

Eastern Australia Highlights

With Naturalist Journeys & Inala Nature Tours



Oct. 30 – Nov. 8, 2018

With Southeast Australia

Extension Nov. 8 – 16

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Tues., 30 Oct.

Arrival in Brisbane and transfer to O'Reilly's (Lamington National Park)

Today we meet mid-morning at Brisbane airport (±10.30am, exact time/details to be confirmed) and drive north to O'Reilly's, arriving in the early afternoon. Our lodge is located in the World Heritage listed Lamington National Park, deservedly one of the best-known birding locations in Australia, and home to a rich assemblage of both birds and mammals. This afternoon there will be time enough for a first stroll in our lush rainforest surroundings.

Accommodation: O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat (en suite). **Meals included:** L, D.

Wed., 31 Oct. O'Reilly's (Lamington National Park)

Today we have a full day to explore the areas around the lodge for birds and wildlife. Many of Australia's best-known bird families are represented here, as are a range of the country's endemic and most striking species, some of which occur right in the lodge grounds. You don't have to venture far to see King Parrot, Crimson Rosella, Lewin's Honeyeater, the handsome Eastern Spinebill and Superb Fairy-wren. Additional birding highlights include Australian Brush-turkey, Wonga and Topknot Pigeon, the stunning Noisy Pitta, sought-after Albert's Lyrebird, Green Catbird, the gaudy Regent Bowerbird, Logrunner and Paradise Riflebird (displaying, with luck!). The area is also good for mammal watching and by night we may see Mountain Brushtail Possum, while by day Red-legged and Red-necked Pademelon are regularly encountered.

Accommodation: O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Thurs., 1 Nov. O'Reilly's (Lamington National Park) to Brisbane

This morning we will leave O'Reilly's and slowly wend our way slowly down the mountain, birding en route and hopefully picking up a few rainforest and woodland birds we may have missed like Spangled Drongo, Spectacled Monarch, White-throated Honeyeater and Eastern Koel. This afternoon there will be time to explore the Brisbane area which can include a visit to the mangroves and tidal flats around Brisbane. Here we'll be looking for a few more species typical of South-east Queensland like Mangrove Gerygone, Mangrove Honeyeater, Collared Kingfisher, Pheasant Coucal, Black Bittern, Pale-vented Bush-hen, Tawny Grassbird and Striated Heron. With a bit of luck, we will find some shorebirds and terns as well. We will then settle into our hotel near Brisbane airport this evening.

Accommodation: Brisbane airport hotel (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Fri., 2 Nov. Fly Brisbane — Sydney to Jamberoo

We depart Brisbane airport early this morning for our flight to Sydney. On our arrival, there is an option to take a city sights tour including a visit to the Opera House/Harbour bridge and Botanic Gardens before making our way out of the city. We will travel south of Sydney to Jamberoo, near Barren Grounds Nature Reserve. Far from barren, this reserve supports a rich diversity of flora and wildlife, and protects a sizeable patch of heathland habitat. On arrival, we will make our way into the reserve where we will spend the afternoon enjoying the natural offerings of this lovely area. Hemmed in by rocky cliffs, at the south-eastern end of the Illawarra Range, Barren Grounds is a great place for wildlife and also very pleasing scenically. Two elusive bird species, Eastern Bristlebird and Eastern Ground Parrot, will be the focus of our search efforts, but there is plenty to entertain us here besides. Rainbow Lorikeet, Australian King Parrot, Southern Emu-wren, Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Pilotbird, Topknot Pigeon, Eastern Whipbird, and Variegated Fairy-wren may all be seen. At it gets dark some interesting mammals may be found including the quirky

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Long-footed Potoroo and, in wet forested areas, Greater Glider.

Accommodation: Jamberoo (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Sat., 3 Nov. Pacific Pelagic

This morning we will drive to the nearby coastal town of Kiama where we will board a vessel bound for the continental shelf. Pelagic birding in this area is world renowned and if conditions are right we have a promising day ahead of us. Inshore species we are likely to encounter include Little Pied Cormorant and Australian Pelican and once we reach deeper water, true pelagic species may be seen. These remarkable birds, doyens of this wild and unforgiving habitat, vary greatly in size and habit and we will spend the day enjoying an impressive selection of species. Possible highlights include a range of shearwaters including Wedge-tailed, Short-tailed, Flesh-footed, Fluttering and Hutton's Shearwaters. The delicate Wilson's Storm-petrel, Grey-faced (Great-winged) Petrel and Arctic and Pomarine Jaeger may also be seen. Albatrosses are in evidence too of course, with Black-browed, Shy, Wandering (Gibson's) and Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross all possible to name a few. With good fortune Black and Providence (Solander's) Petrel's may be seen. After a rewarding day on the ocean we will return to our accommodation in Jamberoo and, if time and mood permit, enjoy a short afternoon excursion to the reserve. *NOTE: For those who don't enjoy pelagic birding a land-based activity will be planned for the day.*

Accommodation: Jamberoo (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Sun., 4 Nov. Jamberoo to Katoomba

This morning we may opt for a last visit to Barren Grounds before making our way north and west through the famous, and stunningly scenic, Blue Mountains. Once in the area we will make plenty of stops to enjoy the sweeping views and the variety of habitats and birds. Glossy and Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Flame and Scarlet Robin may all be seen. In the late afternoon we will arrive at our accommodations in Katoomba, located a few minutes from some of the more scenic look out points in the Blue Mountains, in particular the stunning vistas of a trio of weather-eroded sandstone turrets.

Accommodation: Motel in Katoomba (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Mon., 5 Nov. Katoomba and the Blue Mountains

Today we have the whole day to explore the rugged but spectacular landscapes of the Blue Mountains. The lush forested gullies, *Euclayptus* woodland and windswept heathland yield an interest array of birds and wildlife including the stunning Satin Bowerbird and Rockwarbler, the state's only endemic species. Beautiful Firetail, Red-browed Treecreeper, Satin Flycatcher and Pilotbird may be seen as might Red-necked and Black Wallaby.

Accommodation: Motel in Katoomba (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Tues., 6 Nov. Katoomba to Capertee Area

From the Blue Mountains we will make our way north to the bird-rich Capertee Valley area. This broad valley is a rich tapestry of woodland and grassland and has a well-earned reputation as an excellent site for a number of Australia's most threatened bird species. Notable is Regent Honeyeater that, in recent times, has become a flagship species in Australian conservation. This large honeyeater, richly embroidered with black and yellow markings, is confined to three breeding areas in Australia, the Capertee Valley is one of them. Today we will begin our exploration of this lovely area from our base in the valley. A number of more widespread, but none-the-less desirable species, occur in the area and this afternoon we may well

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see the mighty Wedge-tailed Eagle, Mistletoebird, Red-rumped Parrot, Australian Hobby, Rainbow Bee-eater. Mammals include Red-necked Wallaby, Eastern Grey Kangaroo and Wombat.

Accommodation: Hotel in the Capertee. **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Wed., 7 Nov. Capertee Area

Today we have a full day to explore the variety of habitats in the valley including box ironbark woodlands, grasslands, scree slopes and patches of forest. Many parts of the valley are also cleared, and these open areas attract a number of interesting species including Southern Whiteface, Double-barred and Plum-headed Finches. Other species we may well encounter include Gang-gang Cockatoo, Turquoise Parrot, Wonga Pigeon, Black Falcon, the stunning Spotted Harrier, Painted Honeyeater, Bell Miner, Brown Treecreeper, Red-capped Robin, Satin Bowerbird, the ornate Spotted Quail-thrush, White-browed Babbler, White-backed Swallow and, with a good dose of luck, Regent Honeyeater!

Accommodation: Hotel in the Capertee. **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Thurs., 8 Nov. Capertee to Sydney and Depart

This morning we will enjoy breakfast in the Capertee and then make our way to Sydney airport where the tour will end. Those guests joining *Inala's South East Australia Tour (Koala's, Plains-wanderer, Lyrebirds and more, 8-16 Nov)*, may board a flight to Melbourne of their choosing.

Meals included: B.

Southeast Australia Extension

Thurs., 8 Nov. Arrival in Melbourne

Today is set aside as an arrival day. The group will meet for dinner at the hotel where you will enjoy a brief orientation.

Accommodation: Hotel in Melbourne (en suite). **Meals included:** D.

Fri., 9 Nov. Melbourne to Port Campbell via Werribee

We begin this fabulous exploration of south-eastern Australia departing Melbourne early, making our way to the Western Treatment Plant (Werribee), a renowned birding site and an excellent location to enjoy an introduction to the birds of Australia. We will explore a cross-section of habitats this morning, including saltmarsh, tidal lagoon systems and ephemeral swamps, for a range of species including the gaudy Galah, Brolga, Blue-billed Duck, the striking Red-necked Avocet, skulking Baillon's Crake, Royal and Yellow-billed Spoonbill and the rare Cape Barren Goose. Flocks of over 1000 Pink-eared Ducks are not uncommonly seen. If time permits, we will make our way to the woodlands and granite domes of the You Yangs Regional Park. Pasturelands in the area are home to Eastern Grey Kangaroos and, once in the park, we may be fortunate enough to encounter Koala. This area also boasts many widespread Australian bird species including Laughing Kookaburra, Superb Fairy-wren, Magpie-lark and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. A further highlight today may be White-winged Chough, one of only two members of the Australian mud-nest builder family. In the early afternoon, we will venture onto the Great Ocean Road where we will enjoy a picturesque drive along this rugged stretch of the Victorian coastline. As we travel west we will be sure to

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keep our eyes peeled for one of Australia's best-known mammals, the Koala. This coastal stretch is not only scenic, it also happens to be one of the best places in the world to see these endearing mammals. We will also visit an area of open coastal heathland where we hope to find the endemic Rufous Bristlebird, and the delightful Southern Emu-wren.

Accommodation: Hotel in Port Campbell (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Sat., 10 Nov. Port Campbell to Nhill

This morning we will leave the coast behind us, and make the journey north to the dry country near Nhill in north-west Victoria. While today is a travel day, there will be time for some birding en route, and we will make plenty of comfort stops and take time to enjoy the lovely scenery typical of rural Victoria. In the mid to late afternoon, we will arrive at our lodge and, if time permits, enjoy some birding in the area. Highlight species around the lodge include Southern Scrub-Robin and Mallee Ringneck.

Accommodation: Lodge near Nhill (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Sun., 11 Nov. Nhill and Little Desert National Park

Today we have a full day to explore Little Desert National Park, a vast and diverse reserve consisting of mallee, banksia heath and stringybark woodlands. Our quarry for the day is the main birding attraction of the park, the shy and elusive Malleefowl. With a bit of good fortune, we may find a pair of these largely terrestrial birds, actively working one of their huge nest mounds. These large mounds of soil and organic matter can be up to 12 metres in diameter, and more than a metre high. The eggs are incubated in the mounds, and once the chicks leave the breeding site they receive no parental care; within a mere 24 hours of emerging they are able to fly and feed themselves. Additional birding highlights today may include the delightful Variegated Fairy-Wren, Gilbert's Whistler, Tawny-crowned and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Little Corella, Crested Bellbird and White-browed Babbler. In areas of brown stringybark trees, we may find the raucous Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo. Western Grey Kangaroo is not uncommon in the park.

Accommodation: Lodge near Nhill (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Mon., 12 Nov. Nhill to Bendigo

This morning we have time to search for any of the area's remaining highlights before we make our way east. We plan to arrive in the Bendigo area in the mid to late afternoon allowing a bit of time to explore the area. The mosaic of protected habitats around Bendigo, the Greater Bendigo National Park, is a vast area of box-ironbark and mallee woodland punctuated with patches of mallee heath. This diversity of habitats is home to a special suite of birds, many of which are not found any closer to Melbourne. There are also a range of interesting mammals in the area including Black Wallaby and the quirky Echidna.

Accommodation: Hotel in Bendigo (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Tues., 13 Nov. Bendigo to Deniliquin

This morning we will continue our exploration of the Greater Bendigo National Park. The area is rich in Eucalyptus species providing ample food for a diversity of honeyeaters. Remarkably enough, in excess of

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20 species of honeyeater have been recorded in the area, including Purple-gaped, Black, Yellow-plumed, White-fronted, Tawny-crowned and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. We may also see Shy Heathwren, Black-eared Cuckoo, Gilbert's Whistler, Rainbow Bee-eater and Western Gerygone. We then continue our journey north east, crossing the New South Wales border on our way to Deniliquin. On arrival in the mid-afternoon, we will settle into our accommodation before an afternoon and evening excursion. For this we will join Phil Maher, and make our way north of Deniliquin to an area of vast plains. If we arrive at the plains while still light, and if the conditions are right, we may see White-winged Fairy-wren, Spotted Harrier, Brown Songlark and Singing bushlark. Once dark, we will begin to spotlight for the Plains-wanderer. If we are fortunate we may see Inland Dotterel while we search, in addition to Red-chested and Little Buttonquail and Stubble Quail. The delightful Fat-tailed Dunnart, a cute rodent-like marsupial, may also be seen. We will then return to Deniliquin for the night.

Accommodation: Hotel in Deniliquin (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Wed., 14 Nov. Deniliquin

Today we have a full day to explore the Deniliquin area and we may enjoy a slightly later start today, depending on how late we returned from the previous evening's search. A mosaic of habitats, including Eucalyptus and Acacia woodland and wetlands, is home to a fantastic diversity of birds and wildlife, and we will tailor the day according to local conditions. If we opt for a visit to wetland areas, the noble Australasian Bittern and Little Bittern may be seen, as might Pink-eared Duck, Musk Duck, the sought-after Freckled Duck, Red-kneed Dotterel and Spotless Crake. Riverine areas, fringed by the fabled river redgum (a widespread Eucalyptus species), are a delight to explore and are home to Azure Kingfisher, Crested Shrike-tit, Dollarbird, White-browed Babbler, Hooded Robin and the delightful Diamond Firetail. With good fortune, the aptly named Superb Parrot may also be seen and we will surely see Eastern Grey Kangaroo.

Accommodation: Hotel in Deniliquin (en suite). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Thurs., 15 Nov. Deniliquin to Healesville

This morning we will have time for a last look around Deniliquin before we make our way south. While today is a travel day, we will be sure to make ample comfort stops and enjoy any birding or wildlife highlights on the way. The drier box-ironbark woodlands around the Heathcote area are potentially rich in birds, and if conditions are right we may find Black-chinned and Fuscous Honeyeater, Speckled Warbler and the ornate Spotted Quail-thrush. In the afternoon we will make a stop at a colony of the vociferous Bell Miner, a bird well known for its ability to engineer significant and destructive changes to its habitat. In the late afternoon, we will arrive in Healesville.

Accommodation: en suite hotel in Healesville. **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Fri., 16 Nov. Healesville to Melbourne and Depart

This morning we will depart early and make for the forested foothills of the Yarra Ranges. Our main target for the morning is one of Australia's most enigmatic and sought after species: the incredible Superb Lyrebird. Well-known for their spectacular courtship display and their staggering ability to mimic other

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species, lyrebirds are not only interesting, but visually impressive; so much so that their feathers were in great demand by milliners in bygone eras. As we explore the area we may also see the likes of Pilotbird, Eastern Whipbird, Scarlet Honeyeater, Cicadabird and Gang-gang Cockatoo. In the early afternoon we will arrive in Melbourne where the tour will end. Those joining Inala's Tasmanian Endemics Tour (16-25 Nov) may board a flight to Hobart of their choosing.

Meals included: B, L.

Cost of the Tour

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with [Allianz Travel Insurance](#). Their website will show a grid of tour cost and your age category for you to make selections. As of January 2017, Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

Cost of the Journey

Cost of the main journey is AU\$6400/**US\$5080*** DBL, AU\$7235/**US\$5740*** SGL from Brisbane. Cost of the Southeast Australia Extension is AU\$4750/**US\$3770** DBL, AU\$5495/**US\$4360** SGL. **Price includes:** accommodation as per the itinerary, specialist guide and transport, meals, entrance fees and activities as mentioned in the itinerary. **Price does not include:** International and domestic airfares, alcoholic beverages, snacks, internet, laundry or other items of a personal nature. **Price is based on exchange rate on www.xe.com as of 8/18/17 and is subject to change.*

Travel Information

For the main tour, please plan to meet at 10:30 AM+/- (exact time will be communicated to you before the start of the tour) at the Brisbane Airport (BNE) on October 30. If you plan to extend your stay in Australia on the Southeast Australia Extension, you will need to book flights from Sydney to Melbourne on November 8. If you do NOT plan to do the Southeast Australia Extension, you will depart from Sydney. If you participate on the Southeast Australia Extension, plan to depart Melbourne on November 16. **Please check all flight times with us before you book.**

Please Note

Meals and drinks: Breakfast generally consists of a continental style breakfast with cereal, fruit and yoghurt and tea/coffee. Full cooked breakfast is not generally offered at most locations. Lunch will generally consist of a packed lunch style meal eaten in the field, with sandwich/filled roll, fruit, and a drink. Dinner usually consists of several options for main with the choice of either an appetiser or dessert. Drinks (soft and alcoholic) are generally not included but at lunches and breakfasts juice may be made available.

The itinerary: Whilst we aim to follow the itinerary as planned, please note that the itinerary provided should only be used as a guideline. Depending on individual trip circumstances, weather, and local information, the exact itinerary may not be strictly adhered to. The guides reserve the right to make changes to the itinerary as they see fit.

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Photo Credits

White-winged Fairy-wren by Andrew Browne; Buller's Albatross by Bernie O'Keefe; Blue Mountains scenery by Alfred Schulte; Golden Whistler by Chris Tzaros; Eastern Spinebill by Chris Tzaros; Koala by Alex Vargo. All photo except Koala courtesy Inala Nature Tours.

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