

CAIRNS/DAINTREE/ATHERTON TABLELANDS-NINE NIGHT ITINERARY OCTOBER 10th – 19th 2017.



Day 1 (10th):

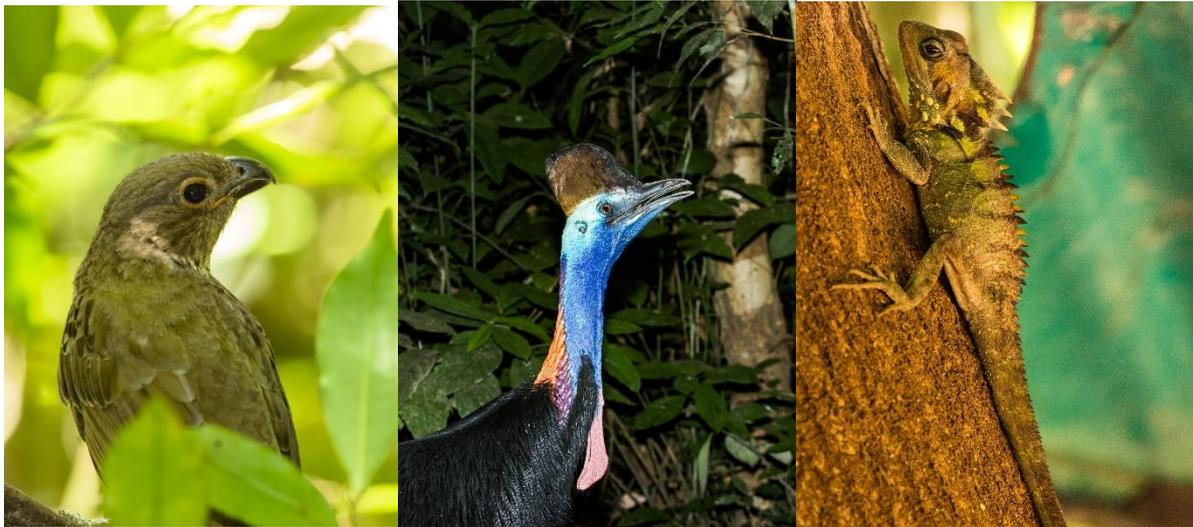
Arrive in Cairns and check into our Hotel. For those there in the afternoon, around 4 PM we will visit the Cairns Esplanade for the first of our sessions with the migratory waders along the Esplanade fore-shore. This is one of the few places where you can get very close to the waders that are normally quite flighty.

Meet and greet with your fellow travellers at 6.30 PM in the bar.

Overnight: Cairns City Palms.

Day 2 (11th):

We will start our journey with an early morning drive up to Kuranda where we will have a private visit to the aptly named Cassowary House, where we hope the namesake bird will be present. Also, around should be Spotted Catbird and Victoria's Riflebird with the diurnal Musky Rat Kangaroo often feeding on the forest floor.



After breakfast in Kuranda we will visit Birdworld, “Australia’s largest collection of free flying birds” for some close up photography opportunities.

Our afternoon destination is the small historic village of Yungaburra, in the Atherton Tablelands, our base for the next 3 nights. On route, we will visit a couple of birding sites where we should find a variety of water birds and surrounding bush birds to capture images of.

Overnight: Kookaburra Lodge Motel, Yungaburra.

Day 3 (12th):

This morning we will head up to Mount Hypipamee National Park where we will concentrate on finding the higher altitude North Queensland endemic birds such as Golden and Tooth-billed Bowerbirds, Atherton Scrub-wren, Mountain Thornbill, Chowchilla, Bridled Honeyeater, Grey-headed Robin and Bower’s Shrike-thrush. We will take a very scenic walk along the tracks to the crater and water falls during our search for some of the more elusive species.

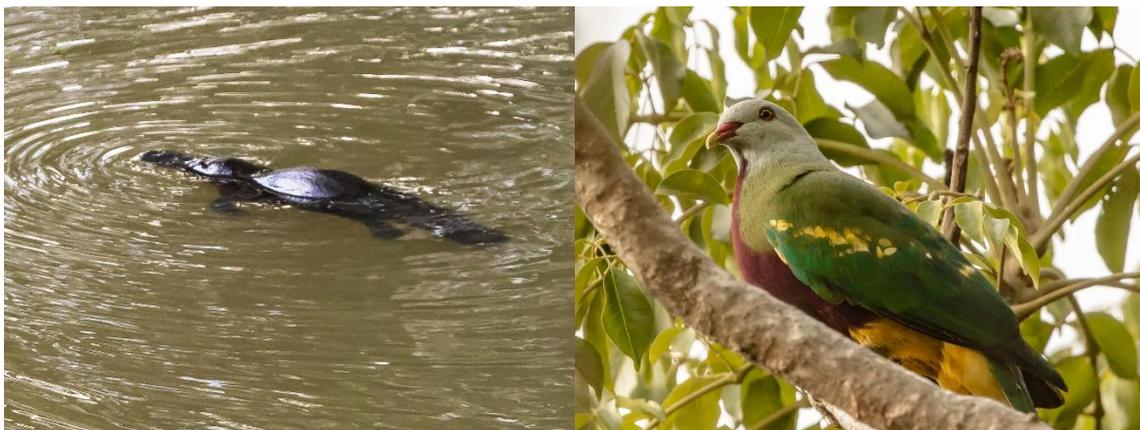
After this we will check out the Nerada Tea Plantation where we hope to photograph the often hard to find Lumholtz's Tree-Kangaroo.

On the way home we will drop into Wongabel State Forest and the Curtain Tree Fig for some more opportunities to photograph some of the local species.

Overnight: Kookaburra Lodge Motel, Yungaburra

Day 4 (13th):

This morning we will have a leisurely start with a stroll along the nearby creek, where our main target will be platypus, amongst a myriad of bird subjects.



After breakfast we will visit nearby Lake Barrine, one of the picturesque Volcanic Crater Lakes in the area, taking a boat cruise around the lake in search of water birds. The rain forest surrounding the lake also holds many bird species and the 1000-year-old Twin Kauri Pines are amongst Australia's largest trees.

We will finish the day with a twilight search for platypus and other species along the creek near Kookaburra Lodge before having our farewell dinner in Yungaburra.

Overnight: Kookaburra Lodge Motel, Yungaburra.

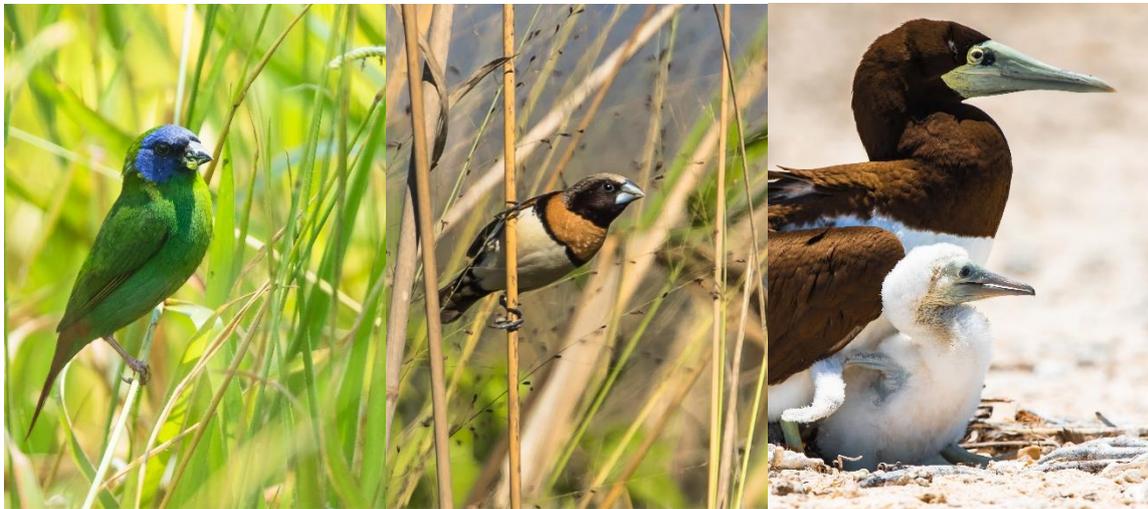
Day 5 (14th):

Checking out from Kookaburra Lodge we will make our way to the quaint little village of Daintree, our home for the next three nights.

On the way, we will drop in to Mareeba Wetlands where they have a captive breeding and release program for Gouldian Finches. We may also be lucky in finding the enigmatic Black-throated Finch.

Travelling on via Mount Molloy we will visit a private lake with many birds to photograph if conditions are right.

Overnight: Daintree Riverview Lodge



Day 6 (15th):

We will start the day right from our door step with an early morning boat cruise on the Daintree River where we will be able to get closer than normal to some of the shyer birds, such as Black Bittern, Great-billed Heron (if we are very lucky), Papuan Frogmouth, Shining Flycatcher and Pied Monarch. Not to forget the crocodiles! After exploring the village and surrounds we will drive back towards Port Douglas and spend the afternoon photographing in the Rainforest Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary.

Overnight: Daintree Riverview Lodge.

Day 7 (16th):

This morning we will drive up Mt. Lewis for more high-altitude specialties including the elusive Blue-faced Parrot-finch.

We will spend a leisurely afternoon strolling the grounds of Kingfisher Park in search of suitable subjects. There are many feeder and watering stations allowing plenty of close up photography opportunities. Macleay's, Yellow-spotted and Graceful Honeyeaters should be present as well as Red-browed Finches, Bar-shouldered Doves, Little Shrike-thrush and Pale-yellow Robins.

Overnight: Daintree Riverview Lodge.

Day 8 (17th):

Our last chance for a morning walk around the scenic Daintree River area before starting our journey back to Cairns where we will visit Centenary Lakes and the Esplanade.

Overnight: Cairns City Palms.

Day 9 (18th):

A day out to the outer reef to finish our trip with a relaxing day of swimming, snorkelling, not forgetting the opportunity to get some close up photos of nesting and roosting sea birds on Michaelmas Cay! The most common being Sooty Tern, Lesser-crested Tern and Common Noddy with a sprinkling of Brown Booby and Frigatebirds. Bridled and Black-naped Terns and other rarities can sometimes be present as well.

An option for a special private tour around the cay by boat is possible, allowing some different angles and sometimes birds to photograph.

We will have a relaxing final dinner before finishing our trip after breakfast the next day.

Overnight: Cairns City Palms.



Day 10 (19th):

Transfer to the airport for flights home.

INCLUSIONS:

- *Transfers to and from the airport.
- *All accommodation (9 Nights) and meals on tour.
- *Bottled drinking water.
- *All entry fees and boat cruises.
- *Guiding and photography tuition.

EXCLUSIONS:

- *Airfares.
- *Alcohol.
- *Items of a personal nature.
- *Travel Insurance- recommended.