

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

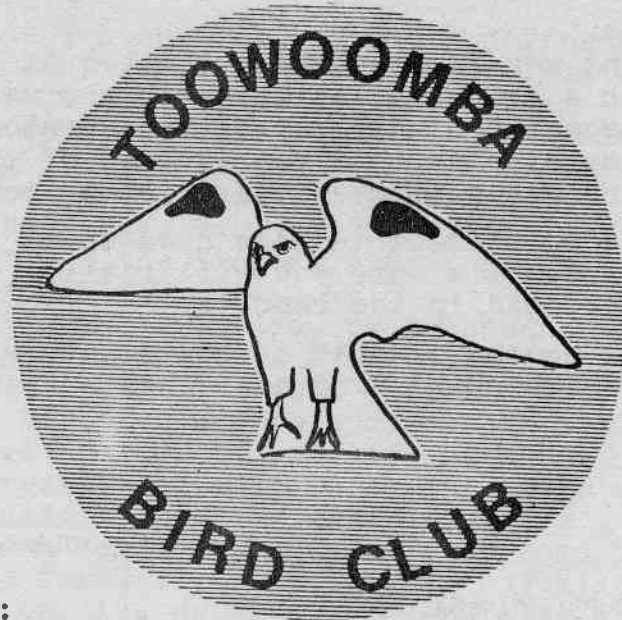
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NEWS-SHEET No. 73 - JANUARY 1982

Welcome to 1982, best wishes to all the members for prosperity, health and, of course, good birding in this new year. Help make it a good year for the Club also, by coming on our very enjoyable outings. Don't be a miser and keep all the fun for yourself, invite some friends to join you, even those not so keen on birding will find the countryside we visit interesting and the places we stop for morning tea a delight for sitting down and relaxing. I always find that birdwatching is the most wonderful cure for releasing all those tensions of a busy week.

An excellent start to the year is two new birds to add to our list for the Toowoomba area, and the introduction of two new members, Roy and Peggie Beaton. Although based in Toowoomba, this lucky couple are enjoying a slow and leisurely life travelling around Australia and have promised to send some articles on their birding (when they have the time!).

January is the month for renewing your subscription. Remember that your small contribution is vital for the continuation of this valuable news-sheet - send that cheque or postal order now so that you won't forget.

\$6.00 - single or family
\$3.00 - students

Three of our members joined the Toowoomba Field Naturalists on their Egret nests count; Jane Corbin, Jim Corbin and myself. It was hot and steamy weather, but the twelve counters plus two tree-tag collectors managed to count the nests in the allotted time. This meant well over 3 000 nests. Not only was it a valuable exercise towards Egret research, but also it was very interesting. During a break Neil McKilligan took four young from a nest to show us how they would be tagged. They ranged from about seven days to fourteen days old, the two older ones being big enough to tag. They are given three bands - one colour to denote the rookery they were bred from, another colour denoting the year they were banded, and a metal band with more information. Any information from sightings of these birds is sent to Neil at the D.D.I.A.E. The

count was followed by a bar-b-q at Lake Clarendon where we relaxed with a drink to lazily watch the water birds. We were treated to a magnificent display of thunderstorms along the ranges and a noisy display in a nearby tree of three Blue-winged Kookaburras which was a pleasant surprise to complete the day.

As a supplement to this news-sheet is the report of the annual bird census. I'm sure you will realize the value of the count and be interested in the results.

Next month, also as a supplement, will be an index of all the Toowoomba Bird Club news-sheets from No. 1 - 60.

Lesley Ball, Editor

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NEW TOOWOOMBA BIRDS

222. Squatter Pigeon (*Petrophassa scripta*). 11.12.81. Postman's Ridge. Michael Atzeni, Shane Brady.
Two birds on the roadside. Black and white facial markings; blue-grey lower breast; distinct white sides extending to abdomen.

223. Painted Snipe (*Rostratula benghalensis*). 11.12.81. Hood's Lagoon. Michael Atzeni, Shane Brady.
A male and female were flushed from marginal vegetation. Female-rich chestnut-brown head and breast; greenish bill curved at tip; mottled wing feathers; slow, fluttering flight.

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GARDEN NOTES

I wonder how many Brown Honeyeaters we have breeding in our yard. In August I noticed two young just out of the nest, on 9th September I noticed two more and again on November 3rd, a wet and cold day, there was once again two young. I have never seen their nest but I have seen them stripping the limbs of the paper bark tree for nesting materials.

These birds seem to live permanently in our yard and I have seen them in my bush house flitting just above my head, no doubt the fibre from my hanging baskets makes good nesting material. Also the Rufous Fantail arrived in the rain November 3rd, stayed a few days until the sun shone again. It spent a few more days in the damp weather later in the month and again on December 3rd it was back in the rain. I have noticed it comes only if it is raining or very foggy, all day stays in the orchard at the back of the house and never comes to the flowering shrubs at the front.

Jane Corbin

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BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS

When my husband retired just over three years ago we decided to give up our suburban life and go a-gypsy in the modern manner in a motorised home. He had always had an interest in watching birds - of the single breasted variety - and this has now become a very absorbing interest for him.

Our way of life is ideally suited for this as we do not "travel" so much as "drift"; keeping to minor roads where possible and stopping where we like a place. A lot of these stopovers are at National Parks. Recreational and Forestry Reserves or along beaches and creeks, just the habitat for birds of all types.

At first my interest was lukewarm as I helped him identify different species, but our way of life does mean involvement with your fellow traveller's interests, indifference is impossible. I have even come to like and become moderately knowledgeable about cricket which I used to hate. And my husband's growing interest in my needlework has been of great help to me. So now my head is often buried in one of our bird books while my husband says "white nape, yellow eyebrow," whilst peering through the field glasses, prior to passing them to me for my observations.

I now share the thrill of identifying a "new" bird, even though this thrill may lapse into acceptance as the bird becomes familiar. But from the "mollymawks" of the Ocean Road in south Victoria to the brilliantly coloured lorikeets of north Queensland and the fast running Native Hen of Tasmania there are some incidents which one can never forget:- The beautiful russet and white Brahminy Kites soaring and diving and then descending to play on the sands of a beach on the Capricornian Coast. Our first broilgas - 200 or more on the rice paddies between Ayr and Townsville. Following a family of Sarus Cranes, listening to them calling as they flew and finally watching them land and feed in a newly harvested mealie paddock. Fishing the Mowbray River above Cairns and watching the mud flat on the opposite bank where a 10ft, 12ft? crocodile was reputed to bask in the sun, seeing mangroves rustle and, instead of our crocodile, there appeared the shy Great-billed Heron. He must have known that nothing would have induced us to swim that river to molest him because he wandered down the mudflats giving us the chance of watching him for a long time as he fed on dainties in the mud. And the sight of the beautiful little Fairy Penguins tumbling and playing in the surf at dusk as they come in from their day-long fishing expeditions to feed their families. They show such a marked reluctance to leave their play and return to their domestic chores!

Which brings me to the story of the family on a camping holiday - their first - who found a beautiful camp site in the dunes bordering a pleasant beach. As darkness fell they heard these twittering, shuffling, peculiar noises. They listened, Tasmanian Devil?, even one of these fierce, thought-to-be extinct Tasmanian Tigers? Grasping his woodsman's axe our friend crept out of his tent ready to defend his family against all odds - to be confronted by a bright-eyed Fairy Penguin feeding its young. They had camped in a Penguin Rookery!

Birds have their moments even to non-bird watchers.

Peggie Beaton

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MR MANN'S PROPERTY, TENTHILL

After a very kind letter from Mr Mann, Ann Shore, Ron Hopkinson and myself decided to visit this property for a bit of Birding. Arranging to meet Mr Mann at 9.00a.m. on 29.11.81. we set out on what turned out to be a very, very hot day, but a rewarding one. Mr Mann was exceedingly kind, inviting us onto his welcoming verandah and regaling us with stories and snippets of people, events and birds of the local area. He gave the Club a list of the birds seen on his property over a two year period, 1974-76. (This is now being held by Michael Atzeni our Records Officer). The list was made by Rod Hobson, a friend of Mr Mann and a member of the Club.

By the time we started some serious birding it was ten o'clock, very hot and probably too late to see many of the birds of the area. Nevertheless we saw twenty-four species, common and not-so common.

Mr Mann is a retired dairy stock inspector and has eight to ten acres right on Tenthill Creek on the Heifer Creek Road. His house is surrounded by a well kept garden visited by many birds. Just by sitting on his verandah we saw Superb Fairy-wrens (one male in particular fought his reflection in Ron's car's side-mirror for some time, resting between bouts on the steering wheel), Double-barred Finches, Peaceful Dove, Brown Honeyeater, Willie Wagtail, Magpie-larks, Dollarbird, Straw-necked Ibis flying overhead, and two Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo chased out of the garden by a pair of Brown Honeyeaters. They came to rest on nearby power lines where we had a beautiful view of them through the glasses. The rest of our birding was done on the creek bank following a horse track that ran under cool and shady gums and pepperina trees. A special sighting during this part of the morning was a pair of Chestnut-breasted Mannikins which were a "first" for me. They were feeding off the seeds of a tall plant and stood out vibrantly against the lush growth of the creek flood area. Walking back to the house we were greeted by Mr Mann with a most refreshing cool drink, a little more verandah watching and an invitation for the Club to drop in on any field day we are in the area.

Species list:

Cattle Egret	Rufous Whistler
Straw-necked Ibis	Willie Wagtail
Pacific Black Duck	Superb Fairy-wren
Australian Kestrel	Brown Honeyeater
Peaceful Dove	Striated Pardalote
Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo	Red-browed Firetail
Pheasant Coucal	Double-barred Finch
Sacred Kingfisher	Chestnut-breasted Mannikin
Rainbow Bee-eater	Starling
Dollarbird	Mynah
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Magpie-lark
White-winged Triller	Crow

Lesley Ball

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MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES

There is another large list this month, and it is very pleasing to see, not only from an editor's point of view, but also because it means that members are getting to do some bird watching and enjoy themselves. It does not necessarily need to be an unusual sighting, but one that was special to you, either as a "first" or one that is not normally seen in your garden, etc.

Least Frigatebird. 28.12.81. Rainbow Beach. M.A., L.A.
Wandering Whistle Duck. 1.12.81. Laidley/Plainlands Rd and Jahnke's Lagoon. M.A., P.M., T.R.
Banded Lapwing (6). 16.11.81. Baker St, D.D.I.A.E. M.A.
Red-kneed Dotterel. 29.11.81. Hood's Lagoon. M.A.
" " 1.12.81. Hood's Lagoon. M.A., P.M., T.R.
Rose-crowned Fruit-dove. 29.11.81. Redwood Park. M.A.
Little Lorikeet. 23.11.81. Preston Rd, Toowoomba. AHS.
Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo. 29.11.81. Tenthill. AHS, LB, RH.
Blue-winged Kookaburra (3). 20.12.81. Lake Clarendon Reserve. LB
Barn Owl. 30.11.81. Geham. M.A., T.R., P.M.
White-winged Triller. 15.11.81. Shorelands Drive, Withcott. AHS
" " 29.11.81. Tenthill. AHS., LB., RH.
Satin Flycatcher. 23.11.81. Preston Rd., Toowoomba. AHS.

MEMBERS' BIRD NOTES cont'd

Rufous Fantail. 3.11.81. 10 Ocean St. JCC.
Golden Whistler. 15.11.81. Mt. Glorious National Park. LB.
Variegated Fairy-wren. 23.11.81. Preston Rd, Toowoomba. AHS.
Buff-rumped Thornbill. 1.11.81. Withcott North. MA.
Red Wattlebird (2 adult, 4 immature). 22.12.81. Dunmore St, T'mba.
JB., LB.
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin. 29.11.81. Tenthill. LB.
Spangled Drongo. 23.11.81. Stockyard Creek Rd. LB.
White-winged Chough (dead). 4.12.81. Warrego Highway, near "Glenroy".
LB., MJ.

LA: Laurie Atzeni. MA: Michael Atzeni. JB: John Ball. LB:
Lesley Ball. JCC: Jane Corbin. RH: Ron Hopkinson. MJ: Marilyn
Jacobs. PM: Pat McConnell. TR: Terry Reis. AHS: Ann Shore.

As a footnote to December 1981 members' notes, there was a sighting of two Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos in the Toowoomba area. It has not been included as a new bird on the list as, although it was sighted by John and Lesley Ball, John did not positively identify it and therefore cannot be legitimately added.

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FIELD DAY FOR JANUARY

Date: Sunday, 24th January, 1982. Place: Goomburra State Forest
Assembly Point: Pigott's Car Park.
Time: 7.15 a.m. for departure at 7.30 a.m. sharp.

For those who don't know the Goomburra area it is south-east of Allora and approximately eight kilometres north of Cunningham's Gap (as a very good crow flies). Turning off the Toowoomba-Warwick road just south of Allora you travel through a beautiful farming valley which follows Dalrymple Creek. The road takes you through Eucalypt forest until you get to the Goomburra State Forest Picnic Area where it becomes rainforest. This is a beautiful spot on the creek where many birds may be seen and heard. There is running tap water, toilet facilities and barbeques. Going on a little further you come across the National Park of the Scenic Rim, and by taking a short walk through virgin rainforest find yourself at Sylvester's Lookout which has the most breathtaking views of the Bremer River Valley. Please join us on our first outing of the year.

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NEW MEMBERS

Peggie and Roy Beaton. c/- 15 Dunmore St, Toowoomba.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

I apologise for not having the recent publications in the last two news-sheets, but this was because I had a lovely, large number of members articles which I felt had priority. In that time, naturally, Michael, the Records Officer, has received several magazines and newsletters. Some interesting articles I read were:-
Bird Deaths from Overhead Wires: Tracking Melbourne's Smog by Plane: Communal Breeding in the Figbird: The Dunes of Cooloola: Bird-watching in Britain. All these and more, get your copies from Michael now!

Bird Observer. September, October, November, December 1981. (Bird Observers' Club Newsletter)

PUBLICATIONS cont'd

Ecos. Spring and Summer 1981-82 issues. (CSIRO Environmental Research)
Queensland Ornithological Society Newsletter. September, October, November newsletters + The Sunbird Volume 11.
Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union Newsletter. September 1981.
Urimbirra Monthly Newsletter. October & November 1981. (Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club)

T.B.C. PUBLICATION DEADLINE

Articles for the Toowoomba Bird Club news-sheet have a deadline of the fourth Sunday of the month. This coincides with the Field Day and can be mailed to the Editor or handed to any of the Executive at the Field Day outing.

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SUPPLEMENT

SIXTH ANNUAL BIRD CENSUS - TOOWOOMBA BIRD CLUB - 24/25.10.81.

This is the sixth annual census carried out by the Toowoomba Bird Club and the fifth one covering the club's official area for which our Atlassing was based on. This area comprises of two 10 minute blocks with central co-ordinates of 27°35'S, 152°05'E and 27°35'S, 151°55'E. The eastern block is known as the 'Downrange' and the western half as 'Uprange'.

It was decided to hold the 1981 census over a weekend rather than just a Sunday in the hope that more people would be able to participate at some stage of the two days. It also had the advantages of two morning sessions and the coverage of certain sectors at better times of the day. In past counts, these sectors have been relatively unprofitable because they were visited in the heat of the day.

Ironically, we were short of participants and three sectors were not covered. However, good weather was in our favour and a total of 5 183 birds was seen consisting of 129 species compared with 133 species last year. The total number of birds is the lowest recorded for the area to date. Whether or not, this is significant is impossible to say because of the array of variables particularly the number of observers.

A resumé of the past five counts is given below. With respect to species seen, there is a stable situation.

	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
U = Uprange D = Downrange					
No. of birds seen	5947	6011	6858	5695	5183
No. of species seen U	104	104	103	119	105
D	92	90	105	85	94
Species seen U and D	66	73	74	71	70
Total no. of species seen	130	128	134	133	129
Non-Passerines	65	55	63	59	52
Passerines	65	73	71	74	77

Sincerest thanks to all that made the effort to spend at least some part of the weekend counting. Apart from being an enjoyable day's birdwatching, censuses are a further contribution to our local ornithological knowledge.

Michael Atzeni

Participants: Laurie Atzeni. Michael Atzeni. Simon Atzeni.
 Lesley Ball. John Ball. Michael Berends. Shane
 Brady. Anthony Christianson. Ron Colpus. Graham
 Corbin. Jane Corbin. Jim Corbin. Ron Hopkinson.
 Marilyn Jacobs. Steven Lacey. Pat McConnell.
 Sandy Pottinger. Elizabeth Russell. Mike Russell.
 Ann Shore. John Shore. Andrew Tan. Darren Wilson.

LIST OF SPECIES AND NUMBERS OBSERVED

	U.	D.	T.		U.	D.	T.
Hoary-headed Grebe	-	1	1	Noisy Pitta	1	-	1
Australasian Grebe	2	30	32	Singing Bushlark	1	-	1
Little Pied Cormorant	1	3	4	White-backed Swallow	-	11	11
Pacific Heron	-	1	1	Welcome Swallow	51	19	70
White-faced Heron	6	3	9	Tree Martin	-	11	11
Cattle Egret	-	12	12	Fairy Martin	6	157	163
Rufous Night Heron	-	1	1	Richard's Pipit	23	4	27
Straw-necked Ibis	-	19	19	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	108	30	138
Plumed Whistling Duck	-	100	100	Cicadabird	2	-	2
Black Swan	-	2	2	White-winged Triller	-	6	6
Pacific Black Duck	11	18	29	Varied Triller	2	-	2
Grey Teal	8	24	32	Eastern Yellow Robin	9	-	9
Hardhead	-	11	11	Jacky Winter	-	1	1
Maned Duck	25	35	60	Crested Shrike-tit	1	-	1
Black-shouldered Kite	8	4	12	Golden Whistler	1	-	1
Pacific Baza	1	-	1	Rufous Whistler	4	7	11
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	-	1	Grey Shrike-thrush	7	-	7
Wedge-tailed Eagle	2	-	2	Black-faced Monarch	11	-	11
Australian Kestrel	24	10	34	Spectacled Monarch	2	-	2
Brown Quail	1	-	1	Leaden Flycatcher	2	4	6
Dusky Moorhen	1	5	6	Satin Flycatcher	1	-	1
Purple Swamphen	-	9	9	Rufous Fantail	6	-	6
Eurasian Coot	-	40	40	Grey Fantail	1	-	1
Comb-crested Jacana	-	1	1	Willie Wagtail	23	32	55
Masked Lapwing	8	7	15	Eastern Whipbird	32	7	39
Black-fronted Plover	-	4	4	Grey-crowned Babbler	-	11	11
Black-winged Stilt	-	6	6	Clamorous Reed Warbler	4	2	6
Topknot Pigeon	37	-	37	Tawny Grassbird	2	-	2
White-headed Pigeon	4	-	4	Golden-headed Cisticola	4	30	34
Feral Pigeon	100	5	105	Brown Songlark	-	1	1
Spotted Turtledove	4	-	4	Superb Fairy-wren	42	35	77
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	1	-	1	Variegated Fairy-wren	25	-	25
Peaceful Dove	-	12	12	Red-backed Fairy-wren	1	10	11
Bar-shouldered Dove	13	30	43	White-browed Scrubwren	43	4	47
Crested Pigeon	50	32	82	Speckled Warbler	4	-	4
Wonga Pigeon	5	-	5	Brown Gerygone	10	2	12
Galah	90	45	135	White-throated Gerygone	24	8	32
Rainbow Lorikeet	7	4	11	Brown Thornbill	5	4	9
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	94	18	112	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	72	9	31
Little Lorikeet	67	8	75	Striated Thornbill	7	-	7
Cockatiel	20	38	58	Varied Sitella	-	4	4
Pale-headed Rosella	71	34	105	White-throated Treecreeper	4	4	8
Red-rumped Parrot	50	-	50	Red Wattlebird	3	-	3
Shining Bronze-cuckoo	1	-	1	Striped Honeyeater	-	2	2
Common Koel	8	12	20	Noisy Friarbird	27	13	40
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2	5	7	Little Friarbird	14	34	48
Pheasant Coucal	5	6	11	Blue-faced Honeyeater	1	7	8
Azure Kingfisher	-	1	1	Noisy Miner	138	14	152
Laughing Kookaburra	51	27	78	Lewin's Honeyeater	42	11	53
Sacred Kingfisher	21	32	53	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	12	-	12
Rainbow Bee-eater	3	33	36	White-throated Honeyeater	2	-	2
Dollarbird	55	24	79	Brown Honeyeater	17	22	39

ANNUAL TOOWOOMBA BIRD CENSUS 1982

	<u>U.</u>	<u>D.</u>	<u>T.</u>
Scarlet Honeyeater	20	1	21
Mistletoebird	3	9	12
Spotted Pardalote	13	1	14
Striated Pardalote	31	17	48
Silvereye	72	35	107
House Sparrow	277	36	313
Red-browed Firetail	22	5	27
Zebra Finch	5	45	50
Double-barred Finch	43	81	124
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin	-	65	65
Common Starling	310	125	435
Common Mynah	162	24	186
Olive-backed Oriole	9	10	19
Figbird	20	13	33
Spangled Drongo	7	-	7
Satin Bowerbird	6	-	6
Regent Bowerbird	3	-	3
Australian Magpie-lark	85	53	138
Dusky Woodswallow	1	-	1
Grey Butcherbird	13	11	24
Pied Butcherbird	40	21	61
Australian Magpie	220	59	279
Pied Currawong	121	6	127
Australian Raven	1	2	3
Torresian Crow	189	58	247

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