Honeyeaters are as typically Australian as gum trees. Everywhere you go across the country you will find these dinki-di Australians. They are often loud, bold and aggressive, and you will often see them bullying other birds as big as eagles.

They have feet that would be the envy of any ballet dancer. Their sharp claws allow them to balance in awkward positions as they stretch to reach blossoms. Their long, sharp beak is ideal for poking into the bottom of flowers. And the tip of their tongue is like a paintbrush that can empty a flower of nectar in less than a second.

The Yellow-throated Miner *Manorina flavigula* is an aggressive honeyeater that is common in Territory towns.
Honeyeaters are common birds in Australian gardens. In Central Australia look out for the White-plumed Honeyeater *Lichenostomus penicillatus* and the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater *Acanthagenys rufogularis*. The Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta* and White-gaped Honeyeater *Lichenostomus unicolor* are common in the Top End.

The Honeyeater’s sugary diet of nectar is high in energy but low in nutrients. So it also eats insects for protein, especially when raising young. You may spot a cheeky individual on your window or under your veranda looking for hiding insects.

Honeyeaters are good birds to have in your garden because they help control insect pests. Use the following letter code to reveal another helpful thing they do.

The Blue-faced Honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis* also visits Darwin gardens.

Use the number code to colour this bird.

1 = blue 2 = black
3 = white 4 = green

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Want to learn more about Honeyeaters?
Check out the affordable field guides *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* by either Simpson & Day or the one by Pizzey & Knight.