



NEWS-SHEET No. 89

MAY 1983

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

## toowoomba bird club

### Postal Address

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### Club Officers

President:

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Editor:

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### Annual Subscription

Ordinary/Family membership ..... \$8.00  
Student membership ..... \$4.00

### Activities

Field Outing and Monthly Meeting - 4th Sunday of each  
month - usually leave from Pigott's Car Park at  
7.30 am.

Camping trips, film and slide evenings.

### NEWS-SHEET

Published monthly, before the outing. Articles have a  
deadline of the last day of the month and should be  
mailed to the editor.

## EDITORIAL

Understandibly, not very many turned up to our camp at Girraween, which was a real shame as some very fine birding was accomplished. I know I don't only speak for myself when I say I enjoyed the whole weekend and was not disappointed to add a few new birds to my 'list'. Girraween is a very pleasant place to visit with excellent facilities and very helpful rangers. Anyone with a spare weekend or even a day should consider the trip as it is only a couple of hours pleasant drive.

Ann and John have said farewell to the last of their many guests over the past couple of months, and hope to get a little more birding in than they have been able to just recently. Ann and I went down to Hood's Lagoon after the heavy rains only to be disappointed with the lack of birds. It is amazing to see the changes in a small ecosystem such as Hood's with the change in conditions. Only a couple of Swamphens were seen when on previous occasions 100+ have been seen. There was an abundance of Darters and Cormorants, both the Little Pied and Little Black. Only Wood Duck, Black Duck and White-eyed Duck plus innumerable Coots were visible, while the Swans had gone to find greener pastures (bluer waters?). We were not unhappy with our outing, however, as we did have a splendid view of a Wedge-tailed Eagle perched on a power pylon, his golden sheen glowing in the sunlight. He seemed totally unconcerned by the Magpie-larks (Peewees) and Grey Butcherbird which were furiously mobbing it. Hood's Lagoon - definitely one of the better spots in our study area and one well worth keeping an eye on.

Lesley Ball, Editor

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## A WEEKEND AT THE BEACH

Early in March my wife, Shirley, and I spent a long weekend at Burrum Heads - a sleepy little fishing village just north of Hervey Bay. Four separate rivers meet the sea at this point and there is a great expanse of tidal flats, making it an ideal spot for viewing water birds.

As we haven't done much birding lately we were a bit rusty, especially on waterbirds which we rarely see anyway. We hoped to remedy the situation while there and the weather and tides worked to help us out. With warm sunny days and high tides early in the morning, it meant that we had most of the day to observe waders, etc. as they foraged on the progressively exposed flats - which happily are sand, not mud! Day one produced a short list of more readily identifiable birds - Australian Pelican, Silver Gull, Caspian and Gull-billed Terns, Whistling and Brahminy Kites, Eastern Curlew, Whimbrel, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits and Reef Heron. Initially, separation of Whistling Kite and juvenile Brahminy Kite caused a problem, but reference to Slater and a little attention to their calls soon solved the problem.

A point of interest was that a large number of the Godwits were wearing their russet breeding plumage. It was on the second day that the problems really started. After positively identifying a Pied Oystercatcher and a couple of Green-shanks we discovered just how inexperienced we were with charadriiformes in general. After much stalking and consulting of bird books we were still left with quite a few birds to which we could only apply the general group name of "sandpiper" or "dotterel". The third and fourth days didn't add much to our list of 'positively identified'. However, frustrations with charadriiformes were offset - partly at least - by the sight of a pair of White-breasted Sea-

A WEEKEND AT THE BEACH CONT'D

eagles slowly quartering the shoreline.

The full list of sightings for the four days is as follows.

Australian Pelican	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet
Little Pied Cormorant	Rainbow Bee-eater
Reef Heron	Dollarbird
Straw-necked Ibis	Welcome Swallow
Brahminy Kite	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Whistling Kite	Rufous Whistler
White-breasted Sea-eagle	Leaden Flycatcher
Pied Oystercatcher	Willie Wagtail
Masked Lapwing	Little Friarbird
Double-banded Dotterel	Blue-faced Honeyeater
Red-capped Dotterel	Lewin's Honeyeater
Eastern Curlew	White-throated Honeyeater
Whimbrel	Brown Honeyeater
Greenshank	Mistletoebird
Bar-tailed Godwit	Striated Pardalote
Black-tailed Godwit	House Sparrow
Silver Gull	Figbird
Caspian Tern	Spangled Drongo
Gull-billed Tern	Magpie-lark
Crested Pigeon	Australian Magpie
Rainbow Lorikeet	Torresian Crow

John Gregor

--ooOoo--

A LETTER FROM SOUTHPORT

I am a member of Wildlife Preservation Gold Coast Branch. In our latest "News" a bush outing to Murray Scrub, 35 km N.W. of Kyogle is mentioned. There are actual stands of mature Red Cedars and Black Myrtle and Giant Fig in quantity. They camped near 'crystal clear' Ironpot Creek and 'a delightful feature of this area is the huge resident colony of Bellbirds". One of the largest colonies to be found anywhere. Other birds included Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, Wedge-tailed Eagles, masses of Finches and many other creatures. Under the heading: Matter Of Concern, it is reported by our President that many small birds are disappearing from the Gold Coast. Once common, Willie Wagtail, Silver Gull, Honeyeaters, Flycatchers, Wrens, Butcherbirds and Babblers are now a rarity. Of course, domestic and feral cats and huge quantities of poison spray are common reasons for their disappearance. Development, unbridled, is also blamed.

Phylliss Christian

SOME UNUSUAL VISITORS TO 'GAMARREN'

Until about a fortnight ago, the Cunnamulla district was experiencing the worst drought on record, with Gamarren having had 2½ inches of rain over a period of eighteen months. Many large eucalypts and acacias which have obviously survived during other droughts for at least 50 years are now dead. About the only green area for miles around was our garden which covers about 2 acres. It consists mainly of lawn, shrubs and trees, and I was able to keep it all alive by the judicious use of water from a flowing bore near the house. Just before Christmas a Banded Landrail took up residence in the garden. He (or she) pottered around the lawn pecking busily at the

GIRRAWEEEN REPORT CONT'D

We were treated to a sensational 'churring' display by a pair of Restless Flycatchers which continued for sometime allowing me to obtain a taperecording of them. Rain then forced us back to the cars and we headed for camp. The fickle weather cleared again and enabled us to check a locality suggested for Turquoise Parrots on the road into Girraween. Our persistence was rewarded with wonderful views of these feathered gems, so cryptic against the grasses and herbage. Eagle-eyed Roy Beaton first glassed them then proved it wasn't a fluke by pointing out a very pale hawk sitting high in a tree a fair distance away. A look through the telescope disclosed a beautiful pale phase Little Eagle with underparts as white as an Osprey's.

Don and I stopped at Storm King Dam on the trip home adding Musk Duck and Scarlet Robin to Don's list of new species to cap off the rewarding day-trip. Our intrepid campers called it quits Monday morning when the rain became heavy.

Not the best weather for a camp but thanks to those that made the effort - you deserved every new bird you saw.

Michael Atzeni

Species list:

Enroute - Straw-necked Ibis, Black-shouldered Kite, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Australian Kestrel, Purple Swamphen, Crested Pigeon, Galah, Crimson Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Pale-headed Rosella, Red-rumped Parrot, Tawny Frogmouth (dead), Laughing Kookaburra, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Jacky Winter, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Grey-crowned Babbler, Weebill, Yellow Thornbill, Red Wattlebird, Striped Honeyeater, Noisy Friarbird, Noisy Miner, Spotted Pardalote, Sparrow, Starling, Common Mynah, White-winged Chough, Apostlebird, Magpie-lark, Black-faced Woodswallow, Dusky Woodswallow, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Magpie, Pied Currawong, Crow.  
40 species

Girraween - Little Pied Cormorant, Black Duck, Wood Duck, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Little Eagle (light phase), Masked Lapwing, Peaceful Dove, Common Bronzewing, Wonga Pigeon, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet, Little Lorikeet, King Parrot, Cockateil, Crimson Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Pale-headed Rosella, Turquoise Parrot, Pallid Cuckoo, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Azure Kingfisher, Kookaburra, Welcome Swallow, Eastern Yellow Robin, Jacky Winter, Grey Shrike-thrush, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Rufous Songlark, Superb Fairy-wren, White-browed Scrub-wren, Brown Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, White-throated Treecreeper, Red Wattlebird, White-eared Honeyeater, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Mistletoebird, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Silvereye, Red-browed Firetail, Double-barred Finch, Satin Bowerbird, Dusky Woodswallow, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Magpie, Pied Currawong, Crow.  
56 species

Wallangarra Road - Sacred Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Pacific Heron, Brown Falcon, Peaceful Dove, Galah, Rainbow Lorikeet, King Parrot, Turquoise Parrot, Tree Martin, Richard's Pipit, Jacky Winter, Hooded Robin, Crested Shrike-tit, Restless Flycatcher, White-browed Babbler, Superb Fairy-wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Southern Whiteface, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Brown Treecreeper, Red Wattlebird, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Fuscous Honeyeater, Striated Pardalote, Diamond Firetail, Double-barred Finch, Satin Bowerbird, Grey and Pied Butcherbird, Magpie, Currawong, Dusky Woodswallow, Crow.  
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GIRRAWEEEN REPORT CONT'D

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35 species

GIRRAWEEEN REPORT CONT'D

Species list:

Storm King Dam - Australasian Grebe, Australian Pelican, Darter,  
Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Black Swan, Grey Teal,  
Musk Duck, Whistling Kite, Eurasian Coot, Black-fronted Plover,  
Scarlet Robin. 12 species

Total number of species - 102

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MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Least Frigatebird. 1.5.83. Point Lookout, Stradbroke Is. MA, BF, TR  
Beach Stone-Curlew. 30.4.83. Point Lookout. MA, BF, TR.  
Lesser Crested Tern. 1.5.83. Point Lookout. MA, BF, TR.  
Topknot Pigeon. 7.5.83. Redwood Park. MA, BF, TR.  
Turquoise Parrot. 24.4.83. Girraween National Park. MA, LB, PB, RB,  
DG.  
Boobook Owl (dark phase). 8.4.83. Flinders St. JD.  
Ground Cuckoo-shrike. 14.4.83. Loker Siding Turnoff. MA, LB.

MA: Michael Atzeni, LB: Lesley Ball, PB: Peggie Beaton, RB: Roy  
Beaton, JD: Joe Deuble, BF: Brian Foulis, DG: Don Gaydon, TR:  
Terry Reis.

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FUTURE OUTINGS

- May 22nd - water bird outing; including Hood's Lagoon, Karrasch's  
Lagoon and lunch at Lake Clarendon.  
June 11th-13th - camp out with Q.O.S. All details of this camp  
are not finalized, but it's to Sunday Creek Field  
Study Centre between Jimna and Kennilworth.  
June 26th - morning outing to Lion's Park, Hodgsonvale and Stock-  
yard Creek Road.  
August 28th - Tenthill Creek and Dyer's Lagoon.

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FIELD OUTING FOR MAY

Date: Sunday, 22nd May 1983. Place: Hood's and Karrasch's Lagoons  
and Lake Clarendon

Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park

Time: 7.15 am. for departure at 7.30 am. sharp.

It will be interesting to see what the fresh rains have done to  
these watering places and to the bird life that abounds on them.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Darling Downs Naturalist. April 1983. (Toowoomba Field Naturalist  
Club)  
QOS Newsletter. May 1983. (Queensland Ornithological Society)  
Urimbirra. April 1983. (Chinchilla Field Naturalists' Club)

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