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## AN ANNOTATED LIST OF THE LAND BIRDS OF COOLOOLA

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### SUMMARY

One hundred and forty two species of land birds have been recorded in the coastal lowlands of Cooloola, southern Queensland. The list includes 91 residents and another 17 probable residents. There are nine winter visitors, eight summer visitors, seven transients, nine vagrants and one of unknown status. Seventy eight of the species are Passerines, including 14 species of honeyeaters.

### INTRODUCTION

Cooloola (26°S,153°E) (Fig.1.) is part of the coastal lowlands or wallum of southern Queensland described by Coaldrake (1961).

It has a mild sub-tropical climate, with up to 1500 mm mean annual rainfall in higher parts of the landscape: about three quarters of the rain falls in summer. There are massive sand dunes, extensive heath plains, rain forests, lakes and the Noosa River. Logging for commercially important timber, and sand mining, have been undertaken, but nevertheless Cooloola retains its natural aesthetic appeal. It is the only large relatively undisturbed area in 800 km of coastal lowlands between Gladstone, Queensland (23°S,151°E) and Coff's Harbour, New South Wales (30°S,153°E).

A great diversity of birds, including such rare species as the ground parrot *Pezoporus wallicus*, occur within the Cooloola mosaic of habitats. There are no published accounts of the birds despite the fact that it has been a popular bird-watching area for many years. Lists are available, however, for the similar large coastal islands nearby: Fraser Island (Vernon and Barry, 1972; Perkins, 1973), Moreton Island (Vernon and Martin, 1975b), and Stradbroke Island (Vernon and Martin, 1975a).

The annotated list of the birds of Cooloola is based on

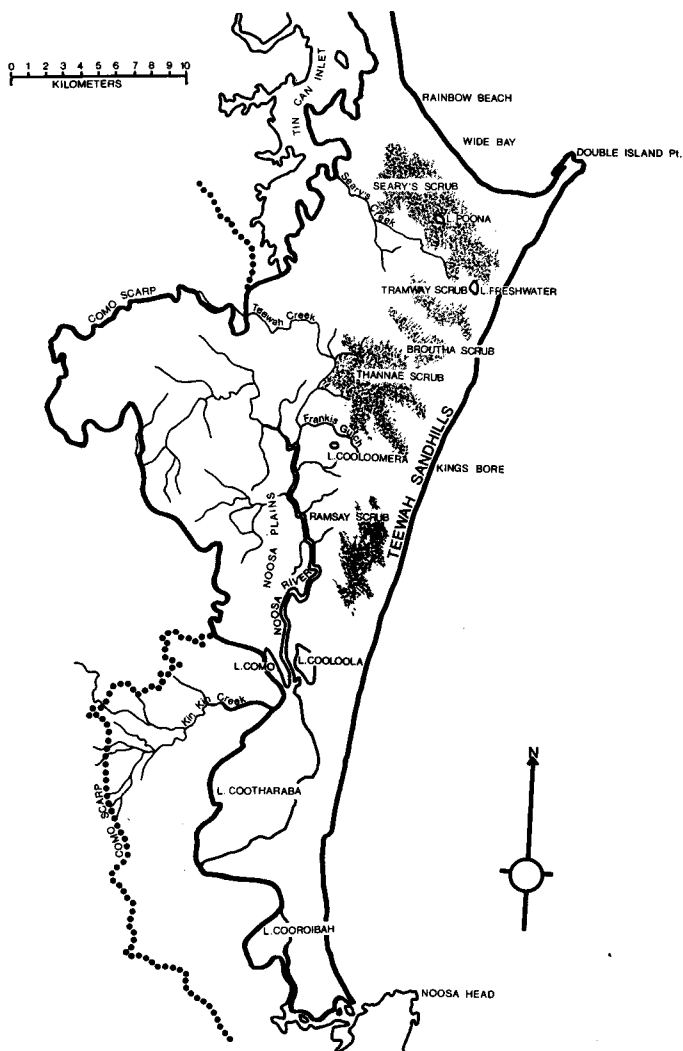


Figure 1. Cooloola, showing the principal features of the landscape and areas referred to in the text.

observations made during approximately ten visits of at least two days duration each year since 1970. It also includes information supplied by other observers. Nomenclature and order follows CSIRO (1969).

## VEGETATION

For convenience, the vegetation of Cooloola has been divided into the following ten categories based on the classification of Specht (1970). This is presented merely as a guide to bird observers and should not be taken as an authoritative analysis of vegetation types in the area.

### Talled closed-forest (TCF)

Tall rain forests, trees over 30 m in height, with dense (70-100%) foliage cover and little light penetration. Usually on the sides or bottoms of dunes, e.g. Tramway, Broutha, Thannae, Ramsay, and Seary's Scrubs.

### Closed-forest (CF)

Rain forests, trees 10 to 30 m in height, with dense foliage cover and little light penetration. Usually in similar situations to TCF, though appear drier and less developed, e.g. Frankis Gulch and scrub adjacent to Lake Cooloomera.

### Closed-scrub (CS)

Scrubs with shrubs 2 to 8 m in height and dense foliage cover with little light penetration. This category is used for the mangroves and littoral complex along Tin Can Inlet and the lower reaches of the Noosa River system.

### Tall open-forest (TOF)

Tall forest, trees over 30 m, with mid-dense (30-70%) foliage cover. Situated on deep sands and frequently adjacent to TCF. Tree species include *Eucalyptus pilularis*, *Angophora costata* and *Tristania conferta*.

### Open-forest (OF)

Forest with trees 10 to 30 m in height and mid-dense foliage cover. Occurs on sand dunes and on the Como Scarp. Chiefly *Eucalyptus intermedia*, *E. signata* and *Tristania* spp. Swamps with the tall *Melaleuca quinquenervia* predominating are also included.

### Low open-forest (LOF)

Forests with trees 5 to 10 m and mid-dense foliage cover. The most widespread vegetation with the tree *Banksia aemula* predominating. Occurs on the dunes and on the plains, often with a thick heath undergrowth.

#### Low woodland (LW)

Woodland with trees 5 to 10 m and sparse (10-30%) foliage cover. Chiefly stands of *Casuarina littoralis* which are common along the coastal foredunes.

#### Open- and closed-heath (OCH)

Heath to 2 m in height with mid-dense to dense foliage cover. Includes heaths of coastal dunes and windswept gullies, consisting chiefly of *Banksia* spp. Much of the Noosa Plain represents a wet phase of this formation on peat, and includes such plants as *Xanthorrhoea* spp., *Gahnia sieberiana*, *Banksia oblongifolia*, *B. robur*, *Leptospermum* spp., and *Hibbertia* spp.

#### Closed-fernland (CFN)

The dense vegetation, mostly consisting of ferns, completely covering the shallow creeks draining the plains.

#### Closed-sedgeland (CSD)

The dense sedge communities of the swamplands adjacent to the lakes and the very wet areas of the Noosa Plain.

### THE BIRDS

The Cooloola region is important in relation to the distribution of many species (Gravatt and Ingram, 1975). The northern or southern limits of several species occur at about this latitude (brush bronzewing *Phaps elegans*, the southern subspecies of fig parrot *Opopsitta diophthalma coxeni*, ground parrot *Pezoporus wallicus*, white-tailed nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*, southern emu-wren *Stipiturus malachurus*, shining flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*, dusky honeyeater *Myzomela obscura*, rufous-throated honeyeater *Conopophila rufogularis*, and the little wattlebird *Anthochaera chrysoptera*). Typically western birds such as red-winged parrot *Aprosmictus erythropterus*, turquoise parrot *Neophema pulchella*, white-winged cough *Corcorax melanorhamphus*, and the Australian raven *Corvus coronoides* have also been recorded, and rare species such as glossy black cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathamii* and eastern grass owl *Tyto longimembris* occur in the region.

Ingram (1975) discussed the past and present distribution of the ground parrot in south-east Queensland, and showed the importance of Cooloola to its conservation: it is regarded as endangered by Fisher *et al.* (1969). Forshaw (1969) stressed its reliance on regenerating heath, and its disappearance when the heath plants grow old. It may be noted in passing that the past distribution of the ground parrot closely coincides with the coastal lowlands and botanically analogous regions in southern Australia (see Coaldrake, 1961). In the aerial photograph of the northern part of the Noosa Plain (Fig. 2) ground parrot habitat is represented

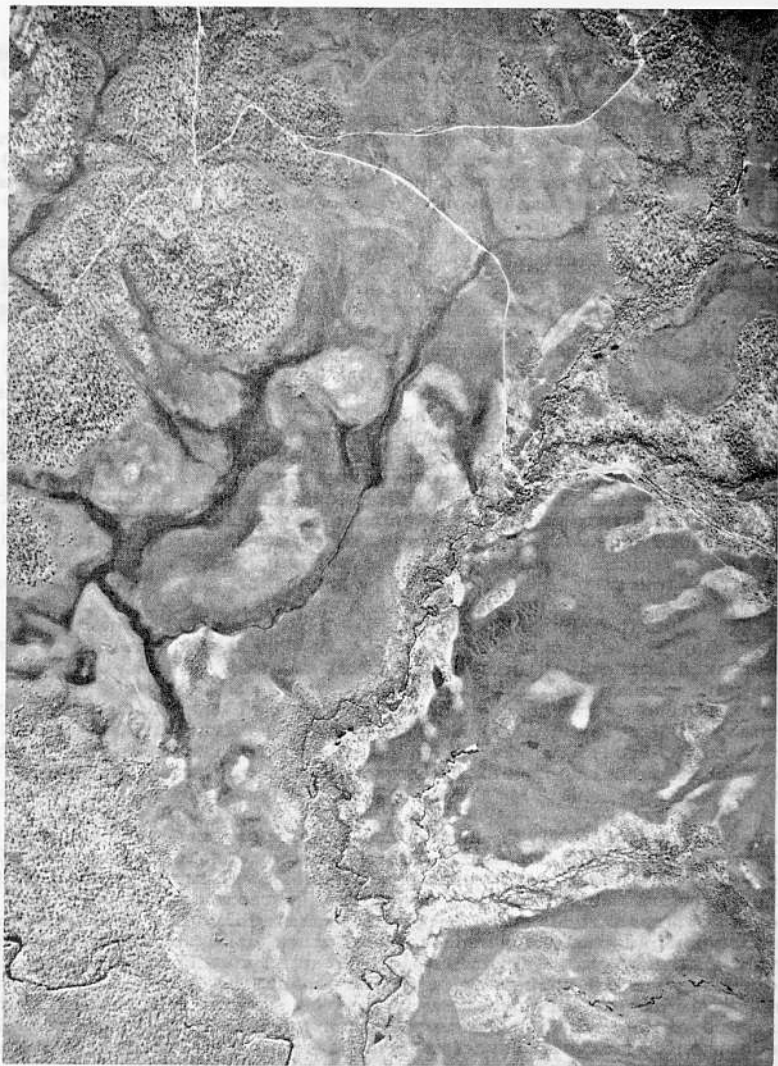


Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the northern part of the Noosa Plain showing ground parrot habitat (see text). (Reproduced by permission of the Surveyor General, Queensland. Crown Copyright Reserved.)

by the uniform medium grey tone, illustrated for example in the centre of the photograph on either side of Teewah Creek.

The southern emu-wren was first found in Queensland at Cooloola in April 1972 (Corben, 1973), and since then one other population has been located near Mt Bilewilam, also in Cooloola. Corben (1973) expressed concern for the effects that burning of the heath as a part of forest management would have on its future status in Cooloola.

The glossy black cockatoo is one of Australia's rare parrots (Forshaw, 1969). Although it appears to be quite common in southern Queensland, its nomadic movements make it an elusive species to locate. It is seen regularly in Cooloola when the *Casuarina* spp. nuts are ripening.

Fourteen species of honeyeaters (Meliphagidae) have been recorded from Cooloola. The presence and calls of this group are a distinctive feature. While some species maintain relatively stable populations throughout the year (such as Lewin honeyeater *Meliphaga lewinii* and mangrove honeyeater *M. fasciogularis*), most fluctuate considerably in numbers. Honeyeaters are most conspicuous during winter months (May-August), with large numbers of yellow-faced honeyeaters *M. chrysops* invading flowering blackbutt *Eucalyptus pilularis* and scarlet honeyeaters *Myzomela sanguinolenta* invading flowering *Banksia* spp. and blackbutt.

Certain distribution patterns within Cooloola emerge when birds other than those restricted to the rain forest and the heath are considered. The little cuckoo-shrike, *Coracina robusta*, weebill *Smicromis brevirostris* and noisy miner *Manorina melanocephala* have been recorded from the Como Scarp and west of the Noosa River only, although other large areas of open forest habitats exist. The satin bowerbird *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus* has been recorded from just above the southern end of the scarp, but not from the Cooloola lowlands.

Gravatt and Ingram (1975) noted the conspicuous absence of the southern chowchilla *Orthonyx temmincki*, brown warbler *Gerygone mouki* and yellow-throated scrub-wren *Sericornis lathamii* from the Cooloola rain forests: these species are normally common in south-east Queensland rain forests. The paradise riflebird *Ptiloris paradiseus*, is also surprisingly absent. On the other hand, the spectacled flycatcher *Monarcha trivirgata*, white-eared flycatcher *M. leucotis* and rufous shrike-thrush *Colluricincla megarrhyncha* are relatively common in the rain forests compared to similar habitat in south-east Queensland and it may be relevant to note that these are predominantly northern species.

A comparison of this list with the lists available for the coastal islands (Fraser, Moreton and Stradbroke) indicates that the avifauna is largely similar. Historical connections and vegetation

similarity can explain this. The more complex mosaic of habitats at Cooloola, as well as its mainland position, presumably accounts for the greater variety and number of species.

The following definitions of status have been used in the annotations to the list of species. They refer to the area as a whole, and not necessarily to each of the vegetation types in which each species has been observed.

#### Common

Many can be located throughout the year.

#### Uncommon

At least one can be located, usually with little effort, throughout the year.

#### Rare

An intensive search may be necessary to locate individuals.

#### Seasonal resident

Common, uncommon or rare (as above); summer, winter or passage migrants; may be breeding or non-breeding.

#### Transient

Seen only occasionally for short periods; sometimes over several years, but mostly rare and unpredictable in occurrence, non-breeding.

#### Vagrant

Unexpected visitors; probably sighted once or at most twice.

The following abbreviations are used for other observers: C.C. - C. Corben, G.C. - G. Czechura, R.E. - R. Elks, D.G. - D. Gravatt, A.S. - A. Smyth.

### LIST OF SPECIES

- Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* - Uncommon resident; OF, LOF, OCH.  
Mostly seen singly or in pairs, although moderately large groups have been recorded at times. One flock of 13 was feeding on the Noosa Plain in June 1970 (D.G.). Parties have been observed using roads for access through closed forest. Individuals have been seen feeding on the broken scapes of *Xanthorrhoea* sp. and on the berries of *Elaeocarpus reticulatus*.
- Crested hawk *Aviceda subcristata* - Uncommon, probably resident; TOF, OF.  
A pair observed near Lake Cooloomera in September 1974 performed an aerial display which could indicate breeding.

- Red-backed sea eagle *Haliastur indus* - Common resident; LOF, CS, OCH.  
Mostly seen singly along the foreshore and over large expanses of water.
- Whistling eagle *Haliastur sphenurus* - Common resident; CS, OF, LOF, LW, OCH, CSD.  
Probably the most common bird of prey. Nesting, with young, on the edge of Lake Cooloola in August 1968 (R.E.).
- Grey goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae* - Uncommon, probably resident; TCF, CF.  
Single birds were occasionally seen feeding over Seary's Scrub.
- Australian goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus* - Uncommon resident; CS, OF, LOF.  
Mostly single birds, adult and juvenile, seen regularly.
- Collared sparrowhawk *Accipiter cirrocephalus* - Uncommon resident; CF, CS, OF, LOF.  
Single birds were frequently noted hunting along Teewah Creek.
- Australian little eagle *Aquila morphnoides* - Vagrant; TOF.  
One seen near Seary's Scrub in September 1974.
- Wedge-tailed eagle *Aquila audax* - Vagrant; LOF.  
One recorded from near Teewah Creek in June 1970 (G.C.).
- White-breasted sea eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* - Uncommon resident; CS, LW, OCH.  
Mostly seen singly or in pairs, particularly in Tin Can Inlet. A juvenile at the entrance to Lake Como in January 1969 (R.E.).
- Swamp harrier *Circus approximans* - Vagrant; OCH.  
One on Noosa Plain in August 1968 and one near Lake Como in January 1969 (R.E.).
- Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* - Uncommon resident; CS, LW, OCH.  
Single birds seen regularly, particularly along foreshore. A pair of adults over Fig Tree Lake, near Lake Como, in January 1969 (R.E.).
- Peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* - Uncommon resident; TOF, OF, LOF, OCH.  
Commonly seen along the high dunes, and several trips in the late 1960's revealed an average of six birds along 30 km of beach (R.E.). Single birds have been seen occasionally, including one on the edge of the Noosa Plain in September 1972 (Ingram, 1972). Noted also in April 1971, June 1972, and January 1974.
- Nankeen kestrel *Falco cenchroides* - Uncommon resident; LOF, OCH.  
One pair has nested regularly since 1971 on the edge of the Noosa Plain near Teewah Creek.



- Brown hawk *Falco berigora* - Uncommon resident; OF, LOF, OCH.  
One pair has nested regularly since 1971, in an isolated eucalypt tree on the Noosa Plain and only 200 m from the nankeen kestrel nest.
- Brush turkey *Alectura lathamii* - Uncommon resident; TCF,CF,TOF,LW.  
Mounds have been found in Seary's Scrub and near Lake Cooloomera.  
A fresh mound was being constructed in blackbutt forest near Frankis Gulch in October 1972 (D.G.).
- King quail *Excalfactoria chinensis* - Uncommon resident; OCH, CFN.  
Single birds, mostly males, are regularly flushed from the Noosa Plain.
- Painted quail *Turnix varia* - Uncommon probably resident; LOF, OCH.  
Recorded from the edge of the Noosa Plain, along Rainbow Beach Road, and along King's Bore Road near Teewah Creek.
- Southern stone curlew *Burhinus magnirostris* - Common resident; OF,LOF, OCH.  
The nocturnal calls are frequently heard throughout Cooloola.
- Red-crowned pigeon *Ptilinopus regina* - Common probably resident;TCF,CF.  
Individuals have been recorded in all months (R.E.). The characteristic call is one of the most common sounds of the Cooloola rain forests in summer.
- Wompoo pigeon *Megaloprepia magnifica* - Uncommon, probably resident; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Recorded most months of the year, but appears to be more numerous in summer.
- Top-knot pigeon *Lopholaimus antarcticus* - Common resident; TCF,CF,TOF.  
Highly nomadic, moving over apparently large distances in considerable numbers. Feeding on fruits of *Endiandra sieberi* from August to November (R.E.).
- White-headed pigeon *Columba norfolciensis* - Uncommon, possibly resident; TCF.  
Recorded in small numbers from Seary's Scrub in summer. Heard calling in December 1972, January 1973, September 1974, and January 1975.
- Brown pigeon *Macropygia amboinensis* - Uncommon resident;TCF,CF,TOF.  
Single birds noted regularly.
- Bar-shouldered dove *Geopelia humeralis* - Common resident; CS,OF,LOF,LW.  
A nest with two eggs was found at a height of 3 m in a *Banksia aemula* near Teewah Creek on 21 October 1973 (D.G.).
- Peaceful dove *Geopelia striata* - Uncommon resident; OF.  
Recorded in small flocks on the Como Scarp and in the vicinity of Lake Cootharaba.

- Green-winged pigeon *Chalcophaps indica* - Common Resident; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Particularly common in Seary's Scrub. Tends to be more numerous on rain forest fringes.
- Common bronzewing *Phaps chalcoptera* - Uncommon, probably resident; OF, LOF.  
Single birds have been recorded regularly from along King's Bore Road (D.G.) and occasionally from the Como Scarp.
- Brush bronzewing *Phaps elegans* - Rare, probably resident; LOF.  
This species was not definitely recorded from Queensland until observed on Fraser Island (Vernon and Barry, 1972) and again in Cooloola along the King's Bore Road in April 1972 (Ingram, 1972a). In September 1974, one of us obtained excellent views of a bird in low open-forest of *Casuarina* sp. and *Banksia aemula* at the Seary's Creek crossing (8 km from the township of Rainbow Beach). The bird was calling and there appeared to be at least one other in the vicinity.
- Crested pigeon *Ochyphaps lophotes* - Vagrant; OF, LOF.  
Recorded occasionally near Mt Bilewilam in 1968 and 1969 (R.E.).
- Rainbow lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
Highly nomadic, at times feeding on flowering *Banksia aemula* in flocks of hundreds.
- Scaly-breasted lorikeet *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
Highly nomadic, frequently in mixed flocks with the rainbow lorikeet.
- Yellow-tailed black cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus funereus* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF, LOF, LW, OCH.  
Highly nomadic. One flock of several hundred was seen in low open-forest which had been burnt (C.C.). Small flocks regularly feed on seeds of *Hakea gibbosa* in burnt areas of OCH (R.E.).
- Glossy black cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami* - Uncommon resident; TOF, OF.  
Nomadic, usually noted feeding on the seeds of *Casuarina* sp.  
Regularly recorded in small flocks at dusk from Lakes Freshwater and Cooloomera.
- Sulphur-crested cockatoo *Cacatua galerita* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF.  
Flocks have often been observed feeding on the seeds from *Pinus radiata* cones in nearby plantations.
- Red-winged parrot *Aprosmictus erythropterus* - Uncommon resident; LOF, OCH.  
Recorded chiefly in small parties around the edges of the Noosa Plain and near Tin Can Bay Inlet; also in the Noosa area (1966-69), Como Scarp (1969) and Cootharaba (1967) (R.E.).

- King parrot *Aprosmictus scapularis* - Uncommon resident; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Mostly seen in small flocks in Seary's Scrub.
- Pale-headed rosella *Platycercus adscitus* - Common resident; OF, LOF, OCH.  
Seen regularly in pairs and small flocks.
- Turquoise parrot *Neophema pulchella* - Vagrant; LOF.  
Gravatt (1973) recorded two individuals in low open-forest near the edge of the Noosa Plain in August 1972: they were part of an influx at that time.
- Ground parrot *Pezophorus wallicus* - Common resident; OCH, CFN.  
The evening and morning choruses and the number flushed during traverses indicate that this bird is common on the Noosa Plain. It favours heath approximately 10 to 25cm high with little or no surface water, and is rarely found in the thick, tall heath or sedgeland with a very wet substrate (see Fig. 2). On the evening of 12 September 1974 one of us listened at three different localities approximately five kilometres apart on the Noosa Plain. An estimated 7 - 10 individuals were calling at each locality. We have observed one particular area of heath burnt in 1970 for five years. One year after burning, ground parrots were common in the area and have remained so to the present, although we have noticed local movements and changes in their concentration. One of us found a nest on 14 September 1974 concealed beneath the down-turned leaves of a *Xanthorrhoea* sp. It consisted chiefly of loosely interwoven grasses, and contained three cream-white eggs. The nest was revealed by the parent bird which flushed within 1 m of the observer and the nest.
- Pallid cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus* - Uncommon, probably resident; TOF, OF, LOF, OCH.  
One on Como Scarp in August 1968, and a pair near Lake Como in January 1969 (R.E.). One on the Noosa Plain near Teewah Creek in August and October 1972 (D.G.).
- Brush cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* - Common summer visitor; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF.  
Usually arrives in October and departs in late March. A fledgling was being fed by brown thornbills in blackbutt forest near Frankis Gulch in October 1972 (D.G.).
- Fan-tailed cuckoo *Cacomantis pyrrhophanus* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF.  
Numbers appear to remain relatively stable throughout the year.
- Horsfield bronze cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalis* - Rare passage migrant; OF, OCH  
Recorded occasionally from the edge of the Noosa Plain in summer although it is not regular. Seen in October 1972, December 1973 and January 1974.

- Golden bronze cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus plagosus* - Common, probably resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF, LOF.  
Appears to be most common in September and October.
- Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* - Uncommon summer visitor; TOF, OF.  
Several records from 1967 onwards in the Lake Cooloomera - Frankis Gulch area (R.E.). Recorded most frequently from the Como Scarp.
- Channel-billed cuckoo *Seythrops novaehollandiae* - Vagrant; OF, LOF.  
Single birds noted in December 1972 and January 1974.
- Pheasant coucal *Centropus phasianinus* - Common resident; OF, LOF, OCH, CSD, CFN.
- Powerful owl *Ninox strenua* - Rare, probably resident; CF, TOF.  
Recorded at Frankis Gulch in August 1972 (D.G.) and at Lake Cooloomera in September 1973 (C.C. and A.S.).
- Barking owl *Ninox connivens* - Rare resident; TCF, CF.  
At least three pairs have been located in Cooloola (D.H. Fleay, pers. comm.)
- Boobook owl *Ninox novaeseelandiae* - Common resident; TCF, CF, LW, TOF, OF, LOF.
- Eastern grass owl *Tyto longimembris* - Rare resident; OCH.  
Dwyer and Willmer (1975) report that one was flushed on the Noosa Plain in August 1975, and a feather found in the same area in May 1975. They have also heard *Tyto* screeches at other times.
- Tawny frogmouth *Podargus strigoides* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF, LOF.
- Owlet-nightjar *Aegotheles cristatus* - Common resident; CF, TOF, OF, LOF, OCH.
- White-throated nightjar *Eurostopodus mystacalis* - Uncommon resident; OF, LOF.  
Often heard from near Teewah Creek and the edge of the Noosa Plain. One was flushed from a ridge on the Como Scarp in September 1974 and one was hunting over the Noosa River at dusk in November 1972 (D.G.).
- Spine-tailed swift *Hirundapus caudacutus* - Irregular summer visitor.  
Large flocks have occasionally been noted feeding overhead in summer.
- Fork-tailed swift *Apus pacificus* - Irregular, probably transient.  
One flock numbering hundreds was seen feeding over the Noosa Plain in January 1974.

- Azure kingfisher *Alcedo azurea* - Common resident; CS, LOF, CSD.  
Mostly seen singly along creeks and around the edges of lakes.
- Laughing kookaburra *Dacelo gigas* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.
- Forest kingfisher *Halcyon macleayii* - Common resident; OF.  
Appears to be much more numerous in summer.
- Sacred kingfisher *Halcyon sancta* - Common summer visitor; CS, OF, LOF, LW.  
Small numbers are found throughout the winter.
- Mangrove kingfisher *Halcyon chloris* - Common summer visitor; CS.  
Some birds probably remain through the winter.
- Rainbow bee-eater *Merops ornatus* - Common resident.  
Appears to be more numerous in summer and feeds overhead in all habitats.
- Dollar-bird *Eurystomus orientalis* - Common summer visitor; CS, TOF, OF, LOF.  
Usually arrives in late September/early October and departs in early March.
- Noisy pitta *Pitta versicolor* - Uncommon winter visitor; TCF, CF.  
Some individuals probably remain all year round, and one bird was heard in Seary's Scrub in November 1972 (D.G.). Apparently numbers of this species disperse from high altitude rain forests to lowland areas like Cooloola in winter months. King and King (1974) have presented evidence which supports this from their observations of broken snail shells at feeding anvils in Noosa National Park.
- Welcome swallow *Hirundo neoxena* - Common resident.  
Feeding overhead in all habitats, it appears to be more common in summer.
- Tree-martin *Petrochelidon nigricans* - Common resident.  
Feeding overhead in all habitats, particularly in winter.
- Fairy martin *Petrochelidon ariel* - Common summer visitor; CS, CSD.  
Seen mostly in large flocks near water. Small numbers occur throughout the year.
- Australian pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae* - Common resident; OCH.  
Noted feeding in low heath or on the tracks through the Noosa Plain.
- Black-faced cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae* - Common resident; CF, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.

- Little cuckoo-shrike *Coracina robusta* - Uncommon winter visitor; OF.  
Occurs in small numbers on the Como Scarp.
- Cicada-bird *Edoliisoma tenuirostre* - Common summer visitor; TCF,  
CF, TOF, OF, LOF.  
Usually arrives in late October and departs in early March.
- White-winged triller *Lalage sueurii* - Rare passage migrant; OF, LOF.  
At Lake Cooloomera in August 1968 (R.E.). Noted in summer on  
the Como Scarp (February 1973 and January 1974) and from near  
Teewah Creek in October 1972 (D.G.).
- Varied triller *Lalage leucomela* - Uncommon resident; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Found most commonly singly or in pairs in Seary's Scrub,  
particularly on the fringe. Numbers increase in winter (R.E.).
- Australian ground-thrush *Zoothera dauma* - Rare, probably resident; TCF.  
Single birds occasionally observed in Seary's Scrub.
- Golden-headed fantail-warbler *Cisticola exilis* - Common resident; OCH,  
CSD, CFN.
- Tawny grassbird *Megalurus timoriensis* - Common resident; OCH, CSD, CFN.  
It appears to be more common in summer, however this may be  
because it does not call in winter. Occurs most abundantly  
in the dense sedges of the Noosa Plain.
- Variegated wren *Malurus lamberti* - Common resident; TOF, LOF, OF.
- Red-backed wren *Malurus melanocephalus* - Common resident; OF, LOF, LW,  
OCH, CSD, CFN.  
This species generally prefers more open spaces than *M. lamberti*  
and is particularly common on the Noosa Plain.
- Southern emu-wren *Stipiturus malachurus* - Rare resident; OCH, CFN.  
This species was discovered at Cooloola in April 1972 (Corben,  
1973). Recorded regularly in the vicinity of the original  
locality on the Noosa Plain near Teewah Creek; it was recorded  
on several occasions in 1974 and 1975 near the foot of Mt  
Bilewilam, 4 km to the north.
- White-throated warbler *Gerygone olivacea* - Common resident; OF.  
Found regularly on the Como Scarp. Records suggest that it is  
scarce east of the Noosa River.
- Buff-breasted warbler (mangrove warbler) *Gerygone levigaster* - Common  
resident; CS.
- Weebill *Smicromis brevirostris* - Common resident; OF.  
Occurs most commonly on the Como Scarp.
- Brown thornbill *Acanthiza pusilla* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF,  
LOF, LW.

- White-browed scrub-wren *Sericornis frontalis* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, LOF.
- Large-billed scrub-wren *Sericornis magnirostris* - Common resident; TCF.
- Jacky winter *Microeca leucophaea* - Rare, probably resident; OF, LOF.  
Three records between Mt Bilewilam and Coop's Corner in 1968 and 1969 (R.E.).
- Rose robin *Petroica rosea* - Uncommon winter visitor; TOF.  
Recorded near Seary's Scrub and along the Noosa River.
- Southern yellow robin *Eopsaltria australis* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF.
- Pale yellow robin *Tregellasia capito* - Uncommon resident; TCF.  
Seen singly and in pairs in Seary's and Ramsay Scrubs.
- Grey fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
More common in winter.
- Rufous fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons* - Common passage migrant; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Seen mostly in the months September/October and March/April.
- Willie wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys* - Common resident; CS, OF, LW.  
Found chiefly in the vicinity of water, particularly mangroves.
- Leaden flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula* - Common summer visitor; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.
- Shining flycatcher *Myiagra alecto* - Status unknown; CS.  
Wheeler (1959) records this species from the RAOU campout at Noosa Heads in October 1958. He notes "on the Noosa River launch trip, six different observers saw birds answering the description of a female shining flycatcher and one male bird".
- Restless flycatcher *Seisura inquieta* - Resident; TCF, CF, CS, OCH.  
Resident along lower Noosa. Resident juveniles at Seary's Scrub in December 1969. A regular summer visitor to the Noosa River upstream from Lake Como (R.E.).
- Black-faced flycatcher *Monarcha frater* - Uncommon passage migrant; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Occurs in small numbers during the months September/October and March/April.
- Spectacled flycatcher *Monarcha trivirgatas* - Common summer visitor; TCF, CF.  
Individuals recorded throughout the year.

- White-eared flycatcher *Monarcha leucotis* - Uncommon, probably resident; TCF, CF.  
Gravatt and Ingram (1975) note that although this species is occasionally seen further south, it is relatively common only in rain forest and its fringes in Noosa National Park and Cooloola. It is not known whether it is a resident or a summer visitor to south-east Queensland. At least some individuals are resident (R.F.).
- Golden whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Noticeably more common in winter.
- Rufous whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris* - Common resident; TOF, OF, LOF, LW.
- Grey shrike-thrush *Colluricincla harmonica* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
A nest with three eggs was located in a *Leptospermum* sp. in October 1973 (D.G.).
- Rufous shrike-thrush *Colluricincla megarrhyncha* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF.  
Appears to be more numerous in winter, though it is found in numbers in Seary's and Ramsay Scrubs throughout the year.
- Eastern whipbird *Psophodes olivaceus* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF.
- White-headed sittella *Neositta leucocephala* - Uncommon resident; TOF, OF.  
Seen mostly in small parties on the Como Scarp.
- White-throated tree-creeper *Climacteris leucophaea* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF.
- Mistletoe-bird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum* - Common resident; CS, OF, LOF, LW.  
Highly nomadic.
- Spotted pardalote *Pardalotus punctatus* - Uncommon, probably resident; TCF, CF, TOF, OF, LOF.  
Occurs most commonly in winter. Nests found along the Noosa River in August 1968 and January 1969 (R.E.).
- Black-headed pardalote *Pardalotus melanocephalus* - Common resident; OF, LOF, LW.
- Grey-breasted silveryeye *Zosterops lateralis* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
Appears more commonly in winter when transient flocks of hundreds of individuals have been noted.
- Brown honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta* - Common resident; CS, OF, LOF, LW, OCH, CSD, CFN.



- Scarlet honeyeater *Myzomela sanguinolenta* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
Occurs mostly in winter when it is often one of the most common species in some areas and invades flowering *Banksia aemula* in large numbers.
- Lewin honeyeater *Meliphaga lewinii* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF.
- Mangrove honeyeater *Meliphaga fasciogularis* - Common resident; CS.
- Yellow-faced honeyeater *Meliphaga chrysops* - Common winter visitor; TOF, OF, LOF, LW.  
Some birds are to be found in the summer. It is attracted in large numbers to flowering blackbutt.
- White-naped honeyeater *Melithreptus lunatus* - Transient; LOF.  
Recorded from Teewah Creek in May 1972, and Lake Cooloola in June 1970. Possibly regular winter visitor in small numbers.
- White-throated honeyeater *Melithreptus albogularis* - Common resident; TOF, OF, LOF, LW.
- Blue-faced honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis* - Uncommon resident; OF, LOF.  
Found mostly in small parties on the edge of the Noosa Plain and on the Como Scarp.
- Little friar-bird *Philemon citreogularis* - Common resident; TOF, OF, LOF, LW, OCH.
- Noisy friar-bird *Philemon corniculatus* - Common resident; TOF, OF, LOF, LW, OCH.  
Generally much more numerous in winter. This species, and to a lesser extent the little friar-bird, occur in large numbers from March to October.
- White-cheeked honeyeater *Phylidonyris niger* - Common resident; LOF, OCH, CSD, CFN.  
Occurs most commonly during winter. It feeds on a variety of plants on the Noosa Plain. Gravatt (1974) suggests that it is prepared to breed at any time of the year depending on available food supplies.
- Eastern spinebill *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris* - Uncommon winter visitor; CF, TCF, TOF, OF, LOF.  
Some individuals probably remain throughout the year, particularly in the rain forests.
- Noisy miner *Manorina melanocephala* - Common resident; OF.  
Although it is locally common on the Como Scarp, this species does not appear to extend east of the Noosa River.

- Little wattle-bird *Anthochaera chrysoptera* - Common resident; TOF, OF, LOF, LW, OCH.  
This species is not recorded north of Cooloola by Storr (1973).
- Red-browed finch *Aegintha temporalis* - Common resident; TCF, CF, TOF, LOF, LW.
- Banded finch *Peophila bichenovii* - Uncommon, probably resident; OF. Recorded in small parties from the Como Scarp and Lake Cootharaba.
- Chestnut-breasted finch *Lonchura castaneothorax* - Vagrant; OCH.  
On the Noosa Plain in 1968 and 1969, and two birds recorded there again in September 1973 (C.C.).
- Olive-backed oriole *Oriolus sagittatus* - Common resident; TOF, OF.
- Southern figbird *Sphecotheres vieilloti* - Common resident; TCF, CF. Observed mostly feeding on rain forest fruiting trees in summer.
- Spangled drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus* - Common resident; TCF, CF, CS, TOF, LOF, LW.  
Moderate numbers remain throughout the year.
- Magpie-lark *Grallina cyanoleuca* - Common resident; CS, OF, CSD. Found mostly in the vicinity of water, particularly near mangroves.
- White-breasted wood-swallow *Artamus leucorhynchus* - Uncommon, probably resident; CS, LOF, OF, OCH.  
Mostly seen in summer. Feeding in small flocks, particularly over the lakes and mangroves.
- White-browed wood-swallow *Artamus superciliosus* - Irregular transient; LOF, OCH.  
Ingram (1972b) reports a large flock feeding on the flowering *Xanthorrhoea* sp. of the Noosa Plain in September 1972.
- Dusky wood-swallow *Artamus cyanopterus* - Regular winter visitor; OCH, CFN.  
In June 1973, a very large flock was noted feeding on flowering *Xanthorrhoea* sp. in the same manner as was described for the white-browed wood-swallow by Ingram (1972b).
- Pied currawong *Strepera graculina* - Uncommon winter visitor; CF, TOF, OF. Possibly small numbers are resident throughout the year. Wintering birds are frequently noted from the Como Scarp and around Lake Cootharaba.
- Pied butcher-bird *Cracticus nigrogularis* - Common resident; OF, LOF, LW, OCH.

- Grey butcher-bird *Cracticus torquatus* - Common resident; TOF, OF, LOF, LW.
- Black-backed magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen* - Uncommon resident; OF.  
Found mostly in small numbers on the Como Scarp.
- Catbird *Ailuroedus crassirostris* - Common resident; TCF.  
Occurs most commonly in Seary's and Ramsay Scrubs.
- Regent bower-bird *Sericulus chrysocephalus* - Uncommon winter visitor; TCF, CF.  
Recorded from Seary's Scrub in June 1972, August 1973 and September 1974. Recorded twice from Ramsay Scrub (R.E.).
- Australian raven *Corvus coronoides* - Vagrant; OCH.  
One flying over the plain in June 1973.
- Australian crow *Corvus orru* - Common resident; CS,TOF,OF,LOF,LW.

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## A WHITE PHASE REEF HERON IN SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA

J.L. MCKEAN, H.B. GILL and J.H. LEWIS

On 29 June 1965, at Batehaven near Bateman's Bay (35°43'S, 150°11'E), New South Wales, we observed a white phase reef heron *Egretta sacra*. The bird was feeding in a salt-water pool behind a sand dune in the close proximity of a white-faced heron, *Ardea novaehollandiae*. The bird was recognised immediately as not being one of the other *Egretta* species which, on the basis of previous records, could be expected to occur in that area. Apart from the fact that two of us (J.L. McK. and H.B.G.) are quite familiar with all the Australian egrets it should be noted that *E. garzetta*, *E. intermedia*, *E. alba* and *Bulbulcus ibis* could be discounted on the basis of size, shape of bill, colour of soft parts and difference in feeding behaviour. The reef heron we saw had a greenish grey bill with a yellowish facial patch from the base of the bill to the eyes. The legs were light coloured, perhaps yellowish grey would be a reasonable description of their colour. Slater (1970) and Macdonald (1973) give the bill colour of the white phase as yellow.

However on the basis of our own field experience and from the data on museum skins it seems that white phase birds with greenish grey bills are quite common. From the few skins available in the collections of the Division of Wildlife Research, CSIRO, it appears that this character might be one of immature or non-breeding birds. It certainly does not relate to sexual differences.

From subsequent conversation with Mr A.R. McGill and Dr H.F. Recher we learned that white phase reef herons had probably not previously been noted so far south in eastern Australia before and that the southern boundary of this phase's normal range was not accurately known. We think it likely that Queensland workers may have some idea of the southern range of the white phase, and of the occurrence of vagrants beyond it, and we hope this note may encourage them to publish their observations. We note that Vernon and Martin (1975) record both phases from Stradbroke Island but give no information on their relative abundance.

In Western Australia, Serventy (1951) notes that "even in the extreme south occasional white individuals are reported. There are records from Albany, Cape Naturaliste and Rottneest Island".

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## REVIEW

CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA, PART 1 - NON-PASSERINES  
by H.T. Condon, Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union,  
Melbourne, 1975, 311 pp. + maps. Price \$10.50.

In this brief notice the aim is to consider the value of Part 1 of the new R.A.O.U. Checklist to members of the Queensland Ornithological Society. This regional approach may place unfair perspectives on a study of quite different dimensions; nevertheless, this is the way the book will be used by many of its readers. As with all books of this type, it is imperative that the Introduction should be carefully studied so that the author's objectives and the limitations imposed may be recognized and taken into account.

Scientific names, vernacular names, geographical distribution, status and a few other topics are considered separately in this notice.

### Scientific Names.

Most scientific names will be readily recognized by local ornithologists except that the adoption of *Tachybaptus* for the little grebe, *Petrophassa* for the spinifex pigeon, *Psitteuteles* for the varied lorikeet, *Psittaculirostris* for the fig parrot and *Northiella* for the blue bonnet among genera may be unfamiliar; the use of *Circus aeruginosus* for swamp harrier, *Tringa terek* for the terek sandpiper and *Macropygia amboinensis* for the brown pigeon likewise may be new for some people.

The use of subspecific names is of little or no consequence to field observers and can generally be ignored. There is a detailed consideration of subspecies but none has a vernacular name applied. The elevation of the red-collared lorikeet and the rufous-breasted bronze-cuckoo to species, sometimes considered as races of *Trichoglossus haematodus* and *Chrysococcyx malayanus* respectively, is worth noting.

### Vernacular Names.

In conjunction with the scientific name, any individual species will be recognizable by the amateur observer; no combination of these names is entirely novel.

There is remarkably little innovation within the common names and this stability is commendable.

Of course, some controversy is involved. Is Chinese snipe a desirable change? Is it really necessary to follow cosmopolitan names like masked booby, black kite, Brahminy kite, emerald dove,

pied stilt, Indian koel and lesser yellow-billed kingfisher, when these have Australian forms with local names of long-standing? White-bellied swiftlet, on the other hand, may well be a more acceptable name than glossy swiftlet. There are, of course, good arguments for adopting vernacular names from monographs dealing with groups of birds on a world-wide basis *e.g.* parrots, pigeons and doves, waterfowl, sea birds and birds of prey, or from lists of birds compiled for the whole world; unfortunately, these two sources are often in disagreement and so would not encourage stability.

It should be noted in this Checklist that the possessive form of a person's name is used when it occurs in a vernacular name *e.g.* Cook's petrel, but strangely Gould petrel.

A number of helpful changes in the use of hyphens and spelling include giant-petrel, storm-petrel, frigatebird, tropicbird, pygmy-goose, scrubfowl, brush-turkey, plains-wanderer and lotusbird. Some names that will cause confusion, however, are Trinidade Island petrel, flesh-footed shearwater, shoveller and Torres Straits pigeon. The names large-billed dotterel for large dotterel or large sand-dotterel, great skua for southern skua and spotted owl for boobook owl are useful changes for the bird-watcher, but kookaburra (for laughing kookaburra) is not. It remains to be seen whether pink cockatoo, many-coloured parrot and rufous-tailed bronze-cuckoo will be generally accepted in place of Major Mitchell, mulga parrot and Horsfield bronze-cuckoo respectively.

#### Distribution.

In this section the Queensland bird-observer will be interested in two aspects; whether a species occurs in or has occurred in Queensland and whether its range within the State is reliably recorded. All the species substantively recorded from Queensland, *i.e.* with specimen or reliable sight record to substantiate the occurrence, are recorded in the list. However, if princess parrot, northern rosella and scarlet-breasted parrot are to be admitted without substantiation, then the elegant parrot also should have been.

The geographical ranges given within Queensland are no sound guide for local naturalists even where some regional precision has been attempted. For example, the emu is known from coastal islands such as Bribie Island, and the cassowary from farther south, to Mount Spec. The black duck and wood duck occur in numbers much farther north than Townsville, the white pygmy-goose is recorded around Cape York Peninsula, and the broad-billed sandpiper from the Gulf of Carpentaria and more southerly coastal plains such as around the delta of the Burdekin River. Mostly, the broad treatment of distribution on a continental scale restricts its usefulness.

### Status

Placement of the species in some 32 categories of abundance (including "rare", "rare straggler", "very rare", "doubtful", "probable", "exceptional", "isolated", "accidental", "vagrant") without further definition is too much for even comparative purposes. In more specific instances the frequency of occurrence is quite incorrect *e.g.* the turquoise parrot is common well west of Dalby.

### Other Comments.

The inclusion of fossil birds is most interesting, and unlikely to be so readily available to ornithologists elsewhere.

The gazetteer is limited with regard to Queensland and the map also is of little use; for instance, none of the nine islands in which the white-capped noddy is given as breeding is shown.

### Conclusion.

It is a simple task to find some errors in, and to have some differences of opinion from, a definitive work of this magnitude. Mr Condon has compiled a meticulous checklist soundly following scientific conventions and these criticisms are minor in this light. As a book it is sturdy and inexpensive. No serious bird-observer in Queensland can afford to neglect this long overdue work.

H.J. Lavery