

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

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NEWS-SHEET No. 47 - NOVEMBER 1979.

The Club's Annual General Meeting took place on Saturday, October 13th and was well attended. The new format of an afternoon meet followed by a barbecue seems to meet with approval, so it is hoped to follow this pattern next year. Office bearers for the upcoming year are President, Bill Jolly; Secretary/Treasurer, Ann Shore; Editor/Records Officer, Ron Hopkinson.

As mooted in last month's editorial the question of an increase in membership fees arose at the meeting. It was unanimously, but regretfully, agreed that the fee for the coming year would have to be \$6.00 and \$3.00 for students. However this still represents good value in this age of "hard to get values".

A discussion took place on the subject of similar groups, such as high school naturalist clubs, joining us for mutual benefit. It was decided to offer a corporate membership to such bodies. This would involve the payment of one joining fee and the supply of one copy of this News-sheet to such bodies. From this basis it is hoped to attract younger members to the virtues of birding as an interest for their spare time. Fuller details of the meeting in the form of minutes and annual reports will be found elsewhere in this issue.

We had a good turn out for the Club's Annual Bird count on Sunday, October 21st. Weather conditions were not ideal, particularly for the uprange people. However the object of the exercise is never to count record numbers of birds but simply to record what is there on that day. This was done so the day could be counted a success. In the event two new birds were added to the Club list. Final results will be published in the January issue so we will withhold comments and comparisons until then.

Club member Marilyn Jacobs is preparing an index of the Club's News-sheet. This mammoth task will be of great value to members and we extend preliminary thanks to her, in anticipation. It is hoped to publish the result with our next issue.

Six copies of the Readers Digest Book of Australian Birds have been ordered for members. Purchase of this most valuable book at Club price is another benefit that accrues from membership. If you do not yet have a copy contact any member of the Executive.

And now the bad news. The Camp out at Goomburra is off. Circumstances have mitigated against us and it is necessary to postpone this trip. Details of the Field day to take place on Sunday, November 18th appear in the usual place in this issue.

Ron Hopkinson,  
Editor.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS.

206. Red-backed Kingfisher (*Halcyon pyrrhopygia*). 21.10.79. Flagstone Creek/  
Iredale Road.

Peter Bostock, Sue Elmes, John Gregor, Ron Hopkinson.

One individual of this species - streaked green and whitish crown - distinct black line through eye through to back of neck - reddish chestnut rump and black flank patches revealed in flight.

207. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*). 21.10.79. Hood's property,  
Helidon.

John Gregor, Ron Hopkinson.

One member of this species resting quietly at the water's edge - rufous crown - pale eye stripe - pale whitish grey underparts with streaks on breast - legs dull yellowish green.

MINUTES OF 1979 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The President, Bill Jolly, opened the meeting at 3.00 p.m. on Saturday, 13th. October on the verandah of "Ringmere". He welcomed those present and mentioned that the Club was trying the idea of an afternoon meeting instead of an evening one.

1. Apologies for absence: Apologies were received on behalf of Ron Wilson, John Coman, Brough Warren, Mathuen Morgan, The Dolleys, Ron Hamilton, Simon Atzeni, Elizabeth Russell and Mrs. Bartlett.
2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting: Ann Shore proposed that the minutes of the last A.G.M., which had been published in Newsletter No. 35, be taken as read. This motion was seconded by A. Powell and passed unanimously.
3. President's Report: The President gave his report which follows:-

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

It gives me considerable pleasure to be able to report with confidence that 1979 has been a strong year for our club.

I believe we have been successful during the past year in terms of the first and most basic of the stated aims as enumerated in our constitution and as set out at the head of our monthly News-sheet - that is "To encourage the observation and study of the birds of the Toowoomba area".

Our membership has continued to grow steadily, with new members joining us not only from the immediate vicinity of our local study area, but also from locations as widespread and as diverse as Southport and Cunnamulla, which in these latter instances serves I suggest as a comment upon the quality of the monthly News-sheet which our Editor produces. For such distant members the News-sheet is for the most part their only link with the club, and it is clearly valued to the extent that people are prepared to pay an annual subscription in order to receive it.

One side-effect of our growth in numbers is that we now produce 50 copies of each monthly News-sheet, and by the time this meeting is over that number may well have to be increased. To have attained such growth in only four years in a city of Toowoomba's size is quite remarkable. Translated into, for example, the Brisbane environment we would be talking about a membership, proportionately, of more than 600! Our influence is also growing as our News-sheet reaches the North, South, East and West of Queensland, as well as other States, and we are recognised as a club that innovates. It has been heartening to watch as more than one of our Toowoomba Bird Club 'new ideas' have been taken up by other groups.

IDENT'S REPORT (cont/d.)

Our success in pursuit of our stated aims stems directly from the energies of our members, who have joined enthusiastically in our task of placing Toowoomba's Bird population on record, who have supported our monthly field trips in which we have pooled our expertise and each helped the other to grow in our understanding of our environment, and who have contributed to our communication both between ourselves and with others through contributions to our News-sheet.

Since our last A.G.M. we have added a further 9 species to the list of those recorded by two or more members between Helidon and Gowrie Mountain, bringing to 205 the total number of species documented in our News-sheet as belonging to the Toowoomba List. As well as maintaining an authoritative overall species list and conducting a regular and substantial Annual Bird Census we have added information to that which may be found in the Field Guides and Handbooks by placing on record the month by month status of the birds which occur in our local area. I should add that we have reliably established the presence of several species which were not previously described as occurring in Toowoomba at all.

As to my own activities during the past year, apart from an ongoing tendency for flagwaving on behalf of the Club, I have delivered addresses on the topic of techniques of field identification to students of Toowoomba State High School, to the naturalists group at Toowoomba Grammar School, to trainee teachers at the Darling Downs Institute as part of their Science in Education programme and to a group of Queensland Secondary School Science teachers as well as representing the club at a field event at Laidley as part of the World Environment Day activities. This followed a successful field event we presented at Lake Dyer in September of last year at the request of the Laidley Centenary Committee.

It has been my privilege to be supported by a strong and efficient executive throughout the year. I was particularly glad when Ron Hopkinson was able to return as Editor. I have already indicated the value to the club of an informative and authoritative News-sheet. Ron has now produced 27 of our 46 News-sheets and has not only brought them to a standard of excellence and reliability in those important terms, but has also succeeded in making them eminently readable. As if that wasn't enough, Ron has also maintained the club's records including compiling our regular contribution to the R.A.O.U. Atlas scheme.

Our Secretary/Treasurer Mike Russell revealed to me the other day that when he accepted nomination last year he didn't realise about the "Treasurer bit". Mike made it clear from the start 12 months ago, that his planned workloads and commitments over the next few years would allow him to serve in this capacity for one term only. I leave you to judge his effective management of club funds by comparing our opening and closing balances for the year as revealed in his Treasurer's report. I commend what Mike calls his 'basic book-keeping' to Government Treasurers.

To Ron and Mike I offer my sincere appreciation for their valued endeavours on the club's behalf. They have contributed significantly to the club's stability and growth, and the standard they have set is a high one.

Such was the success of this year, that for next I can only hope for more of the same. We have not gone out of our way to expand during 1979, but have grown none-the-less. I am sure that we would gain from showing who we are and what we do to the people of the Lockyer Valley with a view to increasing our membership below the Range as well as learning more about the birds of this particularly rich natural aviary. Members will be able to view today our collection of study skins, prepared for us by club member John Coman. Hopefully we will be able to expand this valuable collection during the year ahead. John will also be taking steps to get our Black-shouldered Kite study off the ground. We clearly have a role to play in assisting scientific research by applying our energies to carefully organised studies of the birds we are watching. While continuing our regular study of our local area we may look forward to breaking new ground through two or three camp-outs next year, including a four-day venture at Easter.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (cont/d.)

It is vital, I believe, that we strive to encourage and assist younger people to discover for themselves the realities that we have been privileged to witness through the study of, and interaction with, their natural environment. To this end discussions are in hand with a number of local schools concerning proposals for the affiliation of their naturalists groups to our club.

At the close of what I trust has come across as an optimistic report I feel it is most important that I thank and congratulate you, our members, one and all, for joining in. For your valued and essential involvement in an exciting year of companionable discovery.

4. Editor's Report: The Editor gave his report which follows:-

EDITOR/RECORDS OFFICER'S REPORT.

To the President and Members,

Since December 1978 it has been my privilege to serve the office of Editor/Records Officer and I submit this brief report of the year's activities.

Apart from the personal pleasure members gain from sharing a mutual interest, this Club, I like to think, serves a useful purpose to ornithology in general. The production of our monthly News-sheet puts on record useful observations by our members. Through the exchange of our journal with kindred organisations and placement in libraries, we reach greater numbers of people than our own membership.

The second useful project of our Club is the system of monthly checklists of birds seen by our members in the Club's local study area. Its culmination in the Annual Summary, published through the News-sheet, gives a lot of added point to members' birding activities as well as setting on record the birds of our area. I commend this system to members. We currently receive about ten lists per month. This means over ten members who are recording the birds around them every day. Obviously an increase of this number would give even better coverage.

From time to time in the News-sheet I appeal for contributions of items of interest for the journal. I repeat that appeal here. As has been said it need be only a paragraph or two concerning some observation or aspect of birding that the member would like to share. Longer items, of course, would be equally welcome.

It would be appropriate here to restate the Editorial policy regarding the vernacular names used in the News-sheet. As we are all too well aware, many and varied are the common names applied to Australian birds. This often leads to confusion. So it has always been Editorial policy to use R.A.O.U. vernacular names. Although some of the recent changes were not totally approved, in the interests of clarity and accuracy they are the names that should be used in writings about birds. By all means refer to *Xenorhynchus asiaticus* as Jabiru when talking about it but please understand if when you write about it we refer to it as Black-necked Stork.

In closing I would like to offer my sincere personal and official thanks to my fellow members of the Executive for the wise counsel and help they have given me through the year. Thanks too, to the members who have contributed to the News-sheet and who have kept up the flow of checklists.

Finally my thanks to Eileen Jolly who types the final script for News-sheets every month. Without her dexterous fingers and deadline catching ability our Club News-sheet would not be the journal it is.

5. Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer presented a Balance Sheet, audited by Mr. N. Hughes, and gave his report. The Balance Sheet is as follows:-

TREASURER'S REPORT (cont/d.)

TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB

ACCOUNTS FOR OCT. 1978 to OCT. 1979.

	<u>Debit</u>	<u>Credit</u>
Balance in Acc. 9793 at 20.10.78.		\$56.19
Subscriptions received (35 @ \$4, 7 @ \$3)		161.00
Donations received		6.07
Bank interest		1.77
4 Readers Digest Bird Books @ \$21.43		85.72
Refund of Kite Project		10.00
 Expenditure:		
Printing	\$64.20	
Postage & Stationery	45.80	
4 Readers Digest Bird Books	86.02	
Miscellaneous	34.10	
	<hr/>	
	\$230.12	
Balance	90.63	
	<hr/>	
	\$320.75	<u>\$320.75</u>

Mike Russell moved that the Report and Balance Sheet be accepted. This was seconded by Ron Hopkinson and passed unanimously.

6. Business Arising: a. Consequent on his report the Treasurer proposed that the annual subscription be raised to \$6.00 and student membership to \$4.00 in order to give the Club a better working balance for exigencies such as guest lecturers. After discussion The Treasurer agreed to amend his motion to limit student membership to \$3.00. Ann Shore seconded the motion which was then passed unanimously.
- b. Mike Russell asked that his congratulations be added to the President's on the quality of the newsletter. He commended Ron Hopkinson on an article from Ecos on D.D.T. and birds' egg shells which had appeared in the last newsletter.
- c. Bill Jolly said that he had had a request from Ron Hamilton of St. Mary's School, whose student members of their bird club would be taking part in our bird count, for affiliation of their club with ours. He invited discussion on the concept of corporate membership. As a result of the discussion which followed it was agreed that corporate membership be offered to such bodies at the annual membership fee of \$6.00 which then entitled that body to one newsletter.
- d. A. Powell asked what happened to student members when they ceased to be students. He was assured that student membership entitled that person to a year's membership.
7. Election of Officers: The President then vacated the chair for elections and it was taken by Mike Russell, the retiring Secretary/Treasurer.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Nominator</u>
President	Bill Jolly	Brian Fowler
Editor/Records Officer	Ron Hopkinson	John Gregor
Secretary/Treasurer	Ann Shore	Mike Russell

These three officers were unopposed and therefore declared elected by the Chairman.

8. Any other business:

a. A letter from the Australian Conservation Foundation inviting us to become a corporate member, at a fee of \$25 per annum, was read by Ron Hopkinson. In the discussion that followed the point was made that members of our club have joined the club because of an interest in local birds and are presumably in sympathy with the aims and ideals of the club. Whilst the A.C.F. is a kindred organisation it has much wider aims, many of which are not connected with birds. If our club was to become a corporate member of the A.C.F. this might place some members in an invidious position vis-a-vis certain non-avian activities and aims of the A.C.F. Since certain members of the Bird Club are also members of the A.C.F. the support of this national body could be sought and expected in the case of local avian conservation issues.

Bill Jolly suggested that a letter be put in a future newsletter canvassing comment from members not present at the meeting.

b. Bill Jolly reminded members that Graham Corbin is responsible for the Club's library. He will bring publications, particularly journals, received during the previous month, to club outings together with a loans book. Members were urged to make use of this facility to read the literature sent to us. Bill felt there would be no point in the club subscribing to journals such as "Birds", the R.S.P.B. magazine, unless members gave clear evidence that they were going to avail themselves of the literature which we already receive.

c. Bill Jolly reminded members that John Coman is willing to prepare skins for display from dead birds in reasonable condition. Please don't send them by mail over public holidays because humming birds are not native.

The President closed the meeting at 4.06 p.m.

Members then examined a collection of prepared skins, made final plans for the Bird Count on Sunday, 21st October and enjoyed a barbecue.

"MARYLAND".

Recently I spent two days at Maryland - my parents' sheep property 15 ks from Stanthorpe, where I was very surprised at the number of birds around at that time of year - early August.

In all I saw 49 varieties in the two days, 46 of these I saw on the first day and then the weather deteriorated rapidly, as it is prone to do at Maryland and I saw very few birds the next day.

These birds were seen in a normal work day at home, driving around, sheep work etc. - we didn't actually stop and go 'bird watching' at all. In all Brough and I have seen 85 species at Maryland since the end of November last year. Maybe we could make Maryland a weekend, or day, club activity sometime.

Margaret Warren.

Species list - "Maryland" - August 1979.

- |                     |                     |                        |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Little P. Cormorant | Eastern Rosella     | Striated Thornbill     |
| Pacific Heron       | Pallid Cuckoo       | Noisy Miner            |
| Wh.-faced Heron     | L. Kookaburra       | Yellow-f. Honeyeater   |
| Sacred Ibis         | Welcome Swallow     | White-naped Honeyeater |
| Straw-necked Ibis   | Tree Martin         | Eastern Spinebill      |
| Pacific Black Duck  | Richard's Pipit     | Striated Pardalote     |
| Maned Duck          | Bl.-f. Cuckoo-shr.  | House Sparrow          |
| Whistling Kite      | Scarlet Robin       | Diamond Firetail       |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle  | Jacky Winter        | Double-barred Finch    |
| Brown Falcon        | Grey Shrike-thrush  | Common Starling        |
| Aust. Kestrel       | Restless Flycatcher | White-winged Chough    |
| Purple Swamphen     | Willie Wagtail      | Aust. Magpie-lark      |
| Masked Lapwing      | Superb Fairy-wren   | Grey Butcherbird       |
| Crested Pigeon      | White-br. Scrubwren | Pied Butcherbird       |
| Galah               | Speckled Warbler    | Aust. Magpie           |
| Crimson Rosella     | Yell.-r. Thornbill  | Pied Currawong         |
|                     |                     | Aust. Raven.           |

CONFRONTATION.

On two occasions in the last fortnight a scene of interest was witnessed close to home, where Magpies were chasing individual Richard's Pipits. On the first occasion the birds were in the sky and climbed to a considerable height with the Pipit following a weaving course followed by the Magpie which "broke off" the action after not being able to catch up to the Pipit.

In the second instance the Pipit was on the ground when the Magpie dived on it "clipping" its bill just above the Pipit in a similar action to one Magpie trying to drive off another Magpie. On this occasion the Pipit then took to the air and after a weaving, swerving flight, in which the Magpie could not again catch the Pipit the Pipit "broke off" the action by diving to the ground whereupon the Magpie continued to fly away.

Presently Magpies and Australian Pipits are the most common birds in this immediate area.

Ron Wilson.

THE TAWNY FROGMOUTH.

Those members of the Club who came on the Field Day visit to Mango Vale, Withcott, earlier this year, may remember that one of the highlights was the discovery of a Tawny Frogmouth sitting immobile on a branch just above the path, allowing everyone their fill of gazing at this rather strange bird at close quarters.

I knew from my sister-in-law, Mrs. Drabsch, that Tawny Frogmouths were quite often seen around the farm, but was more than delighted when a large collection of sticks with a hump on top, well up in a gum tree, turned out to be a Tawny Frogmouth sitting on a nest - so well camouflaged that it was quite hard to detect.

I was interested to know from Mrs. Drabsch's observations over the years that a pair of these birds will adopt different postures when sitting together in a tree. One will freeze in a diagonal position, with head tilted up, while its mate sits squat, but upright, with its feathers all fluffed out. I wonder which bird takes which position and if other members have noticed this too, and if they, like us, were surprised to find them nesting in the open rather than, as we had expected mistakenly, in a hole in a tree.

Ann Shore.

re: DEATH OF A DABCHICK (News-sheet No. 42 - June 1979).

An interesting article appeared in "The Australian Birdwatcher", Vol. 6, No. 5, March 1976, page 169, under the authorship of Messrs V.T. and T.G. Lowe of Mystic Park, Victoria. They described a situation witnessed by themselves on Lake Tutchewop, northern Victoria in which Australian Pelicans in groups were surrounding, killing with their large bills and then attempting to swallow, lone, large, juvenile Silver Gulls which had come from nests on an island in the lake.

Ron Wilson.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

Great Egret. 21.10.79. "Ringmere", Withcott. EJ. WJ. SP.  
Rufous Night Heron. 21.10.79. Redwood Park & Spring Ck. MA. JC.  
21.10.79. Flagstone Ck. JG. REH.  
Collared Sparrowhawk. 21.10.79. Redwood Park. MA. JC.  
Wedge-tailed Eagle. 16.10.79. Over DBIAE. RW. VW.  
Australian Hobby. 21.10.79. Ruthven St. MA. JC.  
Ruff-banded Rail. 3.10.79. Lake Cootharaba. RGH. REH.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES. (cont/d.)

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo.(3 birds) 21.10.79. Flagstone Ck. JG. REH.  
Horsefield's Bronze-cuckoo. 3.10.79. Ocean St. GC. JEC. JCC.  
Shining Bronze-cuckoo. 7/8.10.79. "Shorelands", Withcott. AHS.  
Common Koel. 8.10.79. "Ringmere", Withcott. WJ.  
Channel-billed Cuckoo.(5 birds) 21.10.79. Gittings Rd., Withcott. EJ. WJ. SP. DN.  
Tawny Frogmouth.(nesting) 1.10.79. Mango Vale, Withcott. AHS. JS.  
Rainbow Bee-eater. 17.10.79. Ocean St. JEC. JCC.  
Dollarbird. 9.10.79. "Ringmere", Withcott. EJ.  
18.10.79.(19 birds) Rangeview. JEC.  
20.10.79. "Shorelands", Withcott. AHS.  
Ground Cuckoo-shrike.(2 birds) 29.10.79. Rangeview. JEC.  
Logrunner. 19.10.79. Binna Burra. MA.  
Golden-headed Cisticola. 24.10.79. Railway Yards, Toowoomba. REH.  
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin. 21.10.79. "Shorelands", Withcott. AHS. JS.  
Regent Bowerbird. 24.10.79. Range Highway (lower end). EJ.  
Paradise Riflebird.(female) 20.10.79. Binna Burra. MA.  
White-winged Chough. 21.10.79. Hood's Property, Helidon. JG. REH.  
Black-faced Woodswallow. 21.10.79. Gowrie Junction. GC. JEC. JCC.

MA: Michael Atzeni. JC: John Coman. GC: Graham Corbin. JCC: Jane Corbin.  
JEC: Jim Corbin. JG: John Gregor. REH: Rod Hobson. REH: Ron Hopkinson.  
EJ: Eileen Jolly. WJ: Bill Jolly. DN: David Newlands. SP: Sue Patterson.  
AHS: Ann Shore. JS: John Shore. RW: Ron Wilson. VW: Viv. Wilson.

FIELD DAY FOR NOVEMBER.

Date: Sunday, November 18th, 1979. Place: Lake Dyer, Laidley & Lake Clarendon.  
Leader: Ron Hopkinson. Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park.  
Time: 8.15 a.m. for departure 8.30 a.m. sharp.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Club is pleased to welcome the following new members:

Shane Brady, 1, Lockhart Court, Toowoomba.  
Andrew Tan, c/- Baillie Henderson Hospital, Toowoomba.  
Mrs. Phyllis Christian, 3, Goss Avenue, Southport, 4215.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Q.O.S. Newsletter - September, 1979.  
The Bird Observer - October, 1979.