

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND NEWS FRIDAY 21 APRIL 2017

Got twitches for bird watching?

Botanic gardens is the perfect spot for watching



DISCOVER YOUR BACKYARD
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TWITCHING is the new terminology that has replaced the old word for bird watching and gone are the days of birdwatchers equipped with binoculars and a thermos of coffee.

The modern day Twitchers are set up with binoculars, cameras, GPS, comprehensive bird guides, bird logs and yes, a thermos of coffee.

So last weekend I set out on an adventure that took me into the Emerald Botanical Gardens and yes, there were the usual things to see and do, rainforest walk, maze, bush chapel, playgrounds and the Marathon Windmill but this was not why I was there.

I was there searching for birds and just to clarify, the feathered kind.

Did you know that there are over 62 bird varieties that call the Botanical Gardens home and another half dozen or so sub-family

species that can be found by the amateur and avid Twitcher?

When was the last time that you saw a Phalacrocorax Varius (Little Pied Cormorant) or a Merops Ornatus (Rainbow Bee Eater) or the much admired Malurus Cyaneus (Superb Blue Fairy Wren)

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just to name a few.

The spread across habits within the gardens is huge and range from the water course of the Nogoa River to dry country with Brigalow timber, brush features such as the maze and tropical plants of a rainforest environment, all most desirable to our bird populations and one relatively safe with few predator species such as cats.

Emeralds Botanical Gardens are well known to the traveller and is often a



A much admired Malurus Cyaneus (superb Blue Fairy Wren).
PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

requested attraction for visitors to our town and if you want to see how the local feel about our gardens head down there on a Saturday or Sunday and feel the vibe, family gatherings, playgrounds a mass of kids, barbecue on the go, walkers, runners and yes a few twitchers thrown in.

The botanic gardens cover a total area of 42 hectares

and includes over six kilometres of walking trails, each one leading to somewhere new and for the twitcher, the possibility to get a glance of one or all of the sixty eight bird varieties that can be seen fluttering from tree to tree.

RIGHT: A Merops Ornatus (Rainbow Bee Eater). PHOTO: RAY WILSON

