



A [Tropical Birding](#) SET DEPARTURE tour

EASTERN AUSTRALIA: ***From Top to Bottom***

23rd October – 11th November 2015

Tour Leaders: Sam Woods & Wes Homoya



This confiding **Southern Cassowary**, seen on our first afternoon, was voted as the **BIRD OF THE TOUR**.

NB. All of the photos in this report were taken by Sam Woods or Wesley Homoya on this tour.

(The species in the photos are highlighted in **RED** within the text).

INTRODUCTION



The Eastern Australia tour provided a mass of new birds and bird families for the majority of the group, with this representing for most, their first foray into either the biogeographic region of Australasia, or the country, come continent, of Australia. It is a truly varied tour; we started out in Northeast Queensland, one of the most varied legs of the tour, where we scoured tropical lowland rainforests, highland rainforests, tropical wetlands, coastal mudflats, and even touched the edge of the Outback; from there we traveled south to Southeast Queensland, where temperate rainforests and wet sclerophyll forests were the backdrop to our birding; the third leg of the tour was one of the longest, as we birded a variety of habitats in New South Wales, which included coastal heathland, temperate rainforest, rocky shorelines, mallee, brigalow, dramatic limestone outcrops, and even managed to get in some seawatching too. Finally, we finished off on the island of Tasmania, with a rush of new birds with all of the 13 endemic species seen, while birding temperate rainforests and sandy beaches. The tour opened with a **Southern Cassowary** south of Cairns on our first afternoon, and ended with a huddle of **Little Penguins** coming ashore in Tasmania on our final night. The highlights were many, and difficult to pin down to just a few, with so much seen, both avian and mammalian, along the way. Some kind of indication of this was revealed by the varied list of birds

that came into contention for the **Top Five Birds of the Tour** vote at the end of the tour; 22 bird species were nominated. In the end, these were the ones that made the grade:

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | Southern Cassowary | (Ettu Beach, NORTHEAST QUEENSLAND) |
| 2= | Powerful Owl | (Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney NEW SOUTH WALES) - photo above |
| 2= | Plains-wanderer | (Hay Plains, NEW SOUTH WALES) |
| 4 | Turquoise Parrot | (Binya State Forest, NEW SOUTH WALES) |
| 5 | Golden Bowerbird | (Hypipamee National Park, NORTHEAST QUEENSLAND) |

Among the others nominated for birds of the trip were **Cotton Pygmy-Goose** (Lake Mitchell, Northeast Queensland); **Freckled Duck** (Gum Swamp, New South Wales); **Little Penguin** (Pirate's Bay, Tasmania); **White-capped (Shy) Albatross** (Bass Point, New South Wales); **Inland Dotterel** (Hay Plains, New South Wales); **Bush Thick-knee** (Centenary Lakes, Cairns Northeast Queensland); **Australian Bustard** (Maryfarms, Northeast Queensland); **Australian King-Parrot** (Lamington National Park, Southeast Queensland); **Superb Parrot** (near Yarada, New South Wales); **Pink (Major Mitchell's) Cockatoo** (Griffith, New South Wales); **Papuan Frogmouth** (Daintree, Northeast Queensland); **Noisy Pitta** (Julatten, Northeast Queensland); **Variiegated Fairywren** (Canungra, near Lamington National Park, Southeast Queensland); **Red-backed Fairywren** (Lake Mitchell Northeast Queensland & Lamington National Park, Southeast Queensland); displaying **Superb Lyrebird** (Minnamurra Falls Rainforest Centre, New South Wales); **Satin Bowerbird** (Lamington National Park, Southeast Queensland); **Pink Robin** (Bruny Island, Tasmania); and **Diamond Firetail** (Back Yamma State Forest, New South Wales).



It would be a travesty not to mention the mammals, for they were a major highlight for many too. Some **35 mammal species were seen**, which included some of Australia's most famous animals: a **Platypus** was seen in broad daylight (they are more ordinarily nocturnal) at the base of Mount Lewis (Northeast Queensland); a

Koala was seen feeding low down near O Reilly's in Lamington National Park (Southeast Queensland); the odd **Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo** was seen clumsily moving around near the dramatic Curtain Fig Tree in Northeast Queensland; and several **Short-beaked Echidnas** were encountered in New South Wales, with the one trundling down the track towards us at Barren Grounds being a particularly popular sighting. Aside from this, we scored eight different **Common Wombats** on a night drive near Barren Grounds (New South Wales), and saw a variety of wallabies and kangaroos, with the **Whiptail (Pretty-faced) Wallabies** of Lamington (Southeast Queensland), and the giant male **Red Kangaroos** on the Hay Plains (New South Wales) being particularly notable. A pair of **Sugar Gliders** was also popular among the few that made it out that night at Royal National Park too (New South Wales).

The Top Five Mammals of the Tour were voted as:

- 1 **Short-beaked Echidna** **(Barren Grounds, NEW SOUTH WALES) - photo page 3**
- 2= **Platypus** **(Mount Lewis, NORTHEAST QUEENSLAND)**
- 2= **Koala** **(Lamington National Park, SOUTHEAST QUEENSLAND)**
- 4 **Lumholtz's Tree-Kangaroo** **(Curtain Fig Tree, NORTHEAST QUEENSLAND)**
- 5 **Common Wombat** **(Barren Grounds, NEW SOUTH WALES)**

Aside from the birds and the animals, the landscapes seen were also extraordinary, with the various tranquil beaches and outcrops on Bruny Island in Tasmania providing some great final moments of the tour, although were perhaps overshadowed by the spectacular Wattamolla sandstone cliffs in Royal National Park in New South Wales. At the end of it all, we had encountered more than half of Australia's birds, with **430 bird species recorded (426 species seen by one or more of the group)**, and added **35 mammal species** to the list too. This tour is very popular, and it is easy to see why; most on this trip, like most of these tours left with hundreds of new birds, many new bird families, for which this tour is especially good; some of Australia's most famous mammals and felt like they had been given more than a mere introduction to this giant, country-come-continent, which is almost equal in size to the United States...



TOUR SUMMARY

LEG 1: NORTHEAST QUEENSLAND

Day 1: ETTY BAY & CAIRNS

In recent weeks some tragic news had reached us of several Southern Cassowaries mysteriously turning up dead on the Atherton Tableland, which caused a last minute, rapid, change of plans to our first day. As yet, no one knows the cause of these very recent sad events, although with teams of researchers working in the area, this is hoped to be revealed soon, in order to prevent further such events. This news had affected the normally reliable place where we would usually search for this iconic species, and so we switched things for this day and traveled south from Cairns in the afternoon to the idyllic ETTY BAY, a short stretch of white sand beach, flanked by tropical rainforest. This has been a known hotspot for **Southern Cassowary** (*photo above*), for some time, and where several reasonably tame wild individuals often roam the edge of the forest, and

around the on site caravan park. A call to the local **Etty Bay** store the evening before, had enlightened us to the fact they were being seen in recent days, though sometimes for merely 30 minutes during an entire day; other times on and off all day, while on some days these usually reliable rainforest giants may not appear at all. With only part of an afternoon to search, therefore, we knew sightings were not a given...

On arrival at the spot, plenty of beachgoers were sprinkled on the sand, and a quick word with the local store employee revealed a cassowary had indeed been sighted earlier that day, but a quick scoot around the permanently parked caravans, did not turn up the heaviest of all Australian birds. We wandered to the north end of the park, and found our first **Leaden Flycatcher** tail flicking in trees overhead; a sighting that was quickly forgotten in the ensuing mayhem, when words reached us that there was a **"Cassowary on the beach!"** We quickly turned back towards where we had arrived and raced down the side of the park, and quickly saw the cassowary nonchalantly walking the beach edge, while the birders present buzzed with adrenalin at a sighting of one of Australia's most impressive, and odd, birds, and beach tourists gaped in amazement too, as it wandered past their strewn beach towels and thongs.



After gaping at the cassowary for a while, we loaded back into the vehicle, and headed back to **Cairns**, where we birded the local parkland for the remainder of this opening afternoon. The park has patches of rainforest as well as mangrove, ponds, and open lawns, making for quite an eclectic mix of common birds of Tropical Queensland (also known widely as the "Wet Tropics") on our first day. Top



billing went to a pair of roosting **Bush Thick-knees**, dozing under a tree (*photo page 6*), while overhead **Yellow Honeyeaters** gave themselves away with their rollicking calls. A walk along the edge of some deeper rainforest saw us find a red-spectacled **Little Bronze-Cuckoo**, (*photo above*), as well as **Common Cicadabird**, **Varied Triller**, and **Green (Yellow) Oriole**. A walk along a mangrove lined creek got us **Radjah Shelduck**, **Black Butcherbird**, the recently split **Torresian Kingfisher** (*from Collared Kingfisher*), the "Hornbill" form of **Helmeted Friarbird** (often split), and **Brown-backed Honeyeater**, but no *Lovely Fairywren* as hoped. All the while the bold, pied, forms of **Torresian Imperial-Pigeons** darted overhead, and perched in the surrounding trees. Australia does gaudy birds like few other countries, and some of the most colorful species are also some of the most abundant; by the end of the afternoon we had introduced ourselves to some of these with **Australian Figbird** (here of the northern "yellow" form), **Rainbow Lorikeet** and **Rainbow Bee-eater**. Other tour stalwarts that were seen for the first time that day included the comical **Willie-wagtail**, and soon to be become very familiar **Magpie-Lark**. In addition to these regular tour species we also watched **Orange-footed Scrubfowl** and **Australian Brush-Turkey** prowling the park. At the end of the day we got back to our Cairns hotel, with the local **Spectacled Flying-Foxes** regularly passing overhead, then headed to a local *Balinese* restaurant to kick off some great tour food to come...



Day 2: Cairns, The Great Barrier Reef & Yorkey's Knob

This was one of the most relaxing days of the tour; a perfect itinerary to allow some of those still jetlagged from the long flights in to recover, as we spent most of the day on a boat out on the reef. However, before breakfast in town, we made a short trip to some mangroves on the edge of **Cairns**, where after a time we tracked down four different **Mangrove Robins**, as well as a couple of **Varied Honeyeaters**. Post-breakfast, we drove down to a jetty and boarded the *Seastar*, a boat that operates daily trips out to a small sandy island, or cay, out on **The Great Barrier Reef**. 90 minutes later we were docking beside a low flat island, which was packed with nesting seabirds, having encountered two **Black Noddies** on the way in, along with a handful of **Bridled Terns**. As we were docking, Sonia also saw a **Red-footed Booby** being harassed by some of the local **Great Frigatebirds**, a scarce bird on the reef. Along with the regular **Great Frigatebirds** was a male of the scarcer **Lesser Frigatebird** too, while on the sand **Sooty Terns** and **Brown Noddies** were nesting en-masse, along with a handful of **Great Crested Terns** and **Brown Boobies** (*photo above, Wesley Homoya*).

Silver Gulls hung about the colony, hoping to predate on any abandoned chicks, and **Ruddy Turnstones** skirted the edge of the colony. During our short stay on the island we also saw some gatherings of terns, which included among them **Lesser Crested and Black-naped Terns**, and a few distant **Roseate Terns** too. Once the birding was done we still had plenty of time out on the reef to partake in snorkeling, or take a glass bottom boat tour of the reef too. In the late afternoon we docked back in the *Cairns*, picked up our stored baggage and headed for the rainforest cloaked hills of **Kuranda**, north of the city. We first though took a short side trip into some local grassland, which was seeding, attracting hordes of finches, largely striking **Chestnut-breasted Munias**, (*photo below*), but notably among them a few **Crimson Finches** were dotted among the flock (*photo, page 10*). This area also yielded the first of many **Laughing Kookaburras**. This, the world's largest kingfisher, was seen on all but a few days of the tour. We also managed to pry a good, perched view of the often-skulking **Pheasant Coucal** while watching the finches too. After a really enjoyable day we arrived at the infamous **Cassowary House**, after stopping for a **Spotted Catbird** on the way in, where the owner and our host, Sue, treated us to a feast on her balcony for dinner, while the sounds of the Australian tropical rainforest at night took shape around us.





Day 3: Kuranda, Lake Mitchell, Abattoir Swamp, Mount Molloy & the Daintree

One of the wonders of birding the Wet Tropics of northeast Queensland, is the sheer number and variety of birding sites that can be visited in a single day; the guide has the enjoyable privilege of choosing from a range of places to visit each day. We started out by searching the wet tropical rainforest around **Cassowary House** near Kuranda, where we watched as first a young male, then a glossy adult male **Victoria's Riflebird** dropped into a calling post in the forest, took in **Spotted Catbirds** coming in to the lodge feeders, and got several short close ups of a pair of **Chowchillas** too, which turned out to be our only sighting of the trip. Sue, our Cassowary House host, once again, prepared a great spread for us for breakfast on the balcony, while **Musky Rat-Kangaroos** (the smallest of the kangaroo species), scampered around on the ground below, and **Macleay's Honeyeaters** regularly visited the feeders, along with the occasional drop in from a **Spotted Catbird** or two. We also got a short look at a male **Superb Fruit-Dove**, one of only two short sightings of this species on this tour. After breakfast we returned to the rainforest, finding a fantastic **Pied Monarch**, along with the more abundant **Spectacled Monarch** too, and also two different spritely **Yellow-breasted Boatbills**. However several calling *Noisy Pittas* frustrated us there. With time pressing, and plentiful tropical species on

our forthcoming agenda, by mid-morning we pushed off towards a planned lunch stop in **Mount Molloy**, planning to stop in at the bird-packed **Lake Mitchell** en-route. However, an earlier than planned stop was forced when forty or so **Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos** were found beside the road. On this tour we visited a series of great Aussie wetlands, and **Lake Mitchell** clearly qualifies as one of these; **Green Pygmy-Geese** were dotted about this large lake, **Magpie-Geese** graced the grassier areas, a huddle of **Royal Spoonbills** rested in the water; and a tall **Black-necked Stork** stood sentry behind. However, the star find there was a group of five **Cotton Pygmy-Geese**, a major pleasure for Eddy at least, who has a bit of a duck obsession, brought about by his long career working for US Fish and Wildlife. Other first timers for our list also included **Black Swan**, **Wandering Whistling-Duck**, **Red-kneed Dotterel**, and **Comb-crested Jacana**. This wetland site was not just about waterbirds though; **Red-winged Parrot** was seen perched around the lake edge, as were several **Yellow Honeyeaters** and a couple of **White-winged Trillers**; our first *fairywrens* also showed up, with several male **Red-backed Fairywrens** seen within the grassy surroundings of the lake too. Just before heading to lunch from there we also picked up a low flying **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** at Lake Mitchell too.



Stopping at **Mount Molloy** for lunch, many of us enjoyed some of the largest hamburgers ever experienced, adorned with *beetroot*, a traditional ingredient of burgers in Australia. While we lunched outside we enjoyed some other widespread tropical birds in and around the garden of the café: **Blue-faced Honeyeaters**, **Australian Figbirds**, **Bar-shouldered Doves**, and even a short visit from a **Great Bowerbird**! Our next stop after lunch, was the briefest of ones to look for *Northern Fantail* in the parking area at nearby **Abattoir Swamp**, where there was no sign of said fantail, but Eddy made our trip very worthwhile when he noticed a small flock of **Varied Sittellas** overhead (*photo page 11*), a particularly scarce species on this part of the trip. We then traveled north to the tiny village of **Daintree**, where local boatman and bird guide *Murray Hunt* was waiting to take us out on the river for a few hours. This trip was originally planned for the following morning, but with the high tides set to make that time less productive, bird-wise, we re-arranged things for an afternoon run instead, which worked out very well. Murray worked tirelessly to find the specialties of the area, hitting the jackpot when we came across the scarce **Little Kingfisher**, which he quickly maneuvered us into a great position for repeated looks at, (*photo below*).



That was not the only kingfisher of the trip though, with cracking looks at **Azure Kingfisher** also achieved with expert guidance help. Other highlights included both rusty-backed; glossy hooded, and white-breasted female **Shining Flycatchers**, along with the all glossy blue male too. Our only **Large-billed Gerygone** also featured, as did a flyby from a **Rufous (Nankeen) Night-Heron**, as well as great looks at the uncommon

Black Bittern, as well as plentiful **Torresian Imperial-Pigeons**, and two different day roosting **Papuan Frogmouths**, which fought with **Little Kingfisher** for avian prize of the afternoon, (*photo right*). We also saw the first of a handful of **Brahminy Kites** sighted on the trip, a largely coastal species in Australia. Just before dark we docked back in Daintree, and were then hosted at the excellent **Red Mill House** for the night, where famous hosts Trish and Andrew threw on a classic Aussie "barbie" (i.e. barbecue), with kangaroo sausages being a particular favorite. As we ate on the veranda, another mammal was eating below, as we were visited by one of their regular **Northern Brown Bandicoots**, and also saw a handsome **White-lipped Green Treefrog** clamped on to the side of their building. After dinner, some of the hardier folks went out for a bit of spotlighting, hoping for either mammals or nightbirds. No owls were heard, but on the way back from a seemingly fruitless search, a nightjar darted past the car, and with some work we managed to get the bird (a **Large-tailed Nightjar**) to fly in and land right beside us on the road for a great finish to a busy day.

Day 4: Daintree to Julatten, Mount Carbine & Hurricane Road

This was a day that displayed well the extraordinary diversity of both habitats, and subsequently birds, in this part of Australia; during the morning we birded classic, lush and green tropical rainforest along **Stewart Creek Road** in the **Daintree**, then took in some wetlands and beaches as we traveled southwest from there, and ended up in tinder dry tropical savanna around **Mount Carbine**, with a bushy grassy underlayer and sparsely distributed eucalyptus trees overhead. The birds of the morning and afternoon, therefore, were markedly different. Our morning's quest though were birds of rainforest, and it started out well with **Orange-footed Scrubfowl** and **Pacific Koel** in the garden of **Red Mill House** (thanks to lodge owner Trish for spotting the latter), followed by a pair of **Lovely Fairywrens** barely a 5-minute drive from there. The thicker rainforest along the road was much quieter though, though still turned up a nesting pair of **Pied Monarchs**, as well as our first **Black-faced Monarch**, and only **Gray Whistler** of the trip. A noisy, **Noisy Pitta** in the area managed to only show well to Sam, and so we had to put that off for another day, after concerted effort turned up nothing more from that bird. We also found our first **Fairy Gerygones**, and Wes's vehicle got good looks at a **Pallid Cuckoo** on our way out from there.



Moving south from Daintree, we first stopped in at a fish farm near **Wonga Beach**, where waders featured, such as **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**, **Bar-tailed Godwit**, and **Pied Stilt**, and then went on a wild goose chase for *Beach Thick-knee*, trying a series of allegedly reliable sites, but finding no trace of it. However, our stop in at Newell Beach was rewarded with a **Barn Swallow** (scarce on this trip), and great looks at a perched **Double-eyed Fig-Parrot**, whilst we were watching a colony of **Little Red Flying-foxes**. At the end of the morning, after several hours of searching, with little extra to show for it, bar our first **Gray-tailed Tattler** and **Osprey** of the trip, we had to call it a day as far as the thick-knee was concerned, and headed to **Mossman** for a super Thai-themed lunch, before we headed out for plenty more birds in the "arvo" (=afternoon) as Australians say...



Our next stop was back in the rainforest, close to **Julatten**, where a **Wompoo Fruit-Dove** showed up, as did our first **Brown Cuckoo-Doves** and **Pale-yellow Robins**, though not much else. After our short stop there, we changed location and habitat; stopping in for an extended period at **Mount Carbine Caravan Park**, but taking in a prowling **Australian Bustard** or two en-route around **Maryfarms**. At the caravan park, the dry woods held a profusion of new birds, as we ventured into this habitat for the first time. One homeowner was feeding birds on site, leading to point blank views of **Blue-winged Kookaburras** (*photo above*), and

Apostlebirds. A rare find was a calling **Red-browed Pardalote**, which was only seen by a few due to confusion over a melee of new birds at the time, which also included our first **White-throated Honeyeaters**, **Galahs** and **Pale-headed Rosellas**. Some helpful local people also put us onto their local roosting **Tawny Frogmouths**, which also showed at point blank range (*photo below*); while a local **Great Bowerbird** was visiting his well-decorated bower on site too. The proverbial "flood" of new species delayed us there for a while, leaving us with precious little time along the **Hurricane Road** at the day's end, but still just enough time to stop for a pair of **White-gaped Honeyeaters** at the **McLeod River** crossing en-route (here right at the very edge of their range). Once on the **Hurricane Road**, we managed to find a warbling **White-throated Gerygone**, several **Squatter Pigeons**, a small group of **Brown Treecreepers**, and also find Australia's smallest bird, the teeny tiny **Weebill**. We also had a single **Agile Wallaby**, a lonely **Sarus Crane**, our first **White-necked (Pacific) Heron**, and a **Yellow-billed Spoonbill** in the area. Our bumper afternoon finally came to a close, and we rolled into the town of **Mareeba**, on the edge of the Queensland Outback, after dark. We were to stay in this town for three nights, a great central location to use to access lowland and highland rainforests, swamps, and tropical savannas in this diverse region of the Atherton Tableland...



Day 5: Abattoir Swamp, Mount Lewis, Julatten, Mount Hypipamee & Hasties Swamp

This was another day where we combined multiple, diverse sites and accrued a hefty bird list in the process. Our day opened with some **Channel-billed Cuckoos** flying over our **Mareeba** hotel, and a drive to **Abattoir Swamp**, near the base of Mount Lewis. Our primary reason for the visit was to try for **Northern Fantail**, which had eluded us during our first visit. This time it was straightforward though, being seen quickly after our arrival, which prompted us to quickly move on to **Mount Lewis** itself, once everyone had bagged good looks at the fantail. Arriving on Mount Lewis, we were particularly interested in checking out the montane rainforest along the higher points of the mountain road (around 1200m/3940ft. elevation), but stopped first at some

lower rainforest on the way up, where Wes located a **Barred Cuckooshrike** for the group, shortly after we had were privileged to be able to watch a **Platypus** feeding in broad daylight in the creek below, (a rarity, as they are largely nocturnal creatures). While the weather only a short distance away (around 20km/12 miles), at Abattoir Swamp had been warm and balmy in the tropical savanna, our change in altitude brought a significant change in conditions, as we were greeted by windy and chilly temperatures higher up. Our visit to Mount Lewis was entirely strategic, as there are a handful of species in northeast Queensland which are confined to mountain rainforests like that found at the top end of Mount Lewis. Therefore, this mountain acts as a “one-stop-shop” for most of them. We quickly began picking up some of these, along with plenty of other new species, like **Mountain Thornbill**, **Atherton Scrubwren**, typically feeding low down; a beautiful male **Golden Whistler**, **Bower’s Shrike-Thrush**, the only **Bridled Honeyeater** of the tour, and several confiding **Topknot Pigeons**, (*photo below*). Our main quarry, **Fernwren**, however eluded us with none heard initially. Instead, we entered the rainforest, and walked off trail to see, not only the master mimic itself, **Tooth-billed Catbird (Bowerbird)**, but also its “stage”, a scattering of large leaves in a meticulously cleaned area on the forest floor. After some time we finally heard the distinctive call notes of a **Fernwren**, with most of the group getting good looks before it evaporated back into the forest. Some had missed it though, and so a short time later we ran into another male along a side trail on the mountain, to cap off a good time there. Before we left, we also made sure we also added **White-throated Treecreeper** to our bird list.





Returning to a short, forested road in Julatten for the third time, it was a case of third time lucky, as we finally tracked down a Noisy Pitta, which showed well to the whole group. With the pitta in the bag, we drove deeper onto the **Atherton Tableland**, this time visiting some more highland forest at **Mount Hypipamee National Park** for a very special target bird indeed. "Beware of the Cassowary" signs were an amusement on arrival, but there was no sign of this rainforest giant while we were there. However, that was not the purpose of our visit; **Golden Bowerbird** was (*photo left*). We took an indistinct side trail into the forest, where the bower is located, and decorated with pieces of trimmed white lichen. Knowing the male can be inconspicuous I had warned all to be patient. Proving me wrong though, the male gave itself away with a rasping call note right on our arrival, which then led us to utterly amazing views at extremely close range. Whilst heading back to the car we added **Gray-headed Robin** to the list, when it was seen hopping around the parking area, and got great looks at a stunning male **Scarlet Myzomela (Honeyeater)** feeding in

the trees above. The final stop of another busy day was the marvelous **Hasties Swamp**, located near the town of Atherton. As usual, the open water and edges were thick with birds, mostly **Plumed Whistling-Ducks**, but also over one hundred **Pink-eared Ducks** were in the area, along with Gray Teal, and White-eyed Duck (formerly Hardhead). There also the full compliment of Australian ibises and spoonbills around the swamp (i.e. **Straw-backed, Australian and Glossy Ibises, Royal and Yellow-billed Spoonbills**), as well as several small groups of **Sarus Cranes**, and a couple of **Black-fronted Dotterels** working the edge of the wetland. A roosting adult **Rufous (Nankeen) Night-Heron** was found resting beside the swamp too, and the some flowering shrubs were a magnet for a handful of **White-cheeked Honeyeaters**, one of the most handsome of the many honeyeaters on offer on this tour.

After dinner back in the town of **Mareeba**, at the local bowls club, we set out for another night quest, this time to see the much-wanted **Australian Owlet-Nightjar**. It took us some time to find the precise hotspot for them, but after hearing at least three birds, and finally seeing two of them, it rounded out a successful night (*photo page 18*).



Day 6: Emerald Creek Falls, Curtain Fig, Lake Eacham, Hasties & Bromfield Swamps

We started our day at the tranquil **Emerald Creek Falls**, seeing many **Agile Wallabies** on the way in to this area of dry woodland, along with our first **Crested Pigeons**, a bird which was to become a very regular bird as we moved our way south. At the falls we took breakfast in the field, and searched high and low for *White-browed Robin* to no avail; we did though pick up the sole sighting of **Lemon-bellied Flycatcher** of the tour, along with the first of many **Gray Shrike-Thrushes**. Then we returned to the **Atherton Tableland**, and visited the amazing **Curtain Fig Tree**, the photo of which here does not really do it justice. We had come here in the hope of fruit-doves; in particular, as there is often fruiting trees in the vicinity of the famous fig, which attract frugivorous birds. On arriving at the car park, another tourist there approached us to inform us he had just found a roosting **Lumholtz's Tree-Kangaroo**, (*photo next page*), and would we like to see it! He led us straight to it, although the animal was in the crook of a large tree, with most of the body hidden from sight. However, as we turned around we noticed another much lower individual feeding low in the trees, which gave us prolonged looks, before it clumsily descended the tree and sloped off deeper into the rainforest. While we were observing the tree-kangaroo, (a normally nocturnal animal), we managed to track down a **Shining Bronze-Cuckoo**, actually sitting in the famous fig on several occasions. We actually hit a brace of new cuckoos in short succession, as a calling **Fan-tailed Cuckoo** led us back out to the parking area, where we able to see

it up in the 'scope too. We also saw both **Pale-yellow and Gray-headed Robins** feeding alongside the massive fig tree. The usual cacophony of calling fruit-doves, however, seemed conspicuously absent. Trying the call of **Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove**, we were surprised by a quick call back from above, and soon enough this bird flew into a tree overhead, where we were able to have good looks at this handsome bird. Our quest for a prolonged view of a *Superb Fruit-Dove* (some had seen one briefly at *Cassowary House*, earlier on the



tour) led us to another nearby site, **Lake Eacham**, where a fruiting fig tree was alive with birds, particularly **Barred Cuckooshrikes**, which gave us repeated, excellent, observations there. *Superb Fruit-Doves* were heard, but refused to budge from their treetop hiding places. Out on the lake a large raft of **Great Crested Grebes** was found, before lunch drew us back into the town of Atherton. After lunch, we returned to the wonderful **Hasties Swamp**, where the hordes of **Plumed Whistling-Ducks** were waiting for us once more. We had returned, mainly, in the hope of a foraging *Latham's Snipe*, or to find the recently nesting pair of *Crested Shrike-Tits*, but this all appeared rather wasted time, when neither were found. **White-cheeked Honeyeaters** were again seen foraging in some roadside shrubs, but the shrike-tits were conspicuous in their absence. A short flyover from a **Pacific Baza** was different though from the day before's visit. As we were leaving Eddy and Sam latched on to a shorebird feeding out on the open mud, and instantly saw the long straight bill: **Latham's Snipe!** We were quickly

out of the vehicles, and all quickly on to the bird. We had also hoped for *Brolgas* in the area, but some roadside cranes, shortly after leaving the swamp, turned out to be more of the red-legged Sarus variety. Nearby Wes spotted some **Channel-billed Cuckoos**, an immense variety of cuckoo, which is the world's largest brood parasite, targeting large species like crows and currawongs. In the late afternoon, with *Brolga* unfound in a sweep of the nearby fields, we drove out to **Bromfield Swamp**, where, among the distant **Sarus Cranes**, Sonia found a solitary **Brolga**. We returned to **Mareeba** for a final night, where some huge **Eastern Gray Kangaroos** were seen grazing the local golf course at nighttime...



Day 7: Mareeba, Big Mitchell Creek, Newell Beach, Cattana Wetlands & Cairns

We started our day much as we'd finished the one before; peering out at the local golf course in **Mareeba**, this time though in broad daylight, where good numbers of **Eastern Gray Kangaroos** were seen (*photo above*), with some pairs even observed "boxing" one another. A single **Blue-winged Kookaburra** and ten or more **Channel-billed Cuckoos** also featured in the surrounding trees. Birding the entrance road to **Mareeba Wetlands** produced our first **Brush Cuckoo** over breakfast in the field. Our next stop was a wooded creek line, **Big Mitchell Creek**, where we hoped we might find a *White-browed Robin*. During our search, we found our first **Red-browed Firetails**, some **Double-barred Finches**, a pair of **Northern Fantails**, a handful of **Fairy Gerygones**, and a gabbling party of **Gray-crowned Babblers**. We did also manage to track down the often-elusive **White-browed Robin**, which gave short, but decent looks, to some of the group before it dropped back into the creek, and out of sight, again. We continued searching, and eventually found one, which cooperated better, and showed to all. Another stop in the tropical rainforest of **Julatten** did not produce either some early *Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfishers* (that traditionally do not turn up from New Guinea in earnest until November), or a *Superb Fruit-Dove*, although we did admire a super little **Yellow-breasted Boatbill** at close quarters, and also see **Pale-yellow Robin**, and **Black-faced and Spectacled Monarchs**. We then returned to scour some *Beach Thick-knee* areas, but again drew a blank at all of the regular spots for it, and so headed south back towards **Cairns**, where we intended to finish up the day looking at waders along the shore. On the way we made a short side trip to **Cattana Wetlands**, where the hoped-for **White-browed**

Crake was soon found walking the reedy edge; **Green Pygmy-Geese** and **Comb-crested Jacanas** were also seen during our short visit too. In the late afternoon we combed the shoreline at **Cairns**, along the **Esplanade**. While joggers and “fitness freaks” worked out nearby, we added a series of shorebirds to our list: **Terek Sandpiper**, **Far Eastern Curlew**, **Pied Oystercatcher**, **Red-capped Plover** and **Great Knot** being particular highlights, along with a dark morph **Pacific Reef-Heron**. Our time closed in Cairns with another visit to the local, Bali-themed, restaurant for more superb Indonesian curries, before we retired early, in readiness for our early morning flight to Brisbane...



LEG 2: SOUTHEAST QUEENSLAND

Day 8: Cairns to Brisbane; Boondall Wetlands to O Reilly's (Lamington National Park)

A very early rise – a regular feature of this tour – was needed to get us to Cairns airport for our flight out to **Brisbane**. On arrival in Southeast Queensland, we left the airport behind and visited some nearby mangroves, where two habitat specialists were quickly found: **Mangrove Honeyeater** and **Mangrove Gerygone**. A trip to the temperate forest along **Gold Creek Road** was made in the hope of finding the local *White-eared Monarchs*, although none were heard during our short time there. We did, however, get another short flyover from a **Pacific Baza**, and incredible close ups of **Striated Thornbill** and **Red-browed Firetail**. A **Wonga Pigeon** put in its first appearance at this site too, but was typically seen much better later on the tour at Lamington. We also stopped in at a recently found nest of *Square-tailed Kite*, a pair of which had been found

by local resident and fellow Tropical Birding guide, *Nick Leseberg*. Unfortunately, the kite was absent, but we did enjoy a superb meal, at a local restaurant, which fortuitously had only opened three weeks earlier.

With morning moving to midday we took lunch and moved on towards **Lamington National Park**. Near **Canungra** we visited a side road where we soon got looks at some of the constantly calling **Bell Miners**, and enjoyed a great experience with our first **Variegated Fairywren** of the tour (*photo page 21*), and also eyeballed multiple **Black and Gray-headed Flying-foxes** at a local bat colony (*photo of latter below by Wesley Homoya*). As we worked our way up the winding road to O Reilly's, we stopped for some very confiding kangaroos, with first a **Red-necked Wallaby**, followed by **Pretty-faced (Whiptail) Wallaby** both seen within the wet sclerophyll forest on the way up (*photos page 23 and 29 respectively*). On what capped a good day for mammals, we also got a **Mountain Brushtail Possum** while dining that night at the restaurant's feeder, and bumped into some **Common Ringtail Possums** during our fruitless search for *Marbled Frogmouth* after dinner, which was only heard on this occasion.





Red-necked Wallaby near O Reilly's (Lamington National Park)

Day 9: Lamington National Park (O Reilly's)

Having arrived late in the day at **O Reilly's**, our first morning brought a flurry of some of its most famous birds; Joe turned up for the morning meet with one of these perched on his head, a wild **Australian King-Parrot**, that was quickly followed by a **Crimson Rosella** replacing it! Others had some of the local **Crimson Rosellas**, so used to people feeding them at Lamington, swoop in and land on various limbs too, (*photo of Joy and parrots below, and Joe and rosella on next page, both by Wesley Homoya*). With all of this gaudy action, our first **Superb Fairywrens** were somewhat overshadowed by the extraordinarily tame wild parrots that O Reilly's is justifiably famous for. **Wonga Pigeons** were also seen wandering the local lawns at close range. Some of the local **Regent and Satin Bowerbirds** also were seen near the cabins that morning too. Lamington is an interesting mix of habitats; dense, lush, green temperate rainforest on the top of the hill (i.e. on the plateau), but the lower slopes of this area of the **Green Mountains** are covered in sparse wet *sclerophyll* forest, dominated by eucalyptus trees.





We started out by trying to find any thrushes feeding along the rainforest edge by the road early in the morning, and were all rewarded with extreme, and long, close ups of a foraging **Russet-tailed Thrush**. We then moved out into the markedly different, more open, wet *sclerophyll* forest, and searched for *Red-browed Treecreeper* but could not find any, but did see some of our only **White-naped Honeyeaters** of the trip, and our first **Spotted Pardalotes**. Moving back into the rainforest, we lucked into a **White-headed Pigeon**, (often hard to find, due to its irruptive nature), feeding right in the middle of the dirt road, where we were all able to get crippling looks. After returning to O Reilly's for a large, cooked breakfast we chose to do some trail walking for lyrebirds, as this area is one of the most reliable places in Australia for *Albert's Lyrebird*. We returned to our rooms post breakfast, with the idea of meeting up again soon after for this very reason. However, while Sam was walking around the lodge with binoculars swinging around his neck, he was approached by one of the O Reilly's guides (Matt) who informed him he had just seen an **Albert's Lyrebird** scratching around besides the lodge cabins ([photo, page 26](#))! After being shown the spot, Sam ran around

trying to gather up all the troops in time to see it. Most got crisp looks at this foraging male bird, although some of the late arrivals “dipped” (i.e. missed the bird), but were distracted all the same by our first male **Eastern Whipbird** “whip-cracking” in a near bush. After a wider search we soon found the lyrebird quietly feeding at the start of a near forest trail, where this time we not only all got to see it, but also got to see it calling at length.

The late morning was spent looking for further rainforest birds along the “**Python Rock Track**”, which was very productive, giving us good views of several **Green Catbirds**, our first **Australian Logrunners** at close quarters, a Rufous Fantail, and a couple of **Rose Robins** too. The **Paradise Riflebirds** were typically inconspicuous, and although two males were seen along the track, only some got these, although all got to see one of the females found foraging along there.



After a busy morning for new birds, and good birds, we returned to lunch at the O Reilly’s café, but kept seeing birds right around there too, including **Red-browed Firetails**, and **Eastern Spinebills** plundering the local nectar sources, (*photo next page*). Ultra confiding **White-browed Scrubwrens** were also regularly encountered hopping around the café and local bird feeding areas. In the afternoon, following a short rest, we visited the bower of a local glossy male **Satin Bowerbird**, which was adorned with all things bright and blue, mostly formed of human trash items, like plastic spoons and straws. Whilst observing this, we also got distracted by a second **Albert’s Lyrebird** of the day. After that, we headed out in pursuit of the devilish **Red-browed Treecreeper**, which had eluded us during our morning search. For this we visited an area where the rainforest abruptly changes into open sclerophyll woodland, but once again, the treecreeper proved tricky. Finally, after a time, Wes tracked down a group that most people saw before they quickly moved away. While we were in the midst of this, we had a bit of trouble with a passing truck that got wedged with our vehicle along the road. While this felt initially like bad fortune, it turned out well, as the driver of the truck was one of the local guides, (Matt again) who had just found a **Koala**. After getting our vehicles unlocked from each other, we went off in pursuit of the **Koala**, (*photo page 56*), and found it waiting for us, wide-awake and low down, on arrival! The same area also yielded our first **Buff-rumped Thornbills** of the trip, which were rather

unpopular next to the *Koala*. Judy was particularly taken with the *Koala*, one of her main goals of the trip. After dinner in the evening, we went out in pursuit of **Marbled Frogmouth** again, finally finding it at the second site we tried; and then had a shorter search for **Southern Boobook**, which was called in right beside the lodge.



Day 10: Lamington (O Reilly's) & Kakadu Beach to Brisbane & New South Wales

There was precious little to look for on this final O Reilly's morning. Thus, some enjoyed a late lie in and enjoyed some final time with the tame and wild **Regent and Satin Bowerbirds** around the lodge, while a few others came out to try and nail down the **Red-browed Treecreeper**, which had shown only to some before. We picked this species up almost immediately on arrival, settling that score, and then enjoyed a number of avian repeats, like **Variegated and Red-backed Fairywrens**, (*photo page 28*), but also added a responsive **Bassian (Olive-tailed) Thrush**, which circled us several times. Other birds seen before we left **O Reilly's**, included another **White-headed Pigeon**, more **Topknot Pigeons** and **Eastern Whipbird**, and some final **Whiptail (Pretty-faced) Wallabies** and **Red-legged and Red-necked Pademelons** on the way out.



With our early success in **Lamington National Park**, we decided to change plans for the day and have another stab at two missed birds earlier on the trip; *Square-tailed Kite* near **Brisbane**, and perhaps try for a pair of nesting Beach Thick-Knees, which had eluded us at the sites we tried in Northeast Queensland. Shortly after leaving Lamington behind, we were forced to stop for a pair of roadside **Brown Quails**, which lifted off out of the grass in front of the entire group, (and were the only ones encountered on the tour). We met up with a local-based Tropical Birding guide, *Nick Leseberg*, at his local *Square-tailed Kite* nest, which again was empty, unfortunately, in spite of the supposedly good timing for breeding, and despite the fact they had been present days earlier! With time waning, and hopes high of finding a pair of nesting *Beach Thick-Knees*, we left the empty nest behind, and drove on to **Kakadu Beach**, located on Bribie Island, north of Brisbane. A large roost of waders (shorebirds) was waiting for us on arrival, and Nick helped us in locating our first and only **Black-tailed Godwit** of the trip (among the more common **Bar-tailed Godwits**); we also found **Great and Red Knots**, **Lesser and Greater Sandpipers**, **Red-capped Plover**, and plentiful **Curlew Sandpipers**

and **Red-necked Stints** too. Some repositioning was required though for us to see the **Beach Thick-Knees**, which were standing near their nest, bringing great relief to all, following a long and fruitless search earlier on the tour north of Cairns. **White-cheeked Honeyeater** was also seen in the same place, and some very tame **Buff-banded Rails**, which strolled right past the on site blind. This brought our time in Queensland to an end, as we drove then to **Brisbane** airport, flew to **Sydney** in *New South Wales*, from where we immediately headed west to **Lithgow** for the night, in readiness for our morning in the *Capertee Valley* the following day. The nighttime drive was not quite what we hoped as heavy rain and winds whipped across the highways, as we arrived into unusually inclement weather!



LEG 3: NEW SOUTH WALES

Day 11: Capertee Valley & Lake Wallace to Forbes

At dawn we departed our hotel, following our late night arrival, and headed to the **Capertee Valley**, one of the most famous birding sites in the region, a regular entry on the calendar of Sydney-based birders. Our first stop in the valley though came up short; *Yellow-throated Honeyeaters* being absent on the day, in spite of much effort to find them. Our next stop was more successful, quickly finding a pair of **Black-chinned Honeyeaters**, which were constantly attacked by the aggressive and tenacious local **White-plumed Honeyeaters** in defense of their flowers. Not long after, Neil put us on to a male **Hooded Robin** perched in a dead tree. Then one of the birds of the day turned up, with a trio of **Crested Shrike-Tits** in the same area. We also saw our first **Dusky Woodswallows**, while bagging our first **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo** and an **Australian Hobby**. Scanning dead snags and roadside wires led us to find **Australasian Bushlark**, several parties of **Zebra Finches**, many **Superb Fairywrens**, and some **Jacky-Winters**, which were much-wanted, less for their looks (they are rather drab), but more for their odd name! Large numbers of **Fairy Martins** in the area meant that many of the group saw them well for the first time. We also noted our first **Red-rumped Parrots**, but were frustrated by a calling *Painted Honeyeater* that refused to show. A **Pallid Cuckoo** was more co-operative and a get back bird for some of the group that had missed the earlier one near Daintree village. The giant and distinctive form of a **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, Australia's largest raptor (similar in length and wingspan to North America's Bald Eagle), was seen on the wing overhead. Moving on to another area, we hit some good stuff; **Restless Flycatcher**, **Fuscous and Striped Honeyeaters**, and **Olive-backed Oriole** all being seen well there. Our time at Capertee came to a close with a group of **White-winged Chough**, some displaying **Rufous Songlarks**, and multiple **Yellow-rumped Thornbills** adorning the roadside wires.

With this flurry of new birds coming during our first foray into New South Wales birding, the morning flew by, and we soon needed to head to a local café for lunch, before we moved to nearby **Lake Wallace** for waterbirds. Our main quarry here was one of the strangest of all Australian ducks, the oddball **Musk Duck**, a male of which was seen displaying in the area (*photo right*), along with a handful of other individuals too.



A **Blue-billed Duck** was also found there too, making Eddy, the “Duck Man” especially happy, and the lake was also dotted with **Hoary-headed and Great Crested Grebes**, (*photo below*). The reedy edge held a showy **Australian Reed-Warbler**, and in the trees above a male White-winged Triller attended its nest. Wes also located the first **Red Wattlebird** of the tour in nearby *Eucalyptus* trees. The afternoon was wearing on, and so we soon had to hit the road again, as we headed further inland, and further west, to the town of **Forbes** for the night, making a short stop for a low-flying **Little Eagle** en-route, and seeing around a dozen **Common Bronzings** launching off the road verges as we drove to our destination.



Day 12: Back Yamma, Gum Swamp & Lake Cargelligo

There was a very familiar pattern to this day, which largely represented the daily routine in New South Wales on this tour; starting out early, with a field breakfast, packing in multiple sites during the day, interspersed with a long drive in between, and visiting a varied set of sites with markedly different birds at each. On this day we started out within a state forest at **Back Yamma**, dominated by an Australian wooded habitat called “brigalow”, where we started our birding around a small dam, which attracted a myriad of species. Our biggest hope for visiting the dam was that the beautiful **Turquoise Parrot** would drop in for a visit, as they regularly do during early morning hours. This was only met with partial success though; Wes and perhaps one

other getting a view of a calling male as it dropped to the ground, but sadly never visited the actual dam, and so eluded most of the group. This was not a complete “train smash” though, as they say, as we had another great chance at this bird later on, so we set about seeing many of the other new birds on offer...

The dam was a hive of bird activity all the same; another **Crested Shrike-Tit** put in an appearance, along with a flurry of new birds in the area, which included **Speckled Warbler**, **White-browed Babbler**, **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo**, and the bird of the morning, a series of handsome **Diamond Firetails**, which came to the dam to drink. This was a much-wanted “grip back” bird, as we had missed it the day before at Capertee. The dam itself also held a **Black-fronted Dotterel** working the muddy edge, and our only **Brown-headed Honeyeaters** of the entire tour made an appearance there too. Just as we were thinking of leaving the dam a large group of birds sailed in and landed in the trees alongside, which gave us great looks at this mob of **White-browed Woodswallows**. **Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater** also made its first appearance near the dam, whilst on the way out from there we spotted our first **Greater Bluebonnets** and **Mallee Ringnecks** two more handsome parrots. Other new birds during this action-packed morning were **Yellow Thornbill** and **Western Gerygone**, although **Double-barred Finch** and **Brown Treecreeper** were repeats from our time in northeast Queensland. Our only **Swamp (Black) Wallaby** of the tour was also noted around Back Yamma.

After a lunch stop back in **Forbes**, we made our way to the local **Gum Swamp**, an excellent wetland on the outskirts of town, where **Freckled Duck** was the main target for the tour, but especially Eddy, who has something of a fetish for ducks! These turned out to be straightforward and conspicuous on our visit, with no less than 15 Freckled Ducks being seen, along with plenty more **Pink-eared Ducks**, a few **Australian Shovelers** (the other major target there), plenty of **Hoary-headed Grebes**, and a few **Yellow-billed Spoonbills** (a species that was unusually numerous on this year's tour). Wes found a couple of **Little Corellas** sitting in the dead trees in the swamp that also represented our first sighting of the tour, while Joe also spotted another **Blue-billed Duck** in the far corner of the swamp.

From there we headed ever-deeper inland to **Lake Cargelligo**, where we gave its namesake lake short shrift, but instead headed to the local sewage farm, which was typically packed with waterbirds. On the journey to Lake Cargelligo we made a notable stop for a roadside **Short-beaked Echidna**, Australia's answer to the porcupine. Once at the sewage ponds, on the fringes of the marsh the saltbushes were home to several dazzling male **White-winged Fairywrens**, whilst the reeds were home to many calling **Little Grassbirds**, one of which was seen by some of the group only. Rails and crakes are a big feature of this site, and shortly after arriving we found several **Baillon's Crakes** lurking at the edges of the pools, while Wes again added to the trip list when he found an **Australian (Spotted) Crake** later in the day. Lots of **Whiskered Terns** were on the wing above the wetland, although only a solitary **Caspian Tern** was seen there. Waterbirds were our main focus, with one pond holding a handful of **Australian Shelducks**, over a hundred **Red-necked Avocets**, as well as **Red-capped Plovers**, **Red-kneed Dotterels**, **Sharp-tailed Marsh**, and **Wood Sandpipers**, and a healthy number of **Black-tailed Native-Hens**, a highly nomadic species that we only saw twice on the tour.

Non-waterbirds noted in the area included a **Brown Falcon**, as well as a **Collared Sparrowhawk**, before the day drew to a close, and we retired to a pub in **Lake Cargelligo** for dinner and beers.

Day 13: Round Hill & Hay Plains

This is always one of the key days of the tour; we start out within a specialist bird habitat only covered on this one day-mallee, in and around **Round Hill Nature Reserve**, and finish up with a session of birding on the sprawling **Hay Plains**, to search for one of the most wanted birds of the tour, Plains-wanderer.



We went out from **Lake Cargelligo** in darkness, and headed into the mallee, noting two different **Spotted Nightjars** that appeared in our vehicle headlights en-route. In the last 15 years Australia has been in the grip of a long term drought, save for just a couple of wet years within that period. Therefore, we were quite surprised to be

greeted by rain for our morning at **Round Hill**, which turned some of the roads into slicks, and quashed some of our birding opportunities. One of our main targets here was the *Chestnut Quail-Thrush*, which is always easy to hear, but usually tricky to see well. However, perhaps related to the rain situation, not a single quail-thrush was heard all morning. The mallee though, a uniform habitat characterized by low, multi-trunked eucalyptus species, offered us plenty more besides, being our only venture into this habitat type. The morning started slowly, perhaps again, a consequence of the wet conditions, with our foray into neighboring **Nombinnie Nature Reserve**, producing very little save for a spectacular male **Splendid Fairywren** seen there, a few super male **Red-capped Robins**, and a single, showy, **Chestnut-rumped Thornbill**. Australia's smallest bird, the **Weebill**, was also seen in the area, representing the sole sighting of the tour. A **Shy Heathwren** only gave the shortest of views as it scampered across the floor, although the first of many **White-fronted Honeyeaters** for the morning showed better. Indeed, Round Hill is a good area for *honeyeaters*, many of which are nomadic; being numerous in some years when plentiful blooms are present, but

completely absent at other times, when the blossoms are not present. Thus, we scored our only **Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters** of the trip on this day too, along with some striking **White-eared Honeyeaters** too. Moving back to the road, after a disappointing start, save for the *fairywren*, we started to hit more birds: a flock of **Mulga Parrots** was found sitting beside the road and gave good views, but better still came with a calling **Black-eared Cuckoo**, (*photo page before*), a difficult species that gave excellent looks in the area. We also had a good piece of luck when a male **Crested Bellbird** was seen sitting up in full view, if only briefly, a bird that is most usually heard but not seen. Our final long stop of the morning was much better though, as we visited a recent known hotspot at Round Hill for honeyeaters, where a series of flowering *Eremophila* shrubs were packed with honeyeaters; **Pied and Black Honeyeaters** being the most conspicuous; and the same area also held a handful of beautiful **Crimson Chats**, a nomadic species not always recorded on this tour.



All too soon though we had to think about leaving the area, as we had some miles to put under our belt before we reached the **Hay Plains**, home of the Plains-wanderer. Heading out of Round Hill we did make a stop for some roadside **Brown Songlarks**, using fence posts as calling posts, and seen making several conspicuous display flights. After lunch and refueling in **Lake Cargelligo**, we hit the road for Hay, checking into the hotel several hours later, and picking up a packed meal for dinner in the field. In the late afternoon

we set out to meet Phil Maher, the original Plains-wanderer himself, and the man with the best record of finding this species on Earth. On the drive down to meet him we stopped for the only **Spotted Harrier** of the trip, which was quartering the plains. Indeed, the **Hay Plains** are a notable spot for raptors, and yielded **Brown Falcon**, **Australian Kite**, several **Wedge-tailed Eagles**, **Black and Whistling Kites**, and **Australian Kestrel** during this short drive. The drive down also saw us come face to face with Australia's national bird, the **Emu**, (*photo page 34*), several groups of which were seen roaming the plains. No one knows these plains like Phil, and we enjoyed a few hours of daylight birding with him, before we set out in search of the *Plains-wanderer* after dark, when it is most easily found. Our first stop gave us good looks at a single **Broglia** that took flight and flew right over the top of us, and a small party of **White-fronted Chats**, which included at least one immaculate male. We also got good looks at several **Singing Honeyeaters** in this area, which were the first of the tour. Our luck was not in for **White-backed Swallows** though, as only one was seen very briefly by one person in the group. Towards dusk, Phil led us to a small group of **Australian Pratincoles**, which showed well as we watched them from the vehicles (*photo below*), and some people got short looks at a pair of **Orange Chats**, which vanished without a trace shortly after. This late afternoon period also saw us get long looks at one of the local **Banded Lapwings**. We also added two large marsupials, with the largest kangaroo of them all, the **Red Kangaroo**, seen, including one enormous male in their group; and we also saw a couple of **Western Gray Kangaroos** too, along with some more **Eastern Gray Kangaroos**.



Dark clouds were gathering in the distance, and with heavy rains forecast (in an area that had barely had rain all year!), we took our field dinner as darkness fell, keen to look for the key birds, the *Plains-wanderer* and *Inland Dotterel*, before the core of the storm hit. After eating, we set out in 3 vehicles, each with an experienced driver/come plains-wanderer finder at the wheel. The weather deteriorated as we drove, and our initial searches of the sheep paddock where Phil and his team had been seeing the Plains-wanderer recently turned up no sight of them. We continued though, and with persistence a fine male **Plains-wanderer** was spotlit at length, much to our relief, in ever-worsening conditions, (*photo below*).

With the Plains-wanderer seen well, we quickly moved off in search for **Inland Dotterels**, (*photo page 57*), knowing that if the weather worsened further we might have to call off the search early. Luckily, Sam managed to spot one in the nick of time, and we soon were all gathered around this bird that gave us excellent looks as it huddled against the strong winds,



which were whipping across the plains by this time. We had intended then to head off to another area in search of *Little Buttonquail*, but the weather conditions put paid to that idea, and we returned to our vehicles and left this farm, before the roads would become impassable to our vehicles, following the now persistent rain. Heavy and continuous rain fell as we drove back to Hay, and we were relieved to fall into bed for a longer night's rest than usual, following a very long, but very rewarding, day and night in the field!

Day 14: Hay to Five Bough Swamp & Binya

After the longest day of the tour, we enjoyed a rare lie in, meeting for breakfast in a local café, at the absurdly late time of 8AM. After breakfast we packed up and headed eastwards towards our next night's destination, the city of **Griffith**, set within vast agricultural lands and commonly known as the "food bowl of Australia". Our journey eastwards was not without incident though, and we remained alert for new birds. The front vehicle spotted a flash of bright green darting into some roadside trees, and after a short search, we were all

looking at a group of well-named **Superb Parrots**, (*photo below*), which contained some bright yellow-faced males in their midst. While watching these, Wes alerted us to a perched **Cockatiel** close by, a bird that had been strangely difficult on this tour; a couple of **Wedge-tailed Eagles** were also seen on the wing during this stop too. Continuing our journey east we soon reached the outskirts of **Darlington Point**, a small pastoral community located on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River; where we had another “parrot” in our crosshairs, this time stopping for a large mob of roadside cockatoos, which were largely made up of our target species, the pink-flushed **Long-billed Corella**, (*photo page 38*), sharing the trees with **Little Corellas** and **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**. Some more vocal Rufous Songlarks were also seen around **Darlington Point**. We had made good time, in spite of these key stops made, and were at our hotel for the night in **Griffith**, by lunchtime.





We took lunch at a fantastic Italian bakery in **Griffith** (something of a local legend), before we departed for one of Australia's most famous wetlands, **Five Bough Swamp**, near the town of Leeton. Following our successful trip to Lake Cargelligo Sewage Works, we were actually not looking for much here, but it was a good visit all the same, and was predictably packed with birds. We were reacquainted with common wetland birds like **Black Swan, White-eyed Duck, Gray Teal, Whiskered Tern, Glossy Ibis, Red-kneed Dotterel, and Royal Spoonbill**, but also managed to find some scarcer species like **Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Red-necked Avocet, Australian Hobby** was also seen in this area too. However, in spite of considerable effort, and a few birds heard, we could not tempt a *Spotless Crake* into the open, a species that would elude us to the very end. **Binya State Forest**, an area of mulga and brigalow woodland close to the city. Our specific destination was a small dam, Wattle Dam, which we hoped may yield the much-wanted *Turquoise Parrot*, arguably the most attractive of this family in Australia, which is already overloaded with good looking birds! The parrots are known to come in late, near dusk, but we arrived well in advance of this, just in case. Ironically, on arrival, and well before dusk, we heard the quiet, though distinct calls of the parrot, but simply could not find the culprit before it fell silent. We spent the next few hours watching birds come and go by the dam, some stopping to drink, while others appeared in the trees alongside but did not partake. Among the birds seen were a fabulous **Sacred Kingfisher**, a party of **Mulga Parrots**, several **White-winged Trillers**, a troop of **White-browed Babblers**, a single **Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo**, a few **Rainbow Bee-eaters**, two

Jacky-Winters, and several **Mallee Ringnecks**. A **Peregrine Falcon** darted overhead, and ended up being the sole sighting of the tour. Then, at 7:10PM, the quiet tinkling call of the **Turquoise Parrot** was heard again. After alerting the group to their presence, Eddy cried "Parrot!", and a male **Turquoise Parrot** was seen swooping across the small dam, and landed in some trees close by. Thankfully, it remained there for the next five minutes allowing us long 'scope looks at this dramatic parrot, which seemed to have quickly risen into contention for bird of the trip, judging by the group reaction. On our return journey to the car we also picked up some perched **White-browed Woodswallows** and a male **Red-capped Robin** to bring the day to a close.

Day 15: Binya, Griffith & Barren Grounds

One of the reasons guides and participants alike love this trip, is the varied situations to be birding in from one part of the day to the next; and this day was a good example of this. We returned to bird the open woodland (a habitat referred to as "brigalow") at **Binya State Forest** first thing, although this time birding a different part of the reserve to the evening before; from there we checked out one of the best parrot venues in this



region, **Griffith Golf Course**, before we drove all the way back to the coastal strip, and birded the wet temperate rainforest and heathland of **Barren Grounds**, only an hour from Sydney.

Our reason for returning to **Binya** was simple; it represents one of the most reliable sites for the unreliable and unpredictable **Painted Honeyeater**, (*photo above*). This point was proven when we managed to track one down before the end of our field breakfast, one of two singing birds seen well in our few hours there. Aside from that species, we had caught up with most of the usual targets there in our earlier visit to Back Yamma, which shares many of the same species. However, we were still missing **Inland Thornbill**, which, after covering several different areas, we also managed to track down. Other birds seen during this short visit to Binya included another **Collared Sparrowhawk** (often a tricky bird to pin down on this itinerary), more **Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters**, and another **Chestnut-rumped Thornbill**. Finding ourselves with some time on our hands, what with our early success with *Painted Honeyeater*, we opted to return to where we'd overnighted,

Griffith, although this time check out the local golf course, a notable hotspot for parrots in particular. This was displayed shortly after arriving, with **Greater Bluebonnets** (*photo page 42*), and **Red-rumped Parrots** seen, although neither of these were our quarry. As we checked on corner of the golf course, Wes went off to search the other side. As the area is very dry in general, the moist golf course acts as a kind of oasis for birds, which come in far and wide to feed. We got our best looks of the tour at several **Common Bronzewings** (*photo below*), foraging on the green, and also got our final sightings of the tour of **White-winged Choughs** and **Apostlebirds**, also on the green; a small group of **Gray-crowned Babblers** was also seen on the course. Then Sam's phone rang, a call from Wes, and all Hell broke loose; he had located a group of **Pink (Major Mitchell's) Cockatoos**, (*photo next page*), the bird we had most been hoping for! We quickly returned to our vehicles and hurried around the outside of the course to where Wes was waiting near the clubhouse.





Thankfully, so were the *Pink Cockatoos*, and we saw a pair of adults and a young bird foraging at length in the trees above us. After that we stocked up on refreshments at the clubhouse, where they informed us of a **Tawny Frogmouth** nest outside, which we also checked out, before undertaking our long drive towards the coast.

Late in the afternoon we arrived in the small town of **Robertson**, whose largest local store seemed to be the pie shop, very Australian indeed! Here, we checked into our hotel, ordered dinner for the night; then headed up to **Barren Grounds Nature Reserve** for a short birding session in the late afternoon/evening. As we drove along the entrance track, some got looks at our first **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** of the tour in the trees alongside, but all were soon distracted by an ultra-confiding **Short-beaked Echidna**, (*photo page 3*), waddling along the track. The black-cockatoos could not be located in a later search, although were compensated for somewhat, by a well-hidden female **Gang-gang Cockatoo** seen there instead. On the heath we also tracked down a few superb **Southern Emuwrens**, the seventh and final species from the fairywren family possible on this tour. Other notable birds that afternoon were **White-throated Treecreeper**, **Eastern Spinebill**, and the first of many **New Holland Honeyeaters** out on the heath. In spite of at least three

different *Pilotbirds* being heard, none were in any kind of position to see, as they called continually from the thick undergrowth.

After an excellent curry at our hotel in **Robertson**, some of the group decided to go out again, principally in search of nocturnal mammals, and wombats in particular. Judy was among those who were thrilled with no less than EIGHT different **Common Wombats** seen during this night drive, many of which were slowly wandering along the road in full glorious view!



Day 16: Barren Grounds, Budderoo & Bass Point to Royal National Park

Shortly after dawn, we returned to **Barren Grounds Nature Reserve**, with group instructed to keep their eyes peeled for roadside lyrebirds on the way up. The instruction was well founded, with seven different **Superb Lyrebirds** being seen, although only those in the second vehicle getting prolonged looks at any of them. Not long after our arrival at **Barren Grounds**, we got much better looks at both a female and male **Gang-gang**

Cockatoo, which provided a welcome upgrade to our views the evening before of a well-concealed female only. We spent most of the remainder of the morning birding both parts of Barren Grounds, and also nearby **Budderoo National Park** in pursuit of many of the birds shared by both. Wes located one of the trickiest birds in the area, remarkably quickly, when he spotted an **Eastern Bristlebird** sitting out on top of a low shrub on the heathland. While it remained tricky thereafter, a second bird was also seen well by some later that morning too, in what constituted good views and showings for this notoriously furtive species. Less was had with Pilotbird, which was not very vocal at all during this morning; we climbed into a gully, where only Neil, and later Sam, managed a view of the bird. Other birds seen that morning in this area included **Fan-tailed Cuckoo**, **Crimson and Eastern Rosellas**, **Eastern Yellow Robin**, and another short view of **Southern Emuwren**, while tracking down our second bristlebird. Another **Short-beaked Echidna** made an appearance, but did not compare with the previous afternoon's extended, stellar looks.



As early morning turned to late morning, the weather changed, while the day had started bright and clear, (which probably explained how we managed to see two different bristlebirds, at this notoriously rain affected site); we decided to go to another part of **Budderoo National Park**, **Minnamurra Falls Rainforest Centre**, mainly in the hope of getting better looks at *Superb Lyrebirds*, for which this is a notable spot. On arrival at the falls, we were greeted by chilly and wet weather, which did not appear too conducive for a lyrebird

search. The center staff informed us of some likely spots to find their lyrebird, but tempered it with the information that they also just as often turn up around the picnic area! Some of us took a short walk in the rain, along rainforest trail, but turned up very little indeed, let alone a lyrebird, and so we retired to the picnic area for lunch. As we were laying down our food for lunch, Eddy spotted a calling male **Superb Lyrebird**, (*photo page 43*), and we rushed up to the parking lot, where the bird could be seen completely in the open, and for a short time at least, in full, remarkable, display!



After lunch, and a cup of hot drinks from the well-named "Lyrebird Café", we drove to nearby **Bass Point**, getting typically lost along the way, but eventually finding our way to this headland, which is famous amongst Sydney birds as a good land-based seawatching spot. We stopped at the pier, where we found three species of cormorant lounging along it: **Little Black, Great and Pied Cormorants**. This area also provided us with some introduced species, which have healthy, self-sustaining populations in the area: **European Goldfinch, European Greenfinch, and Red-whiskered Bulbul**. Reaching the actual point itself, we quickly located a pair of **Sooty Oystercatchers** foraging among the rocks (*photo above*), and also saw **Red Wattlebirds, Gray**

Fantail, and Superb Fairywrens in the surrounding shrubbery. Then it was time for some extended 'scope work, as we watched the sea at length. We quickly noted some large groups of **Short-tailed Shearwaters**, classified as one of the most numerous of all Australian birds, in this season. Further observation of the sea yielded a scattering of **Fluttering Shearwater** sightings, a handful of **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters**, and a surprise pair of **Parasitic Jaeger** sightings. Bass Point is also a reliable spot for **Australasian Gannet** on this tour, although on this day they took their time to appear, but good views were had of several individuals, including an immaculate adult. However, all of these seabirds were overshadowed by a majestic **White-capped (Shy) Albatross**, which Joe initially glimpsed, but then re-appeared at length, which capped off a great period of seawatching from shore! Our final birding of the day was on the outskirts of Sydney, with a short visit to the coastal heaths in **Royal National Park**, where we added our first **Little Wattlebird** to the list but not much else. After dinner at a fine Thai restaurant (something that Australia can boast an absurdly high number of!), Sonia, Neil and Sam returned to another, forested, part of **Royal National Park**, where they tried for nightbirds. What they were really hoping for was a *Powerful Owl*, but all that was heard was a distant *Southern Boobook*. However, three new mammals joined the list; a pair of introduced species, Red Fox and Rusa (a deer species), but better still were a pair of **Sugar Gliders** frozen in the spotlight.



Day 17: Royal National Park & Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney to Tasmania

In the morning we returned to the coastal heaths of **Royal National Park**; we started out on the windy **Mount Bass Firetrail**, which, like the afternoon before was largely quiet save for a few **Little Wattlebirds** and **New Holland Honeyeaters**, (*photo below*). We then moved on to one of the most dramatic spots for scenery of the entire tour, also inside the park, the spectacular Sandstone cliffs of **Wattamolla**, (*photo page earlier*). Our reason for visiting this scenic spot was not though purely for the landscapes, as appreciated as they were by all. A very localized species, the **Rockwarbler**, is found on such outcroppings, and is confined to this type of Sandstone, occurring merely within a 155 mile/250km radius of Sydney. We had barely arrived at the spot, when one of these warblers was seen scampering on top of the outcrop, and was seen lurking beneath some cliff top bushes several times thereafter.



Our other targets on the heaths nearby, were not so helpful, perhaps due to the ever-strengthening winds that quickly whipped up. We did get a short, though good look at a **Chestnut-rumped Heathwren** that Wes quickly located when it hopped up high in a short bush, although **Tawny-crowned Honeyeater**, which was not foreseen as particularly challenging was proving quiet and elusive. Then finally, after some time on the search, a short period of playback brought a single bird up on to the top of a cliff top shrub, which everyone quickly locked on to before it flew off high into the distance! Some distant **Short-tailed Shearwaters** were seen foraging offshore, and a single **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** passed overhead above the cliffs. We also saw a couple of **Red-browed Firetails** in the area, but not the hoped for *Beautiful Firetail*, and also saw a few **Red Wattlebirds** sharing the flowers around the parking area with the more abundant **Little Wattlebird**.



With almost all of the realistic targets in the area seen, we found ourselves with a little time on our hands, and so retired to the Sydney suburb of **Sutherland**, for lunch. During lunch, Sam plotted one final activity for our time in New South Wales, before we would fly out to Tasmania later on this afternoon. He called the information center at the **Royal Botanic Gardens** in downtown Sydney to see if their regular Powerful Owl was in attendance that day. Sadly, the lady on the end of the phone was not sure, but knew it had been seen at least as recently as two days previously. That was good enough for Sam, and the group, and so we drove into the city and parked up by the gardens, racing to the information center, where they said they would relay

details of the best recent places to search for it. On arrival at the booth though, better news arrived; one of the park staff had just found an owl roosting nearby! We hurried over there, and were greeted by a local lady without binoculars, who quickly put us on to the **Powerful Owl**, (*photo page 2*), which was sitting conspicuously in the open! This was a fantastic end to our time in New South Wales, although we quickly visited nearby **Mrs. Macquarie's Point** before we departed for Sydney airport, which offers the very best views of the **Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Opera House**, (*photo page before*). Following that we ate at Sydney airport and traveled south to Hobart, on the island of Tasmania, for the final leg of the tour...



LEG 4: TASMANIA

Day 18: Peter Murrell Reserve, Bruny Island & Hobart Waterworks Reserve

With 13 endemic species currently listed for the island of Tasmania, even at this late stage of the tour, new birds were on offer aplenty. For our first day (of two) on Tasmania we spent the majority of our time on **Bruny**

Island, a scenic, horseshoe-shaped island that lies off the southeast corner of the mainland. However, before we took the car ferry over there, we made a short visit to **Peter Murrell Reserve**, where we got our first sprinkling of endemics. This small reserve, close to Hobart, has been famous as one of the most reliable places to find the rare Forty-spotted Pardalote, an endangered Tasmanian endemic species that numbers under 1500 individuals. In recent years there has been a sudden and dramatic decline, and so we were not quite sure what we would face in our search for this inconspicuous bird. We took our breakfast in the reserve parking lot, and quickly saw our first endemics, all honeyeaters: **Yellow Wattlebird** (the avian emblem of Tasmania), and **Black-headed and Yellow-throated Honeyeaters**. We also saw the first of many **Tasmanian Native-Hens**, a flightless rail confined to this island. On the small dam alongside we also got our first good looks at **Chestnut Teal**, which were seen several times in our two days on Tasmania. With precious little time, before we needed to catch the ferry to **Bruny Island**, but knowing we could return here later in the day if needed, we went off in search for the reserve's rarest bird, **Forty-spotted Pardalote**. A tree near the parking area had held nesting pairs in this period of the year over recent years, and so this was the first obvious place to check. Amazingly, we quickly found a pair in this tree, soon after checking, making remarkably short shrift of this bird, which was highly unexpected, considering its diminishing conservation status. Both **Striated and Spotted Pardalotes** were also seen in the same area.



We then set off for Kettering dock, from where we took the 20-minute ferry ride to **Bruny Island**. On the ride over we got our first, poor, looks at **Black-faced Cormorants**, which were seen much better later in the day. On getting over to Bruny, we quickly made our way to **Great Bay**, where we hoped to track down some *Blue-winged Parrots*. On arrival at the site, we bumped into a local dog walker, who told us she had seen not only a group of **Blue-winged Parrots** in the last hour, but also seen a *Brush Bronzewing* walking along the beach! We quickly checked the beach, but found nothing of note there, so went back to our parrot search, but were rightly distracted by a pair of **Beautiful Firetails** when doing so, which were seen feeding on a local lawn for some time. Finally, we tracked down some parrots, which quickly took flight but landed across the highway. Soon after we managed to located them quietly feeding on the ground. With our drive to this site having not yielded any roadside Dusky Robins, we decided to visit one of the best areas on Earth for this Tasmanian endemic, **Cape Bruny**. On arrival at the lighthouse, which dominates the landscape, here at the westernmost tip of Bruny Island, we could not immediately find any Dusky Robins, but did see some super confiding **Superb Fairywrens** (*photo by Wesley Homoya, page 48*), hopping about the parking area. Soon after though Wes and Neil spotted a **Dusky Robin** using one of the local sheds as a perch.



We then backtracked to the **Jetty Beach** camping area, where we enjoyed a good run of birds; we were greeted in the car park by two **Olive-tailed (Bassian) Thrushes** (*photo page 49*), hopping around unconcernedly and in full view of us all; then noticed an **Olive Whistler** hopping along on the ground beside them! Our first **Tasmanian Scrubwrens** of the tour also graced this area; and we got looks at a cracking pair of **Satin Flycatchers**, (*photo page before*), another **Dusky Robin**, and a pair of **Strong-billed Honeyeaters** in the trees overhead while there too. We then headed northeast to **Adventure Bay**, stopping along the way for a couple of **Scarlet Robins** adorning the roadside wires and trees. By the time we reached Adventure Bay we had racked up all three of the regular Australian gulls: the now familiar **Silver Gull** featured along with two new additions: **Kelp and Pacific Gulls**. On the beach at **Adventure Bay** we had hoped to find the *Hooded Plover* during a picnic lunch but came up short. After lunch we scoured the many flowering eucalyptus trees that line the bay for parrots, and were turned around when Wes and the other vehicle located a **Hooded Plover** resting on the beach. A local birder, and a local shop owner both informed us that *Swift Parrots* were around at the time, but we were still not managing to find any in spite of many trees in seemingly great condition for them. And so we took a drive up the **Coolangatta Road**, where we hoped the forest might yield our third new robin of the day. This worked out well, a quick burst of playback bringing in a pretty male **Pink Robin** (*photo next page*), into the trees alongside us, for one of the birds of the trip, let alone the day! A continually calling **Crescent Honeyeater** proved more tricky to locate, though Wes managed to track it down for us all eventually. We then returned to **Adventure Bay**, hoping that by late afternoon the parrot activity would have increased. We were not wrong, Wes quickly located an excellent **Swift Parrot**, which remained in the middle of our 'scope, for some time. We also enjoyed an ice cream in the sun while watching a group of **Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos** there, before we departed for our first try at the difficult *Scrubtit*. The *scrubtit* proved as difficult as expected with no sight nor sound, and we almost missed our ferry by doing so, getting on board in the nick of time!





That evening we enjoyed a great feed of Japanese food, a few steps from our hotel rooms, before most of the group headed to the local **Hobart Waterworks Reserve** in the hope of either owls, some Tasmanian mammals, or both! This site, just minutes from our hotel, was a real treat for mammals in particular. The place was literally crawling with mammals, with many **Bennett's Wallabies** (a local endemic Tasmanian race of *Red-necked Wallaby*), along with dozens of **Rufous-bellied (Tasmanian) Pademelons**, and a handful of **Common Brushtail Possums**. Owls were predictably harder to find, with just a single, distant call from *Australian Masked Owl* heard. We fared better with the recently split **Morepork** (from *Southern Boobook*), which was heard calling and was scoped up for all a short time later ([photo page 51](#)).

Day 19: Truganini Reserve, Mount Wellington, Eaglehawk Neck & Pirate's Bay

For the final birding day of the tour there was now somewhat of a slim list of target birds left. We started out close to our hotel, at the **Truganini Reserve** with one such target in mind. Shortly after arriving we could hear several of these, **Brush Bronzewings**, calling. We tried several positions to try and see one of the calling birds



before Wes announced he had one in his sights. We hurried towards him, and got great looks at this handsome pigeon perched, which is more usually seen in a flurry of wings as it is inadvertently flushed. We did not spend long at the reserve, but did find another new bird for the trip in a flowering eucalyptus tree with a small group of **Musk Lorikeets**, in addition to further views of both **Black-headed Honeyeater** and **Yellow Wattlebird**, and another **Green Rosella** or two. We then moved to another site near Hobart, **Mount Wellington**, which looms prominently over the city. As we ascended the lower slopes of the mountain we located a **Gray Currawong** in the trees alongside, and then once we reached the trailhead and our next stop, we got very close looks a **Black Currawong**, (*photo next page*), which was happy to clean up some of our breakfast items as we took this meal in the field. After breakfast we walked for a short time on a cold forest trail, hoping to track down one of the tougher Tassie endemics, *Scrubtit*, but seeing and hearing nothing. We decided to return to that species later, and continued driving up the mountain road to where the forest gave way to scrub. Here we quickly located a shockingly bright male **Flame Robin** - *photo above by Wesley Homoya* - (our fourth new robin on the island of Tasmania), and got our best looks yet at several **Crescent**

Honeyeaters nearby. We continued all the way to the top of Mount Wellington, which afforded great panoramic views over the city of Hobart. After enjoying the scenery, we returned to the same "Scrubtit" trail, but again, failed to find one, and so decided to try another trail further down the mountain. A small flurry of activity, and some interesting calls got us excited, only to see us run into a small party of **Tasmanian Thornbills**, a species we had already seen. However, just as disappointment set in, the same **Scrubtit**-like calls were heard again, and suddenly a pair of them homed into view! By now it was late morning, and so we headed back to **Hobart** for a long lunch, and a short break.



After lunch, we picked up a good meal for dinner to take with us, and headed northeast to **Eaglehawk Neck** for the evening. On the way we noted a small group of **Musk Ducks**, as we crossed the **Derwent River**. We headed to a site near Eaglehawk Neck that often has a small group of **Cape Barren Geese** present; and by the time we got there Eddy was desperate; we only had a few hours left to see the final duck/goose of the trip! It was always planned this way, largely due to geography, and thankfully shortly after arrival Eddy found a group of 4 geese foraging in the back of a large paddock. We also added **Sky Lark** to the list in some nearby farmland, a bird that may sadly be doing better in its non-native Tasmania than in its native homeland of the United Kingdom! By then it was evening time, and so we headed over to eat our dinner with the dramatic coastline of Eaglehawk Neck as a backdrop. While there we saw a final **Australasian Gannet** passing over this

headland, and saw some more **Short-tailed Shearwaters** soaring offshore. Dusk was now approaching, which was our cue to leave and settle ourselves down on a beach at **Pirate's Bay**, for the final avian finale of the tour. We sat and waited impatiently, as slowly the light began to fade. Then, as the very last glimmers of daylight hung over the beach, some gleaming white breasts could just be made out of the gloom; a huddle of some 14 **Little Penguins** were emerging into the surfline, and soon after waddling nervously up the beach towards us. When they were near enough, Sam used a spotlight (equipped with a makeshift red filter to ensure the bird's were not be frightened off), to show them to the group.



Galahs were one of the most abundant “parrots” of the tour; 27 species of parrots and cockatoos were racked up on this tour, with a dozen species seen on one day within inland New South Wales.



This was a very special end to what had been a very special tour, with some 430 species of bird recorded, and more than 30 species of mammal. We had covered everything from wet tropical rainforests in northeast Queensland down to the rocky coastlines and coastal heaths of Tasmania, and much more in between. We had seen some of Australia's most impressive birds from the beach-going **Southern Cassowary** on the first day to the world's smallest penguin (**Little Penguin**) on the last day. We had observed Australia's national bird, and its largest bird, in the form of the **Emu**, on the vast Hay Plains in New South Wales, and also seen its smallest bird, the tiny **Weebill**, in the tropical savanna of Northeast Queensland. We had seen **86 different bird families** along the way, many of them either spectacular, or special to the region, or both. Many of these families were new to many of the group for which this was either their first time in Australia or in the wider Australasian region; we saw **bowerbirds** and their well-adorned bowers; a riflebird from the **Bird-of-**

Paradise family resting on his display pole; a series of confiding, and gaudy, **Australasian Robins** (completely unrelated to either American Robins or European Robins); got great looks at Australia's sole representative of the **owlet-nightjar** family, and all of the Australian **frogmouth** species; managed to see both species of **Lyrebirds**, (the world's largest songbirds), in full display mode; got all the seven possible **fairywrens** on the tour; saw 50 different species of **honeyeaters**; racked up all 4 species of **pardalote**, an endemic Australian family; and got many other families new to many, like **Sitellas**, **Bristlebirds**, **Pseudo-Babblers**, **Logrunners**, **Bellmagpies**, and **Boatbills**. However, any wildlife-related comment on Australia cannot go by without mentioning the group of birds for which Australia is perhaps best loved; **the parrots (and cockatoos)**. If you have only experienced this group in the Americas, where they are most often experienced passing overhead during high altitude flights, then Australia provides a real treat. The parrots in Australia are gaudy, often varied and very different from one another, and are often seen very well, feeding on the ground, or in the trees. Indeed, parrots in Australia were some of the most conspicuous birds of the tour, from the very abundant **Galahs** (photo page 55), **Rainbow Lorikeets** and **Sulphur-crested Cockatoos**, to the giant **Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos** and wild **Australian King-Parrots** and **Crimson Rosellas** of O Reilly's the latter of

which not only demanded our attention due to their vivid coloration, but also by literally perching on top of us! We saw **27 species of parrots and cockatoos**, with nearly a dozen species seen on two days in New South Wales (which included **Red-rumped Parrot, Greater Bluebonnet, Eastern and Crimson Rosellas, Mallee Ringneck, Superb Parrot, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Pink Cockatoo, and Cockatiel**). Australia is known as the "Land of Parrots", and everyone understood why within just a few days of the tour start, well before we had even reached the parrot core of Australia, inland New South Wales! We had covered thousands of kilometers, and covered three states (Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania), and seen markedly different landscapes in doing so, from wet rainforest, to tinder dry Outback, we can honestly say we experienced more than a mere introduction to Australia, its wildlife, and its culture. Few will forget sitting quietly on a deserted beach in Tasmania at dusk, while a nervous group of penguins came ashore and walked right past us to their nesting burrows!



Inland Dotterel, Hay Plains (New South Wales)

BIRD & MAMMAL LISTS**BIRDS:**

The taxonomy of the bird list follows: **Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W.** *The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World*. Cornell, 2007.

This list is up to date with the major changes published by Cornell up until August 2015.

KEY:

Endemic bird species are indicated in RED.

H indicates a species that was HEARD only.

GO indicates a species recorded by the GUIDE ONLY.

QLD refers to the Australian state of Queensland.

NSW refers to the Australian state of New South Wales.

TAS refers to the Australian state and island of Tasmania.

CASSOWARIES: Casuariidae

Southern Cassowary *Casuarius casuarius*

With the usual birds in other areas rumored to be unreliable prior to the tour, we made a hasty change of plans for this bird, visiting ETTY Bay, south of Cairns (QLD) instead on our first afternoon, in the hope of getting this species. The words "Cassowary on the beach!" were heard just 20 minutes or so after we got there, and we enjoyed prolonged looks at a wild bird as it wandered casually along the top end of the beach, in full view of not only the birding group present, but the various beach-goers clad in bikinis and budgie-smugglers!

VOTED AS BIRD OF THE TOUR

EMUS: Dromaiidae

Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* **ENDEMIC**

Australia's national bird was seen on one day, on the Hay Plains (NSW), where three groups were seen.

MAGPIE GOOSE: Anseranatidae

Magpie Goose *Anseranas semipalmata*

Only seen on the Northeast QLD leg, where seen at Lake Mitchell and Hasties Swamp.

DUCKS, GEESE & WATERFOWL: Anatidae

Plumed Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna eytoni*

Only seen at Hasties Swamp in Northeast QLD, where over a hundred birds were present on our visits.

Wandering Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata*

Seen twice in Northeast QLD; at Lake Mitchell and Hasties Swamp.

Cape Barren Goose *Cereopsis novaehollandiae* **ENDEMIC**

A group of four birds was seen on our final day in Tasmania.

Freckled Duck *Stictonetta naevosa* **ENDEMIC**

At least 15 birds were seen at Gum Swamp near Forbes (NSW).

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Recorded regularly in NSW; also seen at Lake Mitchell in Northeast QLD.

Australian Shelduck*Tadorna tadornoides***ENDEMIC**

Seen at two sites in NSW; at Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough Swamp, with over 50 at the latter.

Radjah Shelduck*Tadorna radjah*

Easy in Cairns (Northeast QLD) on this tour; a group was seen at Centenary Lakes on our first afternoon.

Green Pygmy-goose*Nettapus pulchellus*

Seen at two sites in Northeast QLD; Lake Mitchell and Cattana Wetlands.

Cotton Pygmy-goose*Nettapus coromandelianus*

Five birds were seen at Lake Mitchell (Northeast QLD).

Maned Duck*Chenonetta jubata***ENDEMIC**

Regularly recorded from Southeast QLD south.

Mallard*Anas platyrhynchos*

A few were seen on Bruny Island (TAS).

Pacific Black Duck*Anas superciliosa*

One of Australia's most abundant ducks; recorded regularly throughout.

Australian Shoveler*Anas rhynchotis*

Seen twice in New South Wales; 3 at Gum Swamp and another pair was seen on the Hay Plains.

Gray Teal*Anas gracilis*

Seen at Lake Mitchell and Hasties Swamp in Northeast QLD, and again on several wetlands in NSW.

Chestnut Teal*Anas castanea***ENDEMIC**

Good views were had on Tasmania.

Pink-eared Duck*Malacorhynchus membranaceus***ENDEMIC**

Recorded at Hasties Swamp (QLD), and Gum Swamp and Lake Cargelligo in NSW.

White-eyed Duck*Aythya australis*

Seen at Lake Mitchell and Hasties Swamp in QLD; also Lake Wallace, Gum Swamp, Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough Swamp in NSW.

Blue-billed Duck*Oxyura australis***ENDEMIC**

Two males were seen in NSW, one at Lake Wallace and another at Gum Swamp.

Musk Duck*Biziura lobata***ENDEMIC**

A displaying male was seen at Lake Wallace, another was at Lake Cargelligo; others were seen in TAS.

MEGAPODES: Megapodiidae**Australian Brush-turkey***Alectura lathamii***ENDEMIC**

Seen daily during our time in Queensland.

Orange-footed Scrubfowl*Megapodius reinwardt*

Seen at 4 sites in Northeast QLD; in Cairns, Cassowary House, Red Mill House and Cattana Wetlands.

PHEASANTS, GROUSE AND ALLIES: Phasianidae**Brown Quail***Synoicus ypsilophorus*

A pair was seen near Canungra in Southeast QLD; another was seen near Barren Grounds (NSW).

GREBES: Podicipedidae**Australasian Grebe***Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

Recorded five times (Lake Mitchell, Daintree & Hasties Swamp QLD; Capertee & Lake Cargelligo, NSW).

Hoary-headed Grebe *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*

Seen at 3 sites in NSW, Lake Wallace, Gum Swamp and Lake Cargelligo.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Forty or so were seen on Lake Eacham (QLD); a handful were also seen on Lake Wallace (NSW).

PENGUINS: Spheniscidae**Little Penguin** *Eudyptula minor*

Several groups, including a huddle of 14 were seen coming ashore at dusk at Pirate's Bay (TAS).

ALBATROSSES: Diomedidae**White-capped Albatross** *Thalassarche cauta*

Also known as **SHY ALBATROSS**. One was seen for a long spell, while seawatching at Bass Point (NSW).

SHEARWATERS AND PETRELS: Procellariidae**Wedge-tailed Shearwater** *Ardenna pacifica*

A few were seen off Bass Point (NSW).

Short-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna tenuirostris*

Many were seen off Bass Point (NSW); others were seen at Wattamolla (NSW) and Eaglehawk Neck (TAS).

Fluttering Shearwater *Puffinus gavia*

Five or six birds were seen while seawatching at Bass Point in NSW.

STORKS: Ciconiidae**Black-necked Stork** *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*

2 were seen at Lake Mitchell, and singles were seen at Hasties Swamp and Cattana Wetlands (all QLD).

FRIGATEBIRDS: Fregatidae**Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel*

One adult male was seen at Michaelmas Cay (QLD).

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*

Around four birds were seen during our visit to Michaelmas Cay on the Great Barrier Reef (QLD).

BOOBIES AND GANNETS: Sulidae**Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster*

A number of birds were nesting on Michaelmas Cay during our boat trip out to the Great Barrier Reef (QLD).

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*

Sonia saw an adult bird being harassed by frigatebirds above Michaelmas Cay island (QLD).

Australasian Gannet *Morus serrator*

At least three birds were seen off Bass Point (NSW); another 2 were seen at Eaglehawk Neck (TAS).

CORMORANTS AND SHAGS: Phalacrocoracidae**Little Black Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*

Scattered sightings throughout the tour.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Seen at Lake Eacham (QLD), and also regularly during our time in NSW and TAS.

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*

Seen twice on the tour, at Bribie Island near Brisbane (QLD) and then at Bass Point (NSW).

Black-faced Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscescens*

Seen regularly on Tasmania.

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*

Recorded regularly throughout.

ANHINGAS: Anhingidae**Australian Darter** *Anhinga novaehollandiae*

Recorded on six days of the tour, including in Daintree, and at Lake Mitchell, Cattana Wetlands and Hasties Swamp (QLD), and Gum Swamp in NSW.

PELICANS: Pelecanidae**Australian Pelican** *Pelecanus conspicillatus*

Scattered sightings in Northeast and Southeast QLD and NSW; recorded on 12 days of the tour.

HERONS, EGRETS, AND BITTERNs: Ardeidae**Black Bittern** *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

Our local bird expert and boatman, Murray Hunt, found one during the Daintree river cruise (Northeast QLD).

Pacific Heron *Ardea pacifica* **ENDEMIC**

Also known as **WHITE-NECKED HERON**. Seen on four days in Northeast QLD and five days in NSW.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Scattered sightings throughout the tour, recorded on 11 days.

Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia*

Regularly recorded in Northeast QLD, with a few further sightings in NSW.

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*

Recorded on at least 9 occasions, including in Northeast QLD, NSW and TAS.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Just seen on a few occasions; at Newell Beach and Cairns Esplanade in QLD, and Five Bough in NSW.

Pacific Reef-Heron *Egretta sacra*

One dark morph was spotted on our final visit to the Cairns Esplanade (Northeast QLD).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Seen regularly in QLD and NSW.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*

One at Newell Beach was the only sighting.

Rufous Night-Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*

Also known as **NANKEEN NIGHT-HERON**.

Seen twice, in flight on the Daintree River cruise, and then a roosting bird at Hasties Swamp (both NE QLD).

IBISES AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

Seen at Lake Mitchell and Hasties Swamp in QLD, and Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough Swamp in NSW.

Australian Ibis *Threskiornis moluccus*

Seen on all but a few days of the tour.

Straw-necked Ibis *Threskiornis spinicollis*

Regularly recorded in both QLD and NSW.

Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia*

Seen at Lake Mitchell, Hasties Swamp and Cairns in QLD; Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough in NSW.

Yellow-billed Spoonbill *Platalea flavipes*

Unusually numerous on this tour; seen on five different days (Hurricane Road, Hasties Swamp and Bromfield Swamp in QLD; Gum Swamp and Five Bough Swamp in NSW).

OSPREY: Pandionidae**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus cristatus*

Seen at Newell Beach and Wonga Beach in Northeast QLD; and again at Bass Point in NSW.

NOTE: The Osprey found from Sulawesi through Australia has been split off from the western forms as

Eastern Osprey, *P. cristatus* on the IOC list. The western birds are listed as a separate species, Western Osprey, *P. haliaetus* (that covers all the ospreys, except those from Sulawesi to Australia).

HAWKS, EAGLES AND KITES: Accipitridae**Australian Kite** *Elanus axillaris* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on eight occasions, in QLD and NSW.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*

Two flew over Hasties Swamp, and another was seen in flight at Gold Creek Road (both QLD).

Little Eagle *Hiraaetus morphnoides* **ENDEMIC**

A low flying bird was seen near Orange, on the journey to Forbes from Capertee (NSW).

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*

One at Gold Creek Rd in QLD; others at Capertee and the Hay Plains in NSW, and Mt. Wellington in TAS.

Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*

One was seen in Northeast QLD, and another from the vehicle on Bruny Island (TAS).

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*

Just one was seen this year, quartering the Hay Plains (NSW).

Gray Goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae* **ENDEMIC**

Just one was seen by some of the group participants, a white morph bird, near O Reilly's (QLD).

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*

Two birds were seen around Mount Molloy (Northeast QLD).

Collared Sparrowhawk *Accipiter cirrocephalus*

Two sightings in NSW; at Lake Cargelligo and Binya State Forest.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Recorded on 13 days of the tour.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

Recorded on ten different days of the tour, and on all legs.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur Indus*

Seen four times; at Daintree, Newell Beach, and in Cairns (all QLD).

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Seen at Lake Mitchell and Wonga Beach in QLD, Wattamolla in NSW, and also on Bruny Island (TAS).

BUSTARDS: Otididae**Australian Bustard** *Ardeotis australis*

Three birds were seen near Maryfarms in Northeast QLD.

RAILS, GALLINULES AND COOTS: Rallidae**Red-necked Crake** *Rallina tricolor* H

One was heard very close to the rooms at Cassowary House (Northeast QLD).

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*

Two were seen at Kakadu Beach on Bribie Island (QLD), while we twitched some nesting *Beach Thick-knees*.

Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla*

Three were seen at Lake Cargelligo Sewage Works, and another was seen on the Hay Plains (both NSW).

Australian Crake *Porzana fluminea* ENDEMIC

We found a pair at Lake Cargelligo (NSW).

Spotless Crake *Porzana tabuensis* H

At least two birds were heard at Five Bough Swamp (NSW).

White-browed Crake *Porzana cinerea*

Two birds were seen during a brief visit to Cattana Wetlands, near Cairns, one afternoon (QLD).

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus*

Recorded on ten days of the tour, in both QLD and NSW.

NOTE: Purple Swamphen was split into six species recently (2015).

Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*

Recorded regularly on wetlands in NSW, and another was seen at Boondall Wetlands in QLD.

Black-tailed Native-hen *Tribonyx ventralis* ENDEMIC

Seen at Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough Swamp in NSW.

Tasmanian Native-hen *Tribonyx mortierii* TASMANIAN ENDEMIC

Seen around Peter Murrell Reserve and Bruny Island on TAS.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Recorded regularly on wetlands in QLD and NSW.

CRANES: Gruidae**Sarus Crane** *Grus Antigone*

Seen on three days of the tour in Northeast QLD; on the Hurricane Road and around Hasties Swamp.

Brolga *Grus rubicunda*

Just two were seen; one at Bromfield Swamp (Northeast QLD) and on the Hay Plains (NSW).

THICK-KNEES: Burhinidae**Bush Thick-knee** *Burhinus grallarius*

A pair was seen in Cairns, and another eight birds were seen in Kuranda (both QLD).

Beach Thick-knee *Esacus magnirostris*

A pair was seen at a nest site on Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island, near Brisbane (QLD).

STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae**Pied Stilt** *Himantopus leucocephalus*

Recorded on nine days of the tour, in both QLD and NSW.

Red-necked Avocet *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae* **ENDEMIC**

Seen at two sites in NSW, at Lake Cargelligo (where over 100 were present) and Five Bough Swamp.

OYSTERCATCHERS: Haematopodidae**Pied Oystercatcher** *Haematopus longirostris*

Seen at Newell Beach, the Cairns Esplanade and Kakadu Beach in QLD; also seen on TAS.

Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus* **ENDEMIC**

A pair was seen while seawatching at Bass Point (NSW).

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae**Banded Lapwing** *Vanellus tricolor* **ENDEMIC**

A pair and a single were seen on the Hay Plains with Phil Maher (NSW).

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*

A common Aussie shorebird, seen on 17 days of the tour.

Lesser Sandplover *Charadrius mongolus*

Two were seen at the Cairns Esplanade, and others were seen at Kakadu Beach (both QLD).

Greater Sandplover *Charadrius leschenaultii*

Just two singles were seen on the tour; one at Cairns Esplanade and another at Kakadu Beach (both QLD).

Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus*

One was seen in Cairns and others were seen at Kakadu Beach in QLD, and at Lake Cargelligo (NSW).

Red-kneed Dotterel *Erythrogonys cinctus*

Three were seen at Lake Mitchell (QLD), and others were seen at Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough (both NSW).

Hooded Plover *Thinornis cucullatus* **ENDEMIC**

One was seen at Adventure Bay on Bruny Island (TAS).

Black-fronted Dotterel *Euseyonis melanops*

Seen at Hasties Swamp, Cairns Esplanade, and Kakadu Beach (QLD); also Capertee and Back Yamma in NSW.

Inland Dotterel *Peltohyas australis* **ENDEMIC**

One was seen during the stormy Plains-wanderer night drive on the Hay Plains (NSW).

PLAINS-WANDERER: Pedionomidae**Plains-wanderer** *Pedionomus torquatus* **ENDEMIC**

An unusually stormy night was not what we would have liked for our search for this bird, but Phil Maher and his team once again made light work of finding this tough bird, a male of which was seen at length on the Hay Plains (NSW), in the spotlight. ***VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR***

JACANAS: Jacanidae**Comb-crested Jacana** *Irediparra gallinacea*

Three birds were seen at Lake Mitchell and another two were seen at Cattana Wetlands (both NE QLD).

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

One was seen at the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A couple was seen at the Wonga Beach fish ponds, and another was spotted at Hasties Swamp (both QLD).

Gray-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes*

Seen at two sites in Northeast QLD, Newell Beach and the Cairns Esplanade.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One was seen at Newell Beach, and another at Oak Beach, both in Northeast QLD.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Seen at Hasties Swamp (QLD), and Lake Cargelligo and Five Bough Swamp in NSW.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Only seen at the Lake Cargelligo Sewage Works (NSW).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Recorded three times in Northeast QLD, in Cairns and at Newell Beach.

Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*

A handful of birds were seen one afternoon at the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A few were found by fellow Tropical Birder, Nick Leseberg, who joined us for our trip to Kakadu Beach (QLD).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Recorded at three sites in QLD: Wonga Beach fish farm, the Cairns Esplanade, and Kakadu Beach.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

A few were seen on Michaelmas Cay, others at the Esplanade (both QLD), and also at Bass Point (NSW).

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*

Seen at two sites in QLD, the Cairns Esplanade and Kakadu Beach.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

Two were seen at Kakadu Beach on Bribie Island in Southeast QLD.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

Recorded six times on the tour, mostly in Northeast QLD, but also at Lake Cargelligo in NSW.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

This species was abundant at the Cairns Esplanade (QLD), and also seen at Kakadu Beach in the same state.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*

Abundant at the Cairns Esplanade and Kakadu Beach in QLD; also seen at Lake Cargelligo (NSW).

Latham's Snipe *Gallinago hardwickii*

One was found at the "last chance saloon", just as we were leaving Hasties Swamp (Northeast QLD).

PRATINCOLES AND COURSERS: Glareolidae**Australian Pratincole** *Stiltia Isabella*

Four birds were seen on the Hay Plains (NSW), with Phil Maher.

SKUAS AND JAEGERs: Stercorariidae**Parasitic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Two different birds were seen flying past Bass Point in NSW; a first for this tour.

GULLS, TERNS, AND SKIMMERS: Laridae**Silver Gull** *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*

Recorded on ten days of the tour, and on all legs.

Pacific Gull *Larus pacificus***ENDEMIC**

This brute of a gull was seen on one day of the tour, on Bruny Island (TAS).

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

Seen on both of our full days on Tasmania.

Brown Noddy *Anous minutus*

Thousands were nesting on Michaelmas Cay, during our boat trip to the Great Barrier Reef (Northeast QLD).

Black Noddy *Anous minutus*

Two birds were picked up during our boat ride out to the Great Barrier Reef (Northeast QLD).

Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscatus*

Many of these noisy terns were nesting on Michaelmas Cay, and therefore seen at extremely close quarters.

Bridled Tern *Onychoprion anaethetus*

A good number of these terns were seen near Michaelmas Cay (QLD), most resting on buoys offshore.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Just seen twice; on the Great Barrier Reef boat trip, and then at the Cairns Esplanade (both Northeast QLD).

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Seen twice in Cairns and then again at Kakadu Beach (both QLD).

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

One was seen at Lake Mitchell, another at Newell Beach (both QLD), and also at Lake Cargelligo (NSW).

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Recorded in both QLD and NSW, with triple figures seen at Lake Cargelligo Sewage Works (NSW).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

A few distant birds were seen by Sam and Sonia on Michaelmas Cay (Northeast QLD).

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*

At least four birds were seen on Michaelmas Cay on the Great Barrier Reef (Northeast QLD).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

A single bird was seen by some at Wonga Beach (Northeast QLD).

Great Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii*

Recorded on eight days of the tour, in QLD, NSW (Bass Point), and on TAS.

Lesser Crested Tern *Thalasseus bengalensis*

A handful of birds were seen on Michaelmas Cay, on the Great Barrier Reef (Northeast QLD).

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae**Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia*

Commonly recorded in urban environments throughout.

White-headed Pigeon *Columba leucomela* **ENDEMIC**

A single bird was seen feeding in the road at O Reilly's (Lamington NP) on two different days (QLD).

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*

Recorded on three occasions only in Queensland.

Brown Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia phasianella*

Only recorded in QLD, where seen in Julatten, at Curtain Fig Tree, and in Lamington National Park.

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

Only seen in QLD, where recorded at Cassowary House, Mount Lewis, Julatten and at Gold Creek Road.

Common Bronzewing *Phaps chalcoptera* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded on six days in NSW, with the greatest number seen on the journey between Back Yamma and Lake Cargelligo; seen best though on Griffith Golf Course.

- Brush Bronzewing** *Phaps elegans* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen well, thanks to Wes finding it, perched in a tree at Truganini Reserve near Hobart (TAS).
- Crested Pigeon** *Ocyphaps lophotes* **ENDEMIC**
Commonly recorded in Southeast QLD and NSW; also seen near Mareeba in Northeast QLD.
- Squatter Pigeon** *Geophaps scripta* **ENDEMIC**
Four birds were seen along the Hurricane Road in Northeast QLD.
- Wonga Pigeon** *Leucosarcia melanoleuca* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen on Gold Creek Road, and others were seen better at O Reilly's, both Southeast QLD.
- Peaceful Dove** *Geopelia placida*
Recorded regularly in both QLD and NSW.
- Bar-shouldered Dove** *Geopelia humeralis*
Recorded on most days in Northeast QLD; also seen at Binya State Forest at the limit of its range.
- Wompoo Fruit-Dove** *Ptilinopus magnificus*
One was seen at Cassowary House, and two other sightings were had in Julatten (both Northeast QLD).
- Superb Fruit-Dove** *Ptilinopus superbus*
Just two short sightings in Northeast QLD; at Cassowary House and in Julatten.
- Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove** *Ptilinopus regina*
An excellent bird showed well at Curtain Fig Tree in Northeast QLD.
- Torresian Imperial-Pigeon** *Ducula spilorrhoa*
Commonly recorded around Cairns, and also in Daintree (both Northeast QLD).
- Topknot Pigeon** *Lopholaimus antarcticus* **ENDEMIC**
A good tour for the species, seen at Mount Lewis, and at Lake Eacham, Julatten and O Reilly's (all QLD).

CUCKOOS: Cuculidae

- Pallid Cuckoo** *Cacomantis pallidus*
One was seen along Stewart Creek Road, Daintree (QLD), and another seen in the Capertee Valley (NSW).
- Brush Cuckoo** *Cacomantis variolosus*
One was seen at Mareeba Wetlands (Northeast QLD).
- Fan-tailed Cuckoo** *Cacomantis flabelliformis*
One was seen at Curtain Fig (QLD); others were seen at Barren Grounds (NSW) and Peter Murrell (TAS).
- Black-eared Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx osculans* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen by Sonia at Back Yamma; then we all got one together at Round Hill (both NSW).
- Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx basalis*
Seen at four sites in NSW: Capertee Valley, Back Yamma, Round Hill, and Binya.
- Shining Bronze-Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx lucidus*
One was seen at the Curtain Fig Tree (Northeast QLD).
- Little Bronze-Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx minutillus*
Two were seen at Centenary Lakes in Cairns (Northeast QLD).
- Pacific Koel** *Eudynamys orientalis*
Seen four times in QLD, including in the garden of Red Mill House in Daintree.
- Channel-billed Cuckoo** *Scythrops novaehollandiae*
Seen on three days in Northeast QLD, with our best looks at Mareeba Golf Course.
- Pheasant Coucal** *Centropus phasianinus*

Seen at Yorkey's Knob, Lake Mitchell, Emerald Creek Falls, and Big Mitchell Creek in Northeast QLD.

BARN-OWLS: Tytonidae

Australian Masked-Owl *Tyto novaehollandiae* **H**

One was heard distantly at Hobart Waterworks Reserve in Tasmania.

OWLS: Strigidae

Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua* **ENDEMIC**

Finding ourselves with a little bit of time on our hands, we made a dash to see if the regular roosting bird could be seen in the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. On arrival at the information center, we were informed the bird was there, and moments later we were staring up at this impressive beast, the largest of the Australian owls. A great ending to our New South Wales leg!

VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR

Southern Boobook *Ninox novaeseelandiae*

One was seen close to our rooms at O Reilly's (QLD).

"Morepork" *Ninox novaeseelandiae leucopsis*

One was seen in the 'scope at Hobart Waterworks Reserve in Tasmania.

NOTE: This form is split off from Southern Boobook on the IOC list, being lumped with the New Zealand form as another species, **Morepork, N. novaeseelandiae**, with Southern Boobook then having the scientific name *N. boobook*.

OWLET-NIGHTJARS: Aegothelidae

Australian Owlet-Nightjar *Aegotheles cristatus*

Two birds were spotlighted at night near Mareeba in Northeast QLD.

FROGMOUTHS: Podargidae

Tawny Frogmouth *Podargus strigoides* **ENDEMIC**

A roosting bird was seen at Mount Carbine Caravan Park (QLD), and a nesting bird was seen at Griffith (NSW).

Marbled Frogmouth *Podargus ocellatus*

One was seen at night in Lamington National Park (Southeast QLD).

Papuan Frogmouth *Podargus papuensis*

Two different birds were seen on our Daintree River cruise in Northeast QLD.

NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES: Caprimulgidae

Spotted Nightjar *Eurostopodus argus*

Two different birds were seen in the headlights as we headed out to Round Hill (NSW).

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*

One was seen at night along Stewart Creek Road in Daintree (Northeast QLD).

SWIFTS: Apodidae

Australian Swiftlet *Aerodramus terraereginae* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on three days in Northeast QLD, including at Daintree and Lake Eacham.

Pacific Swift *Apus pacificus*

One was seen by some of the group over Gold Creek Road in Southeast QLD.

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae**Azure Kingfisher** *Ceyx azurea*

Great views were had on the Daintree; others were seen at Big Mitchell Creek and Gold Creek Rd (QLD).

Little Kingfisher *Ceyx pusillus*

Our local guide and boatman, Murray Hunt, got us cracking looks on the Daintree River cruise (NE QLD).

Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguineae* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on all but one day of the tour.

Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii*

Three were seen at Mount Carbine Caravan Park, and another was seen at Mareeba (both Northeast QLD).

Forest Kingfisher *Todiramphus macleayii*

Recorded on six days in Northeast QLD.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus*

Seen at Hasties Swamp and Gold Creek Road in QLD, and also at Binya in NSW.

Torresian Kingfisher *Todiramphus sordidus*

One was seen well by all in Cairns on our first afternoon, and another was seen at Newell Beach (both QLD).

NOTE: This species is a split from Collared Kingfisher, which was split up into six species in 2015.

BEE-EATERS: Meropidae**Rainbow Bee-eater** *Merops ornatus*

Recorded on twelve days of the tour, both in QLD and NSW.

ROLLERS: Coraciidae**Dollarbird** *Eurystomus orientalis*

Seen on eight days of the tour, mostly in QLD, with just a few seen in NSW.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae**Australian Kestrel** *Falco cenchroides*

Recorded on seven days of the tour, in both QLD and NSW.

Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis*

Seen four times on the tour; including at Capertee Valley and Five Bough Swamp in NSW.

Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*

Seen at Hasties Swamp (QLD), and in the Capertee Valley, at Lake Cargelligo, and on the Hay Plains in NSW.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

One flew over Binya State Forest in NSW.

COCKATOOS: Cacatuidae**Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo** *Calyptorhynchus banksii* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on four occasions in Northeast QLD, with around forty birds seen near Mareeba being the high count.

Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus funereus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen four times, in NSW and TAS, with the best sighting coming at Adventure Bay on Bruny Island (TAS).

Gang-gang Cockatoo *Callocephalon fimbriatum* **ENDEMIC**

A very obscured female was seen on our first visit to Barren Grounds (NSW), with both male and female being seen better there the next days.

Pink Cockatoo *Cacatua leadbeateri* **ENDEMIC**

Also known as **MAJOR MITCHELL'S COCKATOO**.

Wes located a confiding group of three birds at Griffith Golf Course (NSW).

Galah *Eolophus roseicapilla* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded on nine days of the tour, with most being seen in NSW.

Long-billed Corella *Cacatua tenuirostris* **ENDEMIC**

A large group of cockatoos, mostly comprising this species, was seen near Darlington Point (NSW).

Little Corella *Cacatua sanguinea*

Recorded five times in NSW, including at Capertee Valley, Gum Swamp, and in Griffith.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

Recorded on all but a few days of the tour.

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus* **ENDEMIC**

Surprisingly hard to pin down on this tour, with Wes saving the day with a single perched bird on the journey between Hay and Darlington Point (NSW).

PARROTS: Psittacidae**Superb Parrot** *Polytelis swainsonii* **ENDEMIC**

Sam located a group en-route to Darlington Point from Hay (NSW), which were seen very well.

Australian King-Parrot *Alisterus scapularis* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on four days in QLD. As usual, the best came at O Reilly's where tame wild birds occur. Joe even turned up for the morning's birding with one on his head!

Red-winged Parrot *Aprosmictus erythropterus*

One was seen perched beside Lake Mitchell (Northeast QLD).

Blue-winged Parrot *Neophema chrysostoma* **ENDEMIC**

Three were seen on Bruny Island in Tasmania.

Turquoise Parrot *Neophema pulchella* **ENDEMIC**

A male was seen by Wes at Back Yamma, and then a superb male showed to all in Binya (both NSW).

VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR**Swift Parrot** *Lathamus discolor* **ENDEMIC**

A few birds were seen at Adventure Bay on Bruny Island (TAS), with one allowing prolonged 'scope views.

Mallee Ringneck *Barnardius barnardi* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on four days in NSW; at Back Yamma, Binya and at Griffith Golf Course.

Green Rosella *Platycercus caledonicus* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

Seen on both of our two full days on Tasmania.

Crimson Rosella *Platycercus elegans* **ENDEMIC**

In NSW seen at Capertee, Barren Grounds and in Royal National Park, but seen best, as always at O Reilly's (QLD), where several birds used our limbs as perches!

Eastern Rosella *Platycercus eximius* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded on four days of the tour in NSW, including at Barren Grounds.

Pale-headed Rosella *Platycercus adscitus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on four days in QLD, at Mount Carbine, Mareeba and Gold Creek Road.

Greater Bluebonnet *Northiella haematogaster* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on four days in NSW, with good views at both Back Yamma and Griffith Golf Course.

Red-rumped Parrot*Psephotus haematonotus***ENDEMIC**

Recorded on five days in NSW, including within the Capertee Valley and at Griffith Golf Course.

Mulga Parrot*Psephotus varius***ENDEMIC**

This stunning, vividly colored parrot, was seen Round Hill and Binya State Forest in NSW.

Double-eyed Fig-Parrot*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*

After several disappointing flyovers, we got a great look at a perched bird at Newell Beach (QLD).

Musk Lorikeet*Glossopsitta concinna***ENDEMIC**

A single group of four was seen at Truganini Reserve (TAS); others were seen on departure at Hobart airport.

Rainbow Lorikeet*Trichoglossus haematodus*

A common Aussie parrot, seen on thirteen days of the tour.

Scaly-breasted Lorikeet*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus***ENDEMIC**

Seen five times in QLD, including in Cairns.

PITTAS: Pittidae**Noisy Pitta***Pitta versicolor***ENDEMIC**

One was seen well, by the entire group, in Julatten (Northeast QLD).

LYREBIRDS: Menuridae**Albert's Lyrebird***Menura alberti***ENDEMIC**

Two different males were seen during our full day in Lamington National Park; one of these (a young male) was seen foraging and displaying near the cabins at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Superb Lyrebird*Menura novaehollandiae***ENDEMIC**

Seven different birds were seen by the road on the journey from Robertson to Barren Grounds (NSW); however, most ran off the road before being seen well. In light of this, we visited Minnamurra Falls Rainforest Centre closeby, where we were treated to an adult in full display by the parking lot in the middle of the day!

BOWERBIRDS: Ptilonorhynchidae**Spotted Catbird***Ailuroedus melanotis*

Two or three were seen at Cassowary House, including at their feeders; another was at Hypipamee (QLD).

Green Catbird*Ailuroedus crassirostris***ENDEMIC**

Two birds were seen at O Reilly's, Southeast QLD.

Tooth-billed Catbird*Scenopoeetes dentirostris***ENDEMIC**

A singing male was seen above his "stage" (comprising scattered leaves) on Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD).

Golden Bowerbird*Amblyornis newtoniana***ENDEMIC**

We saw a magnificent male, at extremely close quarters by its bower, at Hypipamee (Northeast QLD).

VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR**Regent Bowerbird***Sericulus chrysocephalus***ENDEMIC**

As usual, the tame wild birds of O Reilly's were seen well by the lodge (Southeast QLD).

Satin Bowerbird*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus***ENDEMIC**

Seen very well at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD), with a male seen at its bower too, which was decorated with various blue items, mostly comprising plastic trash.

Great Bowerbird*Chlamydera nuchalis***ENDEMIC**

Seen at Mount Carbine (where a bower was also seen), Mount Molloy, and Big Mitchell Creek all in NE QLD.

AUSTRALASIAN TREECREEPERS: Climacteridae**White-throated Treecreeper** *Cormobates leucophaea* **ENDEMIC**

Seen once at Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD), and twice at Barren Grounds (NSW).

Red-browed Treecreeper *Climacteris erythroptis* **ENDEMIC**

Seen twice, although only for a short time on each occasion, at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Brown Treecreeper *Climacteris picumnus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen three times; on the Hurricane Road (Northeast QLD), and at Capertee Valley and Back Yamma in NSW.

FAIRYWRENS: Maluridae**Southern Emuwren** *Stipiturus malachurus* **ENDEMIC**

Four birds were seen at Barren Grounds (NSW), with another male seen briefly there the following day too.

Variiegated Fairywren *Malurus lamberti* **ENDEMIC**

Seen five times; near Canungra and at O Reilly's (QLD), and at Five Bough, Bass Point and Royal NP in NSW.

Lovely Fairywren *Malurus amabilis* **ENDEMIC**

A male and two females were seen along Stewart Creek Road in Daintree (Northeast QLD).

Splendid Fairywren *Malurus splendens* **ENDEMIC**

A pair was seen near Round Hill Nature Reserve, and another was seen briefly at Binya (both NSW).

Superb Fairywren *Malurus cyaneus* **ENDEMIC**

The most frequently encountered fairywren; seen on eight days (in QLD, NSW and TAS).

White-winged Fairywren *Malurus leucopterus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen on two days in NSW, at Lake Cargelligo Sewage Works, and on the Hay Plains.

Red-backed Fairywren *Malurus melanocephalus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen three times in QLD, at Lake Mitchell, Mareeba, and at O Reilly's.

HONEYEATERS: Meliphagidae**Eastern Spinebill** *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris* **ENDEMIC**

Excellent views were had around the lodge at O Reilly's (QLD); others were seen at Barren Grounds (NSW).

Pied Honeyeater *Certhionyx variegatus* **ENDEMIC**

Half a dozen or so birds were seen in the mallee at Round Hill (NSW).

Yellow-spotted Honeyeater *Meliphaga notata* **ENDEMIC**

Just seen at the one site in Northeast QLD, Cassowary House.

Lewin's Honeyeater *Meliphaga lewinii* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded several times in Northeast QLD, and also seen in Southeast QLD and NSW.

Graceful Honeyeater *Meliphaga gracilis* **ENDEMIC**

Only seen at one site, Cassowary House in Northeast QLD.

Yellow Honeyeater *Lichenostomus flava* **ENDEMIC**

Seen in Cairns, at Lake Mitchell, Mount Carbine and Big Mitchell Creek (all Northeast QLD).

White-gaped Honeyeater *Lichenostomus unicolor* **ENDEMIC**

Two were seen at the McLeod River crossing near Mount Carbine in Northeast, at the limit of their range.

White-fronted Honeyeater *Purnella albifrons* **ENDEMIC**

Around thirty birds were seen during our morning in the mallee in and around Round Hill (NSW).

Yellow-faced Honeyeater *Caligavis chrysops* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded at Hasties Swamp and O Reilly's in QLD, and at Barren Grounds in NSW.

Bell Miner	<i>Manorina melanophrys</i>	ENDEMIC
A few birds were seen at a colony near Canungra (Southeast QLD).		
Noisy Miner	<i>Manoria melanocephala</i>	ENDEMIC
Commonly recorded in the coastal belt of Southeast QLD, NSW and TAS.		
Yellow-throated Miner	<i>Manorina flavigula</i>	ENDEMIC
Commonly recorded in inland NSW.		
Bridled Honeyeater	<i>Bolemoreus frenatus</i>	ENDEMIC
Just one bird was seen up on Mount Lewis in Northeast QLD.		
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	<i>Acanthagenys rufogularis</i>	ENDEMIC
Seen at Back Yamma, Round Hill, and Binya in NSW.		
Little Wattlebird	<i>Anthochaera chrysoptera</i>	ENDEMIC
Seen a few times in Royal National Park, near Sydney (NSW).		
Red Wattlebird	<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>	ENDEMIC
Seen three times in NSW, at Lake Wallace, Bass Point, and Royal National Park.		
Yellow Wattlebird	<i>Anthochaera paradoxa</i>	TASMANIAN ENDEMIC
The largest Australian honeyeater, seen at Peter Murrell, Bruny Island and Truganini (all TAS).		
Varied Honeyeater	<i>Gavicalis versicolor</i>	
Two birds were seen in Cairns (Northeast QLD).		
Mangrove Honeyeater	<i>Gavicalis fasciogularis</i>	ENDEMIC
Two birds were seen at Boondall Wetlands in Brisbane (Southeast QLD).		
Singing Honeyeater	<i>Gavicalis virescens</i>	ENDEMIC
Several birds were seen on the Hay Plains (NSW).		
Yellow-plumed Honeyeater	<i>Ptilotula ornata</i>	ENDEMIC
At least three birds were seen in the mallee at Round Hill Nature Reserve (NSW).		
White-plumed Honeyeater	<i>Ptilotula penicillata</i>	ENDEMIC
Recorded on four days in NSW (at the Capertee Valley, Back Yamma, and Binya).		
Fuscous Honeyeater	<i>Ptilotula fusca</i>	ENDEMIC
Three were seen near the Capertee Valley in NSW.		
Brown-backed Honeyeater	<i>Ramsayornis modestus</i>	
Seen twice in Northeast QLD; in Cairns and Daintree.		
Crimson Chat	<i>Epthianura tricolor</i>	ENDEMIC
At least four birds were seen at Round Hill Nature Reserve (NSW).		
Orange Chat	<i>Epthianura aurifrons</i>	ENDEMIC
Just one or two of the group saw a pair of these birds on the Hay Plains NSW, which then disappeared.		
White-fronted Chat	<i>Epthianura albifrons</i>	ENDEMIC
Three birds were seen on the Hay Plains (NSW), and two were seen at Cape Bruny, Bruny Island (TAS).		
Dusky Myzomela	<i>Myzomela obscura</i>	
Recorded five times in Northeast QLD.		
Black Honeyeater	<i>Sugomel niger</i>	ENDEMIC
A handful of birds were seen at Round Hill Nature Reserve (NSW).		
Scarlet Myzomela	<i>Myzomela sanguinolenta</i>	ENDEMIC
Quite vocal and conspicuous in QLD; seen at Hypipamee, Hasties Swamp, Lake Eacham and Gold Creek Rd.		

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater *Gliciphila melanops***ENDEMIC**

This species proved tough to find in NSW, before we finally tracked one down at Wattamolla, in Royal NP.

Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta*

Seen four times in Northeast QLD.

Crescent Honeyeater *Phylidonyris pyrrhopterus***ENDEMIC**

One was seen on Bruny Island, but much better views were had on Mount Wellington (both TAS).

New Holland Honeyeater *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae***ENDEMIC**

Commonly recorded on the coastal heaths of NSW (e.g. Barren Grounds and Royal NP) and TAS.

White-cheeked Honeyeater *Phylidonyris niger***ENDEMIC**

Seen at two sites in QLD; Hasties Swamp and Kakadu Beach on Bribie Island.

White-eared Honeyeater *Lichenostomus leucotis***ENDEMIC**

Three birds were seen in the mallee at Round Hill Nature Reserve (NSW).

Yellow-throated Honeyeater *Nesoptilotis flavicollis***TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

Seen at Peter Murrell Reserve and Truganini Reserve, both near Hobart (TAS).

Blue-faced Honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis*

A common and handsome Aussie honeyeater, recorded on thirteen days of the tour.

White-throated Honeyeater *Melithreptus albogularis*

Seen at Mount Carbine Caravan Park and Big Mitchell Creek in Northeast QLD.

White-naped Honeyeater *Melithreptus lunatus***ENDEMIC**

Seen twice near O Reilly's in Southeast QLD.

Black-headed Honeyeater *Melithreptus affinis***TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

Seen at Peter Murrell, Bruny Island, and Truganini Reserve.

Brown-headed Honeyeater *Melithreptus brevirostris***ENDEMIC**

Seen just the once, at Back Yamma in NSW.

Black-chinned Honeyeater *Melithreptus gularis***ENDEMIC**

A pair was seen in the Capertee Valley (NSW).

Strong-billed Honeyeater *Melithreptus validirostris***TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

One was seen near Cape Bruny on Bruny Island.

Macleay's Honeyeater *Xanthotis macleayanus***ENDEMIC**

Recorded at two sites in Northeast QLD, at Cassowary House and in Julatten.

Striped Honeyeater *Plectorhyncha lanceolata***ENDEMIC**

Just one was seen, near the Capertee Valley in NSW.

Painted Honeyeater *Grantiella picta***ENDEMIC**

After being frustrated by a calling bird in the Capertee, we were pleased to see two at Binya (both NSW).

Little Friarbird *Philemon citreogularis*

Seen just twice in Northeast QLD; along the Hurricane Road, and at Big Mitchell Creek.

Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides*

Seen five times in Northeast QLD (e.g. Cassowary House, Cairns, Cattana Wetlands).

NOTE: This yorki form of Helmeted Friarbird, confined to Northeast Australia, is sometimes split off as

Hornbill Friarbird, *P. yorki*.**Noisy Friarbird** *Philemon corniculatus*

Recorded eight times on the tour, in both QLD and NSW.

BRISTLEBIRDS: Dasyornithidae**Eastern Bristlebird** *Dasyornis brachypterus* **ENDEMIC**

Two birds were seen well, though typically briefly, at Barren Grounds (NSW); a good showing for the species.

PARDALOTES: Pardalotidae**Spotted Pardalote** *Pardalotus punctatus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen five times; at O Reilly's (QLD), in the Capertee Valley and Round Hill in NSW, and also on TAS.

Forty-spotted Pardalote *Pardalotus quadragintus* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

One of Tasmania's rarest birds; a pair was seen at Peter Murrell Reserve, near Hobart.

Red-browed Pardalote *Pardalotus rubricatus* **ENDEMIC**

Eddy and a couple of others saw a calling bird at Moutn Carbine (Northeast QLD).

Striated Pardalote *Pardalotus striatus* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded at least seven times on the tour, in QLD and TAS.

THORNBILLS AND ALLIES: Acanthizidae**Pilotbird** *Pycnoptilus floccosus* **ENDEMIC**

An elusive bird was found by Neil, and only also seen by Sam, at Barren Grounds (NSW).

Rockwarbler *Origma solitaria* **ENDEMIC**

Two birds were seen well within the dramatic surrounds of Wattamolla in Royal National Park (NSW).

Fernwren *Oreoscopus gutturalis* **ENDEMIC**

A pair and a single was seen on Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD), with everyone getting good looks.

Yellow-throated Scrubwren *Sericornis citreogularis* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded at Mount Lewis and O Reilly's in QLD, and also seen at Barren Grounds in NSW.

White-browed Scrubwren *Sericornis frontalis* **ENDEMIC**

Some very tame birds were seen at O Reilly's (QLD); others were seen in NSW.

Tasmanian Scrubwren *Sericornis humilis* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

Seen on Bruny Island, and also on Mount Wellington.

Atherton Scrubwren *Sericornis kerri* **ENDEMIC**

Three birds were seen up on Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD).

Large-billed Scrubwren *Sericornis magnirostra* **ENDEMIC**

Small groups were seen at Cassowary House and Gold Creek Road (QLD); also near Barren Grounds (NSW).

Scrubtit *Acanthornis magna* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

The toughest of the Tassie endemics; at midday, on our last day, a pair was found at Mt. Wellington.

Speckled Warbler *Pyrrholaemus sagittatus* **ENDEMIC**

Three birds were seen at Back Yamma in NSW.

Chestnut-rumped Heathwren *Hyalacola pyrrhopygia* **ENDEMIC**

One showed well though briefly at Wattamolla (NSW), which only a few people got on to.

Shy Heathwren *Hyalacola cauta* **ENDEMIC**

One was seen briefly in the mallee at Nombinnie Nature Reserve, near Round Hill (NSW).

Buff-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza reguloides* **ENDEMIC**

Seen twice at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Mountain Thornbill *Acanthiza katherina* **ENDEMIC**

Two were seen at Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD).

- Brown Thornbill** *Acanthiza pusilla* **ENDEMIC**
Seen at Gold Creek Road in QLD, and also on Mount Wellington in TAS.
- Tasmanian Thornbill** *Acanthiza ewingii* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**
Seen on Bruny Island, and also on the flanks of Mount Wellington.
- Inland Thornbill** *Acanthiza apicalis* **ENDEMIC**
Two birds were seen at Binya State Forest in NSW.
- Yellow-rumped Thornbill** *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa* **ENDEMIC**
Commonly recorded in the Capertee Valley (NSW).
- Chestnut-rumped Thornbill** *Acanthiza uropygialis* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen at Nombinnie Nature Reserve, near Round Hill; another was seen at Binya (both NSW).
- Yellow Thornbill** *Acanthiza nana* **ENDEMIC**
Seen at both Back Yamma and near Round Hill, both in NSW.
- Striated Thornbill** *Acanthiza lineata* **ENDEMIC**
Two birds were seen at extremely close quarters, along Gold Creek Road in Southeast QLD.
- Weebill** *Smicrornis brevirostris* **ENDEMIC**
Australia's smallest bird (the size of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird), was seen along the Hurricane Road (Northeast QLD), and also near Round Hill (NSW).
- Fairy Gerygone** *Gerygone palpebrosa*
Seen at both Stewart Creek Road in Daintree, and at Big Mitchell Creek (both Northeast QLD).
- White-throated Gerygone** *Gerygone olivacea*
One was seen along the Hurricane Road (Northeast QLD).
- Large-billed Gerygone** *Gerygone magnirostris*
One was seen during our Daintree River cruise (Northeast QLD).
- Brown Gerygone** *Gerygone mouki* **ENDEMIC**
Seen in Julatten and Curtain Fig in Northeast QLD, and also at O Reilly's in Southeast QLD.
- Western Gerygone** *Gerygone fusca* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen at Back Yamma State Forest in NSW.
- Mangrove Gerygone** *Gerygone levigaster* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen at Boondall Wetlands near Brisbane (Southeast QLD).
- Southern Whiteface** *Aphelocephala leucopsis* **ENDEMIC**
One was seen at Back Yamma, and another at Round Hill (both NSW).

PSEUDO-BABLERS: Pomatostomidae

- Gray-crowned Babbler** *Pomatostomus temporalis*
Seen at Big Mitchell Creek and near Canungra in QLD, and also seen once in NSW.
- White-browed Babbler** *Pomatostomus superciliosus* **ENDEMIC**
Seen twice in NSW, at Back Yamma and Binya.

LOGRUNNERS: Orthonychidae

- Australian Logrunner** *Orthonyx temminckii* **ENDEMIC**
Two pairs were seen at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).
- Chowchilla** *Orthonyx spaldingii* **ENDEMIC**
A pair showed very close, though briefly, on several occasions near Cassowary House (Northeast QLD).

WHIPBIRDS AND WEDGEBILLS: Psophodidae**Eastern Whipbird** *Psophodes olivaceus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen very well at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD), and also in Royal National Park in NSW.

BOATBILLS: Machaerirhynchidae**Yellow-breasted Boatbill** *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*

Seen very well at two sites in Northeast QLD, Cassowary House and in Julatten.

WOODSWALLOWS: Artamidae**White-breasted Woodswallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus*

Recorded on nine days of the tour, mostly in Northeast QLD, but also in NSW.

White-browed Woodswallow *Artamus superciliosus* **ENDEMIC**

At least fifty birds were seen at Back Yamma, and another two were seen at Binya (both NSW).

Dusky Woodswallow *Artamus cyanopterus* **ENDEMIC**

At least three birds were seen in the Capertee Valley (NSW), and a few more were seen on Bruny Island (TAS).

BELLMAGPIES AND ALLIES: Cracticidae**Gray Butcherbird** *Cracticus torquatus* **ENDEMIC**

Seen along Gold Creek Road in QLD, and also in the Capertee Valley in NSW.

Pied Butcherbird *Cracticus nigrogularis* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded on eight days of the tour in QLD and NSW.

Black Butcherbird *Cracticus quoyi*

Seen in Cairns and at Cassowary House and Daintree, all in Northeast QLD.

Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded on all but a handful of days on the tour.

Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded regularly in Southeast QLD and NSW; also seen at Mount Carbine in Northeast QLD.

Black Currawong *Strepera fuliginosa* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

One was seen very well up on Mount Wellington.

Gray Currawong *Strepera versicolor* **ENDEMIC**

One was seen at the base of Mount Wellington on Tasmania.

CUCKOO-SHRIKES: Campephagidae**Barred Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina lineata*Also known as **YELLOW-EYED CUCKOO-SHRIKE**.

A flock of 30 was seen in flight in Kuranda, a single on Mount Lewis, and a small group at Lake Eacham (QLD).

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*

Recorded on thirteen days of the tour in QLD and NSW.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*

Recorded daily in Northeast QLD, including within Cairns.

White-winged Triller *Lalage tricolor*

Seen at Lake Mitchell and Mount Carbine in Northeast QLD; also at Lake Wallace and Binya in NSW.

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*

Seen three times in Northeast QLD; in Cairns and at Big Mitchell Creek.

Common Cicadabird *Coracina tenuirostris*

A male was seen well on our first afternoon in Cairns (Northeast QLD).

SITELLAS: Neosittidae**Varied Sittella** *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*

Eddy found a group of five birds in Abattoir Swamp in Northeast QLD, a region where this species is scarce.

WHISTLERS AND ALLIES: Pachycephalidae**Crested Shrike-tit** *Falcunculus frontatus* **ENDEMIC**

Three birds were seen well in the Capertee Valley, and another single was seen at Back Yamma (both NSW).

Little Shrike-Thrush *Colluricincla megarhyncha*

Also known as **RUFOUS SHRIKE-THRUSH**. Seen at Daintree and Big Mitchell Creek, both in Northeast QLD.

Gray Shrike-Thrush *Colluricincla harmonica*

Recorded on nine days of the tour, in QLD, NSW and TAS.

Bower's Shrike-Thrush *Colluricincla boweri* **ENDEMIC**

Two were seen well up on Mount Lewis in Northeast QLD.

Olive Whistler *Pachycephala olivacea* **ENDEMIC**

One was seen hopping on the ground, with two **Bassian Thrushes**, near Cape Bruny, on Bruny Island (TAS).

Gilbert's Whistler *Pachycephala inornata* H **ENDEMIC**

Heard in the mallee at Round Hill in NSW.

Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis* **ENDEMIC**

A pair was seen well up on Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD); also seen on Tasmania.

Gray Whistler *Pachycephala simplex*

One was seen in the rainforest along Stewart Creek Road in Daintree (Northeast QLD).

Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*

Seen at Emerald Creek Falls and the Hurricane Road (QLD); also Back Yamma, Binya and Round Hill (NSW).

Crested Bellbird *Oreoica gutturalis* **ENDEMIC**

A male was seen well, if briefly, at Round Hill in NSW.

OLD WORLD ORIOLES: Oriolidae**Olive-backed Oriole** *Oriolus sagittatus*

Eddy got one along Gold Creek Road in QLD, and the rest of the group caught up with it in Capertee (NSW).

Green Oriole *Oriolus flavocinctus*

Also known as **YELLOW ORIOLE**. Seen in Cairns, and then again in Daintree (both Northeast QLD).

Australasian Figbird *Sphecotheses vieilloti* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded on ten days in QLD, the only state where it was seen.

DRONGOS: Dicruridae**Spangled Drongo** *Dicrurus bracteatus*

Recorded regularly in QLD, seen on eight different days there.

FANTAILS: Rhipiduridae**Northern Fantail** *Rhipidura rufiventris*

Seen twice in Northeast QLD, at Abattoir Swamp and Big Mitchell Creek.

Willie-wagtail***Rhipidura leucophrys***

Australia's most familiar bird, recorded every single day of the tour.

Rufous Fantail***Rhipidura rufifrons***

Just the one was seen at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Gray Fantail***Rhipidura albiscapa***

Recorded regularly in both QLD and NSW.

MONARCH-FLYCATCHERS: *Monarchidae***Black-faced Monarch*****Monarcha melanopsis***

Seen at Daintree, Lake Eacham, Julatten, and in O Reilly's, all in QLD.

Spectacled Monarch***Symposiachrus trivirgatus***

Recorded at Cassowary House, Hasties Swamp, in Julatten, and along Gold Creek Road (all in QLD).

Pied Monarch***Arses kaupi*****ENDEMIC**

One was seen at Cassowary House, and a nesting pair was seen along Stewart Creek Road in Daintree (QLD).

Magpie-lark***Grallina cyanoleuca***

An abundant bird in Australia, recorded every single day in QLD and NSW (the species is absent from TAS).

Leaden Flycatcher***Myiagra rubecula***

One of the first birds of the tour, at ETTY Beach in Northeast QLD; also seen at three other sites in the region.

Satin Flycatcher***Myiagra cyanoleuca***

Mary saw one at Cassowary House in Northeast QLD, and a pair was seen well on Bruny Island (TAS).

Restless Flycatcher***Myiagra inquieta*****ENDEMIC**

One was seen by all near the Capertee Valley (NSW); another was heard at Back Yamma.

Shining Flycatcher***Myiagra alecto***

Three birds (two males) were seen on the Daintree River cruise with Murray Hunt (Northeast QLD).

CROWS, JAYS AND MAGPIES: *Corvidae***Torresian Crow*****Corvus orru***

A few were seen around Mount Carbine in Northeast QLD, but recorded daily in Southeast QLD.

Australian Raven***Corvus coronoides*****ENDEMIC**

Recorded on most days in NSW.

Little Raven***Corvus mellori*****ENDEMIC**

Recorded on three days in inland NSW, including on the Hay Plains.

Forest Raven***Corvus tasmanicus***

Commonly seen in Tasmania.

WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH AND APOSTLEBIRD: *Corcoracidae***White-winged Chough*****Corcorax melanorhamphos*****ENDEMIC**

Recorded on four days in inland NSW, including in the Capertee Valley, in Binya and Back Yamma.

Apostlebird***Struthidea cinerea*****ENDEMIC**

Recorded on most days in NSW, and also at Mount Carbine Caravan Park in Northeast QLD.

BIRDS-OF-PARADISE: *Paradisaeidae***Paradise Riflebird*****Ptiloris paradiseus*****ENDEMIC**

Two males and a female were seen along the Python Rock Track in Lamington National Park (Southeast QLD).

Victoria's Riflebird *Ptiloris victoriae* **ENDEMIC**

Six birds were seen at Cassowary House, including an adult male on his display pole; others were seen at Lake Eacham and in Julatten (all Northeast QLD)

AUSTRALASIAN ROBINS: Petroicidae**Jacky-winter** *Microeca fascinans*

Recorded at three sites in NSW; Capertee Valley, Back Yamma, and Binya.

Lemon-bellied Flycatcher *Microeca flavigaster*

Just the one was seen, at Emerald Creek Falls in Northeast QLD.

Scarlet Robin *Petroica boodang* **ENDEMIC**

A pair was seen on Bruny Island in TAS.

Red-capped Robin *Petroica goodenovii* **ENDEMIC**

Four birds were seen around Round Hill, and another was seen at Binya (both NSW).

Flame Robin *Petroica phoenicea* **ENDEMIC**

A stunning male gave excellent looks near the top of Mount Wellington (TAS).

Rose Robin *Petroica rosea* **ENDEMIC**

Two birds were seen along a forest trail in Lamington National Park (Southeast QLD).

Pink Robin *Petroica rodinogaster* **ENDEMIC**

An incredible male was seen on Bruny Island in TAS.

Hooded Robin *Melanodryas cucullata* **ENDEMIC**

Neil found a super male sitting in a dead tree in the Capertee Valley in NSW.

Dusky Robin *Melanodryas vittata* **TASMANIAN ENDEMIC**

Two different birds were seen in and around Cape Bruny on Bruny Island.

Pale-yellow Robin *Tregellasia capito* **ENDEMIC**

Seen at both Julatten and at the Curtain Fig Tree in Northeast QLD.

Eastern Yellow Robin *Eopsaltria australis* **ENDEMIC**

Seen at Emerald Creek Falls, Gold Creek and O Reilly's in QLD; Back Yamma and Barren Grounds in NSW.

Mangrove Robin *Eopsaltria pulverulenta*

Four birds were seen well in Cairns early one morning (Northeast QLD).

White-browed Robin *Poecilodryas superciliosa* **ENDEMIC**

This one required quite a bit of effort, before we pinned one down at Big Mitchell Creek (Northeast QLD).

Gray-headed Robin *Heteromyias cinereifrons* **ENDEMIC**

Seen well at both Hypipamee and Curtain Fig Tree in Northeast QLD.

LARKS: Alaudidae**Australasian Bushlark** *Mirafrja javanica*

One showed well, as it sung from the fencepost, in the Capertee Valley (NSW).

Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*

Also known as **EURASIAN SKYLARK**.

Two birds were seen on our final evening near Eaglehawk Neck on TAS.

SWALLOWS: Hirundinidae**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

One was seen at Newell Beach (Northeast QLD); a rare species on this tour.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena* **ENDEMIC**

The common swallow in Australia, recorded every day of the tour.

Fairy Martin *Petrochelidon ariel*

Recorded on seven days of the tour, and on all legs of the trip.

Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans*

Seen in QLD and NSW, with our best looks, and numbers coming in Tasmania.

White-backed Swallow *Cheramoeca leucosterna* **ENDEMIC**

A poor view was had by Wes only, when we were with Phil Maher on the Hay Plains (NSW).

BUBULS: Pycnonotidae**Red-whiskered Bulbul** *Pycnonotus jocosus*

Three were seen at Bass Point (NSW).

REED-WARBLERS AND ALLIES: Acrocephalidae**Australian Reed-Warbler** *Acrocephalus australis*

Seen in the Capertee Valley, at Lake Wallace, Lake Cargelligo, and Five Bough Swamp (all NSW).

GRASSBIRDS AND ALLIES: Locustellidae**Little Grassbird** *Megalurus gramineus*

Heard at Lake Wallace, and at Five Bough Swamp, although only seen at Lake Cargelligo (all NSW).

Brown Songlark *Megalurus cruralis* **ENDEMIC**

Some calling and displaying birds were seen between Round Hill and Lake Cargelligo (NSW).

Rufous Songlark *Megalurus mathewsi* **ENDEMIC**

Two birds were seen in the Capertee Valley, and another two were seen near Darlington Point (both NSW).

CISTICOLAS AND ALLIES: Cisticolidae**Golden-headed Cisticola** *Cisticola exilis*

One was seen at Lake Mitchell, another near Bromfield Swamp, and lastly at Mareeba Wetlands (all QLD).

WHITE-EYES: Zosteropidae**Silver-eye** *Zosterops lateralis*

Seen at Cassowary House and Lake Eacham in QLD, and also at Bass Point (NSW), and on TAS.

THRUSHES AND ALLIES: Turdidae**Olive-tailed Thrush** *Zoothera lunulata* **ENDEMIC**

Also known as **BASSIAN THRUSH**.

Two birds were seen very well, hopping around a car park near Cape Bruny on Bruny Island (TAS).

Russet-tailed Thrush *Zoothera heinei*

A very showy roadside bird was seen near the lodge at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*

This introduced species was encountered regularly in New South Wales and Tasmania.

STARLINGS: Sturnidae**Metallic Starling** *Aplonis metallica*

Recorded on four days in Northeast QLD, including within Cairns.

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Recorded daily in NSW and TAS.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

Recorded regularly in QLD and NSW, only missed on a few days. The species does not occur in TAS.

FLOWERPECKERS: Dicaeidae**Mistletoebird** *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*

Recorded on seven days of the tour, in QLD and NSW (e.g. Cassowary House, Capertee Valley, Back Yamma).

SUNBIRDS AND SPIDERHUNTERS: Nectariniidae**Olive-backed Sunbird** *Cinnyris jugularis*

Seen three times in Northeast QLD, in Cairns, at Cassowary House and near Mount Carbine.

WAGTAILS AND PIPITS: Motacillidae**Australasian Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

Seen in Daintree and Boondall Wetlands in QLD, and at Capertee, Bass Point, and on the Hay Plains in NSW.

FINCHES, EUPHONIAS AND ALLIES: Fringillidae**European Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

One was seen at Bass Point in NSW.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Two were seen at Bass Point (NSW), and another was seen on Bruny Island on TAS.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Recorded on all but a few days of the tour.

WAXBILLS AND ALLIES: Estrildidae**Beautiful Firetail** *Stagonopleura bella* **ENDEMIC**

Two were seen foraging on a lawn on Bruny Island (TAS).

Diamond Firetail *Stagonopleura guttata* **ENDEMIC**

At least five birds were seen at Back Yamma in NSW.

Red-browed Firetail *Neochmia temporalis* **ENDEMIC**

Recorded at Mount Lewis, Big Mitchell Creek, Gold Creek Road, and O Reilly's in QLD, and Royal NP (NSW).

Crimson Finch *Neochmia phaeton*

At least four birds were seen in a flock of **Chestnut-breasted Munias** at Yorkey's Knob near Cairns (QLD).

Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata* **ENDEMIC**

At least ten birds were seen in the Capertee Valley in NSW.

Double-barred Finch *Taeniopygia bichenovii* **ENDEMIC**

Seen at Mount Carbine, Emerald Creek Falls and Big Mitchell Creek in QLD, Back Yamma in NSW, and in TAS

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata*

Also known as **NUTMEG MANNIKIN**. Two groups were seen close to Cairns in Northeast QLD.

Chestnut-breasted Munia *Lonchura castaneothorax*

One hundred or more were seen at Yorkey's Knob, near Cairns; others were seen in Mareeba (both QLD).

MAMMALS:

The taxonomy of the list follows: **Menkhorst, Peter and Knight, Frank.** *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia*. Third Edition. Oxford, 2011.

ECHIDNA: Tachyglossidae

Short-beaked Echidna *Tachyglossus aculeatus*

Three were seen in NSW, including two at Barren Grounds; another was seen on Bruny Island (TAS).

VOTED AS THE BEST MAMMAL OF THE TOUR

PLATYPUS: Ornithorhynchidae

Platypus *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*

One was seen in broad daylight near the base of Mount Lewis (Northeast QLD).

VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE MAMMALS OF THE TOUR

DASYURIDS: Dasyuridae

Eastern Quoll *Dasyurus viverrinus*

One was seen by Wes as we traveled back from Eaglehawk Neck in Tasmania on our final night.

Fat-tailed Dunart *Sminthopsis crassicaudata*

Several of were seen at night on the Hay Plains (NSW), while looking for Plains-wanderer.

BANDICOOTS: Peramelidae

Northern Brown Bandicoot *Isodon macrourus*

One was seen feeding on the Red Mill House lawn in Daintree (Northeast QLD), while we ate barbecue there.

WOMBATS: Vombatidae

Common Wombat *Vombatus ursinus*

Eight were seen on a night drive near Barren Grounds in NSW.

KOALA: Phascolarctidae

Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*

An excellent animal was seen at O Reilly's (QLD) thanks to a chance meeting with one of their guides, Matt.

VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE MAMMALS OF THE TOUR

BRUSHTAIL POSSUMS: Phalangeridae

Mountain Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus caninus*

One was seen at a feeder by the O Reilly's restaurant, during dinner one night (Southeast QLD).

Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula*

At least five were seen at Hobart Waterworks Reserve in Tasmania.

GLIDERS AND STRIPED POSSUM: Petauridae

Sugar Glider *Petaurus breviceps*

Two were seen by Neil, Sonia and Sam, while searching for nightbirds in Royal NP at night (NSW).

RINGTAIL POSSUMS: Pseudocheiridae**Common Ringtail Possum** *Pseudocheirus peregrinus*

One was seen while searching for night birds near O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

MUSKY RAT-KANGAROO: Hypsiprymnodontidae**Musky Rat-kangaroo** *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*

Two were seen scampering around beside Cassowary House (Northeast QLD).

KANGAROOS, WALLABIES AND TREE-KANGAROOS: Macropodidae**Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo** *Dendrolagus lumholtzi*

Two different animals were seen in the daytime at Curtin Fig Tree in Northeast QLD.

VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE MAMMALS OF THE TOUR**Agile Wallaby** *Macropus agilis*

Seen on three days in Northeast QLD, including dozens on the way into Emerald Creek Falls.

Whiptail Wallaby *Macropus parryi*

Also known as **PRETTY-FACED WALLABY**.

This beautiful wallaby was seen in wet sclerophyll forest, on the way in and out of O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Eastern Gray Kangaroo *Macropus giganteus*

This massive kangaroo was seen well at Mareeba Golf Course, where several were seen boxing; others were seen on the Hay Plains and in Griffith in NSW.

Western Gray Kangaroo *Macropus fuliginosus*

Four were seen on the Hay Plains (NSW).

Red Kangaroo *Macropus rufus*

The largest kangaroo species; seen several times on the Hay Plains (NSW), with one particularly large male being memorable.

Euro *Macropus robustus*

Also known as **COMMON WALLAROO**.

Two were seen at Binya (NSW).

Red-necked Wallaby *Macropus rufogriseus*

Seen on the lower slopes of the hill up to O Reilly's (Southeast QLD); others were seen at Capertee (NSW).

"Bennett's Wallaby" *Macropus rufogriseus rufogriseus*

The Tasmanian form of Red-necked Wallaby was seen at Bruny Island and at Hobart Waterworks Reserve.

Black Wallaby *Wallabia bicolor*

Also known as **SWAMP WALLABY**.

One was seen at Back Yamma State Forest in NSW.

Rufous-bellied Pademelon *Thylogale billardierii*

Also known as **TASMANIAN PADEMELON**.

More than twenty of them were seen at the Hobart Waterworks Reserve in Tasmania.

Red-legged Pademelon *Thylogale stigmatica*

Two singles were seen in the rainforest at Julatten, and another was seen near O Reilly's (both QLD).

Red-necked Pademelon *Thylogale thetis*

Seen daily at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

FRUIT BATS: Pteropodidae**Black Flying-fox** *Pteropus alecto*

A roosting colony of these bats and Gray-headed Flying-foxes was seen near Canungra (QLD).

Spectacled Flying-fox *Pteropus conspicillatus*

Some of the group saw some of these large bats flying around Cairns on our first evening (Northeast QLD).

Gray-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus*

A mixed colony of roosting bats involving this species and Black Flying-foxes was seen near O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

Little Red Flying-fox *Pteropus scapulatus*

Seen roosting in Cairns, and another small colony was seen at Newell Beach (both Northeast QLD).

RATS AND MICE: Muridae**Grassland Melomys** *Melomys burtoni*

One was seen near Lake Mitchell in Northeast QLD.

Fawn-footed Melomys *Melomys cervinipes*

One was seen at O Reilly's (Southeast QLD).

DOGS AND FOXES: Canidae**Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes*

One was seen at night at Lady Carrington Drive in Royal National Park, near Sydney (NSW).

RABBITS AND HARES: Leporidae**European Hare** *Lepus europaeus*

A few were seen on the Hay Plains (NSW).

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Seen four times on the tour, including in the Capertee Valley (NSW).

DEER: Cervidae**Rusa** *Cervus timoriensis*

A small herd was seen at night in Royal National Park in NSW.

OTHERS:**Estuarine Crocodile** *Crocodylus porosus*

Also known as **SALTWATER CROCODILE**.

One was seen on the Daintree River cruise in Northeast QLD.

Closed-litter Rainbow Skink *Carlia longipes*

Also known as **RED-SIDED SKINK**.

Seen at Red Mill House in Daintree (Northeast QLD).

Shingleback *Tiliqua rugosa*

One was seen on the journey between Capertee and Forbes in NSW.

Cane Toad *Rhinella marina*

Also known as **Marine Toad**.

Seen at a number of sites, including in Daintree in Northeast QLD.

White-lipped Tree Frog *Litoria infrafrenata*

One of these handsome, bright green frogs was seen on the side of Red Mill House in Daintree (NE QLD).

Lesueur's Frog *Litoria lesueurii*

Also known as **Stony Creek Frog**.

One was seen in the garden of Red Mill House, in Daintree (Northeast QLD).

Ulysses Butterfly *Papilio ulysses*

This spectacular large black and electric blue butterfly was seen in Daintree in Northeast QLD.



One of thousands of nesting **BROWN NODDIES** on Michaelmas Cay, during our day on the *Great Barrier Reef in Northeast Queensland*.