

# Australia's East Coast Specialties

## With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



September 7 – 16, 2019

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This Eastern Australia birding tour, offered in partnership with Inala Nature Tours, showcases the very best of eastern Australia. Enjoy rainforest birding in Lamington National Park for Regent Bowerbird, Albert's Lyrebird, Logrunner and other specialties. Search for the elusive Eastern Bristlebird and Eastern Ground Parrot, join a pelagic in the rich waters of the southern Pacific where Fluttering and Hutton's Shearwaters and several albatross species may be seen, and explore the sweeping Capertee Valley for its bounty of species, including the endangered Regent Honeyeater.

This tour is designed to pair with our Australia's Cape York Specialties Tour, August 30 - September 7, 2019.

## Itinerary

### Sat., Sept. 7 Arrival in Brisbane | Transfer to O'Reilly's | Lamington National Park

*Those participants also joining our Cape York tour fly from Cairns to Brisbane today.* Today we meet mid-afternoon at Brisbane airport (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 is time enough for a first stroll in our lush rainforest surroundings. *Accommodations at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat (L,D)*

### Sun., Sept. 8 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,

### Tour Summary

10-Day / 9-Night Australia Nature Tour with Max Breckenridge

\$4745, from Brisbane

Arrival Airport is Brisbane (BNE), departure airport is Sydney (SYD)

### Tour Highlights

- ✓ Watch for many of Australia's best known bird families in Lamington National Park
- ✓ Explore mangroves and tidal flats near Brisbane
- ✓ Search for the elusive Eastern Bristlebird and Eastern Ground Parrot near Jamberoo
- ✓ Opt to visit the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, as well as the botanic gardens in Sydney
- ✓ Embark from Kiama on a Pacific Pelagic bound for the Continental Shelf — birdlife abounds!
- ✓ Discover the famous, and stunning, Blue Mountains from Katoomba
- ✓ Bird the Capertee area, and look for quintessential Australian mammals like Red-necked Wallaby, Eastern Grey Kangaroo, and Wombat

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 at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat (B,L,D)*

## **Mon., Sept. 9 Lamington National Park to Brisbane**

This morning we leave O'Reilly's and slowly wend our way 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 is time to explore the Brisbane area, which can include a visit to the mangroves and tidal flats near the city. Here we look for a few more species typical of Southeast 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 find some shorebirds and terns as well. We then settle into our hotel near Brisbane airport this evening.

*Accommodations at Brisbane airport hotel (B,L,D)*

## **Tues., Sept. 10 Brisbane | Sydney | 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 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 make our way into the reserve where we 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, are 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 Long-footed Potoroo and, in wet forested areas, Greater Glider.

*Accommodation in Jamberoo (B,L,D)*

## **Wed., Sept. 11 Pacific Pelagic**

This morning we drive to the nearby coastal town of Kiama where we 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 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. Albatross 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) Petrels may be seen. After a rewarding day on the ocean we return to our accommodation in Jamberoo and, if time and mood permit, enjoy a short afternoon excursion to the reserve. *For those who don't enjoy pelagic birding, a land-based activity can be planned for the day.*

*Accommodation in Jamberoo (B,L,D)*

## **Thurs., Sept. 12 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 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, and Flame and Scarlet Robin may all be seen. In the late afternoon we 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.

*Accommodations in Katoomba (B,L,D)*

### **Fri., Sept. 13 Katoomba & 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 all yield an interesting 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.

*Accommodations in Katoomba (B,L,D)*

### **Sat., Sept. 14 Katoomba to Capertee Area**

From the Blue Mountains we 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 several 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 in areas in Australia — the Capertee Valley is one of them. Today we begin our exploration of this lovely area from our base in the valley. Several more widespread, but none-the-less desirable species, occur in the area and this afternoon we may well see the mighty Wedge-tailed Eagle, Mistletoebird, Red-rumped Parrot, Australian Hobby, and Rainbow Bee-eater. Mammals include Red-necked Wallaby, Eastern Grey Kangaroo, and Wombat.

*Accommodations in Lithgow (B,L,D)*

### **Sun., Sept. 15 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 many 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!

*Accommodations in Lithgow (B,L,D)*

### **Mon., Sept. 16 Capertee to Sydney | Departures**

This morning we enjoy breakfast in the Capertee and then head to Sydney airport where the tour ends. (B)

#### **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.

## Cost of the Journey

### Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Please note, as of January 2017, Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

### Travel Information

Arrive in Brisbane no later than Fri., Sept. 6, unless you are arriving from the Cape York tour. If you need hotel recommendations, please let us know. Plan to depart by late afternoon on Mon., Sept. 16 from Sydney Airport (SYD). Please check all flight times with Naturalist Journeys before booking your flight.

### Cost of the Journey

Cost of the journey is **\$4745 DBL / \$5365 SGL** per person, based on double occupancy, from Cairns, Australia. Cost includes all Accommodation as per the itinerary, specialist guide and transport, meals, entrance fees and activities as mentioned in the itinerary. Also includes flight between Brisbane and Sydney on day 4 and GST (=VAT). Tour price does not include International or any other domestic airfares except Brisbane to Sydney flight on day 4, alcoholic beverages, snacks, internet, laundry or other items of a personal nature. Please note that the cost of the journey is based on a minimum of 6 participants.

### Photo Credits

Regent Bowerbird, Cat Davidson; Buller's Albatross, Bernie O'Keefe; Blue Mountains, Alfred Schulte; Regent Honeyeater, Bernie O'Keefe; Blue-faced Honeyeater, Peg Abbott; Glossy Black Cockatoos, Carlos Sanchez; Wombat, Naturalist Journeys Stock.