

AUSTRALIA

11-DAY BIRDING ADVENTURE



DAY 1 - CAIRNS

Following your arrival in Cairns you are met by your naturalist guide and transferred to your accommodations at **Bay Village Tropical Retreat**. After checking into your rooms you join your guide for lunch and your first Australian birding opportunity at the Flecker Botanical Gardens. Following lunch you drive to a nearby Crocodile Farm, where you may expect to find a variety of birds, including Crimson Finch, White-browed Crake, Baillon's Crake, Buff-banded Rail, Little Bittern, Wandering and Plumed Whistling Ducks, Black-fronted Dotterel and other species. Later in the afternoon you return to your hotel for an early dinner and a good night's rest. L/D

DAY 2 - CAIRNS / GREAT BARRIER REEF

Following breakfast you transfer to the wharf and board the luxurious Ocean Spirit catamaran, specifically designed for water based adventure, safety and comfort. Your boat whisks you to the edge of Australia's Great Barrier Reef. Certified divers can enjoy up to three dives (at extra expense) and beginning divers can do both a check out dive and a second dive. Snorkelers can explore the spectacular coral formations and underwater gardens which teem with vibrantly colored

marine creatures. Those who wish to see the splendor of the ocean but stay dry, may board a submersible boat which glides over the reef while an interpreter describes the corals, fish and other creatures that come into view. On board you are encouraged to relax and enjoy the comforts of the boat, which include a full service bar, fresh water showers, air conditioning and a delicious lunch. All equipment is provided. Sand Cays dot the higher elevation along the reef and are preserved as a national park for the benefit of their only inhabitants - thousands of sea birds. These islands and the shallow water surrounding them provide a year-round habitat for to over 14 species of marine birds, including Sooty Terns, Common Noddies, Crested and Lesser Crested Terns and Greater and Lesser Frigate birds. In the afternoon you return to Bay Village where you are on your own for dinner. B/L
Please note: *The costs for diving are in addition to the trip cost. The current cost is approximately \$120 per person for 2 dives. Everyone is also required to pay a \$5.00 "reef tax". These costs cannot be per-paid and must be paid by the passenger while on board.*

DAY 3 - CAIRNS / ATHERTON TABLELANDS

You awake to the morning chorus of parrots, cockatoos and other birds that frequent the grounds near your hotel. After an early morning bird walk and breakfast you depart with your guide and travel into mountains of the Atherton Tablelands with stops along the way to look for birds characteristic of the Sclerophyll and tropical rainforest. Your next stop is at Lake Barrine, an extinct volcanic lake, where a private cruise on the lake provides the opportunity of seeing terrapins, giant eels, ducks, grebes, cormorants, Australia Pelicans, Fork-tailed and Whistling Kites and the occasionally White Breasted Sea-eagle. Following lunch at the Lake Barrine Tea House you drive to the **Eden House Retreat** in the historic village of Yungaburra. After checking into your room you rejoin your guide and travel to a nearby creek to look for the Duck-Billed Platypus. This unique Australian mammal is most active just after daybreak and just before night fall. B/L/D

DAY 4 - ATHERTON TABLE LANDS

Before daybreak you join your guide at the base of the Cathedral Fig Tree, a massive tree that has grown from a seed, dropped by a bird many years ago onto a host tree. This is an excellent place to listen to the dawn chorus and watch the sun rise. It is also good place to find the Musky Rat Kangaroo and Victoria's Riflebird. After breakfast you continue your exploration of the Tablelands, making several stops to look for specific birds. Following lunch at the Tolga Woodworks Cafe you drive to Hypipamee National Park stopping at several locations to look for birds such as the Golden Bowerbird and Grey-headed Robin. After dinner you join your guide and go out with a spotlight to look for animals such as Lumholtz Tree Kangaroo, several species of opossum, quolls, bandicoots and other nocturnal wildlife. Your overnight accommodations are at the Eden House Retreat. B/L/D

DAY 5 - ATHERTON TABLE LANDS / KINGFISHER PARK BIRDWATCHERS LODGE

Early risers have another opportunity to do some early morning birding and look for platypus at a nearby stream. After breakfast you travel across the Tablelands to your accommodations at **Kingfisher Park Birdwatchers Lodge** near Julatten Village. The Lodge is adjacent to rainforest, farmland, Mount Lewis and the dry Queensland interior. This diverse habitat supports many bird species and the Lodge is designed for those interested in birds and other wildlife. Collared Sparrow Hawk, Sarus Crane, Australian Bustard, Squatter Pigeon, Red winged Parrot, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Red-backed Fairy wren, Little Friarbird, Double-barred Finch, Apostle birds and Great Bowerbird are a few of the species you may expect to find here. Your accommodations and meals are at Kingfisher Park Birdwatcher's Lodge. B/L/D

DAY 6 - KINGFISHER LODGE

You spend the entire day exploring the various habitats around Mt. Carbine and the lower slopes of Mt. Lewis looking for birds and other wildlife. Your meals and accommodations are at Kingfisher Park Birdwatcher's Lodge. B/L/D

DAY 7 - ATHERTON TABLE LANDS

After some early morning birding and breakfast you travel north towards Cape Tribulation making frequent birding stops along the way. In the afternoon you cross the Daintree River by barge and arrive at Daintree Heritage Lodge. After checking into your rooms you rejoin our guide to do some birding around the lodge. Your dinner and overnight accommodations are at **Heritage Lodge**. B/L/D

DAY 8 – DAINTREE & HERITAGE LODGE

Early in the morning you depart for a cruise on the Daintree River looking for Great-billed Heron, Rufus Night Heron, Black Bittern, Little, Sacred, Collared and Forest Kingfishers, Rainbow Bee-eater, Large-billed Gerygone, Helmeted Friarbird and several species of honeyeaters. After breakfast you join your guide to search for Cassowary, one of Australia's two large flightless birds. In the afternoon you stop at the Daintree Discovery Centre where there are several trails to walk and displays that describe the environmental relationships between the plants, animals and non-living components of this unique and intricate ecosystem. You then join your guide on the elevated boardwalk and walk to an observation tower for a view over the tree tops. As you walk your guide interprets the ecology of the area, pointing out specific trees, shrubs and other plants that are uniquely adapted to this environment. In the afternoon you return to Heritage Lodge for dinner and to overnight. B/L/D

DAY 9 - CAIRNS / BRISBANE / LAMINGTON PLATEAU/ O'REILLY'S

Following breakfast you transfer to the airport, bid farewell to your naturalist guide, and board your flight to Brisbane, the capital of Queensland (*domestic air is not included in the program cost*). Upon arrival you are met and assisted as you board the coach that will take you to Lamington National Park and your accommodations, for the next two nights at **O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat**, an old family business still run by the second and third generation O'Reillys. Nestled in the heart of Lamington National Park (approximately 3,000 ft. above sea level), O'Reilly's is renowned for its abundant birdlife, splendid vistas, and extensive trail system into the lush subtropical rainforest. The activities available are virtually endless and time can be spent pursuing whatever suites your interest and ambition. You may take a short stroll to the canopy walk for a bird's eye view of birds high in the trees. The more energetic may take the Wishing Tree Track to a glow worm colony, while others may choose to relax and enjoy an audiovisual presentation on the natural history of the Lamington Plateau or participate in an old-fashioned Australian sing-along. B/L/D

DAY 10 - LAMINGTON PLATEAU, O'REILLY'S

A morning bird walk can be a most rewarding experience as this is one of the best regions for endemic birds in all of Australia. Such species as Satin Bowerbird, Regent Bowerbird, Crimson Rosella, Scarlet-backed Fairy Wren, Superb Blue Fairy Wren, Rainbow Lorikeet, Pied Currawong, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Brush Turkey, Wonga Pigeon, Albert's Lyrebird, Noisy Pitta, Paradise Riflebird, and King Parrot are a few of the many species commonly found near the lodge. After breakfast you may embark on a leisurely 5-mile hike into the lush eucalyptus forest of Kerry Valley. Your naturalist guide points out the unique plant and animal life as you walk through the rainforest and it is not unusual to record more than 40 species of birds during the hike. A less strenuous but equally enjoyable two-mile walk, as well as an excursion by coach, is available for those who prefer an alternate activity. As evening approaches, you shouldn't neglect the sunset over the McPherson Range, as it can be spectacular. Sundown also initiates a new phase of wildlife activity, as Red-necked Pademelons emerge from the rainforest to feed on the lawns, Sugar Gliders and Common Ringtail Possums feed in nearby trees, and Boobook Owls and Tawny Frogmouths put in an occasional appearance. Your meals and accommodations are at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat. B/L/D

DAY 11 - O'REILEYS / BRISBANE

After breakfast you depart for the Brisbane Airport and board your flight* to the U.S. B

* Please note: *The cost of the international flight from Sydney back to the U.S. is not included in the Australia program price.*

B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner

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2010 costs for World Discovery Safaris 11-day Australia Birding Adventure, exclusive of international and domestic air

4 - 5 passengers, US\$ 5395 per person in twin

6 - 7 passengers, US\$ 4,425 per person in twin

8 - 12 passengers, US\$ 3,950 per person in twin

Single room supplement adds \$700 to the program cost

WHAT IS INCLUDED: Services of World Discovery Safaris, all accommodations and meals as per this itinerary, all land, boat, and air transportation in Australia, hotel taxes as imposed by government agencies, entrance fees to parks and sites visited while in Australia.

NOT INCLUDED: International air to and from Australia and domestic air from Cairns to Brisbane, costs of obtaining passports & visas, excess baggage charges, immunizations, travel insurance, camera fees and items of a personal nature, such as souvenirs, excursions and services not stated in the Australia travel program itinerary, drinks that are not included with meals, tips to your guides, porters and hotel staff, laundry, faxes, e-mails, and telephone calls.

Individual departures and customized itineraries are available upon request. Please contact us for more details and costs at wds2830@bellsouth.net or call World Discovery Safaris at 205-972-8733

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