

TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS INC



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

No. 377

October 2008

Editorial

By Plaxy Barratt

Well, the end of the year is fast approaching, isn't it! It can be a busy time; don't forget the therapeutic benefits of birding, if you need an escape!

With the recent downpours we've had we should see the renewal of some wonderful wetlands and other habitat, bringing abundant wildlife and hopefully some interesting bird sightings. The Upper Lockyer was alive on the weekend, and it was a real joy to see creeks flowing and wetlands of near-legend status full again.

...and with the weather we've had who knows what interesting birds we might add to the Challenge list...!!

Congratulations to Toowoomba's own Unleaded Petrels (Patrick McConnell, Kath O'Donnell, Ken McKeown, and Michael Atzeni) who have done it again, winning the 2008 Birds Queensland Twitchathon! Their haul of 191 spp in 24 hours proved enough to snaffle the lead from a field of 20 teams. Well done! We look forward to reading the report in the next newsletter.

Last month the TBO held it's AGM, and while most office bearers remain the same, there have been a few changes, and a return of some familiar faces to the Executive Committee...(details on p2).

It's a great time to welcome two new members to the club, Alison and Chris James. We hope to see them at an outing soon.

Before Michael Wood left for WA we came up with the idea of profiling TBO members in the newsletter. The idea was embraced enthusiastically by our new 'Roving Reporter', Kay Williams; the 'Birder in Focus' for this month is Kevin Williams (p 9)!

We have another packed newsletter, and once again I'd like to thank everyone for continuing to send articles and photos. Normally this would be the last newsletter for the year; however we still have articles to be published, so there will be another edition, for December, in a couple of weeks!

Finally, don't miss the last outing for the year, 'Breakfast with the Birds' at Ravensbourne National Park, next Saturday 6th December (see p10 for details). We hope to see you there!

**2008
Challenge**
215 spp as at 26/11/08



TOOWOOMBA
BIRD OBSERVERS INC

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**Saturday 6th December
Breakfast with the Birds
Ravensbourne NP**

Leader: Kev & Kay Williams
(Details inside)

(An affiliated member of Bird Observation and Conservation Australia)

P.O. Box 4730, Toowoomba East 4350
www.toowoombabirdobservers.org

MEMBERSHIP: Adults/Families \$22, Students \$11
(Subscriptions due 31 August)

Annual General Meeting 22nd Oct 2008

By Plaxy Barratt

Members at this year's AGM were treated to a photographic tour by Al Young of his trip to the Kimberlies, followed by an entertaining bird photo quiz. Mick Atzeni presented the latest on the **Blackbird** Project, and a lavish spread for supper was enjoyed as everyone had a chance to mingle.

The election of Office-bearers resulted in a few changes to the Executive Committee for 2009, and the return of some familiar faces. Ross Begent was re-elected as President of TBO, humbly accepting the position and vouching his surprise at being there in the first place! We welcome Mike McGoldrick as the club's new Vice-President, whilst Olive Booth, Rosalie Ruddock, Pat McConnell, Plaxy Barratt, and Kay Williams retain the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, Records Officer, Co-editor, and Outings co-ordinator, respectively. Plaxy is joined by Nicci Thompson in the role of Co-editor, with the pledged support of Kay Williams as a 'Roving Reporter'! Kay will be busy indeed, having also accepted the position of Librarian. Gayle Lee, who has been an active member of club outings, takes on the position of Media Officer, and Mick Atzeni takes on the role of Website Officer, assisted by Joe Scanlan.



One of the more peculiar sights of Al's trip - a Pied Heron perched on the back of a mobile Australian Pelican! Photo: Al Young

Our sincerest thanks go to Sandra Wilson and Dan Begent for their efforts and enthusiasm throughout 2008 in their roles as Vice-President and Librarian, respectively. Sandra will remain a Committee member, and we welcome back to the Committee Rod Hobson. For contact details of the Executive Committee see page 12.

Gatton National Park outing - 31st Aug 2008

By Olive Booth and Kay Williams

Attendees: Ken McKeown, Mike McGoldrick, Mick Atzeni, Gayle Lee, Jean MacKay, Olive Booth, Glynn Hughes, Russ Jenkins, Louise Teese, Ernie Potts, Richard, Daniel and Alexander Thomis, Kevin and Kay Williams, Claudiane Oulett-Plamondon and Plaxy Barratt (leader).

A nice spring morning set our minds to a morning of birding, as we all met up at Apex Park in Gatton at 7am. We set off for Woodlands road, then into Edwards road. We parked our cars on the roadside and strolled down the lane leading into the park entrance. On the way in we saw many species in the trees and the waterholes, **Fuscous Honeyeater**, **Golden Whistler**, and **Striated Pardalote**, to name a few. The waterhole antics from some little birds kept many there taking photos.

Along at the gate into the park we watched a **Varied Sitella** pair on their nest; they also kept an eye on us. Russ Jenkins found a **Speckled Warbler** on the ground in a very well camouflaged area. Great spotting Russell!



One of the roads in to Gatton National Park. Photo: Plaxy Barratt



Louise Teese and Olive Booth. Photo: Plaxy Barratt



Richard Thomis with sons Daniel and Alexander. Photo: Plaxy Barratt

Morning Tea was had at this spot, after which we strolled along another of the trails of the park until we decided it was lacking in birdlife. A decision was made to move on to Lake Galletly at Gatton Uni, where we found many water birds surrounded both lakes. With scopes and binoculars we ventured forth to the hides looking to add to our birding numbers for the day. The outing closed at approximately 12 noon, with a total of 70 species for the morning.



Mick Atzeni and Claudiane Oullet-Plamondon scope Lake Galletly for waterbirds. Photo: Plaxy Barratt

Species list for Gatton National Park:

Australian Wood Duck, Australian White Ibis, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Cockatiel, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Little Lorikeet, Pale-headed Rosella, Laughing Kookaburra, White Throated Treecreeper, Red-backed Fairy Wren, Striated Pardalote, Speckled Warbler, Weebill, White-throated Gerygone, Striped Honeyeater, Little Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Fuscous Honeyeater, White Throated Honeyeater, Scarlet Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey Crowned Babbler, Eastern Whipbird, Varied Sitella, Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike Thrush, Restless Flycatcher, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Olive-backed Oriole, Figbird, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow, Double Barred Finch, Red-browed Finch, Mistletoe Bird, Silvereye.

Species list for Lake Galletly: Plumed Whistling Duck, Black Swan, Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black duck, Grey Teal, Pink-eared Duck, Hardhead, Australasian Grebe, Darter, Australian Pelican, Cattle Egret, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Nankeen Kestrel, Purple Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Black-winged Stilt, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Little Corella, Cockatiel, Red-rumped Parrot, Laughing Kookaburra, Suberb Fairy-wren, Striated Pardalote, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Noisy Miner, Brown Honeyeater, Willy Wagtail, Figbird, Pied Butcherbird, Torresian Crow, House Sparrow, Fairy Martin, Australasian Reed-warbler, Common Myna.

[Ed: On our way home Kay, Kev, Russell, Ken, Mike and I stopped for lunch and a sticky-beak at Lake Apex. The solitary Male **Freckled Duck** we had seen in front of the bird hide a week earlier was nowhere to be found, however this curious **Whistling Kite** (right) circled above us as we walked between the lakes, providing for us a great photo opportunity, and topping off an enjoyable morning birding.]



Whistling Kite at Lake Apex. Photo: Plaxy Barratt

Toorbul Wader outing – Sunday 28th Sept 2008

By Olive Booth

Attendees; Kevin and Kay Williams, Olive Booth, Russell Jenkins, Gayle Lee and Steve Zell, Glynn Hughes, Esther Townsend, Mike McGoldrick, Louise Teese, Ernie Potts, Richard, Daniel and Alexander Thomis, Nicci Thompson and Ken McKeown.

On a beautiful spring day we set out from Toowoomba to go to Toorbul. Kay, Kev, Russell and myself left here on Saturday and spent the night at Toorbul Caravan Park. Saturday morning after arriving about 10am, we checked out the shore line for waders, cameras at the ready. Not sure what we were seeing we decided to leave the identifications to the next day. Kay, Kev and myself got a new bird for our list, a **Little Wattlebird**, and we also saw some **Rainbow Bee-eaters** on the line, all the while looking out for raptors for Russell. We saw a **Brahminy Kite**, a new bird for the Williams.



TBO members with the Queensland Wader Group. Photo: Kay Williams

After lunch we decided to go to Buckley's Hole on Bribie to do some more birding.

Osprey, **Black Swans** with cygnets in tow, **Pheasant Coucal**, (Kay finally got her photo) **Red-backed Fairy-wren**, **Black-winged Stilts**, **Dusky Moorhen**, **Little Pied** and **Little Black Cormorants**, **Australian Whipbird** and a **Koel** were seen, just to mention a few.

On the way back we were lucky enough to see two **Brolgas** at Bishop's Marsh, but with the light fading fast it was hard to get good photos. Sunday morning we went back there early and they were still there but further away from the road.

At about 8 am we all met at the roost with the Wader Group to identify the birds. On the landing were some **Sooty Oyster-catchers** and a **Striated Heron**, and on the shore line were hundreds of birds for us to identify with the help of scopes. Some birds, such as sandpipers, stints, knots, curlews, Whimbrels and godwits all seemed hard until the Wader Group gave us a sheet on how to tell the difference.

Kay Williams got 18 Lifers and Russell got his **White-bellied Sea Eagle**, what a weekend!!!

Birds for the Outing were: Pelican, Silver Gull, Eastern Curlew, Sooty Oyster Catcher, Pied Oyster Catcher, Striated Heron, Curlew Sandpiper, Red Knot, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint, Great Knot, Pacific Golden Plover, Grey-tailed Tattler, Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Magpie Lark, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Brown Honeyeater, Mangrove Honeyeater, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, White-browed Wood Swallow, Kookaburra, Sulphur Crested Cockatoo, White Ibis, Pied and Grey Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Wood Duck, Striped Honeyeater, Spotted Turtle dove, Welcome Swallow, Australian Magpie, Figbird, Rainbow Lorikeet, White-faced Heron, Pacific Black Duck, Crested Pigeon, Masked Lapwing, Galah, Cattle Egret, Great Egret, Red-capped Plover.



Eastern Curlew. Photo: Kevin Williams

On Behalf of the Toowoomba Bird Observers who attended the waders outing to Toorbul I wish to thank Esther Townsend, Linda and Phil and their many other members for a great morning, with the birds and scopes. We learnt a lot and it was nice to see so many species and meet new birders. With many thanks for your time and input.

- Kay Williams, Outings Co-ordinator.

Birdwatching in the Top End

By Jan Christensen

What do you do in a cold Toowoomba July when you have a lung condition that responds badly to cold weather? You go north, that's what! This year I headed up to Darwin, where their minimums are our maximums. Love it! Apart from keeping warm, my goal was to crack 400 Australian bird species seen. I was up to 399.

So I did a bit of research on the Internet before I went, and found a Discovering Tropical Birds Program put on by the Charles Darwin University. Two days of lectures and birdwatching around Darwin, followed by a four-day tour that took in Fogg Dam, Kakadu, Pine Creek, Katherine, and Mataranka. It sounded interesting so I enrolled, along with 6 others. Our lecturer and leader was Richard Noske, who has a passion for birds, and particularly for Top End birds.

The lectures were good, and the birdwatching was great, though inhibited a bit by some windy weather which made the birds harder to find. Our first outing was to the Darwin Botanical Gardens, and there, maybe a minute after I stepped out of the minibus, was my 400th bird - the **Barking Owl**, followed quickly by the **Rufous Owl**. Throughout the trip, I saw 20 new birds (among them **Black-tailed Treecreeper**, **Green-backed Gerygone**, **Black-chinned Honeyeater** (golden-backed form), **Banded Honeyeater**, **Mangrove Fantail**, **Masked Finch**, **Broad-billed Flycatcher**), and around 140 altogether. Those who had never been to NT before saw up to 70 new ones. Mind you, we worked hard for them - slopping through the mangroves, climbing hills (not too much of that for me!), leaping in and out of the bus, charging through long grass, burnt out paddocks, around sewerage ponds, and under barbed wire fences. Richard was a pretty active birdwatcher!



A stunning male Crimson Finch, Palmerston. Photo: Jan Christensen

Some highlights were: bird-banding in the mangroves of Darwin and actually holding a **Red-headed Honeyeater** in my hand; at least 10 000 **Wandering Whistling-ducks**, plus other species, in the lagoon at Mamakala in Kakadu; getting up close & personal to a **Black-necked Stork** at Yellow Waters; following a **Black Bittern** down the Mary River in our cruise boat; a gorgeous **Buff-sided Robin** at Cooida (bird book illustrations don't do justice to its beauty); completing my set of woodswallows as a mixed flock of hundreds hawked for insects over our heads; spotting **Painted Honeyeaters** at Mataranka where they have rarely been seen before.

My second birdwatching goal this trip was to see the **Gouldian Finch**. We missed them on the Program, so I hired a car and went looking. The search began before sunrise one morning along the Edith Falls road. It seemed it was going to be unrewarded till I crossed the road to look at a big flock of **Hooded Parrots**. Some small birds were in a waterhole under their tree. Yes! It was some Gouldian Finches. I wished I had company to share my excitement.

The friend whom I stayed with in Palmerston lives over the road from a lakes-golf course development where birds were plentiful. **Crimson Finches**, **Lemon-bellied Flycatchers**, **Green Pygmy-geese**, **Pied Herons**, **Grey Goshawk** - all were easy to see any time I went for a walk. And finally there was a trip to Dundee Beach where we saw a **Black-Breasted Buzzard**.

Next time I go to the Top End, I want to see a **Varied Lorikeet**. Apparently it's a common bird around the area, but in four trips up that way, I have yet to see one. Oh well, that's part of the lure of birdwatching. There'll always be the possibility of seeing one more bird.

Birds of Mali

By Mary Petr

In August we did a 2-week tour of Mali in West Africa. The tour took us through a variety of landscapes, from Timbuktu on the edge of the Sahara in the north, to higher rainfall savannah woodland in the south, and included the spectacular sandstone escarpment of the Bandiagara plateau and the Niger River, which runs through the centre of Mali.

Usually when we travel to a new region we buy the relevant bird book. But since Mali is not a good place for observing wildlife (the attraction lies in its people and their cultures), we did not do so. However, once there, we discovered that there were lots of interesting birds, so I wrote down descriptions and bought "Birds of Western Africa" [by Nik Borrow and Ron Demey] afterwards. I was a bit shocked by the size of the book. Even after eliminating those birds that did not occur in Mali, the sheer number of birds made retrospective identification difficult at times. For example, there are 41 raptors in Mali (many more in other parts of West Africa). I did manage to identify two: **Black Kite**, the same species we have in Australia, and **Fox Kestrel**, one of the 4 West African kestrels. It is larger than the Australian Kestrel; is almost a uniform rufous colour, and inhabits inselbergs (isolated mountains or rock outcrops).

When I saw bee-eaters, I confidently wrote 'bee-eater' without further description, only to learn that there are 7 species in Mali, including the European migratory bee-eater. Weavers posed a similar problem: there are 6 species in Mali and all the females look alike. We saw very few waterbirds, in spite of the Niger River. Perhaps they were widely scattered amongst the vastness of the Niger and its floodplains. Or perhaps they are hunted; various parts of all kinds of animals are used in traditional medicine. Those I identified were **Cattle Egret** and **Great Egret** (the same species as in Australia), **African Jacana**, and **Black-headed Lapwing**.

There are only 3 parrots in Mali. We saw a flock of **Rose-ringed Parakeets**, introduced from Cape Verde (possibly as pets). Simpson & Day lists this bird as an introduced pet bird in Australia.

Some of the most striking birds were starlings. Eight species occur in Mali, most with dark plumage of iridescent metallic colour – black, purple, greenish, bluish. The **Long-tailed Glossy Starling** is about 51 cm long, with a graduated (scalloped) tail up to 33 cm long, trailing on the ground behind it. Other starlings we saw were the **Chestnut-bellied Starling** and the **Greater Blue-eared Starling**.

Birds with conical beaks were common. There was the **Northern Grey-headed Sparrow**, the **Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting**, the **House Bunting**, the weavers and the **Yellow-crowned Bishop**, a small, bright yellow and black bird. The **Red-billed Quelea** has several variants, occurs in large flocks, and is a serious pest in rice fields. The hotel in Timbuktu had bird feeders to attract them for tourists, but then that area has no rice fields to worry about. The **Red-billed Firefinch** is small, mainly red, very common and quite tame. It belongs to the subfamily Estrildini, as do the Australian Firetails. Whydahs and Indigobirds are another group of finches. The male **Pin-tailed Whydah** is 12.5 cm long with ribbon-like tail streamers up to 20 cm long. It was fascinating to watch it flying around among the bushes with its tail flapping all over the place. The female looks like a sparrow. The female **Village Indigobird** also looks like a sparrow, whereas the male is described as being glossy green or blue, but looked black to me.

Other identified birds were: the gregarious **Abdim's Stork**; **Speckled Pigeon**; **Laughing Dove**; **Helmeted Guinea fowl** (Guinea borders Mali to the southwest); **Abyssinian Roller**, a beautiful turquoise and chestnut bird; **Hoopoe** (this occurs as a migrant from Europe and also as an African breeding race); **African Grey Hornbill**; **Common Bulbul**, a ubiquitous and very common bird; **White Helmet-shrike**, a distinctive black and white bird with a long white crest and yellow eye-wattle; **Fork-tailed Drongo**; **Pied Crow**; and **Piapiac**, another crow, with a very long, graduated tail.



Pin-tailed Whydah (top two birds)
[from 'Birds of West African Town
and Garden' by J.H. Elgood].

Spring time in the Lockyer

By Bill Jolly

[Ed: As many of you would know, Bill Jolly keeps a wonderful website (www.abberton.org/birds2008), and regularly informs us via email of bird and other wildlife visitors at his home "Abberton" and throughout the Lockyer Valley. I love reading Bill's updates, and I marvel constantly at how much his photography continues to improve...not least because we own the same model camera! I realise not everybody has an email account or regularly accesses the internet, so I thought it deserving to include a couple of Bill's recent reports, along with a collection of photos he has shared with us over recent months].



'Male (red eye-ring) Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo' Photo: Bill Jolly

Monday 10 November 2008

Quite a weekend!

We were visited yesterday morning by four or five **Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos**. They spent some time in casuarinas on the creek bank, then moved up into the garden where they gnawed away at old seedcases and galls and even branches in a couple of *Acacia maidenii*, intermittently screeching out their raptor-like contact calls as they took over a couple of trees alongside a birdbath.

When we moved onto Abberton, about 20 years ago, a few eucalypts along the old fence-line by the road were the only mature trees we had here. Later, we bought the old road reserve alongside that boundary and began to plant it up with local endemics so as to join the vegetation further along the creek with what we had here and what we were intending to plant here - the aim being to make a contiguous wildlife corridor.

Well, it's been working quite well. Our list of mammals has steadily grown over the years, along with our bird list, and this-afternoon in a eucalyptus right in the garden - our first **Koala**. We've seen them a few kilometres along the creek in one direction, and along the road in another, but never before in our garden.



'Our first koala on home soil!' Photo: Bill Jolly



Rainbow Bee-eater 'proving they eat a lot more than bees'
Photo: Bill Jolly

In between these two events, much of the other usual excitement was going on, a raucous **Channel-billed Cuckoo** fly-by, a gorgeous female **Eastern Koel** in a tree by the gate as I went out to get the Sunday paper, a **Wedge-tailed Eagle** passing low overhead carrying what looked very like a chook, **Dollarbirds** in pairs, **Rainbow Bee-eaters** likewise, and at breakfast time this-morning two **Plum-headed Finches** in an unkempt patch of garden just off the verandah.

Monday 6th October 2008

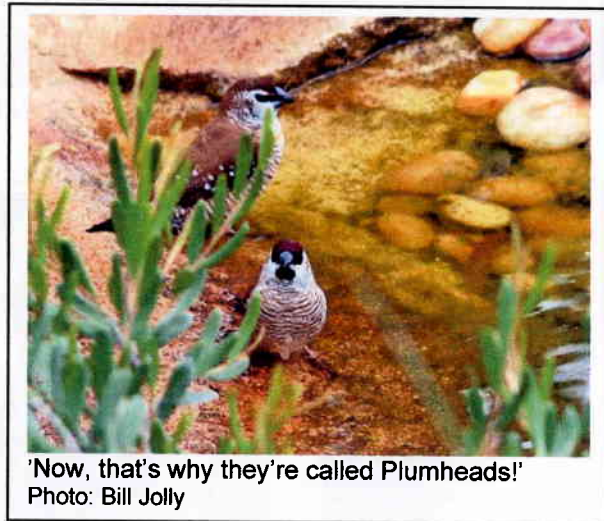
I've birded fairly solidly over the last ten days or so, and picked up more than 190 species around

the valley and with one day-trip out to Durikai Forest.

Seven Mile Lagoon is full of birds, over 100 **Red-necked Avocets** there last Monday with **Red-capped Plovers** dotted around the perimeter, but just one **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**. There were many hundreds of ducks out on the water, at least 8 spp, including **Wandering Whistling Duck** – regular at Lake Apex, but not so often at Seven Mile. Good scope views of a **Peregrine Falcon** sitting on a fence-post. **Whiskered, Gull-billed** and **Caspian Terns**.

Thirteen raptor spp during the week, with **Wedge-tailed Eagles** every day.

We watched a pair of **Great-crested Grebes** performing their synchronised courtship at Lake Dyer. At least a dozen were there, mostly on the far side from the boat ramp, down towards the golf course.



'Now, that's why they're called Plumheads!'
Photo: Bill Jolly

The nesting colony of **Banded Lapwings** at Lockyer Waters have produced several young, I don't know how many in total yet, but there were at least 13 nesting pairs there.



'Our resident pair of Dollarbirds, who seem to be winning the battle for a nest hole in the big dead tree just across the creek'. Photo: Bill Jolly

At Lake Apex a few **Eastern Great, Intermediate** and **Little Egrets** are in their full breeding flush, providing an opportunity to see the three of them while their beaks and soft parts are really coloured up - practically side by side for comparison.

I found last week that a roost of thousands of **Grey-headed Flying Foxes** had taken over what has been one of my favourite spring-time birding spots for more than 30 years on the Toowoomba escarpment. The sight, sound, and even the smell of the place was dramatically changed, and nearly all the birds I have been used to seeing there at this time of year were absent. I went back a few days later to find the bats somewhat reduced in number -- and a few more birds around.

My dates for spring arrivals in the Lockyer Valley this year include:

- 06 Sept – **Common Greenshank**, only one to date
- 10 Sept – **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**, first at Helidon, then at Seven Mile Lagoon
- 11 Sept – **Eastern Koel**, several about, one practically resident at Abberton
- 14 Sept – **Sacred Kingfisher**, everywhere in numbers, lots of courting pairs
- 16 Sept – **Channel-billed Cuckoo**, fly-bys at Abberton daily, several every day feasting on mulberry in a friend's garden
- 19 Sept – **Black-faced Monarch**, only two so far, Toowoomba escarpment and Ravensbourne NP
- 27 Sept – **Dollarbird**, several around the valley, still the bulk to come.

Bill Jolly - "Abberton", Lockyer Valley, Queensland
(27° 34' 21" S; 152° 08' 21" E)



One of two Latham's Snipe at Lake Freeman, 1st November. Photo: Bill Jolly

Birder in Focus: Kevin Williams

By 'Roving Reporter' Kay Williams

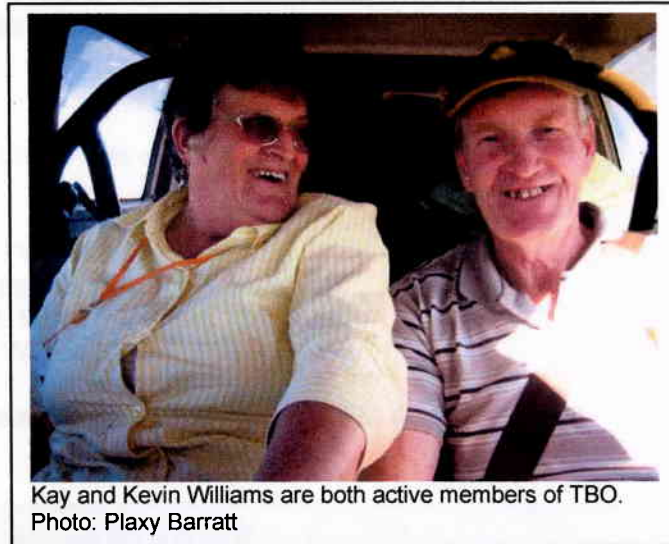
Kevin, how long have you been interested in birds? *Most of my life as far as I can remember.*

How did you get started? *Through my Mother and the Gould League of Bird-lovers at primary school. We got badges every year.*

Are you a lone birder in a family of non birders? *No, most of them are bird-lovers of some form.*

What has been other peoples' responses to you bird watching? *My Brother in-law says we have too much spare time!*

What's the best/worst thing about birding? *Is there a worst thing?! It is all good, other than there not being enough hours in the day.*



Kay and Kevin Williams are both active members of TBO.
Photo: Plaxy Barratt

When did you realise you were hooked? *After I joined Toowoomba Bird Observers.*

Where are some of your favourite birding spots? *National Parks and near water.*

Describe one of your best birding experiences? *The day we found the Powerful Owl [July 2007]. We first spotted the juvenile Powerful Owl at Highfield Falls - just at the top of the rise from the falls turn off heading west on the track. It was in a gum tree with a big burl on it. The next sighting was of an adult which flew into a tree approx 50yds from the juvenile. This was so exciting as we hadn't seen them before. We looked about for further sightings and found another juvenile approx 15yds from the other! Kay and I were blown away as it was so unexpected.*

What is on top of your birds to see list?
Spinifex Pigeon.

What is your favourite local spot to bird?
Highfield Falls, north of Toowoomba.

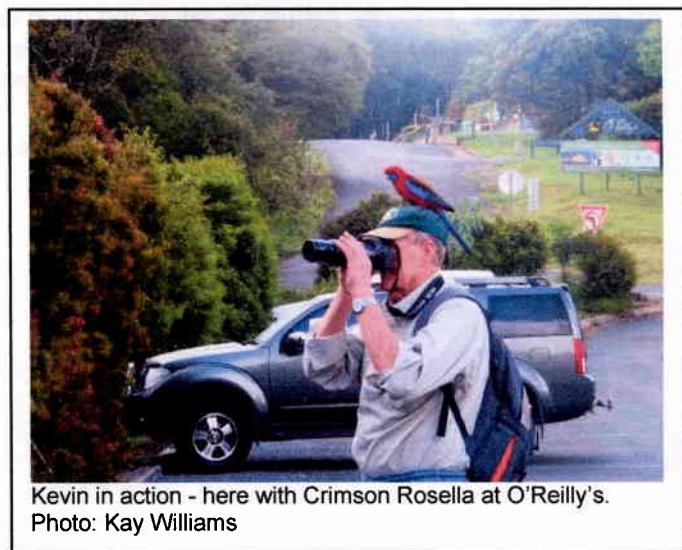
Are you a compulsive list creator? *No.*

Do birds turn up in your dreams? *No.*

What is your favourite bird? *Galah.*

What do you think is your most obvious birding idiosyncrasy? *Photographing every thing that moves.*

Are you a 'twitcher'? *If time and budget allowed, I would be!*



Kevin in action - here with Crimson Rosella at O'Reilly's.
Photo: Kay Williams

Thank you Kevin, that was great. Till next time!

The Challenge 2008 Update

By Plaxy Barratt

There have been four additions to the Toowoomba Bird Observers' *Challenge 2008*, bringing this year's total to 215 species... just 11 short of last year's *Challenge* total! With exactly five weeks left 'til the end of the year I still think we can beat last year's tally! Now's the time to get out in your local patch!

Species reported since the last newsletter.

Accuracy not vouched for by the TBO. Please check with observer before citing.

*Rare/ unusual locally

White-eared Monarch* 22/11/2008 Redwood Park BJ

Spotless Crake* 19/10/2008 Spa-Iredale Rd, Iredale MA, PM

Little Bronze-Cuckoo* 5/10/2008 Thomas Rd, Murphy's Creek MA, RJ

Spotted Quail-thrush* 11/09/2008 Amos Rd, Withcott DC

MA -Mick Atzeni, DC – Dave Cleary, RJ – Russell Jenkins, BJ -Bill Jolly, PM -Pat McConnell

Final outing - Breakfast with the Birds, 6th Dec

With Kevin and Kay Williams

NB. The outing is *next* weekend **Saturday 6th Dec**, (not this Saturday 29th as originally scheduled).

We will meet at the lower (first) picnic area at Ravensbourne National park at 7:00am, Saturday 6th December.

We'll do the loop walk before we go to the upper picnic area for breakfast. We would like you all to bring your breakfast of choice. The BBQs will be available for cooking bacon and eggs etc. We will bring along some fuel for them. You will need to bring hot water for drinks as usual. We will also do the upper loop walk. Birds we hope to see include Topknot Pigeon, Regent Bowerbird, Wompoo Pigeon, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, Green Catbird, Noisy Pitta and many more.

Looking forward to seeing as many as possible at our last outing for 2008

Kevin and Kay Williams.

07 4659 5475

Outing Questionnaire

Please fill in and return to; Kay Williams
C/o Toowoomba Bird Observers,
P O Box 4730
East Toowoomba 4350
Qld.

Or email your responses to Kay at kevkaywills@hotmail.com

Would you volunteer to organise and /or lead an outing, with help or on your own?

Within the Toowoomba Area, have you a special place you would like to see an outing organised to?

Within the 200klm radius of Toowoomba, have you a favourite birding area you would like the club go to for, a one day /two day outing?

Name: -----

Phone no: -----

Thankyou, for your time and input.

Kay Williams
Outings Co-ordinator.

COMING EVENTS

Saturday 6th December 2008

Breakfast with the Birds

Leader: Kevin and Kay Williams

Contact: Kay Williams

(07) 4659 5475

Saturday 31st January 2009

Beginners' outing – new birders welcome!

Meet: 7.00am at Katoomba Point, Prince

Henry Drive, Toowoomba

Leader: Kay Williams

Contact: Kay Williams

(07) 4659 5475

Second Saturday of each month

Black-breasted Button-quail survey

'Birdwood Park', Gowrie Junction area

Contact Mick Atzeni (07) 4688 1318

NB: Remember to pay annual subscriptions

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Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is 7th Dec 2008

Please e-mail or snail-mail your articles to Plaxy Barratt or Nicci Thompson

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