

BIRDS OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

FIELD CHECKLIST



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BIRDS OF THE

NORTHERN

TERRITORY

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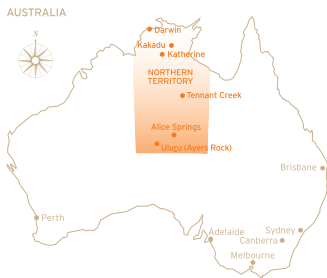
NORTHERN TERRITORY
australiasoutback.com


The Northern Territory boasts almost half of all bird species found in Australia. The territory is home to two distinct and contrasting climatic regions, divided between the humid north and arid south, meaning that the range of species is impressively diverse.

This checklist details all 414 species currently recorded in the NT and is designed to be used in the field as well as a work of reference.

Northern Tropics

The 'Top End' is home to vast wetlands, coastal floodplains, monsoonal rainforest, savannah woodland, impressive waterfalls and soaring escarpments. Kakadu National Park, to the east of Darwin, is Australia's largest at more than 20,000 sq km, and is home to some 280 species. The wider Top End boasts almost 400 species in total, five of which are endemic.



There are many potential highlights for the visiting birder, but specialities in the region include Rainbow Pitta, Gouldian 



Finch, Red Goshawk, Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeon, Banded Fruit-Dove, Hooded Parrot, White-lined Honeyeater and White-throated Grasswren.

The Top End has two seasons. The weather is drier and cooler between May and September,

when massive congregations of birds can be seen around receding water sources. The tropical summer months bring some amazing lightning shows and following the rains in December-February, the rivers, floodplains and billabongs teem with life.

Top birding spots

- **Fogg Dam Conservation Reserve:** an outstanding area of forest, wetland and floodplain habitats just an hour from Darwin. Highlights include Rainbow Pitta, Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove and large concentrations of waterbirds.
- **Mary River National Park:** cruise the river and search the banks for birds such as Azure Kingfisher and Australasian Darter.
- **Mamukala Wetlands:** located in Kakadu National Park, Mamukala Wetlands and Bird Hide offers the spectacle of thousands of Magpie Geese and other waterbirds congregating to feed.
- **Pine Creek:** this small town on the junction of the Stuart and Kakadu Highways is a reliable place to find the beautiful and endemic Hooded Parrot.
- **Nitmiluk National Park (Katherine Gorge):** visit Nitmiluk National Park or cruise the Katherine River. Chestnut-backed Buttonquail is a rare resident here.
- **Timber Creek:** located between Katherine and the Kimberley, Timber Creek affords rich grassy plains and escarpments ideal for searching for Grey-fronted Honeyeater.

Southern Deserts

Better known as the 'Red Centre' or 'Central Australia', this part of the Northern Territory rarely sees rain and has a very even climate. The winter months see warm days and cool nights, and summer brings higher temperatures. There is a surprising amount of water to be found in this region, largely due to the world's largest and deepest underground fresh water aquifer, the Great Artesian Basin.

The species found in the Red Centre are very different from those in the Top End and can sometimes be harder to locate. It is well worth the effort as some of Australia's most exciting birds can be found here, including Orange Chat, Dusky Grasswren, Spinifex Pigeon, Bourke's Parrot, Western Bowerbird and Painted Firetail.

Top birding spots

- **Palm Valley:** this ancient botanical garden located in the Finke Gorge National Park is home to Rainbow Bee-Eater and Port Lincoln Parrot, among many other species.
- **Whistle Duck Waterhole:** part of a greater network of waterholes, Whistle Duck is a serene spot for birdwatching.
- **Kings Canyon:** surrounded by the soaring red walls of the canyon, scan the skies for Wedge-tailed Eagle.
- **Ilpapa Ponds:** a great spot for local waterbirds.
- **Boggy Hole:** part of the oldest river in the world, Boggy Hole provides a permanent water source for bird life. Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Masked Woodswallow and Brown Honeyeater can be found here.
- **Newhaven Sanctuary:** with 262,000 hectares of protected land in the Great Sandy Desert, this site is home to more than 160 species of birds, including 10 threatened species.

We hope this checklist will inspire you to visit Australia's Northern Territory to see some of its amazing bird life for yourself.

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Species list courtesy of Niven McCrie (www.ntbirds.net). The list follows the recent Christidis and Boles revision (*Systematics and Taxonomy of Australian Birds* by Les Christidis and Walter E Boles, CSIRO Publishing, 2008).

Produced in association with Tourism NT

For more information visit www.australiasoutback.com.

Cover photo: Rainbow Pitta, courtesy of Tourism NT.

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Field checklist

You can use this field checklist to keep 14 different lists. Enter the list name and date in the boxes below, and tick off the species in the correspondingly numbered columns; add additional species on page 21.

List # Trip/locality**Date**

1		
2		
3		
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6		
7		
8		
9		
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11		
12		
13		
14		

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Emu														
Malleefowl														
Orange-footed Scrubfowl														
Stubble Quail														
Brown Quail														
King Quail														
Magpie Goose														
Plumed Whistling-Duck														
Wandering Whistling-Duck														
Freckled Duck														
Black Swan														
Radjah Shelduck														
Australian Shelduck														
Australian Wood Duck														
Pink-eared Duck														
Green Pygmy-goose														
Garganey														
Australasian Shoveler														
Grey Teal														
Chestnut Teal														
Northern Pintail														
Pacific Black Duck														
Hardhead														
Blue-billed Duck														
Red-tailed Tropicbird														
Australasian Grebe														
Little Grebe														
Hoary-headed Grebe														
Great Crested Grebe														
TOTALS														

PIGEONS TO FRIGATEBIRDS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Feral Rock Dove														
Barbary Dove														
Spotted Dove														
Emerald Dove														
Common Bronzewing														
Flock Bronzewing														
Crested Pigeon														
Spinifex Pigeon														
Partridge Pigeon														
White-quilled Rock-Pigeon														
Chestnut-quilled Rock-Pigeon														
Diamond Dove														
Peaceful Dove														
Bar-shouldered Dove														
Banded Fruit-Dove														
Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove														
Elegant Imperial-Pigeon														
Pied Imperial-Pigeon														
Tawny Frogmouth														
Spotted Nightjar														
Large-tailed Nightjar														
Australian Owlet-nightjar														
White-throated Needletail														
Fork-tailed Swift														
House Swift														
Wilson's Storm-Petrel														
Streaked Shearwater														
Lesser Frigatebird														
Great Frigatebird														
TOTALS														

FRIGATEBIRDS TO SPOONBILLS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Christmas Island Frigatebird														
Red-footed Booby														
Brown Booby														
Australasian Darter														
Little Pied Cormorant														
Great Cormorant														
Little Black Cormorant														
Pied Cormorant														
Australian Pelican														
Black-necked Stork														
Australian Little Bittern														
Black Bittern														
White-necked Heron														
Eastern Great Egret														
Intermediate Egret														
Great-billed Heron														
Cattle Egret														
Striated Heron														
Javan Pond Heron														
Pied Heron														
White-faced Heron														
Little Egret														
Eastern Reef Egret														
Nankeen Night-Heron														
Glossy Ibis														
Australian White Ibis														
Straw-necked Ibis														
Royal Spoonbill														
Yellow-billed Spoonbill														
TOTALS														

OSPREY TO RAILS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Eastern Osprey														
Black-shouldered Kite														
Letter-winged Kite														
Square-tailed Kite														
Black-breasted Buzzard														
Oriental Honey-buzzard														
Pacific Baza														
White-bellied Sea-Eagle														
Whistling Kite														
Brahminy Kite														
Black Kite														
Brown Goshawk														
Collared Sparrowhawk														
Grey Goshawk														
Spotted Harrier														
Swamp Harrier														
Red Goshawk														
Wedge-tailed Eagle														
Little Eagle														
Nankeen Kestrel														
Brown Falcon														
Australian Hobby														
Grey Falcon														
Black Falcon														
Peregrine Falcon														
Sarus Crane														
Brolga														
Purple Swamphen														
Chestnut Rail														
TOTALS														

RAILS TO PLOVERS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Lewin's Rail														
Buff-banded Rail														
Baillon's Crake														
Australian Spotted Crake														
Spotless Crake														
White-browed Crake														
Pale-vented Bush-hen														
Black-tailed Native-hen														
Dusky Moorhen														
Eurasian Coot														
Australian Bustard														
Bush Stone-curlew														
Beach Stone-curlew														
Australian Pied Oystercatcher														
Sooty Oystercatcher														
Black-winged Stilt														
Red-necked Avocet														
Banded Stilt														
Pacific Golden Plover														
Grey Plover														
Ringed Plover														
Little Ringed Plover														
Kentish Plover														
Red-capped Plover														
Lesser Sand Plover														
Greater Sand Plover														
Caspian Plover														
Oriental Plover														
Inland Dotterel														
TOTALS														

PLOVERS TO SANDPIPERS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Black-fronted Dotterel														
Red-kneed Dotterel														
Banded Lapwing														
Masked Lapwing														
Comb-crested Jacana														
Australian Painted Snipe														
Latham's Snipe														
Pin-tailed Snipe														
Swinhoe's Snipe														
Black-tailed Godwit														
Bar-tailed Godwit														
Little Whimbrel														
Whimbrel														
Eastern Curlew														
Terek Sandpiper														
Common Sandpiper														
Green Sandpiper														
Grey-tailed Tattler														
Common Greenshank														
Marsh Sandpiper														
Common Redshank														
Wood Sandpiper														
Ruddy Turnstone														
Asian Dowitcher														
Great Knot														
Red Knot														
Sanderling														
Little Stint														
Red-necked Stint														
TOTALS														

SANDPIPERS TO TERNS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Long-toed Stint														
Baird's Sandpiper														
Pectoral Sandpiper														
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper														
Curlew Sandpiper														
Stilt Sandpiper														
Broad-billed Sandpiper														
Ruff														
Red-necked Phalarope														
Red-backed Button-quail														
Chestnut-backed Button-quail														
Red-chested Button-quail														
Little Button-quail														
Oriental Pratincole														
Australian Pratincole														
Pomarine Skua														
Arctic Skua														
Common Noddy														
Black Noddy														
Bridled Tern														
Sooty Tern														
Little Tern														
Gull-billed Tern														
Caspian Tern														
Whiskered Tern														
White-winged Black Tern														
Roseate Tern														
Black-naped Tern														
Common Tern														
TOTALS														

TERNS TO CUCKOOS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Lesser Crested Tern														
Crested Tern														
Black-tailed Gull														
Franklin's Gull														
Silver Gull														
Black-headed Gull														
Sabine's Gull														
Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo														
Galah														
Long-billed Corella														
Little Corella														
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo														
Cockatiel														
Rainbow Lorikeet														
Varied Lorikeet														
Red-winged Parrot														
Princess Parrot														
Northern Rosella														
Australian Ringneck														
Mulga Parrot														
Hooded Parrot														
Budgerigar														
Bourke's Parrot														
Scarlet-chested Parrot														
Night Parrot														
Pheasant Coucal														
Eastern Koel														
Channel-billed Cuckoo														
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo														
TOTALS														

CUCKOOS TO FAIRY-WRENS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Black-eared Cuckoo														
Little Bronze-Cuckoo														
Pallid Cuckoo														
Fan-tailed Cuckoo														
Brush Cuckoo														
Oriental Cuckoo														
Rufous Owl														
Barking Owl														
Southern Boobook														
Masked Owl														
Eastern Barn Owl														
Eastern Grass Owl														
Azure Kingfisher														
Little Kingfisher														
Blue-winged Kookaburra														
Forest Kingfisher														
Red-backed Kingfisher														
Sacred Kingfisher														
Collared Kingfisher														
Rainbow Bee-eater														
Dollarbird														
Rainbow Pitta														
White-browed Treecreeper														
Black-tailed Treecreeper														
Spotted Bowerbird														
Western Bowerbird														
Great Bowerbird														
Splendid Fairy-wren														
Purple-crowned Fairy-wren														
TOTALS														

FAIRY-WRENS TO HONEYEATERS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Red-backed Fairy-wren														
White-winged Fairy-wren														
Variegated Fairy-wren														
Rufous-crowned Emu-wren														
Grey Grasswren														
Striated Grasswren														
White-throated Grasswren														
Carpentarian Grasswren														
Thick-billed Grasswren														
Dusky Grasswren														
Eyrean Grasswren														
Rufous Fieldwren														
Redthroat														
Weebill														
Mangrove Gerygone														
Western Gerygone														
Large-billed Gerygone														
Green-backed Gerygone														
White-throated Gerygone														
Slaty-backed Thornbill														
Yellow-rumped Thornbill														
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill														
Slender-billed Thornbill														
Inland Thornbill														
Southern Whiteface														
Banded Whiteface														
Red-browed Pardalote														
Striated Pardalote														
Pied Honeyeater														
TOTALS														

HONEYEATERS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
White-lined Honeyeater														
Singing Honeyeater														
White-gaped Honeyeater														
Grey-headed Honeyeater														
Grey-fronted Honeyeater														
Yellow-tinted Honeyeater														
White-plumed Honeyeater														
Yellow-throated Miner														
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater														
Bar-breasted Honeyeater														
Rufous-banded Honeyeater														
Rufous-throated Honeyeater														
Grey Honeyeater														
Crimson Chat														
Orange Chat														
Yellow Chat														
Gibberbird														
Black Honeyeater														
Dusky Honeyeater														
Red-headed Honeyeater														
Banded Honeyeater														
Brown Honeyeater														
Black-chinned Honeyeater														
White-throated Honeyeater														
Blue-faced Honeyeater														
Helmeted Friarbird														
Silver-crowned Friarbird														
Little Friarbird														
Painted Honeyeater														
TOTALS														

BABLERS TO WOODSWALLOWS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Grey-crowned Babbler														
White-browed Babbler														
Chestnut-crowned Babbler														
Cinnamon Quail-thrush														
Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush														
Chirruping Wedgebill														
Chiming Wedgebill														
Varied Sittella														
Ground Cuckoo-shrike														
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike														
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike														
Cicadabird														
White-winged Triller														
Varied Triller														
Crested Shrike-tit														
Mangrove Golden Whistler														
Grey Whistler														
Rufous Whistler														
White-breasted Whistler														
Little Shrike-thrush														
Sandstone Shrike-thrush														
Grey Shrike-thrush														
Crested Bellbird														
Australasian Figbird														
Yellow Oriole														
Olive-backed Oriole														
White-breasted Woodswallow														
Masked Woodswallow														
White-browed Woodswallow														
TOTALS														

WOODSWALLOWS TO ROBINS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Black-faced Woodswallow														
Little Woodswallow														
Black Butcherbird														
Grey Butcherbird														
Pied Butcherbird														
Australian Magpie														
Grey Currawong														
Spangled Drongo														
Arafura Fantail														
Grey Fantail														
Mangrove Grey Fantail														
Northern Fantail														
Willie Wagtail														
Australian Raven														
Little Crow														
Torresian Crow														
Broad-billed Flycatcher														
Leadend Flycatcher														
Shining Flycatcher														
Restless Flycatcher														
Black-faced Monarch														
Magpie-lark														
Apostlebird														
Jacky Winter														
Lemon-bellied Flycatcher														
Red-capped Robin														
Hooded Robin														
Mangrove Robin														
Buff-sided Robin														
TOTALS														

BUSHLARK TO MANNIKINS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Horsfield's Bushlark														
Zitting Cisticola														
Golden-headed Cisticola														
Australian Reed-Warbler														
Oriental Reed-Warbler														
Tawny Grassbird														
Little Grassbird														
Rufous Songlark														
Brown Songlark														
Spinifexbird														
Yellow White-eye														
Swallow														
Welcome Swallow														
Fairy Martin														
Tree Martin														
Red-rumped Swallow														
Starling														
Mistletoebird														
Zebra Finch														
Double-barred Finch														
Long-tailed Finch														
Masked Finch														
Crimson Finch														
Star Finch														
Painted Finch														
Gouldian Finch														
Yellow-rumped Mannikin														
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin														
Pictorella Mannikin														
TOTALS														

OTHER INFORMATION

Useful web addresses

www.australiasoutback.com/birdwatching Birds and birding information from Tourism NT, including birding locations, accommodation, events and a round-up of the best deals on birdwatching breaks.

www.environment.gov.au/parks/kakadu This government site has information about Kakadu National Park and its birds – more than 280 species.

www.ntbirds.net Niven McCrie's website Birds of the Northern Territory covers the Top End, including where to bird, useful books and checklists.

www.savannah-guides.com.au A network of professional tour guides with a collective in-depth knowledge of the natural and cultural assets of the tropical savannahs of Northern Territory and other regions. A very useful guide for anyone wanting to source their own guide in part of the NT.

www.territorydiscoveries.com/experiences/bird-watching Territory Discoveries offers accommodation and birding tours in Top End and central Northern Territories.

Books

Field Guide to the Birds of Australia by Ken Simpson and Nicolas Day (seventh edition, Christopher Helm, 2004). Call 020 8881 0550 or visit **www.birdwatch.co.uk** to order.

Finding Birds in Darwin, Kakadu and the Top End by Niven McCrie and James Watson (second edition, NT Birding, 2009; order at **www.ntbirds.net**).

Systematics and Taxonomy of Australian Birds by Les Christidis and Walter E Boles (second edition, CSIRO Publishing, 2008).

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Birdwatch



Kakadu Birdwatching Safari

3 days from \$1455* per person twin share

Perfect for Twitchers! Kakadu National Park is a mecca for birdwatchers! Not only is it home to one-third of Australia's entire bird species, it also houses some endangered species endemic to this region as well. Travel with specialist local guides to enjoy the spectacle that is Kakadu in full flight!

INCLUDES:

- Transfers
- Permanent campsite accommodation
- Camping fees & equipment
- Some meals
- Yellow Water Cruise
- Knowledgeable guide
- National Park Entry Fee

BOOKING CODE: MKBW3

Newhaven Birdwatching

7 days from \$1800* per person twin share

Enjoy an outback safari in Central Australia that takes in dynamic ecosystems from open Gibber flats and Spinifex Sandhill country to rock escarpments, River Red Gum country and remote permanent waterholes.

BOOKING CODE: MWOB



Wildlife, wilderness, outback skies, Aboriginal art & culture. We know what goes with the Territory.

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internationalsales@territorydiscoveries.com



Katherine



Uluru / Ayers Rock



Kakadu

Conditions Apply: *Price per person twin share, inclusive of GST and is Land Only. Prices are subject to change without notice and limited availability. MKBW3 - Valid for sale until 01Nov10. Valid for travel 01Jun10-20Nov10. MWOB - Valid for sale until 31Aug10. Valid for Travel 15May10-11Sep10. Selected departure dates apply. A business division of Tourism NT.

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