

Tasmania Birding Tour 2022 - Trip Report (Oct 26 - 30)

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After arriving in Hobart in rain, we decided to drive up Mt Wellington just to see what conditions were like on top. The summit was in the clouds and strong winds and continuing rain meant a quick turnaround and descent. What was interesting about the journey up the mountain was the sheer volume of water cascading down the sides and along the road – waterfalls everywhere! Back in the city we went to the Botanic Gardens where birding actually began with views of the endemic Yellow Wattlebird and others such as Crescent Honeyeater, Eurasian Blackbird, Black Currawong, Forest Raven and Eastern Rosella. Day 2 began with some good roadside birding on the way to Mt Field National Park. Black Swans were very common along the Derwent Estuary and Tasmanian Native Hens, some with chicks, were common in the wet fields. At the National Park, birding between the rain showers produced some spectacular views of Pink Robin, Dusky Robin and Superb Fairywren. After lunch we drove back through Hobart to catch the Bruny Island ferry.



Russell Falls in Mt Field National Park © Rob Elvish

Birding on Bruny Island began early the next morning with a tour of Inala Nature Reserve. Here we had excellent views of the endangered Forty-spotted Pardalote. Other great birds seen here, despite

the ongoing rain, included Swift Parrot, Green Rosella, Black-headed and Strong-billed Honeyeaters, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Tasmanian Thornbill and a range of Robins (Scarlet, Flame, Pink, Dusky). Today we also got great views of one of Bruny Island's famous white wallabies.



White Wallaby on Bruny Island © Rob Elvish

The next morning we went to Adventure Bay to fit in some early birding before our Bruny Island cruise. Bruny Island is a stronghold for the endangered Hooded Plover. A search of the beach at high tide paid off, finding five of them sheltering in a patch less used by the locals walking dogs along the beach. We appreciated the total cover of the supplied spray jackets on the boat cruise, keeping us relatively dry and warm despite the rain and rough seas. It was worth it for the spectacular coastal scenery and on the return journey we had some close views of White-capped Albatross and Short-tailed Shearwaters. We also spotted the Australian endemic Pacific Gulls nesting on the cliffs.



Rock stack on Bruny Island © Rob Elvish



Waterfall on Bruny Island © Rob Elvish

In the evening of Day 4, after an early dinner, we went to a penguin and shearwater breeding colony to watch for the birds to return after dusk. As the light decreased we started to see the wheeling forms of Short-tailed Shearwaters flying over the nesting colony and coming into land and entering their burrows. This was followed by the sound of chicks begging and parents giving their eerie wailing calls. A little later the first Little Penguin of the evening emerged from the sea and made its

way up into the nesting colony in the sand dunes. After some great views of White-fronted Chat, we departed Bruny Island early the next day to gain maximum birding time at Peter Murrell State Reserve on the way back to Hobart. On this final day of the tour, the sun emerged as we rode the ferry back to Kettering Harbour. At Peter Murrell Reserve, we added Chestnut Teal and more views of Yellow-throated and Black-headed Honeyeaters and lots of Striated Pardalotes searching for nest hollows.



Kettering Harbour © Rob Elvish



Group 2022

