



Gibraltar Reserve Wildlife Refuge

News

September 2009



Rainbow Bee-eaters have just arrived, with a small flock hawking insects around the cabin on 12/09/09

The grassland is supporting strong numbers of **Brown Quail**, with flocks of 12+ not uncommon. **King Quail** are also doing well in the denser groundcovers.

At least 2 **Lewin's Rails** spent the summer in the gullies around the cabin, calling frequently and occasionally glimpsed. Hopefully they'll be nesting, but it could be hard to confirm. Our pattern burn regime seems to suit the ground-dwellers.

Tawny Grassbird & **Golden-headed Cisticola** both attempted nesting, with juvenile Grassbirds present by early January.



Noisy Friarbirds are getting territorial, as usual

In the forests, **Cicadabirds** were a noisy success, with juveniles observed with the male in early 2009, the first breeding record.

White-throated Nightjars were paired up adjacent to the cabin for most of their breeding season and a **Brush Turkey** built a mound before disappearing.

Good shrub regeneration in the forest has probably helped many birds, with **Black-faced Monarchs** exploring new areas previously unseen. **Rose, Scarlet and Flame Robins** all occurred during winter, along with large numbers of **Brown Gerygone** and **White-naped Honeyeater**.

Glossy Black-Cockatoos, although not uncommon, are still irregular in small groups. **Masked Owls** are likely breeders locally, with frequent calls but nest site location is still unknown. **Powerful Owl** calls were rarely heard. Raptors recorded include **Grey & Brown Goshawk**, both frequently, with a male **Collard Sparrowhawk** teasing the local corvids. A pair of **Pacific Baza** in April was the only record recently, as was the **Black-shouldered Kite**. **Little Eagles** are being watched for, but not seen often. Also in April, an adult **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** was observed attacking our domestic ducks, unsuccessfully after being interrupted by me.

With summer on the way, flocks of several hundred **Straw-necked Ibis** are on the move and the summer migrants are streaming in with **Varied Trillers** and **Pallid Cuckoo** recently heard.

The rainforest is shaping up beautifully after a couple of wet seasons without cattle. **Logrunners** in particular are scratching around in good numbers, with **Wompoo Fruit-doves** still obvious when the Blue Quandong are fruiting. Both **Large-billed & Yellow-throated Scrubwren** breeding, with the latter occupying new territory in the forest adjacent to the cabin during winter.

Satin & Regent Bowerbirds are both present but not confirmed breeding.

The dam continues to establish itself very well, with Rainbowfish, Clarence River Turtle, Marbled Eel and several species of frogs self introduced. Red-necked Wallaby numbers are steady, with a few Eastern Grey Kangaroos in the cooler months. A small influx of Swamp Wallabies in July 2009 was interesting.

Two new species recorded for the reserve included a cockatoo, with a pair of **Little Corellas** heading east in February 2009. Not unpredictable with the increasing populations coastward. A **Pied Cormorant** was photographed on the dam on 30/12/08.



A juvenile Australasian Grebe diminished the tadpole population on the dam.

Projects Planned for 2010

Monitoring of Rainforest birds, including **Sooty Owl**, **Logrunner**, **Ptilinopus Fruit-doves**, **Paradise Riflebird**, **Bowerbirds**, **Black-faced & Spectacled Monarch**.

Monitoring of Australian Bass introduced into dam.

Ongoing track maintenance & fire management.

Initiation of a bird-banding project and ongoing involvement in banding already established in neighbouring park.
Planning of results presentation.

Investigations into nestbox cameras

Frog survey & monitoring

Regional awareness & data collection for Whiptail Wallaby populations. The single sighting on our first visit to the property is currently the last known sighting of the local population.

Investigations suggest a similar pattern elsewhere in the region, which is the southern limit of the species' range. A nomination for Whiptail Wallaby to be listed as threatened has been initiated.

The developmental Birdrangers website is being redesigned and will be fully launched.



Pied Cormorant on 30/12/08 joins the other 3 Cormorant species & Darter on our list.