

Day Excursion - Point Lookout, North Stradbroke Is/Minjerribah

Monday 10 July 2023

Excursion leader - Susan Nelles

We sailed to Stradbroke Is on a low tide and placid waters, and went to Point Lookout on a bus so crowded, you couldn't have squeezed in an antechinus. A large Eastern grey kangaroo *Macropus giganteus*, with a wriggling pouch, basked in the sun at the track entrance. Several more were seen grazing on the slopes of the gorge. The gorge walk hugs the cliff tops from which we enjoyed a feast of marine and bird life for the next few hours. The migratory corridor of the humpback whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* is closer to land at Point Lookout and Cape Moreton than elsewhere in Australia. The whales, several with a calf alongside, surfaced and blew, slapping the water with their flukes. Some elements of breaching were observed. There were pairs and pods of dolphins, light grey in colour, so maybe the common *Delphinus delphis*.

A single turtle was seen briefly several times in the churning gorge water, perhaps the green turtle *Chelonia mydas*. Schools of small fish, and then a trio of yellow fin tuna *Thunnus albacares* moved in waters below us. Raptors circled, white-bellied sea eagle and a pair of osprey (whose regular perch looks down the main beach area) and gannets dived. *Banksia integrifolia* trees were flowering profusely and attracted insects and birds. In general however, the vegetation was unremarkable. We noted an orb spider and a Glasswing butterfly, possibly *Acraea andromacha*. Birds observed included Australasian gannet (*Morus serrator*), Eastern osprey (*Pandion cristatus*) and White-bellied sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*).

Unlike on most QNC walks, there were many other people and dogs on the track, and we all could have stayed longer on this calm, sunny day. There were six members and four visitors; two of whom plan to join QNC.