

Contact Call

Birders of North Queensland

1 December 1994 □ Issue: Cassowary

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INAUGURAL GENERAL MEETING

This is the first *Contact Call*, the occasional newsletter of the newly formed North Queensland chapter of the RAOU, for which the title *Birders of North Queensland* (BNQ) has been chosen by popular vote. Each newsletter will be named for a bird on the North Queensland list in systematic order - hence we appropriately begin with this, the Cassowary edition.

There were two characteristics of the Inaugural General Meeting at Broadwater State Forest Park on

Saturday 19 November, which fill me with great optimism for a dynamic future for BNQ. First is the obvious enjoyment of those present in simply being together and sharing jokes, bird stories, victuals and the odd noggin. Second is the enthusiasm to participate in the Projects which were suggested and discussed for the future. These offer the opportunity to put the records in our notebooks to a productive use and to direct at least some of our birding activities towards improving the knowledge and management of birds in our region.

Gouldian Finch

Klaus Uhlenhut has offered to coordinate activities designed to help Peter Dostine and ANCA assemble past records on this species and monitor populations in currently known sites. If you are interested in participating contact Klaus at Box 133, Silkwood, Qld, 4856.

Database of Bird Species of Special Interest

Stephen Garnett suggested that we should maintain a database of all sightings of a limited number of species. The severe restriction on species is to keep the project within manageable proportions. The objective is to promote their conservation and document changes in population size or distribution. The provisional list of species is Cattle Egret, (expanding rapidly), Star Finch, Pictorella Mannikin, Crimson Finch (white-bellied form), Brown Treecreeper (northern sub-spp.),

Black-chinned Honeyeater, Squatter Pigeon (southern sub-spp.) Black-throated Finch (southern sub-spp.), Yellow Chat, Painted Snipe, Masked Owl and Rufous Owl. Suggestions for additions or deletions will be welcome.

National Parks Bird Lists and Information Leaflets

Offer to DEH to visit and compile bird lists and information for their new National Parks (and update existing lists for older Parks).

Local Campouts

At the discretion of local Committee representatives, we will encourage campouts through the year in different areas. These will be designed principally for local people although all members will be welcome.

Local Bird Information Leaflets

Members are encouraged to prepare information on local birds for the education of local people (particularly the youth) and visitors. Promoting bird awareness locally can help build low-impact tourism in your area and be a conservation plus if birds are seen as a local asset in aesthetic and economic terms.

All these activities are designed to enhance members enjoyment of birding, not to be a burden. I look forward to more fun together and a sense of doing something worthwhile. If you have any suggestions for how the group should operate please contact the Executive Committee.
Graham Harrington

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher

Marion Crouther would be grateful for any observations members may already have or anything of interest that occurs. The birds arrive in our area in November each year and leave again after breeding about April. Where they go and what track they take are not known in detail. It is believed that they migrate to Papua New Guinea. It has been suggested that the birds that breed around Mackay migrate to a different part of PNG from birds that breed in the northern parts of BNQs area and use a different migration route. Any observations will be most welcome. Do you know when they arrive in your area, do they breed there, do they breed in live termitaria, when do they leave, etc. Marion's address is C/- Post Office, Dalrymple Heights, Qld, 4757 or phone number (079) 584 613.

Any other members seeking information for their own studies are welcome to use *Contact Call*.

UNSIGHTLY MUD TO SOME, BUT A MECCA FOR BIRDERS - CAIRNS MUDFLATS UNDER THREAT AGAIN

Once again, the Cairns mudflats are under threat. Plans have been proposed for a marina and reclamation of an extensive area of the mudflats. BNQ has written to the Mayor of Cairns and the Chief Executive Officer of the Cairns City Council protesting about any destruction of this important habitat, and pointing out that the Esplanade, unsightly mud to some, is an internationally renowned destination for ornithologists.

Every letter helps so if you have ever enjoyed the pleasure of birding along The Esplanade (or even if you haven't yet but intend to) please write to Kevin Byrne, Mayor of Cairns and the Chief Executive Officer, both c/- Cairns City Council, PO Box 359, Cairns, Qld, 4870.

BNQ CALENDAR

In *Contact Call* we hope next year to give more details of events organised by other groups throughout Nth Qld. Visitors are always welcome. In the meantime here are some contact numbers:

BOCA Cairns - holds monthly meetings and outings. Phone Harvey Rich (070) 562 007 or Elinor Duignam (070) 556 139.

BOCA Mackay/Whitsunday - organises monthly surveys and other excursions. Phone Leanne Jorgensen (079) 592 184.

BOCA Townsville - holds monthly meetings on Saturdays at 2.00pm at 161 Bamford Lane, Kirwan. Phone Ian Clayton (077) 891 306 for further details and dates of outings.

Lake Eacham Birdwalks - are held bi-monthly on Sunday mornings, 9.00-11.30am. Phone the Ranger Station (070) 953 768.

North Qld Field Naturalists' Club - meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Cairns Education Centre and holds outings on the Sunday before the meeting. Phone Dawn Magarry (070) 531 183.

WPSQ Townsville meets every 3rd Wednesday at 8.00pm at Ignatius Park College, Ross River Road, Cranbrook, with outings the following Sunday. Talks often have a bird bias. Phone Jo Wieneke (077) 714 707.

OUR LOGO - a PIP (or PIMP)

At the meeting it was decided to use the Pied Imperial-Pigeon, to use the latest nomenclature), as our logo. This beautiful bird is found throughout the area from Mackay to Cape York. It has benefited from direct conservation efforts in the past and is easily reproduced in black and white. Thanks go to Kate Gorringe-Smith who found the time, while editing the December *Wingspan*, to design the logo.

Contributions please for the next *Contact Call* in March.

See you at the Easter Campout!!



"Then just as they've made a positive identification you make a call like a bald eagle."