



INALA

Wet Tropics/Cape York Queensland

Summer migrants and specialties (Fly up, fly back)

25 January - 2 February 2023

Itinerary prepared by Steve Davidson, Inala Nature Tours, 17 April 2022.



Black-winged Monarch. A. Schulte

OVERVIEW:

This eight-day tour is designed to target far North Queensland in the Wet Season where we have the best chance of a small number of very special migrants from Papua New Guinea, birds that have a short migration window and which visit our shores for a few months only.

We take in the upland rainforests of the Wet Tropics, just inland from Cairns, and then fly to the lowland rainforests of the incomparable Kutini-Payamu (Iron Range National Park) of remote Cape York Peninsula. Around the Wet Tropics area our main target is **Blue-faced Parrot-finch**, which, at that time of year, is found in the highland rainforests. Here we will also look for other high-altitude specialties like **Golden Bowerbird**, **Victoria's Riflebird**, **Tooth-billed Bowerbird**, **Bridled Honeyeater** and **Fernwren**, amongst others.

The birds we will be seeking in Kutini-Payamu are the **Papuan Pitta (*Erythropitta macklotii*)**, **Black-winged Monarch** and **Buff-breasted Paradise-kingfisher**. Of course, there is a suite of additional amazing birds in this region that we'll also target, like **Palm Cockatoo**, **Eclectus Parrot**, **Magnificent Riflebird**, **Frill-necked Monarch**, **Yellow-billed Kingfisher**, **Trumpet Manucode** and **Northern Scrub-robin**, to name a few. Several of the species at the tip of Cape York are shared with Papua New Guinea and are found no further south in Australia. They represent an ancient avifauna that harks back to the last Ice Age, when there was a land bridge between Australia and PNG.

ITINERARY OUTLINE:

- Day 0. Wed 25 Jan 2023. Arrive early, optional. Accom: none (extra night Cairns optional).**
Day 1. Thu 26 Jan 2023. Arrive Cairns by midday, to Atherton Tablelands. Accom: Atherton Tablelands.
Day 2. Fri 27 Jan 2023. Atherton Tablelands. Accom: Atherton Tablelands.
Day 3. Sat 28 Jan 2023. Atherton Tablelands. Accom: Atherton Tablelands.
Day 4. Sun 29 Jan 2023. Atherton Tablelands to Cairns. Accom: Cairns.
Day 5. Mon 30 Jan 2023. Fly Cairns to Lockhart River. Accom: Portland Roads.
Day 6. Tue 31 Jan 2023. Iron Range National Park. Accom: Portland Roads.
Day 7. Wed 1 Feb 2023. Iron Range National Park. Accom: Portland Roads.
Day 8. Thu 2 Feb 2023. Lockhart River to Cairns and depart. Accom: none (extra night Cairns optional).

DETAILED ITINERARY:

Day 1. Thu 26 Jan 2023. Arrive Cairns, travel to Atherton Tablelands.

We will meet in Cairns by midday and head up onto the Tablelands to the south-west. We'll look for birds en route and hope to connect with species like **Pale-vented Bush-hen, Double-eyed Fig-parrot** (race *macleayana*), **Barred Cuckoo-shrike, Cotton & Green Pygmy-goose, White-browed Crake, Great Bowerbird, Northern Fantail, Black Bittern, Grey Whistler, Black-faced, Spectacled & White-eared Monarchs** and **White-cheeked, Lewin's, Cryptic, Scarlet, White-throated & Brown-backed Honeyeaters**. In the evening we'll make a stop at a well-known location for one of our more enigmatic animals: the amazing **Platypus**. At night we can try for **Lesser Sooty Owl** and possibly the rainforest-inhabiting *lurida* race of Australian Boobook, known as Little Red Boobook. Nocturnal mammals include a range of different possums like **Green Ringtail, Striped, Lemuroid, Herbert River Ringtail Possums** and **Long-tailed Pygmy-possum**, and gliders such as **Yellow-bellied** and **Sugar Glider**.

Accommodation: Atherton Tablelands (en suite cabins). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Days 2 & 3. Fri 27 Jan and Sat 28 Jan 2023. Atherton and Windsor Tablelands.



Blue-faced Parrot-finch A. Schulte

We will further explore the picturesque and diverse Atherton Tablelands and then head north to some high altitude rainforest at Mount Lewis in the world-famous Windsor Tablelands. Over these two days we target **Blue-faced Parrot-finch**, as well as **Victoria's Riflebird, Golden Bowerbird, Fernwren, Tooth-billed Bowerbird, Atherton Scrubwren, Bower's Shrike-thrush, Pied Monarch, Mountain Thornbill, Tooth-billed Bowerbird, Bridled Honeyeater, Spotted Catbird, Lovely Fairywren** and **Macleay's Honeyeater**. **Accommodation:** Atherton Tablelands (en suite cabins). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 4. Sun 29 Jan 2023. Atherton Tablelands to Cairns.

A day to look around the area and pick up any birds or other critters we may be missing, as well as some open country birds typical of the tablelands, and a few waterbirds. We'll try for **Sarus Crane & Brolga, Australian Bustard, Wandering & Plumed Whistling-ducks, Spotted Harrier, Squatter Pigeon** and **Little Kingfisher**. **Accommodation:** Cairns (en suite water view rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Day 5. Mon 30 Jan 2023. Cairns to Lockhart River.

This morning we will board a flight to Lockhart River on the boundary of one of Australia's most treasured, yet remote, birding destinations: Kutini-Payamu, which is home to a host of range restricted species found nowhere else in the country. On arrival we will collect our vehicle and settle into our accommodation. If time allows, we'll head off into the national park for a look around, hopefully picking up a few birds including **Black-winged Monarch, Trumpet Manucode, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, Yellow-billed Kingfisher** and perhaps hearing the call of a **Papuan Pitta**.

Accommodation: Portland Roads House (shared toilet/bathroom). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Days 6 & 7. Tue 31 Jan and Wed 1 Feb 2023. Iron Range NP. Accom: Portland Roads.

We have 2 full days to search the environs of Kutini-Payamu (Iron Range) NP, searching for the migrant **Papuan Pitta, Black-winged Monarch** and **Buff-breasted Paradise-kingfishers**. Other specialties of the area include **Magnificent Riflebird, Noisy Scrub-robin, Palm Cockatoo, Red-cheeked and Eclectus Parrots, Trumpet Manucode, Black-eared Catbird, Frill-necked Monarch, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, Green-backed, Graceful Tawny-breasted & White-streaked Honeyeaters, White-faced Robin, Yellow-legged Flyrobin, Tropical Scrubwren, Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo, Double-eyed Fig-parrot (race *marshalli*), Noisy Pitta, Fairy Gerygone (race *personata*), Spectacled Monarch (race *albiventer*), Shining**

Flycatcher, Pied Heron, Black-naped, Sooty and Lesser Crested Terns, Great and Lesser Frigatebird and Spotted Whistling-duck.

At night we'll try for a few nocturnal birds like **Marbled Frogmouth, Large-tailed Nightjar** and **Rufous Owl**, as well as some mammals found nowhere else but here and New Guinea, such as **Common Cuscus** and **Spotted Cuscus**. The incredible **Green Tree Python** is also a possibility in the rainforest, as well as **Spotted Python, Amethystine Python, Brown-headed Snake** and **Orange-naped Snake**.

Accommodation: Portland Roads House (shared toilet/bathroom) for 2 additional nights. **Meals included:** B, L, D each day.





White-faced Robin R. Fernley



Buff-breasted Paradise-kingfisher A. Schulte

Day 8. Thu 2 Feb 2023. Lockhart River to Cairns and depart.

Today we will have time for more birding for any targets we may still need to chase down, before we head back to Cairns, arriving at 6.45pm. Please allow at least two hours between arrival and your onward flight. We are happy to assist with extra accommodation in Cairns.

Accommodation: none. **Meals included:** B, L.



Eclectus Parrots in flight by Alfred Schulte

PRICING AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:



Palm Cockatoo A. Schulte

Tour Price: AU\$ 6,560 per person twin share or a group size of 4 participants with one specialist guide/driver in one 4WD vehicle.) **Single supplement:** AU\$550).

Additional accommodation can be arranged in Cairns before the tour and on night 8 for AU\$200/room per night (bed and breakfast).

Price includes: All accommodation as per the itinerary, specialist guide and transport, return flight between Cairns to Lockhart River, all meals, entrance fees and activities as mentioned in the above itinerary. Includes GST.

Price does not include: Airfares other than the Cairns - Lockhart River return flights, airport transfers, alcoholic beverages, snacks, internet, tips, laundry or other items of a personal nature.

Please note:

- **The itinerary:** Whilst we aim to follow the itinerary as planned, please note that the itinerary provided should only be used as a guideline. Depending on individual trip circumstances, weather, and local information, the exact itinerary may not be strictly adhered to. The guides reserve the right to make changes to the itinerary as they see fit.
- **Remoteness:** Please note that for much of this tour we will be birding in a wonderful yet remote part of Australia. Most of the roads are unsealed and rough and travel will be in 4WD vehicles. If you have medical conditions or health concerns, it is important you make us aware of these in advance of this tour.
- [Click here for a separate online doc that answers many of the frequently asked questions about Small Group Tours.](#)