



**A Tropical Birding Custom Tour**  
**Australia: Maximum Outback Overland – A Birding Tour**

**1st – 24th October, 2022**



The glorious Eyrean Grasswren in the Mungeranie dunes was one of six grasswrens – a major Outback target – seen by every tour participant.

*Guided by **Keith Barnes & Ben Knoot**  
Bird and Mammal photos by **Ben Knoot**, all taken on this trip*

## **INTRODUCTION:**

This custom tour covered some of the remotest parts of Outback Australia, while still managing to take in nearly every single habitat that exists on the eastern side of the island continent. A few statistics. 7673 kilometers, five states, 393 bird species including 204 Australian endemics – most importantly amongst which we had (in tune to 'first day of Xmas please'): twelve strident honeyeaters, eleven eclectic parrots, ten mournful robins, nine busy thornbills, eight fiery finches, seven tooting whistlers; six moody grasswrens; five crisp kingfishers, four sneaky quailthrushes, .....three cock-a-tooos; .....two testing emuwrens, and a Flock Bronzewing in a pear tree (OK, just to test if you were listening, they were everywhere, but the nearest pear tree was in Melbourne!!). We also had 22 endemic mammals. It was a trip that was full to the brim!

Seriously though, we did some epic things! We saw Mt Wellington covered in snow, got flooded out in Chiltern and Deniliquin with 1-in-100 year storms turning the 'desert' into a large extended puddle. We saw the arid heathlands of Little Desert NP – while playing pinball machines at the one-and-only Nhill Pinball Museum, we didn't get honey-potted in gluepot. Flinder's Ranges were stunning but soggy! We traversed parts of the Strzelecki track and a big chunk of the Birdsville track. We got punctures and chatted up Phil the everything-man at the one-horse pub-town of Mungeranie. We pushed north dodging lightning strikes near the Dinosaur tracks at Lark Quarry, before reaching the mining Industrialopolis of Mt Isa, where 40C at midday made the icicles of Mt Wellington just a few weeks ago seem like a different country. Sliding into the wet tropics we took in the sweltering mangroves and woodlands around the forgettable Karumba before pushing across to the 'finchlands' of Cumberland Dam. Our final act of insanity was to do as much rainforest birding as we could muster in a little over 24 hours around Cairns, as we wrapped up with a Little-Big-Day around the diverse northern coastal city. If this sounds crazy, it was. But it was also one of the most unforgettable trips I think either of us have ever guided.

Ben Knoot and I (Keith Barnes) were both guiding, and this allowed us some freedom to do things that are not always possible on a normal itinerary. Often Ben, who is a bit of a photographic Rockstar, would be able to head off on his own steam and with his own schedule allowing him to take some much better photos than would normally be possible. So, when you see the incredible gallery that has been amassed on this tour – don't think that's normal and to be expected on a standard birding tour of the Maximum Outback! It was a rather exceptional trip in that regards.

This trip report will be done in sectors covering each major area rather than a day-by-day.

**TASMANIA 1-4 October 2022**

We kicked off with wildlife before we had even finished packing the car after meeting up with the clients at the Hobart hotel. A Southern Brown Bandicoot was snuffling around the flowerbeds and we all had good looks at this cute marsupial critter before loading up and heading out towards Cradle Mountain – an unusual destination for Tropical Birding. More known for its mammals than birds, we spent much of the morning crossing to the northeastern side of the island! However, we did stop of a few waterbirds around Hobart and netted Musk Duck. Strangely, due to the immense amount of rain the interior of Oz had received, finding waterbirds was tough this year – they are just too dispersed. Despite spending most of the day driving we had pretty much seen a decent selection of endemic birds by the time we rocked up at Cradle Mountain. We had time for one last stop, and had a very intimate experience with three Duck-billed Platypus! Strange, and delightful animals indeed. The main targets here are mammalian, and we settled in for a long night. The proprietor came to let us know that with a lot of recent activity on the forestry roads by the local foresters, the Tasmanian Devils had stopped visiting. Too bad! Our nocturnal vigil had mixed success, with the guides seeing Spot-tailed Quoll, and everyone getting good looks at Common Brushtail Possum and Tasmanian Pademelon.



Pacific Gull is a specialty on Tassie, and we had a super experience with this chunky-billed individual.

After breakfast we made our way south and headed straight for Bruny Island and a veritable blitz on the island's endemic bird species and other specialties. We began by visiting North Bruny and a nesting area for Forty-spotted Pardalote, and we departed with a brace of them, plus our first Black-headed Honeyeaters. Making our way south, we stopped to add the endemic Dusky Robin to the list and picked up our first Green Rosellas and Yellow Wattlebirds. We also stopped for a roadside Pacific Gull and Black-faced Cormorant in another bay. As we were driving the quiet island roads a Beautiful Firetail took off from the roadside and was tracked down, where it emerged to perch on overhead wires and bushes. A night drive was absolutely stupendous, with us netting Eastern Quoll, more Southern Brown Bandicoots and the crazy-looking Long-nosed Potoroo! We also connected with a Tawny Frogmouth that did a delightful owl-impression!



Beautiful Firetail is ooooooh, beautiful!

The next day we headed to Adventure Bay for our next major targets. The eucalypts along the shoreline were loaded with flowers in bloom, which attracted Swift Parrots, a seasonal visitor to the island. Along the sandy shoreline, we managed to locate a pair of Hooded Plovers also. For our final time on Bruny Island, we headed up into the forest on Mount Mangana. Here we first found a Crescent Honeyeater, swiftly followed by Olive Whistler and Scrubtit. We closed our time on Bruny with two more robins, with a very cooperative and popular male Pink Robin, and we also upgraded our looks of Scarlet Robin too, before we drove back to the car ferry and headed back to mainland Tasmania for some more birding, heading north towards Eaglehawk Neck. En-route we added a small group of distant Cape Barren Geese, skillfully located by Ben. After a great meal at a local ranch, which was key for us warming ourselves, we made one final foray out for birds at dusk, when we were able to watch several huddles of Little Penguins making their way to their beachside nesting burrows. Returning to the car, we bumped into some amazing Wombats as we left the parking area! Despite it having been a long day, Ben had another surprise up his sleeve and after around 30 minutes we stopped to 'try a little owling'. Not much later we had a cooperative Morepork 'T-ing-up' in the spotlight and then we tried for the pièce de résistance! After a few blasts of playback, Ben scanned with the spotlight, and there it was – a very seldom seen Australian Masked Owl (the endemic Tassie taxon that is sometimes considered a different species!). It was a late drive back to Hobart, but boy were we satisfied with leaving Tassie pretty much with everything important in the bag! The next morning, we were greeted with the news that snow was falling on Mt Wellington and the road was closed. We had a leisurely breakfast – one of the few on this trip! And eventually made our way up the mountain. It was gorgeous, but pretty frigid and several of the birds we were hoping to pick up were just not interested at all!





Mt Wellington was chilly! It was hard to believe we were boiling our bottoms just 2-weeks later in Mt Isa at 40C having made our way overland!

After a good look at the scenery, we decided to return to Hobart and prepare in earnest for our madcap roadtrip, which promised to be exciting, but also pretty tough going at times. We got an early night and headed off for a very early flight to Melbourne the following morning, also knowing that a band of rain was predicted to blanket Victoria for most of the next 10-days.



**VICTORIA AND NEW SOUTH WALES 5-11 October 2022**



Our trusty rig that transported us across the Outback, replete with cooking and camping kit, just in case we needed it!

Leaving Melbourne it was raining, and predicted to continue to do so for the better part of the next week! Australia was in the midst of 1-in-100 year floods, and we were right in the middle of the worst of that. Nevertheless, when given lemons, make lemonade. That was the attitude and we headed up into the hills skirting Melbourne into a wetter belt of habitat, which consisted of towering Wet Sclerophyll Forest and Temperate Rainforests, at Toolangi State Forest. The forests there are impressively tall, some giant mountain ash trees reaching more than 70 meters or 200 feet in height! For more info check our YouTube video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7LoQhriJBU>. There are other Ozzie habitat videos on our YouTube channel if you wish to explore.

Our visit coincided with a chilly dawn on site there and consistent drizzle, but a dawn arrival aided us in finding one of its most famous avian residents, Superb Lyrebird, whose remarkable mimicry was part of the frigid dawn chorus that day. Other songbirds were slower to appear, but eventually we tracked down two very attractive robins, with several handsome Rose Robins in among the tower eucalyptus trees, and a marvelous male Pink Robin within a narrow sliver of dank, dark, temperate rainforest along a gully within this too. We also managed to get the local and weird Pilotbird. We made our way towards the Chiltern area for a two-night stay with a few stops en-route. Entering the stunning temperate eucalypt woodland we would bird the gorgeous Box-Ironbark Woodland for which this area is famed for the next two days, where the Ironbark trees displayed the characteristic thick coat of dark, blackish bark with deep crevices that occasionally glistened to reveal veins of rich, rust-colored resin.

The valley is a known hotspot for honeyeaters in particular, boasting a rich diversity of this, the most diverse of all Australian songbird families. We experienced this firsthand, encountering Painted, Fuscous, White-plumed, Yellow-tufted and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Scarlet Myzomela in our short time there. However, our best sighting in the Mount Pilot area was of a pair of vociferous Spotted Quail-Thrushes, which gave us repeated looks as they emitted their whistler-like calls. Another interesting Australian family featured, with several Eastern Shrike-Tits found beside one of the dams close to Chiltern. The dams yielded the strange Pink-eared Duck and White-eyed Duck and the surrounding woodland added a riot of color in the form of parrots: Eastern and Crimson Roseallas, Red-rumped, Australian King and Turquoise Parrots, as well as Shining Bronze and Fan-tailed Cuckoos. Flocks had Buff-rumped, Striated and Yellow Thornbills, and White-browed and Brown Treecreepers and many honeyeaters. Despite the constant drizzle, we were able to keep birding throughout our time here, and it was ultimately very productive. We did notice however that the Murray River was getting fuller day-by-day. When we crossed it to head north it had burst its banks by about 700 metres!





Spotted Quail-Thrush was the first of a quartet of sexy skulking stunners in this Austro-Papuan family.

After a final morning we made our way towards Deniliquin, with a mild bit of trepidation given the deteriorating weather conditions. I had been in touch with Phil Maher, the local expert, who's take was 'Oh yeah, its soggy underfoot, but let's give it a go anyway mate, eh'. I mean, the clients were not coming back to Australia in a hurry, and so we had little option. Meeting Phil a little earlier in the day meant we could hit a few of his local hotspots, where we added a slew of great new birds, including a roosting Australian Owlet-Nightjar, Blue Bonnet, Striped Honeyeater, White-backed Swallow, and Red-necked Avocet. As dusk was soon approaching, we headed off the 'right zone' for Plains Wanderer hunting, seeing Emus by the dozen en-route!

It was soon dark, and Phil made a brief exploration and came back with news that – 'Well, it's a wee bit soggy than I thought, have you blokes got rubber boots?'. We slowly headed into the field, it was completely flooded! We had to give it a go, but it did feel like chances of success were likely to be close to zero. However, we were rewarded for our efforts with a stunning Fat-tailed Dunnart that appeared marooned on an island!! After several hours of Phil and I traipsing the newly created swamp, we reached the inevitable conclusion that Plains Wanderers were not nocturnal waterbirds! While it was slightly disappointing, the reality is that we were even lucky to reach Deniliquin as many routes had been cut off by the immense amounts of water flowing through the outback and so, given that even being able to be here was a minor miracle, we just had to take the

medicine of the PW-dip and move on! On our way back we had an amazing experience with a Barn Owl that would not move off a pole just meters away from the vehicle.

Before we departed for South Australia, we had a score to settle with a parrot, a superb-looking parrot, oddly enough, named Superb Parrot. We had to put in some effort at a location we expected to deliver and sure enough, eventually had mind-blowing views and photographs of this scarce and temperamental beastie! The photos should be enough to convince you the experience was amazing.



Superb Parrot was better than super, it was SUPERB

Not for the last time on this trip, we had a heck of lot of kilometers to get through to arrive at our next destination, so we headed off on a long drive towards Nhill. Despite Nhill not being famous for anything, it really ought to be! It has one of the best countryside Vietnamese eateries anywhere on Earth, and we made 'Mr Le' our stop for every possible meal we could manage, albeit we only really had one dinner and one breakfast – but they were open at 6am to serve birders piping hot delicious food. And of course, the Australian

Pinball Museum! To be honest, the latter is great, full of older (and newer) working machines, and a real feel for the history of pinball. It is a real trip down memory lane for anyone interested in 'Americana' and the history of pop culture, with imagery starting in the 1930s and spanning almost a century. It's very cool! Here we have group participant Ken Berlin reliving his Pinball wizard heyday! As we had moved substantially southwest, it makes sense that we had shifted into a different habitat, and we were definitely in the interesting arid heathy mallee, when we encountered a few new species and some specialties we would not see again. Specifically, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Rufous Fieldwren and Shy Heathwren. Before too long we were on our way to Hattah-Kulkyne NP. This worked out well, where upon our late afternoon arrival, we almost immediately scored the difficult and endangered Mallee Emuwren, before being seduced by a charming male Chestnut Quail-Thrush that sung in the open while we scrambled for our cameras!







At the 11th hour we caught up with Diamond Firetail, which had done a great job of eluding us.

The following morning, we were hell-bent on finding Striated Grasswrens, and they gave us a real run-around, resisting all attempts at luring them onto into the open. We had a few nearby, but they were paying cat-and-mouse Tom-and-Jerry style, and it's safe to say, we were 'Tom' - getting absolutely spanked! Ben lucked onto a Malleefowl and summoned the rest of us, but by the time we got there, the beast had slunk away, and the rest of the group did not manage to get an encounter. Feeling somewhat frustrated we were on our way out of the park when we checked a tree-hole that had been attracting some attention and a gorgeous pair of Pink Cockatoos were perched there super photogenically. After some decent coffees and a toastie or two we gave the Striated Grasswrens one last shot, and this time – BOOM! We had some 'players'. They really stole the show, and did not hold back. Remarkable, given how skittish their friends up the road had been! One last target was nailed in the form of a flock of Regent Parrots before we made our way towards South Australia.



This pair of Striated Grasswrens were real players, our first grasswrens of the trip!

***SOUTH AUSTRALIA 11-16 October 2022***

Reaching Waikeirie, we learned that the weather gods were truly on our sides. Despite Gluepot – its name an indicator of what happens to the roads after rain – having been closed for most of the last 2-weeks, it was open tomorrow. So lucky, the weather did cost us in some ways but also really we were so lucky in many other ways. We enjoyed dinner at a recreation club, which really is a cultural experience that anyone who visits Oz really should indulge in. A few smokes, with the blokes, and some pokies!

We started at Oh-dark-30, and drove for several hours in the pitch dark opening and closing gates to reach Gluepot at dawn. It's definitely the most beautiful Mallee habitat I have seen in Oz, delivering a delightful sense of true wilderness! Also, it was chockers with superb birds, and with many flowers, we were treated to a slew of honeyeaters and other delights today, with Australian Ringnecks dripping off the trees and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters simply being abundant.



The spectacular White-fronted Honeyeater was in attendance at Gluepot, and it behaved particularly well

Once we managed to calm ourselves down after the adrenalin rush of the honey-eater overload, we started picking through flock birds looking for the rarer targets. Gilbert's Whistler and Redthroat soon succumbed, along with some curious Brown-headed Honeyeaters, and we located a stunning Red-backed Kingfisher and a male Splendid Fairywren – the name says it all – amongst a great many other birds.

We stopped for a picnic lunch that we had brought into the reserve. And despite the fact that it was really heating up, that didn't impact the birds, and a short post-lunch walk netted us White-browed Treecreeper and Black Honeyeater for the only time on the trip. We kept working the flocks, despite the fact that we hardly saw any other people the whole day, it really felt like we had the entire place to ourselves. The afternoon delivered a few more primo birds including Mulga Parrot and then eventually – after a lot of effort – one of Gluepot's marquee birds, the Red-lored Whistler. Although we had almost given up, a random stop saw us get lucky with some delightful Chestnut-crowned Babblers. And as we made put way back to Waikierie we found birds that look (at least according to the fieldguides) exactly like Black-eared Miners. Most folks believe that just about every individual in Gluepot is now somewhat hybridized. Whether these birds are tickable or not tickable is a



debate I am not that interested in having, so let's just say we had some individuals that were 95% Black-eared Miner genetic stock and leave it there ;-). Our return to Waikeirie was not without some drama when Keith realized he had to go all the way back to the reserve as he had left his wallet there. The clients went for dinner and Keith and Ben made the long trip back, where the wallet remained untouched after 3 hours. God bless Australia – or at least parts of the world devoid of people.

Our next stop was the stunning Flinder's Ranges. But the weather gods had other ideas, and so we made a quick detour to a new stakeout to look for the stunning Yellow-footed Rock-Wallaby, a very localized and quite scarce mammal. It required a fair bit of 'clambering' but we eventually located a small group and those that were able to make the climb up the scree slope were able to get views of this pretty little macropod.



The pretty Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby was worth chasing at a location near the spectacular Flinder's Ranges NP



We awoke at Wilepena Pound in the Flinder's Ranges to find the heavens had opened and sheets of water were falling from the sky. A chilled breakfast was followed by some more apprehensive sky-gazing, and then eventually we decided to head to Stokes Hill where we had a walk, saw some Common Walaroos and saw a neat Wedge-tailed Eagle on a nest, and eventually just got very wet without much reward. We returned and packed up and then started our journey north onto the epic Outback Highway – we were leaving any vestiges of civilization and into the truest of all wilderness areas – the Outback! We crossed a few torrents and flashfloods ensured that the roads were under a considerable amount of water, but not enough to halt our progress. Funnily enough, by accident we found the best restaurant of the whole tour right on the fringes of the Outback, and it was a delightful lunch. Soon after that we found our first Chirruping Wedgebills before heading out to the truck-stop of Lyndhurst – where the near-mythical Strzelecki Track starts!



Flash floods rapidly fill the riverbeds where River Red Gums live in the Flinder's Range (top left); The Strzelecki Track that starts at Lyndhurst, and is one of the longest unserviced roads in Australia, best you carry some extra water and food (top right), its also a great birding location; the rock and stonescapes on the Strzelecki Track are stunning (bottom left); the rig gets filthy, there ain't no stopping that (bottom right).



In the afternoon we made our first exploration out of Lyndhurst and drove along the famous Strzelecki, and it didn't take long before we found our main quarry: the stunning Cinnamon Quail-thrush! Just look at the photo, no words can do the strutting this bird can do.



The strutting Cinnamon Quail-thrush put on a show in the afternoon, on the famous Strzelecki Track near Lyndhurst. Desert birds do not come cooler than this.

There are not many birds in this part of the world, but those that are here are special! The main target was another grasswren and first thing the next morning we headed out to a nearby reserve. To say that every 19 out of 20 birds you look at here is a Zebra Finch is not an exaggeration. Also, with all the rains in the Oz interior this year, we started seeing clouds of Budgerigars here and they did not stop until we were past Mt Isa! We also encountered a few Diamond Dove for the first time, but our main quarry was a busy skulking long-tailed wren. So, it was mildly annoying that hundreds of White-winged Fairywren (mostly in grey-brown eclipse plumage) was abundant here, and everytime you thought you were onto something, well, it was a White-winged Fairywren – a hella cool bird, but not why we came here! We worked quite hard, and eventually, not



for the first or last time on this trip, Ben said – 'I think I got em!'. We wondered over to a few shrubs where some Thick-billed Grasswrens were skulking with aplomb. We all had good looks before the culprits jettisoned off on the ground like a mouse-size roadrunner! On our way back to Lyndhurst we encountered a great Black-breasted Kite. The afternoon was a leisurely exploration of the Strzelecki Track, and we simply enjoyed ourselves given the main targets were under the belt, but we did encounter a fun immature Spotted Harrier that confused us for a little bit, and spent much time enjoying the bizarre rockscapes near the road. Big Red Kangaroos were abundant this afternoon. The next day we started up the southern end of the Birdsville track in earnest. What a fabulous piece of wilderness. The most remarkable feature of the day was the extensive areas of Gibber Plains, which is a desert pavement of interlocking rocks, pebbles and cobbles that are then varnished, leaving what appears to be a shiny Roman-built Tiananmen-square-like plain as far as the eye can see. Given that most of the soil is trapped beneath the Gibber, not even grass grows here much. It won't surprise you that this environment is relatively bird-free. But it does hold one special, special bird. The unique 'Gibber Bird', or Gibber Chat. Amazingly, in an environment with a highly-sought-after small yellowish chat, we have the pretty abundant Orange Chat, which has remarkably similar yellow females everywhere. The only way to tell them apart is rump and eye color. Anyway, after a fair bit of scanning using the famous Tropical Birding needle-in-haystack technique, we got lucky, and ultimately had an amazing experience with some very cooperative 'Gibber Birds' indeed! Keith was particularly happy, as this was a bird we managed to miss on the recce, so it was lifer time for all and sundry!



The Gibber Chat sat sentinel on the varnished plains of gibber, quite the poser!

Heading north to Mungeranie, we stopped at a couple of waterholes and scored Australian Reed-Warbler and Brolga. While there we also saw a skanky male Ostrich which we did not pay much attention to. Pulling into Mungeranie, Keith noticed we had a slow puncture, our first but not out last on this trip! The indomitable Phil – hotelier, pub keeper, shop owner, workshop manager and mechanic – makes up 50% of Mungeranie’s permanent population. He went straight to work on fixing our wheel, while checking us in and simultaneously making us burgers for lunch. When it rains in Mungeranie, it pours! The pub is awesome, and everything you would hope for from an Outback experience! While chatting, Phil says “Actually, down the road, is the rarest bird in all of Australia”. We, of course, say “Oh yeah, what is it?”. He says “There is a last male feral Ostrich in all of South Australia, down here somewhere”. We say “Yeah, we saw it at the waterhole”. “Aaaaah, Goo-don-ya!” Phil replies. Tickable or not, I don’t really care, as I have seen thousands of Common Ostrich in Africa, but it made me laugh. I did not come to Mungeranie to look for Common Ostrich, although I bet some mad Ozzie lister has! They will probably make a movie one day “The Last Ostrich of Mungeranie – A birders tale”. Ben was so enamored with the pub, he eventually parted with his cap, and it now lives on this ceiling somewhere!





The Mungerannie Hotel Pub – say no more!

In the afternoon we explored some nearby dunes, finding Eyrean Grasswren and just enjoying the remarkable dune environment. The next day we were off early, and it wasn't long before we had our first major find of the day. A family of Gray Falcon – one of the rarest raptors in Oz – was alongside the road. We used the opportunity to stretch legs and before long had found a delightful group of Banded Whiteface. The remainder of the morning was spent unsuccessfully marching through Lignum. A bizarre shrub, Lignum grows in arid inland Australia especially close to areas that experience intermittent cycles of flooding and drought. It is also the only home of another very special bird, the Gray Grasswren. Anyway, we did not even have a peep this morning, and started making our way north to Birdsville.





The Banded Whiteface was definitely a highlight of the morning

In the late afternoon we stopped at a site known for Gray Grasswren. We got out, were mobbed by flies and realized it was about 41C outside. We got straight back in the car and decided to snooze for another hour. We got out again, it was 40.8C, got back in. An hour later got out again, it was 40.2C. OK, let's do this. The Lignum was uninviting, but we made a mammoth effort for several hours. Eventually, Ben started waving frantically, he had located some Gray Grasswrens. We headed over there and the birds scuttled, Keith got onto one sprinting over 100m – Usain Bolt-like – across an open patch. We followed them, but they scuttled off. The group decided to move on, and so we headed into Birdsville. What a great name this town has. Unfortunately, its become a little 'touristy' and has lost a little of its proper Outback edge ever since Nicole Kidman and Chris Hemsworth started popping in on their private planes for cocktails! The food was probably the worst we had on the trip, and we were grateful for the 'real deal' Mungeranie experience. We awoke to another slow puncture. Using our electric pump we inflated our wheel and went birding. Having raided eBird the night before we tried a few targets unsuccessfully, before deciding it was prudent to get the tyre repaired. While we

did that, we lost Mike within the confines of the 200-square-foot Birdsville Information Centre. Be careful folks – the Outback can be a dangerous place. Having eventually found our client after an extensive 5-minute sweep of the premises, we pushed on for Windorah!

***INTERIOR QUEENSLAND 17-21 October 2022***

We encountered a few mega wetlands at the roadside that were not supposed to be there. That's what happens in wet years! Many birds were repeats, but we did add Gull-billed Tern and the nomadic Black-tailed Native-hen to the burgeoning list. Undoubtedly though, bird of the day was a cooperative roadside Flock Bronzewing. These are notoriously tricky birds to catch up with, as they are nomads and very irruptive and unpredictable in their nature. And so, this year, we were lucky as they had irrupted a little south and east of their 'normal' irruption range. Who cares, we were all just mega-stoked to catch up with this elegant looking, and difficult Outback specialty.



Flock Bronzewing was a definite trip highlight

After checking into our Windorah hotel, we headed for a nearby riverside walk, where a flock of hundreds of Masked and White-browed Woodswallows swirling about was a highlight. We also located our only Yellow-billed Spoonbill of the trip loafing by the river, before flushing a few Stubble Quail, much to everyone's surprise.

The next morning, we only had a few birds on the agenda and went straight to a location for one of them. After a little exploring we heard and then had excellent views of our fourth and last quail-thrush of the trip – the delicious Chestnut-breasted Quailthush, what an outstanding group of birds. Although the grasswrens kind of steal the limelight on these remote Outback trips I think my personal favorite group are the quailthrushes, they are just stunning and way too cool for their own good. Although we were not expecting them here, we tried a little playback and boom – an aggressive and rather boisterous group of Hall's Babbler exploded from a nearby copse of trees and literally started dancing right in front of us. We had to back off to get shots! With our work pretty much done in this zone, we decided to head off to Winton. The skies however, looked ominous! On arrival local gen suggested that the road to Lark Quarry the next morning would be closed, a major blow! But again, we are not in control of the weather, we headed out towards Bladensburg NP to see if we could muster up a few of the true specialties of the area, but we failed. We retreated for dinner and started praying to any diety that might listen.



Hall's Babbler was our fourth and last Australian Babbler to be seen on this tour – a complete sweep of the Ozzie members of this family – bring out the broom!



We awoke with mild apprehension, got pies and gas and headed towards the slippery track to Lark Quarry. The sign said 'Proceed with caution'. BOOM! YES! It's not closed. We started the drive, and couple of patches were slick, I was more worried about abundant kangaroos to be honest, but dawn just never seemed to come. Then I realized, it had come, but the clouds were just so pitch black that I thought it was still dark! You know those idiots that try and drive into twisters, I kind of felt like that – but the opposite – we were driving towards any patch of lighter cloud we could find. And of course, this was not really dangerous, because you do not get twisters here – worst case scenario was we would get bogged down and have to get pulled out. Again, kangaroos – and there were many – were my main concern. It's a 90km drive on dirt to Lark Quarry and we slightly apprehensively – and silently – celebrated each 10km marker that we passed. Eventually it became clear looking at the sky in front of us, we would make it.

Amazingly, no sooner had we reached the main birding location and we had nailed both of the main specialty birds here. The Rufous-crowned Emu-wren and Opalton Grasswren!



Rufous-crowned Emuwren is a cute little stunner, and we had now nailed the two trickiest Emuwrens in Australia on the trip



Opalton Grasswren is a recent split, but a handsome little devil indeed

The area also delivered Painted Firetail, a magical and nomadic finch of the northern Outback, and we even had time to head over the Lark Quarry and enjoy the rather remarkable dinosaur tracks that are fossilized here. It's a really interesting bit of paleontology. After enjoying the show at the quarry, where Ben skulked off and got a few extra good photos, we started the drive back to Winton, this time, a lot less stressful with the weather clearing and the birds in the bag! Little Woodswallow spiralled around as we departed.

On the way back we made a few opportunistic stops, scoring the up-until-then rather resistant Crimson Chat and the inimitable Spinifex Pigeon. After a lunch in Winton we started the long drive north to Mt Isa. This rather strange town, one of the great mining capitals of Oz, is full of trendy cafes and restaurants, while still being surrounded by wilderness. It felt like we were definitely leaving the most remote parts of the Outback, and with the woodland element to it, tropical Northern Oz felt a lot closer.



Spinifex Pigeon looks like it was designed by 6-year-old in doodles class.





Spinifex grass (in the foreground) and hilly rocky savanna, is a key element of grasswren habitat – and here we are in the heart of Kalkadoon Grasswren territories.

We made our way to some rocky outcrops on the edge of town. During some late wandering the previous evening Ben had located a pair of Kalkadoon Grasswrens and it wasn't long until we relocated these cool birds in this amazing habitat. Other new species for the day included Varied Lorikeet, Spotted Bowerbird and Grey-headed Honeyeaters. We also saw the stunning Purple-necked Rock-Wallaby here, another localized and special macropod. We visited a nearby lake which was full of waterbirds – most of which we had already encountered – but this also gave us a few key passerines including Long-tailed Finch and Grey-fronted Honeyeater. It gets hot here quickly, and by 10am it was roasting, and so we decided due to our relative success to recede to the hotel and wait for the afternoon for things to cool off. Later on we headed east of Isa and birded an area of different habitat, adding little to the list, but certainly enjoying the remarkable landscapes and habitats. After dinner we did a quick owling session, locating a Southern Bookbook and Tawny Frogmouth pretty quickly, before getting to bed as we needed to be up early to try for the trickiest of all the grasswrens – Carpentarian Grasswren.



At dawn we were on location where we had to walk over some treacherous, unstable and stony terrain to get into the zone for our final and trickiest grasswren. Eventually, it became apparent that moving over the terrain was too tricky for the group, and we eventually decided the safest strategy was to stick in one place and try – I was thinking, ‘Help me Obi-wan Kenobi – you are our only hope!’ We got lucky with a very cooperative Black-tailed Treecreeper, our fourth species of treecreeper on the tour. Temperatures were starting to rise, birds were getting quiet. We decided 30 more minutes and we’d call it a day. I don’t think hopes were high after 20 minutes had passed, but eventually a feint twittering and I said “I hear them, come this way!”. It was a tense few minutes getting folks onto the birds, but they did ultimately behave very well – even if they kept their distance a little – eventually perching up on some rocks for all to see! Success, our seventh grasswren, and sixth one that everyone on the tour had seen. I think that’s a barometer of success on tours like this, and we had managed them all! Huge relief, it was literally all downhill from here. We returned to Isa for a well-earned lunch at our favorite restaurant, before packing up and heading towards the coast, and the Gulf of Carpentaria, and I pledged to myself that as I entered town I would say “Hi Karumba”.



Carpentarian Grasswren, probably the trickiest of all the grasswrens we were likely to search for on this mega-circuit trip, and a relief to see.

**COASTAL NORTHERN QUEENSLAND 21-24 October 2022**

It was quite a drive into Karumba, and when we arrived we felt the humidity of the northern tropics firmly upon us. Some swampland before Kuramba got us Pied Heron, Saurus Crane and a few other new waterbirds. Once in town, we decided to head to the coastal mangroves to see if we could score a few of the local specialties this afternoon, easing the pressure for our morning cruise. While we did see White-throated Gerygone and Australian Yellow White-eyes which were new, we didn't do particularly well on the mangrove birds, but we did get covered in sticky mangrove mud for our efforts, so that box was ticked. At dusk a stateout yielded a cooperative Barking Owl, and we almost turned a stunning Blue-winged Kookaburra into roadkill before it's evasive action. Getting to the best restaurant in Eastern Australia to see an 'Ocean Sunset' we did enjoy our first fresh seafood since leaving Tasmania. Whether its shrimp or Barramundi, we all enjoyed the meals. In the morning we had a few hours to kill before the river cruise, and so we leisurely birded some nearby woodland. It's pretty odd on day 21 of an extensive Australia tour to be 'adding' birds that are normally slam dunk 1<sup>st</sup>-day birds on other more conventional Oz tours, like Rainbow Lorikeet, Golden-headed Cisticola and Red-backed Fairywren. I guess that emphasizes how unusual this itinerary really was. The best experience of the morning however was the pair of courting Australian Hobby Falcons that were posturing and feeding nearby. Delightful!



Australian Hobby, this photogenic pair were so cooperative, and enjoyable to watch.



Before long, we were on a boat trip around the mangroves. We heard a little about Kuramba's WWII history and the fate of some of the characters of the town over the decades before we got into the birding which included several mangrove specialties such as: Red-headed Myzomela, Mangrove Gerygone, the scarce White-breasted Whistler, and Broad-billed Flycatcher. But other more spectacular species included Brahminy and Whistling Kites and White-bellied Sea-Eagle. The final act of the morning was feeding – at point blank range – a stunning Black-necked Stork. We headed across the base of the Cape York peninsula, reaching Cumberland Dam in the late afternoon. The dam had been dried out and dredged and so we thought maybe our chances to see drinking finches were scuppered, but we did find one pool that was attracting Red-winged Parrot, Pale-headed Rosella and Great Bowerbird. And so, we decided to stake it out for the late afternoon. A few Red-tailed Black Cockatoo sailed overhead, and then with the sun waning, we struck gold as and we scored a trio of delightful seedeaters, our main reason for making this stop – Masked, Double-barred and Black-throated Finches. The morning was an enjoyable wander around the Georgetown horseracing track, where we had a very photogenic Red-backed Fairywren, and also some distant Ground Cuckooshrikes. It was then time to head for a completely different habitat and enter the wet tropical rainforests of the Atherton highlands.



Red-backed Fairywren, not too shabby.....

The reason we spent so little time in the Cairns area on this itinerary was because all the clients had been to this part of Australia before. But there were of course a few bogey birds left for everyone, and so we targeted those as best we could, while, of course, racking up plenty of new trip birds. It was somewhat ironic, the rate of additional new birds was probably higher here than anywhere since we left Victoria and we enjoyed Hastie's Swamp and Mt Hypipimee NP for the afternoon, adding Yellow-spotted, Lewin's, MacLeay's and Bridled Honeyeaters, Atherton and Large-billed Scrubwren, Mountain Thornbill, Bower's Shrikethrush, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Victoria's Riflebird, Black-faced and Spectacled Monarchs, Pale Yellow and Gray-headed Robins and Olive-backed Sunbird, amongst a slew of others. Two highlights were a male Southern Cassowary with chicks wandering across the road at Hypipimee and then a breeding pair of Peregrine Falcons. The following morning, we headed to the lowland forests of Goldsborough road, adding Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Barred Cuckooshrike and a vocal and very uncooperative Noisy Pitta eventually showed for substandard views. We raced through to Cairns picking up Papuan Frogmouth, Gray Goshawk and Rufous Owl at special stakeouts in our Ozzie HQ before wrapping things up with a walk along the Esplanade picking up some waders before the final lunch and airport drop. Overall, a phenomenal 24-days that covered every major habitat and picked up almost every specialty bird that one could have hoped for on that route. Would I do it again? Sure, if I ever recover!



Macleay's Honeyeater was one of many NE tropics endemics we added on our final day of the tour

## 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 changes published by Cornell in October 2022.

QLD-INDICATES THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND.

VIC-INDICATES THE STATE OF VICTORIA

SA-INDICATES THE STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

TAS - INDICATES THE STATE OF TASMANIA

LO – INDICATES LEADER ONLY

HO – INDICATES HEARD ONLY

E – INDICATES AUSTRALIAN ENDEMIC

### OSTRICHES: *Struthionidae*

Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus*: One feral bird just south of Mungeranie is apparently one of the rarest birds in Oz. At least according to pub owner Phil at the Mungerannie Motel. Whether this is tickable or not, I don't know and nor do I really care, but thought we would list it here for fun regardless!

### CASSOWARIES AND EMU: *Casuariidae*

Southern Cassowary *Casuarius casuarius*: One male and a couple of chicks walked across the road at Lake Hypipime, QLD

**Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* (E)**: Recorded at a number of Outback sites (e.g. Little Red QLD).

### MAGPIE GOOSE: *Anseranatidae*

Magpie Goose *Anseranas semipalmata*: A few groups were seen around Hasties Swamp in QLD.

### DUCKS, GEESE AND WATERFOWL: *Anatidae*

Plumed Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna eytoni*: A single group of 25 birds was seen in QLD.

Wandering Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata*: Several seen near Mt Isa and on Atherton Tablelands. QLD

**Cape Barren Goose *Cereopsis novaehollandiae* (E)**: One group distantly in TAS.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*: In TAS and elsewhere.

**Australian Shelduck *Tadorna tadornoides* (E)**: A few in TAS.

Radjah Shelduck *Radjah radjah*: A few were seen at Mt Isa in QLD.

Green Pygmy-goose *Nettapus pulchellus*: A few were seen at Mt Isa in QLD.

**Maned Duck *Chenonetta jubata* (E)**: Many in the south of the country.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*: One in TAS.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*: Common in the south.

Gray Teal *Anas gracilis*: Several scattered throughout.

**Chestnut Teal *Anas castanea* (E)**: A few near Hobart, TAS.

**Pink-eared Duck *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* (E)**: Seen at dams near Chiltern (VIC).

White-eyed Duck *Aythya australis*: Seen at dams near Chiltern (VIC).

**Blue-billed Duck *Oxyura australis* (E)**: Seen once near Lyndhurst (SA)



**Musk Duck *Biziura lobata* (E):** Seen twice, once distantly in TAS, and again near Lyndhurst SA.

#### MEGAPODES: Megapodiidae

**Australian Brushturkey *Alectura lathami* (E):** A few seen on our final days near Cairns (QLD)

**Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellate* (LO) (E):** 1 was seen only by Ben unfortunately before it slipped away at Hattah-Kulkyne NP (VIC).

**Orange-footed Scrubfowl *Megapodius reinwardt*:** A few seen on our final days near Cairns (QLD)

#### PHEASANTS, GROUSE AND ALLIES: Phasianidae

**Stubble Quail *Coturnix pectoralis* (E):** One flushed along a riverbed near Windorah (QLD)

#### GREBES: Podicipedidae

**Australasian Grebe *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*:** Recorded throughout.

**Hoary-headed Grebe *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*:** Recorded at 2 sites in TAS and VIC.

**Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*:** Recorded on 2 days (TAS & QLD).

#### PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae

**Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*:** Encountered regularly on the tour.

**Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*:** Recorded on 6 days of the tour, mostly in TAS.

**Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris*:** Just one sightings in NE QLD.

**Common Bronzewing Phaps *chalcoptera* (E):** Seen throughout the south many times VIC, SA, QLD.

**Flock Bronzewing Phaps *histrionica* (E):** 3-4 flocks were encountered within the vast areas of Tussock Grassland in Western Queensland, on the drive between Lyndhurst and Winton.

**Crested Pigeon *Ocyphaps lophotes* (E):** A commonly encountered pigeon.

**Spinifex Pigeon *Geophaps plumifera* (E):** Seen on at least 2 days, in Rocky Spinifex near Mount Isa and Lark Quarry (both QLD).

**Wonga Pigeon *Leucosarcia melanoleuca* (LO) (E):** Keith saw one of these at Toolangi, but it flushed off the path.

**Diamond Dove *Geopelia cuneata* (E):** Several seen in northern QLD.



Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida*: Recorded daily in NE QLD.

Bar-shouldered Dove *Geopelia humeralis*: Noted on 3 days in NE QLD.

Wompoo Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus magnificus*: Recorded on 1 days in NE QLD (e.g. Hypipamee).

Superb Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus superbus superbus*: Recorded on 1 days in NE QLD (e.g. Hypipamee).

Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus regina*: heard only in NE QLD.

Torresian Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula spilorrhhoa*: Recorded on 2 days in NE QLD, where common around Cairns.

#### **BUSTARDS: Otididae**

Australian Bustard *Ardeotis australis*: A few were seen in NE QLD.

#### **CUCKOOS: Cuculidae**

Pheasant Coucal *Centropus phasianinus*: Just a few were seen in NE QLD.

Pacific Koel *Eudynamys orientalis*: heard only and seen in flight near Cumberland Dam in NE QLD.

Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae*: Seen once near Karumba in QLD.

**Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalis* (E)**: Seen once near Karumba in QLD.

Shining Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*: Seen once near Chiltern in VIC.

Little Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus*: Seen once near Atherton in QLD.

Pallid Cuckoo *Cacomantis pallidus*: Scattered records throughout.

Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* (HO): Heard only near Chiltern.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cacomantis flabelliformis*: Scattered records throughout.

#### FROGMOUTHS: Podargidae

**Tawny Frogmouth Podargus strigoides (E):** A stunning individual was seen during the night-drive on Bruny Island (TAS), and a few others elsewhere.

Papuan Frogmouth *Podargus papuensis*: A pair was seen during the day in Cairns (QLD).

#### OWLET-NIGHTJARS: Aegothelidae

Australian Owlet-Nightjar *Aegotheles cristatus*: A couple of day roosting birds were seen near Deneliquin, courtesy of Phil Maher (NSW).

#### RAILS, GALLINULES AND COOTS: Rallidae

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*: We found a few foraging in farmland behind a gas station in Atherton (QLD).

Rufous-tailed Bush-hen *Amaurornis moluccana* (HO): Heard calling in Cairns on our last day (QLD).

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotis*: A few scattered throughout the trip.

Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*: Chiltern (VIC) and Cumberland Dam (QLD).

**Black-tailed Native-hen *Tribonyx ventralis* (E):** A few were seen around a random lagoon on the Birdsville track (SA).

**Tasmanian Native-hen *Tribonyx mortierii* (TE):** Regularly noted on TAS, where it is a common species.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*: Recorded on 4 days, in NE QLD and VIC.

#### CRANES: Gruidae

Sarus Crane *Antigone antigone*: A mixed species group of these and Brolgas were seen near Karumba (QLD).

Brolga *Antigone rubicunda*: Seen throughout and with the former species in swamps near Karumba (QLD).

#### THICK-KNEES: Burhinidae

Bush Thick-knee *Burhinus grallarius*: Recorded on the last day in Cairns (QLD).

#### STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae

Pied Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus*: Recorded on only 3 days (mostly in QLD).

Red-necked Avocet *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*: A pair were seen on the drive north along the Birdsville track (SA), and elsewhere on the trip.

#### OYSTERCATCHERS: Haematopodidae

Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris*: Recorded at several sites on TAS, including Bruny Island and again at Karumba (QLD).

**Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus* (E):** Recorded at several sites on TAS, including Bruny Island.

#### PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae

Banded Lapwing *Vanellus tricolor*: A pair were seen randomly along the Birdsville track (SA).

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*: A.K.A. "Melted Cheeseface", was recorded on all but a few days of the tour.

Sand-Plover *Charadrius* spp: A very distant sand-plover was seen at a dam near Mt Isa, probably Greater (QLD).



Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus*: Birds were seen on wetlands in the outback and then the flats on Cairns Esplanade.

Red-kneed Dotterell *Erythrogonys cinctus*: One bird near Lyndhurst showed rather well (SA).

**Hooded Plover *Thinornis cucullatus* (E)**: A nesting pair was seen on Bruny Island (TAS).

Black-fronted Dotterel *Elseyonis melanops*: Recorded on 6 days throughout.

#### JACANAS: Jacanidae

Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea*: A few were seen at wetlands near Karumba (QLD).

#### SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*: Recorded 2 times around Karumba and the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*: Recorded 2 times around Karumba and the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa melanuroides*: Recorded around Karumba (QLD).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*: A handful were seen on the flats in Cairns (QLD).

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*: A handful were seen on the flats in Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*: A few were seen on The Esplanade and also at wetlands in the Outback (SA + QLD).

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*: Just a couple were found in TAS and again in the Outback (SA).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*: A few on the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Latham's Snipe *Gallinago hardwickii* (GO): Ben connected with one of these in Bladensburg NP in Winton.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*: Recorded 2 times around Karumba and the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Gray-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes*: A handful were seen on the flats in Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*: Recorded 2 times around Karumba and the Cairns Esplanade (QLD).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*: 4 birds were seen with the Ruff near Cattana Wetlands (NE QLD).

#### BUTTONQUAIL: Turnicidae

**Red-chested Buttonquail *Turnix pyrothorax* (E) (LO)**: A bird flushed near Winton was seen well enough for ID by Keith (QLD).

**Little Buttonquail *Turnix velox* (E)**: A bird flushed near Lyndhurst (SA)

#### PRATINCOLES AND COURSERS: Glareolidae

Australian Pratincole *Stiltia Isabella*: Extremely numerous in Western and Wouthern Queensland, in areas of the Outback with Tussock Grassland and on the Gibber Plains.

#### GULLS, TERNS AND SKIMMERS: Laridae

Silver Gull *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*: A common gull in Australia, recorded on at least 8 days.

**Pacific Gull *Larus pacificus* (E)**: This brute was seen once on Bruny Island (TAS).

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*: Seen on TAS.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*: 2 singles were seen in the Outback hinterlands (SA & QLD).

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*: 2 singles were seen in the Outback hinterlands (SA & QLD).

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*: A few were seen in breeding dress in SA, and then more in the Outback (QLD).

#### PENGUINS: Spheniscidae

Little (Fairy) Penguin *Eudyptula minor*: A handful of them were seen coming ashore on the Tasman Peninsula.

#### STORKS: Ciconiidae

Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*: 4 birds were seen during our mangrove boat tour in Karumba (QLD).

#### BOOBIES AND GANNETS: Sulidae

Australasian Gannet *Morus serrator*: Seen at Eaglehawk Neck (TAS).

#### ANHINGAS: Anhingidae

Australasian Darter *Anhinga novaehollandiae*: Seen on 3 different days.

#### CORMORANTS AND SHAGS: Phalacrocoracidae

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*: Recorded on 6 days of the tour (in QLD, SA & TAS).

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*: Recorded on TAS.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*: Seen on at least 5 days of the tour.

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*: 1 sighting, at Mt Isa, QLD.

Black-faced Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscescens*: A few were seen during our day on Bruny Island (TAS).

#### PELICANS: Pelecanidae

Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus*: Seen on at least 6 days of the tour.

#### HERONS, EGRETS AND BITTERNES: Ardeidae

**Pacific (White-necked) Heron *Ardea pacifica* (E)**: A few were seen throughout.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*: Noted on 7 days of the tour.

Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia*: Seen on 1 day in NE QLD.

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*: Recorded on 9 days of the tour, in QLD and TAS.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: A few sightings in TAS & NE QLD only.

Pied Heron *Egretta picata*: A few on the wetlands near Kurumba (QLD).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: Noted on at least 3 days of the tour.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*: Seen in Cairns and Karumba, both NE QLD.

#### IBISES AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*: Four days in NE QLD.

Australian Ibis *Threskiornis moluccus*: A handful throughout the tour.

Straw-necked Ibis *Threskiornis spinicollis*: Seen in Karumba (QLD).

Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia*: Recorded on 4 days.

Yellow-billed Spoonbill *Platalea flavipes*: Just one near Winton on a river.

**OSPREY: Pandionidae**

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus cristatus* (LO): Just 1 was seen in Cairns (NE QLD) near the airport.

**HAWKS, EAGLES AND KITES: Accipitridae**

**Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus axillaris* (E):** Seen on 23 different days, in both QLD and SA.

Black-breasted Kite *Hamirostra melanosternon*: Just 2 were seen, near Lyndhurst (SA).

**Little Eagle *Hieraaetus morphnoides* (E):** One was seen along the Birdsville Track (SA).

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*: Recorded on 6 days, including memorably on a nest near Flinder's Ranges (SA).



Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*: A few were seen in SA and TAS (Bruny Island).

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*: A few encounters through the Outback, including an interesting immature.

**Gray Goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae* (E):** A nesting bird was seen in Cairns (NE QLD).

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*: Just one brief roadside sighting in QLD.

**Collared Sparrowhawk *Accipiter cirrocephalus* (E):** One very cooperative lunchtime individual perched for over 10 minutes in TAS.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*: A common raptor, seen on at least 13 days in both QLD & SA.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*: Recorded on at least 8 days throughout.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*: Seen once at Karumba (QLD).

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*: Recorded on 2 days of the tour, once in Tas and once in Karumba (QLD), on opposite ends of the island continent!



**BARN-OWLS: Tytonidae**

Sooty Owl *Tyto tenebricosa* (HO): One distant individual was heard up on the Atherton Tablelands on our only night there.

Australian Masked-Owl *Tyto novaehollandiae*: One stunning cooperative individual played ball at a roadstop stop near Eagle-hawk Nest, TAS.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*: 3 birds were seen on the Hay Plains (NSW).

**OWLS: Strigidae**

Rufous Owl *Ninox rufa*: A regular roosting adult was seen in a park in Cairns (QLD).

Barking Owl *Ninox connivens*: 1 was seen in Karumba (QLD).

Southern Boobook *Ninox boobook*: A calling bird was seen at a caravan park near Mt Isa (QLD).

Morepork *Ninox novaeseelandiae leucopsis*: One individual was seen well near Eagle-hawk Nest (TAS). This race is of interest and may be an endemic to Tas.

**KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae**

Azure Kingfisher *Ceyx azureus* (LO): Ben saw one briefly before it disappeared at a dam near Chiltern (VIC).

**Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguineae* (E)**: Recorded on all but a couple of days where we were in woodland.

Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii*: A few were seen around Karumba and Cairns (NE QLD).



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**Red-backed Kingfisher *Todiramphus pyrrhopygius* (E):** We successfully chased a bird at Gluepot Reserve (SA).

Forest Kingfisher *Todiramphus macleayi*: On our Little Big-Day around Cairns one was seen. (NE QLD).

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus*: Recorded on 4 days of the tour.

Torresian Kingfisher *Todiramphus sordidus*: Seen at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour on our visit to Cairns Esplanade at the end of the final day (NE QLD).

#### BEE-EATERS: *Meropidae*

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*: Recorded on 13 different days.

#### ROLLERS: *Coraciidae*

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*: Recorded on the last 4 days in NE QLD.

#### FALCONS AND CARACARAS: *Falconidae*

Australian Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*: Recorded on at least 10 different days in QLD and SA.

Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis*: Seen on a couple of days, including a memorable nesting pair in Karumba (QLD) that were exchanging food and courting.

Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*: Recorded on 12 days throughout.

**Gray Falcon *Falco hypoleucos* (E):** Two groups of this incredible rarity were encountered; one along the Birdsville track and a second perched on a radio tower near Winton.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: 1 from a nesting pair at Lake Hypipimee was still present when we passed through on our way back to Cairns.

#### COCKATOOS: *Cacatuidae*

**Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus banksia* (E):** A flock of around a dozen birds was seen at Cumberland Dam (QLD).

**Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus funereus* (E):** A huge flock in TAS and a single group was seen in lowland heathland like habitat in Little Desert National Park (VIC).

**Pink (Major Mitchell's) Cockatoo *Lophochroa leadbeateri* (E):** A prospecting pair was found in mallee at Hattah-Kulkyne (VIC).

**Galah *Eolophus roseicapilla* (E):** A wonderfully common cockatoo, recorded on most days in QLD & SA.

**Long-billed Corella *Cacatua tenuirostris* (E):** A few were seen in TAS and then again in SA.

Little Corella *Cacatua sanguinea*: A wonderfully common cockatoo, recorded on most days in QLD & SA.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*: Very common, but not as abundant as the other cockatoos and encountered on 7 days.

#### OLD WORLD PARROTS: *Psittaculidae*

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus* (E): We had great encounters with the wild version of this popular cagebird over a few days in interior QLD.

**Superb Parrot *Polytelis swainsonii* (E):** Excellent views of a birds south of Deneliquin (NSW).

**Regent Parrot *Polytelis anthopeplus* (E):** Excellent views of a birds in Hattah-Kulkyne NP (SA).

**Australian King-Parrot *Alisterus scapularis* (E):** Seen extremely well at Chiltern (VIC).

Red-winged Parrot *Aprosmictus erythropterus*: A few were seen in near Karumba and Cumberland Dam (NQLD).

**Elegant Parrot *Neophema elegans* (E)** (LO): Brief views only of this tiny parrot in the driving rain at Flinder's Ranges, and seen only by Keith and Ben.

**Turquoise Parrot *Neophema pulchella* (E)**: Seen twice during our morning around Chiltern (VIC).

**Swift Parrot *Lathamus discolor* (E)**: Brilliant views of this increasingly rare endemic in some flowering trees on a beach on Bruny Island (TAS).

**Australian Ringneck *Barnardius zonarius* (E)**: Scattered sightings, including the Cloncurry form in Mount Isa (QLD) and the Mallee form in Hattah-Kulkyne in VIC.

**Green Rosella *Platycercus caledonicus* (TE)**: A few were seen on both full days in TAS (e.g. Bruny Island).

**Crimson Rosella *Platycercus elegans* (E)**: As usual, exceptional views. The "Yellow Rosella" form was also seen in inland SA.



**Eastern Rosella *Platycercus eximius* (E)**: Seen on at least 4 days in SA & TAS (e.g. Hobart).

**Pale-headed Rosella *Platycercus adscitus* (E)**: A few small parties were seen around Cumberland Dam in QLD.

**Greater Bluebonnet *Northiella haematogaster* (E)**: One sighting, 4 going to roost on a ranch near Hay (NSW).

**Red-rumped Parrot *Psephotus haematotus* (E)**: Recorded on 4 days in SA (e.g. Chiltern).





**Mulga Parrot *Psephotus varius* (E)**: Briefly seen at Gluepot (SA).

**Double-eyed Fig-Parrot *Cyclopsitta diophthalma***: Seen late in the game at The Esplanade in Cairns just a few hours before the tour ended.

**Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulates* (E)**: Thousands were seen on at least 8 different days, with these being particularly conspicuous and numerous between Winton and Lark Quarry (QLD). An amazing experience that only wet years brings!

**Musk Lorikeet *Glossopsitta concinna* (E)**: A nesting pair was seen foraging diligently in Hobart (TAS).

**Varied Lorikeet *Psitteuteles versicolor* (E)**: A small group were seen flying around some flowering trees west of Mount Isa (QLD).

**Little Lorikeet *Glossopsitta pusilla* (E)**: Flyovers were seen at Chiltern.

**Purple-crowned Lorikeet *Parvipsitta porphyrocephala* (E) (LO)**: Only seen by Ben and Keith as they jettisoned overhead near Little Desert NP (SA).

**Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus moluccanus moluccanus* (E)**: Recorded on at least 4 days of the tour between Karumba and Cairns (QLD).

**PITTAS: Pittidae**

**Noisy Pitta *Pitta versicolor* (E):** A singleton was very secretive, but vocal, and eventually seen poorly in the canopy on the Goldsborough Road near Cairns (NE QLD).

**LYREBIRDS: Menuridae**

Superb Lyrebird *Menura novaehollandiae*: 1 was seen at Toolangi State Forest, north of Melbourne (VIC).

**BOWERBIRDS: Ptilonorhynchidae**

**Spotted Bowerbird *Chlamydera maculate* (E):** Recorded at a number of Outback sites (e.g. Mica Creek, near Mount Isa QLD).

**Great Bowerbird *Chlamydera nuchalis* (E):** Several individuals seen in the vicinity of Cumberland Dam (QLD).

**AUSTRALASIAN TREECREEPERS: Climacteridae**

**White-throated Treecreeper *Cormobates leucophaea* (E):** Recorded near Chiltern (SA).

**White-browed Treecreeper *Climacteris affinis* (E):** A very cooperative pair was seen in Gluepot (SA).

**Brown Treecreeper *Climacteris picumnus* (E):** A few birds were seen around Chiltern (SA).

**Black-tailed Treecreeper *Climacteris melanurus* (E):** A few were seen west of Mount Isa (QLD).



**FAIRYWRENS: Maluridae**

**Gray Grasswren *Amytornis barbatus* (E) (LO):** We tracked a pair south of Birdville for a long time, but only Ben and Keith got looks at they scuttled across the plains before vanishing into some lignum (QLD).

**Opalton Grasswren *Amytornis rowleyi* (E):** 1 very cooperative individual was seen near Lark Quarry in QLD.

**Striated Grasswren *Amytornis striatus* (E):** Found in the spinifex in the mallee at Hattah-Kulkyne (VIC) after much effort.

**Carpentarian Grasswren *Amytornis dorotheae* (E):** After quite some effort, we found this one west of Mount Isa (QLD).

**Thick-billed Grasswren *Amytornis modestus* (E):** After much effort a pair was seen near Farina (SA).

**Eyrean Grasswren *Amytornis goyderi* (E):** A few were tracked down in dune spinifex near Mungeranie (SA) quite easily.

**Kalkadoon Grasswren *Amytornis ballarae* (E):** A pair showed well in Rocky Spinifex within Mount Isa (QLD).



**Rufous-crowned Emuwren *Stipiturus ruficeps* (E):** A small party was seen in mulga habitat near Lark Quarry (QLD).

**Mallee Emuwren *Stipiturus mallee* (E):** A pair was located in an area of dense spinifex in the mallee at Hattah-Kulkyne (VIC).

**Purple-backed Fairywren *Malurus assimilis* (E):** A few groups were found in the outback scrub near Birdsville (QLD).





**Splendid Fairywren *Malurus splendens* (E)**: A few were seen in the mallee at Gluepot in SA.

**Superb Fairywren *Malurus cyaneus* (E)**: Common in Southern VIC, around Chiltern and beyond.

**White-winged Fairywren *Malurus leucopterus* (E)**: Numerous around Mungeranie and Birdsville in SA and QLD.

**Red-backed Fairywren *Malurus melanocephalus* (E)**: A few were seen in Open Eucalypt Savanna in Cumberland Dam area (QLD).



**HONEYEATERS: Meliphagidae**

**Eastern Spinebill *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris* (E):** Recorded only on Bruny Island (TAS).

**Yellow-spotted Honeyeater *Meliphaga notata* (E):** Seen on our last day only NE QLD (in Cairns).

**Lewin's Honeyeater *Meliphaga lewinii* (E):** Seen on our second last day only NE QLD (in Vine Forest near Georgetown).

**Cryptic Honeyeater *Microptilotis imitatrix* (E) (HO):** A few were heard close to Cairns.

**Yellow Honeyeater *Stomiopera flava* (E):** Several were seen at Cumberland Dam and Georgetown (NE QLD).

**White-fronted Honeyeater *Purnella albifrons* (E):** A few delightful encounters, most memorably at Gluepot (SA).

**Yellow-faced Honeyeater *Caligavis chrysops* (E):** A few around Chiltern (VIC).

**Yellow-tufted Honeyeater *Lichenostomus melanops* (E):** Several were seen in the Chiltern Valley (VIC).

**Noisy Miner *Manorina melanocephala* (E):** Common and conspicuous, noted on at least 6 days.

**Yellow-throated Miner *Manorina flavigula* (E):** An inland miner, seen throughout.

**(?)Black-eared Miner *Manorina flavigula* ? (E):** Apparently extinct. Or at least heavily interbred and hybridized out. We saw birds that phenotypically looked good, but who knows. If you can get a 95% tick, I guess this was it.

**Bridled Honeyeater *Bolemoreus frenatus* (E):** Seen in the highlands of NE QLD, at Hypipamee.



**Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater *Acanthagenys rufogularis* (E)**: Seen on multiple days in inland SA (e.g. Gluepot).

**Little (Brush) Wattlebird *Anthochaera chrysoptera* (E)**: This heathland species was seen in TAS and SA.

**Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera carunculata* (E)**: Seen on just a few occasions, especially around Chiltern (VIC).

**Yellow Wattlebird *Anthochaera paradoxa* (TE)**: This massive honeyeater was seen several times on Bruny Island.

**Varied Honeyeater *Gavicalis versicolor***: Seen on our visit to The Esplanade in Cairns.

**Singing Honeyeater *Gavicalis virescens* (E)**: Seen a few times in the Outback.

**Yellow-plumed Honeyeater *Ptilotula ornate* (E)**: This mallee species was seen with some regularity in Hattah-Kulkyne NP, VIC.

**White-plumed Honeyeater *Ptilotula penicillata* (E)**: Regularly seen on tour, including on 13 days.

**Yellow-tinted Honeyeater *Ptilotula flavescens***: Just the once at Karumba (QLD).

**Yellow-tinted Honeyeater *Ptilotula flavescens* (E)**: Some small groups were seen coming to drink beside Cumberland Dam in QLD.

**Fuscous Honeyeater *Ptilotula fusca* (E)**: Seen with regularity at Chiltern (VIC).

**Gray-headed Honeyeater *Ptilotula keartlandi* (E)**: Just seen on 2 days, in and around Mount Isa in QLD.

**Gray-fronted Honeyeater *Ptilotula plumula* (E)**: Multiple birds were seen at sites around Mount Isa (QLD).





**Rufous-throated Honeyeater *Conopophila rufogularis* (E):** Seen at Cumberland Dam and West of Mount Isa (both QLD).

**Gibber Chat *Ashbyia lovensis* (E):** A few very cooperative individuals were found on the Birdsville track north of Lyndhurst (SA).

**Crimson Chat *Epthianura tricolor* (E):** Glimpses here and there, before finally satisfactory looks at a stongking male near Lark Quarry (QLD)

**Orange Chat *Epthianura aurifrons* (E):** Good looks at plenty of individuals scattered throughout the Outback of SA and QLD.

**White-fronted Chat *Epthianura albifrons* (E):** A small group was seen on Bruny (TAS).

**Black Honeyeater *Sugomel niger* (E):** Eventually one of these blossom nomads was found at Gluepot (SA).

**Dusky Myzomela *Myzomela obscura*:** Recorded on the last day in NE QLD (e.g. In Cairns).

**Red-headed Myzomela *Myzomela erythrocephala*:** At least 6 birds were seen on our mangrove boat cruise from Karumba (QLD).

**Scarlet Myzomela *Myzomela sanguinolenta* (E):** A stonking male was seen at Chiltern (VIC).

**Tawny-crowned Honeyeater *Gliciphila melanops* (E):** Seen within the heathy mallee in Little Desert NP (VIC).

**Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta*:** Regularly recorded on the NE QLD leg.

**Crescent Honeyeater *Phylidonyris pyrrhopterus* (E):** 1 was located in the forest at Bruny Island (TAS).

**New Holland Honeyeater *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae* (E):** Conspicuous in coastal heathlands in SA & TAS.

**White-eared Honeyeater *Nesoptilotis leucotis* (E):** This stunning bird was seen a few times in heathland fringes in SA.

**Yellow-throated Honeyeater *Nesoptilotis flavicollis* (TE):** A few were seen on Bruny Island.

**Blue-faced Honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis*:** Recorded on 5 days of the tour, with the best looks coming at Chiltern.

**Black-headed Honeyeater *Melithreptus affinis* (TE):** Double figures were seen on Bruny Island.

**Brown-headed Honeyeater *Melithreptus brevirostris* (E):** Observed in Glueopot (SA).

**Black-chinned Honeyeater *Melithreptus gularis* (E) (LO):** A small group of the 'Golden-backed' race seen by Keith only near Mt Isa (QLD).

**Strong-billed Honeyeater *Melithreptus validirostris* (TE):** A small party was seen on South Bruny.

**Macleay's Honeyeater *Xanthotis macleayanus* (E):** Seen really well once in NE QLD (in Hastie's Swamp).

**Striped Honeyeater *Plectorhyncha lanceolata* (E):** Just 1 was seen at Deniliquin (NSW).

**Painted Honeyeater *Grantiella picta* (E):** One cooperative bird was seen in the Chiltern area (VIC).

**Little Friarbird *Philemon citreogularis*:** Recorded on 6 days in QLD.

**Silvery-crowned Friarbird *Philemon argenticeps* (E):** Seen in the Mt Isa area (QLD).

**Noisy Friarbird *Philemon corniculatus*:** Our best views came at Chiltern (VIC).





**PARDALOTES: Pardalotidae**

**Spotted Pardalote *Pardalotus punctatus* (E):** Recorded around Chiltern (VIC).

**Forty-spotted Pardalote *Pardalotus quadragintus* (TE):** A pair were seen on North Bruny.

**Striated Pardalote *Pardalotus striatus* (E):** Recorded on 7 days, in QLD, SA and Bruny (TAS).

**Red-browed Pardalote *Pardalotus rubricatus* (E) (HO):** 1 was heard only in Open Eucalypt Savanna, near Georgetown (QLD).

**THORNBILLS AND ALLIES: Acanthizidae**

**Pilotbird *Pycnoptilus floccosus* (E):** This odd member of this family was eventually coaxed into view at Toolangi (VIC).

**White-browed Scrubwren *Sericornis frontalis* (E):** Also seen only at Toolangi (VIC).

**Tasmanian Scrubwren *Sericornis humilis* (TE):** We finally got good views in the rain at Hobart Waterworks Reserve.

**Atherton Scrubwren *Sericornis keri* (E):** Seen at Hypipimee (NE QLD).

**Large-billed Scrubwren *Sericornis magnirostra* (E):** Seen at Hypipimee (NE QLD).

**Scrubtit *Acanthornis magna* (TE):** A few were seen well on Bruny Island.

**Redthroat *Pyrholaemus brunneus* (E) :** Several were seen at Gluepot and close to Wilpena Pound Resort (SA).

**Speckled Warbler *Pyrholaemus sagittatus* (E):** People got on to a cooperative individual at Chiltern (VIC).



**Rufous Fieldwren *Calamanthus campestris* (E):** After a little effort, a rather cooperative bird perched up and sang for some time allowing absorbing looks of this inveterate skulker.

**Shy Heathwren *Hylacola cauta* (E):** Seen within the mallee at Little Desert NP (VIC).

**Buff-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza reguloides* (E):** At least 3 birds were seen in Chiltern (VIC).

**Mountain Thornbill *Acanthiza katherina* (E):** 1 was seen on Mt. Hypipimee (NE QLD).

**Brown Thornbill *Acanthiza pusilla* (E):** Recorded in TAS.

**Tasmanian Thornbill *Acanthiza ewingii* (TE):** 2-3 birds were seen on Bruny Island.

**Inland Thornbill *Acanthiza apicalis* (E):** A couple were found in Gluepot (SA).

**Yellow-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa* (E):** Recorded in Flinder's Ranges and elsewhere (SA).

**Chestnut-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza uropygialis* (E):** Seen multiple times in Gluepot (SA).

**Yellow Thornbill *Acanthiza nana* (E):** Seen a few times in Chiltern (VIC).

**Striated Thornbill *Acanthiza lineata* (E):** Seen a few times in Chiltern (VIC).

**Weebill *Smicrornis brevirostris* (E):** Australia's smallest bird was observed near Gluepot (SA).

**White-throated Gerygone *Gerygone olivacea*:** A few were seen in Karumba (NE QLD).

**Brown Gerygone *Gerygone mouki* (E):** one sightings, at Yungaburra (QLD).

**Western Gerygone *Gerygone fusca* (E):** One of Karen's favourites for its skills as a songster, seen regularly at Deniliquin (NSW).

**Mangrove Gerygone *Gerygone levigaster* (E):** A few pairs were found Karumba (NQLD).

**Southern Whiteface *Aphelocephala leucopsis*:** 2 were seen in Callitris Woodland close to little Desert NP (SA).

**Banded Whiteface *Aphelocephala nigricincta* (E):** A few were seen in scrub close to Mungeranie (SA).

#### **PSEUDO-BABBLERS: Pomatostomidae**

**Gray-crowned Babbler *Pomatostomus temporalis*:** Seen a few times, most memorably right in Mt Isa, where a family really put on a show for us (QLD) and at Chiltern (VIC).

**White-browed Babbler *Pomatostomus superciliosus* (E):** Several encounters on 4 days throughout the southern and central Outback.

**Hall's Babbler *Pomatostomus halli* (E):** A couple of parties were found within mulga near Winton and Lark Quarry (QLD).

**Chestnut-crowned Babbler *Pomatostomus ruficeps* (E):** After some effort we located a party in Gluepot (SA).

#### **QUAIL-THRUSHES AND JEWEL-BABBLERS: Cinclosomatidae**

**Spotted Quail-thrush *Cinclosoma punctatum* (E):** A wonderful pair was found in the Chiltern Valley (VIC).

**Chestnut Quail-thrush *Cinclosoma castanotum* (E):** This mallee species was noted at Hattah-Kulkyne. Some superb views and photos were had at the site.

**Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush *Cinclosoma castaneothorax* (E):** A very cooperative pair were had close to Winton, where they put on a real show for us! Serious lookers!

**Cinnamon Quail-thrush *Cinclosoma cinnamomeum* (E):** A couple were seen on a ridge of Rocky Spinifex on the Strzelecki Track (SA).

**CUCKOOSHRIKES: Campephagidae**

**Ground Cuckooshrike *Coracina maxima* (E):** Encountered briefly near Cumberland Dam (QLD).

**Barred (Yellow-eyed) Cuckooshrike *Coracina lineata*:** Ben found a nesting bird in the Goldsborough Valley (NE QLD) on our final day.

**Black-faced Cuckooshrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*:** Commonly encountered, on at least 15 days.

**White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis*:** Recorded on 4 different days.

**White-winged Triller *Lalage tricolor*:** Seen commonly in the drier parts of NQLD.

**Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*:** One seen on the final day in NE QLD (e.g. in Cairns).

**SITELLAS: Neosittidae**

**Varied Sittella *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*:** A few were seen in Gluepot (SA).



**WHIPBIRDS AND WEDGEBILLS: Psophodidae**

**Eastern Whipbird** *Psophodes olivaceous* (E) (H): Heard on the Atherton Tablelands.

**Chirruping Wedgebill** *Psophodes cristatus* (E): Several were seen on the Birdsville and Strzelecki Tracks (QLD & SA).

**AUSTRALO-PAPUAN BELLBIRDS: Oreoicidae**

**Crested Bellbird** *Oreoica gutturalis*: Easily seen in the malee at Hattah-Kulkyne NP (SA).



**SHRIKE-TITS: Falcunculidae**

**Eastern Shrike-tit** *Falcunculus frontatus*: Some great looks in the temperate woodland of the Chiltern Valley (VIC).

**WHISTLERS AND ALLIES: Pachycephalidae**

**Rufous Shrikethrush** *Colluricincla rufogaster*: Recorded on the final day near Cairns (QLD).

**Gray Shrikethrush** *Colluricincla harmonica*: Noted on 9 days of the tour in QLD & SA.

**Bower's Shrikethrush** *Colluricincla boweri* (E): A couple were seen at Mt. Hypipamee (NE QLD).



**Olive Whistler *Pachycephala olivacea* (E):** 1 was seen on Bruny Island in TAS.

**Red-lored Whistler *Pachycephala rufogularis* (E):** After a massive effort we located one of these rare birds at Gluepot (SA)

**Gilbert's Whistler *Pachycephala inornate* (E):** A regular distraction at Gluepot where the similar sounding Red-lored is much rarer. Must have had 15 individuals before one turned into the rarer quarry.

**Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis* (E):** Noted on 4 days of the tour.

**Gray Whistler *Pachycephala simplex*:** 1 was seen at Mt Hypipimee (NE QLD), our only tour sighting.

**Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*:** Recorded on at least 10 days of the tour.

**White-breasted Whistler *Pachycephala lanioides* (E):** A couple of males were seen on the mangrove boat cruise out of Karumba (QLD).

#### **OLD WORLD ORIOLES: Oriolidae**

**Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus*:** Seen 2-3 times, including at Chiltern (VICO & Karumba (QLD).

**Australasian Figbird *Sphecotheres vieilloti* (E):** Seen around Karumba (QLD).

#### **BOATBILLS: Machaerirhynchidae**

**Yellow-breasted Boatbill *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*:** 1 was seen along the Goldsborough Road (QLD).

#### **WOODSWALLOW, BELLMAGPIES & ALLIES: Artamidae**

**White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*:** Recorded on 4 days of the tour (e.g. in Karumba).

**Masked Woodswallow *Artamus personatus* (E):** Numerous in the Queensland Outback between Mount Isa and Winton.

**White-browed Woodswallow *Artamus superciliosus* (E):** A handful were seen in the Queensland Outback between Mount Isa and Winton.

**Black-faced Woodswallow *Artamus cinereus*:** Plentiful, seen in the Queensland Outback between Mount Isa and Winton.

**Dusky Woodswallow *Artamus cyanopterus* (E):** Recorded at Chiltern (VIC) & Bruny (TAS).

**Little Woodswallow *Artamus minor* (E):** Seen on just a few days of the trip in areas of Rocky Spinifex in and around Mount Isa (QLD).

**Gray Butcherbird *Cracticus torquatus* (E):** Just a few were seen, including in TAS.

**Pied Butcherbird *Cracticus nigrogularis* (E):** Recorded on 7 days of the tour in QLD & SA.

**Black Butcherbird *Cracticus quoyi*:** Just the one on the final day on the Goldsborough Road.

**Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen* (E):** Regular throughout the tour.

**Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina* (E):** A few at Chiltern and again in Atherton (QLD).

**Black Currawong *Strepera fuliginosa* (TE):** Seen first on Cradle Mountain, then Bruny in Hobart (TAS).

**Gray Currawong *Strepera versicolor* (E):** We got some great looks in TAS.



**FANTAILS: Rhipiduridae**

Willie-wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*: One of Australia's most conspicuous birds, seen on all but a few days.

Gray Fantail *Rhipidura albiscapa*: Recorded on 10 days of the tour in QLD, SA & TAS.

Mangrove Fantail *Rhipidura phasiana*: A singleton was found during our mangrove boat cruise from Karumba (QLD).

**DRONGOS: Dicuridae**

Spangled Drongo *Dicurus bracteatus*: Seen on the second to last day near Hastie's Swamp.

**BIRDS-OF-PARADISE: Paradisaeidae**

**Victoria's Riflebird *Ptiloris victoriae* (E)**: A velvety black male was seen at Mount Hypipamee on the Atherton Tablelands of NE QLD.

**MONARCH FLYCATCHERS: Monarchidae**

Black-faced Monarch *Monarcha melanopsis*: Seen near Hastie's Swamp (QLD).

Spectacled Monarch *Symphysistura trivirgatus*: Seen once in NE QLD (e.g. just outside of Cairns).

Magpie-lark *Grallina cyanoleuca*: Seen almost daily except in TAS, where is absent.

Broad-billed Flycatcher *Myiagra ruficollis*: A sighting in Karumba (QLD), on the boat trip.

**Restless Flycatcher *Myiagra inquieta* (E)**: A pair was found in Chiltern VIC.

Paperbark Flycatcher *Myiagra nana*: Several seen in NE QLD from Mt Isa through to Georgetown.

**WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH AND APOSTLEBIRD: Corcoracidae**

White-winged Chough *Corcorax melanorhamphos*: Seen on 6 days in Victoria, around Little Desert and Chiltern.

Apostlebird *Struthidea cinerea*: Particularly abundant and conspicuous around Cumberland Dam and Mount Isa (both QLD).

**AUSTRALASIAN ROBINS: Petroicidae**

Jacky-winter *Microeca fascians*: A couple were seen in Chiltern (VIC) and elsewhere.

Lemon-bellied flycatcher *Microeca flavigaster* (LO): Ben connected with one near Mt Isa.

**Scarlet Robin *Petroica boodang* (E)**: 3 were seen during our day on Bruny Island (TAS).

**Red-capped Robin *Petroica goodenovii* (E)**: A gorgeous male showed well at Hattah-Kulkyne (SA).

**Flame Robin *Petroica phoenicea* (E)**: A spectacular male brightened up the day on TAS, near Cradle Mountain.

**Rose Robin *Petroica rosea* (E)**: Some great looks at this handsome species in Wet Sclerophyll Forest at Toolangi (VIC).

**Pink Robin *Petroica rodinogaster* (E)**: A superb showy male was found late in the day on Bruny Island (TAS); also Toolangi (VIC).

**Hooded Robin *Melanodryas cucullata* (E)**: A few were seen West of Mount Isa (QLD) and then again in Hattah-Kulkyne NP (VIC).

**Dusky Robin *Melanodryas vittata* (TE)**: A couple were seen on Bruny Island.

**Pale-yellow Robin *Tregellasia capito* (E)**: Recorded near Cairns (NE QLD).

**Eastern Yellow Robin *Eopsaltria australis* (E)**: Recorded at Little Desert NP (SA) and again at Hypipimee (QLD).

**Gray-headed Robin *Heteromyias cinereifrons* (E)**: Seen at Mt. Hypipamee.

**Southern Scrub-Robin *Drymodes brunneopygia* (E)**: A malleee species recorded in Victoria at Hattah-Kulkyne and Little Desert.





**LARKS: Alaudidae**

Australasian Bushlark *Mirafra javanica*: Only observed on 1 day, on the plains near Windorah (QLD).

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*: An introduced species, we saw this displaying on TAS.

**CISTICOLAS AND ALLIES: Cisticolidae**

Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*: 2 were seen near Kuramba (QLD) .

**REED-WARBLERS AND ALLIES: Acrocephalidae**

Australian Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus australis*: Seen in Chiltern (VIC) and elsewhere.

**GRASSBIRDS AND ALLIES: Locustellidae**

**Spinifexbird *Poodytes carteri* (E)**: Seen on two consecutive days, both within areas of Rocky Spinifex grasses near Mount Isa and Lark Quarry (both QLD).

Tawny Grassbird *Cincloramphus timoriensis alisteri*: Several displaying birds were seen in farmland near Atherton (QLD).

**Brown Songlark *Megalurus cruralis* (E)**: 4 or so birds were seen on the plains south of Hay (NSW).

**Rufous Songlark *Megalurus mathewsi* (E)**: Seen regularly, most memorably near Lyndhurst (SA).

**SWALLOWS: Hirundinidae**

**Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena* (E)**: An ever present, seen on nearly every day of the tour.

Fairy Martin *Petrochelidon ariel*: Scattered throughout the trip.

Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans*: Seen on 3 different days.

**White-backed Swallow *Cheramoeca leucosterna* (E)**: Several pairs of this delightful swallow were found, most memorably in Deniliquin with Phil, where close flybys were had.



#### WHITE-EYES, YUHINAS, AND ALLIES: Zosteropidae

**Australian Yellow White-eye *Zosterops luteus* (E)**: About 10 birds were observed during our mangrove boat cruise from Karumba (QLD).

Silver-eye *Zosterops lateralis*: Noted on several days, particularly in TAS.

#### STARLINGS: Sturnidae

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*: This Wet Tropics species was seen on our final day in NE QLD (e.g. Cairns).  
European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*: Recorded almost daily from Southern Queensland to the end of the tour in Tasmania.

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: Recorded on at least 5 days of the tour in QLD & SA.

#### THRUSHES AND ALLIES: Turdidae

**Bassian Thrush *Zoothera lunulata* (E) (HO)**: A singing bird remained unseen at Toolangi (VIC).

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula*: This introduced species was seen on a number of occasions in SA and TAS.

#### FLOWERPECKERS: Dicaeidae

Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*: Recorded on 5 days of the tour, mostly in NE QLD, but also SA.

#### SUNBIRDS AND SPIDERHUNTERS: Nectariniidae

Olive-backed (Yellow-bellied) Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis*: Only on the final day in NE QLD (e.g. in Cairns).

#### WAXBILLS AND ALLIES: Estrilidae

**Beautiful Firetail *Stagonopleura bella* (E)**: Finally tracked down on Bruny Island (TAS).

**Diamond Firetail *Stagonopleura guttata* (E)**: Having though we had dipped this we ended up with steller views at Little Desert NP (SA).

**Red-browed Firetail *Neochmia temporalis* (E)**: Excellent views of a flock on the lawn near Chiltern (VIC)

**Painted Firetail *Emblema pictum* (E)**: Several groups were seen around Mount Isa and Lark Quarry (QLD).

Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata*: Regular in the Outback of SA and QLD.

**Masked Finch *Poephila personata* (E)**: A few were seen at Cumberland Dam and in nearby Georgetown (QLD).

**Long-tailed Finch *Poephila acuticauda* (E)**: A pair near Mt Isa did not hang around.

**Black-throated Finch *Poephila cincta* (E)**: A small group were seen at Cumberland Dam (QLD).

**Double-barred Finch *Taeniopygia bichenovii* (E)**: Singles were seen on 3 different days (e.g. in Mareeba, Binya).

Scaly-breasted Munia (Nutmeg Mannikin) *Lonchura punctulate*: A couple were seen in a park in Cairns (NE QLD).

Chestnut-breasted Munia *Lonchura castaneothorax*: Some large, mobile flocks were seen near Atherton (QLD).

#### OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: Regularly recorded throughout.

#### WAGTAILS AND PIPITS: Motacillidae

Australasian Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*: Recorded on 12 days of the tour (e.g. Newell Beach, Hay Plains).

## FINCHES, EUPHONIAS AND ALLIES: Fringillidae

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*: A couple were seen on Bruny Island by some (TAS).

European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*: A small group was seen on Tas.

## MAMMALS

**Duck-billed Platypus *Ornithorhynchus anatinus* (E)**: A small group of these weird and wonderful critters was enjoyed at close quarters in northern TAS. We saw a few more – but at considerable distance.

**Spot-tailed Quoll *Dasyurus maculatus* (LO) (E)**: One of these crazy brutish predators was seen at Cradle Mountain, but unfortunately not the whole group got to see it.

**Eastern Quoll *Dasyurus vivierinus* (E)**: One was seen on Bruny Island on a night-drive!

**Fat-tailed Dunnart *Smithopsis crassicaudata* (E)**: The consolation prize for having our Plain Wanderer night flooded out was finding one of these cute mini-predators trapped on an island in the swampy field.

**Northern Brown Bandicoot *Isodon macrourus* (E)**: A few of these were found scuffling around Curtain Fig on a night walk.

**Southern Brown Bandicoot *Isodon obsoletus* (E)**: One in the parking lot before the tour even began on TAS and another on Bruny Island, TAS.

**Common Wombat *Vombatus ursinus* (E)**: A few individuals were found at night on the road near Eagle-hawk Neck, TAS.

**Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula* (E)**: Many, many many in TAS!

**Long-nosed Potoroo *Potorus tridactylus* (E)**: One quizzical individual on our night-drive on Bruny (TAS).

**Agile Wallaby *Macropus agilis* (E)**: Noted at a few sites in NE QLD.

**Eastern Grey Kangaroo *Macropus giganteus* (E)**: Some individuals entertained us near Chiltern (VIC).

**Western Grey Kangaroo *Macropus fuliginosus* (E)**: A few were seen on the plains south of Hay (NSW), and throughout the southern Outback.

**Red Kangaroo *Macropus rufus* (E)**: A number of these giant “roos” were seen on the plains south of Hay (NSW), and throughout the Outback.

**Euro (Common Walaroo) *Macropus robustus* (E)**: Our best views were around the Flinder's Ranges, where several individuals were seen at Stokes Lookout.

**Bennett's Wallaby *Macropus rufogriseus rufogriseus* (E)**: Several were seen on Bruny Island (TAS), including a leucistic 'Painted Wallaby' individual.

**Black (Swamp) Wallaby *Wallabia bicolor* (E)**: 1 was seen in Chiltern (VIC).

**Purple-necked Rock Wallaby *Petrogale purpuricollis* (E)**: Several of this local macropod were seen in Mt Isa (QLD).

**Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby *Petrogale xanthopus* (E)**: Twitched at a campsite near the Flinders Ranges (SA).

**Rufous-bellied (Tasmanian) Pademelon *Thylogale billardierii* (E)**: A few were seen on TAS.

**Red-necked Pademelon *Thylogale thetis* (E)**: A few were seen around Atherton (QLD).

**Spectacled Flying-fox *Pteropus conspicillatus* (E)**: Seen cruising over the Atherton (NE QLD).

**Giant White-tailed Rat *Uromys caudimaculatus* (E)**: A few seen near Curtain Fig (QLD).

European Hare *Lepus europaeus*: A handful were seen on the plains south of Hay (NSW).

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*: A few were noted in SA.



