



Field Guides Tour Report

Papua New Guinea & New Britain In Style 2017

Sep 16, 2017 to Oct 3, 2017

Phil Gregory

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



We got a great view of these gorgeous Beach Kingfishers on Restorf Island. We even heard them calling! Photo by guide Phil Gregory.

PNG in Style was a specially designed tour taking in the more comfortable lodges and visiting several areas not covered by the regular tours. It allowed for a mix of birding, cultural interactions and generally fairly easy walking, and we had a good time with some great sightings and memorable experiences. Hal made a memorable comment in "the nice thing about being out of shape is that you warm up very fast!"

Walindi made for a good introduction, with a nice spread of endemics-- Melanesian Scrubfowl at their diggings in the warm soil, Black-headed Paradise-Kingfisher for most, White-mantled and Melanesian Kingfisher, Red-knobbed, Yellowish and Finsch's Imperial Pigeon, Violaceous and Pied Coucal, Blue-eyed Cockatoo, Song Parrot, New Britain Friarbird, and more. We made a special effort for Golden Masked-Owl out in the oil palm, and saw it on both nights; a lifer for me though I'd heard what I presumed was it back in 2000. The dark moon really helped and Joseph and David were very good at knowing where to try out in the maze.

The boat trip in Kimbe Bay got us Black Noddy, Great Frigatebird, Nicobar Pigeon, Island Imperial, Beach Kingfisher, Sclater's Myzomela, Island Monarch for Mike, and Mangrove Golden Whistler, and was a wonderful introduction to snorkelling, complete with seahorses. We also saw lots of flying fish on the trip, gliding surprisingly long distances.

A Curlew Sandpiper in a muddy cow yard at Numundo was a vagrant to the Bismarcks, and it's the first time I've seen Grey-tailed Tattler inland. Bismarck Munia showed well, and I finally got to see and hear the local Grassbird, which is of uncertain attribution though currently and illogically dumped in Papuan Grassbird. Clements taxonomy for NG remains way out of date despite some recent progress.

Rondon was a nice stop with decent weather, but most of us dipped on the Black Sicklebill as it flew by, though a male Brown Sicklebill was a star, as were male King of Saxony and Princess Stephanie's Astrapia, and Joyce got to hear Wattled Ploughbill, her new family, luckily picked up again later in the trip. Superb BoP was very nice too, and I finally got to have a good look at and record the white-eyes, which are I think Green-fronted and not New Guinea here, though I remain uncertain about what is at Ambua on the southern watershed. Yellow-breasted Bowerbird showed nicely, and Elfin and Red-collared Myzomela added splashes of vivid color to the forest edge.

Lake Murray gave us some nice birds but proved hard work in the forest, with little responding-- Common Paradise Kingfisher, King BoP seen very well, as well as Spotted Whistling Duck, Rusty Pitohui, Southern Variable Pitohui, White-spotted Munia and Papuan Babbler, but again no luck with Campbell's Fairywren. This almost unknown species must be very shy and local. Crimson Finch, Black Munia, Paperbark Flycatcher, and Papuan Harrier were all seen on the boat trip on the Kaim River on the first afternoon, when we just dodged a big rainstorm on the way back. The microbats here-- probably Papuan Pipistrelles--are really tiny and sadly unable to dodge fans as Hal and Ann discovered!

Ambua was a big highlight despite the fruiting of the big tree in the grounds being long over, and the third bird guide named Joseph of the trip did very well for us, finding us a great King of Saxony, Ribbon-tails in their amazing full long plumes, Princess Stephanie's Astrapia again, a Short-tailed Paradigalla near the King of Saxony, a female Blue BoP in the Lodge grounds, as well as Lawes's Parotia and male Superb BoP. We also had 2 terrific Sooty Owls down in the valley, and a nice easy Papuan Boobook that flew in silently close to us. Parrots were sparse but we did get Brehm's and Madarasz's Tiger-Parrot and some glimpsed Modest. Stella's Lorikeet showed well at the Lodge, this species still not recognized by Clements despite both new field guides adopting it, and a fabulous pair of Red-breasted Pygmy-Parrots at the Lodge. Joseph's orchid garden below the Lodge was a nice visit, too, and we saw a great variety of local species, including newly described *Dendrobium engae* from Enga Province, where it is now the provincial flower!

Wattled Ploughbill showed well at 7-kona, and we got Papuan Logrunner and Lesser Melampitta there, whilst a responsive Chestnut Forest Rail at the new trail above the Bailey Bridge was unexpected this late in the season, after extensive tape over-exposure over the past few months.

The Waterfall Trail turned up Mottled Berryhunter, which called really close but as ever proved hard to see, and Joyce missed it, unfortunately. Some folks saw Loria's Satinbird here too, so we actually got all 7 endemic families on this tour! Spotted Berrypecker at the Lodge might be a future family consolation, I suspect. All seemed quiet down in the valley and the all the troubles are now centered on Mendi it seems; it really is the wild west out here!

The finale was at Karawari, which used to be part of our itinerary, but I had not been since 2011. It's great for the cultural stuff, with the sago making display being well received and the bamboo band being a hit, especially as they saved the lodge (and perhaps us!) from being burned down when they spotted a small fire begun by a carelessly stubbed out security guard's cigarette!

Notable birds included Great-billed Heron, King BoP, Twelve-wired BoP (now minus tail wires having molted already), Buff-faced Pygmy-Parrot, noisy flocks of Dusky Lory, Double-eyed and Edwards's Fig-Parrot, Streak-headed Munia, Meyer's Friarbird, Streak-headed Honeyeater, Ochre-collared Monarch and Black-browed Triller. We spent a lot of time checking Sunbirds, looking for the newly split Rand's Sunbird which is known from the airstrip, but only got a couple of probables for our troubles, all seen way too briefly. Sadly no sign of Victoria Crowned Pigeon except one single feather on a trail. Still it was a nice end to the tour and we eventually, after much negotiation, managed to get out in time for our connection to POM. I fear we did not endear ourselves to the distinguished guests at the Lodge when we got put on the first flight instead of them so we could make our connection, "sori tumas".

My thanks to an entertaining and good humored group. We had a fine time experiencing PNG, and met many very nice local characters. This is a trip that might be offered again in 2020. Thanks to Sue and Rowan at Sicklebill, and to Karen at FG HQ, for good logistics. It all ran nicely and the lodges were very nice. Good birding, hope to see you all again at some point, and safe travels.

"Lukim yu"

Phil

Itinerary

Mon Sept 18: Arrive from Cairns or Brisbane in Port Moresby, then a tight connection to Hoskins and then to Walindi.

Tues Sept 19: Garu Wildlife Management Area (WMA) 0630-1130, then Kulu River 1530-1800 and Numundo oil palms 2030-2215

Wed Sept 20: Boat trip in Kimbe Bay 0600-1100 to Restorf and Big Malo Malo Islands. Afternoon to Numundo 1530-1715 then to oil palms again 2000-2100

Thurs Sept 21: Depart Walindi 0700 for Hoskins to Lae then Port Moresby and connection to Mt Hagen. Rondon Ridge 1500 on

Fri Sept 22: Rondon Ridge top 0530-1130 at 2300 m, then lodge grounds and gate area 1500-1800.

Sat Sept 23: Mt Hagen to Lake Murray 90 minutes arrive 1130. Pm to Kaim River.

Sun Sept 24: Short boat trip across to canoe forest till 1130, pm Lodge area and airstrip.

Mon Sept 25: Longer 30 min boat trip to Fria till 1130, then pm to canoe trail start.

Tues Sept 26: Shortcut tie-channel on Lake Murray 0630-0830, then flight to Ambua arriving 1145. Pm up to 7-kona area.

Wed Sept 27: King of Saxony Trail, 7-kona trail and Tari Gap am, pm to Piakonda Sooty Owl then birding by Lodge.

Thurs Sept 28: King of Saxony Trail then across Tari Gap to Naieda Trail. Pm upper Waterfall Trail and Lodge area 1500-1730.

Fri Sept 29: Ambua till 0900 then fly 45 minutes to Karawari arriving 1100. Pm Sago making demonstration at Kundiman village, then birding around Lodge.

Sat Sept 30: Twelve-wired BoP site 0600-0630 then Karawari River Trail before airstrip till 1130. Pm boat trip to Ymas Lakes.

Sun Oct 1: Airstrip 0645-0730 then to Konmai, shortcut forest trail. Pm Lodge and airstrip.

Sun Oct 2: Karawari Lodge area 0630-0730 and 0815-0845, Then TNT charter to Mt Hagen and eventually Air Niugini back to Port Moresby, arriving 1900.

Mon Oct 3: Depart Port Moresby for home.

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

SPOTTED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna guttata*) – Up to 30 at Lake Murray, seen very well.

GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus pulchellus*) – Good views from Lake Murray.

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) – Small numbers in puddles under the oil palms out at Numundo.

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

YELLOW-LEGGED BRUSHTURKEY (*Talegalla fuscirostris*) – Lots of nest mounds at Lake Murray, and birds could be heard honking away in the forest, but always very hard to actually see one. [E*]

MELANESIAN SCRUBFOWL (*Megapodius eremita*) – We went to a colony out in the volcanic sand in the forest at Garu, and got quite good views of several birds here. The eggs are a big deal locally and cost K2 each, with thousands being harvested each year.

NEW GUINEA SCRUBFOWL (*Megapodius decollatus*) – Heard in the forest at Karawari and some large mounds seen. [*]

ORANGE-FOOTED SCRUBFOWL (*Megapodius reinwardt*) – Some really large mounds seen at Lake Murray, and some birds heard, their sites can be utilized for decades so the mounds get pretty big. [*]

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

BLUE-BREASTED QUAIL (*Synoicus chinensis*) – Good team work at Numundo meant we got to flush a female a couple of times. It was very small and quite dark with no contrasting coverts, and was a lifer for most.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

GREAT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata minor*) – One over the boat in Kimbe Bay, with a Frigatebird sp. earlier.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT (*Microcarbo melanoleucos*) – Small numbers at Lake Murray and one at Karawari.

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – Small numbers from Lake Murray and 8 at Karawari.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

AUSTRALASIAN DARTER (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – 3 at Karawari.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

BLACK BITTERN (*Ixobrychus flavicollis*) – Great views in the oil palms at Numundo, they have adapted to hunting in the ditches there, one of the few birds to manage to exist in this sterile monoculture habitat.

GREAT-BILLED HERON (*Ardea sumatrana*) – Lovely views of 2 adults and an immature from Karawari.

GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Ardea alba modesta*) – Small numbers from Lake Murray and Karawari, and a few from Walindi.

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – Very small numbers at Lake Murray and none at Walindi this trip.

LITTLE EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Egretta garzetta nigripes*) – A couple of singles from Karawari.

PACIFIC REEF-HERON (*Egretta sacra*) – Some folks saw one at Walindi.

PIED HERON (*Egretta picata*) – One flew over at Lake Murray.

CATTLE EGRET (EASTERN) (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) – 10 at Numundo and a few at Jackson's Airport in Port Moresby.

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – A couple seen at Lake Murray.

RUFOUS NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – Singles from Numundo, Lake Murray and Karawari.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*) – Two at Walindi, split by many as Eastern Osprey.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE (*Elanus caeruleus wahgiensis*) – A single on back roads near Mt Hagen was unexpected.

LONG-TAILED HONEY-BUZZARD (*Henicopernis longicauda*) – Two at Karawari, both in very heavy wing molt. [E]

PACIFIC BAZA (*Aviceda subcristata*) – 3 at at Garu on the first day on New Britain.

EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER (PAPUAN) (*Circus spilonotus spilorhax*) – A terrific male at Kaim River at Lake Murray was a surprise, then was had another up at Tari Gap with some folks seeing a pair there earlier. Shame Clements does not split it. [E]

VARIABLE GOSHAWK (*Accipiter hiogaster*) – Good views of the small pale race *dampieri* at Kilu River, an immature having a white belly also, then a couple of singles from Karawari.

BROWN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter fasciatus*) – One from the boat at Karawari.

BLACK-MANTLED GOSHAWK (*Accipiter melanochlamys*) – One male went right over us at Rondon and even perched up for a short while, then we had a second fly over as we came up to 7-kona at Tari Gap. An uncommon bird and not seen every trip. [E]

BLACK KITE (BLACK) (*Milvus migrans affinis*) – Small numbers from Lake Murray, Mt Hagen and Karawari.

WHISTLING KITE (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Likewise, small numbers from Lake Murray and Karawari.

BRAHMINY KITE (*Haliastur indus*) – Small numbers around Walindi, then singles on several days from Lake Murray and Karawari.

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – One on Restorf island, then singles from Lake Murray and Karawari on several days.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CHESTNUT FOREST-RAIL (*Rallina rubra*) – A fine male on the forest track above the Bailey Bridge below Tari Gap; I was surprised it responded so late in the season after so much tape exposure earlier. [E]

BUFF-BANDED RAIL (*Gallirallus philippensis*) – 5 feeding out on a track at Numundo Farms one afternoon.

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE (*Amaurornis cinerea*) – Two by a small pond at Numundo.

AUSTRALASIAN SWAMPHEN (*Porphyrio melanotus melanopterus*) – 2 at Numundo were the only ones we saw.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis fulva*) – 8 at Numundo included some in partial summer dress.

MASKED LAPWING (MASKED) (*Vanellus miles miles*) – Seen at Jackson's Airport and then 2 at Karawari on a sand bar.

GREATER SAND-PLOVER (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) – 2 seen at Walindi and one at Numundo in the cattle yard.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

WHIMBREL (SIBERIAN) (*Numenius phaeopus variegatus*) – Small numbers off Walindi.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A single at Numundo in the cattle yard, and some folks saw one at Walindi.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER (*Calidris acuminata*) – 5 in the cattle yard at Numundo; this species regularly turns up inland, unlike some of the other shorebirds here.

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – 2 at Walindi and 8 at Numundo at the cattle yard, then one at Karawari.

GRAY-TAILED TATTLER (*Tringa brevipes*) – Up to 8 in the cattle yard at Numundo, an unusual site for what is usually a coastal species, albeit only a couple of km inland here.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

AUSTRALIAN PRATINCOLE (*Stiltia isabella*) – Two on the grass at Jackson's Airport on Sept 21 were quite late for it still to be here.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK NODDY (*Anous minutus*) – Great views off Walindi, and some nice photos, we saw about 200 birds.

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Small numbers at Lake Murray and one at Ymas lakes.

COMMON TERN (LONGIPENNIS) (*Sterna hirundo longipennis*) – 4 in Kimbe Bay by Restorf Island; this race is a good candidate for a split.

GREAT CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bergii cristatus*) – Mike and I saw a couple of very distant ones off Walindi.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – A few around Mt Hagen. [I]

AMBOYNA CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia amboinensis*) – Amazingly, Clements does split this from Brown Cuckoo-Dove and the western Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove. We saw a couple around Walindi, one at Rondon and then some had one at Karawari. [E]

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) – 2 of this small rusty long tailed dove were seen at Rondon. [E]

MACKINLAY'S CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia mackinlayi*) – Quite good looks at Restorf and Big Mal Malo Islands in Kimbe Bay; a small island specialist species.

GREAT CUCKOO-DOVE (*Reinwardtoena reinwardti*) – One seen and heard briefly up at Tari Gap. [E]

STEPHAN'S DOVE (*Chalcophaps stephani*) – Common in the oil palm at Numundo, where they come to forage on spilt oil palm fruits and gravel; one of the few birds able to exploit the monoculture. Also one flying across the Karawari River, a much more typical sighting on the mainland.

BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE (*Geopelia humeralis*) – Heard from the boat at the shortcut on Lake Murray, it's a savanna bird of the Trans-Fly and Port Moresby areas here. [*]

NICOBAR PIGEON (*Caloenas nicobarica*) – Great looks out at Kilu River, where one flushed then perched up for scope views, with another nearby. They seem to be coming in after palm fruits here. Then 3 out on Big Malo Malo, it is more usually a small island species and a nice one to get.

WOMPPOO FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – 4 seen at Lake Murray and a couple flying by at Karawari.

PINK-SPOTTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) – A couple of sightings from Lake Murray, they seem oddly scarce here. [E]

ORNATE FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus ornatus*) – One seen in the scope from Karawari Airstrip, the yellowish mottling on the shoulder showed well. Quite an uncommon bird of hill forests as a rule, but wanders widely. [E]

ORANGE-FRONTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*) – A couple of sightings from Lake Murray, and 2 from Karawari, one of the less common *Ptilinopus*. [E]

WHITE-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) – A fine female up at the fruiting tree atop Rondon Ridge. [E]

ORANGE-BELLIED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) – Very small numbers from Lake Murray and Karawari, a small rather short-tailed species that is common in lowland forest. [E]

KNOB-BILLED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus insolitus*) – Brief views from Garu, this small dove is becoming much less common it seems. [E]

DWARF FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus nainus*) – One flew across the river at Karawari and it was heard at Lake Murray. [E]

RED-KNOBBED IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula rubricera*) – Nice looks from Garu; the huge red bill knob is very striking and it's quite a vocal species; a Bismarck/Solomons endemic.

FINSCH'S IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula finschii*) – Very nice looks at this lovely Imperial Pigeon with a voice like a klaxon at Garu; it is one of the rarer ones and it was good to see it well. [E]

ISLAND IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula pistrinaria*) – Common and noisy on the small island in Kimbe Bay, but I don't recall ever seeing it on the mainland, it really is a small island specialist.

PINON'S IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula pinon*) – This large and attractive Imperial Pigeon showed well along the Karawari River. [E]

COLLARED IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula mullerii*) – Just a handful of sightings along the Karawari River, this riverine specialist can be quite common along the Fly but has always been very scarce in this section of the Sepik. Maybe hunting pressure I suspect? [E]

ZOE IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula zoeae*) – A couple from Lake Murray and singles seen well every day at Karawari. [E]

TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula spilorrhoa*) – Very small numbers from Lake Murray, with 1 at Kaim River and a couple of sightings over the next two days.

TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (YELLOWISH) (*Ducula spilorrhoa subflavescens*) – This Bismarck endemic showed well at Garu, with 2 on our visit there then 5 flying out by the islands next day. Usually split as Yellowish Imperial Pigeon. [E]

PAPUAN MOUNTAIN-PIGEON (*Gymnophaps albertisii*) – 10 flew by atop Rondon Ridge, and 5 were seen at Ambua. [E]

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

PIED COUCAL (*Centropus ateralbus*) – Good views of some 4 birds on the morning at Garu. [E]

GREATER BLACK COUCAL (*Centropus menbeki*) – Heard in the forests at Lake Murray and Karawari, but elusive as always. This one sometimes calls at night as well, with the deep booming calls. [E*]

VIOLACEOUS COUCAL (*Centropus violaceus*) – Great views of two of this big unobtrusive species in the forest at Garu; they sat side by side for ages. [E]

LESSER BLACK COUCAL (*Centropus bernsteini*) – Some folks got to see this one at Karawari and it was heard at the airstrip and by the river. [E]

PHEASANT COUCAL (*Centropus phasianinus*) – Good views from Lake Murray.

DWARF KOEL (*Microdynamis parva*) – Heard at Karawari but not responsive. [E*]

PACIFIC KOEL (AUSTRALIAN) (*Eudynamis orientalis cyanocephalus*) – Seen well at Lake Murray, several females gave good views.

CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – Seen a couple of times over Karawari, it is getting a bit late for them as they return to Australia now.

LONG-BILLED CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx megarhynchus*) – Heard at Lake Murray but we were too obstructed by trees to be able to see it. [E*]

RUFIOUS-THROATED BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx ruficollis*) – Seen very well at Ambua and some very loud vocals, with 4 birds excitedly calling one morning up at Tari Gap. I posted a cut of this to the IBC (Internet Bird Collection). [E]

LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – Seen at Lake Murray and Karawari and heard quite often in the forests.

WHITE-CROWNED KOEL (*Cacomantis leucolophus*) – A noisy one at Lake Murray that came in very nicely to playback and gave flight views twice. A hard one to get to see. [E]

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO (*Cacomantis flabelliformis excitus*) – Calling up at Tari Gap and seen a couple of times. I reckon this resident montane race is a good candidate for a split when someone gets around to analyzing the group.

BRUSH CUCKOO (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – Seen at Walindi and very well at Karawari where a juv. was in the tree at the airstrip, and the voice is a frequent sound of the lowland forests.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

SOOTY OWL (GREATER) (*Tyto tenebricosa arfaki*) – A very good one showed at a tree hole at Piakonda, and there was a second bird sitting nearby that had snuck out of another exit. [E]

GOLDEN MASKED-OWL (*Tyto aurantia*) – This rare and little-known species has begun to be seen occasionally near Walindi in the last couple of years, though one recent tour group tried 4 nights without success. Happily for us, it was a dark moon, and Joseph and David had a good idea where to look. The first was one that launched out of an oil palm and flew off, only seen by Phil and Joseph, I think, so a nervous 20 minutes followed. Just as we were leaving one was spotted sitting with its back to us on a post, and it sat for some time, though not everyone got onto it as it was very inconspicuous with such a dark plumage. We decided on a return visit next night, and this time scored big, with sightings of 2 perched birds, one notably darker than the other (maybe sexually dimorphic?). I was able to get a video, now posted at the IBC, and was delighted to finally get to see this species which I believe I'd heard back in 2000. [E]

Strigidae (Owls)

BARKING OWL (*Ninox connivens*) – Heard at Lake Murray Lodge, and Mike saw one chased off by a bird on an afternoon walk there. [*]

PAPUAN BOOBOOK (*Ninox theomacha*) – Heard at Rondon, but we were anxious to get up on top in time for the sicklebills; then a fine bird at Ambua that came in silently and landed bang in front of us with its back towards us, before then turning around for great looks. Some folks saw it the previous dusk by the cabins too. [E]

Apodidae (Swifts)

PAPUAN SPINETAILED SWIFT (*Mearnsia novaeguineae*) – A couple of sightings of this riverine specialist from Karawari; oddly it does not seem to be at Lake Murray. [E]

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (*Collocalia esculenta*) – This was curiously scarce this trip and we only saw them at Ambua, where the blue upperparts and white belly are very obvious.

MOUNTAIN SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus hirundinaceus*) – Nice looks from Rondon and Ambua, an all dark montane swiftlet. [E]

WHITE-RUMPED SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus spodiopygius*) – A flock of Uniform Swiftlets at Numundo had a couple of this species mixed in, the small white rump is not obvious unless seen well.

UNIFORM SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus vanikorensis*) – Common on New Britain, but where were the Glossy Swiftlets? Then a few from Lake Murray, and common at Karawari.

PACIFIC SWIFT (*Apus pacificus*) – This was a surprise at Lake Murray, where a single bird heading south flew over us at the shortcut channel. It's a passage migrant here and only comes through in a narrow time slot.

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

BLYTH'S HORNBILL (*Rhyticeros plicatus*) – 5 at Garu showed well, but the highlights came from Karawari where a male was visiting a nest hole in a giant tree by the river, and an endearing female visited us daily at the Lodge and administered a sharp peck to the noble bonce of Lady Crisp....

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – One at Walindi.

AZURE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx azureus*) – A few folks got a quick look along the Konmai River.

PAPUAN DWARF-KINGFISHER (*Ceyx solitarius*) – Heard at Lake Murray, and one flew over calling at Karawari, a very brief view of this tiny and hard to see bird. [E]

NEW BRITAIN DWARF-KINGFISHER (*Ceyx sacerdotis*) – Heard at Garu; this species group got split into some 15 species so kingfisher-collectors now have their work cut out, as all are hard to see! [E*]

RUFIOUS-BELLIED KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) – Heard at Lake Murray and seen well at Karawari. I posted a couple of sound cuts to the IBC as this is a noisy species that often duets. [E]

NEW BRITAIN KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus albonotatus*) – Fortunately, Joseph and David knew of a pair at Garu and we got some nice scope views of them calling. It's an uncommon endemic that has lost a lot of its habitat. More usually called White-mantled Kingfisher. [E]

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Amazingly scarce, they seem to have left for Australia already. Some saw one at Walindi, and there were a couple by Lake Murray Lodge.

BEACH KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus saurophagus*) – Great views of 2 calling on Restorf Island, one spectacular bird.

MELANESIAN KINGFISHER (NEW BRITAIN) (*Todiramphus tristrami tristrami*) – Seen well on New Britain, part of the break up of what was Collared Kingfisher, a richly coloured form that lives on forest edge.

HOOK-BILLED KINGFISHER (*Melidora macrorrhina*) – Heard at Karawari at dawn and dusk, but all distant; this is a crepuscular kingfisher. [E*]

YELLOW-BILLED KINGFISHER (*Syma torotoro*) – Heard at Lake Murray and Karawari but we were unable to lure one into view. [*]

MOUNTAIN KINGFISHER (*Syma megarhyncha*) – Heard at Rondon, but a long way off. [E*]

COMMON PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera galatea*) – Great views and vocals from Lake Murray, and heard at Karawari; another spectacular kingfisher. [E]

BUFF-BREASTED PARADISE-KINGFISHER (BLACK-CAPPED) (*Tanysiptera sylvia nigriceps*) – 4 heard and one seen by most at Garu; it's a shy endemic of the forest and always hard to see. Clements does not split it despite just about everyone else now doing so..... [E]

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

RAINBOW BEE-EATER (*Merops ornatus*) – Surprisingly scarce, I guess most have left for summer quarters in Australia, so we saw just a few at Lake Murray and a couple at 2300 m at Rondon ridgetop.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

DOLLARBIRD (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – Suellen's favorite, she became expert at spotting them and we saw quite a few at Lake Murray and Karawari.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

ORIENTAL HOBBY (*Falco severus*) – One shot by as we got to Restorf Island, an unexpected sighting of a quite scarce species.

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

PALM COCKATOO (*Probosciger aterrimus*) – This terrific bird showed well at both Lake Murray and Karawari, with one at the former site sitting and then calling with wings raised. They have a very loud voice which is often the first sign of their presence. Video cut now posted on the IBC.

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO (*Cacatua galerita triton*) – Small numbers from Lake Murray and Karawari.

BLUE-EYED COCKATOO (*Cacatua ophthalmica*) – We saw 5 at Garu on the first morning; it's another species that is I think in decline as so much habitat has been lost here. [E]

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

BUFF-FACED PYGMY-PARROT (*Micropsitta pusio*) – Nice looks at 2 at Garu, then even better were 4 in the huge gums by Karawari Lodge; this genus comprises the world's smallest parrots, no bigger than an average thumb! They graze on lerps and lichen, it is believed, working creeper-like along trunks and branches. [E]

RED-BREASTED PYGMY-PARROT (*Micropsitta bruijnii*) – A great find by Joseph at Ambua just before we left, a striking pair were foraging in the large tree that fruits earlier in the year. We'd seen a nest hole earlier but the birds had been absent. so this a nice pick up of the most striking of the genus.

PAPUAN KING-PARROT (*Alisterus chloropterus*) – Calling very well and seen briefly at Ambua, cut posted to IBC. [E]

ECLECTUS PARROT (*Eclectus roratus*) – Common in the lowlands, with up to 30 on New Britain and 20 quite commonly at Karawari, but only a handful at Lake Murray. There seemed to be a lot of females in evidence too; maybe nesting is over and they can wander about more?

RED-CHEEKED PARROT (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) – Vocal at Lake Murray and Karawari; I posted a nice sound cut of them in calling flight on the IBC site, this is one of the default lowland parrots.

SINGING PARROT (*Geoffroyus heteroclitus*) – Just one over along the Garu Road, another species that has lost much of its habitat here.

BREHM'S TIGER-PARROT (*Psittacella brehmii*) – One of these big bulky parrots was seen by some of us up along the King of Saxony Trail. [E]

MODEST TIGER-PARROT (*Psittacella modesta*) – One up along the King of Saxony Trail was seen by a few, though I never got anything on it beyond a shape in the foliage. [E]

MADARASZ'S TIGER-PARROT (*Psittacella madaraszii*) – A good look at one at the Lodge at Ambua, not easy to tell from Modest but it had much less brown on the chest. [E]

YELLOW-BILLED LORIKEET (*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*) – A few around Ambua and at Tari Gap, some showed quite well by the Lodge but numbers were low this time. [E]

ORANGE-BREASTED FIG-PARROT (DUSKY-CHEEKED) (*Cyclopsitta guiliemitertii fuscifrons*) – Some good views from Lake Murray of this small parrot with the orange chest and a black mark on the whitish ear coverts. This taxon is split by HBW/BirdLife. I also heard them at Karawari where I don't recall seeing them before, and that race would be nigrifrons; it was shame they only flew by.

DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – Good views of two of the red-faced form at Karawari, presumably race coccineifrons and another likely split when the group is analyzed. A skin at Hagen airport was on sale for decoration in traditional costume, one of the much less usual species to be traded.

EDWARDS'S FIG-PARROT (*Psittaculirostris edwardsii*) – Chris got us a beautiful perched bird at Karawari Lodge late one afternoon and it sat for ages, just a pity the light was not better for photos! We also had some brief flybys next day but this was the only nice view. An uncommon bird of the north-central lowlands. [E]

PLUM-FACED LORIKEET (*Oreopsittacus arfaki*) – Heard at Tari Gap. [E*]

RED-FLANKED LORIKEET (*Chamosyna placensis*) – Great looks at 8 at Karawari Lodge on the last morning, feeding at a flowering tree. [E]

PAPUAN LORIKEET (*Chamosyna papou*) – One was seen in flight at Rondon, then we had some over at Tari Gap before good views of one by the Lodge, quite a low altitude for it. Split in both new field guides as Stella's Lorikeet, Papuan is only in the Vogelkop. [E]

PURPLE-BELLIED LORY (*Lorius hypoinochrous*) – Good views from Garu, and quite noisy in flight. [E]

BLACK-CAPPED LORY (*Lorius lory*) – Small numbers from Lake Murray and Karawari. [E]

GOLDIE'S LORIKEET (*Psittuteutes goldiei*) – Heard flying over at Ambua. [E*]

DUSKY LORY (*Pseudeos fuscata*) – Some nice flocks at Karawari with about 300 over Karawari airstrip late one afternoon, and good views of them feeding in some blossoming trees there. [E]

RAINBOW LORIKEET (COCONUT) (*Trichoglossus haematodus nigrogularis*) – Amazingly few, 2 of race massena at Garu, and then just 7 near Ymas Lakes, presumably race haematodus. Both these are split as Coconut Lorikeet by most these days.

Pittidae (Pittas)

PAPUAN PITTA (*Erythropitta macklotii*) – Heard at Lake Murray but not very responsive. [E*]

HOODED PITTA (PAPUAN) (*Pitta sordida novaeguineae*) – Now split by many as Eastern Hooded Pitta, this one showed briefly near the Lodge, coming very close and flying by several times. Sound cut posted to IBC. [E]

Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

BLACK-EARED CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – Heard at Lake Murray, the former Spotted Catbird is now a 6-way split and this is the one from Far N Queensland (Iron Range) and the Trans-Fly. They are incredibly hard to see, and I posted the sound cut to IBC. [*]

MACGREGOR'S BOWERBIRD (*Amblyornis macgregoriae*) – A lovely maypole bower with mossy circular platform was seen at Rondon, with the hanging frass (insect sawdust) on the lowest part of the maypole as some kind of decoration. [E]

YELLOW-BREASTED BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera lauterbachi*) – Great looks at one at Rondon late one afternoon, this is an elusive species of the highlands and lower hills. The yellow underparts really show up well. [E]

FAWN-BREASTED BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera cerviniventris*) – One flew over the river at Karawari as we arrived, a surprise and my first sighting from here.

Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

PAPUAN TREECREEPER (*Cormobates placens*) – Seen along the Naieda Trail across the Tari Gap, a good site for this scarce species. [E]

Maluridae (Fairywrens)

EMPEROR FAIRYWREN (*Malurus cyanocephalus*) – Wonderful views of an iridescent blue and black male and the chestnut, black and white female at the shortcut at Lake Murray. [E]

WHITE-SHOULDERED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus alboscapulatus*) – Seen up at Rondon. [E]

Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)

STREAK-HEADED HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) – Vocal at Karawari and seen briefly near the Lodge; sound cut on IBC. This is one of the friarbird mimics, being very similar in plumage but with a much more delicate bill. [E]

MIMIC HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga analoga*) – All the lowland sites had Meliphagas calling "chup", and the ones we saw at Lake Murray look like a good bet for this hard to identify species. [E]

GRACEFUL HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga gracilis gracilis*) – I am reasonably sure some of the Meliphagas around Lake Murray Lodge are this species, but getting a conclusive view is very hard.

BLACK-THROATED HONEYEATER (*Caligavis subfrenata*) – Great looks at one sat out for ages along the King of Saxony Trail at Ambua, far more often heard than seen and a sound cut is on the IBC site. [E]

ORNATE MELIDECTES (*Melidectes torquatus*) – Heard at Rondon, then one was seen very nicely at the Kofi Kave in Mt Hagen as we made a pit-stop, the penultimate addition to the trip birds. [E]

BELFORD'S MELIDECTES (*Melidectes belfordi*) – Common above the Bailey Bridge at Ambua, and very vocal, quite a striking bird with its dark bill and blue facial skin. [E]

YELLOW-BROWED MELIDECTES (*Melidectes rufocrissalis*) – Common at both Rondon and Ambua and a rather bizarre looking creature with the yellow-green facial skin and pale bill. [E]

BROWN-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ramsayornis modestus*) – Good views at Lake Murray, even by the Lodge.

RUFIOUS-BANDED HONEYEATER (*Conopophila albogularis*) – Common and noisy by Lake Murray Lodge.

SMOKY HONEYEATER (*Melipotus fumigatus*) – The common higher altitude honeyeater, with the endearing habit of blushing from yellow to red facial skin. [E]

LONG-BILLED HONEYEATER (*Melilestes megarhynchus*) – Heard at Karawari Lodge. [E*]

RUBY-THROATED MYZOMELA (*Myzomela eques*) – Mike and a few others got onto one in the flowering tree at the Karawari airstrip. [E]

ASHY MYZOMELA (*Myzomela cineracea*) – Mike got one of these briefly at Garu. [E]

ELFIN MYZOMELA (*Myzomela adolphinae*) – Nice looks at this diminutive sprite with the red head at Rondon, one of the smallest of the genus and a montane special. [E]

SCLATER'S MYZOMELA (*Myzomela sclateri*) – A classic small island specialist species, the islands in Kimbe Bay are a great site to see it and we had good looks at both males and females on the boat trip. [E]

RED-COLLARED MYZOMELA (*Myzomela rosenbergii*) – A spectacular red and black myzomela that showed well at Rondon and briefly at Ambua. [E]

GREEN-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Glycichaera fallax fallax*) – One at Karawari airstrip was a good pick up, it's both uncommon and cryptic, easily overlooked.

RUFIOUS-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora guisei*) – A couple seen at Ambua, the rufous back was seen well, and it's actually a PNG endemic, oddly enough. [E]

GRAY-STREAKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora perstriata*) – Seen very briefly at Ambua, it tends to be at higher altitudes than the similar Rufous-backed, and lacks the rufous back. [E]

TAWNY-BREASTED HONEYEATER (*Xanthotis flaviventer*) – Quite noisy at Karawari and seen by the Lodge and at the airstrip, this race philemon is very dull and the group as a whole is a likely 3-way split.

MEYER'S FRIARBIRD (*Philemon meyeri*) – Heard at Lake Murray and seen very well by Karawari Lodge, I think Hal should have a definitive photograph. [E]

HELMETED FRIARBIRD (NEW GUINEA) (*Philemon buceroides novaeguineae*) – Friarbird taxonomy remains vexatious, the IOC split this as New Guinea Friarbird, and this race is jobiensis which almost lacks a bill knob. We saw it at Karawari.

NEW BRITAIN FRIARBIRD (*Philemon cockerelli*) – Seen well at Garu and around Walindi, a New Britain endemic too. [E]

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

RUSTY MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis murina*) – Heard at Lake Murray, the "Three Blind Mice" call is often heard but the bird is very elusive. [E*]

MOUNTAIN MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis robusta*) – A few folks saw this at the Naieda Trail at Tari Gap, and it was heard at Rondon Ridge and 7-kona. [E]

LARGE SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis nouhuysi*) – A few seen at Ambua, the reddish throat is a good field mark. [E]

BUFF-FACED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis perspicillatus*) – Seen at the King of Saxony Trail at 2200 m, which seems quite high for it, and also at the Lodge at Ambua. [E]

PAPUAN SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis papuensis*) – Vocal at high altitudes and seen briefly at Rondon and Ambua. [E]

GREEN-BACKED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chloronota*) – Heard at Lake Murray. [*]

YELLOW-BELLIED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chrysogaster*) – Vocal at Lake Murray and seen quite well, it was one of the few species to form small flocks here. [E]

LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – Very good at Karawari, and several nests seen that look like flood debris hanging out over the creek at Lake Murray. Song cut posted to IBC.

BROWN-BREASTED GERYGONE (*Gerygone ruficollis*) – The lovely slow smoky song was a feature at Rondon and Ambua and we saw it at both sites, though the name is woefully inaccurate. [E]

Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

PAPUAN BABBLER (*Pomatostomus isidorei*) – A noisy flock of these rusty birds with the decurved yellow bill was seen at Fria at lake Murray, and we saw one of the hanging pendulous nests at Karawari. [E]

Orthonychidae (Logrunners)

PAPUAN LOGRUNNER (*Orthonyx novaeguineae*) – A good sighting on the lovely trail at 7-kona, this is one highly cryptic and elusive bird and we did well to see them. Also heard at Naieda across Tari Gap. [E]

Cnemophilidae (Satinbirds)

LORIA'S SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus loriae*) – A few folks saw one briefly along the Waterfall Trail, so we actually got all 7 endemic families on the tour! [E]

Melanocharitidae (Berrypeckers and Longbills)

BLACK BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis nigra*) – Heard at Lake Murray. [E*]

MID-MOUNTAIN BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis longicauda*) – One up at Tari Gap showed quite well, we could see the yellowish pectoral tufts of the female plumage. [E]

FAN-TAILED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis versteri*) – A couple seen at Ambua and Rondon, mostly females but a male was seen too. [E]

SPOTTED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis crassirostris*) – There is a Ficus fig at Ambua that seems to be a favourite of this tricky species, so again this year we got to see a male of this odd bird there. It could well prove to be a separate family from berrypeckers as it's pretty different to the rest. [E]

YELLOW-BELLIED LONGBILL (*Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*) – Vocal at Karawari and seen briefly, they call back to recordings but seldom come in. Oddly I did not hear it at Lake Murray. [E]

SPECTACLED LONGBILL (*Oedistoma iliolophus*) – Heard at Lake Murray. [E*]

Paramythiidae (Tit Berrypecker and Crested Berrypecker)

CRESTED BERRYPECKER (*Paramythia montium*) – Three of this striking species were at 7-kona and showed nicely, a member of an endemic family. This is now split as Eastern Crested Berrypecker in the new field guides. [E]

Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)

SPOTTED JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa leucosticta*) – Heard at both Rondon and Ambua but the most difficult of the genus to see as a rule. [E*]

BLUE JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*) – Not bad at Lake Murray, a couple of times we got birds singing and managed to get glimpses of them flitting by or skulking in cover. [E]

Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)

BLACK-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus nigripectus*) – Great looks at this striking species at both Rondon and Ambua. [E]

YELLOW-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) – One in the forest at Lake Murray.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

GREAT WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus maximus*) – A small group of about 4 were around Ambua Lodge, less than usual. [E]

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – 4 at Lake Murray airstrip, with a nest on the power pole there.

Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

MOUNTAIN PELTOPS (*Peltops montanus*) – Lovely looks at Ambua car park. [E]

LOWLAND PELTOPS (*Peltops blainvillii*) – One at Lake Murray, then another at Karawari Airstrip, don't be surprised to see these two Peltops species as a new family at some point. [E]

HOODED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus cassicus*) – Seen well at Lake Murray and Karawari, and singing nicely. [E]

BLACK BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus quoyi*) – One from Karawari, this is a likely split too as it has a much thicker bill than the Australian birds, and different voice.

Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

BOYER'S CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Coracina boyeri*) – Just 2 at Lake Murray, the only sighting this trip. [E]

BLACK-FACED CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – Good numbers at Lake Murray as they head back south to Australia, we had about 70 at the airstrip late one afternoon.

WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Coracina papuensis papuensis*) – One at Numundo took a while to nail down, then small numbers from Lake Murray and Karawari.

BLACK-BROWED TRILLER (*Lalage atrovirens*) – A couple at Karawari airstrip, calling well and seen nicely, and a recording now posted to the IBC site. [E]

VARIED TRILLER (*Lalage leucomela*) – Heard at Numundo, and again at Lake Murray where I think Mike and Marianne saw one.

BLACK-BELLIED CICADABIRD (*Edolisoma montanum*) – Terrific along the King of Saxony Trail, where a pair were duetting loudly and may well have been nesting. I posted a very good recording to the IBC site. [E]

COMMON CICADABIRD (*Edolisoma tenuirostre*) – Vocal at Lake Murray, the raspy cicada-like call that give it its name, and a male was seen there, then a nice look at a female at Karawari Airstrip.

COMMON CICADABIRD (GRAY-CAPPED) (*Edolisoma tenuirostre remotus*) – Heard at Numundo but not visible, and only the "chup chup" contact calls. Split as Grey-capped Cicadabird by the IOC and the field guides. [E*]

Eulacestomatidae (Ploughbill)

WATTLED PLOUGHBILL (*Eulacestoma nigropectus*) – The big one for Joyce, and it led us a dance, calling well at Rondon at 2 sites but only being seen by 3 people. Happily, we got a pair calling well at 7-kona and managed to get them into view, with the male eventually showing off his pink paddles nicely. A truly odd bird, long of uncertain affinities and now shown to be one of an ancient Tertiary radiation of species/families. [E]

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

RUSTY PITOHI (*Colluricincla ferruginea*) – Seen well at Lake Murray and heard at Karawari, the yellow eye is quite conspicuous when you see this shy bird. [E]

LITTLE SHRIKETHRUSH (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) – Heard at Rondon, Ambua and Karawari, 3 different taxa and all eventually potential splits when someone unravels this complex assemblage of forms. Both the new field guides ducked the issue, just way too hard!

GRAY SHRIKETHRUSH (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – One see at Lake Murray.

BLACK PITOHI (*Melanorectes nigrescens*) – Heard along the Waterfall Trail and I think a few folks got to see it. [E]

REGENT WHISTLER (*Pachycephala schlegelii*) – Nice looks at Rondon and Ambua of this high altitude species, it was giving a very strange song at Tari Gap which I have put on the IBC and XC. [E]

SCLATER'S WHISTLER (*Pachycephala soror*) – Seen at Rondon and Ambua, a lower altitude bird than the Regent. [E]

BLACK-TAILED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala melanura*) – Great looks on the islands off Walindi, this species is restricted to small islands and mangroves, hence the name of Mangrove Golden Whistler.

BROWN-BACKED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala modesta*) – Seen at Tari Gap and Ambua Lodge, a nondescript brown and white delicate whistler that is actually endemic to PNG. I finally got a poor recording of it, it's a very silent bird and I did not have any before. Now posted on IBC and XC [E]

GRAY WHISTLER (GRAY-HEADED) (*Pachycephala simplex griseiceps*) – This was heard at Lake Murray but is very inconspicuous. [*]

BLACK-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala monacha*) – Heard up at Rondon but oddly none in the Tari Valley this time, it likes gardens and Casuarinas. [E*]

Rhagologidae (Mottled Berryhunter)

MOTTLED BERRYHUNTER (*Rhagologus leucostigma*) – Another Joyce family target, and very difficult, the hardest of the endemic families. We tried without success at Rondon, but finally got 2 responding along the Waterfall Trail, where a few folks got looks at a male, though not unfortunately Joyce. It's another of these ancient Tertiary families that was broken out of whistlers a few years ago. [E]

Oreoicidae (Australo-Papuan Bellbirds)

RUFOUS-NAPED BELLBIRD (*Aleadryas rufinucha*) – Another reallocation out of whistlers, this is now in Australasian Bellbirds which seems a far better fit. We saw a couple around Ambua, a very odd little bird. [E]

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LONG-TAILED SHRIKE (NASUTUS GROUP) (*Lanius schach stresemanni*) – One seen well up at Tari Gap, a very plausible split as its very isolated from other taxa and is actually endemic to PNG.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

VARIABLE PITOHI (NORTHERN) (*Pitohui kirhocephalus kirhocephalus*) – Calling quite well at Karawari Lodge, especially at dawn, but I think I was the only one to see them. [E]

VARIABLE PITOHI (SOUTHERN) (*Pitohui kirhocephalus brunneiceps*) – Good views from Lake Murray; this taxon has a dark brownish head. There was 3-way split of this group and I think it is not yet over. [E]

BROWN ORIOLE (*Oriolus szalayii*) – Nice looks up at Karawari and singing well; it is a friarbird mimic but the call is a dead giveaway. [E]

Dicruridae (Drongos)

SPANGLED DRONGO (*Dicrurus bracteatus carbonarius*) – Some of the birds at Lake Murray seem to belong here by voice. I actually split them in the new field guide as this is another long overlumped species complex. [E]

SPANGLED DRONGO (*Dicrurus bracteatus laemostictus*) – Migrant drongoes from Australia were seen and heard at Lake Murray and Karawari. [E]

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

BLACK FANTAIL (*Rhipidura atra*) – Pairs were seen nicely at Tari Gap and Ambua, the rusty female and all black male are very distinctive. [E]

NORTHERN FANTAIL (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) – Good views in the forest at Karawari.

WHITE-BELLIED THICKET-FANTAIL (*Rhipidura leucothorax leucothorax*) – Heard at Lake Murray, and led us a dance at Karawari, where some folks got brief views of this arch-skulker. [E]

WILLIE-WAGTAIL (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – Widespread almost throughout but few from Lake Murray.

DIMORPHIC FANTAIL (*Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*) – Good views up at Rondon Ridge and then at Tari Gap. [E]

RUFOUS FANTAIL (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) – This proved quite common in the forest at Lake Murray; they may well be migrants from Australia.

FRIENDLY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albolimbata*) – The common montane fantail. [E]

Ifritidae (Ifrita)

BLUE-CAPPED IFRITA (*Ifrita kowaldi*) – Another odd ancient Tertiary family that was recognised recently, this bizarre bird acts like a creeper as it picks along branches and up trunks. We heard them several times and finally got good looks along the Waterfall Trail on the last afternoon. [E]

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

GOLDEN MONARCH (*Carterornis chrysomela*) – Heard at Lake Murray and at Karawari but proved very elusive and I don't think anyone saw it. One was singing really well in the heat of the afternoon right by the Lodge, and this sound cut is now on the IBC and XC sites. [E*]

ISLAND MONARCH (*Monarcha cinerascens*) – Mike was the only one to see one from the boat on Restorf Island, this species is very much a small island specialist.

FANTAILED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus axillaris*) – A very obliging one was actually with Black Fantails at Ambua Lodge car park one afternoon; it is a remarkable mimic of the male fantail but has a white mark at the bend of the wing which distinguishes it. Quite why it should mimic is anyone's guess! [E]

HOODED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus manadensis*) – Heard in the swamp forest at Karawari when we were busy with Golden Monarch. [E*]

BLACK-TAILED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus verticalis verticalis*) – Heard at Garu, and quite close at one time, but the Black-headed Paradise-Kingfisher intervened. [E*]

SPOT-WINGED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus guttula*) – Heard in the forest at Lake Murray. [E*]

FRILLED MONARCH (*Arses telescopthalmus*) – Very nice looks at males and females in the forest at Lake Murray, the males with the neck frill erect. [E]

OCHRE-COLLARED MONARCH (*Arses insularis*) – A good look at one at Karawari, singing by the King BoP site, and a much shyer and more elusive bird than the Frilled Monarch with which it was long lumped. The head colour of the male is very striking. [E]

SATIN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*) – A surprise from the forest at Karawari where a male and female of this Australian migrant were in the forest near the Golden Monarch. Not well known on the NG mainland.

PAPERBARK FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra nana*) – One at the Kaim River at Lake Murray.

SHINING FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra alecto*) – Seen at Walindi, Restorf Island and then at Lake Murray and Karawari, always near water.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

GRAY CROW (*Corvus tristis*) – One at Lake Murray and some saw one at Karawari, it is an odd frugivorous forest dwelling crow. [E]

BISMARCK CROW (*Corvus insularis*) – Noisy and fairly obvious at Walindi and Numundo, with one out on Restorf Island being unexpected there. Vocally very distinct to Torresian Crow with which it was long lumped. [E]

Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-Paradise)

TRUMPET MANUCODE (*Phonygammus keraudrenii*) – Heard at Lake Murray but none nearby, taxon here presumably jamesi, part of the lowland complex. [*]

GLOSSY-MANTLED MANUCODE (*Manucodia ater*) – Seen at Lake Murray and again at Karawari airstrip, the rising tuning fork sound-like call is a typical sound of the lowlands. [E]

KING-OF-SAXONY BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Pteridophora alberti*) – Very nice up at Rondon Ridge with a male singing, and excellent at the trail above the Bailey Bridge where a male was very vocal. The curiously plumaged female-type bird was seen at Tari Gap too, a nondescript greyish bird with chevrons on the underparts and a cinnamon vent. [E]

LAWES'S PAROTIA (*Parotia lawesii*) – Brief views by the Ambua car park, the odd flat-headed shape could be seen. [E]

TWELVE-WIRED BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Seleucidis melanoleucus*) – Very nice at a site below Karawari, though we had to get there by 0600 and by 0620 it was all over. The male here has lost all his wires as the molt starts, but was still well colored and busy calling and showing off to a female. [E]

SUPERB BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Lophorina superba*) – Great at Rondon where we saw about 3 male birds one afternoon and were able to scope one nicely. There was also a subadult male at Ambua car park, with small breast shield and brown on the back, probably about 4 years old. [E]

MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD (MAGNIFICENT) (*Ptiloris magnificus magnificus*) – Heard way off at Lake Murray only. [*]

BLACK SICKLEBILL (*Epimachus fastosus*) – A couple of folks got one fly through at Rondon where it was very shy this time; I fear the new trail is too open and he can see us too easily. However there was still a male calling from a song post below Ambua and we got the scope on him around 0700 on the last morning, and could hear him call the loud "whik whik whik" vocalization. Quite late in the year to be still showing off so we were lucky. [E]

BROWN SICKLEBILL (*Epimachus meyeri*) – A fantastic male showed very well at a fruiting tree at Rondon, males are hard to see well so we were fortunate. Several female plumage birds also seen at Tari Gap and the great machine-gun chatter call heard nicely. [E]

SHORT-TAILED PARADIGALLA (*Paradigalla brevicauda*) – Lucky for us that one bird was hanging about near the King of Saxony Trail at Ambua, and we got nice views of it, one of the far more difficult BoP's as low density and quite shy. The yellow "butterfly" at the base of the bill is a strange feature and the sexes are almost identical in this species. [E]

STEPHANIE'S ASTRAPIA (*Astrapia stephaniae*) – Quite good looks at a long-tailed male at Rondon Ridge, and females both here and at Ambua. This species is endemic to the mountains of PNG. [E]

RIBBON-TAILED ASTRAPIA (*Astrapia mayeri*) – One of my favourite birds, the male is a truly amazing creature with that very long white waving tail. We were fortunate to see several very fine males at Tari Gap and see a couple chasing through the shrubbery, with one beautiful long tailed male going right overhead, tail rippling behind him, how I wish I'd got that on video! This is a PNG endemic too and was the most recently described member of the family in 19..... [E]

KING BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Ciccinnurus regius*) – A big star this trip, males being seen very nicely at Lake Murray and Karawari. The latter bird was in intense calling mode as two females were up in the vine tangle and he was frantic for their attention. I posted a nice recording to the IBC and XC. [E]

BLUE BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Paradisaea rudolphi*) – One female plumage bird was in the Ficus at Ambua, seen fairly well and a very nice trip addition. This is one of the more threatened members of the family, only being found in PNG in a height band that is becoming more and more heavily settled. [E]

RAGGIANA BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Paradisaea raggiana*) – One female plumage bird was seen from the boat in the tie-channel by some of us, and everyone got to hear them at Lake Murray. [E]

Melampittidae (Melampittas)

LESSER MELAMPITTA (*Melampitta lugubris*) – Heard at Rondon, and one was lured into circling around us at the Naieda Trail at Tari Gap, so everyone got quick looks as he skulked round. Now in their own family too after years of uncertain placement. [E]

Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

LESSER GROUND-ROBIN (*Amalocichla incerta*) – Heard at Rondon and Ambua but shy and kept out of view. [E*]

LEMON-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Microeca flavigaster*) – One seen from the boat at Lake Murray, but elusive and only calling occasionally.

YELLOW-LEGGED FLYCATCHER (*Microeca griseiceps*) – Heard at Fria at Lake Murray but I think only Mike got a quick look at it.

PAPUAN FLYCATCHER (*Microeca papuana*) – This yellow and olive bird with the orange legs was seen at Rondon and Ambua. [E]

GARNET ROBIN (*Eugeryone rubra*) – Singing well along the King of Saxony Trail and a garnet male showed nicely later at Tari Gap, they seemed quite vocal this trip. [E]

BLACK-THROATED ROBIN (*Poecilodryas albonotata*) – Just a couple of folks saw this at Rondon and it was heard both there and at Ambua. [E]

WHITE-WINGED ROBIN (*Peneothello sigillata*) – Seen nicely in the forest at 7-kona near Tari Gap. [E]

BLUE-GRAY ROBIN (*Peneothello cyanus*) – Good views at Ambua car park which was always a good spot for it in the past, also along the Waterfall Trail. [E]

ASHY ROBIN (*Heteromyias albispecularis*) – Heard along the King of Saxony Trail and Mike and Marianne had one that was calling close by zip past, always a very hard bird to see. [E]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PACIFIC SWALLOW (*Hirundo tahitica*) – Small numbers in the lowlands at Port Moresby and Mt Hagen.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

ISLAND LEAF WARBLER (*Phylloscopus maforensis*) – Vocal at Ambua and Rondon but always high in the trees.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus australis*) – Nice looks at the Kaim River at Lake Murray, and also at Numundo on New Britain.

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

TAWNY GRASSBIRD (TAWNY) (*Megalurus timoriensis alisteri*) – This was the grassbird at Numundo, of uncertain taxonomic affinity as it may be classified with Papuan Grassbird not Tawny, or something else. Sadly I was unable to tape a call.

TAWNY GRASSBIRD (PAPUAN) (*Megalurus timoriensis wahgiensis*) – Calling at Rondon and Tari Gap and seen perched up at the latter site by some.

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA (*Cisticola exilis*) – Good views at Lake Murray airstrip.

Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)

CAPPED WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops fuscicapilla*) – Heard at Ambua and glimpsed flying over. [E]

NEW GUINEA WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops novaeguineae*) – The white-eyes at Rondon have green foreheads, some dark on the lores, very narrow broken eye rings which may be two semicircles or just one below the eye, and rich golden yellow chin and throat. They are a split from what was Black-fronted White-eye in both new field guides, known as Green-fronted White-eye. White-eye taxonomy remains unsettled and quite what constitutes New Guinea White-eye is debatable..... [E]

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

PIED BUSHCHAT (*Saxicola caprata*) – Nice views at Rondon and Tari Gap.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

ISLAND THRUSH (*Turdus poliocephalus*) – One nice grey one with orange bill and eye-ring at Tari Gap, the whole complex of 49 races is long-overdue for splitting.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

METALLIC STARLING (*Aplonis metallica*) – Seen at Lake Murray and Karawari, where they were hunting a hatch of mayflies over the river late one afternoon.

SINGING STARLING (*Aplonis cantoroides*) – The last trip addition with 4 by the Kofi Kave in Mt Hagen during a pit-stop.

YELLOW-FACED MYNA (*Mino dumontii*) – A few at Karawari. [E]

LONG-TAILED MYNA (*Mino kreffti*) – Good views at Garu on day one of the tour.

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

RED-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER (*Dicaeum geelvinkianum*) – Small numbers at Lake Murray and Karawari and hard to see well as they are so mobile. [E]

RED-BANDED FLOWERPECKER (*Dicaeum eximium*) – Seen at Garu on the first day. [E]

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

BLACK SUNBIRD (*Leptocoma sericea*) – Common at Karawari, with males outnumbering females.

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (BLACK-BREASTED) (*Cinnyris jugularis idenburgi*) – Hmmm, well much scrutiny of the sunbirds at Karawari gave 3 possible sightings, all rather too brief, of what is now a split as Rand's Sunbird. A bird Phil saw at the Lodge had a bright yellow belly and black flanks and looked likely, but it promptly vanished. There were a couple of other probables at Karawari Airstrip too, certainly worth looking out for here as it's an almost unknown species. [E]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN) (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – One seen briefly by some folks at Kagamuga Airstrip as we came in from Karawari.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Seen at Mt Hagen. [I]

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – Seen at Port Moresby and also at Lake Murray airstrip, this has invaded NG over the past 15 years and is now in many towns and villages. [I]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

MOUNTAIN FIRETAIL (*Oreostruthus fuliginosus*) – Heard along the Naieda Trail at Tari Gap. [E*]

CRIMSON FINCH (*Neochmia phaeton evangelinae*) – Great looks at Lake Murray, this is the white-bellied taxon, and a split by HBW/BirdLife.

STREAK-HEADED MUNIA (*Lonchura tristissima*) – Seen at Karawari at the sago making demonstration. [E]

STREAK-HEADED MUNIA (WHITE-SPOTTED) (*Lonchura tristissima leucosticta*) – A bird was building a nest at Lake Murray and is this taxon which both new field guides and most checklists separate as White-spotted Munia.

HOODED MUNIA (*Lonchura spectabilis*) – Good looks at Rondon, and it was seen at Garu briefly, the nondescript juveniles. [E]

BLACK MUNIA (*Lonchura stygia*) – Seen at the Kaim River but unobliging! A Trans-Fly endemic. [E]

BISMARCK MUNIA (*Lonchura melaena*) – Seen well at Numundo with flocks of several dozen, also called Buff-bellied Mannikin which is more descriptive. [E]

MAMMALS

SPECKLED DASYURE (*Neophascogale lorentzii*) – I think one was seen in the forest at Tari Gap? [E]

GREATER FLYING FOX (*Pteropus neohibernicus*) – A few around on New Britain.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Birds of the trip were hard to choose, but the King Bird of Paradise, not surprisingly, made a good showing, as did Short-tailed Paradigalla and King of Saxony. Golden Masked Owl featured for some including Phil, and Common Paradise Kingfisher and Great-billed Heron were popular, whilst amongst the skulkers Wattled Ploughbill and Papuan Logrunner were picked.

Some of the trip photos and sounds are on the Internet Bird Collection (IBC), a free-access site via Lynx Edicions (publishers of the classic Handbook of Birds of World). It is a superb collection of videos, photos and sound cuts, and I usually post pictures and sound cuts from the tours here, as well as on the Field Guides gallery for that particular tour.

I also recommend the xeno-canto website, which has cuts of almost all of the world's bird species; I contribute cuts from most of my tours.

Folks were also asking about the IOC World Checklist of Birds, a free-access downloadable Excel file that gets updated every four months; version 7.3 has just been published. Go to worldbirdnames.org, or Google "IOC" and ignore the Olympics stuff!

Totals for the tour: 304 bird taxa and 2 mammal taxa