



TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

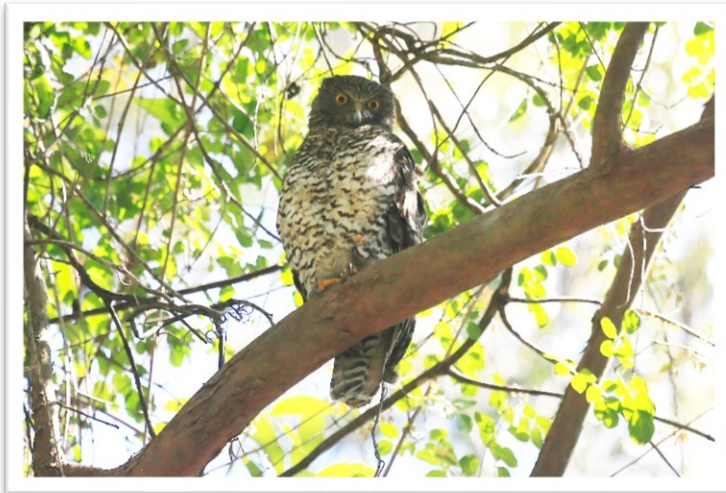
NEWSLETTER

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

October 2022

EDITION 484

BIRD OF THE MONTH



Powerful Owl
Williams Park, Highfields QLD 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Annual Report	P1-2
Outings & Events Details	P2-3
Club Reports	P3-6
Notices & Articles of Interest	P6-9
Bird of the Month	P10
Members Bird Notes	P11



OUTINGS & EVENTS 2022

Wednesday November 9th	Prince Henry Drive – Toowoomba Charles Dove 0417 422 302
Saturday November 26th	Ravensbourne NP Mick Atzeni 0499 395 485
Sunday December 4th	Breakfast with the Birds Sandy Robertson 0415 277 145

Website: www.tboc.org.au

Postal address:

P.O. Box 4730

Toowoomba East QLD Australia 4350

Email: tboc4350@gmail.com

Phone: 0499 395 485

PLEASE CONTACT THE LEADER IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND

The Toowoomba Bird Observers Newsletter
is published monthly.

**The deadline for the next Newsletter
is 27th November**

Charles powerart@bigpond.net.au

Management Committee:

President	Mick Atzeni
Vice-president	Sandy Robertson
Secretary	Peter Everest
Treasurer	Ann Alcock
Media officer	Ann Alcock
Editor	Charles Dove
Outings Coordinator	Peter Everist
Records Officer	Pat McConnell
Facebook Admin	Sandy Robertson
	Mick Atzeni
	Ann Alcock

2022 CHALLENGE

224 species as of the end of September 2022.

President's Annual Report

It's fair to say the past year has been one of the busiest and most memorable and rewarding of our club's 47-year history.

This time last year, Redwood Park was still at risk of becoming a downhill mountain biking adventure tourism park. The Save Redwood Park campaign coordinated by DDEC was in overdrive. Our club contributed in various ways to the campaign including bird records; images for the Save Redwood postcards; Ann's bird prints and calendars for fundraising, and also Charlie's book "Redwood Park. Toowoomba's Wildlife Treasure", which had been produced and published thanks to a timely collaboration between Eddy van Klinken and Charles.

In November, we participated in a peaceful rally outside Council Chambers. Scot McPhie presented a killer presentation to the TRC's Environment Committee on 22 March. Then we all celebrated the 15th June announcement there'd be no mountain bike trails in Redwood Park, which became official a week later.

I point out that the battle continues in other areas and we really can not sit idle and leave it to others. Even though we'd like to think we're just a social birding club, when things like the Redwood Park threat happen, it is clearly time to be more than just 'social'.

Outings included Brekky with the Birds at Murphys Creek; Toorbul; Lockyer Valley Wetlands with the visiting Illawarra Bird Observers Club in May; Crows Nest NP; Highfields Falls and Williams Park; Mount Glen Rock at Esk; Redwood Park (Open Day); Carabeen Nature Reserve near Killarney; West Creek Reserve, the first of our mid-week monthly outings. Thanks to all hosts, leaders and attendees.

Surveys included

- The annual Raptor census resulted in 11 species and 385 birds.
- Swift Parrots. Well attended but no evidence of them this year in SEQ. Some local sites were chosen for future surveys
- Annual October Species census resulted in an exceptional 176 species. Thanks to the 27 participants.
- Monthly surveys: 224 species were recorded during 2021 and reported in the annual summary. Thanks to Pat for reinstating this and to those who provided their records.
- Powerful Owl monitoring during the breeding season

Two new species were recorded in our survey area, namely:

- Australian Swiftlet on 14/10/21, by Bill and Eileen over their Helidon property
- Fairy Gerygone on 19/11/21, by Roger Jaensch in Redwood Park, which I also saw.

With the big wet, and cold winter, it has been an interesting year for certain species including

- Button-quail: Numerous Painted BQ sightings. A Red-backed BQ turned up at USQ and there were more breeding records of BBBQ evidenced by camera traps
- Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove were regularly reported, traditionally one of our least reported species
- Powerful Owl breeding success was apparently low this year with only one sighting of a fledgeling reported.
- Waterbirds have been in short supply having dispersed to breed.

Campaigns and projects

- The successful Save Redwood Campaign which our guest speaker, Scot McPhie, spoke about
- Current campaign to stop Stage 2 of the Helidon Rocket Engine Testing facility being approved. This is another case of lack of due diligence and poor public consultation. It is not just a public amenity issue with the noise; there are valid concerns about the impact on fauna and the environment in the area

- Painted Honeyeater Project in the Jondaryan area. Conservation and ecotourism aspects.
- Birds of Lockyer Uplands Conservation Action Plan (BLUCAP). This will involve volunteers conducting seasonal surveys across several properties using standard survey methods
- Primary School visits. Charlie's Redwood Park book, bird posters and other resources were donated to 16 local primary schools that local supporter, Peter Eldridge, suggested to us during the Save Redwood campaign.
- TBO raptor census data: Researchers, Jarrod Kath and Chris MacColl, are analysing the annual raptor census data (2002 to date).
- Bird Tourism: to be included in the TRC's upcoming Tourism and Events Strategy (2022-2032)

Thanks to:

- Peter Watts and Shelly Grist for sharing their Big Year birding adventures. Congratulations on what they managed to achieve
- Al Young for donation of several overseas field guides to our Library. Hopefully, the club library will end up at the old Scout Hut in Heller St, which will be an environmental centre.
- Suzanne Combes who is stepping down for her past 4 years as Secretary due to her health. Suzanne kept us honest and will be greatly missed.
- Ann Alcock, and Jenni and Tony Bond for looking after a visiting birder, Leonard Analdo.
- Charles for pulling the newsletter together each month, and for producing the bird and butterfly posters, and walkabout sheets for the Carnival of Flowers
- Eddy for her fund-raising initiative to help Charlie replace their stolen car, and to all who supported this.

Congratulations to:

- Charlie on his Redwood Park book, and Ann and her friend Julie Ramsay for their book "Birds of Western Queensland". We're blessed to have such talented people in the club.
- Suzanne Combes whose image of an unusual Black Falcon is the subject of a paper by Stephen Debus and Chris MacColl that has been accepted for journal publication.

It's pleasing to have had a few new members including some keen birders who are recording their sightings on eBird and BirdData.

It's also important to start capturing our historical data digitally. To that end, we are currently in discussions with BirdLife Australia who are keen to support us.

Finally, thanks to my team—Sandy, Ann, Charlie, Suzanne, Pat, Peter, Jenni and Toni. Some have had health issues and I'm grateful for the way we've backed each other up. It's not just a club; it's a family who care about each other, and that's been amply proven this year. The club has shown what goodwill, kindness, patience, tolerance and love can achieve and I'd like very much to see that continue.

We have our 50th anniversary in three years. It's time to start planning how we honour that milestone. It would be really wonderful if we could document the club's history.

Michael Atzeni

Upcoming Outings

MIDWEEK WALK

Prince Henry Drive Toowoomba

Date: Wednesday 9th November

Leader: Charles Dove

TBOC NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2022

Meet location: Katoomba Point Lookout, Prince Henry Drive Toowoomba

Time: 8:00am.

Approx 4km - Please bring and carry morning tea

RSVP: To Charles Dove by 12:00 midday Tuesday 8th November 2022
Txt 0417 422 302 or email powerart@bigond.net.au

Outing details: Tarrred Road with slight downhill and uphill grades. Morning tea at Lovers lookout before doing the return trip

In the event of inclement weather contact Charles Dove on 0417 422 302 by 7.30am
Closed footwear required.

MONTHLY OUTING

Ravensbourne National Park

Date: Sat 26 November 2022

Leader: Michael Atzeni

Meet location: Gus Beutel Lookout, National Park Road

Start time: 7:00am.

RSVP: To Michael Atzeni by 12am Friday 25th November 2022
Text 0499 395 485

Outing details: **Bring Morning Tea and Lunch – 2 bushwalks, varied grades. Both locations have facilities**

BREAKFAST WITH THE BIRDS

Sunday December 4th
"Minglen", 50 Hirstglen Road Hirstglen

Early birds can arrive from 6am if they're keen.

BYO Breakfast at 7:30 (Similar to what we do at Lake Apex)
Will be a BBQ available if anyone wants to use it.

Then we'll visit some local spots around Hirstglen, West Haldon, Budgee area.

For more info contact Sandy Robertson text 0415 277 145

Club Reports

Midweek Walk – West Creek - 12th October 2022

The first of many Midweek Walks for the club and it turned out a great day with 11 members coming for the walk.

We started with a list already commenced from the meeting area of a number of species and started off casually walking around the many water ways along West creek Toowoomba. Many members were surprised by the

number of birds breeding in the trees with chic's, Willy Wagtails, Noisy Miners, Magpies and Magpie-larks it continued in the waterways with many of the water birds, Eurasian Coots, Dusky Moorhens, Wood Ducks, Purple Swamphens, Australian White Ibis and Pacific Black Ducks parading their youngsters in the water or on the grass near the ponds as we passed by. Many members had never seen the chicks of some species so it was a real treat for them.

A big Thankyou to all those who came along and to Chris Cameron for putting together the bird list for the morning.

Charles Dove

West Creek Midweek Walk 12/10/22		11 members	41 species
Australian Wood Duck	Dusky Moorhen	Brown Honeyeater	Torresian Crow
Pacific Black Duck	Eurasian Coot	Blue-faced Honeyeater	Magpie-lark
Australasian Grebe	Masked Lapwing	Noisy Friarbird	Apostlebird
Spotted Dove	Galah	Little Friarbird	Welcome Swallow
Crested Pigeon	Little Corella	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Fairy Martin
Tawny Frogmouth	Rainbow Lorikeet	Australasian Figbird	Tree Martin
Little Pied Cormorant	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	Grey Butcherbird	Common Myna
Little Black Cormorant	Pale-headed Rosella	Pied Butcherbird	House Sparrow
Australian White Ibis	Laughing Kookaburra	Australian Magpie	
Straw-necked Ibis	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Pied Currawong	
Purple Swamphen	Noisy Miner	Willie Wagtail	

In Search of Albert *Carabeen Nature Refuge 16 October 2022*

Seven of us met Anna Fearnley at the Carabeen Nature Refuge on their property at The Falls, near Killarney. Our mission: to observe the birds on her patch and, if possible, to catch a glimpse of the shy and elusive Albert's Lyrebird. Anna is a Citizen Scientist who has been studying the lyrebirds in the area for many years.

The Carabeen Nature Refuge straddling Spring Creek Road is an ecotone area where large eucalypts merge with vine filled rainforest.

On arrival we saw a Grey Fantail busily attending its nest at the side of the road. A Noisy Pitta was calling with its own inimitable "Walk to work" call but we were unable to locate it or entice it in with our calls.



Grey Fantail by Mick Atzeni



Golden Whistler by Anna Fearnley

As we walked along, we noticed a number of nests of Brown Gerygone, Yellow-throated and Large-billed Scrubwren. Eastern Whipbirds, Golden and Rufous Whistler were seen and heard as well as Grey Shrike-thrush and, to our surprise, Rose Robin. A noisy Green Catbird shrieked and a Paradise Riflebird called.

An elusive Australian Logrunner tried very hard to hide, but some managed a glimpse of him. Sulphur-crested Cockatoos made a raucous entry echoed by the shrieks of a flock of Crimson Rosellas. A pair of Australian King-Parrots came into view. We reached a track and, as we walked up, we heard the mimicking and the unmistakable low call of an Albert's Lyrebird. The photographers moved furtively around to try to get a shot but it was too shy and too well-hidden amongst the vegetation.



Brown Gerygone



Eastern Rosella

Next, we drove to Carr's Lookout to take in the scenery and then further along saw a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo and a Black-faced Monarch. We then walked along the New South Wales border for a little way, hoping for an Alberts. A Fan-tailed Cuckoo was calling close by but we could not find it. Other birds identified were Eastern Spinebill, Pale-headed Rosellas and Grey Shrike-thrush.

Finally, we moved on to the Queen Mary Falls caravan park where we enjoyed "Lunch with the birds" which were being fed by visitors.

As well as the parrots, Red-browed Finches and a pair of Wonga Pigeons had come down for a feed.



Wonga Pigeon



Red-browed Finches

Well, we didn't get to see an Albert, but we heard one and I think that some of us may be lining up for a possible meeting next winter. A big thank you to our guide Anna.



Group pic by Christian Blank

Bird Lists and report courtesy of Peter Everist with photos supplied by a few members.

Carabeen Wildlife Reserve:			37 species
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Noisy Pitta	Spotted Pardalote	Rufous Fantail
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Albert's Lyrebird	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-throated Treecreeper	Bell Miner	Torresian Crow
Australian King-Parrot	Green Catbird	White-naped Honeyeater	Paradise Riflebird
Crimson Rosella	Satin Bowerbird	Australian Logrunner	Rose Robin
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Yellow-throated Scrubwren	Eastern Whipbird	Eastern Yellow Robin
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	White-browed Scrubwren	Golden Whistler	Red-browed Finch
Brush Cuckoo	Large-billed Scrubwren	Rufous Whistler	
Laughing Kookaburra	Large-billed Scrubwren	Grey Shrike-thrush	
Rainbow Bee-eater	Brown Gerygone	Pied Currawong	

Carr's Lookout:			12 species
Eastern Rosella	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Shrike-thrush
Pale-headed Rosella	White-throated Treecreeper	Eastern Whipbird	Black-faced Monarch
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Eastern Spinebill	Golden Whistler	Eastern Yellow Robin

Queen Mary Falls Caravan Park:			12 species
Wonga Pigeon	Crimson Rosella	Bell Miner	Pied Currawong
Rainbow Lorikeet	Satin Bowerbird	Noisy Miner	Welcome Swallow
Australian King-Parrot	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Magpie	Red-browed Finch

NOTICES & ARTICLES of INTEREST

Links:

Competitive bird calling revived by Bega Valley school students

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-10-19/bird-call-competition-revival-in-the-bega-valley/101550188>

Watch "Lewin's Rail. Australian Bird Media. Filming the rarely seen Lewin's Rail and it's amazing calls." on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/eslb8aajqyc>

Peter and Shelley have these amazing images of a Tawny Frogmouth and a Channel-billed Cuckoo taken from their deck.

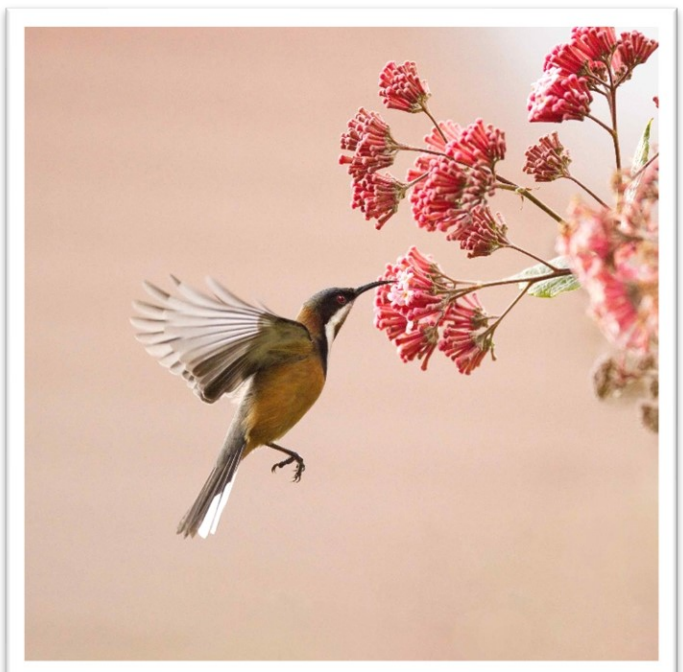
We have had frogmouths nest in our yard for many years now and we have been watching a nest from our deck. This afternoon, we observed a dramatic event as per the following images. We are interested to know if anyone has seen or heard of similar behaviour.



PS: Peter and Shelly would be happy to receive any comments.

NB: UPDATE 2 HEALTHY CHICS 5/11/2022

Mitchell Roberts captured this great image of the Eastern Spinebill at JE Duggan Park 23/7/22.



GREAT MEMORY TO SHARE by Eduarda van Klinken

On the recommendation of Ann Alcock, I stayed at Bellthorpe Stays (between Woodford and Maleny) for a few nights recently. On arrival my host pointed out two Dollarbirds perched on a high branch. As we stood there, they appeared to grab each other by the beak, spinning down quite a distance before separating. I believe this is a courtship ritual? My host also played me the call of the Paradise Riflebird, which I heard regularly during my stay. Despite searching I wasn't able to find the bird until, quite suddenly, as I was enjoying an evening drink on the back deck, a male alighted on the same spot I had earlier seen the Dollarbirds! It spent around a minute attacking the bark acrobatically. Minutes after these two catbirds alighted in the same tree. I had heard these since childhood camping trips, but never seen one. I also enjoyed good sightings of the Little Shrike-thrush – another first for me. Definitely a holiday to remember!

TAWNIES AT HOME by Tony Bond

One or two Tawny Frogmouths used to roost on the same branch in our backyard in Highfields pretty much every day - but we haven't seen them months. While chatting to our neighbours this morning we discovered why. They have set up home next door.

The children reckon they've counted three chicks but only the one was visible today and looking very wide awake!!



MURDEROUS HONEYEATERS! by Chris Cameron

An unusual incident at Lake Galletly early afternoon, 8.10.2022

I had spent a couple of hours in the bird hide waiting unsuccessfully for the Blue-billed Ducks to show and was on the way out, heading back to my car. Distracted a bit by a pair of Willie Wagtails scolding, and a quick scan revealed two fledglings in a nearby paperbark, trying not to be too obvious! Very cute! Sadly, they would not sit together to do an overload of cuteness!

A couple more steps out onto the road and some movement caught my eye, which was anything but cute....

A Brown Honeyeater had flown down to something beside the bitumen that it appeared to be struggling with. I could not quite make it out, so very carefully approached till I could see it was another, likely road-killed Brown Honeyeater! I have seen a number of quite heart-wrenching sights of various reptile and animal species trying to revive a recently killed mate on the road, and my initial thought was this was something similar.

Closer approach revealed quite the opposite! The live bird had one foot locked around the corpse's neck while kicking and shoving with the other, effectively rolling and twisting in circles while it pecked viciously, pulling out quite a number of feathers, while continuing the non-stop attack for roughly 10 minutes! It was quite unworried by my slow approach, and flew back to feed eventually when it felt it had defeated its foe.... not because I had disturbed it.

This action all took place in a quite open area by the roadside, the attacking bird seemed to be totally focussed on its assault, it was perhaps lucky not to have been spotted by a passing Currawong or similar, it would have been very vulnerable!!



Brown Honeyeaters were also being observed by the immature Willy Wagtail

POWERFUL OWL

Scientific Name: *Ninox strenua*
Atlas Number: 248

image by Charles dove
Text courtesy <https://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>

Description:

The Powerful Owl is a large owl with a relatively small head and a rounded tail. It is dark grey to dark grey-brown above, with white barring, and off-white below, with distinctive dark v-shaped chevrons. The eyes are yellow, set in a dark grey/brown facial mask. The legs are feathered and the yellow to orange feet are massive, with sharp talons. The sexes are alike but the female is smaller, with a narrower head. Juvenile birds are downy white on the head and underparts, the underparts are sparsely streaked, and they have much shorter tails than the adults. Powerful Owls are the largest of the Australian nocturnal birds (night birds).



To see a video profile of the Powerful Owl, please head to our [Powerful Owl Research Page](#).

Similar species:

Where the range of the Powerful Owl overlaps with the similarly shaped Rufous Owl, *N. rufa*, it can be distinguished by its chevrons on the underparts, and general lack of rufous colouring. Juveniles can be similar, but those of the Rufous Owl are never streaked.

Distribution:

The Powerful Owl is endemic to eastern and south-eastern Australia, mainly on the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range, from south-eastern Queensland to South Australia.

Habitat:

The Powerful Owl is found in open forests and woodlands, as well as along sheltered gullies in wet forests with dense understoreys, especially along watercourses. Will sometimes be found in open areas near forests such as farmland, parks and suburban areas, as well as in remnant bushland patches. Needs old growth trees to nest.

Seasonal movements:

Sedentary.

Feeding:

The Powerful Owl is a carnivore, eating mainly medium to large tree-dwelling mammals, particularly the Common Ringtail Possum, *Pseudocheirus peregrinus*, and the Great Glider. It will also take roosting birds and sometimes small ground-dwelling mammals such as rabbits or small marsupials. It forages mainly in trees, swooping down on prey and taking prey with its feet.

Breeding:

The Powerful Owl mates for life (over 30 years in some cases) and pairs defend an all-purpose territory year-round. The male prepares the nest, which is usually a vertical hollow in a large old tree, and provides the female and young with a constant supply of food during the early part of the nesting period. The female incubates the eggs and broods the young, emerging later in the nesting period to hunt for food as well. Young birds remain with the parents for several months after fledging and may stay within their parents' territory for over a year.

To see video of the Powerful Owl at the nesting hollow, please go to the [Powerful Owl NestCAM](#)

Living with us

The Powerful Owl is adversely affected by land clearing, but can live in fragmented habitats such as farms or suburban areas. Sometimes killed by cars. Young birds are sometimes killed by foxes, cats or dogs.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

Species	Date	Location	Observer
Topknot Pigeon (7)	07/09/22	private property, Ballard	MA
Topknot Pigeon (1)	07/09/22	Spring Bluff	MA
Australian Hobby (1)	04/10/22	Woden St, Murphys Creek	MA
Grey Goshawk (1)	23/09/22	Highfields Falls	MA
Black-faced Monarch (1)	23/09/22	Highfields Falls	MA
Powerful Owl (1)	23/09/22	Williams Park, Highfields	DB, MA
Sooty Owl (h)*	29/09/22	private property, Ballard	MA; pers comm
Little Bronze-Cuckoo (h)	17/09/22	Thomas Rd, Upper Lockyer	MA
Black-chinned Honeyeater (h)	17/09/22	Thomas Rd, Upper Lockyer	MA
Apostlebird (4)**	29/09/22	Lemway Ave, Kearney Springs	MA
Apostlebird (3)	29/09/22	along highway, Blue Mtn Heights	MA

MA: Mick Atzeni DB: Dan Bishop

*'drop-bomb' call heard just on dark by B. Willmet

**nesting along West Creek

A couple more images from the Carabeen Nature Refuge by Chris Cameron



Satin Bowerbird in transition



Brown Gerygone 'nest'