



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Papua New Guinea III & New Britain extension

9th - 13th; 13th - 30th August 2008



Photos by David Shackelford

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader Frank Lambert

Tour Summary

New Britain:

This short extension took us to New Britain, the largest island in the Bismarck Archipelago; a series of volcanic islands situated in the Pacific “Ring of Fire” where volcanoes regularly spew smoke and occasionally erupt. Only an hour from the airport and we were at our luxurious diving resort, where we were literally encircled by a chain of active volcanoes, and we could occasionally smell sulphury gases in the atmosphere. On the way to Wakili, we stopped for our first look at New Britain Munias, at a spot where there were also numerous migrant Tree Martins.

Our first full day saw us boarding a dive boat to look for small-island specialties. We motored into Kimbe Bay before dawn, heading towards two small forested tropical islands. The sea was relatively calm, making it easy to see birds from the boat as we skirted the rocky forested shores of Restoff Island. Island Imperial Pigeons were abundant, and we soon discovering our first pair of the boldly attractive Beach Kingfisher and

a number of Sclater's Myzomela. Heading to the nearby island of Big Malumalu, we found the extraordinary Nicobar Pigeon on the beach, and later had good views in nearby trees as we approached close to shore. Most of us saw Island Monarch here as well, and a Stephan's Emerald Dove on the beach gave us fantastic views. Later, when we returned and landed on Restoff, we had good views of Mangrove Golden Whistlers'. A few of us ventured into the sea to look at the variety of colorful coral reef fish, as well as a diversity of other marine life, including two Hawksbill turtles.

During the afternoon we headed up to Kilu Ridge near the Wakili Resort, where we had our first views of many of the islands larger birds, including Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon, Red-knobbed Fruit-dove, Blue-eyed Cockatoo, Eclectus Parrot, Blyth's Hornbill and Pied Coucal.

After another early start, we tried to find the endemic hawk owls as it was getting light, but though one was tantalizingly close it remained obscured. After dawn, we tracked down some of the archipelago's other endemics, including Finsch's Imperial Pigeon, New Britain Flowerpecker, Ashy and New Britain Red-headed Myzomelas, Long-tailed Miner and Black-headed Kingfisher. With cloudless skies it soon became very hot, and by 9:15 Black Honey-buzzards were already rising on thermals, and we saw at least three birds. Incredibly we also found a pair of New Britain Goshawks doing the same thing; a poorly-known bird that few birders get to see. Later, for comparison, we also saw our first Variable Goshawk at the edge of a palm-oil plantation.

Venturing into the flat lowland rainforest in Pokili Wildlife Management Area, we walked through to the edge of the world's largest megapode colony, where thousands upon thousands of Melanesian Scrubfowl burrows are dug deep into the ground to incubate clutches of eggs in the warm volcanic soil. Here there were plenty of megapodes to see, flushing into the trees ahead of the group. In the same area we managed outstanding views of the gorgeous Black-headed Paradise-Kingfisher, a number of Black-tailed Monarchs and, to distract us from birds, huge Queen Alexandra's Birdwing Butterflies, allegedly the largest butterfly in the world with a wingspan of up to 25cm! The surprise bird here, however, was a New Britain Hawk-owl, perched high in a canopy tree. It was very alert, peering down into the forest and occasionally directly at us, giving us fantastic scope views of this endemic New Britain bird.

Main Tour:

Papua New Guinea, the country that occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, is rightfully regarded as one of the top birding destinations on the planet. As one of the world's largest as well as the world's highest island, and still almost completely carpeted by tropical rainforest, New Guinea harbors a remarkable fauna and flora, including many endemics. These include such spectacular species as the birds-of-paradise, as well as a host of stunningly beautiful parrots and pigeons, a remarkable array of terrestrial birds, and a number of odd birds of unknown taxonomic affinity, such as the Wattled Ploughbill and Blue-capped Ifrita.

New Guinea boasts not only a huge diversity in fauna and flora, but also amongst its peoples. The many remote, isolated mountain valleys and huge rivers created a situation where populations of people developed in virtual isolation from each other. This has resulted in the evolution of hundreds of ethnic groups with their own unique languages and tribal cultures. Indeed, New Guinea hosts what is probably the worlds most diverse and fascinating cultural landscape, with many inhabitants still adhering to traditional



tribal customs. This added an interesting cultural dimension to our tour, since we had many opportunities to interact with local people.

We began our birding trip with an afternoon visit to the manicured grounds of the Pacific Adventist University. Here we had amazing scope views of two Papuan Frogmouths, frozen in an a deceptively disguised daytime position, and excellent views of a variety of waterbirds, including Black Bittern, Rufous Night-Heron, Comb-crested Jacana, and Grey Teal, as well as a diversity of land birds adapted to the open environments in this part of PNG, such as Black-backed Butcherbird and Green Figbird. Here we also found the attractive Fawn-breasted Bowerbird and carefully studied the neat alley-shaped bower of this species. The bower is created with thousands of carefully placed sticks, tightly and precisely packed together, and decorated with green-colored fruits and leaves in the hope of attracting a mate.

As it got light on our second day, we briefly saw Large-tailed Nightjars on the entrance road to Varirata National Park, and got outstanding views of a Barred Owlet Nightjar. Not long after dawn we were birding the narrow forested trails, and impressed by the existence of good lowland rainforest so close to the city limits. Virtually the first bird of the day was a superb male Hook-billed Kingfisher, close by and filling the scope. This very shy forest bird was one of several shy forest species that we managed to see during the day, as we concentrated our efforts on finding forest skulkers. Most of the group managed to see Northern Scrub-Robin, Painted Quail-Thrush and Chestnut-backed Jewel-Babbler, all of which are missed by many bird tour groups. Other birds seen during the day included the endemic Brown-headed Paradise-Kingfisher, a species that sits quietly in the understory; a close Wompoo Fruit-dove, a pair of confiding Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon, as well as noisy crimson Western Black-capped Lories, the unique Black Berrypecker, noisy Red-cheeked Parrot and, briefly, the gaudy Papuan King Parrot. We also saw a second Barred Owlet-nightjar at close range in the forest understory. Stunning colorful *Papilio* and other butterflies flashed by throughout the day. Other great birds included Pale-billed Scrub-wren, Spot-winged, Frilled and Black-faced Monarch and White-shouldered Fairy-wren. Here we also encountered our first of several poisonous birds, the Hooded Pitohui, a member of the only bird family known to have poisonous feathers loaded with homobatrachotoxin, a chemical also found in poison dart frogs in Central America.

Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the day, as beams of sunlight filtered through the canopy foliage, was watching the brief displays of male Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise, with their red plumes arched into a veiling bouquet over the back and passionately quivering in extraordinary display. The intense golden feathers on the head were surpassed only by the glitter of emerald shimmering iridescent as the throat inflated to produce the raucous courtship call in bold excitement and exclamation.

Arriving in the mining town of Tabubil, not far from the Indonesian border in the foothills of the Star Mountains, and set in an area of spectacular topography with large areas of undisturbed forest, we set off in search of several riverine specialists. Stopping above the rapids of two forested rivers, we succeeded in our search for the petite Torrent Flycatcher, boldly patterned Torrent-lark, and a pair of Salvadori's Teal that seemingly swam effortlessly through the surging water. Here we also had what has to have been the trip's most unexpected sighting: that of a Black Noddy perched on one of the rocks in the rapids and occasionally flying around below us. The bird seemed to be exhausted, which is not surprising since this oceanic species had somehow found its way almost to the centre of the island, more than 1,000 km from the sea!

Next we traveled to the Ok Ma road near the Ok Tedi River where we arrived pre-dawn in search of a truly amazing species, the Shovel-billed Kingfisher. Although we heard the birds, they stopped calling before we



had seen them, and we had to wait until the following morning to finally see this wonderful kingfisher, in perfect light. Greater Melampitta also proved highly elusive, but as with the kingfisher, several of us saw it reasonably well on our second morning within the forest interior where limestone sinkholes were a predominant feature. The forest in this area was alive with the gibbon-like calls of the Magnificent Riflebird, and after a lot of effort, we finally saw this species along with a pair of Magnificent Birds-of-Paradise, the male of which was in its full plumage and gave spectacular views. Dusky Lories passed over on several occasions, but the surprise parrot here was a Papuan Hanging Parrot which gave us great views as it fed in the forest canopy above the road. In the same area we found a variety of other species, including the very secretive Sooty Thicket-Fantail, the little-known Obscure Berrypecker, Spotted Honeyeater, and Dwarf Fruit-dove.

On our first afternoon we spent considerable time searching for fruiting trees in the vicinity of the Ok Menga road. Unfortunately this area is being rapidly deforested, and birds-of-paradise were scarce during our visit, though we did have good views of a female Superb Bird-of-Paradise. The wind chime song of Blue-collared Parrots could be heard overhead, and we easily found the boldly marked Mountain Peltops and bright Golden Cuckoo-Shrike, Orange-breasted Fig-Parrots, and an impressive flock of Red-breasted Pygmy-Parrot, feeding on lichens on the larger trunks of the remaining large trees.

Next we traveled south, by road, to the town of Kiunga on the Fly River. From our base here we set off early next morning towards Indonesia, having good views of two White-throated Nightjars en route to our destination. Here we spent a morning staking out a section of remnant roadside forest where we were fortunate to find a gorgeous male Flame Bowerbird, a species that contends to have the brightest plumage in the world! The area was teeming with other birds, and we saw a good variety of pigeons, parrots and honeyeaters.

Departing at dawn from the bank of the expansive Fly River on our second day, we loaded into a small motorized boat and began our journey into the remote lowland rainforest interior. Passing by small forest villages and locals transporting materials by dugout canoes, we were clearly in a very special place. Along the Fly River we had a wonderful opportunity to study a pair of Palm Cockatoos at their nest, and to see large flocks of Collared Imperial Pigeons and Blyth's Hornbills, not to mention one of the most bizarre of the Australian migrants, the giant Channel-billed Cuckoo. Leaving the Fly River, we entered the more pristine Elevela River, and soon found ourselves on a muddy trail in the floodplain forest. Even before we left the boat we could hear our main quarry – the amazing King Bird-of-Paradise, a male of which put on a superb show as he hopped about on creepers only 20m from the group. Here also we briefly glimpsed a Common Paradise Kingfisher, as well as Black-sided Robin, and Wompoo and Superb Fruit-doves. During our journey up the Elevela we also found the rare New Guinea Crocodile and a huge terrapin, perched atop a log.

Our rainforest lodge built of local palms and set on stilts was very basic, but offered spectacular views of the serene Elevela River that winds for miles into increasingly remote territory. From this base at Ekame Lodge, we headed up river towards the sharp cries of the extraordinary Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise, a species that we located displaying at the top of a conspicuously exposed palm pole. Exploring this truly wild place was enthralling and we vigilantly persisted along the muddy forest trails finding elusive gems such as the endemic Little Paradise-Kingfisher and wary Hooded Pitta. A highlight of the tour materialized very suddenly – as a small sandy beach came into view, only 30m away, we spotted a pair of giant Southern Crowned Pigeons feeding close to the water's edge. This bird, with its incredible blue-grey and deep



maroon plumage combined with an extravagant crest of feathers extending over its head; is by far the most outrageous of all the world's pigeons and doves. Indeed, it was hard to imagine that such a species still existed and had not gone the way of the Dodo and other larger mainly-terrestrial pigeons. This was a wonderful way to end a fantastic day's birding.

We bid a temporary goodbye to the humidity and heat of the lowlands and set off by small aircraft to the highlands. Spread below us during the flight we were privileged to gaze down upon one of the largest expanses of lowland tropical forest on earth, surpassed only by the Congo Basin of Ituri and the vast lowlands of the Amazon basin. From the town of Mount Hagen, we traveled up to Kumul Lodge, set amid montane forest at about 2,900m altitude, and with a wonderful view of the 4,000m Mt Hagen. Even from the wooden balcony we marveled at the active fruit feeding tray, visited by a variety of mainly larger birds, such as the stunning Brown Sicklebill, the male of which gives a startlingly loud machinegun-like call, Smoky Honeyeater, Island Thrush, White-winged Robin and Rufous-naped Whistlers all visited the area, feeding on insects attracted by the fruit, whilst the large Belford's Melidectes, and the brightly colored Brehm's Tiger-Parrot joined the sicklebills and occasional Ribbon-tailed *Astrapia* on the feeder. One unexpected visitor was a female Archbold's Bowerbird, a species that is usually difficult to see well. There were several fruiting trees in the garden, and these were attracting other species, such as Mid-mountain, Fan-tailed and Crested Berrypeckers.

On trails just below the garden we waited patiently to see one of the specialties of this lodge, and after a relatively short wait we were rewarded with amazing views of a male Crested Bird-of-Paradise, only 3m from the group, as it first fed on fallen fruits, hopping around on the ground, and then lounged around a few metres above the ground. A truly wonderful bird. A singing male Garnet Robin also gave us spectacular views at this spot. Other trails in the area produced another set of amazing birds, including the strange Lesser Melampitta, Regent Whistler, Black-breasted Boatbill, Ashy Robin, fantails and scrub-wrens.

On both days at Kumul Lodge we set off before dawn to see birds-of-paradise, and were not disappointed. We managed to see male Lesser Bird-of-Paradise in their display tree at the edge of a village, along with several stunning Ornate Melidectes. At another locality, we had excellent scope views of both male and female Blue Birds-of-Paradise along with male Lawes Parotia and at least five Superb Birds-of-Paradise visiting a single fruiting tree. The following morning at dawn we visited a tree frequented by Macgregor's Bowerbird, and had excellent views of a pair, with the male's colorful crest blowing in the wind as it fed on the cauliflower-like fruit near the top of the tree. At least five Loria's Birds-of-Paradise also came to the tree within the first half hour of daylight. Prior to dawn on our last day, some of the group called in a Mountain Owlet-nightjar to within a meter! Birding never gets better than this!

At Varirata, the same afternoon, we waited patiently near the nest of a Doria's Hawk. As one of the group walked quietly up the trail, a Black-billed Brush-turkey flushed up into the canopy. It then flew high through the trees in front of the group and, just as it was passing us, an unseen Doria's Hawk dive bombed the bird and hit the brush-turkey, which fell amid a cacophony of sound, to the ground. Later we all had prolonged views of the hawk perched in full view; certainly one of the highlights of the trip for some. As we walked back towards the road, we chanced upon an Eastern or Growling Riflebird, high in the canopy, and were able to scope it for at least five minutes whilst it called intermittently. Finally, in the more open forest we eventually tracked down and saw well a male White-bellied Whistler.

Landing on a dirt runway, there were literally hundreds of colourful local people who had come to watch



the spectacle of an airplane landing in Tari. A man wearing traditional grass coverings, cassowary bones and a hornbill casque for protection, and other men wearing bird-of-paradise plumes and other feathers placed in their hair or on their hats, greeted us and assisted us transporting our luggage to our waiting vehicle. Making our way up to Ambua, it was fascinating to see the steep sun-baked mud walls surrounding properties and graves of respected ancestors from generations past, still well maintained.

Arriving at the luxurious Ambua Lodge, we were all impressed by the location of this famous birding site. Nestled at the edge of montane forest with its heavy growth of epiphytes, the view of the surrounding valley was breathtaking. On our first afternoon we headed up the road, and here had the memorable experience of watching a group of at least six male Princess Stephanie's *Astrapias*, all with spectacular tail plumes, as they "danced" around a huge fruiting tree, leaping from branch to branch and displacing each other, whilst a few females looked on. One of these birds was evidently a hybrid with Ribbon-tailed *Astrapia*, having an exceedingly long tail of mixed black and white. Further up the road there were no less than four fully adorned male King-of-Saxony Birds-of-Paradise, displaying from prominent high perches spaced at about 150m apart. These amazing birds had our attention for a good half hour. Later, birds like Mottled and Sclater's Whistlers, our first of several Blue-capped Ifritas and some gorgeous Papuan Lorikeets kept us busy.

Before dawn the following morning, a Feline Owlet-nightjar called close by but stayed well hidden. After breakfast, however, we were watching five species of bird-of-paradise in a fruiting tree, including a superb male Lawes Parotia. Then we headed up the road again, entering the forest on a narrow trail to look for skulking understory species. After only a few minutes we heard the distinctive bark of a New Guinea Harpy Eagle, and rushed back to the road. Within ten minutes we had found it, perched high on a nearby ridge, where it stayed for about 20 minutes, giving us fantastic scope views. In perfect lighting, the bird then glided across the valley, passing right over us, and we were able to marvel at the huge bulk of this impressive raptor – definitely one of the most memorable events of this tour!

Our second full day at Ambua started very slowly, with a distant Black Sicklebill, and little luck on the forest trails. However, a flowering tree provided us with opportunities to study Red-collared Myzomelas, since there were about twenty birds in the tree, as well as Black-throated Honeyeaters and both red and black morphs of Papuan Lorikeet. Then a Black Pitohui put in an appearance, and almost immediately afterwards we found a large mixed bird flock, and in it, two key species: a male Wattled Ploughbill and a Papuan Treecreeper. We moved to another forest trail, where Frank tried to call various elusive ground-living birds across the trail. After a lot of trying, finally a Spotted Jewel-babbler walked onto the edge of the trail, with its wings half spread and tail fanned, presumably in response to the tape, allowing more than half the group to see the bird. Twenty minutes later a female Forbes Forest-Rail walked right to the trail edge, and although it stayed foraging there for about five minutes, only metres from Frank, none of the group could see it until it ran across the trail. At lunchtime, just after light rain, we finally all saw Short-tailed Paradigalla in the garden before heading back to the same trail system. Activity was low, but most of us managed to see Lesser Ground-Robin. One person saw Papuan Parrotfinch at the edge of the garden.

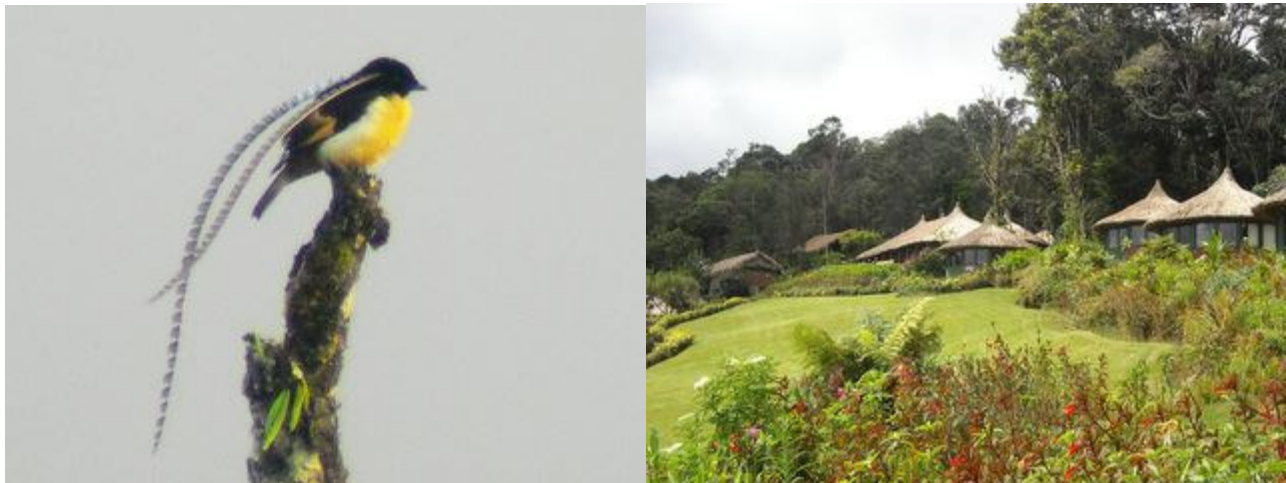
In the Tari Valley, on our way to the airport, we scoped a distant pair of Black Sicklebills before heading down to the arable land below. Here, with the help of a local landowner, we were fortunate to find the localized Greater Sooty Owl that first flew directly towards us and then perched in full view near a roost cavity. Our flight out of Tari was spectacular, as we skimmed the forest and forested hills and valleys and skirting around bad weather in our small MAF aircraft, eventually arriving in the Central Ranges of Mount



Hagen. Back at the now familiar Kumul Lodge, we were excited to find that at least two Bronze Ground-doves were in the immediate vicinity of the lodge, and everyone got views of this shy bird. Sadly Mountain Owlet-nightjar eluded us this time, but one lucky person saw Dusky Woodcock, and everyone had excellent views of Goldies Lorikeets.

On our final day we headed to an area of mangroves near the Brown River. A number of mangrove specialties, such as Mangrove Gerygone and Mangrove Robin, as well as Orange-footed Scrubfowl, Orange-fronted Fruit-dove, Black Thicket-Fantail and Grey Shrike-thrush provided us with plenty to see in the early morning. Later, despite the heat, we had great views of Emperor Fairy-wren, Azure and Common Paradise Kingfisher and Greater Black Coucal in another area, as well as a distant Gurney's Eagle. Altogether we had added at least ten more species to our list on our last day: a fitting way to end our trip to this fascinating tropical island.

We saw 353 bird species during our tour, a very good total for any PNG tour. Amongst this tally were 20 birds-of-paradise (excluding the two satinbirds that were formerly considered to be birds of paradise) that included many full-plumaged males, 31 species of pigeon and dove, 27 species of parrots, a remarkable 18 species of kingfisher, 14 species of robin, all three jewel-babblers, Doria's Hawk, New Britain Goshawk and the magnificent New Guinea Harpy Eagle. From poisonous birds and giant butterflies to ornamented tribesmen and displaying birds-of-paradise, Papua New Guinea is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating and memorable birding destinations on earth!



King-of-Saxony Bird-of-paradise and Ambua Lodge (D. Shackleford)

Annotated Checklists of Birds

Taxonomy used is based on: Gill, F. and Wright, M. 2006. Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Notes indicate differences with the Clements Taxonomy.

Key to endemic/near endemic abbreviations

NG – endemic to New Guinea

PNG – endemic to Papua New Guinea

NB – endemic to New Britain

BA – endemic to the Bismarck Archipelago



NE – near endemic to New Guinea

Megapodes Megapodiidae

Black-billed (Yellow-legged) Brush-turkey (NG) *Talegalla fuscirostris*

Observed on three occasions, at Varirata and along the Elevala River. Also heard regularly in lowland areas and nest mounds were also seen. One at Varirata that had flown up into the canopy was attacked and knocked to the ground by a Doria's Hawk.

Melanesian Scrubfowl *Megapodius eremite*

A highlight was visiting the world's largest known breeding colony at Pokili Reserve, New Britain. We had excellent views of many birds.

Orange-footed Scrubfowl *Megapodius reinwardt*

At least two were seen in a mangrove area near the Brown River.

Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae

Wandering Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata*

About 16 were at Pacific Adventist University.

Salvadori's Teal (NG) *Salvadorina waigiuiensis*

We scoped two swimming amongst the rocks on a larger river near Tabubil. This is a highly-desired bird on any New Guinea tour.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*

About 20 at Pacific Adventist University.

Grey Teal *Anas gracilis*

Two at PAU.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Australasian Grebe *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

Two were seen at Pacific Adventist University and another at Varirata.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

Australian (White) Ibis *Threskiornis molucca*

The only one seen was at PAU.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae

Black Bittern *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

We had brief looks at a single bird at PAU.

Rufous (Nankeen) Night-Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*

Four were seen at the Pacific Adventist University and two elsewhere in the lowlands. Also recorded in an oil-palm area on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Striated (Little Green/Green-backed) Heron *Butorides striatus*

Seen in small numbers in the lowlands, with maximum of four at PAU.

Note: A polytypic and cosmopolitan superspecies with over 30 recognized forms. Clements recognized two full species, the North American Green Heron B. virescens and the most widespread nominate form which we recorded in PNG. This split is not recognized by Handbook of Birds of the World (del Hoyo et al.) who lump these forms under the nominate.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Only seen in the Port Moresby region: at and near PAU, Port Moresby airport, and Brown River.

Note: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle



Egret *E. coromanda*.

Great-billed Heron*Ardea sumatrana*

We had several flight views on the Elevala River and prolonged views of a perched bird near the Brown River.

Great Egret*Ardea alba*

Widespread in the lowlands, with the maximum 30 in one day. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain. *Note: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World A. a. egretta which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.*

Pied Heron*Egretta picata*

We saw 12 of this beautiful heron at PAU.

Intermediate Egret*Egretta intermedia*

Widespread but uncommon, with 12 at PAU. *Note: This group may be split into 3 species, Yellow-billed Egret *E. brachyrhyncha*, Plumed Egret *E. plumifera* (which is what we recorded in PNG) and the nominate Intermediate Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by IOC.*

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

Singles observed on the Fly River and near the Brown River.

Pacific Reef Heron*Egretta sacra*

Up to 10 per day recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain, mostly on the offshore islands.

Frigatebirds Fregatidae**Great Frigatebird***Fregata minor*

Four birds were seen off New Britain and one near Brown River.

Cormorants Phalacrocoracidae**Little Black Cormorant***Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*

Common in the Port Moresby area, with about 30 at the Pacific Adventist University (PAU) and some near the Brown River as well as small numbers in the Elevala and Fly River area.

Little Pied Cormorant*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*

Widespread in small numbers: at PAU, up to five per day at Kiunga and Elevala River. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Anhinga & Darters Anhingidae**Darter***Anhinga melanogaster*

One at PAU. *Note: Race *A. m. novaehollandiae* is usually split as Australasian Darter, occurring from Australia, New Guinea and Wallacea.*

Falcons and Kestrels Falconidae**Australian Hobby***Falco cenchroides*

A probable bird was seen near Kiunga.

Brown Falcon*Falco berigora*

One at Mt Hagen airport

Peregrine Falcon*Falco peregrinus*

One below Kumul Lodge. This is the dark, resident race *ernesti*.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites Accipitridae**Osprey***Pandion haliaetus*

Two or three recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Pacific Baza (Crested Hawk) *Aviceda subcristata*

Seen almost daily in the Tabubil / Kiunga / Elevala River area, with a maximum of six a day, and also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain and near the Brown River.

Black Honey-Buzzard *Henicopernis infuscatus*

Three seen well at our new forest site on New Britain.

Long-tailed Honey-buzzard (E) *Henicopernis longicauda*

Seen on six dates, mostly in the lowlands.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Up to 30 birds were seen daily in the Mt. Hagen area and one or two per day in the Port Moresby region.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

Several in the Port Moresby area.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Seen regularly throughout the tour, with maxima of up to fifteen daily on New Britain, in the Moresby area and up to ten a day in the Kumul area.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

One or two on the offshore islands visited when in New Britain, and one to two others on the Fly River.

Variable Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster*

Widespread, with singles seen on seven days, including in the New Britain.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*

Only seen in the Kumul area, with at least two birds on one date, and one near the Brown River.

Black-mantled Goshawk NG *Accipiter melanochlamys*

An immature was seen in the Kumul Lodge area.

New Britain Goshawk *Accipiter*

Two were watched circling up from the forest mid morning at our new site on New Britain. This is a very rarely seen species.

New Britain Sparrowhawk *Accipiter brachyurus*

A slim, small sparrowhawk seen perched at close range on Kilu Ridge was almost certainly an immature of this species.

Doria's Goshawk NG *Megatriorchis doriae*

One, possibly two seen extremely well through scopes in the vicinity of an active nest in Varirata.

New Guinea Eagle NG *Harpyopsis novaeguineae*

Unbelievable views of this powerful raptor near Ambua, first perched on a ridge calling, and subsequently gliding across the valley and straight over us! Wonderful!

Gurneys Eagle *Aquila gurneyi*

One seen soaring near the Brown River.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

Forbes Forest Crake *Rallina forbesi*

FL had great views of a foraging bird near Ambua, but the group only glimpsed it as it crossed the trail. Heard on two dates near Kumul Lodge.

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*

Most of us had good looks at one at Pacific Adventist University.

White-browed Crake *Porzana cinerea*

We all had good looks at one at Pacific Adventist University.

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*



At least 40 were recorded at Pacific Adventist University and several were seen in the Brown River region.
Note: This cosmopolitan species is currently in taxonomic review and several forms are expected to be recognised as distinct species. The form we recorded might then become Black-winged Swampphen P. melanopterus. Other forms to be recognised may include Indian Swampphen P. poliocephalus, Philippine Swampphen P. pulverulentus and Eastern Swampphen P. melanotus.

Dusky Moorhen*Gallinula tenebrosa*

Eight were at Pacific Adventist University.

Buttonquails Turnicidae**Red-backed Buttonquail***Turnix maculosa*

Repeating our success from the tour immediately preceding, we observed two of these secretive little birds at Kiunga Airport and were treated to good views.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae**New Guinea Woodcock***Scolopax rosenbergii*

One seen by Ron at Kumul Lodge

Masked Lapwing*Vanellus miles*

Six were at PAU, several near Mt Hagen and about four near the Brown River.

Pacific Golden Plover*Pluvialis fulva*

At least ten birds in the Moresby area.

Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

Seen on five dates with a maximum of three.

Grey-tailed Tattler*Heteroscelus brevipes*

Up to five tattlers per day on New Britain were presumably this species.

Jacanas Jacanidae**Comb-crested Jacana***Irediparra gallinacea*

Six were found at the Pacific Adventist University.

Sandpipers Scolopacidae**Whimbrel***Numenius phaeopus*

Up to six daily on New Britain.

Eastern Curlew*Numenius madagascariensis*

Up to six daily on New Britain.

Coursers and Pratincoles Glareolidae**Australian Pratincole***Stiltia isabella*

Seen on four dates, mostly at airports, with a maximum of five at Port Moresby.

Terns Sternidae**Great Crested Tern***Sterna bergii*

Up to forty on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Black-naped Tern*Sterna sumatrana*

Twenty were seen near Restorf Island and some from the beach near our hotel, New Britain.

Roseate Tern*Sterna dougallii*

At least thirty seen off New Britain.

Brown Noddy*Anous stolidus*

At least two off New Britain.

Black Noddy*Anous minutusi*

Remarkably, we saw and photographed one bird on the rocks of a fast flowing river near Tabubil, probably more than 1,000 km from the sea.

Pigeons & Doves Columbidae**Slender-billed [Brown] Cuckoo-Dove***Macropygia amboinensis*

This species was widespread and common in small numbers from the lowlands up to mid-level mountains, with up to 8 per day.

Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove*Macropygia nigrirostris*

Up to 8 per day in the Kumul area.

Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove*Macropygia mackinlayi*

Two birds were seen on Restorf Island.

Great Cuckoo-Dove (NE)*Reinwardtoena reinwardtii*

One near Ambua Lodge; one near Ekame Lodge and another at Varirata.

Pied Cuckoo-Dove (NE)*Reinwardtoena browni*

One seen in flight on New Britain.

Emerald Dove*Chalcophaps indica*

One near the Brown River.

Stephan's Dove*Chalcophaps stephani*

One flew across the Elevala River and at least four recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Peaceful Dove*Geopelia placida*

Fifteen at PAU.

Bar-shouldered Dove*Geopelia humeralis*

We found this highly localized bird (in New Guinea) at Pacific Adventist University and in mangroves near the Brown River.

Nicobar Pigeon*Caloenas nicobarica*

We had excellent looks at eight birds at Restorf Island and two on mainland New Britain at Pokili.

Bronze Ground-Dove (NG)*Gallicolumba beccarii*

Most of us had fantastic views of a male at Kumul Lodge, whilst others saw a female and possibly a third bird in the general vicinity.

Southern Crowned-Pigeon (NG)*Goura scheepmakeri*

Always one of the main target birds along the Elevala River, this amazing bird did not let us down. We had fantastic prolonged views of a pair of this huge species as they wandered away from the edge of the river where they had been foraging.

Pheasant Pigeon (NG)*Otidiphaps nobilis*

Heard only, at Varirata.

Wompoo (Magnificent) Fruit-Dove*Ptilinopus magnificus*

Seen at Varirata National Park and heard at the Brown and Elevala River.

Pink-spotted Fruit-Dove (NG)*Ptilinopus perlatus*

Up to 12 per day in the Kiunga – Elevala River area. Otherwise small numbers at Varirata and near Brown River.

Orange-fronted Fruit-Dove (NG)*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*

We saw three at the mangroves near Brown River, a reliable site for this localized fruit-dove.

Superb Fruit-Dove*Ptilinopus superbus*

Seen on five dates, mostly in the lowlands, but remarkably one male found (and caught when it flew into



the wall at night) at 2,900m at Kumul Lodge.

Beautiful Fruit-Dove (NG) *Ptilinopus pulchellus*

Two along Boys Town Road, Kiunga.

Orange-bellied Fruit-Dove (NG) *Ptilinopus iozonus*

Small numbers seen in the Kiunga area, with up to a high of ten per day. A few in the Brown River area.

Knob-billed Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus insolitus*

Seen daily in New Britain, with a maximum count of 15.

Dwarf Fruit-Dove (NG) *Ptilinopus nanus*

Two along the Ok Ma road near Tabubil was the only sighting.

Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon *Ducula rubricera*

Pleasingly common on New Britain.

Finsch's Imperial Pigeon (BA) *Ducula finschii*

Three birds seen and others heard in New Britain.

Island Imperial Pigeon *Ducula pistrinaria*

Common on the smaller islands off New Britain.

Purple-tailed Imperial-Pigeon (NG) *Ducula rufigaster*

Amazing views of two in the mid-storey in Varirata, one in the Tabubil area and another near Kiunga.

Pinon Imperial-Pigeon NG *Ducula pinon*

Three only, all in the Kiunga – Elevala River region.

Collared (Black-collared) Imperial-Pigeon (NG) *Ducula mullerii*

Abundant along the Elevala and Fly rivers, with up to 200 estimated daily.

Zoe Imperial-Pigeon (NG) *Ducula zoeae*

Five seen in total, in Varirata and along the Elevala River.

Torresian Imperial-Pigeon (NE) *Ducula spilorrhoea*

Singles seen at PAU, the Brown River and Varirata.

Black Imperial Pigeon *Ducula melanochroa*

A very brief flight view for a few people on New Britain. This species is mainly montane but occasionally visits the lowlands

Yellowish-tinted Imperial Pigeon *Ducula subflavecens*

Daily counts of up to 20 at locations on New Britain.

Papuan Mountain-Pigeon (NE) *Gymnophaps albertisii*

Widespread and often seen in flocks of up to 40, not only in the mountains but also in lowland areas. Maximum count of about 100 on the Ok Ma road near Tabubil.

Cockatoos & Parrots Psittacidae

Buff-faced Pygmy-Parrot *Micropsitta pusio*

Two birds were watched at close range at Pokili on New Britain.

Yellow-capped Pygmy-Parrot (NE) *Micropsitta keiensis*

Small numbers of these tiny birds seen in flight along Boys Town Road, Kiunga.

Red-breasted Pygmy-Parrot (NE) *Micropsitta bruijnii*

Great views on the Dablin Creek Road, where at least 40 were feeding in the taller trees.

Palm Cockatoo (NE) *Probosciger aterrimus*

Seen daily in the Tabubil and Kiunga/Ekame Lodge areas, with up to four of this magnificent species seen per day.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

Observed on five days with up to nine per day, in the lowlands and hills.



- Blue-eyed Cockatoo** *Cacatua ophthalmica*
Seen in good numbers at all forest patches on New Britain.
- Yellow-streaked (Greater Streaked) Lory (NG)** *Chalcopsitta sintillata*
Up to 15 daily in the Kiunga area, with smaller numbers along the Elevala River and near Tabubil.
- Dusky Lory (NG)** *Pseudeos fuscata*
Seen only in the Tabubil area, with up to 60 a day.
- Rainbow Lorikeet** *Trichoglossus haematodus*
Common and widespread in the lowlands and hills. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.
- Goldie's Lorikeet (NG)** *Psitteuteles goldiei*
Only seen at Kumul Lodge, with up to 30 in one tree.
- Western Black-capped Lory (NG)** *Lorius lory*
This gorgeous bird was common through the lowlands and hills in small numbers. Fifteen per day was the maximum count.
- Eastern Black-capped Lory** *Lory hypoinochrous*
Up to 40 per day recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.
- Red-flanked Lorikeet (NE)** *Charmosyna placentis*
Up to 30 per day on New Britain, and small numbers in the Kiunga area.
- Fairy (Little Red) Lorikeet (NG)** *Charmosyna pulchella*
Five seen well along the Ok Ma road, Tabubil.
- Papuan Lorikeet (NG)** *Charmosyna papou*
Small numbers in the mountains, with up to ten daily around Ambua Lodge. This must rate as one of the world's most beautiful parrots!
- Plum-faced (Whiskered) Lorikeet (NG)** *Oreopsittacus arfaki*
Only seen in the vicinity of Kumul Lodge, with four on our last day there.
- Yellow-billed Lorikeet (NG)** *Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*
Small numbers below Kumul Lodge and in the Ambua Lodge area.
- Orange-billed Lorikeet (NG)** *Neopsittacus pullicauda*
Several birds most days at both Kumul Lodge and the Ambua Lodge area.
- Orange-breasted Fig-Parrot (NG)** *Clycopsitta guliemitertii*
We had 30 at Dablin Creek Road, 5 at Ok Ma, and small numbers along the Elevala River.
- Double-eyed Fig-Parrot** *Clycopsitta diophthalma*
We found about 20 on the Boys Town Road.
- Brehm's Tiger-Parrot (NG)** *Psittacella brehmii*
Up to five seen daily at Kumul Lodge, most often feeding obligingly on the fruit at the bird feeder. This is the largest and most-common tiger-parrot but it is always charming to watch.
- Madarasz's Tiger-Parrot (NG)** *Psittacella madaraszii*
One was studied near Ambua Lodge.
- Red-cheeked Parrot (NE)** *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*
Common but easily over-looked. Seen at PAU, Varirata, Brown River, and in the Kiunga – Elevala River area.
- Blue-collared Parrot (NG)** *Geoffroyus simplex*
At least five were seen in flight overhead at Dablin Creek Road.
- Singing Parrot** *Geoffroyus heteroclitus*
Single birds in flight on two days in New Britain.
- Eclectus Parrot (NE)** *Eclectus roratus*
Seen regularly in small numbers on the mainland, though no more than six per day. In New Britain found to



be abundant, with up to 60 per day.

Papuan King-Parrot (NG)

Alisterus chloropterus

Seen on four dates, with maximum of four in a day at Varirata.

Orange-fronted Hanging Parrot

Loriculus aurantiifrons

This scarce bird was seen near Tabubil on the Ok Ma road.

Cuckoos and Coucals Cuculidae

Greater Black Coucal (NG)

Centropus menbeki

We heard several calling along the Elevala River, especially before dawn around Ekame Lodge. One seen very well near the Brown River.

Pied Coucal

Centropus ateralbus

Fairly common on New Britain in forested areas, with up to four seen per day.

Pheasant Coucal

Centropus phasianinus

One seen at PAU; six seen at Brown River; and several on both visits to Varirata.

Brush Cuckoo

Cacomantis variolosus

A common bird that was seen occasionally and frequently heard.

Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo (NE)

Cacomantis castaneiventris

We scoped a singing bird at Ok Ma Road.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo

Cacomantis flabelliformis

Heard on seven dates and seen in flight once.

White-eared Bronze-Cuckoo (NG)

Chrysococcyx meyeri

Three seen in the Tabubil area.

Shining Bronze-Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx lucidus

One seen on Kilu Ridge, New Britain.

Rufous-throated Bronze-Cuckoo (NG)

Chrysococcyx ruficollis

One seen and at least two heard near Kumul Lodge.

Long-billed Cuckoo (NG)

Rhamphomantis megarhynchus

One seen very well on Boys Town Road.

White-crowned Koel (NG)

Caliechthrus leucolophus

Heard only, in the Tabubil area and along the Elevala River.

Asian [Common] Koel

Eudynamys scolopacea

Heard on six dates and glimpsed once. As this is the breeding form in New Guinea, it is the only one expected to call there; the male looks just like the male Australian Koel, which is usually silent in New Guinea. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Channel-billed Cuckoo

Scythrops novaehollandiae

Twenty observed along the Elevala and Fly rivers. Also recorded in small numbers on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Barn Owls Tytonidae

Greater Sooty-Owl (NE)

Tyto tenebricosa

We heard one above Ambua Lodge and had spectacular daylight views in the Tari valley.

Typical Owls Strigidae

Barking Owl (NE)

Ninox connivens

We saw two in the Varirata National Park region. One was in the bus headlights on the road during the pre-dawn drive up to the park. Jim, Jr. flushed the second individual beside the Varirata car park clearing and



Steve re-found it inside the forest, where we all got good views.

Papuan Boobook (NG) *Ninox theomacha*

A pair calling at Ok Ma before dawn was eventually seen well, and some people saw another at Ambua.

Spangled (New Britain) Boobook (NB) *Ninox odiosa*

One seen well during the day at Pokili Reserve.

Frogmouths Podargidae

Marbled Frogmouth (NE) *Podargus ocellatus*

One seen at a daytime roost in Varirata

Papuan Frogmouth (NE) *Podargus papuensis*

Essentially the first birds of this tour were a magnificent pair roosting together in a tree in the residential portion of Pacific Adventist University. We scoped these astounding birds in intimate detail. Another two were seen in the Tari valley.

Nightjars & Allies Caprimulgidae

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*

Seen pre-dawn at Varirata

White-throated Nightjar *Eurostopodus mystacalis*

Two seen prior to dawn on the Boys Town Road, Kiunga.

Owlet-Nightjars Aegothelidae

Spangled (Starry) Owlet-Nightjar (NG) *Aegotheles tatei*

One heard at Ekame Lodge.

Barred Owlet-Nightjar (NG) *Aegotheles bennettii*

One or two seen in Varirata National Park as it got light on our first visit, and another seen there perched close-by in the understorey during the day.

Mountain Owlet-Nightjar (NG) *Aegotheles albertisi*

Heard nightly around Kumul Lodge and seen at 2m distance pre-dawn by Brian and Fay.

Treeswifts Hemiprocnidae

Moustached Treeswift (NE) *Hemiprocne mystacea*

Small numbers recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain and others in the lowlands near Kiunga.

Swifts Apodidae

Glossy Swiftlet *Aerodramus esculenta*

Up to 50 birds estimated daily in the hills and mountains.

Mountain Swiftlet (NG) *Aerodramus hirundinaceus*

Up to 50 daily in the Kumul Lodge and Tari Gap – Ambua Lodge areas. Appeared to be present with the next species in the hills above Tabubil at Okmendi.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis*

Very common in the lowlands and hills, where seen virtually every day. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

White-rumped Swiftlet *Aerodramus spodiopygius*

Several birds were seen on New Britain.

Papuan Needletail (New Guinea Spine-tailed) NG *Mearnsia novaeguineae*



Small numbers foraging above the Fly and Elevala Rivers.

Rollers Coraciidae

Oriental Dollarbird

Eurystomus orientalis

Seen regularly in the lowlands with up to 40 per day near Kiunga. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Common Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis

Recorded on New Britain and near the Brown River.

Azure Kingfisher

Alcedo azurea

One at Varirata and another near the Brown River.

Variable (Dwarf) Kingfisher

Ceyx lepidus

Regularly heard in the lowlands but only seen briefly, on two occasions.

Blue-winged Kookaburra

Dacelo leachii

Up to three birds were seen each day at Varirata and two at PAU. One of the largest kingfishers, with a truly massive bill!

Rufous-bellied Kookaburra (NG)

Dacelo gaudichaud

Seen and heard on six dates, with up to two in a day.

Shovel-billed Kookaburra (NG)

Clytoceyx rex

Three or four birds were calling in the dawn twilight at Ok Ma, Tabubil, but we had to visit twice to see one perched. This is a near-mythical species; the first known nest of this species was only discovered in this same area just a few years ago!

Forest Kingfisher

Todirhamphus macleayii

One at PAU and two near Varirata.

Collared Kingfisher

Todirhamphus chloris

Two near Tabubil, and one in the mangroves near the Brown River. Several seen daily in New Britain.

White-mantled Kingfisher (BA)

Todirhamphus albonotatus

Four seen on two dates in New Britain.

Beach Kingfisher

Todirhamptus saurophaga

Four birds were seen on the smaller isles including Restorf, New Britain.

Sacred Kingfisher

Todirhamphus sanctus

This common wintering bird from Australia was widespread and frequently seen in the lowlands.

Hook-billed Kingfisher (NG)

Melidora macrorrhina

We heard this crepuscular species calling many times and scoped one calling in the canopy at Varirata.

Yellow-billed Kingfisher (NE)

Syma torotoro

One seen well at Varirata National Park and two others near the Brown River.

Mountain Kingfisher (Mountain Yellow-billed) (NG)

Syma megarhyncha

Heard several times near Ambua Lodge but sadly never seen.

Little Paradise-Kingfisher (NG)

Tanysiptera hydrocharis

Excellent views of one along the Elevala River and others heard in the area.

Common Paradise-Kingfisher (NE)

Tanysiptera galatea

Only glimpsed along the Elevala River but very good views of a couple of birds near the Brown River, where this is a common species.

Brown-headed Paradise-Kingfisher (PNG)

Tanysiptera danae

With only a small amount of work we saw one or two at Varirata National Park.



Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher (NE) *Tanysiptera sylvia*

One seen briefly in Varirata

Black-headed Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera Sylvia nigriceps*

Five were seen at Pokili and in the vicinity of Garu Forest, New Britain.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*

Seen on 8 dates, with up to 40 in a day. This is a migrant from Australia.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Blyth's Hornbill NE *Aceros plicatus*

This vulnerable bird is always most abundant along the Elevala and Fly rivers, where we saw it daily in numbers up to 40. The only hornbills we saw elsewhere were a few at Ok Ma. Also recorded in small numbers (up to ten a day) on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Pittas Pittidae

Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida*

We heard up to four birds daily along the Elevala River and in the Kiunga area, and saw two well.

Blue-breasted Pitta *Pitta erythrogaster*

Heard only, in Varirata.

Bowerbirds Ptilonorhynchidae

White-eared Catbird (NG) *Ailuroedus buccoides*

Heard in Varirata.

Archbold's Bowerbird (NG) *Archboldia papuensis*

One in the garden at Kumul Lodge on a number of occasions. A shy surprise visitor to the bird table!

Macgregor's Bowerbird (NG) *Amblyornis macgregoriae*

Great scope views of a male and at least two females in a fruiting tree near Kumul Lodge.

Flame Bowerbird (NG) *Sericulus aureus*

We had great views of a male of this awesome golden bird as it flew across the forest along Boys Town Road.

Yellow-breasted Bowerbird (NG) *Chlamydera lauterbachii*

Near the village below Kumul Lodge we watched at least three birds perched atop prominent trees.

Fawn-breasted Bowerbird (NE) *Chlamydera cerviniventris*

We saw at least four birds at Pacific Adventist University and were able to study an active bower. We also saw one near Brown River.

Australian Treecreepers Climacteridae

Papuan Treecreeper (NG) *Cormobates placens*

One seen in a large mixed bird flock just up the road from Ambua Lodge.

Australasian Wrens Maluridae

Wallace's Fairywren (NG) *Sipodotus wallacii*

At least three were seen in the canopy at Km 17 near Kiunga.

White-shouldered Fairywren (NG) *Malurus alboscapulatus*



- Fairly widespread and seen at several sites below Kumul Lodge, at Varirata, and in the Kiunga lowlands.
- Emperor Fairywren (NG)** *Malurus cyanocephalus*
Several groups were seen in the Brown River area.
- Orange-crowned Fairywren (NG)** *Clytomias insignis*
Small groups encountered twice near Kumul Lodge.
- Honeyeaters Meliphagidae**
- Spotted Honeyeater (NG)** *Xanthotis polygramma*
One in a mixed bird flock on Ok Ma Road. A strikingly marked honeyeater.
- Tawny-breasted Honeyeater (NE)** *Xanthotis flaviventer*
Up to three seen daily around Tabubil.
- Black-throated Honeyeater (NG)** *Lichenostomus subfrenatus*
One seen below Kumul Lodge and at least ten seen visiting a single flowering tree near Ambua.
- Obscure Honeyeater (NG)** *Lichenostomus obscurus*
Two seen on the Ok Ma road completed our sweep of the 'obscures.'
- Yellow-tinted Honeyeater (NE)** *Lichenostomus flavescens*
Several at the Gateway Hotel, Port Moresby, and others at the Hisiu petrol station near the Brown River.
- Mountain Meliphaga (NG)** *Meliphaga orientalis*
Seen in the Tabubil area and below Kumul Lodge.
- Scrub (Scrub White-eared) Honeyeater (NG)** *Meliphaga albonotata*
Several around Tabubil town.
- Mimic Honeyeater (Meliphaga) (NG)** *Meliphaga analoga*
Several on each visit to Varirata.
- Graceful Honeyeater (Meliphaga) (NE)** *Meliphaga gracilis*
Only definitely seen near Brown River.
- White-throated Honeyeater** *Melithreptus albogularis*
Four were observed in savanna along the Varirata National Park entrance road.
- Plain Honeyeater (NG)** *Pycnopygius ixoides*
Two on the Boys Town Road, Kiunga
- Marbled Honeyeater (NG)** *Pycnopygius cinereus*
At least three seen below Kumul Lodge.
- Streak-headed Honeyeater (NG)** *Pycnopygius stictocephalus*
Seen only in Varirata National Park.
- Meyer's Friarbird (NG)** *Philemon meyeri*
One seen on the Boys Town Road
- Helmeted [New Guinea] Friarbird** *Philemon buceroides*
Common in the New Guinea lowlands and recorded almost daily in numbers up to ten in the Port Moresby – Varirata area and in smaller numbers in the Kiunga – Elevala River region.
- New Britain Friarbird** *Philemon cockerelli*
Recorded daily in small numbers, New Britain.
- (Common) Smoky Honeyeater (NG)** *Melipotes fumigatus*
Common in the high mountains, with up to 30 and 40 daily at Kumul and Ambua lodges, respectively, but only one at Dablin Creek Road. The Kumul Lodge bird feeder provided many opportunities for close views of their faces blushing from yellow to red and back again, often in odd blotchy patterns.
- Belford's Melidectes (NG)** *Melidectes belfordi*
Most common high and heard constantly. Up to 15 daily in the Kumul Lodge and Ambua areas.



Yellow-browed Melidectes (NG)*Melidectes rufocrissalis*

Mostly below the elevation zone dominated by Belford's Melidectes. Some showed signs of introgressive hybridization from Belford's, as is common in this region. Daily numbers up to 10 from somewhat above Ambua Lodge down into Tari Valley.

Ornate Melidectes (NG)*Melidectes torquatus*

Only seen below Kumul Lodge and near Mt Hagen airport.

Olive-streaked (Yellowish-streaked) Honeyeater (NG) *Ptiloprora meekiana*

One in a flowering tree near Ambua Lodge.

Rufous-backed Honeyeater (PNG)*Ptiloprora guisei*

Several below Kumul Lodge and up to ten daily around Ambua Lodge. More common at lower elevations than the following species.

Black-backed (Grey-streaked) Honeyeater (NG) *Ptiloprora perstriata*

Daily numbers of up to four around Kumul Lodge and three in the Ambua area.

Long-billed Honeyeater (NG)*Melilestes megarhynchus*

Three sightings; two in the Tabubil area and one in Varirata.

Silver-eared Honeyeater (NG)*Melilestes megarhynchus*

Two near the Brown River.

Rufous-banded Honeyeater (NE)*Conopophila albogularis*

Twelve birds scattered amongst Gateway Hotel, Pacific Adventist University, Varirata savanna, and Hisiu petrol station.

Ashy Myzomela*Myzomela cineracea*

Up to eight daily on mainland New Britain.

Sclater's Myzomela*Myzomela sclateri*

At least ten on the small islands in Kimbe Bay, New Britain.

Splendid Myzomela*Myzomela erythrmelas*

Up to three daily on mainland New Britain.

Mountain Red-headed Myzomela (NG)*Myzomela adolphinae*

We saw at least eight near the Lesser Bird-of-paradise display tree at Munganda village and one near Kumul.

Red-collared Myzomela (NG)*Myzomela rosenbergii*

Seen only in the Ambua area, with at least 20 in one flowering tree.

Green-backed Honeyeater*Timeliopsis fallax*

Four in total, in the Kiunga and Tabubil areas.

Thornbills & Allies Acanthizidae**Rusty Mouse-Warbler (NG)***Crateroscelis murina*

Two birds seen at Varirata; up to six heard per day around Tabubil and Kiunga.

Mountain Mouse-Warbler (NG)*Crateroscelis robusta*

Up to three seen daily near both Kumul and Ambua lodges.

Large Scrubwren (NG)*Sericornis nouhuysi*

Up to ten per day at Kumul Lodges and up to four at Ambua Lodge.

Buff-faced Scrubwren (NG)*Sericornis perspicillatus*

Up to at least ten daily at Ambua and Kumul lodges.

Papuan Scrubwren (NG)*Sericornis papuensis*

Up to six daily at Kumul Lodge but only two at Ambua Lodge.

Pale-billed Scrubwren (NG)*Sericornis spilodera*

Two seen at Varirata.

Green-backed Gerygone NE *Gerygone chloronotus*

Its distinctive song was heard frequently in the lowlands and hills from Varirata and the Kiunga region to Tabubil, but only three were seen.

Large-billed Gerygone *Gerygone magnirostris*

A total of four seen in the Kiunga and Ekame Lodge area and at Varirata.

Yellow-bellied Gerygone (NG) *Gerygone chrysogaster*

A total of six seen along the Elevala River.

Brown-breasted (Rufous-breasted) Gerygone (NG) *Gerygone ruficollis*

Heard almost daily and often seen in the mountains near both Kumul and Ambua lodges, with up to ten seen. Its song is one of the beautiful and characteristic sounds of the montane forest.

Mangrove Gerygone NE *Gerygone levigaster*

Small numbers in the Hisiu Mangroves, where one was seen.

Fairy Gerygone *Gerygone palpebrosa*

Small numbers in Varirata.

Australasian Babblers Pomatosromidae

Papuan (Rufous) Babbler (NG) *Pomatostomus isidorei*

Six seen well at Km 17 near Kiunga and others heard in that region.

Logrunners Orthonychidae

Papuan Logrunner (NG) *Orthonyx temminckii*

One seen briefly above Ambua by some of the group.

Satinbirds Cnemophilidae

Velvet Satinbird (Loria's Bird-of-paradise) NG *Cnemophilus loriae*

Up to four visiting a fruiting tree below Kumul Lodge and up to four daily in the Ambua area.

Antenna Satinbird (Crested Bird-of-paradise) NG *Cnemophilus macgregorii*

An adult male and a female were seen below Kumul Lodge and a female was also seen in the garden.

Berrypeckers Melanocharitidae

Obscure Berrypecker (NG) *Melanocharis arfakiana*

We saw two on the Ok Ma road, Tabubil. This enigmatic species was almost unknown until discovered to be regular around Tabubil.

Lemon-breasted (Mid-mountain) Berrypecker (NG) *Melanocharis longicauda*

Up to four near Kumul Lodge.

Fan-tailed Berrypecker (NG) *Melanocharis versteri*

Up to three around Kumul Lodge and two per day near Ambua.

Streaked Berrypecker (NG) *Melanocharis striativentris*

Two seen below Kumul Lodge.

Yellow-bellied Longbill (NG) *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*

One seen on the Elevala River near Ekame Lodge.

Slaty-chinned Longbill (NG) *Toxorhamphus poliopterus*

Singles below Kumul Lodge on two dates.

Dwarf Honeyeater (NG) *Toxorhamphus iliolophus*



One was seen at Varirata National Park.

Painted Berrypeckers Paramythiidae

Tit Berrypecker (NG)

Oreocharis arfaki

Four seen below Kumul Lodge and another five on two dates near Ambua Lodge.

Crested Berrypecker (NG)

Paramythia montium

Seen daily around Kumul Lodge, with a maximum of six birds. Also two seen above Ambua.

Whipbirds and Jewel-babblers Eupetidae

Spotted Jewel-babbler (NG)

Ptilorrhoa leucosticta

Most of us saw this species near Ambua Lodge, where encountered on two occasions.

Blue Jewel-babbler (NG)

Ptilorrhoa caerulescens

Most of the group managed to see this beautiful but elusive species behind Ekame Lodge. We also saw it briefly at Km 17 near Kiunga.

Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler (NG)

Ptilorrhoa castanonota

One seen by half the group at Varirata and others were heard at Ok Ma.

Quail-thrushes Cinclosomatidae

Painted Quail-thrush (NG)

Cinclosoma ajax

Three observed briefly at Varirata.

Boatbills Machaerirhynchidae

Black-breasted Boatbill (NG)

Machaerirhynchus nigripectus

A total of seven observed in the highlands around Kumul Lodge.

Butcherbirds & Allies Cracticidae

Black-backed Butcherbird (NE)

Cracticus mentalis

Three at Pacific Adventist University.

Hooded Butcherbird (NG)

Cracticus cassicus

Conspicuous, by both sight and sound, at Varirata, around Kiunga, and along the Elevala river with maximum of three on a day.

Black Butcherbird

Cracticus quoyi

Three near Tabubil and one near Ambua Lodge.

Mountain Peltops (NG)

Peltops montanus

Six on the Dablin Creek road and one at Ambua Lodge.

Woodswallows Artamidae

Great Woodswallow (NG)

Artamus maximus

Up to ten per day around Ambua Lodge and a few elsewhere in the highlands.

White-breasted Woodswallow

Artamus leucorhynchus

Up to ten seen daily in the Port Moresby area and lowlands, where recorded on five dates

Bismarck Woodswallow (BA)

Artamus insignis

Two seen on Kulu Ridge during our extension to New Britain.



Cuckoo-shrikes Campephagidae**Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike***Coracina novaehollandiae*

This Australian migrant was most common at the end of the tour near the Brown River, where at least 20 were seen. Others were seen in Varirata.

Stout-billed Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina caeruleogrisea*

Among New Guinea's cuckoo-shrikes, of which we saw all twelve species, this large bird is particularly impressive. We saw one at Varirata and three in the Tabubil area.

Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrike*Coracina lineata*

Two seen at Varirata.

Boyer's Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina boyeri*

Seen on two occasions in the Tabubil area.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike*Coracina papuensis*

Widespread in the lowlands where up to four were seen per day. Also seen in New Britain.

Hooded Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina longicauda*

A group of at least five seen at Ambua Lodge.

Common Cicadabird*Coracina tenuirostris*

Only seen on New Britain, where at least six birds were encountered.

Papuan (Black-shouldered) Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina incerta*

Two were seen on the Ok Ma road.

Black Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina melas*

Two near the Brown River

Grey-headed (Black-tipped) Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina schisticeps*

Up to four daily in the Tabubil region.

Black-bellied Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Coracina montana*

Two to three on several days near Ambua and below the Kumul Lodge.

Golden Cuckoo-shrike (NG)*Campochaera sloetii*

This is always a popular bird and we saw two several times on the Dablin Creek Road.

Varied Triller*Lalage leucomela*

Seen on eight dates with at least four per day in New Britain and up to two per day on the mainland.

Sittellas Neosittidae**Black Sittella (NG)***Neositta miranda*

A flock of six were watched feeding near the road above Ambua Lodge.

Shriketits Falcunculidae**Wattled Ploughbill (NG)***Eulacestoma nigropectus*

An adult male in a large mixed bird flock above Ambua gave us fantastic views of this famous and strange New Guinea endemic.

Whistlers Pachycephalidae**Rufous-naped Whistler (NG)***Aleadryas rufinucha*

This distinctive whistler was seen nearly every day in the highlands around Kumul and Ambua lodges, with a maximum of four seen.

Mottled Whistler (NG)*Rhagologus leucostigma*

Several seen near Ambua Lodge.



Rusty Whistler (NG) Two seen at Ok Ma.	<i>Pachycephala hyperythra</i>
Brown-backed Whistler (PNG) We encountered this whistler almost daily in the highlands, with up to two daily.	<i>Pachycephala modesta</i>
Grey-headed [Grey] Whistler (NE) Seen on four dates.	<i>Pachycephala griseiceps</i>
Slater's Whistler (NG) We saw up to two daily at Ambua Lodge.	<i>Pachycephala soror</i>
Black-tailed Whistler (NE) About eight recorded on the small islands off New Britain.	<i>Pachycephala melanura</i>
Regent Whistler (NG) Up to four daily at Kumul Lodge but fewer near Ambua Lodge. One of the most colourful of all whistlers.	<i>Pachycephala schlegelii</i>
Black-headed Whistler (NG) Singles on two dates below Kumul Lodge.	<i>Pachycephala monacha</i>
White-bellied Whistler (NG) A superb male seen in response to playback in Varirata.	<i>Pachycephala leucogastra</i>

Shrikes Laniidae

Long-tailed Shrike Up to four seen almost daily near Kumul Lodge and some in the Tari Valley.	<i>Lanius schach</i>
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Figbirds and Orioles Oriolidae

Brown Oriole (NG) Small numbers at Varirata and around Kiunga.	<i>Oriolus szalayi</i>
Green Figbird Six at Pacific Adventist University and two at the Hisiu Mangroves.	<i>Sphecotheres viridis</i>

Shrikethrushes & Pitohuis Colluricinclidae

Rufous (Little) Shrike-Thrush A few in Varirata and around Tabubil and one below Kumul Lodge	<i>Colluricincla megarhyncha</i>
Grey Shrike-Thrush One in mangroves near the Brown River was the only sighting.	<i>Colluricincla harmonica</i>
Hooded Pitohui (NG) Up to six birds seen at Varirata National Park. This aposematically-coloured bird is the traditional "poison-bird" as it was the first bird species discovered to possess poisonous compounds in its tissues.	<i>Pitohui dichrous</i>
Rusty Pitohui (NG) One bird seen at Km 17 outside Kiunga.	<i>Pitohui ferrugineus</i>
White-bellied Pitohui (NG) Three along the Elevala River were seen by all after much effort.	<i>Pitohui incertus</i>
Crested Pitohui (NG) We heard its remarkably long pulsing song at Varirata.	<i>Pitohui cristatus</i>
Variable Pitohui (NG) Two were at Km 17 near Kiunga. This is a brown-hooded subspecies.	<i>Pitohui kirhocephalus</i>
Black Pitohui (NG) Two or three seen well just above Ambua Lodge	<i>Pitohui nigrescens</i>



Drongos Dicruridae**Papuan (Mountain) Drongo (NG)** *Chaetorhynchus papuensis*

One in a mixed bird flock at Varirata was the only individual seen.

Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus*

We had up to ten on most days in the lowlands and lower hills. Small numbers also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Fantails Rhipiduridae**Northern Fantail** *Rhipidura rufiventris*

Small numbers recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain but few on the main tour.

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Very widespread, being seen every day throughout the trip; with up to 30 per day in the Port Moresby region. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Friendly Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura albolimbata*

Relatively common in the highlands, with up to ten per day around Kumul and Ambua lodges.

Chestnut-bellied Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura hyperythra*

Three were seen at Varirata National Park.

Sooty Thicket-Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura threnothorax*

Two seen in the Tabubil area and one near the Brown River.

Black Thicket-Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura maculipectus*

One seen in the Hisiu Mangroves.

Black Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura atra*

Seen on six dates, with up to three in a day.

Mangrove Fantail (NE) *Rhipidura phasiana*

One seen by Brian in the Hisiu Mangroves.

Dimorphic Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*

A total of six birds seen in the Kumul Lodge and Ambua Lodge regions.

Rufous-backed Fantail (NG) *Rhipidura rufidorsa*

Two birds seen by Daniel along the Elevala River.

Monarchs Monarchidae**Black Monarch (Fantail Monarch) (NG)** *Monarcha axillaris*

Singles were observed near Tabubil and near Kumul Lodge.

Island Monarch *Monarcha cinerascens*

One was seen on Malumalu islet off New Britain.

Black-faced Monarch *Monarcha melanopsis*

Single observed at Varirata.

Black-winged Monarch *Monarcha frater*

One at Varirata and three seen on two dates near Ekame Lodge.

Spot-winged Monarch (NG) *Monarcha guttulus*

Four at Varirata and 1-2 daily in the Elevala River area.

Hooded Monarch (NG) *Monarcha manadensis*

Singles at two sites in the Elevala River area.

Black-tailed Monarch (BA) *Monarcha verticalis*

At least four seen at Pokili Forest Reserve on New Britain

Golden Monarch (NG) *Monarcha chrysomela*

One along Boys Town road and another along the Elevala River.

Friiled Monarch (NG) *Arses telescopthalmus*

Seen on seven dates in the lowlands. Note: The Australian *A. t. lorealis* has now been raised to full species status as Frill-necked Monarch, making the Friiled Monarch a New Guinea endemic.

Torrentlark (NG) *Grallina bruijni*

We all had great views of a pair of this charismatic cascade specialist above the Ok Menga Hydro Plant.

Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula*

Seen in Varirata on two dates.

Broad-billed Flycatcher *Myiagra ruficollis*

This is a mangrove specialist and one was recorded in the Hisiu Mangroves.

Satin Flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca*

One in a mixed bird flock along the Elevala River was unexpected.

Shining Flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*

Common along the Elevala River where at least ten per day were seen. Also seen along the Brown River. Up to eight daily on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Dull Flycatcher *Myiagra hebetior*

A male was seen at our new forest site on New Britain.

Crows and Jays Corvidae

Grey (Bare-eyed) Crow (NG) *Corvus tristis*

Up to twenty per day were seen on four dates, at Varirata, along the Elevala River and near Tabubil.

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*

The typical 'mainland' form we saw only in the Port Moresby – Varirata region, with up to six per day.

Island Crow *Corvus orru insularis*

Pleasingly common on New Britain.

Family Uncertain

Lesser Melampitta (NG) *Melampitta lugubris*

Everyone saw this species well near Kumul Lodge. Also heard in the Ambua area.

Greater Melampitta (NG) *Melampitta gigantea*

This species is one of New Guinea's near-mythical birds, and some of us were very lucky to get glimpses or more of a bird that circled us on our second visit to the Ok Ma road.

Blue-capped Ifrita (NG) *Ifrita kowaldi*

Up to two a day seen near Ambua. This is another of the 'poison-birds' and is believed to be the most poisonous of them all. In any case, it is a unique bird with a distinctive charm.

Birds-of-Paradise Paradisaeidae

Glossy-mantled Manucode (NG) *Manucodia atra*

We saw only two manucodes that were definitely this species, both on the Elevala River. It was heard near Kiunga, and at Varirata.

Crinkle-collared Manucode (NG) *Manucodia chalybata*

Singles seen at Varirata and on two dates in the Tabubil area.

Trumpet Manucode (NE) *Manucodia keraudrenii*

One watched displaying on its exposed perch along the Boys Town Road.

Short-tailed Paradigalla (NG) *Paradigalla brevicauda*

One seen in a fruiting tree at Ambua Lodge.



Ribbon-tailed Astrapia (PNG)*Astrapia mayeri*

Up to five per day at Kumul Lodge included occasional visitors to the feeder. Up to eight per day above Ambua Lodge. The adult males have the longest tail in proportion to body size of any bird in the world! This PNG endemic has a very limited range and was the last recognized species of bird-of-paradise to be discovered (in 1938).

Princess Stephanie's Astrapia (PNG)*Astrapia stephaniae*

Up to five per day were seen around Ambua Lodge and on one occasion we observed a group of at least six males “dancing” around in a huge fruiting tree with several females looking-on. One of these birds appeared to be a hybrid with the former species, having an extraordinarily long tail that was partially white.

Lawes' Parotia (PNG)*Parotia lawesii*

Up to four daily at Ambua Lodge included adult males and another two, including a full adult male, below Kumul Lodge.

King-of-Saxony Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Pteridophora alberti*

We watched four males calling from well-spaced exposed perches atop large trees above Ambua and also saw a number of females in this area as well as below Kumul Lodge. These observations included the males' characteristic ‘radio static’ song and incredible ‘semaphore’ displays with their two unreal head plumes!

Growling Riflebird (NG)*Ptiloris intercedens*

We saw a male extremely well at Varirata on our last visit.

Magnificent Riflebird (NE)*Ptiloris magnificus*

After much effort we finally had brief views of both sexes of this species along the Ok Ma road. It was also heard along the Boys Town Road and at Km 17 near Kiunga.

Superb Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Lophorina superba*

First seen at Dablin Creek Road, and subsequently below Kumul Lodge (five birds, including males) and near Ambua.

Brown Sicklebill (NG)*Epimachus meyeri*

This species was an entertaining visitor to the Kumul Lodge feeders (up to six daily, including a fully adorned male), and we heard adult males regularly in the Kumul area. We also saw several per day above Ambua Lodge, both males and females. The adult male's ‘machine-gun burst’ calls always impress.

Black Sicklebill (NG)*Epimachus fastuosus*

A male and female seen distantly early morning below Ambua Lodge, on the way to Tari.

Magnificent Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Cicinnurus magnificus*

We saw a pair of this species on the Ok Ma road, with the male in full breeding plumage.

King Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Cicinnurus regius*

The adult male faithfully attended the canopy tangle of a display tree by the Elevala River, and a female put in a brief appearance on a few occasions. Although often difficult to see, his repeated movements within a small and predictable area gave us many striking views of his gleaming red-orange and white plumage with unique green tail rackets. We even saw his green-tipped pectoral fans! This is the smallest bird-of-paradise but also one of the brightest and most unique.

Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Seleucidis melanoleuca*

Typically active in the early morning, this species treated us to a good show along the Elevala River where at one point we watched two males competing for the top of a calling pole, crawling up and down the pole with a mechanical motion. We saw at least six birds, including a female.

Greater Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Paradisaea apoda*

We saw up to 20 a day in the Kiunga area.

Lesser Bird-of-paradise (NG)*Paradisaea minor*

At least four birds were seen in and around the display tree at Munganda village included adult males.

Raggiana Bird-of-paradise (PNG)*Paradisaea raggiana*

This is the national bird of Papua New Guinea, endemic to PNG. Waiting under the lek trees in Varirata National Park, we watched as several prime males displayed briefly, dancing and shivering their rich reddish flank plumes every time a female appeared. We also saw several most days in the Kiunga area and on the Elevela River.

Blue Bird-of-paradise (PNG)*Paradisaea rudolphi*

We scoped an adult male and at least two females as they fed in a fruiting tree early in the morning down the valley below Kumul Lodge. At Ambua Lodge we saw a single female. Even the female of this species is strikingly coloured and patterned. This PNG endemic is one of the most desired of all birds-of-paradise.

Australasian Robins Petroicidae**White-faced Robin (NE)***Tragellasia leucops*

One seen at Varirata on both visits.

Mangrove Robin (NE)*Eopsaltria pulverulenta*

Two seen around pools in the Hisiu Mangroves.

Black-sided Robin (NG)*Poecilodryas hypoleuca*

Seen by most of us on two dates along the Elevela River.

Black-throated Robin (NG)*Poecilodryas albonotata*

Two seen above Ambua.

White-winged Robin (NG)*Peneothello sigillatus*

Up to four seen daily around Kumul Lodge.

White-rumped Robin (NG)*Peneothello bimaculatus*

Two birds seen on the Dablin Creek Road and others heard at Ok Ma.

Blue-grey Robin (NG)*Peneothello cyanus*

Singles below Kumul Lodge and several at Ambua Lodge.

Grey-headed [Ashy] Robin (NE)*Heteromyias albispecularis*

Seen extremely well on several occasions above Ambua Lodge and one near Kumul.

Torrent Flycatcher (NG)*Monachella muelleriana*

At least eight seen around the Ok Menga Hydroelectric Plant near Tabubil.

Lemon-bellied Flycatcher (NE)*Microeca flavigaster*

Up to four each visit to Varirata.

Canary Flycatcher (NG)*Microeca papuana*

Two near Kumul Lodge and up to two daily near Ambua Lodge.

Garnet Robin (NG)*Eugerygone rubra*

Excellent views of a male below Kumul Lodge.

Lesser Ground-Robin (NG)*Amalocichla incerta*

After much frustration, we finally saw one above Ambua. Also heard below Kumul Lodge.

Northern Scrub-Robin (NE)*Drymodes superciliaris*

Most of us had good views at Varirata as a singing bird responded to playback and ran past us on two occasions.

Swallows & Martins Hirundinidae**Pacific Swallow***Hirundo tahitica*

This is the common swallow of the region and it is very widespread; we had modest numbers (up to 30 daily) throughout the lowlands and in the montane valleys.



Tree Martin*Petrochelidon nigricans*

This Australian migrant was seen in small numbers on New Britain and near the Brown River.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae**Golden-headed Cisticola***Cisticola exilis*

One at PAU and several on New Britain.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae**Australian Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus stentorius*

Two seen on New Britain.

Island Leaf-Warbler (NE)*Phylloscopus poliocephalus*

Small numbers in the highlands, with a maximum of ten below Kumul Lodge.

Tawny Grassbird*Megalurus timoriensis*

Seen and/or heard almost daily in the mountains around Ambua and once near Kumul Lodge.

White-eyes Zosteropidae**Black-fronted White-eye (NG)***Zosterops minor*

Five at Varirata were the only ones seen.

Capped (Western Mountain) White-eye (NG)*Zosterops fuscicapillus*

Twenty were seen at Dablin Creek Road, Tabubil, and small numbers in the Tari Valley.

New Guinea White-eye (NG)*Zosterops novaeguineae*

Up to 30 were seen at valley sites below Kumul Lodge and several near Ambua.

Starlings Sturnidae**Metallic Starling (NE)***Aplonis metallica*

We found this colonial starling to be common along the Elevala River – Kiunga area and in the Brown River region. On days when we passed multiple nesting colonies we estimated numbers up to several hundred along the Fly and Elevala rivers. Also recorded on the pre-tour extension to New Britain.

Yellow-eyed Starling (NG)*Aplonis mystacea*

We saw about five along the Fly River.

Singing Starling (NE)*Aplonis cantoroides*

We saw about twenty in Port Moresby and others near Varirata.

Yellow-faced Myna (NG)*Mino dumontii*

Seen almost daily in the lowlands, with up to eight per day in the Tabubil – Elevala River – Kiunga region and slightly smaller numbers in the Varirata – Port Moresby region.

Long-tailed Myna*Mino kreffti*

Fairly common on New Britain at Pokili and Garu Forests, with up to ten seen per day.

Golden Myna (NG)*Mino anais*

Up to six per day in the Kiunga/Elevala River area.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae**Island Thrush***Turdus poliocephalus*

Up to four daily at Kumul Lodge and six at Tari Gap.



Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae**Pied Bushchat***Saxicola caprata*

Local in the lowlands and widespread in the mountains, with up to ten daily.

Flowerpeckers Dicaeidae**Red-capped [Papuan] Flowerpecker (NG)***Dicaeum geelvinkianum*

Widespread in small numbers throughout the lowlands, hills, and mountains, with up to five seen per day.

Note: This species has been split from the former Papuan Flowerpecker D. pectorale.

Red-banded Flowerpecker*Dicaeum eximium*

Recorded at Pokili and Garu Forests, New Britain.

Sunbirds & Spiderhunters Nectariniidae**Black Sunbird***Leptocoma sericea*

Common in New Britain, with up to 20 per day. On the mainland, seen in the lowlands in small numbers, on five dates.

Olive-backed (Yellow-bellied) Sunbird*Cinnyris jugularis*

Up to four daily on the pre-tour extension to New Britain and several near the Brown River.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae**House Sparrow***Passer domesticus*

Up to thirty were seen and heard at and near the Port Moresby Airport and at the Hisiu petrol station.

Tree Sparrow*Passer montanus*

A few were observed at the Port Moresby Airport on most visits.

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae**Mountain Firetail (NG)***Oreostruthus fuliginosus*

Up to five seen daily at Kumul Lodge.

Blue-faced Parrotfinch*Erythrura trichroa*

Seen on three dates in the highlands, with a maximum of six at Ambua.

Papuan Parrotfinch*Erythrura papuana*

One seen by Ron in the garden at Ambua.

Hooded Munia (NG)*Lonchura spectabilis*

This species was seen in the highlands on six days, with a maximum of 32 near Kumul Lodge.

Streak-headed Munia (NG)*Lonchura spectabilis*

About ten seen along the Boys Town Road, near Kiunga.

Grey-headed Munia (PNG)*Lonchura caniceps*

Thirty at PAU and two near the Brown River.

Chestnut-breasted Munia*Lonchura castaneothorax*

Ten at PAU.

Bismarck Munia*Lonchura melaena*

Up to fifty birds were seen on New Britain, where observed on three dates.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae**Australasian Pipit***Anthus novaeseelandiae*

We saw two at Mt. Hagen Airport.



Photos on Cover Page: Princess Stephanie's Astrapia, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Raggiana Bird-of-paradise, Greater Sooty Owl, Wattled Ploughbill, Brown Sicklebill, and Shovel-billed Kookaburra – all photos taken by David Shackelford during RBT PNG July 2008

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