

## A Tourism Classification of Australian Wildlife

**Green, R., Higginbottom, K. and Northrope, C. 2001.**  
**CRC Sustainable Tourism, Gold Coast.**  
**Pp. 71 (plus spreadsheet), ISBN 1-876685-43-3**  
**Price AUD \$35.00**

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**DR GREEN** is both a research ecologist and an ecotour operator, with research interests in frugivorous seed dispersal and habitat modification. Dr Higginbottom is a lecturer at Griffith University where she teaches wildlife management, vertebrate biology, and nature based tourism. Ms Northrope holds a BSc in Ecotourism from Griffith University and was awarded the Bachelor's Medal for highest overall GPA in her faculty.

The core of this technical report is a spreadsheet (on floppy disk or CD) containing many useful comments on Australian wildlife related to their tourism potential. It is accompanied by a booklet, which is both an overview and an introduction to the spreadsheet. The report's purpose is to present data about wildlife as an aid to tourism operators, thereby aiding the development of wildlife tourism in Australia. The report is recommended to both tourism operators and conservation managers; it is too skeletal for the latter. Therefore, I will review it for tourism operators.

Unsurprisingly, mammals and birds represent more than half of the spreadsheet, with reptiles, frogs, fish, and invertebrates, included in the lower half.

The spreadsheet presents the taxa in rows and the data relating to tourism/management appeal in columns. However, the tourism/management data is frequently iterated with many cells duplicated down the columns. More specific comments per taxon may have benefited operators and led them more precisely in their follow up research. The authors acknowledge that it is not a final product, but merely a starting point to stimulate feedback.

The hardcopy and the spreadsheet rely heavily and in some cases naïvely on secondary literature. For example, The Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* and Southern Cassowary *Casuarius casuarius* are each incorrectly placed into separate families, when both species belong in the family Casuariidae (Christidis and Boles 1994). This error is likely to have been perpetuated from the secondary literature (see Slater *et al.* 1991). In addition, the authors state that 850 bird species occur in Australia, citing Jones and Buckley (2001). However, when I checked this reference I found that they suggest 800 species and this was obtained from Wheatley (1998).

The hardcopy 'introduction' provides quite general overviews of the most familiar groups of Australian wildlife. However, they are presented in an academic format, which may not be best suited to non-academic tourism operators. The numerous footnotes slow the reader even more. Conversely, the information presented in the spreadsheet is easily accessible and logically structured.

Overall, the report appears as a poorly researched draft form. I find it unsatisfactory to defend a report as not a final product, but as a starting point to justify its publication. Despite these criticisms, the report has potential as a handy reference for tourism operators; however, this potential would be better served if the report was fully developed prior to publication.

### REFERENCES

- Christidis, L. and Boles, W. E., 1994. The Taxonomy and Species of Australia and its Territories. Royal Australian Ornithologists Union Monograph 2. RAOU, Melbourne.
- Jones, D. N. and Buckley, R., 2001. Birdwatching Tourism in Australia. CRC Sustainable Tourism, Gold Coast.
- Slater, P., Slater, P. and Slater, R., 1991. The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds. Weldon Publishing, Willoughby.
- Wheatley, N., 1998. Where to watch birds in Australia and Oceania. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

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## Birdwatching Tourism in Australia

**Jones, D. N. and Buckley, R. 2001.**  
**CRC Sustainable Tourism, Gold Coast.**  
**Pp. 37, ISBN 1-876685-61-1**  
**Price AUD \$20.00**

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**DR DARRYL JONES** graduated from the University of New England. He is a senior lecturer in ecology at Griffith University. Prof. Ralf Buckley is Chair in Ecotourism and Director of the International Centre for Ecotourism Research at Griffith University.

This brief technical report discusses the characteristics of the birdwatcher, and the constraints and challenges facing the birdwatching tourism industry. It aims to provide information and insights that will aid the development of the birdwatching tourism in Australia. It is ordered logically into short coherent sections, with birdwatchers fittingly defined and categorized early in the report. Their descriptions are both practical and useful for the tourism operator and developer. Subsequently, willingness and ability to pay are juxtaposed with the categorizations, which should aid tourism operators to optimize the birdwatchers experience and their profits.

Birdwatching locations are introduced, but not discussed in detail. Economic efficiency is re-iterated throughout the report and is the primary focus of sections regarding obstacles and opportunities. A particular strength of the report lies in identifying and discussing some of the obstacles. These are varied and include discussions about limited quality accommodation in regional areas and the unpredictability of the climate. I would have liked to have seen more detail in the effects on conservation section, particularly on approaching and disturbing

nesting birds. Nevertheless, the section is informative despite its brevity. Pertinent and concise recommendations for industry, government action, and research complete the report.

The strength of this report lies in its detailed approach to characterization of birdwatchers and the ways they are likely to interact with the market. In addition, it presents thoughtful overviews regarding constraints and challenges. Overall, it is well researched and relevant to the tourism industry.

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## Introductory Ecology

**Peter Cotgreave and Irwin Forseth, 2002**  
**Blackwell Science, Oxford**  
**277 Pp. ISBN 0-632-04227-3**  
**RRP AUD\$75.90**

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**DR** PETER COTGREAVE completed a PhD in ecology at the Zoology Department of the University of Oxford. Irwin Forseth is a plant physiological ecologist, teaching plant ecology and introductory biology at the University of Maryland since 1982. Cotgreave and Forseth have come together to write their first text: *Introductory Ecology*. The authors believe that many students attain qualifications in science without a basic understanding of the importance of ecology. The authors' aim is to provide a straightforward text that can be used by students receiving only minimal exposure to ecology.

The book contains 14 chapters covering the various areas of ecology that are considered standard fare in an introductory text. Chapters 1 to 3 cover the fundamentals of the diversity of life, global ecological theories such as biomes and the nature of experiments and interpreting ecological information. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss interactions of organisms with abiotic factors; for example, climatic process and climate-organism interactions and interactions between organisms and the physical environment.

Chapters 6 to 10 deal with organisms and their interactions with the biotic environment. Population models dealing with reproductive rate, carrying capacity and intraspecific competition are discussed (Chapter 6), as well as population demography and life history (Chapter 7) and competition between different species and its effect on structuring communities (Chapter 8). Chapter 9 looks at a range of interactions other than competition, such as predation, herbivory and parasitism. Chapter 10 describes how ecologists view and study interactions and the movement of organic resources.

The authors spend considerable effort in Chapter 10 discussing the nature of interactions. They describe how one type of interaction may have different consequences and how different interactions can have the same consequence. It appears that the inclusion of this chapter may have been an effort to introduce a selling point, by distinguishing this text from others. Unfortunately, the authors have not made it clear why this topic is important and the complexity of the chapter only serves to confuse the reader.

Chapters 11 to 13 cover community ecology, ecosystem ecology and larger scale patterns such as succession, equilibrium, resilience and resistance. The last chapter explains additional ecological patterns such as species richness, abundance and diversity.

The chapters flow easily in a logical sequence, with helpful summary sections. The somewhat chatty but informative introductions describe what the reader should understand from previous chapters and how that information will help them in the following chapter.

There is a figure, table or box on almost every page and the presentation of the text is pleasing and easy to read. The use of various shades of purple as the only colour has given the text a stylish appearance. The text includes simple examples of ecological models with easy to follow language used to describe the models (e.g., Chapter 9, page 149 presents a clear model of predation systems).

Cotgreave and Forseth have produced a useable and attractive ecology text that covers the main ecological disciplines with an equal coverage of plant and animal interactions. This text is presented in a simple style and covers the necessary basics of ecology adequately. For those using this book in conjunction with lectures, it would be a useful acquisition. However, on its own, some concepts may leave the reader none the wiser.