

## Trip Report: Townsville, QLD, Dec 2023

Note: All mammals are **bolded** upon their initial sighting, but not thereafter

I was sent by my work to attend a conference in Townsville, QLD in December 2023, with neither my wife or my (at the time) 1-year old daughter coming with me. Naturally, my mind wandered to the mammalwatching possibilities when I was there, particularly as mammalwatching opportunities can be rather thin on the ground with a kid that young.

My major target was the Mahogany Glider, and for that, upon the advice of the locals, I would head to Jourama Falls in the Paluma Ranges. However, the conference I was attending had arranged field trip days on either end, so there were opportunities for some other mammals in other locations.

### Townsville Town Common Conservation Park:

The day prior to the conference, there was a field trip to Townsville Town Common Conservation Park. We were mainly reptile- and frog-focussed, but still managed to see some **Agile Wallabies** on a large rock outcrop.

### Jourama Falls, Paluma Range National Park

The following night, I headed up to Jourama Falls for Mahogany Glider. Upon entering the rainforest, my friends and I were very quickly greeted by a variety of bat species. The largest and most prominent among them was **Black Flying Fox**. However, we also saw an **Eastern Tube-nosed Bat** flying around, with some sort of fleshy fruit in its mouth. There were microbats that constantly hung around a creek and would periodically skim along the surface as well, which I'm guessing were **Large-footed Myotis** based on their behaviour. I'm comfortable listing this species as a result but am happy to revise this if anyone feels they could likely have been a different species.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, we dipped on Mahogany Glider. I had to admit, this stung, as it lives a fair distance away from the other endemic mammal species of the Wet Tropical Rainforests of Australia. I'll have to add a Paluma leg to a future Wet Tropics trip, even though it will likely be logistically unwieldy. I did walk away from the Falls with a sighting of **Fawn-footed Melomys** neatly perched on a nearby branch, some Agile Wallabies, and the aforementioned bats, as consolation prizes.

On the drive back to the Bruce Highway, we saw a **Dingo** stalking around a fallow paddock. Subsequently, we went spotlighting in drier woodland down one of the side roads south of the Paluma Ranges. I cannot remember exactly which one, but it was probably somewhere in the Blue Hills area. We were rewarded with some cool reptiles, and mammal-wise, a glimpse of a **Rufous Bettong** as it fled.

### **Magnetic Island:**

The day after the conference, there was a second field trip to Magnetic Island. Again, the trip was reptile-focussed, but a couple of mammals featured. Near the top of the island are some disused old military concrete buildings, and one of these was a roost site for a bat species that I was told was *Scotorepens greyii*, the **Little Broad-nosed Bat** (see photo below). I got good looks at very close range - in fact, one of them flew into the side of my head. The other mammals we saw were **Koalas** (see photo below), on the way down from the peak. They were snoozing high in the forks of some eucalypts and were a great deal smaller and skinnier than the ones I typically see in Victoria (my home state).





**Mammal List** (lifers marked with a \*):

Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*

Rufous Bettong *Aepyprymnus rufescens* \*

Agile Wallaby *Notamacropus agilis* \*

Dingo *Canis dingo/Canis lupus/familiaris dingo*

Black Flying Fox *Pteropus alecto* \*

Eastern Tube-nosed Bat *Nyctimene robinsoni* \*

Large-footed Myotis *Myotis macropus* \*

Little Broad-nosed Bat *Scotorepens greyii* \*

Fawn-footed Melomys *Melomys cervinipes* \*