

Australia

Tasmania & Southern Victoria

Tuesday 31 October – Sunday 19 November 2017

Leader: Mark Hanger

2017 Cost: £6,199 single room supplement £600



Omitholidays is excited to welcome back Mark Hanger as one of our guides and to be able to offer a fascinating tour to Tasmania and Southern Victoria in pursuit of the wildlife that occurs in the region. We won't just be looking for the birds that occur here but also the varied number of marsupials that the regions can offer. We have visited Tasmania before on a number of occasions and the island has so much to offer the naturalist, with some endemic birds (12 species), exciting marsupials (including Tasmanian Devil, Platypus and Eastern Quoll), an interesting flora (70% of Tasmania's alpine plants are endemic) and some magnificent scenery. Tasmania is a relatively large island (26th largest in the world) with an area of about 24,000 square miles, but it is relatively unspoiled and undeveloped, with almost 37% of the land mass being designated as reserves, national parks or World Heritage Sites. It is the most mountainous of the Australian states, with much of the land being forested and it holds some of the last temperate rain forests in the Southern Hemisphere. The island is also home to some of the tallest and oldest trees of the world, with some individual Huon Pines believed to be more than 2,000 years old. Our exploration will find mountain peaks, fern-filled gullies, extensive lakes and even offshore islands (when we take to the boat for a pelagic trip). On Southern Victoria we will look for Koala, Emu, Superb Lyrebird, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo and much more besides. Travel with Mark and see why this will be a great exploration of this wild part of Australia.

ITINERARY

Days 1 to 3

We leave London on a scheduled evening flight to Singapore arriving the next day. We then catch our connecting flight to Hobart, via Melbourne where we arrive in the morning of the third day. We meet our guide Mark Hanger and begin our explorations of this lovely island. Our first outing will be to a local reserve where ponds should hold Hoary-headed Grebe and Pacific Black Duck while Sulphur-crested Cockatoos call from the trees. The fascinating Echidna may put in an appearance as it forages through the understorey. We stay overnight in Hobart.

Days 4 & 5

Mount Wellington provides a dramatic backdrop to the city of Hobart. We gain a first introduction to the Tasmanian alpine environment, and we shall also discover some of the diversity of the renowned Australian flora and fauna on the mid-slopes. Noisy Grey Shrike Thrushes, Superb Fairy-wren, Brown Thornbill, Yellow-throated Honeyeater and Grey Fantail frequent the mid-slopes, while on the summit Brown Falcon and Black Currawong may make their appearance. Later we travel to a local reserve just south of Hobart, looking out for the large flightless Tasmanian Native Hen en route, and in the shrubs and forest of the reserve Yellow Wattlebirds, and Forty-spotted Pardalotes are possible. In the afternoon we take the ferry from Hobart to the renowned island of Bruny where we stay for two nights. Black-faced Cormorants frequent these waters. The carnivorous Eastern Quolls can be seen more readily on Bruny than in any other part of the island. This evening we shall seek them out along with Brush-tailed Possums and endemic Tasmanian Pademelons, We have a full day to explore Inala, a 'Land for Wildlife' property on South Bruny, and gain further insights into the endemic wildlife and birdlife of this unique region. Inala is a 205 hectare (500 acre property) located north of Cloudy. It is home to 90 bird species (including all of the Tasmanian endemic species), almost 40 species of native terrestrial orchids, an amazing diversity of plant species and several species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Of particular interest today will be the Forty-spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Strong-billed, Yellow and Black-headed Honeyeaters, Dusky and Flame Robins, Brush Bronzewing, Eastern Spinebill and Green Rosella. Small terrestrial orchids such as the Purple Bird Orchid may also be seen. On the coastline and beaches

Mount Field National Park



we can watch out for Wedge-tailed Eagle, White-bellied Sea Eagle and Australasian Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers.

Day 6

Today we take a three hour marine excursion from Bruny Island, which boasts stunning natural cliff formations. Common and Bottle-nose Dolphins are a common sight around the island, as are Australian and New Zealand Fur Seals, while Humpback and Southern Right Whales migrate through this area at this time of year. Three species of albatross – Buller's, Yellow-nosed and Shy are likely to be seen along with Short-tailed Shearwaters. Later we return by ferry to Hobart and travel north to New Norfolk where we stay overnight.

Day 7

We travel inland today to the Mount Field National Park, where we can explore the lower forests, home to Grey Shrike Thrush, Olive Whistler, Flame Robin and Black Currawongs, while the rivers and tarns are home to Duck-billed Platypus. This afternoon we continue to the World Heritage area encompassing Lake St Clair and Cradle Mountain where we stay overnight. We take a walk through

the black peppermint forest on the shores of the lake. Here the endemic Tasmanian Scrub-Wren and Yellow Wattlebird occur along with Pink Robin. We can listen and look for the unusual Ground Parrot this evening.

Days 8 & 9

We travel through the passes to Western Tasmania and north up to Cradle Mountain National Park for a stay of two nights. There are good opportunities to see Echidnas later today along the road verge. We make an evening excursion for Common Wombats, Pademelons, Bennett's Wallabies, and possible Spotted-tailed Quolls. The next day we visit Lake Dove and vicinity. Great hikes to Crater Lake and Cradle Mountain depart from this area. Scrub Tits and Tasmanian Scrub Wren are features of the button grass and shrub lands.

Day 10

We take a morning walks along the Cradle Valley boardwalk, usually with Metallic Skinks in abundance and to the calls of Tasmanian Froglets. Following lunch we leave Cradle Mountain and travel north to the coast. This evening we visit a seabird colony on The Nut, where we marvel and

'duck' as 13,000 Short-tailed Shearwaters return to their burrows around our feet. Southern Brown Bandicoots occur in the vicinity, and the Stanley 'nightlife' consists of Little Penguins walking down the main street, with Tasmanian Pademelons sitting at the cross-roads! We stay in Stanley overnight.

Days 11 & 12

Today we travel inland to the Mountain Wilderness Retreat, in the lost valley of Loonganna in NW Tasmania, for a stay of two nights. Eleven of the twelve Tasmanian endemics can be found in this private forest sanctuary. After dark the marsupial life may astound. Spotted-tailed Quolls frequent the immediate vicinity of the lodge while the views of Tasmanian Devils can be unrivalled.

Day 13

Just after dawn we can seek the graceful Platypus in the wild as it glides through the water on creeks adjacent to the town. Then it is off the northern coast and the Narrawntapu National Park. This park has abundant marsupial wildlife, including Forrester Kangaroos on the 'marsupial lawns' surrounding the lagoon, and Southern Bettongs in the shrub lands. Copperhead snakes are also regularly viewed in this area. A newly created walkway near Launceston will provide a variety of waterfowl, estuarine and scrub birds – Grey and Chestnut Teals, Australasian Shoveler, Great Egret, Australian Pelican and Peregrine overhead. We arrive in Launceston in the late afternoon for an overnight stay.

Days 14 & 15

In the early morning we visit a local reserve and look out for Long Nosed Potoroo, before travelling south through the Midlands to Freycinet Peninsula. We stay in Bicheno for two nights. We take an afternoon walk in the vicinity of Bicheno coast for Crested Tern and Red-capped Plover and an evening walk for Little Penguins. The next day we make an excursion to Freycinet National Park. The waters of Moulting Lagoon hold Black Swans, Australian Pelican, Musk and Pacific Black Ducks. We walk to Wineglass Bay where granite outcrops, rugged peaks, crystal clear water, stunning orchids, wonderfully barked local eucalypt trees

and Oyster Bay Pines, all combine to make this a superb locality from which to learn much more about the coastal natural heritage. We can keep an eye out for Bassian Thrush, and Spotted Quail Thrush along with White's and Ocellated Skinks Later this afternoon we can search for Hooded Plovers on the beaches of the peninsula and in the evening we can take an excursion for possums and quolls,

Days 16 to 18

In the morning we drive to Hobart and connect with our flight to Melbourne where we stay for three nights. In the evening we visit the botanic gardens to look for the large colony of Grey-headed Flying Foxes that is in residence here. Many bird species inhabit the trees and shrubs in the gardens, including Rainbow Lorikeet, Red-rumped Parrot, Pied Currawong and White-plumed Honeyeater. We have a full day and evening excursion to the west of Melbourne. We can view a wide range of Victorian wildlife, in the Serendip Sanctuary, including Grey Kangaroo, Swamp Wallaby, Emu, and a wonderful array of water loving birds such as Yellow-billed and Royal Spoonbills, Magpie Geese, Nankeen Night-Heron, White-faced and Pacific Herons, Black-headed Plover, Dusky Moorhen and Australian and Straw-necked Ibises. In addition overhead Whistling and Black Kites and Little Eagle survey all. We can learn about the Koala research being undertaken in the Brisbane Ranges, seek out Koala and gain a real insight into natural values of the greater Melbourne region. Tawny Frogmouth is regularly viewed in these hills, along with Musk and Purple-crowned Lorikeets, Galah, Long-billed Corella and White-winged Chough. The next day we can visit the local ranges and spend the morning searching for birds such as the secretive Superb Lyrebird, the Eastern Whipbird, Red Wattlebird, White-naped Honeyeater and parrots such as Eastern and Crimson Rosellas, King Parrot and Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo.

Days 19 & 20

We transfer to Melbourne Airport for our flight to London and we arrive back in London early the next morning.



Tasmanian Devil

Outline Itinerary

Day 1	Depart London
Day 2	In transit
Day 3	Hobart
Days 4-5	Bruny Island
Day 6	New Norfolk
Day 7	Lake St Clair
Days 8-9	Cradle Mountain
Day 10	Stanley
Days 11-12	Loonganna
Day 13	Launceston
Days 14-15	Bicheno
Days 16-18	Melbourne
Day 19	Depart Melbourne
Day 20	Arrive London

Party Size

Maximum of 10 clients.

Accommodation

Comfortable accommodation in twin/double and single rooms with private facilities.

Transport

By private coach and minibus

Includes

All flights, meals, accommodation, transport, entry fees, services of the leaders, airport taxes and tips.

Gradings

	Good
	140
	Warm
	Low
	Special
	Moderate
	Good
	Moderate
	Scheduled



Tasmanian Native-hen



Echidna