

Australia August 2008

Sydney Pelagic trip + Royal NP, NSW

Cairns and Atherton Tablelands, QLD

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Mareeba Wetlands in Queensland

August 9-30th I visited Australia on a combined work conference and vacation trip and stayed the first two weeks in central Sydney and did a few day trips south to e.g. Cronulla, Bundeena and Royal NP. In addition to some birding one morning in Centennial Park, the only birding worth mentioning around Sydney was a day on Aug 19th in Royal NP (primarily Lady Carrington Rd, Wattamolla and the Curra Moors loop track) an hour's drive south of the city. The pelagic trip off Sydney out to the continental shelf and Brown's Mountain was with the Halicat on Aug 9th. For more information about this all year round monthly event departing from Rose Bay (but also from Wollongong), see website: <http://users.bigpond.net.au/palliser/pelagic/> I then took a 3 hours domestic flight north and stayed a holiday week in Queensland starting off in Cairns Aug 20-23rd from where I also went on a boat day trip with Seastar (www.seastarcruises.com.au) to Michaelmas Cay on Aug 22nd and also combined it with some Scuba diving here and around Hastings Reef. Birding in Cairns primarily around Centenary

Lakes, Botanic Gardens and Mt Whitfield in the northern outskirts of the town. Also adjacent Cairns Cemetery was visited and of course the Cairns Esplanade including the northern mangrove area.

Subsequently rented a car and spent three nights at the Chambers lodge near Lake Eacham/Yungaburra on the Atherton Tablelands Aug 24-27th. The following places were visited during these days: Kuranda, Mareeba Wetlands (both en route), The Cathedral Fig, The Curtain Fig, Lake Eacham (including Chambers Lodge), Johnson's and Peterson's Creek (Yungaburra), the Bromfield Crater and Hasties Swamp. One day was spent with a local nature guide, Jonathan Munroe (www.wildwatch.com.au), and included additional visits to Flaggy Creek near Wondecla and the roads in the drier areas west of Ravenshoe around Innote Hot Springs and Mt Garnet + Tabo Village. The evening was spent spotlighting for marsupials at his own estate called Warrigal, near Ravenshoe.



High tide at the north end of the famous Cairns Esplanade. Between here and the nearby airport (behind), the coastline still holds some mangrove forest. The Cairns city centre and harbour is seen at a distance.

Winter in Sydney NSW had been unusually wet and cold but with the exception of a few intermittent showers it was mostly sunny during my stay with day temperatures of up to 17-18°C. Weather in QLD was warm (20-25°C during the days, generally a little colder on the Tablelands) mostly overcast and especially at higher altitudes on the Tablelands, plenty of drizzling rain. Great local weather variation on the Tablelands with the drier areas around e.g. Mareeba and Mt Garnet being just that.

Species notes

Orange-footed Scrub-fowl, *Megapodius reinwardt*. Fairly common and conspicuous in parkland and forests around Cairns. On Atherton Tablelands, only two observations near Lake Eacham.

Australian Brush-Turkey, *Alectura lathami*. Common around Cairns and in rainforest on the Tablelands.

Wandering Albatross, *Diomedea exulans*. 4-5 Sydney pelagic trip. All juveniles or various degrees of immatures.

Shy Albatross, *Diomedea cauta*. 5-10 pelagic trip. Adults and immatures.

Black-browed Albatross, *Thalassarche (Diomedea) melanophris*. 10+ pelagic trip. Both adults and immatures of race *melanophris* except one adult "Campbell Island" *impavida* (pale iris).

Yellow-nosed Albatross, *Thalassarche (Diomedea) chlorohynchos*. 5-10 pelagic trip. Both adults and immatures.

Cape Petrel, *Daption capense*. One bird showing well near the boat during the pelagic trip.

Providence Petrel, *Pterodroma solandri*. 2-3 pelagic trip.

Fluttering Shearwater, *Puffinus gavius*. 100+ pelagic trip. All closer inshore.

Hutton's Shearwater, *Puffinus huttoni*. On pelagic trip 2-3 birds inshore displayed dark underwings and believed to be this species.

Fairy Prion, *Pachyptila turtur*. 100+ pelagic trip, probably more. This year was apparently a "Prion year" and they were fairly common both near the continental shelf and closer inshore. A few other more uncommonly occurring species are recorded regularly, but none were identified on this trip.



White-fronted Tern (*Sterna striata*) and Black-browed Albatross (*Thalassarche melanophrys*) were recorded at the Pelagic trip from Sydney.

Australian Gannet, *Morus serrator*. 20+ mostly inshore on pelagic trip. All ages.

Brown Booby, *Sula leucogaster*. 50+ around Michaelmas Cay. Mostly adults. Masked Booby is a rare possibility out here too.

Pied Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax varius*. A few Sydney Harbour and Cronulla, 2-3 Centennial Park.

Little Pied Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*. Fairly common around Sydney. In QLD, observed in small numbers around Cairns, Mareeba Wetlands and Hasties Swamp.

Little Black Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*. Like previous species, but not always as numerous.

Great Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Several Centennial Park, Sydney. 1 Hasties Swamp, Tablelands.

Darter, *Anhinga melanogaster*. 3 Centennial Park. 1 Sydney Harbour, 1 Centennial park. Recorded in Cairns and several noted at Hasties Swamp.

Australian Pelican, *Pelicanus conspicillatus*. Singles Rose Bay, Darling Harbour, Centennial Park and Cronulla. 50+ Cairns Esplanade.

Lesser Frigatebird, *Fregata ariel*. 1 adult male Michaelmas Cay. Clearly smaller next to following species.

Greater Frigatebird, *Fregata minor*. 6 females/immatures Michaelmas Cay.

Australian Grebe, *Tachybaptus novahollandiae*. Common in most visited wetland areas. Various degrees of breeding plumage.

Black Swan, *Cygnus atratus*. 8 flying by Rose Bay, Sydney. Several Centennial Park. Not recorded QLD.

Magpie Goose, *Anseranas semipalmata*. 300+ Hasties Swamp and adjacent fields.

Wandering Whistling Duck, *Dendrocygna Arcurata*. 150+ Mareeba Wetlands, 5-10 Hasties Swamp.

Plumed Whistling Duck, *Dendrocygna eytoni*. 75+ Hasties Swamp.

Pacific Black Duck, *Anas superciliosa*. Common and widespread, NSW and QLD.

Chestnut Teal, *Anas castanea*. 1 male Centennial Park.

Grey Teal, *Anas gracilis*. 10+ Hasties Swamp, Atherton Tablelands.

Hardhead, *Athya australis*. 250+ Centennial Park, Sydney (by far the most common duck here). Widespread and noted in greater numbers in e.g. Mareeba Wetlands and Hasties Swamp.

Pink-eared Duck, *Malacorhynchus membranaceus*. A single bird Hasties Swamp was the only record.

Musk Duck, *Biziura lobata*. 1 female Centennial park, Sydney.

Australian Wood Duck, *Chenocretta jubata*. Fairly common around Sydney and noted in Botanic gardens, Centennial Park and Royal NP. Only observed once at the Atherton Tablelands, 25+ at a field en route near Atherton.

Green Pygmy-goose, *Nettapus pulchellus*. 35+ Mareeba Wetlands. Cotton Pygmy-goose is far more uncommonly encountered up here.

Buff-banded rail, *Gallirallus philippensis*. 2 confiding birds in gardens in Herberton early one morning.

Purple swamphen, *Porphyrio porphyrio*. Abundant most wetlands e.g. Centennial Park and Hasties Swamp.

Dusky moorhen, *Gallinula tenebrosa*. Common Centennial Park and around Botanical garden ponds, Sydney. A few Hasties Swamp, Atherton Tablelands.

Eurasian coot, *Fulica atra*. Fairly common Centennial Park and several around Botanical garden ponds. Also noted in small numbers Mareeba Wetlands and Hasties Swamp.

Great Egret, *Egretta alba*. Widespread in Queensland.

Intermediate Egret, *Egretta intermedia*. Widespread in Queensland.

Reef Egret, *Egretta sacra*. Common Cairns Esplanade.

Cattle Egret, *Ardea ibis*. Very common on Tablelands, particularly around grazing cattle. A species that fairly recently conquered Australia.

Straw-necked Ibis, *Threskiornis spinicollis*. Common and widespread in Queensland including central Cairns. Not noted around Sydney.

Australian White Ibis, *Threskiornis molucca*. Common and widespread NSW and QLD. Urban.

Royal spoonbill, *Platalea regia*. 2 Centennial Park, Sydney. 25+ Cairns Esplanade.

White-necked Heron, *Ardea pacifica*. 1 in a pond in Mt Garnet west of Ravenshoe.

Striated Heron, *Butoroides striata*. 5+ in total, Cairns Esplanade.

White-faced Heron, *Egretta novahollandiae*. 2-3 Centennial park. A few Cairns and on the Atherton Tablelands.

Brolga, *Grus rubicunda*. 4-5 sightings of parties of 10-40 birds, e.g. the Bromfield Crater. Also 100+ near Innote Hot Springs.

Saurus Crane, *Grus antigone*. Several hundreds near Innote Hot Springs. 4-5 sightings of smaller parties around the Tableland. Mixes with previous species.

Australian Bustard, *Ardeotis australis*. 2 on the way in to Mareeba Wetlands. 2+5 along roads near Innote Hot Springs.

Comb-crested Jacana, *Irediparra galliancea*. Singles noted Mareeba Wetlands Centre, Hasties Swamp and Mt Garnet.

Bush Thick-knee, *Burhinus grallarius*. 3 in the south end of Cairns Cemetery (which is apparently a very reliable location for this species), 2+2 in gardens around Wondecla.

Sooty Oystercatcher, *Haematopus fuliginosus*. 3 birds at the cliffs near the ferry wharf, Bundeena, NSW.

Pied Oystercatcher, *Haematopus longirostris*. Possibly the same individual seen every day at Cairns Esplanade.

Black-winged stilt, *Himantopus himantopus*. 1-2 birds Hasties Swamp.

Masked lapwing, *Vanellus miles*. Common both NSW and QLD in open areas and suburban lawns including central Sydney.

Red-capped Plover, *Charadrius ruficapillus*. A few noted daily Cairns Esplanade.

Black-fronted dotterel, *Charadrius melanops*. 10+ daily Cairns Esplanade.

Lesser sand plover, *Charadrius mongolus*. One bird in winter plumage Cairns Esplanade was the only record.

Great knot, *Calidris tenuirostris*. Noted daily in small numbers, Cairns Esplanade. Some still in summer plumage.

Red-necked stint, *Calidris ruficollis*. Up to 50+ birds daily Cairns Esplanade.

Curlew sandpiper, *Calidris ferruginea*. Up to 50+ birds daily Cairns Esplanade. Some still in summer plumage.

Sharp-tailed sandpiper, *Calidris acuminata*. Seen daily with up to 10 birds Cairns Esplanade. Mostly adults in summer plumage.

Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa*. Only three birds identified, Cairns Esplanade.

Bar-tailed godwit, *Limosa lapponica*. Common in small numbers Cairns Esplanade.

Whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus*. Common Cairns Esplanade.

Far Eastern Curlew, *Numenius Madagascariensis*. Common in small numbers Cairns Esplanade.



Michaelmas Cay, a mere hour by boat from Cairns, has colonies of breeding birds of which the most numerous and conspicuous are the Common Noddies and Sooty Terns.

Grey-tailed tattler, *Heteroscelus brevipes*. Fairly numerous, 30+ daily, Cairns Esplanade. Some still in summer plumage.

Ruddy turnstone, *Arenaria interpres*. 2 Michaelmas Cay and 2 Cairns Esplanade, QLD.

Silver gull, *Larus novahollandiae*. Common around Darling Harbour and along the coast, NSW. Common Cairns.

Kelp Gull/Pacific Gull, *Larus dominicanus/pacificus*. Two black-backed gulls on a beach seen from the car just north of Wollongong were left unidentified. To prevent social suicide in front of Australian family in car, I refrained from suggesting a U-turn on the highway for a closer inspection of “some sea gulls”.

Common Noddy, *Anous stolidus*. Common breeder on Michaelmas Cay. Despite reduced numbers after the 2006 cyclon, still hundreds present on the island. Strangely no Black Noddies identified.

Greater Crested Tern, *Sterna bergii*. Some 10 birds noted in Rose Bay, on the continental shelf and again closer to land. Common Cairns and Michaelmas Cay. No Lesser Crested Terns found was equally strange/poor work.

White-fronted Tern, *Sterna striata*. This winter visiting New Zealand species was noted with 1 individual on the way out and another 4+ on the way back in during the Sydney pelagic trip.

Sooty Tern, *Sterna Fuscata*. 40-60 birds, including juveniles, Michaelmas Cay. No Bridled Terns identified.

Little Tern, *Sterna albifrons*. One individual Michaelmas Cay.

Roseate Tern, *Sterna dougalli*. 5-10 birds in winter plumage, Michaelmas Cay.

Black-naped Tern, *Sterna sumatrana*. 10+ Michaelmas Cay.

Brown Skua, *Stercorarius maccormicki*. 4-5 pelagic trip.

Pacific Baza, *Aviceda subcristata*. A pair soaring low over the tree tops, Centenary Lakes, Cairns.

Black-shouldered Kite, *Elanus axillaries*. Not uncommon Atherton Tablelands, 10+ seen.

Brown Sparrowhawk, *Accipiter fasciatus*. 1 soaring over Centennial Park. 1 perched bird and 1 soaring bird on two occasions, the Tablelands.

Whistling Kite, *Haliaeetus sphenurus*. Fairly common Atherton Tablelands (albeit vastly outnumbered by the black kites).

Black Kite, *Milvus migrans*. Common Atherton Tablelands and also noted in Cairns.

White-bellied Sea Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucogaster*. 1 adult Mareeba and 1 adult Cairns Esplanade.

Swamp Harrier, *Circus approximans*. 10+ birds noted Atherton Tablelands.

Spotted Harrier, *Circus assimilis*. 2 birds near Ravenhoe and Innote Hot Springs, respectively.

Brown Falcon, *Falco berigora*. 4-5 observations in the drier areas around Atherton Tablelands including Mareeba.

Nankeen Kestrel, *Falco cenchroides*. 1 Centennial Park. Several Atherton Tablelands.

Peaceful Dove, *Geopelia placida*. Ubiquitous Cairns and most villages around Atherton Tablelands.

Bar-shouldered Dove, *Geopelia humeralis*. Only recorded for certain near Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra where 2-3 birds were calling from wires. A few probables en route around the Tablelands.

Wompoo Fruit-dove, *Ptilinopus magnificus* (H). The fruit-doves flopped dismally. This species was the only one recorded, heard 2-3 times around Lake Eacham.

Wonga Pigeon, *Leucosarcia melanoleuca* (H). 2-3 birds heard at a distance Royal NP, NSW.

Brown Cuckoo-dove, *Macropygia amboinensis*. Not uncommon on the Tablelands. 30+ birds in total.

Topknot Pigeon, *Lopholaimus antarcticus*. Groups of 3-10 birds seen flying or high in the canopy 8-10 times on the Tablelands.

White-headed Pigeon, *Columba leucomela*. 1+1 birds perched in the canopy on different evenings by the Lake Eacham parking lot.

Feral pigeon, *Columba livia* (Introduced). Common around human settlements.

Spotted turtle dove, *Streptopelia chinensis* (Introduced), Common Centennial Park and recorded along suburban roads, NSW. Fairly common QLD.

Crested pigeon, *Ocyphaps lophotes*. Recorded in small numbers at many sites including the Sydney Botanical gardens and Centennial Park, NSW and drier areas QLD.

Long-billed Corella, *Cacatua tenuirostris*. 100+ Centennial Park. Introduced in this part of NSW.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, *Cacatua galerita*. Common and widespread around Sydney. Widespread Cairns and Atherton, but only noted in any numbers near Innote Hot Springs where 100+ birds were feeding in a field.

Galah, *Eolophus roseicapillus*. 15+ Centennial Park, Sydney. 30-40 in loose groups around Innote Hot Springs and Mt Garnet, QLD.

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, *Calyptorhynchus lathami*. Two groups of 35+ in Centennial park and 50+ in Wattamolla, Royal NP.

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, *Calyptorhynchus banksii*. A group of 40+ noisy birds noted 3-4 kilometres along the highway south of Mareeba was the only record.

Rainbow Lorikeet, *Trichoglossus haematodus*. Abundant everywhere NSW and QLD. Very urban and gregarious.

Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*. Alongside the many Rainbow Lorikeets, 2-3 birds were identified near Wondecla.

Little Lorikeet, *Glossopsitta pusilla*. Showed well in Flaggy Creek near Wondecla where the parrot was fairly common.

Eastern Rosella, *Platycercus eximus*. A few Royal NP, NSW. Also brief looks of a few birds en route near McHughs lookout north of Milla Milla, QLD.

Crimson Rosella, *Platycercus elegans*. A few Royal NP, NSW.

Pale-headed Rosella, *Platycercus palliceps*. Noted a few times around Atherton Tablelands.

Double-eyed Fig-parrot, *Cyclopsitta diophthalma*. Repeated frustratingly poor views of this nervous little parrot with characteristic insect-like call around Centenary Lakes, Cairns. Also noted flying overhead near Lake Eacham a few times.

Red-winged Parrot, *Aprosmictus erythropterus*. 2 females/immatures + 1 male Mt Garnet.

Australian King Parrot, *Alisterus scapularis*. 3-4 Royal NP, 3-4 Yungaburra and 1 Warragal, Ravenshoe, Atherton Tablelands.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo, *Cacomantis flabelliformis*. 2 together on telephone wires near Ravenshoe.

Barn Owl, *Tyto alba*. 1 just south of Yungaburra seen sitting on a fence post by the road after dark on the spotlighting evening.

Tawny frogmouth, *Podargus strigoides*. 2 roosting in a tree near the white wooden bridge over the Lily pond in Lachlan swamp, Centennial Park, Sydney. Could be said to be a fairly reliable stakeout as this was in the exact same tree as three years (sic!) earlier during my previous Sydney visit!

Papuan Frogmouth, *Podargus papuensis*. 1 roosting high up in a tree along the rainforest walk, adjacent to the Cairns Botanical Gardens. Would certainly not have been found without kind tip from a local birdwatcher...

Australian Swiftlet, *Aerodramus terraereginae* (former race of White-rumped Swiftlet, *A. spodiopygius*). Fairly common around Cairns and also noted daily on the Tablelands.

Azure Kingfisher, *Alcedo azurea*. 1 briefly at the Peterson Creek, Yungaburra.

Little Kingfisher, *Alcedo pusilla*. 1 at the classical location on the backside of the freshwater lake at Centenary Lakes.

Laughing Kookaburra, *Dacelo novaeguineae*. Common in small numbers, mostly in pairs, at most places visited including the Centennial Park. Common Cairns and Atherton Tablelands.

Blue-winged Kookaburra, *Dacelo leachi*. 1 Innote Hot Springs was surprisingly the only record.

Sacred Kingfisher, *Todiramphus sanctus*. 1 along the Cairns Esplanade was the only record.

Forest Kingfisher, *Todiramphus macleayi*. Not uncommon QLD, 15+ birds noted.

Rainbow Bee-eater, *Merops ornatus*. Several Cairns cemetery and Centenary Lakes. On the Tablelands only noted near the Cathedral Fig.

Noisy Pitta, *Pitta versicolor*. 1 responding to tape performing wonderfully out in the open for several minutes and another two birds heard in the rainforest along the eastern/right trail of the blue circle on Mt Whitfield, Cairns.

Superb Lyrebird, *Menura novahollandiae*. 1 male Royal NP, NSW on a bicycle ride along Lady Carrington Rd.

White-throated Treecreeper, *Cormobates leucophaeus*. Common and vocal Royal NP and several seen and heard Atherton Tableland.

Brown Treecreeper, *Cormobates picumnus*. 1 seen feeding on a dead trunk on the ground near Innote Hot Springs, Atherton Tablelands. Northern race *melanotus*.

Superb Fairy Wren, *Malurus cyaneus*. Common Centennial Park. Also noted Audley, Royal NP.

Variiegated Fairy Wren, *Malurus lamberti*. Common Royal NP.

Lovely Fairy Wren, *Malurus amabilis*. 2-3 birds including a male in the mangrove in Centenary Lakes.

Red-backed Fairy Wren, *Malurus melanocephalus*. Parties of 5-10 birds noted on 4 occasions at the Atherton Tablelands.

Large-billed Scrubwren, *Sericornis magnirostris*. Fairly common in rainforest on Atherton Tablelands, noted at e.g. The Crater, Yungaburra and Cathedral Fig.

Yellow-throated Scrubwren, *Sericornis citreogularis*. A single record of one pair at the Chambers lodge, Lake Eacham.

Atherton Scrubwren, *Sericornis keri*. Totally 10+ birds noted Chambers Lodge, Lake Eacham, The Crater and Peterson's Creek. Some initial confusion with Large-billed Scrubwren. Tablelands endemic.

Chestnut-rumped Hylacola, *Hylacola pyrrhopygius*. A single bird briefly along Curra Moor Trail, Royal NP. Chestnut rump is very conspicuous.

Brown Gerygone, *Gerygone mouki*. Common and widespread QLD.

Large-billed Gerygone, *Gerygone magnirostris*. Common around Centenary Lakes, Cairns.

Fairy Gerigone, *Gerygone palperosa*. 1 Mt Whitfield, 2-3 Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra.

Yellow Thornbill, *Acanthiza nana*. 2-4 Centennial Park, Sydney.

Brown Thornbill, *Acanthiza pusilla*. Several Royal NP, NSW.

Striated Thornbill, *Acanthiza lineate*. Several Royal NP, NSW.

Mountain Thornbill, *Acanthiza katherina*. 3-4 birds in total Atherton Tablelands (The Crater, Lake Eacham and Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra). White eye diagnostic. Tablelands endemic.

Little Wattlebird, *Anthochaera chrysoptera*. Common in heathland, Royal NP

Red Wattlebird, *Anthochaera carunculata*. Only noted in NSW with 1 Bondi Beach, 1 Centennial Park and a few around Bundeena and Royal NP.

Noisy Friarbird, *Philemon corniculatus*. Noted in small numbers around Wondecla and Kalunga, QLD.

Helmeted Friarbird, *Philemon buceroides*. 3-4 birds daily around Cairns. Also seen in Kuranda.

Noisy Miner, *Manorina melanocephala*. Abundant to common everywhere. Urban. Noted in drier areas around Atherton Tablelands but not observed around Cairns.

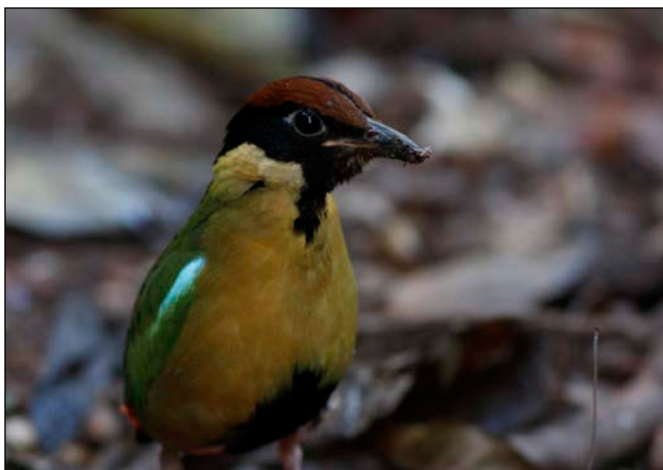
Blue-faced Honeyeater, *Entomyzon cyanotis*. 1 Mareeba Wetlands Centre, 3-4 birds Mt Garnet.

Macleay's Honeyeater, *Xanthotis macleayana*. 2 Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra and 1 bird Chambers lodge, Lake Eacham. Tablelands endemic.

Yellow-spotted Honeyeater, *Meliphaga notate*. Common on Mt Whitfield. Calling frequently.

Graceful Honeyeater, *Meliphaga gracilis*. Not uncommon Mt Whitfield. Identified from previous species mainly on the distinctive call. Slightly smaller and neater appearance.

Bridled Honeyeater, *Lichenostomus frenatus*. 5+ birds Flaggy Creek, Kalunga. One bird Cathedral Fig. Tableland endemic.



Noisy Pitta (*Pitta versicolor*). This gem is fairly reliable at the Mt Whitfield in Cairns.



Varied Honeyeater (*Lichenostomus versicolor*) was found at the northern end of the Cairns esplanade where it was easily located along the mangrove fringes. Dusky Honeyeater (*Myzomela obscura*) is a characteristic bird in the rainforest around Cairns and on the Atherton Tablelands.

Varied Honeyeater, *Lichenostomus versicolor*. 4-5 birds in the mangrove in the northern end of Cairns Esplanade.

Yellow Honeyeater, *Lichenostomus flavus*. A few Centenary Lakes and also noted on Atherton Tablelands.

Fuscous Honeyeater, *Lichenostomus fuscus*. Common Flaggy Creek, Kalunga.

White-throated Honeyeater, *Melithreptus albogularis*. 1 Flaggy Creek, Kalunga.

White-naped Honeyeater, *Melithreptus lunatus*. A party of 10+ birds near Audley, Royal NP.

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, *Phylidonyris melanops*. 5+ birds along Curra Moor Trail, Royal NP.

Brown-backed Honeyeater, *Ramsayornis modestus*. Fairly common around Centenary Lakes, including several breeding pairs attending their suspended nests.

Dusky Honeyeater, *Myzomela obscura*. Common Mt Whitfield and also noted e.g. at The Crater on Atherton Tablelands.

Scarlet Honeyeater, *Myzomela sanguinolenta*. 1 Lake Eacham, 3-4 Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra and a few around Wondecla.

Lewin's Honeyeater, *Meliphaga lewinii*. Common and widespread in rainforest and drier forest around Atherton Tablelands.

Yellow-faced Honeyeater, *Lichenostomus chrysops*. Common Royal NP and also noted at Hasties Swamp, Atherton Tablelands.

Brown Honeyeater, *Lichmera indistinct*. Very common around Cairns and Centenary Lakes. Also noted Mareeba, Hasties Swamp and other places around the Tablelands.

White-cheeked Honeyeater, *Phylidonyris nigra*. Common Wondecla and Flaggy Creek near Kalunga.

New Holland Honeyeater, *Phylidonyris novahollandiae*. 3-4 Centennial Park. Abundant in the heathland, Royal NP.

Eastern Spinebill, *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*. Very common in forest in Royal NP, also noted a few times in the heathland. One bird near Wondecla was the only QLD-record.

Grey-crowned Babbler, *Pomatostomus temporalis*. 3 birds together along a dirt road near Innote Hot Springs.

Chowchilla, *Orthonyx spaldingii*. Two parties foraging around the Cathedral Fig and 3-4 birds Warrigal, Ravenhoe. Wary but moving slowly and not too hard to observe once located. Tablelands endemic.

Eastern Whipbird, *Psophodes olivaceus*. Rather common and vocal Royal NP and on Atherton Tablelands. Occasionally easily seen.

Eastern Yellow Robin, *Eopsaltria australis*. Race *australis* common in Royal NP and northern race *chrysorrhoea* noted Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra and Flaggy Creek, Kalunga.

Pale-yellow Robin, *Tregallasia capito*. Common. A strikingly anonymous bird.

Grey-headed Robin, *Poecilodryas albispecularis*. Common and easily seen around Lake Eacham. Also noted at The Crater and the Cathedral Fig. Usually solitary. Tablelands endemic.

Jacky Winter, *Microeca fascinans*. One bird on a fence along the road north of Ravenhoe was a bit unexpected.

Varied Sitella, *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*. A party of 6-7 birds Wondecla.

Golden Whistler, *Pachycephala pectoralis*. A few noted on the Tablelands, mostly males.

Rufous Whistler, *Pachycephala rufiventris*. A male Wondecla and 2-3 females Yungaburra.

Grey Shrike-thrush, *Colluricincla harmonica*. 2 Flaggy Creek, Kalunga.



Grey-headed Robin (*Poecilodryas albispectularis*) is considered one of the Atherton Tablelands endemics, even though it is actually found on Papua New Guinea also.

Black Butcherbird (*Cracticus quoyi*) is conspicuous around Cairns Botanical Gardens. Both black and brown birds were seen, but whether the latter of these were indeed of the brown morph or simply juveniles I never figured out.

Little Shrike-thrush, *Colluricincla megarhyncha*. 2-3 Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra, 2 Lake Eacham. 2-3 Mt Whitfield, Cairns. More chestnut and lighter coloured than the next species. Lighter bill obvious.

Bower's Shrike-thrush, *Colluricincla boweri*. 1 Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra, 1 Cathedral Fig. Darker and greyer appearance compared to previous species. Bill entirely dark. Tablelands endemic.

Spectacled Monarch, *Monarcha trivirgatus*. Single individuals noted on 10+ occasions around the Tablelands. Also recorded on Mt Whitfield, Cairns.

Pied Monarch, *Arses kaupi*. A female Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra on two different days was the only record of this Tableland endemic.

Leaden Flycatcher, *Myiagra rubecula*. Several males and females around Centenary Lakes and on Mt Whitfield.

Restless Flycatcher, *Myiagra inquieta*. One vocal male Mt Garnet was a good finding.

Yellow-breasted Boatbill, *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*. Poor views of calling birds in the canopy on two occasions, on Mt Whitfield, Cairns and along Johnson's Creek south of Yungaburra.

Rufous Fantail, *Rhipidura Rufifrons*. Not uncommon and rather conspicuous on the Tablelands and on Mt Whitfield, Cairns.

Grey Fantail, *Rhipidura albiscapa*. Common QLD and in Royal NP, NSW.

Willie Wagtail, *Rhipidura leucophrys*. Common and conspicuous NSW and QLD.

Spangled Drongo, *Dicrurus bracteatus*. A few noted Cairns area, especially around Centenary Lakes.

Olive-backed Oriole, *Oriolus sagittatus*. Only one bird, foraging along the Lady Carrington Rd, Royal NP. None identified in QLD, but probably overlooked.

Yellow Oriole, *Oriolus Flavocinctus*. Heard frequently in Cairns and a few birds also seen well. Call reminiscent of a barbet.

Figbird, *Sphecotheres vielloti*. Common Cairns and Atherton Tablelands. Completely different call compared to previous two species.

Victoria's Riflebird, *Ptiloris victoriae*. 3-4 birds including a beautiful male around Chambers lodge. Also noted by Lake Eacham, Cathedral Fig and The Crater, all females. Tablelands endemic.

Satin Bowerbird, *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*. A group of 20+ birds in a fig tree in the parking lot, The Crater.

Great Bowerbird, *Chlamydera nuchalis*. 1+2 birds Mt Garnet. Also a big bower in a garden.

Tooth-billed Bowerbird, *Scenopoeetes dentirostris*. 1 "singing" bird Warrigal, Ravenshoe. Not uncommon, but a little too early in the season. Tablelands endemic.

Golden Bowerbird, *Prionodura newtoniana*. A known bower was visited at the Warrigal estate, Ravenshoe, but no sign of the owner during the 45 min wait. As with most birds, the activity is much higher a month or so closer to spring. The constant drizzling at this altitude probably did not improve the odds.

Spotted Catbird, *Ailuroedus crassirostris*. Fairly common and conspicuous around Lake Eacham. Also noted The Crater and Cathedral Fig.

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, *Coracina novahollandiae*. Fairly common Centennial Park and also noted elsewhere in Sydney. Common Atherton Tablelands.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, *Coracina Papuensis*. Common around Cairns and on the Tablelands.

Varied Triller, *Lalage leucomela*. A pair and later a single male Mt Whitfield.

White-breasted Woodswallow, *Artamus leucorhynchus*. Noted frequently in small numbers around Cairns.

Pied Butcherbird, *Cracticus nigrogularis*. Common in drier and open areas around the Atherton Tablelands.

Black Butcherbird, *Cracticus quoyi*. Fairly common around Centenary Lakes, Botanic Gardens and Mt Whitfield, Cairns. Both black and brown individuals.

Grey Butcherbird, *Cracticus torquatus*. 1 Bellevue Hill, central Sydney and one Scarborough Pub near Woolongong, NSW.

Pied Currawong, *Strepera graculina*. Never numerous, but widespread both NSW and drier parts of QLD.

Australian Raven, *Corvus coronoides*. Common and widespread NSW.

Torresian Crow, *Corvus orru*. Widespread but not very numerous Atherton Tablelands. Not noted around Cairns.

Apostlebird, *Struthidea cinerea*. A group of 7-8 birds in a garden in Mt Garnet, QLD.

Welcome Swallow, *Hirundo neoxena*. Common and widespread NSW and QLD.

Tree Martin, *Hirundo nigricans*. 15+ Centennial Park, Sydney. Also noted on Atherton Tablelands in small numbers.

Fairy Martin, *Hirundo ariel*. By far outnumbering the previous species on Atherton Tablelands and also noted in Cairns. Not recorded in NSW.

Australian Pipit, *Anthus australis*. Only noted in the fields along the road to the Cathedral Fig, Atherton Tablelands. Here it seemed to be fairly common though.

Rufous Songlark, *Cincloramphus mathewski*. 1 Flaggy Creek, Wondecla, 2-3 birds Innote Hot Springs. Apparently an infrequent winter migrant this far north, possibly a result of the unusually cold weather further south.

Australian Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus australis* (formerly lumped with Clamorous Reed Warbler, *A. stentoreus*). 1 Mareeba Wetlands Centre foraging in a palm tree near the visitor's centre.

House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*. Noted around human settlements including central Sydney.

Red-browed Firetail, *Neochima temporalis*. Common and widespread Atherton Tablelands.

Double-barred Finch, *Teaniopygia bichenovii*. Many around Mareeba Wetlands Centre.

Olive-backed Sunbird, *Nectarina jugularis*. Common Queensland.

Mistletoebird, *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*. Only two birds seen, Cairns Esplanade and Mt Whitfield.

Silver-eye, *Zosterops lateralis*. Fairly common Queensland. Also noted in Royal NP, NSW.

European Starling, *Sturnus vulgaris* (Introduced). Several Botanical gardens and at Centennial Park. Also recorded in small numbers around Newcastle.

Common Myna, *Acridotheres tristis* (Introduced). Abundant to common everywhere. Urban.

Metallic Starling, *Aplonis metallica*. A group of 20+ Mt Whitfield. Possibly the same group seen a second time an hour later.



This Rufous Songlark (*Cincloramphus mathewski*) found near Wondecla and the Jacky Winter (*Microeca fascians*) seen at the roadside near Ravenshoe were both a bit unexpected findings during the days in Queensland.



A curious Agile Wallaby (*Macropus agilis*) and the fascinating Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*).

Other animals

Platypus, *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*. 1 Johnson's Creek south of Yungaburra and 3 individuals in Peterson's Creek, Yungaburra on two mornings. Wary and only observed briefly at dawn.

Long-nosed Bandicoot, *Perameles nasuta*. 1 very confident individual with particular interest in bananas, Chambers lodge, Lake Eacham.

Lemuroid Ringtail Possum, *Hemibelideus lemuroids*. 2 during spotlighting at Warrigal Estate, Ravenshoe.

Green Ringtail Possum, *Pseudochirops archeri*. 1 during spotlighting at Warrigal, Ravenshoe.

Herbert River Ringtail Possum, *Pseudochirulus herbertensis*. 1 during spotlighting at Warrigal, Ravenshoe.

Common Brushtail Possum, *Trichosurus vulpecula*. 3-4 during spotlighting at Warrigal, Ravenshoe.

Sugar Glider, *Petaurus breviceps*, 2-3 at feeding trees Chambers lodge, Lake Eacham.

Musky Rat Kangaroo, *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*. 2-3 Cathedral Fig Tree. One feeding together with Chowchillas.

Red-legged Pademelon, *Thylogale stigmatica*. A group of up to 8 at the same time coming in to be fed at Chambers lodge on two nights.

Agile Wallaby, *Macropus agilis*. 2-3 Atherton Tablelands.

Whiptail Wallaby, *Macropus parryi*. A loose group with 20+ animals near Ravenshoe.

Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo, *Dendrolagus lumholtzi*. A female and a fairly big joey along the road near Langland's Gap. A quite wary creature, this species is still surviving in the few forest islands remaining on the Tablelands.

Common Wallaroo, *Macropus robustus*. Several Atherton Tablelands.

Eastern Grey Kangaroo, *Macropus giganteus*. A few smaller groups seen on the Atherton Tablelands.

Humpback Whale, *Megaptera novaengliae*. 2 younger individuals near Sydney coast on the pelagic trip.

New Zealand/Australian Fur Seal, *Arctocephalus forsteri/pussilus*. 2-3 near the continental shelf at the Sydney pelagic trip.

Grey-headed Flying Fox, *Pteropus poliocephalus*. 100+ in Sydney Botanic Gardens.

Dingo, *Canis lupus dingo*. One in a field by the road near Ravenshoe just after dusk.

Bush Rat, *Rattus fuscipes*. A few rodents, coming in to feed on honey intended for the possums at Chambers lodge, was thought to be this species.

European Rabbit, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*. Noted a few times on the Atherton Tablelands.

Monitor sp. A ~125cm long specimen was seen briefly on Mt Whitfield. Possibly a Lace Monitor, *Varanus varius*.

A bunch of butterflies were seen, the following were identified:

Brown Ringlet, *Hypocysta metirius*. Noted a few times in the forest at Flaggy Creek, Wondelcla.

Ulysses Butterfly, *Papilio ulysses*. This Queensland symbol was observed once along Cairns esplanade.

Clearwing Butterfly, *Cressida cressida*. 10+ in an open area Mt Whitfield, Cairns.

Monarch, *Danaus plexippus*. 2-3 on the Atherton tablelands.

Not a single snake was seen...