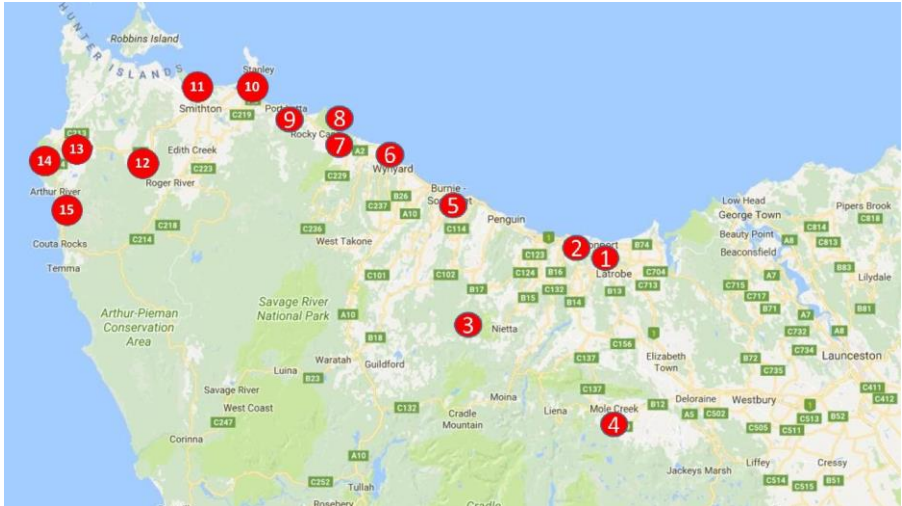


Northwestern Tasmania



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Moorland Beach, Devonport

This beautiful beach is located north of the Devonport Airport. The site includes a variety of habitats such as sandy beaches, rocky points, lagoons, heathland, coastal scrub and grazing paddocks. Pardoe Northdown Conservation Reserve is located at this beach.

To get there, from Mill Rd (C701) in Devonport turn north into Moorland Beach Rd and drive to the beach.

Over 70 species are on the site's birdlist. **Key species** are Ruddy Turnstone, Banded Lapwing and Hooded Plover. Other birds of interest include Musk Duck, Australian Shelduck, Striated Fieldwren, Cattle Egret and Peregrine Falcon. Rarities include Fairy Tern, Pacific Golden Plover and Tasmanian Morepork.

Check the paddocks along Moorland Beach Rd. Banded Lapwings are observed regularly, even breeding here. After the breeding season, small flocks of Banded Lapwings can sometimes be seen on the beach among the other waders. In winter, flocks of Cattle Egrets are reported from the paddocks. Australasian Pipit, Eurasian Skylark, Masked Lapwing, Forest Raven and plenty of Common Starlings are also found there.

Ruddy Turnstones are regularly found on the beach which is home to about 80 bird species often seen roosting at high tide on the strandline. Some Ruddy Turnstones even winter here. A pair of Hooded Plovers regularly attempt to breed at the western end of the beach. Other birds here include Sooty Oystercatcher, Australasian Pied Oystercatcher, Red-capped Plover, Double-banded Plover (in winter), Pacific Gull and Caspian Tern. On rocky points, Black-faced Cormorants and Little Pied Cormorants are often roosting.

The chain of lagoons behind the dunes may produce a wide range of waterbirds such as Musk Duck, Chestnut Teal, Australasian Shoveler, Eastern Great Egret, Hoary-headed Grebe, Australasian Grebe and Black Swan. In the vegetation around the lagoons look for Striated Fieldwren, White-fronted Chat, New Holland Honeyeater and Brown Thornbill.

A pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles is often seen patrolling this section of the coast. We observed a Peregrine Falcon, consuming a large Masked Lapwing on the ground, being attacked by a group of distraught lapwings and other birds. This created quite a ruckus. This however did not distract the raptor which calmly carried on with feather plucking from its meal.

Lillico Beach Conservation Area

The narrow coastal strip of the Lillico Beach is home to a large colony of Little Penguins. From the viewing platform you can observe these cute creatures returning to their burrows in the evening. Local volunteers and/or Park Rangers are on site in the penguin breeding season (September to May). The site is located 20km west of Devonport, just off Bass Hwy (A2). It is well signposted and a large carpark is provided near the viewing platform.



Little Penguin in its nesting box

During our visit, Swamp Harrier was flying over the coastal strip. On the rocky beach we found Black-faced Cormorant, Sooty Oystercatcher, Australian Pied Oystercatcher and a juvenile Pacific Gull. In the dense shrubbery near the carpark, we found New Holland Honeyeater, Silvereye, Grey Fantail, Superb Fairy-wren and Common Starling.

Other birds recorded here include Kelp Gull, Red-capped Plover, Australian Hobby and Grey Goshawk.

Mountain Valley Wilderness Centre, Loongana

This 61ha “Land for Wildlife” private nature reserve is hidden in the valley of Loongana, 65km southwest of Devonport. This is the eco-style retreat with cosy log cabins built at the foothill of Black Bluff Mountain in a fantastic bushland setting. On offer is plenty of wildlife, both birds and other animals. This reserve is a release site for the rehabilitated wildlife, coming off human care for injured or orphaned animals. You may see here a spotted-tailed quoll or Tasmanian devil out of your cabin window. Wildlife also includes platypus, Tasmanian pademelon, wombats, etc.

Access is restricted to the guests of the Centre and to volunteers. The site is located at 1519 Loongana Rd, Loongana. For bookings and further information see their website at <http://mountainvalley.com.au/> or call (03) 6429 1394. To get there, from Bass Hwy (A2) turn south into Castra Rd (B15) near Ulverstone. At Nietta, turn into Loongana Rd (C128). You will have approximately 16km of winding dirt road to the Wilderness Centre.

Over 80 species are on the site’s birdlist. **Key species** are Scrubtit, Satin Flycatcher, Strong-billed Honeyeater and Grey Goshawk. Other birds of interest include Pink Robin, Olive Whistler, Bassian Thrush, Black Currawong, Australian Owlet-nightjar, Masked Owl and Wedge-tailed Eagle.

The site offers exciting possibilities for spotlighting. Apart from Australian Owlet-nightjar and Masked Owl mentioned above, you may get Tasmanian Morepork and Tawny Frogmouth. As most of the marsupials are nocturnal, they can be discovered in the spotlights, too.

All but one Tasmanian endemics can be found here with the relative ease. The odd one out is Forty-spotted Pardalote. Grey Goshawk is resident in the area, often seen close to the release aviary, attempting to steal some food out of the captive birds’ plate.

Other birds recorded here include Brush Bronzewing, Common Bronzewing, Beautiful Firetail, Satin Flycatcher, Striated Fieldwren, Grey Currawong, Crescent Honeyeater and Grey Butcherbird.

Mole Creek Karst National Park

Mole Creek is a small National Park located on the slopes of Great Western Tiers in northwest Tasmania, about 60km south of Devonport. It protects internationally significant karst geological system. The word 'karst' is a Slovenic term for a landscape shaped by erosion of limestone by acidic water. Caves and sinkholes are the main feature of this system.

More than 300 caves, underground creeks and sinkholes have been found in the Mole Creek Karst Park. Majority of them are not open to public but two, King Salomon Cave and Marakoopa Cave, are the major Tasmanian tourist attractions. Marakoopa Cave boasts the largest glow-worm display in Australia.

The Park comprises twelve separate blocks of land, surrounded mostly by farmland but also by some forest and bushland. Almost all of the Park is covered with open forest dominated with stringybark, swamp gum, manna gum, black peppermint and silver acacia. There are also small areas of rainforest in damp gullies, where beech myrtle, sassafras and tree ferns reign.

From Launceston or Devonport get to Deloraine via Bass Hwy (1). From Deloraine it is a 45min drive to the Park. First, take Mole Creek Rd (B12) and about 4km past the Mole Creek township turn left to the Marakoopa Cave. For the King Salomon Cave, continue on Mole Creek Rd for another 11km. Day use facilities at both sites include electric barbecues, shelters, picnic areas and walking tracks. No camping is allowed. A basic map of the area can be downloaded here: <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/file.aspx?id=19046>.

Over 60 species are on the site's birdlist. **Key species** are Scrubtit, Pink Robin and Grey Goshawk. Other birds of interest include Cape Barren Goose, Dusky Moorhen, Green Rosella, Tasmanian Morepork, Masked Owl and Tasmanian Scrubwren.

Pink Robins are common and tame around the Marakoopa Cave. A pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles can often be seen in this area. Other birds here include Shining Bronze-cuckoo, Scarlet Robin, Dusky Robin, Tasmanian Thornbill, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Tree Martin, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo and Green Rosella. A small wetland in the Marakoopa Cave block may produce Australian Shelduck, Hardhead, Hoary-headed Grebe, Dusky Moorhen, Black Swan and Purple Swamphen.

Burnie

Burnie is a large coastal town located in northwestern Tasmania. In the 1980' it was an important industrial hub, full of smoke stacks and pollution. Most of the heavy industry since died so the town needed to reinvent itself. Now it is known for restoring and protecting natural habitats. The only industries left are agriculture with a couple of boutique cheese-making factories, forestry and a large harbour. The town can now offer several wonderful wildlife-watching opportunities, especially the Little Penguin Observation Centre and a viewing platform for the platypus in the Fern Glade Reserve. Swift Parrots are regularly observed in town, particularly when they are returning to Tasmania from the mainland in September.

Fern Glade Reserve

The peaceful Emu River valley is Burnie's most valuable natural asset. The Reserve is located along Emu River in South Burnie just 4km from the city centre. The main attraction of the reserve is the platypus; with luck you'll see it from the viewing platform.

Access is from Bass Hwy (A3). If driving in westerly direction, pass the Emu River bridge and turn left into Massy-Greene Dr (C112) at the lights. Soon turn sharp left into Fern Glade Rd leading to fern Glade Reserve. There is another entry to the reserve from Old Surrey Rd (C112), turning into Wattle Av and then right to Fern Glade Dr. Site facilities include a carpark, viewing platform, picnic area, fireplaces (bring your own firewood) and long walking tracks along the Emu River.

About 80 species are on the Reserve's birdlist. **Key species** are White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Dusky Robin, Beautiful Firetail, Bassian Thrush and Scrubtit (rare). Other birds of interest include Masked Owl, Australian Owlet-nightjar, Pink Robin, Olive Whistler, Satin Flycatcher, Dusky Woodswallow and Strong-billed Honeyeater. Rarities here include Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Dusky Moorhen, Eastern Rosella and Grey Goshawk.

The Reserve is an easily accessible birding spot for Beautiful Firetail and Dusky Robin; they are common here. Look for Tawny Frogmouth roosting in a tree near the carpark. In this area there are also Pink Robins, Brush Bronzewings and Dusky Woodswallows.

Tasmanian Native-hens are plentiful, often running before you on a walking track. Honeyeaters are plentiful in the bush, including Crescent Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill and Yellow Wattlebird. All four cuckoos occurring in Tasmania can be found here. We observed a Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo chick being fed by Tasmanian Scrubwren near the viewing platform.

Common in the river are Hoary-headed Grebe, Chestnut Teal, Australian Wood Duck and Great Cormorant.

A pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles can often be observed flying over the Reserve. Look also for Collared Sparrowhawk, Brown Falcon and Wedge-tailed Eagle.

Romaine Reserve

This large recreational reserve is located in South Burnie along the Romaine Creek. The site is part of the walkways and boardwalks that circumnavigate Burnie. Vegetation includes both native and exotic trees and is dominated by mountain ash and manna gum with the understory of blackwood and tree ferns.

To get there, turn south off Bass Hwy (A3) into Reeves St which changes name to Collins St, then to Roslyn Av. Take a left on the roundabout into Blackwood Pde and finally turn left into Amanda Ct which will lead you to the Reserve's carpark. A fitness track runs around the dam.

The Reserve is very good for parrots as it offers plenty of hollows in the old trees. Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Galah and Green Rosella are common. Swift Parrots are regularly seen and even breed here. We observed a pair of Rainbow Lorikeets investigating the hollows, so probably breeding in the Reserve, too.

On the ground look for Scarlet Robin, Forest Raven and Grey Butcherbird. Bush birds here include Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Golden Whistler, Satin Flycatcher and a great selection of honeyeaters. Black-Headed Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater and Little Wattlebird are regularly recorded.

On the water expect to see Hardhead, Chestnut Teal, Australian Wood Duck, Hoary-headed Grebe, Australasian Grebe and Northern Mallard (pure-breed). Black Swans nest on the dam.

We observed a large flock (50+) of White-throated Needletails flying high with Welcome Swallows over the Reserve.

Little Penguin Observation Centre

The Centre is located at Parsonage Point next to West Beach. To get there, from Bass Hwy (A3) turn north at the lights into an unnamed street next to the West Park Oval, leading into a large carpark. A picnic area is provided near the Surf Club and another in Burnie Park on the land side of Bass Hwy.

The Centre is in the right-hand corner of the carpark, near the beach. From the carpark you can get to the viewing platform on the beach. The area of bush and beach where penguins are nesting is fenced off. To see the penguins, visit the Centre about an hour after sunset, use the viewing platform and walk along the fence. Remain very quiet and do not use a torch or flash. The area is not very dark due to the street lamps around.



Little Penguin colony in Burnie

To see the shorebirds, visit the West Beach located to the east of the Little Penguin Observation Centre. Look for Australian Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatcher, Red-capped Plover, Pacific Gull, Crested Tern and White-bellied Sea-Eagle. In winter, Double-banded Plover appears here. Seabirds that can be observed from the shore include Australasian Gannet, Short-tailed Shearwater and Shy Albatross. We found Black-faced Cormorants nesting on the pier in the harbour. A group of Pacific Gulls were standing on top of a woodchip pile ready for shipping.

Burnie Regional Hospital Grounds

Access is from Bass Hwy (A3), turning south into Brickport Rd. Swift Parrots visit the hospital grounds every year in spring and summer, you can find them in the stands of flowering Tasmanian blue gums. You can also find here Green Rosella, Galah, Yellow Wattlebird and Australian Hobby.

Wynyard

Wynyard is a relaxed coastal town, famous for its flat-topped Table Cape and fields of stunning tulips flowering in spring. It is located on the northwest coast Tasmania, 70km west of Burnie. A good range of birding opportunities can be found here, particularly along the shoreline and Inglis River. A good initiative in this city is a free (donation-based) Wynyard Little Penguin tour, greatly appreciated by the birdwatchers and tourists alike. Contact Keith at 0417 153244 or by email at wynyardpenguins@hotmail.com; bookings are essential.

Inglis River Walking Track

This well-signposted 6km one-way walk follows closely the forested banks of Inglis River in Wynyard. The track runs between the Table Cape Bridge and a pedestrian crossing below the Bass Hwy Bridge. It is best to start from the Table Cape Bridge parking area off Saunders St (C234) where Table Cape Bridge Reserve is located.

Follow the track through a forest dominated by the Tasmanian blue gums until you reach the Big Creek Bridge. Past that bridge you enter the 16ha York Street Reserve. The reserve features an old eucalypt forest with plenty of hollows with the understory of tea trees, paperbarks, Boronia, bushpeas, etc. The Reserve can be accessed directly from York St where a carpark is provided. A circular walking track runs through the site.

Past the York Street Reserve, the last leg of Inglis River Walking Tk runs through extensive pastures with only a narrow belt of trees lining the river bed. You can come back to your car walking along River Rd on the other side of the river.

Over 80 bird species have been recorded along this track. **Key species** is Azure Kingfisher – this is the best place to see this bird in Tasmania. Other notable species include Grey Goshawk, Satin Flycatcher, Swift Parrot, Eastern Great Egret, Dusky Robin and a variety of honeyeaters. Among the rarities are Forest Kingfisher and Sacred Kingfisher.

Look for Azure Kingfisher along the entire distance but the best place to find it is at the Table Cape Bridge Reserve where the birds are often seen catching crabs at low tide. Other good spots are near the footbridge across the Big Creek and about 700m downstream the Bass Hwy Bridge. The rare vagrants, Forest Kingfisher and Sacred Kingfisher, have also been found here in similar environments.

Easter Great Egret is often spotted at the river banks around the Table Cape Bridge.

The most common birds along the Inglis River Walking Tk are, as nearly everywhere else in Tasmania, Common Blackbirds. You may also come across Tasmanian Native-hen, Grey Butcherbird, Green Rosella, Scarlet Robin, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo, Pallid Cuckoo, Tree Martin, Collared Sparrowhawk and Australian Hobby.

Platypus is known to inhabit the river so keep an eye on the water for its V-shaped trail.

The best place for bush birds is the York Street Reserve. We encountered several birds on the nests or feeding their young. Among them were Golden Whistler, Satin Flycatcher and Grey Shrike-thrush. Parrots such as Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Galahs were investigating the hollows or already breeding in them. Spotted Pardalotes were nesting in the banks of Big Creek near the footbridge.

Brush Bronzewing was walking in front of us on the track. Brown Thornbills were extremely common everywhere in the Reserve. Other birds in the York Street Reserve included Crescent Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Dusky Woodswallow, Tasmanian Scrubwren and Grey Fantail. Look also for Grey Goshawks; a pair has been nesting in this reserve for ages. Swift Parrots are regular visitors to the Reserve in summer.

Camp Creek Mouth

The mouth of Camp Creek is another good birding spot in Wynyard. It can be accessed from Old Bass Hwy (C240) in Wynyard. You'll find walking and cycling tracks on both sides of the creek.

About 50 species are on the site's birdlist. **Key species** are Latham's Snipe, Eastern Great Egret, Nankeen Night-Heron and Australian Pelican. Other birds of interest include Tasmanian Native-hen, Hoary-headed Grebe, Chestnut Teal, Black-headed Honeyeater and Musk Lorikeet. Occasionally, Royal Spoonbill is recorded.

An old hospital site near a creek is a good place for birds. Latham's Snipes are regularly found there and Nankeen Night-Herons often roost in trees by the water. Eastern Great Egret and sometimes Royal Spoonbill can be found under the road bridge.

Bush birds around this site include Yellow-throated Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Little Wattlebird, Golden Whistler, Scarlet Robin and Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo.

Wynyard Shoreline

The coast along Old Bass Hwy (B240) east of Camp Creek to Bruce's Café is worth checking. This area is very good for Double-banded Plover, arriving here regularly in winter, with a few birds occasionally staying over for the summer.

Common birds on the beach include Red-capped Plover, Sooty Oystercatcher, Australian Pied Oystercatcher, Pacific Gull and Crested Tern. There are sporadic records of Fairy Tern, Whimbrel and Red Knot. On the rocks along the coast you'll find plenty of Black Cormorants, they nest on the old port wall.

Other birds in the area include Tasmanian Native-hen, Red-necked Stint and White-bellied Sea-Eagle.

Flowerdale

The small locality of Flowerdale is situated a few kilometres west of Wynyard. Flowerdale River is meandering through the pastures. For birdwatchers, the most interesting site is a large dam near the Flowerdale River.



Wedge-tailed Eagle, a dark morph Tasmanian subspecies

To get there from Wynyard, drive west on Bass Hwy (A3) and turn left into Flowerdale Rd (C229). On Google Maps this road is called Preolenna Rd. The dam is on the right about 1km from the turnoff from Bass Hwy. This easy to find dam is an excellent birding site. You'll find here a wide range of waterbirds and the resident Wedge-tailed Eagles. When we arrived, three of them were perched on a lone pine tree on a nearby hill. They later started to fly which startled all waterfowl into the air. These were mostly Australian Shelducks, Musk Lapwings, Pacific Black Ducks and Chestnut Teals. Only a few Freckled Ducks stayed calmly on the water.

Black Swans and small flocks of Cape Barren Geese were grazing on the pasture. We also recorded Tasmanian Native-hen, Eurasian Skylark, White-faced Heron, Forest Raven, Black Currawong and Brown Falcon. There were plenty of introduced finches around.

We flushed a couple of Blue-winged Parrots from the road verge. A single Dusky Moorhen (a rarity in western Tasmania) was on a small pond near the main road.

In winter, a large flock of Cattle Egrets (up to 250 birds) takes residence in this area for a few months. Other rare birds recorded here include Royal Spoonbill and Blue-billed Duck.

Rocky Cape National Park

This small, 3,060ha Park is located on the northwest coast of Tasmania half way between Wynyard and Stanley. You'll find here fantastic views across the Bass Strait, spectacular wildflower displays in spring and sheltered picturesque beaches. Vegetation here is hardy, windswept and salt-resistant, mostly coastal heath. The long spikes of grass trees protrude out of the sea of heath everywhere.

The Park is located 2hr drive west of Launceston along Bass Hwy (A2). It can be accessed in two ways:

- The main entrance in the west can be reached by turning into Rocky Cape Rd (C227), 2.5km west of the Rocky Cape township. After 3km, turn right to the Burgess Cove boat ramp or take second right to the Rocky Cape Lighthouse and a walking track to the North Cave.
- Eastern section is accessible via Port Rd (C232) 12km west of Wynyard. After 1.5km veer left to Sisters Beach Rd (C233). On your way you will pass the eastern entrance to Postmans Tk on your right and to Lake Llewellyn on your left. Sisters Beach Rd ends in the Sisters Beach village. At the end of the road you'll find walking tracks leading into the National Park.

The tracks in the Rocky Cape National Park intertwine so you may choose a short walk or a 25km trek throughout the whole Park. Facilities in the Park include a picnic area with fireplaces at Mary Ann Cove. There is also a picnic area at Sisters Beach with electric barbecues and drinking water. Camping is not allowed in the Park but a variety of accommodation is available in Sisters Beach, Rocky Cape and Wynyard. The Rocky Cape brochure with a basic locality map can be downloaded here:

<http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/file.aspx?id=19051>.

Over 90 species are on the Park's birdlist. **Key species** are Ground Parrot, Painted Button-quail, Brown Quail and Hooded Plover. Other birds of interest include Scrubtit, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Tasmanian Thornbill, Southern Emu-wren, Beautiful Firetail, Black-headed Honeyeater, Bassian Thrush and Peregrine Falcon. Among the rarities are Spotted Quail-thrush and Swift Parrot.

Ground Parrots are resident in the Park but these elusive birds seldom flush from the heath. They reside in the central section of the Park where the walking tracks are scarce so access is difficult.

Postmans Track

The eastern entrance to Postmans Tk is from Sisters Beach Rd (C233) on your way to the Park and the western entrance is in Sisters Beach. In the heath along the track look for Southern Emu-wren, Beautiful Firetail and Superb Fairy-wren. You may also come across Crescent Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater and Little Wattlebird. At the western entrance to the track (near the township) look for Brown Quails that come out from the heath to forage on the lawns. At the carpark near the eastern entrance, Spotted Quail-thrush was recorded several times.

Other birds along Postmans Tk include Satin Flycatcher, Bassian Thrush, Scarlet Robin, Dusky Robin, Blue-winged Parrot, Golden Whistler and Tasmanian Thornbill.

Lake Llewellyn

As you enter the Park, turn left from Sisters Beach Rd (C233) into the short Tink Taylor Av. Looking from this street onto the lake, we got a single Blue-billed Duck and a couple of Australian Shelducks and Pacific Black Ducks. White-faced Heron had a huge nest with two chicks in a tree by one of the houses. On the forest track at the end of the street were Pink Robin, Scrubtit, Dusky Robin, Green Rosella, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Golden Whistler and eight Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos.



White-faced Heron at Lake Llewellyn, taking a break from its parental duties

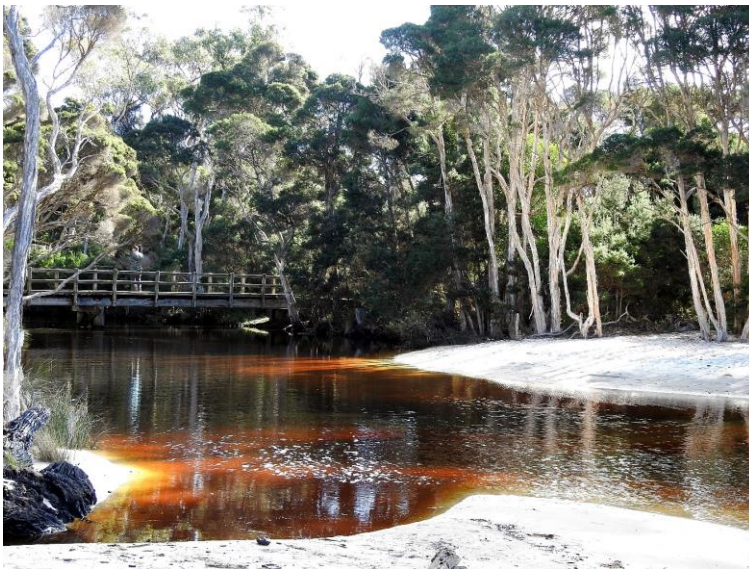
Rocky Cape Road

About 1.5km into this road check a large farm dam on your left. It was drying up during our visit. On the water were a couple of Chestnut Teals, Great Cormorant and White-faced Heron. In the dead vegetation on the mudflats were Black-fronted Dotterels, White-fronted Chats and Australasian Pipits. Latham Snipe flushed from the edge of the dam. Peregrine Falcon was flying over the area.

Sisters Beach

This quaint, pretty village is surrounded by the magnificent Rocky Cape National Park from three sides and the Bass Strait beaches from the north. It is located 15min drive west of Wynyard in the Tasmanian northwest coast. The unique feature of this place is the prevalence of old man banksia (*Banksia serrata*). In Tasmania, this species grows only in the open woodland and sedgeland around Sisters Hills. The village boasts the very old, giant trees. Sisters Beach is known for unusual, rare bird sightings.

Access is via Port Rd (C232) 12km west of Wynyard. After 1.5km veer left to Sisters Beach Rd (C233). Sisters Beach Rd ends in the Sisters Beach village (no through road, you go back the same way you came in). Facilities include a picnic area with electric barbecues and drinking water and a variety of accommodation in the village. There is a foot bridge over the creek and a short walking path to a cave.



Footbridge at Sisters Beach where Azure Kingfisher is often found

Over 70 species are on the Sisters Beach birdlist. **Key species** are Azure Kingfisher and Hooded Plover. Other birds of interest include White-throated Needletail, Scarlet Robin, Dusky Robin, Green Rosella, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Crescent Honeyeater, Australian Owlet-nightjar and Masked Owl. Among the rare birds are White-necked Heron, Stubble Quail, Nankeen Night-Heron, Rainbow Lorikeet and Swift Parrot.

Azure Kingfishers are regularly recorded hunting in the area near the foot bridge. This is where we saw two of them, too. On the beach were a couple of Hooded Plovers, Australian Pied Oystercatchers, Sooty Oystercatchers and Pacific Gulls. A pair of White-bellied sea-Eagles were flying over the waves. Common Greenfinches were foraging among the debris on the beach.



Female Superb Fairy-wren at a picnic site in Sisters Beach

Banksias were flowering profusely at a picnic site by the beach, attracting masses of honeyeaters including Yellow-throated Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Crescent Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill and Little Wattlebird. In the bush along the creek we found Brush Bronzewing, Scarlet Robin, Dusky Robin, Black Currawong, Golden Whistler, Pallid Cuckoo and Superb Fairy-wren. Tasmanian Native-hens are often seen walking through the village.

In summer, flocks of White-throated Needletails make a regular appearance in the village, often flying with Tree Martins. In bad weather, seabirds may come close to the shore. Look for Shy Albatross, Short-tailed Shearwater and Brown Skua.

Crayfish Creek

The Crayfish Creek mouth is a fantastic birding spot, especially if you stay in Crayfish Creek Tourist Park. The cabins and caravan sites are scattered in dense bushland along the creek mouth. The area is teeming with birds and other wildlife. The site is located along Bass Hwy (A2) just east of Port Latta, 40 km west of Wynyard and 25km east of Stanley. The coordinates for the tourist park are 40.51.28 E and 145.23.55 S.

When we stayed there, Masked Owl and Tasmanian Morepork were calling through the night. A white spot clearly visible in one of the dead trees in the camp proved to be Grey Goshawk. The most common honeyeaters were Yellow-throated Honeyeaters; these were everywhere. Tame Pink Robins and Dusky Robins perched along the driveways to caravan sites. Green Rosellas were plentiful. Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos landed with the big noise to roost on the opposite side of the creek.

The abundance of small bush birds included Brown Thornbill, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Silvereye and Grey Fantail. We also saw Brush Bronzewing, Golden Whistler, Eastern Spinebill, New Holland Honeyeater, Brown Goshawk, Laughing Kookaburra and Grey Currawong.

In the mouth of the creek on the beach on the other side of Bass Hwy were Australian Pied Oystercatcher, Pacific Gull, Crested Tern and a group of Little Penguins in the water. White-bellied Sea-Eagle was circling over the shore.



Yellow-throated Honeyeater

Stanley and The Nut

The beautiful historic township of Stanley is located on the far northwest coast of Tasmania, on the large cape called The Nut. The massif of The Nut is the most significant landmark in all of the northwest coast of Tasmania. This huge rock is the plug of an extinct volcano which stands 134m tall and has steep sides with a flat top. To reach the top you may either walk which takes around 15min or get there the easy way - by the chairlift.

The Nut State Reserve is established on the plateau, featuring a 2.3km walk circular walk by the edge, taking around 45min. The views from the top are simply breathtaking. Before, the Reserve was hopelessly overgrown by gorse but thanks to the huge efforts the gorse got under control. The habitats include large areas of tall grassland and patches of lush planted bushland in sheltered spots. The Nut Reserve protects the nationally endangered straw daisy and provides an important breeding site for 15,000 pairs of Short-tailed Shearwaters (mutton birds) as well as Peregrine Falcon and Nankeen Kestrel.



The characteristic silhouette of The Nut dominates the Stanley landscape

To get there from Launceston, take a scenic route west on Bass Highway (National 1 changing into A2) along the northern coast. About 18km west of Crayfish Creek you will get to a large intersection where you turn north onto Stanley Hwy (B21). To get to the chairlift when you reach the town, turn left into Marshall St from Church St, then right into Browns Rd which will take you to the carpark and café at the Chairlift station. The

chairlift operates 7 days per week from 9:30am to 5pm but it's closed from late June to late August. A site map can be downloaded here:

<http://www.circularhead.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/map4.pdf>.

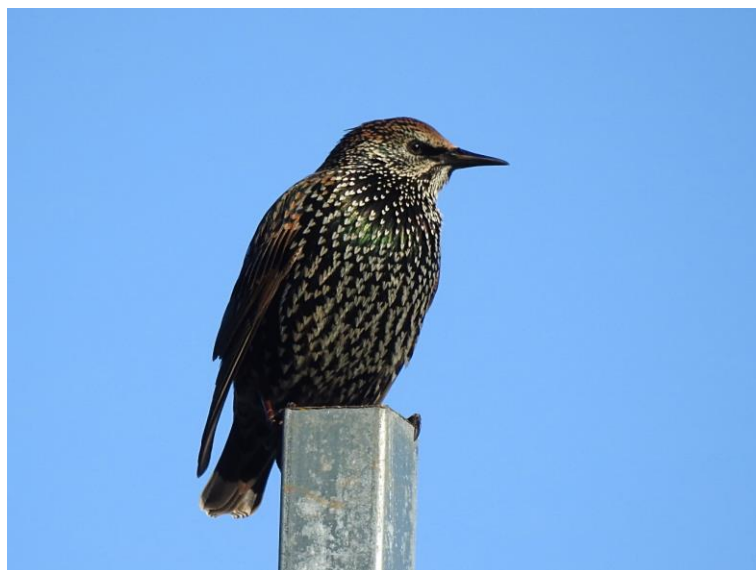
Over 80 bird species have been recorded in the Stanley area. **Key species** are Little Penguin, Short-tailed Shearwater, Peregrine Falcon and Nankeen Kestrel. Other birds of interest include Hooded Plover, Striated Fieldwren, Crescent Honeyeater, Dusky Woodswallow, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Grey Fantail and Silvereye. Occasionally, the rare Orange-bellied Parrots utilise The Nut as a launching or landing pad for their trip to or from the mainland.

Little Penguin Colony

The colony is situated on the western slopes of The Nut. Penguins come in the evening onto Godfreys Beach. From Church St turn into Harrison Tce and get to Kings Park. Go through the gate to the colony and wait until dark on a path at the bottom of the cliff to see the penguins coming ashore. Dress warm. No flashlights are allowed unless you have a red filter.

During the day, on Godfreys Beach you can find Australian Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatcher, Pacific Gull, Black-faced Cormorant and Red-capped Plover.

The Nut State Reserve



Common Starling on top of the Chairlift Station's antenna on The Nut.

Birdwatching started for us at the chairlift station where we found plenty of introduced birds such as Common Starling, Common Blackbird, European Goldfinch and Common Greenfinch. Common Starling was singing his heart out from an antenna on the Chairlift Station. He was mimicking other bird calls in his song and we were able to recognise the voices of Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, European Goldfinch, Australian Pied Oystercatcher and Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo.

Grey Shrike-thrushes were calling loudly as we were riding to the top in the chairlift. In the grass and weeds on the plateau we observed Tasmanian Scrubwren, Superb Fairy-wren, New Holland Honeyeater, Grey Fantail and Australasian Pipit. Striated Fieldwren is common in the heath; we saw one calling from the gorse.

Good numbers of honeyeaters hanged out in the planted bushland including Crescent Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater and Eastern Spinebill. In the same habitat we also found Dusky Woodswallow and Pallid Cuckoo.

The Nut is a very important staging point for the migratory birds on their departure and return to Tasmania. In autumn in particular, large numbers of Grey Fantails, Silvereyes, Dusky Woodswallows, Welcome Swallows, Black Cuckoo-shrikes, etc. gather here before crossing the Straits.



Weeds are growing rapaciously in the well-fertilized soil of a shearwater colony on The Nut

Such a massive bird get-together is a magnet for raptors. We saw seven raptor species around The Nut and the township. A pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles were soaring on the uplift air. Swamp Harrier had a nest in the tall weeds in the shearwater colony. Nankeen Kestrel, the rarest bird of prey in Tasmania, was hovering over the plateau. Peregrine Falcon, regularly nesting on the eastern cliffs of The Nut, was hunting over the harbour. Wedge-tailed Eagle, Brown Falcon and Australian Hobby were flying over the Highfield Historic Site and the sewage lagoons.

If you stay on the plateau until dark between September and March, you will witness the spectacle of Short-tailed Shearwaters returning noisily in massive numbers to their burrows. During the day, you may see other seabirds from the plateau such as Australasian Gannet, Shy Albatross, Black-browed Albatross and various cormorants, including Black-faced Cormorant.

Sewage Lagoons

Sewage Lagoons are located along Godfreys Beach on Green Hills Rd north of town. Birds to be found there include Hardhead, Australasian Shoveler, Chestnut Teal, Australian Shelduck, Australasian Grebe (occasionally) and Hoary-headed Grebe.

Along the access road look for Tasmanian Native-hen, Purple Swamphen, Eurasian Skylark and Australasian Pipit.

West Inlet

The site is accessed via West Inlet Tk (not signposted). Look for it on the left a few kilometres before reaching Stanley.

This is a good water spot. Hooded Plovers breed there. Australian Pied Oystercatchers form post-breeding flocks of up to 100 birds. Double-banded Plover is frequently found here in winter. Other birds include Red-capped Plover, Sooty Oystercatcher and Eastern Curlew (very rare).

Smithton

Smithton is a small coastal town located on Bass Hwy (A2) in the far-northwest corner of Tasmania in the mouth of Duck River. The distance to Burnie is 85km. The rich green farmland surrounding the town brings life and prosperity to it. The town is the last stop for the travellers to Arthur River and the Tarkine Wilderness.

Several good birding areas are scattered around the town including the sewage ponds and the mouth of Duck River. Over 70 bird species have been recorded. The **key species** is Latham's Snipe. Other birds of interest include White-fronted Chat, Eastern Great Egret, Black-fronted Dotterel, Australian Pelican, Yellow-throated Honeyeater and Brown Falcon. Several rare species have been reported from the area including Orange-bellied Parrot, Swift Parrot, Galah, Straw-necked Ibis, Azure Kingfisher, Royal Spoonbill, Blue-billed Duck and Pink-eared Duck.

Azure Kingfisher is occasionally found around Duck River. The best place is 1km upstream of Watsons Corner.

Duck River Boardwalk

This is a well-known Latham's Snipe's roosting site. Up to 100 birds have been counted during the season.

To get there, from Bass Hwy (A2) turn north onto Nelson St (C215) and drive to the junction with Key St where you'll find Rotaract Park with mudflats and boardwalk over the saltmarshes. These saltmarshes are the favourite roost of Latham's Snipes.

In the flowering gums in the Rotaract Park we found Little Wattlebird, Black-headed Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater and Yellow-throated Honeyeater as well as Green Rosella, Pallid Cuckoo and Brown Falcon.

Swift Parrots were reported from this site several times.

In the saltmarshes we found a couple of Latham's Snipes but the show was stolen by hundreds of White-fronted Chats in the samphire. They let us to get close enough to them for a photo. In April 2017, a few Orange-bellied Parrots were found here in the samphire. Pacific Golden Plover is occasionally reported.



A male White-fronted Chat in the Rotaract Park saltmarsh

On the Duck River mudflats, we found Chestnut Teals, White-faced Herons and Pacific Gulls. A couple of Eastern Great Egrets were standing on the other side of the river. This is a good place for migratory waders such as Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and sometimes Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Ruddy Turnstone.

Smithton Sewage Ponds

To get there, after crossing over the Duck River bridge on Smith St (C215) in the westerly direction turn immediately right into West Esplanade and then go onto a dirt track called Pelican Ln. At a T-junction turn right into Pelican Point Rd. Drive to the end of the road and scan the ponds from the outside.

To pond came to the birdwatchers' attention after several rarities were found there including Blue-billed Duck, Pink-eared Duck, Royal Spoonbill and Straw-necked Ibis.

When driving to the site among the paddocks we found plenty Eurasian Skylarks, Australasian Pipits, Tasmanian Native-hens, Purple Swamphens, Kelp Gulls, Flame Robins and hundreds of Goldfinches and Greenfinches.



European Goldfinches on an old farm fence

One of the sewage ponds was drying out and featured ten Black-fronted Dotterels, two Red-capped Plovers and two Curlew Sandpipers. In the weeds surrounding that pond we found White-fronted Chats.

On the ponds with water were hundreds of Australian Shelducks and small numbers of Grey Teals, Chestnut Teals, Australian Wood Ducks and Black Swans. Swamp Harrier was flying over the area.

Tarkine Forest Adventure

This 640ha adventure park, also known as Dismal Swamp, is located at the northern edge of the Tarkine Wilderness. It is situated along Bass Hwy (A2) 20min west of Smithton. The swamp has formed in a giant sinkhole. Visitor Centre is located at the edge of the sinkhole. You can take 110m high slide to the sinkhole or, more sedately, take a steep 360m-long walk. A 1.2km boardwalk runs among the thousand year old giant trees and the tree ferns at the bottom of the hole.

The operation is closed in winter. For the opening times and further information visit the website at <http://dismalswamptasmania.com.au/>.

The site is known for its wide variety of rainforest bird species such as Bassian Thrush, Pink Robin, Scrubtit and Tasmanian Thornbill.

On arrival, you'll be greeted by the colourful robins such as Pink, Flame and Scarlet Robin which perch among the tree ferns scattered between the carpark and Visitor Centre. Masked Owl is often heard calling from the swamp at night. Other birds in the area include Dusky Robin, Golden Whistler, Green Rosella, Grey Fantail, Crescent Honeyeater, Tasmanian Morepork and Grey Goshawk.

Marrawah Area

Marrawah is a small rural town located in the northwest corner of Tasmania with access to very good surfing beaches.

Key species are Hooded Plover and Banded Lapwing. Other birds of interest include White-fronted Chat, Australasian Shoveler, Hoary-headed Grebe, Striated Fieldwren and Brown Falcon. White-necked Heron is the only rarity, found in April 2016 on a flooded paddock a few kilometres east of Marrawah.

The farmland around Marrawah is good for raptors. Brown Falcon, Wedge-tailed Eagle, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Brown Goshawk and Grey Goshawk have been recorded.

Green Point Campground

The site is located on the coast a few kilometres west of town. From Bass Hwy (A2) take Comeback Rd (C213) to Marrawah, then turn west into Green Point Rd to get to the campground.

The beach near the campground is good for the waders, particularly for Hooded Plover and Ruddy Turnstone. Other shorebirds there include Red-capped Plover, Sooty Oystercatcher, Australian Pied Oystercatcher, Caspian Tern, Crested Tern and Pacific Gull. Seabirds visible from the shore include Short-tailed Shearwater, Shy Albatross and Black-faced Cormorant.

In the surrounding heath look for Striated Fieldwren, White-fronted Chat and Superb Fairy-wren. On the farmland along the road, Australasian Pipit, Eurasian Skylark, Forest Raven and Brown Falcon can be found.

Green Point Lagoon

This large lagoon is located about 1km past the Green Point Campground along Green Point Rd. Banded Lapwings are resident on the paddocks around the lagoon.

Waterbirds on the lagoon include Black Swan, Hardhead, Australian Shelduck, Australasian Shoveler, Chestnut Teal, Hoary-headed Grebe, Great Cormorant and Black-fronted Dotterel.



A pair of Australian Shelducks

West Point State Reserve

This is a small coastal reserve with beautiful beaches and coastal heath behind the dunes. It is located north of Arthur River and south of Marrawah. Turn off Arthur River Rd (C214) to West Point Rd, an awful dirt track that will get you to the Reserve. Site coordinates are 40.56.39 S and 144.37.04 E.

This site is suitable for the observation of seabirds and shorebirds. Hooded Plovers regularly breed there. Other waders in the area include Ruddy Turnstone, Red-capped Plover, Sooty Oystercatcher and Australian Pied Oystercatcher. Among the seabirds you'll usually find large numbers of Short-tailed Shearwaters coming back to their

burrows along the shore. There should also be some Shy Albatrosses, Australasian Gannets, Pacific Gulls and Black-faced Cormorants.

Birds in the heath and surrounding paddocks include White-fronted Chat, Crescent Honeyeater, Swamp Harrier, Australasian Pipit, Forest Raven and Brown Falcon.

Arthur River Area

The tiny (population 25) coastal township of Arthur River is located in the northwestern corner of Tasmania at the mouth of Arthur River about 2hr drive (150km) from Burnie. It is surrounded by the lush rainforest and serves as a base for the exploration of Tarkine Wilderness, the Tasmania's largest expanse of temperate rainforest. On the southern side of the Arthur River mouth you'll find a plaque claiming that this is the 'edge of the world'. It truly feels like it.

To get there drive on Bass Hwy (A2) to Marrawah where you turn left into Arthur River Rd (C214).

The coastline is gorgeous and remote. Because it lies within the violent grasp of the Roaring Forties, the winds and the weather here can make quite an impression on an unsuspecting visitor.

The heavily tannin-stained waters of Arthur River run completely wild; this is the only river in Tasmania that is not dammed. The best way to explore the river is to take a cruise or you can hire a boat or a kayak.

A network of shorter and longer tracks run on both sides of the river. You'll find here picnic sites with barbecues. Accommodation ranges from good campsites to holiday houses. There are three campgrounds: Manuka, Peppermint and Prickly Wattle. Meals are available in the Tavern. The area is heaven for the 4-wheel drivers with a choice of tough 4WD tracks around.

Over 70 bird species have been found in the area. **Key species** are Azure Kingfisher, Hooded Plover, Southern Emu-wren and Tawny-crowned Honeyeater. Other birds of interest include Brown Quail, White-throated Needle-tail, Striated Fieldwren, Beautiful Firetail, White-bellied Sea-Eagle and Grey Goshawk.

Birdwatchers come here to look for the endangered Tasmanian form of Azure Kingfisher. The easiest way to get this bird is to take one of the river cruises (for details see <http://www.arthurrivercruises.com.au/>) and travel a few kilometres upstream. The birds can be found in the small inlets and channels along the northern banks of the river. Another good place is a series of small waterfalls and the tracks leading to them – most

cruises stop there so you can venture out on a quick walk. Travelling on foot, you may get a glimpse of the birds from the bridge over the river.

The most visible bird on a river cruise is usually White-bellied Sea-Eagle. The birds breed along the river. Other birds noticeable on a cruise include Green Rosella, Black Currawong, White-faced Heron, Nanking Night-Heron (occasionally) and Grey Goshawk.



Black Currawong

A beach 500m north of Arthur River estuary is good for Hooded Plover, Red-capped Plover and Double-banded Plover (in winter).

Gardiner Point

Gardiner Point and the Edge of the World are located at the southern bank of Arthur River. To get there, from Temma Rd (C214) turn into Airey St and drive to the end of the road.

Scan the ocean for seabirds from the lookout. You may get Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross, Shy Albatross, Cape Petrel and Northern Giant-Petrel.

On the rocky headland, beaches and dunes, look for Hooded Plover, Red-capped Plover, Black-faced Cormorant, Pacific Gull, Australian Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatcher and Masked Lapwing. Occasionally, Latham's Snipes are reported from the swamps behind the dunes.

Manuka Campground

The site is located before the Arthur River hamlet, just off Arthur River Rd (C214). There are several tracks around the campsite that may prove to be good for birdwatching. There should be plenty of honeyeaters such as Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Crescent Honeyeater, Little Wattlebird and Eastern Spinebill. Flocks of Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos often roost near the campground. Wedge-tailed Eagle and Swamp Harrier often fly over the camp. White-throated Needletails are regularly found flying over the river in summer. At night, you may hear Tasmanian Morepork.

Other birds in the area include Green Rosella, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Tasmanian Scrubwren, Dusky Robbin, Black Currawong and Forest Raven.

Arthur River Road Heathland

A stretch of Arthur River Rd (C214) north of Arthur River runs through an extensive area of heathland on both sides of the road. This is an excellent place to look for heathland birds such as Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, Southern Emu-wren, Beautiful Firetail, White-fronted Chat, Brown Quail and Striated Fieldwren. You may also come across New Holland Honeyeater, Little Wattlebird, Tasmanian Scrubwren and Australasian Pipit.