

Common Name/Scientific name: Rose Robin / *Petroica rosea*

Often holding its wings out from the body and its tail spread, the Rose Robin may sometimes look more like a fantail than a robin. When foraging, Rose Robins seldom stay still, darting out from a perch in pursuit of flying insects with an aerobatic, tumbling flight, or snatching insects from the foliage. Even when perched, they regularly shift position or change perches by making short flights every few seconds. They often join mixed-species feeding flocks, accompanying thornbills, fantails and other small insectivorous species. The Rose Robin prefers wet forest and rainforest habitats during spring and summer, moving into drier, more open habitats during autumn and winter. Mainly found in the temperate zone in Eastern Australia, and is also in the sub-tropical zone in south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales.



Description: The Rose Robin is a slender robin with a relatively long tail. Males are dark grey above, with a white patch above the bill (frontal patch), and have a rose-pink breast. The lower part of the underbody and outer tail feathers are white, the wings and upper tail dark grey. Females are mainly brown-grey above with a small white frontal patch, white outertail and wing bars, and off-white below, with occasional pale pink wash across breast. Young birds resemble females, but are streaked white above, usually lack the white frontal patch, and are mottled dark brown underneath, with less or no pink.

Feeding & Behaviour in the gardens: The Rose Robin feeds on insects and mainly forages in the upper to mid-canopy, but will also feed from the ground. It is very active, flitting from tree to tree or to the ground, and will not return to the same perch, unlike other robins. Rose Robins are the most acrobatic of the red robin genus (*Petroica*) with a darting, tumbling flight, and forage higher up in the canopy.

Breeding and Nesting: Rose Robins breeds in pair, with the female incubating the eggs and both sexes feeding the young. The compact, cup-shaped nest is placed towards the outer end of a branch or in a tree fork, and is made of green moss, with some twigs and bark, lined with plant down or fur and camouflaged with lichen. Three broods can be raised in a single season. Nests may be parasitised by cuckoos, including Pallid Cuckoos (*Cuculus pallidus*) and Brush Cuckoos (*Cacomantis variolosus*), both recorded in the Maroochy gardens

Similar species seen in the gardens: The Rose Robin may sometimes be confused with the other red robins that share its wet forest habitat (such as Pink Robins and Flame Robins) but these species have not been recorded in the Maroochy gardens.