

CLASSIC PAPUA NEW GUINEA TOUR REPORT 2024

2 - 20 / 24 July 2024

by Dáni Balla

New Guinea being the second largest island on Earth with a great coverage of pristine primary forest and known from several natural history programmes on TV especially David Attenborough's great interpretation is one of the most sought-after birding locations for most birders. Having the extraordinary Bird-of-paradise is just the icing on the cake when it comes to the selection of birds found on the island. Although having such diversity does not mean that one will see a lot as most birders – not excluding us – have to work extremely hard to get the birds we are after. Generally, birds are shy and are just lost in the vast habitat and finding them takes time and patience. In Papua New Guinea struggles could be easily topped with the common and easily arising logistic issues, making a carefully built plan just collapse in a second. This year we were lucky as these logistical nuisances were just slightly reaching us, thus we enjoyed our time out in the field and not back in the hotels or at airports scratching our heads.

It is hard to select the most special moment from a three weeks tour full of great sightings but highlights this year definitely included displaying Raggiana Bird-of-paradise, Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher, Barred Owllet-nightjar, Goldenface, Pygmy Drongo, Papuan Scrub Robin and Gurney's Eagle in Varirata National Park. Arriving at Tabubil we saw Salvadori's Teal, Splendid Astrapia, Queen Carola's Parotia, Golden Cuckooshrike, the seldom known Sooty Shrikethrush and many others in the region before descending down to Kiunga from where we took the boat onto the mighty Elevala River.

During our stay at the Elevala River and around Kiunga we enjoyed displaying Red Bird-of-paradise, Great Bird-of-paradise a Flame Bowerbird at his bower, Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise, the localized Starry Owllet-nightjar and Wallace's Owllet-nightjar, Blue Jewel-babbler, Common Paradise Kingfisher, Papuan Pitta, a great set of Pigeons and Fruit Doves including the huge Sclater's Crowned Pigeon, Large Fig Parrot, Yellow-eyed Starling, skulking and rare Campbell's Fairywren, Emperor Fairywren and two mega finds included New Guinea Flightless Rail and Bare-eyed Rails.

In the highlands even more spectacles were found including many BoPs such as Blue Bird-of-Paradise, Ribbon-tailed and Princess Stephanie's Astrapia, Black and Brown Sickbill, Loria's and Crested Satinbird, MacGregor's and Yellow-breasted Bowerbird, Mountain and Feline Owllet-nightjars, Greater Sooty Owl, Forbes's Forest Rail, Tit and Eastern Crested Berrypeckers, Papuan and Black Sittellas, Lesser Melampitta and both Mottled Berryhunter, Blue-capped Ifrit and Wattled Ploughbill which are representing their own monotypic families.

Our extension to New Britain was as successful as the main tour seeing all available endemics around the Kimbe including a roosting Golden Masked Owl, New Britain Boobook, Pink-legged Rail, Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon, Knob-billed Fruit Dove, White-mantled Kingfisher, Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher, New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher, Purple-bellied Lory, Blue-eyed Cockatoo, Slater's, Ashy and Black-bellied Myzomela, Black-tailed Monarch and Velvet Flycatcher. Our experience on the island was crowned with such unexpected birds as a Pied Cuckoo-Dove, a pair of White-backed Woodswallow and the extremely rare New Britain Goshawk.

The tour kicked off meeting at Port Moresby from where we headed to the close-by Varirata National Park lying on the close mountainous range. Our first spot birding we found a singing White-bellied Whistler as start followed by Papuan Eclectus, Coconut Lorikeets, Papuan Black Myzomela and Lemon-bellied Flyrobin. Although it felt like slow birding, we were nicely collecting most of the birds around finding Purple-tailed and Pinon's Imperial Pigeons, a passing Metallic Pigeon above us, a nice Rufous-bellied Kookaburra behaving well. Honeyeaters were far from common but we managed to find a few Mimic and two Elegant Honeyeaters. Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher was causing some headache but two days were enough to find one sitting still long enough for everyone to get on the bird. A visit to the highest point was rewarding us with an extremely close Gurney's Eagle which we flushed from the ground and just perched above us on a tree. On the trails we found only one flock during our time in the national park but that one had Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Chestnut-bellied Fantail and a big surprise party of three Goldenface. In the same area we found Black Berrypecker and Wompoo Fruit Dove the previous day. Taking the trail running along a stream we found a responsive pair of Drongo Fantail, had a Pygmy Eagle and Pacific Baza above the forest and further down a White-faced Robin made us wait to turn up again when we found a roosting Barred Owllet-nightjar. However, the Robin was not kind to us, we were lucky to find one later which showed well for everyone.

The highlight of our stay in Varirata was definitely the show put on by the Raggiana Bird-of-paradise. We spent a late afternoon and an early morning enjoying them from a close distance.

We did a short nightwalk in the park finding a roosting Growling Riflebird – which eluded us during the day, a roosting Papuan Scrub Robin and Green-backed Honeyeater while Feather-tailed Possums and Eastern Common Cuscus were the mammalian finds.

Our planned last morning was spent paying a rapid visit to the Silver-eared Honeyeater and a walk in the Pacific Adventist University's ground finding some more widespread but special birds such as Comb-crested Jacana, Australian White Ibis, Nankeen Night Heron, Pied Heron, Blue-winged Kookaburra and more Coconut Lorikeets. Some of the specialties we also saw included Black-backed Butcherbird, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird and a few Rufous-banded Honeyeaters which were all seen unusually well in New Guinea standards.

The local airline tricked us into one more afternoon visit to Varirata, as our flight was canceled to Tabubil in the morning and we were moved onto the next day's one, making us lose a day in the Tabubil area. However, the short visit paid off as we found White-throated Honeyeaters and had fabulous views of Pink-spotted Fruit Dove and Black-capped Lory.

A day later than planned we landed on the airstrip on Kiunga from where we were transferred to Tabubil 'rapidly'. On the few hours long journey, no serious birding was done just before arriving at Tabubil, as we made our first attempt to find Salvadori's Teal on the near-by river. Although the Teals were not showing, we had nice views of Torrent Flyrobin, a couple of Dusky-cheeked Fig

Parrots before catching the call of a Shovel-billed Kookaburra. After some luring a flush was seen in the canopy and the bird was sitting in the dense vegetation visible in the scope and lit with the torch but even this way, putting together the pieces was challenging. The last bird for the day was a cooperative Papuan Boobook seen just before dinner.

The upcoming few days were spent around Tabubil especially on the so-called Henry's Road. We were not treated with nice weather, but were drenched a few times and enjoyed times when rain was not heavy but only drizzling and especially moments when there was no rain at all.

Some key birds were nicely seen such as Wallace's Fairy Wren, a few Crinkle-collared Manucodes feeding on a fruiting tree sometimes joined by a female Magnificent Bird-of-paradise, Spangled Drongo and Yellow-faced Mynas. We had a clear view of a Magnificent Riflebird passing by, while further down the road Spot-winged Monarch was seen. White-winged Robin was hard but finally one came close and Rusty Mouse-warbler was seen clearly on the same spot in the meantime while a Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler calling under our feet was invisible for most of us. Obscure Berrypecker was only briefly seen a few times, better heard, an adult Grey-headed Goshawk perched and enabling scope views was a treat after the Berrypecker. Southern Variable Pitohui was seen in the vegetation and a singing Piping Bellbird was called in as well. While trying to lure in a close calling Pheasant Pigeon (which was not coming out) Julien saw a Papuan Eagle passing by, unfortunately he was just standing behind us, thus we were not realizing his gestures. A distant calling party of Golden Cuckooshrikes was heard once and soon they were performing close to us while the other 'golden bird' the Golden Monarch only showed for a short time for our group. Long-billed Honeyeater, Pygmy Longbill both were just seen passing by.

Visiting the stake out of the Salvadori's Teal again, we were patiently waiting and seeing such great stuff like Torrent Lark and passing Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot before a Teal pair was showing well in the scopes.

A higher section of road had a fruiting tree where we had amazing views of the sought-after Queen Carola's Parotia, several females and at least two males coming onto the tree also joined by three female/immature Magnificent Bird-of-paradise. A surprise Goldenface was spotted again in the canopy shared with Black-bellied Cuckooshrike, Black-shouldered Cicadabird, Island Leaf Warbler while lower down Black-winged Monarchs and the first Sclater's Whistlers were seen. A Blue-collared Parrot pair crossing above us was a real gift from this spot.

We spent a whole morning and a bit more to bird on the Telefomin road which goes up the Hindenburg Wall. We were treated with nice weather up here and birding in the surrounding magnificent forest started with a Birdquest lifer Sooty Shrikethrush which was responding to our tape and came in soon but never staying still in the open for too long, thus it took some time while everyone got views of the bird. After a good start we kept going and saw several Grey-streaked Honeyeaters, a Rufous-backed Honeyeater, a Black-breasted Boatbill, Sclater's Whistlers, Mountain Peltops, Canary Flyrobin and even two Dusky Lories crossing above us. Calling King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise was calling at a few spots but the male was never spotted here, although several females were showing nicely. Reaching the furthest point, we got on the road we heard a call of Splendid Astrapia and soon located the bird. While spending some time around an immature male was seen well and a nice adult male was crossing in the canopy as well. A Brown Sicklebill was spotted skulking in the canopy before we turned around and started walking back. Fan-tailed Berrypeckers and a few Tit Berrypeckers were seen moving around while Mountain Swiftlets were actively feeding in the air. The first Red-collared Myzomelas and Papuan Island Thrush of the tour

were also seen here, once we even had a flock of Red-breasted Pygmy Parrots flying around us. One of the last birds we had views of here was a scoped Lorentz's Whistler.

We had short stops while driving down and immediately at our first one we luckily found a tree with good activity flushing a Loria's Satinbird when stepping out of the cars. Two Black-throated Honeyeaters and a few noisy Spotted Berrypeckers were also seen. When a plain looking bird was spotted in a close canopy we checked with scope and realized it was a New Guinea Thornbill. A Brown Falcon flying away and landing in the distance also tricked us and took time to get it.

One more stop further down – while treated with rain again – Ornate Melidectes, Queen Carola's Parotia and a pair of Josephine's Lorikeets were seen very well and a Black Sicklebill was surprisingly heard.

From Tabubil we drove down to Kiunga the same way we came up and stoppen at a patch of forest before reaching the town for a late afternoon birding seeing Dwarf Koel, Streak-headed and Puff-backed Honeyeater, Yellow-streaked Lory, Pink-spotted Fruit Dove, Pinon's Imperial Pigeon and Papuan Spinetails.

The next day early morning we got on a boat and started our journey on the Fly River to turn onto the meandering parts of the Elevala River where we spent two nights at the remote Kwatu 'lodge'.

Cruising with the boat we immediately started picking up such important birds for us as Glossy-mantled and Trumpet Manucode, Great Cuckoo-Dove as it crossed in front of the boat, Pinon's and Collared Imperial Pigeons, Orange-bellied and Pink-spotted Fruit Doves, a few Blyth's Hornbills and a great selection of Parrots including the huge Palm Cockatoo, Papuan Eclectus, dozens of Red-cheeked Parrots, Black-capped Lories, Yellow-streaked Lories and both Double-eyed and Large Fig Parrots, several Channel-billed Cuckoos and our first Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise was seen crossing above the river as well.

A stop at a forest patch where our excellent local team prepared a great hide was rewarding us with a male Flame Bowerbird coming down to his bower. The list of quality birds was not terminated with the Bowerbird here as Campbell's Fairywren – a rarely seen and much less known species – was seen here, Hook-billed Kingfisher was nicely observed and we spent time to lure Blue Jewel-babbler into views here. This was the spot where we connected with the only Pesquet's (or Vulturine) Parrots, but unfortunately, they remained heard-only as they flew away before we could find them.

Nightbirding in the area has the same importance as daytime one. We didn't miss any opportunity (evenings and also mornings) to go out and try to find the key specialties. We had to work hard and try not just once but finally the very localized Starry Owlet-nightjar was seen well so was his cousin the Wallace's Owlet-nightjar and roosting Black-billed Brushturkeys. A Papuan Nightjar hunting above the water once was a nice surprise and we found the huge Sclater's Crowned Pigeons roosting. Both Frogmouth species were seen here, the Papuan found from the boat and Marbled on a trail close to our lodge. The most goosebumps though were caused by New Guinea Flightless Rail as we spotted it roosting on a dry stick emerging from the mud in one of the corners of the river showing unbelievably well in the torch light.

One morning we were heading to the display tree of Red Bird-of-paradise who were testing our patience but finally they came in and entertained us with an excellent show. Not too far from this spot we tried to lure in Eastern Hooded and Papuan Pitta but only the former was showing for a

split second in the open. Walking back to the boat we tried another calling Papuan Pitta and this time we were lucky as the bird came out to a completely open area and even hopped up on a log for a better view.

During daytime various patches of forest were checked either on foot or from the boat and we found Common Paradise Kingfisher, Ivory-billed Coucal, Zoe's Imperial Pigeon, Papuan Babbler, Sahul Cicadabird, Grey-crowned, Boyer's and Golden Cuckooshrikes, the tricky White-bellied Pitohui, White-bellied and Sooty Thicket Fantails, Arafura Shrikethrush, Hooded Monarch, Golden Myna and Yellow-bellied Longbill. Some birds were of course harder to see, so was Black-sided Robin this year, which took more time than usual to spot. The other morning here we tried our luck at a known display pole of the Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise but the bird was only hopping onto his pole twice for two second and disappeared after, fortunately our local man found it perched in the canopy and managed to find a window through which we had good scope views.

Our ride out, back to Kiunga was still giving us a few new species such as the tiny Dwarf Fruit Dove, a flying Fairy Lorikeet, the skulking Emperor Fairywren and a responsive Meyer's Friarbird although it was not landing but seen well in flight from the boat.

At night we paid a visit to the forest patch close to Kiunga and with the last few electrons left in our batteries we found a roosting Bare-eyed Rail pair near the trail.

Early next morning we visited the forest again and still had the Bare-eyed Rails on the same spot we left them, thus the ones missing out at night could feel more than lucky at the start of the day. We walked further in to find the tree where the Greater Bird-of-paradise have their lek. Unfortunately, only one nice adult male was left alive here, but a few immatures were eagerly learning the tricks of dance around and a good number of females were coming to check the morning show. Some birding on the way back to our bus we finally saw a Yellow-billed Kingfisher, lured in a pair of Obscure Honeyeaters and had scope views of a Beautiful Fruit Dove.

We had a flight from Kiunga to Mount Hagen with only a minor delay enabling us to observe Australian Pratincoles on Kiunga airstrip carefully. From Mt. Hagen airport we were transferred to the luxurious Rondon Ridge Lodge for two nights stay and where we initiated birding in the afternoon.

Our warm-up birding at Rondon took us around the garden where we found Ornate Melidectes, Large Scrubwren, Black Fantail, Papuan White-eyes and had the first proper views of Greater Lophorina a.k.a. Superb BoP.

The next morning, we were ready to track up to the top of Rondon Ridge – as it turned out – not in the best weather possible. Although the morning started with nice clear weather the clouds soon took over the sky and we were walking, sometimes in drizzling, sometimes in pouring rain.

Rain was not blocking us finding our birds though. Before reaching the denser forest, we found a calling Mottled Berryhunter and had some views of the birds moving around. Further up we luckily bumped into a party of three Short-tailed Paradigallas – a bird far from guaranteed here. MacGregor's Bowerbird was seen a few times, two Black-breasted Boatbills and Dimorphic Fantails were around, a singing Black-throated Robin and a feeding Garnet Robin was also found here. Reaching the top we luckily found our main target the Black Sicklebill with its extreme long tail calling and moving in the canopy. Princess Stephanie's Astrapias were moving around, Yellow-browed Melidectes seen well and a singing King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise was keeping us alert,

but still no view of the male was possible, only for a split second when it left his spot. We found our first Blue-capped Ifrits at the top, but our views were easily improvable later. On the way walking down we tried to see the Garnet Robin better but the bird came close quietly and when we spotted it was already quickly moving away, from the same spot we spotted a Black Pitohui which vanished away soon, but came back and showed nicely to us.

We tracked down a calling Greater Lophorina to see him spreading his reflective shield in the canopy.

In the afternoon and the next morning, we spent time in the garden, especially around a fruiting tree where Blue Bird-of-paradise and White-bibbed Fruit Doves were rewarding our patience. In the early morning when walking back from a rather unsuccessful 'owling' session we managed to spot a calling Mountain Kingfisher.

After breakfast we had fantastic experience with a displaying Greater Lophorina on a bare tree and had flock of Yellow-billed Lorikeets landing on the top of the nearby bushes. A pair of Slaty-headed Longbills were also seen in the garden and White-shouldered Fairywren from the breakfast table – a real meal with a view. Our last birds in Rondon were a pair of Mountain Myzomela just when walking back to the rooms for packing.

From Rondon we had a transfer back to Mount Hagen and while waiting for our 'connecting' bus we saw Black-headed Whistler in the city before leaving to Kumul Lodge for three nights stay.

Arriving at Kumul Lodge we planned an easy afternoon and spent some time admiring the variety of birds coming to the famous feeder near the dining room. Such great species as Ribbon-tailed Astrapia, Brown Sicklebill, Belford's Melidectes, Papuan Island Thrush, Brehm's Tiger Parrot and Stella's Lorikeets were showing from a close distance here for everyone's joy. Walking around in the garden we found Large Scrubwren, Eastern Crested Satinbird, Tit Berrypecker, Eastern Crested Berrypecker, Crested Satinbird, Rufous-naped Bellbird, Regent Whistler, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Canary Flyrobin and White-winged Robin. Lesser Melampitta was seen by a few of us behind the garden from extremely close distance but in almost dark conditions – not enhancing the experience of a black bird, for the rest of us another bird was seen much better hopping across the entrance road of the lodge early morning the next day. For some of us Archbold's Bowerbird was also a nice addition to the 'garden list'. Taking a trail further into the forest the next day we had a male Crested Satinbird, Rufous-backed Honeyeater, Papuan Scrubwrens, Dimorphic Fantail and a fantastic male Wattled Ploughbill seen well.

We did not miss any chance to do some night birding and found Mountain Owlet-nightjar on our first try. Less satisfying Archbold's Nightjar and New Guinea Woodcock were not showing any sign despite all our efforts. Feline Owlet-nightjar turned out to be the hardest of its kind this year, but on our last night in Kumul we managed to track down two individuals at the end completing the Owlet-nightjar list.

Visits to the close Murmur pass where a nice patch of forest was finally rewarding us with great views of the incredible male King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise. A large fruiting tree was attracting Princess Stephanie's Astrapias, Brown Sicklebills, Loria's Satinbirds, Hooded Cuckooshrikes and many more. A singing Mottled Berryhunter was flying by to our playback a few times and Tit Berrypeckers were observed nicely. From the trail we found feeding female King of Saxony, Black-throated, Rufous-backed and Grey-streaked Honeyeaters and we managed to lure a Forbes's Forest Rail into view. Luckily the Forest Rail was flushed by villagers coming from the opposite

direction on the trail, thus those who missed the tiny window for the bird had a second chance as the bird flew in front of the group, turned around in the air, landed on the ground and ran away in a split second. Walking back, we had a pair of Plum-faced Lorikeet landing in front of us that provided excellent views.

An afternoon visit to last year's spot to find the Streaked Berrypecker, where the bird was only showing for a short time and not for everyone of us, the same as a crossing Meyer's Goshawk. Mountain Myzomela and a Torrent Lark was seen by everyone here.

We left Kumul and drove further north stopping in the Lai River Valley where a village has displaying Raggiana and Lesser Bird-of-paradise. The set-up this year was limiting even our slight chances of seeing Lesser BoP, but some of us luckily managed to find a calling bird through the tiny holes of the blind which just disappeared after some time. Hooded Mannikins and Papuan Grassbird were also seen here and a White-crowned Coucal was spotted at the car park.

A few curves back on the road we stopped to see Yellow-breasted Bowerbird and also found Grey Shrikethrush and a White-bellied Cuckooshrike on its nest.

In the afternoon we reached Komange Lodge where some initial exploration was quickly performed. We were thrilled to spot a group of Black Sittellas from our balcony and later Goldie's Lorikeets and Orange-billed Lorikeets seen from the same spot felt truly magical.

Birding here was mainly done from the road which is passing in front of the lodge. On some spots a great activity of birds was enjoyed and we found Blue-capped Ifrits easily and had incredible views. A Rufescent Imperial Pigeon was better seen here perching near-by, Rufous-throated and Fan-tailed Cuckoos were singing and finally seen, Brown-backed and Regent Whistlers seemed to be common around and Princess Stephanie's Astrapia, Brown Sicklebill and King of Saxony BoP were all enjoyed by our group. We had a female Wattled Ploughbill showing for a split second and our luck was completed with a passing flock of Papuan Sittellas which perched for a few seconds around us before disappearing as rapidly as they appeared. In a nice gulley we found Slaty Robins and heard a distant Papuan Treecreeper. Unfortunately, the lack of trails going into the forest were limiting us getting closer to several calling birds including the Treecreeper and e.g., Lesser Ground Robin as well.

Enjoying the birds staying around the road we found Tit and Eastern Crested Berrypeckers, Belford's Melidectes, Rufous-backed Honeyeater, Dimorphic Fantail and a flock of Hooded Mannikins. Our luck with hard to see birds was completed with an Olive Straightbill here, a strange looking honeyeater which was feeding near the road.

Our last night here and the last night of the main tour we went out for a walk and found a calling Feline Owlet-nightjar, but we struggled to make it perch nearby. While trying the Owlet-nightjar we heard a calling Greater Sooty Owl which made us change the subject. After two fly-by views we found the pair sitting on a bare tree providing great views. Leaving Komange we did a rapid birding in the early morning and added Orange-crowned Fairywren to our list before saying goodbye to the area.

A longer drive back to Mount Hagen where we thanked our great local team their hard work and started our ordinary wait for our flight. This time the flight was only delayed a few minutes, though we still had plenty of time to scan the airstrip resulting in an unexpected Papuan Harrier hunting around.

Arriving back to Port Moresby the main tour officially ended and voting for the Top5 bird of the main tour resulted in the following:

BIRDS OF THE MAIN TOUR

1st Flame Bowerbird

2nd New Guinea Flightless Rail

3rd King Bird-of-paradise

4th Starry Owllet-nightjar

5th Ragging Bird-of-paradise

Starting the New Britain extension of the tour we headed out early in the morning to the domestic terminal in Port Moresby to finally find out that our flight was canceled and we were moved onto the afternoon flight to Hoskins. Frustrating but still we lost a late morning and an afternoon birding session on New Britain only. Finally landing late in the afternoon we had a smooth transfer to the Walindy Plantation Resort and enjoyed a nice meal and some walk in the garden.

On New Britain we concentrated on four main areas. One being the Kulu River area, where some forest patches remained along the river between the plantations, we visited the site three times to finally clean up our list. At the various patches of the forest, we found White-necked and Violaceous Coucal, Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon, roosting New Britain Boobooks, Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher, Blue-eyed Cockatoo, Papuan Eclectus, Purple-bellied Lory, Long-tailed Myna and after many struggling, we managed to see Bismarck Pitta. The same spot where we had the Pitta, we found a singing Rusty Thicketbird but our efforts calling it further out remained unsuccessful and only a few leader-only glimpses were possible. At the river we spotted a Pink-legged Rail in a muddy curve which ran into the reeds immediately but appeared for a short time again. We were lucky enough to find another individual two days later feeding on the grassy track in front of us, though the views were less clear on this bird. Above the river we spotted several White-rumped Swiftlets feeding and had Nicobar Pigeons flying by.

Moving between the forest patches the road is running along cultivated areas and canals where we saw Buff-bellied Mannikins, Black Bittern, Stephan's Emerald Dove and flushed several Blue Quails and a Brown Quail. We visited a small wetland in the forest where the reedbed had Australian Reed Warblers for us.

The second day morning we took a speedboat out to the Kimbe bay to visit some offshore islands where we successfully found Island and Yellowish Imperial Pigeons, Nicobar Pigeons, Spot-breasted (MacKinlay's) Cuckoo-Dove, Sclater's Myzomela, Mangrove Golden Whistler, Island Monarch and Beach Kingfisher. On the way back we found Beach Stone-curlews on an islet.

Birding around our rooms at the resort we saw Red-banded Flowerpecker, Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot, Black and Ornate Sunbirds. We had a short drive once to a nearby orchard where a few more dense trees had a beautiful Golden Masked Owl roosting.

We paid an afternoon visit to the Kilu Ridge which is quite close to the resort but took us some time to actually climb up onto the ridge and reach the best areas. The site was not letting us down

as we found Black-bellied Myzomela, Red-knobbed Fruit Dove, Finsch's Imperial Pigeon, Melanesian Kingfisher and New Britain Friarbird on the way up where all the 'megs' were waiting for us. We first spotted an Ashy Myzomela, then a Song Parrot on a treetop, then a very rarely seen White-backed Woodswallow pair flying around and perching on a dry tree. We were thrilled by the latter when a responsive Pied Cuckoo-Dove just crossed the open area close-by. God knew the best bird was still ahead of us in the form of a New Britain Goshawk first perched on a further tree facing away then as birds were mobbing it, it took off and landed on a closer tree. We realized that the bird is huge, and way too big and massive to be a variable Goshawk which we saw before several times. The dark red eyes were also a clue but we were not sure about the ID as the immature plumage of the species is literally unknown.

On our last full day, we spent the morning in the Garu Forest. One of the first birds we found were Melanesian Megapodes flushed from the roadside, a few minutes later we even got one in the forest, perching in front of us for a few seconds. Birding along the road we tracked down both Bismarck Monarch and Velvet Flycatcher and had more great views of Purple-bellied Lorries. Walking a few meters in on a small sidetrack we had incredible views of New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher. It was time to move further back along the road to have the best view on the forest around us which soon rewarded us with a pair of soaring Black Honey Buzzards

A perched Finsch's Imperial Pigeon gave us improved views after the one we saw flying on Kilu Ridge.

After a highly successful visit on New Britain the Top5 voting for the extension resulted in the following:

BIRDS OF THE EXTENSION

1st Bismarck Pitta

2nd Golden Masked Owl

3rd Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher

4th Beach Stone-curlew

5th Black Honey Buzzard

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED

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).

The species names and taxonomy used in the bird list follows Gill, F., Donsker, D., & Rasmussen, P. (Eds). **2024. IOC World Bird List (v14.2)** (this was the current version when the checklist for the tour report was created).

Species only seen on the pre-tour extension to Way Titas are marked (E).

Where the subspecies seen is/are known, these are often given in parentheses at the end of the species comment.

BIRDS

Radjah Shelduck ◊ (**White-headed S**) *Radjah radjah* Seen easily in Port Moresby.

Salvadori's Teal ◊ *Salvadorina waigiensis* It took several attempts near Tabubil, finally rewarded with a pair scoped.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*

Black-billed Brushturkey ◊ (**Yellow-legged B**) *Talegalla fuscirostris* Heard many times and seen at night along the Elevala River.

Melanesian Megapode ◊ *Megapodius eremita* A few flushed and seen well on New Britain.

Brown Quail *Synoicus ypsilophorus*

King Quail *Synoicus chinensis*

Papuan Nightjar ◊ *Eurostopodus papuensis* One seen hunting above the river near Kwatu.

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*

Marbled Frogmouth ◊ *Podargus ocellatus* One seen close to Kwatu.

Papuan Frogmouth ◊ *Podargus papuensis* Great views from the boat along the Elevala River.

Feline Owlet-nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles insignis* After 5 attempts two showing well at Kumul.

Starry Owlet-nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles tatei* Took only two attempts to have great looks at one.

Wallace's Owlet-nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles wallacii* One distant bird torched from boat and another one close near Kwatu.

Mountain Owlet-nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles albertisi* Easily seen near Kumul.

Barred Owlet-nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles bennettii* Almost missed but finally magnificent views of one in Varirata NP.

Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea*

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*

Mountain Swiftlet ◊ *Aerodramus hirundinaceus*

White-rumped Swiftlet ◊ *Aerodramus spodiopygius* A few seen on New Britain.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis*

Papuan Spinetail ♦ (P Needletail) *Mearnsia novaeguineae* Several seen along the Elevala River.

White-necked Coucal ♦ *Centropus ateralbus* Endemic. Good views on New Britain.

Ivory-billed Coucal ♦ (Greater Black C) *Centropus menbeki* One seen at the Elevala River.

Violaceous Coucal ♦ *Centropus violaceus* Endemic. A few seen well on New Britain.

Black-billed Coucal ♦ (Lesser Black C) *Centropus bernsteini* Heard-only.

Pheasant Coucal *Centropus phasianinus*

Dwarf Koel ♦ *Microdynamis parva* One seen near Kiunga.

Pacific Koel *Eudynamis orientalis*

Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae*

Long-billed Cuckoo ♦ *Chrysococcyx megarhynchus* Heard-only.

Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo ♦ *Chrysococcyx ruficollis* After hearing a few one seen well at Komange.

Shining Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus* Seen twice on New Britain.

White-eared Bronze Cuckoo ♦ *Chrysococcyx meyerii* Heard-only.

Little Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus* Heard-only.

White-crowned Cuckoo ♦ (W-c Koel) *Cacomantis leucolophus* One bird in the Lai River Valley.

Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo ♦ *Cacomantis castaneiventris* Heard-only.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cacomantis flabelliformis*

Sahul Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus*

Rock Dove (introduced) (Feral Pigeon) *Columba [livia] domestica*

Metallic Pigeon (White-throated P) *Columba vitiensis* Only one seen at Varirata NP.

Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove ♦ *Macropygia amboinensis*

Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Dove ♦ (Black-billed C-D) *Macropygia nigrirostris*

Spot-breasted Cuckoo-Dove ♦ (MacKinlay's C-D) *Macropygia mackinlayi* Near-endemic. It took some time to spot one at one off the islands near New Britain.

Great Cuckoo-Dove ♦ (Long-tailed C-D) *Reinwardtoena reinwardti* A few seen flying at the Elevala River.

Pied Cuckoo-Dove ♦ *Reinwardtoena browni* Endemic. One seen on New Britain at the Kilu Ridge.

Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris*

Stephan's Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps stephani* Several seen on New Britain.

Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida*

Nicobar Pigeon ♦ *Caloenas nicobarica* Great views on and near New Britain.

Pheasant Pigeon ♦ (Grey-naped P P) *Otidiphaps [nobilis] cervicalis* Heard-only.

Sclater's Crowned Pigeon ♦ *Goura sclaterii* Seen only at night, luckily great views.

Wompoo Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus magnificus* Seen in Varirata NP.

Pink-spotted Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus perlatus* A few seen in Varirata and more along the Elevala River.

Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* A few seen, one found on the nest in Varirata NP.

Beautiful Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus pulchellus* One scoped near Kiunga.

White-bibbed Fruit Dove ♦ (Mountain F D) *Ptilinopus rivoli* A pair seen at Rondon.

Yellow-bibbed Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus solomonensis* Heard-only.

Orange-bellied Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus iozonus* A few seen along the Elevala River.

Knob-billed Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus insolitus* Endemic. Nice scope views on New Britain.

Dwarf Fruit Dove ♦ *Ptilinopus nainus* Only distant and short views from the boat on Elevala.

Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula rubricera* Endemic. Common on New Britain.

Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula rufigaster* Three birds seen in Varirata NP on the first day.

Finsch's Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula finschii* Endemic. Great scope views on New Britain.

Rufescent Imperial Pigeon ♦ (Shining I P) *Ducula chalconota* One distant at Rondon and one perched close at Komange.

Island Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula pistrinaria* Dozens seen on off-shore islands at New Britain.

Pinon's Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula pinon* Seen in Varirata and along the Elevala River.

Collared Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula mullerii* Many great views along the Elevala River.

Zoe's Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula zoeae* Best view near Kwatu.

Torresian Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula spilorrhoea* A few in Varirata and many more in Port Moresby.

Yellowish Imperial Pigeon ♦ *Ducula subflavescens* Good views on New Britain.

Papuan Mountain Pigeon ♦ *Gymnophaps albertisii* Common in the highlands.

Chestnut Forest Rail ♦ *Rallidula rubra* Heard-only near Kumul.

Forbes's Forest Rail ♠ *Rallicula forbesi* One lured in for some and flew across in front of us thanks to villagers flushing it as walking near-by.

Buff-banded Rail *Hypotaenidia philippensis*

Pink-legged Rail ♠ *Hypotaenidia insignis* Endemic. Seen on two spots on New Britain, never great looks.

Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus*

Bare-eyed Rail ♠ *Gymnocyrex plumbeiventris* A roosting pair found near Kiunga.

New Guinea Flightless Rail ♠ *Megacrex inepta* A fantastic roosting bird found from the boat on the Elevala River.

Beach Stone-curlew *Esacus magnirostris* Three birds seen well on an islet in the Kimba Bay.

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*

Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea*

Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Australian Pratincole *Stiltia isabella*

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Lesser Crested Tern *Thalasseus bengalensis*

Greater Crested Tern (C T, Swift T) *Thalasseus bergii*

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*

Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos*

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* One flying across in Port Moresby.

Australian White Ibis *Threskiornis molucca* Good numbers in Port Moresby.

Black Bittern *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

Nankeen Night Heron (Rufous N H) *Nycticorax caledonicus* Several seen in Port Moresby.

Pacific Reef Heron *Egretta sacra*

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Pied Heron ♦ *Egretta picata*

Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata*

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*

Great Egret (Eastern G E) *Ardea [alba] modesta*

Plumed Egret *Ardea plumifera*

Osprey (Eastern O) *Pandion [haliaetus] cristatus*

Pacific Baza (Crested Hawk) *Aviceda subcristata*

Black Honey Buzzard ♦ *Henicopernis infuscatus* Endemic. A fantastic pair soared above us on New Britain.

Papuan Eagle ♦ (N G Harpy E) *Harpyopsis novaeguineae* Non-leader bird near Tabubil.

Pygmy Eagle ♦ *Hieraetus weiskei* Brief views of one in Varirata NP.

Gurney's Eagle ♦ *Aquila gurneyi* Fantastic views of an immature bird in Varirata.

Variable Goshawk *Tachypiza hiogaster*

Brown Goshawk (Australasian G) *Tachypiza fasciata*

Grey-headed Goshawk ♦ *Tachypiza poliocephala* A perched individual scoped at Tabubil.

New Britain Goshawk ♦ *Tachypiza princeps* Endemic. An individual seen above Kimbe very likely represents the undescribed immature plumage of the species.

Collared Sparrowhawk *Tachypiza cirrocephala*

Meyer's Goshawk ♦ *Astur meyerianus* Seen near Kumul by only a couple of us.

Papuan Harrier ♦ *Circus spilothorax* One surprise individual spotted at Mt. Hagen airport.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

White-bellied Sea Eagle *Ichthyophaga leucogaster*

Greater Sooty Owl ♦ *Tyto tenebricosa* A pair seen near Komange.

Golden Masked Owl ♦ *Tyto aurantia* Endemic. A roosting individual seen on New Britain.

Papuan Hawk-Owl ♦ *Uroglaux dimorpha* Heard-only.

Barking Owl *Ninox connivens*

Papuan Boobook ♦ (Jungle Hawk Owl, Jungle B) *Ninox theomacha* A responsive individual seen at Tabubil.

New Britain Boobook ♦ *Ninox odiosa* Endemic. Two individuals seen near the Kulu River on New Britain.

Blyth's Hornbill ♦ (Papuan H) *Rhyticeros plicatus*

Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

Hook-billed Kingfisher ♦ *Melidora macrorrhina* Seen well at the Elevela River.

Common Paradise Kingfisher ♦ *Tanysiptera galatea* Great views at the Elevela River.

Little Paradise Kingfisher ♦ (Aru P K) *Tanysiptera hydrocharis* Heard-only.

Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher ♦ *Tanysiptera nigriceps* Endemic. Fantastic views of a responsive individual near the Kulu River on New Britain.

Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher ♦ *Tanysiptera danae* Endemic. After some struggle everyone got onto a bird in Varirata NP.

Shovel-billed Kookaburra ♦ (S-b Kingfisher) *Dacelo rex* A lot of effort and a partial view in the scope only.

Rufous-bellied Kookaburra ♦ *Dacelo gaudichaud* Great views in Varirata NP and along the Elevela River.

Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii*

White-mantled Kingfisher ♦ *Todiramphus albonotatus* Endemic. One seen near the Kulu River, New Britain.

Melanesian Kingfisher ♦ *Todiramphus tristrami* Seen well on New Britain.

Beach Kingfisher ♦ *Todiramphus saurophagus* Seen from the boat on New Britain.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus*

Yellow-billed Kingfisher ♦ (Lesser Y-b K) *Syma torotoro* Finally we saw one near Kiunga.

Mountain Kingfisher ♦ (M Yellow-billed K) *Syma megarhyncha* Seen at Rondon.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher ♦ *Ceyx solitarius* Seen in Varirata NP.

New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher ♦ *Ceyx sacerdotis* Endemic. Extraordinary views on New Britain.

Azure Kingfisher *Ceyx azureus*

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*

Oriental Hobby *Falco severus*

Brown Falcon *Falco berigora* One bird seen on the Telefomin Road above Tabubil.

Palm Cockatoo ♦ *Probosciger aterrimus* A few seen at the Elevala River.

Blue-eyed Cockatoo ♦ *Cacatua ophthalmica* Endemic. A handful seen on New Britain.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

Pesquet's Parrot ♦ (N G Vulturine P) *Psittrichas fulgidus* Heard-only.

Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot ♦ *Micropsitta keiensis* Two near Tabubil.

Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot ♦ *Micropsitta pusio* Seen in flight at Varirata and a few on New Britain.

Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot ♦ *Micropsitta bruijnii* A group seen well in flight on the Telefomin road above Tabubil.

Papuan King Parrot ♦ *Alisterus chloropterus* Heard-only.

Papuan Eclectus ♦ *Eclectus polychloros* Common throughout.

Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*

Blue-collared Parrot ♦ *Geoffroyus simplex* A pair in flight from the Telefomin road.

Song Parrot ♦ *Geoffroyus heteroclitus* Seen very well on New Britain.

Brehm's Tiger Parrot ♦ *Psittacella brehmii* Coming on the feeder at Kumul.

Painted Tiger Parrot ♦ *Psittacella picta* Leader-only views near Kumul.

Plum-faced Lorikeet ♦ (Whiskered L) *Oreopsittacus arfaki* Great views of a few landing near by at Kumul.

Red-flanked Lorikeet ♦ *Hypocharmosyna placentis* A handful observation on the mainland and on New Britain.

Fairy Lorikeet ♦ *Charmosynopsis pulchella* A single flying by from the boat on the Elevala River.

Josephine's Lorikeet ♦ *Charmosyna josefinae* Two seen on the Telefomin Road.

Stella's Lorikeet ♦ *Charmosyna stellae* Fantastic views around Kumul.

Yellow-billed Lorikeet ♦ *Neopsittacus musschenbroekii* Nice view at Rondon.

Orange-billed Lorikeet ♦ *Neopsittacus pullicauda* Best seen around Komange.

Purple-bellied Lory ♦ *Lorius hypoinochrous* Easily seen on New Britain.

Black-capped Lory ♦ (Western B-c L) *Lorius lory* Several good looks.

Dusky Lory ♦ *Pseudeos fuscata* Only a pair seen briefly on the Telefomin road.

Yellow-streaked Lory ♦ (Yellow-s L, Greater S L) *Chalcopsitta scintillate* Seen near Kiunga and Kwatu.

Goldie's Lorikeet ◊ *Glossoptilus goldiei* A dozen moving around Komange. Some great views.

Coconut Lorikeet ◊ *Trichoglossus haematodus* Common.

Large Fig Parrot ◊ (Yellow-naped F P) *Psittaculirostris [desmarestii] cervicalis* A few seen along the Elevala River.

Dusky-cheeked Fig Parrot ◊ *Cyclopsitta melanogenia* Best seen near Tabubil but also along the Elevala River.

Double-eyed Fig Parrot ◊ (Red-faced F P) *Cyclopsitta diophthalma* Along the Elevala River.

Orange-fronted Hanging Parrot ◊ (Papuan H P) *Loriculus aurantiifrons* Brief flight views only this year.

Papuan Pitta ◊ *Erythropitta macklotii* One showing well near Kwatu.

Bismarck Pitta ◊ *Erythropitta novaehibernicae* Endemic. One seen well after some hard work.

Eastern Hooded Pitta ◊ *Pitta novaeguineae* One seen briefly near Kwatu.

Archbold's Bowerbird ◊ *Archboldia papuensis* Brief views by some of us.

MacGregor's Bowerbird ◊ *Amblyornis macgregoriae* A few around Rondon Ridge.

Flame Bowerbird ◊ *Sericulus ardens* A fantastic male at his bower near Kwatu.

Yellow-breasted Bowerbird ◊ (Lauterbach's B) *Chlamydera lauterbachi* One perched individual scoped in the Lai River Valley.

Fawn-breasted Bowerbird ◊ *Chlamydera cerviniventris* Seen well in Port Moresby.

Papuan Treecreeper ◊ *Cormobates placens* Heard-only.

Wallace's Fairywren ◊ *Sipodotus wallacii* A pair moving in the mid canopy near Tabubil.

Campbell's Fairywren ◊ *Chenorhamphus campbelli* Endemic. Everyone saw them after some time, real skulkers.

Emperor Fairywren ◊ *Malurus cyanocephalus* Seen along the Elevala River.

White-shouldered Fairywren ◊ *Malurus alboscapulatus* Tame individuals at Rondon Ridge.

Orange-crowned Fairywren ◊ *Clytomyias insignis* A family skulking along the roadside vegetation at Komange.

Green-backed Honeyeater ◊ *Glycichaera fallax* One found roosting in Varirata NP.

Rufous-backed Honeyeater ◊ *Ptiloprora guisei* Endemic. Fairly common at higher altitudes.

Grey-streaked Honeyeater ◊ (Black-backed H) *Ptiloprora perstriata* Same as the previous one.

Rufous-banded Honeyeater ◊ *Conopophila albogularis* A couple seen in Port Moresby.

Long-billed Honeyeater ♦ *Melilestes megarhynchus* Always brief views.

Olive Straightbill ♦ *Timeliopsis fulvigula* A single individual surprised us at Komange, quickly disappeared.

Common Smoky Honeyeater ♦ *Melipotes fumigatus* Common around Kumul and Komange.

Streak-headed Honeyeater ♦ *Pycnopygius stictocephalus* Seen near Kiunga and along the Elevala River.

Ashy Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela cineracea* Endemic. Seen on New Britain.

Papuan Black Myzomela ♦ (Black M) *Myzomela nigrita* A few at Varirata NP.

Red-headed Myzomela *Myzomela erythrocephala* One seen near Varirata, a write-in.

Mountain Myzomela ♦ (Elfin M, M Red-headed M) *Myzomela adolphinae* A pair showing well at Rondon Ridge.

Slater's Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela sclateri* Endemic. At least a dozen seen from the boat on islets in Kimbe Bay.

Black-bellied Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela erythromelas* Endemic. A pair seen well above Kimbe, New Britain.

Red-collared Myzomela ♦ *Myzomela rosenbergii* Fairly common at higher altitudes especially around Kumul.

Meyer's Friarbird ♦ *Philemon meyeri* One taped in and got it flying by on the Elevala River.

New Guinea Friarbird ♦ *Philemon novaeguineae*

New Britain Friarbird ♦ *Philemon cockerelli* Endemic.

Tawny-breasted Honeyeater ♦ *Xanthotis flaviventer*

Silver-eared Honeyeater ♦ *Lichmera alboauricularis* One found surprisingly rapidly in Port Moresby.

White-throated Honeyeater ♦ *Melithreptus albogularis* A few outside Varirata.

Puff-backed Honeyeater ♦ (P-b Meliphaga) *Meliphaga aruensis* One seen near Kiunga.

Mottle-breasted Honeyeater ♦ (Mottled Meliphaga, Spot-b H) *Microptilotis mimikae* Brief views of one at Tabubil.

Mountain Honeyeater ♦ (M Meliphaga, Hill Forest H) *Microptilotis orientalis* Non-leader.

Scrub Honeyeater ♦ (S Meliphaga, S White-eared M) *Microptilotis albonotatus*

Mimic Honeyeater ♦ (M Meliphaga, Mimetic M) *Microptilotis analogus*

Elegant Honeyeater ♦ (E Meliphaga) *Microptilotis cinereifrons* Endemic.

Yellow-gaped Honeyeater ♦ (Y-g Meliphaga) *Microptilotis flavirictus* One found roosting and another on a trail near Kwatu.

Black-throated Honeyeater ♦ *Caligavis subfrenata* Two on the Telefomin road above Tabubil.

Obscure Honeyeater ♦ *Caligavis obscura* Two seen near Kiunga.

Yellow-browed Melidectes ♦ *Melidectes rufocrissalis* Common around Rondon.

Belford's Melidectes ♦ *Melidectes belfordi* Common around Kumul and Komange.

Ornate Melidectes ♦ (Cinnamon-breasted M) *Melidectes torquatus* A few seen around Rondon and on the Telefomin road.

Goldenface ♦ (Dwarf Whistler) *Pachycare flavogriseum* We were lucky this year seeing them in Varirata and at the Telefomin road as well.

Mountain Mouse-warbler ♦ *Origma robusta* Easily seen around Kumul.

Rusty Mouse-warbler ♦ (Lowland M-w) *Origma murina* Heard many, seen at Varirata and better near Tabubil.

Large Scrubwren ♦ *Sericornis nouhuysi*

Buff-faced Scrubwren ♦ *Aethomyias perspicillatus* Seen at Komange.

Papuan Scrubwren ♦ *Aethomyias papuensis*

New Guinea Thornbill ♦ *Acanthiza murina* A nice surprise. A bird scoped on a small tree at the top of the Telefomin road.

Yellow-bellied Gerygone ♦ *Gerygone chrysogaster*

Green-backed Gerygone ♦ *Gerygone chloronota*

Fairy Gerygone *Gerygone palpebrosa*

Large-billed Gerygone *Gerygone magnirostris*

Brown-breasted Gerygone ♦ (Treefern G) *Gerygone ruficollis*

Papuan Babbler ♦ (Rufous B, New Guinea B) *Garritornis isidorei* A few came in near Kwatu.

Loria's Satinbird ♦ *Cnemophilus loriae* Several good views on the Telefomin road, Rondon and Kumul.

Crested Satinbird ♦ (C Bird-of-paradise) *Cnemophilus macgregorii* A few seen around Kumul.

Obscure Berrypecker ♦ *Melanocharis arfakiana* Seen briefly near Tabubil.

Mid-mountain Berrypecker ♦ (Lemon-breasted B) *Melanocharis longicauda* One seen at Rondon Ridge.

Black Berrypecker ♦ *Melanocharis nigra* Seen in Varirata.

Fan-tailed Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis versteri*

Streaked Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis striativentris* A single bird seen by some near Kumul.

Spotted Berrypecker ◊ *Rhamphocharis piperata* Endemic. A noisy party seen at the Telefomin road.

Pygmy Longbill ◊ (P Honeyeater) *Oedistoma pygmaeum* A few fly-bys near Tabubil.

Yellow-bellied Longbill ◊ (Green-crowned L) *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae* Seen well at Kwatu.

Slaty-headed Longbill ◊ (S-chinned L, Grey-winged L) *Toxorhamphus poliopterus* A pair at Rondon.

Tit Berrypecker ◊ *Oreocharis arfaki* Several birds seen well around Kumul and Komange.

Eastern Crested Berrypecker ◊ *Paramythia montium* Great views at Kumul and also at Komange.

Spotted Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa leucosticte* Heard-only.

Blue Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens* Tricky as always, some got good views some missed it near Kwatu.

Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa castanonota* A glimpse by some of a bird calling just under our feet.

Painted Quail-thrush ◊ *Cinclosoma ajax* Heard-only.

Yellow-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer* Seen in Varirata and near Kwatu as well.

Black-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus nigripectus* Best seen at Komange.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

Great Woodswallow ◊ *Artamus maximus*

White-backed Woodswallow ◊ *Artamus insignis* Endemic. Two seen at the Kulu Ridge on New Britain, a write-in.

Lowland Peltops ◊ *Peltops blainvillii*

Mountain Peltops ◊ *Peltops montanus*

Black Butcherbird *Melloria quoyi*

Black-backed Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus mentalis* Seen easily in Port Moresby.

Hooded Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus cassicus*

Mottled Berryhunter ◊ *Rhagologus leucostigma* Seen briefly a few times at Rondon and near Kumul.

Stout-billed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina caeruleogrisea* Heard-only.

Hooded Cuckooshrike ♦ *Coracina longicauda* A few seen near Kumul.

Barred Cuckooshrike ♦ (Yellow-eyed C) *Coracina lineata* One in Varirata and one on New Britain.

Black-faced Cuckooshrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*

Boyer's Cuckooshrike ♦ *Coracina boyeri*

White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis*

Golden Cuckooshrike ♦ *Campochaera sloetii* Great views this year near Tabubil and on the Elevala River.

Black-bellied Cuckooshrike ♦ (B-b Cicadabird) *Edolisoma montanum* Seen a few times around Tabubil, Rondon and Kumul.

Grey-headed Cuckooshrike ♦ (G-h Cicadabird) *Edolisoma schisticeps* Only two seen at Kwatu.

Black-shouldered Cicadabird ♦ *Edolisoma incertum* Seen at Tabubil and at the Elevala River.

Common Cicadabird *Edolisoma tenuirostre*

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*

Papuan Sittella ♦ (Varied S) *Daphoenositta papuensis* A small flock appeared around us at Komange.

Black Sittella ♦ *Daphoenositta miranda* A family group seen a few times at Komange.

Wattled Ploughbill ♦ *Eulacestoma nigropectus* A nice male lured in at Kumul.

Rufous-naped Bellbird ♦ (R-n Whistler) *Aleadryas rufinucha* Great views at Kumul.

Piping Bellbird ♦ (Crested Pitohui) *Ornorectes cristatus* Heard a few times, one seen near Kumul.

Black Pitohui ♦ *Melanorectes nigrescens* Showing nicely at Rondon.

Brown-backed Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala modesta* Endemic. Several birds seen around Kumul and Komange.

Grey Whistler *Pachycephala simplex*

Slater's Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala soror* A few around Tabubil.

Mangrove Golden Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala melanura* We worked hard to see one on an island in Kimbe bay.

Lorentz's Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala lorentzi* One bird scoped from the Telefomin road.

Regent Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala schlegelii* A few around Kumul and Komange.

Black-headed Whistler ♦ *Pachycephala monachal* At Rondon office and in the Lai River Valley.

White-bellied Whistler ◇ *Pachycephala leucogastra* Endemic. One seen well near Varirata.

White-bellied Pitohui ◇ *Pseudorectes incertus* A few encounters in the Elevala region.

Sooty Shrikethrush ◇ *Colluricincla tenebrosa* One seen at the Telefomin road. A Birdquest lifer!

Arafura Shrikethrush (Rufous S) *Colluricincla megarhyncha* Seen near Kwatu.

Variable Shrikethrush ◇ *Colluricincla fortis* Endemic. Leader-only at Varirata.

Grey Shrikethrush *Colluricincla harmonica* A pair seen in the Lai River Valley.

Australasian Figbird *Sphecotheres vieilloti* Literally hundreds seen in Port Moresby.

Southern Variable Pitohui ◇ *Pitohui uropygialis*

Hooded Pitohui ◇ *Pitohui dichrous*

Brown Oriole ◇ *Oriolus szalayi*

Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus*

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Northern Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura rufiventris*

Sooty Thicket Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura threnothorax* Seen only briefly twice near Kwatu and Kiunga.

White-bellied Thicket Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura leucothorax* Heard a few and one seen near Kwatu.

Black Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura atra* A few at Rondon and Komage.

Chestnut-bellied Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura hyperythra* A few in a mixed flock in Varirata.

Friendly Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura albolimbata*

Dimorphic Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura brachyrhyncha* Scarce around Rondon, Kumul and Komange.

Rufous-backed Fantail ◇ *Rhipidura rufidorsa* Heard-only.

Drongo Fantail ◇ (Pygmy Drongo, Mountain D) *Chaetorhynchus papuensis* A pair seen well in Varirata.

Spot-winged Monarch ◇ *Symposiachrus guttula* Seen near Tabubil.

Hooded Monarch ◇ *Symposiachrus manadensis* One morning near Kwatu.

Black-tailed Monarch ◇ *Symposiachrus verticalis* Seen on New Britain on the last full day.

Island Monarch ◇ *Monarcha cinerascens* Seen on the islands in Kimbe Bay.

Black-winged Monarch ◇ *Monarcha frater* Seen near Tabubil.

Golden Monarch ◇ *Carterornis chrysomela* One bird seen near Tabubil.

Friiled Monarch ♦ *Arses telescopthalmus* Seen a few in Varirata and near Kwatu.

Torrent-lark ♦ *Grallina bruijnii* A pair seen near Tabubil.

Satin Flycatcher ♦ *Myiagra cyanoleuca* One seen near Kwatu.

Shining Flycatcher (Common S F) *Myiagra alecto*

Velvet Flycatcher ♦ *Myiagra eichhorni* Endemic. A few seen in New Britain.

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*

Grey Crow ♦ (Bare-eyed C) *Corvus tristis*

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*

Bismarck Crow ♦ *Corvus insularis*

Lesser Melampitta ♦ *Melampitta lugubris* Kumul was the place for them, one crossing the track at the lodge.

Blue-capped Ifrit ♦ (B-c Ifrita) *Ifrita kowaldi* Fantastic views at Kumul and Komange.

Glossy-mantled Manucode ♦ (Glossy M) *Manucodia ater* Common along the Elevala River.

Crinkle-collared Manucode ♦ *Manucodia chalybatus* A few seen along the Elevala River.

Trumpet Manucode ♦ *Phonygammus keraudrenii* One seen while calling on the Elevala River others heard.

Short-tailed Paradigalla ♦ *Paradigalla brevicauda* A party of three luckily seen at Rondon.

Splendid Astrapia ♦ *Astrapia splendidissima* Three individuals seen at the Telefomin road.

Ribbon-tailed Astrapia ♦ *Astrapia mayeri* Endemic. A few visiting the feeder at Kumul including an adult male (no tail though).

Princess Stephanie's Astrapia ♦ *Astrapia stephaniae* Endemic. Seen well at Rondon Ridge and near Kumul including nice males.

Queen Carola's Parotia ♦ *Parotia carolae* Fantastic views this year along the Telefomin road.

King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise ♦ *Pteridophora alberti* Seen a few including calling males at Kumul and Komange.

Greater Lophorina ♦ *Lophorina superba* A few seen including a displaying male at Rondon.

Magnificent Riflebird ♦ *Ptiloris magnificus* One seen near Tabubil.

Growling Riflebird ♦ (Eastern R) *Ptiloris intercedens* Endemic. A few heard during the daytime and finally a female found roosting at night.

Black Sicklebill ♦ *Epimachus fastosus* Seen high up on Rondon Ridge.

Brown Sicklebill ◊ *Epimachus meyeri* Great views at Kumul feeder also seen at the Telefomin road.

Magnificent Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Diphylodes magnificus* Only females seen.

King Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Cicinnurus regius* Two displaying males and a female seen near Kwatu.

Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Seleucidis melanoleucus* A shy bird seen landing on its display pole and a few others seen flying above the Elevala river.

Greater Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Paradisaea apoda* Only one male seen at the lek at Kiunga but several females around.

Raggiana Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Paradisaea raggiana* Endemic. Great show in Varirata NP.

Lesser Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Paradisaea minor* Only one seen hard and briefly in the Lai River Valley.

Blue Bird-of-paradise ◊ *Paradisornis rudolphi* Endemic. A bird feeding on a fruiting tree seen nicely at Rondon.

Lesser Ground Robin ◊ *Amalocichla incerta* Heard-only.

Garnet Robin ◊ *Eugeryone rubra* Limited views at Rondon.

Canary Flyrobin ◊ (Papuan Flycatcher, Montane F) *Devioeca papuana*

Olive Flyrobin ◊ (O Flycatcher) *Kempiella flavovirescens*

Torrent Flyrobin ◊ (T Flycatcher, River F) *Monachella muelleriana* A few near Tabubil.

Lemon-bellied Flyrobin ◊ (L-b Flycatcher) *Microeca flavigaster*

Papuan Scrub Robin ◊ *Drymodes beccarii* A roosting bird found in Tabubil.

Black-capped Robin ◊ *Heteromyias armiti* One glimpsed near Kumul.

Black-throated Robin ◊ *Plesiodryas albonotata* One singing bird seen at Rondon.

Black-sided Robin ◊ (B-bibbed R) *Poecilodryas hypoleuca* After some struggle one bird seen very well.

White-winged Robin ◊ *Peneothello sigillata* Easy around Kumul.

Slaty Robin ◊ (Blue-grey R) *Peneothello cyanus* A few seen around Kumul and Komange.

White-rumped Robin ◊ *Peneothello bimaculate* One lured in near Kumul, not easy...

White-faced Robin ◊ *Tregellasia leucops* One seen briefly and finally one well in Varirata.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*

Island Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus poliocephalus*

Australian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus australis*

Rusty Thicketbird ◊ *Cincloramphus rubiginosus* Endemic. Leader-only views of a singing bird near the Kulu River on New Britain; a write-in.

Papuan Grassbird ◊ *Cincloramphus macrurus*

Papuan White-eye ◊ *Zosterops novaeguineae*

Metallic Starling (Shining S) *Aplonis metallica*

Yellow-eyed Starling ◊ *Aplonis mystacea* A small flock feeding on berries along the Elevala River.

Singing Starling ◊ *Aplonis cantoroides*

Yellow-faced Myna ◊ *Mino dumontii*

Long-tailed Myna ◊ *Mino kreffti*

Golden Myna ◊ *Mino anais* A few seen from the boat on the Elevala River.

Papuan Island Thrush ◊ *Turdus papuensis* A few around the feeder in Kumul and another one in Komange.

Pied Bush Chat (P Chat) *Saxicola caprata*

Red-capped Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum geelvinkianum* Best views at Rondon.

Red-banded Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum eximium* Endemic. Common on New Britain.

Black Sunbird ◊ *Leptocoma aspasia*

Sahul Sunbird *Cinnyris frenatus*

Eurasian Tree Sparrow (introduced) *Passer montanus*

House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus*

Hooded Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura spectabilis* Good views at Komange.

Buff-bellied Mannikin ◊ *Lonchura melaena* Several flocks seen on New Britain.

Australian Pipit *Anthus australis*

MAMMALS

Speckled Dasyure (Long-clawed Marsupial Mouse) *Neophascogale lorentzii* Two seen near Kumul.

Eastern Common Cuscus Phalanger intercastellanus

Common Spotted Cuscus *Spiloguscus maculatus* One found near Kwatu at night.

Feather-tailed Possum *Distoechurus pennatus* Seen in Varirata at night.

Sugar Glider (Papuan S G) *Petaurus breviceps* A few seen in the torch light from the boat at the Elevala River.

Masked Ring-tailed Possum *Pseudochirulus larvatus* One found at Kumul after 'owling'.

Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops aduncus*

Great Flying Fox (Bismarck F F) *Pteropus neohibernicus*

Chestnut Tree Mouse *Pogonomys macrourus*