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Birds of the Mary River Wetlands



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t. 08 8978 8955
e. reservations@wildman.com.au
w. www.wildmanwildernesslodge.com.au



Australasian Grebe

Size: 20-25cm Habitat: Commonly found in ponds, lakes, swamps and dams. Feeds on freshwater crayfish and other aquatic life which it hunts by diving underwater to depths sometimes more than 10 feet. Notes: Head and neck dark grey, body greyish-brown yellow eye. When breeding head is black with chestnut stripes on side, yellow patch on base of bill. Breeds when conditions good.



Australian Pelican

Size: 160-190cm Habitat: Common throughout Australia, found at coastal mudflats, estuaries and rivers also found inland at lakes dams and lagoons. Feeds on fish and crustacean. Notes: White head with black wings often seen soaring a great heights. Breeds when conditions are good.



Darter

Size: 85-95cm Habitat: Found most places in Australia except arid inland regions, the Darter lives around saltwater and freshwater lakes, creeks and estuaries, It's main diet is fish which are hunted underwater and speared with it's long sharp beak. Notes: Black to greyish brown head and body with long snakelike neck, thin pale yellow beak. Pale streaks on wings when outstretched. Breeds Spring-Summer



Little black Cormorant

Size: 60-65cm Habitat: Widespread throughout Australia excepting our most arid areas. Located in rivers, lakes, ponds, dams, creeks and reservoirs. Feeds mainly on fish. Notes: Black bird with glossy wing and long bill. Breed all seasons.



Little pied Cormorant

Size: 50-55cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide, inhabiting most water environments. Dams, creeks, ponds, lakes, rivers and reservoirs. Feeds mainly on crustaceans and aquatic insects. Notes: Yellow bill, black over forehead and down back of neck, white face, neck and body, black wings. Breeds all seasons.



White Faced Heron

Size: 60-70cm Habitat: Very common throughout Australia, found living around dams, creeks, rivers estuaries and bays, the White faced Herons diet is varied consisting of small aquatic creatures, insects, frogs and small reptiles. Notes: Head and neck grey with white face, body blue-grey, legs yellow. Breeds all year.



Cattle Egret

Size: 50cm Habitat: Located from Darwin down the east coast of Australia and also Southern Western Australia, this Egret prefers pasture land, often seen grazing with stock, can also be sighted in swamps. The Cattle Egret prefers grasshoppers as well frogs, toads and small lizards. Notes: White bird with rust coloured head, neck and back, the smallest Egret in Australia. Breeds all seasons when conditions are good.



Great Egret

Size: 90-100cm Habitat: Found Australia wide excepting our most arid regions. This Egret is the largest white Egret in Australia. Located near rivers, lakes, swamps, floodwaters and mudflats. Diet consists of small fish, crustaceans and amphibians. Notes: White bird, bill longer than other Egrets, long legs. Breeding season varies depending on location.



Intermediate Egret

Size: 65cm Habitat: Found across Australia's top end and down Australia's Eastern half, inhabiting wetlands, swamps and mud flats. This bird feeds on small fish, amphibians and crustaceans. Notes: White bird with elongated neck, orange bill and black legs. Breeds when conditions are good.



Jabiru (Black necked Stork)

Size: 130-170cm Habitat: Ranging from NSW central coast to Northern QLD, NT and Northern WA. Located near swamps, wetlands, mangroves flats, flood pastures and dams. Feeds on fish, amphibians and crustaceans. Notes: Formerly called Jabiru, Black head, bill and neck, white body and black wings. Female eyes yellow, males eyes black, legs red Breeds Autumn.



Glossy Ibis

Size: 52cm Habitat: Occurring Australia wide excepting TAS and parts of Central Australia, usually feeds in flocks on insects, molluscs and crustaceans in freshwater wetlands and pastures. Notes: Dark red/brown body, long curved dark bill, wings glossy iridescent green/purple. Breeds in response to sufficient rainfall.



Straw necked Ibis

Size: 70cm Habitat: Found throughout most of Australia excepting the most arid areas, this bird inhabits shallow freshwater wetlands and pastoral land. Feeds on grasshoppers, amphibians and small reptiles. Notes: Bare black head, straw like breast plumes, iridescent black wings and back, white belly, red legs. Breeds variably.



Royal Spoonbill

Size: 75cm Habitat: Widespread through out the Australian mainland excepting the Central West. This bird inhabits fresh and saltwater wetlands. Feeds on crustaceans and molluscs by sweeping spoon shaped bill side to side through the water. Notes: White bird with black face, long spoon shape black bill, black legs, red eyes. Breeds Spring-Summer-Autumn.



Yellow billed Spoonbill

Size: 80-90cm Habitat: Found Australia wide excepting our most arid regions, the Yellow billed Spoonbill frequents freshwater wetlands, feeding on fish, insects and molluscs. Notes: White bird with light yellow bill, face grey. Legs yellow. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Magpie Goose

Size: 70-90cm Habitat: Distributed across the Top End of Australia and down the East coast to Central NSW. Frequents marshes, swamps and lagoons in the tropical North. Feeds on aquatic vegetable matter. Notes: Knobbed black head, knob more noticeable with age. Bill pink/red, neck and upper wings black, body white, legs orange/yellow. Breeds Autumn.



Pacific Black Duck

Size: 50-60cm Habitat: Found throughout Australia except arid areas. Found in and around dams, canals, lakes and other water reservoirs. It feeds by turning up mud with its beak and filtering out seeds. Notes: Head light brown and black with a black stripe around eyes, body and wings feathers brown with lighter edges. Iridescent green spot in upper wing noticeable when in flight. Breeds Autumn.



Black shouldered Kite

Size: 33-40cm Habitat: Located Australia wide, often found hovering over tall grass and open paddocks. Feeds on small mammals and large insects. Notes: White head and body, black patch in front of eye, grey to brown wings and distinctive orange eyes. Breeds Winter.



Black Kite

Size: 55cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide, this perhaps is Australia's most abundant Raptor. Congregating in large flocks this bird feeds on carrion , rodents and insects. Often seen on the outskirts of small country towns and edges of roads. Notes: Dark brown bird with distinctive forked tail. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Black breasted Buzzard

Size: 51-61cm Habitat: Distributed throughout most of inland Australia, this raptor prefers arid scrubland, and open woodlands. Feeds on small mammals and birds. Notes: Face and breast black, head and body chestnut/brown. White patches under wings, black wing tips. Breeds Winter-Spring.



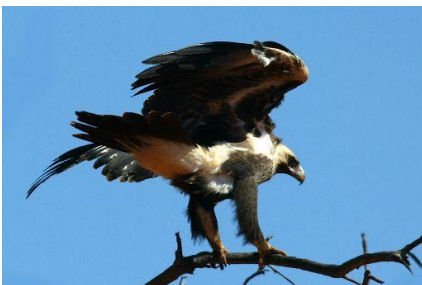
Whistling kite

Size: 52-59cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide, this raptor can be seen soaring over grasslands, woodlands, swamp, plains and seashores. Feeds on carrion, fish, small mammals and other birds. Notes: Head, chest and belly light brown with pale streaks, wings dark brown, long rounded tail in flight. Breeds Winter-Spring.



White bellied Sea Eagle

Size: 75-85cm Habitat: Found around Australia's coastline, and inland close to large rivers, reservoirs and lakes. This Eagle feeds on fish caught near the surface of the water, also feeds on rabbits, birds, turtles, sea snakes and carrion. Notes: White head, chest and belly, grey wings, under wing white with black edge and fingers. Tail short and wedge shaped. Large wings span almost 2 meters. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Wedge tailed Eagle

Size: 87-104cm Habitat: Found across Australia excluding closed forests, This is Australia's largest raptor with a huge wing span of almost 2.5 meters the Wedge tail feeds on a diet of rabbits, marsupials, reptiles and birds, often seen on the side of roads feeding on carrion. Adult birds become darker with age. Notes: Head and body black to brown depending on age, Distinctive wedge shaped tail in flight. Fully feathered legs. Can soar to a height of 2000 meters. Breeds Winter - Spring.



Spotted Harrier

Size: 50-60cm Habitat: Found throughout the Australian mainland this raptor frequents grassland, farmland and swamplands. Hunts by flying low over areas in search of prey, eats small mammals, reptiles and ground birds. Notes: Head, chest and belly brown with white spots, upper parts blue/grey, tail barred black and white, legs yellow. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Australian Hobby

Size: 20-25cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide this bird frequents open forests, scrub land and sometimes urban areas. Feeds on small birds and insects often taken on the wing. Notes: Head grey/brown with black mask, breast and belly rufous, wing grey and yellow feet and legs. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Brown Falcon

Size: 40-50cm Habitat: Found Australia wide inhabiting most types of land excluding closed forest. Feeds on reptiles, rodents, other birds, insects and carrion. Notes: Head brown paler markings under cheek, body brown with paler markings under chin and rump. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Brown Quail

Size: 18cm Habitat: Found in most non arid areas of Australia, this bird lives in thick grasslands, scrubland and marshes. Feeds on seeds and insects. Notes: Brown bird with fine light and dark streaks, legs orange. breeds all seasons except Winter.



Purple Swamphen

Size: 45cm Habitat: Located across the Top End of Australia, down the Eastern half and Southern WA, this bird inhabits swamps and marshland. Feeds on plant matter. Notes: Red bill and forehead, purple face, neck and body, black wings, white under tail. Breeds variably.



Brolga

Size: 130cm Habitat: Found across Australia's Top end, throughout QLD and Northern NSW, Central NSW and Central VIC. Frequents wetlands and pastoral land, feeds on insects, plants and grain crops. Notes: Grey bird with reddish band encircling nape and back of head, grey ear patch, legs dark, eyes yellow. Breeds Spring-Summer-Autumn.



Australian Bustard

Size: 80-130cm Habitat: Found in all states excepting Tas, this bird frequents paddocks and grasslands, feeds on insects, small animals and plants. Notes: Grey-white bird with brown wings, black breast band and black crown. Males are larger than females. Breeds irregularly.



Comb crested Jacana

Size: 23cm Habitat: Distributed across the Top End and down the East coast of Australia, the Comb Crested Jacana inhabits swamps and lakes where floating plants are present, feeds on aquatic weeds and small invertebrates. Notes: Grey head, with yellow eye, brown striped breast and belly. Yellow legs, wings grey on top, tail long grey with dark barring. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Masked Lapwing

Size: 35-40cm Habitat: Is widespread across Australia found in open grasslands, swampland, city parks and sports ovals. Wanders open areas in search of insects, worms, and other small creatures. Notes: Head is black with noticeable "yellow mask" around eyes, neck is white with black band around shoulders. Back and wings grey, under body white; dark red legs. Breeds Summer-Autumn.



Red kneed Dotterel

Size: 18cm Habitat: Wide spread throughout Australia excepting our most arid regions. Frequently found on the edges of swamps, lagoons and creeks. Feeds on small insects, worms and other creatures inhabiting the water's edge. Notes: Head and body brown with white chin and throat, wings brown, knees and beak red. Breeds Spring.



Red capped Plover

Size: 15cm Habitat: Distributed through out Australia, found on beaches, on the edge of river and lakes inland. This Plover feeds on insects and small crustaceans. Notes: Small bird with white body, brown wings and red cap, dark eye stripe. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Black winged Stilt

Size: 36-38cm Habitat: Wide spread throughout Australia excepting our most arid regions. Frequently found on the edges of swamps, lagoons and creeks and sewage ponds. Feeds on small aquatic insects, molluscs and crustaceans. Notes: Head white with black nape, body white with black wings, legs long and red folding backwards. Breeds Spring.



Marsh Sandpiper

Size: 20-23cm Habitat: Distributed throughout Australia, found on coastal mudflats and the edges of rivers and lakes inland. This Sandpiper feeds on insects and small crustaceans. Notes: Grey bird with white throat, breast and belly. Greenish legs. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Sharp tailed Sandpiper

Size: 17-21cm Habitat: Wide spread throughout Australia's coastal and wetland habitats. Feeds in shallow water on plant matter and aquatic creatures. Notes: Straight dark bill, brown crown with white eye stripe. Brown/black/tan wings and tail. Buff chest and white belly. Migratory visitor.



Silver Gull

Size: 40cm Habitat: Found at coastal and inland waterways Australia wide. Frequently found on beaches and around parks scavenging for food scraps offered by humans. Notes: Head and body white, wings grey, leg and beak red. Breeds Spring.



Caspian Tern

Size: 50-56cm Habitat: Located Australia wide, this is the largest of all terns, frequents coastal and inland water courses, islands and rivers. Often sighted patrolling waterways with head pointed down in search of small fish. Dives at prey from a great height. Notes: White bird with bright red bill and black cap, wings grey on top. Breeds variably.



Bar Shouldered Dove

Size: 29-30cm Habitat: Found near water, in woodland, mangroves and scrub, feeding on seeds on the ground near cover. This bird is reluctant to take to flight when approached preferring to scurry away. Notes: Neck copper coloured, head grey, wing brown with barring on back of neck. Breeds all year round.



Galah

Size: 36cm Habitat: Very common throughout most of Australia, the Galah inhabits grasslands, woodlands and pastoral land, feeding on cereal grains, seeds, fruits and even insects. Notes: Pink body, whitish crown and grey wings. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Little Corella

Size: 38cm Habitat: Distributed across Australia's top end, throughout Central QLD, NSW, VIC and parts of SA. Preferring woodland, farmland and wetlands. Feeds on seeds and cereal crops. Notes: White bird, blue patch around eye, pink patch on face, small crest, yellow tip of tail. Breeds all seasons.



Sulphur crested Cockatoo

Size: 50cm Habitat: Found across Australia's Top End and down the Eastern side. This bird inhabits forest, woodlands and open country. Feeds on seeds, roots, grains and nuts usually foraged off the ground. Notes: White bird with Sulphur coloured crest, yellow patches under wing, bill grey, eyes brown. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Horsefield's bronze Cuckoo

Size: 17cm Habitat: Found Australia wide. frequents scrubland, forest and open country. feeds on insects and their larvae. Notes: Head has brown eye stripe, body has a bronze green sheen and belly has incomplete bronze barring. Female lays eggs in other species nest leaving the host parents to raise their young. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Pheasant Coucal

Size: 60-80cm Habitat: Found across Australia's Top End and down the East Coast to south of Sydney. Inhabiting rank grasslands, and cane fields. This Cuckoo lives partly on the ground, and the male raises its own offspring. Diet consists of large insects and small animals. Notes: Black bird with brown/chestnut wings and long tail. Red eye and large feet. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Azure Kingfisher

Size: 18cm Habitat: Distributed Across the Top End and down the Eastern side of Australia, this bird inhabits creeks, rivers and mangroves. Feeds on small fish and water dwelling creatures. Notes: Bill black, black eye, rust coloured breast and belly, Bright blue head and wings, two white patches on back of neck (resemble eyes to other birds), legs orange. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Forest Kingfisher

Size: 20cm Habitat: Located across Australia's Top end and down the Eastern seaboard to North of Sydney, the Forest Kingfisher Inhabits as the name suggest forests, woodlands and mangroves. Diet consists of insects worms and small reptiles. Notes: Blue crown, black eye stripe, long bill, with blue wings and tail, white patch on top of each wing noticeable in flight. White breast and belly. Breeds Spring.



Sacred Kingfisher

Size: 23cm Habitat: Distributed through out Australia except our most arid of regions. Inhabiting eucalypt and paperbark forests, woodlands and mangroves. Diet consists of aquatic insects and small animals. Notes: Head and back green/blue, black band through eye, white collar, chest and belly white to buff. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Rainbow Bee-eater

Size: 38cm Habitat: Found all across Australia except Tasmania and the far south west of the mainland. It is found in all types of open country especially around rivers and creeks. Notes: Head is orange with a black and blue stripe through their bright red eye. Body green and blue, bright orange under wings, tail usually has two wire like extensions. Nests at the end of tunnel in a creek or river bank. Breeds Spring- Summer.



Dollarbird

Size: 30cm Habitat: Located across Australia's top end and down the Eastern side of Australia. This bird frequents woodlands and forest fringes, often seen perched high in trees, the Dollarbird migrates to New Guinea for Winter months returning around October to breed, feeds on insects. Notes: Brown head, orange bill, dark green and blue body and wings, orange feet.



Tree Martin

Size: 13cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide this Swallow inhabits open woodland near water. Feeds on insects caught in flight. Notes: Dark black/brown head, with dirty cream face, brownish above bill. Dirty cream throat, chest and under belly. Wings dark brown. Nests in hollows in trees. Breeds Winter-Spring-Summer.



Black faced Cuckoo Shrike

Size: 30-33cm Habitat: Located Australia wide, often found in parks and gardens eating berries, insects and fruit. Notes: Black face and throat, grey body and white underbelly. Breeds Spring-Summer.



White winged Triller

Size: 18cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide, the White winged Triller prefers open woodlands, parks and gardens. Feeds on insects and fruit. Notes: Black and white bird with black top half of head, white under belly, wings black and white. Females browner. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Rufous Whistler

Size: 17cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide excepting our most arid areas. This bird inhabits mostly open forests and scrublands, its diet consists of insects, grubs and small fruits. Notes: Male: Grey head and back, black eye and breast band, rufous chest and belly. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Leaden Flycatcher

Size: 15cm Habitat: Distributed across Australia's Top End down the East coast to VIC. Inhabiting open forests and mainly feeding on insects caught in flight. Notes: Male: Grey bird with black throat, grey crest and white chest and belly. Female: grey with orange throat, grey crest and white chest and belly. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Rufous Fantail

Size: 16cm Habitat: Found across Australia's Top End and down the East Coast through to VIC, This bird inhabits rainforests and other dense moist forests. Feeds on insects usually caught in flight. Notes: Head and wings Grey/brown with rufous brow, back and part tail. Chest and belly white with black scaling. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Willie Wagtail

Size: 21cm Habitat: Wide spread through out Australia, the Willie wagtail is found in most habitats excepting wet forests. Feeds on foliage and insects. Notes: Black and white bird with black head, back and wings. White brow and belly. Often seen on the ground wagging its fan tail. Chases off other birds. Breeds Winter-Spring-Summer.



Clamorous Reed Warbler

Size: 17cm Habitat: Distributed Australia wide excepting the most arid areas. Inhabiting places where reeds are present, this bird feeds on a diet of insects. Notes: Brown bird with paler belly, thin bill. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Tawny Grassbird

Size: 18cm Habitat: Found across the Top End and down the Eastern side of Australia as far as Sydney. This bird inhabits grasslands, reeds and rank grasses in swamps. Feeds on insects. Notes: Red/brown crown, brown/dark brown wings and tail, white/buff chest and belly. Breeds Spring-Summer.Autumn.



Golden Headed Cisticola

Size: 10cm Habitat: Located eastern Australia, favours tall grasses and reeds and stitches nest using spiderweb and fibres. Notes: Golden headed, black steaked wings. golden chest. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Red backed Fairy-wren

Size: 13cm Habitat: Found across Australia's Top end and down the East coast to Northern NSW, this bird inhabits dense undergrowth and thick grasslands usually around water. Feeds on insects. Notes: Black Wren with red patch on back, brown wings. Breeds Spring-Mid Summer.



Little Friarbird

Size: 29cm Habitat: Distributed across Australia's Top end and down the eastern side of Australia. Inhabiting open forest and woodlands. Feeds on nectar, insects and fruit. Notes: Head and wings brown/grey, faced and bill black with blue skin patch around eye. Breast and belly light brown. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Blue faced Honeyeater

Size: 30cm Habitat: Located across the top end and down the Eastern side of Australia, inhabiting open forest, this bird has a diet of insects and nectar. Notes: White belly, black throat and neck, distinctive blue patch around eye on adult birds, olive green wings and tail. Breeds Winter-Spring-Summer.



White throated Honeyeater

Size: 14cm Habitat: Distributed across Australia's Top End and down the Eastern Seaboard to Northern NSW, the White throated Honeyeater inhabits woodlands, parks and gardens. Feeds on insects and nectar. Notes: Black face with white above eye and white stripe around back of head. White throat, chest and belly. Olive wings and back. Breeds Summer-Autumn-Winter.



Brown Honeyeater

Size: 12-16cm Habitat: Located in all States except VIC and TAS, found in open scrubland, forests, parks and suburban gardens, the Brown Honeyeater feeds on insects and nectar. Notes: Brown body and head slight olive tinge on wings. Yellow patch behind eye, blue/grey legs. Breeds Winter to Summer.



Mistletoebird

Size: 10cm Habitat: Widespread on the Australian mainland. This bird inhabits places where Mistletoe is present. Mainly eating Mistletoe berries. Notes: Male: black head, red throat and rump, with black stripe down white belly. Female: Grey/white bird with slight red rump. Breeds Spring-Summer



Double barred Finch

Size: 10cm Habitat: Located across Australia's top end and down the Eastern side of Australia, the Double barred Finch is often found in grasslands and open forest. This bird feeds on grass seeds picked from grasses or foraged off the ground. Notes: White face owl like, black line across white chest, brown head and wings, white spots on wings. Breeds Winter-Spring.



Chestnut breasted Mannikin

Size: 10cm Habitat: Located in Northern and Eastern Australia. Inhabiting swamps, grasslands and crop fields. Feeds on seeds and small insects. Notes: Brown head, black face light blue/grey beak. Brown back, chestnut coloured breast dark brown band across breast with white underbelly. Breeds all year round.



Olive backed Oriole

Size: 25-28cm Habitat: Widespread in Northern and Eastern Australia, found in most wooded habitats and parklands. Feeds on insects and fruits. Notes: Red bill and eye, olive head and back, pale chest and belly marked with fine dark streaks. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Figbird

Size: 28cm Habitat: Located across Australia's Top end and down the Eastern seaboard to South of Sydney, found in forest edges, parks and gardens, the Figbird is a locally nomadic bird which roams in search of native and cultivated fruits and figs. Notes: Male has black head with distinctive pink/red eye patch, olive green/grey body. Females have green/brown body with paler chest and belly, slight blueish patch around eye. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Spangled Drongo

Size: 30-33cm Habitat: Located Eastern and Northern Australia inhabiting forests, parks and suburban gardens. Feeds on flying insects caught in mid air also feed on nectar. Notes: Black iridescent body with white spots on breast and under wing. Long forked tail with bright red eyes. Breeds Spring-Summer.



Torresian Crow

Size: 45-50cm Habitat: Very common throughout the northern half of the Australian continent living in most habitats. Feeds on various small creatures, insects and carrion. Notes: Head and body black, robust beak white eye. Breeds spring-summer.



Nankeen Night Heron

Size: 50-60cm Habitat: It is not strictly nocturnal. It often feeds during the day, especially during wet weather. The bird is dependent on a diet of small fish, reptiles, insects and sometimes eggs. Notes: stocky with rich cinnamon upperparts, white-buff underparts, a black crown, and yellow legs and feet. Breeds September to April, building a nest platform out of sticks. It nests communally, near water..

**Radjah Shelduck**

Size: 50-60cm Habitat: prefers the brackish waters of mangrove flats and paperbark tree swamps, but will visit freshwater swamps, lagoons, and billabongs further inland during the wet season. Notes: big white duck with a brown back and wing tips and a rusty band across its breast. It has pink legs, pink feet, pink beak, even pink eyes Breeds spring-summer, it lays lots of eggs, sometimes as many as fifteen, in a hollow in a tree..

**Tern**

Size: 20-50cm Habitat: are seabirds, mainly coastal when not breeding and found in offshore waters, ocean beaches, estuaries and large lakes. Notes: medium to large birds, typically with grey or white plumage, often with black markings on the head. They have longish bills and webbed feet. They are lighter bodied and more streamlined than gulls, and look elegant in flight with long tails and long narrow wings. Breeds spring-summer, Terns generally nest in large, densely packed colonies.