



TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

NEWSLETTER

TO ENCOURAGE THE OBSERVATION AND STUDY OF THE BIRDS IN THE TOOWOOMBA AREA

MAY 2021

EDITION 468

BIRD OF THE MONTH



Rose Robin by Ann Alcock

Redwood Park - 2021

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OUTINGS FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 2021

Saturday 29 th May	Durikai - meet 8.30am at Karara Tavern, Karara. Contact Mick Atzeni tiddalac@gmail.com if attending
Saturday/Sunday 26 th /27 th June	Raptor Census Contact Pat McConnell for details Pat.McConnell@usq.edu.au ph 4631 5573
Saturday 12 th June	Raptor talk by Chris MacColl 6pm venue see attached PDF notice P7

WEB FORUM ONLY

www.toowoombabirdobservers.org.

Address All Correspondences to:

POSTAL ADDRESS:

P.O. BOX 4730
Toowoomba QLD Australia 4350

Email: tboc4350@gmail.com

Phone: 0415 277 145

The Toowoomba Bird Observers Newsletter
will now be published monthly.

The deadline for the June Newsletter will be the 25th June

Charles powerart@bigpond.net.au

2021 CHALLENGE

187 as of 21/05/2021

Club Contacts:

President	Sandy Robertson
Vice President	Mick Atzeni
Secretary	Suzanne Combes
Treasurer	Anne Alcock
Editor	Charles Dove
Media Officer	S Dyson-Holland
Facebook Admin	Sandy Robertson
	Mick Atzeni
	Ann Alcock

Outings

Co-Ordinator Martin Clark

TBOC OUTINGS REPORT

Outing report – Prince Henry Drive, Toowoomba – 2 May 2021

The morning fog had cleared and three newcomers in Philippa, Karen and Alexandra joined us for the outing. The lack of blossom made the birding a little harder. Nevertheless, we compiled a reasonable list of 35 species including two species of raptor, namely, Black Kite (4) and a Collared Sparrowhawk. Surprisingly, we saw no Fairy-wrens. Indeed, the usual suspects were thin on the ground, Silvereyes being the most common. A closer inspection of the Silvereyes revealed they were all the south-eastern form.



The club is blessed with some excellent photographers and it's good to see others benefiting from their help on outings. A White-headed pigeon provided some practice for Alex with Ann's help. We were later fortunate to cross paths with Sri, another excellent photographer, I'd met recently in Redwood Park, and he, Ann and Charlie found plenty to talk about.

I had hoped to show everyone a Rose Robin and male Regent Bowerbird but only heard the former and saw females of the latter. We finished up at nearby Webb Park for morning tea, where the only other addition was Welcome Swallow. After discussing the Mountain Bike Trails proposal in Redwood Park and promoting the upcoming talk on the Red Goshawk research being conducted by Chris McColl in northern Australia, we drew stumps.

Thanks to all who attended.
Michael Atzeni

Attendees: Ann Alcock, Eduarda van Klinken, Peter Everist, Karen Hayes, Alexandra Hayes, Charles Dove, Janina Dove, Philippa Harvey, Mick Atzeni

Species List Prince Henry Drive Toowoomba 2 nd May		9 attendees	35 species
Australian Brush-turkey	Australian King-Parrot	Eastern Whipbird	Torresian Crow
White-headed Pigeon	Laughing Kookaburra	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Magpie-lark
Spotted Dove	Regent Bowerbird	Golden Whistler	Rose Robin
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	White-browed Scrubwren	Grey Shrike-thrush	Silvereye
Bar-shouldered Dove	Brown Thornbill	Australasian Figbird	Welcome Swallow
Australian White Ibis	Striated Pardalote	Pied Butcherbird	Double-barred Finch
Black Kite	Lewin's Honeyeater	Australian Magpie	Red-browed Finch
Collared Sparrowhawk	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Pied Currawong	
Rainbow Lorikeet	Noisy Miner	Grey Fantail	



Collared Sparrowhawk at a distance



Grey Shrike-thrush – immature

Images by Charles Dove

MEMBERS PROFILES

By Ann Alcock

Name: Suzanne Combes

Position in TBO?

Secretary

How long have you been a member of TBO?

2/3 years

How did you first get involved with TBO?

Recommendation from a friend

What do you enjoy about being a member of TBO?

Interaction with people who have a similar interest to myself.

How long have you been interested in birding?

Approx six years

Your most memorable birding experience:

A Flinders Ranges workshop

Your favourite bird?

Any kind of Raptor and Pardalote.

What are your other interests:

Gardening, reading, exercise and spending time with my family.



MEMBERS PAGES – NOTICES – ARTICLES AND LINKS OF INTEREST

Taking something new nearly every day on our lagoons at Hope Island. This one has me stumped. We have the Great Egrets here but this was considerably smaller. Moorhen was chasing it away. *Peter Granfield*



Little Egret
chased by the
Dusky Moorhen

I photographed an odd-looking Australian Magpie while near Sundown National Park last week.



The first image was taken from a long way away. Initially I wondered what it was - thought it must have been a White-backed Magpie. Once it got closer it was obviously just an odd-looking Magpie. Not sure if it is a young one or just strange markings. I know the photos are not very good quality.

This was new to me but maybe others have seen it before.

By Joe Scanlan



Leucism is a wide variety of conditions that result in the partial loss of pigmentation in an animal—causing white, pale, or patchy coloration of the skin, hair.

Rarities Committee

Many years ago, the Toowoomba Bird Observers set up a Rarities Committee to vet rare or unusual bird sightings from the local area. This informal group is made up of four members of the Toowoomba Bird Observers and is called upon by the Records Officer on a needs basis. The current members of this committee are the same members as when the committee was set up. They are Pat McConnell, Michael Atzeni, Bill Jolly and Rod Hobson. Their first job was to vet some of the old sightings that may have needed to be removed from the Club's records. In the early days of the Club, bird field guides weren't as good as they are today and observers often did not have a lot of experience as to what species could be found locally. The group meet and we went back through all the old newsletters checking all the unusual sightings based on our increased experience of local species. An example was that Australian Ravens were being reported nearly every month from numerous locations. Based on current knowledge the vast majority of these sightings were incorrect – observers were obviously getting the calls of Torresian Crow and Australian Raven mixed up. By going back through the records, we were able to vet some of the more obvious mistakes. Some of these were submitted by members of the committee – the early days of the Club were very much a learning process for everyone. Maybe some genuine sightings were removed but it is important to maintain high standards for all records.

With that job completed the committee is now called upon from time to time to vet sightings of rare or unusual sightings reported by members. These sightings include, but are not limited to, new species for the local area, rare species or species not usually seen at that time of year. After all, if we are recording this data and putting it in our newsletter it has to stand the test of time. This is why members may from time to time be asked to submit a "Rarities Report". Please don't feel offended if you are asked to do one (all the Rarities Committee members have submitted many over the years). It is just a way to help maintain the Club's high standards with regard to our sightings. This may mean that we miss out on the occasional good sighting. It is important to remember that our records may be looked at in 50 years' time and if we have maintained our high standards, they will be looked at favourably. Please remember that if we reject a sighting, we are not saying that you misidentified the species but that on this occasion we needed some additional information for the committee to be absolutely sure.



Torresian Crow



Australian Raven



Crow,
Torresian.mp3

Double click MP3
To play sound



Raven, Australian.wav

Another Baza pic you might enjoy from late December last year.

They bred here throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, then only occasional visits until they raised three young here again in the summer just gone.

They make very noisy neighbours

Bill Jolly, Abberton, Helidon

www.abberton.org



ROSE ROBIN

Scientific Name: *Petroica rosea*

Featured bird groups: Small insect-eating birds

Atlas Number: 384

DESCRIPTION:

The Rose Robin is a slender robin with a relatively long tail. Males are dark grey above, with a white patch above the bill (frontal patch), and have a rose-pink breast. The lower part of the underbody and outer tail feathers are white, the wings and upper tail dark grey. Females are mainly brown-grey above with a small white frontal patch, white outertail and wing bars, and off-white below, with occasional pale pink wash across breast. Young birds resemble females, but are streaked white above, usually lack the white frontal patch, and are mottled dark brown underneath, with less or no pink. Rose Robins are the most acrobatic of the red robin genus (*Petroica*) with a darting, tumbling flight, and forage higher up in the canopy.

SIMILAR SPECIES:

The Rose Robin may sometimes be confused with the other red robins that share its wet forest habitat, with the females and juveniles being the hardest to distinguish. However, it generally tends to be slimmer with a much longer tail and shorter legs. It can be distinguished from the rather similar Pink Robin, *P. rodinogaster*, by the following: the male not as black, and the pink only on the breast (it extends further down abdomen for Pink Robin), while the female is more grey than brown; the Pink Robin also has no white in the tail. Flame Robins (*P. phoenicea*) are generally bigger and bulkier, with males having a distinctive white wing bar not seen in the Rose Robin.

DISTRIBUTION:

The Rose Robin is found in south-eastern Australia from south-east Queensland, along coast and inland to western slopes of Great Dividing Range in New South Wales and south into Victoria, to eastern parts of Western District. Occasional visitor to South Australia.

HABITAT:

The Rose Robin prefers wet forest and rainforest habitats during spring and summer, moving into drier, more open habitats during autumn and winter. Mainly found in the temperate zone, but is found in sub-tropical zone in south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales. May sometimes be seen in farm and town gardens when migrating.

Seasonal movements:

Seasonal migrant, moving south into wetter habitats during the spring and summer breeding season and moving north during the colder months, especially from Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Also moves down from higher altitudes in autumn and winter.

FEEDING:

The Rose Robin feeds on insects and mainly forages in the upper to mid-canopy, but will also feed from the ground. It is very active, flitting from tree to tree or to the ground, and will not return to the same perch, unlike other robins.

BREEDING:

The Rose Robin breeds in pairs, with the female incubating the eggs and both sexes feeding the young. The compact, cup-shaped nest is placed towards the outer end of a branch or in a tree fork, and is made of green moss, with some twigs and bark, lined with plant down or fur and camouflaged with lichen. Three broods can be raised in a single season. Nests may be parasitised by cuckoos, including the Pallid (*Cuculus pallidus*) and Brush Cuckoos (*Cacomantis variolosus*) and the Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx basalis*).

LIVING WITH US

Land-clearing for urban development, especially along the coast, has caused local extinctions of Rose Robin populations. Rose Robins are quite sensitive to habitat fragmentation and the loss of understorey. May sometimes be killed by cats.



Rose Robin image by Ann Alcock

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Species	Date	Location	Observer
Australasian Shoveler	16/05/2021	Wallangarra Sewage Ponds	RH, TR
Pink-eared Duck	16/05/2021	Wallangarra Sewage Ponds	RH, TR
Australian Bustard (3)	15/04/2021	Jandowae State Forest SEQ	RH
White-headed Stilt (5) *	13/05/2021	West Creek Toowoomba	CD
Square-tailed Kite	8/04/2021	Millmerran	RH
Square-tailed Kite	15/05/2021	Highfields	PM, KO
Powerful Owl	13/04/2021	Nudley State Forest via Jandowae SEQ	RH
Pacific Koel (female) **	8/05/2021	Web St. Toowoomba	RH
Black-eared Cuckoo	10/04/2021	East Jimbour SEQ	RH
White-eared Monarch	22/04/2021	Redwood Park Toowoomba	CD
Scarlet Robin (male)	16/05/2021	Dr. Roberts Waterhole, Girraween National Park	RH, TR
Rose Robin	22/04/2021	Redwood Park Toowoomba	CD
Hooded Robin (young male)	16/05/2021	Hickling Lane, Wyberba	RH, TR
Ground Cuckoo-shrike (2)	15/04/2021	Jandowae State Forest SEQ	RH
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	5/04/2021	Prince Henry Drive Toowoomba	CD
Plum-headed Finch	16/05/2021	Accommodation Creek, Wyberba	RH, TR
Diamond Firetail	16/05/2021	Accommodation Creek, Wyberba	RH, TR
Little Grassbird	16/05/2021	Wallangarra Sewage Ponds	RH, TR

* Rare in Toowoomba City

** Very late record

CD. C. Dove; RH. R. Hobson; PM. P. McConnell; KO. K. O'Donnell, TR. T. Reis.

Your Photos of what you have been seeing can be sent to the newsletter, this would be much appreciated.

General local stories and photos of what's around your backyard or a place you regularly visit would be great to post in the newsletter.

Photos to Charles Dove powerart@bigpond.net.au



Pied Stilts
West Creek Toowoomba
by Charles Dove



Eastern Yellow Robin
Jack Duggan Park Toowoomba
by Charles Dove