



THE CAIRNS FROGMOUTH

All correspondence to: info@cairnsbirders.com
or connect with us on [Facebook](#) or Cairnsbirders.com

*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:

Festival - still ongoing	see next page
Sunday 6th September	7am Cattana Wetlands followed by Fully catered morning tea - Final event of the Festival
Sunday 13th September	7am Barron River Mouth
Tuesday - every week	7:30 Friends' House , Botanic Gardens, Collins Ave, Cairns
Thursday 10 September	7pm BirdLife talk, Malanda Hotel, Dr Cliff Frith "Bird discoveries made through the camera lens"
Starry starry night	12 September - Tablelands - see below for details
Cairns Birders' Epic Excursion	October 2026 TANZANIA FULL

ONLINE SHOP

Cairns Birders merchandise

Look 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](#)



Art by Yorz Trooley

Cairns Birding Festival - Talk Night - Scott Ritchie**Friday 4th September 18:00** · Stratford Library

Join local birder Scott Ritchie for an engaging evening exploring the surprising diversity of birds that call urban Cairns home. You don't have to travel to the world's great wilderness areas to enjoy incredible birdlife. Some of Far North Queensland's most remarkable birds can be found right here in suburban Cairns.

Cairns Birding Festival - East Trinity - BYO morning tea, chairs - Snakey area, boots n long trousers!**Saturday 5th September 06:30** · 1812 Pine Creek, Yarrabah Rd, (18.12kms from the Bruce Hwy turnoff)

East Trinity is controlled by QPWS in concert with Mandingalby Yidinji Traditional Owners and we have been granted access. Entry and exit is controlled via locked gates. **YOU MUST BE ON TIME TO GET IN AND BE PREPARED TO STAY TILL WE ALL LEAVE** - allow for 4 hours inside the 740ha property. Bring snacks and drinks for morning tea and be prepared to car share.

Cairns Birding Festival - Welcome the Waders**Saturday 5th September 14:00** · Esplanade - opposite the RSL

Each year, one of nature's most extraordinary journeys ends right here in Cairns with the arrival of thousands of migratory shorebirds. These shorebirds – known as waders – arrive on our coastline after flying thousands of kilometres along the East Asian–Australasian Flyway, one of the world's great bird migration routes. Many have travelled from breeding grounds in Siberia, Alaska, Mongolia, and northern China, stopping at wetlands across Asia before reaching the rich feeding grounds of northern Australia.

Cairns Birding Festival - Cattana Wetlands and fully catered Morning Tea - BYO chair - please RSVP**Sunday 6th September 7:00** · Cattana Wetlands carpark

RSVP for the morning tea. We will arrive early and do some birding. When we finish (8:30/9:00) we'll gather for a fully catered morning tea. BYO chair

It's not over yet but here's a HUGE thank you to those who have stepped up to help out including (and there is the risk of leaving someone out) Sean, Doug, Jan, Denis W, Mikey, Graham, Daniel, Rowdy n Annie and the catering team.

Thanks to our guest speakers Denis Moeser, Iain Campbell and Scott Ritchie.

Thanks too to our participants (the best) and partners [Seastar](#) and Murray ([Daintree Boatman](#)) and sponsors Jan, Chris @ [Camera House](#) and Ian at [Night Sky Secrets](#)

The Cairns Birding Festival got off to an inspiring start with an entertaining and informative presentation by local wildlife enthusiast and conservation advocate **Denis Moeser**. His presentation, “**Nest Box Success**,” provided a fascinating insight into the wildlife using nest boxes at **Cattana Wetlands** and highlighted the important role that artificial habitat can play in supporting native species. Surprisingly, he had set up three large tables at the front of the room, all covered with an impressive array of nest boxes!

Cairns Regional Council and volunteers have been planting trees and shrubs at **Cattana Wetlands** for over 16 years, with over 137,000 plantings. Some scientists tell us that a well-established tree hollow, large enough to house wildlife, will take between 100 to 220 years to form properly. Denis has spent considerable time installing and monitoring nest boxes, carefully observing what species move in and what happens inside and around the boxes. While the boxes were initially intended to provide valuable nesting habitat, his observations have revealed a much wider range of wildlife activity than might have been expected.

Among the most interesting discoveries were **Kreff's Gliders** and their activities around the nest boxes. These small, nocturnal marsupials are not always easy to observe, making Denis's detailed observations particularly valuable. His experiences demonstrate that nest boxes can become much more than simple substitutes for natural tree hollows. They can provide an opportunity to observe animal behaviour and interactions that would otherwise remain hidden. Denis also described some of the other unexpected occupants and visitors to the boxes such as goannas and frogs. Denis also mentioned that **Striped Possums** with its elongated fourth finger, similar to the **Aye-aye of Madagascar** {a **Lemur**}. Another amazing species with an elongated fourth finger is the Pterodactylus, the first flying reptile living over 150 million years ago.



Now, Denis's enthusiasm extends to **microbat conservation** well beyond Cattana Wetlands. He has been campaigning for a **bat-friendly bridge on the Kuranda Range**, particularly in relation to the future replacement of the Barron River Bridge. Denis believes that new infrastructure should incorporate suitable roosting spaces for microbats, turning what could otherwise be simply a bridge into an opportunity to provide valuable wildlife habitat.

His determination to promote this idea is remarkable. Denis has not been content simply to raise the issue locally. He has taken his campaign to some very high-profile supporters, even writing to **King Charles III** and renowned naturalist **Sir David Attenborough**. To his delight, he received encouraging replies, providing an enormous boost to his efforts and demonstrating that a passionate individual can attract attention well beyond their local community.

What made Denis's presentation particularly enjoyable was his obvious enthusiasm for wildlife and his willingness to share both his successes and his unexpected discoveries.

It was an excellent and inspiring talk for the Cairns Birding Festival's participants, who share a deep appreciation for nature and wildlife and are interested in conserving and protecting our environment.

Cairns Birding Festival Day 2: Bird Photography workshops Shane Kennedy.



Saturday saw us with two bird photography workshops, a morning session at Cattana Wetlands and the afternoon session at Centenary Lakes.

Huge thanks here to Luke Clements and OM Australia who provided the expertise and supplied a stack of camera bodies and lenses for people to use. Photographers turned up with their choice of Sony, Nikon, Canon or OM equipment and all received advice on settings and technique. Wanna-be photographers turned up too as did those who just wanted to go birdwatching.

It was another outing plagued with less than ideal conditions and the birding was tough. But there was plenty for us to train our cameras on with a couple of chooks wandering around us at the workshop centre, a Black Bittern, Orchids, Little Kingfisher, Forest Kingfisher, Crimson Finch and then right at the end a very accommodating Rufous Fantail.

Alexander alerted us to a Wood Sandpiper in a ditch on the road into Cattana so some of us checked that out on the way home. Don't often get to see these birds.





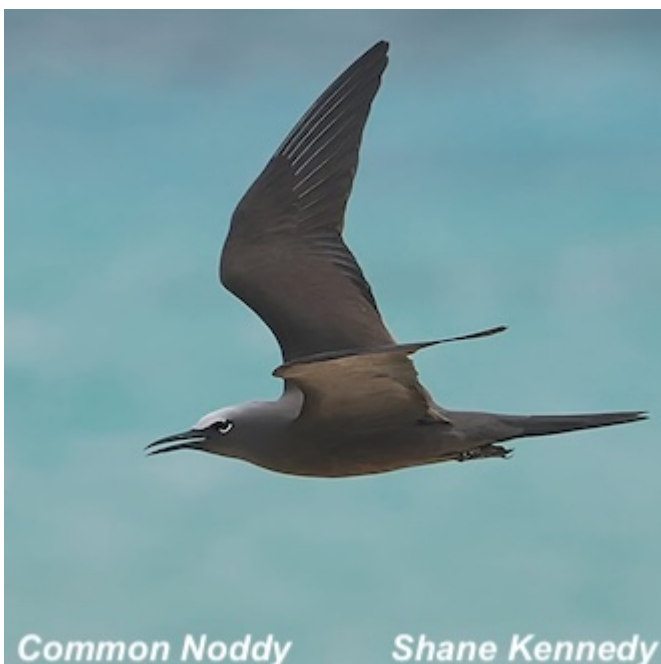
It was a tough day at the office. Michaelmas Cay trip, perhaps my toughest camera trip to date. The boat trip was challenging; lurching up and down, yawing all over the place. My heart goes out to those who suffer sea sickness. Bad enough one episode; the prospect of going home and doing it all again, must be the pits.

But birds await. Brown Boobies, Crested Terns, Sooty Terns, and two frigate birds and a Ruddy Turnstone. But the weather deteriorated. The SE'ly truly surged, with 20-30 knot winds blowing rain and sand horizontally.

I brought two camera bodies. My R5-2 for birds, and the old R5 for landscape. After the 1st squall barrelled through, my R5-2 died. Changed batteries, died again. With the help of Barbara, I swapped cameras and used the old RF 100-500 lens. Just like old times.

The boobies put on the full range of behaviour, the terns carved up the sky and the frigate bird kept a steady eye on all below. In the meantime, the rain calmed down, but the wind created bird level sandstorms. Here are some pics from the event. And it is great to catch up with so many birders from near and far!

PS. As soon as I got home, I got online and googled 'battery failure Canon R5-2'. A video said to clean the battery contacts with a pencil eraser. I did, and it worked!



Common Noddy

Shane Kennedy

Great Frigatebird
Crested Tern

Michael McMaster



From their facebook page [LINK](#)



We duly arrived at the closed gate just before 8:00am and sorted ourselves out, carpooling to condense our convoy down to five cars. This was designed to allow us to easily pull over along the way for a bit of roadside birding. It was a solid plan, and while we did stop at a couple of spots, the blustery conditions proved tough on us and the birds alike.



When the rain settled in, we made the call to push up the road anyway. It turned out to be an excellent decision; as we reached the high point, the conditions improved and we were even treated to some sunshine. We got out to stretch our legs and were immediately surrounded by the calls of **Victoria's Riflebirds**, though none chose to come into view. High in the canopy on the uphill side of the road, we spotted a group of birds roughly the size of figbirds. There were plenty of figbirds around, but these individuals had a distinct jizz (general impression of size and shape). Thanks to a few big-lensed cameras, we got the clarity we needed to identify them as **Barred Cuckoo-shrikes**. Meanwhile, high in the canopy on the downhill side, **Topknot Pigeons** were basking in the feeble sunlight. Several honeyeaters were also enjoying the brief respite, including **Dusky, Yellow-spotted, Lewin's, and Macleay's**.

We idled there for a while, walking up and down the road to steadily add a few more birds to the checklist. Soon, it was time for morning tea, so we headed on to Copperlode Dam to share around some well-earned vittles. From our vantage point, we could make out numerous **Great Crested Grebes**, along with a few **Little Pied Cormorants**. We were also treated to a pair of **Pacific Bazas** showing off with some spectacular aerial displays, followed by a **Grey Goshawk** soaring overhead.

To cap off the trip, we headed down to our final rendezvous and successfully ticked off the **Rufous Owl**. It seemed entirely fitting somehow.



Seeing Habitats Through Birds: Iain Campbell at the Cairns Birding Festival

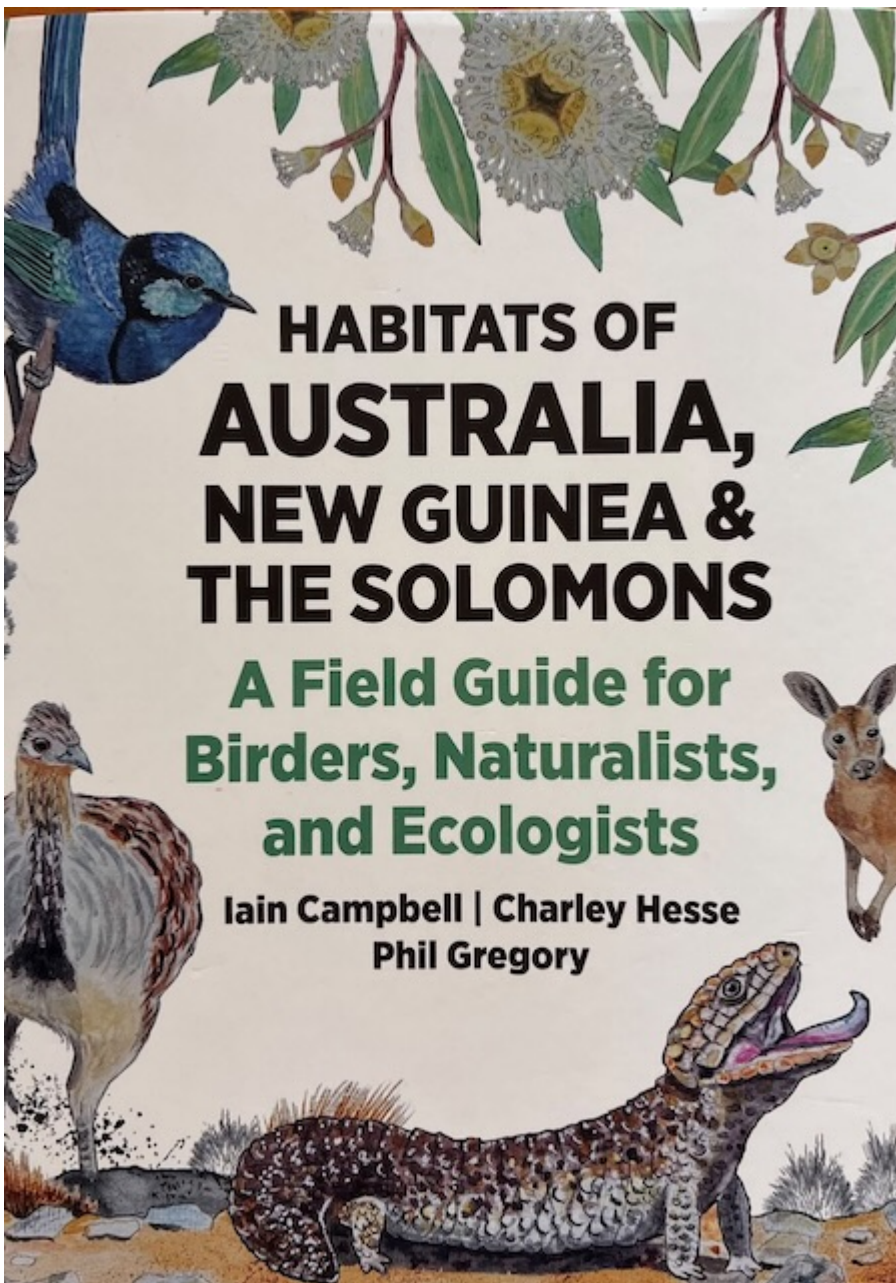
The second talk night of the Cairns Birding Festival featured a fascinating presentation by Iain Campbell, **"Habitats of Australia: the book, concept, bird assemblages and mapping."**

Iain explored a powerful idea familiar to experienced birders: we often understand vegetation and habitat in a very different way from non-birders and even general ecologists. Birders develop an instinct for landscapes. After years in the field, we learn to sense where particular birds are likely to occur. Sometimes, we can walk into an environment and have a good idea of which birds are present without even raising our chins to look. We read habitat through its bird community.

This insight is central to *Habitats of Australia*, the fourth book in a series of continental habitat guides. Rather than describing habitats through vegetation alone, the book combines **animal assemblages with habitat structure, climate, soils and vegetation** to provide a distinctive way of understanding Australia's major habitats. It is designed not only to help us appreciate the country's breathtaking landscapes, ecosystems and wildlife, but also to support their conservation.



Iain then turned to the important role of habitat mapping. Conservation planners and land managers rely on vegetation maps to identify ecosystems, prioritise conservation action and monitor environmental change. However, these maps are often based on relatively sparse field plots extrapolated across large areas or on remote-sensing data. Iain highlighted that the Australian **mapping system (MVS)** only matches observed habitats at 53% of Australian sites.



Bird assemblages offer another way of identifying habitat. The **Bird Assemblage Habitat Predictor** combines bird-list data with Bird-Habitat Indicator Assemblages. Across Australian sites, it correctly predicted the observed habitat **72% of the time**. Even more remarkably, when the vegetation mapping and the Bird Assemblage Habitat Predictor aligned, the habitat was correctly predicted **97% of the time**!

These results demonstrate that bird assemblages can act as powerful, independent validators of habitat maps. They can also help identify where vegetation classifications are inaccurate and improve our understanding of habitats at a national scale. For birders, the implications are exciting. **Our bird lists can effectively become real-time vegetation classification maps.**

As Iain explained, this isn't magic. It is something birders have been doing for years. We walk into a landscape, hear or see a combination of species, and instinctively understand something about the habitat around us. What *Habitats of Australia* and the Bird Assemblage Habitat Predictor do is give scientific structure to that remarkable skill.

The presentation was a good reminder that birding is about much more than identifying and counting birds. Every bird list can also be a record of the landscape itself — helping us understand, map and even protect Australia's extraordinary habitats.

Cairns Botanic Gardens Day 5 - Tuesday's Guided Bird Walk: Denis Walls

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.

Despite the rain around 30 brave souls turned up for our regular Tuesday walk. We had eight from overseas - Dutch, German and Singaporean; 11 from inter-state and about 11 locals. Not a bad turn out for a miserable morning. This was the 1st September and a universal truth, until now, has been that Cairns has two seasons - the Wet Season and September - so yet another immutable law has been broken!

On Goodwin St the rain came on very heavily and we had to seek shelter next to the 25-year-old Orange-footed Scrubfowl mound for 30 minutes as we all got to know each other a bit better. A nice moment actually. Humans can be quite a convivial species when we put the effort in. Once the downpour ceased we checked out the narcissistic Yellow/Green Oriole that is obsessed by its own appearance in the reflections of the Visitor Centre. Then, the Rainbow Gum (*Eucalyptus deglupta*) on Collins Ave was required viewing with its dripping multicoloured bark a must-see after the rain.



Rainbow Bee-eater

Jake Moores



Brown-backed Honeyeater

Scott Ritchie

The birds started to wake up as we crossed the narrow bridge into White Cedar Paddock. A Torresian Kingfisher perched briefly then flew overhead calling loudly. Rainbow Bee-eaters had woken up in response to an upsurge in the insect population following the drenching and the sudden hot sun. Double-eyed Fig-Parrots zoomed about but refused to perch. A female Shining Flycatcher made a brief appearance. Brown Honeyeaters were back after last week's absence. The Ecotone (aka Lerp Lane) was surprisingly quiet as no trees were flowering to attract the usual suspects. A Spangled Drongo and Varied Triller were confiding and a Leaden Flycatcher called before we moved on to the Land of the Three Majestic Melaleucas.

As we turned the corner towards the Ant Plant lecture area, Jake spotted a Black Bittern amongst the mangrove roots and right in front of it sat a Little Kingfisher. Both views were tricky and fleeting. A Little Egret fished on the north side of Saltwater with a Great Egret on the south side. Some saw Brown-backed Honeyeater which like to nest, in season, on overhangs next to Greenslopes St bridge.

As we had been doing the tour back to front, we then headed to the Sushi Train in Centenary Lakes hoping for Little and Nankeen Night Herons benefitting from the increased water flow. No joy! Freshwater Lake was good though. Comb-crested Jacana, Australasian Grebe, Australasian Darter, Little Pied Cormorant and Magpie-geese were present and the Little Kingfisher put on quite a show. Jeff even augmented the spiritual awareness of some Yogaists at the Pagoda by lending his binoculars to see the little beauty. We had to do something, mind, as our enthusiast mob virtually knocked the practitioners out of the way to get to see the bird. In recompense we proposed a new Yoga position called the Little Kingfisher which involves much head bobbing but is excellent for strengthening neck muscles!



And so, yet another excellent Tuesday outing ended with a slow walk back to base camp via the Osprey nest, a calling Sahul Brush Cuckoo and an imaginary Sahul Cicadabird which turned out to be a White-bellied Cuckooshrike. (That's a forgivable mistake, Ed). Jake had been doing the tally and called 53 species for the morning which was much better than expected after such a dreary start to the day. After coffee, some of the crowd had not had enough and the *Syzgium* appearance of a male Rufous Owl in Les Davie Park had super-enthusiasts heading off for even more excitement. I'll cheat and add Scott's pic to this Bot Gdns report.



Cairns Birding Festival Day 5n6: Daintree River Cruises Shane Kennedy

This has become a highly popular, staple event for our festival over the years. **Murray** from **Daintree Boatman Wildlife Cruises** always looks after us with a great deal, and seats sell out almost the moment the dates are announced. This year, we decided to try something a little different by offering one evening cruise followed by another the next morning—and a few eager guests even did both! We saw plenty of birds with 48 and 55 species respectively including the cryptic **Papuan Frogmouth**.



It's a wonderfully intimate experience; with only nine seats on the boat, we sit low in the water, making our wildlife encounters feel incredibly close and personal. We spotted several **Estuarine (Saltwater) Crocodiles**, ranging from a tiny 2026 hatchling to "Hook," a dominant four-meter male who swam gently past us on both cruises.



Bottle Brush Orchid Shane Kennedy

Our other wildlife encounters included a **Common Tree Snake** and an **Eastern Water Dragon**. Murray truly has a superpower when it comes to spotting these fabulous critters! He is also fantastic with botany and shares my passion for Australian native orchids. This time of year, one of my absolute favorites is in bloom: the classy pink, white, and green **Bottlebrush Orchid** (*Dendrobium smillieae*).



One of the greatest benefits of this style of birding is that the wildlife is far less likely to flee. In fact, we were able to get remarkably close to usually skittish birds like **Azure Kingfishers** and **Shining Flycatchers**. While the exact reason remains a bit of a mystery, my favorite theory is that these animals have evolved to respond specifically to known predators—things on legs or with the distinct silhouette of a raptor. A boat or a car, with people sitting quietly inside, is perceived as a single, neutral entity that simply doesn't trigger their fight-or-flight instinct. Whatever the reason, we reap the rewards with front-row views from our floating hide.



The Special Spotlighting Event along Yellow Arrow Track during the Cairns Birding Festival was an exciting and rewarding night of wildlife encounters. With no moon in the sky, the forest was particularly dark, creating ideal conditions for spotting nocturnal wildlife.



Bandicoots were exceptionally active throughout the forest, and we were delighted to see around six individuals. Both **Brown Bandicoots** and **Long-nosed Bandicoots** were observed foraging along the track. We were also lucky to see two **Red-legged Pademelons**.

The forest was also alive with the sounds of crickets. **Clasping Tree Crickets** could be heard calling in the canopy, while **Big-headed Crickets** were vocal among the leaf litter on the forest floor. We were also fortunate to encounter a beautiful **Spiny Rainforest Katydid**, adding another fascinating species to the evening's observations.

The highlight of the night was a **Giant White-tailed Rat**. This impressive nocturnal mammal was a fantastic find and a memorable moment for everyone involved. I hope everyone had a great time and enjoyed the walk.





In the darkness of pre-dawn on day one I started hiking up the mountain, encountering a calling female **Lawes's Parotia** while it was still too dark to get a photo. **Brown-breasted Gerygone** could be seen on the way up as morning light increased, their descending song travelling far in the forest.

At the top, a small number of **Brown Sicklebill** fired their machine-gun-like calls at regular intervals as they fed in the 'cloud forest' canopy. Meanwhile, a lone male **King of Saxony Bird of Paradise** entranced with his unbelievably amazing 'radio static' call from a perch, and I was pleased to get a few shots of him twirling his extraordinary plumes that protrude from his eyebrows. (I highly recommend listening to the audio for these species on eBird or similar.)

The fourth bird of paradise on Rondon this weekend was **Stephanie's Astrapia**, with numerous females and a male loudly flapping between fruiting trees.

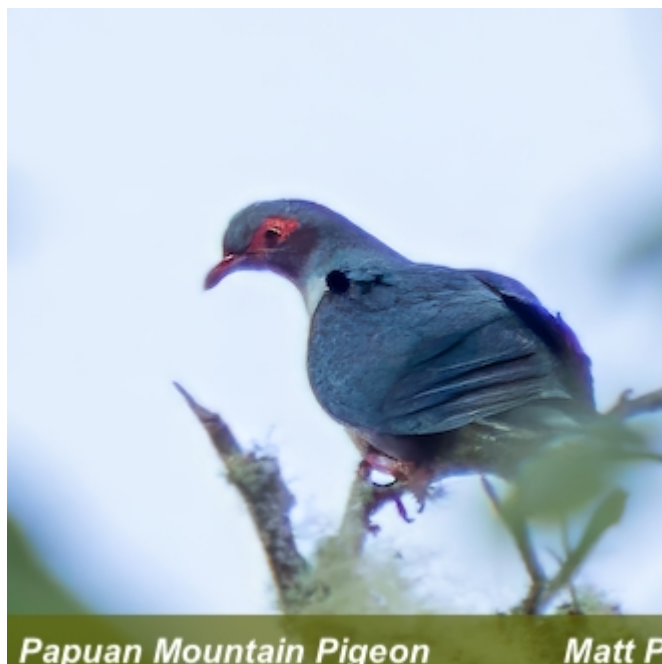
Last week I was blessed to visit Mount Hagen, Papua New Guinea, for my work. On the weekend I spent two mornings birding in the forest at Rondon Ridge at around 2100 m elevation. Despite extremely dry El Niño conditions I was very pleased to log 43 species in the forest and around the lodge, which is run by Trans Niugini Tours and only a short drive from town.



In a distant flowering tree I got fleeting but satisfying binocular views of two amazing **Stella's Lorikeet** – the mostly black and green melanistic form – with their majestic long tails, a kind of 'Paradise Lorikeet', if you like.



Papuan Scrubwren and **Buff-faced Scrubwren** could be seen in the understory, as well as a lone **Mountain Mouse-Warbler**. In the canopy elsewhere, I spotted **Papuan Mountain Pigeon** and a few **White-breasted Fruit-Dove**.



The ridgetop site features rudimentary seating and clear spaces from which to sit and view approaching birds, but bring a good jacket, because it can get very cold for a Cairns birder. While dry conditions obviously impeded numbers, the higher and lower ends of the walk both featured a good number of bird species if given the time to investigate.

The lodge's approach is markedly different to the nearby Kumul Lodge, on the other side of Mount Hagen, which uses a feeding station to bring the birds to you. Both sites are highly recommended for birders and local guides are available, though not compulsory at Rondon for those like me on a budget.



Blue-capped Ifrita

Matt Painter

My favourite bird of the weekend was a lifer **Blue-capped Ifrita** pair, climbing the trunks near the ridgetop, their beautiful azure hats on show as they methodically moved up the trees and duetted with one another.



King of Saxony BoP

Matt Painter

Overall, Rondon Ridge is a tiny but spectacular slice of creation in an amazing nation for birders and adventurers alike.

eBird Trip report <https://ebird.org/tripreport/565004>

G'day Cairns Birders,

A progress report and a favour, and the favour isn't more testing from you, you've done your share.

Since some of you kicked the tyres on **BirdScribe** over winter, it's grown up. Free on both app stores, and the big change this fortnight: it learns. Correct a bird once, "sistickle" to Golden-headed Cisticola, and it ranks first every time you say it that way again. Flick Auto-log on a name you trust and it logs the bird the moment you say it, eyes still on the canopy. Full list at birdscribe.com/whats-new.

Here's the thing. The app runs region by region now, and each region's built-in names come from the birders who train it there. The UK list is being built as we speak by some serious birders over there, and FNQ is covered because it's home ground. The rest of Australia is empty. A birder in Sydney or Perth is still starting from scratch, and it'd be a poor show if the Poms end up with better coverage than most of the country.

So the favour: your networks. Every one of you knows birders down south and out west, club mates, trip mates, the rellies who bird. If you know someone who'd enjoy putting their stamp on their patch, point them at birdscribe.com/trailblazers. First birder in a region sets its voice, their corrections become the defaults everyone after them starts with, and there's a straight line to me for anything the app gets wrong.

It's free, it stays free, and the more of the country it learns, the better it gets for all of us.

Our Major Sponsors



Rowdy's Ramblings

Bird song and music: - [Muppets Rowlf & Sam the Eagle sing Tit Willow](#)

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.

The Bird Quiz

Louise Baume

What is this ?



Last week's quiz: What is this?

Brown Cuckoo-Dove



SPECIAL OUTING: **Starry Starry Night** limited to 15

12 September - up on the Tablelands (near Kay Rd)

3 places left;

- an evening meal,
- discussion about the night sky with access to a telescope,
- stories around the campfire inc Aboriginal night sky yarns.
- there is a campground nearby - [Emerald Escape Camping](#)



Doug is organising this to celebrate Carolyn's birthday and thought, rather than joining a group of 12 randoms, wouldn't be nice to do it with folk he knows.

So if you want to help Doug and Carolyn celebrate then book here [STARRY STARRY NIGHT](#) and use the discount code **FNQastro** for 20% off. This is a regular NightSky event but this date is set aside just for us birders. - limited to 15 people.

Extra Extra! Read all about it ...

Common Mynahs commuting on Sydney trains - [LINK](#)

Live-cam of the falcons at 367 Collins St, Melbourne.

They've been nesting here since the early 1990s and this pair have 4 eggs laid about a week ago so they're due to hatch around the end of the month. [LINK](#)

BIRDSCRIBE is up and running - Voice control bird listing, inc. exporting to ebird - [LINK](#)

[Part of What's About, our weekly birding wrap - see all editions](#)

For three weeks the Common Redshank has owned this column. This week it finally began to hand the stage back. The reports thinned as the crowds eased off, and while the bird was still being seen early in the week, the Esplanade slowly returned to something like normal. What filled the gap is the best kind of news: spring migration has arrived in force.

The Redshank eases

It has been a remarkable run. A bird from the far side of the world dropped onto the Cairns mud, stayed the better part of a fortnight, and drew more birders to one stretch of foreshore than we have seen in a long time. This week the tally of reports fell away day by day, the natural end to any twitch as the must-see becomes the has-been-seen. If you still want it, it may yet be about on the falling tide at the northern end, but the great rush is over. It was a genuine event while it lasted, and one plenty of people will remember for a long time.

The migrants pour in

The real story now is the season. Late August is when the returning shorebirds and summer migrants start arriving in earnest, and this week the floodgates opened. Fresh in on the coast were a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and a Wood Sandpiper, a Black-faced Monarch in the rainforest, a Large-tailed Nightjar and an Australian Owlet-nightjar after dark, and an Eastern Barn Owl up towards Wonga Beach. Out on the reef the seabirds put on a show of their own, with a White-tailed Tropicbird, a Wilson's Storm-Petrel and a Hutton's Shearwater all logged offshore. Up on the Tablelands a Masked Woodswallow, an Australian Pratincole and a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper added to the sense of movement. After a quiet winter, the place is filling up again.

Around the region

There was plenty else about for those out looking. The Cairns Esplanade and its mangroves turned up a Varied Honeyeater, a Mangrove Gerygone and a Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove, while the Lamb Range produced a Superb Fruit-Dove and a Pale-yellow Robin. Up on the Tablelands the Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo was still being reported around the Mount Molloy country, and the Green Island Ashy-bellied White-eyes continued to show. Effort held up well across both regions, with the Mount Molloy and Julatten patches and the Crater Lakes especially busy.

Flagged as unusual by eBird - Several records were flagged as unusual by eBird over the week. As always, we treat these as provisional until they are confirmed:

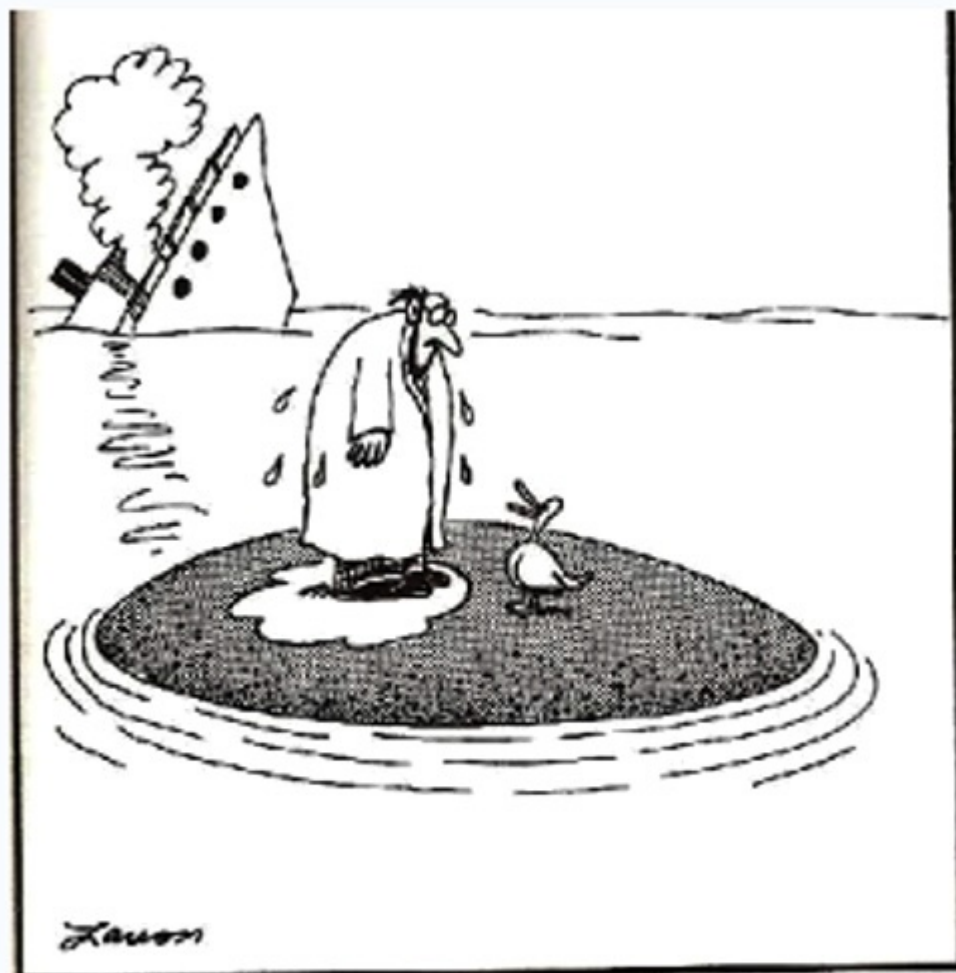
- Common Redshank - still reported early in the week on the Cairns Esplanade.
- Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove - reported on the Cairns Esplanade.
- Superb Fruit-Dove - reported at the Lamb Range.
- Pale-yellow Robin - reported at the Lamb Range.
- Varied Honeyeater - reported around the Cairns foreshore.
- Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo - reported on the Tablelands, near Mount Molloy.
- Ashy-bellied White-eye - reported from Green Island, off Cairns.

These records are flagged as unusual by eBird's automated filters and may be reviewed, corrected or withdrawn afterwards. We re-check each one against eBird before posting, but a flagged sighting is provisional until it is confirmed.

Our thanks, as ever, to everyone who got out and logged what they saw, and to the local photographers who share their shots; the whole picture is built from all of it.

That was the week around Cairns and the Tablelands. The Redshank may be bowing out, but with the migrants arriving daily, the best of the season is just getting started.

Norty Corner



So, Professor Jenkins! ... My old nemesis ... We meet again,
but this time the advantage is mine! Ha! Ha! Ha!