



Birding

Cairns-Atherton-Cairns

Eyes on Wildlife

PO Box 839

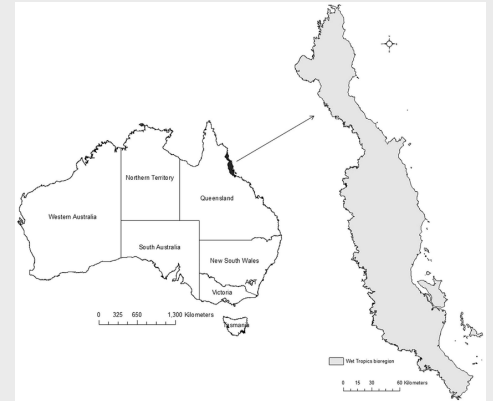
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The **Wet Tropics Bioregion of Queensland** in Australia is an area with an enormous diversity in fauna and flora. The larger part of this Bioregion was listed as World Heritage Area in 1988. There are more than 300 bird species that call the Wet Tropics home at least some time of the year. More than 150 species of reptiles, 40+ species of marsupials, 2 monotremes and more than 30 species of bats can be found in this relatively small area. Twenty-one species of frog are endemic to this area. The bioregion is also home to almost 60% of all butterflies that can be found in Australia. The Wet Tropics is the place to be to see Australian fern species with more than 60% of all Australian species found just there. It has the highest concentration (12 of the 19) of primitive flowering plant families (angiosperms) in the world. **This tour showcases the birdlife of the beautiful Atherton Tablelands and Cassowary Coast.**



Day 1 – Cairns - Atherton Tablelands

Pick up from your accommodation for a 7am start of our birding day in the Cairns area. We'll visit shore, mangroves, paperbark swamp and other coastal habitat to look for Little Kingfisher, Mangrove Robin, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Crimson Finch, **Double-eyed Fig-parrot**, Olive-backed Sunbird, Beach Stone-Curlew, Bush Stone-Curlew, Rose-crowned Fruit-dove, Torresian Kingfisher, **Papuan Frogmouth**, Varied Honeyeater, Black Butcherbird and other birds. Making our way to Innisfail for lunch, we'll look for Shining Flycatcher and Azure Kingfisher. We might also get Black-necked Stork, Brahminy Kite and White-bellied Sea-eagle. Saltwater Crocodile might be sunning on a bank at one of the wildlife hotspots we'll visit

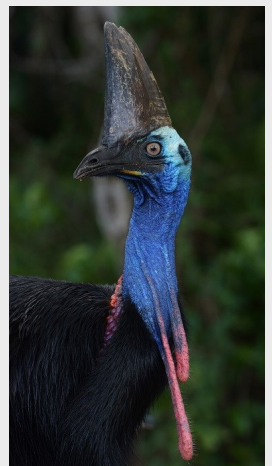
After lunch, we'll try to get close-up with **Southern Cassowary** in the Innisfail area. Late afternoon, we drive to the Atherton Tablelands. Stopping along the way wherever new birds show up. We might also see the Wet Tropics endemic before checking in at our accommodation where we'll look for our first Wet Tropics endemics.

During our first nocturnal tour (2.5 hrs) starting just after dinner, we'll target our Wet Tropics endemic **Lesser Sooty Owl**, and try to also see Eastern Barn Owl and the Wet Tropics subspecies of Southern Boobook, AKA Little Red Boobook.

Day 2 – Atherton Tablelands

We'll visit some higher altitude rainforest at around 1200m above sea level to get the Wet Tropics endemic **Golden Bowerbird**, Atherton Scrubwren, Grey-headed Robin and Mountain Thornbill. Traversing through the Tablelands we'll come across remnants of volcanic activity. Bromfield Swamp stands out and is an old *maar*. It's a good place to see raptors. Driving past the multiple scoria cones, we'll be looking for birds in wet and dry sclerophyll forest. Species we are looking to add to our already impressive list: Crested Shrike-tit, Grey Shrike-thrush, Fuscous Honeyeater, Little Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, **Spotted Pardalote** and maybe even Banded Honeyeater.

Around Atherton we'll look for some of the Wet Tropics endemics like **Victoria's Riflebird**, Macleay's Honeyeater, Bridled Honeyeater and **Pied Monarch**, but also Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Wompoo Fruit-dove, Pale-yellow Robin and Eastern Whip-bird. We might have a Musky Rat-kangaroo crossing our path; a Wet Tropics endemic diurnal marsupial. Both Sarus Crane and Brolga will be around foraging on farm land between July and late November.



Late afternoon we'll be visiting some more local hotspots to add birds to our list. After dinner, we'll go for **Australian Owlet-nightjar**, possibly Rufous owl and White-throated Nightjar (depending on the time of the year. If time left, we will also be looking for Eastern Grass Owl.

Accommodation: Atherton Tablelands

Day 3 – Atherton Tablelands – Cairns

Early morning, we'll visit to the local swamp for ducks and other waterfowl. Latham's Snipe and Buff-banded Rail are possible there too. Swamp Harrier, Whistling Kite and sometimes even White-bellied Sea-eagle frequent the swamp looking for prey.

The rest of the day will be spent in drier habitats. Double-barred Finch, **Black-throated Finch**, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Pale-headed Rosella, Red-backed Fairy-wren, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Robin, Northern Fantail, Striated Pardalote, Golden-headed Cisticola, Eastern Osprey, Nankeen Kestrel, Red-winged Parrot, and Squatter Pigeon are some of the birds we'll get in this drier country. From late November till April, the Buff-breasted Paradise-kingfisher can be seen as well.

Making our way back to Cairns, we'll explore 2 or 3 hotspots to get **Crimson Finch**, Green Pygmy Goose, Leaden Flycatcher, Little Bronze-cuckoo, Comb-crested Jacana, Bar-shouldered Dove, and a range of waders including Far-eastern Curlew, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint, Bar-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Great Knot, Curlew Sandpiper and others.

We will be back at your accommodation in Cairns by 6pm.

Tour dates, start/end

This tour is offered any time of the year depending on availability at the time of enquiry. The tour can also be split up in 2 days touring, 1 or more days personal outings to do the final day of touring to get back to Cairns.

Included in the tour price

The tour includes 3 full days and 2 nocturnal sessions. Breakfast (x2) from day 2 is included. Please, let Patrick know what breakfast items are required. Lunch or dinner are not included. Accommodation (for 2 nights) is included in the tour price. Guests will have to arrange accommodation for the night before day 1 of the tour, and for the night of day 3 of the tour. Drinks, and snacks are not included. Binoculars can be borrowed, enquire with Patrick@eyesonwildlife.com.au.

What to bring and how to be well prepared

The tour involves driving from wildlife hotspot to hotspot, or to and from accommodation, and walks at the hotspots. The walks on gravel/dirt tracks and bitumen are easy to moderately difficult and are not longer than 1-2 kilometres, usually shorter. The state of the walking tracks will depend on weather conditions. Rubber boots, or a second pair of shoes are not a luxury as it can be wet any time of the year.

Also recommended: a light rain jacket, warm jumper (nocturnal session in June-July-August), hat, long-sleeved shirt, long trousers, insect repellent, sunscreen, water. Please communicate any physical discomforts or health issues you may have well before the start of the tour. Terms & Conditions will be emailed upon further enquiry.

Tour cost AU\$ 1,720 per person min. 2 persons—max. 6 persons.

Email patrick@eyesonwildlife.com.au, or phone on +61 439817214 if you wanted to book this tour, or wanted to inquire further.

