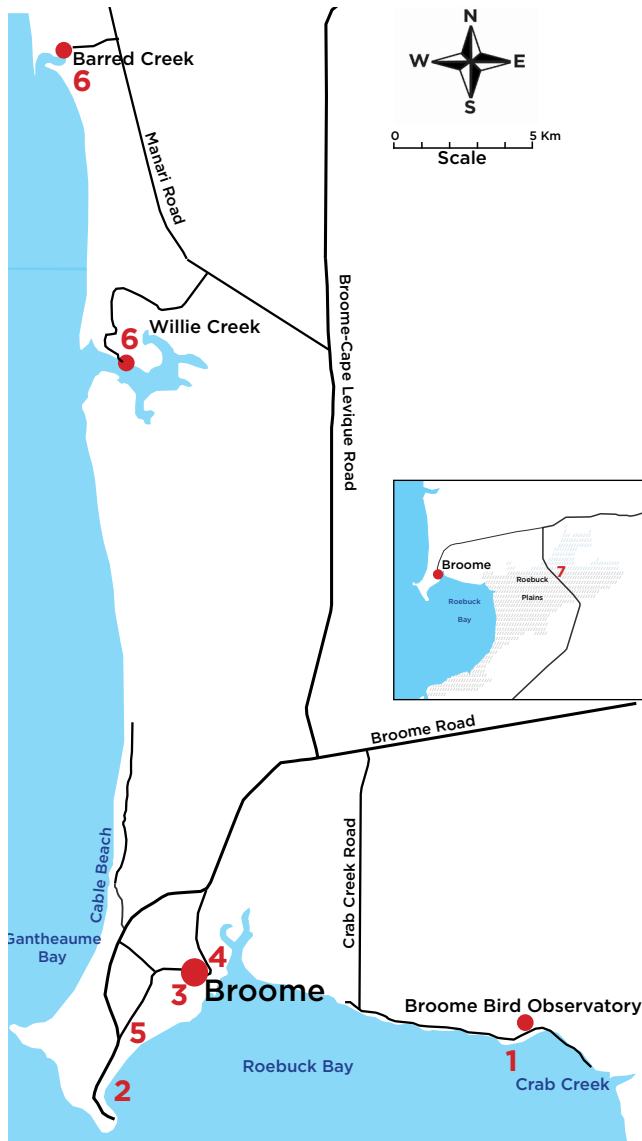


# Bird Sites Broome Region



## Birdwatching around Broome

Broome is world famous for its spectacular birdlife, with over 325 species recorded in the region. Excellent birding can be had throughout the year. *NB The wet season occasionally affects access to the prime birding areas.*

There are six distinct habitats in the region and all are relatively close to the town itself. They are mangrove, salt marsh, open plains, mudflats, pindan woodland and coastal scrub interspersed with vine thickets



Bar-shouldered Dove

## Acknowledgements

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## Guide No 3A

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# Birdwatching around Broome

Grey Plover by John Anderson



birds are in our nature

  
**birdlife**  
Western Australia

## 1. Roebuck Bay

This area has some of the best birding areas in Australia for migratory waders. The coastal environment is an internationally recognised wintering area for tens of thousands of these birds from September to April. Many of these species stay through the Australian winter, appearing very different in their breeding plumage.



Bar-tailed Godwit  
(breeding plumage)

A telescope is very useful to identify and enjoy these waders. Near high tide is the best time to view the flocks as they roost on the beaches of the bay.



Pied Oystercatcher

While summer is the best season to see the largest flocks of waders, several thousand can be seen throughout the dry season such as Sooty and Australian Pied Oystercatchers, Eastern Curlew, Whimbrel, Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits, Great and Red Knots, Common Greenshank, Terek and Curlew Sandpipers, Red-necked Stint, Greater and Lesser Sand Plovers, Grey Plover and Ruddy Turnstone.



Ruddy Turnstone

Sought after species such as Common Redshank, Asian Dowitcher and Broad-billed Sandpiper are often present including the dry season.

## 1a. Broome Bird Observatory (BBO)

Located on Roebuck Bay, BBO was established in 1988 by Birds Australia (now BirdLife Australia) as a base to research the many thousands of migratory waders that use the East Asian-Australasian Flyway to visit the north west of Western Australia each summer. Over 800,000 birds visit annually; it is considered one of the top shorebird viewing sites in the world. Habitats in the area include intertidal mudflats, woodland, open plains, mangroves and salt marsh.



Common Sandpiper

The observatory is 25km from Broome and is accessed via Crab Creek Rd (sign-posted at the junction of Broome and Crab Creek Rds). It is 15km from here, **including 13km of unsealed, sandy and corrugated road - 4WD recommended.**

Accommodation & facilities: The observatory has basic units, a self-contained cottage, unpowered campsites and a well-equipped camp kitchen, education facilities and a library.

There are conducted tours and walks. Day visitors are welcome. Ring the observatory for full details, including tide times for watching waders. (See *Contacts for BBO contact details*)



Brown Quail

## 1b. Malurus Trail

This leads from the observatory along the fence line for about 3 km to Crab Creek. Look for Black-shouldered Kite, Spotted Harrier, Brown Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel, Brown Quail, White-winged Triller, Grey-crowned Babbler, Horsfield's Bushlark, Golden-headed Cisticola, Red-backed Fairy-wren, cuckoos and button-quails.



Brown Falcon



White-winged Triller  
(male)

## 1c. Crab Creek Mangroves

Many birds are present, but some are difficult to locate. Keen observers may find Striated Heron, Mangrove Golden and White-breasted Whistlers, Broad-billed Flycatcher, Mangrove Grey Fantail, and Dusky Gerygone. Yellow White-eye is common. This is the best site to view the waders feeding close to the mangroves at low tide. You may be fortunate enough to see Common Redshank and Asian Dowitcher feeding here.



Striated Heron

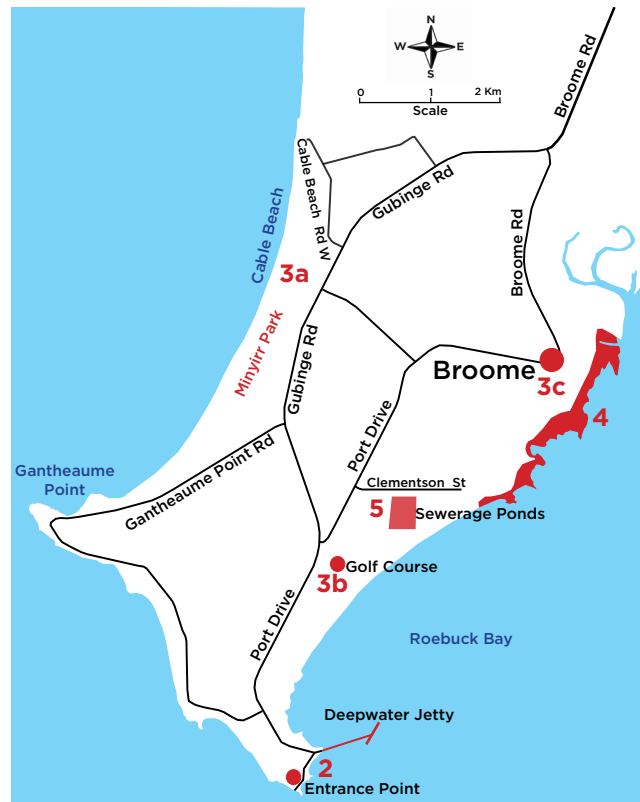
## 2. Entrance Point and Deep Water Jetty

Deep Water Jetty is worth a look for Brown Booby, Australasian Darter, Osprey and Striated Heron.

This is also a good area for Singing, Brown, Rufous-throated and sometimes Grey-headed Honeyeaters. Red-backed and Variegated Fairy-wrens are common. Other species include Eastern Reef Egret, Grey-tailed Tattler, Sanderling and several terns.



Caspian Tern



## 3. Pindan Woodlands, Broome Town, Golf Course and ovals

Pindan woodland, the common acacia-dominated vegetation community found between Derby and Port Hedland, offers quite different birding opportunities

Species to be seen include Red-winged Parrot, Black-chinned Honeyeater, White-throated Gerygone, Black-faced Woodswallow and Great Bowerbird. Look for Barnswallow and Dollarbird (Oct -Apr). The sewage ponds (see Site 5) have surrounding pindan woodland.

**Minyirr Park** ( site 3a) which runs from Cable Beach Resort area to Gantheaume Point, has trails throughout and the numerous entrances are marked. The best place to start is to park in the Cable Beach parking lot near the surf club.

The **golf course** (site 3b) is also an excellent area of woodland. *Please do not disturb the golfers.*

**Town ovals** (site 3c) support several species including include Black Kite, Nankeen Kestrel, Masked Lapwing, Australasian Pipit, and White-breasted Woodswallow. In the wet season Yellow Wagtail is possible and waders may include Little Curlew, Pacific and Golden Plover.



White-breasted Woodswallow

Birds of prey feature prominently in Broome. Eighteen species have been recorded including Black Kite, Whistling Kite, Brown Goshawk, Collared Sparrowhawk and Peregrine Falcon and there is a good chance of White-bellied Sea Eagle.

In **town gardens** look for White-gaped Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Double-barred Finch and Great Bowerbird. On the town's outskirts look for Bar-shouldered Dove, Pheasant Coucal, Blue-winged Kookaburra, Grey-crowned Babbler, White-throated and Mangrove Gerygones, Mistletoebird and Dollarbird (Oct to Apr).



Double-barred Finch

## 4. Town Mangroves

These areas provide a challenge to the most avid birder. The easiest site to access is Streeters Jetty off Dampier Tce at the end of Short St.

Look for Mangrove Golden and White-breasted Whistlers, Mangrove Grey Fantail, Dusky Gerygone, Broad-billed Flycatcher, Red-headed Honeyeater and Yellow White-eye.

Osprey, Brahminy Kite and Gull-billed Tern are a few of the birds patrolling the coastline.



Red-headed Honeyeater



White-breasted Whistler (male)

## 5. Broome Sewage Ponds

Birdwatchers often visit such areas seeking unusual sightings in these reliable water sources.

Officially 'Broome South Waste Water Treatment Plant' (WWTP), the area is accessed via Port Drive and Clementson St. This is an artificial, 13ha site and is used by a wide variety of species – ducks, shorebirds, herons, spoonbills, raptors, etc for foraging, roosting and in some cases, breeding. It often turns up unusual sightings. A raised viewing area, the Barndarlmarra Hut, is inside the main fenced boundary and provides good views over the ponds.

This was an innovative and much appreciated development by the Water Corporation's West Kimberley Operations, incorporated when major works were carried out at the site. The area is always open and does not require special permission to enter.



Freckled Duck

**6. Barred and Willie Creeks**

Travel 17 km north along the road to Cape Leveque. Turn left along the dirt road and follow the signs. A **4WD is recommended** unless you are prepared to walk further. Both saltwater creeks are superb mangrove-lined areas that are alive with birds. Several species of terns, mangrove dwellers, raptors, waders and bush birds are in close proximity.



Beach Stone-curlew

These are good areas to look for Lesser Frigatebird, Black-necked Stork, Beach Stone-curlew, Red-headed Honeyeater, Northern Fantail, the elusive Kimberley form of Lemon-bellied Flycatcher (*tormenti*) and a chance of Little Bronze-Cuckoo.



Glossy Ibis



Little Egret

**7. Roebuck Plains**

Excellent birding is available on the Great Northern Highway where it crosses Roebuck Plains. The highway is sealed so it is easily accessible by all vehicles. **Look for a safe place to pull off the road.** If travelling from Broome it is about a 30 minute drive.

The grasslands plains start 8 km south of the Roebuck Plains Roadhouse and continue for 13 km until entering the Pindan again.



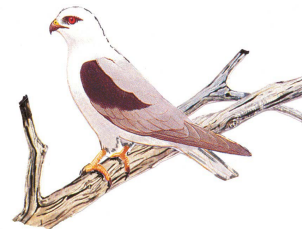
White-faced Heron

The wet season offers particularly good birding, with thousands of nesting waterbirds, including Australian Painted-snipe, Magpie Goose, crakes, ducks, ibis, egrets and Oriental Pratincole. In the dry season there are grassland species such as Yellow Chat, Australiasian Pipit, Horsfield's Bushlark, songlarks, Australian Pratincole and Brolga.

Common raptors are Spotted Harrier, Black and Whistling Kites and Nankeen Kestrel. Black-shouldered Kite is another possibility.



Nankeen Kestrel



Black-shouldered Kite

**Bird List**

Broome Bird Observatory's list is extensive. It covers an area within 70 km of Broome. The list is available at: [www.broomebirdobservatory.com](http://www.broomebirdobservatory.com) Look under THE BIRDS then use the link at the end of the introductory section.

The following are some of the most sought after (from BBO website).

**BIRD LIST**

Name	Season	Tick
Yellow Chat	Nov - Jan	
Common Redshank	Oct - Apr	
Asian Dowitcher	Feb - Mar	
White-breasted Whistler	any month	
Dusky Gerygone	any month	
Broad-billed Sandpiper	Sep - Apr	
Broad-billed Flycatcher	any month	
Oriental Pratincole	Best change Nov - Mar	
Red-headed Honeyeater	any month	
Yellow Wagtail	Nov - Mar	

Yellow Chat (male)



**Current BirdLife Australia names and taxonomic order applied**