Welcome TO THE DARWIN BIRDING GUIDE

Darwin and its surrounding area is a birdwatchers paradise. You have a range of habitats to choose from - the harbour, mangrove-lined creeks, billabongs, savanna woodlands and seasonal wetlands, all of which nurture the diverse migratory and endemic species of the Top End.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The wellbeing of our birds is our top priority. Making as little impact as possible in these environments is of high importance for the future protection of these wonderful species.

• Keep to the marked tracks and obey all signage, especially when you are close to any body of water; saltwater crocodiles are common and can be found in all natural waterways.

• Try not to disturb or feed any of the wildlife. Limit the use of recordings or ‘call-back’ and keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roots and important feeding sites.

• Ensure you drink plenty of water and have appropriate clothing to protect you from the elements. Sunscreen and insect repellent are recommended.

Top 3 Birds
- Rufous Owl
- Spangled Drongo
- Forest Kingfisher
- Bonus: Barking Owl

Top 3 Birds
- Lemon-bellied Flycatcher
- Rainbow Pitta
- Collared/Torresian Kingfisher
- Bonus: Little Kingfisher

Top 3 Birds
- Beach Stone-curlew
- Red-tailed Black Cockatoo
- Crimson Finch
- Bonus: Little Kingfisher

Top 3 Birds
- Forest Kingfisher
- Great Knot
- Red-headed Honeyeater
- Bonus: Chestnut Rail

Top 3 Birds
- Royal Spoonbill
- Brooqa
- Red-kneed Dotterel
- Bonus: Eastern Yellow Wagtail

Top 3 Birds
- Long-tailed Finch
- Masked Finch
- Osprey
- Bonus: White-bellied Sea Eagle

Top 3 Birds
- Emerald Dove
- Rainbow Bee-eater
- Azure Kingfisher
- Bonus bird: Rainbow Pitta

Top 3 Birds
- Black-necked Stork
- Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove
- Comb-crested Jacana
- Bonus bird: Buff-banded Rail

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DAVID NICHOLS DIPLOMA IN WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

DARWIN TRAILS - WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO SEE

1 GEORGE BROWN DARWIN BOTANIC GARDENS
GARDENS ROAD, DARWIN

Wander through the George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens to see a range of environments and flora of Northern Australia as well as some fantastic bird life. Species such as Northern Fantail, Varied Thriller, Green-backed Gerygone, Orange-footed Scrubfowl, Mistletoebird. White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, Rufous-banded Honeyeater and Rainbow Bee-eater.

Top 3 Birds
- Rufous Owl
- Spangled Drongo
- Forest Kingfisher
- Bonus: Barking Owl

2 EAST POINT RESERVE
ALEX FONG-LIM DRIVE, DARWIN

Just 6km from the CBD, East Point Reserve is home to abundant wildlife, including many birds. The Monsoon Forest walk is great for spotting species such as the Emerald Dove, Rainbow Bee-eater, Rainbow Pitta and Rose-crowned Fruit Dove. The Mangrove boardwalk gives easy access to Mangrove Golden Whistler, Crimson Finch, Mangrove Grey Fantail and Brown Goshawk. Between October and March many shorebirds share the shorelines with the Military Museum.

Top 3 Birds
- Lemon-bellied Flycatcher
- Rainbow Pitta
- Collared/Torresian Kingfisher
- Bonus: Little Kingfisher

3 CASUARINA COASTAL RESERVE – DRIPTONE CLIFFS TO LEE POINT
GRISBON RD, BRINNIN

Start this walk from the Dripstone Cliffs end and walk through some excellent birding environments. Winding your way along the coast, look out for Whistling, Black and Brumby Kits as well as Pacific Baza (migratory) and Red-tailed Black Cockatoos. Listen out for a variety of finches such as Crimson and Double-barred. With a clear view on a high tide you’ll see many travel-weary waders (October – March) such as Eastern Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit, Great Knot and Crested and Gull-billed Terns.

Top 3 Birds
- Beach Stone-curlew
- Red-tailed Black Cockatoo
- Crimson Finch
- Bonus: Little Kingfisher

4 CASUARINA COASTAL RESERVE – LEE POINT TO BUFFALO CREEK
LEE POINT ROAD, LEE POINT

From the Lee Point end of the Casuarina Coastal Reserve, a short 1km walk leads you across a mangrove creek and through a monsoon forest towards a bird hide facing the shoreline. You may spot a Rainbow Pitta, Forest Kingfisher, Anfaraa Fantail, Varied Lorikeet and White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike. When you reach the bird hide, look out for Grey-tailed Tattler, Great Knot and Eastern Curlew. If you continue your walk on towards the Buffalo Creek boat ramp on a dropping tide, you may even be rewarded with the elusive Chestnut Rail!

Top 3 Birds
- Forest Kingfisher
- Great Knot
- Red-headed Honeyeater
- Bonus: Chestnut Rail

5 KNUCKEY LAGOONS CONSERVATION RESERVE
JUNE-NOV

RANDALL ROAD (OFF LAGOON ROAD), KNUCKEY LAGOONS

Located 8km from Darwin, this understated wetland provides a wide range of native wildlife. Migratory birds, waterfowl and waders congregate at the billabongs as the waters from the wet season begin to dry up. Look out for large flocks of Magpie Goose, Swimsne Snake, Australasian Pratincole, Pacific Black Duck, Horsfield’s Bronze-cuckoo, Black-winged Stilt and more.

Top 3 Birds
- Royal Spoonbill
- Brooqa
- Red-kneed Dotterel
- Bonus: Eastern Yellow Wagtail

6 NIGHTCLIFF FORESHORE (NEAR THE MOUTH OF RAPID CREEK)

Travel just 10km out of the city and follow the coast around to the Nightcliff foreshore. A beautiful place for a walk or a picnic with sea views, Nightcliff also doubles as a fantastic birding location. Visiting early in the morning or late afternoon, you’ll see a variety of Kingfishers including Forest and Sacred, as well as Red-collared Lorikeets, and Northern Fantail. There are also a few finch species along with some birds of prey such as Whistling Kite, Brahminy Kite and Osprey. Heading along the foreshore in a south-west direction, towards Nightcliff Pier, is also a good spot to search for shorebirds during October – March.

Top 3 Birds
- Long-tailed Finch
- Masked Finch
- Osprey
- Bonus: White-bellied Sea Eagle

HEADING FURTHER OUT OF DARWIN? TAKE IN A COUPLE OF OTHER OUTSTANDING SPOTS UNDER 1.5 HRS FROM THE DARWIN CBD.

HOWARD SPRINGS NATURE PARK - CORNER OF HOWARD SPRINGS ROAD AND GUNN POINT ROAD, HOWARD SPRINGS

Around 40mins from Darwin City, Howard Springs Nature Park is an excellent place to spot some colourful and elusive birds. Head out on the Stuart Highway, turn off at the Howard Springs road and follow the signs to the Nature Park just 6km down the road. Here you will find species such as Rainbow Pitta, Spangled Drongo, Emerald Dove and the quick Shining Flycatchers.

Top 3 Birds
- Emerald Dove
- Rainbow Bee-eater
- Azure Kingfisher
- Bonus bird: Rainbow Pitta

FOGG DAM CONSERVATION RESERVE- ANZAC PARADE

(Off Arnhem Highway)

Further out of town on the Arnhem Hwy is a perfect wetland environment with some great viewing platforms and a couple of good walks. Foggy Dam is just over an hour drive from Darwin off the Arnhem Highway. Here you will see wetland birds such as Comb-crested Jacana, Black-necked Stork and Plumed Whistling-Duck. On the walks, you can spot some Kingfisher species along with Rainbow Pitta and Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove.

Top 3 Birds
- Black-necked Stork
- Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove
- Comb-crested Jacana
- Bonus bird: Buff-banded Rail

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TOP END

Birdfinder

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Fogg Dam Conservation Reserve- Anzac Parade (OFF ARNHEM HIGHWAY)

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- Royal Spoonbill
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- Red-kneed Dotterel
- Bonus: Eastern Yellow Wagtail

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