



# TOOWOOMBA BIRD OBSERVERS

## NEWSLETTER

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

November 2023

EDITION 496

### BIRD OF THE MONTH

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**Red-capped Plover**  
Keongs Lagoon Oakey QLD

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### OUTINGS & EVENTS 2023

The Toowoomba Bird Observers Newsletter  
is published monthly.

**The deadline for the next Newsletter  
is 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

Charles [powerart@bigpond.net.au](mailto:powerart@bigpond.net.au)

Saturday December 16th	<b>Earlybird breakfast</b> Tony and Jennie Bond
Saturday January 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Beginner's outing</b> Dan Bishop

PLEASE CONTACT THE LEADER IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND

**A REALY BIG THANK YOU  
TO ALL THE MEMBERS WHO CONTRIBUTED  
THROUGHOUT 2023  
WITH PHOTOS – ARTICLES – REPORTS  
FOR THE TBO NEWSLETTER**

*Charles Dove editor*

## EARLYBIRD BREAKFAST

### HIGHFIELDS

**Date:** Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December

**Leaders:** Tony and Jennie Bond

**Time:** 7:00am.

**Meet location:** 9 Tara Court, Highfields - <https://maps.app.goo.gl/WfC6KcfGEWcW6AE87>

**Approx -** Tea and coffee and bread rolls provided. BBQ available.  
Please BYO breakfast.

**Parking:** Please do not park on verges in Tara Court. There is room for about 6-7 cars on our drive if first people squeeze up. If no room on arrival (or don't want to be blocked in) park on Clarke Road - short walk but lots of space.

**RSVP:** Tony & Jennie by 12:00 midday Friday 15th Dec  
Tony Mobile: text 0412 638 406 or email [jtbond19b@protonmail.com](mailto:jtbond19b@protonmail.com)

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## EARLY BIRD WALK

An introduction to birds for all

### PRINCE HENRY DRIVE

**Date:** Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**Leader:** Dan Bishop

**Time:** 7:00 am

**Meet location:** Prince Henry Drive. Near Katoomba Point Lookout  
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/EzcgKjM4XJrfN8Tq6>

**Approx 2 & 3km -** BYO morning tea,

**Outing details:** Moderate walking. **Closed footwear required.** In the event of inclement weather contact the leader.

No toilets at this location.

Nearest rest area is at Bridge St., Trailhead, Bridge Street  
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/3P3UZ5nMWw4Gm6D78>

**RSVP:** To Dan Bishop by 12:00 noon Friday 26th January 2024  
Txt 04019 135 156 or email [danbishop@internode.on.net](mailto:danbishop@internode.on.net)

**MID-WEEK WALK REPORT** Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023**JONDARYAN** by Tony Bond

The midweek walk on Wednesday the 8th of November 2023 was not just the latest of Charles' midweek walks it will now be known as the "Black-eared Cuckoo Walk".

Only five birders managed the drive to Jondaryan where we were expecting to see Painted Honeyeaters, White-winged Fairywrens and Mistletoe Birds, but nobody mentioned a Black-eared Cuckoo!!

It was a fairly cool day when we met at 8am at the Memorial Park on the highway at Jondaryan. But before long the sun started making itself felt and jackets came off.

At the rest area we logged all the normal residents, including Galah, Blue-face Honeyeaters, Noisy Friarbirds, Noisy Miners, a Pied Butcherbird etc. Then we headed south-east on the highway and turned immediately left, crossing the railway line, and drove slowly along the Jondaryan-Sabine Road with occasional stops to look at Apostlebirds, and Cockatiels. During one brief stop a Nankeen Kestrel performed some acrobatics, a White-necked Heron glided by, and a Black Kite was also seen.

We parked up outside the grain facility and it was here we had our first Painted Honeyeater encounter. We could hear their occasional calling and eventually a few were seen. Superb Fairywrens, Willy Wagtail were also present.

We turned to the left, still following the Jondaryan-Sabine Road and parked up at a sharp right turn where there is a small dam on private property. The water level in the dam was very low and there was no visible bird activity as viewed from the road. But the calling of Painted Honeyeaters was now more constant. As we walked up and down many were spotted very close to the road, as well as an occasional Mistletoebird, more Superb Fairywrens, and even some Grey-crowned Babblers.

On returning to the cars, movement in a tree right in the corner at the roadside drew everyone's attention. Most activity was coming from a couple Brown Honeyeaters and Silvereyes before Charles called out "Black-eared Cuckoo". And there it was, low down in the same tree in plain sight getting on with business and not worried at all by us or the other birds. It remained in view for several minutes. Later it flew eastwards for a hundred metres or so and was seen again high up, but still close to the road before it headed north into thicker country and out of our view. With two photographers in the group, we were able to collect some good pictures and the identification was later confirmed.

After morning tea, we continued to follow Jondaryan-Sabine Road to a small thorn bush on a roadside fence where Charles had seen White-winged Fairywrens nesting on a previous outing. We parked up and crept closer before a female appeared and posed on the wires and posts. Then very briefly the male popped into view on a low wire behind some woody growth. We only had the one sighting and of the male with his distinctive appearance. Confusingly we also saw a male Superb Fairywren on the same stretch of fence as the female. Then as suddenly as this activity began, they all went down behind the fenceline and out of sight.

It was an excellent morning with some good sightings. Thanks to Charles for sharing some of these special locations, and thanks again to Jennie for keeping the count, which was 40 birds by the time we headed home.

Jennie's Bird List follows...

Bird List Jondaryan November 8 <sup>th</sup> 2023		5 members	40 species
Spotted Dove	Galah	Noisy Friarbird	Willie Wagtail
Crested Pigeon	Cockatiel	Striped Honeyeater	Torresian Crow
Peaceful Dove	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	Painted Honeyeater	Magpie-lark
Bar-shouldered Dove	Black-eared Cuckoo	Grey-crowned Babbler	Apostlebird
Little Pied Cormorant	Superb Fairy-wren	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Silvereye
White-necked Heron	White-winged Fairy-wren	White-winged Triller	Welcome Swallow
Straw-necked Ibis	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	Grey Butcherbird	Tree Martin
Black-shouldered Kite	Noisy Miner	Pied Butcherbird	Common Myna
Black Kite	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	Australian Magpie	Mistletoebird
Nankeen Kestrel	Brown Honeyeater	Grey Fantail	Double-barred Finch



Images from the Jondaryan November mid-week walk courtesy of Tony Bond.



Black Kite



Black-shouldered Kite



Painted Honeyeater



Mistletoebird



Black-eared Cuckoo



White-winged Fairy-wren

## A few links that might interest.

2023 Finalists — BirdLife Australia Photography Awards <https://www.birdlifephotoaward.org.au/gallery-finalists-2023>

**Amazed beachgoer** videos endangered cassowary emerging from ocean off Far North Queensland. From a distance it resembled a mythic monster but as it came closer in the tropical Queensland waters a stunned onlooker realised the struggling creature was a large bird — and not a seabird. [Read the full story](#) Shared from [ABC app](#)

**Dodo relative's mysterious appearance on tropical island baffles bird experts.** Usually found in South East Asia, the colorfully plumed Nicobar pigeon has been spotted living its "best life" on Green Island off the coast of Cairns, delighting tourist and puzzling scientists. [Read the full story](#) Shared from [ABC app](#)

**Farmers prove the difference** in providing new hope for endangered bird. Central west NSW farmer Rodney Guest is "over the moon" Malleefowl incubated and hatched in captivity are thriving in the wild as part of efforts to ensure the survival of the species.

[Read the full story](#)

Shared from [ABC app](#)

**For 25 years there's been one event** this passionate birdwatcher won't miss. Every year, Mick Roderick commits to an "obsessive" Twitchathon race across the countryside. This year it's helping save one of Australia's rarest birds.

[Read the full story](#)

Shared from [ABC app](#)

**Hundreds of mutton birds found dead** as 'wreck' strikes during 'epic' migration Experts say the "confronting" sights that greeted NSW beachgoers was likely caused by bad weather, though other factors could also have been at play.

[Read the full story](#)

Shared from [ABC app](#)

**Warning as snakes appear from above hunting birds in trees** Fiona Tustian enjoys having snakes in her garden, but they're not everyone's cup of tea. So how can you reduce the chances of one taking up residence in your yard?

[Read the full story](#)

Shared from [ABC app](#)

Why Australia's largest owl is being forced further into urban areas Conservationists are working with citizen scientists to ensure the powerful owl is protected as habitat loss drives it into new areas.

[Read the full story](#)

Shared from [ABC app](#)

**Australian discovery of 120m-year-old footprints** provides earliest evidence for birds in southern hemisphere.

[https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/nov/16/australia-discovery-ancient-bird-footprints-tracks-victorian-beach?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/nov/16/australia-discovery-ancient-bird-footprints-tracks-victorian-beach?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

**Bird Week: New hope for rare Australian bird | NSW Environment and Heritage.**

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/news/bird-week-new-hope-for-rare-australian-bird>

**QLD: Clagiraba - Australian Painted Snipe Tracking**

<https://paintedsnipe.com.au/2023/11/03/qld-clagiraba/>

Scientists learn secret to hummingbirds' remarkable agility.

[https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/nov/09/scientists-learn-secret-to-hummingbirds-remarkable-agility?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/nov/09/scientists-learn-secret-to-hummingbirds-remarkable-agility?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

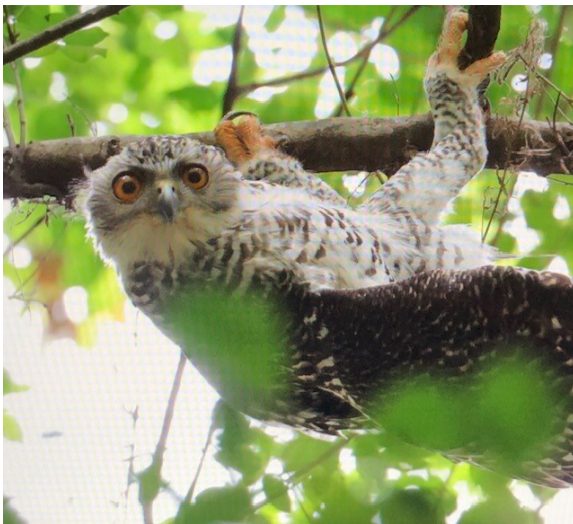
**The Forgotten Female: How a Generation of Women Scientists Changed Our View of Evolution | All About Birds All About Birds.**

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/the-forgotten-female-how-a-generation-of-women-scientists-changed-our-view-of-evolution/>

**Two Expeditions Highlight the Work of Women Ornithologists** in Colombia and Brazil | All About Birds All About Birds.

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/two-expeditions-highlight-the-work-of-women-ornithologists-in-colombia-and-brazil/>

## NOTICES & ARTICLES of INTEREST



Pat McConnell was lucky to catch this image of a Powerful Owl chick at Williams Park.

*"We would not have seen it if it hadn't flown."*

Regards Pat

## RED-CAPPED PLOVER

Scientific Name: *Charadrius ruficapillus*

Atlas Number: 143

Image by Charles Dove

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

### DESCRIPTION:

The adult male Red-capped Plover has a bright reddish chestnut crown (centre of crown can be grey brown) and nape, and grey brown mantle. There is a black incomplete band running down from the chestnut nape to the sides of the breast and a black line from the bill through and past the eye. The legs and short fine bill are black. In flight there is a clear white wing bar and white outer tail. The female is duller in colour, missing the dark breast patches. Young birds are similar but paler than the adults. Other names for this species are Red-capped Dotterel, Red-necked Dotterel and Sand Lark.



Female

### SIMILAR SPECIES:

The Red-capped Plover is similar to the non-breeding Lesser Sand (Mongolian) Plover, *C. mongolus*, the Kentish Plover, *C. alexandrinus*, and the non-breeding and juvenile Double-banded Plover, *C. bicinctus*. The Red-capped Plover is small, has light upperparts and white underneath and the red cap of the male is diagnostic. Its short rear end gives it a compact shape and it often stands tall, with long legs.

### DISTRIBUTION:

The Red-capped Plover is widespread throughout Australia.

### HABITAT:

The Red-capped Plover is found in wetlands, especially in arid areas, and prefers saline and brackish waters.

### SEASONAL MOVEMENTS:

The Red-capped Plover is resident. Movements are poorly known, but it may move between the coast and inland wetlands.

### FEEDING:

The Red-capped Plover may be seen foraging for molluscs, small crustaceans and some vegetation, on mudflats, sandy beaches and salt-marsh.

### BREEDING:

The nest site of the Red-capped Plover is a shallow scrape on a beach or stony area, nearly always close to water. Sometimes the nest is protected by a small plant or some rubbish. The eggs are usually well camouflaged.

### LIVING WITH US

The Red-capped Plover is secure in Australia. The nest site location can be varied, but those built in sand and pebbles are vulnerable to damage by fisherman and off-road vehicles.