

WESTERN PACIFIC ODYSSEY TOUR REPORT 2023

20 March - 17 April 2023

by Fraser Gurney

The 2023 Western Pacific Odyssey (WPO) gave its participants some fantastic experiences. Rare, poorly known and Critically Endangered bird species were enjoyed by all, as were cetaceans, good weather and brilliant food. Unfortunately, the expedition did not run as smoothly as it could have, with an outbreak of COVID-19 on our ship the Heritage Adventurer majorly disrupting the itinerary. At the time of the trip Japan still had some of the strictest Covid entry requirements in the world, which meant the voyage could not stop at any of the Japanese islands where we had planned to disembark. Distressingly, the Federated States of Micronesia also denied the Heritage Adventurer the right to land, and positive Covid tests meant passengers onboard the ship had to isolate in their cabins and miss some of the expedition landings. This was highly disappointing for all affected. Despite this, we still managed to record 246 bird species, with the rarity and obscurity of some of the species being the highlight rather than the sheer number of species. Specific highlights among the 40 tube-nosed seabird species included the poorly known Heinroth's Shearwater and Beck's Petrel, the undescribed "Lava Petrel", and the rare and highly sought after Short-tailed Albatross. Some of the terrestrial birding was also excellent, with New Caledonian Crow, Kagu and Crow Honeyeater on New Caledonia, and Melanesian Megapode, Moustached Treeswift, Buff-headed Coucal, Blyth's Hornbill and Sanford's Sea Eagle in the Solomon Islands. The many sea days aboard the ship afforded the opportunity to spot cetaceans such as Humpback Whale, Pygmy Sperm Whale and Spinner Dolphin, all the while enjoying the comfort of the Heritage Adventurer and the remarkably good weather throughout the whole voyage.

The WPO started in Auckland, New Zealand, with everyone meeting on the 20th to get settled onboard the Heritage Adventurer that afternoon. After the introductions and briefings, we had the first of many fantastic dinners, before heading out into the Hauraki Gulf overnight. We spent the next two days on two offshore islands in northern New Zealand, Great Barrier Island and Urupukapuka Island. Before we got to Great Barrier Island there was a chance to examine a Cook's Petrel up close, as one was released after being found on the deck early in the morning. The island itself provided an opportunity to see some of New Zealand's endemics such as New Zealand Pigeon, New Zealand Kaka, Tui, New Zealand Fantail and Grey Gerygone. After leaving the island we got stuck into the seabirds, with White-capped Albatross, Fairy Prion, Black-winged Petrel, White-necked Petrel, Grey-faced Petrel, Black Petrel, Buller's Shearwater, Fluttering Shearwater and Common Diving-Petrel all seen as the ship cruised north. However, the most exciting bird was New Zealand Storm-Petrel, with of these recently rediscovered seabirds appearing on an oil slick laid by the Heritage Expeditions staff. The next morning was spent on

Urupukapuka Island, where we had great views of more New Zealand endemics with Brown Teal, Red-crowned Parakeet, North Island Saddleback, Tomtit, North Island Robin and Whitehead. The afternoon and the next day were spent sea watching from the ship as we continued north and out of New Zealand waters, adding Antipodean Albatross, Kermadec Petrel, Wilson's Storm-Petrel and Long-tailed Skua to the trip list. We also saw our first wedge-tailed shearwater, which would then see nearly every day for the next three and a half weeks!

At first light the next morning we were treated to a seabird spectacle as we approached Norfolk Island. Hundreds of White Tern, Black-winged Petrel and Wedge-tailed Shearwater swirled around the ship, with a few black and brown noddies, red-tailed tropicbirds and masked boobies mixed in. These birds hung around as we were taken ashore in Zodiacs (Rigid Inflatable Boats), with a nankeen kestrel and our first great frigatebird flying overhead as we cleared customs. The shore party headed to Palm Glen, an area of forest in Norfolk Island National Park, being informed on the way that the feral chickens here were actually tickable Red Junglefowl! That's Australians for you... Once at Palm Glen we quickly found most of the Norfolk Island endemics in Slender-billed White-eye, Norfolk Island Gerygone, Norfolk Robin and the Norfolk Island subspecies of Golden Whistler – a probable future split. Unfortunately, the Norfolk Island Parakeet proved much harder to find, and despite hearing one or two only a few people were able to get a look at this species. We headed back to ship with a couple of people consoling themselves with a brief flyby of the only Pacific Emerald Dove of the trip.

We spent the next day at sea, heading north into New Caledonian waters, where we picked up some excellent seabirds in Providence Petrel, Gould's Petrel, Tahiti Petrel, White-bellied Storm-Petrel and White-tailed Tropicbird. Wedge-tailed shearwaters were now abundant, most of the day was spent picking out the rarer seabirds as they passed by amongst the wedge-tails. Unfortunately, it was at this point in the trip that COVID-19 reared its ugly head, with one of the Birdquest guests having to isolate in their cabin for seven days. Our thoughts were with our teammate as this meant they missed out on going ashore on New Caledonia and part of the Solomon Islands, which is hugely disappointing. The next morning the Heritage staff laid another oil slick, hoping to attract the recently described New Caledonian Storm-Petrel, but frustratingly none of this species appeared. As we entered the lagoon around New Caledonia that afternoon we saw several new species for the trip, including Black-naped Tern, Red-footed Booby Osprey and Pacific Reef Heron.

Later that afternoon we made Landfall in Nouméa, with the landing party making their way to Mount Koghi. What followed was a stunning few hours of birding, with great views of Barred Honeyeater, Streaked Fantail, New Caledonian Crow, Cloven-feathered Dove, Southern Shrikebill, Red-throated Parrotfinch and much more besides. The beautiful Cloven-feathered Dove was popular, as was the tool use of the New Caledonian Crow, but the bird of the day might have been a New Caledonian Thicketbird which was coaxed out of the undergrowth in the early evening. This skulking species is very difficult to see and hadn't been recorded at Mount Koghi in five years, so this was a fantastic sighting. Delighted, we headed back to the ship to prepare for a 3:30am start the next day.

As we were getting over our early start, we boarded an overland a couple of overland buses to Rivière Bleu, a park in New Caledonia famous for its birds. After a temporary breakdown of one of the buses we arrived and were immediately treated to views of New Caledonian Parakeet, New Caledonian Whistler and New Caledonian Cuckooshrike. However, we didn't hang around for long as we were keen to head into forest and look for our main targets for the day. Before long

the first of these appeared, and we were treated to close-range views of the iconic Kagu, the national bird of New Caledonia. These flightless birds seemed relatively unperturbed by people and we saw several more over the course of the day. As we continued through the forest, we came across Horned Parakeet, with a couple of people even seeing the Critically Endangered Crow Honeyeater. As a packed lunch was served and we prepared to leave, another Crow Honeyeater was spotted, much to the delight of all present. This scarce species is getting harder and harder to find, with some birders present more excited to see this species than even the Kagu. This capped a fantastic 24 hour on New Caledonia, between our group we had managed to see all 17 of the New Caledonian endemic birds available to us.

The next two days saw us heading north again, out of New Caledonian waters and through seas belonging to Vanuatu en route to the Solomon Islands. As we went, we picked up our Pomarine Skuas, first Lesser Frigatebirds, as well as the gorgeous grey-washed "Magnificent" subspecies of Collared Petrel. We also began seeing Tropical Shearwaters, a poorly known and confusing species complex which almost certainly contains multiple species. We saw two distinct types over this leg of the journey, slightly larger birds with large white "saddlebags" and slightly small birds without any obvious saddlebags. Another poorly known species we saw in this area was Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, of which we saw three. This species was only recently found in this part of the Pacific and potentially represents a new subspecies or even full species. However, perhaps the most interesting bird we saw in these waters was the undescribed "Lava Petrel" – a completely unknown species – it's not even known which genus it belongs to! This bird appeared to be a Pseudobulweria type petrel, with dark brown colouring and white wing flashes like a skua. Fascinating stuff. We were also hoping to spot Vanuatu Petrel as we passed their breeding islands, but no candidates for this tricky to identify species were seen. A consolation prize was a few sightings of the large and enigmatic Polynesian Storm-Petrel, with the Birdquest guest in Covid isolation managing to spot one out his cabin porthole!

After our two sea days we arrived at the island of Nendo, our first stop in the Solomon Islands. This was an exciting phase of the voyage, with many of the species here being new most on board. As we were landing on Nendo we could see large numbers of Coconut Lorikeet, Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove, White-rumped and Uniform Swiftlets and Cardinal Myzomela. Nendo is one of the most easterly Solomon Islands, which gave us a good chance to see some Polynesian birds not present on the rest of the Solomon Islands. As the day (and humidity) progressed, we were treated to good views of Red-bellied Fruit Dove, Pacific Imperial Pigeon, Pacific Kingfisher Polynesian Triller and Temotu Whistler. However, the real targets were the two species of strange white-eye: Santa Cruz and Sanford's White-eye. After a few hours we had both in the bag, with the large, brown, Sanford's White-eye being particularly appreciated. Back on the ship we turned west towards the island of Makira, seeing Bridled Terns and a Grey-backed Tern as we sailed on.

We were ready to land on Makira the next morning, at the village of Na Mugha. Due to Covid we were making land at a different point to usual, and as such we were unfortunately limited to the village and we unable to enter the privately owned forest. Despite this, we still managed to get some good birding in and amassed a respectable list containing several island endemics. Some of the better birds seen were Island, Red-knobbed and Chestnut-bellied Imperial Pigeons, Yellow-bibbed Fruit Dove, Glossy Swiftlet, Eclectus Parrot, Yellow-bibbed Lory, Sooty Myzomela, Makira Honeyeater, Chestnut-bellied Monarch, Singing Starling and Mottled Flowerpecker. Back on this ship we had our first opportunity for snorkeling, with several people spending a few hours exploring the nearby corals and the fish living amongst them. After the snorkeling the ship departed for Guadalcanal and tomorrow's land-based excursion.

While it was still dark, we put ashore at Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands. Excitement was in the air as a new set of birds awaited and we welcomed back our fellow Birdquest member from Covid isolation. Our birding location for the day was Mount Austin, the site of some significant World War II battles and also a well-known birding hotspot. The five and half hours we had here we fantastic, again compiling an excellent species list which included some cracking birds. Claret-breasted Fruit Dove, Buff-headed Coucal, Moustached Treeswift, Variable and Pied Goshawks (dark morph), Ultramarine Kingfisher, Blyth's Hornbill, Solomons Cockatoo, Cardinal Lory, Black-headed Myzomela, Solomons Monarch, White-billed Crow, Steel-blue Flycatcher, Brown-winged Starling, Long-tailed Myna and Midget Flowerpecker were all seen well. Phew! The Blyth's Hornbill and Ultramarine Kingfisher were two of the standouts, although one Birdquester was lucky enough to see several Solomons Sea Eagles, one being harassed by an Oriental Hobby. A very satisfying day ended with us continuing west through the Solomon Islands towards our next landing.

The next morning was spent on the island of Tetepare, which has been set aside as a nature reserve and has largely been spared the logging which has ravaged the rest of the Solomon Islands. Several new birds awaited us on Tetepare, and we saw our first Beach Kingfishers as we were landing. Just around the clearing at the landing site we got onto Melanesian Megapode, Stephan's Emerald Dove, Song Parrot, Dark-eyed White-eye, Crimson-rumped Myzomela and the striking White-capped Monarch. The rest of the morning was spent searching for the more elusive Cockerell's Fantail and Kolombangara Monarch, both of which were found after a long but rewarding search. As we headed back to the ship for lunch a Solomons Sea Eagle flew quite low over one of the Zodiacs, giving most people their first view of the magnificent raptor. That afternoon we made the short one and a half mile jump over to the island of Rendova, where some enjoyed another snorkeling opportunity and others the massive trees in the rainforest and better views of both Cockerell's Fantail and Kolombangara Monarch. Another satisfying day ended as we headed towards Kolombangara, the final island we would land on in the Solomons.

Dawn saw us being driven up the slopes of Kolombangara in the back of flatbed pick-up trucks, having made another landing in the dark earlier in the morning. Our goal was Imburano Lodge, where a lookout provided a nice view over the surrounding rainforest and Kolombangara's volcanic cone. From the lookout we had very distant views of a couple of Pale Mountain Pigeon, with a flock of around 15 birds later making a close flyby and one briefly perching in full view. The road leading to the lodge was excellent for birding, providing new birds such as the diminutive Finsch's Pygmy-Parrot, Solomons Cuckooshrike, Oriole Whistler and Solomons White-eye. We were happy to see the pygmy-parrots at close range, and a nice flyover by a Solomons Sea Eagle meant our whole party had now seen this species. As we headed back down to the ship, we stopped to play a tape for the extremely secretive Roviana Rail, with several birds calling in response but none coming closer to the tape. As we boarded the ship, we were met with the extremely disappointing news that due to Covid concerns, Micronesia's government had denied us entry to the country. This was awful news, made more frustrating later as we had only one Covid case on board when we would have arrived in Micronesia. We updated our plans to spend an extra day in the Solomon Islands, to provide us with more time birding on land. Ironically, some people who had previously been to Micronesia were quite happy about this, as there were still birds they needed in the Solomon Islands! One of these birds revealed itself to us as we sailed around Kolombangara that evening: a Heinroth's Shearwater which made a close pass down one side of the ship. This small shearwater is believed to breed on Kolombangara and is another seabird from this part of the Pacific about which virtually nothing is known.

The next morning, we were again on Kolombangara, this time at the village of Hambere. Here we played more tapes for Roviana Rail, again getting responses from birds that remained hidden in cover. However, as the day went on, a couple of people were lucky enough to get glimpses of this species skulking in the undergrowth. The forest around Hambere also provided excellent views of Moustached Treeswift, Solomons Sea Eagle and Buff-headed Coucal, with one Birdquest guest lucky enough to have a New Georgian Dwarf Kingfisher fly across the trail in front of them. Some people elected to take a short Zodiac cruise through some nearby mangroves, where they were rewarded with views of North Melanesian Cuckooshrike and Melanesian Kingfisher. Just as we were about to catch our zodiacs back to the ship, the cry of Duchess Lorikeet went up as one was spotted in a flowering tree close to the dock. We had looked for this bright red lorikeet over the last two days without success, so it was great to see one at the eleventh hour before our departure. In the afternoon we made one last landing, one the Island of Ranongga, where we were greeted by final but still impressive Solomons Sea Eagle and Blyth's Hornbills. However, our target bird was the Ranongga White-eye – the only endemic bird on the island. After only a brief search we had one which showed very nicely for the group, an excellent way to cap off our time on land in the Solomons.

We now had a week at sea until we reached Japanese waters, which seemed like a long time after six consecutive days of birding on land. A week was increased to 12 days as the news came through that the Japanese government wouldn't allow us to make land until we arrived at the port in Yokohama on the final day of the voyage. Extremely disappointing, but not unexpected considering Japan's strict Covid regulations. As we sailed north into Papua New Guinea waters the next day, we had a very close sighting of another Lava Petrel, with some on board getting excellent pictures which will hopefully go some way to solving the mystery of what this bird is. We also saw our first Streaked Shearwaters (which we wouldn't see again until Japan) and first light morph Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, as well as a small group of Heinroth's Shearwaters – one of which was ferociously attacked by a Pomarine Skua. That evening we passed to the coast of New Ireland, where we were looking for Beck's Petrel. This species is yet another poorly known seabird from the Western Pacific, very difficult to separate from the closely related Tahiti Petrel. Before long, we had one paralleling the ship, with several more crossing the bow and showing their smaller size more agile flight compared to a Tahiti Petrel. Brilliant!

Over the next eight days we sailed north through the Pacific, celebrating crossing the equator with evening drinks on the top deck. King Neptune even appeared to celebrate with us! Travelling North, the dark morph wedge-tailed shearwaters gradually phased out and were replaced by light morphs, and as we passed Micronesia, we came across a very bedraggled looking Tahiti Petrel which allowed very close views as it was too tired to even fly away from the ship. The birding began to slow down as we approached the "dead zone", an area of unproductive ocean where birds were few and far between. As we traversed the dead zone, the entertainment was mainly provided by Red-footed, Brown, and Masked Boobies which put on a great show around the ship, chasing flying fish flushed by our passage and showcasing the different hunting techniques used by each species. The other main excitement was one of the guests managing to lock themselves in one of the ship's toilets! The birding began to slowly pick up again as we left the equator behind, with one evening producing several Bulwer's Petrel, a very close Leach's Storm-Petrel, and even a brief flyover of a Pacific Swift a long way from land. As we approached Japan the seabirds began to increase in numbers again, bringing with them our first Matsudaira's Storm-Petrel and Bonin Petrel.

Once in Japanese waters, we slowed near a seamount to see if laying another oil slick would bring in some birds. The oil did its job and we had great views of around 100 Matsudaira's Storm-Petrel feeding over the slick, close and Bonin Petrel, and several Bannerman's Shearwaters which made some close passes near the ship. After several days without even seeing land, we arrived at the island of Chichi-jima just before dusk. We couldn't land, but we hoped to spot the tiny and Critically Endangered Bryan's Shearwater returning to a rock stack where they breed. What followed was rather chaotic, with over 1000 wedge-tailed shearwater and several Bannerman's shearwater mixed in, making spotting small shearwaters very difficult. After several false alarms, the Birdquest team got onto a Bryan's flying passed to bow, but in the scrum of birds and strong wind most people got onto the wrong bird. This would prove to be the only Bryan's Shearwater that was seen, well done to those that spotted it! Even without the Bryan's Shearwater it was an enjoyable evening, with several breaching hump-backed whales and our first Black-footed Albatross of the trip.

Two mornings later we had much better views of Black-footed Albatross as we approached the island of Torishima. These magnificent chocolate brown albatrosses came very close to the ship as they followed our wake, but before long they were being almost ignored as there was another species of albatross on people's minds... Short-tailed Albatross! This scarce species is a bucket list bird for many birders, with everyone very keen to see one. The short-tails kept us waiting however, with the first one not coming into view until we were relatively close to Torishima. This individual was very obliging, at one point flying right over the boat and eliciting oohs and ahhs from all present. We ended up seeing several hundred of these birds, including some stunning adults, as they breed on Torishima and were currently raising young in two visible colonies on the island. With hundreds of both Short-tailed and Black-footed Albatross swirling around us we were treated to a real show as circumnavigated the island, managing to pick out a couple of Eastern Buzzard soaring near the coast. As we left, we tried some chumming to draw in the albatross. This was unsuccessful but we were all a bit distracted by the humpback whale which began following the boat, staying with us for well over 10 minutes.

The next morning was the penultimate day of the voyage. First light brought with it some unexpected birds, with migrating Black-crowned Night Heron, Barn Swallow and Eyebrowed Thrush all using the boat as a temporary resting place. Not long after the migrants had left us, we had our first really good look at a Tristram's Storm-Petrel, up to this point they had only been fleetingly seen or only by some people. In mid-afternoon we neared the island of Miyake-jima, where we hoped to see the diminutive Japanese Murrelet. We didn't like our chances however, with the sea becoming quite rough and making spotting murrelets very tricky. We cruised past the island without seeing any, but we did see 10,000 Wedge-tailed shearwaters, which had built in numbers over the day and now formed vast rafts which parted to let the ship through. Just when we thought we had missed out chance for Japanese Murrelet, one was spotted flying across the bow. This individual was only seen by a few people, and there was a tense wait until another bird was spotted after 10 minutes searching. After this, the floodgates opened and more than 10 of these brilliant little birds being seen, at times being just metres from the ships hull. As the ship sheltered from the wind near Nii-jima, the evening was nicely capped by a Peregrine Falcon which was audacious enough to chase a passing Short-tailed Albatross. It had been a wonderful day, but our minds now turned to tomorrow and the prospect of setting foot on dry land after 12 days at sea.

Dawn saw us sailing into Tokyo Bay and the end of our odyssey. We managed to pick up new species amongst the passing container ships, with Black-headed, Black-tailed and Vega Gulls all

seen, as well as Large-billed Crow and the local black-eared subspecies of Black Kite. Several cormorants created some intrigue, with one Pelagic Cormorant flying past the ship and many birds that were either Great or Japanese, with probably fewer than five certainly being Japanese. Even as we began to say our goodbyes we were seeing new species, with our last birds of the trip being Carrion Crow, Grey Heron and Chinese Spot-billed Duck, all right at our dock in Yokohama. We had made it! Although everyone was glad to escape the confines of the ship and the major disappointment Covid had created, we had undeniably seen some brilliant birds and managed to explore a very remote and intriguing part of the planet. A memorable voyage.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED

BIRDS

Paradise Shelduck ♦ *Tadorna variegata* Two seen on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Eastern Spot-billed Duck (Chinese S-b D) *Anas zonorhyncha* Three seen at the dock in Yokohama.

Brown Teal ♦ *Anas chlorotis* (NL) A pair on each of Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand.

Melanesian Megapode ♦ (M Scrubfowl) *Megapodius eremita* Several sightings in the Solomon Islands, including great views of one on Tetepare.

Red Junglefowl (introduced) *Gallus gallus* Lots on Norfolk Island, which the Australians apparently say are countable!

Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea* Seen in the Solomon Islands with three of four on each of Guadalcanal, Tetepare and Kolombangara, with fantastic views of perched birds on the latter two islands.

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta* Commonly seen in the Solomon Islands.

Satin Swiftlet ♦ *Collocalia uropygialis* Commonly seen on both days on New Caledonia

White-rumped Swiftlet *Aerodramus spodiopygius* Seen at Mount Koghi on New Caledonia and on Nendo in the Solomon Islands, flying higher than the glossy and satin swiftlets.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis* Nendo and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, with a big flock of around 50 at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal

Pacific Swift (Pacific S) *Apus pacificus* A single bird flew over the ship while at sea, a long way from land southwest of Micronesia

Buff-headed Coucal ♦ *Centropus milo* Single birds seen in the Solomon Islands on Guadalcanal, Tetepare and Kolombangara, with good views on Kolombangara. Many more heard.

Pacific Koel (Australian K) *Eudynamys [orientalis] cyanocephalus* One on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Shining Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus* Singles on Rendova and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia*

Metallic Pigeon *Columba vitiensis* One close bird on New Caledonia at Mount Koghi.

Spotted Dove (introduced) *Spilopelia chinensis*

Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove ♦ *Macropygia mackinlayi* Abundant on Nendo, with a few other individuals on other islands in the Solomons.

Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris* One on Norfolk Island.

Stephan's Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps stephani* Individual birds seen on Tetepare and Kolombangara.

Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* Heard on Guadalcanal.

Red-bellied Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus greyi* Two seen well on Nendo in the Solomon Islands

Yellow-bibbed Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus solomonensis* Good views of a pair on Makira, at times perched in the open.

Claret-breasted Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus viridis* Low numbers seen on Guadalcanal and Tetepare, around 18 on Kolombangara.

Cloven-feathered Dove ♦ *Drepanoptila holosericea* Exceptional views of one at Mount Koghi and two at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Pacific Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula pacifica* 10 seen on Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula rubricera* Seen on almost all of the Islands in the Solomons, with a high count of 15 on Kolombangara.

Island Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula pistrinaria* Commonly seen in the Solomon Islands with a high count of 35 on Kolombangara.

Chestnut-bellied Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula brenchleyi* Six on Makira and one at Mount Austin (unexpected) on Guadalcanal in the Solomons

Goliath Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula goliath* Great views of perched birds, four at Mount Koghi and six at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

New Zealand Pigeon ♦ *Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae* Three seen on Great Barrier Island in New Zealand.

Pale Mountain Pigeon ♦ *Gymnophaps solomonensis* 17 seen from the Imburano Lodge lookout on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands, including decent flight views.

Roviana Rail ♦ *Hypotaenidia roviae* (NL) Heard both days on Kolombangara in the Solomons, with some catching a glimpse on the second day

Buff-banded Rail *Hypotaenidia philippensis* Three seen on Great Barrier Island and eight on Urupukapuka Island, very bold for a rail.

Woodford's Rail ♦ *Hypotaenidia woodfordi* One heard at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal.

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus* Two on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand and three on Norfolk Island.

Variable Oystercatcher ♦ *Haematopus unicolor* Two on Great Barrier Island and four on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles* One heard on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

New Zealand Plover ♦ (New Zealand D) *Charadrius obscurus* Close views of four birds on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus* First seen at Norfolk Island with sightings on 10 days, including a high count of 600 at sea north of the Solomon Islands.

Black Noddy *Anous minutus* Seen on seven days, starting at Norfolk Island, with 500 seen at sea near Micronesia.

Grey Noddy ♦ (G Ternlet) *Anous albivitta* Three seen at Māori Rocks in New Zealand, around 25 at Norfolk Island.

White Tern *Gygis alba* Seen on seven days between Norfolk Island and the North Mariana Islands with a high count of 500 at Norfolk Island.

Silver Gull *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae* One at Norfolk Island and hundreds around New Caledonia.

Silver Gull (Red-billed G) *Chroicocephalus [novaehollandiae] scopulinus* Hundreds seen on the first three days of the tour around New Zealand.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* 50 seen as we approached Yokohama on the final day.

Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris* Seven were seen on the penultimate day of the voyage and four on the final day as we approached Yokohama.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* 10 were seen while in port at Auckland, two on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Vega Gull ♦ (East Siberian G) *Larus vegae* 10 seen on approach to Yokohama on the final day.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* One near Urupukapuka Island, New Zealand

Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii* Multiple days with sightings around New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands, a high count of 40 the day we left New Caledonia.

Spectacled Tern ♦ (Grey-backed T) *Onychoprion lunatus* Ones and twos seen on several days in the Solomon and North Mariana Islands.

Bridled Tern *Onychoprion anaethetus* Seen over nine days around the Solomon Islands and as far north as Micronesia, a high count of 100 off the coast of Papua New Guinea.

Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscatus* Seen on 13 days, from near Norfolk Island to southern Japanese waters, with the high count being 300 at sea between New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands.

White-fronted Tern ♦ *Sterna striata* 25 near Great Barrier Island and 2 near Urupukapuka Island, New Zealand.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana* Seen on four days around New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands, with 35 seen on approach to Nouméa, New Caledonia.

South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* (NL) One hurried past the ship near Urupukapuka Island, New Zealand.

Pomarine Jaeger (P Skua) *Stercorarius pomarinus* Mostly ones and twos seen on 10 different days from New Caledonia to Japan, with a high count of 20 birds at sea north of New Caledonia.

Long-tailed Jaeger (L-t Skua) *Stercorarius longicaudus* Between one and five birds seen on 15 days between New Zealand and Japan, the high count was 15 individuals in northern New Zealand waters.

Japanese Murrelet ♦ *Synthliboramphus wumizusume* 15 seen on the penultimate day of the voyage between Miyake-jima and Nii-jima, Japan. Good views despite rough conditions, with some right next to the ship.

Kagu ♦ *Rhynochetos jubatus* 10 of these iconic birds seen at incredibly close range in Rivière Bleue on New Caledonia.

Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda* A high count of 50 seen near Norfolk Island, with one and two over a couple of days in southern Japanese waters.

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus* Seen on 12 days between New Caledonia and southern Japan, with a high count of seven at sea near Micronesia.

Little Penguin ♦ (L Blue P) *Eudyptula minor* (NL) One glimpsed from the ship as we approached Urupukapuka Island, New Zealand.

Wilson's Storm Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* One at sea in each of New Zealand and Papua New Guinea waters.

White-faced Storm Petrel *Pelagodroma marina* One at sea off the coast of New Zealand.

White-bellied Storm Petrel ♦ *Fregetta grallaria* One at sea south of New Caledonia.

New Zealand Storm Petrel ♦ *Fregetta maoriana* Five attracted to chum laid specially for this species off the coast of New Zealand.

Polynesian Storm Petrel ♦ *Nesofregetta fuliginosa* Two in New Caledonian and one in Vanuatu waters, with one Birdquest member seeing this species from his cabin!

Laysan Albatross ♦ *Phoebastria immutabilis* A single bird in Japanese waters.

Black-footed Albatross ♦ *Phoebastria nigripes* Seen over four days in Japanese waters with 200 seen around Torishima.

Short-tailed Albatross ♦ *Phoebastria albatrus* This sought after species was seen on two days in Japanese waters, including brilliant views of around 250 birds around the breeding island of Torishima.

Antipodean Albatross ♦ (Gibson's A) *Diomedea [antipodensis] gibsoni* One briefly followed the ship in northern New Zealand waters.

Shy Albatross ♦ (White-capped A) *Thalassarche [cauta] steadi* One and two seen on two respective days off the coast of New Zealand.

Matsudaira's Storm Petrel ♦ *Hydrobates matsudairae* Seen on six days between the North Mariana Islands and Japan, with multiple following the ship for extended periods and 100 seen on one day in the North Marianas.

Leach's Storm Petrel *Hydrobates leucorhous* Single birds seen on four separate days at sea in Micronesian and Japanese waters.

Band-rumped Storm Petrel ♦ *Hydrobates castro* A total of four birds over three days in Vanuatu waters. Potentially an undescribed form.

Tristram's Storm Petrel ♦ *Hydrobates tristrami* Between one and three birds seen on four different days in Japanese waters.

Fairy Prion ♦ *Pachyptila turtur* Three individuals on two days off the coast of New Zealand.

Grey-faced Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma gouldi* Up to 50 seen on three days in New Zealand waters, including some birds with aberrant plumage which caused momentary confusion.

Providence Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma solandri* Between one and five birds seen over five days between Norfolk Island and the southern Solomon Islands, including some very close to the ship.

Kermadec Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma neglecta* Seen on two separate days in New Zealand waters, plus one in Japanese waters.

White-necked Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma cervicalis* Seen on three days between New Zealand and Norfolk Island, with a high count of 10 in northern New Zealand waters.

Black-winged Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma nigripennis* Seen on five days between New Zealand and New Caledonia, with 60 seen on one day near Norfolk Island.

Bonin Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma hypoleuca* Seen on four days in the North Mariana Islands and Japan, with 75 seen on one day in southern Japanese waters.

Gould's Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma leucoptera* Five on day and 80 on another in New Caledonian waters.

Collared Petrel ♦ (Magnificent P) *Pterodroma [brevipes] magnificens* Close views of up to 10 birds over two days in New Caledonian and Vanuatu waters.

Cook's Petrel ♦ *Pterodroma cooki* 20 seen over two days in New Zealand waters, including in the hand views of one bird that has landed on the ship. Two seen in New Caledonian waters.

Tahiti Petrel ♦ *Pseudobulweria rostrata* Seen on six days between New Caledonia and Micronesia, including close views of a bird on the water and 15 seen on day in New Caledonian waters.

Beck's Petrel ♦ *Pseudobulweria becki* At least five of this sought after species seen one evening in Papua New Guinea waters.

Black Petrel ♦ (Parkinson's B P) *Procellaria parkinsoni* Up to 40 seen on three days in New Zealand waters, following the ship for long periods.

Streaked Shearwater ♦ *Calonectris leucomelas* Five seen near the Solomon Islands, then over 10,000 in Japanese waters in the last few days of the tour.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna pacifica* Consistently the most common bird of the trip, with several thousand seen over 22 separate days from New Zealand to Japan.

Buller's Shearwater ♦ *Ardenna bulleri* Over 100 seen across three days in New Zealand waters.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea* A single bird seen in New Zealand waters.

Short-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna tenuirostris* Five seen in the Solomon Islands, plus 35 over several days in Japanese waters.

Flesh-footed Shearwater *Ardenna carneipes* 30 across two days in New Zealand waters and one in Japanese waters.

Bryan's Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus bryani* (NL) Several people were lucky enough to spot one individual amongst hundreds of other shearwaters off the coast of Chichi-jima.

Fluttering Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus gavia* 14 over two days in New Zealand waters.

Tropical Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus bailloni* 26 individuals on four days, spread between New Caledonia and Micronesia. At least two species of “Tropical Shearwater” seen, possibly what are currently described by some authorities as “Melanesian” and “Micronesian” shearwaters.

Bannerman’s Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus bannermani* Seen on two days in Japanese waters with around 16 individuals sighted.

Heinroth’s Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus heinrothi* Eight of these poorly known shearwaters seen over three days in the Solomon Islands.

Common Diving Petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix* 26 seen over two days in New Zealand waters.

Bulwer’s Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* Between one and six seen on five different days in Micronesia and the North Mariana Islands.

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor* Seen on nine days, spread from Norfolk Island to Micronesia, with a high count of 10 near New Caledonia.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* Seen on eight days, spread from New Caledonia to the Solomon Islands, with a high count of 67 near Ranongga in the Solomon Islands.

Australasian Gannet *Morus serrator* 75 seen over two days in New Zealand waters.

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra* Over 200 seen around Norfolk Island, 11 in North Mariana and Japanese waters.

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* Eight individuals spread over several days between New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands, 85 between Micronesia and Japan. At times they put on a brilliant show chasing flying fish flushed by the ship.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* Sightings spread over 14 days from Norfolk Island to Japan, with a high count of 50 in southern Japanese waters.

Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos* One on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand and four at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Pelagic Cormorant *Urile pelagicus* One in Tokyo Bay near Yokohama on the final morning.

Australian Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius* 26 seen on Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* (NL) A single bird seen on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Japanese Cormorant ♦ *Phalacrocorax capillatus* At least one bird seen in Tokyo Bay on approach to Yokohama, possibly as many as five but very difficult to separate from the great cormorants also present.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* Four birds at Rivière Bleu in New Caledonia and around 30 near Yokohama.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* A single bird that spent the morning roosting and flying around the ship, at sea in Japanese waters.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata* A single bird on Tetepare in the Solomon Islands.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* One individual that spent half a day roosting on and flying around the ship, at sea in Japanese waters.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Single individual at the port in Yokohama.

Great Egret (Eastern G E) *Ardea [alba] modesta* One bird seen on Torishima and another in Tokyo Bay near Yokohama.

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae* Single birds on Norfolk Island, at Rivière Bleu and near Nouméa on New Caledonia.

Pacific Reef Heron (P/Eastern R Egret) *Egretta sacra* Two and then one on the same rock stack on consecutive days near Nouméa on New Caledonia, three on Makira (both colour morphs) and one at extremely close range on Ranongga in the Solomon Islands.

Osprey (Eastern O) *Pandion [haliaetus] cristatus* Four and eight were seen approaching and leaving New Caledonia, one on Makira in the Solomon Islands and one near Yokohama on the final day.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata* Great views of three displaying birds on Maikra and three more on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Variable Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster* One at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal and another on Ranongga, in the Solomon Islands.

Pied Goshawk ♦ *Accipiter albogularis* A single dark morph bird seen soaring at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

White-bellied Goshawk ♦ (New Caledonia G) *Accipiter haplochrous* Two seen at Mount Koghi, New Caledonia, one perched on wires during the drive to the site and the other flew briefly overhead.

Black Kite (Black-eared K) *Milvus [migrans] lineatus* Eight around Tokyo Bay during the approach to Yokohama.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus* Three at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Multiple pairs seen in the Solomon Islands on Makira, Guadalcanal, Tetepare and Rendova.

Sanford's Sea Eagle ♦ (Solomon S E) *Haliaeetus sanfordi* We had good views of this impressive raptor on the Solomons with one on Guadalcanal, one on Tetepare, three over two days on Kolombangara and one on Ranongga.

Eastern Buzzard *Buteo japonicus* Two circling around Torishima in Japan.

Blyth's Hornbill *Rhyticeros plicatus* Multiple sightings of these magnificent birds on Guadalcanal, Tetepare, Rendova, Kolombangara and Ranongga in the Solomon Islands, with a high count of five at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal.

Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* Seen on three different islands in the Solomons, with one on Makira, three on Guadalcanal and one on Kolombangara.

Ultramarine Kingfisher ♦ *Todiramphus leucopygius* Good views of three of these attractive kingfishers at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.

Melanesian Kingfisher ♦ *Todiramphus tristrami* (NL) Several heard with a few getting looks on Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Pacific Kingfisher ♦ *Todiramphus sacer* Two seen on Nendo and four on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Beach Kingfisher *Todiramphus saurophagus* Pairs seen on Tetepare and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus* Several seen on Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand, on Norfolk Island and heard on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (NL) Seen by some in the mangroves on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

New Georgian Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx collectoris* (NL) One Birdquest member was lucky enough to catch a glimpse of this species flying across a forest track on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Nankeen Kestrel (Australian K) *Falco cenchroides* A single bird seen on Norfolk Island.

Oriental Hobby *Falco severus* Seen by one Birdquest member, harassing a Sanford's Sea Eagle on Guadalcanal.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* One seen near Nii-jima in Japan, where it briefly chased a Short-tailed Albatross!!

New Zealand Kaka ♦ *Nestor meridionalis* At least three seen on Great Barrier Island in New Zealand.

Solomons Cockatoo ♦ *Cacatua ducorpsii* Commonly seen in the Solomon Islands, with up to 10 seen on Guadalcanal, Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara.

Finsch's Pygmy Parrot ♦ *Micrositta finschii* At least one heard at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal before great views of four birds together Imburano Lodge on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus* Multiple sightings on each of Makira, Guadalcanal and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Song Parrot ♦ (Singing P) *Geoffroyus heteroclitus* Seen on three different island in the Solomons with four at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal, three on Tetepare and one at Imburano Lodge on Kolombangara.

Crimson Rosella (introduced) *Platycercus elegans* Four on Norfolk Island.

Eastern Rosella (introduced) *Platycercus eximius* One heard on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Horned Parakeet ♦ *Eunymphicus cornutus* As many as 10 seen at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

New Caledonian Parakeet ♦ *Cyanoramphus saisseti* Two at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Norfolk Parakeet ♦ *Cyanoramphus cookie* (NL) Two heard on Norfolk Island with some people managing to see one.

Red-crowned Parakeet ♦ *Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae* Five seen on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Duchess Lorikeet ♦ *Chamosynoides margarethae* A single bird seen by some on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands, only moments before returning to the ship!

Yellow-bibbed Lory ♦ *Lorius chlorocercus* Six on Makira and five at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Cardinal Lory ♦ *Pseudeos cardinalis* Commonly seen in the Solomon with sightings of many birds on Guadalcanal, Tetepare, Rendova and Ranongga.

Coconut Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus* This common lorikeet was seen on Nendo, Makira, Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Barred Honeyeater ♦ *Glycifohia undulata* Seen on New Caledonia at Mount Koghi and Rivière Bleu, with 10 at the former and two at the latter.

Tui ♦ *Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae* Common on both Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand.

New Caledonian Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela caledonica* Four or five seen at both Mount Koghi and Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Cardinal Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela cardinalis* Seen in the Solomon Islands where it was abundant on Nendo with a few also on Makira.

Crimson-rumped Myzomela ♦ (Yellow-rumped Myzomela) *Myzomela eichhorni* Seen well on Tetepare and at Imburano Lodge on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Black-headed Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela melanocephala* Four seen at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Sooty Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela tristrami* This attractive Myzomela was commonly see on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

New Caledonian Friarbird ♦ *Philemon diemenensis* Two at Mount Koghi and four at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Grey-eared Honeyeater ♦ *Lichmera incana* Common on New Caledonia, with 10 at Mount Koghi and one or two at Rivière Bleu. One was even seen from the cruise ship at the Nouméa cruise ship terminal.

Makira Honeyeater ♦ *Meliarchus sclateri* Five of these strange and conspicuous honeyeaters were seen on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Crow Honeyeater ♦ *Gymnomyza aubryana* One of these large and highly Endangered honeyeaters was seen well at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Grey Gerygone ♦ *Gerygone igata* A few were seen on both Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand.

Norfolk Gerygone ♦ *Gerygone modesta* Common on Norfolk Island with at least eight seen.

Fan-tailed Gerygone ♦ *Gerygone flavolateralis* Common on New Caledonia with six at Mount Koghi and eight at Rivière Bleu.

North Island Saddleback ♦ *Philesturnus rufusater* Six seen at very close range on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus* Four at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Australian Magpie (introduced) *Gymnorhina tibicen* One on Great Barrier Island in New Zealand.

Barred Cuckooshrike (Yellow-eyed C-S) *Coracina lineata* Relatively common on Kolombangara with nine seen over two days.

North Melanesian Cuckooshrike ♦ *Coracina welchmani* (NL) One seen by a lucky few on Kolombangara.

South Melanesian Cuckooshrike ♦ *Coracina caledonica* One seen briefly but well at both Mount Koghi and Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis* 10 seen over three days in the Solomons on Guadalcanal, Tetepare and Kolombangara.

New Caledonian Cuckooshrike ♦ *Edolisoma anale* Two seen at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Makira Cicadabird ♦ *Edolisoma salomonis* Heard only on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Solomons Cuckooshrike ♦ *Edolisoma holopolium* Three seen over two days on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Grey-capped Cicadabird *Edolisoma remotum* Ones and twos seen on Tetepare and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Polynesian Triller *Lalage maculosa* Two adults feeding an immature on Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Long-tailed Triller ♦ *Lalage leucopyga* Two at Mount Koghi on New Caledonia and three on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Whitehead ♦ *Mohoua albicilla* Nine on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Australian Golden Whistler (Norfolk Island W) *Pachycephala [pectoralis] xanthoprocta* Common on Norfolk Island with nine seen.

Oriole Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala orioloides* Heard only on several islands in the Solomons, but two seen at Imburano Lodge on Kolombangara.

New Caledonian Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala caledonica* Relatively common on New Caledonia with seven at Mount Koghi and four at Rivière Bleu.

Timotu Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala vanikorensis* Five seen on Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris* Three seen over the two days on New Caledonia.

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys* Common in the Solomon Islands with sightings on Makira, Guadalcanal, Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara.

Cockerell's Fantail ♦ *Rhipidura cockerelli* Between one and three seen on each of Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara.

Grey Fantail *Rhipidura albiscapa* Four on Norfolk Island and six over two days on New Caledonia.

New Zealand Fantail ♦ *Rhipidura fuliginosa* Common on Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand.

Streaked Fantail ♦ *Rhipidura verreauxi* Seen at both Mount Koghi and Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia, with two birds at both sites.

Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons* Three on New Caledonia and two on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands, covering two very distinct subspecies.

Southern Shrikebill ♦ *Clytorhynchus pachycephaloides* Great views of two birds at Mount Koghi and another seen at Rivière Bleu in New Caledonia.

Solomon's Monarch ♦ *Symposiachrus barbatus* A very shy individual seen several times at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Kolombangara Monarch ♦ *Symposiachrus browni* Six seen over the two days on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Chestnut-bellied Monarch ♦ *Monarcha castaneiventris* Two on Makira and two at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

White-capped Monarch ♦ *Monarcha richardsii* Great views of this particularly striking monarch on Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands, with 12 seen over the two days on Kolombangara.

Steel-blue Flycatcher ♦ *Myiagra ferrocyanea* Between one and four seen on each of Guadalcanal, Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Melanesian Flycatcher ♦ (New Caledonian F) *Myiagra caledonica* Three at Mount Koghi and four at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

New Caledonian Crow ♦ *Corvus moneduloides* Another iconic New Caledonian species which we got good views of, with five at Mount Koghi including one doing its famous tool-using routine.

White-billed Crow ♦ (Gaudalcanal C) *Corvus woodfordi* Three seen at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Carrion Crow ♦ (Oriental C) *Corvus [corone] orientalis* One at the dock in Yokohama.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos* One flying over Tokyo Bay as we approached Yokohama.

Yellow-bellied Flyrobin ♦ *Cryptomicroeca flaviventris* One at Mount Koghi and 10 at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Norfolk Robin ♦ *Petroica multicolor* Common on Norfolk Island with eight seen.

Tomtit ♦ *Petroica macrocephala* Four on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

North Island Robin ♦ *Petroica longipes* One on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Eurasian Skylark (introduced) *Alauda arvensis* One on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Seen on every day on land in the Solomon Islands, from Nendo to Kolombangara.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena* Two on Great Barrier Island and two on Urupukapuka Island in New Zealand.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* One roosting on the ship at sea in Japanese waters, the other in Tokyo Bay near Yokohama.

New Caledonian Thicketbird ♦ *Cincloramphus mariae* Great views of this elusive and sought after bird at Mount Koghi on New Caledonia.

Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis* Commonly seen on Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands in New Zealand, six on Norfolk Island and two on New Caledonia.

Santa Cruz White-eye ♦ *Zosterops sanctaerucis* Nine on Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Sanford's White-eye ♦ *Zosterops lacertosus* Close views of two of these unusual white-eyes on Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Ranongga White-eye ♦ *Zosterops splendidus* Close views on Ranongga in the Solomon Islands.

Dark-eyed White-eye ♦ *Zosterops tetiparius* Six seen on Tetepare, one on Rendova in the Solomon Islands.

Solomon's White-eye ♦ *Zosterops kulambangrae* Around 15 seen over two days on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Slender-billed White-eye ♦ *Zosterops tenuirostris* Good views of at least two on Norfolk Island.

Green-backed White-eye ♦ *Zosterops xanthochroa* Commonly seen on New Caledonia, with 13 at Mount Koghi and 11 at Rivière Bleu.

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica* Relatively common in the Solomon Islands with sightings on Makira, Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara.

Singing Starling *Aplonis cantoroides* Seen on Makria, Guadalcanal, Tetepare and Rendova in the Solomon Islands, with a high count of 20 on Tetepare.

Brown-winged Starling ♦ *Aplonis grandis* 30 at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal and 2 on Tetepare in the Solomon Islands.

Makira Starling ♦ (**San Christobal S**) *Aplonis dichroa* Two seen on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Striated Starling ♦ *Aplonis striata* 10 at Mount Koghi on New Caledonia.

Long-tailed Myna ♦ *Mino kreffti* Between one and three seen on each of Guadalcanal, Tetepare, Rendova and Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Common Myna (introduced) *Acridotheres tristis*

Common Starling (introduced) *Sturnus vulgaris*

Song Thrush (introduced) *Turdus philomelos*

Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus* A single bird which briefly flew around the ship at sea in Japanese waters.

Common Blackbird (introduced) *Turdus merula*

Midget Flowerpecker ♦ *Dicaeum aeneum* Great views of this tiny bird at Mount Austin, on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Mottled Flowerpecker ♦ *Dicaeum tristrami* Four seen on Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis* Singles or pairs on multiple islands in the Solomons.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* A single bird at the port of Yokohama.

House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus*

Red-throated Parrotfinch ♦ *Erythrura psittacea* Three at Mount Koghi and one at Rivière Bleu on New Caledonia.

Common Chaffinch (introduced) *Fringilla coelebs*

European Goldfinch (introduced) *Carduelis carduelis*

Yellowhammer (introduced) *Emberiza citrinella*

MAMMALS

Bryde's Whale *Balaenoptera brydei* A mother and calf seen travelling close across the bow a day north of the Solomon Islands.

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* Many seen in Japanese waters, including some breaching and one even following the ship.

Pygmy Sperm Whale *Kogia breviceps* Two seen logging near Makira in the Solomon Islands.

Sperm Whale *Physeter macrocephalus* One seen a day south of the Solomon Islands.

Blainville's Beaked Whale *Mesoplodon densirostris* Five seen a day south of the Solomon Islands.

Short-beaked Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis* 50+ seen in New Zealand waters.

Short-finned Pilot Whale *Globicephala macrorhynchus* 20 seen near Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Fraser's Dolphin *Lagenodelphis hosei* 15 seen a day north of New Caledonia.

False Killer Whale *Pseudorca crassidens* Two pods of about 10 seen on separate days near the Micronesia and in Japanese waters.

Pantropical Spotted Dolphin *Stenella attenuate* 20 seen near the North Marianas.

Spinner Dolphin *Stenella longirostris* A pod of at least 40 seen a day north of the Solomon Islands.

Indo-pacific Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops aduncus* 20 seen close in a harbour at Kolombangara and eight a day north of the Solomon Islands.

Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncates* At least one seen near Norfolk Island.

Temotu Flying Fox ♦ *Pteropus nitendiensis* At least 20 seen on Nendo in the Solomon Islands.

Solomons Flying Fox *Pteropus rayneri* 10 seen on Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands.

Pacific Flying Fox *Pteropus tonganus* One seen on New Caledonia.