

# Inside BOCA



Superb Fairy-wren. Photo: John Barkla



**Richard Hunter**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Events

We are coming to the end of a very busy period involving many groups within BOCA. The Branches and Affiliated Groups Forum held in Wagga Wagga and “Between the Mountains and the Sea”, both reported more fully elsewhere, brought together members to discuss and pursue common interests and, while taxing our reserves a great deal, represent very important high points of our calendar.

While National Office staff has a major coordinating and planning role, the successful running of both events relied heavily on the efforts of local branches, groups and individual members. This year, members at Wagga Wagga, our Egbooc Branch and the Photographic Group, all contributed to ensure great outcomes. We also had wonderful support from members of the Fivebough and Tuckerbill Trust who hosted a very enjoyable visit to their Leeton wetlands.

By the time of publication, the Leeton Birdfair will also have been held and once again BOCA has been a major participant in an event which is a great credit to its organisers. While again very taxing on our reserves, we feel the Birdfair is an important addition to the list of bird events and a real contributor to raising awareness of environmental issues impacting on bird life and thus worthy of support.

## Clarksdale Bird Sanctuary

At long last the Interpretation Centre has been delivered to the site and located on its foundations (see David Coutts’ photographs). As happens so often with building projects, there have been a number of hiccups along the way and delivery delayed by wet weather (very welcome nonetheless), but we have now a building which will suit the purpose very well. Work on services, verandas and landscaping is now underway. At the same time, work on extending waterbird habitat below the centre site has been completed and installation of a syphon to move water from one area to another commenced.



Eastern Yellow Robin – Common Clarksdale Resident. Photo: M. Lyell

## New Groups

I recently attended a meeting of people interested in forming a BOCA group based in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales and, as a result, the Board has approved the establishment of a steering committee to further discuss and plan the way forward. I am hopeful we will shortly see the establishment of a BOCA branch in this wonderful part of the country.

Also, at the last Board meeting, approval was given for a steering committee to plan the establishment of a national BOCA Photography Group. It is envisaged that the committee will be made up of representatives from various parts of the country and, using electronic meetings, add to the skill and interest of members pursuing bird photography. The Photography Group is using the working title Photoboca.

## Alliances

An important tool in ensuring the best outcomes for our efforts in conservation and education is the forming of alliances with like-minded organisations. The pooling of resources and ideas will, more often than not, bring about results which could never be achieved by organisations acting alone.



Mustering near Charleville. Photo: Courtesy South West NRM Ltd.

In Queensland and New South Wales, BOCA, through Brisboca Branch, is part of the Stock Routes Coalition which aims to preserve the very ecologically important Travelling Stock Route (TSR) network. The coalition includes an interesting mix of groups who see great value in the network, both as habitat corridors and also in terms of our heritage.

The common cause is to see the TSR network maintained and not broken up into individual private ownerships.



In Victoria, BOCA has recently joined Victoria Naturally Alliance which has, perhaps, a broader environmental agenda. The other members of the Alliance are Victorian National Parks Association, The Wilderness Society, Australian Conservation Foundation, Environment Victoria, Greening Australia, Invasive Species Council, Trust for Nature and Bush Heritage Australia.

Again, we look forward to the sharing of ideas and resources to achieve common goals.

## Harry Briggs

In September, BOCA lost a great contributor, Harry Briggs. Harry has been involved with our Brisboca Branch since its inception and with birds and their conservation over a considerably longer period.

In addition to being a very capable leader of outings, Harry was very active in survey work, convened the Albert's Lyrebird Count and was heavily involved with revegetation of many parts of the Tamborine rainforests. Harry will be missed by his many friends, particularly at Brisboca. Our sympathy goes to his family.

## Wrap up

The year has been a very busy one for BOCA. Among other things, we have seen the expansion of our conservation and education capability with the addition of another Conservation Officer and the results can be seen from the growth in our areas of involvement. A list of issues for which BOCA has prepared submissions or had other involvement, can be found on our website: [www.birdobservers.org.au](http://www.birdobservers.org.au)

Of course with increased activity comes increased costs and the inevitable need for fundraising. With this edition of *The Bird Observer*, you will find our Christmas Appeal mailer and I ask that you consider supporting BOCA in its work to conserve bird habitat and to raise awareness of our birds.

### Reminder

**Nominations for BOCA Distinguished Service Awards 2009 close on 31 December 2008.**

**For further information and nomination form, please refer to the October issue of *The Bird Observer* or contact National Office.**

### Christmas Trading

**BOCA National Office will close on Christmas Eve and reopen on Monday 5 January, 2009.**

## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all at BOCA.

**Richard Hunter**

**[ceo@birdobservers.org.au](mailto:ceo@birdobservers.org.au)**

***Helping today's birds survive tomorrow***