

How to get Started

Bird Observers are people whose hobby is observing birds in the wild. Some birders like to add as many new birds as they can to their "life list". Others are content to observe the local birds more closely. Some like to photograph the birds while others try to record bird calls. Some birders like to help in research by participating in bird surveys providing important information about the value of an area or habitat, particularly when it is threatened by a change in land use. Birding covers a wide range of activities, but we are united by our love of wild birds and our determination to help conserve the environment so that they may prosper.

Noosa Parks Bird Observers Group encourages new birders of any age, to start an interest in birds. However, if you are new to birding, it can be difficult to know where to start.

We can help you – attend our meetings and outings to local spots and our friendly members will help you with bird identification.

We recommend Birds Queensland courses conducted specifically for newcomers. *

You will need a good field guide and a reasonable pair of binoculars.

Information from Bird Observers Club of Australia may be helpful in making your choice.

www.birdobservers.org.au/Leaflets/pdfs/ChoosingBinoculars.pdf

Learning bird calls is an integral part of birding. Consider buying a CD of bird calls. Many calls can be accessed on the internet. A telescope and tripod for looking at distant birds, such as migratory waders, may be necessary later, but many birders manage without these.

*Birds Queensland conducts classes to assist beginners to identify birds. Classes consist of two classroom sessions and two outings to practice identifying birds. Each session takes about two hours.

Notes, suppers and morning teas are provided. Binoculars are available for those who don't have any.

Take your field guide. They prefer Morcombe but any will do.

Cost \$25

For information and bookings see www.birdsqueensland.org.au

Or ring Dawn 3870 8076 or Peter 3398 5118



Field Guides

Many are available to choose from. Two are recommended here.

- Morecombe, Michael (2000) Field Guide to Australian Birds, Australia Steve Parish Publishing. The slim version is easy to carry in a pocket.
- Slater, Peter, *The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds*, Australia, Landsdowne.



Interpretive Birding

Interpretive Birding gives an insight into the every day life of birds in a particular area. A group of observers walk around Wallace Park each Friday to observe and try to interpret the activities of the birds.

Beginners are welcome.
Meet at the car park at 8.30am.

Buying Binoculars

Binoculars are referred to by dimension eg. 7x50; 8x42

The first figure refers to the multiple of magnification (seven times, eight times).

The second figure refers to the size (in millimeters) of the exit lens. The bigger the exit lens, the more light gathering capability, but bigger also means heavier.

The quality of the optical glass is also a significant factor. Cheaper binoculars generally have poorer quality glass. The difference usually becomes evident in poorer light conditions.

The most popular binoculars for bird watching have a magnification of 7x to 10x. Less than 7x does not give sufficient magnification for most people to identify a bird. More than 10x requires a very steady hand and strong shoulders.

Exit lens of 40 mm to 50 mm are probably the most popular for birding.

- Take time to find the best you can afford.
- Ensure you can see through them easily.
- Ensure you can carry them comfortably.
- Ensure you can focus easily and quickly.
- Consider waterproof binoculars.



NOTES

The sequence and taxonomy of lists follow
L. Christidis and W.E. Boles
*'The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia
and its Territories'*
(RAOU 1994)



Noosa Parks Association Inc. Bird Observers



Beginners Guide

SINCE 1962
PROTECTING NOOSA AS A GREAT
PLACE TO LIVE AND VISIT



For further information refer to field guides,
*'Common Birds of Noosa, Cooloola and the
Sunshine Coast'* by Cecily Fearnley,
Or phone Valda 5476 2123.

Great Birding Naturally