

Cassowary Coast

Farmland | Rainforest | Wetlands | Coast

The Cassowary Coast birding region features rugged mountains, sparkling rivers and waterfalls, secluded beaches, a rainforest canopy walk, tropical islands, and abundant birds. Add the uniquely North Queensland character of the people, food, towns and farms (sugar cane, bananas, tropical fruit) and this area provides an unforgettable visitor experience.

Of the 335 bird species found here, as the region's name suggests, you are very likely to see a Southern Cassowary. Despite their impressive size, these 60 Kg birds can be tricky to find in the forest – unless you know where to look! Reliable sightings occur at Etty Bay, where cassowaries regularly stroll along the beach, and at the Licuala Fan Palm Walk near Mission Beach. These iconic birds can also wander along and cross roads, so please be on the look-out and drive carefully.

As well as excellent birding, the region's attractions include: the town of Innisfail with its art deco architecture; Mission Beach's restaurants, shaded sandy beaches, walking trails and holiday atmosphere; and Cardwell's esplanade providing views to Hinchinbrook Island. The all-year-round lush, greenness of the Cassowary Coast landscape is nurtured by more than 3,000 mm average rainfall, so consider taking a raincoat or umbrella.

When to go

Birding at any time of year is rewarding. In the drier season, from June to December, the sugarcane harvest season attracts large numbers of raptors and egrets. Waterbirds also concentrate as waterholes and wetlands contract. From September to April, migratory species such as Torresian Imperial Pigeon, Buff-breasted Paradise Kingfisher, and migratory shorebirds visit the region.

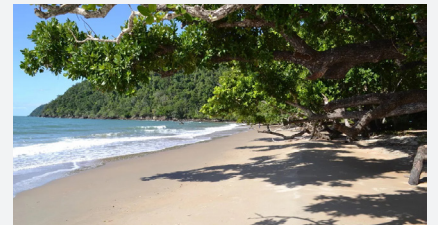
Getting there

Most travellers fly into Cairns and travel by car or bus to the region. Roads are good, though during the summer Wet season flooding occasionally occurs. If you are into wilderness cycling, the Misty Mountain trails offer an opportunity to ride through rainforest clad mountains to the coast.



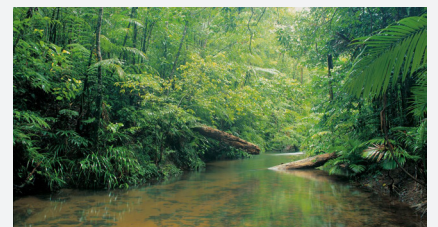
Warrina Lakes

Lush parkland in Innisfail featuring over 130 bird species



Etty Bay

The best place to see Southern Cassowary at a picturesque beach



Djiru National Park Mission Beach

Lowland rainforest walking trails along pristine creeks

Spot these locals when you visit

Community

BirdLife Northern Queensland have a monthly morning bird walk at Warrina Lakes. Check our events at birdlifennq.org/events to find out more.

Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4) is a well-established community group with a display centre and plant nursery at Mission Beach. Visitors are very welcome. The group works on revegetation, advocacy, education and land buy-back. Volunteer at C4 by emailing c4mission@gmail.com.

The Johnstone Ecological Society is a conservation group based in Innisfail and is responsible for local land restoration at Bulguru Swamp and Loth Park.

Conservation

Make your birding count by doing a bird survey in the Coastal Wet Tropics Key Biodiversity Area and entering it at birddata.birdlife.org.au. Every time you share your surveys, our collective knowledge of birds grows.

Get involved!

Visit birdlifennq.org to find out more about what we do and subscribe to our newsletter to get notified about our events.



Beach Stone-curlew



Macleay's Honeyeater



Brahminy Kite



Brown-backed Honeyeater



Double-eyed Fig-Parrot



Forest Kingfisher



Great-billed Heron



Grey Whistler



Lovely Fairy-wren



Metallic Starling



Orange-footed Scrubfowl



Spotted Catbird



Torresian Imperial Pigeon



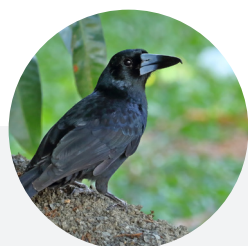
White-bellied Sea Eagle



Lesser Sooty Owl



Wompoo Fruit-Dove



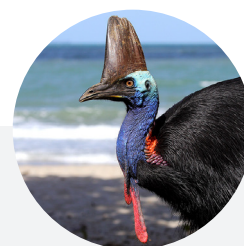
Black Butcherbird



Crimson Finch



White-browed Crake



Southern Cassowary



Shining Flycatcher

