



national science week 2018

Matthew Fielding

Raven-ing about Birds

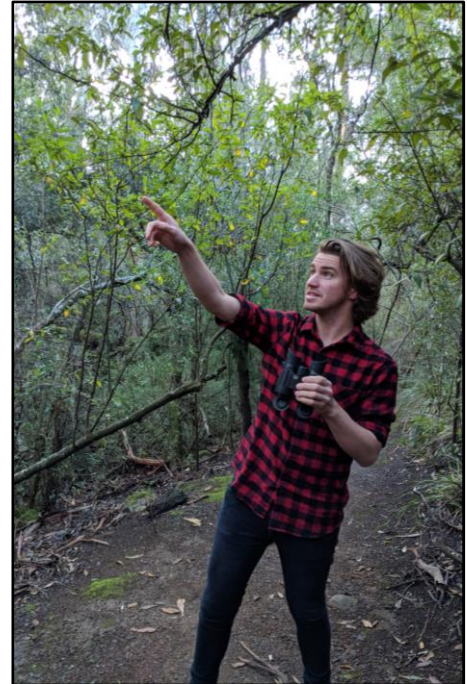
Ornithologist & Ecologist

**College of Sciences and Engineering,
University of Tasmania**

Ever heard of a dwarf emu? They used to exist and they only disappeared around 200 years ago!

I'm an ornithologist (which means I study birds) and you can usually find me in the Tasmanian wilderness behind a pair of binoculars. However, I wasn't always interested in birds. I grew up in north-west Tasmania and was a little late to world of science. I was never a dinosaur kid and it wasn't until after finishing school that I finally became a bird nerd and knew that I wanted to be a scientist.

I enrolled at the University of Tasmania, where I became fascinated by the birdlife of Tasmania. I was lucky enough to be involved in a study on how forest ravens (yes, those big noisy black birds) respond to land-use change. I was able to contribute to expanding our understanding of ravens, but still enjoy myself by watching birds, exploring Tasmania and getting trapped in a snowstorm on a mountain.



Currently, I'm studying the extinct and endangered birds of the Bass Strait Islands (the bit between Tasmania and the Australian mainland). This is where those dwarf emus used to live before they went extinct. Nowadays it's important habitat for some of the most endangered bird species in Australia. I have a strong passion for the conservation of our bird friends, especially the impact that humans have on bird populations, and I hope my research can contribute to keeping our bird buddies around to sing for future generations.

Find me on Twitter at [@mattwfielding](https://twitter.com/mattwfielding)

For more information:

www.ecological-dynamics.org

www.epicaustralia.org.au