Indonesia

West Papuan Islands Cruise

11 – 23 November 2017 (13 Days)

Buru Extension

23 – 29 November 2017 (7 Days)

Trip Report

Wilson’s Bird-of-Paradise by Glen Valentine
Tour Leaders: Glen Valentine & Keith Valentine
Trip Report Compiled by Glen Valentine

Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher by Alasdair Hunter

Top 10 birds of the main West Papuan Island Cruise tour as voted for by the tour participants:

1. Wilson’s Bird-of-Paradise
2. Moluccan (Obi) Woodcock
3. Chinese Crested Tern
4. Salmon-crested Cockatoo
5. Purple-naped Lory
6. Hantu (Seram) Boobook & Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher
7. Red Bird-of-Paradise
8. Long-crested Myna
9. King Bird-of-Paradise
10. Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher

Top 5 birds of the Buru Extension as voted for by the tour participants:
1. Madanga
2. Moluccan (Lesser) Masked Owl
3. Buru Thrush
4. Tawny-backed Fantail
5. Buru Racket-tail & Black-tipped Monarch

Tour Summary

Main Tour – West Papuan Island Cruise

What can I say? Other than wow wow WOW! I think for both Keith and I we can happily say that this was one of the top three trips we’ve ever had the privilege of leading! What a truly incredible birding trip this is!

Rockjumper’s second cruise through the islands off West Papua (Irian Jaya) and the north and central Moluccas was even more successful than our inaugural 2016 tour and was without a doubt an immeasurable triumph! We were also blessed with a fantastic group!
Of the numerous birding highlights over the course of the trip these were a few of the truly outstanding sightings that we were treated to: Spectacular Wilson’s, King and Red Birds-of-Paradise, the once-mythical Madanga, critically endangered Chinese Crested Tern, Rufous-necked Sparrowhawk, Scarlet-breasted and Carunculated Fruit Doves, Moluccan Masked Owl, Hantu (Seram) Boobook, brilliant Kofiau and Red-breasted Paradise Kingfishers, Lazuli Kingfisher, Salmon-crested and Palm Cockatoos, Buru Racket-tail, Purple-naped, Blue-eared and Black Lories, Long-crested Myna, Buru Thrush, Pygmy Eagle, Cinnamon-bellied Imperial Pigeon, Buru and Seram Mountain Pigeons, Large Fig Parrot, Papuan Pitta, White-eared Catbird, Buru and Seram Honeyeaters, Buru and Moluccan Cuckoo-shrikes, Island and Cinnamon-breasted (Obi) Whistlers, Raja Ampat Pitohui, Tawny-backed Fantail, Black-chinned (Boano), Black-tipped (Buru), Kofiau and White-naped Monarchs, Violet and Brown-headed Crows and Streak-breasted Jungle (Buru Warbling) Flycatcher. This was our adventure…

Beginning in the lowland forests and mangroves within close proximity to Sorong (West Papua), those who arrived early for some pre-tour explorations and birding were rewarded with several rarely seen species that included the magnificent Blue-black and Little Kingfishers, Barred Rail, Black-billed Coucal, Streak-headed Munia, Spotted Whistling Duck, Grey-headed Goshawk, Coroneted Fruit Dove, Wallace’s and Emperor Fairywrens, Magnificent Bird-of-Paradise, Southern Variable Pitohui and Rufous-backed Fantail, while other interesting but slightly more regular species were Orange-fronted Fruit Dove, Collared Imperial Pigeon, Pacific Baza, Buff-banded Rail, Brown-backed and Puff-backed Honeyeaters, Black-sided Robin, Grey Whistler, Grey Crow and Papuan Spine-tailed Swift.

After a superb introduction to New Guinea birding the tour officially began on the afternoon of the eleventh November with a visit to the nearby extensive hill forests of Pipa. Birding was fairly slow-
Rockjumper Birding Tours

Trip Report – RBL Indonesia West Papuan Islands Cruise & Buru Ext 2017

going as is often the case in any forest environs on an overcast afternoon but we plugged away and eventually managed to pick up a number of note-worthy species such as Grey-headed Goshawk, Wompoo, Pink-spotted and Orange-bellied Fruit Doves, Pinon’s and Zoe’s Imperial Pigeons, Red-cheeked Parrot, Green-backed, Plain, Spotted, Mimic and Tawny-breasted Honeyeaters, Grey-headed and Boyer’s Cuckooshrikes, Black-browed Triller, Northern Fantail, Frilled Monarch, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Yellow-faced Myna, Grey-streaked Flycatcher, Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, Olive-backed and Black Sunbirds, an unexpected and much appreciated pair of fly-over Pesquet’s (New Guinea Vulturine) Parrots, a brief Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher and a flock of the very rare Streak-headed Mannikins for a lucky few and our first of many Sultan’s Cuckoo-Doves. The very rarely seen Red-billed Brushturkey called tantalizingly close but unfortunately could not be seen in the dense forest undergrowth and refused to come closer.

The next morning saw us heading into the vast pristine lowland rainforest of the Tamrau Lowlands. How utterly pleasing and heart-warming it is to see so much extensive and virtually untouched lowland forest so close to the region’s largest city! We spent five hours birding this outstanding forest and were rewarded with an array of mind-blowing birds. The birding absolutely pumped for the first two hours and even when bird activity slowed down somewhat in the mid-morning we still managed to find some absolute stunners!

The morning kicked off with many of the same species seen yesterday afternoon but also included Pied Imperial Pigeon, a fly-over Pacific Koel, two impressive Channel-billed Cuckoos, the brightly coloured Black-capped Lory and familiar Coconut Lorikeets. Noisy pairs of Blyth’s Hornbills flew overhead along with Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Double-eyed and Large Fig Parrots and Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrots and eventually a pair of the scarce, elusive and regional-endemic Black Lory obliged and made a close fly-by across the road in front of us. Brilliant!
In a tall *Albizia* tree we encountered a welcome pair of Ruby-throated Myzomela and several species of honeyeater already seen the previous day. A Scrub Honeyeater popped into view momentarily and we also enjoyed good close looks at Green-backed Gerygone. The far-carrying cries of the shy but aptly named Magnificent Riflebird was heard all around us throughout the morning and a pair eventually decided to show briefly in flight across the road. Thereafter we encountered a mixed species flock that harboured Yellow-bellied Longbill, Grey-headed Cuckooshrike, Frilled Monarch and Black Cicadabird, while a Beautiful Fruit Dove also appeared for a few seconds in the nearby canopy. A flock of Papuan Babblers moved through the mid-canopy, calling all the while but remaining mostly concealed but a Lowland Peltops perched up atop a dead snag showed much better and was admired at length in the scopes. A female Golden Monarch also made an appearance along with a fly-over Black Butcherbird, Brown Oriole, three Papuan Mountain Pigeons, (Papuan) Spangled Drongo and smoking views of the superb Yellow-billed Kingfisher. What an amazing morning so far but with the heat and humidity levels rising along the road we decided to duck into the forest to try our luck at a few of the tougher interior specialties on offer. This proved exceedingly worthwhile as we racked up most of our targets within the final two hours of the morning.

It started with a brilliant male King Bird-of-Paradise perched up on various perches in the upper canopy of its display tree. Thereafter we managed to coax in a cooperative Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher before hearing the distinctive, plaintive calls of Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher, a very rarely seen and incredibly localized New Guinea endemic. We tried tracking the calls but could not get them to call frequently enough to successfully do so. A Red-billed Brushturkey then emitted a bellowing series of rasping squawks so close to where we were standing that it felt as though we could almost touch it. However, despite our best efforts to see it we were forced to eventually give up and were unable to muster even a glimpse of this ultra-shy and rarely seen creature. Frustrating but expected! However, while trying for the megapode the calls of the paradise kingfisher were heard once again and this
time very close-by giving us a renewed hope of seeing this gorgeous and much sought-after kingfisher. A quick squeeze of the call and in it shot, right above our heads but before we could all get onto it, it vanished in typical paradise kingfisher style. However, the pair continued to call close-by and so we continued the search. Just as I was about to play the call once more Alasdair exclaimed that he had a red shape perched high up in the dense canopy off to our left and there it was, in full view through a tiny window for all of us to admire. We ended up obtaining saturation views of this mega rarity and departed the area utterly content to give a try for a vocalizing Papuan Pitta. The pitta eventually cooperated amazingly well too with a pair hopping around in front of us at point-blank range for lengthy views and for all to admire. What an excellent end to an unbelievably rewarding morning’s birding!

By now it was already eleven o’clock and time to make our way back to Sorong to board the awaiting Seahorse and begin the cruising part of this epic birding adventure.

We boarded the fabulous ship just after midday and settled into our comfortable rooms before enjoying a welcome lunch and setting sail towards the island of Waigeo, a mere five hours sailing away.

Our afternoon sea-watch en route to the island proved quite productive and yielded large numbers of Lesser Frigatebird, Brown Booby and Red-necked Phalarope, while a few Bridled Terns,
Pomarine Jaegers, a single Black Noddy and a Black-naped Tern were also admired as they accompanied feeding pods of Spinner Dolphins.

This evening we enjoyed our first of many stunning sunsets during the trip, just after arriving at the southern end of Waigeo in the early evening. We were treated to a fine dinner and an early night in preparation for a very early start the next morning and a long but stupendous day’s birding.

Our day kicked off well before sunrise as we landed on the nearby beach and boarded our awaiting vehicles that drove us a short distance to the Wilson’s Bird-of-Paradise hides that were all set up and waiting for us. With Bennie and colleagues in tow we made our way to our various hides just as it was beginning to get light in preparation for what was for most of the group, “the bird of the trip” and the most anticipated and magical once-in-a-lifetime dream experience. Waiting in our respective hides at dawn, the calls of Mr. Wilson began resonating out of the jungle. Every hide had their resident birds that could be heard calling but after waiting for over an hour for them to make their appearance on the display grounds, it became evident that all the activity was happening at just one of the three hides. Keith and I duly vacated our unsuccessful hides with our groups and made our way to Bennie’s hide where all the activity was taking place and immediately upon arriving were greeted by an incredible four separate males and two females performing their stuff on the dance floor. Amazing! For the next hour we were entertained by these out-of-this-world birds-of-paradise and those that stayed longer were rewarded with further displays that included all four males displaying and strutting around at the same time, flicking from bare branch to bare branch and then back to the bare ground, flaring their green breast bands and twitching from side to side in one of the most awe-inspiring and magnificent birding spectacles on Earth! What a mind-blowing performance by this total and utter show-stopper! After being completely and utterly satiated with Wilson’s Bird-of-Paradise we continued with more general birding along the access road in search of the other Waigeo specialties.
Top of the list were Raja Ampat Pitohui and Brown-headed Crow, both of which showed impeccably, as did the spectacular Common Paradise Kingfisher, the miniscule Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, vociferous pairs of Eclectus Parrots, Spotted and Tawny-breasted Honeyeaters, Yellow-bellied Longbill, White-breasted Woodswallow, Hooded Butcherbird, Black Cicadabird, Spangled Drongo, Northern Fantail and Willie Wagtail. Several young male Red Birds-of-Paradise were also admired at the road edge, while Stephen’s Emerald Dove and Rusty Pitohui popped up into view for a lucky few.

What a fine morning it had been and after a scrumptious lunch we departed for the small offshore, limestone karst Kari Raja islands just off the southwestern coast of Waigeo. Here we motored around on the zodiacs, savouring the idyllic scenery and awesome birds on offer. Large numbers of the range-restricted Spice Imperial Pigeon were seen perched and in flight across the turquoise-blue waters, while the dazzling white and aqua-marine Beach Kingfisher perched out for us to admire. Pacific Reef and Great Billed Herons, Little Pied Cormorant, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Metallic Starling and Violet-necked (Scaled) Lory were also enjoyed and at dusk we positioned ourselves at the edge of a tiny island in wait for the impressive Great-billed Parrot to appear. The plan worked to perfection as dozens upon dozens of these otherwise scarce parrots came streaming into roost along with smaller numbers of Spice Imperial Pigeons. We ended up counting around 370 parrots all within a mere eighteen minute period and when we departed the island for the Seahorse they were still streaming in. A magical experience indeed and so pleasing to see so many of these threatened parrots that are obviously still doing well in the extensive forests and unoccupied islands of the Raja Ampats!

Our final day on Waigeo had us up nice and early again for some pre-dawn owling that produced fine views of a Papuan Boobook before heading up the hill to our awaiting Red Bird-of-Paradise

Olive Honeyeater by Glen Valentine

Island Whistler by Glen Valentine
lek. Marbled Frogmouths called distantly and unfortunately there was no sign of the resident Wallace’s Owlet-nightjars. At dawn the first male Red BOP’s appeared and thereafter we were entertained by several males that visited the lek, including a couple of birds that put on an impressive display high up in the canopy for several minutes. A Dwarf Fruit Dove also uttered its distinctive plaintive calls and excellent spotting by eagle-eye Romney produced the quarry high up in the canopy of an overhead tree. After an hour of almost continuous Red BOP viewing we departed the site and made our way back downhill to our awaiting vehicles to continue birding along the road but before we could make it back we were stopped in our tracks by a mixed flock that held several new and exciting birds such as Black Berrypecker, Yellow-breasted Boatbill and Olive Flyrobin.

Ambling down the road for a final hour’s birding on Waigeo before continuing our adventure, we enjoyed watching eye-catching species like Moustached Treeswift, Glossy and Uniform Swiftlets, a fast-flying White-throated Needletail, Oriental Dollarbird, Black-capped Lory and more Raja Ampat Pitohuis.

While trying to draw in a singing Black-sided Robin a large shape appeared out of the corner of our eyes and landed in the open in front of a few of us and then hopped to another open branch for a few seconds before evaporating, not to be seen again. This brief encounter was with an extremely shy and very rarely seen New Guinea endemic, the recently split White-eared Catbird and a lifer for the leader! What insane luck but such a pity that everyone wasn’t in a position to see it! Further down the road we encountered another Green-backed Honeyeater and a Brown Oriole before calling it a morning on this side of the island. With two hours of the morning still remaining and knowing that it would be our final chance of the trip, we sailed around to the western side of Waigeo and headed into the forest along a steep and indistinct trail in one final hope of locating the near-mythical Western Crowned Pigeon. It was an extremely long shot due to the time of day.
and the fact that we were indeed searching for Western Crowned Pigeon, one of New Guinea’s rarest and most enigmatic species but it was certainly worth a shot and oh my, how close we ended up getting to this creature! We heard one calling in the distance; we saw the tracks where one had been drinking from a small pond earlier in the morning and our local guides actually saw one flush from the forest canopy and land in view but sadly disappeared deep into the forest before we managed to get to where they were. Frustrating and exhilarating at the same time! Our efforts weren’t wasted though as we did encounter our only impressive Palm Cockatoo of the trip, a perched Rufous-bellied Kookaburra and another Beautiful Fruit Dove.

It was a long, hot and tiring hike and we arrived back at the ship more than ready for lunch and a short afternoon’s break before our Kris snorkelling and birding session in the late afternoon. The snorkelling off the coral reef adjacent to the beautiful island of Kris is certainly some of the best on the planet and those that made the plunge were utterly blown away by the “other world” that greeted us down there. Thereafter we landed at the dive resort and a short stroll around the grounds quickly produced the main target species in the form of several Dusky Megapodes that eventually showed very well. A stunning male Shining Flycatcher, a pair of Hooded Butcherbird, several confiding Glossy-mantled Manucodes and a major bonus in the form of a Waigeo Cuscus were also all enjoyed during the late afternoon foray.

Back on the ship we settled in for the night and set sail for some smaller “supertramp” islands a little further south that would be our birding destinations for the next morning.

We awoke to another beautiful morning that was fairly cool at least in comparison to how it can be in this region at this time of year. This was mainly due to the large amount of moisture and cloud cover all around and indeed it almost appeared as though we were sitting in the eye of a major low-pressure storm system as dense, dark grey clouds loomed around us in every direction we turned. Somehow we managed to evade the rain though and enjoyed a truly

Common (Wallacean) Cicadabird by Alasdair Hunter

Rufous-bellied Kookaburra by Glen Valentine

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superb morning’s birding, scoring every single one of our target species for the two islands that we visited. First off it was Agusta Island where the exceedingly localized and little known Island Whistler was our main target. This drab but rare species obliged and afforded us excellent views. We also scored with Arafura Fantail, unimaginably large numbers of Olive Honeyeater, several Moluccan Starlings, a pair of Raja Shelduck and three impressive Variable Goshawks, as well as our only Varied Honeyeaters of the trip and more Beach Kingfishers, Spice Imperial Pigeons, Torresian Crow and Violet-necked (Scaled) Lory. With all of our Agusta targets in the bag by nine o’clock we stopped in at the local dive resort’s restaurant and enjoyed a refreshing cooldrink before moving onto the adjacent island of Merpati where we hoped to find the last of our target supertramp specialties: the fairly widespread and common (well as least on most tiny islands in the Indonesian Archipelago) Lemon-bellied White-eye. After carefully navigating the zodiacs over the coral reef at low tide we landed on Merpati’s white-sand beach and were immediately greeted by a pair of the rare and often extremely elusive Beach Stone-Curlew. What a great intro to this tiny island and this bode well for things to come. We only had an hour to cover the island but this was enough time and within fifteen minutes we’d found all of the major species located earlier in the morning on Agusta, as well the quarry, the tiny, bright yellow Lemon-bellied White-eye thanks to the keen eyes of Craig and Keith. They were however unusually sneaky but eventually obliged and offered good views for all. What a fantastic morning it had been and with spirits on an all-time high we departed these small islands, the last of the Raja Ampats for this trip and began cruising towards our next island destination, the virtually unknown island of Kofiau.

The afternoon’s cruising proved quite interesting and exciting and yielded a number of great mammals and note-worthy birds. Rafts of wintering Streaked Shearwaters were frequently seen and we also managed to pick out a few dark morph Wedge-tailed Shearwaters in the mix. Lesser Frigatebirds and Brown Boobies were once again numerous, as were Bridled, Greater

![Beach Kingfisher by Alasdair Hunter](image)

![Kofiau Monarch by Glen Valentine](image)
Crested and Common Terns and we also found our only Common Noddy and Sooty Tern of the trip. We counted over seven hundred Red-necked Phalaropes during the afternoon, mostly in rafts of several dozen birds that would erupt from either side of the bow and then buzz across the water before alighting back on the water a few meters away to continue feeding. On the mammal front we were kept occupied by pods of Spinner and Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins and a few close encounters with Short-finned Pilot Whale. Fabulous! We arrived at Kofiau a little later than expected due to fairly choppy seas towards the late afternoon but not too late for us to arrange what was necessary for the next morning’s adventure.

After another early breakfast we boarded one of the zodiacs and were onshore just after dawn where we were met by the village chief and several of his buddies who accompanied us into the “farmbush” habitat and forest edge behind the village. Kofiau is one of the birdiest islands in the region and we were easily side-tracked by eye-catching species such as Little (Gould’s) Bronze Cuckoo, Spectacled (Moluccan) Imperial Pigeon, Sacred Kingfisher, Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot, gaudy Eclectus Parrots, noisy Great-billed Parrots, New Guinea Friarbird, Large-billed Gerygone, White-bellied Cuckooshrike, Black-browed Triller, (Kofiau?) Spangled Drongo, (Kofiau?) Northern Fantail, Grey-streaked Flycatcher, Black-faced Munia, Olive-backed (Sahul) Sunbird and unusually large numbers of White-bibbed and Claret-breasted Fruit Doves. A pair of Dusky Megapode crashed through the undergrowth before flushing up through the forest midstrata and out of sight. What a superb start to the morning but it was now time to get down to business and get stuck into our two main island targets: the dazzling Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher and Kofiau Monarch, both endemic species to this tiny island and species that have probably been seen by fewer than fifty birders! Both species were very easily found and showed well on several occasions. What a special experience it is to be among so few birders to have ever laid eyes on these two remarkable and so little known species! The morning then ended in fine form yet again with flight views of three raptors that are largely unknown from this region: Pygmy Eagle, Chinese Sparrowhawk and Grey-faced

![Cinnamon-bellied Imperial Pigeon by Alasdair Hunter](image1)

![Crested and Common Terns by Alasdair Hunter](image2)

![Paradise-crow by Alasdair Hunter](image3)
Buzzard. What a thrill! While enjoying some fresh coconut water and reminiscing over the unbeatable morning’s birding we managed to locate and obtain scope views of a single Lesser Crested Tern among a large flock of Greater Crested (Swift) Terns.

Leaving Kofiau behind we continued the journey towards the seldom-visited island of Obi, situated just south of Halmahera in the North Moluccan chain of Indonesian islands. Our afternoon sea-watch from the decks of the fabulous Seahorse were once again rewarding with more views of Short-finned Pilot Whale, Lesser Frigatebird, Brown Booby, Bridled Tern, Pomarine Jaeger and an immature Great Frigatebird that had us going at the time and for several days afterwards as a Christmas Island Frigatebird. Yet another post-card perfect sunset was savoured with Bintang in hand before dinner and checklist and we continued to cruise right through the night, arriving on the north-eastern shore of Obi in the early hours of the morning.

Obi remains well off the birding route for most companies and birders and it was with immense pleasure and excitement that we were back on this island in search of some of the Planet’s most desirable and until very recently almost-mythical avian gems!

We arrived on land about an hour before dawn to meet up with our drivers and have our first crack at the Moluccan (Obi) Woodcock. However, some recent heavy rain had washed away a nearby bridge that the drivers needed to cross to reach our position and it was only until half an hour after sunrise that the vehicles finally caught up with us. Nevertheless, we made the most of what was left of the morning and after a short drive to the start of the now completely washed away and impassable logging road, we began our birding for the remainder of the morning. Almost as soon as we stepped out of the vehicles we had locked onto the first few species on our desirable list of Obi targets: Rufous-bellied Triller, Cinnamon-breasted (Obi) Whistler, Northern (Obi) Fantail, Moluccan Flycatcher and the distinctive and endemic rubrotincta subspecies of Dusky Myzomela. Thereafter we continued higher up the logging track on foot for the remainder of the morning and found Northern (Obi) Golden...
Bulbul, three beautiful and cooperative Blue-and-white Kingfishers, brief Scarlet-breasted, Carunculated and Black-naped Fruit Doves, a fly-by Cinnamon-bellied Imperial Pigeon, a pair of Moluccan Monarch, Spotted Kestrel, (Obi) Paradise-crow, Halmahera Flowerpecker and the ever-present Grey-streaked Flycatcher.

It was a fine introductory morning to Obi and we were now at least well aware of what was in store for us for tomorrow morning if we wanted to try and reach higher elevations and better habitat further up the logging road.

The afternoon was spent along a different road in some easily accessible degraded forest habitat and here we found more Northern Golden Bulbuls, Rufous-bellied Trillers and Paradise-crows. A Barking Owl that was flushed right from the road edge and then alighted in the open only a few meters further away was a real treat and major bonus indeed! Thereafter we kept encountering the endemic Rothschild’s Cuscus and a little while later we were marvelling at the most exquisite male Superb Fruit Dove that fed completely unperturbed in a nearby fruiting tree. The afternoon ended with a tree-full of Spectacled Imperial Pigeons but a North Moluccan Pitta that called from a nearby patch of forest was just too deep in to coax into the open.

As dusk approached we positioned ourselves at a clearing where we were fortunate to have a roding Moluccan Woodcock make several fly-bys on last year’s trip. While waiting for the “main event” we were entertained by a hunting Oriental Hobby that put on quite a show. Dusk approached but no sign of the woodcock. Growing appreciably more anxious by the minute I gave the call a quick try and within seconds received a response from the forest to the left of us. Then suddenly like a cruise missile, in came Obi “Freakin” Woodcock!!! It came straight for our heads and with both beams illuminating this absolute mega so that its golden-buff colouration could easily be seen; it veered over our heads and into the din of the night, not to be seen again. Wow, what an incredible birding experience and one that we will all no doubt never ever forget! A quick try for a calling Moluccan Scops Owl proved fruitless so we called it a night and returned to the Seahorse for a well-deserved dinner and night’s rest.
We had a final morning on Obi to mop up the remaining few species and to acquire better views of several species that had only been seen briefly or by some of the group the previous morning. Our vehicles made it on time this morning which was already a better start than yesterday and up we drove to the start of the logging track from where we would continue walking uphill until we ran out of time and would need to continue back down.

Proceedings kicked off with a lovely perched Variable Goshawk, several Common (Wallacean) Cicadabirds and many of the same target species seen yesterday morning. We continued higher and finally reached the area where we were able to drive to on last year’s trip. Almost immediately upon arriving at this birdy area we were greeted by flocks of rasping Red-flanked Lorikeets that obliged for a change and alighted in the nearby flowering trees where they showed impeccably well and even posed for photographic opportunities. A few meters further on we found a Cinnamon-breasted (Obi) Whistler feeding at eye-level only a few meters away. Fantastic! A very handsome Cinnamon-bellied Imperial Pigeon was then found sitting motionless in a fruiting tree and a little further on we enjoyed perched views of both Carunculated and Black-naped Fruit Doves. Awesome stuff! With many of the morning’s targets already in the bag, we tried to push on higher to the altitude where we might find two of the island’s least known species: the recently split Obi White-eye and Bacan Myzomela, a species otherwise shared with the nearby island of Bacan. However, the track petered out into an indistinct foot-path only a little higher up and seemed to flatten out (not what you want to see when you’re trying to get higher as quickly as possible!) and continue into more heavily degraded scrub. Alas, we were only at a mere two hundred meters in elevation at this point and therefore still way below the possible lowest altitudinal range of these two species so with only a few hours left of the morning we decided the wisest move would be to turn around then and there and begin making our way back down to the awaiting vehicles. The return journey gave us better views of Moluccan Monarch, Hair-crested (Obi Spangled) Drongo and Carunculated Fruit Dove, which was the perfect way to
end our time on Obi.

We began the journey towards the much larger island of Seram in the late morning but since the daylight part of the journey took us through shallow water close to shore as we skirted the east coast of Obi, we saw very little in the way of seabirds and cetaceans and in the early morning of the next day we arrived in Sawai Bay on the northern coast of Seram and our base for the next three days.

Ornithologically speaking Seram is a very interesting island as it harbours a huge number of endemic and near-endemic birds making it one of the Molucca’s most desirable birding localities. However, the island’s almost untouched and seemingly endless and amazingly accessible montane forests also happen to harbour some of the lowest densities of birds and highest densities of Cicadas of any place on Earth. This makes for some seriously slow and challenging birding at this critical elevation for so many of Seram’s endemics! Therefore with so many endemics and specialties on offer, and with so few birds around (at least in the highlands) it goes without saying that almost any bird that you actually encounter is a gem of a species!

Our first morning on the island saw us birding the lowland forest along the Sawai access road. The birding was fabulous and we very quickly made a massive dent into the target list! We were immediately swamped with new birds upon exiting the vehicles at our scheduled stop with Seram Golden Bulbul, Seram Imperial Pigeon, Red Lory, Ashy Flowerpecker, Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove, the scarce Moluccan Cuckooshrike and Grey-collared Oriole all on show within the first fifteen minutes. What a sublime start! A little further down the road we found a pair of brilliant Lazuli Kingfisher, a lovely pair of Salmon-crested Cockatoo, a perched Pacific Baza and the tiny Violet Crow. In the mid-morning, when it became too hot at sea level, we drove higher up along the Trans-Seram Hi-way into the Manusela National Park. After negotiating some roadworks we arrived near the top of the first pass and walked downhill for an hour to see what high altitude species we might be able to capture before
lunch. Three Seram Mountain Pigeons made an appearance which was great and we also enjoyed our first of many Island (Seram) Leaf Warblers. A Moluccan Cuckoo called oh so close but would not show itself and would just have to wait until another day.

What an amazing morning it had been and we returned to the ship for lunch feeling very satisfied with our first morning’s efforts. Returning in the afternoon we birded the section of road just below the entrance to the National Park with our primary aim being the elusive and sought-after endemic Long-crested Myna. The afternoon began in fine form with several cooperative Seram Friarbirds showing well for all. Thereafter we admired two very interesting and as yet unidentified Cuscus right next to the road. A Great-billed Parrot perched up for great scope views and a male Pale Cicadabird was also well spotted. Eventually in the late afternoon our local guide, Pak Fino heard the calls of a Long-crested Myna and with some scanning managed to locate it in the treetops. Unfortunately, this particular individual was not very cooperative and disappeared before everyone managed to lay eyes on this great-looking endemic. Fortunately though, we managed to find several more very well behaved individuals a little further down the road. We also encountered two very unique looking Cuscus individuals along this section of the road, the identities of which are still up in the air. This evening we staked out a pair of Hantu (Seram) Boobook that showed very well after a few minutes of searching just after dusk. A fantastic end to a marvellous day in the field and with every single lowland species in the bag we were afforded the luxury of being able to spend the next two full days scouring the beautiful high altitude forests for the remaining highland endemics.

The quest was on and after a bright and early start the next morning we wound our way up towards the top of the first pass within Manusela National Park to start making a dent into Seram’s highland endemics. Wakolo (Seram) Myzomela was first to make an appearance with several birds singing from the treetops. A Rufous-necked Sparrowhawk was a
brilliant find thereafter and a lifer for all! Several Seram Mountain Pigeons were seen in flight overhead as was a screeching pair of Blue-eared Lory and regular pairs of Red Lory. Continuing down the far side of the pass we hit a bit of a brick wall with the rain just as a Streak-breasted Fantail was located and a Cinnamon-chested Flycatcher uttered a few notes but a juvenile Black Eagle was a nice addition. After a lengthy lull in the birding activity we finally located a small mixed flock that harboured a male Yellow-throated (Moluccan) Whistler, another Streak-breasted Fantail and a Drab Whistler. Just as we were about to call an end to the morning a flock of Seram White-eye was found and was a much-appreciated end to a fairly challenging morning’s birding.

We departed the highlands of Seram and returned to the Seahorse where we did a quick turnaround and were back on the zodiacs and cruising out to a nearby small island and adjacent sand-spit where we were extremely fortunate last year to find the long-staying Chinese Crested Tern that Craig Robson had so brilliantly picked up a few years prior. As we neared the sandbar we could see that our timing was absolutely perfect and the spit was laden with Greater Crested Terns. Suddenly, as if one of the Greater Cresteds had been splashed with white paint, the glowing white lump of a Chinese Crested Tern could immediately be seen standing out from the rest of the terns like a saw thumb. The bird had returned once again! What a feeling! What a truly incredible feeling and celebrations all around as we gawked and exclaimed over this critically endangered world rarity. On another all-time high we returned to the Seahorse for another delicious lunch.

In the afternoon we returned to the high-altitude forest and worked a different stretch of the road but birds were almost non-existent and we only managed to squeeze out a pair and juvenile Turquoise (Warbling) Flycatcher, a brief Cinnamon-chested Flycatcher for some, and a pleasantly confiding Moluccan Cuckoo that at least made the afternoon worthwhile.

With one more day remaining we tried our best at the remaining high altitude specialities with some success. We quickly managed to locate a Seram Honeyeater in an area of flowering trees.
Thereafter we found more Yellow-throated and Drab Whistlers, Streak-breasted Fantails, Wakolo Myzomelas, Pale Cicadabids, Seram Golden Bulbuls, another Violet Crow and Turquoise Flycatcher. Further down the road we encountered a Drab Myzomela that showed briefly before disappearing but the remainder of the morning produced little else except for the incessant drone of cicadas. Returning to the same general area in the afternoon we were delighted to finally find the very rare and endangered Purple-naped Lory, one of Seram’s rarest endemics and a fine way to end our time on the island.

We departed Sawai Bay in the early evening and began cruising west towards the tiny island of Boano, situated off Seram’s north-western coast and our destination for the next day.

The trip to Boano took a lot longer than it should have and could only have been attributed to the fair swell and rather choppy seas that we experienced during the night. Nevertheless, we arrived safely in the beautiful Huhua bay and estuary in the mid-morning with enough time to spend two sessions on the island in search of Boano’s only endemic, the very little known Black-chinned (Boano) Monarch, another Indonesian endemic that has previously been seen by very few people. We were also on the hunt for two other island targets: the small-island specialist Island Monarch and a potential split in the form of Seram Northern Fantail. It was already rather late and hot though by the time we reached the small village of Huhua and we saw and heard very little along the trail behind the village for the first hour or so other than a handsome Common Paradise Kingfisher. Just as we were about to call an end to a hot and rather unproductive morning we found a small mixed flock that harboured four species, three of which were our targets on Boano! We birded the flock that was totally silent and rather unobtrusive for quite some time and in so doing managed to obtain brief views of all four species. Some folks were fortunate and managed to get onto all of the target species while others were less fortunate and missed a few of them and so we returned to the island after lunch to try our luck in the late afternoon. This worked like a charm and what a difference the time of day and change in

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temperature made as we easily found and obtained excellent views of Black-chinned Monarch, as well as an unusually showy Grey’s Grasshopper Warbler that was a wonderful and unexpected bonus! Those who did not return to the island embarked on some snorkelling and were rewarded with point-blank views of a sea snake or took a short boat trip around the edge of the island where they found Seram and Pied Imperial Pigeons.

Just before dusk we departed Boano and continued the journey west and then south towards the small offshore island of Ambon. We cruised all night and hit some serious swell and choppy seas at one stage which made sleeping a real challenge and these conditions also delayed our arrival time at Telehu by a few hours. Nevertheless, we arrived safely at the small coastal village of Telehu in the mid-morning and we soon found ourselves on land and searching a small area of secondary forest near the edge of town for the island’s only endemic, the Ambon White-eye. This attractive white-eye cooperated very nicely and was located almost immediately after arriving at the site. With the target species under the belt we could simply enjoy some leisurely birding along the road and this turned up another Northern (Seram) Fantail, as well as a Spectacled Monarch. Thereafter we made our way towards a small lake near Ambon Airport. We spent the next hour or so scouring the lake and this yielded a number of new trip birds that included Tricolored and Australasian Grebes, Little Black Cormorant, Pacific Golden Plover, Red-necked Stint, Wood Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Oriental Pratincole, Gull-billed Tern and Eastern Yellow Wagtail. After another great morning’s birding we returned to the wonderful Seahorse one last time before saying our farewells to our team members that were not participating on the Buru Extension and were sadly leaving us to return home, as well as the fabulous crew that had been so terrific throughout the past twelve days.

Seram White-eye by Glen Valentine

Seram Mountain Pigeon by Glen Valentine
Our post-tour extension to the remote and seldom birded island of Buru to the west of Ambon and Seram kicked off with an overnight ferry ride from Ambon City to the town of Namlea on Buru’s north-east coast. The ferry ride was actually fairly comfortable and uneventful and we arrived in Namlea and boarded our awaiting vehicles in the early morning well before it was light. We then drove along the northern coast of the island to our very comfortable but rather bizarre hotel situated on Buru’s north-western coastline. We settled in and had a quick breakfast before heading out towards the coastal village of Bara for some introductory birding in the last few patches of lowland forest that has largely been degraded in this accessible part of the island.

The birding around Bara was quite good though, especially considering that is was already mid-morning and therefore quite hot and humid. We were happy with our finds and thrilled to obtain superb views of Black-tipped Monarch, Black-eared Oriole, Buru Golden Bulbul and Flame-breasted Flowerpecker, as well as Claret-breasted Fruit Dove, Red Lory, Coconut Lorikeet, Black Eagle, Eastern Osprey, Common Emerald Dove, Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove and Peregrine Falcon.

The afternoon was spent in higher altitude forest along the Wanlama Logging Road. Birding here was fairly quiet due
to the dense cloud cover and fog but we still managed to find Spotted Kestrel, Moluccan King Parrot, Spectacled Imperial Pigeon, Collared Kingfisher, Pale Cicadabird, Drab Whistler and Northern (Buru) Fantail. A pair of Buru White-eyes that fed close-by was probably the best bird of the afternoon and a great way to end a good introductory day to Buru.

Over the course of the next three days we worked most altitudes along the Wanlama Logging Road from the highest point at around 1400m to the lower sections at 600m and we also returned to the Bara area on several occasions.

As with Seram, the birding can be slow at times but is on the whole much birdier, at least in the highlands and we were extremely pleased with our efforts during most sessions.

The high altitude forest between 1200 and 1400m proved extremely productive for us and our first morning in this zone gave us a number of Buru’s toughest endemics such as the scarce Buru Cuckooshrike, the nomadic and erratic Buru Honeyeater and Streak-breasted Jungle (Buru Warbling) Flycatcher. Also in attendance were Wakolo (Buru) Myzomela, Black-faced Friarbird, White-naped Monarch and Island (Buru) Leaf Warbler. Several South Moluccan Pittas called tantalizingly close-by but sadly refused to come closer or could not be seen in the extremely dense forest understory.

Spot-lighting and pre-dawn owling sessions also proved worthwhile as we managed to track down the rare Moluccan (Lesser) Masked Owl, Moluccan Scops Owl and Large-tailed Nightjar but the rare Buru race of Hantu Boobook was sadly just heard briefly on one morning.

Our time in the lowlands around Bara produced all of the same species seen the first morning there, as well as Superb Fruit Dove, Buru Racket-tail, Buru Mountain Pigeon, a female White-bibbed Fruit Dove, Lesser Coucal, Red-cheeked and Great-billed Parrots, another three Buru Cuckooshrikes, (Buru) Spangled Drongo, Spectacled Monarch, Moluccan Flycatcher and Olive-backed (Clementia’s) Sunbird but sadly no Buru Green Pigeon.
On our third morning on the island we decided to strike out very early on the long drive to the highest point on the Wanlama Logging Track and embarked on the hike up to higher altitudes in search of one of Buru’s least known and strangest birds, the Madanga. The drive was a long and bumpy one and our drivers did well to negotiate the tricky patches and rickety stream crossings and we finally arrived at the base of the trail just after sunrise. After a quick coffee and round of snacks that coincided with a flock of Buru Racket-tail squawking by overhead, we started up the fairly steep and muddy trail into the stunted elfin forest that dominates Buru’s higher altitudes above 1500m. This stunted, moss-clad forest with a dense vine-covered understory is the habitat of this once-mythical creature – the Madanga. We went at a fairly steady pace thanks to our fit and able group and it took us just over an hour to reach the habitat and altitude where we could start seeing this species. We did make a few stops en route but the general birding was quiet and the only species of interest along the way was a Chestnut-backed Bush (Buru Grasshopper) Warbler that was eventually coaxed out for a couple of very brief views.

I’d just completed prepping the group for what we were looking for and the game-plan but was well aware that we were still a good 300m in distance and around 50m lower in elevation from where we’d encountered the pair of Madanga on last year’s trip when the distinctive calls of Island Leaf Warbler and Drab Whistler pierced the air…a mixed flock! This could be our chance! We hastily made our way through the dense undergrowth laden with lawyer vines to where the vocalizing activity was and there it was, feeding like an Irit or a nuthatch was the quarry, the legendary Madanga! Unbelievable! It took a few minutes to get everyone onto the bird but eventually we were all treated to amazing and prolonged views of this absolute mega! To my knowledge, we are only the third birding group (the second being our 2016 group!) to have ever seen this species with less than 40 people having ever laid eyes on the Madanga! Our return journey was punctuated by a handsome Tawny-backed Fantail and several male Snowy-browed Flycatchers and we arrived back at the vehicles just as the rain set in.
and in time for a tasty field lunch.

After lunch the rain cleared somewhat and we took a stroll along the road before the rain set in again and we were forced to make our way to lower altitude. This short amble along the road was, however, an immensely successful one as we located a pair of Buru Thrush that were rearing a very cooperative youngster. We also found a mixed flock that held another Tawny-backed Fantail, Yellow-throated and Drab Whistlers, a confiding and unusually showy pair of Mountain Tailorbirds (Leaftoiler), Buru and Mountain White-eyes, Northern (Buru) Fantail and Buru Golden Bulbul.

On our final afternoon during our journey back to Namlea we made a short stop in at a small lake near the airport where we added Australasian Darter and Purple Heron and also found several Tricolored Grebes, Little Pied and Little Black Cormorants and a perched Channel-billed Cuckoo.

After a delicious farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Namlea we boarded the ferry back to Ambon where this epic birding adventure through West Papua and the northern and central Moluccas of Indonesia came to an end.

Thank you to everyone involved who made this an unforgettable trip and such a resounding success! Until next time…

Annotated List of species recorded

Birds:

Total species recorded on both the main West Papuan Islands Cruise tour and Buru Extension (according to IOC): 274 (255 seen and 19 heard only)

Total species recorded on the main tour, Buru Extension and pre-tour days (according to IOC): 293 (271 seen & 22 heard only)

Number of species recorded only on Buru Extension: 31

Number of species seen only on Buru Extension: 31
Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2017. IOC World Bird List (v 7.2).

Note:
- Species in italics were seen only on the Buru Extension
- Species in italics and underlined were seen only on the extra days around Sorong prior to the start of the main tour
- A notes section appears where the taxonomy differs between the region’s major authorities: IOC, Clements and the new Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago field guide
- Alternative names appear in brackets
- H = Species which were heard only
- E = Indonesian endemic
- IUCN codes: CR = Critically endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near Threatened, DD = Data Deficient
- BIA = The new field guide to the Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago.

DUCKS, GEESE WATERFOWL  ANATIDAE

**Spotted Whistling Duck**  *Dendrocygna guttata*
Singletons seen in flight at the Sorong mangroves in the late afternoon on two visits.

**Raja Shelduck**  *Tadorna radjah*
Two in flight at dusk at Kris and another two perched up on Agusta.

MEGAPODES  MEGAPODIIDAE

**Red-billed Brushturkey (H) - E**  *Talegalla cvieri*
Several heard, including one very close by in the Tamrau lowlands. A leaders-only sighting during the pre-tour days.

**Dusky Megapode (Scrubfowl)**  *Megapodius freycinet*
Four seen on Pulau Kri and another two on Kofiau. Also heard and seen briefly by Frank on Buru.

*NOTE: BIA treats populations of Megapodius on Seram and Buru as Forsten’s Scrubfowl. IOC does not accept this split.*

SHEARWATERS & PETRELS  PROCELLARIIDAE

**Streaked Shearwater**  *Calonectris leucomelas*
Around 140 of these northern migrants seen well as we cruised from Sorong towards Waigeo and ca. 40 as we cruised from the Raja Ampats to Kofiau.

**Wedge-tailed Shearwater**  *Ardenna pacifica*
Three seen at sea between Raja Ampats and Kofiau.

GREBES  PODICIPEDIIDAE

**Tricolored Grebe**  *Tachybaptus tricolor*
Four at a lake near Ambon Airport and another 30 at the airport lake near Namlea, Buru.

*NOTE: IOC recently split Little Grebe into two species: Little and Tricolored Grebes respectively.*

**Australasian Grebe**  *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*
One in breeding plumage, on a small lake near Ambon Airport.
**HERONS, EGRETS & BITTENS ARDEIDAE**

**Striated Heron**  
_Butorides striata_  
A total of five seen during the main tour.  
*NOTE:* Striated Heron was recently split into three species: Green, Lava and Striated (Green-backed) Herons respectively.

**Eastern Cattle Egret**  
_Bubulcus coromandus_  
Seen on four dates.  
*NOTE:* IOC splits Cattle Egret into two species: Eastern and Western Cattle Egrets respectively but Clements does not yet accept this split.

**Great-billed Heron**  
_Ardea sumatrana_  
A great surprise as we flushed one from a forested island within the Kari Raja Island chain near Waigeo.

**Purple Heron**  
_Ardea purpurea_  
One on a small forest-lined lake near Namlea, Buru.

**Little Egret**  
_Egretta garzetta_  
Seen on three dates.

**Pacific Reef Heron (Egret)**  
_Egretta sacra_  
Small numbers in the Raja Ampats and then again on Boano.

**FRIGATEBIRDS FREGATIDAE**

**Great Frigatebird**  
_Fregata minor_  
One immature bird seen, photographed and later identified after thoroughly going through several references on this confusing group.

**Lesser Frigatebird**  
_Fregata ariel_  
Huge numbers seen throughout the tour.

**BOOBIES & GANNETS SULIDAE**

**Brown Booby**  
_Sula leucogaster_  
Commonly seen throughout the tour.

**CORMORANTS & SHAGS PHALACROCORACIDAE**

**Little Pied Cormorant**  
_Microcarbo melanoleucos_  
A few in the Raja Ampats and another two at the lake near Namlea, Buru.

**Little Black Cormorant**  
_Phalacrocorax sulcirostris_  
Around 20 at the lake near Ambon Airport and several more on Buru.

**ANHINGAS ANHINGIDAE**

**Australasian Darter**  
_Anhinga novaehollandiae_  
Two at a small, forest-lined lake near Namlea, Buru.  
*NOTE:* BIA refers to this taxon as Australian Darter. Both Clements and IOC now accept the splitting of Anhinga (Darter) into four distinct species: African, Oriental and Australasian Darters and Anhinga respectively.

**OSPREY PANDIONIDAE**

**Eastern Osprey**  
_Pandion (haliaetus) cristatus_  
One in Kaboe Bay, Waigeo with further regular sightings in Buru’s lowlands.  
*NOTES:* BIA lumps the Osprey as one species _P. haliaetus_. IOC accepts the Osprey split as Eastern and Western Osprey respectively but Clements does not accept this split.
**HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES ACCIPITRIDAE**

**Pacific Baza**  
Aviceda subcristata  
Seen on the pre-tour days and then again in the Seram lowlands.

**Black Eagle**  
Ictinaetus malaiensis  
Several seen on Seram and then again on Buru.

**Pygmy Eagle**  
Hieraaetus weiskei  
Good flight views of one on Kofiau.  
*NOTE: IOC recently recognized the split of Little Eagle into two species: Little and Pygmy Eagles respectively.*

**Chinese Sparrowhawk (Goshawk)**  
Accipiter soloensis  
A massive surprise on both Kofiau and Buru islands! Lovely adults seen on both occasions!

**Variable (Varied) Goshawk**  
Accipiter hiogaster  
Fairly regular sightings throughout the Raja Ampats and again on Seram.  
*NOTE: BIA places this taxon in Tachyspiza and refers to it as Varied Goshawk.*

**Grey-headed Goshawk**  
Accipiter poliocephalus  
Seen on the pre-tour days around Sorong and again on the main tour.

**Rufous-necked Sparrowhawk - NT**  
Accipiter erythrauchen  
One seen briefly perched and then in flight and calling at the top of the 1st Pass in Manusela NP, Seram.  
*NOTE: The subspecies we saw on Seram is ceramensis.*

**Brahminy Kite**  
Haliastur indus  
Widespread and seen on most days.

**White-bellied Sea Eagle**  
Haliaeetus leucogaster  
Several seen in the Raja Ampats and on Obi.

**Grey-faced Buzzard**  
Butastur indicus  
Along with the accompanying Chinese Sparrowhawk, this was another major surprise on Kofiau!

**RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS RALLIDAE**

**Barred Rail**  
Gallirallus torquatus  
Fabulous views of one at the edge of the mangroves near Sorong during our pre-tour days in the area.

**Buff-banded Rail**  
Gallirallus philippensis  
Excellent views of one at dusk during the pre-tour days near Sorong.

**White-breasted Waterhen**  
Amaurornis phoenicurus  
One seen at a small pond on Seram.

**THICK-KNEES BURHINIDAE**

**Beach Stone-curlew (Thick-knee) – NT**  
Esacus magnirostris  
A pair was seen at Merpati Island in the Raja Ampats.

**PLOVERS & LAPWINGS SCOLOPACIDAE**

**Pacific Golden Plover**  
Pluvialis fulva  
Four seen at the lake near Ambon Airport.

**SANDPIPERS & ALLIES SCOLOPACIDAE**

**Whimbrel**  
Numenius phaeopus
Seen on both pre-tour days in the mangroves near Sorong and then again on Seram.

**Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*
One bird flew past half of the group while boating back to the ship from the beach on Waigeo.

**Red-necked Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*
At least two seen at the small lake near Ambon Airport.

**Moluccan (Obi) Woodcock – E - EN** *Scolopax rochussenii*
Extraordinary! We enjoyed point-blank views of one in flight at dusk as it cruised past low over our heads! Fabulous!

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*
Seen on three dates.

**Grey-tailed Tattler** *Tringa brevipes*
One seen on one of the pre-tour days near Sorong and another found in the Raja Ampats.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*
Several seen on the lake near Ambon Airport.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*
At least four seen at the lake near Ambon Airport.

**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*
Clearly a large part of the area we traversed forms a major wintering ground for this Palearctic breeder. We encountered several hundred of these waders on most sea-cruising days with a high of around 700 birds between Merpati and Kofiau.

**PRATINCOLES GLAREOLIDAE**

**Oriental Pratincole** *Glareola maldivarum*
A singleton was seen well at the lake near Ambon Airport.

**GULLS, TERNs & SKIMMERS STERNIDAE**

**Brown Noddy** *Anous stolidus*
One seen while cruising towards Kofiau.

**Black Noddy** *Anous minutus*
One seen while cruising towards Waigeo.

**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*
Good flight views enjoyed of this species at the lake near Ambon Airport.

**Greater Crested (Swift) Tern** *Thalasseus bergii*
Widespread and generally common and seen on most dates.

**Chinese Crested Tern - CR** *Thalasseus bernsteinii*
Known from just a single old specimen collected near Halmahera (year 1861), this severely endangered species was recently sighted off Seram during four Palearctic winters and was found on last year’s trip. We investigated the same sandbar of Sawai, Seram and there to our delight, standing out among the covey of Crested Terns was our quarry. Absolutely magnificent! Our thanks again to Craig Robson for so generously sharing this exciting find in a previous year’s trip report.

**Bridled Tern** *Onychoprion anaethetus*
Good numbers seen this year throughout the cruise.

**Sooty Tern** *Onychoprion fuscatus*
One seen amongst the latter species while cruising towards Kofiau.

**Black-naped Tern** *Sterna sumatrana*
A total of two birds seen amongst feeding frenzies made up mostly of other tern species, frigatebirds and Streaked Shearwaters.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*
Fair numbers seen on four dates.

**SKUAS & JAEGERS STERCORARIDAE**

*Pomarine Jaeger (Skua)*  
*Stercorarius pomarinus*  
A total of four were seen while cruising within the Raja Ampats.

**PIGEONS & DOVES COLUMBIDAE**

*Rock Dove - I*  
*Columba livia*  
A few around Ambon City.

*Spotted Dove - I*  
*Streptopelia chinensis*  
Seen on a few occasions in the Buru lowlands.

*Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove*  
*Macropygia amboinensis*  
Commonly seen on Seram and Buru.

*N0TE: BIA splits this taxon into seven or eight species. Both Clements and IOC at least accept the splits of Sultan’s and Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove’s from the original Brown (Slender-billed) Cuckoo-Dove.*

*Sultan’s Cuckoo-Dove*  
*Macropygia doreya*  
Commonly seen on mainland New Guinea, in the Raja Ampats and on Obi.

*N0TE: See above.*

*Common Emerald Dove*  
*Chalcophaps indica*  
One seen on Seram with further sightings in the Buru lowlands.

*N0TE: Most authorities now recognize the splitting of Common Emerald Dove into two species: Common (Asian) and Pacific Emerald Doves respectively.*

*Stephan’s Emerald (Ground) Dove*  
*Chalcophaps stephani*  
Flybys of single birds on Waigeo.

*Western Crowned Pigeon (H) - VU*  
*Goura cristata*  
We put in some serious effort for this mega species on Waigeo but unfortunately just heard one in the distance.

*Buru Green Pigeon (H) – E - NT*  
*Treron aromaticus*  
We put in some serious time and effort for this rare, lowland endemic but unfortunately we only managed to hear it on one occasion. Our local guide, Fino did however find two birds at a fruiting tree but they had disappeared by the time we arrived a mere two minutes later! Very frustrating indeed!

*N0TE: Formerly lumped under the wide-ranging Pomadour Pigeon Treron pompadora but now split by most authorities.*

*Scarlet-breasted Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus bernsteinii*  
Brief but good views of one of these gorgeous doves in the forested hills of Obi.

*Wompoo Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus magnificus*  
Heard in the Tamrau lowlands and on Waigeo and one seen in flight near Sorong.

*Pink-spotted Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus perlatus*  
Superb scope views of one in the forested hills above Sorong.

*Orange-fronted Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*  
Fabulous views of several birds in the mangroves near Sorong during the pre-tour days.

*Superb Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus superbus*  
Absolutely knock-out views of this beautiful dove on Obi. Further good views were had on Buru.

*Coroneted Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus coronulatus*  
A lucky find on one of the pre-tour days in the Tamrau Lowlands!

*N0TE: The distinctive subspecies that we saw is geminus.*

*Beautiful Fruit Dove*  
*Ptilinopus pulchellus*  
Good views of one of the Tamrau Lowlands near Sorong and again on Waigeo.
White-bibbed (Small Island) Fruit Dove  *Ptilinopus rivoli*

Unusually large numbers of this usually scarce and always shy species were found on Kofiau. A male was later seen briefly on Seram and another female posed in the scopes for extended views on Buru.

*NOTE:* Birds of New Guinea by Pratt and Beehler splits White-bibbed Fruit Dove into three species: Moluccan, White-bibbed and Mountain Fruit Doves respectively. We encountered *P. prasinorrhous* (Moluccan Fruit Dove) during the tour. BIA recognises only one species: White-bibbed Fruit Dove but suggests splitting into several species and names the subspecies we saw as Small-island Fruit Dove. Neither IOC nor Clements accept these splits.

Claret-breasted Fruit Dove  *Ptilinopus viridis*

First seen on Kofiau with regular sightings thereafter. A very handsome dove!

Orange-bellied Fruit Dove  *Ptilinopus iozonus*

Commonly seen in the forested hills above Sorong and in the Tamrau Lowlands.

Carunculated Fruit Dove – E  *Ptilinopus granulifrons*

After only achieving very brief perched views of one of these highly sought after species on our first day on Obi it was with enormous relief and immense pleasure on our final morning on Obi, that we encountered around 10 of these beauties, several of which were admired in the scopes.

Black-naped Fruit Dove  *Ptilinopus melanospilus*

A total of six birds (males and females) were seen during our time on Obi.

Dwarf Fruit Dove  *Ptilinopus nainus*

Incredible spotting by Romney produced this tiny little gem at the top of a tall, dense tree on Waigeo.

Spectacled (Moluccan) Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula perspicillata*

Commonly seen on Obi and Buru.

Seram Imperial Pigeon - E  *Ducula negeleta*

Small numbers seen on Seram.

*NOTE:* Recently split from the latter species.

Spice Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula myristicivora*

Large numbers (around 80 birds) seen in the Kari Raja islands off Waigeo with a few also seen on Agusta and Merpati islands.

*NOTE:* Birds of New Guinea by Pratt & Beehler splits *myristicivora* into two species: Spice Imperial Pigeon *D. myristicivora* and Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *D. geelvinkiana*.

Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula rufigaster*

Heard on a few occasions in the forests around Sorong and on Waigeo.

Cinnamon-bellied Imperial Pigeon - E  *Ducula basilica*

A total of four of these handsome pigeons that included a fabulous perched bird were seen on Obi.

*NOTE:* We saw the distinctive and endemic obiensis subspecies.

Pinon’s Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula pinon*

Small numbers seen around Sorong and on Waigeo.

Collared Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula mullerii*

Small numbers seen in the mangroves near Sorong during the pre-tour days.

Zoe’s Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula zoeeae*

Two seen in the forests around Sorong.

Pied Imperial Pigeon  *Ducula bicolor*

Two seen near Sorong with further encounters on Seram and Buru.

*NOTE:* This group was recently split into three species: Pied, Torresian and Yellowish Imperial Pigeons respectively.

Papuan Mountain Pigeon  *Gymnophaps albertissii*

A brief fly-over of three birds in the Tamrau Lowlands.

Buru Mountain Pigeon - E  *Gymnophaps mada*
Small numbers of this “montane” species were surprisingly found in the Buru lowlands around Bara.

**Seram Mountain Pigeon - E** *Gymnophaps stalkeri*
Small numbers were found in the Seram highlands.

**CUCKOOS CUCULIDAE**

**Ivory-billed (Greater Black) Coucal (H) - NE** *Centropus menbeki*
Heard in the Tamrau lowlands.

**Lesser Coucal** *Centropus bengalensis*
Heard on Seram and later seen a few times in the Buru lowlands.

**Black-billed (Lesser Black) Coucal** *Centropus bernsteini*
One seen briefly in the Tamrau Lowlands during the main tour with an excellent sighting in the same area during the pre-tour days.

**Dwarf Koel** *Microdynamis parva*
One heard in the hills above Sorong.

**Pacific (Eastern) Koel** *Eudynamys orientalis*
One male seen in flight in the Tamrau Lowlands with further vocalizing birds on Seram and Buru.

**Asian Koel (H)** *Eudynamys scolopaceus*
This species, that is unknown from Obi according to the BIA field guide, was heard on a few occasions during our time on the island. Since this species is known from Halmahera while the latter species is restricted to the South Moluccas within the Maluku region, it is almost certain that the vocalizing birds on Obi refer to Asian Koel rather than Pacific Koel.

**Channel-billed Cuckoo** *Scythrops novaehollandiae*
A few seen in flight in the Tamrau lowlands and another individual seen perched at the edge of a lake near Namlea, Buru.

**Little Bronze Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx minutillus*
Heard in the forest near Sorong and one seen on Kofiau.

**Brush Cuckoo** *Cacomantis variolosus*
One seen in flight in the Tamrau Lowlands and heard almost daily during the first week of the trip.

**Moluccan (Brush) Cuckoo – E - NT** *Cacomantis aeruginosus*
After hearing and struggling to see this localized species we were finally rewarded with fabulous perched views of a single bird perched in the open right next to the road that refused to budge. Seen on Seram and heard on Buru. Brilliant!

**NOTE:**

**BARN-OWLS TYTONIDAE**

**Moluccan (Lesser/Australasian) Masked Owl – E - DD** *Tyto sororcula*
Fabulous views in degraded hill forest on Buru. Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the Buru Extension!

**NOTE:** BIA now lumps this taxon with Australasian Masked Owl Tyto novaehollandiae. Both IOC and Clements recognise this species as distinct from the mainland Australian and Tasmanian varieties.

**OWLS STRIGIDAE**

**Moluccan Scops Owl** *Otus magicus*
Heard on Obi and Buru and finally seen while spot-lighting pre-dawn on Buru. Excellent views of a pair!
NOTE: There are many subspecies and the one we saw on Buru refers to Bouruensis.

**Barking Owl** — *Ninox connivens*

We were delighted and extremely fortunate to have encountered this scarce owl during the late afternoon on Obi.

*NOTE:* We saw the subspecies *rufostrigata* on Obi.

**Hantu (Seram) Boobook — E** — *Ninox squamiphila*

Excellent views of this scarce and localized owl in the Seram lowlands.

*NOTE:* BIA splits this taxon into two species: Seram Boobook *Ninox squamiphila* and Buru Boobook *N. hantu*. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise this split.

**Papuan Boobook — NE** — *Ninox theomacha*

Excellent perched views of this species just before our second morning on Waigeo.

**FROGMOUTHS** **PODARGIDAE**

Marbled Frogmouth (H) — *Podargus ocellatus*

Heard pre-dawn on both mornings on Waigeo.

**NIGHTJARS & ALLIES** **CAPRIMULGIDAE**

Large-tailed Nightjar — *Caprimulgus macrurus*

Heard on Obi at dusk and then seen on consecutive mornings on Buru.

**TREESWIFTS** **HEMIPROCNIDAE**

Moustached Treeswift — *Hemiprocne mystacea*

These handsome birds were seen on 8 dates.

**SWIFTS** **APODIDAE**

Glossy Swiftlet — *Collocalia esculenta*

Commonly seen throughout.

**Seram Swiftlet— E** — *Aerodramus ceramensis*

Commonly seen throughout Seram and Buru.

Uniform Swiftlet — *Aerodramus vanikorensis*

Seen commonly during the first week.

**Papuan (Spinetail) Spine-tailed Swift** — *Mearnsia novaeguineae*

At least two birds seen on one of the pre-tour days in the forested hills above Sorong.

**White-throated Needletail** — *Hirundapus caudacutus*

One on Waigeo, several on Obi and Seram and another one on Buru.

**Pacific Swift** — *Apus pacificus*

At least 10 seen overhead during a short morning’s walk around Ambon City during our final morning of the trip.

*NOTE:*

**ROLLERS** **CORACIIDAE**

Oriental Dollarbird — *Eurystomus orientalis*

Two on Waigeo and another one on Kofiau.

**KINGFISHERS** **ALCEDINIDAE**

Hook-billed Kingfisher (H) — *Melidora macrorrhina*

Heard once at dawn on Waigeo.

Common Paradise Kingfisher — *Tanysiptera galatea*
Impressively common in the Waigeo forests where seen well a few times. Also heard on Obi and seen on Boano.  

\textit{NOTE:} Many distinctive subspecies exist and we encountered Boanensis on Boano and galatea on Waigeo.

\textbf{Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher – E - EN} \quad \textit{Tanysiptera elliotti}

Undoubtedly this was one of THE highlights of the entire trip! We were only the third group of birders to see this spectacular species in the wild and boy did we see it well!

\textbf{Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher – NE} \quad \textit{Tanysiptera nympha}

We managed to obtain superb scope views of this range-restricted and very rarely seen species in the Tamrau Lowlands. A spectacular bird!

\textbf{Rufous-bellied Kookaburra} \quad \textit{Dacelo gaudichaud}

Heard above Sorong and seen on Waigeo.

\textbf{Blue-black Kingfisher – NE - DD} \quad \textit{Todiramphus nigrocyaneus}

This very little known species was seen well in flight in the mangroves near Sorong on both of our pre-tour visits there.  

\textit{NOTE:} Several distinctive subspecies. We encountered nigrocyaneus subspecies near Sorong.

\textbf{Blue-and-white Kingfisher - E} \quad \textit{Halcyon diops}

Fine views of three birds on consecutive days on Obi.

\textbf{Lazuli Kingfisher – E - NT} \quad \textit{Todiramphus lazuli}

Fantastic scope views of a gorgeous pair in the Seram lowlands.

\textbf{Collared Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Todiramphus chloris}

Moderately common in the upland forests of Buru – something of a surprise.  

\textit{NOTE:} Many distinctive subspecies, many of which have already been split into unique species. We encountered the chloris subspecies on Buru.

\textbf{Beach Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Todiramphus saurophagus}

First seen along the shores of the magical Kaboe Bay, Waigeo and thence on Kris, Agusta and Merpati Islands and finally one on Kofiau.

\textbf{Sacred Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Halcyon sanctus}

One seen on Kofiau and another one on Buru, near Namlea.

\textbf{Yellow-billed Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Syma torotoro}

Excellent views of one in the Tamrau Lowlands. Also heard throughout the forests around Sorong and on Waigeo.

\textbf{Common Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Alcedo atthis}

One on Kofiau and another on Obi.

\textbf{Buru Dwarf Kingfisher – E - NT} \quad \textit{Ceyx cajeli}

Some folks had a brief fly-by of this rare endemic while making a river crossing in the Buru lowlands.  

\textit{NOTE:} Variable Dwarf Kingfisher was recently split into several species that includes this and the next species.

\textbf{Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Ceyx solitarius}

Fabulous views of two birds: one in the Tamrau Lowlands and another on Waigeo.  

\textit{NOTE:} See above.

\textbf{Little Kingfisher} \quad \textit{Ceyx pusillus}

Excellent perched views of this tiny and rather elusive kingfisher in the mangroves near Sorong during one of our pre-tour days.

\textbf{HORNBILLS} \textit{BUCEROTIDAE}

\textbf{Blyth’s Hornbill} \quad \textit{Rhyticeros plicatus}

Commonly seen throughout the main tour.
FALCONS & CARACARAS FALCONIDAE

Spotted (Indonesian) Kestrel
Falco moluccensis
Fine views on 7 dates.

Oriental Hobby
Falco severus
This scarce falcon was seen hunting dragonflies at dusk on Obi. An awesome sighting!

Peregrine Falcon
Falco peregrinus
One bird was seen on consecutive days near Bara, Buru.

COCKATOOS CACATUIDAE

Palm Cockatoo
Probosciger aterrimus
Seen on several occasions around Sorong during the pre-tour days and then once on Waigeo while trekking for Western Crowned Pigeons.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Cacatua galerita
Several seen in the Tamrau Lowlands, on Waigeo and on Kofiau.

Salmon-crested Cockatoo – E - VU
Cactua moluccensis
Magnificent views of a pair of these endangered endemics near Sawai, Seram. Thereafter several sightings in the lowlands and mountains of Seram.

OLD WORLD PARROTS PSITTACULIDAE

Pesquet’s (New Guinea Vulturine) Parrot – VU Psitrichas fulgidus
This was another major bonus and surprise! A pair flew over the forested hills above Sorong on one of the pre-tour days, as well as during our afternoon there at the start of the main tour. A very rare and declining species throughout its limited range and a species that is virtually unknown from Bird’s Head/Vogelkop!

Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot
Micropsitta keiensis
Several seen in the Tamrau lowlands and another two on Kofiau.

Moluccan King Parrot
Alisterus amboinensis
Seen on the pre-tour days around Sorong. Also brief sightings had on Seram and better views later enjoyed on several days on Buru.

Buru Racket-tail - E
Prioniturus mada
Small numbers seen perched and in flight in the lowlands and highlands of Buru. A cracking endemic!

Eclectus Parrot
Eclectus roratus
These gaudy parrots were encountered regularly throughout the main tour.

Red-cheeked Parrot
Geoffroyus geoffroyi
Widespread and common on almost every island visited.

Great-billed Parrot
Tanygnathus megalorhynchos
What a truly fabulous creature. We enjoyed a wonderful experience watching a total of 300+ arriving in dribs and drabs to roost against a most wonderful sunset. We also had a few on Kofiau, Obi and Buru.

Red-flanked Lorikeet
Charmosyna placentis
After only seen this species briefly in flight on a few occasions we were delighted with multiple close perched views of dozens of these gorgeous little parrots in the forested hills of Obil.

Purple-naped Lory – E - VU
Lorius domicella
For years the Purple-naped Lory has been on the brink of extinction as a direct result of the bird trade. Happily, however, the efforts of various individuals including several whom we met on this
trip are slowly turning the situation around. Slowly but surely this lovely endemic appears to be coming back to life and as a result, we were able to enjoy fine scope views of a single bird on our final afternoon on Seram. Several birds were also heard during our time in the highland forests on the island.

**Black-capped Lory**  
*Lorius lorry*

This closely related species albeit with a much wider distribution is now being brutally hammered by the cage-bird industry. We were thus fortunate to enjoy fine views of this striking species in the Tamrau lowlands and in the forests of Waigeo.

**Black Lory - E**  
*Chalcopsitta atra*

A pair seen in flight during one of our pre-tour days and during the morning of the main tour in the Tamrau lowlands. A rare and localized parrot!

**Violet-necked (Scaled) Lory**  
*Eos squamata*

Four birds seen around the Kari Raja islands with a further three on Agusta island and three on Kofiau.

**Red Lory - E**  
*Eos bornea*

Regular sightings were enjoyed on Seram and Buru.

**Blue-eared Lory - E**  
*Eos semilarvata*

This rarely-seen, high altitude Seram specialty was seen in flight on at least three occasions at the top of the 1st pass in Manusela NP.

**Coconut Lorikeet**  
*Trichoglossus haematodus*

First seen in the Tamrau lowlands and thereafter we enjoyed regular sightings throughout Seram and Buru.

**Large Fig Parrot**  
*Psittaculirostris desmarestii*

Several seen during the pre-tour days and then a pair seen and heard in flight overhead during the first morning of the main tour in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**Orange-breasted Fig Parrot**  
*Cyclopsitta gulielmitertii*

Good flight views were had of a small flock in the mangroves near Sorong during one of the pre-tour days.

**South Moluccan Pitta (H) - E**  
*Erythropitta rubrinucha*

Heard on several occasions on Buru but despite our best efforts we were unable to see one.

**North Moluccan Pitta (H) - E**  
*Erythropitta rufiventris*

Heard on a few occasions on Obi but always too deep inside the forest to give it a realistic try.

**Papuan Pitta**  
*Erythropitta macklotii*
Everyone managed to eventually obtain excellent, close views of a very responsive pair in the Tamrau Lowlands.

*NOTE: See above.*

**Hooded Pitta (H) — *Pitta sordida***

Heard a few times in the forests around Sorong and again on Kofiau.

### BOWERBIRDS — PTILONORRHYNCHIDAE

**White-eared Catbird — *Ailuroedus buccoides***

This ultra-shy and very rarely seen species was quite incredibly seen very well but very briefly by absolute chance on Waigeo.

*NOTE: IOC now splits this group into three species: White-eared, Tan-capped and Fawn-breasted Catbirds respectively.*

### FAIRYWRENS — MALURIDAE

**Wallace’s Fairywren - NE — *Sipodotus wallacii***

A single bird was sighted up in the canopy in the Tamrau Lowlands on one of our pre-tour days.

**Emperor Fairywren - NE — *Malurus cyanoccephalus***

A single male was seen well but briefly and in fading light along the Sorong mangroves entrance road.

### HONEYEATERS — MELIPHAGIDAE

**Drab Myzomela - E — *Myzomela blasii***

A most appropriate epithet; we saw a single bird feeding on flowers up in the montane forest canopny on Seram.

**Ruby-throated Myzomela — *Myzomela eques***

A pair was seen well in the Tamrau Lowlands and another two were seen on Waigeo.

**Dusky Myzomela — *Myzomela obscura***

One in the Tamrau Lowlands and another 8 on Obi.

*NOTE: The rubrotincta subspecies we saw on Obi is endemic and visually distinct and may warrant full species status in future. None of the major authorities recognise this split as yet.*

**Wakolo Myzomela - E — *Myzomela wakoloensis***

Several seen on Seram and Buru.

*NOTE: BIA split this taxon into two species: Seram Myzomela Myzomela elizabethae and Buru Myzomela M. wakoloensis. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise these splits.*

**Green-backed Honeyeater — *Gylicichaera fallax***

Good views of a few in the forests around Sorong with a further sighting on Waigeo.

**Plain Honeyeater – NE — *Pycnopygius ixoides***

Two birds seen on both days around Sorong.

**Olive Honeyeater — *Lichmera argentrarius***

Large numbers (around 30 birds) seen on the supertramp islands that we visited in the Raja Ampats.

*NOTE: The Olive Honeyeaters we saw in the Raja Ampats are, according to K.D. Bishop, distinctive in appearance and voice from Olive Honeyeaters elsewhere but this is not mentioned or referred to elsewhere.*

**Buru Honeyeater - E — *Lichmera deningeri***

We were very fortunate to encounter one of these scarce and easily missed endemics in the highland forest on Buru.

**Seram Honeyeater - E — *Lichmera monticola***

Rather good views were eventually had of this relatively poorly known Seram upland endemic as one bird was watched foraging on red flowers up in the forest canopy edge.

**Spotted Honeyeater — *Xanthotis polygramma***

One at Pipa forest just above Sorong, three in the Tamrau Lowlands and another one on Waigeo.
Tawny-breasted Honeyeater  
*Xanthotis flaviventer*

Common in the forests around Sorong and on Waigeo.

**Seram Friarbird - E**  
*Philemon subcorniculatus*

Commonly heard but only a few seen on Seram.

**Black-faced (Buru) Friarbird - E**  
*Philemon mouluccensis*

As with the previous species, many heard but only a few seen daily on Buru.

**New Guinea Friarbird**  
*Philemon novaeguineae*

Heard on four consecutive days at the beginning of the trip and then finally seen on Kofiau.

*NOTE: This taxa was a recent split from Helmeted Friarbird.*

**Long-billed Honeyeater**  
*Melilestes megarhynchus*

Seen well on the pre-tour days at Pipa but only heard on the main tour in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**Brown-backed Honeyeater**  
*Ramsayornis modestus*

Common at the mangroves near Sorong on the pre-tour days.

**Varied Honeyeater**  
*Gavicalis versicolor*

Abundant and very vocal on our supertramp islands in the Raja Ampats.

**Scrub (White-eared) Honeyeater (Meliphaga)**  
*Meliphaga albonotata*

A singleton seen in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**Mimic Honeyeater (Meliphaga)**  
*Meliphaga analoga*

Small numbers seen daily around Sorong and on Waigeo.

**Puff-backed Honeyeater (Meliphaga)**  
*Meliphaga aruensis*

One seen in the Tamrau Lowlands during the pre-tour days.

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**THORBILLS & ALLIES ACANTHIZIDAE**

**Rusty Mouse-Warbler (H)**  
*Crateroscelis murina*

Heard several times around Sorong and on Waigeo but none cooperated.

**Pale-billed Scrubwren**  
*Sericornis spilodera*

Heard on Waigeo and Mathew was able to obtain a view of one at our Wilson’s BOP hide.

**Large-billed Gerygone**  
*Gerygone magnirostris*

Common in the mangroves around Sorong and later seen well again on Kofiau.

**Green-backed Gerygone**  
*Gerygone chloronota*

Heard in the forested hills above Sorong; the Tamrau lowlands and on Waigeo with a few sightings at all of these sites.

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**PSEUDO-BABBLERS POMATOSTOMIDAE**

**Papuan Babbler**  
*Garritornis isidorei*

Around 8 birds seen in the Tamrau Lowlands.

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**BERRYPECKERS & LONGBILLS MELANOCHARITIDAE**

**Black Berrypecker**  
*Melanocharis nigra*

A pair showed well on Waigeo.

*NOTE: We saw the distinctive nigra subspecies on Waigeo.*

**Yellow-bellied Longbill**  
*Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*

Several sightings had around Sorong and on Waigeo.

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**BOATBILLS MACHAERIRHYNCHIDAE**

**Yellow-breasted Boatbill**  
*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*

A pair seen along with a small mixed flock on Waigeo.
WOODSWALLOWS, BUTCHERBIRDS & ALLIES  ARTAMIDAE

White-breasted Woodswallow  
*Artamus leucorhynchus*
Several on Waigeo with a few more on Buru.

Lowland Peltops  
*Peltops blainvillii*
Good scope views of one in the Tamrau lowlands.

Black Butcherbird  
*Melloria quoyi*
The lovely voice of this elusive species characterized dawn in the Tamrau lowlands and we managed to obtain views of at least one bird.

Hooded Butcherbird  
*Cracticus cassicus*
Heard throughout our time on Waigeo with several sightings too. Also seen well on Kris.

BUCKOO-SHIKES  CAMPEPHAGIDAE

*Buru Cuckoo-shrike* - *E*  
*Coracina fortis*
Two excellent sightings on Buru, once in the highlands and another near Bara in the lowlands.

*Moluccan Cuckoo-shrike* – *NE*  
*Coracina atriceps*
This rare species was seen on an incredible four separate occasions during our first day on Seram.

NOTE: We saw the atriceps subspecies that is endemic to Seram.

**Barred Cuckoo-shrike**  
*Coracina lineata*
Heard once on Waigeo.

**Boyer’s Cuckoo-shrike**  
*Coracina boyeri*
A pair showed well in the forested hills above Sorong.

**White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike**  
*Coracina papuensis*
Commonly seen on Kofiau and Obi.

**Common (Wallacean) Cicadabird**  
*Coracina tenuirostris*
Good views of five birds on Obi.

NOTE: BIA splits the “Common Cicadabirds” in the Moluccas as Wallacean Cicadabird and also suggests splitting this taxon further into several species within the region. We encountered the obiensis race (Obi Cicadabird) on Obi and the muellerii subspecies on Kofiau. Neither IOC nor Clements accepts these further splits of Common Cicadabird but they do accept several splits that pertain outside this region.

**Pale Cicadabird**  
*Coracina ceramensis*
Several seen on Seram and then commonly encountered on Buru.

**Grey-headed Cicadabird**  
*Coracina schisticeps*
Good views throughout the Sorong area.

**Black Cicadabird**  
*Coracina melas*
Single males seen in the Tamrau Lowlands and again on Waigeo.

**Golden Cuckoo-shrike**  
*Campochaera sloetii*
A female was seen by a few guests in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**Rufous-bellied Triller** - *E*  
*Lalage aurea*
This handsome North Moluccan endemic was delightfully common on Obi.

**Black-browed Triller**  
*Lalage atrovirens*
Fine views of several pairs in the forested hills above Sorong and in the Tamrau lowlands. Another two later seen on Kofiau.

WHISTLERS & ALLIES  PACHYCEPHALIDAE

**Island Whistler** - *E*  
*Pachycephala phainota*
We enjoyed superlative and prolonged views of three of these very poorly known small-island species in the Raja Ampats.

**Grey Whistler**  
*Pachycephala simplex*
Seen during the pre-tour days in the forests around Sorong.

**Yellow-throated Whistler - NE**  *Pachycephala macrorhyncha*

Two males seen on Seram and a further three birds found on Buru.

*NOTE: BIA splits the once Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis* replete with innumerable subspecies into three species in the region they refer to. They perhaps wisely refer to the birds we saw as Moluccan Whistler while IOC splits “Moluccan Whistler” into Yellow-throated and Black-chinned Whistlers respectively.*

**Black-chinned Whistler – E**  *Pachycephala mentalis*

A leader-only sighting of a female on Obi. Also heard on one occasion later in the morning.

*NOTE: See above.*

**Drab Whistler**  *Pachycephala griseonota*

*NOTE: BIA split this taxon into two species and suggest further partitioning may be appropriate. IOC recognise the Drab vs Cinnamon-breasted split.*

**Cinnamon-breasted (Obi) Whistler - E**  *Pachycephala johni*

A total of three of these localized whistlers were seen brilliantly on Obi.

*NOTE: See above.*

**Rusty Pitohui**  *Pseudorectes ferrugineus*

One seen briefly on Waigeo. Also heard a few times on the island.

**Little Shrikethrush (H)**  *Colluricincla megarrhyncha*

Seen during the pre-tour days and heard during the main tour in the Tamrau Lowlands.

### OLD WORLD ORIOLES  **ORIOLIDAE**

**Raja Ampat Pitohui - E**  *Pitohui cerviniventris*

Excellent and repeat views were had of this range-restricted species on Waigeo.

*NOTE: Recently split from the next species.*

**Southern Variable Pitohui**  *Pitohui uropygialis*

Seen briefly during one pre-tour morning in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**Brown Oriole**  *Oriolus szalayi*

One seen in the Tamrau Lowlands and another one seen on Waigeo.

**Grey-collared (Seram) Oriole**  *Oriolus forsteni*

Only two birds seen during our entire time on Seram!

**Black-eared (Buru) Oriole - E**  *Oriolus bouroensis*

Fairly commonly heard and seen on Buru.

### DICRURIDAE  **DICRURIDAE**

**Hair-crested Drongo**  *Dicrurus hottentottus*

Seen on both days on Obi.

*NOTE: See below.*

**Spangled Drongo**  *Dicrurus bracteatus*

Seen commonly on most islands throughout the tour.

*NOTE: BIA splits this group into an incredible number of species. We encountered Obi Spangled Drongo *D. guilemardi*; Seram Spangled Drongo *D. amboinensis*; Buru Spangled Drongo *D. buroensis*. Based on this “new species of Spangled Drongo on every island in the region” trend it is likely that the Spangled Drongos on mainland West Papua and at least on Kofiau would represent distinctive species. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise these splits as yet.*

### FANTAILS  **RHIPIDURIDAE**

**Willie Wagtail (Fantail)**  *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Commonly seen throughout the tour.

**Northern Fantail**  *Rhipidura rufiventris*

Commonly seen on most islands.
NOTE: BIA splits this taxon into seven species within the region they refer. Based on their taxonomy we encountered Obi Fantail R. obiensis on Obi; Seram Fantail R. cinerea on Ambon and Boano; Buru Fantail R. buruensis on Buru. We also encountered “Northern Fantails” on mainland New Guinea, Waigeo and Kofiau. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise these splits as yet.

**Black Thicket Fantail (H)**  
*Rhipidura maculipectus*  
One heard during one of the pre-tour days in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**White-bellied Thicket Fantail (H)**  
*Rhipidura leucothorax*  
One heard on one of the pre-tour days around Sorong.

**Streak-breasted Fantail - E**  
*Rhipidura dedemi*  
Fairly commonly heard and seen throughout the Seram highlands.

**Tawny-backed Fantail - E**  
*Rhipidura superflua*  
This high-altitude specialist was seen very well on two occasions on Buru.

**Rufous-backed Fantail**  
*Rhipidura rufidorsa*  
A pair of these rather elusive lowlands forest fantails were seen rather well in the Tamrau Lowlands during one of the pre-tour mornings.

**Arafura Fantail**  
*Rhipidura dryas*  
This lovely supertramp species put on quite a show for us on both of our small islands in the Raja Ampats.

NOTE: The Rufous Fantail complex was recently split up and Arafura Fantail is one such species that has evolved from this splitting. All major authorities now accept these splits.

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**MONARCH FLYCATCHERS MONARCHIDAE**

**Spot-winged Monarch**  
*Symposiachrus guttula*  
One bird seen briefly amongst a mixed species flock just before re-finding the Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher in the Tamrau Lowlands.

**Black-chinned (Boano) Monarch – E**  
*Symposiachrus boanensis*  
We eventually enjoyed amazing views of this species on Boano. A total of three birds were seen.

**Spectacled Monarch**  
*Symposiachrus trivirgatus*  
One seen on Ambon and another two seen and heard on Buru may be the first records of this species for the latter island.

NOTE: IOC includes the subspecies nigrimentum on Seram and the yet undescribed subspecies on Buru, both of which we saw under Spectacled Monarch, while BIA includes these south Moluccan subspecies under Moluccan (Wallacean) Monarch.

**Moluccan (Wallacean) Monarch - E**  
*Symposiachrus bimaculatus*  
Pairs seen both days on Obi but rather shy and elusive on both occasions.

NOTE: This species was recently split from the widespread Spectacled Monarch. All major authorities recognise this split but at least IOC and BIA disagree as to the distribution and naming of this species.

**Black-tipped (Buru) Monarch - E**  
*Symposiachrus loricatus*  
Superb views of this fairly common lowland endemic on Buru.

**Kofiau Monarch - E**  
*Monarcha julianae*  
We saw one incredibly responsive and showy bird and heard several more during our early morning on Kofiau. Again we are only the third group of birders to see this species in the wild! David Bishop and Jared Diamond rediscovered this species during their 1986 expedition. Probably fewer than 50 people have ever seen this species!

**Island Monarch**  
*Monarcha cinerascens*  
Three separate birds were seen during our sessions on Boano.

**White-naped Monarch - NE**  
*Carterornis pileatus*  
Excellent views were had on three occasions of this scarce species on Buru.
NOTE: We saw the distinctive buruensis subspecies that may be split in future as Buru White-naped Monarch. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise this split.

Golden Monarch Carterornis chrysomela

Seen unbelievably well and frequently during the pre-tour days around Sorong and we also managed to see a female during our main tour morning in the Tamrau Lowlands.

Frilled Monarch Arses telescopthalmus

Several seen in the forested hills above Sorong, another female found in the Tamrau Lowlands and several heard on Waigeo.

Moluccan Flycatcher (Monarch) Myiagra galeata

Fairly commonly seen on Obi, Seram and Buru.

NOTE: The naming of this species and Symposiachrus bimaculatus is rather confusing indeed since IOC names this species Moluccan Flycatcher and the latter species Moluccan Monarch, while BIA names this species Moluccan Monarch and calls Symposiachrus bimaculatus Wallacean Monarch.

Shining Flycatcher (Monarch) Myiagra alecto

Singletons seen in the Tamrau Lowlands, Waigeo, Kofiau and Obi.

CROWS, JAYS & MAGPIES CORVIDAE

Violet (Seram) Crow - E Corvus violcaeus

An interesting and very distinctive crow! We enjoyed several sightings on Seram.

NOTE: Previously erroneously considered as part of Slender-billed Crow.

Brown-headed Crow – NE - NT Corvus fuscicapillus

A distinctive, rare and strangely localized species of great character and with a great call! We managed to track down two groups during our time on Waigeo.

Grey (Bare-eyed) Crow Corvus tristis

Two seen in flight on one of our pre-tour days in the Tamrau lowlands.

Torresian Crow Corvus orru

Seen in small numbers throughout the Raja Ampat islands.

BIRDS-OF-PARADISE PARADISAEIDAE

(Obi) Paradise Crow - E Lycocorax pyrrhopterus

Commonly heard and seen on Obi.

NOTE: BIA splits this taxon into two species: Obi Paradise-Crow L. obiensis and L. pyrrhopterus – Halmahera and nearby islands.

Glossy-mantled Manucode Manucodia ater

Seen daily around Sorong, on Waigeo and on Kris.

Magnificent Riflebird Ptiloris magnificus

Heard calling throughout the Tamrau Lowlands with a pair eventually seen in flight across the road.

NOTE: This species was recently split into two: Magnificent Riflebird and Growling Riflebird.

Magnificent Bird-of-Paradise Diphylloides magnificus

A major surprise! This hill and lower montane forest BOP was heard and seen by way of several females during our time in the Tamrau Lowlands.

Wilson’s Bird-of-Paradise - E Diphylloides respublica

Undoubtedly for many, this was THE highlight of the entire cruise. From three specially constructed hides we were all finally treated to extended and most wonderful experiences with this most extraordinary of all birds. From the half-light of pre-dawn when we first heard several males calling all around us to seeing several males alight upon their display court; clear the court of overnight debris and then go into their full displays for the awaiting females was surely, certainly for me, one of the greatest avian spectacles I have ever had the privilege to witness. Absolutely amazing!

King Bird-of-Paradise Cicinnurus regius
Unbelievable views of a spectacular male in his display tree on three consecutive mornings in the Tamrau Lowlands! Awesome!

**Lesser Bird-of-Paradise (H) - NE**  
Paradisaea minor  
Heard in the Tamrau Lowlands on a few occasions during our first pre-tour morning in the area.

**Red Bird-of-Paradise – E - NT**  
Paradisaea rubra  
We enjoyed the most incredible views of this magnificent BOP in their display tree on Waigeo. Several birds were also seen in flight and perched up next the main track on the island.

### AUSTRALASIAN ROBINS  *PETROICIDAE*

**Black-sided Robin**  
Poecilorhyncha hypoleuca  
Typically heard commonly throughout the lowland forests of the Birds Head and Waigeo and seen well during the pre-tour days in the Tamrau Lowlands. Frank also managed to find one during our scheduled morning there.

**Olive Flyrobin (Flycatcher)**  
Microeca flavovirescens  
Two separate but brief sightings of this scarce forest interior species during our time on Waigeo.

### BULBULS  *PYCNONOTIDAE*

**Sooty-headed Bulbul - I**  
Pycnonotus aurigaster  
An introduced species on Ambon. Several seen on our final morning there at the end of the Buru Extension.

**Seram Golden Bulbul - E**  
Thapsinillas affinis  
Commonly heard but irregularly seen (as with almost every species on Seram!!).  
*NOTE: This Golden Bulbul complex has recently been split into several species.*

**Northern (Obi) Golden Bulbul - E**  
Thapsinillas longirostris  
Small numbers seen on both mornings on Obi.  
*NOTE: See above. BIA splits Northern Golden Bulbul further into Halmahera Golden Bulbul and Obi Golden Bulbul, which we saw on Obi.*

**Buru Golden Bulbul - E**  
Thapsinillas mystica  
Commonly seen throughout Buru.  
*NOTE: As with the latter two species, recently split from Golden Bulbul.*

### SWALLOWS  *HIRUNDINIDAE*

**Barn Swallow**  
Hirundo rustica  
A few of these Palearctic migrants were seen around Sorong and again on Kofiau and Obi.

**Pacific Swallow**  
Hirundo tahitica  
The common, resident hirundine, seen on most islands except Kofiau.

### BUSH-WARBLERS & ALLIES  *CETTIIDAE*

**Mountain Tailorbird (Leaftoiler)**  
Phyllogetes cucculus  
After hearing this species throughout the highlands of Seram and Buru we finally managed to obtain unbeatable views of a pair in a mixed flock high up on Buru.  
*NOTE: This widespread species is indeed not a tailorbird and therefore almost any other common name would fit just fine. Leaftoiler works for me!*  

### LEAF-WARBLERS  *PHYLLOSCOPIDAE*

**Arctic (Leaf-) Warbler**  
Phylloscopus borealis  
Singles seen on Obi, Seram and Buru.

**Island Leaf Warbler**  
Phylloscopus maforensis  
Seen on several occasions in the highlands of Seram and Buru.
NOTE: BIA splits Island Leaf Warbler into four species in Wallacea and suggest that there are a further possible species in New Guinea and Melanesia. We saw Seram (S. ceramensis) and Buru (S. everetti) Leaf Warblers respectively if split. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise these splits.

GRASSBIRDS & ALLIES LOCUSTELLIDAE

*Chestnut-backed Bush (Buru Grasshopper) Warbler - E*  *Locustella castanea*

Brief views of a close, singing bird along the Madanga Trail on Buru. A few more heard in the same general area.

NOTE: BIA splits this taxon into three species: We saw Buru Grasshopper Warbler Locustella disturbans if split. Neither IOC nor Clements recognise these splits.

*Gray’s Grasshopper Warbler*  *Locustella fasciolata*

Amazingly good and repeat views were had of this usually very shy and skulking species on Boano.

CISTICOLAS & ALLIES CISTICOLIDAE

*Golden-headed Cisticola (H)*  *Cisticola exilis*

Heard near the airport lake on Buru.

YUHINAS, WHITE-EYES & ALLIES ZOSTEROPIDAE

*Mountain White-eye*  *Zosterops montanus*

Small numbers seen in the uplands of Buru.

NOTE: We encountered the distinctive but fairly widespread Montanus race of Mountain White-eye on Buru.

*Lemon-bellied White-eye*  *Zosterops chloris*

A small flock encountered on our second supertramp island that we visited in the Raja Ampats. A surprise find was later had on Ambon on our final morning there at the end of the Buru Ext.

*Seram White-eye - E*  *Zosterops stalkeri*

Three sightings were had on Seram.

*Buru White-eye - E*  *Zosterops buruensis*

Common in the uplands of Buru.

*Ambon White-eye – E - NT*  *Zosterops kuehni*

One of these endemic white-eyes showed very nicely on Ambon.

STARLINGS STURNIDAE

*Metallic Starling*  *Aplonis metallica*

Commonly seen throughout the trip.

*Moluccan Starling*  *Aplonis mysolensis*

First seen on the small islands in the Raja Ampats and thereafter commonly encountered during the remainder of the trip.

*Yellow-faced Myna*  *Mino dumonti*

Several sightings had on mainland New Guinea.

*Golden Myna*  *Mino anais*

Seen well on our first pre-tour morning in the Tamrau Lowlands and thereafter heard just once in the same area during our main tour morning there.

NOTE: We saw the Anais subspecies on the Bird’s Head.

*Long-crested Myna - E*  *Basilornis corythaix*

Excellent views were finally had of a few of these endemic mynas on Seram. A fabulous and distinctive endemic!
THRUSHES & ALLIES TURDIDAE

Buru Thrush - E  Geokicha dumasi
Yet another incredible highlight! We all enjoyed stunning views of this very little known and purportedly super elusive endemic in the uplands of Buru when an immature bird was found sitting in the open on a bare branch and refused to budge! Quite incredibly though, we ended up encountering a whopping six individuals during one morning in the highest elevation forests, although most of these sightings were mere flight views across the road during the early morning.
NOTE: Recently split into two species: Buru and Seram Thrushes. This split is recognised by all major authorities.

OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS MUSCICAPIDAE

Grey-streaked Flycatcher  Muscicapa grisesticta
Bird of the trip (by way of abundance!). This familiar species became a favourite and was encountered almost daily during the tour.

Turquoise (Warbling) (Island Verditer) Flycatcher - NE Eumyias panayensis
A pair and juvenile plus a further adult was seen in the Seram Highlands.

Streak-breasted Jungle (Buru Warbling) Flycatcher - E  Eumyias additus
Only one of these scarce highland flycatchers was encountered during our time on Buru.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher  Ficedula hyperythra
Several males seen along the Madanga Trail on Buru.

Cinnamon-chested Flycatcher – E  Ficedula buruensis
One of the South Moluccas most elusive endemics, especially during this time of year. A single bird was seen very briefly by some of the group in the forest understory on Seram.
NOTE: Those who were lucky enough to see this tricky endemic saw the ceramensis subspecies on Seram.

Little Pied Flycatcher  Ficedula westermanni
A male and female were encountered on Buru.

FLOWERPECKERS DICA VIDAE

Flame-breasted (Buru) Flowerpecker - E  Dicaeum erythrothorax
One of Buru’s most common endemics!
NOTE: The Ashy Flowerpecker complex was recently split up into several species and this the next two species are the result of the splitting. All major authorities accept these splits.

Halmahera Flowerpecker - E  Dicaeum schistaceiceps
Small numbers were seen each field session on Obi.

Ashy Flowerpecker - E  Dicaeum vulneratum
Notably common throughout Seram.

Olive-crowned Flowerpecker - E  Dicaeum pectoral
Several sightings were had around Sorong and again on Kofiau.

SUNBIRDS & SPIDERHUNTERS NECTARINIIDAE

Black Sunbird  Leptocoma sericea
Widespread and common and seen at all localities.

Olive-backed (Sahul) Sunbird  Cinnnyris jugularis
As for the above species, commonly seen throughout.
NOTE: BIA split this taxon as Sahul Sunbird C. clementiae and then suggest further splitting. We encountered clementiae (Seram, Ambon, Boano), buruensis (Buru) and frenatus (New Guinea and Obi) subspecies during this trip. BIA suggests splitting the latter as Sahul Sunbird and the former two subspecies as Clementia’s Sunbird. Neither IOC nor Clements accept these splits.
OLD WORLD SPARROWS PASERIDAE

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
A widespread and ubiquitous commensal of man we recorded this species at almost every landing.

WAXBILLS & ALLIES ESTRILDIDAE

Black-faced Munia (Mannikin) *Lonchura molucca*
This Indonesian endemic was seen on several occasions on Kofiau, Obi and Buru.

Streak-headed Munia (Munia) *Lonchura tristissima*
A small flock seen on one pre-tour day in the Tamrau Lowlands and another group of four briefly encountered in the hill forest above Sorong during the first afternoon of the main tour.

Chestnut Munia (Black-headed Mannikin) (I) *Lonchura atricapilla*
Another surprise find on Buru and Ambon when individuals were seen around Namlea and Ambon City.

WAGTAILS & PIPITS MOTACILLIDAE

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*
A few seen at a small lake near Ambon Airport.

NOTE: We encountered both tschutschensis and taivana subspecies on Ambon. These subspecies are up for further splitting as Bering and Green-headed Wagtails respectively. Neither IOC nor Clements accept these splits.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
Common and widespread in ones and occasionally twos along roads through forest on most islands. Especially numerous on Buru.

*Madanga (Pipit) – E - EN* *Madanga ruficollis*
Undoubtedly one of THE most astonishing highlights of a very remarkable tour. Known from just four specimens collected prior to World War II this peculiar species was until 10 days previously unknown in life. We were rewarded with unbeatable views of this absolute mega-tick almost immediately after arriving at the right altitude and habitat on Buru. Fantastic!

NOTE: Hmmmm...BIA regards this extremely unique and bizarre mega-endemic as a pipit...based solely on molecular DNA. Interesting indeed and after seeing this species two years in a row and having spent considerable time watching it and marvelling at its uniqueness one cannot help but wonder if this is really true. Monotypic family...? I think so!! Surely at least monotypic genus and NOT merely an Anthus!! It’ll be very interesting to see what comes of this in the near future. Watch this space!

MAMMALS

10 species seen

The mammals of eastern Indonesia are extremely poorly known and what literature there is very poor and/or taxonomically confused and/or dated.

POSSUMS, CUSCUSES, GLEDERO, RINGTAILS PHALANGERIDAE

*Waigeou (Papuan Spotted) Cuscus* *Spilocuscus papuensis*
Superb views of this beautiful little creature feeding on fruit at point-blank range and affording us walk-away views on Kris.

*Rothschild’s (Obi Island) Cuscus* *Phalanger rothschildi*
Great looks at several of these little known, endemic but seemingly common cuscus on Obi.
Northern Common (Grey) Cuscus - I \textit{Phalanger orientalis}

Two seen one evening while owling on Seram.

Common Spotted Cuscus – I \textit{Spilocuscus maculatus}

After extensive research and correspondence with several experts, it appears that the “spotted” cuscus that was seen crawling down the bare tree during our first afternoon on Seram refers to this species that has been introduced on Seram from further afield where it natively occurs on New Guinea.

Cuscus sp.

Fabulous views of a very distinctive, grey-bodied and buff-and-orange-tailed Cuscus curled up in the open in the canopy of a foliaged tree during our first afternoon on Seram has not yet been identified despite a great deal of research and correspondence with experts. There has been several suggestions that this individual merely represents a different colour morph of Northern Common Cuscus or Common Spotted Cuscus, which can be extremely variable in its pattern and colour.

These two species are currently the only known cuscus species on Seram and both species have been introduced from further afield fairly recently. Therefore, according to everything we currently know, there are no native cuscus on Seram.

\textbf{VIVETS, GENETS VIVERRIDAE}

Common Palm Civet \textit{Paradoxurus hermaphroditus}

One spot-lighted in montane forest on Seram.

\textbf{PIGS SUIDAE}

Wild Boar – I \textit{Sus scrofa}

This introduced pig was seen dashing across the road in the Tamrau Lowlands.

\textbf{OCEANIC DOLPHINS DELPHINIDAE}

Short-finned Pilot Whale \textit{Globicephala macrorhynchus}

Fairly large pods seen on three dates.

Spinner Dolphin \textit{Stenella longirostris}

Relatively common with pods of as many as 100+ being seen on at least four dates.

Indo-pacific Bottlenose Dolphin \textit{Tursiops aduncus}

Fairly large pods seen on at least two dates.

\textbf{OLD WORLD FRUIT BATS PTEROPODIDAE}

Spectacled Flying Fox \textit{Pteropus conspicillatus}

Large numbers at dusk over Waigeo and surrounding islands and also seen on Kofiau.

Moluccan Flying Fox \textit{Pteropus chrysoprocus}

The commonly encountered large flying fox on Obi, Seram and Buru.

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