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THE SUNBIRD

THE BIRDS OF MAGNETIC ISLAND, NORTH QUEENSLAND

Jo Wleneke

ABSTRACT

The 188 species of birds recorded here for Magnetic Island are attracted by, and reflect the Island's present diverse range of natural habitats. Magnetic Island is at present relatively undeveloped considering its proximity to Townsville, population 100,000, Queensland's largest provincial city. Future development for urbanisation and tourism is inevitable. Unfortunately the Island's National Park does not include all the habitat types required to ensure a secure future for all of the Island's resident and migratory bird species.

INTRODUCTION

Magnetic Island lies 10 km off the coast of North Queensland near Townsville. Although the area was included in *Birds of the Townsville Area* by Lavery and Hopkins (1963), the only previously published information on Magnetic Island birds is a short article by Enwright (1940), based on a one week visit in August 1939. From his account and my observations it seems that changes to the avifauna have taken place and with the present rate of subdivision, building and population increase, others will doubtless occur.

This paper aims to provide a record of birds seen on Magnetic Island, and their status, from 1967 to 1987.

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

Magnetic Island ($19^{\circ} 05' S$, $146^{\circ} 50' E$) is a continental island formed mostly of granodiorite which shows as outcrops of huge boulders. The island is 5199 ha in area, most of which is hilly or mountainous terrain rising to the highest peak of Mt. Cook (506 m). The 2533 ha National Park (Fig. 1) covers mostly the steep rugged interior of the Island.

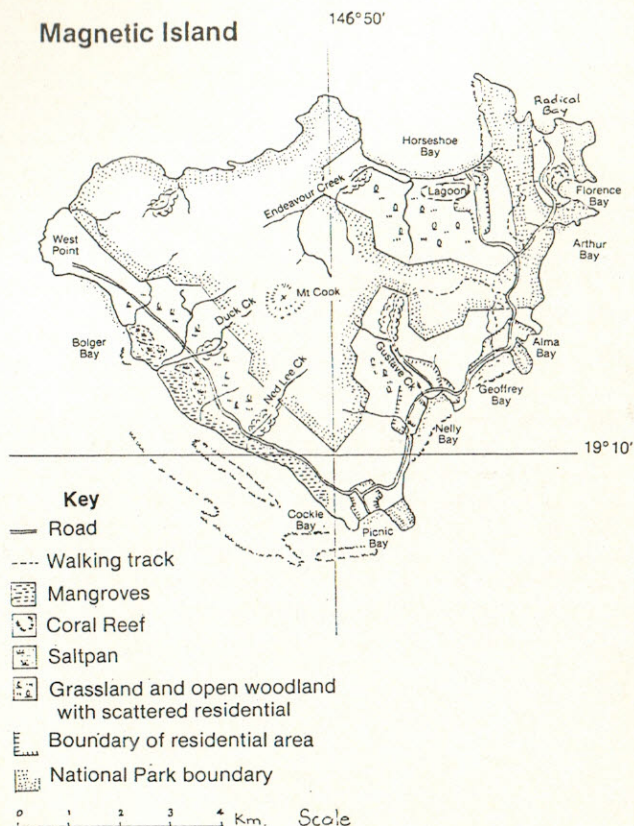


FIG. 1 : LOCALITY MAP

Magnetic Island has a seasonally dry climate with an average annual rainfall of 1198 mm. Most of this rain falls during the period December to March as storms or associated with cyclonic activity. Low-lying creeks run for 2 to 5 months after the wet season but water remains at higher altitudes for longer. The lagoon at Horseshoe Bay is the only substantial body of fresh water but this dries up in very dry seasons.

The vegetation on the Island is more luxuriant than that on the adjacent mainland due to slightly higher rainfall. Most of the inland area is Open Woodland (*Eucalyptus* spp., *Acacia* spp., *Canarium australicum*, *Albizia* sp., *Cochlospermum gillivraei*, *Alphitonia excelsa* etc.). Patches of Closed Forest with some rainforest species and vines occur in valleys protected from wind and along creeks. *Melaleuca* spp. and *Pandanus* are common in low-lying areas and Hoop Pines *Araucaria cunninghamii* are prominent on the rocky headlands. The south-west coast facing the mainland is sheltered and has an extensive and diverse area of mangroves, mudflats and some saltpan. Most of the low-lying areas of Horseshoe Bay that were originally cleared for pineapple cultivation have reverted to grassland. In Florence Bay and Nelly Bay small areas of "Beach Scrub" remain.

The annotated list (Appendix 1) of birds of Magnetic Island has been compiled from my observations from 1967 to 1987, as well as authenticated reports from other observers. Since 1977, during the survey for the *Atlas of Australian Birds*, monthly records have been kept. Regular monthly or more frequent visits have been made to Horseshoe Bay Lagoon, the closed forest area along Gustav Creek and to Cockle and Bolger Bays which were included in the R.A.O.U. Wader Survey from 1981 to 1985. From 1980 to 1987 approx. 20 ha of suburban Nelly Bay has been surveyed during the months October to February for nesting records.

RESULTS

In the 20 years since 1967, 188 species of birds have been recorded (Appendix 1). Over half of these are resident or seen regularly every year. However with some species that can be seen all year, such as the Rainbow Bee-eater, Spangled Drongo

and Forest Kingfisher, it is not known whether the same birds are present all year or if those present in summer migrate north in winter and are replaced by migrants from further south. There is documented migration of these three species and others across Torres Strait (Draffan *et al.* 1983).

Summer migrants include migratory waders, the Torresian Imperial-Pigeon, Koel, Dollar Bird and Channel-billed Cuckoo.

Winter migrants comprise mainly small passerines (fantails, flycatchers and whistlers). Towards the end of some dry seasons, finches, the Australian Magpie and the Australian Raven have been recorded when conditions in inland Queensland were very dry. A few waders (Eastern Curlew, Whimbrel and Grey-tailed Tattler) overwinter on the western side of the Island.

Breeding has been recorded for 36 species.

DISCUSSION

Although no full account of the early avifauna of the Island exists, it is apparent that changes have taken place. Enwright (1940) recorded the Diamond Dove *Geopelia cuneata*, Noisy Friarbird *Philemon corniculatus* and Red-browed Firetail *Emblema temporalis*, none of which are here now. He mentioned the Blue-winged Kookaburra but not the Laughing Kookaburra and the Sacred Kingfisher but not the Forest Kingfisher which is more numerous throughout the year. His flock of "about 60" Sulphur-crested Cockatoos has decreased to 20. The Little Whimbrel *Numenius minutus* and Silver-crowned Friarbird *Philemon argenticeps* were mentioned by Lavery and Hopkins (1963) but have not been seen during the study period. House Sparrows were rarely seen until 1985 but are now unfortunately firmly established breeding residents in Picnic Bay.

Although the Island is only 10 km from the mainland there are some marked differences in avifauna between the two. The most noticeable is the paucity of honey-eaters and the larger numbers of Pied Currawongs on the Island. In summer the Koel is common in Townsville suburbs but rarely seen on the Island despite the large population of breeding Figbirds. The Orange-

footed Scrubfowl which is fairly common on the Island has been recorded only once on the adjacent mainland, at the Townsville Common.

Settlement since 1877 has taken place in the four largest bays, Picnic, Nelly and Geoffrey Bays on the south-east side and Horseshoe Bay on the north. There is a small settlement at Cockle Bay and sparse settlement between Bolger Bay and West Point. The resident human population was approx. 800 in 1967 and 3000 in 1986, and is currently increasing at 10% per annum.

The National Park covers 48.7% of the total area of the Island but includes very little low-lying area. Most of the Closed Forest is on private land and likely to be subdivided in the future. The area of Beach Scrub behind Florence Bay has been ear-marked by the State Government for a large-scale tourist resort. In the past 5 years over 50 ha of grassland and open woodland have been cleared for subdivision in Horseshoe and Nelly Bays.

Species most likely to be affected by an increase in human population are the Bush Hen (not seen since 1983), the Buff-banded Rail (not seen since 1978), Tawny Grassbird, Golden-headed Cisticola, quail spp., Pheasant Coucal and species dependent on older trees for nesting holes. Pheasant Coucals have already decreased in numbers, possibly because of the increased volume of traffic on the roads and loss of habitat following the Townsville City Council's insistence on eradication of Guinea Grass *Panicum maximum* in suburban areas.

The fresh water lagoon at Horseshoe Bay is a very important habitat. Thirteen species have only been recorded there and another 14 species are very dependent on the area. Unfortunately only half the actual lagoon is included in an Environmental Park, the rest being privately owned or part of a Council Park Reserve. This valuable area is at present under threat from subdivision on adjoining land.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to Marion Crouther and Carrine Williams who supplied information from their records and Peter Valentine who provided useful advice and comments on the text. Elinor Scambler provided more records and very kindly typed the manuscript.

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APPENDIX 1

Non-passerines

- Australasian Grebe** *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*. Breeding resident of Horseshoe Bay Lagoon (HBL).
- Southern Giant Petrel** *Macronectes giganteus*. Very rare vagrant. One juvenile at Radical Bay, June 1987.
- Wedgetailed Shearwater** *Puffinus pacificus*. Recorded rarely in off-shore waters.
- Australian Pelican** *Pelecanus conspicillatus*. Up to 10 occasionally recorded at Bolger Bay.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*. Recorded offshore most months.

Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*. Seen on rocky headlands and at HBL in all months but January and February.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Seen at Picnic Bay in October 1977 and September, October 1978.

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*. Occasionally seen offshore or perched on rocks or oyster lease posts at West Point and Nelly Bay.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*. Recorded frequently from 1977 till 1983 in coastal areas and at HBL. Rarely seen since then.

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*. Seen at HBL and coastal areas most months.

Least Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*. Seen over Horseshoe Bay and occasionally other bays from January to April. Their presence is usually associated with strong winds and cyclonic conditions nearby.

White-faced Heron *Ardea novaehollandiae*. A flock of about 100 over-winters at Bolger Bay. Single birds are seen in other bays and at HBL throughout the year.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*. A few birds seen at the western side of the Island and at HBL throughout the year. Flocks of up to 50 seen at HBL in October/November in years when there is still water there and conditions inland are dry.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*. Resident at Cackle Bay where they roost on the Wreck (a rusty hulk of an old steamship) but single birds seen in other bays and at HBL.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*. Usually found at HBL in small numbers.

Eastern Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*. Grey phase resident of all intertidal areas. One white bird seen once, feeding in shallow water of Endeavour Creek 1 km from the coast.

Striated Heron *Butorides striatus*. Seen occasionally on intertidal areas. Numbers appear to be decreasing.

Rufous Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*. Occasionally seen roosting in *Melaleuca* at HBL and in mango trees at Nelly Bay.

Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis*. Recorded once at Endeavour Creek, June 1974.

Black-necked Stork *Xenorhynchus asiaticus*. Pair seen in all bays on intertidal areas as well as the salt pan at Bolger Bay. Seldom seen in summer.

Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopica*. Resident of western side of the Island. Usually seen in the mangroves.

Straw-necked Ibis *Threskiornis spinicollis*. Found in parks and gardens in suburban areas as well as paddocks at Horseshoe Bay. Most common in winter months.

Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia*. Flocks of up to 20 occasionally seen at HBL and on western side of the Island.

Yellow-billed Spoonbill *Platalea flavipes*. Very rare visitor to fresh water areas.

Magpie Goose *Anseranas semipalmata*. One record, May 1980 at HBL.

Plumed Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna eytoni*. Resident at HBL most months, breeding recorded in 1978.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*. Very rare visitor. Two birds seen 500 m off Picnic Bay October 1979. One bird at HBL for a week October 1978.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*. Breeding resident at HBL. Occasionally seen in saline areas.

Grey Teal *Anas gibberifrons*. Rare visitor to HBL. Recorded in July 1977, August and October 1978 and June 1985.

Hardhead *Aythya australis*. Recorded at HBL most years during winter months when water levels are high.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*. Breeding resident. At least three pairs nest around the island usually in a prominent position, at the top of a Hoop Pine or on a large rock.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus notatus*. Recorded Horseshoe Bay October 1977, May 1983, March, April, May and August 1985.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*. Probably resident. Most often reported from Picnic Bay.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*. Occasionally seen over the Island, usually at Picnic Bay, probably attracted by the dump.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*. Breeding resident seen in all bays all year. The nests of four or five pairs are well-concealed, usually in mangroves or Hoop Pine *Araucaria cunninghamii*.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*. Seen occasionally in all bays. Breeding recorded at Horseshoe Bay and Bolger Bay.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*. Occasionally seen over wooded areas. Pair at a nest in June 1985 but later abandoned it.

Grey Goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae*. Rare. Recorded at Horseshoe Bay some years.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*. Breeding resident. Possibly two pairs. Most commonly seen in winter months.

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*. One pair resident, usually seen soaring over higher parts of the Island.

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*. Very rare. One immature seen at Horseshoe Bay June and July, 1985.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*. Rare visitor. Seen in March, May and June 1983 and August 1984.

Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis*. One record June 1984 at Horseshoe Bay.

Australian Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*. Resident. Most often seen at Horseshoe Bay but occasionally elsewhere.

Orange-footed Scrubfowl *Megapodius reinwardt*. Resident in the more inaccessible parts of all bays. Known active mounds in Florence Bay and Horseshoe Bay.

Australian Brush-turkey *Alectura lathami*. Recorded once behind Bolger Bay. Could be present in the higher inaccessible parts of the Island.

Brown Quail *Coturnix australis*. Breeding resident. Seen in small groups in grassland throughout the year.

Red-backed Button-quail *Turnix maculosa*. Recorded once in April 1981 in grassland behind Nelly Bay.

Buff-banded Rail *Rallus philippensis*. Possibly resident but rarely seen. Recorded at West Point and Horseshoe Bay.

Bush-hen *Gallinula olivacea*. Not seen since 1982. Areas of Horseshoe Bay and Nelly Bay where it was recorded have since been cleared for subdivision.

Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*. Resident at HBL when there is sufficient water.

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*. Resident at HBL. Flocks of up to 100 birds have been seen.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*. Occasional visitor to HBL.

Comb-crested Jacana *Iredipara gallinacea*. One or two seen at HBL some years during winter months.

Bush Thick-knee *Burhinus magnirostris*. Common breeding resident found in all suburban areas and grassland. Flocks of up to 20 seen at Horseshoe Bay during winter months.

Beach Thick-knee *Burhinus neglectus*. A rare visitor to all beaches.

Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris*. Seen with waders on sandbank at Bolger Bay. All months.

Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus*. Occasionally seen on rocky headlands and on exposed reef at low tide.

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*. Breeding resident. Flocks of up to 30 seen at Horseshoe Bay but numbers fluctuate. Seen on saltpan, grassland and intertidal areas. Most birds are race *miles* but some possible hybrids with race *novae-hollandiae* are seen with varying amounts of black on nape and sides of neck.

Lesser Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*. An uncommon passage migrant. Seen all months from October to April in some years.

Mongolian Plover *Charadrius mongolus*. A small flock of 30 to 40 birds seen at Bolger Bay, September to February most years.

Large Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaulti*. An occasional bird seen with the Mongolian Plovers.

Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus*. Recorded at Bolger Bay most months. More numerous in summer. Bred September 1985.

Black-fronted Plover *Charadrius melanops*. A few birds occasionally seen at Bolger Bay in winter.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*. Very rare visitor. Not recorded since 1977.

- Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*. Very rare migrant. Recorded in Nelly Bay October 1986.
- Eastern Curlew** *Numenius madagascarensis*. Flocks of 20 - 30 birds seen during summer on western side of the Island. A few birds usually overwinter.
- Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*. Flocks of up to 50 birds seen at Bolger Bay. Smaller numbers in other bays. Some birds overwinter.
- Grey-tailed Tattler** *Tringa brevipes*. The most common summer migrant. Small flocks in Nelly Bay and Geoffrey Bay. Up to 100 on western side of the Island but hard to estimate because of difficulty of access through mangroves.
- Common Sandpiper** *Tringa hypoleucos*. Summer migrant. One or two seen in Nelly Bay each year.
- Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*. Summer migrant. Five to 15 birds seen at Bolger Bay. One at Nelly Bay each year from 1972 till 1985.
- Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*. One record. HBL November 1980 on last remaining pool of water.
- Terek Sandpiper** *Tringa terek*. Passage migrant. One seen at Cockle Bay October 1984.
- Japanese Snipe** *Gallinago hardwickii*. Rare passage migrant. Recorded at HBL in October 1980 and 1982.
- Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*. Summer migrant in flocks up to 50 on western side of the Island. Some overwinter.
- Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *Calidris acuminata*. Passage migrant seen most years at Bolger Bay and occasionally in Nelly Bay and HBL.
- Red-necked Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*. Passage migrant. Small flocks seen at Bolger Bay and once at HBL.

Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*. A few birds resident in all bays in all months.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*. Resident in Nelly Bay and Geoffrey Bay (10 - 15) and Bolger Bay (up to 40). Usually absent during December to February.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*. Ten to twenty recorded at Bolger Bay most months. 160 seen in May 1987 during rough weather. Occasionally seen in Nelly Bay.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*. Rare visitor to all bays. Recorded in March 1979 and January and October 1980.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*. Rare visitor to Nelly Bay, usually during rough weather. In November 1977, January and November 1979 and January 1980.

Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*. One in Nelly Bay immediately after Cyclone Althea in December 1971.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*. Rare visitor to Nelly Bay and Bolger Bay. Recorded in October 1979, March and December 1979, November 1985, February, 1986.

Crested Tern *Sterna bergii*. Seen occasionally in all bays throughout the year. Ten to 20 usually at Bolger Bay and 30 - 40 seen perched near the oyster lease at Horseshoe Bay.

Lesser-crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis*. Occasionally seen in small numbers at Bolger Bay with the Crested Terns.

Black Noddy *Anous minutus*. Rare visitor. One recorded in Nelly Bay, March 1975.

Superb Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus superbis*. Probably vagrant from the mainland. Rare. In closed forest in Nelly Bay, Florence Bay and Horseshoe Bay mostly during winter.

Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus regina*. Probably resident.

Heard more often than seen throughout the year in Nelly Bay and Horseshoe Bay.

Wompoo Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus magnificus*. Recorded in closed forest along National Park walking track in Nelly Bay, May 1979, July, September and October 1981, August 1986.

Torresian Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula spilorrhoa*. Regular summer migrant arriving in September, breeding in all bays and leaving in April. Birds remain on the Island to feed during the day.

Topknot Pigeon *Lopholaimus antarcticus*. Flocks of 30 - 50 occasionally seen over Horseshoe and Bolger Bays. Single birds also recorded in closed forest along Gustav Creek and Endeavour Creek.

White-headed Pigeon *Columba leucomela*. One or two birds occasionally seen in closed forest along Gustav and Endeavour Creeks.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*. Flock of about 20 birds sometimes seen at Horseshoe Bay. Numbers do not seem to be increasing.

Brown Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis*. Probably resident. Seen in most months usually along creeks in denser vegetation or feeding on *Trema aspera* in regenerating cleared areas.

Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida*. Breeding resident. Very common and found in all habitats.

Bar-shouldered Dove *Geopelia humeralis*. Breeding resident in small numbers in all bays.

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*. Resident. Along walking tracks in denser vegetation and occasionally in suburban gardens.

Common Bronzewing *Phaps chalcoptera*. Very rare visitor.

Recorded in January and September 1978, December 1979 and September 1985.

Red-tailed Black-Cuckoo *Calyptrorhynchus magnificus*. Now a very rare visitor. Recorded in Nelly Bay January 1983. Seen frequently 40 - 50 years ago. (M. Crouther pers. comm.).

Galah *Cacatua roseicapilla*. A dry season visitor. Recorded October 1978, August 1982. Two released from captivity in 1986 in Nelly Bay.

Little Corella *Cacatua sanguinea*. One seen at Picnic Bay was probably an aviary escapee.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita* Resident in all bays in flocks of up to 20.

Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*. Breeding resident. Very common in all bays.

Scaly-breasted Lorikeet *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*. Very rare. Recorded May 1983, October 1986.

Double-eyed Fig-Parrot *Psittaculirostris diophthalma*. Reported by a National Parks officer in the hills behind Nelly Bay October 1984.

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*. Very rare. Only record April 1983.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*. Passage migrant usually in March/April and November. In April 1985 two seen along Endeavour Creek coinciding with an abundance of White Cedar Moth larvae *Leptocneira reducta*.

Pallid cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus*. Occasional visitor. Recorded at Arcadia before 1977 and at Nelly Bay in December 1983 and January 1984.

Brush Cuckoo *Cuculus variolosus*. Occasionally seen in all bays. Heard calling regularly in early summer.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cuculus pyrrhophanus*. Usually seen in winter months. Seldom heard calling.

Shining Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*. Occasionally recorded in closed forest usually in winter.

Little Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx malayanus*. Very rare. In mangroves at Cockle Bay September 1979, November 1980.

Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*. Summer migrant, not as common here as on the adjacent mainland.

Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae*. Summer migrant, seen from September till April. Seen in all areas often pursued by Pied Currawongs whose nests it parasitises.

Pheasant Coucal *Centropus phasianinus*. Breeding resident whose numbers have declined with the spread of residential areas and the destruction of its habitat.

Southern Boobook *Ninox novaeseelandiae*. Breeding resident, heard year round in all bays. Downy young with adults Nelly Bay December 1983.

Eastern Grass Owl *Tyto longimembris*. Very rare. September 1985 in Nelly Bay. Probably a fugitive from cane fires on the mainland further north.

White-throated Nightjar *Caprimulgus mysticallis*. Very rare. One record May 1986, Nelly Bay. Hit by a car.

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*. Very rare. Recorded at Horseshoe Bay May 1977 and along the West Point road in August 1977.

White-rumped Swiftlet *Collocalia spodiopygia*. Recorded occasionally during summer months November to February. Thousands seen off Nelly Bay January 1979.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*. Very rare. One record, a flock of about 100, November 1986.

Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus*. Regular passage migrant. Flocks usually pass over the island in November and February.

Azure Kingfisher *Ceyx azurea*. Rarely seen along Endeavour Creek and at HBL.

Little Kingfisher *Ceyx pusilla*. Rare. Recorded some years in mangroves along Ned Lee Creek and in closed forest along Gustav Creek.

Laughing Kookaburra *Dacela novaeguineae*. Breeding resident found in all bays.

Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii*. Breeding resident found in all bays. Not as common as *D. novaeguineae*.

Forest Kingfisher *Halcyon macleayii*. Breeding resident found in all bays. Present all year but numbers fluctuate.

Red-backed Kingfisher *Halcyon pyrrhopygia*. Occasional sightings in Horseshoe Bay during winter, usually associated with dry conditions inland.

Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta*. Birds recorded in all months but more common during winter. Seen in mangroves more often than in woodland.

Mangrove Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris*. Very rare. Recorded in mangroves on western side of the island.

Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher *Tanysiptera sylvia*. Very rare. Recorded once in Horseshoe Bay before 1977 and an injured bird found in Picnic Bay in December 1985 recovered and was released.

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*. Breeding resident. Present all year but numbers fluctuate.

Dollar Bird *Eurystomus orientalis*. Summer migrant. No breeding recorded yet. Present from September till April.

Passerines

Noisy Pitta *Pitta versicolor*. Probably resident. Seen occasionally throughout the year in closed forest along Gustav and Endeavour Creeks.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxema*. Breeding resident, very common in all areas.

Fairy Martin *Cecropis ariel*. Rare. Recorded at Horseshoe Bay and Bolger Bay.

Richard's Plipt *Anthus novaeseelandiae*. Very rare. Recorded at Bolger Bay in September 1985 and 1986, on salt-pan.

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*. Common breeding resident found in all areas.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*. Single birds occasionally seen in open woodland. One breeding record Nelly Bay December 1982.

Cicadabird *Coracina tenuirostris*. Casual visitor, possibly on migration, recorded in February-March and October-November some years.

White-winged Triller *Lalage sueurii*. Very rare visitor seen in April and December 1982 and June 1984.

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*. Breeding resident found in closed forest throughout the year.

Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis*. Very rare. Single immature or female birds recorded in closed forest in Nelly Bay August 1980, June 1985, April and September 1986.

Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*. Winter migrant, fairly common in woodland and closed forest from April till October. Males in adult plumage are rarely seen.

Little Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla megarrhyncha*. Resident recorded

all months along Gustav Creek and occasionally in mangroves.

Black-faced Monarch *Monarcha melanopsis*. Passage migrant found in closed forest and along creeks from February to April then August to October.

Spectacled Monarch *Monarcha trivirgatus*. Winter migrant, common in closed forest usually from March to October. Equal numbers of immatures and adults seen.

White-eared Monarch *Monarcha leucotis*. Winter migrant common in closed forest, from March till October. More immatures than adults seen.

Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula*. Common winter migrant found in open forest, suburban areas and mangroves. Rarely seen in December or January.

Satin Flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca*. Rare passage migrant. Recorded in May 1976 and May and September 1985 at Nelly Bay, October 1977 near HBL.

Shining Flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*. Rare. Seen occasionally in mangroves at Cockle Bay and Ned Lee Creek.

Restless Flycatcher *Myiagra inquieta*. Very rare winter visitor. Bolger Bay April 1984 and Nelly Bay July 1985.

Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons*. Winter migrant found along creeks in denser vegetation, March to October.

Grey Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa*. Winter migrant, common in open woodland and suburban areas from April till August.

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*. An occasional winter migrant recorded March till September in most bays.

Tawny Grassbird *Megalurus timoriensis*. Rare. Seen occasionally in Horseshoe Bay.

Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*. Rare. Occasional single

birds seen in Horseshoe Bay and Bolger Bay.

Large-billed Gerygone *Gerygone magnirostris*. Occasional visitor to mangroves on western side of the Island.

Mangrove Gerygone *Gerygone laevigaster*. Rarely recorded in mangroves on western side of the Island.

Fairy Gerygone *Gerygone palpebrosa*. Rare winter visitor. Immature birds seen in closed forest along Gustav Creek.

White-throated Gerygone *Gerygone olivacea*. Heard more often than seen in open woodland in all bays during winter.

Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides*. Breeding resident common in all areas. Often nests in the same trees as Spangled Drongos and Figbirds.

Blue-faced Honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis*. Rare. Recorded once at Horseshoe Bay before 1977, Picnic Bay May 1986 and April 1987.

Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta*. Very rare. One record July 1982, Horseshoe Bay.

Brown-backed Honeyeater *Ramsayornis modestus*. Rare. Recorded in Horseshoe Bay September 1981, October 1983, September 1984.

Dusky Honeyeater *Myzomela obscura*. Breeding resident seen occasionally in all areas.

Scarlet Honeyeater *Myzomela sanguinolenta*. Very rare. An immature male seen in June 1980 at Horseshoe Bay.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis*. Found in all habitats but more abundant in suburban areas. Breeds August till April.

Mistletoe Bird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*. Breeding resident uncommon in most areas.

Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis*. Rare winter migrant. A small flock seen May to August 1980 and June 1986.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*. One small flock seen occasionally at Picnic Bay and Horseshoe Bay until 1985. Since then the numbers at Picnic Bay have increased and they are now resident and breeding in the Picnic Bay Mall.

Double-barred Finch *Poephila bichenovii*. Rare. Small flock of 10 to 20 seen during very dry months some years.

Chestnut-breasted Mannikin *Lonchura castaneothorax*. Very rare. Flocks of up to 200 seen in Horseshoe Bay during dry months some years.

Nutmeg Mannikin *Lonchura punctulata*. Very rare. Flock of about 50 seen in Horseshoe Bay June 1981.

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*. Very rare. One record, a single bird seen in Nelly Bay September 1984.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*. Very rare. Recorded at Picnic Bay November 1976.

Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus*. Flocks of mostly immatures seen in closed forest and occasionally gardens from March - October.

Figbird *Sphecotheres viridis*. Breeding resident abundant in all bays. Birds here are hybrids between race *vieilloti* and race *flaviventris* and males show considerable variation in colouring (Ford 1975, 1982). Figbirds nest in association with Helmeted Friarbirds and Spangled Drongos.

Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*. Breeding resident. Present all year but more abundant in summer.

Australian Magpie-Lark *Grallina cyanoleuca*. A winter migrant common in suburban areas. One breeding record November 1985.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*. Seen in

small numbers throughout the year in all habitats.

White-browed Woodswallow *Artamus superciliosus*. Very rare.
One flock of 5 in Horseshoe Bay June 1982.

Pied Butcherbird *Cracticus nigrogularis*. Breeding resident,
common and tame in suburban areas where numbers are
increasing.

Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen*. Very rare. Recorded on
Horseshoe Bay oval July to October 1982 and July 1985
during very dry weather inland.

Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina*. Common breeding resident
found in all habitats.

Australian Raven *Corvus coronoides*. Resident on the Island some
years. Present from April 1978 to June 1980. Often seen
scavenging on beaches and dead coral areas.

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*. Breeding resident found in all
habitats.

JO WIENEKE, 142 Sooning Street, Nelly Bay, Qld. 4816.

BOOK REVIEW

THE SEABIRDS OF AUSTRALIA

by

TERENCE R. LINDSEY, 1986.

Angus & Robertson, Sydney. 29.8 cm x 22.5 cm. 518 pages.
All colour plates. Hardcover. \$65 retail.

Every serious bird watcher comes, sooner or later, to seabirds; whether it is the occasional bird watcher on the edge of a cliff, or a dedicated "twitcher" trying to increase his or her list. This is an excellent book for identification of birds seen on a pelagic trip, or for anyone who is interested in pictures of birds which are rarely seen, even at sea, and which are often nocturnal when on land.

The Seabirds of Australia covers the 90 species of seabirds so far recorded around the Australian continent. The book is generously illustrated with consistently good photographs and with a distribution map for every species it will allow easy identification; or in some cases the knowledge that exact identification of a particular sighting will not be possible. (I used this book for that purpose on a bird sighted off Bribie Island.)

The Seabirds of Australia is the third in the series of publications of the National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife. This was founded in 1969 as a project of the Australian Museum to select the best colour photographs of Australian birds and other wildlife.

TIM MURPHY, 1 Maker Street, The Gap, Qld. 4061.

TAPE RECORDING REVIEW

BIRD CALLS OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA
by
LEN GILLARD, 1987.

Processed by
E.M.I. (Australia) Ltd., N.S.W.
BCEA 150 : \$11.00 Approx.

This tape by Len Gillard features calls of 150 species from Eastern Australia, 75 per side, plus a rainforest chorus at the conclusion. Mr. Gillard has travelled extensively to obtain his recordings as birds from Cape York to Tasmania, with three endemics, are represented.

This recording includes many species previously not commercially available and some, for example Painted Snipe, Sooty Oystercatcher, Wood Sandpiper and Topknot Pigeon, are very difficult to record. Generally speaking the calls are strongly reproduced and the background noise is limited only to surrounding habitat noise with very little objectionable electronic noise. Some sections are very well represented, particularly the pigeons with 10 species and honeyeaters with 19 species recorded. I found the owls with 3 species - Rufous, Southern Boobook and Barn - very well recorded and of exceptional clarity.

Birds of similar plumage and distribution can be separated by learning the calls on this tape, e.g. Fairy Gerygone and White-throated Gerygone, Lewin's and Yellow-spotted Honeyeater; and birds with very similar calls can be separated, e.g. Australian Raven and Torresian Crow. There are four introduced species. A few notes and suggestions are given for those intending to use the tape for identification purposes. On the reverse side the names, both English and scientific binomials, are given for each species recorded following Pizzey's *A Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*.

With 150 species printed in taxonomic order there is no room for location of the recording nor any further explanation. This is a pity for those wishing to know more about geographic dialects.

The calls of both male and female Common Koel and Pheasant Coucal are included. The Eastern Yellow Robin is giving its pre-dawn call. The Golden-headed Cisticola is giving one particular alarm call.

The tape has 45 minutes per side playing time, averaging 36 seconds per species. The tape has Dolby but plays well on those recorders without this feature.

IAN VENABLES, 7 Aberfoyle St., Kenmore. Qld. 4069

BOOK REVIEW

"Your Garden Birds" by Ellen M. McCulloch, 1987
Hyland House, South Yarra : \$19.95

The stated purpose of this little book is to arouse the interest of casual or novice bird-watchers. The author has attempted to do this by acquainting the reader with birds frequently encountered in the places where we spend most time - around the home or workplace. As an active member of the Bird Observer's Club and the Victorian Museum for more than 15 years, Ellen McCulloch is well qualified to write a book for would-be birdos. Ellen has seen to it, however, that beginners are not the only people likely to enjoy reading this book. There are, of course, many "beginners" bird books about. Some are perhaps too technical to hold the attention of casual observers, while others may be full of padding, waffle having been substituted for substance. This is not such a book. Ellen's small book is not, nor was it intended to be, an exhaustive work. It does, however, contain a great deal of information about a wide variety of birds, which the observer might encounter in gardens from Perth to Birdsville to Cooktown. One hundred and fifty species are mentioned in the text, many of them unlikely to be included in other beginners' books. "Your Garden Birds" is well illustrated with 60 crisp colour photos.

Ellen has definitely not assumed that we all have back yards in one of the six capital cities. The book's 23 chapters cover a great deal of territory. There are chapters on inner city birds, tropical species, arid zone birds, and many others. The common thread tying the chapters together is birds and human habitation. The ways in which humans modify the environment to the benefit of some species and the detriment of others are discussed. Following on from this, Ellen suggests ways in which we may improve our garden environments to provide for the physical needs of birds. There are sections in the book on provision of food, water, shelter and nesting structures. Conservation is a very strong theme throughout this book. Ellen's commitment in this regard is evident, as she plans to donate a percentage of the royalties collected from sales of her book to the Bird Observers Club.

birdwatching. She suggests several study projects, and discusses both record keeping and participation in bird clubs. A succinct and useful list of additional literature is also provided.

The book is written in a lively style; there are abundant stories and anecdotes which illustrate the author's points and hold the reader's attention. I have only one very minor criticism to make. Because the book is based on a series of previously published magazine articles, the text seems a little disjointed, as the chapters do not follow directly on from one to another. This very slight flaw is, I think, more than compensated for by the fact that each chapter is more or less "self-contained", each discussing a particular theme. This means that each chapter may be read in a relatively short time: this is a book which may be picked up, read for a brief time, and put down again. It would, therefore, be of use in the classroom, and would probably appeal to very busy readers.

"Your Garden Birds" is a well-presented, enjoyable and informative book.

SCOTT O'KEEFE

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

The Sunbird is published quarterly by the Queensland Ornithological Society to further the knowledge of birds in Queensland and adjacent northern regions of Australia.

Papers are invited from non-members as well as members on all aspects of ornithology, e.g. life history, taxonomy, distribution, behaviour, and ecology. Articles may take the form of major articles on specific birds, birds in specific areas or habitats, or short notes on either birds themselves or the literature on birds, such as reviews of books or comments on published articles.

Submission of a paper implies that the results reported have not been published and are not being considered for publication elsewhere. The editor reserves the right to submit records of rare birds to the Records Appraisal Committee of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union.

Manuscripts should be typed (if possible), double-spaced and two (2) copies sent. Papers longer than four (4) typed A4 pages should have a summary. If needed, help may be given to authors to find relevant literature. Common names, scientific names and order of names should follow "Recommended English Names for Australian Birds", in *The Emu* Volume 77, Supplement, 1978. Intending authors should consult recent issues of *The Sunbird* to see acceptable forms of contributions.

References should be listed in alphabetical order at the end of papers in the following styles, titles of journals will be abbreviated as in the *World List of Scientific Periodicals*:

- FLEAY, D.H. 1937. Nesting habits of the brush turkey. *Emu* 36: 153-163.
- FRITH, J.H. 1976. Mallee fowl. In *Complete Book of Australian Birds* (H.J. Frith consul. ed.) pp 136-137. Sydney: Reader's Digest.
- SERVENTY, D., SERVENTY, V.N. & WARHAM, J. 1971. *The Handbook of Australian Sea-birds*. Sydney: Reed.
- SLATER, P. 1970. *A Field Guide to Australian Birds. Non-Passerines*. Adelaide: Rigby.

Tables and Figures should be numbered with Arabic numerals. Drawings and diagrams should be in Indian Ink on cartridge paper or tracing cloth. If authors cannot arrange suitable drawings, the editor may arrange the drawing of figures and diagrams. Authors may submit photographs (preferably black and white) with their manuscripts.

Reprints are not supplied gratis. Authors may order reprints within one month after publication.

Manuscripts should be sent to:

The Editor, *The Sunbird*, Queensland Ornithological Society,
P.O. Box 97, St. Lucia, Queensland 4067.