



Croajingolong Journey

**Attainable wilderness halfway between Sydney and Melbourne
four day Private tour**

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| Tour code: | CJP |
| Tour Duration: | Four day journey |
| Style: | Private eco-touring. |
| Operates: | on request all year (Note: no tours run on or through Christmas Day) |
| Departs: | Merimbula airport – meets scheduled daily flights from Melbourne or Sydney |
| Returns to: | Merimbula airport – to meet scheduled daily flights to Melbourne or Sydney |

Overview

[Travel Agents please see last page for suggested brochure/website text]

Relax in the wilderness surrounded by wildlife beside Croajingolong National Park! See wild koalas, watch wild kangaroos and enjoy the chorus of parrots, cockatoos, swans and honeyeaters – all within a short distance of your luxury apartment. There's no rush on your private journey.

Your experienced Wildlife Guide will get you into the secret spots in this magnificent wilderness. Wander through gum-free forests full of birds, cruise a quiet coastal lake, stroll along a remote beach gazing at the wild Southern Ocean.

The tour begins after a short flight from Melbourne or Sydney, so this tour can be part of a through journey: Melbourne to Sydney or Sydney to Melbourne.

Introduction:

Australia's Croajingolong National Park is considered one of the finest natural regions on earth – it has been classified by the United Nations as a World Biosphere Reserve and contains one of the most complex forest ecosystems in Australia. The park spans the south-east corner of Australia - a pristine wilderness of eucalyptus forests, coastal heathlands, ocean beaches, deep secret rivers and secluded estuaries.

The jewel of Croajingolong is the Mallacoota region (in the eastern section of the National Park), where the Genoa River enters a large wilderness lake system called Mallacoota Inlet at the crossover of 3 major ecosystems – forest, estuary and ocean. Wildlife abounds in the sea, the bush and the lakes.

In this magnificent wilderness you will stay for 3 nights in luxury accommodation at Gipsy Point Lakeside overlooking the Genoa River. Lakeside is surrounded by Croajingolong and is a haven for wildlife – it is the perfect base to explore this beautiful, untouched region on foot, by vehicle and by boat, escorted by your personal Wildlife Guide. Delicious meals are served at Lakeside and are included in the tour price.

Day by Day Description (Note meal inclusions shown thus: B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)

Day 1 EAST GIPPSLAND - CROAJINGOLONG NATIONAL PARK

Depart Melbourne or Sydney airport for a short flight to Merimbula on the south-east corner of Australia. Upon arrival you will meet your Wildlife Guide and begin your wildlife sojourn in Croajingolong National Park. Your luxury accommodation for the next 3 nights will be at Gipsy Point Lakeside overlooking the Genoa River.

After settling in at Lakeside your Guide will take you on an orientation walk into the forest surrounding Lakeside. On this evening walk we may see kangaroos, wallabies, rare pigeons, kingfishers, the Superb Lyrebird, parrots and honeyeaters amongst other sightings. Dinner tonight will be at Lakeside.

O/n Gipsy Point Lakeside (D) - you will stay at the same accommodation for tonight and the following 2 nights

Note: transfer to Melbourne or Sydney airport to board Rex flight is not included



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Day 2 CROAJINGOLONG – THE FORESTS

This morning you may awake to the calls of dozens of birds – Lakeside is famous for its myriad “fly pasts” of colourful parrots and lorikeets. If you rise early you can watch them as the sun rises over the Genoa River. If you are quiet you may see kangaroos grazing near your apartment.

Today your Wildlife Guide will explain Australia's wildlife heritage as you walk and drive through this forest wilderness. One of the highlights may be sightings of wild koalas living on the edge of the rainforest – these delightful living fossils evolved in the rainforest before the Eucalypts but, as the rainforests disappeared, they have adapted to eat only eucalyptus leaves. We will discover the Casuarina tree that has a separate male and female plant. They produce cones with little seeds that the large Glossy-black Cockatoo feeds upon - we also search for this red and black cockatoo by listening for its tiny voice! We'll walk in sapphire flats beside giant stands of Melaleuca (paper-bark trees) and search for the rare Southern Emu-wren, a profoundly shy yet sedentary bird. In corridor rainforests we'll discover the gene pool that created the genus Eucalyptus. We'll even see the crossover genus - Angophora - one of the world's most profusely flowering trees and their first eucalyptus “children” the mighty Bloodwoods towering on gnarled trunks over everything. Depending on the time of year and recent rainfall we may even see the famous the orchids of Mallacoota - both terrestrial (ground) and epiphytic (in trees).

If you are a birdwatcher your bird list should expand dramatically today as we move through the forest. Your Wildlife Guide will help you identify as many birds as possible.

Dinner precedes an evening of spotlighting in the eucalypt forest for the flying possums of this area. These unique marsupials are more often heard than seen but if we are lucky we may see any of the 3 species as they fly courageously from tree to tree. Regardless of what we see, these very safe spotlight walks are a wonderfully rewarding experience – all your senses are heightened as your Nature Guide interprets the sounds of the night. We often see possums and if we are very lucky - and quiet - we may spot a Wombat. These large marsupials (about the size of a small pig), although common, are very shy and retiring and require care and patience to find. Sightings are often brief but well worth the effort.

O/n Gipsy Point Lakeside (B,L,D)

Day 3 CROAJINGOLONG – THE ESTUARY AND THE OCEAN

NB. As we will be travelling by boat today's activities will be governed by weather conditions and water levels. The day's activities are planned as follows:

Today is dedicated to the magnificent estuary and the ocean systems of Mallacoota.

Mallacoota Inlet was formed after the last ice age when a coastal river system was drowned by the sea. This lake system is comprised of a smaller, inland, “top” lake connected by a narrow section of inundated river valley to a larger “bottom” lake that finally overflows into the Southern Ocean (Gipsy Point Lakeview is on the upstream side of the Top Lake). Many smaller “arms” of water branch off the main lakes. A large semi-submerged sand bank called the Goodwin Sands sits in the middle of the Bottom Lake and is home to both migratory and local birds. The shoreline of the lake system and the outlet to the sea are home to many bird species.

We'll visit the Southern Ocean on Croajingolong's coast. With a great curving beach stretching to the east and colourful rocky headlands to the west this is the place to bring your camera for dramatic photos. The beaches are mostly untrodden and are home to the rare Hooded Plover, oystercatchers, gannets and other seashore and ocean-going birds.

To explore Mallacoota Inlet we board the Porkie Bess, a delightful timber cruising launch, to search the coves and sand flats for sea eagles (and other raptors), swans, migrant waders and shorebirds, egrets, herons, spoonbills, cormorants, terns, dotterels, plovers, ibis and ducks not to mention the land birds that we will also see. The Porkie Bess will be at our full disposal for 4 hours. If we tire of the water the boat will drop us at remote jetties to walk along the shoreline before picking us up again for further adventures up some of the secret wilderness arms of the lake system. We may even see Australian Fur Seals that are occasional visitors to the bottom lake.



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During today your Wildlife Guide will relate stories of Mallacoota's past - for this is the place that some of Australia's most famous poets came to pen rhymes about the unparalleled beauty of the place. E.J. Brady, one of the poets, described Mallacoota as having "loveliness amongst the rarest in Australia." You may also be enchanted by Mallacoota Inlet.

O/n Gipsy Point Lakeside (B,L,D)

Day 4 DEPART CROAJINGOLONG

We depart Lakeview this morning en route to Merimbula airport. Before departing the morning is yours to have a relaxing breakfast and a quiet stroll in this idyllic location. Depending in flight timings we may have a chance to drop in at a Genoa River Falls where we can search for the famous Water Dragons, a big green lizard that lives in and near running water. The falls are a wonderful place to reflect on the beauty of Croajingolong before driving to Merimbula to fly out to Melbourne or Sydney. (B,L)

Note: transfer from Melbourne or Sydney airport after arrival is not included

Location: East of the city of Melbourne in south-east Australia. Visit Mallacoota, Gipsy Point, Genoa, Wangarabell and Croajingolong National Park, including Mallacoota Inlet, Genoa Falls, Double Creek, Genoa River and Genoa Peak.

Duration: 4 days, 3 nights

Wildlife

East Gippsland is famous for its forest wildlife, particularly big mammals, birds and reptiles. This tour is a great chance to see some very shy forest-dwellers: Yellow-bellied, Sugar and Greater Gliders, Koalas, Swamp and Red-necked Wallabies, Superb Lyrebirds (best seen and heard in Spring and Autumn), Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos, King-Parrots and Eastern Whipbirds. In the warmer months we enjoy watching Lace Monitors (Goannas) prowling the forest floor for food, and Gippsland Water Dragons sunning themselves on waterfalls. We often see Satin Bowebirds, Laughing Kookaburras, Golden Whistlers, Yellow and Rose Robins, and up to 14 species of honeyeater. We sometimes see rare Glossy Black-Cockatoos, and White-headed Pigeons.

Along the coast and estuaries we often see White-bellied Sea-Eagles, Pelicans, Gannets, cormorants, oystercatchers, herons, Black Swans, waders and several species of duck. We sometimes see an Echidna or a Wombat.

The wildlife of the plains lives here too – we often see Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Wedge-tailed Eagles, Galahs, ibis, Australian Magpies, Magpie-larks and Willie Wagtails. We rarely see snakes or spiders, though we are as interested in them as in all wildlife, and will look out for them.

For more information on wildlife species seen on past Croajingolong Journey tours go to: [Croajingolong Journey Species List](#)

Note: we go to enormous effort to ensure great wildlife sightings on every tour. Our Guides prepare for each tour by studying recent sightings and seasonal trends, and then compile a comprehensive list of species at the conclusion of the tour for future reference. Some species are migratory or seasonal – contact us about the best time to come if you would particularly like to see a certain animal group. Note, we do not guarantee sightings of any wild animal.

Inclusions

- Tour includes: Full interpretation by an experienced Wildlife Guide, all transport, meals and accommodation as described below and entry fees.
- Wildlife notes will be provided to people who travel on this tour



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Expert Wildlife Guides: You will be guided on this journey by a friendly, experienced and knowledgeable Wildlife Guide. Many hours of research work precede the tour to ensure that you see and learn about native wildlife in its natural environment.

First class standards in guidance are the hallmark of Echidna Walkabout. Our in-house Wildlife Guide training program ensures that all guides have an in-depth knowledge of the wildlife and environments you will see. Guides carry two way radios which link them to our office and to emergency services.

Accommodation: Accommodation is at Gipsy Point Lakeside overlooking the Genoa River. For couples and small parties breakfasts are supplied to your room to be prepared by yourself in the fully self contained kitchen. For groups breakfasts are provided in the dining room. Two dinners are supplied by Lakeside in their dining room.

Meals on tour: Meals are provided as detailed in the itinerary above. Dinners are 2 courses. Note: Alcoholic beverages are not included in the price but are available at Lakeside. NB Vegetarian or other food preferences should be noted at the time of booking. We can only cater for allergies and special food preferences that we are informed of in advance.

Easy walking: Although this tour is vehicle based, most of the day is spent outside the vehicle on a number of easy, flat terrain, bushwalks so that you can get close to nature. Passengers must be able to walk unassisted at least 1km on uneven dirt surfaces to ensure wildlife sightings. There may be up to 5 walks of this duration during the day.

Transport: In our comfortable air conditioned vehicle.

What to bring: Good walking shoes or boots, outdoor clothing to suit variable weather conditions (please check weather forecast for accurate predictions), sun hat, rainproof coat, insect repellent, 15+ sunscreen, daypack and 1 litre water bottle. Camera and binoculars are recommended. You can also bring swimming gear.

As space is limited please keep luggage to 1 duffel bag OR 1 backpack OR 1 small suitcase per person.

Please note that whilst every attempt will be made to follow our planned route National Park Service requirements and weather conditions may cause amendments which will be clearly outlined to you by your Guide.

Not Included

- Airport transfers to and from Melbourne/Sydney Airports
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Flights to and from Sydney/Melbourne

About Us

Janine Duffy and Roger Smith founded Echidna Walkabout in 1993, to foster respect for Australia's wildlife and to ensure its wild and free-living future. Most tours depart Melbourne and travel to carefully chosen wildlife locations in south eastern Australia.

Our fantastic team of Wildlife Guides – Bill, Paul, Joanne, Martin and Janine & Roger – and Koala Researchers – Mary, Donna & Alison – ensure that every tour is a special, once-only experience. No two tours are ever the same with wild animals!

Our Wildlife Team provides support to our tours. Their research is passed on to you and to the National Parks Service, Field Naturalists Clubs and the Atlas of Australian Birds.

Echidna Walkabout respects our Indigenous Cultures, and is grateful to the Wathaurong and Gonnai communities for their support over many years.



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Our tour groups are small (no more than 8 people) allowing for a personal experience and optimal wildlife viewing opportunities.

For the past 12 years, Echidna Walkabout has tracked and monitored the movements and lives of hundreds of wild koalas. The proceeds of each tour contribute to this important study and our guests are involved while on tour. The results of this study are made available to all our staff, the National Parks Service, Field Naturalists Clubs, wildlife veterinarians and wildlife carers.

We are also regenerating an old farming property west of Melbourne as a Wildlife Habitat – for the benefit of native wild birds, Kangaroos, Koalas and Wallabies, plus reptiles, frogs and invertebrates - to restore some lost habitat to these wild creatures that have given us so much. We have, and have always had, a serious commitment to running sustainable tours. Our comprehensive environmental code is available for viewing on our website: [Environmental Code](#)

Bookings/More Information

Echidna Walkabout

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TRAVEL AGENT'S PAGE

Suggested Brochure/website text

Croajingolong Journey Private 4 day tour

[6 words, 40 characters incl. spaces]

Relax in the wilderness surrounded by wildlife beside Croajingolong National Park! See wild koalas, watch wild kangaroos and enjoy the chorus of parrots, cockatoos, swans and honeyeaters – all within a short distance of your luxury apartment. There's no rush on your private 4 day journey.

Your experienced Wildlife Guide will get you into the secret spots in this magnificent wilderness. Wander through gum-tree forests full of birds, cruise a quiet coastal lake, stroll along a remote beach gazing at the wild Southern Ocean.

The tour begins after a short flight from Melbourne or Sydney, so this tour can be part of a through journey: Melbourne to Sydney or Sydney to Melbourne. Includes 3 nights accommodation at Gipsy Point Lakeside 5 star apartments, 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners.

[129 words, 801 characters including spaces]

Why is Croajingolong so important?

Croajingolong National Park spans the intersection of two very different oceans: from the south the Southern Ocean carries cool dry air from Antarctica northwards into the warm, moist, tropical air of the Pacific Ocean. These unique climatic conditions nurture a phenomenally diverse variety of plants and wildlife. Here we see modern, complex eucalyptus forests pushing deep into ancient rainforests. We also see wildlife that represent the transition from the Gondwana rainforests to the modern eucalypt and throughout all this a myriad of other plants and animals have evolved and are hidden in the forests of Croajingolong. Some new discoveries have been made only in the last decade!! One of Australia's earliest & best known botanists - Ferdinand von Mueller (he created the famous Melbourne Botanic Gardens) - described this region as one of the most profoundly complex ecosystems he had ever seen. If you really want to know what Australia is all about, this is the place to be!

Birdwatchers: Croajingolong is famous for its birds – it has one of the highest bird counts in Australia.

Croajingolong is an anglicised version of the Aboriginal name for the south-eastern corner of Australia – Krowathunkalooong. The region is now called East Gippsland but the national park retains the original Aboriginal name.

Updated: July 2011 For more details about this tour contact: roger@echidnawalkabout.com.au