



PAPUA NEW GUINEA (2nd tour)

Jul 10, 2011 to Aug 1, 2011

Jay VanderGaast

This year's Papua New Guinea tour was wonderful as always, but unique (for me at least) in one aspect: the weather. I'm used to birding in the rain on more than a few days per tour in a normal year, but this tour had nearly perfect weather throughout. That isn't to say we weren't affected by rain: we couldn't get to Tabubil because of rain there, and the Elevala River was super high, with the surrounding forests pretty wet and sloppy, but we really didn't have to bird in any significant rain, and I, for one, enjoyed that. Dry Birds-of-paradise are always better than wet Birds-of-paradise!

On the topic of Birds-of-paradise (henceforth BOPs), they, of course, are the main reason birders are drawn to the island, and they generally provide a bunch of the highlights of any given tour. This year was no exception, with stunning birds like Ribbon-tailed Astrapia, King-of-Saxony BOP, and Twelve-wired BOP all performing well. Speaking of performing, this tour featured some marvelous lekking displays of both Lesser and Greater BOPs, and we even got to see a male Blue BOP hanging upside-down, even if it wasn't an adult at a display perch. Also among the BOPs, my best-ever male Lawes's Parotia and first-ever male Magnificent BOP (thanks, Jerry!) were nothing short of spectacular!

PNG isn't only about BOPs; there are plenty of other brilliant birds too: the POPs, (parrots-of-paradise) for instance. Our sightings ranged from the tiny Buff-faced Pygmy-Parrots at Karawari to the slightly larger Plum-faced Lorikeets at the Tari Gap on up through the larger fig-parrots (those Edward's at Karawari were gorgeous!), the Brehm's Tiger-parrot swarms on the Kumul feeders, and those amazing long-tailed Papuan Lorikeets, also at Kumul. The distant but well-seen Pesquet's Parrot was a great find, and the massive Palm Cockatoos (yeah, I know, they're cockatoos, not parrots) along the lowland rivers were also impressive.

We did even better with the DOPs (doves-of-paradise), nailing not only every possible fruit-dove (with scope views of almost all of them), but also every possible imperial-pigeon and every possible crowned-pigeon (okay, there are only two, but we saw them both). This group included two lifers for yours truly (Rufescent Imperial-Pigeon and Victoria Crowned-Pigeon), plus stellar views of some incredible fruit-doves, such as the scarce Orange-fronted, the hard-to-find Dwarf, and the truly gaudy Wompoo. What's more, we also had multiple Purple-tailed Imperial-Pigeons and incredible looks at a perched Southern Crowned-Pigeon at close range and right out in the open along the Dei River! Wow!

There were so many other memorable birds too, that I can't even begin to cover them all, but a few do deserve special mention here, not least of all those huge New Guinea Eagles that we kind of stumbled into along the Kiunga-Tabubil road and ended up walking away from after a long and wonderful encounter. Others that come to mind are such rarely seen species as those Forbes's Rails we lured onto a mossy log at the Tari Gap, the pre-dawn Dusky Woodcock that fluttered over our heads and landed just in front of us, before scurrying off into the tall, wet grass, and the tiny Mountain Owllet-Nightjar hunting from a low perch among the cabins, the latter two species both at Kumul.

Then there was the wierdly beautiful male Wattled Ploughbill perched in the open beside the road at the Gap, that stunning, skulking Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler on the forest floor at Varirata National Park, and the charming little Dwarf Whistler (not a whistler at all!) in a canopy flock at the same site. Loads of beautiful kingfishers, honeyeaters, fantails, monarchs (that dazzling Golden!) cuckoo-shrikes, etc, made this a most memorable trip. All in all it was a lot of fun sharing this unique country with all of you. I appreciate the enthusiasm, comaraderie, good humor, and the calm acceptance when



Scenic view of Ambua Lodge in the Tari highlands. (Photo by guide Jay VanderGaast)

things didn't go quite as planned. We had a fun, compatible, and multicultural group, the kind of group every guide hopes to have on each and every tour, and I am truly grateful for that. I would enjoy guiding any or all of you on a future tour, and certainly look forward to doing so soon.

--Jay

We have more information about this itinerary and future departures on our web page for [Papua New Guinea](#).

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

SPOTTED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna guttata*) – Never quite as bold as the next species, and these birds are usually sitting up in trees above the most isolated and hard to get to pond at PAU, which is exactly where we found 3 birds perched. A possible whistling-duck at Ymas Lake could also have been this species.

WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) – Usually quite common at PAU; this trip we saw 20+ birds there. Birds here belong to the same race as is found in northern Australia, namely, *australis*.

RADJAH SHELDUCK (*Tadorna radjah*) – A lone bird at PAU was a bit of a surprise, as they are rather rare here, though I'd also seen a couple here in late 2010, when they were lifers for our local guides, Leonard and Billy.

GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus pulchellus*) – Five birds, two males and 3 females, were on a duckweed covered pond at PAU.

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) – The only duck seen away from PAU (though we also saw good numbers there. We also saw these ducks at Karawari (mainly at Ymas Lake) and along the Dei River near Kiunga. The Karawari birds are assigned to the race *pelewensis*, while the Kiunga and PAU birds are race *rogersi*, though there are very minor differences between the forms.

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

BLACK-BILLED BRUSH-TURKEY (*Talegalla fuscirostris*) – Heard often in the Kiunga region, but the only one seen was at Varirata NP, where one dashed across the road near the Raggiana BOP lek. Only about half the group saw it, though; the rest of us (me included) were evidently not watching the road. [E]

NEW GUINEA SCRUBFOWL (*Megapodius affinis*) – Not often seen, but Lane and I got lucky and saw one fly across the Karawari airstrip as we waited for our flight to Ambua. [E]

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – Small numbers on the ponds at PAU, including a bird on a nest and a few juveniles. [N]

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – About 5 birds along the Karawari River, a couple along the Lai River below Kumul Lodge, and loads at PAU.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) – Small numbers along the Karawari River and on the Fly and Elevala Rivers, plus a fair few at PAU.



A Southern Crowned-Pigeon uncharacteristically sitting out in the open! Love the hairdo! (Photo by tour participant Jerry Oldenettel)

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

AUSTRALASIAN DARTER (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – A lone bird roosting among the many cormorants at PAU was a good find, and the first I'd seen at the site. Treated as a full species here, though some authorities lump all Old World darters into a single species.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

BLACK BITTERN (*Ixobrychus flavicollis*) – Two along the Karawari River. The first was a rather rufous bird, probably a juvenile, the second was a normal adult plumaged bird. This second bird was seen very well as it stood out on a mud bank in the open for a while.

GREAT-BILLED HERON (*Ardea sumatrana*) – Several birds along the Karawari River, but surprisingly we saw just one in the Fly River region.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Fair numbers throughout, in appropriate habitat.

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – One was seen in a small marshy area next to the Karawari air strip, then several at PAU.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Small numbers along the Karawari River.

PIED HERON (*Egretta picata*) – A gorgeous small heron. We saw several of these striking birds at Ymas Lake, and a few more at PAU, though most of the birds at the latter site were in a less striking subadult plumage.

CATTLE EGRET (ASIAN) (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) – Fairly common at the lowland sites.

RUFOUS NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – Our first few sightings along the Karawari and Elevala Rivers were all of juvenile birds, which look pretty much like any other juvenile night heron. We finally caught up with a lovely rufous (or Nankeen, if you prefer the old name) adult on our morning along the Dei River.



Rufous-naped Whistler exhibiting its usual, though un-whistler-like habit of hopping around on the ground. (Photo by tour participant Jerry Oldenettel)

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

AUSTRALIAN IBIS (*Threskiornis molucca*) – A few birds came into roost at the PAU ponds.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PACIFIC BAZA (*Aviceda subcristata*) – Several excellent looks, including some scope views of perched birds, at both Varirata and around Kiunga.

BLACK KITE (*Milvus migrans*) – Quite numerous throughout.

WHISTLING KITE (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Seen only in the Moresby region and around Karawari. [N]

BRAHMINY KITE (*Haliastur indus*) – This beautiful raptor occurs widely through the country; we saw them from sea level right on up to the highlands at Tari and Kumul. We also found an active nest at Varirata NP. [N]

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – A couple of birds each along the Karawari and Elevala Rivers.

EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus spilonotus spilothorax*) – Though treated here as just a race of Eastern Marsh-harrier, this bird is very distinctive from other races of that species, and will likely be elevated to full species level some time in the future. We saw a male at Mt. Hagen airport on two different days, and another male made a nice close flyby in the Tari valley. [E]

VARIABLE GOSHAWK (*Accipiter hiogaster*) – The most numerous Accipiter encountered; we had ones or twos at several sites, though most of them didn't stick around and give us prolonged views.

BROWN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter fasciatus*) – A pair circled overhead as we enjoyed the Huli sing-sing in the Tari Valley.

GRAY-HEADED GOSHAWK (*Accipiter poliocephalus*) – A beautiful, clean-looking hawk, this species is generally quite scarce, and we were fortunate to see it three times. We had sightings on two days at Karawari, then a superb scope view of a perched bird along the road near KM 17 at Kiunga. [E]

COLLARED SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) – A smaller version of the Brown Goshawk, this one is built more like our Sharp-shinned Hawk (Brown is more Cooper's Hawk-like). Our only sighting was of a single bird that flew over the lodge at Ambua one morning.

DORIA'S GOSHAWK (*Megatriorchis doriae*) – A fairly close calling bird at KM 17 sadly stayed out of sight. [E*]

NEW GUINEA EAGLE (*Harpyopsis novaeguineae*) – One of the trip highlights was finding a pair of these rare eagles during a random stop along the road between Kiunga and Tabubil. We heard them calling first, then spent a long time trying to track them down before "Eagle-eye" Jerry finally spotted one sitting in the canopy of a large tree. We then spent an equally long time enjoying our encounter before we ultimately walked away from them (did we really do that!?) Both Lane and Paolo had this bird at the top of their list of favorites. [E]

GURNEY'S EAGLE (*Aquila gurneyi*) – Luis picked out one of these scarce eagles soaring high overhead during an afternoon boat ride at Karawari.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

BROWN FALCON (*Falco berigora*) – Nice views of a couple in the Tari Valley, and another at the Lesser BOP site.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CHESTNUT FOREST-RAIL (*Rallina rubra*) – Max found us a pair feeding near the cabins at Kumul, and we had a great view of them as they fed in the open along one of the trails. The male also put in an appearance below the feeders, allowing some who'd missed seeing the pair to catch up. [E]

FORBES'S RAIL (*Rallina forbesi*) – I've tried for this species in the Tari Gap every time I'd visited, but this was the first time I'd had any sort of response. And what a response! We had several brief but excellent views of both members of a pair as they repeatedly came up onto a mossy log before scampering back into the undergrowth.

RED-NECKED CRAKE (*Rallina tricolor*) – At Km 17. [*]

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – Swarms of these were at the PAU ponds.

DUSKY MOORHEN (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Not uncommon at the PAU ponds.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

MASKED LAPWING (*Vanellus miles*) – Four birds on the air strip at Karawari, then several more at PAU.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*) – This non-migratory resident form may be better split from the northern breeding forms, but for now remains a part of this species. We saw a couple along the Ok Tedi river.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

COMB-CRESTED JACANA (*Irediparra gallinacea*) – Quite numerous at the PAU ponds.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

DUSKY WOODCOCK (*Scolopax saturata rosenbergii*) – A couple of brown blurs was all most people saw of this species when it was flushed in Max's orchid garden at Kumul. But Jerry, Cynthia, and I had super looks on our final morning there. As we trudged back to the lodge after an unsuccessful attempt to track down nightjars, one fluttered just over our heads, and then landed not far in front of us, pausing for several seconds in the spotlight before scurrying off into the tall grass. A lifer for me, and Cynthia's first ever woodcock; what a species to start with! [E]

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

AUSTRALIAN PRATINCOLE (*Stiltia isabella*) – Half a dozen at the Kiunga air strip was a rather large number for there.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Loads of these terns, all in non-breeding plumage, were at Ymas Lake.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Really only in Mt Hagen and Port Moresby. [I]

SLENDER-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia amboinensis*) – Formerly lumped with Australia's Brown Cuckoo-dove. This was the most common of the cuckoo-doves we saw; recorded at most sites, but most regularly seen around Kiunga.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) – We only saw a single one of these small, bar-tailed cuckoo-doves, in a fruiting tree at the Km 17 parking area. Not a common bird in the Kiunga region [E]



Though many of New Guinea's birds are shy and elusive, there are some friendly ones, too, the delightful Friendly Fantail for example. (Photo by tour participant Jerry Oldenettel)

- GREAT CUCKOO-DOVE** (*Reinwardtoena reinwardtii*) – Singles of this massive bird were seen on three days, twice at Karawari and once at Kiunga. All our sightings were of flying birds, but it's hard to misidentify these monsters. [E]
- STEPHAN'S DOVE** (*Chalcophaps stephani*) – A couple of flybys along Boy's Town Road was all we managed, though a juvenile dove several of us saw behind the helicopter landing pad at Karawari was either this species or Emerald Dove.
- PEACEFUL DOVE** (*Geopelia placida*) – Quite common on the grounds of PAU.
- BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE** (*Geopelia humeralis*) – Also seen only at PAU, though outnumbered by the smaller Peaceful Dove there.
- THICK-BILLED GROUND-PIGEON** (*Trugon terrestris*) – Heard twice at Km 17, but as always a tough bird to actually see. [E]
- SOUTHERN CROWNED-PIGEON** (*Goura scheepmakeri*) – Sam had a bird staked out on a nest along the Elevala River, and that bird, backlit though it was, was enough to satisfy everyone. But the bird we found the next day perched out in the open in superb light, right above the Dei River, just blew us away! What a stunner! [EN]
- VICTORIA CROWNED-PIGEON** (*Goura victoria*) – Karawari's local guide, Chris, did a simply amazing job of tracking this bird down, not once, but twice, after we'd heard it take off from the forest floor. I still don't know how he found it, but I'm glad he did, as we had incredible looks! [E]
- WOMPPOO FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – Heard pretty often at the lowland sites, but it wasn't until the last morning at Varirata that we finally laid eyes on this large, colorful fruit-dove.
- PINK-SPOTTED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) – One of the more numerous of the fruit-doves at the lowland sites, and we saw plenty, particularly around Kiunga. [E]
- ORNATE FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus ornatus*) – Always much scarcer than the similar Pink-spotted, but we had a couple of good sightings of this species around Kiunga. [E]
- ORANGE-FRONTED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*) – Another of the rarer fruit-doves, and one we often miss, but we had this lovely bird twice this trip. Super scope views of one at Chris's garden near Karawari were followed by a pair at PAU near the end of the trip. [E]
- SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus superbus*) – A female in the fruiting tree at Ambua was a bit of a surprise at that high elevation. Some folks also saw a male briefly near the King BOP lek at Kiunga, but our best was a gorgeous male on our last day at Varirata, in the same tree as our Wompoo.
- CORONATED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus coronulatus*) – On our tour route, this species is only at Karawari, and we nailed one early, getting great views of a close perched bird at the helipad on our first afternoon there. [E]
- BEAUTIFUL FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus pulchellus*) – Recorded a few times, but our best views of these aptly-named doves was at Varirata, where we found a quartet of them feeding in a fruiting tree on our first visit. [E]
- WHITE-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) – Our final new fruit-dove, giving us a rare clean sweep of the genus! A male that flew across the road at the start of the Pigites Track at Kumul responded well to playback and perched out in the open for a great scope look. Even the local lads were wowed by its beauty! [E]
- ORANGE-BELLIED FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) – Along with Pink-spotted, the most often seen of the genus. Easily identified by the clean cut orange belly and blue shoulder stripe, both of which were reduced or lacking in the first one we saw at Karawari, evidently a juvenile that had us thoroughly confused at first! [E]
- DWARF FRUIT-DOVE** (*Ptilinopus nanus*) – Always a tough one to see well, but we had fantastic scope views thanks to Cynthia, who managed to relocate this bird along Boy's Town Road when it vanished after an initial brief appearance. [E]
- PURPLE-TAILED IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (*Ducula rufigaster*) – We saw far more than usual of this beautiful pigeon. Great views of one on our first morning at Varirata (where it was our first of the genus) were followed by more excellent views on three other days, including three together in a riverside tree during our Dei River cruise. [E]



*New Guinea's culture is as fascinating as its bird life. Here a Konmei villager takes part in a traditional dance ceremony.
(Photo by guide Jay VanderGaast)*

RUFESCENT IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula chalconota*) – A scarcely seen montane species, and we barely saw it this trip either. A couple of birds flew by along the Pigites Track, and though they landed nearby, we couldn't locate them on their perches. Still, the rufous underparts and the banded tail were unmistakable. [E]

PINON IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula pinon*) – The pigeon with the Cleopatra eye make-up. We saw these striking birds regularly in the Karawari and Kiunga regions. [E]

COLLARED IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula mullerii*) – A scarce bird now at Karawari, and the one we saw near Ymas Lake was my first for the site. But this was the most numerous pigeon along the Fly and Elevala rivers, with dozens seen during our boat trips there. [E]

ZOE IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula zoeae*) – Quite common in the lowlands. Our first views in the fruiting tree by the Karawari helipad were exceptional and easily our best. [E]

TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula spilorrhoa*) – A couple of these ethereal looking pigeons were a nice find at PAU, allowing us to close out this genus as well.

PAPUAN MOUNTAIN-PIGEON (*Gymnophaps albertisii*) – Despite the name, this species is just as likely in the lowlands as in the mountains. We saw them pretty much daily from Ambua onward, but the birds making the display flights near the Tari Gap were perhaps the most memorable. [E]

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

PALM COCKATOO (*Probosciger aterrimus*) – A fair number of these spectacular birds were seen beautifully in the Karawari region, but they were unusually scarce in the Kiunga area, where we saw a grand total of 3 birds.

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO (*Cacatua galerita*) – Despite the different voice and eye ring color, these are still considered the same species as the ones from Australia. Numerous and noisy in the lowlands and foothills. It was particularly amusing to see the ones that were agitated by the New Guinea Eagles' presence.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

YELLOW-STREAKED LORY (*Chalcopsitta sintillata*) – Aka Greater Streaked Lory. We had fairly decent views of this large lory several times around Kiunga. [E]

DUSKY LORY (*Pseudeos fuscata*) – Quite numerous and seen daily around Karawari, where I had my first ever perched views of these birds at Ymas Lakes. We also had a flock or two along Boy's Town Road. [E]

RAINBOW LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – The default lorikeet in much of the country. The I.O.C. has accepted the split of PNG's birds from the Australian ones, though Clements is slow to follow suit. The new name of these birds is Coconut Lorikeet, with the scientific name remaining the same.

BLACK-CAPPED LORY (*Lorius lory*) – A real beauty; we saw these lories commonly in the lowland regions, though they were kind of scarce at Karawari. [E]

RED-FLANKED LORIKEET (*Charmosyna placentis*) – Paolo managed to photograph some of these birds in the trees over the lodge at Karawari; the rest of us had to wait until Kiunga to see them, but we got lucky when a bunch of them landed directly overhead for some great views. Usually we have to be satisfied with flight views only. [E]

PAPUAN LORIKEET (*Charmosyna papou*) – Small numbers daily at Ambua and again at Kumul. We had several great looks at them, though it was too bad we never saw the black form of this striking, long-tailed lorikeet. [E]

PLUM-FACED LORIKEET (*Oreopsittacus arfaki*) – These tiny parrots can be tricky to find, and we were pretty fortunate to have such amazing looks at a pair feeding in a roadside Schefflera tree at the Tari Gap. [E]

YELLOW-BILLED LORIKEET (*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*) – Numerous and seen daily at Ambua and Kumul. [E]

ORANGE-BILLED LORIKEET (*Neopsittacus pullicauda*) – Quite similar to the more common Yellow-billed Lorikeet. We found a pair with that species at Ambua, then saw several more at Kumul. [E]

PESQUET'S PARROT (*Psitttrichas fulgidus*) – One of the main target birds on our drive up into the foothills along the Kiunga-Tabubil road, and we got one! Luis did an amazing job of finding a lone bird in a distant fruiting tree, and though it was far away, the scope views were pretty darned good. [E]



Yellow-billed Lorikeet, one of New Guinea's many colorful parrots. (Photo by tour participant Jerry Oldenettel)

- YELLOW-CAPPED PYGMY-PARROT** (*Micropsitta keiensis*) – Heard regularly in the Kiunga region, but hard to see, and we only saw the as tiny black dots flying overhead. [E]
- BUFF-FACED PYGMY-PARROT** (*Micropsitta pusio*) – Incredible scope views of these micro-parrots perched over the lodge at Karawari. [E]
- ORANGE-BREASTED FIG-PARROT** (*Cyclopsitta gulelmitertii*) – Fewer than usual, but we had some excellent views at Kiunga, especially those ones perched over the Dei River. [E]
- DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT** (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – The most commonly seen fig-parrot this trip. We had them first at Karawari, then daily in the Kiunga region.
- LARGE FIG-PARROT** (*Psittaculirostris desmarestii*) – A pair flew by as we boated along the Elevala River, but the views were not terribly satisfying. [E]
- EDWARDS'S FIG-PARROT** (*Psittaculirostris edwardsii*) – A north slope specialty, and we had some incredible views of them at Karawari. Our first looks from the boat almost cost us the scope (thanks to boatman Elvis for retrieving it from the river bottom!), but we had far better views (my best ever) of a bunch of them at Chris's garden. [E]
- BREHM'S TIGER-PARROT** (*Psittacella brehmii*) – A few birds at Ambua, but much easier to see at Kumul, where they are one of the most common visitors to the feeders. [E]
- RED-CHEEKED PARROT** (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) – Abundant everywhere but in the highlands.
- ECLECTUS PARROT** (*Eclectus roratus*) – Fairly common throughout the lowlands. Green males predominated, though we also saw a few lovely females, including a perched one at Karawari.
- PAPUAN KING-PARROT** (*Alisterus chloropterus*) – We don't often see these beautiful parrots, so it was great to find a pair near the Blue BOP site below Ambua, and especially to get such wonderful scope views of the male. [E]

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

- BRUSH CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – Heard often throughout the country, and we had a few sightings, too, of this rather dull cuckoo.
- CHESTNUT-BREASTED CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis castaneiventris*) – Our only one of these birds came on our first day, when we had superb views of one along the entrance road to Varirata NP.
- FAN-TAILED CUCKOO** (*Cacomantis flabelliformis simus*) – The race in PNG is restricted to the highlands; we saw our only one at the Tari Gap.
- SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – We found a lone bird in the Tari Valley, a rather high elevation for the species, after our Sooty Owl experience.
- RUFOUS-THROATED BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx ruficollis*) – Good views of this endemic cuckoo in the highland forest at the Tari Gap. This was our only sighting of the species. [E]
- WHITE-EARED BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx meyeri*) – Luis, Paolo, and I saw what looked like this species late one afternoon at Karawari, though it was troubling that we couldn't make out the white ear patch. [E]
- LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – A couple of sightings along the Karawari River and heard in the Kiunga area. A bronze-cuckoo along the Dei River was also most likely this species, though we couldn't rule out Shining.
- LONG-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Rhamphomantis megarhynchus*) – A rare species about which much remains to be learned (for example, which bird species it parasitizes. We had great looks at a responsive bird along the road at the Km 17 Greater BOP lek. [E]
- ASIAN KOEL** (*Eudynamys scolopaceus*) – Heard along the Karawari River. [*]
- AUSTRALIAN KOEL** (*Eudynamys cyanocephalus*) – Heard daily in the lowlands around Kiunga, though our only sighting was of a lone female along Boy's Town Road.
- CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – A lone, distant bird flying over along the Dei River was the only one we managed to find this trip.
- GREATER BLACK COUCAL** (*Centropus menbeki*) – For such a large, vocal bird, this species is incredibly hard to see. We had one fly overhead along the trail to the lek at Km 17, and Paolo saw one along Boy's Town Road on our last morning at Kiunga. [E]
- PHEASANT COUCAL** (*Centropus phasianinus*) – Quite common in the savanna grasslands in the Port Moresby region, where we had especially good looks of several at PAU.
- LESSER BLACK COUCAL** (*Centropus bernsteini*) – Great views of a responsive, calling bird along the Karawari air strip, then singles one three days in the Kiunga region. [E]

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

SOOTY OWL (GREATER) (*Tyto tenebricosa arfaki*) – One at a long-used roost hole in the Tari Valley seemed to be getting used to the disturbances, as it took a long time to put in an appearance. It finally showed nicely, but one wonders how much more it will put up with before it moves off. At least the landowner has a reason to protect the bird. [E]

Strigidae (Owls)

JUNGLE HAWK-OWL (*Ninox theomacha*) – Aka Papuan Boobook. We found one of these dark owls easily after dinner at Ambua; it took no more than a couple of minutes to track it down. My kind of owling! [E]

PAPUAN HAWK-OWL (*Uroglaux dimorpha*) – We heard a couple on our first night at Karawari, but only Lane saw one when he ventured out at around 1:00 AM and saw one sitting atop one of the cabins. [E]

Aegothelidae (Owlet-Nightjars)

FELINE OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles insignis*) – One of my most wanted PNG birds, but it will have to wait for another visit, as the very responsive bird at Kumul stayed mysteriously out of view. Are these things invisible? [E*]

MOUNTAIN OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles albertisi*) – I found one on a hunting perch among the cabins at Kumul one night, but it disappeared by the time anyone got out to look. Luckily, it was back on the same spot early one morning and we all had nice studies of this tiny bird. [E]

BARRED OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles bennettii*) – Formerly a tough bird to find, but the local guides have several day roosts staked out at Varirata NP, and now we expect to see this species every trip. We had decent views of two. [E]

Podargidae (Frogmouths)

MARbled FROGMOUTH (MARbled) (*Podargus ocellatus ocellatus*) – Great response from one our first night at Karawari. So great, in fact, that the bird just stuck around singing long after we'd had our views and gone off to bed.

PAPUAN FROGMOUTH (*Podargus papuensis*) – Two on a day roost at Varirata, one of which was leaning lazily against a tree trunk. Another three were on a regular day roost at PAU.

Apodidae (Swifts)

PAPUAN NEEDLETAIL (*Mearnsia novaeguineae*) – Small numbers along the rivers in the lowlands, with especially nice views of some dipping into the Karawari River near our boat. [E]

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (*Collocalia esculenta*) – The common swift species everywhere but the lowlands, where it seems to be replaced by the previous species.

MOUNTAIN SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus hirundinaceus*) – Seen in small numbers around Tari and Kumul. [E]

UNIFORM SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus vanikorensis*) – Numerous in the lowlands.

Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

MOUSTACHED TREESWIFT (*Hemiprogne mystacea*) – First seen at Varirata, where a pair with a juvenile were hanging around the picnic area, and were still there on our second visit. We also saw these elegant birds most days in the Kiunga region. [N]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

AZURE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx azureus*) – A pair of these electric blue kingfishers were seen nicely at the stream crossing on the Varirata entrance road, and several were noted along the Karawari River.

LITTLE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx pusillus*) – Beautiful looks at this tiny, elusive bird along a channel near Ymas Lake, with another seen briefly along the Dei River.

BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo leachii*) – Just a few birds in the savannas of the Port Moresby region.

RUFOUS-BELLIED KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) – Though heard more often than seen, we did also see a bunch of these striking large kingfishers at all the lowland sites. [E]

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Small numbers throughout, though they seemed to be less common and/or conspicuous than usual.

HOOK-BILLED KINGFISHER (*Melidora macrorrhina*) – Heard daily around Karawari and Kiunga, but we just never could get one of these elusive birds to show. [E*]

YELLOW-BILLED KINGFISHER (*Syma torotoro*) – Great views of a couple of birds on our first visit to Varirata NP, then heard at several other sites as well.

LITTLE PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera hydrocharis*) – The high waters along the Elevala River left us with a mucky swamp to trudge through in search of this species and the next, but we soldiered on, and eventually wound up with excellent views of one of these rare birds, though it showed little or no interest in playback. [E]

COMMON PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera galatea*) – A little more responsive than the preceding species, but

still a real challenge to get a look at. We managed in the end, but only just. [E]

BROWN-HEADED PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera danae*) – Compared to the other paradise-kingfishers, this one is a breeze to find. We had superb views of this stunner several times on our first visit to Varirata NP. [E]

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

RAINBOW BEE-EATER (*Merops ornatus*) – Quite common throughout the lowlands.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

DOLLARBIRD (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – If I had a dollar for every time someone said, "there's a Dollarbird"...

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

BLYTH'S HORNBILL (*Aceros plicatus*) – Watching these immense birds lumbering across the sky over the Karawari and Elevala Rivers was never less than breathtaking!

Pittidae (Pittas)

HOODED PITTA (*Pitta sordida*) – Fine views of one not far along one of the drier trails along the Elevala River.

RED-BELLIED PITTA (*Pitta erythrogaster*) – We had a responsive bird along the trail to the Greater BOP lek at km 17; it came close, but stayed mostly out of view. A couple of folks did get looks at it on the ground, the rest of us so it only as it flew across the trail. [*]

Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

WHITE-EARED CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus buccoides*) – Heard only inside the forest along the Karawari River. [E]

SPOTTED CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – Heard a couple of times near the Km 17 Greater BOP lek. [E]

ARCHBOLD'S BOWERBIRD (*Archboldia papuensis*) – One or two females of this hard to see species were regular visitors to the feeders at Kumul. [E]

MACGREGOR'S BOWERBIRD (*Amblyornis macgregoriae*) – Though we never saw this species, it's worth mentioning that we did see a beautifully maintained maypole bower at the Tari Gap. [E]

FLAME BOWERBIRD (*Sericulus aureus*) – Stunning scope views of this fiery species several times along Boy's Town Road. They were a bit distant, but perhaps that's just as well, as we may have seared our retinas had they been closer. [E]

YELLOW-BREASTED BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera lauterbachii*) – It was quite a scramble down to see this species' double avenue bower near Wapenamanda, but it was worth it to see the wonderful construction; it was my first time to see the bower of this species. Oh, and we also had some nice looks at the builders! [E]

FAWN-BREASTED BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera cerviniventris*) – A commonly seen species in the savanna regions around Port Moresby. Though the single avenue bower of this bird isn't quite as ambitious a construction as the bower of the preceding species, it was still nice to see an active bower at PAU.

Maluridae (Fairywrens)

WALLACE'S FAIRYWREN (*Sipodotus wallacii*) – A cooperative pair behind the helipad at Karawari was a nice find, and gave us the best views I've ever had at these birds, which usually never sit still long enough for long studies. [E]

WHITE-SHOULDERED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus alboscapulatus*) – Several great views of these little guys in the Tari Valley, below Kumul, and at Varirata. Generally easier to see than the other fairy-wrens, due at least in part for their preference of rather open habitats. [E]

EMPEROR FAIRYWREN (*Malurus cyanocephalus*) – Stunning little birds with a pleasant, jaunty little song. We couldn't find them at our usual site near Kiunga, but then ran into them a few times at spots along the Elevala River and wound up with some great views. I think this is the only fairy-wren species in which the female outshines the males. [E]

Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)

PLAIN HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius ixoides*) – I love the field guide's claim that this species lacks field marks, but it is pretty accurate, as is the name. While it may not be much to look at, at least we had a good view of it, pretty much at eye level along Boy's Town Road. [E]

MARbled HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius cinereus*) – Several great looks at these local birds at the Blue BOP site below Ambua. [E]

STREAK-HEADED HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) – Quite common and widespread, though generally heard far more often than seen. We did have some good views though, beginning with one at the Karawari airstrip. [E]

MIMIC HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga analoga*) – I must admit I wasn't too confident putting names to the various *Meliphaga* honeyeaters we saw, though I doubt there's anyone who can honestly claim to be. This seems to be the

common species at Karawari and the Kiunga area. [E]

GRACEFUL HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga gracilis cinereifrons*) – This slender-billed, smallish *Meliphaga* is one of the easier ones to identify. We saw this bird at Varirata and on the grounds of the PAU. This race is often split off from the Australian birds, and is called Elegant Honeyeater. [E]

BLACK-THROATED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus subfrenatus*) – Often difficult to see, but we had them fairly easily and fairly often in the Tari Gap. [E]

OBSCURE HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus obscurus*) – Heard regularly in the Kiunga region, but they never would show themselves. [E*]

YELLOW-TINTED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus flavescens*) – A few were seen at PAU. The birds here sound more like Fuscous Honeyeater than the Yellow-tinted Honeyeaters of Australia, and some genetic work may be in order to determine the relationships of these birds to each other.

RUFOUS-BANDED HONEYEATER (*Conopophila albogularis*) – Quite common in the Port Moresby region (particularly at PAU); less so around Kiunga, though Jerry found a nest of this species across the street from the guest house. [N]

BLACK MYZOMELA (*Myzomela nigrita*) – A lone bird in flowering eucalyptus trees along the Varirata entrance road. [E]

MOUNTAIN MYZOMELA (*Myzomela adolphinae*) – A couple of folks saw a dull female in a flowering hedge at the Tari airport. Later we saw a pair at the Lesser BOP lek site below Kumul and a few more at Varirata NP. [E]

RED-COLLARED MYZOMELA (*Myzomela rosenbergii*) – A male of this stunning species was a nice find in a flowering tree in the Tari Gap. We also saw males on two days at Kumul, including one that posed beautifully at eye level right beside the van! I'm sure Jerry got stunning pictures of that one! [E]

WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER (*Melithreptus albogularis*) – Pretty common in the treed savanna habitat along the entrance road to Varirata NP.

MEYER'S FRIARBIRD (*Philemon meyeri*) – Great scope views of a singing bird below the helipad at Karawari, then a couple more along Boy's Town road, including a strange looking tailless bird. [E]

HELMETED FRIARBIRD (*Philemon buceroides*) – Numerous and noisy throughout the lowlands, and well up into the mountains, too (ie Mt Hagen). This form is often split as New Guinea Friarbird, *P. novaeguineae*, a different species from Helmeted Friarbird of Australia.

TAWNY-BREASTED HONEYEATER (*Xanthotis flaviventer*) – Generally common in the lowlands, though it seems to me there weren't as many as we usually see.

LONG-BILLED HONEYEATER (*Melilestes megarhynchus*) – Heard a couple of times around Kiunga. [E*]

SMOKY HONEYEATER (*Melipotés fumigatus*) – Numerous in the highlands, where they were seen especially well at the Kumul Lodge feeders. We even got to see them blush a few times... a feature that makes them even more interesting and endearing. [E]

BELFORD'S MELIDECTES (*Melidectes belfordi*) – Abundant and noisy in the highland forest, where especially pugnacious at the Kumul feeders. Though folks stop looking at them fairly early on, these are beautiful birds when you take the time to really look at them. [E]

YELLOW-BROWED MELIDECTES (*Melidectes rufocrissalis*) – Generally at lower elevations than the Belford's. Quite common around Ambua Lodge, though less so than usual, perhaps due to all the construction disturbance. [E]

ORNATE MELIDECTES (*Melidectes torquatus*) – A real stunner. We saw good numbers of these fancy birds around the Lesser BOP lek site below Kumul. [E]

RUFOUS-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora guisei*) – Similar to the next species, which replaces this one at higher elevations. We saw a few birds around Ambua Lodge, and one at the start of the Pigites track at Kumul. [E]

BLACK-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora perstriata*) – Quite numerous in the Tari Gap and right around the lodge at Kumul. [E]

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

RUSTY MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis murina*) – Elusive little buggers. Though we heard them at several sites, we never got one into view. [E]

MOUNTAIN MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis robusta*) – Great looks at a cooperative bird in Max's Orchid Garden at Kumul. [E]

LARGE SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis nouhuysi*) – Fairly common in the highlands, especially at Kumul where they were often feeding boldly right next to the paths. [E]

BUFF-FACED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis perspicillatus*) – Easily confused with the preceding species which also has a

buffy face, though this species has a gray crown which contrasts strongly with the face. We saw them quite regularly both at Ambua and Kumul. [E]

PAPUAN SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis papuensis*) – The least common of the three highland scrubwrens, though we did see them at the Tari Gap and Kumul. [E]

PALE-BILLED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis spilodera*) – This scarce species has a great, distinctive, siren-like call; we heard it, and saw a couple of these birds, on our last day's visit to Varirata NP. [E]

MOUNTAIN GERYGONE (*Gerygone cinerea*) – Not often seen on the tour, but we ran into them twice. Cynthia, Lane and I had them at Ambua during a siesta break optional walk, and then at Kumul we had super looks at a small group at the Pigites trail head. Local guide Max had never seen this species before! [E]

GREEN-BACKED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chloronota*) – This species has a lovely song, but it isn't much to look at. Luckily we heard them more often than we saw them; our only sighting came on our last day at Varirata.

FAIRY GERYGONE (*Gerygone palpebrosa*) – Decent views of a male of this rather fancy gerygone on our first day at Varirata.

YELLOW-BELLIED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chrysogaster*) – A common voice in the lowland forests. We also saw them several times, usually with mixed flocks, at Varirata and Karawari. [E]

LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – One in riverside vegetation during our boat trip on the Elevala River.

BROWN-BREASTED GERYGONE (*Gerygone ruficollis*) – Heard regularly at Ambua, but we didn't see this species until our visit to the Kumul Lodge Lesser BOP lek, where we had excellent views of a couple. [E]

Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

NEW GUINEA BABBLER (*Pomatostomus isidorei*) – Often tricky to see well, but we got them easily this trip, when we found a group seemingly settling down to roost for the night along the trail at KM 17. [E]

Orthonychidae (Logrunners)

NORTHERN LOGRUNNER (*Orthonyx novaeguineae*) – One of the only of the terrestrial interior forest birds to respond in the Tari Gap was a female of this species, which I believe everyone saw pretty well. This bird has until recently been lumped with the logrunner of eastern Australia, though it is quite different, and the range of the two forms is highly disjunct, with a third *Orthonyx* species (*Chowchilla*) occurring in between the two species' ranges. Also known as Papuan Logrunner. [E]

Cnemophilidae (Satinbirds)

LORIA'S SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus loriae*) – Three former BOPs (this and the next species, along with Yellow-breasted) have recently been taken from the BOP family and placed in a new family of their own, the Satinbirds. We saw this species regularly, including males, at the fruiting tree at Ambua, and also had a female at Kumul. [E]

CRESTED SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus macgregorii*) – A Kumul special. A female or two were semi-regular visitors to the feeders, and a fantastic male was a regular visitor to a fruiting tree in Max's orchid garden (where it also had a display area). We had beautiful views of the male (my best ever!) as he perched quietly digesting his meal. [E]

Melanocharitidae (Berrypeckers and Longbills)

BLACK BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis nigra*) – Just a couple of birds with a mixed flock on our final visit to Varirata. [E]

LEMON-BREASTED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis longicauda*) – A lone female near the Bailey Bridge in the Tari Gap. [E]

FAN-TAILED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis versteri*) – Cynthia, Lane, and I had great looks at a fancy male sitting on the trail during an afternoon break at Ambua; another male was seen at the Pigites trail head. After looking at photos of various berrypeckers, I've concluded that those dull colored, fleshy-gaped birds seen at Kumul were actually females or juveniles of this species, rather than Streaked Berrypeckers as we first thought. [E]

YELLOW-BELLIED LONGBILL (*Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*) – Heard a couple of times around Kumul, but stayed resolutely out of sight. [E*]

DWARF HONEYEATER (*Toxorhamphus iliolophus*) – We finally caught up with this tiny species on our final visit to Varirata, though it was pretty tough to get a good view of this active little guy. Note that despite the name, this and the next species are longbills, not honeyeaters at all. [E]

PYGMY HONEYEATER (*Toxorhamphus pygmaeum*) – Good views of a responsive bird along Boy's Town Road. [E]

Paramythiidae (Tit Berrypecker, Crested Berrypecker)

TIT BERRYPECKER (*Oreocharis arfaki*) – Numerous at Ambua, where a big group (20+) were frequent visitors to the fruiting tree. This was also the most commonly seen bird along the Pigites track, so much so that they were kind of in the way whenever we were trying to get on anything else! [E]

CRESTED BERRYPECKER (*Paramythia montium*) – A beautiful pair along the road just below the Tari Gap, then multiple sightings at Kumul. This lovely bird was Sarah's pick for bird of the trip. [E]

Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)

BLUE JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*) – Heard daily around Kiunga, though our lone 'view' was a flash of feathers as one flew across Boy's Town Road. [E*]

CHESTNUT-BACKED JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa castanonota*) – It took a lot of work, but we finally found a responsive bird at Varirata and lured it up onto a mossy log for decent views, keeping us from going jewel-babbler-less for the trip! [E]

Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)

BLACK-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus nigripectus*) – A charming and beautiful little bird, reminiscent of a tody-flycatcher. We had several nice views at Ambua, then saw it again at Kumul. [E]

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

GREAT WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus maximus*) – Numerous around the lodge at Ambua, where their habit of huddling shoulder to shoulder as if to stay warm (up to 10 birds were seen in one such huddle) was particularly endearing. [E]

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – Smaller than usual numbers in the lowlands around Kiunga and Port Moresby.

Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

MOUNTAIN PELTOPS (*Peltops montanus*) – A distant pair across the ravine from the helipad at Ambua were the only ones we saw. [E]

LOWLAND PELTOPS (*Peltops blainvillii*) – Quite common and seen most days in the lowlands at Karawari and Kiunga. [E]

BLACK-BACKED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus mentalis*) – Small numbers in the open treed savanna areas below Varirata NP and at PAU.

HOODED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus cassicus*) – More of a forest bird than the preceding species, though they do occur together along the entrance to Varirata. This was much more widespread, and we saw them throughout the lowland regions. [E]

BLACK BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus quoyi*) – Mainly occurs above the other two species, and we saw them most often in the Ambua/Tari region.

Campephagidae (Cuckoo-shrikes)

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – The common cuckoo-shrike in the Port Moresby savanna region. Many of these birds were likely migrants from Australia, though there is also a local breeding population in the area.

STOUT-BILLED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina caeruleogrisea*) – Our only one was a fine male that gave us great views near the picnic area at Varirata. [E]

BARRED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina lineata*) – Nice looks at a pair from the lookout at Varirata NP. The male of this New Guinea form is completely gray, with no barring, unlike the birds of northern Australia, and this form may well be a different species from the Aussie ones.

BOYER'S CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina boyeri*) – The only cuckoo-shrike (other than the much larger Stout-billed) with chestnut wing linings, and thus easily identified when seen well. We saw these birds regularly around Kiunga, and also had them at Varirata. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina papuensis papuensis*) – Numerous and conspicuous around Karawari, but not seen at any other site.

CICADABIRD (*Coracina tenuirostris*) – A couple of males were calling and interacting in some tall Casuarinas in the Tari Valley.

GRAY-HEADED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina schisticeps*) – Seen in small numbers in the Kiunga region. Males are a bit tricky to tell apart from several other species, but those gray-headed females are sure distinctive. [E]

BLACK-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina montana*) – A pair of these highland forest birds put in an appearance on our first visit to the Tari Gap, but they didn't stick around long, and there were a lot of other new birds in view at the

time, so the views could have been better. [E]

GOLDEN CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Campochaera sloetii*) – A real dazzler among cuckoo-shrikes! We had a couple of nice views during boat rides along the Elevala and Dei Rivers. [E]

VARIED TRILLER (*Lalage leucomela*) – Seen in small numbers at Varirata and Kiunga.

BLACK-BROWED TRILLER (*Lalage atrovirens*) – The easiest of the north slope specials to find; we had these birds pretty much right away after our arrival at Karawari, and saw them many times daily during our stay. [E]

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

DWARF WHISTLER (*Pachycare flavogriseum*) – A wonderful little bird, and we had great views of one in a mixed flock on our final day at Varirata. Recent work has shown that this bird is not a whistler at all, but rather an aberrant Acanthizid, more closely related to thornbills, scrubwrens and gerygones! Who saw that coming? [E]

RUFOUS-NAPED WHISTLER (*Aleadryas rufinucha*) – Surprisingly we saw only one at Ambua, but they were common around Kumul where we saw them daily. [E]

BROWN-BACKED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala modesta*) – As above, we saw just one in the Ambua region, then several more at Kumul. [E]

GRAY-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala griseiceps*) – Heard along Boy's Town Road, but completely uninterested in playback. [*]

SCLATER'S WHISTLER (*Pachycephala soror*) – A male was seen during an afternoon break at Ambua by Lane, Cynthia, and me. [E]

REGENT WHISTLER (*Pachycephala schlegelii*) – Hmmm, seems we have a whistler trend here: again we saw just one male in the Ambua region, then had several sightings of this brilliant whistler at Kumul. [E]

BLACK-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala monacha*) – Fairly common in disturbed highland valleys with lots of Casuarina trees. We saw this species in the Tari Valley, outside the coffee shop in Mt. Hagen, and also along the entrance road to Varirata, as we were trying to call in White-bellied Whistler. [E]

RUFOUS SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla megarrhyncha*) – Aka Little Shrike-thrush; seen or heard at a number of sites throughout the country.

HOODED PITOUI (*Pitohui dichrous*) – Probably the easiest of the pitohuis to see well, this species cooperated nicely at Varirata, where we had no fewer than 7 birds on our first visit, and a few more on our follow up. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED PITOUI (*Pitohui incertus*) – Quite a sneaky bird, but we managed some reasonable looks at a responsive trio in some tall forest along the Elevala River. [E]

RUSTY PITOUI (*Pitohui ferrugineus*) – A curious pair showed pretty well, despite being very stealthy, behind the helipad at Karawari. [E]

CRESTED PITOUI (*Pitohui cristatus*) – We heard this species's incredible song on our final visit to Varirata. I have yet to see one! [E*]

VARIABLE PITOUI (*Pitohui kirhocephalus*) – As the name suggests, this bird comes in a variety of plumages. We saw two forms; first we had nice views of a couple of birds with pale gray heads just outside the restaurant at Karawari, and then we saw one of the brown hooded forms at KM 17 in Kiunga. [E]

WATTLED PLOUGHBILL (*Eulacestoma nigropectus*) – We couldn't have seen this bizarre little bird any better. After hearing one sing near the Bailey Bridge above Ambua, I did a little playback and the bird blasted in, then sat out in the open on a roadside perch, long enough for us to enjoy scope views of it! [E]

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LONG-TAILED SHRIKE (*Lanius schach stresemanni*) – Small numbers in disturbed areas of the highlands around Ambua and Kumul. This isolated population may soon prove to deserve full species status, rather than to be treated as a race of this species.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

BROWN ORIOLE (*Oriolus szalayi*) – Numerous and noisy throughout the lowlands, where they occupy the same habitat, and generally resemble, the also widespread Helmeted Friarbird. [E]

GREEN FIGBIRD (*Sphecothebes viridis*) – In PNG pretty much restricted to the Port Moresby savanna region. Most of ours were seen at PAU, though we also saw one on the grounds of the Holiday Inn.

Dicruridae (Drongos)

PAPUAN DRONGO (*Chaetorhynchus papuensis*) – Called Mountain Drongo in the field guide. Paolo was the only one to see this bird on our first visit to Varirata, but we all caught up with it on our return, when we saw one with a large mixed

flock that also held the Dwarf Whistler, among others. [E]

SPANGLED DRONGO (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) – Common throughout the lower elevation regions. The resident race, carbonarius, calls differently than the Australian migrant form and could be a different species. Most, if not all of the birds we saw would have been carbonarius, though it's possible some migrants were at Kiunga.

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

WILLIE-WAGTAIL (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – Abundant, and pretty much ubiquitous; we missed this species on only two days.

FRIENDLY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albolimbata*) – A couple of birds near the cabins at Ambua, then especially friendly at Kumul, where they often hung out near the lodge. [E]

CHESTNUT-BELLIED FANTAIL (*Rhipidura hyperythra*) – Tricky to see this trip, though we had them on both visits to Varirata. Still, I think everyone ultimately got nice looks. [E]

SOOTY THICKET-FANTAIL (*Rhipidura threnothorax*) – Heard at Kiunga and Varirata, but this is a species that I have yet to see. [E*]

WHITE-BELLIED THICKET-FANTAIL (*Rhipidura leucothorax leucothorax*) – Very common, especially by voice, in the lowlands. We also had fine views, my best ever, in fact, at Karawari, after I'd recorded a bird and played back its own song. [E]

BLACK FANTAIL (*Rhipidura atra*) – Lane, Cynthia and I had good looks at a male with a mixed flock along the entryway to Ambua during an afternoon break. [E]

DIMORPHIC FANTAIL (*Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*) – Our only record was of a pair of birds, both with black and rufous tails, near the Bailey Bridge in the Tari Gap. [E]

RUFOUS-BACKED FANTAIL (*Rhipidura rufidorsa*) – One was seen briefly a couple of times at Karawari, and we also heard this species in the Kiunga region. [E]

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

GOLDEN MONARCH (*Carterornis chrysomela*) – This snazzy monarch was seen nicely several times, though the highlight was that scope view of a brilliant male sitting on a palm frond right out in the open along Boy's Town Road. [E]

BLACK-WINGED MONARCH (*Monarcha frater frater*) – Luis and I had a quick look at one with a mixed flock on our second visit to Varirata.

BLACK MONARCH (*Symposiachrus axillaris*) – These birds are very similar in looks and behavior to male Black Fantails, with which they often occur, though this species has a little white pectoral tuft and lacks the fantails white eyebrow. We saw these birds near the cabins at Ambua a couple of times. [E]

SPOT-WINGED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus guttula*) – A common member of most mixed flocks at Varirata. We had at least half a dozen on our first visit, and several more on our return. [E]

FRILLED MONARCH (*Arses telescopthalmus*) – Not uncommon at Varirata, though they never cooperated quite as well as we'd have liked. Males were particularly tough, and most of the birds we saw (including one at Kiunga) were females. [E]

RUFOUS-COLLARED MONARCH (*Arses insularis*) – A few sightings of this north slope specialty (which until recently was lumped with Frilled Monarch) at Karawari, though as always, they were flighty and elusive. [E]

TORRENT-LARK (*Grallina bruijnii*) – At the start of the Pigites track, local guide Max heard these birds calling from along the river below us and by racing upstream, we were able to get a nice view of the birds flying upriver and eventually out of sight. An exceptionally shy species, so this was a nice find. [E]

LEADEN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra rubecula*) – A pair in the savanna along the Varirata entrance road were likely to belong to the resident breeding population rather than being Australian migrants, which tend to prefer forest edge over savanna habitats.

SATIN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*) – A subadult male in riparian growth along the Dei River was an unexpected find, as they are a migrant we seldom record on this tour, and it was a first for me in the country.

SHINING FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra alecto*) – A few decent views of these birds in riparian areas around Kiunga, but best views were probably of a pair next to the "terminal" at the Karawari air strip.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

GRAY CROW (*Corvus tristis*) – Generally a very tatty looking bird. We saw these strange crows daily around Kiunga. [E]

TORRESIAN CROW (*Corvus orru orru*) – Small numbers in the Port Moresby area.

Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-paradise)

- GLOSSY-MANTLED MANUCODE** (*Manucodia ater*) – The most commonly encountered of the manucodes; we saw and/or heard this species on many days at Varirata, Karawari, and Kiunga, where they seemed especially numerous (more so than usual) along the rivers. [E]
- CRINKLE-COLLARED MANUCODE** (*Manucodia chalybatus*) – Singles on two days along Boy's Town Road. The second sighting was of a bird carrying nesting material. [EN]
- TRUMPET MANUCODE** (*Phonygammus keraudrenii*) – Pretty common around Kiunga, where we saw them quite often, and heard their very untrumpet-like calls even more.
- SHORT-TAILED PARADIGALLA** (*Paradigalla brevicauda*) – Only two sightings, both probably of the same bird, at the fruiting tree at Ambua. Not one of the flashier BOPs, but that chartreuse wattle on the forehead is attractive. [E]
- RIBBON-TAILED ASTRAPIA** (*Astrapia mayeri*) – A few sightings in the upper parts of the Tari Gap included a couple of brief views of long plumed males, which was good, as the only adult male we saw at Kumul had pretty short plumes. Of course, he was still impressive, enough so that Jeff chose it as his top bird of the trip. [E]
- PRINCESS STEPHANIE'S ASTRAPIA** (*Astrapia stephaniae*) – Commonly see around Ambua, though most of them were females. We did, however, see an adult male with an impressively long tail below the Bailey Bridge at the Gap. [E]
- LAWES'S PAROTIA** (*Parotia lawesii*) – Parotias are also known as 6-wired BOPs as the males have 6 head plumes. We saw several females, and one gorgeous male (though he had only 4 head plumes) in the Ambua fruiting tree. [E]
- KING-OF-SAXONY BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Pteridophora alberti*) – A fan favorite, and Luis and Cynthia's pick for bird of the trip. We had stunning views of a male calling from an open perch near the Bailey Bridge, as well as numerous females. At Kumul, we only found young birds at the display areas. [E]
- MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD** (*Ptiloris magnificus*) – This is the one we heard, but never could track down, at Kiunga. [*]
- MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD** (*Ptiloris magnificus intercedens*) – This form may be split from the above based mainly on their very different calls. We heard the growling call regularly at Varirata. [E*]
- SUPERB BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Lophorina superba*) – Not uncommon in the highlands, and we had some nice views of displaying males down in the Tari Valley. [E]
- BLACK SICKLEBILL** (*Epimachus fastuosus*) – A couple of females put in an appearance at the Ambua fruiting tree. [E]
- BROWN SICKLEBILL** (*Epimachus meyeri*) – Seen well at both Ambua and Kumul. At the latter site, females were regular visitors to the feeders, and we saw some fabulous long-tailed males along the Pigites track. It was also great to hear the incredible 'machine gun' rattling call if these birds. [E]
- MAGNIFICENT BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Cicinnurus magnificus*) – As we walked the final couple of kilometers up to the Lesser BOP lek below Kumul, we heard this species calling from up the hill. After a bit of searching, Jerry finally spotted a beautiful male (my first ever male of this species!) in a fruiting tree, and we had incredible scope views of him. This was Jerry's choice for bird of the trip, and I must admit, it was one of my (many) favorites, too! [E]
- KING BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Cicinnurus regius*) – Heard regularly in the Kiunga region, and we had superb looks at a displaying male high in a tangle of vines along the Elevala River. [E]
- TWELVE-WIRED BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Seleucidis melanoleucus*) – We were a bit short changed as the male we saw at Karawari had only 11 wires, but we still enjoyed the sight of him calling and displaying on a dead snag for a long while at dawn one morning. We also had a couple of birds along the Elevala River. [E]
- LESSER BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea minor*) – Despite a rather late arrival at the lek, we were still treated to a great show as a couple of females dropped in at the lek and set off a frenzy of calling and displaying. [E]
- GREATER BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea apoda*) – Last year it appeared that the KM 17 lek was being over run by hybrids, causing some concern that pure Greaters would soon be a rarity here, but there was good news this year. Apart from a Raggiana or two, all the males appeared to be pure Greaters! Good too, was the display, the best I'd ever witnessed here. Visits by several females had the males in a frenzy, and we enjoyed some amazing performances. I don't know how those females could have resisted those efforts! [E]
- RAGGIANA BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea raggiana*) – Per usual, this was the first BOP we saw (excluding manucodes, anyway) and once again, we were treated to a great show. Several males were on site when we arrived at the Varirata NP lek, and we didn't have to wait at all to get excellent looks at a couple of full-plumaged birds. Also seen regularly in the Kiunga region. [E]
- BLUE BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea rudolphi*) – Daily views of this scarce species at Ambua, where several females and juveniles were regulars at the fruiting tree. In addition, we also had fine views of a calling male on a display perch in the Tari Valley, and some of us got to enjoy a young male hanging upside down, just for practice, before heading into the fruiting tree for a snack. [E]
- LESSER MELAMPITTA** (*Melampitta lugubris*) – Lane managed to get a glimpse of one inside the forest at the Tari Gap,

while the rest of us caught up with a responsive, but sneaky, bird near the orchid garden at Kumul. Though this and the Greater Melampitta are currently included in the BOP family, it is likely that they do not belong there at all, and in fact, they are apparently not all that closely related to each other either. [E]

Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

LESSER GROUND-ROBIN (*Amalocichla incerta*) – I believe Luis was the only one to see this species, one of which approached silently about the same time as we were trying for the logrunner in the Tari Gap. [E]

TORRENT FLYCATCHER (*Monachella muelleriana*) – A pair of these lovely little birds were seen nicely from the Lai River bridge below Kumul. [E]

LEMON-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Microeca flavigaster*) – A few vocal birds were seen well in the savanna habitat just before the entrance to Varirata NP.

CANARY FLYCATCHER (*Microeca papuana*) – Not uncommon in highland forests, and we had some good views of them, generally with mixed flocks, at both Ambua and Kumul. [E]

GARNET ROBIN (*Eugerygone rubra*) – Heard at both Ambua and Kumul, but we just couldn't lure one into view. [E*]

WHITE-FACED ROBIN (*Tregellasia leucops*) – Super views of one of these attractive robins inside the forest on our final day's visit to Varirata NP.

BLACK-SIDED ROBIN (*Poecilodryas hypoleuca*) – As always, this bird was incredibly vocal and even more elusive. We heard them at both Karawari and Kiunga, but at most we had fleeting glimpses of one at Karawari as it whizzed overhead from one concealed perch to another. [E]

BLACK-THROATED ROBIN (*Poecilodryas albonotata*) – Lane spotted one of these highland robins in a little mixed flock along the Highland Highway just above Ambua Lodge. [E]

WHITE-WINGED ROBIN (*Peneothello sigillata*) – After a couple of brief sightings at the Tari Gap, we enjoyed daily great looks at these perky birds in the gardens at Kumul. [E]

BLUE-GRAY ROBIN (*Peneothello cyanus*) – Not uncommon at Ambua, mainly along the driveway and the main road just above the lodge. [E]

ASHY ROBIN (*Heteromyias albispecularis*) – Another super-skulker of the highland forests, and one I'd never managed to see before. But this time, we found a responsive bird near the Macgregor's Bowerbird bower in the Tari Gap, and most folks had beautiful looks at it. Though often lumped with Gray-headed Robin of northern Australia, this species differs both vocally and visually (and I'd never appreciated how much until I saw it!) and is best treated as a full species endemic to PNG. [E]

NORTHERN SCRUB-ROBIN (*Drymodes superciliaris*) – Heard on our second visit to Varirata, though they seemed to move away in response to playback. [*]

Eupetidae (Rail-babbler and Ifrita)

BLUE-CAPPED IFRITA (*Ifrita kowaldi*) – A fantastic little bird that gave us some great views both at Ambua and Kumul. Currently placed in a family with the Malaysian Rail-babbler, though this just seems so wrong! Apparently it, like the pitohuis, is poisonous; perhaps it belongs in a family of its own. [E]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PACIFIC SWALLOW (*Hirundo tahitica*) – The only swallow of the trip; this species was common and widespread, and seen most days.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

ISLAND LEAF-WARBLER (*Phylloscopus poliocephalus*) – Good views of our only pair at the Blue BOP display site in the Tari Valley.

Megaluridae (Grassbirds and Allies)

TAWNY GRASSBIRD (*Megalurus timoriensis*) – Fairly common in the montane grasslands. We saw it best on the walk up to the Lesser BOP lek. This highland form is often split off as a separate species from the Australian and PNG lowlands form based on different calls, habitat and morphology and is called Papuan Grassbird (*M. papuensis*).

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

PIED BUSHCHAT (*Saxicola caprata*) – Numerous in disturbed areas throughout the highlands.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

ISLAND THRUSH (*Turdus poliocephalus*) – First seen in the grasslands at the top of the Tari Gap, then daily at Kumul where they are regular feeder visitors.

Zosteropidae (White-eyes)

BLACK-FRONTED WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops minor*) – Common at Varirata, but tough to see. Most of us got some decent views on our first visit, when we encountered a flock in the treetops just as we emerged from the trail out into the picnic area. [E]

CAPPED WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops fuscicapilla*) – Also known as Western Mountain White-eye. We had good views of a small flock about the same time as we saw our Island Leaf-warblers in the Tari Valley. [E]

NEW GUINEA WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops novaeguineae*) – White-eyes we heard near the Lesser BOP lek were this species. [E*]

Sturnidae (Starlings)

METALLIC STARLING (*Aplonis metallica*) – Abundant along the lowland rivers. Also a few were mixed in with the Singing Starlings at PAU. [N]

YELLOW-EYED STARLING (*Aplonis mystacea*) – Rather scarce in the Kiunga region, and seen poorly along the Dei River, but we had some good looks at several near the New Guinea Eagles. [E]

SINGING STARLING (*Aplonis cantoroides*) – God numbers in the late afternoon at PAU.

YELLOW-FACED MYNA (*Mino dumontii*) – Common throughout the lowlands, with a couple of nests located too, including our very first pair at Varirata. [EN]

GOLDEN MYNA (*Mino anais*) – Much less common along the lowland rivers than is the above species. We saw them well several times, but never better than those first gorgeous ones Sarah spotted along the Karawari. [E]

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

RED-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER (*Dicaeum geelvinkianum*) – Widespread and seen at many sites, but never more than a couple at a time.

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

BLACK SUNBIRD (*Leptocoma sericea*) – A common lowland species. Though this bird looks black in poor light, it is pretty dazzling when seen under the right lighting conditions.

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (*Cinnyris jugularis*) – A few birds on our boat trip along the Dei River.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – Jerry spotted our lone one in the grassy verges of the Tari air strip.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Common in Port Moresby and Mt. Hagen. [I]

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – A small population has become recently established around the Port Moresby airport. [I]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

MOUNTAIN FIRETAIL (*Oreostruthus fuliginosus*) – Scarce this trip; we had just one sighting of a pair along the road near the Tari Gap. [E]

STREAK-HEADED MUNIA (*Lonchura tristissima leucosticta*) – Identifiable if not spectacular; a lone bird kept pace with the bus for a few meters as we drove out to KM 17 one afternoon. This race is treated as a good species by some authorities, so watch for it to be split. [E]

HOODED MUNIA (*Lonchura spectabilis*) – Fairly common in disturbed grassy areas of the highlands. Most of our sightings were from up around Ambua. [E]

GRAY-HEADED MUNIA (*Lonchura caniceps*) – A couple of birds right outside the window of the departure lounge of the Port Moresby airport as we awaited our flight to Hagen/Karawari. [E]

MAMMALS

SPECKLED DASYURE (*Neophascogale lorentzii*) – A couple of these small, squirrel-like marsupials were seen nicely in the Tari Gap. [E]

CALABY'S PADEMELON (*Thylogale calabyi*) – This is the small wallaby-like mammal that Jeff saw one morning at Kumul.

GREATER FLYING FOX (*Pteropus neohibernicus*) – Some big roosts near Ymas Lake, and quite a few over the Fly River at dawn.

BLACK-TAILED GIANT RAT (*Uromys arak*) – These were the large rodents that emerged onto the Kumul feeders after dark. [E]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 310 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa