

Birds of the Darebin Creek

The Darebin Creek Catchment contains a diverse range of avian habitats including Grasslands, Wetlands and Grassy Woodlands. These habitats support a variety of bird species. Revegetation works throughout the Catchment have improved the vegetation structure of a previously degraded landscape transforming it into suitable bird habitat. A visit to the Darebin Creek will enable you to observe some of the many birds that have made it their home. Go for a walk along the Darebin Creek to see if you can spot some of the birds on this list. A good field guide to birds and some binoculars will help you to identify them correctly.

Tawny Frogmouth

A common woodland bird, but rarely seen because of its nocturnal habits and camouflage to appear like a branch stub. Grey to red-brown back streaked black, with paler underparts. Feeds on snails, insects and small vertebrates by flying from a perch to the ground. Prefers open woodland.
Voice: a constant “ooo-oom”.



Photo: Wendy Miller

Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoo

A large black cockatoo with yellow tail panels and cheek patches, with most of its body feathers edged in pale yellow. Often seen in groups of 5-10, feeding in the upper canopy or in feeding among dead wattle trees. You can tell the male from the female by the colour of the eye ring – the female’s eye is dark but the male’s is a bright pink.
Voice: a wailing “kee-ow”.

Superb Fairy-wren

These tiny birds can be seen flitting about in shrubs in open woodlands along the Darebin Creek. The male displays bright blue plumage during the breeding period. The female is brown. Prefers woodlands habitat.
Voice: musical trill.



Photo: Sean Walsh

Hardhead “White eyed” Duck

Less common than other ducks along the Darebin Creek, the hardhead has a rich brown body, white underneath and a distinctive white eye. The bill is black with a blue tip.
Voice: nasal “mow”.

Red-rumped Parrot

Also found in woodland habitat this medium sized green parrot is often seen feeding along the Darebin Creek Shared Trail. The male is bright green while the female is a pale olive. Commonly seen in pairs and small groups in grasslands and woodlands.
Voice: a two-syllable whistle when flying.

White-Faced Heron

An attractive 60-70cm long-necked bird living around creeks and wetlands. Overall grey shades in colour, with a white face to just behind the eye. Often seen perching on trees or posts, or searching for insects, frogs, fish and crustaceans in the shallows or nearby grasslands.
Voice: harsh croaks.

Little Pied Cormorant

Streamlined fishing bird with black wings and back, white underside and short yellow bill. Often seen at wetlands and along the Darebin Creek.
Voice: short croak.



Sacred Kingfisher

Small colourful bird, the same shape as a Kookaburra, dwelling in riparian zones along the creek. Kingfishers can be seen diving in to water in search of food. They nest in small hollows and crevices in trees and creek banks.
Voice: high-pitched whistles when disturbed.

Further Reading

Simpson and Day, (1996) Field Guide to the Birds of Australia, Viking

Warringal Conservation Society, (1981) Birds of the Heidelberg and Yarra Valley, WCS, Rosanna

Bird List of the Darebin Creek Catchment

The following list shows some of the species that you may be able to spot around the Darebin Creek Catchment.

* indicates an introduced species.

Raptors –Diurnal Birds Of Prey

Australian Hobby (Little Falcon) *Falco longipennis*
Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus axillaris*
Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*
Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*
Collared Sparrowhawk *Accipiter cirrhocephalus*
Little Eagle *Hieraaetus morphnoides*
Nankeen Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*
Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*
Whistling Kite *Haliastur (Milvus) sphenurus*

Waterbirds – most common around waterways and wetlands.

Australasian Grebe *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*
Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus*
Australian White (Sacred) Ibis
Threskiornis molucca
Australian Wood (Maned) Duck *Chenonetta jubata*
Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*
Blue-billed Duck *Oxyura australis*
Cattle Egret *Ardea ibis*
Chestnut Teal *Anas castanea*
Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*
Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*
Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Great Egret *Ardea alba*
Hardhead (White-eyed Duck) *Aythya australis*
Hoary-headed Grebe
Poliiocephalus poliocephalus
Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*
Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*
Nankeen (Rufous) Night Heron
Nycticorax caledonicus
Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*

Pacific Heron *Ardea pacifica*
Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*
Pink-eared Duck *Malacorhynchus membranaceus*
Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*
Straw-necked Ibis *Threskiornis spinicollis*
White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*

Diurnal Birds – most active during the day

Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen*
Bell Miner *Manorina melanophrys*
Black –faced Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*
Black-faced Woodswallow *Artamus cinereus*
Bronzewing Pigeon *Phaps chalcoptera*
Brown Quail *Coturnix ypsilophora*
Brush Wattlebird *Anthochaera chrysoptera*
Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*
Common Myna* *Acridotheres tristis*
Common Blackbird* *Turdus merula*
Common Starling* *Sturnus vulgaris*
Crested Pigeon *Ocyphaps (Geophaps) lophotes*
Crested Shrike-tit *Falcunculus frontatus*
Crimson Rosella *Platycercus caledonicus*
Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*
Dusky Wood swallow *Artamus cyanopterus*
Eastern Rosella *Platycercus elegans*
Eastern Spinebill *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*
European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*
European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cuculus flabelliformis*
Flame Robin *Petroica phoenicea*
Galah *Elophus (Cacatua) roseicapilla*
Gang-Gang Cockatoo *Callocephalon fimbriatum*
Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*
Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis*
Grey Currawong *Strepera versicolor*
Grey Butcherbird *Cracticus torquatus*
Grey Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa*
Grey Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla harmonica*
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalix*
House Sparrow* *Passer domesticus*
Kookaburra *Dacelo novaguineae*
Little Lorikeet *Glossopsitta pusilla*
Little Raven *Corvus mellori*

Little (Brush) Wattlebird *Anthochaera chrysoptera*
Little (Yellow) Thornbill *Acanthiza nana*
Long billed Corella *Cacatua sanguinea*
Magpie-lark *Grallina cyanoleuca*
Masked Lapwing (Spurwinged Plover) *Vanellus miles*
Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*
Musk Lorikeet *Glossopsitta concinna*
New Holland Honeyeater *Philidonyrus novaehollandiae*
Noisy Miner *Manorina melanocephala*
Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus*
Pallid Cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus*
Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina*
Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*
Red-browed Finch (Firetail) *Neochima temporalis*
Red-rumped Parrot *Psephotus hamematonotus*
Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera carunculata*
Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus*
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*
Scarlet Robin *Petroica multicolor*
Silvereye (Grey-backed) *Zosterops lateralis*
Song Thrush* *Turdus philomelos*
Speckled Warbler *Chthonicola (Sericimix) brunneus*
Spotted pardalote *Pardalotus punctatus*
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*
Superb Fairy-wren *Malurus cyaneus*
Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*
White-browed Scrubwren *Sericornis frontalis*
White-plumed Honeyeater *Lichenostomus ornatus*
White-throated Needletail (Spine-tailed Swift) *Hirundapus caudacutus*
Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*
Yellow (Eastern) Robin *Eopsaltria australis*
Yellow-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus funereus*

Nocturnal Birds – most active at night

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*
Boobook Owl *Ninox novaeseelandiae*
Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua*
Tawny Frogmouth *Podargus strigo*