



THE CAIRNS FROGMOUTH

*All correspondence to: cairnsbirders@yahoo.com.au
or connect with us on [Facebook](#).*

As we take our next step, let us remember the first people to walk this land.

Cairns Birders is a group of people who share common interests. We are not a club. There is no leader. Those joining in any outings/activities are expected to follow the 'common space' expectations and do so at their own risk. NO trespassing on habitat or private property.

EVENTS:

Sunday	19th April	7am	Andy's Patch meet cnr Little n Arthur Streets
Sunday	26th April	7:30	Behanna Gorge Meet near the Highway
Weekend away	May 15th - 19th		Camping at Artemis Station
ECOFIESTA	21st June 10 - 4pm		Munro Martin Parkland - vollies needed!
Cairns Birders' Festival	Friday 28th August - Saturday 5th September		
Cairns Birders' Epic Excursion	October 2026 TANZANIA	FULL	

ONLINE SHOP

Cairns Birders merchandise

Look out for sales

All designs are available as car stickers, caps, T-shirts, cushions, aprons, telephone covers and many many other options.

All profits from sales of images displaying "Cairns Birders"

go to Cairns Birders for miscellaneous expenses. [Redbubble Store](#) Or log into [redbubble.com](https://www.redbubble.com) and search for "Cairns Birders"

Art by Yorz Trooley



Today we visited an area behind James Cook University. It's Michael's turf, and he kindly offered to lead the way, having guided a JCU group here for some time. Although a few of us have birded this area over the years, it was a new site for many in the group, and more than 30 birders turned up to take advantage of the outing.

We followed an access road along the edge of well-forested slopes for most of the walk. There were numerous side paths branching off, but these are purpose-built BMX and mountain bike trails, best avoided as riders move through them at speed.



Shane Kennedy



Forest Kingfisher Shane Kennedy

Once we entered the forested area, visibility became more challenging. Photographers shuffled left and right as the birds teased us, always keeping just enough foliage between themselves and our lenses. Quite some time was spent tracking a **Little Bronze-Cuckoo** doing exactly that - silently slipping from twig to twig, seemingly unbothered by our presence.

We gathered in the car park to wait for stragglers and map-challenged travellers, and began compiling our bird list. **Australasian Figbirds, Brown Honeyeaters, Magpie-larks, Spangled Drongos** and **Varied Trillers** were all recorded here. As we crossed a grassy field lightly dotted with trees, we spotted the first of several **Forest Kingfishers** - such a smart-looking bird.



Little Bronze-cuckoo Mikey Kudo



Metallic Starling Eden Gray-Spence

A small flock of **Spectacled Monarchs**, possibly a family group with some juveniles, proved even trickier. They flitted rapidly between dark hiding spots, never settling for long. Miles took a hopeful shot and later discovered a blurred image of a **Little Shrikethrush** - I've just added it to the list.

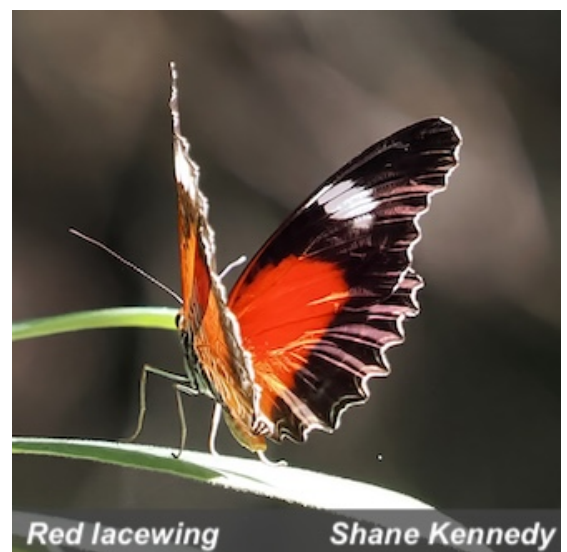
Nearby, Mikey heard **Lovely Fairy-wrens** in a tangle of vines. With patience, we were rewarded with brief glimpses of the colourful female and a male in full breeding plumage. Meanwhile, Michael Y pointed out what looked like a piece of bark that suddenly moved - and stuck out a tongue! Sure enough, it was a goanna high in the tangle, still almost invisible. Perhaps a **Spotted Tree Monitor**. How did you spot that, Michael?



Mistletoebird Eden Gray-Spence

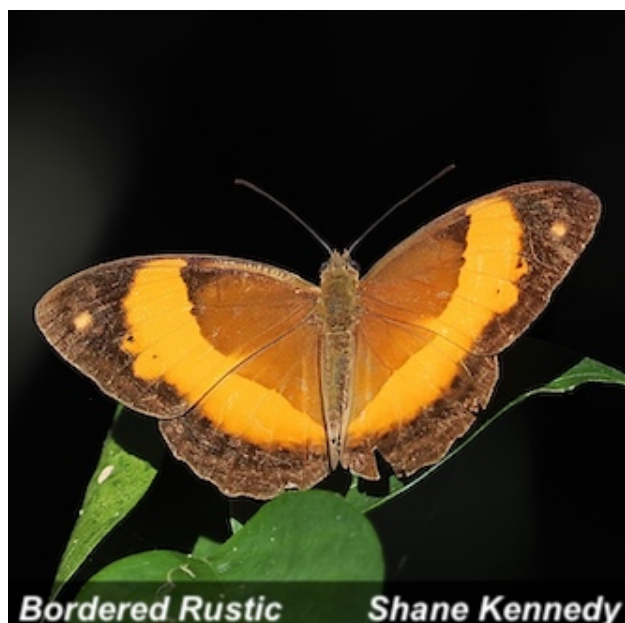
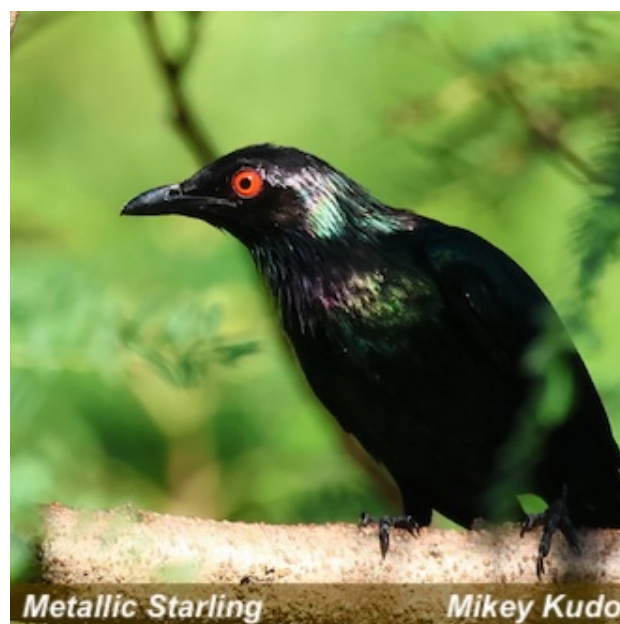
Mikey's ears were working overtime, and he soon alerted us to a **Noisy Pitta** calling from the gully below. **Metallic Starlings** were far easier to locate - noisy, gregarious feeders that they are - but **Grey Whistlers**, **Fairy Gerygones** and **White-throated Honeyeaters** played the game of the day: "see me if you can!" Most of us managed only fleeting glimpses. A **Grey Fantail** showed briefly to a lucky few. Miles glimpsed a **Pheasant Coucal** disappearing into the scrub, though another later obliged the stragglers with a photo opportunity.

There were also plenty of butterflies about, including **Ulysses**, **Red Lacewing**, **Bordered Rustic** and **Varied Eggfly**, while Xian kept busy photographing spiders.



Red lacewing Shane Kennedy

The sky was blue, the temperature mild, and the company excellent. Who would have thought that this time last week there was a chance we might be in the middle of a cyclone? Everyone left happy, with a total of 43 species recorded for the day.



Orange-footed Megapode, Spotted Dove, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Pheasant Coucal, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Australian Swiftlet, Bush Stone-curlew, Masked Lapwing, Osprey, Rainbow Bee-eater, Forest Kingfisher, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Rainbow Lorikeet, Noisy Pitta, Lovely Fairywren,

Yellow-spotted Honeyeater, Cryptic Honeyeater, Dusky Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Helmeted Friarbird, Fairy Gerygone, Varied Triller, Little Shrikethrush, Grey Whistler, Australasian Figbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Black Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Spangled Drongo, Australian Spectacled Monarch, Magpie-lark, Leaden Flycatcher, Welcome Swallow, Metallic Starling, Common Myna, Mistletoebird, Sahul Sunbird, Scaly-breasted Munia, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin

Cairns Botanic Gardens: Tuesday's Guided Bird Walk: Shane Kennedy

*This walk is free and open to all. It is part of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens program of activities.
7:30 Tuesday mornings. Meet near the 'Friends' office, near the Conservatory.*



An impressive start to the day: dark, moody clouds hung against a blue-black sky, pushing back against the encroaching white of dawn. The rising sun eventually prevailed, leaving us with a glorious morning for birding.

A strong contingent of locals joined us - familiar faces including Sean, Eden, Leah, Peter O, Peter M, Roy, Laurie, Jeff, Kazu, Darren, Darlene and Graham, along with newcomers Tim and Kate and their children, Eilis and Stellan. We also welcomed visitors from further afield: Michael from the Sunshine Coast, Amy from the UK, Lou from the USA, Shion from Japan, and Kim and Hillki (?) from Finland.



It's always great to have youngsters along, and Eilis stayed close as we explored "handkerchief" trees, native bees and Sausage Trees. We even found a large Cairns Birdwing caterpillar, so she got the full experience.

We then headed down the boardwalk, with Metallic Starlings active in the canopy and **Orange-footed Scrubfowl** cackling loudly from the undergrowth. At one point, our path was blocked by a gathering of **Australian Brush-turkeys** - six of them - which eventually hopped off the boardwalk to allow us safe passage.





Little Kingfisher *Eden Gray-Spence*

Not much further on, Sean brought us to another abrupt stop. “**Black Bittern**,” he announced. We had clear views of this secretive species, and cameras were soon clicking again, barely cooled from the kingfisher session.



Black Bittern *Leah Drummond*



Sean Han

As we reached the western arm of Freshwater Lake, we flushed a **Little Kingfisher** just as we were jostling to a halt. “Bother,” I thought. Moving forward cautiously, we spotted it flying again, this time it settled in a melaleuca ahead. With a careful approach, we were rewarded with 20 minutes of close encounters with this jewel of a bird.

Freshwater Lake hosted its usual scattering of **Rainbow Bee-eaters** hawking insects, but this time they were joined by **White-breasted Woodswallows** doing the same. Their hunting antics are usually well overhead, so this was a bit of a treat.

Saltwater Lake continues to host a flock of **Radjah Shelducks**, while nearby the resident **Bush Stone-curlews** were hunkered down on their bent legs. We had hoped for a few additional species here, but it was not to be, so we moved on to Lerp Lane. Activity there was quiet - perhaps due to the noisy mowing.

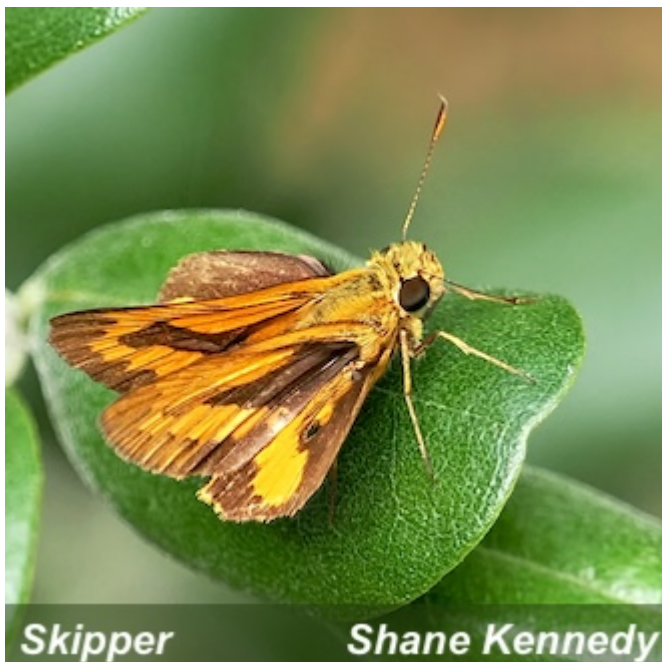


Skirting Lily and Saltwater Creeks, we enjoyed good views of the **Green (Yellow) Oriole**, with its salmon bill and ruby-red eyes. These birds often remain high in the canopy, calling persistently while frustrating attempts at a clear view - but not today.

Crossing the footbridge, we entered the mangrove track along the opposite side of the creek. Leah's sharp ears first picked up a **Mistletoebird** - a bold male that responded to my whistle, fooled only briefly - followed by **Lovely Fairy-wrens**. Deep in the mangroves, they teased us with only the briefest glimpses as they flitted just out of reach.

A lower bird count today, with 31 species recorded, but as Sean aptly put it, it was quality, not quantity, that made the day.

Radjah Shelduck, Moriarty (Muscovy Duck x Mallard hybrid), Australian Brushturkey, Orange-footed Megapode, Spotted Dove, Peaceful Dove, Australian Swiftlet, Bush Stone-curlew, Masked Lapwing, Black Bittern, Osprey, Rainbow Bee-eater, Little Kingfisher, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Rainbow Lorikeet, Lovely Fairywren, Yellow Honeyeater, Helmeted Friarbird, Varied Triller, Green aka Yellow Oriole, Australasian Figbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Black Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Magpie-lark, Leaden Flycatcher, Welcome Swallow, Metallic Starling, Common Myna, Mistletoebird, Sahul Sunbird



ECOFIESTA 21st June 2026 @ Munro Martin Parklands, Cairns

Ecofiesta is a one-day festival celebrating the natural environment and the practical steps we can all take to leave a lighter footprint on the planet. [Link to CRC Events page](#)

BIRDLIFE North Queensland has long had a stall at this annual event and we are looking to our local community for volunteers to engage with stall visitors.

ECOFIESTA			
Set up 8:30 - 10:00	Shane	Vishy	Denis Moeser
10:00 - 12:00			
12:00 - 14:00			
14:00 - 16:00			
Packing up 15:30 -	Shane		

As usual, Denis Moeser is setting up nestbox display on an additional table. So you can ask him any questions.

Entry is free so even if you are not volunteering grab your mates and come down to Munro Martin Parklands for a day of fun, friendship and eco-inspiration, popping in to say hello, of course .

Please contact Mikey Kudo at kudo555@hotmail.co.jp

Rowdy's Ramblings:

Bird song and music: Linda Ronstadt sings the Neil Young song ['Birds'](#)

Cairns Birders' Archives are now available for a mere \$5 each including postage. The flash-drive contains more than **830 newsletters** and related articles going back some **27 years** and you can update it yourself as each new newsletter appears. Simply SMS your postal address to Rowdy B on 0406 068 295 and promise to buy him a beer someday. Remember, if you want to contribute to Cairns Birders funds, consider taking your cans and bottles to a recycling point near you and direct the funds to the account below. Alternatively, meet us on our **'first outing of the month' Centenary Lakes or Cattana Wetlands) and hand over your empties to Rowdy.** CAIRNS BIRDERS Containers for Change Account C10211514.

Louise's Trivia Quiz from the BLNQ AGM - part 1

1. What Penguin Species breeds in Australia
2. How many PRIMARY flight feathers does the average bird have on each wing;
3. What was Birdlife Australia 2025 Bird of the Year;

Answer to last week's quiz;

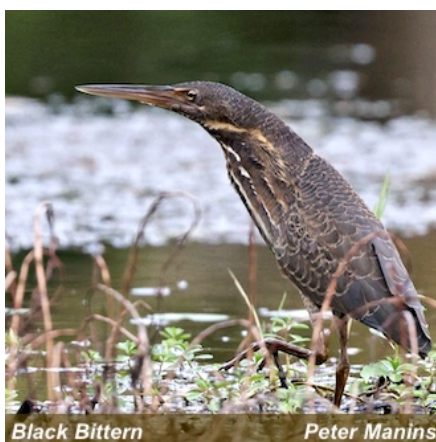


Black-faced Monarch



Golden Bowerbird

Chris Rappolt



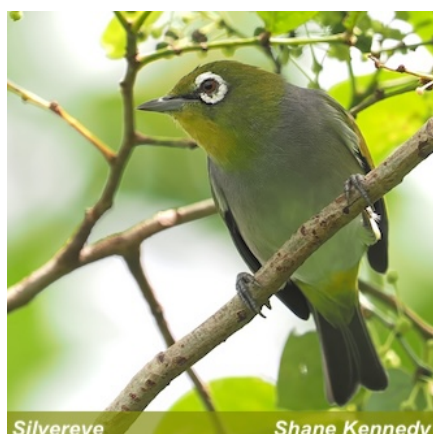
Black Bittern

Peter Manins



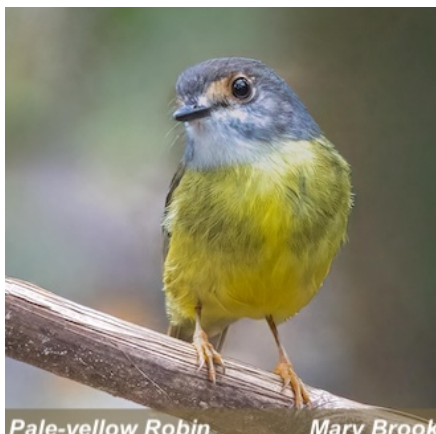
Eastern Yellow Wagtail

Shane Kennedy



Silveryeye

Shane Kennedy



Pale-yellow Robin

Mary Brook



Double-eyed Fig-parrot

Warwick Norman

Extra Extra! Read all about it!

Slow shutter speeds for bird photography?? [LINK](#)

New discovery - Sunbirds suck, Hummingbirds don't! [LINK](#)

Norty Corner

