



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**AUSTRALIA INVITATIONAL 2013**

Nov 5, 2013 to Nov 22, 2013  
John Coons & John Rowlett

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

For many years, as he repeatedly traveled throughout the Neotropics, Pepper had dreamed of one day being properly introduced to the exciting Australian avifauna by his great friend and colleague John Coons, Field Guides' senior Down Under guide. One of the perks of cutting back on a full-time touring schedule is gaining opportunities to explore new ground; so in cooperation with a wonderful group of friends who also found this an appealing prospect, he and Kingfisher took advantage of this opportunity and together we realized a dream in November. We wanted to make this tour of eastern Australia a bit different from Field Guides' current offerings, to mix it up a bit and perhaps make it a bit slower paced than our current trips that squeeze a lot in to some days with long drives. We decided to start in Cairns with three days on the Atherton Tableland, followed by two days in Cairns, including a visit to Cassowary House. From there we flew to Brisbane with three nights at O'Reilly's and a more leisurely day in getting there. Then we headed to Melbourne to meet up with Phil Maher to bird the eucalypt forests of northern Victoria before going to Deniliquin for some drier country birds and our marquee trip target, the legendary Plains-wanderer. To finish on a relaxing note we went to the Werribee Western Treatment facility on our last day, closing with a stop in the You Yang Mountains.

Most everyone came in early and we got some extra birding in on the day of arrival in Cairns. Unfortunately, we never hit "the perfect tide" along the Esplanade, but we had a great mix of shorebirds, including those crazy Terek Sandpipers on the beach and Mangrove Robins in the mangroves, plus our introduction to Australian pigeons, parrots, and honeyeaters! We started the first morning in Cairns (with the rather inscrutable Jun Matsui driving) at Centenary Lakes where we had nice looks at Lovely Fairywren, Brown-backed Honeyeater, Large-billed Gerygone at a nest, and our first waterfowl. We then drove onto the Tableland and birded Granite Gorge, a birdy nature reserve where Mareeba Rock-Wallabies are tame and willingly pose for photographs. Not as willing but equally photogenic was the Tawny Frogmouth sitting on a nest that turned its back on us. There we enjoyed a couple of embowered Great Bowerbirds, Squatter Pigeons squatting underfoot, Pale-headed Rosellas, Double-banded Finches, and nearby Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos and Brolga and Sarus cranes. Next, at Hasties Swamp there were seven Freckled Ducks along with a handful of Yellow-billed Spoonbills, some cool dotterels, and more than 100 Pink-eared Ducks.

We settled in at Chambers Wildlife Lodge where the dinners and breakfasts were catered. A couple of Sugar Gliders, a handsome Striped Possum, and a Long-nosed Bandicoot came to the trees smeared with honey each evening, and a resistant Boobook finally deigned to sing repeatedly from its nearby perch over the trail. Morning birding on the grounds was exciting with some getting on to a Chowchilla and all watching a Victoria's Riflebird calling from its vertical perch. One of the highlights at nearby Lake Eacham was a fantastic male Tooth-billed Bowerbird perched above his "bower," singing away. As we enjoyed Act One and Act Two from this Stagemaker, Pat found a model for turning over a new leaf whenever changing scenes became desirable. In the afternoon we spent time with a flashy male Golden Bowerbird whose performance at its bower was no less thrilling. A Fernwren was cooperative until a car came by, and in the late afternoon we had three individual Platypuses afford a few revealing close views. At the north end of the Tableland we stopped at Big Mitchell Creek for White-browed Robin and some other passerines before continuing north. Near Mt. Carbine Ruth spotted a couple of Australian Bustards where there can sometimes be scores. Jun took us to a new spot where we found White-gaped Honeyeater at its southernmost point, along with nesting Fairy Gerygones.

With a couple of very good Tableland days under our belt and Cassowary being something of a worry at Cassowary House (only one sighting in the last six days), we decided to try a visit to Etty Bay on the coast about 1½ hours south of Cairns for our last morning on the Tableland. We arrived at a pretty spot on the coast where, at a caravan park renowned for visiting Cassowaries, we set up a Cassowary vigil and watched and waited more than four hours--until almost 3pm when, astonishingly, ten minutes before we had agreed to leave, a male Cassowary and a youngster boldly walked down the track and commenced to bathe in a sprinkler, the young bird dancing into a flight of fancy! We all quickly gathered from our various outposts and got great views of this fantastic creature. The bus ride back to Cairns was animated, with all of us on a Cassowary high. We headed up to Cassowary House the next morning with the pressure off and had a relaxed breakfast with Sue Gregory, Rowan, and the dogs. A White-eared Monarch performed pretty well on Black Mountain Road, and we ended up getting very nice Chowchillas along the entrance road. A Double-eyed Fig-Parrot was chewing on a fig branch just outside Sue's cluttered office for about an hour. And, only because the first pickle had been removed from the jar, Henrietta the "new" female Cassowary strolled in as we finished our leisurely breakfast. We had mostly poor views of a Red-necked Crake from the veranda before one of Sue's famous lunches and our drive back to Cairns.



*Plains-wanderer, by participant Jan Shaw*

After an early flight to Brisbane we were met by our driver and squeezed into the bus. We went to a wetland that Phil had told us about on Sandy Camp Road in the suburbs of Brisbane and found it rewarding: a Pacific Baza was sighted, as were obliging Baillon's Crake, jacanas, and a few ducks and other marsh birds, including a recalcitrant Tawny Grassbird. At Lota, Mangrove Honeyeater was a responsive treat, and Mangrove Gerygone got difficult before it relented for all. We did lunch in Canungra at Café Metz, which Phil had recommended. It seemed good at the time, but this is likely the place where eight of us ended up getting stomach issues that put some on the bench for awhile at O'Reilly's. Having more time than usual at O'Reilly's was great and that made finding all the birds much more relaxing. Nesting season and displaying were well under way, and we enjoyed a ten-minute view of a displaying Paradise Riflebird in the rainforest down the road from the lodge. Down the boardwalk at O'Reilly's Allison spotted the FEET of an Albert's Lyrebird through the dense vegetation, and this female and her chick ended up foraging right up next to, then under, the boardwalk as we watched and videoed for 20 minutes. During our time birding out of O'Reilly's, Crested Shrike-Tit, Bell Miners, White-headed and Topknot pigeons, the bizarre but mesmerizing Logrunners, Rose Robin, and Red-browed Treecreeper were all seen well. A walk up a trail with local guide, Duncan, took us to a Gray Goshawk nest with an active chick. That evening we had a great look at a huge Marbled Frogmouth. One afternoon we headed down into the Kerry Valley and had a great experience with Glossy Black-Cockatoos feeding in the casuarinas right next to the road. At the bottom of the valley we went to a fruiting fig where at least six Channel-billed Cuckoos were actively feeding and flying about. On our final morning Robert got his scope on a Noisy Pitta for all--which, may we say, has simply not happened for awhile! Driving down the windy road on our return to Brisbane, Robert (in his role as third guide) spotted a Koala from the bus! Our accommodating driver, Geoff, did a turn around and we watched this furry fellow for 15 minutes for another trip highlight. As we ducked in to Daisy Hill Sanctuary, Robert immediately spotted another Koala, but this one was curled up high in a tree and didn't want to be disturbed.

Next morning we flew to Melbourne to bird areas Kingfisher had not seen in 15 years. We were met by Trisha Maher who called Phil to arrive with the bus. Our first stop was a preserve near downtown Melbourne where we quickly found a Powerful Owl on a day roost. There was also a very loud and easy Bell Miner lek here, and Phil called out a Spotless Crake that he had seen the week before. We then made the long afternoon drive to Beechworth in the tall eucalypt forest northeast of Melbourne. Much of this area was devastated by the bush fires three years ago and it greatly affected the former birding areas. We stayed in a nice place in this small town and had dinner at a pub/hotel in the main part of the small town. Next morning at the hotel we found Gang-gang Cockatoos outside some of the rooms before heading to the cemetery to properly nail them. We then headed into the forest, where we had Yellow-tufted and Fuscous honeyeaters, and we came across a few beautiful Turquoise Parrots and more Crested Shrike-Tits. However, we could not come up with a Spotted Quail-Thrush and therefore didn't have enough time to give Speckled Warbler a good try. Outside of the town of Chiltern we had a great roadside stop with two Painted Honeyeaters, a Diamond Firetail doing its display of carrying around a long blade of grass and bouncing up and down on a perch, Black-chinned Honeyeaters, and Brown-headed Honeyeater. Little Lorikeets showed well in the forest, but we dipped on a pair of Regent Honeyeaters that had been in the vicinity. Evidently all the area Regent Honeyeaters are released birds from a captive breeding program and wear substantial jewelry on their legs. Settling on that for consolation, we went on to enjoy Gray-crowned Babbler, Spotted Harrier, and Apostlebirds en route to Deniliquin. We stayed along the Edward River at a quiet Caravan Park where Colin the Cod leaped free in perpetual joy.

After Trish's tasty, cooked breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage, yogurt, fruit and cereal, we left for the Gulpa flood plain where we had many good views of some gorgeous adult and immature Superb Parrots, along with Red-capped Robin, Weebill, Western Gerygone, Hooded Robin, White-browed Babbler, Red-rumped Parrot, Varied Sittella, and Yellow and Yellow-rumped thornbills. Although it taxed us, we finally chased down a singing Gilbert's Whistler. Following an afternoon siesta we loaded up for a big night and some evening birding at Phil's sister's farmhouse, where we had reasonably good if quick looks at Australian Owllet-Nightjar and where we also saw a few electrifying Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters and confiding Chestnut-rumped Thornbills. A nearby patch of native scrub yielded Black Honeyeater and Striped Honeyeater, a cluster of female-plumaged White-winged Fairywrens, and our first Emus and Western Gray Kangaroos. As dusk approached, we drove on toward the site where we would look for the Plains-wanderer.

When we arrived, Trisha met us again, this time with hearty sandwiches for dinner, along with a couple of popular desserts, beer, wine, and juices. Then the 14 of us loaded into three separate 4WD vehicles that were driven by Phil, the landowner and quite good birder Robert, and Kingfisher's old buddy Rick Webster, who did some early work on Plains-wanderers and came out with the intention of driving for Kingfisher. We headed off under a full moon and it took 20 minutes for Robert's vehicle with Pepper aboard to spotlight a pair of magnificent Plains-wanderers. Staying in radio contact we all arrived and got great, long views of this remarkable bird. The female started calling while we listened with the motors off. We continued our drive and had a couple of fantastic Inland Dotterels (one of the coolest shorebirds on Earth), which had moved in with the drought several years ago and didn't leave. Banded Lapwings, Australian Pratincoles, and Brown Songlarks also showed well in the lights, as did a tiny Fat-tailed Dunnart, a miniscule, shrew-like marsupial. All this made for an absolutely enchanted and unforgettable evening.

The next morning we loaded up luggage after breakfast and headed to a wet area where Australian (Spotted) Crake performed well. We also saw Diamond Dove and Black-tailed Native-Hen. On the way to Melbourne we had a surprising Black Falcon soaring and a group of Musk Lorikeets feeding along the roadside. Phil dropped us off at the Holiday Inn near the airport where we met our driver for our last morning of birding at Werribee (where the high winds can be devastating for birds and birding) on what turned out to be a calm and gorgeous day. There, accompanied by the facility's naturalist, Chris, and a trainee, we enjoyed Red-necked Avocets, Cape Barren Geese, White-fronted Chats, Little Grassbird, Striated Fieldwren, Australian Shoveler, Blue-billed Duck, and the odd Musk Duck. After lunch down the road we headed to the You Yangs, which Kingfisher had not visited for about 20 years. We arrived to find the place beginning to green up from being mostly burned in the fires from three years ago. Birding was very slow at this time of day and we were nearly skunked until we pulled out Scarlet Robin--a nice way to finish our birding.

It was an immense pleasure for Pepper ("whose enthusiasm rubbed off on everyone," quoth Kingfisher) and Kingfisher ("is this guy good for birding, or what!" quoth Pepper) to guide this tour together, AND to do so with an ideal group of 12 intelligent people--most of whom are long-time friends, two of whom became new friends--some of whom were crackerjack spotters, all of whom knew how to bird in a group and were great sports about everything, even in an upside-down world.

Here's to a repeat with a difference in 2015!

--Kingfisher and Pepper

NOTE:

The annotations on the triplist below afford some gee-whizzes that we hope will sweeten the list, some gleaned from Handbook of the Birds of the World. These tidbits are often difficult to convey in the field due to the exigencies of birding, but we hope they add to your enjoyment when you're recalling the birds themselves. We are grateful for the wonderful photos/videos Jan, Robert, and Rob put up, and we indicate under many of the species where you can find a photo of that species on one or more of their three sites. In case you have misplaced them, they are at the links below:

Jan's--[http://fieldguides.smugmug.com/NEW-PHOTOS-add-all-photos-here/Aus13p-Jan-Shaw/34399698\\_9P3HzG](http://fieldguides.smugmug.com/NEW-PHOTOS-add-all-photos-here/Aus13p-Jan-Shaw/34399698_9P3HzG);

Robert's--<http://www.flickr.com/photos/47862125@N03/sets/72157637994500364/>;

and Rob's--[http://fieldguides.smugmug.com/NEW-PHOTOS-add-all-photos-here/Aus13p-Rob-Colwell/35466390\\_RCDx8w](http://fieldguides.smugmug.com/NEW-PHOTOS-add-all-photos-here/Aus13p-Rob-Colwell/35466390_RCDx8w).

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## 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

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## BIRDS

### *Casuariidae (Cassowaries)*

**SOUTHERN CASSOWARY** (*Casuarius casuarius*) – Well let's get this list started off right! What a bird, what an experience! Seeing that male and young bird come strolling down the hill at Etty Bay was stunning! And watching the immature flying high with his exuberant if awkward leaps was a totally unexpected treat (terrific photo, Rob). Finally, seeing big Henrietta, our female of the tour, from the safety of the veranda at Sue and Phil's Cassowary House made our Cassowary experience perfect! Looking down from our toast and marmalade we could study her razor-sharp inner claw with impunity. Exciting videos, Jan and Robert! [N]

### *Dromaiidae (Emu)*

**EMU** (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) – Another extraordinary ratite! Seeing these noble birds blasting across the landscape in their grass skirts at 50+ mph was astonishing, but seeing them tear across the plains under a moon that cast a spell over all of us was very heaven! [E]

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

**MAGPIE GOOSE** (*Anseranas semipalmata*) – Currently placed in Anatidae, this strange goose has been elevated to a monotypic family by some ornithologists owing to several features unique among the Ducks and allies, including a sequential moult so that flight is never lost. We had our first nice views of several birds at the Centenary Lakes in Cairns.

**PLUMED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna eytoni*) – What a beautiful whistling-duck! Seen nicely at Hasties Swamp National Park—along with the following whistler. Nice photo, Jan! [E]

**WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) – As the name suggests, this one gets around, but Hasties was the only place we saw it, albeit in some numbers.

**CAPE BARREN GOOSE** (*Cereopsis novaehollandiae*) – A nice surprise at Werribee Western Treatment Plant outside Melbourne, thanks to Jan, who got a good photo. [E]

**FRECKLED DUCK** (*Stictonetta naevosa*) – A few of this fine endemic were seen at Hasties Swamp NP. [E]

**BLACK SWAN** (*Cygnus atratus*) – A lovely swan with striking white wing-tips. It has been introduced in New Zealand. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna tadornoides*) – Our best looks at the greatest number came at Werribee. [E]

**RADJAH SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna radjah*) – Several enjoyed at Centenary Lakes, Cairns.

**MANED DUCK** (*Chenonetta jubata*) – Goes by multiple names, including Australian Wood Duck; seen often, including at Deniliquin where its behavior in the town is reminiscent of Canada Geese elsewhere in the States. [E]

**PACIFIC BLACK DUCK** (*Anas superciliosa*) – Common and widespread.

**AUSTRALIAN SHOVELER** (*Anas rhynchos*) – Seen well at the Werribee Treatment Plant near Melbourne.

**GRAY TEAL** (*Anas gracilis*) – Also common and widespread.

**CHESTNUT TEAL** (*Anas castanea*) – Seen on a couple of occasions in the Melbourne area, perhaps best at Werribee, where we saw ducklings. Jan and Robert got good photos. [EN]

**PINK-EARED DUCK** (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) – Seen first at Hasties Swamp, then some 800+, a staggering number, at Werribee. What a superb duck! Photos by Jan and Robert merely suggest the numbers we had at Werribee. [E]

**WHITE-EYED DUCK** (*Aythya australis*) – Also known as Hardhead, this diving duck was seen on several occasions from the northern part of the country through to the south.

**BLUE-BILLED DUCK** (*Oxyura australis*) – This Ruddy relative was seen at Werribee, if somewhat distantly. [E]

**MUSK DUCK** (*Biziura lobata*) – What an oddity! Four of these were seen at the Werribee Treatment Plant; interesting how they ride low in the water. Jan and Robert got photos. [E]

### *Megapodiidae (Megapodes)*

**AUSTRALIAN BRUSH-TURKEY** (*Alectura lathami*) – This common fowl with the fan-shaped tail that it held sidewise as if about to fan itself from the rear couldn't be missed, as it scratched in the leaf litter of the rainforests often distracting us from a rarer target like the Red-necked Crane! For most of us, it was our first megapode! [E]

**ORANGE-FOOTED SCRUBFOWL** (*Megapodius reinwardt*) – To be followed by this, our second megapode, which also was confined to the rainforests of the north.

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

**BROWN QUAIL** (*Coturnix ypsilophora*) – We had two quail erupt out of the grass well below O'Reilly's in the Kerry Valley near the spot where we



had all the Channel-billed Cuckoos, but we didn't get adequate looks to identify them. They may have been this species. We entered them on our list as "quail species."

#### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**AUSTRALASIAN GREBE** (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – Seen on several occasions; closely related to the Little Grebe.

**HOARY-HEADED GREBE** (*Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*) – Nice studies of this endemic grebe at Werribee Western Treatment Plant. [E]

**GREAT CRESTED GREBE** (*Podiceps cristatus*) – Seen in some numbers at Lake Barrine and at Werribee.

#### Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – Fairly common along our route.

**GREAT CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Seen well on several occasions.

**PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax varius*) – Seen at Werribee Western Treatment Plant.

**LITTLE PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) – The more common of the two pied cormorants.

#### Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

**AUSTRALIAN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) – This is the world's largest pelican; as a breeder it is endemic to Australia.

#### Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**PACIFIC HERON** (*Ardea pacifica*) – Seen on a number of occasions; also known as White-necked Heron, it is endemic to Australia as a breeder.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – Scattered throughout. The Australasian taxon is modesta.

**INTERMEDIATE EGRET** (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – Several seen.

**WHITE-FACED HERON** (*Egretta novaehollandiae*) – Fairly common along our route.

**LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*) – Seen several times in the northern part of our route.

**PACIFIC REEF-HERON** (*Egretta sacra*) – Seen at Etty Bay.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Common enough. This widespread egret looks a little different in its breeding finery from "our" birds.

**STRIATED HERON** (*Butorides striata*) – Seen on a couple of occasions.

**RUFIOUS NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – A nice colony of nesting night-herons along the Esplanade in Cairns.

#### Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Another cosmopolitan species.

**AUSTRALIAN IBIS** (*Threskiornis moluccus*) – Widespread along our route.

**STRAW-NECKED IBIS** (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Another widespread Australian endemic which we saw many times. [E]

**ROYAL SPOONBILL** (*Platalea regia*) – Seen nicely several times.

**YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL** (*Platalea flavipes*) – Our best views came in the Melbourne area, where we had several sightings of small groups.

Jan got a shot of a foraging group with a Royal hiding behind one of the Yellow-billeds. [E]

#### Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One of these cosmopolitan birds at Etty Bay. [N]

#### Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**AUSTRALIAN KITE** (*Elanus axillaris*) – Closely related to Black-shouldered Kite. [E]

**PACIFIC BAZA** (*Aviceda subcristata*) – One seen a couple of times on the 13th along Sandy Camp Road on the outskirts of Brisbane where he had our first Baillon's Crake and our Tawny Grassbirds.

**WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE** (*Aquila audax*) – Seen quite a few times, both perched and in flight.

**SWAMP HARRIER** (*Circus approximans*) – Seen at Werribee Western Treatment Plant.

**SPOTTED HARRIER** (*Circus assimilis*) – Seen near Deniliquin and at Werribee, a little further off than we would have liked.

**GRAY GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) – We had a bird on the nest at O'Reilly's that our local guide Duncan had staked out. [N]

**BROWN GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter fasciatus*) – One seen near Deniliquin.

**COLLARED SPARROWHAWK** (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) – Our first sighting was of a tail protruding from the nest of a bird well below O'Reilly's; we then had two additional sightings of the entire bird! [N]

**BLACK KITE** (*Milvus migrans*) – Common and widespread.

**WHISTLING KITE** (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Fairly common with singletons seen on a number of days.

**BRAHMINY KITE** (*Haliastur indus*) – One seen nicely, thanks to Jan's good eye.

**WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – One seen by some as it flew over Etty Bay on our Cassowary watch.

#### Otididae (Bustards)

**AUSTRALIAN BUSTARD** (*Ardeotis australis*) – Our first was seen near Mount Carbine, with a good spot by Ruth; we later saw as many as 7 or 8 more.

#### Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**RED-NECKED CRAKE** (*Rallina tricolor*) – One seen briefly by part of the group, appearing and disappearing several times—the crake, that is—as we watched from the deck at Cassowary House.

**BAILLON'S CRAKE** (*Porzana pusilla*) – One seen nicely on the 13th on the outskirts of Brisbane; then another seen near Deniliquin with Phil.

**AUSTRALIAN CRAKE** (*Porzana fluminea*) – Largest of the Australian Porzanas, and known as Australian Spotted Crake to distinguish it from the following species; we had our first views near Deniliquin, followed by good looks at Werribee Western Treatment Plant. [E]

**SPOTLESS CRAKE** (*Porzana tabuensis*) – Heard where we saw our first Baillon's, and seen well at Wilson Reserve in downtown Melbourne at a site where Phil had seen it the week before.

**PURPLE SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – Fairly common and seen on a number of days.

**DUSKY MOORHEN** (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – First seen at Hasties Swamp, thanks to Jan; we had several others on succeeding days.

**BLACK-TAILED NATIVE-HEN** (*Tribonyx ventralis*) – Two seen with Phil near Deniliquin; at least 8 seen at Werribee. [E]

**EURASIAN COOT** (*Fulica atra*) – Here and there.

#### *Gruidae (Cranes)*

**SARUS CRANE** (*Grus antigone*) – Seen on several days in northern Queensland. The taxon found in Australia is *gilliae*.

**BROLGA** (*Grus rubicunda*) – Three seen en route to Chambers Wildlife Lodge. This crane, larger than Sarus, has less red on the head and black rather than pink legs. [E]

#### *Burhinidae (Thick-knees)*

**BUSH THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus grallarius*) – Seen on numerous occasions, our first ones at Centenary Lakes, Cairns. [N]

#### *Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)*

**BANDED LAPWING** (*Vanellus tricolor*) – Nice views of a bird on a dike along the highway to Deniliquin; then fabulous views of adults and young on our wild wanderer night! Robert and Jan got memorable photos of one of Caryn's trip favorites. [EN]

**MASKED LAPWING** (*Vanellus miles*) – Common and seen almost daily; for some, the first bird seen on Australian soil!

**RED-KNEED DOTTEREL** (*Erythrogonys cinctus*) – What a pretty little plover! First seen at Hasties Swamp, where we had one immediately below the hide, one further out; then a sprinkling of other sightings throughout the route.

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – One on the beach at Cairns. [b]

**PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER** (*Pluvialis fulva*) – Several of these beauties seen over the tour's length, two on the first day along the Esplanade in Cairns. Documented by Jan. [b]

**LESSER SAND-PLOVER** (*Charadrius mongolus*) – Sorting out the two sand-plovers on the beach at Cairns was a challenge we accepted. [b]

**GREATER SAND-PLOVER** (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) – Enjoyed at Cairns. [b]

**RED-CAPPED PLOVER** (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – This pretty little endemic hugged the scattered grassy areas along the sandy beach at Cairns. It breeds in sandy areas along the coast and inland. [E]

**BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL** (*Elsyornis melanops*) – Another really pretty little plover; this dotterel is in a monotypic genus. We had our first below us at Hasties, and it was our most frequently seen small plover through the tour.

**INLAND DOTTEREL** (*Peltohyas australis*) – One of the prettiest of the family and one of our tour favorites! These beauties along with the Plains-wanderer were the primary targets on our wild, wondrous, moonlit night on a 30,000 acre private ranch near Deniliquin. Beautiful studies! This is an inland dotterel of short grassland. [E]

#### *Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)*

**PIED STILT** (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) – What long legs!

**RED-NECKED AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) – Some 100+ at Werribee! Elegant birds. Vagrant to New Zealand. [E]

#### *Jacanidae (Jacanas)*

**COMB-CRESTED JACANA** (*Irediparra gallinacea*) – What a nice variation on the Jacana theme; yet note that this species is not placed in Jacana, but in a monotypic genus. The taxon we saw is called *novaehollandiae* and it is predominantly an Australian bird.

#### *Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)*

**TEREK SANDPIPER** (*Xenus cinereus*) – One of the coolest sandpipers! We saw the greatest number on the beach at Cairns. Its elongated body and short legs, along with its peculiar locomotion and upturned bill, causes it to stand out immediately among its mixed fellow Scolopacids. *Xenus* refers to "stranger" because it breeds in northern Siberia and winters among foreigners. Jan got a nice portrait of one of her trip favorites. [b]

**GRAY-TAILED TATTLER** (*Tringa brevipes*) – A fine *Tringa* with a fluty, two-note whistle. Well seen on the beach at Cairns. Photographed by Robert and Jan. [b]

**COMMON GREENSHANK** (*Tringa nebularia*) – Several of these boreal migrants seen. [b]

**MARSH SANDPIPER** (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – Eight or so seen at Werribee. [b]

**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Several migrants. [b]

**FAR EASTERN CURLEW** (*Numenius madagascariensis*) – Breeds in northeastern Asia. [b]

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** (*Limosa limosa*) – Our best looks came at two along the Esplanade at Cairns. [b]

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT** (*Limosa lapponica*) – The commoner of the two godwits on our route. [b]

**GREAT KNOT** (*Calidris tenuirostris*) – Seen best by the group on the beach at Cairns; much commoner than Red Knot here. [b]

**RED KNOT** (*Calidris canutus*) – A couple on the beach at Cairns. [b]

**RED-NECKED STINT** (*Calidris ruficollis*) – Good numbers scattered along our route; the commonest "peep" with countless numbers at Werribee. [b]

**SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris acuminata*) – Common, with greatest numbers at Werribee. [b]

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Common on the beach at Cairns and at Werribee. [b]

**BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER** (*Limicola falcinellus*) – One seen on the beach at Cairns—unfortunately in the morning, so before Robert and Caryn had arrived. That will be among the targets in 2015, McNabs! [b]

**LATHAM'S SNIPE** (*Gallinago hardwickii*) – Two birds seen nicely at Hasties Swamp. This is the commonest snipe in Australia. [b]

#### *Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)*

**AUSTRALIAN PRATINCOLE** (*Stiltia isabella*) – Six of these graceful beauties on the plains with the wanderer; this taxon, placed in a monotypic genus, breeds exclusively in Australia, wintering north to southern New Guinea and the Greater Sundas. [N]

#### *Pedionomidae (Plains-wanderer)*

**PLAINS-WANDERER** (*Pedionomus torquatus*) – For many of us, the highlight of the trip! This legendary species has not been seen by many birders

—and, as John quipped, 95% of those who have saw it with Phil! Larger than the male, and more ornate, the female even performed for us and uttered some soft mooring. The night we went for that bird, enhanced by the dotterels, the Banded Lapwings, the pratincoles, the Emus, the kangaroos and Fat-tailed Dunnart—the entire experience, was simply unforgettable. As I wrote in response to Paul, the memory of certain experiences—like the moon on that night of wandererlust—will never set. [E]

#### Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**SILVER GULL** (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) – The common Larid on our trip, both inland and along the coast.

**LITTLE TERN** (*Sterna albifrons*) – The endemic taxon, placens, is endangered; we were lucky to see a few along the Esplanade in Cairns.

**GULL-BILLED TERN** (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – Fairly common. The taxon we saw, macrotarsa, is endemic to Australia.

**CASPIAN TERN** (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – This cosmopolitan bird, the largest tern, was seen offshore in Cairns.

**WHISKERED TERN** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – This taxon, fluvialis, breeds opportunistically and locally in Australia and disperses to New Guinea and the Moluccas. We had nice looks at hundreds of this lovely tern at Werribee, where many took to perching on the dykes around the ponds.

#### Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Widespread. [I]

**WHITE-HEADED PIGEON** (*Columba leucomela*) – We saw several of this big pigeon, an endemic to eastern Australia; seen best, I think, at O'Reilly's. [E]

**SPOTTED DOVE** (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – The common *Streptopelia* in Australia.

**BROWN CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Macropygia phasianella*) – Fairly common in eastern Australia, where we saw them on multiple occasions.

**EMERALD DOVE** (*Chalcophaps indica*) – A few singletons, our best looks coming at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. Robert got a nice photo of a preening bird.

**COMMON BRONZEWING** (*Phaps chalcoptera*) – Rob and Rita had our first one; then we caught up at Wilson Reserve in Melbourne; seen daily thereafter. Jan and Robert got good photos. [E]

**CRESTED PIGEON** (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) – This endemic was seen many times; we noted it raising its tail on alighting. Our birds were the nominate lophotes. [E]

**SQUATTER PIGEON** (*Geophaps scripta*) – Very exciting to see these pigeons, especially as we almost stepped on them at Granite Gorge! A bird that looks like a granite rock! An Australian pigeon almost endemic to Queensland, the nominate taxon gets into extreme northern New South Wales. Jan and Robert got good photos. [E]

**WONGA PIGEON** (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*) – What a fascinating pigeon with its monotonous woop woop call and its puzzling name: "wonga-wonga" is the name of a native woody vine, and the pigeon is locally known as "Wonga-Wonga." Wonga is also British slang for money. This bird, like Neotropical quail-doves, feeds terrestrially but vocalizes from tall trees; we saw them in both stations at O'Reilly's. [E]

**DIAMOND DOVE** (*Geopelia cuneata*) – A nice surprise in the Deniliquin area with Phil; we had at least 5 birds along the roadside that we saw well. Robert got a great photo. [E]

**PEACEFUL DOVE** (*Geopelia placida*) – The common *Geopelia* on our route; frequently seen.

**BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE** (*Geopelia humeralis*) – Seen on the 10th and the 13th, our first on the Atherton Tableland, Queensland.

**WOMPPOO FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – Seen and heard well on the Atherton Tableland, our first at Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodge; our birds belong to the taxon kerri. Photographed by Jan.

**SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus superbus*) – Heard along Black Mountain Road, but we were unable to see it. [\*]

**ROSE-CROWNED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus regina*) – Mostly heard, but we saw one bird fly toward us in response to playback at Chambers Lodge; the nominate taxon.

**TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (*Ducula spilorrhoa*) – An abundant and showy pigeon seen many times in and around Cairns; these birds were breeding during our stay, and we noted many nests on the Esplanade and at the Flying-Fox roost.

**TOPKNOT PIGEON** (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) – Several of these fancy pigeons seen, mostly in flight; however, we had great perched views at O'Reilly's (see Jan's and Robert's photos!). [E]

#### Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**PALLID CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis pallidus*) – Endemic as a breeder; winters north to Wallacea. Part of the group had a bird along the Esplanade.

**BRUSH CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – Fairly common in the Cairns area where we had several.

**FAN-TAILED CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) – Several seen over our route; seen best, perhaps, at You Yangs Regional Park near Melbourne.

**HORSFIELD'S BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx basalis*) – Seen twice by some, our best at You Yangs on our last birding day. Endemic as a breeder, but winters north to Java; hosts are mainly thornbills, fairy-wrens, robins, and chats.

**SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – Heard on several days; seen at O'Reilly's. These small cuckoos make up a delightful group.

**LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – Seen twice, though our best look came the first afternoon in the mangroves along the Esplanade in response to John's playback. Robert got a fine photo!

**AUSTRALIAN KOEL** (*Eudynamis cyanocephalus*) – A male seen on the 10th along the road where we had parked to bird. Another migrant cuckoo, this one is endemic as a breeder, wintering north to the Moluccas.

**CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – Heard a couple of times before we nailed them in the Kerry Valley well below O'Reilly's where we saw at least half a dozen birds flying in and out of one big tree. What an extraordinary cuckoo! Principal hosts for this brood parasite are the butcherbirds and currawongs.

**PHEASANT COUCAL** (*Centropus phasianinus*) – Several seen on the Atherton Tableland over four days.

#### Strigidae (Owls)

**POWERFUL OWL** (*Ninox strenua*) – Surprisingly, we enjoyed a family of these huge owls—an adult and two juves—hiding on their day roost in Wilson Reserve en route to Beechworth. This endemic is restricted to southeastern Australia. Prior to our tour, Marsha and Allison had good luck with this owl in the Royal Botanical Gardens, Sydney. Robert's photo of the adult is especially gripping. [E]

**SOUTHERN BOOBOOK** (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) – Great views for most—finally, in response to John's playback—at Chambers Wildlife Lodge not

far from where we saw the Striped Possum and Sugar Gliders. Four taxa are widespread over Australia.

Aegothelidae (Owlet-Nightjars)

**AUSTRALIAN OWLET-NIGHTJAR** (*Aegotheles cristatus*) – Almost endemic, but this owlet-nightjar gets to southeastern New Guinea. We had an exciting chase with this bird's shadow as it moved from cavity to cavity at Susan's (Phil's sister) home and as we tried unsuccessfully to outfox it. We did get brief views as it stuck its head out from the preferred cavity it was currently using, and Robert managed to obtain a good digipix as it appeared in the opening.

Podargidae (Frogmouths)

**TAWNY FROGMOUTH** (*Podargus strigoides*) – Fabulous studies of nesting birds at Granite Gorge and Gulpa Reserve; the gape on this bird is jaw-dropping. [E]

**MARbled FROGMOUTH (PLUMED)** (*Podargus ocellatus plumiferus*) – Plumiferus is endemic, occurring only in southeast Queensland and northeast New South Wales, where we had a nocturnal sighting right where John expected it at O'Reilly's. This taxon may be elevated to a distinct species.

Apodidae (Swifts)

**WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL** (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) – Seen at various sites on our route.

**AUSTRALIAN SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus terraereginae*) – This small swift was seen on most days while we were in the Cairns-Atherton Tablelands area.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**AZURE KINGFISHER** (*Ceyx azureus*) – Seen along the Barron River where we had the Platypus.

**LAUGHING KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) – What a great bird! We had many excellent views of this honking big kingfisher, a true Australian! Nice photo, Robert! The specific name suggests that the bird occurs in New Guinea, and, indeed, the bird's first description from there "seems to have been a deliberate falsification" (fide HBW). This is perhaps the best known kingfisher in the world (except for our own from Flagstaff). [E]

**BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo leachii*) – Two seen on the 10th sitting on the wire as our bus sped past, unable to stop along the highway.

**FOREST KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus macleayii*) – This blue-and-white kingfisher was seen on four days, for some of us especially well at Etty Bay.

**COLLARED KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus chloris*) – Also known as Mangrove Kingfisher, this green-and-white bird was seen in the mangroves on our first afternoon in Cairns, where we had Mangrove Robin.

**SACRED KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Seen nicely on several days.

**BUFF-BREASTED PARADISE-KINGFISHER** (*Tanysiptera sylvia*) – A devilish one was seen by part of the group at Stoney Creek Park. Pepper had seen a brief fly-by at Kingfisher Park where playback is not permitted.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**RAINBOW BEE-EATER** (*Merops ornatus*) – Widespread throughout our route; seen nicely on many occasions.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

**DOLLARBIRD** (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – Numerous sightings of this stocky migrant which breeds in Australia.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**AUSTRALIAN KESTREL** (*Falco cenchroides*) – Seen throughout and on most days.

**AUSTRALIAN HOBBY** (*Falco longipennis*) – Our lengthy and most relaxed views came of a bird outside the headquarters at Werribee, yet we saw others at Werribee and a couple in the Melbourne-Deniliquin area. See the note under Pied Butcherbird.

**BROWN FALCON** (*Falco berigora*) – Seen well each day in New South Wales.

**BLACK FALCON** (*Falco subniger*) – One seen in flight in the Deniliquin area; we noted its characteristic gliding on drooped wings; we were lucky to spot this endemic from the bus. [E]

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

**RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*) – Two sightings of these huge, striking cockatoos on the Atherton Tableland; a highlight for many. [E]

**GLOSSY BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*) – Even better—seeing these guys, smallest of the black-cockatoos, feeding in the casuarinas right next to the road en route to the Kerry Valley out from O'Reilly's. When we returned from the valley in the late afternoon, we had another 20 or so in the same area, as they were gathering to roost. Terrific! [E]

**YELLOW-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) – Two very distant birds seen flying across the valley from the lookout on Duck Creek Road, O'Reilly's. We will do better on this cockatoo in 2015!

**GANG-GANG COCKATOO** (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*) – Another fabulous dry-country parrot! We had a quick look outside our rooms in Beechwood, then good looks at a pair in Beechwood Cemetery, right where Phil thought they would be. One of the highlights of the trip. Good documentation by Jan and Robert! [E]

**GALAH** (*Eolophus roseicapilla*) – Ah, the Galah! Another great endemic seen well many times, especially in New South Wales and Victoria. [E]

**LONG-BILLED CORELLA** (*Cacatua tenuirostris*) – Seen well in New South Wales; what a big mess of white birds feeding on the ground! [E]

**SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO** (*Cacatua galerita*) – The commonest and most frequently seen cockatoo, by far. We had great looks at these huge parrots repeatedly, almost daily.

**COCKATIEL** (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) – Nice looks at four birds in windy conditions south of Deniliquin; some had poor looks the previous day. These Psittacids have now been shown to be small cockatoos. [E]

Psittacidae (Parrots)

**RAINBOW LORIKEET** (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – Abundant and beautiful, these birds were seen daily, first along the Cairns Esplanade, last in Melbourne.



- SCALY-BREASTED LORIKEET** (*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*) – Seen first at Centenary Lakes, Cairns, although perhaps best at Daisy Hill Koala Reserve. [E]
- MUSK LORIKEET** (*Glossopsitta concinna*) – Our best looks were at about 15 birds feeding alongside the highway near Heathcote en route to Melbourne on the 20th. [E]
- LITTLE LORIKEET** (*Glossopsitta pusilla*) – The small, red-faced Psittacids were seen well on the 18th in New South Wales. [E]
- DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT** (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – The taxon we saw, *macleyana*, is endemic to a very small range in the Cairns-Mareeba-Atherton area; we saw a pair very nicely on the Esplanade, then had fabulous photo opportunities of a pair feeding outside Sue's office at Cassowary House (great photos, guys!).
- CRIMSON ROSELLA** (*Platycercus elegans*) – Outlandish encounters with these endemics at the incomparable O'Reilly's where they landed all over us. Everyone got photos who wanted them—and a few selfies with the birds! [E]
- CRIMSON ROSELLA (YELLOW)** (*Platycercus elegans flaveolus*) – Seen in the Beechworth and Deniliquin areas; our first was right outside our rooms in Beechworth. [E]
- EASTERN ROSELLA** (*Platycercus eximius*) – Also seen well in the Beechworth-Deniliquin area. A really beautiful rosella! [E]
- PALE-HEADED ROSELLA** (*Platycercus adscitus*) – Another beautiful rosella, this one seen first at Granite Gorge, then later on three occasions, the last near O'Reilly's. [E]
- RED-RUMPED PARROT** (*Psephotus haematonotus*) – Seen several times, but really well on the 18th in the Gulpa flood plain. Jan got a handsome photo (which shows a speck of red on the rump). [E]
- BLUEBONNET** (*Northiella haematogaster*) – One seen reasonably well on the 19th by some; let's do better on this one in 2015! [E]
- TURQUOISE PARROT** (*Neophema pulchella*) – Another endemic seen (four only) after we left Beechworth en route to Deniliquin on the 18th. [E]
- AUSTRALIAN KING-PARROT** (*Alisterus scapularis*) – Seen first (a pair) on the Atherton Tableland and but plenty vying with Rosellas and Regent Bowerbirds to become our best friends at O'Reilly's. Also seen well into the Melbourne area. [E]
- RED-WINGED PARROT** (*Aprosmictus erythropterus*) – Seen on two days on the Atherton Tableland, the best probably at Granite Gorge, where Jan got a photo.
- SUPERB PARROT** (*Polytelis swainsonii*) – Wow! This bird was a knockout. We had fabulous views of adults and juveniles near Gulpa Forest, New South Wales; good on Phil. Memorable photos by Robert and Jan. [EN]

#### Pittidae (Pittas)

- NOISY PITTA** (*Pitta versicolor*) – Marsha had one on the road outside Cassowary House that we all heard but couldn't really see. But the rest of us struck gold at O'Reilly's where we had great looks on two occasions, the latter scoped by Robert for all to see!

#### Menuridae (Lyrebirds)

- ALBERT'S LYREBIRD** (*Menura alberti*) – A terrific bird, which we saw properly only after Allison spotted the feet of an adult female with a young bird in tow! Shortly thereafter both birds walked out nonchalantly and fed right in front of us! We later had a male walking around showing off its long lyre-shaped tail. Just another treat in the rainforest at O'Reilly's. [E]

#### Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

- SPOTTED CATBIRD** (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – Paul had a nice look at a bird we'd only been able to hear—until the next day, when we all saw it again at Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodge. A cool bird! [E]
- GREEN CATBIRD** (*Ailuroedus crassirostris*) – We had several of these at O'Reilly's and in the general vicinity. This is a bird of the rainforest along the Sunshine Coast. [E]
- TOOTH-BILLED CATBIRD** (*Scenopoeetes denti-rostris*) – One of my favorite birds of the trip; just a super artist whose simplicity of construction—a simple "stage" of freshly clipped green leaves inverted to their pale side so as to contrast with the dark forest floor—is complemented by a complexity of strong song phrases (mostly in imitation of various musical vocalizations from neighboring passerines) delivered from a perch above his court. We had wonderful studies of one bird (several were singing) at Lake Eacham. It uses its "tooth bill" to snip off fresh leaves. The fact that this bird constructs a display area—however inornate—which it tends and decorates suggests that it might be more apt to call it a bowerbird than a catbird. In light of its talents I prefer the old name of Stagemaker! [E]
- GOLDEN BOWERBIRD** (*Amblyornis newtoniana*) – Another highlight and a very restricted endemic! We had breathtaking views of a male at its bower not far off the entrance road at Mt. Hypipamee National Park (the Crater). Some beautiful photos resulted from this encounter. [E]
- REGENT BOWERBIRD** (*Sericulus chrysocephalus*) – Overwhelming! These birds show up in force at O'Reilly's and present themselves, males and females, for close inspection and great photos. This bird is the totem icon for O'Reilly's, yet no bower had been found in the vicinity this year! Like the Golden Bowerbird, requires rainforest. [E]
- SATIN BOWERBIRD** (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) – Another great-looking bowerbird easy to see at O'Reilly's, though we actually saw our first at Mt. Hypipamee, a new spot for John. Like the Regal, this species is strongly sexually dimorphic. For a bower of blue objects, check out Robert's photo from O'Reilly's. [E]
- GREAT BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera nuchalis*) – Fine encounters on the Tableland, our first at its nicely decorated bower at Granite Gorge. [E]

#### Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

- WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER** (*Cormobates leucophaea*) – We saw this treecreeper at O'Reilly's and again at Wilson Reserve. Several remarked on how nuthatch-like they appear. [E]
- WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER (LITTLE)** (*Cormobates leucophaea minor*) – This taxon may eventually be split; we failed to see it but heard it our second day, was it at Chambers Wildlife Lodge? [E\*]
- RED-BROWED TREECREEPER** (*Climacteris erythroptus*) – Nice looks at this treecreeper along Duck Creek Road, O'Reilly's. Robert managed to get a nice photo of this on-the-move treecreeper. [E]
- BROWN TREECREEPER** (*Climacteris picumnus*) – Seen well along the Gulpa Flood Plain (with Phil) near Deniliquin; Robert managed to get a photo. [E]

#### Maluridae (Fairywrens)



- VARIEGATED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus lamberti*) – The fairywrens are some of the most captivating passerines in Australia, and we saw five species of them! The Variegated is the most widespread and long-tailed of the red-shouldered group, and we first marveled at these creatures at O'Reilly's where they are common on the grounds. [E]
- LOVELY FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus amabilis*) – Seen at Centenary Lakes Park, Cairns; they were a little tricky, but we all managed to see them. We had another along Black Mountain Road after breakfast at Cassowary House. This was formerly treated as a subspecies of Variegated and has a very limited range. [E]
- SUPERB FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus cyaneus*) – We had these superb fairywrens at O'Reilly's on a number of occasions. Wintering groups can be more than a hundred! [E]
- WHITE-WINGED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus leucopterus*) – These guys were a surprise alongside the road after we left Susan's home en route to Robert's property and the Plains-wanderer. The group we saw numbered about 8, and all were in female, eclipse, or immature male plumage, which is not unusual for malurids; often the males are shy and stay back. [E]
- RED-BACKED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus melanocephalus*) – The males are striking! We had nice views on a number of occasions, the first on the day we birded Mt. Hypipamee, or The Crater. [E]
- Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)*
- EASTERN SPINEBILL** (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) – What a beauty! We had our first at Lake Barrine, but many more on the grounds at O'Reilly's. We had 38 species of this large, fascinating family, many of which are endemic to Australia. [E]
- GRACEFUL HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga gracilis*) – Like a more delicate Yellow-spotted. We had this species on the Kingfisher Park day and near Cassowary House.
- YELLOW-SPOTTED HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga notata*) – We had several of these at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. [E]
- LEWIN'S HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga lewinii*) – The common honeyeater in wet forest from Cairns through the Brisbane area. Robert and Jan got vivid photos. [E]
- BRIDLED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus frenatus*) – This endemic was seen at Lakes Eacham-Barrine and The Crater. [E]
- YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus chrysops*) – A very pretty honeyeater; a seen throughout in forested areas, if in small numbers. [E]
- VARIED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus versicolor*) – The common honeyeater along the Esplanade in Cairns.
- MANGROVE HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus fasciularis*) – Kingfisher took us to a mangrove area in Lota where we had excellent views of this endemic, along with Mangrove Gerygone. [E]
- SINGING HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus virescens*) – This widespread endemic was absent in coastal rainforest, but we had it on a couple of days in the Gulpa forest and near Deniliquin, New South Wales. Nice shot, Robert! [E]
- YELLOW HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus flavus*) – Seen first along the Esplanade, then at Centenary Lake Park and Chambers Wildlife Lodge. [E]
- WHITE-GAPED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus unicolor*) – Seen nicely on our Big Mitchell Creek day where we had the Fairy Gerygones. [E]
- YELLOW-TUFTED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus melanops*) – These beauties were seen at Beechworth and Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP. Robert managed to get a photo. [E]
- FUSCOUS HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus fuscus*) – Seen at our Beechworth cottages and also at Susan's home. [E]
- WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus penicillatus*) – This beautiful endemic was seen daily from the 18th through the 21st at different locations in New South Wales and Victoria; it appeared quite common. [E]
- BELL MINER** (*Manorina melanophrys*) – A large group was heard and several seen out the Duck Creek Road, O'Reilly's, and we also had a big, loud lek at Wilson Reserve. Jan got some great video. [E]
- NOISY MINER** (*Manorina melanocephala*) – Our first encounter with this colonial endemic was in Canungra where we had an ill-fated lunch at Cafe Metz; thence in most areas in Victoria and New South Wales. [E]
- YELLOW-THROATED MINER** (*Manorina flavigula*) – Seen very well along the side road we took after leaving Susan's home en route to Robert's ranch. [E]
- SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER** (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*) – What a fabulous bird! We first saw it working in a low shrub at Susan's home; we also had about six the following day. This was one of Allison's favorites. Robert got a great photo! [E]
- RED WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera carunculata*) – Seen nicely on several days in New South Wales and Victoria; we were cohabiting at Beechworth. Jan got a photo of one in a state of repose. [E]
- BROWN-BACKED HONEYEATER** (*Ramsayornis modestus*) – Seen at Centenary Lakes (our first, where we had a nesting pair) and at Big Mitchell Creek, as well as later that day (with another nest). [N]
- WHITE-FRONTED CHAT** (*Epthianura albifrons*) – A nice surprise at Werribee Western Treatment Plant along the grassy edge. This species flocks up in winter. [E]
- BLACK HONEYEATER** (*Sugomel niger*) – Males seen nicely near Deniliquin the day we left for Melbourne. [E]
- DUSKY MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela obscura*) – Quite a few seen in the Cairns-Atherton area, our first at Lake Meacham; Jan got a photo.
- SCARLET MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) – We saw numerous examples of this beautiful honeyeater, the first at Lakes Eacham and Barrine. This species has a tinkling and very musical song.
- BROWN HONEYEATER** (*Lichmera indistincta*) – Almost daily while in the Cairns-Atherton area; our first was in the mangroves along the Cairns Esplanade where we saw the Mangrove Robin.
- NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) – We were lucky to see two of these honeyeaters at the Werribee Treatment Plant Center as we waited for our Werribee Birder trainee. [E]
- WHITE-CHEEKED HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris niger*) – This endemic was seen only on our third, Mt. Hypipamee day; ours was the nominate taxon, which is geographically disjunct from western gouldii. [E]
- WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus lunatus*) – First seen on the Duck Creek Road, O'Reilly's; we saw this endemic well on three successive days. This short-billed genus feeds mostly on insects, and this species searches mostly on the foliage, whereas the Brown-headed and the larger Black-chinned mostly glean branches. [E]

- WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus albogularis*) – Our first *Melithreptus*, seen well on days two and four on the Atherton Tablelands; sole member of the genus which is not endemic to Australia, as it gets north into southernmost New Guinea. In most genera of Meliphagidae females perform the incubation duties, but in *Melithreptus* males of several species, including the White-throated, also incubate. [E]
- BLACK-CHINNED HONEYEATER (GOLDEN-BACKED)** (*Melithreptus gularis laetior*) – Seen nicely outside the town of Chiltern en route to Deniliquin; Robert got a couple of fine photos. [E]
- BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus brevirostris*) – This *Melithreptus*, which we also saw outside of Chiltern, is called Brown-headed, but darned if it isn't gray-headed, or brownish-gray at best; so the taxon we saw was likely *pallidiceps*. [E]
- BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Entomyzon cyanotis*) – This monotypic genus is evidently closely allied to *Melithreptus*. We had quite a few good looks at this bird (which ranges just into Papua New Guinea) throughout the length of our route.
- LITTLE FRIARBIRD** (*Philemon citreogularis*) – Another bird seen from the Atherton Tablelands south to the Deniliquin area. This odd-looking, small-headed, long-billed, multiple-taxa genus is found through Australasia. This species is found over most of eastern and northern Australia; it ranges into southern New Guinea.
- HELMETED FRIARBIRD (HORNBILL)** (*Philemon buceroides yorki*) – Seen in the Cairns and Lakes Eacham and Barrine areas where we had nice looks; eight of its close relatives (each now treated as distinct species), it's been argued, may belong to a single species. Widespread in New Guinea just reaching into the northernmost parts of Australia.
- NOISY FRIARBIRD** (*Philemon corniculatus*) – Seen off and on throughout; these birds were nesting at the Caravan Park where we stayed in Deniliquin; nice photos—Jan's of an adult with nestlings, Robert's enveloped in blossoms. [N]
- MACLEAY'S HONEYEATER** (*Xanthotis macleayanus*) – Nice looks at this bird of a monotypic genus and restricted range (northeastern Queensland) from the deck at Cassowary House! [E]
- STRIPED HONEYEATER** (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*) – Great looks at this endemic, a real surprise find en route to Deniliquin; Robert got some photos in the late afternoon light that reveal the oddly shaped base of the bill. [E]
- PAINTED HONEYEATER** (*Grantiella picta*) – A striking honeyeater, with a pink bill and bright yellow in the wings; we had several flying about the highway at the most unlikely spot outside of Chiltern on a warm afternoon. This honeyeater is especially wedded to mistletoe. [E]
- Pardalotidae (Pardalotes)*
- SPOTTED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus punctatus*) – Seen the first day we did the Duck Creek Road; then in Wilson Reserve and near Deniliquin. The *Pardalotidae* is another (tiny) family endemic to Australia (1 genus; 4 species). Spotted nests almost exclusively in tunnels in the ground! [E]
- STRIATED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus striatus*) – Seen nicely in Deniliquin at our Caravan Park and at the headquarters of the Werribee Treatment facility. Striated will often nest in tree hollows as well as in ground tunnels. [E]
- Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)*
- FERNWREN** (*Oreoscopus gutturalis*) – One bird seen singing alongside the road near the Golden Bowerbird spot at Mt. Hypipamee until a passing vehicle flushed it, preventing a view for all. Another monotypic genus endemic to Australia. [E]
- YELLOW-THROATED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis citreogularis*) – Repeated encounters with this pretty and quite confiding scrubwren at O'Reilly's. This bird is an exceptional mimic and may approach or exceed the number of songs imitated by the lyrebird! It often feeds opportunistically in the "slipstream" of logrunners and scrubfowl, awaiting prey that is scratched out by the larger terrestrial species. [E]
- WHITE-BROWED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis frontalis*) – Seen well and daily from O'Reilly's to Melbourne. This highly variable *Sericornis* has 10 accepted subspecies! Like all the members of its genus, it is widely parasitized by various small cuckoos. Robert got a photo of one on a rock. [E]
- ATHERTON SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis keri*) – We saw this rather featureless scrubwren at Mt. Hypipamee National Park. As its name suggests, its range is limited to the Atherton Tablelands. [E]
- LARGE-BILLED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis magnirostra*) – Although this scrubwren is capable of building a nest, it often takes over the nest of its smaller congener, the Yellow-throated; we witnessed this nest predation behavior at O'Reilly's where we got photos of a Large-billed looking out from a nest built by Yellow-throated. The Large-billed often feeds hanging upside-down in trees, yet it more often spirals up trunks in the manner of a tree creeper! [E]
- STRIATED FIELDWREN** (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*) – This was a nice surprise at the Werribee ponds, Melbourne. This fieldwren is partial to low, dense vegetation near wetlands and coastal lagoons. It is heavily parasitized by cuckoos. [E]
- BUFF-RUMPED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza reguloides*) – Seen well on our Duck Creek Road-Kerry Valley day out of O'Reilly's; also seen in New South Wales. According to HBW, this species forages as clans of up to 20 individuals in tight groups; as the breeding season approaches they break up into smaller groups—usually 1 female and 3 males—within the clan, which they defend against other groups and against other clans. The female usually breeds with only one male in her group, and the other males help feed the female and the young. [E]
- MOUNTAIN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza katherina*) – Our first representative of the genus—which we saw at Mt. Hypipamee NP; from this introduction on, I was a fan of *Acanthiza*! The range of this species is limited to the Tablelands of northeast Queensland. [E]
- BROWN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza pusilla*) – The commonest thornbill at and near O'Reilly's; also seen in New South Wales. A frequent member of mixed-species flocks. [E]
- YELLOW-RUMPED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) – This *Acanthiza* exhibits the unusual habit (for a thornbill) of placing its shabby-looking nest well out on the branches of a tree and building four or five dummy nests in the same messy clump; this may serve to throw off the Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, which heavily parasitizes this species. Our best views of Yellow-rumped came with Phil in New South Wales in the Gulpa flood plain, but we also saw it on two other occasions. [E]
- CHESTNUT-RUMPED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza uropygialis*) – We had nice looks at this thornbill in the Gulpa Forest. This species sometimes places its nest in a tree cavity to avoid predation and parasitism. I might mention, several *Acanthiza* have chestnut rumps! [E]
- YELLOW THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza nana*) – Initially seen out of O'Reilly's near where we had the Bell Miners; then in New South Wales (in the Gulpa flood plain) and Victoria. These thornbills have been seen in monospecific flocks of up to 35, and are often seen in mixed thornbill flocks. They forage high in the canopy, often in casuarinas, as we noted. [E]
- STRIATED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza lineata*) – We saw several of these well out Duck Creek Road; they are canopy and subcanopy feeders (often on lerp), enabling them to occur sympatrically with Buff-rumped and Brown thornbills. [E]
- WEBBILL** (*Smicromis brevirostris*) – The smallest Australian bird, this tiny acanthizid-like passerine was seen nicely on the Gulpa flood plain and

later at the Caravan Park. [E]

**FAIRY GERYGONE** (*Gerygone palpebrosa*) – One of six species of Gerygone we had on the tour. Jun took us to a new place for Kingfisher between Mt. Carbine and Kingfisher Park where we had a nesting pair of this Gerygone, the only ones we saw on the tour. [N]

**WHITE-THROATED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone olivacea*) – One of the most striking of the genus; we saw several, both in southeastern Queensland and in New South Wales. "Gerygone" is said by A. R. McGill to mean "born of sound" or "born of song"; the word itself derived from an idyll by Theocritus. These "fairy warblers" are aptly said by G. Pizzey to sing "sweet plaintive 'falling-leaf' melodies in the minor key." Nice.

**LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – Seen nesting over the creek at Centenary Lakes. That nest was so messy only a cagey, Gerygone-smart predator would find it. [N]

**BROWN GERYGONE** (*Gerygone mouki*) – The smallest Australian Gerygone and the one most frequently encountered on the tour—daily, from Cairns to Brisbane; Glen trained us to hear its distinctive vocalization as "which-is-it, which-is-it." [E]

**WESTERN GERYGONE** (*Gerygone fusca*) – A nice surprise in the Gulpa flood plain with Phil; great looks permitted us to see the bold black-and-white tail of this otherwise gray bird; even the red iris was apparent. When visiting English ornithologist Alan Bell first heard this species in Perth, he rhapsodized thus: "I have never heard sounds so plaintively microscopic, so clear and yet scarcely perceptible. The ghost of a kitten's mew—the echo of dwarf violins played in the moon—these were the bird's notes." I recall our hearing the Westerns we saw, but now I'll want to check my impression against those we'll hear when we visit Perth ourselves! [E]

**MANGROVE GERYGONE** (*Gerygone levigaster*) – Several seen well in the mangroves at Lota on the 13th. Often forages in mixed-species flocks, although ours were feeding as singletons. All the Gerygones are heavily parasitized by cuckoos.

#### Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

**GRAY-CROWNED BABBLER** (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) – These gregarious birds were seen several times along the Hume Highway en route to Deniliquin. Australian babblers, of which there are but five species, appear not to be closely related to the so-called "true" babblers.

**WHITE-BROWED BABBLER** (*Pomatostomus superciliosus*) – We had a small group of this endemic babbler in the Gulpa-Edwards River flood plain. Australian babblers are largely terrestrial. [E]

#### Orthonychidae (Logrunners)

**AUSTRALIAN LOGRUNNER** (*Orthonyx temminckii*) – What a great bird! We never tired of watching, photographing, and videoing pairs of this cool endemic to subtropical rainforests as they scratched vigorously in the leaf litter, often throwing debris off to the side with right angle motions of each leg before searching the litter below. A tour highlight at O'Reilly's where they are quite common and where Jan and Robert got great videos. These passerines are exceptional in that they breed in the austral winter. [E]

**CHOWCHILLA** (*Orthonyx spaldingii*) – Some folks managed to get on this endemic at Chambers Wildlife Lodge as it alternately sang and scratched in the leaf litter. Then we got to see a pair at Cassowary House! They usually lay but a single egg, accounting for the frequent presence of three birds in a family group. The vocalization, for which it is named, is frequent enough to reveal its otherwise inconspicuous presence. [E]

#### Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)

**EASTERN WHIPBIRD** (*Psophodes olivaceus*) – Another great endemic which we saw amazingly well—Mr. Whippy being the best performer, if we discount Glen himself—at O'Reilly's. Named for its ringing whipsong, the species duets, with the male initiating the song with one or two quiet notes, followed by a swishing sound and a loud WHIP that the females then follows with a sharp chew chew. Our first encounter was at Chambers Wildlife Lodge where it was foraging and singing near two Chowchillas. Later, we all got photos at O'Reilly's of Mr. Whippy. [E]

#### Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)

**SPOTTED QUAIL-THRUSH** (*Cinclosoma punctatum*) – We heard a bird near Beechworth where Phil had seen one recently, but we couldn't turn it up in spite of considerable searching. [\*]

#### Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)

**YELLOW-BREASTED BOATBILL** (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) – A brightly colored bit of a bird with a flattened, boat-shaped bill. Affinities are unclear, though it's been placed in the subfamily of monarch flycatchers; many think the genus will prove to constitute a family of its own. Highly vocal and traveling in mixed-species flocks, it was easy to detect but difficult to see well—until we finally nailed it at Chambers Wildlife Lodge!

#### Artamidae (Woodswallows)

**WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – The most frequently seen woodswallow on our tour, this clean-cut aerial carnivore was first encountered along the Esplanade at Cairns. Their bifurcated tongues permit them to take nectar and pollen, as well. They often sit shoulder-to-shoulder along a limb or wire, as Jan's photo captures.

**WHITE-BROWED WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus superciliosus*) – We had this one, an endemic, in New South Wales, first outside of Chiltern, then in the Gulpa flood plain. Oddly, woodswallows are thought to be most closely related to butcherbirds and are placed in the same (extended) family Coidae by Sibley & Ahlquist! However, many Australian taxonomists treat the woodswallows as a family, Artamidae, the butcherbirds as constituting one of their own, Cracticidae. [E]

**BLACK-FACED WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus cinereus*) – Seen in the Deniliquin area before we headed off to Melbourne.

**DUSKY WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus cyanopterus*) – Seen outside of Chiltern where we stopped for Painted Honeyeater, et al. [EN]

#### Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

**GRAY BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus torquatus*) – A handsome bird which Jan got us on outside of Deniliquin where we stopped in a wet area to see an Australian Crake. A beautiful songster, this is one of the cracticids whose vocalizations have been carefully studied. We heard some lovely whispy songs of the bird we saw. [E]

**PIED BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus nigrogularis*) – The butcherbird which has been most studied, in part owing to the beauty of its flute-like song and widespread occurrence in Australia. We saw these endemics only occasionally but throughout our route. Jan surprised one ground-feeding bird. A memorable event that took place along the highway in the Deniliquin region showcased an intriguing behavior of butcherbirds: that of "hunting in unison with" Australian Hobbys "in what seems deliberate intent to secure prey driven under cover by the presence and/or tactics of the raptor" (fide Pizzey). So THAT'S WHAT WAS GOING ON! [E]

**BLACK BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus quoyi*) – Seen only on the Atherton Tablelands. They are, like other members of the family, extremely aggressive



in defending their nest and young. As might be expected, cracticids are the primary brood parasite of the Channel-billed Cuckoo.

**AUSTRALASIAN MAGPIE** (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) – Seen most days of the tour, and daily from the Brisbane area, south. Another cracticid which has been carefully studied, in part due to its fine, flute-like, caroling song and widespread range in Australia. This species is extremely variable in plumage, with at least seven taxa in Australia alone. Groups hold territories, and five types of groups have been recognized. It is said that everybody has a magpie story, and indeed the magpies themselves are frequent participants of play.

**PIED CURRAWONG** (*Strepera graculina*) – Pat had a good look at one while at Hypipamee; a few of us had glimpsed one the preceding day. We then had many encounters (almost daily) for the remainder of our route. These large black corvid-like birds with yellow eyes, robust bills, and white rumps, vents, and tail-tips have bold white crescents in the wings. The specific name "graculina" means gracula-like, or Jackdaw-like. Jan got a nice photo of an adult on the ground. [E]

#### Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

**BARRED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina lineata*) – Cuckooshrikes are neither cuckoos nor shrikes (hence the one-word, rather than hyphenated, spelling), but the upright, slender profile, plain gray coloration, and barred pattern of some suggest a cuckoo, their hooked bill a shrike. We had several nice looks at Barred on the Atherton Tablelands.

**BLACK-FACED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – The most frequently encountered cuckooshrike, seen almost daily in all areas. Partly migratory.

**WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina papuensis*) – Seen in the Tablelands and New South Wales; we had good looks at these birds, named for their having been described from Papua New Guinea; also known as Little, or Papuan, Cuckooshrike.

**WHITE-WINGED TRILLER** (*Lalage tricolor*) – This small cuckooshrike is named for its trilling vocalization. We saw it first in the Tablelands at Big Mitchell Creek, then later in dry New South Wales.

**VARIED TRILLER** (*Lalage leucomela*) – Seen first in Cairns and on the Tablelands. We also had one on Black Mountain Road. Jan got good photos of male and female.

**COMMON CICADABIRD** (*Edolisoma tenuirostre*) – Another small cuckooshrike whose vocalization is a cicada-like trill. We saw one at Big Mitchell Creek but only heard others elsewhere.

#### Neosittidae (Sittellas)

**VARIED SITTELLA** (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) – Widespread over Australia, with five subspecies, which were originally treated as five species; so quite varied. Nuthatch-like in appearance and locomotory behavior—indeed the family name, Neosittidae, marks this apparent relationship and history of taxonomic treatment (until 1967)—the Sittellas are actually more closely related to whistlers and monarch-flycatchers, so indicative of convergent evolution. Yet their "true" affinity remains unclear. Cooperative breeders, they live in groups and place their nests in vertical forks of trees, very un-nuthatch-like. We saw them well in the Gulpa flood plain.

#### Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

**CRESTED SHRIKE-TIT** (*Falcunculus frontatus*) – What an interesting bird! Brightly colored with a large head, strong, somewhat hooked bill, and a prominent crest, it is a relative of the whistlers. We had our first along Duck Creek Road where we enjoyed the lek of Bell Miners; later, we had a pair in the tall eucalypt forest near Beechworth. Jan got a nice photo. [E]

**RUFIOUS SHRIKE-THRUSH** (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) – Shrike-thrushes are closely related to whistlers and have richly complex, melodic songs, but are plain and rather drab by comparison. And they show little of the sexual dimorphism shown in the whistlers. We had our first Rufous, or Little, at the Chambers Wildlife Lodge, where we also enjoyed hearing it for the first time.

**GRAY SHRIKE-THRUSH** (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – A large shrike-thrush and one of the very finest songsters of the group. We had looks at this species out of O'Reilly's and almost daily in New South Wales. Robert's photo shows one of the five endemic taxa, nominate harmonica.

**BOWER'S SHRIKE-THRUSH** (*Colluricincla boweri*) – This endemic, quite similar to Rufous, we had in the Tablelands on the 9th and the 11th. We noted its streaking below and its gray lores. [E]

**GILBERT'S WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala inornata*) – A notable coup, seeing this elusive whistler which we could hear tantalizing us in the Gulpa flood plain! Finally, we saw a female, then a male after much pursuit outside the area Phil and his sister had replanted years before. [E]

**GOLDEN WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) – Highly dimorphic, this whistler was first seen at Chambers Wildlife Lodge, where we saw beautiful males and modest females. We had them almost daily from here on until New South Wales. This whistler is a fine songster with a rich whistle.

**GRAY WHISTLER (GRAY-HEADED)** (*Pachycephala simplex peninsulae*) – Peninsulae, the taxon we saw in the Tablelands, is called Gray-headed, a much better name than Gray since it is washed yellow below.

**RUFIOUS WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) – Almost endemic (it occurs in New Caledonia), this good-looking whistler engages in musical song bouts that can last for 15 minutes and can be heard a great distance away. Sometimes they engage in "conversational song," with songsters vocalizing in tandem (fide HBW). We saw males and/or females on most days.

#### Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

**OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus sagittatus*) – We had one on the 10th and on the Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP day, late in the afternoon en route to Deniliquin. This oriole is endemic as a breeder, but many move north after nesting.

**GREEN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus flavocinctus*) – Heard only—on the Atherton Tablelands. One of our few "heard onlys." [\*]

**AUSTRALASIAN FIGBIRD** (*Sphecotheres vieilloti*) – A member of the Oriolidae, the figbird was one of the first Australian birds we enjoyed along the Esplanade in Cairns, where brightly colored taxon flaviventris occurs; duller and grayer vieilloti we had in the Brisbane area. "Green Figbird" which occurs on our checklist has been split, resulting in our bird's new English and scientific epithet. [N]

#### Dicruridae (Drongos)

**SPANGLED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) – Drongos made appearances daily in the Atherton Tablelands through the Brisbane-O'Reilly's area; we noted their conspicuous red eyes and their singleton habits when compared with the rather similar, gregarious Metallic Starlings.

#### Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

**WILLIE-WAGTAIL** (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – Willie gets around! We had this confiding fantail daily through our entire route. One of the few birds

that occurs throughout Australia, it's found in every habitat but for very wet forest. Fantails have no close affinity to the Old World flycatchers (as previously assumed) but are closely related to the Drongos and Monarchs! [N]

**GRAY FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) – Seen almost daily throughout our route. Its high-pitched, squeaky song, which ascends in seesaw-like cadence, we learned quickly and enjoyed from Chambers Wildlife Lodge on. This *Rhipidura* (a sizable genus of at least 44 species) actively feeds in the middle story and subcanopy.

**RUFIOUS FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) – Most frequently seen in the O'Reilly's area, this *Rhipidura* prefers wet forest, feeding mostly in the understory. It's very high-pitched, squeaky song see-saws in a descending cadence. A less active feeder than Gray.

#### Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

**WHITE-EARED MONARCH** (*Carterornis leucotis*) – Nice looks at a bird in the subcanopy along Black Mountain Road near Cassowary House.

Recently, Christidis and Boles, in their \*Systematics and Taxonomy of Australian Birds\* (2008) erected the genus to regroup four species—three very similar black-and-white monarchs and, rather surprisingly, the Golden Monarch of New Guinea and nearby islands. Thomas Carter (1863-1931) was an ornithologist, naturalist, and pastoralist, and a founding member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union. He has four species named for him (along with 14 subspecies) and now he's awarded a genus! *Carterornis leucotis*, the sole representative of the new genus in Australia, is endemic to the rainforest and mangroves of the northeast, whereas Carter collected primarily in Western Australia. [E]

**BLACK-FACED MONARCH** (*Monarcha melanopsis*) – We repeatedly saw this pretty, rather large, big-eyed monarch on the Atherton Tablelands and in Brisbane rainforests of O'Reilly's. This monarch and the following belong to the chestnut-bellied group. Jan got a good photo which reveals the large eye.

**SPECTACLED MONARCH** (*Symposiachrus trivirgatus*) – Seen well on a couple of days, perhaps our best on Black Mountain Road. This fancy monarch also belongs to the chestnut-bellied group.

**PIED MONARCH** (*Arses kaupi*) – This boldly patterned monarch is endemic to a small area of northeastern Queensland; we saw one especially well at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. [E]

**MAGPIE-LARK** (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) – The strikingly patterned "Mudlark" has been one of the most taxonomically controversial birds in Australasia, its affinities having been discovered all over the "greater Corvidae" map. DNA studies suggest that it now belongs with the monarch-flycatchers, though some authors treat it in its own duotypic family—the mudlarks. Pairs deliver antiphonal duets accompanied by a variety of wing-lifting displays. We had the pleasure of encountering Mudlarks almost daily, occasionally a high-stepper like the one Jan photographed. [N]

**LEADEN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra rubecula*) – The most common *Myiagra* on our tour, most of the sightings coming on the Atherton Tablelands with some out of O'Reilly's. Jan got a photo of a male and of a dimorphic female.

**RESTLESS FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra inquieta*) – We had one, the largest *Myiagra*, out of Chiltern with Phil at our post-lunch stop where we saw the Diamond Firetails and Painted Honeyeaters.

#### Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

**TORRESIAN CROW** (*Corvus orru*) – Seen on the Tablelands and out of O'Reilly's. We noted this corvid frequently lifting its wings on alighting.

**AUSTRALIAN RAVEN** (*Corvus coronoides*) – All our sighting of this raven—not noticeably larger than the other corvids we saw—came north of Melbourne and in New South Wales. This corvid has prominent throat hackles lacking in the Little Raven. [E]

**LITTLE RAVEN** (*Corvus mellori*) – All of the "ravens" which occur in Australia are endemic. This one, slightly smaller than its more widespread cousin—sympatric in the area we birded, seemed a bit more common along the roadside of our route. [E]

#### Corcoracidae (White-winged Chough and Apostlebird)

**WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH** (*Corcorax melanorhamphos*) – Seen nicely in the south, especially well in New South Wales. This social species is gregarious at all times but flocks of up to 100 in winter are not uncommon. The chough—merely suggestive of the choughs found in Europe—belong to the Corcoracidae, or "mud-nesters," a family which is endemic to Australia. [E]

**APOSTLEBIRD** (*Struthidea cinerea*) – The Apostlebird, like its relative the chough, is the only other corcoracid and is also placed in a monotypic genus. Closely related to the chough, their complex sociality is similar in that a male, several females, and immatures from previous broods all assist in the mud-nest construction. Groups in the breeding season usually number around a dozen, resulting in the common name. They, too, congregate in massive flocks in the winter. We had some fine looks in the Deniliquin area, where Robert and Jan got photos. [E]

#### Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-paradise)

**PARADISE RIFLEBIRD** (*Ptiloris paradiseus*) – What an exciting performance, that male display on his song perch high above the forest floor out Duck Creek Road! This riflebird's song-display is delivered from a heavy horizontal limb rather than a vertical tree stump as Robert's excellent video shows. That superb yellow mouth-lining is revealed as the bird explodes into its raspy yell. Riflebirds are unique among the Paradisaeidae in probing dead wood and bark for food with their long bills, the dimorphic females' of which are longer than the males'. [E]

**VICTORIA'S RIFLEBIRD** (*Ptiloris victoriae*) – Some wonderful studies of a displaying male at Chambers Wildlife Lodge (of which Jan got a nice memento). Riflebirds belong to the Paradisaeidae of which there are only four species in Australia, the two riflebirds the only ones endemic (though the bowerbirds were once considered to belong to this family; the Birds-of-Paradise are actually more closely related to the true corvids than to the bowerbirds). Victoria's displays from the top of a vertical tree trunk or pole, as shown in Jan's photo. [E]

#### Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

**JACKY-WINTER** (*Microeca fascians*) – Any bird with a name like Jacky-winter is a must-see! We had this "flycatcher" (a member of the family Petroicidae, or Australasian Robins) at Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP (while looking for the Quail-thrush), where we had one on its tiny nest. [N]

**LEMON-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Microeca flavigaster*) – Good study of a bird at Big Mitchell Creek, where we watched one singing; Robert got a photo of our singing bird. No flycatcher, this species has been called a Flyrobin by some authors—which seems apt.

**SCARLET ROBIN** (*Petroica boodang*) – We had a pair of these pretty robins in the You Yangs on our last birding day out of Melbourne; thanks to Marsha for getting us on the male! I noted how the female (which only I saw) has a pale scarlet wash on the breast, distinguishing her from the females of Red-capped and Flame. Formerly considered a subspecies of *Petroica multicolor* (now Pacific Robin) but split in 1999, making its three taxa endemic. Boodang is an Aboriginal word meaning "rock-dweller" that natives around Sydney used for this robin, fide Lesson (1837). Jan and Robert got nice photos of the male as this understory feeder sat high above us. [E]

**RED-CAPPED ROBIN** (*Petroica goodenovii*) – This exquisite robin feeds mostly on the ground. We had nice looks at five or more in the Gulpa flood

plain outside Deniliquin. This species will raise four broods in a season (and will make up to 10 attempts!), behavior no doubt related to the fact that it is heavily predated by cuckoos; additional avian predators include Gray Shrike-Thrush, Gray Butcherbird, and Australian Raven. Robert got a good photo of a male. [E]

**ROSE ROBIN** (*Petroica rosea*) – This lovely Petroica was seen on the O'Reilly's property not far down the road from the lodge. We noted its tail-cocking and wing-drooping as it actively moved quite high above us. Rosea is said to be the most acrobatic of the genus. Jan got a photo of this bird above us. [E]

**HOODED ROBIN** (*Melanodryas cucullata*) – We had three of these robins in the Gulpa flood plain; formerly placed in Petroica, but now put in a duotypic genus. [E]

**PALE-YELLOW ROBIN** (*Tregellasia capito*) – We saw this rather small robin every day in the Tablelands. Fledglings remain dependent for 10 weeks before becoming fully capable of feeding on their own. Jan got a nice shot that shows the pale rufous eye-ring and lores of the taxon nana, geographically disjunct from the nominate, with a range limited to a small part of the rainforests of northeastern Queensland. This robin has pink feet and legs. [E]

**EASTERN YELLOW ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria australis*) – This pretty, confiding robin we encountered each day during our stay at O'Reilly's, and most of us got photos of the bird on its nest situated along the boardwalk. This species sometimes follows foraging lyrebirds to partake of the insects that are stirred up. The generic name means "dawn singer," and indeed the Eopsaltria are among the first birds to sing (as well as the last), often well before dawn. [EN]

**MANGROVE ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria pulverulenta*) – Sweet looks at two birds in the mangroves just off the Esplanade in Cairns on our first birding afternoon. This robin has a complex taxonomic history, having been placed in various families (whistlers through shrikes) before being referred to the petroicids where it now resides; and even here it has occupied three genera, including its own (*Peneoenanthe*), although Cornell Clements checklist now returns it to Eopsaltria (perhaps it is an exceptionally early riser!). Several features unique to the petroicids are responsible for this uncertainty, including habitat preference, its hooked beak, and its rounded tail.

**WHITE-BROWED ROBIN** (*Poecilodryas superciliosa*) – I'd say we were lucky to see this scarce endemic were it not for the fact that John took us right to it and pulled it into good view with some nice piping playback along Big Mitchell Creek! Recent studies show superciliosa and former conspecific, disjunct cerviniventris (Buff-sided Robin), to be separate species based on size, plumage, and habitat preference. Robert managed to get a photo! [E]

**GRAY-HEADED ROBIN** (*Heteromyias cinereifrons*) – A large, confiding robin of the rainforests of northeastern Queensland—and now split from albispecularis of New Guinea (Ashy Robin). We had numerous views on the Tablelands, the first at Chambers Rainforest Lodge. [E]

#### Alaudidae (Larks)

**SKY LARK** (*Alauda arvensis*) – We had quite a few Sky Larks flight-singing in the grasslands around the Werribee Western Treatment Plant. [I]

#### Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**WELCOME SWALLOW** (*Hirundo neoxena*) – These Barn Swallow look-alikes welcomed us daily throughout the tour.

**FAIRY MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon ariel*) – Seen on three days, but best studies were right outside Susan's home where we could observe these in direct comparison with the similar Tree Martins as they lined up on the wires above the road. Endemic as a breeder and almost so in occurrence, though some post-breeding birds turn up in New Guinea and New Zealand, as well as on some nearby islands.

**TREE MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) – First seen on our second day by Rita only; seen best perched alongside Fairy Martins at Susan's home, New South Wales.

**WHITE-BACKED SWALLOW** (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*) – One seen zipping around swiftly—along with other swallows—in very windy conditions in the Deniliquin area near where Phil had seen them previously. This representative of a monotypic genus is nomadic and roosts and nests in sandy banks and dunes. [E]

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

**AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus australis*) – Astonishingly, our first reed-warbler was in the trees along the Esplanade in Cairns, where there had been a few previous records! Jan secured documentary photos. Proper looks and proper habitat came in the Phragmites outside Brisbane on Sandy Camp Road (our first Pacific Baza) and later in the reeds at Werribee Treatment facility, where we heard them singing their clear, sweet rattles. Three taxa are endemic, but toxopei (if it belongs with these Australian taxa) is found in New Guinea, the Bismarcks, and the Solomons.

#### Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

**TAWNY GRASSBIRD** (*Megalurus timoriensis*) – Two pesky birds seen only occasionally emerging from the grass on the outskirts of Brisbane along Sandy Camp Road, where we saw Baillon's Crake, our first Baza, and a number of Australian Reed-Warblers.

**LITTLE GRASSBIRD** (*Megalurus gramineus*) – Seen best in the grasses along the dykes at the Werribee Western Treatment Plant on our last day of birding.

**BROWN SONGLARK** (*Megalurus cruralis*) – Seen on the Plains-wanderer prairie as they flushed before our vehicles. Cornell Clements puts both songlarks in the genus Megalurus, the same genus as the grassbirds, whereas they are often placed in Cincloramphus, and some think the two songlarks are sufficiently distinct to warrant monotypic genera! Males are much larger and darker than females and can appear black in the headlights. Whatever their position taxonomically—they forage on the ground, walking!—they are sufficiently divergent from the Sylviidae, or Old World Warblers, that a new family has been erected in which they are placed called Locustellidae, or Grassbirds and Allies. [E]

**RUFIOUS SONGLARK** (*Megalurus mathewsi*) – We had pretty good looks at these songlarks in the Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP and the following day in the Gulpa flood plain. Like the Brown Songlark, they are highly nomadic and disperse after the breeding season. The males are larger than the females, though not as markedly so as in Brown. [E]

#### Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

**GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola exilis*) – One of the fanciest Cisticolas! We had wonderful looks at a singing bird atop the grass stalks at Werribee. The cisticolas (and their allies) are now placed in their own family, Cisticolidae, by Cornell Clements. Jan got a windy shot of ours.

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

**SILVER-EYE** (*Zosterops lateralis*) – We had numerous looks at Silver-eyes in the Atherton Tablelands and in New South Wales. Our first



acquaintance came at Chambers Wildlife Lodge, where these omnivores were feeding on small fruits, for the most part. They also have a habit of assiduously "trap-lining" branches over their territory in order to prevent insects from escaping their repeated gleanings. Seven taxa occur in Australia and six are endemic.

#### Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

**RUSSET-TAILED THRUSH** (*Zoothera heinei*) – Most of us had nice looks at this thrush along the boardwalk at O'Reilly's as it gathered and carried food to a fledged young. Rather shy, it did not stay around long enough for everyone to see it well, even though we saw it on two days. This species exhibits "brood division," by which parents divide care for the young, of which they have two or three. This would seem to favor the successful raising of only two young per brood. Only the nominate taxon occurs in Australia and is endemic. [N]

**EURASIAN BLACKBIRD** (*Turdus merula*) – Seen daily in the Melbourne-Beechworth area. [I]

#### Sturnidae (Starlings)

**METALLIC STARLING** (*Aplonis metallica*) – Striking gregarious species that we saw nesting in the Cairns area on several days. The colonial tree we watched near the Cairns airport was alive with these birds, their red eyes gleaming. Jan and Robert got some vivid photos at the nest tree. [N]

**COMMON MYNA** (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Widespread along the roadsides and in towns. I like Simpson and Day's "'arrogant' walk on ground." Precisely. [I]

**EUROPEAN STARLING** (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Seen sporadically from Brisbane south. [I]

#### Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

**MISTLETOEBIRD** (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) – Perhaps our best sightings of this flowerpecker came at Chambers Wildlife Lodge where we had them feeding above the parking lot on gray mistletoe. Responsible for spreading the seeds of mistletoe, the Mistletoebird begins life eating insects, developing its frugivorous habits only in adulthood. Jan photographed a male overhead sitting among non-mistletoe fruit.

#### Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

**OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris jugularis*) – Seen on most days in northeastern Queensland. The taxon of this brightly colored nectivore we saw, *frenatus*, belongs to the Yellow-faced group of *jugularis*. Twenty-one taxa are recognized for *jugularis*!

#### Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

**AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN)** (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – A widespread pipit throughout Australia. We had this species on the plains of New South Wales.

#### Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

**EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH** (*Carduelis carduelis*) – A few of these introduced birds were seen at the Werribee Western Treatment Plant. [I]

#### Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Seen in all urban areas. [I]

#### Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

**DIAMOND FIRETAIL** (*Stagonopleura guttata*) – What a remarkable display this waxbill performs! We watched as it sat high on a dead branch and bounced vigorously, all the while triumphantly waving a long grass stem in its bill! This beauty is considered Near-threatened, a low population estimated at 200,000 and declining, due mostly to the loss of Eucalyptus woodland. Several individuals, along with our displaying male, were seen outside of Chiltern where we stopped at some roadside woodland for Painted Honeyeater and others. Jan and Robert got photos of the male with his grass stem to remind you how intriguing, if ridiculous, this appeared! [E]

**RED-BROWED FIRETAIL** (*Neochmia temporalis*) – Seen almost daily, this endemic with the flaming rump was always encountered in some numbers. Jan got a nice photo of a group. Ours was the nominate taxon. [E]

**DOUBLE-BARRED FINCH** (*Taeniopygia bichenovii*) – Seen on three days, with our best experience at Granite Gorge where these finches were flying in and out of the parrot cages to feed on seeds the inhabitants had overlooked. Ours was the nominate taxon. [E]

**NUTMEG MANNIKIN** (*Lonchura punctulata*) – Seen best our first day in Cairns. [I]

**CHESTNUT-BREASTED MUNIA** (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) – Seen on our second day of birding and en route to Mt. Carbine, where we had a group of 50+ birds feeding on grass seeds beside the road.

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## MAMMALS

**SHORT-BEAKED ECHIDNA** (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) – A small one DOR along the Hume Highway, then we all had great views of two large Echidnas, one on the 18th at Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP and one on the 21st in the You Yangs. The Echidna and the Platypus are the only egg-laying mammals. Jan and Robert got close up shots. [E]

**PLATYPUS** (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) – What a thrill to finally see this mammal! We saw at least three feeding in the clear Barron River below us, and some of us saw one of them pull itself over a low rocky dam, exposing its entire body. I think Rob got the best photo, one which really delineates all the beast. [E]

**FAT-TAILED DUNNART** (*Sminthopsis crassicaudata*) – Wow! A miniscule, mouse-like, marsupial which we saw running across the prairie the night of Plains-wanderer! Largely nocturnal, the Dunnart is called "fat-tailed" due to the wide base of its tail, which it uses to store fat. [E]

**LONG-NOSED BANDICOOT** (*Peramelas nasuta*) – We saw a couple of these carnivorous marsupials digging below the honey-smearing trunks at Chambers Rainforest Lodge. This bandicoot is nocturnal and has a reverse pouch. [E]

**KOALA** (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) – Great studies of a singleton high in a Eucalyptus between O'Reilly's and Daisy Hill Koala Centre. Keen-eyed Robert spotted it from the vehicle en route to our fallback position—Koalas provided for in an educational center. Way to go, Robert! (Of course, when we arrived at the Centre, he spotted another one!) Photos and videos were splendid. [E]

**SHORT-EARED POSSUM** (*Trichosurus caninus*) – One seen on the 15th. [E]

**SUGAR GLIDER** (*Petaurus breviceps*) – The precious little nocturnal marsupials were real performers at Chambers Rainforest Wildlife Lodge, where we saw several that permitted us to photograph them, from a very short distance away, as they fed on honey-smearings. Good photos. [E]

**STRIPED POSSUM** (*Dactylopsila trivirgata*) – One of the best marsupials we had in Australia, this fabulous, long-bodied, boldly patterned little

possum came in repeatedly for us to feed on the honey-smearing Eucalyptus. Arboreal and scarce in Australia, this possum is more common in New Guinea. Nice photos, all!

- MUSKY RAT-KANGAROO** (*Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*) – This diurnal marsupial we saw at Chambers Wildlife Lodge and at Cassowary House. At the level of Macropodiformes, the suborder, these little guys are "kangaroos." [E]
- RED-NECKED PADEMELON** (*Thylogale thetis*) – One of the eight species of kangaroos we saw in Australia! We had super looks at O'Reilly's where we got photos, a nice one by Robert. [E]
- RED-LEGGED PADEMELON** (*Thylogale stigmatica*) – The Roberts had one near their cabin at Chambers Rainforest Wildlife Lodge, and the rest of us caught up out of O'Reilly's. [E]
- MAREEBA ROCK-WALLABY** (*Petrogale mareeba*) – Wonderful encounter with these confiding wallabys at Granite Gorge! Just about everyone got in the picture with one. [E]
- AGILE WALLABY** (*Macropus agilis*) – The wallabys we saw in the Lake Eacham-Lake Barrine area. Robert got a photo. [E]
- RED-NECKED WALLABY** (*Macropus rufogriseus*) – Seen well at and around O'Reilly's. [E]
- WHIPTAIL WALLABY** (*Macropus parryi*) – Seen nicely near O'Reilly's, this wallaby is also known as "Pretty-faced Wallaby"; it posed nicely for photos. [E]
- EASTERN GRAY KANGAROO** (*Macropus giganteus*) – Glimpsed out of O'Reilly's but not seen really well until New South Wales, where we had good looks at this big kangaroo on the magical evening of our Plains-wanderer adventure. Robert got a photo of a curious bunch at Susan's home. [E]
- WESTERN GRAY KANGAROO** (*Macropus fuliginosus*) – Also seen the night of our Plains-wanderer saga. These big roos, which Robert and Jan captured in photos, have very sooty ears and face. They were coarsing across the plains in front of the fullish moon. [E]
- SPECTACLED FLYING-FOX** (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) – We had great studies of this megabat, endemic to northeastern Queensland. At this urban day roost we also had the opportunity to detect their presence with eyes closed! Jan got an intriguing upside-down portrait. [E]
- OLD WORLD RABBIT** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Seen in the Brisbane area, New South Wales, and Victoria. [I]
- EUROPEAN BROWN HARE** (*Lepus europaeus*) – Most common in the Deniliquin area. [I]
- RED FOX** (*Vulpes vulpes*) – One seen on the 19th. [I]
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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In addition to the fabulous birds and mammals, we noted some fascinating reptiles, amphibians, and spiders. I may not have the names just right for these creatures, but Robert and Jan got photos of most:

Stony Creek Frog--on the 8th

Ross's Tree Frog--on the 8th

Tree Goanna, or Lace Monitor--on the 8th and 20th; Jan and Robert got close-ups

Black-headed Monitor--on the 8th; photo by Robert

Boyd's Forest Dragon--on the 9th at Lake Barrine; Robert got a fine photo

Water Dragon (Lizard)—on the 9th on the Barron River where we had the Platypus; no photo

Frilled Lizard—on the 10th; no photo

Carpet Python—at O'Reilly's on the 16th; Jan and Paul got photos

Red-bellied Black Snake—in the Gulpa flood plain on the 19th

Gould's Goanna, or Sand Monitor—in the Deniliquin area on the 20th; Jan and Robert with photos

Gray Huntsman Spider—a huge thing over the door in the hide at Hasties on the 8th; Robert braved a photo

Australian Tunnel-web Spider—Glen showed us this deadly spider at O'Reilly's; Jan braved a photo

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**Totals for the tour: 341 bird taxa and 21 mammal taxa**