



Wildlife Preservation Society of Caboolture Shire Inc

NEWSLETTER NO. 204 – AUGUST 2007

AUGUST



Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby

ALONG THE TRACK.....

More than eleven percent of Australia's landmass – an impressive 88 million hectares – is now protected under Australia's National Reserve System. Known as Australia's natural safety net, the network of protected areas conserves examples of Australia's unique landscapes, plants and animals for future generations, and has an estimated ecological worth of more than a trillion

dollars. The NRS is an important partnership between all levels of Government, indigenous landholders, farmers, and community and conservation groups. Seven million hectares have been added since 1997, ranging from new National Parks to private reserves managed by conservation non-profits and parts of private land protected under perpetual conservation covenants.

One of the areas within the NRS in Queensland is Mt Zero – Taravale. The Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) bought Mt Zero in 2001, adding neighbouring property Taravale two years later. The sanctuary provides an important link from the wet tropics world heritage area west to drier country. This magnificent wilderness runs from wet sclerophyll forest through to arid spinifex-covered hills, and is home to hundreds of animal and bird species including the threatened Spotted-tailed Quoll, Northern Bettong, Masked Owl and Red-chested Button-quail.

Earlier this year the Royal Geographical Society of Qld (RGSQ) brought together a multi-disciplinary team of thirty-two scientists, from a number of educational and Government institutions for the Cravens Peak Scientific Study. Their projects ranged from studying

CABBOS CORNER



Joan Fairbridge has a problem. I'll let her explain.

“Twitchers who can identify birds by their calls never cease to amaze me. I can tell a Magpie from a Kookaburra, and when I hear a flock of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos screeching in the garden I don't have to go outside to make sure. I can identify Currawongs, Silver Gulls, Blackbirds, Butcherbirds and Thrushes, especially if I can see them, but after that I am completely lost. And the worst of it is that I suspect I share this confusion with most bird identification publications.

Descriptions such as ‘a soft twitter’ are far from helpful, and ‘a sharp sit-sit when alarmed’ describes just about every bird I've ever heard. The Red-rumped Parrot has ‘a

two syllable whistle’, which means it goes ‘tweet tweet’. One is tempted to ask, ‘don't they all?’

One of the descriptions designed to prevent anyone from getting within a bull's roar of knowing a Scarlet Robin from other birds is ‘male territorial repeated’. Repeated what, you may well ask. The only time I saw a Hooded Robin, I watched it for quite a long time, waiting for it to say something. My book said it had ‘a piping whistle’ but there wasn't a peep out of it. After it had flown away I checked and discovered it is ‘usually quiet’. I must say that is probably the most accurate description I have come across.

It is frustrating, to say the least, to find that even the experts in bird call identification can never be quite certain. The White-bellied Sea-eagle for instance emits ‘a deep goose-like honking’. It would be so embarrassing for the expert who had just told a group of ecotourists ‘ah, that would be the White-bellied Sea-eagle’ and it turned out to be a goose, or even vice versa.

Numerous birds' calls are described as 'mimics other birds'. Not all Kookaburras laugh (the Blue-winged has 'a harsh cackling scream') and, contrary to popular belief, not all ducks quack. Not only is the Wood Duck actually more like a goose, it makes matters worse by calling in 'a drawn out mournful mow with a rising inflection', just to be difficult.

Of course I shall persevere, but will never be able to say with confidence, like some twitchers I know, things like, 'Shh, everyone – it's a Diamond Firetail. Hear that "plaintiff whistle that descends and then ascends", yes, definitely a Diamond Firetail.'

I'll always be wondering if it's not one of those birds that mimics other birds. Of course, I could always play safe and say 'I think it's a Speckled Warbler'. They have 'a soft musical variable song and a harsh grating twitter and they mimic other birds.' You can't go wrong with the Speckled Warbler."

Joan was writing in the latest edition of "Wingspan" – the quarterly journal of Birds Australia.

Bird calls can be frustrating, especially if you have a hearing difficulty. But as the late, great Graham Pizzey wrote "Listen repeatedly to tapes (or CDs) or to bird calls in the field. With practice you will refine the description to a memorable version. When you hear that sound again, it will be with the warm feeling of familiarity, wherever you travel."

To help us here in South East Queensland a CD has just been released called "Bird calls of the Brisbane Region". This CD, compiled by well known naturalist David Stewart, covers fifty species in the region. The compilation is helpful where each species has a number of call variations recorded. After each recorded call sequence, the species is named. However the CD is also available without the species announcement. A list is supplied in the CD with extra comments and

each species track is identified on the case back. It should prove to be a helpful addition for identifying those birds that are sometimes difficult to see. Available at \$25 plus \$1 P&P from "Nature Sound", PO Box 256, Mullumbimby NSW 2482. (Specify whether with or without voice).



Happy (aural) birding....John E Noyce

Postcard from Turkey

Sunday 17 June 2007

Here we are at the end of our first week in this lovely part of Turkey. Our son's apartment is nicely furnished with all modern amenities including a swimming pool. The sun shines every day in a clear blue sky with temperatures rising every day. At the moment 37⁰ C. Cools at night to a pleasant 23⁰ C. The downside is masses of new complexes going up all around. Have visited ancient Greek/Roman/Turkish ruins at Miletos and Priene - very interesting. Stood right at the top of Amphitheatre and gave the old thumbs down. Just like a Roman Emperor. Have seen a few new birds including White Stork, Syrian Woodpecker, Rufous Bush Robin, Pied and Isabelline Wheatear.

*... Your pommie friends,
John & Val*

PS.... My son calls me a Turkish Birdwatcher 'Mustapha Walkabout'.

(The picture side has view of Amphitheatre with a cross where John gave the order for the demise of a gladiator JEN)

CABBOS OUTING

Wed 15 August 2007

**Stoney Creek
(Private Property)**



The Rawsons (Kim & Kym) and the Littles (Brian and Robyn) are kindly allowing us to bird on their little bit of paradise for the fourth time.

Our excursions to these adjacent properties have always been productive and we are always ensured of a warm welcome even if the weather is not as accommodating. Which brings me to the meeting place.

Meet at Cruice Park at 8am. Bring morning tea, slip, slop, slap, table and/or chairs. Wet-weather gear if forecast (we hope).

Directions: Take D'Aguilar Highway through Caboolture to Woodford. After Woodford turn right into Kilcoy/Beerwah Road. Cruice Park is on left (UBD Map 33 B16).

.... John E Noyce

REPORT - CABBOS OUTING

Wednesday 20 June 2007

MT GLORIOUS

Did I pick a bad day! With the wind howling and the barometer falling twelve members and two visitors met at the Maiala Day Use Area to see if there were any birds insane enough to come out to be watched. We found 25 escapees from the asylum.

Thought it might be less blowy in the rainforest. Wrong again. We traversed the Circuit Track and the front three or four saw most of the birds. Wonga Pigeon was flushed and a sighting of a Rufous-tailed Thrush were some highlights as was the Brown Cuckoo-dove feeding on the track. Almost had to kick him out of the way. White-browed and Large Billed Scrubwrens were noted along with Brown Gerygone and Brown Thornbill. Interesting to note that Pale Yellow Robins were extremely common. We even saw one outside the rainforest usurping the Eastern Yellow Robin's domain. While walking up the hill for morning tea, after the walk, a number of female Satin Bowerbirds were seen feeding on berries. There was at least one immature male with them.

After morning tea we started on the Green Falls Track. T'was good walking weather. Little Shrike-thrush was noted and a female Logrunner exploded out from under the walkway followed almost immediately by the male. Most had good views of this pair only metres from the Green Falls Lookout. Of course the falls were not falling.

Back at the Day Use Area we had a quick bird count before seven of us decided to leave our salads and sandwiches in the eskies and hightail it to the Maiala Tearooms for a warm lunch. (Lady said it was 4 degrees outside). But before we could jump into our cars, Philip, Barbara's son-in-law, spotted the bird of the day. A most immaculately clothed male Rose Robin. Some saw it.

We may have been lucky getting out walks in too as two NP Rangers talked to us and said they were going around closing the walks due to the high wind. Although the weather was abysmal we made up for it with warm camaraderie. Pleasure to welcome Carol and Philip, visitors from near Nambucca Heads. They hope to go to the snow in July. This day certainly got close to it.

..... John E Noyce

REPORT
CABBOS OUTING
Wednesday 18 July 2007
SHEEPSTATION CREEK
CONSERVATION PARK
& ROCKSBERG

I really did not know what to expect at Sheepstation Creek Conservation Park. It's a dry sclerophyll forest that supports species like the Fuscous Honeyeater in numbers compared to other areas of the Shire where they are met with only intermittently. And what with the very dry weather we have been having our bird count could be low in species and numbers. But for the fourteen members who participated in this outing the birds were there.

As we walked along the tracks we noted that there was a fair amount of water in the tributaries to Sheepstation Creek and even, in one spot, a large puddle. This water has drawn a good bird assemblage to the park.

At the Phelp's Road entrance Ruth was greeted by a pair of Eastern Yellow Robins and just within the park we were all transfixed by the perambulations of a female Rose Robin. White-throated Treecreepers were numerous as were the resident Fuscous Honeyeaters, now in breeding plumage. Good views were had of both. Both the Pardalotes for the area were heard

and seen and the puddle mentioned earlier gave us great views of White-throated, White-naped, Scarlet, Yellow-faced and Fuscous Honeyeater as they came to drink. At least two Skrike-tits were picking at the bark of the gums and we had a fleeting glimpse of a Square-tailed Kite as it flew low over the canopy. The "doodle-doo" of Peaceful Doves rang out and we saw two Little Lorikeets erupt from a tree hollow. A lone koala was seen. It turned out to be a very good morning after the very cool start and convoluted detour on back roads to get there. (There's major road works on Caboolture River Road). 30 species recorded.

From there it was on to the end of the road where there are tables in a park near to the Caboolture River (north branch).

After morning tea we walked to the end of the road then back to the causeway. Right at the end we had good views of at least two Dusky Wood-swallows feeding near the ground in a paddock. Don't find them that often in the Shire. A Fantailed Cuckoo gave us a good look as it flew from post to post then in trees near the road.

The first couple of cars to arrive reported a male Rose Robin. He stayed around and we had excellent views of him as he fed from fence to ground or tree to ground.

A couple of females were seen as well. More Golden Whistlers were seen and a lone Grey Shrike-thrush turned up as well. The Rainbow Bee-eaters were resplendent in the sun.

It was a very pleasant morning's birding with the grand total at 50.

It has been years since so many Rose Robins have been seen in winter. Could it be put down to the extreme cold conditions we are experiencing at this time?

.... John E Noyce



PROJECTED SEPTEMBER CABBOS OUTING SHADOWS BEFORE

We will be visiting a private property at Mt Kilcoy on Wednesday 19 September.

Due to the distance Hazel and I will be travelling we have decided to book into the Kilcoy Motel (54220092) for the night of Tuesday 18th. We intend to book in between 1200 and 1300 hours and spend the afternoon and early evening at Peach Trees State Forest Park, birding. We will be having a BBQ dinner at the park. Anybody wish to join us? The other motel in town is the Kilcoy Gardens Motor Inn (54971100) on the western side.

Full details as to the outing to Mt Kilcoy will be in the September newsletter.

.... John E Noyce

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Annual General Meeting – Saturday 1 September

All positions on the executive committee will be vacant. Nominations most welcome. Come along and have your say in what direction you would like our group to take in the coming year, and what activities you would like planned or social outings you would be interested in. Get involved, have some fun and make it YOUR group!

WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF CABOOLTURE SHIRE INC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2007 NOMINATION FORM

I, _____ nominate _____
for the position of _____ Signed _____
Seconded by _____ Signed _____

PLEASE NOTE: Only financial members of the society are eligible to vote.