



Inala Gulf Country/ Outback Queensland Tour

7 – 21 July 2024

Itinerary updated by Tonia Cochran, Inala Nature Tours, 12 January 2023



Alfred Schulte - Budgerigars

ITINERARY OUTLINE:

- Day 1. Sun 7 July Arrive Cairns.
- Day 2. Mon 8 July Cairns to Georgetown.
- Day 3. Tue 9 July Georgetown to Karumba.
- Day 4. Wed 10 July Karumba.
- Day 5. Thu 11 July Karumba to Burketown.
- Day 6. Fri 12 July Burketown to Boodjamulla National Park.
- Day 7. Sat 13 July Boodjamulla National Park.
- Day 8. Sun 14 July Boodjamulla National Park to Mount Isa.
- Day 9. Mon 15 July Mount Isa area.
- Day 10. Tue 16 July Mount Isa area.
- Day 11. Wed 17 July Mount Isa to Winton.
- Day 12. Thu 18 July Winton area.
- Day 13. Fri 19 July Winton to Charters Towers.
- Day 14. Sat 20 July Charters Towers to Cairns.
- Day 15. Sun 21 July Depart Cairns.

DETAILED ITINERARY:

B- breakfast; **L-** lunch; **D-**dinner.

Day 1. Sunday 7 July. Arrive Cairns. Today we will arrive at Cairns to settle into our accommodation before a welcome dinner where you will meet your guide and the rest of the group. Own arrangements for flights, airport transfers and activities today. **Accommodation:** Cairns (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** D.

Day 2. Monday 8 July. Cairns to Georgetown. This morning we will depart Cairns and head across the lush Atherton Tablelands into the drier country towards Georgetown. West of the Tablelands, the annual rainfall drops dramatically, and the rainforests and rich arable land turn give way to open woodland and tropical savannah, with a few isolated patches of vine thicket, a relict semi-evergreen forest that survives in areas protected from fire.

Birds we'll hope to see en route include Red-tailed Black-cockatoo, Apostlebird, Cockatiel, Spotted Harrier, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Emu, Brown-backed Honeyeater, Dollarbird, Brown Treecreeper and White-throated Honeyeater. We will stay overnight in Georgetown, once a bustling Gold Rush town but now a quiet farming community. **Accommodation:** Georgetown (en suite motel rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Red-tailed Black Cockatoo - Karen Dick

Day 3. Tuesday 9 July. Georgetown to Karumba. This morning we'll have a look around a dam near Georgetown which is famous for the finches that come to drink early morning. Here we hope to connect with Black-throated, Masked, Plum-headed (rare), Zebra & Double-barred Finches, as well as Pictorella & Chestnut-breasted Mannikins and the very rare Gouldian Finch if we're really lucky. Other woodland birds here include



Radjah Shelduck - Bob Lewis

Rufous-throated, Yellow-tinted, Banded, Bar-breasted, Grey-fronted and Blue-faced Honeyeaters, Varied Lorikeet, Pale-headed Rosella, Red-browed Pardalote, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, Brown Treecreeper, Spinifex Pigeon, Diamond Dove, Paperbark Flycatcher and Black-chinned Honeyeater. Waterbirds may include Black Bittern, Comb-crested Jacana, Green Pygmy-goose, Hardhead, Plumed Whistling-duck and Australasian Grebe. From here we will drive west from Georgetown along the Savannah Way, looking to see birds like Sarus Crane, Brolga, Black-necked Stork, Australian Pratincole, Emu, Weebill and White-browed & Masked Woodswallows. **Accommodation:** Karumba (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 4. Wednesday 10 July. Karumba. We'll explore the extensive mangroves and swampy grasslands in Karumba today. The habitat here holds a few species we won't have encountered yet including White-breasted Whistler, Mangrove Golden Whistler, Broad-billed Flycatcher, Yellow White-eye, Mangrove Gerygone, Mangrove Grey Fantail, Arafura Fantail, Red-headed Honeyeater, Mangrove Robin and Rufous-throated Honeyeater. In adjacent grassland flats there are Sarus Crane, Tawny Grassbird, the rare Zitting Cisticola, and the difficult to find Star Finch, which is more tied to freshwater environments around Karumba. Along roadsides and in wetlands and open habitats between Karumba and Normanton we have the chance of Australian Bustard, Australian Pratincole, Radjah Shelduck, Glossy Ibis and the possibility of an over-wintering Oriental Plover or two. At night we'll try to locate one of the resident pairs of Barking Owl. **Accommodation:** Karumba (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 5. Thursday 11 July. Karumba to Burketown. After a morning birding around Karumba we'll set off again, this time heading west across the stark Gulf plains for Burketown. The road crosses several rivers on low causeways. During summer. Wet Season rains inundate the plains. Around the Leichhardt River, the dunes of sand on either side of the road are testament to the strength of seasonal floods. We will stop to bird along the way. Despite the apparent lack of cover, the area is home to a range of dry-country birds: Brolga, Sarus Crane, Red-backed Fairy-Wren, Black-breasted Buzzard, Brown Falcon, Red-browed Pardalote, Striated Pardalote (black-headed race *uropygalis*), Ground Cuckoo-shrike, Little Woodswallow and White-throated Gerygone among others. We will stay overnight in Burketown. The town is named after Robert O'Hara Burke, of the ill-fated Burke and Wills Expedition. After crossing the continent from south to north, the expeditioners were forced to turn back by impenetrable mangrove swamps only kilometres from the coast. .

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

Day 6. Friday 12 July. Burketown to Boodjamulla National Park (Lawn Hill). It's only 207 km from Burketown to Adel's Grove but it will probably take at least 5-6 hrs to travel as it's fairly rough. Along this section we'll see similar birds to yesterday, but there will be a range of sought-after specialties at Boodjamulla NP, and we'll base ourselves here for the next two nights. Birds we will aim to see here include Purple-crowned Fairy-wren, Buff-sided Robin, Sandstone Shrike-thrush, Long-tailed & Crimson Finch, Silver-crowned Friarbird, White-gaped Honeyeater, Pictorella Mannikin, Varied & Red-collared Lorikeet, Northern Fantail, Azure Kingfisher, Little Woodswallow and Paperbark Flycatcher. We will stay at Adel's Grove, once a private experimental botanic gardens founded by Albert de Lestang in 1920. In the 1950s, the gardens, all the buildings and de Lestang's notes and research were destroyed by fire. Lestang's work is remembered in the name.

Accommodation: near Boodjamulla National Park (en suite cabins). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Red-winged Parrot - Alfred Schulte

Day 7. Saturday 13 Jul. Boodjamulla National Park.

We will spend a full day of birding around this prime location, looking for the aforementioned species, plus others like Northern Rosella, Red-winged Parrot, Great Bowerbird, White-throated, Grey-fronted, Grey-headed, Black-chinned (the spectacular Golden-backed race *laetior*), Brown and Yellow-tinted Honeyeaters, Variegated & Red-backed Fairy-Wrens, White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike and the possibility of the very rare Grey Falcon. **Accommodation:** near Boodjamulla National Park (en suite cabins). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 8. Sunday 14 July. Boodjamulla National Park to Mt Isa.

After a final morning's birding in Boodjamulla NP we'll commence our journey to the somewhat more arid country around the mining town of Mt Isa, where we'll be based for the next three nights. We'll need a bit more time here to search for the regional specialties, the hardest of which are the Kalkadoon and Carpentarian Grasswrens. **Accommodation:** Mount Isa (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 9. Monday 15 July. Mount Isa area. Today we'll commence our search for the region's specialties with one of the harder to find birds - the Kalkadoon Grasswren. This is a tough and possibly arduous task, so we will need to set out early before the heat of the day kicks in. The Kalkadoon Grasswren occurs in Spinifex-clad hillsides strewn with large boulders so some nimble-footedness will help here. With some luck we can see them singing from atop a boulder. Also here, may be Grey-headed Honeyeater, Diamond Dove, Red-backed Kingfisher and Little Woodswallow. At around midday we'll head back to town for lunch, after which we will drive to a nearby Lake to look for a range of aquatic and woodland birds like Wandering Whistling-Duck, Glossy Ibis, Black-necked Stork, Intermediate Egret, Pacific Black Duck, White-eyed Duck, Black-tailed Treecreeper, Painted & Long-tailed Finch, Pictorella Mannikin, Bar-breasted Honeyeater, Varied Lorikeet, Little Friarbird and Rainbow Bee-eater. **Accommodation:** Mount Isa (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Painted Finch - Andrew Browne

Day 10. Tuesday 16 July. Mount Isa area. Our target today will be the critically endangered Carpentarian Grasswren, and in order to see this bird we'll need to drive north west of Mount Isa to a well-known location for this increasingly difficult to find species. We'll try in several locations along the route and with some good fortune will have found the bird before the heat of the day kicks in. Other species here include Grey-headed Honeyeater, Painted Finch, Hooded Robin and Square-tailed Kite. Travel back to Mt Isa for lunch plus some more birding in the region. Additional chance of Kalkadoon Grasswren if needed. **Accommodation:** Mount Isa (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Cloncurry Ringneck
Alfred Schulte

Day 11. Wednesday 17 July. Mount Isa to Winton. With a bit of time up our sleeves we can bird the morning around Mt Isa to look for any birds we may be missing, and after lunch will head towards Cloncurry. Birds we can expect to see today include Australian Ringneck (local race *macgillivrayi*, "Cloncurry Parrot"), Varied Lorikeet, Cockatiel, Little Corella, Galah, Budgerigar, Ground Cuckoo-shrike, Emu, Little Crow, Apostlebird, Spotted Bowerbird, White-plumed Honeyeater and Black Falcon. **Accommodation:** Winton (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 12. Thursday 18 July. Winton area. We will visit a nearby National Park and have the whole day to look for a few species associated with Spinifex grasslands. We are on the edge of a range of species here that rely on this habitat type. Birds we are searching for today include Spinifexbird, Rufous-crowned Emu-wren, Spinifex Pigeon, Hall's Babbler, Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush, Painted Finch, Black Honeyeater, Pink-eared Duck, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Miner, Mistletoebird, Black-tailed Native Hen and Red-browed Pardalote. **Accommodation:** Winton (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 13. Friday 19 July. Winton to Charters Towers. Today will involve a bit of travelling as we make our way back towards Cairns however, we can stop for birding en route. **Accommodation:** Charters Towers (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 14. Saturday 20 July. Charters Towers to Cairns. Today we will continue our journey back to Cairns, stopping for birds en route. **Accommodation:** Cairns (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B L D.

Day 15. Sunday 21 July. Depart Cairns. Depart Cairns this morning. **Accommodation:** none. **Meals Included:** B



Yellow-throated Miner - Bob Lewis

Price includes: All accommodation as per the itinerary, specialist guide and transport, meals, entrance fees and activities as mentioned in the above itinerary.

Price does not include: International and domestic airfares, airport transfers, alcoholic beverages, snacks, internet, gratuities, laundry or other items of a personal nature.

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.
- **Remoteness:** Please note that for much of this tour we will be birding in a wonderful yet remote part of Australia. Most of the roads are unsealed and rough and travel will be in 4WD vehicles. If you have medical conditions or health concerns, it is important you make us aware of these in advance of this tour.

[Click here for a separate online doc that answers many of the frequently asked questions about Small Group Tours](#)



Budgerigars - Alfred Schulte