Wet Tropics
Queensland Speciality Birds

Inala Nature Tours

HIGHLIGHTS

This intensive tour takes in the wide range of habitats and ecotones available in the Wet Tropics region of Far North Queensland. We cover the abundant wildlife of the lowland rainforest, wetlands and shoreline of the Cairns area, the Atherton Tablelands with its suite of endemics, the fantastic Daintree River cruise, a Great Barrier Reef boat trip and amazing birds and mammals including Southern Cassowary, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Rufous Owl, Pied Monarch, Papuan Frogmouth, Little Kingfisher, Great-billed Heron, Golden Bowerbird, Fernwren, Wompoo Fruit-dove, Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo, Striped Possum & Platypus.

OVERVIEW

Tropical Queensland offers some of Australia's most bird-rich landscapes. We have combined our favourites in this tour, offering you an excellent cross-section of wildlife experiences, from searching for the magnificent Southern Cassowary, to exploring the lush forests of the Atherton Tablelands for upland endemics.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1. Arrive Cairns.
Day 2. Cairns area.
Day 3. Cairns to Atherton Tablelands.
Day 4. Atherton Tablelands.
Day 5. Atherton Tablelands.
Day 6. Atherton Tablelands.
Day 7. Atherton Tablelands to Daintree area.
Day 8. Daintree River Cruise to Cairns.
Day 9. Great Barrier Reef cruise.
Day 10. Depart Cairns

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1. Arrive Cairns.
Arrive in Cairns today. Free time to settle in before meeting at 6:30pm for a welcome dinner and orientation. Participants joining from the Inala Cape York Tour will arrive in Cairns today and join the group for welcome dinner.
Accommodation: Cairns hotel (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** D.

Day 2. Cairns area.
We will meet again this morning for breakfast before taking a walk along The Esplanade to look for local specialties like Varied Honeyeater, Torresian Imperial Pigeon, Rainbow Lorikeet, Mangrove Robin, Torresian Kingfisher, Rose-crowned Fruit-dove and Olive-backed Sunbird. We will be able to see several different shorebirds out on the extensive mudflats here, such as Far Eastern Curlew, Great Knot, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Terek Sandpiper. There should also be Gull-billed Tern, Australian Pelican, Eastern Osprey and maybe an Eastern Reef Egret or two. Nearby botanic gardens hold several different species and we'll look for Black Butcherbird, Cicadabird, Brown-backed Honeyeater, Australian Brush-turkey, Australasian Darter, Azure Kingfisher, Radjah Shelduck, Magpie Goose, Bush Stone-curlew, Hornbill (Helmeted) Friarbird, Large-billed Gerygone and Orange-footed Scrubfowl. Late in the afternoon we'll visit a local park to see whether the resident pair of Rufous Owl is in residence.
Accommodation: Cairns hotel (en suite rooms). **Meals included**: B,L,D.

Dennis Braddy - Southern Cassowary

Day 3-6. Cairns to Atherton Tablelands.

After a pre-breakfast walk, we will head south of Cairns to look for one of Australia's most amazing & prehistoric-looking birds, the Southern Cassowary. If our good fortune is in, we should see at least one or two of these stately ratites on the roadside at a coastal rainforest location on our way. Other birds seen here recently include Lovely Fairy-wren, Macleay's Honeyeater, White-bellied Sea-eagle and Pheasant Coucal. From here we will head up towards the famous Atherton Tablelands, where with a few road-side stops we should pick up birds like Yellow-spotted & Graceful Honeyeaters, Australian Swiftlet, Rufous (Little) Shrike-thrush, Australasian Figbird, Rainbow Bee-eater, Metallic Starling, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, Mistletoebird and Masked Lapwing. Reaching our destination for the next four nights near the Crater Lakes National Park we will settle in and have a good look around.

Surrounded by high altitude rainforest, our accommodation has a plethora of visitors to the gardens and fruiting trees, and birds like Victoria's Riflebird, Spotted Catbird, Grey-headed Robin, Barred Cuckoo-shrike, Wompoo Fruit-Dove, Superb Fruit-Dove, Pale Yellow Robin, Scarlet Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Red-browed Finch and Olive-backed Oriole are all regular visitors.

Over the next few days, using this as our base we will explore the wide variety of habitats that are within our reach here on the Atherton Tablelands. With high altitude rainforest, tropical savannah woodlands, grassland & agricultural fields, wetlands and swamps to explore, we will be looking at birds like Brolga, Sarus Crane, Great Crested Grebe, Plumed Whistling-Duck, Nankeen Night-heron, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, White-necked Heron, Black-necked Stork, Buff- banded Rail, White-headed Pigeon, Pacific Baza, Spotted Harrier, Lesser Sooty Owl, the rainforest-inhabiting form (subsp *lurida*) of Australian Boobook, Tooth-billed Bowerbird, Fernwren, Bridled Honeyeater, Atherton Scrubwren, Fairy & Brown Gerygones, Mountain Thornbill, Chowchilla, Bower's Shrike-thrush, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Black-faced, Pied, Spectacled & White-eared Monarchs, Shining Bronze-cuckoo, Fan- tailed Cuckoo and Grey-headed Robin. We will have a great chance of seeing a range of mammals including Striped Possum, Krefft's (Sugar) Glider, Long-nosed Bandicoot, Musky Rat Kangaroo, Green Ringtail Possum, Red-legged Pademelon, Agile Wallaby and Giant White- tailed Rat.

Accommodation: Atherton Tablelands (en suite cabins). Meals included: B,L,D.

Yellow-Faced Honeyeater - Susan Knabe

Day 7. Atherton Tablelands to Daintree.
After a final morning's birding in the rainforest looking for any bird species we may still be missing, we will leave the higher latitude rainforests of the tablelands and head north to the Daintree River region, via a range of open woodland habitats and tropical savannahs. Birds we hope to connect with today include Australian Bustard, Black-necked Stork, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Squatter Pigeon, White-throated Honeyeater, Grey-crowned Babbler, Noisy & Little Friarbirds, White-throated Gerygone, Red-winged Parrot, Great Bowerbird, Cotton Pygmy-goose, Pale-headed Rosella, Blue-winged Kookaburra and Yellow Oriole. Our destination for the evening will be the famous Daintree area, home to what is thought to be the oldest rainforest in the world.
Accommodation: Daintree area (en suite cabins). Meals included: B,L,D.

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo - Keith Kennedy

Day 8. Daintree River cruise to Cairns.
This morning we will enjoy a boat cruise on the Daintree River where we may enjoy sightings of Azure & Little Kingfisher, Large-billed Gerygone, Black Bittern, Pacific Baza, Varied Triller, Shining Flycatcher, Chestnut-breasted Mannikin, Brown-backed Honeyeater and Fairy Martin, as well as a chance of the rare & localised Great-billed Heron. Additional species we may see in the area include Bar-shouldered Dove, Pacific Koel, Papuan Frogmouth, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Helmeted Friarbird, Dusky Myzomela & White-breasted Woodswallow. Reptiles to see include Saltwater Crocodile, Amethystine Python & Common Tree Snake.
We will then make our way back to Cairns where, depending on what species we have yet to see, we will spend the rest of the afternoon exploring.
Accommodation: Cairns hotel (en suite rooms). Meals included: B,L,D.

Day 9. Great Barrier Reef.
Today we will head out to the world-famous Great Barrier Reef. Here we will have the opportunity to do a bit of snorkelling or just enjoy the vista that makes up this amazing natural wonder.
We will be looking for Brown Booby, Great Crested, Sooty, Bridled, Lesser Crested, Black-naped & Roseate Terns, Common & Black Noddies, Great & Lesser Frigatebirds and a variety of shorebirds like Ruddy Turnstone, Pacific Golden Plover and Grey-tailed Tattler. Birds that are seen less often on the Great Barrier Reef include such rarities as White-tailed & Red-tailed Tropicbirds and Masked & Red-footed Boobies.
Accommodation: Cairns hotel (en suite rooms). **Meals included**: B,L,D.

Day 10. Depart Cairns.
Depart Cairns airport this morning for your onward travels.
Accommodation: none. **Meals included**: B.

Green Oriole - Karen Dick

PRICING AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Group size : 6-8 participants and 1 Inala guide or 9-12 participants and 2 Inala guides

Price includes : Accommodation for each night of the tour, specialist guiding and transport for day and night tours as outlined in the itinerary, all meals (B, L, D) and activities outlined in the itinerary (including Daintree River cruise and Great Barrier Reef trip), National Park entry fees. (These prices are based on the current rate of GST and may need to be adjusted if there are significant changes.)

Price does not include : Any international and domestic airfares (best to book those as a group ticket your end as for this year), alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and expenses of a personal nature (snacks, travel insurance, internet, laundry, tips etc).

Please note:

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.

Click here for a separate online doc that answers many of the frequently asked questions about Small Group Tours