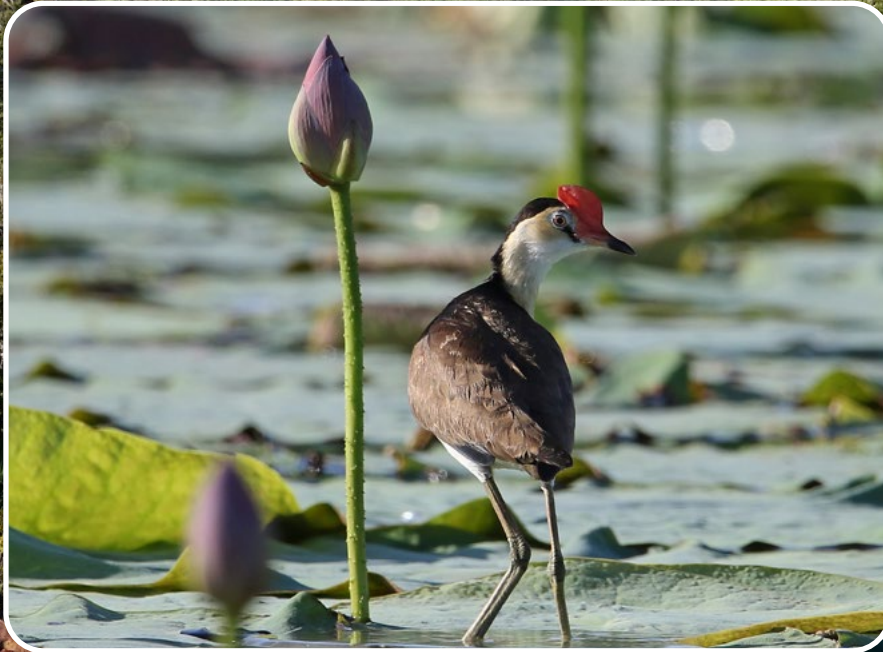




Top End

21 - 29 August 2028

The Northern Territory's 'Top End' is one of Australia's top birding destinations and includes tantalizing destinations such as Kakadu National Park, Nitmiluk National Park, Pine Creek, Katherine and Judbarra/Gregory National Park (Timber Creek Region). A raft of wonderful birds inhabit this scenic area, including the sought-after Gouldian Finch, the rare Hooded Parrot, the localized Chestnut-quilled Rock Pigeon, the elusive Red Goshawk; the stunning Rainbow Pitta and many other specialties. In addition, we'll look for Saltwater Crocodile, the endemic Short-eared Rock-wallaby and other macropods.

During the tour we can expect up to ten finch species, including Gouldian, Masked and Star Finches and Yellow-rumped and Pictorella Mannikins; parrots such as the endemic Hooded Parrot, Northern Rosella, Red-winged Parrot, Cockatiel, Budgerigar, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo; pigeons including Chestnut-quilled and White-quilled Rock Pigeon, Partridge Pigeon; quails and buttonquails; a variety of Honeyeaters; and a raft of waterfowl and good chance of Black Bittern and Great-billed Heron. This is also a very good time of the year to see raptors. Join us for this exciting tour in Australia's Top End!

ITINERARY

Day 0: 21 August 2028

Arrival in Darwin

After arriving in Darwin, please make your own way to our hotel, where we meet for introductions and dinner tonight.

Overnight: Club Tropical Resort, Lee Point, en-suite hotel room

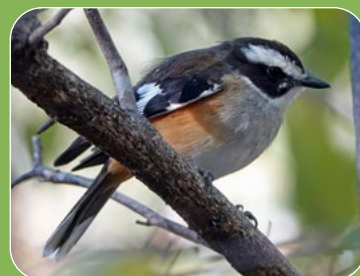
Meals included: D

Day 1: 22 August 2028

Darwin to Kakadu National Park

Our guide will pick you up after an early breakfast. We'll visit Buffalo Creek, where, depending on the tide, we have a chance of glimpsing the elusive Chestnut Rail. Other mangrove species here include Black Butcherbird, Green-backed Gerygone, Canary White-eye, Mangrove Golden Whistler and Azure Kingfisher. On the nearby beach we may see the huge Beach Stone-curlew. We'll visit one of the local reserves containing Monsoon Forest to search for Grey Whistler, Arafura Fantail, Little Shrikethrush, Green-backed Gerygone, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove and our main target Rainbow Pitta. In the Darwin Botanic Gardens we will be looking for Rufous and Barking Owls on their day roosts and then we'll drive to the Fogg Dam wetlands, originally a rice-growing scheme, but thousands of Magpie Geese put an end to that and the area is now a nature reserve. The reedbeds and lily-covered ponds are home to birds like Brolga, Magpie Geese, Black-necked Stork, Royal Spoonbill, Comb-crested Jacana, White-browed and Baillon's Crake, Green Pygmy Goose, Broad-billed and Paperbark Flycatchers, Tawny Grassbird, and Golden-headed Cisticola. In the adjacent woodlands we have a chance of Rainbow Pitta and Lemon-bellied Flycatcher.

Towards the end of the day we arrive in Kakadu, Australia's largest terrestrial national park. Covering almost 20,000 sq. km, it is a place of great ecological and biological diversity. The rock escarpments are a treasure trove of Aboriginal rock paintings. And the birdlife and wildlife is spectacular! Along the way we visit one of Kakadu's finest wetlands, Mamukala, a large billabong that can hold thousands of waterbirds. From the bird hide we can see waterfowl such as Magpie Goose, Radjah Shelduck, Hardhead, Plumed and Wandering Whistling Duck, Green Pygmy Goose and egrets and herons include Little, Plumed and Great Egret, Nankeen Night Heron and White-necked and Pied Heron. After checking in at our hotel in Jabiru we will head South toward Nawur-landja to bird among the sandstone cliffs and watch the sunset. Targets here are Banded Fruit Dove, Partridge Pigeon, Chestnut-quilled Rock Pigeon, White-lined Honeyeater, Sandstone Shrikethrush and the Sand-



Buff-sided Robin, Gouldian Finch, Glossy Ibis, Varied Lorikeet, and Yellow-rumped Mannikin. All photos by Peter Waanders.

stone race of Helmeted Friarbird.

Overnight: Crocodile Hotel Jabiru, en-suite hotel rooms

Meals included: B, L, D

Day 2: 23 August 2028

Kakadu National Park

We have an early morning and head north to Bardedjilidji for an early walk. Here we will be looking for Chestnut-quilled Rock Pigeon, Sandstone Shrikethrush and maybe a Rainbow Pitta or Rose-crowned Fruit Dove. After the walk our next spot for the rest of the morning is Ubirr. This spectacular viewpoint over the floodplain can also be a great place for Chestnut-quilled Rock Pigeon and Sandstone Shrikethrush. Rocky escarpments such as Ubirr not only have Aboriginal rock art paintings but are also a good place to see White-lined Honeyeater, Chestnut-quilled Rock Pigeon and Sandstone Shrikethrush, along with the newly split Wilkin's (Eastern) Short-eared Rock-wallaby. If the tide is right we will check out Cahill crossing to see its famous crocodiles feeding together then it will be time to head back for lunch. After a break in the middle of the day we will head to Nourlangie to clean up any of the endemics we have missed. This is also a great spot to see some Aboriginal artwork. There are also Black and Little Red Flying-Foxes here, as well as many exotic lizards, colourful turtles, and unusual butterflies. We spend the night again in the township of Jabiru, in the heart of Kakadu.

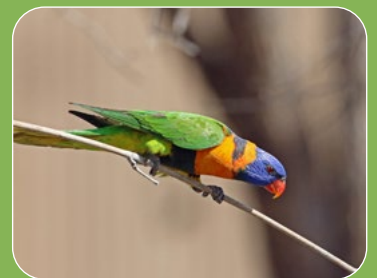
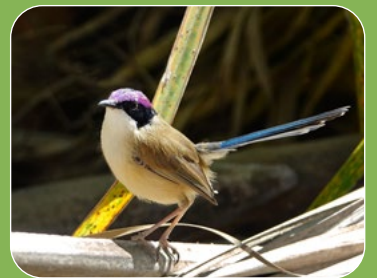
Overnight: Crocodile Hotel Jabiru, en-suite hotel rooms

Meals included: B, L, D

Day 3: 24 August 2028

Kakadu to Pine Creek

We start the day early with a cruise on the Yellow Waters, one of Australia's important areas for waterfowl. Watch the sunrise over the water teeming with up to 70 species, including Plumed and Wandering Whistling Ducks, Pacific Black Duck, White-necked and White-faced Herons, Nankeen Night Heron, Australasian Grebe, Australasian Darter, Glossy, Arafura Fantail, Buff-sided Robin and Paperbark Flycatcher. Azure Kingfisher can be found along the river and we should see Forest and Sacred Kingfishers. Some of the rarer birds we may encounter include Great-billed Heron, Little Kingfisher and Black Bittern. After the cruise we will head back to the lodge to check out and have lunch before heading south to Pine Creek and our accommodation for the night. Along the way we have a chance for Australia's rarest bird of prey: the Red Goshawk, which nests in the area. The afternoon is spent around Pine Creek, tracking down the endemic Hooded Parrot, along with Red-winged Parrot, Northern Rosella, Varied and Red-collared



Hooded Parrot, Crimson Finch, Purple-crowned Fairy-wren, and Red-collared Lorikeet. All photos by Peter Waanders.

Lorikeet. We'll also encounter Little Corella, Sulphur-crested and Red-tailed Black Cockatoo.

Overnight: Pine Creek Railway Resort, en-suite hotel rooms
 Meals included: B, L, D

Day 4: 25 August 2028

Pine Creek to Victoria River

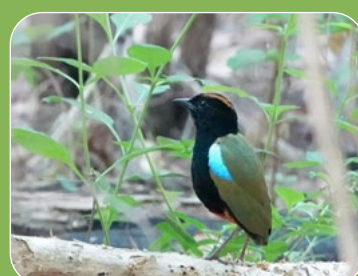
After some early morning birding around Pine Creek to pick up any parrots we may still need, we head south for our first chance to see the spectacular Gouldian Finch. Other birds in the area include Hooded Parrots, Long-tailed Finch, Masked Finch, Double-barred Finch, Banded Honeyeater, Great Bowerbird and Brown Quail. Along the way we'll witness the amazing magnetic termite mounds. These tall mounds (over 3m/10ft!) are dotted throughout the savannah-like landscape. We will also be on the lookout for Dollarbird and Silver-crowned Friarbird and further chances of the rare Red Goshawk. After a morning around the beautiful Edith Falls on the Katherine River in Nitmiluk National Park (Gouldian Finch, Hooded Parrot, Northern Rosella and a nice selection of honeyeaters) we head south to Katherine for lunch before heading west to the Victoria River Region. Along the way we will stop at a few waterholes to see what we can find: Gouldian Finch is high on the target list. The afternoon at Victoria River can be spent searching for Purple-crowned Fairy-wrens along the banks of the Victoria River or go looking for White-quilled Rock Pigeons which are found up on the escarpments.

Overnight: Victoria River Roadhouse, en-suite hotel rooms
 Meals included: B, L, D

Day 5: 26 August 2028

Victoria River to Timber Creek

The morning will be spent around the roadhouse at Victoria River looking for Purple-crowned Fairy-wren, birds of prey and finches. Alternatively we may explore the escarpments of the Victoria River National Park, which means a moderate hike with some steep sections. The rewards will (hopefully) be: White-quilled Rock Pigeon, Sandstone Shrikethrush, Little Woodswallow, Yellow-tinted and Black-chinned Honeyeater. We'll be back around lunchtime and after a short break we'll head further west. The savannah-like landscape here is reminiscent of Africa, dotted with the odd-looking Boab trees. Arriving at Timber Creek we start looking for the various finches that live in this habitat, such as Star, Double-barred, Zebra and Gouldian Finch, as well as Pictorella and Yellow-rumped Mannikin and with luck, Chestnut-backed Buttonquail.



Pied Heron, Star Finches, Black-necked Stork, Little Kingfisher, and Rainbow Pitta. All photos by Peter Waanders.

Overnight: Timber Creek Hotel, en-suite cabins
 Meals included: B, L, D

Day 6: 27 August 2028 Timber Creek to Pine Creek

This morning we will be up early again to bird another great area, where our targets will be Pictorella Mannikin, Budgerigar, Cockatiel and maybe another Gouldian Finch or two. We're sure to add more species to the list here, including Grey-headed and Grey-fronted Honeyeater. After a morning in the area, we start heading back east and to our accommodation in Katherine for the night. After checking in we will bird one of the many sites around Katherine either looking for Chestnut-backed Buttonquail or head south to look for the rare Northern Crested Shrike-tit. There is also a nice selection of honeyeaters including Banded and Rufous-throated Honeyeaters

Overnight: Pine Tree Motel Katherine, en-suite motel rooms
 Meals included: B, L, D

Day 7: 28 August 2028 Katherine to Darwin

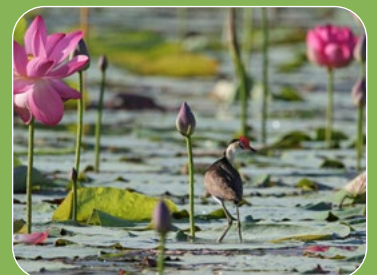
Depending on what we are still missing, we will determine where to go this morning. Possibilities around Pine Creek include wetlands where Partridge Pigeon may come in to drink, while Olive-backed Orioles frequent the trees, Red-backed Kingfishers sit on the wires and various waterfowl forage on the wetlands although we should have picked up all waterbirds by now. Heading north we have further chances of birding rainforest patches looking for Buff-sided Robin, various honeyeaters, Silver-backed Butcherbird, Arafura Fantail and Varied Lorikeet. We'll bird our way back to picking up any birds that we may still need. Arriving back in Darwin by late-afternoon.

Overnight: Club Tropical Resort Lee Point, en-suite hotel rooms
 Meals included: B, L, D

Day 8: 29 August 2028 Departure from Darwin

This morning we'll spend a few hours birding to pick up any species we still need. We'll finalise the bird list, and then it's time for goodbyes and drop everyone off at their respective hotels (own arrangements) in Darwin or the airport. Please don't book flights departing before noon today.

Meals included: B



Chestnut Rail, Rufous Owl, Radjah Shelduck, and Comb-crested Jacana. All photos by Peter Waanders.

QUICK OVERVIEW

SCHEDULED DATES

Top End: 21 - 29 August 2028

Preceding connecting tour: [Comfortable 9 Grasswren Tour](#), 4 - 19 August 2028.

Following connecting tour: [Red Centre Adventure](#), 30 August - 5 September 2028.

STARTING IN

Darwin, Northern Territory

FINISHING IN

Darwin, Northern Territory

GROUP SIZE

Minimum 4, maximum 8 participants.

BRIEF ITINERARY

Day 0: 21 August 2028: Arrival in Darwin

Day 1: 22 August 2028: Darwin to Kakadu National Park

Day 2: 23 August 2028: Kakadu National Park

Day 3: 24 August 2028: Kakadu to Pine Creek

Day 4: 25 August 2028: Pine Creek to Victoria River

Day 5: 26 August 2028: Victoria River to Timber Creek

Day 6: 27 August 2028: Timber Creek to Pine Creek

Day 7: 28 August 2028: Katherine to Darwin

Day 8: 29 August 2028: Departure from Darwin

BOOKING

Please book at: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings/>.



COST

COST

AU\$6,799 per person including accommodation and all meals, based on double or twin-share occupancy. Single occupancy surcharge of AU\$1,165.

Earlybird discount of AU\$99 for bookings received up to 12 months before departure date. Return client discount may apply.

INCLUDED

All meals commencing with dinner on Day 0 and finishing with breakfast on Day 8, cold water, tea and/or coffee. Accommodation in private rooms, some with en-suites, although on some nights only basic rooms with shared facilities are available; upgrades to rooms with en-suites may be possible subject to availability. 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 and after breakfast on Day 8, drinks except where provided, personal expenses, tips, insurance.

PRE & POST TOUR OPTIONS

If you would like us to arrange your stay in Darwin for one or more days before and/or after the tour, please tick the relevant box on the booking form. We can book this for you and add the cost to your tour price. We will be in contact to discuss options.

This tour links with our preceding [Comfortable 9 Grasswren Tour](#), leaving Mt Isa on 4 August and finishing in Adelaide on 19 August 2028. Or why not join our following [Red Centre Adventure tour](#), leaving from Alice Springs on 30 August 2028?

Receive an instant discount if you book two tours. More details: <https://bellbirdtours.com/nine-grasswren-tour-comfortable/>

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 our Terms and Conditions: <https://bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions/>.

BOOKING

Please book at: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings/>.

PRACTICAL DETAILS

LEADERS

Bellbird tour leader

DIFFICULTY

Low to medium level of fitness required. The tour has a relaxed pace and walks are on varying surfaces, from paved forest roads to uneven, slippery trails with some short climbs. We generally walk slowly, with lots of stops. You can opt out of any challenging walks.

ACCOMMODATION

Private en-suite rooms in hotels or lodges. Standards of the lodgings are generally very comfortable. Expect slow, if any, wi-fi access.

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 rain-proof jacket. Neat casual attire for dinners. Shorts and sandals or thongs (flip-flops) are acceptable for non-birding time.

WHAT TO BRING

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

RECOMMENDED READING

The comprehensive (but large and heavy) *Australian Bird Guide* by Danny Rogers, Peter Menkhorst, and Rohan Clarke, or the (smaller and lighter) *Compact Australian Bird Guide* (2022) by the same authors.

HOW TO BOOK THIS TOUR?

Step 1: Essential reading

- Download, save and read the itinerary (this document);
- Read our terms and conditions and the release of liability waiver (both can be found on <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions>);
- Read our health & safety information page (<https://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 90 days prior to the departure date. Until full payment has been received, Bellbird Tours reserves the right to change the tour price (e.g. 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 and account no. 206136528
 - Please use your surname as the booking reference.

Visa, Mastercard & Google/Apple Pay: 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) 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 and account no. 206136528
 - If possible, please use your surname as the booking reference.
 - If you are asked to provide our physical address, this is: 30 Roberts Avenue, Balaklava, SA 5461, 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.

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/>.

POSSIBLE SPECIES LIST (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)

Emu	Great Frigatebird	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Banded Fruit Dove	Spotted Harrier	Black-fronted Dotterel
Straw-necked Ibis	Pied Oystercatcher	Common Bronzewing
Chestnut Rail	Pacific Black Duck	Eastern Reef Egret
Orange-footed Scrubfowl	Masked Booby	Brown Falcon
Rose-crowned Fruit Dove	Black Kite	Red-kneed Dotterel
Australian White Ibis	Sooty Oystercatcher	Flock Bronzewing
Buff-banded Rail	Grey Teal	Little Egret
Brown Quail	Brown Booby	Black Falcon
Pied Imperial-Pigeon	Square-tailed Kite	Masked Lapwing
Glossy Ibis	Black-winged Stilt	Crested Pigeon
Baillon's Crake	Chestnut Teal	Plumed Egret
King Quail	Australian Darter	Australian Hobby
Tawny Frogmouth	Whistling Kite	Comb-crested Jacana
Royal Spoonbill	Red-necked Avocet	Spinifex Pigeon
Spotless Crake	Garganey	Great Egret
Magpie Goose	Little Pied Cormorant	Nankeen Kestrel
Spotted Nightjar	Black-breasted Buzzard	Snipe Sp.
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Pacific Golden Plover	Partridge Pigeon
White-browed Crake	Green Pygmy Goose	White-faced Heron
Radjah Shelduck	Little Black Cormorant	Grey Falcon
Large-tailed Nightjar	Brahminy Kite	Black-tailed Godwit
Collared Sparrowhawk	Grey Plover	White-quilled Rock Pigeon
Pale-vented Bush-hen	Pink-eared Duck	White-necked Heron
Black Swan	Great Cormorant	Peregrine Falcon
Australian Owlet-nightjar	Eastern Osprey	Bar-tailed Godwit
Brown Goshawk	Little Ringed Plover	Chestnut-quilled Rock Pigeon
Black-tailed Native-hen	Hoary-headed Grebe	Pied Heron
Plumed Whistling Duck	Pied Cormorant	Brolga
Fork-tailed Swift	Black-shouldered Kite	Little Curlew
Grey Goshawk	Red-capped Plover	Diamond Dove
Eurasian Coot	Australasian Grebe	Nankeen Night Heron
Wandering Whistling Duck	Australian Pelican	Sarus Crane
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	Letter-winged Kite	Whimbrel
Red Goshawk	Lesser Sand Plover	Peaceful Dove
Australian Bustard	Great Crested Grebe	Striated Heron
Freckled Duck	Black-necked Stork (Jabiru)	Dusky Moorhen
Streaked Shearwater	Little Eagle	Eastern Curlew
Pacific Baza	Greater Sand Plover	Bar-shouldered Dove
Bush Stone-curlew	Rock Dove	Black Bittern
Australian Wood Duck	Great-billed Heron	Purple Swamphen
Lesser Frigatebird	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Terek Sandpiper
Swamp Harrier	Oriental Plover	Silver Gull
Beach Stone-curlew	Emerald Dove	Blue-winged Kookaburra
Hardhead	Cattle Egret	Helmeted Friarbird

Arafura Fantail
 Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo
 Rainbow Bee-eater
 Silver-crowned Friarbird
 Grey Fantail
 Galah
 Dollarbird
 Little Friarbird
 Mangrove Grey Fantail
 Little Corella
 Rainbow Pitta
 Yellow-throated Miner
 Northern Fantail
 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
 Black-tailed Treecreeper
 Grey-crowned Babbler
 Willie Wagtail
 Cockatiel
 Great Bowerbird
 Varied Sittella
 Torresian Crow
 Rainbow Lorikeet
 Purple-crowned Fairy-wren
 Ground Cuckoo-shrike
 Broad-billed Flycatcher
 Varied Lorikeet
 Red-backed Fairy-wren
 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
 Leaden Flycatcher
 Red-winged Parrot
 Variegated Fairy-wren
 White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike
 Shining Flycatcher
 Northern Rosella
 White-throated Grasswren
 Cicadabird
 Restless Flycatcher
 Hooded Parrot
 Weebill
 White-winged Triller
 Magpie-lark
 Budgerigar
 Mangrove Gerygone
 Varied Triller

Apostlebird
 Pheasant Coucal
 Large-billed Gerygone
 Crested Shriketit
 Jacky Winter
 Eastern Koel
 Green-backed Gerygone
 Mangrove Golden Whistler
 Lemon-bellied Flycatcher
 Channel-billed Cuckoo
 White-throated Gerygone
 Grey Whistler
 Red-capped Robin
 Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo
 Red-browed Pardalote
 Rufous Whistler
 Hooded Robin
 Black-eared Cuckoo
 Striated Pardalote
 White-breasted Whistler
 Mangrove Robin
 Little Bronze-Cuckoo
 White-lined Honeyeater
 Little Shrikethrush
 Buff-sided Robin
 Pallid Cuckoo
 Singing Honeyeater
 Sandstone Shrikethrush
 Horsfield's Bushlark
 Brush Cuckoo
 White-gaped Honeyeater
 Grey Shrikethrush
 Zitting Cisticola
 Oriental Cuckoo
 Yellow-tinted Honeyeater
 Australasian Figbird
 Golden-headed Cisticola
 Rufous Owl
 Bar-breasted Honeyeater
 Yellow Oriole
 Australian Reed Warbler
 Barking Owl
 Rufous-banded Honeyeater
 Olive-backed Oriole

Tawny Grassbird
 Southern Boobook
 Rufous-throated Honeyeater
 White-breasted Woodswallow
 Brown Songlark
 Masked Owl
 Crimson Chat
 Masked Woodswallow
 Rufous Songlark
 Eastern Barn Owl
 Yellow Chat
 White-browed Woodswallow
 Canary White-eye
 Eastern Grass Owl
 Dusky Honeyeater
 Black-faced Woodswallow
 Barn Swallow
 Little Kingfisher
 Red-headed Honeyeater
 Little Woodswallow
 Red-rumped Swallow
 Azure Kingfisher
 Banded Honeyeater
 Black Butcherbird
 Welcome Swallow
 Forest Kingfisher
 Brown Honeyeater
 Grey Butcherbird
 Fairy Martin
 Red-backed Kingfisher
 Black-chinned Honeyeater
 Pied Butcherbird
 Tree Martin
 Sacred Kingfisher
 White-throated Honeyeater
 Australian Magpie
 Mistletoebird
 Collared Kingfisher
 Blue-faced Honeyeater
 Spangled Drongo
 Double-barred Finch