

# The Drongo

Number 122 August 2012



BTF Research

Bird Olympics

What's in a  
Name?



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

BirdLife Townsville is now six months old! The committee is still working hard to make the necessary changes to bring us in line with National Office requirements. It's a bit of a drag, but once it's all sorted, things will run smoothly.

It will be very obvious to you that Annette has been making huge leaps into the new technology with the end product being a brilliant newsletter. This newsletter is actually being produced just a hop, step and a jump away from the Olympics as Annette is *supposedly* on an overseas holiday. Once again, I remind you all to keep those articles – short or long – coming in to Annette.

Our latest book, '*Rainforest Birds of the Southern Wet Tropics*' is now in the final editing stage. I've had a sneak peek and it looks fantastic! Marleen is working hard on this last leg before the book is printed, despite being on '*holidays*' down at Bowra.

Again, I am asking for nominations for the Publicity Officer. Karen has offered to step in but is leaving Townsville in a few months time. As I have said previously, the role mainly involves sending a group email -which is already set up, just needs dates and venues changed - once a month. There may be the occasional request for information from the media but those requests are passed on to the appropriate member of the committee to be dealt with. Please give it a bit of thought. If you want to discuss the role please contact me either by phone 47799933 or email [contact@trboc.org.au](mailto:contact@trboc.org.au).

There have been a few hitches in the changeover of the website. Ian and Graeme are working doggedly at it and it should be all systems go very soon. You can still access the website at [trboc.org.au](http://trboc.org.au). Keep looking – you may be the first to see the new BirdLife Townsville web page come up!

*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  
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## BLACK-THROATED FINCH RESEARCH

Black-throated Finch and other granivorous birds' field activities have started!!

I (along with my colleague, Stanley Tang) have started mist netting birds in the Townsville area, an essential component of our PhD researches. We are colour banding, measuring and taking blood samples from the Black-throated Finches and other granivorous birds we are capturing (Double-barred Finch, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Zebra Finch, Nutmeg Mannikin and Peaceful Dove).

Seven attempts in four different locations in the vicinity of Ross River dam have been made so far. We captured a total of 193 birds, from those 144 were target species (Peaceful Doves= 50; Chestnut-breasted Mannikins= 73; Double-barred Finches= 8; Black-throated Finches= 13).

The first two finches were banded in April, 2012: two Double-barred Finches at Laudham Park. They were captured near their nest and weighed 9.5 and 8.5 grams respectively. Both were banded with a unique colour combination and had blood samples taken for genetic analysis. After being processed, the birds were released and flew off strongly, showing no evidence of having suffered from the treatment.

All the target species were colour banded and most of them were bled. Whenever possible we also measure head-bill length, bill length, tarsus, wing and tail. Other important information such as moulting characteristics, fat and the presence of brood patch is also recorded.

However, not only target species are trapped in the nets. We captured other species including Diamond Dove, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Sacred Kingfisher, White-winged Triller, Leaden Flycatcher, Lemon-bellied Flycatcher, Tawny Grassbird, Red-backed Fairy-wren, Little Friarbird, White-throated Honeyeater, Black-chinned Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Yellow-bellied Sunbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Great Bowerbird and Spangled Drongo. These birds were banded (only numbered bands, not colored), measured and released.

If you are visiting areas in the vicinity of Ross River dam and see any of our banded birds, we would appreciate to hear of your sighting including the specific location, date of the sighting and the colour combination of the bands.

But, how do you 'read' the colour bands?

The colour band is a very useful technique to mark birds and individualize them. Colour banding can provide useful information (breeding and social behaviour, movements and site/mate fidelity) without having to recapture them. Each bird has a unique colour combination and it must be 'read' in the correct way... and to do that is very easy!

The bands should be read: top left, bottom left, top right, bottom right (not your right, the bird's right!) In this picture, for instance, the combination is: Y (yellow), R (red), G (green), M (metal).

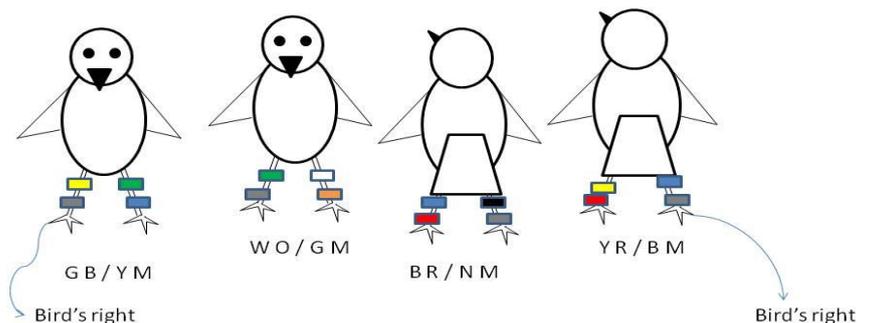


This bird is Y R / G M.

The colours we are using are:

Colour	Abbreviation
Red	R
Yellow	Y
Green	G
Blue	B
Orange	O
Black	N
White	W
Grey	S
Metal	M

Other examples of how to read the colour combinations:



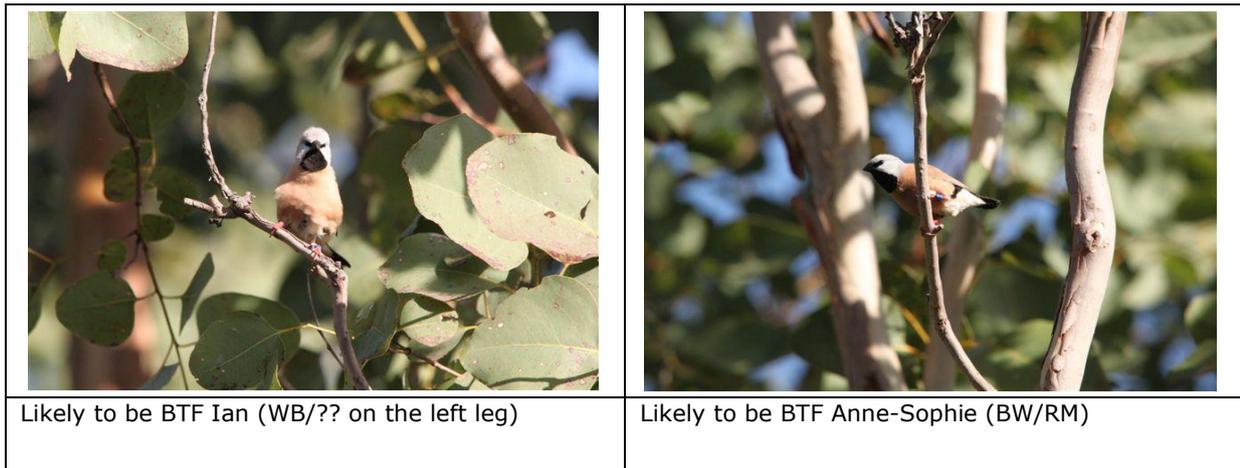
Because colour banded finches can be individualized, from now on they will receive names! Names will be chosen to honour friends and people that are contributing to our research. Only Black-throated Finches (and the first two Double-barred Finches) will receive names. However, all target granivorous birds will be colour banded.

Black-throated finches colour combinations	Name	Double-barred finches colour combinations	
Y G / W M	Tony	N R / W M	Troy
G Y / G M	Eric	B W / R M	Viviane
N R / W M	April	-	-
G B / R M	Rob	-	-
N B / R M	Glen	-	-
W B / G M	Ian	-	-
B W / R M	Anne-Sophie	-	-
B W / B M	Matthew	-	-
R W / N M	Janet	-	-
G N / R M	Ivor	-	-
R N / W M	Denise	-	-
W W / W M	James	-	-
B W / G M	George	-	-

If you see a **Black-throated Finch** it's very important that you let us know, so we can monitor and study them. We also strongly recommend that you report Black-throated Finch sightings at the Black-throated Finch Recovery Team web-site (<http://www.blackthroatedfinch.com>) and help us with their conservation.

If you see a **banded finch** (any target species) it's very important that you record: species, date, location and combination! Your help is important!

Some Black-throated Finches were already sighted by Norm Rains! Have a look at his pictures:



(Images courtesy of Norm Rains) / Sightings June 17<sup>th</sup> 2012

Thanks

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## ARTEMIS TRIP - JULY 2012

Recently, six members from the club ventured up to Cape York to camp at Artemis Station.

For those who have not been there before, Artemis is situated about 20k south of Musgrave Roadhouse and is a large cattle property owned by Tom and Sue Shepherd, long time guardians of the endangered Golden-shouldered Parrot that is resident on the property.

With an overnight stop at Lakeland, the trip up (and back) was uneventful with good roads all the way. Upon arrival at Artemis, we were enthusiastically welcomed by Sue who soon had the billy on and in no time we were sitting down to a hot cuppa and slabs of homemade fruitcake. It was then time to set up our camp which was in a paddock adjacent to the homestead. Things turned out to be quite civilised as the Shepherds have constructed a toilet block complete with hot showers and flushing toilets in the paddock to cater for visitors and work gangs that camp on the property.

That afternoon Sue guided us to an area on the property in search of the Golden-shouldered Parrot. It was not long before we had a flock of about 20 parrots in our binoculars. The flock consisted of adult birds, juveniles and some young chicks that were still being fed by their parents. Good close sighting and photo opportunities were had by all.



Golden-shouldered Parrot

Ian Boyd

That night, as with each night we were there, we went spotlighting. We were not disappointed. Southern Boobooks and Tawny

Frogmouths were prevalent. Of interest, we did spot several families of Laughing Kookaburras. It was terrific to see a family of four chicks and two adults huddled closely together high up on a tree branch. Nightjars were the target birds of those nightly jaunts but they were elusive, until we got to Nifold Plain, that is.



Red Goshawk

Ian Boyd

The next bird on the list was another endangered species, the Red Goshawk. Some literature classes it as one of the rarest birds in Australia. We had to travel about 50 kilometres to the area of the Goshawk and then the hunt was on. Our search was made easier when, after about 15 minutes in the area, a pair of birds was sighted flying along the roadway towards us. It was a pair of Red Goshawks. Wow! Six bird watchers soon had them firmly fixed in their binoculars. How lucky can you be! For a while we watched the male bird go about nest building by repeatedly carrying and carefully placing dry twigs in their nest which was on a horizontal branch about 15 metres above the ground. The female bird was not as active as she sat perched looking on, as if to make the sure the male was doing the right thing. It was to our amazement the pair were sighted mating not once, but twice in the time that we there. While in the area we also sighted a pair of Black-throated Finches (northern form) and Banded Honeyeaters.

We visited Lotusbird Lodge situated on the Marina Plain Road about 28 kilometres from Musgrave Roadhouse.

(<http://www.lotusbird.com.au/index.html>)

We were made welcome there and allowed to wander around the large billabong on which the lodge is situated. The track around the billabong made the going easy and, while the birding was not terrific, we did have good sighting of the waterbirds including the Radjah Shelduck. Among others were the Yellow Oriole, Black-backed Butcherbird and Forest Kingfishers.

Star Fiches were our next quarry. To get to an area where they could be easily found entailed a drive of about 75 kilometres over dirt roads. To make it worthwhile we decided to not only pack lunch but to also pack an evening meal so we could combine some spotlighting on the Nifold Plain in search of the Nightjars and Owls. On the way we called into the Red Goshawk area in the hope that Martin Willis, a late arrival, would be able to see the birds. He did. It was then off to the area of the Star Finch. At first the finches were difficult to find. Once we had worked out their movements, they were easily found. Several Star Finch flocks sighted included Black-throated Finches, Masked Finches and Black-faced Woodswallows. In one area there was an Australian Hobby that one would assume had a constant supply of food with so many Finches in the area.



White-throated Nightjar Ian Boyd

After a good look around the Nifold Plain areas and a drive out to see Hahn Crossing in Lakefield National park, we sat back to have dinner and wait for night fall. Having eaten, my attention was caught by the constant alarm calls of some Yellow Honeyeaters. An owl is close by was my immediate thought. I worked my way around the edge of the billabong we were sitting on and in the tree where the Honeyeaters were acting so frantically, I spotted a Papuan Frogmouth. This got the attention of the others who scurried around to see it. During the excitement the Frogmouth's mate was spotted. Two Papuan Frogmouths while having dinner. How good can it get!

Nightfall came and the spotlights were readied. The area we were to spotlight in was along the roadway that crosses Nifold Plain, a stretch of about 9 kilometres. White-throated Nightjars were the first species we came across and they proved to be quite common. They were easily approached and photographed. Next species was a Barking Owl which gave excellent views as it sat in the open on top of a broken tree trunk not far off the road. This was followed by a couple of sightings of Grass Owls. These were not easily approached but we got good views through the binos and spotting scope. On the trip back to Artemis, a number of Southern

Boobooks and Tawny Frogmouths were caught in the car headlight on the roadway. Again these birds offered excellent views. The decision to spend the extra time spotlighting on the Nifold Plain prove a good one as a top night was had by all.

The rest of the time at Artemis was filled with bird watching on the property's wetlands and diverse forested areas. Our species tally for the trip was 130. The one that we thought we would easily get but didn't was the Silver-crowned Friarbird. I suppose you can't be too greedy!

We all had a terrific time and there is now talk of a return visit next year. Any extra takers?

*Ian Boyd – On behalf of Janet, Rick, Gloria, Ian L and Gil.*

## ANNANDALE – NOT A FRIENDLY SUBURB?

On Sunday morning there was quite a raucous going on in our back yard or, more precisely, in our Euodia tree. I hadn't heard the call before so both Pat and I had a look to see what new bird was in our tree. There wasn't just one bird, there were lots! And they were all in the upper section of the tree.

I managed to see three Magpies - it was one of those making the noise and must have been a "call to arms" alarm call - at least two Great Bowerbirds, a Drongo and several Magpie-larks - with several more flying in. I also saw a few Common Mynas flying around but they were keeping their distance. Just as I went downstairs and attempted to see what was causing the melee, "it" flew off beyond the rear of the property, stopping us from identifying it. I saw a striped front while Pat saw a grey head and guessed it was a Collared Sparrowhawk. They have been nesting along the river during the past year. I guess it won't be back at our place for quite a while.

This was certainly an example of the old saying - Birds of a feather, flock together!

*Warren Charlton*



Magpie Ian Boyd

## COLOUR AND ANATOMY IN AUSTRALIAN BIRD NAMES

Throughout the world common names usually reflect key identification characteristics of birds.

In Australia this is most readily seen in the use of colour and anatomy in common names for our birds. I decided to get a better appreciation of this by analysing the names as recorded in the Australian Bird List (BOCA's Little Blue Bird List) but confined myself to indigenous species only; no introduced species and no vagrants. This gives a total of about 682 species. The first question was relating to colour. What colours were used and how common were



Red-eared Firetail

different colours in our bird names?

Perhaps surprisingly a total of about 290 species include colour in their common names with a few having more than one colour. An example of a multiple colour common name in our region is the Yellow White-eye. Another would be the Chestnut-breasted Whiteface. In this analysis I have included the two end points of the colour spectrum (ie black and white) and it is perhaps not surprising to find that these are the two most commonly used colours for Australian bird names (white in 47 species, black for 44 species).

What is the next most common colour? Red is the colour most used after black or white with 32 indigenous species using red. Any bird with red is likely to be noticed and perhaps that is the explanation for its frequent use, but there are some birds with red in their plumage that do not have the colour in their common name (Little Lorikeet for example). After red came yellow with 26 species including that colour in their common name, closely followed by grey with 20 species. From then on the list petered

out quite quickly with brown (13), rufous and chestnut (9 each), blue (8), and green, gold, sooty, buff and bronze all on 6 species. Purple, dusky and tawny have four each while scarlet, olive, crimson, silver, chestnut and orange all have three species each. There are many colours that are only used once and these would be relatively easy for you to pinpoint the species as soon as the colour is mentioned - for example azure, or leaden, or plum, or sulphur or straw or emerald to name a few local instances. A lot more challenging (and now I sound like Marleen at a trivia event), can you name the 6 species with green in their names?

What about anatomy? By my calculation there are 36 anatomical references in Australian common names (for indigenous species of birds). A total of 213 birds have an anatomical element in their names (a little less than those that have colour). What is the most frequently used part of the anatomy included in common names? Perhaps not surprisingly the two end points of the body feature, most commonly the tail (with 24 names) and followed by the bill (with 17) and the breast (17 also). Close to these are the face and the wing, each with 14 uses. Other well-used bits of the anatomy include head and back (13 each), throat (11), brow (9), neck and crown (8 each) and then ear, belly, rump, and eye with 6 each.

As with colour there are a few anatomical bits only used once and some of these will be obvious (for example "knee", "shoulder", "toe" and "side"). But, what about "nose"? Somehow does not sound right does it. Perhaps surprisingly there are only four species with a direct reference to feathers - 2 with "quill" in their name and 2 with "plumage" in their name.

Colour and anatomy combinations feature quite strongly - again not surprisingly. Can you identify two colours associated with "shoulders"? How many colours associated with "rump"? Next time you see a bird, think about its name.



Red-rumped Parrot

*Story and Photographs by Peter Valentine*

## Birding in Bali

### A Bukit Bird-walk and Sewage Ponds Saunter

In recent times, more of our BirdlifeTownsville (formerly TRBOC) members seem to be travelling overseas, so it occurred to me that a *Drongo* article about a nearby exotic destination usually associated with beaches, strange foods and fascinating culture may be of interest, because Bali is also a good birding destination. Indonesia as a whole boasts a bird list of some 1700 species, about 17% of the world's total, but it is a large and varied tropical country, with dense population centres, and seeing many of the species is a formidable challenge, as I well know from the approximately seven years I have spent in various periods in the archipelago. Bali has many advantages as a starting point in exploring the Indonesian avifauna: tourism is well-developed, many Balinese speak English and are used to dealing with foreigners, and the infrastructure, facilities and food are generally good to adequate, compared to other parts of the country. Furthermore, Bali's bird list of over 300 species is not overwhelming, with some birds familiar to Australians, and reasonably good bird-books and local guides available to help out with unfamiliar birds.

Bird-wise, many families/groups not found in Australia are represented in Indonesia, for example hornbills, woodpeckers, barbets and junglefowl/pheasants, among others. The tropical latitudes and extended nature of this nation of islands also has allowed greater species diversity within families, including those that are represented in Australia such as bee-eaters, kingfishers, warblers, sunbirds and flycatchers, to name a few.



Black-naped Oriole

Ian Boyd

To see many of the more typical south Asian forest birds, it would be necessary to travel westward to Java and beyond. Without leaving



Bali Starling

Ian Boyd

the heavily-populated island of Bali, however, it is still possible to get a pretty good bird list.

Even a short excursion limited to the drier habitats and hotel gardens on the Nusa Dua peninsula of eastern Bali will probably surprise you - so let's take an imaginary half-day trip as per the title of this article and tick what we can see and hear. Udayana Lodge (an accredited ecolodge run by Indonesian staff under the guidance of Australian expat friends and former Townsvillians Alan and Meryl Wilson) up on Bukit Jimbaran ("bukit" means hill) at the base of the Nusa Dua peninsula, is a good place to stay, and to start from. An early start ambling about the grounds and vicinity of the Lodge will take us through a dawn chorus with a bewildering cacophony of sounds, and we should see most of the concert participants: among others, two babbling bulbul species, the ubiquitous Common Ioras with their distinctive melodious jingle, Javan and Collared Kingfishers screeching from the treetops, a Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker drumming, squabbling White-breasted Waterhens near the swimming pool, and perhaps the mellifluous song of the Asian Magpie Robin or the harsh crowing of the stunning Green Junglefowl, sometimes seen skulking around the lawn edges at this time of day. Glancing skyward, we would likely see two kinds of swiftlets with a couple of Pacific Swallows, which might be joined by other swifts and perhaps a passing group of Blue-tailed Bee-eaters. As the day warms we stop for a quick breakfast at the Lodge's upper-floor open-air restaurant, from where the massive Gunung Agung, the sacred volcano, is hazily visible in the distance, while in the foreground bulbuls, ioras, sunbirds, flowerpeckers, tailorbirds and prinias forage in the lush Lodge gardens (over 50 bird and 20+ butterfly species have been recorded just around the Lodge).

From the Lodge we take a meandering drive around the peninsula via the plateau and cliff-tops, stopping at a few points including the grounds of some of the fancier hotels to look for additional species - seabirds, fantails, trillers, minivets, Long-tailed Shrike, Plaintive Cuckoo and with luck a Racket-tailed Treetopie or two.

We arrive eventually at the Nusa Dua sewage works near the southern end of the peninsula, a magnificent (to a birder) set of admittedly (ahem) "perfumed" ponds and adjacent mangrove forests, which have been protected as a nature reserve. Sauntering slowly around the settling ponds, we could add a further 30 species or more, including wetland birds such as Purple Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Javan Pond Heron, Sunda Teal, assorted egrets and cormorants, the electric Small Blue Kingfisher and a few waders in season, not to mention some additional bushbirds such as Pink-necked Green Pigeon and Flyeater. By now the heat and humidity are stifling, our sewage pond saunter has turned into a poo-ponds plod, so we retreat with a 10-minute drive to the Lodge, where we celebrate our bird list with suitable liquids and a light lunch: 50-60+ species, including at least 70-80% "lifers" if you are new to Indonesia. Not bad for a morning's bukit bird-walk, peninsular peregrination and sewage ponds saunter - and you still have the rice paddies, botanical gardens, the mountain forests and lakes, and the Bali Barat National Park to look forward to - good for another 50-100 species!

[Udayana Eco-Lodge is birder and non-birder friendly, has pleasant, clean, affordable accommodation, excellent well-trained staff, set but flexible menu meals, and reliable vehicles/drivers for hire at reasonable cost; airport, Kuta village and two beaches are within 10-20 minutes drive - see internet for more info]

Rolf Jensen

## BOWRA BITS

Alf and I took on the job of volunteers at Bowra for the month of July.

The weather has been everything from minus with frosts to mild and even on the edge of hot. Our highest overnight temp was 17 degrees followed by a day that dropped to 13 °C. Some days have been very cold with the wind chill taking the temp down to 4°C. Birding in that is not fun, then 45ml of rain which made roads impassable for a few days. Even though the nights are cold, a lot of the days have been beautiful and sunny.

Washing linen and cleaning are some of our duties. After that we can go birding. Before the rain, birds were hard to find; after the rain even more difficult. Still we have managed to see quite a lot.

*In the yard;* a White-plumed Honeyeater has nested just outside the office door, Brown Treecreepers call constantly and visit off and on all day, Spotted Bowerbird, Restless Flycatcher, Chestnut-crowned Babbler, Mistletoebird,

Yellow-throated Miners, Crested Pigeons, and Red-wing Parrot are just some of our visitors. Fairy Martins are building nests under the eaves. A pair of Galahs and Ringnecks have spent a lot of time checking out a nesting hole in a large gum near the back door. The big decision is yet to be decided.

*Out and about;* over a hundred Diamond Doves coming down to take water at a dam was spectacular, first landing in a dead tree close to the edge then making their wary approach and quickly having a drink. Another highlight was finding an Emu sitting on eggs. When first seen before the rain came there were six eggs. After a week I thought I might not be able to locate it again or that it may have been waterlogged and abandoned, but I did manage and he was still there along with eight eggs.

I usually do not go in to town with Alf but he had reported seeing a Bustard along the road out to the gate and as I wanted that for my Bowra list thought I would tag along. Just as well for me. I finally got my Grey Falcon so that was another good day and pure luck as well.

We are now on the countdown to departure with only about 7 days left of our month. After coming to grips with the cold it has been most enjoyable.

Marleen Acton



Chestnut-crowned Babbler  
Peter Valentine



Major Mitchell



Australian Ringneck  
Marleen Acton



Emu eggs

*Bowra is a hotspot for Australia's threatened birdlife. It is renowned as one of the country's most rewarding birdwatching destinations, featuring iconic species such as Hall's Babbler, Chestnut-breasted Quail Thrush and the Grey Falcon.*

*Located in the heart of the Mulga Lands, on the Warrego River plains, Bowra is a vitally important property for the conservation of Australia's wildlife and is now owned by Australian Wildlife Conservancy.*

<http://www.australianwildlife.org/bowra.aspx>

## AVIAN GOLD MEDALS

What if there were an Olympics for birds? Who would be in the medal count?

George and I were discussing this the other day. George suggested the starlings for Synchronised Swimming but, as they would look silly with pegs on their noses and swimming costumes, they should get the gold for Synchronised Flying. Budgerigars could come in for the silver. We need an Aussie on the podium.

Gentoo Penguins take gold in the swimming. They can manage up to 30 km/h (one source says 40km/h but they can't keep up the pace for long. The longest swimming migration undertaken by a bird is made by the Magellanic Penguin. It swims 2000 miles from Patagonia, South America to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In the sport of diving, Gannets can dive from a height of 30 m, achieving speeds of 100 km/h as they strike the water, enabling them to catch



Emperor Penguin  
vistawallpapers.com

fish much deeper than most airborne birds. Spongy bone around the head and air sacs under their skin protect their bodies from impact. Emperor Penguins come in first for the deepest diving bird at 540m. They also take out gold in a few

other events, mostly endurance. Emperor Penguins maintain the longest period underwater at eighteen minutes. At -45° C, they regularly endure the coldest temperature of any bird though the Snowy Owl has been known to put up with -62.5 °C. The male Emperors have the longest fasting period (134 days) and the longest uninterrupted incubation period at 64 to 67 days. Looks like the Emperor Penguins could be set to win the overall medal count. The Michael Phelps of the feathery kind.

Next on the program are Athletics. The gold medal for running goes to the Ostrich who clocks in at 70km/h. They can maintain this speed for up to twenty minutes so they would take out all the sprint gold medals and maybe a long distance one or two as well. The Ostrich is also the tallest and the heaviest bird but lays the smallest egg, relative to body size.

What about gold for flying? The Peregrine Falcon is everybody's favourite and certainly takes out the gold for the fastest bird on earth, but only when it is diving. Level flight is a different event. Most sources seem to agree

that the White-throated Needletail would take out the gold. The Spur-winged Goose and the Red-breasted Merganser (a northern hemisphere duck with an impressive punk hairdo) would vie for silver and bronze.



Red-breasted Merganser  
The Backyard Wildlife and Nature Store

There are a few contenders for the weightlifting gold, all of them eagles. The jury is still out on this one but the Harpy, African Golden Crowned, and Philippine Eagles are all reported to have taken small

mammals (antelope and howler monkeys). Most of the stories are anecdotal. The largest documented prey taken by a Philippine eagle is a 14 kg (30.8 lbs) Philippine deer Cervus at a nest studied by Kennedy in 1985.

The flight endurance gold would probably go to the Sooty Tern. It leaves its nesting grounds as a youngster and remains aloft for 3-10 years. It occasionally settles on the water. It returns to land to breed as an adult.

Last but not least, the gold medal for the highest flight goes to a Ruppell's Vulture which collided with a commercial aircraft over Abidjan, Ivory Coast, at an altitude of 37,000 feet in November 1973. The impact damaged one of the aircraft's engines, but the plane landed safely. The species is rarely seen above 20,000 feet.

In 1967, about 30 Whooper Swans were spotted at just over 27,000 feet by an airline pilot over the Western Isles, UK. They were flying from Iceland to Loch Foyle on the Northern Ireland/Republic Ireland border. Their altitude was confirmed by air traffic control. They take out silver.

In the human sphere, only the top, super-fit athletes who train rigorously for years are capable of amazing feats in physical pursuits. Birds have to be Olympic athletes at all times, just to survive.

*Annette Sutton*

There are a lot of internet sites to check out these fantastic birds. Try this one and try Google.

<http://www.victorialodging.com/recreation/birding/small-big-fast-slow>

## WINTER WINDS AND WINTON WONDERS

### Pentland, White Mountains and Beyond

BirdLife Townsville had planned a weekend trip to Pentland for some interesting birding on the dam and out in White Mountains National Park. Beth and I decided to make it a full trip by going on to Winton, up to Richmond and back through Hughenden, and for another weekend in Pentland with Beth's two sisters. I made all the necessary bookings – having learnt never to go west without having secured accommodation. The grey nomads are there in full force this year, which is great news for those towns.

Our Pentland weekend was cold but delightful, with just eight Club members participating, but all great company and good spotters. The most notable birds seen were the Pink-eared Ducks, a Baillon's Crake and a Glossy Ibis at the dam, while Banded Honeyeaters and a Pied Honeyeater provided special thrills in White Mountains. Banded Honeyeater was a "lifer" for Beth and me. A quite satisfying day, even if we missed the White-eared Honeyeater and any Thornbills. The constant chirping and singing of Brown Honeyeaters throughout the day gave the usual pleasure, even if we couldn't change any into Rufous-throated Honey-eaters.

On the Sunday, Beth and I headed for Winton, hoping to find those reported (months ago) Flock Bronzewings along the Winton road. We stopped and looked at several dams without luck, but did have the pleasure of seeing Crimson Chats and many flocks of Zebra Finches. Closer to Winton, several flocks of Budgies flashed green and gold (they should fly in the Olympics as Australia's emblem) and a couple of flocks of Cockatiels caused us to slow down in admiration.



Monday came in with a freezing wind from Antarctica, after we'd barely survived the night at Banjo's with only a small 2-bar heater, so we set off towards The Age of Dinosaurs mesa, encased in thermal vests, long-sleeved skivvies and a sweater. The first time we pulled off the

road to inspect a flock of "something that wasn't Budgies or Cockatiels", confirmed our feelings about Antarctica. Stepped out of the car and stopped in haste. Back to the car to retrieve our overcoats, scarves and gloves which, with our hoods also over the ears, gave sufficient protection from the icy blasts to allow us to sneak towards the birds we hoped to identify. The flock of about 20 had landed in the grass near the railway line, 12 to 15 metres away, so we had good views of their bobbing



heads and watched in excitement till the wind beat us back into the car. Holding the binoculars against the wind was difficult, but when you see Flock Bronzewings for the first time in your life, you need to study them carefully. Tick our target bird, but – on to the next ones, which we hoped to find on the gravelly mesa.

I headed straight for the Laboratory section of the Age of Dinosaurs museum complex, pulled up in the car park, and bingo, there was a Red-capped Robin showing off for us right beside the car. On with the overcoats again to walk around in the scraggly, uninspiring-looking trees that didn't provide much shelter, but did provide great views of Variegated Fairy-wrens, a flock of "different" *Sitellas* feeding busily in the lower branches, Rufous Whistlers, Grey Fantails and *Spinifex* Pigeons wandering around in the spinifex. By that time, the cold wind convinced me that a coffee in the brand-new restaurant perched enticingly beside the gorge, was just what the body required. We drove around to the other side of the gorge where this wonderful addition to a birding morning proved as delightful as I'd hoped. Coffee and toasted sandwiches sitting in the sun (out of the wind), overlooking the red rocks of the gorge, with a narrow view to eternity stretching out between the 'arms' of the gorge, was a wonderful experience.

Don't miss it when you next visit Winton in the morning. Refreshed and with new energy, we returned to the Laboratory side to search for the Yellow Thornbills and Inland Thornbills we'd seen there two years ago. Found them both and the Red-capped Robin appeared again in the same tree.

Returning to town, we had a cuppa and then headed for Pelican Waterhole. Along the way, four Ground Cuckoo-shrikes flew across our bows, Jacky Winters perched, tail-wagging, on the small shrubs and a Pallid Cuckoo flew into a tree beside us. Diamond Doves, Red-backed Kingfishers, a dozen Black-fronted Dotterels, Bustards, Brolgas and a male Restless Flycatcher completed our catch for the day.

The next day Bladensberg called and a visit to Logan's Falls gave great views of Grey-headed Honeyeaters and both male and female Hooded Robins. After lunch at Top Crossing, we called at Pump Hole and found a Spotted Bowerbird but, best of all, were the male White-winged Fairy-wren and two females scuttling around amongst the low bushes beside the road to Skull Hole. We managed to have a brief chat with Lenore and Malcolm Calvert towards the end of the day, as they headed for their cold camp and we returned to the 2-bar heater at Banjo's. Winton was great, and Pink-eared Ducks at the sewerage works was a good finish, before we headed north to Stamford and the dirt road across to Marathon and Richmond. Not far along this road, a flock of Banded Lapwings brought us to a halt; then another and later, another. Two flocks of Australian Pratincoles, Emus, Bustards, Zebras and six camels made that road one of the "must-do-again" types.

The Richmond Kronosaurus Korner Museum was the attraction there and it was still very cold with signs of frosts during recent nights. En route to Hughenden, for some distance, there were Brown Falcons perched on the lines about 100 metres apart. Mt. Walker was a fizzer both that evening and the next morning. Cold wind and no Spinifexbirds in sight, but the road across from that Muttaborra Rd. to the Prairie Rd. on the Eromanga Sea Byway, down to the Kooroorinya Nature Reserve, was very interesting with more Banded Lapwings and Brown Quails.

On our second visit to White Mountains, we saw both the Banded Honeyeaters and the Pied Honeyeater in the same trees they had been in the Saturday before. This time there were Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, too, and Elna managed to spot the White-eared Honeyeater perched for a few seconds on "his" tree down at Sawpit Gully parking area where we again had lunch. Our great excitement though, was the Baillon's Crake doing his thing, right beside the bitumen road at the Pentland Dam. He was just wandering along, in and out of the water-lily stems and other plants, as we cruised slowly past, keeping him in view for about 10 metres. Oh Yes! No need for binoculars as he was too close. What a way to finish a ten day excursion into the delightful mid-west, which looks absolutely terrific after so much rain during the first months of the year.

*Story and photographs by Elna Kerswell*

## MURRAY'S THE MAN

Over the weekend 28/29 July 2012, I attended the inaugural monthly meeting of BirdLife North Queensland.

It was a very interesting weekend, comprising a Saturday morning Daintree River cruise, a Saturday evening meeting at "The Habitat" Port Douglas, co-hosted by BirdLife North Queensland and 'The Habitat' staff, complete with real live bird calls in the background and Bush Stone-curlews roaming among the 60 or so attendees, and a Sunday morning excursion to Mount Lewis



Great-billed Heron

The event I want to dwell on was the boat cruise on the Daintree River with Murray Hunt. Murray is a committee member of BirdLife North Queensland, a keen bird watcher and runs a business called Daintree Boatman Nature Tours, based at Daintree Village.

Murray took us into a small, shallow creek running off the Daintree River. We had only gone

metres into the creek when the first of a number of Little Kingfisher crossed our path. It was not too many more metres up the creek that its dazzling cousin, the Azure Kingfisher, showed itself. By this time the boat's occupants were all excited. That excitement soon turned to raptures when Murray had us sitting quietly within five metres of an adult Great-billed Heron. The Heron was in no hurry to move on and did not seem to care about the clicking shutters of the cameras that were working overtime.

Continuing up the creek, we sighted more Little and Azure Kingfishers. Murray was able to drift the boat to within a couple of metres of an Azure Kingfisher which put on a show by diving for food in the water at the very edge of the boat. One of the birds I really wanted to see was the Papuan Frogmouth. I was not disappointed as Murray got us good views of a pair sitting not that high up in a mangrove tree at the mouth of the creek.



Papuan Frogmouth

During the two hour trip, Murray's knowledge of the river and its flora and fauna was evident through his keenness to point out interesting things that the novice would easily overlook.

Our bird list was not that extensive but it did include nice species like the Yellow Oriole, Brown Gerygone and Shining Flycatcher, just to name a few.

Of course, a number of crocodiles were seen through the trip, the smallest about 30cm long and the largest around 4 metres.

If you ever get up to Daintree Village and want to get a good look at the wildlife in a leisurely manner with a knowledgeable and informative guide, Murray's the man!

*Story and photographs by Ian Boyd*

## BIRDLIFE TOWNSVILLE CONSERVATION REPORT



In northern Queensland we are particularly aware of two species of threatened birds. Locally the Black-throated Finch (*Cincta cincta* subspecies) is now listed as Vulnerable (Garnett et al., 2010) with concerns for its

survival. Our branch, through the work of George Baker and others in trying to better understand the threats, is much involved with this species. Also quite local is the Southern Cassowary, which is now listed as Vulnerable (an improvement on the 2000 assessment which listed it as Endangered). The main cause for optimism is the extent of relatively intact habitat and the effective protection of that habitat through conservation (much of the habitat is now part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area).

Apart from these two well-known birds, the IUCN listed species in our region include many others. One group of concern are the many species of waders that feature on the IUCN Red List. Amongst Endangered species on the 2010 assessment are the Lesser Sand Plover and the Australian Painted Snipe, while the Greater Sand Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Eastern Curlew, Great Knot, Red Knot and Curlew Sandpiper are all Vulnerable. Many other waders are listed as Near Threatened including Grey Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Grey-tailed Tattler and Ruddy Turnstone. The Garnett et al. 2010 Action Plan for Australian Birds does not include

the Beach Stone-curlew but the IUCN Red List does (as Near Threatened).

One lesson from the threats posed to waders is that their local abundance here in summer may not be a clear indicator of their level of threat globally. Most of the species named above are relatively easy for us to observe in summer despite their global population declines. We are privileged in this. Another lesson of course is the global links for our migratory species. The future of the world's waders does not depend on any one country hence our multi-national conventions that help reach protection agreements across national borders. JAMBA and CHAMBA (Japan and China Migratory Bird Agreements with Australia respectively) are examples of this work in action.

Are we taking effective local conservation action for our waders? If we expect Japan, China, Korea and other nations to protect critical habitat for these species, how well are we working to protect their habitat while they are here in Australia? This is where I have some serious concerns. Much of our coastline is important to waders but the mudflats and beaches are poorly protected especially from disturbance (therefore adding high energy expenses on the birds). Simple solutions exist, including limiting access to these areas by mechanised vehicles and by dogs. There is certainly scope for us to do a lot better locally in protecting our waders while still enabling the pleasures of seeing them in the wild.

*Peter Valentine (Conservation Officer)*

## COMMON MYNAS AS PREY FOR GREY GOSHAWKS

Due to their aggressive nature, nothing really seems to bother with Common Mynas, or so I thought until a few years ago. My first observation of something other than a cat trying to catch Common Mynas was when I was living in Kirwan and one morning witnessed a Collared Sparrowhawk quickly fly out from the cover of an Albizia tree and grab from behind a Common Myna sitting on the power lines and return to its roosting spot with nothing else other than me witnessing the event. Pure stealth!

Where I live in Woree, I have a pair of resident Grey Goshawks (and an occasional white phase visitor), at least one Brown Goshawk, Hobby and Peregrine Falcon. Daily I often hear the alarm calls of the various neighbourhood birds announcing the presence of a raptor, usually the Grey Goshawks. The preferred prey of the Goshawks seems to be the area's numerous Spotted Doves. However, standing out on my back patio the other afternoon, I heard the

alarm call from the Common Mynas, Drongos and Helmeted Friarbirds as a Grey Goshawk flashed past in a downwards arc and crashed into the Fiddlewood foliage, followed by the screams of a Common Myna. Fluttering and fighting, both fell out of the tree on to the shed roof about 3m below and on impact the Grey Goshawk let go of its prey as a posse of at least 30 Common Mynas, two Drongos and half a dozen Helmeted Friarbirds flew in. In the confusion I lost sight of the Grey Goshawk as attention was paid to the injured but airworthy prey. As the posse circled and the injured bird was escorted away, suddenly the Goshawk broke from the cover of a neighbouring tree, pursued by a few Common Mynas, an aggressive Drongo and Helmeted Friarbirds landing in the top of a Eucalypt about 200m away.

On other occasions I have seen the Grey Goshawks shadow Sulphur-crested Cockatoos but never take one; although I have witnessed on Lawn Hill Creek a Brown Goshawk do so.

*Greg Bortolussi*



Common Myna

Ian Boyd

## Hastie's Swamped!

I have been on another trip to the Tablelands with my sister Rosey and luckily she is a birdwatcher so we were able to spend much time at Hastie's Swamp on Saturday morning 4th August. We had been up very early to gulp down a cuppa before our inaugural balloon ride at Mareeba. What a glorious experience with picturesque views of the Mareeba Valley; no birds seen until we landed on a grassy field and heard the magpie's singing. A fitting finale to an Aussie experience; another tick on the bucket list!

We had watched and heard many Brolgas passing overhead the night prior and were not able to ID any Sarus Cranes, hence the trip to the swamp. The sun was well up as we drove along the swamp road and tried to count all the Swampheens in the swamp--about 200. A little

further along the road and there was a newly ploughed paddock up on our left and it was dotted with many Brolgas. On closer inspection about half of them turned into Sarus Cranes; both species intermingled and with accompanying juveniles. There were about 100 altogether; a spectacular and welcome sight.

Our drive down the road beside the swamp was accompanied by the musical (and loud) whistling of thousands of Plumed Whistling-Ducks, many Wandering Whistling-Ducks and the trumpeting of many Magpie Geese. From the lower viewing platform we watched four Nankeen Night-Herons fly into an adjacent tree, two Green Pygmy-geese sail by, many Pacific Blacks, a sprinkling of Hardheads, Moorhen and Coots, some Australasian Grebes displaying their petticoats, Little Black Cormorants, a Pelican, White-necked Heron, all the Egrets while Black and Whistling Kites flew overhead. It was a noisy, busy spectacle.

Walking along the roadway the following were seen: Brown Falcon, Straw-necked Ibis, Red-tailed Black- Cockatoos, Laughing Kookaburras, Rainbow Bee-eaters, Brown Gerygone, Lewin's Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, White-cheeked Honeyeater, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Azure Kingfisher, Rainbow Lorikeets, Black-faced and Little Cuckoo-shrikes, Rufous Whistler, Little Shrike-thrush, Figbirds, Northern Fantail, Magpie Lark, Pied Monarch, Pale Yellow Robin, Silvereye, Welcome Swallows, Red-browed Finch and Chestnut-breasted Mannikins, and sitting on the power lines was a Black-shouldered Kite.

A very satisfying morning of birding under a glorious blue sky.

We headed to Atherton and Halloran's Hill to enjoy the view before heading home. I stepped out of the car and looked out over the roof of the house below to see a raptor fly into a nearby tree-- goodness, could it be the elusive Grey Goshawk? A resounding yes, and in the grey morph, very good views as it sat in the tree for ten minutes. Of course we took photos and I attach the best of the lot taken with ordinary cameras by amateur photographers! What an exciting find before we headed back to Townsville and the squawk of Indian Mynas!

*Cecily Messer*



## MUSEUM BIRDS

In July 2012, Townsville hosted the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference at Southbank.

One of the Taxidermy team, Karen Hunt, made contact with the organizers and offered a presentation on Taxidermy, which was accepted. Wildlife Carers are a valued source of specimens that sadly didn't survive the traumas that saw them placed in care in the first place. Karen was called to SA due to a family matter and so I presented alone.

I talked about the correct way to prepare a specimen for delivery to the taxidermy team. These points included :-

- Lie the bird in a natural pose
- Stroke the feathers to ensure they lie naturally. (Imagine going to bed with wet hair....the dry hair is difficult to control the next day.)
- Wrap the bird in paper to absorb moisture and protect the feathers.
- Place the wrapped bird in a sealed plastic bag.

In with the bird, include a second bag containing the information. :- \*Name of the bird \*Date of death \* Place of death\*Cause or suspected cause of death \* Name of finder & phone number. We try to let finders know when their bird is 'worked on' and also include their name on the ID card.

- Any other information you think will be of interest

The talk went off well with great feedback and interest. One lady said, " I just needed to tell you that I didn't expect to enjoy your presentation - but I did. It was very interesting and you obviously care about your birds." Another fellow, a snake catcher and carer, was keen to donate those who die or are euthanized so I gave his details to Phil. A lady from Sydney was keen to send me Swamp Wallabies and Possums - apparently there are a great number where she lives and she pulls bodies from the roads each day. This lady was saddened that no benefits came to wildlife by way of their death and that maybe through taxidermy and education their deaths could achieve something.

I found the half hour time slot - with a bell at 5 minutes - a bit short...I was just warming to my topic!! Still it was the same time allocation that everyone had. They just had so many fascinating topics to cover in the 5 days. Nearly 200 people attended from all over the country and Dr Jim Pollock said they were very pleased with the turnout.

I set up a table with 'bits' & stayed through the lunch break to allow looking, touching and questions and was busy whenever the participants were around.

They were thrilled to see the detail on the Barn Owl's wing and to see how 'bits' as well as mounts were used to educate children as to the wonders of birds and the need they all have for healthy environments. Some 'birder' participants were keen to ask where they could see various species on the extra day they had allocated to their trip.

All up I was very pleased to have attended and spent time with these dedicated folk who donate their time and money to rehabilitate the animals and birds of Australia.

*Beth Snewin*

## WINTER TRIP

Down south in spite of the weather

We don't always have the choice of when we visit family and this year a mid-winter trip south to Warrnambool, Victoria was on the agenda. No matter what the weather is, we make the most of any opportunity to look for and watch birds.



Noisy Miner

Ray Sutton

Our birding journey started in Toowoomba in southern Queensland with Superb Fairy-wren, Red Wattlebird, Pied Currawong, Noisy Miner and Yellow-rumped Thornbill in my sister's garden. We made an overnight stop in Forbes in Central NSW and visited a wetland where we saw Pink-eared Duck, Sea-Eagle and Eastern Rosella.

Continuing on, there was evidence of recent rainfall with large areas of water on each side of the road where we saw many water birds but we were unable to stop. The predominant raptor was the Black-shouldered Kite - in fact for our whole journey, they were seen in all environments. I've never seen so many. Chiltern was our next family stop. Here we went to some of the local spots and saw our first Rose Robin, Yellow-tufted and Yellow-faced

Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robin, and Grey Fantail, to name a few.

Leaving here, we continued to Hall's Gap in the Grampian Mountains. A special highlight was seeing three Gang-gang Cockatoos – a male, female and juvenile were busy feeding in a tree, only alerting us to their presence when debris started falling out of the tree they were in. From here it was only a short drive to Warrnambool and our daughter. While here we visited the Tower Hill Reserve – seeing Musk Duck, Australian Shelduck and Chestnut Teal, large numbers of Superb Fairy-wren and Emu. On a visit to nearby Killarney Beach, we saw Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers and 13 Hooded Plovers – 2 feeding along the water's edge and 11 scavenging in the seaweed at the back of the beach. Here we also saw two Striated Fieldwren and Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, Grey Fantail, Skylark, Scarlet Robin and the common, but very welcome Singing Honeyeater. At Port Fairy, we saw two Southern Right Whales frolicking in the distance as well as Pacific and Kelp Gulls.

In Warrnambool at Lake Pertobe, we saw more Chestnut Teal, Superb Fairy-wren, Black-tailed Native-hen, Australian Reed-Warbler and one male Musk Duck on the Hopkins River. Our bird watching here was definitely limited by the weather; only had three days out of 16 and also by the jobs our daughter had organised for us to do.

Leaving Warrnambool, we came up to Bendigo. In the caravan park, we were entertained by flocks of Musk Lorikeets. Heading north, we stopped in Hillstone (NSW) and saw Grey-crowned Babblers and numerous Laughing Kookaburras in the caravan park. There was more sun here but it was definitely not much warmer.

Continuing into Queensland via Cobar and Bourke, we came up to Bowra Station near Cunnamulla – now owned by the AWC. Friends were volunteering there on behalf of Birds Queensland. This property is a special place for birdwatchers and we were pleased to be able to spend time looking for the species it is known for, including Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush, Hall's and Chestnut-crowned Babbler, Red-backed Kingfisher, Crested Bellbird, Major Mitchell Cockatoo, Blue Bonnet, Mulga Parrot, Red-rumped Parrot, Mallee Ringneck, Variegated, White-winged and Splendid Fairy-wren, Black-breasted Buzzard, Striped, White-fronted and Grey-headed Honeyeater. While there, about 50mm of rain fell so driving was out of the question so we did a lot of walking and had to stay an extra three days. We then travelled back to Townsville via bitumen roads after 6 weeks away and after thousands of kilometres, I could take my jumper off.

*Pat Charlton*

## Rainforest Bird Book

I can report good progress in the production of our new book, Rainforest Birds of the Southern Wet Tropics. This will be the fourth book in the series of bird books produced by the Club and will contain photographs and text produced by BirdLife members. The feature bird is the Southern Cassowary.

Funding for the production and printing of the Rainforest Bird book has been provided under a Caring for our Country project managed by Townsville City Council. As part of this agreement, BirdLife Townsville will conduct a number of school presentations in support of the Rainforest Bird identification project run by the Paluma Education Centre.

In addition to the agreement with TCC, we have made a separate agreement with the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) that will enable us to print a further 2000 copies of the book and distribute them to up to 60 schools in the Wet Tropics region. This is the opportunity we have had to work with WTMA.

The team from the education group in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) will assist BirdLife in the distribution of the books to the schools and the promotion of our school presentations. GBRMPA has invited BirdLife to support their Future Leaders Eco Courses (FLEC) in Townsville, Ingham and Charters Towers. These events attract selected pupils from local schools to participate. We have supported the event for the last 2 years; they are well organised and allow us to get our conservation message across to a widespread and interested audience. Typically we set up a display of laminated bird photos on the Spyder board and a table of bird bits from the local museum, and then talk to each school group for 20 minutes. Last year we covered 12 schools and about 80 children. This year we plan to cover Rainforest Birds and issue copies of our new book.

BirdLife would like to thank TCC, Paluma EC, WTMA and GBRMPA for their support of our education and conservation activities.

*George Baker*



## INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

Birds	Date	Place	Observer
Topknot Pigeon	4/6/12	Ross Creek (CBD)	Niel Bruce
Pacific Bazza	6/6/12	Town Common	Joan Wharton
Peregrine Falcon	6/6/12	Town Common	Joan Wharton
Black-breasted Buzzard	8/6/12	Flinders Hwy, Selhiem	Len & Chris Ezzy
Fernwren and White-browed Scrubwren	8/6/12	Paluma Township	Alexandra Canton & Marleen Acton
Australian Shoveler	10/6/12	Pentland Dam	Niel Bruce
Pied Cormorant, Grey Goshawk, Sooty Oystercatcher, Owlet Nightjar, Lemon-bellied Flycatcher	11/6/12	Town Common	Ed Pierce
Pacific Bazza	14/6/12	Garbutt Shopping Centre	Chris Armstrong
Olive-backed Oriole	18/6/12	Anderson Park, Pimlico	Joan Wharton
Square-tailed Kite	18/6/12	Hervey Range Rd	Ivor Preston
Spotted Nightjar	21/6/12	Private Property Kelso	Ian Boyd, Bill Holmes & Mark Hovarth
Grey Goshawk	22/6/12	Kings Rd, Pimlico	Ian Boyd
Diamond Dove	23/6/12	Town Common	Ed Pierce
Orange-footed Scrubfowl	30/6/12	Fairfield Waters Wetland	Alexandra Canton
Southern Boobook & Pied Butcherbird	30/6/12	Town Common	Ed Pierce
Southern Boobook	30.6.12	Tyto Wetlands Ingham	Tony Ashton
Pink-eared Duck & Baillon's Crake	30/6/12	Pentland dam	Joan Wharton
Pictorella Mannikin	30/6/12	Moorinya NP	Len & Chris Ezzy
Plum-headed Finch	2/7/12	Mingela Township	Joan Wharton
Square-tailed Kite	11/7/12	Heatley	John Mew
Lesser Frigatebird	14/7/12	The Strand Townsville	Ed Pierce
Brolga	16/7/12	Mundy Creek, Belgian Gardens	Helen McLaughlin
Grey Goshawk and Black-shouldered Kite	18/7/12	Louisa Creek	Len & Chris Ezzy
Grey Goshawk	19/7/12	Broadwater State Forest Park	Tony Ashton
Barn Owls (46)	24/7/12	Private property Woodstock	Ian Boyd, Bill Holmes & Gil Crabtree
Little Kingfisher	29/7/12	Near Ross River, Bowen Rd Rosslea	Attila Paksi

If you haven't reported your interesting sightings on Birdline North Queensland please report them to Ian Boyd at [ninox45@bigpond.com](mailto:ninox45@bigpond.com). Other members like to know what birds are about.

## CALENDAR

### August 2012

15<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday - Bush Garden - Meet at end of Thompson St Mundingburra 7.00am.

19<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - Ross River Dam - Meet in the Dam car park 7.00am.

26<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - Town Common - Shelly Beach - Meet in the Common carpark for a 7.00am start. Home by lunchtime so only bring morning tea. Road only suitable for high clearance vehicles such as SUVs and 4WDs therefore car pooling encourage.

## September 2012

2<sup>nd</sup> - Sunday - Town Common - Meet at the main gate 6.30am.

5<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday - Photography Group Meeting - Theme is Black and White. Place TBA 7.00pm.

8<sup>th</sup> - Saturday - Committee Meeting (12.30pm) and General Meeting (2.30pm) Held in the Townsville City Council Sound Shell meeting room Thuringowa. Guest speaker TBA

12<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday - Bush Garden - Meet at end of Thompson St Mundingburra 6.30am.

16<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - Ross River Dam - Meet in the Dam car park 6.30am.

30<sup>th</sup> - No regular outing this month due to the new Queen's Birthday public holiday on Monday 1 October 2012 - See the first October entry below.

## October 2012

29<sup>th</sup> September - 1<sup>st</sup> October (Sat - Mon) Queen's Birthday long weekend. Campout at Inkerman Station (Via Ayr). More details closer to the date.

7<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - Town Common - Meet at the main gate 6.30am.

10<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday - Photography Group Meeting - Theme is Your Favourite Bird Photos. Meeting place TBA 7.00pm.

13<sup>th</sup> - Saturday - Committee Meeting (12.30pm) and General Meeting (2.30pm) Held in the Townsville City Council Sound Shell meeting room Thuringowa. No Guest speaker - Annual Trivia Quiz.

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

21<sup>st</sup> - Sunday - Ross River Dam - Meet in the Dam car park 6.30am.

28<sup>th</sup> - 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.

## QUEST 2012

Janet Robino	351	16/12/2012
Chris Ezzy	337	2/12/2012
Len Ezzy	335	30/11/2012
Peter Valentine	302	28/10/2012
Ian Leach	292	18/10/2012
Marleen Acton	286	12/10/2012
Elna Kerswell	271	27/09/2012
Cecily Messer	267	23/09/2012
Ian Boyd	265	21/09/2012
Beth Snewin	262	18/09/2012
Barbara Reidy	257	13/09/2012
Rosemary Payet	234	21/08/2012
George Baker	234	21/08/2012
Janet Cross	229	16/08/2012
Joan Wharton	228	15/08/2012
Teresa Baker	226	13/08/2012
Alex Canton	219	6/08/2012
Annette Sutton	209	27/07/2012
Pat Charlton	196	14/07/2012
Malcolm Calvert	180	28/06/2012
Wendy Kaus	179	27/06/2012
Lenore Calvert	177	25/06/2012
Warren Charlton	171	19/06/2012