

President: Bill Jolly

17, Herries St., Toowoomba.

Ph: 32.9421.

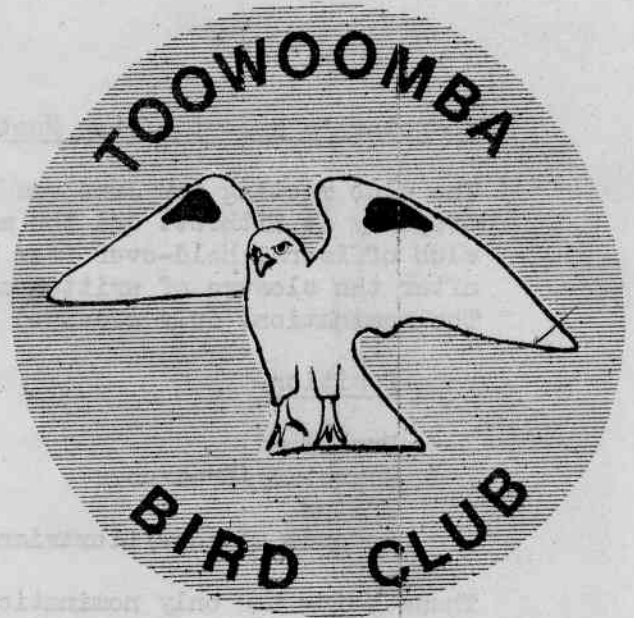
Sec./Treasurer: Alan Graham

Naliandrah, M.S. 224, Helidon.

Ph: 30.3138.

Editor/Librarian: Rod Hobson

8, Sir Street, Toowoomba.



NEWS-SHEET No. 8 - JUNE, 1976.

At our June meeting the election of office bearers for the now constitutional Toowoomba Bird Club took place. The results of that election may be read in the Secretary's Report published below.

Several species of birds are at this time appearing in and around Toowoomba. The most noticeable are the Straw-necked ibis. Although a few had arrived here as early as March this year, the larger flocks have just arrived recently. The occasional White ibis may be seen along with his black and white counterpart. Anyone wishing to see these birds would be well advised to visit the Alderley Street swamp (near corner of Alderley and Mackenzie Streets) where the ibis may be seen feeding daily with large numbers congregating there to roost every evening. Middle Ridge seems to be a very popular area for these birds, indeed the old timers often referred to them as Middle Ridge turkeys, obviously associating them with this area of town.

The magnificent Spotted harrier may also be seen in apparently increasing numbers at this time of year. Anyone taking a drive along either the Warwick road or the Oakey road would stand a good chance of seeing these birds. Redwood Park is a must for anyone seeking Rose robins as they are still there in good numbers. Banded plovers are presently in residence in the Wilsonton aerodrome and at the Institute. White-necked herons have returned and are likely to be encountered at Alderley Street or the Nelson/Kearney Street wetland.

The club project regarding the recording of all bird casualties is now under way and members are requested to keep a list of all dead birds encountered, (keep the bird too if it is wholesome enough to do so), and periodically send details to our Records Officer/Librarian.

Mal Perera is in Sri Lanka at present and we should have news of some exciting birds from there in our future news-sheets. Your Editor is accompanying the Q.O.S. on a sea bird outing on Sunday, 4th July and hopefully we may have some news from that quarter. At present our Secretary is also seeking to arrange a night trip to the Bunya Mountains for early next year. That should prove both unusual and interesting (and hopefully well attended) as should all our other monthly outings which the new Executive Committee is planning for our club. The Executive Committee will endeavour to serve the club and its members to their best ability for the term of their office.

Rod Hobson,
Editor.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Mr. Don Vernon, Curator of Birds, Queensland Museum, has fixed the date of his talk to the Club as Friday, 16th.

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Secretary's Report - June Meeting - 17th June, 1976.

The club meeting for June was held on 17th June at Naliandrah, the Grahams' property at Withcott and the main business for the evening was the election of club officers, held-over from May. The meeting commenced sharply at 7.30 p.m. after the closure of written and signed nominations for the vacant positions. The nominations duly received before 7.30 p.m. were as follows:-

<u>Position</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Nominators</u>
President	Bill Jolly	Alan Graham
Secretary/Treasurer	Alan Graham	Bill Jolly
Editor	Rod Hobson	Bill Jolly
Records Officer/Librarian	Rod Hobson	Chris Bianchi

These being the only nominations received the above-mentioned members were declared to be the elected Executive Officers for the ensuing year.

Reference was made by Bill Jolly to the fact that Mr. Don Vernon, Curator of Birds, Queensland Museum, Brisbane, has offered to give us an illustrated talk. The meeting decided that Mr. Vernon be approached to suggest dates suitable to himself for his talk.

Also, Bill has had a talk to Mr. Glen Postle, Director of the Toowoomba Education Centre (T.E.C.) on the D.D.I.A.E. campus, with regard to the use of the T.E.C. as a venue for future meetings. Mr. Postle kindly offered to help with regard to, (i) a room for club meetings (with projection facilities for slides etc.) (ii) production of the club's News-sheet and (iii) club advertising and promotion.

The meeting voiced its deep appreciation to Mr. Postle for this offer of help and looks forward to the active use of the T.E.C. facilities.

Paul Green supplied the meeting with two dead bird specimens, both car casualties. The specimens were, (i) Spotted owl (Boobook owl) - Brymaroo 28.5.76 and (ii) Golden headed cisticola - Hatton Vale 6.6.76. These specimens will be forwarded to Mr. Vernon, Queensland Museum.

Members were reminded of the June outing to the Ravensbourne National Park and the meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS.

- 152 Plumed egret (*Egretta intermedia*). 24.6.76. Alderley St. swamp. Rod Hobson.
26.6.76. Rod and Kerrie Hobson.

Single bird feeding in company of Straw-necked ibis and White-necked heron. Both sightings late in afternoon.

- 153 Wonga pigeon (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*). 27.6.76. Redwood Park. Bill Jolly and Rod Hobson.

Three birds "exploding" from ground. Apparently feeding on ground in dense ground cover when disturbed. Distinct clatter of wings heard as birds sought refuge in taller timber.

- 154 White-winged chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*). 13.6.76. Hodgson Vale. Rod and Kerrie Hobson.

Nine birds feeding in cleared paddock surrounded by open bushland. Although this is the club's first recording of this species in Toowoomba they appear to be quite common in the Crows Nest and Leyburn areas.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES.

- Spotted harrier. 7.6.76. Devon Park. Rod Hobson. Two mature birds. 24.6.76. Greenmount. Rod Hobson. One mature bird.

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Spotted harrier. 7.6.76. Devon Park. Rod Hobson. Two mature birds. 24.6.76. Greenmount, Rod Hobson. One mature bird.

Banded plover. 21.6.76. Warra-Macalister area. Rod Hobson. These birds very prevalent in this area.

King parrot. 13.6.76. Toowoomba. Rod Hobson. Lone female sitting on wires in Mackenzie Street.

Blue bonnet. 23.6.76. Warra. Rod Hobson. Several birds observed in flight. Exact subspecies not identified.

(cont/d).

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES (cont/d.)

Pallid cuckoo. 23.6.76. Warra. Rod Hobson. Two birds observed in small area by roadside.

Fan-tailed cuckoo. 13.6.76. Toowoomba. Eileen and Bill Jolly. Bird observed in home garden in Herries Street.

White-backed swallow. 28.5.76. Range Highway. Alan Graham. Several swallows flying from embankment, across highway and into Redwood Park and back.

Varied triller. 14.6.76. Redwood Park. Rod Hobson. Male and female birds in bushland verging on vine scrub. 26.6.76. Range Highway. Alan Graham. Single male bird.

Weebill. 27.6.76. Redwood Park. Bill Jolly and Rod Hobson.

Rose robin. 13.6.76. Flagstone Creek. Rod Hobson. Male bird. 14.6.76. Redwood Park. Rod Hobson. Male bird. 17.6.76. Herries St., Toowoomba. Eileen Jolly. Female bird in home garden. 27.6.76. Bill Jolly noted several birds in Redwood Park.

Red-capped robin. 16.6.76. DDIAE. Colin Kent. Male bird. This is the first time the T.B.C. has recorded this bird in the 10km area. Unfortunately no other club member was with Colin when he made his exciting find. (Sightings must be confirmed by two or more club members to be added to our official list - Ed.).

Eastern spinebill. 22.6.76. Toowoomba. Eileen Jolly. Bird sighted in house yard.

Striped honeyeater. 14.6.76. Flagstone Creek. Rod and Kerrie Hobson. Two birds feeding on cactus blooms.

Spiny-cheeked honeyeater. 23.6.76. Warra. Rod Hobson. Several of these colourful honeyeaters feeding in low ground cover.

Regent bower-bird. 14.6.76. Toowoomba. Eileen and Bill Jolly. Another bird for Bill and Eileen's garden. This was a female bird.

Australian Raven. 22.6.76. Toowoomba. Eileen Jolly. The call recorded by Eileen. Bird appeared in home yard.

URBAN BIRDPWATCHING.

One would not expect a garden in Herries Street to hold much in the way of bird-life other than the usual urban species, but in the five months that we have been living at the Range end of Herries Street we have been pleasantly surprised at the variety of birds that have dropped in from time to time.

Our first note-worthy visitors were three Koels, two male, one female, back in February who came off and on for most of the month. On another February day from my kitchen window I noticed a bird moving around in one of the tall shrubs lining the driveway. I'd never seen one like it before but the first thought that came to mind was that it was a cuckoo of some kind although somehow it seemed too small. I watched him carefully for several minutes and the most distinctive thing about him was the bold barring on the sides of his breast and flanks, and when he turned his back towards me I caught flashes of metallic green. The field guide left me in no doubt that it was a Rufous-tailed bronze cuckoo. In April, after an encounter with an unidentified quail (the grass was a little long), we began seeing a pair of Rufous whistlers who from then on became regulars along with Brown and Lewin honeyeaters.

On to June now when we had the pleasure of a visit from a Fan-tailed cuckoo, two female or immature Regent bower-birds, one Black-faced flycatcher, a Rose robin, and most recently an Eastern spinebill and Australian ravens. All this in a garden which doesn't possess any native shrubs (imagine if it did!). Apart from being close to the edge of the Range the other likely explanation for the popularity of this small garden is that the houses along this stretch and the adjacent streets forming the block all have large, established gardens which taken from a bird's-eye view could represent an inviting park-like area. I shall carefully watch the bird-table we have now erected and report back in due course.

Eileen Jolly.

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Eileen Jolly.

RAVENSBOURNE OUTING - 20.6.76.

For the small gathering of vehicles, fog bound on Mt. Kynoch, the prospect of the June outing seemed bleak indeed. No doubt it was with little enthusiasm that we set off for our destination, for the fog looked as if it was going to stick to us like a Ravensbourne leech. However, on dipping over the edge of the range we were greeted by blue skies and fair weather, much to everyone's delight. This was a good omen, which did indeed portend the great day which followed.

(cont/d).

RAVENSBOURNE OUTING - 20.6.76. (cont/d.)

Upon driving into the picnic area we were treated to our first memorable sighting. A flock of approximately forty Top-knot pigeons came winging up out of the park. They came directly over us and then, inscribing a sweeping avian arc, winged mightily up over the tops of the blue gums and disappeared. Two stragglers, flying lower than the main body, bisected the arc of flight of the flock and with the strong, rapid wing beats characteristic of these birds, managed to gain the security of the main flock. Things were looking up (no pun intended). The agony followed by the ecstasy.

After some fruitful birdwatching in the picnic area we proceeded into the park proper. One of our first sightings was a Shrike-tit, peering at us from upon his perch, his crest giving him a somewhat quizzical appearance. Near him a Golden whistler made an appearance, bedecked in his feathered finery.

The day proceeded thus pleasantly with sightings of Brown pigeon, White-headed pigeon, Mistletoe bird, White-throated tree-creeper and several other species. The surrounding rain forest vegetation, in lush profusion and the occasional entry of a Red-necked pademelon (*Thylogale thetis*) onto the winding walks helped in passing an enjoyable morning. Do the members on the outing remember the splendid orange bracket fungi growing on a fallen limb by the track side?

Noon, and now we returned for the midday meal. We sought out a sunny position along the perimeter of the picnic area and settled down to a leisurely lunch - beef sausages and all. Whilst so engaged, the antics of Superb blue wrens and other small passerines in nearby clumps of bracken fern kept us entertained. An Australian goshawk wheeled leisurely high above us. Then out of nowhere appeared the eagle. I, for one, was quite taken back by the Wedge-tails appearance. Eagles seem to have a unique ability of just appearing. One minute there's empty sky and the next the monarch is there. The bird in question appeared quite close to our party, soared up over the tall trees and disappeared. I think we were all impressed by the size and the aura of majesty which surrounded him. Later two Wedge-tails appeared further off in the blue bowl of sky. Without any discernable wing beat they rode the thermals, alternately close to the ground one instant, the next, high above the earth. What is it about eagles that moves one to poetry?

After lunch we proceeded along Seventeen Mile Road, which connects Ravensbourne with Helidon, to the end of the rain forest area. Along this stretch, a Green-winged pigeon catapulted from the roadside in a flurry of warm brown and emerald green. We explored another small track before setting off home and here the natural beauty of the native rain forest deeply impressed us. At just such times one becomes acutely and sadly aware of the loss of such areas given up by mankind as a sacrifice to "progress".

The highlight of the day was yet to come and it wasn't ornithological. On stopping to check out a dam on the Ravensbourne range, we were extremely fortunate to sight a Platypus among the Little grebes and Dusky moorhens. The monotreme caused great excitement and comment among the observers lining the roadside. He twisted and turned, surfaced and submerged in the cold water in much the same manner as otters do in those B.B.C. documentaries on television. But he was "getting on" with it and so it was we also left contented, a fitting end to a good day. And the kids enjoyed themselves too.

Rod Hobson.

Bird list - Ravensbourne. 20.6.76.

<u>En route.</u>	Little grebe	Noisy miner
	Wood duck	House sparrow
	Nankeen kestrel	Starling
	Dusky moorhen	Indian mynah
	Domestic pigeon	Magpie lark
	Pale-h. rosella	Pied currawong

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Dusky moorhen	Indian mynah
Domestic pigeon	Magpie lark
Pale-h. rosella	Pied currawong
Aust. pipit	Pied butcher-bird
Bl.-f. cuckoo-sh.	Black-backed magpie
Grey-cr. babbler	Aust. crow
Jacky winter	

(Cont/d.)

Bird list - Ravensbourne, 20.6.76. (cont/d.)

White-faced heron	Grey fantail
Aust. goshawk	Willie wagtail
Wedge-tailed eagle	Golden whistler
Brush turkey	Grey shrike-thrush
Topknot pigeon	Shrike-tit
White-headed pigeon	Eastern whipbird
Brown pigeon	Wh.-thr. tree-creeper
Emerald dove	Mistletoe bird
Crimson rosella	Grey-br. silvereye
L. kookaburra	Lewin honeyeater
Tree martin	Red-browed finch
Superb blue-wren	Pied currawong
Striated thornbill	Pied butcher-bird
Brown thornbill	Aust. raven
Wh.-br. scrub wren	Aust. crow
E. Yellow robin	

OUTING FOR JULY, 1976.

Sunday, 25th July, 1976. Dyer's Lagoon & Lake Clarendon.

Meet at park just before Helidon. 9.30 a.m. Bill Jolly (leader). Blue-winged shoveller, White pigmy goose, Pelican - perhaps).

Proposed outings 1976.

August. 22.8.76. Rod Turner's property and Trail Park, Flagstone Creek.
Leader - Rod Hobson.

September. Date to be decided. Brisbane wader haunts with Q.O.S.

October. 24.10.76. Withcott area. Ward's Hill area. Leader - Alan Graham.

November. Date to be decided. Area west of Toowoomba. Leader - John Walter.

December. 12.12.76. Redwood Park. Leader - Alan Graham. Annual barbecue and get together afterwards at Little Oakey Creek on Alan's property.
Details to be advised.

OF INTEREST

"Birds of the World" available Angus and Robertson,
Queen Street, Brisbane. Reduced from \$19.50 to \$9.50 -
excellent buy.

"Birds of Port Moresby and District" available Mary
Martin Bookshop, Adelaide. \$1.45 (much reduced).