

Contact Call



Quarterly Newsletter of Birds Australia North Queensland



March 2008

Issue: Peregrine Falcon

The Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) is similar in size to the Brown and Black Falcons but is stockier with shorter wings and tail. The adult has a black head and cheeks, forming a full helmet. The upper parts are slaty blue-grey, paler on the rump with black wing tips and finely barred wings and tail. Under parts are white with a grey wash and fine dark bars on the abdomen. The female is somewhat browner than the male, with a stronger buff suffusion on the underparts. The cere, eye-ring and feet are bright yellow. This falcon is a solitary, aggressive falcon occurring in most habitats, including cliffs, escarpments and wetlands. The Peregrine Falcon eats mostly flocking birds including seabirds on the coast. It can seize or strike down quite large birds and readily feeds on the ground. The bird is typically seen in flight. It perches on cliffs or structures such as towers or buildings. Pairs nest solitarily in the August to October laying season. The bird uses a variety of nest sites, including cliff edge, old raptor nest and a ledge of a man made structure. This Falcon is widely distributed throughout mainland Australia and Tasmania, where it has had time to differentiate into an endemic race—*macropus*.



Peregrine Falcon, female.
Photo courtesy of Australian Museum



Peregrine Falcon, male.
courtesy Australian Museum

Information sourced from "The Birds of Prey of Australia – A Field Guide" by Stephen Debus.

Birds Australia Membership

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

Birds Australia North Queensland

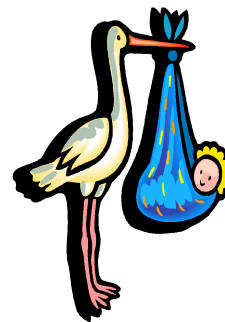
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Members receive four issues of the full-colour bird magazine *Wingspan* and four issues of *Contact Call*, the

BANQ newsletter. Membership forms are available from the Secretary or send subscriptions directly to:
Birds Australia, Suite 2-05, 60 Leicester Street,
Carlton, Victoria 3053

You can now join directly through our web site:
www.birdsaustralia.com.au

Check out the regional website for local and national events.
www.birdsaustralia.org



A new twitcher:

We proudly announce the arrival of **William (Will) Robert** born 25th February.

Our previous Editor, Helen McLaughlin and husband Marty are the delighted parents.

Congratulations to the happy family.



Inside this issue:

- Committee news
- Important Bird Areas news
- Grass Wren surveyors information
- Trip Report—Australian Day weekend
- Interesting Sightings
- Website update information
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from the Convenor ...

I am fascinated by the factors that determine where different bird species occur. Even though they are in general highly mobile they often are NOT found in places where they might be expected on the simple grounds of being physically able to reach them. On the other hand, birds can often show up far away from where they are normally found; hence, lists of 'rarities', 'first sightings' and 'one-ofs' for Australia, for example. Many of these cases are demographic and ecological 'dead-ends', it being unlikely that they will form a breeding population or return to their natural range. Any region for which we develop a species list will include species that are regulars, others that occur frequently, some that turn up every now and then, and a 'long tail' of species that are rarely seen. Trying to understand what is going on with all these changes over time and patchiness in space is one of the challenges of bird-watching and ornithology.

For the last 12 years I have been keeping monthly records of the species I see in the Townsville urban area. As with any bird list, mine contains everything from 'regulars' (rainbow lorikeets, brown honeyeaters etc) to rarities (e.g. black honeyeaters showed up once, in November 2002). The list also documents some apparent trends: yellow orioles were first recorded in October 2004, but every wet season since then; spotted turtle doves first made my list in November 2003, then rapidly became regulars; zebra finches seem to have become less frequent. The list is also fascinating for what it does not include: I have never seen black-throated finches, apostle birds or squatter pigeons around town, but other finch species, mudlarks and crested pigeons are common(ish).

Urban landscapes could no doubt be better managed to improve bird habitats and so increase the richness and abundance of the avifauna. There are two benefits to working hard to keep birds in urban landscape. One is that urban-dwellers who have a particular interest in birds can experience them as they go about their day-to-day business. The other is that it helps to keep bird conservation higher on the agenda. Birds Australia has conservation of and education about birds as part of its goals. Keeping birds in urban environments can play an important role in helping achieve these goals. I would be interested in hearing from readers about simple (small or great) ways in which we can better manage urban environments to allow a wide variety of bird species to thrive in them.

I will finish with an anecdote. Some time ago near where I live there is a typical urban park with scattered pruned trees and a large area of manicured lawns. However, there was also pandanus clump around which the grass was 'neglected'. The pandanus clump and patch of long grass was only a few square metres in area but that was sufficient to provide shelter for a pair of buff-banded rails, regularly observed early in the morning. Unfortunately, a couple diligent workers, in spite of my urging, cleaned up the long grass and trimmed the pandanus. I haven't seen the rails there since. The sad thing is that there are probably few people who were aware of or mourned the loss. Herein lay the educational and management challenge.

Tony Grice

from the Secretary ...

The BANQ Committee meeting held 26 January 2008 at Kingfisher Park in Julatten, under the care of our generous hosts Lindsay and Keith Fisher. While the 40 odd participants for the campout had a very rewarding time on Mt Lewis, the committee spent the best part of the day at work. The printing of posters from the Enviro fund grant is about to begin, with the Black-throated Finch poster the first in the series. A small print run will be done and the posters will be used at any of our BANQ displays. Elinor Scambler has laid the groundwork to revise our brochure series in both web friendly format and hard copy format. By the time you read this, most of the revisions will have been posted on our web site

www.birdsaustralianq.org.

There was discussion on the new national website where there will be a page for each regional group. The committee also discussed a draft strategic plan and this will be finalised for adoption at the next meeting. The annual display at the Yungaburra markets will continue and will be combined with a one day birds for beginners course on the Sunday. The national regional groups meeting was held in November and the main point of interest to BANQ was that the annual congress and campout has been allocated to us for 2010 and is mooted for Townsville. Reports were given on the projects and have been reported in the last edition of Contact Call. Also, future activity on the Important Bird Areas was reported and an article appears elsewhere in this edition of CC. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for 12 April 08 in Cardwell. Please contact Ivor Preston at birdsaus@birdsaustralianq.org if you would like to raise any issues for the committee.

Ivor Preston

Thanks ...

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

Contact Call



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Keith & Lindsay Fisher

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

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REPORT ON MEETING OF NATIONAL IBAs COMMITTEE 16 FEBRUARY 2008

I am fresh from a national meeting of IBA Coordinators and I will try to communicate the results of our discussions. The meeting was chaired by Stephen Garnett who, you may remember, was instrumental in getting North Queensland off ahead of the other Regional Groups in identifying Important Bird Areas.

I would remind members that IBAs are chosen according to global criteria determined by BirdLife International (see *page 4* Criteria). Birds Australia is the BirdLife representative in Australia and declaring and monitoring Australian IBAs is part of our contribution to the worldwide conservation of the world's birds and their habitats. Birds Australia National Office (NO) is promoting IBAs as a major plank in our efforts to assemble essential information on the state and trends in our bird populations.

BA has to report annually to BirdLife on the state of each IBA so NO will require BANQ to supply essential information on each IBA in North Queensland.

Our meeting identified a concern that, because IBAs are preferentially declared over already reserved land (National Parks, Nature Refuges), they are not going to tell us how our birds are travelling in land under other tenure, such as pastoral leases and farmland. Thus not only must IBAs be monitored by ongoing Atlassing but we need Atlassing outside IBAs to continue. So all you Atlassers (like me) who have let your Atlas effort drop off a bit, we need you to resurge! In fact, it was suggested that what is required is "targeted" Atlas points, where we make a particular effort to get our members to visit. This is the strategy we adopted to improve Atlas coverage of Cape York in the 1998-2002 Atlas effort.

Whether targeted Atlassing will develop into a national campaign, I don't know, but I think we should seriously consider it in our region.

Much discussion centred on how we deal with "biome restricted" birds (one of the BirdLife criteria for selecting IBAs). One of the Australian biomes is the arid lands. It extends from Charters Towers to Broome and Katherine to the Bight. We have a large number of birds that only occur within this vast area and a considerable subset of them, which are nomadic ie they cannot reliably be found at any one locality within this biome. Identifying an IBA for these species is



anomalous and would expose us to ridicule. We considered setting up a series of IBAs at regular intervals across the arid zone but eventually rejected it. The number of IBAs and monitoring effort required would be prodigious and it would be difficult to explain to a landholder why her or his property had been chosen as an IBA and not the neighbour's. Clearly

Atlassing is more versatile in dealing with such complex and unpredictable bird movements. Of course, these nomadic, arid-biome birds periodically appear in IBAs set up for sedentary birds, so we adopted a target of ensuring that these IBAs covered the range of nomadic birds with no gap between them greater than 20% of the entire range.

There was a deal of discussion on what to do about landholder opposition to the declaration of an IBA over their land. Two major decisions were made. The first is that we will not get ourselves into the position where we negotiate permission to declare an IBA. If the land qualifies for an IBA then we should not be shy about identifying it. However, we can choose not to publicly advertise the IBA boundaries if it is politic to do so. Nonetheless, we recognise that it is desirable to involve the landholder in the IBA declaration whenever possible. We should also bear in mind that no action necessarily follows the declaration of an IBA; it has no legal status, is not approved by government and does not modify the landholder's freedom in management. What the declaration DOES do is to concentrate the attention of Birds Australia members on that area to try to monitor the bird populations (if only from afar).

Curious thought: We have two IBAs triggered by Sarus Cranes on the Atherton Tableland and in their breeding area in the Gulf. However, the Threatened status for this species is due to its precarious survival in Asia. If it goes extinct in Asia, this species would likely lose its threatened classification because it is not threatened in Australia. We would then lose our reason for declaring IBAs based on sarus Cranes!

In our Region we have nearly completed our IBA proposals (see box) but we have not yet grappled with globally Near-Threatened Black-throated Finch. We have both sub-species in our area and we probably should declare at least one IBA for each race.

Graham Harrington

Volunteers for Grasswren Surveys Required...



Carpentarian Grasswren

Volunteers are needed to assist in surveying for **Kalkadoon** and **Carpentarian Grasswrens**. There will be two surveys taking place on 7th-16th and 21st-30th July 2008. The aim is to assess the population densities of grasswrens in Spinifex fire scars of different ages. This is part of the Birds Australia North Queensland Important Bird Area Monitoring Program.

You would have to find your own way to Mount Isa. Accommodation would be under canvas at the survey sites. Be warned the nights are cold! You can choose to take part in either or both surveys.

For more details and a project description contact Graham Harrington on phone (07) 4096 5051 or email riflebird@austarnet.com.au.

Criteria for IBAs

A1 The site regularly holds significant numbers of a **globally** threatened species i.e. Critically Endangered, Endangered, Threatened, Vulnerable or Near-threatened e.g. Morehead River IBA for Golden-Shouldered Parrot.

A2 The site holds a significant number of at least two species with a restricted range. Restricted Range is defined as less than 50,000km² (The Wet Tropics is 10,000km² and the endemic birds within it qualify it as an IBA).

A3 Biome-restricted species. A biome is an area with a common climate type which exhibits a single ecological community of plants and animals e.g. the Wet Tropics, the Australian Arid Zone, Cape York. The IBA would encompass a significant set of components of this biome.

A4. Globally important areas where birds congregate. It must regularly hold at least 1% of the global population of a species of bird OR at least 20,000 waterbirds OR at least 10,000 seabirds. This is the basis on which the Atherton Tablelands IBA is defined for Sarus Cranes. Alternatively migrating birds may be restricted in a bottleneck, which is the basis of the Lock-erbie Scrub IBA at the tip of Cape York. Many birds accumulate there e.g. Spangled Drongos before departing for PNG and S.E. Asia.

Boodjamulla, Buckley River and Fountain Springs IBAs

Leasie Felderhof, Brian Venables and I are combining to organise a survey of the Kalkadoon and Carpentarian Grasswrens in and around these three IBAs. The habitat is the Spinifex and open Snappy Gum woodlands on the hilly country to the south and east and north-west of Mount Isa. We will have to search about one million ha. of remote country - quite a challenge.

So far 33 stalwarts have put up their hands to be involved. We will be under canvas for most of July. July will be dry, bitterly cold at night and pleasantly warm and sunny during the day.

The basis of the survey will be to assess the density of Grasswrens in country that has been unburnt for different periods of time, up to 10 years without a burn. When the Spinifex burns the Grasswrens are driven out. Whether they survive or die is unknown. At some point in the Spinifex recovery growth cycle the birds return and breed.

We want to find out when they return and how quickly the population reaches a maximum. With that information we can monitor the fire pattern year by year on satellite imagery and estimate how well the Grasswrens are doing. In Queensland, it appears that at any one time at least 50% of the area has been unburnt for at least five years but in the Northern Territory burning is more extensive and more frequent, which poses a severe threat to Carpentarian Grasswrens.



Graham Harrington

Wet Tropics IBAs

The Wet Tropics is well protected within the World Heritage Area. However, the endemic, restricted-range birds on which the IBA declaration is based are threatened by global warming – particularly those which are restricted to higher altitudes, such as Atherton Scrubwren and Grey-headed Robin. Dr. Steve Williams of JCU is conducting regular surveys at different altitudes to try and detect any changes in the populations of a range of biota. BANQ is hoping to assist him by monitoring additional sites and Rosemary Payet, of Townsville, is testing Steve's methodology to see if she can make it work. If she is successful we will be looking for volunteers to monitor sites regularly – particularly in the coastal zone.

Another approach will be to monitor Bowerbird bowers at different altitudes.

Watch this space for a call for volunteers.

Graham Harrington

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BANQ

Australia Day Long Weekend

at Kingfisher Park

25th - 28th January

The now traditional Australia Day Long Weekend field trip was again held at Kingfisher Park, Julatten. Unlike previous years we had wonderful weather for the full 3 days activities with people arriving on the Friday for the start of the program on the Saturday. Those lucky people on the BANQ Committee had the day to hold their meeting whilst the rest of us had to go birdwatching! The morning was spent up on Mt. Lewis at and around the well known **Blue-face Parrot-Finch** site. We were not disappointed as at least eight BFP Finches were in the area; also a pair of **Double-eyed Fig-Parrot** was seen along the road. A slow walk down to the dam had a pair of **Yellow-throated Scrubwren** feeding a youngster, several **Chowchilla**

foraging on the edge of the track, good views of **Spotted Catbird** and **Bowers Shrike-thrush** plus a few **Atherton Scrubwren** in the undergrowth. Many other species were seen beside these and combined with the sunny weather made for a great morning.

The afternoon field trip took us around some of the back roads in Julatten stopping at a seasonal wetland where we had **Brown Quail**, **Buff-banded Rail**, **Red-backed Fairy-wren** and a flock of **White-breasted Woodswallow**. Along the Wetherby Road towards Mt. Molloy we stopped to find a small flock of **Brown-backed Honeyeater** and at the Wetherby Swamp was a lone **Green Pygmy-goose** and **Comb-crested Jacana**. We returned via Abattoir Swamp where the best birds were **White-browed Crake** and a **Northern Fantail** on a nest.

The Saturday night communal dinner was excellent, congratulations to all the cooks and as usual we ate too much again. The dinner was followed by an excellent talk by John Clarkson, Principal Botanist from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service who gave us a thought provoking look at introduced grasses and their impact on wildlife mainly in the Tropical Savannah of the north. These grasses are changing the ecology of the landscape, causing irreparable damage to mature trees when they are burnt and this will inevitably result in a changed landscape and bad news for the native animals living in it.

You can find out more on the web at http://savanna.ntu.edu.au/research/projects/impacts_of_exotic_g.html

The Sunday field trip was north to the Hurricane Station area and onto a section of Brooklyn Station across the Mitchell River. Del Richards from Fine Feather Tours had kindly organised the field trip which was so well attended we had to split up into two groups. First stop was north of Mt. Carbine for one group who found **Little Bronze-Cuckoo** whilst the other group went onto McLeod River. Here was found the population of **White-gaped Honeyeater** which are present along the river here. These birds occur further south around Townsville but avoid the Wet Tropics area, are found around Georgetown to the west and then re-appear along the McLeod River and then north across onto Western Australia. Also of interest here was a pair of **Grey Goshawk**, three **Channel-billed Cuckoo**, **Dollarbird** and **Fairy Gerygone**. A dam along the Kondaparinga Road was very productive, several **Australian Wood Duck** flew off as we arrived and in the woodland around it was a **Squatter Pigeon** in a tree, the north Queensland race of the **Noisy Miner**, a few **Black-throated Finch**, several **Brown Treecreeper** (NE Qld race *melanotis* called the **Black Treecreeper**, this location is on their southern distribution limit), one pair was feeding nestlings who were in a nest situated in the fork of a tree. Further along the road we stopped to see some more **Black-throated Finch** who cooperated and allowed everyone to get good views. The group then travelled across the Cooktown Crossing on the Mitchell River into Brooklyn Station, the Australian Wildlife Conservation property. Of interest here was **Galah**, a roosting **Southern Boobook** and nesting **Tawny Frogmouth**. No signs of the Variegated Fairy-wren Del had found here a while back, a considerable range extension.

It was an excellent day trip with plenty of interesting country and birds found.

The evening was spent watching a DVD called "A Flash of Blue" which was mainly about the Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher and the Azure Kingfisher. The filming was done around Kingfisher Park by Mr Shimada, a Japanese film maker, who spent three months making the film. The result was a very good insight into the breeding ecology of the Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher.

Monday morning we went for a two hour bird walk around Kingfisher Park and the surrounds. It started well with two **Pale-vented Bush-hen** (new name) walking across Mt. Kooyong Road, we also saw **Buff-banded Rail** with three fluffy black chicks, **Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher** and **Bridled Honeyeater** which was unusual at this time of year (they are normally at higher altitudes). We ended up with 60 species of which 11 were heard only.

Some of the group re-visited Mt. Lewis in the morning and found **Fernwren** which was not seen on our previous trip.

A big thank you to John for his presentation on Saturday and providing the projector for Sunday night, Del for organising the Sunday trip and all the people (40+) who attended the weekend making it one of the more successful BANQ socialising and birding weekends.

The total number of species logged down for the weekend was 145.

See you all at the official 10th anniversary of the BANQ Australia Day weekends at Kingfisher Park

Keith & Lindsay Fisher

Interesting sightings

Species	Date	Obs.	Site	Comments
Sanderling	Dec 3rd	JA	Cooya Beach	2 birds
Metallic Starling	8th	DR	Mt Lewis clearing	Unusual @ 992m
Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo	8th	DR	Mt Lewis	Half way up
Large-tailed Nightjar	9th	BH	Ross River Dam rd	
Red Knot	15th	GB	Redden Is	1 bird with other waders
Pied Heron	16th	PC	Craiglea	7 birds
White-browed Scrubwren	16th	BH	Oaky Creek	32km S of T'ville
Oriental Cuckoo	17th	BH	Central Creek	30km SSW of T'ville
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	22nd	GB	40 Mile Scrub	1 bird
Spinifex Pigeon	29th	GB	Gilbert River S of bridge	14 birds
Banded Lapwings	30th	GB	Mt Surprise	6 - breeding
Southern Cassowary	30th	GB	Highway 1 at approach to Murray River bridge	
White-browed Crake	Early Jan	TG	Nr Aplins Weir Ross R.	Pair with 2 chicks
Varied Sittella	Jan 2nd	GB	Paluma <i>grandis</i> walk	
White-headed Pigeon	2nd	GB	As above	1 bird
Superb Fruit-Dove	2nd	GB	Bluewater forestry camp	2 birds
Long-tailed Jaeger	4th	Per PG	Michaelmas Cay	3 birds v unusual
Black-throated Finch	8th	BH	Ross River Dam	26 birds
Glossy Ibis	8th	L&MC	Ross River Dam	From new observation area
Black Swan	8th	L&MC	As above	160 birds
Latham's Snipe	8th	L&MC	Townsville Common	1 bird
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	11th	BV	Potters Reef	
Yellow Oriole	12th	TG	Annandale T'ville	1 bird
Oriental Cuckoo	15th	AG	Curtain Fig	
Common Tern	19th	JA	Cooya Beach	2 birds
White-winged Black Tern	19th	JA	As above	6 birds
Little Eagle	25th	L&CE	Blakey's Crossing	
Little Eagle	26th	L&CE	Hervey Range Rd	2 on road kill
Black Falcon	27th	L&CE	Pentland CP	5.30 pm fly through
Banded Honeyeater	28th	L&CE	Great Basalt Wall	17 in mixed flock
Black-chinned Honeyeater	28th	L&CE	As above	2 birds nr Lake Toomba
Shining Flycatcher	Feb. 3rd	BH	Townsville Common	1 female
Brahminy Kite	3rd	BH	Soaring over Many Peaks Range	30+ raptors in 2 groups, of which at least 21, (maybe all) were Brahminy Kites
Black Bittern	7th	BH	Charters Towers	Also seen 9th and 29th
Little Tern	14th	RP	Mouth of Ross River	50+ birds feeding
Macleay's Honeyeater	15th	IM	Forestry Rd Bluewater	Unusual here
Little Kingfisher	16th	MT	Loam Is. Ross River	Also seen by L&CE
Fairy Gerygone	16th	MT	As above	
White-browed Crake	19th	GC	Fairfield Waters, T'ville	

Interesting sightings continued

Species	Date	Obs.	Site	Comments
Rufous-throated H/e	19th	GC	As above	1 bird
Bush-hen	27th	IM	Forestry Rd Bluewater	1 bird seen briefly
Whiskered Tern	28th	L&CE	AIMS Rd	150+ birds
Caspian Tern	28th	L&CE	AIMS Rd	110 birds
Black-necked Stork	28th	L&CE	AIMS Rd	8 birds
Little Tern	28th	L&CE	Cungulla Beach	210
Collared Kingfisher	28th	L&CE	Cungulla Beach	1
Terek Sandpiper	28th	L&CE	Cungulla Beach	177 birds
Grey Plover	28th	L&CE	Cungulla Beach	9 - partial breeding plumage
Bush-hen	27th	IB	Cleveland Bay Tr.Pplant	Road-kill
Bush-hen	March 1st	IM	Forestry Rd Bluewater	Adult and 2 dept. young
Black Noddy	March 1st	BH	Townsville breakwater	

The Vagrant Gull: a vagrant gull was found in mid February at Cooktown and ticked by scores of twitchers. It was in juvenile plumage and as large gulls from the Northern Hemisphere are notoriously hard to identify its ID has ranged from Thayers, Vega, Mongolian and at present is thought to be Slaty-backed.

Swifts: There were numerous reports of swifts, both Fork-tailed and Spine-tailed from November to March throughout our area but space does not allow to include them all.

Contributors: AG - Alan Gillanders; BH - Bill Holmes; BV - Brian Venables; DR - Del Richards; GB - George Baker; GBo - Greg Bor-tolussi; GC - Greg Calvert; GS - Graham Snell; IB - Ian Boyd; IM - Ian Montgomery; JA - Jim Allen; JS - John Seale; L&CE - Len and Chris Ezzy; M&LC - Malcolm and Lenore Calvert; MT - Malcolm Turner; PC - Peter Cooper; PG - Phil Gregory; RP - Rosemary Payet;

Thanks to everyone for sending in these and other sightings. Please check with observers before quoting any of these sightings. My apologies if the sightings in this issue are 'bottom heavy' and mainly from the southern range of our area.

Jo Wieneke

2007-2008 BANQ Committee and Contacts

Executive Committee

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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)
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Cape York Atlas:	Graham Harrington 4096 5051 email: riflebird@austarnet.com.au



NOTICE BOARD



Calendar of Events

March 2008

Sunday 30th ~ Wave the Waders Goodbye, Cairns Esplanade. Come and join us on the Esplanade. Meet at 4:30pm. Contact Harry Cassidy (07) 4057 5278 or Ian Montgomery (07) 4751 3115.

April 2008

Saturday 12th ~ BANQ Committee Meeting, Rainforest Centre, Cardwell.

Sunday 13th ~ Group birdwatching activity—meet at Rainforest Centre at 7.30am.

June 2008

Saturday 21 ~ AGM Innisfail. Venue: TBA. Group dinner in the evening.

Sunday 22 ~ Group birdwatching activity in the Etty Bay, Mourilyan Harbour areas.

July 2008

7th-16th and 21st-30th ~ Grasswren surveys - Mount Isa.

Contact Graham Harrington—see page 3 for details.

October 2008

Saturday 4th ~ Annual Crane Count. Mark this one in your diary.

18th and 19th ~ Black-throated Finch waterhole survey—Townsville. Mark this one in your diary.

Check out Birds Australia website 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.



Winter Volunteer Rangers at Newhaven Sanctuary: April to August 2008

In 2008 we plan to have a resident volunteer Ranger /Campground Caretaker. Some of the Ranger's duties would involve liaising with visitors, maintaining the small campground and participating in other projects on the Sanctuary. The Ranger's would be offered accommodation in the self-contained two-bedroom unit and assistance would be given to reach Newhaven from Alice Springs if required. We would prefer Ranger/s to stay for a minimum of two and a maximum of four weeks, however alternative arrangements could be made. If you are interested please contact us by email newhaven@australianwildlife.org or phone (08) 8964 6000. Kind regards, Josef Schofield and Danae Moore, Managers.

Support Australia's Shorebird Capital

The BROOME BIRD OBSERVATORY (BBO) is seeking an enthusiastic couple to host our campground guests / facilities between June and September. Our Campground hosts are people who love camping and the outdoors and would like to bring their own caravan or tent and set up at the BBO. Our hosts welcome visitors and help with allocating a campsite, provide information about the BBO, its facilities and the local fauna and flora. Our hosts also assist the BBO team with general maintenance of the Shadehouse and campground facilities and the weekend stall at Broome's famous markets. For more information please contact us by email bbo@birdsaustralia.com.au or phone (08) 9193 5600.

NEW WEBSITE

Birds Australia has recently completed an upgrade of its website and as part of this process the TBN pages have also been overhauled. This is an evolving site and many improvements will be added in the coming months, but for now check it out at www.birdsaustralia.com.au/our-projects/threatened-bird-network.html

NEW EDITOR

A huge thank you to Helen McLaughlin for her seven years as editor and hope we see her in some other capacity when responsibilities of parenting allow. Karen Doyle has taken up the challenge of becoming Editor of Contact Call. All contributions and comments are welcomed.

NEXT NEWSLETTER:

June deadline ~ 22 May 2008

Please send, articles, advertisements, updates etcetera to the Editor at birdsaustralianq.org or c/- The Secretary, PO Box 37, Belgian Gardens Qld 4810