

## Close to Winton Town

### Long Waterhole

Long Waterhole is a man-made, permanent billabong, located on the Western River system south of Winton Town. The turn off into Long Waterhole is approximately two kilometres from the town grid on the Winton-Jundah Road. It is a popular recreation spot for the locals, for swimming, and occasionally, fishing. **Notable birds: Red-kneed Dotterel; Banded Lapwing.**

### Pelican Waterhole

Pelican Waterhole is the site of the first settlement of Winton. There are remnants of the old town, including an old baker's oven and broken glass on site. If you go exploring on the site, it is recommended that you wear closed, sturdy shoes. Further past the site of the old town is the Waterhole that it was named for. **Notable birds: Nankeen Night Heron; Brown Quail; White-winged Triller; Variegated Fairy-wren.**

### Council Sewerage Treatment Ponds

A popular spot with many birdwatchers that visit Winton, the Council Sewerage Treatment Ponds are a prime location to find birds of many different species. As these are Council facilities, please check with the Winton Shire Council before visiting them—contact the Shire Office (weekdays 8.30am–5.00pm) on (07) 4657 2666. **Notable birds: Australian Spotted Crane; Baillon's Crane; Pink-eared Duck; Little Grassbird.**

### Cooling Dams

There are two cooling dams closely located to each other on the eastern side of the town, between Manifold St and the Winton Showgrounds. The Cooling Dams are part of the system used to cool the bore water supplied into the town. **Notable birds: Black-fronted Dotterel; Black-winged Stilt; Marsh Sandpiper.**

Other birds that can be seen close to Winton include: Crested Pigeon; Budgerigar; Cockatiel; White-plumed Honeyeater; and Apostlebird.

## Bladensburg National Park

Formerly a grazing property, Bladensburg National Park conserves 85,000ha of Mitchell and Flinders grass downs and Channel Country, Flat topped mesas, plateaus and residual sandstone ranges provide a beautiful backdrop for birdwatching. The flat tops of mesas and plateaus support open woodlands of western bloodwood and mulga. The distinctive mineritchie or red mulga—with its characteristic curly, red bark—lines some dry creek beds. Lancewood covers the steep slopes of sandstone ranges and escarpments, while spinifex and Normanton box are found in the broad valleys. Bladensburg forms the south-eastern boundary of soft spinifex's (*Triodia pungens*) range. Much of the park's northern half consists of vast cracking clay soils covered by Mitchell grass and scattered with small areas of gidgee woodlands.

Bladensburg National Park is wonderful to explore in search of the more illusive bird species, such as the Rufous-crowned Emu-wren and Spinifexbird. Other birdwatchers have seen flocks of Painted Finch come in for a drink at Skull Hole. Camping at Bough Shed Hole offers the opportunity to hear the call of Australian Owlet-nightjars, regularly seen patrolling for insects rising from the waterhole. A night spot-lighting slow drive can prove very productive—but watch out for the kangaroos!

There is a tourist drive map available for the *Route of the River Gum*, which is a loop drive from Winton with points of interest, largely in the National Park. Stop in at the old Bladensburg Homestead—now the Park Information Centre—to pick up a Park map. Bladensburg NP allows you to fish, swim and paddle in the waterholes, and there is self-registration camping at Bough Shed Hole (fees apply). Please remember that National Park rules apply to your visit, including a ban on lighting any type of fire.

**Notable birds: Spinifex Pigeon; Spinifexbird; Spotted Harrier; Spotted Nightjar; Spotted Bowerbird; Hooded Robin; Inland Thornbill; Rufous-crowned Emu-wren.**

## Further Afield

### Lark Quarry Conservation Park

The Conservation Park is home to the Dinosaur Stampede National Monument, usually known as Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways. It is known to be the world's only definitive record of a dinosaur stampede. Regular tours of the facility are conducted daily. Besides the Stampede, there are many birds to be seen, including such as the White-winged Fairy Wren which can be seen from the road. Please note camping is not allowed. **Notable birds: White-winged Fairy Wren; Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater.**

### Opalton

Some of Queensland's best Boulder Opal can be found in and around Opalton, Queensland's Capital of Boulder Opal. Opalton Bush Camp offers a campground with cold showers and toilets, sheltered picnic tables and stone-built, thatched-roofed camping shelters, a refuge from the sometimes extreme heat and weather. It is a popular camping locations, with modest fees and an honesty box. It makes an excellent base from which to operate in the area. **Notable birds: Grey Falcon, Australian Ringneck, Hall's Babbler; Redthroat; Striated Grasswren.**

### Old Cork Homestead

The ruins of the homestead at Old Cork are part of Winton's Pioneer Trail, 126km south-west of Winton. It is a vintage sandstone homestead of one of the original properties in the Winton Shire. The property was settled in the 1870s and was the mail distribution point before Winton was established. It is situated not far from the Diamantina River. **Notable birds: Pelicans; White-necked Herons; Spinifex Pigeons.**

Other locations which may offer birdwatching opportunities are Carisbrooke Station Stay, on the Cork Mail Road, and Windermere Station Stay on the Winton-Jundah Road. Please contact the station owners for fees and accommodation availability—information available from the Winton Visitor Information Centre.