

The Drongo

Number 171 August 2023



Annette Sutton

South and
West

Molongle

Iron Range



FROM THE PRESIDENT

As you will all be aware by now, Birdlife Australia has a new CEO, Kate Millar, and a new President of the Board, Mandy Bamford. Birdlife Townsville is hopeful that within the near future our membership and communication with head office issues will be sorted out.

The Town Common Survey on Sunday 6 August highlighted the usefulness of registering for outings. Heatley Parade, the only access road to the Town Common has restricted traffic access related to a foot race. The leader was able to delay the start of the survey to allow all those who had registered to arrive. Despite a little delay in starting, we had a very busy and exciting survey with large numbers of water birds counted – see the Birdata list for the survey as circulated by Secretary Wal Threlfall.

Fees for the use of the Soundshell for our meetings are to commence in October. We are applying to the Townsville City Council to have the fees waived as we are a not-for-profit community group.

I'm sure everyone is keeping an eye on the Club Activities on the website and October seems a long way away, but please put a couple of important activities in your calendar. The Aussie Bird Count is the week of 16-22 October and the Black-throated Finch Waterhole Survey is 21 and 22 October. Remember, you can do the Aussie Bird Count at the same time as doing the Waterhole Survey.

We are still negotiating with the Museum Of Tropical Queensland for the loan of bird specimens for use in our school and community programs.

I had the great honour of presenting Annette Sutton with a very well-deserved Birdlife Australia Distinguished Service Award at the August meeting. All those who attended the meeting were able to 'help' Annette celebrate with a great looking, and better tasting, cake. See Wal's article in this issue of the Drongo for all the information. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Committee to thank Annette for all she has done over many years for the club.

Janet Robino

YOUR COMMITTEE

President: Janet Robino	Annette Sibson	Julia Goldsbury
Secretary: Wal Threlfall	Mark Horvath	Kathleen Vowles
Treasurer: Nina Doyle	Brigid Glass	Warren Charlton

Newsletter Editor Annette Sutton amsgreat@gmail.com

Deadline for next Drongo is October 31st. Please send articles as Word documents, photos as attachments.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Birdlife Townsville..

LAKE DUNN

We recently spent 4 nights at Lake Dunn; what a fabulous place. The camping spot we chose was right at the far end of the camping area so we had nobody in front or to the right of us. This meant great views of the water and no disturbance from other campers. We were close enough to the water to allow me to stay in the shade of our canopy for most of the day, which meant that the birds were not disturbed by my presence or camera.



White-necked Heron

There were heaps of birds. I won't bore you with a long list, but I will mention a few. Obviously, waterbirds featured the most, with bush birds making a good number and raptors bringing up the rear.

One visitor very close to our camp was a female Australasian Darter. She walked out of the water to dry out and preen late one afternoon so the light was fabulous. I sat on the ground and took way to many photographs as she happily preened, yawned and stretched. A lovely bird to spend time with.



Black-eared Cuckoo

I lay on the ground to photograph a Great Egret busily catching fish (which were plentiful). Laying down is a great way to get a different perspective but it's not always convenient to do so. Being right there gave me opportunities to try all sorts of things.

I don't normally sit in one spot for very long when I'm photographing birds. I get too fidgety, so this was an ideal opportunity for me to practice staying in one spot for a length of time. I didn't keep perfectly still, but I did sit in the chair for a good number of hours, which meant that I saw things I would normally have missed, like the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater and the Freckled Monitor that was living in a nearby tree stump.



Freckled monitor

We even had a large litter of young domestic pigs come and visit. They were fun to watch until they wanted to get under the canopy with me. We counted 16 of them and mum.

Of special note in the bird list were Grey-crowned Babblers, Australian Hobby, White-necked Heron, Little Eagle and last but certainly not least a Black-eared Cuckoo.

Lake Dunn is well worth a visit if you have the time.

Annette Sibson

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE

From the Australian Museum Website

Scientific name: *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

Similar species:

Hoary-headed Grebe

Size Range 25 cm - 27 cm

Grebes eat their own feathers and feed them to their young to prevent injury when swallowing fish bones.

Identification

The Australasian Grebe is a small waterbird with two distinct plumage phases. The non-breeding plumage of both the male and female is dark grey-brown above and mostly silver-grey below, with a white oval patch of bare skin at the base of the bill. During the breeding season, both sexes have a glossy-black head and a rich chestnut facial stripe which extends from just behind the eye through to the base of the neck. At this time, the eye becomes darker and the patch of skin at the base of the bill becomes pale yellow and more noticeable. When approached, Australasian Grebes usually dive under water.



Habitat

The Australasian Grebe is found in freshwater ponds or small waterways.

Distribution

The Australasian Grebe is found throughout Australia and throughout the Pacific region. Also self-introduced to New Zealand.



Feeding and diet

Food consists mainly of small fish and water insects. Prey is normally caught during deep underwater

dives, but some is taken on the surface. Like other grebes, the Australasian Grebe is often seen eating its own feathers and feeding them to its young. This behaviour is thought to help prevent injury from any sharp fish bones that are swallowed.

Breeding behaviours

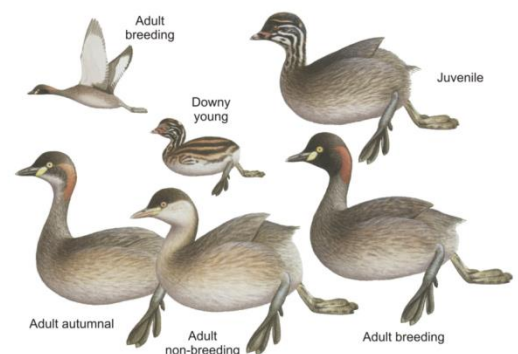
The Australasian Grebe may raise up to three successive broods in a season. The pale blue eggs are laid in a nest which is a floating mound of vegetation, normally anchored to a submerged branch or reed. The striped downy chicks are able to swim from birth and are cared for by both parents. When parents start breeding again, however, the young of the previous brood are driven away.

- Breeding Season: September to January in the south; January to April in the north
- Clutch Size: 4 or 5



References

- Pringle, J.D. 1985. *The Waterbirds of Australia*. Angus and Robertson/National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife, Sydney.
- Marchant, S. and Higgins, P.J. (eds.) 1990. *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Vol 1*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.



From the Australian Bird Study Association

BIRDING WEST AND SOUTH

By April this year, we (Beth, Wendy, Roger and I) had already checked out the wet tropics, so it was obviously time to head west and south. A birding trip to the outback must now be planned at least two months in advance if one wants accommodation in those delightful western towns, so with the planning done successfully, we set off on the 30th April.

Well, we meant to set off at 11.00 a.m. to spend the first night in Pentland. The car was packed full of our gear and all was in order till Beth checked her right front tyre as she was about to get in. Humm! That looks a little bit flat perhaps? Further inspection and comparing it with the other three, assured us that it was indeed "down". Oh bother!! I phoned the R.A.C.Q. and told my sad story to the operator who hopefully told us that someone would come. Not even the "at least an hour" bit. Damn! Beth unpacked the copious suitcases and bags of necessities from the boot and put them on my lawn beside the car. I guess all the neighbours watched for the rescue vehicle, too, so we came back inside and made sandwiches for lunch.



Pink-eared Duck

Ray Sutton

After what seemed like an eternity, Beth phoned the R.A.C.Q. again. Yes, they confirmed the address etc and repeated that someone would come. Finally, action, as help arrived. The offending tyre and wheel were removed and replaced with the spare, but the problem remained of where could we buy another tyre and when? My sister rang her son, a builder, who arrived shortly afterwards with a repair kit. He knew about flat tyres and repair kits, which he assured us would have the old tyre as good as new. We watched in fascination as the offending screw was removed, the plug inserted and the tyre pumped up very hard. Repack the boot and off - nearly 4 hours after the planned time of departure. It was a hurried drive to Pentland with

the setting sun right in our eyes for the last hour and no stopping to look at birds along the way, but we made it without anything untoward occurring. We agreed that it was a blessing that the tyre trouble happened at home and not somewhere in the great outdoors, during the next 4000 kilometres.

Oh, did we see any birds? Yes indeed - at Pentland, Pink-eared Ducks, Wood Ducks, Glossy Ibis, Cotton Pygmy-geese, Black Swans, a Striated Pardalote and a Bustard at the Pentland Dam were the first new finds. The Gravel Pits at White Mountains National Park had a sign to say, "No entry", but we didn't see it for the profusion of flowering Grevillea Decora and the songs of the Brown Honeyeaters. Other than them we saw only many Noisy Friarbirds and some Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, so we pushed on to Hughenden for lunch before heading south. Nothing of note except dozens of Zebra Finches and Black-faced Woodswallows.



Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater

Annette Sutton

A cuppa at Corfield and then - a better time of day, rewarded us with the surprise of the trip. Puttering about by the side of the bitumen and actually in the middle of the road were these tiny feathered creatures which we thought may be more Zebras, until we drew closer and could see many of them were bright yellow. In unison, Beth and I both exclaimed, "Chats!" But which Chats? We called on the two-way to Wendy and Roger to drive up slowly and park beside us (in the middle of the road, of course). Much intense looking through 4 pairs of binoculars to study all their features until finally we decided on Yellow Chats as no black throats were visible on the brightest coloured ones.

Since then, Ivor has convinced me that they must have been Orange Chats; but do we care?? A "lifer" no matter which one while the thrill and their beauty still remain in my memory. Luckily it was on the Winton road as we completely blocked the road, as one does out there, and no other vehicles hove in sight. A couple of Emus, Brolgas, Cockatiels and a Spotted Harrier completed the pleasure before we

arrived in Winton at the expensive Boulder Opal Motel.

Bladensburg National Park had had more rain than in 2021, so there was long grass and a couple of puddles were still lying around, which proved good for finding more birds. Spinifex and Crested Pigeons, a Common Bronzewing, Jacky Winters, Black-fronted Dotterels, Budgerigars, Variegated



Budgerigars and Zebra Finches Annette Sutton

Fairy-wrens, White-plumed Honeyeaters and a multitude of Crimson Chats feeding by the roads were soon seen.

Next morning, at The Age of Dinosaurs, there were Red-capped Robins, Singing Honeyeaters and a Buff-rumped Thornbill. Coffee and cake were enjoyed while gazing down into the depression behind all the constructions. My favourite coffee place. Leaving there, the next stop was at the Ilfracombe Dam where a Little Grassbird, a Yellow Spoonbill, Brown Quail, a Pied Cormorant, White-winged Fairy-wrens and large flocks of Plum-headed Finches were seen. Great finds! The Barcardine Caravan Park was the venue that night so we could take time en route to Blackall to inspect the Lara Wetlands. We always call into the Lagoon just before Patrick Creek, too, and were rewarded with Restless Flycatcher, Little Grassbird, Reed Warbler, Spotted Bowerbird and Rufous Whistlers. At Lara were the usual Red-kneed Dotterels, Black-tailed Native Hens, Pink-eared Ducks, and Grey-crowned Babblers. Along the entry road, a couple of Hooded Robins were seen. At the Wool Scourer Works in Blackall were the usual Babblers, Bowerbirds and Choughs, while a flock of Splendid Fairy-wrens and Striped Honeyeaters added to the joys. Charleville yielded up Red-rumped Parrots and a Major Mitchell Cockatoo. Later, there were three of them at Bowra.

Finally – Cunnamulla. A thousand Galahs and a thousand Little Corellas decorated the oval across the road from the Warrego Hotel. What a cacophony! After a quick photo of the scene we headed for the Weir. Good move! Just before arriving, there was a small flock of Blue Bonnets

sitting in a spindly, leafless tree right beside the road. What luck!

Next morning we set off for Bowra in an Antarctic wind and 6 degrees Celsius. My five layers did little to keep out that wind even though we spent most of the day walking in the sun. However, a good birder takes such torments in their stride, so searching we went, with rewards such as Mallee Ringnecks and Red-rumped Parrots, Crested Bellbirds, Purple-backed Fairy-wrens, Chestnut-rumped and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, Little Woodswallows, Hall's Babblers, Hooded and Red-capped Robins and a most elusive Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush which had Beth and me scrambling around in the old burnt Mulga sticks as it scampered from shelter to shelter. As we headed back to base a Black-breasted Buzzard flew overhead. Bowra certainly lived up to its fame as a great birding place.

Next stop was St George for an uneventful drive, though Beth and I had been pleased to see Squatter Pigeons alongside the road, as well as Cockatiels and Mallee Ringnecks. At 4pm we boarded a small, flat boat to explore the river, hopefully searching for birds while listening to the spiel about the history of St George and information about all the expensive homes which lined the eastern bank. These were the homes of the Cotton Kings. Apparently there is big money in cotton. The cold wind made it less than pleasant, but it was an interesting tour.



Emu

Annette Sutton

Next day, along the road to Goondiwindi, a small flock of Chestnut-crowned Babblers flew across right in front of us and a Black-shouldered Kite circled overhead, while Emus fed in the roadside paddocks. We probably saw more than fifty Emus during the trip.

Our destination for the night was in Eukey, between Stanthorpe and Girraween National Park. This was a delightful house and the garden yielded a plethora of beautiful birds: Eastern Yellow Robin, Variegated Fairy-wrens, Silvereyes, Red-browed Finches, a Scarlet Robin, New Holland Honeyeaters and a flock of 40+ Crimson Rosellas feeding in and under a pomegranate tree.

Our target next day was visiting Girraween National Park, so off we went in our warmest gear. It was a bit disappointing, but we did find Yellow-faced and White-eared Honeyeaters, a Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Superb Fairy-wrens, Red Wattle Birds and several Red-capped Robins. From Eukey the next day, we headed south through Tenterfield, where the Avenues of autumn-leafed Plane trees had us exclaiming with delight. It seemed that every street was lined with those glorious autumn colours, though some were past their prime as masses of fallen leaves were lying under them on the footpaths and sides of the road. It was indeed a feast for the eyes. Heading east, we drove for many hours across the beautiful New England Tableland, where we managed to see some Bell Miners, down to the coast at Casino and north to Kyogle for lunch. We followed the Tweed River which had caused such disaster for hundreds of people, when it flooded in 2022, to the coastal resort town of Kingscliff. Here Wendy's sons and their children joined us for the weekend to celebrate her 70th birthday. Unfortunately it decided to drizzle most of the time, so the young ones couldn't enjoy the beach, but nevertheless a great time was had by all and the birthday was suitably celebrated.



Yellow-throated Scrubwren R.Sutton

Of course we did the compulsory walk through Mary Cairncross Park near Maleny, so scored a Wompoo, Large-billed Scrub Wren, Large-billed Gerygone, Yellow-throated Scrub Wrens, Pale-yellow Robin, Eastern Yellow Robin and a Brown Thornbill. Around the Noosa area, we managed Little Wattlebird, Topknots, Azure Kingfisher, Spotted Pardalote and a Golden Whistler. Nothing of interest was seen then until we visited the St Lawrence Wetlands. What a joy that was with so many Cotton Pigmy Geese, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Great Crested Grebe, Swan, Bustard, Mangrove Honeyeater and a Brown Falcon in the total count of 39 species.

What an exciting and successful birding trip that was. In all, I added 60 more species to my Quest list.

Elna Kerswell

GLARE VS STARE

Can you tell your Brown Goshawk from your Collared Sparrowhawk?

These similar-looking raptors can be tricky to tell apart – even by experts!

The Collared Sparrowhawk is generally smaller and thinner in appearance with a small head and bug-eyed expression. While the Brown Goshawk is heavier set with a large head and glare-like expression.

In flight, the Brown Goshawk has rapid, powerful wing beats, while the Collared Sparrowhawk has quick, flickering wing beats.

From the Birdlife Australia Facebook page



CATTLE EGRET

BREEDING COLONIES

Can anyone help with this request by Peter Valentine from Birdlife Northern Queensland.



I am seeking your assistance to try and find out a little more about Cattle Egret breeding colonies in northern Queensland. I recall a significant colony at Ayr from my days in Townsville but I have only seen one reference to a possible colony north of there (at Innisfail, 25 years ago). It would be surprising if there were no colonies north of Ayr so I am hoping you might be able to recall any known sites. I appreciate all the early records of Cattle Egrets in Eastern Australia were much further south and the substantial breeding colonies well south in NSW. Roost surveys on the Tablelands showed large numbers (and those numbers seem even greater today) but none of these roosts had any breeding. However our birds do develop breeding plumage here, before they head off. I am keen to find out where they might go!

Any suggestions, data or thoughts most welcome.

If you can help please send an email to contact@birdlifetownsville.org.au and it will be forwarded to Peter.

FLYING-FOX CHILDREN'S BOOK

OUT NOW AT 'MARY WHO?' BOOKSHOP

New children's book about saving our forests! Full-colour illustrations on each page of birds, flying-foxes, trees and other marvels, showing how all living creatures are connected.

"This book is absolutely adorable. It's beautifully illustrated and is highly relevant to teaching kids and adults alike about the importance of flying-foxes for our forests." Annabel Dorrestein, ecologist.

Available at www.naturebooks.com.au, or Mary Who? bookstore at 414 Flinders St, Townsville



BEST BIRD OF THE TRIP

My sister joined Anne Lawrance and myself on a seven day trip to Iron Range. Mavis was the fourth passenger. David Mead, our guide, was very knowledgeable and very, very patient. He made sure we all had the best chance of seeing some amazing birds. Even though none of the birds was new for me, it was still really exciting to see them.

We had given up any chance of seeing the elusive Yellow-billed Kingfisher. We'd heard it several times, but it was obviously hiding out very high in the canopy. As we were leaving Iron Range, we stopped at a few places along the way for a last look for a Tropical Scrubwren, which we found. Then we trudged right into the thick of the forest as we heard a White-faced Robin.



Yellow-billed Kingfisher

As we were standing nice and still watching this lovely little bird, the Yellow-billed Kingfisher just quietly fly down to check us out. This female sat there for several minutes. None of us was game to move and a quick glance assured me that Anne, Patsy and Mavis could see her. Anne told me later that she knew the moment Patsy saw it as she heard a sharp intake of breath with a very quiet gasp. As Anne said it certainly was a 'breath-taking' sight, not just for Patsy, but all of us.

PS. We knew it was a female as the male does not have the black cap.

PPS I also managed to get a dose of scrub itch! I hadn't sprayed that morning as I hadn't anticipated crawling through the undergrowth. I expected to be travelling in the car for the day

Janet Robino

The Yellow-billed Kingfisher is a small green kingfisher with orange head and bright yellow bill, found in wet rainforest on Cape York Peninsula and in New Guinea. In flight, note uniformly colored wings (no wing spots). Adult female has small black cap. Juvenile similar to adult but with black bill. Call a rolling, descending trill, rather like call of Fan-tailed Cuckoo.

MOLONGLE

We arrived safely at the Molongle Creek caravan park after a leisurely drive from Townsville. Saw a few birds on the way down, nothing outstanding I'm afraid. First up, the sandflies are very friendly. Secondly there is a fabulous brand new Boat Club building where you book in. Meals are available Wednesday to Sunday.

Late in the afternoon we walked to the 'point' which leads down to the beach - sandy mud flats at low tide. I could see a few distant birds, terns, egrets, plovers and gulls. It was difficult to hold the binoculars steady in the strong wind. On the way back I could hear Little-bronze Cuckoos calling - I found two.



As we ate tea we heard whistling ducks fly over- at a guess they'd be Wandering Whistlers.

Up bright and early the next morning for a trek through the mangroves. The sand flies were especially friendly this morning. The birds were also friendly and numerous. It was fabulous to hear and see so many and lots of different species, Rufous Fantail and Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove being the stand outs.

This particular walk is just less than a kilometre each way. Beware of a rising tide - you can be cut off from your starting point for a few hours. Unless you take off your shoes and socks and wade through - remembering that the sandflies are very friendly!

We walked a fair bit; out to the 'point' is a short and easy walk. The two tracks we found through the mangroves are relatively easy walking. I found two Yellow White-eye this morning, yay. We followed a rough track up beside the dredged out boat ramp area. If it's low tide you can get there by walking along the sand bank - it is steep and in some area you have to go up into the mangroves. If it's high tide there is a track through the mangroves and grass - it's not well defined but easy enough to make your way along.

I've put both Birddata and ebird reports with marks showing where we birded.

All up an interesting place for birding.

Annette Sibson

AUSSIE BIRD COUNT

AUSTRALIA POST

BirdLife Australia has been at the heart of bird conservation for more than a century. One of its most popular initiatives is its annual bird count, a citizen science activity that takes place across the country during National Bird Week, each October, and engages a broad range of bird enthusiasts - newcomers and consummate twitchers alike. This growing army of bird devotees collects crucial data on species diversity and distribution, information that BirdLife Australia then uses to monitor distribution trends and to ascertain which species are thriving and which are not.

In 2022, nearly four million birds were counted by citizen scientists through the submission of 124,430 checklists. The three species whose numbers reigned supreme at the national level were the Rainbow Lorikeet, Noisy Miner and Australian Magpie. To participate, citizen scientists require only a sharp pair of eyes and access to the Aussie Bird Count app (downloadable onto smartphones) or the website (aussiebirdcount.org.au), which includes a handy bird-identification guide. Participants simply observe the bird species evident around them at a single spot for a period of 20 minutes, noting not only what birds they observe but also the number of individuals of that species that they see. In 2023, Aussie Bird Count marks its 10th annual snapshot. Citizen scientists will be counting during 16-22 October 2023.

Stamps in this issue



\$1.20 Australian Magpie

Heavy-set and powerful, the Australian Magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) is an imposing black-and-white butcherbird of around 37-44 centimetres in length. Its piercing red-brown eyes and sizable pointed beak combined with its fast flight and noisy wingbeats make for an intimidating presence, and it has something of a reputation for swooping during

breeding season. While the Australian Magpie might be a daunting bird, it is, however, also undeniably curious and highly intelligent, and its superb song is rich and melodious.

The Australian Magpie lives in complex social structures and is extremely territorial. It is widespread across the country, being common in city suburbs, townships, farmlands and bushland – wherever trees occur in combination with open areas.



\$1.20 Rainbow Lorikeet

The Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus moluccanus*) is a bright, bold and brassy character, around 26–31 centimetres in length. With plumage coloured green, blue, yellow and orange, this conspicuous and gregarious species occurs in flocks of noisy, screeching individuals, which can be seen darting and wheeling through the canopy of trees, when they are not hanging upside-down feeding on flower nectar.

The Rainbow Lorikeet is evident in treed areas throughout eastern Australia. It also occurs around Perth, where it is known for its aggressive behaviour in commandeering nesting hollows from competitors.



\$1.20 Noisy Miner

The Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*) might be relatively small at 25–28 centimetres, but what it

lacks in size it makes up for in front; this bold bird becomes very vocal when warning loudly of dangers and it will even noisily swoop pets to chase them away. The Noisy Miner has plumage that is largely grey, and a deep-yellow beak and eye-skin area. It is native to Australia and belongs to the honeyeater family, though it is often assumed to be related to the introduced Common Myna.

Usually occurring in colonies, this communal and family-oriented bird is territorial and aggressive with other bird species. While it is not uncommon in urban parkland, its preferred habitat is open woodlands and grassy forest areas right down the eastern seaboard.

BIRDLIFE WEBINAR

The recording of our recent sought-after webinar, *Birds Meet: From Newbie to Pro - Beginner's Guide to Bird Watching and ID*, with Sean Dooley is now available for you to [watch on YouTube!](#)

We apologise to those who missed out due to overwhelming demand. Even with increased capacity on Zoom, we could not host everyone who wanted to attend. We truly appreciate your support and understanding.

Feel free to watch the recording whenever you like and share it with your family and friends, or anyone who is getting interested in birding.

Stay tuned for our upcoming Birds Meet session in June. Keep your binoculars ready, as we'll be diving into a topic that will help you bring the wonders of birds even closer to home.

Dr. Holly Parsons Urban Birds Program Manager,
BirdLife Australia



Frank started to get a funny feeling that his doctor was a quack.

ANNETTE SUTTON

"DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD"

A very special event took place at the August monthly meeting – a celebration in honour of Annette Sutton being presented with the Birdlife Australia Distinguished Service Award.

The Birdlife Australia Distinguished Service Award (BDSA) is a formal acknowledgement of the enormous contribution to Birdlife Australia and its predecessor organisation made by WildBird Protectors and BirdLife Australia members. The Award was established in 2005 by Bird Observation and Conservation Australia (BOCA) as part of its Centenary to acknowledge outstanding service to BOCA --- BirdLife Australia is continuing the tradition of this Award.

Annette Sutton (Membership No: 60472) has more than met these criteria and in March 2022 Birdlife Townsville Members unanimously endorsed the nomination of Annette for her contribution over 16 years' service.

- Joined 3 April 2007 (16 years)
- Executive Committee Member from 13 September 2008 to 11 January 2014 (6 years)
- Editor/Publisher of the Birdlife Townsville newsletter "The Drongo" from May 2009 to current.
- Assistant Editor of the Birdlife Townsville publication "Wetland Birds of the Townsville Region" 2011
- Provided photographs and text for the Birdlife Townsville publications "Woodland Birds of the Burdekin Dry Tropics" 2009, "Wetland Birds of the Townsville Region" 2011, "Coastal Birds of the Burdekin Dry Tropics" 2011 and "Rainforest Birds of the Southern Wet Tropics" 2012.
- Assisted in the design and publication of several Birdlife Townsville pamphlets.
- Served for several years on the Education Sub-committee raising awareness about birds and their habitats through school visits and participating in Community activities.
- Active member of the Birdlife Townsville Photography Group
- Actively participates in Birdlife Townsville Surveys and Outings
- Always prepared to be the Guest Speaker at Birdlife Townsville monthly meetings.

The citation is as follows and can be viewed on the Birdlife Townsville website (Governance Page- Honours Board) along with a list of past recipients.

"Annette Sutton has been an active member of Birdlife Townsville since first joining in 2007 and has served on both the executive and Education Sub-committee.

In 2009 she took on the role of Editor of "The Drongo" newsletter, developing the newsletter into a modern, interesting and newsworthy publication enjoyed by all members.

As Assistant Editor of "Wetland Birds of the Townsville Region", she helped produce the second book, in our four book educational series on fifty birds and their habitat. A keen photographer, along with husband Ray, they provided many photographs used in the four books.



As a long time, competitor in the Branch's annual fund-raising competition "The Quest", Annette has travelled all over Queensland, diligently seeking out those elusive and difficult birds in the hope of reaching the magic figure of 365 species of birds observed in a calendar year and being crowned the winner – The Quest continues!!

Annette remains an active member participating and giving freely of her time and energy in helping the Branch remain a viable and active participant in the promotion and conservation of Australian birds.

This award acknowledges and recognises her long and dedicated service".

The award was presented to Annette by Birdlife Townsville President Janet Robino and members were then able to celebrate with Annette as she proudly displayed the Distinguished Service Award certificate and badge --- the celebration continued with members enjoying afternoon tea as Annette cut the cake.

Wal Threlfall Secretary Birdlife Townsville