



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 14th June	Chinaman Creek - Racecourse Meet Western end of Hartley St LINK
Sunday 21st June	Behana Gorge TBA
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



Hi ho, hi ho, it's off bir-ding we go! Tra-la, tra-lah, tra-la-la-la-lah ...

Well, that about sums up the day. But instead of 12 dwarves skipping off to work the mines, it was 30+ birders eager to hit the trails in search of a few gems of their own. And yes, I do like to whistle while I work. 😊



Sean Han

On the drive in, we passed Scott, who had pulled off the road to admire a fluttering **Black-shouldered Kite**. Three more cars were parked along Morabito Road, which has been pumping lately, and finally, on the edge of Cattana, were Steven and Jon watching another temporary waterway. We pulled over too—but one car too many, as most of the birds promptly took to the air. Up went another **Black-shouldered Kite**, a **Brahminy Kite**, **White Ibis**, **Great Egrets**, a **Black-necked Stork**, **Royal Spoonbills** and one **Yellow-billed Spoonbill** - a great bird for Cairns. An executive decision was made: surely these would be the start of today's list!

And so, with a healthy tally already underway, we set off around the car park, only to be called back by Patrick, who had spotted a **Grey Fantail** flitting about. As it turned out, there were two, along with **Willie Wagtails**, **Varied Trillers**, **Dusky Honeyeaters**, a **Mistletoebird** and a **Leaden Flycatcher**. Are you singing along yet?



Black-shouldered Kite Jon Westaway



Grey fantail Patrick Howlett



Brown Honeyeater

Peter Manins

Passing Crake Pond, we came upon a couple of dumped **chooks** (Australian for chickens!). Nearby, we could hear **Orange-footed Scrubfowl**. They have a strange cackle - rather like a demented chook. Two **Laughing Kookaburras** flew up from the ground and, for a bonus point, as Peter noted, they actually laughed.

We left the car park behind and walked through a little dark wood. This is where the group inevitably disbanded. Some headed west towards Jacana Pool, some straight ahead to Cuckoo Lake, while those with me turned east towards Kingfisher Pool and beyond.



Rufous Whistler

Scott Ritchie



Scaly-breasted Munia

Scott Ritchie

"This is where we normally see Bush Stone-curlew," I said.

"There's one, tucked under that bush!" Jake immediately replied.

As we entered the open grassland, an increase in twittering drew us back towards the forest edge. The canopy was busy with **Dusky** and **Brown Honeyeaters**, **Leaden Flycatchers**, **Spangled Drongos**, **Peaceful Doves** and a couple of **Rufous Whistlers**. Back out on the grasslands, we added **Scaly-breasted Munia**, **Chestnut-breasted Mannikin**, **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** and a pair of **Double-eyed Fig-Parrots** flying overhead.



Little Bronze-cuckoo *Shane Kennedy*

We retraced our steps towards the wetlands. Dominic, visiting from the UK, was determined to find **Green Pygmy-Geese**. He'd tried several times before without success. We made for Jabiru Lake—so named because our Black-necked Stork has erroneously been called a Jabiru for, like, ever.

This time, Jabiru Lake delivered. We also added **Darter**, **Little Pied Cormorant** and **Comb-crested Jacana** for good measure. Then, sitting on 59 species, a small flock of **Topknot Pigeons** flew overhead—another lifer for Dominic and another "good" bird for the Cairns area.



Mistletoebird *Patrick Howlett*

We crossed the eastern ford and ventured into the open country beyond. The trees to the west were bathed in morning sunlight, and we carefully worked this stretch back towards Dunne Road. **Little Bronze-Cuckoos** were everywhere and remarkably obliging, posing beautifully on sunlit branches. Another cuckoo kept to the shadows, but we managed clear views of a **Sahul Brush-Cuckoo**. **Australasian Figbirds** and **Green Orioles** were about as well, keeping us on our toes as we could also hear **Olive-backed Orioles** and occasionally glimpse them through the foliage. Jake, at least, managed a decent photo.



Olive-backed Oriole *Jake Moores*

We'd done well, and as we headed back towards the car park, we bumped into Darren. It's not true that he was only just arriving ... though one could be forgiven for thinking so! Camera in hand, he'd been stalking a **Little Kingfisher**. He missed the photo, but we added the bird to the group list all the same. And that might have been it but for Miles, who heard Little Corella calling with Sulphur-crested Cockatoos as they flew overhead. 62 species for the day - now that's something to sing about.

61 species

Green Pygmy-Goose, Pacific Black Duck, Orange-footed Megapode, Red Junglefowl (Domestic type), Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Topknot Pigeon, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Sahul Brush Cuckoo, Australian Swiftlet, Bush Stone-curlew, Masked Lapwing, Comb-crested Jacana, Black-necked Stork, Australasian Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Little Heron, Great Egret, Black-shouldered Kite, Brahminy Kite, Rainbow Bee-eater, Little Kingfisher, Laughing Kookaburra, Forest Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Nankeen Kestrel, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Rainbow Lorikeet, Yellow Honeyeater, Brown-backed Honeyeater, Dusky Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Helmeted Friarbird, Large-billed Gerygone, Black-faced Cuckooshrike, White-bellied Cuckooshrike, Varied Triller, Rufous Whistler, Olive-backed Oriole, Green aka Yellow Oriole, Australasian Figbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Black Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Spangled Drongo, Magpie-lark, Leaden Flycatcher, Shining Flycatcher, Welcome Swallow, Metallic Starling, 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.](#)



The sun might be hitting the snooze button a little later these days, but not us birders! A fantastic crew of 32 eager folks gathered right by the “Friends” office. We had an awesome turnout of locals: Sean, Shane, Denis, Scott, Lois, Mayin, Peter, Jannette, James, Tracy, Bruce, Robert, Darren, David, and Clayton. We also welcomed a bunch of wonderful visitors from all over! Ellany, David, Debra, and Carl joined us from interstate; Leanne, Tina, Jay, JP, and Sean travelled from Singapore; Joslyn came from the US; Ron from NZ; and Angelina and Natalie from the UK. A massive welcome to everyone!

Jannette and Peter suggested a quick detour into the conservatory, and what a call that was - the famous Titan Lily (aka the Corpse Flower, *Amorphophallus titanum*) was just starting to bloom! These legendary plants take years to flower, and when they finally do, it's infrequent and brief. Standing at a massive 3 metres, it's the largest “unbranched” inflorescence in the world. It's infamous for smelling like rotting meat which attracts carrion pollinators such as flies - honestly, what's not to love?



A few people wanted to linger there (and who could blame them with all the gorgeous tassel ferns, epiphytic cycads, pitcher plants, and orchids?), but we managed to herd everyone outside. We strolled under the blooming Teak and Pride of Burma trees, crossed the road, and headed down the boardwalk toward Freshwater Lake. Right on cue, we were greeted by **Moriarty**, the dumped domestic hybrid duck who's become quite the local celebrity. We also spotted **Pacific Black Ducks**, **Radjah Shelducks**, a **Darter**, and a **Little Pied Cormorant**. **Rainbow Bee-eaters** and **Varied Trillers** were seen up above, and the showy bauhinia trees were absolutely buzzing with **Sahul Sunbirds**.



That was all great, but we were really on the hunt for a much smaller prize: the highly sought-after **Little Kingfisher**. Luckily, I managed to spot its bright white breast from a distance, giving everyone time to gather around and slowly move closer. We got two more fantastic looks at this little gem before leaving the lake!

Just around the corner, we crossed paths with a **Laughing Kookaburra**. It's an everyday bird for us Aussies, but an absolute must-see for international visitors! This particular one kept all of us entertained as it meticulously plucked the legs off a crab before swallowing the carapace whole.



Nearby, we startled an adult **Nankeen Night Heron**. Then, while I was pointing out a **Spangled Drongo** in an isolated tree, another dark bird flew right in. I almost wrote it off as another Drongo, but a second look revealed a male **Shining Flycatcher**—another excellent find! Right about then, we heard the beautiful, melodic song of a **Large-billed Gerygone**. I did my best to mimic its call, a poor rendition if truth be told, and then, for one reason or another it popped out into view. It didn't sit still but most got to see it.

Next, we wound our way to *Lerp Lane*, where we picked up the calls of a **White-throated Honeyeater** and a **Little Bronze-cuckoo**, and spotted a couple of **Bush Stone-curlews**. The path opened up into the *White-cedar Paddock*, where the grassy field was alive with **Masked Lapwings**, **Australian White Ibises**, and **Scaly-breasted Munias**. The White Cedar itself gave us some great views of **Rainbow Bee-eater**, **Leaden Flycatcher** and **Sacred Kingfisher**.

In the distance, we could see **Green Orioles**, and I managed to catch a glimpse of a fruit dove flying into a grove of paperbarks. We crept closer and searched the canopy. It was Ellany who finally cracked the code, calling out, “*Look between those forked branches!*” After a bit of guesswork to find the right fork, there it was in all its glory—a **Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove** basking in the sunshine. We just stood there and soaked it in. What an unforgettable way to wrap up the walk, and hands-down the bird of the day!



Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove James Bowyer



Leaden Flycatcher Shane Kennedy



Great Egret Scott Ritchie

49 species:

Radjah Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Moriarty - Muscovy Duck x Mallard (hybrid), Australian Brushturkey, Orange-footed Megapode, Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon), Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Australian Swiftlet, Bush Stone-curlew, Masked Lapwing, Australasian Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Australian White Ibis, Nankeen Night Heron, Great Egret, Osprey, Pacific Baza, Rainbow Bee-eater, Laughing Kookaburra, Torresian Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Little Kingfisher, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Rainbow Lorikeet, Yellow-spotted Honeyeater, Yellow Honeyeater, Dusky Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Helmeted Friarbird, Large-billed Gerygone, Varied Triller, Green aka Yellow Oriole, Australasian Figbird, Black Butcherbird, Willie Wagtail, Spangled Drongo, Magpie-lark, Leaden Flycatcher, Shining Flycatcher, Welcome Swallow, Metallic Starling, Common Myna, Mistletoebird, Sahul Sunbird, Scaly-breasted Munia

Many of us have seen the adult male Southern Cassowary with a teenage chick at the top of the Kuranda Range Road. I remember several of us birders coming across this delightful couple when we were coming back from Kay Rd. I also finally remember seeing them when I went to Artemis station about a month ago.

I have since learned from two reliable Kuranda sources that the chick was hit by an automobile and had to be euthanised. I'm greatly saddened by this. It seems like a broken record. It would be very treacherous existence along that road. Both times I've seen this young cassowary the road has been very busy. I have no solutions. I just have great sadness.



Good morning

I've just finished reading another exciting episode of the latest Cairns Birders newsletter. It's all happening in the north, well almost all!

I've just been lucky enough to view the first ever Cocos Booby known to visit Australia and thought some of your twitchy readers may be interested.



It is residing on the NSW Central Coast at Marks Point. Credit to Dion Hobcroft of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours for identification after it was first assumed to be a Brown Booby. It appears that it's a female Columbian Cocos Booby.

She has settled well into the area spending her time between a few boats moored in the harbour and feeding locally. She can be viewed from the land but a couple of entrepreneurial locals are providing tinnie trips out for a closer look and better photo opportunities. The local post office is coordinating the boat trips.



Festival: Daintree River Boatman 1st AND 2nd September

Daintree River Boatman

- 1st September 4pm evening cruise - 9 people (4 already booked)
- 2nd September 7am dawn cruise - 9 people (6 already booked)
- **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. (7 already booked)

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

ECOFIESTA			
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: [Swan Lake – Entrée and Adage from the Black Swan pas de deux \(The Royal Ballet\)](#)

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.

Extra Extra - read all about it!

The Fawn-breasted Bowerbird is one of the targets for birders up in Cape York. Brian Venables has supplied this link, some video footage from a bower - [Fawn-breasted Bowerbird](#)

Shane, this link takes you to a video of an active FBBwrbrd bower and exposes some little known features of the species. Things like painting the inside of the gallery and the production of the pigment from plant material used to do it. It was set up by Steve Murphy and myself 15 years ago at a bower 2km from my house on the Chili Beach Rd.

This video goes for about 30 minutes and has no commentary *and could do with some editing* (anyone interested?) but is also good for listening to other bird calls in the area.



The "painted" bower Brian Venables

Common Snipe (UK) Fascinating and informative video on the [LINK HERE](#)

Latham's Snipe and, as a bonus, here is an equally informative video on the [LINK HERE](#)

Which of these is the Western Spinebill?



Last week's quiz:

- A) Red-headed Honeyeater
- B) Scarlet Honeyeater



Norty Corner

