



The exquisite Spotted Wood Kingfisher, here just having caught a bat, was one of the most appreciated species of the tour.

All pictures taken by Julien Mazenauer.

CLASSIC PHILIPPINES

11 JANUARY – 2 FEBRUARY 2020

LEADER: JULIEN MAZENAUER

Having operated a long series of successful Philippines tours over the last three decades, and with so much to see in this country, last year's tour was reorganised and focussed on the islands of Luzon, Mindanao and Palawan. This 2020 Classic Tour is hence the second of its kind to operate, and was a massive success in both numbers of species recorded and number of 'diamond' birds seen, those endemics or special birds you're unlikely to see elsewhere. This year, we recorded 351 species, with a very high percentage of all possible signature birds (including an impressive 166 endemics!) and those megas such as Philippine Eagle, Palawan Peacock-Pheasant, Celestial Monarch, Spotted Wood Kingfisher, Southern Silvery Kingfisher, Flame-breasted Fruit Dove and Azure-breasted Pitta, not to mention 13 superb species of owl seen (including the rarely seen Mindanao Scops Owl, the unique Giant Scops Owl and the huge Philippine Eagle-Owl), 19 species of doves and pigeons (including the fantastic Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove, the threatened Spotted Imperial Pigeon and the poorly known Mindanao Brown Dove, the latter a Birdquest lifer) and 11

species of kingfishers (including the tiny Indigo-banded Kingfisher). Special mention should go to the four Chinese Crested Terns we found at Panabo. This represents about 8% of the known global population and all individuals were visible in a single scope field. Other unique species seen were endemics like Palawan and Philippine Frogmouth, the endangered Green Racket-tail and critically endangered Red-vented (or Philippine) Cockatoo, Bukidnon Woodcock (which was discovered almost three decades ago by one of our groups), Mindanao Miniature Babbler (another Birdquest lifer as parts of Mindanao open up), unique Rough-crested Malkohas, superb Rufous and Blue Paradise Flycatchers, shining Short-crested Monarchs, five Ashy Thrushes in a urban park, weird Apo Mynas, Stripe-headed and Stripe-breasted Rhabdornises (in the past treated as an endemic family, Rhabdornis are now believed to be aberrant starlings), Falcated Wren-Babbler (which gave us a very hard time, to finally show itself exceedingly well), all possible sunbirds (13 species) and flowerpeckers (12 species), plus finally some brilliant Red-eared Parrotfinches and White-cheeked Bullfinches.



A male Palawan Peacock Pheasant delighted us on Palawan – a relief, knowing that the traditional male disappeared last year!

The group assembled this morning in Manila, and due to logistical issues we had to head straight towards Subic. Along the way, we made a brief stop at a marshy area and quickly logged up to five Philippine Swamphen, getting rare these days. White-browed Crakes, Cinnamon and Yellow Bitterns, Arctic Warblers, Philippine Pied Fantails, Clamorous and Oriental Reed Warblers and many more were also recorded. After a lunch at Subic, we spent our first afternoon birding a quiet road in the excellent forest of the former US military base. New birds came thick and fast, with highlights such as White-bellied and Northern Sooty Woodpeckers, Luzon Flamebacks, Philippine Falconets, Blackish and Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike, Philippine Green Pigeon, brief Green Racket-tails, the critically endangered Luzon race of Blue-naped Parrot, a flock of jumpy Rufous Coucals, brief Rough-crested and Scale-feathered Malkohas and our first Luzon Hornbill and Coletos. At dusk, we were attracted to raucous calls and found two juvenile Philippine Scops Owls hiding in thick tangles! Not far away were two very showy Luzon Hawk Owls, and after an hour or so we managed great views of Chocolate Boobooks, with Great Eared Nightjar calling nearby. A successful first day in the Philippines!

Today started with an unexpectedly productive nightbirding session, as within minutes we found a superb pair of Philippine Eagle Owls, calling and staring at us for long minutes, one of the tour's highlights already!

Additionally, a wonderful Spotted Wood Kingfisher posed for us in the spotlight, giving fantastic views. It was then time to bird another site with restricted access. When leaving the vehicles, literally the first bird in view was an immature Philippine Hawk-Eagle, first seen briefly perched and in flight, but not for everyone unfortunately. Soon after, two White-lored Orioles were lured into view and stayed around for most of the morning. Walking around produced many other great sightings, including showy (!) Rufous Coucals, Luzon Hornbills, great scope views of the endangered Green Racket-tail, more Blue-rumped Parrots and Guaiabero, the weird Stripe-headed Rhabdornis, White-eared Brown Doves of the nominate subspecies, our first Whiskered Treeswifts, Philippine Pygmy Woodpeckers, Luzon Flamebacks, Northern Sooty Woodpeckers, White-bellied Woodpeckers, Trilling Tailorbird, more Philippine Falconets and Coletos. After lunch, we visited another site, which was as productive, with great looks at some striking Scale-feathered Malkoha, a good look at a White-browed Shama, Rough-crested Malkohas, more Green Racket-tails, Philippine Serpent Eagle, Blackish Cuckooshrikes and many more. At dusk, Philippine Nightjar first started calling and then hunted around us, while Great Eared Nightjars kept flying high.



Two stars from Subic: Philippine Eagle-Owl (above) and Luzon Hawk Owl.

A pre-breakfast outing gave us good views of an adult Philippine Scops Owl. We then returned to the same area as the morning before, but hours of searching didn't produce the hoped-for White-fronted Tit, which

seem to have all but disappeared from the area with no recent records. We did however find a few good birds, everybody got good looks at a striking Rough-crested Malkoha, Philippine Serpent Eagle, our first Handsome Sunbird and Red-keeled Flowerpecker. It was then time to start the very long journey to Banaue, which was interrupted by a stop at Dalton Pass, where we saw our first Pygmy Flowerpecker and a pair of stunning Handsome Sunbirds, Blue-headed Fantail and Red-keeled Flowerpecker again. We arrived fairly late at the Lagawe Gorge, where after 20 minutes we located an Indigo-banded Kingfisher (here of the northern race), a gem of a bird! We arrived an hour later at our hotel in Banaue and enjoyed a great dinner, getting ready for an early start the following morning.



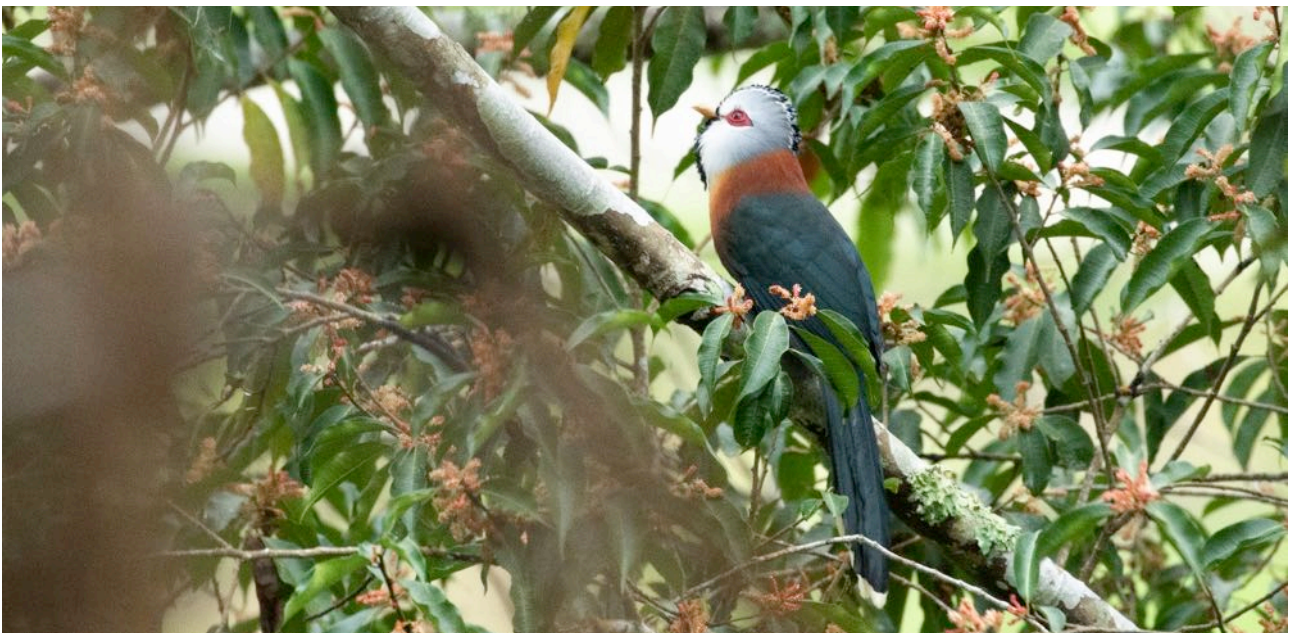
Flame-breasted Fruit Doves showed once again brilliantly.

Some serious nightbirding sessions were the agenda for the next two days, and we started early on our first visit of the Mount Polis area. After walking up and down a trail, we located a calling Luzon Scops Owl, but it remained so deep in the vegetation and out of the reach of our flashlights. The bird never came closer, we would have to try again! At dawn, we were on the vigil at the next site and soon started hearing distant booming of one of our biggest targets. After a few minutes of repositioning, an extraordinary Flame-breasted Fruit Dove appeared, followed by two juveniles, and they fed and called for an hour just few meters in front of us! That was a mega start of the day! We walked up the road, and nailed one by one some great specialties, like Flame-crowned Flowerpecker, nice White-cheeked Bullfinches, a close Mountain Shrike, showy Philippine (Luzon) Bush Warbler, unusually tame Long-tailed Bush Warbler, Island Thrushes and encountered several mix-species flocks containing endemics like Chestnut-faced Babblers, Elegant Tits, Sulphur-billed Nuthatches, Negros Leaf Warblers, Green-backed Whistlers, Blue-headed Fantails and others like Mountain Tailorbirds, Warbling White-eyes, Turquoise Flycatchers, Luzon Sunbirds and Fire-breasted Flowerpeckers. Lower down, a search for Benguet Bush Warbler first drew a blank, so we continued further down to admire a male Luzon Water Redstart, a range-restricted Luzon endemic that showed very well and close this year. Endemic Ridgetop and Philippine Swiftlets were also around, and a flock of vocally distinct 'Luzon' Red Crossbills flew past. After lunch, a long search for Benguet Bush Warbler resulted in only two individuals heard, one on a distant ridge and the other in some infinitely dense habitat. We never managed to get views of it, another one we'd have to look for again! The end of the afternoon didn't add much except for some Eastern Buzzards, Olive-backed Pipits, Tawny Grassbird, perched Red Crossbills and Eye-browed Thrushes, so we prepared for yet another nightbirding session. This time, a Luzon Scops Owl could be heard distantly, but never came within reach, unfortunately. Philippine Frogmouth and Bukidnon Woodcock were also heard.



Two Mount Polis specials: Mountain Shrike and Luzon Water Redstart.

We started the next day as the previous one and were hence out very early to get a better chance of success with the scops. It took some time, but we found a calling Luzon Scops Owl close, and after a bit of manoeuvring managed to get it in the torch. The bird stayed deep in a bush, but was well visible for a minute or so before flying off even deeper in the vegetation. Frustrating views, but not much we could do about it! We then drove down the road through the drizzle (it would rain all day long) before hearing a Benguet Bush Warbler, which after an hour's wait showed briefly to all. A few flocks were seen later in the morning, with our first Orange-bellied and Buzzing Flowerpeckers seen. After lunch, a short walk produced a male Bundok Flycatcher (at the very same site as last year!), but a calling Philippine Hawk-Eagle behind a ridge couldn't be seen, whereas Eastern Buzzards, Philippine Serpent Eagle and 'Philippine' Crested Honey Buzzards kept circling above us. Higher up, a 'Luzon' White-browed Shortwing could be lured briefly into view (indeed, the White-browed Shortwing might be split in the near future, and this taxon has a distinctive voice differing from others in the Philippines). We made our way higher up, still in the drizzle, but didn't add much except a showy Green-backed Whistler, Island Thrush, and commoner species. It was then time again to look for night birds, but the rain continued and although we heard a Luzon Scops Owl close again, that one stayed well hidden and sheltered deep in the vegetation.



The unique Scale-feathered Malkoha showed very well in the garden of our hotel. A definite favourite!

The day started with a short walk early morning in the gardens of our hotel, walk highlighted by brilliant views of an amazing Scale-feathered Malkoha and Yellowish White-eyes, a new bird for us. A singing Bundok Flycatcher was also lured into view for a short time. It was then time to drive all the way to Manila (taking us over 14 hours this time, with a flat tire and road works). A brief stop at Dalton pass was rewarding, with a nice Olive-backed Flowerpecker of a striking local race, Pygmy and Red-keeled Flowerpeckers, more

Yellowish White-eyes and our first Pygmy Swiftlets. We made it to Candaba swamp just before sunset, allowing us to find good numbers of Philippine Ducks, a Philippine Swamphen, some surprisingly showy Middendorf's Grasshopper Warblers, Lesser Coucals, Buff-banded and Barred Rails, Oriental Reed Warblers and an Eastern Marsh Harrier. We reached our hotel late after struggling in Manila traffic and had a huge buffet at our hotel.



Philippine Frogmouth is always much appreciated on Mt Kitanglad!

We landed next morning on time at Cagayan de Oro on Mindanao, after an early flight from Manila. Our way up to the famous Del Monte lodge was pretty uneventful, but we did encounter several flocks of Chestnut-cheeked Starlings and a male Eastern Marsh Harrier. We arrived on time for some initial exploration, and after positioning ourselves in a clearing above the lodge, we waited for dusk. A Philippine Hawk-Cuckoo started singing and was seen a few times crossing the clearing and briefly perching. In 1993, a Birdquest team discovered a new woodcock, and that's the bird we were all hoping to see that evening. After a tense wait, we finally heard the typical flight display song of a Bukidnon Woodcock, who flew straight above our head and landed out of sight. What a mega! The growling of a nearby Philippine Frogmouth led to its discovery and to an amazing and close observation of that weird species. Giant Scops and Everett's Scops Owls were also calling but only intermittently and refused to show, but we saw a few Philippine and Great Eared Nightjars. The lodge crew cooked us a delicious dinner and we all went to bed, very excited about what the next day could bring us!

Pre-breakfast owling didn't result in anything (both Scops were still calling but not showing), so we set off towards the Philippine Eagle viewpoint. On the way, we caught sight of our first daytime Mindanao endemics, such as the 'bug-eyed' Apo Myna and Olive-capped Flowerpecker. Once at the viewpoint, much to our surprise, it didn't take 10 minutes before the shout went off and a majestic Philippine Eagle appeared over the opposite ridge! We followed the bird along the hillside, and it perched in full view, giving good albeit distant view through the scope. Not much happened the following hour, but it then suddenly took off and was joined by a second individual. They started displaying and grabbing talons, giving a terrific spectacle! After perching for another hour, they disappeared behind a hill and were not seen again. Lunch was brought to us, after which we started our exploration of the remaining forest fragments of the lower areas. Just behind the viewpoint, an absolutely fantastic and tame Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove was much appreciated by

all! Several flocks were also encountered, with excellent species like Black-and-cinnamon Fantails, Mindanao White-eyes, the enigmatic Cinnamon Ibon, Grey-hooded Sunbirds, McGregor's Cuckooshrikes, Rufous-headed Tailorbirds, Sulphur-billed Nuthatches and some jumpy Brown Tit-Babblers being favourites. We spent some time successfully luring in view a vocally distinct 'Apo' White-browed Shortwing and Long-tailed Bush Warbler, the latter showing extremely well. A surprise find was a Pinsker's Hawk-Eagle, found circling only about 50 meters above us with two Philippine Serpent Eagles! We stayed in the same clearing near the lodge until dusk and could again see the Bukidnon Woodcock displaying, a nice sight. Soon after, a Giant Scops Owl started calling not too far, so we decided to try our luck and repositioned ourselves. Not twenty seconds later this monster of a scops landed in front of us, giving great views! It didn't stay too long but we could all admire how unique this nightbird is. Pleased by our success, we backed-up to the lodge, heard an Everett's Scops Owl along the way (as usual, the bird did not respond and could not be found), spotted a roosting female Bundok Flycatcher and ate another good dinner cooked by our favourite crew!



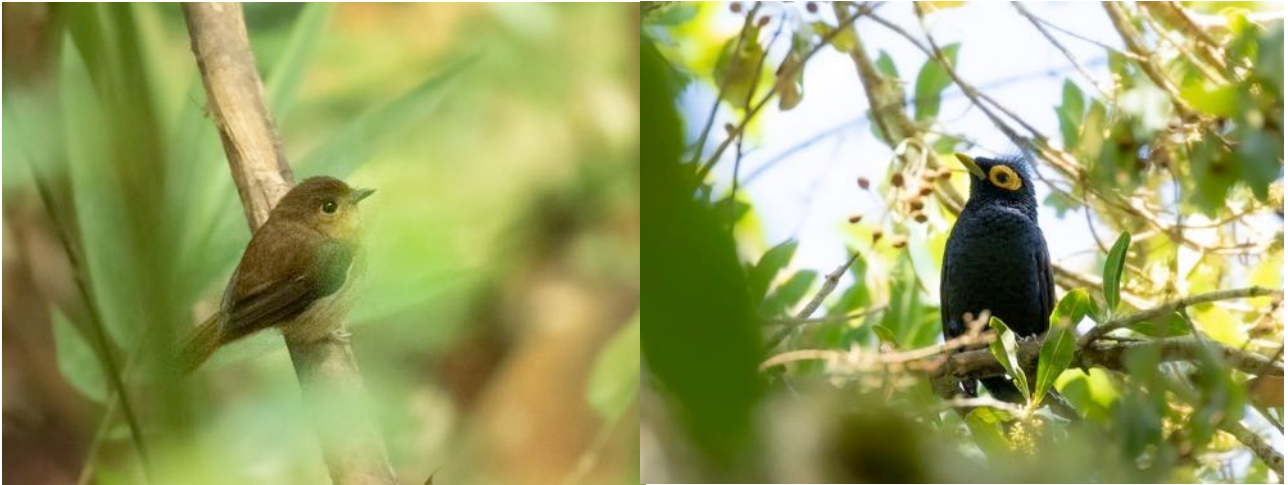
The unique Giant Scops Owl showed very well on Mt Kitanglad!

Today, some of us would hike to the top of the nearby ridge to look for some additional species, while the others would stay at the Eagle platform to enjoy the eagles again. On the way up, a very thin whistle caught my attention, and we positioned ourselves inside the forest, hoping that the nearby calling Bagobo Babbler would come in view. Of course, it never came close enough, but we could still hear it clearly for some minutes. Apo Mynas, Stripe-breasted Rhabdornis and Short-tailed Starling were still showing on treetops while we hiked up, and once at the summit two nice Apo Sunbirds were spotted within minutes, showing long enough for everybody to enjoy. More Mindanao White-eyes and McGregor's Cuckooshrikes were spotted along the way, as well as one Red-eared Parrotfinch, feeding quietly on the trail in front of us. We eventually reunited with the other half, who had seen the two Philippine Eagles again, and walked back to the camp. That night, Mindanao Scops Owl was heard distantly, but that's about it!



Two great birds seen from the viewpoint: a stunning Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove and the endangered Pinsker's Hawk-Eagle.

Before leaving the lodge next morning, we tried to call in the local pair of Hombron's Kingfisher. They came close, I managed to locate an individual but unfortunately it flew off before the group put its eyes on it. The same happened with Buff-spotted Flameback, as an individual came in but landed out of sight. It then flew over Rich, who had stayed at the lodge (where he also saw a Hombron's Kingfisher!), not to be found again later on. We then had to say goodbye to the excellent Del Monte lodge crew, and hiked down to the meeting point. Some groups of Chestnut-cheeked Starlings were still around. The drive to Eden, near Davao, took hours, but we arrived on time to find a pair of Cryptic Flycatchers, before a heavy downpour that spoiled our late afternoon and evening birding. Another fine banquet was had before getting back to our chalets for the night.



The rare Cryptic Flycatcher (left) and a 'bug-eyed' Apo Myna.

The rain continued overnight, but we still went out owling (unsuccessfully) before driving to the next birding site. This year we visited the lake Agco area for the first time, meaning there was potentially a new species for Birdquest to be found. But first, as we parked the car on site, we couldn't believe our eyes as a monster Philippine Eagle crossed the sky just a few hundred yards away! Definitely our best sighting of the species, and a great start of what would be a productive morning. We scrutinized all possible mix-species flocks during over 3 hours, before I finally managed to discover three Mindanao Miniature Babblers, a rare and very poorly known species endemic to its namesake island. The birds behaved unusually well, staying low under the canopy and giving fantastic views. We were lucky, knowing the species to be mostly a canopy dweller.



Mindanao Miniature Babbler at Lake Agco, a new species for BirdQuest!

This Birdquest lifer in the bag, we continued birding and saw a brief Flame-crowned Flowerpecker of the Mindanao race, and more importantly up to 6 Whiskered Flowerpeckers, a species which lost its mythical status only a few years ago. During the course of the morning, we recorded up to 8 species of Flowerpeckers, including Olive-capped, Buzzing, Fire-breasted and Bicoloured. But it wasn't all, we also found a small flock of 'Apo' Scarlet Minivets, and their yellow belly, some pretty Citrine Canary-Flycatchers, Grey-hooded Sunbirds, Cinnamon Ibons and 'Mindanao' Long-tailed Bush Warbler. Interestingly, we also recorded two races of White-browed Shortwings sharing the same habitat - one of these was discovered two decades ago by our leader Pete Morris. Its unique song and exclusive altitudinal limits mean that it is likely to

be a new species for science once a specimen is eventually procured! Alongside these at this site, more 'Mindanao' White-browed Shortwings with a more classic song were also heard. Content with our success, we retraced our steps towards Eden, where we once again looked for the Japanese Night Herons, which had sadly not been seen since December. None were found of course, but we did find our first Everett's White-eyes and Orange-tufted Spiderhunter. At dusk, an Everett's Scops Owl called once, but went silent and we could not track it down. We called it a day and went for another great buffet..



Four megas from Davao region (clockwise from top left): the canopy-loving Whiskered Flowerpecker, an impressive Philippine Eagle, the rare Cryptic Flycatcher and critically endangered Chinese Crested Tern!

Pre-breakfast owling didn't result in anything, but we then got great looks at 'Julia's' Purple-throated Sunbird (a HBW split) and Orange-tufted Spiderhunter, plus some showy Brown Tit-Babblers. Off we were to Panabo, with low expectations given the Chinese Crested Terns were not recorded since almost two weeks and that several groups before us drew a blank. We parked the car by the seaside, and I was just speechless given the very first bird I lifted my binoculars on was a Chinese Crested Tern! As it turned out, we counted no less than 4 individuals, representing the highest total on wintering grounds ever! Lots of happy faces around and an unexpected bonus after all! The shores were full of waders, and we recorded an excellent array of species, including Great Knots, Far Eastern Curlews, Grey-tailed Tattlers, Pacific Golden Plovers, Terek Sandpipers, Lesser and Greater Sand Plover and also a close Chinese Egret. After lunch, we drove straight to Bislig, where we visited the airfield until dusk. A few King Quail were flushed from the side of the airfield, and we added a few new species like Watercock and Golden-headed Cisticola. At dusk, a fabulous Eastern Grass Owl started hunting and gave a great show, while a Philippine Nightjar was calling nearby. We retreated to our accomodation, pleased by this very successful day!



Eastern Grass Owl performed well at Bislig!

Our first day in what is remaining of the old PICOP logging concession proved to be rather disappointing. Indeed, it poured down intermittently the whole day, making birding conditions a real challenge. Nevertheless, we managed to see an interesting series of endemics. The morning started very slowly, with rain spoiling our pre-dawn owling. A Philippine Frogmouth was however seen briefly. At dawn, a few Rufous-colored (Winchell's) Kingfishers started calling, as well as a Hooded Pitta but they couldn't be lured into view. During the course of the morning (which was a very wet one), we didn't find any flocks, but managed to find a few good endemics, like Black-bibbed Cicadabird, a rather brief Philippine Leafbird, several showy Philippine Orioles, a close-by Philippine (or Steere's) Honey Buzzard, a perched Crested Goshawk, some Philippine Spine-tailed Swifts overhead, 'Mindanao' Hair-crested Drongos, Mindanao Pygmy Babblers associated with a few Everett's White-eyes, a pair of Grey-throated Sunbirds, several Metallic-winged Sunbirds and a duo of Black-faced Coucals showing decently. We also called in a nice Black-headed Tailorbird and a shy Philippine Trogon, but that was about it! Unfortunately, Pink-bellied Imperial Pigeon, Writhed and 'Southern' Rufous Hornbills remained heard only, as they were heard calling from very far away. As we were about to head for lunch, a small bird flock was discovered, highlighted by a Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher and our first Mindanao Blue Fantails. The afternoon was spent at the same site but rain spoiled most of it. Some of us managed brief views at a stunning 'Southern' Rufous Paradise Flycatcher, while a large flock (over 20 birds) of Stripe-headed Rhabdornis were moving in the canopy of a distant tree, joined by several 'Philippine' Scarlet Minivets, Violet Cuckoo and Philippine Leaf Warbler. When walking back to our vehicles, the typical call of one of the most sought-after PICOP speciality was heard, and after a bit of repositioning we were looking at a magnificent Azure-breasted Pitta, which showed at close range in the open! An amazing flash of blue, red and black. We decided to try our luck with the owls at a different site, but as soon as we arrived it started pouring down again and never stopped, so we called it a day and retreated to our accommodation.

Heavy rain spoiled (once again) our pre-dawn owling. Rain went on and off the whole morning, and we really didn't record much as the forest interior was very quiet. A Hombron's Kingfisher called only once and was unresponsive, as was a calling Little Slaty Flycatcher, sheltering from the rain down a dark gully. A Philippine Trogon showed nicely, and we managed to scope a Pink-bellied Imperial Pigeon through the canopy. A mix flock entertained us for some time, with Philippine Leaf Warbler and Rusty-crowned Babblers appreciated. From a large clearing, we started to hear the calls of one of the most exciting PICOP speciality, and after five minutes of wait, Jim suddenly shouted "Wait, there's a bright blue bird in the scope!" and indeed he just located a Celestial Monarch pair, which were sitting and calling quietly from a treetop, and albeit distant,

giving great scope views. Two Short-crested Monarchs appeared nearby, as did two family flocks of 'Southern' Rufous Hornbills, much to our delight. Things started to get better, at last! We walked quietly our way back to the jeepneys, paying a special attention to mix flocks, but didn't find anything else of note. A rather uncooperative Striated Wren-Babbler showed briefly, but a Philippine Pitta next to the trail was admired at length! A visit to the famous Southern Silvery Kingfisher pond brought us brief but great looks at this gem of a bird, amazingly patterned with its bright red legs! We continued on to our nightbirding site, where, of course, a heavy shower dropped on us as soon as I started playing some recordings. After the rain, a Mindanao Hawk-Owl responded and soon we got fantastic views of this endemic. The rain won't have us!



Two endemics from PICOP: the huge and beautiful Azure-breasted Pitta (above) and a showy Philippine Pitta!

Heavy rain basically spoiled all our birding of the following morning until midday. Nothing was recorded during that time, unfortunately. We were definitely unlucky with the weather at PICOP, but nothing we could do about it! It improved slightly in the afternoon, giving us time to locate a Writhed Hornbill pair and again two aptly-named Celestial Monarchs, most likely the same individuals as the previous day, much to the delight of Pete who missed the birding yesterday! It was then already time to get back to the jeepneys, but we found a cooperative and showy Striated Wren-Babbler pair en-route, giving great views to all. We once again visited

the Southern Silvery Kingfisher, hoping to see the bird for a longer time than yesterday, but the pair was again very elusive and only gave brief fly-bys. Purple-throated Sunbird was a nice addition here though! We went off for owling, and this time I quickly located a calling Everett's Scops Owl, which gave good and close views, just before the rain started again. Phew!



Amethyst Brown Dove is usually rather retiring but posed for us in the open. Metallic-winged Sunbird came close to inspect us.

Our final morning in PICOP was a total wash-out, it indeed rained continuously so we didn't spend much time looking for some more stuff. We still managed to connect with Amethyst Brown Dove, which eluded us before. A nice flock was also found, with 'Southern' Rufous Paradise Flycatcher, Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher, Short-crested Monarchs and Philippine Leaf Warbler as highlights. We said goodbye to Zardo and drove to Compostela, arriving in time for some initial exploration. Our first birds on site were the range-restricted Lina's Sunbird, our main target, with both males and females obliging. Some flocks were carefully checked, and we logged in Mindanao White-eyes, Cinnamon Ibons, the vocally distinct race of McGregor's

Cuckooshrike, the local subspecies of Negros Leaf Warbler, two Red-eared Parrotfinches, stunning Black-and-cinnamon Fantails, Island Thrushes, Black-faced Coucal and some more. Doves were much in evidence in the evening, with several showy Yellow-breasted Fruit Doves and Philippine Cuckoo-Doves. Amethyst Brown Doves were heard, as were two or three of the very rare Mindanao Brown Doves, but they wouldn't budge unfortunately. We would have to try again! At one point, we started hearing a very close Bagobo Babbler from the nearby slope. We hence positioned ourselves and after a wait the bird hopped across a small opening, only to be glimpsed by a few of us. Another one we would have to find again tomorrow.



Two megas from Compostela: a colourful Lina's Sunbird and the rarely-seen Mindanao Scops Owl!

As dusk fell, Chocolate Boobook and Everett's Scops Owl started calling, a Bukidnon Woodcock roded close overhead and the sought-after and little recorded Mindanao Scops Owl was heard from a distant ridge. I started playing the calls of this rare scops, and much to our surprise, the bird, which was initially about two hundred meters away came straight in! I put the beam on it and we enjoyed fantastic views of this ultimate mega, one of the least recorded nightbirds in the Philippines. Success, persistence pays off, at last, after struggling the previous days. We retreated to our accomodation. The beers tasted good that night!



Mindanao Brown Dove is a real rarity and had never been seen before on a BirdQuest tour!

We went back in the mountains following morning, and I quickly scoped a calling Mindanao Brown Dove down a forested gully – another Birdquest lifer – but it took about two more hours for everybody to connect with it given the bird was very shy and flighty. It finally gave up hiding and sat right in the open at eye level, giving fantastic views. One of the most difficult species to observe in the Philippines! A nice bonus came in form of a nice Spotted Imperial Pigeon scoped by Jim up slope. Skulking Bagobo Babblers were still calling but sadly we had to drive back to Davao to catch our flight to Puerto Princessa on Palawan, so didn't have more time to look for this secretive critter. The flight was miraculously on time, and after transiting via Manila we reached the paradise island of Palawan, later in the evening and went straight to our hotel for some much needed sleep.

Starting early morning on a new island was exciting, and we first visited Irawan Eco Park, very close to Puerto Princessa. At dawn, a Palawan Frogmouth called nearby but we did not find it roosting unfortunately. The first Palawan endemics arrived one by one: Palawan Flowerpecker, Pale Spiderhunters, White-vented Shama, Lovely Sunbirds, Melodious Babblers, Ashy-headed Babblers, Ashy-fronted Bulbuls, Palawan Bulbuls, 'Palawan' Hair-crested Drongos, Blue-headed Racket-tails, 'Palawan' Slender-billed Crows and many more. The highlight were the great views we had of two different Palawan Flycatchers. Further on, we found more endemics, including Yellow-throated Leafbird, Spot-throated Flameback and other more south-east Asia species like Common Hill Mynas, Chestnut-breasted Malkohas, Oriental Dwarf Kingfishers but also Crested Goshawk and Crested Honey Buzzard. We paid a visit to the nearby wildlife rescue center and were granted great views of a male Palawan Peacock Pheasant, who is allegedly wild and roaming freely around the enclosure of some of its mates. After the disappearance of the usual male at the Underground River National Park, it was a relief to connect with the species, even if the status of this new individual is sometimes debated. The bird was actually quite shy and never left the cover of vegetation, so we were all happy to tick this stunning male. Hooded Pittas and Blue Paradise Flycatchers were well present and showing unusually close and in the open. Additional species recorded include Pin-striped Tit-Babblers, more Ashy-headed Babblers, Pale Spiderhunters, 'Palawan' Ameline Swiftlets and many more. After a delicious Vietnamese lunch, we birded the Sabang road, and scored heavily with most of our difficult targets located quickly, like a Spot-throated Flameback pair, a pair of the rare Red-headed Flameback, a party of nice Palawan Tits, brief Falcated Wren-Babblers, another Palawan Flycatcher and some very close Brown-backed Needletails. Towards the end of the day, we waited at the famous cockatoo viewpoint, from where we scoped a large party of fifteen Palawan Hornbills, three Great Slaty Woodpeckers, many Blue-naped Parrots, a few Blue-headed Racket-tails, Thick-billed Green Pigeon, a roosting Changeable Hawk-Eagle and

many Green Imperial Pigeons. It took some time, but just before dusk, several small flocks of Red-vented (or Philippine) Cockatoos flew past our viewpoint. Some good looks of this critically endangered species were had, and we set off to our night birding site. Just before dusk, an Oriental Hobby was scoped, and within minutes a cute and tame Palawan Scops Owl was in the beam, giving walk-away views and calling his very unusual growl from under the canopy. Some minutes later, a Palawan Frogmouth started calling and was soon located, much to our delight. Before these two amazing sightings, Spotted Wood Owls were heard calling distantly, but never reacted to our calls so we called it quits and went for a gigantic buffet in Sabang, pleased by our very successful first day on Palawan.



Blue Paradise Flycatcher at Puerto Princessa. A stunner!

A boat ride early next morning brought us to the Underground River National Park, where we enjoyed great looks at four Philippine Megapodes. A fruiting tree attracted Palawan Hornbills, 'Palawan' Asian Fairy Bluebird, Yellow-throated Leafbird and we also found our first Sulphur-bellied Bulbuls and more Palawan Tits. Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher proved elusive and was only seen in flight, and a Blue-eared Kingfisher was seen catching fish by the cave. After an appreciated boat ride on the underground river, the place got crowded so we returned to Sabang and went birding on a trail, where we quickly located a pair of Black-chinned Fruit Dove, the species having somehow eluded us so far. Sulphur-bellied Bulbuls were also around. Falcated Wren-Babbler started to get on our nerves, as we tried once again to lure one into view, with no success. The bird came close, and only allowed glimpses only for some. After a nice lunch, we spent the whole afternoon trying to find a responsive individual, to no avail. We spent long hours waiting in dark gullies, but the species simply seemed to be wearing a cloak of invisibility! Some cool birds were however seen, like a few juvenile Philippine Pittas and a Hooded Pitta. We went back to the viewpoint and found about ten Philippine Cockatoos going to roost, as well as Common Hill Mynas, Blue-naped Parrots, Common loras, Brown-throated Sunbird and some distant Blue-headed Racket-tails. Ruddy Kingfisher started calling at dusk, as well as Spotted Wood Owl, but both remained elusive. We made several attempt further up the road for the owl, but despite hours of trying no birds came into view.



Palawan Scops Owl and Palawan Frogmouth gave a stellar performance on our first evening on Palawan!

We started early the following morning and visited a site near to our hotel, where we were granted great looks at some perched Blue-headed Racket-tails, at last! Oriental Dwarf Kingfishers were also nearby, but we had a last mission to achieve. The whole morning was spent walking quietly and waiting inside dark and wet gullies, but for some reasons Falcated Wren-Babbler still managed to elude us! It was very frustrating, given how many individuals we were able to hear, and that none were responding to our desperate calls. We recorded excellent species like Red-vented Cockatoo, Hooded Pitta, Philippine Pitta, Ashy-headed Babbler, Sulphur-bellied Bulbuls, but no Wren-Babblers. After a buffet lunch, we were back on the trails and again failed to find anything new. It was then sadly time to slowly retrace our steps back towards Puerto Princessa, but we made one last stop in promising habitat. Fruiting trees attracted Thick-billed Green Pigeons, 'Palawan' Asian Fairy Bluebirds, Yellow-throated Leafbird and all kind of endemics. We walked the road for twenty minutes, when I suddenly heard the typical whistle of a very distant Falcated Wren-Babbler, far away up a rocky gully. We climbed for about 150 meters up, positioned ourselves by one side of the gully, and

waited for an answer. Suddenly, a movement few meters away attracted my attention, and we found the Falcated Wren-Babbler perched in full view on a horizontal stick! It started singing, still in full view, and we enjoyed this stunning bird in all its glory for several long minutes. A last minute success, we were relieved that our persistence paid! That was actually the last accessible endemic we were still in need of, so we retreated to our accommodation in Puerto Princessa for a little rest, before driving out of town again and boarding a tiny boat. We sailed through the bay to a small island, where we waited for darkness. Five Lesser Frigatebirds flew inland, and four Pink-necked Green Pigeon were scoped in the distance. At dusk, Mantanani Scops Owls, the main reason of our presence on this island, started calling, and in no time they were in the beam of our torches, only few meters away and for as long as we wanted! A Large-tailed Nightjar showed also well nearby. A legendary dinner was had later and we prepared ourselves for the return flight to Manila following morning.



Falcated Wren-Babbler gave us a very hard time. On the opposite, Mantanani Scops Owl was the easiest nightbird of the whole tour!

Before flying to Manila, we went back to Irawan Eco Park for an hour birding. A very nice Red-headed Flameback welcomed us on site and we saw more of the commoner Palawan endemics like Lovely Sunbirds, Pale Spiderhunters, and Palawan Flowerpecker. It was then time to bid farewell to our local guide, we then flew on time to Manila, from where we drove to Los Banos for two nights. It literally took forever to

reach our destination so we went straight to birding, just to find that our usual stake-out for the Spotted Buttonquail was under quarantine, with no possible access! The guards just wouldn't let us in. Frustrated, we scouted a few different areas, where we found at least five Barred Buttonquail and five King Quail, but no Spotted unfortunately. We encountered some nice species like a stunning Rough-crested Malkoha, Yellow-wattled Bulbuls and our first Grey-backed Tailorbirds and House Swifts, Peregrine Falcon, Stripe-headed Rhabdornis, Ashy Minivets and many Striped Swallows, before a quick checking in and a nice dinner.



A rather showy Hooded Pitta (above) and two Palawan endemics: Spot-throated Flameback (left) and the rare and endangered Red-headed Flameback.

We made our way up Mount Makiling early next morning, on time for some nightbirding, granting us views of Philippine Scops Owl and Luzon Hawk-Owl. At dawn, the number of Spotted Wood Kingfisher calling was just tremendous. While walking up the trail, we noticed the deep hooting calls of a Luzon Bleeding Heart from up the slope. We positioned ourselves by the side of the trail, and waited. We waited a long time, the bird would respond, but didn't agree to show itself unfortunately. Several flocks were then observed, with Scale-feathered and Rough-crested Malkohas both seen, as well as Luzon Hornbills, a Philippine Trogon pair and many others. A massive downpour then occurred so we retreated to our vehicle. Making our way down the mountain and stopping a few times at strategical places gave us great views of a Flaming Sunbird pair and two Striped Flowerpeckers, a species we had missed so far. After lunch, we visited the nearby botanical gardens, where things were very quiet. Some more Striped Flowerpeckers were seen, a Naked-faced Spiderhunter flew past and we saw our only Purple Needletails of the tour. An immature Philippine

Hawk-Eagle was much appreciated by the group as some of us missed it previously. Nothing else was happening so we moved on to some more open areas, where nothing happened either so we went back to our accommodation for some packing and refreshing, before having some last good beers and a great dinner in town.



Two megas on our final morning: Ashy Thrush and Spotted Wood Kingfisher!

We arrived in La Mesa early next morning, greeted by a flock of Lowland White-eyes. Ashy Thrushes were quite numerous this year as we recorded minimum five different individuals, who gave very good views. But, a Spotted Wood Kingfisher having just caught a bat stole the show! An unusual prey as far as I know, and unusually great and close views of this mega kingfisher. An incredible White's Thrush was also appreciated, as was Hooded Pitta, our only Mangrove Blue Flycatcher of the tour, a Hooded Pitta and a brief Brown-headed Thrush. We also did find our first Philippine Magpie Robins finally, and saw more Grey-backed

Tailorbirds. It was then time to pay a visit to the nearby university campus, where we got great looks at a roosting Philippine Scops Owl and a Philippine Nightjar – a great finish to this successful trip! We made it back to the airport on time and said goodbye, very happy having had such a smooth and enjoyable time in the Philippines, despite the downsides of deforestation and the usual bad weather!

A huge thanks to all participants for making this tour such an great one!



This roosting Philippine Nightjar was the last bird we put our binoculars on during this tour!



A Black-chinned Fruit Dove from Palawan.



The stunning Flame-breasted Fruit Dove... one of the group's favorite!

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

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).

BIRDS

Philippine Megapode ◊ (P Scrubfowl, Tabon S) *Megapodius cumingii* Four seen on Palawan.

King Quail ◊ (Blue-breasted Q) *Excalfactoria chinensis* Seen at Bislig and Los Banos.

Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus* Seen and heard at Subic.

Palawan Peacock-Pheasant ◊ *Polyplectron napoleonis* See note.

Wandering Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata* Hundreds north of Manila and at Candaba.

Philippine Duck ◊ *Anas luzonica* About twenty at Candaba.

Philippine Frogmouth ◊ *Batrachostomus septimus* Seen on Mt Kitanglad and PICOP.

Palawan Frogmouth ◊ *Batrachostomus chaseni* Seen at Irawan and near Sabang.

Great Eared Nightjar *Lyncornis macrotis* Seen and heard on Luzon and Mindanao.

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* Seen near Puerto Princesa.

Philippine Nightjar ◊ *Caprimulgus manillensis* Seen at Subic, Manila, Mt Kitanglad and PICOP.

Whiskered Treeswift *Hemiprocne comata* Seen at Subic and Mt Polis.

Grey-rumped Swiftlet ◊ *Collocalia marginata* Seen at Subic and Los Banos.

Ridgetop Swiftlet ◇ *Collocalia isonota* Seen on Mt Polis and Mindanao.



Philippine Duck and Whiskered Treeswift.

Pygmy Swiftlet ◇ *Collocalia troglodytes* Seen on Mt Polis and Mindanao.

Philippine Swiftlet ◇ *Aerodramus mearnsi* Seen on Mt Polis, Mt Kitanglad and in Compostela valley.

Ameline Swiftlet ◇ *Aerodramus [amelis] amelis* Seen at Subic, Manila and PICOP.

Ameline Swiftlet ◇ (Palawan S) *Aerodramus [amelis] palawanensis* Many on Palawan.

Philippine Spine-tailed Swift ◇ *Mearnsia picina* A few at PICOP.

Brown-backed Needletail (Brown N) *Hirundapus giganteus* Several near Sabang.

Purple Needletail ◇ *Hirundapus celebensis* Only three, at Mt Makiling.

Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis* Seen at Los Banos.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis* Seen at Los Banos.

Rufous Coucal ◇ *Centropus unirufus* Seen very well at Subic.

Black-faced Coucal ◇ *Centropus melanops* Seen very well at PICOP.

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* Seen and heard on Palawan.

Philippine Coucal ◇ *Centropus viridis* Seen and heard many times.



Philippine Coucal (left) and the usually unobtrusive Rufous Coucal.

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis* A few seen at Candaba.

Chestnut-breasted Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus curvirostris* Several on Palawan.

Rough-crested Malkoha ◇ (Red-c M) *Dasylophus superciliosus* Seen at Subic and Mt Makiling.

Scale-feathered Malkoha ◇ *Dasylophus cumingi* A stunner, seen many times, at Subic, Mt Polis and Mt Makiling.

Asian Koel (Common K) *Eudynamys scolopaceus* (H) Heard on Palawan and Luzon.

Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus* Seen at PICOP and on Palawan.

Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* Seen on Palawan, heard elsewhere.

Rusty-breasted Cuckoo *Cacomantis sepulcralis* Seen on Mt Kitanglad, many heard elsewhere.

Philippine Drongo-Cuckoo ♦ *Surniculus velutinus* Seen at PICOP.
 Philippine Hawk-Cuckoo ♦ *Hierococcyx pectoralis* One seen on Mt Kitanglad.
 Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia* Many in cities.
 Red Turtle Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica* Hundreds at Candaba and Los Banos.
 Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* Many seen.
 Philippine Cuckoo-Dove ♦ *Macropygia tenuirostris* Many seen, first at Subic.
 Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica* Seen at Subic and on Mindanao.



We had a lot of rain this year at PICOP, but this Philippine Drongo-Cuckoo did not seem to bother!

Zebra Dove (Peaceful D) *Geopelia striata* Many seen.
 Luzon Bleeding-heart ♦ *Gallicolumba luzonica* (H) One on Mt Makiling, heard only unfortunately.
 White-eared Brown Dove ♦ *Phapitreron leucotis* Many seen and heard, first at Subic.
 Amethyst Brown Dove ♦ *Phapitreron amethystinus* Seen at PICOP, heard elsewhere.
 Mindanao Brown Dove ♦ *Phapitreron brunneiceps* A pair seen very well at Compostela. See note.
 Pink-necked Green Pigeon *Treron vernans* Four seen at Puerto Princessa.
 Philippine Green Pigeon ♦ *Treron axillaris* Seen at Subic and PICOP.
 Thick-billed Green Pigeon *Treron curvirostra* Seen a few times on Palawan.
 Flame-breasted Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus marchei* Three wonderful individuals on Mt Polis.
 Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus occipitalis* Fantastic views of Mt Kitanglad.
 Black-chinned Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus leclancheri* Great views on Palawan.
 Pink-bellied Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula poliocephala* One scoped at PICOP.
 Spotted Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula carola* One at Compostela valley.
 Green Imperial Pigeon *Ducula aenea* Many at Subic and PICOP.
 Barred Rail ♦ *Gallirallus torquatus* Seen at Candaba, heard many times elsewhere.
 Buff-banded Rail ♦ *Gallirallus philippensis* One at Candaba.
 Plain Bush-hen ♦ *Amaurornis olivacea* Brief views on Mt Kitanglad and PICOP, heard elsewhere.
 White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus* Many at Candaba.
 White-browed Crane *Porzana cinerea* Many north of Manila and at Candaba.
 Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* Two at Bislig airfield.
 Philippine Swamphen ♦ *Porphyrio pulverulentus* Five north of Manila and one at Candaba.
 Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* Many seen.
 Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Several north of Manila.
 Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator* Five at Los Banos.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Many north of Manila.
Pied Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus* One flock at Panabo.
Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* Several flocks at Panabo.
Grey Plover (Black-bellied P) *Pluvialis squatarola* Several at Panabo.
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* Several at Bislig and Panabo.
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* Seen in northern Luzon and at Panabo.
Lesser Sand Plover (Mongolian S P) *Charadrius [mongolus] mongolus* One at Panabo.
Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* Many at Panabo.
Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* Two hundreds north of Manila.
Whimbrel (Eurasian W) *Numenius phaeopus* Several at Panabo.
Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* Two at Panabo.
Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* One at Panabo.
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* One at Panabo.
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* Seen at Panabo.
Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* Eight at Panabo.
Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* A few at Panabo.
Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* A few on northern Luzon.



Chinese Egret (right) with a Little Egret at Panabo.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* Several flocks at Panabo.
Bukidnon Woodcock ♦ *Scolopax bukidnonensis* One heard on Mt Polis, seen on Mt Kitanglad and Compostela.
Swinhoe's Snipe *Gallinago megala* At least one at Los Banos.
Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* Good numbers at Panabo.
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Seen several times.
Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes* Few dozens at Panabo.
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* A few at Panabo.
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* Several at Panabo.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* Many seen.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Several at Panabo.
Black-headed Gull (Common B-h G) *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* Many at Panabo and Puerto Princessa.
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* Several at Panabo.
Chinese Crested Tern *Thalasseus bernsteini* Four individuals seen at Panabo. See note.
Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* Several at Panabo.



Crested Honey Buzzard of the endemics philippensis race (above; here with a green snake sp. in its talons!) and the endemic Philippine Honey Buzzard.

Common Tern (Eastern C T) *Sterna [hirundo] longipennis* One at Panabo.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Many seen.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* One at Panabo.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* Five birds heading inland at Puerto Princessa!

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* Several seen near Manila.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* A few at Manila and on Mindanao.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Hundreds at Candaba, scattered sightings elsewhere.

Nankeen Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus* Two at Sabang.

Striated Heron (Little H) *Butorides striata* A few seen.

Javan Pond Heron *Ardeola speciosa* A few seen.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Hundreds seen on every island.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Seen several times.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Hundreds at Candaba, a few at Bislig.
Great Egret (Eastern G E) *Ardea [alba] modesta* Many seen.
Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia* Many seen.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Many seen.
Pacific Reef Heron (Pacific R E) *Egretta sacra* One on Palawan.
Chinese Egret ♦ *Egretta eulophotes* One at Panabo.



Everett's Scops Owl gave us a hard time on Mindanao!

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* A few seen.
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Seen on Mt Kitanglad.
Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus* Seen at Mt Polis and Mt Kitanglad.
Philippine Honey Buzzard ♦ *Pernis steerei* Several at PICOP.
Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* (H) Heard on Palawan.
Philippine Serpent Eagle ♦ *Spilornis holospilus* Many seen.
Philippine Eagle ♦ (Monkey-eating E) *Pithecophaga jefferyi* See note.
Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus cirrhatus* One on Palawan.
Philippine Hawk-Eagle ♦ (Luzon H-E) *Nisaetus philippensis* One at Subic and one at Los Banos. Heard at Mt Polis.
Pinsker's Hawk-Eagle ♦ *Nisaetus pinskeri* One immature on Mt Kitanglad.
Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus* Seen on Mt Kitanglad, PICOP and Palawan.
Besra *Accipiter virgatus* Seen on Mt Kitanglad.
Eastern Marsh Harrier *Circus spilonotus* One at Candaba and one on Mt Kitanglad.
Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Many seen.
White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* An immature at PICOP.
Grey-faced Buzzard ♦ *Butastur indicus* One at lake Agco.
Eastern Buzzard (Japanese B) *Buteo japonicus* Several on Mt Polis.
Eastern Grass Owl ♦ (Australasian G O) *Tyto longimembris* One at Bislig airfield.
Giant Scops Owl ♦ *Otus gurneyi* Very well seen after much efforts on Mt Kitanglad.
Palawan Scops Owl ♦ *Otus fuliginosus* One seen very well on Palawan.
Philippine Scops Owl ♦ *Otus megalotis* Great sightings of a family with youngs at Subic and in Manila.
Everett's Scops Owl ♦ *Otus everetti* We finally had great views of one at PICOP, after 18 tentatives!
Mindanao Scops Owl ♦ *Otus mirus* Fantastic sighting of one at Compostela valley. One heard on Mt Kitanglad.

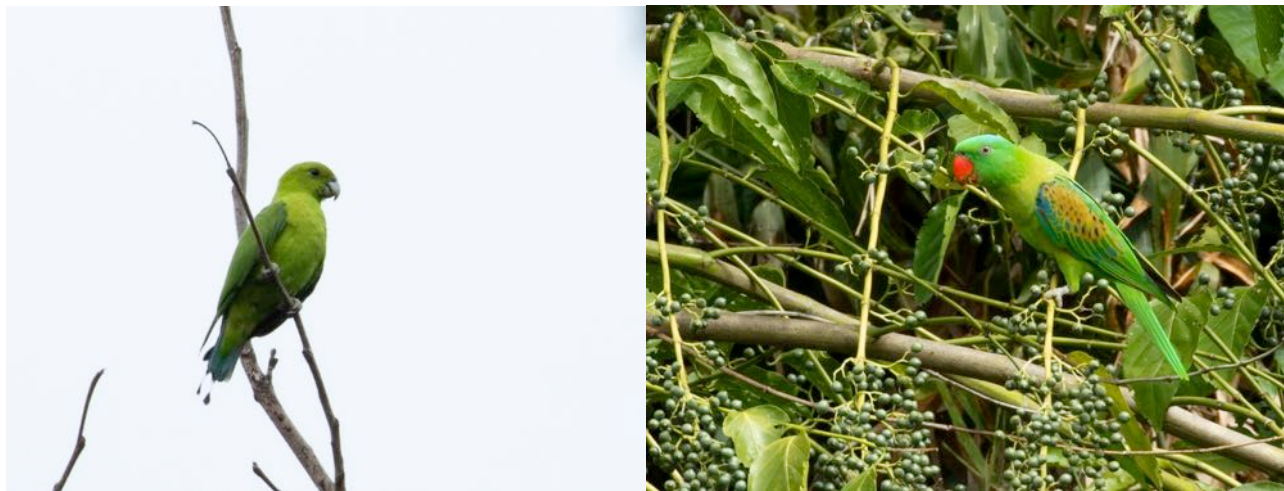
Luzon Scops Owl ♦ *Otus longicornis* One seen on Mt Polis.
Mantanani Scops Owl ♦ *Otus mantananensis* Two seen near Puerto Princessa.
Philippine Eagle-Owl ♦ *Bubo philippensis* A pair at Subic. Heard on Mt Makiling.
Spotted Wood Owl ♦ *Strix seloputo* (H) Several heard on Palawan, they wouldn't come into view.
Chocolate Boobook ♦ *Ninox randi* Seen at Subic, heard at PICOP and Compostela.
Luzon Hawk-Owl ♦ (Philippine Boobook) *Ninox philippensis* Two at Subic, many on Mt Makiling.
Mindanao Hawk-Owl ♦ (M Boobook) *Ninox spilocephala* One eventually seen well at PICOP.



Skewers of Palawan Hornbills (above), Luzon Hornbill (left) and Mindanao Hornbill.

Philippine Trogon ♦ *Harpactes ardens* Seen at PICOP and a pair on Mt Makiling.
Rufous Hornbill ♦ *Buceros hydrocorax* Several family flocks at PICOP.
Palawan Hornbill ♦ *Anthracoceros marchei* Many seen near Sabang, including a flock of at least 15 individuals.
Writhed Hornbill ♦ *Rhabdotorrhinus leucocephalus* Only a pair at PICOP.
Luzon Hornbill ♦ *Penelopides manillae* Seen at Subic and on Mt Makiling
Mindanao Hornbill ♦ *Penelopides affinis* Seen on Mt Kitanglad and PICOP.
Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* Several seen on all visited islands.
Spotted Wood Kingfisher ♦ *Actenoides lindsayi* Fantastic views at Subic and La Mesa eco park.
Hombroon's Kingfisher ♦ *Actenoides hombrooni* Seen only by some on Mt Kitanglad. Heard elsewhere.
Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda* (H) Heard on Palawan.
White-throated Kingfisher ♦ (Brown-breasted K) *Halcyon [smyrnensis] gularis* Many seen, mostly on Luzon.

Winchell's Kingfisher ♦ (Rufous-lored K) *Todiramphus winchelli* A pair seen well at PICOP.
Collared Kingfisher (White-c K) *Todiramphus chloris* Many seen.
Blue-eared Kingfisher *Alcedo meninting* One at Sabang.
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Seen first near Manila.
Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher (Rufous-backed K) *Ceyx erithaca* Brief views only on Palawan.
Indigo-banded Kingfisher ♦ *Ceyx cyanopectus* A superb individual near Banaue.
Southern Silvery Kingfisher ♦ *Ceyx argentatus* A pair on the usual pond at PICOP.
Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus* Many seen.
Blue-throated Bee-eater ♦ (Rufous-crowned B-e) *Merops [viridis] americanus* Many seen at Subic.
Coppersmith Barbet *Psilopogon haemacephalus* Many seen.
Philippine Pygmy Woodpecker ♦ *Yungipicus maculatus* Many seen.
White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis* Seen at Subic, Mt Kitanglad and PICOP.
Spot-throated Flameback ♦ *Dinopium everetti* Seen well near Sabang.
Buff-spotted Flameback ♦ *Chrysocolaptes lucidus* Seen only briefly on Mt Kitanglad and PICOP.
Luzon Flameback ♦ *Chrysocolaptes haematribon* Seen well at Subic and Mt Makiling.
Red-headed Flameback ♦ *Chrysocolaptes erythrocephalus* Great views of a pair near Sabang.
Sooty Woodpecker ♦ (Northern S W) *Mulleripicus [funnebris] funnebris* Several at Subic.
Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus* A trio from a viewpoint near Sabang.
Philippine Falconet ♦ *Microhierax erythrogenys* Seen at Subic, Mt Makiling and PICOP.
Oriental Hobby ♦ *Falco severus* One near Sabang.
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* Seen near Manila and Los Banos.
Red-vented Cockatoo ♦ *Cacatua haematuropygia* Ten individuals from a viewpoint near Sabang.
Mindanao Racket-tail ♦ *Prioniturus waterstradti* (H) Several heard on Mt Kitanglad.
Blue-headed Racket-tail ♦ (Palawan R-t) *Prioniturus platenae* Seen very well near Sabang.
Green Racket-tail ♦ *Prioniturus luconensis* Seen very well at Subic.



The endangered Green Racket-tail (left) and the critically endangered Luzon race of Blue-naped Parrot.

Blue-crowned Racket-tail ♦ *Prioniturus discurus* (LO) A flock briefly seen in flight at PICOP. Others heard.
Blue-naped Parrot ♦ *Tanygnathus lucionensis* Seen on Luzon and Palawan.
Guaibero ♦ *Bolbopsittacus lunulatus* Many seen on Luzon.
Philippine Hanging Parrot ♦ (Colasisi) *Loriculus philippensis* Many seen.
Philippine Pitta ♦ *Erythropitta erythrogaster* Seen very well at PICOP and on Palawan.
Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida* Seen very well on Palawan and at La Mesa eco park.
Azure-breasted Pitta ♦ (Steere's P) *Pitta steerii* A showy individual at PICOP.
Golden-bellied Gerygone *Gerygone sulphurea* Seen and heard several times.
White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus* Many seen.
Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia* Seen on Palawan.
Scarlet Minivet ♦ (Philippine M) *Pericrocotus [speciosus] leytensis* Seen at lake Agco and at PICOP.
Ashy Minivet *Pericrocotus divaricatus* Up to 100 individuals at Mt Makiling.
Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina striata* Seen at Subic, PICOP and on Palawan.

McGregor's Cuckooshrike ◇ *Malindangia mcgregori* See note.



McGregor's Cuckooshrike from Mt Kitanglad.

Blackish Cuckooshrike ◇ *Edolisoma coerulescens* A few seen well at Subic.
Black-bibbed Cicadabird ◇ *Edolisoma mindanense* A pair seen well at PICOP.
Black-and-white Triller ◇ *Lalage melanoleuca* (H) Heard only at PICOP.
Pied Triller *Lalage nigra* Seen on Mt Kitanglad and Mt Makiling.
Green-backed Whistler ◇ *Pachycephala albiventris* Seen on Mt Polis.
Yellow-bellied Whistler ◇ *Pachycephala philippinensis* Seen on Mt Kitanglad, lake Agco and PICOP.
Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* Many seen.
Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach* Many seen.
Mountain Shrike ◇ *Lanius validirostris* Two on Mt Polis.
Dark-throated Oriole *Oriolus xanthonotus* A few near Sabang.
Philippine Oriole ◇ *Oriolus steerii* A pair seen well at PICOP.
White-lored Oriole ◇ *Oriolus albiloris* A pair seen well at Subic.
Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis* Many seen.
Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* Many on Palawan.
Balicassiao ◇ *Dicrurus balicassius* Many at Subic and Mt Makiling.
Hair-crested Drongo ◇ (Palawan D) *Dicrurus [hottentottus] palawanensis* Several seen on Palawan.
Hair-crested Drongo ◇ (Mindanao D) *Dicrurus [hottentottus] striatus* Seen at PICOP.
Mindanao Blue Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura superciliaris* Seen well at PICOP.
Blue-headed Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura cyaniceps* Seen well on Mt Polis.
Philippine Pied Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura nigritorquis* Several seen around Manila.
Black-and-cinnamon Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura nigrocinnamomea* Several on Mt Kitanglad.
Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* Seen at Subic, PICOP and on Palawan.
Short-crested Monarch ◇ *Hypothymis helenae* A pair seen very well at PICOP.
Celestial Monarch ◇ *Hypothymis coelestis* A pair seen very well at PICOP. Mega!



Two megas from PICOP: Short-crested Monarch (left) and the rare Celestial Monarch.

- Blue Paradise Flycatcher** ♦ *Terpsiphone cyanescens* Seen very well at Puerto Princessa.
Rufous Paradise Flycatcher ♦ *Terpsiphone cinnamomea* Seen a few times at PICOP.
Slender-billed Crow ♦ (Palawan C) *Corvus [enca] pusillus* Many on Palawan.
Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* Many on Luzon and Mindanao.
Citrine Canary-Flycatcher ♦ *Culicicapa helianthea* A few in mix flocks at lake Agco.
Elegant Tit ♦ *Pardaliparus elegans* Seen on Mt Polis, Mt Kitanglad, lake Agco and Compostela valley.
Palawan Tit ♦ *Pardaliparus amabilis* Several flocks on Palawan.



The canopy-loving Palawan Tit (left) and Citrine Canary-Flycatcher.

- Oriental Skylark** *Alauda gulgula* Seen a few times on Luzon.
Black-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus atriceps* Seen twice on Palawan.
Yellow-wattled Bulbul ♦ *Pycnonotus urostictus* Seen at PICOP and on Mt Makiling.
Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier* Many seen.
Ashy-fronted Bulbul ♦ *Pycnonotus cinereifrons* Many seen on Palawan.
Palawan Bulbul ♦ *Alophoixus frater* Several seen on Palawan.
Sulphur-bellied Bulbul ♦ *Iole palawanensis* Two pairs seen well on Palawan.
Philippine Bulbul ♦ *Hypsipetes philippinus* Many seen.
Yellowish Bulbul ♦ *Hypsipetes everetti* Several seen at PICOP.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Many seen.
Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Many seen.
Striated Swallow *Cecropis striolata* Seen on Mt Polis and Mt Makiling.



Above, Yellow-wattled Bulbul; Below, Sulphur-bellied Bulbul, an uncommon Palawan endemic.

Mountain Tailorbird *Phyllergates cucullatus* Seen on Mt Polis, lake Agco and Compostela valley.

Rufous-headed Tailorbird ♦ *Phyllergates heterolaemus* Seen very well on Mt Kitanglad.

Philippine Bush Warbler ♦ (Luzon B W) *Horornis seebohmi* Seen very well on Mt Polis.

Philippine Leaf Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus olivaceus* A few seen at PICOP.

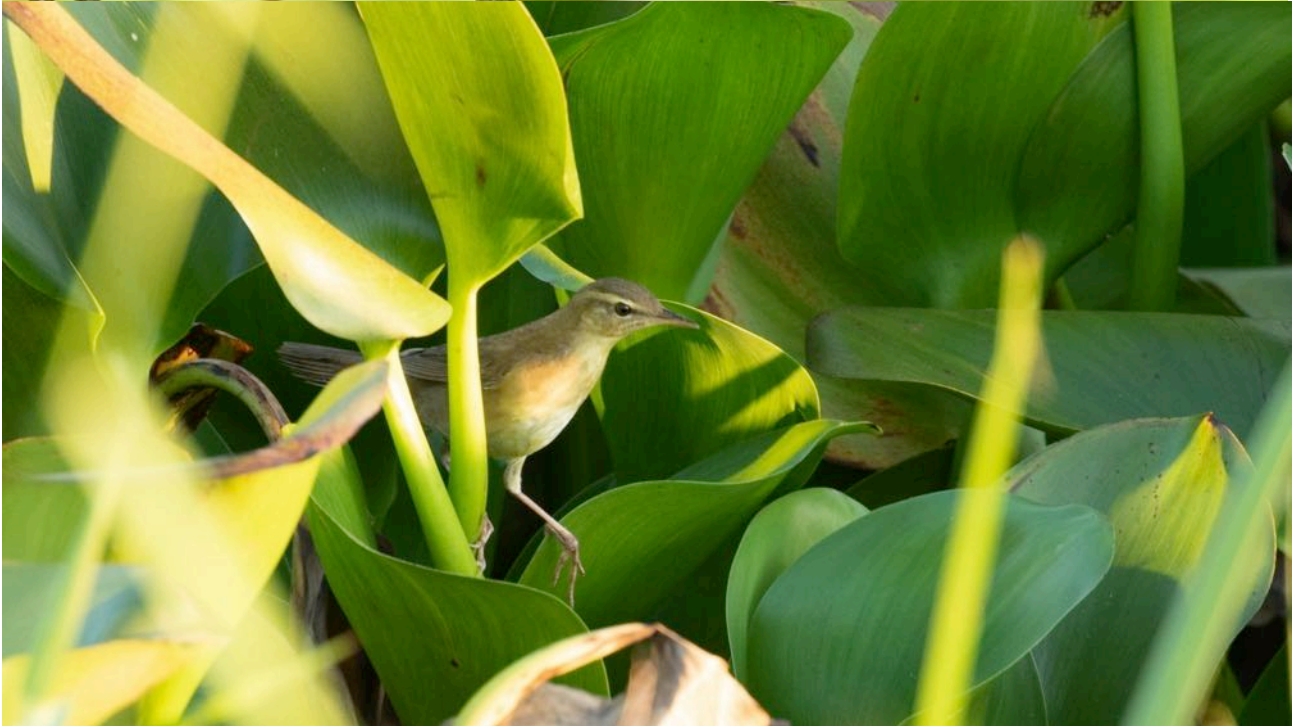
Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* Several seen and heard on all islands.

Negros Leaf Warbler ♦ *Phylloscopus nigrorum* See note.

Oriental Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orientalis* Seen near Manila.

Clamorous Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus* Seen near Manila and at Candaba.

Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler ♦ *Helopsaltes ochotensis* Seen very well at Candaba.



Rufous-headed Tailorbird showed well on Mt Kitanglad (above). For some obscure reasons, the ultra-skulking *Middendorf's Grasshopper Warbler* just posed miraculously in the open!

- Long-tailed Bush Warbler** ♦ *Locustella caudata* See note.
Benguet Bush Warbler ♦ *Locustella seebohmi* One glimpsed on Mt Polis, others heard.
Tawny Grassbird *Cincloramphus timoriensis* Seen well on Mt Polis and Mt Kitanglad.
Striated Grassbird *Megalurus palustris* Many seen.
Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* Seen well at Los Banos.
Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis* A few seen at Bislig airfield.
Mindanao Miniature Babbler ♦ *Micromacronus sordidus* Seen very well at lake Agco. See note.
Trilling Tailorbird ♦ *Orthotomus chloronotus* Seen very well at Subic.
Rufous-fronted Tailorbird ♦ *Orthotomus frontalis* Seen very well at PICOP.
Grey-backed Tailorbird ♦ *Orthotomus derbianus* Seen very well at Mt Makiling and La Mesa eco park.
Rufous-tailed Tailorbird *Orthotomus sericeus* Many seen on Palawan.

Black-headed Tailorbird ◇ *Orthotomus nigriceps* One seen well at PICOP, many more heard.

Pin-striped Tit-Babbler *Macronus gularis* A few flocks on Palawan.

Brown Tit-Babbler ◇ *Macronus striaticeps* Seen on Mt Kitanglad, near Davao and at PICOP.

Striated Wren-Babbler ◇ *Ptilocichla mindanensis* Eventually seen well at PICOP.

Falcated Wren-Babbler ◇ *Ptilocichla falcata* One individual showed very well in the end on Palawan!

Ashy-headed Babbler ◇ *Malacocincla cinereiceps* Several seen on Palawan.

Melodious Babbler ◇ *Malacopteron palawanense* A couple seen on Palawan.

Chestnut-faced Babbler ◇ *Zosterornis whiteheadi* Many seen on Mt Polis.

Mindanao Pygmy Babbler ◇ *Dasycrotapha plateni* A few flocks mixed with Everett's White-eyes at PICOP.

Rusty-crowned Babbler ◇ *Sterrhoptilus capitalis* Several in mix flocks at PICOP.

Mindanao White-eye ◇ *Lophozosterops goodfellowi* Seen well on Mt Kitanglad and at Compostela valley.

Warbling White-eye *Zosterops japonicus* See note.

Lowland White-eye ◇ *Zosterops meyeri* Many seen at La Mesa eco park.

Everett's White-eye *Zosterops everetti* Seen near Davao and at PICOP.

Yellowish White-eye ◇ *Zosterops nigrorum* Flocks at Banaue and Dalton Pass.

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella* See note.

Sulphur-billed Nuthatch ◇ *Sitta oenochlamys* Seen on Mt Polis and Mt Kitanglad.

Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis* Seen at Manila and many on Mt Kitanglad and on Palawan.

Short-tailed Starling ◇ *Aplonis minor* Seen on Mt Kitanglad.

Apo Myna ◇ *Basilornis mirandus* Several seen well on Mt Kitanglad.

Coledo ◇ *Sarcops calvus* Seen well at Subic, Compostela and PICOP.

Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* Several seen on Palawan.

Crested Myna (introduced) *Acridotheres cristatellus* Seen in Manila and Los Banos.

Chestnut-cheeked Starling ◇ *Agropsar philippensis* Hundreds in several flocks on Mt Kitanglad.

Stripe-headed Rhabdornis ◇ *Rhabdornis mystacalis* Seen well at Subic, PICOP and Mt Makiling.

Stripe-breasted Rhabdornis ◇ *Rhabdornis inornatus* Seen well at Mt Kitanglad.

Ashy Thrush ◇ *Geokichla cinerea* At least five seen well at La Mesa eco park.



Stripe-breasted Rhabdornis (left) and Ashy Thrush.

White's Thrush *Zoothera aurea* One seen well at La Mesa eco park.

Island Thrush ◇ (Mountain Blackbird) *Turdus poliocephalus* Seen on Mt Polis and Compostela valley.

Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* Hundreds on Mt Kitanglad.

Brown-headed Thrush ◇ (Brown T) *Turdus chrysolaus* One at La Mesa eco park.

Philippine Magpie-Robin ◇ *Copsychus mindanensis* Only seen at La Mesa eco park, one pair.

White-browed Shama ◇ *Copsychus luzoniensis* Great views at Subic.

White-vented Shama ◇ *Copsychus niger* Seen very well on Palawan.

Grey-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta* Many seen.

Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica* One seen on Palawan.

Palawan Blue Flycatcher ◇ *Cyornis lemprieri* Several seen on Palawan.

Mangrove Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis rufigastra* One female at La Mesa eco park.

Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher ◇ *Cyornis ruficauda* Seen twice at PICOP.
 Turquoise Flycatcher ◇ *Eumyias panayensis* Seen on Mt Polis, Mt Kitanglad and at Compostela.
 Bagobo Babbler ◇ *Leonardina woodi* Seen briefly at Compostela valley, heard on Mt Kitanglad.
 White-browed Shortwing ◇ (Luzon S) *Brachypteryx [montana] poliogyna* Seen on Mt Polis. See note.
 White-browed Shortwing ◇ (Mindanao S) *Brachypteryx [montana] malindangensis* Seen on Mt Kitanglad.
 ‘Morris’s’ Shortwing ◇ *Brachypteryx* sp. nov. (H) Heard only at Lake Agco.
 Mugimaki Flycatcher ◇ *Ficedula mugimaki* A few seen on Mt Kitanglad.
 Little Slaty Flycatcher ◇ *Ficedula basilanica* (H) Heard only low down in a dark gully at PICOP.
 Palawan Flycatcher ◇ *Ficedula platenae* Seen at Irawan and near Sabang.
 Cryptic Flycatcher ◇ *Ficedula crypta* Great looks at a pair near Davao.
 Bundok Flycatcher ◇ *Ficedula luzoniensis* Seen on Mt Polis, at Banaue and on Mt Kitanglad.
 Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni* Seen on Mt Polis, Mt Kitanglad and at Compostela.



Above: Palawan Blue Flycatcher (left) and a roosting female Bundok Flycatcher.

Below: Yellow-throated Leafbird (left) and Palawan Flycatcher.



Luzon Water Redstart ◇ *Phoenicurus bicolor* A few seen near to Banaue.
 Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata* Seen on Luzon and Mindanao.
 Philippine Leafbird ◇ *Chloropsis flavipennis* A few seen well at PICOP.
 Yellow-throated Leafbird ◇ *Chloropsis palawanensis* Several seen on Palawan.
 Olive-backed Flowerpecker ◇ *Prionochilus olivaceus* See note.
 Palawan Flowerpecker ◇ *Prionochilus plateni* Many seen on Palawan.
 Striped Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum aeruginosum* One on Palawan, at least five on Mt Makiling.
 Whiskered Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum proprium* At least six birds at lake Agco.
 Olive-capped Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum nigrilore* Seen at Mt Kitanglad, lake Agco and Compostela.
 Flame-crowned Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum anthonyi* See note.
 Bicolored Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum bicolor* Seen at lake Agco and PICOP.
 Red-keeled Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum australe* Many seen, at Subic, Mt Kitanglad, PICOP and near Davao.

Orange-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum trigonostigma* Seen at Los Banos and many on Mindanao.

Buzzing Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum hypoleucum* See note.

Pygmy Flowerpecker ◇ *Dicaeum pygmaeum* Seen on Mt Polis and on Palawan.

Fire-breasted Flowerpecker (Buff-bellied F) *Dicaeum ignipectus* Seen on Mt Polis, Mt Kitanglad and lake Agco.



Buzzing Flowerpecker (left), Orange-bellied Flowerpecker (right) and the Mindanao endemic Olive-capped Flowerpecker.

Brown-throated Sunbird (Plain-t S) *Anthreptes malacensis* Seen on Palawan.

Grey-throated Sunbird ◇ *Anthreptes griseigularis* Seen at PICOP and on Mt Makiling.

Purple-throated Sunbird *Leptocoma sperata* See note.

Copper-throated Sunbird ◇ *Leptocoma calcostetha* Two pairs on Palawan.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis* See note.

Grey-hooded Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga primigenia* Several on Mt Kitanglad.

Apo Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga boltoni* At least three males on Mt Kitanglad.

Lina's Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga linaraborae* Several seen very well at Compostela.



Fire-breasted Flowerpecker (left) and 'Julia's' Purple-throated Sunbird.

- Flaming Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga flagrans* Seen well on Mt Makiling.
 Metallic-winged Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga pulcherrima* Several seen very well at PICOP.
 Luzon Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga jefferyi* Several seen very well at Mt Polis.
 Lovely Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga shelleyi* Many seen on Palawan.
 Handsome Sunbird ◇ *Aethopyga bella* Seen at Dalton Pass and at PICOP.
 Orange-tufted Spiderhunter ◇ *Arachnothera flammifera* Seen near to Davao.
 Pale Spiderhunter ◇ *Arachnothera dilutior* Several seen on Palawan.
 Naked-faced Spiderhunter ◇ *Arachnothera clarae* Seen at PICOP and on Mt Makiling.



No shortage of Sunbirds on this tour! Luzon Sunbird (left) and Grey-hooded Sunbird.

- Cinnamon Ibon ◇ *Hypocryptadius cinnamomeus* Seen on Mt Kitanglad and at lake Agco and Compostela.
 Eurasian Tree Sparrow (introduced) *Passer montanus* Many seen.
 Red-eared Parrotfinch ◇ *Erythrura coloria* Seen well on Mt Kitanglad and at Compostela.
 Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata* Many seen.
 White-bellied Munia *Lonchura leucogastra* Seen at Mt Kitanglad, Compostela and Los Banos.
 Chestnut Munia *Lonchura atricapilla* Many seen.
 Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis* Seen a few times, first on Mt Kitanglad.
 Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* Many seen.
 Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus* Seen on Luzon and Mindanao.
 Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* Seen on Mt Polis, Mt Kitanglad and at Compostela.
 White-cheeked Bullfinch ◇ (Philippine B) *Pyrrhula leucogenis* Seen on Mt Polis.
 Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* Two flocks seen well on Mt Polis.



Red Crossbill on Mt Polis.

MAMMALS

Crab-eating Macaque (Long-tailed M) *Macaca fascicularis* Many seen on Palawan.
Finlayson's Squirrel (introduced) *Callosciurus finlaysonii* Seen at La Mesa eco park.
Northern Palawan Tree Squirrel *Sundasciurus juvencus* Several on Palawan.
Mindanao Squirrel (M Tree S) *Sundasciurus mindanensis* Seen at Mt Kitanglad.
Common Palm Civet *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus* One at Compostela.
Golden-capped Fruit Bat (G-crowned Flying Fox) *Acerodon jubatus* Many at Subic.
Large Flying-fox *Pteropus vampyrus* Several at Subic.

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Palawan Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron napoleonis*

After the disappearance of the traditional male at the Underground River National Park, another habituated male near Puerto Princessa became popular amongst birders and is considered as a wild individual. We enjoyed great looks at that one!

Chinese Crested Tern *Thalasseus bernsteini*

We found four individuals of this critically endangered species at their wintering site of Panabo, after an absence of almost two weeks. This species was only found wintering a few years ago and it is the first time BirdQuest recorded that species in the Philippines.

Philippine Eagle *Pithecophaga jefferyi*

As last year, a pair was seen displaying at their traditional site on Mt Kitanglad and gave great scope views for everybody. Much to our delight, we also encountered the species near Lake Agco, where it gave much closer flight views.

McGregor's Cuckooshrike *Malindangia mcgregori*

Several seen well at Mt Kitanglad. We also saw another pair at Compostela. The bizarre song and subtly different plumage suggest this is probably actually a new species!

Negros Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus nigrorum*

We saw three forms of this species which was formerly known as Mountain Leaf Warbler. On Mount Polis, the form *benguensis* was very common. On Mt Kitanglad, we saw several of the form *diuatae* which shows pale underparts and white in the tail whilst at the Compostela Valley, we saw the form *mindanensis*, with yellow underparts and white in the tail.

Long-tailed Bush Warbler *Locustella caudata*

We saw different forms of this species which may well end up as different species... Many of the nominate form were heard at Mount Polis where a couple were seen very well after some effort. The form *unicolor* gave excellent views, with one wondering around on the ground at Mt Kitanglad. Many more were heard there and another seen more briefly. We also saw one seen at the Compostela Valley, which may represent a new form?

Mindanao Miniature Babbler *Micromacronus sordidus*

This year, we visited for the first time the Lake Agco area, where we had great looks at several individuals. A BirdQuest lifer!

Warbling White-eye *Zosterops japonicus*

With the revision of the white-eye complex, the birds formerly known as Mountain White-eyes have been lumped into the birds formerly known as Japanese White-eye, with the name Warbling White-eye being used for the enlarged species. In addition, we saw three forms of Warbling White-eye during the tour: *whiteheadi* was common at Mount Polis, *diuatae* was abundant in mixed flocks at Mt Kitanglad and *vulcani* was seen well at the Compostela Valley.

Asian Fairy Bluebird *Irena puella*

The form *tweeddalii* was seen on Palawan and is already split by HBW as Palawan Fairy Bluebird.

White-browed Shortwing *Bachypterix montana*

I have listed each taxon separately as I strongly suspect that further splits will follow in this complex, and it will make it easier to fathom out in the future.

Olive-backed Flowerpecker *Prionochilus olivaceus*

The striking *parsoni* race was seen at Dalton Pass, Luzon; Nominate form seen at PICOP.

Flame-crowned Flowerpecker *Dicaeum anthonyi*

Two forms seen: nominate on Luzon and *kampalili* on Mindanao.

Buzzing Flowerpecker *Dicaeum hypoleucum*

Two very different forms seen: *obscurum* seen on Luzon and nominate on Luzon.

Purple-throated Sunbird *Leptocoma sperata*

The *juliae* subspecies was seen near Davao and is already split by HBW as Orange-lined Sunbird.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis*

Several of the nominate form were seen at various sites whilst on Palawan we saw the lovely orange-breasted form *aurora*. Both of these forms are in the group referred to as Garden Sunbird.

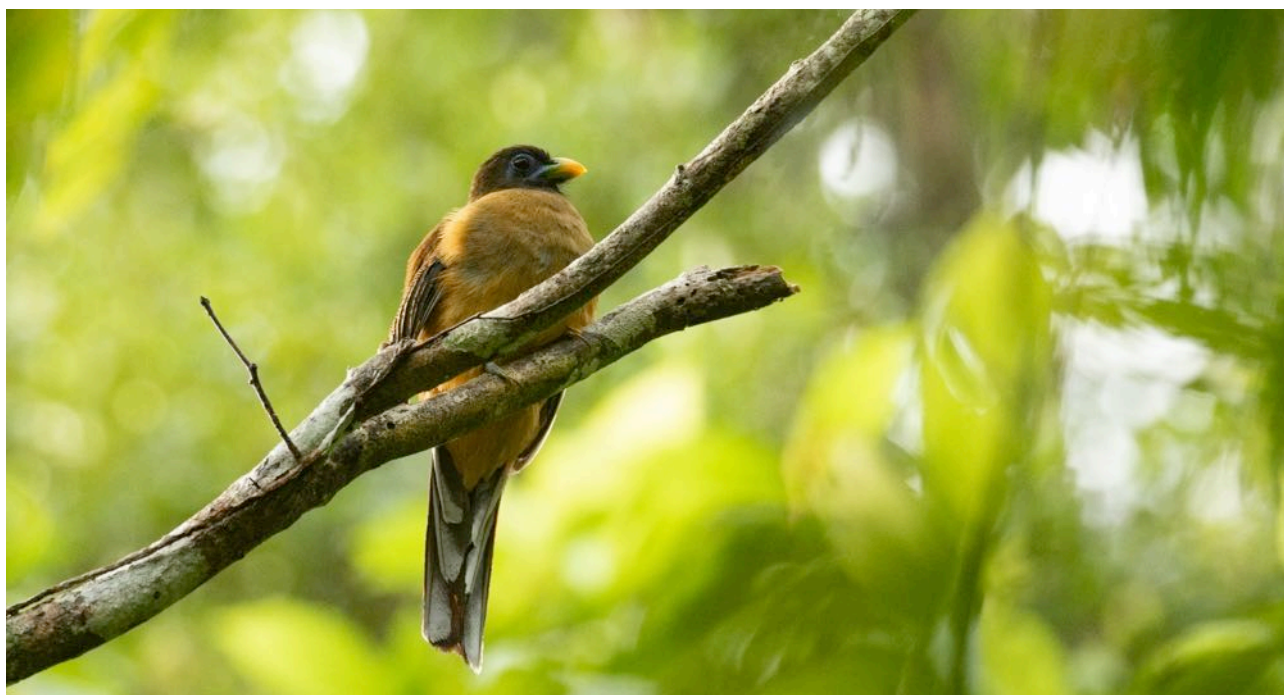


Philippine Frogmouth is one of these very special birds you only get to see in the Philippines!

APPENDIX 1

TOP 10 BIRDS RECORDED

1. Philippine Eagle (37pts)
2. Azure-breasted Pitta (21pts)
3. Falcated Wren-Babbler (20pts)
4. Spotted Wood Kingfisher (19pts)
5. Scale-feathered Malkoha = Celestial Monarch (16pts)
7. Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove (15pts)
8. Flame-breasted Fruit Dove (14pts)
9. Southern Silvery Kingfisher (13pts)
10. Palawan Peacock-Pheasant (11pts)
11. Short-crested Monarch = Apo Myna = White-lored Oriole (10pts)



A female Philippine Trogon seen at PICOP, and the group relaxing after having seen a Philippine Eagle!