Bird Trails

TROPICAL QUEENSLAND

Tour Guides for Birders

Daintree Boatman Nature Tours

The Daintree Boatman, Murray Hunt, provides personalised small-group cruises at dawn and dusk, perfect for viewing and photographing highly sought-after birds of the Daintree River.

Phone: 0417 651 929 www.daintreevillagetours.com.au

Daintree River Wild Watch

Decades of experience providing small personalised tours on the Daintree River. Excellent sunrise and sunset birdwatching and photographic opportunities. 10 individual and groups of up to 50 people are excellent viewing. Specialised photographic tours available.

Phone: 0447 546 926 www.daintreerivertours.com.au

Birdwatching Tropical Australia (Mossman)

Doug Herrington (20 years local experience, SATOUR trained guide) offers day and multi-day birding and photographic tours of the Wet Tropics Rainforest and Great Barrier Reef. Daintree, Cairns Highlands, Mission Beach.

Phone: 0427 773 060 www.sweetwaterlodge.com.au

Accommodation for Birders

Red Mill House


Phone: 07 4098 6233 www.redmillhouse.com.au

Thala Beach Nature Reserve

A deluxe eco retreat & birdwatcher’s paradise with over 195 bird species documented. Thala’s guest enjoy complimentary guided nature walks surrounded by Wet Tropics Rainforest and Great Barrier Reef.

Phone: 07 4098 5700 www.thalabeach.com.au

Sweetwater Lodge

Two outstanding self-contained private lodges in Julatten set on 160 hectares of private rainforest. Ideal for birders, birdwatchers or photographic safaris. 10 individual and groups of up to 50 people.

Phone: 0427 773 060 www.sweetwaterlodge.com.au

Cassowary House

Naturalists’ guest-house within World Heritage rainforest at Kuranda above Cairns. Ideal base for exploring coast and highlands. Cassowaries and Riflebirds are frequent visitors. Expert guides are available.

Phone: 07 4098 7130 www.cassowaryhouse.com.au

Crater Lakes Rainforest Cottages

South side of Lake Eacham


Phone: 07 4095 2322 www.craterlakes.com.au

Atherton Tablelands Birdwatchers’ Cabin

Modern self-contained, well-appointed cabin, secluded in eucalote of tall dipterocarp and rainforest at 1000m elevation. Private walking trails, creeks. Great wildlife diversity, species lists on website.

Phone: 07 4201 0993 www.athertontablelandsbirdwatchercabin.com.au

Birdwatching Tropical Australia (Mossman)

Expert guides offer a wide range of bird and natural history day trips or fully accommodated tours around Tropical North Queensland. Excellent and varied habitat, including mountain, coastal, riverine, city, rainforest, and marine environments. Wildlife includes many endangered species.

Phone: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Great Northern Tours.

Great Northern Tours specialise in small group birdwatching tours in far North Queensland. Our fully accommodated tour destinations include Cape York, Torres Tablelands, Gulf of Carpentaria and Queensland’s North West.

Phone: 0411 348 120 www.greatnortherntours.com.au

Cassowary Tours

Expert guides offer a wide range of bird and natural history day trips or fully accommodated tours around Tropical North Queensland and the Cairns region. Cairns Highlnds, Tablelands, Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York. Excellent and varied habitat, including mountain, coastal, riverine, city, rainforest, and marine environments. Wildlife includes many endangered species.

Phone: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Alan’s Wildlife Tours

Half to full day private tours with a natural history generalist whose passions are birds and nocturnal mammals. Knowledgeable and knowledgeable. Alan can find those special birds in your tour.

Phone: 0408 953 786 www.alanswildlifesfours.com.au

Seastar Cruises (Cairns Pier)

Seastar express cruise arrives at Michaelmas Cay first before other boats arrive to disturb the nesting birds. It offers a circumnavigation of the island where 38 species of seabird have been observed.

Phone: 07 4041 6218 www.seastarcruises.com.au

Thala Beach Nature Reserve

Join a wildlife tour with any of our experienced guides to fully appreciate the rainforest canopy. All tours include rainforest walking tracks, creeks. Great wildlife diversity, species lists on website. Thala’s guests enjoy complimentary guided nature walks and learn about the habitats they live in.

Phone: 07 4098 5700 www.thalabeach.com.au

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Phone: 07 4201 0993 www.athertontablelandsbirdwatchercabin.com.au

All the best birding sites, guides and places to stay

www.birdingtq.com.au

Check the website for more information, sites, directions and bird lists.
Ph: 07 4041 6218  www.seastarcruises.com.au

of the island where 38 species of seabird have been observed. It offers a circumnavigation as the Seastar Cruises express cruise arrives at Michaelmas Cay first before other boats arrive to disturb the nesting birds. It offers a circumnavigation of the Great Barrier Reef, and the Wet Tropic Rainforest.

Ph: 0411 348 120   www.greatnortherntours.com.au

Cover photos: Seastar Cruises (Cairns Pier)

Ph: 0408 953 786 www.alanswildlifetours.com.au

Ph: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Great Northern Tours specialise in extended, small group tours of the Wet Tropics and Cape York. Small groups. Variable itineraries. Private tours. Offers day and multiday birding and photographic tours of the Wet Tropics. Specialist guides will take you into rainforest, grassland and riparian. 5 minutes to Mt. Lewis National Park. Two outstanding self-contained private lodges in Julatten set on 160 hectares of tropical dry rainforest. Includes a guided tour at dawn or dusk and photography tuition. A 10 individual swivel seats for excellent photographing highly sought-after birds of the Daintree River.

Daintree River Wild Watch
Ph: 0418 757 288

Daintree Boatman Nature Tours
Ph: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowary-house.com.au

Cassowary House
Ph: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Cover photos: Cassowary Tours (Cairns)

Ph: 0418 757 288 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Tours and guides for birders

Rainforest, mountains, dry country, swamps, lakes, mudflats and reef

It is no wonder that so many birds call the Cairns region home. With the variety of habitats such as mountain, coastal, riverine, mangrove, wetland, woodland, grassland, rainforest, rural and urban parkland, this area has the largest avifauna of any region in Australia. It is home to over 450 species of birds of which 13 of these are local endemics. The higher altitude rainforests that some of these species occur in, is usually above 600m.

Wet Tropic Endemic Species
Lesser Sooty Owl – In and around rainforest, heard more often than seen.
Tooth-billed Bowerbird – easily seen when displaying in mid- to high-altitude rainforest between August & December.
Golden Bowerbird – best seen at bowers during breeding season (Sep-Jan), chance sightings out of this period, generally at higher altitudes.
Fernwren – generally seen in the higher altitude rainforest. Atherton Scrubwren – higher altitude rainforests.
Mountain Thornbill – higher altitude rainforests.
Bridled Honeyeater – common, some altitudinal migration in winter, found in rainforest and adjacent woodlands.
Macleay’s Honeyeater – common at lower and mid altitudes in and around rainforest areas.
Chowchilla – easiest when calling in the early morning, usually in higher altitude rainforest.
Bower’s Shrike-Thrush – fairly easy to find in higher altitude rainforests, some altitudinal migration.
Pied Monarch – throughout rainforest and adjacent woodlands, except at highest altitudes, but can be elusive.
Victoria’s Riflebird – throughout rainforests and adjacent woodlands, can be elusive.
Grey-headed Robin – common in rainforest, generally at higher altitudes.

Additionally many distinct subspecies occur including:

Double-eyed Fig-Parrot
Crimson Rosella
Southern Boobook
Masked Owl
Satin Bowerbird
White-throated Treecreeper
Yellow-throated Scrubwren
Brown Gerygone
Yellow Thornbill
Eastern Spinetail
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Grey Fantail
Pale-yellow Robin
Bassian Thrush

Whatever time of year you decide to visit there will always be plenty of birds to see. October – April may be our warmer and wetter months, but it is the time when migrant species arrive from Papua New Guinea including the beautiful Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher, Channel-billed Cuckoo and Eastern Koel. Many birds such as Noisy Pitta are also breeding at this time of year and are easier to observe as they search for food. During our cooler, drier, winter months (May-Sept) the Victoria’s Riflebird are displaying and winter breeders such as White-eared Monarch can be easier to see. Trips on the Daintree River are good for riverine and mangrove species like Great-billed Heron, Little Kingfisher and Shining Flycatcher. Enjoy the tranquil experience of an early morning trip watching birds and wildlife start their day or a late afternoon trip ending with a tropical sunset. All these options provide great opportunities for wildlife photography.

When you visit the Cairns region, take the time to explore its many trails and walks. There are a number of trails which are particularly popular among birders and nature enthusiasts. Some of these trails are described below:

1 Stone Curlew Trail
Cairns & northern beaches.

2 Kingfisher Trail
Mossman.

3 Honeyeater Trail
Jalalal & Mt Lewis.

4 Bustard Trail
Mt Carbine to Mareeba.

5 Catbird Trail
Kuranda to Mareeba.

6 Riflebird Trail
Cairns Highlands.

Accommodation for birders

Trails

To help you find your way around to see the best birds, we have suggested some bird trails which will take you to some of the diverse habitats found in the Cairns region.

1 Stone Curlew Trail
Cairns & northern beaches. Experience shorebirds, lowland species such as Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove and Pied Imperial Pigeon (Aug-April) and both Bush and Beacon Riflebirds throughout the year.

2 Kingfisher Trail
Mossman & Daintree.

3 Honeyeater Trail
Jalalal & Mt Lewis.

20 species of honeyeater have been recorded in this area. Wet Tropic endemics, Macleay’s and Bridled Honeyeater, along with the other 11 Wet Tropic endemic species can be found on Mt. Lewis.

4 Bustard Trail
Mt Carbine to Mareeba.

The Australian Bustard can be found along this dry country trail, especially at Maryfans. Open woodland and several wetlands ensure an excellent variety of bush and waterbirds throughout the year.

5 Catbird Trail
Kuranda to Mareeba.

Mid-altitude rainforest and drier woodland give a huge variety of species including the Spotted Catbird.

6 Riflebird Trail
Cairns Highlands.

Cairns Highlands (Atherton Tablelands).

A number of days can be spent exploring the wide variety of sites on this trail. Victoria’s Riflebird may be found in any of the many rainforest areas.

7 Cassowary Trail
Cairns south to Mission Beach.

Mission Beach has long been the stronghold for Southern Cassowary which may be encountered on walking tracks in the rainforest along with many other lowland species. Ely Bay is another reliable location for Southern Cassowary.

Birdwatching Tropical Australia (Mossman)
Ph: 0447 546 926   www.daintreeriverwildwatch.com.au

Daintree River Wild Watch
Ph: 0418 757 288 www.cassowary-house.com.au

Cassowary House
Ph: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Cassowary Tours (Cairns)
Ph: 0418 757 288 www.cassowarytours.com.au

Tours and guides for birders
1 Cairns Foreshore (Esplanade)

2 Century Lakes

3 Flecker Botanic Gardens and Mt. Whitley Conservation Park

4 Pioneer Cemetery – James Street Cairns

5 Jack Barnes Bicentennial Mangrove Boardwalk – Cairns Airport Drive

6 Redden Island

7 Cattana Wetlands

8 Yule Point

9 Michieasm Cay National Park

10 Mossman Gorge - Daintree National Park

11 Newell Beach area

12 Wonga Beach

13 Daintree Village

14 Stewart Creek Road

15 Jindalba Boardwalk – Daintree National Park

16 Mt. Lewis

17 Abattoir Swamp Environmental Park

18 Mowbray National Park

19 Maryvales

20 Mount Molley

22 Mareeba Wetlands

21 Lake Mitchell

22 Mareeba Wetlands

23 Mowbray National Park

24 Tinaroo Creek Road

25 Davies Creek Wetland

26 Emerald Creek – Dinden State Forest

27 Cairns

28 Tully Gorge and Tully Falls

29 Kabun Track

30 Mt Hypipamee National Park

31 Wongabel State Forest

32 Hasties Swamp National Park

33 Bromfield Swamp

34 Curtain Fig National Park

35 Lake Eacham

36 Pelican Point

37 Goldborough Valley – Wooroonooran National Park

38 Babinda Swamp National Park

39 Crater Lakes National Park

40 Craven’s Creek

41 Eungella

42 Gownaswary Trail

43 Mission Beach

44 Reefbird Trail – Cairns Highlands

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