



*Field Guides Tour Report*  
**New Guinea & Australia 2015**

Oct 29, 2015 to Nov 16, 2015  
Jay VanderGaast

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



*Though we never found a male Ribbon-tailed Astrapia with a completely full set of tail plumes (which can extend more than a meter!), we did get great looks at some fine specimens. Photo by participant Conny Palm.*

I've always enjoyed leading the New Guinea and Australia tour, and this year's trip was no exception. In fact, it was perhaps the best yet, with just about everything working out perfectly -- the weather, the flights, the birds -- I couldn't have asked for better. Plus we added one or two new sites that we haven't used in the past, and they added a great deal to the experience, and to our bird lists!

We kicked things off in the Cairns region, where the numerous highlights included a male Northern Cassowary with two young chicks near Kuranda, a pair of White-browed Crakes skulking through the reeds at Cattana Wetlands, gorgeous Double-eyed Fig-Parrots and a gangly Black-necked Stork at Centenary Lakes, and loads of shorebirds, including several cool Terek Sandpipers, along the famous Esplanade.

Moving up into the Atherton tablelands, we tallied all of the local endemics, including especially good encounters with a smashing male Golden Bowerbird and the secretive Fernwren at Mt Hypipamee, and a party of wonderful Chowchillas at Lake Barrine, as well as a very vocal Tooth-billed Catbird on his display perch. In the dry eucalyptus forest at Wondecla, we enjoyed a long scope view of a feeding Crested Shrike-Tit, as well as Brown Treecreeper and the delightfully named Jacky-winter, while at Granite Gorge we got to watch a Great Bowerbird put some decorative touches on his bower. Mammals in the region were excellent, too, and ranged from the striking Striped Possum and Sugar Gliders at the Chamber's feeders to the cute and cuddly Mareeba Rock-Wallabies at Granite Gorge. I can't neglect to mention, either, that big mob of Eastern Gray Kangaroos at the Mareeba Golf Course, or the fantastic close Platypus that swam past at Yungaburra!

Papua New Guinea was next on the schedule and we hit the ground running, heading straight for PAU and a bunch of wonderful birds, including a group of Spotted Whistling-Ducks perched above one of the ponds, a pair of bizarre Papuan Frogmouths blending in beautifully with their roost tree, and a surprise, out-in-the-open view of a Black Bittern stalking prey in the middle of a pond. Next morning saw us at the fantastic Varirata National Park, where -- among many highlights -- a friendly Yellow-billed Kingfisher, a nice assortment of fruit-doves, a perched female Eclectus Parrot, a sleepy-looking Barred Owlet-Nightjar, an elegant pair of Moustached Treeswifts, and an incredible male Painted Quail-Thrush were some of the standouts. We also tallied our first PNG birds-of-paradise, with both Raggiana BoP and a cooperative female Magnificent Riflebird showing well. Leonard's close encounter with a large Olive Python was also quite memorable!

The next few days in the highlands were fruitful as we tallied a bunch of incredible birds-of-paradise and other wonderful montane species. Star of the show was a superb male Lesser BoP in full display mode, in open view and excellent light. What a stellar performance! King-of-Saxony BoPs were also great, with several males waving their "antennae" around in an attempt to excite nearby females. And both Ribbon-tailed and Stephanie's astrapias showed well also, with a long-plumed male Stephanie's Astrapia being particularly special. Among non-BoPs, standouts included gaudy Papuan Lorikeets visiting a flowering Schefflera next to the veranda, a brilliant male Crested Satinbird at his favorite fruiting tree, quirky Blue-capped Ibis foraging along the walkway railings, a surprise Black Pitohui calling loudly from a wooded ravine, and a glowing Red-collared Myzomela feeding at

some roadside flowers.

Our late departure back to Australia allowed us enough time to make a second morning visit to Varirata NP, and weren't we glad that we had that chance! In our short time there we added 10 new species to the list, including the often difficult White-crowned Koel (in the scope!), Stout-billed Cuckooshrike, Black Cicadabird, Papuan Dwarf-Kingfisher, Pale-billed Scrubwren, and Spot-winged Monarch. Back in Port Moresby, a flock of Little Curlews was a nice find.

We began our Brisbane birding with an unscheduled visit to the Port of Brisbane, and we quickly concluded this new site was a keeper. Black Swans, Chestnut Teal, Red-necked Avocet, Fairy Martin, and Striped and Mangrove honeyeaters were just some of the new species we added here. Moving along to Daisy Hill, we enjoyed marvelous views of an alert looking Koala, plus a Southern Boobook that was being harassed by a mob of Noisy Miners. Then on to Canungra, where a lunch stop also netted us a close and low Tawny Frogmouth roosting in the park. O'Reilly's was great, too, with the best Albert's Lyrebird I've seen in years, plus a surprise Square-tailed Kite, the first one ever recorded in Lamington National Park, among the wonderful assortment of regulars. We ended the tour at Sydney's Royal National Park, where the Superb Lyrebird gave us the slip, but birds like New Holland Honeyeater, Little Wattlebird, Satin Flycatcher, Southern Emuwren, and the very local Rockwarbler more than made up for it. We also found a new sea-watching spot which was not only productive, with birds like Black-browed Albatross, Australasian Gannet, and White-bellied Sea-Eagle, but incredibly beautiful as well.

This was a really fun tour to lead, and a really fun, sociable group of folks to lead it for. I enjoyed meeting and traveling with you all, and I want to thank you all for allowing me the pleasure of showing you the incredible birds of these two countries. I'm looking forward to seeing each of you on another tour sometime soon! Thanks also to Jun, Leonard, Max, and Matt, our local guides who add so much more to the experience. The tour is definitely better thanks to their skill and hard work!

--Jay

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#### 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

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### BIRDS

#### Casuariidae (Cassowaries)

**SOUTHERN CASSOWARY** (*Casuarius casuarius*) – No knock against seeing them at the Cassowary House feeders, but I must admit I really enjoyed our sighting of a male with two small chicks in a more natural setting, moving through the rainforest at a nearby site we visited since the feeder bird had recently expired. Alison picked this as her top bird for the Australia portion of the trip. [EN]

#### Anseranatidae (Magpie Goose)

**MAGPIE GOOSE** (*Anseranas semipalmata*) – Daily in the Cairns region, with especially huge numbers at Hasties Swamp in the tablelands. [E]

#### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**SPOTTED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna guttata*) – This rare duck is hit or miss at Pacific Adventist University (PAU), but it was a hit this trip, with nice views of 4 at the usual pond.

**PLUMED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna eytoni*) – First seen at Jaques Coffee Farm near Mareeba, where a group of 100+ were roosting around the small pond near the entrance. Hasties Swamp also harbored immense numbers of these lovely ducks, but the 60+ birds that were at PAU a few months ago had all disappeared. [E]

**WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) – We only managed to pick out about 10 of these among the many Plumed Whistling-Ducks at Hasties Swamp, then saw a fair few around the ponds at PAU.

**BLACK SWAN** (*Cygnus atratus*) – A single bird on a roadside pond near Granite Gorge was a good find, and would have been our only one if we hadn't made a change to our plans and dropped in at the Port of Brisbane wetlands, where 52 of the gorgeous swans were loafing about.

**RADJAH SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna radjah*) – A half a dozen birds on the freshwater pond at Centenary Lakes were the only ones. [E]

**GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE** (*Nettion pulchellus*) – Excellent scope views of these attractive small geese on our first afternoon at Cattana Wetlands. [E]

**MANED DUCK** (*Chenonetta jubata*) – Only around Brisbane and Sydney, including an aggressive pair with young in the park in Canungra. [EN]

**PACIFIC BLACK DUCK** (*Anas superciliosa*) – The South Pacific equivalent of the Mallard, and the most regularly seen duck in both countries.

**GRAY TEAL** (*Anas gracilis*) – Quite a few at Hasties Swamp, and a handful of birds at the Port of Brisbane wetlands.

**CHESTNUT TEAL** (*Anas castanea*) – These handsome ducks were quite numerous at the Port of Brisbane, and included a pair with ducklings. [E]

**PINK-EARED DUCK** (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) – Australia has a few very unusual ducks, and this is one of them. We had great looks, good enough to see the pink ear, of about 35 at Hasties Swamp, with a distant pair also at the Walnut Road wetlands. [E]

**WHITE-EYED DUCK** (*Aythya australis*) – Also known as the Hardhead. We saw quite a few at most of the wetlands in Australia, and a single bird on the ponds at PAU. That bird was my first ever in PNG.

#### Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

**AUSTRALIAN BRUSHTURKEY** (*Alectura lathami*) – Common throughout the eastern rainforests of Australia and we saw plenty. Memorable were the ones at O'Reilly's, where we got to watch one male monitoring the eggs in a huge mound behind some of the cabins, and even better, found a very small, and rather homely, chick roosting on its own right next to the Border Track. [EN]

**YELLOW-LEGGED BRUSHTURKEY** (*Talegalla fuscirostris*) – Formerly called Black-billed Brush-Turkey. Much shyer than its Australian counterpart, and once again, this is on our list as a heard only species, though we had one calling very nearby at Varirata NP. [E\*]

**ORANGE-FOOTED SCRUBFOWL** (*Megapodius reinwardt*) – Fairly common in the Cairns region, where we had several excellent views.

#### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**AUSTRALASIAN GREBE** (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – Layne spotted our first ones, a trio feeding inconspicuously among the lily pads at

Cattana Wetlands. We had several more records scattered around Australia, and super views of a pair in breeding plumage at PAU.

**GREAT CRESTED GREBE** (*Podiceps cristatus australis*) – Lake Barrine is about the only place we ever see this handsome grebe on this tour, and that was the case once again. We only managed to find one pair this time, but they were pretty close to shore and showed very well.

*Diomedidae (Albatrosses)*

**BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS (BLACK-BROWED)** (*Thalassarche melanophris melanophris*) – Conny spotted this one with his scope during our sea watch at Royal National Park, and it eventually came close enough to get reasonably good looks at it with binoculars, too.

*Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)*

**WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER** (*Ardenna pacifica*) – Small numbers of these larger shearwaters were seen during our sea watch, mainly well offshore, and easily outnumbered by the next species.

**SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER** (*Ardenna tenuirostris*) – The most numerous seabird seen off of Royal NP, with pretty good views through the scope, and just with our bins.

**FLUTTERING SHEARWATER** (*Puffinus gavia*) – Conny also picked up this small, white-bellied shearwater flying with a flock of Short-tails. Jerry also managed to get a look through the scope, but the rest of us couldn't find it.

*Ciconiidae (Storks)*

**BLACK-NECKED STORK** (*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus australis*) – A pretty scarce bird on the tour route, so it was a nice surprise to have one of these feeding around the freshwater lake at Centenary Lakes in Cairns. This was a first for me at the site, though I've seen them near Cairns once or twice.

*Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)*

**AUSTRALASIAN GANNET** (*Morus serrator*) – One made a nice pass by us as we watched the sea from the rocky promontory at Royal NP.

*Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)*

**LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – Pretty common at the wetland sites visited in both countries. [E]

**GREAT CORMORANT (AUSTRALASIAN)** (*Phalacrocorax carbo novaehollandiae*) – Just a couple of birds at Lake Barrine, then a few more off of Royal NP.

**PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax varius*) – A trio of these were resting on the island at the high tide shorebird roost at the Port of Brisbane. [E]

**LITTLE PIED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) – Common at all the wetland sites visited in both countries. [N]

*Anhingidae (Anhingas)*

**AUSTRALASIAN DARTER** (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – Never numerous, but we saw one or two at most of the wetland sites in Australia. [E]

*Pelecanidae (Pelicans)*

**AUSTRALIAN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) – Seen at most wetland areas in Australia, with incredibly close views of those habituated birds on the high tide roost along the Cairns Esplanade. [E]

*Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)*

**BLACK BITTERN** (*Ixobrychus flavicollis*) – Finishing off our visit to PAU, we headed for the back of the property to see if this bird was about, and it was way better than I'd anticipated. With the low water levels, we found the bird right out in the open, stalking prey on the lily pads in the middle of the pond. As we watched, it suddenly lunged forwards and came up with a small fish, then it flew off and disappeared in the dense vegetation along the shore. What an amazing view, and easily my best view ever of this normally elusive bird!

**PACIFIC HERON** (*Ardea pacifica*) – Also known as White-necked Heron. We saw just two birds, one each at Hasties Swamp and from the viewpoint over Luke's Farm at the top of Duck Creek Road. [E]

**GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN)** (*Ardea alba modesta*) – Pretty common in the Cairns region, with just a couple of other birds seen in the Brisbane area.

**INTERMEDIATE EGRET** (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – Small numbers around Cairns and at PAU.

**WHITE-FACED HERON** (*Egretta novaehollandiae*) – A poor flyby in the Atherton tablelands was bettered with great views of our only other one at the Port of Brisbane.

**LITTLE EGRET (LITTLE)** (*Egretta garzetta nigripes*) – Not very common, and we saw just one each in the Cairns region and at PAU, and three birds together at the Port of Brisbane.

**PACIFIC REEF-HERON** (*Egretta sacra*) – A dark morph bird was seen (by some) on two days, flying out across the mudflats along the Cairns Esplanade.

**PIED HERON** (*Egretta picata*) – Several of these striking small herons showed beautifully at the PAU ponds.

**CATTLE EGRET (EASTERN)** (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) – Pretty numerous throughout, with the exception of the PNG highlands.

**RUFIOUS NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – We found these in the usual day roost trees along the Cairns Esplanade and at PAU. [E]

*Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)*

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – About a dozen flew over the golf course at Yorkey's Knob on our first afternoon and a single bird was at Hasties Swamp. We also had surprisingly good numbers at and around PAU, where they are usually scarce or absent. Something to do with the dry conditions, I suspect.

**AUSTRALIAN IBIS** (*Threskiornis moluccus*) – Pretty much everywhere in Australia, with several birds also present at the PAU ponds.

**STRAW-NECKED IBIS** (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Decent numbers in the Cairns region. [E]

**ROYAL SPOONBILL** (*Platalea regia*) – Small numbers in the Cairns region and around the Port of Brisbane.

**YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL** (*Platalea flavipes*) – Three birds at Hasties Swamp were a good find as they are not present every year here. [E]

*Pandionidae (Osprey)*

**OSPREY (AUSTRALASIAN)** (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*) – Our only one was a bird that flew by over the creek as we waited for the Platypus near Yungaburra.

*Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)*



**AUSTRALIAN KITE** (*Elanus axillaris*) – We stopped for a couple of birds that were hovering over a roadside pasture near the Cattana Wetlands, nearly costing me my laser pointer in the process! Our only other sighting was of a couple of birds in the Atherton tablelands. [E]

**SQUARE-TAILED KITE** (*Lophoictinia isura*) – The Daisy Hill Koala Center is our only spot for this scarce bird on the tour, and although Lannois did spot one there, not everyone saw it, and the views left a lot to be desired. Amazingly, we found one the next morning over the eucalyptus forest at the top of Duck Creek Road, and that one gave us excellent views as it soared overhead repeatedly, calling. Conny got decent shots of the bird, too, a good thing, as it caused quite a stir back at the lodge, as not only was it a first ever for O'Reilly's annual Bird Week festivities, but also the first ever record for Lamington National Park! [E]

**PACIFIC BAZA** (*Aviceda subcristata*) – Wonderful views of a pair of these striking small hawks early one morning from the parking lot at Chamber's.

**WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE** (*Aquila audax*) – A single bird over Jaques Coffee Farm and a couple in the Granite Gorge region were the only ones we managed during the trip. A raptor we glimpsed flying over at the Bell Miner colony appeared much smaller, and was most likely a Little Eagle. [E]

**SPOTTED HARRIER** (*Circus assimilis*) – Seen on two days in the tablelands, with the second bird giving incredible views as it coursed over a grassy field near Gallo Dairyland.

**VARIABLE GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter hiogaster*) – Scope views of one in the fading light of late afternoon at PAU, followed by another bird the next day at Varirata.

**GRAY GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) – We spotted this beauty perched on the edge of the forest at the Luke's Farm viewpoint, then watched as it changed perches a couple of times, coming closer and showing even better, as it searched for prey along the margins of the pasture. Conny's choice for top bird of the Australian portion of the tour. [E]

**COLLARED SPARROWHAWK** (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) – This raptor is similar in size and shape to our Sharp-shinned Hawk; we saw singles on three days in PAU, with one along the Varirata entrance road, and two in the highlands below Kumul Lodge. [E]

**BLACK KITE (BLACK)** (*Milvus migrans affinis*) – Numerous in the Atherton tablelands and the PNG highlands.

**WHISTLING KITE** (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Far outnumbered by the Black Kite. We saw a pair at the Mareeba Golf Course, another pair at PAU, and a third at the Walnut Road wetlands.

**BRAHMINY KITE** (*Haliastur indus*) – Surprisingly scarce around Cairns, where we only glimpsed a single bird, but we saw them most days in PNG and saw several also in the Brisbane region.

**WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – Those ones we glimpsed from the bus near Cairns were countable, but far from satisfying, so the birds that flew by at eye level during our sea watch at Royal NP were much appreciated!

#### Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**RED-NECKED CRAKE** (*Rallina tricolor*) – Heard several times in the Cairns region. [\*]

**WHITE-BROWED CRAKE** (*Porzana cinerea*) – Nice spotting by Lannois to pick out a pair of these birds feeding along the margins of the Cattana Wetlands, where we all wound up with superb scope views.

**AUSTRALASIAN SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio melanotus melanotus*) – With the recent split of Purple Swamphen into 6 species, this is the new name of the one found here. These were pretty common at most of the wetland sites, including at PAU, but most impressive were the large number of them at Hasties Swamp.

**DUSKY MOORHEN** (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Pretty small numbers were seen, though we had them at most wetlands, including PAU.

**EURASIAN COOT** (*Fulica atra australis*) – Quite common at most of the wetlands, though only seen in Australia.

#### Gruidae (Cranes)

**SARUS CRANE** (*Grus antigone gillae*) – A week earlier, my colleagues leading the Australia tour were trying hard to find Sarus Cranes among the many Brolgas in the tablelands, so it was a bit ironic that we couldn't find a single Brolga among the many Sarus Cranes, and it certainly wasn't for lack of effort.

#### Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

**BUSH THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus grallarius*) – We saw our first pair strolling across Black Mountain Road as we left Cassowary House, not the usual type of habitat we see them in. For the next few days we had regular sightings of these birds at various spots on the tablelands. [E]

#### Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**PIED STILT** (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) – Small numbers of these elegant waders were at each of the wetland sites visited in Australia.

**RED-NECKED AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) – Not a bird we expect on this tour, but our change of plans in Brisbane gave us a group of 5 at the high tide roost in the Port of Brisbane wetlands.

#### Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

**PIED OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus longirostris*) – This was another one seen only at the Port of Brisbane wetlands, where we saw three birds lurking in the low vegetation around the high tide roost. [E]

#### Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER** (*Pluvialis fulva*) – Five birds were around the pond at PAU, and 10+ were seen on the Bisini Sports Grounds in Port Moresby. In Australia, our only ones were a couple of birds at the high tide roost at the Port of Brisbane. [b]

**MASKED LAPWING (MASKED)** (*Vanellus miles miles*) – This is the northern subspecies which we saw commonly in the Cairns region and in PNG.

**MASKED LAPWING (BLACK-SHOULDERED)** (*Vanellus miles novaehollandiae*) – And this is the southern subspecies, which has a large amount of black along the sides of its breast. We saw these around Brisbane, including a pair with very small chicks at Walnut Road wetlands. [N]

**LESSER SAND-PLOVER** (*Charadrius mongolus*) – Very few were around, and I counted just 4 of these among the many shorebirds along the Cairns Esplanade. [b]

**GREATER SAND-PLOVER** (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) – A lone bird showed well along the Esplanade, and at one point we had both this bird and one of the Lesser Sand-Plovers in the same scope view, allowing a good comparison of the different sized bills and head profiles. [b]

**RED-CAPPED PLOVER** (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – Three birds at the north end of the Esplanade on our final morning in Cairns. After complaints that the initial bird had no red cap, we managed to find one that had a more appropriate cap color, quieting those that thought the bird was misnamed;-) Lannois chose this as her favorite Australian bird. [E]

**RED-KNEED DOTTEREL** (*Erythrogonys cinctus*) – A pair was fairly well-hidden along one of the channels at the Port of Brisbane high tide roost,

but we managed to find the one good opening from which we could scope these attractive plovers. [E]

**BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL** (*Elseya melanops*) – Half a dozen birds showed nicely at Hasties Swamp, and a single bird was along the Esplanade. [E]

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

**COMB-CRESTED JACANA** (*Irediparra gallinacea*) – Seen only at the Cattana wetlands and PAU, but we had nice views of these 'lotus birds' strolling across the lily pads at both sites.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**TEREK SANDPIPER** (*Xenus cinereus*) – Just a couple of these cool sandpipers were among the shorebird flock at the Esplanade. [b]

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – It wasn't so common on this trip as our only one was at the ponds at PAU> [b]

**GRAY-TAILED TATTLER** (*Tringa brevipes*) – There were about 10 of these birds on the Esplanade mudflats on our first visit there. [b]

**MARSH SANDPIPER** (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – This slender shorebird prefers freshwater habitats, and Conny spotted our only two birds feeding along the far shore at Hasties Swamp. [b]

**LITTLE CURLEW** (*Numenius minutus*) – After meeting me at our Port Moresby hotel to discuss our final morning's plans, local guide Leonard was on his way home, but he called me a few minutes later to tell me he'd found some kind of shorebird that he'd never seen before on the local playing fields. I went out there with him and discovered about half a dozen of these birds there with some golden-plovers. When we dropped by there the next day, the number was up to about 20, and we had superb views. I've only seen this bird a couple of times, and it was a new tick for my PNG list! [a]

**WHIMBREL (SIBERIAN)** (*Numenius phaeopus variegatus*) – A pretty common migrant, with 20+ birds at the Esplanade, and a dozen or so at the Port of Brisbane high tide roost. These Siberian nesting birds are larger than the North American Whimbrel, and have a distinctive white rump and back. [b]

**FAR EASTERN CURLEW** (*Numenius madagascariensis*) – The largest of the curlews, these birds are truly impressive. We had half a dozen at the Esplanade, and a couple at the Port of Brisbane. [b]

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (MELANUROIDES)** (*Limosa limosa melanuroides*) – The less numerous of the two godwits at the Esplanade. In non-breeding plumage, as these birds were, this one is the plainer, more uniform bird, with the long straight bill. We also saw them in flight, when they show a striking black-and-white wing pattern. [b]

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT** (*Limosa lapponica*) – Outnumbered the preceding species by about 2 to 1 at the Esplanade, and we also had a couple at Port of Brisbane. The light feather edging on the wings and mantle make this bird look more patterned than Black-tailed, and they also show a strongly upturned bill in comparison with that species. [b]

**RUDDY TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria interpres*) – If I've had this along the Esplanade before, I certainly can't recall, so I was surprised to find a single bird among the many other waders there. [b]

**GREAT KNOT** (*Calidris tenuirostris*) – About 15 of these chunky birds were in among all the other shorebirds at the Esplanade. [b]

**SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris acuminata*) – The most numerous shorebird at the Esplanade, with about 100 birds present. A small flock was also at Hasties Swamp, and a single bird at the Port of Brisbane. [b]

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** (*Calidris ferruginea*) – A handful showed nicely at the Esplanade. [b]

**RED-NECKED STINT** (*Calidris ruficollis*) – The second most numerous shorebird at the Esplanade, with about 75 present. This time of year they're all in non-breeding plumage, so they're pretty gray overall, with no red on the necks. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**SILVER GULL** (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) – The only gull through most of Australia, and pretty common along the coast.

**LITTLE TERN** (*Sterna albigula*) – One of these tiny terns flew by as we watched shorebirds at the Esplanade.

**GULL-BILLED TERN** (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – We also saw just one of these terns, also at the Esplanade.

**CASPIAN TERN** (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – A few birds at the Lake Tinaroo Dam in the tablelands, and a few others off of Royal NP.

**WHISKERED TERN** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – A lone bird was hunting over the marsh at the Port of Brisbane, and it gave us some awesome views as it flew past a couple of times.

**GREAT CRESTED TERN** (*Thalasseus bergii*) – Several of these coastal terns flew by during our sea watch at Royal NP.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – We even saw a few of these in Port Moresby, where they are really not that common. [I]

**WHITE-HEADED PIGEON** (*Columba leucomela*) – A couple of perched birds as we headed in for breakfast at Chamber's one morning, then a few sightings, mostly flybys, at O'Reilly's. [E]

**SPOTTED DOVE** (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – Just a few birds around Cairns and Brisbane. [I]

**BROWN CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Macropygia phasianella*) – Seen regularly in the rainforest in Australia. [E]

**SLENDER-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Macropygia amboinensis*) – Fairly common in PNG. This was recently split off from Brown Cuckoo-Dove. [E]

**BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) – The smaller, rustier cuckoo-dove with the barred tail. We saw these in the PNG highlands, particularly around that grove of roadside fruiting trees that also held all those Yellow-billed Lorikeets. [E]

**EMERALD DOVE (PACIFIC)** (*Chalcophaps indica longirostris*) – A brief look at one at the Cassowary spot, then Conny got good views, and photos, of another at Chamber's.

**COMMON BRONZEWING** (*Phaps chalcoptera*) – One flew off the road then ran up the hillside beside the bus on our way down from O'Reilly's.

**CRESTED PIGEON** (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) – A strikingly beautiful pigeon, and common in many areas. We had loads of good views, and even found a nesting bird at the Mareeba Golf Course. [EN]

**SQUATTER PIGEON** (*Geophaps scripta*) – Though often hard to find, they are endearingly tame at Granite Gorge, and gave excellent close views there. [E]

**WONGA PIGEON** (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*) – We finally caught up with these often shy pigeons when we found three around the feeding area at O'Reilly's in the first hour of daylight, before the crowds gather there. [E]

**PEACEFUL DOVE** (*Geopelia placida*) – Common in the Cairns and tablelands regions, where we saw them daily. We also saw a few at PAU in PNG,

and several in the Brisbane area. [E]

**BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE** (*Geopelia humeralis*) – Larger than the similar Peaceful Dove, and generally less numerous. Some folks saw one as we ate lunch at Gallo Dairyland, then we found a couple of pairs at PAU, and finally, saw a pair at the Walnut Road wetlands. [E]

**BRONZE GROUND-DOVE** (*Gallicolumba beccarii*) – A shy highland forest dove in PNG, and not often seen, but a male made daily visits to the Kumul Lodge feeders, where we had fantastic studies of him.

**WOMPOO FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – The distinctive call was a regular sound in the eastern Australia rainforests. We also saw this colorful dove several times around the Cairns region, as well as one in PNG at Varirata NP.

**PINK-SPOTTED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) – Usually the most numerous and easily seen fruit-dove at Varirata, and that was again the case. We had especially nice views at the picnic area, where they often sit atop casuarina trees and call. [E]

**ORANGE-FRONTED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*) – These lovely birds have become pretty reliable in the late afternoon at PAU, and we had several good views there. [E]

**SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus superbus*) – A male at Varirata showed quite well, making up for our heard-only birds in the tablelands.

**ROSE-CROWNED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus regina*) – Great looks at a pair one morning from the parking lot at Chamber's. [E]

**BEAUTIFUL FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus pulchellus*) – All the fruit-doves are beautiful, so this is kind of an arbitrary name, but it does suit this bird, so what the heck. We had great scope looks at a couple at Varirata. [E]

**WHITE-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) – Man they were calling pretty regularly up around Kumul, but none were close or interested in playback. [E\*]

**ORANGE-BELLIED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) – A single bird was spotted along the entrance road at Varirata as we drove out after our first visit to the park. [E]

**TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (*Ducula spilorrhoa*) – Abundant around Cairns this time of year, and you'd need to be completely blind to miss them here! We also saw a number of nests, including a tree full of them near the flying-fox colony in downtown Cairns. We also saw a few around PAU. [N]

**TOPKNOT PIGEON** (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) – Three birds flew over one morning at Chamber's. then we saw them regularly, and really well, at O'Reilly's. [E]

**PAPUAN MOUNTAIN-PIGEON** (*Gymnophaps albertisii*) – A small flock of 5 birds whipped by overhead as we birded the Varirata entrance road the first morning in PNG. Despite the name, these birds seem far more common at lower elevations, and I have never seen them up at Kumul lodge, for instance.

#### Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**WHITE-CROWNED KOEL** (*Cacomantis leucolophus*) – A notoriously difficult species to see, and in all my previous visits, I'd managed just one sighting of a bird flying over, so it was very rewarding to lure one of these in at the Varirata Lookout, and to get fantastic scope views of it, good enough to see the white crown feathers! [E]

**BRUSH CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – Pretty good views of a responsive bird we called across the lake at Cattana Wetlands our first afternoon, then another one the next day. These were the only ones we saw, though we heard these cuckoos a couple of times in the PNG highlands as well.

**FAN-TAILED CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) – Our only one was a bird that posed nicely for us at the big open area with all the pademelons below O'Reilly's on our first afternoon there.

**HORSFIELD'S BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx basalis*) – Nancy and Stefanie spotted one at the roadside rest stop where we were searching through the cranes near Atherton. We also had another on our final day as we headed up to the sea watch spot at Royal NP. [E]

**SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – After very poor views of one high overhead at Mt Hypipamee, we had to wait until we got to O'Reilly's to improve on that one. There we had super looks at one singing at the edge of the forest at the Luke's Farm overlook

**LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – Our only one turned up next to the patio as we ate our lunch at Jaques Coffee Farm.

**PACIFIC KOEL (AUSTRALIAN)** (*Eudynamys orientalis cyanocephalus*) – We also saw just one of these birds, a calling male below the rock-wallaby feeding area at Granite Gorge.

**CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – Just a couple of flybys from this massive cuckoo, both in the Atherton tablelands. One flew past just as we arrived at the hide at Hasties Swamp, the other was seen by a few folks from the bus as we headed for Mt Hypipamee.

**GREATER BLACK COUCAL** (*Centropus menbeki*) – A calling bird at Varirata was a bit of a surprise, and was my first one for the park. A bigger surprise was that several of you actually got your bins on this usually elusive bird before it flew off!

**PHEASANT COUCAL** (*Centropus phasianinus*) – One flew low across the road as we descended from the tablelands back down to the coast, but our best views came at PAU where we managed reasonable scope views of a couple.

#### Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

**SOOTY OWL (GREATER)** (*Tyto tenebricosa arfaki*) – Heard at fairly close range during our nocturnal foray at Kumul. [\*]

#### Strigidae (Owls)

**SOUTHERN BOOBOOK** (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) – Nosiy Miners are loud and rather obnoxious and nobody's favorite bird, but we were loving that mob at Daisy Hill that chased up a boobook and harassed it until it flew, right into a vine tangle nearby to where we were standing enjoying a Koala! [E]

#### Aegothelidae (Owlet-nightjars)

**MOUNTAIN OWLET-NIGHTJAR** (*Aegotheles albertisi*) – We heard one quite close at night at Kumul Lodge, but it just wouldn't close the distance and show itself. [E\*]

**AUSTRALIAN OWLET-NIGHTJAR** (*Aegotheles cristatus*) – All the usual day roosts were vacated and we had to settle for hearing one in the forest across from the lodge at O'Reilly's one night. [E\*]

**BARRED OWLET-NIGHTJAR** (*Aegotheles bennettii*) – We got a bit lucky with this one, as they were missing from their usual roosting spot, but Leonard was persistent and eventually found another roost along the Border Track. That bird popped out and sat out in the open for us until we finally had to walk away from it! Jerry's favorite bird from the PNG segment of the tour. [E]

#### Podargidae (Frogmouths)

**TAWNY FROGMOUTH** (*Podargus strigoides*) – On our first pass through Canungra, I tracked one down in the small park in the center of town where they nested last year. It was pretty easy, as the bird was perched at eye level right out in the open! On our second pass through, it was in a different,



more concealed spot, but we found it anyway. [E]

**MARBLED FROGMOUTH** (*Podargus ocellatus*) – A couple of these were calling right over our heads on the trail to the glow worms at O'Reilly's, but the dense canopy kept us from being able to see either one. [\*]

**PAPUAN FROGMOUTH** (*Podargus papuensis*) – We had a hard time finding one in Australia this year, but Jun finally located one in the Cairns Botanical Gardens on our final morning there. Much easier were the pair at their usual spot near the basketball courts at PAU. [E]

#### Apodidae (Swifts)

**WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL** (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) – A few birds that flew over in the tablelands were very poorly seen, but we had good views of a couple later in the tour from the Luke's Farm overlook. This is a migrant species here, fairly recently arrived from their northern breeding areas. [b]

**GLOSSY SWIFTLET** (*Collocalia esculenta*) – The most numerous swift we saw in PNG, with records every day. Often flies quite low, making that glossy blue back easy to see.

**MOUNTAIN SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus hirundinaceus*) – The dull brownish swiftlet in the highlands, seen a few times below Kumul. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus terraereginae*) – These swifts were common, sometimes numerous, in the Cairns region. [E]

**UNIFORM SWIFTLET** (*Aerodramus vanikorensis*) – The PNG lowland counterpart of the Mountain Swiftlet. We saw a few of these flying high overhead on our second visit to Varirata.

#### Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

**MOUSTACHED TREESWIFT** (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) – A pair of these sleek, elegant birds were perched above the Varirata picnic area on our first visit to the park, allowing us to study them at leisure through the scope.

#### Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

**BLYTH'S HORNBILL** (*Rhyticeros plicatus*) – I guess I'm going to have to add these to the checklist, as they have been showing up much more regularly at Varirata in recent years. We had 4 birds fly by on our first visit, with poor sightings for most through the canopy, and a good look for a couple of folks of a perched bird. On our second visit, most of us had good views of a perched male below the Varirata Lookout.

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**AZURE KINGFISHER** (*Ceyx azureus*) – Great scope looks at one perched along the creek on our first visit to Varirata. More surprisingly, Jerry spotted one along the river at the start of the Blue BoP trail. I had no idea they occurred at such a high elevation. [E]

**PAPUAN DWARF-KINGFISHER** (*Ceyx solitarius*) – Our final attempt to get a good view of a male Raggiana BoP at Varirata failed in that goal, but it did result in us finding several new trip birds, including a pair of these tiny, elusive kingfishers. It was tough work, but we wound up with a great scope view of one after it made several passes over our heads. The former Variable Dwarf-Kingfisher was just recently split into 15(!) species, with this one being endemic to PNG. [E]

**LAUGHING KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) – One of Australia's most iconic birds, and a common one at that. We saw and heard these plenty of times throughout the Aussie portion of the tour. [E]

**BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo leachii*) – Though present in the Cairns region, we failed to find any there, but we had better luck in PNG, with great views of them on both of our visits to Varirata. [E]

**RUFIOUS-BELLIED KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) – This stunning kookaburra occurs together with the preceding species at Varirata, but this is more a bird of the forest, whereas Blue-winged is more likely out in the wooded savanna. We saw just one of these near the picnic area on our first visit to the park. [E]

**FOREST KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus macleayi*) – Surprisingly our only one was by the pond at the entrance to Jaques Coffee Farm.

**TORRESIAN KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus sordidus*) – This is the new name of the former Collared Kingfisher, which was split into 6 species in the latest taxonomic revision. We had nice views of a pair in the mangroves at the north end of the Esplanade, and a couple of folks glimpsed a calling bird at the Port of Brisbane. The Cairns birds belong to the nominate subspecies, the Brisbane bird to the subspecies *colcloughi*. [E]

**SACRED KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Usually a common bird, so I was surprised at how few we encountered. We had singles on several days in the Cairns region, including one on our first day at Yorkey's Knob, and a couple of birds at Royal NP. Unusually none at all in PNG.

**YELLOW-BILLED KINGFISHER** (*Syma torotoro*) – Varirata is as good a place as any for this gorgeous little kingfisher, and we had excellent looks at one or two on each visit. [E]

**BROWN-HEADED PARADISE-KINGFISHER** (*Tanysiptera danae*) – Varirata is also the place for this beauty, and we got some super looks at a couple on our first visit there. [E]

#### Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**RAINBOW BEE-EATER** (*Merops ornatus*) – Quite common in the Cairns region with several seen most days, but we saw just 2 in PNG where they are numerous as Austral migrants through to October, but quite local breeders. All but the few local breeding birds would have been in Australia by this time. [a]

#### Coraciidae (Rollers)

**DOLLARBIRD** (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – Seen in ones or twos on several days in the Cairns and Atherton tablelands regions, as well as in the Port Moresby region of PNG. We almost certainly saw 2 subspecies of this bird, with *pacificus* being the Austral migrant form we saw in Australia, and *waigiuensis* being the resident form in PNG. At this time of year, all *pacificus* should have been in Australia to breed. [a]

#### Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**AUSTRALIAN KESTREL** (*Falco cenchroides*) – Just a few birds up in the Atherton tablelands, and a single bird in the Brisbane region. [E]

**AUSTRALIAN HOBBY** (*Falco longipennis*) – Our only one was seen right at the start of the tour, when one buzzed us as we were about to leave our very first birding spot at Yorkey's Knob. This was Claudia's choice for Aussie bird of the trip, as it was #2000 on her life list. Congratulations, Claudia! [E]

**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – I think only Jerry, Stefanie, and I saw this bird as it whipped past us as we walked back to the parking lot from the sea watch spot at Royal NP.

#### Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

**RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO** (*Calyptrorhynchus banksii*) – Sometimes quite scarce on the tour route, but there seemed to be good numbers of these spectacular birds this year, and we had some superb views, mainly in the region around Mareeba. [E]

**GALAH** (*Eolophus roseicapilla*) – Also not terribly numerous on the tour route (though abundant in some parts of Australia). We saw them only in and around Canungra, with one pair in the Canungra park showing beautifully for those that weren't already in the rest rooms. [E]

**LITTLE CORELLA** (*Cacatua sanguinea*) – A couple of birds around the Walnut Road wetlands, then quite a few in Royal NP. I believe the birds in these regions are not naturally occurring, but rather feral birds that have now established local breeding populations. [E]

**SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO** (*Cacatua galerita*) – Pretty ubiquitous, and seen daily in Australia, with a few birds also seen at Varirata NP. It was the nominate subspecies we saw in Australia, and the endemic subspecies triton in PNG.

#### Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

**BUFF-FACED PYGMY-PARROT** (*Micropsitta pusio*) – We heard these micro-parrots on our second visit to Varirata, but were unable to locate them in the canopy. [\*]

**AUSTRALIAN KING-PARROT** (*Alisterus scapularis*) – That first one we saw briefly in the tablelands was barely countable, but I think you should be able to tick the ones that kept landing on your heads at O'Reilly's;-) [E]

**RED-WINGED PARROT** (*Aprosmictus erythropterus*) – This was a nice find in the parking lot of the Mareeba Gold Club, where we a good look at two pairs. We don't see this one every year. [E]

**ECLECTUS PARROT** (*Eclectus roratus*) – Great looks at a couple of red females, including one that perched and allowed us to scope her, along the entrance road to Varirata NP on our first visit. On our second visit we had a lone male fly past at the Varirata Lookout.

**RED-CHEEKED PARROT** (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) – There seemed to be far fewer than normal around PAU and Varirata, but we still managed some good views, mainly of females, but there was the odd male as well. [E]

**BREHM'S TIGER-PARROT** (*Psittacella brehmii*) – The only tiger-parrot we see regularly on the tour (same goes for the PNG tour) as they are regular visitors to the Kumul Lodge feeders. [E]

**MODEST TIGER-PARROT** (*Psittacella modesta*) – Only my second ever sighting of this species, so it was a nice surprise to have one fly in and start feeding overhead at the Blue BoP sight above Tonga village. The lighting could have been a bit better, but we'll take it!

**YELLOW-BILLED LORIKEET** (*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*) – A bunch of these colorful lorikeets were a constant presence in that grove of fruiting trees along the roadside below Kumul lodge. [E]

**CRIMSON ROSELLA** (*Platycercus elegans*) – Just in case those cheeky ones around O'Reilly's were a little too domesticated for you, we also had a few wild ones along the entrance road at Mt Hypipamee. [E]

**PALE-HEADED ROSELLA** (*Platycercus adscitus*) – I thought those 4 birds at Granite Gorge were likely to be our only ones of the tour, but then we found one at Daisy Hill, and a pair in the park at Canungra, too. [E]

**DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT** (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – Common but pretty inconspicuous around Cairns. We found a cooperative pair at Centenary Lakes and had amazing looks at them before they moved on.

**PAPUAN LORIKEET** (*Charmosyna papou*) – This spectacular bird was a regular visitor to a flowering Schefflera just off the balcony at Kumul and elicited more "oohs" and "aahs" than almost any other bird on the trip. The field guide treats the nominate subspecies of the Vogelkop as a separate species, which retains the name Papuan Lorikeet, and the other three subspecies (the one we saw is *goliathina*) as Stella's Lorikeet, though that treatment has not been accepted by Clements at present. [E]

**BLACK-CAPPED LORY** (*Lorius lory*) – Unusually few at Varirata, perhaps due in part to the extraordinarily dry conditions, but we did have a couple of decent flybys. [E]

**RAINBOW LORIKEET (COCONUT)** (*Trichoglossus haematodus haematodus*) – This nominate form is the widespread New Guinea bird, which we saw at PAU and Varirata.

**RAINBOW LORIKEET (RAINBOW)** (*Trichoglossus haematodus moluccanus*) – One of the most familiar of birds in Australia, pretty much occurring just about anywhere and everywhere.

**SCALY-BREASTED LORIKEET** (*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*) – In the Cairns region, there were often a pair or two mixed in with the big flocks of Rainbow Lorikeets. Elsewhere, we found just a single bird among a noisy bunch of Rainbows in a flowering eucalyptus at Walnut Road wetlands. [E]

#### Pittidae (Pittas)

**NOISY PITTA** (*Pitta versicolor*) – A few folks saw that sneaky one in the rain at the cassowary spot our first morning, but better views were had at O'Reilly's, especially for those that took the final morning's walk along the Python Rock Track. There we found a very vocal and cooperative one that showed beautifully a couple of times.

#### Menuridae (Lyrebirds)

**ALBERT'S LYREBIRD** (*Menura alberti*) – This is often one of the toughest of the local specialties to track down at O'Reilly's, and it was not looking too good for us this year either. But on our last morning there, we spotted a male at the beginning of the Booyong Track. It ran under the boardwalk ahead of us, then vanished, and we thought we'd lost him. But a few minutes later, we relocated him, calling and displaying at the edge of the car park, and we had an amazing encounter and views, perhaps the best I've ever had! This was Layne's pick for best Australian bird. [E]

#### Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

**SPOTTED CATBIRD** (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – The two catbirds are pretty similar, really. This is the northern one, which we saw a few times in the tablelands, with an especially nice one that paid a brief visit to the balcony feeder at Cassowary House. [E]

**GREEN CATBIRD** (*Ailuroedus crassirostris*) – Common around O'Reilly's but a bit more elusive than the Spotted Catbird. We saw a few, and Jerry reported seeing a group of 5 or more teed up on the fence just outside the reception building at first light one morning. [E]

**TOOTH-BILLED CATBIRD** (*Scenopoeetes dentirostris*) – An Atherton Tableland specialty, and Lake Barrine is the best place for this one. They were very vocal this visit, and it didn't take long for us to have our first one in view as it sat above its display ground singing loudly. Most of the display areas weren't all that well-maintained, though we found one close to the trail that was pretty neat, with a bunch of neatly placed, upside-down leaves covering a meter-wide circle on the forest floor. [E]

**ARCHBOLD'S BOWERBIRD** (*Archboldia papuensis*) – As usual, the only one was a female that made sporadic visits to the Kumul Lodge feeders. [E]

**GOLDEN BOWERBIRD** (*Amblyornis newtoniana*) – This gorgeous bird is another endemic of the Atherton highlands. We visited a long-used bower at Mt Hypipamee, and within minutes were looking at a stunning male perched quietly, and openly, nearby. After a few minutes he flew off, and we had a chance to take a close look at his bower, an impressively large double maypole structure, the biggest bower of all the Australian bowerbirds. [E]



- REGENT BOWERBIRD** (*Sericulus chrysocephalus*) – There's no challenge in seeing this beautiful bird at O'Reilly's where they are common and habituated, but it is a challenge to see them pretty much anywhere else! [E]
- SATIN BOWERBIRD** (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) – A common bird at O'Reilly's where in addition to seeing lots of them we also got a close up view of a well-decorated bower with plenty of blue objects in place. Nancy chose this as her favorite bird of the Australian portion of the tour. [E]
- GREAT BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera nuchalis*) – This one is never going to win the best-looking bowerbird prize, but we certainly enjoyed seeing them, especially the one that was working on its bower at Granite Gorge. We even got to see the often concealed pink nape patch. [E]
- YELLOW-BREASTED BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera lauterbachii*) – Our guides in PNG don't have any bowers staked out, (I've only seen one, a very cool double-walled avenue bower) but there is undoubtedly one somewhere near the Lai River bridge below Kumul, as the bird is pretty reliable there. We had good views of one after just a short wait this trip. [E]
- FAWN-BREASTED BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera cerviniventris*) – Numerous at PAU, and pretty easy to see there as well. We also got a nice close look at a well-made bower there. [E]

#### Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

- WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER** (*Cormobates leucophaea*) – We heard these in the tablelands region several times (where subspecies minor, the 'Little Treecreeper', is found), but didn't catch up with any until we found both this and the next species together along Duck Creek Road. We also saw one of these at Royal NP. [E]
- RED-BROWED TREECREEPER** (*Climacteris erythroptera*) – Fantastic close views of a lone bird along Duck Creek Road. [E]
- BROWN TREECREEPER** (*Climacteris picumnus*) – We were just about ready to give up on this one at Wondecla when I spotted one creeping up a nearby trunk, and we got a good look at it before it flew the coop. [E]

#### Maluridae (Fairywrens)

- SOUTHERN EMUWREN** (*Stipiturus malachurus*) – The heathland in Royal NP was pretty quiet, with a brisk wind keeping bird activity down, but we still managed to locate a pair of these wonderful little birds, though they were reluctant to emerge from the dense cover and sadly weren't seen by all. [E]
- VARIEGATED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus lamberti*) – Several good sightings were had in the undergrowth of dry eucalyptus forest along Duck Creek Road and Lady Carrington Drive in Royal NP. [E]
- LOVELY FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus amabilis*) – Until a few years ago, this one was considered a subspecies of Variegated Fairywren. These birds are usually tricky, and arguably the toughest of the Australian fairywrens to see well, but we got some pretty good views of a trio of birds at Centenary Lakes in Cairns. [E]
- SUPERB FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus cyaneus*) – One of the more familiar of the group, this one is a common and easily seen species in the Brisbane and Sydney regions. [E]
- RED-BACKED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus melanocephalus*) – We had up to five of these lovely birds in the dry scrub on our way in to Granite Gorge, then saw another group, including at least one very cooperative male, in the undergrowth of eucalyptus forest at Wondecla. [E]
- WHITE-SHOULDERED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus alboscapulatus*) – Not uncommon in scrubby areas of PNG, where we had them along the entrance road to Varirata and a couple of places in the highlands near Kumul Lodge. [E]

#### Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)

- EASTERN SPINEBILL** (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) – Our first looks came around the parking lot at Chamber's where we had very nice views of this striking honeyeater. Further along, we found them to be much more common around Brisbane and Sydney. [E]
- PLAIN HONEYEATER** (*Pycnopygius ixoides finschi*) – I'd never seen this subspecies before, and was initially fooled by their rusty appearance into thinking they were Tawny-breasted Honeyeaters. These birds at Varirata are much more colorful than the very plain birds in western PNG.
- MARbled HONEYEATER** (*Pycnopygius cinereus*) – This species tends to be more common at the forest edge and in gardens of the PNG highlands. Our lone one was along the Blue BoP trail above Tonga village. [E]
- STREAK-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) – Great response and looks at a singing bird at PAU and thus one of our first PNG endemics for the tour. [E]
- YELLOW-SPOTTED HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga notata*) – Not uncommon up around Cassowary House, but I was surprised to see this one at Cattana Wetlands and Centenary Lakes. I don't recall ever having them in the coastal lowlands before. [E]
- LEWIN'S HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga lewinii*) – The default Meliphaga throughout most of the eastern rainforest region. [E]
- SCRUB HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga albonotata*) – A few of these white-spotted birds were in scrubby habitat at the Lesser BoP site below Kumul.
- GRACEFUL HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga gracilis*) – Just a couple of birds along Black Mountain Road. [E]
- ELEGANT HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga cinereifrons cinereifrons*) – Generally the most numerous and easy to see Meliphaga at Varirata, as well as being one of the more distinctive in what is a very difficult group of birds. [E]
- YELLOW HONEYEATER** (*Stomiopora flava*) – Nice close views of a pair at Cattana Wetlands, with a few other sightings also in the Cairns region. [E]
- YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Caligavis chrysops*) – First seen in the flowering lantana along the road at Hasties Swamp, then fairly commonly in eucalyptus forest around O'Reilly's and Royal NP. [E]
- BLACK-THROATED HONEYEATER** (*Caligavis subfrenata*) – A distinctive and often heard song in the PNG highlands, though this species can be tough to see. We finally tracked down a responsive pair along the road below Kumul for some fine views. [E]
- BELL MINER** (*Manorina melanophrys*) – A noisy, tinkling colony of these birds were quite an experience in a lerp-laden patch of eucalyptus forest below O'Reilly's. [E]
- NOISY MINER** (*Manorina melanocephala*) – Abundant in the Brisbane and Sydney areas, and generally underappreciated, but when they show you an owl, you learn to like them just a little bit more. [E]
- ORNATE MELIDECTES** (*Melidectes torquatus*) – A few of these fancy honeyeaters were seen around the Lesser BoP and Blue BoP sites. [E]
- BELFORD'S MELIDECTES** (*Melidectes belfordi*) – An aggressive, abundant visitor to the feeders at Kumul. [E]
- YELLOW-BROWED MELIDECTES** (*Melidectes rufocristalis*) – Replaces Belford's at slightly lower elevations, and we saw these regularly at the sites we visited below Kumul Lodge. [E]
- BRIDLED HONEYEATER** (*Bolemoreus frenatus*) – A common endemic of highland forests in the Atherton tablelands, and we saw plenty of these at Mt Hypipamee. [E]

- LITTLE WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) – We had one in the heathland along Wise's Track at Royal NP, then quite a number of them in flowering trees along the track to the sea watch spot. [E]
- VARIED HONEYEATER** (*Gavicalis versicolor*) – Not uncommon in the trees along the Esplanade. [E]
- MANGROVE HONEYEATER** (*Gavicalis fasciularis*) – Replaces the similar Varied Honeyeater to the south of that species' range. We found quite a few of them at the Port of Brisbane, which was great, as they can be tough to track down at times in our (former) usual spot. [E]
- FUSCOUS HONEYEATER** (*Ptilotula fusca*) – These birds we saw in the eucalyptus forest at Wondecla are a bit of a puzzle, as they are much more yellow on the face than in other parts of the range. A local birder here is apparently planning to propose them as a separate species, 'Wondecla Honeyeater', though I'm not convinced that will be accepted. Still, a closer look at these birds may be warranted, especially considering the "Yellow-tinted" Honeyeaters of PNG that sound more like these birds than other populations of Yellow-tinted Honeyeater. [E]
- BROWN-BACKED HONEYEATER** (*Ramsayornis modestus*) – A few birds, including a couple working on a nest, around the pond at Yorkey's Knob. [EN]
- RUFIOUS-BANDED HONEYEATER** (*Conopophila albogularis*) – Quite numerous at PAU, where they can often be seen bathing in the ponds. [E]
- SMOKY HONEYEATER** (*Melipotres fumigatus*) – Numerous in PNG's highland forests, and always a favorite, given their ability to change the color of their bare facial skin from yellow to red in the blink of an eye. [E]
- DUSKY MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela obscura*) – Kind of dull, so you may not remember that we saw them on several days around Cairns.
- PAPUAN BLACK MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela nigrita*) – Great close looks at a couple at Varirata, after I recorded and played back the call notes of one of them. [E]
- ELFIN MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela adolphinae*) – This is the new name of what we were calling Mountain Myzomela. We saw this red-headed bird at the Lesser and Blue BoP sites. [E]
- SCARLET MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) – Quite common in the forests on the Atherton tablelands, and we had good views at several places, first at the platypus site near Yungaburra. [E]
- RED-COLLARED MYZOMELA** (*Myzomela rosenbergii*) – We only saw one of these stunning birds but that was enough! We had awesome views of one in a nearby flowering shrub along the roadside below Kumul Lodge. [E]
- GRAY-STREAKED HONEYEATER** (*Ptiloprora perstriata*) – This bird had a name change in the latest taxonomic revisions; we were calling it Black-backed Honeyeater. These were pretty common around Kumul, where they were especially fond of the tubular orange flowers that were plentiful around the gardens. [E]
- BROWN HONEYEATER** (*Lichmera indistincta*) – One of the most common honeyeater species down the east coast of Australia, and we saw them just about everywhere.
- NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) – A really snazzy little honeyeater, and super common in that patch of flowering coastal scrub along the way to the sea watch spot. [E]
- WHITE-CHEEKED HONEYEATER** (*Phylidonyris niger*) – Our first one was in a flowering shrub outside the restaurant in Tolga, and it showed amazingly well, a real treat as we often struggle to find these birds. Surprisingly we also saw a half a dozen the next day in some flowering lantana at Hasties Swamp. [E]
- BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Entomyzon cyanotis*) – These big, colorful honeyeaters are quite numerous in the dry habitats in the Mareeba area. [E]
- WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus albogularis*) – Often quite numerous along the Varirata entrance road, but in the dry conditions there, it seemed they were much fewer in number this trip. Still, we had nice looks at a couple on our first visit. [E]
- WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER** (*Melithreptus lunatus*) – We found a few of these in the eucalyptus forest along Duck Creek Road, though they stayed high up and were pretty active, so it was a bit tricky to get good views. [E]
- MACLEAY'S HONEYEATER** (*Xanthotis macleayanus*) – Endemic to the Atherton tablelands region. These were especially easy to see at the Cassowary House feeders. [E]
- STRIPED HONEYEATER** (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*) – A pair of these handsome honeyeaters eventually showed wonderfully after giving us the run around at first at the Port of Brisbane. [E]
- LITTLE FRIARBIRD** (*Philemon citreogularis*) – Never very numerous, but we had scattered records of these birds in ones and twos at Yorkey's Knob, the Mareeba Golf Course, as well as the Walnut Road wetlands near Brisbane, along with a few other sites. [E]
- HELMETED FRIARBIRD (NEW GUINEA)** (*Philemon buceroides novaeguineae*) – Helmeted Friarbird could potentially be split into three species, with this one being a PNG endemic. We found these to be quite common in the Port Moresby region. [E]
- HELMETED FRIARBIRD (HORNBILL)** (*Philemon buceroides yorki*) – And this one would be endemic to Queensland, where they are quite numerous around Cairns. That one in its beautifully woven basket nest at the botanical gardens was a real treat. [EN]
- NOISY FRIARBIRD** (*Philemon corniculatus*) – This species seems to prefer drier country than the preceding one, and replaced Helmeted at places like Granite Gorge and Wondecla. [E]

#### *Pardalotidae (Pardalotes)*

- SPOTTED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus punctatus*) – After watching this little beauty sitting a few yards away at eye level along Duck Creek Road, we realized we must be standing next to its nest burrow, and moved away to let it get back to its nest. Stefanie was impressed enough to choose this as her favorite Australian bird of the trip. [E]
- STRIATED PARDALOTE** (*Pardalotus striatus*) – Very nice close views of a cooperative pair at Granite Gorge. [E]

#### *Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)*

- GOLDENFACE** (*Pachycare flavogriseum*) – A vocal, but sometimes difficult bird to see, these wonderful birds regularly move with feeding flocks at Varirata. We heard them calling in a couple of flocks, and Conny spotted one that most of us saw quite well. [E]
- ROCKWARBLER** (*Origma solitaria*) – A very localized endemic, and the only bird completely restricted to New South Wales. We had amazing views of a pair at the usual spot along Lady Carrington Drive, then were surprised to see a few others along the coast at our sea watch spot. [E]
- FERNWREN** (*Oreoscopus gutturalis*) – It took a second visit to Mt Hypipamee to find this elusive, and very local Atherton endemic, but we wound up with incredible close views of a family group (4 birds) moving along the forest floor just off the trail. [E]
- RUSTY MOUSE-WARBLER** (*Crateroscelis murina*) – As is often the case, this one was heard only, and often, at Varirata. [E\*]
- MOUNTAIN MOUSE-WARBLER** (*Crateroscelis robusta*) – Though usually as elusive as the previous species, this one often turns up below the feeders at Kumul, and that was the case this trip. [E]

- YELLOW-THROATED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis citreogularis*) – We were almost duped by these ones at Mt Hypipamee, when they turned up as we were searching for a singing Fernwren. Later we saw plenty of these at O'Reilly's where they have become quite habituated. [E]
- WHITE-BROWED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis frontalis*) – Also very common and tame at O'Reilly's; we also saw these at Royal National Park, along with one at the Platypus spot. [E]
- ATHERTON SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis keri*) – Another very local Atherton highland endemic, and another bird we needed to return to Mt Hypipamee to find. And find we did, with some good views on that second visit. [E]
- LARGE SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis nouhuysi*) – A small party of these were regulars around the cabins and walkways at Kumul. [E]
- LARGE-BILLED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis magnirostra*) – I was a bit surprised that we saw just one of these birds, in the parking lot at Lake Barrine. [E]
- BUFF-FACED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis perspicillatus*) – There were quite a few of these in the scrub along the trail at the Blue BoP site, where we saw them nicely several times.
- PALE-BILLED SCRUBWREN** (*Sericornis spilodera*) – The constant tail-wagging of these birds is helpful in clinching the identification, though they are already one of the more easily recognized scrubwrens. We had good views of a pair with a mixed flock on our second visit to Varirata. [E]
- BUFF-RUMPED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza reguloides*) – We searched hard but came up a bit short with poor views of a pair along Duck Creek Rad, then stumbled across a few others at Royal NP that were much more cooperative. [E]
- MOUNTAIN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza katherina*) – Just one pair feeding high in the canopy at Mt. Hypipamee. Another Atherton endemic. [E]
- BROWN THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza pusilla*) – Pretty common in the forest at O'Reilly's and Royal NP. [E]
- YELLOW-RUMPED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*) – One of the more colorful in this rather dull family of birds. A pair in the open country near the Walnut Road wetlands was a nice find.
- STRIATED THORNBILL** (*Acanthiza lineata*) – We finally tracked a couple of these down at Royal NP after missing them along Duck Creek Road. [E]
- GREEN-BACKED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone chloronota*) – Pretty decent views of a singing bird that I recorded and called in along the road at Varirata NP. [E]
- FAIRY GERYGONE** (*Gerygone palpebrosa*) – Some folks saw one briefly along Black Mountain Road, but another male we saw on our second visit to Varirata showed much better. The male of the PNG race we saw (inconspicua, I believe) is a much more strikingly marked bird than the northern Queensland race personata. [E]
- WHITE-THROATED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone olivacea*) – A lovely bird, with an even lovelier song. We saw this one at Granite Gorge, where Stefanie spotted it singing in a low shrub as we were watching the Great Bowerbird work on his bower. [E]
- YELLOW-BELLIED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone chrysogaster*) – A fairly common member of mixed flocks, and perhaps one of the flock leaders, at Varirata NP. [E]
- LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – A few of these were seen in the Cairns area, with our first views coming in the mangroves at Centenary Lakes. [E]
- BROWN GERYGONE** (*Gerygone mouki*) – Pretty common in the eastern rainforests. [EN]
- BROWN-BREASTED GERYGONE** (*Gerygone ruficollis*) – I finally got some decent recordings of this oft-heard PNG highland bird, and we had several good views of them too. [E]
- MANGROVE GERYGONE** (*Gerygone levigaster*) – A family group worked through the mangroves and gave us good views at the high tide roost at the Port of Brisbane. [E]

#### Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

- GRAY-CROWNED BABBLER** (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) – We were pretty sure we'd missed this one as we left Granite Gorge without a sniff, but luckily we spotted a group of them from the bus, and disembarked in time to get some fine views. [E]

#### Orthonychidae (Logrunners)

- AUSTRALIAN LOGRUNNER** (*Orthonyx temminckii*) – With their beautifully patterned plumage and their cool side kick foraging style, these are some pretty endearing birds, and they allow such great views from the boardwalk at O'Reilly's too! [E]
- CHOWCHILLA** (*Orthonyx spaldingii*) – A cool bird, and an Atherton endemic to boot, these birds are always trickier to find than their more southerly counterparts. Luck was on our side this year, though, as we had super looks at a quartet of them along the entrance road at Lake Barrine. This was Jerry's pick for best bird in Australia. [E]

#### Cnemophilidae (Satinbirds)

- LORIA'S SATINBIRD** (*Cnemophilus loriae*) – I rarely see this species around Kumul, and usually just females, so a calling male sitting in a bare tree at the King-of-Saxony BoP site was a terrific find. [E]
- CRESTED SATINBIRD** (*Cnemophilus macgregorii*) – Kumul is a great place for this elusive bird, and we had good, though brief looks at a brilliant male at his usual fruiting tree below the lodge. [E]

#### Melanocharitidae (Berrypeckers and Longbills)

- BLACK BERRYPECKER** (*Melanocharis nigra*) – A few of these were seen at Varirata on our first visit there. [E]
- FAN-TAILED BERRYPECKER** (*Melanocharis versteri*) – Not always an easy species to find at Kumul, so the pair that we saw from the balcony shortly after we arrived were great. [E]
- SLATY-CHINNED LONGBILL** (*Toxorhamphus poliopterus*) – Quite a scarce species on this tour, but for the second year in a row we had pretty nice looks at one feeding in a flowering tree at the Blue BoP site. As someone remarked, this bird looks remarkably like one of the spiderhunters of SE Asia.
- SPECTACLED LONGBILL** (*Oedistoma iliolophus*) – Pretty good views of one creeping along up a tree trunk, on the edge of a mixed flock at Varirata. This one was formerly called Dwarf Longbill. [E]

#### Paramythiidae (Tit Berrypecker and Crested Berrypecker)

- TIT BERRYPECKER** (*Oreocharis arfaki*) – Quite a few of these were hanging around in the patch of fruiting trees along the roadside below Kumul, though they weren't all that easy to see as they stayed inside the foliage and moved around a lot. Still, I think everyone managed a view in the end. [E]



**CRESTED BERRYPECKER** (*Paramythia montium*) – This beauty was quite a bit easier, as they showed up regularly around the lodge and the gardens below. [E]

*Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)*

**EASTERN WHIPBIRD** (*Psophodes olivaceus*) – Those habituated birds at O'Reilly's are wonderfully easy to see. Not so much elsewhere, where they are pretty elusive, though their remarkable voices always give away their presence. [E]

*Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)*

**PAINTED QUAIL-THRUSH** (*Cinclosoma ajax*) – I actually thought I was a calling in a Papuan Scrub-Robin, so it was a great surprise when a gorgeous male quail-thrush strolled into view instead! Never an easy bird to see, so we did quite well with this one. [E]

*Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)*

**BLACK-BREASTED BOATBILL** (*Machaerirhynchus nigripectus*) – Our only one at Kumul was a bit distant but we did get some scope views of this charming little bird. [E]

**YELLOW-BREASTED BOATBILL** (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) – Our first was not the best view, as it was a look from below of a bird on a nest at the cassowary site. Most of the group did get a look at another pair at Lake Barrine, though they weren't as friendly as they usually are. [EN]

*Artamidae (Woodswallows)*

**GREAT WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus maximus*) – Stefanie spotted our only one perched in a dead tree high on the ridge above the road below Kumul. [E]

**WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – Not uncommon around Cairns with a few also around Port Moresby and the Brisbane area.

**DUSKY WOODSWALLOW** (*Artamus cyanopterus*) – We spied a few of these soaring over the treetops and perched in some high dead branches at our only site for them near Wondecla. [E]

*Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)*

**BLACK-BACKED BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus mentalis*) – Two similar butcherbirds occur in the port Moresby region; this one is found primarily in drier, savanna type habitats. We saw a couple on our afternoon visit to PAU. [E]

**GRAY BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus torquatus*) – Our only one was seen on our way from Brisbane to O'Reilly's. I believe it was at Daisy Hill that we saw it. [E]

**HOODED BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus cassicus*) – The other butcherbird of the Port Moresby region, this species is more likely in rainforest habitat, and we saw it on both visits to Varirata NP. [E]

**PIED BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus nigrogularis*) – Unusually few of these widespread butcherbirds. Our first was a young bird hanging around the campground at Granite Gorge, and later we saw several in the Brisbane region, including one singing its beautiful song at the Kamarun Viewpoint below O'Reilly's. [E]

**BLACK BUTCHERBIRD** (*Cracticus quoyi*) – Quite common and seen often in the Cairns region (subspecies *rufescens*) with a single bird also seen our first day at Varirata NP (nominate subspecies *quoyi*).

**AUSTRALIAN MAGPIE** (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) – A widespread and familiar species pretty much throughout Australia, and we saw them most days. [E]

**PIED CURRAWONG** (*Strepera graculina*) – A few birds were seen in the Atherton tablelands, after which we saw them daily and in good numbers at O'Reilly's and Royal NP. [E]

*Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)*

**STOUT-BILLED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina caeruleogrisea*) – One of several species we found when we made that final attempt to see a male Raggiana BoP on our second visit to Varirata. We had fine looks at a lone male perched up in some dead branches. [E]

**HOODED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina longicauda*) – Though fairly distant, we got nice scope views of a pair of these large, striking cuckooshrikes along the road below Kumul Lodge.

**BARRED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina lineata*) – Great looks at a group of these on the rainy morning along Black Mountain Road where the nominate race is found, and we also saw a couple on each visit to Varirata NP, where the widespread PNG race *axillaris* occurs. The races differ in that both sexes of the Australian birds are barred below, while the male of the PNG birds is all gray, with only the female showing the barring. [E]

**BOYER'S CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina boyeri*) – Like a small version of the Stout-billed Cuckooshrike. These ones are often present around the picnic clearing at Varirata, where we saw them on both visits. [E]

**BLACK-FACED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – The common large cuckooshrike in most of Australia, where we saw them often. Primarily occurs as an Austral winter migrant in PNG, though there is a small breeding population near Port Moresby. Given the time of year, the birds we saw at PAU were likely local breeders. [a]

**WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Coracina papuensis*) – Likewise quite common, at least in the Cairns region where we saw them most days. We also had a few in PNG, both at PAU and along the entrance road to Varirata NP.

**WHITE-WINGED TRILLER** (*Lalage tricolor*) – Not often encountered on this tour route. Our lone bird was a juvenile male at the Mareeba Golf Course. [E]

**VARIED TRILLER** (*Lalage leucomela*) – Seen quite regularly in the Cairns region, with a single bird also along the Varirata entrance road on our first visit.

**BLACK-BELLIED CICADABIRD** (*Edolisoma montanum*) – Heard up at the King-of-Saxony BoP site, but we couldn't track it down. [E\*]

**COMMON CICADABIRD** (*Edolisoma tenuirostre*) – Great views of a singing male at Centenary Lakes in Cairns and also seen a couple of times at O'Reilly's. The name comes from the ringing, cicada-like song.

**BLACK CICADABIRD** (*Edolisoma melan*) – Wonderful views of a pair with a mixed flock on our second visit to Varirata. [E]

*Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)*

**WATTLED PLOUGHBILL** (*Eulacestoma nigropectus*) – Darn! This one was so close, and came closer in response to playback, but we just couldn't spot it before it lost interest and moved off. [E\*]

**CRESTED SHRIKE-TIT (EASTERN)** (*Falcunculus frontatus frontatus*) – It took a lot of patience and time to track down a calling bird at Wondecla, but when we finally did, we had amazing, and lengthy scope views as it poked around at the stub of a broken, dead branch. After all that effort, we

also stumbled across one at the Luke' Farm viewpoint at O'Reilly's. Oh well, I'd rather see this great bird twice than not at all! [E]

**LITTLE SHRIKETHRUSH** (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) – The recent Clements updates changed the name of this species back to Little Shrikethrush from Rufous Shrike-thrush, as it appeared on our checklists. We saw a few of these in the tablelands, particularly around the parking lot at Chambers, and also heard it at Varirata NP.

**GRAY SHRIKETHRUSH** (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – First seen in PNG along the entrance road to Varirata NP. Back in Australia, we found these birds fairly regularly around O'Reilly's. [E]

**BOWER'S SHRIKETHRUSH** (*Colluricincla boweri*) – An Atherton tablelands endemic. We had fantastic views of a very responsive bird in the parking lot at Chamber's. [E]

**BLACK PITOUI** (*Melanorectes nigrescens*) – When we heard this bird calling at the Blue BoP site, I wasn't really sure what it was, but suspected it to be a Little Shrikethrush, which I've seen regularly there. But, I recorded it and played back the calls and soon most of us had great views of one of these scarce birds. This was only my second time seeing this species, and local guide Wilson said he had never seen one before, so it was a great surprise addition to the list! [E]

**REGENT WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala schlegelii*) – This beautiful whistler was seen often around the lodge at Kumul. [E]

**SCLATER'S WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala soror*) – Brief but fairly good views for some of a male at the Blue BoP site. [E]

**GOLDEN WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) – Quite common and seen most days in the eastern rainforests of Australia.

**BROWN-BACKED WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala modesta*) – We usually see this bird regularly at Kumul, but they were surprisingly elusive this time. Jerry and Conny saw one each, independently, but we missed it as a group. [E]

**GRAY WHISTLER (GRAY)** (*Pachycephala simplex dubia*) – This is the form we saw on both visits to Varirata NP, and not the race *griseiceps* as was marked on checklist.

**GRAY WHISTLER (GRAY-HEADED)** (*Pachycephala simplex peninsulae*) – And this is the eastern Australia form which we saw only along Black Mountain Road. Gray and Gray-headed whistlers were split at one time, and could be again someday, so it's worth noting where you've seen them. [E]

**WHITE-BELLIED WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala leucogastra*) – Great looks at a pair of these local whistlers along the Varirata entrance road. [E]

**BLACK-HEADED WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala monacha*) – This species seems to have a preference for Casuarina trees in the highland valleys, and we saw several in such situations below Kumul Lodge. [E]

**RUFIOUS WHISTLER** (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) – A dry country bird which we encountered and saw well at Granite Gorge and Wondecla, then heard again in the heathland at Royal NP. [E]

#### Oreoicidae (Australo-Papuan Bellbirds)

**RUFIOUS-NAPED BELLBIRD** (*Alcedryas rufinucha*) – Seen daily in the gardens of Kumul Lodge, including one or two young birds still in a subadult plumage, but also at least one fine adult. This species was formerly considered a whistler but is now in a small family of three including Australia's Crested Bellbird and the former Crested Pitohui, now called Piping Bellbird. [E]

#### Laniidae (Shrikes)

**LONG-TAILED SHRIKE (NASUTUS GROUP)** (*Lanius schach stresemanni*) – A single bird perched along the roadside near the Lai River bridge showed well before it flew off.

#### Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

**HOODED PITOUI** (*Pitohui dichrous*) – This is one of the true pitohuis, the ones with the poisonous plumage. We saw this oriole-like bird very well on both visits to Varirata. [E]

**BROWN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus szalayi*) – As usual one of the first PNG endemics we encountered, as we had a couple at PAU. It's amazing how much these birds resemble friarbirds, and even Streak-headed Honeyeater. [E]

**OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus sagittatus*) – Granite Gorge played host to a trio of these, and a single bird was seen a couple of days later at Wondecla. [E]

**GREEN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus flavocinctus*) – The books often call this one Yellow Oriole. This was a commonly heard species in Cairns, and we saw them fairly easily at the botanical gardens. [E]

**AUSTRALASIAN FIGBIRD** (*Sphecotheres vieilloti*) – Numerous and conspicuous in the Cairns region, where we saw them daily (race *flaviventris*) as well as around Brisbane (n nominate race). The endemic PNG race *salvadorii* was also quite numerous at PAU. [E]

#### Dicruridae (Drongos)

**SPANGLED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) – We didn't see all that many, but had scattered individuals and pairs at a number of locations, starting with one at Cattana Wetlands on our first day. The birds we saw at Varirata NP belong to the PNG endemic race *carbonarius*, while the Australian birds (which do migrate to PNG in winter) are of the nominate form.

#### Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

**BLACK FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura atra*) – Several were seen at the Blue BoP site above Tonga village, and I was especially pleased to get good views of a female, which I had never seen well previously. With her rusty plumage and contrasting black central tail feathers, she is quite a striking bird! [E]

**WILLIE-WAGTAIL** (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – Pretty much everywhere in this part of the world, and the only species we saw every day of the tour. In addition, we also saw one or two of their beautifully woven nests, including one along the road at Wondecla. [EN]

**DIMORPHIC FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*) – We saw just one bird, of the rufous-tailed morph (the book calls this dark morph) along the roadside below Kumul. [E]

**RUFIOUS FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) – Lannois glimpsed one at Mt Hypipamee, but the rest of us had to wait until we got to O'Reilly's before we caught up with this attractive fantail. Luckily it was pretty common there and we saw a few.

**FRIENDLY FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura albolimbata*) – Someone was finding this bird a bit unfriendly at first as they struggled to get good views of one, but fortunately they are quite common around Kumul and we saw them daily, with friendly looks for all in the end. [E]

**CHESTNUT-BELLIED FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura hyperythra*) – A regular component of mixed feeding flocks at Varirata, where we saw this lovely little bird well on both visits. They do become a bit of a nuisance though, as their active foraging makes them fairly easy to see and distracts folks from the less conspicuous members of these flocks. [E]

**GRAY FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) – Oddly difficult in the Atherton tablelands, where we normally see these daily. This trip we glimpsed one, though I did hear several others. No worries, though, as they were common and easily seen at O'Reilly's and Royal NP. [E]

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

- BLUE-CAPPED IFRITA** (*Ifrita kowaldi*) – These are odd and charming little birds, and it's always a treat to see them so well, as we did regularly at Kumul, where they often were feeding right on the railings along the walkways. Currently placed in the family of Monarch flycatchers, though they've moved around a bit, and this may not be their final resting place. In fact, the new field guide has them placed in their own family, which may prove to be the correct treatment. [E]
- BLACK-FACED MONARCH** (*Monarcha melanopsis*) – Though we saw this gorgeous bird a number of times in the tablelands, O'Reilly's, and Royal NP, it was next to impossible to beat that first one, sitting out in the open in the early morning sunlight just a few yards away from where we stood in the parking lot at Chamber's! [E]
- SPECTACLED MONARCH** (*Symphysistichus trivirgatus*) – A couple of lovely pairs along Black Mountain Road were the only ones for the tour. [E]
- SPOT-WINGED MONARCH** (*Symphysistichus guttula*) – A pair of these showed well in a mixed feeding flock at Varirata, making it well worth going back there a second time! [E]
- FRILLED MONARCH** (*Arses telescopthalmus*) – We had a couple of sightings on our first visit to Varirata, and a male on our second visit, but they weren't as vocal or as easily seen as usual, so perhaps they were nesting. [E]
- PIED MONARCH** (*Arses kaupi*) – Great looks at a pair of these at about the same time as our first Spectacled Monarchs, in the rain along Black Mountain Road. This is another localized endemic of the Atherton tableland region. [E]
- MAGPIE-LARK** (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) – Very common and conspicuous, and usually one of the first birds people see when they arrive in Australia. Seen daily in the Cairns region, most days around Brisbane and Sydney. [E]
- TORRENT-LARK** (*Grallina bruijnii*) – Much shyer and more elusive than its close relative in Australia, and this bird is also much more selective in its habitat choice, preferring to be along fast flowing mountain rivers. We lucked into a male that was moving up from boulder to boulder alongside a waterfall below Kumul Lodge, and I believe everyone got a nice scope view before it managed to get out of sight behind the vegetation.
- LEADEN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra rubecula*) – Many Australian birds winter in PNG, but the singing male we saw so well along the Varirata entrance road would have been of the endemic PNG breeding race papuana. The females we saw in the Cairns region were almost certainly this species as well, though they are notoriously difficult to separate from other female *Myiagra* flycatchers, particularly Satin. [E]
- SATIN FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*) – Great views of a responsive, singing male right over our heads along the Lady Carrington Drive at Royal NP. [E]
- SHINING FLYCATCHER** (*Myiagra alecto*) – I'd found a nest at the golf course pond at Yorkey's Knob the day before the trip started, and we had superb views of both sexes as they swapped places on the nest several times while we watched, with the male seemingly getting the lion's share of the time on incubation duties. [N]

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

- GRAY CROW** (*Corvus tristis*) – We looked hard for these birds as we heard them calling below the Varirata Lookout, and finally Claudia spotted them flying far below. Too bad they didn't stick around very long, so not everyone got a view before they disappeared. [E]
- TORRESIAN CROW** (*Corvus orru*) – The common Corvid in the Cairns and Brisbane regions, as well as around Port Moresby. [E]
- AUSTRALIAN RAVEN** (*Corvus coronoides*) – The distinctive 'crying baby' calls of this species were heard a few times at Royal NP, but we saw just one on the verge of the road as we headed for the coast. [E]

Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-Paradise)

- CRINKLE-COLLARED MANUCODE** (*Manucodia chalybatus*) – Lannois and I saw one in some shrubs at the bottom of a gully when we stepped off the Varirata entrance road, but it took off before anyone else could join us. Difficult to tell from the next species, but we saw the distinctive head bump that separates the two. [E]
- GLOSSY-MANTLED MANUCODE** (*Manucodia ater*) – Though they weren't at all vocal this trip, we did manage to see one in the savanna along the Varirata entrance road on our return visit to the park. Hard to think of the manucodes as BoPs, but they are. [E]
- KING-OF-SAXONY BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Pteridophora alberti*) – After a short but steep hike, we arrived at the display area for this spectacular bird, and a couple of males were calling as we got there, though they stayed frustratingly out of sight at first. Eventually we wound up with superb scope views of a wonderful male sitting in the dead branches of an emergent tree. With some threatening clouds looming, several folks opted to head back, but those that stuck it out were rewarded with even better looks at these amazing birds, including one male displaying full on to a couple of interested females! better yet, the rain stayed away and we remained dry; what more could you ask for? This was the runner up favorite among PNG birds, with three first-place votes from Alison, Claudia, and Conny. [E]
- SUPERB BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Lophorina superba*) – There was little to no calling and displaying going on from this usually common species, but we still had several decent views, mainly of females, but there were a couple of males, with that first one creeping along the branches of a large tree at the Blue BoP site showing his colors quite well. Still, it would have been nice to see that breast shield fully extended. [E]
- PARADISE RIFLEBIRD** (*Ptiloris paradiseus*) – This one is often a bit of a struggle at O'Reilly's and that was again the case this trip, and we had to settle for good views of a female along the road to the Kamarun Lookout. [E]
- VICTORIA'S RIFLEBIRD** (*Ptiloris victoriae*) – Another Atherton tablelands endemic. We recorded them daily in the region, with especially good views of a male calling (though not displaying, sadly) on a display perch at Lake Barrine. [E]
- MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD (GROWLING)** (*Ptiloris magnificus intercedens*) – Though we hear these ones often at Varirata, they can be exceptionally tough to see, so our scope views of a preening female were much appreciated. Watch for this species to be split at some point, as the vocalizations of the three different races is quite dramatic. Some authors already treat this form as a separate species, Growling Riflebird. [E]
- BROWN SICKLEBILL** (*Epimachus meyeri*) – The male that used to frequent the Kumul feeders disappeared recently, so we had to be satisfied with watching a female feeding her adult-sized youngster on the feeding tray. That wasn't too hard to take, as she is pretty amazing too. We did hear the incredible machine gun rattle of the male a few times up at the King-of-Saxony site. [E]
- STEPHANIE'S ASTRAPIA** (*Astrapia stephaniae*) – The folks that lingered at the King-of-Saxony site were rewarded when a couple of females of this bird flew in and landed nearby, then further rewarded when a stellar male with a full tail flew in shortly afterward! I hadn't seen an adult male for a long time, so I was especially pleased with this sighting, as was Stefanie, who chose it as her favorite PNG bird, despite the misspelling of her name;-) [E]
- RIBBON-TAILED ASTRAPIA** (*Astrapia mayeri*) – Though we never saw a male with full-length tail plumes (which can be over a meter in length!) the ones we saw around Kumul were no less stunning, and we had ample opportunity to enjoy these fabulous birds. Especially fun was watching an aggressive male tussling with a tiger-parrot as it attempted to drive off all competition from the feeders. [E]
- BLUE BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea rudolphi*) – The Tonga trail birds weren't calling or displaying as vigorously as usual, and our only sighting



was early on in the morning when we spotted a fairly distant, though still wonderful male calling from an exposed perch. Scope views were awesome, though I'm sure we all would have enjoyed a follow up look, too. [E]

**LESSER BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea minor*) – What an incredible bird! A male was calling and in full display mode atop an exposed perch in great light as we first arrived at the display area near the Lai River. By far the best views I've had of this species! The bird disappeared, and a new show began when a disgruntled landowner began shouting nearby, and ended up in a fight with his brother, who apparently hadn't shared the entrance fees the lodge paid him with his elder brother. Things settled down when we left, and we were invited back, but the Lesser BoP declined the invitation and didn't show a second time. Still, it was a fantastic display, and the bird was voted favorite PNG bird by George, Layne, Nancy, and Lannois, and took first place overall in the voting. [E]

**RAGGIANA BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea raggiana*) – As in July, activity at the long-used lek along the roadside at Varirata was very low and though a male showed up on each of our visits, he didn't stick around long, and wasn't seen as well as we would like by everyone. But there were plenty of females and young birds to be seen, and they're not half bad either. [E]

**LESSER MELAMPITTA** (*Melampitta lugubris*) – Heard regularly at Kumul, but as always, difficult to coax out into view. The folks that stayed behind at the King-of-Saxony spot were lucky, though, to see one of a pair crossing the trail ahead of us. It paused just long enough before it crossed to give us a pretty decent view, too. [E]

#### Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

**TORRENT FLYCATCHER** (*Monachella muelleriana*) – The Lai River bridge is an excellent place for this attractive bird, and we saw at least 10 of them there, including a family group of 5 birds. [E]

**JACKY-WINTER** (*Microeca fascians*) – A calling bird along the road near Wondecla proved to be pretty elusive, and we had to relocate him several times, singing from a high dead branch, before everyone had a satisfactory view. [E]

**LEMON-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Microeca flavigaster*) – Pretty common in savanna along the Varirata entrance road, and we saw several there. [E]

**PAPUAN FLYCATCHER** (*Microeca papuana*) – Formerly called Canary Flycatcher, a name I prefer to this new name. I think only Jerry and Alison saw this charming little flycatcher on the trails at Max's Orchid Garden. [E]

**GARNET ROBIN** (*Eugeryone rubra*) – A beautiful little male was seen well by some on the trail up to the King-of-Saxony display area. [E]

**ROSE ROBIN** (*Petroica rosea*) – I expect nesting season was in full swing as this species was far less vocal than usual. Still, we managed to find a singing male at the Luke's Farm viewpoint and wound up with nice views of him at the forest edge. [E]

**WHITE-FACED ROBIN** (*Tregellasia leucops*) – A couple of these charming robins showed well along the Boundary Track on our first visit to Varirata. [E]

**PALE-YELLOW ROBIN** (*Tregellasia capito*) – Good views of a pair along the stream as we waited for the Platypus to put in an appearance. [E]

**EASTERN YELLOW ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria australis*) – Though we had a few sightings in the north, it wasn't until we got to O'Reilly's that we had a chance to really enjoy these beautiful little birds. [E]

**MANGROVE ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria pulverulenta*) – A pair in the mangroves at the north end of the Esplanade were friendly and played nice, showing well to all that made the final morning trek out to see them. [E]

**WHITE-WINGED ROBIN** (*Peneothello sigillata*) – Easy to see at Kumul, where a family group regularly fed around the gardens, often clinging to the posts that support the feeding table, and even to the walls of the lodge. [E]

**BLUE-GRAY ROBIN** (*Peneothello cyanus*) – A singing bird came quite close at the Blue BoP site, but never showed itself. Always a tough bird here. [E\*]

**GRAY-HEADED ROBIN** (*Heteromyias cinereifrons*) – One turned up across the stream as we waited for Platypus, giving a nice view as it sat still for quite a while. It turned out to be our only sighting, though we didn't really try too hard after that. [E]

#### Alaudidae (Larks)

**AUSTRALASIAN BUSHLARK** (*Mirafra javanica*) – A couple of birds performed aerial flight displays a few times along the road to Granite Gorge.

#### Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**WELCOME SWALLOW** (*Hirundo neoxena*) – An abundant, every day bird in Australia. [EN]

**PACIFIC SWALLOW** (*Hirundo tahitica*) – The PNG counterpart to the Welcome Swallow. One of the first birds we saw on arrival in Port Moresby, and seen most days in the country.

**FAIRY MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon ariel*) – Some great close views of several birds feeding over the wetlands at the Port of Brisbane. [E]

**TREE MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) – Our only ones were a fairly distant pair perching and flying around a large dead tree at Walnut Road wetlands. [E]

#### Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

**ISLAND LEAF WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus poliocephalus*) – *Phylloscopus* warblers are notoriously difficult to identify, so it's a good thing there's just one species in PNG! We saw them well several times in the highlands.

#### Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

**AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus australis*) – One showed exceptionally well at the Platypus creek as it hopped along the rocky shoreline in full view. Our only other ones were a pair in a reedbed at the Port of Brisbane. [E]

#### Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

**TAWNY GRASSBIRD (PAPUAN)** (*Megalurus timoriensis macrurus*) – Quite common in the montane grasslands around Kumul, though we heard far more than we saw. Our best was a cooperative bird perched out in the open at the Yellow-breasted Bowerbird site. Some authors, including those of the new PNG field guide, treat this as a separate species from those of Australia and the Trans-Fly grasslands. [E]

#### Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

**GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola exilis*) – Nice looks at a singing and displaying bird near one of the hides at the Port of Brisbane, and a couple more at Walnut Road wetlands.

#### Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)

**BLACK-FRONTED WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops minor*) – A couple of the black-fronted race *delicatus* were seen at Varirata, though, as ever, they

were quite slippery. Then, at the Lesser and Blue BoP sites we ran into several good-sized flocks of the green-fronted nominate race which the new field guide treats as a separate species. [E]

**NEW GUINEA WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops novaeguineae*) – On past visits, this is the usual white-eye I've seen in the areas below Kumul, but this year (on both of my trips) I've seen more of the previous species. In fact July was the first time I'd seen that form. This trip, only Jerry saw one of these mixed in with a group of "green-fronted" white-eyes along the trail above Tonga. [E]

**SILVER-EYE** (*Zosterops lateralis*) – Quite common in the Cairns region, and also seen at O'Reilly's. Most interesting was watching a bird being viciously attacked by a Lewin's Honeyeater in the parking lot at Chamber's. The honeyeater actually knocked the Silver-eye to the ground at one point and it seemed like it was going to stop until it had killed the bird, but the Silver-eye eventually managed to elude the honeyeater and fly off. Wonder what that was all about?

#### Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

**PIED BUSHCHAT** (*Saxicola caprata*) – Just a couple of birds were seen in scrubby pasture at the Lesser BoP site.

#### Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

**OLIVE-TAILED THRUSH** (*Zoothera lunulata*) – Generally the more common of the two thrushes at O'Reilly's, and we had good views of several. [E]

**RUSSET-TAILED THRUSH** (*Zoothera heinei*) – Very tough to distinguish from the preceding species, and generally less common. We never confirmed one of these visually, but we did hear one singing its distinctive song along the Booyong Track. [E\*]

**ISLAND THRUSH** (*Turdus poliocephalus*) – A regular visitor to the feeders at Kumul.

#### Sturnidae (Starlings)

**METALLIC STARLING** (*Aplonis metallica*) – Seen in good numbers at Cairns, where the usual colony in the shopping center parking lot was again active. Also seen our first afternoon in New Guinea at PAU.

**SINGING STARLING** (*Aplonis cantoroides*) – Some folks missed this one at PAU our first afternoon, where there were a couple among the many Metallic Starlings. So, I told folks to watch the jet bridge from the departure lounge as we awaited our flight to Brisbane, and sure enough, a couple of birds flew in and perched on the bridge for a while allowing all those who weren't shopping to catch up. [E]

**YELLOW-FACED MYNA** (*Mino dumontii*) – This bird nearly got us in trouble with the police. Our driver, Kelly, spotted a pair of these perched along the road as we were driving to PAU and we made a quick stop for some great views. But, the vehicle immediately behind us was carrying about a dozen policemen, and the erratic behavior of our vehicle got their attention, and they pulled over to make sure Kelly wasn't drunk or otherwise impaired. In the end they probably just figured we were nuts! [E]

**EUROPEAN STARLING** (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – A bird or two in the Sydney suburbs. [I]

**COMMON MYNA** (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Unfortunately common throughout the eastern part of Australia. [I]

#### Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

**RED-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER** (*Dicaeum geelvinkianum*) – A widespread bird in PNG, but quite easily overlooked. We saw singles on several days, and eventually managed to get good scope views of one. [E]

**MISTLETOEBIRD** (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) – Almost daily sightings of this, Australia's only flowerpecker, in the Cairns region. I seem to recall someone getting excited about watching one defecate. These birds eat mistletoe berries, and the sticky seed pass, coming out in a sticky, gelatinous string that adheres to a branch, thus allowing the mistletoe to disperse to a new place to grow. [E]

#### Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

**OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris jugularis*) – Pretty common around Cairns, and seen well a bunch of times.

#### Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

**AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN)** (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – Best views were of a pair of birds on the mud flats at the high tide roost at the Port of Brisbane.

#### Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Pretty common in the Australian cities, with a few birds also in Port Moresby, where the next species seems to be outcompeting it since they first showed up in the country about 15 years back. [I]

**EURASIAN TREE SPARROW** (*Passer montanus*) – It's amazing how the population of this species has exploded in PNG since we first noted them in Port Moresby in 2006 or so. [I]

#### Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

**MOUNTAIN FIRETAIL** (*Oreostruthus fuliginosus*) – A couple of birds were seen a few times hanging around the grounds at Kumul. [E]

**RED-BROWED FIRETAIL** (*Neochmia temporalis*) – We glimpsed a lone bird in the Atherton region, but not to worry, as these little cuties were pretty numerous and easy to see around the feeding station at O'Reilly's. In fact, I remember having to warn Claudia to watch where she stepped as she almost squashed one underfoot inadvertently! [E]

**DOUBLE-BARRED FINCH** (*Taeniopygia bichenovii*) – If ever the word adorable could be used to describe a bird, this would be the species it should be reserved for. Everything about them is cute, including their endearing nasal calls. We had nice views several times, first at Jaques Coffee Farm, where they were a bit elusive, then en route to Granite Gorge where we found a huge, cooperative flock of them along the road. Also seen our final day at Royal NP. [E]

**SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA** (*Lonchura punctulata*) – A lone bird was feeding in seeding grass along the Esplanade on our final morning in Cairns. [I]

**HOODED MUNIA** (*Lonchura spectabilis*) – A common species of the PNG highlands, and we saw them daily there. [E]

**GRAY-HEADED MUNIA** (*Lonchura caniceps*) – A fair-sized flock was seen in some seeding grasses along the edge of the pond at PAU. [E]

**CHESTNUT-BREASTED MUNIA** (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) – Conny spotted our only ones, 4 birds in the flowerign lantana with all the honeyeaters at Hasties Swamp. [E]

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## MAMMALS

**PLATYPUS** (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) – We spent a lovely late afternoon along a creek near Yungaburra waiting for this enigmatic creature to put in an appearance. It soon showed up, but was tough to see well as it was quite far and never surfaced for very long, but we remained patient and were

rewarded when it finally came towards us, and swam on the surface not far away giving us smashing views! [\[E\]](#)

**SPECKLED DASYURE** (*Neophascogale lorentzii*) – This squirrel-like marsupial turned up on the feeder at Kumul one afternoon. [\[E\]](#)

**LONG-NOSED BANDICOOT** (*Peramelas nasuta*) – A couple of these were seen on our night walk at Chamber's. [\[E\]](#)

**KOALA** (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) – For the first time in several visits, we found one at the Daisy Hill Koala Center, sitting quietly observing us, and showing very well compared to the usual view of a koala's butt as it dozes high overhead. Even better, O'Reilly's guide Matt spotted us another, a nice blond looking beast, at the Bell Miner colony. [\[E\]](#)

**COMMON BRUSHTAIL POSSUM** (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) – A woman drove up to us at Mt Hypipamee and got out of her car with a young brushtail in a trap. She'd caught it in her yard and came to the park to release it. It was the only one we saw. [\[E\]](#)

**SHORT-EARED POSSUM** (*Trichosurus caninus*) – This one showed up at the O'Reilly's feeders quite late, and only Conny, Jerry, and I were still in the dining room to see it. [\[E\]](#)

**SUGAR GLIDER** (*Petaurus breviceps*) – Just a single visitor each night at the Chamber's feeding station, and it also showed up late, so not everyone managed to stay up long enough to see it. [\[E\]](#)

**COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUM** (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) – Some folks saw one sleeping in a hollow tree at the Mareeba Golf Course, thanks to Jun. Those of us who did the night walk at O'Reilly's had good luck too, seeing 4 of these, including one sitting right above the trail. [\[E\]](#)

**GREEN RINGTAIL POSSUM** (*Pseudochirops archeri*) – It was quite a surprise to find this one climbing a vine at the Golden Bowerbird bower site in the middle of the day. I'm sure we disturbed it as it looked pretty sleepy, and sat still giving us a nice long look. [\[E\]](#)

**STRIPED POSSUM** (*Dactylopsila trivirgata*) – This stunning animal showed up late one night at Chamber's feeding station, allowing several of us to take possum selfies with our phones. [\[E\]](#)

**MUSKY RAT-KANGAROO** (*Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*) – The tiniest of the macropods. we saw a single one of these little kangaroos below the balcony at Cassowary House. [\[E\]](#)

**RED-NECKED PADEMELO** (*Thylogale thetis*) – Numerous at O'Reilly's. [\[E\]](#)

**RED-LEGGED PADEMELO** (*Thylogale stigmatica*) – Just a few at Chamber's where there used to be plenty of them. We also had a couple in the forest at O'Reilly's. [\[E\]](#)

**MAREEBA ROCK-WALLABY** (*Petrogale mareeba*) – Ridiculously cute and tame at Granite Gorge, almost too tame to count, really. [\[E\]](#)

**LUMHOLTZ'S TREE KANGAROO** (*Dendrolagus lumholtzi*) – Not an animal we see often, so it was cool to spot one feeding high in the canopy at Mt Hypipamee. The views weren't great as it was mostly hidden in the canopy, but still... it's a kangaroo in the top of a tree! [\[E\]](#)

**AGILE WALLABY** (*Macropus agilis*) – Just a couple of sightings, one in a pasture at Hasties Swamp, and the other, seen by just a couple of folks, at Varirata NP. [\[E\]](#)

**RED-NECKED WALLABY** (*Macropus rufogriseus*) – The usual habituated group in the picnic area at Daisy Hill. [\[E\]](#)

**WHIPTAIL WALLABY** (*Macropus parryi*) – Aka Pretty-faced Wallaby, and apt name for this attractive species. We saw quite a few along the road during the drive up to O'Reilly's with our birthday celebrating, acrophobic driver Victor. [\[E\]](#)

**EASTERN GRAY KANGAROO** (*Macropus giganteus*) – A stroll onto the golf course at Mareeba brought us nice and close to the big mob of these large kangaroos that hang out there. [\[E\]](#)

**SWAMP WALLABY** (*Wallabia bicolor*) – One of these dark wallabies was with some Red-necked Wallabies at Daisy Hill.

**SPECTACLED FLYING-FOX** (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) – A huge roost in downtown Cairns was a truly impressive sight. [\[E\]](#)

**GRAY-HEADED FLYING-FOX** (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) – Equally impressive was the immense roost of these bats along the river near Canungra. [\[E\]](#)

**LITTLE RED FLYING-FOX** (*Pteropus scapulatus*) – The Rufous Owls were not on their roost along the Esplanade, but we did spot a handful of these smaller flying foxes in their tree. [\[E\]](#)

**OLD WORLD RABBIT** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – A few in the tablelands. [\[I\]](#)

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

--Reptiles of interest

Sand Monitor

Green Tree Monitor

Eastern Water Dragon

Olive Python

Saltwater Crocodile

Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*)

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**Totals for the tour: 415 bird taxa and 24 mammal taxa**