



The fantastic Forest Bittern showed memorably well at Varirata during this tour! (JM)

ULTIMATE PAPUA NEW GUINEA II

25 AUGUST – 11 / 15 SEPTEMBER 2019

LEADER: JULIEN MAZENAUER

Our second Ultimate Papua New Guinea tour in 2019, including New Britain, was an immense success and provided us with fantastic sightings throughout. A total of 19 Birds-of-paradise (BoPs), one of the most striking and extraordinary bird families in the world, were seen. The most amazing one must have been the male Blue BoP, admired through the scope near Kumul lodge. A few females were seen previously at Rondon Ridge, but this male was just too much. Several males King-of-Saxony BoP – seen displaying – ranked high in our most memorable moments of the tour, especially walk-away views of a male obtained at Rondon Ridge. Along the Ketu River, we were able to observe the full display and mating of another cosmopolitan species, Twelve-wired BoP. Despite the closing of Ambua, we obtained good views of a calling male Black Sicklebill, sighted along a new road close to Tabubil. Brown Sicklebill males were seen even better and for as long as we wanted, uttering their machine-gun like calls through the forest. The adult male Stephanie's *Astrapia* at Rondon Ridge will never be forgotten, showing his incredible glossy green head colours. At Kumul, Ribbon-tailed *Astrapia*, one of the most striking BoP, amazed us down to a few meters thanks to a feeder especially created for birdwatchers. Additionally, great views of the small and incredible King BoP delighted us near Kiunga, as well as males Magnificent BoPs below Kumul. Visiting the lekking sites of Lesser, Greater and Raggiana BoP (the latter being PNG's national bird) were a reason enough of travelling

to New Guinea! The males shook their elongated flank plumes in front of females, an true 'Attenborough' moment! The bird of the trip wasn't however a Bird-of-paradise, but the saturated Flame Bowerbird, putting on a cosmic show in front of its bower and only few meters away from us, almost burning our eyes! The male Crested Satinbird, almost as extreme as the bowerbird, was a major highlight for all, showing well in its usual fruiting tree just behind our cabins at Kumul lodge.



This male Flame Bowerbird cleaning one-by-one the sticks of its bower was voted best bird of the trip! (JM)

While those striking examples seen during this tour are a key signature of New Guinea, birding on this island has much more to offer. We encountered 40 (!) species of pigeons and doves – they reach their higher diversity in New Guinea – including the mythical Sclater's Crowned Pigeon, the rare New Guinea Bronzewing (scoped!), 11 Fruit Doves including the uncommon Coroneted and 'Eastern' Ornate, the superb Nicobar Pigeon and the rarely recorded Black Imperial Pigeon during our New Britain extension. 18 species of Kingfishers were recorded, including the crepuscular and monstrous Shovel-billed Kingfisher, Common, Little and Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher during the main tour and White-mantled and Black-capped Paradise Kingfishers in New Britain. Close studies of an Archbold's Nightjar at Kumul was a great experience as well. All possible Owlet-Nightjars were SEEN, including walk-away views of Mountain, Barred, Wallace's and Starry (the latter having been a Birdquest lifer only few weeks prior this tour!). Visiting a blind near Kwatu camp allowed us a prolonged New Guinea Flightless Rail sighting, with two birds feeding on recently cut sago (for some of us the bird of the trip!). On the last day of the main tour, we were rewarded with very close studies of the rare Forest Bittern at Varirata, a species we've been looking for on several occasions, who even made it to the Top 5! Golden Masked Owl, before 2015 being almost unknown and now a signature species of the New Britain extension, kept delighting us as we found two birds during a short night drive. We were lucky to encounter a Papuan (New Guinea Harpy) Eagle at Rondon, flying across a clearing straight in front of us! 31 species of Parrots were recorded, including the prehistoric Pesquet's (or New Guinea Vulturine) Parrot and the rare Striated Lorikeet. The ultimate skulking and most-wanted Jewel Babblers proved hard to see as usual, but we at least obtained good views of Blue and Chestnut-backed JB, whereas Spotted was only glimpsed. Painted Quail-Thrush, a nearby relative, was unusually cooperative, with a family of 3 birds showing very well to most of us. In addition to all those major highlights, we also achieved the main goal of seeing all 7 recognized endemic bird families, with both Painted Berrypeckers (Paramythiidae), both Satinbirds (Cnemophilidae), Berrypeckers and Longbills (Melanocharitidae), males and females of the monotypic Mottled Berryhunter (Rhagologidae), Lesser Melampitta (Melampittidae), the monotypic Wattled Ploughbill (Eulacestomatidae) and the monotypic Blue-capped Ifrit (Ifritidae), all seen very well. All-in-all, we recorded an impressive total of 421 species including 11 heard-onlys.



Three displaying Greater Birds-of-paradise, a reason enough to visit PNG! (JM)

The tour assembled early morning at Port Moresby, where after a short refresher we departed for Varirata NP. On the way we already encountered some quality birds like a Forest Kingfisher on a wire, a large flock of the range-restricted Grey-headed Mannikin, a couple Yellow-faced Mynas and our first parrots and lorikeets. As soon as we arrived at the main clearing, we were submerged by a wave of new birds that included an excellent set of Doves and Pigeons, including an unbelievably cooperative Dwarf Fruit-Dove gorging herself on berries, several Pink-spotted and a few Orange-bellied Fruit-Doves (while Beautiful and 'Eastern' Superb were heard). Zoe's Imperial Pigeon proved to be common and we also recorded two large flocks of Papuan Mountain Pigeons passing by. One of the first birds seen when stepping out of the bus was a male Dwarf Koel, soon joined by a female, on show for as long as we wanted. On the passerines side, the fruiting and flowering trees attracted a variety of honeyeaters and Birds-of-paradise. Elegant Honeyeaters were studied at length and photographed, Tawny-breasted and Streak-headed Honeyeaters visited largest trees of the clearing and Papuan Black and Mountain Myzomelas were seen flittering around. Female Growling Riflebird were seen repeatedly (while males remained glimpsed) and an adult male Raggiana's Bird-of-Paradise put on a show by flying across the whole clearing in front of our eyes. New Guinea birding at its best! Cuckooshrikes were well represented, with flocks of Boyer's, White-bellied, Barred and Stout-billed being almost continuously in view. A Long-tailed Honey Buzzard made a close appearance, as did a Yellow-billed Kingfisher, occupied in smashing its predated frog! We then hit the trails and were soon rewarded by scope studies of Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher and Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, while Painted Quail-thrush was only glimpsed by some and Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler remained heard only. Some flocks provided us the likes of Spot-winged, Frilled and Black-faced Monarchs, the weird and vocal Drongo Fantail (also logically called Pygmy Drongo!), Chestnut-bellied Fantail, the striking local race of White-faced Robin, comical Rusty Pitohuis, Variable Shrikethrushes (from the recently split Little Shrikethrush complex), Dwarf Longbills, Black and Hooded Butcherbird. Chris also found two roosting Papuan Frogmouths being mobbed by a Black Cicadabird pair, and Barred Owlet-nightjar was visible at its usual stake-out. After lunch, we drove outside the park and birded the dry savannah, with its avifauna largely shared with Australia.

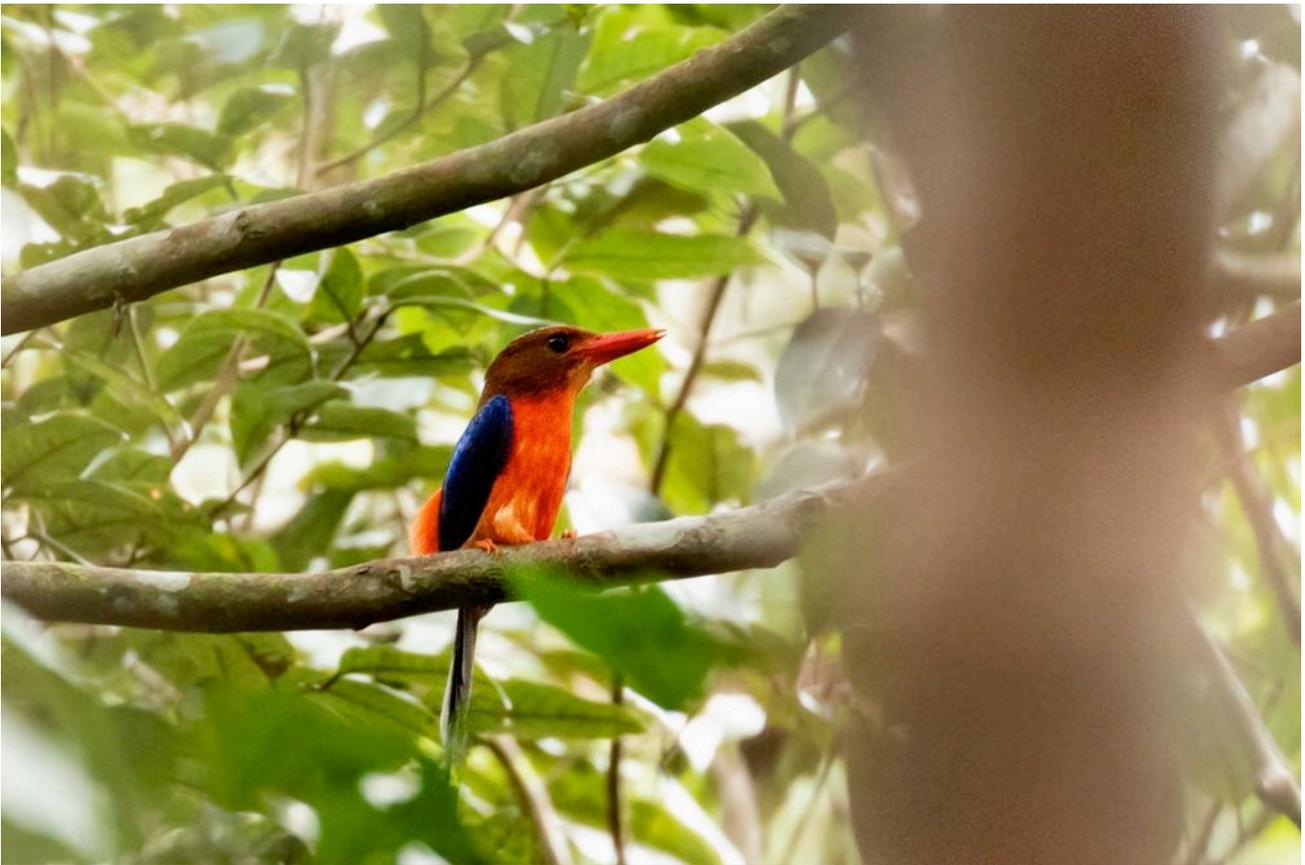
Our main target of this area was the endemic and range-restricted White-bellied Whistler, which we managed to find swiftly, with three calling males and one female. We came close to a few Piping Bellbirds but they refused to show, as did the White-crowned Cuckoo, heard calling for a while but a bit too distant. Raptors were prominent, with repeated sightings of Long-tailed Honey-buzzard, Eastern Ospreys, Gurney's Eagle, Pacific Baza and even a rare Oriental Hobby. Forest Kingfishers, White-throated Honeyeaters,

Lemon-bellied Flyrobins, Red-flanked and Coconut Lorikeets and several Raggiana's Birds-of-paradise were noted from the open woodland. Returning to Port Moresby, we checked some roadside pools and added the last birds of the day (a day at more than 110 species!), with Radja Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Australasian Swamphen, Masked Lapwing, Australian White Ibis and hundreds of Pied Herons, Intermediate Egrets and Eastern Cattle Egrets.



A endearing Dwarf Fruit Dove and Yellow-billed Kingfisher from the first day of the tour at Varirata (JM)

Following morning saw us leaving Port Moresby at dawn to enjoy one of the most amazing avian spectacle on earth back in Varirata. Indeed, as soon as we positioned ourselves, adult males Raggiana's Bird-of-Paradise appeared, started displaying to females, shaking their extravagant flank plumes and some even mating. A once-in-a-lifetime experience, a reason alone to visit Papua New Guinea, and this for about an hour in our scopes! Hitting the trails proved rewarding, with views of Fairy, Green-backed and Yellow-bellied Gerygones, repeated Brown-headed Paradise and Papuan Dwarf Kingfishers sightings, skittish Growling Riflebirds, a party of smart White-faced Robins and a surprise Yellow-legged Flyrobin. Scanning from the clearing during lunch brought us good views of Pygmy Eagle and Papuan King Parrot. A brief foray inside the forest gave us scope views of a splendid Beautiful Fruit Dove and a surprise Coroneted Fruit Dove, while a Piping Bellbird was seen crossing the trail. The savannah outside the national park gave us new birds again. Our first Glossy-mantled Manucode was seen, as well as a pair White-throated Gerygone, large flocks of Grey-headed Mannikins, a few Fawn-breasted Bowerbirds and again White-bellied Whistlers. Back in Port Moresby, our usual stake-out proved reliable again with close views of the range-restricted Silver-eared Honeyeater.



Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher and Raggiana Bird-of-paradise, PNG's national bird, at Varirata (JM)

An early flight next morning took us to Mount Hagen. After a short birding session by the airport and sightings of a perched Brown Falcon, an immature Papuan Harrier and Australian Pipits, we were soon on our way to the luxurious Rondon Ridge. On the way we encountered our first Ornate Melidectes, Great Woodswallow and Hooded Mannikins, and as soon arrived we obtained great views of several males Greater Lophorina (the Superb Bird-of-paradise complex was recently split, the members being renamed Lophorinas), some Yellow-browed Melidectes (a stunner!), Mountain and the amazing Red-collared Myzomelas and a few flocks of Papuan White-eyes (allowing close studies and photographs). After a unique lunch, we walked slowly uphill, and new birds came thick and fast. Black and Friendly Fantails were much in evidence, while Slaty-chinned Longbill only briefly showed to a few, as did Black Monarch. Slaty Robin cooperated, but a close Spotted Jewel-Babbler singing a few meters from us could not be coaxed into view, despite a long wait. A few flocks held Island Leaf Warblers, some aggressive pairs of Canary Flyrobins and we also heard two Black Pitohuis (remaining out of sight, for the moment!). Back at the fruiting clearing, we couldn't believe our eyes when a fabulous Blue Bird-of-Paradise popped up on a fruiting tree and stayed in few for several minuts! Definitely one of the very best birds in the world, and for some the main target of the tour. The same fruiting tree latter on also held a splendid male Greater Lophorina. Quite the tree! The icing on the cake was a male Madarasz's Tiger Parrot in a nearby bush, starting vocalising his unusual whistling notes and giving great views to some of us.



The monotypic Blue-capped Irit (left) and an impressive male Princess Stephanie's Astrapia at Rondon (JM)

We walked up to the ridge very early next morning, in the drizzle, and encountered five Feline Owlet-Nightjars on the way (although none accepted to show!). One of the very first birds of the morning was a stupendous adult male Stephanie's Astrapia, which we had in the scope for as long as we wanted, examining the subtleties of his incredibly shining green plumage, what a mega bird! The clearing proved to

be very productive, with repeated sightings of Blue-capped Ifrits during the day (one even building a nest few feet from us), a Black Pitohui in bamboos for some, two flocks of funny Papuan Sittellas, superb males Regent Whistlers, a flock of smart Orange-crowned Fairywrens, a nice Garnet Robin (at eye level!) and much more. Lorikeets were well represented, with nice views of Orange-billed and Papuan, whereas Plum-faced and Yellow-billed only showed well to a few of us. Suddenly, we started hearing the insect-like, out-of-this-world calls of a male King-of-Saxony Bird-of-Paradise. It quickly flew in and started displaying in front of us for an hour, calling and shaking its antennas like a maniac, what a spectacle! Probably the weirdest Bird-of-paradise. After a box lunch brought to us, we were still enjoying great scope views of this mega, when all birds at the clearing started alarming, and we struck gold: a Papuan (or New Guinea Harpy) Eagle flew under the canopy strait in front of us, allowing good views for all! An unexpected rarely seen raptor, much to our delight. On the trail, a Spotted Jewel-Babbler showed briefly to some of the group, as did a Rufescent Imperial Pigeon, first heard calling during the morning. On the way down to the lodge, we secured good views of the monotypic and difficult Mottled Berryhunter, with a male singing overhead, got brief looks at a Wattled Ploughbill, and found a female Loria's Satinbird feeding on a fruiting tree soon joined by a shining male (the 5th endemic family of the day!). Slaty and Lesser Ground Robins were furtive in the understorey (the latter to be heard only), a cooperative Black-throated Robin pair under the canopy and glimpses of Blue-faced Parrotfinches. Pheasant Pigeon, Black and Brown Sicklebills were unfortunately heard only. Back at the lodge, a female Blue Bird-of-Paradise was still attending the fruiting trees, and we observed two more amazing males Stephanie's Astrapias, MacGregor's Bowerbird, Metallic Pigeon flying past and a rare Streaked Berrypecker feeding on berries. After dinner, a few of us opted for a short night foray and were granted walk-away views of Papuan Boobook, the icing on the cake after a very successful day!



Female Blue Bird-of-paradise at Rondon. For many, one of the very best bird in the world (JM)

Birding at the lodge early morning didn't produce anything new, but we improved our views of Madarsz's Tiger Parrot, saw again the Streaked Berrypecker and got two perched Papuan Mountain Pigeons in the scope. Half of the group opted to stay near the lodge for more views of Blue Bird-of-Paradise and Greater Lophorina, while I walked up the trail with the others towards the productive upper clearing. Productive again it was, with three Yellowish-streaked Honeyeater (including a juvenile fed by its parent), our first stunning Black-breasted Boatbill and Brown-backed Whistler, a lone Ashy Thornbill and a female Macgregor's Bowerbird as highlight. The Pheasant Pigeon was heard again but remained out of sight, as did Black Pitohui. It was then time to say farewell to Rondon, and after a distant Yellow-breasted Bowerbird and some more Great Woodswallows we were soon on our way to Kumul lodge. The drive was unproductive, except for the Torrent-lark seen by everyone crossing the road just in front of our vehicle! We had a late afternoon at

Kumul's feeders, with unbelievable views of up to 5 cosmic Ribbon-tailed Astrapias, two female Brown Sicklebills, a pair Brehm's Tiger Parrot, our first of many Belford's Melidectes. It was a relief to get at last close and good views of several species having eluded us at Rondon, like Mountain Mouse Warbler and Rufous-naped Bellbird, both garden birds at Kumul! A short wait at the usual fruiting tree proved productive, with good views of an immature male and a female Crested Satinbirds (no adult male though!) and a fantastic 'Eastern' Crested Berrypecker pair (part of the endemic family of the Painted Berrypeckers together with Tit Berrypecker). Our local guide took us to his best New Guinea Woodcock stake-out, but despite a tense wait the bird did not appear. However, just after dark, a Mountain Owlet-Nightjar flew in silently and the whole group obtained close and good views of this rarely seen species, a definitive bonus!



This male King-of-Saxony was admired at length at Rondon (JM)

Next morning saw us listening to the loud ringing calls of the Blue Bird-of-Paradise. Unfortunately, all males stayed on distant ridges and we were unable to scope them. We had to wait for hours, and just before giving up (we already told ourselves we would come back next morning), I finally spotted an ultimate male on a distant eucalyptus, after hearing his loud call, what a relief! We observed this amazing creature through the scope for several minutes, giving us time to enjoy its brilliant colours and feathers. We all agreed it must rank amongst the most beautiful birds on Earth (some, like me, even rated it as their top number one!). Other birds seen at that site included a male Macgregor's Bowerbird, Blue-faced Parrotfinch, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, some more well-studied Papuan White-eyes, several White-bibbed Fruit Doves, our first Great Cuckoo-Dove and Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Doves, repeated good views of Papuan Lorikeets, and best of all, a small flock Goldie's Lorikeets few meters from us, giving us great scope views in a flowering tree teaming with birds. It was then time to move down towards Lai River for some more birds. Seconds after stopping by the bridge, Torrent Flyrobins appeared under us and gave great views. On a nearby hill, several Yellow-breasted Bowerbirds showed well, a female Magnificent Bird-of-paradise was briefly seen by the leader and we added Mountain Honeyeater to our ever-growing bird list, as well as Papuan Grassbird. Back to the lodge, we spent the afternoon staking out the bird feeder and a few fruiting trees (producing three nice Mountain Firetails, including an adult, a Tit Berrypecker and the same birds as yesterday) but things accelerated as we hit the trails. An unexpected male Archbold's Bowerbird gave brief views to some of us, a pair Forbes's Forest Rails was heard but didn't come close, and we then secured excellent views of a Lesser Melampitta feeding

unconcerned few feet away (and hence achieving the main goal of seeing all endemic bird families of New Guinea after just 6 days!), got our best ever and extended Wattled Ploughbill sighting (much to the relief of people having missed it at Rondon!) which was in fact following a family of Regent Whistler and few Blue-capped Ifrits. Cute Black-breasted Boatbills kept whispering in the canopy and Black Monarch showed well to everybody, at last. A vigil by the woodcock stump didn't produce anything.



Female Brown Sicklebill and an ultimate Ribbon-tailed Astropia from Kumul lodge (JM)

Constant drizzle and fog didn't help next morning at Murmur Pass, but we still managed to get gripping looks at a male Brown Sicklebill, throwing its machine gun-like calls through the mist. Quite an experience! A Forbes's Forest Rail wasn't cooperative but was glimpsed by the leader, a pair Black-bellied and Hooded Cuckooshrikes made a short appearance, as well as one more nice Black-breasted Boatbill. We retreated to lower elevations as we didn't want to waste our time, stuck in the fog. It was a great move, and we encountered some nice Tit Berrypeckers, Brown-backed Whistler and a flock of Great Woodswallows on wires. A walk around the lodge after lunch was productive as always, and more views of Lesser Melampitta were obtained and the usual suspects were around the lawns. The weather improved and we were back at the Murmur Pass clearing and birding got much better. One of the very first birds was a male Mottled Berryhunter seen by the whole group (followed shortly after by a second individual, feeding on berries) and in the same fruiting tree we located an excellent Modest Tiger Parrot giving great looks, a male Loria's Satinbird and some more Tit Berrypeckers. Brown Sicklebills were almost constantly in view, whereas a male and two females King-of-Saxony Bird-of-Paradises remained quite distant. Lorikeets were much in evidence this afternoon, with repeated comparison views of Yellow-billed and Orange-billed Lorikeet. Several small

flocks of Plum-faced Lorikeets flew by and one stopped, giving brief perch views. 'Black-capped' Ashy Robins hopped around the clearing and a Garnet Robin was heard nearby. We also improved our views of Black-bellied Cuckooshrike, with a male seen through the scope, and a male Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo showing at eye-level. Other birds seen included numerous Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Dimorphic, Black and Friendly Fantails, Black-throated and Rufous-backed Honeyeaters, Brehm's Tiger Parrot, Yellow-browed Melidectes and a female Ribbon-tailed Astropia. At dusk, after digging our car out of a ditch, I decided to change our night birding strategy, so we waited with little hope at a random roadside. As it got dark, we were suddenly surrounded by two stunning Archbold's Nightjars, which first were seen flying around and briefly perching, while one individual gave excellent, close-by scope views and allowed great pictures to be taken. Success! What a bonus and an excellent end to this once again amazing and bird-filled day.



Papuan Boobook showed well at Rondon (JM)

Next day couldn't start better, with views of Greater Sooty Owls (3 birds were heard and one seen) and a brief Feline Owlet Nightjar just after breakfast! We were soon at our usual lookout near Kama Village, listening to the calls of Lesser Bird-of-Paradise. A male showed exceedingly well, perching atop a bare tree for several minutes. What a bird! The bushes around were filled with Mountain Honeyeaters, while a few Marbled and a Long-billed Honeyeater also visited the site. On the way back, we finally connected with a Black-headed Whistler pair, as well as a few Grey-headed Cuckooshrikes. Heading back towards Kumul, an hour staking out some fruiting trees gave us multiple scope views of a male Magnificent Bird-of-Paradise and some females Greater Lophorinas, as well as two more Black-headed Whistlers. At a random site along the road, some flowering trees were hosting at least two of the rare Spotted Berrypeckers (including a nicely patterned female). We were happy to get several reasonable scope views of this bird! A Black-mantled Goshawk spotted by Chris flew in and landed in a tree, as did two Double-eyed Fig Parrots. A Gurney's Eagle and a Long-tailed Honey Buzzard were additionally seen soaring above us. Just after lunch, we were ultimately delighted to find a male Crested Satinbird feeding on berries just in front of our cabins (thanks Shealagh and Chris for this one!). Its unreal saturated black and orange plumage is something no one will ever forget! Returning to Murrumbidgee pass with half of the group, the same species as yesterday were seen, but we improved our views of Loria's Satinbird, saw a female Mottled Berryhunter, found about five 'Western' Bronze Ground Doves and a few Blue-faced Parrotfinches feeding in the clearing and got brief views of a

responsive Forbes's Forest Rail. The Birds-of-Paradise were again on show, with repeated views of a male Brown Sicklebill and a male King-of-Saxony Bird-of-Paradise. During this time, the other half of the group saw the male Crested Satinbird at the lodge again, sitting still in the open for over 5 minutes. Some of us tried again a vigil in the forest and were this time rewarded by a roding New Guinea Woodcock, which landed in a dense tree and remained invisible, only to be seen briefly in flight by the leader and local guide! We also got heard Mountain Owlet Nightjars and a Papuan Boobook.

A short pre-departure nightbirding session yielded Papuan Boobook, Greater Sooty Owl and Feline Owllet Nightjar as heard only. We were then soon landing at Kiunga, were after an early lunch we went straight to Tabubil. The drive was uneventful, as was birding in the drizzle of Tabubil this afternoon. No Salvadori's Teals were on show, but we managed to scope a pair of Rufous-bellied Kookaburra (at last!), many Torrent Flyrobins, Bar-tailed and Amboyna Cuckoo Doves, Grey-headed Cuckooshrikes, Tawny-breasted Honeyeaters, Mountain Honeyeaters, some astronomical Dusky Lories and closer Black-capped Lories, a Pacific Baza pair, a Variable Goshawk, a nesting Papuan Frogmouth (spotted while driving by our local guide Kwiwan!) heard Chestnut-breasted and Brush Cuckoo. Rain spoiled our dusk birding session so we retreated at our hotel in Tabubil.



Archbold's Nightjar was an unexpected and highly appreciated find near Kumul (JM)

The drizzle next morning didn't hinder birding much, as good birds kept delighting us at Dablin Creek! First bird heard when getting out of the bus was the range-restricted Obscure Berrypecker, with at least three birds giving lengthy views. The star of this site, Queen Carola's Parotia, was first heard calling in the mist, then several females were spotted in fruiting trees near the road, together with females Magnificent Bird-of-Paradise. Another excellent tree held Goldenface, a female Sclater's Whistler, the uncommon Spotted, Long-billed, Green-backed, Scrub and Mountain Honeyeaters, Black-winged Monarch, many Mountain Peltops, a trio of White-eared Bronze Cuckoo and a large flock of Dusky Lories. Our first Orange-breasted Fig Parrots came in, and we found a small flock of Red-breasted Pygmy Parrots nearby. A cooperative White-rumped Robin showed well to the whole group and a flock of Pesquet's Parrots flew overhead, but were only to be heard through the mist. After lunch and the local race of Little Ringed Plover feeding in the garden of the hotel, we drove to another track of forest. En route, we a last located Salvadori's Teal, scoped

on the river by the Ok Menga dam. Rain never stopped until late evening, but we managed to track down a number of great birds. A nice mix-species flock held Golden and Spot-winged Monarchs, Yellow-breasted Boatbills, Grey Whistler and a selection of common honeyeaters. Further on, an intense flowering tree hosted large numbers of nectarivores, including our first Ruby-throated Myzomelas and many Papuan Black Myzomelas, yet another Spotted Honeyeater, who were joined by two Red-flanked Lorikeets. White-crowned Cuckoos started singing in the rain and it was not long before we lured one into view, for as long as we wanted. Hearing the calls of the Greater Birds-of-Paradise led us to find several displaying males, giving a show not to be forgotten in front of our eyes (most of them turned out to be Greater x Raggiana's hybrids)! A flock of Ornate Fruit Dove shot past, as did a small flock of the rare Striated Lorikeet. Towards dusk, a Wallace's Fairywren showed at last in the canopy, much to our delight! And as a grand final, at least three Shovel-billed Kingfishers were heard this evening but none came close enough for the moment unfortunately. Hook-billed Kingfisher and Rufous-bellied Kookaburra remained heard only as well.



Male Lesser Bird-of-paradise in Minamba valley (JM)

Having an additional day at Tabubil, we decided to explore a new road opened just few weeks ago and giving access to higher elevation. Weather was definitely not on our side, as when we arrived on the fog was so thick that the trees were barely visible. The conditions remained the same for the next eight hours, bird activity was low and in the end we decided to move to lower elevations for the rest of the day. Nevertheless, we encountered some brilliant species. A huge impressive male Black Sicklebill was spotted, a great catch-up after having missed that species at Rondon! This monster kept giving its machine gun-like calls throughout the morning. A female was also seen nearby, feeding in a pandanus. Higher up, a Mountain Kingfisher pair was lured into view and we improved our views of Ashy Thornbill and White-bibbed (Mountain) Fruit-Dove, plus heard a few New Guinea Bronzings and Papuan (New Guinea Harpy) Eagle, which decided not to show. Driving lower down got us a Grey-headed Goshawk by the roadside and a nice male Queen Carola's Parotia, showing only briefly. Once back at yesterday afternoon's site, the flowering tree was still very busy with loads of Dwarf Longbills, Papuan Black Myzomelas, Tawny-breasted, Plain and Spotted Honeyeaters and one Pygmy Longbill. But the highlight was the nomadic Pygmy Lorikeets, admired

at length through the scope. Another flock of Striated Lorikeet flew past, giving brief but good views and even allowing to be photographed. Part of the group at last got great views of at least three Chestnut-backed Jewel Babblers, while the others heard a distant Pesquet's Parrot. White-bellied Thicket and Rufous-backed Fantails, Greater Bird-of-Paradise, Crinkle-collared Manucode, Magnificent Riflebird, Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot and Red-flanked Lorikeets were also noted nearby. We were then on site at dusk and waiting for a very special bird to come out. Suddenly, several Shovel-billed Kingfishers started calling, and one was eventually spotted after stressful minutes, giving excellent views through the scope, a relief for everybody!

Bad luck on the weather continued this morning, as it pored down during our whole birding session, with a relatively thick fog (in fact just a normal day at Tabubil!). We visited a few sites and observed some good birds like a pair of Torrent-larks, some Red Myzomelas in a flowering tree, Southern Variable Pitohui and other ones seen on previous days. It was then time to head back to Kiunga for some great lowland birding. Before arriving at the famous KM17, a Grey-headed Goshawk crossed the road in front of us. Entering the forest, we could soon hear the calls of one of the stars of New Guinea, Greater Bird-of-Paradise. We had to wait for half an hour, but the show eventually began. Five males started hopping and shaking their amazing flank feathers in front of females and this lasted for long minutes, an absolutely unique spectacle right in front of our eyes! We wandered then a bit around and soon discovered a brilliant male King Bird-of-Paradise, incredibly faithful to his tree. Luckily, a female soon joined him and they started displaying on a liana, near the top! Two fabulous Birds-of-Paradise within a few minutes. We encountered great birds during the end of the afternoon, including our first Ivory-billed Coucal seen, a fly-by Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon (while others were heard), Wompoo, Beautiful, Orange-bellied and Pink-spotted Fruit Doves. We heard a few more like Blue Jewel Babbler, Black-billed Brush Turkey, Black-eared Catbird and Hooded Pitta. Towards dusk, we tried to lure in a Hook-billed Kingfisher but this one just refused to show. A Papuan Pitta hopped for a few seconds in front of us on the trail, only to be seen by half of the group. As a compensation, we had unbeatable looks at a Wallace's Owlet Nightjar, sitting still few meters in front of us! A Red-necked Crake also called during that time, not to be seen by anyone.

We woke up early next morning and visited the famous Boystown Road viewpoint, from where we spotted several new species. First on, a Trumpet Manucode showed in the scope, followed by a Glossy-mantled. A party of Emperor Fairywrens played hide and seek but we finally got great views of a pair nearby. Hearing and then seeing the uncommon Obscure Honeyeater was another highlight of this productive hour birding, and King Bird-of-Paradise and Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon were heard only. After this, we boarded our small boats and were soon off towards the swampy forests along the Elevala and Ketu rivers, a remote location three hours upstream from Kiunga. On the way, trees were filled with Whistling and Brahminy Kites, Pacific Bazas, White-bellied Sea Eagles, Long-tailed Honey Buzzards, Pinon's and Zoe's Imperial Pigeons. During our first stop, we visited a blind offering views over a clearing with recently cut sago, supposedly attracting the extremely shy and uncommon New Guinea Flightless Rail. We didn't have to wait for 30 minutes before two birds showed up and started feeding, giving terrific views! Pleased with our success with this ultimate bird, we returned to the boats, not without flushing two Black-billed Brushturkeys (which perched out of sight) and an adult New Guinea Bronzewing (expertly spotted by our local guide Kwiwan!), another very rarely recorded species on this route. Two Common Paradise Kingfishers played hard to see but we at least managed good flight views. White-bellied Pitohuis were building a nest nearby so were quite conspicuous at this site. It was then time to reach Kwatu lodge, where a party of Golden Mynas welcomed us on arrival. Back in the boats, the ride upstream was uneventful but arriving at another location a Pesquet's Parrot flew straight over our heads, much to our delight as this was a species we heard only in the foothills around Tabubil! It proved to be quite common in the area this year, as small numbers were regularly heard and seen throughout our stay, a great catch-up. Towards dusk, half of the group went back at the lodge and had great views of a displaying pair of impressive Sclater's Crowned Pigeons and a Great-billed Heron, while the other half went night birding. It was not long before the star of the night, Starry Owlet Nightjar, known from only a couple of location, started calling. With some persistence (and we know what persistence means!) we first had a fly-by view, and some minutes later, as I detected a moving shadow on the corner of my eye and turned the light on, I found the bird perched only seven meters above our heads! It gave unbeatable views for half an hour, almost at touching distance. Rarely recorded it is, with this being only the second sighting ever on a Birdquest tour (the first being one month previously, of the same individual!). After

this magical experience, we were back on the river and looking for other night birds. Except Papuan and Marbled Frogmouth however, nothing else was noted.



Female (left) and male Greater Lophorina (or Superb Bird-of-paradise) (JM)

Another fantastic day started off early on the river, with one very special bird in mind. Just after dawn, the strange but beautiful Twelve-wired Bird-of-Paradise flew in, perched atop his display pole and started calling. A female soon arrived and activated the male, which went nuts, shaking his wires and harassing her and as grand final a deployment of his breast shield. That was enough, the pair copulated and the female flew back in the forest. After this major highlight, we were soon on our way to yet another fabulous experience, but not before seeing another huge Sclater's Crowned Pigeon crossing the river, Nankeen Night and Striated Herons. The blind in which we were taken to looked out over the bower of a Flame Bowerbird. As we entered the hide, the male was in full display in front of a female but unfortunately, they flew off too quickly before anyone could appreciate the extent of the event. Not long after, the male came back and started cleaning his bower stick by stick, added some leaves to it. A unique opportunity to study his saturated yellow and red plumage and the incredible behaviour of this bird. An explosion of colours in our bins! A party of nice Emperor Fairywrens added some blue to the show before we rode back to Kwatu. Lunch was interrupted by a singing Long-billed Cuckoo, showing well for an hour in our garden. Afterwards, it was time to head back to some more hilly forest. The sunny afternoon was deadly quiet and we barely recorded a bird! As persistence often pays, we ended up having great views of a Blue Jewel Babbler slowly crossing the trail (but still too fast for photographs!) and a nice Hooded Pitta. Green-backed Gerygone was at last coaxed into view and we heard a couple Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeons. A Pesquet's Parrot flew overhead at the same location as yesterday and a long night birding session didn't produce much, except for a roosting White-bellied Sea Eagle, a Great-billed Heron, several Papuan Frogmouths and a couple Marbled Frogmouth. Papuan Boobook was heard near our camp.



Two displaying Greater Birds-of-paradise and the wonderful male King Bird-of-Paradise near Kiunga (JM)

We still had to find some specialities on our final morning in the swamp forests. The birds were shy and thin on the ground, but in the end we managed to do fairly well. A mix species flock yielded our first Hooded Monarchs seen of the trip, Spot-winged and Golden Monarchs several White-bellied Pitohuis, five females and a male King and two Twelve-wired Birds-of-paradise and a few Southern Variables Pitohuis. The skulkers proved remarkably elusive, and after hard work we had stunning scope views of two Common Paradise Kingfishers. Little Paradise Kingfisher was heard nearby, and it was not long after that a bird flew-in and landed straight above our head, showing its diagnostical blue tail and white streamers. The bird took off immediately, not to be seen perched by everyone, unfortunately. Another Sclater's Crowned Pigeon was located nearby and scoped for brief views and Black-sided Robin perched long enough for part of the group to connect with it. A responsive Hook-billed Kingfisher was additionally spotted by our local guides. The return ride towards Kiunga was interrupted by a Sclater's Crowned Pigeon for some, and a short stop by a swamp forest gave good views of Black-sided Robin and Hooded Pitta for the whole group. Another Hook-billed Kingfisher was seen by Chris as the same site. Flocks of Collared, Pinon's and Zoe's Imperial Pigeons crossed the sky above us and we were back at Kiunga for a hot shower and a comfortable night.



Two rarely-recorded species in the Kiunga area: Wallace's Owlet-Nightjar (above) and the mythical New Guinea Flightless Rail (JM)



Yet another very rarely recorded species, Starry Owlet-Nightjar from Watame Lodge (JM)



Flame Bowerbird cleaning its bower and a stunning Common Paradise Kingfisher near Kwatu lodge (JM)

Having a midday flight to Port Moresby, we spent some time next morning on the Boystown Road viewpoint, where we even managed to find a couple of new birds for the tour (after having been in the area for now 6 days!). An Orange-fronted Fruit Dove pair sat nicely in the sun, a Black-eared Catbird gave brief views in a fruiting tree before crossing the road in front of us and a party of Papuan Babbler were found in the undergrowth, giving our first good views of the species. Grey-headed Goshawk were seen several times and Obscure Honeyeater at last showed to the whole group. But the show was not yet over. Andreas spotted a magnificent male Flame Bowerbird sitting distantly on a snag. The bird took off in our direction, flew straight above us and landed on a nearby fruiting tree! He was soon joined by a female, and we could once more appreciate their saturation in the scope. Not a bad way to end our days at Kiunga! A walk around the airfield didn't produce anything, and we flew to Port Moresby for a final day and a half birding. Our late afternoon excursion took place at the Pacific Adventist University, where we birded a complex of ponds and dry forest. Typical Australian species were observed, such as Little Black Cormorants, Pied Herons, Comb-crested Jacanas, Plumed and Wandering Whistling Ducks, Grey Teals, Pacific Black Ducks, a Magpie Goose, Australasian Figbirds, Peaceful and Bar-shouldered Doves, Pacific Emerald Dove, Rufous-banded Honeyeaters and some more. Two gorgeous Orange-fronted Fruit-Doves were found in a nearby fruiting tree, as well as a couple of Orange-bellied Fruit Doves and Torresian Imperial Pigeons. We also visited an active Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, which the bird was cleaning as we arrived, impressive work! Nearby rice paddies hosted a dozen Wood Sandpipers and some Raja Shelducks.



A gorgeous Orange-fronted Fruit Dove at PAU and Barking Owl at Varirata (JM)

A productive third and final day at Varirata (also the final day of the main tour) started at the locked entrance gate where we had to wait some minutes for the ranger to arrive. Two Barking Owls were new for us, being harassed by a Variable Goshawk. Along the river trail, we were soon to watch a stunning Ochre-breasted Catbird, usually a shy species but showing exceedingly well this time above the trail. Superb Fruit Dove was at last seen nicely perched, while a party of White-faced Robins flittered around in the gloom. Despite intensive searching, no Forest Bitterns were found this morning. We then visited another trail slightly higher in elevation and got several large mix species flocks holding the excellent Goldenface, the weird Drongo Fantail, Black-winged and Frilled Monarch, Pale-billed Scrubwren, Fairy, Yellow-bellied and Green-backed Gerygones. But the main highlights were the skulkers, which for once did not skulk too much! First off, a 'Grey-naped' Pheasant Pigeon was tempted to cross the trail but jumped out of view before anything more than record shots could be taken. Two minutes later, a family of three Painted Quailthrush showed unusually well, crossing the trail slowly and allowing superb views. Then, a few hundred meters further, a Papuan Scrub Robin was first seen on the trail, and then crossed it twice, giving the chance for most of us to connect with it! A Papuan (New Guinea Harpy) Eagle was heard very close but we didn't manage to find it perched in the dense canopy. Four more Pheasant Pigeons were heard, as well as a Chestnut-backed Jewel Babbler. Walking back to the picnic site for a well-deserved late lunch was quite uneventful, but after an hour rest some of us decided to give a last try for the bittern along the river trail, before we had to drive back to Port Moresby. We walked slowly and reached the first kilometre, without noticing anything special. I was really starting to lose hope, when suddenly, I caught a movement on the riverbed nearby. Lifting my bins, I couldn't believe that we just found the long-awaited, rare and inconspicuous Forest Bittern, only minutes before the end of the tour! The bird flushed and perched nicely in the open, giving us time to run down and get all other group members to the bird. An ultimate mega and grand final to this very successful main tour!

Next day found us taking a domestic flight to Hoskins on the tropical paradise island of New Britain. We were soon touching ground at the excellent Walindi Plantation Resort, and after a break off to a nearby ridge. Birding was great, and we familiarised ourselves with the local endemics like Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon, Long-tailed Mynas, Purple-bellied Lories, Blue-eyed Cockatoos, Ashy and Black-bellied Myzomelas. A surprise was a Pied Cuckoo-Dove feeding on a fruiting tree, a rare sight near Walindi! Two New Britain Pitta played hide and seek in the dense vegetation and we managed to get some glimpses. At dusk, New Britain Boobooks started calling, but only allowing flight views. Black-headed Paradise Kingfisher remained heard only.



New Britain Boobook near Walindi and the 'tramp' Island Imperial Pigeon in Kimbe bay, New Britain (JM)

Starting early on a boat trip following morning, we tried to reach open sea as soon as possible, as the wind has been blowing strongly the past few days. Today was not an exception, and soon after we arrived at our designated chumming site, the swell became just too strong and for obvious reasons we could not keep seabirding! Retracing our steps towards some nearby small islands, we did however get views of a Wedge-tailed Shearwater, two fly-by Red-necked Phalaropes and some commoner species like Black Noddies, Black-naped Terns, Eastern Osprey, Lesser Frigatebirds. On the Malumalu Islands, a number of 'tramp' species were recorded. Island Imperial Pigeon proved common, as did Sclater's Myzomelas and MacKinley's Cuckoo-Dove. Island Monarch and Mangrove Golden Whistlers were glimpsed and we saw our first Nicobar Pigeon. Visiting a different island got us more looks at Nicobar Pigeons and, surprisingly, a party of Melanesian Scrubfowls, then some more Island Monarchs and Mangrove Golden Whistlers. Back on the mainland, Jo took us to his well-known New Britain Boobook roost and we were soon admiring this excellent nightbird through the scope. After that, a short visit to a nearby farm produced hundreds of endemic Buff-bellied Mannikins, the endemic race of Papuan Grassbird, Australian Reed Warblers, Golden-headed Cisticolas, Buff-banded Rail, Australasian Swamphen, and Black Bittern. One of the fields hosted fifty Pacific Golden Plovers, some Ruddy Turnstones, a Grey-tailed Tattler, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed

Sandpiper and Lesser Sand Plovers. The day was not over yet, as we had a mission to accomplish, after a superb buffet dinner. Off we went towards the palm oil plantation, in search of a species almost never recorded before 2015. We didn't have to drive more than eight minutes before an extraordinary Golden Masked Owl was spotted perched on a roadside pole! The bird took off after we all lifted our bins and disappeared in the dark. That was not enough for us, so we decided to drive further and try our luck inside the plantations. After half an hour, a second Golden Masked Owl was spotted in front of our car, giving great views and allowing this time to be photographed. Mission accomplished! A Large-tailed Nightjar and numerous Nankeen Night Herons were also seen.



The mythical Golden Masked Owl near Walindi, New Britain. (JM)

We found ourselves early in the Garu Conservation Area, looking for more lowland New Britain endemics. The sky was filled with Eclectus Parrots, Red-flanked and Coconut Lorikeets, Blue-eyed Cockatoos, Buff-faced Pygmy Parrots and Purple-bellied Lorries. We soon found a flock of White-rumped Swiftlets, as well as a cooperative New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher pair. Two Pink-legged Rails started calling nearby but remained invisible in dense thickets. A bit further, the uncommon Finsch's Imperial Pigeon was spotted close to the road, Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeons and Knob-billed Fruit Doves gave fly-bys. Entering the forest, we lured into view several stunning Black-capped Paradise Kingfishers and finally after much resistance an endemic White-mantled Kingfisher. A pair of Melanesian Kingfisher were also appreciated. The hoped-for Black-tailed Monarch didn't show, but we had great views of Velvet Flycatcher and Melanesian Megapode through the scope. A calling 'Eastern' Bronze Ground Dove never came within eye reach. After a lunch break, we birded the plantations and forest around Kulu River. Knob-billed Fruit Doves and Violaceous Coucals perched nicely, and a short foray on a trail gave us wonderful views of a 'New Britain' Bismarck Pitta, hoping slowly in front of us, as well as more Black-capped Paradise and White-mantled Kingfishers. A Northern Fantail nest was found, and a small party of Buff-faced Pygmy Parrots showed down to a few meters on some tangles. As dusk came, we watched several nice Nicobar Pigeons coming to roost and a pair of Spotted Whistling Ducks. But the biggest surprise was the brief views of a Pink-legged Rail by the river, showing tonight unfortunately to the leader only, as the others were watching Nicobars fifty meters away!

We spent half of next day on a new trail recently opened to birders, reaching slightly higher elevations than other sites. The first hours were spent in the lower part of it, and a large garden clearing was productive. Flowering trees packed with Ashy and Black-bellied Myzomelas, Coconut and Red-flanked Lorikeets and Song Parrots! White-mantled Kingfishers were calling nearby, and the whole group had great views of a

Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher on a short trail. When hitting the trail leading higher, a pair of Black-tailed Monarch visited us and gave good views, as well as some Northern Fantails. It was exciting to find the usually rare Black Imperial Pigeon, which we scoped in the canopy, and near the summit a pair of Bismarck Whistlers showed nicely. Even higher, about a dozen of Black Imperial Pigeons sat politely on some burned trunks (burnt during the last eruption some 10 years ago). Black Honey Buzzard was photographed by Chris during his time at the lower garden. The end of the afternoon was spent along the Kulu River again, trying to connect again with the Pink-legged Rail. The bird never called nor showed, but we managed good views of Nicobar Pigeons again, a pair of Pale-vented Bush Hens and some White-browed Crakes.

A huge thanks to all the participants and all local guides, without whom the success of this tour would not have been possible!



Some great birds from New Britain: Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher and Bismarck Whistler (JM)



The lovely New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher posed for us few meters away (JM)



Two rare pigeons from New Britain: Finsch's Imperial (left) and Black Imperial Pigeons (JM)

BIRDS OF THE TOUR (AS VOTED BY THE PARTICIPANTS)

1. Flame Bowerbird
2. Blue Bird-of-paradise
3. King-of-Saxony Bird-of-paradise
4. Ribbon-tailed Astrapia = Crested Satinbird
5. Forest Bittern = Brown Sicklebill

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Total number of bird species recorded: 421

The species names and taxonomy used in the report follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **2019. IOC World Bird List (v 9.1)**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>. The online checklist, available to download at the above website, includes all relevant taxonomic notes. The website also includes a useful section outlining recent taxonomic decisions and upcoming proposals.

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).

Spotted Whistling Duck ◊ *Dendrocygna guttata* Two birds along Kulu river, NB.

Plumed Whistling Duck ◊ *Dendrocygna eytoni* About 30 at Pacific Adventist University (PAU).

Wandering Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata* About 30 at PAU.

Raja Shelduck ◊ (White-headed S) *Radjah radjah* Several at PAU.

Salvadori's Teal ◊ *Salvadorina waigiuenis* One near Tabubil.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa* Commonly seen near Port Moresby and on New Britain.

Grey Teal *Anas gracilis* Only 2 at PAU.

Black-billed Brushturkey ◊ (Yellow-legged B) *Talegalla fuscirostris* (H) Heard many times.

Melanesian Megapode ◊ *Megapodius eremita* Great views at Garu Conservation Area, NB.

Orange-footed Scrubfowl ◊ *Megapodius reinwardt* (NL H) Heard at Kwatu camp.

Brown Quail *Coturnix ypsilophora* A covey at Rondon.

King Quail (Blue-breasted Q) *Excalfactoria chinensis* Two birds flushed near Walindi.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna pacifica* One in Kimbe bay.

Australian White Ibis *Threskiornis Molucca* Commonly seen near PAU.

Forest Bittern ◊ (New Guinea Tiger-heron) *Zonerodius heliosylus* One fantastic bird at Varirata.

Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis* Several seen in plantations on New Britain.



Pygmy Eagle at Varirata (left) and Gurney's Eagle near Kumul (JM)

Nankeen Night Heron (Rufous N H) *Nycticorax caledonicus* First seen along the Elevala river.
Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata* One along the Elevala river.
Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Numerous observations.
Great-billed Heron *Ardea sumatrana* Two near Kwatu camp.
Great Egret (Eastern G E) *Ardea [alba] modesta* Several sightings, first near Port Moresby.
Intermediate Egret ◊ *Ardea intermedia* Several sightings near Port Moresby.
Pied Heron ◊ *Egretta picata* Hundreds near PAU.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Several sightings, first near Port Moresby.
Pacific Reef Heron (Eastern R Egret) *Egretta sacra* Several in front of Walindi Resort, NB.
Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* Dozens in Kimbe bay.
Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* A couple in Kimbe bay.
Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos* (LO) One at Kulu river.
Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* Many at PAU.
Eastern Osprey *Pandion cristatus* First seen at Varirata, then on New Britain.
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* One near Rondon.
Pacific Baza (Crested Hawk) *Aviceda subcristata* Several seen at Varirata, PAU and on New Britain.
Long-tailed Honey Buzzard ◊ (L-t B) *Henicopernis longicauda* First seen at Varirata.
Black Honey Buzzard ◊ (New Britain B) *Henicopernis infuscatus* (NL) One photographed near Walindi.
Papuan Eagle ◊ (N G Harpy E) *Harpyopsis novaeguineae* One at Rondon, heard at Varirata and Tabubil.
Pygmy Eagle *Hieraetus weiskei* One at Varirata.
Gurney's Eagle ◊ *Aquila gurneyi* Seen at Varirata and near Kumul.
Variable Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster* First at Varirata, many on New Britain.
Black-mantled Goshawk ◊ *Accipiter melanochlamys* One perched near Kumul.
Grey-headed Goshawk ◊ *Accipiter poliocephalus* Several along the Elevala river and near Kiunga.
Papuan Harrier ◊ (Swamp H) *Circus spilothorax* An immature on Mt Hagen airport.
Black Kite *Milvus migrans* Many near Mt Hagen.
Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus* A couple near PAU and Kiunga.
Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Many throughout.
White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* A couple along Elevala river.
Forbes's Forest Rail ◊ *Rallicula forbesi* One seen near Kumul, two more heard.



The huge New Guinea Flightless Rail near Kwatu (JM)

Red-necked Crake ◊ (R-n Rail) *Rallina tricolor* (H) Several heard near Kiunga and Kwatu camp.
Pink-legged Rail ◊ (New Britain R) *Gallirallus insignis* (LO) One bird along Kulu river, others heard on NB.
Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis* A couple near Kulu river, NB.
Pale-vented Bush-hen ◊ *Amaurornis moluccana* A couple near Kulu river, NB and heard near Kiunga.
White-browed Crake *Porzana cinerea* Several near Kulu river, NB.
New Guinea Flightless Rail ◊ *Megacrex inepta* Two near Kwatu camp gave great views.
Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus* Seen at PAU and on NB.
Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa* Seen at PAU.
Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles* Many at PAU.
Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* A flock on NB.
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* Two at Tabubil.
Lesser Sand Plover (Mongolian P) *Charadrius mongolus* Five on NB.
Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultia* One at Walindi, NB.
Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea* A couple at PAU.
Whimbrel (Eurasian W) *Numenius [phaeopus] variegatus* Many on NB.
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* A small flock on NB.
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* A couple on NB.
Red-necked Stint (Rufous-n S) *Calidris ruficollis* One on NB.
New Guinea Woodcock ◊ *Scolopax rosenbergii* (H) One roding at Kumul, glimpsed by the leader.
Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* (LO) Two birds briefly seen in Kimbe bay, flying offshore.
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Some along Elevala, at Tabubil and on NB.
Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes* One on NB.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* A dozen at PAU.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* One at Walindi, NB.
Black Noddy *Anous minutus* Many in Kimbe bay, NB.
Greater Crested Tern (C T, Swift T) *Thalasseus bergii* Many in Kimbe bay, NB.
Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana* A handful in Kimbe bay, NB.
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Several in Kimbe bay, NB.
Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia* Seen in major cities.
Metallic Pigeon (White-throated P) *Columba vitiensis* A couple at Rondon, one at Tabubil.
Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove ◊ *Macropygia amboinensis* Many seen throughout.
Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Dove ◊ (Black-billed C-D) *Macropygia nigrirostris* Several seen in highlands and on NB.
MacKinlay's Cuckoo-Dove ◊ *Macropygia mackinlayi* A dozen in Kimbe bay, NB.
Great Cuckoo-Dove ◊ (Long-tailed C-D) *Reinwardtoena reinwardti* Several near Kumul and Kiunga.
Pied Cuckoo-Dove ◊ *Reinwardtoena browni* One near Walindi, NB.
Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris* One at PAU.
Stephan's Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps stephani* Many in plantations on NB.
New Guinea Bronzewing ◊ *Henicophaps albifrons* One in the scope near Kwatu camp, heard at Tabubil.
Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida* Many at Port Moresby.
Bar-shouldered Dove *Geopelia humeralis* Several at PAU.
Nicobar Pigeon ◊ *Caloenas nicobarica* Several dozens at Kulu river and in Kimbe bay, NB.
Bronze Ground Dove ◊ *Alopecoenas beccarii* Five near Kumul.
Bronze Ground Dove ◊ (Eastern BGD) *Alopecoenas [beccarii] johannae* (H) Heard and one flushed on NB.
Pheasant Pigeon ◊ *Otidiphaps nobilis* Five heard, one seen at Varirata.
Sclater's Crowned Pigeon ◊ *Goura sclaterii* Several sightings along Elevala river.
Wompoo Fruit Dove ◊ (Magnificent FD) *Ptilinopus magnificus* Seen at Varirata and near Kiunga.
Pink-spotted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus perlatus* Regularly seen in the lowlands, first at Varirata.
Ornate Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus ornatus* One flock near Tabubil.
Orange-fronted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus aurantiifrons* A couple near Kiunga and at PAU.
Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* First seen at Varirata, Kiunga and also on NB.
Coroneted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus coronulatus* One at Varirata.
Beautiful Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus pulchellus* Seen at Varirata and near Kiunga.



The rare New Guinea Bronzewing digiscoped near Kwatu lodge (left) and Zoe's Imperial Pigeon at Varirata (JM)

- White-bibbed Fruit Dove** ◊ (Mountain FD) *Ptilinopus rivoli* Seen at Rondon and Tabubil.
- Orange-bellied Fruit Dove** ◊ *Ptilinopus iozonus* Many in the lowlands, especially near Kiunga.
- Knob-billed Fruit Dove** ◊ *Ptilinopus insolitus* Regularly encountered on NB.
- Dwarf Fruit Dove** ◊ *Ptilinopus nainus* First at Varirata, scattered records elsewhere.
- Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula rubricera* Many on NB.
- Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula rufigaster* Seen near Kiunga, heard at Varirata.
- Finsch's Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula finschii* Seen a few times at Garu and near Walindi, NB.
- Rufescent Imperial Pigeon** ◊ (Shining IP) *Ducula chalconota* One at Rondon.
- Island Imperial Pigeon** ◊ (Floury IP) *Ducula pistrinaria* Many in Kimbe bay, NB.
- Pinon's Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula pinon* Many along Elevala river.
- Black Imperial Pigeon** ◊ (Bismarck IP) *Ducula melanochroa* About 15 on NB.
- Collared Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula mullerii* Several along Elevala river.
- Zoe's Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula zoeae* Several seen, first at Varirata.
- Torresian Imperial Pigeon** ◊ *Ducula spilorrhoea* Several at PAU.
- Yellowish Imperial Pigeon** ◊ (Yellow-tinted IP) *Ducula subflavescens* Several on NB.
- Papuan Mountain Pigeon** ◊ *Gymnophaps albertisii* Many seen, first at Varirata.
- White-necked Coucal** ◊ (Pied C) *Centropus ateralbus* Several on NB.
- Ivory-billed Coucal** ◊ (Greater Black C) *Centropus menbeki* Seen at Varirata and near Kiunga.
- Violaceous Coucal** ◊ *Centropus violaceus* A couple seen on NB.
- Black-billed Coucal** ◊ (Lesser Black C) *Centropus bernsteini* (H) Heard near Kiunga.
- Pheasant Coucal** *Centropus phasianinus* A couple at PAU.
- Dwarf Koel** ◊ *Microdynamis parva* Seen at Varirata and Kwatu camp.
- Pacific Koel** *Eudynamis orientalis* Several sightings, on the mainland and on NB.
- Channel-billed Cuckoo** *Scythrops novaehollandiae* Seen along the Elevala river and on NB.
- Long-billed Cuckoo** ◊ *Chrysococcyx megarhynchus* One at Kwatu camp.



The weird Long-billed (left) and the uncommon White-crowned Cuckoo (JM)

- Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo ◇ *Chrysococcyx ruficollis* Several seen well near Kumul.
 White-eared Bronze Cuckoo ◇ *Chrysococcyx meyerii* Several seen well near Tabubil.
 Little Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus* A couple near Kiunga.
 White-crowned Cuckoo ◇ (W-c Koel) *Cacomantis leucolophus* Seen at Tabubil and Kwatu camp.
 Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo ◇ *Cacomantis castaneiventris* Seen at Tabubil and near Kiunga.
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cacomantis flabelliformis* Seen near Kumul and Rondon.
 Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* Many throughout.
 Greater Sooty Owl ◇ *Tyto tenebricosa* Three birds at Kumul, one seen.
 Golden Masked Owl *Tyto aurantia* Two birds seen on a night drive near Walindi, NB.
 Eastern Barn Owl *Tyto javanica* One at PAU.
 Barking Owl *Ninox connivens* Two at Varirata.
 Papuan Boobook ◇ (Jungle Hawk Owl, Jungle B) *Ninox theomacha* One at Rondon, heard elsewhere.
 New Britain Boobook ◇ (Russet Hawk Owl) *Ninox odiosa* One near Walindi, NB.
 Marbled Frogmouth ◇ *Podargus ocellatus* Two seen near Kwatu camp.
 Papuan Frogmouth ◇ *Podargus papuensis* Regularly seen, first at Varirata.
 Archbold's Nightjar ◇ (Mountain N) *Eurostopodus archboldi* Two near Kumul.
 Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* Three near Varirata and one on NB.
 Feline Owlet-Nightjar ◇ *Aegotheles insignis* One briefly seen at Kumul, others heard.
 Starry Owlet-nightjar ◇ *Aegotheles tatei* Fantastic sighting of a bird near Kwatu camp.
 Wallace's Owlet-nightjar ◇ *Aegotheles wallacii* Fantastic sighting of a bird near Kiunga.
 Mountain Owlet-Nightjar ◇ *Aegotheles albertisi* Great views at Kumul.
 Barred Owlet-Nightjar ◇ *Aegotheles bennettii* One at Varirata.
 Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea* Seen at Tabubil, Kiunga and on NB.
 Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta* Many seen.
 Mountain Swiftlet ◇ *Aerodramus hirundinaceus* Many seen in the highlands.

White-rumped Swiftlet ◊ *Aerodramus spodiopygius* Several flocks on NB.
Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis* Many seen, also on NB.
Papuan Spine-tailed Swift ◊ (P Spinetail, P Needle-tail) *Mearnsia novaeguineae* Many along Elevala river.
Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* Many seen in the lowlands and on NB.
Hook-billed Kingfisher ◊ *Melidora macrorrhina* Commonly heard, one seen near Kwatu.
Common Paradise Kingfisher ◊ *Tanysiptera galatea* Great views of two birds near Kwatu.
Little Paradise Kingfisher ◊ (Aru P K) *Tanysiptera hydrocharis* Brief view of one bird near Kwatu.



Barred Owlet-Nightjar checking us out from its day roost at Varirata (left) and a Marbled Frogmouth at Kwatu (JM)

Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher ◊ (B-headed P K) *Tanysiptera nigriceps* Great views on NB.
Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher ◊ *Tanysiptera danae* Great scope views at Varirata.
Shovel-billed Kookaburra ◊ (S-b Kingfisher) *Clytoceyx rex* Great scope views at Tabubil.
Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii* Several at Varirata.
Rufous-bellied Kookaburra ◊ *Dacelo gaudichaud* Many seen and heard along Elevala river and at Kiunga.
Forest Kingfisher *Todiramphus macleayii* Several at Varirata and PAU.
White-mantled Kingfisher ◊ (New Britain K) *Todiramphus albonotatus* Several at Garu and Walindi, NB.
Melanesian Kingfisher ◊ (Collared K) *Todiramphus tristrami* Several at Garu and Walindi, NB.
Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus* Frequently encountered.
Yellow-billed Kingfisher ◊ (Lesser Y-b K) *Syma torotoro* Seen at Varirata and Kiunga.
Mountain Kingfisher ◊ (M Yellow-billed K) *Syma megarhyncha* A couple near Tabubil.
Common Kingfisher ◊ *Alcedo atthis* Seen at PAU and on NB.
Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher ◊ *Ceyx solitarius* Great views at Varirata.
New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher ◊ *Ceyx sacerdotis* Great views at Garu, NB.
Azure Kingfisher *Ceyx azureus* One at Varirata and several along Ketu river.
Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus* Many seen.
Blyth's Hornbill ◊ (Papuan H) *Rhyticeros plicatus* Many seen, first at Varirata.

Oriental Hobby *Falco severus* One bird at Varirata was probably this species.

Brown Falcon *Falco berigora* One at Mt Hagen.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* One near Kiunga and one on NB.



Mountain Kingfisher in the mist at Tabubil (left) and a male Brehm's Tiger Parrot at Kumul (JM)

Palm Cockatoo ◊ *Probosciger aterrimus* Several seen along Ketu river.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita* Many seen.

Blue-eyed Cockatoo ◊ *Cacatua ophthalmica* Many seen on NB.

Pesquet's Parrot ◊ (N G Vulturine P) *Psittarchas fulgidus* A couple of sightings near Kwatu camp.

Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta keiensis* Fantastic views two meters away near Kiunga.

Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta pusio* Great views on NB.

Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta bruijnii* Seen well at Rondon and Tabubil.

Papuan King Parrot ◊ *Alisterus chloropterus* Several seen nicely at Varirata.

Eclectus Parrot ◊ *Eclectus roratus* Seen commonly at lower elevations.

Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi* Seen commonly at lower elevations.

Blue-collared Parrot ◊ *Geoffroyus simplex* (H) Heard in the mist several times near Tabubil.

Song Parrot ◊ *Geoffroyus heteroclitus* A couple seen well on NB.

Brehm's Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella brehmii* Several at Kumul.

Modest Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella modesta* One near Kumul.

Madarasz's Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella madaraszii* One at Rondon.

Plum-faced Lorikeet ◊ (Whiskered L) *Oreopsittacus arfaki* Several flocks near Kumul.

Striated Lorikeet ◊ (Streaked L) *Chamosyna multistriata* Two flocks seen well at Tabubil.

Pygmy Lorikeet ◊ *Chamosyna wilhelminae* A small flock scoped in a flowering tree at Tabubil.

Red-flanked Lorikeet ◊ *Chamosyna placentis* Couples at Tabubil, Kiunga and many on NB.

Papuan Lorikeet ◊ *Chamosyna papou* Seen a few times at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.

Yellow-billed Lorikeet ◊ *Neopsittacus musschenbroekii* Seen well near Kumul.

Orange-billed Lorikeet ◊ *Neopsittacus pullicauda* Seen well near Kumul.

Black-capped Lory ◊ (Western B-c L) *Lorius lory* Many at lower elevations.

Purple-bellied Lory ◊ (Eastern B-c L) *Lorius hypoinochrous* Many on NB.

Yellowish-streaked Lory ◊ (Yellow-s L, Greater S L) *Chalcopsitta scintillate* Only one flock near Kiunga.

Dusky Lory ◊ *Pseudeos fuscata* Several flocks near Tabubil.

Goldie's Lorikeet ◊ *Psitteuteles goldiei* One flock scoped at Tonga, near Kumul.

Coconut Lorikeet ◊ (Rainbow L) *Trichoglossus haematodus* Many at lower elevations.

Large Fig Parrot ◊ (Yellow-naped F P) *Psittaculirostris desmarestii* Several in flight along Ketu river.

Orange-breasted Fig Parrot ◊ (Dusky-cheeked F P) *Cyclopsitta gulelmiterii* Many seen near Kiunga.

Double-eyed Fig Parrot ◊ (Red-faced F P) *Cyclopsitta diophthalma* Seen well near Kumul and Kiunga.
Bismarck Pitta ◊ (Red-bellied P) *Erythropitta novaehibernicae* Great views at Kulu river, NB.
Papuan Pitta* ◊ (Red-bellied P) *Erythropitta macklotii* Brief views for some near Kiunga.
Hooded Pitta ◊ *Pitta sordida* Good views near Kwatu.
Ochre-breasted Catbird ◊ (White-eared C) *Ailuroedus stonii* Excellent views at Varirata.
Black-eared Catbird ◊ *Ailuroedus melanotis* Brief views near Kiunga.
Archbold's Bowerbird ◊ *Archboldia papuensis* One seen briefly at Kumul.
MacGregor's Bowerbird ◊ *Amblyornis macgregoriae* Several at Rondon and near Kumul,
Flame Bowerbird ◊ *Sericulus ardens* A fantastic male at bower near Kwatu and another couple near Kiunga,
Yellow-breasted Bowerbird ◊ (Lauterbach's B) *Chlamydera lauterbachii* Seen in the Minamba valley.
Fawn-breasted Bowerbird ◊ *Chlamydera cerviniventris* Several at PAU.
Wallace's Fairywren ◊ (W Wren) *Sipodotus wallacii* One near Tabubil.
Emperor Fairywren ◊ *Malurus cyanocephalus* Several parties seen well near Kiunga.



Yellow-billed Lorikeet near Kumul (left) and the uncommon Madarasz's Tiger Parrot at Rondon (left)(JM)

White-shouldered Fairywren ◊ *Malurus alboscapulatus* Several sightings, first near Mt Hagen.
Orange-crowned Fairywren ◊ (O-c Wren) *Clytomyias insignis* Parties at Rondon and Kumul.
Ashy Myzomela ◊ (Bismarck M) *Myzomela cineracea* Many on NB.
Ruby-throated Myzomela ◊ (Red-throated) *Myzomela eques* A few near Tabubil.
Dusky Myzomela *Myzomela obscura* (NL) One at Varirata.
Red Myzomela ◊ *Myzomela cruentata* A few near Tabubil.
Papuan Black Myzomela ◊ (B M) *Myzomela nigrita* Seen at Varirata and near Tabubil.
Mountain Myzomela ◊ (Elfin M, M Red-headed M) *Myzomela adolphinae* Many seen, first at Varirata.
Sclater's Myzomela ◊ (Scarlet-bibbed M) *Myzomela sclateri* Many in Kimbe bay, NB.
Black-bellied Myzomela ◊ (NB Red-headed M) *Myzomela erythromelas* A few near Walindi, NB.
Red-collared Myzomela ◊ *Myzomela rosenbergii* Many at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.

Green-backed Honeyeater ◊ *Glycichaera fallax* Several sightings, first at Varirata.
Yellowish-streaked Honeyeater ◊ (Yellow-s H) *Ptiloprora meekiana* Three birds at Rondon.
Rufous-backed Honeyeater ◊ *Ptiloprora guisei* Seen at Rondon and near Kumul.
Grey-streaked Honeyeater ◊ (Black-backed H) *Ptiloprora perstriata* Many near Kumul.
Plain Honeyeater ◊ *Pycnopygius ixoides* Several sightings, first at Varirata.
Marbled Honeyeater ◊ *Pycnopygius cinereus* One bird in Minamba valley.
Streak-headed Honeyeater ◊ *Pycnopygius stictocephalus* Several at Varirata, Kiunga and Tabubil.
Silver-eared Honeyeater ◊ *Lichmera alboauricularis* A couple in Port Moresby.
Spotted Honeyeater ◊ *Xanthotis polygrammus* Seen twice near Tabubil.
Tawny-breasted Honeyeater ◊ *Xanthotis flaviventer* Many at lower elevations, first at Varirata.
Meyer's Friarbird ◊ *Philemon meyeri* (H) Heard near Kwatu.
New Guinea Friarbird ◊ (Helmeted F) *Philemon novaeguineae* Many seen in the lowlands.
New Britain Friarbird ◊ *Philemon cockerelli* Many seen on New Britain.
White-throated Honeyeater ◊ *Melithreptus albogularis* Several in Port Moresby region.
Long-billed Honeyeater ◊ *Melilestes megarhynchus* Several seen, first near Tabubil.
Common Smoky Honeyeater ◊ *Melipotes fumigatus* Many at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.
Rufous-banded Honeyeater ◊ *Conopophila albogularis* Several near Varirata and at PAU.
Black-throated Honeyeater ◊ *Caligavis subfrenata* Seen near Rondon and Kumul.



The colourful Orange-breasted Fig Parrot at Kwatu (left) and a Goldie's Lorikeet well concealed in a flowering tree near Kumul (JM)

Obscure Honeyeater ◊ *Caligavis obscura* Good views near Kiunga.
Yellow-browed Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes rufocrissalis* Many at Rondon and near Kumul.
Belford's Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes belfordi* Many at Kumul.
Ornate Melidectes ◊ (Cinnamon-breasted M) *Melidectes torquatus* Several near Rondon and Kumul.
Yellow-tinted Honeyeater ◊ *Ptilotula flavescens* Several at Varirata and PAU.
Mountain Honeyeater ◊ (M Meliphaga, Hill Forest H) *Meliphaga orientalis* Several near Tabubil.

Scrub Honeyeater ◊ (S Meliphaga, S White-eared M) *Meliphaga albonotata* Several near Tabubil.
Mimic Honeyeater ◊ (M Meliphaga, Mimetic M) *Meliphaga analoga* A few seen, first at Varirata.
Elegant Honeyeater* ◊ (E Meliphaga) *Meliphaga cinereifrons* A couple well studied at Varirata.
Goldenface ◊ (Dwarf Whistler) *Pachycare flavogriseum* Seen at Tabubil and Varirata.
Rusty Mouse-warbler ◊ (Lowland M-w) *Origma murina* Seen at Varirata, Tabubil and Kiunga.
Mountain Mouse-warbler ◊ *Origma robusta* Seen at Kumul.
Pale-billed Scrubwren ◊ *Aethomyias spilodera* Several at Varirata.
Buff-faced Scrubwren ◊ *Aethomyias perspicillatus* Several at Rondon and below Kumul.
Papuan Scrubwren ◊ *Aethomyias papuensis* Several near Rondon and Kumul.
Large Scrubwren ◊ *Sericornis nouhuysi* Several near Kumul.
Brown-breasted Gerygone ◊ (Treefern G) *Gerygone ruficollis* Several at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.
Large-billed Gerygone *Gerygone magnirostris* Seen near Kwatu.
Yellow-bellied Gerygone ◊ *Gerygone chrysogaster* Seen at Varirata and Kiunga.
Green-backed Gerygone ◊ *Gerygone chloronota* Seen at Kwatu, many heard elsewhere.
White-throated Gerygone *Gerygone olivacea* A couple near Varirata.
Fairy Gerygone *Gerygone palpebrosa* Several at Varirata.
Grey Thornbill (Ashy Gerygone, Mountain G) *Acanthiza cinerea* One at Rondon and a flock near Tabubil.
Papuan Babbler ◊ (Rufous B, NG B) *Garritornis isidorei* A flock seen near Kiunga.
Loria's Satinbird ◊ *Cnemophilus loriae* Two including a male at Rondon and two more males near Kumul.
Crested Satinbird ◊ (C Bird-of-paradise) *Cnemophilus macgregorii* A fabulous male at Kumul.



Belford's Melidectes at Kumul (left) and the range-restricted Silver-eared Honeyeater at Port Moresby (JM)

Obscure Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis arfakiana* Up to three near Tabubil.
Black Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis nigra* Seen at Varirata and Kiunga area
Fan-tailed Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis versteri* Seen at Rondon and Kumul.
Streaked Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis striativentris* One seen well at Rondon.

Spotted Berrypecker ◊ *Rhamphocharis crassirostris* At least two birds below Kumul.
Dwarf Longbill ◊ (Spectacled L, D Honeyeater) *Oedistoma iliolophus* Several seen at Varirata and Tabubil.
Pygmy Longbill ◊ (P Honeyeater) *Oedistoma pygmaeum* One near Tabubil.
Yellow-bellied Longbill ◊ (Green-crowned L) *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae* Seen at Kwatu.
Slaty-headed Longbill ◊ (S-chinned L, Grey-winged L) *Toxorhamphus poliopterus* Seen at Rondon.
Tit Berrypecker ◊ *Oreocharis arfaki* Several flocks near Kumul.
Crested Berrypecker ◊ *Paramythia montium* Two birds at Kumul.
Blue Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens* One seen well near Kwatu.
Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa castanonota* Two seen well near Tabubil, heard at Varirata.
Spotted Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa leucosticte* One seen briefly crossing the trail at Rondon.
Painted Quail-thrush ◊ *Cinclosoma ajax* Great sighting of a party of three birds at Varirata, heard near Kwatu.
Yellow-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer* Seen at Varirata and Kiunga.
Black-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus nigripectus* Seen at Rondon, Kumul and near Tabubil.
White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus* Seen near Port Moresby and Kiunga.
Great Woodswallow ◊ (New Guinea W) *Artamus maximus* Seen at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.
Lowland Peltops ◊ *Peltops blainvillii* Seen near Kiunga and Kwatu.
Mountain Peltops ◊ *Peltops montanus* Seen at Tabubil.
Black Butcherbird *Melloria quoyi* Several seen, first at Varirata.
Black-backed Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus mentalis* Several near Varirata.
Hooded Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus cassicus* Several seen, first at Varirata.
Mottled Berryhunter ◊ *Rhagologus leucostigma* Good views of male at Rondon and a couple near Kumul.
Stout-billed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina caeruleogrisea* Seen first at Varirata.
Hooded Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina longicauda* (H) Heard in the mist at Kumul and Rondon.
Barred Cuckooshrike ◊ (Yellow-eyed C) *Coracina lineata* Seen at Varirata and near Kiunga.
Boyer's Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina boyeri* Several encounters, first at Varirata.
White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis* Several seen, first at Varirata.
Golden Cuckooshrike ◊ *Campochaera sloetii* Several flocks at Tabubil and Kwatu camp.
Black-bellied Cuckooshrike ◊ (B-b Cicadabird) *Edolisoma montanum* Seen near Kumul and Tabubil.
Grey-headed Cuckooshrike ◊ (G-h Cicadabird) *Edolisoma schisticeps* Seen near Tabubil a few times.
Black-shouldered Cicadabird ◊ *Edolisoma incertum* Seen first in Minamba valley, then at Tabubil.
Black Cicadabird ◊ (B Cuckooshrike, New Guinea C) *Edolisoma melas* Good numbers in Varirata.
Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela* Regularly recorded, first at Varirata.
Papuan Sittella ◊ (Varied S) *Daphoenositta papuensis* Two flocks at Rondon.
Wattled Ploughbill ◊ *Eulacestoma nigropectus* Several nice encounters at Rondon and Kumul.
Rufous-naped Bellbird ◊ (R-n Whistler) *Aleadryas rufinucha* Seen at Kumul.
Piping Bellbird ◊ (Crested Pitohui) *Ornorectes cristatus* A few heard, one seen crossing the trail at Varirata.
Black Pitohui ◊ *Melanorectes nigrescens* Two heard and one seen at Rondon.
Brown-backed Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala modesta* Seen a few times at Rondon and Kumul.
Grey Whistler *Pachycephala simplex* Several at Varirata.
Sclater's Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala soror* Seen at Rondon and Tabubil,
Bismarck Whistler ◊ (B Golden W) *Pachycephala citreogaster* Two birds near Walindi, NB.
Mangrove Golden Whistler ◊ (NB) (Black-tailed W) *Pachycephala melanura* Three birds in Kimbe bay, NB.
Regent Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala schlegelii* Seen several times at Rondon and Kumul.
Black-headed Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala monacha* A couple in Minamba valley.
White-bellied Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala leucogastra* Several birds at Varirata.
White-bellied Pitohui ◊ *Pseudorectes incertus* Several flocks near Kwatu camp, one gave good views.
Rusty Pitohui ◊ *Pseudorectes ferrugineus* Seen at Varirata.
Little Shrikethrush (Rufous S) *Colluricincla megarhyncha* See notes.
Grey Shrikethrush *Colluricincla harmonica* Seen near Varirata and in the Minamba valley.
Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* Commonly seen at Rondon and Kumul.
Australasian Figbird *Sphecotheres vieillotii* Several at PAU.
Southern Variable Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui uropygialis* Several at Tabubil and near Kwatu.
Hooded Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui dichrous* Many seen at Varirata and near Tabubil.
Brown Oriole ◊ *Oriolus szalayi* Regularly encountered at lower elevation, first at Varirata.



Obscure Berrypecker at Tabubil (left) and the monotypic Mottled Berryhunter seen very well near Kumul (JM)



Blue Jewel Babbler gave amazing views at Kwatu. Photographing it was a whole different story! (JM)



Whistler galore! Clockwise from top left: White-bellied, Regent, Brown-backed and Black-headed Whistlers (JM)

- Spangled Drongo** *Dicrurus bracteatus* Seen regularly on the mainland and also on New Britain.
- Willie Wagtail** *Rhipidura leucophrys* Seen everyday during the whole tour.
- Northern Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura rufiventris* Several at Kulu river and near Walindi, NB.
- White-bellied Thicket Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura leucothorax* Seen well near Kwatu.
- Black Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura atra* Regularly seen at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.
- Chestnut-bellied Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura hyperythra* Several seen at Varirata.
- Friendly Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura albolimbata* Many at Rondon, Kumul and near Tabubil.
- Dimorphic Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura brachyrhyncha* Seen at Rondon and near Kumul.
- Rufous-backed Fantail** ◊ *Rhipidura rufidorsa* Seen near Tabubil, heard near Kiunga.
- Drongo Fantail** ◊ (Pygmy Drongo, Mountain D) *Chaetorhynchus papuensis* A few seen at Varirata.
- Black Monarch** ◊ (Fantailed M) *Symposiachrus axillaris* Seen at Rondon and Kumul.
- Spot-winged Monarch** ◊ *Symposiachrus guttula* Seen at Varirata and near Kiunga.
- Hooded Monarch** ◊ *Symposiachrus manadensis* A couple near Kwatu.
- Black-tailed Monarch** ◊ (Bismarck Pied M) *Symposiachrus verticalis* Several seen near Walindi, NB.
- Island Monarch** ◊ (Islet M) *Monarcha cinerascens* A couple in Kimba bay, NB.
- Black-faced Monarch** ◊ *Monarcha melanopsis* Seen at Varirata .
- Black-winged Monarch** ◊ *Monarcha frater* Seen at Varirata and Tabubil.

Golden Monarch ◊ *Carterornis chrysomela* Seen at Tabubil and Kiunga.

Frilled Monarch ◊ *Arses telescopthalmus* Seen at Varirata and Kiunga.



The uncommon Black-tailed Monarch from new Britain (left) and a superb Emperor Fairywren near Kiunga (JM)

Torrent-lark ◊ *Grallina bruijnii* One near Kumul, two at Tabubil.

Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula* One along the Elevala river.

Shining Flycatcher (Common SF) *Myiagra alecto* Many seen, first near Kiunga, Also on NB.

Velvet Flycatcher ◊ (Dull F, Lesser Shining F) *Myiagra hebetior* Seen well at Garu, NB.

Grey Crow ◊ (Bare-eyed C) *Corvus tristis* Seen at Varirata and Kiunga.

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru* Seen a few times, first near Port Moresby.

Bismarck Crow ◊ (Island C) *Corvus insularis* Many on New Britain.

Lesser Melampitta ◊ *Melampitta lugubris* Great looks at two at Kumul, others heard.

Blue-capped Ifrit ◊ (B-c Ifrita) *Ifrita kowaldi* Several parties at Rondon and Kumul.

Glossy-mantled Manucode ◊ (Glossy M) *Manucodia ater* Several seen near Varirata and Kiunga.

Crinkle-collared Manucode ◊ *Manucodia chalybatus* Two birds at Varirata.

Trumpet Manucode ◊ *Phonygammus keraudrenii* Seen and heard a few times near Kiunga.

Ribbon-tailed Astrapia ◊ *Astrapia mayeri* Fantastic males and some females at Kumul.

Princess Stephanie's Astrapia ◊ *Astrapia stephaniae* Two adult males and some females at Rondon.

Queen Carola's Parotia ◊ *Parotia carolae* A few near Tabubil, including a male.

King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Pteridophora alberti* Seen exceedingly well at Rondon and near Kumul.

Greater Lophorina ◊ *Lophorina superba* Seen at Rondon and below Kumul.

Magnificent Riflebird ◊ *Ptiloris magnificus* (H) Heard only near Tabubil and Kiunga.

Growling Riflebird ◊ (Eastern R) *Ptiloris intercedens* A few males and females seen at Varirata.

Black Sicklebill ◊ *Epimachus fastosus* An adult male and a female near Tabubil, heard at Rondon.



The beetle-like King-of-Saxony Bird-of-paradise and the marvelous Ribbon-tailed Astrapia were clear highlights on this tour (JM)

- Brown Sicklebill** ◇ *Epimachus meyeri* Males seen well near Kumul, females at Kumul feeders.
- Magnificent Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Diphyllodes magnificus* An adult male below Kumul, a couple near Tabubil.
- King Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Cicinnurus regius* Seen well near Kiunga and at Kwatu.
- Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Seleucidis melanoleucus* Seen displaying and mating near Kwatu.
- Greater Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Paradisaea apoda* Seen displaying near Kiunga.
- Raggiana Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Paradisaea raggiana* Seen displaying at Varirata.
- Lesser Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Paradisaea minor* One male gave great views in the Minamba valley.
- Blue Bird-of-paradise** ◇ *Paradisaea rudolphi* Several females at Rondon, an extraordinary male near Kumul.
- Ashy Robin** ◇ (Black-capped R) *Heteromyias albispectularis* Several near Kumul.
- Black-sided Robin** ◇ (B-bibbed R) *Poecilodryas hypoleuca* Seen well near Kwatu.
- Black-throated Robin** ◇ *Poecilodryas albonotata* Seen well at Rondon and near Kumul.
- White-winged Robin** ◇ *Peneothello sigillata* Seen at Kumul.
- Slaty Robin** ◇ (Blue-grey R) *Peneothello cyanus* Seen at Rondon and near Kumul.
- White-rumped Robin** ◇ *Peneothello bimaculate* Great looks at Tabubil.
- White-faced Robin** ◇ *Tregellasia leucops* Several seen in Varirata.
- Torrent Flyrobin** ◇ (T Flycatcher, River F) *Monachella muelleriana* Several in the Minamba valley.
- Canary Flyrobin** ◇ (Papuan Flycatcher, Montane F) *Microeca papuana* Several at Rondon and Kumul.
- Yellow-legged Flyrobin** ◇ (Y-l Flycatcher) *Microeca griseoiceps* One at Varirata.
- Lemon-bellied Flyrobin** ◇ (L-b Flycatcher) *Microeca flavigaster* A couple near Varirata.
- Garnet Robin** ◇ *Eugerygone rubra* Eye-level views at Rondon, heard near Kumul.
- Papuan Scrub Robin** ◇ *Drymodes beccarii* Brief views at Varirata of a bird crossing the trail several times.
- Lesser Ground Robin** ◇ *Amalocichla incerta* (H) Two heard at Rondon.



Staying at a certain distance allowed us to witness the full display and mating of a Twelve-wired BoP pair! (JM)

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Many seen.

Island Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus maforensis* Seen at Rondon, Kumul and Tabubil.

Australian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus australis* Seen near Walindi on NB.

Papuan Grassbird ◊ *Cincloramphus macrurus* Seen in the Minamba valley and on NB.

Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* Seen on NB.

Black-fronted White-eye ◊ *Zosterops minor* Several flocks at Varirata.

Papuan White-eye ◊ *Zosterops novaeguineae* Several flocks at Rondon.



White-faced Robin at Varirata (left) and an unusually showy Garnet Robin at Rondon (JM)

Capped White-eye ◊ (Western Mountain W-e) *Zosterops fuscicapilla* Several flocks at Tabubil.

Metallic Starling (Shining S) *Aplonis metallica* Many sightings in the lowlands.

Singing Starling ◊ *Aplonis cantoroides* One near Port Moresby, and some on NB.

Yellow-faced Myna ◊ *Mino dumontii* Seen several times, first at Varirata.

Long-tailed Myna ◊ (Melanesian M) *Mino kreffti* Many seen on NB.
Golden Myna ◊ *Mino anais* Several parties near Kwatu.
Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus* Several at Kumul.
Pied Bush Chat (P Chat) *Saxicola caprata* Many near Rondon and Kumul.
Red-capped Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum geelvinkianum* Seen several times, first at Varirata.
Red-banded Flowerpecker ◊ (Bismarck F) *Dicaeum eximium* Seen at Garu and Walindi, NB.
Black Sunbird ◊ *Leptocoma aspasia* Seen at Kiunga and on NB.
Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis* Several on NB.
House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Seen at Port Moresby.
Eurasian Tree Sparrow (introduced) *Passer montanus* Seen at many sites.
Mountain Firetail ◊ *Oreostruthus fuliginosus* A few birds at Kumul.
Blue-faced Parrotfinch *Erythrura trichroa* Several birds near Kumul.
Grey-headed Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura caniceps* Some flocks near Varirata.
Hooded Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura spectabilis* Many near Rondon and Kumul.
Buff-bellied Mannikin ◊ (Bismarck M, Thick-billed M) *Lonchura melaena* Several flocks on NB.
Australian Pipit *Anthus australis* A few birds on the airfield of Mt Hagen.



Golden Myna from Kwatu (left) and Mountain Firetail from Kumul (JM)

MAMMALS

Speckled Dasyure *Neophascogale lorentzii* 1 at Kumul.
New Guinea Quoll *Dasyurus albopunctatus* 1 crossing slowly the road in front of us all at Dablin Creek !
Spectacled Flying Fox *Pteropus conspicillatus* Many near Kiunga.
Greater Flying Fox *Pteropus neohibernicus* Seen on New Britain.



Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot from Kiunga, showing down to a few meters at dusk! (JM)

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Little Shrikethrush (Rufous S) *Colluricincla megarhyncha*

The Little Shrikethrush complex has recently been split into 7 different species, from which we recorded 3 species. Arafura Shrikethrush *Colluricincla megarhyncha* was recorded near Kiunga and also occurs in northern Australia. Sepik-Ramu Shrikethrush *Colluricincla tappenbecki* was seen at Rondon and Kumul and is endemic to New Guinea. Variable Shrikethrush *Colluricincla fortis* was seen at Varirata and is endemic to New Guinea and D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago.



The endemic Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove from Kumul (JM)