



Male Masked Bowerbird in the Arfaks. Truly remarkable colors! (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

ULTIMATE WEST PAPUA

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This year's Ultimate West Papua tour was possibly our most successful ever trip to this incredible region. The tour was packed with highlights, and several stand out. A displaying male Black Sicklebill in the Arfaks was absolutely amazing, as was the out-of-this-world Western Parotia on its display court just a few feet from our hide. We were also blessed with gripping views of displaying Wilson's Bird-of-paradise (for many, the best bird in the world) in Waigeo – and very close to the road! -, while the stunning Masked Bowerbird couldn't have shown any better in the Arfaks. Other close contenders included frame-filling scope views of a calling Papuan (New Guinea Harpy) Eagle on our last day near Sorong, terrific views of the rare Papuan Hawk-Owl, a ridiculously tame Papuan Logrunner in the Snow Mountains, a bizarre Feline Owlet-Nightjar that we saw so well in its daytime roost, the outstanding MacGregor's Honeyeater (sadly not a bird-of-paradise anymore) and the grotesque Western Crowned Pigeon, which showed exceedingly well in Waigeo.

Probably the main attraction of this tour is the chance to get up close encounters with some members of the most beautiful, spectacular and enigmatic bird family in the world: the Birds-of-paradise (BoPs for the aficionados). In fact, the heart-warming display of quite a few species was witnessed at minimal range, and this is surely an experience any birder should experience at least once in a lifetime. We also observed a great selection of kingfishers, pigeons and parrots, as well as many endemics or rarely observed species such as Snow Mountains Quail, Chestnut Forest Rail, Geelvink, Spice and Spectacled (first for mainland New Guinea!) Imperial Pigeons, New Guinea Bronzewing, Western Ornate Fruit Dove, Black, Brown and Violet-necked Lories, Modest and Snow Mountain (Painted) Tiger Parrots, Salvadori's and Large Fig Parrots, Archbold's Nightjar, Mountain Owlet-Nightjar, Biak Scops Owl, Tan-capped (White-eared) Catbird, Archbold's and Vogelkop Bowerbirds, Numfor, Biak and Common Paradise Kingfishers, Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, Papuan Treecreeper, Spotted, Black-throated, Orange-cheeked and Marbled Honeyeaters, Short-bearded, Sooty and Vogelkop Melidectes, Ruby-throated and Red Myzomelas, Vogelkop and Grey-green Scrubwrens, Fairy Gerygone, Goldenface, Western Crested Berrypecker, Biak Triller, Black Sittella, Mottled Berryhunter (a new endemic NG family), Vogelkop, Lorentz's and Sclater's Whistlers, Arafura Fantail, Raja Ampat Pitohui, Sooty Thicket Fantail, Biak Monarch, Brown-headed Crow, Long-tailed Paradigalla, Arfak and Splendid Astrapias, Pale-billed Sicklebill, King, Lesser and Red Birds-of-paradise, Ashy, Garnet, Mountain and Smoky Robins, Greater Ground Robin, Mountain Firetail and Streak-headed, Great-billed, Black-breasted, Western Alpine and last, but not least, Grey-banded (a Birdquest lifer!) Mannikins, amongst others.



Male Wilson's BoP in Waigeo. (DLV)

Our West Papua tour used to be one of our toughest ones due to a combination of some rather basic camping, hard and long hikes on slippery, muddy and steep trails, hot and sticky or cold and damp weather, the potential for lots of rain and the sometimes shaky logistics. However, things have changed dramatically over the last couple of years, and, although the birding in New Guinea can be extremely frustrating because of the many shy and skulking species, at least the physical effort required to see them is not as great as it used to be just a few years ago. In fact, one can now see Wilson's and Red BoPs from the road itself in Waigeo, and you can drive all the way up to our camp in Lake Habbema and see Snow Mountains Quails from the vehicle. Deforestation in the lowlands, especially around Nimbokrang, but also in the mountains near Habbema, is at its worst, and unfortunately going at a very fast pace. Some of the birds are getting much harder to find in recent years, so the sooner you come to West Papua, the better. During our tour we

birded a wide variety of habitats, including hot and sticky lowlands, montane grasslands and moss forests, primary forest on offshore islands and rich hill forest.



We had multiple sightings of Western Crowned Pigeon during our stay in Waigeo. (DLV)

We arrived in the early morning at Biak airport in a clear day. We checked in at our nearby hotel, and quickly made our way to a good forest patch on this oceanic island situated in the famous Geelvink Bay. As soon as we started walking along the forest trail, endemics came thick and fast. Long-tailed Starlings foraged in a fruiting tree, Black-winged (Biak Red) Lories provided a splash of colour, and a pair of unobtrusive Biak Gerygones flittered around in the canopy. A pair of Biak Black Flycatchers gave great views, and this is a bird that will be long remembered by trip participant Keith Betton, as it marked his 8000th species! What a milestone! Nearby, we enjoyed good views of a pair of white-winged Biak Trillers, recently split by some authors from Black-browed Triller. Further on the trail, we caught up with the stunning Biak Paradise Kingfisher, which eventually performed very well. This cracking endemic is the most endearing of the Geelvink specials and its calls emanate everywhere from the forest. A vocal “Biak” Hooded Pitta –ssp. *rosenbergii*, now split off in the new Phil Gregory’s guide- gave great views, and the rare Biak Monarch, a species that until recently had only been seen by a handful of birders, proved quite easy to see, and we managed to get great view of at least 3 individuals. Doves and pigeons were much in evidence, including Geelvink Fruit Dove (split off from Yellow-bibbed Fruit Dove in Phil Gregory’s guide) and Claret-breasted Fruit Doves, Slender-billed and Great Cuckoo-Doves and Geelvink Imperial Pigeon, found by Price. A pair of uncommon Geelvink Pygmy Parrots was found checking a nest hole in a tree. We also obtained great looks at the smart, orange *kordensis* race of Golden Monarch. The endemic form of Little Shrike Thrush, which sounds much like a whistler and is a future split candidate, was also noted. It had surely been a very successful morning, so we decided to head back to our hotel. After lunch we visited a patch of scrubland and small trees not far from town where our target, the endemic and scarce Biak White-eye, showed very well. In the afternoon we visited the southeast tip of the island, where a handsome Beach Kingfisher was seen. The best bird seen was a male Geelvink Cicadabird (split from Common Cicadabird by Gregory, and with a very different song), while several Torresian Imperial Pigeons flew by. Other widespread New Guinea species were seen too, including Eclectus Parrot (very smart males and females), Red-cheeked Parrot, Brush Cuckoo, Glossy and Uniform Swiftlets, Sacred Kingfisher, Oriental Dollarbird, Rainbow Bee-eater, Hooded Butcherbird, Shining Flycatcher, Spangled Drongo, Willie Wagtail, Sooty-headed Bulbul (introduced), Pacific Swallow, Metallic Starling, Red-capped Flowerpecker and Olive-backed and Black Sunbirds. On the way back to our accommodation we tried for Biak Scops Owl. The owls were pretty vocal and responsive, flying

from one side of the track to the other, but in spite of all of our efforts, they perched out of view all the time. We would be back...



We did well with nightbirds on the tour. Biak Scops Owl on the left and Papuan Frogmouth on the right. (DLV)

Next day we would head by boat to the island of Numfor, home to the spectacular Numfor Paradise Kingfisher. We left the harbour in the speedboat early in the morning, and thankfully the weather was good, which meant that we arrived to the remote island in just under three hours. The seas were pretty calm, only noting some Bridled Terns and Brown Boobies on the way. Once we disembarked, we loaded up in the vehicle and drove towards the northern end of the island. A stop on the way already produced a pair of stunning Numfor Paradise Kingfishers. What a bird! Pressure off, now we could relax. After settling in our guesthouse, we spent the rest of the afternoon birding. The very uncommon Numfor Leaf Warbler was our priority bird, and after a bit of searching we eventually found a very cooperative pair. Nearby, we heard the distinctive voice of a Hooded Pitta emanate from a dense patch of secondary growth. After getting some recordings, it didn't take long to have the bird in the bins. The Hooded Pittas in Numfor, of the endemic *mefoorana* subspecies, are very poorly known and could represent a new species, so it was good to get it in the bag. A number of Geelvink Imperial Pigeons were scoped, whilst other endemics already seen in Biak, such as Biak Black Flycatcher and Black-winged Lory, also showed nicely. It was then time to head back for a well-deserved dinner.

We were out early next morning, but the weather didn't look good at all, so bearing in mind the long sea crossing ahead, and the fact that we had seen all of our key birds, we decided to go back to the harbour. In hindsight, this was a good decision, as the weather really deteriorated during our crossing. A few seabirds were seen, best of all being an unexpected Tahiti Petrel – a new addition to our West Papua list, and well out of the range depicted in guides-, of which we managed to obtain some record shots. Once we got closer to Biak we observed several Black Noddies and Black-naped Terns. After the usual engine problems, which were ultimately fixed, we finally arrived to the harbour. We had a quick lunch, and then went in search of Biak Lorikeets, getting quite uncommon in recent years. We drove around for a while, until we found a flowering tree with several of the prized endemic lorikeets in attendance, giving excellent scope views alongside Black-winged Lories. On the way back we decided to try again for Biak Scops Owl, at the same site as the previous attempt. This time, I did some scouting inside the forest, until I found a promising spot.

We then waited until darkness fell, and within a few minutes we had a cracking Biak Scops Owl fixed in the beam, giving outrageous views. Another difficult and rarely seen species in the bag!



Two fantastic endemic paradise kingfishers. Biak Paradise Kingfisher and Numfor Paradise Kingfisher. (DLV)

We had one day left in the island, and only a handful of remaining species left. After an early breakfast we headed to the forest patch we had birded on our first day. Most of the same species were noted, including more Biak Monarchs, and finally we connected with the rare Biak Coucal, seen by everyone. We spent considerable time chasing the calls of Biak Megapodes away from the trail, but the birds are now very shy here due to considerable hunting pressure, and we didn't manage to get visual contact. On the other hand, a singing Biak Leaf Warbler, an almost unknown warbler, recently split off from Island Leaf Warbler, was seen briefly by some of us, while a Biak Fantail – split from Northern by Gregory- obliged. This was our last endemic to be seen, and marked probably our most successful visit to the islands.

In the early hours of the next day we flew from Biak to Sentani. Instead of having to stay in a rather basic guesthouse like in previous years, we now had a very comfortable, five star hotel at our disposal. Very posh and very much appreciated by everyone. In the late morning, and then again in the afternoon we explored the nearby grasslands surrounding huge Lake Sentani. It was quite birdy in this open habitat and birds kept coming our way. Highlights included Black Bittern, Brown Falcon, Orange-bellied Fruit Dove, Black-billed Coucal, the impressive Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, several pretty White-shouldered Fairywrens and many Great-billed Mannikins. Other goodies included Whistling Kite, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, a brief Long-billed Honeyeater, New Guinea Friarbird, Tree Martin, Golden-headed Cisticola, Hooded and Chestnut-breasted Mannikins and Crimson Finch (probably introduced here).

The morning flight from Sentani to Wamena took us over endless expanses of rain forest, a truly fantastic sight. While approaching our destination we could see the formidable peaks of the Snow Mountains and the famous Baliem Valley. Upon arrival we were welcomed at the brand-new airport by our trusted man on the

spot with his team. We transferred to the hotel for a bit of repacking and reorganizing and off we went in our 4x4 vehicles towards Lake Habbema. Things have really changed here, mostly for the worst. The former track to the lake is now a paved road, with traffic (!!) and this has obviously helped loggers to get access to all the forest, which is now sadly mostly gone. We first stopped in the lower section of the road, where we easily found the endemic Baliem Whistler -split from Golden Whistler-. A couple of stops further up, in some very degraded "forest", gave us some Orange-billed Lorikeets, Mountain Swiftlet, the boisterous Belford's Melidectes, Lorentz's Whistler, a pair of Papuan Treecreepers, a flock of Black Sittellas, a single Mountain Firetail and Mountain and Black-throated Robins. A final stop before the campsite yielded a very obliging flock of Western Alpine Mannikins, a very localized endemic and our only ones of the trip, and a confiding male Snow Mountain (Painted) Tiger Parrot. We finally arrived at a breath-taking 3,300m altitude and settled in our campsite very close to the scenic Lake Habbema. A magic spot. The 4,750m high rocky outcrop of Mount Trikora (the old Mount Wilhelmina) was towering in the distance. This third highest top of New Guinea used to be regularly covered in snow till the early nineties...Sadly, nowadays this is a rare sight. We spent the afternoon birding around our base camp, seeing some good birds including Black-throated Honeyeater, Great Woodswallow, Short-bearded Melidectes, Island Thrush, Red-collared Myzomela, New Guinea Thornbill and Alpine Pipit, amongst others. We had an excellent dinner at our very comfortable camp, and at dusk we visited a nearby spot where we had excellent views of a displaying New Guinea Woodcock in flight, as well as an Archbold's Nightjar. We also admired the amazing starry sky and happily hit the sack.



A very confiding Papuan Logrunner in the Snow Mountains. (DLV)

Next morning we headed to a nearby ridge in search of the mythical MacGregor's Honeyeater (better known as MacGregor's Bird-of-paradise, as it was thought to be a BoP until recently). On the way we found a pair of cooperative Snow Mountains Quails, which showed well by the roadside. Our early morning walk through the open *Libocedrus* pine forest produced several exquisite species. It didn't take long to find our main garget, *Macgregoria*, foraging, sitting about and preening, and we appreciated their fashionable orange cheek patches with the scope. A marvellous experience. It might not be a BoP anymore, but definitely still one of the best birds of the tour. Nearby, a male Splendid *Astrapia* gave good scope views, uttering his liquid 'plick' call. Western Crested Berrypeckers obliged at length, while several Salvadori's Teals and Pacific Black Ducks were scoped in the lake. We spent some time trying to lure a calling Spotless Crake into the open, only resulting in brief views for the leader. Other birds seen in the morning included Papuan Harrier, Orange-cheeked Honeyeater and Papuan Grassbird. With all main targets safely secured in the bag, we returned to

camp for a well-deserved lunch. A short outing in the afternoon, before it started to rain, produced a few things, including scope views of a MacGregor's "HoneyBop".



The antpitta-like Greater Ground Robin. (DLV)

At dawn we walked down into the Ibele valley, following a steep, muddy, slippery trail through beautiful Tolkienesque, mossy forest. The birding was as good as it gets, and we had many highlights. Bird of the day wasn't an easy picking at all, and was tied between no less than 4 species: the rare, shy and Antpitta-like Greater Ground Robin that showed so exceedingly well; the obliging pair of Chestnut Forest Rails that came within a few feet from us and just stayed there for as long as we wanted; a pair of equally obliging and fearless Papuan Logrunners – normally a very shy creature-, or a tame, completely fearless female Lesser Melampitta – a renowned skulker-, that spent a few minutes hopping along the trail in front of us completely unconcerned by our presence. Its interesting to note that two years ago we experienced the same behaviour with a female Lesser Melampitta in the same area, and I wonder if it could be the same individual. Another rarely seen bird was an Archbold's Bowerbird, feeding on a fruiting tree. A trio of perched Plum-faced Lorikeets were a welcome sight, and we also obtained good looks at Common Smoky Honeyeater, Large and Papuan Scrubwrens and both Friendly and Dimorphic Fantails. We then walked slowly back to our camp. It had surely been an unforgettable day for everyone.

Having seen all the key birds in the upper section of the forest, we decided to spend the next day birding the lower stretches of the road. Habitat wasn't good at all, but we saw a few new birds, including Superb Bird-of-paradise, a female King-of-Saxony BoP, Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo, heard-only Hooded Cuckooshrikes and Mountain Kingfisher, Stella's Lorikeets, several Blue-faced Parrotfinches, Grey Thornbill (also known as Ashy Gerygone), Black-breasted Boatbill and some endemic Black-breasted Mannikins. The weather was truly bad the following day, and the birding was rather slow. Highlights included a pair of showy Ornate Melidectes, Mountain Peltops, Brown Falcon, some more Plum-faced Lorikeets and further looks at Baliem Whistler. Our flight from Wamena to Sentani was almost on time. Upon arrival we rearranged things at the hotel, had a tasty lunch, and then drove to our well-known lowland rainforest site near the foothills of the Cyclops Mountains. We now have a very comfortable guesthouse at our disposal, instead of having to camp out in forest, so we made good use of it!

Over the next 3 and half days we birded the alluvial lowland forest that still exists around Nimbokrang. This used to be one of the best birding sites in West Papua, but sadly extensive logging and habitat clearance over the last few years have resulted in heavily degraded forest, which obviously has affected its avian populations. However, most of the key birds still remain, and with hard work and persistence, we managed to find a good selection of them. Pale-billed Sicklebill showed very well on top of a palm for as long as we wanted on our first afternoon, while the sought-after Blue-black Kingfisher was lured into view for everyone. A pair of Salvadori's Fig Parrots showed exceedingly well around their nesting hole in a huge ficus tree, and the shy Tan-capped (split off from White-eared) Catbird put on a great show too. Another speciality of the area, the uncommon Brown Lory, was seen perched at close quarters a couple of times.



King Bird-of-paradise. Simply stunning. (DLV)

One morning we visited the favourite display spike of a male Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise. And soon we were able to observe this splendid creature uttering its mournful call and parading to a visiting female. WOW, just brilliant! And not much later we were witnessing a stonking male King Bird-of-paradise (King Bop for the aficionados) in his display tree. Luckily for us, this jewel-like bird came pretty low down in the tree, so we could discern well his striking blue legs, green tail discs and bizarrely shaped head. What a bird! We also spent considerable time over the course of 2 mornings chasing the rare Shovel-billed Kookaburra, but the bird was largely unresponsive and unfortunately remained a heard only, in spite of all of our efforts.

We spent most of the following day in some hot, humid, sticky and muggy lowland rainforest trying to track down the nowadays very rare -mostly due to hunting- and difficult to find Victoria Crowned Pigeon (local name: Mambruk). You now have to walk quite some distance to get to good mambruk habitat, and that's what we did. With the help of our local man, Dante, who knows this forest and how to find mambruks better than anyone, we checked a lot of suitable places, but despite a lot of hard work, we didn't have a sniff. We

heard some close Northern Cassowaries, but they are also very elusive here due to hunting, and we couldn't get visual contact. Birding was slow but we picked Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher and Northern Variable Pitohui and also heard a Long-billed Cuckoo.



The rare Papuan Hawk-Owl. (DLV)

On our last morning, the retiring Sooty Thicket Fantail eventually gave itself up, after two river crossings and a lot of time chasing it! On the other hand, we put a lot of effort into trying to see a singing Blue Jewel-babbler, but it was as shy as ever, and was only seen briefly by the leader. Nearby, a calling Papuan Eagle couldn't be found either. Birding here is surely no easy thing! Nightbirding around Nimbokrang was very successful during our stay though, with excellent views of the rare Papuan Hawk-Owl, as well as both Papuan and Marbled Frogmouths and the rarely seen Papuan Nightjar.

Other birds seen during our stay in Nimbokrang included Buff-banded and White-browed Crakes, Pinon's and Zoe's Imperial Pigeons, Pink-spotted, Wompoo, Coroneted and Orange-bellied Fruit Doves, some impressive Palm Cockatoos, Dwarf Koel, White-crowned Cuckoo, Meyer's Friarbird, Hooded Butcherbird, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Papuan Spine-tailed Swifts, Boyer's, Golden, White-bellied and Grey-headed Cuckooshrikes, Black Cicadabird, Grey Whistler, Rusty Pitohui, Little Shrikethrush, Brown Oriole, Ochre-collared, Hooded and Spot-winged Monarchs, Tawny-breasted, Green-backed and Plain Honeyeaters, White-bellied Thicket Fantail, Papuan Babbler, Black-sided Robin, Yellow-bellied and Green-backed Gerygones, Lowland Peltops, Yellow-faced Myna, Lesser Bird-of-paradise and Streak-headed Mannikin.

After our 4-night stay here, it was time to head back to Sentani, from where we took a place westward to Manokwari, the main town at the other side of the Vogelkop peninsula, and now West Papua's capital. Some birding in the vicinity of the city gave us a few new birds, including Beautiful Fruit Dove and Yellow-billed Kingfisher.

Next morning we drove straight up the fabled Arfak Mountains. The road up the mountains was covered by mud, and some trucks were stuck, which slowed us. We eventually made it to our base for the first 2 nights, but heavy rain didn't let us do much birding. A few bits and pieces were seen near our accommodation, including a nice male "Western/Vogelkop" Superb Bird-of-paradise (a soon-to-be-split species) and a female Black Sicklebill.



Grey-banded Mannikin. Birdquest lifer! (DLV)

Early morning saw us all sitting in the Western Parotia hide. We waited for a while and eventually an adult male came down, just in front of us. The silvery frontal shield, the six head plumes, the iridescent chest and the purple eyes sure made an impression. The views of the male were simply out of this world, and this is surely one of the most amazing birds on Earth. All participants were surprised by the large size of the bird, not so apparent in photos. Arfak (split from Black-eared/ Spotted) Catbirds called nearby, although they were not very responsive, but on the other hand Vogelkop Melidectes, Vogelkop Scrubwren, Vogelkop Whistler and Red Myzomela all showed nicely. A pair of Papuan Lorikeets gave fantastic views as they sat in a branch and a rare Black-mantled Goshawk was seen in the same area too. For the second time in the trip, a calling Papuan Eagle remained heard only. In the afternoon we decided to explore the remote Anggi lakes for the first time in a Birdquest tour, hoping to find a BQ lifer, the very poorly known Grey-banded Mannikin. After a 2-hour drive in a very tricky road, we reached a site that friends Carlos and Rob had recommended me (thanks guys!). However, we couldn't find any mannikins there. With little light left, we moved on and eventually reached the lake. Once there it didn't take long to find some mannikins, flighty ones at first but in the end some confiding ones, which showed exceedingly well. Very exciting stuff and a welcome addition to the 10000+ BQ life list. Other birds in the area included several Yellow Bitterns, possibly breeding and becoming a major range and altitude extension in the island, as well as Australasian Swamphen and Australian Reed Warbler. Very happy with our success, we drove back to our base.

Next morning we drove to Zeth's place, met the man himself – one of the most talented local guides in the world- , and got ourselves ready for the wonders of Zeth's fabulous valley. Once we got ourselves sorted, we moved up to the higher reaches of Gunung (Mount) Indon. Our first stop gave us very good views of the mysterious Long-tailed Paradigalla, with 2 different pairs in view for a prolonged time. The long tail and the blue and yellow facial markings of this extreme rarity showed well. A brief pair of Modest Tiger Parrots appeared, and a singing Black-throated Robin obliged. Later, the heavens opened, and we suffered a lot of rain during the whole hike. Birding was slow, but we encountered a few things, including Bar-tailed Cuckoo-

Dove, a brief Rufescent Imperial Pigeon, Mountain (White-bibbed) Fruit Dove, Papuan and Yellow-billed Lorikeets, Rufous-sided Honeyeater, Arfak (or Western Smoky) Honeyeater, Cinnamon-browed Melidectes, Garnet Robin, Black-breasted Boatbill, Vogelkop, Sclater's and Regent Whistlers, Slaty (or Blue-grey) Robin and Leser Ground Robin. Once we got to the camp, we enjoyed great views of a confiding Ashy Robin.



Ashy Robin from the upper Arfaks. (DLV)

Before dawn next morning we were already sitting quietly inside two hides overlooking a Black Sickbill display perch. Soon the bird started uttering his distinctive and far-carrying explosive double note. And after some nervous waiting, the huge male flew straight to the perch, located very close to the hide. The red eye, the glossy blue-black back and the very long tail really stood out. As if this wasn't enough, the male then started doing his horizontal courtship display with the pectoral plumes raised around its head. Absolutely unbeatable, mind-blowing and unforgettable views. After such an amazing experience, we left the hide and walked towards our base camp. After breakfast we spent some time exploring the higher reaches of the forest. Our main target here was the endemic and poorly known Arfak *Astrapia*. After a longish wait, an immature male flew in, stayed in view for a short while, and then flew off. Not the best views ever, but better than nothing. While waiting for it, a memorable –for some at least!– moment happened. A loud sound close by was immediately identified by the locals as a Dwarf Cassowary (!!); the bird was running down the slope, crashing through the vegetation. Those who were at the right spot, especially Keith, managed to see the bird, while the rest of us just saw the vegetation moving. A bit frustrating, but that's birding! In the same area, Zeth also showed us a nice male Bronze Ground Dove on its nest, while a pair of Red-breasted Pygmy Parrots was seen briefly. Some flocks of striking Tit Berrypeckers were watched at close quarters, and our first Black Pitohui was found too. Right after seeing the *astrapia*, it started to rain and unfortunately it didn't stop for the rest of the day.

Next morning we visited a Vogelkop Bowerbird hide, right next to its bower. The bower of this species is probably the most amazing structure built by any bird. We had great views of this drably-coloured species, as it picked some of the colourful items placed around the bower and moved them from one spot to another. It was gratifying to see this self-effacing, fashion-conscious bird so very well. Afterwards we were taken to see a roosting Feline Owlet-nightjar. We followed Zeth and enjoyed terrific views, and good photo

opportunities, of this cracking and heavily sought-after bird. And just 5 minutes away was a roosting Mountain Owlet-nightjar, which also obliged. One can only wonder how the locals find these roosting nightbirds with such ease... What a morning! We then started walking down towards Zeth's house, picking up a few good birds. Best of all was a Mottled Berryhunter, - now placed on its own monotypic endemic family-, followed by Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, some well-behaved Modest Tiger Parrots, a party of Grey-green Scrubwrens, and Black (Fan-tailed) Monarch. Johan also video recorded a Mountain Honeyeater.



"Western/Vogelkop" Superb BoP and Feline Owlet-nightjar from the Arfaks. (DLV)

Knowing we still had several targets left in the foothills, we decided to spend the following day birding along the main road. This turned out to be a great decision, and it ended up being one of the best days of the trip. Birds were very active all morning, and undoubtedly the main highlight was getting smashing, close-up views of a male Masked Bowerbird. What a fantastic bird! Even after 3 weeks in New Guinea, new birds came thick and fast, including Moluccan King Parrot, a heard only Pesquet's (Vulturine) Parrot, Western Ornate Fruit Dove, Eastern Superb Fruit Dove, Black-shouldered Cicadabird, Blue-collared Parrots –a trio giving good views in flight-, Josephine's Lorikeet, Black-fronted White-eye, Goldenface, White-faced and Green-backed Robins, a leader-only Yellow-legged Flyrobin, a brief Mid-mountain Berrypecker and a pair of Fairy Gerygones, amongst others. In the afternoon we tried the Magnificent BoP hide, but unfortunately, although the male was around calling, it rained heavily, which spoiled our chances for good looks at it. White-striped Forest Rails are conspicuous for their absence too, and none were heard.

And after 5 excellent days, it was then time to leave this magnificent valley. After an early breakfast we said goodbye to Zeth's family and thanked them for a fantastic stay. We stopped a couple of times in the same areas as the previous day, although bird activity was poorer. We saw more or less the same species, including further looks at Masked Bowerbird and a showy Hooded Pitohui, as well as a brief Trumpet Manucode and a leader only Arfak Catbird. A try lower down for the rare Black-chinned Robin left us empty handed, although some of us saw a brief female Magnificent Riflebird, and by mid afternoon we finally made it to Manokwari.

Next morning saw us on a plane en route to Waigeo, with a short stopover at Sorong. In the past we visited Salawati and Batanta islands, in order to see such beauties as Wilson's and Red BoPs and Western

Crowned Pigeon. However, extensive logging is taking place in these two islands, so nowadays it's much easier and reliable to visit Waigeo instead. Once in this lovely and still well forested island, we transferred into the vehicles and drove to our accommodation, a lovely resort by the ocean. After leaving our things in our wonderful cabins and having a tasty lunch, we admired a cracking Waigeo Cuscus sitting on a tree by the road. We then went for a walk along a track that goes through some good forest. Birding was quite fun, and produced Dusky Megapode, endemic Raja Ampat Pitohui and Dwarf, Yellow-bellied and Pygmy Longbills.



Displaying male Red BoP. (DLV)

Next morning was hopefully going to be one of the best days of the tour, as we would visit the display court of the highly desired Wilson's Bird-of-paradise. Instead of the traditionally strenuous and very steep hike we had to do in Batanta in order to reach the display area, this time we just drove for half an hour and then walked in flat terrain for 100 metres to reach the hide... Now that's a big difference! So by dawn, and without having had to sweat, we were all sitting behind the palm leaf screen overlooking the display area of one of the most colourful, bizarre and spectacular birds our planet has on offer. Soon we were admiring the improbably decorated and patterned male cleaning his court only metres away. Sometimes he was just sitting on an open branch over his court and uttering his raucous call to warn off intruders and to attract females. We all tried to puzzle together the different feather tracts of this truly amazing bird, which is restricted to just two islands off the western tip of New Guinea! We observed this gorgeous species for a while, before it started raining. While watching it, a Western Crowned Pigeon started calling close by, and one of the locals saw it briefly on the ground, but by the time we arrived the bird was gone. The rest of the morning and part of the afternoon was spent birding in the forest. The rare Brown-headed Crow, restricted to just a handful of locations in New Guinea, showed nicely, as did several female-plumaged red BoPs, while other birds of note included Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, Puff-backed Honeyeater, Rusty Pitohui of the distinctive local race, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Frilled Monarch and pleasantly good numbers of Eclectus Parrots, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Blyth's Hornbills.

Early next morning we visited a couple a Red BoP display trees. A single male put on a great show, calling and displaying for a while right after sunrise. Another fantastic-looking BoP in the bag! The usual suspects were seen during the remaining of the day, plus a couple of new birds. One of the surprises of the trip came here in form of a very confiding New Guinea Bronzewing I found sitting on a branch, a very rarely seen, endemic pigeon, and a write-in for the tour, that showed so very well. Good numbers of Stephan's Ground

Doves were soon too, and a final attempt at a calling Hook-billed Kingfisher, a common voice in the lowlands of NG but at the same time a super difficult bird to see. However we were in luck, as in no time we had found it, allowing for extremely good views. In the evening we tried for Papuan Bookook, but only Large-tailed Nightjar was seen, the owl staying out of view.



Western Crowned Pigeon. (DLV)

Next day, after another early morning visit to the Wilson's BoP hide, with Keith also enjoying excellent views of a Yellow-billed Kingfisher, we went for an enjoyable and pleasant boat trip to some offshore islands. The trip kicked off with the usual engine problems, and we had to transfer to another boat, but afterwards things went smoothly. We spent some time in a fancy resort located in a pristine tropical island, where we had a sumptuous lunch, surrounded by Common Paradise Kingfishers, some Violet-necked Lories and a couple of shy Dusky Megapodes, as well as an Arafura Fantail for some. After a siesta we carried on, having excellent views of our target Spice Imperial Pigeon. Brown Booby, Bridled, Greater Crested and Black-naped Terns were all seen fishing in the calm waters too. We then reached our final destination, a tiny, 50 m long "rock" covered with thick vegetation and some trees that was supposed to be a big Great-billed Parrot roost. At first, not much was going on, but as light faded, the first Great-billed Parrots started to arrive. Soon, flocks and flocks of them appeared, totalling more than 300 birds, and making for a really impressive sight! Together with them, lots of Spice Imperial Pigeons, as well as Rainbow Bee-eaters and Singing Starlings covered the whole islet. After admiring a nice sunset, with all the birds in the background, we happily returned back to our accommodation.

We had a couple of hours in the morning for some final birding in Waigeo. The crowned pigeons put on another great show, this time slowly walking on the road ahead of us, with one of them opening the wings in a display manner, showing the big white patches. Mega moment! Also of note was a Red-necked Crake sighting, another write-in for the tour, as well as a Spotted Honeyeater. We also spent some time chasing a calling Papuan (Red-bellied) Pitta, but sadly only the leader managed to see it. So after yet another excellent stay in Waigeo, it was time to take the ferry back to Sorong, where we would spend the last 2 nights.



Waigeo Cuscus. (DLV)

Next morning we went to a nearby forest patch. Believe it or not, the first bird seen was a stonking Papuan (New Guinea) Harpy Eagle, crossing the path in flight. It then started calling actively, making an unforgettable and unmistakable sound, and after a while the bird flew in again and landed on a tree, where it would spend the next half an hour. Frame-filling, unbelievable scope views were had of this beast, making it one of the highlights of the trip for all. The rare Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher was heard, deep down in a gully, but unfortunately it couldn't be lured out into the open, in spite of a lot of trying. One of the specialities of the area, Black Lory, was seen well several times too. In the afternoon we tried a few more sites for the kingfisher, but none were heard.

We returned to the same tract of forest next morning. No kingfishers were seen, however a fruiting tree attracted large numbers of fruit doves and several Large Fig Parrots as well as a pair of Golden Mynas. We also found a perched Spectacled Imperial Pigeon, first spotted by Dave, an island speciality that only occurs in Kofiau Island in the Papuan region, making it the first ever sighting for mainland New Guinea! As we were walking back we also came across some Ruby-throated Myzomelas and heard some distant Red-billed Brushturkeys. And then it was time to head back to Sorong.

And so another fantastic (and definitely less demanding than in the past) tour came to an end. West Papua is not an easy tour to lead, the birds are shy and difficult to see, logistics are problematic, there are always some delays and things can go wrong. For a tour to be successful, you need, above everything else, a good group, with open-minded and understanding participants. And luckily, this one of the best groups I've ever lead, who coped with all kinds of adverse conditions, including at-times very slow birding, so big thanks to all

of you: for making such successful and enjoyable tour run so smoothly. I am most grateful to New Guinea bird guru Mark van Beirs for all his expert advice, and also to Carlos Bocos and Rob Hutchinson, as well as to all our local guides and agents, especially Zeth, Maria, Benny, Andreas, Jamil and Scorpio.



Papuan (New Guinea Harpy) Eagle and Western Alpine Mannikin. (DLV)





New Guinea Bronzewing and Raja Ampat Pitohui from Waigeo. (DLV)





Snow Mountain (Painted) Tiger Parrot and Dimorphic Fantail from the Snow Mountains. (DLV)





Male Splendid Astrapia and Lesser Melampitta in the Ibele valley. (DLV)





Blyth's Hornbills over good forest in the Arfaks, and male Red BoP. (DLV)



SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H). Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO). Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

BIRDS

Northern Cassowary ◊ *Casuarius unappendiculatus* (H) Heard very close in a remote forest patch in Nimbokrang.

Dwarf Cassowary ◊ *Casuarius bennetti* (NL) Seen by Keith and heard by the rest in the higher Arfaks.

Salvadori's Teal ◊ *Salvadorina waigiensis* Cracking scope studies of this unusual duck on Lake Habbema.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa* A few were seen on Lake Habbema.

Red-billed Brushturkey ◊ *Talegalla cuvieri* (H) Heard near Sorong.

Collared Brushturkey ◊ *Talegalla jobiensis* (H) Heard only in the Nimbokrang area.

Dusky Megapode ◊ (B Scrubfowl) *Megapodius freycinet* Seen well in Waigeo.

Biak Scrubfowl ◊ (B Megapode) *Megapodius geelvinkianus* (H) Heard only in spite of all of our efforts.

Brown Quail *Coturnix ypsilophora* Seen near Nimbokrang.

Snow Mountains Quail ◊ *Anurophasis monorhonyx* Excellent looks at this speciality near Lake Habbema.

Tahiti Petrel *Pseudobulweria rostrata* Photographed at sea in the Numfor crossing.



Record shot of Tahiti Petrel off Biak, and Brown Booby

Tricolored Grebe *Tachybaptus tricolor* One at Habbema.

Australian White Ibis *Threskiornis molucca* Seen in Waigeo by some of us.

Black Bittern *Dupetor flavicollis* A single was seen well in the Sentani grasslands.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* Two males seen at Anggi Lakes. Major range and altitude extension.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus* Just a few.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* Just a few.
Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E) *Egretta intermedia* A couple were noted.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* A few seen.
Great-billed Heron *Ardea sumatrana* Seen in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
Pacific Reef Heron (Eastern Reef Egret) *Egretta sacra* A few seen along the coast.
Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel* Good numbers around Biak, also in Waigeo.
Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* A few were noted at sea near Biak.
Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos* Seen in Waigeo.
Eastern Osprey *Pandion cristatus* Seen in Waigeo.
Pacific Baza (Crested Hawk) *Aviceda subcristata* Just a few encounters with this attractive bird of prey.
Long-tailed Honey Buzzard ◊ (L-t Buzzard) *Henicopernis longicauda* A couple of sightings.
Papuan Eagle ◊ (New Guinea Harpy E) *Harpyopsis novaeguineae* MEGA views near Sorong.



Papuan Eagle and Papuan Harrier. (DLV)

Variable Goshawk ◊ (Varied G) *Accipiter hiogaster* A few sightings.
Grey-headed Goshawk ◊ *Accipiter poliocephalus* Three scattered sightings.
Black-mantled Goshawk ◊ *Accipiter melanochlamys* Seen in the Arfaks.
Papuan Harrier ◊ *Circus spilothorax* Male and female showed well hunting over the Lake Habbema grasslands.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus* Several were noted over the Sentani grasslands.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* Regular encounters.

White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* Good looks at this striking bird along the coast.

Chestnut Forest Rail ◊ *Rallacula rubra* Excellent close up views in the Snow Mountains.

Red-necked Crake ◊ *Rallina tricolor* One seen in Waigeo.

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis* Very nice looks of this widespread species.

Pale-vented Bush-hen ◊ (Rufous-tailed Bush-hen) *Amauornis moluccana* One sighting, a few more heard.

Spotless Crake *Porzana tabuensis* (LO) One seen at Lake Habbema.

White-browed Crake *Porzana cinerea* One seen at Nimbokrang ricefields.

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus* One in the Anggi lakes.

Eurasian Coot (Common C) *Fulica atra* Small numbers were at Lake Habbema.

New Guinea Woodcock ◊ *Scolopax rosenbergii* Seen well in the Snow Mountains.

Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* Seen in Numfor.

Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes* Seen in Numfor.

Black Noddy *Anous minutus* Seen very well off Numfor.

Greater Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii* Small numbers were seen on our boat trips.

Bridled Tern *Thalasseus bergii* Seen well at sea in Numfor and Waigeo.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana* Small numbers were seen on the different boat trips.



Black-naped Tern



Bridled Tern

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Seen at Sentani lake.

Rock Dove *Columba livia* Feral birds seen.

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis* A few seen .

Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis* Regular encounters.

Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Dove ◊ (Black-billed C-D) *Macropygia nigrirostris* Regular good looks in the Arfaks.

Great Cuckoo-Dove ◊ *Reinwardtoena reinwardtii* Seen well a few times.

Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris* Seen in Biak and Numfor.

Stephan's Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps stephani* Many seen at Waigeo.

New Guinea Bronzewing ◊ *Henicophaps albifrons* Amazing views in Waigeo. A very rarely seen bird.

Bronze Ground Dove ◊ *Gallicolumba beccarii* Nice looks at a pair in the nest in the higher reaches of the Arfaks.

Western Crowned Pigeon ◊ *Goura cristata* Amazing views of two groups at close quarters in Waigeo.

Victoria Crowned Pigeon ◊ *Goura victoria* (H) Heard only in Nimbokrang in spite of much effort. Getting very rare.

Wompoo Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus magnificus* Regularly heard and also seen in the Nimbokrang area.

Pink-spotted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus perlatus* A few seen well.

Western Ornate Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus (ornatus)* Good views in the Arfaks.

Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* Seen in Biak and in the lower Arfaks.

Coroneted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus coronulatus* Seen well in the Nimbokrang area.

Beautiful Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus pulchellus* Seen well near Manokwari.

Mountain Fruit Dove ◊ (White-bibbed F D) *Ptilinopus (rivoli) bellus* Regular encounters in the Arfaks. See Note.

Geelvink (Yellow-bibbed) Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus (solomonensis)* Good looks on Biak. See Note.

Claret-breasted Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus viridis* Several fantastic observations of this very striking species.

Orange-bellied Fruit Dove ◊ *Ptilinopus iozonus* The most common *Ptilinopus* of New Guinea.

Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *Ducula (myristicivora) geelvinkiana* Seen well in Biak and Numfor.

Spice Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula myristicivora* Great views in Waigeo.

Spectacled Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula perspicillata* One photographed near Sorong. First for mainland New Guinea!

Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula rufigaster* One briefly in Waigeo.

Rufescent Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula chalconota* (LO) One seen in the Arfaks.

Pinon's Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula pinon* Seen plenty of times.

Zoe's Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula zoeae* A few sightings. Really nice scope looks at Nimbokrang.

Torresian Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula spilorrhoea* Seen at Biak.

Pied Imperial Pigeon ◊ *Ducula bicolor* Seen in Waigeo. Scarcer than usual this year.

Papuan Mountain Pigeon ◊ (Bare-eyed M-P) *Gymnophaps albertisii* A handful of observations in the highlands.

Ivory-billed Coucal ◊ (Greater Black C) *Centropus menbeki* (H) Often heard.

Biak Coucal ◊ *Centropus chalybeus* One seen well in Biak.

Black-billed Coucal ◊ (**Lesser Black C**) *Centropus bernsteini* Repeated scope views in the Sentani area



Claret-breasted Fruit Dove and record shot of the first Spectacled Imperial Pigeon for mainland New Guinea. (DLV)

- Dwarf Koel** ◊ (**Black-capped Koel**) *Microdynamis parva* Seen twice in the Nimbokrang forests.
Pacific Koel *Eudynamis orientalis* Seen once.
Channel-billed Cuckoo ◊ *Scythrops novaehollandiae* Seen a couple of times.
Long-billed Cuckoo ◊ *Chrysococcyx megarhynchus* (H) Heard in Nimbokrang.
Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo ◊ *Chrysococcyx ruficollis* Seen well in the Snow Mts.
White-eared Bronze Cuckoo ◊ *Chrysococcyx meyerii* (H) Heard only in the Arfaks.
Little Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus* Seen in Waigeo.
White-crowned Cuckoo ◊ (**W-c Koel**) *Cacomantis leucolophus* Seen briefly in the Nimbokrang forests.
Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo ◊ *Cacomantis castaneiventris* Eventually seen well in the Arfaks. It took time!
Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cacomantis flabelliformis* Seen a couple of times.
Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* Often heard in lowland forests and seen a few times.
Biak Scops Owl ◊ *Otus beccarii* Amazing views in Biak.
Papuan Boobook ◊ *Ninox theomacha* Recorded in Waigeo.
Papuan Hawk-Owl ◊ *Uroglaux dimorpha* Unbeatable close up views in Nimbokrang. A very rarely seen bird.
Marbled Frogmouth ◊ *Podargus ocellatus* Seen well in Nimbokrang.
Papuan Frogmouth ◊ *Podargus papuensis* Several magnificent observations all along our route.
Papuan Nightjar ◊ *Eurostopodus papuensis* Very good looks at this uncommon species in Nimbokrang.
Archbold's Nightjar ◊ (**Mountain N**) *Eurostopodus archboldi* Seen well in the Snow Mts.
Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus* A few good sightings.
Feline Owlet-Nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles insignis* One of this magnificent birds showed so very well in the Arfaks.
Mountain Owlet-Nightjar ◊ *Aegotheles albertisi* One of these critters allowed incredible close ups in the Arfaks.
Moustached Treeswift ◊ *Hemiprocne mystacea* A few of these elegant birds seen at various places.
Glossy Swiftlet (White-bellied S) *Collocalia esculenta* A very common bird all over West Papua.
Mountain Swiftlet ◊ *Aerodramus hirundinaceus* A regular sight in the highlands.
Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis* A common bird in all the lowland sites.
Papuan Spine-tailed Swift ◊ (**P Needle-tail**) *Mearnsia novaeguineae* Fantastic looks in Nimbokrang.
Oriental Dollarbird (Common D) *Eurystomus orientalis* Many observations.
Hook-billed Kingfisher ◊ *Melidora macrorrhina* Great views in Waigeo.
Common Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea* Seen in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
Biak Paradise Kingfisher ◊ *Tanysiptera riedelii* Magnificent observations of this exquisite creature on Biak.

Numfor Paradise Kingfisher ◊ *Tanysiptera carolinae* Great views in Numfor. A cracker!
Shovel-billed Kookaburra ◊ (S-b Kingfisher) *Clytoceyx rex* (H) Heard only in spite of a lot of effort in Nimbokrang.
Rufous-bellied Kookaburra ◊ *Dacelo gaudichaud* Seen at length on several occasions in the lowlands.
Blue-black Kingfisher ◊ (Black-sided K) *Todiramphus nigrocyaneus* Excellent views of a pair in Nimbokrang.
Beach Kingfisher ◊ *Todiramphus saurophagus* Seen in Biak.
Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus* Quite common.
Yellow-billed Kingfisher ◊ *Syma torotoro* Good looks at Manokwari , Sorong and Waigeo.
Mountain Kingfisher ◊ *Syma megarhyncha* (H) Heard only in the lower Snow Mountains.
Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher ◊ (Dwarf K) *Ceyx solitarius* Seen in Nimbokrang.



Marbled Frogmouth, Common Paradise Kingfisher and Beach Kingfisher. (DLV)

Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus* Regular at the Sentani grasslands.
Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus* Small numbers noted at various locations.
Blyth's Hornbill ◊ (Papuan H) *Rhyticeros plicatus* Good numbers were at Nimbokrang and on Waigeo.
Brown Falcon *Falco berigora* Seen at Lake Habbema.
Palm Cockatoo ◊ *Probosciger aterrimus* Several sightings. Sometimes close and impressive.
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita* A common sight in the lowlands.
Pesquet's Parrot ◊ (Vulturine P) *Psitttrichas fulgidus* (H) Heard in the lower Arfaks.
Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta keiensis* Seen near Sorong.
Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta pusio* Seen in the Nimbokrang forests.
Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta bruijnii* Brief encounter in the higher reaches of the Arfaks.
Geelvink Pygmy Parrot ◊ *Micropsitta geelvinkiana* Excellent views in Biak.
Moluccan King Parrot ◊ *Alisterus amboinensis* Great views in the lower Arfaks.



Moluccan King Parrot and Salvadori's (bottom left) and Large (bottom right) Fig Parrots. (DLV)

Eclectus Parrot ◊ *Eclectus roratus* A delightfully common and attractive species in all the visited lowland areas.
Red-cheeked Parrot ◊ *Geoffroyus geoffroyi* A regular bird of the lowlands.
Blue-collared Parrot ◊ *Geoffroyus simplex* Seen very well in the middle Arfaks.
Great-billed Parrot ◊ *Tanygnathus megalorhynchus* Impressive roost of several hundred birds in Waigeo.
Brehm's Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella brehmii* Seen in the Snow Mts.
Snow Mountain (Painted) Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella (picta)* Excellent observations in the Lake Habbema area.
Modest Tiger Parrot ◊ *Psittacella modesta* Good looks at several in the higher reaches of the Arfaks.
Plum-faced Lorikeet ◊ (Whiskered L) *Oreopsittacus arfaki* Quite common in the Snow Mountains. Stylish.



Plum-faced Lorikeet. (DLV)

Red-flanked Lorikeet ◊ *Charmosyna placentis* Great views in Sorong.
Josephine's Lorikeet ◊ *Charmosyna josefinae* Seen in flight in the lower Arfaks.
Papuan Lorikeet ◊ *Charmosyna papou* Several excellent sightings in the Arfaks.
Stella's Lorikeet ◊ *Charmosyna [papou] stellae* Seen in the Snow Mountains.
Yellow-billed Lorikeet ◊ *Neopsittacus musschenbroekii* Several fine encounters.
Orange-billed Lorikeet ◊ *Neopsittacus pullicauda* Many excellent sightings.
Black-capped Lory ◊ (Western B-c L) *Lorius lory* A handful of observations in the Nimbokrang and Waigeo forests.
Black Lory ◊ *Chalcopsitta atra* Good views of this western speciality near Sorong.
Brown Lory ◊ *Chalcopsitta duivenbodei* Nice looks at this localized species in the Nimbokrang area.
Violet-necked Lory ◊ *Eos squamata* Seen well on Waigeo.
Black-winged Lory ◊ (Biak Red L) *Eos cyanogenia* Many encounters with this endemic on Biak.
Biak Lorikeet ◊ *Trichoglossus rosenbergi* Seen well in Biak. A recent split.
Coconut Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus* Screeching parties are a common sight in the lowlands.

Large Fig Parrot ◊ *Psittaculirostris desmarestii* Common this year near Sorong.



Palm and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. (DLV)

Double-eyed Fig Parrot ◊ *Cyclopsitta diophthalma* Recorded briefly at Nimbokrang.

Salvadori's Fig Parrot ◊ *Psittaculirostris salvadorii* Great looks at Nimbokrang. A localized speciality.

Papuan Pitta (Red-bellied Pitta) *Erythropitta macklotii* Seen briefly by a couple of us in Waigeo.

Biak Hooded Pitta *Pitta XXX sordida* Two showed very well in Biak. Split in the new Phil Gregory's guide.



"Biak" Hooded Pitta and Hook-billed Kingfisher. (DLV)

Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida* Seen in Numfor. A possible split candidate.

White-eared Catbird ◇ *Ailuroedus buccoides* Seen very well in Nimbokrang.

Arfak (Black-eared) Catbird *Ailuroedus melanotis* (LO) Heard a few times and briefly seen in the Arfaks.

Archbold's Bowerbird ◇ *Archboldia papuensis* Good views in the Arfaks.

Vogelkop Bowerbird ◇ *Amblyornis inornata* Splendid views of birds attending their bower. Incredible bowers.

Masked Bowerbird ◇ *Sericulus aureus* Amazing views of adult males in the lower Arfaks. What a bird!



Masked Bowerbird. (DLV)

Fawn-breasted Bowerbird ◇ *Chlamydera cerviniventris* Nice looks in the Sentani grasslands.

Papuan Treecreeper ◇ *Cormobates placens* Regular brilliant looks at this friendly species.
Emperor Fairywren ◇ *Malurus cyanocephalus* Two sightings of this colourful species.
White-shouldered Fairywren ◇ *Malurus alboscapulatus* Regular encounters with this dainty bird.
Ruby-throated Myzomela ◇ *Myzomela eques* Seen well in Sorong..
Red Myzomela ◇ *Myzomela cruentata* Seen very well in the lower Arfaks.



Red Myzomela and Mountain Firetail. (DLV)

Mountain Myzomela ◇ (Mountain Red-headed M) *Myzomela adolphinae* Seen in the Arfaks.
Red-collared Myzomela ◇ *Myzomela rosenbergii* The common Myzomela of the higher mountains. Colourful.
Green-backed Honeyeater ◇ *Glycichaera fallax* Seen in Nimbokrang.
Rufous-sided Honeyeater ◇ *Ptiloprora erythropleura* Regular in the Arfaks.
Grey-streaked Honeyeater ◇ *Ptiloprora perstriata* Common in the Snow Mountains.
Plain Honeyeater ◇ *Pycnopygius ixoides* A couple of sightings.
Marbled Honeyeater ◇ *Pycnopygius cinereus* Seen in lower Arfaks by some.
Streak-headed Honeyeater ◇ *Pycnopygius stictocephalus* Good looks at a few.
Spotted Honeyeater ◇ *Xanthotis polygrammus* Seen well in Sorong and Waigeo.
Tawny-breasted Honeyeater ◇ *Xanthotis flaviventer* A few observations.
Meyer's Friarbird ◇ *Philemon meyeri* Seen at Nimbokrang.
New Guinea Friarbird ◇ *Philemon novaeguineae* Regular encounters with this bald species. Distinctive calls.

Long-billed Honeyeater ◊ *Melilestes megarhynchus* A couple of sightings.
MacGregor's Honeyeater ◊ *Macgregoria pulchra* One of the highlights. Great views in the Snow Mountains.
Arfak Honeyeater ◊ (Western Smoky H) *Melipotés gymnops* This endemic is quite common in the Arfak forests.
Common Smoky Honeyeater ◊ *Melipotés fumigatus* Fairly regular in the Snow Mountains.
Black-throated Honeyeater ◊ *Lichenostomus subfrenatus* Regularly observed in the Snow Mountains.
Sooty Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes fuscus* One seen near the tree line in the Snow Mountains.
Short-bearded Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes nouhuysi* Regular in the Snow Mountains.



Goldenface and Blue-faced Parrotfinch. (DLV)

Cinnamon-browed Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes ochromelas* One showed briefly in the higher reaches of the Arfaks.
Vogelkop Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes leucostephes* Often heard and regularly seen in the Arfaks.
Belford's Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes belfordi* Many sightings of this noisy bandit in the Snow Mountains.
Ornate Melidectes ◊ *Melidectes torquatus* Great views near Wamena and in the Arfaks.
Mountain Honeyeater ◊ (M Meliphaga) *Meliphaga orientalis* A few in the Arfaks.
Scrub Honeyeater ◊ (Scrub White-eared Meliphaga) *Meliphaga albonotata* One record.
Mimic Honeyeater ◊ (Mimic Meliphaga) *Meliphaga analoga* Regular sightings.
Puff-backed Honeyeater ◊ (P-b Meliphaga) *Meliphaga aruensis* A couple of records.

Orange-cheeked Honeyeater ◇ *Oreornis chrysogenys* Many marvellous views of this localized speciality.

Goldenface ◇ (Dwarf Whistler) *Pachycare flavogriseum* This beauty showed well in the lower Arfaks.

Rusty Mouse-warbler ◇ *Crateroscelis murina* Regularly heard and seen in Nimbokrang.

Mountain Mouse-warbler ◇ *Crateroscelis robusta* Seen briefly in the Arfaks, heard regularly there.

Pale-billed Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis spilodera* Seen in Waigeo.

Papuan Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis papuensis* Quite common in the Snow Montains.

Perplexing Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis virgatus* (LO) One in the middle Arfaks.

Large Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis nouhuysi* A handful of sightings in the highland areas.

Buff-faced Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis perspicillatus* Seen in the Snow Mountains.

Vogelkop Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis rufescens* Family parties showed well in the Arfak Mountains.

Grey-green Scrubwren ◇ *Sericornis arfakianus* Great looks at this subtle species around Zeth's house in the Arfaks.

Brown-breasted Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone ruficollis* An often heard voice in the mountains. A few observations.

Yellow-bellied Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone chrysogaster* A few in the Nimbokrang forests.

Green-backed Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone chloronota* A common voice. Good looks at this canopy bird in the lowlands.

Fairy Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone palpebrosa* Seen well in the lower Arfaks.

Biak Gerygone ◇ *Gerygone hypoxantha* Seen in the Biak forests .

New Guinea Thornbill ◇ (Papuan T) *Acanthiza murina* Plenty of first-rate looks in the Snow Mountains.



New Guinea Thornbill and Alpine Pipit. (DLV)

Grey Thornbill ◊ (Mountain/Ashy Gerygone) *Acanthiza cinerea* Seen in the Snow Mountains.
Papuan Babbler ◊ (Rufous B) *Garritornis isidorei* A few in the flooded forests of Nimbokrang.
Papuan Logrunner ◊ *Orthonyx novaeguineae* Mega views of this skulker in the Snow Mountains.
Black Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis nigra* Seen once in the lowlands.
Mid-mountain Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis longicauda* Two showed rather briefly in the Arfaks.
Fan-tailed Berrypecker ◊ *Melanocharis versteri* A few in the highland areas. Smart when seen well.
Dwarf Longbill ◊ (Spectacled L, Dwarf Honeyeater) *Oedistoma iliolophus* Two observations
Pygmy Longbill ◊ (Pygmy Honeyeater) *Oedistoma pygmaeum* This tiny bird showed well once.
Yellow-bellied Longbill ◊ *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae* Several good looks. A common voice in the lowlands forest.
Tit Berrypecker ◊ *Oreocharis arfaki* This stunning species showed very well in the mountains.
Western Crested Berrypecker ◊ *Paramythia (montium) olivacea* Fairly common around Habbema. See Note.



Western Crested Berrypecker and Biak Black Flycatcher. (DLV)

Spotted Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa leucosticta* (H) Heard only in the Arfaks.
Blue Jewel-babbler ◊ *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens* Heard in Nimbokrang and only a brief view for the leader.
Yellow-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer* A few encounters in Waigeo.
Black-breasted Boatbill ◊ *Machaerirhynchus nigripectus* This unusual species was seen in the highland areas.
White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus* A handful of observations.
Great Woodswallow ◊ (New Guinea W) *Artamus maximus* We saw these well in the higher Snow Mountains
Lowland Peltops ◊ *Peltops blainvillii* Just a few in the Nimbokrang forests. A splendid bird.
Mountain Peltops ◊ *Peltops montanus* Seen well near lake Habbema.
Black Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus quoyi* Seen in Waigeo.
Hooded Butcherbird ◊ *Cracticus cassicus* Pretty common in the lowlands. Very vocal.
Mottled Berryhunter ◊ *Rhagologus leucostigma* Mega views in the Arfaks. Endemic monotypic family.
Stout-billed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina caeruleogrisea* Seen twice.
Barred Cuckooshrike (Yellow-eyed C) *Coracina lineata* Seen in Waigeo.
Boyer's Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina boyeri* Small numbers in the lowland forests.
White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis* One seen.
Hooded Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina longicauda* (H) Heard only in spite of a lot of effort.
Geelvink Cicadabird (Common C) *Coracina tenuirostris* We saw this modest species in Biak.
Black-shouldered Cicadabird ◊ *Coracina incerta* Photographed in the lower Arfaks.
Grey-headed Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina schisticeps* Fairly common at Nimbokrang.
Black Cicadabird ◊ (Black Cuckooshrike) Seen in Nimbokrang.
Black-bellied Cuckooshrike ◊ *Coracina montana* A few were seen in the Arfaks.
Golden Cuckooshrike ◊ *Campochaera sloetii* Seen in Nimbokrang.

Biak Triller ◊ *Lalage (atrovirens) leucoptera* Seen on Biak.
Black-browed Triller ◊ *Lalage atrovirens* Vocal and obvious at Nimbokrang.
Black Sittella ◊ *Daphoenositta miranda* Good looks at a big party in the Snow Mountains. Attractive.
Rufous-naped Whistler ◊ *Aleadryas rufinucha* Regularly recorded in the highland areas. Quite skulky!
Black Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui nigrescens* Several encounters in the Arfaks.
Vogelkop Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala meyeri* Regular in the Arfak forests.
Grey Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala simplex* Seen in Nimbokrang.
Sclater's Whistler ◊ (Hill Golden W) *Pachycephala soror* Recorded in the Arfaks.
Baliem Whistler *Pachycephala balim* Great views of this localized endemic above Wamena.
Lorentz's Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala lorentzi* A few in the higher reaches of the Snow Mountains.
Regent Whistler ◊ *Pachycephala schlegelii* Seen well in the Arfaks.
Rusty Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui ferrugineus* Several at Nimbokrang and Waigeo.
Little Shrikethrush ◊ *Colluricincla megarhyncha* A commonly recorded species of lowland rainforest.
Northern Variable Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui kirhocephalus* Seen well in Nimbokrang.
Southern Variable Pitohui *Pitohui uropygialis* Seen briefly in Sorong.
Raja Ampat Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui cerciniventris* This recent split was seen well in Waigeo.
Hooded Pitohui ◊ *Pitohui dichrous* One of this poisonous birds seen in the lower Arfak Mountains.
Brown Oriole ◊ *Oriolus szalayi* Perfect scope studies in Nimbokrang. A regularly heard song.
Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus* Regular and vocal.
Willie Wagtail (White-browed Fantail) *Rhipidura leucophrys* A common bird of open lowland areas.
Northern Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura rufiventris* A regular member of lowland rainforest flocks.
Sooty Thicket Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura threnothorax* Great views in Nimbokrang.
White-bellied Thicket Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura leucothorax* Often heard and seen a few times at Nimbokrang.
Black Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura atra* A typical member of highland forest flocks.
Arafura Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura dryas* Seen in Waigeo by some.
Drongo Fantail ◊ (Pygmy Drongo, Mountain D) *Chaetorhynchus papuensis* Great views in the lower Arfaks.
Friendly Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura albolimbata* Regular and friendly indeed...
Dimorphic Fantail ◊ *Rhipidura brachyrhyncha* Another inquisitive species of highland forest.
Black Monarch ◊ *Symposiachrus axillaris* Seen in the higher Arfaks.
Spot-winged Monarch ◊ *Symposiachrus guttula* Several encounters in the Nimbokrang lowland rainforests.
Biak Monarch ◊ *Monarcha brehmii* Great looks at this mega rarity on Biak. At least 4 birds seen!



Biak Monarch showed very well. (DLV)

Hooded Monarch ◊ *Symposiachrus manadensis* Seen in Nimbokrang and Waigeo.

Island Monarch *Monarcha cinerascens* Seen in Numfor.

Black-winged Monarch ◇ *Monarcha frater* Seen in the lower Arfaks.

Golden Monarch ◇ *Carterornis chrysomela* Regular encounters with this beauty.

Ochre-collared Monarch ◇ (Rufous-collared M) *Arses insularis* Fairly common in the Nimbokrang forests. Smart!

Frilled Monarch ◇ *Arses telescopthalmus* This splendour was regular on Waigeo.

Biak Black Flycatcher ◇ (Biak F) *Myiagra atra* Several very nice encounters with this Geelvink endemic.

Shining Flycatcher (S Monarch) *Myiagra alecto* Regularly heard and seen in lowland habitat.

Brown-headed Crow ◇ *Corvus fuscicapillus* Excellent views of this rare species in Waigeo.

Grey Crow ◇ (Bare-eyed C) *Corvus tristis* Seen a few times.

Torresian Crow (Australian C) *Corvus orru* Only seen in Waigeo.

Lesser Melampitta ◇ *Melampitta lugubris* Amazing looks of a “tame” bird the mossy forests of the Arfaks.

Glossy-mantled Manucode ◇ *Manucodia ater* Nice looks at this subtle bird of paradise in the Sentani area.

Trumpet Manucode ◇ *Phonygammus keraudrenii* (LO) Seen briefly in the lower Arfaks, where heard a few times.

Long-tailed Paradigalla ◇ *Paradigalla carunculata* Great views of 4 in the middle Arfaks. A real rarity!



The rare Long-tailed Paradigalla. (DLV)

Arfak Astrapia ◇ *Astrapia nigra* An immature male in the higher Arfaks.

Splendid Astrapia ◇ *Astrapia splendidissima* Fairly common in the higher forests of the Snow Mountains.

Western Parotia ◇ *Parotia sefilata* Incredible views of a male in its dancing court in the Arfaks.

“Western/Vogelkop” Superb Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Lophorina (superba) neidda* Great looks in the Arfaks.

Superb Bird-of-paradise *Lophorina superba* One seen in the lower Snow Mountains.

King of Saxony Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Pteridophora alberti* A female seen well in the lower Snow Mts.

Magnificent Riflebird ◇ *Ptiloris magnificus* Seen briefly by some in the lower Arfaks.

Black Sicklebill ◇ *Epimachus fastosus* Cracking views of a displaying male in the higher Arfaks. MEGA!

Black-billed Sicklebill ◇ (Buff-tailed S) *Drepanornis albertisi* (H) Heard only in the Arfaks.

Pale-billed Sicklebill ◇ *Drepanornis bruijnii* Many good looks in the Nimbokrang area.

Magnificent Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Diphyllodes magnificus* Heard only in the Arfaks due to heavy rain.

Wilson's Bird-of-Paradise ◇ *Diphyllodes respublica* Stunning views of two displaying males in Waigeo.

King Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Cicinnurus regius* Great studies of a cracking adult male at Nimbokrang.

Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Seleucidis melanoleucus* Excellent views of a displaying male at Nimbokrang.

Lesser Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Paradisaea minor* Regular looks at this gorgeous species. So beautiful.

Red Bird-of-paradise ◇ *Paradisaea rubra* Excellent looks in Waigeo, including displaying male.



Pale-billed Sicklebill and Black Sicklebill. (DLV)

Ashy Robin ♦ *Heteromyias albispecularis* Great views in the Arfaks.

Black-sided Robin ♦ *Poecilodryas hypoleuca* Regularly heard in lowland rainforest and eventually seen well.

Black-throated Robin ♦ *Poecilodryas albonotata* A few showed quite well in the mountains.

White-winged Robin ♦ *Peneothello sigillata* Seen a few times in the Snow Mountains.

Smoky Robin ♦ *Peneothello cryptoleuca* Good views in the higher Arfaks. A localized speciality!

Slaty Robin ♦ (Blue-grey R) *Peneothello cyanus* A few seen in the mountains.

Green-backed Robin ♦ *Pachycephalopsis hattamensis* One seen in the Arfaks..

White-faced Robin ♦ *Tregellasia leucops* Seen very well in the lower Arfaks.



Juvenile Ashy Robin. This plumage was only described last (!!) year. (DLV)

Canary Flyrobin ◊ (C Flycatcher) *Microeca papuana* Fairly common and appealing in the highland areas.
Yellow-legged Flyrobin ◊ (Y-I Flycatcher) *Microeca griseiceps* (LO) One in the lower Arfaks.
Garnet Robin ◊ *Eugerygone rubra* Male and female seen in the Arfaks.
Mountain Robin ◊ (Alpine R) *Petroica bivittata* A couple of great encounters in the Snow Mountains.
Greater Ground Robin ◊ *Amalocichla sclateriana* Amazing close up views of this rare antpitta-like creature.
Lesser Ground Robin ◊ *Amalocichla incerta* Excellent views in the Arfaks.
Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster* This introduced species is quite common on Biak.
Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* Regular observations.
Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans* A few seen over the Sentani grasslands.
Island Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus poliocephalus* Seen in the Snow Mts and in the Arfaks.
Biak Leaf Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus (maforensis) mysorensis* One briefly at Biak, in a mixed flock.
Numfor Leaf Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus [maforensis] maforensis* Great views in Numfor.



Numfor Leaf Warbler. (DLV)

Australian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus australis* Seen at Anggi lakes.
Papuan Grassbird ◊ (P Grass Warbler) *Megalurus macrurus* A few birds seen in Habbema and Anggi lakes.
Golden-headed Cisticola (Bright-capped C) *Cisticola exilis* Good looks at several in the Sentani grasslands.
Black-fronted White-eye ◊ *Zosterops minor* Regular in the Arfak foothills.
Biak White-eye ◊ *Zosterops mysorensis* Nice looks at this Biak endemic in Biak.
Capped White-eye ◊ (Western Mountain W-e) *Zosterops fuscicapilla* Common in the middle reaches of the Arfaks.
Metallic Starling (Shining S) *Aplonis metallica* A common species of the lowlands.
Long-tailed Starling ◊ *Aplonis magna* Many excellent looks on Biak. A Geelvink endemic.
Singing Starling ◊ *Aplonis cantoroides* A few sightings.
Yellow-faced Myna ◊ *Mino dumontii* Small numbers were noted in the lowlands.
Golden Myna ◊ *Mino anais* Seen near Sorong.
Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus* Regular observations in the Lake Habbema area.
Pied Bush Chat (Pied Chat) *Saxicola caprata* Just a few in grassy areas.
Red-capped Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum geelvinkianum* Small numbers were seen in the first half of the tour.
Olive-crowned Flowerpecker ◊ *Dicaeum pectorale* Small numbers were noted in Waigeo and in the Arfaks.
Black Sunbird ◊ *Leptocoma sericea* Regular sightings of this endemic in all the lowland areas.
Olive-backed Sunbird (Yellow-bellied S) *Cinnyris jugularis* Regular in the same areas.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* Common in most of the visited towns and villages.
Mountain Firetail ♦ ***Oreostruthus fuliginosus*** Great looks at this curious species in the Snow Mountains.
Crimson Finch ♦ ***Neochmia phaeton*** Good numbers in the Sentani grasslands. Probably introduced here.
Blue-faced Parrotfinch *Erythrura trichroa* Excellent looks in the Snow Mountains.
Streak-headed Mannikin ♦ ***Lonchura tristissima*** Good numbers in Nimbokrang.
Grey-banded Mannikin ♦ ***Lonchura vana*** Birdquest lifer!! Good numbers seen in Anggi lakes.



Grey-banded and Western Alpine Mannikins and Filled Monarch. (DLV)

Great-billed Mannikin ♦ **(Grand M) *Lonchura grandis*** Excellent views in Sentani grasslands and Nimbokrang.
Hooded Mannikin ♦ ***Lonchura spectabilis*** Some nice scope views in the Sentani grasslands.
Chestnut-breasted Mannikin *Lonchura castaneothorax* A few seen in the Sentani grasslands.
Black-breasted Mannikin ♦ ***Lonchura teerinki*** Good looks at several of these localized endemics near Wamena.
Western Alpine Mannikin ♦ **(Snow Mountain M) *Lonchura montana*** Great views in the Habbema area.

Alpine Pipit ◊ *Anthus gutturalis* Small numbers were seen in the Lake Habbema area. Display flight!



Wilson's BoP. (DLV)

MAMMALS

Waigeo Cuscus *Spilogale papuensis* Three seen at Waigeo. A very cool looking mammal!

Indo-Pacific Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops aduncus* Seen off Biak.

Feral Pig (Wild Boar) *Sus scrofa* One encounter. Impressive beasts!

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. Gill, F and Donsker, D (Eds). 2012. IOC World Bird Names (v2.11). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Long-tailed Honey Buzzard *Henicopernis longicauda*

Also known as Long-tailed Buzzard, its recorded prey items include a variety of insects (also wasps), tree lizards, birds and bird eggs. This is a member of a genus which possesses a very distinctive jizz and which is endemic to New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago.

Geelvink (Yellow-bibbed) Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus (solomonensis) speciosus*

The IOC hasn't split off the Geelvink bay subspecies *speciosus* as a separate species. Pratt & Beehler also treat it as part of Yellow-bibbed F D. However, Gregory and HBW have split this form off as Geelvink Fruit Dove *P speciosus*.

Bronze Ground-Dove *Gallicolumba beccarii*

The bird is named after Odoardo Beccari (1843-1920) Italian botanist, explorer, collector and author.

Western Crowned Pigeon *Goura cristata*

This extraordinary species is endemic to West Papua. This and the other two *Goura* allospecies are by far the largest of the Pigeon family. All are restricted to alluvial forest, are heavily hunted.

Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *Ducula (myristicivora) geelvinkiana* and **Spice Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula myristicivora*

Gregory and Pratt & Beehler split Geelvink Imperial Pigeon *D geelvinkiana*, endemic to the Bay Islands, from Spice Imperial Pigeon *D myristicivora*, restricted to the Moluccas and W Papuan Islands. Both show many different plumage details. The IOC hasn't adopted this split yet.

Biak Lorikeet *Trichoglossus rosenbergi*

Biak Lorikeet, endemic to Biak Island, has recently been split from Coconut Lorikeet, *T haematodus*.

Vogelkop Bowerbird *Amblyornis inornatus*

We were able to admire several magnificently built bowers, which must surely be the best of any Bowerbird. We enjoyed good views of this modestly-plumaged bird in action at its bower. The song is totally amazing and the bird seems to be able to imitate about everything it hears. This species is endemic to West Papua.

Macgregor's Honeyeater *Macgregoria pulchra*

It is much rarer there now than it used to be, mainly because of it being hunted for its delicious taste. Sadly, recent research has shown that this species belongs with the Honeyeaters.... Pratt & Beehler call it Giant Wattled Honeyeater.

Western Crested Berrypecker *Paramythia (montium) olivacea*

Gregory and Pratt & Beehler have split off Crested Berrypecker into Western Crested Berrypecker *P olivacea* and Eastern Crested Berrypecker *P montium*. The IOC hasn't accepted this split yet.

Biak Triller *Lalage (atrovirens) leucoptera*

Gregory and Pratt & Beehler have split off Biak Triller *L leucoptera* from Black-browed Triller *L atrovirens*. The IOC hasn't accepted this split yet.

Raja Ampat Pitohui *Pitohui cerciniventris*

Raja Ampat Pitohui, has recently been split off from Variable Pitohui *P. kirhocephalus*, and is endemic to Batanta, Waigeo and Gam. This is one of those famous poisonous birds, whose feathers and skin contain homobatrachotoxin, a powerful poison of the batrachotoxin group. These poisons were previously considered to be restricted to neotropical poison-dart frogs of the genus *Phylllobates*. However it seems (inexplicably) that not all individuals or indeed populations of pitohuis are poisonous and the reason for the presence of these toxins has not yet been discovered.

Grey Whistler *Pachycephala simplex*

The form involved is sometimes split off as Grey-headed Whistler *P. griseiceps*.

Long-tailed Paradigalla *Paradigalla carunculata*

This rarely-seen, much prized bird is endemic to West Papua. *Paradigalla* is derived from *Paradisea*, bird of paradise and the Latin *gallus*, a farmyard cock, probably referring to the colourful facial wattles typical of the genus.

Arfak Astrapia *Astrapia nigra* and **Splendid Astrapia** *Astrapia splendidissima*

Astrapia is derived from the Greek meaning a flash of lightning.

Wilson's Bird-of-paradise *Diphyllodes respublica*

Tremendous close up views for all of two males and females of this most wonderful and extraordinary Bird of Paradise on his display court in Waigeo. The combination of colours is totally amazing and the blue head seems to be illuminated from inside. It took a bit of effort to get to the spot, but it was well worth it. This species is restricted to Batanta and nearby Waigeo and is thus a West Papua endemic. The scientific epithet refers to the "republic". In naming this species Prince Bonaparte expressed his disenchantment with the French republic, ensuring that since there could not be a paradisaean republic, there should at least be a republican bird of paradise..

Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus*

The race *versteegi* (restricted to the Jayawijaya Mountains) was not uncommon in the grasslands and along the treeline near Lake Habbema. The taxonomy of this diverse species is highly complex with at least 49 subspecies having been described for this widespread bird, usually from the highest mountains or smallest islands.

Pied Bush Chat *Saxicola caprata* It has been suggested that the populations of New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago be split off as a separate species, Black Bush Chat *S. aethiops*.



Happy Birdquesters after seeing McGregor's Honeyeater. Lake Habbema and Mt Trikora in the back. (Keith Betton)



Black-billed Coucal, Snow Mountains Quail, Biak Monarch and Large Scrubwren. (DLV)



Our accommodation in Waigeo, and one of the islets visited during our boat trip.





The forest in the Arfaks, above, and in the Ibele Valley, Snow Mountains, below.

