



# Inala's

## South-western Australian Endemics Tour

*Perth – Cheyne Beach – Dryandra*

*20<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022*

Trip report Frank O'Connor and Tonia Cochran, Inala Nature Tours 16 December 2022.



Numbat. J Hamilton

**Day 1. Thursday 20 October 2022. Arrive in Perth.** The tour started with a welcome dinner in our Perth hotel. Three members of the group (Cyril, Chris and John H) had also travelled on the Coral Coast-Inland Wheatbelt section of the trip with Frank and Tonia, and we were joined by new group members Maggie and John T, Jenny, Ruth and Kerry this evening. We then headed back to our rooms at the Perth hotel in preparation for our travels tomorrow.



Western Whistler. J Hamilton

**Day 2. Friday 21 October 2022. Perth to Cheynes Beach.** This morning after an early breakfast and negotiating the overzealous breakfast supervisor at the hotel, we boarded our bus and headed south for our long day of travel to the southern coastline of Western Australia. We quickly started nabbing our first WA endemics (Red-capped Parrot, Western Spinebill, Western Wattlebird, Gilbert's Honeyeater and Red-winged Fairywren) with good views of the near-endemic Western Whistler on our first couple of stops in and near Bungendore State Forest, south-east of Perth.

Inala Nature Tours

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Purple Enamel Orchid. J Thynne



Cowslip Orchid. J Thynne



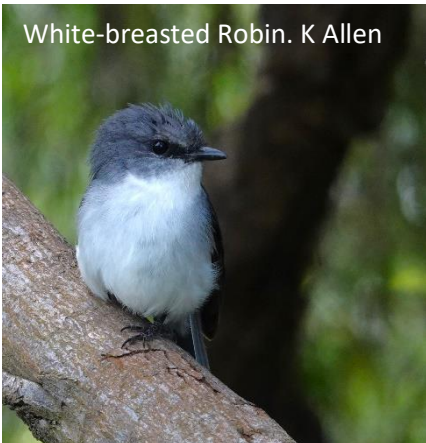
The wildflowers were also fantastic, and highlights included the Cowslip Orchid (*Caladenia flava*), Purple Enamel Orchid (*Elythranthera brunonius*), Red Ink Sundew (*Drosera erythrorhiza*), Parrot Bush (*Banksia sessilis*) and our first views of Blue Lechenaultia (*L. bilobus*). After a snack stop at Williams while we watched Purple-crowned Lorikeets, we continued south to Beaufort River where we added Red-capped Robin, Western

Gerygone, Inland Thornbill, Rainbow Bee-eater, Varied Sittella, Brown-headed Honeyeater, White-winged Triller, Dusky Woodswallow, Sacred Kingfisher, brief views of Yellow-plumed Honeyeater. Kerry also saw the first Rufous Treecreeper of the trip. After lunch we picked up another couple of endemics, Western Corella (subspecies *pastinator*) and a flock of around 200 Baudin's Black Cockatoo during a couple of roadside stops before continuing on to do a bit of grocery shopping for snacks and lunch provisions. Throughout the day we also saw a few raptors (Wedge-tailed Eagle, Australian Hobby, Brown Goshawk and Whistling Kite). Our destination was Cheyne Beach where we checked in before gathering for one of the huge dinners the owner Joanne had prepared for us. Some of the group heard Australian Boobook calling after dinner and Kerry came across a Flesh-footed Shearwater outside reception which appeared to have lost its way. The only mammal of the day was Western Grey Kangaroo which was seen at Cheyne Beach.



Baudin's Black Cockatoo. J Thynne

White-breasted Robin. K Allen



**Day 3. Saturday 22 October 2022. Cheynes Beach area.** Today we spent in the Cheyne Beach area, starting with an early walk to see a quick glimpse of a Noisy Scrubbird as it scurried across the road (boy, could we hear it sing though!) The beautiful Rose Banjine (*Pimelea rosea*) was in flower along the roadside. After breakfast, we spent time walking around our accommodation property where we did well for birds including more endemics (White-breasted Robin, brief views of Red-eared Firetail, Carnaby's Black Cockatoo, Red-capped Parrot and Western Wattlebird and heard Black-throated Whipbird) as well as Common Bronzewing, Silvereye, Osprey, Southern Emu-wren (briefly), Brown Quail, New Holland Honeyeater, White-cheeked Honeyeater, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Little Eagle, and Swamp Harrier.



Common Bronzewing. J Hamilton



Western Carpet Python. J Hamilton



Brown Quail. J Thynne

We also had a good view of a South-western Rock Skink (*Liopholis pulchra*) basking in the early morning sun outside its burrow and a Western Carpet Python also coiled up in the sun on the side of the track. Cyril and Kerry also saw and photographed a King's Skink (*Egernia kingii*). But the hugest excitement of the morning was undoubtedly caused by watching a pair of \*\*\*HONEY POSSUMS\*\*\* foraging amongst the flowers in a Hood-leaved Hakea (*Hakea cucullata*) which were spotted by eagle-eyed Ruth. The female's pouch was huge, and Jenny's photos later captured at least two little backsides of her young poking out of her distended pouch. We were treated to views of them foraging in the flowers for around 30 minutes where we were able to get some great shots, even with our mobile phones with minimal disturbance.



Honey Possum (female K Allen left; male J Hamilton centre and male J Thynne right)

The sheer abundance of wildflowers was awesome, with the striking Scarlet Banksia (*Banksia coccinea*), unusual Southern Cross (*Xanthosia rotundifolia*) and Common Dampiera (*Dampiera linearis*) in full flower. We then visited a nearby beach where we saw Greater Crested Tern and distant views of Australasian Gannet and Southern Right Whale. Kerry walked back to the beach after lunch and had great views of the juvenile whale breaching! Other birds seen today included Brush Bronzewing, another Little Eagle (this time a dark morph bird), Spotted Harrier, White-cheeked Honeyeater, Sooty Oystercatcher, Grey Fantail and Splendid Fairywren. We also had better views of Western Bristlebird, Brown Quail and Red-eared Firetail later in the day. Other plant highlights today included a flowering Leopard Sun orchid (*Thelymitra benthameana*), the unusual *Synaphea* (a member of the family Proteaceae), Bull Banksia (*Banksia grandis*), Prostrate Banksia (*Banksia gardneri*) and the showy Swamp Daisy (*Actinodium cunninghamii*).



Southern Right Whale. K Allen



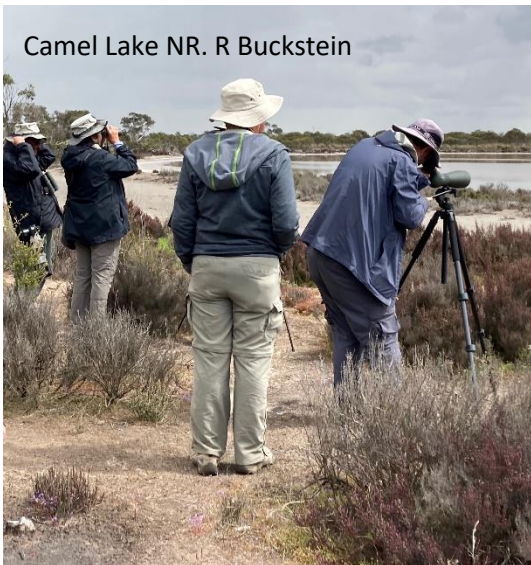
Scarlet Banksia. J Thynne



Leopard Orchid. K Allen

We then ventured out in the vehicle at dusk where we saw a few Spotted Nightjar in flight and Southern Brown Bandicoot, before returning to another huge meal and our comfortable accommodation at Cheyne Beach.

**Day 4. Sunday 23 October 2022. Cheyne Beach and Stirling Range.** This morning we attempted our first try at Porongurup NP (Tree in the Rock) where it started raining heavily on our arrival. We saw brief views of Western Whistler, Frank saw a Gilbert's Honeyeater and we heard Baudin's Black Cockatoo from the cover of the picnic shelter before giving up. We did see Pink-eared Duck, Australasian Shoveler, Hardhead (lovely weather for ducks!) and Australian Pipit in and around a nearby waterhole and we then headed northward towards Camel Lake Nature Reserve where we saw Emu and Tawny-crowned Honeyeater.



Camel Lake NR. R Buckstein



Tawny-crowned Honeyeater J Hamilton

The flowers were amazing here, particularly in an area that had previously been burnt, where highlights included miniature relatives of Kangaroo Paw called 'Cats Paws' (*Anigozanthus humilis*) and 'Cottonheads'



Red Lechenaultia. T Cochran



Zebra Orchid.  
T Cochran



Featherflower.  
T Cochran

(*Conostylis serrulata*), Red Lechenaultia (*L. formosus*), Heath Lechenaultia (*L. tubiflora*), Featherflower (*Verticordia endlicheraina*), Smoke Bush (*Conospermum distichum*) and Chittick (*Lambertia inermis*). The diminutive Zebra Orchid (*Caladenia cairnsiana*) was also a popular find.

We then headed into Stirling Range National Park where we saw Grey Currawong, Regent Parrot, great views of



Crested (Northern) Shrike-tit. J Hamilton



Australian Owlet-nightjar. J Hamilton

Crested (Western) Shrike-tit, Rufous Songlark, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, Purple-crowned Lorikeet, brief views of Elegant Parrot and an Australian Owlet-nightjar dozing at the entrance of its tree hollow. Scented Sun Orchid (*Thelymitra macrophylla*), Fringed Mantis Orchid (*Caladenia falcata*) and Common Dragon Orchid (*Caladenia barbarossa*) were also flowering here. On the way back to Porongurup NP, we chanced upon a flock of around 40 male Carnaby's Black Cockatoo feeding in a paddock. We also saw Red-winged Fairywren before

heading into the national park where it had finally stopped raining enough for us to see Spotted Scrubwren and Baudin's Black Cockatoo and hear a very vocal Spotted Pardalote subspecies *punctatus*) plus visit the tree in the rock, an old Karri (*Eucalyptus diversifolia*) for which this section of the park is named. We then returned to Cheyne Beach where we had more success with better views of Western Bristlebird.

**Day 5. Monday 24 October 2022. Cheynes Beach to Jerramungup.** Today we headed out in the rain to



Dwarf Violet Snail. T Cochran



Beach-washed treasures. J Thynne

Bremer Bay and nearby beaches where we picked up Pied Oystercatcher, Chestnut Teal, Far Eastern Curlew, Sooty Oystercatcher, Australasian Gannet and Yellow-throated Miner and found some Dwarf Violet Snails (*Janthina exigua*) and cuttlefish 'bones' washed up on the beach.

We had very welcome hot drinks at a local caravan park (and snacks from the bus as they had no cakes left ☺), before heading to a local café for a delicious lunch. We then visited a local reserve where we found some interesting plants including Bushy Yate (*Eucalyptus lehmannii*) before heading back to the main highway, admiring the bright yellow blooms of the Bell-fruited Mallee (*Eucalyptus preissiana*) en route. We then skated our way in the bus along an unsealed road that is usually rock hard gravel in dry weather (which is 99% of the time) but which we found to our dismay had turned into a horrible slimy mess when wet! We still managed some good birds including Southern Scrub Robin, Black-throated Whipbird (subsp. *oberon*), Purple-gaped Honeyeater and Shy Heathwren before punching back onto the sealed road to Jerramungup and a huge pub meal.



Bushy Yate. J Thynne



Bell-fruited Mallee. T Cochran

**Day 6. Tuesday 25 October 2022. Jerramungup to Narrogin.** This morning we headed south into the Mallee



Western Fieldwren. J Hamilton

where we saw Western Fieldwren and Tawny-crowned Honeyeater and plant highlights including Red Lantern Banksia (*B. caleyi*), Prickly Dryandra (*Banksia falcata*), and Red Toothbrushes (*Grevillea cagiana*). We then visited a nearby river (Chestnut Teal, Pied Stilt and Yellow-throated Miner) before heading back to Jerramungup for the yellow-rumped form of Spotted Pardalote (subspecies *xanthopyge*). We then headed west, picking up Black-shouldered Kite, Pied Butcherbird, Grey Butcherbird and Striated Pardalote (subspecies *substriatus*) before stopping at Katanning for lunch. En route to Wagin we also stopped for Mistletoebird (with accompanying Mistletoe (*Amyema preissii*) in fruit, Red-capped Robin, Western Gerygone, Black Swan and

Singing Honeyeater before heading for Narrogin which was our scheduled stop for the night. After an early dinner, we travelled out to Dryandra NP where we viewed Southern Brown Bandicoot (Quenda), Brush-tailed Bettong (Woylie), Burrowing Bettong (Boodie) and Rufous Hare Wallaby (Mala) in an extensive fenced



Brush-tailed Bettong (Woylie) left, Burrowing Bettong (Boodie) centre and Rufous Hare Wallaby (Mala) right. K Allen

(for their protection from cats and foxes) enclosure. Common Brushtail Possums were also seen here but they make their way in and out at will. On the way out of the park we saw two wild Woylies—a great sign that they are also surviving outside the enclosure.

**Day 7. Wednesday 26 October 2022. Dryandra State Forest. Narrogin.** We returned to Dryandra NP early



Common Bee Orchid.  
T Cochran



Pink Enamel Orchid.  
J Thynne

this morning where we spent all day exploring the various roads and stopping at regular intervals to walk. On our first walk we saw a decent sized Gwardar (Northern Brown Snake) and some lovely plants including Common Bee Orchid (*Diurus decrementata*), Pink Enamel Orchid (*Caladenia emarginata*), Common Dragon Orchid (*Caladenia barbarossa*), swathes of everlasting daisies including the Pink Everlasting (*Rhodanthe manglesii*), several different species of Trigger plants (*Stylidium* spp), and the small Kangaroo

Paw relative *Conostylis setigera*. We also did well with mammals today with another wild Woylie, Tammar Wallaby, Western Brush Wallaby, Short-beaked Echidna and a beautifully-marked \*\*\*NUMBAT \*\*\* which was voted the best thing on the trip.

Western Yellow Robin (left) and Scarlet Robin. J Hamilton



We also saw two new endemic bird species here (Western Rosella, Western Yellow Robin) in addition to Western Spinebill, Western Whistler, Spotted Scrubwren, Rufous Treecreeper, Rainbow Bee-eater, Restless Flycatcher, Jacky Winter, Weebill, Western Gerygone, Scarlet Robin, Weebill, Western Gerygone, Elegant Parrot, Regent Parrot, Dusky Woodswallow, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater and

good views of Painted Buttonquail. At Dryandra Woodlands Village we had great views of a Tawny Frogmouth with a chick, and we then visited the Kwongan Heath area of the park where we saw the unusual Fox or Round-fruited Banksia (*Banksia sphaerocarpa*), Christmas Morrison (*Verticordia nitens*), Smoke Bush (*Conospermum distichum*), Pouched Dampiera (*Dampiera sacculata*) and more Blue Lechenaultia (*L. biloba*).

Blue Lechenaultia (left), Christmas Morrison (centre) and Smoke Bush (right). T Cochran



**Day 8. Thursday 27 October 2022. Narrogin to Perth.** Early this morning we walked in a reserve near the hotel Foxes Lair picking up Red-capped Parrot and White-cheeked Honeyeater and admiring more plants including Tall Triggerplant (*Stylidium elongatum*), Conebush (*Petrophile striata*), and the pink bell-shaped flowers of *Tetratheca setigera*). We then worked our way back to Perth, stopping at several locations en route where we finally managed to see the last remaining endemic which had eluded us until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour -Western Thornbill. Hoorah and thanks to Frank's perseverance! Other species seen today included Black-fronted Dotterel, Pallid Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo, White-eared Honeyeater, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Baudin's Black Cockatoo, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Western Wattlebird, Gilbert's Honeyeater, Western Whistler, Western Spinebill and White-necked Heron. We also found some amazing carnivorous plants in a wet area on the Albany Highway including the Giant sundew (*Drosera gigantea*), Pimpernel Sundew (*D. glanduligera*) and Pink Petticoats (*Utricularia multifida*). Fuchsia Grevillea (*Grevillea bipinnatifida*) and Drumsticks (*Isopogon formosus*) were also flowering here. Waterbirds seen in a cove near Perth included Pied Oystercatcher, Caspian Tern, White-faced Heron, Fairy Tern, Grey Plover, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, and Pied Cormorant and at our last stop at Herdsman Lake we added Tawny Frogmouth, Swamp Harrier, Australasian Shoveler, Dusky Moorhen, Australasian Swamphen, Australasian Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Great Cormorant and Musk Duck. We then headed back to our hotel in Perth where we enjoyed our final dinner together before heading our separate ways.

During this trip we saw 149 bird species, 13 mammal species, 7 reptile species and experienced one of the best wildflower seasons in the area for many years. You were a fun group to travel with and many thanks for the laughs, the sharp eyes and the varied interests that allowed us to cover such a broad range of flora and fauna during this trip. It was a real pleasure to travel with you! Cheers, Frank and Tonia.



Long-beaked Echidna. J Hamilton



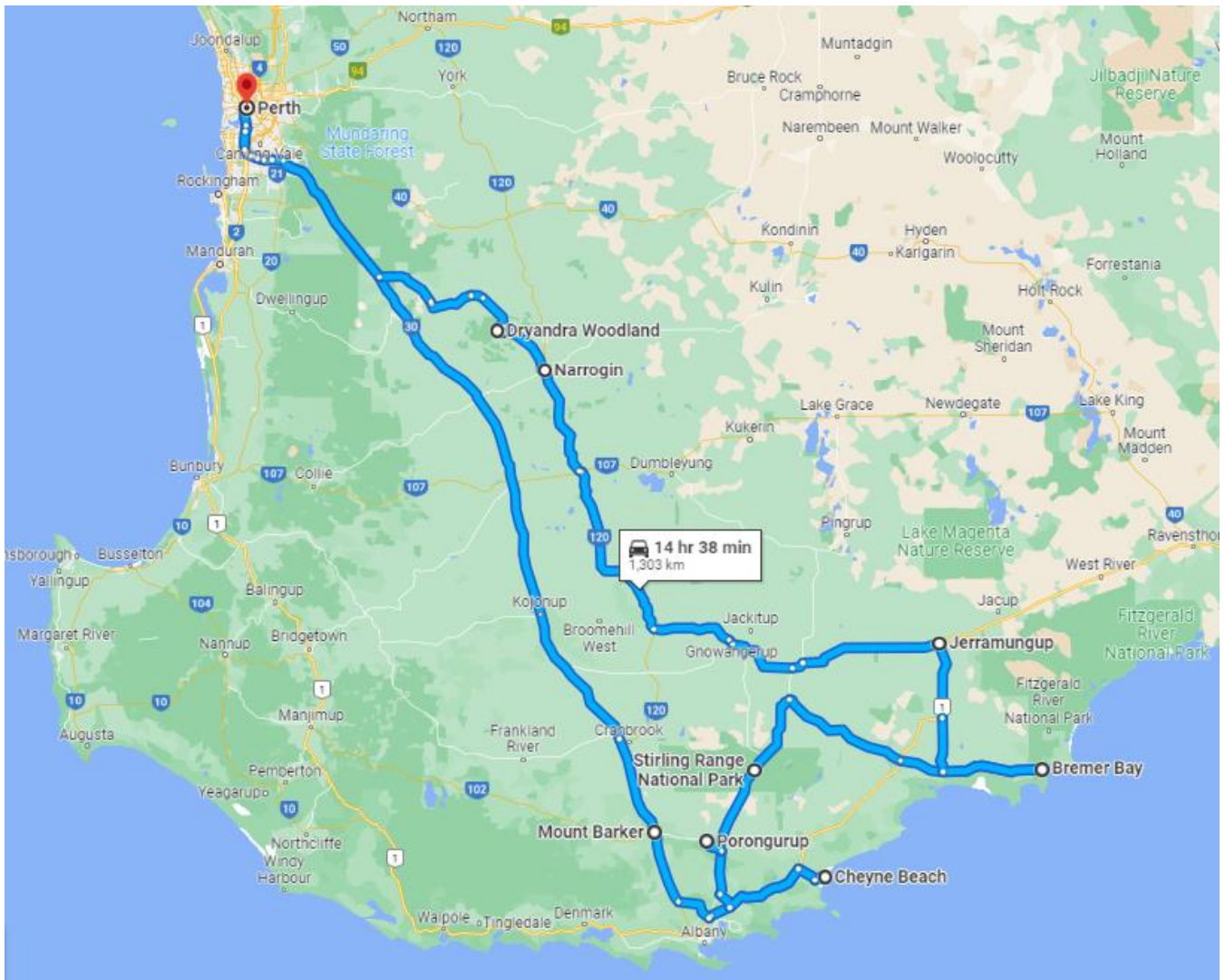
King's Skink. C Kerr



Waiting for the Noisy Scrubbird. R Buckstein



## Map of our travels:



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