



Inala's South-west Queensland

**Birds and Wildlife of the
Remote Outback
6 - 15 June 2024**



Inland Dotterel - photo Alfred Schulte

Itinerary prepared by Dr Tonia Cochran, Steve Davidson & Dr Bronwen Scott, November 2022.

We are excited to offer this new Outback adventure that takes us to the red dunes and isolated waterholes of the remote South-west corner of Queensland. Beginning in Mt Isa and ending in Longreach, the tour takes us to the Channel Country and Mulga Lands to look for inland rarities and difficult to find species such as Eyrean and Grey Grasswrens, Grey Falcon and Letter-winged Kite. We will visit iconic landscapes and towns including Birdsville. A highlight of the tour is a visit to Bowra Wildlife Sanctuary, a world-renowned birding location known for its diversity and rare species.

This tour is designed to join [Inala's Outback Queensland: Birds, Mammals and Australia's Ancient Creatures, 15 - 25 June 2024.](#)

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1. Thu 6 Jun 24. Arrive Mount Isa. Group dinner.

Day 2. Fri 7 Jun 24. Mount Isa to Boulia.

Day 3. Sat 8 Jun 24. Boulia to Birdsville

Day 4. Sun 9 Jun 24. Birdsville

Day 5. Mon 10 Jun 24. Birdsville to Windorah

Day 6. Tue 11 Jun 24. Windorah to Quilpie

Day 7. Wed 12 Jun 24. Quilpie to Bowra Station (Cunnamulla)

Day 8. Thu 13 Jun 24. Bowra Station

Day 9. Fri 14 Jun 24. Cunnamulla to Blackall

Day 10. Sat 15 June 24. Blackall to Longreach

Day 11. Sun 16 June 24. Depart Longreach or continue on outback Qld dinosaur tour.

DETAILED ITINERARY:

B- breakfast, L- lunch, D-dinner



Cloncurry Ringneck – photo Alfred Schulte

Day 1. Thursday 6 June 2024. Arrive Mount Isa. Today has been set aside as an arrival day. Meet at 19:00 for a group welcome dinner, meet your guides and chat about the details for the tour. **Accommodation:** Mt Isa (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** D

Day 2. Friday 7 June 2024. Mount Isa to Boulia (310 km). An early start today with a visit to the rocky gorges around Mount Isa to look for **Kalkadoon Grasswren**, the Golden-backed form (*laetior*) of the **Black-chinned Honeyeater**, **Red-winged Parrot**, **Spotted Bowerbird** and other dry country birds. There is also a good chance of **Purple-necked Rock-wallaby**, restricted to the ranges of NW Queensland. After breakfast we will travel to Boulia (around 4 hours' drive), birding en route. Species we will be searching for include **Black and Grey Falcons**, **Red Goshawk**, **Rufous-crowned Emu-wren** and **Ground Cuckoo-shrike**. We should also see **Red-**

browed Pardalote, **Budgerigar** and **Wedge-tailed eagle**. **Little Button-quail** has also been seen on our past tours there. After a visit to the Boulia Marine Fossil display, we will bird in the area (**Brolga**, **Rufous Songlark**, Cloncurry form of **Australian Ringneck** and **Mistletoebird**). **Accommodation:** Boulia (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 3. Saturday 8 June 2024. Boulia to Birdsville (380 km). Today we drive south on the through the Channel Country. Our destination is Birdsville, one of Queensland's most famous Outback towns. We will stop along the way at river crossings to look for **Black-eared Cuckoo**, **Black Honeyeater**, **Brown and Rufous Songlark**, and nomadic flocks of **Cockatiel**. On arrival at Birdsville we will check into our accommodation and explore the town. **Accommodation:** Birdsville (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.



Black-eared Cuckoo – photo Dennis Braddy

Day 4. Sunday 9 June 2024. Birdsville area. We'll have a full day to explore this area, with excursions out to the west and north to look for a few star specials of the region. To the west is the mighty Simpson Desert with its enormous red sand dunes, and here we'll look for **Eyrean Grasswren** in the canegrass amongst the swales. This is a charismatic and active species, however we will need to sit quietly amongst their chosen habitat for the best chances of a look. Out on the lignum flats to the north of Birdsville we'll have a try for **Grey Grasswren**, an extremely elusive bird that is entirely restricted to the lignum floodplains of the lower Eyrean basin of the corner country where NSW, QLD & SA meet. Mammals we should see include **Red Kangaroo**, **Western Grey Kangaroo** and **Common Wallaroo (Euro)**. At night we can head out with spotlights in hand to look for night birds such as **Spotted Nightjar**, **Australian Owllet-nightjar** and **Australian Boobook**, and for



Purple-backed Fairy-wren – photo Alfred Schulte

critters like **Dusky Hopping Mouse**, **Smooth Knob-tailed Geckos** and **Broad-banded Sand-swimmers**. Australia's biggest goanna, the **Perentie**, is also a chance here. **Accommodation:** Birdsville (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

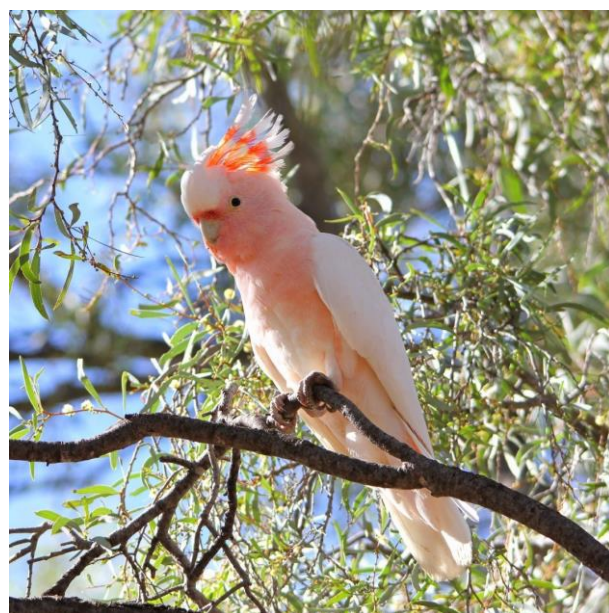
Day 5. Monday 10 June 2024. Birdsville to Windorah (380 km). We will spend another morning in Birdsville to pick up anything we might be missing before heading toward Windorah. As we travel east out of Birdsville, we cross the Sturt Stony Desert – a vast, open and mostly treeless landscape consisting of the small, pebbly substrate known as gibber. We'll have a chance of the fascinating **Gibberbird** in this environment, as well as the possibility of **Cinnamon Quail-thrush**, **Inland Dotterel**, **Australian Pratincole**, **Australian Bustard**, **White-backed Swallow**, **Australian (Gull-**

billed) Tern, Banded Lapwing, Little Button-quail, Australian Ringneck, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Southern Whiteface, Apostlebird, Australian Raven and Little Crow. Depending on whether rain has fallen recently, there may be small numbers of the highly nomadic **Flock Bronzewing** present in the area as well. Diurnal reptiles will hopefully be out and about, and we'll keep eyes peeled for **Mulga Snake, Central Bearded Dragon and Gould's Monitor.** The afternoon will involve a bit of driving but, as always, we'll have stops along the way. Birds we may have not seen yet include the likes of **Pallid Cuckoo, Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo, Purple-backed Fairywren, Inland Thornbill, Varied Sittella, Crested Bellbird, White-fronted, Singing and Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters,** and **Black-faced Woodswallow.** **Accommodation:** Windorah (en suite rooms) **Meals included:** B, L, D

Day 6. Tuesday 11 June 2024. Windorah to Quilpie (330 km). After a pre-breakfast look along Cooper Creek, we'll leave Windorah and head south, stopping en route for birds and wildlife along the way. We may see our **Australian Bustards** today, as well as chances of mixed flocks of **White-browed** and **Masked Woodswallows, White-winged Triller, Rufous Songlark, Blue Bonnet, Mulga Parrot, Spotted Bowerbird, Red-browed Pardalote** and hopefully if there has been recent rain – **Pied** and **Black Honeyeaters** in flowering *Eremophila* shrubs. Raptors should be well-represented, with **Black Falcon, Black-breasted Buzzard, Spotted Harrier, Little Eagle, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Black and Whistling Kites** and the ever-present chance of **Grey Falcon** or even **Letter-winged Kite.** We will stop at the tiny Outback village of Eromanga with its amazing fossil museum. The town lies on Cretaceous Eromanga Sea and fossils of dinosaurs and more recent megafauna have been



Grey Falcon – photo Alfred Schulte



Pink Cockatoo – photo Bernie O'Keefe

excavated in the area. We will stay overnight at Quilpie on the Bulloo River. If time permits, we will visit St Finbarr's Church to view the precious opal altar or fossick for our own opals at the edge of town. **Accommodation:** Quilpie (en suite rooms) **Meals included:** B, L, D

Day 7. Wednesday 12 June 2022. Quilpie to Cunnamulla and Bowra Station (390 km). Today we make our way south and east. Our first stop is Lake Bindegolly, where we'll see if any waterbirds are present, whilst looking for arid-county birds in the shrublands like **Chirruping Wedgebill, White-winged Fairywren, Black Honeyeater, Brown Songlark, Horsfield's Bushlark** and the amazing **Orange Chat.** As we head along the

Bulloo Developmental Road, we will look for birds of mulga woodland such as **White-browed Treecreeper, Little Woodswallow, Splendid Fairywren, Red-backed Kingfisher and Ground Cuckoo-shrike**. Our base for two nights is Bowra Station, a former cattle station which is now a wildlife reserve managed by Australian Wildlife Conservancy. Bowra offers a range of different arid-zone habitats like mulga woodland, open plains and Coolabah-lined watercourses. Regional specialties here include **Hall's Babbler, Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush, Bourke's Parrot, Chirruping Wedgebill** and a resident pair of the near-mythical **Grey Falcon**. We'll spend two nights here looking for these and other specials like **Painted Honeyeater, Pink Cockatoo, Budgerigar, Cockatiel, Plum-headed Finch, Red-winged Parrot, Hooded and Red-capped Robins, Chestnut-crowned Babbler and Crimson Chat**, to name a few. **Accommodation:** Cunnamulla (en suite rooms) **B, L, D**

Day 8. Thursday 13 June 2024. Bowra Station. We'll have a full day to explore the range of ecotones here and will explore the various trails in order to have the best chance of the harder to find specialties. If water is present at any of the waterholes along the creek-lines we may find a range of water birds like **Black-fronted Dotterel, White-necked Heron, Black-tailed Native-hen, Plumed Whistling-duck** or even **Freckled Duck**. Honeyeaters regularly come in to drink, especially in the morning and late afternoon, and we should see **White-plumed, Striped, Black-chinned, Singing, Spiny-cheeked and Blue-faced Honeyeaters. Bourke's Parrot** is a regular visitor and a quiet sit at one of the waterholes on dusk may be rewarding, as they come in to drink quite late in the evening. Some of the more extensive patches of mulga woodland on the station have **Hall's Babbler, Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush** and **White-browed Treecreeper** present, and the quail-thrush in particular is best attempted early morning as the males sing to advertise territory. In the evening we'll try a bit of spotlighting, looking for **Spotted Nightjar, Tawny Frogmouth and Australian Boobook**, as well as reptiles like **Marbled Velvet Gecko, Red-naped Snake and Gidgee Skink**. **Accommodation:** Cunnamulla (en suite rooms) **Meals included:** B, L, D



Freckled Duck – photo Ramit Singal

Day 9. Friday 14 June 2024. Cunnamulla to Blackall (500 km). An early start for a big driving day as we head north on the Matilda Way to Blackall. We will take a few breaks on the way, the first of which will be in Charleville, one of the oldest towns in western Queensland, replete with heritage buildings from the 1800s and the home to two of the six giant Vortex Guns used in 1902 in an attempt to end drought in the region. Here we can expect east coast birds to start appearing on our list, including **Yellow Thornbill**, the white-cheeked form (*palliceps*) of **Pale-headed Rosella, Double-barred Finch** and **White-winged Chough**. **Accommodation:** Blackall (en suite rooms), **Meals included:** B, L, D



Rainbow Bee Eater – photo Pat Kelly

Day 10: Saturday 15 June 2024. Blackall to Longreach (250 km). We will take the less-travelled route to Longreach, stopping at Idalia National Park, west of Blackall. This area of sandstone gorges and mulga woodland is home to seven species of macropod including **Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby** and **Black-striped Wallaby**. After rain, the park is vibrant with wildflowers. If there's time, we will visit the Outer Barcoo Interpretive Centre to look at the display of fossils collected from the Isisford area. We'll endeavour to reach Longreach early enough to do some birding

around town if so desired. In the areas surrounding town we may find **Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Weebill, Plum-headed Finch, Tree Martin, Rainbow Bee-eater, Peaceful Dove, Yellow-throated Miner, Torresian Crow, Rufous Whistler, Restless Flycatcher,** and **Australian Darter**. To celebrate the tour, we'll have our final group dinner tonight, after which the tour will end. **Accommodation:** Longreach (en suite rooms). **Meals included:** B, L, D.

Day 11. Sun 16 June 24. Depart Longreach or continue on outback Qld dinosaur tour. Own arrangements to transfer to Longreach airport and depart or continue on our outback Queensland dinosaur tour today.

Group size: 3-4 people with one specialist Inala driver guide or 6- 8 people with 2 driver/guides.

Tour Price: AU\$7,360 twin share and **Single Supplement:** AU\$900

Price includes: 10 nights' accommodation, specialist guides and transport, meals, entrance fees and activities as mentioned in the itinerary including fossicking licenses if required.

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

We are pleased to offer a discount of \$250 per person (\$330 per single) for guests who wish to combine our south-western Queensland (6-15 June 2024) and [Queensland Outback 'dinosaur' tours \(15-25 June 2024\)](#), starting and finishing in Mt Isa.

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.
- **Remoteness:** Please note that for much of this tour we will be birding in a wonderful yet remote part of Australia. Many 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. We will also be travelling long distances on some days.

MAP OF ROUTE ON TOUR:

