

Corinna Birdlife

Owls, Parrots & Allies

Few groups of birds are as well known as parrots and cockatoos and these colourful and often very visible birds have attracted the attention of people throughout history. Five species of Cockatoo and seven species of parrot are found regularly in Tasmania

Yellow-Tailed Black-Cockatoo

IDENTIFICATION: 330-370mm
A large, black Cockatoo with yellow panels in the tail and yellow ear patches. Body feathers have pale yellow edges. Bill is grey. Male has a pink eye-ring and a smaller yellow cheek patch than the female, which has a grey eye-ring.

HABITAT: Forest, woodland, and coastal heathland.



Green Rosella

IDENTIFICATION: 330-370mm
A dark Rosella that is endemic to Tasmania. Upperparts are dark mottled green. Head is bright yellow with blue cheek patch and red forehead band. Shoulder and leading edge of the wings is blue. Underparts are yellow. Female is duller than the male.

HABITAT: It prefers dense moist forests and savanna woodlands, but can be found in most Tasmanian habitats except treeless moorlands and cleared farmlands.



Orange-Bellied Parrot

IDENTIFICATION: 200-215mm
A male is brilliant emerald green above with yellow breast and orange patch on belly. Leading edge of wing deep blue. Frontal forehead band bright blue. Female has a duller coloration.

HABITAT: Coastal button-grass plains with patches of forest in south-west Tasmania. Wintering habitat on mainland comprises mainly coastal areas of inlets and lagoons with saltmarsh and low shrubs.



Ground Parrot

IDENTIFICATION: 250-320mm
A medium-sized, bright green parrot with a long tail. Upperparts are yellow-green with dark barring. The long tail is green with faint yellow barring. Small red forehead patch.

HABITAT: Densely vegetated coastal heaths, swamps and button-grass plains.



Southern Boobook

IDENTIFICATION: 300-350mm
A familiar, small, brown hawk-owl with pale green-yellow eyes surrounded by dark patches with pale borders. In Tasmania the eyes are more yellow. Large white spots on the wing scapulars. Breast and belly whitish with variable brown streaks. Legs fully feathered. Tasmania birds are generally darker than those on the mainland.

HABITAT: Forest, woodland, parks, gardens and shrub.



Tawny Frogmouth

IDENTIFICATION: 330-460mm
A large, strange, big-headed bird with large yellow eyes and a broad bill. The mostly grey plumage is intricately marked with black, buff and white mottles and streaks, providing superb camouflage while perched. Distinctive tuft of bristles above the bill. Female is browner.

HABITAT: Forest, woodland, parks and gardens with trees.



Azure Kingfisher

IDENTIFICATION: 170-190mm
A small, short-tailed kingfisher with a orange breast. Upperparts are glossy rich azure blue with a buff-white patch on either side of the neck.

HABITAT: Rivers and creeks with tree-lined banks.



Wedge-tailed Eagle

IDENTIFICATION: 850-1000mm
A large, dark raptor with a pale bill and distinctive, long wedge-shaped tail. Adult plumage darkens with age.

HABITAT: Open Plains, forests and mountainous country.



Brown Falcon

IDENTIFICATION: 410-510mm
A long-legged, medium-sized falcon with highly variable plumage. Sexes are similar. Plumage ranges from dark sooty-brown to reddish-brown above, with underparts ranging from white breasted to sandy breasted, with or without streaks. All colour phases have a moustachial stripe and dark thighs. The normal form in Tasmania is a brown form.

HABITAT: Prefers open country, grassy woodland, paddocks, coastal dunes.



White Bellied Sea Eagle

IDENTIFICATION: 720-880mm
A large, white eagle with broad, dark wings and a white wedge-shaped tail. Adult is unmistakable. Juvenile is mottled-brown overall with a white tail. Female is larger than the male. Huge talons.

HABITAT: Coast and islands, also inland lakes and large rivers.



Songbirds

Tasmania is a very fortunate to still possess large areas of forest and scrub together with a small human population. In fact ideal conditions for a wealth of birdlife. Songbirds make up over half of the bird species and are also more correctly termed Passerines or perching birds. In Tasmania these birds are often referred to as "Bush Birds"

Black Currawong

IDENTIFICATION: 470-490mm
An all black bird except for a white tip to the tail primaries and small, white patch in the wing. Eye is bright-yellow.

HABITAT: Prefers Mainly sub-alpine forest and woodland, sometimes moving to lower grounds during winter. Occurs in open woodland and coastal scrub on Bas Straight islands



Superb Fairy-wren

IDENTIFICATION: 140mm
An exquisite and extremely popular little bird. The male has a distinctive bright blue crown, ear coverts and upper back, and a glossy dark blue chest & throat. Wings are brown, belly is off-white and the long tail is a dark blue. Female is brown overall. During winter, most males enter an eclipse plumage similar to the female.

HABITAT: Open forest, woodland, scrub and gardens; in fact, almost any where with ground cover and open areas.



Beautiful Firetail

IDENTIFICATION: 115-125mm
A plump, dark finch with a scarlet bill and rump. Black mask around a pale blue eye-ring. The upperparts are dark grey-brown, finely barred with black. The underparts are finely barred black-and-white. The plumage of breeding males darken and the eye-ring becomes bluer. Sexes are similar.

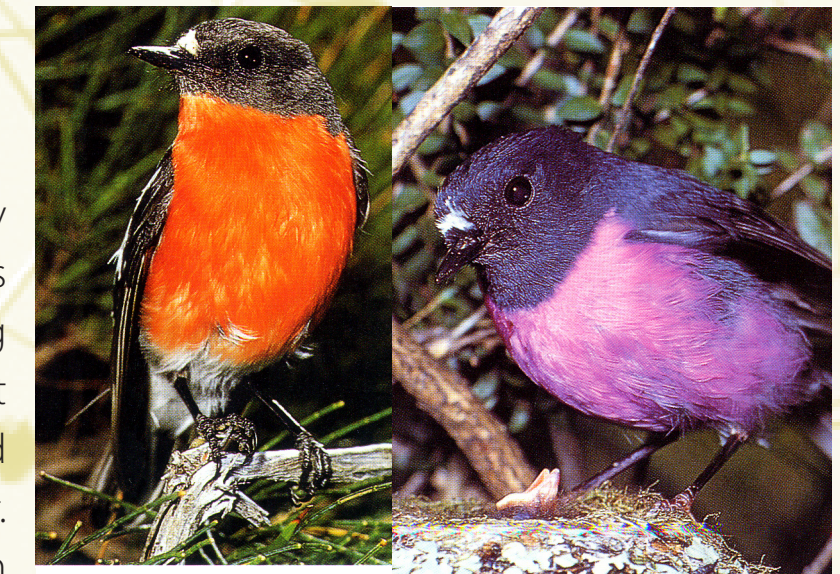
HABITAT: Varied, from sclerophyll woodland, tea-tree thickets and scrub, particularly coastal although range also extends into mountains.



Flame & Pink Robin

IDENTIFICATION: 125-135mm
Flame Robin: A strikingly coloured robin, the male has dark-grey upperparts contrasting with brilliant orange-red breast and belly. Small white forehead patch and bold white wing bar. Female has overall buff-brown upperparts with grey-brown underparts.
Pink Robin: A small, dark robin, which is quiet and rarely seen. Male has uniformly sooty-brown upperparts and bib. Breast and belly is a dusky, rose-pink. Female has olive-brown upperparts with pale brown to buff underparts sometime with a pale pink wash.

HABITAT: **Flame:** Prefers more open country than other robins, favouring dry forest and savannah woodland from coastal to sub-alpine. **Pink:** Wet forest, rainforest and coastal tea-tree scrubs. Breeds in densely vegetated gullies or tea-tree thickets



Golden Whistler

IDENTIFICATION: 160-180mm
The male is a distinctive bird with a black head that extends around the breast in a band, white throat and a rich yellow nape extending into a collar and yellow underparts. Back and wings are olive-green. Female is mid-grey with olive-wash on the upperparts.

HABITAT: Wet sclerophyll forests, rainforests, orchards and well-vegetated gardens.



Grey Fantail

IDENTIFICATION: 150-170mm
The Tasmania race is the darkest of the five races. Upperparts are dark grey with a white eyebrow, a white mark behind the eye and white throat. The long fan-shaped tail is dark great with white tips and outer tail feathers. Dark sooty breast band with a creamy buff belly.

HABITAT: Prefers sclerophyll forest, tea-tree lined creeks and coastal scrub.



Yellow-throated Honeyeater

IDENTIFICATION: 190-210mm
A distinctive, medium-small honeyeater with overall olive-green plumage with dark grey crown and face contrasting with the rich yellow chin and throat. Small yellow ear tuft. Deep ruby eye.

HABITAT: Wide variety, including wet and dry sclerophyll forests, alpine woodland, coastal heathland, parks and gardens but not rainforest.



Striated Pardalote

IDENTIFICATION: 90-115mm
The plumage of this small bird varies considerably across Australia. The crown is striped black with a white streak behind the eye and a yellow patch between the eye and the bill. The wing primaries are edged white with a red spot at the base. The short black tail has a white tip. The flanks and the throat are yellow.

HABITAT: Sclerophyll forest, open woodland and gardens.



Forest Raven

IDENTIFICATION: 520-540mm
The largest of all ravens is an all-black bird with a white eye. Bill is large and prominent and the tail short. Sexes are similar.

HABITAT: Wide range of habitats from alpine moorland and forests to sclerophyll woodland, coastal scrub, beaches, roadsides and gardens.



Tree Martin

IDENTIFICATION: 145-155mm
A dark-coloured martin with glossy blue-black upper back and crown. Wings are dusky brown and the rump is finely streaked grey. Tail has a square end. Sexes are similar.

HABITAT: Wooded areas especially with mature eucalypts, often near water.



Welcome Swallow

IDENTIFICATION: 145-155mm
The familiar swallow of Australia. The forehead, face and throat are russet except for black lores. Upperparts are glossy blue-black with browner wings; underparts are pale buff to off-white. The long tail is deeply forked. Sexes are similar.

HABITAT: It is widespread in open country particularly near man-made structures such as farm buildings, bridges and verandahs; also frequents lagoons, river and swamps.



Waterbirds

Many of Tasmania's Waterbirds are specialist feeders having evolved to inhabit specialist types of wetland. Unfortunately many wetlands are increasingly threatened by drainage although some areas such as the magnificent Moulting Lagoon on Tasmania's East coast have now been protected.

Chestnut Teal

IDENTIFICATION: 380-470mm
Male is a small duck with a dark, bottle-green head, rich chestnut body and a white patch on the flank. Black under tail. Female is similar to Grey Teal but darker and lacking the pale throat patch. In flight, the narrow white wing bar is seen in both sexes.

HABITAT: Fresh and brackish swamps, lagoons, farm dams and estuaries.



Little Pied Cormorant

IDENTIFICATION: 550-640mm
A small Cormorant with all-black plumage above and white below. White face extends over the eye to the stubby yellow bill. In breeding plumage, it develops a small spiky crest on the forehead.

HABITAT: Prefers freshwater, rivers, lakes and swamps etc. Also coastal lagoons and estuaries.



Seabirds

Tasmania has a long coastline, sweeping sandy beaches, myriads of deserted offshore islands, rugged wind-swept cliffs and silt-laden estuaries.

The birds which inhabit these oceans and the seas are collectively known as Seabirds.

Pacific Gull

IDENTIFICATION: 580-650mm
A large gull. Massive, heavy bill is yellow with a red tip. Head and body are white with black back and wings. Legs are yellow. In flight, note the white tail with black sub-terminal band. Juveniles are uniformly mottled brown.

HABITAT: Coastal. Beaches and offshore islands. Rubbish tips close to the coast of Tasmania.

