



Field Guides Tour Report

Australia - Part One 2012

Sep 21, 2012 to Oct 11, 2012

Chris Benesh & Eric Hynes

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

Wow, what an amazing adventure in a spectacular country! As a continent, Australia has been isolated geographically long enough for some of the more peculiar and fascinating creatures in the world to evolve, and we got to see many of them. Thanks to a good-natured and harmonious group, we all enjoyed a fantastic journey across this warm, dry landscape. Three reliable and charismatic bus drivers, separated by three flights, made this mega-roadtrip safe and interesting. By the end, we tallied close to 300 bird species, so choosing favorites was a real challenge. Our highlights were many and often.

The tour started with a bang at Royal National Park, the world's second oldest national park behind Yellowstone. A number of species were encountered only on day one, including Rockwarbler (NSW's only endemic) and Superb Lyrebird. But no time to linger, we had a plane to catch the next day to Melbourne.

Our week with Alan on the Moe's bus was a memorable one. Just getting to dinner on Phillip Island was a birder's paradise followed by those adorable Little Penguins waddling along. A Koala lumbering down the road at sunrise should have been our clue that Wilsons Promontory National Park was going to be a special place for marsupials as well as birds. The world's largest wastewater treatment facility outside Werribee provided a number of species we never saw again. The Grampians produced Gang-Gang Cockatoos; thanks Tom and Bob! The next few days in mallee country were windy and occasionally wet, but it did not stop us from picking up lots of gems like Malleefowl and Pink Cockatoo. Arriving in Adelaide gave us a taste of the coast again, and Freckled Duck, before our flight to the Outback.

In Alice Springs, we listened to Harry's polished schtick while picking up major targets like Spinifex Pigeon, Bourke's Parrot, and Black Falcon. Who could forget the hauntingly beautiful song of the Pied Butcherbird on Cassia Hill or the waves upon waves of Budgerigars flowing all around us?

Diane confidently drove us around the picturesque Southwest corner of Australia for our last week. Along the way, special moments occurred on our night drive through the Dryandra Woodland, in the cathedral forests of karri trees, at the merging of the oceans at Cape Leeuwin, and the trifecta of challenging species at Cheyne Beach which even left Solitaire speechless.

Chris and I enjoyed this tour immensely. I sincerely hope you did as well. It was a joy to travel and bird with each of you and we look forward to spending time in the field together in the future.

Peace, Love, and Papayas,

--Eric

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

Dromaiidae (Emu)

EMU (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) – Australia's national bird and tallest native species. Don't forget about that "trailer raider" at Little Desert Lodge!

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)



Red-capped Robin. (Photo by guide Chris Benesh)

CAPE BARREN GOOSE (*Cereopsis novaehollandiae*) – How adorable were those goslings along the entrance road to the Shearwater Restaurant on Phillip Island?

FRECKLED DUCK (*Stictonetta naevosa*) – The pair on the pond at Laratinga Wetlands in Mount Barker was one of our more unlikely "gets" on the tour.

BLACK SWAN (*Cygnus atratus*) – A striking bird, particularly in flight. We saw cygnets on multiple occasions.

AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadornoides*) – We first encountered this species at the Western Treatment Plant but several watering holes in pastures held this odd waterfowl.

MANED DUCK (*Chenonetta jubata*) – Also called Australian Wood Duck, it was the most common duck.

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) – Runner-up for most common duck.

AUSTRALIAN SHOVELER (*Anas rhynchos*) – They put up a fight but eventually we all got on this species at the Western Treatment Plant.

GRAY TEAL (*Anas gracilis*) – Tough to separate from female Chestnut Teal; we had more sightings coastally and in western Australia.

CHESTNUT TEAL (*Anas castanea*) – The drakes are very handsome.

PINK-EARED DUCK (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) – What a unique bill structure.

WHITE-EYED DUCK (*Aythya australis*) – We often used the Australian name: Hardhead.

BLUE-BILLED DUCK (*Oxyura australis*) – Thankfully, Chris spotted a sleeping drake at Western Treatment Plant.

MUSK DUCK (*Biziura lobata*) – We saw several hens but the drake with the strange, leathery flap under his bill eluded us.

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

MALLEEFOWL (*Leipoa ocellata*) – Wasn't that lecture from Graeme Creek with the pair at our feet wonderful?

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

STUBBLE QUAIL (*Coturnix pectoralis*) – Heard well but never seen in the fields along "parrot alley" the morning we were leaving Katanning en route to Stirling Range National Park.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – Numerous

HOARY-HEADED GREBE (*Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*) – First encountered at the Western Treatment Plant.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*) – Our only look was at Lake Wendouree in Ballarat but it was a good one.

Spheniscidae (Penguins)

LITTLE PENGUIN (*Eudyptula minor*) – The parade on Phillip Island did not disappoint.

Diomedidae (Albatrosses)

YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS (INDIAN) (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos bassi*) – Distance views of a few birds in flight from the Cave Point Lighthouse in Torndirrup National Park outside of Albany. Many authorities recognize this *bassi* subspecies as a full species and call it Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche carteri*). The *chlororhynchos* subspecies or Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross is only an occasional visitor to eastern Australian waters.

WHITE-CAPPED ALBATROSS (*Thalassarche cauta cauta*) – This is Australia's only breeding albatross. We watched the dynamic soaring on an individual from the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse where the Indian and the Southern Oceans meet. Formerly part of the Shy Albatross complex, Clements currently recognizes two subspecies: *cauta* and *steadii*. Australians treat them as two full species. The *cauta* subspecies (which breeds on islands around Tasmania) they call Shy Albatross and the *steadii* subspecies (which breeds in the Auckland Islands off Zealand) they call White-capped Albatross. Stay tuned.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER (*Puffinus carneipes*) – A fair number of individuals flew by while we were sea watching from various points in southwestern-most Australia but unfortunately never close to shore.

SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) – A few people noticed a couple individuals overhead at dusk at the penguin parade but clearly most birds had not returned to the colony yet.

HUTTON'S SHEARWATER (*Puffinus huttoni*) – A few individuals picked up small, white-bellied shearwaters flying by at Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse the last morning but it was a lousy look. Originally discussed as *Fluttering*, those shearwaters were more likely the very similar Hutton's based on range.

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

AUSTRALASIAN GANNET (*Morus serrator*) – Multiple locations while sea watching but Western Treatment Plant was our first.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*)

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – From a North American perspective, it was odd to see them in trees and away from the coast.

PIED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax varius*) – Not little

BLACK-FACED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax fuscescens*) – Only one time; quite a few on the jetty on the NW side of Adelaide

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*)

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

AUSTRALASIAN DARTER (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – Few and far between but most people enjoyed a nice look during our picnic lunch at Oyster Harbor, outside of Albany.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AUSTRALIAN PELICAN (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*)

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

PACIFIC HERON (*Ardea pacifica*) – Australian's call it White-necked Heron. We finally got that killer look we were all hoping for on the last morning, on the back side of that farm pond, shortly after leaving Cape Leeuwin.

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

WHITE-FACED HERON (*Egretta novaehollandiae*) – Arguably the most frequently encountered wader on our journey. I particularly liked that fluffed up guy at the little spillway at Laratinga Wetlands.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Not many but a couple good looks at the Western Treatment Plant.

PACIFIC REEF-HERON (*Egretta sacra*) – A dark morph in flight as we pulled into the parking lot at Cape Leeuwin.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Another last day species; a pack had a nervous cow surrounded on our drive north back to Perth.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

AUSTRALIAN IBIS (*Threskiornis molucca*) – Trash-pickers in Sydney

STRAW-NECKED IBIS (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Our best looks were often in flight; most frequently seen toward the end of the trip.

ROYAL SPOONBILL (*Platalea regia*) – Western Treatment Plant

YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL (*Platalea flavipes*) – Nice to compare it to Royal in flight.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – At the nest at Hamelin Bay.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

AUSTRALIAN KITE (*Elanus axillaris*) – Plenty of birds spotted while driving but the best study was of the nesting pair at Wilsons Promontory National Park.

BLACK KITE (*Milvus migrans*) – A few here and there but the low overhead birds at PowerWater (Alice Springs waste water treatment facility) put on a real show.

WHISTLING KITE (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Common

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – Thank goodness we lingered to admire Emu scat at Wilsons Promontory National Park.

SWAMP HARRIER (*Circus approximans*)

SPOTTED HARRIER (*Circus assimilis*) – An unofficial record year for a species normally tough to come by. We saw at least ten, mostly early on.

Our first look approaching the Shearwater Restaurant was probably the best.

BROWN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter fasciatus*) – A soaring bird on our first morning at Royal National Park.

COLLARED SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) – Chris got us on a soaring bird off to the left while driving west from Alice Springs

WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE (*Aquila audax*) – What a tremendous raptor.

LITTLE EAGLE (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*) – The soaring individual we had prolonged looks at in Torndirrup National Park. Never close, we had our best view from the Gap-Natural Bridge parking lot.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AUSTRALIAN KESTREL (*Falco cenchroides*) – Common

AUSTRALIAN HOBBY (*Falco longipennis*) – Who could ever forget the laser that grabbed a Budgie out of the air roadside in Alice Springs?! The pair nesting on the tower on the Tanami Road evening was nice too.

BROWN FALCON (*Falco berigora*) – The most frequently encountered raptor during the tour.

BLACK FALCON (*Falco subniger*) – Its flight style gave it away over the ridge when we were standing at PowerWater.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – The individual at PowerWater did a great job of stirring up the terns, stilts, and avocets.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

AUSTRALIAN CRAKE (*Porzana fluminea*) – The Australians call this Spotted Crake. One individual repeatedly stepped into the open at our last stop in Western Treatment Plant.

SPOTLESS CRAKE (*Porzana tabuensis*) – It took some patience but eventually I believe we all got glimpses of that furtive individual in the roadside marsh one of our last mornings.

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – What a honking rail!

DUSKY MOORHEN (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Some good concentrations.

BLACK-TAILED NATIVE-HEN (*Tribonyx ventralis*) – Funny birds. We seemed to run into them in random places.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Many

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

MASKED LAPWING (*Vanellus miles*) – Common

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL (*Erythrogonys cinctus*) – A handsome plover.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Part of the shorebird medley at Oyster Harbor. Great suggestion on the turn-off Tim!

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis fulva*) – A lone bird among the other shorebirds at Oyster Harbor.

RED-CAPPED PLOVER (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – Subtly beautiful. Seen at Western Treatment Plant.

HOODED PLOVER (*Thinornis cucullatus*) – A beautiful pair on a gorgeous beach at Phillip Island Nature Park.

BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL (*Elseya melanops*) – We came across this striking plover in a number of locations but the pair at Simpsons Gap were super cooperative.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

PIED OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus longirostris*) – Seen a couple times but nice to compare it to Sooty at St. Kilda.

SOOTY OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus fuliginosus*) – Best look at Cape Leeuwin.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

PIED STILT (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) – Great looks at PowerWater.

BANDED STILT (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) – I loved picking out those gorgeous shorebirds among the Red-necked Avocets at Western Treatment Plant.

RED-NECKED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) – Gorgeous

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Single birds at PowerWater and Oyster Harbor.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Western Treatment Plant

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – PowerWater

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – A bird in flight at Western Treatment Plant and two in the mud flats at Oyster Harbor.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A write-in! A fly-by while we were picking through all the cormorants on the old dock at Oyster Harbor.

GREAT KNOT (*Calidris tenuirostris*) – A write in! About a half dozen birds at Oyster Harbor.

RED KNOT (*Calidris canutus*) – A write-in! Among the Great Knots at Oyster Harbor; retaining a little rust in the belly and with a shorter bill.

RED-NECKED STINT (*Calidris ruficollis*) – Impressive flocks at Western Treatment Plant.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER (*Calidris acuminata*) – Western Treatment Plant and PowerWater.

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Western Treatment Plant

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER (*Limicola falcinellus*) – A write-in! Great spotting by Chris. A tough bird to get on among all the Red-necked Stints before it flew at Western Treatment Plant.

Turnicidae (Buttonquail)

PAINTED BUTTONQUAIL (*Turnix varius*) – We repeatedly flushed two birds in the Dryandra Woodland but we never got them to hold still in the open.

LITTLE BUTTONQUAIL (*Turnix velox*) – While wandering off-trail at Wyperfeld National Park, we pursued at least one bird which a few folks got a look at before it seemingly disappeared.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

SILVER GULL (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) – "Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine" from Finding Nemo. My favorite were the ones whose wingtips practically brushed my cheeks while I was seated watching the penguins come ashore.

PACIFIC GULL (*Larus pacificus*) – What a bill!

FAIRY TERN (*Sternula nereis*) – A challenging look at Western Treatment Plant.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – Seen in flight from a few coastal locations.

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Common

GREAT CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bergii*) – Seen in flight from a few coastal locations. Also, a few perched on pilings at Hamelin Bay.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

SPOTTED DOVE (*Streptopelia chinensis*) [I]

LAUGHING DOVE (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) [I]

COMMON BRONZEWING (*Phaps chalcoptera*) – Seen most often flushing from the shoulder of the road.

BRUSH BRONZEWING (*Phaps elegans*) – A great look at the public restroom/boat launch at Cheyne Beach.

CRESTED PIGEON (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) – Common

SPINFEX PIGEON (*Geophaps plumifera*) – A tour highlight; the "Dr. Seuss Pigeon."

WONGA PIGEON (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*) – A boldly pattern pigeon singing incessantly at Royal National Park.

DIAMOND DOVE (*Geopelia cuneata*) – One of the last species we picked up in Alice Springs that windy morning before our flight.

TOPKNOT PIGEON (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) – What a beast! Seen our first morning at Royal and never again.

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*) – Dianne spotted our best look when we took a mid-morning break in town.

YELLOW-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) – Heard a couple times early in the trip but never flew into view unfortunately. [*]

SLENDER-BILLED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) – Australians call this Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo which is a much less deceiving name than Slender-billed. We had a great study of the bill and call on the walk out to Cave Point Lighthouse in Torndirrup National Park.

WHITE-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*) – Australians call this Baudin's Black-Cockatoo. A single bird was thankfully calling as it flew to the top of one of the enormous Karri trees in Porongurup National Park. The elongated tip to the maxilla (upper bill) was visible in the scope.

GANG-GANG COCKATOO (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*) – Three cheers to Tom and Bob for spotting these charismatic parrots in the downtown park in Halls Gap.

PINK COCKATOO (*Lophochroa leadbeateri*) – Major Mitchell's Cockatoo. Thank goodness Hattah-Kulkyne National Park came through with one bird.

GALAH (*Eolophus roseicapilla*) – Don't let their abundance fool you; this species was stunning. Remember that clever individual hanging upside to catch the drips from the leaking spigot at the Telegraph Station in Alice Springs?

LONG-BILLED CORELLA (*Cacatua tenuirostris*) – Waking up to them at the Grampians Motel was a treat.

WESTERN CORELLA (*Cacatua pastinator*) – Another great spot by our bus driver Dianne.

LITTLE CORELLA (*Cacatua sanguinea*) – A fair number in our travels from Melbourne to Adelaide.

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO (*Cacatua galerita*) – Easy on the eyes but not on the ears: what a voice!

COCKATIEL (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) – Chris spotted our first small flock flying up and down the highway on our way to Adelaide then Alice Springs held quite a few.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

RAINBOW LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – Their dynamic flight is almost as impressive as their plumage.

MUSK LORIKEET (*Glossopsitta concinna*) – A pair in the courtyard early the first morning at Little Desert Lodge.

PURPLE-CROWNED LORIKEET (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*) – More easily heard than seen in the canopy of the gum trees next to the big ram in Wagin.

RED-CAPPED PARROT (*Purpureicephalus spurius*) – Part of that great "parrot alley" the morning we left Katanning en route to Stirling Range National Park.

PORT LINCOLN PARROT (*Barnardius zonarius*) – No complaints about the looks we had at this species in Alice Springs. The Australians consider this species to be part of the Australian Ringneck complex and list it as the nominate race.

MALLEE RINGNECK (*Barnardius barnardi*) – Common

CRIMSON ROSELLA (CRIMSON) (*Platycercus elegans elegans*) – Plenty of looks right from the start at Royal National Park.

CRIMSON ROSELLA (YELLOW) (*Platycercus elegans flaveolus*) – Nice looks from the picnic area where Alan grilled sausages on the "barbie" for us.

CRIMSON ROSELLA (ADELAIDE) (*Platycercus elegans adelaidae*) – Paul first spotted this subspecies from the parking area at Laratinga Wetlands in Mount Barker (outside of Adelaide).

EASTERN ROSELLA (*Platycercus eximius*) – Simply gorgeous; quite a few roadside encounters while we were on the bus.

WESTERN ROSELLA (*Platycercus icterotis*) – Lovely looks outside the country store/tea room after Porongurup National Park.

RED-RUMPED PARROT (*Psephotus haematonotus*) – A number of sightings between Little Desert Lodge and Adelaide.

MULGA PARROT (*Psephotus varius*) – A few individuals here and there; our first was at Wyperfeld National Park.

BLUEBONNET (*Northiella haematogaster*) – Holding out for the "belly shot" view in the scope was totally worth it.

BOURKE'S PARROT (*Neophema bourkii*) – Thank goodness for those roadside "doves" since the water hole had dried up.

ELEGANT PARROT (*Neophema elegans*) – A simple pattern but indeed elegant.

BUDGERIGAR (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) – Wave after wave rushing overhead at Simpsons Gap was one of the special moments of the tour.

AUSTRALIAN KING-PARROT (*Alisterus scapularis*) – Beautiful start to the trip with these majestic parrots overhead at Royal National Park.

REGENT PARROT (*Polytelis anthopeplus*) – The "yellow" parrots toward the end of the trip.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

PALLID CUCKOO (*Cacomantis pallidus*) – Our first good look was an individual teed up on a fencepost as we headed NW from Melbourne.

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) – Their slow, melodic trill was distinctive.

HORSFIELD'S BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx basalis*) – The more common of the two little cuckoos we encountered.

SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – Seen at Royal National Park and then only heard on a couple other days.

Strigidae (Owls)

SOUTHERN BOOBOOK (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) – Thank goodness for "that" rock on the Tanami Road after dinner at the dried up watering hole.

Aegothelidae (Owlet-Nightjars)

AUSTRALIAN OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles cristatus*) – Roosting in the cavity almost to Jersey Spring on Lady Carrington Drive in Royal National Park.

Podargidae (Frogmouths)

TAWNY FROGMOUTH (*Podargus strigoides*) – The Grampians night walk, roosting at Little Desert Lodge, and the night drive through the Dryandra Woodland.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

AZURE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx azureus*) – One of the first species of the trip.

LAUGHING KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) – More days than not for Australia's most iconic bird species.

RED-BACKED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus pyrrhopygius*) – On the wire on our way out on the Tanami Road evening.

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Singing then seen in the first parking area at Stirling Range National Park.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

RAINBOW BEE-EATER (*Merops ornatus*) – Part of that remarkable streak on the post-lunch walk at Glen Helen Gorge.

Menuridae (Lyrebirds)

SUPERB LYREBIRD (*Menura novaehollandiae*) – Worth the walk all the way out to Jersey Spring in Royal National Park.

Atrichornithidae (Scrub-birds)

NOISY SCRUB-BIRD (*Atrichornis clamosus*) – Wow, just wow.

Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

SATIN BOWERBIRD (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) – Their purple eyes seemed to glow.

WESTERN BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera guttata*) – Bus Driver Harry showed us the bower in his neighbor's front yard.

Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER (*Cormobates leucophaea*) – A couple looks early in the tour, especially Royal National Park.

BROWN TREECREEPER (*Climacteris picumnus*) – Wyperfeld National Park -- good looks as soon as we got off the bus at the park entrance.
RUFIOUS TREECREEPER (*Climacteris rufus*) – You can't ask for a better look than the individual that teed up on that low post in the parking area at Porongurup National Park.

Maluridae (Fairywrens)

WHITE-WINGED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus leucopterus*) – We never got close at St. Kilda but we didn't have to -- the male simply glows.
SUPERB FAIRYWREN (*Malurus cyaneus*) – Our first in a thankfully long line of fantastic fairywrens.
SPLENDID FAIRYWREN (*Malurus splendens*) – Blue covered in blue.
VARIEGATED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus lamberti*) – One of the gems from the first morning.
RED-WINGED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus elegans*) – A runner-up for the favorite species of the tour.
BLUE-BREASTED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus pulcherrimus*) – Close views in Dryandra Woodland.
SOUTHERN EMUWREN (*Stipiturus malachurus*) – I hate this species, I hate this species, I hate this species... I LOVE THIS SPECIES! Thank you Hamelin Bay.
MALLEE EMUWREN (*Stipiturus mallee*) – Maddeningly close to a calling bird in the spinifex of Hattah-Kulkyne National Park. I guess Chris will have to lead this tour again. [*]

Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)

EASTERN SPINEBILL (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) – One of a number of species we saw only on the first day at Royal National Park.
WESTERN SPINEBILL (*Acanthorhynchus superciliosus*) – At the Glen Eagle rest area leaving Perth.
LEWIN'S HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga lewinii*) – A good-sized honeyeater at Royal.
YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus chrysops*) – The first few mornings of the tour.
SINGING HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus virescens*) – A more delicate honeyeater.
WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus leucotis*) – On our morning walk at Little Desert Lodge
PURPLE-GAPED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus cratitius*) – Teed up in the open for a prolonged moment justly after leaving the mound in the Malleefowl Sanctuary.
GRAY-HEADED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus keartlandi*) – Simpsons Gap
FUSCOUS HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus fuscus*) – One of the species we had to work for in the bush off Asses Ears Road in the highlands of Grampians National Park.
YELLOW-PLUMED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus ornatus*) – Good looks on more than one occasion.
WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus penicillatus*) – Common around Alice Springs.
WHITE-FRONTED HONEYEATER (*Purnella albifrons*)
NOISY MINER (*Manorina melanocephala*) – Tough to avoid the first half of our journey.
YELLOW-THROATED MINER (*Manorina flavigula*) – Our first good look was immediately after the roadside Sand (or Gould's) Goanna in Hattah-Kulkyne National Park.
SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*) – Seen most often in the Alice Springs area.
RED WATTLEBIRD (*Anthochaera carunculata*) – Almost an everyday bird; aggressive.
LITTLE WATTLEBIRD (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) – In the Southeast.
WESTERN WATTLEBIRD (*Anthochaera lunulata*) – First encountered at Glen Eagle rest area leaving Perth.
WHITE-FRONTED CHAT (*Epthianura albifrons*) – The entrance road to the Shearwater Restaurant on Phillip Island was our first look.
TAWNY-CROWNED HONEYEATER (*Gliciphila melanops*) – A particularly good-looking honeyeater.
BROWN HONEYEATER (*Lichmera indistincta*) – Visiting the tiny waterhole after lunch at Glen Helen Gorge
CRESCENT HONEYEATER (*Phylidonyris pyrrhopterus*) – A couple brief scope views of singing birds atop the tallest trees at our first stop outside Fish Creek, at sunrise en route to Wilsons Promontory National Park.
NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATER (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) – Remarkable how dramatically they responded to squeaking.
WHITE-CHEEKED HONEYEATER (*Phylidonyris niger*) – Found in the Southwest; similar to New Holland.
WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER (*Melithreptus lunatus*) – Don't forget we had the "Eastern" and then later the "Western" (in Dryandra) - a potential split.
BLACK-CHINNED HONEYEATER (*Melithreptus gularis*) – One of the highlights from Asses Ears Road up in the Grampians.
BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER (*Melithreptus brevirostris*)
BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER (*Entomyzon cyanotis*) – A write-in! Perched briefly then flew off at Hattah-Kulkyne National Park
NOISY FRIARBIRD (*Philemon corniculatus*) – The vocalization was impressive. It flew back and forth across Lady Carrington Drive in Royal National Park.
STRIPED HONEYEATER (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*) – A write-in! An individual at Wyperfeld National Park

Dasyornithidae (Bristlebirds)

WESTERN BRISTLEBIRD (*Dasyornis longirostris*) – We really had to work for this one but eventually everyone had a look at this loud skulker in Waychincup National Park near Cheyne Beach.

Pardalotidae (Pardalotes)

SPOTTED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus punctatus*) – This beautiful little bird was more often heard than seen.
RED-BROWED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus rubricatus*) – Part of that great haul after lunch at Glen Helen Gorge.
STRIATED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus striatus*) – Heard singing more days than not.

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

ROCKWARBLER (*Origma solitaria*) – We only had one shot at this limited range species and we got it!

WHITE-BROWED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis frontalis*) – About an every other day bird.

LARGE-BILLED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis magnirostra*) – Another one day wonder at Royal.

REDTHROAT (*Pyrrholaemus brunneus*) – The Cassia Hill hike in West MacDonnell National Park was well worth it.

SPECKLED WARBLER (*Pyrrholaemus sagittatus*) – We tracked down this curious little bird among the brush piles in the bush off Asses Ears Road in Grampians National Park.

RUFOUS FIELDWREN (*Calamanthus campestris*) – In the Little Desert area.

STRIATED FIELDWREN (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*) – Wilsons Promontory National Park

SHY HEATHWREN (*Hylacola cauta*) – The high winds on our Little Desert day made getting a great look at this little skulker a real challenge but we got.

BUFF-RUMPED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza reguloides*) – The differences between thornbills are subtle. It does not help that they are tiny.

WESTERN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza inornata*) – Our last thornbill; picked up in the Dryandra Woodland.

SLENDER-BILLED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza iredalei*) – In the coastal scrub at St. Kilda. The name should be "Slightly More" Slender-billed Thornbill.

BROWN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza pusilla*) – Encountered quite often early in the trip.

INLAND THORNBILL (*Acanthiza apicalis*) – The Spinifex Pigeon spot was our first look.

YELLOW-RUMPED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) – Fairly widespread.

CHESTNUT-RUMPED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza uropygialis*) – We had that pair flitting around us after our picnic lunch in Wyperfeld National Park.

SLATY-BACKED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza robustirostris*) – On the walk back from Cassia Hill in West MacDonnell National Park.

YELLOW THORNBILL (*Acanthiza nana*) – Only on our Little Desert day.

STRIATED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza lineata*) – Another Royal only bird.

WEEBILL (*Smicromis brevirostris*) – Adorable little sprites; Australia's smallest bird.

BROWN GERYGONE (*Gerygone mouki*) – Do you remember how to pronounce it? "jur-rig-ah-knee"

WESTERN GERYGONE (*Gerygone fusca*) – Not much to look at what a song!

SOUTHERN WHITEFACE (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) – In the arid, open landscapes.

Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

GRAY-CROWNED BABBLER (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) – A charismatic group came in to check us out our last morning in Alice Springs.

WHITE-BROWED BABBLER (*Pomatostomus superciliosus*) – We picked up our third babbler of the tour roadside traveling from Narrogin to Katanning.

CHESTNUT-CROWNED BABBLER (*Pomatostomus ruficeps*) – Our first babbler of the tour was found in the open landscape at Hattah-Kulkyne National Park.

Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)

EASTERN WHIPBIRD (*Psophodes olivaceus*) – That song is ridiculously awesome!

WESTERN WHIPBIRD (*Psophodes nigrogularis*) – Noisy Scrub-bird, then Western Bristlebird, the this species... geez, what an incredible run that morning in Waychinicup National Park near Cheyne Beach.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – A write-in for this tour! Good spotting by Chris of a single bird on a wire.

MASKED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus personatus*) – We had a remarkable run with the woodswallows. These guys were outnumbered by the White-browed Woodswallows on our morning through Hattah-Kulkyne National Park.

WHITE-BROWED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus superciliosus*) – Simply gorgeous.

BLACK-FACED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus cinereus*)

DUSKY WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus cyanopterus*) – In Dryandra Woodland

LITTLE WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus minor*) – The white underwings were a striking contrast to the body when seen in flight at Glen Helen Gorge.

Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

GRAY BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus torquatus*) – One joined us at the picnic table for Alan's barbie.

PIED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus nigrogularis*) – A hauntingly beautiful song

AUSTRALASIAN MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) – A nearly constant companion.

PIED CURRAWONG (*Strepera graculina*) – Common early in the tour.

GRAY CURRAWONG (*Strepera versicolor*)

Campephagidae (Cuckoo-shrikes)

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – Almost an everyday bird with the curious habit of adjusting its wings repeatedly when settling into a perch which is how it earned its Australian colloquial name: Shufflewing.

WHITE-WINGED TRILLER (WHITE-WINGED) (*Lalage sueurii tricolor*) – One of those species even better looking in flight.

Neosittidae (Sittellas)

VARIED SITTELLA (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) – We were lucky enough to come across two nests on our first walk at Royal National Park. The outer part of the nest looked like it was covered in pale gray shingles.

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

CRESTED SHRIKE-TIT (EASTERN) (*Falcunculus frontatus frontatus*) – Royal produced so many treats we never saw again.

CRESTED SHRIKE-TIT (WESTERN) (*Falcunculus frontatus leucogaster*) – The white-bellied western race gave us good looks in the Dryandra Woodland. Look for this subspecies to be split.

CRESTED BELLBIRD (*Oreoica gutturalis*) – More easily heard than seen. We eventually caught up to a cooperative pair at the parking area for the Cassia Hill hike in West MacDonnell National Park.

OLIVE WHISTLER (*Pachycephala olivacea*) – Only on day three at Wilsons Promontory National Park

GOLDEN WHISTLER (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) – A striking bird seen frequently toward the end of the tour

RUFOUS WHISTLER (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) – A beautiful male was first seen while bushwhacking off Asses Ears Road in The Grampians.

GRAY SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – We observed this fairly common species multiple times but its rich and varied vocalizations we noted frequently.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE (*Oriolus sagittatus*) – Only in Royal National Park

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

WILLIE-WAGTAIL (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – This charismatic species was an "everyday bird!"

GRAY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) – Frequently encountered early and late in the tour

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

BLACK-FACED MONARCH (*Monarcha melanopsis*) – Royal National Park

MAGPIE-LARK (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) – Another "everyday bird!"

LEADEN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra rubecula*) – It some doing for everyone to spot this stunning flycatcher overhead at the beginning of Lady Carrington Drive.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

TORRESIAN CROW (*Corvus orru*) – The less common of the lookalike crows in the Alice Springs area; best IDed by voice

LITTLE CROW (*Corvus bennetti*) – Frequently encountered in the Alice Springs area; best IDed from the previous species by its voice.

AUSTRALIAN RAVEN (*Corvus coronoides*) – Almost an everyday bird; its distinctive calls reminded me of somebody with an upset stomach or a sick lamb.

LITTLE RAVEN (*Corvus mellori*) – The one with the small bill and the frog-like voice.

FOREST RAVEN (*Corvus tasmanicus*) – The most range-restricted raven with the biggest bill and shortest tail

Corcoracidae (White-winged Chough and Apostlebird)

WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH (*Corcorax melanorhamphos*) – Very cooperative around the Little Desert Lodge

APOSTLEBIRD (*Struthidea cinerea*) – Right on cue at Hattah-Kulkyne National Park

Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

JACKY-WINTER (*Microeca fascians*) – First encountered while bushwhacking at Wyperfeld National Park; what a great name!

SCARLET ROBIN (*Petroica boodang*) – Our first sighting in The Grampians allowed some folks, luckily we caught up to a cooperative male in the Dryandra Woodland.

RED-CAPPED ROBIN (*Petroica goodenovii*) – That spectacular, glowing male posing so nicely in Wyperfeld National Park won top honors for the tour favorite.

FLAME ROBIN (*Petroica phoenicea*) – Those female migrants at Wilsons Prom provided one of Australia's ID challenges

ROSE ROBIN (*Petroica rosea*) – Another Royal only species

HOODED ROBIN (*Melanodryas cucullata*) – We enjoyed a nice view of a male after our picnic lunch in Wyperfeld National Park.

EASTERN YELLOW ROBIN (*Eopsaltria australis*) – Seen early in our adventure

WESTERN YELLOW ROBIN (*Eopsaltria griseogularis*) – One of the species we only found in the Dryandra Woodland

WHITE-BREASTED ROBIN (*Eopsaltria georgiana*) – Reliable in the Cape Leeuwin area

SOUTHERN SCRUB-ROBIN (*Drymodes brunneopygia*) – A heard only bird for some people at Little Desert [*]

Alaudidae (Larks)

SKY LARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Their aerial display was a delight at the Western Treatment Plant. [I]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

WELCOME SWALLOW (*Hirundo neoxena*) – Almost an everyday bird

FAIRY MARTIN (*Petrochelidon ariel*) – Our best look was the colonial nesting in the roadside culvert at Western Treatment Plant.

TREE MARTIN (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) – It was interesting to watch them checking out natural cavities in the trees around the Laratinga Wetlands.

WHITE-BACKED SWALLOW (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*) – A rare treat after lunch at the Glen Helen Resort

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus australis*) – They were absolutely thick at the Laratinga Wetlands.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

LITTLE GRASSBIRD (*Megalurus gramineus*) – Our only sighting was at the Western Treatment Plant.

BROWN SONGLARK (*Cincloramphus cruralis*) – It seems to occupy a similar niche to that of a meadowlark in North America.

RUFOUS SONGLARK (*Cincloramphus mathewsi*) – In the Dryandra Woodland

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA (*Cisticola exilis*) – We had an individual tee up nicely for us at the avocet and stilt spot in the Western Treatment

Plant.

Zosteropidae (Yuhinas, White-eyes, and Allies)

SILVER-EYE (*Zosterops lateralis*) – Thick in some places, particularly in the coastal SW

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Most during the first week [I]

Sturnidae (Starlings)

COMMON MYNA (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Most during the first week [II]

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – During the first half of the tour [II]

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

MISTLETOEBIRD (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) – During our Alice Springs full day

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN) (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – Scattered here and there

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Only in the first couple of days [II]

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – In a few towns during the first half of the tour [II]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

PAINTED FIRETAIL (*Emblema pictum*) – One of a flurry of new species we had after lunch in Glen Helen

BEAUTIFUL FIRETAIL (*Stagonopleura bella*) – Finding a nest a Royal National Park was really special.

RED-EARED FIRETAIL (*Stagonopleura oculata*) – Frosting after the terrific threesome of challenging species at Cheyne Beach

DIAMOND FIRETAIL (*Stagonopleura guttata*) – Great looks on the lawn at Little Desert Lodge

RED-BROWED FIRETAIL (*Neochmia temporalis*) – In the road early on during our hike out Lady Carrington Drive

ZEBRA FINCH (*Taeniopygia guttata*) – Quite a few in the Alice Springs area

MAMMALS

SHORT-BEAKED ECHIDNA (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) – What a bizarre creature!

NUMBAT (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*) – Only a few got a glimpse of this termite specialist in the Dryandra Woodland; that guy just disappeared on us?!

SOUTHERN BROWN BANDICOOT (*Isodon obesulus*) – A few people caught on crossing the road after our celebratory ice cream at Cheyne Beach

COMMON WOMBAT (*Vombatus ursinus*) – Good spotting Alan, thanks

KOALA (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) – Never expected to see one lumbering down the road

COMMON BRUSHTAIL POSSUM (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) – One spending the day in a cavity at Little Desert Lodge was fun but we saw several more in action at night in Dryandra Woodland.

BLACK-FOOTED ROCK-WALLABY (*Petrogale lateralis*) – These were the beasts in the boulder field at the base of the cliff at Simpsons Gap.

TAMMAR WALLABY (*Macropus eugenii*) – We saw quite a few of these guys at the start of our night drive through Dryandra Woodland.

EASTERN GRAY KANGAROO (*Macropus giganteus*) – Our first kangaroos! They were very cooperative upon our arrival at Wilsons Promontory National Park.

WESTERN GRAY KANGAROO (*Macropus fuliginosus*) – Common and widespread; we were surrounded at Little Desert Lodge

COMMON WALLAROO (*Macropus robustus*) – Also known as Euro; we saw several up on the rocks at the telegraph station in Alice Springs.

RED KANGAROO (*Macropus rufus*) – No wild individuals were encountered but we did see this largest kangaroo species at the roadside sanctuary en route to Stirling Range National Park.

SWAMP WALLABY (*Wallabia bicolor*) – Several right from the first side road in Wilsons Promontory National Park

OLD WORLD RABBIT (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Tragically common unfortunately; their concentrations on Phillip Island was mind-boggling [II]

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – A partial view of one just beyond the jetty at St. Kilda

RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*) – A couple quick glimpses [II]

DINGO (*Canis familiaris dingo*) – Yes! Two running away at the telegraph station in Alice Springs.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The rich faunal diversity of this amazing continent is not limited to birds and mammals. There are already over 900 reptile species recognized in Australia and herpetologists are adding to the list almost daily. We enjoyed encounters with a few notable species:

Oblong Turtle (*Chelodina oblonga*): the turtle with the absurdly long neck on the grass near the turtle-crossing sign in the Southwest.

Lace Monitor (*Varanus varius*): Stalking its way through the leaf litter in Royal National Park.

Eastern Water Dragon (*Physignathus lesuerii lesuerii*): Several impressive beasts were sunning themselves on rocks at the river's edge in Royal National Park.

Tiger Snake (*Notechis scutatus*): This highly variable but always beautiful snake has extremely potent venom placing it in the top ten among the world's

deadliest snakes. We had a brief look at one at the Western Treatment Plant.

Central Bearded Dragon (*Pogona vitticeps*): Impressive rows of spines around the head and throat and down the flanks; we saw several in the Alice Springs area including a very cooperative individual at the telegraph station.

Shingleback (*Tiliqua rugosa*): Also called Bobtail, Stumpy-tail, and Sleepy Lizard; truly one of Australia's more peculiar reptiles. Unfortunately they were seen more as roadkill than alive.

Sand Goanna (*Varanus gouldii*): Also called Gould's Goanna and Sand Monitor. A large predacious lizard seen well several times. The one basking roadside in Wyperfeld was memorable.

Totals for the tour: 293 bird taxa and 17 mammal taxa