



AUSTRALIA: TASMANIA – ENDEMICS AND THE ORANGE-BELLIED PARROT

25 – 30 OCTOBER 2023
25 – 30 NOVEMBER 2024



*The handsome **Orange-bellied Parrot** is the primary target on this tour.*

This small group tour of the Australian island state of Tasmania looks for all Tasmanian endemics (we usually see them all well) and also includes a day-trip flight to look for the Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) **Orange-bellied Parrot**, not everyone offers this option within their tours so do check as this is the only realistic way to see this species.

Adjoined to the mainland until the end of the last glacial period about ten thousand years ago, Tasmania is both geographically and genetically isolated from the Australian mainland. Through the millennia this island has developed its own unique set of plants and animals, including twelve avian endemics: **Forty-spotted Pardalote**, **Tasmanian Nativehen**, **Green Rosella**, **Yellow Wattlebird**, **Scrubbytit**, **Tasmanian Scrubwren**, **Tasmanian Thornbill**, **Dusky Robin**, **Yellow-throated Honeyeater**, **Black-headed Honeyeater**, **Strong-billed Honeyeater**, and **Black Currawong**. Beyond the endemics Tasmania also harbors several species which winter on the mainland and breed on Tasmania, such as **Orange-bellied Parrot** already mentioned above and **Swift Parrot** another Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) parrot and another major target on this tour.



Forty-spotted Pardalote is one of the Tasmanian endemics we will target on this tour.

This tour also offers wonderful opportunities for many other highly sought-after species such as **Morepork** (a recent split from Australian Boobook), **Little Penguin**, **Hooded Dotterel**, **Freckled Duck**, **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, **Grey Goshawk**, **Eastern Ground Parrot**, **Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo**, **Pink Robin**, **Flame Robin**, **Scarlet Robin**, **Olive Whistler**, **Southern Emu-wren**, and **Beautiful Firetail**.

Our search for the endemics and breeding specialties of Tasmania is set within a stunning backdrop of rugged coastlines, tall evergreen sclerophyll forests, alpine heathlands, and cool temperate rainforests, undoubtedly enriching our experience here.

For those wishing to continue exploring Australia, this tour can be combined with our set of Australia tours: **Eastern Australia: from the Outback to the Wet Tropics**, **Australia: Northern Territory – Top End Birding**, and **Western Australia: Southwest Specialties**. You can also join our new **Northern Territory – Alice Springs Birding** tour (it will fit perfectly between our Top End and Western Australia tours). All five of our Australian birdwatching tours could be combined into one long tour, or you could just do one or two (or more!), whatever suits your time. We can also arrange further extensions (e.g., sightseeing trips to Sydney, Uluru, etc., and pelagic trips) if you wish.

Itinerary (6 days/5 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Hobart

Afternoon arrival at Hobart International Airport and transfer to your hotel in the city, our base for the next few nights, with the rest of the day at your leisure.

Overnight: Hobart



*Endemic to Tasmania, **Strong-billed Honeyeater** will be an early target on the tour.*

Day 2. Hobart environs

We spend the day birding at a couple of sites within close proximity to Hobart city, exploring the beautiful Fern Glade at Mt Wellington and the nearby Waterworks Reserve, where we can expect to get our list of Tasmanian endemic species up and running with **Tasmanian**

Scrubwren, Scrubtit, Tasmanian Thornbill, Black Currawong, Yellow Wattlebird, Dusky Robin, and Strong-billed Honeyeater. The supporting cast may include **Pink Robin, Bassian Thrush, and Olive Whistler.**

Day 3. Melaleuca Orange-bellied Parrot day trip

An unforgettable day is in store for us today! Weather-permitting we will board a small plane early in the morning, flying over some incredible scenery over southwestern Tasmania before descending onto the remote airstrip at Melaleuca. Originally a tin mine, Melaleuca is now the center of conservation efforts aimed at restoring the wild population of the Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) **Orange-bellied Parrot**. A Tasmanian breeding endemic, these beautiful little parrots are in a dire situation, with fewer than forty individuals left in the wild. Time unfortunately seems to be running out for them.



*We will hopefully find **Orange-bellied Parrot** at Melaleuca.*

The surrounding heath hosts a healthy population of **Southern Emu-wren, Striated Fieldwren, Olive Whistler, Pink Robin, Crescent Honeyeater, Beautiful Firetail**, and the very secretive and subtly beautiful **Eastern Ground Parrot**, which we will also try to find. Over the course of the day we will be truly spoiled with a range of fantastic local Tasmanian food and drink. Our return flight to Hobart late in the afternoon will likely take us on a different route back to Hobart, offering more views of stunning mountain scenery. This is often considered one of the most enjoyable days across all of our Australian tours.

Overnight: Hobart

Day 4. Hobart to Bruny Island

Located off the southeastern coast of Tasmania, Bruny Island supports all twelve currently recognized Tasmanian endemics, including the world's largest population of the Endangered (BirdLife International) **Forty-spotted Pardalote**. We will board a ferry to this rich site during the morning, watching for **White-bellied Sea Eagle**, **Pacific Gull**, and **Black-faced Cormorant** on our way out.

Once we arrive on the island, we will spend the better part of the day looking for all the Tasmanian endemics, such as the demure **Dusky Robin**, the vociferous **Yellow Wattlebird**, and the comical **Tasmanian Nativehen**. By scanning sandy beaches, we also hope to connect with the increasingly rare **Hooded Dotterel**. While here we will also look for the Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) breeding-endemic **Swift Parrot**, another species in a state of unfortunate rapid decline.



***Swift Parrot** – another Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) parrot that we hope to find on this tour.*

We will take a drive and walk around at dusk to look for **Little Penguin** and **Short-tailed Shearwater** as well as the recently split **Morepork** (a hawk-owl). Birds of the latter species in Tasmania were formerly thought to be a subspecies of Australian Boobook, which is found widely on the Australian mainland, but recent DNA analysis has found them to be more closely related to birds on New Zealand and actually a subspecies of the species found in that country!

Overnight: Bruny Island

Day 5. Bruny Island to Hobart

We spend a full day birding Bruny Island, focusing perhaps on the scarcer endemics such as **Scrubtit** and **Strong-billed Honeyeater**. Other specialties like **Wedge-tailed Eagle**, **Beautiful Firetail**, **Olive Whistler**, **Eastern Ground Parrot**, and **Swift Parrot** will be among our targets too. We will also keep an eye open over the water for **Black-browed Albatross** and **Shy Albatross**, **Australasian Gannet**, and **White-bellied Sea Eagle**. In the late afternoon we will catch the ferry off Bruny Island and head back to our hotel in the city of Hobart.

Overnight: Hobart

Day 6. Birding Southeast Tasmania and tour concludes

We will have a final morning session birding at some sites in the southeast of the island, where we may find **Latham's Snipe**, **Baillon's**, **Australian**, and **Spotless Crakes**, **Little Grassbird**, and **Australian Reed Warbler**, as well as, hopefully, an assortment of waterbirds (depending on water levels).

The tour will end after a final lunch together before we make our way back to Hobart International Airport, where the tour ends at 2pm. Those continuing on the **Eastern Australia: from the Outback to the Wet Tropics** tour will fly to Melbourne for the start of that tour the following day.

Overnight: Not included



*This tour gives great opportunities to see the magnificent **Beautiful Firetail**.*

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.

Duration: 6 days
Group Size: 6 - 8
Dates: 25 - 30 October 2023
 25 - 30 November 2024
Start: Hobart, Tasmania
End: Hobart, Tasmania
Prices: AU\$5,236 per person sharing – based on 6 - 8 participants, which includes the Orange-bellied Parrot day-trip flights (2023)
 AUSTBC per person sharing (we expect 2024 prices to be 5-10% higher than 2023 prices) – based on 6 - 8 participants, which includes the Orange-bellied Parrot day-trip flights (2024)
Single Supplements: AU\$690 (2023)
 AUSTBC (2024)

Price includes:

Day trip return flights for Orange-bellied Parrot day trip
 All accommodation (as described above from day 1 through day 5, note accommodation on Bruny Island might include shared bathrooms, we usually stay in small cottages that have a couple of private bedrooms and a communal dining room and bathroom)
 Meals (from dinner on day 1 until lunch on day 6)
 Expert tour leader
 National park/birdwatching reserve/protected areas entrance fees
 Private transportation during the tour and transfers (possibly shared) to and from the airports

Price excludes:

International or domestic flights to/from Hobart
 Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing/etc. excursions
 Visa if required
 Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.
 Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing/monument excursions
 Soft/alcoholic drinks (drinking water is safe from the taps, please bring a refillable water bottle)
 Personal travel insurance
 Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))