



WildWings

Christmas Island Tropical seabirds and island endemics

South of Indonesia, North West of Australia lays this small tropical paradise, home to two full endemic seabirds and at least four full endemic landbird species. We visited the island in April 2005 and a full illustrated trip report is available on our website or from us. Seabirds are always in view, anywhere over the island, hence the local's nickname for them, the Christmas Island Air Force. Abbott's Booby is the first of the two endemic seabirds, the largest and rarest member of its family, they nest on tall trees in the island's forests and prefer to roost in trees even outside the breeding season, about 3000 pairs. They have an almost albatross-like look to them in flight with long straight wings. The second is the Christmas Island Frigatebird, also the rarest member of its family with about 2000-2500 pairs, especially common around the settlement.

The island also boasts the stunning golden-apricot coloured race of White-tailed Tropicbird (known locally as the Golden Bosun) plus breeding Red-tailed Tropicbirds too (Silver Bosuns). Add Brown and Red-footed Boobies (yellow-headed white form), Great and Lesser Frigatebirds and finally nesting Brown Noddies. At least four full land endemics also occur, Christmas Island Imperial Pigeon, Christmas Island White-eye, Christmas Island Brown Goshawk and the hard to see Christmas Island Hawk Owl, plus at least four distinct island races of other birds. Some of these may yet be split into full species over time. In addition to the birding (and photo opportunities are excellent) superb snorkelling is also on offer including with Whale Sharks at certain times of year. A resident group of Spinner Dolphins can often be seen offshore. If you see any black buzzard type 'birds' flying around they will be the island's endemic fruit bat! The island is also world famous for its 'crab-based' ecosystem, Red, Blue and Robber Crabs are abundant. The famed endemic red crab migration occurs in the latter part of the year. Reached by frequent flights from Perth, Western Australia and a weekly flight from Kuala Lumpur & Singapore, our packages can be customised to suit your needs. A choice of accommodation is available on the island, most are simple lodges and there is some self-catering. Our prices below are for standard rooms at VQ3 Lodge. 4 x4 vehicle hire is essential for getting around. You could see most of the birds in just a few days but we suggest at least five nights to fully absorb the magic of this special place.

If you are serious about your seabirds, this is a place you just have to add to your list of travelling destinations.

Trip information (year round)

From Kuala Lumpur

Prices: 7 nights from £960 per person sharing an apartment (based on 4 people) or from £1020 per person sharing a twin room.

Single supplement: on request

From Perth, WA.

Prices: 7 nights from £1105 per person sharing an apartment (based on 4 people) or from £1170 per person, sharing a twin room.

Single supplement: on request

Price includes: Return economy class charter flights from Kuala Lumpur or Perth including taxes, 7 nights accommodation in rooms with private facilities, return transfers, island orientation tour, half-day birding tour, night owl tour, birding boat trip, 3 days 4 x 4 vehicle rental, pre-trip information including a bird booklet and checklist.

Price excludes: Flights to/from KL and/or Perth, meals, visa fees and travel insurance.

Contact us for your quote, any number of nights and combination of services are possible.