



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Australia Invitational 2016**

Oct 21, 2016 to Nov 9, 2016  
John Coons & Rose Ann Rowlett

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*Legacy of ancient reptilian ancestors, the monotremes (echidnas and Platypus) developed in Australia as they mingled with early marsupials that evolved in South America when those two continents were still connected via Antarctica. The resulting combo of an egg-laying mammal with a pouch is remarkable indeed. Getting great views of the two extraordinary Australian monotremes was one of the foremost highlights of the trip. Though normally considered shy, this Short-beaked Echidna wandered right among us at Cradle Mountain National Park. (photo by participant Fred Dalbey)*

It was another trip to the ancient and fascinating land of kookaburras, kangaroos, and echidnas. This year we met in Tasmania, where we spent most of our time in the cool, forested mountains, remnants of the intrusive lavas that ultimately unzipped Australia from Antarctica in the dying days of Gondwana, some 30-40 million years ago. It was then that Australia started sailing northward toward the tropics, drying as it drifted into warmer climes, and triggering one of the planet's great biological experiments in isolation--and the beginning of an incredible radiation of unique life forms.

Tasmania itself has been detached from the world's largest island long enough to harbor a number of its own endemics. By the time we left Tasmania, we had seen all 12 of its endemic birds, the toughest-to-find delivering lerp to its nest hole. And we had had close looks at such iconic Australian mammals as echidnas, Platypus, pademelons, wombats, and even the Endangered Tasmanian Devil, largest extant marsupial carnivore. It would be hard to match such riches on the rest of our route.

But a new form of excitement came the day we flew from Melbourne to Alice Springs. Even the pilot was excited to point out the amount of water in Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre, Australia's lowest point (at 49' below sea level) and the terminal basin for a huge drainage area encompassing much of interior Australia. Normally a sprawling salt pan with little water, Lake Eyre has only filled to capacity three times in the last 150 years. Heavy rains in late 2015 into the spring of 2016 have been filling the lake, which, before it becomes too salty, can attract huge numbers of Banded Stilts and up to 80% of Australia's pelican population to feed on the ephemeral abundance of aquatic life. From the plane, we could see considerable water in the lake, enough to create its own weather--a covering of clouds over the center of the water. We would later witness thousands of Banded Stilts moving inland, away from the coasts, and wonder at how birds hundreds of miles away are able to detect the filling of endorheic inland lakes.

On the ground at Alice Springs, the Outback was in bloom and alive with singing and displaying birds. A Western Bowerbird was spiffing up his bower; Dusky Grasswrens were singing and territorial, as were fairywrens and honeyeaters and such rarities as Redthroat and Chiming Wedgebill. Vast stretches of Spinifex were in seed, and there were displaying Spinifex Pigeons, responsive Spinifex-birds and emuwrens, and nesting Painted Firetails. Mulga Parrots foraged amid the wildflowers, and impressive flights of Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos inspected mulga burns. There were Long-nosed Dragons, leveled Mulga Ant nests, and flowering Sturt's Desert Peas. It was quite a contrast to Tasmania!

Then it was on to Perth and the Southwest, famous for supporting the highest diversity of bird-pollinated flowers on Earth. To be there in the austral spring of a wet year was to witness a fabulous spring bloom! From the Dryandra Forest to Lake Sepping, from Cheynes Beach and Two Peoples Bay to "Muttonbird Island" and Rocky Gully, spring was in the air. The spectacular coastal scenery--from tall eucalyptus woodlands to Banksia-dominated

coastal heath--contrasted dramatically with what we'd seen near Alice. Bird highlights ranged from displaying male Musk Ducks to a wonderful diversity of parrots (including an banner year for Purple-crowned Lorikeets!); from seeing the Big Three Southwestern specialties (the scrub-bird, the bristlebird, and the whiplikebird) to watching displaying Red-eared Firetails carrying long grass stems in courtship; from watching bizarre Shingleback (or Stumpytail) Lizards to cataloging a wonderful array of Proteaceae, Myrtaceae, and kangaroo paws in bloom.

We finished the trip with a day of birding at Royal National Park out of Sydney, mainly to ease the transition to the long flights homeward. But sampling the flora and fauna along the Hacking River and the nearby sandstone cliffs produced some highlights unique to eastern Australia, and new for most. Our final bird highlights ranged from handsome Topknot Pigeons and Australian King-Parrots to a cooperative Superb Lyrebird, the rare and local Rockwarbler, and a singing male Rose Robin--our 11th robin of the trip! It was an appropriate ending to a very memorable tour.

For a wonderful review of the wonders of Australia, we highly recommend two programs: the 4-part Nova series "Australia's First 4 Billion Years"; and "Australia: Land Beyond Time," a video that can be seen on YouTube. Plus, Tim Low's book, WHERE SONG BEGAN (2014, Penguin EBook or Viking paperback), which I've referenced liberally in the annotations below, deserves a reread after any birding trip to Australia.

We thank Karen in our FG office, Len and Pat, our hosts at Mountain Valley Lodge, and all of our driver-guides in Australia for a seamless tour. Thanks to Fred, Peggy, Don, Ron, and Nancy for processing and uploading photos under time pressures; their photos adorn the html version of this triplist. And special thanks to our botanists--Linda, Nancy, and Ron--for photographing, identifying, uploading, and compiling the list of representative flowers we encountered; you can view the Aus16p-FLOWERS gallery at the URL we sent you.

And thanks again to all of you for all the fun. John and I had a grand time, and I'll remember it fondly as my final scheduled FG tour--shared with a select group of wonderful people.

--Grebe (& Kingfisher)

---

## KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

---

## BIRDS

### Casuariidae (Cassowaries and Emu)

**EMU** (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) – More closely related to cassowaries than originally thought, the Emu--which used to be considered a distinct, monotypic family endemic to Australia--is now merged into the Casuariidae. We saw them on two days in the far West, starting near Rocky Gully. [E]

### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**BLACK SWAN** (*Cygnus atratus*) – Common throughout our route, save for the xeric interior. Its specific moniker, *atratus*, means "clothed in mourning," for its black plumes, anomalous for a swan. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna tadornoides*) – These big ducks were seen nicely in Tasmania and on Parkeyerring Lake in WA.

**MANED DUCK** (*Chenonetta jubata*) – Known to Aussies as Wood Duck, this small, rather goose-like endemic was seen often and widely. [E]

**PACIFIC BLACK DUCK** (*Anas superciliosa*) – Also widespread.

**GRAY TEAL** (*Anas gracilis*) – Seen well, first at the Alice Springs water treatment facility, and then a couple of times in the West.

**CHESTNUT TEAL** (*Anas castanea*) – Seen nicely at a roadside lake between Launceston and Deloraine. [E]

**PINK-EARED DUCK** (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) – We scoped these endemics with the Shoveler-like bills at the Alice Springs water treatment ponds our first afternoon in Alice. Its specific moniker is for the membrane-like skin flaps at the tip of its huge bill. [E]

**WHITE-EYED DUCK** (*Aythya australis*) – A.k.a. Hardhead, this diving duck was seen first at Alice, but best at the freshwater marsh at the Vasse River Wetland in Busselton.

**BLUE-BILLED DUCK** (*Oxyura australis*) – Nice males were seen a couple of times, perhaps best at the Vasse River Wetland in Busselton. [E]

**MUSK DUCK** (*Biziura lobata*) – One of the behavioral highlights of our trip was watching a male displaying at Sepping Lake, Albany: He spread his pincushion-like tail, holding it forward over his back, spread his legs to his sides, held his neck forward, head arched backward, his lobe fully distended, and uttered a far-carrying, vocal "plonk" followed by a high-pitched whistled "chee" while simultaneously kicking splashes of water back with his legs! We watched this male repeatedly displaying this way, sometimes oriented toward a female; other, more distant, males were engaged in the same behavior. What a fabulous show! [E]

### Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**BROWN QUAIL** (*Synoicus ypsilophorus*) – After a quick view (for some) of a bird that flushed in Tasmania, we all got to watch a pair cross the track near Two Peoples Bay, WA, just after having seen the Red-eared Firetails displaying.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**AUSTRALASIAN GREBE** (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – We saw these small grebes well at the Alice Springs water treatment ponds.

**HOARY-HEADED GREBE** (*Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*) – We compared this species to the last at the Alice Springs ponds. [E]

### Diomedidae (Albatrosses)

**YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS** (*Thalassarche chlororhynchus*) – On a windy afternoon we visited the Gap and the Blowhole, in Torndirrup NP. We saw a distant white albatross which was doubtless of this species, but truly satisfying views were lacking.

### Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

**FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER** (*Ardenna carneipes*) – In the same area, we managed some fairly good views of this species, in part thanks to the strong winds that brought them close to shore.



**WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER** (*Ardenna pacifica*) – The numerous (50+) shearwaters we saw from the ocean vista at Royal National Park were, we believe, predominantly Wedge-tailed.

**SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER** (*Ardenna tenuirostris*) – We saw this smaller shearwater off the coast of Bruny Island, TS.

*Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)*

**AUSTRALASIAN GANNET** (*Morus serrator*) – We saw large circling flocks of these handsome gannets at fairly close range off Bruny Island.

*Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)*

**LITTLE PIED CORMORANT** (*Microcarbo melanoleucos*) – Seen almost daily in the Southwest.

**GREAT CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

**LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*)

**PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax varius*)

**BLACK-FACED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax fuscescens*) – The cormorant highlight of our trip was obtaining good looks at this endemic species at the ferry landing on Bruny Island. [E]

*Anhingidae (Anhingas)*

**AUSTRALASIAN DARTER** (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – Seen nicely at our picnic site on 4 Nov.

*Pelecanidae (Pelicans)*

**AUSTRALIAN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) – Seen almost daily in the SW, but perhaps best at the Vasse River Wetland in Busselton, where we especially noticed the huge size of their eyes.

*Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)*

**PACIFIC HERON** (*Ardea pacifica*)

**GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN)** (*Ardea alba modesta*)

**WHITE-FACED HERON** (*Egretta novaehollandiae*) – The most frequently encountered heron on this trip, it was widespread in small numbers.

*Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)*

**AUSTRALIAN IBIS** (*Threskiornis moluccus*) – Seen daily in the SW, this endemic was especially common in the marsh at Sepping Lake, Albany. [E]

**STRAW-NECKED IBIS** (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Our best looks at this species were also at Sepping Lake in Albany, WA. [E]

**YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL** (*Platalea flavipes*) – We had lovely scope studies of a couple of these scarce endemics at the Vasse River Wetland at Busselton. [E]

*Pandionidae (Osprey)*

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One bird was seen on 3 Nov.

*Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)*

**AUSTRALIAN KITE** (*Elanus axillaris*) – This hover-hunting kite, as split from our White-tailed Kite, was seen only in Western Australia (WA)--on 3 Nov. [E]

**WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE** (*Aquila audax*) – This dramatic big raptor, first seen in Tasmania, was also seen at Alice Springs and in WA. In total, we probably saw a dozen or so.

**SWAMP HARRIER** (*Circus approximans*) – Seen in Tasmania and WA in varied locations.

**GRAY GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) – The light was perfect on it! We had great scope views of a stunning white-morph bird perched atop a dead branch at Mountain Valley Lodge.

**BROWN GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter fasciatus*) – One bird was seen on Bruny Island, TS.

**COLLARED SPARROWHAWK** (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) – One bird flew over us at Royal National Park, NSW.

**BLACK KITE** (*Milvus migrans*) – Abundant around the water treatment area at Alice Springs.

**WHISTLING KITE** (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Common in the Alice Springs area, this species was seen atop its big nest near the dam we visited one afternoon. [N]

**WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – This impressive raptor was seen widely, most impressively at a nest in Tasmania en route to Mountain Valley Lodge. [N]

*Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)*

**SPOTLESS CRAKE** (*Zapornia tabuensis*) – Several birds called from the marshy margins of Lake Powell but wouldn't emerge into view. [\*]

**AUSTRALASIAN SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio melanotus*) – Seen first at Alice Springs (water treatment ponds), but probably best at the marshy margins of Lake Sepping in Albany.

**DUSKY MOORHEN** (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Seen at Centennial Park and Royal NP, NSW.

**TASMANIAN NATIVE-HEN** (*Tribonyx mortierii*) – This Tasmanian endemic seemed to be everywhere over the northern part of the island! We had many good encounters, including watching a pair building a nest, as well as a downy chick, behind the public restrooms in Deloraine. Fide Tim Low (\*Where Song Began\*), this bird is an exception to the "global rule that flightless rails keep to islands without predatory animals." [EN]

**EURASIAN COOT** (*Fulica atra*) – Widespread.

*Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)*

**PIED STILT** (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) – Numerous at Alice Springs water treatment ponds.

**BANDED STILT** (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) – In this wet year, we anticipated finding lots of water in Parkeyerring Lake. But we were blown away by the impressive numbers (JC counted 2600+!) of handsome Banded Stilts at the lake--especially since only 12 had been reported there four weeks earlier, then 1200 three weeks earlier. A number of birds were close enough for fabulous scope views of this impressive Australian endemic, which was clearly moving inland, away from the coast, to take advantage of the ephemeral burst of life in these inland lakes. How do they know??! [E]

**RED-NECKED AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) – Amid the hordes of Banded Stilts at Parkeyerring Lake were two lovely Red-necked Avocets, as Linda pointed out. We had first seen this beauty at the Alice Springs sewage ponds. [E]

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

**PIED OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus longirostris*) – We had repeated good studies of this beauty at Bruny Island and along the coast in WA. [E]

**SOOTY OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus fuliginosus*) – Ditto for this species. We watched one pair copulating right below us along the causeway on Bruny Island. [EN]

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**BANDED LAPWING** (*Vanellus tricolor*) – We had nice studies of these rather scarce and local endemics in Tasmania, and then Rita noticed a pair with 3 tiny young ones--in a vacant lot right in Busselton! [EN]

**MASKED LAPWING** (*Vanellus miles*) – Common and widespread.

**RED-CAPPED PLOVER** (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – This pretty little plover was seen at close range at the Alice Springs water treatment ponds. [E]

**BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL** (*Euseyornis melanops*) – Seen nicely at the Alice Springs ponds and along the stream through Ormiston Gorge.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris acuminata*) – We had nice studies of this boreal migrant at the Alice Springs sewage ponds. [b]

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – At the Alice Springs sewage ponds. [b]

**COMMON GREENSHANK** (*Tringa nebularia*) – One bird at the Alice Springs sewage ponds. [b]

**WOOD SANDPIPER** (*Tringa glareola*) – The most conspicuous sandpiper at the Alice Springs sewage ponds. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**SILVER GULL** (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) – The common gull in all coastal areas, with some seen inland. Recently removed from *Larus* and placed in the genus *Chroicocephalus*, a genus of relatively small gulls, including our Bonaparte's Gull.

**PACIFIC GULL** (*Larus pacificus*) – A huge gull with a huge bill. Our first ones were at the ferry landing to Bruny Island, Tasmania, and then we enjoyed a number of others along the SW coast. This endemic is currently considered Near Threatened. [E]

**KELP GULL** (*Larus dominicanus*) – The commoner gull in Tasmania, where we saw it well.

**GULL-BILLED TERN** (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – We saw one bird well at the Alice Springs sewage ponds.

**CASPIAN TERN** (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – A few seen near "Muttonbird Island" and at Hamelin Bay.

**WHISKERED TERN** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – A few basic-pumaged birds at the Alice Springs sewage ponds.

**GREAT CRESTED TERN** (*Thalasseus bergii*) – Seen along the rugged rocky coastline at the Gap, Torndirrup NP, in the SW.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – In most urban areas. [I]

**SPOTTED DOVE** (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – Common in Tasmania and widespread in small numbers. [I]

**BROWN CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Macropygia phasianella*) – A bird was seen nicely along Lady Carrington Drive at Royal NP on our final morning afield.

**COMMON BRONZEWING** (*Phaps chalcoptera*) – Seen nicely on multiple occasions, beginning in Tasmania and then especially in the Southwest. [E]

**BRUSH BRONZEWING** (*Phaps elegans*) – Mostly seen at the road edges and heard uttering its incessant whooping at Mountain Valley Lodge; but we eventually had fabulous scope views of a bird perched on a wire at Cheynes Beach! [E]

**CRESTED PIGEON** (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) – Widespread, particularly in the drier areas. We had many wonderful views.

**SPINIFEX PIGEON** (*Geophaps plumifera*) – After seeing this exceptional pigeon up close and personal at the Ormiston Gorge Cafe, where they are fed, we had equally stunning views of birds calling and displaying in the a natural setting--complete with seeding Spinifex--along the Gorge stream. What a bird! [E]

**WONGA PIGEON** (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*) – Only at Royal National Park on our route, where birds were calling and seen briefly. [E]

**DIAMOND DOVE** (*Geopelia cuneata*) – This delicate dove was seen daily in the Alice Springs area, beginning with the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens. [E]

**TOPKNOT PIGEON** (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) – A small flock of these lovely, big endemics were foraging in fruiting trees just above our bus when we first arrived at Royal National Park. We had great scope views of these pigeons that are considered the foremost "forest maker" in Australia's subtropical forests; they are not known to eat anything but fruits, and they spread the seeds widely. [E]

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – We had a couple of fly-overs of these massive cuckoos, which were calling all the while--in Centennial Park and at Royal NP near Sydney. They live largely on figs. Channel-billed is the largest of all brood parasites, its hosts primarily currawongs, magpies, butcherbirds, and crows. That their eggs mimic those of currawongs most closely suggests that currawongs became their victims first, giving evolution time to perfect a look-alike egg.

**SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – Seen well in Tasmania and in the Dryandra Woodland and heard almost daily in the SW.

**PALLID CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis pallidus*) – Heard at the Wilmot River as we watched the Platypus; and then a fly-over bird was seen overhead at Two Peoples Bay. [E]

**FAN-TAILED CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) – Seen first (by some) along a roadside fence in Tasmania, where we heard them regularly; ultimately, we all had a nice view of one at Royal NP. Brood parasite primarily on fairywrens, thornbills, and scrub-wrens that build domed nests.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**AZURE KINGFISHER** (*Ceyx azureus*) – This little beauty was seen along the Hacking River in Royal NP, at first by some, and then by all when Nico spotted a perched bird near our picnic lunch site.

**LAUGHING KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) – This great Australian icon was seen and heard widely in Tasmania and in the SW, perhaps best in the backyard of the Porongurup Shop and Tearoom, where we had lunch and birded the grounds, seeing a kookaburra up close! Largest member of the kingfisher family, it is unusual among non-passerines in exhibiting cooperative breeding behavior. That Australia has the most cooperative breeders in the world is a reminder of the exceptional depth of bird evolution here. [E]

**RED-BACKED KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus pyrrhopygius*) – We called in the first one along the road to the West MacDonnell Range NP near Alice and then had nice looks at several others in the Alice Springs area. Often found far from water, this little kingfisher eats large insects, small reptiles, and even mice. [E]

**SACRED KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Seen well near Alice Springs and a couple of times in the SW. Sanctus is the common woodland kingfisher of Australia. None of the four kingfishers we saw on our trip has changed much since the Quaternary; that is, their skeletons can't be distinguished from the remains of their respective ancestors that lived one million years ago! (No wonder OUR Kingfisher has such an affinity for Australia.)

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**RAINBOW BEE-EATER** (*Merops ornatus*) – This pretty bee-eater was seen well near Alice and in the SW, especially at the lake near the entrance to the Dryandra Woodland, where we scoped foraging birds in great light.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**AUSTRALIAN KESTREL** (*Falco cenchroides*) – Seen first near Alice and then several times in the Southwest.

**AUSTRALIAN HOBBY** (*Falco longipennis*) – We recorded one bird--in the SW on 2 Nov. [E]

**BROWN FALCON** (*Falco berigora*) – This big falcon was seen in all three major areas, both perched and in flight. Berigora is the English literation of the aboriginal word for this species.

**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – Heard, perhaps seen by some, at Simpsons Gap. [\*]

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

**RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*) – One of the highlights of the trip was watching flock after flock (some 300-400!) of these big black-cockatoos in a recently burned area along the Santa Teresa Road out of Alice. Generally scarce on our route, this species is seasonally nomadic; we were lucky to intersect such a large group and get to watch them streaming past and trumpeting their far-carrying calls! The female of this species was the first psittaciform to be sketched (1770), on Cook's first voyage to the continent. [E]

**YELLOW-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) – Black-cockatoos have much of their vice-like bills hidden, hence their generic name. This species feeds principally on insect larvae, though its diet includes seeds as well. We saw it well in Tasmania, where it's the only black-cockatoo that occurs. It's not found in Western Australia or the Northern Territory. [E]

**CARNABY'S BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) – A.k.a. Short-billed Black-Cockatoo, this impressive Psittacid was the more numerous of the two similar species on our trip; yet both are considered Vulnerable. The range of both is strictly limited to the SW. Our first views were of 4 birds that flew over us while we were on a sandy side track off the road to Two Peoples Bay on 4 Nov. That same afternoon, we scoped a group of 14 birds foraging on "Muttonbird Island," officially known as Shelter Island. [E]

**BAUDIN'S BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*) – A.k.a. Long-billed Black-Cockatoo, this species has a VERY restricted range in southwesternmost Australia. We had great scope studies of a perched pair on 2 Nov at the entrance to Stirling Range Bluff Knoll. Males of all four black-cockatoos we saw have dark or gray bills, whereas the females have pale whitish bills. [E]

**GALAH** (*Eolophus roseicapilla*) – This widespread Cacatuid was plentiful and seen in each major area we birded and almost every day. Gregarious, noisy, and handsome! [E]

**WESTERN CORELLA** (*Cacatua pastinator*) – A split from Long-billed Corella, this species was considered Endangered until recently (thanks to conservation efforts, it's now considered only Vulnerable). They are rather sedentary, and we found them in the same area--Rosella's farm near Rocky Gully--where JC had seen them before; this time they were close enough for great scope views! "Pastinator" means "ditch-digger" and refers to the manner in which large flocks of this terrestrial Cacatua dig up roots and insects and their larvae. [E]

**LITTLE CORELLA** (*Cacatua sanguinea*) – This common, widespread species was seen by some along the drive from Narrogin to Albany.

**SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO** (*Cacatua galerita*) – We saw many in Tasmania, but our closest views by far were of birds that joined us for lunch at Royal National Park, some of them fully raising their amazing crests. Parrots and passerines are the most intelligent birds and are each other's closest relatives, as reflected in the new taxonomic ordering.

**COCKATIEL** (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) – We had great studies of a bird that flew in and landed nearby along the Santa Teresa Road out of Alice. Long belonging to a monotypic genus, the Cockatiel is now placed in a monotypic subfamily of the Cacatuidae, with DNA studies showing it sister to the black-cockatoos. [E]

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

**REGENT PARROT** (*Polytelis anthopeplus*) – Despite multiple efforts, our only encounters with these golden endemics were of birds flying along, and seen from, our moving bus. Sorry. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN KING-PARROT** (*Alisterus scapularis*) – But we had lovely views of these beauties at Royal National Park on our last morning afield. [E]

**BLUE-WINGED PARROT** (*Neophema chrysostoma*) – Our experience with this scarce Australian endemic was superb, starting at Cradle Mountain NP when Don spotted a bird on the ground just ahead of us! These little Neophemas often feed on the ground, eating seeds, blossoms, fruit, and insects. We had good scope views of a pair there and then saw them again on Bruny Island while searching for the firetail. Many birds migrate between Tasmania, where they breed in the austral spring and winter, and southeast mainland Australia, where they winter. They can appear in flocks of up to 2000 birds just before fall migration! [E]

**ELEGANT PARROT** (*Neophema elegans*) – Another member of the delicate Neophema genus, all of which forage a lot on the ground (thus making them difficult to locate), this beauty gave us trouble in the Dryandra Woodland. But some lucky folks did get on one of the couple of birds we spotted--though they didn't stay perched for long. This species was yet another Australian bird named (in 1837) by renowned ornithologist and artist John Gould. [E]

**ROCK PARROT** (*Neophema petrophila*) – A coastal representative of the genus, this species is totally unpredictable. The weekend traffic at Hamelin Bay, where Kingfisher had found it recently, was probably responsible for keeping birds away from the accessible areas. We walked the beaches, the grassy edges of the parking lots, and then tried an alternative site, flushing one bird up from the road edge through stunted coastal scrub. Unfortunately, only a few folks could see that one, and we couldn't find another, despite a deserted beach at Foul Bay. [E]

**SWIFT PARROT** (*Lathamus discolor*) – Breeding only in Tasmania and then wintering on the SE coastal mainland, this gregarious species feeds primarily on blue gums. We searched the blue gums at Adventure Bay, TS, on a windy day, but only a couple of folks got on the pair of Swift Parrots that rocketed overhead; we couldn't relocate them or find others. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN RINGNECK** (*Barnardius zonarius*) – What we often called Port Lincoln Ringneck or Port Lincoln Parrot has been merged with other ringnecks (with which it interbreeds freely in zones of overlap) and is now considered the nominate race of Australian Ringneck. We had repeated wonderful encounters with this beauty, beginning at the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens in Alice Springs, and then continuing throughout Western Australia. The genus was named for Edward Barnard, zoologist and botanist, who was responsible for securing loans from the British Treasury for



South Australia. He provided the type specimen to the Linnaean Society. The species was described by the English naturalist George Shaw in 1805. [E]

**GREEN ROSELLA** (*Platycercus caledonicus*) – We had nice encounters with this rather secretive rosella in Tasmania on several occasions. It is the largest of the rosellas and is one of the twelve Tasmanian endemics. The specific name, given by the German naturalist Johann Gmelin in 1788, was derived from the mistaken belief the bird was collected from New Caledonia instead of Adventure Bay! [E]

**CRIMSON ROSELLA (CRIMSON)** (*Platycercus elegans elegans*) – Endemic to forested areas of coastal and montane eastern and southeastern Australia, the Crimson Rosella inhabits primarily older and wetter forests. Like all rosellas, their populations are sedentary. They can be quite conspicuous when foraging (remember those that sat on our shoulders at O'Reilly's?). On this trip we saw them only in Royal National Park on our last day. [E]

**WESTERN ROSELLA** (*Platycercus icterotis*) – Pairs of these beauties were seen in the Southwest, beginning in the Dryandra Woodland, and then on 3 other days. [E]

**MULGA PARROT** (*Psephotus varius*) – These fabulous beauties were seen repeatedly along the Santa Teresa Road near Alice, where they foraged on the ground in the mulga, often amid a shock of wildflowers. [E]

**RED-CAPPED PARROT** (*Purpureicephalus spurius*) – Endemic to the southwest, this fabulous parrot, of a monotypic genus, was not as frequently seen as the ringneck, but we had gripping looks at it in the Southwest, beginning in the Dryandra Woodland. The specific name "spurius" (= illegitimate) refers to the juveniles, which look so different as not to be related. [E]

**BUDGERIGAR** (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) – We had nice scope views of this familiar parakeet--in its natural habitat!--in the West MacDonnell Range near Alice. They may have been nesting, or investigating potential nest holes, at our lunch spot at Glen Helen; and we watched wave after wave passing overhead, calling, after our flat tire near Alice. Small flocks were also seen in Ormiston Gorge and along the Santa Teresa Road. Amazingly, each individual Budgie knows not only the call of its mate, but the sound of its group when flocks combine. By hearing extremely well in the 2–4 kHz range, pairs within flocks of thousands can keep together! (Low) [E]

**PURPLE-CROWNED LORIKEET** (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*) – Primarily an inhabitant of eucalyptus woodland, this species ranges widely through the mallee when it's in bloom. There was a LOT in bloom during our visit, and there seems to have been an amazing influx of Purple-crowned Lorikeets in the Southwest. They were most conspicuous in the Dryandra Woodland, where some were going to nest holes, but they were seen in surprising numbers throughout the Southwest. (By contrast, they were not even recorded on this same route last year!) [EN]

**RAINBOW LORIKEET** (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – These beauties of eastern Australia were seen on our trip only in and around Sydney.

#### Menuridae (Lyrebirds)

**SUPERB LYREBIRD** (*Menura novaehollandiae*) – It may have been on the last day, but it was one of the birds of the trip! After hearing it singing--and getting glimpses of it in display through the understory--we ultimately had great views as it hopped onto a boulder and then crossed the Lady Carrington Drive, circling us. The largest songbird--and a contender for the best songster!--the lyrebird is a shy descendant of the very first songbirds. As Tim Low points out, fossils show that lyrebirds and logrunners were scratching in the leaf litter of Queensland in the early to mid-Miocene, at which time the perching birds in Europe did not belong to living families, much less living genera. The ancient origin of songbirds in Australia is why Australia has the claim to being "where song began." [E]

#### Atrichornithidae (Scrub-birds)

**NOISY SCRUB-BIRD** (*Atrichornis clamosus*) – The arresting similarities between lyrebird and scrub-bird acoustics suggest they had a common ancestor with a commanding voice. Amazingly, these strong singers actually have fewer throat muscles than other songbirds--only three intrinsic muscles on the syrinx or voice box, whereas all other songbirds have four! In the coastal scrub at Cheynes Beach, abloom with flowering Banksias, we heard the rich and melodious song of the Noisy Scrub-bird. Approaching the song, we got closer. And soon it was nearby--moving across the track, singing again from dense cover on the opposite side. But it moved back and forth several times, and everyone managed to get binocular views! A real achievement for a tough endemic. Yip! Yip! [E]

#### Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

**SATIN BOWERBIRD** (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) – A male and a couple of females were seen nicely in Royal NP on our last morning afield. [E]

**WESTERN BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera guttata*) – Another behavioral highlight was watching a male of this big bowerbird arranging sticks and figs at its bower in the Olive Pink Botanic Garden at Alice. [E]

#### Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

**WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER** (*Cormobates leucophaea*) – We had terrific views of two birds along Lady Carrington Drive at Royal NP. The species is endemic to the southeast. [E]

**RUFOUS TREECREEPER** (*Climacteris rufus*) – This was the treecreeper of the Southwest, and we had great views of multiple birds scaling trunks, nuthatch-like, in the Dryandra Woodland and at the Climbing Tree near Manjimup. The Rufous breeds cooperatively, with extra birds, mostly males, assisting in feeding the young. [E]

#### Maluridae (Fairyrwens)

**DUSKY GRASSWREN** (*Amytornis purnelli*) – We were exceptionally lucky with this little runner and boulder-hopper at Simpsons Gap in the West MacDonnell Range NP. So difficult and in demand are grasswrens throughout Australia, there are special bird tours targeting grasswrens! Not only did we have great views in our first encounter, but we saw another bird or two moving through the Spinifex while we were searching for the Rufous-crowned Emuwren off the Santa Teresa Road. Delightful! [E]

**SOUTHERN EMUWREN** (*Stipiturus malachurus*) – Among the smallest birds in Australia, the emuwrens are a lot harder than they appear. The common name recalls the filmy, fuzzy feathers of the Emu. "Stipiturus" refers to the "stem-like" or "branch-like" tail, whereas "malachurus" refers to the "soft, weak" tail. This species is an inhabitant of the breezy coastal heathlands in the Southwest. We had seen it the preceding day, but what were probably our best views were on our afternoon in the heath near "Muttonbird Island." Fabulous! [E]

**RUFOUS-CROWNED EMUWREN** (*Stipiturus ruficeps*) – This was our first emuwren--where we walked out into the Spinifex off the Santa Teresa Road near Alice. We had lovely views of a male and at least one female. Another tough-to-see bird, but one that merits the effort and minimizes the impact of those sharp Spinifex spines. [E]

**RED-WINGED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus elegans*) – The first, phylogenetically speaking, of the six species of Malurus that we saw on our trip, all of them delightful. Red-winged was the common chestnut-shouldered fairywren in the extreme southwest of Western Australia. We saw it on 4 days in a row, beginning in the gardens of the Porongurup Shop & Tearoom, where we had lunch on 2 Nov. All the fairywrens are social, living in groups

that usually contain a dominant male, one adult female, and subordinate or first-year birds of both sexes. They are cooperative breeders and maintain a group territory. [E]

**BLUE-BREASTED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus pulcherrimus*) – This was the one we called in around us for close views--of both male and female-plumaged birds--inside the Dryandra Woodland. Its range is limited to inland areas of the Southwest. Somewhat surprisingly (to us!), it is considered one of the more secretive fairywrens. [E]

**VARIEGATED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus lamberti*) – A third member of the "chestnut-shouldered group," this fairywren is the most widespread of the genus. We had it first in the Alice Springs area, then again at Royal National Park. Named for Aylmer Bourke Lambert, a British botanist (1761-1842) for whom the Sugar Pine is also named. [E]

**SPLENDID FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus splendens*) – These lovely blue fairywrens were seen first at Simpsons Gap and the Alice Springs area, and then repeatedly in the Southwest, perhaps best at Cheynes Beach. Fairywrens are among the most promiscuous of birds, "males almost never siring the chicks in their own nests, inseminating instead the faithless wives of rivals" (fide Low). This species is most closely related to the next, the other blue fairywren. [E]

**SUPERB FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus cyaneus*) – The sole species of fairywren in Tasmania. At Mountain Valley Lodge we had many fabulous looks at this little beauty, including birds hopping all around the grounds and brush piles right outside our rooms. This confiding species, which is widespread in the most populated sections of the country, is the one that was voted Australians' favorite bird. [E]

**WHITE-WINGED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus leucopterus*) – Another dazzlingly blue beauty, the race *leuconotus* was the one we saw first at the Alice Springs sewage ponds. It may be the fairest of them all! [E]

#### Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)

**EASTERN SPINEBILL** (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) – The spinebills are among the prettiest of the huge family, Meliphagidae, of nectarivorous birds. Indeed, Australia's open nectar has allowed the honeyeaters to become the continent's largest family of birds. The Eastern Spinebill was seen nicely along Lady Carrington Drive in Royal NP. [E]

**WESTERN SPINEBILL** (*Acanthorhynchus superciliosus*) – The spinebills, of which there are only two, represent an endemic genus; the males of both species are much more brightly colored than the females. The especially beautiful Western Spinebill is limited in range to the coastal and subcoastal Southwest. We saw both sexes nicely at Two Peoples Bay, where they were sipping nectar from the blooming Banksias and responsive to playback. [E]

**LEWIN'S HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga lewinii*) – The common honeyeater at Royal National Park, where we saw it well; a strict easterner. [E]

**YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Caligavis chrysops*) – Like Lewin's, Yellow-faced is an eastern honeyeater. We saw it nicely at Royal NP our last morning. Formerly a part of the genus *Lichenostomus*, the genus *Caligavis* (from "caligo" meaning obscurity and "avis") was erected for three species after a molecular phylogenetic study showed that the original genus was polyphyletic.

**NOISY MINER** (*Manorina melanocephala*) – Seen well in Royal National Park. [E]

**YELLOW-THROATED MINER** (*Manorina flavigula*) – First encountered in the Olive Pink Botanic Garden, where seen very nicely; then seen daily in the Alice area and occasionally in the Southwest. The miners, among the larger honeyeaters, feed mostly by gleaning bark and foliage for lerps, honeydew, or insects. [E]

**SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER** (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*) – This handsome honeyeater eats many more fruits than others in the family, and one species of mistletoe that offers flowers or fruit in every month is known to feed some Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters all year round. But the species will also take lerps and honeydew when available. Found in the more xeric habitats; we saw it well only in the habitats out from Alice Springs. [E]

**LITTLE WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) – Seen nicely by half the group just across from our hotel in Launceston, and then by all later on Bruny Island. [E]

**WESTERN WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera lunulata*) – This western counterpart of the previous species was seen nicely at Cheynes Beach and Two Peoples Bay. This pugnacious nectarivore is said to control the best sugar flows in SW Australia--an area with more than a thousand flower species visited by birds! Indeed, SW Australia has the highest density of bird-dependent nectar flowers on earth. [E]

**RED WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera carunculata*) – The common big wattlebird of the Southwest, where we saw it almost daily. It's not quite as big as the Yellow Wattlebird. [E]

**YELLOW WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera paradoxa*) – Largest of all the honeyeaters, the Yellow Wattlebird is five times the weight of the largest nectarivorous bird on another continent--the Spectacled Spiderhunter of SE Asia. It's a reflection of the evolutionary route Australia's forests have taken, where whole forests can be dominated by nectarivorous birds--which have become important pollinators to vast forests. We had some nice encounters with these big wattlebirds, beginning at the park in Launceston and then elsewhere in Tasmania, including in the lovely gardens at the Kaydale. When described in 1800, this species was placed in the genus *Corvus*! [E]

**SINGING HONEYEATER** (*Gavicalis virescens*) – This streaky-breasted honeyeater was seen repeatedly in the Alice Springs area. Like the Yellow-faced Honeyeater, this species was formerly a part of the large *Lichenostomus* genus and was split off after studies showing that genus to be polyphyletic. The newly erected genus *Gavicalis* was named as an anagram of *Caligavis*! [E]

**YELLOW-PLUMED HONEYEATER** (*Ptilotula ornata*) – The genus *Ptilotula* was erected for six species--four of which we saw--that were also formerly a part of the *Lichenostomus* complex. This handsome species was the one that was so common in the Dryandra Woodland. [E]

**WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER** (*Ptilotula penicillata*) – This was the common one around Alice Springs, first seen in the Botanic Gardens. "Penicillata" refers to its white tufts or plumes. [E]

**GRAY-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Ptilotula keartlandi*) – This was the one we saw actually eating lerp along the roadside out the Santa Teresa Road, having first seen it the day before. [E]

**GRAY-FRONTED HONEYEATER** (*Ptilotula plumula*) – Also seen in the Alice Springs area; this one is the scarcest of its genus on our route. [E]

**GRAY HONEYEATER** (*Conopophila whitei*) – This was the small, rather dull honeyeater that we worked on with playback until everyone could see it well on our afternoon out the Tanami Highway NW of Alice. It was small enough to be confused with the nearby Western Gerygones, but its bill was slightly longer, its eye dark, and its tail lacking the pronounced white tail band of the gerygone. It responded well to playback of Gray Honeyeater, giving us multiple good looks. A rarity that was a lifer for the Grebe. [E]

**TAWNY-CROWNED HONEYEATER** (*Gliciphila melanops*) – The generic name of this one means "sweet nectar-loving," which seems appropriate, as we saw them well sipping nectar (and singing) from the incredible blossoms in the Stirling Range and then at Cheynes Beach. One of the prettiest honeyeaters. [E]

**BROWN HONEYEATER** (*Lichmera indistincta*) – We first saw this "indistinct tongue-darter" near Alice Springs, then several times in the Southwest. An important pollinator, it has been recorded to visit more than 300 different flower species, in more than 25 families! (fide Low) [E]

- CRESCENT HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris pyrrhopterus*) – Another fancy endemic honeyeater; this beauty was seen nicely in Tasmania. [E]
- NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) – The endemic *Phylidonyris* with the white iris. We saw it first on Bruny Island, then almost daily in Western Australia. [E]
- WHITE-CHEEKED HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris niger*) – This close relative of the preceding species has dark eyes. It was seen well repeatedly in the SW. [E]
- YELLOW-THROATED HONEYEATER** (*Nesoptilotis flavicollis*) – This Tasmanian endemic is one of the prettiest of the honeyeaters, with smartly contrasting yellow throat. Some of us saw it briefly atop a tree at Mountain Valley Lodge, but we all had good looks at Peter Murrell Conservation Park. Note that the genus is newly erected to contain only two species, again both former members of *Lichenostomus*. [E]
- GILBERT'S HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus chloropsis*) – As split from White-naped, this is the population of the Southwest. First seen at Gleneagle, this species was fairly common there and in the Dryandra Woodland. [E]
- BLACK-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus affinis*) – First seen at our picnic spot at Gowrie Park, this Tasmanian endemic was seen repeatedly at Mountain Valley Lodge and on Bruny Island. "Melithreptus" means "honey-fed"; the early naturalists came close to exhausting the ways of referring to these honeyeaters' affinity for nectar and honeydew! [E]
- BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus brevirostris*) – First seen in the Dryandra Woodland, and then on the route south to Albany the following day. All members of this genus, though socially monogamous, are known to breed cooperatively, the helpers at the nest both joining in incubation as well as feeding the parents when they are incubating.
- STRONG-BILLED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus validirostris*) – Another Tasmanian endemic, first seen feeding in the eucalypts en route to Mountain Valley Lodge. We watched it using its strong bill to lift bark and probe for insects and lerps. [E]
- Dasyornithidae (Bristlebirds)*
- WESTERN BRISTLEBIRD** (*Dasyornis longirostris*) – As we walked out through the coastal heath above Cheynes Beach, we heard the ringing song of this specialty. Shortly, it was right at our feet! We all managed good views of this skulker of extremely limited range. Considered globally threatened and Vulnerable, its limited remaining undisturbed habitat is vulnerable to fire and human disturbance. [E]
- Pardalotidae (Pardalotes)*
- SPOTTED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus punctatus*) – The tiny pardalotes--the family endemic to Australia--are lerp and manna specialists. Their stout beaks are perfect for levering sweets from eucalyptus leaves. By controlling psyllid outbreaks (psyllids being the aphid-like bugs that excrete the starch-rich lerp), they play an important role in maintaining the health of the ecosystem (fide Lowe). Spotted is the one we saw at Royal NP. [E]
- FORTY-SPOTTED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus quadragintus*) – This species is considered the toughest-to-find of the 12 Tasmanian endemics. But Kingfisher knew right where to take us, and we found them easily. In fact, we had outstanding studies of a pair bringing lerp to nestlings inside their nest hole--a natural cavity in a gum tree. This species is thought to nest in small colonies, in part to defend their nest cavities against the more common Striated Pardalotes. [EN]
- RED-BROWED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus rubricatus*) – We heard the monotonous calling of this species our first afternoon in Alice, starting at the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens. But we all saw it well at Ormiston Gorge, where we called one in, and then the following day SE of Alice as well. [E]
- STRIATED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus striatus*) – This handsome pardalote nests both in tree cavities and in tunnels into the soil. It was the latter situation where we watched a pair attending a nest just outside the cabins at Mountain Valley Lodge. The birds would come surprisingly close en route to and from the nest! This was the commonest pardalote on our route, and we found a second nest in the Dryandra Woodland. [EN]
- Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)*
- ROCKWARBLER** (*Origma solitaria*) – What a delightful treat! Often referred to by its generic name since "warbler" is misleading, the *Origma* is endemic to the Hawkesbury Sandstone region of southeastern New South Wales. Its closest relatives are the New Guinea mouse-warblers; its ancestors apparently survived the demise of rainforest by associating with sandstone (fide Low). Our exciting encounter was at Wattamolla, in Royal NP, where we had a bird hopping around the rocks and vocalizing at very close range. "*Origma*" refers to the caves and rocky overhangs where the birds nest. [E]
- YELLOW-THROATED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis citreogularis*) – The *Sericornis* scrubwrens are named for the birds' soft plumage. We saw this pretty, eastern species hopping in the understory at the Waterfall area of Royal NP on our final morning afield. [E]
- WHITE-BROWED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis frontalis*) – The taxon we saw almost daily in the Southwest, starting at Gleneagle, was heavily "spotted" on the breast. We saw the nominate group, which lacks the spots, at Royal NP in NSW. [E]
- TASMANIAN SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis humilis*) – Another Tasmanian endemic, this one seen especially well at Mountain Valley Lodge and surroundings. [E]
- LARGE-BILLED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis magnirostra*) – This rather plain-faced, eastern scrubwren was seen only at Royal NP. [E]
- SCRUBTIT** (*Acanthornis magna*) – One of Don's favorites, the monotypic Scrubtit is a fairly tough Tasmanian endemic. It took some effort this trip, but, after a brief look along the trail at Mountain Valley Lodge, we had a cooperative bird amid the ferns at Leven Canyon--where we all ultimately got great looks. [E]
- REDTHROAT** (*Pyrrholaemus brunneus*) – To our surprise, we encountered a spontaneously singing male of this uncommon endemic along a trail through the mulga near Alice Springs. It had been silent or absent when Kingfisher was here two weeks earlier. [E]
- RUFOUS FIELDWREN (WESTERN)** (*Calamanthus campestris montanellus*) – Amid the extensive bloom along the road through Stirling Range NP, we had lovely scope studies of this a bird that responded well to playback. The race *montanellus* is elevated to full-species status by some, then called Western Fieldwren.
- STRIATED FIELDWREN** (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*) – It took a bit of searching, but Kingfisher eventually took us to a stretch of alpine heath at Cradle Mountain NP where he heard one singing in the distance. With a little further effort, we nailed it! Great scope studies of this scarce and local inhabitant of Tasmania and southernmost coastal Australia. [E]
- WESTERN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza inornata*) – Seen on a couple of days in the extreme Southwest. The generic name comes from the Greek for a "thorn brake" plus "to live"--a reference to the habitat of many of the Australian thornbills. This one was dull (thus "inornata") with a white eye. [E]
- BROWN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza pusilla*) – This was our first thornbill, right in the gardens across from our lodgings in Launceston, and then elsewhere in Tasmania as well. "Pusilla" means "tiny," appropriately. This one had a red iris. [E]
- TASMANIAN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza ewingii*) – One of the 12 Tasmanian endemics, this little thornbill was fairly common on our route, from where we first saw it--on a side road birding stop en route to Mountain Valley--to Gowrie Park to MVLodge and Bruny Island. This one was named for Reverend Thomas J. Ewing, an Australian teacher, naturalist, and collector. [E]



- INLAND THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza apicalis*) – Another red-eyed thornbill, this one with a chestnut rump (like the Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, which shares much of its range); it is distinguished by its prominent streaks on the throat and breast. We saw it in the Dryandra Woodland. [E]
- YELLOW-RUMPED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) – We had our first good looks at this distinctive thornbill at our picnic lunch stop at Gowrie Park and then saw them especially well on Bruny Island, where little flocks foraged on the ground in and around the corral. [E]
- SLATY-BACKED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza robustirostris*) – Our first good look was in the mulga near Simpsons Gap, where we walked out and saw the Redthroat. A singing Slaty-backed Thornbill there was very responsive, circling us for good looks. We saw others at the Gray Honeyeater spot near the Hamilton Downs Bore. [E]
- WEBBILL** (*Smicronis brevirostris*) – This widespread endemic is Australia's smallest bird (which its generic name acknowledges). It was seen nicely on several occasions in the Southwest. Our first views were in the eucalyptus woodland of Foxes Lair Park at Narrogin, but they were most numerous in the Dryandra Woodland. Its pale iris and short, swollen bill are distinctive, as is its high-pitched, two-note call. [E]
- BROWN GERYGONE** (*Gerygone mouki*) – This easterner was seen only at Royal NP. "Mouki" is probably an Aboriginal name. [E]
- WESTERN GERYGONE** (*Gerygone fusca*) – We had a small flock of very cooperative birds in the bush at the Gray Honeyeater spot near the Kunuth Bore out of Alice. We then encountered them regularly in the Southwest. [E]
- SOUTHERN WHITEFACE** (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) – We had these distinctive endemics in the Alice Springs area. The generic name refers to the smooth, silky appearance of the heads of the Australian whitefaces. [E]

*Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)*

- GRAY-CROWNED BABBLER** (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) – We had pairs of these big pseudo-babblers at the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens in Alice, where we noted the large size of their basketball-shaped nests. The race we saw was the western rubeculus, with the buffy breast.

*Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)*

- EASTERN WHIPBIRD** (*Psophodes olivaceus*) – The generic name means "noisy"--a fitting moniker for both whipbirds given their far-carrying songs. The song of this species is, in fact, one that is commonly mimicked by the Superb Lyrebird--just as we heard along Lady Carrington Drive, in Royal NP, where we saw both species. The Eastern Whipbird, with a wide distribution, is a larger and darker version of the Western. [E]
- WESTERN WHIPBIRD** (*Psophodes nigrogularis*) – We had to work for this specialty, hearing it in the great distance near Two Peoples Bay. We tracked it down, eventually recording a singing bird, which responded wonderfully to playback. We all had great views of the bird hopping out across the open ground. This songster has been down-listed from Near Threatened to Least Concern--an encouraging trend--based on the combination of its range and population size. Its population does vary locally, owing to the impacts of wildfires; the populations we visit may have been recently impacted, but the habitat is recovering nicely. [E]
- CHIMING WEDGEBILL** (*Psophodes occidentalis*) – Another highlight bird along the Santa Teresa Road S of Alice was this species with the far-carrying, chime-like songs. We tracked down their at-first-distant calls and watched several pairs moving low through the mulga, sometimes foraging right on the ground. Note that they're in the same genus as the two whipbirds--and they share being difficult-to-see! [E]

*Artamidae (Woodswallows)*

- BLACK-FACED WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus cinereus*) – These swallow-like birds comprise a family of eleven species whose anatomical variability is so slight that they constitute a single genus. Black-faced, which we saw repeatedly in the Alice Springs area, is the plainest of the Australian lot. The genus, meaning "butcher," reflects the original conjecture--which turns out to be erroneous--that woodswallows were related to the shrikes. [E]
- DUSKY WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus cyanopterus*) – First seen near the ferry landing on our way back from Bruny Island, TS (the nominate race), this species was then seen again in the Southwest (perthi). They show prominent white stripes along the outer primaries of their wings. Woodswallows will take huge quantities of locusts and other flying insects, but they also eat nectar (for which they have a brush-tipped tongue) and lerp. [E]
- LITTLE WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus minor*) – A small version of the previous species, Little Woodswallows favor cliffs and rocky outcrops. We saw them flying high above the cliffs at Simpsons Gap and then scoped a perched bird that Nico found sitting halfway up the slope. [E]

*Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)*

- GRAY BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus torquatus*) – A few folks saw a Gray Butcherbird right outside our rooms in Launceston the first morning of the tour, but our best views as a group were of a singing bird we scoped at the Peter Murrel Conservation Park on our way back to Hobart from Bruny Island. That's quite a song! The butcherbirds and currawongs are now placed in their own family. Their strong, hooked bills are used to eat invertebrates and small vertebrates, mostly nestlings and small birds. The generic name means "clamorous." [E]
- PIED BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus nigrogularis*) – This was the one at Alice Springs, whose lovely song serenaded us pre-dawn at our hotel. We saw a pair well along the Tanami Highway, when we stopped for a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles. [E]
- AUSTRALIAN MAGPIE** (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) – Though called a magpie, this black-and-white butcher is properly placed with the butcherbirds, for in addition to their genetic affinities, they are notorious for their aggression to other birds and to humans. We saw and/or heard them throughout our route, their marvelous songs contributing to the dawn chorus in many parts of the country. According to Low, the magpies of the Southwest are the most promiscuous birds on Earth!
- PIED CURRAWONG** (*Strepera graculina*) – The currawongs are Cracticids that are placed in their own genus, *Strepera*, which means "noisy." The Pied is an easterner that we saw at Royal National Park. They are brood-parasitized by big Channel-billed Cuckoos, which we also saw at RNP. [E]
- BLACK CURRAWONG** (*Strepera fuliginosa*) – We saw this Tasmanian endemic on quite a few occasions--nicely at Mountain Valley Lodge, where pairs foraged about on the ground; and then at very close range at our sheltered picnic table in Cradle Mountain NP. The species has a longer bill and a shorter tail than the other currawongs. These birds show no bold white spot at the base of the primaries and no white vent. [E]
- GRAY CURRAWONG** (*Strepera versicolor*) – The largest of the butcherbirds, this one was first enjoyed at the dam in the Dryandra Woodland, where one came to water in the late afternoon. It was then with us throughout the SW. [E]

*Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)*

- BLACK-FACED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – The only *Coracina* we saw on our tour, but it was widespread in small numbers. Our first views were along a side road en route to Mountain Valley Lodge, where we scoped one of several birds atop a distant tree, raising one wing at a time. They flew in with an undulating, woodpecker-like flight.

*Neosittidae (Sittellas)*

**VARIED SITTELLA** (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) – We had lovely studies of these nuthatch-like critters (note the family name "new nuthatches") at the entrance to Stirling Range Bluff Knoll. Australian populations were formerly considered to comprise 5 separate species, but, despite considerable variation in plumage, there are extensive zones of hybridization where the forms overlap. Recent treatments place all the Australian birds into one species and relegate them, along with the Black Sittella of New Guinea, to a distinctive Australasian family. The birds we saw, with black caps and white throats, belong to the W race pileata. [E]

*Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)*

**GRAY SHRIKETHRUSH** (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – This frequent songster delivers a rich series of explosive, melodious notes, with both sexes singing. It was heard or seen widely--from Tasmania (where we saw it well en route to Mountain Valley) to Alice Springs and the Dryandra Woodland.

**OLIVE WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala olivacea*) – This species too was seen nicely in the eucalypt woodland on our first day to Mountain Valley Lodge. A subtly lovely bird with a rich voice. [E]

**GOLDEN WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) – The commanding whip-crack song of this beauty always drew our attention--from that first day en route to Mountain Valley to the fabulous male we watched singing just off the track along the Wilmot River on our way to Hobart. It was this species that we recorded in Royal NP as well.

**WESTERN WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala occidentalis*) – Formerly considered a race of the last species, this disjunct southwestern population was recently determined to be a cryptic species and upgraded to full-species status in Aug'16 on the Cornell/Clements checklist. We saw a male well in the Dryandra Woodland. [E]

**RUFIOUS WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) – This widespread, pretty whistler was seen nicely on two days in the Alice Springs area and then again in the Southwest. It, too, has a ringing whip-crack song. Song bouts last for 15 minutes. Rufous Whistler spends more of its time foraging aerially than any of its congeners. Save for one taxon that breeds in New Caledonia, this species would be another Australian endemic.

*Oreoicidae (Australo-Papuan Bellbirds)*

**CRESTED BELLBIRD** (*Oreoica gutturalis*) – Until recently grouped with the whistlers, this striking bellbird is now placed in a newly recognized family of small, insectivorous songbirds of three distinct monotypic genera, *Oreoica* and two from New Guinea, implying a common ancestor that presumably inhabited rainforest. We had great views of the Crested Bellbird as we walked out along the Santa Teresa Road for the Chiming Wedgebills. [E]

*Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)*

**OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus sagittatus*) – Nico pointed out one of these Old World Orioles at Royal NP.

*Rhipiduridae (Fantails)*

**WILLIE-WAGTAIL** (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – One of the most widespread birds in Australia, where present just about everywhere, but scarce in most of Tasmania (we missed it), where it is replaced by Gray Fantail.

**GRAY FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) – Seen almost daily in Tasmania, the Southwest, and at Royal National Park. This species often seemed to show up just as we were searching for something else, diverting our attention! Its thin, high-pitched song was often heard in the forested areas.

*Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)*

**BLACK-FACED MONARCH** (*Monarcha melanopsis*) – We had a nice male above us along the Lady Carrington Drive at Royal NP. Monarchs are named for their often feisty, territorial behavior. This endemic species is restricted to forests along the east coast. [E]

**MAGPIE-LARK** (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) – Another example of an open-country species with close relatives inside New Guinea's rainforest; the Magpie-lark's only congener is the Torrent-lark, which inhabits swift-flowing streams in New Guinea's forested mountains. Having adapted to a drying climate by adapting to open country, the Magpie-lark is especially widespread in Australia today, occurring almost throughout (save for the driest desert). It's not very common in Tasmania, but it was seen on virtually every other day of the trip, often walking about "plover-like."

**LEADEN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra rubecula*) – Another dimorphic monarch that was seen nicely at Royal NP.

**SATIN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*) – This Leaden Flycatcher look-alike was seen well in Tasmania in the steep hills en route to Mountain Valley, where we called in a nice pair overhead.

**RESTLESS FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra inquieta*) – The largest member of the genus, this impressive flycatcher indeed lived up to its name! It flew in overhead repeatedly in the Dryandra Woodland, usually staying for but a moment before restlessly moving again. But we persisted until we had all managed good views. [E]

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)*

**TORRESIAN CROW** (*Corvus orru*) – This small crow was identified in the Alice Springs area, primarily based on its vocalizations. We found them quite tough to distinguish visually from the next species.

**LITTLE CROW** (*Corvus bennetti*) – Around Alice Springs, where both occur, the Kingfisher was separating this small corvid from the last primarily by vocalizations. It was easier in the extreme Southwest, where the only other corvid was the larger Australian Raven. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN RAVEN** (*Corvus coronoides*) – We identified this larger corvid throughout the Southwest and at Royal NP. [E]

**FOREST RAVEN** (*Corvus tasmanicus*) – The Australian stronghold for this corvid is Tasmania, where it is the sole representative of the family--making it easily identifiable! There we saw it daily. Outside Tasmania, it is confined to a very restricted range in the southeast. [E]

*Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)*

**JACKY-WINTER** (*Microeca fascinans*) – The first of a number of "robins" and flycatchers that radiated to fill fly-catching niches in Australasia--niches filled by New World flycatchers in N. and S. America, and by Muscicapids in Europe, Asia, and Africa. The Jacky-winter, named for its rapid, sweet song resembling "jacky-jacky winter-winter-winter," occurs in low density almost throughout Australia and is familiar to many. Our only encounter on this trip was in the Dryandra Woodland, where we scoped one nicely.

**SCARLET ROBIN** (*Petroica boodang*) – This beauty, with the black throat and the big white spot on the forehead, was seen several times in Tasmania, beginning with our picnic stop at Gowrie Park. We saw another pair at the Bluff Knoll entrance to Stirling Range NP. Robins are heavily parasitized by cuckoos and fledge only about 10-40% of their brood (Handbook of Birds of the World). Probably owing to this, pairs often attempt three (and sometimes five!) broods per season. [E]

**RED-CAPPED ROBIN** (*Petroica goodenovii*) – We found this species in the mulga near Kunuth Bore NW of Alice Springs, where we had nice views of a singing male and a female. This beauty has been recorded attempting as many as 10 broods in one season! Petroicas have the smallest nests of any Australian birds. [E]

**FLAME ROBIN** (*Petroica phoenicea*) – After seeing a female at Gowrie Park, we had some lovely males at Mountain Valley Lodge. This species alone occurs in winter flocks though many species disperse to some extent. The Flame Robin occurs on the major Bass Strait islands, and banding studies have shown that some individuals migrate to the mainland in winter. [E]

**ROSE ROBIN** (*Petroica rosea*) – We ended our tour with this southeastern robin, which was a surprise, at Waterfall in Royal NP. The lovely male was singing and came in for great views--becoming our 11th robin of the trip!

**PINK ROBIN** (*Petroica rodinogaster*) – We made a special effort to see this little beauty at Gowrie Park, where JC and RAR had recently seen a male. We all did see it there, and then we saw another male the following day at Mountain Valley Lodge. Another exquisite robin! [E]

**HOODED ROBIN** (*Melanodryas cucullata*) – We encountered a female feeding a fledgling of this arid-land inhabitant during a walk through the mulga off the Santa Teresa Road near Alice. Though we didn't see a nest, we've applied the N as evidence of breeding. [N]

**DUSKY ROBIN** (*Melanodryas vittata*) – A sombre cousin of the Petroica robins, this one is a Tasmanian endemic. We saw it at Gowrie Park, Mountain Valley Lodge, and Cradle Mountain NP. [E]

**EASTERN YELLOW ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria australis*) – *Eopsaltria*, yet another genus of robins, translates to "dawn-singer." This eastern species was conspicuous along the Lady Carrington Drive in Royal NP, where they often foraged right out in the track. [E]

**WESTERN YELLOW ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria griseogularis*) – A close relative of the last species, this endemic was seen nicely in the Dryandra Woodland. [E]

**WHITE-BREASTED ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria georgiana*) – This endemic (to sw Western Australia) was seen nicely well up in the karri forest at The Climbing Tree picnic area (near Manjimup), where some folks climbed partway up a giant karri tree, *Eucalyptus diversicolor*. [E]

#### *Alaudidae (Larks)*

**EURASIAN SKYLARK** (*Alauda arvensis*) – Seen and heard on a couple of days in Tasmania; introduced or not, it pours forth an astounding song in dramatic flight display. [I]

#### *Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

**WELCOME SWALLOW** (*Hirundo neoxena*) – This species was welcoming throughout. [N]

**FAIRY MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon ariel*) – Though we had a number of small swallows flying overhead, it was hard to see their crowns to separate Tree from Fairy martins. I don't think we ever got good views of this species as a group, but I guess a few folks identified some in the Southwest on 6 Nov. [E]

**TREE MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) – Seen from Tasmania to SW Australia, but probably best where they were nesting in natural cavities at the Bluff Knoll entrance to Stirling Range NP. [N]

**WHITE-BACKED SWALLOW** (*Cheramoea leucosterna*) – We had great views of this distinctive swallow circling over the arid shrub land at our first stop en route to Simpsons Gap out of Alice. The generic name refers to the tunnels in which their nests are built. [E]

#### *Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)*

**AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus australis*) – This big, dull warbler with the distinctive song was seen well at the Alice Springs sewage ponds and otherwise heard a few times.

#### *Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)*

**SPINIFEX-BIRD** (*Megalurus carteri*) – We took a side road off the Santa Teresa Road near Alice to get into extensive Spinifex grassland, home of some real Spinifex specialties, the Spinifex-bird among them. With a little encouragement from playback, one of these toughies came nicely into view. It did indeed have a "large tail," for which the genus is named. The specific name honors Thomas Carter (1863-1931), an English ornithologist who worked in Australia, 1886-1921. [E]

**LITTLE GRASSBIRD** (*Megalurus gramineus*) – This smaller representative of the genus was seen nicely in the grassy margins of the Alice Springs sewage ponds.

**BROWN SONGLARK** (*Megalurus cruralis*) – This species was singing and landing on the fence at Kunuth Bore, where we searched for Bourke's Parrots in the late afternoon out of Alice. [E]

**RUFIOUS SONGLARK** (*Megalurus mathewsi*) – This great songster was in full song and display at our very first stop en route to Simpsons Gap N of Alice. We scoped perched birds and enjoyed their aerial song-displays. [E]

#### *Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)*

**SILVER-EYE** (*Zosterops lateralis*) – Representing the large family of white-eyes, whose center of distribution is Asia, the Silver-eye illustrates a group of passerines that have spread back into Australia, the land where songbirds evolved. Such species are usually fecund and start breeding at an early age. Other examples are swallows and finches. We saw lots of Silver-eyes in Tasmania and the Southwest.

#### *Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**EURASIAN BLACKBIRD** (*Turdus merula*) – Seen and heard daily in Tasmania, where it is a very common--and lovely--songster, even if introduced. [I]

#### *Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**EUROPEAN STARLING** (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Seen daily in Tasmania and by some in Sydney. [IN]

**COMMON MYNA** (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Seen only in the Sydney area. [I]

#### *Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)*

**MISTLETOEBIRD** (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) – Males were seen nicely in the West MacDonnell Range NP and in the mulga near Alice. Like the Silver-eye, the Mistletoebird is a relatively recent arrival to Australia from SE Asia. The sole representative of the large flowerpecker genus, *Dicaeum*, it is found throughout most of the country wherever mistletoe grows, especially where it is fruiting. Though it feeds its young on insects, its diet as an adult is primarily fruit. It plays a crucial role as a disperser of fruiting plants, mainly mistletoe, since the seeds bypass its gizzard and are quickly processed through the digestive system, sometimes within 4 minutes! These minute birds have been found to move as many as 66,000 seeds per hectare per season! This relationship between bird and plant is perhaps the foremost example of mutualism among birds in Australia (fide Low).

#### *Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)*

**AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN)** (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – Now found essentially throughout Australia, this species probably represents an invader from Asia, which has prospered with the drying of the continent and the consequent spread of grasses. It's the only



representative of its family. We saw it in Tasmania and at the grassy entrance to the lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin in the SW.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

**EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH** (*Carduelis carduelis*) – This introduced species, which we saw regularly in Tasmania, competes for grass seeds with what is probably Australia's most endangered bird, the Orange-bellied Parrot. Like most man-introduced species, despite their pretty plumage and song, the European Goldfinch has had a negative impact on native species. [I]

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – The same is true for introduced House Sparrows, but they seemed less common in N Tasmania; we saw them only a few times there and then in Sydney. [I]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

**PAINTED FIRETAIL** (*Emblema pictum*) – What a treat! Kingfisher took us to a patch of Spinifex near Alice where he had found this species nesting on his previous tour. And, sure enough, only a short distance beyond the nest area, we enjoyed fabulous views of the fancy male sitting right below us! Painted Firetails generally build a small nest with a side entrance inside a large clump of Spinifex (*Triodia*), very like those clumps where we saw it. It was another lifer for the Grebe. [E]

**BEAUTIFUL FIRETAIL** (*Stagonopleura bella*) – After having heard it whistling across the Wilmot River, we searched for this handsome species on Bruny Island at another of JC's historic spots. We were spread out searching when Nancy spotted a male on the corral fence, and the bird flew shortly thereafter, not to be relocated. But it was seen well, if briefly, by some of us. [E]

**RED-EARED FIRETAIL** (*Stagonopleura oculata*) – We were all successful with this one. And it was perhaps the most exciting one of all--because we got to watch a male in courtship display! While carrying a long piece of grass-like vegetation in his bill, he would call from a bare branch until joined by a female, then jump back and forth, his grass swinging from side to side. The birds we were watching then flew off, but this display often ends in copulation. We watched all this along a side track near Two Peoples Bay, where there seemed to be a little group of firetails. Some of us then saw the same display being initiated the following morning, at Lake Powell. A real behavioral highlight of the trip! [E]

**RED-BROWED FIRETAIL** (*Neochmia temporalis*) – Yet another endemic firetail, this one an easterner; we saw several along the Lady Carrington track at Royal NP. This one is a particularly social firetail, often occurring in groups; and pairs tend to spend most of their time together, even when bathing or drinking. [E]

**ZEBRA FINCH** (*Taeniopygia guttata*) – Among the most gregarious of birds, Zebra Finches live in feeding flocks, often allopreening and huddling together day and night. They nest in loose colonies and construct separate (smaller) nests for roosting. The species evolves rapidly by breeding at much younger age than most Australian birds; they can nest when only two months old and are extremely fecund, often laying as many as seven eggs. But they're short-lived, dying on average after 12 years. These strategies have allowed them to adapt to Australia's drying climate and compete well for ephemeral grass seeds. We saw some impressive foraging flocks in the Alice Springs area.

---

## MAMMALS

**SHORT-BEAKED ECHIDNA** (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) – Early human inhabitants of Australia encountered giant echidnas 50,000-60,000 years ago. Today, the Short-beaked Echidna is one of only 4 extant species of echidnas and the only one in Australia (the other three are in New Guinea). By adapting to increasingly arid environments, it has become THE most widespread native Australian mammal. The first one we saw came right toward us and lumbered among us--at Cradle Mountain NP in Tasmania. The second, in the Dryandra Woodland, exhibited its alarm posture by burying its long snout in the soil, leaving but a spiny ball above the surface, its head completely invisible. A pregnant female lays a single egg directly into her pouch. When the young hatches, it sucks milk from the pores of the two milk patches, remaining in the pouch for some 50 days, at which time it starts to develop spines. This triggers the mother to dig a nursery burrow for the young, to which she returns about every 5 days to nurse it. Weaning takes about 7 months! [E]

**PLATYPUS** (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) – Watching this incredible Australian icon swimming back and forth right below us on the Wilmot River was another highlight of the trip. Just to contemplate this egg-laying mammal of ancient lineage, with a duck-like bill, beaver-like tail, a venomous spur on its hind feet, and electroreceptors to help it locate its prey under water is staggering. But to watch it in action at close range in good light was exceptional! Tasmania proved a good place to do that. Its modern range is now confined to the more humid parts of eastern Australia and Tasmania. [E]

**SPOTTED-TAILED QUOLL** (*Dasyurus maculatus*) – Some lucky folks got to watch this striking carnivorous marsupial, a.k.a. Tiger Quoll, coming to meat outside their cabins at Mountain Valley Lodge. It's the largest of the quolls and considered Near Threatened, its range--the humid forests of eastern Australia--shrinking, mostly owing to habitat destruction. [E]

**TASMANIAN DEVIL** (*Sarcophilus harrisii*) – But the mammalian highlight at Mountain Valley Lodge was everyone's seeing this Endangered marsupial, the largest extant carnivorous marsupial (since the extinction of the Thylacine in 1936), now endemic to Tasmania. More good news: Not a single animal seen by our group exhibited the terrible devil facial tumor disease--a transmissible cancer--that has ravaged wild populations since the late 1990's. The generic name means "meat-lover"; its specific moniker honors George Harris, a surveyor, explorer, artist, and naturalist in Tasmania, who published the first description of the devil in 1807. [E]

**COMMON WOMBAT** (*Vombatus ursinus*) – Thought to have diverged from other marsupials some 40 million years ago, wombats are vegetarians that dig extensive burrow systems with their rodent-like teeth and powerful claws. They are the largest burrowing herbivorous mammals on Earth and are unique among marsupials in having a backward-facing pouch, doubtless to protect the young from the soil produced while digging. The Common Wombat, which is no longer common, occupies a territory of up to 57 acres and is primarily crepuscular. We watched an animal at Mountain Valley Lodge in the late afternoon and early morning. We saw their burrows as we walked through the grass and were fascinated by clusters of their cubic scat both there and as we walked out through habitat at Cradle Mountain NP. Another remarkable Australian endemic! [E]

**COMMON BRUSHTAIL POSSUM** (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) – This big possum--the second largest of the possums--is nocturnal and eats mostly leaves, being adapted for a primarily arboreal lifestyle, complete with a prehensile tail. But it was clearly attracted to the raw chicken put out for the Tasmanian Devils at Mountain Valley Lodge. It's adaptive and perhaps the most widespread marsupial in Australia. [E]

**COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUM** (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) – This was the ball of fur with a pink nose and some eyes that was curled in a tree along the Lady Carrington Drive in Royal NP. It's nocturnal and arboreal, with a long prehensile tail. It's restricted to eastern Australia, where it sleeps by day and produces a special kind of nutritious fecal material that is later consumed--a behavior called coprophagia. Go read about it in Wikipedia.

**WESTERN RINGTAIL POSSUM** (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) – A smaller version of the last species, this one is confined to a tiny range in southwestern Australia. We were lucky to see it foraging by night in the gardens of our hotel in Margaret River, WA. It's considered Endangered and was Kingfisher's only vertebrate lifer of the trip. [E]

**TASMANIAN PADEMELON** (*Thylogale billardieri*) – This genus is the smallest of the macropods, the kangaroo group, and the species is the sole endemic pademelon to Tasmania. We saw numbers of them at Mountain Valley Lodge and others dead on the roads, as well. In addition to being smaller than the wallabies, they differ also in having heavier, bushier fur than their northern relatives. [E]

**BLACK-FOOTED ROCK-WALLABY** (*Petrogale lateralis*) – We had great looks at these cuties at Simpsons Gap, where they hopped about on the steep, rocky slopes. Their feet are highly textured to prevent them from slipping on the steep cliff faces among which they live. Female rock-wallabies have a useful reproductive strategy known as "embryonic diapause," which permits the embryo to cease developing temporarily until environmental conditions become more suitable for healthy completion--a fairly widespread adaptation to environments that change dramatically from year to year. [E]

**RED-NECKED WALLABY** (*Macropus rufogriseus*) – One animal was seen by some from our moving bus through Tasmania on 26 Oct. [E]

**WESTERN GRAY KANGAROO** (*Macropus fuliginosus*) – One of the two largest (along with Reds) species of kangaroo. We had some fine views of these in the southwest, especially in the Dryandra Woodland. Yep, I'm gonna say it one more time: Boing, boing, boing! [E]

**COMMON WALLAROO** (*Macropus robustus*) – A.k.a. Euro, this species was the one we saw well at the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens in Alice. They were mostly cooling it during the heat of the day. [E]

**OLD WORLD RABBIT** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Seen in Tasmania and the Southwest. [I]

**BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN** (*Tursiops truncatus*) – Seen best from the sandstone cliffs at Wattamolla, Royal NP.

**HUMPBACK WHALE** (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) – One distant animal was seen breaching (by some) from the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse area in the Southwest. It was in the Indian Ocean--just where it meets the great Southern Ocean.

---

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In addition to the birds and mammals, we must mention a few herps that were seen well and identified:

-- Centillian Green Treefrog (*Litoria caerulea*) - A.k.a. Australian Green Tree Frog, this was the big, bright-green frog we scoped in the permanent water at Simpsons Gap, which is right on the SW edge of its native distribution. It was the first Australian frog to be scientifically described--in 1790, by John White, an Irish surgeon and botanical collector in New South Wales.

--Buchanan's Snake-eyed Skink (*Cryptoblepharus buchananii*) - I think this was the species (the pair interacting) we watched at our picnic lunch spot in the Dryandra Woodland. They occur in SW Australia and are fairly common.

--Shingleback or Stumpytail (*Tiliqua rugosa*) - These fabulous big lizards with the short, fat tails belong to the skink family. We saw the nominate race, which occurs in SW Australia and fascinated us at our lunch stop in the Dryandra Woodland. Familiar to most Australians, it may have more common names than any other lizard.

--Diporiphora sp.? - The dragon with the long, curled tail that Jeff held in the Dryandra Woodland seems to fit this genus. But I couldn't determine the species for sure.

--Central Notted Dragon (*Ctenophorus nuchalis*) - This was the red-sand-colored lizard we encountered along the Tanami Highway on an afternoon walk through the bush near Alice.

--Long-nosed Dragon (*Gowidon longirostris*) - These were the fancy big lizards with the long pale stripe from the cheeks all along the sides and the extremely long toes. We saw them at the Alice Springs sewage ponds and in the West MacDonnell Range NP. They're typical of the arid, western interior.

--Sand Goanna (*Varanus gouldii*) - This big lizard is Australia's most widespread and abundant goanna, found over most of the mainland. It was the one we saw in the Dryandra Woodland. We were assuming the ones on the SW coast were darker variations of the same species; but the next species replaces this one in the coastal heath areas of the extreme south.

--Heath Monitor (*Varanus rosenbergi*) - This was the one we photographed at Two Peoples Bay. It's found in southern Australia and is much darker, with blackish banding. But it also like coastal sands.

Another of the highlights of our trip was witnessing the exceptional spring bloom in the Southwest, which has more than a thousand flower species visited by birds--the highest density on earth. The poor soils of one of the world's oldest landscapes suit floral diversity because they prevent any one plant from dominating the landscape. And the nectar flows generously because plants compete for visitors to spread their pollen (fide Low).

Southwestern Australia is the center for the family Proteaceae, one of the world's oldest families--the one containing Banksia, Grevillea, Hakea, and Adenanthos, all of which we saw in bloom and being visited by honeyeaters. Representative photos of many of the flowers we saw, identified by Linda Verbeek and Nancy Dengler, are in our aus16p-FLOWERS gallery and are listed in phylogenetic order in the Word document Nancy prepared for everyone. That document includes some species we saw but failed to photograph as well. As folks add new flowers to the gallery, we can update that list and rearrange new additions into their proper sequence. We invite everyone who photographed flowers to contribute if you have photos of flowers you can't find in the gallery.

At this point, I include below the list of FLOWERING PLANTS identified as of Dec 13. The family circumscription and order are as per Angiosperm Phylogeny Group website – Missouri Botanical Garden, Version IV, 2016 ([www.mobot.org/MOBOT/research/APweb](http://www.mobot.org/MOBOT/research/APweb)). Those marked with an asterisk following the location were identified, but not represented (as yet) by a photograph in the gallery.

GyMEA lily family (Doryanthaceae)

GYMEA LILY (*Doryanthes excelsa*) – Royal National Park, restricted to Sydney area of NSW

Asphodelaceae (Asphodel family)

AGROSTOCRINUM (*Agrostocrinum* sp.) Two Peoples Bay, WA

BLUE FLAX LILY (*Dianella* sp.) – This species seen in Royal National Park, NSW

BLUE FLAX LILY (*Dianella* sp.) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

HOODED LILY (*Johnsonia teretifolia*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

GRASS TREE (*Xanthorrhoea preissii*) – Dryandra Forest, WA

Iridaceae (Iris family)

CORN LILY (*Ixia* sp.) – Rest area near Rocky Gully, native to South Africa

MORNING IRIS (*Orthrosanthus polystachys*) – near Manjimup, WA

PURPLE FLAGS (*Patersonia occidentalis*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

Orchidaceae (Orchid family)

BLUE CHINA ORCHID (*Cyanicula sericea*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

SUN ORCHID (*Thelymitra* sp.) – Borden rest area, WA

COWSLIP ORCHID (*Caladenia flava*) – Stirling Range NP, WA

Asparagaceae (Asparagus family)

PURPLE TASSELS (*Sowerbaea laxiflora*) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

FRINGED LILY (*Thysanotis* sp.) – near Rocky Gully, WA

Xyridaceae (*Xyris* family)

YELLOW-EYED GRASS (*Xyris* sp.) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

Poaceae (Grass family)

SPINIFEX (*Triodia* sp.) – Alice Springs area, NT

Haemodoraceae (Bloodwort family)

CAT'S PAW (*Anigozanthos humilis*) – Stirling Range NP, WA

RED AND GREEN KANGAROO PAW (*Anigozanthos manglesii*) – near Rocky Gully, WA

CONE FLOWER (*Conostylis* sp.) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

Ranunculaceae (Buttercup family)

OLD MAN'S BEARD (*Clematis pubescens*) – near Manjimup, WA

Amaranthaceae (Amaranth family)

GREEN PUSSYTAILS *Ptilotus macrocephalus* - Santa Teresa Rd, Alice Springs, NT

PINK PUSSYTOES *Ptilotus manglesii* – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

Iceplant family (Aizoaceae)

NATIVE PIGFACE (*Carpobrotus rosii*) – Adventure Bay, Bruny Island, TAS

Droseraceae (Sundew family)

PINK RAINBOW (*Drosera menziesii*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

BLACK-EYED SUNDEW (*Drosera platystigma*) – Stirling Range, WA

Loranthaceae (Mistletoe family)

CHRISTMAS TREE (*Nuytsia floribunda*) – Cheynes Beach, WA

Geraniaceae (Geranium family)

AUSTRALIAN STORKSBILL (*Pelargonium australe*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

Protea family (Proteaceae)



BASKET FLOWER (*Adenanthos obovatus*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

COASTAL WOOLYBUSH (*Adenanthos sericea*) – near Muttonbird Island, WA

GREVILLEA (*Grevillea* sp.) – Bruny Island ferry dock, TAS

COAST BANKSIA (*Banksia attenuata*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA – backdrop for group photo

SCARLET BANKSIA (*Banksia coccinea*) – Cheynes Beach, WA

PROSTRATE BANKSIA (*Banksia gardneri*) – Stirling Range NP, WA

BULL BANKSIA (*Banksia grandis*) – near Muttonbird Island, WA

YELLOW BANKSIA (*Banksia marginata*) – Bruny Island, TAS

PINGLE (*Banksia polycephala*) – Dryandra Forest, WA; originally the genus *Dryandra*, for which the forest was named

CUT-LEAF BANKSIA (*Banksia praemorsa*) – The Gap, Torndirrup NP, WA

MOUNTAIN NEEDLE BUSH (*Hakea lissosperma*) – south of Deloraine, TAS

CONEBUSH (*Petrophile* sp.) – Stirling Range NP, WA

SYNAPHEA (*Synaphea gracillima*) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

Hibbertia family (Dilleniaceae)

GUINEA FLOWER (*Hibbertia scandens*) – common in Royal National Park, NSW

Cunoniaceae (*Cunonia* family)

BLACK WATTLE (*Callicoma serratifolia*) – along Lady Carrington Drive, Royal National Park, NSW

Fabaceae (Pea family)

MULGA (*Acacia aneura*) – Olive Pink Botanical Garden, NT

BLACKWOOD (*Acacia melanoxylon*) – Mountain Valley Lodge, TAS

CASSIA (*Senna artemesioides*) – Tanami Rd, NT

FLAME PEA (*Chorizema* sp.) – near Rocky Gully, WA

SMALL-LEAF ORANGE PEA (*Daviesia podophylla*) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

PRICKLY POISON (*Gastrolobium spinosum*) – Dryandra Forest, WA

POISON PEA (*Gastrolobium* sp.) – Dryandra Forest, WA

HANDSOME WEDGE PEA (*Gompholobium venustum*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

GLORY PEA (*Gompholobium* sp.) – Borden rest area, WA

GRANNY BONNETS (*Isotropis cuneifolia*) – near Muttonbird Island, WA

CORAL VINE (*Kennedia coccinea*) – near Manjimup, WA

AFRICAN SCURF PEA (*Psoralea pinnata*) – near Lake Powell, WA

PRICKLY BEAUTY (*Pultenaea juniperina*) – near Mountain Valley Lodge, TAS

STURT'S DESERT PEA (*Swainsonia formosa*) – Olive Pink Botanic Garden, Alice Springs, NT

SWAINSON'S PEA (*Swainsonia flavicarinata*) – Tanami Rd, NT

Polygalaceae (Milkwort family)

MILKWORT (*Comespernum confertum*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

Fagaceae (Oak family)

MYRTLE BEECH (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) – Mountain Valley Lodge, TAS

Myrtaceae (Myrtle family)

NARROW-LEAVED BOTTLE-BRUSH (*Melaleuca linearis*) – Royal National Park, NSW

PAPERBARK (*Melaleuca parviceps*) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

PAPER BARK (*Melaleuca* sp.) – Bruny Island ferry dock, TAS

PAPER BARK (*Melaleuca* sp.) – Gleneagle rest stop south of Perth, WA

ALBANY BOTTLEBRUSH (*Callistemon glaucus*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

MARRI (*Corymbia calophylla*) – Gleneagle rest stop south of Perth, WA

KARRI (*Eucalyptus diversicolor*) – Four Aces Reserve, WA

BUSHY YATE (*Eucalyptus lehmanii*) – Cheynes Beach, WA

MOTTLECAH (*Eucalyptus macrocarpa*) – Dryandra Forest, WA

WANDOO (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) – Dryandra Forest, WA

Malvaceae (Mallow family)

STURT’S DESERT ROSE (*Gossypium sturtianum*) – Ormiston Gorge, NT

Rutaceae (Citrus family)

TAMALA ROSE (*Diplolaena grandiflora*) – Hamelin Bay, WA

STINKWOOD (*Ziera arborescens*) – near Mountain Valley Lodge, TAS

Thymeliaceae (Daphne family)

YELLOW BANJINE (*Pimelea sulphurea*) – Stirling Range, WA

ROSE BANJINE (*Pimelea* sp.) – common on sandy soils, coastal heaths, WA

Ericaceae (Heath family)

FOXTAILS (*Andersonia caerulea*) – Cheynes Beach, WA

ANDERSONIA (*Andersonia involucrata*) – near Muttonbird Island, WA

FUCHSIA HEATH (*Epacris longiflora*) – seen along Lady Carrington Drive, Royal National Park, NSW

Solanaceae (Tomato family)

STICKY TAILFLOWER (*Anthocerus viscosa*) – near Muttonbird Island, WA

Scrophulariaceae (Figwort family)

POVERTY BUSH (*Eremophila bignoniiflora*) – Olive Pink Botanic Garden, Alice Springs, NT, identified by Harry

Pittosporaceae (Pittosporum family)

BLUEBELL CREEPER (*Billardiera heterophylla*) – Borden Rest Area, WA

Apiaceae (Carrot family)

SOUTHERN CROSS (*Xanthosia rotundifolia*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

Goodeniaceae (Fan-flower family)

DAMPIERA (*Dampiera eriocephala*) – Dryandra Forest, WA

DAMPIERA (*Dampiera spicigera*) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

DAMPIERA (*Dampiera* sp.) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

LECHENAULTIA (*Lechenaultia biloba*) – Foxes Lair Reserve near Narrogin, WA

LECHENAULTIA (*Lechenaultia floribunda*) – Dryandra Forest, WA\*

FAN FLOWER (*Scaevola depauperata*) – Tanami Rd, NT

FAN FLOWER (*Scaevola platyphylla*) – near Rocky Gully, WA

Stylidiaceae (Trigger flower family)

MILK MAIDS (*Stylidium caricifolium*) – Foxes Lair Reserve near Narrogin, WA

TRIGGER FLOWER (*Stylidium caespitosum*) – Foxes Lair Reserve near Narrogin, WA

TRIGGER FLOWER (*Stylidium fasciculatum*) – Stirling Range, WA

YELLOW TRIGGER FLOWER (*Stylidium luteum*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

COW KICKS (*Stylidium schoenoides*) – Two Peoples Bay, WA

Asteraceae (Sunflower family)

SWAN RIVER DAISY (*Brachyscome iberidifolia*) – near Muttonbird Island, WA

BILLY BUTTONS (*Calocephalus platycephalus*) – Tanami Rd, NT

AFRICAN DAISY (*Osteospermum* sp.) – Two Peoples Bay, WA, non-native

PINK PAPER DAISY (*Rhodanthe chlorocephalum*) – Dryandra Forest, WA

---

**Totals for the tour: 247 bird taxa and 16 mammal taxa**