



TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

NEWSLETTER

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

JULY 2021

EDITION 470

BIRD OF THE MONTH



Bar-shouldered Dove

Redwood Park - 2021

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OUTINGS 2021

Saturday 31 st July	Redwood Park 8am meet at the Warrego Highway entrance and email tboc4350@gmail.com if attending
Saturday 28 th August	131 Hendon-Victoria Hill Road Meet 7:45 for 8am start. Sandy Takes about 1 hr to get there from the centre of Toowoomba
Saturday September 25 th	Girraween National Park
Oct 29 - 1/11	October Species Census
Saturday Nov 27 th	Lockyer Valley M. Atzeni

The Toowoomba Bird Observers Newsletter
will now be published monthly.

The deadline for the August Newsletter will be the 27th August
Charles powerart@bigpond.net.au

2021 CHALLENGE

197 as of 21/06/2021

WEB FORUM ONLY

www.toowoombabirdobservers.org.

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OUTINGS REPORTS

Durikai State Forest, 29/5/21

Blessed with glorious weather, we kick started the list at the Karara Tavern carpark with nine species including Little and Noisy Friarbird, White-plumed Honeyeater, Striated Pardalote and Whistling Kite, then proceeded along the Cunningham Highway to the first of several sites chosen during a reconnoitre three days earlier.

At the first site, near the Durikai Rd turnoff, a nice feeding party, including Yellow Thornbill, Inland Thornbill, Rose Robin, Spotted Pardalote, White-browed Treecreeper and Brown-headed Honeyeater, kept us entertained for several minutes. Grey-crowned Babbler, Brown Treecreeper, Golden Whistler, Mistletoebird and Striped Honeyeater were also recorded. Back at the cars, a Wedge-tailed Eagle cruised over, a distraction to most as it turned out, as only two of us saw the two White-backed Swallows tailing it at a distance, higher up. I was both chuffed and surprised, as I hadn't seen one for a few years, and never at Durikai. More about them later.

At the next stop, two obliging male Scarlet Honeyeaters enthralled beginners and veterans alike. Someone commented, "You won't find *that* red in a tin of paint". Totally agree! Weebill, Brown Honeyeater and Peaceful Dove were other additions. A little further down the road, Noisy Friarbirds were prolific, and Little and Musk Lorikeets kept the photographers busy and, dare I say, frustrated. The Mugga Ironbarks were in flower and, being late-May, we were mindful Swift Parrots were a genuine possibility, albeit a long shot. None had been reported there this year and we found none ourselves. But the very next day, two Brisbane birders photographed several on the south-eastern edge of Durikai SF. Missed by that much!

The well-known waterhole with the bullrushes was our next port of call. Usually, you can bank on a variety of honeyeaters and other bush birds around the waterhole, but evidently not this time of year. In fact, birds were hard to find. We eventually heard a Brown Treecreeper, and saw a couple of Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, a single Dusky Woodswallow overhead, and a Mistletoebird. As we were preparing to leave, I managed to get the bins on a couple of distant swallows before they dropped out of view. One was a Welcome Swallow, but the other turned out to be another White-backed Swallow, the second sighting of the day, so perhaps there's a resident colony in the area. It would be good news because those we knew of around Toowoomba, Helidon and Gatton have all gone.

At the Rockdale Rd turnoff, we added Pallid Cuckoo and Restless Flycatcher. After lunch at Karara, we returned to Durikai and birded around the railway and Scientific Site on the northern side of the highway. It proved quite productive with Fuscous Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Weebill and Yellow-rumped Thornbill being new for the list. An Australasian Darter overhead was an unexpected bonus and the final addition for a total of 66 species.

Excellent habitat, great birding, enjoyable company. Let's do it again in Spring!

Mick Atzeni

Attendees: Ann Alcock, Suzanne Case, Margie Murphy, Eddy van Klinken, Pam Heemskerk, Janina Dove, Charles Dove, Jimsie Varghese, Richard Thomis, Sandy Robertson, Chris Cameron, Mick Atzeni

Species List: Australian Wood Duck*, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Pallid Cuckoo*, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Australian Darter, Little Pied Cormorant*, Straw-necked Ibis*, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Whistling Kite*, Nankeen Kestrel, Little Corella*, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Pale-headed Rosella, Red-rumped Parrot*, Musk Lorikeet, Little Lorikeet, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet*, White-throated Treecreeper, Brown Treecreeper, Superb Fairy-wren, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, White-plumed Honeyeater, Fuscous Honeyeater, Scarlet Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Blue-faced Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Brown-headed Honeyeater, Striped Honeyeater, Little Friarbird, Noisy Friarbird, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Speckled Warbler, Inland Warbler, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Weebill, Grey-crowned Babbler, Dusky Woodswallow, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Grey Shrike-thrush*, Golden Whistler, Willie Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Magpie-lark, Restless Flycatcher*, Torresian Crow, Australian Raven, Jacky Winter, Rose Robin, Welcome Swallow, White-backed Swallow, Silvereye, Common Myna, Mistletoebird, Red-browed Finch, Double-barred Finch

* only seen outside Durikai State Forest



RED GOSHAWK INFORMATION SESSION FAIRHOLME COLLEGE

2ND JUNE 2021

An enthusiast group of bird lovers gathered at Fairholme College to hear an information session on “The Secret Life of possibly our Rarest Raptor and how to identify them” presented by Chris MacColl, PhD candidate at the School of Earth and Environmental Studies at UQ.

As the evening began the question was “Why are we doing this research?” The answers were very clear – poorly known, significant population decline, regional extinctions. Understanding and managing Red Goshawk populations can benefit many other threatened species. The Red Goshawk has lost more than half of its habitat in the last two hundred years, the remaining habitat is hugely fragmented.

CONSERVATION STATUS IS NOW:

NSW Critically Endangered
Queensland Endangered
NT and WA vulnerable
Nationally Vulnerable



The bird was first described by Latham in 1801 and he proceeded to draw it. This proved to be a factual copy of the bird. Further sightings were made from the 1800 through to January 2021 in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. This was the second record in this region. The juvenile male from Litchfield NP dispersed over 1600 kms to the Pilbara bioregion. He crossed the Great Sandy Desert enroute.

At present a tracking study is being undertaken – the method for collecting data is 17g solar-powered GPS/satellite transmitters – fitted via a backpack harness with cotton weak link – this can last 2 – 3 years – data is retrieved remotely via satellite.

A breeding study is underway – it aims to build understanding of breeding success, failure rates, causes of nest failure – unknown causes and looking at food and habitat.

IDENTIFYING RAPTORS

Initial Keys: *Size and Shape*
Flight Mannerisms
Plumage.

I found this particular presentation both extremely informative and very enjoyable. I would recommend that should another session such as this one take place members make every effort to attend. Raptors are magnificent birds and to see them launch themselves into the sky from a perch is a sight that brings awe to the viewer. I have attached an image of a Wedge Tailed Eagle which I hope will show just what incredible power and beauty raptors possess.

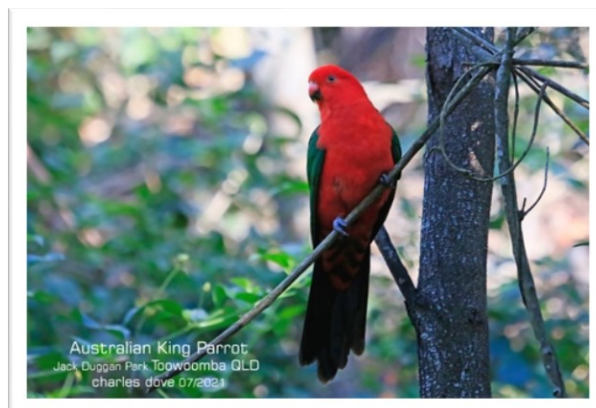


by Suzanne Combes

DUGGAN PARK 14th July

Awakening to a bright sunny Saturday the bird walk scheduled for this morning should be fine, until one walked outside to face the gale-force winds with a cold chill factor. Too late to think about not going. So, we went to Duggan Park not expecting too many to front up for the walk that I was going to lead, but surprise; all those who had booked to come were there plus a couple more. It was great to see young families with some keen star birdos of the future which proved beneficial during the morning.

After settling in, sort of, very difficult to stand or hear the person talking next to you under the conditions. We set off for some extreme birding so to speak. Heading down the steepest section to try and avoid the wind we came across some Brown Thornbill along with a pair of Australian King Parrots, feeding down low and being annoyed by a pair of Pale Headed Rosellas who felt that this is their patch, the King parrots did move along a bit to let them in. After instructing everybody with a word of caution on the rocky muddy slope, I did myself make a slip and ended up with a few bruises, but all was well and we carried on.



Australian King Parrot
Jack Duggan Park Toowoomba QLD
charles dove 07/2021

The Spotted Pardalote and the Striated Pardalote had managed to find suitable places to construct nesting hollows in the bank and were keeping busy. Sulphur Crested Cockatoos were getting excited seeing all the visitors and the Galah just sat at the mouth of its hollow taking in sun out of the wind which did occupy everyone for a time.

Moving on enjoying the sunshine out of the wind, on the lower track; and showing up numerous birds. One in particular spotted by two of our young up and coming stars, with one saying what's that! it looks like a honeyeater and the other saying yes, it's an Eastern Spinebill. That moment did make my day.

We stopped at the picturesque lookout overlooking Table Top Mountain and decided we might go to the cars and bring our morning tea back to this spot in the sun out of the wind. Good choice as we just relaxed, getting our bird list and conversations on the way it seemed so different from when we started out on this extreme birding walk! now somewhat less extreme. It was surprising the number of birds that we managed to accumulate with 26 species making it a great day considering the conditions.

We headed back to the cars and arriving back at the car park everyone had to scramble back to their cars, head on into the gale-force winds once again.

Thank you to everybody that came along and I feel a very enjoyable day, looking forward to another day of extreme birding.
Charles Dove

Bird List

Bird list Duggan Park 17 th July 2021		26 species	24 members
Galah	White-throated Treecreeper	Lewin's Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Variiegated Fairy-wren	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Rainbow Lorikeet	White-browed Scrubwren	Noisy Miner	Rose Robin
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	Brown Thornbill	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Eastern Yellow Robin
Little Lorikeet	Spotted Pardalote	Golden Whistler	Silvereye
Australian King-Parrot	Striated Pardalote	Grey Shrike-thrush	
Laughing Kookaburra	Eastern Spinebill	Australian Magpie	



Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Jack Duggan Park Toowoomba QLD charles dove 07/2021



Galah
Jack Duggan Park Toowoomba QLD charles dove 07/2021



DDEC MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

You may have heard about Redwood Park and the plan by Council to cut Mountain Bike Tracks through it. Many people are shocked about this and Darling Downs Environment Council is helping raise funds to protect Redwood permanently as a Conservation Park.

Save Redwood has a fundraiser – and with only 10 days to go is falling short of what we need – can you help?

It is easy to give 5 or 10 dollars to save the quails, owls, finches and fantails living on Toowoomba's doorstep, so why not?

Click on [this link](#) to donate to Save Redwood. Don't delay!.

Learn more on [facebook](#) [instagram](#) [youtube](#) [twitter](#)

You are invited to the opening of the pop-up exhibition
Tweets From Redwood Park

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANN ALCOCK

ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO THE SAVE REDWOOD PARK CAMPAIGN



The event will feature a presentation on the birdlife of Redwood Park

FRIDAY 6^{PM}, 13TH AUGUST 2021 ~ SATURDAY 9^{AM} -12^{MIDDAY}, 14TH AUGUST 2021

THE OFFICES OF THE DARLING DOWNS ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

AUSTRALIA ARCADE, 461 RUTHVEN STREET, TOOWOOMBA



IN MY GARDEN

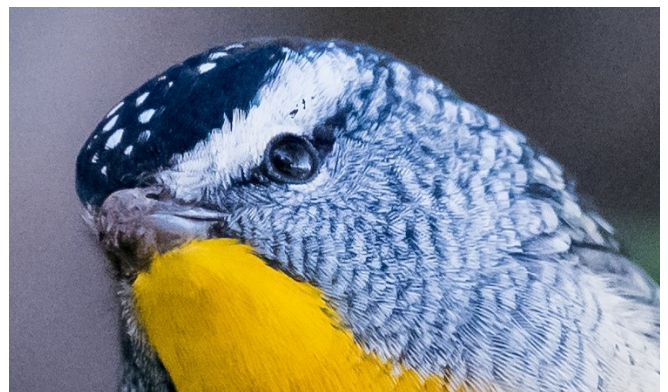
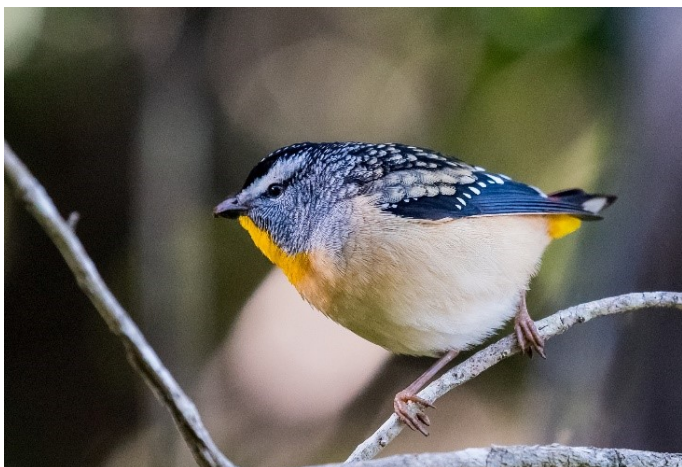
by Joe Scanlan

A few days ago, in our garden, I took photos of a male Satin Bowerbird who was dancing around for a female. He was picking up and then dropping a white flower (from a may bush I think). She was observing with interest. They flew off before anything else took place. The birds were under a thick bush, so the light was quite low and the photo is somewhat grainy as a result.

Then I heard a Spotted Pardalote calling. I tracked it down to a hole in a bank. It flew out of the nest and landed on a branch nearby. It sat there for long enough for me to get some good shots. I have cropped one of the images to show the reflections of trees and sky in its eye. Unlike in CSI, I could not get a super clear image from the eye! I think the Spotted Pardalote is one of the prettiest little birds in this area.



Satin Bowerbird – male



Spotted Pardalote - male

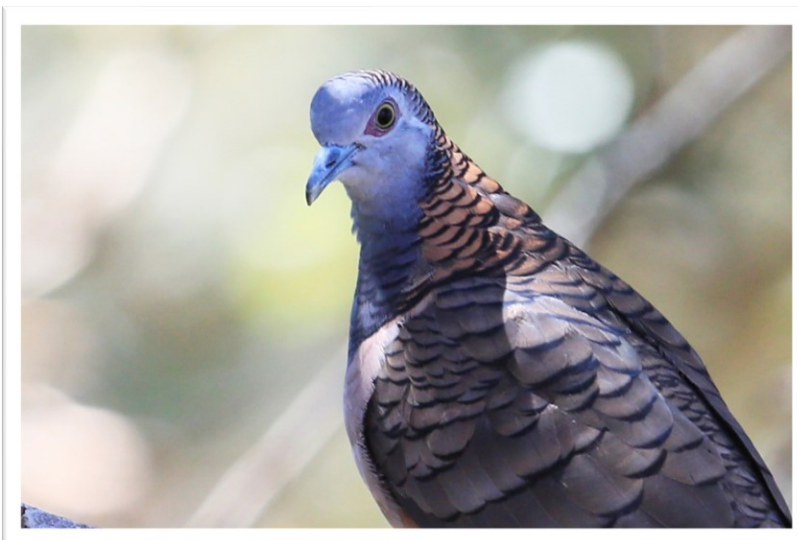
Bar-shouldered Dove

Scientific Name: *Geopelia humeralis*

Atlas Number: 32

DESCRIPTION:

The Bar-shouldered Dove is a medium-sized, long-tailed dove. Adults' doves have a blue-grey head, neck and upper breast, with a distinctive reddish-bronze patch on the hindneck, with dark barring. Young doves lack this patch and barring and tend to be duller overall. There is also a distinctive pinkish bar on the lower breast. The lower body is pale. They have a blue-grey eye-ring and reddish eye. They are usually seen in pairs or small parties. The northern sub-species *hedlandi* is lighter in colour. This species is also known as the Mangrove Dove, Scrub Dove, or Kookawook.



SIMILAR SPECIES:

The Bar-shouldered Dove is similar in size and shape to the Spotted Turtle-Dove, *Streptopelia chinensis*, and much larger than the Peaceful Dove, *G. striata*, or the Diamond Dove, *G. cuneata*.

DISTRIBUTION:

Bar-shouldered Doves are found in humid and well-wooded regions of north-western, northern and eastern Australia from near Onslow in Western Australia to Bega in New South Wales, as well as in southern New Guinea. The subspecies *hedlandi* is restricted to the Pilbara region.

HABITAT:

Bar-shouldered Doves are found in woodland with a grassy understorey and in nearby open areas, usually near water. They are also often found in mangroves and are frequently seen in urban areas.

FEEDING:

Bar-shouldered Doves feed on the ground in short grass near cover. They need to drink throughout the day. They mainly eat seeds of grasses, herbs and sedges, as well as rhizomes (small root storages).

BREEDING:

The nest of the Bar-shouldered Dove is usually hidden in dense shrubs or trees and in gardens, throughout its range. A thin platform is made from twigs and roots and is placed in a fork or on a branch. Both parents incubate the eggs and feed the chicks. Young doves are fed with 'crop milk', specially produced by the parent birds (a common characteristic of pigeons and doves).

LIVING WITH US

Bar-shouldered Doves have benefitted from clearing for agriculture and are common in urban areas in the Top End region (far northern Australia).

Text courtesy of <https://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>

image courtesy of Charles Dove

RAPTOR CENSUS JUNE/JULY 2021

Pat McConnell

NORTHERN SECTION

Pat McConnell and Kath O'Donnell surveyed the northern section on Sunday 27 June. This section was divided into four sub-sections as in previous years. These were Highfields to Cooby Dam, Cooby Dam to Goombungee, Goombungee to Cooyar and Cooyar to Highfields. The survey was completed between 11.00am and 4.00pm. Four species and 18 individual birds of prey were seen (See table below for summarised results). The weather during the survey was cool and fine with a light breeze. One hundred and sixty-four kilometres were travelled. Other interesting observations were a flock of six Ground Cuckoo-shrikes and several large flocks (one with more than 70 birds) of Zebra Finches.



SOUTHERN SECTION

The southern section was surveyed by Michael McGoldrick and Marie Gittins on Saturday 26 June. The weather was cold and showery with 20km SW winds. The route travelled was from Toowoomba to Cambooya (via Wyreema) to Greenmount to Pilton to Goomburra to Allora (via Mt. Marshall) to Toowoomba (via Nobby). The distance travelled was 207km. Two species and 17 individual birds of prey were seen.

EASTERN SECTION

The eastern section was surveyed by Mick Atzeni and Suzanne Combes on Monday 28 June from 9.00am to 3.00pm. The route surveyed was Lockyer, Helidon, Grantham, Placid Hills, Gatton north, Adare, Lake Clarendon, Lake Apex, Helidon Spa, Postman's Ridge and Murphy's Creek. Seven species and 102 individual birds of prey were seen.

WESTERN SECTION

The western section was surveyed by Mick Atzeni, Chris MacColl and Suzanne Combes on 8 July from 9.10am to 3.30pm. The route they surveyed was Toowoomba to Oakey (via Cecil Plains Rd), Jondaryn, Bowenville Reserve, Norwin, Cecil Plains, Dalby, 'Bun' & Quinalow to Jondaryn (via Mt Tyson Rd), Biddeston to Toowoomba via the Mt Tyson Rd (past the Wellcamp airport). Seven species and 202 individual birds of prey were seen.

Table of Sightings

Species	N	S	E	W	Total
Black-shouldered Kite	1	3	3	17	24
Black Kite			73	67	140
Whistling Kite			10	7	17
Spotted Harrier				1	1
White-bellied Sea- Eagle			3		3
Wedge-tailed Eagle	1		1	3	5
Brown Falcon	4				4
Black Falcon			1	1	2
Nankeen Kestrel	12	14	11	106	143
Total number of raptors	18	17	102	202	339

The above table shows that nine species were seen in 2021 which is one less species than in 2020. There were 339 individual birds of prey seen which is 130 more than in 2020.

A big thank you to all involved especially the leaders.

Pat McConnell
Records Officer

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Species	Date	Location	Observer
Musk Duck (1 female)	27/07/2021	Loveday Cove, Cooby Dam	MA et. al.
Australasian Shoveler (2)	27/07/2021	Loveday Cove, Cooby Dam	MA et. al.
Red-necked Avocet (3)	28/06/2021	Helidon Spa Caravan Park	MA; SC
Swamp Harrier	24/06/2021	Helidon	RH
Blue Bonnet (pair nesting)	21/07/2021	Old Homebush Road, Gowrie Junction	RH, JS
Powerful Owl (2)	19/07/2021	Redwood Park	MA, AA, BC, HK, KK
Australian Owlet-nightjar	19/07/2021	Redwood Park	MA
Pallid Cuckoo	27/06/2021	Sutcliffes Road, Flagstone Creek	RH
Spotted Quail-thrush	24/06/2021	Egypt, Lockyer Valley	RH, JG
Western Gerygone	16/06/2021	Pechey Swamp, Lower tent Hill	RH
Red-browed Treecreeper	11/07/2021	Goomburra Section, Main range N.P.	RH, TR
Crested Shrike-tit	11/07/2021	Goomburra Section, Main range N.P.	RH, TR
Rose Robin (female)	19/07/2021	Duggan Bushland, Toowoomba	RH
Russet-tailed Thrush	19/07/2021	William Park	MA, AA, BC

AA, A. Alcock; BC, B. Coleman; SC, S. Combes; JG, J. Geissler; RH, R. Hobson; HK, H. Krenske; KK, K. Krenske; JS, J. Shiels; TR, T. Reis.

Please notify Pat McConnell Records Officer of your sightings each month to maintain a continued records database to enable the monitoring of species in the Toowoomba region.

Been out and about and capturing a few images? Please send Photos of what you have been seeing 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 and stories to Charles Dove powerart@bigpond.net.au

