



Bellbird

BIRDING, WILDLIFE & PHOTO TOURS

Unique and unforgettable nature experiences!

Bellbird Tours Pty Ltd

Australia-wide: Berri, SA –

Stockton, NSW – Mildura, Vic

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Six Grasswren 8 day birding tour

3-11 October 2024



Now in our 19th year, the 6 Grasswren tour continues to be one of our most popular outback birding tours. This is one of Australia's epic birding adventures, during which we search for half of all of Australia's current Grasswren species. This fast-paced trip is not for the faint-hearted, with lots of walking in sometimes difficult terrain, early departures and late finishes each day, while covering over 2500 km in 8 days. We may encounter harsh outback conditions such as extreme heat, frosty mornings, torrential rain or dust-storms. The accommodation is in basic rooms often with no private facilities. However, the rewards are some of Australia's hardest to find, yet most sought-after species: Grey, Striated, Short-tailed, Thick-billed, Western and Eyrean Grasswren. We will travel

through exceptionally remote areas including the 1,000,000 ha of Bookmark Biosphere eucalypt mallee scrub, spectacular rock formations on the edge of the outback in the Flinders Ranges, white and red sand dunes of the vast Strzelecki desert, endless stony 'gibber' plains and the Bulloo river overflow. In addition to the Grasswrens, time will also be spent searching for other good species such as Bourke's Parrot, Red-shouldered Whistler, Inland Dotterel, chats, Honeyeaters including Pied and Grey-fronted; Banded Whiteface, Gibberbird, Chestnut and Cinnamon Quail-thrush and many more. Some years we see Letterwinged Kites and Flock Bronzewing on this tour – their presence depends on preceding rainfall. You'll return home from this trip with an impressive list of outback birds!

Tour starts & finishes:

Adelaide, SA (see itinerary for details of pickup locations)

Scheduled departure & return dates:

3-11 October 2024

Price: \$4,799 all-inclusive (discounts available).

Leader: Peter Waanders & Helga Kieskamp

Trip reports and photos of previous tours:

<http://www.bellbirdtours.com/reports>

Questions? Contact BELLBIRD BIRDING TOURS:

- Freecall 1800-BIRDING
- Email birds@bellbirdtours.com

READ ON FOR:

- Further tour details
- Daily itinerary
- Booking information

Six Grasswren tour Oct 2024



Tour starts & finishes: Adelaide, SA (see itinerary for details of pickup locations)

Scheduled departure and return dates: Tour commences in the afternoon of 3 Oct 2024 and finishes after breakfast on 12 Oct 2024. See daily itinerary for further details.

Leader: Peter Waanders & Helga Kieskamp

Difficulty: Low/Medium/High/Excellent level of fitness required. This fast-paced trip is not for the faint-hearted, with lots of walking in sometimes difficult terrain, early departures and late finishes each day, while driving around 2,500 km (almost half on unsealed roads of varying quality) in 8 days. We may encounter harsh outback conditions such as extreme heat, frosty mornings, torrential rain or dust-storms. You can opt out of any challenging activities if you like.

What to bring: Please travel light. Binoculars, camera, mobile phone, chargers, power adaptors if you're an international guest, insect repellent, sunscreen, personal medications, sun hat, water bottle, hand sanitizer. Sturdy footwear recommended. Scopes, super-telephoto lenses with tripods, and heavy suitcases are discouraged.

Clothing: Lightweight long pants, t-shirt and long-sleeved shirt, over the top of which you can wear layers that can be taken off as necessary, including a jumper / sweater and a wind- and rain-proof jacket.

Group size: Minimum 4, maximum 8 participants.

Cost: AU\$4,799 per person including accommodation and all meals, based on double or twin-share occupancy. Single occupancy surcharge of \$690. Not included: drinks, tips, personal expenses. Earlybird discount of \$99 for bookings received up to 12 months before departure date. Return-client discount may apply. Check our website for discounts T&C's.

Bookings: Online at <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings/> - see last page of this brochure.

ITINERARY

Six Grasswren tour Oct 2024

Day 0: 3 Oct '24. You will be transferred from a meeting point (TBA) in Adelaide departing 3:00pm, to Berri to meet your guide(s) for dinner and introductions. Overnight **Berri Resort Hotel** (en-suite rooms; meals included: D).

Day 1: 4 Oct '24. We depart before sunrise to explore a 1,000,000 ha large wilderness of 'mallee' eucalypt scrubland. This area contains a number of reserves including Birdlife Australia's Gluepot Reserve, Murray Sunset NP and others. Where exactly we'll go in this wilderness depends on preceding seasonal conditions. It is sure to be an impressive exploration as we find ourselves off the beaten track in search of our first Grasswren species: Striated Grasswren. Here we also target Red-lored Whistler, of which we have had excellent views on previous trips, and the localised Mallee Emuwren. Other species we look for include Southern Scrubrobin, Shy Heathwren, Chestnut Quail-thrush, Little Friarbird, Striped, Yellow-plumed and White-eared Honeyeater, White-browed Treecreeper and with luck Malleefowl. Overnight **Berri Resort Hotel** (en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 2: 5 Oct '24. We depart early for further birding in the mallee reserves surrounding Berri, with targets being Chestnut Quail-thrush, Gilbert's Whistler, Redthroat, Regent Parrot and Mulga Parrot. Heading east, we should see Pink Cockatoos and Blue Bonnets. After lunch at the scenic confluence of Australia's two major rivers: the Murray and the Darling, with many waterbirds, we turn north to Broken Hill, where we may encounter our first Chirruping Wedgebills. Overnight **Outback Lodge, Broken Hill** (en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 3: 6 Oct '24. We follow the road north, with further chances of Chirruping Wedgebill, Bluebonnet and Pink Cockatoo. We stop at the eccentric Packsaddle Plains roadhouse where we may come across Ground Cuckoo-shrike and with even more luck, Bourke's Parrot. We have lunch in Tibooburra and soon after we'll explore the vast expanses of Sturt NP. Once or twice on these trips, we've come across Grey Falcon here! In the same area we also have a small chance of Black Falcon and Aust. Bustard. More regularly encountered birds here include Gibberbird, Inland Dotterel, Cinnamon Quail-thrush and Australian Pratincole. But in this boom-and-bust environment, birds are highly nomadic so what we see varies from year to year. Returning around nightfall across the gibber plains surrounding Tibooburra we may see Bourke's Parrot and Inland Dotterel. Overnight **Tibooburra Granites Motel** (en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 4: 7 Oct '24. An early start for one of the drawcards of this trip! We're off to search the vast outback swamps on the NSW-Qld border for the enigmatic Grey Grasswren. Later today we continue birding through Sturt



Chestnut-breasted Whiteface, Australian Pratincole, Birding, Black-breasted Buzzard, Wet conditions in the outback © P Waanders

Six Grasswren tour Oct 2024

National Park, with chances of Flock Bronzewing in wet years, Inland Dotterel and Red-browed Pardalote. At Cameron Corner, the point where South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales meet, we spend the afternoon searching for Banded Whiteface and Cinnamon Quail-thrush. On a previous occasion we've even seen Grey Falcon! Overnight **Cameron Corner Store Cabins** (basic private rooms with shared bathrooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 5: 8 Oct '24. We depart before sunrise for a visit to the red sand dunes to search for Eyrean Grasswren, Cinnamon Quail-thrush and any other species still needed. We will now enter one of the remotest parts of outback Australia as we continue our journey west where, depending on seasonal conditions we may come across Black-breasted Buzzard and Letter-winged Kite (not present each year). We then join the Strzelecki track and turn south. In the white sand dunes of the Strzelecki desert we have another chance of Eyrean Grasswren. We have lunch at a waterhole fed by an artesian bore, with flocks of Zebra Finches, chats and White-backed Swallows. The endless open stony plains of the Strzelecki desert are traversed by mostly dry watercourses. We will follow the Track south across the desert, looking for species such as Budgerigar, Red-backed Kingfisher, Crimson, Orange and Gibber Chat. At sunset we arrive at the Lyndhurst Hotel, a typical outback pub with basic facilities but lots of character. **Overnight Lyndhurst Hotel** (en-suite cabins; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 6: 9 Oct '24. We spend the morning birding at Mt Lyndhurst, on the edge of the Strzelecki desert, to search for Thick-billed Grasswren, Inland Dotterel, Cinnamon Quail-thrush, Chirruping Wedgebill, Rufous Fieldwren, Budgerigar and Cockatiel. An outback lake usually holds good numbers of waterfowl including Blue-billed and Freckled Duck. In the afternoon we drive along the Flinders Ranges, an impressive range of hills and rock formations on the edge of the outback. We make a short detour into these ranges to search for the endangered Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby and are also likely to come across Grey-fronted Honeyeater, Elegant Parrot and Redthroat. Towards the end of the day we visit the Arid Lands Botanical Gardens in Port Augusta, where there are often Pied and Black Honeyeaters present this time of year. Tonight's dinner in one of the best Indian restaurants is sure to be a highlight, and they also have a good selection of standard western dishes. Overnight **Standpipe Motel, Port Augusta** (en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 7: 10 Oct '24. This morning we depart early to a site for Western Grasswren – split from Thick-billed in 2009 – before venturing into the Gawler Ranges where we comb the spinifex-grass covered slopes for the elusive Short-tailed Grasswren. On some of our previous trips we have had views of this species almost too close for binocular focus! Other birds we are likely to come across include Slender-billed Thornbill, Rufous Fieldwren, Redthroat and the beautiful 'turquoise' range of Splendid Fairywren. Overnight **Mt Ive Station** (some en-suite cabins, some non-en-suite historical cottagerooms; meals included: B, L, D).



Inland Dotterel, Grey Falcon, Letter-winged Kite, Gibberbird © P Waanders

Six Grasswren tour Oct 2024

Day 8: 11 Oct '24. This the morning we'll have another chance at Short-tailed Grasswren following which we search the Bluebush plains near for Western Grasswren. Watching the sun rise across the beautiful, spinifex-covered hills of the Gawler ranges is one of life's little pleasures. Other birds we are likely to come across here are Hooded Robin, Southern Whiteface,, Black-eared Cuckoo and Slender-billed thornbill. We'll then follow the coast south, looking for Banded Stilt, Elegant Parrot, the *rosinae* race of Slender-billed Thornbill and the *rosina* race of White-browed Scrubwren, to arrive in Adelaide in the evening. Over our last meal together we'll prepare the final bird list and reminisce about the many great birds we've seen and experiences we've had...! Overnight **Hotel in Adelaide** (ensuite hotel rooms; meals included: B, L, D). **Please make your own onward travel arrangements for any time tomorrow (12 Oct) – continental breakfast is included and available from 6:30am.**

Pre- and post-tour options:

If you wish to stay in Adelaide before the tour starts, or after the tour finishes, and you'd like us to book you into a hotel, please indicate this on the booking form.

Price inclusions and exclusions:

Included: All meals commencing with Dinner on Day 0 and finishing with Breakfast on Day 9, morning tea/coffee, some snacks, some fruit, some drinks, unlimited drinking water refills. Accommodation in private en-suite rooms, although on some nights only basic rooms with shared facilities are available. Transport using comfortable and reliable 4WD vehicle, expert guiding, any entry fees, taxes.

Excluded: Travel to & from departure and finish points, Pre- & post trip accommodation, any meals before Dinner on Day 0 or after breakfast on Day 9, drinks except where provided, personal expenses, tips, insurance.

Bookings: Please book online: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings/> - see the last page of this brochure.

Reports of previous tours:

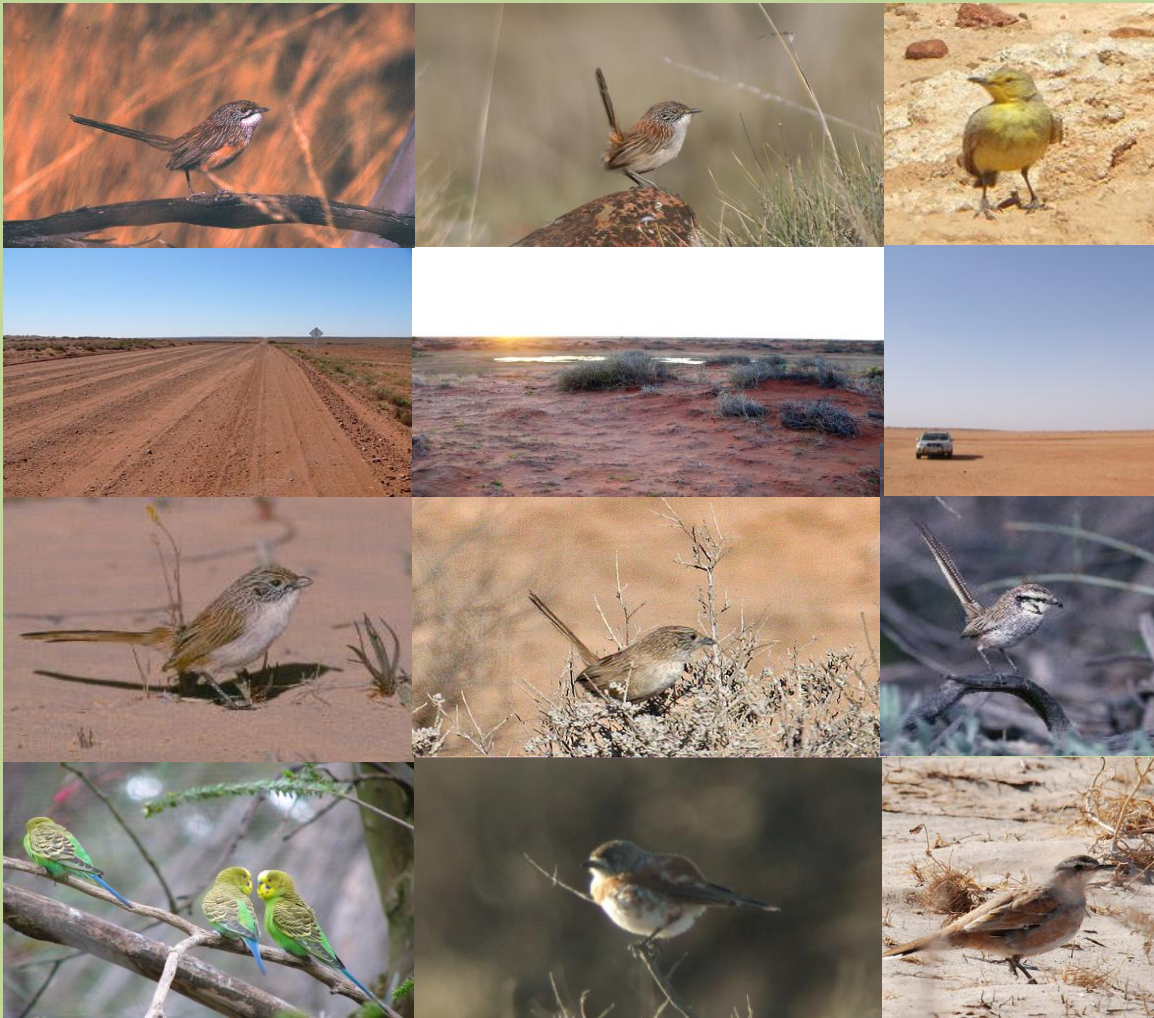
Reports and photos of previous tours can be found on our website.

Contacts:

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email birds@bellbirdtours.com

Disclaimers: (1) itinerary may be modified slightly due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors; (2) until we've received your final payment, tour price may be subject to adjustment in the event of significant cost increases in ground arrangements. See the terms and conditions posted on our website.

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Striated Grasswren, Short-tailed Grasswren, Gibberbird
Strzelecki Track, Mertys, Cameron Corner
Eyrean Grasswren, Thick-billed Grasswren, Grey Grasswren
Budgerigar, Chestnut-breasted Whiteface, Cinnamon Quail-thrush

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Possible species list

Emu
Plumed Wistling-duck
Wandering Whistling Duck
Freckled Duck
Musk Duck
Black Swan
Australian Shelduck
Australian Wood Duck
Pink-eared Duck
Australasian Shoveler
Grey Teal
Chestnut Teal
Northern Mallard¹
Pacific Black Duck
Hardhead
blue-billed duck
Malleefowl
Brown Quail
Stubble Quail
Australasian Grebe
Hoary-headed Grebe
Great Crested Grebe
Glossy Ibis
Australian White Ibis
Straw-necked Ibis
Royal Spoonbill
Yellow-billed Spoonbill
Eastern Great Egret
Intermediate Egret
Cattle Egret
White-necked Heron
White-faced Heron
Little Egret
Nankeen Night-Heron
Australian Pelican
Little Pied Cormorant
Great Cormorantblack
Little Black Cormorant
Pied Cormorant
Black-faced Cormorant
Australasian Darter
Black-shouldered Kite
Letter-winged Kite
Whistling Kite
Black Kite

Black-breasted Buzzard
Brown Goshawk
Collared Sparrowhawk
Spotted Harrier
Swamp Harrier
Wedge-tailed Eagle
Little Eagle
Australian Bustard
Purple Swamphen
Baillon's Crake
Australian Spotted Crake
Spotless Crake
Buff-banded Rail
Black-tailed Native-hen
Dusky Moorhen
Eurasian Coot
Brolga
Little Button-quail
Australian Pied Oystercatcher
Sooty Oystercatcher
Black-winged Stilt
Red-necked Avocet
Banded Stilt
Red-capped Plover
Double-banded Plover
Greater Sand Plover
Inland Dotterel
Black-fronted Dotterel
Red-kneed Dotterel
Oriental Plover
Banded Lapwing
Masked Lapwing
Common Sandpiper
Wood Sandpiper
Common Greenshank
Ruddy Turnstone
Red-necked Stint
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
Curlew Sandpiper
Ruff
Australian Pratincole
Crested Tern
Gull-billed Tern
Caspian Tern
Whiskered Tern

White-winged Black Tern
Silver Gull
Rock Dove¹
Barbary Dove¹
Spotted Dove¹
Common Bronzewing
Flock Bronzewing
Crested Pigeon
Diamond Dove
Peaceful Dove
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo
Black-eared Cuckoo
Pallid Cuckoo
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Eastern Barn Owl
Southern Boobook
Tawny Frogmouth
Spotted Nightjar
Australian Owlet-nightjar
White-throated Needletail
Fork-tailed Swift
Laughing Kookaburra
Red-backed Kingfisher
Sacred Kingfisher
Rainbow Bee-eater
Nankeen Kestrel
Brown Falcon
Australian Hobby
Grey Falcon
Black Falcon
Peregrine Falcon
Galah
Pink Cockatoo
Long-billed Corella
Little Corella
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Cockatiel
Rainbow Lorikeet
Musk Lorikeet
Purple-crowned Lorikeet
Regent Parrot
Eastern Rosella
Crimson (Adelaide) Rosella
Crimson (Yellow) Rosella
Australian (Pt Lincoln) Ringneck

Australian (Mallee) Ringneck
 Blue Bonnet (yellow-vented)
 Blue Bonnet (pale form)
 Red-rumped Parrot
 Mulga Parrot
 Budgerigar
 Bourke's Parrot
 Blue-winged Parrot
 Elegant Parrot
 Scarlet-chested Parrot
 White-browed Treecreeper
 Brown Treecreeper
 Superb Fairy-wren
 Splendid Fairy-wren
 White-winged Fairy-wren
 Variegated Fairy-wren
 Striated Grasswren
 Short-tailed Grasswren
 Thick-billed Grasswren
 Western Grasswren
 Eyrean Grasswren
 Grey Grasswren
 Pied Honeyeater
 Singing Honeyeater
 White-eared Honeyeater
 Yellow-plumed Honeyeater
 Grey-fronted Honeyeater
 White-plumed Honeyeater
 White-fronted Honeyeater
 Blue-faced Honeyeater
 Yellow-throated Miner
~~Black-eared Miner~~
 Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
 Red Wattlebird
 Little Wattlebird
 Striped Honeyeater
 Crimson Chat
 Orange Chat
 White-fronted Chat
 Gibberbird
 Yellow Chat
 Black Honeyeater
 New Holland Honeyeater
 Brown-headed Honeyeater
 Spotted Pardalote
 Red-browed Pardalote

Striated Pardalote
 White-browed Scrubwren
 Shy Heathwren
 Rufous Fieldwren
 Redthroat
 Weebill
 Yellow-rumped Thornbill
 Chestnut-rumped Thornbill
 Slender-billed Thornbill
 Buff-rumped Thornbill
 Inland Thornbill
 Southern Whiteface
~~Chestnut-breasted Whiteface~~
 Banded Whiteface
 White-browed Babbler
 Chestnut-crowned Babbler
 Cinnamon Quail-thrush
 Chestnut Quail-thrush
 Chirruping Wedgebill
 Grey Butcherbird
 Pied Butcherbird
 Australian Magpie
 Grey Currawong
 White-breasted Woodswallow
 Masked Woodswallow
 White-browed Woodswallow
 Little Woodswallow
 Ground Cuckoo-shrike
 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
 White-winged Triller
 Varied Sittella
 Crested Shrike-tit
 Gilbert's Whistler
 Red-lored Whistler
 Rufous Whistler
 Golden Whistler
 Grey Shrike-thrush
 Crested Bellbird
 Dusky Woodswallow
 Grey Fantail
 Willie Wagtail
 Restless Flycatcher
 Magpie-lark
 Australian Raven
 Little Raven
 Little Crow

White-winged Chough
 Apostlebird
 Jacky Winter
 Red-capped Robin
 Hooded Robin
 Southern Scrub-robin
 Horsfield's Bushlark
 Eurasian Skylark¹
 White-backed Swallow
 Welcome Swallow
 Fairy Martin
 Tree Martin
 Australian Reed-Warbler
 Little Grassbird
 Rufous Songlark
 Brown Songlark
 Silvereye
 Common Starling¹
 Common Blackbird¹
 Mistletoebird
 House Sparrow¹
 Zebra Finch
 Red-browed Finch
 Australasian Pipit

Steps to book this tour:

Step 1: Essential reading

- Download, save and read the itinerary (this document)
- Read our [terms and conditions](https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions) and the [release of liability waiver](https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions) (both can be found on <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions>).
- Read our [health & safety information](https://www.bellbirdtours.com/health-and-safety/) page (<https://www.bellbirdtours.com/health-and-safety/>)

Step 2: Online booking

Head over to our secure online booking page: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings>.
(Should you prefer a paper booking form, this can be downloaded from there).

Step 3: Pay the deposit

To secure your seat, a deposit of 20% of the tour price is required at the time of booking. Full payment is due 60 days prior to the departure date. Until full payment has been received, Bellbird Tours reserves the right to change the tour price (eg due to changing fuel prices). Payment options:

- ☐ *Domestic electronic funds transfer*: please send funds to the following bank account:
- bank: Australia & New Zealand Bank (ANZ), 112 Rundle Mall, Adelaide SA 5000
 - account name: Bellbird Tours Pty Ltd
 - Branch No. (BSB) 015-140 Account No. 206136528
 - Please use your *surname* as the booking reference.
- ☐ *Visa, Mastercard & Google Pay*: through Pin Payments (an easy, secure online payment system). They charge us a fee of ~3%, which we pass on to you. Please contact us to use this option, and we'll email you a secure payment link.
- ☐ *International electronic funds transfer*: please send funds in Australian Dollars (+ bank charges or AU\$20 bank transaction fee, see notes below) to the following bank account:
- international swift code: anzbau3m (no IBAN codes are used in Australia)
 - bank: Australia & New Zealand Bank (ANZ), 112 Rundle Mall, Adelaide SA 5000
 - account name: Bellbird Tours Pty Ltd
 - Branch No. (BSB) 015-140 Account No. 206136528
 - If possible, please use your *surname* as the booking reference.
 - If you are asked to provide our physical address, this is: 101 Chilton Road, Berri, SA 5343, Australia.
 - Please specify AU\$ as the recipient's currency, and the correct amount. Select the option for you to incur any charges at *both* ends; if no such option exists, please add AU\$20 to cover the bank fee at the recipient's end.

Any discrepancy between the amount payable and amount received will be added to the final balance, or payable in cash at the start of the tour. Prices and fees are not negotiable.

Step 4: You're done!

Sit back and wait for your booking confirmation to arrive (24-48 hrs). Meanwhile, should you have any questions, please contact us via: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/about-us/>.