

# Honeyeaters

HONEYEATERS  
DON'T EAT HONEY,  
BUT NECTAR,  
FRUIT AND  
SUGARY INSECT  
SECRETIONS

Honeyeaters are only found in the south west Pacific, primarily Australia, across most habitats. They use their brush-tipped tongues to collect nectar and honeydew.

Learn more!

[www.birdsinbackyards.net](http://www.birdsinbackyards.net)  
[www.birdobservers.org.au](http://www.birdobservers.org.au)  
[www.birdsaustralia.com.au](http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au)



## Blue-faced honeyeater

*Entomyzon cyanotis*

### DESCRIPTION

Length: 26-32cm; Weight: 95-125g

### CALL

Loud raucous whistles and calls: 'woik', 'keewit', 'teeu', 'hwit, hwit'.

### DISTRIBUTION

Inhabits open forests, woodlands, scrubs, watercourses farmlands, orchards, banana plantations, parks and gardens along coastal and eastern WA, NT, QLD. NSW, VIC.



### SOME ESSENTIALS

Small, communal groups hang out with other honeyeaters, feeding primarily on small invertebrates as well as nectar and fruit.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Rather than build their own nests, they will often use abandoned grey-crowned babbler nests, re-lining the tops.

### LEND A HAND

Sometimes considered a pest in orchards. Use only white knitted bird and bat netting tensioned over a frame so birds can 'bounce off' rather than getting entangled.



## Scarlet honeyeater

*Myzomela sanguinolenta*

### DESCRIPTION

Length: 9-11cm; Weight: 8g

### CALL

Males sing a drawn-out, tinkling song from a visible perch. Both sexes use a 'chiew chiew' contact call.

### DISTRIBUTION

Found in the canopy of tall, flowering trees along the eastern coast from Cooktown, QLD to Gippsland, VIC.



### SOME ESSENTIALS

Dull brown female builds the nest and sits on the eggs while the brightly coloured male protects their territory.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Australia's smallest honeyeater.

### LEND A HAND

Keep tight control over cats, especially during the scarlet honeyeater's breeding season from July-January.



## New Holland honeyeater

*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*

### DESCRIPTION

Length: 17-18cm; Weight: 20g

### CALL

Loud 'chick', softer 'pseet'. When threatened, will band together in groups and give a loud alarm call.

### DISTRIBUTION

Heathlands, eucalypt forests and woodlands along the south-eastern coast of QLD down through NSW, Victoria, and South Australia up to the edge of the Nullarbor, then southern WA and Tasmania.



### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds almost exclusively on nectar from small flowering trees and shrubs plus sugary manna and honeydew. Pollinates more than 100 plant species.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Appears to be unafraid of humans; frequently present in urban backyards.

### LEND A HAND

Nests in trees anywhere from ground level up to 6m and breeds year-round, so nestlings are very vulnerable to cat predation.



## Spiny-cheeked honeyeater

*Acanthagenys rufogularis*

### DESCRIPTION

Length: 23-26cm; Weight: 52g

### CALL

Clear musical bubbly notes and a loud 'tock'. Also mimics other bird calls.

### DISTRIBUTION

Favours dry woodlands, mallee and acacia scrub across inland and arid Australia; will also visit orchards.



### SOME ESSENTIALS

A fruit-eating honeyeater; also feeds on nectar, insects, small reptiles and nestlings.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Note the black-tipped pink beak and 'spiny' cheek feathers.

### LEND A HAND

Plant a variety of local flowering native shrubs and trees.



## White-plumed honeyeater

*Lichenostomus penicillatus*

### DESCRIPTION

Length: 15-17cm; Weight: 19g

### CALL

A wide variety of songs, calls, whistles and piping (alarm call).

### DISTRIBUTION

Open forests and woodlands near water and wetlands on much of mainland Australia except across the tropical north and south-west. Strongly favours redgums.



### SOME ESSENTIALS

Quick-moving and darts from tree to tree feeding on insects. It is the only honeyeater sporting a white neck plume.

### DID YOU KNOW?

This bird is one of the first to call at dawn and one of the last at dusk.

### LEND A HAND

Do not remove trees from waterways unless you replace them with native habitat plantings.



## Eastern spinebill

*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*

### DESCRIPTION

Length: 15-16cm; Weight: 11g

### CALL

Short, repeated, high-pitched piping.

### DISTRIBUTION

Heath, forests and woodlands east of the Great Dividing Range from Flinders Ranges, SA to Cooktown, QLD.



### SOME ESSENTIALS

Will visit suburban gardens and feed on non-native flowers.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Most honeyeaters perch while feeding on flower nectar. This bird hovers in hummingbird fashion.

### LEND A HAND

Bird attracting plants include common heath (*Epacris impressa*), red spider flower (*Grevillea speciosa*), native fuchsia (*Correa reflexa*), mountain devil (*Lambertia formosa*).