

Northern Cassowary. (All photos by DLV and Jan Hillman)

ULTIMATE WEST PAPUA

3-30 JULY 2019

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This year's Ultimate West Papua tour was by far our most successful ever to this incredible region. A total of 389 species was recorded during the trip. The tour was packed with highlights, and several stand out. A displaying male Black Sicklebill in the Arfaks was absolutely amazing, as was a displaying male Crescent-caped Lophorina (formerly "Vogelkop" Superb Bird-of-paradise) and the out-of-this-world Western Parotia, on its display court just a few feet from our hide. We also enjoyed cracking views of displaying Wilson's Bird-of-paradise (for many, the best bird in the world) in Waigeo, while the stunning Masked Bowerbird couldn't have shown any better in the Arfaks. Other close contenders included amazing views of a wild adult Northern Cassowary in Malagufuk, the very rare Vogelkop Owlet-Nightjar that we saw so well in its daytime roost in the lower Arfaks, the outstanding MacGregor's Honeyeater (sadly not a bird-of-paradise anymore) up in the Snow Mountains, the gorgeous Blue-black Kingfisher in the Sorong mangroves and the grotesque Victoria Crowned Pigeon, which showed exceedingly well in Nimbokrang, as did the equally stunning Western Crowned Pigeon in Waigeo.



Blue-black Kingfisher near Sorong.

Probably the main attraction of this tour is the chance to get up close encounters with some members of the most beautiful, spectacular and enigmatic bird family in the world: the Birds-of-paradise (BoPs for the aficionados). In fact, the heart-warming display of quite a few species was witnessed at minimal range, and this is surely an experience any birder should experience at least once in a lifetime. We also observed a great selection of kingfishers, pigeons and parrots, as well as many endemics or rarely observed species such as Snow Mountain Quail, Red-billed Brushturkey, Pale-vented Bush-hen, White-striped Forest Rail, Geelvink, Rufescent and Spice Imperial Pigeons, New Guinea Bronzewing, Green-naped Pheasant Pigeon, Thick-billed Ground Pigeon, Cinnamon Ground Dove (leader-only), Black, Brown and Violet-necked Lories, Modest and Snow Mountain (Painted) Tiger Parrots, Salvadori's and Large Fig Parrots, Papuan, Biak Hooded, "Numfor" Hooded and Hooded Pittas, Archbold's and Papuan Nightjars, Mountain and Feline Owlet-Nightjars, Biak Scops Owl, Arfak and Tan-capped (White-eared) Catbirds, Archbold's and Vogelkop Bowerbirds, Numfor, Biak, Red-breasted (BQ lifer!) and Common Paradise Kingfishers, Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, Shovel-billed and Mountain Kingfishers, Rufous Owl, Three-toed (Papuan) Swiftlet, Papuan

Treecreeper, Spotted and Blue Jewel Babblers, Spotted, Black-throated, Orange-cheeked and Marbled Honeyeaters, Short-bearded, Cinnamon-browed and Vogelkop Melidectes, Ruby-throated and Red Myzomelas, Vogelkop and Grey-green Scrubwrens, Fairy Gerygone, Goldenface, Western Crested and Obscure Berrypeckers, Wallace's Fairywren, Biak Whistler, "Numfor" Barred Cuckooshrike, Tawnt Straightbill, Black Sittella, Mottled Berryhunter (a new endemic NG family), Vogelkop, Lorentz's, Sclater's and the very rarely seen Rusty Whistlers, Raja Ampat Pitohui, Papuan Logrunner, Sooty and rare Black Thicket Fantails, Biak Monarch, Brown-headed Crow, Long-tailed Paradigalla, Arfak and Splendid Astrapias, Pale-billed and Black-billed Sicklebills, King, Lesser and Red Birds-of-paradise, Ashy, White-faced, Green-backed, Garnet, Mountain and Smoky Robins, Greater and Lesser Ground Robins, Mountain Firetail and Streak-headed, Great-billed, Black-breasted, Western Alpine and last, but not least, Grey-banded Mannikins, amongst others.



Wilson's BoP in Waigeo.

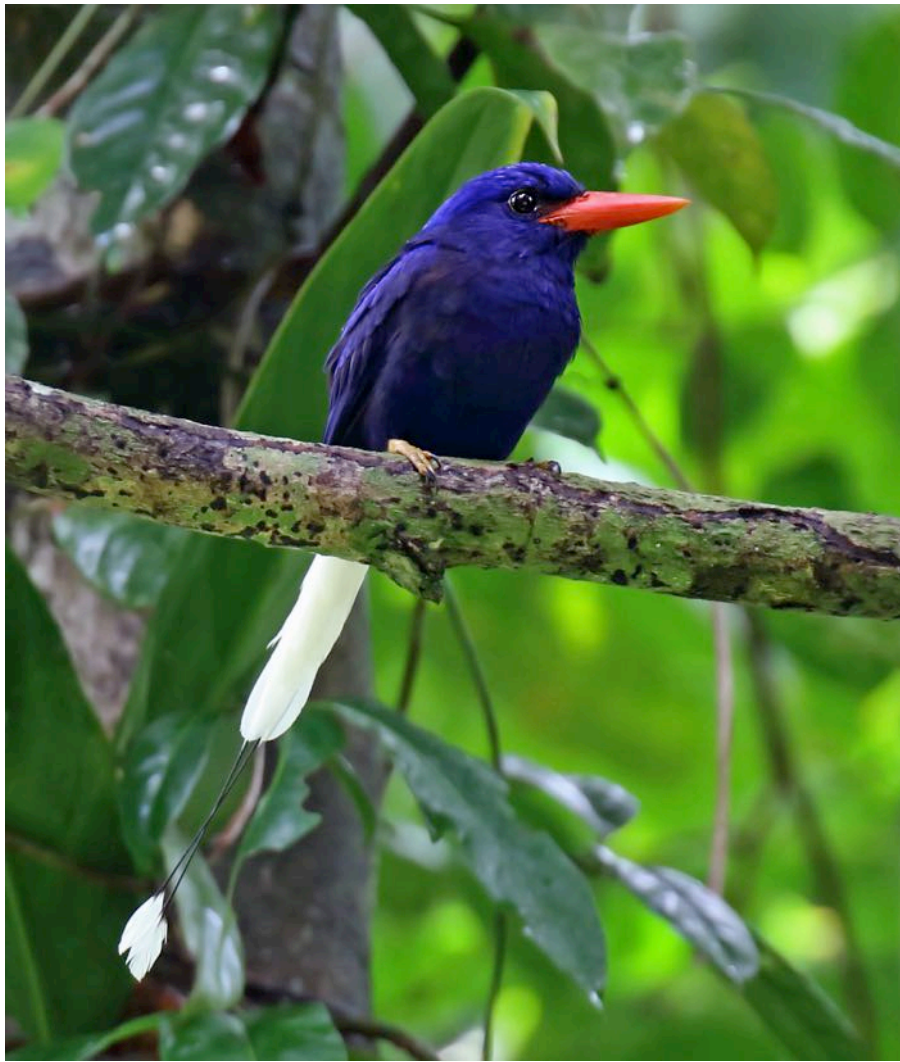
Our West Papua tour used to be one of our toughest ones due to a combination of some rather basic camping, hard and long hikes on slippery, muddy and steep trails, hot and sticky or cold and damp weather, the potential for lots of rain and the sometimes shaky logistics. However, things have changed dramatically over the last couple of years, and, although the birding in New Guinea can be extremely frustrating because of the many shy and skulking species, at least the physical effort required to see them is not as great as it used to be just a few years ago. In fact, one can now see Wilson's and Red BoPs from the road itself in Waigeo, and you can drive all the way up to Lake Habbema and see Snow Mountain Quail and McGregor's Honeyeater from the vehicle, returning back to the comfortable hotel in Wamena every night. Deforestation in the lowlands, but also in the mountains near Habbema, is at its worst, and unfortunately going at a very fast pace. Some of the birds are getting much harder to find in recent years, so the sooner you come to West Papua, the better. During our tour we birded a wide variety of habitats, including hot and sticky lowlands, montane grasslands and moss forests, primary forest on offshore islands and rich hill forest.

We arrived in the early morning at Biak airport in a rainy day. We checked in at our nearby hotel, and quickly made our way to a good forest patch on this oceanic island situated in the famous Geelvink Bay. As soon as we started walking along the forest trail, endemics came thick and fast. Almost the first bird we saw was the stunning Biak Paradise Kingfisher, which performed very well sitting on a branch. This cracking endemic is the most endearing of the Geelvink specials and its calls emanate everywhere from the forest. Long-tailed Starlings foraged in a fruiting tree and Black-winged (Biak Red) Lories and the nowadays rare Biak Lorikeet

provided a splash of colour. A pair of Biak Black Flycatchers gave good views, as did several noisy “Biak” Trillers, recently split by some authors from Black-browed Triller. A female “Geelvink” Cicadabird, split by some from Common Cicadabird, and a couple of “Biak” Fantails, split from Northern Fantail, were also found. A vocal “Biak” Hooded Pitta –ssp. *rosenbergii*, now split off in the new Phil Gregory’s guide- eventually gave great views, and the rare Biak Monarch proved quite easy to see. Doves and pigeons were much in evidence, including Geelvink Fruit Dove (split off from Yellow-bibbed Fruit Dove in Phil Gregory’s guide), “Eastern” Superb and Claret-breasted Fruit Doves and Slender-billed and Great Cuckoo-Doves. A tiny Geelvink Pygmy Parrot was a good find too. We also obtained great looks at the smart, orange *kordensis* race of Golden Monarch. A pair of Emperor Fairywrens was also noted, skulking in the undergrowth. It had been a very successful morning, so we decided to head back to our hotel. After lunch we visited a patch of scrubland and small trees not far from town where our target, the endemic and scarce Biak White-eye, showed very well. In the afternoon we did some roadside birding, but things were quiet. Nevertheless, a number of widespread New Guinea species were seen, including Eclectus Parrot (very smart males and females), Red-cheeked Parrot, Brush Cuckoo, Glossy and Uniform Swiftlets, Sacred Kingfisher, Oriental Dollarbird, Rainbow Bee-eater, Hooded Butcherbird, Shining Flycatcher, Spangled Drongo, Willie Wagtail, Sooty-headed Bulbul (introduced), Pacific Swallow, Metallic Starling, Red-capped Flowerpecker and Olive-backed and Black Sunbirds. On the way back to our accommodation we tried for Biak Scops Owl. Luckily for us, the owls were very vocal and responsive, and we enjoyed fantastic views of this rare species. Papuan Frogmouth and Large-tailed Nightjar were also present in the same spot.



Geelvink Pygmy Parrot and Biak Paradise Kingfisher.



Numfor Paradise Kingfisher.

Next day we headed by boat to the island of Numfor, home to the spectacular Numfor Paradise Kingfisher. We left the harbour in the speedboat early in the morning, and thankfully the seas were calm, so by midday we arrived to the island. A few birds were seen on the way, including Sooty and Bridled Terns, Brown Booby and Lesser Frigatebird. Once we disembarked, we waited for the rain to stop, and then we loaded up in the vehicle and drove towards the northern end of the island. A stop on the way already produced a pair of stunning Numfor Paradise Kingfishers. What a bird! Pressure off, now we could relax. After settling in our guesthouse, we spent the rest of the afternoon birding. The uncommon Numfor Leaf Warbler was one of our priorities, and after a bit of searching we eventually found a very cooperative pair. Nearby, we heard the distinctive voice of a “Numfor” Hooded Pitta emanate from a dense patch of secondary growth. After getting some recordings, it didn’t take long to have the bird performing for everyone. The Hooded Pittas in Numfor, of the endemic *mefoarana* subspecies, are poorly known and possibly represent a distinct species, so it was good to get it in the bag. A couple of Geelvink Imperial Pigeons were seen briefly, whilst other endemics already seen in Biak, such as Biak Black Flycatcher and Black-winged Lory, also showed nicely. It was then time to head back for a well-deserved dinner.

We were out early next morning, seeing some of the birds we had seen the previous day, including more cracking paradise kingfishers. The biggest surprise came in form of the rarely seen “Numfor” Cuckooshrike, already split from Barred Cuckooshrike by HBW, which gave excellent views. A very nice white Common Spotted Cuscus was spotted by Andy. It was then time to head back to Biak, so we said goodbye to our hosts and went back to the harbour. The seas were again calm, and we saw several Black Noddies and Black-naped Terns. No new birds were seen in the afternoon.



"Numfor" Hooded Pitta.

We had one day left in the island, and only a handful of remaining species left. After an early breakfast we headed to the forest patch we had birded on our first day. It rained heavily for a couple of hours, but eventually the weather cleared up, and we started walking on the trail. Many previously-seen species were noted, including more Biak Monarchs and Biak Lorikeets, and finally we all managed to get good views of a pair of Biak Gerygones, flittering around in the canopy. We heard several shy Biak Coucals, and after considerable time chasing them, one was seen briefly by everyone. Biak Megapodes have become quite rare and shy here, due to hunting, and unfortunately this time we only heard their calls distantly. A Biak Leaf Warbler was seen briefly, and a sneaky Biak Whistler –thought to be a local form of Little Shrikethrush in the past-, proved harder than usual and was only seen by some of us. A pair of eye-level Geelvink Pygmy Parrots, inspecting a tree hole, were much appreciated. We stayed in the forest until it got dark, and then returned to the city for a well-deserved and delicious dinner.

In the early hours of the next day we flew from Biak to Sentani. Instead of having to stay in a rather basic guesthouse like in the old days, we now have a very comfortable, five star hotel at our disposal. Very posh and very much appreciated by everyone. In the late morning, and then again in the afternoon we explored the nearby grasslands surrounding huge Lake Sentani. It was quite birdy in this open habitat and birds kept coming our way. Highlights included Brown and King Quails, Black Bittern, Pygmy Eagle, Orange-bellied Fruit Dove, Black-billed Coucal, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, Glossy-mantled Manucode –our first BoP!-, several pretty White-shouldered Fairywrens, White-bellied Cuckooshrike and many Great-billed Mannikins. Other goodies included two brief Spotted Whistling Ducks, a distant White-bellied Sea Eagle, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Streak-headed and Tawny-breasted Honeyeaters, New Guinea Friarbird, Tree Martin, Golden-headed Cisticola, Hooded Mannikin and Crimson Finch (probably introduced here).

The morning flight from Sentani to Wamena took us over endless expanses of rain forest, a truly fantastic sight. While approaching our destination we could see the formidable peaks of the Snow Mountains and the famous Baliem Valley. Upon arrival we were welcomed at the brand-new airport by Scorpio, our trusted man on the spot with his team. We transferred to the hotel, where we dropped our things, and went in our 4x4 vehicles towards Lake Habbema. Things have really changed here, mostly for the worst. The former track to the lake is now a paved road, with traffic (!!) and this has obviously helped loggers to get access to all the

forest, which is now sadly mostly gone.



Snow Mountain Quail.

We first stopped in the lower section of the road, where we easily found the endemic Baliem Whistler -split from Golden Whistler-, as well as Long-tailed Honey Buzzard, Papuan Harrier, Ornate Melidectes, Island Leaf Warbler, Capped White-eye and Black-breasted Mannikin. A cracking male Greater Lophorina –Superb Bird-of-paradise in the past- showed extremely well too, much to everyone’s delight. A couple of stops further up, in some degraded “forest”, gave us Fan-tailed Cuckoo, some Orange-billed Lorikeets, Mountain Swiftlet, the boisterous Belford’s Melidectes, Hooded and Black-bellied Cuckooshrikes, Lorentz’s Whistler, a pair of Black Sittellas, Black and Friendly Fantails, Mountain Firetail, our first female Splendid Astrapias and Mountain, Slaty (Blue-grey), White-winged and Black-throated Robins. Both Snow Mountain (Painted) and Modest Tiger Parrot were seen feeding on roadside bushes. We finally arrived at a breath-taking 3,300m altitude –our former campsite-, close to the scenic Lake Habbema. A magic spot. The 4,750m high rocky outcrop of Mount Trikora (the old Mount Wilhelmina) was towering in the distance. This third highest top of New Guinea used to be regularly covered in snow till the early nineties...Sadly, nowadays this is a rare sight. We spent the afternoon birding around the clearing, seeing some good birds including Black-throated, Orange-cheeked and Common Smoky Honeyeaters, Short-bearded Melidectes, Island Thrush, Western Crested Berrypecker, Red-collared Myzomela, New Guinea Thornbill and Alpine Pipit, amongst others. At dusk we had excellent views of a displaying New Guinea Woodcock, both in flight and briefly on the ground.

Next morning we drove up the road again and then walked up to a nearby ridge in search of the mythical MacGregor’s Honeyeater (formerly known as MacGregor’s Bird-of-paradise, as it was thought to be a BoP until recently). On the way we found a very cooperative Snow Mountain Quail, which showed well by the roadside. Our early morning walk through the open *Libocedrus* pine forest produced several exquisite species. It didn’t take long to find our main garget, *Macgregoria*, foraging, sitting about and preening, and we appreciated their fashionable orange cheek patches with the scope. A marvellous experience. It might not be a BoP anymore, but definitely still one of the best birds of the tour. Salvadori’s Teals and Pacific Black Ducks and Eurasian Coots were scoped in the lake too. We spent some time trying to lure a calling Spotless Crane into the open, and in the end, thank to the help of our skilled local guides, we all had good, albeit brief, views of one. Other birds seen in the morning included Papuan Harrier, Nankeen Kestrel, Orange-cheeked

Honeyeater and Papuan Grassbird, as well as two brief Western Alpine Mannikins. In the afternoon we enjoyed more views of MacGregor's Honeyeater, and also saw our first Stella's (Papuan) Lorikeets, before the rain started.



MacGregor's Honeyeater.

Next day we walked down into the Ibele valley, following a steep, muddy, slippery trail through beautiful Tolkienesque, mossy forest. The birding was rather quiet, but we scored some good species. The Antpitta-like Greater Ground Robin was more sneaky than usual, but in the end we all had a view. Calling Chestnut Forest Rails refused to show, but a male Lesser Melampitta – a renowned skulker-, gave terrific views. A male Crested Satinbird was seen briefly too. Other species noted in the forest included Garnet Robin, Mountain Mouse Warbler, Fan-tailed Berrypecker, Large and Papuan Scrubwrens and Friendly Fantail. We

then walked slowly back to our vehicles. In the afternoon we birded along the road, where highlights included some perched Goldie's Lorikeets, a fantastic adult male Splendid Astrapia and a pair of Western Alpine Mannikins. As we approached town, an Eastern Grass Owl flew by.



Lesser Melampitta.

We decided to spend the next day birding the lower and middle stretches of the road. Highlights included Brown Falcon, Mountain Fruit Dove, a female King-of-Saxony BoP, Brown Sicklebill, Plum-faced Lorikeet, Tit Berrypecker, Rufous-naped Bellbird, Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo, Canary Flyrobin, several Blue-faced Parrotfinches, Dimorphic Fantail, Black-breasted Boatbill, Garnet Robin, Blue-capped Ifrit, Mountain Peltops, Brown Falcon, more Splendid Astrapias and further looks at Baliem Whistler. In the afternoon we returned to the Ibele clearing, where we all caught up with Archbold's Bowerbird. At dusk we had brief views of an Archbold's Nightjar in flight.



Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo.

On our last full day in the Wamena area we decided to explore the new Jayapura-Wamena road, birding along the road. We saw many previously-seen species, but also added a few nice ones to the list, including a cracking Mountain Kingfisher, well spotted by Jim, some Slaty-chinned Longbills, Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo and the rarely-seen Green-fronted White-eye. Even better, we had very good views, and took good photos, of several large swiftlets, flying low down over the road with Glossy and Mountain Swiftlets, which looked in every respect to the almost-unknown Three-toed (Papuan) Swiftlet.



Splendid Astrapia.

Our flight from Wamena to Sentani was almost on time. Upon arrival we drove to our well-known lowland rainforest site near the foothills of the Cyclops Mountains. We now have a very comfortable guesthouse at our disposal, instead of having to camp out in forest, so we made good use of it! Over the next 2 and half days we birded the alluvial lowland forest that still exists around Nimbokrang. This used to be one of the best birding sites in West Papua, but sadly extensive logging and habitat clearance over the last few years have resulted in heavily degraded forest, which obviously has affected its avian populations. However, most of the key birds still remain, and with hard work and persistence, we managed to find a good selection of them. Pale-billed Sicklebill showed very well on top of a palm from the recently-built canopy tower at Alex's property. A pair of Salvadori's Fig Parrots was scoped at their nesting hole in a huge ficus tree. Another speciality of the area, the uncommon Brown Lory, was seen perched and in flight at close quarters a couple of times too. One morning we visited the favourite display spike of a male Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise. And soon we were able to observe this splendid creature uttering its mournful call and parading to a visiting female. WOW, just brilliant! And not much later we were witnessing a stonking male King Bird-of-paradise (King Bop for the aficionados) in his display tree. Luckily for us, this jewel-like bird was even seen displaying to a female, and we could discern well his striking blue legs, green tail discs and bizarrely shaped head. What a bird!

We spent considerable time inside the forest searching for the rare -mostly due to hunting- and difficult to find Victoria Crowned Pigeon (local name: Mambruk). You now have to walk quite some distance to get to good mambruk habitat, and that's what we did. With the help of our local man, Dante, who knows this forest and how to find mambruks better than anyone, we checked a lot of suitable places. Fortunately, in the end we managed to find 2 stonking Mambruks, which were seen perched up on a tree for as long as we wanted. Success! We also saw fresh Northern Cassowary footprints in the area, as well as a brief Tan-capped Catbird and the rare Brown-headed Crow. Nightbirding around Nimbokrang was very successful during our

stay though, with excellent views of Papuan Boobook, an all-too-brief Papuan Hawk-Owl, as well as both Papuan and Marbled Frogmouths and a roosting Hook-billed Kingfisher.



Victoria Crowned Pigeon and 12wired BoP.



Pink-spotted Fruit Dove.

Dawn on our last morning saw us at a Shove-billed Kingfisher spot. The bird started calling and eventually flew in, perching in full view for some time, but unfortunately the window to see it was small and by the time the scope was on the bird, it flew off. Other birds seen during our stay in Nimbokrang included leader-only Collared Brushturkey, Buff-banded and White-browed Crakes, Pinon's and Zoe's Imperial Pigeons, Pink-spotted, Wompoo, Coroneted and Orange-bellied Fruit Doves, some impressive Palm Cockatoos, roosting White-throated Nightjar, Meyer's Friarbird, Black Butcherbird, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Blyth's Hornbill, Black-capped Lory, Papuan Spine-tailed Swift, Boyer's, Golden and Grey-headed Cuckooshrikes, Black Cicadabird, Rusty Pitohui, Little Shrikethrush, Brown Oriole, Emperor Fairywren, Ochre-collared and Golden Monarchs, Ruby-throated Myzomela, Plain Honeyeater, White-bellied Thicket Fantail, Rufous-backed Fantail, Northern Variable Pitohui, Rusty Mouse Warbler, Yellow-bellied Longbill, Papuan Babbler, Yellow-bellied and Green-backed Gerygones, Lowland Peltops, Yellow-faced Myna, Lesser Bird-of-paradise and Streak-headed Mannikin.

After our 3-night stay here, it was time to head back to Sentani, from where we took a place westward to Manokwari, the main town at the other side of the Vogelkop peninsula, and now West Papua's capital. We then drove straight up the fabled Arfak Mountains. A quick stop on the way up produced great scope views of a craking pair of Masked Bowerbirds. What a start!

We spent the following 5 days in the middle reaches of the Arfaks, visiting a number of bird-of-paradise blinds and birding both along the road and on trails. Western Parotias were very active during our stay, and we had mind-blowing views of dancing males doing the "ballerina" display to attending females. Absolutely out-of-this world! As good as that was watching a male Crescent-caped Lophorina ("Vogelkop" Superb Bird-of-paradise) displaying to a female in a log, just a few feet from our blind. Yet again absolutely amazing stuff, which was seen for the first time by a visiting group only 2 years ago, during a Birdquest tour. The equally stunning Magnificent BoP was also seen very well at its display court. We also visited a Vogelkop Bowerbird hide, right next to its bower. The bower of this species is probably the most amazing structure built by any bird. We had great views of this drably-coloured species, as it picked some of the colourful items placed around the bower and moved them from one spot to another. It was gratifying to see this self-effacing, fashion-conscious bird so very well, and it was definitely another tour highlight. We also spent considerable

time in a Masked Bowerbird blind, but the male never came. Some very shy Piping Bellbirds uttering their strange song, came just around us though. While in the BoP blinds, we saw some very good birds, including White-striped Forest Rail, Arfak Catbird and Spotted Jewel Babbler. The uncommon Black-billed Sicklebill eventually showed well, both singing and coming to feed on fruits. Our skilled local guides showed us roosting Feline and Mountain Owlet Nightjars too, which was greatly appreciated by everyone. At night we saw the rare Vogelkop (Arfak) Ringtail Possum.



Black Sicklebill.



Feline Owlet-Nightjar.

Other interesting species seen during our stay included multiple encounters with Mottled Berryhunter –now placed on its own endemic monotypic family-, scope views of Rufescent Imperial Pigeon, Moluccan King Parrot, Pesquet’s (Vulturine) Parrot, Black-shouldered Cicadabird, Blue-collared Parrot, Fairy and Papuan

Lorikeets, Black-fronted White-eye, Goldenface, White-faced and Green-backed Robins, Yellow-legged Flyrobin, Fairy Gerygone, Vogelkop Melidectes, Vogelkop and Grey-green Scrubwrens, Vogelkop and Sclater's Whistler, Mid Mountain Berrypecker, Ashy Robin, further views of Masked Bowerbird and Drongo Fantail (Pygmy Drongo). A massive Papuan Eagle was also seen by most of us inside the forest. One afternoon, some of the group decided to go to the Anggi lakes, where Grey-banded Mannikin was seen very well.



Vogelkop Owlet-Nightjar and White-striped Forest Rail female.

Special mention goes to a particularly memorable day spent on a trail in mid-elevation forest. Here, we saw one of the birds of the trip, a roosting Vogelkop Owlet-Nightjar. This was a Birdquest lifer and a very rare species, having been seen only a handful of times before.

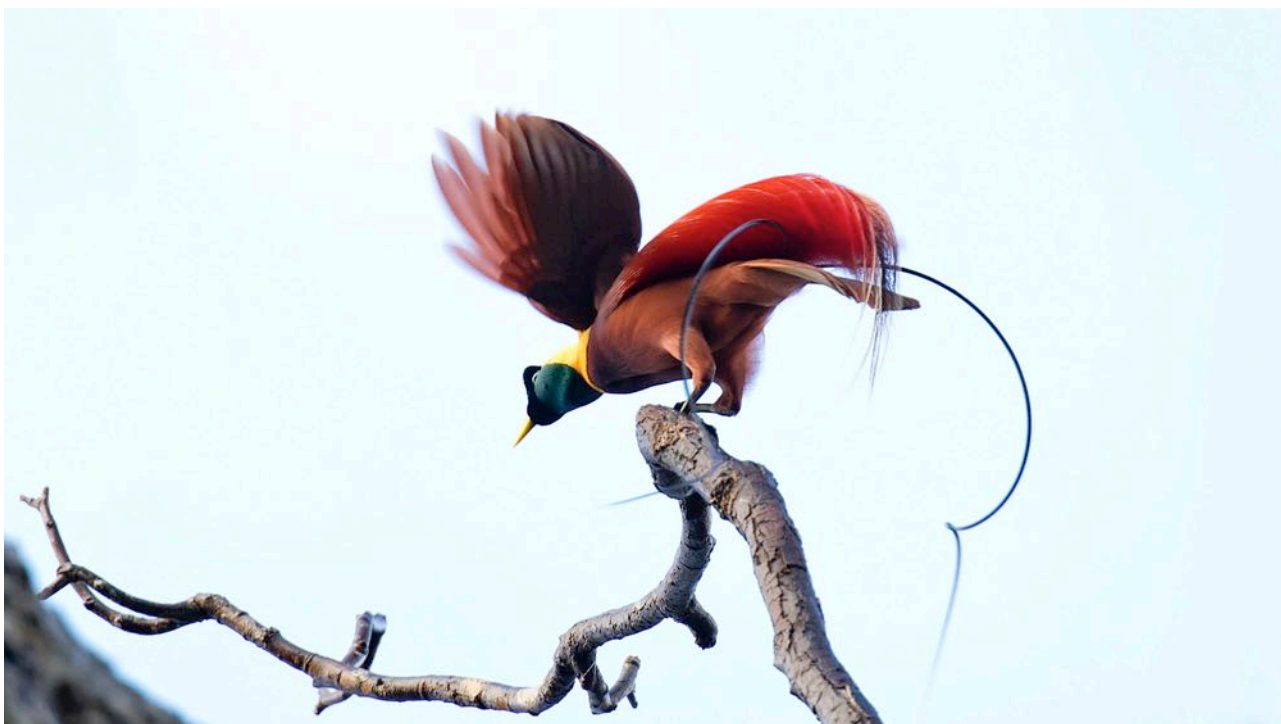
We then drove to Zeth's place, met the man himself, and got ourselves ready for the wonders of Zeth's fabulous valley. Once we got ourselves sorted, we moved up to the higher reaches of Gunung (Mount) Indon. Our first stop gave us very good views of the mysterious Long-tailed Paradigalla sitting on a nest. The long tail and the blue and yellow facial markings of this extreme rarity showed well. The weather was fine, and we saw a few birds on the way up, including Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Dove, another roosting Mountain Owlet-Nightjar, Mountain (White-bibbed) Fruit Dove, Papuan and Yellow-billed Lorikeets, Rufous-sided Honeyeater, Arfak (Western Smoky) Honeyeater, Cinnamon-browed Melidectes, Black-breasted Boatbill and Regent Whistler. We had lunch in the camp, and spent the afternoon birding the ridge area. Here, we had good views of Black Pitohui, Smoky Robin and Leser Ground Robin, amongst others, but no astrapias were seen.



Mottled Berryhunter.

Before dawn next morning we were already sitting quietly inside two hides overlooking a Black Sickbill display perch. Soon the bird started uttering his distinctive and far-carrying explosive double note. And after some nervous waiting, the huge male flew straight to the perch, located very close to the hide. The red eye, the glossy blue-black back and the very long tail really stood out. As if this wasn't enough, the male then started doing his horizontal courtship display with the pectoral plumes raised around its head. Absolutely unbeatable, mind-blowing and unforgettable views. After such an amazing experience, we left the hide and walked towards our base camp. While we were watching the sicklebill, Simon and John went again to the ridge area, where they had amazing views of two Arfak Astrapias, including an adult male. It then started to rain, so we decided to start walking down. However, before doing so, we spent some times chasing a calling Papuan Logrunner near the camp, which eventually showed well to everyone. We made it down, and then it was sadly time to leave this magnificent valley. We said goodbye to our hosts and thanked them for a fantastic stay. We stopped a couple of times as we drove back to Manokwari, and the birding was very good. Highlights included the rare Obscure Berrypecker, Wallace's Fairywren and a flock of Red-breasted Pygmy Parrots, amongst others.

Next morning saw us on a plane en route to Sorong, where we would take the ferry to Waigeo. In the past we visited Salawati and Batanta islands, in order to see such beauties as Wilson's and Red BoPs and Western Crowned Pigeon. However, extensive logging is taking place in these two islands, so nowadays it's much easier and reliable to visit Waigeo instead. While in Sorong, we visited the nearby mangroves. Here, the highlight was the fantastic Blue-black Kingfisher, which showed exceedingly well. The rare Black Thicket Fantail was also another great sighting, and other new birds included Ivory-billed Coucal, Cinnamon Bittern, Brown-backed Honeyeater, Little Kingfisher and Black-fronted (Orange-breasted) Fig Parrot. We then boarded the ferry and finally arrived to Waigeo. Once in this lovely and still well forested island, we transferred into the vehicles and drove to our accommodation, a lovely resort by the ocean. Some birding on the way already produced a number of parrots and pigeons as well as our first Red Bird-of-paradise, Grey-headed Goshawk and endemic Raja Ampat Pitohui, amongst others.



Red Bird-of-paradise.

Next morning was hopefully going to be one of the best days of the tour, as we would visit the display court of the highly desired Wilson's Bird-of-paradise. Instead of the traditionally strenuous and very steep hike we had to do in Batanta in order to reach the display area, this time we just drove for half an hour and then walked in flat terrain for 100 metres to reach the hide... Now that's a big difference! So by dawn, and without having had to sweat, we were all sitting behind the palm leaf screen overlooking the display area of one of the most colourful, bizarre and spectacular birds our planet has on offer. Soon we were admiring the improbably decorated and patterned male cleaning his court only metres away. Sometimes he was just sitting on an open branch over his court and uttering his raucous call to warn off intruders and to attract females. We all tried to puzzle together the different feather tracts of this truly amazing bird, which is restricted to just two islands off the western tip of New Guinea! We observed this gorgeous species for a while, and then went on to search for Western Crowned Pigeon, although none could be found. In the afternoon we went back to the forest. A showy Papuan (Red-bellied) Pitta was seen very well, while other birds of note included Stephan's Ground Dove, a brief New Guinea Brozewing, Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, Rusty Pitohui of the distinctive local race, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Frilled Monarch and pleasantly good numbers of Eclectus Parrots, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Blyth's Hornbills.

Early next morning we visited a Red BoP display tree. Bad weather didn't really encourage the birds to display, but in the end we had good views of a couple of males. The rest of the morning was spent searching for Western Crowned Pigeon, and this time we finally succeeded, having fantastic views of two birds in the

forest and one bird on the path. What a bird! A mixed flock gave us Spotted Honeyeater and Olive Flyrobin too, both new birds for the trip. In the afternoon we went on a very pleasant boat trip to a remote area of the island. We had excellent views of our target Spice Imperial Pigeon as well as Violet-necked Lory. Andy found us a Waigeo Cuscus too. We then reached our final destination, a tiny, 50 m long “rock” covered with thick vegetation and some trees that was supposed to be a big Great-billed Parrot roost. At first, not much was going on, but as light faded, the first Great-billed Parrots started to arrive. Soon, flocks and flocks of them appeared, totalling more than 500 birds, and making for a really impressive sight! Together with them, lots of Spice Imperial Pigeons, as well as Rainbow Bee-eaters and Singing Starlings covered the whole islet. After admiring a nice sunset, with all the birds in the background, we happily returned back to our accommodation.



Western Crowned Pigeon.

And then it was time to leave the island, taking the ferry back to Sorong. We had lunch and then drove for 2 hours to the beginning of the trail that would take us to the small village of Malagufuk. This was the first time we would visit this lowland site, and it was definitely worth it. On the walk in we already secured excellent views of the rare and stunning Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher, another Birdquest lifer! We eventually made it to the village, settled in our basic cabins, and had dinner. At dusk, 2 Papuan Nighthars allowed for great looks. We then went for a night walk, which produced roosting Papuan and Hooded Pittas and a calling Wallace’s Owlet Nightjar.



Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher from Malagufuk.

Some scanning from the clearing early next morning produced a number of good birds, including Large Fig Parrots, Golden Mynas and Black Lories. Breakfast was interrupted by the pet Northern Cassowary, which did its best to steal our bananas, together with a pet Blyth's Hornbill. The rest of the day was spent walking in the forest, and resulted in several rare birds. Mixed flocks produced the rare Tawny Straightbill, as well as Magnificent Riflebird and other common birds. We had brief views of a couple of rare Thick-billed Ground Pigeons, which quickly flushed from the trail, as well as a Cinnamon Ground Dove that did the same. A calling Green-naped Pheasant Pigeon gave us a hard time, but in the end half of the group managed to get good views of it, walking on the forest floor. However, the best bird of the day, and one of the best birds of the trip, came in form of a stonking (wild) adult Northern Cassowary, which our local guides tracked in the forest after hearing its deep-sounding calls. The views we had were simply incredible. Brown Dorcopsis –a type of forest wallaby- were seen several times too. At night we scored heavily, with roosting Pale-vented Bush-hens, Hook-billed Kingfisher, Beautiful Fruit Dove and, even better, a Red-billed Brushturkey.

We spent the next morning back in the forest. Another Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher showed brilliantly, and we were surprised to find 2 immature Rufous Owls. Black-sided Robin, Sooty Thicket Fantail and a White-crowned Cuckoo were also recorded during the morning. After lunch we said goodbye to our friendly hosts, and reluctantly waked back to the road, where the cars took us back to Sorong.

And so another fantastic (and definitely less demanding than in the past) tour came to an end. West Papua is not an easy tour to lead, the birds are shy and difficult to see, logistics are problematic, there are always some delays and things can go wrong. For a tour to be successful, you need, good ground agents, which we have, and a good group, with open-minded and understanding participants. And luckily, this one of the best groups I've ever lead, who coped with all kinds of adverse conditions, including at-times very slow birding, so big thanks to all of you: for making such successful and enjoyable tour run so smoothly.



Papuan Pitta and Red-billed Brushturkey.



SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H). Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO). Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

BIRDS

- Northern Cassowary** ◊ *Casuarus unappendiculatus* Fantastic views of a wild adult in Malagufuk.
- Spotted Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna guttata* Seen near Sentani.
- Raja Shelduck** ◊ *Tadorna radjah* Seen in Waigeo.
- Salvadori's Teal** ◊ *Salvadorina waigiensis* Cracking scope studies of this unusual duck on Lake Habbema.
- Pacific Black Duck** *Anas superciliosa* A few were seen on Lake Habbema.
- Red-billed Brushturkey** ◊ *Talegalla cuvieri* Amazing views of a roosting bird at Malagufuk.
- Collared Brushturkey** ◊ *Talegalla jobiensis* (LO) One seen briefly in the Nimbokrang area.
- Dusky Megapode** ◊ (B Scrubfowl) *Megapodius freycinet* Seen in Waigeo.
- Biak Scrubfowl** ◊ (B Megapode) *Megapodius geelvinkianus* (H) Heard in Biak.
- Brown Quail** *Coturnix ypsilophora* Seen near Sentani and Nimbokrang.
- King Quail** *Excalfactoria chinensis* Seen near Sentani.
- Snow Mountain Quail** ◊ *Anurophasis monorthonyx* Excellent looks at this speciality near Lake Habbema.
- Cinnamon Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* Seen near Sorong.
- Black Bittern** *Dupetor flavicollis* A couple birds seen briefly in the Sentani grasslands.
- Striated Heron** *Butorides striata* Seen in Waigeo.
- Eastern Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus coromandus* Just a few.
- Great Egret** *Ardea alba* Just a few.
- Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E)** *Egretta intermedia* A few seen.
- Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* A few seen.
- Pacific Reef Heron (Eastern Reef Egret)** *Egretta sacra* A few seen along the coast in Waigeo.
- Lesser Frigatebird** *Fregata ariel* Good numbers around Biak, also in Waigeo.
- Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster* A few were noted at sea near Biak and Waigeo.
- Little Pied Cormorant** *Microcarbo melanoleucos* Seen in Waigeo.
- Eastern Osprey** *Pandion cristatus* A few birds seen.
- Pacific Baza (Crested Hawk)** *Aviceda subcristata* Just a couple of encounters with this attractive bird of prey.
- Long-tailed Honey Buzzard** ◊ (L-t Buzzard) *Henicopernis longicauda* Several much appreciated close encounters.
- Papuan Eagle (New Guinea Harpy Eagle)** ◊ *Harpypopsis novaeguineae* One seen in the Arfaks.
- Pygmy Eagle** ◊ (Little Eagle) *Hieraaetus weiskei* Seen well in Sentani.
- Variable Goshawk** ◊ (Varied G) *Accipiter hiogaster* A few sightings.
- Grey-headed Goshawk** ◊ *Accipiter poliocephalus* Several seen well in Waigeo.
- Papuan Harrier** ◊ *Circus spilothorax* Male and female showed well hunting over the Lake Habbema grasslands.
- Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus* Regular encounters.
- White-bellied Sea Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* Good looks at this striking bird along the coast.
- Chestnut Forest Rail** ◊ *Rallricula rubra* (H) Heard in the Snow Mountains.
- White-striped Forest Rail** *Rallina leucospila* Amazing views of a pair in the Arfaks.
- Buff-banded Rail** *Gallirallus philippensis* Very nice looks at this widespread species.
- Pale-vented Bush-hen** ◊ (Rufous-tailed Bush-hen) *Amaurornis moluccana* Seen very well in Malagufuk.
- Spotless Crake** *Porzana tabuensis* Seen by everyone at Lake Habbema.
- White-browed Crake** *Porzana cinerea* Seen in Nimbokrang.
- Eurasian Coot (Common C)** *Fulica atra* Small numbers were at Lake Habbema.
- New Guinea Woodcock** ◊ *Scolopax rosenbergii* Seen well in the Snow Mountains.
- Eurasian Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* Seen in Numfor.
- Grey-tailed Tattler** *Tringa brevipes* Seen in Numfor.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Seen in Waigeo.
Black Noddy *Anous minutus* Seen very well off Biak and Numfor.
Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii* Small numbers were seen on our boat trips.
Bridled Tern *Onychoprion anaethetus* Good numbers on the Numfor crossing.
Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscatus* A few seen on the Numfor crossing.



Pale-vented Bush-hen.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana* Small numbers were seen on the different boat trips.
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* A few were seen at sea.
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Seen at Sentani lake.
Rock Dove *Columba livia*
Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* A few seen .
Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis* Regular encounters.
Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Dove ◊ (Black-billed C-D) *Macropygia nigrirostris* Widespread.
Great Cuckoo-Dove ◊ *Reinwardtoena reinwardtii* Seen well a few times.
Stephan's Emerald Dove ◊ *Chalcophaps stephani* Common in Waigeo.
Pacific Emerald Dove ◊ *Chalcophaps longirostris* Seen in Biak.
New Guinea Bronzewing *Henicophaps albifrons* Seen in Waigeo.
Cinnamon Ground Dove ◊ *Gallicolumba rufigula* (LO) One in the lower Arfaks and another one in Malagufuk.
Green-naped Pheasant Pigeon ◊ *Otidiphaps nobilis* One calling bird seen well by most of us in Malagufuk.
Western Crowned Pigeon ◊ *Goura cristata* Seen very well in Waigeo. What a bird!!
Victoria Crowned Pigeon ◊ *Goura victoria* After much effort, great views of 2 at Nimbokrang. Mega!
Wompoo Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus magnificus* Regularly heard and also seen in the Malagufuk area.
Pink-spotted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus perlatus* A few in the lowlands.
Orange-fronted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus aurantiifrons* Nice looks at several in the Sentani grasslands.
Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* Good looks on Biak (including a roosting bird) and in the lower Arfaks.
Coroneted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus coronulatus* Seen well in the Nimbokrang area.
Mountain Fruit Dove ◊ (White-bibbed F D) *Ptilinopus (rivoli) bellus* Regular encounters in the Arfaks. See Note.
Geelvink Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus (solomonensis) speciosus* Lovely looks at this delightful bird on Biak. See Note.
Claret-breasted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus viridis* Several fantastic observations of this very striking species.
Orange-bellied Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus iozonus* The most common *Ptilinopus* of New Guinea.
Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *Ducula (myristicivora) geelvinkiana* Seen at Rani Island. Very different from Spice I P.
Spice Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula myristicivora* Great views in Waigeo.
Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula rufigaster* (H) Recorded in the lowlands.

Rufescent Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula chalconota* Seen well in the Arfaks.
Pinon's Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula pinon* Widespread.
Zoe's Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula zoeae* A few sightings. Really nice scope looks at Nimbokrang.
Pied Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula bicolor* Seen at Waigeo.
Papuan Mountain Pigeon ◊ (Bare-eyed M-P) *Gymnophaps albertisii* A handful of observations in the highlands.
Ivory-billed Coucal ◊ (Greater Black C) *Centropus menbeki* Seen very well in Sorong.
Biak Coucal ◊ *Centropus chalybeus* Seen briefly in Biak.
Black-billed Coucal ◊ (Lesser Black C) *Centropus bernsteini* Repeated scope views in Sentani and Nimbokrang.
Dwarf Koel ◊ (Black-capped Koel) *Microdynamis parva* (H)
Pacific Koel *Eudynamis orientalis* Seen in Malagufuk.
Channel-billed Cuckoo ◊ *Scythrops novaehollandiae* Seen in Malagufuk.
Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo ◊ *Chrysococcyx ruficollis* Seen very well in the Snow Mts
White-eared Bronze Cuckoo ◊ *Chrysococcyx meyerii* Seen poorly and heard in the Arfak Mountains.
Little Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus* Seen in Waigeo.
Long-billed Cuckoo ◊ *Chrysococcyx megarhynchus* (H) Heard in Malagufuk.
White-crowned Cuckoo ◊ (W-c Koel) *Cacomantis leucolophus* Seen in Malagufuk.
Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo ◊ *Cacomantis castaneiventris* Seen well on the Wamena-Jayapura rd.
Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cacomantis flabelliformis* Seen in the Snow Mountains.
Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* Often heard in lowland forests and seen a few times
Sooty Owl ◊ (Greater S O) *Tyto tenebricosa* (H) Heard in the Arfaks.
Biak Scops Owl ◊ *Otus beccarii* Seen very well in Biak.
Papuan Boobook ◊ *Ninox theomacha* Great looks in Nimbokrang.
Papuan Hawk-Owl ◊ *Uroglaux dimorpha* Seen briefly in Nimbokrang.
Rufous Owl ◊ *Ninox rufa* Two birds seen in Malagufuk.



Rufous Owls.

Marbled Frogmouth ◊ *Podargus ocellatus* Seen well in Nimbokrang.
Papuan Frogmouth ◊ *Podargus papuensis* Several magnificent observations along our route.
Archbold's Nightjar ◊ (Mountain N) *Eurostopodus archboldi* Seen briefly in the Snow Mts.

White-throated Nightjar ◊ *Eurostopodus mystacalis* Seen in Nimbokrang.

Papuan Nightjar *Eurostopodus papuensis* Seen very well in Malagufuk.

White-throated Nightjar *Eurostopodus mystacalis* One flushed at daytime and photographed in Nimbokrang.

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* Seen in Biak and elsewhere.

Feline Owlet-Nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles insignis* Two of these magnificent birds showed so very well in the Arfaks.

Vogelkop Owlet-Nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles affinis* MEGA! Seen in the lower Arfaks. BQ lifer!

Mountain Owlet-Nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles albertisi* Two of these critters allowed incredible close ups in the Arfaks.

Moustached Treeswift ◊ *Hemiprocne mystacea* A few of these elegant birds seen.



Marbled Frogmouth.

Glossy Swiftlet (White-bellied S) *Collocalia esculenta* A very common bird all over West Papua.

Mountain Swiftlet ◊ *Aerodramus hirundinaceus* A regular sight in the highlands.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis* A common bird in all the lowland sites.

Three-toed (Papuan) Swiftlet ◊ *Aerodramus papuensis* Presumably this species photographed in the Snow Mts.

Papuan Spine-tailed Swift (P Needletail) *Mearnsia novaeguineae* Fantastic looks in Nimbokrang.

Oriental Dollarbird (Common D) *Eurystomus orientalis* Many observations.

Hook-billed Kingfisher ◊ *Melidora macrorrhina* Seen very well in Nimbokrang and Malagufuk.

Common Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea* Seen briefly in Waigeo.

Biak Paradise Kingfisher ◊ *Tanysiptera riedelii* Magnificent observations of this exquisite creature on Biak.

Numfor Paradise Kingfisher ◊ *Tanysiptera carolinae* Great views of several birds in Numfor.

Rufous-bellied Kookaburra ◊ *Dacelo gaudichaud* Seen at length on several occasions in the lowlands.

Shovel-billed Kingfisher ◊ *Clytoceyx rex* Seen briefly in the hills near Nimbokrang.

Beach Kingfisher ◊ *Todiramphus saurophagus* Seen in Waigeo.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus* Quite common on Biak.

Yellow-billed Kingfisher ◊ *Syma torotoro* Good looks in Nimbokrang.

Mountain Kingfisher ◊ *Syma megarhyncha* Seen well on the Wamena-Jayapura road.

Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher (Dwarf K) *Ceyx lepidus* Seen in Waigeo and Malagufuk.

Little Kingfisher *Ceyx pusillus* Seen in the Sorong mangroves.
Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus* Regular at the Sentani grasslands.
Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus* Small numbers noted at various locations.
Blyth's Hornbill ◊ (Papuan H) *Rhyticeros plicatus* Good numbers in the lowlands.
Nankeen Kestrel (Australian K) *Falco cenchroides* A few sightings around Lake Habbema.
Brown Falcon *Falco berigora* Seen well in the Snow Mts.
Oriental Hobby *Falco severus* Seen in Waigeo.
Palm Cockatoo ◊ *Probosciger aterrimus* Several sightings. Sometimes close and impressive.
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita* A common sight in the lowlands.



Palm Cockatoo.

Pesquet's Parrot ◊ *Psitttrichas fulgidus* Seen in the Arfaks.
Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta keiensis* Seen in Malagufuk.
Geelvink Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta geelvinkiana* Seen well in Biak.
Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta pusio* Seen in the Nimbokrang forests.
Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta bruijnii* A flock seen well in the Arfaks.
Moluccan King Parrot *Alisterus amboinensis* Seen in the Arfaks.
Black Lory ◊ *Chalcopsitta atra* Excellent views of this western speciality at Malagufuk.
Brown Lory ◊ *Chalcopsitta duivenbodei* Nice looks at this localized species in the Nimbokrang area.
Violet-necked Lory ◊ *Eos squamata* Seen well on Waigeo.

Biak Red Lory ◊ (Black-winged L) *Eos cyanogenia* Many encounters with this endemic on Biak and Numfor.
Biak Lorikeet ◊ *Trichoglossus rosenbergi* Seen well in Biak. Endangered.
Coconut Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus* Screeching parties are a common sight in the lowlands.
Black-capped Lory ◊ (Western B-c L) *Lorius lory* Fairly common.
Red-flanked Lorikeet ◊ *Chamosyna placentis* Seen near Sorong.
Fairy Lorikeet ◊ (Little Red L) Seen in the lower Arfaks.
Papuan Lorikeet ◊ *Chamosyna papou* Several excellent sightings in the Arfaks.
Plum-faced Lorikeet ◊ (Whiskered L) *Oreopsittacus arfaki* Quite common in the Snow Mountains. Stylish.
Yellow-billed Lorikeet ◊ *Neopsittacus musschenbroekii* Several fine encounters in the Arfaks.
Orange-billed Lorikeet ◊ *Neopsittacus pullicauda* Many excellent sightings in the Snow Mountains.
Brehm's Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella brehmii* (H) Heard in the Snow Mts.



Hooded Pitta.

Snow Mountain (Painted) Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella lorentzi* Excellent observations in the Lake Habbema area.
Modest Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella modesta* Great looks in the Snow Mts.
Red-cheeked Parrot ◊ *Geoffroyus geoffroyi* A regular bird of the lowlands.
Blue-collared Parrot ◊ *Geoffroyus simplex* Seen in the Arfaks.
Great-billed Parrot ◊ *Tanygnathus megalorhynchus* Impressive roost of several hundred birds in Waigeo.
Eclectus Parrot ◊ *Eclectus roratus* A delightfully common and attractive species in all the visited lowland areas.
Double-eyed Fig Parrot ◊ *Cyclopsitta diophthalma* Several showed well at Nimbokrang.
Salvadori's Fig Parrot ◊ *Psittaculirostris salvadorii* Good looks at Nimbokrang. A localized speciality.
Black-fronted (Orange-breasted) Fig Parrot ◊ *Cyclopsitta (gulelmitertii) nigrifrons* Seen at Sorong mangroves.
Papuan Pitta (Red-bellied Pitta) *Erythropitta (erythrogaster) macklotii* Seen well in Waigeo and Malagufuk.
Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida* Seen in Numfor. A possible split candidate.
Tan-capped (White-eared) Catbird ◊ *Ailuroedus buccoides* Seen in Nimbokrang.
Arfak (Black-eared) Catbird *Ailuroedus melanotis* Seen in the Arfaks.
Archbold's Bowerbird ◊ *Archboldia papuensis* Good views in the Arfaks.
Vogelkop Bowerbird ◊ *Amblyornis inornata* Splendid views of birds attending their bower. Incredible bowers.
Masked Bowerbird ◊ *Sericulus aureus* Amazing views of adult males in the lower Arfaks. What a bird!

Fawn-breasted Bowerbird ◇ *Chlamydera cerviniventris* Nice looks in the Sentani grasslands.
Papuan Treecreeper ◇ *Cormobates placens* Seen well in the Arfaks.
Wallace's Fairywren ◇ *Sipodotus wallacii* Great views in the lower Arfaks.
Emperor Fairywren ◇ *Malurus cyanocephalus* Seen in Biak, Nimbokrang and Malagufuk.
White-shouldered Fairywren ◇ *Malurus alboscapulatus* Regular encounters with this dainty bird.
Ruby-throated Myzomela ◇ *Myzomela eques* Seen briefly in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
Red Myzomela ◇ *Myzomela cruentata* Seen very well in the lower Arfaks.
Mountain Myzomela ◇ (Mountain Red-headed M) *Myzomela adolphinae* Seen in the Arfaks.
Red-collared Myzomela ◇ *Myzomela rosenbergii* The common Myzomela of the higher mountains. Colourful.
Green-backed Honeyeater ◇ *Glycichaera fallax* Seen in the lower Arfaks and Waigeo.
Rufous-sided Honeyeater ◇ *Ptiloprora erythropleura* Regular in the Arfaks.
Grey-streaked Honeyeater ◇ *Ptiloprora perstriata* Common in the Snow Mountains.
Plain Honeyeater ◇ *Pycnopygius ixoides* Seen in Nimbokrang.
Marbled Honeyeater ◇ *Pycnopygius cinereus* Seen in lower Arfaks.
Streak-headed Honeyeater ◇ *Pycnopygius stictocephalus* Good looks at a few.
Spotted Honeyeater ◇ *Xanthotis polygrammus* Seen well in Waigeo.
Tawny-breasted Honeyeater ◇ *Xanthotis flaviventer* A few observations.
Meyer's Friarbird ◇ *Philemon meyeri* Seen at Nimbokrang.
New Guinea Friarbird ◇ *Philemon novaeguineae* Regular encounters with this bald species. Distinctive calls.
Long-billed Honeyeater ◇ *Melilestes megarhynchus* A couple of sightings.
MacGregor's Honeyeater ◇ *Macgregoria pulchra* One of the highlights. Great views in the Snow Mountains.
Arfak Honeyeater ◇ (Western Smoky H) *Melipotes gymnops* This endemic is quite common in the Arfak forests.
Common Smoky Honeyeater ◇ *Melipotes fumigatus* Fairly regular in the Snow Mountains.
Tawny Straightbill ◇ *Timeliopsis griseigula* Good looks in Malagufuk.
Black-throated Honeyeater ◇ *Lichenostomus subfrenatus* Regularly observed in the Snow Mountains.
Sooty Melidectes ◇ *Melidectes fuscus* (H) Heard in the Snow Mountains.
Short-bearded Melidectes ◇ *Melidectes nouhuysi* Regular in the Snow Mountains.
Cinnamon-browed Melidectes ◇ *Melidectes ochromelas* Seen in the higher reaches of the Arfaks.
Vogelkop Melidectes ◇ *Melidectes leucostephes* Often heard and regularly seen in the Arfaks.
Belford's Melidectes ◇ *Melidectes belfordi* Many sightings of this noisy bandit in the Snow Mountains.
Ornate Melidectes ◇ *Melidectes torquatus* Great views near Wamena and in the Arfaks.
Mountain Honeyeater ◇ (M Meliphaga) *Meliphaga orientalis* A few in the Arfaks.
Mimic Honeyeater ◇ (Mimic Meliphaga) *Meliphaga analoga* Regular sightings.
Puff-backed Honeyeater ◇ (P-b Meliphaga) *Meliphaga aruensis* A couple of records.
Orange-cheeked Honeyeater ◇ *Oreornis chrysogenys* Many good views of this localized speciality.
Goldenface ◇ (Dwarf Whistler) *Pachycare flavogriseum* This beauty showed well in the lower Arfaks.
Rusty Mouse-warbler ◇ *Crateroscelis murina* Regularly heard and seen in Nimbokrang and lower Arfaks.
Mountain Mouse-warbler ◇ *Crateroscelis robusta* Seen well in the Snow Mts.
Pale-billed Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis spilodera* Seen well in the lower Arfaks.
Papuan Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis papuensis* Quite common in the Snow Mountains.
Perplexing Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis virgatus* (LO) Seen in the lower Arfaks.
Large Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis nouhuysi* A handful of sightings in the highland areas.
Buff-faced Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis perspicillatus* Seen in the lower Snow Mountains.
Vogelkop Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis rufescens* Family parties showed well in the Arfak Mountains.
Grey-green Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis arfakianus* Great looks at this subtle species in the Arfaks.
Brown-breasted Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone ruficollis* An often heard voice in the mountains. A few observations.
Yellow-bellied Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone chrysogaster* A few in the Nimbokrang forests.
Green-backed Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone chloronota* A common voice. Good looks at this canopy bird in the lowlands.
Fairy Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone palpebrosa* Seen well in the lower Arfaks and Waigeo.
Large-billed Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone magnirostris* Seen in the mangroves of Sorong.
Biak Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone hypoxantha* Seen in the Biak forests .
New Guinea Thornbill ◇ (Papuan T) *Acanthiza murina* Plenty of first-rate looks in the Snow Mountains.
Grey Thornbill ◇ (Mountain/Ashy Gerygone) *Acanthiza cinerea* Seen in the Arfaks.

Papuan Babbler ◊ (**Rufous B**) *Garritornis isidorei* Seen in the flooded forests of Nimbokrang.

Papuan Logrunner ◊ *Orthonyx novaeguineae* God views of this skulker in the Arfaks.

Crested Satinbird ◊ *Cnemophilus macgregorii* (LO) A male in the Ibele valley.

Mid-mountain Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis longicauda* Seen in the Arfaks.

Obscure Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis arfakiana* Seen in the lower Arfaks. Rare!

Fan-tailed Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis versteri* A few in the highland areas. Smart when seen well.

Slaty-headed Longbill ◊ (**Slaty-chinned L**) *Toxorhamphus poliopterus* Seen well in the jayapura-wamena road.

Dwarf Longbill ◊ (**Spectacled L, Dwarf Honeyeater**) *Oedistoma iliolophus* A few observations

Pygmy Longbill ◊ (**Pygmy Honeyeater**) *Oedistoma pygmaeum* This tiny bird showed once.

Yellow-bellied Longbill ◊ *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae* Several good looks. A common voice in the lowlands forest.

Tit Berrypecker ◊ *Oreocharis arfaki* This stunning species showed very well in the mountains.

Western Crested Berrypecker ◊ *Paramythia (montium) olivacea* Fairly common around Habbema. See Note.

Spotted Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa leucosticta* Seen very well in the Arfaks.



Spotted Jewel Babbler.

Blue Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens* Heard in Nimbokrang and briefly in Malagufuk.

Yellow-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer* A few encounters in Waigeo.

Black-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus nigripectus* This unusual species was seen in the highland areas.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus* A handful of observations.

Great Woodswallow ◊ (**New Guinea W**) *Artamus maximus* We saw these in the higher Snow Mountains

Lowland Peltops ◊ *Peltops blainvillii* Just a few in the Nimbokrang forests. A splendid bird.

Mountain Peltops ◊ *Peltops montanus* Seen well near lake Habbema.

Black Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus quoyi* Seen in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.

Hooded Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus cassicus* Pretty common in the lowlands. Very vocal.

Mottled Berryhunter ◊ *Rhagologus leucostigma* Mega views in the Arfaks. Endemic monotypic family.

Stout-billed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina caeruleogrisea* Seen twice.

Barred Cuckooshrike (Yellow-eyed C) *Coracina lineata* Seen in Waigeo.

Numfor (Barred) Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina (lineata) maforensis* This rarity was seen well in Numfor.

Boyer's Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina boyeri* Small numbers in the lowland forests.

White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis* A few in Sentani.
Hooded Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina longicauda* Seen well in the Snow Mts.
Geelvink Cicadabird (Common C) *Coracina tenuirostris* We saw this modest species in Biak.
Black-shouldered Cicadabird ◊ *Coracina incerta* Photographed in the lower Arfaks.
Grey-headed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina schisticeps* Fairly common at Nimbokrang.
Black Cicadabird ◊ (Black Cuckooshrike) *Edolisoma melas* Seen in Nimbokrang.
Black-bellied Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina montana* A few were seen in the Arfaks.
Golden Cuckooshrike ◊ *Campochaera sloetii* Seen in Nimbokrang.
Biak Triller ◊ *Lalage (atrovirens) leucoptera* Seen on Biak.
Black-browed Triller ◊ *Lalage atrovirens* Vocal and obvious at Nimbokrang.
Black Sittella ◊ *Daphoenositta miranda* Good looks in the Snow Mountains. Attractive.
Rufous-naped Bellbird ◊ *Aleadryas rufinucha* Regularly recorded in the highland areas. Quite skulky!
Black Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui nigrescens* Several encounters in the Arfaks.
Piping Bellbird ◊ *Ornorectes cristatus* Recorded in the Arfaks.
Vogelkop Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala meyeri* Regular in the Arfak forests.
Rusty Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala hyperythra* Seen in the lower Arfaks. Rare!
Grey Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala simplex* Seen in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
Biak Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala melanorhyncha* Seen by some in Biak. Tricky this year.
Sclater's Whistler ◊ (Hill Golden W) *Pachycephala soror* Recorded in the Arfaks.



Rusty Whistler.

Baliem Whistler *Pachycephala balim* Great views of this localized near Wamena.
Lorentz's Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala lorentzi* A few in the higher reaches of the Snow Mountains.
Regent Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala schlegelii* Seen well in the Arfaks.
Rusty Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui ferrugineus* Several at Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
Little Shrikethrush ◊ *Colluricincla megarhyncha* A commonly recorded species of lowland rainforest.
Northern Variable Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui kirhocephalus* Seen well in Nimbokrang.
Southern Variable Pitohui *Pitohui uropygialis* Seen in Malagufuk.
Raja Ampat Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui cerciniventris* This recent split was seen well in Waigeo.
Hooded Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui dichrous* Seen in the lower Arfak Mountains.
Brown Oriole ◊ *Oriolus szalayi* Good scope studies in Malagufuk. A regularly heard song.
Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus* Regular and vocal.
Willie Wagtail (White-browed Fantail) *Rhipidura leucophrys* A common bird of open lowland areas.

- Northern Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura rufiventris* A regular member of lowland rainforest flocks.
- Biak Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura (rufiventris) kordensis* Seen in Biak.
- Sooty Thicket Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura threnothorax* Great views in Malagufuk.
- Black Thicket Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura maculipectus* Great views in the Sorong mangroves.
- White-bellied Thicket Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura leucothorax* Seen well in Nimbokrang.
- Black Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura atra* A typical member of highland forest flocks.



Sooty Thicket Fantail.

- Rufous-backed Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura rufidorsa* Great views in Nimbokrang and lower Arfaks.
- Drongo Fantail** ◇ (Pygmy Drongo, Mountain D) *Chaetorhynchus papuensis* Great views in the lower Arfaks.
- Chestnut-bellied Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura hyperythra* Common in the middle Arfaks.
- Friendly Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura albolimbata* Regular and friendly indeed...
- Dimorphic Fantail** ◇ *Rhipidura brachyrhyncha* Another inquisitive species of highland forest.
- Black Monarch** ◇ *Symposiachrus axillaris* Seen in the Arfaks.
- Biak Monarch** ◇ *Monarcha brehmii* Great looks at this rarity on Biak. At least 4 birds seen!
- Black-winged Monarch** ◇ *Monarcha frater* Seen in the lower Arfaks.
- Golden Monarch** ◇ *Carterornis chrysomela* Regular encounters with this beauty.
- Ochre-collared Monarch** ◇ (Rufous-collared M) *Arses insularis* Fairly common in the Nimbokrang forests. Smart!
- Frilled Monarch** ◇ *Arses telescopthalmus* This splendour was regular on Waigeo and Malagufuk.
- Biak Black Flycatcher** ◇ (Biak F) *Myiagra atra* Several very nice encounters with this Geelvink endemic.
- Shining Flycatcher** (S Monarch) *Myiagra alecto* Regularly heard and seen in lowland habitat.
- Brown-headed Crow** ◇ *Corvus fuscicapillus* Excellent views of this rare species in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
- Grey Crow** ◇ (Bare-eyed C) *Corvus tristis* Seen a few times.
- Torresian Crow** (Australian C) *Corvus orru* A few seen.
- Lesser Melampitta** ◇ *Melampitta lugubris* Amazing views in the mossy forest of the Snow Mts.
- Blue-capped Ifrit** ◇ (B-c Ifrita) *Ifrita kowaldi* Seen in the Snow Mts.
- Glossy-mantled Manucode** ◇ *Manucodia ater* Nice looks at this subtle bird of paradise in the Sentani area.
- Trumpet Manucode** ◇ *Phonygammus keraudrenii* (H) Heard in the lower Arfaks.
- Crinkle-collared Manucode** ◇ *Manucodia chalybatus* Seen by some in the Arfaks.
- Long-tailed Paradigalla** ◇ *Paradigalla carunculata* Great views of a nesting bird in the middle Arfaks. A real rarity!
- Arfak Astrapia** ◇ *Astrapia nigra* Adult male and female in the higher Arfaks.
- Splendid Astrapia** ◇ *Astrapia splendidissima* Fairly common in the higher forests of the Snow Mountains.
- Western Parotia** ◇ *Parotia sefilata* Incredible views of a male in its dancing court in the Arfaks.

Greater Lophorina *Lophorina superba* Excellent views of a male in the lower Snow Mts.

Crescent-caped Lophorina *Lophorina nieda* Amazing views of displaying male and female in the Arfaks.

King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Pteridophora alberti* Females in the lower Snow Mts and on the Jayapura rd.

Magnificent Riflebird ◊ *Ptiloris magnificus* Seen in Malagufuk.

Black Sicklebill ◊ *Epimachus fastosus* Cracking views of a displaying male in the higher Arfaks. MEGA!

Brown Sicklebill *Epimachus meyeri* Seen in the Snow Mts.

Black-billed Sicklebill ◊ (Buff-tailed S) *Drepanornis albertisi* Seen well in the Arfaks.

Pale-billed Sicklebill ◊ *Drepanornis bruijnii* Good looks at last in the Nimbokrang area.

Magnificent Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Diphyllodes magnificus* Heard only in the Arfaks due to heavy rain.

Wilson's Bird-of-Paradise ◊ *Diphyllodes respublica* Stunning views of males and females in Waigeo.

King Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Cicinnurus regius* Great studies of a cracking adult male at Nimbokrang. Also Malagufuk.

Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Seleucidis melanoleucus* Excellent views of a displaying male at Nimbokrang.

Lesser Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Paradisaea minor* Regular looks at this gorgeous species. First in Nimbokrang.

Red Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Paradisaea rubra* Excellent looks in Waigeo, including displaying male.

Ashy Robin ◊ *Heteromyias albispecularis* Great views in the Arfaks.

Black-sided Robin ◊ *Poecilodryas hypoleuca* Seen well in Malagufuk.

Black-throated Robin ◊ *Poecilodryas albonotata* A few showed quite well in the mountains.

White-winged Robin ◊ *Peneothello sigillata* Seen a few times in the Snow Mountains.

Smoky Robin ◊ *Peneothello cryptoleuca* Good views in the higher Arfaks. A localized speciality!

Slaty Robin ◊ (Blue-grey R) *Peneothello cyanus* A few seen in the mountains.

Green-backed Robin ◊ *Pachycephalopsis hattamensis* Seen in the Arfaks.

White-faced Robin ◊ *Tregellasia leucops* Seen well in the lower Arfaks.

Torrent Flyrobin ◊ (T Flycatcher) *Monachella muelleriana* Seen near Nimbokrang.

Olive Flyrobin *Microceca flavovirescens* Seen well in Waigeo.

Canary Flyrobin ◊ (C Flycatcher) *Microeca papuana* Fairly common and appealing in the highland areas.

Yellow-legged Flyrobin ◊ (Y-I Flycatcher) *Microeca griseiceps* A couple birds in the lower Arfaks.

Garnet Robin ◊ *Eugerygone rubra* Seen well in the Snow Mts and the Arfaks.



Garnet Robin.

Mountain Robin ◊ (Alpine R) *Petroica bivittata* A few seen well in the Snow Mountains.

Greater Ground Robin ◊ *Amalocichla sclateriana* One in the Snow Mts.

Lesser Ground Robin ◊ *Amalocichla incerta* Excellent views in the Arfaks.

Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster* This introduced species is quite common on Biak.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Regular observations.

Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans* A few seen over the Sentani grasslands.

Island Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus poliocephalus* Seen in the Snow Mts and in the Arfaks.

Biak Leaf Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus (maforensis) mysorensis* One briefly at Biak, in a mixed flock.

Numfor Leaf Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus [maforensis] maforensis* Great views in Numfor.
Papuan Grassbird ◊ (P Grass Warbler) *Megalurus macrurus* A few birds seen in Habbema.
Golden-headed Cisticola (Bright-capped C) *Cisticola exilis* Good looks at several in the Sentani grasslands.
Black-fronted White-eye ◊ *Zosterops chrysolaeus* Regular in the Arfak foothills.
Green-fronted White-eye ◊ *Zosterops minor* Seen well on the new Jayapura-Wamena rd, at 1.100 m.
Biak White-eye ◊ *Zosterops mysorensis* Nice looks at this Biak endemic in Biak.
Capped White-eye ◊ (Western Mountain W-e) *Zosterops fuscicapilla* Common in the middle reaches of the Arfaks.
Metallic Starling (Shining S) *Aplonis metallica* A common species of the lowlands.
Long-tailed Starling ◊ *Aplonis magna* Many excellent looks on Biak and Numfor. A Geelvink endemic.
Singing Starling ◊ *Aplonis cantoroides* A few sightings. First seen in Waigeo.
Yellow-faced Myna ◊ *Mino dumontii* Small numbers were noted in the lowlands.



Magnificent BoP.

Golden Myna ◊ *Mino anais* Seen at Malagufuk.
Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus* Regular observations in the Lake Habbema area.
Pied Bush Chat (Pied Chat) *Saxicola caprata* A few in grassy areas.
Red-capped Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum geelvinkianum* Small numbers were seen in the first half of the tour.
Olive-crowned Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum pectorale* Small numbers were noted in Waigeo and in the Arfaks.
Black Sunbird ◊ *Leptocoma sericea* Regular sightings of this endemic in all the lowland areas.
Olive-backed Sunbird (Yellow-bellied S) *Cinnyris jugularis* Regular in the same areas.
Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* Common in most of the visited towns and villages.
Mountain Firetail ◊ *Oreostruthus fuliginosus* Great looks at this curious species in the Snow Mountains.
Crimson Finch ◊ *Neochmia phaeton* Seen in the Sentani grasslands and Nimbokrang. Probably introduced here.
Blue-faced Parrotfinch *Erythrura trichroa* Good looks in the Snow Mountains.
Streak-headed Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura tristissima* Eventually seen well in Nimbokrang.
Grey-banded Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura vana* Seen in Anggi lakes near the Arfaks.
Great-billed Mannikin ◊ (Grand M) *Lonchura grandis* Excellent views in Sentani grasslands and Nimbokrang.
Hooded Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura spectabilis* Some nice scope views in the Sentani grasslands.
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin *Lonchura castaneothorax* Seen briefly near Nimbokrang.
Black-breasted Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura teerinki* Good looks at several of these localized endemics near Wamena.

Western Alpine Mannikin ◊ (**Snow Mountain M**) *Lonchura montana* Great views in the Habbema area.
Alpine Pipit ◊ *Anthus gutturalis* Small numbers were seen in the Lake Habbema area.



Arfak Catbird.

MAMMALS

Speckled Dasyure *Neophascogale lorentzii* Seen in the Snow Mts.
Brown Dorcopsis *Dorcopsis muelleri* This forest wallaby was seen in Malagufuk.
Vogelkop Ringtail Possum *Pseudochirulus schlegeli* Seen well in the Arfaks.



Common Spotted Cuscus *Spiloguscus maculatus* Seen in Numfor.
Waigeo Cuscus *Spiloguscus papuensis* 1 seen at Waigeo. A very cool looking mammal!
Striped Possum *Dactylopsila trivirgata* 1 in Malagufuk.
Spinner Dolphin *Stenella longirostris* Off Biak.

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. Gill, F and Donsker, D (Eds). 2012. IOC World Bird Names (v2.11). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Long-tailed Honey Buzzard *Henicopernis longicauda*

Also known as Long-tailed Buzzard, its recorded prey items include a variety of insects (also wasps), tree lizards, birds and bird eggs. This is a member of a genus which possesses a very distinctive jizz and which is endemic to New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago.

Geelvink (Yellow-bibbed) Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus (solomonensis) speciosus*

The IOC hasn't split off the Geelvink bay subspecies *speciosus* as a separate species. Pratt & Beehler also treat it as part of Yellow-bibbed F D. However, Gregory and HBW have split this form off as Geelvink Fruit Dove *P speciosus*.

Western Crowned Pigeon *Goura cristata*

This extraordinary species is endemic to West Papua. This and the other two *Goura* allospecies are by far the largest of the Pigeon family. All are restricted to alluvial forest, are heavily hunted.

Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *Ducula (myristicivora) geelvinkiana* and **Spice Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula myristicivora*

Gregory and Pratt & Beehler split Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *D geelvinkiana*, endemic to the Bay Islands, from Spice Imperial Pigeon *D myristicivora*, restricted to the Moluccas and W Papuan Islands. Both show many different plumage details. The IOC hasn't adopted this split yet.

Biak Lorikeet *Trichoglossus rosenbergi*

Biak Lorikeet, endemic to Biak Island, has recently been split from Coconut Lorikeet, *T haematodus*.

Vogelkop Bowerbird *Amblyornis inornatus*

We were able to admire several magnificently built bowers, which must surely be the best of any Bowerbird. We enjoyed good views of this modestly-plumaged bird in action at its bower. The song is totally amazing and the bird seems to be able to imitate about everything it hears. This species is endemic to West Papua.

MacGregor's Honeyeater *Macgregoria pulchra*

It is much rarer there now than it used to be, mainly because of it being hunted for its delicious taste. Sadly, recent research has shown that this species belongs with the Honeyeaters.... Pratt & Beehler call it Giant Wattled Honeyeater.

Western Crested Berrypecker *Paramythia (montium) olivacea*

Gregory and Pratt & Beehler have split off Crested Berrypecker into Western Crested Berrypecker *P olivacea* and Eastern Crested Berrypecker *P montium*. The IOC hasn't accepted this split yet.

Biak Triller *Lalage (atrovirens) leucoptera*

Gregory and Pratt & Beehler have split off Biak Triller *L leucoptera* from Black-browed Triller *L atrivirens*. The IOC hasn't accepted this split yet.

Raja Ampat Pitohui *Pitohui cerciniventris*

Raja Ampat Pitohui, has recently been split off from Variable Pitohui *P. kirhocephalus*, and is endemic to Batanta, Waigeo and Gam. This is one of those famous poisonous birds, whose feathers and skin contain homobatrachotoxin, a powerful poison of the batrachotoxin group. These poisons were previously considered to be restricted to neotropical poison-dart frogs of the genus *Phyllobates*. However it seems (inexplicably) that not all individuals or indeed populations of pitohuis are poisonous and the reason for the presence of these toxins has not yet been discovered.

Grey Whistler *Pachycephala simplex*

The form involved is sometimes split off as Grey-headed Whistler *P. griseiceps*.

Long-tailed Paradigalla *Paradigalla carunculata*

This rarely-seen, much prized bird is endemic to West Papua. *Paradigalla* is derived from *Paradisea*, bird of paradise and the Latin *gallus*, a farmyard cock, probably referring to the colourful facial wattles typical of the genus.

Arfak Astrapia *Astrapia nigra* and **Splendid Astrapia** *Astrapia splendidissima*

Astrapia is derived from the Greek meaning a flash of lightning.

Wilson's Bird-of-paradise *Diphyllodes respublica*

Tremendous close up views for all of two males and females of this most wonderful and extraordinary Bird of Paradise on his display court in Waigeo. The combination of colours is totally amazing and the blue head seems to be illuminated from inside. It took a bit of effort to get to the spot, but it was well worth it. This species is restricted to Batanta and nearby Waigeo and is thus a West Papua endemic. The scientific epithet refers to the "republic". In naming this species Prince Bonaparte expressed his disenchantment with the French republic, ensuring that since there could not be a paradisaean republic, there should at least be a republican bird of paradise..

Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus*

The race *versteegi* (restricted to the Jayawijaya Mountains) was not uncommon in the grasslands and along the treeline near Lake Habbema. The taxonomy of this diverse species is highly complex with at least 49 subspecies having been described for this widespread bird, usually from the highest mountains or smallest islands.

Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata* It has been suggested that the populations of New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago be split off as a separate species, Black Bush Chat *S. aethiops*.