

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

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NEWS-SHEET No. 68-AUGUST 1981

For this month's Field Day we will be meeting with members of the N.C.S. It is proposed to begin the day with a look at Redwood Park which we haven't visited recently. We would hope to see a decent turnout of members for this opportunity to meet birders from another organization. The usual details apply for starting time and place. Annual Bird Census will take place on the week-end of October 24/25th. The two day spread, it is felt, will enable participants to have a less tiring time of it. Conversely it will give the keen ones the chance to count for two days.

Elsewhere in this issue is a "tear-off", which we hope you will complete and return to any member of the Executive, to indicate the extent of your participation in the census. A half day or two full days or somewhere in between would be fine. Early indication of your help would be appreciated.

The date for the Annual General Meeting has been set for Saturday October 17th. The venue and agenda will be advised prior to that day.

Ron Hopkinson.

PLUMED WHISTLING-DUCK.

Around 1:30am on a very cold June morning at Rangeview I heard the distinct sound of a Whistling-Duck. A careful move to the door of the station revealed a Plumed Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna eytoni*) strolling along beside the railway line.

This bird stood for some time and willingly answered my whistle with its own quiet pips; however at my slight movement it flew straight upwards out of the range of the platform lights, sending forth a high pitched alarm call, loud and clear as it disappeared.

I have heard these birds many times in the early hours of the morning flying over or along the line; also groups have landed in the short grassed paddock above the station.

I now believe these ducks are regular night visitors along the railway line, feeding on spilled grain or young shoots beside the rails and communicate with small soft pips. However when alarmed by the yellow insect lights under the station awning they emit the usual high pitched whistle of this species.

Jim Corbin.

FIELD DAY REPORT.

ACLAND-GOOMBUNGE AREA, 26/7/81.

It was gratifying to see a good turn-up of members and other interested people for the trip to the north-west of Toowoomba where we were hoping for good sightings on behalf of the R.A.O.S. Atlas of Australian Birds.

En route to Acland where we commenced our coverage, we paid a brief visit to Aeong's Lagoon near Oakey. That part of the Downs had had about 50mm. of rain over the previous couple of days, in addition to the earlier unexpected winter rain. Puddles were obvious everywhere and young corn crops a brilliant shade of green against the dark soil, but it was a somewhat bleak morning with dark scudding rain clouds still about, and a chill wind which did not encourage one to stand about overlong. There were a number of Black-winged Stilts, Black Duck and Grey Teal busy feeding and one lone Black Swan.

At Acland the party split in two, one group taking the ten minute block to the northwest from there and the other that to the east.

Coverage of the eastern block (here called Block 2 for convenience) over the next four hours produced a fair number of species. Travelling north from Acland, where the most notable bird seen was the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, we struck east to Goombungee and from there back in a north-westerly direction to Kulpi thence south again to Oakey.

Numerous short stops were made to check likely areas beside the road, but the soft ground did not tempt one to drive far off the firm gravel or bitumen. A pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles were seen; a Spotted Harrier; many Black-shouldered Kites and Australian Kestrels; numbers of Cockatiel and Galah and other members of the Parrot family and a small party of Apostle Birds feeding on the edge of the bitumen. The most notable small birds were Rufous and Golden Whistlers, Yellow-rumped and Yellow Thornbills, a Wistletoebird and both Zebra and Double-barred finches.

The second ten minute block (Block 1) covered was west of Acland and proved to be a little disappointing with respect to intact habitats - much of the land was arable. However, we had our share of excitement with one well and truly bogged car on a deceptive road that looked firm but wasn't! Much thanks to the kindly farmer and his tractor and the girl who contacted him.

Grey-crowned Babblers, Black-faced Woodswallows and a Brown Goshawk were possibly the best of the 27 species seen in the block.

Just north of Oakey, three of us topped up the outing with a Black Falcon which obligingly flew within our sight for a few minutes.

Ann Shore. Michael Atzeni

Species List- en route and Blocks 1 and 2.

Australasian Grebe, Little Pied Cormorant, Pacific Heron, White-faced Heron, Sacred Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Black Swan, Pacific Black Duck, Grey Teal, Manded Duck, Black-shouldered Kite, Brown Goshawk, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Spotted Harrier, Black Falcon, Brown Falcon, Australian Kestrel, Masked Lapwing, Black-winged Stilt, Silver Gull, Peral Pigeon, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Cockatiel, Pale-headed Roselia, Red-rumped Parrot, Laughing Kookaburra, Welcome Swallow, Fairy Martin, Richard's Pipit, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Grey-crowned Babbler, Golden-headed Cisticola, Superb Fairy-wren, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Striped Honeyeater, Little Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Brown Honeyeater, Wistletoebird, Striated Pardalote, House Sparrow, Zebra Finch, Double-barred Finch, Common Starling, Common Mynah, Figbird, Apostlebird, Australian Magpie-lark, Black-faced Woodswallow, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

Pied Cormorant. 1.8.81. Helidon Spa. WA. GC.  
 Pink-eared Duck. 1.7.81. Hood's Lagoon. AHS.  
 Spotted Harrier. 13.7.81. "Shorelands", Withcott. AHS. MD. JAS.  
 Peregrine Falcon. 10.6.81. Near Cambooya. MJR.  
 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. (large flock). Cunningham's Gap. 26.7.81. REH.  
 Crimson Rosella. 14.7.81. Lamington Nat. Pk. AHS. JAS.  
 Brown-headed Honeyeater. 30.7.81. Echo Valley. WA.  
 WA: Michael Atzeni. GC: Graham Corbin. MD: Maggie Drabsch.  
 NH: Ron Hopkinson. MJR: Mike Russell. AHS: Ann Shore. JAS: John Shore.

FIELD DAY FOR AUGUST.

Date. Sunday, August 23rd. Place. Trip with QCS. to Redwood Park.  
 Assembly Point. Pigott's car park. Departure Time. 7.30am sharp.

Arrangements have been made to meet the QCS. at 9am at the Withcott  
 hotel. It was felt that we might meet at our usual time and have a  
 preliminary look at Redwood. However some members might prefer to  
 wait and meet at Withcott at 9am. Over to you.

SEPTEMBER CAMP.

Hope you are planning to attend the camp at Goomburra on the week-end  
 of 26, 27th. We would like to hear from you if you are interested.

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GOOMBURRA BIRD CLUB.

ANNUAL BIRD CENSUS.

To take place over the week-end of October 24/25th 1981.

Yes, I hope to be able to participate in the count.

I would be available to count at the following times.

Saturday, 24th, A.M. ....	Saturday 24th, P.M. ....
Sunday 25th A.M. ....	Sunday 25th. P.M. ....

(Please tick the times that suit)

Signature.....

(Please return this form to any member of the Executive)