne Dolley, Mick Dolley, Phillip Elmes, Sue Elmes, John Duff, Ed. Diery, Ron Hopkinson, Marilyn Jacobs, Bill Jolly, Eileen Jolly, Barry Kenway, Neil McKilligan, Bill McKenzie, Richard Mann, Sue Mann, David Newlands, Alwyn Powell, Sandy Pottinger, Elizabeth Russell, Mike Russell, Anne Shore, John Shore, Vera Simon, Mark Stewart, Brough Warren, Margaret Warren, Jan Veacock.

TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB - ANNUAL BIRD CENSUS - 22.10.78.

LIST OF SPECIES AND NUMBERS OBSERVED.

	U.	D.	T.		U.	D.	T.
Anst. Grebe	6	11	17	Jacky Winter	4	1	5
Darter	-	2	2	Golden Whistler	4	-	4
Pied Cormorant	-	1	1	Rufous Whistler	8	2	10
Little B. Cormorant	-	1	1	Grey Shrike-thrush	5	-	5
Little P. Cormorant	-	3	3	Black-f. Monarch	6	-	6
White-faced Heron	11	7	18	Spec. Monarch	1	-	1
Sacred Ibis	-	7	7	Leaden Flycatcher	1	-	1
Royal Spoonbill	-	1	1	Rufous Fantail	7	-	7
Plumed Whist.-Duck	-	4	4	Grey Fantail	1	-	1
Pacific Black Duck	23	26	49	Willie Wagtail	14	42	56
Grey Teal	-	20	20	Eastern Whipbird	46	8	54
Maned Duck	20	22	42	Grey-crowned Babbler	3	1	4
Bl.-Sh. Kite	3	8	11	Clamorous Reed-warbler	8	2	10
Pacific Baza	2	1	3	Tawny Grassbird	-	1	1
Whistling Kite	-	1	1	Golden-headed Cisticola	4	19	23
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1	2	3	Rufous Songlark	1	-	1
Brown Falcon	-	1	1	Brown Songlark	1	-	1
Aust. Kestrel	24	12	36	Sup. Fairy-wren	29	42	71
Stubble Quail	-	2	2	Var. Fairy-wren	33	6	39
Dusky Moorhen	-	1	1	Red-b. Fairy-wren	9	12	21
Purple Swamphen	10	21	31	White-browed Scrubwren	43	7	50
Eurasian Coot	-	43	43	Speckled Warbler	3	5	8
Comb-cr. Jacana	-	4	4	Wh.-th. Gerygone	14	10	24
Masked Lapwing	16	8	24	Brown Thornbill	24	2	26
Banded Lapwing	5	-	5	Y-rumped Thornbill	14	8	22
Bl. fr. Plover	-	9	9	Yellow Thornbill	1	-	1
Latham's Snipe	-	6	6	Striated Thornbill	29	-	29
White-headed Pigeon	1	-	1	Var. Sittella	16	1	17
Feral Pigeon	290	1	291	White-throated Treecreeper	8	-	8
Spotted Turtle-Dove	6	-	6	Red Wattlebird	2	-	2
Br. Cuckoo-Dove	7	-	7	Striped Honeyeater	-	1	1
Peaceful Dove	-	5	5	Noisy Friarbird	16	23	39
Bar-shouldered Dove	11	41	52	Little Friarbird	9	16	25
Emerald Dove	1	-	1	Blue-faced Honeyeater	1	4	5
Common Bronzewing	3	2	5	Noisy Miner	129	17	146
Crested Pigeon	30	27	57	Lewin's Honeyeater	33	2	35
Galah	179	57	236	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	14	-	14
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	-	1	1	White-throated Honeyeater	2	-	2
Rainbow Lorikeet	3	2	5	Brown Honeyeater	8	17	25
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	101	8	109	Eastern Spinebill	1	-	1
Little Lorikeet	11	-	11	Scarlet Honeyeater	4	20	24
Australian King Parrot	2	3	5	Mistletoebird	1	3	4
Cockatiel	152	3	155	Spotted Pardalote	13	-	13
Pale-headed Rosella	39	44	83	Striated Pardalote	20	20	40
Red-rumped Parrot	22	-	22	Silvereye	34	58	92
Oriental Cuckoo	1	-	1	House Sparrow	336	76	412
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	5	-	5	Red-browed Firetail	14	8	22
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1	-	1	Zebra Finch	-	28	28
Common Koel	8	9	17	Double-barred Finch	11	216	227
Channel-billed Cuckoo	5	1	6	Plum-headed Finch	-	50	50
Pheasant Coucal	1	6	7	Chestnut-br. Mannikin	2	11	13
Laughing Kookaburra	51	32	83	Common Starling	847	117	964
Sacred Kingfisher	15	23	38	Common Mynah	246	48	294
Rainbow Bee-eater	2	34	36	Olive-backed Oriole	11	12	23
Dollarbird	17	12	29	Figbird	4	2	6
Singing Bushlark	-	1	1	Satin Bowerbird	1	2	3
White-backed Swallow	-	12	12	Regent Bowerbird	4	1	5
Welcome Swallow	61	37	98	Aust. Magpie-lark	115	70	185
Fairy Martin	7	47	54	Grey Butcherbird	4	4	8
Richard's Pipit	2	9	11	Pied Butcherbird	60	24	84
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	74	50	124	Australian Magpie	220	36	256
Y.-eyed Cuckoo Shr.	1	-	1	Pied Currawong	102	23	125
Rose Robin	1	-	1	Australian Raven	3	-	3
Eastern Yellow Robin	15	-	15	Torresian Crow	250	142	392

U. denotes Uprange 10' block.

D. denotes Downrange 10' block, as defined in text.