

# TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS



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

No. 399  
October, 2010

## Editorial

Ken McKeown

The late mail has it that all committee positions have names pencilled in, so that being the case all members should attend the AGM without fear. Honest!!

We've had the forty days of rain and I was hoping for forty without, but, as I write, the Bureau of Meteorology is promising more and with huge winds.

At Table Top Estate we have our usual migrants as per last month and four species of lorikeet and **Noisy Friarbirds** feasting on local grevilleas. **Whipbirds** and **Pheasant Coucals** are providing a beautiful sound track to all this activity.

Whatever you think of **White Ibis**, problems with drought and water management issues mean that many birds have now moved into urban areas where there are plentiful food supplies particularly at waste landfill. This has triggered a population explosion. The birds are perceived as a pest because of their nuisance value, threat to aviation safety and impact on biodiversity. Better understanding of their distribution and abundance would help plan for conservation and effective management. If you could help

with a census on 31 October, please reply to [ibiscensus@ecosure.com.au](mailto:ibiscensus@ecosure.com.au)

**Mick Atzeni has some FOLA 2011 calendars for sale at \$10 each.** Taken by a talented Gatton photographer, they are a great present.

**White-eared Monarch, Silver Gull, Eastern Rosella and Blue Bonnet** are recent additions for the 2010 Challenge. Hoping for more during the October Species Census!



White-eared Monarch,  
Redwood Park.  
Photo: Steve Burke

**2010 Challenge**  
**215 spp as at 17/10**



TOOWOOMBA  
BIRD OBSERVERS

(An affiliated member of Bird Observation and Conservation Australia)

P.O. Box 4730, Toowoomba East 4350  
[www.toowoombabirdobservers.org](http://www.toowoombabirdobservers.org)

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

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## COMING EVENTS

**Annual General Meeting**  
**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Venue: Uniting Ch'ch Hall**  
**Time: 7.00 pm**

**Species Census**  
**Sat/Sun 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> Oct.**  
**Venue: Local area**  
**Coordinator: Michael Atzeni**

**November Outing**  
**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November**  
**Venue: Cooby Dam – Loveday Cove**  
**Time: 7.00 am**

## Durikai State Forest & Lake Coolmunda – September Outing

By Kay Williams



The Three Amigos spy again. Photo: Kay Williams.

What a difference a day makes! Eight hardy souls met at Karara hall at 7.30 am with heavy rain falling outside. The kind S E S men offered us a cuppa while we decided what to do. Gayle Lee decided to return home as did Lorraine Welch, a Karara local and keen birder. Six determined, keen birders, decided to see the day out. Allan and Jude Benson, Olive

Booth, Steve Burke and Kevin and Kay Williams, headed towards Lake Coolmunda.

Our prayers were answered as we approached the Cobba-da-mana entrance to the dam. With a break in the weather we ventured through the watery drive to find **White-winged Fairy-wren**, **Ground Cuckoo-shrikes**, and a very high dam. After spending some time here we moved onto Picnic area 1. The day was a little clearer by now so we were keen to keep going. **Grey-crowned Babblers**, **Apostlebirds**, **Pelicans**, **Whistling Kites** and **Southern Whiteface** kept us keen.

Our next port of call was to be the dam wall and Picnic area 2. Alas, SunWater had locked the gates on us; so sad, as we always manage to get lots of birds along the creek. Talking about the creek, this was a raging river as three gates had been opened to allow the dam to reduce to maximum level. Birds of interest were **Southern Whiteface**, **Whistling Kites** and **White-winged Fairy-wren**.

All we could do at this stage was retrace our steps and book in to the caravan park, have lunch and wait for a break in the weather again. We were not to be disheartened. After lunch we did the "loop" around Lake Coolmunda. Taking right hand turns, the loop takes you onto the highway, then the Stanthorpe, Texas and Inglewood Roads. The next right



Yellow-tufted Honeyeater.  
Photo: Steve Burke.



White-browed Babbler. Photo: Kevin Williams.

should have been the Lake Coolmunda access road but due to the flooded creek we had to go back through Inglewood.

As this was the first time we had done this trip we found some great birding sites, views of the dam, Conservation Reserves, and many water crossings which would not normally be there. Some of the birds of interest were, **Pacific Baza**, many Honeyeaters, **Red-winged Parrot** and **Jacky Winter**.

Later in the afternoon some went birding in a 4-wheel drive vehicle up Mosquito Creek Road. Some of the birds seen were **Wandering** and **Plumed Whistling-Ducks** and **Australian Ringneck** which was a lifer for Steve

The evening was spent keeping warm and dry and praying for fine weather next day. We woke to an overcast but dryer morning, so plans to head for Durikai SF were actioned. The birds did us proud, with many new sightings in this area for Kevin and me: **White-browed Babblers**, **Turquoise Parrot**, **Dusky Woodswallow**, **Crested Shrike-tit**, and **Blue-faced, Brown, Scarlet, White-throated, Yellow-tufted, Yellow-faced and White-plumed Honeyeaters**. Steve Burke was walking around with a permanent smile on his face, his lifers at this stage numbered five for the weekend.

Next we headed to Back Creek Road after saying farewell to the Bensons who returned to Toowoomba via Warwick. The birds were many and varied, including **Buff-rumped, Yellow, Yellow-rumped** and **Striated Thornbills**, **Speckled Warblers**, **Dollarbird**, **Plum-headed Finch** and **Eastern and Pale-headed Rosellas**.

Olive and Steve left us at the turn to Leyburn and the outing was officially over. One hundred metres down the road Kevin and I found a male **Emu** with seven chicks. Alas we had



Turquoise Parrot

Steve Burke 2010

A beautiful Turquoise Parrot. Photo: Steve Burke.

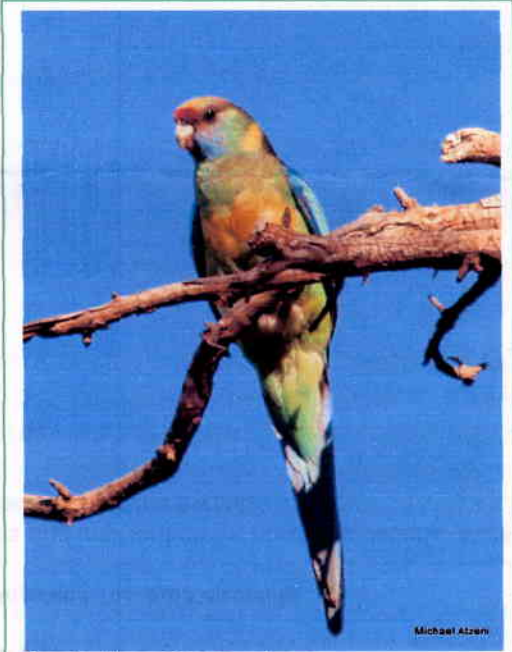
**Key**

given the two-way radio back to Steve. We felt the outing was very successful despite the weather.

- I Introduced Species
- O Oddity
- T Threaten Species, New South Wales Threatened Species Conservation /
- B Balranald Area

**Weekend List – 96 Species:**

Emu, Plumed Whistling-Duck, Wandering Whistling-Duck, Black Swan, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Australasian Grebe, Australian Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Pelican, White-faced Heron, White-necked Heron, Little Egret, Eastern Great Egret, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Black-shouldered Kite, Whistling Kite, Australian Kestrel, Dusky Moorhen, Masked Lapwing, Common Bronzewing, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Galah, Little Corella, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Cockatiel, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Eastern Rosella, Pale-headed Rosella, Blue Bonnet, Red-rumped Parrot, Red-winged Parrot, Turquoise Parrot, Laughing Kookaburra, Sacred Kingfisher, Dollarbird, Superb Fairy-wren, White-winged Fairy-wren, Southern Whiteface, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Speckled Warbler, Weebill, White-throated Gerygone, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Striped Honeyeater, Noisy and Little Friarbird, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Yellow-throated Miner, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Yellow-Tufted Honeyeater, Fuscous Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Scarlet Honeyeater, Jacky Winter, Grey-crowned Babbler, White-browed Babbler, White-plumed Honeyeater, Crested Shrike-tit, Rufous Whistler, Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Leaden Flycatcher, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Ground Cuckoo-shrike, Dusky Woodswallow, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow, White-winged Chough, Apostlebird, Australasian Pipit, House Sparrow, Zebra Finch, Double-barred Finch, Plum-headed Finch, Mistletoebird, Welcome Swallow, Tree Martin, Fairy Martin, Common Starling, Common Myna.



Australian Ringneck.  
Photo: Mick Atzeni



## **Southport Pelagic 21 August 2010**

By Ken McKeown

Inspired by Al Young's mega tick on his Ulladulla Pelagic, I ventured down to Southport to try my luck on the good ship *M.V. Grinner*. Led by seabird aficionado Paul Walbridge, we experienced mill-pond conditions and a cloudless sky compared to other trips where seasickness was prevalent for the duration of the trip.

I am indebted to our trip leader, Paul Walbridge for the bulk of this article.

**Weather conditions:** A high, over the southern Coral Sea and moving east brought light SW winds to the coast early on, switching to S as the day wore on. Generally light winds throughout the day, barely reaching 10 knots. A virtually cloudless sky all day with excellent visibility, max. air temperature 23°C.

**Sea conditions:** Light seas on a gentle swell on leaving the Seaway and these conditions lasted until a north-south current was encountered shortly after the Shelf-break whereon the seas increased to .5m on a 1.5m swell. Later, when returning, the sea calmed somewhat and became quite glassy.

**Summary:** Left the seaway at 0640 hours and proceeded too Jim's Mountain, approximately 31 nm ENE of the Southport Seaway. Reached the final drift point at 0955 hours and drifted until 1245 hours before heading for home. Arrived back at Southport Seaway at 1550 hours. Total trip time 9 hours 10 minutes.

On leaving the Seaway, very little present save for numbers of **Australasian Gannets** working just beyond the surf but fifteen minutes out a lone trawler was encountered with mostly **Silver Gulls** and **Crested Terns** following but with a few recently returned **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters**. We continued out over the Shelf but saw only a few **Hutton's Shearwaters** and the occasional Wedge-tailed.

Arrived at Jim's Mountain at 0955 hours and proceeded to throw berley over the side. Very slow at first with so little wind but the slick started to drift south of us and soon the first **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters** arrived followed shortly by **Wilson's Storm Petrels**. For the next hour or so that was pretty much it with a few extras such as **Providence Petrels** (very low in numbers for this species) and the odd **Common Noddy** and **Hutton's Shearwater**.

Just before 1200 hours the first **Black-bellied Storm Petrel** put in a belated appearance quickly followed by the first **Tahiti Petrel** of the season. Over the next hour the Tahiti Petrels seemed particularly ravenous, a couple flying within arm's length in order to get the floating berley.

At 1245 hours it was time to head for home with several **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters** following in our wake, gorging on chicken mince now being offered.

We also had many close encounters with migrating whales.

**Species:**

Wilson's Storm Petrel	14	Providence Petrel	8
Black-bellied Storm Petrel	4	Australasian Gannet	40
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	189	Pied Cormorant	1
Hutton's Shearwater	11	Common Noddy	3
Tahiti Petrel	5	Crested Tern	40
Silver Gull	41		

**Cetaceans:**

Humpback Whale 14  
Offshore Bottlenose Dolphin 20+ Inshore Bottlenose Dolphin 2

If you are interested in a good day out contact Paul (W) 07 3139 4258 (H) 3256 4124 or [Paul\\_Walbridge@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:Paul_Walbridge@health.qld.gov.au)

For all seabird information in Australia, go to SOSSA (Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association Inc) website:

<http://www.sossa-international.org/>

This comprehensive site will detail Pelagic Trips, Pelagic Reports, Galleries, SOSSA Projects, Newsletters, Links and Contacts. For those interested, 78 species have been sighted on Southport pelagic trips.

## Members' Bird Notes

*By Pat McConnell*

**MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES:** All sightings seen by, or reported to members of the Toowoomba Bird Observers. Accuracy not vouched for by the TBO. Please check with observer before citing.

Royal Albatross	16/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Black-browed Albatross	15/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Shy Albatross	15/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Yellow-nosed Albatross	14/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Sooty Albatross	16/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Northern Giant Petrel	16/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Cape Petrel	16/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Great-winged Petrel	14/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Australasian Gannet	15/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Pacific Baza (pair)	26/09/2010	Kleinton	BG, JG
White-bellied Sea-Eagle	2/10/2010	"Abberton" Helidon	BJ
Black Falcon	14/09/2010	"Abberton" Helidon	BJ
Buff-banded Rail	18/09/2010	West Ck Toowoomba	SB
Red-chested Button-Quail	29/09/2010	Esk-Crows Nest Rd	RH
Red-chested Button-Quail	29/09/2010	Crows Nest Nat. Park	RH
Pacific Gull	14/09/2010	North Neptune Is., SA	RH
Glossy Black-Cockatoo	29/09/2010	Crows Nest Nat. Park	RH
Eastern Rosella	19/09/2010	Highfields	PM
Australian Ringneck	25/09/2010	Mosquito Ck Road	SB
White-browed Babbler	26/09/2010	Durikai State Forest	Club
White-eared Monarch	7/10/2010	Redwood Park	SB



Pacific Baza under attack. Photo: Judi Gray

**Club-** Club Outing  
**SB**, S. Burke; **BG**, B. Gray; **JG**, J Gray; **RH**, R. Hobson; **BJ**, B. Jolly; **PM**, P. McConnell.

If anyone wishes to submit bird notes they can do this directly to me at [mcconnel@usq.edu.au](mailto:mcconnel@usq.edu.au) or via the Club's mailing address.

Thanks  
 Pat McConnell

## Local Species Census 30-31 October

By Mick Atzeni

For this month's Species Census, I'd like participants, where possible, to actively seek out those species not yet reported for 2010. The "Wanted" list appears below. We need 14 species to break the record of 228 species (2009 Challenge). For what it's worth, those bolded species (and likely location) are my predictions by year's end. What are yours?

Blue-billed Duck \*  
Musk Duck \*  
Freckled Duck \*  
**Cotton Pygmy-goose \*(Hood's dam, Helidon)**  
Mallard \*  
Chestnut Teal \*  
**Great Crested Grebe \*(Hood's dam)**  
Pied Cormorant \*  
**Little Egret (Hood's dam)**  
Little Bittern \*  
Black-necked Stork \*  
Osprey \*  
Brahminy Kite \*  
Grey Falcon \*  
Brolga \*  
Baillon's Crake \*  
Australian Spotted Crake \*  
**Spotless Crake \*(Iredale site)**  
Black-tailed Native-hen \*  
Red-backed Button-quail \*  
Little Button-quail \*  
Black-breasted Button-quail \*  
Black-tailed Godwit \*  
Whimbrel \*  
**Marsh Sandpiper (Hood's dam)**  
Common Greenshank \*  
Common Sandpiper \*  
Red-necked Stint \*  
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper  
Curlew Sandpiper \*  
Red-necked Phalarope \*  
Painted Snipe \*  
Pacific Golden Plover \*  
Red-capped Plover \*  
Banded Lapwing  
Australian Pratincole \*  
Gull-billed Tern \*  
Caspian Tern \*  
Whiskered Tern  
White-winged Black Tern \*  
Squatter Pigeon \*  
Diamond Dove \*

Superb Fruit-Dove \*  
**Topknot Pigeon (Redwood Park or Prince Henry Drive)**  
Red-winged Parrot \*  
Crimson Rosella  
Budgerigar \*  
Turquoise Parrot \*  
**Pallid Cuckoo (Lower Flagstone)**  
Black-eared Cuckoo \*  
Barking Owl \*  
Sooty Owl \*  
Masked Owl \*  
Spotted Nightjar \*  
**Fork-tailed Swift (overhead, Summer)**  
Red-backed Kingfisher \*  
Noisy Pitta \*  
Western Gerygone  
White-plumed Honeyeater \*  
Painted Honeyeater \*  
Black Honeyeater \*  
Scarlet Robin \*  
Red-capped Robin  
**Satin Flycatcher \*(Redwood Park or Highfields Falls)**  
**White-winged Triller (Iredale)**  
**Masked Woodswallow \*(Upper Lockyer)**  
**White-browed Woodswallow \*(Upper Lockyer)**  
Black-faced Woodswallow \*  
Little Woodswallow \*  
Australian Raven \*  
Diamond Firetail \*  
White-backed Swallow \*  
Little Grassbird \*  
**Rufous Songlark (Lower Flagstone)**  
**Brown Songlark \*(Kingsthorpe area)**  
Russet-tailed Thrush \*  
**Common Blackbird \*(Fitzpatrick-Router St area, Wilsonton)**

\* Rare/unusual locally



Furthermore, rather than trying to visit as many grids as possible, do fewer grids more thoroughly. This year, I'd like a concerted effort in the three north-eastern grids (N3, N4, and C7) of our survey area. These take in Cabarlah East, Murphy's Creek, Upper Lockyer, White Mountain State Forest, Helidon and Iredale. Please contact me on my mobile 0458 9489 55 or email [matzeni@westnet.com.au](mailto:matzeni@westnet.com.au) for maps, checklists, or if you wish to be assigned to an area, or to a team. Meeting point and times are to be arranged by each team.

To collate records, gather at the Helidon Rest Area at 11am on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>. Those surveying on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>, can meet me by prior appointment. Otherwise, please phone, email, or post your records to the club address by 5th November.

Also, as per Ken's editorial - even if you do not participate in the census, please count all Australian White Ibis and note the locations, on the 31<sup>st</sup>. For further information, contact [ibiscensus@ecosure.com.au](mailto:ibiscensus@ecosure.com.au)

### **Toowoomba Bird Observers Inc AGM**

*By Steve Burke*

All members are invited to attend the 2010 AGM being held at the Uniting Church hall on the corner of Tor and North Streets on Wednesday night October 20th. I would like to kick the meeting off at 7 pm to give plenty of time for a light supper afterward. Mick Atzeni will give an informative presentation on his trip last year to Tanzania with his father Laurie. From what I have seen of Mick's photos, it will be a presentation well worth seeing. Please bring a plate. A cushion might also come in handy. If you are interested in offering your talents to the Club as a Committee member please make contact with any of the current Committee.



Variable Sunbird, Sept 2009, Karatu, Tanzania.  
Photo: Mick Atzeni

## COMING CLUB EVENTS

### Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2010

**Venue:** Uniting Church Hall

**Time:** 7.00 pm

**Meet:** Corner Tor and North Streets

**Phone:** Olive on 07 4633 0553 or Steve on 07 4616 2333 (WK) or 0434 397 532

### Sat/Sun, 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2010

**Venue:** Local TBO Survey Area

**Time:** Up to you.

**Meet:** Make own arrangements.

**Coordinator:** Mick Atzeni

**Phone:** 07 4688 1318 (WK)

### Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2010

**Venue:** Breakfast with the birds

**Time:** 7.00 am

**Meet:** Loveday Cove, Cooby Dam

**Leader:** Olive Booth

**Phone:** 4633 0553

## Committee Members

<b>President</b>	Steve Burke	0434 397 532 <a href="mailto:sburke@heritageseeds.com.au">sburke@heritageseeds.com.au</a>
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**Deadline for articles for the next Newsletter is 18 November, 2010**

Please e-mail or post articles to the Editor.

**If undeliverable return to  
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**Surface Mail**

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