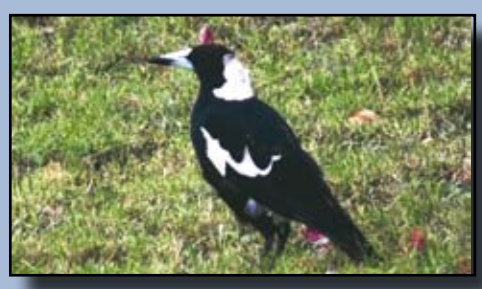
disappearing smaller birds

White Throated Gerygone

Small birds need protective leafy trees, undergrowth and/or grass for protection from hawks and other aggressive birds, cats and foxes.

Smaller bird species in the Fraser Coast region include:
White throated Gerygone (pictured), Variegated Fairy-wren, Red-backed Fairy-wren, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, Large-billed Scrubwren, Speckled Warbler, Weebill, Mangrove Gerygone, Fairy Gerygone, Brown Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill and Striated Thornbill.

aggressive birds



Hand-feeding aggressive birds such as the Magpie (pictured), Laughing Kookaburra and Butcherbirds increases their population to the detriment of the unaggressive smaller bird species who will disappear from the area as a result.

we have encouraged birds into our backyards - what about our parks?

Parks have many open areas and large trees which encourage bigger birds and natives. What we need to be aware of is bird diversity and the numbers of birds in these areas.

Artificial feeding of aggressive birds such as butcherbirds, magpies and even kookaburras will cause an increase in numbers and decrease the survival of other birds. Large numbers of birds due to public feeding can also lead to excessive bird droppings building up in an area, large roosting areas and less space for other native species of birds.

Fraser Coast Regional Council, through landscaping and bushland restoration projects, is restoring native vegetation to parks and public spaces to encourage bird diversity.

It is up to us to consider what we do, so we can continue to enjoy our birds when we visit public places such as Arkarra Wetlands and Lagoons.

For more information, go to:
www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/Services/Animals/Other Animals

The feeding of birds on your premises or on public property including parks and streets can cause health and environmental problems. Unlawful feeding and keeping of birds may result in legal action under the Nature Conservation Act and Local Government Act.

To obtain further information about native bird species for the Fraser Coast Regional Council area, contact us at:

Fraser Coast Regional Council
PO Box 1943, Hervey Bay, Qld, 4655
P: 1300 794 929
E: enquiry@frasercoast.qld.gov.au
W: www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au

Photographs and some information used in this brochure was kindly supplied by John Knight, Birdwatchers of Hervey Bay P: (07) 4125 2372

Fraser Coast REGIONAL COUNCIL

living with birds in the Fraser Coast Region

enjoy our birds "Jewels of Nature" in the Fraser Coast without feeding them

Around 300 species of birds have been identified in the Fraser Coast Local Government Area during the last ten years. Of these, the most dominant in gardens are the nectar eating and artificially fed birds. Numbers of the smaller insect and grass seed/fruit eating birds are decreasing.

This brochure contains tips and techniques that will enable us, as residents and visitors, to encourage the diversity of birds in our area. Through diversity we create the opportunity for a greater variety of bird species to visit and inhabit the Fraser Coast region.

The environment in the Fraser Coast has changed over the years - quite dramatically in some places because of human population growth. These changes have impacted on bird life in our urban environment.

Native birds such as Butcherbirds, Magpies and Kookaburras are a more dominant feature of our urban gardens than ever before, with open space and big trees providing shelter for these birds and people providing a secure food source.

Other birds of this new urban landscape include little Wattlebirds and Noisy Miners, Bluefaced Honeyeaters and Friarbirds which are often seen and heard in the excessive planting of nectar producing shrubs such as Grevilleas and Bottle Brush. Usually these birds are territorially aggressive. Emphasis should be given to providing shelter and food for smaller insect/seed eating birds in your garden.

Some of the smaller native birds that are still present include Willie Wagtail, Magpie-Larks (Peewee), Fairy–wrens, Eastern Yellow Robin, Double–barred Finch and sometimes forgotten Silvereyes.

Our urban wetlands also support many water fowl such as Black ducks and Cormorants, Pelicans, Ibis and Herons.

Rainbow Lorikeets

the impact of feeding birds

Unfortunately, feeding wildlife can cause dependency on human food which can lead to:

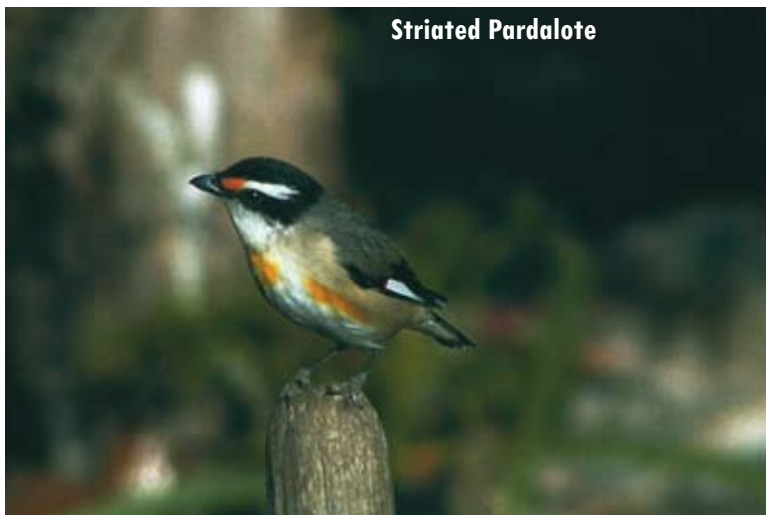
- Obese birds dependent on humans,
- A poorly balanced diet resulting in poor nutrition,
- Disease spreading between birds from poorly cleaned feeding and drinking areas,
- Increased aggression and bad behavior.

what can I do?

- Create bird friendly gardens and backyards.
- Plant local native species of trees and shrubs. In a native garden, different plants will attract different birds. Landscaped gardens need to be carefully planned to provide for the variety of needs for nesting birds.
- Planting hybrid plants such as Grevillea Robyn Gordon only in your garden will tend to attract the larger, more aggressive Honeyeaters and Lorikeets (which defend the flowers and stop smaller birds such as Silvereyes from entering your garden).
- Smaller sized birds, such as Finches and Fairy-wrens, prefer shrub-like plants, prickly bushes and mature grasses over Grevillea. These plants provide enough fruits/insects/grass seeds and protection for the smaller birds.

what can I do? (continued)

- Provide a variety of habitats and food specific to birds needs.
- As well as choosing your plants, birds may need many different types of food including seeds, nectar, fruits, insects and other small creatures. Just like us - variety is important in their diet!
- Kookaburras and Magpies prefer insects, invertebrates and small reptiles. Leaf litter around trees or in garden beds provides a home for insects and lizards that these larger birds can eat.
- Birds need a variety of nesting materials and shelters to keep them safe from both elements and other predators.
- Tangled undergrowth and grass - this provides an escape from cats, foxes and other predators. Also nesting sites and food such as berries, grass seeds and insects are good for Pheasant Coucal, Fairy-wrens, Finches, and Silvereyes. For example Fairy-wrens will build a nest approximately one metre off the ground and amongst tightly backed shrubs.
- Trees with hollows are excellent nesting sites for Kookaburras, Lorikeets, Rosellas, Dollarbirds and Kestrels.
- Trees with branches provide shelter for Magpies, Magpie Larks, Butcherbirds , Cuckoo Shrikes, Frog mouths and Mistletoebirds.
- Striated Pardalote (pictured below) often use heaped soil to build their nest in.


Striated Pardalote

birds of the Fraser Coast region

wetland birds

Most wetland birds require areas of reeds or other undergrowth for nests or to hide in.

39 species

Black Swan (pictured above), Magpie Goose, Cotton Pygmy-goose, Plumed Whistling Duck, Pacific Black Duck,Wandering Whistling Duck, Musk Duck, Freckled Duck, Radjah Shelduck, Mallard, Australian Wood Duck, Pink-eared Duck, Australian Shoveller, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Australasian Grebe, Great-crested Grebe, Hardhead, Australian Darter, Australian Pelican, Little-Pied Cormorant, Little-Black Cormorant, White-faced Heron, White-necked Heron, Striated Heron, Nankeen Night Heron, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Great Egret (pictured below), Intermediate Egret, Little Egret, Eastern Reef Egret, Cattle Egret, Jabiru, Indian Peafowl and Mallard.

cuckoo family

Cuckoos go north during the southern winter and return in summer to lay their eggs in other birds' nests.
Pheasant Coucals (pictured) are related but look after their own young and stay in the area over winter.

11 species

Pheasant Coucal (pictured), Oriental Cuckoo, Pallid Cuckoo, Brush Cuckoo, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Gould's Bronze-Cuckoo, Common Koel and Channel-billed Cuckoo.

raptors - hawk family

Raptors are hunting birds.

24 species

Australian Hobby (pictured), Osprey, Crested Hawk, Kites (Black-shouldered, Letter-winged, Square-tailed, Black, Whistling, Brahminy), White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Spotted and Swamp Harriers, Brown and Grey Goshawks, Collared Sparrowhawk, Wedgetailed and Little Eagles, Falcons (Brown, Grey, Black, Peregrine) and Nankeen Kestrel.

sea birds

Seabirds include Terns and Gulls.

11 species

Crested Tern (pictured), Silver Gulls, Lesser Crested and Common Terns, Other Terns (Gull-billed, Caspian, Little and Whiskered), Kelp gulls, Common and Black Noddy.

owl family

Owls and Frogmouths are not related but they have keen eyesight and hearing and hunt at night.

6 species

Southern Boobook Owl (pictured), Powerful Owl, Tawny Frogmouth, White-throated Nightjar, Large-tailed Nightjar and Australian Owlet-nightjar.

pigeon family

This is a diverse group of Pigeons, Doves and Fruit-Doves.

14 species

Crested Pigeon (pictured),White-headed Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Emerald Dove, Common Bronzewing, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Wonga Pigeon, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove and Topknot Pigeon, Spotted Turtle-Dove and Feral Pigeon.

honeyeaters

Larger Honeyeaters are often territorially protective birds and will take over any area with Grevilleas, Callistomins etc unless there is also a balance of other trees, shrubs and undergrowth for other unaggressive little birds to feed, nest and hide safely in.

16 species

Scarlet Honeyeater (pictured), Other Honeyeaters (Striped, Fuscous, Blue-faced, Yellow-faced, Little, Lewin's, Mangrove, Yellow-tufted, White-throated, Brown, White-cheeked and Dusky), Little Wattlebird, Noisy Friarbird and Noisy Miner.

finches

These tiny birds must have undergrowth that is safe to hide and nest in away from aggressive birds, cats and foxes. Suitable grass-seed is also necessary.

7 species

Double Barred Finch (pictured), Other finches (Common Red-browed, Zebra, Plum-headed), Chestnut-breasted and Nutmeg Mannikin and House Sparrow.

kingfisher family

With the exception of the Laughing Kookaburra (pictured) all other Kingfishers have primary or pastel colouring.

8 species

Laughing Kookaburra (pictured), Azure Kingfisher, Forest Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Collared Kingfisher, Rainbow Bee-eater, Dollarbird and Red-backed Kingfisher.

parrot family

This family includes some of the areas brightest and showiest birds.

13 species

Galah (pictured), Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Glossy Black Cockatoo, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Long-billed Corella, Little Corella, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Cockatiel, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Little Lorikeet, Australian King Parrot and Pale-headed Rosella.

whistlers & fly catcher family

These small birds need protective leafy shrubs or tangled undergrowth to safely feed, hide and nest in.

22 species:

Eastern Yellow Robin (pictured), Jacky Winter, Rose Robin, Varied Sitella, Crested Shrike-tit, Golden Whistler, Rufous Whistler, Little Shrike-thrush, Grey Shrike-thrush, Black-faced Monarch, Spectacled Monarch, White-eared monarch, leaden Flycatcher, Shining Flycatcher, Restless Flycatcher, Magpie-lark, Rufous Fantail, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail and Spangled Drongo.

migratory waders

Most of these birds feed in tidal areas. They do not recognise 'day' and 'night' but feed on low tide and rest at high tide. It is essential that they are not disturbed as they build up their energy reserves in their bodies for the hazardous flight to the far north where they breed in the brief arctic summer.

22 species

Latham's Snipe (pictured), Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwit, Little and Eastern Curlew, Whimbrel, March Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper, Terek Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Ruddy Turnstone, Great and Red Knots, Sanderling, Red-necked Stint, Sharptailed Sandpiper and Broad-billed Sandpiper and Wandering Tattler.