



The gorgeous Purple-crowned Fairywren was undoubtedly a highlight of the tour (Pete Morris)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA INCLUDING CHRISTMAS ISLAND

21/24 SEPTEMBER – 10 OCTOBER 2013

LEADERS: PETE MORRIS and SIMON MITCHELL



The super Christmas Boobook was a potential banana-skin but didn't cause us any problems! (Pete Morris)

Our 2013 Western Australia tour, with a pre-tour adventure to Christmas Island, will go down as a major ornithological success. It was a tour of contrasts. Commencing in Perth, we spent a couple of days on hot, humid, and seabird-filled Christmas Island before returning to Perth and exploring the southwest of the country. Our week or so here was cool and windy and all of the clothing was needed, but once we boarded the flight to Broome for the final week and a half up in the northwest, the fleeces could be put away again! It was hot, indeed very hot at times, but fortunately there were enough cool hours for us to find our quarries. The total of around 316 species was no doubt respectable but unimportant. What really counted is that just about every major target species was seen, and nearly all of them were seen very well. From the Abbot's Boobies and Christmas Boobooks of Christmas Island, to the clean sweep of southwest endemics (which included great views of the notorious trio of Noisy Scrubbird, Western Whipbird and Western Bristlebird), to the northwest, where goodies such as Yellow Chat, Gouldian Finch and Black Grasswren all obliged, we enjoyed success after success. We also marvelled at some stunning landscapes, saw some other fascinating mammals and reptiles and enjoyed (?!) some good Aussie hospitality (especially the chats about the cricket).

We assembled in Perth in time for the longish flight up to Christmas Island where we arrived after lunch. What to do? Get the cars and get the hard work out of the way. So we headed out aiming to stay out until dark. We quickly found most of the endemics and specialities, but it was not until dusk



We could hardly take our eyes off the fabulous Golden Boobies (Pete Morris)

that we saw the fabulous Christmas Boobook, peering down at us through bright golden eyes. We now knew that we could relax and enjoy the island and the spectacles it had to offer.

Much time was spent admiring seabirds. Huge frigatebirds constantly drifted over and large concentrations included Great and Christmas Island Frigatebirds of all ages and a few male Lesser Frigatebirds to boot. Red-footed and Brown Boobies could be found all over, the former perching in trees, the latter with fluffy young along the coast, whilst offshore they joined ranks in huge feeding flocks, swirling around after their prey. More special were the prehistoric-looking Abbot's Boobies and we



Tree-nesting Abbot's Boobies were another fabulous feature of Christmas Island (Pete Morris)



Landbirds on Christmas Island included (clockwise from top left) Christmas Island Thrush (currently lumped in Island Thrush), Christmas Island Goshawk (this is a juvenile - the taxonomy of this form is confused) and Christmas White-eye (Pete Morris)

spent much time watching the antics of these very special birds. They preferred the tall forest, and here we enjoyed seeing them crashing down to land in the canopy, only to emerge with a large stick for nest-building purposes. Mating pairs emitted loud growls from the canopy, and one day we were even shown one in the hand! Along the coast, stunning Red-tailed Tropicbirds drifted along, coming down to nest under bushes, whilst stunning Golden Bosunbirds (the local form of White-tailed Tropicbird) performed elegant courtship flights. Interestingly, a few stark white individuals were mixed amongst them. Offshore, and along some of the cliffs, we also found good numbers of Brown Noddies.

Much of our attention was also focused on the lovely tropical forest, and although not diverse from a birding perspective, it did house some special birds. Most common were the smart little Christmas White-eyes and Christmas Island Thrushes, but hulking Christmas Imperial Pigeons were also pretty conspicuous. Christmas Island Swiftlets fluttered over the forest but more difficult was the taxonomically confused Christmas Island Goshawk, which took a little longer to track down, though in the end we got great looks at several. Other landbirds were few and far between. Nankeen Kestrels and Emerald Doves were fairly numerous, and one day we tracked down two pairs of Asian Koels.

One could not write about our visit with out mentioning the crabs though. In particular the huge Robber Crabs, comical Red Crabs and bearded Blue Crabs were very special, and we soon started adding to our crab lists! We also had a memorable time at some spectacular blowholes and a few



Part of the group admire one of the many Red Crabs we saw! (Pete Morris)

jars at the Golden Bosunbird (the local pub, conveniently situated next to our hotel!!!). By the time we left the island, it was only the most hardcore of the crablisters that had much left to search for!

We had a morning in Perth to recover. Some of the group saw a pair of Buff-banded Rails early doors, and later we explored a small reserve which had an excellent selection of species including Pink-eared and Blue-billed Ducks, Australian Shoveler, Australian Hobby, Little Grassbird and Western Gerygone, not to mention a large number of more common and widespread species.

After lunch, we headed for the airport to pick up the remainder of the party, some of the group adding planes and a few birds to their respective lists. We then embarked upon the drive to Narrogin. It wasn't to far, but inevitably we were distracted, first by some impressive Red-tailed Black Cockatoos and a male Scarlet Robin, and, soon before our destination, a very impressive flock of Long-billed Black Cockatoos which came down to drink and flew around us noisily. There must have been the best part of 100!

We were up early the following morning, but it was not in vain as we soon had a Southern Boobook fixed in the spotlight beam, followed by some eerily-crying Bush Stone-Curlews and a Brush-tailed Possum. Once it became light it got a little tougher for a while. An Echidna was much appreciated and Long-billed and Short-billed Black Cockatoos side-by-side were good. It took a while to find our other targets but gradually they fell one-by-one. Colourful Western Rosellas, ground-loving Rufous Treecreepers and smart Blue-breasted Fairywrens obliged, and we were delighted to find a brilliant pair of Western Shriketits though Western Yellow Robins and Western Thornbills (accompanied by Inland Thornbills) took a bit more tracking down though ultimately showed well. The supporting cast of numerous honeyeaters including the recently-split Swan River Honeyeater, colourful Red-capped Robins and Striated and Spotted Pardalotes all added value, and by the time we left, we were pretty content with the haul. By then it was pretty cool, wet and breezy, and our first pies at lunch were much appreciated.

The drive down to the Stirling Ranges was pretty uneventful and we arrived in time to get settled in, only to discover that the local eating establishment had suddenly closed and we needed to drive 40km for dinner! Luckily the pub was fine, a good job as we were to do it all again the following night! The following day was again cool, but we were on a mission, and although it took a while, we man-



The yet-to-be-split Western Shriketit was seen superbly well at two different sites (Pete Morris)

aged to get everyone good scope views of the ultra-elusive Western Whipbird. Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters were abundant, and other goodies included Western Spinebill and the recently split Western Fieldwren. Sadly the calling Painted Buttonquails were less obliging, only showing to one or two of the group. Moving on, we soon found some sumptuous Hooded Plovers and an unexpected flock of Banded Stilts. We also enjoyed fabulous Splendid Fairywrens, our first Emus and, to round the morning off, some brilliant Red-capped Parrots. After a rather rural lunch, the afternoon was a little quieter, though we did see some fabulous orchids and other wildflowers, and admired a pair of hunting Square-tailed Kites. The evening was rounded off for some with another pair of superb Western Shriketits.



The fantastic Blue-breasted Fairywren gave incredible views at the Stirling Range Retreat (Pete Morris)

The following morning failed to deliver very much new. We did enjoy more stunning views of south-west near-endemics including Blue-breasted Fairywrens, Rufous Treecreepers and Western Yellow Robins as well as nesting Restless Flycatchers, and we added a few species such as Shining Bronze Cuckoo and Fan-tailed Cuckoo, and some exquisite new orchids including Dragon Orchid! The drive to the coast was pretty straightforward, and with time on our hands, we headed for the attractive reserve at Two Peoples Bay. Here we admired the beautiful and scenic coast whilst failing to find many birds, though after some effort a few goodies did pop up, including a staggeringly beautiful male Red-winged Fairywren, some lovely little Southern Emu-wrens and an obliging pair of Sooty Oystercatchers.



Sooty Oystercatchers put on a wonderful display at Two Peoples Bay (Pete Morris)

The following day was the big one, and our success with the skulkers was to hinge on it! We arrived at Cheyne's Beach, admired a Brush Bronzewing and then took up our positions. It was a long, cold and damp vigil; not many of us had contemplated shivering and numb fingers before a holiday to Australia, but we got them here! Fortunately the weather was not too bad, and the Noisy Scrubbirds gave everyone enough chances to see them well. Whilst waiting, we also got fantastic views of White-breasted Robins and Western Wattlebirds, though a flyover Rock Parrot left us wanting, needing, more! Hot drinks and snacks got the blood to the fingers again, and as the weather brightened, we headed for the heath. Here, Western Bristlebirds soon obliged and a fantastic Red-eared Firetail provided the icing on the cake! It didn't matter that the Western Whipbirds here failed to show well!

Driving back to Albany, we stopped to look at some unusually large gatherings of White-necked Herons, and also took a detour to The Gap where numerous Flesh-footed Shearwaters and a few albatrosses could be seen offshore, but by now, the weather was really closing in and we headed for home, a hot shower, a hot dinner and a couple of drinks!

With few targets left in the southwest, we made a beeline to an area for one of them, and soon had some smart Regent Parrots lined up. Back-tracking a little, we headed west and soon ran into flocks of Western Corellas. The first grubby individuals rooting around in a field were less than impressive,

but our next encounter provided the champagne moment of the trip as a proud 'Muir's Cockatoo' (the name of the local form) performed repeated somersaults for us (or for his mate) whilst guarding his nest. It was only after many successful somersaults that he failed, fell from his perch and flew away, as if embarrassed! Priceless! Continuing on we saw many Black Swans, some distant Red-necked Avocets and more White-breasted Robins, and then embarked upon the long drive southwest to Cape Leeuwin. The good news here was that the weather had brightened up and the wind dropped, allowing us to enjoy the spectacular coastline, where the Indian and Pacific meet. A few seabirds drifted offshore but sadly the bad news was that there were no Rock Parrots to be seen. Chunky Pacific Gulls and a few other bits and bobs entertained, but we resigned ourselves to a lengthy journey the following day!

And so it was. We headed north up good highways, bypassed Perth and arrived in Lancelin around noon. A minute later we were watching Rock Parrots! Not only that, but they performed unbelievably well for as long as we wanted! A few Brown Noddies passed offshore and we retired to the local establishment for well-earned refreshments! Heading back to Perth, we paused for the other form of Long-billed Corella (Butler's), and arrived in time to explore part of Herdsman's Lake. This superb wetland not only gave us the hoped for Australasian, Hoary-headed and Great Crested Grebes, displaying Musk Ducks and many common waterfowl, but we also enjoyed Nankeen Night Heron at point blank range and saw two surprises in the form of the rare Freckled Duck and the nomadic Black-tailed Native-Hen. It had been a good day!



Rock Parrots took some time to track down but were well worth the effort! (Pete Morris)

In the morning we had a few hours to explore the wetlands around Perth, finding more Blue-billed and Pink-eared Ducks and seeing confiding Little Grassbirds and other by now familiar species. The temperatures were warming and it was feeling almost spring-like by the time we got to Perth Airport. By the time we got to Broome, the spring weather had disappeared. We had now entered a furnace.

To say it was warm was a slight understatement! That afternoon we explored a few areas close to town, largely the sewage ponds and the mangroves. Birding was generally a bit tough, especially at the sewage ponds where everything was distant and through a fence, though impressive numbers of Plumed Whistling Ducks were good! We did however find a few specialities in the mangroves including the smart Red-headed Myzomela, Canary White-eyes, Mangrove Fantails and localized Dusky Gerygones. From our hotel, we could see the vast mudflats of Roebuck Bay, with tiny shorebirds scattered across them.

The following morning we explored Roebuck Bay. We began in the mangroves where we again struggled, though we did find a couple of female White-breasted Whistlers. As the tide came up, more and more shorebirds and terns were forced up into view and soon we were watching Great Knots, Grey-tailed Tattlers, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Mongolian and Greater Sandplovers and other Asian-flyway waders. As the roosts gathered we began to scrutinize the flocks, and despite the heat, some diligent searching pulled out some of the more sought-after species, including several lovely Oriental Plovers, a couple of Broad-billed Sandpipers and a single juvenile Asiatic Dowitcher, hidden amongst the hordes of Siberian Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits. With the hard work done, we returned to the hospitable Broome Bird Observatory and relaxed, watching a series of birds coming to drink from the comfort of the shade house. An adult and juvenile Brown Goshawk were frequenting the area and giving great views, various doves and honeyeaters came down to drink, fidgety Paperbark Flycatchers flitted around and a Hooded Robin was a surprise. And to add to the black and white surprises, we then found a male Black Honeyeater, a rare nomad and another new bird for the tour! With the temperature now in the 40s (over 100 in old money), we retired for lunch and a break. Refreshed (but still warm), we explored a shady caravan park where an amazing Tawny Frogmouth peered at us at eye-level and then made our way to an area of swamp and paperbark forest. This proved to be productive, with several singing Mangrove Gerygones, our only Spotted Harrier of the trip, several migrant Wood Sandpipers, an Eastern Yellow Wagtail and a Pacific Swift. As the sun slipped lower it cooled down, and we enjoyed our first Red-winged Parrots on the journey back.



A juvenile Asiatic Dowitcher (back, just right of centre) was eventually found in the hordes of waders in Roebuck Bay (Pete Morris)



This Tawny Frogmouth gave great views as it sat oblivious to us in a caravan park! (Pete Morris)

For our final morning in Broome we decided to explore another area of mangroves further to the north. This proved to be a good choice as before we'd even tucked into breakfast we were watching the seldom-seen Kimberley Flyrobin. These proved to be not uncommon here and we went on to see another couple of pairs. We also managed great views of Broad-billed Flycatcher, a species which had been elusive until then, and great views of males of both White-breasted and Mangrove Golden Whistlers. Some petrified forest provided an interesting diversion, gorgeous Red-backed Fairywrens were much admired, and on the coast we found a few terns (including Greater and Lesser Crested Terns and an adult *longipennis* Common Tern) and shorebirds, and also found a Brown Booby and a



White-breasted Whistler (left) and Kimberley Flyrobin both showed well in the mangroves north of Broome (Pete Morris)

Lesser Frigatebird. After an excellent morning's work, we headed back to Broome where a last look around produced little of note.

It was a short hop from Broome to the equally warm Kununurra where, having organized ourselves, we spent a pleasant afternoon around Lake Kununurra familiarizing ourselves with the common birds. Green Pygmy-Geese and Raja Shelducks were two excellent new wildfowl and were somewhat easier on the eye than the common but awkward-looking Magpie Geese. Smart Comb-crested Jacanas and Australasian Darters graced every pool, White-browed Crakes skulked around the fringes, Yellow-tinted and Rufous-throated Honeyeaters were common, colourful Crimson Finches fed quietly on the ground, a Collared Sparrowhawk gave great views, and Brush and Pallid Cuckoos perched up for good views. A turtle at the edge of the lagoon caused the greatest excitement, but the less said about that, the better!!

An early start was required to arrive at Lake Argyle soon after sunrise, and we were glad we did as it didn't take too long to warm up here! We spent a very enjoyable morning cruising around the lake enjoying the many spectacles on offer. The numbers of birds were quite incredible with literally thousands of ducks including the biggest gatherings of Hardheads I've ever seen. As we cruised around, we gradually added new species including Wandering Whistling-Ducks, stately Black-necked Storks, neat Pied Herons and a pair of Brolgas. We also paused to admire Euros (wallabies not the currency) and cute Short-eared Rock-Wallabies. We spent much time on a low-lying island where we were greeted by a couple of superb Little Curlews and three Long-toed Stints! Here our main quarry was the rare Yellow Chat, and we were not disappointed as several showed superbly. Our first Australian Bustard flew by, Horsfield's Bush-Lark and Brown Quail were flushed and a variety of water-birds included more Freckled and Pink-eared Ducks and several Australian Pratincoles. On our way back north on this vast lake we stopped at a few other spots, adding Sandstone Shrike-Thrush and strange White-quilled Rock-Pigeons to our ever-growing lists.



The stunning Yellow Chat showed brilliantly at Lake Argyle (Pete Morris)



The superb Spinifex Pigeon (left) and Little Curlew were two more of the goodies seen at Lake Argyle (Pete Morris)

It had been a brilliant morning, but our excellent guide's knowledge did not stop there. As soon as we disembarked the boat, we were led to a museum where we saw our first spikey-crested Spinifex Pigeon, and admired Double-barred, Masked and Long-tailed Finches coming down to drink. After an action-packed morning, many of the group chose to take it easy for the afternoon while we got organized for our expedition! Some of the group did however continue the cause, adding Channel-billed Cuckoo and Green Oriole amongst others.

Fortunately we managed an early night, for the following morning we were on the road at an extremely unsociable hour. As we turned on to the (in?)famous Gibb River Road, a Spotted Nightjar lifted up, and soon we had this fixed in the spotlight. Moving on, we enjoyed a picnic at sunrise at the scenic Pentecost River, before stopping for some interesting finches. These turned out to be the rare *Pictorella* Mannikin, and while watching these other birds appeared. A flock of smart Varied Sittellas were followed by the holy grail of finches, a fine Gouldian Finch. Not a bad start. Continuing on we made several roadside stops, often adding new species such as Pacific Baza, White-bellied Cuckooshrike, Leaden Flycatcher, and we also got fantastic views of a roadside Australian Bustard. Shortly before reaching the Drysdale River, Little Woodswallow and Black-breasted Buzzard were also added! Having 'fuelled up' and made the most of the cold drinks, we took a picnic down by the river itself, where gorgeous Purple-crowned Fairywrens found a place in all of our hearts! We still had a way to go, and things were not helped by the fact that the front bull-bar on my Toyota Prado was by now hanging-off somewhat precariously! Various Heath-Robinson attempts to patch up the problem just about did the job, and by late afternoon we made our way into the Mitchell Falls campground, greeted by a yellow-faced Partridge Pigeon. By the time we'd organized the camp, cooked dinner and got sorted, I think we were all ready for bed...

We were out at first light as we didn't want to waste a second of cooler air! As we wandered into the spinifex-covered rocky slopes, Variegated Fairywrens appeared, a pair of Northern Rosellas posed and Bar-breasted Honeyeaters obliged. Northern Fantails flitted by, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos flew noisily over, and Silver-crowned Friarbirds squawked from the canopy. After a while, we found our first major target, the localized Kimberley Honeyeater, which showed extremely well. A little later a buzz and a rattle got the pulses racing, but alas, the Black Grasswrens only showed to a few of us. As the heat increased, many fruitless minutes were spent until eventually we relocated the



Ok, not the best photos ever, but Kimberley Honeyeater (left) and Black Grasswren are two seldom-seen birds! (Pete Morris)

wrens, and this hulking bird, the most-impressive of the grasswrens, showed superbly in the scope for all to admire! Success, and we retired for breakfast and hid from the heat! We potted for a bit more, but it was getting fiercely hot, and although we admired more Partridge Pigeons and a Silver-backed Butcherbird, we decided that the best course of action was to pack-up camp and head for the Drysdale River. It took us most of the rest of the day to get there, and we were not aided by a flat tyre and still dodgy bull-bar! Sadly, the welcome we received at the Drysdale River was not what we'd hoped for, especially given the information we'd been given by an employee the previous day, and we ended up camping again. Somewhat dejected, but unsurprised by the Australian (lack-of) hospitality, we soldiered on!

Any bad feelings were forgotten by dawn the following morning as a Barking Owl peered down at us, giving incredible views! More stunning Purple-crowned Fairywrens were much-admired, Collared Sparrowhawks were busy and numerous Banded Honeyeaters were new for the trip. Sadly we only



Gouldian Finch (left) and Rainbow Bee-eater added colour along the Gibb River Road (Pete Morris)



This Australian Bustard seemed to have been charred - perhaps trying to protect a nest or its young? (Pete Morris)

managed to hear the elusive Northern Shrike though. We also admired another pair of Pacific Bazaes, one of which was devouring a huge stick insect, almost as long as itself (most likely *Eurycnema osiris* - thanks Dave & Sue). We once again packed up camp and headed for civilization. Various stops along the way produced a few interesting sightings including a small flock of Oriental Plovers, a somewhat charred-looking Australian Bustard, some confident Rainbow Bee-eaters and more Little Woodswallows and Black-breasted Buzzards. The highlight of the journey however was a stunning flock of intensely-coloured Gouldian Finches, which included both red-headed and black-headed males. We also passed a large bushfire which actually, unbeknown to us, had closed the road!

The following morning was somewhat easier, as we explored an area on the outskirts of Kununurra. Here we once again met with success. A small flock of smart Chestnut-breasted Mannikins held a rare pair of Yellow-rumped Mannikins, a Channel-billed Cuckoo popped-up and a pair of Pacific Koels put in a welcome appearance. A patch of nearby scrub held a lovely trio of smart Buff-sided Robins, and by the time we sat down for breakfast, our work was almost done. Just for a change it was warming up, and our drive around an agricultural area was largely devoid of interesting birds until we found the desired quarry, a smart little flock of Star Finches. A decent siesta was in order, and the late afternoon session produced little new, though we did admire six excited Blue-winged Kookaburras chasing each other around.

With most likely targets in the bag, we headed east from Kununurra to explore some areas of woodland. With the recent high temperatures, many of the areas were quite literally smouldering, and we

had to choose where to look carefully! We managed a few new birds including Grey-fronted Honeyeater, a smart pair of White-throated Gerygones and the hoped-for Black-tailed Treecreepers. It was then just a case of freshening up and trying to stay cool for our flights! Of course we could not resist one last stop, at Kununurra Sewage Ponds. Well, where else could one end a tour? Here we admired more Australian Pratincoles and Freckled Ducks and added a surprise Australian Crake, the last new bird of the tour! As we dropped the just about intact 4wds off at the airport, the mercury hit 43°C, but fortunately the beers in the airport were a little cooler!

It had been a great adventure, through varied landscapes and very varied climates. Importantly, we'd got around without too many hitches, survived the temperatures and seen just about all of the birds we'd set out to find. As we boarded our long flights home (or for some on to Southern Australia) we could reflect back on many wonderful memories from this fascinating country.



A fantastic performance from Barking Owls led to them becoming our bird-of-the-trip! (Pete Morris)



The gorgeous Red-winged Fairywren is a Southwest Australia endemic (Pete Morris)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

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).

Conservation threat categories and information are taken from *Threatened Birds of the World*, BirdLife International's magnificent book on the sad status of the rarest 10% of the world's avifauna, and updates on the BirdLife website: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/home>

(E)= Endangered, **(V)** = Vulnerable, **(NT)** = Near Threatened, **(DD)** = Data Deficient.

For polytypic species, the subspecies seen on the tour, where known, is placed in parentheses at the end of the species comment.

Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* Good numbers in the Stirling Ranges, and a few others in the southwest (*rothschildi*).

Brown Quail ◊ *Coturnix ypsilophora* (NL) Just 1, flushed by some of the group at Lake Kununurra (*australis*).

Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus* Feral chickens everywhere on Christmas Island where introduced.

Maggie Goose *Anseranas semipalmata* Common in the Kununurra area.
Plumed Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna eytoni* Common in the north. First seen at Broome sewage ponds.
Wandering Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata* First seen on the Lake Argyle boat trip. A few elsewhere (*australis*).
Black Swan *Cygnus atratus* First seen on the way to the Stirling Ranges, and then plenty at several sites.
Freckled Duck *Stictonetta naevosa* 2 at Herdsman Lake, 3 at Lake Argyle and 3 at Kununurra sewage ponds. A bonus!
Raja Shelduck *Tadorna radjah* Fairly common in the Kununurra area. A smart duck (*rufitergum*).
Australian Shelduck *Tadorna tadornoides* Common in the southwest where first seen in Perth.
Pink-eared Duck *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* First seen in Perth. Also seen well around Broome and Kununurra.
Maned Duck *Chenonetta jubata* Common and widespread. First seen in Perth, 25/9.
Green Pygmy Goose *Nettapus pulchellus* A beautiful duck that was common in the Kununurra area.



Green Pygmy Geese (left) and Raja Shelduck both showed very well around Kununurra (Pete Morris)

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* A single dubious introduced individual at Herdsman Lake in Perth.
Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa* Common and widespread. First seen in Perth (*rogersi*).
Australasian Shoveler *Anas rhynchos* A few very well seen at sites in Perth (nominate)
Grey Teal *Anas gracilis* Common and widespread. First seen in Perth.
Hardhead *Aythya australis* First seen in Perth, but huge numbers on the Lake Argyle boat trip were notable (nominate).
Blue-billed Duck *Oxyura australis* (NT) Several seen at various sites in Perth. A good bird to see.
Musk Duck *Biziura lobata* 5 at Herdsman Lake, inc. an amazing displaying male. Also seen at Lake Monger.
Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophris* (EN) Singles noted off the Gap and off Cape Leeuwin.
Salvin's Albatross *Thalassarche salvini* (VU) A singles off the Gap and a couple off Cape Leeuwin.
Flesh-footed Shearwater *Puffinus carneipes* Common off the Gap and Cape Leeuwin. The default dark shearwater!
Australasian Grebe *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae* First seen in Perth, we enjoyed many great views (nominate).



Australasian Grebe (left) and Australian (Great) Crested Grebe (a potential split) showed well around Perth (Pete Morris)

Hoary-headed Grebe *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus* First seen in Perth with small numbers at various sites there.
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* First seen at Herdsman Lake. Great views of this potential split *australis*.
Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda* Great views of several on a daily basis on Christmas Island (*westralis*).
White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus* Cracking birds - good numbers daily on Christmas Island (*fulvus*). See note.



The tropicbirds were a highlight of Christmas Island where many Red-tailed Tropicbirds (top) and White-tailed Tropicbirds showed well. The latter mostly comprised of stunning Golden Boobies (left), but some white birds were also seen (Pete Morris)

Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* (NT) First seen on Lake Argyle and a few others noted (*australis*).
Australian White Ibis *Threskiornis moluccus* First seen in Perth and common for much of the trip (nominate).
Straw-necked Ibis *Threskiornis spinicollis* First seen in Perth and common for much of the trip.
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* First seen at Herdsman Lake, and a few others noted, especially in the north.
Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia* First seen at Broome sewage ponds, and a few others seen in the north.
Yellow-billed Spoonbill *Platalea flavipes* First seen near Cheyne's Beach, with 1 other in Perth.
Nankeen Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus* Best views were at Herdsman Lake, Perth (*hilli*).
Striated Heron *Butorides striata* A few seen around Broome (*stagnatilis*).
Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Only seen on the Lake Argyle boat trip, and a single near to Kununurra.

White-necked Heron *Ardea pacifica* First seen on the drive to Dryandra. Common in the southwest - up to 25 a day.
Eastern Great Egret *Ardea modesta* 1-2 on Christmas Island and a few at various mainland sites. Not yet split by the IOC.
Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* Fairly common in the north. First seen near to Broome (*plumifera*).
Pied Heron *Egretta picata* First seen on Lake Argyle and also seen at the Kununurra sewage ponds. Smart bird!
White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae* First seen in Perth, and widespread in small numbers.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Common in the north. First seen at Broome Bird Observatory, (*nigripes*).
Pacific Reef Heron *Egretta sacra* Two seen on Christmas Island and 1 for some at Broome (nominate).
Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus* First seen in Perth, and fairly widespread in suitable habitat thereafter.
Christmas Frigatebird *Fregata andrewsi* (CR) Small numbers daily on Christmas Island, including a few males daily.



Small numbers of Christmas Frigatebirds were seen, including a few males, whilst Red-footed Boobies (above left) and Abbot's Boobies were both seen in relatively large numbers (Pete Morris)

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor* The common frigatebird with 100s seen daily on Christmas Island (nominate).

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* A few males over Settlement on Christmas Island and a female north of Broome (nominate).

Australasian Gannet *Morus serrator* A few off the Gap and Cape Leeuwin in the southwest.

Abbott's Booby *Papasula abbotti* (E) Great views of up to 100 on a daily basis on Christmas Island - superb!

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* Very common and photogenic on Christmas Island (*rubripes* - Hawaiian R-f B).

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* Hundreds daily on Christmas Island and a single north of Broome (*plotus* Forster's B B).

Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos* First seen in Perth and a few at various other sites (nominate).

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* Widespread in small numbers. First seen in Perth.

Australian Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius* First seen at Cape Leeuwin where 100s were present (*hypoleucos*).

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* A grand total of around 15 noted (*novaehollandiae*).

Australasian Darter *Anhinga novaehollandiae* Common and vocal in the north. First seen at Broome (nominate).

Eastern Osprey *Pandion cristatus* First seen at Cheyne's Beach, and about 10 more noted during the trip.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus axillaris* First seen in Perth, with 6 or 7 more noted during the tour.

Square-tailed Kite *Lophoictinia isura* Good views of a pair in the Stirling Ranges, and another at Two Peoples Bay.

Black-breasted Buzzard *Hamirostra melanosternon* Seen well on the way to and from the Mitchell Plateau.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata* Great views on the way to the Mitchell Plateau, and at the Drysdale River (nominate).

Little Eagle *Hieraaetus morphnoides* First seen at Cape Leeuwin, and another on the journey the following day.

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax* First seen near to Dryandra Forest and several more in the southwest (nominate).

Christmas Island Goshawk *Accipiter [fasciatus] natalis* Four seen well on Christmas Island; both adults and juvs.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus* Two forms seen: nominate in the southwest and *didimus* in the northwest.

Collared Sparrowhawk *Accipiter cirrocephalus* A few seen around Kununurra and Drysdale River (nominate).

Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans* A total of six seen, the first of which was at Cheyne's Beach.

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis* A single seen at the Mangrove Gerygone site north of Broome.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* Common in the north where first seen around Broome (*affinis*).

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus* Widespread, especially in the north. First seen in Perth.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Common in the north. First seen at Broome (*girrenera*).

White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* First seen at Two Peoples Bay. Best were the close pair north of Broome!



These superb White-bellied Sea-Eagles were seen 'up-close and personal' north of Broome (Pete Morris)

Nankeen Kestrel *Falco cenchroides* Common on Christmas Island and widespread on the mainland
Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis* A few noted, including at Eric Singleton Reserve and Herdsman Lake (nominate).
Brown Falcon *Falco berigora* First seen at Cheyne's Beach, but more common in the north (*occidentalis*).
Australian Bustard *Ardeotis australis* Best views were on the journeys to and from the Mitchell Plateau.



An Australian Bustard along the Gibb River Road (left) and a pair of Black-tailed Nativehens in Perth (Pete Morris)

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis* (NL) A pair for some of the group in Perth.
Australian Crake *Porzana fluminea* A single at Kununurra sewage ponds was a surprise.
White-browed Crake *Porzana cinerea* A few were seen well around Kununurra.
Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio [porphyrio] melanotus* Two forms; *melanotus* in the north and *bellus* in the south.
Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa* Most common and conspicuous in the wetlands around Perth (nominate).
Black-tailed Nativehen *Tribonyx ventralis* A few at Herdsman Lake, Perth, and 1 at the Pentecost River.
Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* Most common around Perth. Another potential split *australis* - Australian Coot.
Brolga *Grus rubicunda* A pair on the Lake Argyle boat cruise and another pair near the Drysdale Station.
Painted Buttonquail *Turnix varius* Heard and glimpsed by some in the Stirling Ranges (nominate).
Bush Stone-Curlew *Burhinus grallarius* Several seen at Dryandra Forest, a pair at Drysdale and others heard.
Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris* First seen near to Albany, and small numbers elsewhere.
Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus* Best were the superb pair at Two Peoples Bay (*occidentalis*).
White-headed Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus* Fairly common, first noted in Perth.
Banded Stilt *Cladorhynchus leucocephalus* c100 seen on the salt lake along in Stirling Ranges NP. A nice bonus!
Red-necked Avocet *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae* c12 distantly on Lake Muir were the only ones
Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles* Common in the north. First seen in Broome (nominate).
Red-kneed Dotterel *Erythronyx cinctus* First seen at Broome Sewage Ponds, and a few others in the north.
Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory. Nine others noted.
Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory (nominate).
Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus* First seen on the salt lake in Stirling Ranges NP. Several subsequently.
Mongolian Plover *Charadrius mongolus* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory, in Roebuck Bay.
Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* First seen at Broome Bird Observatory, in Roebuck Bay (nominate).
Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus* 5 at Broome Bird Observatory, 12+ by Drysdale Station and 3 over Kununurra.



A pair of wonderful Hooded Dotterels (or Plovers) were one of the highlights of our visit to Stirling Ranges National Park (Pete Morris)

- Hooded Dotterel** *Thinornis cucullatus* (VU) A stunning pair with a chick on the salt lake in Stirling Ranges NP.
Black-fronted Dotterel *Euseyonis melanops* First seen at Broome Sewage Ponds, and others seen in the north.
Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea* A very attractive species that was first seen in Kununurra.
Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* (NT) Great views of a juv near to Broome Bird Observatory. Phew!
Eastern Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa [limosa] melanuroides* (NT) Good numbers at Broome Bird Observatory.
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* Good numbers at Broome Bird Observatory, (Siberian B-t G - *baueri/menzbieri*).
Little Curlew *Numenius minutus* Just 2 seen, during the Lake Argyle boat cruise, but they gave great views!
Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* Common around Broome Bird Observatory (*variegatus*).
Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* (VU) A couple seen near to Broome Bird Observatory.
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* A couple seen on the Lake Argyle boat cruise.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* The largest count (12) was at the Broome Bird Observatory.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* First seen north of Broome, and a few others noted subsequently.



Comb-crested Jacanas and White-headed Stilts spooked at Lake Argyle (Pete Morris)

Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes* Small numbers seen at Broome Bird Observatory and Barred Creek.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* Small numbers seen at Broome Bird Observatory and Barred Creek.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Heard on Christmas Island. First seen at Cheyne's Beach on the main tour.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory (nominate).

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* (VU) 100s seen near to Broome Bird Observatory, in Roebuck Bay. Excellent to see.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* c200 seen near to Broome Bird Observatory, in Roebuck Bay.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* A few seen at Broome Bird Observatory and Barred Creek (nominate).

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* c50 seen near to Broome Bird Observatory, and a few at other sites.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* Best views of were of the 3 that showed well during the Lake Argyle boat cruise.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory and plenty at Lake Argyle.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* Small numbers seen near to Broome Bird Observatory..

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* 2 seen well near to Broome Bird Observatory (*sibirica* - Eastern B-b S).

Australian Pratincole *Stiltia isabella* Many seen on Lake Argyle and others seen at Kununurra sewage ponds. Smart!

Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus* Common on Christmas Island and a few seen off Lancelin (*pileatus*).

Silver Gull *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae* Common in all coastal areas (nominate).

Pacific Gull *Larus pacificus* Several seen well along the south coast. Monstrous beaks! (*georgii*).

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* Many around Broome Bird Observatory, but not identified to form.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* First seen in Perth, a maximum count of c20 at Lake Argyle.

Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii* The commonest tern along the coasts, including the southwest (*cristatus*).

Lesser Crested Tern *Thalasseus bengalensis* A few seen near to Broome Bird Observatory (*torresii*).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* A few seen near to Broome Bird Observatory and Barred Creek (*sinensis*).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* A few at Barred Creek including an adult in summer plumage (*longipennis* Siberian C T)

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* First seen at Broome Sewage Ponds, (*javanicus*).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* Grim introduced Feral Pigeons!

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* Introduced nonsense (in my opinion anyway!).

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis* Ditto!

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica natalis* A few daily on Christmas Island, some of which showed well.

Common Bronzewing *Phaps chalcoptera* First seen on the drive to Narrogin, and generally fairly common.

Brush Bronzewing *Phaps elegans* Fantastic views of a few at Cheyne's Beach. A really smart bird (*occidentalis*).

Crested Pigeon *Ocyphaps lophotes* Nominate in the south, *whitlocki* in the north.

Spinifex Pigeon *Geophaps plumifera* 1 at Lake Argyle and others on the way to and from the Mitchell Plateau (nominate).

Partridge Pigeon *Geophaps smithii* (VU) Great views in the Mitchell Falls campground of the yellow-faced *blaaui*.

White-quilled Rock Pigeon *Petrophassa albipennis* Seen well at Lake Argyle and the Mitchell Plateau (nominate).

Diamond Dove *Geopelia cuneata* First seen near to Lake Argyle, and generally fairly common in the north.

Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida* First seen at Broome Sewage Ponds, and again, common in the north (nominate).

Bar-shouldered Dove *Geopelia humeralis* First seen around Broome and common in the north (nominate).

Christmas Imperial Pigeon *Ducula whartoni* (NT) Common on Christmas Island with good views of several daily.



Christmas Imperial Pigeons (left) were common on Christmas Island. In the north we saw several White-quilled Rock Pigeons (Pete Morris)

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus banksii* Two forms: *naso* in the south and *macrorhynchus* in the north.
Short-billed Black Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus latirostris* (EN) First seen in Dryandra Forest. Many great views!
Long-billed Black Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus baudinii* (E) 100+ on the drive to Narrogin, and seen in Dryandra.
Galah *Eolophus roseicapilla* Two forms, nominate in the south and *kuhli* in the north.
Western Corella *Cacatua pastinator* See note.
Little Corella *Cacatua sanguinea* First seen in Perth (where introduced). First 'genuine' ones near to Broome (nominate).
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita* First seen by the Mitchell Falls campground. A few others seen (*fitzroyi*).



The Western Corella (top) was a real comedian! In the southwest we also found the other two endemic cockatoos: Long-billed Black Cockatoo (left) and Short-billed Black Cockatoo - bills best seen on the flying birds (Pete Morris)

Cockatiel ◊ *Nymphicus hollandicus* (NL) Two seen by Martin, flying over at the Stirling Ranges.
Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus moluccanus* Common around Perth where introduced (nominate).
Red-collared Lorikeet *Trichoglossus rubritorquis* Fairly common in the north, first seen at Broome Sewage Ponds.
Purple-crowned Lorikeet *Glossopsitta porphyrocephala* Best views were at the nest holes in Dryandra Forest.
Red-capped Parrot *Purpureicephalus spurius* A real beauty, first seen along Salt River Road in Stirling Ranges NP.
Australian Ringneck *Barnardius zonarius* First seen in Perth where the form is *semitorquatus* - Twenty-eight Parrot.
Northern Rosella *Platycercus venustus* A pair seen well near to the Mitchell Falls campground (*hilli*).



Who's a pretty boy then? Elegant Parrot (left) and Western Rosella (Pete Morris)

- Western Rosella** *Platycercus icterotis* Two forms seen: *xanthogenys* in Dryandra Forest, and nominate near to the coast.
- Elegant Parrot** *Neophema elegans* First seen in Dryandra Forest and common in the Stirling Ranges (*carteri*).
- Rock Parrot** *Neophema petrophila* After some effort, c10 gave fantastic views at Lancelin. Great birds (nominate).
- Red-winged Parrot** *Aprosmictus erythropterus* First seen north of Broome and common around Kununurra (*coccineopterus*).
- Regent Parrot** *Polytelis anthopeplus* First seen on the drive to Narrogin, but best views were near Cranbrook (nominate).
- Pheasant Coucal** *Centropus phasianinus* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory. Huge! (*melanurus*).
- Asian Koel** *Eudynamys scolopaceus* Excellent views of 2 pairs in Settlement, Christmas Island (*malayanus*).
- Pacific Koel** *Eudynamys orientalis* Great views of a pair by Kununurra Golf Club, (*subcyanocephalus*).
- Channel-billed Cuckoo** *Scythrops novaehollandiae* A few seen well in Kununurra. Amazing birds!
- Shining Bronze Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx lucidus* Best views were of 1 in the Stirling Ranges (*plagosus*).
- Pallid Cuckoo** *Cacomantis pallidus* One seen well on wires in Kununurra and others heard.
- Fan-tailed Cuckoo** *Cacomantis flabelliformis* First seen in the Stirling Ranges NP, and seen at Cheyne's Beach.
- Brush Cuckoo** *Cacomantis variolosus* Common and vocal in the north, first seen in Kununurra (nominate).
- Barking Owl** *Ninox connivens* Brilliant views of a pair at the Drysdale River, superb! (*peninsularis*).
- Southern Boobook** *Ninox boobook* Great views of 1 in Dryandra Forest, and others heard (*ocellata*).
- Christmas Boobook** *Ninox natalis* (VU) Great views of 2-3 and 1-2 more heard on Christmas Island. A smart endemic.
- Tawny Frogmouth** *Podargus strigoides* Best views were of 1 in Broome caravan park (*phalaenoides*).
- Spotted Nightjar** *Eurostopodus argus* Decent spotlight views of a couple at the start of the Gibb River Road.
- Australian Owlet-nightjar** *Aegotheles cristatus* (H) Sadly, only heard in the Stirling Ranges.
- Christmas Island Swiftlet** *Collocalia [esculentia] natalis* Common on Christmas Island. Not generally split yet.
- Pacific Swift** *Apus pacificus* A great migrant, seen north of Broome and over Kununurra (nominate).
- Oriental Dollarbird** *Eurystomus orientalis* Common in the north, first seen in Broome (*pacificus*).
- Laughing Kookaburra** *Dacelo novaeguineae* Several seen in the southwest where introduced
- Blue-winged Kookaburra** *Dacelo leachii* Common in the north. Best were 6 together at Kununurra Golf Club (nominate).
- Sacred Kingfisher** *Todiramphus sanctus* First seen near to Broome and a few around Kununurra (nominate).
- Azure Kingfisher** *Ceyx azureus* Good views at Kona Caravan Park in Kununurra (*ruficollaris*).
- Rainbow Bee-Eater** *Merops ornatus* Common in the north, with many great views.
- Noisy Scrubbird** *Atrichornis clamosus* (EN) Good views of a pair on the road twice at Cheyne's Beach. Best not to blink!
- Great Bowerbird** *Chlamydera nuchalis* Common in the north, first seen near to Broome Bird Observatory (*orientalis*).
- Rufous Treecreeper** *Climacteris rufus* Great views in Dryandra Forest and in the Stirling Ranges. Often on the ground!
- Black-tailed Treecreeper** *Climacteris melanurus* Great views of a pair east of Kununurra on our final morning (nominate).
- Variiegated Fairywren** *Malurus lamberti* First seen near to the Mitchell Falls campground (*assimilis* - Purple-backed F).
- Blue-breasted Fairywren** *Malurus pulcherrimus* Great views in Dryandra Forest and around the Stirling Range Retreat.
- Red-winged Fairywren** *Malurus elegans* Brilliant views of a pair at Two Peoples Bay. Real stunners.
- Splendid Fairywren** *Malurus splendens* A real cracker, first seen in the Stirling Ranges NP (nominate).
- Purple-crowned Fairywren** *Malurus coronatus* Brilliant views of several at the Drysdale River. Superb birds! (nominate).

Red-backed Fairywren *Malurus melanocephalus* Another cracker, first seen north of Broome (*cruentatus*).

Southern Emu-wren *Stipiturus malachurus* Another corker, seen well at several sites in the southwest (*westernensis*).



Southern Emuwren (left) were seen at several sites in the southwest. This male Black Honeyeater was a complete surprise (Pete Morris)

Black Grasswren *Amytornis housei* (NT) Great views of a pair near to the Mitchell Falls campground. Great birds. Huge!

Black Honeyeater *Sugomel nigrum* A male at Broome Bird Observatory, was a complete surprise!

Red-headed Myzomela *Myzomela erythrocephala* Common around Broome, especially in the mangroves (*nominata*).

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater *Gliciphila melanops* Common in the heaths of the southwest (*nominata*).

Western Spinebill *Acanthorhynchus superciliosus* First seen at Mt Trio and several more seen well. A stunner.

Banded Honeyeater *Cissomela pectoralis* First seen along the Drysdale River, where common. A few others seen.

Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta* First seen in Perth, and common for much of the tour.

New Holland Honeyeater *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae* First seen in Perth, and common in the southwest (*longirostris*).

White-cheeked Honeyeater *Phylidonyris niger* Common in Perth and in heaths around the southwest (*gouldii*).

Little Friarbird *Philemon citreogularis* First seen around Broome and then common in the north (*sordidus*).

Silver-crowned Friarbird *Philemon argenticeps* Best views were up on the Mitchell Plateau (*nominata*).

Blue-faced Honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis* A few in the north where first seen in Kununurra (*albipennis*).

Brown-headed Honeyeater *Melithreptus brevirostris* A few seen well in Dryandra Forest (*leucogenys*).

White-throated Honeyeater *Melithreptus albugularis* First seen along the Gibb River Road (*nominata*).

Swan River Honeyeater *Melithreptus chloropsis* First seen in Dryandra Forest and many more seen well later.

White-eared Honeyeater *Nesoptilotis leucotis* A couple seen well in Dryandra Forest. Surprisingly a write-in (*novaenoriae*).

Yellow Chat *Epthianura crocea* Brilliant views of 6+, including several males at Lake Argyle (*nominata*).

White-fronted Chat *Epthianura albifrons* A couple seen at the salt lake in Stirling Ranges NP.

Rufous-throated Honeyeater *Conopophila rufogularis* Common in the north, especially around Kununurra.

Bar-breasted Honeyeater *Ramsayornis fasciatus* A few seen well, especially near to the Mitchell Falls campground.

Western Wattlebird *Anthochaera lunulata* Seen by some in Perth, but best views for all were at Cheyne's Beach.

Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera carunculata* Common in the southwest. First seen in Perth (*woodwardi*).

Yellow-throated Miner *Manorina flavigula* Two forms: *obscura* (Dusky M) in the southwest and *lutea* in the northwest.

White-gaped Honeyeater *Stomiopera unicolor* Common in the Broome and Kununurra areas.

Singing Honeyeater *Gavicalis virescens* Two forms: *nominata* in the southwest and *forresti* in the northwest.

Yellow-tinted Honeyeater *Ptilotula flavescens* Common on the Kununurra leg of the tour (*nominata*).

Grey-fronted Honeyeater *Ptilotula plumula* Best views were along the start of the Lake Argyle Road (*planasi*).

Yellow-plumed Honeyeater *Ptilotula ornata* Common in Dryandra Forest, and in the Stirling Ranges.

Kimberley Honeyeater *Meliphaga fordiana* Great views of a pair near to the Mitchell Falls campground.



Western Bristlebird (left) and Western Fieldwren were two specialities of the southwestern heaths (Pete Morris)

- Western Bristlebird** *Dasyornis longirostris* (EN) Brilliant views of a few at Cheyne's Beach. The easiest skulker!
- Spotted Pardalote** *Pardalotus punctatus* Just one seen in Dryandra Forest (*nominatus*).
- Striated Pardalote** *Pardalotus striatus* Two forms: *substriatus* in the southwest and *uropygalis* (Northern P) in the northwest.
- Western Fieldwren** *Calamanthus montanellus* Brilliant views at 2 sites in Stirling Ranges NP. A Birdquest lifer!
- White-browed Scrubwren** *Sericornis frontalis* Very common in the southwest (*maculatus* - Spotted S).
- Weebill** *Smicrornis brevirostris* Two forms: *occidentalis* in the southwest and *flavescens* (Yellow W) in the northwest.
- Mangrove Gerygone** *Gerygone levigaster* Good views of a few in paperbark forest north of Broome (*nominatus*).
- Western Gerygone** *Gerygone fusca* First seen in Perth, and several more seen. Sweet song (*nominatus*).
- Dusky Gerygone** *Gerygone tenebrosa* Several seen well at various mangrove sites around Broome (*nominatus*).
- White-throated Gerygone** *Gerygone olivacea* Great views of a pair east of Kununurra on our last day (*rogersi*).
- Inland Thornbill** *Acanthiza apicalis* Several in the southwest, first seen at Dryandra Forest, (*apicalis* - Broad-tailed T).
- Western Thornbill** *Acanthiza inornata* Great views of in Dryandra Forest, several with pollen-stained foreheads.
- Yellow-rumped Thornbill** *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa* First seen by all of us near to Cranbrook (*nominatus*).
- Grey-crowned Babbler** *Pomatostomus temporalis* Common in the north - conspicuous and untidy nests (*rubeculus*).
- Western Whipbird** *Psophodes nigrogularis* Great views at Mt Trio (*oberon*) and heard/glimpsed at Cheyne's Beach (*nominatus*).
- Silver-backed Butcherbird** *Cracticus argenteus* Males seen well at Mitchell Falls campground and Drysdale River (*colletti*).
- Grey Butcherbird** *Cracticus torquatus* Common in the southwest – great fluty song (*leucopterus*).
- Pied Butcherbird** *Cracticus nigrogularis* A couple in the southwest but more common in the north (*picatus*).
- Australian Magpie** *Gymnorhina tibicen* Two forms: *dorsalis* (Western M) in the sw and *uropygalis* (Northern M) in the nw.
- Grey Currawong** *Strepera versicolor* Frequent along the roadsides in the southwest (*plumbea*).
- White-breasted Woodswallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus* Common in the north (*leucopygalis*).
- Black-faced Woodswallow** *Artamus cinereus* Small numbers seen well in the north (*melanops* - Black-vented W).
- Dusky Woodswallow** *Artamus cyanopterus* Great to see them snuggling up together in Dryandra Forest (*perthi*).
- Little Woodswallow** *Artamus minor* Singles seen well on the way up and down the Gibb River Road (*derbyi*).
- Black-faced Cuckooshrike** *Coracina novaehollandiae* Pretty common throughout (*melanops*).
- White-bellied Cuckooshrike** *Coracina papuensis* Common for the last few days in the north (*hypoleuca*).
- White-winged Triller** *Lalage tricolor* Seen briefly in the southwest but much more common in the north.
- Varied Sittella** *Daphoenositta chrysoptera* Groups seen well along the Gibb River Road (*leucoptera* - White-winged S).
- Northern Shriketit** *Falcunculus [frontatus] whitei* (H) Sadly, only heard along the Drysdale River.
- Western Shriketit** *Falcunculus [frontatus] leucogaster* See note.

Australian Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis* Several great views in the southwest (*fuliginosa*).
Mangrove Golden Whistler *Pachycephala melanura* Best were the pair at Barred Creek, north of Broome (*robusta*).
Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris* Two forms: nominate in the southwest and *falcata* in the northwest.
White-breasted Whistler *Pachycephala lanioides* Best was the superb male at Barred Creek (nominate).
Grey Shrikethrush *Colluricincla harmonica* Two forms: *rufiventris* (Western S) in the sw and *brunnea* (Brown S) in the nw.
Sandstone Shrikethrush *Colluricincla woodwardi* Excellent views of one during the Lake Argyle boat cruise.
Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus* Best views were near to the Mitchell Falls campground (*affinis*).
Green Oriole *Oriolus flavocinctus* Quite common around Kununurra, with many seen well there (nominate).
Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys* Common and widespread. First seen in Perth (nominate).
Northern Fantail *Rhipidura rufiventris* A few seen near to the Mitchell Falls campground, (*isura*).
Grey Fantail *Rhipidura albiscapa* Quite common in the southwest, first seen in Dryandra Forest (*preissi*).
Mangrove Fantail *Rhipidura phasiana* The commonest of the mangrove specialities around Broome.
Magpie-lark *Grallina cyanoleuca* Two forms: nominate for much of the tour and *neglecta* around Kununurra.
Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula* Seen well along the Gibb River Road and .
Broad-billed Flycatcher *Myiagra ruficollis* Our best views were at Barred Creek, north of Broome (*mimikae*).
Paperbark Flycatcher *Myiagra nana* Very common in the north. First seen at Broome Bird Observatory.



Clockwise, from top left, Broad-billed Flycatcher and Mangrove Fantail were two more of Broome's mangrove specialities. In the southwest, Western Yellow Robin and White-breasted Robin were two more of the endemic stars! (Pete Morris)

Restless Flycatcher *Myiagra inquieta* First seen in Dryandra Forest, and easy to see at the Stirling Range Retreat.
Torresian Crow *Corvus orru* Common on the northern leg of the tour (*ceciliae*).
Australian Raven *Corvus coronoides* Common on the southwest leg of the tour (*perplexus*).
Buff-sided Robin *Poecilodryas cerviniventris* Great views of 3 near to Kununurra Golf Course. Superb birds.
Western Yellow Robin *Eopsaltria griseogularis* Seen well in Dryandra Forest and at Stirling Ranges (*rosinae*).
White-breasted Robin *Eopsaltria georgiana* A smart endemic robin. Our best views were at Cheyne's Beach.
Hooded Robin *Melanodryas cucullata* A male seen at Broome Bird Observatory was a surprise (*picata*).
Kimberley Flyrobin *Microeca [flavigaster] tormenti* Great views of several at north of Broome. Drab but rarely-seen!
Jacky Winter *Microeca fascinans* Two forms: *assimilis* in the southwest and *pallida* along the Gibb River Road.

Scarlet Robin *Petroica boodang* A cracker, seen on the drive to Narrogin and in the Stirling Ranges (*campbelli*).
Red-capped Robin *Petroica goodenovii* At least two males seen well in Dryandra Forest. Another cracker.
Horsfield's Bush Lark *Mirafrja javanica* One flushed a couple of times on an island at Lake Argyle (*halli*).
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* One seen briefly near to the Golf Course on Christmas Island (*gutturalis*).
Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena* Common, for much of the tour. First seen in Perth (*carteri*).
Fairy Martin *Petrochelidon ariel* First seen near to Broome Bird Observatory, and common in the north.
Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans* Common, first seen in Perth (nominate).
Australian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus australis* Two forms: *gouldi* in the southwest and *carterae* in the northwest.
Rufous Songlark *Megalurus mathewsi* Great views of a couple in the Stirling Ranges NP.
Little Grassbird *Megalurus gramineus* Seen well at the Eric Singleton Reserve and Lake Monger in Perth (*thomasi*).
Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* First seen at Lake Argyle and several around Kununurra (*lineocapilla*).
Christmas White-Eye *Zosterops natalis* (NT) Very common, with 100s seen daily on Christmas Island.
Canary White-eye *Zosterops luteus* Common around Broome especially in mangrove areas (*balstoni*).
Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis* Common in the southwest. The distinctive *chloronotus* lacks grey and buff tones.
Christmas Island Thrush *Turdus [poliocephalus] erythropleurus* Common on Christmas Island. Not generally split yet.
Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum* Quite a few seen in the north of the country (*hirundinaceum*).
Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* Small nos. on Christmas Island where I assume it's introduced (*malaccensis*).
Red-eared Firetail *Stagonopleura oculata* Brilliant views of a fine male at Cheyne's Beach. Stunning!
Crimson Finch *Neochmia phaeton* Common, in the north. First seen in Kununurra (nominate - Black-bellied C F).
Star Finch *Neochmia ruficauda* Great views of a flock of c10 near to Kununurra (*subclarescens*).
Masked Finch *Poephila personata* First seen at Lake Argyle and many more in the northwest (nominate).
Long-tailed Finch *Poephila acuticauda* Common in the north. Nominate yellow-billed birds throughout.
Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata* The few seen at Broome Bird Observatory were the best (*castanotis*).
Double-barred Finch *Taeniopygia bichenovii* Common in the northwest. First seen well at Broome (*annulosa*).
Gouldian Finch *Erythrura gouldiae* (NT) Excellent views of several, including fine males, along the Gibb River Road.
Yellow-rumped Mannikin *Lonchura flaviprymna* Excellent views of a pair at Kununurra Golf Course.
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin *Lonchura castaneothorax* Best views were at Kununurra Golf Course (nominate).
Pictorella Mannikin *Heteromunia pectoralis* Excellent scope views of several along the Gibb River Road.
Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis* A single seen well north of Broome (nominate).
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* One seen briefly by our hotel on Christmas Island and another heard.
Australian Pipit *Anthus australis* Several seen very well. First seen in Perth (*bilbali*).



This incredible Red-eared Firetail was a real star at Cheyne's Beach! (Pete Morris)



Aaaaah, they don't come much cuter than this young Short-eared Rock-Wallaby at Lake Argyle! (Pete Morris)

MAMMALS

Short-beaked Echidna *Tachyglossus aculeatus* Great views of 1 in Dryandra Forest - amazing creature!

Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula* Seen well in the spotlight at Dryandra.

Agile Wallaby *Macropus agilis* Common in the north.

Western Grey Kangaroo *Macropus fuliginosus* Many seen in the southwest.

Western Brush Wallaby (Black-gloved W) *Macropus irma* One seen briefly on the way back from Cape Leeuwin.

Euro (Common Wallaroo) *Macropus robustus* Best seen on the boat trip at Lake Argyle.

Short-eared Rock Wallaby *Petrogale brachyotis* Great views of several on the boat trip at Lake Argyle.

Black Flying-fox (Central F-f) *Pteropus alecto* Best was the tame one at Kununurra.

Christmas Flying-fox *Pteropus natalis* Several seen well on Christmas Island. A rare and declining mammal

European Rabbit (introduced) *Oryctolagus cuniculus* Introduced of course.

Red Fox (introduced) *Vulpes vulpes* Wasn't looking good when this popped out when waiting for the scrubbird!!

Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* A couple off Augusta (near Cape Leeuwin).



This Echidna was one of the mammalian highlights (Pete Morris)

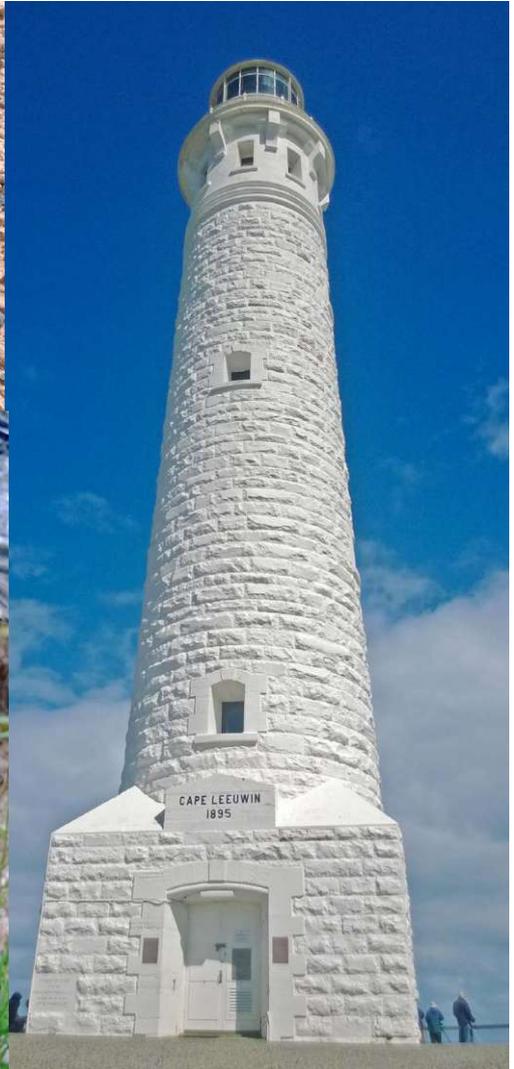
And a few REPTILES (largely thanks to Dave)

Shingleback *Tiliqua rugosa* The Blue-tongued Skink on the road east of Lancelin.

Centralian Blue-tongued Skink *Tiliqua multifasciata* The Blue-tongued Skink by the dirt road north of Broome.

Gilbert's Dragon *Amphibolurus gilberti* The lizard with the white side/head stripe at Kununurra Golf Course.

Rosenberg's Monitor (Heath Monitor) *Varanus rosenbergi* The stripey monitor seen in the Stirling Ranges.



Clockwise from top left, a Shingleback at Lancelin, the famous lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin, the 'Ralley Team', a Cowslip Orchid from the southwest and in the centre, the fantastic Dragon Orchid from the same area (Pete Morris)



Western Spinebill - another smart Southwest Australia endemic (Pete Morris)

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. Gill, F and Donsker, D Eds). 2013. IOC World Bird Names v3.4). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus*

The superb form *fulvus*, locally known as Golden Bosunbird, was a delight to watch on Christmas Island. Interestingly, a handful of the individuals seen were pure white, lacking any trace of gold in their plumage.

Western Corella *Cacatua pastinator*

We saw the two forms. 'Muir's Cockatoo', the nominate form, was seen superbly between Mount Barker and Lake Muir, 30/9. Particularly entertaining were a pair at a nest at Rocky Gully, one of which kept doing somersaults on its perch, one of the most entertaining moments of the trip. North of Perth, on the return journey from Lancelin, we saw 'Butler's Corella' *C. [p.] derbyi*. Note that the nomenclature for this form is somewhat contentious as some authors refer to this form as *butleri* due to confusion over the provenance of the type specimen.

Western Shriketit *Falcunculus [frontatus] leucogaster*

We enjoyed excellent views of a pair at Dryandra Forest, and then stunning views of a pair at the Stirling Ranges Retreat. A superb bird that is not universally recognized as a species. Currently the IOC lump this form and Northern Shriketit *F. [f.] whitei* with Eastern Shriketit *F. [f.] frontatus*, referring to the combined species as Crested Shriketit.



Buff-sided Robins were one of the highlights at Kununurra, whilst below, what better way to finish than with the aptly-named Splendid Fairywren! (Pete Morris)

APPENDIX 1

TOP 10 BIRDS OF THE TOUR

- 1st BARKING OWL**
- 2nd PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRYWREN**
- 3rd BLACK GRASSWREN**
- 4th Abbot's Booby**
- 5th Red-eared Firetail**
- 6th White-tailed Tropicbird (Golden Bosunbird)**
- 7th Noisy Scrub-bird**
- 8th Gouldian Finch**
- 9th= Western Corella**
- 9th= Splendid Fairywren**

