Australia

Southwest Extension

East Coast I: Queensland's Tropics & Lamington Rainforests

East Coast II: Forests & Outback of New South Wales & Victoria

Tasmania Extension



The spectacular Regent Bowerbird at O'Reilly's, Lamington National Park by Glen Valentine

Australia is a vast continent harbouring many fabulous, endemic birds and bizarre wildlife found nowhere else on our planet. During this exciting trip, we will cover an incredible range of habitats ranging from lush expanses of dense tropical rainforest, tall and stunted (mallee) Eucalypt woodland and sclerophyll forest to coastal heath, mudflats, rocky shorelines, grassland, spinifex, Mulga woodland and saltmarsh near the edge of the desolate outback. We can therefore expect a fantastic collection of endemic birds and incredible mammals.

The south-west corner of Western Australia is an ecological hotspot, hosting a remarkably high diversity of endemic plant, animal and bird species. Our short extension concentrates on the region's endemic species and

commences in the state's capital of Perth, situated alongside the Swan River. We will explore a range of habitats, from the eucalypt forests of the Darling Ranges to the extensive woodlands of Dryandra, the Stirling Ranges, semi-arid mallee woodlands and the rugged windswept heathlands of the south coast. In six days, we hope to encounter almost all the recognised south-western Australian endemic bird species. Among these ultra-localised species, top of the wish list will be the area's 3 "megas": Noisy Scrubbird, Western Bristlebird and Western Whipbird. We also hope to encounter several fabulous mammals such as Short-beaked Echidna, the beautiful but critically endangered Numbat (Banded Anteater), Western Grey Kangaroo, Black-gloved Brush Wallaby, Southern Brown Bandicoot and Southern Right Whale.

Exploring the east of this vast country, we begin in northern Queensland where highlights include Victoria's Riflebird from the bird-of-paradise family, Golden and Tooth-billed Bowerbirds, Spotted Catbird, Chowchilla, Beach Stone-curlew and the outrageous Southern Cassowary among a suite of Atherton Tableland and wet tropic endemics. We then continue to the world-famous Lamington NP in search of rainforest specialties such as Albert's Lyrebird, Australian King Parrot, the brilliant Regent and Satin Bowerbirds, Australian Logrunner, Paradise Riflebird and Noisy Pitta amongst numerous other potential highlights.

From Sydney, we bird into the interior through New South Wales and Victoria all the way to Melbourne. We hope to find several wet and dry-country specialties like the spectacular Superb Lyrebird, unique Pilotbird and Rockwarbler, the strange Plains-wanderer, a plethora of colourful parrots and cockatoos, Chestnut Quail-thrush, Striated Grasswren, Mallee Emu-wren, Rufous and Eastern Bristlebirds and the endangered Hooded Plover among many other mouth-watering species. We'll also no doubt encounter many of Australia's bizarre and iconic mammals such as Koala, Wombat, Short-beaked Echidna, Platypus and a large selection of possums, gliders, kangaroos and wallabies.

Our Australian adventure culminates on the island of Tasmania, where our extension will see us searching for all of Tasmania's endemic and near-endemic species. Our chances of seeing every single Tasmanian endemic and near-endemic is excellent and highlights should include the critically endangered Forty-spotted Pardalote, the rare Scrubtit, Tasmanian Nativehen, Yellow Wattlebird, Green Rosella, Pink and Dusky Robins, Black Currawong, Tasmanian Thornbill, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Yellow-throated, Black-headed and Strong-billed Honeyeaters, Tasmanian Boobook, the beautiful Swift Parrot (currently one of the most endangered species on Earth!), Sooty Oystercatcher, Black-faced Cormorant and the pure white colour morph of Grey Goshawk. Mammal-wise, we'll be on the lookout for Eastern Quolls and the endearing Wombat amongst others.

Itinerary & Map

Southwest Extension

Day 1	Arrival in Perth
Day 2	Perth to Cheyne Beach via the Darling Ranges & Rocky Gully
Day 3	Albany & surrounds
Day 4	Albany area
Day 5	Cheyne Beach to Narrogin via Stirling Range
Day 6	Dryandra Woodlands to Perth
Day 7	Herdsman Lake & departure / flight to Cairns for East Coast main tour

East Coast I: Queensland's Tropics & Lamington Rainforests

Day 1	Arrival into Cairns
Day 2	Cairns area: Cairns Botanical Gardens, Cattana Wetlands, Smithfield, Mangrove boardwalk & Cairns Esplanade
Day 3	Cairns to Atherton Tablelands via Etty Bay
Days 4 & 5	Atherton Tablelands: Crater Lakes NP, Yungaburra area, Curtain & Cathedral Fig Trees, Hasties Swamp & Mt. Hypipamee
Day 6	Atherton Tablelands to Daintree via Mareeba
Day 7	Daintree River cruise, transfer to Cairns
Day 8	Cairns; flight to Brisbane & transfer to Lamington National Park
Days 9 & 10	Lamington National Park
Day 11	Lamington NP to Brisbane & final departure

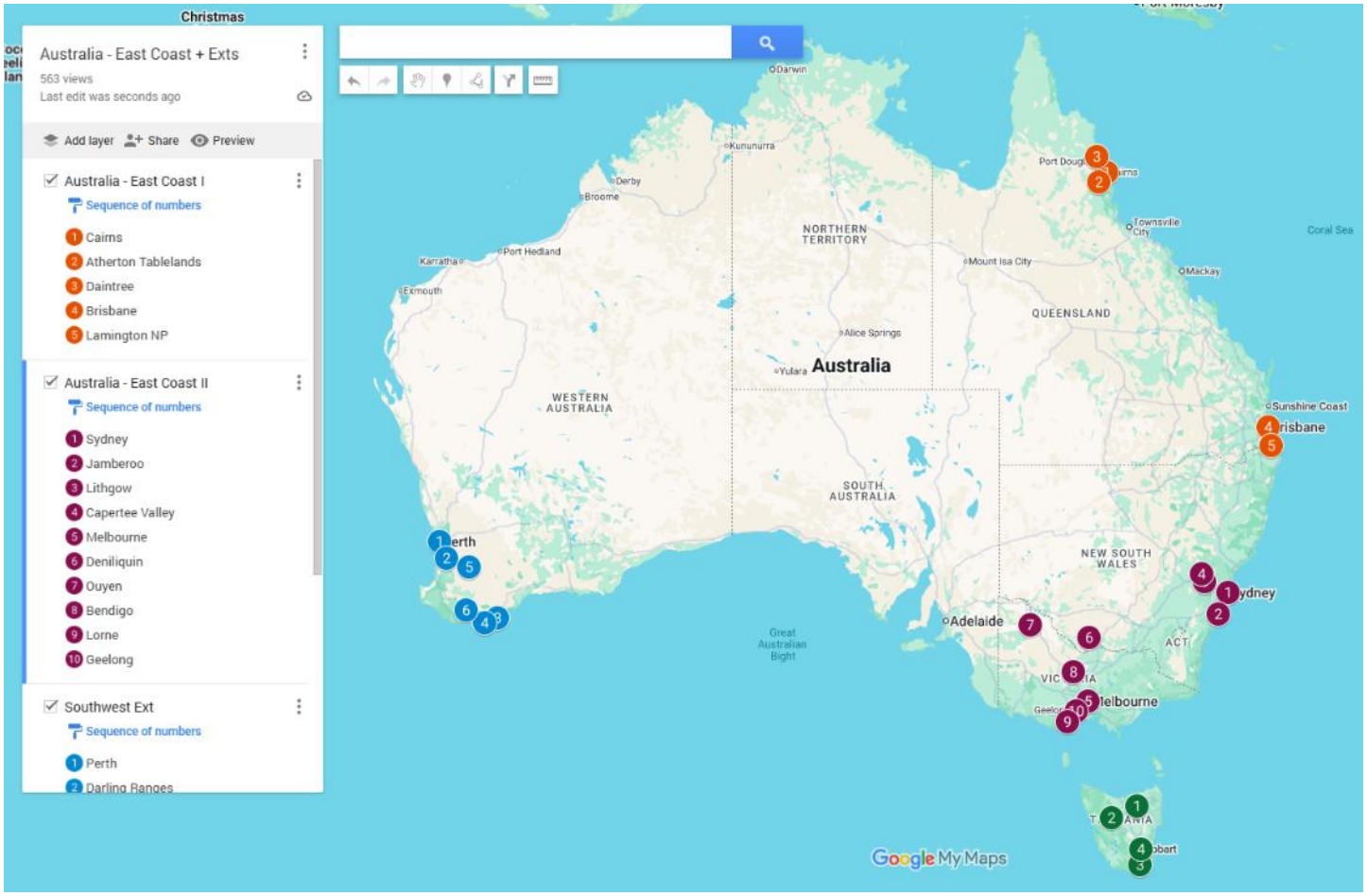
East Coast II: Forests & Outback of New South Wales & Victoria

Day 1	Arrival in Sydney, transfer to Jamberoo
Day 2	Barren Grounds & Budderoo National Park
Day 3	Jamberoo to Lithgow via the Blue Mountains
Day 4	Capertee Valley
Day 5	Lithgow to Sydney; flight to Melbourne
Day 6	Melbourne to Deniliquin (night excursion for Plains-wanderer)
Day 7	Deniliquin to Ouyen
Day 8	Ouyen area: Hattah-Kulkyne & Murray Sunset National Parks
Day 9	Ouyen to Bendigo

Day 10	Bendigo to Lorne
Day 11	Lorne to Geelong
Day 12	Geelong to Melbourne & depart / flight to Launceston for Tasmania Ext

Tasmania Extension

Day 1	Arrival to Launceston, transfer to Cradle Mountain area
Day 2	Cradle Mountain area
Day 3	Cradle Mountain to Bruny Island
Day 4	Bruny Island
Day 5	Bruny Island to Hobart & depart



Birding sites in detail



Western Spinebill by Glen Valentine

Darling Ranges. Ascending into the Darling Ranges, we will begin our search for some of south-western Australia's very special endemics, including Baudin's Black Cockatoo and Carnaby's Black Cockatoo, Red-capped Parrot, Western Rosella, Western Spinebill, Gilbert's Honeyeater, Western Gerygone, Western Thornbill, Restless Flycatcher, Western Whistler, the nomadic Western Wattlebird, and the rare and elusive Square-tailed Kite.

Open areas may produce Wedge-tailed Eagle, Black-shouldered and Whistling Kites, Swamp Harrier, Brown Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Crested Pigeon, lively Willie Wagtail, Black-faced and Dusky Woodswallows, Magpie-lark, Tree and Fairy Martins, Welcome Swallow, Australian Magpie and Australian Raven.

Rocky Gully. We will then deviate towards Rocky Gully, where we will find the geographically limited population of Western Corella (known as Muir's Corella).

Cheyne Beach. We have time to explore this area to look for some of Australia's rarest endemics. One of these is the Noisy Scrubbird, which was believed to be extinct until it was rediscovered at Two People's Bay in 1961. Western Bristlebird is another threatened species, as is Western Whipbird. With a concerted effort, we should see all these scarce birds, and will try our best to obtain good views of these three very elusive endemics!

Cheyne and Betty's Beach areas. Besides the three major targets mentioned above, we will also be on the lookout for Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Red-winged and Splendid Fairywrens, Southern Emu-wren, Brush Bronzewing, White-breasted Robin, Western Wattlebird, Red-eared Firetail and Spotted Scrubwren. If we are extremely fortunate, we might encounter the rarely seen Rock Parrot, while other more widespread species could include Brown Quail, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Common Bronzewing and Grey Fantail.

We'll also scan for coastal species in the bay and new birds may include Pacific and Silver Gulls, Greater Crested and



Brush Bronzewing by Glen Valentine



Red-winged Fairywren by Glen Valentine

Caspian Terns, Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers, Pacific Reef Heron, White-bellied Sea Eagle, and Osprey. Further out to sea, we might also be able to find a few Indian Yellow-nosed and Shy Albatross, as well as Australasian Gannet. Southern Right Whales are present from April to October and Humpbacked Whales pass by on migration, often coming in very close to the rocks.

Porongurup National Park. Early this morning we travel to the park to visit the karri forest. Here we'll target the extremely specialized Baudin's Black Cockatoo if we have not already found it, as well as Western Rosella, Gilbert's Honeyeater, Purple-crowned Lorikeet, White-breasted and Scarlet Robins, Western Whistler, Red-winged Fairywren, Rufous Treecreeper and our first chance of Western Shriketit.

Stirling Range National Park. We visit the Stirling Range to search for Regent and Elegant Parrots, the scarce and often-elusive Western Yellow Robin and the rare and recently described Western Shriketit. The birding here is usually excellent and extremely rewarding and besides, the above-mentioned key species, we'll also have further chances of Purple-crowned Lorikeet, Western Whistler, Western Gerygone, Western Thornbill, Striated and Spotted Pardalotes, Carnaby's Black Cockatoo, Western Spinebill, Gilbert's Honeyeater, Blue-breasted Fairywren and with luck, an Australian Owlet-nightjar sitting at the entrance of its hollow.



Malleefowl by Greg de Klerk



Varied Sittella by Glen Valentine

Jerramungup. The mallee south-west of Jerramungup has inactive Malleefowl mound, where we will look for Southern Scrub Robin, Purple-gaped Honeyeater, White-browed Babbler and the yellow-rumped form of Spotted Pardalote with a small chance of Crested Bellbird. We will stay as late as possible to look for Malleefowl, Painted Buttonquail and Western Brush Wallaby along the side of the road.

Fox's Lair Nature Reserve. We'll make a quick stop here for Western Rosella and Red-capped Parrot if needed.

Lake Parkeryenning. Time permitting, we'll visit this site in search of Mistletoebird, Spiny-cheeked and Singing Honeyeaters and Pallid Cuckoo, together with large numbers of Black Swan and perhaps a few other species of waterbird.

Dryandra Woodlands. Our focus in these magnificent and prolific woodlands will be Rufous Treecreeper, Painted Buttonquail, Red-capped Robin, White-browed Babbler and the stunning but very rare Numbat, a small, termite-eating, "Suricate/Meerkat-like" mammal that is critically endangered and restricted to tiny remnant forest patches in south-western Australia. If we missed Western Yellow and Scarlet Robins and Western Shriketit in the Stirling Range, we'll make a concerted effort to track them down today, while we also have our final, back-up chances for specialties such as Carnaby's Black Cockatoo, Blue-breasted Fairywren, Western Thornbill, Elegant Parrot, and Purple-crowned Lorikeet.

Other noteworthy species that we hope to see today include Little Eagle, Laughing Kookaburra, Sacred Kingfisher, beautiful Rainbow Bee-eater, Spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Western Gerygone, Weebill (Australia's smallest bird), Jacky Winter, Rufous Whistler, Grey Butcherbird, Grey Currawong, Silvereye, Scarlet and Western Yellow Robins, Varied Sittella and Restless Flycatcher, as well as a host of honeyeaters including New Holland, White-cheeked, Brown-headed,



Western Grey Kangaroo by Glen Valentine



Western Rosella by Glen Valentine

White-eared, Yellow-plumed and Red Wattlebird and a fine selection of parrots like Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Galah, Western Corella, Regent Parrot, Western Rosella and Australian Ringneck (the "Twenty-eight Parrot" subspecies).

We'll most likely come across the large Western Grey Kangaroo, the diminutive Western Brush Wallaby and hedgehog-like Short-beaked Echidna.

Herdsman Lake. Depending on our flight times, we hope to be able to fit in a quick visit to one of Perth's best urban wetlands where we can see Blue-billed, Maned and Musk Ducks, Grey, and Chestnut Teal and Australian Shelduck, along with many other water-associated birds such as Buff-banded Rail, Australasian Grebe, Glossy and Australian White Ibis, Australasian Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Little Grassbird and Swamp Harrier. Other species that frequent the surrounding woodland and gardens include Whistling Kite, Little Corella, Singing Honeyeater, Tawny Frogmouth (often at its nest or roost) and the recently split Purple-backed Fairywren. Depending on the weather, we might even encounter coiled Tiger Snakes sunning themselves on the grassy banks! From there we will make our way to the airport where our endemic-filled south-western Australia birding tour will conclude.

Cairns area - Smithfield: This open area of grassland, fields and scrub provides for excellent birding during the first hour or two of the day and makes for the perfect introduction to birding in north-eastern Australia. The stunning Crimson Finch will be our main target here but there will be plenty of other eye-catching species around to entertain us and these include Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Australasian Figbird, the aptly named Rainbow Bee-eater, Magpie-lark, Straw-necked Ibis, Brahminy Kite, Metallic Starling, Welcome Swallow, Tawny Grassbird, Masked Lapwing, Australian Pipit, Black-faced and White-bellied Cuckooshrikes and Helmeted Friarbird.



Red-backed Fairywren by Erik Forsyth

Cairns area - Cattana Wetlands: This prolific birding site just north of Cairns protects some productive, rehabilitated wetland and secondary forest habitat and supports good numbers of wetland and woodland birds. The vegetated wetlands harbour Comb-crested Jacana, Australasian Darter and Green Pygmy Geese, while Black-faced and Spectacled Monarchs, Yellow and Brown Honeyeaters, Little Bronze Cuckoo, Large-billed Gerygone, Green Oriole, the bold



Southern Cassowary by Greg de Klerk

and quirky Australian Brushturkey and Orange-footed Scrubfowl occupy the adjacent thickets and regenerating forest.

Cairns area - Cairns Botanical Gardens: One of the birdiest sites in the greater Cairns area, the extensive Cairns Botanical Gardens support good densities of birds with several species like Australian Brushturkey, Orange-footed Scrubfowl, Bush Stone-curlew, Helmeted Friarbird, Magpie-lark, Laughing Kookaburra and Maned Duck being particularly common. Some of the more special and lower-density species we will be on the lookout for include Grey and Brown Goshawks, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, Green Oriole, Common Cicadabird, Double-eyed Fig Parrot, White-throated Honeyeater, the scarce and endemic Lovely Fairywren and the impressive Papuan Frogmouth.

Cairns area - Cairns Esplanade & surrounds: One of the most famous birding sites in all of Australia and justifiably so, the mudflats and surrounding trees along the Cairns Esplanade support an incredible number and diversity of migrant and resident birds. We'll spend some time scanning the tidal mudflats for Australian Pelican, White-faced and Pacific Reef Herons, Little Egret, the huge White-bellied Sea Eagle, Silver Gull, Greater Crested Tern, and a whole host of waders such as Far Eastern Curlew, Sharp-tailed and Curlew Sandpipers, Red-necked Stint, Great Knot, Pacific Golden and Red-capped Plovers, Black-fronted Dotterel, Greater and Siberian Sand Plovers, Ruddy Turnstone, Eurasian Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Sanderling, Grey-tailed Tattler, Terek Sandpiper, Pied Oystercatcher and if we are fortunate, the scarce and erratic Beach Stone-curlew. Varied Honeyeater is common in the surrounding flowering trees, as is the abundant but brilliant Rainbow Lorikeet. We also hope to be able to track down the whereabouts of a roosting Rufous Owl that usually has a roost or nest somewhere in the immediate vicinity.



Double-eyed Fig Parrot by Glen Valentine

Cairns area - Cairns Mangroves: We'll spend the late afternoon visiting the nearby mangroves where a well-constructed boardwalk takes us through this unique habitat. Bird density and diversity in the mangroves are relatively low, but the habitat supports several highly specialised species found nowhere else and it is these few specialties that



Platypus by Greg de Klerk

we'll be targeting. Mangrove Robin and Torresian Kingfisher will be top of the list, and the mangroves also provide a chance for the tricky Lovely Fairywren.

Etty Bay. Etty Bay is an area of coastal forest just over an hour from Cairns. Our main target here is the incredible Southern Cassowary, which still occurs in small numbers in this area. This impressive and enigmatic species will be our focal species this morning and our chances of finding one are excellent. We'll check the grassy clearings along the entrance road, as well as the beach alongside the campsite for fresh tracks and scat, as the birds are known to feed on fallen fruit from the surrounding trees. If we are fortunate, we might also find a party of Lovely Fairywren here, while Olive-backed Sunbirds and Torresian Imperial Pigeons frequent the fruiting and flowering trees.

Atherton Tablelands - Henrietta Creek: Cryptic Honeyeater is the key species here as it only occurs in mid-elevation forest and is absent from the forest patches at the top of the Tablelands. Other wet tropic and Tablelands endemics that we'll be on the lookout for here include Victoria's Riflebird, Spotted Catbird, Pied Monarch, Yellow-spotted and Macleay's Honeyeaters, Pale-yellow Robin, Rufous Shrikethrush and Wompoo Fruit Dove.

Atherton Tablelands - Crater Lakes National Park (Lakes Barrine & Eacham) & Chambers grounds: Early mornings around the grounds around our accommodation offer some of the finest birding and photographic opportunities of the entire area and we are likely to be rewarded with close encounters of Victoria's Riflebird, Spotted Catbird, the localised and impressive Tooth-billed Bowerbird, Bridled, Yellow-spotted and Lewin's Honeyeaters, Wompoo, Superb and Rose-crowned Fruit Doves, Pacific Emerald Dove, Topknot Pigeon, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Double-eyed Fig Parrot, Barred Cuckooshrike, Pied Monarch, Grey-headed Robin, Silvereye, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Bower's and Rufous Shrikethrushes, Eastern Whipbird and Mistletoebird.



Victoria's Riflebird by Lee Hunter

At Lake Barrine, we hope to find the unique Chowchilla feeding in small family groups on the forest floor and this is also an excellent area to find Tooth-billed Bowerbird, as well as the north-eastern minor subspecies of



Golden Bowerbird by Erik Forsyth

Australian King Parrot, the unobtrusive Musky Rat-Kangaroo and Boyd's Forest Dragon, an impressive forest-dwelling reptile.

In the lodge gardens, there is a night-lit viewing platform that is regularly visited by several species of nocturnal mammal, and these include Musky Rat-Kangaroo, Red-legged Pademelon, Sugar Glider, Striped Possum and Long-nosed Bandicoot.

Atherton Tablelands - Yungaburra area: We'll spend a few hours and possibly several visits to the woodlands, forest patches and creek-lines in the area surrounding Yungaburra, which is situated just to the west of our accommodations at the edge of Crater Lakes National Park. Flowering eucalyptus and low shrubs near the edge of town provide a fantastic food source for many species of honeyeater and we hope to find Scarlet and Dusky Myzomela, White-throated and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, as well as White-throated Gerygone, Eastern Yellow Robin and Rufous Whistler. In a nearby unique and critically endangered forest type, we'll be targeting the rare White-eared Monarch, while areas of scrub and grassland at the forest edge support the gorgeous Red-backed Fairywren.

A visit to a well-known creek in the area will give us an excellent chance of seeing the amazing Duck-billed Platypus, undoubtedly one of the greatest mammals on Earth! There is also usually a huge roosting colony of impressive Spectacled Flying Fox that is quite something to see!

Atherton Tablelands - Curtain & Cathedral Fig Trees: These impressive trees are a sight to behold but also happen to offer some excellent rainforest birding with most of the Tablelands Forest specialties occurring in the lush forest surrounding these iconic sites. They're especially good for the often-elusive Pied Monarch and the north-eastern endemic and distinctive minor subspecies of White-throated Treecreeper, while Grey-headed and Pale-yellow Robins, Wompoo Fruit Dove, Spotted Catbird, Spectacled Monarch, Black Butcherbird, Orange-footed Scrubfowl and Bower's Shrikethrush. This is also a good area to try and find the rare and localised Lumholtz's Tree-Kangaroo.



Chowchilla by Glen Valentine

Atherton Tablelands - Hasties Swamp: The freshwater wetland of Hasties



Magpie Goose by Glen Valentine

Swamp is an extremely birdy area and usually has sufficient water and surrounding sedge vegetation to support a wealth of waterbirds year-round. It can be a particularly good site for the monotypic Magpie Goose, as well as Buff-banded Rail, the migratory Latham's Snipe, Black-necked Stork and a variety of resident ducks. In the surrounding fields, we may find small groups of Sarus Cranes and Brolgas, while Cotton and Green Pygmy Geese sometimes occupy the small, vegetated satellite ponds in the area. We'll also watch out for Spotted and Swamp Harriers quartering over the grasslands, as well as Grey Goshawk and Pacific Baza perched at the edge of forest patches.

Atherton Tablelands - Mount Hypipamee: This high altitude, montane forest site is excellent for most of the Atherton Tablelands' Forest endemics and especially so for a few specialised species that only occur at higher elevation such as the immaculate and rare Golden Bowerbird, Mountain Thornbill and Atherton Scrubwren. During a morning here we are likely to see both sought-after species, the former at its impressive bower. Other noteworthy species we are likely to encounter in the lush forest that blankets the mountain include Bower's Shrikethrush, Tooth-billed Bowerbird, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Macleay's and Bridled Honeyeaters, Grey-headed Robin, Victoria's Riflebird and Peregrine Falcon.

A night excursion here will likely reveal several rarely seen and localised species of possum such as the Coppery Brush-tailed, Green Ringtail and the extremely range-restricted and threatened Lemuroid and Herbert River Ringtail Possums. We might also find the fantastic Northern Leaf-tailed Gecko and Southern Boobook and with exceptional fortune, the very rare and elusive Lesser Sooty Owl.



Macleay's Honeyeater by Glen Valentine

Mareeba area and Granite Gorge: At Granite Gorge we are likely to be met and entertained by hordes of fabulous birds such as bower-building Great Bowerbirds, large flocks of Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, tame Squatter Pigeons, very colourful and impressive, Blue-faced Honeyeaters, the vulture-like Noisy Friarbird and Red-winged Parrot. We'll also enjoy the endearing Mareeba



Australian Logrunner by Adam Riley

Rock Wallaby here at one of its only known locations. Around Mareeba, we hope to track down the seldom-seen White-browed Robin.

Mount Molloy and Mount Carbine: We'll target the threatened and impressive Australian Bustard north of Mount Molloy, while a stop at Mount Carbine will hopefully yield roosting Tawny Frogmouth, the handsome Blue-winged Kookaburra, Red-winged Parrot, the lovely Pale-headed Rosella, Bar-shouldered Dove and unique Apostlebird among many other more widespread and common species.

Daintree River. This morning we embark on an exciting riverboat trip along the Daintree River and a few of its narrow tributaries. As we wind our way along the main river and through the extensive mangroves, we'll be looking for the huge Great-billed Heron, a scarce resident, the secretive Black Bittern, Black-fronted Dotterel, flocks of Scaly-breasted and Rainbow Lorikeets, Torresian Imperial Pigeons, the incredible Papuan Frogmouth, the huge Channel-billed Cuckoo, Pacific Koel, Pheasant Coucal, Shining Bronze, Little Bronze and Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoos, Rose-crowned and Superb Fruit Doves, Little, Forest and Azure Kingfishers, Large-billed Gerygone, Leaden Flycatcher, Australasian Figbird, Green Oriole, the beautiful and sexually dimorphic Shining Flycatcher and Metallic Starling. We might also be fortunate to see Spectacled Flying Fox, large Estuarine Crocodiles, and the vibrant Common Tree Snake. After our boat trip, we will return to Cairns where we will settle into our now familiar hotel. If time allows, we will again check one of the regional birding sites for any species we may still need in the area.

Lamington National Park. O'Reilly's Guesthouse combines a unique mixture of subtropical rainforest and wet Eucalypt woodland, creating a natural haven for wildlife. The area protects vast tracts of forested mountains and offers charming waterfalls, spectacular views of the rugged escarpment, and a birding experience second to none! In the lodge grounds we'll be blown away by constant, close encounters with brightly coloured Australian King Parrots, the stunning Crimson Rosella, incredible Regent, and Satin Bowerbirds, Australian Brushturkey, White-browed Scrubwren, Red-browed Finch and Pied Currawong. Other great birds that will likely be regularly encountered at point-blank range



Lemuroid Ringtail Possum by Glen Valentine



Grey-crowned Babbler by Greg de Klerk

include the very handsome Wonga Pigeon, Eastern Yellow Robin, the normally shy Eastern Whipbird, Australian Logrunner, Yellow-throated Scrubwren, Brown Gerygone, Brown Thornbill, Superb Fairywren, Rufous Fantail, Black-faced Monarch, and Lewin's Honeyeater. A little bit of effort and specific targeting will hopefully reveal the exquisite Rose Robin, Green Catbird, Topknot Pigeon, Paradise Riflebird, Bassian and much rarer Russet-tailed Thrushes and the spectacular Albert's Lyrebird.

The lower elevation, mixed Eucalyptus and Casuarina woodland harbours Red-browed and White-throated Treecreepers, the exquisite Variegated Fairywren, the striking white-headed subspecies of Varied Sittella and the rare and nomadic Glossy Black Cockatoo.

Nocturnal excursions might produce Southern Boobook and the scarce and elusive Marbled Frogmouth, as well as Short-eared Brush-tailed and Common Ringtail Possums, Red-necked Pademelon and Long-nosed Bandicoot.

Barren Grounds Nature Reserve. The unique, scrubby heathlands protected within the Barren Grounds Nature Reserve supports some very interesting bird species. Target species will include Eastern Bristlebird, Beautiful Firetail, Southern Emu-wren, the scarce and secretive Pilotbird, the gorgeous Eastern Spinebill and with a hefty dose of luck, the elusive Ground Parrot. Other noteworthy species we'll be on the lookout for include Little Eagle, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Striated and Spotted Pardalotes, New Holland Honeyeater and the rare Square-tailed Kite that occurs here annually in very small numbers.



Tawny Frogmouth by Glen Valentine

Minnamurra Forest Reserve. At this lush, mid-elevation forest reserve close to Jamberoo, we'll focus our time on locating the magnificent Superb Lyrebird.

Blue Mountains. Here we shall visit several of the nearby lookouts to soak in the incredible scenery that brings so many people to the Blue Mountains area. We will be hoping for a chance encounter with a Superb Lyrebird, walking through the woodland, the enigmatic Glossy Black Cockatoo and the unique and localised Rockwarbler on the sandstone cliffs. Other species that might entertain us include Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Eastern Rosella, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Lewin's and New Holland Honeyeaters, Beautiful Firetail, Variegated Fairywren and Little Wattlebird.



Rockwarbler by Glen Valentine

Lithgow water treatment works. This is an excellent site for waterbirds, and we hope to encounter a fine selection of species during our time here. These could include Pink-eared, the strange Musk and Blue-billed Ducks, Chestnut and Grey Teals, Australasian Shoveler, Dusky Moorhen, Australasian and Great Crested Grebes and Little Grassbird, Australian Reed Warbler and Superb Fairywren in the adjacent reedbeds, scrub and thickets.

Capertee Valley. Early this morning we will head north into the dry sandstone hillsides and mixed Eucalypt woodland pockets of the Capertee Valley. This region on the western edge of the Great Dividing Range supports a staggering variety of bird life and is often hailed as one of the country's premier birding localities. Several rare, unpredictable, declining and difficult-to-find species occur here fairly regularly, and they will be our prime targets.

These include the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater, Painted Honeyeater on passage, Turquoise Parrot, Spotted Quail-thrush and Plum-headed Finch. However, despite us scouring the best areas, habitats and renowned localities for these species, we'd consider ourselves fortunate to see any one or more of these rarities during our day trip to the area. Other exciting and no less desirable species that we are more likely to encounter during the course of the day include the handsome Eastern Shriketit, flocks of White-winged Chough, Wedge-tailed and Little Eagles, Black-shouldered Kite, Swamp Harrier, Brown Falcon, Glossy Black and Gang-gang Cockatoos, Red-rumped Parrot, Little Lorikeet, Eastern Rosella, Fuscous, White-plumed, Yellow-faced, Yellow-tufted and Black-chinned Honeyeaters, White-browed and Grey-crowned Babblers, Noisy Friarbird, Striated, Brown, Buff-rumped and Yellow Thornbills, Olive-backed Oriole, Scarlet, Eastern Yellow and Hooded Robins, Speckled Warbler, Red-browed and Brown Treecreepers, Striated and Spotted Pardalotes, Restless Flycatcher, Rufous Whistler, White-winged Triller, Varied Sittella, the simply stunning Superb Fairywren, Black-faced and Dusky Woodswallows, Double-barred and Zebra Finches and Diamond Firetail.



Red-capped Robin by Glen Valentine

Mammal-wise, we will be on the lookout for Whiptail Wallabies, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, and the unique Wombat.

Great Ocean Road – Kennett River, Lorne area & Anglesea. We will explore the coast road and surrounding forest for Koala. There are few places in Australia where Koala can be



Emu by Glen Valentine

seen this regularly and we stand an excellent chance of having memorable encounters with these endearing mammals. While in the area, we are also likely to see Australian King Parrot, Satin Bowerbird, Rufous Bristlebird and Crescent Honeyeater and stand a reasonable chance at the scarce and secretive Olive Whistler, Pink Robin and Gang-gang Cockatoo.

Looking offshore, we have reasonable chances of seeing Shy Albatross, Short-tailed and Fluttering Shearwaters, the range restricted Pacific Gull, Black-faced and Australian Pied Cormorants, Australasian Gannet, and the highly threatened Hooded Plover. In dense heathland and mixed forest habitat in the Anglesea area, we'll search for the usually extremely shy and elusive Chestnut-rumped Heathwren, as well as Satin Flycatcher and Southern Emu-wren if we haven't already encountered them.

Brisbane Ranges National Park. This large reserve protects extensive eucalyptus woodlands in undulating, mountainous terrain and is an excellent place to find Musk Lorikeet if we haven't already seen them. The other major target here is the beautiful but scarce Spotted Quail-thrush. Brisbane Ranges is however a very good area for this species, and we'll try our very best to locate a pair if we didn't succeed in doing so in the Capertee Valley. We'll also have further chances of finding the sometimes tricky Fuscous and Black-chinned Honeyeaters here.

Lakes Cullen and Tutchewop. These saline lakes in the Kerang area make a perfect stop on the way westwards towards Ouyen and depending upon water levels, might support large numbers of Banded Stilt and Red-necked Avocet. Other species could include Australasian Shoveler, Pink-eared Duck, Australian Shelduck, Australasian and Hoary-headed Grebes, Red-kneed and Black-fronted Dotterels and Red-necked Stint, while the surrounding saltmarsh usually supports fair numbers of White-fronted Chat, as well as Brown Songlark and White-winged and Purple-backed Fairywrens. Depending on conditions in the general area, as well as those deeper in the heart of the outback, there might even be a few of the scarce and erratic Orange and Crimson Chats present.



Pink Cockatoos by Glen Valentine

Goschen Bushland Reserve. Depending on recent weather and



Koala by Glen Valentine

conditions, this can be a particularly birdy little reserve that often supports healthy populations of Rufous Songlark during the spring. Other noteworthy species we'll search for include Red-rumped and Blue-winged Parrots, Cockatiel, Australian Ringneck (Mallee subspecies), Bluebonnet, Singing, White-fronted and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Hooded Robin, Striated Pardalote, Brown Treecreeper, White-winged Triller, White-browed Woodswallow, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill and with a fair amount of fortune perhaps even the extremely nomadic Budgerigar or a Black or Pied Honeyeater in the flowering Long-leaf Emu-Bushes.

Hattah-Kulkyne National Park. Hattah-Kulkyne National Park is undoubtedly one of Australia's great protected reserves and we have an entire day to explore this rich and varied park. The extensive mallee eucalypt woodlands that dominate the park support a wealth of endemics and several of the mallee specialists. This unique, stunted woodland is home to several specialties that occur in few other Australian habitats, and these include the rare, elusive and declining Malleefowl, a large terrestrial, megapode, the only non-forest member of its family. The Malleefowl excavate large mounds, where they lay their eggs and allow the heat in the mound to hatch the eggs. The best time of day to find these elusive birds is in the early morning or in the late afternoon when, with exceptional luck, one might be found at the edge of the road or crossing a track. Other mallee specialties that are high on the wish list today are Chestnut Quail-thrush, Mallee Emu-wren and Striated Grasswren and our chances of seeing these three mega-specialties is excellent. These beautiful woodlands with their understory of spinifex (a uniquely Australian spiny grass) also support Red-rumped and scarce Mulga Parrots, Australian Ringneck, Eastern Bluebonnet, Gilbert's Whistler, Southern Scrub Robin, Crested Bellbird and Pallid Cuckoo, among several more common and widespread species.

Areas of Callitris woodland with open grassy glades and thickets provide habitat for the brilliant Splendid Fairywren, Inland and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills, Southern Whiteface, Red-capped Robin and Chestnut-crowned Babbler and if we are extremely fortunate, perhaps a fly-over of the unpredictable and migratory White-backed Swallow.

The picturesque lakes dotted around the reserve often harbour fair numbers of waterbirds, while the tall, Red River Gums are home to the handsome Regent Parrot, Crimson Rosella (yellow form) and flocks of Apostlebird and White-winged Chough.



Apostlebird by Greg de Klerk



Splendid Fairywren by Glen Valentine

Murray-Sunset National Park. This, the second largest park in Victoria (6, 332km^2) protects an extensive area of Mallee, although much of this is inaccessible or only accessible in 4x4 vehicles. We'll spend some time enjoying the picturesque Pink Lakes section of the reserve that is usually an excellent area to see the much-wanted Pink Cockatoo, which will likely be our main target in this area. We'll also likely find Regent and Mulga Parrots, Cockatiel, Australian Ringneck (Mallee subspecies), Eastern Bluebonnet, Black-faced, Dusky and White-browed Woodswallows, Yellow-throated Miner, Weebill, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo and Brown Songlark.

Lake Tyrrell. This saline lake is a back-up site for the nomadic and unpredictable Banded Stilt, as well as Red-necked Avocet, Brown Songlark, White-winged Fairywren and Singing Honeyeater but our main target here is the tiny and vocal Rufous Fieldwren. Here we have another chance, depending on conditions, for the gorgeous but elusive Orange and Crimson Chats.

Deniliquin. We leave Melbourne driving north into farming areas before arriving in the small town of Deniliquin. The mix of habitats, including pine and mallee vegetation may produce several exciting new species for the trip. Possibilities along the drive include Australian Ringneck, Red-rumped Parrot, the strange Apostlebird, White-winged Chough, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Eastern Rosella, Grey Shrikethrush, Laughing Kookaburra, Pied Butcherbird, Australian Magpie, Willie Wagtail, Australian Raven, the huge Wedge-tailed Eagle and as we near Deniliquin, the aptly named Superb Parrot.



Plains-wanderer by Adam Riley

After our evening meal, we will be heading out for a spotlighting excursion on the open-plains country near Hay, where the endemic, monotypic and critically endangered Plains-



Beautiful Firetail by Greg de Klerk

wanderer occurs. This species is the world's only member of the bird family *Pedionomidae* and the native, stubble grasslands of New South Wales and Victoria are their last stronghold. A night on the plains also gives us the chance to locate other grassland species, such as Stubble Quail, Little Buttonquail, Banded Lapwing, Australian Pratincole and Inland Dotterel, all of which are very difficult to see elsewhere during the tour.

Hay Plain. The flightless Emu and the enormous Red and Western Grey Kangaroos roam the open plains here near the edge of the Outback and other possibilities on these seemingly endless plains include the rare Black Falcon, the brilliant White-winged Fairywren, White-fronted Chat, Australian Pipit and displaying Brown Songlark. Surrounding woodlands support Peaceful and Diamond Doves, Long-billed and Little Corella, Galah, Cockatiel, Eastern Bluebonnet, Superb Parrot, Common Bronzewing, Gilbert's Whistler, Striped, White-eared, Brown-headed and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, plus a variety of thornbills and gerygones, White-winged Chough, Zebra and Red-browed Finches, Mistletoebird, Grey-crowned Babbler and the rare and nomadic Ground Cuckooshrike and Black Honeyeater. Depending on conditions, small seasonally flooded wetlands in the area might have Black-tailed Nativehen, as well as a few other interesting, nomadic water-associated species.



Red Kangaroo by Glen Valentine

Mount Korong. The tiny reserve of Mount Korong situated an hour north-west of Bendigo is a reasonably reliable site for the often-elusive Painted Honeyeater on passage during the spring months. It is a notoriously elusive species that winters up in the Gulf region of north-western Queensland and breeds in the box-ironbark woodlands in New South Wales and Victoria during the summer months. We'll try our best to obtain good views and will also keep a lookout for other specialties such as Diamond Firetail and White-browed Babbler.

Bendigo National Park. This morning we'll explore the mallee woodlands within the Bendigo National Park in search of a few species we may not yet have found. These may include Musk and Purple-crowned Lorikeets, Tawny-crowned, White-fronted and White-eared Honeyeaters, Shy Heathwren, Purple-backed Fairywren, Southern Scrub Robin, Gilbert's Whistler, and Inland Thornbill.



Common Wombat by Adam Riley

Launceston to Cradle Mountain. After arrival in Launceston, we will make our way to the Cradle Mountain National Park area. Enroute, we're likely to encounter several great, introductory Tasmanian species such as Tasmanian Nativehen, Black Currawong, the endemic Tasmanian subspecies of Grey Currawong, Forest Raven, Australian Magpie, Swamp Harrier, Masked Lapwing and Welcome Swallow.

Cradle Mountain area. This is a good area to search for many of Tasmania's endemic bird species and we'll have our first chance to see the retiring Scrubtit, Black Currawong, Tasmanian Thornbill and Tasmanian Scrubwren. In addition to the great birding, we will enjoy some of the interesting plants found here. Notables are ancient rainforest species and Gondwana relics such as Pencil and King Billy Pines, Myrtle and the famous Fagus (*Nothofagus gunnii*) which is Tasmania's only deciduous tree.

This is also a good area to view Common Wombat and if we are fortunate, we may find Platypus, one of Australia's most bizarre mammals in a nearby stream. If time permits we will visit the replica of "Waldheim", the home of the Austrian Gustav Weindorfer, whose love of the area inspired the establishment of the national park.

Cradle Mountain National Park. This well-preserved wildlife sanctuary makes for the perfect place to find several of Tasmania's endemic bird species, whilst the scenery here is spectacular and the facilities are world-class. Specialties we'll be on the lookout for include Yellow-throated and Crescent Honeyeaters, the impressive Yellow Wattlebird (the largest honeyeater on Earth!), Tasmanian Thornbill, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Pink and Scarlet Robins, Green Rosella and the rare and highly specialised Scrubtit. The chicken-like Tasmanian Nativehen should be commonly seen running across the open grassy glades and we'll also likely see fair numbers of endearing Wombats.



Green Rosella by Glen Valentine

At Levin Gorge we'll search for Tasmanian Scrubwren, Tasmanian Thornbill, immaculate Scarlet and Pink Robins and Olive Whistler.

Depending on weather conditions, we shall take a night drive into the National Park after dinner, where we will hope to see Spotted-tailed and Eastern Quolls or even the iconic, but very rare Tasmanian Devil.

Cradle Mountain to Bruny Island. We will begin our scenic drive to Hobart, which takes



Forty-spotted Pardalote by Adam Riley

approximately 4 to 5 hours. From Hobart, we will then drive to the harbour to catch our afternoon ferry to Bruny Island.

While heading to Hobart, we'll make a few stops at several rivers and lakes to view waterfowl, as well as forest birds in the surrounding vegetation. Highlights are likely to include many ducks, with previous trips finding Black Swan, Maned Duck, Mallard, Australian Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Australasian Shoveler, Grey and Chestnut Teals, Hardhead and Musk Duck. Several widespread Australian species are also likely to be encountered such as Hoary-headed Grebe, White-faced Heron, Australasian Swamphen, Eurasian Coot, Little Pied Cormorant and Kelp Gull.



Swift Parrot by Glen Valentine

The surrounding forests and scrub may produce large flocks of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Long-billed Corella, Eastern Corella, Musk Lorikeet, Black-headed, Yellow-throated and New Holland Honeyeaters, White-fronted Chat, Galah, Noisy Miner, Pallid and Fan-tailed Cuckoos, Yellow Wattlebirds, Tasmanian Thornbill and the delectable Superb Fairywren.

Hobart to Bruny Ferry. The ferry crossing to Bruny can be quite productive, and we will be on the lookout for several marine species, including a quartet of cormorants: Little Black, Little Pied, Great and the localised Black-faced. Other species of interest include Silver, Kelp and the huge Pacific Gulls, Australian Pelican, and Australasian Gannet.

Bruny Island. Our focal point this morning will be 'INALA', a privately owned 500-acre wildlife reserve situated in southern Bruny Island that is a refuge for several

threatened birds and home to all of the Tasmanian endemic birds. Species we'll likely be targeting this morning are the critically endangered and delicately patterned Forty-spotted Pardalote, Strong-billed and Black-headed Honeyeaters, Dusky Robin, and the now critically endangered Swift Parrot. Other specialties that we might encounter while birding the grounds of Inala include the sneaky Scrubtit, Black Currawong, Green Rosella, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, the white morph of Grey Goshawk, Brown Goshawk, Tasmanian Nativehen, stunning Scarlet and Pink Robins, Olive and Australian Golden Whistlers, Striated Pardalote, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, flashy Blue-winged Parrot, Dusky Woodswallow, Yellow-rumped and Brown Thornbills, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Striated Fieldwren, Eastern Spinebill, extravagant Yellow Wattlebird and Beautiful Firetail.



Pink Robin by Adam Riley

We will also explore several different habitats, from coastal beaches where there is very good possibility of finding Hooded Plover, Australasian Gannet, Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers, Black-faced Cormorant and Pacific Gull, to rainforest areas to search for the endemic Scrubtit and Tasmanian Thornbill should we still be needing these sometimes-tricky endemics. We might also come across Red-necked Wallaby, including several beautiful white morph individuals and we have further opportunity to stumble across the Short-beaked Echidna.



Black Currawong for Greg de Klerk

After dinner, we'll visit a nearby Short-tailed Shearwater rookery to view this species at their burrows. Watching dozens of shearwaters wheeling around at dusk right around us and above our heads before settling down for the night really is a sight to behold! Continuing with a night drive, we'll have a chance of seeing some of Tasmania's nocturnal marsupials such as Common Brushtail Possum, as well as Eastern Quoll and Tasmanian Pademelon. Tawny Frogmouth, Eastern Barn Owl and Tasmanian Boobook also occur, and we may very well see these nocturnal species. There's a very slim chance of encountering an Australasian Masked Owl, the endemic subspecies being especially large, dark, and distinctive but we would indeed be very fortunate to find one.

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Moderate. Suitable for most birding / wildlife interest levels, with several long travel days & full days in the field.
Birding Ease		Moderate. Most species provide good views in open conditions, but several require dedication, patience & repeated effort.
Accommodation		Comfortable hotels, eco-lodges & typical Australian rural motels; some are more rustic but remain pleasant.
Walking / Trails		Moderate distances of up to 6 km a day. Walking is mostly easy, taking place on roads, good trails & waterbody edges.
Vehicles / Roads		Sealed roads are generally in good condition; unsealed roads are more variable. Several long to very long drives.
Photography		Good to very good.
Annoyances		Combination of long drives & occasional hot or humid conditions can be tiring.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 7 of the Southwest Extension.
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 11 of the East Coast I tour.
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 12 of the East Coast II tour.
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 5 of the Tasmania Extension.
- All lodgings.
- All ground transportation during the tour.
- All reserve entrance fees.
- All guiding services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees.
- ANY flights.
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels).
- Optional excursions.
- Special gratuities, tips for local guides, drivers, and services.
- Telephone calls, laundry, and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are **NOT** included on this tour as Australians do not expect to be tipped. However, if you feel that your Tour Leader has given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**
- Please note that these tours will be led by several professional and experienced local leaders who are qualified and licensed to guide in each state. There will be no single tour leader for the entire series of tours.
- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 5kg (+-18lb) for hand luggage.
- Weather: Cairns and the Daintree are lowland tropical and can be hot and humid, with highs around 30°C. The higher Atherton Tablelands are generally cooler, particularly early and late in the day. The normal wet season is broadly November to April, when heavy rain and storms can interrupt field time; May to October is usually drier, with mild days but cool mornings. Pack rain protection and a warm layer for the Tablelands.
- Bush flies: These may occasionally be bothersome at open inland or pastoral sites, particularly in the south-west, the Capertee Valley, Hay/Deniliquin and the Mallee, rather than being a uniform issue across the itinerary. They are most likely in warm spring or summer conditions, but abundance varies greatly with recent rain, livestock dung, local dung-beetle activity and wind. A head net and insect repellent are sensible optional precautions.
- Tasmania Extension: Please be aware that for two nights at the Inala Cottages on Bruny Island there is limited rooming. We will ensure that everyone has their own room, but some guests may have to share a bathroom if sharing a two-bedroom cottage.

Arrival and Departure Details

The Southwest Extension will depart from Perth immediately after breakfast on day 2; kindly arrive the day before (scheduled as day 1). The tour will conclude mid-morning at Perth International Airport, Perth (IATA: PER) on day 7.

The East Coast I tour begins on day 1 with an arrival day in Cairns. Those joining from the pre-tour Southwest Extension will likely arrive at Cairns in the late evening. The tour will conclude in the mid-afternoon at Brisbane International Airport on day 11.

The East Coast II tour begins on day 1 with an arrival day in Sydney. Those joining from the East Coast I will likely arrive in Sydney in the mid-afternoon. The tour will conclude mid-morning at Melbourne International Airport, Melbourne (IATA: MEL) on day 12.

The Tasmania Extension will depart early afternoon from Launceston on day 1 after a midday flight from Melbourne. The tour will conclude at Hobart Airport (IATA: HBA) at around midday of day 5.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

Sydney International Airport, Sydney (IATA: SYD) is the main port of entry for international flights in Australia and is well serviced by all of the world's major airlines. Regular flights linking Australia's major cities are also available.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.