

NEW GUINEA & AUSTRALIA 2011

Oct 6, 2011 to Oct 24, 2011

Phil Gregory

This was a fun and pretty gentle tour with some fantastic birds and good weather throughout. We began as ever in Cairns, where Mangrove Robin was easy (and sans tape), and we saw a fair selection of shorebirds including Terek Sandpiper, Gray-tailed Tattler, Great Knot, and Broad-billed Sandpiper, had Radjah Shelduck still at Centenary Lakes, an unexpected 7-foot saltwater crocodile sunning at the golf course pond, and very nice Lovely Fairywrens. Cattana wetlands gave us Crimson Finch and White-browed Crake on a quick visit.

Luck was with us at Cassowary House, where we had the amazing iconic female Cassowary, and Pied, Spectacled, White-eared, and Black-faced monarchs. We then saw almost all the Tablelands endemics including a fine male Golden Bowerbird and nice Fernwren, plus had some unusually good close interactions with foraging Chowchillas. Sadly the Australian Painted-snipe had gone from my friend's place, but we did score well with Rufous Owl.

Varirata was very good: Barred Owlet-nightjar was in the usual hole, and bonus Buff-breasted Paradise-Kingfishers plus Brown-headed Paradise, also Yellow-billed, Variable and Rufous-bellied Kookaburra meant 5 lifer kingfishers for most. Raggiana Birds-of-paradise (BOPs) were right at the end of the season but showed well and were still fairly well dressed, and we got a male Growling Riflebird to fly over twice. Gurney's Eagle being mobbed by what may be my first Peregrines at Varirata was a nice sighting too; a very good day up here. We heard Thick-billed Ground-pigeon for the first time in a while here, also Pheasant Pigeon but as ever quite distant, and some folks got onto Black-billed Brush-turkey which is very hard to see.

Kumul was good too with decent weather, just some afternoon rain. We had nice looks at the feeder birds including a stonking male Ribbon-tailed Astrapia and amazing Brown Sicklebills, plus better than usual views of male Blue BOP and King-of-Saxony. Crested Satinbirds showed well with fine looks at a pair in the forest, and we also had a pair of Loria's Satinbirds along the Pigites Track. Archbold's and Yellow-breasted bowerbirds gave good views, an Archbold's Nightjar at dusk gave a brief flyby on the main road, and Walter saw a Dusky (New Guinea) Woodcock on the trail when he was off on one of his photo wanderings. Tit-berrypecker was easy and we did well with Crested Berrypecker too, and the photo ops at the Lodge were again very nice with Max Mals's orchid garden a highlight.

Lamington was a super destination, with good weather and all the usuals including great looks at Logrunner, Paradise Riflebird, Green Catbird, Rose Robin, Red-browed Treecreeper and a wonderful Spotted Pardalote, but once again no Albert's Lyrebird, a sign of the times. Australian Owlet-Nightjar sitting out in daylight at the ancient roost site was a bonus. Lota mangroves gave us very good Mangrove Honeyeater, Mangrove Gerygone, and Collared Kingfisher.

Royal NP was a good finale, and at last I had a good weather period for this part of the tour after a couple of years with woeful conditions. We got a good Superb Lyrebird deep in cover but luckily visible at one spot! The heath gave us Tawny-crowned Honeyeater and Southern Emuwren, and our final sea watch at Garie Beach and Otford Lookout gave Wedge-tailed and Fluttering shearwaters and a distant Humpback Whale.

It was a memorable tour, a great snapshot of some fascinating birds, people, and places, and not a strenuous trip at all, with some marvelous photo ops. Our 2012 tour should be another great adventure?



The Superb Fairywren was indeed superb and a trip favorite! (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

My thanks as ever to Karen at the Field Guides office, to Stephen, Leonard, and Daniel in Port Moresby, Sue at Cassowary House, and to the group for coming, especially to Bob for his help with the parking and packing. Safe travels and hope to see you again at some point.

--Phil

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

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

Casuariidae (Cassowaries)

SOUTHERN CASSOWARY (*Casuarius casuarius*) – The big female Missy was very helpful at Cassowary House, first seen on the road nearby then coming in like the star she is, one of the world's great birds for sure.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

MAGPIE GOOSE (*Anseranas semipalmata*) – Nice looks on a wetland near Mareeba, an odd goose-like creature with semi-webbed feet and the habit of often perching in trees; usually classified in its own family too.

SPOTTED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna guttata*) – Nice looks at 5 at the PAU.

PLUMED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna eytoni*) – Great views at Hastie's Swamp.

WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) – A few at Mareeba and the PAU.

BLACK SWAN (*Cygnus atratus*) – Three at Mareeba wetlands were all we saw.

RADJAH SHELDUCK (*Tadorna radjah*) – One at Centenary Lake in Cairns was a good pick up, as they are quite scarce locally.

GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus pulchellus*) – A few at Mareeba and the PAU, a charming little bird with a complex plumage.

MANED DUCK (*Chenonetta jubata*) – Good looks around Brisbane and Sydney, also called Australian Wood Duck.

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) – Widespread in small numbers.

GRAY TEAL (*Anas gracilis*) – Just 3 at Hastie's Swamp and 2 at Mareeba wetlands.

CHESTNUT TEAL (*Anas castanea*) – This was a nice find on the river at Royal NP, with 3 pairs being quite obliging.

WHITE-EYED DUCK (*Aythya australis*) – Hardhead is the real name, and we had fine views at Hastie's Swamp, Lake Tinaroo and Mareeba wetlands.

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

AUSTRALIAN BRUSH-TURKEY (*Alectura lathamii*) – Cassowary House offers a free one for every night spent with us! There was an active mound at Lamington, and that sideways fan tail is plain bizarre. [E]

BLACK-BILLED BRUSH-TURKEY (*Talegalla fuscirostris*) – Heard at Varirata and a couple of folks got onto them skulking back in the forest, a lucky sighting as they are very shy. The mound along the Lookout Trail is huge and has been in use for decades. [E]

ORANGE-FOOTED SCRUBFOWL (*Megapodius reinwardt*) – Seen at Cairns and Cassowary House, with a great pointed head shape.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)



The fantastically vocal Eastern Whipbird (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

BROWN QUAIL (*Coturnix ypsilophora*) – Two flushed at Max's orchid garden.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – Small numbers on various wetlands inc. the PAU.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus australis*) – Three on Lake Barrine. This is an endemic and very isolated race here and in NZ.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER (*Puffinus pacificus*) – About 70 offshore from Royal NP on a very calm day.

FLUTTERING SHEARWATER (*Puffinus gavia*) – Some of the small black and white shearwaters off Royal were brownish above and looked to be this species. We call the indeterminates Flutton's Shearwaters as this and Hutton's are hard to tell at long range.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – Widespread in small numbers.

GREAT CORMORANT (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Phalacrocorax carbo novaehollandiae*) – One at Mareeba and a few at Royal NP.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) – Small numbers at various sites inc. the PAU.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

AUSTRALASIAN DARTER (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) – Small numbers around Cairns and one pretending to be a soaring raptor at Royal NP.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AUSTRALIAN PELICAN (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) – A few around the tablelands, then the odd sight of 14 heading south on the seawatch at Royal, with 3 coming north later.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

PACIFIC HERON (*Ardea pacifica*) – Long ago renamed White-necked Heron, we had one at Hastie's Swamp.

GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Ardea alba modesta*) – Small numbers around Cairns.

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – More numerous than Great Egret, and also seen at the PAU.

WHITE-FACED HERON (*Egretta novaehollandiae*) – Amazingly few, really just a couple at Lota on the main tour.

LITTLE EGRET (LITTLE) (*Egretta garzetta nigripes*) – Three day records, from Cairns and Lota.

PACIFIC REEF-HERON (*Egretta sacra*) – Two at Cairns, one white morph and one dark.

PIED HERON (*Egretta picata*) – Great views at the PAU, many in full breeding dress.

CATTLE EGRET (ASIAN) (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) – Some on the tablelands and around Port Moresby, this is the eastern form which is split by the IOC.

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – A couple at Cairns Esplanade.

RUFOUS NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – Two at the PAU, this is the Nankeen Night Heron.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Two near Mareeba then 5 at Hastie's Swamp.

AUSTRALIAN IBIS (*Threskiornis molucca*) – Small numbers, including two at the PAU and some foraging at MacDonalds in Sylvania

STRAW-NECKED IBIS (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Quite a few around in the north.

ROYAL SPOONBILL (*Platalea regia*) – Nice views at Hastie's Swamp.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*) – Singles at Cairns Esplanade, this taxon is now split as



The stunning male Ribbon-tailed Astrapia: a true work of art! (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

Eastern Osprey but the Clements guys have yet to pick up on it.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PACIFIC BAZA (*Aviceda subcristata*) – Heard at Cassowary House, and George gripped us off with one photographed at Wondecla.

AUSTRALIAN KITE (*Elanus axillaris*) – Very sparse, we had just two Black-shouldered Kites on the tablelands. No one here has the faintest idea what an Australian Kite is, we have 6 species of kites in Australia.....

BLACK KITE (*Milvus migrans*) – Widespread in small numbers, especially at the PAU and Mt Hagen, also swooping over the road at Kumul.

WHISTLING KITE (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Small numbers around the tablelands and the PAU.

BRAHMINY KITE (*Haliastur indus*) – Singles at various sites including Lota and the PAU.

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – One at Cairns.

SPOTTED HARRIER (*Circus assimilis*) – One sat on a fence post near Bromfield Swamp, then flying off for a close albeit brief view.

VARIABLE GOSHAWK (*Accipiter hiogaster*) – This was seen at the Holiday Inn in POM, with photo evidence too.

GRAY GOSHAWK (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) – One was over the sports ground at Atherton, and we saw a nest at Black Mountain Road. [E]

COLLARED SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) – One at Yorkey's Knob, the notched tail is a good character.

GURNEY'S EAGLE (*Aquila gurneyi*) – Two were soaring over at Varirata, only my second sighting from here of what is a rather rare and localized species.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AUSTRALIAN KESTREL (*Falco cenchroides*) – One or two on the tablelands only, amazingly few.

AUSTRALIAN HOBBY (*Falco longipennis*) – A fantastic view of a perched bird on the Tablelands, just by the Spotted Harrier.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Two were mobbing a soaring Gurney's Eagle at the car park at Varirata, they may be my first from here.

Otididae (Bustards)

AUSTRALIAN BUSTARD (*Ardeotis australis*) – Nine of these magnificent creatures were out in a ploughed field near Walkamin, with the necks stained red by the soil and a large bush-fire raging nearby.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CHESTNUT FOREST-RAIL (*Rallina rubra*) – Great views of a calling female at Kumul Lodge, she came really close and sat up on a log calling. We more usually see the males which seem more confiding, interesting to note it is the females that give the "kik' call. [E]

BUFF-BANDED RAIL (*Gallirallus philippensis*) – One at Centenary Lakes was spotted by Lynda, then there was one at Hastie's Swamp.

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE (*Porzana cinerea*) – Great looks at a couple at Cattana wetlands.

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Porphyrio porphyrio melanotus*) – This black backed race melanotus is sometimes split as Pacific Swamphen, we saw them at various wetlands including the PAU.

DUSKY MOORHEN (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Scattered records, with some great looks at Royal NP.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Two at Lake Barrine, not a common bird here.

Gruidae (Cranes)

SARUS CRANE (*Grus antigone*) – Small numbers on the tablelands, max. 30.

BROLGA (*Grus rubicunda*) – They were with Sarus Cranes on the tablelands which made for nice comparisons, we had 10 one day and 15 on another.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)



"Don't make me come up there!" Missy the Southern Cassowary stares down the onlookers on the balcony. (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

BUSH THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus grallarius*) – 11 in Cairns cemetery and a couple at Yungaburra with one near Mareeba, a bizarre creature.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

MASKED LAPWING (*Vanellus miles*) – Widespread, and 3 of the southern nominate race at Hastie's Swamp were unusual this far north, although we later saw lots around Brisbane.

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis fulva*) – Two at the PAU.

LESSER SAND-PLOVER (*Charadrius mongolus*) – We saw 3 at the Esplanade and had some good comparisons with Greater. These birds are either nominate or *stegmanni*.

GREATER SAND-PLOVER (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) – Up to 6 at the Esplanade.

RED-CAPPED PLOVER (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – George got to see one at the Esplanade early one morning.

BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL (*Elsayornis melanops*) – One near Mareeba and a couple at Hastie's Swamp.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

PIED OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus longirostris*) – Just 2 at Lota.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

PIED STILT (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) – A single at Hastie's Swamp and another at Lota. Amazingly Clements splits this from Black-winged Stilt and the Oz list does not, about the only time he gets it right and we don't!

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

COMB-CRESTED JACANA (*Irediparra gallinacea*) – Seen at the PAU and Cattana wetlands.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

TEREK SANDPIPER (*Xenus cinereus*) – Two at Cairns on each visit.

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – One at the PAU.

GRAY-TAILED TATTLER (*Tringa brevipes*) – Up to 15 at Cairns.

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – One at the PAU was unexpected.

WHIMBREL (SIBERIAN) (*Numenius phaeopus variegatus*) – Up to 12 at Cairns, now split from the dark rumped Hudsonian Whimbrel.

FAR EASTERN CURLEW (*Numenius madagascariensis*) – Up to 6 at Cairns and 10 at Lota, overall a rare shorebird with around 5000 in total.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (SIBERIAN) (*Limosa limosa melanuroides*) – Up to 6 at Cairns.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – Very few, just 10 or so at Cairns and a handful at Lota.

GREAT KNOT (*Calidris tenuirostris*) – About 30 were at Cairns.

RED-NECKED STINT (*Calidris ruficollis*) – Around 100 of these tiny peeps were at Cairns Esplanade.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER (*Calidris acuminata*) – About 30 at Cairns Esplanade. on each visit

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – About 30 at Cairns.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER (*Limicola falcinellus*) – One at Cairns Esplanade was a useful pick up.

LATHAM'S SNIPE (*Gallinago hardwickii*) – Great views of 3 at Hastie's Swamp.

Turnicidae (Buttonquail)

PAINTED BUTTONQUAIL (*Turnix varius*) – One was walking across the main road up to the Lamington Plateau and flushed as I almost ran it over!

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

SILVER GULL (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) – A few at Cairns and Lota. [E]

LITTLE TERN (*Sternula albifrons*) – A few at Cairns.



A brilliant Red-browed Firetail, or is that firebill? (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – Nice looks at Cairns Esplanade and Lota.

COMMON TERN (SIBERIAN) (*Sterna hirundo longipennis*) – Six at the Esplanade were unusual here.

GREAT CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bergii*) – Amazingly the only ones were off Garie Beach.

LESSER CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bengalensis*) – One flew by at Cairns Esplanade, where they are scarce visitors.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Seen in the big urban centres in Australia. [I]

WHITE-HEADED PIGEON (*Columba leucomela*) – Great views of a pair with an immature at Chambers after a flyby at Cassowary House. [E]

SPOTTED DOVE (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – A few around Cairns. [I]

BROWN CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia phasianella*) – Seen along Black Mountain Road and heard at Lamington. [E]

SLENDER-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia amboinensis*) – A few seen at Varirata and one near Kumul, a split from Brown Cuckoo-Dove with a very different voice. [E]

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) – A couple of flybys of this small rusty dove near Kumul. [E]

EMERALD DOVE (*Chalcophaps indica*) – Fantastic views of this beautiful little dove at Cassowary House. Now split by the IOC as Pacific Emerald Dove.

STEPHAN'S DOVE (*Chalcophaps stephani*) – This was heard calling at Varirata. [E*]

CRESTED PIGEON (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) – This striking species was seen near Mareeba and again near Brisbane. [E]

SQUATTER PIGEON (*Geophaps scripta*) – Great views of two right by where I stopped the truck to check near Mareeba, and one next day. It's a scarce and declining species. [E]

WONGA PIGEON (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*) – One very tame one at Lamington, and heard at Royal NP. Highly distinctive and in a monotypic genus. [E]

PEACEFUL DOVE (*Geopelia placida*) – Widespread in the north and a few around at the PAU.

BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE (*Geopelia humeralis*) – A few around Cairns and one at the PAU.

THICK-BILLED GROUND-PIGEON (*Trugon terrestris*) – Varirata [E*]

PHEASANT PIGEON (*Otidiphaps nobilis*) – One was calling at Varirata but as ever was way back out of sight. [E*]

WOMPOO FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – Seen really well at Cassowary House and Chambers.

PINK-SPOTTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) – 6 seen at Varirata with some good views of them perched up. [E]

ORANGE-FRONTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*) – These were amazing at the PAU and for the first time we got some really good photos, it's one of the scarcer doves too and it was great to see them so close. [E]

SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus superbus*) – Females seen well sat out in the open at Black Mt Road, and one at Varirata.

BEAUTIFUL FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus pulchellus*) – Sadly only heard at Varirata. [E*]

WHITE-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) – Heard up at Kumul Lodge, we were a tad unlucky not to see it. [E*]

ORANGE-BELLIED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) – Just one at Varirata. [E]

ZOE IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula zoeae*) – One flyby at Varirata. [E]

TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula spilorrhoea*) – Quite a few in Cairns, a few at the PAU and oddly some flying over Port Moresby city.

TOPKNOT PIGEON (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) – Small numbers on the tablelands, another very distinctive monotypic pigeon. [E]

PAPUAN MOUNTAIN-PIGEON (*Gymnophaps albertisii*) – Nice views up at Kumul where we got a few perched up.

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

RED-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*) – Nice looks at 6 of these magnificent birds feeding in a ploughed field near Mareeba, and one flying near Atherton later. Some kids in Centenary Park had kazoos that sounded remarkably like this species too! [E]

YELLOW-TAILED BLACK-COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) – Four flew across the highway at Royal, a BVD for sure. [E]

GALAH (*Eolophus roseicapilla*) – This lovely grey and strawberry pink cockatoo was seen well at Lota and near Canungra. [E]

LONG-BILLED CORELLA (*Cacatua tenuirostris*) – Great looks at Walnut Creek wetland, they seem to be well-established in this area now and are surely countable. [I]

LITTLE CORELLA (*Cacatua sanguinea*) – A few at Walnut Creek wetland, probably also of feral origin but now established.

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO (*Cacatua galerita*) – Small numbers on the tablelands and at Varirata (race triton in PNG) and then great looks at Royal NP.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

RAINBOW LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – Small numbers at most sites, the ones in PNG are split as Coconut Lorikeet by the IOC. There was nest in a tree hollow along Duck Creek Road, found as we checked for owl-nightjars.

SCALY-BREASTED LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*) – A couple of sightings near Cairns and Brisbane. [E]

GOLDIE'S LORIKEET (*Psittuteutes goldiei*) – Small flocks were by Kumul early each day, but feeding out of sight so we only got flight views. [E]

BLACK-CAPPED LORY (*Lorius lory*) – A few of these were around at Varirata but again only flight views, it's an amazing looking parrot. [E]

PAPUAN LORIKEET (*Charmosyna papou*) – Brief views at Kumul Lodge of this spectacular species. [E]

PLUM-FACED LORIKEET (*Oreopsittacus arfaki*) – A diminutive crushed emerald gem, but hard to see well! We had a few go over around Kumul. [E]

YELLOW-BILLED LORIKEET (*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*) – Some quite good looks at Kumul Lodge. [E]

DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – Great views of one by the mangroves in Cairns.

CRIMSON ROSELLA (*Platycercus elegans*) – Tame and very confiding at O'Reillys..... [E]

PALE-HEADED ROSELLA (*Platycercus adscitus*) – Great looks at the Mareeba stockyards. [E]

BREHM'S TIGER-PARROT (*Psittacella brehmii*) – This lumbering great parrot sits on the feeders at Kumul and is very photogenic there. [E]

RED-CHEEKED PARROT (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) – Nice looks at this noisy species at Varirata.

ECLECTUS PARROT (*Eclectus roratus*) – We were lucky and had good flyovers of 2 males at Varirata.

AUSTRALIAN KING-PARROT (*Alisterus scapularis*) – Tame and confiding at O'Reillys. [E]

PAPUAN KING-PARROT (*Alisterus chloropterus*) – Heard at both Varirata and near Kumul. [E*]

RED-WINGED PARROT (*Aprosmictus erythropterus*) – A fine male showed when we were checking the Aus Painted Snipe site.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

ORIENTAL CUCKOO (*Cuculus optatus*) – This was an unexpected find at Varirata, and it sat for ages. Sadly it's now split into two species, this and Himalayan Cuckoo *C. saturatus*, and they are inseparable unless calling. Most PNG records seem to be Oriental Cuckoo.

BRUSH CUCKOO (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – Good views at Henry Hannam Drive and then at Wapanemanda by the bowerbird site.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED CUCKOO (*Cacomantis castaneiventris*) – Heard at Varirata. [*]

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) – A fine migrant sat on power lines at Yorkeys Knob, and several at Lamington.

SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*) – We saw one at the Crater, and then a couple at lamington.

LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – One at Cairns in the mangroves.

LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx minutillus russatus*) – One along Black Mt Road, also called Gould's Bronze but now lumped into Little = Malay Bronze Cuckoo.

AUSTRALIAN KOEL (*Eudynamys cyanocephalus*) – Heard at various tableland sites and at Royal. [*]

CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – Three along Henry Hannam Drive, then great looks at 2 at Royal NP, they are not long back from wintering in PNG.

PHEASANT COUCAL (*Centropus phasianinus*) – A couple of sightings on the tablelands, and 4 at Varirata.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

SOOTY OWL (*Tyto tenebricosa*) – A falling bomb screech at O'Reillys when we were out after the boobook sounded like this species, way off in the forest. [*]

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – Fantastic looks and photos on the tablelands after spotlighting one night. This is now split as

Pacific Barn Owl *Tyto javanica*.

Strigidae (Owls)

RUFOUS OWL (*Ninox rufa*) – A great look at a roosting bird at Emerald Creek, they have been in this area for a few weeks but seem to come and go, so the chances of finding are moderate only, but paid off well for us with this big and rather elusive species.

SOUTHERN BOOBOOK (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) – Nice look at O'Reillys on the first night, and I did it again the second night and took ages to find a spot where we could see the bird sat in the big hoop pine that grows up through the centre of the lodge! Always nice to get owls....

JUNGLE HAWK-OWL (*Ninox theomacha*) – Heard from the cabin at Kumul in the small hours one morning, and known as Papuan Boobook. [E*]

Aegothelidae (Owlet-Nightjars)

BARRED OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles bennettii*) – This is the the third year at least that this bird or a descendant has been in the hole at Varirata, luckily for us! [E]

AUSTRALIAN OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles cristatus*) – Hooray, one was sitting out in daylight in a hole in the traditional tree at O'Reillys, we didn't even have to scratch or knock the trunk. They can be elusive so this was a very nice find.

Podargidae (Frogmouths)

PAPUAN FROGMOUTH (*Podargus papuensis*) – Great looks at 2 of these huge birds at the PAU.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

ARCHBOLD'S NIGHTJAR (*Eurostopodus archboldi*) – One flyby on the road at dusk near Kumul, after failing the first night. It's a rare and seldom seen species.

LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus macrurus*) – Heard at the spotlighting site near Yungaburra. [*]

Apodidae (Swifts)

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (*Collocalia esculenta*) – Common at Varirata and Kumul, boy are they hard to photograph!

MOUNTAIN SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus hirundinaceus*) – A few up at Kumul, very dark looking. [E]

AUSTRALIAN SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus terraereginae*) – A few seen over Black Mt Road. [E]

PACIFIC SWIFT (*Apus pacificus*) – One was seen by a couple of folks over Black Mt Road, an unusually early sighting. [b]

Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

MOUSTACHED TREESWIFT (*Hemiproctne mystacea*) – Nice looks up at Varirata where i heard one all when we were in the forest, and we came out to find it perched up for nice looks, later seen in flight as well.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – One at the PAU.

AZURE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx azureus*) – Nice looks at Royal NP.

VARIABLE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx lepidus*) – This was a good one from Varirata where one was calling close by and eventually showed for most of us, a tiny little dark billed sprite with yellowy underparts. Heard more often than they are seen.

LAUGHING KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) – We saw quite a few of these gigantic predatory kingfishers, and heard the iconic call. [E]

BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo leachii*) – Seen near Mareeba and at Varirata, another enormous predatory kingfisher. [E]

RUFOUS-BELLIED KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) – A good scope view of a female at Varirata. [E]

FOREST KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus macleayi*) – A few along Black Mt Road, including a nest in an arboreal termite mound.

COLLARED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus chloris*) – Heard at Cairns, and seen well at Lota on the mudflats.

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – There was a nest in a huge arboreal termite mound at Royal NP, and we saw a couple of other birds on the tablelands.

YELLOW-BILLED KINGFISHER (*Syma torotoro*) – Great looks at Varirata, I love they way they trill and come in so secretively to check you out, that odd domed head shape is unique. [E]

BROWN-HEADED PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera danae*) – A great look at one sat quietly in the forest at Varirata, much brighter coloured than the books show. I like to get them without using tapes and our local guys are great at spotting them. [E]

BUFF-BREASTED PARADISE-KINGFISHER (*Tanysiptera sylvia*) – This was a bonus from Varirata, where we had 2 or 3 quite responsive ones along a dry creek line deep in the forest. I think these are the resident nominate race and not the migrants to Australia. [E]

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

RAINBOW BEE-EATER (*Merops ornatus*) – Surprisingly few, just a handful on the tablelands.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

DOLLARBIRD (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – Just a few, seen on the tablelands, at Varirata and then at Royal.

Pittidae (Pittas)

NOISY PITTA (*Pitta versicolor*) – They had not yet begun calling on the tablelands, but we got them vocal at Lamington and saw one on two mornings buried deep in some vine tangles.

Menuridae (Lyrebirds)

ALBERT'S LYREBIRD (*Menura alberti*) – Boy these have become hard, once again we heard a couple, but no sightings sadly, they used to be much easier here. [E*]

SUPERB LYREBIRD (*Menura novaehollandiae*) – A fine vocal bird at Royal NP, luckily sitting in a bit of a gully where we could peer in and see him sat on rock. It's the world's largest passerine and an iconic species for the tour. [E]

Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

SPOTTED CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – Great looks at Cassowary House and Chambers, and what a voice! [E]

GREEN CATBIRD (*Ailuroedus crassirostris*) – Nice looks at O'Reillys but nowhere near as tame as Spotted in the north, though it has a similarly great yowling voice. [E]

TOOTH-BILLED CATBIRD (*Scenopoeetes dentirostris*) – Seen well at Chambers and then above its upturned leaf stage at Lake Barrine, where they were singing and mimicking well. [E]

ARCHBOLD'S BOWERBIRD (*Archboldia papuensis*) – A fine female of this rare and restricted range species was on the feeders at Kumul. [E]

GOLDEN BOWERBIRD (*Amblyornis newtoniana*) – We were lucky, as a few days ago the bower was not in use. I went in just to show folks the amazing double maypole bower, saw it was decorated, and then we came back next day to get a fine view of the male. It's another rare and restricted range species, conceivably under great threat from climate change if the forest dries out. [E]

REGENT BOWERBIRD (*Sericulus chrysocephalus*) – This showy bird was all over at O'Reillys, no wonder it's the corporate logo! [E]

SATIN BOWERBIRD (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*) – A female at Longlands Gap was of the smaller northern race, then we had great males, females and immatures at Lamington, along with a fine blue decorated bower. [E]

GREAT BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera nuchalis*) – A fine bower decorated with white stones and snail shells was near Mareeba, with the bird perched nearby, and we saw another bird at Mareeba wetlands. [E]

YELLOW-BREASTED BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera lauterbachii*) – This is a difficult one, but we got a good view of it in a thicket at Wapanemanda, and George went down the steep slope to see the strange double avenue bower. [E]

FAWN-BREASTED BOWERBIRD (*Chlamydera cerviniventris*) – Amazing views at the PAU, and a fine avenue bower decorated with some green berries. [E]

Climacteridae (Australasian Treecreepers)

WHITE-THROATED TREECREEPER (*Cormobates leucophaea*) – Nominate birds seen well at Lamington, and the race minor on the tablelands. [E]

RED-BROWED TREECREEPER (*Climacteris erythroptis*) – Two came in nicely along Duck Creek Road, quite a local species. [E]

BROWN TREECREEPER (*Climacteris picumnus*) – They were vocal and all over the dry woodland at Mareeba wetland on a very hot and dry morning. [E]

Maluridae (Fairywrens)

WHITE-SHOULDERED FAIRYWREN (*Malurus alboscapulatus*) – A couple seen around Kumul. [E]

- RED-BACKED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus melanocephalus*) – Great looks along some roads near Mareeba, the male is a terrific bird. [E]
- SUPERB FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus cyaneus*) – A trip favourite, the males at Walnut Creek Road and then at O'Reillys were very entertaining and beautiful. [E]
- VARIEGATED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus lamberti*) – Four birds in tangles along Duck Creek Road included a fine male. [E]
- LOVELY FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus amabilis*) – A pair of this far north Queensland endemic showed nicely at Centenary Park, it's the shyest of the Australian members of the family and can be hard to see well. [E]
- SOUTHERN EMUWREN** (*Stipiturus malachurus*) – A fine still morning on the heath let us track down this skulker, and we got good looks at the blue-throated male eventually. That long degraded filamentous tail is very odd. [E]
- Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)*
- EASTERN SPINEBILL** (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) – This striking bird was seen at Lake Barrine, Lamington and Royal, some of us even got photos. [E]
- PLAIN HONEYEATER** (*Pycnopygius ixoides*) – Just one at Varirata where it is very scarce, an amazingly dull and inconspicuous species.
- MARbled HONEYEATER** (*Pycnopygius cinereus*) – Some saw this at Wapanemanda and we all heard it there. [E]
- STREAK-HEADED HONEYEATER** (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) – Great views up at Varirata, it's a friarbird mimic like the Brown Oriole too, only much smaller billed. [E]
- MOUNTAIN MELIPHAGA** (*Meliphaga orientalis*) – A few seen below Kumul Lodge, a Meliphaga with a small yellow ear spot. [E]
- GRACEFUL HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga gracilis*) – The Meliphagas with the large pale ear spot at Varirata are actually Elegant Honeyeater *M. elegans*, a well documented split that Clements has yet again failed to pick up on. Actual Graceful Honeyeaters were seen around Black Mountain Road, being small, pale below with small ear spots and a distinctive "plik" call.
- YELLOW-SPOTTED HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga notata*) – Nice looks at Cassowary House, It has very loud unmusical voice for a honeyeater too. [E]
- LEWIN'S HONEYEATER** (*Meliphaga lewinii*) – This large Meliphaga with the white gape line is quite common in the higher elevation forests around Chambers and at Lamington. [E]
- BLACK-THROATED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus subfrenatus*) – Nice looks by Kumul Lodge, it has a great musical song phrase as well. [E]
- BRIDLED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus frenatus*) – This uncommon high altitude endemic showed nicely at the Crater. [E]
- YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus chrysops*) – A few in the drier country at Hastie's Swamp and Lamington. [E]
- VARIED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus versicolor*) – Nice looks at this big and quite vocal bird on the Esplanade, the only place we ever see it.
- MANGROVE HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus fasciularis*) – Lota is the place, and it showed well this year with fine views and even some photo ops. Very much a mangrove specialist. [E]
- YELLOW HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus flavus*) – This north Queensland endemic showed well near Mareeba. [E]
- YELLOW-TINTED HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus flavescens*) – This is a speciality of the PAU, where we found them as usual near the barrier gate. Why they sound like Fuscous Honeyeaters has me worried and awaits DNA work.
- FUSCOUS HONEYEATER** (*Lichenostomus fuscus*) – Seen well at Springvale Road, the only local site for them, and it's not every day you get to use the word fuscous. [E]
- BELL MINER** (*Manorina melanophrys*) – Well, the colony has shifted way downslope so all my careful negotiating of large potholes in the poorly maintained Duck Creek Track was for nothing. We did hear them anyway, AND got back up again. [E*]
- NOISY MINER** (*Manorina melanocephala*) – Seen at Wondecla, and then around Canungra and Duck Creek Road. [E]
- RED WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera carunculata*) – Several folks got this as the last tick of the trip by the Abcot Inn. [E]
- LITTLE WATTLEBIRD** (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) – Nice looks up on the heath, and in bottlebrush at Bundeena. [E]
- BROWN-BACKED HONEYEATER** (*Ramsayornis modestus*) – A few at Centenary Lakes and Yorkey's Knob ponds.
- RUFOUS-BANDED HONEYEATER** (*Conopophila albogularis*) – Nice looks at the PAU where they fly out and swoop low over the ponds.

DUSKY MYZOMELA (*Myzomela obscura*) – A few around Cassowary House and Lake Barrine.

BLACK MYZOMELA (*Myzomela nigrita*) – One at Varirata in the parking area. [E]

MOUNTAIN MYZOMELA (*Myzomela adolphinae*) – This was a good find near Wapanemanda, they are tiny and can be elusive. [E]

SCARLET MYZOMELA (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*) – Great view at Lake Barrine in the flowering bushes there, a very striking species. [E]

RED-COLLARED MYZOMELA (*Myzomela rosenbergii*) – Some folks saw this very striking high altitude species at Kumul Lodge. [E]

TAWNY-CROWNED HONEYEATER (*Gliciphila melanops*) – Great looks up on the heath where one individual was very responsive and photogenic. [E]

BANDED HONEYEATER (*Cissomela pectoralis*) – This was a good trip addition, with several in flowering bottlebrush at Wondecla, an uncommon and erratically occurring species. [E]

BROWN HONEYEATER (*Lichmera indistincta*) – Common on the coast in the north, also at Lota.

NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATER (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) – A few up on the heath at Royal. [E]

WHITE-CHEEKED HONEYEATER (*Phylidonyris niger*) – Great looks at this spectacular black, yellow and white species at one site near Atherton, it's an uncommon bird.

WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER (*Melithreptus albogularis*) – Some nice looks on the tablelands and at Varirata.

BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER (*Entomyzon cyanotis*) – A few around near Mareeba and Brisbane, this is one large showy bird.

LITTLE FRIARBIRD (*Philemon citreogularis*) – A handful on the tablelands.

HELMETED FRIARBIRD (*Philemon buceroides*) – Great looks at the the taxon yorki at Cassowary House and Cairns, often split as either New Guinea or Hornbill Friarbird. Birds at the PAU are New Guinea Friarbirds *P. novaeguineae*.

NOISY FRIARBIRD (*Philemon corniculatus*) – A few about at Wondecla and near Mareeba, quite vocal and with a distinct bare black head.

TAWNY-BREASTED HONEYEATER (*Xanthotis flaviventer*) – One was seen at Varirata.

MACLEAY'S HONEYEATER (*Xanthotis macleayanus*) – Just a few at Cassowary House, atypically scarce this trip. [E]

SMOKY HONEYEATER (*Melipotes fumigatus*) – This is the blushing honeyeater, the facial skin going from yellow to bright red very quickly, and very showy at Kumul. [E]

BELFORD'S MELIDECTES (*Melidectes belfordi*) – Nice looks at this hulking great bird at Kumul, being beaten up by the Ribbontails! [E]

RUFOUS-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora guisei*) – A few along the Pigites Track. [E]

BLACK-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora perstriata*) – A few at the feeders at Kumul, known as Grey-streaked Honeyeater by all except Clements. [E]

Pardalotidae (Pardalotes)

SPOTTED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus punctatus*) – This was a trip favorite, showing amazingly well in the gums at Python Rock, a really exquisite little jewel of a bird on such good views. [E]

STRIATED PARDALOTE (*Pardalotus striatus*) – Great looks near Mareeba. [E]

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

FERNWREN (*Oreoscopus gutturalis*) – I managed to get one calling and Ray spotted it perched low down singing, so we all had a nice look at this skulker, with another nearby. Endemic to FNQ too.

MOUNTAIN MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis robusta*) – George saw one at Kumul. [E]

YELLOW-THROATED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis citreogularis*) – Great looks at this strikingly marked species at Lamington where they are remarkably tame. Also seen at the Crater, where they are far shyer. [E]

WHITE-BROWED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis frontalis*) – Common and amazingly tame at Lamington, we also had one at Wondecla. [E]

ATHERTON SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis keri*) – This was hard this trip and we only got brief looks up at Longlands Gap and the Crater. A restricted range endemic. [E]

LARGE SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis nouhuysi*) – This was quite common at Kumul this trip, the reddish throat is a good field character. [E]

LARGE-BILLED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis magnirostra*) – Nice looks at Cassowary House and the Curtain Fig, a classic LBJ that pokes about in dead leaf clusters. [E]

PAPUAN SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis papuensis*) – Only heard at Kumul this time. [E*]

CHESTNUT-RUMPED HEATHWREN (*Hylacola pyrrhopygia*) – George and Joan thought they saw one on the heath at Royal, which is where they occur. [E]

BUFF-RUMPED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza reguloides*) – Great looks at two small groups along Duck Creek Road. [E]

MOUNTAIN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza katherina*) – This led us a dance but we finally nailed it up by the Crater, it's a restricted range and high altitude endemic. [E]

BROWN THORNBILL (*Acanthiza pusilla*) – Good looks at Lamington and Royal. [E]

STRIATED THORNBILL (*Acanthiza lineata*) – Seen well at Royal where they were vocal along Lady Carrington Drive. [E]

WEEBILL (*Smicronis brevirostris*) – Walter found us these along Henry Hannam Drive, and they showed remarkably well for once. It's the smallest Australian bird and has a stubby stout yellowy bill. [E]

GREEN-BACKED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chloronota*) – Heard at Varirata but we didn't spend too much time looking for them as greater things beckoned! [*]

FAIRY GERYGONE (*Gerygone palpebrosa*) – Fine views near Cassowary House and along Henry Hannam Drive.

WHITE-THROATED GERYGONE (*Gerygone olivacea*) – This little beauty showed nicely near Mareeba at a site I have staked out for it, it's one of the nicest of the gerygones and has a lovely song.

YELLOW-BELLIED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chrysogaster*) – These were heard in Varirata but again we didn't spend much time seeking them out. [E*]

LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – Heard in the mangroves near Cairns. [*]

BROWN GERYGONE (*Gerygone mouki*) – Nice looks at the Curtain Fig and then at Lamington. [E]

BROWN-BREASTED GERYGONE (*Gerygone ruficollis*) – This is another one where the slow smoky song is the best feature about it, though they did show quite well at the start of the Pigites Track. [E]

MANGROVE GERYGONE (*Gerygone levigaster*) – Great looks at Lota mangroves, the only site where we see it.

Orthonychidae (Logrunners)

AUSTRALIAN LOGRUNNER (*Orthonyx temminckii*) – Fabulous at Lamington, with pairs indulging in chases and displays as well as feeding tamely in the leaf litter, with legs kicking out sideways. [E]

CHOWCHILLA (*Orthonyx spaldingii*) – Great at Lake Barrine, we had close groups twice and were able to watch them feeding with the leaves flying up and the legs kicking out sideways, a very distinctive bird.

Cnemophilidae (Satinbirds)

LORIA'S SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus loriae*) – A pair at a fruiting tree up along the Pigites Trail were a good find of this former bird of paradise, now placed in its own family [E]

CRESTED SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus macgregorii*) – One of the New Guinea megas and can be elusive, but we got great views of both male and female at a fruiting tree in the forest at Kumul, and Anne had one come to her window at cabin 5! Another former BoP but now in the endemic family of satinbirds, a much better treatment. [E]

Melanocharitidae (Berrypeckers and Longbills)

BLACK BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis nigra*) – A pair seen at Varirata, in another of the endemic New Guinea families so much sought after. [E]

FAN-TAILED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis versteri*) – A male showed several times at Kumul Lodge. [E]

PYGMY HONEYEATER (*Toxorhamphus pygmaeum*) – This is the smallest New Guinea bird, and we got a good one calling along the Lookout Trail, with a nice look at it high in a tree. It's actually a longbill and not a honeyeater, but at least Clements now gets the family right if not the name! [E]

Paramythiidae (Tit Berrypecker, Crested Berrypecker)

TIT BERRYPECKER (*Oreocharis arfaki*) – This is one of two species in the endemic Painted Berrypecker family, and is much sought after for that reason. We saw both males and females, at the fruiting tree below the lodge, and along the Pigites Track. [E]

CRESTED BERRYPECKER (*Paramythia montium*) – Much prized as it's half of the Painted Berrypecker family, and a very beautiful bird too. We saw several below Kumul Lodge and Walter saw it by the feeders. [E]

Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)

EASTERN WHIPBIRD (*Psophodes olivaceus*) – A trip favourite, seen at Lake Barrine and then amazingly well at Lamington, those antiphonal calls are just brilliant and so loud. [E]

Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)

PAINTED QUAIL-THRUSH (*Cinclosoma ajax*) – This was heard giving the "whit" alarm call in Varirata, where it's always a major project to see one [*]

Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)

BLACK-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus nigripectus*) – Heard distantly at Pigites, it's odd that we never caught up with them properly. [E*]

YELLOW-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) – Luckily this one showed very well at Black Mountain Road, now in its own family too.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

GREAT WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus maximus*) – Seen nicely near Kumul, the largest of the family. [E]

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – Nice looks at Cairns and Port Moresby.

Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

BLACK-BACKED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus mentalis*) – Seen nicely at the PAU.

GRAY BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus torquatus*) – One at Daisy Hill was it for the trip. [E]

HOODED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus cassicus*) – Great looks at Varirata and very vocal. [E]

PIED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus nigrogularis*) – Seen near Mareeba and then near Brisbane, they are very good songsters too. [E]

BLACK BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus quoyi*) – The first was at Cairns mangroves, and the very tame ones showed well at Cassowary House.

AUSTRALASIAN MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) – A few in the north and common around Brisbane, it's also a very good songster and is nothing to do with corvids.

PIED CURRAWONG (*Strepera graculina*) – Common at Lamington, it's a big bird with a piercing yellow eye and heavy bill. [E]

Campephagidae (Cuckoo-shrikes)

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – Small numbers at various sites including the PAU.

BARRED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina lineata*) – A good look at 2 at Chambers was nice.

BOYER'S CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina boyeri*) – Seen from the car park at Varirata. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina papuensis*) – Seen on 4 days in the north, including a nest with an adult and a juvenile along Henry Hannam Drive.

CICADABIRD (*Coracina tenuirostris*) – A good look at a male of the rainforest form with the whistled song at Black Mountain Road, and we heard the buzzy cicada-type song at Varirata and Royal NP.

NEW GUINEA CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina melas*) – A pair of New Guinea Black Cuckooshrikes were at Varirata. The name New Guinea Cuckooshrike is meaningless as we have about 10 species.... [E]

BLACK-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina montana*) – Two at the Pigites Track, the usual site for them here. [E]

VARIED TRILLER (*Lalage leucomela*) – Nice looks at this well-marked bird at Cairns and Black Mountain Road.

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

RUFOUS-NAPED WHISTLER (*Aleardyas rufinucha*) – This odd whistler showed very well at Kumul. it spends a lot of time on the ground, unusual in this family. [E]

GRAY-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala griseiceps*) – One was seen at Varirata, a small rather flycatcher-like arboreal species.

GOLDEN WHISTLER (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) – This lovely bird was seen at Chambers and then at Lamington, the males are very striking.

REGENT WHISTLER (*Pachycephala schlegelii*) – Beautiful views of both males and females at Kumul, the male is surely one of the most striking of the family. [E]

BLACK-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala monacha*) – Good looks in tall gums at Wapanemanda, this is a hill forest and highland species. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala leucogastra*) – This is restricted to SE PNG, and we saw a fine male along the approach road at Varirata, it's a very uncommon bird. [E]

RUFOUS WHISTLER (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) – A few in the drier country around Mareeba.

RUFOUS SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) – The Little Shrike-thrush was seen at Cassowary House and Chambers, the pink bill is a good field mark.

BOWER'S SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla boweri*) – This is endemic to hill and high altitude forest in FNQ, and we saw a fine bird at the Crater, the black bill and grey upperparts help distinguish it. [E]

GRAY SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – One at the PAU and again at Lamington.

HOODED PITOUI (*Pitohui dichrous*) – We saw a couple of this, the famous poison bird, at Varirata where they are quite vocal but not always easy to see. They have now been moved into orioles too, which is an odd symmetry with their shape and plumage! [E]

RUSTY PITOUI (*Pitohui ferrugineus*) – This was heard at Varirata but stayed out of view. [E*]

CRESTED PITOUI (*Pitohui cristatus*) – Another one heard only at Varirata, it is a very tough bird to see and Phil has not actually seen one for some years. [E*]

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LONG-TAILED SHRIKE (*Lanius schach*) – A couple seen around the Kumul area. This is the black-capped montane form *stresemanni*.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

BROWN ORIOLE (*Oriolus szalayi*) – This strange Friarbird-mimic oriole was seen nicely up at Varirata. It's always one of the first endemics we see. [E]

OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE (*Oriolus sagittatus*) – Nicely seen near Mareeba.

GREEN ORIOLE (*Oriolus flavocinctus*) – Very good looks down at the Cairns mangroves, and the Clements name is about the only instance where one of his imposed name changes is better than the real one, as the bird really is green and not yellow! Great fluty voice too. [E]

AUSTRALASIAN FIGBIRD (*Sphecotheres vieillotii*) – Seen well around Cairns where the males are bright yellow beneath, and the race *salvadorii* at the PAU in PNG, which is grey chested. Males at Brisbane are greyish below too.

Dicruridae (Drongos)

SPANGLED DRONGO (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) – There was a strong visible migration going on over Black Mt Road with small groups of this species heading south, coming back from wintering in PNG. The local PNG race *carbonarius* is a likely split, having a different voice and bill morphology.

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

WILLIE-WAGTAIL (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – Widespread, common and with a great feisty attitude, often seen beating up potential predators way larger than they are- we saw one bashing up a Brahminy Kite at Lota!

FRIENDLY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albolimbata*) – Nice looks up at Kumul. [E]

CHESTNUT-BELLIED FANTAIL (*Rhipidura hyperythra*) – This was heard in Varirata but oddly stayed back out of sight. [E*]

GRAY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) – A few on the tablelands and at Lamington. [E]

DIMORPHIC FANTAIL (*Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*) – Good looks near Kumul Lodge, the chestnut and black tail is quite striking. [E]

RUFOUS FANTAIL (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) – A nice one at Cassowary House where they are winter birds, then a few newly arrived back at Lamington and showing very well for photos.

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

WHITE-EARED MONARCH (*Carterornis leucotis*) – Hard work, but we got fine views eventually of this uncommon arboreal monarch along Black Mt Road. [E]

BLACK-FACED MONARCH (*Monarcha melanopsis*) – Lovely views along Black Mt Road and at Lamington, also seen at Royal, this bird winters in PNG and is not long back.

SPOT-WINGED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus guttula*) – Seen briefly at Varirata. [E]

SPECTACLED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus trivirgatus*) – Great looks along Black Mt Road where we had a real monarch morning, this is a very nice looking species.

FRILLED MONARCH (*Arses telescopthalmus*) – We saw a couple of females in Varirata. [E]

PIED MONARCH (*Arses kaupii*) – Good looks along Black Mt Road, this one creeps along branches and works up trunks like a creeper. It's an uncommon FNQ endemic. [E]

MAGPIE-LARK (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) – Widespread in Australia, and now placed in monarchs rather than its own family,

which still seems odd to me as it is so divergent.

LEADEN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra rubecula*) – Singles at various sites including Lamington and the Varirata approach road, this one shivers its tail when agitated.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

TORRESIAN CROW (*Corvus orru*) – A few around Cairns and Brisbane/Lamington, also at Port Moresby.

AUSTRALIAN RAVEN (*Corvus coronoides*) – Seen at Royal NP this trip, and just one up at O'Reillys where Torresian Crow now seems to have moved in. [E]

Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-paradise)

GLOSSY-MANTLED MANUCODE (*Manucodia ater*) – Amazingly enough we saw one at the PAU, the first I've ever seen here! It was sat out in a bare gum. [E]

RIBBON-TAILED ASTRAPIA (*Astrapia mayeri*) – This is one of my favorite birds, and again Kumul is a magnificent place to see it, with a full adult male coming to the feeder and several of them chasing around in a tall Antarctic beech one afternoon, not to mention females and immatures beating up honeyeaters and generally carrying on. Wonderful. [E]

LAWES'S PAROTIA (*Parotia lawesii*) – This was an unexpected find at the Blue BoP site, where a young male and a female came by and gave quite good looks views. Very uncommon up here as the hunting pressure is s high.

KING-OF-SAXONY BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Pteridophora alberti*) – A fine male was singing from his songpost not too far off the road below the lodge, those headwires are something else! Several females/immatures were seen in the forest too. Great stuff and one of the more bizarre birds on the planet. [E]

MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD (GROWLING) (*Ptiloris magnificus intercedens*) – A male was calling at Varirata and I twice got him to fly over to check us out, I even saw him perched briefly but they are very wary and he went as soon as he saw me. It's a split from Magnificent Riflebird.

PARADISE RIFLEBIRD (*Ptiloris paradiseus*) – This is the most southerly of the bop's, and can be tricky. We got a female plumaged one initially, George photographed one in the canopy on the walkway, then we got a very good male along the Python Rock Track. [E]

VICTORIA'S RIFLEBIRD (*Ptiloris victoriae*) – Easy to see at Cassowary House where both sexes come in to the breakfast table, quite amazing. [E]

SUPERB BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Lophorina superba*) – A male was hard to see below Kumul Lodge, we could hear him but only a couple of us got a look and he seemed to be moulting already. George saw another at the Yellow-b bowerbird site. [E]

BROWN SICKLEBILL (*Epimachus meyeri*) – Stunning as ever on the feeders where females and a young male came in daily, throwing the fruit up into the air and catching it with their long decurved bills. Also a fine male sat up and calling near the King of Saxony site, so we did very well here. [E]

MAGNIFICENT BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Cicinnurus magnificus*) – Heard near the Blue BoP site. [E*]

LESSER BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Paradisaea minor*) – Head briefly at a new site below Kumul but not visible, and the usual lek was out of range due to road damage. [E*]

RAGGIANA BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Paradisaea raggiana*) – The lek at Varirata still held several males in good plumage and we had a super early morning vigil there, getting some very nice looks. [E]

BLUE BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Paradisaea rudolphi*) – This was outstanding, the male at Tomba was barely calling but we climbed up the slope and waited, and finally got him sat quite close by, much better views than normal, the old BeBop came through in style. It's a rare species too, endemic to PNG, threatened by the exploding human population and consequent habitat loss, and hunting for plumes. [E]

LESSER MELAMPITTA (*Melampitta lugubris*) – George saw one a couple of times during his explorations by Kumul, and we all heard it clicking away in the undergrowth. Clements still has it as a paradisaeid, but no-one else does and it is of uncertain affinities, very unlikely to be a bop.

Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

TORRENT FLYCATCHER (*Monachella muelleriana*) – Great looks on the Sepik headwaters, a very attractive little flyrobin. [E]

JACKY-WINTER (*Microeca fascians*) – This was an unexpected find at Wondecla, where one was nesting. [E]

LEMON-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Microeca flavigaster*) – Seen at Mareeba and then at the Varirata. [E]

CANARY FLYCATCHER (*Microeca papuana*) – This colorful bird was seen at Kumul several times, they have orange legs and feet. [E]

- ROSE ROBIN** (*Petroica rosea*) – A vocal male at Lamington eventually showed quite well for most. [E]
- PALE-YELLOW ROBIN** (*Tregellasia capito*) – Good views along Black Mountain Road. [E]
- EASTERN YELLOW ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria australis*) – An attractive and striking bird, very tame at O'Reillys; we saw the northern race too at Wondecla. [E]
- MANGROVE ROBIN** (*Eopsaltria pulverulenta*) – Amazingly obliging for once, we saw 2 on the mangrove edge at Cairns without having to tape them, if only I'd had my camera!
- WHITE-WINGED ROBIN** (*Peneothello sigillata*) – Common at Kumul and easily seen. [E]
- BLUE-GRAY ROBIN** (*Peneothello cyanus*) – Heard at Kumul along the Pigites Track. [E*]
- ASHY ROBIN** (*Heteromyias albispecularis*) – Heard at Kumul along the Pigites track as well. [E]
- GRAY-HEADED ROBIN** (*Heteromyias cinereifrons*) – Easy to see at Chambers and the Crater, and Clements for once gets it right by splitting it from Ashy Robin. [E]
- NORTHERN SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Drymodes superciliaris*) – Heard at Varirata but not accessible. [E*]

Eupetidae (Rail-babbler and Ifrita)

- BLUE-CAPPED IFRITA** (*Ifrita kowaldi*) – Only heard at Kumul, strange we did not get to see it this trip. It's a real oddity too, acts like a creeper and is of uncertain affinity. [E*]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

- WELCOME SWALLOW** (*Hirundo neoxena*) – Common in Australia.
- PACIFIC SWALLOW** (*Hirundo tahitica*) – Common in PNG. like a short tailed version of the Welcome Swallow.
- TREE MARTIN** (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) – Nice looks at Walnut Road wetland.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

- ISLAND LEAF-WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus poliocephalus*) – Seen up near Kumul Lodge.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

- AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus australis*) – Heard singing down in the valley at Wapanemanda. [*]

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

- TAWNY GRASSBIRD** (*Megalurus timoriensis*) – One showed well at Walnut Creek wetland.
- TAWNY GRASSBIRD (PAPUAN)** (*Megalurus timoriensis macrurus*) – Heard up around Kumul, this is vocally quite distinct to Tawny and is split by many including the IOC. [E*]

Zosteropidae (Yuhinas, White-eyes, and Allies)

- BLACK-FRONTED WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops minor*) – Good looks in Varirata. [E]
- NEW GUINEA WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops novaeguineae*) – They were conspicuous in the valleys around Kumul, not always an easy bird to get. [E]
- SILVER-EYE** (*Zosterops lateralis*) – Small numbers around Cairns.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

- PIED BUSHCHAT** (*Saxicola caprata*) – A few around Kumul, including some showy pied males.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

- OLIVE-TAILED THRUSH** (*Zoothera lunulata*) – Heard at Lamington but oddly none were on the tracks in the early morning or late afternoons like they normally are. [E*]
- RUSSET-TAILED THRUSH** (*Zoothera heinei*) – One flushed off the Python Rock Track and vanished. [E]
- ISLAND THRUSH** (*Turdus poliocephalus*) – Easy to see at Kumul.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

- METALLIC STARLING** (*Aplonis metallica*) – Great looks at this crimson-eyed bird at Smithfield where they nest in the car park.
- SINGING STARLING** (*Aplonis cantoroides*) – A few at the PAU, short tailed with an orange eye, and 5 up near Kumul. [E]
- YELLOW-FACED MYNA** (*Mino dumontii*) – Great looks and vocals at the PAU, we even got photos. Always one of the first NG endemics we see. [E]
- COMMON MYNA** (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Sadly common in eastern Australia. [I]

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – A few at Walnut Creek wetland. [H]

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

RED-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER (*Dicaeum geelvinkianum*) – Flybys and glimpses from PNG only. [E]

MISTLETOEBIRD (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) – A beautiful male in Cairns on the first morning, a seen again at Chambers. It's our only flowerpecker.

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD (*Cinnyris jugularis*) – A few around Cairns and Cassowary House.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (AUSTRALIAN) (*Anthus novaeseelandiae australis*) – Brief views up on the high tablelands but each time we stopped they had gone.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Seen in the urban areas including Port Moresby. [H]

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – A couple at Jackson's Airport in PNG, it has colonized since 2007.

[H]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

MOUNTAIN FIRETAIL (*Oreostruthus fuliginosus*) – George and I heard it at Kumul but I think I was the only one to see it? [E*]

RED-BROWED FIRETAIL (*Neochmia temporalis*) – A delightful little finch, seen well at Emerald Creek and Lamington with one at Royal NP too. [E]

CRIMSON FINCH (*Neochmia phaeton*) – Good looks at Cattana Wetlands including some good colorful males. [E]

DOUBLE-BARRED FINCH (*Taeniopygia bichenovii*) – This owl-faced finch was seen well around Mareeba. [E]

NUTMEG MANNIKIN (*Lonchura punctulata*) – A few around Cairns. [H]

HOODED MUNIA (*Lonchura spectabilis*) – Nice looks around the Kumul area. [E]

GRAY-HEADED MUNIA (*Lonchura caniceps*) – Great views at the PAU, it's endemic to SE PNG too. [E]

CHESTNUT-BREADED MUNIA (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) – Two day records, with some nice views near Mareeba.

MAMMALS

PLATYPUS (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) – Fantastic looks at one at Yungaburra just after a local told me they had not been seen for 2 days.....

SPECKLED DASYURE (*Neophascogale lorentzii*) – One at Kumul Lodge by the feeder, it's a carnivorous/insectivorous marsupial with a pointed face, pale tipped ears and white tail tip.

LONG-NOSED BANDICOOT (*Peramelas nasuta*) – One close by during our tablelands spotlighting trip.

NORTHERN BROWN BANDICOOT (*Isoodon macrourus*) – One amazingly close by at Chambers, thoroughly engrossed in digging at the base of a tree where the honey had dripped.

COMMON BRUSHTAIL POSSUM (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) – A couple close by on our spotlighting trip on the tablelands.

MOUNTAIN BRUSHTAIL POSSUM (*Trichosurus caninus*) – These huge great grey white and black possums come in to feed at night at O'Reillys; they are now split as Short-eared Possum by the way.

SUGAR GLIDER (*Petaurus breviceps*) – Fantastic looks at Chambers Lodge where they smear honey on the trunks for them.

COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUM (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) – One by the lodge at O'Reillys.

MUSKY RAT-KANGAROO (*Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*) – These tiny little macropods really are kangaroos! They are a sign of good habitat, and we saw them nicely at Cassowary House and Lake Barrine.

RED-NECKED PADEMELON (*Thylogale thetis*) – Common at O'Reillys and quite used to people.

RED-LEGGED PADEMELON (*Thylogale stigmatica*) – These are the little guys at John Chambers's place, very entertaining to watch.

MAREEBA ROCK-WALLABY (*Petrogale mareeba*) – One obliging male was sat out in the sun on his rock pile near Mareeba. [E]

AGILE WALLABY (*Macropus agilis*) – A couple of singles near Mareeba in the dry country.

RED-NECKED WALLABY (*Macropus rufogriseus*) – Good views at Daisy Hill and Duck Creek Road.

EASTERN GRAY KANGAROO (*Macropus giganteus*) – A good big mob on the golf course at Mareeba, some quite close by.

SPECTACLED FLYING-FOX (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) – A fine noisy camp was by the library in central Cairns- whatever you do don't park underneath them!

OLD WORLD RABBIT (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – One during our spotlighting on th Tablelands.

HUMPBACK WHALE (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) – One distant one was off Otford Lookout on the last afternoon.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As always a very varied choice of favorite birds, with the huge and imposing Southern Cassowary an overall highlight. Other contenders were the remarkable variety of kingfishers (with 5 new ones at Varirata!), the great antiphonal duetting vocals and views from Eastwrn Whipbird, the endearing Superb fairywrens, that immaculare Spotted Pardalote at Python Rock, the tame Eastern Yellow robins, the bizarre Rufous-naped whistlers at Kumul Lodge and of course the rare and marvellous male Blue Bird of Paradise that we had quite a wait to see well.

Other critters

Saltwater Crocodile 7' one at the golf course pond at Yorkey's Knob was unexpected.

Kreff's River Turtle 3 at Centenary Lake.

Saw-shelled Turtle 2 at Hastie's Swamp.

Eastern Short-necked Turtle one on a river rock at Lady Carrington Drive in Royal NP.

Land Mullet several at Lamington.

Lace Monitor one large and lovely yellow spotted one at Duck Creek Road, waddling in front of the bus for a while.

Greater Black Whipsnake one at Cassowary House.

Small thin brown snake sp. one on the Pigites Track at Kumul Lodge around 2000m

Totals for the tour: 397 bird taxa and 18 mammal taxa