

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

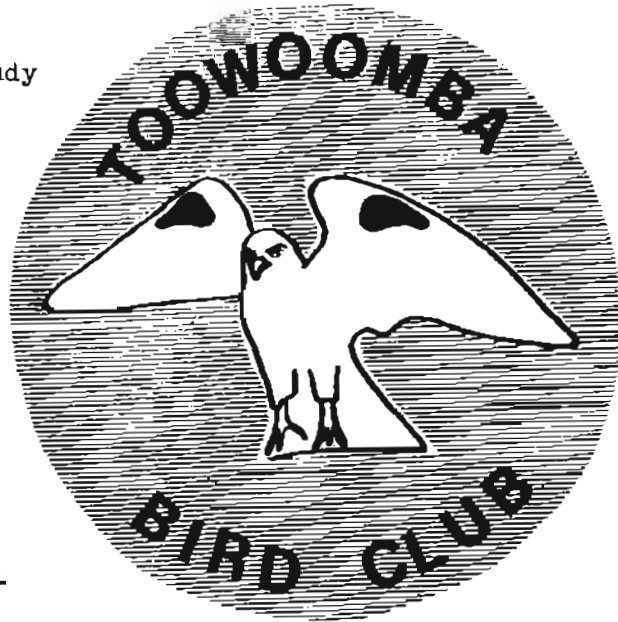
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NEWS-SHEET No. 70- OCTOBER 1981.

This month of October is always an important one on our club calendar in that the Annual General Meeting and bird census take place then.

As stated last month the A.G.M. will be held on Saturday, October 17th at 7.30pm. Venue is the Toowoomba Education Centre in Baker St. We hope to see you there. Last month's issue carried a nomination form for office bearers for the ensuing year. These forms should be in the secretary's hands prior to the meeting. As always the call is for people to be willing to take office. Bird club life-- be in it.

The week-end of 24/25th has been set aside for the club's sixth annual bird census. We have had fair response to the call for participants and most of the sectors have been allotted. To the people who took the trouble to reply--thank you. If you haven't yet done so there is still some counting needing your help.

In particular the two city area sectors are not yet covered. Although these involve mostly the commoner species, they are still very important in that we need to record what is there as a gauge of the rise or fall of population densities.

In the past these sectors have been an interesting and useful exercise for such as a school nature or biology group. Valuable experience can be gained here. Any takers?

Last month's issue carried some interesting observations from J. Corbin, and M. Wood, with a gem from the students of Charlton State School. Have you made any interesting notes lately? Have you something to say on issues affecting the environment? Any aspect of nature you'd like to write about? If you have, we would like to hear from you.

Ron Hopkinson.

BLACK-NECKED STORK.

JABIRU.

I recently paid a visit to my sister who lives at Capalaba in the Redland Shire and her home is on the bank of the Leslie Harrison dam in a semi secluded area. This is fine for bird watching, for as the water level drops, small sandy islands appear and these are a haven for water fowl which feed among the water lilies growing in the dam.

Pelicans, Black Swans, Coot, Ducks, Cormorants and Egrets are always there for the viewing and make a welcome change for a Toowoomba based birder.

JABIRU c/td

This trip, however, was memorable as on Friday September 11th, two Black-necked Storks, or Jabiru, (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) were seen from the house and we followed a covered approach to within 50 or 60 metres of the birds. Standing in shallows, preening, in the four o'clock sun, these birds were truly a magnificent sight and we spent some time observing them.

They appeared to be in full plumage. Black and white pattern on the body, black neck, head and beak but in both birds from our viewing distance the green sheen was visible only on the neck. Slater puts the colour of the legs as red, but we agreed on orange. The eye was very prominent.

There were quite a few rushes and dead sticks upright in the water, three or four feet high and about one inch in diameter. Later, both birds approached these and grasping a stick in their large bills commenced to tug at them, even laying back in tug-o-war style and staggering back a pace or two when the stick broke or their hold slipped. They continued this for several minutes but we were unable to see any reason for this behaviour as any pieces which snapped off were immediately dropped in the shallows.

My sister said that this was only her second Jabiru sighting on the Dam in several years, the other being a single bird; so evidently they are not frequent visitors.

Next morning we hopefully approached the spot but the birds were gone and a search with binoculars failed to find them. "Every Australian Bird Illustrated" states that a Jabiru seen among the water lilies of a lagoon, is a sight never to be forgotten. How right they are.

Joe Deuble.

DEFINITION OF SECTORS

For the purpose of the upcoming bird census, set out here are the definitions of the sectors, twenty in all, contained within the outer boundaries of the two ten minute blocks which constitute the club's local study area. These outer boundaries were explained in last month's issue.

Sector 1. Toowoomba City East, bounded by Stenner, Ruthven and North streets, eastwards to the escarpment but excluding Jubilee Park, Prince Henry Drive, Webb Park, area east of East St., Redwood Park and Picnic Point area.

Sector 2. Toowoomba City West, bounded by Stenner, Ruthven and North streets, Tor street and Anzac Avenue.

Sector 3. Balance of uprange 10 minute block lying north of Bridge street (west of Tor street) and north of North street (east of Tor street).

Sector 4. Western Sector. That part of the uprange block to the west of Pittsworth Road, Anzac Avenue and Tor street and south of Bridge street.

Sector 5. South-western Sector. That part of the uprange block to the east of Pittsworth Road, west of Ruthven street and south of Stenner St.

Sector 6. South-eastern Sector. That part of the uprange block south of Stenner street and east of Ruthven street, excluding Flagstone creek road.

Sector 7. Flagstone Creek Road. That part of the road lying in the uprange ten minute block, from its junction with Rowbotham street.

Sector 8. Redwood Park.

Sector 9. Prince Henry Drive, Webb Park and bushland adjacent to East St.

Sector 10. Jubilee Park.

SECTOR DEFINITIONS c/td.

Sector 11. Picnic Point and Memorial Drive.

Sector 12. Weis' property-- Rifle Range Road.

Sector 13. Boyce property--6 Range street.

Downrange:

Sector 14. Table Top and its western approach.

Sector 15. Withcott North. withcott north of the Warrego Highway--those areas approached along Jones Road.

Sector 16. Withcott South. withcott south of the warrego Highway and west of Blanchview Road.

Sector 17. Blanchview, Iredale, Helidon Spa. South of Warrego Highway, east of Blanchview Road, north and west of Flagstone Creek Road.

Sector 18. Flagstone Creek Road. Flagstone creek/Helidon Road and all areas south and east thereof, i.e. that part of the downrange block lying south of the Warrego Highway and not included in sectors 14, 16 or 17.

Sector 19. Postman's Ridge. That part of the downrange block to the north of the Warrego Highway and approached along the Postman's Ridge/Murphy's Creek Road, i.e. west of the railway line.

Sector 20. Helidon, North and East. That part of the downrange block lying to the north and east of Helidon township and the railway line.

FIELD DAY REPORT-27/9/81.

After the most successful field day in August, that for September was a very minor affair with regard to numbers present and something of an anti-climax. A promise of 32 degrees led us to expect a warm morning whereas it was, in fact, cool and blustery with threat of rain so only a few hardy souls turned out for the visit to the Spring Creek area on what was a most unsuitable day for birdwatching.

A quick foray was made into the cemetery grounds en route and a longer time spent checking out two spots by the creek along Euston Road before we were driven back to the cars for shelter and decided to call it a day. There were plenty of small birds about while overhead shrill calls of fast flying members of the parrot family, the harsher voices of Dollar birds and softer ones of pigeons could be heard. Also the constant sweet piping calls of the White-throated Gerygones or Bush canaries and the tinkling notes of the Yellow-rumped Thornbills were all around us. Noticeable was an absence of honeyeaters.

Ann Shore.

Species list- Spring Creek area 27/9/81.

Pacific Heron, Australian Kestrel, Feral Pigeon, Spotted Turtle-dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Cockatiel, Pale-headed Rosella, Laughing Kookaburra, Dollarbird, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Leaden Flycatcher, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Superb Fairy-wren, White-throated Gerygone, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Noisy Miner, Striated Pardalote, House Sparrow, Double-barred Finch, Common Starling, Common Mynah, Figbird, Australian Magpie-lark, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Urrimbirra. September 1981.

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