



CAIRNS MODULE

Day 1: Arrival and Spend Night at

Accommodation: Acacia Court Hotel in Cairns.



Day 13 (November 21): Cairns Birding

Del Richards, your expert bird guide for the day, will pick you up from Acacia Court

Hotel with his vehicle at of birding hotspots in the Centennial Lakes and where you can find Radjah Scrubfowl, Magpie Goose, Little Black Cormorant. Not Gardens you should see and Rainbow Bee-eater as



7:30 AM to visit a number Cairns. First you will visit the Botanical Gardens, Shelduck, Orange-footed Pacific Black Duck, and too far from the Botanical Double-eyed Fig-Parrot well.

Later in the morning you through dry savanna see Crimson Finch and At the Mareeba Wetlands ride on the lake to look for Swan along with Maned and other species.

will head west of Cairns habitat where you should Chestnut-breasted Munia. you will take a short boat pygmy-geese and Black Duck, Australasian Grebe, Mareeba might be a good

place for you to have your picnic lunch including salad provided by a small, local establishment. On the nearby golf course you should encounter Eastern Grey Kangaroo.

Other birds for the morning may include black-cockatoos, Galah, Green Oriole, Black Butcherbird, Bush Thick-knee, Varied Triller, Torresian Imperial-Pigeon, Metallic Starling, and Olive-backed Sunbird.

You will return to the Esplanade at around 3:00 PM, when the tide will be ideal for waders and others and where you may find Australian Pelican, Royal Spoonbill, and various migratory species such as Gray-tailed Tattler, Bar-tailed Godwit, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Little and Far Eastern Curlews, Whimbrel, Red-necked Stint, Gull-billed and Great Crested Terns, Great Knot, and Pacific Golden-Plover.

Your hotel overlooks the Esplanade, so there are further chances of visiting this area throughout the afternoon.

You will stay at the Acacia Court Hotel in Cairns.

Day 14 (November 22): Great Barrier Reef Onboard the *Sea Star*, Exploring the Marine Life of the Great Barrier Reef for Most of the Day; Includes Birding at Michaelmas Cay and Etty Bay After the Boat Trip.

During the boat trip today, you will leave your luggage in storage at the Acacia Court Hotel.

You will have a full day out on the Reef at Michaelmas Cay today. The trip includes a ride in a semi-submersible boat over the Great Barrier Reef to view a range of tropical fish, soft corals, and other spectacular invertebrates, such as giant clam. This will include the opportunity for those who are interested to snorkel from shore at the Cay.

An optional introductory SCUBA dive with the boat's resident naturalist, who will point out many more fascinating marine species, is also available; .

Michaelmas Cay is a seabird nesting area that you will not want to miss. You won't have an expert bird guide with you, but the boat's naturalist guides are quite versed in bird identification; before the start of the tour, make sure the guide and the captain know of your special interest in birding. Although there will be other passengers along, the captain will accommodate you and facilitate the birding, and the naturalist guide will help you with the bird identification and spotting.

Here you are likely to encounter Sooty Tern, Great Crested Tern, Black-naped Tern, Brown Noddy, Brown Booby, Great Frigatebird, Lesser Frigatebird, and Ruddy Turnstone. Some of the rarer terns, such as Roseate Tern and Bridled Tern, also show up here.

Your expert bird guide, Alan Gillanders, meets your group off the *Sea Star* upon return at around 4:00 PM. You will pick up your luggage from the Acacia Court Hotel before you start your drive to Etty Bay,

Birding for the afternoon will be limited to incidental stops other than the short stop for Agile Wallabies which will also turn up Bush Stone Curlew and Straw-necked and Australian White Ibis. Chestnut-breasted Munia, Peaceful and Bar-shouldered Doves and Double-eyed Fig-Parrots may be sighted here. Brahminy Kites are often spotted above the cane fields. At Etty Bay we will be on alert for Cassowary before and while

checking in. On dusk we will return to Innisfail for dinner and to purchase supplies for breakfast.

Accommodation in Etty Bay: Etty Bay Caravan Park.



Day 15 (November 23): Atherton Tablelands: Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodges

Early morning birding at Mourilyan Harbour for Lovely Fairywren and Brahminy Kite and along the access road for Southern Cassowary, Crimson Finch, and honeyeaters. After-breakfast departure from Etty Bay. You will stop along Palmerston Highway for rainforest birds including Black Butcherbird, monarchs, and lowland honeyeaters. Scenic stop at Millaa Millaa Falls for lunch (purchased in town or made with the previous day's provisions). Continue to Chambers to check in.

The Atherton Tablelands are part of the World Heritage-listed Wet Tropics Region and were once densely covered with high-altitude rainforest. Today, the area is one of upland dairy farming and rolling agricultural country, broken by pockets of remnant rainforest, deep volcanic lakes, and wetlands. A number of North Queensland endemic birds can be found in this area, including Macleay's Honeyeater, Bridled Honeyeater, Gray-headed Robin, and Victoria's Riflebird.

In the eucalypt forest on the west side of the range you will look for Yellow Thornbill, Rufous Whistler, "Herberton" Honeyeater (this species is yet to be described), Little Lorikeet, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Gray Butcherbird, and Sarus Crane and Brolga if they are still around. You will remain out in the forest until after dark for Golden Bowerbird at his bower, Mountain Thornbill, Fernwren, Bower's Shrikethrush, and Atherton Scrubwren. Where you eat dinner will depend on the group's choice to spotlight for mammals and/or owls. One might expect to see two out of a possible five species of gliding possum, two other possum species, and one other arboreal mammal.

IBarn, Australasian Grass-, and Sooty are the most likely owls followed by Rufous, Barking, and Australian Masked-Owls and Southern Boobook.

The cabins at Chambers are basic, but they are in the middle of an area with excellent wildlife-viewing opportunities. Every naturalist and birder loves staying here.

Accommodation for the night: Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodges.

Day 16 (November 24): Rainforest Lodges

You'll have a full day of Tablelands today. Start (suggested 5 AM) at the dawn chorus, which includes Chowchilla, Eastern Whipbird, Spotted Catbird, Cuckooshrike, Red-triller, Laughing Kookaburra, Golden-headed Cisticola, and Tawny Grassbird.



Chambers Wildlife

birding in the Atherton early this morning Cathedral Fig Tree to listen includes Chowchilla, Eastern King Parrot, Barred backed Fairywren, Varied

Next, travel to Lake Barrine. The area hosts a variety of water- and forest birds, including such as Tooth-billed Catbird at his court, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Golden Whistler, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Mountain Thornbill, and Atherton Scrubwren. Continue searching this area for other North Queensland endemics such as Bridled Honeyeater, Macleay's Honeyeater, and Gray-headed Robin. You also may find Eastern Whipbird, Yellow-throated Scrubwren, Spotted Catbird, and Wompoo Fruit-Dove.

Later in the morning you will drive to Malanda to see a Victoria's Riflebird that Alan has habituated. (This bird will be featured in the 2017 edition of the BBC's Planet Earth.)

After lunch and a well-deserved rest you will search a couple of wetlands and some forest for any of the rainforest birds we are still missing.

After dinner, there will be an optional night excursion to search for a range of mammals (some endemic to that area), including Coppery Brushtail and Green, Lemur-like, and Herbert River Ringtail Possums, with a chance of viewing Lumholtz's Tree-Kangaroo.

Dinner in Yungaburra or self-catered at the lodge. Pay for any expenses incurred at Chambers this evening so you can make a swift getaway in the morning.

Overnight at Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodges.

Day 17 (November 25): AM, Tablelands, Anything We May Have Missed; PM, Cairns

Morning birding depends on species found the previous two days and what you may yet find in the Tablelands and/or close to the lodge. Alan's judgment will be critical here and you will go with his advice.



Most likely, you will drive north to the dry country today for Green Pygmy-Goose, Squatter Pigeon, Tawny Frogmouth, Australian Bustard, Galah, Little Corella, Red-winged Parrot, Great Bowerbird, Northern Fantail, Lovely Fairywren, Blue-winged Kookaburra, the northern race of Brown Treecreeper, and a different suite of honeyeaters.



You should plan to arrive back in Cairns about 5 PM.

You will stay at the Acacia Court Hotel in Cairns.

Day 18: (November 26): Early Morning Flight to Hobart and PM, Hobart .

Flight at 5:45 AM gets to Hobart via Brisbane at 12:35 PM.

Upon arrival at Hobart Airport, your first errand will be to collect your rental car, a Hinday IMAX minivan. As soon as you get the vehicle, you will drive up to the top of Mount Wellington (5,643 feet high). The 13.6 mile road to the summit (Pinnacle Road) winds up through dense eucalypt forest and patches of cool temperate rainforest, with semi-alpine to alpine vegetation at the top. Criss-crossed by excellent walking tracks, the lower slopes of Mount Wellington are thickly forested. From Hobart, take Davey Street and Huon Road for 8 km to the Mount Wellington turn-off and the start of the Fern Glade Walk. You should reach this spot in only 45 minutes.

The Fern Glade Track is one of the best walks for a selection of Tasmania's endemic species close to Hobart. If possible, try to incorporate it with a walk to The Springs (3.8-km loop). The track passes through some wet forest gullies where principal target species are Scrubtit, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Tasmanian Thornbill, and Pink Robin. Other birds to look for along the walk include Gray Goshawk, Brush Bronzewing, Green Rosella, Golden Whistler, Yellow-throated and Black-headed Honeyeaters, Black Currawong, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Forest Raven, Scarlet Robin, and Olive-tailed Thrush. The high-elevation views as we hike through the fern glade and giant tree ferns are spectacular.

On your way up to Mount Wellington's summit via Pinnacle Road, stop anywhere you see bird activity and look for Crescent and Yellow-throated Honeyeaters, Yellow Wattlebird, Olive Whistler, Flame and Pink Robins, Olive-tailed Thrush, Forest Raven, and Black Currawong. Scan the skies for Wedge-tailed Eagle (rare). Striated Fieldwren is sometimes seen around Big Bend (approximately 2 km before the summit).

One other site you may consider visiting is the Waterworks Reserve in South Hobart. This might be a good place to do some night wildlife watching. Bear in mind, the reserve is open to vehicles every day of the week, with the gates opening at 8:30 AM and closing at 4:15 PM. Outside these hours, you need to walk in, gaining access through the turnstile adjacent to the main gate. If you are planning to stay in the reserve after closing hours, remember to park outside the main gate, otherwise your vehicle will be trapped inside!

To get to Waterworks Reserve from CBD, head south down Davey St for 2.3 km, turn-left into Lynton Ave. and after 200m, right again onto Waterworks Rd. The reserve is another 1.5 km on your right. Daylight birding at the reserve can produce Black-headed, Yellow-throated, Crescent and Strong-billed Honeyeaters; Eastern Spinebill; and Yellow and Little Wattlebirds. On and around the reservoirs, look for Australasian and Hoary-headed Grebes; Tasmanian Native-hen; Gray and, occasionally, Black Currawongs; Tasmanian Scrubwren; Tasmanian Thornbill; Dusky, Scarlet, and Pink Robins; and Beautiful Firetail. There is no entrance fee or special arrangement needed to visit this site.

This is a good location for mammals near Hobart, for at night you might see Red-necked Wallaby, Common Brushtail Possum, Eastern Barred Bandicoot, Southern Bettong, Tasmanian Pademelon, and Eastern Quoll. This place is an excellent location for the endemic subspecies of Australian Masked-Owl, the largest and heaviest of the *Tyto* owls and sometimes considered a full species, the Tasmanian Masked-Owl (very hard to find these days). Look and listen for it along the Lower and Upper Reservoir Circuits, where Southern Boobook, Australian Owlet-nightjar, and Tawny Frogmouth are also occasionally seen.

By about 5 /6 PM, you should arrive at your hotel for the night.

The group will likely eat out tonight and some time will be needed to fill the coolers and food boxes for the next three days.

Stay at Mayfair Plaza Motel.



Day 19 (November 27): Early AM Ferry to Bruny Island and Bruny Island Birding; Likely Late PM for Little Penguin

Leave early (between 5 and 5:30 AM) and catch the first ferry (6:30 AM) at Kettering (about 40 minutes away, 30 km south of Hobart). You then have a short drive to Bruny Island, which entails a 20-minute ferry crossing from Kettering. Black-faced Cormorant is often seen on this crossing.

Once in Bruny, instead of driving straight to Inala, spend some time exploring the north of the island. Search for the endangered Forty-spotted Pardalote in woodland south of Dennes Point. Look specifically in the woodlands around the quarry and around the base of Waterview Hill, 3.5 km south of Dennes Point on the west side of Bruny Island Main Road. The pardalote has a clear preference for White (Manna) Gum, where it feeds among the foliage. Another excellent site for the pardalote is in roadside woodlands along Missionary Road, particularly near McCracken Creek, 1 km south of Barnes Bay (2 km north of the Bruny Island Main Road turnoff). If you do not see the pardalote at either of these sites, Inala and its birding guide will provide a better chance for it.

Try also the loop around Barnes Bay/Dennes Point; possible species include Common Bronzewing, Black-headed Honeyeater, Green Rosella, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Dusky Robin, Tasmanian Native-hen, White-faced Heron, Brown Falcon, Laughing Kookaburra, and Australian Magpie. Blue-winged Parrot is also a possibility here. The group may also want to stop at the start of the Cape Queen Elizabeth Walking Track and take a walk towards the north end of Adventure Bay. Some of the species likely to be found will be Flame and Dusky Robins, Black-faced Cuckooshrike, Pallid Cuckoo, Satin Flycatcher, Musk Duck, Black Swan, Hoary-headed Grebe, and sometimes

Australian Shelduck on the big lagoon. Keep in mind that the walk to here is roughly 40 minutes each way! The neck between North Bruny and South Bruny is also good for Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers, Black Swan, Masked Lapwing, and sometimes Chestnut Teal.

IMPORTANT: Please note that you will have to stop at the Bruny Hotel on your way south to collect the key for the other cottage.



You can then drive past Inala to Cloudy Bay Beach, where you can look for Kelp, Pacific and Silver Gulls; Hooded Plover; Forest Raven; and sometimes Black Currawong *en route*. Once you finish this visit, go back to Inala to explore the property on your own. The office staff will be happy to direct you to where to look for the Forty-spotted Pardalote and the raptor-viewing areas for the afternoon. You can go out at dusk to look for Little Penguin and Short-tailed Shearwater colonies on the neck. The penguins will perform at around 8:30 PM.

Inala is home to a number of threatened birds and all of the Tasmanian endemic birds. Bird species you are likely to see here include endemics such as Forty-spotted Pardalote, Strong-billed Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, and Tasmanian Native-hen. Swift Parrot is possible.

Part of the group is staying at Inala itself, in the Nairana Cottage, which has a bedroom with queen and single beds and a sofa bed in the lounge for three women; the other three participants are staying in a two-bedroom cottage at Explorer's Cottages (some five minutes away). These will be the accommodations for the nights of November 27 and 28.

You can have dinner tonight at a nearby pub or cook simple meals in the cabins.



Day 20 (November 28): Full Day Inala and Surrounding Areas with Guide and Vehicle

You will do some early morning birding at the reserve The Inala specialist birding guide will meet you in front of the Inala cottage at around 7:30 AM to start a day of birding together. You will spend the first part of the morning on the Inala property with your guide, looking for some of the endemic bird species such as Forty-spotted Pardalote; Strong-billed, Black-headed, and Yellow-throated Honeyeaters; Swift Parrot, and, with luck, white-morph Gray Goshawk in particular. Later in the morning, you will head to the Adventure Bay area to focus on Scrubtit, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Tasmanian Thornbill, and Hooded Plover. In the afternoon, you probably will visit Cape Bruny, where Brown Quail, White-fronted chat, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, and Australasian Pipit can be found. In the event you run out of time and are not able to visit Cape Bruny today, you will drive there the following morning before leaving Bruny.

Since you are not going to have the aid of the Inala guide at night, make sure he tells you where to go and what to look for after dinner for those desiring to do some additional birding and a chance to see a range of Tasmania's nocturnal marsupials. These marsupials include Eastern Quoll and Tasmanian Pademelon (both of which occur only in Tasmania), Red-necked Wallaby and Common Brushtail Possum (each of which also occurs rarely as almost-albino morphs on Bruny Island), and perhaps Long-nosed Potoroo. Night birds occurring in this area include Tawny Frogmouth and Southern Boobook. You could either spotlight around the cottage at Inala or take your vehicle out to search for nocturnal birds and mammals at North Bruny. Make sure to get site suggestions for species from your guide before you part from him. You should also learn from your guide the best way to spend your following and last day in the area.

Day 21 (November 29): Inala AM on Your Own and Off to Hobart Late Morning; Afternoon Visit to Waterworks Reserve or Mount Wellington.

You will start with an early breakfast and birding in the Inala Reserve before you start your drive back to the neck to catch one of the scheduled ferries. Ferries depart for Hobart at 9:30 AM, 10:30 AM, and 11:30 AM.

If you didn't have time to visit Cape Bruny the previous day, this could be a good activity for the early morning before leaving Bruny.

On the way to Eaglehawk Neck (the departure site for your pelagic trip next morning), you can stop at Hobart Waterworks Reserve or Mount Wellington (see birding description for Day 18, Nov. 26). To get to Waterworks Reserve, head south down Davey Street for 2.3 km, turn left onto Lynton Avenue, and after 200 m, right again onto Waterworks Road. The reserve is another 1.5 km on your right. Daylight birding at the reserve can produce Black-headed, Yellow-throated, Crescent, and Strong-billed Honeyeaters; Eastern Spinebill, and Yellow and Little Wattlebirds. On and around the reservoirs, look for Australian and Hoary-headed Grebes; Tasmanian Native-hen; Gray and, occasionally, Black Currawongs; Tasmanian Scrubwren; Tasmanian Thornbill; Dusky, Scarlet, and Pink Robins; and Beautiful Firetail.

Bear in mind, the drive from Waterworks Reserve via Hobart to Eaglehawk Neck is about 51 km and might take you 1.5 hours.

Stay at Lufra Hotel and Apartments.



Day 22 (November 30): Early Morning Departure for Pelagic Boat Trip; Mid-Afternoon Return to Eaglehawk Neck to Drive to Hobart Airport for Departure Flights.

You will have an early breakfast to start at 6:30 AM for the 15-minute drive to Eaglehawk Neck boat ramp. Make sure to arrive by 6:45. Your guide for the day will meet you at the boat ramp for some brief instructions before you depart at 7:00.

Today you will make your way into the vastness of the Southern Ocean in quest of pelagic birds. High species diversity and the nearness of the continental shelf have earned Tasmania an international reputation as an excellent place to see pelagic

species. Not long after you depart Pirate's Bay you will encounter Short-tailed Shearwater in considerable numbers as well as your first albatross species. This is one of the finest places on the planet to see a diversity of albatrosses, and Wandering (subspecies *antipodensis*, New Zealand Albatross), Black-browed (including the Campbell type), White-capped, Royal, Gray-headed, Light-mantled, and Yellow-nosed Albatrosses are all possible. With land still in sight, you will reach the continental shelf and begin to chum off the back of the boat. Possible petrels include Great-winged, the striking White-headed, Gould's, and Mottled. Shearwater diversity is also good, with Hutton's, White-chinned, Buller's, Sooty, Short-tailed (common in Tasmanian waters), and Fluttering Shearwaters all possible. Wilson's, Gray-backed, and White-faced Storm-Petrels and Fairy Prion are also regularly seen. There are often surprises in store and with 30-plus species possible in these waters, there is bound to be something new for everyone. Mammals we may encounter include Cape Fur Seal, Humpback Whale, and Common Bottlenose Dolphin.

Other species that we might encounter are Salvin's and Buller's Albatrosses; Southern and Northern Giant-, Petrels, Black-faced Cormorant, Australasian Gannet, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Silver Gull, Pacific Gull, Great Crested Tern, and Parasitic Jaeger.

The boat will be back to Eaglehawk Neck by no later than 3:30 PM.

You will then have about a 1 to 1.5 hour drive back to Hobart. You will need some time to swing back and get your luggage, before getting to the Hobart Airport. You should have time for a final dinner together, before reaching the airport by 6 PM.

You must be to the airport by 6 PM to deal with Jetstar for flight check-in. Once all are checked in, you can do your final bird checklist together.

See the Departure Plan for more details.

