Bird Trails
TROPICAL NORTH

Tours and Guides for Birders

A Daintree Boatman Nature Tours
Renowned birdwatching & photography cruises on the Daintree River. 2 hour personalised cruises conducted at dawn & dusk. Unique hybrid vehicle with both outboard & electric motor used. 10 passenger max.
Ph: 0417 651 929 www.daintreevertours.com.au

B Daintree River Wild Watch
Decades of experience providing small personalised tours on the Daintree River. Excellent sunrise & sunset birding opportunities. 10 twelved seaters. Specialised photography tours available.
Ph: 0447 546 926 www.daintreesriverwildwatch.com.au

C Birdwatching Tropical Australia
Doug Herrington (20 years local experience, SATOUR trained guide) offers daily and multi-day birding and photographic tours of the Wet Tropics and Cape York. Small groups. Variable itineraries. Private tours.
Ph: 0418 757 288
www.birdwatchingtropicalaustralia.com.au

D Great Northern Birdwatching Tours
Experienced North QLD birding guide, David Mead, specialises in small groups and personal tours. Day tours and multi-day tours to destinations include Cairns, Atherton Tablelands, Cape York and Queensland’s North West.
Ph: 0411 348 120 www.greatnortherntravels.com.au

E Cassowary Tours
Expert guide offers a wide range of bird and natural history day trips or fully accommodated tours around Tropical North Queensland and Cape York Peninsula. Customised & photographic tours speciality.
Ph: 0413 661 213 www.cassowarytours.com.au

F Alan’s Wildlife Tours
Half to multi-day private tours with a natural history generalist whose passions are birds and nocturnal mammals. Knowledgeable and personable. Alan can find those special birds at your site.
Ph: 0408 953 786 www.alanswildlife.com.au

G 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 18 species of seabird have been observed.
Ph: 07 4041 6218 www.seastarcruises.com.au

H Eyes on Wildlife
Half day to multi-day birding & wildlife tours guided by naturalist and Wet Tropics specialist Patrick De Gucht. Specific bird and/or mammal target tours all over Tropical Queensland.

Accommodation for Birders

A Red Mill House
Ph: 07 4086 6233 www.redmillhouse.com.au

B Thala Beach Nature Reserve
A deluxe eco retreat & birdwatcher’s paradise with over 195 bird species documented. Thala’s guests enjoy complimentary guided nature walks surrounded by Wet Tropics Rainforest and Great Barrier Reef.
Ph: 07 4086 5700 www.thala.com.au

C Sweetwater Lodge
Two outstanding self-contained private lodges in Julatten set on 160 acres bird-watcher’s paradise. Habitats include rainforest, woodland, grassland and riparian. 5 minutes to Mt. Lewis National Park.
Ph: 0427 773 060 www.sweetwaterlodge.com.au

D Cassowary House
Naturalist guest-house within World Heritage rainforest at Kuranda above Cairns. Ideal base for exploring coast and highlands. Cassowaries and Reefbirds are frequent visitors. Expert guides are available.
Ph: 07 4093 7318 www.cassowary-house.com.au

E Crater Lakes Rainforest Cottages
‘Where the wildlife comes to you’. Self-contained cottage nestled in rainforest. Walking distance to Lake Eacham, Victoria’s Reefbirds among the many visitors. Great location close to World Heritage Rainforest.
Ph: 07 4095 2322 www.craterlakes.com.au

F Atherton Tablelands Birdwatchers’ Cabin
Modern self-contained, well-appointed cabin, secluded in expanse of tall sclerophyll forest and rainforest at 1000m elevation. Private walking trails, creek. Great wildlife diversity, species lists on website.
Ph: 07 4201 0993 www.athertontablelandbirdwatcherscabin.com.au

G Villa Marine Holiday Apartments
Villa Marine Holiday Apartments Cairns, great location 15 min from Cairns at Verkyck Beach. Stay next to rainforest, 50m to beach and 5 min to great birding.
Ph: 07 4055 7158 www.villamarin.com.au

Cover photo: John Matulis, Keith & Lindsay Fisher, Phil Gregory

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Cairns Wat Tropics Region
Cairns, Daintree, Atherton Tablelands, Julatten, Kuranda, Mission Beach

Check the website for more information, sites, directions and bird lists.
www.birdingtqn.com.au

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

It is no wonder that so many bird calls 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 15 of these are local endemics. The higher altitude rainforests that some of these species occur in is usually above 600m.

Wet Tropics 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 (July-Dec), chance sightings out of this period, generally at higher altitudes.

Ferruginous Bowerbird – generally seen in the higher altitude rainforests.

Mountain Thornbill – higher altitude rainforests.

White-throated Treecreeper – throughout rainforest and adjacent woodlands.

White-throated Scrubwren – Bassian Thrush.

Crimson Rosella

Southern Boobook

Masked Owl

Satin Bowerbird

Yellow-throated Scrubwren

Brown Gerygone

Eastern Spinebill

Yellow-faced Honeyeater

Grey Fantail

Pale-yellow Robin

Bassian Thrush

Great-billed Heron – Jim Mantia, Lesser Sooty Owl – Patrick De Cavel

Accommodation for birds

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

2. Kingfisher Trail

3. Honeyeater Trail

4. Bowerbird Trail

5. Catbird Trail

6. Riflebird Trail

Tropical North Queensland

Bird Trails

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

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-tailed 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.

Join a wildlife tour with any of our experienced guides to fully appreciate the huge diversity of birds and other wildlife in our region and learn about the habitats they live in.

Apart from birding there is also a whole host of other wildlife and environmental related activities available in the region. Have a day on the reef at the abalone breeding colony of Mischke Livestock Co. Ltd., or you can also snorkel, dive and view the reef. Take the Skyrail cable car from Kuranda or Cairns and observe the birds from above the rainforest canopy.

Other interesting animals occurring in Northern Queensland include Platypus, Echidna, Tree Kangaroo., a variety of possums, the iridescent Cairns Birdwing and Ulysses butterflies, Giant White-tipped Tree Frog and the Boyd’s Forest Dragon.

Check the website for more information & kids’ ideas. Cairns, Atherton Tablelands, Mission Beach.
**Black Mountain Road – Kuranda National Park**
Rainforest habitat close to Kuranda, with a good chance of Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Tinbeerwah Creek – Daintree National Park**
Driving the length of this road near Mareeba gives a good chance of Squirrel Pigeon, Pale-headed Rosella, Yellow Honeyeater, Brown Treecreeper, Great Bowerbird and possibly Black-throated Finch.

**Davie Creek National Park**
Davie Creek flows over massive granite boulders surrounded by rainforest. Bowerbirds are the only birds in this area that can be seen at close range. The bower is an area of dense trees where a female is attracted by the male’s display.

**Emerald Creek – Dinden State Forest**
The forest is a wilderness and wet-scrub forest, good for Pale-headed Rosella, honeyeaters including Bridled (in winter), Yellow and White-naped, White-throated and White-plumed Wren, White-throated and a variety of finches.

**Carron Beach – Cape York Peninsula**
The beach is a flat, wide, white-sand beach with a good chance of Cassowary, Western Bowerbird, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Zillie Creek – Woorooloooran National Park**
A small wetland with a good chance of Cassowary, Western Bowerbird, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Hulk Bird Trail – Cairns Highlands**
A great trail for birders and nature enthusiasts. The trail is a loop trail that winds through wetland vegetation, providing an excellent opportunity for birders to see many tropical bird species.

**Khanum Bird Trail – Mission Beach**
A short, easy walk that winds through tropical rainforest, providing good opportunities for birders to see many tropical bird species, including Cassowary, Western Bowerbird, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Great Barrier Reef**
The Great Barrier Reef is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. It is home to thousands of species of fish, corals, and other marine life. The reef is a popular destination for snorkeling, scuba diving, and other water activities.

**Cassowary Trail – Cairns south to Mission Beach**
This trail is a great opportunity to observe the cassowary in its natural habitat. The trail winds through tropical rainforest, providing good opportunities for birders to see many tropical bird species, including Cassowary, Western Bowerbird, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Black Mountain Road**
A great place to see Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Tinbeerwah Creek**
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**Davie Creek National Park**
A great place to see Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Emerald Creek – Dinden State Forest**
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**Carron Beach – Cape York Peninsula**
A great place to see Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Khanum Bird Trail – Mission Beach**
A great place to see Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Great Barrier Reef**
A great place to see Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.

**Cassowary Trail – Cairns south to Mission Beach**
A great place to see Cassowary, Red-necked Crane, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Jabeer Fruit-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Pernet, Lovely Fairy-wren, four species of monarchs, Yellow-faced Blackbill, Victoria’s Riflebird and Spotted Cuckoo.