

Field Guides Tour Report

PHILIPPINES

Feb 26, 2011 to Mar 20, 2011 Dave Stejskal & Mark Villa

I really enjoyed getting back to the Philippines again this year with our group. We had some fantastic birding moments together on this rather demanding and sometimes challenging trip, even to the very end.

Every time I come back to these islands, I worry about how much more habitat has been lost in the intervening time since my last visit. As usual, lots had been lost, but much good habitat still remains, albeit more difficult to access. Despite the habitat loss, we were able to find, and to see very, very well, an impressive number of Philippine endemic birds.

Perhaps first and foremost of these was the Great Philippine Eagle on Mt. Kitanglad. We had a couple of good looks, though they were a little distant. Still, to see this critically endangered eagle at all is a marvelous achievement!

Other highlights of this three-week tour are many, but I feel compelled to mention:

- --that gorgeous male Palawan Peacock-Pheasant at St. Paul's NP
- --our close flyby looks at Bukidnon Woodcock
- --a flock of seven Philippine Cockatoos near Sabang
- -- those bizarre Scale-feathered and Red-crested malkohas
- --our outstanding Luzon Scops-Owl
- --the delightful Silvery Kingfisher and the scarce Blue-capped Kingfishers at PICOP on Mindanao
- --all of those huge Rufous Hornbills
- --our surprise trio of Wattled Broadbills at dusk
- --our skulky Russet Bush-Warbler
- -- and those strange Apo Mynas.

There are lots of others, so read on.

Many thanks to our group for your good companionship throughout. Your willingness to roll with the punches and your collective sense of fun made this trip much easier and enjoyable to guide from my perspective. Thanks also to Mark Villa for his strong co-leadership an great logistical work on this tour. I doubt we could have pulled off such a good overall tour without his help. I hope to see all of you on another tour sometime soon!

--Dave

We have more information about this itinerary and future departures on our web page for *Philippines*.



Azure-breasted Pitta...a beauty seen well at PICOP (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

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)

WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK (Dendrocygna arcuata) – The Bislig airstrip birds were expected on this tour, but the several at the Candaba Marsh were a bit of a surprise there (I've seen them there before, though).

PHILIPPINE DUCK (Anas luzonica) – Fantastic views of about a hundred birds at the Candaba Marsh on our first morning of birding. Our first of about 130 Philippine endemics recorded on this tour! [E]

GARGANEY (Anas querquedula) – Hundreds of these attractive Old World teal at the Candaba Marsh.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (Anas crecca) – All of the birds we saw were the Old World "Common" Teal, A. c. crecca.

TUFTED DUCK (Aythya fuligula) - About a dozen of these distinctive diving ducks at Candaba.

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

TABON SCRUBFOWL (Megapodius cumingii) – Our views at the Underground River (St. Paul's) NP were incomparable!

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

BLUE-BREASTED QUAIL (Coturnix chinensis) – I'm not sure if anyone saw this one on Mt. Kitanglad, but we all heard it calling from the edge of the agricultural field. [*]

RED JUNGLEFOWL (Gallus gallus) [*]

PALAWAN PEACOCK-PHEASANT (Polyplectron napoleonis) — WOWW!!! I'm not sure if this is the same individual male that I first saw here a dozen years ago, but I sure am glad he's still around! [E]

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

YELLOW BITTERN (Ixobrychus sinensis) – Very common at Candaba.

CINNAMON BITTERN (Ixobrychus cinnamomeus) – We finally got a good look at one in the scope at Bislig.

BLACK BITTERN (Ixobrychus flavicollis) – Nice views in flight and perched at the Bislig airstrip.

GRAY HERON (Ardea cinerea)

PURPLE HERON (Ardea purpurea) – Impressive numbers of this and the Gray Heron at Candaba.

GREAT EGRET (Ardea alba)

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (Mesophoyx intermedia) – Common and widespread in the Philippines.

CHINESE EGRET (Egretta eulophotes) – We were able to scope a couple of these at high tide near Puerto Princesa on Palawan. Palawan is one of the most important wintering areas for this scarce species.

LITTLE EGRET (Egretta garzetta)

PACIFIC REEF-HERON (Egretta sacra) – Decent numbers of dark-morph birds near Sabang on Palawan.

The strange Coleto, a very unusual member of the starling family (Photo by guide Dave Steiskal)

CATTLE EGRET (ASIAN) (Bubulcus ibis coromandus)

JAVAN POND-HERON (Ardeola speciosa) – This species is spreading in the Philippines and we saw my first for Luzon at Candaba Marsh on the first morning.

STRIATED HERON (Butorides striata)

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (Nycticorax nycticorax)

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (Pandion haliaetus)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD (INDOMALAYAN) (Pernis ptilorhynchus philippensis) – The best looks were had on Mt. Kitanglad while we waited for the Great Philippine Eagle to show itself.

BRAHMINY KITE (Haliastur indus)

CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE (Spilornis cheela) – We finally spotted one of these on Palawan as we left the Balsahan Trail area. Widespread on the mainland of S.E. Asia and in the Greater Sundas, but in the Philippines, found only on Palawan.

PHILIPPINE SERPENT-EAGLE (Spilornis holospilus) – Nice views on lowland Luzon and lowland Mindanao. [E] **EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER** (Circus spilonotus) – A single immature bird at Candaba Marsh on our first morning. **PIED HARRIER** (Circus melanoleucos) – Another immature bird also at Candaba Marsh.

CRESTED GOSHAWK (Accipiter trivirgatus) – Scope looks at St. Paul's NP on Palawan.

CHINESE GOSHAWK (Accipiter soloensis) – We had a single flyover only on our way down from Mt. Kitanglad. **BESRA** (Accipiter virgatus) – A single bird at PICOP one evening there.

GRAY-FACED BUZZARD (Butastur indicus) – A big flock of these was seen migrating north over the road to Sabang on Palawan.

GREAT PHILIPPINE EAGLE (Pithecophaga jefferyi) – YESSSS!!!! Mark spotted the first bird in flight on our first morning on Mt. Kitanglad, and Ann got us onto a perched bird at the same viewpoint on our second morning there. While they weren't very close, it was a thrilling experience on both occasions to see such a magnificent and critically endangered raptor. It's the highest priority for many birders who travel to the Philippines – so far, I'm batting 1.000 with this one (but that's sure to change!). [E]

RUFOUS-BELLIED EAGLE (Lophotriorchis kienerii) – An adult at Subic Bay was a nice find.

CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE (Nisaetus cirrhatus limnaeetus) – It was my first nest for this species and also the first time that I've ever seen it in the Philippines! [N]

PHILIPPINE HAWK-EAGLE (Nisaetus philippensis) – We had three encounters with this scarce endemic raptor, but the best was at Subic Bay. [E]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

PHILIPPINE FALCONET (Microhierax erythrogenys) – Subic Bay and PICOP were the sites for this one this year. [E]

PEREGRINE FALCON (Falco peregrinus)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

BUFF-BANDED RAIL (Gallirallus philippensis) – A single bird on the road into Candaba Marsh this year was all that we could find.

BARRED RAIL (Gallirallus torquatus) – We had several fine views of this very distinctive rail throughout the trip.

PLAIN BUSH-HEN (Amaurornis olivacea) – Excellent views of this endemic rail along the buttonquail track near Los Banos. [E]

WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN (Amaurornis phoenicurus) – Several of these very distinctive rallids at Candaba.

WHITE-BROWED CRAKE (Porzana cinerea) – Very common at Candaba this year. We also had decent views of a bird or two at the Bislig airstrip.

WATERCOCK (Gallicrex cinerea) – One of these strange birds flew right over us at the Bislig airstrip.

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (PHILIPPINE) (Porphyrio porphyrio pulverulentus) – Some day, this widespread and highly variable species will get split up into a few species, and it's likely that this race in the Philippines will be among those split.

COMMON MOORHEN (Gallinula chloropus)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (Pluvialis squatarola)

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (Pluvialis fulva)



Philippine Trogon, a gorgeous endemic (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

MALAYSIAN PLOVER (Charadrius peronii) – We scoped a pair at the 'usual' spot along the beach near Sabang. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (Charadrius dubius) – The birds we saw at the Bislig airstrip were likely breeding there.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-WINGED STILT (Himantopus himantopus)

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA (Hydrophasianus chirurgus) – Several birds at Candaba were in basic plumage, as expected at this season.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

COMMON SANDPIPER (Actitis hypoleucos)

GRAY-TAILED TATTLER (Tringa brevipes)

COMMON GREENSHANK (Tringa nebularia)

WOOD SANDPIPER (Tringa glareola)

WHIMBREL (Numenius phaeopus)

LONG-TOED STINT (Calidris subminuta)

COMMON SNIPE (Gallinago gallinago gallinago) – Likely the species seen at Candaba and at Bislig.

BUKIDNON WOODCOCK (Scolopax bukidnonensis) – Great looks in the light as it flew right through camp! This endemic woodcock was only recently described to science, and it appears to be much more widespread in the Philippines than was previously thought (we had a bird above Banaue this year as well as the expected bird on Mt. Kitanglad). [E]

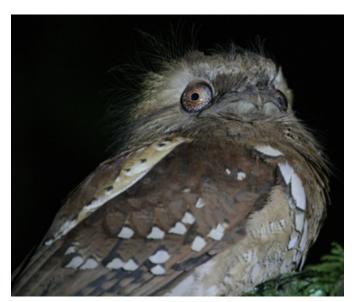
Turnicidae (Buttonquail)

SPOTTED BUTTONQUAIL (Turnix ocellatus) – It took a lot of patience, but one of these endemic buttonquails finally crossed the track near Los Banos late one afternoon. [E]

BARRED BUTTONQUAIL (Turnix suscitator) – Flushed for some folks along the road out of the Balsahan Trail on Palawan.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE (Glareola maldivarum) – Numerous in the Candaba Marsh area that first morning.



Philippine Frogmouth right next to our sleeping quarters on Mt. Kitanglad, Mindanao. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK-HEADED GULL (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) – Several birds were on the lake outside Bislig on our final morning.

WHISKERED TERN (Chlidonias hybrida)

COMMON TERN (Sterna hirundo)

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (Columba livia) [I]

ISLAND COLLARED-DOVE (Streptopelia bitorquata) – A single bird (without a tail!) in the Candaba Marsh. Numbers here have really plummeted in recent years.

RED COLLARED-DOVE (Streptopelia tranquebarica)

SPOTTED DOVE (Streptopelia chinensis)

PHILIPPINE CUCKOO-DOVE (Macropygia tenuirostris) – I think we all finally caught up with this endemic dove on Mt. Kitanglad. [E]

EMERALD DOVE (Chalcophaps indica) – Seen this year on Palawan only.

ZEBRA DOVE (Geopelia striata)

WHITE-EARED DOVE (Phapitreron leucotis) – A very common voice throughout the tour route, but we saw relatively few this year. [E]

- **AMETHYST DOVE** (Phapitreron amethystinus) We were lucky to get this one so well at Subic Bay this year. Heard also this year at Kitanglad and at PICOP (where it used to be very common). [E]
- **POMPADOUR GREEN-PIGEON** (Treron pompadora) We saw a couple of subspecies on this tour: T.p. axillaris at Subic Bay, and T.p. canescens on Mindanao. This bird will likely be split in the future by Clements, so you need to keep track of your subspecies.
- **THICK-BILLED PIGEON** (Treron curvirostra) A bird going to roost on Palawan one evening in the spotlight was a nice surprise!
- **YELLOW-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE** (Ptilinopus occipitalis) It was great to get this beautiful fruit-dove so well and so early in the tour at Subic Bay! [E]
- **BLACK-CHINNED FRUIT-DOVE** (Ptilinopus leclancheri) This one proved to be very difficult to track down on this tour, but we all finally nailed it in the scope at PICOP. [E]
- **SPOTTED IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (Ducula carola) Thanks goodness for that fruiting tree at PICOP! This was only my second sighting of this one there, and only Zardo's third. [E]
- **GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON** (Ducula aenea) It's hard to believe that this species is now scarce in PICOP! We did have good numbers on Luzon and Palawan, though.

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

PHILIPPINE COCKATOO (Cacatua haematuropygia) – YESSSS!!! It took two afternoon tries, but we all came away with decent scope views of several birds going to roost in the mangroves near Sabang on Palawan. Numbers of this one in the Philippines have been decimated by the bird trade. [E]

Psittacidae (Parrots)

- **GUAIABERO** (Bolbopsittacus lunulatus) This dumpy little parrot doesn't seem to be obviously closely related to anything else in the world of parrots. [E]
- MINDANAO RACQUET-TAIL (Prioniturus waterstradti) Mostly just a distant voice or a speck across the sky on Kitanglad, but some folks got a better flight look than the rest of us. [E]
- BLUE-HEADED RACQUET-TAIL (Prioniturus platenae) This was probably the best year I've had for this Palawan endemic than most recent years I've done this tour. The scope looks on that first afternoon were fantastic! [E]
- **GREEN RACQUET-TAIL** (Prioniturus luconensis) We had an excellent encounter with this one at Subic Bay, the only place to find this one along our route. [E]
- **BLUE-CROWNED RACQUET-TAIL** (Prioniturus discurus) Still hangin' in there at PICOP! [E]
- **BLUE-NAPED PARROT** (Tanygnathus lucionensis) Still easy and plentiful at both Subic Bay and at Palawan. [EN]
- **AZURE-RUMPED PARROT** (Tanygnathus sumatranus) This was a surprise find along the road at PICOP. Formerly quite easy there, this one site may be the only place one can hope to see it at PICOP.



Philippine Duck (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

PHILIPPINE HANGING-PARROT (Loriculus philippensis) – Also called the Colasisi, which is a much better name for this widespread parrot. [E]

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

PHILIPPINE HAWK-CUCKOO (Hierococcyx pectoralis) – A recent split from Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo. [E*] **PLAINTIVE CUCKOO** (Cacomantis merulinus)

BRUSH CUCKOO (Cacomantis variolosus sepulcralis) – We didn't run into this one until Mindanao.

LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO (Chrysococcyx minutillus) – A real surprise along the road to Sabang on Palawan, but I have had it here before.

VIOLET CUCKOO (Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus) – This widespread Asian species was easiest on Mindanao at PICOP.

ASIAN DRONGO-CUCKOO (Surniculus lugubris) – Another widespread Asian bird, we had this one on Palawan only.

PHILIPPINE DRONGO-CUCKOO (Surniculus velutinus) – Another recent split, this one occupies the rest of the major Philippine islands away from Palawan. [E]

ASIAN KOEL (Eudynamys scolopaceus) [*]

CHESTNUT-BREASTED MALKOHA (Phaenicophaeus curvirostris) – Ann and a few others may have been the only ones to get this hefty malkoha on Palawan.

RED-CRESTED MALKOHA (Phaenicophaeus superciliosus) – We got our best looks, after a couple of teases earlier in the tour, while we waited for the Spotted Buttonquail to appear. [E]

SCALE-FEATHERED MALKOHA (Phaenicophaeus cumingi) – This spectacular malkoha was almost wiped out on Mt. Makiling after a typhoon several years ago, but it's made a comeback since then. [E]

RUFOUS COUCAL (Centropus unirufus) – This was certainly my best year ever for this social coucal at Subic Bay. [E]

BLACK-FACED COUCAL (Centropus melanops) – A common voice at PICOP, but not always easy to see. We fared quite well this year, though. [E]

GREATER COUCAL (Centropus sinensis) – Restricted to Palawan on this tour.

PHILIPPINE COUCAL (Centropus viridis) – Great looks at this widespread endemic early on in the tour on Luzon. [E] **LESSER COUCAL** (Centropus bengalensis)

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

AUSTRALASIAN GRASS-OWL (Tyto longimembris) – Our bird at the Bislig airport was out much earlier than I had anticipated, giving us all fabulous looks!

Strigidae (Owls)

PALAWAN SCOPS-OWL (Otus fuliginosus) – Almost! [E*]

PHILIPPINE SCOPS-OWL (Otus megalotis megalotis) [E*]

LUZON SCOPS-OWL (Otus longicornis) – For those who ventured up the road before breakfast, we were rewarded with my best views of this bird to date. Fantastic! [E]

MINDANAO EAGLE-OWL (Mimizuku gurneyi) [E*]

SPOTTED WOOD-OWL (Strix seloputo) [*]

PHILIPPINE HAWK-OWL (Ninox philippensis philippensis) – We had an incredible look at this boobook along the start of the Mt. Makiling road. Look for this one to be split into at least three or four different species. [E]

PHILIPPINE HAWK-OWL (Ninox philippensis spilocephala) – This one came in right before the rain commenced at PICOP. The voice of this subspecies is very different than the above subspecies. [E]

<u>Podargidae (Frogmouths)</u>

PHILIPPINE FROGMOUTH (Batrachostomus septimus) – Carlito knew where to find this endemic right near camp on Mt. Kitanglad. Unbelievable looks! [E]

JAVAN FROGMOUTH (Batrachostomus javensis affinis) – The very different voice of this form strongly suggests that it is a good candidate for a split from Javan Frogmouth in the Sundas and on the mainland. Outstanding views on Palawan.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

GREAT EARED-NIGHTJAR (Eurostopodus macrotis) – Widespread on the major islands.

LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus macrurus) – Nicely along the road to Sabang on Palawan.

PHILIPPINE NIGHTJAR (Caprimulgus manillensis) – A close relative of the Large-tailed Nightjar, we scored on this one at the eagle camp on Mindanao. [E]



PHILIPPINE NEEDLETAIL (Mearnsia picina) – One of the strangest of all the swifts, we enjoyed multiple looks at this



This is the buff-bellied race of Island Flycatcher (E. p. nigriloris) from the highlands of Mindanao. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Mindanao endemic at PICOP. [E]

PURPLE NEEDLETAIL (Hirundapus celebensis) – We had only one encounter with this one at Subic Bay this year. Also found on Sulawesi.

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (Collocalia esculenta isonota) – This was the race with the darker rump that we saw in n. Luzon.

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (Collocalia esculenta marginata) – The widespread lowland form with the obscure pale rump patch.

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (Collocalia esculenta bagobo) – Mindanao was the place for this form on the tour.

PYGMY SWIFTLET (Collocalia troglodytes) – We didn't get our first good 'group' look until we got to Palawan. The rump band on this species is much more distinct than the patch on the Glossies. [E]

PHILIPPINE SWIFTLET (Aerodramus mearnsi) – Only in the highlands of Luzon and Mindanao on this tour. [E]

PALAWAN SWIFTLET (Aerodramus palawanensis) – Obviously, this one is very close to the Uniform Swiftlet, but it's confined to Palawan. [E]

UNIFORM SWIFTLET (Aerodramus vanikorensis amelis) – We didn't catch up with this big swiftlet until we got to PICOP.

FORK-TAILED SWIFT (Apus pacificus) – For some folks on the ride up to the eagle camp on Mindanao.

HOUSE SWIFT (Apus nipalensis) – A few around our hotel in Banaue.

ASIAN PALM-SWIFT (Cypsiurus balasiensis)

Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

WHISKERED TREESWIFT (Hemiprocne comata) – A fairly common roadside bird in the forest around Subic Bay.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

PHILIPPINE TROGON (Harpactes ardens) – We finally nailed this gorgeous endemic trogon on one of our walks at PICOP. Not nearly as common as it used to be in the Philippines. [E]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (Alcedo atthis)

INDIGO-BANDED KINGFISHER (Ceyx cyanopectus) – A cooperative bird at the bridge in Lagawe was a real treat for all of us. [E]

SILVERY KINGFISHER (Ceyx argentatus) – Always a crowd-pleaser, this tiny, beautiful kingfisher performed nicely for us at its traditional spot at PICOP. [E]

RUFOUS-BACKED KINGFISHER (Ceyx rufidorsa) [*]

STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER (Pelargopsis capensis) – For some in the mangroves near Sabang.

WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER (Halcyon smyrnensis) – The race here has just a tiny, vestigial white chin, unlike races on the mainland with white throats and chests.

RUFOUS-LORED KINGFISHER (Todiramphus winchelli) – This endemic is becoming more of a challenge to find and see on this tour, so we were lucky to get the good look that we had at PICOP. [E]

COLLARED KINGFISHER (Todiramphus chloris)

SPOTTED KINGFISHER (Actenoides lindsayi) – This big, gorgeous kingfisher really isn't very obvious in the forests of Mt. Makiling unless you're there at first light. We were fortunate to lure in a pair of these fantastic birds early one morning there. [E]

BLUE-CAPPED KINGFISHER (Actenoides hombroni) – Even more shy and retiring than the above species, we all had great views of at least the female of a pair of these along the road at PICOP. [E]

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

BLUE-THROATED BEE-EATER (Merops viridis) – Subic's a great place for this one!

BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER (Merops philippinus)

Coraciidae (Rollers)



Black-faced Coucal (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

DOLLARBIRD (Eurystomus orientalis)

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

PALAWAN HORNBILL (Anthracoceros marchei) – Nicolas had this one's number on Palawan! Great views for all. [E]

RUFOUS HORNBILL (Buceros hydrocorax) – Compared to that last few trips that I've done here, these birds were downright easy this year! Great views of a family group on our first encounter with them at PICOP. [E]

LUZON HORNBILL (Penelopides manillae) – Still hanging on in decent numbers at Subic Bay. [E]

MINDANAO HORNBILL (Penelopides affinis) – The most common hornbill still at PICOP this year. [E]

WRITHED HORNBILL (Aceros leucocephalus) – This was our first hornbill at PICOP this year, much to my surprise. We ended up with pretty good looks later on. [E]

Megalaimidae (Asian Barbets)

COPPERSMITH BARBET (Megalaima haemacephala)

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

PHILIPPINE WOODPECKER (Dendrocopos maculatus) – About as small as a woodpecker gets without being called a piculet. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER (Dryocopus javensis) – The Philippines are the best place I know of to see this spectacular woodpecker in s. Asia.

COMMON FLAMEBACK (Dinopium javanense) – Restricted to Palawan on this tour.

GREATER FLAMEBACK (Chrysocolaptes lucidus haematribon) – This was the red-backed race that we saw on Luzon. There's talk of splitting all of these fancy races of Greater Flameback in the Philippines.

GREATER FLAMEBACK (Chrysocolaptes lucidus erythrocephalus) [*]

GREATER FLAMEBACK (Chrysocolaptes lucidus montanus) – We had a super encounter with this one on the slopes of Mt. Kitanglad.

SOOTY WOODPECKER (Mulleripicus funebris) – The Subic Bay area is great for some of the larger endemic birds, including this distinctive woodpecker. We had several fabulous looks this year. [E]

GREAT SLATY WOODPECKER (Mulleripicus pulverulentus) [*]

Eurylaimidae (Broadbills)

WATTLED BROADBILL (Eurylaimus steerii) – WOWWW!!! As we were standing around waiting for optimal owl time at PICOP, a trio of these flew in to a tree right next to our group. I've never had to use a light for this one, but what a look and what a stroke of luck! [E]

Pittidae (Pittas)

AZURE-BREASTED PITTA (Pitta steerii) – Also known as Steere's Pitta, we worked on a couple of these at PICOP and finally came away with scope views of a calling bird for everyone. What a beauty! [E]

HOODED PITTA (Pitta sordida) – These birds seemed a bit easier than usual and we had a few encounters with it on Palawan.

WHISKERED PITTA (Pitta kochi) [E*]

RED-BELLIED PITTA (Pitta erythrogaster) – Some folks were lucky enough to see this one briefly on the trail near Sabang.

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

GOLDEN-BELLIED GERYGONE (Gerygone sulphurea) – On our first day at Candaba only.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (Artamus leucorynchus) – A common roadside sight in the lowlands.

Aegithinidae (Ioras)

COMMON IORA (Aegithina tiphia) – Only on Palawan on this tour.

Campephagidae (Cuckoo-shrikes)

BAR-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (Coracina striata) – They all have yellow eyes, but not all races have barred bellies.

BLACKISH CUCKOO-SHRIKE (Coracina coerulescens) – Pretty common in the Subic Bay area. [E]

BLACK-BIBBED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (Coracina mindanensis) – For Norbert only at PICOP one day. [E]

MCGREGOR'S CUCKOO-SHRIKE (Coracina mcgregori) – These distinctive cuckoo-shrikes were very evident in the mixed flocks on the slopes of Mt. Kitanglad this year. Some years they can be really tough. [E]

BLACK-AND-WHITE TRILLER (Lalage melanoleuca) – We only had one sighting of this one this year at PICOP, but it was a good one! This canopy bird can be difficult to detect if it's not vocalizing. [E]

PIED TRILLER (Lalage nigra)

ASHY MINIVET (Pericrocotus divaricatus)

FIERY MINIVET (Pericrocotus igneus) – A very brief look for most folks along the road to Sabang.

SCARLET MINIVET (Pericrocotus flammeus johnstoniae) – Males of a number of the races of this one in the Philippines, including this one, are quite yellowish, unlike the vibrant reddish-orange of the mainland races.

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

MANGROVE WHISTLER (Pachycephala grisola) [*]

GREEN-BACKED WHISTLER (Pachycephala albiventris) – Decent looks at this rather drab endemic whistler in the Mt. Polis area. [E]

YELLOW-BELLIED WHISTLER (Pachycephala philippinensis) – We found that this widespread endemic has quite a vocal repertoire throughout its range in the Philippines. [E]

Laniidae (Shrikes)

BROWN SHRIKE (Lanius cristatus)

LONG-TAILED SHRIKE (Lanius schach)

GRAY-CAPPED SHRIKE (Lanius validirostris) – This one teased us to the point of frustration on Mt. Polis. [E]

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

DARK-THROATED ORIOLE (Oriolus xanthonotus) – Another Greater Sunda bird that barely makes it into the Philippines at Palawan.

WHITE-LORED ORIOLE (Oriolus albiloris) – After a lot of searching, we finally located a bird along the trail at Subic Bay for some good scope views. This one and the next are sometimes lumped with the very different Dark-throated Oriole. [E]

PHILIPPINE ORIOLE (Oriolus steerii) – We eventually got a great look at this one in the scope along the road in PICOP. [E]

BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE (Oriolus chinensis chinensis) – If you've ever seen this species on the mainland, it looks quite different from this nominate subspecies in the Philippines.

Dicruridae (Drongos)

ASHY DRONGO (Dicrurus leucophaeus) – Palawan only.

HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO (Dicrurus hottentottus palawanensis) – The latest update of the Clements checklist lumps what we were calling Spangled Drongo with the Hair-crested Drongo. Clearly, there's still some taxonomic work to be done with this group! This was the form we saw on Palawan.

HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO (Dicrurus hottentottus striatus) – This was the race we saw on Mindanao.

BALICASSIAO (Dicrurus balicassius balicassius) [E]

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

BLUE FANTAIL (Rhipidura superciliaris) – We found this distinctive fantail with a couple of the few mixed understory flocks that we found at PICOP. Formerly much more common there when the habitat wasn't quite so fragmented and disturbed. [E]

BLUE-HEADED FANTAIL (Rhipidura cyaniceps) – We used to see this one much more regularly at low elevations on Luzon, but the best place to find it now is up on Mt. Polis at about 6000'. [E]

BLACK-AND-CINNAMON FANTAIL (Rhipidura nigrocinnamomea) – Still one of the most common flock components in the forests of Mt. Kitanglad. [E]

PIED FANTAIL (Rhipidura javanica)

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

SHORT-CRESTED MONARCH (Hypothymis helenae) – We could only find one decent male with a mixed flock at PICOP this year. Formerly much more frequently seen there. [E]

BLACK-NAPED MONARCH (Hypothymis azurea) – The most widespread of our three species of monarchs on this trip.

CELESTIAL MONARCH (Hypothymis coelestis) – We had some tough luck with this species on Mindanao this year, with only about half of the group getting a decent look. It's always been a little tough to track down, but the continued loss of habitat there is only going to hurt our chances in the future. [E]

BLUE PARADISE-FLYCATCHER (Terpsiphone cyanescens) – We stuck around to try for the bird near Puerto Princesa on Palawan, and I'm sure glad we did. We ran into very few later on during our stay there and never saw it again! [E]

RUFOUS PARADISE-FLYCATCHER (Terpsiphone cinnamomea) – We had a few cooperative birds with mixed flocks at PICOP again this year, giving all good looks. Talaud Island is the only other place to see this near-endemic. [E]

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

SLENDER-BILLED CROW (Corvus enca pusillus) – Look for a taxonomic revision of both Slender-billed and Large-billed crows coming sometime soon. The Europeans will likely make a move first, followed by the North Americans.

LARGE-BILLED CROW (Corvus macrorhynchos philippinus)

Alaudidae (Larks)

ORIENTAL SKYLARK (Alauda gulgula) – Distantly for some at Candaba.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PLAIN MARTIN (Riparia paludicola) – A single bird gave us very brief views along the river in Lagawe this year. Very local in the Philippines. The race here is R.p. tantilla.

BARN SWALLOW (Hirundo rustica)

PACIFIC SWALLOW (Hirundo tahitica) – The second-most common swallow of the trip.

STRIATED SWALLOW (Cecropis striolata) – Recorded only in the highlands on this tour.

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

ELEGANT TIT (Pardaliparus elegans) – Probably most commonly seen on Mindanao this year. [E]

PALAWAN TIT (Pardaliparus amabilis) – We had a few this year, but none were very cooperative. [E]

Cettiidae (Bush-Warblers and Allies)

PHILIPPINE BUSH-WARBLER (Cettia seebohmi) – A very common bird at high elevations in Luzon, at least by voice. This one was a real pain to try to see this year, but persistence finally paid off. [E]

MOUNTAIN TAILORBIRD (Phyllergates cucullatus) – This and the next are very closely related to each other, but are not, it turns out, very close to any of the other tailorbirds.

RUFOUS-HEADED TAILORBIRD (Phyllergates heterolaemus) – This shy bird usually takes a few tries, but we prevailed in the end, as usual with this one. [E]

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH (Sitta frontalis) – A few of us got a brief look on Palawan, the only island where it occurs in the Philippines.

SULPHUR-BILLED NUTHATCH (Sitta oenochlamys) – Obviously closely related to the above species, and lumped with it by some authors. [E]

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

BLACK-HEADED BULBUL (Pycnonotus atriceps)

YELLOW-WATTLED BULBUL (Pycnonotus urostictus) – Some folks caught up with this one on the final day. These were more difficult than usual this year for some reason. [E]

YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL (Pycnonotus goiavier)

OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL (Pycnonotus plumosus) – This, the next species, and the Black-headed Bulbul above are all widespread birds in the Sundas and on the Asian mainland and just reach the Philippines in Palawan.

GRAY-CHEEKED BULBUL (Alophoixus bres)

SULPHUR-BELLIED BULBUL (Ixos palawanensis) – We had fabulous scope looks on our first afternoon in Palawan as we made our way across the island to Sabang. [E]

PHILIPPINE BULBUL (Ixos philippinus) – Everywhere except for Palawan. [E]

YELLOWISH BULBUL (Ixos everetti) – The melodic calls of this one were heard only in the Mindanao lowlands. [E]

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

ARCTIC WARBLER (Phylloscopus borealis)

MOUNTAIN WARBLER (Phylloscopus trivirgatus) – We had two very different looking races in the highlands on Luzon and on Mindanao.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

ORIENTAL REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus orientalis)

CLAMOROUS REED-WARBLER (Acrocephalus stentoreus) – This one outnumbered the above species at Candaba Marsh on Luzon on our first day of the tour.

Megaluridae (Grassbirds and Allies)

RUSSET BUSH-WARBLER (Bradypterus seebohmi seebohmi) – YESSS!!! Our strategy worked like a charm with this one high in the pine forests near Bay-yo in n. Luzon! Some authors split the Russet Bush-Warbler into several species, with this one being called the Benguet Bush-Warbler, another Philippine endemic.

LONG-TAILED BUSH-WARBLER (Bradypterus caudatus) – Never easy, we really had to work hard to get this one in view for most folks. [E]

LANCEOLATED WARBLER (Locustella lanceolata) [*]

TAWNY GRASSBIRD (Megalurus timoriensis) – Another widespread species that's ripe for a split.

STRIATED GRASSBIRD (Megalurus palustris)

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

ZITTING CISTICOLA (Cisticola juncidis)

GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA (Cisticola exilis)

DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus atrogularis chloronotos) – The latest Clements Checklist update lumps this race with the widespread s. Asian Dark-necked Tailorbird. This seems a very unlikely reassessment given that there are no Dark-necked/Philippine Tailorbirds on Palawan, the likely bridge between the range of Dark-necked and Philippine Tailorbird in the archipelago. Stay tuned, because I think it will revert back to Philippine Tailorbird in subsequent revisions.

RUFOUS-FRONTED TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus frontalis) – A little work in the rain produced some nice looks at this one in PICOP. [E]

GRAY-BACKED TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus derbianus) – We had the best looks that I've ever had of this one on Mt. Makiling. [E]

RUFOUS-TAILED TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus sericeus) – As far as anyone knows, this is the only tailorbird on Palawan

WHITE-BROWED TAILORBIRD (Orthotomus nigriceps) – Seen well by some, but never really nailed by the entire group at PICOP. [E]

Irenidae (Fairy-bluebirds)

ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD (Irena puella) – Great looks on Palawan!

PHILIPPINE FAIRY-BLUEBIRD (Irena cyanogastra) – Another endemic bird that none of us really saw that well on this tour. It's getting tougher and tougher. [E]

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

GRAY-STREAKED FLYCATCHER (Muscicapa griseisticta) – The Philippines are the winter stronghold of this n.e. Asian species.

ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER (Muscicapa dauurica) – Seen by Dave & Vicki at the eagle camp during a day off there

MUGIMAKI FLYCATCHER (Ficedula mugimaki) – For some folks in the upper elevations of Mt. Kitanglad.

SNOWY-BROWED FLYCATCHER (Ficedula hyperythra) [*]

LITTLE SLATY FLYCATCHER (Ficedula basilanica) [E*]

PALAWAN FLYCATCHER (Ficedula platenae) – It was really difficult to hear the high-pitched song of this bird over the din of the cicadas! [E]

LITTLE PIED FLYCATCHER (Ficedula westermanni) – In the highlands only.

ISLAND FLYCATCHER (Eumyias panayensis) – The races on Luzon and Mindanao differ in the color of their bellies (white in Luzon, buffy on Mindanao).

PALAWAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER (Cyornis lemprieri) – We had a pair of these Palawan endemics right overhead as we tried for a couple of Ashy-headed Babblers near Sabang. [E]

- **ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN** (Copsychus saularis) Surprisingly local in the Philippines.
- WHITE-BROWED SHAMA (Copsychus luzoniensis) One of the first endemic forest birds that we picked up on that first full morning at Subic Bay. What a great song! [E]
- WHITE-VENTED SHAMA (Copsychus niger) One of the easy endemics on Palawan. [E]
- LUZON REDSTART (Rhyacornis bicolor) We found a female right next to the road on Mt. Polis, thanks to some good intel from Mark. [E]
- PIED BUSHCHAT (Saxicola caprata)

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

- **ISLAND THRUSH** (Turdus poliocephalus) A widespread, but highly variable, species throughout the islands of the western Pacific.
- **EYEBROWED THRUSH** (Turdus obscurus) We had several migrants in the high forests of Mt. Kitanglad.
- **WHITE-BROWED SHORTWING** (Brachypteryx montana poliogyna) This species is never easy to see. I wouldn't be surprised at all if all of these endemic races in the Philippines get split off as good species some day (the voices are all very different).
- **WHITE-BROWED SHORTWING** (Brachypteryx montana mindanensis) Nicolas was the only one to get a look at a female on Mt. Kitanglad.

Timaliidae (Babblers)

- **ASHY-HEADED BABBLER** (Malacocincla cinereiceps) Not the most cooperative bird on the tour by any means, but most folks got a look of some kind near Sabang. [E]
- **PALAWAN BABBLER** (Malacopteron palawanense) Also called the Melodious Babbler, we found a very cooperative individual along the Balsahan Trail near Puerto Princesa. This one can be really difficult to see, so we were lucky. [E]
- **STRIATED WREN-BABBLER** (Ptilocichla mindanensis) We found a very responsive bird at PICOP that showed quite nicely for most folks. [E]
- **FALCATED WREN-BABBLER** (Ptilocichla falcata) After giving us quite the run-around, Ann spotted this skulker sitting up and singing, allowing most a decent look before it disappeared for good. [E]
- MINDANAO PYGMY-BABBLER (Stachyris plateni) This tiny babbler was just recently split into two species, with the other one (Visayan Pygmy-Babbler) occurring on Leyte & Samar. [E]
- **RUSTY-CROWNED BABBLER** (Stachyris capitalis) We finally tracked this one down for everyone at PICOP for some great views. This is certainly one of the least vocal babblers that I've ever encountered anywhere. [E]
- CHESTNUT-FACED BABBLER (Stachyris whiteheadi) As usual, this one was around in good numbers in the stunted roadside vegetation on Mt. Polis. [E]
- **PIN-STRIPED TIT-BABBLER** (Macronous gularis) Another recent split, the birds on Palawan have been assigned to the mostly mainland S.E. Asian form instead of the mostly Bornean Bold-striped Tit-Babbler.
- **BROWN TIT-BABBLER** (Macronous striaticeps) Especially common in the lowlands of Mindanao. [E]

Zosteropidae (White-eyes)

- **EVERETT'S WHITE-EYE** (Zosterops everetti) Fairly common at PICOP. All of the white-eyes have recently been reassigned to the babbler family.
- **YELLOWISH WHITE-EYE** (Zosterops nigrorum) The hotel grounds at Banaue has proven to be pretty reliable recently for this one. [E]
- **MOUNTAIN WHITE-EYE** (Zosterops montanus) Maybe the most common passerine in the highlands of Luzon and Mindanao on this tour.
- **MINDANAO WHITE-EYE** (Lophozosterops goodfellowi) This one always seems to slip away from you just as you start to get the group on it...a tough one to see well. [E]
- **CINNAMON WHITE-EYE** (Hypocryptadius cinnamomeus) Also called the Cinnamon Ibon, this bird's taxonomy has always been a head-scratcher, but it was just recently and conclusively shown to be an aberrant member of the Passeridae sparrows (think House Sparrow). [E]

Sturnidae (Starlings)

- **ASIAN GLOSSY STARLING** (Aplonis panayensis)
- **SHORT-TAILED STARLING** (Aplonis minor) This cavity-nesting species was more common than usual in the clearings up on Mt. Kitanglad.

- **APO MYNA** (Basilornis mirandus) Certainly one of the weirdest of all of the many endemics that we see on this tour. [E]
- COLETO (Sarcops calvus) Another very weird one, we enjoyed some great looks of this unique starling early on. [E]

COMMON HILL MYNA (Gracula religiosa)

CRESTED MYNA (Acridotheres cristatellus) [I]

Rhabdornithidae (Philippine Creepers)

- **STRIPE-SIDED RHABDORNIS** (Rhabdornis mysticalis) We never ran into that many of these unusual birds on the tour, but we had our best looks, by far, at PICOP at the end of the trip. This family, the only endemic family of birds currently recognized in the Philippines, might get lumped in with the starlings sometime in the near future. [E]
- **STRIPE-BREASTED RHABDORNIS** (Rhabdornis inornatus) Luckily for us, this species has a tendency to sit up on bare branches above the canopy for prolonged periods, making their detection pretty easy. Numbers up on Mt. Kitanglad are dropping, though. [E]

Chloropseidae (Leafbirds)

- PHILIPPINE LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis flavipennis) This one doesn't seem to be nearly as common as the Yellow-throated is on Palawan, so it's a little trickier to track down for a group. We did find an nice singing male at PICOP for some good looks. [E]
- YELLOW-THROATED LEAFBIRD (Chloropsis palawanensis) Several fine views of this Palawan endemic. [E]

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

- **OLIVE-BACKED FLOWERPECKER** (Prionochilus olivaceus) That little fruiting shrub just off the road at PICOP was a lucky find since it held so many feeding flowerpeckers, including this scarce endemic. [E]
- **PALAWAN FLOWERPECKER** (Prionochilus plateni) Once you learn the calls of this one, it's pretty darned common on Palawan. [E]
- **OLIVE-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum nigrilore) Only in the highlands of Mindanao. [E]
- **FLAME-CROWNED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum anthonyi) This one is always one of the most difficult of the highland endemics to get a look at, but we really lucked out on Mt. Polis with fantastic views of a pair with a mixed flock. [E]
- **BICOLORED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum bicolor) Really similar to the next species when seen from behind, but the bill is stubbier, much like the bill of the above species. Of course, it lacks any color other than black and white. [E]
- **RED-STRIPED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum australe) Just about everywhere we went, except for Palawan. [E] **ORANGE-BELLIED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum trigonostigma)
- **WHITE-BELLIED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum hypoleucum) I do like the name Buzzing Flowerpecker so much better it's really a stretch to call the Luzon race of this thing "White-bellied". [E]
- **PYGMY FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum pygmaeum) Yet another one of our eight species of endemic flowerpeckers on this trip, but certainly not the fanciest of the lot. [E]
- **FIRE-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER** (Dicaeum ignipectum apo) After seeing this one here and at various spots on the mainland, this one surely involves more than one species.

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

- **PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD** (Anthreptes malacensis) We saw both the brown-throated race on Palawan and the gray-throated race on Luzon.
- **PURPLE-THROATED SUNBIRD** (Leptocoma sperata) One of our more widespread sunbird species on this tour.
- **COPPER-THROATED SUNBIRD** (Leptocoma calcostetha) We ended up with fabulous looks at this mangrove specialist on Palawan.
- **OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD** (Cinnyris jugularis) The Palawan race is quite distinctive.
- **GRAY-HOODED SUNBIRD** (Aethopyga primigenia) One of the more common Mindanao highland endemics that we ran into at the eagle camp. [E]
- MOUNT APO SUNBIRD (Aethopyga boltoni) Always a bit of a pain in the neck to see, but we did have a responsive male right over our heads for a couple of minutes at the upper reaches of the Mt. Kitanglad trail. Maneuvering on the trail to get a look from the right spot was a different issue, though. [E]
- FLAMING SUNBIRD (Aethopyga flagrans) Eventually tracked down for good looks on Mt. Makiling. [E]
- METALLIC-WINGED SUNBIRD (Aethopyga pulcherrima) It's very odd that this one is a highland bird on Luzon and

a lowland forest bird on Mindanao. Hmmm.... [E]

LOVELY SUNBIRD (Aethopyga shelleyi) – A recent split from the Handsome Sunbird occupying the rest of the Philippines, this bird is one of the most common of the sunbirds on Palawan. [E]

HANDSOME SUNBIRD (Aethopyga bella) – Much less frequently seen than the above species, we caught up with a male for the group at PICOP late one afternoon. [E]

LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER (Arachnothera longirostra flammifera) – This and the next race are very divergent in appearance from birds on the mainland, but the voices are quite similar. I'm not sure if a split or two is in order for this one or not. This was the race we had on Mindanao.

LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER (Arachnothera longirostra dilutior) – This is the endemic race found on Palawan.

NAKED-FACED SPIDERHUNTER (Arachnothera clarae) – It really wasn't much of a look at all, but the large size and the long, decurved bill of this one were both evident in flight at PICOP. [E]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (Motacilla tschutschensis) – Those agricultural fields up on Mt. Kitanglad usually hold large flocks of this one.

GRAY WAGTAIL (Motacilla cinerea)

ORIENTAL PIPIT (Anthus rufulus) – Also called Paddyfield Pipit and split from Richard's Pipit. [N]

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT (Anthus hodgsoni) – Decent looks in the fog on Mt. Polis.

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

WHITE-CHEEKED BULLFINCH (Pyrrhula leucogenis) – After quite a bit of frustration, we all ended up with good scope views of one sitting quietly on the slopes of Mt. Kitanglad. Not an easy bird to track down. [E]

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (Passer montanus)

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

RED-EARED PARROTFINCH (Erythrura coloria) – Very similar to most of my other encounters with this furtive species. [E]

NUTMEG MANNIKIN (Lonchura punctulata)

WHITE-BELLIED MUNIA (Lonchura leucogastra)

CHESTNUT MUNIA (Lonchura atricapilla) – The most common and widespread of our Lonchura species.

MAMMALS

PHILIPPINE COLUGO (Cynocephalus volans) – Some folks got a look of this one as it glided overhead while we waited for darkness at PICOP. [E]

FRUIT BAT SP. (Pteropus vampyrus) – Those huge roosts at Subic Bay were a mix of this species and the next.

PHILIPPINE YELLOW-CROWNED FLYING-FOX (Acerodon jubatus) [E]

CRAB-EATING MACAQUE (Macaca fascigularis) – Also called Long-tailed Macaque. The ones on the trail at Subic were a little unnerving!

(Sundasciurus mindanensis) – This was our tree-squirrel at PICOP. [E]

(Sundasciurus juvencus) – The small, rusty tree-squirrel on Palawan. [E]

STINK BADGER SP. (Mydaus marchei) – Smelled only on Palawan. [E]

COMMON PALM CIVET (Paradoxurus hermaphroditus) – We had a couple of these in the road at night as we exited the PICOP area.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 317 bird taxa and 8 mammal taxa