

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

President: Ron Hopkinson,
50 Bass St., Toowoomba, 4350.
Ph: 35 4952

Secretary/Treasurer: Ann Shore,
"Shorelands", Withcott, 4344.
Ph: 30 3207

Records Officer: Michael Atzeni,
2 Memory St., Toowoomba, 4350.
Ph: 35 1933.

Please address all correspondence to:
The Secretary, Toowoomba Bird Club,
"Shorelands", Withcott, 4344.



NEWS -SHEET No. 61-JANUARY 1981.

Now that the Field Day has been set down for the fourth Sunday of each month (Annual General Meeting, October 18th 1980), it seems valid to re-state the advantage that accrues. This is that even if your news-sheet does not reach you before the day, members need only arrive at Pigott's car park at 7.15 a.m. to be sure of joining a Field trip to somewhere. As the Field Day is also our monthly meeting it provides the opportunity for discussion on club affairs in general. We hope to see you at this month's trip.

A Black Swan seems to have taken up residence on Lake Annand. It appeared several weeks ago and is now part of the scenery there. It accepts human presence (and presents, in the form of food) so it could be assumed that it came here from a similar park elsewhere. A nice acquisition for Lake Annand.

Another worthwhile acquisition for the Lake would be the bird garden envisaged by John Hilliard and reported in "The Chronicle" of Saturday, December 20th, 1980. Mr Hilliard would like to see the south-western sector of the park developed as a bird sanctuary. Planting of suitable trees in an effort to attract parrots and other nectar eating species would be a good starting point. Hopefully the scheme will gain enough support to bring it to reality. Certainly, this club ought to get involved. This is just the practical sort of venture that adds that extra interest to our hobby and benefits the reason for that interest, birds.

Among the many bird books on the shop shelves at the moment is "Birds of Australian Gardens". Publisher is Rigby, with paintings by Peter Trusler. The text is written by Tess Kloot and Ellen M. McCulloch. The detail achieved by Peter Trusler is photographic, with its realism. The book is a thing of joy to all bird lovers and I suggest that you check it out.

Of particular interest in the book is a credit given in the "references" section to Rod Hobson and this Club's News-sheet. In issue 19 (July, 1977) Rod recorded having seen a Black-shouldered Kite take a Red-rumped Parrot. This fact is recorded in the text. All of this re-inforces what has been said several times in this journal. Your observations can be of interest and value if you let us know of them through these pages. Because of our exchange system with other clubs, your notes reach beyond our immediate membership.

itorail e/td.

For the time being, it would be most expedient if your monthly checklist and bird notes were sent to me at 50 Bass St. This comes about because of a change in editorship. Until we (hopefully) gain a new Editor, please contact me if you have bird notes or contributions for the sheet.

Unfortunately for this Club, John Gregor is moving from Toowoomba. He is soon to take up a new appointment in Mackay. John has been our Editor/Records Officer twelve months and in that time has maintained our records and our News-sheet very competently. On behalf of the Club I extend sincere thanks to him for his work and wish him and Shirley many happy birding days in North Queensland.

Finally, this month I have to remind you that annual subscriptions are now due. The fee is still just \$6.00 (although donations are always welcome) and offers fair value in these inflationary times. Elsewhere in this issue you will find a renewal slip. Please fill in the details and return it promptly to the Secretary/Treasurer, Ann Shore, "Shorelands", Withcott.4344, together with your payment. Thank you.

Ron Hopkinson, Acting Editor

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRD.

216. Little Button-quail. (*Turnix velox*). 16.12.80. Rangeview.

Jim Corbin. Jane Corbin. Graham Corbin. Ron Hopkinson.

One female of this species which crashed into the window of Rangeview station, with disastrous results, at 4.20 a.m. I took the bird home to show the family and it was then the problem of identification began. Ron Hopkinson came to the rescue and we agreed on Little Button-quail. Crown and nape darkish cinnamon--upperparts brownish with feathers showing black cross bars and whitish grey edges--underparts light buff--heavy grey bill--legs flesh coloured.

At 2 a.m. December 17th a male of the same species, showing the whitish central streak on the crown, hit the window but was luckier. After a rest in the station bucket it was released apparently none the worse for the experience.

Jim Corbin.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

As will be seen by reference to the masthead, all correspondence should now be directed to The Secretary, Toowoomba Bird Club, "Shorelands", Withcott, 4344.

GARDEN BIRD DAY. 26.1.81.

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia is conducting a nationwide survey of garden birds on Australia Day, January 26th, 1981. The scheme was begun last year, mostly in N.S.W. and Victoria, and you are invited to participate this year.

The survey takes place in just one hour, between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. Identify and record the species and numbers of all birds in your garden at that hour. The only stipulation is that the birds be in the garden not just flying over it. Also indicate weather conditions and if the garden is near bush. After the count the information should be sent to the Wild Life Preservation Society, Box 3248, G.P.O. Sydney, N.S.W. 2001.

Ron Hopkinson.

THE TAKING OF A COURSER.

The week-end of thirteenth and fourteenth September, 1980, I passed in camp at the Cacoorey ruins. These buildings, now shockingly vandalised, lie 80 kilometres north of Birdsville, on the main Birdsville-Bedourie road.

On the morning of the fourteenth I was gathering firewood when I witnessed the death of an Australian Pratincole (*Stiltia isabella*), taken by a Brown

TAKEING OF A COURSER.c/td.

Falcon (*Falco berigora*). I first noticed the pratincole flying about six metres above ground level, easily outstripping a pursuing falcon. Neither bird seemed in any great hurry, the falcon apparently content in distracting the pratincole. As the pratincole gradually increased the lead, a second falcon, of which the pratincole (and myself) were unaware, dropped from above, smashing the pratincole to earth and apparently killing it, instantly. The harrying falcon soon alighted alongside the killer and victim.

As I witnessed no animosity between the falcons over the spoils, I am, therefore, of the opinion that this was a planned, co-operative manouvre between the two raptors.

I left the two falcons to their fresh fowl; to brood over my tin of slowly percolating baked beans.

Rod Hobson.

'BIRDIE TO SMITH'

"The Chronicle" of December 22nd 1980 carried a report of a Crows Nest golfer, Ron Smith, who achieved a golfing birdie with a difference. Hitting off from the No. 5 hole at Crows Nest golf course, Smith drove the ball straight into a bird flying overhead.

The unfortunate bird plummeted straight to the ground and was dead on arrival.

What with so many cricketers going for a duck and now golfers becoming aggressive, birds will have to retaliate --if only Emus could fly.

Graham Corbin-Ron Hopkinson

THE KISS OF LIFE

We borrow again from "The Chronicle" for this one. A London ambulance bearer, Earle Duncan, saw a duck floating apparently lifeless in a neighbour's garden pool.

He acted swiftly and blew in her beak and "suddenly she opened her eyes", he said. A photographer pictured a lively duck giving her saviour a friendly peck.

Big deal, Mr. Duncan, let's see you do it with a Pelican.

Ron Hopkinson.

BIRD MOVEMENT THROUGH THE TOOWOOMBA AREA.

Part 2 . Non-Passerines.

This article continues on from part 1 in News-sheet No. 56 and has been compiled in similar fashion.

The local study area is defined in Part 1 and also in News-sheet No. 45. The table given has been compiled from four Annual Summaries, 1976-1979. To illustrate the interpretation of each figure in the table-- a 2 in April for the Common Koel means this species has been recorded in April at least once for 2 out of the 4 years.

In general, most of the 113 species of non-passerines recorded in our study area are either nomadic or migratory. Nomadism is prevalent and is due to a variety of factors, the major influence being suitable bodies of water, something our area is not overendowed with, especially in the proximity of the city. As a result, many of the water birds have patchy records showing no definite trends. The fact is, they may turn up at any time (some more frequently than others) provided a water habitat has suitable food.

I believe the data reflects the infrequency with which water bodies were visited by members rather than the status of the species concerned. To illustrate this point, the Comb-crested Jacana, Black-fronted Plover and Black-winged Stilt all have similar 'patchy' records and personal experience prompts me to suggest that in most cases the three were seen together.

However, species such as the Black-necked Stork, Black Swan and Silver Gull

BIRD MOVEMENT c/td.

are definitely rare visitors. Others such as the Little Pied Cormorant and Pacific Black Duck seem to be able to remain locally at waters unsuitable to other species.

Another nomadic influence is the flowering of trees. As a result, Rainbow, Scaly-breasted and Little Lorikeet numbers fluctuate locally while Musk Lorikeets seem to disappear totally for several months.

Fruiting of Casuarina trees certainly lures the Glossy and Red-tailed Black Cockatoos to the area. Turquoise Parrots follow seasonal grasses as do Brown and Stubble Quail. Seasonal crops are also influential. Fruiting trees in areas such as Redwood Park attract the fruit eating pigeons, White-headed and Topknot, for example. The White-headed is also fond of Camphor Laurel and has been seen 'downtown' in Queens Park.

Birds of prey are mostly nomadic. Of the 16 species so far confirmed in our area only the Kestrel, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Black-shouldered Kite are regularly reported. The others have scant records with a notable absence of data in the November-February period. Two explanations come to mind: our area is unfavourable during this period, or we have a repeat of the situation with Spring/Summer passerine migrants, namely a lack of watchers in the area at this time, or possibly a combination of the two.

Migratory water birds present in the Spring/Summer period include the Rufous Night-heron, Black Bittern (probably), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Matham's Snipe, the latter two arriving from across the Equator.

A host of more familiar migrants take up residence in the area in Spring, including the Dollarbird, Rainbow Bee-eater and Sacred Kingfisher. Individuals of these species may remain all year round. This also applies to Tree Martins, Fairy Martins and Welcome Swallows. White-throated Needletails and Fork-tailed Swifts drop in from Asia and Japan. The latter prefers plains and is therefore rarer in our area.

The Fan-tailed Cuckoo and Pheasant Coucal are the only exceptions in their family--all other cuckoos are mainly migratory and presumably breed in our area, except for the Oriental Cuckoo which is an Asian non-breeding visitor.

The Red-backed Kingfisher is an irregular migrant tending to venture north and east in the winter or in drought periods.

Admittedly, this article is just a repeat of known movements among our non-passerines, but the real interest lies with records of the Club from which the accompanying table has been compiled. In general it supports what has been said with only a couple of extremes, the most notable being the migratory Channel-billed Cuckoo being seen in every month.

Compiling the table from the four summaries certainly gave me a greater appreciation of the Club's progress as well as being a wealth of information. I hope it is a useful guide to members now and in the future where new annual summaries can be added to these figures.

Michael Atzeni

Editor's Note. The appearance of the Channel-billed Cuckoo every month in at least one of the four years in question certainly is of great interest. At a request from Michael I did some further research into records kept during my term as Records Officer. This disclosed that the record is quite accurate and the bird was, in fact recorded quite reliably, downrange, every month in the year 1979. Doubtless there are 'individuals' among birds as among any other species and some chance that year kept one or a few members of the specie in the area for us to record.

BIRD MOVEMENT c/td.

TABLE OF SELECTED SPECIES.

SPECIES	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Rufous Night-heron		1	1							2	1	2
Black Bittern		1	1									
Plumed Whistle-duck	2	2	2	2				1		1	1	1
Black Swan		1						1				
Black Kite			1	1	2	2	1	1	1			
Square-tailed Kite			1			1	1	1	2			
Whistling Kite	1	1	1	1							1	
Collared Sparrowhawk								1	1	1		
Grey Goshawk	1	2	1	2	2	1						
Little Eagle			1	2	1		1	2	2			
Spotted Harrier			2	1	2	2	3	4	2	1		
Black Falcon		1	1	1	2	1		1	1			
Australian Hobby	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	
Comb-crested Jacana	1	1	1					1	2			
Black-fronted Plover	2	1	1				1	1		1		
Black-winged Stilt	1	1	1	1				2	1	1		
Latham's Snipe		1						1	1	2	1	2
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper										1		
Silver Gull	1	2				1						1
White-headed Pigeon			1		1	1	2	2	4	3	1	2
Red-tailed Black Cockatoo			1					1		2		1
Glossy Black Cockatoo		1	1						1			
Musk Lorikeet					2	1	1	2	2			
Turquoise Parrot				1								
Oriental Cuckoo	1	1									1	
Pallid Cuckoo	2	2						2			1	1
Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo		1	2								3	
Shining Bronze Cuckoo		1		1	1			1	1	3		
Common Koel	4	4	4	2	1			1	3	4	4	4
Channel-billed Cuckoo	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3
White-throated Needletail	4	4	4	4		1				3	3	4
Fork-tailed Swift		1	2									1
Red-backed Kingfisher											1	1
Sacred Kingfisher	4	4	3	3	2	1		1	4	4	4	4
Rainbow Bee-eater	2	2	2	2		1	1	3	4	4	3	3
Dollarbird	4	4	3	3	2	1		1	4	4	4	4

MEMBER'S BIRD NOTES.

Great Crested Grebe. 27.12.80. Cooby Ck. RGH. REH.
 Silver Gull. 5.1.81. Oakey Weir. GC.
 Southern Boobook.(3 birds).13.12.80. Tourist Road. JG.SG.
 Little Friarbird. 9.12.80. Ocean St. JCC. JEC.

JCC:Jane Corbin. JEC:Jim Corbin. GC:Graham Corbin.JG:John Gregor.
 SG:Shirley Gregor. RGH:Rod Hobson. REH:Ron Hopkinson.

FIELD DAY FOR JANUARY.

Date:Sunday, January 25th. 1981. Place:Cooby Creek, Northern end.
 Assembly Point:Pigott's car park. Time:7.15am for departure 7.30am SHARP.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Q.O.S. Newsletter, November 1980.
 Urimbirra. October, November 1980.
 The Bird Observer. October, November, December 1980.
 ECOS. November 1980.
 Darling Downs Naturalist. December 1980.

FIFTH ANNUAL BIRD CENSUS - TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB- 2.11.1980

The 1980 Annual Bird Census was the fifth carried out by the Toowoomba Bird Club. However, the first of these in 1976 covered a smaller area and cannot be included for comparison purposes.

The area counted is the two ten minute blocks having central co-ordinates of 27^o35' S, 152^o05' E and 27^o35' S, 151^o55' E. The eastern half is referred to as "downrange" while the western is "uprange".

This year the count was postponed one week because of wet weather. However, essentially, it was carried out during the same season as usual, so the postponment was irrelevant.

Although the number of species seen this year was almost the same as last, the total number of individual birds was far below last year's total. Perhaps this could be attributed to the preceding dry period.

Of the 133 species recorded, one was new for the area; this is the White's Thrush.

The following resume of the last four years would seem to indicate a relatively stable bird population for the Toowoomba area.

U= Uprange. D= Downrange.	1977	1978	1979	1980
Number of birds seen	5947	6011	6858	5695
Number of species seen U	104	104	103	119
D	92	90	105	85
Total number of species seen	130	128	134	133
Species seen U&D	66	73	74	71
Non-passerine	65	55	63	59
Passerine	65	73	71	74

Although Census Day can be a bit tiring, I am sure that all those who took part thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Thank you for your efforts.

John Gregor.

Participants: Michael Atzeni. Leslie Ball. Leslie Boyce. Shane Brady.
 Ron Colpus. Graham Corbin. Jane Corbin. Jim Corbin.
 Dave Dowling. John Gregor. Gloria Hamilton. Ron Hamilton.
 Rod Hobson. Ron Hopkinson. Marilyn Jacobs. Lachlan Macdonald.
 Sue Mann. Sandy Pottinger. Elizabeth Russell. Mike Russell.
 Ann Shore. John Shore. Brough Warren. Margaret Warren.
 And the T.G.S. Nature Group.

LIST OF SPECIES AND NUMBERS OBSERVED.

	<u>U.</u>	<u>D.</u>	<u>T.</u>		<u>U.</u>	<u>D.</u>	<u>T.</u>
Australasian Grebe	14	2	16	Hardhead	7	-	7
Pied Cormorant	1	-	1	Maned Duck	28	17	45
Little Pied Cormorant	5	3	8	Black-shouldered Kite	8	-	8
Pacific Heron	7	2	9	Pacific Baza	1	-	1
White-faced Heron	14	9	23	Wedge-tailed Eagle	4	-	4
Great Egret	1	-	1	Brown Falcon	-	1	1
Rufous Night-heron	-	2	2	Australian Kestrel	34	8	42
Sacred Ibis	48	5	53	Dusky Moorhen	-	7	7
Straw-necked Ibis	95	75	170	Purple Swamphen	2	1	3
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	-	1	1	Eurasian Coot	1	-	1
Plumed Whistling-duck	-	1	1	Masked Lapwing	11	9	20
Black Swan	-	1	1	Black-fronted Plover	1	1	2
Pacific Black Duck	46	65	111	Black-winged Stilt	2	9	11
Grey Teal	33	6	39	Top-knot Pigeon	3	-	3

LIST OF SPECIES AND NUMBERS OBSERVED (Continued)

	U.	D.	T.		U.	D.	T.
White-headed Pigeon	3	-	3	Grey Fantail	7	1	8
Feral Pigeon	252	-	252	Willie Wagtail	16	30	46
Spotted Turtle-dove	7	1	8	Eastern Whipbird	11	6	17
Brown Cuckoo-dove	3	-	3	Grey-crowned Babbler	-	1	1
Peaceful Dove	-	2	2	Golden-headed Cisticola	18	6	24
Bar-shouldered Dove	12	7	19	Rufous Songlark	3	2	5
Crested Pigeon	65	15	80	Brown Songlark	2	-	2
Wonga Pigeon	1	-	1	Superb Fairy-wren	18	27	45
Galah	228	23	251	Variegated Fairy-wren	18	5	23
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	2	-	2	Red-backed Fairy-wren	-	1	1
Rainbow Lorikeet	18	-	18	Large-billed Scrubwren	6	-	6
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	94	2	96	White-browed Scrubwren	12	-	12
Little Lorikeet	2	-	2	Speckled Warbler	2	-	2
Cockatiel	68	-	68	Brown Gerygone	7	-	7
Crimson Rosella	4	-	4	White-throated Gerygone	15	1	16
Pale-headed Rosella	101	25	126	Brown Thornbill	38	-	38
Red-rumped Parrot	54	-	54	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	40	-	40
Pallid Cuckoo	6	-	6	Yellow Thornbill	2	-	2
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	4	-	4	Varied Sittella	4	-	4
Horsefield's Bronze-cuckoo	3	-	3	White-throated Treecreeper	1	2	3
Common Koel	12	6	18	Red Wattlebird	7	-	7
Channel-billed Cuckoo	-	3	3	Striped Honeyeater	1	5	6
Pheasant Coucal	2	2	4	Noisy Friarbird	64	16	80
Tawny Frogmouth	4	1	5	Little Friarbird	21	40	61
White-throated Needletail	6	-	6	Blue-faced Honeyeater	6	1	7
Azure Kingfisher	-	1	1	Noisy Miner	141	62	203
Laughing Kookaburra	70	24	94	Lewin's Honeyeater	45	3	48
Red-backed Kingfisher	-	1	1	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	2	-	2
Sacred Kingfisher	22	14	36	Brown Honeyeater	1	6	7
Rainbow Bee-eater	2	33	35	Eastern Spinebill	-	1	1
Dollarbird	59	27	86	Scarlet Honeyeater	3	-	3
Singing Bushlark	4	1	5	Mistletoebird	6	3	9
White-backed Swallow	5	11	16	Spotted Pardalote	8	-	8
Welcome Swallow	28	11	39	Striated Pardalote	7	9	16
Tree Martin	6	2	8	Silvereye	94	13	107
Fairy Martin	2	45	47	House Sparrow	544	13	557
Richard's Pipit	12	2	14	Red-browed Firetail	25	1	26
Blk-faced Cuckoo-shrike	90	49	139	Zebra Finch	-	20	20
Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrike	7	-	7	Double-barred Finch	1	8	9
Cicadabird	1	-	1	Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	1	-	1
White-winged Triller	14	13	27	Common Starling	482	74	556
Varied Triller	3	-	3	Common Mynah	273	29	302
White's Thrush	1	-	1	Olive-backed Oriole	8	2	10
Eastern Yellow Robin	7	2	9	Figbird	12	20	32
Golden Whistler	4	-	4	Spangled Drongo	5	-	5
Rufous Whistler	5	2	7	Regent Bowerbird	13	-	13
Grey Shrike-thrush	8	-	8	Australian Magpie-lark	137	46	183
Black-faced Monarch	3	-	3	Dusky Woodswallow	1	3	4
Spectacled Monarch	4	-	4	Grey Butcherbird	21	2	23
Satin Flycatcher	4	2	6	Pied Butcherbird	40	11	51
Restless Flycatcher	1	-	1	Australian Magpie	246	41	287
Rufous Fantail	18	-	18	Pied Currawong	155	11	166
				Torresian Crow	279	55	334

00000000

00000000