

# Tasmania - The Wilderness Isle

Naturetrek Tour Dossier

2009

## Outline itinerary

<b>Day 1</b>	Depart London	<b>Day 10/11</b>	Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park
<b>Day 2</b>	In flight	<b>Day 12</b>	Launceston
<b>Day 3</b>	Arrive Hobart	<b>Day 13/14</b>	Bicheno and Freycinet National Park
<b>Day 4/5</b>	Bruny Island	<b>Day 15</b>	Hobart
<b>Day 6</b>	Mount Field National Park	<b>Day 16</b>	Depart Hobart
<b>Day 7</b>	Queenstown	<b>Day 17</b>	Arrive London
<b>Day 8/9</b>	Strahan		

## Dates

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2009

## Cost

£4,395 (London/London); £3,545 (Hobart/Hobart)

## Insurance

£75

## Single room supplement

£590

## Grading

A/B. Wildlife walks, some moderate but optional, and cruises

## Focus

The unique fauna, flora and wilderness regions of Tasmania



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**NB. Please note that the itinerary below offers our planned programme of excursions. However, adverse weather & other local considerations can necessitate some re-ordering of the programme during the course of the tour, though this will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.**

## Introduction

Tasmania, which separated from mainland Australia during the last Ice Age, has developed a character all of its own. It is a beautiful, dramatic island, whose rugged terrain nurtures an often exclusive anthology of Australian mammals: the archetypal Tasmanian Devil, wombats, kangaroos, wallabies, quolls, pademelons and even the bizarre platypus all inhabit the island. It is also an ornithologist's paradise, home to 12 endemic bird species which inhabit a wet temperate forest, a substantially diminishing habitat in today's world. These species include the Tasmanian Thornbill, Scubtit and Black Currawong. Of special interest elsewhere in Tasmania are the Tasmanian Native-hen (a flightless rail), Green Rosella and Forty-spotted Pardalote. Two other species which breed only in Tasmania are the Swift Parrot and Orange-bellied Parrot. The latter, a summer visitor to the south-western coastal region of Tasmania, is one of the world's rarest and most endangered species of wildlife, with a population of just 15 or so pairs left.

Tasmania, rather like a rugged version of New Zealand, is also blessed with exceptional habitat diversity. Surrounded by rich oceans favoured by many sub-Antarctic breeding birds and marine mammals, the island is also endowed with spectacular mountain landscapes and forested wilderness (both eucalyptus and rainforest), as well as rivers, lagoons and lakes, coastal heaths, wet sedgelands and buttongrass plains.

Our tour around and through Tasmania celebrates the island's landscape in all its diversity: Mount Field National Park, with its striking mountain scenery and wondrous alpine plant communities; Lake St Clair, where forests of Black Peppermint grow against a spectacular backdrop of quartz mountains; the mighty and stunningly picturesque Macquarie Harbour; the beautiful bays and granite outcrops of Freycinet National Park and Mount Wellington, which towers above the attractive state capital city of Hobart.

Intertwined with this abundance of natural beauty, Tasmania has a rich, but tragic, social history associated with the penal colony at Port Arthur, the largest in Australia. In addition there have been battles between those that believe the need to protect the superb wilderness areas from flooding for dams and logging was far greater than the need to exploit and destroy so rich a natural heritage. When the south-western region of Tasmania was nominated for World Heritage listing it was described as "the last great temperate wilderness remaining in Australia and one of the last in the world". The great attraction of Tasmania for the naturalist is the ability to view many of its wildlife inhabitants at such close quarters, without feeling in any way that you are impinging on their natural behaviour.

## Days 1 & 2

Friday

### In flight

You will depart London Heathrow on Emirates' flight to Melbourne, via Dubai. Emirates also has flights departing from Manchester, Newcastle, Gatwick and Glasgow, but you will need to enquire about availability and extra costs.

## Day 3

Sunday

### Hobart

On your arrival at the international airport in Melbourne you must transfer to the domestic terminal for the short onward flight to Hobart. There you will be met by your locally-based tour leader and taken to your city hotel. Hobart is a very attractive city set against a backdrop of the imposing Mount Wellington and straddling the clear aquamarine waters of the Derwent River.

Hobart is Tasmania's state capital and the second oldest city in Australia after Sydney. It is the largest city in the state, with the population of the Greater Hobart area approaching 200,000. First settled in 1804, the early population consisted mainly of convicts and the city's first buildings were established around the waterfront, frequented by whalers, sealers and colonial traders. It still retains a quiet colonial character, epitomised by the many historic buildings which have been sympathetically restored and maintained.

During the afternoon we will take a drive up nearby Mount Wellington. This will offer us wonderful panoramic views over the city, the Derwent Estuary and the surrounding countryside, as well as an opportunity to begin to familiarise ourselves with some of the birds of this fascinating island. In particular, we will look for our first Tasmanian endemic birds; such species as the Black-headed Honeyeaters in the forest canopy, the Strong-billed Honeyeaters that busily search for insects and spiders, and the Green Rosellas that flash past us or overhead. Dusky Robins and small flocks of Scrubtits, White-browed Scrubwrens and both Brown and Tasmanian Thornbills are amongst other species that we shall hope to see, whilst, higher up the slopes, we will search for Yellow-throated Honeyeater and Black Currawong. We will also look for other interesting species which, although more widely distributed across Australia, occur more commonly in Tasmania. Amongst these species are the uncommon Olive Whistler, the beautiful Pink Robin and the Beautiful Firetail. Near the summit of Mount Wellington, we will look amongst the boulder-strewn slopes and stunted shrubs for one of Australia's most beautiful birds, the Flame Robin. We return to our city hotel for dinner and an overnight stay.

## Day 4

Monday

### Bruny Island

Hopefully with a good night's sleep behind you, you will be met after breakfast by your tour leader and embark on the short coach journey to Kettering. From there, a short ferry ride will transport our group onto Bruny Island, home to many of Tasmania's 12 endemic birds, amongst them – most notably – the Forty-spotted Pardalote. Today will provide our best opportunity to see this species, one of Australia's most endangered and localised birds, for Bruny Island holds several small colonies of this Tasmanian endemic. Amongst other endemics found on Bruny Island that we shall look for today will be both Black-headed and Strong-billed Honeyeater, Green Rosella, Yellow Wattlebird, Black Currawong, Tasmanian Thornbill and Tasmanian Scrubwren. Dusky Robins are also likely to be seen, since they make themselves quite evident by perching on wayside fence posts.

During our time on Bruny Island we will focus our attention particularly on the variety of birdlife to be found in its most densely forested areas. It is here that we may also hope to see Swift Parrot, the scarce Olive Whistler and Beautiful Firetail, three endemics of south-eastern Australia.

We will break the day with a picnic lunch amongst the tranquil landscapes of this attractive island. Later, we will settle in to a hotel on the island, taking an early dinner before we set out again, this time to a nearby beach where we hope to enjoy the spectacle of Little Penguins and Short-tailed Shearwaters as they come in from the ocean at dusk. Then, on our way home, we will spend time spotlighting for such native mammals as quolls, possums and wallabies to conclude an eventful day!

## Day 5

Tuesday

### Bruny Island

After breakfast, we will head by coach to Roberts Point to join the morning boat trip, the Bruny Island Cruise, which spends three hours on the water in search of such seabirds as Wandering, Shy, Black-browed and Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, White-faced and Great-winged Petrels, Fluttering and Short-tailed Shearwaters and Australasian Gannets, amongst other pelagic species. Being so far south, this is one of the best places anywhere in Australia to search for seabirds, and we may also encounter dolphins, seals, and perhaps even a whale.

We return in the early afternoon to Roberts Point, where our coach will meet us. We will then have the rest of the day to resume our exploration of the island in search of its birds and land mammals. With a chance of Tasmanian Native-hen and/or the rare Hooded Plover along the way, we will keep a watchful eye open on our return to our hotel cottages this evening.

(Please note that on Bruny Island we will be staying in small cottages, each of which accommodates between 4 and 6 people. The cottages are very comfortable, but their facilities are shared.)

## Day 6

Wednesday

### Mount Field/New Norfolk

After breakfast we will return to the ferry in order to cross back over to the mainland and travel back to Hobart and then on to the Lyell Highway for our journey to New Norfolk. We will enjoy a packed lunch en route, to provide the flexibility needed for any birding stops, and, prior to an afternoon visit to Mount Field National Park, we will stop off at our accommodation at New Norfolk to leave our luggage.

Mount Field is one of Tasmania's oldest and most diverse national parks. Established in 1917, it is best known for the magnificent Russell Falls, accessed by a path that leads through a forest of towering tree ferns. The park's environment also offers the visitor an array of natural wonders, from the tall forests that lie at the base of Mount Field, to the Tasmanian high country with its Snow Gums, alpine moorlands and glacial lakes. The winding road that leads to the higher slopes of the mountain passes, particularly, through an ever-changing succession of plant communities. Interestingly, Mount Field is unusual in that plant diversity increases with altitude, and on walks around some of the alpine lakes we will discover some of the park's bizarre alpine plant species.

We will also take a stroll along 'the Tall Trees Walk' which winds through stands of giant Swamp Gum, one of the largest hardwood tree species in the world, towering to 100 metres in height. This forest contains giant 250-year-old gum trees, sassafras, huge tree ferns, the unique 'horizontal scrub' and a variety of mosses, ferns, lichens and fungi. Amongst this myriad and density of vegetation we will look for Pink Robin and Scrub-tit.

Birds have taken advantage of the range of altitudes and habitats available here and, consequently, many species are found within the park and surrounding reserves. They include 11 of the 12 Tasmanian endemic species, amongst them the Tasmanian Native-hen, the ecologically important, but not endemic, Black Currawong which is a key disperser of fleshy-fruited plants. Other species will include the Noisy Black Cockatoo and Yellow Wattlebird.

It is the diversity of habitats within the park's relatively small area that is the reason why so many of Tasmania's native terrestrial and arboreal mammals occur within the park. Species that are either extinct or endangered on the mainland are found here, including the Eastern Quoll and the Eastern Barred Bandicoot. The last known Tasmanian Tiger, which sadly saw out its days in Hobart Zoo, was trapped in the nearby Florentine Valley in 1933.

We will complete our day in the high alpine meadows of Mount Field National Park, searching for Striated Fieldwren and Flame Robin. As we ascend, the scenery changes from the soft greens of the rainforest to the harsh, glaciated landscape of the mountains, producing some spectacular scenic highlights.

Later still, after we have returned to our hotel to take dinner, we will head back out into the park for an evening's spotlighting, hoping to see such nocturnal mammals as Tasmanian Devil, Common Wombat, Eastern Quoll and Bennett's Wallaby. With careful searching we may also locate the effectively camouflaged Tawny Frogmouth.

We overnight in New Norfolk

## Day 7

Thursday

### Queenstown

Following breakfast, and our departure from New Norfolk, we continue our way along the Lyell Highway to Queenstown, the largest town on Tasmania's west coast. This bizarre settlement essentially owes its existence to mining, as minerals and gold were discovered in the area in the 1880s and the town grew rapidly. All the trees growing on the surrounding hills were cut down for fuel, resulting in severe topsoil erosion which has left bare, coloured rocks, resembling a lunar landscape, which still remain today. Queenstown still has the atmosphere of a frontier town, with its remaining historic buildings and unique setting.

This will be a long day's traveling, as we have approximately 200 kilometres to cover, but it will be broken with stops at various points including a picnic lunch.

We will spend tonight in Queenstown.

## Day 8

Friday

### Strahan

This morning we will leave Queenstown aboard the West Coast Wilderness Railway train, bound for Strahan. This spectacular 35-kilometre train journey, that clammers through a rugged wilderness of dense rainforest and steep gorges, will take us through tight curves and over spectacular bridges, a legacy to the engineering skills, determination and endurance of the early 19th century west coast pioneers who built it. A lunch stop in the heart of the forest at Dubbil Barril (meaning "the dividing of the waters" in the local aboriginal language) will allow us to wander along forest paths and to discover some of the remote creeks running down to the King River, enjoying at first hand the beauty of this majestic wilderness rainforest.

Finally, we will travel over the restored iron bridge near Teepookana before completing the final stage of this railway journey as it first follows the King River, and then the edge of Macquarie Harbour, to the little town of Strahan. At Regatta Point we will stop at the original railway station building, from where we will transfer by coach to our Strahan hotel, taking a tour of the town en route.

Strahan, with a population of just 700, lies at the edge of the unspoiled waters of Macquarie Harbour, the second largest natural harbour in the southern hemisphere after Sydney. This is the last outpost of civilisation on the island, and the only safe anchorage on its west coast. It is surely one of the loneliest places on earth. Strahan's history is a showcase of Tasmania's, its penal colony on Sarah Island perhaps the most brutal in the state, a place to which the most unruly convicts from Port Arthur were transported; a place from which they would never escape. Strahan was also the port used during the west coast's mining boom, and was additionally used for the export of Huon Pine from the surrounding forest. These days, the harbour provides an anchorage for crayfish, abalone and shark fishing fleets and is a centre for the ever-growing number of tourists wishing to visit its surrounding wilderness regions.

The town was named after Major George Strahan, the Governor of Tasmania from 1881 to 1886, and was officially proclaimed in 1892, two years after the government had constructed a railway to it from the booming mining town of Zeehan. The railway line from Queenstown to Strahan was then opened in 1899 and, at its peak during this mining boom, the town had a population of over 2,000 people and was the second busiest port in Tasmania.

The first European to explore Macquarie Harbour was James Kelly who, with four companions, entered Hells Gate in December 1815. James Kelly and his group spent three days exploring the huge, 285-square-kilometre harbour, and it was on the basis of their descriptions of the vast stands of trees that, within a year, timber cutters had entered the harbour and were cutting down the magnificent Huon Pines. It was the Huon Pine, a superb fine-grained wood, ideal for shipbuilding, which brought the first Europeans to the harbour. It was the Huon Pine also, which was the reason behind the establishment of a penal colony on Macquarie Harbour's Sarah Island in 1821. This penal colony, known everywhere as one of the most appalling and cruel of all the convict stations, operated just until 1833, when it was closed down and the recidivists were all removed to Port Arthur on the east coast.

The town continued to prosper as a port until the 1950s and 1960s. Then, when the rail link to Zeehan was closed down, and three years later the same fate befell the Queenstown rail link, the town's importance diminished and it became something of a backwater. This all changed in the early 1980s, when the Tasmanian Government announced its intention to permit the Tasmanian Hydro-Electricity Authority to dam the Gordon River. However, an extensive period of local and international environmental protest followed, supported by Britain's David Bellamy, and this forced the Federal Government to intervene in 1983, ruling against the dam and that the whole area, including the Aboriginal art in the Fraser and Kutikina Caves, dating back over 15,000 years, and the white waters of the dangerous Franklin River, would be preserved under a World Heritage order. The Aborigines had had a very long history with the area, extending back at least 20,000 years, but tragically by about 1830 there were none left in the area and the preservation of their artwork now provides us with one of just a few significant insights into their lifestyle and culture. Today, the whole area is known as the Franklin Lower Gordon Wild Rivers National Park and the ecologically significant rainforest and stunning scenery attract tourists from around the world.

## Day 9

Saturday

### Strahan

Making an early start today, we will join the Gordon River Heritage Cruise, led by a local accredited naturalist guide, to explore Macquarie Harbour, a huge inland sea some 30 kilometres long by 10 kilometres wide. First though, we will slip out to the Southern Ocean via Hell's Gate, a narrow passage of water linking the harbour to the sea that, in the past, caused great difficulties for seafarers.

Once back in the harbour, our cruise will take us to Sarah Island. Here, as you walk amongst the ruins, your guide will bring the past to life with stories of the days when convicts built mighty ships from Huon Pine. Further south in the harbour, the mouth of the Gordon River draws us into quiet river reaches where the trees of this ancient forest are reflected in the tannin-rich waters. Upstream, you may step ashore and walk amongst the rainforest at Heritage Landing, where there are Huon Pine trees up to 2,000 years old, their timber virtually immune to rot and insect damage. This tree species is amongst the longest-living organisms on earth, only the Bristle-cone Pine of North America exceeding it in age.

Indeed, Tasmanian rainforest contains many of Australia's most ancient species of flora, whose ancestors once grew in Antarctica, Africa, South America or New Zealand in the days when these continents were united in the landmass called Gondwanaland. This ancient rainforest dates back over 60 million years, well before what we now call "sclerophyll vegetation" – today's eucalypt and acacia forest – evolved.

Although Tasmanian rainforest is not renowned for its wildlife, and during your time here it is unlikely that a great number of birds and mammals will be sighted, it is the magnitude and age of the land which is its special feature and which attract people to visit from around the world. The Tasmanian rainforest is such a quiet place that sometimes it seems that there are no animals, but the forest is certainly not without its share of wildlife. Mammals include the Tasmanian Pademelon, Spot-tailed Quoll and Platypus, whilst such bird species as Black Currawong, Green Rosella, Azure Kingfisher, Olive Whistler and Grey Goshawk may be seen. Amongst the reptiles of the region, the Tasmanian Tree Frog, Tiger Snake and Brown Skink are relatively common. Tasmanian rainforest also contains some of the most ancient and primitive of the invertebrates, amongst them the Large Land Snail, Macleay's Swallowtail butterfly, freshwater crayfish and the Peripatus, or Velvet Worm.

A buffet lunch will be served as we cruise back downstream and we will arrive back at the terminal in Strahan during the mid afternoon, leaving the rest of the day for you to explore the town and surrounding area at your leisure.

We will once again spend the night in Strahan.

## Days 10 & 11

Sunday & Monday

### Cradle Mountain

On Day 10 we will drive back to Queenstown and then up the Zeehan Highway to Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, where we will be based at Cradle Mountain Lodge for the next two nights. Part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, this national park encompasses rugged mountain peaks, glacial lakes, deep gorges, rainforest, wet sclerophyll forest, scrub, heathland, sedgeland, bog communities and high moorland, all of which combine to provide one of the most dramatic and untouched landscapes in Australia. The park holds a rich flora,

including some endemic species and others with a restricted range, such as Huon Pine, King Billy Pine, Pandani, Whitey Wood, Myrtle Beech, Sassafras, Celery Top and Pencil Pine.

Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park is also an outstanding place in which to encounter Australian mammals – perhaps the best in the world! Of the eighteen indigenous mammal species recorded in the park we will hope to see Short-beaked Echidna, Tasmanian Devil, Eastern Quoll, Common Wombat, Common Brushtail Possum and Common Ringtail Possum, Long-nosed Potoroo, Bennett's Wallaby and Rufous-bellied Pademelon. We will also enjoy the birdlife, which may include such species as Yellow Wattlebird (the world's largest honeyeater), Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Ground Parrot, Azure Kingfisher, Southern Emu-wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Tasmanian Thornbill and possibly even Orange-bellied Parrot. The latter is one of the world's rarest birds, breeding only in Tasmania and with a population estimated at around 50 pairs only.

We will spend as much of Day 10 as we can in the field, in order to enjoy to the full the varied habitats and associated wildlife of this stunning national park. Then, after dinner at the Lodge, we will venture back into the field to spend the late evening spotlighting, looking in particular for such nocturnal species as Tasmanian Devil and Spot-tailed and Eastern Quolls.

On Day 11, we will spend a full day in the park, taking a picnic lunch with us. Again we will overnight at Cradle Mountain Lodge.

## Day 12

Tuesday

### Launceston

After breakfast we will leave Cradle Mountain and drive along country roads and through small towns to Deloraine, where we will stop for lunch (at our own expense). We will then continue on to Launceston, the second largest city in Tasmania, where we will settle into our overnight hotel accommodation.

We will spend the afternoon visiting some of the natural attractions around Launceston, notably the wetlands on the outskirts of the city where we may see Black Swans, Tasmanian Native-hen, Eastern Swamphen, Swamp Harrier, White-faced Heron, cormorants and Australian Pelican.

## Day 13

Wednesday

### Bicheno

Today we will drive to Bicheno. Leaving early, we first travel south along the Midland Highway to Campbelltown, one of the state's historic wool towns, where we will stop for lunch before continuing on the Tasman Highway to the coast, and Bicheno.

Situated 176 kilometres south-east of Launceston and 182 kilometres north-east of Hobart, Bicheno (which was originally established as a whaling centre as early as 1803) is a charming seaside town noted for its excellent fishing, its safe and attractive beaches, and its interesting coastal walks which access some superb rocky outcrops and spectacular blowholes.

On arrival in the town, we will have the rest of the afternoon to settle in to our lodge, relax and to enjoy the spectacular surroundings before an early dinner. After dinner, we will be met by the local national parks guide, with whom we will spend the remainder of the evening watching the Little Penguins at the bottom of the lodge's garden! Here, each evening, within an hour or so of dusk, large numbers of penguins return from the sea and toddle up the beach to their nesting burrows where a chick may be waiting to be fed.

(NB. Even though the penguins are 'on site', we are obliged to join the nightly tour run by the National Parks Department, who are responsible for and manage the site.)

## Day 14

Thursday

### Bicheno

Today we will drive a short distance to the south, to Freycinet Peninsula, one of the State's most scenic coastal areas and known worldwide for its stunning Wineglass Bay. The imposing Devonian granite peaks – known as the Hazards – and the many white sandy beaches that fringe the peninsula are amongst the highlights of the park. The combination of the mild, maritime climate, the scenic beauty of the area, and the abundance of birds and mammals to see on the walks around the park make it a fascinating place to explore.

It is most noticeable that the vegetation of the park is very different from that which we have seen up to now. Predominantly this is a heathland region, with a low overstorey of wattle (*Acacia* species), banksias, paperbarks (*Melaleuca* species), casuarinas (sheoaks) and species of eucalyptus.

Many species of birds live in, or stop over at, Freycinet and the surrounding area. We may be lucky enough to see a White-bellied Sea-eagle gliding overhead, or an Australasian Gannet diving for fish in the ocean. In the bushy and forested areas we should see and hear such small, nectar-feeding birds as Eastern Spinebill and Yellow-throated, Crescent and New Holland Honeyeaters, whilst the raucous sound of the large Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoos can often be heard as they drift by in their groups.

Mammals known to occur in the park include Short-beaked Echidna, Tasmanian Devil, Eastern Quoll, Common Wombat, Common Brushtail Possum and Common Ringtail Possum, Long-nosed Potoroo, Bennett's Wallaby and Rufous-bellied Pademelon.

Moulting Lagoon Reserve, a wetland of international importance, lies just outside the park and, time permitting, will be well worth a visit this evening.

## Day 15

Friday

### Hobart

We return today from Bicheno to Hobart. There, the day will be free for you to relax or explore, as you please, before a farewell dinner this evening and a final night in Tasmania.

## Day 16

**Saturday**

### Hobart/in flight

As we do not depart Hobart until the late afternoon, you will have time for a morning's visit to the well known Salamanca markets, or a last-minute visit to one of the many museums in the city, before we transfer to the airport for your flight to Melbourne and onward international flight to London Heathrow, via Dubai.

## Day 17

**Sunday**

### London

You are scheduled to arrive at London's Heathrow airport in the early afternoon.

## Tour grading

This is a birdwatching and wildlife tour that covers the very best of Tasmania's fine selection of habitats (indeed, some of the very best that Australia has to offer). There will be some long of drives during the tour, but we will be travelling on good, metalled roads and enjoying generally short wildlife walks at a gentle pace. The relaxed pace and itinerary of this tour make it suitable for most ages and levels of fitness.

## Weather

The month of November is early summer in Tasmania, similar to May/June in the United Kingdom, with similarly unpredictable weather! Daytime temperatures are likely to range from 15 to 23°C, whilst at night it will be cooler, especially at such high sites as Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park.

## Food & accommodation

The accommodation we use consists of a variety of comfortable hotels/motels, lodges and chalets, all rooms with private facilities except on Bruny Island. All meals are included in the cost of the holiday, with the exception of lunches on Days 12, 15 and 16. Drinks and additional snacks are generally not included.

## Clothing

Please read our separate clothing list included in the pre-departure information sent to you after booking.

## How to book your place

In order to book your place on this holiday, you will need to read our main Naturetrek brochure thoroughly and complete and return the enclosed booking form, together with a deposit of 20% of the holiday cost plus the insurance premium if required. If you do not have a copy of this brochure please give us a call on 01962 733051, and we will gladly post one to you. Alternatively you may telephone us to make a booking or book online at [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk). If you would like to extend your stay in Victoria, we can highly recommend a visit to Gypsy Point Lodge, or take a guided tour along the Great Ocean Road, visit the Fairy Penguin colony at Phillip Island or enjoy an extended stay at the Little Desert National Park.