Eagle-Eye Tours



Tropical Australia Trip Report (Sep 30 - Oct 8, 2025)

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Day 1: We met in the resort reception before driving to the Darwin Sailing Club for dinner by the seaside. We were entertained by Red-collared Lorikeets as the sun set. We had an early night in preparation for a full day of birding.



Red-collared Lorikeet © Kye Turnbull

Day 2: Our day started at Buffalo Creek. Before too long we had Northern Fantail on a nest, 2 Rose-crowned Fruit-Doves, Arafura Shrikethrush and the star of the morning, an extremely friendly Rainbow Pitta. From here we moved to the Aralia Street wader roost, where we had fantastic views of Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Eastern Reef Egret and a Helmeted Friarbird building a nest.



Rainbow Pitta © Kye Turnbull



Green-backed Gerygone © Kye Turnbull



Shining Flycatcher © Kye Turnbull

After picking up some lunch we moved onto some shady benches at Lee Point where we were treated to great views of Blue-winged Kookaburra, Varied Lorikeet and an anting Tawny Frogmouth. After a retreat from the heat in our accommodation we set out again to bird the East Pt Mangrove Boardwalk. Here we had Beach Stone-Curlew, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Broad-billed Flycatcher and Torresian Kingfisher. We were also delighted to see many Agile Wallabies. Dinner tonight was a 200 meter walk from our accommodation. On the way we ended our daily checklist with Black Flying-Fox and Bush Stone-Curlew.



Little Bronze Cuckoo © Kye Turnbull



Striated Heron © Kye Turnbull

Day 3: To start our day we set off early, having breakfast on the road. Soon after arriving at our first birding spot at a pond in Darwin River we found 3 Northern Rosellas, Red-winged Parrot and a group of Crimson Finches. Not long after this, the first of 60 Gouldian Finches along with Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Double-barred Finch and Masked Finch came in to drink at the pond.



Birding at Darwin River © Kye Turnbull

After leaving this spot he headed to Fogg Dam, where we saw hundreds of water birds, including Brolga, Pied Heron and a Paperbark Flycatcher on a nest. From here we made our way towards Jabiru, finding a trio of Partridge Pigeons while having lunch and making a stop at a Red Goshawk nest by the highway. After a rest in the afternoon we had a dinner at the Mercure Kakadu Hotel before returning to our accommodation, serenaded by Barking Owls and Tawny Frogmouth.



Birding at Fogg Dam © Kye Turnbull



Partridge Pigeon © Kye Turnbull



Red Goshawk © Kye Turnbull



Barking Owl © Kye Turnbull

Day 4: An early start at the Yellow Waters cruise gave us great views of Black-necked Stork, Nankeen Night-Heron and many Estuarine Crocodiles. Before we got on the boat a walk-by from a Dingo got the whole group excited.



Yellow Waters boat trip © Kye Turnbull



Estuarine Crocodile © Kye Turnbull

After finishing the boat cruise we moved onto the breakfast buffet at Cooinda, then onwards to Mardugal Billabong on Jim Jim Creek to rest in the shade. Here we saw Arafura Shrikethrush, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Mertens Water Monitor, a large Barramundi and a Spotted Archerfish. To finish off our day we travelled to Bardedjilidji where we saw Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeon and Leaden Flycatcher, before watching the sunset and admiring indigenous rock artwork at Ubirr, spotting an Eastern Short-eared rock-wallaby in the process. We ate dinner at Kakadu Lodge and headed for bed.



Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeon © Kye Turnbull

Day 5: We began our day at Nourlangie Rock, admiring more indigenous rock artwork while searching for Banded Fruit-Dove. Here we had our first Silver-crowned Friarbirds and Pacific Emerald Doves of the trip. We also managed to spot the target Banded Fruit-Dove. As it became hotter several interesting species of butterfly were seen, including Orange Lacewing and Blue-banded Eggfly. To pass the hot part of the day we spent the late morning at the Bowali visitors centre, taking in the history, shade and birds, including Rufous-throated Honeyeaters, White-gaped Honeyeaters and Mistletoebird. We had lunch at the Murrawuddi arts and culture centre, where we were delighted not only by the indigenous artwork but also by an Australian Hobby flying above. An afternoon visit to Bardedjilidji gave us great views of Pheasant Coucal, Sandstone Shrikethrush, Pacific Baza and another Eastern Short-eared rock-wallaby. We returned to our hotel for another dinner, followed by a quick spotlighting session which gave us Tawny Frogmouth, a show stealing Burton's Legless-Lizard and wonderful views of two dingos which followed our car. **Day 6:** As soon as the gates opened at Kakadu we made our way to Nawurlandja Lookout where we had an interesting Singing Honeyeater find. After this we made our way back to Nourlangie Rock to get the White-lined Honeyeater. From here we travelled to Cooinda to explore the cultural centre and do some birding, which gave us our first Bar-breasted Honeyeaters for the trip, along with more views of Pheasant Coucal and a Northern Dwarf Tree Frog.



Nawurlandja Lookout © Kye Turnbull

After having lunch at the restaurant we made our way towards Line Creek. We had a lazy afternoon in the caravan park, but it did not go unrewarded. As the afternoon rolled on we counted 70 Hooded Parrots and 8 Masked Finches plus a Great Bowerbird at it's bower. We settled in for dinner at the Lazy Lizard Tavern and then got ready for a big day.



Hooded Parrot © Kye Turnbull



Great Bowerbird © Kye Turnbull

Day 7: The morning got off to a bad start when an Agile Wallaby ran in front of one of our vehicles. Luckily everyone was safe, but the car was out of action. The group all got into Katherine for breakfast and some birding in a local park while the car was towed to the Katherine hire car shop. While birding in town the group was delighted to get the first Apostlebirds, Yellow-tinted Honeyeaters and Crested Pigeons for the trip. By lunchtime our car was back in action and we made

our way to the savannah south of town for some birding. Despite being late we managed to secure a solid list of birds including the Golden-backed subspecies of Black-chinned Honeyeater, Little Woodswallow, Jacky Winter, Varied Sitella and Antilopine Wallaroo. A quick stop at some grassland on our way home gave us our first Brown Quails of the trip and when we did arrive at Pine Creek we were once again greeted by 70 Hooded Parrots. We returned to the Tavern for one last dinner here before heading to Darwin in the morning. **Day 8:** We decided to have a later start as most had early flights to catch the next morning. While leaving the accommodation we once again got to see 50+ Hooded Parrots in the caravan park. From here we travelled to the Pine Creek Waste Treatment facility where we found Red-backed Kingfisher, Cockatiels and Australasian Grebes. After this we made short stops for Buff-sided Robin at Lake Bennet and Silver-backed Butcherbird at Marlow Lagoon. We then spent a few hours scoping out Knuckies Lagoon where we found several hundred Magpie Geese, Wood Sandpiper, Marsh Sandpiper and Little Curlew. For lunch we visited Eva's Cafe at the botanic Gardens, where we were lucky enough to find a roosting Rufous Owl. After checking into our accommodation we had some short birding around Buffalo Creek, where we had our first Mangrove Gerygone and Greater Crested Tern for the trip, along with nice views of Bush Stone-Curlew and Radjah Shelduck. We made our way to the Darwin Sailing Club for our final bird call and dinner beneath a beautiful warm Darwin night. A splendid ending to a wonderful trip.



Birding at Buffalo Creek © Kye Turnbull



Rufous Owl © Kye Turnbull

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