



## THE CAIRNS FROGMOUTH

All correspondence to: [cairnsbirders@yahoo.com.au](mailto: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 7th June	7:00 Cattana Wetlands Meet in the carpark
Sunday 14th June	Chinaman Creek - Racecourse
ECOFIESTA	21st June 10 - 4pm Munro Martin Parkland
Cairns Birders' Festival	Friday 28th August - Saturday 5th September 30th August - Michaelmas Cay - book now - see below 1st September - Daintree evening cruise - book now - see below 2nd September - Daintree morning cruise - book now - see below
Starry starry night	12 September - Tablelands - more info to come ...
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](#)

Art by Yorz Trooley





Sean Han

Well over 30 gathered at the Barra Farm and what a day we had ahead. It was a 7:30 am start, with pleasantly cool conditions as we set off, making our way clockwise around the property and ponds.

Our first stop was along the bank of the waterway on the western side of the property. This area consists of swamps, pools, and a creek that flows back into Thomatis Creek, which forms the southern boundary. The well-treed habitat provided excellent viewing opportunities, with sightings including **Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Mistletoebird, Sahul Sunbird, Nankeen Night Heron, Plumed and Cattle Egrets, Shining Flycatcher, and Australian Reed Warbler.**



Sean Han



Pied Herons

Shane Kennedy

To our right were the Barramundi ponds, their banks alive with birds. Flocks included hundreds of **Australian White Ibis**, many **Pied Stilts**, and **Pacific Black Ducks**, while **Australian Terns** cruised overhead.

Jake wandered over with his camera and asked, "What are these?"

"Oh! Nice one - **Pied Herons**," I replied. Though, knowing Jake, he probably already knew that.

**Pied Herons** can be a bit hit-and-miss around Cairns and are often a sought-after species for those working on their annual lists, so they were probably our birds of the day. There were five in total, including a juvenile that, for some of us, seemed determined to masquerade as a White-necked Heron.



The skies were equally busy. Along with the aforementioned terns, we recorded several **White-bellied Sea-Eagles, Osprey, Brahminy Kites, Magpie Geese,** and both **Little Pied** and **Little Black Cormorants.**

A dark heron stood motionless in a drain. Unfortunately, the sun was directly behind it, so my photos were hopeless and quickly consigned to the bin. However, Peter Manins' image strongly suggested a **Little Heron**, while several others were convinced it was a **Black Bittern**. As Andy used to say, "A bird can be whatever you want it to be..."



There were plenty of other birds as well, and by the time we returned to the cars, Sean announced that we had reached 58 species.

A great tally, but I jokingly said:

"OK, turn around — we need two more species to make it 60!"

Trevor stepped forward with a photo of a **Golden-headed Cisticola**. That made 59.

Then Meagan spotted a distant flock of **Pelicans** crossing the sky.

"Yay! 60!"

But we weren't finished yet. Sean picked up a solitary **White-breasted Woodswallow**, and Michael found a **Fairy Martin** sharing the overhead wires with the **Welcome Swallows**. 62!

"Can we go now?"

We did start to leave, but Mal and Daniel lingered a little longer and managed to add both **Tree Martin** and **Whistling Kite** to the list.

64 species.

Try and beat that!



Magpie Goose, Pacific Black Duck, Spotted Dove, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Pied Stilt, Black-fronted Dotterel, Masked Lapwing, Australian Tern, Black-necked Stork, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Black Bittern, Nankeen Night Heron, Little Egret, Pied Heron, White-faced Heron, Little Heron, Eastern Cattle-Egret, Great Egret, Plumed Egret, Australian Pelican, Osprey, Pacific Baza, Brahminy Kite, Whistling Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Rainbow Bee-eater, Forest Kingfisher, Torresian Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Yellow Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Helmeted Friarbird, Striated Pardalote, Large-billed Gerygone, White-bellied Cuckooshrike, Varied Triller, Green aka Yellow Oriole, Australasian Figbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Black Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Spangled Drongo, Magpie-lark, Leaden Flycatcher, Shining Flycatcher, Golden-headed Cisticola, Australian Reed Warbler, Welcome Swallow, Fairy Martin, Tree Martin, Metallic Starling, Common Myna, Mistletoebird, Sahul Sunbird, Crimson Finch, Scaly-breasted Munia, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin

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

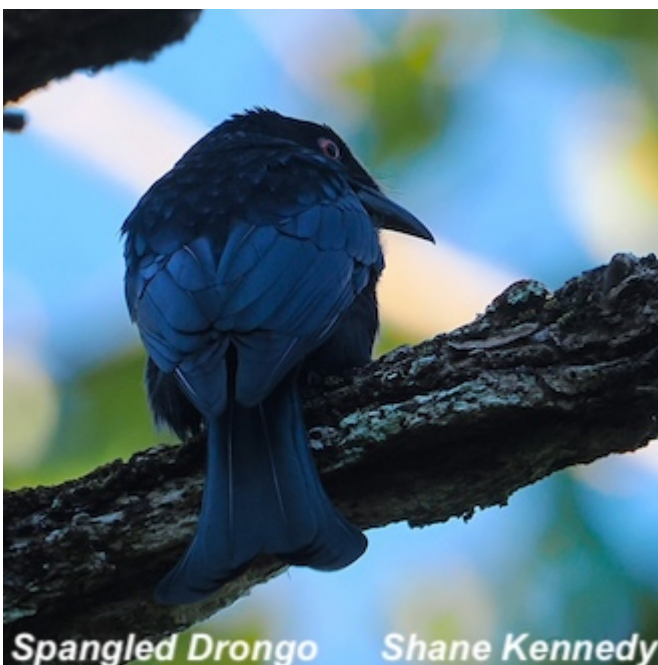
*This walk is free and open to all. It is part of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens program of activities. 7:30 Tuesday mornings. [Meet near the 'Friends' office, near the Conservatory.](#)*



Jon Westaway



Sulphur-crested Cockatoo Shane Kennedy



Spangled Drongo Shane Kennedy

There are no lingering sunrises or sunsets here in the tropics. The light show is brief but intense. At this time of year, 6 am is the perfect time to catch it at its best, and this morning was no exception. Deep golds and burnt oranges lit the horizon like a grassfire. Even birders appreciate a sleep-in, but as Molly used to say, "Do yourself a favour!"

We gathered at the Gardens by 7 am, chatting as people arrived. Among the regulars were Sean, Jeff, Mayin, Denis, Jon, Curtis and Lois, along with local birders Darren, Marcie, Dennie, Nigel, Heather and Graeme. From further afield we welcomed Michael from the Gold Coast, Zac from Brisbane, and Miguel and Sonia from Adelaide. But that's not all - Chimene, Amber and Natalie were travelling independently from the UK, Robbe had joined us from Belgium, and Simon from Austria. We love visitors! There is nothing better for a bird guide than helping others find lifers, and we were hoping to hand out plenty today.

We exited the Gardens, pausing for the obligatory show-and-tell: Handkerchief and Sausage Trees, native bees, and a Cairns Birdwing chrysalis. Birds, however, kept stealing the spotlight, with **Helmeted Friarbirds**, **Metallic Starlings** and **Australasian Figbirds** all demanding attention. No complaints there.



*Little Pied Cormorant Jon Westaway*

We continued on to the Pagoda, ticking off the **Osprey** on its nest. **Sahul Sunbirds** were again busy among the purple bauhinia blooms, creating a beautiful contrast of colours. I was reluctant to move on too quickly as our visitors were thoroughly enjoying these stunning little birds, and that patience paid off when Sean called out, "**Little Kingfisher!**"

Sure enough, Darren had spotted one perched in the middle of the lake and it immediately captured everyone's attention. Another was spotted along the western bank, and I announced I was heading back for a closer look. Several people followed and were rewarded with views of three **Little Kingfishers** and a **Sahul Brush-cuckoo**. Jon later revisited the area and added **Spectacled Monarch** and **Rufous Fantail** to the day's tally.

The walk to Saltwater Lake saw us pause at the fig tree. The fruit looked promising, but the only occupant at first was a **Dusky Honeyeater**. Then, while I was distracted giving the Ant Plant presentation, a couple of **Double-eyed Fig-Parrots** flew in. What delightful little birds! Unfortunately,

An otherwise uneventful stroll along the boardwalk brought us to Freshwater Lake. **Pacific Black Ducks** and their ducklings paddled about while **Rainbow Bee-eaters**, **Sahul Sunbirds**, a **Little Pied Cormorant** and an **Australasian Darter** added to the list. We had already passed one of the hotspots for THE kingfisher, but came up empty-handed. That wasn't the only omission - where was Moriarty!?



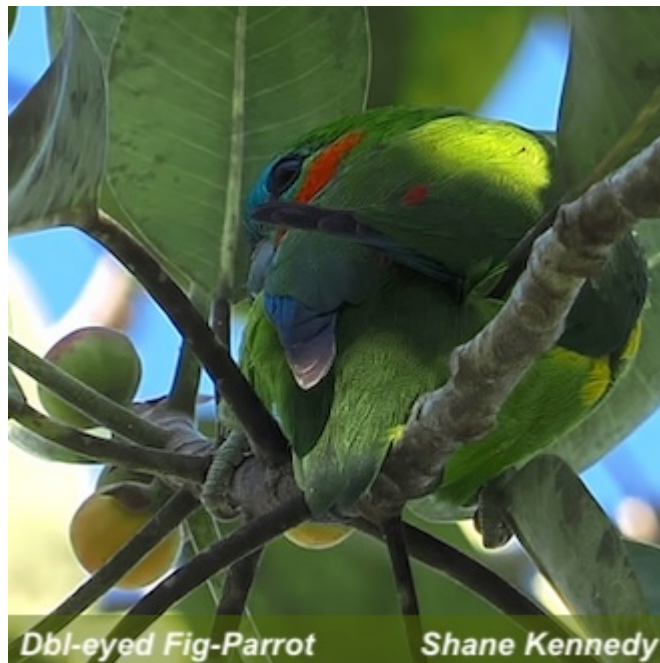
*Little Kingfisher Jon Westaway*



*Rufous Fantail Jon Westaway*

there is not much a photographer can do when all that's on offer is what Leah would have called a "birdie brown-eye" view.

Continuing on, we encountered the first of several **Sacred Kingfishers**, **Willie Wagtails** and **Spangled Drongo** while seven **Radjah Shelducks** were resting on the lake.



Things really picked up when we reached Lerp Lane. **Brown, Yellow and White-throated Honeyeaters** were chasing each other through the canopy, while other species such as **Little Bronze-Cuckoo** and **Varied Triller** seemed content to take things a little more calmly. We also enjoyed excellent views of **Bush Stone-curlews** and **Scaly-breasted Munias**.

The White Cedar paddock was occupied by **Australian White Ibises** and **Masked Lapwings**, while the surrounding trees produced **Green Orioles**, **Australasian Figbirds** and a **Laughing Kookaburra**. A few stragglers were also rewarded with a **Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove** - a lovely little bonus.

It may have felt like a slow start at times, but by the end of the morning we had recorded a very respectable 50 species, giving us plenty to talk about over a well-earned cuppa.





*Scaly-breasted Munia* Shane Kennedy

Honeyeater, Yellow Honeyeater, Dusky Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Helmeted Friarbird, Large-billed Gerygone, White-bellied Cuckooshrike, Varied Triller, Green aka Yellow Oriole, Australasian Figbird, Black Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Australian Rufous Fantail, Spangled Drongo, Australian Spectacled Monarch (Eastern), Magpie-lark, Leaden Flycatcher, Shining Flycatcher, Welcome Swallow, Metallic Starling, Common Myna, Mistletoebird, Sahul Sunbird, Scaly-breasted Munia

Radjah Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Australian Brushturkey, Orange-footed Megapode, Peaceful Dove, Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Sahul Brush Cuckoo, Australian Swiftlet, Bush Stone-curlew, Masked Lapwing, Australasian Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Australian White Ibis, Great Egret, Osprey, Brown Goshawk, Rainbow Bee-eater, Little Kingfisher, Laughing Kookaburra, Torresian Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Rainbow Lorikeet, Yellow-spotted



*Shining Flycatcher* DnN Kelly



*Sahul Brush Cuckoo* Jon Westaway



*Sahul Sunbird* Shane Kennedy

The End

*This is the second in a series celebrating bird artists known to us.  
I'd invite you to contribute something on artists you may know.*

Let me introduce you to [Penny Meakin](#).

I am blessed to count Penny among my friends. She and her partner, John, met two of my brothers in the Galápagos Islands, and I was introduced to them in the early 1990s during my first visit to South Africa. Since then, we have shared many birding and game-viewing safaris together, as well as several treks in the Drakensberg Mountains.



Penny grew up in Kenya and Zambia before settling in South Africa, experiences that exposed her to the wonders of the wilderness and nurtured her passion for the natural world. Her enthusiasm when out in the bush is contagious. She uses this time to observe and record animal behaviour, collect feathers and bones, and photograph her subjects for future reference and artistic work.



When I first met, Penny described herself as a wildlife illustrator rather than an artist. Certainly, her career began as that of a scientific illustrator, initially focusing on carnivore anatomy before embarking on a long and distinguished career illustrating bird, mammal, and reptile field guides. Her work is meticulous, anatomically accurate, and rich in detail, pattern, and colour, all the while capturing the very essence - the "jizz" - of her subjects. I would argue that her work unquestionably falls under the banner of art.

Penny became particularly renowned for her depictions of game birds, including francolins, quail, and various species of wildfowl and waterfowl. She often portrayed them as they are most commonly seen - in groups - capturing the variety of poses and interactions that bring them vividly to life.

She has been commissioned to illustrate several prestigious African natural history publications, including *Roberts Birds of Southern Africa* (7th edition) and AGRED's *Game Birds of South Africa*. She also collaborated with her partner, John Carlyon, on his book [Nocturnal Birds of Southern Africa](#).

Penny could easily be enjoying a quiet retirement, but instead she and John sold their busy veterinary practice and moved to be closer to nature. She continues to paint and is rightly celebrated for her exceptionally detailed natural history and ornithological artwork, which reflects a lifetime of close observation, knowledge, and love of the natural world.



**Festival: Daintree River Boatman 1st AND 2nd September**

**Daintree River Boatman**

- 1st September 4pm evening cruise - 9 people
- 2nd September 7am dawn cruise - 9 people
- Book Direct - text or email - 0417 651 929 - <https://www.daintreerivertours.com.au/>
- Cairns Birders special price of \$60/person is extended to all other cruises during the festival, just mention "Cairns Birders Festival" when booking.

**Festival: Michaelmas Cay Cruise Sunday 30th August**

Seastar is hosting another Birders Only Michaelmas Cay cruise. Must book and pay before Sunday, July 26. As we cater for a small group of 36 passengers we do recommend booking ahead to save disappointment.

Full Day at Michaelmas - Included in your day is:

- Unlimited island time
- Island circumnavigation depends on weather and tides.
- Morning and afternoon tea, Lunch
- Glass Bottom boat tour
- Snorkel equipment
- Guided snorkel tour

All for the special price of \$228 per person.

We are seeking expressions of interest of any who would like to travel. To book please phone us with payment by Visa or MasterCard on (07) 4041 6218.

We require Full Names, Email Address and phone number of all passengers.

**ECOFIESTA 21st June 2026 @ Munro Martin Parklands, Cairns**

<b>ECOFIESTA</b>			
Set up 8:30 - 10:00	Paul Fisk, set up	Shane Kennedy	Denis Moeser
10:00 - 11:00	Peter Manins	Vishy, Ceri Pearce	Denis Moeser
11:00 - 12:00	Peter Manins	Tricia, Ceri Pearce	Denis Moeser
12:00 - 14:00	Scott Ritchie	Tricia Gates	Denis Moeser
14:00 - 15:30	Denis Walls		Denis Moeser
Packing up 15:30 -	Paul Fisk	Shane Kennedy	Denis Moeser

**Contact Denis W on 0434 279 552 if you'd like to volunteer for more info.**

## Rowdy's Ramblings:

### Bird song and music: Silly Symphony - [Who killed cock Robin? - 1935](#)

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.

## Observations:

**Tooth-billed Bowerbird** 29th May 2026 Shane and Sean  
Lake Morris Road, at the bend before the highest elevation.  
There were other "good" birds there too including  
**Golden Whistler**  
**Bower's Shrike-Thrush**  
**Eastern Whipbird**  
**Lewin's Honeyeater**  
**Chowchilla**



Which of these is the Red-headed Honeyeater?



What could be the collective noun for twitchers/birders and those long zoom lenses??

A babble of birders - Rowdy

Lie of twitchers, RowdyB

A List of Twitchers - Shane

A Scope of Lenses - Shane

A Nest of twitchers - Kev

A Focus of cameras - Kev

A Flutter of Twitchers - Shane

A Parrotarazzi of twitchers - Jesse

A Crop of birders/photographers - Mayin

Do you have a favourite? Or another suggestion?

## Norty Corner

