

Australian Raven

Scientific Name: *Corvus coronoides*
 Atlas Number: 930

Description

Australian Ravens are black with white eyes in adults. The feathers on the throat (hackles) are longer than in other species, and a bird tends to extend these when calling, while holding its head and body in a horizontal



photo by Charles Dove

position. Australian Ravens are usually seen in pairs. Another aid to identification of this species is the absence of wing-flicking while calling. Young birds resemble the adults, but have dark eyes, shorter throat hackles and often the presence of a pink, fleshy gape. This species is sometimes called a crow.

Similar Species

There are six members of the family Corvidae found in Australia: five native breeding species and one infrequent self-introduction. Three are called crows and three ravens, although there is really little difference. Most Australian species are similar in size and colouration, and can be difficult to tell apart. In some cases, identification is aided by the separate ranges of different species, but differences in plumage, habits and calls offer good clues for distinguishing them. The bases of the feathers of the crows are white, while those of the ravens are grey, although this is only useful if birds are held in the hand or if discarded feathers are found.

Distribution

The Australian Raven is found in eastern, southern and central Australia.

Habitat

The Australian Raven is found in all habitat types, with the exception of the more arid areas of Western Australia.

Feeding

The Family Corvidae has a wide-ranging diet that may consist of grains, fruits, insects, small animals, eggs, refuse and carrion; however, the Australian Raven is mainly carnivorous.

Breeding

Australian Ravens construct a large untidy nest, normally consisting of bowl or platform of sticks, lined with grasses, bark and feathers. Both sexes construct the nest and feed the young. The incubation of the eggs is performed solely by the female, and only one brood is raised in a year.

Text courtesy of <https://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>

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Founded in 1977

Club's Aim:

To join together people with a common interest who wish to further their knowledge and enjoyment of the bird life around them.

ILLAWARRA BIRD OBSERVERS' CLUB INC.

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MARCH ACTIVITIES

March Meeting on Zoom

Monday 8th March 7pm for 7.30pm start

IBOC will be conducting another virtual meeting using Zoom, officially starting at 7:30 pm. Please note that the meeting will once again start at 7:00 pm to allow folks to catch up a bit and join before the business starts.

A presentation by Bill & Joan Zealey will follow.

As Promised in 2020- OUR JAPAN TRIP *Joan & Bill Zealey*

We visited Japan in February 2020 with Sicklebill Safaris. During our two-week tour we visited the three main islands, arriving at Narita airport, then traveling as far south as Kagoshima, and as far north as Rausa on Hokkaido.



Japan had a mild winter last year, so the threatened -26C on Hokkaido, turned out to be a relatively balmy -6C. Mind you we still needed thick coats and warm hats and gloves. We saw over 140 species of bird. Highlights would undoubtedly be the large numbers of waterfowl that winter in Japan, the flocks of cranes, the boat trip to see the rare Japanese murrelet, and the sea eagles which winter around Rausa. Bill has cut his 3000 slides down to below 400, so you can share our great birding experience.

For those late bloomers who have just decided to join us; to use Zoom.

Note: to use Zoom, you need a tablet, mobile or laptop/computer and should download the Zoom app and **make sure Ken Brown has your email at membership@iboc.org.au** ; If you require any additional assistance in getting set up, feel free to contact Jann Gowans at info@iboc.org.au or 4285 9070.

Please RSVP Jann if you would like to join the meeting ASAP.

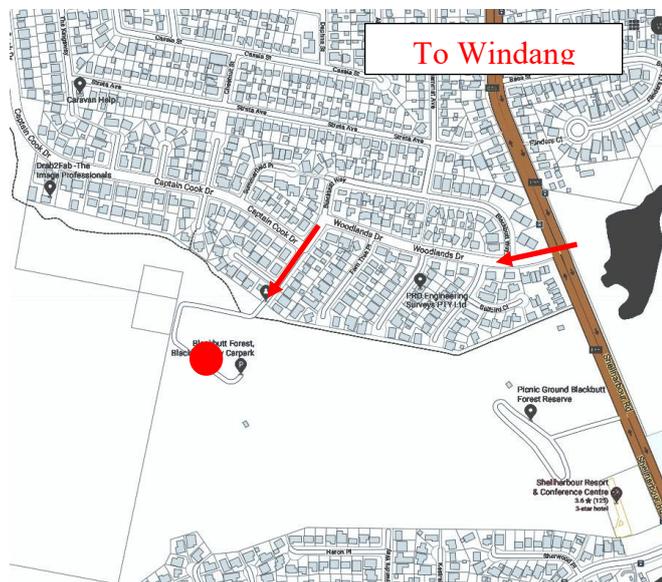
Midweek Walk Wednesday 10th March

Leaders Bill & Joan Zealey

Blackbutt Forest

Meet at **8.30am** in the carpark off Shellharbour Road at 8:30 am. To get there: turn west off Shellharbour Rd between Barrack Heights and Shellharbour at the traffic lights into Woodlands Drive, then left into Blackbutt Drive and follow the road up the hill into the reserve. We will walk through the middle of the forest and down to the dam then back to the cars. We will carry morning tea and have it "en route". This is a remnant piece of bush with small bird numbers declining during the drought and hopefully we will get a good selection now there has been a bit of rain to liven things up.

Be sure to bring plenty of insect repellent and sunscreen.
Phone Bill on 0414747644.



MONTHLY OUTING

Sunday 14th March at 9am

Leaders Alan & Anne Cousins

Royal national Park, Audley

Take the Princes Highway to the top of Bulli Pass and then the Princes Motorway, or if preferred go through Thirroul, Lawrence Hargrave Drive through the park to Audley. From the Princes Motorway enter the park via Waterfall and on reaching Sir Bertram Stevens Drive turn left and follow to Audley. If you enter by Farnell Avenue, Loftus you will go straight to the Visitor Centre, Audley. Enter the road to the centre and follow to white timber bridge, cross the bridge and turn left. Following the signs to Wattle Flat car park.

Bring morning tea and lunch and we will decide on the venues for these depending on how far we get.

In the event of inclement weather contact Alan or Anne on 0413869534 by 7.30am

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Next Committee Meeting Monday 15th March

Will be held on Zoom at 7pm. Any members with anything they wish to raise are welcome to attend the meeting but must let Ken Brown know ahead of the meeting.

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE 25th March 2021

For all articles & photos in the next IBOC newsletter PLEASE E-mail contributions:
To Charles Dove newsletter@iboc.org.au
or post to 1/13 Horrocks Crescent, Kearney's Spring, Toowoomba QLD 4350.

Illawarra Bird Observers Club Reports

Pelican View Reserve,

Wednesday 3rd February 2021

By Jann Gowans

We arrived early for our first walk of 2021. People slowly started arriving and signed in. We were pleased the weather was not too hot and also not raining. Eventually, we started moving towards the lake shore. A Little Egret was doing a delicate dance to stir up food. Rainbow Lorikeets, Little Corellas, Rock Doves and the odd Ibis flew overhead. While I returned to the shelter, the rest of the gang looped around Picnic Island and even managed to take a wrong turn which scared up a Sacred Kingfisher. Lots of Silvereyes were sighted with the odd Yellow and Brown thornbill. On the northern side of the island, the sand banks provided a challenge for distant shorebird ID but Whimbrel, Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit and Pied Oystercatcher were all seen. Sandpipers were too far away to definitively identify but were most likely Sharp-tailed. A group of 5 Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos did a fly by, closely followed by a Sea Eagle, which I managed to catch a glimpse of briefly. By the time the group straggled back to the shelter, it was time to eat and catch up... There was a respectable count of 41 species tallied, enjoyed by the 19 of us present. A good start to the year!

Bird List

Pelican View Reserve 3 rd February 2021		19 Members	41 Species
Rock Dove	Little Pied Cormorant	Nankeen Kestrel	White-browed Scrubwren
Spotted Dove	Great Cormorant	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Brown Thornbill
Crested Pigeon	Australian Pelican	Little Corella	Yellow Thornbill
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	Great Egret	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Black-faced Cuckoo shrike
Masked Lapwing	White-faced Heron	Rainbow Lorikeet	Grey Butcherbird
Whimbrel	Little Egret	Satin Bowerbird	Australian Magpie
Eastern Curlew	Australian White Ibis	Superb Fairywren	Magpie-lark
Bar-tailed Godwit	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Little Wattlebird	Australian Raven
Silver Gull	Sacred Kingfisher	Red Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow
Little Tern	Dollarbird	New Holland Honeyeater	Silvereye
Crested Tern			

**Comerong Island Nature Reserve,
Saturday 13th February 2021**

by Alan Cousins

19 intrepid members braved the wet weather and gathered by 9am to board the Numbaa Ferry to gain access to the Island. The crossing of the Shoalhaven River took two trips for the small ferry due to the number of cars. Meeting up along the Comerong Island Road we took a slow drive to the first carpark and despite the fine rain we spent time in the area and gathered a good few sightings along the road and around the carpark, 39 species in number including White-headed Pigeon, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Variegated Fairy-wren, Yellow-Faced Honeyeater and Rufous Whistler to name a few. Moving on to the second carpark along a very uneven and puddle filled road we had morning tea trying to keep dry with our umbrellas. Following morning tea members went their various ways around the area and came up with a further 29 species including White-throated Needle-tail, Dollarbird, Golden Whistler, Rufous Fantail, Black-faced Monarch, etc.



When all arrived back at the cars for lunch, again in the fine rain but who was worried? Not the members of IBOC!! After lunch it was decided to call it a day due to the ever-increasing rainfall. It was a very successful morning despite the weather and enjoyed by members with a total of 53 species.

Many thanks to all who braved the weather and made this a very enjoyable and worthwhile trip.

Bird Lists

Comerong Island—Up to first stop 13 th February 2021 39 Species 19 Members			
Pacific Black Duck	Australian Pelican	New Holland Honeyeater	Eastern Yellow Robin
Chestnut Teal	White-faced Heron	Large-billed Scrubwren	Golden-headed Cisticola
Rock Dove	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	Brown Thornbill	Australian Reed Warbler
White-headed Pigeon	Sacred Kingfisher	Brown Gerygone	Common Starling
Crested Pigeon	Galah	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Common Myna
Bar-shouldered Dove	Variegated Fairywren	Rufous Whistler	Red-browed Finch
Masked Lapwing	Superb Fairywren	Australian Magpie	House Sparrow
Silver Gull	Lewin’s Honeyeater	Willie Wagtail	Australasian Pipit
Little Pied Cormorant	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Magpie-lark	European Goldfinch
Little Black Cormorant	Red Wattlebird	Australian Raven	

Comerong Island---Second stop 13 th February 2021 29 Species 19 Members			
White-headed Pigeon	Australian Pelican	Little Wattlebird	Grey Butcherbird
White-throated Needle-tail	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	New Holland Honeyeater	Willie Wagtail
Sooty Oystercatcher	Sacred Kingfisher	White-browed Scrubwren	Rufous Fantail
Silver Gull	Dollarbird	Brown Thornbill	Grey Fantail
Crested Tern	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Brown Gerygone	Black-faced Monarch
Common Tern	Eastern Spinebill	Golden Whistler	Eastern Yellow Robin
Great Cormorant	Lewin’s Honeyeater	Rufous Whistler	Silvereye
Little Black Cormorant			

Q1 = "An unkindness" is the collective noun for which group of birds?

Q2 = The extinct bird the Dodo was endemic to which island:
Galapagos or Mauritius?

Club Zoom Meeting

Monday 8th February 2021

February Meeting 2021 and our unusual times roll on, we still bounce from one restriction to another and we continue to adapt. So, our meetings are still being conducted on zoom and we had a small number of people on screen for this meeting.

Jann delivered a presentation on e-bird, something I am sure most of us have heard of but have not dabbled in. The club has been entering all of our bird lists in e-bird for a number of years and it is also used to research unfamiliar areas for camps.

Jann spoke about the many uses e-bird could be put to such as research; an individual council area can be searched for hot spots which are sites bird lists have been entered for. From these lists we can see which areas could be worth a visit, providing bird species, numbers and also location.

Many other features can also be accessed for birds worldwide; things such as distribution of species and animated migration patterns. For some species in North America these animations are updated continually so you could even see when to expect their arrival at your location.

All these and other features are evolving constantly.

Jann also managed to do this presentation with an uncooperative laptop that had locked up PowerPoint and that was not even covid-19 related!

So jump online, search e-bird.org/home and see what else you can learn about this fabulous resource.

Ross Gowans

AUTUMN CAMP 2021

Will be at Tumut from Saturday 24 April to Saturday 1 May 2021.

Accommodation will be at the Riverglade Caravan Park, Snowy Mountains Highway, Tumut, NSW.

Accommodation bookings can be made on by phone on 0269472528.

The main Gala Day for the end of the Festival of the Falling Leaf may be on Saturday 24 April with activities in the town and fireworks in the evening (subject to Covid-19 restrictions).

It is suggested that bookings are made early.

The official camp program will start on the Sunday.

Please email

Anna and Andy Knowlson on knowlsons@bigpond.com with your name, phone contact number, whether you have booked and details of an emergency contact person and phone number so that we can prepare the Autumn Camp Attendance List.

Peanut Butter
IS IT FOR THE BIRDS

YES!

BUT CHECK THE LABEL

Certain brands of peanut butter may contain **xylitol** or other artificial sweeteners which are highly toxic to birds!

Peanut butter is actually a very nutritious treat, high in fat and calories, and great for energy.

NOTICES & ARTICLES OF INTEREST



The musk lorikeet is in a bush outside our lounge room window.
The five male Variegated Fairy Wrens are nearby Bellambi surf club.

Ross and Jann



A relative of our Satin Bowerbird, the Green Catbird stayed long enough for me to capture it from our back verandah.

By Mike Morphett

A MOST PLACID HERON

Mike Morphett

The first weekend in February Carol and I made a long overdue visit to parts of the Southern Highlands, joining our two-generation family members and overnighting in cabins in the Moss Vale Village Park. Watercourses through the grounds were flowing fast after the lunch-time heavy rainfall.

Late that cloudy afternoon we took a walk in the Cecil Hoskins Nature Reserve, known as a good spot for waterbirds, especially in times of drought. However, there were only pairs of Wood and Pacific Black Ducks on either side of the weir, damming the Wingecarribee River, plus a few Eurasian Coots mid-lake. Bush birds were much more in evidence, but still not a large variety.



Walking trail western side of the lake



Yellow-faced honeyeater

Sunday morning brought blue sky and sunshine as we headed off to Mount Gibraltar Reserve, known as The Gib. From the old quarry, from where volcanic trachyte was used for the columns of the Queen Victoria Building and piers of the Brooklyn Bridge over the Hawkesbury River, we ascended the steep Stone Stairway to the Bowral Lookout and walked just part of the Rim Track. Only the Grey Butcherbird and Laughing Kookaburra announced their presence.



< Foot of Stone Stairway



Heritage quarry wheel near Bowral Lookout >

A detour homeward mid-afternoon took us to Carrington Falls. The tumbling waters of the Kangaroo River from the edge of Budderoo Plateau were truly powerful and dynamic. Crowds of people, far in excess of the locality’s population of 20 (2016 Census), shuffled their way along the finely paved trail, allowing easy access to the less mobile, to view the spectacle from various vantage points. In the manner of the portmanteau word ‘glamping’, I’ve thought of the term ‘glushwalking’ (the first syllable pronounced with a Yorkshire accent) to describe this very comfortably easy form of movement through such wooded environment, but I doubt it would similarly be accepted into the Oxford English Dictionary.



< Carrington Falls

Kangaroo River Valley below falls >

Down at the water’s edge above the falls there were even more visitors, wading across the river and bathing further upstream. Despite all this human activity, a white-necked heron had taken up position beside some low-lying vegetation in the quieter shallows just a few metres from the bank. Two young mothers relaxing with their children said it had been there that morning. Its neck and belly plumage suggested to me a young ‘Ardean’*, which might also account for its lack of shyness, which this species tends to display. During the roughly five minutes I spent watching and photographing the bird, it remained in the same spot, alert, and turning its head in different directions. Not feeding at all on any freshwater creatures, it ignored a piece of bread tossed towards it by a small boy. This species is also known as the Pacific heron. It certainly lived up to its peaceful name.



White-faced Heron

*Coined from the taxonomic nomenclature *Ardea*

A 1 = Ravens

A 2 = Mauritius



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Rare parrot is breeding in Tasmania in record numbers

The critically endangered Orange-bellied Parrot is having a fruitful breeding season in southwest Tasmania, giving hope for the species' survival. *By AAP • January 27, 2021*



Image credit: Mark Holdsworth and Friends of the OBP

A critically endangered migratory parrot is breeding in Tasmania in record numbers, giving biologists renewed hope for the species' survival. The [orange-bellied parrot](#) makes a perilous journey between southern Australia and the island state's rugged southwest each year.

INTERESTING LINKS TO VIEW

Shared from [ABC app and others](#)

Weekend cold snap blamed for mass deaths of a small native bird in WA

Unseasonal cold temperatures are believed to have led to widespread deaths of tree martin birds across WA's South West region. [Read the full story](#)

White swan turned black after being 'contaminated'

RSPCA members are seeking donations to help clean the bird, which was initially thought to be a black swan, while the cause of its sudden colour change remains unclear. [Read the full story](#)

Why do some Australian birds stop singing when it gets too hot? - ABC News

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-12-11/why-do-birds-stop-singing-when-it-gets-too-hot/12952674>

Differences in wing shape of captive, critically endangered, migratory orange-bellied parrots *Neophema chrysogaster* relative to wild conspecifics: Emu - Austral Ornithology: Vol 0, No 0

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01584197.2021.1872389>

At risk Hutton's Shearwater birds seen diving at petrol station's bright lights | Stuff.co.nz

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/300231685/at-risk-huttons-shearwater-birds-seen-diving-at-petrol-stations-bright-lights>

Suitable nesting sites for specialized cavity dependent wildlife are rare in woodlands - ScienceDirect

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0378112720314870>

Do you remember by Charles Dove a silent movie 4.4hrs now available on YouTube for free and is as it was seen at the Sydney Art Festival .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POOcSv0dI4o>

My colleagues and I are doing a short survey about Covid-19 and Birdwatching. We would be happy for some help/support – e.g., for an announcement or distribution of this link.

<https://www.soscisurvey.de/birdwatchers/>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate, and contact me. We have also some text (see below) and a twitter and facebook link for distribution.

Results from the previous study can be found here:

<https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/19/7310>

MONTHLY SIGHTINGS January / February '21

compiled by Darryl Goldrick

SPECIES	N ^o	DATE	LOCATION	HABITAT	OBSERVER
Australian Brush-turkey	1	19/02/2021	Wollongong	Botanic Garden	Mike Morphet
White-headed Pigeon	1	11/02/2021	Wollongong Botanic Garden	Edge of rainforest	Alan & Anne Cousins
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	3	11/02/2021	Thirroul	backyard	Mike Morphet
Topknot Pigeon	1	4/02/2021	Thirroul residential	eucalypt canopy	Mike Morphet
White-necked Heron	1 juv	7/02/2021	Kangaroo River	near top of Carrington Falls	Mike Morphet
White-necked Heron	1	3/02/2021	Russell Vale Golf Course	reedy dam shallows	Ian McKinlay
Yellow-throated Scrubwren	2	10/02/2021	Gibson track, Thirroul	rainforest floor	Ian McKinlay
Galah	50+	7/02/2021	Albion Park	nature strip Tongarra Road	Mike Morphet
Nankeen Kestrel	1	3/02/2021	Surfers Pde, Thirroul	over street	Ian McKinlay
Little Corella	40	17/01/2021	Macauleys Hill, Thirroul	afternoon repose in our Small Leafed Fig	Ian McKinlay
Eastern Koel	2 m+f	22/01/2021	Lake Illawarra South	Neighbours Backyard Eucalyptus	Darryl Goldrick
Eastern Koel	1 juv	22/01/2021	backyard, Thirroul	Small leafed Fig, Koel fed by Little Wattlebird	Ian McKinlay
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1 juv	5/02/2021	Thirroul	backyard to Excelsior	Mike Morphet
Channel-billed Cuckoo	1	10/02/2021	Thirroul	backyard casuarina	Mike Morphet
Superb Lyrebird	2	10/02/2021	2nd Bench, Thirroul esc.	rainforest floor making Kookaburra call	Ian McKinlay
Green Catbird	1	2/02/2021	Thirroul	Backyard	Mike Morphet
Green Catbird	2	11/02/2021	Thirroul	backyard	Mike Morphet
Satin Bowerbird	1 fem	8/02/2021	Dempster St West W'gong	Suburban backyard bird bath	Chris. Cartledge
Satin Bowerbird	1 juv	3/02/2021	Creek run, Cordeaux Heights	Suburban backyard (bower)	Chris. Cartledge
White-browed Scrubwren	2	18/01/2021	Macauleys Hill, Thirroul	backyard garden	Ian McKinlay
White-browed Scrubwren	1	12/02/2021	Thirroul	front garden bird-bath	Mike Morphet
White-browed Scrubwren	1	5/02/2021	Tarrawanna	Garden	Alan & Anne Cousins
White-browed Scrubwren	1	11/02/2021	Tarrawanna	Garden	Alan & Anne Cousins
White-browed Scrubwren	1	14/02/2021	Tarrawanna	Garden	Anne Cousins
Eastern Spinebill	1	31/01/2021	Tarrawanna	In yard feeding on Kangaroo Paw	Alan & Anne Cousins
Eastern Whipbird	3 (2a +1imm)	12/02/2021	Thirroul	front & back gardens	Mike Morphet
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	2	31/01/2021	Tarrawanna	Tree in Tarrawanna Green	Alan & Anne Cousins
Australian Raven	1	8/02/2021	backyard, Thirroul	dunking toast scraps in pond to soften & eat	Ian McKinlay
Black-faced Monarch	1	10/02/2021	Pole Track, Thirroul esc.	Eucalypt foliage	Ian McKinlay
Golden-headed Cisticola	2	1/03/2021	Macauleys Beach cycleway	tall grassland	Ian McKinlay
Red-whiskered Bulbul	2	10/02/2021	Thirroul	backyard robinia	Mike Morphet
Bassian Thrush	2	10/02/2021	Gibson track, Thirroul	rainforest	Ian McKinlay

Thank you to all those who took the time to submit the sightings



An invitation to all birders
– experienced or otherwise

**VISIT King Island, GIVE US A HAND and ENJOY
SOME GREAT BIRDING**

‘Wings on King’ Autumn Bird Surveys 22nd-25th April, 2021

Coincides with the last weekend of direct Hobart - King Island flights by Sharp Airlines.

FIND the nine King Island subspecies including the critically endangered King Island Brown Thornbill and Scrubtit, 10 of the 12 Tasmanian endemics, the most southern population of Golden-headed Cisticola, Little Grassbird near wetlands or Sea Eagles at the nest in forest. King Island is a magical birding spot.

SURVEY WEEKEND:

The Wings on King program is gathering data to learn the story of the birds of King Island and 2021 is the 5th year of data collection. Hoping COVID won't stop us this year, we are planning another weekend event.

There are over 60 survey sites located across the island many on private land – hotspots not usually available to visitors. Small teams, all led by at least one experienced birder, undertake 20minute surveys on all sites over two days.

Social events include a Welcome and Registration gathering on Thursday 22nd April, a dinner with guest speaker/s on Saturday 24th April and a Threatened Species search on Sunday 25th a.m (TBC).

Note: Visitors arriving on Sharp direct Hobart-King Island morning flight on Friday 23rd, registration will take place at the airport.

PRIOR REGISTRATION is ESSENTIAL:

Cut-off date – Friday 16th April. <https://www.birdsofkingisland.com/register>

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE BIRDS OF KING ISLAND, SPECIAL ACCOMODATION DEALS FOR REGISTERED WINGS ON KING PARTICIPANTS AND HOW TO GET TO THE ISLAND visit:
<https://www.birdsofkingisland.com>

NOTE: Please check <https://www.birdsofkingisland.com> for updates or changes to the itinerary. Registered participants will be notified directly.

Photo: Golden-headed Cisticola on King Island x Paul Fraser