



Australia: Tasmania Trip Report (Nov 2023)

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The 5-day optional extension in the Island state of Tasmania offers a relaxed and slower-paced conclusion, especially appealing for those traveling from Eastern Australia. Being the most southerly state, Tasmania is characterized by cooler temperatures and a slightly damp environment. However, it boasts a wonderful array of incredible wildlife, including 12 endemic birds, ancient forests, and vast wilderness areas, making it a truly special destination. Our itinerary commenced in the historic and charming state capital of Hobart, where we delved into local birding and explored the natural wonders of Mt Field National Park. The journey continued with three nights on Bruny Island, an enchanting location where we had the opportunity to observe some excellent birds, with the endangered Forty-spotted Pardalote being a notable highlight. Our time on Bruny also included an insightful tour of the incredible Inala Sanctuary and a scenic boat cruise along the rugged south coast, offering breathtaking views of the coastline and glimpses of seabirds. In total, we recorded an impressive 93 species of birds, encompassing all 12 endemics, marking a highly successful outcome. I extend my gratitude to all participants for contributing to the good company, delightful gastronomy, and the joy of encountering a diverse array of birds. The tour was crafted to be gently paced, ensuring a very enjoyable experience for all involved.



Bennett's (Red-necked) Wallaby (albino) © Scott Baker

Nov 26: Arriving in Hobart on a cold and wet afternoon was a shock to the system, but standard for southern Tasmania. Our dedicated and optimistic group trudged up to Mt Wellington with umbrellas. Despite the odds, we managed to spot a soggy Black Currawong and an inquisitive Olive Whistler, cutting losses and heading back to Gould's Lagoon. This wetland site allowed us to observe ducks, including Australasian Shoveler and Freckled Duck—a good record for Tasmania. A flushed Latham's Snipe was also a nice sighting. Nov 27: Spending the morning birding at Mt Field National Park, a tall forest site in the upper Derwent, proved to be hard work. The vegetation here is notably dominated by the enormous Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*)—the tallest flowering plant on the planet. Despite the challenges, we got tickable views of endemics like Tas Nativehen, Green Rosella, Yellow Wattlebird, Black-headed Honeyeater, Tas Scrubwren, Tas Thornbill, and several Pink Robins. A fabulous encounter with a friendly Short-beaked Echidna added to the experience. Later making our way to Bruny Island.



Short-beaked Echidna © Scott Baker



Green Rosella © Scott Baker



Black-headed Honeyeater © Scott Baker

Nov 28: Today's agenda included a guided tour of the Inala property on South Bruny with local expert Andrew. The property hosts most of Tasmania's endemics and is a stronghold for the endangered Forty-spotted Pardalote. We observed birds utilizing custom-built nest boxes from the Pardalote viewing tower, witnessing successful breeding outcomes. We also spotted Swift Parrot, Strong-billed Honeyeater, and Dusky Robin. Later, we connected with Yellow-throated Honeyeater at a different site and the somewhat elusive Scrubtit, completing the set of Tasmanian endemics with time to spare.



Swift Parrot © Scott Baker

Nov 29: After a late breakfast, we embarked on a 'Bruny Island Wilderness Cruise' to explore South Bruny in a high-powered speed boat, providing a unique experience of the incredible coastline. This includes some of the highest sea cliffs on the planet, dolerite columns, blowholes, and cave formations. We encountered both New Zealand (long-nosed) and Australian Fur Seals, along with a Humpback Whale with a calf less than 50 meters from the boat—a real bonus! Hundreds of Short-tailed Shearwaters, Australasian Gannets, and several Shy Albatross were also observed, along with a single Parasitic Jaeger.



The Monument rockstack at Bruny Island © Scott Baker

Nov 30: Winding things up on Bruny with most targets under our belt, we had a chance to improve on a few photos before returning to Hobart. With 93 species over 5 days, including all the true endemics, it was a respectable effort. [Australia: Tasmania species list \(Nov 2023\)](#)