



Field Guides Tour Report

AUSTRALIA INVITATIONAL 2014

Nov 13, 2014 to Dec 1, 2014
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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).

What a wonderful trip! With an exceptional group, we toured some of the best of the Land Down Under--the land where song began. From eastern Queensland to Victoria and southern New South Wales, we enjoyed an incredible sampling of Australia's impressive diversity, from stately River Red Gums (one of its more than 800 species of Eucalyptus!) and blossoming Banksias to Platypus, Koala, echidna, and kangaroos; from Frilled Dragons and Carpet Pythons to lyrebirds and cassowaries and cockatoos and cranes. All told we saw more than 300 species of birds, many of them noisy and "argumentative" (as discussed), with a food source worth defending; but we also heard from some of the finest songsters in the world. Along the way we experienced some wonderful scenery, charming local humor, and quintessentially Australian flavors--from vegemite and burgers with beetroot to Pavlova and fine Australian wines. It was a tour to be remembered!



The monotypic Plains-wanderer is cryptically patterned amid its short-grass habitat and more easily spotted by night, when it often stands still and upright. This lovely male was one of nine (!) individuals we counted near Deniliquin on our fabulous night adventure with local guide Phil Maher. (photo by participant Don Taves)

Starting in Brisbane (during the G20 Summit!), we began with a visit to nearby Sandy Camp Reserve, which provided a great introduction to Australian birds, from Royal Spoonbills and Red-kneed Dotterels to Rainbow Bee-eaters, Superb Fairywrens, and Double-barred Finches. A stop at Fig Tree Point netted Blue-faced and Mangrove honeyeaters and a responsive Mangrove Gerygone. Then it was on to O'Reilly's, where we were left for three nights in Duncan's hands, well, and as perches for Crimson Rosellas and Australian King-Parrots. Highlights at O'Reilly's ranged from a singing Albert's Lyrebird at arm's length to stunning Regent Bowerbirds, foraging Australian Logrunners and Eastern Whipbirds, and Red-necked Pademelons just outside our rooms. A bit farther afield in Lamington National Park we saw a colony of Bell Miners cultivating lerp, which we collected and tasted, before seeing an Australian Owllet-Nightjar peeking out of its dayroost hole. A Wompoo Fruit-Dove, a White-eared Monarch, and families of Red-browed Trecreepers entertained us out the entrance road. As we left O'Reilly's, we had some impressive rain, the first in the area for weeks, that followed us right to the Brisbane airport...but didn't delay our flight.

But when we arrived in Cairns, it was warm and clear. We were met by Jun Matsui, our driver and local guide for the Cairns-Atherton Tableland area. After a night overlooking the Esplanade and a stop for a big roost of Spectacled Flying-Foxes, we headed for a mangrove back beach where Jun showed us a pair of bizarre Beach Thick-knees that had nested in the area. Next we saw their cousins, the Bush Thick-knees, at Centenary Park, where we rambled through Orange-footed Scrubfowl and Australian Brush-turkeys and called in a Brown-backed Honeyeater. Here too were our first Magpie Geese, now placed in a monotypic family sister to the Anatidae. From there we climbed onto the Atherton Tableland, where the increased elevation produced more pleasant temperatures. After a delicious lunch in Tolga, we enjoyed some great waterfowl viewing at Hastie's Swamp, seeing our first Freckled and Pink-eared ducks, both of ancient lineage with no close relatives.

We settled into Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodge, our home for three days (and nights!) of birding in the Wet Tropics. Charming Striped Possums,

Sugar Gliders, and even a Long-nosed Bandicoot came by night to trees smeared with honey, as Orange-thighed Treefrogs croaked and (introduced) Cane Toads jumped out from underfoot. Morning birding on the grounds disclosed Spotted Catbirds and Victoria's Riflebirds coming to bananas while the roof gutters were lined with thirsty White-headed Pigeons. We even saw one male Riflebird displaying on its perch, its fan fully flared.

Along forest trails at Lake Barrine (Mt. Hypipamee National Park) we watched Chowchillas tossing leaves, Tooth-billed Catbirds singing above their "stages," a lovely male Golden Bowerbird sitting above his bower, and a responsive Fernwren singing its piercing whistles from the understory. By afternoon we visited the amazing Curtain Fig Tree, where we called in a Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove for great scope views and had close looks at a Green Ringtail Possum with a baby. We spent a lovely late afternoon overlooking a clear section of the Barron River, seeing a vagrant Eastern Yellow Wagtail and our only Cotton Pygmy-Geese before a fabled Platypus swam up and then down the river.

Next morning we reveled at a field full of reveling Brolga and Sarus cranes mixed in with Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos. Another stop along the road to Granite Gorge netted us a fierce Frill-necked Lizard, its golden frill fully extended, and two big Channel-billed Cuckoos. At the Gorge we sidestepped Squatter Pigeons to watch a couple of embowered Great Bowerbirds, Pale-headed Rosellas, and a Tawny Frogmouth atop its flimsy nest. Atop the impressive granite domes we were met by engaging Mareeba Rock-Wallabies, including several with Joeys.

After viewing Little Red Flying-Foxes at a lakeside roost, we visited Kingfisher Park, where highlights included a colorful Boyd's Forest Dragon, a giant Papuan Frogmouth on a nest, and an elegant, long-tailed Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher that sat for scope views in its nesting area. We then drove north to near Mt. Carbine for several Australian Bustards strutting dramatically through the tall grass.

Back in Cairns we examined a nesting colony of Metallic Starlings and watched Terek Sandpipers, Great Knots, and a host of other shorebirds and waterbirds as the tide came in. We failed to locate a Broad-billed Sandpiper, but we ended the day on a high note after Jun located a Rufous Owl at an alternate roost location. We headed up to Phil & Sue Gregory's Cassowary House the next morning, where we had a lovely breakfast as Macleay's Honeyeaters, Spotted Catbirds, Victoria's Riflebirds, and Musky Rat-Kangaroos pilfered fruit and cheese from the feeders. With patience we all had great looks at a shy Red-necked Crane, and then suddenly, silently, a male Southern Cassowary appeared! It was so close we could fully appreciate--from the safety of the veranda above it--how huge are its legs, toes, and that spike-like inner claw that can be so deadly when it kicks. After it slipped away, we examined Papuan weapons that use Cassowary claws as their tips. After playing with some reticent Noisy Pittas and Superb Fruit-Doves, we focused on more cooperative new honeyeaters and Barred Cuckooshrikes until lunchtime. Sue had outdone herself, providing the tastiest meal of the entire tour! With a short stop at the Knob, which netted a nice Buff-banded Rail, we returned to Cairns early, in prep for our early flight to Melbourne the following morning.

At the Melbourne airport we were met by Trish Maher, who called Phil, foremost bird guide in these parts, to arrive with the bus, and we set out on the most anticipated portion of our trip--right through Ned Kelly country. Based for two nights at a delightful inn in Beechworth, we birded nearby Chiltern-Mt. Pilot National Park, racking up lots of new birds: a Little Eagle, a surprise Black-eared Cuckoo, Eastern and Yellow (Crimson) rosellas, the elegant Turquoise Parrot (investigating nest sites), Brown Treecreepers, Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters, Black-chinned & Brown-headed honeyeaters, Yellow-rumped & Yellow thornbills, White-throated & Western gerygones, a responsive pair of Spotted Quail-thrushes, nesting Dusky Woodswallows, White-winged Triller, intriguing Crested Shrike-tits, extended families of White-winged Choughs, a nesting Jacky-Winter, displaying Rufous Songlarks, and multiple Diamond Firetails. Among the foremost highlights at Chiltern were two much-wanted mammals: a fabulous Koala in the crotch of a tree, followed closely by a Short-beaked Echidna running across the road!

On our final morning at Beechworth we birded the edge of the nearby golf course, calling in a pair of spectacular Gang-gang Cockatoos that wheeled overhead and then landed in the sun. Almost as stunning on a small scale was the male Spotted Pardalote that sat for long scope views. Making our way north across the Murray River to Deniliquin, we made stops along the road for Cockatiels, Red-rumped Parrots, Gray-crowned Babblers, and Apostlebirds before settling into a quiet caravan park along the Edward River, where Colin the Cod greeted us.

After Trish's tasty breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage, yogurt, fruit, cereal, and toast, we headed for the Gulpa floodplain, where we had multiple views of striking Superb Parrots, along with Red-capped Robin, Weebill, Striated Pardalote, Hooded Robin, Varied Sitellas, and White-browed Woodswallows. After lunch and a siesta, we headed out for some afternoon birding and a big night. En route we stopped for some terrific Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Zebra Finches, and an electrifying male White-winged Fairywren. Birding some of Phil's regenerating habitat plots we lucked into Bluebonnets and a surprise Pink Cockatoo. Emus foraged in the grass-shrub zone, as did three species of kangaroos, en route to Robert's paddock. Here we met Trish, who had set up a scrumptious field dinner, complete with beer, wine, and juices, which we consumed during a waning sunset.

Then it was time for action. We loaded into three 4WD vehicles, driven by Phil, Robert, and Rick Webster, who did some early work on Plains-wanderers. It took about 30 minutes to find our first Plains-wanderer, a male that stood frozen in the spotlight while all three vehicles surrounded it, giving all of us great, long views. Continuing, in hopes of seeing a female, we spotlighted a young bird alone, another adult male, and then a male with five chicks--for an incredible tally of 9 Plains-wanderers! Continuing our drive in a more open habitat, we encountered first a family of Banded Lapwings and then, yes! an Inland Dotterel, one of the loveliest of shorebirds. Brown Songlarks showed well in the lights, as did the tiny Fat-tailed Dunnart, a miniscule, shrew-like marsupial. It was an unforgettable evening and the highlight of the trip.

The next morning we loaded up luggage (after another of Trish's delicious breakfasts) and headed to a marsh where we had great looks at three species of crakes: Australian, Baillon's, and Spotless! We watched a group of Black-tailed Native-hens running across the landscape with their distinctive tail action and picked up White-backed Swallow near a nesting bank. Very exciting was our visit to a rich patch of woodland where Striped Honeyeater had nested and the striking Painted Honeyeater was currently nesting; both showed wonderfully. After the scenic drive back to Melbourne, we said good-bye to Phil at the Holiday Inn near the airport.

Our final morning of birding was to the Western Treatment Plant at Werribee, where we were accompanied by the facility's naturalist, Chris, who knows every road within the 26,000-acre wastewater treatment facility. It was understandable that the site would be extremely popular among Aussie birders, what with its large concentrations of waterfowl and waders, from Black Swans and Australian Shelducks to iconic Musk Ducks and Cape Barren Geese, nesting Chestnut Teal, Blue-billed Ducks, and rafts of Pink-eared Ducks, as well as impressive numbers of striking Red-necked Avocets and Banded Stilts. In the process of birding the facility, we encountered a number of other new species, from Spotted and Swamp harriers to White-fronted Chat, Little Grassbird, and Striated Fieldwren.

After lunch down the road, we headed to You Yangs Provincial Park, which had greened up after the fire four years ago and had a number of blooming trees. It was a hot afternoon, but we managed to pull out a lovely Scarlet Robin at a vista point atop the weathered granite. Our final birding highlight

was comparing Little and Long-billed Corellas at close range near the base of the You Yangs before heading homeward.

"Kingfisher" and I had a blast guiding this tour together, and we especially loved sharing Australia with you guys--an intelligent, flexible, curious, humorous, sharing group of birders and friends. Thanks for making it possible!

--Grebe (& Kingfisher)

NOTE: Special thanks to Don, who shared his photos so generously and had the most to process under this Grebe's pressure! The photos, in conjunction with the annotations below, should help bring our memories to life. But please note that the photos (save for the first one), videos, and recordings included in the triplist are included only in the online version, at www.fieldguides.com/triplists/aus14p.html.

Many of the tidbits of info included in the annotations below come from either Tim Low's *Where Song Began* or from the *Handbook of Birds of the World* (HBW), some of them via John Rowlett's informative annotations on last year's triplist. Both are recommended reading!

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

BIRDS

Casuariidae (Cassowaries)

SOUTHERN CASSOWARY (*Casuarius casuarius*) – What an breathtaking presence! It was hard to believe how big the legs, feet, and toes were when seeing that male cassowary at such close range. We were glad to be safely above it on the veranda at Cassowary House. That long, sharp, sturdy inner claw is its prized weapon, and Jun showed us Papuan weapons that wear the claw at their tip. The last of the rainforest megafauna--and the biggest animal on the continent--cassowaries have probably persisted in Australia and New Guinea owing to the lack of large mammals. Without elephants, apes, bears or tapirs to move large seeds, Australia's rainforests depend on cassowaries to spread their largest seeds over long distances. And, bound as they are to rainforest, Australia's main vegetation in an earlier day when it was wetter, cassowaries have probably changed little over time. Sue has updated us that, sadly, the juvenile has never reappeared though the male continues to visit.

Dromaiidae (Emu)

EMU (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) – National bird of Australia, this ratite of the more open savannas relies on vigilance and speed (rather than kicking feet) for its protection. Recent molecular studies show that cassowaries and Emus are closer to tinamous than to ostriches, implying that ratites is an artificial assemblage and that flight was lost many times. We saw stately Emus en route to Robert's sheep paddock for our Plains-wanderer quest. [E]

Anseranatidae (Magpie Goose)

MAGPIE GOOSE (*Anseranas semipalmata*) – Having been placed in a monotypic family, the peculiar Magpie Goose, along with the screamers of S. America (an Eocene bone of which was found in southern Queensland!), are basal branches in the phylogeny of living Anseriformes. Magpie Geese certainly thrive in Australia now, but there are fossils from Europe and North America from long-extinct birds that seems closely related to the distinctive Magpie Goose, with its knobbed head, hooked bill, looped trachea, and half-webbed feet. The progressive molt of its flight feathers, insuring that it is never completely flightless, reflects longterm adaptation to Australia's seasonally drying coastal wetlands. We saw Magpie Geese first at Centenary Park in Cairns and then encountered them daily on the Atherton Tableland.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

PLUMED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna eytoni*) – Within the Anatidae, the deepest lineages comprise the whistling-ducks and an assemblage of oddities with no near relatives that includes several Australian representatives (Freckled Duck, Pink-eared Duck, & a complex of pygmy-geese and stiff-tails, including Blue-billed Duck and the strange Musk Duck. Our best views of the endemic Plumed Whistling-Ducks were at Hastie's Swamp, where we compared them with the following species. [E]

WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) – As the name implies, this species gets around; it occurs from the Philippines to Indonesia, Australia and New Guinea, and Cape Britain Island. We saw them first at Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane and then at Hastie's Swamp and elsewhere on the Atherton Tableland.

CAPE BARREN GOOSE (*Cereopsis novaehollandiae*) – Three birds at Werribee were our only sightings of this endemic that is the only Australian bird that forages on southern pastures free from grazing mammals. Of uncertain affinities, it is now thought to be closest to the Coscoroba Swan of southern S. America. [E]

FRECKLED DUCK (*Stictonetta naevosa*) – As mentioned under Magpie Goose, the odd Freckled Duck, with a dish-shaped, swan-like bill and lacking the strong plumage patterns of other dabbling ducks, is thought to be of an ancient lineage. Fossil birds from the beginning of the Tertiary (65 MYA) included long-legged presbyornithids (extinct "wading ducks") with skulls resembling that of Freckled Duck. Our first were at Hastie's Swamp, and then we saw one well near Deniliquin. [E]

BLACK SWAN (*Cygnus atratus*) – This lovely swan with white flight feathers was common at Werribee. [E]

AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadornoides*) – Though it was seen first at Deniliquin, this species appeared in vast (& colorful!) numbers at Werribee. The genus *Tadorna* probably originated in Australia since they existed there 10 million years before the oldest European records. [E]

GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus pulchellus*) – Jeff spotted a pair of these in the cabbage-choked lake where we stopped for the roost of Little Red Flying-Foxes, but they flew before the rest of us could get over.

COTTON PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus coromandelianus albipennis*) – Susie spotted these little beauties way upstream from our Platypus-viewing station on the bank of the Barron River. Formerly known as White-headed Pygmy-Goose.

MANED DUCK (*Chenonetta jubata*) – A.k.a. Australian Wood Duck, this species is a dabbling duck that has adapted to a goose-like grazing lifestyle, having developed a short bill with serrated, cutting edges as well as long legs and partly webbed feet. We enjoyed them first at Fred Bucholz Park en route to O'Reilly's and then saw them widely. [E]

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) – A typical dabbling duck, this one was common throughout and seen with ducklings a few times. [N]

AUSTRALIAN SHOVELER (*Anas rhynchotis*) – Seen only at Werribee on this trip.

GRAY TEAL (*Anas gracilis*) – Another typical dabbler, it was common and widespread.

- CHESTNUT TEAL** (*Anas castanea*) – This colorful teal was the only duck we saw using the nest boxes at Werribee, where there were a number. [EN]
- PINK-EARED DUCK** (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) – This oddity is another considered of ancient lineage. Occurring mostly inland in Australia, it is highly nomadic and dispersive, dependent on rainfall-produced wetlands. We saw it first at Hastie's Swamp, but there were hundreds of them at Werribee, perhaps reflecting longterm drought conditions in the interior. [E]
- WHITE-EYED DUCK** (*Aythya australis*) – A.k.a. Hardhead, this diving duck was seen first at Deniliquin and then at Werribee.
- BLUE-BILLED DUCK** (*Oxyura australis*) – This stiff-tail, of ancient lineage, was scoped nicely at Werribee. [E]
- MUSK DUCK** (*Biziura lobata*) – We scoped this oddity at Werribee, where it rode low in the water, its large leathery lobe seeming to drag in the water. Another stiff-tail of ancient lineage. [E]

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

- AUSTRALIAN BRUSH-TURKEY** (*Alectura lathami*) – A sister group to all the other Galliformes, the Megapodes or Mound Builders are another group of ancient lineage and amazing behavior. Having laid a clutch in a mound of decaying vegetation, they actively maintain the temperature and humidity of the mound to incubate the eggs. Our first of many was scratching/tossing leaves up onto a large mound right outside our lodging at O'Reilly's. Common throughout the rainforest, they become a bit of a nuisance where food is placed out to attract birds. [EN]
- ORANGE-FOOTED SCRUBFOWL** (*Megapodius reinwardt*) – Our second Megapode was half as common as the first in the Queensland rainforest. Our first ones were in Centenary Park in Cairns, where one pair had a mound that must have been more than 2 meters high! They also occur in New Guinea and on a number of Indonesian islands. [N]

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

- BROWN QUAIL** (*Coturnix ypsilophora*) – What a nice surprise to have seen a pair of these tough-to-see-well little quail! Nancy spotted them on the trail at Sandy Camp Reserve our second day of birding.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

- AUSTRALASIAN GREBE** (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – First seen at Hastie's Swamp and then seen well at a nest (with young) in Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP. Recent evidence from molecular genetics has shown that grebes are most closely related to, of all things, flamingoes, not loons. Supporting evidence includes that both groups have 11 primaries, whereas all other groups (except storks) has 10 or fewer; and both groups have a chalky layer of calcium phosphate on their eggshells, whereas all other birds (except megapodes) use calcium carbonate. Interestingly, one of the great surprises from fossil beds in Australia is all the flamingo bones! Some inland lakes in Australia supported three species of flamingoes (more than in Africa today), which lived for some 20 million years before disappearing around a million years ago. [N]
- HOARY-HEADED GREBE** (*Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*) – First near Deniliquin (at a distance) and then at the Werribee ponds. [E]
- GREAT CRESTED GREBE** (*Podiceps cristatus*) – A raft of 86 birds swam in the distance on Lake Barrine.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

- LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – Fairly common along our route. [N]
- GREAT CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Best seen at Deniliquin.
- PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax varius*) – Seen at Werribee Western Treatment Plant, where they were nesting. [N]
- LITTLE PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) – The more common of the two pied cormorants; nesting at Sandy Camp Reserve. [N]

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

- AUSTRALASIAN DARTER** (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – Widespread in small numbers and nesting in the south. [N]

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

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

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

- PACIFIC HERON** (*Ardea pacifica*) – A.k.a. White-necked Heron, it is endemic to Australia as a breeder. Seen on multiple occasions, mostly in the south.
- GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN)** (*Ardea alba modesta*) – Scattered throughout. The Australasian taxon is modesta.
- WHITE-FACED HERON** (*Egretta novaehollandiae*) – Fairly common along our route.
- LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*) – Seen several times in the north and at Werribee in the south.
- PACIFIC REEF-HERON** (*Egretta sacra*) – A.k.a. Reef Egret; a blue-gray morph was seen on the distant shore from the Cairns Esplanade.
- CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Fairly common, especially in the north. This widespread egret, here of the race coromandus, looks a little different in its breeding finery from "our" birds.
- STRIATED HERON** (*Butorides striata*) – Seen various times in the north.
- RUFIOUS NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – We saw a nice colony of nesting and roosting night-herons along the Esplanade in Cairns. [N]

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

- GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – A cosmopolitan species.
- AUSTRALIAN IBIS** (*Threskiornis moluccus*) – Common and widespread; it was nesting at Brisbane and Deniliquin. [N]
- STRAW-NECKED IBIS** (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Another widespread Australian endemic as a breeder, which we saw many times. It migrates to New Guinea.
- ROYAL SPOONBILL** (*Platalea regia*) – Seen nicely from Day 1 in Brisbane right through Werribee.
- YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL** (*Platalea flavipes*) – Our first ones were at the lake at Fred Bucholz Park en route to O'Reilly's, but we saw a number along our route, from Hastie's Swamp to Werribee. [E]

Pandionidae (Osprey)

- OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – This cosmopolitan species was nesting at Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane. [N]

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

- AUSTRALIAN KITE** (*Elanus axillaris*) – As split from Black-shouldered and White-tailed kites; we saw several on the Atherton Tableland and near Deniliquin. [E]

PACIFIC BAZA (*Aviceda subcristata*) – One was seen nicely on the Atherton Tableland.

LITTLE EAGLE (*Hieraetus morphnoides*) – With its distinctive flight pattern, this endemic raptor was seen nicely flying overhead in Chiltern NP.

[E]

WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE (*Aquila audax*) – We saw a number of these big eagles, perhaps best as we watched Superb Parrots near Deniliquin; endemic to Australia and southern New Guinea.

SWAMP HARRIER (*Circus approximans*) – A couple of birds at Werribee.

SPOTTED HARRIER (*Circus assimilis*) – This beauty was also seen along the road at Werribee.

GRAY GOSHAWK (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) – It was a quick flyover at Lake Barrine, but it was a dramatic white morph! [E]

BROWN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter fasciatus*) – One bird at Deniliquin.

BLACK KITE (*Milvus migrans*) – Especially common at the Deniliquin dump!

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

BRAHMINY KITE (*Haliastur indus*) – We saw only one bird--at Sandy Camp Reserve on our second day there.

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – One bird was seen briefly at Hastie's Swamp, where it put up a number of birds.

Otididae (Bustards)

AUSTRALIAN BUSTARD (*Ardeotis australis*) – Restricted to Australia and s. New Guinea, this--the heaviest flying bird (along with its close relative, the Kori Bustard in Africa)--was seen well first near Mt. Carbine, where several birds strutted through the tall grass. We were surprised to see it again the following day near Mareeba.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

RED-NECKED CRAKE (*Rallina tricolor*) – One of our best birds at Cassowary House! We all managed to see this scarce, shy, local, and very pretty rail well. It occurs to the Lesser Sundas.

BUFF-BANDED RAIL (*Gallirallus philippensis*) – We had nice views of two different individuals, one at "the Knob" on our way back to Cairns, and the other at the Wilson Reserve in Melbourne. A beauty!

BAILLON'S CRAKE (*Porzana pusilla*) – Yip! Yip! for Nico, who had been looking for this widespread but tough species for 65 years! We all saw it nicely at Phil's crake marsh near Deniliquin.

AUSTRALIAN CRAKE (*Porzana fluminea*) – A.k.a. Spotted Crake; seen very well at the same Deniliquin marsh as the last species (and then briefly at Werribee). This one's endemic to Australia. [E]

SPOTLESS CRAKE (*Porzana tabuensis*) – This was the shy one at the same marsh; it's widespread but can be the toughest to see well. But we persisted until it was seen well by all. What a marsh!

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

DUSKY MOORHEN (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Seen widely along our route, including with chicks. [N]

BLACK-TAILED NATIVE-HEN (*Tribonyx ventralis*) – Linda's favorite for its impressive tail action, this endemic was seen in groups rushing along in a couple of spots near Deniliquin. [E]

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Widespread in small numbers.

Gruidae (Cranes)

SARUS CRANE (*Grus antigone*) – This one is basically an Asian species, first recorded in Australia in October 1966. It has since expanded rapidly through northern Queensland, where we encountered good numbers on several different days. It is still partially migratory and dispersive.

BROLGA (*Grus rubicunda*) – This one's the endemic, but it is also partially migratory and dispersive. Both the cranes are examples of an evolutionarily recent colonization from Asia, both species probably having separated from a common ancestor of Asian origin. It was a real treat to see (and hear!) the big flock of both species of cranes mixed with Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos in the fields of northern Queensland. [E]

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

BUSH THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus grallarius*) – Like a number of species, this one is endemic to Australia and s. New Guinea. We saw it well at Centenary Park in Cairns, where there were juveniles with the adults. [N]

BEACH THICK-KNEE (*Esacus magnirostris*) – Yip! Yip! Yip! This is one I had looked for for years (and in a number of places). We got to see a pair on a deserted back beach near mangroves at Cairns--thanks to Jun's having found them nesting there recently. Their huge bills were impressive, even at a fair distance.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

PIED STILT (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) – Fairly common where there was good habitat, especially at Hastie's Swamp and Werribee.

BANDED STILT (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) – Breeding on inland salt lakes of southwest and south-central Australia, this beauty is nomadic and irruptive. We were lucky to have seen large numbers well at Werribee! [E]

RED-NECKED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) – We saw impressive numbers of this elegant beauty at Werribee as well. [E]

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

PIED OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus longirostris*) – First seen at a great distance at low tide in Brisbane, this handsome oystercatcher--which is mainly Australian--was seen much better on the Cairns Esplanade and at Werribee.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BANDED LAPWING (*Vanellus tricolor*) – Another elegant Australian shorebird we saw (and with young) on our Plains-wanderer night at Robert's. [EN]

MASKED LAPWING (*Vanellus miles*) – Previously known as Spur-winged Plover, this species was common and widespread (and noisy!) throughout.

LESSER SAND-PLOVER (*Charadrius mongolus*) – We compared the two migrant sand-plovers, both in basic plumage, on the beach at Cairns as the tide crept in. [b]

GREATER SAND-PLOVER (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) [b]

RED-CAPPED PLOVER (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – We saw this pretty little endemic on the beach at Cairns and then at very close range at Werribee. [E]

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL (*Erythrogonys cinctus*) – Another pretty almost-endemic that also occurs in s. New Guinea; it too is nomadic and

irruptive. We saw it at Brisbane (Sandy Camp Reserve) and Deniliquin.

BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL (*Euseyornis melanops*) – A more sedentary species, this one was seen widely on our route, from Sandy Camp to Werribee. It also occurs in New Zealand.

INLAND DOTTEREL (*Peltohyas australis*) – One of the loveliest shorebirds of our trip! Another nomadic species, this one nests inland in short grass that is influenced by the rains. Along with the Plains-wanderer, it was one of our principal targets on our night afield near Deniliquin; we saw it wonderfully in the spotlights before turning homeward. [E]

Pedionomidae (Plains-wanderer)

PLAINS-WANDERER (*Pedionomus torquatus*) – For many of us, the foremost highlight of the trip! This legendary species, in its own monotypic family long thought to be in the Gruiformes, is now known to be a charadriiform related to the seedsnipes of S. America. Although it is diurnal and crepuscular, it is extremely difficult to find during the day; as Kingfisher said, "probably 95% of the birders who've seen it have done so with Phil Maher!" BirdLife International lists the Plains-wanderer as Endangered, with a very small population (estimated at 1000-2500 individuals) that is experiencing an ongoing decline owing to cultivation and overgrazing of natural grassland. We are fortunate that Robert owns a big chunk of Plains-wanderer habitat and manages it for the birds. And we're fortunate that he, Phil, and Rick are birders who are happy to show this rarity to others. On our delightful evening quest--after that wonderful field dinner--we managed to see a total of 9 birds--first an adult male; then a good-sized juvenile (juveniles look like the less colorful males who attend them in a reversal of traditional sexual roles); another adult male; and a male with 5 chicks, for one of the largest one-night counts Phil has ever had! [EN]

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

COMB-CRESTED JACANA (*Irediparra gallinacea*) – In a monotypic genus of the Jacaniidae, this spiffy Australian specialty was seen well at Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane and seen again in Cairns.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

TEREK SANDPIPER (*Xenus cinereus*) – We had great looks at this weirdly wonderful sandpiper with the upturned bill along the beach at Cairns.

Xenus means "stranger" because it breeds in northern Siberia and winters among foreigners. [b]

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – We saw this uncommon migrant only at Hastie's Swamp. [b]

GRAY-TAILED TATTLER (*Tringa brevipes*) – Another distinctive migrant that was seen well on the beach at Cairns. [b]

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Hastie's Swamp and Werribee. [b]

MARSH SANDPIPER (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – Singles at Cairns and Werribee. [b]

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – We compared this species to the next from the Esplanade at Cairns. [b]

FAR EASTERN CURLEW (*Numenius madagascariensis*) – The largest migrant wader in Australia, this one has the really long bill. After seeing it well out at Brisbane, we had nice scope views of birds on the beach at Cairns. [b]

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*) – Seen in the distance at Cairns as the tide came in. [b]

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

GREAT KNOT (*Calidris tenuirostris*) – Fairly common on the beach at Cairns, this species breeds in ne. Siberia and winters regularly to coastal Australia. We saw good numbers on the beach at Cairns. [b]

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER (*Calidris acuminata*) – Common and seen well from Brisbane to Werribee. [b]

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

RED-NECKED STINT (*Calidris ruficollis*) – The commonest "peep" and seen well repeatedly on the beach at Cairns and at Werribee. [b]

LATHAM'S SNIPE (*Gallinago hardwickii*) – Seen nicely at the marshy margins of the lake at Sandy Camp Reserve, Brisbane. This is the commonest snipe in Australia. [b]

Turnicidae (Buttonquail)

PAINTED BUTTONQUAIL (*Turnix varius*) – Nico and Linda chanced into one of these hard-to-see buttonquail on an early walk at Chambers Wildlife Lodge.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

SILVER GULL (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) – Named "novaehollandiae" for Australia, this spiffy little gull was the common Larid on our trip, both inland and along the coast. The species occurs in New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands as well.

LITTLE TERN (*Sternula albifrons*) – First seen from the Esplanade and then at Werribee.

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – Fairly common along the coast at Brisbane and Cairns. The taxon we saw, macrotarsa, is endemic to Australia.

WHITE-WINGED TERN (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) – A.k.a. White-winged Black Tern, this species is a close relative of our Black Tern. Chris pointed out one at Werribee and then we saw several perched. They breed in Eurasia and winter to Australia September to May. [b]

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – The taxon we saw, fluviatilis, breeds opportunistically and locally in Australia and disperses to New Guinea and the Moluccas April through August as an austral migrant. We had nice looks at large numbers in breeding plumage at Werribee. [a]

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – We saw one bird on the rocks at Werribee, showing a strong dark carpal bar, that appeared to be of this species. [b]

GREAT CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bergii*) – A couple of these breeders on the same rocks were seen nicely through scopes at Werribee.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Probably introduced early in European settlement; now widespread in settled areas. [I]

WHITE-HEADED PIGEON (*Columba leucomela*) – These big pigeons were seen best at Chambers Wildlife Lodge, where they came to drink from the roof gutters each morning. [E]

SPOTTED DOVE (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – This common *Streptopelia* was introduced from Asia starting in the 1860's; it's now common and widespread. [I]

BROWN CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia phasianella*) – Fairly common in eastern Australia; we saw them well at O'Reilly's and on the Atherton Tableland.

EMERALD DOVE (*Chalcophaps indica*) – Several were seen and heard, our best looks coming at Kingfisher Park, where one spiffy bird walked around on the ground under thick cover as we watched.

- COMMON BRONZEWING** (*Phaps chalcoptera*) – Our best looks at this endemic with the iridescent wing spots came at Beechworth and Chiltern. [E]
- CRESTED PIGEON** (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) – This common but elegant endemic, which raises its tail on alighting, was seen well many times. [E]
- SQUATTER PIGEON** (*Geophaps scripta*) – How exciting it was to exit our bus at Granite Gorge and have these ground-dwelling beauties almost under foot! [E]
- WONGA PIGEON** (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*) – This hefty and distinctive endemic was a regular feature on the grounds of O'Reilly's each morning. Locally known as "Wonga-Wonga," a puzzling name since that is also the name of a native woody vine (as well as British slang for money). [E]
- PEACEFUL DOVE** (*Geopelia placida*) – The common *Geopelia* on our route, it was seen often.
- BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE** (*Geopelia humeralis*) – Another essentially Australian endemic, this pretty *Geopelia* also occurs in southern New Guinea. Our first ones were on the banks of the Barron River where we watched for Platypus. We saw them well again at Kingfisher Park.
- WOMPPOO FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – We had lovely scope views of this beauty as it sat atop a fig tree where Duncan had seen it feeding in Lamington NP. We later heard its hefty "wom-poo" repeatedly near Cassowary House. The species also occurs in New Guinea.
- SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus superbus*) – Calling birds refused to show both at Chambers Lodge and near Cassowary House. [*]
- ROSE-CROWNED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus regina*) – We had nice looks at this colorful fruit eater high in the trees at O'Reilly's and then, especially well through scopes at the Curtain Fig Tree. Like many strong fliers among the Columbids, this species occurs as well in s. New Guinea and s. Indonesia.
- TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (*Ducula spilorrhoa*) – As split from Pied Imperial-Pigeon, the taxon we saw was the nominate race. Abundant along the Cairns coast, they were even nesting among flying-foxes and Rufous Night-Herons. [N]
- TOPKNOT PIGEON** (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) – This fancy pigeon was seen well at O'Reilly's, where it fed atop a tall fruiting tree. [E]

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

- BRUSH CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – We heard it and called it in along a road in Lamington NP. It's a brood parasite on robins, flycatchers, fantails, and some of the smaller honeyeaters.
- FAN-TAILED CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) – A responsive bird was seen nicely near the Wompoo fruiting tree in Lamington NP. This brood parasite targets the nests of fairywrens, thornbills, and scrubwrens.
- BLACK-EARED CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx osculans*) – This scarce little cuckoo was a nice surprise as we birded through the dry eucalypts at Bartley's Block in Chiltern NP. Endemic as a breeder, mostly inland in Australia--and targeting Speckled Warblers, fieldwrens, thornbills, and scrubwrens--it is known to migrate in the austral winter to coastal n. Australia and s. New Guinea and e. Indonesia. But it is also a breeding migrant to sub-coastal s. Australia Aug-Feb.
- HORSFIELD'S BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx basalis*) – Also endemic as a breeder, this little cuckoo was seen well near Deniliquin. Its hosts are fairywrens, gerygones, thornbills, robins, and chats.
- SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – Another small parasitic cuckoo, this one targeting mostly thornbills, fairywrens, flycatchers, Silver-eye, and small honeyeaters. We struggled to see it but finally saw it well near Lake Barrine. It is to some extent an austral migrant, some races migrating to n. Australia and New Guinea in the austral winter. [a]
- AUSTRALIAN KOEL** (*Eudynamis cyanocephalus*) – After hearing this one several times at Lamington NP, we finally had a nice look at a female at Granite Gap. Endemic as a breeder, this one winters north to the Moluccas. It parasitizes a variety of larger birds, including friarbirds, wattlebirds, miners, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Olive-backed Oriole, figbirds, and even Paradise Riflebirds and Magpie-larks. [a]
- CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – The world's largest brood parasite, this big cuckoo with the huge bill parasitizes Pied Currawongs, Australian Magpies, and Torresian Crows after arriving from the north, as far as New Guinea and Indonesia. We saw a responsive pair interacting noisily on our Frilled Lizard stop en route to Granite Gap. [a]
- PHEASANT COUCAL** (*Centropus phasianinus*) – Largest of the Australian cuckoos (also known as "Cane Pheasant"), this one builds its own nest. We saw it nicely on our Granite Gap day.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

- SOOTY OWL (LESSER)** (*Tyto tenebricosa multipunctata*) – Close, but not close enough! It called persistently from the rainforest at Chambers Wildlife Lodge, but we couldn't quite spot it. A little known Australian endemic related to the Barn Owl. [E*]

Strigidae (Owls)

- RUFIOUS OWL** (*Ninox rufa*) – Another almost endemic that occurs as well in New Guinea and on Aru Island; we saw a bird on its dayroost in Cairns, thanks to Jun's sharp eye.
- SOUTHERN BOOBOOK** (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) – Duncan showed us this one, atop a tall tree above O'Reilly's one evening.

Aegothelidae (Owlet-Nightjars)

- AUSTRALIAN OWLET-NIGHTJAR** (*Aegotheles cristatus*) – Another species shared with se. New Guinea, the owlet-nightjars are related to swifts and hummingbirds, sharing the order Apodiformes. In fact, an early fossil hummingbird from Germany that lived 47 million years ago bore feathering very like that of an owlet-nightjar. Australian fossils from the late Oligocene to mid-Miocene bear evidence that owlet-nightjars have changed little over a long period of time. On our fourth attempt, we ultimately saw the dark-eyed head of an Australian Owlet-Nightjar poking out of its roost hole in a natural cavity of a eucalypt in Lamington NP (thanks to Duncan!).

Podargidae (Frogmouths)

- TAWNY FROGMOUTH** (*Podargus strigoides*) – We had fabulous looks at nesting birds, both in Lamington NP and at Granite Gorge. What a gape! [EN]
- PAPUAN FROGMOUTH** (*Podargus papuensis*) – In Australia restricted to ne. Queensland, the largest of the frogmouths is actually more common in New Guinea--assuming it is indeed the same species. We were lucky to get to be shown a pair, one of them on the nest, during our visit to Kingfisher Park (thanks to the owners, Keith and Lindsay Fisher!). [N]

Apodidae (Swifts)

- WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL** (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) – These big migrants from Asia were seen high overhead at O'Reilly's and Chambers Wildlife Lodge, and near Cassowary House. [b]
- AUSTRALIAN SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus terraereginae*) – This small swift was seen on most days while we were in the Cairns-Atherton Tableland area. [E]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

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

LAUGHING KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) – We had some excellent views and heard many great vocalizations of this iconic kingfisher--the world's largest. It's a true Australian despite its specific name's suggesting that it occurs in New Guinea. Indeed, the bird's first description from NG "seems to have been a deliberate falsification" (fide HBW). [E]

BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo leachii*) – Almost as big as its Laughing cousin, this species was seen in arid woodland along the road near Granite Gap. It occurs across the Torres Strait in s. New Guinea as well.

FOREST KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus macleayi*) – We scoped this species at the same stop as the last. Also found in New Guinea and New Britain, where some birds are austral migrants from Australia.

COLLARED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus chloris*) – A.k.a. Mangrove Kingfisher, this green-and-white bird was seen in at the margin of Centenary Park in Cairns. It's a widespread kingfisher of Old World islands and mangroves.

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Another widespread species, this one was seen repeatedly, from our first afternoon in Brisbane to our final morning in Deniliquin. [N]

BUFF-BREASTED PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera sylvia*) – The highlight of our visit to Kingfisher Park was, appropriately, getting great scope views of a perched adult of this spiffy kingfisher (which, also appropriately, was spotted by our Kingfisher). It migrates from New Guinea to breed in coastal ne. Queensland October to April, after which most birds withdraw for the austral winter. Keith pointed out a couple of active nest burrows, each surprisingly low. [aN]

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

RAINBOW BEE-EATER (*Merops ornatus*) – We had lovely views of this beauty, starting right off in Brisbane, at Sandy Camp Reserve; we flushed a bird from its nest--a hole in the sandy ground--while chasing the White-browed Woodswallows near Deniliquin. [N]

Coraciidae (Rollers)

DOLLARBIRD (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – We had multiple sightings of this stocky migrant which breeds in Australia (and, remember, bears two silver dollars per bird). [a]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AUSTRALIAN KESTREL (*Falco cenchroides*) – Seen on various occasions, mostly in the south.

AUSTRALIAN HOBBY (*Falco longipennis*) – We had only one bird on this trip, near Deniliquin.

BROWN FALCON (*Falco berigora*) – Seen first at Lamington and then seen daily in New South Wales, where one bird perched nearby.

BLACK FALCON (*Falco subniger*) – Well, it was distant, flying over well beyond the Deniliquin dump, but we could see its distinctive falcon shape.... It's an uncommon, nomadic endemic. [E]

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*) – What a treat to have seen these big black-cockatoos foraging amidst the towering cranes in the cultivated fields of the Atherton Tableland. [E]

GANG-GANG COCKATOO (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*) – One of the highlights of the trip was watching a pair of these fabulous cockatoos with the curly crests come circling over us and then land for scope views at the Beechworth golf course. Wow! The generic name means "beauty head" and the specific "fringed." They belong to a monotypic genus and are found only in se. Australia. [E]

PINK COCKATOO (*Lophochroa leadbeateri*) – A.k.a. Major Mitchell's Cockatoo; the lone bird that flew right over us, exposing its all-pink underwings, at one of Phil's Deniliquin restoration plots, was a totally unexpected surprise near the edge of its range. [E]

GALAH (*Eolophus roseicapilla*) – What a striking bird to have as a common and widespread species! [E]

LONG-BILLED CORELLA (*Cacatua tenuirostris*) – We saw numbers of these corellas in the Deniliquin area, but our best looks by far were at perched birds we could compare directly with the following species near the base of the You Yangs on our final afternoon of the trip. What a bill! [E]

LITTLE CORELLA (*Cacatua sanguinea*) – These seemed petite compared to the nearby Long-bills! This species also occurs in s. New Guinea.

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO (*Cacatua galerita*) – The commonest and most frequently seen cockatoo by far, it was seen almost daily. They are so big we routinely mistook them for Cattle Egrets at a distance. We watched one peering out of its nest hole of a huge gum tree where we looked for Powerful Owl near Wangaratta in ne. Victoria. It occurs in New Guinea as well. [N]

COCKATIEL (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) – We had nice looks at two birds right along the highway south of Deniliquin. These psittacids have now been shown to be small cockatoos. [E]

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

SUPERB PARROT (*Polytelis swainsonii*) – Phil's favorite parrot--and one of ours! After all, *Polytelis* translates to "sumptuous," which is appropriate for this long-tailed genus. We watched adults feeding fledglings and saw some fair-sized flocks in the Gulpa woodland near Deniliquin. The species is endemic to Victoria and New South Wales. [E]

AUSTRALIAN KING-PARROT (*Alisterus scapularis*) – These striking red-and-green beauties were our constant companions around O'Reilly's. [E]

TURQUOISE PARROT (*Neophema pulchella*) – We had great looks at these elegant parrots as they investigated cavities in the rather open woodland of Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP. [E]

CRIMSON ROSELLA (*Platycercus elegans*) – This striking endemic was vying with king-parrots at O'Reilly's to be our best new friend; they visited our balconies regularly, just in case we had anything we wanted to share.... [E]

CRIMSON ROSELLA (YELLOW) (*Platycercus elegans flaveolus*) – We had nice looks at the yellow version of Crimson Rosella on three days at Deniliquin, including right at our caravan park. [E]

EASTERN ROSELLA (*Platycercus eximius*) – Yet another gorgeous rosella! Seen well first at Wilson Reserve in Melbourne and then daily near Beechworth and Deniliquin. [E]

PALE-HEADED ROSELLA (*Platycercus adscitus*) – First seen in the distance below O'Reilly's, this one was best seen at Granite Gap. [E]

BLUEBONNET (*Northiella haematogaster*) – Of a monotypic genus (named for Alfred John North, an Australian jeweler and oologist, 1855-1917), these little beauties were seen nicely at another of Phil's restoration plots near Deniliquin. [E]

RED-RUMPED PARROT (*Psephotus haematonotus*) – Seen first along the drive from Beechworth to Deniliquin and then several times in the Deniliquin area, as well as at Werribee. [E]

DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – Best seen in the rainforest along the road near Lake Barrine, Mt. Hypipamee NP. This one gets to New Guinea and Aru Island.

RAINBOW LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – Quite common, but strikingly beautiful, these were seen almost daily in the north, but particularly memorably in the flowering trees outside our gas/ice cream stop at Tolga on the Atherton Tableland. [N]

SCALY-BREASTED LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*) – Also seen briefly at our Tolga stop, but we improved on our looks back in Cairns, where we saw the Mangrove Robins. [E]

Pittidae (Pittas)

NOISY PITTA (*Pitta versicolor*) – Alas, we couldn't get any of the few birds we heard calling to show well; a few folks (or Dan, at least) saw one in flight across the road near Cassowary House, but most folks it was heard only. Pittas are among the few suboscine passerines in Australia. [E]

Menuridae (Lyrebirds)

ALBERT'S LYREBIRD (*Menura alberti*) – One of the foremost highlights of the trip! It all started when Ginny saw a lyrebird, first thing in the morning, foraging just outside her room at O'Reilly's. She took us to the spot and we all wandered through the area for some time to no avail, eventually dividing into two groups to look farther afield. As Grebe's group returned toward the lodge entrance, we encountered Duncan who had seen a lyrebird only 5 minutes earlier right in front of the lodge. We searched the area until we heard it singing--and there it was: a female-plumaged bird (hence a female or young male) up on an exposed horizontal branch, mimicking an array of local birds, singing away at close range! After recording some song, I walked to within walkie-talkie range to summon Kingfisher's group, and we all reassembled at the picnic table just below the bird. Not only did it sing, but it hopped into the crotch of an adjacent tree, 3-4m above the ground, and scratched in the collected leaf litter, consuming several goodies, before returning to its song perch by leaps and bounds. Then it dropped to the ground and departed, only to be seen a few minutes later chasing madly around in circles on the ground! Amazing! I could find no reference in the literature to this strange behavior, but HBW does mention that other observers have reported seeing it forage 3-4m above ground, usually in bird's-nest ferns which have accumulated leaf litter, and suggests that foraging in the subcanopy could prove advantageous in areas where many birds compete for food on the forest floor. Similar-plumaged birds were seen on all three mornings at O'Reilly's, with John and Judy finding one at a distant spot. What a treat to have seen (and heard) this modern descendant of the earliest songbirds (i.e., Oscine Passerines) and to realize that, based on fossil evidence, lyrebirds were scratching in the leaf litter of Queensland rainforests in the early to mid-Miocene, long before the perching birds of Europe belonged to living families, much less living genera (see Tim Low's book **Where Song Began**). [E]

Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

SPOTTED CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – This species came for bananas at Chambers and at Cassowary House. Named for their cat-like calls, catbirds of this genus are monogamous and neither clear courts nor build bowers. They represent a distinct group that diverged from other bowerbirds some 24 million years ago or so. [E]

GREEN CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus crassirostris*) – Replacing Spotted Catbird in the rainforests further south, this species was conspicuous by its cat calls at O'Reilly's, but it was more of a challenge to see well. Most had great views near the lodge. [E]

TOOTH-BILLED CATBIRD (*Scenopoetes dentirostris*) – A.k.a., Tooth-billed Bowerbird or Stagemaker; unlike the members of *Ailuroedus*, this species does build a simple "stage" of freshly clipped green leaves inverted to their pale side so as to contrast with the dark forest floor. It then sits above its court and delivers a diversity of strong song phrases, including imitations of various of its passerine neighbors. We watched two different singing males, the second one above its stage, along the trail to Lake Barrine. [E]

GOLDEN BOWERBIRD (*Amblyornis newtoniana*) – This species builds a more elaborate bower, a maypole bower, consisting of one or two bulky stick towers built around a pre-existing sapling or two and then decorated with (usually) gray-green lichens. We watched a brilliant male above his bower that Jun had discovered in Mt. Hypipamee NP. A fabulous treat! [E]

REGENT BOWERBIRD (*Sericulus chrysocephalus*) – The colorful male of this species, the totem icon for O'Reilly's, uses its fancy plumage to attract females and lead them to his avenue bower of rather simple construction. Apparently, the majority of Regent Bowerbird bowers are maintained for fewer than 11 days, possibly explaining why no bower had been found in the vicinity recently. We had wonderful views of both males and females (or young males), which seemed to show up in small groups around the gardens. Like the Golden Bowerbird, this species requires rainforest. [E]

SATIN BOWERBIRD (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) – Another avenue bower builder, this species usually building two avenues and decorates the ground outside the entrance with blue objects--from such natural objects as the flight feathers of Crimson Rosellas, flowers, fruits, and shells to (especially near human dwellings) a variety of manmade plastics. We saw several males and several different bowers, and Ron and Nancy got to watch a male adding objects to his bower. Duncan pointed out a female sitting on a nest deep in the garden shrubbery at O'Reilly's. The young, once hatched, may take up to 7 years to achieve adult plumage. [EN]

GREAT BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera nuchalis*) – Males of this species, the largest of the bowerbirds, build the largest avenue-type bowers. They are usually a single avenue under a shrub or leafy tree limb, the ground outside decorated with white snail shells, bones, and stones, pale leaves and flowers, fruits, as well as red objects now in the local population at Granite Gorge (where one male started using red objects and others learned from him and adopted the practice!). We also got to watch younger males cooperatively building a "practice bower." [E]

Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER (*Cormobates leucophaea*) – Like bowerbirds, the treecreepers have a deep evolutionary history; in fact, they are now known to be more basal on the songbird evolutionary tree than bowerbirds--on the second-lowest branch, one above lyrebirds and scrub-birds. These bark foragers have a foot design unique among perching birds and unique syrinx muscles, which probably reflect an early evolutionary design. The White-throated Treecreeper, which we saw first at O'Reilly's and later in the south, reminded us of a nuthatch in its foraging behavior, but it also takes nectar from banksia and eucalypt blossoms with its fringed tongue. It's a bark relict, with hind toes that rotate more freely than on most birds, allowing them to walk under limbs upside down and even hang from trunks to sleep! [E]

WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER (LITTLE) (*Cormobates leucophaea minor*) – This race, restricted to ne Queensland, is sometimes considered a full species. We saw it at the Curtain Fig Tree and at the Crater. [E]

RED-BROWED TREECREEPER (*Climacteris erythroptis*) – We had nice looks at this species in the drier eucalypts along the entrance road to O'Reilly's. [E]

BROWN TREECREEPER (*Climacteris picumnus*) – We watched a pair of these making frequent trips to a nest in a dead snag at Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP. They were also seen near Deniliquin. [EN]

Maluridae (Fairywrens)

VARIEGATED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus lamberti*) – Some of the most captivating--and, next to Australian Magpies, the most promiscuous!--of Australia's passerines, fairywrens live in extended family groups and, like so many of Australia's birds, are cooperative breeders. Though they weren't

- as conspicuous this trip as sometimes (probably owing to their breeding season), we enjoyed 5 species of them! This species is the most widespread and long-tailed of the red-shouldered group, and we worked on it near O'Reilly's until we had great views of a striking male. [E]
- LOVELY FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus amabilis*) – Formerly treated as a subspecies of Variegated, this one has a very limited range--in ne Queensland. We had to work on it, on the Atherton Tableland, but everyone managed to get a view ultimately. [E]
- SUPERB FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus cyaneus*) – This species, Australians' favorite bird, was our first (and our last) seen fairywren: they were hopping in the open at the margins of the marshy lake at Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane on our first day. The males are indeed superb! [E]
- WHITE-WINGED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus leucopterus*) – Perhaps the most stunning of all, the males of this species literally glow! We had good looks at a splendid male (as well as drabber female-plumaged birds) N of Deniliquin en route to our Plains-wanderer adventure. Another mostly blue fairywren, New Guinea's Emperor Fairywren, is sister to all the rest. [E]
- RED-BACKED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus melanocephalus*) – A male that was seen nicely at Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane was our only encounter with this species. [E]
- Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)*
- EASTERN SPINEBILL** (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) – Ah, the honeyeaters--Australia's largest family of birds! And it's one of the most aggressive ones, with a food source well worth defending: nectar. We saw 34 species of them. This small (and pretty) honeyeater is one species that is often attacked by larger honeyeaters. We saw it well repeatedly, starting at O'Reilly's. [E]
- GRACEFUL HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga gracilis*) – Like a more delicate Yellow-spotted with a distinctive vocalization. We saw both species well at Cassowary House. This species also reaches New Guinea.
- YELLOW-SPOTTED HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga notata*) [E]
- LEWIN'S HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga lewinii*) – The common honeyeater in wet forest of Queensland. We saw many, especially at O'Reilly's. [E]
- BRIDLED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus frenatus*) – Seen nicely on the Atherton Tableland, especially at the Crater. [E]
- YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus chrysops*) – Seen first at O'Reilly's and then in forested areas throughout (in small numbers). [E]
- VARIED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus versicolor*) – The distinctive honeyeater along the Esplanade at Cairns.
- MANGROVE HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus fasciularis*) – A close relative of the last, this species is a mangrove specialist; we visited Fig Tree Point in Brisbane for this endemic, as well as the Mangrove Gerygone. [E]
- SINGING HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus virescens*) – This widespread species of more arid habitats was seen well near Deniliquin. [E]
- YELLOW HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus flavus*) – Seen nicely at Centenary Park in Cairns. [E]
- YELLOW-TUFTED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus melanops*) – Among the prettiest of the honeyeaters, these were seen nicely at Chiltern NP, even as we watched the Koala. [E]
- FUSCOUS HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus fuscus*) – Seen several times in the Beechworth area. [E]
- WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus penicillatus*) – Another pretty one, it was fairly common in the south, our first being seen at a gas-station stop and our last in the You Yangs. [E]
- BELL MINER** (*Manorina melanophrys*) – One of the highlights of our time at Lamington NP was descending to a colony of very vocal Bell Miners (hear their tinkling vocalizations in the embedded audio clip to the right), where we examined (and tasted!) the lerp they were cultivating (and defending!). Bell Miners practice some of the most intensive resource defense of any birds. Sadly, however, the eucalypts they live among usually eventually sicken and die since the birds lever the lerp--the carbohydrate-rich excrement secreted by abundant aphid-like psyllids--without eating the harmful insects. Guarding their "farm" against other birds as well--and with colonies sometimes numbering in the hundreds--Bell Miners can effectively exclude most other birds that would defend the trees by consuming the harmful insects. [E]
- NOISY MINER** (*Manorina melanocephala*) – This aggressive endemic was quite common almost throughout, especially in human-influenced areas (starting right in Brisbane near our hotel). We had one nesting at O'Reilly's and saw them almost throughout. [EN]
- SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER** (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*) – Among the most distinctive of honeyeaters, this striking species--of a monotypic genus--was seen on both our Deniliquin days. [E]
- RED WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera carunculata*) – First seen at the Wilson Reserve (where we searched for Powerful Owl) and then seen better at Beechworth and in the You Yangs. Some of us saw a mostly albino bird outside our accommodations at Beechworth. [E]
- BROWN-BACKED HONEYEATER** (*Ramsayornis modestus*) – We called in one of these for good looks at Centenary Park in Cairns. This one occurs in similar habitat in New Guinea as well.
- WHITE-FRONTED CHAT** (*Epthianura albifrons*) – What nice looks we had at this distinctive honeyeater in the grass and flowers at the edge of the ponds at Werribee! The Australian chats were formerly considered to comprise a separate family, but DNA sequencing has placed them in the honeyeaters and disclosed an amazing relationship between chats and New Guinea's subalpine giant, the Macgregor's Honeyeater (once thought to be a bird-of-paradise)! [E]
- DUSKY MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela obscura*) – Seen in the Cairns-Atherton area, this is another species that is shared with New Guinea.
- SCARLET MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) – This beauty was also seen in the Atherton Tableland area. Also found in New Guinea.
- BROWN HONEYEATER** (*Lichmera indistincta*) – Fairly common near Brisbane and in the Cairns-Atherton Tableland area.
- WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus lunatus*) – This short-billed genus feeds mostly on insects, and this species searches the foliage, whereas the Brown-headed and the larger Black-chinned mostly glean branches. We saw this one--the eastern race with the red eye-crescent--at Brisbane and then at O'Reilly's. [E]
- WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus albobularis*) – Seen only on the Atherton Tableland, this species also occurs in southern New Guinea and is the only non-endemic member of the genus. [E]
- BLACK-CHINNED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus gularis*) – Seen nicely at Bartley's Block in Chiltern NP, when a little group came in to inspect us. [E]
- BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus brevirostris*) – This close relative of the last was also seen at Chiltern. [E]
- BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Entomyzon cyanotis*) – This spectacular big honeyeater, which also occurs in s. New Guinea, was seen quite well at Fig Tree Point in Brisbane, where it played hide-and-seek among the big leaves of a fruiting fig.
- LITTLE FRIARBIRD** (*Philemon citreogularis*) – Seen well at Granite Gap and then near Deniliquin; it also ranges into s. New Guinea.
- HELMETED FRIARBIRD (HORNBILL)** (*Philemon buceroides yorki*) – Seen at Cairns and at Granite Gap, this big friarbird is widespread in New Guinea, just reaching into the northernmost parts of Australia. The genus name means "affectionate" or "kissing," and the species name means "hornbill-like."

NOISY FRIARBIRD (*Philemon corniculatus*) – Fairly common near Brisbane and near O'Reilly's; it was seen again near Deniliquin.

MACLEAY'S HONEYEATER (*Xanthotis macleayanus*) – This distinctive honeyeater was first seen coming to water at Kingfisher Park. It then joined us for breakfast at Cassowary House. [E]

STRIPED HONEYEATER (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*) – After trying for it in Brisbane, we ultimately had terrific views of this unique honeyeater--of a monotypic genus--near Deniliquin, where Phil showed us a nest that was recently used. [EN]

PAINTED HONEYEATER (*Grantiella picta*) – A real mistletoe specialist, this striking honeyeater is nomadic, following the mistletoe fruits. We were fortunate to find a nesting pair in a patch of forest Phil took us to near Deniliquin. [EN]

Pardalotidae (Pardalotes)

SPOTTED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus punctatus*) – Pardalotes specialize on eating lerp and manna, levering the sweet carbohydrates from the leaves with their stout beaks, and they consume the arthropods that form the lerp as well. This species nests in tunnels in the soil, its burrows seen as a response by these lerp-feeding birds to the attacks by honeyeaters competing for the same food. We inadvertently flushed females from nests a couple of times at Chiltern and scoped a lovely male from the golf course at Beechworth. [EN]

STRIATED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus striatus*) – Our good looks were near Deniliquin, especially at the Superb Parrot area, where we also encountered them nesting. This species nests in tree cavities as well as in ground tunnels. [EN]

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

FERNWREN (*Oreoscopus gutturalis*) – Of a monotypic genus endemic to Australia, this ground-dwelling species with the piercing whistles was seen well in response to playback--and thanks to Susie's good spotting--at the Crater. [E]

YELLOW-THROATED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis citreogularis*) – The most confiding and endearing of the scrubwrens! We had daily encounters with them at O'Reilly's. The species is an exceptional mimic that often forages opportunistically around logrunners and scrubfowl, awaiting prey that is scratched out by the larger terrestrial species. [E]

WHITE-BROWED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis frontalis*) – This too was seen well daily at O'Reilly's, but we also saw it in the south. Like all members of the genus, it is widely parasitized by various small cuckoos, especially the Fan-tailed and bronze-cuckoos. [E]

ATHERTON SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis kerri*) – We saw this range-restricted endemic along the road at Lake Barrine. [E]

LARGE-BILLED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis magnirostra*) – We saw this one repeatedly in the forests of Queensland. [E]

STRIATED FIELDWREN (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*) – We had to work on this one at Werribee, where the wind--and the dense vegetation of their preferred habitat--made it a challenge to see well. But we persisted and scoped a nice one or two. [E]

BUFF-RUMPED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza reguloides*) – Seen well first at O'Reilly's and then in the south at Chiltern and Deniliquin. [E]

MOUNTAIN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza katherina*) – Found only on the Tablelands of ne Queensland, this species came in very close (in response to playback) at John & Jun's secret spot at the Crater. [E]

BROWN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza pusilla*) – The commonest thornbill at and near O'Reilly's; also seen in the south. 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 at Chiltern NP, but we also saw it in the You Yangs. [E]

YELLOW THORNBILL (*Acanthiza nana*) – These thornbills are often seen in mixed thornbill flocks. They forage high in the canopy, often in casuarinas. We saw them with Phil in Chiltern and right at Beechworth. [E]

STRIATED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza lineata*) – We saw this species in the canopy of the drier habitat near O'Reilly's, where they moved with mixed thornbill flocks. They were later seen in Chiltern NP and near Deniliquin. [E]

WEBBILL (*Smicronis brevirostris*) – Australia's smallest bird, this tiny passerine was seen well on the Gulpa floodplain near Deniliquin. [E]

WHITE-THROATED GERYGONE (*Gerygone olivacea*) – We saw this sweet singer with Phil in Chiltern NP. It also occurs in se. New Guinea.

LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – Centenary Park. [*]

BROWN GERYGONE (*Gerygone mouki*) – The smallest Australian gerygone, it was seen regularly at O'Reilly's, on the Atherton Tableland, and at Cassowary House. This is the one whose distinctive song reminds Kingfisher of the William Tell Overture (but seemed a bit simpler to some of the rest of us). [E]

WESTERN GERYGONE (*Gerygone fusca*) – We saw this one at Chiltern NP and even found an active nest, where the male was singing its plaintively beautiful song. [EN]

MANGROVE GERYGONE (*Gerygone levigaster*) – We called this one in with playback in the mangroves at Fig Tree Point in Brisbane.

Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

GRAY-CROWNED BABBLER (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) – We saw a flock of these gregarious birds--which are not at all closely related to Asian babblers--along the highway en route to Deniliquin. This one also occurs in s. New Guinea.

Orthonychidae (Logrunners)

AUSTRALIAN LOGRUNNER (*Orthonyx temminckii*) – What a bird! Watching these birds foraging by kicking vigorously in the leaf litter with right angle motions by each leg was one of the highlights of our stay at O'Reilly's. The Logrunner is another species of special evolutionary significance, with a deep evolutionary history. Per Tim Low, "Australia had lyrebirds and logrunners before songbirds had even reached southern Africa, and before Europe had the families thriving there today." [E]

CHOWCHILLA (*Orthonyx spaldingii*) – We watched a pair of these generally inconspicuous endemics as they foraged through the leaf litter along the trail at Lake Barrine. We later heard them near Cassowary House as well. [E]

Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)

EASTERN WHIPBIRD (*Psophodes olivaceus*) – Another great endemic which we saw amazingly well—Mr. Whippy being the best performer, especially when he hopped onto both Kingfisher's and Grebe's hands!--at O'Reilly's. Named for its ringing whipsong, which is heard throughout the wet forests of Queensland. [E]

Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)

SPOTTED QUAIL-THRUSH (*Cinclosoma punctatum*) – Another highlight (at least for Nico and for me) was getting to see both male and female of

this strange, local endemic of se Australia. Quail-thrushes go back more than 30 million years, to long before Australia became seriously arid. They are plumage conservatives with a rainforest ancestry. Our scope views were with Phil in the open eucalypt-grass woodland of Chiltern NP. [E]

Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)

YELLOW-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) – We had great looks at this brightly colored cutie with the broad boat-shaped bill along the road at Lake Barrine. It also occurs in New Guinea.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – The most frequently seen woodswallow on our tour, it was first seen right in Brisbane. It's an aerial carnivore with a bifurcated tongue that allows it to take nectar and pollen as well as insects. Some species have a taste for lerp as well. The woodswallows in Asia--where this species is also found--probably exemplify the most recent successful songbird invasion from Australia to another continent.

WHITE-BROWED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus superciliosus*) – Susie spotted the male of this endemic in the Gulpa floodplain near Deniliquin, where we had great scope views. The woodswallows are currently treated as a family whose closest ties are to the Cracticidae (the butcherbirds and allies). [E]

DUSKY WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus cyanopterus*) – We had lovely scope views of this species at a nest in Chiltern NP. [EN]

Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

GRAY BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus torquatus*) – "Butch" was a most cooperative individual down the road from O'Reilly's in Lamington NP. Duncan scarcely had to call his name before he appeared and sat for photos! [E]

PIED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus nigrogularis*) – The butcherbird which has been most studied, in part owing to the beauty of its flute-like song and its widespread occurrence in Australia. We saw these endemics only occasionally but throughout our route. [E]

BLACK BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus quoyi*) – First seen at Centenary Park and then at Chambers Wildlife Lodge and Cassowary House. They are, like other members of the family, extremely aggressive in defending their nest and young. Cracticids are the primary brood hosts of the parasitic Channel-billed Cuckoo.

AUSTRALASIAN MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) – Seen most days of the tour, and daily in the Brisbane area and the 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 every Australian has a magpie story, and indeed the magpies themselves are frequent participants of play, as well as fierce aggressors. They are also considered the most promiscuous bird known.

PIED CURRAWONG (*Strepera graculina*) – These large, corvid-like birds were our constant companions pre-breakfast at O'Reilly's, where they joined the King Parrots and Crimson Rosellas in balcony patrol at coffee time. We also saw them in the south. [E]

Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

BARRED CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Coracina lineata*) – This handsome big cuckooshrike was probably our final new bird in the Cassowary House region. Nancy spotted a cooperative one that stayed for great scope views.

BLACK-FACED CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – The most frequently encountered cuckooshrike, seen almost daily in all areas. Partly migratory, it also occurs to New Guinea and the Sundas.

WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Coracina papuensis*) – Seen first at Tolga, then elsewhere in the Tablelands and in New South Wales; we had good looks at these birds, their specific name reflecting their having been described from Papua New Guinea.

WHITE-WINGED TRILLER (*Lalage tricolor*) – This small cuckooshrike is named for its trilling vocalization. We saw it well in Chiltern NP.

VARIED TRILLER (*Lalage leucomela*) – We had a nice look at this one near O'Reilly's.

COMMON CICADABIRD (*Edolisoma tenuirostre*) – Its cicada-like call is heard more often than seen, but we saw it well in the arid eucalypt woodland below O'Reilly's.

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 similarity—the sittellas are actually not closely related to nuthatches at all, but an example of convergent evolution. 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 near the owl-nightjar cavity below O'Reilly's and then in the south at the Gulpa floodplain, each area representing a different subspecies.

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

CRESTED SHRIKE-TIT (*Falcunculus frontatus*) – What an intriguing bird! Brightly colored with a large head, strong, somewhat hooked bill, and a prominent crest, it is a relative of the whistlers that acts somewhat tit-like. We had good looks at birds in Chiltern NP and near Beechworth. [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, thanks to Nancy, on the Atherton Tableland and later saw them near Cassowary House.

GRAY SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – A large shrike-thrush and one of the finest songsters of the group, this one was seen well daily in Lamington and then almost daily in the south.

BOWER'S SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla boweri*) – This endemic, quite similar to Rufous, we had best at Mt. Hypipamee National Park (the Crater). [E]

GOLDEN WHISTLER (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) – Highly dimorphic, this whistler was first seen at O'Reilly's, where we saw striking males and modest females. We had them almost daily on the Atherton Tableland. This whistler is a fine songster with a strong, rich whistle reminiscent of a weaker version of a whipbird's song.

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 from Brisbane to New South Wales.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE (*Oriolus sagittatus*) – This oriole is endemic as a breeder, but many move north after nesting. We saw them in Brisbane,

at O'Reilly's, on the Atherton Tableland, and at Chiltern NP--always in small numbers. The orioles are another group that seems to have colonized Eurasia from Australia.

GREEN ORIOLE (*Oriolus flavocinctus*) – Seen briefly in Brisbane, but then seen well at Centenary Park in Cairns.

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. We watched a nice pair beside the Spectacled Flying-fox roost and then saw a number of others. (We had seen the duller nominate race vieilloti, including on a nest, at Fred Bucholz Park en route to O'Reilly's.) "Green Figbird" which occurs on our checklist has been split, resulting in our bird's new English and scientific epithet. It also occurs to coastal se. New Guinea. [N]

Dicruridae (Drongos)

SPANGLED DRONGO (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) – Singletons were seen widely in Queensland forest, beginning with O'Reilly's and continuing through Cassowary House area.

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

WILLIE-WAGTAIL (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – One of the few birds that occurs throughout Australia, Willie is 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. We saw Willie almost daily, including at a nest in a tree in a Cairns parking lot where 4 additional species were nesting in the same tree! [N]

RUFOUS 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.

GRAY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) – Seen daily at O'Reilly's and again at Chiltern. Its high-pitched, squeaky song ascends in seesaw-like cadence in contrast to that of the previous species. This *Rhipidura* (a sizable genus of at least 44 species) actively feeds in the middle story and subcanopy.

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

WHITE-EARED MONARCH (*Carterornis leucotis*) – Duncan took us to a spot for this very local beauty below O'Reilly's, and after a while it started vocalizing. We called it in and saw it very well. 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 been 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*) – Ginny pointed out many a Black-faced Monarch to us--at O'Reilly's and on the Atherton Tableland. This and the following species belong to the chestnut-bellied group.

SPECTACLED MONARCH (*Symphysichrus trivirgatus*) – This one was seen well repeatedly, from O'Reilly's to the Atherton Tableland to Cassowary House.

PIED MONARCH (*Arses kaupi*) – This boldly patterned monarch is endemic to a small area of ne Queensland; we saw one well at the Curtain Fig Tree. [E]

MAGPIE-LARK (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) – The strikingly patterned "Mudlark" has been one of the most taxonomically controversial birds in Australasia. It's clear that its closest relative is the Torrent-lark of montane rainforest in New Guinea, another mud-nest builder. But exactly where they belong is still a bit controversial. DNA studies suggest that they belong with the monarchs, though some authors treat them as a separate family. Pairs deliver antiphonal duets accompanied by a variety of displays. We encountered them almost daily and saw them at nests on several occasions. [N]

LEADEN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra rubecula*) – We watched this species on our first birding trip to Sandy Camp Reserve at Brisbane.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

TORRESIAN CROW (*Corvus orru*) – Seen daily during our time in Queensland. Occurring commonly in s New Guinea, the species was named for the Torres Straits, which it crosses easily.

AUSTRALIAN RAVEN (*Corvus coronoides*) – We identified this with confidence only in Victoria and New South Wales, where we heard them and saw them with Kingfisher & Phil. [E]

LITTLE RAVEN (*Corvus mellori*) – Slightly smaller than its more widespread cousin, this one was a bit more common on our route through the south, and especially at the Deniliquin dump! [E]

Corcoracidae (White-winged Chough and Apostlebird)

WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH (*Corcorax melanorhamphos*) – This family has deep roots. Its two members, along with the Australasian Magpie, comprise the three largest cooperatively breeding songbirds. They are very gregarious throughout the year, with flocks of up to 100 in winter. They can be very playful, but they defend their territories with harsh, grating calls and aggressiveness. And, amazingly, this species comes closer than any other known bird to practicing "slavery." According to Tim Low, large groups sometimes assail smaller groups and lure away fledglings by wing-tail displays that command a following response, essentially kidnapping them to serve as extra helpers in their new group! We saw choughs daily in the south, and we stopped for good views a couple of times. Reminiscent of the choughs found in Europe (hence the name), they are only distantly related, belonging instead to a family endemic to Australia. [E]

APOSTLEBIRD (*Struthidea cinerea*) – The other member of the family Corcoracidae, this species too merits a monotypic genus. Most 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 congregate in massive flocks in the winter. We had good looks en route to Deniliquin and in the Deniliquin area. Remember how there were always 12? (Yes, it was breeding season.) [E]

Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-Paradise)

PARADISE RIFLEBIRD (*Ptiloris paradiseus*) – 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'. Most of us had good looks at females at O'Reilly's, but the males were not calling during our visit and we never saw one. [E]

VICTORIA'S RIFLEBIRD (*Ptiloris victoriae*) – But we did have great views of males and females of this one, including one male displaying from the top of a vertical trunk, its orange mouth lining visible when it called! Both males and females were regular on the grounds and at the bananas at Chambers Wildlife Lodge, and a male joined us for lunch on the veranda at Cassowary House. DNA evidence has elucidated that birds-of-paradise

are more closely related to the true corvids than to the bowerbirds (to which they were formerly thought to be close). [E]

Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

JACKY-WINTER (*Microeca fascinans*) – We saw this rather plain-plumaged "flycatcher" in the south, both at Chiltern NP (where we saw it on its tiny nest above the quail-thrush area) and near Deniliquin. [N]

SCARLET ROBIN (*Petroica boodang*) – We had a nice male of this pretty robin on our final afternoon of birding, in the You Yangs. "Boodang" is an Aboriginal word meaning "rock-dweller" that natives around Sydney used for this robin, fide Lesson (1837). [E]

RED-CAPPED ROBIN (*Petroica goodenovii*) – Another pretty little robin! This one, which forages mostly on the ground, we saw well with Phil in the Gulpa floodplain. 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. [E]

ROSE ROBIN (*Petroica rosea*) – We saw males of this exquisite little robin at O'Reilly's, first high in the canopy and then coming to a water drip on the ground. *Rosea* is said to be the most acrobatic of the genus. [E]

HOODED ROBIN (*Melanodryas cucullata*) – We had a male of this species, yet another spiffy little robin, in the Gulpa floodplain near Deniliquin. [E]

PALE-YELLOW ROBIN (*Tregellasia capito*) – We saw this little robin first at Kingfisher Park and then at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. [E]

EASTERN YELLOW ROBIN (*Eopsaltria australis*) – This confiding little beauty we encountered each day during our stay at O'Reilly's, including at a couple of nests, and then in the south as well (where it was seen daily). This species sometimes follows foraging lyrebirds and other bigger ground foragers to partake of the insects that are stirred up. The generic name means "dawn singer." [EN]

MANGROVE ROBIN (*Eopsaltria pulverulenta*) – We had great views of this mangrove specialist in the mangroves along the Cairns shoreline. Formerly placed in various other families--and within the petroicids in several different genera, including its own. It's unique within the family in its habitat preference, its hooked beak, and its rounded tail--all of which are sources of the uncertainty. It also occurs in the mangroves of New Guinea.

GRAY-HEADED ROBIN (*Heteromyias cinereifrons*) – A large, confiding robin of the rainforests of northeastern Queensland—and now split from *albispicularis* of New Guinea (Ashy Robin). We had good views on the Atherton Tableland, including right at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. [E]

Alaudidae (Larks)

AUSTRALASIAN BUSHLARK (*Mirafrja javanica*) – We had looks at this widespread species in the fields and fences of the Atherton Tableland where we stopped to see the mixed flock of cranes and black-cockatoos.

SKY LARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Introduced by early European settlers to make Australia feel (and sound) more like the homeland, this species survives in the south. We had several birds in impressive song-display high over the ponds at Werribee. [I]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

WELCOME SWALLOW (*Hirundo neoxena*) – These Barn Swallow look-alikes were common and widespread on our route.

FAIRY MARTIN (*Petrochelidon ariel*) – Seen in passing on various occasions, but we had good looks where they were nesting at Werribee. [N]

TREE MARTIN (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) – Seen at Deniliquin, but we didn't get great looks.

WHITE-BACKED SWALLOW (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*) – Of a monotypic genus, this handsome swallow is nomadic and roosts and nests in sandy banks and dunes--like those Phil took us to for this species near Deniliquin; we saw it quite nicely. [E]

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus australis*) – We had great views of this big warbler as they hopped in the open at the edge of the marshy pond at Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane. We later had them in the south as well.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

LITTLE GRASSBIRD (*Megalurus gramineus*) – Seen well (with some effort!) in the marsh surrounding some of the Werribee ponds on our final morning of birding.

BROWN SONGLARK (*Megalurus cruralis*) – We spotlighted ca. 4 different birds during our nocturnal search for the Plains-wanderer. I think everyone managed to get good looks. Formerly placed with the Old World Warblers (*Sylviidae*), the songlarks and grassbirds have been split off into their own family. [E]

TAWNY GRASSBIRD (*Megalurus timoriensis*) – Heard well, but seen only poorly, at the Sandy Camp Reserve in Brisbane, where they wouldn't cooperate (despite the fact that they had been doing flight displays but a few days earlier!).

RUFIOUS SONGLARK (*Megalurus mathewsi*) – We had fabulous scope views of a singing male that performed its lovely flight-song-display in the eucalypt woodland of Chiltern NP. Like the Brown Songlark, they are highly nomadic and disperse after breeding. [E]

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA (*Cisticola exilis*) – One of the cutest of the cisticolas, this species was singing and confiding at Werribee. The cisticolas (and their closest allies) are now in their own family.

Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)

SILVER-EYE (*Zosterops lateralis*) – We had many encounters with this sweet variation on a theme, from our first afternoon in Brisbane through O'Reilly's and the Atherton Tableland (remember the ones in the brilliant flowering trees at Tolga?) to the south (Chiltern, Deniliquin, and the You Yangs). The species occurs from Australia to the Fiji archipelago, with numerous races involved.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

OLIVE-TAILED THRUSH (*Zoothera lunulata*) – A.k.a. Bassian Thrush, this species was seen well a couple of times along the boardwalks at O'Reilly's. We studied it carefully to determine how scaly its rump was; my video made it clear that the second bird was of this species. [E]

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Its lovely song was heard at dawn from our lodgings in Beechworth, and we saw it at Deniliquin. [I]

Sturnidae (Starlings)

METALLIC STARLING (*Aplonis metallica*) – Representing a bird that has "returned" to Australia, this species has colonized ne Queensland from New Guinea. Low refers to it as part of a species 'swarm', an explosive radiation in the genus *Aplonis*, characterized by very low genetic divergence. It seems to have evolved recently from crevice-nesting starlings, now building poorly constructed nests in big colonies (as we saw near the Cairns airport), perhaps to overcome a shortage of cavities and to take advantage of superabundant fruit. They can produce three broods of up to four young per season--a phenomenal output for a frugivore, and one that doubtless compensates for flaws in craftsmanship. They are unusual in being seasonal fruit migrants, breeding in Queensland and then withdrawing to New Guinea. As such they are fruit couriers, partly responsible for the spread of

fruiting trees to islands off n Australia as well. In good light they are quite handsome! [aN]

COMMON MYNA (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Widespread along our route. [I]

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Seen only in the south, where they were regular near habitations and along highways. [I]

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

MISTLETOEBIRD (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) – Mainland Australia's only representative of the flowerpeckers, the colorful Mistletoebird is another example of a successful "new arrival" to Australia from Asia (where there are many species of flowerpeckers). Coming from a land full of mistletoe, the Mistletoebird is superior at distributing mistletoe seeds: The fruits it ingests bypass its gizzard, going straight to the intestine for such quick processing that seeds can pass out in less than four minutes! No old Australian bird can match that efficiency. Flitting rapidly among a variety of habitats, it spreads the seeds quite efficiently, having been measured moving as many as 66,000 seeds per hectare per season! (fide Tim Low, *Where Song Began*). We saw it from rainforest on the Atherton Tableland to open eucalypt woodland near Chiltern to arid roadside scrub en route to Deniliquin.

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (*Cinnyris jugularis*) – Seen best right in Cairns, at Cassowary House, and near Beechworth, this species too probably represents a "recent colonist" from Asia, where it is common. Sunbirds have slender tongues with forked tips (compared with the honeyeaters' brush-tipped tongues), which limit the sizes they can reach and still imbibe fluid efficiently. In Australia they have specialized on small, tubular flowers.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla tschutschensis*) – With some research, Jun determined that the rather drab wagtail we saw along the Barron River at the Platypus spot on 21 Nov was of this species. It's quite an uncommon visitor from Asia. [b]

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN) (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – Our best experience with this species was near Luke's Farm below O'Reilly's, where we watched a male in flight display above the short-grass meadow and then saw a bird on the ground carrying away a fecal sac-- which led Nico to find the baby pipit. [N]

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

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

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

DIAMOND FIRETAIL (*Stagonopleura guttata*) – We had several encounters with this spiffy seed consumer near Chiltern NP, where we eventually "nailed" a pair feeding a fledgling. Considered Near Threatened by Birdlife International, owing mostly to the loss of Eucalyptus woodland. We were delighted to see two more in the Gulpa floodplain near Deniliquin. [EN]

RED-BROWED FIRETAIL (*Neochmia temporalis*) – Seen widely in north and south, this handsome endemic usually occurred in small flocks and allowed great views. [E]

ZEBRA FINCH (AUSTRALIAN) (*Taeniopygia guttata castanotis*) – Its call notes embodying the sound of a pet shop, this lovely little estrildid was a very nice surprise at our stop along the highway north of Deniliquin en route to our Plains-wanderer adventure. We scoped both males and females in the flock. This taxon is endemic to Australia, the nominate race occurring in the Lesser Sundas.

DOUBLE-BARRED FINCH (*Taeniopygia bichenovii*) – Another adorable little estrildid! We had nice looks, first at Sandy Camp Reserve (Brisbane) and later on the Atherton Tableland & Granite Gorge. Ours were of the nominate race. [E]

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA (*Lonchura punctulata*) – A.k.a. Nutmeg Mannikin, this species was seen by some of us at the edge of Centenary Park in Cairns. [I]

CHESTNUT-BREASTED MUNIA (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) – Seen on our second day of birding near Brisbane.

MAMMALS

SHORT-BEAKED ECHIDNA (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) – We had just seen the Koala and were returning to the bus when Jeff pointed out another of our most-wanted mammals: the Short-beaked Echidna, a monotreme like the Platypus. We all watched it cross the road in Chiltern-Mt. Pilot NP. What a treat! It's specialized for feeding on soil invertebrates exposed by powerful digging and then licked up with its long, sticky tongue. Its single egg, and later, the juvenile, is carried in a pouch on its belly. The echidnas and the Platypus are the only egg-laying mammals. Its range includes essentially all of Australia as well as s New Guinea.

PLATYPUS (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) – Another mammalian highlight of the trip! Kingfisher took us to a lovely vista point overlooking a clear section of the Barron River, where we sat one late afternoon awaiting this fabled monotreme. It did not disappoint! It swam up and down the river as we watched, intermittently diving and surfacing at some distance from where it disappeared. What a thrill! [E]

YELLOW-FOOTED ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus flavipes*) – An antechinus is a small, carnivorous marsupial with a pointed snout, and this species is the most widespread (and the most diurnal) of the lot. We saw it in a small tree, where it played hide-and-seek, in the eucalypt woodland near the Turquoise Parrots in Chiltern NP. [E]

FAT-TAILED DUNNART (*Sminthopsis crassicaudata*) – A miniscule, mouse-like, marsupial which we saw running through the paddock as we searched for the Plains-wanderer. Largely nocturnal, the Dunnart is called "fat-tailed" owing to the wide base of its tail, which it uses to store fat. An unanticipated treat! [E]

LONG-NOSED BANDICOOT (*Peramelas nasuta*) – A largely carnivorous marsupial, this little bandicoot with the extremely long snout is largely nocturnal and has a reverse pouch. Don saw it digging below the honey-smeared trunk at Chambers Wildlife Lodge when he stayed until 11:00PM one night. The following night Ron and Nancy found it much earlier and retrieved me as I was walking to join the owling party way up the road. We returned to the honey tree and got to watch it for ca. 10 minutes; it ultimately poked down into the hole below the honey drip, exposing nothing but its tail! [E]

KOALA (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) – We all wanted to see this symbol of Australia. It took a good while--to when we were in Chiltern NP with Phil. We were standing around watching honeyeaters in the eucalypt woodland--for as long as 10 minutes--when Ron looked up and spotted a Koala overhead in a nearby tree! What a treat to see another "living fossil", the only extant member of its deep-rooted herbivorous family. [E]

COMMON BRUSHTAIL POSSUM (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) – The second-largest of the possums, this nocturnal possum was a big roosting ball up in a tree at our Painted Honeyeater woodland near Deniliquin. Sadly, it was introduced into New Zealand (where there were no native mammals) in the 19th century to establish a fur industry; like so many other introductions, it became a major pest and is one of the targets of conservation efforts to free NZ of mammalian pests that threaten the native fauna. [E]

SUGAR GLIDER (*Petaurus breviceps*) – These fabulous little marsupials that glide between trees and are attracted to nectar and honey (as well as

- eating arboreal arthropods, pollen, and manna) occur in New Guinea and to the Moluccas, as well as Australia. We all had fabulous views of them at Chambers Wildlife Lodge, where they came nightly (though sometimes late!) to the honey-smear trunk. Another favorite!
- COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUM** (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) – We had good looks at this one (with the white-tipped tail) the night we went looking for Marbled Frogmouth below O'Reilly's.
- GREEN RINGTAIL POSSUM** (*Pseudochirops archeri*) – Endemic to a small area of rainforest in ne Queensland, this species was a treat to see so well. Jun spotted the first one near Lake Barrine, but it was a roosting clump high in the vines (though not too bad in the scopes). But we later found a close mother with a young one in its pouch near the Curtain Fig Tree. [E]
- STRIPED POSSUM** (*Dactylopsila trivirgata*) – One of the fanciest marsupials of the trip, this fabulous, boldly patterned, arboreal little possum came in repeatedly to lap the honey-smear Eucalyptus at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. Scarce in Australia--where it occurs only in the rainforests of ne Queensland--this possum is more common in New Guinea.
- MUSKY RAT-KANGAROO** (*Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*) – Another marsupial restricted to the rainforests of ne Queensland, this was the smallest kangaroo we saw. In fact, it is the smallest macropod and the only one with 5 toes, the first being opposable. It's diurnal, and we watched it moving about (using all four feet) in search of fruit tossed from the balcony at Cassowary House. It seems to be a "living fossil" of sorts, with ancestors that branched early on. [E]
- RED-NECKED PADEMELON** (*Thylogale thetis*) – Though they are mostly nocturnal, we had some great, close views of these small kangaroos in the early mornings (and evenings) around O'Reilly's, where they are common. [E]
- MAREEBA ROCK-WALLABY** (*Petrogale mareeba*) – We had delightfully close encounters with these confiding little guys at Granite Gorge, including mothers with Joeys. They are one of 7 closely related species that inhabit rocky outcroppings in e Queensland. [E]
- AGILE WALLABY** (*Macropus agilis*) – The wallabys we saw in the Lake Barrine-Atherton Tableland area. [E]
- RED-NECKED WALLABY** (*Macropus rufogriseus*) – Seen well in Lamington NP. [E]
- WHIPTAIL WALLABY** (*Macropus parryi*) – A.k.a. Pretty-faced Wallaby, this striking kangaroo was seen a few times in the eucalypt woodland en route to and from O'Reilly's. [E]
- EASTERN GRAY KANGAROO** (*Macropus giganteus*) – This was the commonest big kangaroo in the south. We had good comparisons between it and the next two species on our Plains-wanderer evening. This species was the palest of the three and the most uniform, with a black-tipped tail. [E]
- WESTERN GRAY KANGAROO** (*Macropus fuliginosus*) – In the crepuscular period when all these big roos were getting active, we could see that this species was quite sooty-dark, especially on the head. They too have a black-tipped tail. [E]
- RED KANGAROO** (*Macropus rufus*) – This one, with the distinctive face pattern and all white tail, is the largest living marsupial. It was a treat to see a few of these mixed with the others in the arid country en route to Robert's place to look for the Plains-wanderer. [E]
- SWAMP WALLABY** (*Wallabia bicolor*) – This shy, solitary roo is more diurnal than most. We saw individuals a couple of times in the south, at Chiltern NP. [E]
- SPECTACLED FLYING-FOX** (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) – We had great studies of this big frugivore, endemic to coastal Queensland, right along the Cairns Esplanade. They are considered Vulnerable, owing mostly to habitat destruction. [E]
- LITTLE RED FLYING-FOX** (*Pteropus scapulatus*) – This species feeds mostly on eucalypt and melaleuca nectar and thus is partially nomadic, following its food supplies. During Oct-Nov it forms large camps where mating occurs. Jun showed us one such camp at a roadside stop beside a lake on the Atherton Tableland, where many individuals were clumped closely together. It's the smallest flying-fox in Australia and the one with the widest range. Groups of up to a million have been documented! [E]
- OLD WORLD RABBIT** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Quite common in Beechworth and generally in the south. [I]
- EUROPEAN BROWN HARE** (*Lepus europaeus*) – Common throughout se Australia; we saw numbers of them in the more arid country near Deniliquin. [I]
- RED FOX** (*Vulpes vulpes*) – Singletons were seen in Chiltern NP and near Deniliquin. [I]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In addition to all the fabulous birds and mammals, we enjoyed a nice variety of fascinating other critters, from Ulysses butterflies and Orchard Swallowtails to a host of reptiles and amphibians. I can't resist recounting a few of the more fascinating herps:

--the big, beautifully patterned Carpet Python (*Morelia spilota*) that was crossing the road in Lamington NP. It's a constrictor that can reach 13' in length and feeds on small mammals, birds, and lizards.

--the big Tree Goannas or Lace Monitors (*Varanus varius*) we saw on 27-28 Nov in Chiltern NP, especially that beauty that Linda spotted on a roadside trunk. Belonging to the monitor lizard family, these eat insects, reptiles, small mammals, birds, birds' eggs, and even carrion. They were a favorite traditional food of the Aborigines.

--the incredible Frilled Dragon or Frill-necked Lizard (*Chlamydosaurus kingii*) that Jun caught and showed us up close on our drive into Granite Gorge. We got to see it produce its startling deimatic display, given (in our case) when it is threatened, but also in courtship and territorial displays. It belongs to the agamid family.

--the colorful Boyd's Forest Dragon (*Hypsilurus boydii*) that was so nicely camouflaged on a gray trunk near the water feature at Kingfisher Park. It's an arboreal agamid lizard endemic to the rainforests of n Queensland. It was described by William John Macleay (of Macleay's Honeyeater), who named it for Boyd, a Brit who collected specimens for the Australian Museum.

--the Orange-thighed Treefrogs (*Litoria xanthomera*) near the swimming pool at Chambers Wildlife Lodge. They lured some of us away from the honey-smear trunks to locate the source of their persistent calling nightly. We were delighted to locate these colorful treefrogs endemic to a small area of tropical rainforest in n Queensland. It was good to find an endemic frog in the midst of so many introduced Cane Toads (now *Rhinella marina* instead of *Bufo marina*, native to C. and S. America).

Totals for the tour: 329 bird taxa and 26 mammal taxa