



# Contact Call



Newsletter of the Birds Australia  
North Queensland Group  
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## The year unfolds ...

September 2007  
Issue: Grey Falcon



The latest meeting of the Birds Australia North Queensland Committee was held in Cardwell (a good central location for our widely dispersed committee members) on Saturday September 8. This was the first regular meeting we have had since Ivor Preston took over from Helen McLaughlin as Secretary. Ivor did a great job in organising the business and agenda for the meeting. Thanks to him. In between meetings, committee members have been able to keep in touch with one another via an email group. This has been a very handy way of discussing issues that arise and keeping one another informed between meetings. At our most recent face-to-face meeting the committee discussed several conservation issues relevant to our region. These included the crane count planned for October 6 and the work of the Black-throated Finch Recovery Team and its waterhole count planned for October 27-28. Planned urban expansion in the Townsville region has required considerable attention from the recovery team and the team is now represented on a Committee providing advice in relation to a Trust Fund for the conservation of Black-throated Finches, for which the Burdekin Dry Tropics Board is the Trustee. A conservation issue of a different sort is attempting to address the threats posed to birds by agricultural fencing. More information on this can be found at [www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com).

The BANQ committee also discussed a role that BANQ can play in monitoring designated IBAs (Important Bird Areas). This is an evolving focus that has the potential to make some of our bird-watching effort more strategic. There are a number of issues still to be 'ironed out' as far as the monitoring of IBAs is concerned. This issue also came up during discussion of the BANQ Strategic Plan that the committee is also working on.

Helen McLaughlin has informed the committee that she finds it necessary to finish her term as editor of Contact Call. Thank you, Helen, for your diligence and your professional approach to producing the newsletter. Your boots will be hard to fill. As for the birds themselves I have not had a great deal of time to get out. I have been intrigued by the Pied Currawongs I have seen in Townsville in recent weeks. While they are a regular feature on Magnetic Island, in Townsville they are sparse at best. Does this mean anything? Who knows? Is it only a matter of time before they learn that a tropical city can provide a regular food supply as do southern cities, with the supposed flow-on effects on smaller birds... but my favourite recent sighting was a Black-breasted Buzzard sharing a road killed wallaby with a Wedge-tailed Eagle and several Whistling Kites, and, what is more, unlike the other species, it did not take flight... which is what I must do now.

*Till next time, Tony Grice, Convenor*

## BA North Queensland Group—Events Calendar Sept 2007 - Mar 2008

### October 2007

#### Saturday 6th October - Annual Crane Count

The annual BANQG research activity, across the Atherton Tableland, Upper Herbert, Townsville - Giru, Ingham, Gulf Plains and Cape York. Email Elinor at [cranesnorth@austarnet.com.au](mailto:cranesnorth@austarnet.com.au) and check out <http://ozcranes.net> for details.

#### Sunday 21st October - Birding for Beginners

We have invited the general public to attend a weekend course on birding identification. Based at the Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre the day will be very informative. Details on page 5. Please check the website for updates. Any members able to assist that day please contact Alan Gillanders on (07) 4095 3784.

#### Saturday 27th October - Yungaburra markets

BANQG needs helpers at Yungaburra Markets between 7am and midday or anytime in between, phone Virginia Simmonds 4095 8302 or email (note the dots) [p.andv.simmonds@bigpond.com](mailto:p.andv.simmonds@bigpond.com).

#### Saturday and Sunday 27-28th October - Black-throated Finch Waterhole Survey, Townsville Coastal Plain

Join the Recovery Team in surveying key habitat areas around Townsville in the search of the BTF. Contact Tony Grice a/h (07) 4725 7201.

### November 2007

**Saturday 10th November - Pied Imperial Pigeon count.** Come and join us for this amazing experience at Mission Beach. Details on page 5. Please check the website.

#### Saturday 17 & Sunday 18th November - BANQ Christmas Park and High Altitude Bird Survey, Paluma

Dinner at Hidden Valley Cabins with surveys on Sunday. Contact Elna Kerswell on (07) 4723 7019. Details on page 5. Please check the website for updates.

#### Sunday 2nd December - BANQ Christmas Party, Cairns

Another party has been arranged for Cairns at Centenary Lakes. Contact Harry Cassidy on (07) 4057 5278. Details on page 5. Please check the website for updates.

### Ones for the 2008 Diary

**26-28 January. Australia Day Weekend at Kingfisher Park, Julatten.** Del Richards will take us out to the Mitchell River on Hurricane Road. Book accommodation with Kingfisher Park directly.

**30 March—Wave the Waders Goodbye, Cairns Esplanade.** Meet at 4:30pm. Leader: Alan Gillanders 4095 3784.

*Check the website for more details*

### Inside this issue:

- *Annual Crane Count*
- *Black-throated Finch update and survey*
- *Outing for Southern Tablelands*
- *Birding for Beginners*
- *2007 Pied Imperial Pigeon count*
- *Christmas party in Cairns*
- *2008 Calendar Offer*
- *Around the region: Cardwell excursion, tourism, Committee meeting*
- *Interesting Sightings*

The **Grey Falcon** (*Falco hypoleucos*), white or pale underparts. The **Grey** a wingspan of 86-97cm. In flight, the black grey upperparts and pale underparts. When shouldered and short-legged, with striking orange-yellow cere, eye-ring and feet. The **Grey Falcon** is a rarely seen, solitary desert falcon, characteristic of shrubland, grassland and wooded watercourses. The **Grey Falcon** is listed as Rare in Queensland.

## Grey Falcon

When

as the name suggests, has **Falcon** is 33-43cm long with wing tips contrast with the perched, it appears broad-shouldered and short-legged, with striking orange-yellow cere, eye-ring and feet. The **Grey Falcon** is a rarely seen, solitary desert falcon, characteristic of shrubland, grassland and wooded watercourses. The **Grey Falcon** is listed as Rare in Queensland.



Grey Falcon  
Bevly Hughes  
© Birds Australia 2003

## 2007-2008 BANQG Committee and Contacts

### Executive Committee

**Convener**—Tony Grice (07) 4725 7201

Email: [tony.grice@csiro.au](mailto:tony.grice@csiro.au)

**Deputy Convener**—Alan Gillanders (07) 4095 3784

Email: [alan@alanswildlifetours.com.au](mailto:alan@alanswildlifetours.com.au)

**Secretary**—Ivor Preston (07) 4723 2723

Email: [birdsaustralia@birdsaustralianq.org](mailto:birdsaustralia@birdsaustralianq.org)

**Treasurer**—Harry Cassidy (07) 4057 5278

Email: [harrycass40@hotmail.com](mailto:harrycass40@hotmail.com)

### Committee members

Ian Montgomery (Townsville) Elinor Scambler (Atherton)  
Karen Doyle (Townsville) Elna Kerswell (Townsville)

### Committee-elected Positions

**Conservation Officers**—Graham Harrington (northern) & Jo Wieneke (southern)

**Newsletter Editor**—Helen McLaughlin

**IBA Coordinators**—Graham Harrington & Alastair Freeman



### Regional Contacts

**Townsville:** Jo Wieneke Ph: 4771 4707

Email: [bowerbird07@bigpond.com](mailto:bowerbird07@bigpond.com)

**Cairns:** Harry Cassidy Ph: 4057 5278

Email: [harrycass40@hotmail.com](mailto:harrycass40@hotmail.com)

**Atherton Tableland:** Alan Gillanders Ph: 4095 3784

Email: [spotlighting@cyberwizards.com.au](mailto:spotlighting@cyberwizards.com.au)

**Mossman / Daintree:** Del Richards Ph: 4094 1199

Email: [info@finefeathertours.com.au](mailto:info@finefeathertours.com.au)

**Cape York:** Sue Gould Ph: 4069 7585

Email: [susanfgould@yahoo.com](mailto:susanfgould@yahoo.com)

**Mount Isa:** Bob Forsyth Ph: 4743 3210

Email: [Isabirds@bigpond.net.au](mailto:Isabirds@bigpond.net.au)

### Project Contacts

**Black-throated Finch** Tony Grice 4725 7201

**Crane Count** Elinor Scambler 4095 3296

Email: [dacelo@austarnet.com.au](mailto:dacelo@austarnet.com.au)

**Townsville Egret & Ibis Count** Jo Wieneke 4771 4707

**Cape York Atlas** Graham Harrington 4096 5051

Email: [riflebird@austarnet.com.au](mailto:riflebird@austarnet.com.au)

## Version 2 of **Birdata** now available on the web

**B**irdata is Birds Australia's web application for entering and viewing data, particularly the Atlas of Australian Birds. The first change you will notice is the homepage. We have introduced a weekly article to highlight aspects of the Atlas with case studies of species and places of interest. Mapping is improved throughout the site with small scale bird distributions now shown using 10 minute grid cells for new Atlas data. Data from the first Atlas is also available in 1 degree grid cells. Users can also view Atlas survey effort in each cell for both of the Atlas datasets. In the "maps+lists" section, we have improved the way users search for bird species, added images for all species, and there are links to Birds in Backyards species profiles. We have also

added new background map layers including parks and reserves, IBRA bioregions, average annual rainfall, and a graticule showing latitude and longitude. In the data entry section, you can now create lists of your favourite survey sites or group sites together to simplify your data. Species lists are available for every one of your Atlas sites. Birdata 2 is a huge improvement over the original version and we hope you enjoy exploring its features. The site works best with the Firefox browser which is a free download from <http://www.mozilla.org>. In case you have forgotten, the website is <http://www.birdata.com.au> and your default login details are: username: *membership number* password: *Surname*  
**Regards Cameron Williams & Andrew Silcocks**

## Birds Australia Membership

Subscriptions: \$75 Single \$55 Single Concession \$119 Family \$96 Family Concession Library \$55

This includes membership of the national organisation plus membership of our regional group,

**Birds Australia—North Queensland Group.**

Members also receive four issues of the full-colour bird magazine *Wingspan* and four issues of *Contact Call*, the BA-NQG newsletter.

Membership forms are available from the Secretary or send subscriptions directly to:

Birds Australia, 415 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn East, Victoria 3123

You can now join directly through our web site: [www.birdsaustralia.com.au](http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au).

Check out the website for local and national events.



## The Annual Nth Qld Crane Count - Saturday 6th October 2007

Australia's two cranes, the Brolga and rarer Sarus Crane, coexist well with many kinds of agriculture provided wetlands are protected. BANQG Crane Counts contribute more every year to our knowledge about our cranes, and how best to integrate their lifestyles with pastoral and other production environments.

The annual BANQG survey activity covers the Atherton Tableland, Upper Herbert, Townsville-Giru, Ingham, Gulf country and Cape York.

North Queensland residents and visitors are invited to join BANQG members and count Brolgas and Sarus Cranes as they fly in to roost for the night, at many wetland locations.

To join **Atherton Tableland teams**: meet at Hasties Swamp Bird Hide Atherton 3:30 pm. Email Elinor Scambler [cranesnorth@austarnet.com.au](mailto:cranesnorth@austarnet.com.au) or phone (07)

4095 3296 before 8pm.

To join the **Townsville-Giru teams**: contact Jo Wieneke email [howerbird07@bigpond.com](mailto:howerbird07@bigpond.com) or phone (07) 4771 4707 More info and forms can be found at either BANQG website: [www.birdsaustralianq.org](http://www.birdsaustralianq.org) or <http://ozcranes.net/>

For more information about research and conservation for Australia's Brolgas and Sarus Cranes, explore the Ozcranes (Australian Crane Network) website. Includes photographs, articles, reports on BANQG Crane Counts, latest research and conservation reports.

**Australian Crane Network**  
PO Box 59  
Atherton Qld 4883



## Black-throated Finch Annual Waterhole Survey on 27-28 Oct 2007

The southern sub-species of the **Black-throated Finch** is listed as Endangered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and its legislative status in Queensland under the *Nature Conservation Act 1994* (NCA) is currently being revised. Whereas the species used to occur as far south as northern New South Wales, there have been no records from south of Rockhampton since the early 1990s. The sub-species can still be found in the Clermont-Charter Towers area, though the size of those populations is unknown. To the best of our knowledge, the only substantial coastal population that survives is that centred on the Townsville Coastal Plain. The Black-throated Finch Recovery Team (BTFRT) is working to address the conservation needs of this bird.



One of the very significant threats to the 'Townsville' population of the **Black-throated Finch** is from urban expansion. Whereas the species seems to do quite well on some pastoral lands of the area, unlike some other finch species, it is not found in urban settings. However, urban developments are planned for extensive areas around Townsville, including in the poplar gum (*Eucalyptus platyphylla*) and associated woodlands that make up the finch's habitat.

One recent 'development' (excuse the pun) in relation to the Townsville **Black-throated Finch** is a consequence of negotiations between developers and the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Water over a large area of habitat north of the

Bohle River. This has led to the establishment of a **Black-throated Finch** Trust which is to be managed by Burdekin Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management (BDTNRM). BDTNRM has established an advisory committee, including representation from the BTFRT to help guide the use of trust funds.



The area of the planned Rocky Springs development south of Townsville also includes habitat for **Black-throated Finch** and other threatened species. The referral under the EPBC Act in relation to this development can be accessed at [http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/epbc/epbc\\_ap.pl?name=current\\_referral\\_detail&proposal\\_id=3574](http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/epbc/epbc_ap.pl?name=current_referral_detail&proposal_id=3574).

The Recovery Team has responded to this referral in relation to likely impacts of the development for local **Black-throated Finch** populations and has had discussions with the developers.

The 'Townsville' population of the southern **Black-throated Finch** is an important one and yet it is likely to come up against increasing pressure from changes in land use. A carefully thought-out and implemented regional strategy is required to keep this bird in the Townsville landscape.

One of the main activities of the BTFRT has been its annual waterhole count. The next count is scheduled for **Saturday and Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October**. This year we are focussing again on some core areas where BTF's are known to occur, while also taking in a few new waterholes where we hope BTF's might come in to drink. If you are keen to help out with the annual count please contact Phil Bourke of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service so that the Volunteer Registration Forms can be sent to you. These need to be returned by mail or fax, not email, to Phil ASAP. Once we have the list of volunteers, more detailed information regarding the survey will be sent.

**Phil Bourke, QPWS, Marlow Street, PO Box 5597, Townsville Qld 4810 or phone (07) 4796 7790.**

Please note: If you also want to participate in this years Birds Queensland Twitchathon (that is on the same weekend) details are on their website: [www.birdsqueensland.org.au/twitch2007.html](http://www.birdsqueensland.org.au/twitch2007.html).

*Editors footnote: The Australian Government recently decided that the proposed Rocky Springs Community near Townsville will be a controlled action under the EPBC Act. They have decided that the project is likely to have a significant impact on World Heritage properties, National Heritage places, wetlands of international importance, listed threatened species and communities and listed migratory species. The project will require assessment and approval under the EPBC Act before it can proceed. The community will be able to comment on the draft Terms of Reference for the Environmental Impact Statement very soon.*

## BANQ Outing to Southern Atherton Tablelands

What a magic day! Glorious weather great company and the birding was fantastic. The list below is my list of the day from when I picked up my new friends Celeste and John until I dropped them off in Yungaburra. It shows 96 species seen and another 10 heard. I must point out that it was not a vigorous day of mad twitching but a relaxed journey and stroll through some beautiful high altitude rainforest, tall wet sclerophyll forest and some eucalypt woodland. Of course there was open farming country as well.

Four members and two guests travelled in two cars making for a compact, sociable group. The list of apologies was as long as those attending. From Yungaburra we drove via Bromfield Swamp. Here we saw both species of cranes and a **Collared Sparrowhawk**. Before reaching the meeting place at Mount Hypipamee we added **Crimson Rosella** to an expanding list.

**Grey-headed Robins** and **Brush-turkeys** greeted us in the picnic area and a **Golden Bowerbird** shone overhead. A surprise here was two young **Square-tailed Kites**. After a walk to the crater we moved to some high altitude forest with emergent Blue Kauri. The highlights here were **Mountain Thornbill** and a male **Grey Goshawk** which posed on an exposed branch. Heading south we added more rainforest and eucalypt species to the list. Lunch was eaten in Ravenshoe. At Kaban we visited a farm dam and the State forest. An adult **Square-tailed Kite** circled us and the nearby trees for about ten minutes. **White-bellied Sea-Eagles** had two well developed young in the nest and the dad came in while we were not watching. One of the most remarkable things of the day was the quality of the sightings. The birds were close and cooperative. An exception to this was the **Little Lorikeets** which stayed hidden except for dashing raids across our field of view and sometime only heard. Identification was made only because they were so small and there was the absence of any warm colour under the wing. Back in Yungaburra as we were shifting items between cars a pair of **Pacific Bazas** was seen as they searched a tree for tucker. One was observed to eat a green tree frog. Fourteen raptors, what a great day!



Square-tailed Kite  
Kevin Bartram  
© Birds Australia 2003

*Alan Gillanders, Yungaburra*

## THE Final List...

- |                         |                                 |                                |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Australian Brush-turkey | Masked Lapwing                  | Brown Honeyeater               |
| Black Swan              | <i>Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)</i> | Pale-yellow Robin              |
| Australian Wood Duck    | White-headed Pigeon             | Eastern Yellow Robin           |
| Cotton Pygmy-goose      | Spotted Turtle-Dove             | Grey-headed Robin              |
| Pacific Black Duck      | Brown Cuckoo-Dove               | Rufous Whistler                |
| Hardhead                | Emerald Dove                    | Magpie-lark                    |
| Australasian Grebe      | Crested Pigeon                  | Grey Fantail                   |
| Darter                  | Peaceful Dove                   | Willie Wagtail                 |
| Little Pied Cormorant   | Bar-shouldered Dove             | Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike      |
| Little Black Cormorant  | Topknot Pigeon                  | White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike    |
| White-faced Heron       | Rainbow Lorikeet                | Varied Triller                 |
| Cattle Egret            | Scaly-breasted Lorikeet         | Grey Butcherbird               |
| Great Egret             | Little Lorikeet                 | Pied Butcherbird               |
| Intermediate Egret      | Australian King Parrot          | Australian Magpie              |
| Nankeen Night Heron     | Crimson Rosella                 | Pied Currawong                 |
| Australian White Ibis   | Pale-headed Rosella             | Torresian Crow                 |
| Straw-necked Ibis       | Brush Cuckoo                    | Spotted Catbird                |
| Pacific Baza            | White-rumped Swiflet            | Golden Bowerbird               |
| Black-shouldered Kite   | Laughing Kookaburra             | Chestnut-breasted Mannikin     |
| Square-tailed Kite      | Forest Kingfisher               | Red-browed Finch               |
| Black Kite              | White-throated Treecreeper      | Mistletoe Bird                 |
| Whistling Kite          | Brown Treecreeper               | Welcome Swallow                |
| White-bellied Sea-Eagle | Red-backed Fairy-wren           | Fairy Martin                   |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle      | Striated Pardalote              | Richard's Pipit                |
| Spotted Harrier         | Australian Fernwren             | Tawny Grassbird                |
| Swamp Harrier           | Large-Billed Scrubwren          | Common Myna                    |
| Brown Goshawk           | Brown Gerygone                  | <b>Heard Only</b>              |
| Grey Goshawk            | Mountain Thornbill              | <i>Orange-Footed Scrubfowl</i> |
| Collared Sparrowhawk    | Noisy Friarbird                 | <i>Australian King Parrot</i>  |
| Brown Falcon            | Noisy Miner                     | <i>Scarlet Honeyeater</i>      |
| Nankeen Kestrel         | Lewin's Honeyeater              | <i>Victoria's Riflebird</i>    |
| Sarus Crane             | Bridled Honeyeater              | <i>Chowchilla</i>              |
| Brolga                  | Yellow-faced Honeyeater         | <i>Eastern Whipbird</i>        |
| Buff-banded Rail        | Fuscous Honeyeater              | <i>Olive-Backed Oriole</i>     |
| Purple Swamphen         | Eastern Spinebill               | <i>Golden-headed Cisticola</i> |

## Birding for Beginners on the Atherton Tablelands - 21st October



**F**or a couple of reasons I am changing the date of Birding for Beginners to **Sunday 21st October**. Registrations from 7:30 to 7:45am with a mid afternoon finish. There will be expert tuition in bird identification in a supportive style. Come along and practise of new skills and a chance to share knowledge and experiences. Light lunch, tea, coffee, juice and snacks will be provided. Binoculars will be available for use on the day. Binoculars and telescopes available for testing and purchase. Opportunities to join future bird excursions. The cost includes a years membership to Birds Australia, a year's subscription to Wingspan and the north Queensland newsletter Contact Call. The price is only \$95 single, \$160 family, \$75 concession and \$20 for current Birds Australia members. Registration and inquiries to Alan Gillanders (07) 4095 3784 or email Alan on [alan@alanswildlifetours.com.au](mailto:alan@alanswildlifetours.com.au) by 16th October. It would be appreciated if members attending could assist with many small tasks on the day and for mentoring beginners

The venue is the Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre, Black Gully Road, Tinaroo. Check out Google Maps <http://maps.google.com.au/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Tinaroo+Environmental+education+centre&ie=UTF8&ll=17.181467,145.553055&spn=0.03321,0.057163&z=14&om=1>

*Alan Gillanders, Yungaburra*

## Pied Imperial Pigeon Counts - 10th November

**I**n 1965 Margaret and Arthur Thorsborne started regular counts of **Pied Imperial Pigeons** on North Brook Island after finding shooters killing large numbers of the birds. Since then the birds have been protected by law and now with the help of QPWS, counts have been organised in at least November and December every year and numbers have increased from several thousand to well over 30,000.

In the 80's John Winter organised counters from Magnetic Is, north to Port Douglas to count or estimate the number of pigeons in their areas. There are large numbers of **Pied Imperial Pigeons** nesting on the Barnard Islands (between Mission Beach and Mourilyan), about which there is very little information. It is not known whether the birds which feed in the Mission Beach area nest and roost on the Family Group, the Brook Islands or the Barnard Islands. John has suggested that a useful group project would be to watch and count from a few locations on either side of Clump Point to determine the approximate numbers of

pigeons and which direction they are heading.

It is proposed that this will take place on **Saturday 10th November**. We will base ourselves at a caravan park at Mission Beach, arriving for lunch and instructions then moving to count sites till dusk and returning with the results for a social evening and to camp for the night. Birding will also be organised for Sunday morning. If you would like to be involved please contact Jo Wieneke, (07) 4771 4707, email [bowerbird07@bigpond.com](mailto:bowerbird07@bigpond.com) or check the BANQG website [www.birdsaustralianq.org](http://www.birdsaustralianq.org) for further details. Watching hundreds of pigeons fly back to the islands at sunset then returning at dawn is a spectacular and unforgettable sight.



Pied Imperial Pigeon  
Ian Hance  
© Birds Australia 2003

*Jo Wieneke, Townsville*



This year BANQ is having two Christmas Parties: the **Southern North Queenslanders** are having a dinner at the **Hidden Valley Cabins** on **Saturday 25th November** together with a bird outing on the Sunday to the grandis forest, Birthday Creek Falls and Lake Paluma. Members are to meet at the cabins on Saturday at 5:30pm and are to book accommodation asap with Hidden Valley Cabins via their website [www.hiddenvalleycabins.com.au](http://www.hiddenvalleycabins.com.au). Our **Northern members** will meet the Cairns Birding Group at 6:30am for a morning walk followed by lunch at the Centenary Lakes section of the **Cairns Botanic Gardens** (Greenslopes Street) on **Sunday 2nd December 2007**. Please bring a plate. Further details and contacts are available from our website.

## Royal Society of Tasmania 2008 Calendar



**T**he Royal Society of Tasmania 2008 Calendar featuring a series of superb Australian bird prints by John and Elizabeth Gould. The artworks are from the Royal Society of Tasmania collection, which is housed within the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the University of Tasmania Library. The stunning images including e.g. the Rainbow Pitta, Yellow Wattlebird, Gouldian Finch, Crested Shrike tit and Wedge-tailed Eagle, are taken from the Society's volumes of Gould's "Birds of Australia". Funds raised will assist the Society's activities of supporting and promoting science. Retail price: \$19.95. Calendar size: 297 mm high x 220 mm wide. Calendars may be purchased for \$18.00 directly from reception at the Tasmanian museum and Art gallery, 19 Davey Street, Hobart or ordered by post for \$20.00 per copy (including postage and handling) by sending a cheque or money order with your name, address, phone, and the number of calendars ordered to: The Royal Society of Tasmania GPO Box 1166, Hobart TAs 7001. Please send a cheque or money order (sorry, we cannot accept credit cards).

**Special discount price for orders of 10 or more: \$15.00 per copy (plus \$2.00 postage and handling per copy if applicable). Please phone (03) 6211 4177 or email [royal.society@tmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:royal.society@tmag.tas.gov.au) for further information**

## Around the region...

### Birds Australia Excursion Cardwell to Kennedy

Starting from Cardwell Rainforest and Reef Information Centre, six members drove to Glenbora Waterhole, a site of significance to the indigenous people of the area and in early Caucasian settlement. This site is situated in a newly replanted forestry plantation but a corridor is to be planted to link it to other remnant vegetation to the north and south. The waterhole is surrounded by rainforest with paperbarks and Moreton Bay Ash. There are a few palms present and the canopy is closed in places. There is natural regeneration occurring around the edges and within the forest. Weeds under the closed canopy were not obvious but in the disturbed areas weed invasion is significant. It grows on an alluvium which shows signs of water logging in the wet. The morning was cool but soon warmed up and was hot in the sun by mid day.

White-necked Heron  
White-faced Heron  
Darter  
Australian White Ibis  
Peaceful Dove  
Bar-shouldered Dove  
Wompoo Fruit-Dove  
White-rumped Swiflet  
Forest Kingfisher  
Lovely Fairy-wren  
Large-Billed Gerygone  
Yellow-spotted Honeyeater

Graceful Honeyeater  
White-throated Honeyeater  
Dusky Honeyeater  
Yellow Honeyeater  
Pale-yellow Robin  
Grey Whistler  
Rufous Whistler  
Little Shrike-thrush  
Spectacled Monarch  
Shining Flycatcher  
Leaden Flycatcher  
Grey Fantail



White-faced Heron  
Debbie Sullivan  
© Birds Australia 2003

Northern Fantail  
Willie Wagtail  
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike  
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike  
Cicadabird  
Varied Triller  
Yellow Oriole  
White-breasted Woodswallow  
Black Butcherbird  
Red-browed Finch  
Yellow-bellied Sunbird  
Mistletoe Bird  
Silvereye



### Great Tropical Drive, North Queensland

The Great Tropical Drive is a self-drive touring route that has released a new 20 page colour guide that covers birds that are most common in the North Queensland region. This guide has been compiled with the assistance of John Young, an outstanding cinematographer, photographer, wildlife expert and consultant. John Young's work is just as highly recognised and regarded internationally as it is here in Australia. This guide will also be available for free download, once the finishing touches are complete on our new bird section of the Great Tropical Drive website. For more information on the Great Tropical Drive or Townsville and North Queensland, please visit [www.GreatTropicalDrive.com.au](http://www.GreatTropicalDrive.com.au) or email [therese@tel.com.au](mailto:therese@tel.com.au).

*Therese Toy, Great Tropical Drive Marketing Coordinator, Townsville Enterprise Limited*

### BANQG Committee Meeting - 8th September 2007

The first committee meeting since the AGM was held on 8 September in Cardwell on a beautiful weekend. The new committee is enthusiastic and ready for a good year. The morning passed dealing with issues arising from previous meetings. We learnt that the wildlife friendly fencing article will be published in Wingspan in the near future, as well as on the web site - [www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com.au](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com.au). This also raised a topic wildlife friendly tanks and troughs, which the committee will refer to the National Office through the next Regional Convenor's meeting. The Townsville City Council has called for a representative on their Coral to Creek project consultation workshop in October; Tony Grice will represent BANQG. A big issue was the impending resignation of Helen McLaughlin as *Contact Call* editor after seven years doing a wonderful job. If

anyone knows of a suitable person, please contact any member of the Committee. A number of the posters are now ready to do some printing and these will soon grace our display. The main bird conservation issues reported to the committee were the Black-throated Finch Recovery Team and the Annual Crane Count. The Important Bird Area project was also reported to the committee and various issues discussed. The Committee is also progressing well with our own web site at [www.birdsaustralianq.org](http://www.birdsaustralianq.org) which is worth regularly checking. The extensive list of brochures (22 in all) is being revised and our intention is to make them web friendly for easy downloading.

The next meeting is scheduled for the 26 January 2008. If you would like to raise any issues, please contact the secretary Ivor Preston at [birdsaustralianq.org](mailto:birdsaustralianq.org).

### Interesting Sightings from the region...

Our observers this edition are: AG - Alan Gillanders; BH- Bill Holmes; DM Dawn Magarry; GB – George Baker; IP - Ivor Preston; JL - John Lowry; JW - Jo Wieneke; L&CE - Len and Chris Ezzy; MA - Marlene Acton; RH - Russell Hughes; SG -Sue Gould; TRBOC – Townsville Region Bird Observers Club; TG - Tony Grice.

Please check with observers before quoting any of these sightings. Please note that Jo Wieneke is the coordinator for collating Interesting Sightings. Please send any unusual or interesting sightings to Jo at [bowerbird07@bigpond.com](mailto:bowerbird07@bigpond.com)

*Jo Wieneke, Townsville*

## Interesting sightings

Species	Date	Observer	Location	Comment
Bush-hen	9 March	DM	Whitfield, Cairns	One adult and chick
Black Bittern	5-8 April	DM	Georgetown	All seen at annual campout
Pictorella Mannikin				
Masked Finch				
Variegated Fairy-wren				
Australasian Shoveler				
Little Kingfisher	14 June	DM	Centenary Lakes, Cairns	Two birds
Green Pygmy-goose	17 June	BH	Cromarty, Townsville	10-20 birds
Glossy Ibis	17 June	BH	Cromarty, Townsville	Small flock
Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo	18 June	AG	Curtain Fig, Yungaburra	
Australasian Shoveler	20 June	AG	Hasties Swamp, Atherton	
Cockatiel	22 June	BH	Woodstock, Townsville	About 20 birds
Spotted Nightjar	23 June	BH	Woodstock, Townsville	
White-browed Woodswallow	30 June	GB	Toonpan, Townsville	Small flock
Emu	30 June	BH	Laudham Park, Townsville	Two Regular but infrequent
Cotton Pygmy-goose	July	SG	Weipa	Out of range
Australasian Shoveler	1 July	MA	Town Common CP, Townsville	Three birds – unusual here
White-eared Monarch	8 July	DM	Goldsborough NP, Cairns	
Square-tailed Kite	2 July	L&CE	Bruce Hwy near Bohle River, Townsville	Seen by many others in area for about a week
Sooty Oystercatcher	16 July	BH	Townsville Harbour Breakwater	Pair
Rufous Owl	18 July	TRBOC	The Bush Garden, Townsville	
Glossy Ibis	19 July	BH	Cromarty, Townsville	20+ birds
Diamond Dove	20 July	BH	Old Flinders Hwy	10 birds
Varied Sittella	21 July	BH	West of Lake Ross, Townsville	Small flock
Pied Currawong	25 July	TG	Town Common CP, Townsville	Two birds near entrance
Painted Snipe	25 July	TG	Town Common CP, Townsville	Three birds
Large-tailed Nightjar	1 Aug	BH	Laudham Park, Townsville	First call for season
Golden Bowerbird	2 Aug	AG	Yungaburra	Unusual at this altitude
Satin Bowerbird	2 Aug	AG	Yungaburra	
Tooth-billed Bowerbird	5 Aug	RH	Hencamp Creek, Rollingstone	Unusual in lowland
Pied Monarch	5 Aug	JW&JL	Big Crystal Creek, Paluma	Female
Pied Currawong	11 Aug	TG	Fairfield Waters, Townsville	One bird
Black-necked Stork	21 Aug	JW	Town Common CP, Townsville	Two adults + two juveniles
Grey Goshawk	24 Aug	DM	Whitfield, Cairns	Pair nesting in garden
Red-necked Crake	25 Aug	L&CE	Queens Garden, Townsville	First seen by Greg Bruce
Bar-breasted Honeyeater	26 Aug	TRBOC	The Orient, Ingham	Unusual near coast
White-eared Monarch	26 Aug	JW	Horseshoe Bay, Magnetic Island	One adult
Black-breasted Buzzard	27 Aug	TG	100km north of Croydon	
Black-throated Finch	28 Aug	TG	105km west of Georgetown	12 birds
Channel-billed Cuckoo	2 Sept	IP	Townsville	First report for season
Spectacled Monarch	3 Sept	TG	The Bush Garden, Townsville	
Brush Cuckoo	7 Sept	JW	Belgian Gardens, Townsville	First heard this season

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## Welcome to our new members...

- ✍ Ms Jutta Linneweber, MAREEBA;
- ✍ Ms Allison Newton, KARUMBA;
- ✍ Dr Greg Bortolussi, TOWNSVILLE;
- ✍ Ms Susan Doherty, KURANDA;

*Welcome to our new members.*

*Please join us on any of our outings.*

Check out Birds Australia website [www.birdsaustralia.com.au](http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au) for up to date information on field trips as details may change after publication. Please note that additional events may be arranged post publication. For more information specific to north Queensland visit our own website [www.birdsaustralianq.org](http://www.birdsaustralianq.org)

### Thanks

Birds Australia—North Queensland is very grateful for the support given by **Member for Townsville**, the Honourable, **Mike Reynolds** for the printing of this edition of *Contact Call*

## WANTED - NEWSLETTER Notice Board

**EDITOR:** From the beginning of 2008 BANQG need a newsletter editor. If you have some knowledge of M/S Publisher or want to learn, have an interest in the birds and letting our members know what's happening, then please consider this rewarding position. The newsletter is produced four times a year - March, June, September and December. The newsletter template and training is available. Please contact the current editor Helen McLaughlin on (07) 4771 3239, before 9pm for more information.

Check out **Jo Wieneke's** new website <http://www.nqbirds.com/> and information on her very popular book "Where to Find Birds in North Queensland"

**HELP** - The Committee is STILL searching for a large blue plastic envelope containing plastic brochure holders for our display boards. Could everyone please look out for that envelope as these are very expensive to replace. Please contact the Secretary to arrange an anon pickup. THANKS.

**4th Biennial Australasian Ornithological Conference 2007** will be held at the University of Western Australia, Perth 3-5 December 2007. This conference provides a regular forum for the exchange of information and ideas between avian researchers and conservationists throughout the Australasian region. The venue will be the University of Western Australia, and the Western Australian group of Birds Australia (RAOU) will host the conference. Post-conference field excursions will be available. Visit [www.birdswa.com.au/aoc2007](http://www.birdswa.com.au/aoc2007).

Ergon Energy will "bird proof" its substation at Julia Creek following unacceptable interruptions to power supply caused by crows. An Ergon Energy spokesman said work would commence in the next few weeks using a product that has been successfully used by other electricity utilities in the state. "Deter" is a powder that will be placed on equipment in the substation's yard. The powder emits a strong odour that is known to deter birds and given its successful use in other parts of the state we are confident it will be effective in keeping birds off our equipment and prevent the interruption to our customers' power supply.



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### Keith & Lindsay Fisher

RN6, Mt. Kooyong Road, Julatten, QLD 4871

Ph: (07) 4094 1263 or Fax: (07) 4094 1466

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Web Page: [www.birdwatchers.com.au](http://www.birdwatchers.com.au)



Contact Call is now produced on 100% Australian paper using 80% recycled material from waste fibre diverted from Australian landfill

Please send items for December 2007 Contact Call by mid November 2007 to: Helen McLaughlin, Newsletter Editor,  
By email at [helen\\_marty2000@hotmail.com](mailto:helen_marty2000@hotmail.com)