



*Bird or dinosaur? This awe-inspiring Southern Cassowary won bird of the tour! All photos by Joshua Bergmark.*

# **EASTERN AUSTRALIA**

**29 OCTOBER – 18 NOVEMBER 2018**

**LEADER: JOSHUA BERGMARK**

Australia is home to an extraordinary avifauna, with an eclectic mix of gaudy, unique and often bizarre families and species, many of which are exceedingly tame. This tour once again highlighted many of the best birds the land Down Under has to offer to our keen contingent, and our comprehensive itinerary collected all the key eastern specialties and endemics, plus a whole swag of bonus birds which are difficult to see Australia-wide! Starting around Sydney we focused on the endemic Rockwarbler, but managed some great encounters with Chestnut-rumped Heathwren alongside some of the amazing species we were to see regularly in the following weeks; raucous Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Rainbow Lorikeets; vibrant Variegated Fairywrens and Eastern Yellow Robins; nectivorous Little Wattlebirds and Eastern Spinebills; funky Crested Pigeons and Eastern Whipbirds; beautifully-voiced Black-faced Monarchs and Laughing Kookaburras... The list goes on! The resident Powerful Owls with their fledgling were tracked down without a worry in one of the busiest city parks and to the south we visited the upland heaths which hold Eastern Bristlebird, Eastern Ground Parrots, diminutive Southern Emuwrens, and some very friendly Pilotbirds. Around Wollongong we twitched a critically endangered Regent Honeyeater, and a trio of rare Glossy Black Cockatoos were located feeding quietly near Katoomba. Waterfowl like Freckled Duck, Musk Duck, Blue-billed Duck and Pink-eared Duck were collected, along with a very rare Black-backed Bittern which is rarely seen even by resident Australian birders! Descending into the dry woodlands we spent a full day exploring the magnificent Capertee Valley where highlights included beautiful Painted Honeyeaters and Turquoise Parrots; loud Little Lorikeets and Black-chinned Honeyeaters; wary Spotted Quailthrush and Brown Quail; scarce Speckled Warblers and Southern Whitefaces; charismatic Brown Treecreepers, White-browed Babblers and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters; dapper Diamond Firetails Double-barred Finches, Zebra Finches and a lone Plum-headed Finch; Pallid Cuckoos and White-backed Swallows; and both Barking Owl and Southern Boobook during our first spotlighting session (the first of many!).



*Luminous Regent Bowerbirds entertained us at O'Reilly's in the world-famous Lamington National Park!*

Back on the coast around Newcastle we took a boat offshore where we found some Providence Petrels mixed with hundreds of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters and Short-tailed Shearwaters in our slick. A few

Australasian Gannets, Fluttering Shearwaters and Pomarine Jaegers, plus a Wilson's Storm Petrel or two made it an enjoyable day out. Coastal swamps and heaths nearby allowed us to find the skulking Lewin's Rail, some displaying Brush Bronzewing, Grey Goshawk, Swamp Harrier, Australian Hobby, Red-necked Avocet, and our only White-fronted Chats. The rare relict Rufous Scrubbird was our top priority in the Antarctic beech forest, and we successfully found two birds which showed to the whole group as they moved like mice through the thick ferny undergrowth. Other highlight species included Crescent Honeyeater, Satin Flycatcher, Flame Robin, Bassian Thrush, and a fantastic displaying male Superb Lyrebird doing his full repertoire. Driving past Forest Ravens and Yellow-billed Spoonbills we motored up to O'Reilly's in Lamington National Park. In the fantastic Gondwanan rainforest we searched out the endemic Albert's Lyrebird, a displaying male Paradise Riflebird, luminous Regent Bowerbirds and Satin Bowerbirds, meowing Green Catbirds, Spectacled Monarchs, colourful Noisy Pittas and Wompoo Fruit Doves, Australian Logrunners, and Russet-tailed Thrush. Some searching around at night also connected us with a Greater Sooty Owl and the large southern subspecies of Marbled Frogmouth. The nearby city of Brisbane held range-restricted Mangrove Honeyeaters and strange Beach Stone-curlews near Toorbul, while King Quail, Painted Buttonquail and Red-backed Buttonquail were found at Lake Samsonvale. Spotlighting produced us two stupendous Australian Masked Owls and an Eastern Grass Owl, but Black-breasted Buttonquail was sadly a leader only this year. Some long drives en. Route to Cairns were broken up by the endangered subspecies of Yellow Chat, the distinct Australian form of Zitting Cisticola, stupendous Brolgas, Red-tailed Black Cockatoos, Cotton Pygmy Goose in Mackay, White-eared Monarch, Topknot Pigeons, and the incredibly range restricted Eungella Honeyeater in the nearby ranges.



*It is rare to see Superb Lyrebirds displaying in the open like this!*

We wrapped up the tour around Cairns where we found all fourteen wet tropic endemics; Victoria's Riflebird; Golden Bowerbird; Tooth-billed Bowerbird; Spotted Catbird; Lesser Sooty Owl; Pied Monarch; Bridled Honeyeater; Macleay's Honeyeater; Mountain Thornbill; Atherton Scrubwren; Chowchilla; Fernwren; Grey-headed Robin and Bower's Shrikethrush. This is arguably the best region in Australia for birdwatching, and of course we found a whole set of non-endemic birds here which included the prehistoric Southern Cassowary, visiting Oriental Plovers, a scarce Red-necked Crake, fantastic Green Pygmy Geese and Sarus Cranes, Bush Stone-curlew, a cute Australian Owlet-nightjar, vibrant Double-eyed Fig Parrots, strange

Squatter Pigeons, beautiful Lovely Fairywrens, skulky Mangrove Robins and Torresian Kingfishers, rare Bar-breasted Honeyeaters and Banded Honeyeaters, Varied Honeyeaters, colourful Yellow-breasted Boatbills, White-browed Robin, Northern Fantail, Lemon-bellied Flyrobin, Grey-crowned Babbler, Black-faced Woodswallows and restricted Black-throated Finch. We focused on a few endemic subspecies here too and made careful note of the local Yellow-tinted Honeyeater, Grey Fantail, White-throated Treecreeper, Brown Treecreeper and Crimson (Tropical) Rosella.

All in all, the tour was a huge success with 396 species of bird recorded. Even with our quick daily pace, we still had time to indulge in some mammal watching, and notched up an impressive list which included *The Big Five*; Platypus; Short-beaked Echidna; Common Wombat; Eastern Grey Kangaroo and Koala. Many nocturnal possums included Great Glider, Sugar Glider, Common Brushtail Possum, Short-eared Brushtail Possum, Common Ringtail Possum, Green Ringtail Possum, Lemuroid Ringtail Possum, while Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo, Mareeba Rock Wallaby and Musky Rat Kangaroo were all found during the day around Cairns. Grey-headed Flying Fox, Spectacled Flying Fox, Northern Brown Bandicoots, Long-nosed Bandicoots, Fawn-footed Melomys, Bush Rats, Red-legged Pademelons, Red-necked Pademelons, Swamp Wallabies, Agile Wallabies and Red-necked Pademelons also featured in our list of 33 species.



*Our first Wet Tropics endemic was this fabulous male Victoria's Riflebird on his display post!*

Our very New World contingent assembled in Sydney for the start of the tour, and most were so eager to start birdwatching that they had already started two days previously! Nonetheless, everyone appreciated both their first and second looks at the wide variety of species which can be found in the forests south of Sydney. Along a lovely winding river, we became acquainted with many of the east coast wet forest species which would become regulars over the coming weeks. Delightful Eastern Yellow Robins and Australian Golden Whistlers mixed with Eastern Spinebill and Lewin's Honeyeaters. Raucous Laughing Kookaburras sounded off while Channel-billed Cuckoos and Pacific Koels joined in with their loud advertising chants. Some Fan-tailed Cuckoos and Oriental Dollarbirds were spied, as was an fluorescent Azure Kingfisher.

Some Rainbow Lorikeets were prospecting nesting hollows and two Green Catbirds showed in front of us hopping around giving their strange strangled cat meowing. Our first Satin Bowerbird at our first bower performed brilliantly as we observed his bright purple eye, an Olive-backed Oriole came in overhead. White-browed Scrubwren, Brown Gerygone and Brown Thornbill kept us up to date with the little brown jobs, and Pied Currawongs called all around the valley. Eastern Whipbirds, Grey Butcherbirds, Black-faced Monarchs, Grey Fantails and Rufous Fantails were added to our rapidly growing list, and Grey Shrikethrush hopped around as Welcome Swallows flew by. The nearby grass flats next to the river acted as a feeding area for a noisy flock of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos (with one Little Corella mixed in), Maned Ducks and Pacific Black Ducks, and two somewhat timid Wonga Pigeons kept their distance, but remained in good view.



*Delightful Eastern Yellow Robins accompanied us on most days of the tour!*

Heading to the cliff faces which overlook the Pacific Ocean we had a few special targets in mind which specialise in the low shrubby heath which lines the coast. On the way some stunningly vibrant Variegated Fairywren hopped around by the track with Eastern Whipbird, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo and Red-browed Finch as a supporting cast. We spied a Caspian Tern passing by offshore as we began searching, but it wasn't long before the resident Rockwarblers appeared by the track, and were almost close enough to touch a few times! This species is entirely endemic to the sandstone formations in the Sydney region, but we also wanted to see the more widespread but skulky Chestnut-rumped Heathwren which is usually a very difficult bird to observe. Luckily this site is one of the best for it, and over the morning at least three individuals showed down to a few metres! Elegant Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, New Holland Honeyeaters and Little Wattlebirds were also found before we drove into central Sydney in search of Powerful Owl.

At Centennial Park we had lunch before setting out to locate the roosting birds. It did not take long before we found the resident pair and their recently fledged chick in one of their favourite dense fig trees. This imposing large owl feasts primarily on possums, which do quite well for themselves in suburban Sydney. The various ponds also allowed us to get up close and personal with a variety of Australian waterfowl including Black Swans, Hardheads, Australasian Grebes, Little Pied Cormorants, Pied Cormorants, Little Black Cormorants, Great Cormorants and Australasian Darter. Dusky Moorhens, Australasian Swampheens and Eurasian Coots fed in the duckweed, and our first White-bellied Sea Eagle drifted overhead. Ubiquitous Masked Lapwings

and Crested Pigeons strutted around on the grassy fields while a few Silver Gulls loafed around, and an Eastern Barn Owl was found at its usual roost high in a palm tree. Noisy Miners, Magpie-larks and Australian Magpies searched for food scraps, but Australian Ravens often bullied them out of the way!



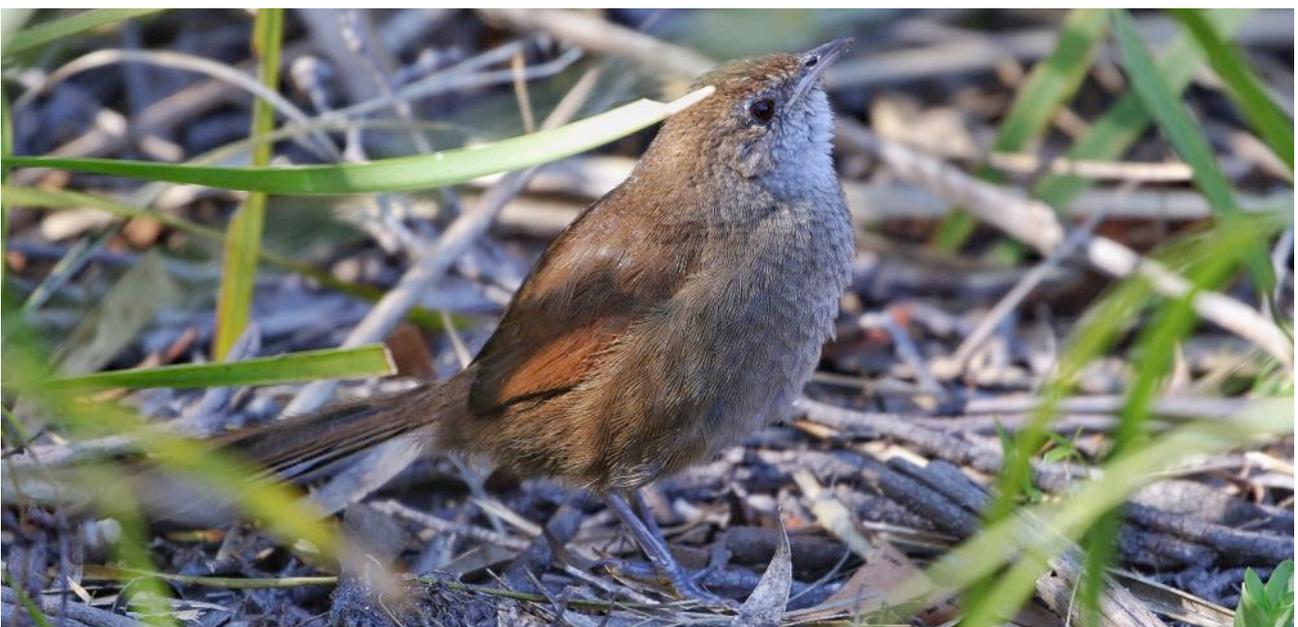
*Powerful Owls do quite well for themselves in Sydney, as their favorite possums breed well in suburbia!*



*The strange Rockwarbler is essentially endemic to two specific sandstone lithologies in the Sydney region!*

Our afternoon session started well with our only prolonged views of Collared Sparrowhawk for the trip, and a highly responsive Red-browed Treecreeper. Neither of these species can ever be guaranteed, so were good gets! Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Yellow-throated Scrubwrens came in to check us out while Striated Thornbills and our first Crested Shrike-tit foraged above us. Some had brief views of a Scarlet Myzomela, and our first bald-headed Noisy Friarbirds made an appearance building a nest above the carpark.

An early rise proved valuable as one of the first birds we saw after arriving at Barren Grounds Nature Reserve up on the Budderoo Plateau at dawn was the rare Eastern Ground Parrot, which flew up off the track in front of us and was seen by... almost... everyone. Tomorrow would come soon enough! We spent some time walking the trails through the rolling heathland, having lovely looks at tiny Southern Emuwrens with their strange feathery tails, and a noisy Shining Bronze Cuckoo, but the best moment was when a pair of endangered Eastern Bristlebirds started calling and chasing each other around before coming out into the open on the side of the track! We also wanted to try for Pilotbird here, which is notoriously difficult to see on tour, but soon after hearing two birds calling we saw some movement in the bracken, and a strategically placed a tape tempted both birds to hop straight onto the exact log I had told the group to watch! Fantastic! We spotted some roadside Long-billed Corellas and Straw-necked Ibis on the drive out.



*Endangered Eastern Bristlebirds have a highly restricted range, but are usually seen well at Barren Grounds!*

Back up the coast at Wollongong Botanic Gardens we were hoping that a recently reported Regent Honeyeater was still hanging around. This critically endangered nomad had only been recorded a dozen times during 2018, and this was the only bird which was currently accessible. Our luck held, and after staking out the designated tree for a while watching Red Wattlebirds and Little Wattlebirds chase each other around, the beautiful Regent appeared for a quick feed before flying to the adjacent tree for an extended preening session which allowed us to even have scopes studies! Some local twitchers showed us a roosting Tawny Frogmouth sitting surprisingly low down in a tree, and a young Pacific Baza glided overhead while being harassed by multiple Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. The afternoon was a little slower, but some birding near Kiama resulted in Brown Songlark and some heard only Stubble Quail, plus Brown Cuckoo-Dove and Brush Cuckoo in some nearby forest. A cute Short-beaked Echidna by the side of the road was admired, and Dusky Woodswallows hawked above us with some returning White-throated Needletails. After much searching, a single Beautiful Firetail was whistled in beside the trail where it proceeded to gorge itself on seeds, and a Swamp Harrier flew over to end our very successful day.



*Only a handful of Regent Honeyeaters were seen in 2018, so the timely appearance of this individual on our route was welcome!*

We still had a score to settle with Eastern Ground Parrot, so we returned to the plateau the following morning. After some waiting around the ringing whistles of our quarry sounded off not far from the track, and our well-formed line quickly flushed up two different parrots which gave excellent views as they flew low over the heath, and both were even refound for seconds and thirds! Some creaky notes alerted us to a pair of Gang-gang Cockatoos which flew straight towards us and perched on some dead snags, while some were quick enough to see a Scarlet Myzomela fairly low down in a eucalypt. After some flyover White-browed Woodswallows and a single Masked Woodswallow, we jumped in the cars once again - from here on, we were northward bound for the rest of the tour. The dry woodland around Mittagong's Boxvale Track was explored, and some welcome birds included very bold pairs of excited Leaden Flycatcher and the nuthatch-like Varied Sittella, plus excellent looks at both Striated Pardalote and Spotted Pardalote. We noted a number of Little Ravens giving their distinctive call, and had good looks at the field marks on one individual. Adding to our growing honeyeater list here, Brown-headed Honeyeater and White-eared Honeyeater were feeding in the same tree, but as the day began to warm we continued onwards. The cool(ish) high(ish)lands

of the Blue Mountains harbour good numbers of the scarce Glossy Black Cockatoo, but finding this unobtrusive species in the middle of the day is of course challenging. Nevertheless, we wanted to find this species as early as possible to free up time later in the tour, so we spent some time scouring the scrubby heaths. Eventually a quiet rasping heard from the vehicle alerted us to one begging cockatoo perched just off the road with his parents in one of their favourite allocasurina trees, and we enjoyed studying these beautiful birds from only a few metres away! We finished up lunch, admired our view of the famous Three Sisters, and successfully found a male Scarlet Robin which the leader had prepared earlier.



*Stumbling across a feeding trio of Glossy Black Cockatoos in the Blue Mountains was very lucky in the midday heat!*

Our motel near Lithgow revealed White-winged Triller, Pallid Cuckoo, Yellow-rumped Thornbill and European Goldfinch as we were sorting ourselves out in the mid-afternoon. A subsequent bout of evening birding around Lake Wallace was highly productive, and everyone had a great look at a displaying male Musk Duck whistling loudly and splashing water while arching his tail and lifting his bizarre fleshy lobe towards the sky. Half a dozen rare Freckled Ducks also graced us with their presence, while the perpetually breeding-plumaged Australian subspecies of Great-crested Grebe also loafed around on the water. Pink-eared Duck, Grey Teal, Australasian Swamphen, an electric male Superb Fairywren, Eastern Rosellas and Galahs were but a supporting cast to the extremely rare Black-backed Bittern which suddenly called from a patch of reeds as we were searching for Little Grassbird, and then conveniently decided to fly up and over the vegetation in full view of the whole group just as the leader was taking his shoes off in preparation for a wet flush!



*Another bird which we saw many times was the incomparable Superb Fairywren!*

Spending the whole day in Capertee Valley was our plan for the following day, and we started with a bang just after sunrise when a superb pair of Spotted Quailthrush were brought in from the side of the road, with the male walking right over to us for some quality views indeed! Descending down to the patchwork mixture of woodland and farmland which provides rich and varied habitat for so many species ticks came thick and fast. Rufous Songlarks and Jacky Winters perched along the barb wire fences, while Black-chinned Honeyeaters and Fuscous Honeyeaters chased each other overhead as White-plumed Honeyeaters watched on. Our field breakfast at one of the bridges was slow, as it was continuously interrupted! A superbly colourful Painted Honeyeater showed exceptionally well, and a beautiful male Turquoise Parrot perched in the early morning sun on a dead tree. Our first attractive Double-barred Finches and some Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters made themselves known, before we became acquainted with Fuscous Honeyeater, Black-chinned Honeyeater, and the delightful Jacky Winter. Further roadside birding produced some dry woodland specialties like Speckled Warbler, White-browed Babbler and Weebill, while the rocky slopes held some Buff-rumped Thornbills and a huge Lace Monitor. Arriving in a nice grassy area surrounded by towering sandstone cliffs on all sides some Rainbow Bee-eaters, Common Bronzewing, Rufous Whistlers a White-bellied Cuckooshrike were observed, but everyone was particularly fond of the pair of Brown Treecreeper which came right in to the tree next to us!



*Painted Honeyeaters are somewhat unpredictable, but they were everywhere in Capertee this year!*

Moving up the road towards our lunch stop we located a pair of declining Southern Whiteface, the stupendous Diamond Firetail, and a mixed feeding flock of White-browed Woodswallow and Masked Woodswallow. As the afternoon wore on we wandered along a dry creek line in the shade and found more Turquoise Parrots which sat still for photos this time, alongside some typically active Restless Flycatchers. Beautifully elegant White-backed Swallows circled in the warm air above some open fields, and the high temperatures also attracted a Jacky Dragon and Eastern Bearded Dragon onto the road for us to have a look at. We scoped up a nice Pallid Cuckoo calling on some powerlines, and then hiked along a different creek to a spot where Plum-headed Finches had been seen recently. Only at the eleventh hour did we succeed as Jeff spotted a single tiny bird up high in a tree – it was a good thing we brought the scope with us! The bird eventually came down lower and really showed very nicely in the fading light before we headed back to the vehicles.

We had to go all the way back to town for dinner due to the classic outback Australian opening hours, but returned to the valley for spotlighting afterwards. It was fantastic to see a number of dumpy Common Wombats lumbering around alongside the road after seeing so many burrows during the day, and we studied the differences between Common Wallaroo, Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Red-necked Wallaby and Swamp Wallaby. Birds were a key focus of course, and a Southern Boobook was found perched for an extended period, but the best was to come. Some loud woofing seemed to be in vain initially, but some quiet notes in a large tree led us straight to a fantastic Barking Owl which gave walk-away views!



*Leaden Flycatchers (above) are very similar to Satin Flycatchers, but we had good studies of both on this tour to compare them!*

After our late night and successful previous day our morning was fairly relaxed as we focused on the Lithgow sewage ponds. Here we found more Freckled Ducks and Pink-eared Ducks, a male Chestnut Teal or two, plus some new birds in the form of Hoary-headed Grebe, Australasian Shoveler and some female Blue-billed Ducks. We were surprised by three Grey Currawongs feeding on the roadside as we traversed the Blue Mountains, and they even stuck around long enough for us to stop and get the scope on them while they

continued foraging! We twitched some Banded Lapwings on the turf farms in Sydney (which had two adorable fluffy chicks), but the hot and blustery conditions which had raised the fire alert to severe were not conducive at any of our other stops on the way to Swansea. We did venture out again in the late afternoon however, and Belmont Lagoon came close to revealing both Lewin's Rail and Brush Bronzewing, but only audio records for us today... We did however have fantastic looks at a Grey Goshawk perched by the side of the trail, and some nice views of Australasian Figbird.



*Pied Oystercatchers are endemic to Australia, and we had some lovely encounters with them all up the coast!*

Some pelagic birding off the east coast of Australia had been hanging in the balance due to worrying weather forecasts, however all was well as we motored out towards the shelf break this morning. In actuality, the weather was a little too nice, which really lowered the diversity which we had been hoping for. Nevertheless, both Pied Oystercatcher and Sooty Oystercatcher were seen on the rocks as we left the sheltered harbour, and our first Wedge-tailed Shearwaters appeared with some Australasian Gannets not long after. Passing through the coastal strip of activity, our chumming slowly gathered a collection hundreds strong behind the boat, within which we picked out Short-tailed Shearwater, Flesh-footed Shearwater, and Fluttering Shearwater. Numerous Pomerine Jaegers harassed the birds as they tried to feed, and as we approached the shelf two Sooty Shearwaters made a brief pass. The best birds of the day were probably the numerous Providence Petrels (an Australian breeding endemic from nearby Lord Howe Island) showing off their white wing flashes and feeding on the water beside the boat, and a dainty Wilson's Storm Petrel which danced along in our slick. Sadly despite lots of scanning and searching in different areas, no other species were added to our tally until we approached shore in the afternoon and two Arctic Jaegers flew by, followed by a group of Whimbrel beside the mangroves in the bay. We revisited Belmont Lagoon at dusk and were hugely successful – one of the Lewin's Rail from the previous evening was tempted across the track in full view after much growling and grunting, and we managed to closely approach a pair of Brush Bronzewings on the track, observing the male do a strange kangaroo-like hopping display which I had never witnessed nor even heard of before! Some White-cheeked Honeyeaters were seen nearby as we made our way back to the vehicles.



*Providence Petrels are an Australian breeding endemic, and are regularly observed on pelagics at this time of year.*

Morning birding around Newcastle was productive as we visited the various swamps and wader roosts within the Hunter Estuary. We improved on our views of Tawny Grassbird and Little Grassbird from previous days, and studied some attractive White-fronted Chats feeding in the saltmarsh. An Australian Hobby passed by irregularly, flushing the huge flocks of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers which were congregating here for the summer. Within such groups, we picked out Pacific Golden Plover, Red Knot, Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Common Greenshank and Marsh Sandpiper. Some Australian Ravens walked around showing off their diagnostic hackles and a Black-necked Stork flew by, but more exciting was a group of breeding-plumaged Royal Spoonbills with red and yellow face highlights and elegant feather manes feeding by the cars. Over at Stockton Sandspit the usual large flocks of lovely Red-necked Avocet and Pied Stilt were complimented by over a hundred (!!!) Far Eastern Curlews, both Bar-tailed Godwit and Black-tailed Godwit, more Red Knot and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, plus Little Tern, Caspian Tern, and the endemic Australian race of Gull-billed Tern.

After driving to the small town of Gloucester in the northern Hunter Valley we spent some time searching for lorikeets on some backroads. We notched up both Scaly-breasted Lorikeet and our main quarry Musk Lorikeet here, with both species seen very well perched and feeding in flowering gum trees. After lunch we travelled up to the haunts of Rufous Scrubbird for our first pass at this diabolically difficult bird. We quickly located some individuals which allowed close approach on foot but as is most often the case only some darting shapes between bushes and the somewhat deafeningly loud call evidenced the presence of the birds. Those who were standing with me on the left side of the line-up were eventually treated to good views of this ancient Australian relict as it hopped into a bush and began singing, but it was long gone before anyone else could get on it. We would try again tomorrow! In the same area, a male Rose Robin flitted above us with a female Crescent Honeyeater, and a cooperative Olive Whistler was seen right by the track.



*Our views of the retiring Rufous Scrubbird were out of this world during the tour - it is unusual for the whole group to even see the bird, let alone like this! It was also Steve's final remaining worldwide family, so the beer flowed readily that night!*

Searching the surrounds of the camping area the following morning hoping for some thrushes was relatively birdless initially, but when I peered through some foliage to investigate the Superb Lyrebird calls just inside the forest, I was surprised to see the excited male was in full display with his tail feathers waving around hypnotically as he performed his trademark mimicry. Amazingly he kept performing for the next half an hour, and everyone was privy to the secret life of this remarkable passerine, viewing his sublime avian performance to our heart's content! Our second date with his close scrub-loving relative up the hill proved challenging, and we consistently drew blanks at half a dozen known territories. Eventually we returned to the same bird which was glimpsed yesterday. It was calling as we arrived, and as we were getting into position, it suddenly ran across the open track (unprompted) in front of us! The views were brief but good, and those who had been looking in the right spot were happy. Birding the surrounding tops netted us a pair of rare Satin Flycatchers, a showy Bassian Thrush, some female Flame Robins, Scarlet Robins, and more views of Crescent Honeyeaters. As we were preparing to leave, some keen individuals accompanied me back into the undergrowth towards another scrubbird which had suddenly begun to call. We sat down and waited patiently without making any movements, but the bird had stopped vocalising and we were no longer sure where it was. We waited and waited, but it was looking like we would have to call it a day. Then, almost miraculously, a cracking male Rufous Scrubbird scuttled out of a bush next to us and pretty much ran over to stand on top of the speaker! Wow! We were able to observe his comings and goings over the following minutes as he ran around us in circles, sometimes sitting and squeaking at us in full view! We could discern the subtle scalloping and black chest speckles with our naked eyes! This was a major highlight for Steve in particular, for whom this was his last bird family!

An afternoon siesta was in order, as no diurnal targets remained in the park. After dinner we ventured back out and spent a very long session searching in particular for Greater Sooty Owl, although sadly despite hearing two birds neither could be coaxed in. This lovely forest did hold some nice animals for us to observe however, with majestic Greater Gliders and cute Common Ringtail Possums adorning the trees, Red-necked Pademelons bounding through the torchlight, and an uncommon Dwarf Crowned Snake slithering along the road. Driving up to Queensland after a lie-in the next morning was punctuated by a short and successful stop to find Scarlet Myzomela and Forest Raven (the corvids here on the mid-north coast of New South Wales

representing an isolated subspecies which may be best treated as Relict Raven), but otherwise we saw little of note before arriving at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat in Lamington for our two night stay.



*Vibrant Australian King Parrots entertained us at O'Reilly's – what a bird!*

The pristine world heritage Gondwanan rainforest surrounding O'Reilly's is one of the birdiest places in Australia, and we jumped straight in at sunrise. While gathering in the carpark, an Australian King Parrot which was showing well on the nearby roof swooped down and landed on Gavin's head. The bird feeding arrangements have allowed some birds in the vicinity of the lodge to become extremely tame, and we amused ourselves by raising our arms to have Crimson Rosellas and more King Parrots land and clamber all over us. While everyone else was still asleep, we set about finding the shyest denizen of the eastern rainforests. We crisscrossed the roads and trails watching for movement, and struck gold behind the staff carpark where two Albert's Lyrebirds (a female and her fledged chick) were unconcerned by our presence and provided magnificent views as they fed, somehow keeping their heads gyroscopically stable as they scratched around on a dirt slope. During our search some Australian Logrunner were found feeding by the track in their strange manner, and some Green Catbirds showed well. Moving over to the bird feeding area for the designated start time we were treated to close-and-personal encounters with glorious Regent Bowerbirds as they came for some early morning treats. The sunlight hitting their gold mantles positively glowed!

We followed the bird walk for a short time seeing habituated Eastern Whipbirds, Eastern Yellow Robins, White-browed Scrubwrens and Yellow-throated Scrubwrens all come to take food out of the hand, but pulled ourselves away to focus on the main targets. A calling Noisy Pitta was quickly located as he crossed the track, then perched unobscured in a tree to show off his beautiful plumage, and along the entrance road we found some more Bassian Thrush, plus most had excellent looks at a similar Russet-tailed Thrush (we returned later in the day to nail this species for those who had missed it). Some Wompoo Fruit Doves and some more Australian Logrunner were enjoyed, but other birds were waiting. Hot on the trail of birds-of-paradise, I was in the process of explaining how our quarry tends to require a lot of effort before good views are obtained when a stunning male Paradise Riflebird flew over our heads and landed on a low branch! He stayed for a minute or two before climbing up onto a large open branch which looked suspiciously like a display post. We got the scope out and sure enough after preening and fluffing himself up, we were treated to a few practice dance moves as he waved his wings back and forth, swaying hypnotically side to side. Great stuff!



*Albert's Lyrebirds are endemic to a small section of Gondwanan rainforest near Brisbane - we had good looks at two individuals.*



*Paradise Riflebird is the most southerly bird-of-paradise, and this male performed a few practice dances for us on his open bough!*

After some free time during the heat of the day (which included a few flyby White-throated Needletails during lunch), those who wished joined for a half-hour vigil at the Satin Bowerbird bower out the back of the lodge. The long-staying male is a real performer, and has been filmed for numerous documentaries – it is questionable whether he is the same bird which David Attenborough filmed right here during *Life of Birds* many years ago, but is quite possibly related to that individual! The nearby trails held Spectacled Monarch and Large-billed Scrubwren, but it was quiet aside from the rustling footsteps of the numerous Australian Brushturkey! We spent much of the late afternoon searching for thrush along the road but struggled to get close to any – with some good luck everyone was ultimately happy with their views of both species. One Southern Angle-headed Dragon was moved off the road on our way back for dinner. An excellent spotlighting session yielded the large southern *plumifera* subspecies of Marbled Frogmouth, which came in to sit on a lovely open perch after a few goes. Not much further along, our opportunistic whistling paid dividends as a Greater Sooty Owl responded and was coaxed into a pine tree where it sat calmly for walkaway views! Some interesting mammals included Red-legged Pademelon (as opposed to the commoner Red-necked Pademelon which was also seen), Bush Rat and Fawn-footed Melomys (two native rodents), Short-eared Brushtail Possum, and a cute Sugar Glider.



*We saw a few Satin Bowerbirds during the tour, but the star male at O'Reilly's is a joy to observe since he is so used to people!*

Some relaxed birding around the lodge the following morning allowed some to catch up with more Noisy Pitta and Russet-tailed Thrush, while others once again enjoyed the bird feeding spectacle near reception. Steve didn't even have to get out of bed for his birding, as an Australian King Parrot flew through his open door early in the morning and landed on his chest! After breakfast it was time to head to Brisbane, where we started at a small pond with two visiting Red-kneed Dotterels in attendance. Some cat and mouse with a Mangrove Gerygone eventually paid dividends with a beautifully voiced individual perching up for us on a low mangrove. The nearby Sandy Camp Road Wetlands had held all three species of Australian crane in previous weeks, but during our vigil none were in evidence. Nonetheless, many birds were around to keep us occupied – bizarre honking Magpie Geese, Wandering Whistling Ducks, Comb-crested Jacanas, and a



*The southern race of Marbled Frogmouth is much larger and otherwise quite distinct to those found on the Cape and in New Guinea.*

brief Little Friarbird were all noted, along with a breeding plumage Intermediate Egret. Driving across town for dusk, we headed straight for our usual forest clearing. Waiting for a good hour and a half as the light faded, our scanning became more and more desperate as the regular White-throated Nightjars refused to appear hawking above us as they usually do. In the end, only a few calls were heard from this species - possibly the cool change and wind which had come through earlier in the day kept them grounded? We heard an Australian Owlet-nightjar here too, but could not coax it in close enough. Our spirits had been dampened, but a tip off from Pete's brother Rob Morris (who lives and guides in the Brisbane area) had us happy again soon enough. Following a short stumble up a valley, I shone the torch into a big tree and not one but two Australian Masked Owls were sitting quietly right above us! These recently-fledged juveniles sat calmly as photos were taken, and after some minutes we left them in peace – wow! This cryptic *Tyto* is almost never seen without a reliable stake-out, so we were very lucky they were still hanging around!



*With some fantastic local help, we were able to find two beautiful Australian Masked Owls at a nest in Brisbane without even trying!*

Having seen all the key birds we may usually spend a morning targeting around Brisbane earlier in the tour, we elected to visit Lake Samsonvale in the north. This is known as one of the best places to see some of the special quail of Australia, and one of the first birds we saw on arrival was a Brown Quail crossing the track! We lucked out quickly with two different Red-backed Buttonquail and a pair of King Quail flushing up from right beside us along the swampy trail, then on the way back to the cars, two Painted Buttonquail foraging beside the track also showed briefly. Four great quail in only two hours isn't shabby at all! Nearby a Spotted Harrier was seen flying low across the road, and a Grey Goshawk perched up while three Pacific Baza circled low overhead. Some excellent views of male and female Red-backed Fairywren were had in the long grass, while some Australian Pipits and a Red-bellied Black Snake were also seen. Over in the Toorbul area we had four Beach Stone-curlews on their private fenced-off beach (one of them was only a few inches tall, having just hatched) mixing with a flock of Bar-tailed Godwits, Great Knots and Red Knots. Our first Lesser Sand Plovers and Red-capped Plovers were also scoped up here, and a few beaches over we found a huge roosting flock of over two hundred Far Eastern Curlews, and similar numbers of Whimbrel. The coastal vegetation here also held two calling Mangrove Honeyeaters, and we were able to secure close showings of this lower east coast endemic without much effort at all!



*Great Knots are declining rapidly across their range due to degradation of their staging mudflats in the Yellow Sea.*

Driving to Noosa, home of sunshine, beaches and buttonquail, we stopped off at a small suburban wetland in Bli Bli where two Latham's Snipe and a Buff-banded Rail played nicely for us. Some photographic opportunities with an attractive Double-barred Finch were well appreciated, but our main activity beckoned. We took a walk out to the scrubby headland which was being favoured by a family of restricted Black-breasted Buttonquail, but despite finding plenty of fresh scratchings, no quail appeared. One bonus here however was a sleepy Koala which was causing quite a commotion amongst the various joggers and surfers on the track, allowing us to see very easily where it was hiding in the canopy! Spotlighting for the third night running was on-point yet again, and with some trickery we were able to bring an elegant Eastern Grass Owl directly overhead out of a cane grass field showing off his long legs and tawny breast well.



*Black-faced Monarchs were another constant companion in the eastern forests, often uttering their lovely see-saw call..*

We spent over four hours staking out the Black-breasted Buttonquail, but sadly the only evidence of their presence in our immediate vicinity was a brief leader only view as one scuttled away into impenetrable undergrowth. We commenced the long drive to Rockhampton, stopping for a roadside Yellow-billed Spoonbill and a powerline Pacific Baza. The following day also involved a fairly long drive, but a morning visit to the saltworks south of Rockhampton produced both the rare and endangered subspecies of Yellow Chat, plus some bonus Zitting Cisticolas of the vocally distinct Australian race, which are a hard bird to see down under. A handful of Singing Honeyeaters were also present here, one of the few places you can see them on the east coast. We paused at the Tropic of Capricorn before upping the air conditioning and continuing north into tropical Australia. Some lovely Brolgas in their traditional pairs were enjoyed by the roadside, some Forest Kingfishers perched on the wires, and two small flocks of Red-tailed Black Cockatoos flew over the road. Black Kites slowly become more and more common alongside their Whistling Kite counterparts. Our lunch stop in Mackay found us the only Cotton Pygmy Geese of the trip before we ascended the Eungella Ranges.



*The critically endangered subspecies of Yellow Chat on the Queensland coast was a lucky find near Rockhampton!*

The main reason for the visit to Eungella, was to see the endemic Eungella Honeyeater, which has a highly restricted range in the area. First discovered in the 1970s and initially passed off as a southern population of the more widespread Bridled Honeyeater around Cairns, this species was one of the last new species of bird to be discovered in Australia, but it was one of the first species we found on exiting the car at our chosen rainforest stretch. It took a while for everyone to get a satisfactory look as it foraged amongst the mossy boughs of a large tree, but it hopped up unobscured eventually and we could admire his white facial stripe and subtly streaked dark grey breast. Pale-headed Rosellas fed by the road, and dozens of comical Topknot Pigeons were feeding in the area, and although similar numbers of Rose-crowned Fruit Doves could be heard, only a handful were seen briefly by a few lucky punters. As dusk fell we moved over to Broken River, which is famous for its extremely friendly Platypus. This bizarre Australian monotreme was initially distantly scoped down the river, but after some quiet patience, three individuals eventually began to feed right under our feet below the viewing platform. One even climbed onto a log to have a scratch, moving more like a large lizard than a mammal! Two Azure Kingfishers also lived in this stretch of river and preened in our binoculars at length, while a White-eared Monarch competed for attention with the Platypus and ultimately disappeared before everybody had seen it.



*The Platypus viewing area in Eungella allows fantastic encounters with this usually shy monotreme!*

Given that Eungella is an adaptation of a local Aboriginal word meaning 'mountains of the mist', we unsurprisingly were met by a wall of fog at dawn the following day. We tried hard to find some of the local species, but it was windy and largely silent – we didn't even hear a Eungella Honeyeater all morning! Indeed it was lucky that we already had this one in the bag. The group did however have excellent looks at the many pigeon species frequenting the clearing we were staking out. Our first White-headed Pigeons were scoped up overhead, while plenty of Rose-crowned Fruit Doves interacted with a handful of Superb Fruit Doves. Some Wompoo Fruit Doves also allowed scope studies as they made their strange noises, and more Topknot Pigeons were admired. An arboreal Noisy Pitta was spotted by Max, and a return visit to the river could not net us the monarch from yesterday, but we had more lovely views of Platypus before departing. The drive north to the Cassowary Coast took most of the day, punctuated by a couple of particularly good species. First up was a trio of Emu beside the highway, one of which provided excellent views before slowly wandering into the tall cane grass where it all but disappeared. An Australian Bustard standing on a huge pile of discarded capsicums near Bowen was an interesting sight (as was the big mango), while perched Red-tailed Black Cockatoos and a White-bellied Sea Eagle catching what looked like a Coastal Taipan were also noted.

Our prehistoric adventure saw us rise at dawn and travel to some coastal lowland forest inhabited by a dangerous and powerful creature with scaly claws and a rock-hard helmet. It didn't take long before our jaws dropped as a female Southern Cassowary was spotted by the road, and we had just enough time to take in her magnificence before she silently disappeared into the undergrowth. Down the road at the main stakeout a wary male appeared to eyeball us, puffing himself up and standing tall while teetering back and forth. In actuality, this was directed at the hidden female which suddenly appeared and chased him away from her patch! She is the boss of the area, and soon came back down to feed on the fruits which had been left out, sometimes getting a little too close for comfort! Being so close to such an imposing bird is something which could never be forgotten!

Searching some turf farms to the north for any interesting visitors, a small flock of Plumed Whistling Ducks were picked out sitting on a dam wall. Some midday birding around the Cairns Botanic Gardens allowed us to get up close and personal with Raja Shelduck and a nesting Papuan Frogmouth, and we began to note some of the common northern species like Black Butcherbird, Yellow Honeyeater and Hornbill Friarbird. We

searched fruitlessly for the Rufous Owls which have not been seen at their usual roost for over a month after their nest failure, but the same park held no less than eight Bush Stone-curlews which kept a watchful eye on us from shaded ground. One pair had two adorable fluffy chicks! It is heartening to see such charismatic ground birds being so successful in the middle of suburbia. Our afternoon session was mangrove oriented, but a stop at the Cairns Esplanade first saw us viewing a number of Great Knot mixed in with other waders which we had seen further south. A male Little Bronze Cuckoo (of the Gould's variety) showed excellently in a low fig tree, and Peaceful Doves all but got trodden on! We birded for a while, getting bitten by mosquitos and sandflies as we waited and waited for our targets to appear. One Torresian Kingfisher was discovered sitting unobtrusively in a small window, but it stayed still for ten minutes and was scoped up well. Meanwhile, some Varied Honeyeaters performed above us as the friendly resident Willy Wagtail fed at our feet on flushing insects. We heard some Mangrove Robins calling near the edge of the mangrove after a while, and some patient waiting resulted in one individual flying in and perching in front of the whole group while he searched the muddy ground for morsels of food. The airport mangroves held a male Shining Flycatcher, and some spotlighting after dinner for the few who chose the join finally found us Nankeen Night Heron. We opportunistically checked a tree that I had seen Red-necked Crake roosting in years previously, and by some miracle a bloody Red-necked Crake was sitting right there in the torch beam! Now that is mega! A quick phone call had the rest of the group awakened from their slumber and rushing over to enjoy this rare *Rallidae* in the torch.



*Noisy Pittas were noted regularly this year, and we had some great views!*

We spent the next session targeting the declining Lovely Fairywren, which has become harder and harder to see in the Cairns region over recent years. They favour mangroves and coastal scrub, but are notoriously difficult to get close to as they work their way through dense vegetation without almost no interest in playback. We eventually located a pair (the female of this species look completely different but is just as stunning as the male) and after some careful positioning they moved right past us, foraging only metres away unconcernedly. Two Double-eyed Fig Parrots flew through, and the nearby beach held our first Ruddy Turnstones and Greater Sand Plovers. Pleased with this success, we went to twitch a pair of Oriental Plover which had been seen in the north of Cairns - they were happily feeding on the field with some Pacific Golden Plovers and showed well in the scope.



*Red-necked Crakes had been playing hard to get at Kingfisher Park this year, so we were pleased to luck across this one at night!*



*Chestnut-breasted Mannikins are particularly confiding at the Kingfisher Park feeders!*

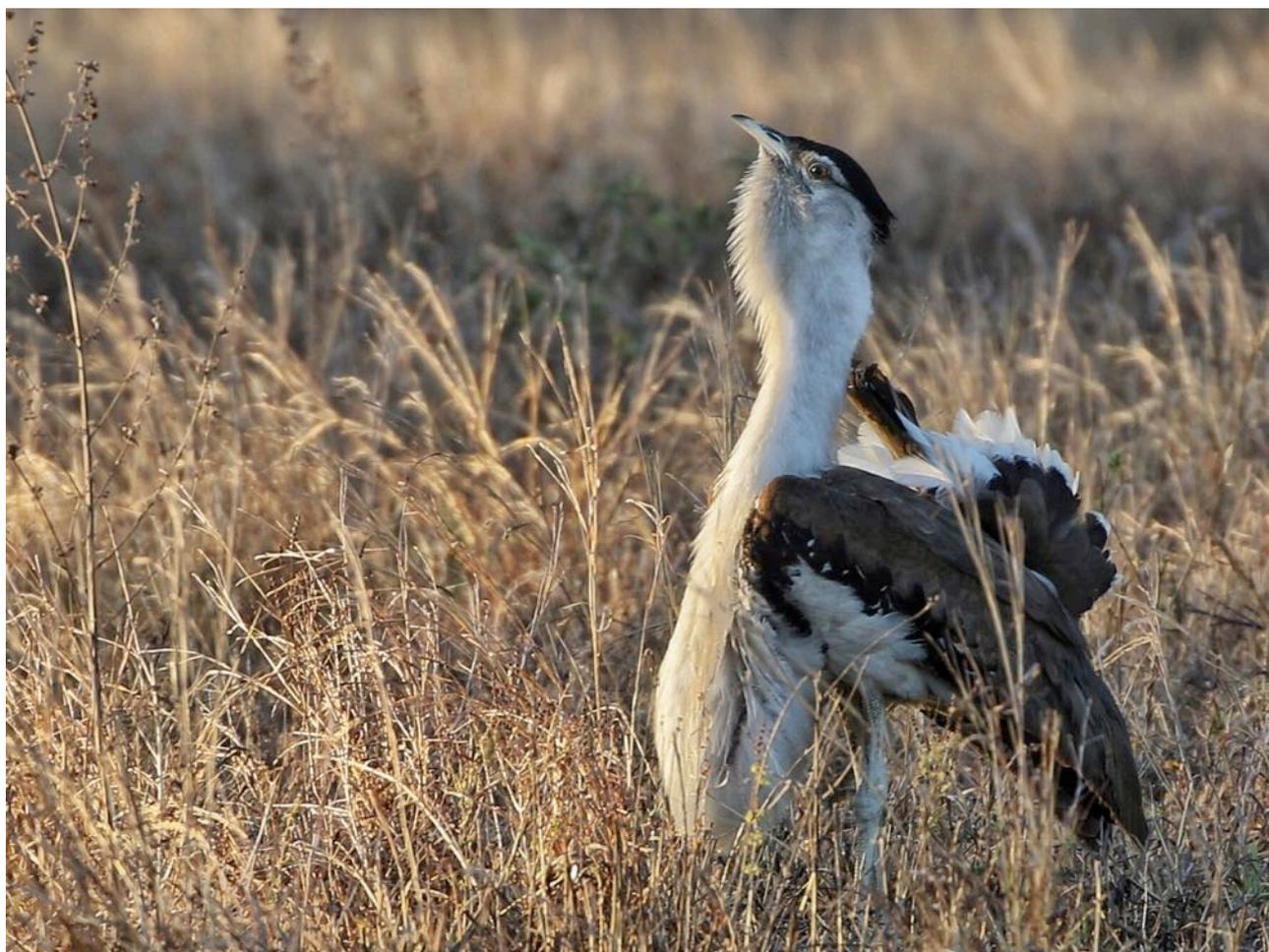
Arriving at the famous Kingfisher Park for the lunch prepared so finely by Carol and Andrew Iles, I made it my mission to disturb everyone halfway through their meal to bring attention to a sublime Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher which was perched up not too far away from us. This is of course the star bird here, and only freshly arrived from their wintering grounds in New Guinea to the north. We have been struggling on recent tours to connect with it as their arrival dates have become later and later in recent years, but the decision to push this tour back one week from now on has clearly made all the difference! The garden feeders attracted multitudes of Red-browed Finch, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Pacific Emerald Dove and Bar-shouldered Dove, and many of the other regular rainforest species from the area were also seen in the grounds over the following days.



*Of course we had to see the flagship species of KFP – beautiful Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfishers recently arrived from New Guinea!*

Nearby Abattoir Swamp boosted our honeyeater list considerably with a long long long overdue White-throated Honeyeater showing well with some Brown-backed Honeyeaters and Yellow Honeyeaters. As the day wore on we continued west towards Mount Carbine, and before I had even stopped the car I could see a number of Squatter Pigeon surrounding our favourite waterhole. In fact, there were thirty of them! Apostlebirds carried on above us while a flock of rare Black-throated Finches demanded our attention. It was difficult to keep focused on the finches as the northern black race of Brown Treecreeper fed with Black-faced Woodswallows, and a superb Bar-breasted Honeyeater landed in front of us (one of the three extralimital northern honeyeaters which we connected with this year due to unusually dry conditions elsewhere on Cape York). Towards sunset we reached Maryfarms, and were not disappointed by the displaying Australian Bustards which sure did exhibit themselves by the roadside! We were surprised by a Black-breasted Buzzard which flew over us, and our second rare honeyeater was found nearby, a flock of Banded Honeyeaters. Despite some significant spotlighting efforts after dinner, no other birds were located today.

Those who chose to have a quick walk around Kingfisher Park after we returned from the night drive saw Northern Brown Bandicoots, Fawn-footed Melomys, and a sleeping Boyd's Forest Dragon.



*This male Australian Bustard put on a show for us as he strutted his stuff late one evening!*

Mount Lewis was on the agenda today, as it was already our third day in the wet tropics and we had not yet targeted a single wet tropic endemic! Not to worry, as we quickly heard a calling Victoria's Riflebird through the car window as we drove slowly up the hill. The male could not be spotted at first, but only because we were looking too high, and he was sitting on his display pole only just above eye-level! He showed off for ages, and even did a few practice poses with his wings raised up in an arch above his head. Some calling Spotted Catbirds were found in full view above the road, and we had great studies of two nest-building Atherton Scrubwrens which kept returning to the same stick every few minutes. A similarly obliging pair of Mountain Thornbill hopped around in some low bushes while a young Pied Monarch foraged along a tree trunk.

Reaching the fabled clearing near the summit, we started along the track and quickly found a noisy roving party of Bower's Shrikethrush, while a few Bridled Honeyeaters fed in a low overhanging tree. Further down, a family of strange Chowchilla were particularly confiding (we were able to walk right up to them as they fed), and behind us two Fernwren behaved similarly! This trail can provide excellent birding, as although all the species here are taped out, they are well used to visitors and go about their business regardless of how close you get! With this superb array of birds, we had seen every high altitude wet tropic endemic we were hoping for in this area (excluding a certain owl...). Working our way back down towards Kingfisher Park we found two lovely Macleay's Honeyeater with a Yellow-breasted Boatbill, and we worked on a calling Yellow-spotted Meliphaga to eventually obtain some excellent views and photographs showing all the key identification features.



*Fernwren are endemic to the Wet Tropics, and showed well on Mount Lewis!*



*The weird Chowchilla is an uncommon denizen of the forest floor in the Atherton Tabelands, but can be confiding once located!*

Searching some areas out west again in the afternoon connected us with White-gaped Honeyeater at the only site in this region it inhabits, while our third rare Cape York honeyeater, Rufous-throated Honeyeater, made an appearance. Some brief Large-billed Gerygone were seen by some, while an exceptionally plumaged male Red-winged Parrot sat in the sun atop a dead tree. Back closer to Kingfisher Park, we focused on finding more fig parrots, but had to make do with Superb Fruit Dove, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, a heard only Spotless Crake and a briefly seen White-browed Crake in a small reedy pond. Not long after dinner, our spotlighting efforts finally lured out a beautiful Lesser Sooty Owl which sat screeching at us for walkaway views - this was our fifth and final Australian *Tyto!*



*This Lesser Sooty Owl was our fifth and final Australian Tyto for the tour!*

A morning in the dry forest around Mareeba was fantastic for seeing some remaining species. Multiple Green Pygmy Goose showed well at Lake Mitchell, while nearby a pair of Lemon-bellied Flyrobin surveyed their territory for food and some Grey-crowned Babblers were nabbed just before breakfast. Our picturesque stakeout for White-browed Robin proved efficient yet again as a bird sat above us cocking his tail and calling away, but we also picked up Fairy Gerygone and Northern Fantail at the same spot. The nature park at Granite Gorge held adorable Mareeba Rock Wallabies which loved being hand-fed a few special food pellets handed out to us by the staff, and the usual local Squatter Pigeons allowed real close approach.

Focusing on some remaining species around Kingfisher Park in the afternoon, we began by chasing meliphagas around and around for some time until finally a calling Graceful Meliphaga perched long enough for us all to observe the subtly different bill structure and gape extension. An upcoming paper indicates that this honeyeater may soon become another wet tropics endemic, differing from the birds further north on Cape York and in New Guinea. Although the forest we were working remained quiet for a while, as the sun dipped birds started appearing. In particular, a pair of superb Pied Monarchs displayed right by the road allowing great photos, and a young White-eared Monarch popped up allowing those who had missed it at Eungella to relax. Also in this area we had some flyover Double-eyed Fig Parrots, the vocally distinct wet tropics form of Common Cicadabird, Large-billed Gerygone, Grey Whistler, Barred Cuckooshrike, more Lovely Fairywren, and some Spotted Catbird. Spotlighting in the grounds of Kingfisher Park resulted in an uncommon Tree Mouse, along with the usual Bush Rats, Fawn-footed Melomys, Long-nosed Bandicoots, Northern Brown Bandicoots, Spectacled Flying Fox, one locally rare Sugar Glider, and a Green Ringtail for the persistent!



*Squatter Pigeons were seen multiple times this year, with both the northern and the southern subspecies observed.*



*Pied Monarchs are another Cairns region endemic which we enjoyed at the end of the tour!*

Our full day in the Atherton Tabelands commenced in an area which has proved to be a regular haunt of Blue-faced Parrot Finch in recent years, however our various drives up and down the tracks resulted only in Red-browed Finches, plus a few Musky Rat Kangaroos. The resident Tooth-billed Bowerbirds at Lake Eacham however were much more showy, and we were easily able to get close enough appreciate the strange 'tooth'. A strange adaptation, this bill modification is used for cutting leaves off trees which allows more sunlight to penetrate down to the display court. Our next stop near the town of Herberton saw us carefully studying the confusing form of Yellow-tinted Honeyeater which exists here. Although it has a big yellow neck stripe, it is a pale brown bird with a call much more like that of a Fuscous Honeyeater. Who knows where this bird will eventually end up being placed! Nearby around Mount Hypipamee we succeeded in locating a couple of rare Crimson (Tropical) Rosellas, here of the endemic dark backed form which is more genetically distinct from standard Crimson Rosellas than the Green Rosella of Tasmania is!



*Tooth-billed Bowerbirds use the tiny kink before the end of their bill (visible as a pale dot in this photo) to cut leaves above their courts!*

Meeting up with Alan Gillanders, our talented local man on the spot, we were quickly whisked away to spend some time at a Golden Bowerbird bower. Several the well-known males mysteriously disappeared during a very short time frame during 2017, and as such the locations of current bowers are well-kept secrets. Thanks to Alan, the group was able to marvel at the spectacular colouration of this restricted endemic as he sat above his bower keeping watch. Next up was a visit to Alan's most well-behaved Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroos, which were dutifully sitting 15m up in a large eucalypt on the branches. This is the only tree kangaroo species which can be seen in the wild with any sort of reliability, so we spent some time marvelling at this strange mammal which has evolved so distinctly from its hopping cousins. Our man was not done however, and a nearby carpark had scarcely been pulled into when two Double-eyed Fig Parrots flew in to their favourite fruiting fig. It was a challenge to locate them in the thick canopy, but then the male was eventually spotted he was in fact only metres above us, and completely in the open! Farewelling Alan, we returned to our finch site on dusk and were rewarded by a frustrating Blue-faced Parrotfinch which only appeared above the tall grass briefly in view of some of us. Some nocturnal forays after a scrumptious final

dinner were enjoyable as usual – mammals were a highlight, with Lemuroid Ringtail, Green Ringtail and Coppery Brushtail all seen well, plus the weird Chameleon Gecko and a well-camouflaged Northern Leaf-tailed Gecko. On the return to Kingfisher Park, some opportunistic stops finally produced our final bird addition of the tour – the cute Australian Owlet-nightjar!



*Double-eyed Fig Parrots can be very difficult to spot in dense fig trees, but a thermal camera helps!*

Our late return had most of the group sleeping in for our final morning, but some did a little birding in the grounds of Kingfisher Park once again. The journey back to Cairns was uneventful, but some roosting Nankeen Night Herons before we went to the airport were welcomed! We had enjoyed an exceptionally successful tour with a great bunch of people, many of whom had never visited Australia before. All have vowed to return at some point, as even though we saw close to four hundred species, there is always much more to see in this fantastically diverse land!

#### **BIRD OF THE TOUR (AS VOTED FOR BY THE GROUP)**

1. Southern Cassowary
2. Superb Lyrebird (display)
- = 3. Australian Bustard (display)
- = 3. Australian Masked Owl
5. Rufous Scrubbird



The group at the Three Sisters in the Blue Mountains. Thanks for a fantastic tour guys!

## SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRD SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

**Total number of bird species recorded: 396**

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). IOC World Bird Names. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>. Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

**Southern Cassowary** ◊ *Casuarius casuarius* Three adults near Mission Beach one morning at a reliable stake-out

**Emu** ◊ *Dromaius novaehollandiae* Some by the roadside south of Proserpine – quite rare on this route

**Magpie Goose** ◊ *Anseranas semipalmata* Abundant around Cairns

**Plumed Whistling Duck** ◊ *Dendrocygna eytoni* Some on the turf farms south of Cairns

**Wandering Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna arcuata* First noted around Brisbane, and a couple more around Cairns

**Black Swan** ◊ *Cygnus atratus* Great views at Centennial Park in Sydney, noted elsewhere

**Freckled Duck** ◊ *Stictonetta naevosa* Good numbers around Lithgow this year

**Raja Shelduck** ◊ (Radjah S) *Radjah radjah* One family of birds at Centenary Lakes in Cairns

**Pink-eared Duck** ◊ *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* A good year for this species, a few seen throughout

**Maned Duck** ◊ (Australian Wood D) *Chenonetta jubata* Common around Sydney and seen elsewhere

**Cotton Pygmy Goose** *Nettapus coromandelianus* Some pairs in Mackay Botanic Gardens

**Green Pygmy Goose** ◊ *Nettapus pulchellus* Good looks of a few birds at Lake Mitchell near KFP  
**Australasian Shoveler** ◊ *Spatula rhynchotis* Handful floating around at Lithgow STW  
**Pacific Black Duck** *Anas superciliosa* Common throughout eastern Australia  
**Mallard (introduced)** *Anas platyrhynchos* Single male near Newcastle  
**Grey Teal** *Anas gracilis* Regularly observed throughout  
**Chestnut Teal** ◊ *Anas castanea* Some nice males at Lithgow STW, and others distantly around Sydney  
**Hardhead** ◊ *Aythya australis* Big numbers at a number of deeper wetlands throughout  
**Blue-billed Duck** ◊ *Oxyura australis* Some females at Lithgow STW  
**Musk Duck** ◊ *Biziura lobate* Good looks at a displaying male on Lake Wallace  
**Australian Brushturkey** ◊ *Alectura lathamii* Common in eastern forests, especially around O'Reilly's  
**Orange-footed Scrubfowl** *Megapodius reinwardt* Regularly seen around Cairns, and in KFP  
**Stubble Quail** ◊ *Coturnix pectoralis* Some heard in a field near Kiama, but never managed to flush one! (H)  
**Brown Quail** ◊ *Coturnix ypsilophora* Some in Capertee, and good looks at Eungella  
**King Quail** *Excalfactoria chinensis* One pair flushed at Lake Samsonvale



Wedge-tailed Shearwaters were the common tubenose on our Swansea pelagic.

**Wilson's Storm Petrel** *Oceanites oceanicus* Two birds on our Swansea pelagic  
**Providence Petrel** ◊ *Pterodroma solandri* A handful came in to feed on our slick off Swansea  
**Wedge-tailed Shearwater** *Ardenna pacifica* The common tubenose during our pelagic off Swansea  
**Sooty Shearwater** *Ardenna grisea* Singles throughout the day on our pelagic  
**Short-tailed Shearwater** *Ardenna tenuirostris* Quite a few hungry individuals coming in to the slick off Swansea  
**Flesh-footed Shearwater** ◊ *Ardenna carneipes* Just two off Swansea mixed in with the Wedge-tailed Shearwaters  
**Fluttering Shearwater** ◊ *Puffinus gavia* Some quick passes by a few individuals, one or two seen well  
**Australasian Grebe** *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae* Regular throughout on most waterbodies  
**Hoary-headed Grebe** ◊ *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus* Some good looks at a few individuals at Lithgow STW  
**Great Crested Grebe** ◊ (Southern C G) *Podiceps [cristatus] australis* Some dancing at Lake Wallace  
**Black-necked Stork** ◊ *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* Distantly in flight around Newcastle, good looks south of Cairns  
**Australian White Ibis** *Threskiornis molucca* Common throughout  
**Straw-necked Ibis** ◊ *Threskiornis spinicollis* Common throughout  
**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* A few observations in swampy wetlands  
**Royal Spoonbill** ◊ *Platalea regia* Excellent looks at Hexham Swamp in particular of some breeding plumage birds  
**Yellow-billed Spoonbill** ◊ *Platalea flavipes* One for the second vehicle in Gloucester, and one near Rockhampton

**Black-backed Bittern** ◊ *Ixobrychus dubius* Single calling then in flight right in front of us at Lake Wallace  
**Nankeen Night Heron (Rufous N H)** *Nycticorax caledonicus* Spotlit in Cairns, and also seen at the roost tree here  
**Striated Heron** *Butorides striata* Singles noted in the north  
**Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus* Common throughout in fields  
**White-necked Heron** ◊ (Pacific H) *Ardea pacifica* Quite regular, with some good looking fresh birds in the south  
**Great Egret (Eastern G E)** *Ardea [alba] modesta* Regular at various waterbodies  
**Intermediate Egret** *Ardea intermedia* A few throughout, with one in breeding plumage in Brisbane – potential split  
**White-faced Heron** *Egretta novaehollandiae* Noted throughout  
**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* Noted throughout  
**Pacific Reef Heron (Eastern R E)** *Egretta sacra* Some around Noosa, and further north  
**Australian Pelican** ◊ *Pelecanus conspicillatus* Regular, with some well-showing individuals around Sydney  
**Australasian Gannet** ◊ *Morus serrator* Some on the pelagic as we came back to shore  
**Little Pied Cormorant** *Microcarbo melanoleucos* Regular throughout  
**Little Black Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* Regular throughout  
**Australian Pied Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax varius* Some around Sydney  
**Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo* Regular throughout  
**Australasian Darter (Australian D)** *Anhinga novaehollandiae* Good looks around Sydney, seen throughout  
**Eastern Osprey** *Pandion cristatus* Good looks at two birds at a nest in Brisbane  
**Black-shouldered Kite** ◊ (Australian K) *Elanus axillaris* Regular throughout in low numbers  
**Black-breasted Buzzard** ◊ *Hamirostra melanosternon* Single somewhat out of range bird near Mount Carbine  
**Pacific Baza** *Aviceda subcristata* Some around Brisbane, and one very confident bird on a wire near Rockhampton  
**Wedge-tailed Eagle** ◊ *Aquila audax* Some in Capertee, and a few on various transit days  
**Grey Goshawk** ◊ *Accipiter novaehollandiae* Excellent looks at this somewhat uncommon goshawk near Newcastle  
**Brown Goshawk** *Accipiter fasciatus* Multiple birds seen on various transit days  
**Collared Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter cirrocephalus* Single individual seen well south of Sydney  
**Swamp Harrier** ◊ *Circus approximans* Some birds around Newcastle, others elsewhere  
**Spotted Harrier** ◊ *Circus assimilis* Single passed in front of the cars north of Brisbane, couldn't be refound  
**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* Common in the north by the roadside  
**Whistling Kite** *Haliastur sphenurus* Common in the north  
**Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus* Regular in coastal areas as we moved further north  
**White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* A few individuals noted around Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane  
**Australian Bustard** ◊ *Ardeotis australis* One north of Rockhampton, and an awesome display for us near KFP  
**Red-necked Crake** ◊ *Rallina tricolor* Spotlit in Cairns – somehow it was in the same tree I saw it two years ago!  
**Buff-banded Rail** *Gallirallus philippensis* Good looks at one at a wetland in Bli Bli  
**Lewin's Rail** ◊ *Lewinia pectoralis* Tempted across the track for brief but good views at Swansea  
**Spotless Crake** ◊ *Porzana tabuensis* Heard at a small wetland near KFP (H)  
**White-browed Crake** *Porzana cinerea* One seen distantly at a small wetlands near KFP on dusk  
**Australasian Swamphen** ◊ *Porphyrio melanotus* Common throughout the route  
**Dusky Moorhen** ◊ *Gallinula tenebrosa* Quite common in the south, some good looks at Centennial Park  
**Eurasian Coot** ◊ (Australasian C) *Fulica [atra] australis* Noted throughout, lots on Lake Wallace  
**Sarus Crane** *Antigone antigone* Two expertly spotted on a field near Mareeba by Bengt the Crane Man!  
**Brolga** ◊ *Antigone rubicunda* Lots of sightings, some great close looks near Mackay  
**Black-breasted Buttonquail** ◊ *Turnix melanogaster* Only one for Josh running away (LO)  
**Red-backed Buttonquail** ◊ *Turnix maculosus* Two different individuals flushed off the track at Lake Samsonvale  
**Painted Buttonquail** ◊ *Turnix varius* Two briefly near Brisbane, and one taken by a cat as we watched at Eungella  
**Bush Stone-curlew** ◊ (Bush Thick-knee) *Burhinus grallarius* Common around Cairns  
**Beach Stone-curlew** ◊ (Beach Thick-knee) *Esacus magnirostris* Some breeders a Kakadu Beach in Brisbane  
**Pied Oystercatcher** ◊ (Australian P O) *Haematopus longirostris* Quite a few along the coast, great looks in Cairns  
**Sooty Oystercatcher** ◊ *Haematopus fuliginosus* Some excellent views on the rocks as we headed off Swansea  
**Pied Stilt** ◊ (White-headed S) *Himantopus leucocephalus* Noted throughout, good looks in Brisbane  
**Red-necked Avocet** ◊ *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae* Lots of birds at the Stockton roost in Newcastle  
**Banded Lapwing** ◊ *Vanellus tricolor* Four birds at the Sydney turf farms  
**Masked Lapwing** *Vanellus miles* Common throughout  
**Red-kneed Dotterel** ◊ *Erythrogonys cinctus* Just two this year twitched at a small wetland in Brisbane

**Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* Some in Sydney, and others at various wader roosts  
**Red-capped Plover** ◊ *Charadrius ruficapillus* Some on the flats around Brisbane and Rockhampton  
**Lesser Sand Plover (Mongolian S)** *Charadrius [mongolus] mongolus* Small numbers at the roost in Brisbane  
**Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultia* A few north of Cairns  
**Oriental Plover** ◊ *Charadrius veredus* Two mixing with Pacific Golden Plovers at Newell Beach near Cairns  
**Black-fronted Dotterel** ◊ (B-f Plover) *Euseyornis melanops* Noted throughout  
**Comb-crested Jacana** ◊ *Irediparra gallinacea* Common in the north of our route  
**Whimbrel (Eurasian W)** *Numenius phaeopus* Plenty around Brisbane  
**Far Eastern Curlew** *Numenius madagascariensis* Big numbers in Newcastle and Toorbul  
**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* Regular at various wader roosts  
**Black-tailed Godwit (Eastern B-t G)** *Limosa [limosa] melanuroides* Small numbers along the coast  
**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* Some around Cairns  
**Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* A few dozen on the Cairns esplanade  
**Red Knot** *Calidris canutus* Sparse along the coast as we headed north  
**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *Calidris acuminata* Regular, lots at Hexham in particular  
**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* Singles and duos throughout at various roosts  
**Red-necked Stint** *Calidris ruficollis* Some around Cairns, and a handful further south  
**Latham's Snipe** ◊ *Gallinago hardwickii* Two searched out in a small wetland near Noosa  
**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* Some at the roost in Newcastle, others around Cairns  
**Grey-tailed Tattler** *Tringa brevipes* Plenty in Newcastle, and around Cairns  
**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* Some at Hexham, and others in small waterbodies further north  
**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* Some throughout, good looks at Hexham  
**Silver Gull** ◊ *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae* Regular in coastal areas in the south  
**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* Some around Brisbane and Cairns  
**Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia* Noted regularly as singles  
**Greater Crested Tern** *Thalasseus bergii* Some on the pelagic, and a few from shore  
**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons* A few flying past at Stockton in Newcastle  
**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida* Quite regular on most inland water bodies  
**Pomarine Jaeger (P Skua)** *Stercorarius pomarinus* Good numbers on the pelagic off Swansea



Crested Pigeons are a common species in open parks all over Australia, but who could get tired of this

**Rock Dove (introduced) (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia*** Common around Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane  
**White-headed Pigeon** ◇ *Columba leucomela* Our best looks were around Eungella  
**Spotted Dove (introduced) *Spilopelia chinensis*** Noted in cities and towns throughout  
**Brown Cuckoo-Dove** ◇ *Macropygia phasianella* Good looks in a small forest patch near Kiama, and around Eungella  
**Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris*** It took some time, but everyone eventually had nice looks near KFP  
**Common Bronzewing** ◇ *Phaps chalcoptera* Just a few in the Capertee Valley  
**Brush Bronzewing** ◇ *Phaps elegans* Pair near Swansea in the heath doing a strange bouncing display  
**Crested Pigeon** ◇ *Ocyphaps lophotes* Regular wherever grass and open ground was present  
**Squatter Pigeon** ◇ *Geophaps scripta* Blue eyed subspecies near Rockhampton, red eyed subspecies Mareeba  
**Wonga Pigeon** ◇ *Leucosarcia melanoleuca* Some in Sydney, and confiding at O'Reilly's  
**Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida*** Abundant and confiding on the Cairns esplanade  
**Bar-shouldered Dove** ◇ *Geopelia humeralis* Common in the north  
**Wompoo Fruit Dove** ◇ *Ptilinopus magnificus* Some great looks in Lamington and around Eungella  
**Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus*** Brief views of a male and some females around Eungella and near KFP  
**Rose-crowned Fruit Dove** ◇ *Ptilinopus regina* Excellent looks at Eungella and near KFP  
**Torresian Imperial Pigeon** ◇ *Ducula spilorrhoa* Common in and around Cairns  
**Topknot Pigeon** ◇ *Lopholaimus antarcticus* Seen throughout, but excellent scope views at Eungella



*Pheasant Coucals were seen regularly, but only this one stayed for photos!*

**Pheasant Coucal** ◇ *Centropus phasianinus* Became more and more common as we moved north  
**Pacific Koel** ◇ (Australian K) *Eudynamys orientalis* Heard most days, seen well on our first morning in Sydney  
**Channel-billed Cuckoo** ◇ *Scythrops novaehollandiae* Again heard regularly, seen a few times  
**Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo** ◇ *Chrysococcyx basalis* Great looks at one bird in the coastal heath south of Sydney  
**Shining Bronze Cuckoo** ◇ *Chrysococcyx lucidus* One very confiding bird at Barren Grounds  
**Little Bronze Cuckoo** ◇ *Chrysococcyx minutillus* One of the "Gould's" form seen well at the Cairns Esplanade  
**Pallid Cuckoo** ◇ *Cacomantis pallidus* Nice looks in Capertee, and around Lake Mitchell  
**Fan-tailed Cuckoo** ◇ *Cacomantis flabelliformis* The common forest cuckoo, noted most days  
**Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus*** Singles near Kiama and north towards Cairns  
**Greater Sooty Owl** ◇ *Tyto tenebricosa* After much trying, one came in near O'Reilly's  
**Lesser Sooty Owl** ◇ *Tyto multipunctate* After much more trying, one was found screeching away on Mount Lewis  
**Australian Masked Owl** ◇ *Tyto novaehollandiae* At a nest site in Brisbane courtesy of Rob Morris  
**Eastern Barn Owl *Tyto javanica*** One roosting in Centennial Park on our first day

**Eastern Grass Owl (Australasian G O) *Tyto longimembris*** Somehow located in blustery conditions near Nosoa  
**Powerful Owl** ◇ *Ninox strenua* Adults with their fledgling in Centennial Park, Sydney  
**Barking Owl** ◇ *Ninox connivens* One in the Capertee Valley at night  
**Southern Boobook** ◇ *Ninox boobook* Excellent views on our first attempt in Capertee Valley  
**Marbled Frogmouth** ◇ *Podargus ocellatus* Stonking views of this big frogmouth near O'Reilly's  
**Papuan Frogmouth** ◇ *Podargus papuensis* One on a nest in Cairns  
**Tawny Frogmouth** ◇ *Podargus strigoides* Roosting in Wollongong Botanic Gardens, and one at night in Gloucester



*We had marvelous views of this low-down Tawny Frogmouth in Wollongong!*

**White-throated Nightjar** ◇ *Eurostopodus mystacalis* Sadly heard only at our stakeout in Brisbane (H)  
**Australian Owlet-Nightjar** ◇ *Aegotheles cristatus* Heard often, finally found in the torch on our last night near KFP  
**Australian Swiftlet** ◇ *Aerodramus terraereginae* Common around Cairns  
**White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus* Some in Lamington  
**Oriental Dollarbird** *Eurystomus orientalis* Common, particularly in the north  
**Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher** ◇ *Tanysiptera sylvia* Multiple birds at KFP observed a few times  
**Laughing Kookaburra** ◇ *Dacelo novaeguineae* Regularly encountered, with a good chuckle in Cairns  
**Blue-winged Kookaburra** ◇ *Dacelo leachii* Great views of a male on the power lines south of Cairns  
**Forest Kingfisher** ◇ *Todiramphus macleayii* Became regular as we moved north past Rockhampton  
**Torresian Kingfisher** ◇ *Todiramphus sordidus* Managed to scope one through a tiny hole in the Cairns mangroves  
**Sacred Kingfisher** *Todiramphus sanctus* Regular throughout  
**Azure Kingfisher** *Ceyx azureus* One in Sydney on our first day, and great looks at a pair in Eungella  
**Rainbow Bee-eater** *Merops ornatus* Regularly encountered in open habitats  
**Nankeen Kestrel** *Falco cenchroides* Some seen on various drives, reasonably common  
**Australian Hobby** ◇ *Falco longipennis* Excellent looks at a bird hanging around Hexham Swamp  
**Brown Falcon** ◇ *Falco berigora* Good looks in Capertee, and noted on various drives  
**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* Quite a few during the southern sections of our route this year  
**Cockatiel** *Nymphicus hollandicus* A surprise find, one pair was spotted feeding near Rockhampton  
**Red-tailed Black Cockatoo** ◇ *Calyptorhynchus banksia* Couple of flocks in the north, one group perched in Bowen  
**Glossy Black Cockatoo** ◇ *Calyptorhynchus lathami* Adults with a young bird feeding on *allocasurina* in Katoomba  
**Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo** ◇ *Calyptorhynchus funereus* Great looks near Barren Grounds  
**Gang-gang Cockatoo** ◇ *Callocephalon fimbriatum* Multiple views of this great bird near Barren Grounds  
**Galah** ◇ *Eolophus roseicapilla* Common throughout, but always a pleasure to see!



*Turquoise Parrots were a real treat in the Capertee Valley!*



*The loud squawking of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos was a regular evening sound!*

**Long-billed Corella** ◇ *Cacatua tenuirostris* Feeding flock in a field near Jamberoo

**Little Corella** *Cacatua sanguinea* Single with Sulphurs on our first day in Sydney, then noted regularly throughout

**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** *Cacatua galerita* Common throughout, very loud and noisy!



*Australian King Parrots were happy to pose for us at O'Reilly's!*

**Australian King Parrot** ◇ *Alisterus scapularis* Struggled for a view early on, but had them landing on us at O'Reilly's

**Red-winged Parrot** ◇ *Aprosmictus erythropterus* Superb looks at multiple females and a male near Mount Carbine

**Red-rumped Parrot** ◇ *Psephotus haematonotus* Multiple birds seen well in the Capertee Valley

**Crimson Rosella** ◇ *Platycercus elegans* Fairly common throughout, but intimate encounters on our arms at O'Reilly's

**Pale-headed Rosella** ◇ *Platycercus adscitus* Superb looks at a family of birds feeding in the town of Eungella

**Eastern Rosella** ◇ *Platycercus eximius* Noted in the Sydney region regularly

**Eastern Ground Parrot** ◇ *Pezoporus wallicus* One at Barren Grounds for some, then two more nearby for all

**Turquoise Parrot** ◇ *Neophema pulchella* Multiple encounters with this pretty parrot in Capertee

**Little Lorikeet** ◇ *Parvipsitta pusilla* Some feeding birds showed well in the Capertee Valley

**Rainbow Lorikeet** ◇ *Trichoglossus moluccanus* Seen every day of the tour, with great views a few times

**Scaly-breasted Lorikeet** ◇ *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus* First observed near Gloucester, then most days

**Musk Lorikeet** ◇ *Glossopsitta concinna* We hunted out two birds near Gloucester in a large flowering gum

**Double-eyed Fig Parrot** ◇ *Cyclopsitta diophthalma* Took us a while, but then a superb male low down in Atherton

**Noisy Pitta** ◇ *Pitta versicolor* Encountered a few times around O'Reilly's, and another at Eungella. Heard elsewhere

**Albert's Lyrebird** ◇ *Menura alberti* Female and fledgling scratching around the edges of O'Reilly's one morning

**Superb Lyrebird** ◇ *Menura novaehollandiae* Two males displaying to each other at Gloucester

**Rufous Scrubbird** ◇ *Atrichornis rufescens* Seen running across the track, then more views for those who went bush

**Green Catbird** ◇ *Ailuroedus crassirostris* Some in Sydney, and many more at O'Reilly's

**Spotted Catbird** ◇ *Ailuroedus maculosus* Regularly heard in the Cairns hinterland, with excellent view on Mt Lewis

**Tooth-billed Bowerbird** ◇ (T-b Catbird) *Scenopoeetes dentirostris* Heard regularly, with a showy male in Atherton

**Golden Bowerbird** ◇ *Prionodura newtoniana* One male keeping an eye on us near his splendid bower

**Regent Bowerbird** ◇ *Sericulus chrysocephalus* An abundance of birds coming to be fed at O'Reilly's

**Satin Bowerbird** ◇ *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus* Two exceptional bowers seen, with two well-performing males



*Rainbow Lorikeets are a stunning backyard bird throughout eastern Australia!*



*Red-browed Treecreepers can be difficult to connect with, but we had a few this tour!*

**Great Bowerbird** ◇ *Chlamydera nuchalis* One male at his bower near KFP

**White-throated Treecreeper** ◇ *Cormobates leucophaea* Both the southern and northern subspecies seen

**Red-browed Treecreeper** ◇ *Climacteris erythrops* Great looks in southern Sydney, and more at Gloucester

**Brown Treecreeper** ◇ *Climacteris picumnus* Southern race showed well in Capertee, "Black" performed near KFP

**Lovely Fairywren** ◇ *Malurus amabilis* Beautiful pair showed well near Cairns  
**Variiegated Fairywren** ◇ *Malurus lamberti* This newly split eastern endemic was seen outrageously near Sydney  
**Superb Fairywren** ◇ *Malurus cyaneus* Always a beautiful bird, enjoyed at Lake Wallace in particular  
**Red-backed Fairywren** ◇ *Malurus melanocephalus* First seen at Lake Samsonvale in Brisbane, then further north  
**Southern Emu-wren** ◇ *Stipiturus malachurus* Excellent views of this tiny bird at Barren Grounds  
**Dusky Myzomela** ◇ *Myzomela obscura* Common around Cairns and KFP, noted elsewhere  
**Scarlet Myzomela** ◇ *Myzomela sanguinolenta* Good views near Barren Grounds and Port Macquarie  
**Tawny-crowned Honeyeater** ◇ *Gliciphila melanops* Just one bird located in some burnt heath south of Sydney  
**Eastern Spinebill** ◇ *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris* Regularly observed throughout, good looks south of Sydney  
**Banded Honeyeater** ◇ *Cissomela pectoralis* An uncommon visitor to the Cairns region, a flock was feeding near KFP  
**Brown Honeyeater** ◇ *Lichmera indistincta* Common throughout  
**Crescent Honeyeater** ◇ *Phylidonyris pyrrhopterus* Multiple birds at Gloucester in the high forest  
**New Holland Honeyeater** ◇ *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae* Common around Sydney in particular  
**White-cheeked Honeyeater** ◇ *Phylidonyris niger* Observed best a Swansea and near KFP  
**Painted Honeyeater** ◇ *Grantiella picta* Lovely views of a very responsive individual in the Capertee Valley  
**Striped Honeyeater** ◇ *Plectorhyncha lanceolata* Best sighting was two birds in Capertee  
**Macleay's Honeyeater** ◇ *Xanthotis macleayanus* Common in the vicinity of KFP, some great views of this endemic



One Tawny-crowned Honeyeater was hanging on in a recently burnt area south of Sydney.

**Little Friarbird** ◇ *Philemon citreogularis* Regular from Brisbane north, good looks around Mount Carbine  
**Hornbill Friarbird** ◇ *Philemon yorki* Common in the Cairns region  
**Noisy Friarbird** ◇ *Philemon corniculatus* Some south of Sydney, in Capertee, and elsewhere  
**Blue-faced Honeyeater** ◇ *Entomyzon cyanotis* Regularly found throughout, good looks near Rockhampton  
**Black-chinned Honeyeater** ◇ *Melithreptus gularis* One group of birds in Capertee Valley huddled together on a stick  
**Brown-headed Honeyeater** ◇ *Melithreptus brevirostris* Only noted two or three times in the south, best near Bowral  
**White-throated Honeyeater** ◇ *Melithreptus albogularis* Finally found our first near KFP, then seen near Cairns  
**White-naped Honeyeater** ◇ *Melithreptus lunatus* Common in woodland in the south of our route  
**White-eared Honeyeater** ◇ *Nesoptilotis leucotis* Nice looks at two birds near Mittagong and Bowral  
**Yellow Chat** ◇ *Epthianura crocea* Small numbers at the Rockhampton Saltworks

**White-fronted Chat** ◇ *Epthianura albifrons* Small feeding party seen at Hexham Swamp  
**Rufous-throated Honeyeater** ◇ *Conopophila rufogularis* One bird mixing with White-gaped Honeyeaters near KFP  
**Bar-breasted Honeyeater** ◇ *Ramsayornis fasciatus* Single bird near Mount Carbine  
**Brown-backed Honeyeater** ◇ *Ramsayornis modestus* Seen in the paperbark swamp near KFP, and in the grounds  
**Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater** ◇ *Acanthagenys rufogularis* One flighty bird seen by all in Capertee  
**Little Wattlebird** ◇ *Anthochaera chrysoptera* Common and noisy around Sydney, especially in the heath  
**Red Wattlebird** ◇ *Anthochaera carunculata* Regular in the south, some good looks in Wollongong  
**Regent Honeyeater** ◇ *Anthochaera phrygia* Thin on the ground this year, twitched in Wollongong Botanic Gardens  
**Bridled Honeyeater** ◇ *Bolemoreus frenatus* Common at the top of Mount Lewis, and noted near Atherton  
**Eungella Honeyeater** ◇ *Bolemoreus hindwoodi* One good observation of this loud but sneaky bird near Eungella  
**Yellow-faced Honeyeater** ◇ *Caligavis chrysops* Common throughout, best observed south of Sydney  
**Yellow-tufted Honeyeater** ◇ *Lichenostomus melanops* Some great looks at this beautiful bird in Capertee



*Bell Miners have a particularly annoying call, but are really quite a beautiful honeyeater.*

**Bell Miner** ◇ *Manorina melanophrys* Heard in a few places, with good looks at Gloucester  
**Noisy Miner** ◇ *Manorina melanocephala* Common, seen well around Sydney  
**White-gaped Honeyeater** ◇ *Stomiopera unicolor* Just two birds at our usual stakeout near Mount Carbine  
**Yellow Honeyeater** ◇ *Stomiopera flava* Regular in the Cairns region, also seen at Eungella  
**Varied Honeyeater** ◇ *Gavicalis versicolor* Some along the Cairns Esplanade  
**Mangrove Honeyeater** ◇ *Gavicalis fasciogularis* Two lovely showings at Toorbul in Brisbane  
**Singing Honeyeater** ◇ *Gavicalis virescens* Some in the Rockhampton region  
**Yellow-tinted Honeyeater** ◇ *Ptilotula flavescens* Some of the isolated "Herberton" form seen near Ravenshoe  
**Fuscous Honeyeater** ◇ *Ptilotula fusca* Some good looks at our first main stop in the Capertee Valley  
**White-plumed Honeyeater** ◇ *Ptilotula penicillata* Common in the Capertee Valley in particular

**Graceful Honeyeater** ◊ *Meliphaga gracilis* Heard most days around Cairns, seen well at and near KFP  
**Yellow-spotted Honeyeater** ◊ *Meliphaga notata* As above, but seen more regularly – bolder behavior  
**Lewin's Honeyeater** ◊ *Meliphaga lewinii* Regularly recorded throughout from Sydney to Cairns  
**Eastern Bristlebird** ◊ *Dasyornis brachypterus* Some great showings of a pair at Barren Grounds  
**Spotted Pardalote** ◊ *Pardalotus punctatus* Two males near Mittagong, and in the Capertee  
**Striated Pardalote** ◊ *Pardalotus striatus* One sitting next to a Spotted Pardalote at Mittagong, and noted elsewhere



*Yellow-throated Scrubwrens were regular during the tour.*

**Fernwren** ◊ *Oreoscopus gutturalis* Two very confiding birds on top of Mount Lewis feeding by the path  
**Pilotbird** ◊ *Pycnoptilus floccosus* Phenomenal looks at this skulker near Barren Grounds  
**Rockwarbler** ◊ (*Origma*) *Origma solitaria* My usual pair performed well south of Sydney  
**Chestnut-rumped Heathwren** ◊ *Calamanthus pyrrhopygius* Some exceptional sightings south of Sydney  
**Speckled Warbler** ◊ *Pyrrholaemus sagittatus* One in Capertee showed well near the main road  
**Atherton Scrubwren** ◊ *Sericornis kerri* Great studies of two birds in particular building a nest by the Mount Lewis road  
**White-browed Scrubwren** ◊ *Sericornis frontalis* Common in most forests and scrubs on the tour  
**Yellow-throated Scrubwren** ◊ *Sericornis citreogularis* Some south of Sydney, and many around O'Reilly's  
**Large-billed Scrubwren** ◊ *Sericornis magnirostra* Some around O'Reilly's, and at KFP  
**Weebill** ◊ *Smicrornis brevirostris* Great views in Capertee, and the yellower race near Mount Carbine  
**Brown Gerygone** ◊ *Gerygone mouki* Common throughout in wet forest  
**Mangrove Gerygone** ◊ *Gerygone levigaster* One bird found in some stunted mangroves in Brisbane  
**Large-billed Gerygone** ◊ *Gerygone magnirostris* Eventually seen by all on a side road near KFP  
**White-throated Gerygone** ◊ *Gerygone olivacea* Seen near Mittagong, and out past Mount Carbine  
**Fairy Gerygone** ◊ *Gerygone palpebrosa* Two birds near Mareeba in open woodland  
**Mountain Thornbill** ◊ *Acanthiza katherina* Fairly common atop Mount Lewis  
**Brown Thornbill** ◊ *Acanthiza pusilla* Common in the south, especially in the Sydney / Newcastle region



*Chestnut-rumped Heathwrens proved somewhat common in the heath south of Sydney this year!*



*Atherton Scrubwrens are restricted to a tiny highland area in the Cairns region, coexisting with Golden Bowerbirds and Chowchillas!*

**Buff-rumped Thornbill** ◇ *Acanthiza reguloides* Just one flock in sloped woodland in Capertee  
**Yellow-rumped Thornbill** ◇ *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa* Some around Lithgow and in Capertee  
**Yellow Thornbill** ◇ *Acanthiza nana* Noted on a few occasions as we made our way north. Best in Capertee  
**Striated Thornbill** ◇ *Acanthiza lineata* Excellent views south of Sydney  
**Southern Whiteface** ◇ *Aphelocephala leucopsis* Just one pair of this declining woodland species in Capertee  
**Grey-crowned Babbler** ◇ *Pomatostomus temporalis* Two birds lucked across near Mareeba  
**White-browed Babbler** ◇ *Pomatostomus superciliosus* Small family group in Capertee



*Australian Logrunners employ a weird foraging technique which involve splaying their legs out and digging little holes!*

**Australian Logrunner** ◇ *Orthonyx temminckii* Common around O'Reilly's in the forest, and very confiding  
**Chowchilla** ◇ *Orthonyx spaldingii* One feeding family found on Mount Lewis allowed real close approach  
**Eastern Whipbird** ◇ *Psophodes olivaceus* Common throughout in wet forest, and tame at O'Reilly's  
**Spotted Quailthrush** ◇ *Cinclosoma punctatum* Superb views of a pair in the Capertee Valley  
**Yellow-breasted Boatbill** ◇ *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer* One on the road up Mount Lewis, others heard  
**White-breasted Woodswallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus* Common in the north  
**Masked Woodswallow** ◇ *Artamus personatus* Some mixing with White-browed Woodswallows in Capertee  
**White-browed Woodswallow** ◇ *Artamus superciliosus* First noted at Barren Grounds, common in the Capertee  
**Black-faced Woodswallow** ◇ *Artamus cinereus* Not uncommon around Mount Carbine  
**Dusky Woodswallow** ◇ *Artamus cyanopterus* Some at Barren Grounds, and also in Capertee  
**Black Butcherbird** ◇ *Melloria quoyi* Lovely views of a confiding bird in the picnic ground at Centenary Lakes  
**Australian Magpie** ◇ *Gymnorhina tibicen* Common throughout, but a lovely bird!  
**Grey Butcherbird** ◇ *Cracticus torquatus* Noted throughout  
**Pied Butcherbird** ◇ *Cracticus nigrogularis* Noted throughout, particularly around Brisbane  
**Pied Currawong** ◇ *Strepera graculina* In Sydney and around O'Reilly's we had the best views  
**Grey Currawong** ◇ *Strepera versicolor* Very lucky to see three birds feeding by the road in the Blue Mountains  
**Barred Cuckooshrike** ◇ (Yellow-eyed C) *Coracina lineata* Two near Mission Beach, and others near KFP  
**Black-faced Cuckooshrike** *Coracina novaehollandiae* Common throughout, seen most days  
**White-bellied Cuckooshrike** *Coracina papuensis* Seen most days in the north  
**Common Cicadabird** *Edolisoma tenuirostre* Heard around Sydney, seen on the Cairns coast and near KFP  
**White-winged Triller** ◇ *Lalage tricolor* Some in Lithgow and the Capertee, one near Lake Mitchell

**Varied Triller** ◊ *Lalage leucomela* Abundant and commonly heard in the northern forests  
**Varied Sittella** ◊ *Daphoenositta chrysoptera* Great looks at this strange species near Mittagong  
**Crested Shriketit** ◊ (Eastern S) *Falcunculus [frontatus] frontatus* One south of Sydney, two in Capertee  
**Olive Whistler** ◊ *Pachycephala olivacea* Seen high up in the Gloucester forest while searching for scrubbirds  
**Grey Whistler** ◊ *Pachycephala simplex* Heard a few times near KFP, and one good observation  
**Australian Golden Whistler** ◊ *Pachycephala pectoralis* Regularly heard and seen well throughout  
**Rufous Whistler** *Pachycephala rufiventris* Regularly heard and seen well throughout  
**Bower's Shrikethrush** ◊ *Colluricincla boweri* A noisy roving party was found atop Mount Lewis  
**Little Shrikethrush** ◊ *Colluricincla megarhyncha* Regular in the forests as we moved north  
**Grey Shrikethrush** ◊ *Colluricincla harmonica* Common in a variety of habitats, seen well on the road to O'Reilly's  
**Australasian Figbird** ◊ *Sphecotheres vieilloti* Both the southern and the northern subspecies seen well  
**Olive-backed Oriole** ◊ *Oriolus sagittatus* One south of Sydney, others noted throughout  
**Green Oriole** ◊ (Yellow O) *Oriolus flavocinctus* Common around Cairns  
**Spangled Drongo** *Dicrurus bracteatus* Most common around Cairns



*Sleek-looking Black Butcherbirds were seen around Cairns.*

**Willie Wagtail** *Rhipidura leucophrys* A welcome addition to the list on most days of the tour  
**Northern Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura rufiventris* One bird near Mareeba  
**Grey Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura albiscapa* Regularly seen throughout, with the mountain form *keasti* near Cairns  
**Rufous Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura rufifrons* Regularly heard and seen a few times in wet forests  
**Spectacled Monarch** ◊ *Symposiachrus trivirgatus* Common from Brisbane north  
**Black-faced Monarch** ◊ *Monarcha melanopsis* We often heard the see-saw call, and saw many  
**White-eared Monarch** ◊ *Carterornis leucotis* One brief adult at Eungella for some, and a juvenile near KFP for all  
**Pied Monarch** ◊ *Arses kaupi* One juvenile on Mount Lewis, and two displaying adults near KFP  
**Magpie-lark** ◊ (Australian M-l) *Grallina cyanoleuca* Common throughout as a roadside bird  
**Leaden Flycatcher** ◊ *Myiagra rubecula* One pair showed very well near Mittagong, others noted

**Satin Flycatcher** ◇ *Myiagra cyanoleuca* One pair at Gloucester in the high forest allowed close study  
**Shining Flycatcher** ◇ *Myiagra alecto* One male in the Cairns mangroves  
**Restless Flycatcher** ◇ *Myiagra inquieta* Some in the Capertee Valley  
**Torresian Crow** *Corvus orru* Common in the north  
**Forest Raven** ◇ (Relict R) *Corvus [tasmanicus] boreus* Three birds searched out at Port Macquarie  
**Little Raven** ◇ *Corvus mellori* Some around Mittagong, and in Capertee  
**Australian Raven** ◇ *Corvus coronoides* Common around Sydney, and noted on other days towards Brisbane  
**White-winged Chough** ◇ *Corcorax melanorhamphos* Great looks in Capertee  
**Apostlebird** ◇ *Struthidea cinerea* One noisy flock near Mount Carbine  
**Paradise Riflebird** ◇ *Ptiloris paradiseus* Two fantastic males on display posts near O'Reilly's  
**Victoria's Riflebird** ◇ *Ptiloris victoriae* One superb male on a display post on Mount Lewis, and a female in Atherton  
**Grey-headed Robin** ◇ *Heteromyias cinereifrons* Common on Mount Lewis and around Atherton  
**White-browed Robin** ◇ *Poecilodryas superciliosa* One bird found near Mareeba  
**Mangrove Robin** ◇ *Peneoenanthe pulverulenta* After some patience, once appeared in the Cairns mangroves  
**Pale-yellow Robin** ◇ *Tregellasia capito* Most common in the grounds of KFP  
**Eastern Yellow Robin** ◇ *Eopsaltria australis* A regularly seen bird in forests throughout  
**Hooded Robin** ◇ *Melanodryas cucullata* A few pairs in the Capertee Valley  
**Lemon-bellied Flyrobin** ◇ (L-b Flycatcher) *Microeca flavigaster* Just one pair near Lake Mitchell, heard at KFP  
**Jacky Winter** ◇ *Microeca fascinans* Some in the Capertee Valley, noted elsewhere  
**Rose Robin** ◇ *Petroica rosea* Best views at Gloucester, also noted at O'Reilly's  
**Flame Robin** ◇ *Petroica phoenicea* Only females this year at Gloucester  
**Scarlet Robin** ◇ *Petroica boodang* One lovely male near Katoomba, and another two at Gloucester  
**Horsfield's Bush Lark (Australian B L)** *Mirafra javanica* Quite a few in the Capertee, and near Rockhampton  
**Red-whiskered Bulbul (introduced)** *Pycnonotus jocosus* Noted near Kiama  
**White-backed Swallow** ◇ *Cheramoeca leucosterna* Great looks at this elegant swallow in the Capertee Valley  
**Welcome Swallow** *Hirundo neoxena* Regular throughout the tour  
**Fairy Martin** ◇ *Petrochelidon ariel* Noted throughout  
**Tree Martin** ◇ *Petrochelidon nigricans* Noted throughout in smaller numbers than Fairy Martin  
**Australian Reed Warbler** ◇ *Acrocephalus australis* Good looks around Sydney and Lake Wallace  
**Little Grassbird** ◇ *Poodytes gramineus* Tricky to see well, but a few birds at Hexham Swamp  
**Rufous Songlark** ◇ *Cincloramphus mathewsi* Abundant in Capertee this year  
**Brown Songlark** ◇ *Cincloramphus cruralis* Some around Kiama, in the Capertee, and at Rockhampton  
**Tawny Grassbird** *Cincloramphus timoriensis* Multiple birds around Swansea and Newcastle, then further north  
**Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* Great looks at the distinctive Australian form at the Rockhampton Saltworks  
**Golden-headed Cisticola (Bright-headed C)** *Cisticola exilis* Regularly encountered  
**Silveryeye** ◇ *Zosterops lateralis* Heard most days, some good views in Sydney and around Eungella  
**Metallic Starling (Shining S)** *Aplonis metallica* Large flocks around Cairns, with two nesting colonies found  
**Common Myna (introduced)** *Acridotheres tristis* Regularly encountered  
**Common Starling (introduced)** *Sturnus vulgaris* Common in the south  
**Russet-tailed Thrush** ◇ (R-t Ground T) *Zoothera heinei* Eventually seen by all in Lamington  
**Bassian Thrush** ◇ (Australian Ground T) *Zoothera lunulate* Common in Lamington, others at Gloucester  
**Common Blackbird (introduced)** *Turdus merula* One in Sydney  
**Mistletoebird** ◇ *Dicaeum hirundinaceum* Noted a few times, some good looks  
**Olive-backed Sunbird (Yellow-bellied S)** *Cinnyris jugularis* Regular around Cairns  
**House Sparrow (introduced)** *Passer domesticus* Common in small towns, particularly in the south  
**Beautiful Firetail** ◇ *Stagonopleura bella* Just one near Barren Grounds this year  
**Diamond Firetail** ◇ *Stagonopleura guttata* A few small flocks in Capertee  
**Red-browed Finch** ◇ (R-b Firetail) *Neochmia temporalis* Common throughout the tour  
**Crimson Finch** ◇ *Neochmia phaeton* Some observed south of Cairns  
**Plum-headed Finch** ◇ *Neochmia modesta* One sought out in Capertee up a dry river bed  
**Black-throated Finch** ◇ *Poephila cincta* One large flock near Mount Carbine  
**Zebra Finch** ◇ *Taeniopygia guttata* Common in the Capertee Valley  
**Double-barred Finch** ◇ *Taeniopygia bichenovii* Regularly encountered in the south  
**Blue-faced Parrotfinch** *Erythrura trichroa* Just one bird feeding furtively with Red-browed Finches in Atherton

**Scaly-breasted Munia (introduced) *Lonchura punctulata*** Small numbers noted around Cairns  
**Chestnut-breasted Mannikin** ♦ *Lonchura castaneothorax* Abundant in the north, with great encounters at KFP  
**Australian Pipit** ♦ *Anthus australis* Many in Capertee and around Rockhampton in particular  
**European Goldfinch (introduced) *Carduelis carduelis*** Some around Lithgow much to the delight of Andre



Adorable Mareeba Rock Wallabies are easy to see at Granite Gorge!

## MAMMALS

**Total number of mammal species recorded: 33**

**Platypus *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*** Excellent looks at this delightful creature near Eungella  
**Short-beaked Echidna *Tachyglossus aculeatus*** One fantastic specimen by the road near Barren Grounds  
**Northern Brown Bandicoot *Isodon macrourus*** Some at KFP  
**Long-nosed Bandicoot *Perameles nasuta*** Some at KFP  
**Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*** One sleepy individual near Noosa  
**Musky Rat Kangaroo *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*** A few brief views on Mount Lewis and around Atherton  
**Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo *Dendrolagus lumholtzi*** Female with young in Atherton with Alan's Wildlife Tours  
**Agile Wallaby *Macropus agilis*** Some noted in the north and around KFP  
**Eastern Grey Kangaroo *Macropus giganteus*** Seen at multiple points throughout the tour  
**Common Wallaroo (Euro) *Macropus robustus*** Small numbers in Capertee  
**Red-necked Wallaby *Macropus rufogriseus*** Most common around Gloucester  
**Mareeba Rock Wallaby *Petrogale mareeba*** Plenty at Granite Gorge  
**Red-legged Pademelon *Thylogale stigmatica*** One at O'Reilly's, more at KFP  
**Red-necked Pademelon *Thylogale thetis*** Common at Gloucester and O'Reilly's  
**Swamp Wallaby *Wallabia bicolor*** Some at Barren Grounds and in Capertee  
**Sugar Glider *Petaurus breviceps*** One at O'Reilly's, and one at KFP  
**Short-eared Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus caninus*** Some around the O'Reilly's dining hall  
**Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula*** Common in the south at night  
**Greater Glider *Petauroides volans*** Abundant around Gloucester

**Lemuroid Ringtail Possum** *Hemibelideus lemuroides* Some around Atherton  
**Common Ringtail Possum** *Pseudocheirus peregrinus* Common at Gloucester  
**Green Ringtail Possum** *Pseudochirops archeri* In Atherton and at KFP  
**Common Wombat** *Vombatus ursinus* Multiple along the road in Capertee  
**European Hare (introduced)** *Lepus europaeus* Noted near Gloucester  
**European Rabbit (introduced)** *Oryctolagus cuniculus* Noted regularly  
**Fawn-footed Melomys** *Melomys cervinipes* At both O'Reilly's and KFP  
**Bush Rat** *Rattus fuscipes* One at O'Reilly's, more at KFP  
**White-tailed Giant Rat (W-t Rat)** *Uromys caudimaculatus* One spotlight in Cairns  
**Red Fox (introduced)** *Vulpes vulpes* Two near Rockhampton  
**Common Bottlenose Dolphin (C Bottle-nosed D)** *Tursiops truncatus* Some on the Swansea pelagic  
**Black Flying Fox** *Pteropus Alecto* Noted up the mid-north Queensland coast  
**Spectacled Flying Fox** *Pteropus conspicillatus* Some at the orchard in KFP  
**Grey-headed Flying Fox** *Pteropus poliocephalus* Plentiful in Centennial Park Sydney



*A rare out-of-water view of Platypus while he was having a scratch!*



*Lemuroid Ringtail Possums are endemic to the highlands forests of the Atherton Tablelands.*

## REPTILES

Total number of reptile species recorded: 13

**Northern Snapping Turtle** *Elseya dentata* Many in the Platypus river at Eungella

**Eastern Snake-necked Turtle (E Long-n Turtle)** *Chelodina longicollis* Two crossing the Capertee road

**Asian House Gecko** *Hemidactylus frenatus* Common in the north at our accommodations

**Northern Leaf-tailed Gecko** *Saltuarius cornutus* One on Mount Lewis, one in Atherton at night

**Land Mullet** *Bellatorias major* Observed around Noosa by some of us

**Boyd's Forest Dragon** *Hypsilurus boydii* One at KFP sleeping on the side of a tree

**Southern Angle-headed Dragon** *Hypsilurus spinipes* Just a few around O'Reilly's

**Eastern Water Dragon** *Intellagama lesueurii* Common around Sydney and Brisbane

**Eastern Bearded Dragon** *Pogona barbata* One big male in Capertee

**Jacky Dragon** *Amphibolurus muricatus* One by the side of the road in Capertee

**Lace Monitor** *Varanus varius* Some in Capertee, and around Noosa

**Southern Dwarf Crowned Snake** *Cacophis krefftii* One on the road spotlighting at Gloucester

**Red-bellied Black Snake** *Pseudechis porphyriacus* Some at Gloucester, and at Lake Samsonvale



*Southern Angle-headed Dragon at O'Reilly's.*



*The bizarre Chameleon Gecko is one of the reptile endemics keenly sought by herpers in the Wet Tropics!*