

The Drongo

Number 123 October 2012



Albatross in
Danger

Peregrines

After Yasi



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Once again, it's been a busy couple of months. BirdLife Townsville's latest publication, *Rainforest Birds of the Southern Wet Tropics*, was launched at the club meeting in September. The final product looks every bit as good as we expected. All members at the meeting were presented with a copy. If you were not at the meeting and would like a copy of the book, please send an email to contact@birdlifetownsville.org.au or speak to one of your committee members. The school presentations promoting protection of rainforest habitat will commence in October. Remember, it is never too late to join the Education Group. No special skills are necessary - just an interest in supporting BirdLife Townsville's conservation activities.

I have had the honour of presenting Bird Observation and Conservation Australia (BOCA) Distinguished Service Awards (DSA) to two of our members. The club submitted nominations for Barbara Reidy and George Baker at the end of 2011 for the last round of BOCA DSAs. Both were successful: Barbara was a founding committee member of TRBOC and remained an active committee member for the entire life of TRBOC! That certainly is an achievement worth acknowledging. George was TRBOC's Conservation Officer since 2005 and in this role has forged strong ties with all levels of Government, pertinent organisations and local businesses that has raised our profile as a well-respected conservation organisation. Even though Barbara and George are no longer Committee members, they both still continue to work hard to make our club one to be proud of. Congratulations to Barbara and George.

BirdLife Townsville's website is now up and running so have a look. Ian and Graeme are still working to ensure a first class website. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send an email to contact@birdlifetownsville.org.au.

Janet Robino

YOUR COMMITTEE

President: Janet Robino
Vice-President: Alf Acton
Secretary: Warren Charlton
Treasurer: Norm Rains
Newsletter Editor: Annette Sutton
Conservation Officer: Peter Valentine
Education Officer: Elna Kerswell
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INKERMAN CLUB CAMPOUT

On the long weekend at the end of September we travelled to Spotswood Park, Inkerman after work on the Friday afternoon.

It's private property supporting cattle, cane and orchard products and processing. It boasts an extensive fresh water wetland system, with riparian and coastal forest habitats. Five of us camped there, two motelled it in Ayr and two made it down for the day on Sunday. This made for a very relaxed time birding. Early Friday evening, cane-fires roared and lit the land, belching smoky mushrooms high into the skies. One fire erupted just a few hundred metres from our camp. This was great to see at close hand, but it also meant that noisy harvesters and cane-bin transport vehicles started work there in the wee hours of the morning, way before any respectable diurnal birder needed to be awake... but we were,,, and by mid morning, that cane field had been cut bare and all became quiet once again.



Spotswood Camp

As daybreak eventually arrived, a small party of Pallid Cuckoos started calling alongside us. They became very active in their feeding antics, which afforded us some good photo opportunities. Interestingly we watched one Pallid Cuckoo feeding another... possibly a juvenile. Apparently this can happen, with adults supplementing host parents feeding the young. Brush Cuckoos called nearby. An early morning walk along the irrigation channel levee-bank produced a few Australian Reed-Warblers, Baillon's and White-browed Crakes and a Latham's Snipe which flushed. Many Whiskered Terns hawked precisely over the expansive lagoons, with a lesser number of Gull-billed Terns interspersed. Many hundreds of Magpie Geese would fly over camp each dawn, seemingly drawn to the newly-harvested cane-fields. Then, on dusk they'd fly back again to roost on the other side of the main lagoon.

Next we walked down to the drying reed beds, passing the White-bellied Sea-Eagles' nest, which

contained 2 unfledged nestlings. Plenty of Crimson Finch about around here also. We arrived at the reed beds and Len started 'scoping the distant, drying mud-flats. He then put his camera up to the eyepiece (Click Click Click) and I knew he had something good. "You'll never guess what I've got here, Chris", he said. "Take a look! There, resting in the shade under that stand of reeds."

Well there it was: - A male Australian Painted Snipe. (APS) Hi fives all round. A few cattle rushed by between us and the Snipe, which made it duck for cover for a few minutes. Len wanted to stealth a bit closer for some better digiscope images, so I walked off to see what else I could find.



Australian Painted Snipe

After lunch, the rest of the crew arrived and after a quick briefing of the APS, it was clear we had to go for a forest walk and also to see if the APS was still there. On arrival at the reed beds we couldn't find it even now with three 'scopes trained on that same stand of reeds. Suddenly, something must have spooked a herd of cattle and they stampeded between us and the reeds. Luckily for us because the Painted Snipe was frightened by this and it strutted out into the open to see what was going on. WELL we certainly didn't mind. For a minute or so it surveyed its position and maybe it was the sight of us birders and the cattle disappearing into the scrub, but it took flight and landed about 100metres away in some water hyacinth at the edge of another wall of reeds. We couldn't find it again in our lenses and after numerous more visits, it was not to be seen again for the remaining three days we were there. However, that Australian Painted Snipe was definitely the highlight bird of the weekend for us all. I wonder where it is now?

Spotswood Park. A wonderful long weekend with friends and great birding a bonus;

105 species for the property for the three days.

You can see the entire species list on Eremaea Birds: - click on the link below

<http://www.eremaea.com/Lists.aspx?List=145369>

Photos and story

Len and Chris Ezzy

BROADWATER AFTER YASI.

It was a very strange experience driving into Broadwater Camping area, in the Abergowrie State Forest, at the beginning of September this year, eighteen months after Yasi.

There was hardly a pine tree standing and many piles of pine tree trunks in the paddocks; pine that was unsuitable for milling. In the Information display there were photos of the decimation of the pine trees and the trees around the campground; the mud in the toilet blocks and the general devastation. The rangers told us that they had accessed the camping ground via Abergowrie and across Broadwater Creek until the fallen pine trees and other logs were removed from the usual access road.

The boardwalk was smashed in many places from fallen tree trunks and part of it has been removed; there has been work to remove the unsafe portions and this is continuing. There were huge tree trunks on the ground, visible from the "No Entry" sign, and the boardwalk will remain closed until all work is completed. There was marked loss of density of the trees and foliage of the rainforest area; it looked as though it will take many years to regrow. There had been groups of birds zooming through the campground with high pitched noises; the Metallic Starlings are still going strong with their communal nests moved to another tree near the boardwalk. It was such a good sign of bird survival. The walks beside the creek are clear and the big swimming hole accessible but very cold -- couldn't resist a quick dip!



Spectacled Monarch

Gail Brodie

Yes, it did rain a bit and the creek water was still freezing! as was the cold shower! but so refreshing. There were signs at every tap or water source advising campers to boil or treat all water. Some of the animals did survive and we saw a Marsupial Mouse, a Bandicoot and a White Tailed Rat the first night we camped. The rat managed to chew through the plastic lidded tub and help itself to the loaf of

bread on the first night; took a bit to clean out the poop! We were better prepared on the second night and had all food in the back of the car. The large goannas are still resident around the day area; apparently some senseless idiots rode their motor bikes into the park after the cyclone (via Abergowrie) and shot and killed one of the goannas. There were no flying foxes in residence; possibly loss of suitable roosting trees. Pretty Faced



Spectacled Monarch Nest

Gail Brodie

Wallabies were seen and many skinks and lizards.

Many species of birds (64) were seen with the Brown Cuckoo Doves and Superb Fruit Doves calling throughout the day; the Brown were seen cooing and nestling against one another-- definitely spring!-- and the Superb seen on the side of the track up to the swimming hole. Only once were Rose Crowned heard but not seen. Each morning an Emerald Dove walked through the campsite picking up worms, the Scrub Turkeys picked up anything that looked edible. Every morning we were woken up with the calls of the Yellow Oriole; it was difficult to spot but called all day so gave us plenty of opportunities. Birds of interest included Broadbilled Flycatcher, Sacred Kingfisher, Macleay's Honeyeater, Lovely Fairy-wren, King Parrot, Boatbills, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Whipbird.

On the first day I spotted a pair of Spectacled Monarchs flying in and out of nearby shrubbery repeatedly. Further investigation revealed the beautiful, well camouflaged nest that they were constructing. They continued to add to it (above the leafy part) with what looked like woven tiny twigs around the rim, what a masterpiece of basket weaving. This continued for the eight days we camped but no sign of eggs laid or incubating before we left. My friend Gail took some photos of the process and they are included.

At night there were many bird sounds (apart from the squealing of the girls on a school camp when the boys turned out the torch light) with the Lesser Sooty Owl's unmistakable call heard but not seen. It was impossible to wander any distance into the undergrowth as it was littered with debris from the trees. Noisy Pittas were heard on dusk but kept to the undergrowth. The Orange-footed Scrubfowls

gave their loud cries and appeared in the early morn. There were two nights when a repeated drawn out 'screech' was heard (after the schoolgirls had left!) and I don't know whether it was a Masked or Barn Owl. Of course the Large-tailed Nightjars called from one spot across the other side of the camping ground and by the time I crept over with the torch they had moved diagonally opposite! I did some zigging and zagging before I saw one take off across the day visitors area. A Tawny Frogmouth called early one morning and I circled the trees repeatedly but could not spot it.

Not a sighting or one sound of the Wompoo Pigeon was heard throughout our stay but a wonderful trip and good birding. I did my usual cover up and spray for scrub itch and ended up with only one itchy lump -- that made it a superb trip!!

Cecily Messer

BRIEFLY BIRDING HOBART

In late August work took me to Hobart for a brief period and I managed to find a couple of early mornings to go birding. It is often difficult to see much when so constrained by time so I sought some local advice. The best advice was to go to Peter Murrell Reserve just south of Hobart near Kingston.



Little Wattlebird

On the first morning I notched up some excellent species including three target lifers. On arrival I was greeted by three Tasmanian Native Hens along with several other waterfowl and woodland species. Still in the carpark I then saw a pair of Green Rosella (lifer) who appeared to be investigating possible nesting hollows. I was particularly keen to see the Forty-spotted Pardalote, a species that had eluded me on previous visits to Tasmania. When I saw what was clearly pardalotes high in the eucalypts I was disappointed to find they were Striated Pardalotes. A few minutes later I saw a pair of Spotted Pardalotes much lower in amongst eucalypt blossom. Where was the endemic pardalote?



Tasmanian Native-hen

Following one of the firetrails I found a large white gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and set up shop in front of it for a while. After about 15 minutes and visits by Little Wattlebirds, Crescent Honeyeaters, Yellow-throated Honeyeaters, Eastern Spinebills and New Holland Honeyeaters I was delighted to see a pair of Forty-spotted Pardalotes that appeared to be investigating dead limbs. They came down quite low and allowed excellent views. Later I also had great views of Yellow Wattlebirds and Black-headed Honeyeaters (another lifer). This reserve is an outstanding birding site and seems very consistent for so many endemics including the Forty-spotted Pardalote. A quick trip up Mt Nelson gave me my fourth lifer - the Black Currawong. Great use of the early mornings - and saved the cost of breakfast!

Story and photos by Peter Valentine

FORK-TAILED SWIFT

More than an estimated 215,000 Fork-tailed Swift were observed about 30 km SE of Townsville on Australia Day 2012.

Contributing Observers (All are experienced Birders)

Vehicle 1 (V1) Len Ezzy (Senior Cartographer),
Chris Ezzy, Janet Robino (President TRBOC)

Vehicle 2 (V2) John Stewart (Maths teacher -
retired), Christine Stewart

Vehicle 3 (V3) Peter Valentine (Associate Professor,
School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, James
Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, Australia)

Len Ezzy has written a detailed article about this very significant event and you can read the full report on our website. The report is complete with maps and explains the methodology behind the observations - a very interesting read.

The link to the full article can be found on the
Birdlife Townsville News page.

SOLE PARENT PEEWEE

On the 17th of September I came across this Peewee's nest on the banks of Ross River. There was only ever one bird tending the nest, both sitting and food gathering. I never saw the female so can only surmise she may have met a "sticky" end, maybe at the talons of the Kestrel that is nesting in an air conditioning vent at the Riverside Tavern a couple of hundred yards up the river. Further on from this nest there are pair of Peeweess nesting, with both birds tending.

I went to have a look at them every few days. I am amazed how quickly the babies grew (as per the attached photos). Papa Peewee (Magpie-lark) worked overtime as far as his parenting job is concerned, getting grubs etc., chasing away the Magpies which had juveniles in the next tree, hunting away Figbirds, Friarbirds and even a Pied Imperial-Pigeon.

This morning I went down and could only see one chick on the nest. I had been a bit worried they would end up in the river as the nest was over the water, but the birds had made their first flight and were in the bushes on the bank. Papa Peewee sure has his work cut out for him now. Do all birds carry on tending their young if a mate departs? I may be wrong and I stand corrected if so, but previously I have always seen two Magpie-larks tending their nest.

Sue Rutherford



18th



18th



25th



29th

The Magpie-lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) is a conspicuous Australian bird of small to medium size, also known as the Mudlark in Victoria and Western Australia, the Murray Magpie in South Australia, and as the Peewee in New South Wales and Queensland. It had been relegated to a subfamily of fantails in the family Dicruridae (drongos), but has been placed in a new family of Monarchidae (monarch flycatchers) since 2008.

It is a common and very widespread bird both in urban and rural areas, occupying all parts of Australia except for Tasmania and some of the inland desert in the far north-west of Western Australia, and appears to have adapted well to the presence of humans. It is also found in southern New Guinea. (from Wikipedia)

CAN YOU HELP TO RECORD PIP NESTING?

Pied Imperial-Pigeons (PIPs) *Ducula bicolour* spend the summer in coastal areas of Northern Queensland then migrate to Papua New Guinea for the winter.

PIPs, a.k.a. Torresian Imperial-Pigeons (TIPs) or Nutmeg Pigeons, are often sighted and clearly they are not a species at imminent risk of extinction. However, Australian field guides presenting PIP status as 'increasing' give an over-simplified view.



Pied Imperial-Pigeon

Rav Sutton

Against a background of habitat disturbance since European land clearing began, PIPs suffered heavy mortality from subsistence harvest and recreational hunting. In the mid 1960s protection was increased and the subsequent turnaround in PIP numbers is recognised as an important conservation achievement. However, the slow rate of PIP recovery tends to get overlooked and the optimistic assumption that PIPs are still increasing also needs careful scrutiny. One major nesting colony recently suffered a big decline. There is currently insufficient data for other colonies and to determine whether the Queensland-nesting PIP population as a whole may have continued to recover, or levelled off, or possibly declined.

In the Hinchinbrook area PIPs have been more comprehensively monitored than anywhere else. Although vast flocks were noted by early settlers, numbers had been decimated before conservation champions Margaret and Arthur Thorsborne discovered shooting groups were killing more than a thousand PIPs in a single outing. During the 1960s the Thorsbornes and others campaigned successfully for stronger protection. They also began systematic counts of the afternoon return flight of PIPs nesting at North Brook Island.

These PIP counts, which have continued annually, represent approximately the number of nesting pairs in the island colony. In an alternating daily pattern, one bird from each pair remains at the nest while the other flies to the mainland to forage, returning during the late afternoon. Thus the incoming flight of PIPs is relatively easy to count (unlike birds in forest habitat) apart from the logistics of getting to the island.

Starting at fewer than 2,000 in the late 1960s, North Brook Island counts showed an irregular upward trend. However it took three decades for counts to reach 30,000. Numbers seemed to plateau around that level, albeit with considerable variation in some years. Then came Cyclone Yasi in February 2011. At that time the PIP breeding season was nearly completed so direct mortality from the storm was probably low. However nesting and foraging habitat was devastated. The 2012 count plummeted to about 5,000.

Can the North Brook population recover? Will it take another three decades for recovery? Answers will emerge over time if dedicated people continue to monitor this site. But meanwhile, where could 25,000 pairs of displaced PIPs have gone? And is breeding success reduced when PIPs are obliged to nest at unfamiliar and perhaps less favourable sites?

This is where everyone interested in birds can help. Systematic PIP counts are currently being done only at North Brook Island, Green Island and Low Isles. Counts at other islands would be extremely valuable and might be feasible for keen birders with experience in offshore boating, but the logistics are challenging. Far more easily everyone interested can contribute records of PIP nests on the mainland.

As yet mainland nesting of PIPs has been poorly documented. The relative importance and reproductive success of mainland PIP nesting remain matters for speculation and reports of PIP nesting are needed for all areas. It will be particularly valuable if people can follow up and check their sites regularly until the final outcome for each PIP nest is recorded. An online submission form makes it easy to contribute reports. At the website **pipwatch.net** just click the link 'PIP Nests' to read more.

Julia Hazel



In early October 2012 this PIP prepared a typical scanty nest high in the tree canopy. Photo thanks to Jenny Sebba who submitted the first Townsville PIP nest report to pipwatch.net

TOOWOOMBA & THE LOCKYER VALLEY

Before a recent trip to Toowoomba, we contacted the Toowoomba Bird Observers group to see if they had any outings planned while we were down there. We weren't able to join them on their regular outing but a couple kindly offered to take us out bird watching on a weekday.

We started our observation in their garden with Red Wattlebirds Figbirds & Noisy Friarbirds. We then moved off to Redwood Park on the Toowoomba escarpment where we had good views of Spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Superb Fairy-wrens, Silvereyes, Grey Fantails, White-browed Scrubwrens, Golden Whistlers, White-headed Pigeons, and a Grey Goshawk.

From there we moved down into the Lockyer Valley to observe birds along creeks & wetlands – sites that the group regularly visit. Birds seen were Sacred Kingfisher, White-winged Triller, Variegated and Red-backed Fairy-wren, Australian Reed-warbler, Black Duck, Egrets, Swan, Swamp Harrier and Rainbow Bee-eater. We stopped for lunch at a small lake in the grounds of the Gatton campus of the University of Qld. Highlights here were Pink-eared and Blue-billed Duck, Nankeen Night-Heron, more Superb Fairy-wrens, Red-rumped Parrot and Black-fronted Dotterel.



Pink-eared Duck

Ray Sutton

According to some tourist info, over 300 species of birds have been observed in the Lockyer Valley. We saw about 80, leaving more to see next time. On a separate jaunt, Warren and I saw Musk Duck and Latham's Snipe at Cooby Dam, north of Toowoomba.

Pat Charlton

November
Meeting

Members' Presentations

NINGALOO



Yellow-nosed Albatross

Peter Valentine

In mid September I spent a week or so at Ningaloo World Heritage Area near Exmouth in Western Australia. I was there with friends with a focus on fishing (five of us in two boats we towed up from Perth). While the weather was good we went well offshore and fished the 100 metres depth. Less pleasant weather we spent trolling closer in or fishing inside the reef. When the winds got too strong I did some casual birding.

On the first trip out we were surrounded by Humpback Whales who were breaching, fin-slapping and blowing almost continuously during the morning. Throughout the trips the marine wildlife was amazing with rays, sharks, dolphins and turtles seen most days as well as the whales.

The most exciting birds for me were at sea with the first day yielding hundreds of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (which I had previously seen at Lady Musgrave Island in the GBR) and even two Wilson's Storm-petrels (a lifer for me). The next day was even better with a juvenile Yellow-nosed Albatross (another lifer), which came in very close to the boat. Even a juvenile Silver Gull visited the boat, obviously accustomed to begging bait from fishers! It landed on the bait board at the back of our boat where we gave it some leftover bait.

The land areas are also excellent for birds with numerous Spotted Harriers seen on the coastal plain and many other raptors including Black-shouldered Kites, Wedge-tailed Eagles and Ospreys. Along the coastal plain we also saw Bustards and numerous Emus. Exmouth itself can also be useful with Western Bowerbirds occasionally seen but these are more common in the Cape Range National Park with access a few km south of Exmouth.

Mangrove Bay, just to the south of Northwest Cape is surprisingly good for such a small area of mangroves. In addition to Yellow White-eyes there were many Dusky Gerygones and Mangrove Grey Fantails along with waders and wetland species. The bird hide is a good start.

Peter Valentine

CASTLE HILL PEREGRINES

POST-SCRIPT AND BINS-UP

John and I have occasionally checked Castle Hill since about mid-August 2012, as it is again Peregrine nesting season. No sign of Peregrines until today, 27 September, when around 10:30 an adult-plumaged male appeared, landed and preened on a rock near the Saint, then took off to chase some birds in the trees below, unsuccessfully, and flew off westwards. Some time later, he reappeared in flight, again travelling westwards and disappeared around the hill. No calling whatsoever. Possibly "stealth mode" behaviour, normal during incubation.

This may mean the pair are again nesting this year, possibly on Castle Hill. Sometimes Peregrines skip a year when they've successfully raised a large brood the previous year, and often they will use an alternate site if they do nest in successive years. The evidence from accumulation of "whitewash" (droppings) is inconclusive at present. So we would like input from club members/visitors - if you go up the hill, keep eyes peeled and bins poised for Peregrines, and please let us know of any observations. If you need further info on where, when and what to look for, we'll be happy to fill you in (Rolf 47244668, John 47239399).

As a post-script to last season's nesting, we offer the following. John and I checked on the Peregrine family sporadically from November onwards last year and into 2012, sometimes seeing some of them (usually one or more of the fledglings) and sometimes not, as they expanded their flying range gradually. A few of the more interesting observations follow:

11/11/2011 c.09:00 - All three fledglings eventually seen from hilltop, crops not noticeably full, perhaps fed earlier on smallish prey. No sign of parents. Youngsters already slightly faded, but still quite buffy underparts.

13/11/2011 17:00 onwards - two fledglings seen, brother and sister, appeared to be rather hungry, some screeching. Male fledgling disappeared westwards eventually, no sign of parents. Female fledgling at dusk perched briefly on top tree and then swooped down the cliff to presumed roost out of our view. No sign of her from the lower viewpoint a few minutes later, but too dark to see much, so roost spot remains a mystery.

15/11/2011 17:00 on till dusk - With Rosemary Payet and her friend Jenny, we saw two of the fledglings, flying around hilltop and westwards after sunset, crops medium full, roosts not determined, apparently not on Castle Hill that night(?).

17/11/2011 17:45 - Kim Lomann (friend of John's) got excellent photos of the female fledgling near the upper viewing platforms feeding on a kill

presumably just delivered, a Peaceful Dove (see photo).

21/11/2011 17:30 - Female fledgling on a rock on hilltop feeding on possibly a Wompoo Pigeon. Unfortunately we were a few minutes too late to see the delivery by the parent and also were unable to clearly confirm the prey i.d. for various reasons. At least one brother also had a very full crop. For the first time in several visits we saw all three fledglings playing around together in spectacular dives and chases around the windy summit for about half an hour. Parents not seen. At dusk we were finally able to follow sister and one brother to their roosts for the night; on the east cliff near the "Saint", below the furthest viewing platform, the two siblings settling down on separate small ledge perches, one about 15 metres below the other. Third fledgling possibly settled further east around the cliff-face, out of our view. We left when it got too dark to see, around 19:15. Interesting to note the roosting fledglings chose to roost within the glare of the CBD lights - why not further around in the shadowed part of cliff? Perhaps so they could more easily keep track of "breakfast" - the hundreds of noisy roosting lorikeets in the CBD trees??



Female Peregrine fledgling with Peaceful Dove prey, Castle Hill

Kim Lomann

22 & 23/11/2011: [Reported to bird club and sent to JM later] About 18:00 on both days, Sue Rutherford (TRBOC member/photographer) reported seeing two Peregrines in the upper Ross Dam area, about 20km south-west of Castle Hill. On 22/11, one bird; on 23/11 two, one was photographed, adequately enough for us to conclude it was most likely our Castle Hill female fledgling (presumably with one of her brothers). The birds were seen perched in treetops, and doing some screeching and flying around on the second day.

24/11/2011 c.17:15 - We arrived at Castle hilltop, no sign of Peregrines. About 18:00 the female fledgling suddenly cruised over the hilltop, flew around and left, heading north-west out to sea and out of sight towards Magnetic Island. Eventually checked the Aquarius building on the Strand with binoculars, saw a Peregrine and then a second, confirmed with scope. Went by car for closer look, found the female fledgling on south ledge near eastern corner of building (a few metres below

rooftop, a favoured roost site of the adults in previous years). One brother possibly roosted on a pole on rooftop, not visible from below. We left towards dusk 18:50.

27/11/2011 c.12:00 - One brother and his sister on their favourite ledge again, soon joined by third (male) sibling flying in, and all three proceeded to give us a spectacular aerial show of chases, dives and aerial "handshakes" (claw-shakes?). Crops not full. Momentarily one adult appeared on east side, was greeted with eager screeching and departed forthwith. No doubt got the message "We're hungry, where's the chookburger?!!". We left after a half-hour or so, with the youngsters still performing. Youngsters now more faded, legs more yellow, but still easily distinguishable from adults.

11/12/2011 c.09:15 - Heard screeching low down northeast face, found adult male perched in favourite "sentinel" tree on cliff. Shortly, a fledgling male appeared and settled on cliff ledge below adult, with a complete Rainbow Lorikeet which it proceeded to tear apart and eat. Some time later his brother appeared over the hilltop and landed on a shaded slope area above him, no screeching nor interest in brother's prey, crop not empty. From this, deduced male parent had brought the lorikeet, and probably other prey had been delivered by the female parent some time before our arrival, to one or both of the other two fledglings, perhaps on the east cliff out of our view (female fledgling not seen). Male fledgling ate entire lorikeet on his own, crop full though not bulging. Very hot, youngster panting after his meal. He has a slightly broader white terminal spot on his central tail feather than his brother, who has a uniformly very narrow whitish terminal band. Otherwise they look very similar, underpart markings, etc. We left around 10:30, adult still perched in sentinel tree, fledgling males in separate spots on the cliff face.

18/12/2011 c.06:45 - On hilltop, no sign of Peregrines, although the previous afternoon RJ had heard one or more Peregrines screeching over North Ward for the first time in more than a week (not seen). We stayed on the hill till about 08:15, disappointingly no Peregrines seen or heard. The fledglings are probably near independence stage by now (6-8 weeks), and probably only visiting their birthplace intermittently.

23/12/2011 - Len Ezzy told us that he had seen two Peregrines on the 23rd at about 06:00, screeching around the Tax Office building where he works in the CBD adjacent to Castle Hill. One thought to be adult, the other mantling over a Rainbow Lorikeet kill.

8/1/2012 c.09:15 - On Castle Hill lower viewing platform we found one male fledgling with prey, perched in his father's favourite "sentinel tree". He turned out to be the "even-tail-band" brother; prey had already lost its head, not positively i.d.'d, possibly Grey-tailed Tattler, which could have been taken on the Strand, a kilometre or so away. The fledgling dropped his meal at one stage but instantly followed it down the cliff to a lower ledge where he retrieved it to continue feeding. No other

Peregrines seen, none heard, the young male had perhaps made the kill himself, as now 10+ weeks post-fledgling.



Peregrine at Cluden

10/1/2012 c.06:00 - Len Ezzy reported one Peregrine with Rainbow Lorikeet on Tax Office building. Not positively i.d.'d, but probably fledgling.

13/1/2012 c.15:00 - Peregrine screeching over North Ward, not seen. Not roosting on Aquarius building that evening.

15/1 - 15/2/2012: LE reported Peregrines seen every few days at Tax Building around 06:00, one or two, presumed Castle Hill juveniles, sometimes with identifiable Rainbow Lorikeet prey, sometimes not.

4/3/2012 c.10:00 - On the monthly Town Common outing, an adult male Peregrine perched in a treetop on edge of grassy plain not far from concrete hide. Highly likely our Castle Hill male (as the Peregrine flies, a 2-3 minute trip from the hill).

5/3/2012 c.08:00 - Peregrines heard screeching over RJ's apartment in North Ward. Stepped out and saw "our" three birds screeching and performing claw-shakes high overhead. Perhaps a final personal farewell from the now-independent Castle Hill juveniles of the 2011 nesting season? We have not seen them since.

(Report sightings to Rolf at junglej99z@yahoo.com.au)

Rolf Jensen and John Maddy

The Peregrine Falcon is the world's most widespread raptor. It can be found nearly everywhere on Earth, except extreme polar regions, very high mountains, and most tropical rainforests; the only major ice-free landmass from which it is entirely absent is New Zealand. Reaching sexual maturity at one year, it mates for life and nests in a scrape, normally on cliff edges or, in recent times, on tall human-made structures. The Peregrine is renowned for its speed, reaching over 322 km/h during its characteristic hunting high speed dive, making it the fastest member of the animal kingdom.

BLACK-THROATED FINCH ISSUES

PhD Projects

The two PhD projects funded partly by the BTF Trust are well underway.

Juliana Rechetelo is working on the resources requirements of the Black-throated Finch and how the bird meets its resource needs in a changing and heterogeneous environment. She is colour-banding birds in the Townsville Coastal Plain to better understand the birds' movements through the landscape and how populations change over time. Stanley Tang is focusing on the bird's genetic make-up as a means of quantifying how well connected populations are. This is especially important where habitat is being fragmented. Both projects are comparing Black-throated Finches with other non-threatened avian granivores.

BirdLife members have provided valuable support to these projects and there will be many other opportunities to support this important research over the coming months. Please continue to report any BTF records to the website (<http://www.blackthroatedfinch.com>) particularly if banded birds are sighted.



Oak Valley October 2012

Ray Sutton

Galilee Basin

The first of the Galilee Basin coal mine projects has been approved by the Minister of Environment.

The approval contains a number of specific conditions aimed at providing long term protection to the Black-throated Finch populations in the Galilee Basin. Full details can be found on SEWPaC's website (<http://www.environment.gov.au>) reference number 2008/4648.

George Baker

BLACK-THROATED FINCH WATERHOLE COUNT 2012

This year's Black-throated Finch (BTF) waterhole count will be held on Saturday the 20th and Sunday 21st October 2012 at various locations in the Townsville region.

Once again the Black-throated Finch Recovery Team (BTFRT) is seeking volunteers for these two days to watch waterholes and count finches coming into drink. The count covers a three hour period of each morning. Volunteers may also record the other species they record at these waterholes. The list is often impressive.

We are currently finalising the detailed arrangements for the count, including start times and waterhole allocation, so please complete your registration and contact details for this year's count on the Black-throated Finch website, www.blackthroatedfinch.com. Further details of the waterhole count activities are explained in various documents on the website.

The first BTF waterhole count was conducted in 2003, when six sites were monitored. Since then we have built up an impressive database of BTF sightings in the Townsville region for use in our research and conservation projects. Last year we mobilised 33 counters to monitor 19 different waterholes in the Townsville region. However, we encountered Black-throated Finches at only 5 waterholes. This provided us with valuable information for use in the Black-throated Finch recovery programme.

The BTFRT recognises and greatly appreciates the ongoing commitment made by our regular observers. The BTF waterhole count is a great opportunity for new volunteer observers to support the BTF recovery programme and hopefully to see the endangered BTF at close quarters. If you are interested in joining one of the teams for the waterhole count then please register your interest on the BTFRT website, www.blackthroatedfinch.com and a member of the BTFRT will contact you.

George Baker Secretary BTFRT.



BIRDING ON THE DAINTREE

Birdlife Northern Queensland emailed our Club of a weekend of great birding to take place at the beginning of August, when they were having their quarterly meeting in Port Douglas. Murray Hunt, secretary and Bird Guide, was to conduct a "special" trip down the Daintree River in his boat.

Beth and I decided to take advantage of this great offer, so travelled to Mossman on the Friday and joined all the other birders at the jetty in the Village early on Saturday morning. Suitably clothed for the cold blast as Murray raced downstream to his favourite creek, we all scanned hopefully for any interesting species, until he entered the narrow mouth of Barrett Creek. Our speed dropped to zero as we zoned in on all the calls and flutterings of a variety of Fly-catchers, Honeyeaters, Gerygones and Kingfishers. However, the target bird was the Great-billed Heron, so he slowly navigated through log-jams, hanging branches and shallows for hundreds of metres up the little creek, regularly pausing so we could view and photograph many little beauties, including Little and Azure Kingfishers, Shining Flycatchers and a basking crocodile.

Finally, in deep shadow right at the water's edge, there was the Great-billed Heron in a frozen pose that would have done a statue proud. We crept closer, snapped enthusiastically and admired every aspect of this amazing bird. After a while, it strolled further away from the water's edge and paused helpfully in a patch of sunlight. More snapping and cries of delight, as the sheen and colours came to life. What a glow of satisfaction one has in being able to admire such a rare bird. Finally it was time to return to the jetty, pay our \$20 and head for a picnic table to have smoko. The entertainment provided while enjoying our cuppas was nothing less than a Pacific Baza showing off in various trees nearby. On our way back to Mossman, we called at a fish farm, where a flock of Radjah Shellducks paraded around the borders of the pools. Another good one and often to be found there.

About mid-afternoon, we drove out to the Rainforest Habitat at the turnoff to Port Douglas. Beth had to present a talk about her displays at the Tropical Museum, as BirdLife Northern Queensland is funding them, so we wandered in just before closing time and I spent 2 hours sauntering around the aviary. One species had me puzzled until I asked one of the workers for information. Chestnut Rails – a lifer. Pity I couldn't count it though. When the meeting ended, we all met under the huge net over the

restaurant area. There were two Papuan Frogmouths providing amusement for a little girl who tried to make them notice her, a very aggressive and noisy Sulphur Crested Cockatoo, and three Bush Stone-curlews playing chasy around the tables and our legs. Two slide shows were presented – one by the owner of Red Mill House in Daintree and the other about the breeding Black-necked Storks in the Habitat. Very interesting, but sometimes difficult to hear the presenters, as the Curlews mewed, wailed and protested constantly. Luckily we were all keen birders or they may have been strangled, instead of enjoyed. Finally, a free sausage sizzle provided sustenance and socialising among approximately sixty guests.

Sunday morning at 7a.m. found us meeting the



Radjah Shelduck

others near the Highland Hotel, Julatten, where we pooled cars before heading up Mt Lewis. THAT WAS COLD! My fingers went to sleep in spite of gloves, and ears tingled under my beanie, because of a chilling wind that blew through the tunnel (i.e. the track) in the rainforest that took us to the dam. It seemed even colder there as the wind blew across the water, so some of us turned around shortly after arriving, and hurried back to the vehicles for a warming coffee in the sun, in the grassy clearing. After morning tea we walked about a kilometre along the road without finding any birds of great interest. So it was back down the winding track and a quick visit to Sides Road to search for the elusive Blue-faced Parrot Finches, which (with the help of Doug, a local) we saw, intermittently, as they popped up and down stems of some feral weeds.

Altogether, we had a most enjoyable and successful weekend and can recommend Murray and Doug as good guides to use if visiting the Mossman area. Many thanks to BirdLife North Queensland for inviting us to join you all for a great and interesting weekend. It was good to catch up with so many friends, too.

Elna Kerswell

CONSERVATION REPORT

My first personal encounter with an albatross was off the south coast of Western Australia in 2008. Here we had excellent views of Shy Albatross flying across the waves. This species is endemic to Australia and only breeds in Australian territory (islands off Tasmania). Its conservation status is near-threatened. In 2009 I had my second encounter with an albatross, this time a tropical species in the Galapagos Islands, the critically endangered Waved Albatross, endemic to Ecuador. Albatross are not really tropical but a chance encounter with a Yellow-nosed Albatross in Ningaloo Marine Park this September made me very interested in finding out more about the group and their conservation threats, especially as this species is also endangered. Ningaloo is at the extreme north of its range.

Although I had some idea of the threats posed by various human activities, I was shocked to discover the significant decline in virtually all species and the endangered status of most. According to Birdlife International pelagic seabirds, including albatrosses, "are becoming increasingly threatened and at a faster rate globally than all other species-groups of birds; they face a wide variety of threats. Many declines are closely linked to the expansion of commercial longline fisheries in seabird feeding areas, combined with the impacts of invasive alien species at nesting colonies."

The scale of the problem is horrendous and sadly is very rarely featured in mainstream media. "Dying at a rate of around one every five minutes, the albatross family is becoming threatened faster than any other family of birds. Eighteen of the 22 species of albatross are globally threatened with extinction, an increase from just seven in 1994.

Albatrosses are being killed in such vast numbers that they can't breed fast enough to keep up, putting them in real danger of extinction. Without help, losses could become so great that recovery may never be possible for these majestic ocean wanderers." (Birdlife International)

Longlining involves a vessel setting fishing lines over 100 km long with thousands of baited hooks, hoping to catch tuna. It has been estimated that the global longline industry kills 300,000 seabirds every year, of which 100,000 are albatross. Should we not eat tuna? There are a number of valuable techniques to reduce this serious mortality (and in so doing improve the fishery yield). One example is the deployment of streamer lines that discourage birds from trying to reach the baited hooks. These should be mandatory but are not.

There has been international work to try and address these critical problems, notably the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatross and Petrel which includes thirteen nations (Australia has a leading role). However there is little sign of effective outcomes at either the national level or the

global. The final report of the most recent meeting of the parties to this agreement (held in April this year in Lima) makes depressing reading. One may be forgiven a degree of pessimism and cynicism about international commitment to sea bird conservation.

Last month, in addition to the Yellow-nosed Albatross (a lifer) I also saw Wilson's Storm-petrel and Wedge-tailed Shearwater at Ningaloo. I am now wondering what more we can do to better protect these species. Perhaps we need more effort to get the public behind better protection of these magnificent birds who spend most of their lives at sea and nest in locations remote from humans. A recent publication by CSIRO on Albatross is a marvellous account of each species and the threats they face. Written by Tui De Roy, Mark Jones and Julian Fitter is a comprehensive analysis of the global family with spectacular photography by Tui De Roy.

De Roy et al., 2008 *Albatross: their world, their ways*. CSIRO Publishing.

There is some excellent material on the Birdlife website:

<http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/species/seabirds/index.html>

Peter Valentine

De Roy et al., 2008 *Albatross: their world, their ways*. CSIRO Publishing.

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<http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/species/seabirds/index.html>

TRICKY CROW

There has been a juvenile Torresian Crow hanging about my garden over the last week. With the racket it makes very early in the morning, it is no wonder its parents have chucked it out! Apart from that it has been entertaining to have it around.

It was sitting on the side of the birdbath yesterday, facing outwards, drinking over its shoulder. A couple of days back it was begging food from an Australian White Ibis who gave it very short shrift!

This morning has certainly been the highlight of his visit so far! I heard a racket coming from next door. There was the Crow! He (just seems like a little boy to me) had 'captured' a ping-pong ball and seemed to be just having fun with it. He carried it to the top of my neighbour's shed roof, let it go, and then chased it down the slope of the roof until he pounced on it again when it got trapped in the gutter. This happened four times. Each time he caught it again, he seemed to do a little victory dance – leaping up with wings above his head and the ball held firmly in his beak.

Janet Robino

BIRDING THE BIRDSVILLE STRZELECKI TRACKS AND BOWRA

Sixteen days camping and birding in September with Outback Track Tours in Corner Country along the Birdsville and Strzelecki Tracks and a stopover at Bowra have given me vivid memories of miles of red roads in good condition; long distances between camping stops; cold drinks at outback pubs; the countryside, especially the red sand dunes, covered with wildflowers like golden wattle or pea flower; and unexpected sights of animals and birds thriving in lakes, wetlands and tree-lined watercourses. Where there was water from bores, channels or ephemeral lakes, wildlife was abundant. However I did not realise that I would be up at 6 every morning - and sometimes 5 or earlier - would have difficulty putting up and pulling down tents (I did get some gracious help), and trying to unclip dust-filled clips on sleeping rolls with frozen and cracked fingers. No wonder I was told the trip "was not for the faint-hearted."

The trip began with a gentle journey from Sydney to Nyngan (Day 1), lunching and birding at Orange Botanical Gardens where the highlight was a Rose Robin. Nyngan that night was very cold but the lagoon behind the camping ground was alive with birds such as cormorants, egrets, Nankeen Night-Heron and Australian Reed-Warbler the next morning. We were excited to see hundreds of Black-tailed Native-hen at a wetland as we travelled (Day 2) through drier country to White Cliffs, via Cobar and Wilcannia where Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo munched as we lunched on the banks of the Darling - the havoc of its floodwaters evident in abandoned muddy grey stone and corrugated iron buildings. At White Cliffs - white, stony country - we saw our first groups of Budgerigar, White-backed Swallow and a Pied Honeyeater.



En route to Tibooburra (Day 3) we spent time watching a pair of Hobbies, Grey Teal, Royal and Yellow-billed Spoonbill at Lake Pinaroo near the Fort

Grey camping and picnic area. We were nearly blown away at Cobham Lake but at Lake Harry were surprised by the large unexpected expanse of water and a dark line indicating thousands of birds. Glare and haze prevented us from seeing all that was there but we estimated hundreds, probably thousands, of Black Swan. On the shoreline Black-winged Stilt, a juvenile Banded Stilt, and Flock Bronzewing were easier to see and an Orange Chat popped into my scope. By the time we reached Tibooburra, where the Red Kangaroos were huge;



Wallaroo or Euro and Emu plentiful; and wild goats prolific; gusty red sand winds forced us to retreat to the pub for lunch. From here, with the Grey Range on our left, we explored Sturt National Park full of saltbush, Mitchell grass, dry creek beds and raptors (mainly Black-shouldered Kite, Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Spotted Harrier, Black-breasted Buzzard and Wedge-tailed Eagle, Brown Falcon and Nankeen Kestrel), Galah, Little Corella, Bluebonnet, Diamond Dove and Little Crow. Birds were plentiful at Mt Wood Homestead and Dam, an oasis within Sturt National Park (Day 4) but at the Bulloo Overflow we failed in our search for Grey Grasswren. Some caught glimpses of a female Redthroat before a sodden track prevented us from venturing further.

Australian Pratincole greeted us from the middle of the road as we left Tibooburra for Cameron Corner (Day 5). Great excitement! We saw these birds often as we drove along. At Cameron Corner, after cold drinks, ice creams and the purchase of a map to orientate myself in a red landscape, I took note of the Dingo Fence, State boundaries and the absence of kangaroos once we passed the Corner into South Australia. I'm told a lot of Kangaroo shooters "hang out at Cameron Corner." The evidence was overwhelming. We drove along the Strzelecki Track, stopping to search for Eyrean Grasswren - to no avail - but did manage to flush Little Button Quail - and camped under the coolibahs (one with a Tawny Frogmouth on a nest) near Merty Merty. Next morning (Day 6), birding in the sandhills behind us, we found Chirruping Wedgebill, Pied Honeyeater and Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo and White-winged Fairywren before moving on to Montecollina Bore. Here we searched the sandhills to the west for Eyrean Grasswren but found it too hot and dry. We retreated to the cooler edges of the Bore to find two well fed Australian Shelducks resting in a little patch of wetland also

host to White-backed Swallow flitting over the water, Australian Spotted Crake, Singing Honeyeater, White-winged and Variegated Fairy-wren.

On reaching Mt Lyndhurst sheep station in gibber country, Frog, the manager, led us to the Shearers' Quarters, boasting separate rooms with mattresses and the opportunity to wash away some of the red dust from the Track. Target species here (Day 7) were Thick-billed Grasswren (seen by some), Cinnamon Quail-thrush (pointed out to me by Lindy and watched for several minutes while the bus blew its horn and we had no way of communicating what we were watching), Chestnut-breasted Whiteface (I saw two fly past me), Rufous Fieldwren, Inland Dotterel and Gibber Bird (seen by two people). We tried the "rusty car site" twice in the hope of sighting Thick-billed Grasswren and explored the airport and surrounds, but to no avail.



Having reached our most southern point at Lyndhurst, the outline of the Flinders Ranges visible, we moved on towards Mungerannie (Day 8), keeping an eye out for Letter-winged Kite and Grey Falcon. These we didn't see but sharp eyes spotted a Black Falcon – the only one for the trip. At Marree, where we met the Birdsville Track, historical relics reminded us of Afghan Camel Trains; drovers leading large herds to Marree for rail to Adelaide; Tom Krews and his truck getting the mail through to people in the outback; and access to Lake Eyre. Three flight companies still advertise flights over the lake - now nearly empty - and plentiful portable accommodation attests to the number of visitors who have visited Marree for that purpose.

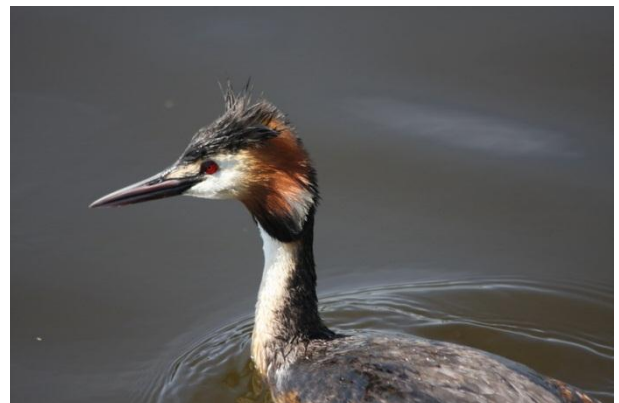
From the once busy railhead of Marree we headed north towards Cooper Creek. At the Dulkaninna Crossing there was a little water over the road and more wetland species in the reeds and vegetation beside the road. Here some saw the only Buff-banded Rail and Baillon's Crake of the trip. On reaching Mungerannie, we took advantage of bathing in the hot springs - estimated to be about 45 degrees - in a small enclosed pool about 3x 4 metres. Very refreshing! Morning at Mungerannie revealed the birdlife in the wetlands and sand dunes and a highly endangered Mulgara digging out a new

burrow. An amazing sight to see such a little mammal so hard at work!

On to Birdsville (Day 9): At Tibooburra we had noted the many 4 wheel drives, vans and trailers making their way back from the Birdsville Races. We headed in across the Diamantina to find a new racecourse and facilities at the entrance to the town, wonderful facilities at the Caravan Park and our campsite on the edge of the billabong and hundreds of galahs on powerlines. That evening just before sunset a large flock of Flock Bronzewing come in to drink – this I missed . . . doing the washing! Dinner at the Birdsville Pub was scrumptious - cold drinks and top class fare in the outback! After a morning birding (Day 10), spending most of my time at the Aboriginal Dreaming Site where there is a small wetland, temperatures soared and I retreated to the pub for lunch before exploring the town i.e. the library and information centre - a cool respite. That evening we were able to see the night sky through a powerful telescope and learn more about some of the constellations above us.

From our leisurely stopover at Birdsville we set out (Day 11) for our campsite under coolibahs on the banks of Cooper Creek via the Cordillo Downs Rd and Innamincka. A delight! Brown Treecreepers greeted us, one pecking away at our feet and flocks of Fairy Martin, Galahs and Little Corellas nested in a large gum tree by the Cullyamurra Waterhole. The waterhole was alive with birds, including Yellow-billed Spoonbill, seemingly not as rare as in Nth Qld. Here we came face to face with the story of Burke and Wills and visited the spot where Burke died (Day 11). My map had a line showing the routes taken by various explorers but nothing prepared me for the reality of being in the actual spot where tragedy occurred. Explanatory storyboards tell the story from both the point of view of the aboriginal people and the stubborn Burke. A fellow birder, Tom Karplus, read Mr. Stuart's Journey as we travelled and was able to fill us in on details about several of the explorers, their personalities and misadventures.

On the long drive to Bowra via Thargomindah (Day 12) we noted verdant vegetation at the many channels we crossed and an abundance of martins and swallows. Besides seeing cattle in good condition we passed many gas plants, machinery



for shale oil petroleum and cable for the NBN being rolled out near Innamincka. Birding from the bridge at Lake at Lake Bindegolly, we saw our only Great-crested Grebe of the trip.

Bowra at last! I chose to sleep in the shearing shed rather than erect a tent and was happy with my decision when we woke to -2 and frost. In the two days (Days 13, 14) there we were able to check out varying habitats and find some of our target species - Cinnamon Quail-thrush, Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush, White-browed Treecreeper, Red-capped and Hooded Robin, Splendid Fairy-wren, Bourke's Parrot and Spotted Bowerbird. Hundreds of woodswallows - Black-faced, Masked, White-browed and Little had congregated around the diminishing waterhole at Gumholes North and were probably feeding on sticky insects we found on the trees. Black Honeyeater called constantly and Pallid Cuckoo and Hall's Babbler were also found in this area. Returning from Sawpits Waterhole where Brown Treecreeper were seen close up, we were amazed to see a male Emu with 24 chicks. Families of 4-14 were common - but 24! The lagoon near the homestead and our camping area gave us easy sightings of Red-kneed and Black-fronted Dotterel, Black-winged Stilt, Plum-headed Finch, Major Mitchell Cockatoo and Australian Ringneck. Before departing a pre-breakfast dawn walk along the Bore Drain gave us splendid views of Red-browed Pardalote, Rufous Songlark singing from its high perch and White-necked Heron waiting for breakfast. Apostlebird and Chestnut-crowned Babbler were feeding but we didn't see the calling Crested Bellbird which had been sighted the previous morning.

Homeward bound (Day 15) back to Nyngan via Bourke on the Darling through country more adapted to grazing, to be greeted by White-winged Choughs and news of 5am breakfast before our departure next morning. Moving towards Dubbo, Bathurst and Orange (Day 16), the flat outback plains gave way to greener grazing fields interspersed with crops of yellow canola till we reached the Blue Mountains and descended gradually into the greyness of Sydney which I had forgotten for over a fortnight.

I will treasure the experience and photos which remind me of an expansive red and golden landscape which can be very harsh, but which on this trip enabled us to see almost every day flocks of Emu, Budgerigar, Galah and Little Corella; White-plumed and Yellow-throated Honeyeater; Zebra Finch and Fairy Martin; many raptors and hundreds of Black-tailed Native-hen. Of the 196 species seen by the group, I saw 167. Elusive grasswrens, Letter-winged Kite and Grey Falcon are definitely out there and the challenge of seeking them out remains.

Thanks to our bird guide, Charlie Andrews who walked miles in search of birds; Eddie Bird, our driver and organiser who gave us an indigenous appreciation of the landscape and animals; and to Heather Barnes for catering so well for hungry travellers!

Joan Wharton



Thank you for all the contributions to The Drongo.

Contributions for the next Drongo are due by 15th November.

Please send them to amsgreat@gmail.com

Photos resized to 800 pixels on the longest side

QUEST 2012

Chris Ezzy	366	31/12/2012
Len Ezzy	366	31/12/2012
Janet Robino	354	19/12/2012
Ian Boyd	318	13/11/2012
Marleen Acton	315	10/11/2012
Barbara Reidy	304	30/10/2012
Malcolm Calvert	304	30/10/2012
Peter Valentine	302	28/10/2012
Lenore Calvert	301	27/10/2012
Ian Leach	292	18/10/2012
Cecily Messer	283	9/10/2012
Elna Kerswell	271	27/09/2012
Joan Wharton	271	27/09/2012
Beth Snewin	262	18/09/2012
Rosemary Payet	234	21/08/2012
George Baker	234	21/08/2012
Janet Cross	229	16/08/2012
Teresa Baker	226	13/08/2012
Alex Canton	219	6/08/2012
Annette Sutton	209	27/07/2012
Pat Charlton	196	14/07/2012
Wendy Kaus	179	27/06/2012
Warren Charlton	171	19/06/2012

CALENDAR

October

17th - Wednesday - Bush Garden - Meet at end of Thompson St Mundingburra 6.30am.

21st - Sunday - Ross River Dam - Meet in the Dam car park 6.30am.

28th - Sunday Outing - Crystal Creek. Meet adjacent to the RAAF Base Duckworth St gate for a departure at 6.30 sharp. This is an all-day outing bring morning tea and lunch. Car pooling encouraged.

November 2012

4th - Sunday - Town Common - Meet at the main gate 6.30am.

7th - Wednesday - Photography Group Meeting - Theme is Photographs from club outings - The people and the birds. Meeting place 10 McLaren Ct., Kirwan 7.00pm.

10th - Saturday - Committee Meeting (12.00pm) and General Meeting (2.00pm) Held in the Townsville City Council Sound Shell meeting room Thuringowa. No Guest speaker - Members Short Presentations. Contact Ian Boyd if you wish to participate.

14th - Wednesday - Bush Garden - Meet at end of Thompson St Mundingburra 6.30am.

18th - Sunday - Ross River Dam - Meet in the Dam car park 6.30am.

25th - Sunday Outing - Bluewater State Forest. Meet near the RAAF Base Duckworth St gate 6.30am sharp. This is an all-day outing bring morning tea and lunch. Car pooling encouraged.

December 2012

1st & 2nd - Saturday and Sunday. Summer Challenge Count. More details closer to the date.

2nd - Sunday - Town Common - Meet at the main gate 6.30am.

5th - Wednesday - Photography Group Meeting - Theme is Flying. Meeting place TBA 7.00pm.

8th - Saturday - Christmas Party. (No Committee Meeting or General Meeting). Details closer to the date.