



Bowerbirds (Australian Natural History Series)

Peter Rowland

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The bowerbirds (family Ptilonorhynchidae) are famed for their unique bower-building behaviour. In some species, the bower can be a complex construction of sticks and other vegetable matter that can grow to two metres in diameter and one-and-a-half metres high. Many species are also accomplished mimics, and are able to copy the calls of other bird species, other natural and mechanical sounds and even human speech.

The bowerbirds are confined to Australia and New Guinea and, due to the difficulty in accessing certain areas of their distribution, the study of their habits has been challenging. The 20 existing species are almost equally divided between the two regions, with eight species endemic to Australia, 10 to New Guinea and two species occurring in both.

Bowerbirds condenses published knowledge into a format that will suit natural history enthusiasts at any level. While the emphasis is on Australian members of the family, with detailed accounts on each of the 10 species, the New Guinea representatives are discussed in general chapters and are included in a supplemental section that covers key areas such as breeding, identification and distribution.

This book also includes more than 50 illustrations, including colour pictures of each Australian species, their bowers, displays and distributional maps.



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