

The new-format small group Field Guides tour of PNG got off to a terrific start, with a keen group interested in the culture as well as the birds. Margaret and Ron had to go back to collect their bags at Jackson's Airport, fortunately not a problem here like it would have been elsewhere, then we went the short trip to our comfortable hotel. Next day the Raggiana Birds-of-paradise up at Varirata gave a great show, the best I've seen here in ages, and the supporting cast included Barred Owlet-Nightjar, Papuan Frogmouth, and Brown-headed Paradise-, Variable, and Yellow-billed kingfishers, all showing really well.

The trip to Mt Hagen and then Karawari went off smoothly, with a couple of Papuan Harriers at Hagen airport before a baking hot afternoon at the lodge. Luckily for us the next couple of days saw a high overcast so the temperatures were reasonable, and the high water levels meant we could get up to Ymas Lakes this year, a spectacular river trip with some memorable views at the end. Konmai village with its new spirit house was a great success, and Great-billed Heron and Blue-tailed Bee-eater were good trip birds here.

We managed to get one of the crocodile cult initiates to show us his amazing scarring next day, it must be a huge ordeal, his initial embarrassment transforming to pleasure at the tip, and Chris was a great interpreter and fixer here. A male Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise on his song post was memorable, and other nice birds were Edwards's Fig-Parrot, a pair of the world's smallest parrot, Buff-faced Pygmy-Parrot, foraging over branches like nuthatches, and some nice looks at Coroneted Fruit-Dove and Collared Imperial-Pigeon.

Ambua had just had 60 days of heavy rain in a row, but expert local guide Joseph and the fruiting tree in the lodge grounds were ready for us and we swiftly got onto Brown Sicklebill, Princess Stephanie's Astrapia, Lawes's Parotia, Short-tailed Paradigalla, Blue BoP, Superb BoP, and a bonus of Loria's Satinbird (now promoted out of the birds-of-paradise into a new family) and Macgregor's Bowerbird. Not bad for the first couple of hours, and the rain held off!

Next day we went up to below the Tari Gap area, getting above the fog-shrouded lodge, and had wonderful looks at the bizarre male King-of-Saxony, some really good Ribbon-tailed Astrapia, and even a good male Princess Stephanie's Astrapia despite the roadworks and logging at this site. Phil went to change his camera lens and neatly missed the sighting of a female Papuan Whipbird, one of the great PNG mystery birds about which almost nothing is known. A fine Painted Tiger-Parrot was some consolation, as were beautifully colored Mountain Firetails. That afternoon we went back up to the Gap and got a phone call from local guide Benson, one of Phil's wantoks, that he was watching a New Guinea (Harpy) Eagle not far below the Gap! We coaxed more power out of the bus and got there in time to see it as it sat on a dead tree near the waterfall--it's one of the great NG prizes. The Gap in fine weather was also very nice, and a fine bower of MacGregor's Bowerbird was a real bonus.

Next morning we went for the male Blue Bird-of-paradise and luckily enough the dawn came cold and clear, so we quickly got onto great looks of him at his song post despite the noise of the nearby highway upgrade. The Sooty Owl also came good, though it took a good 10 minutes of patience for it to show. Then we got another phone call from Benson, this time for a reported Feline Owlet-Nightjar in a tree-hole along a trail. We made quick time up there and duly found the bird, though Phil was puzzled as it sure didn't look like any Feline he'd ever seen--and later review of photos clearly showed a dark-eyed bird, a Mountain Owlet-Nightjar, still a great find!



A preening Raggiana Bird-of-paradise made for a graceful form at Varirata. (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

Getting to Tabubil proved to be an adventure in itself. We got back to Hagen in time for the flight, but Air Niugini didn't show up and we repaired to Betty's Coffee Shop for refreshment and the first good coffee for days, having a bonus encounter as the amazing Betty turned up with some clients and we got to chat with her--she's quite a character. The flight did eventually come in, delayed due to bad weather in Tabubil, and the pilot actually made an attempt to land there, pulling out at the last second, not my favorite experience I have to say. They basically then dumped us all off in Kiunga, where fortunately I had kept local guide Samuel for the day, having a strange inkling that this was going to happen given the low probability of afternoon landings at Tabubil. He organized a bus for the 3-hour drive back to Tabubil--joy--and we got in during heavy rain about 9 p.m., luckily having pre-ordered pizzas for dinner!

Rain and fog beset us for the next two days, though we did actually get across the Ok Ma bridge which has been out of action since 2008. We saw White-eared Bronze-Cuckoo, 2 fresh nest holes for Shovel-billed Kingfisher, and some of us saw a female Magnificent BoP, but all thoughts of going back were dashed when the bridge was washed away again that night! A 10-minute lull in the grim weather up at Dablin Creek let us salvage male Carola's Parotia, then score a Pesquet's Parrot flying by and Obscure Berrypecker close by, but really we got weathered out (AWC or Adverse Weather Conditions as the Brits say).

The drive back to Kiunga was enlivened by Little Ringed Plovers at Km 120 and a very quiet spell at Km 17, but thereafter we did well with male Flame Bowerbird perched, Southern Crowned-Pigeons, great male King BoP, White-bellied Pitohui, fantastic looks at both Common and Little paradise-kingfishers. Becky's anti-chigger gear up river here was quite a sight too, I reckoned she was the hottest mum in the world, and any chiggers would be drowned! We had a really superb performance at the Km 17 lek late one afternoon. Interestingly, what was a hybrid swarm last year has now been rejuvenated and we had some pretty good-looking male Great BoP's dancing, with an occasional hybrid and Raggiana looking on.

One day we went back there for what was a much quieter show, but then did some nightbirding nearby, getting a Papuan Frogmouth flying right overhead at dusk, a fine Papuan Boobook, and best of all what was Phil's lifer sighting of Wallace's Owlet-Nightjar, which fortunately was very responsive to the tape.

Kumul Lodge was a second bite at some of the high altitude specials, and the feeders there eventually came good with great views of Brown Sicklebill and the shortest-tailed adult male Ribbon-tail I've ever seen, plus Brehm's Tiger-Parrot and very obliging Archbold's Bowerbird and Crested Satinbird. The Pigites trek got us a fine male Wattled Ploughbill for most, and the trip out to Kama was noteworthy not only for the Lesser BOP and the awful road, but the car in front put its back wheels off the logs over a deep ditch! Luckily a gang of brawny highlanders soon appeared with a rope, and they hauled the thing out, it almost seemed like a set-up as they earned K100 for their trouble, but it gave us a good talking point and chance to tease Max about his driving! Other good birds this day were Yellow-breasted Bowerbird with a nice bower, which took something of an adventurous scramble to reach, and a fine male Superb BoP.

Then it was back (almost on time!) to Port Moresby and a trip out to the PAU for some nice easy birding--it gives you a totally false impression of what birding in PNG is like!--and fine views of Spotted Whistling-Duck, amazing Papuan Frogmouths, and a neat bower of Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, with the avian owner swearing away at us nearby.

The finale was Varirata with Growling Riflebird spotted by Tom through a gap in the foliage atop a ridge, and a terrific clown-faced White-faced Robin. The Kokoda Trail memorial was worth a look, as was Bomana war cemetery en route back to town. The last afternoon cultural tour saw us score Silver-eared Honeyeater after shopping at PNG Art and take in the sights of Hanuabada stilt village, Ela Beach (with an unexpected Brown Booby offshore), and Waigani Houses of Parliament.

It was a memorable trip with a very sympatico group--we got some great birds and had some amazing experiences with the local people. My thanks to everyone for coming, Lukim yu behain. Thanks to Teresa at FG HQ for good logistics, and to local guides Leonard, Billy, Chris, Joseph, Samuel, Jimmy and Max 1 and Max 2, who all gave a lot to the trip and were ace spotters.

--Phil

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

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

BIRDS

Casuariidae (Cassowaries)

SOUTHERN CASSOWARY (*Casuarius casuarius*) – Fresh footprints around the Kwatu Lodge forests were as close as we got.

DWARF CASSOWARY (*Casuarius bennetti*) – Droppings were seen up at Ambua.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

SPOTTED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna guttata*) – Five at the PAU were a nice find.

WANDERING WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) – Nine at the PAU were a good trip bird.

RADJAH SHELDUCK (*Tadorna radjah*) – Two at the PAU were unexpected, this is not common here.

GREEN PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus pulchellus*) – Several females at the PAU.

PACIFIC BLACK DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*) – A couple along the Karawari and 30 at the PAU.

Megapodiidae (Megapodes)

BLACK-BILLED BRUSH-TURKEY (*Talegalla fuscirostris*) – Heard up at Varirata and a nest mound seen. [E*]

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

BROWN QUAIL (*Coturnix ypsilophora*) – 4 up at Tari Gap, ably flushed by our busboy Stephen.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) – 5 at the PAU included 2 juvs. one of which was riding on the back of an adult. [N]

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

BROWN BOOBY (*Sula leucogaster*) – One adult off Ela Beach harbor was an unexpected addition to the trip list.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) – About 30 at the PAU.

GREAT CORMORANT (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Phalacrocorax carbo novaehollandiae*) – One flying over at the Sepik Headwaters was unexpected, but I think there is a small population here as I've seen them a few times now. It's meant to be a vagrant to PNG.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) – Just 6 along the Karawari and 2 at the PAU.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT-BILLED HERON (*Ardea sumatrana*) – Great views at Karawari with 4 birds on the Konmai day and a couple en route to Ymas.

GREAT EGRET (AUSTRALASIAN) (*Ardea alba modesta*) – Three day records of 2 birds each time at Karawari and then the Elevala.

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – 2 at Ymas Lakes and 7 at the PAU.

LITTLE EGRET (LITTLE) (*Egretta garzetta nigripes*) – Just 3 seen along the Karawari, one of which had odd pale



The fantastic male Twelve-wired Bird-of-Paradise at first light near Karawari (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

colored legs.

PIED HERON (*Egretta picata*) – One at Karawari airstrip, 10 at Ymas Lakes and 7 at the PAU.

CATTLE EGRET (ASIAN) (*Bubulcus ibis coromandus*) – As usual only seen in the Port Moresby area where they are quite common.

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – One along the Elevala was it for the trip.

RUFOUS NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) – A couple at Karawari and some smart adults and an imm. at the PAU. Called Nankeen Night Heron where it occurs.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

AUSTRALIAN IBIS (*Threskiornis molucca*) – 3 at the PAU, an uncommon winter migrant.

STRAW-NECKED IBIS (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) – Some folks saw this irruptive winter migrant near the PAU. (NL)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PACIFIC BAZA (*Aviceda subcristata*) – Two at Varirata, one at Karawari and just one at Kiunga.

LONG-TAILED HONEY-BUZZARD (*Henicopernis longicauda*) – The only one of the trip was up above the Bailey Bridge at Ambua. [E]

BLACK KITE (BLACK-EARED) (*Milvus migrans affinis*) – Quite common at Karawari, Mt Hagen and Port Moresby. Note this taxon is NOT a part of Black-eared Kite.

WHISTLING KITE (*Haliastur sphenurus*) – Common at Karawari, also seen at the PAU.

BRAHMINY KITE (*Haliastur indus*) – Small numbers at all the lowland sites.

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) – Good views at Karawari, with a fine adult up at Ymas being particularly memorable.

EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus spilonotus spilothorax*) – Two were seen at Mt Hagen airport, a good pick up of a scarce species, usually split these days as Papuan Harrier. [E]

VARIABLE GOSHAWK (*Accipiter hiogaster*) – Good views at Karawari and Kiunga.

GRAY-HEADED GOSHAWK (*Accipiter poliocephalus*) – One up at Karawari was unusual here and showed very nicely. [E]

NEW GUINEA EAGLE (*Harpyopsis novaeguineae*) – Yay! We got a phone call from my wantok Benson to tell me they were watching a NG Harpy Eagle up near the Gap, which we were actually driving towards. Luckily the bird stayed sat despite various photographers harassing it, and we got a great scope view before it did eventually fly off. I had not seen one for some years, it's a very hard bird to see these days. [E]



Our Painted Tiger-Parrot skulking in the tall grasses...a great find! (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

BROWN FALCON (*Falco berigora*) – Singles at the Sooty Owl site and one at Mt Hagen.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

CHESTNUT FOREST-RAIL (*Rallina rubra*) – Tom got one on a forest track at Kumul early on our last morning; they did not seem to be calling at all this trip. [E]

BUFF-BANDED RAIL (*Gallirallus philippensis*) – One flushed across the road by the Kumul entrance.

RUFOUS-TAILED BUSH-HEN (*Amaurornis moluccana*) – Heard at Kiunga. [*]

PURPLE SWAMPHEN (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – Great looks at the PAU, may well be a split as Pacific Swamphen.

DUSKY MOORHEN (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) – Three at the PAU.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

MASKED LAPWING (*Vanellus miles*) – 19 at Karawari airstrip and a few at the PAU.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (INDIAN) (*Charadrius dubius dubius*) – 6 at km 120 despite all the oil worker

developments there. Note this is not the Indian taxon *jerdoni*, despite the parentheses.

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

COMB-CRESTED JACANA (*Irediparra gallinacea*) – Great views of 6 at the PAU, a superb little bird.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

AUSTRALIAN PRATINCOLE (*Stiltia isabella*) – One at Tari airport was unexpected, then there were 3 at Kiunga.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – One along the Karawari R. and 7 up at Ymas Lakes.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – A few in Mt Hagen looked like they might really be Feral Pigeons. [I]

SLENDER-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia amboinensis*) – A few in flight at Varirata.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) – Several seen at Karawari, then at Ambua and finally Kumul where a flock of 7 flushed from the roadside. [E]

GREAT CUCKOO-DOVE (*Reinwardtoena reinwardtii*) – One was seen by some at Varirata and there were a couple of fly-bys at Kiunga. [E]

STEPHAN'S DOVE (*Chalcophaps stephani*) – One flew across the river at Karawari, a nice flight view of an elusive bird.

NEW GUINEA BRONZEWING (*Henicophaps*

albifrons) – One was calling along the Boystown Road and I think Tom may have seen it fly across the road at some point. [E*]

PEACEFUL DOVE (*Geopelia placida*) – A few at the PAU, very local in PNG.

BAR-SHOULDERED DOVE (*Geopelia humeralis*) – Two at the PNG, another very local bird here.

SOUTHERN CROWNED-PIGEON (*Goura scheepmakeri*) – Samuel keeps his title of Mr Crowned Pigeon again, this time we had it by 0715 when he spotted one sat up on a huge limb along the Elevala. Later we saw one on a nest near Kwatu, then had a third on the bank by a creek, so we did really well for this great bird. [E]

VICTORIA CROWNED-PIGEON (*Goura victoria*) – Frustrating, one flew out of a huge tree at Karawari with a wing-clap, but we could not find it again, it's shame they are so heavily hunted here. [E]

WOMPOO FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) – A couple at Varirata and one at Kiunga.

PINK-SPOTTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) – Very sparse this trip, we saw a handful at Varirata and again at Kiunga. [E]

ORNATE FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus ornatus*) – Two along Boystown road were a surprise, it's usually more of a hill forest species, and an elusive one too. [E]

ORANGE-FRONTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*) – A brief view of one along the Karawari was it for this trip. [E]

SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus superbus*) – Heard at Varirata. [*]

CORONATED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus coronulatus*) – A nice view of one at Karawari, we managed to tape it in for good looks. [E]

BEAUTIFUL FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus pulchellus*) – Jimmy found us a lovely perched one at Kiunga, and it was vocal at Varirata. [E]

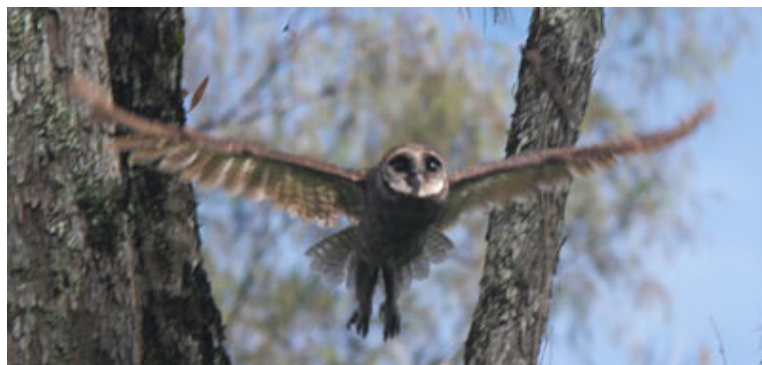
WHITE-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) – One male up at Ambua, which didn't sit for very long. [E]

ORANGE-BELLIED FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) – Fairly common and 2 races, *pseudohumeralis* with the maroon shoulder bar at Kiunga and *finschii* at Varirata. [E]

DWARF FRUIT-DOVE (*Ptilinopus nanus*) – One flew over at Karawari, a tiny little dove that is always hard to find. [E]

PURPLE-TAILED IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula rufigaster*) – Heard at Km 17 but not interested in the tape. [E*]

PINON IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula pinon*) – Nice looks along the Karawari, the nominate race at Karawari and *rubiensis* at Kiunga. [E]



Sooty Owl (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

COLLARED IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula mullerii*) – Just a few at Karawari, where they are hunted a lot- we had a great look at one by the airstrip. Small numbers upriver at Kiunga, where we had about 50. [E]

ZOE IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula zoeae*) – Some good looks around Kiunga, and a few folks saw one fly past at Karawari. [E]

TORRESIAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON (*Ducula spilorrhoa*) – One flew over at the PAU.

PAPUAN MOUNTAIN-PIGEON (*Gymnophaps albertisii*) – Small numbers from Kiunga and Ambua. [E]

Cacatuidae (Cockatoos)

PALM COCKATOO (*Probosciger aterrimus*) – Amazingly we only heard it at Karawari, the first time I've not seen it here, but the Elevala came good and we saw about 5 individuals.

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO (*Cacatua galerita*) – Seen (and heard!) nicely at Varirata and Kiunga.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

YELLOW-STREAKED LORY (*Chalcopsitta sintillata*) – Good views of this big dark-headed parrot at Kiunga. [E]



A view at Varirata, where eucalypt woodland meets more humid forest (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

DUSKY LORY (*Pseudeos fuscata*) – Some flocks went over at Karawari in the late pm sun, and we had 8 at Kiunga. [E]

RAINBOW LORIKEET (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) – New Guinea birds are often now split as Coconut Lorikeet, the plumage is pretty distinct from the Australian birds. They are quite common in the lowlands and we saw them well at Varirata.

GOLDIE'S LORIKEET (*Psitteuteles goldiei*) – One zipped over at Ambua, a dreadful view! [E]

BLACK-CAPPED LORY (*Lorius lory*) – These were noisy and widespread but getting them perched was problematic, the best were up at Varirata. [E]

RED-FLANKED LORIKEET (*Charmosyna placentis*) – Good looks at both Karawari and Kiunga. [E]

PAPUAN LORIKEET (*Charmosyna papou*) – They showed nicely up at Ambua, it really is one of the most beautiful of all the parrots. Also seen at Kumul. [E]

PLUM-FACED LORIKEET (*Oreopsittacus arfaki*) – This tiny lorikeet with the husky voice was seen at Ambua. [E]

YELLOW-BILLED LORIKEET (*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*) – Quite common at Ambua. [E]

ORANGE-BILLED LORIKEET (*Neopsittacus pullicauda*) – Just a couple at Ambua. [E]

PESQUET'S PARROT (*Psittichas fulgidus*) – One at Dablin Creek in the mist, then 3 at Km 17 late one afternoon, a great bird that is becoming rare due to hunting. [E]

YELLOW-CAPPED PYGMY-PARROT (*Micropsitta keiensis*) – Flyover dust specks at Kiunga, if you've got floaters you've already seen it! [E*]

BUFF-FACED PYGMY-PARROT (*Micropsitta pusio*) – Much better, we watched two birds foraging along the branches of a huge tree at Karawari. This genus is the world's smallest parrots. [E]



Our group testing the engineering of a highlands bridge—it works! (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)

ORANGE-BREASTED FIG-PARROT (*Cyclopsitta guiliemitertii*) – Seen at Dablin Creek and Kiunga, quite well at the latter site. [E]

DOUBLE-EYED FIG-PARROT (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) – A couple of good looks at Karawari, and again at Kiunga.

LARGE FIG-PARROT (*Psittaculirostris desmarestii*) – Only heard up the Elevala. [E*]

EDWARDS'S FIG-PARROT (*Psittaculirostris edwardsii*) – This is a north slope special and we got fairly good looks at Karawari, not a vintage year for them but better than some. [E]

PAINTED TIGER-PARROT (*Psittacella picta*) – One fine male feeding in tall grass just by the road below the wrecked container and giving great views, I'd forgotten that they are more intensely colored than Brehm's and the turquoise breast spot is a giveaway. It's a difficult bird to get on this trip. [E]

BREHM'S TIGER-PARROT (*Psittacella brehmii*) – Brief looks at Tari Gap, then 3 or 4 lumbering about on the feeders at Kumul, less than usual there. [E]

RED-CHEEKED PARROT (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) – Common and noisy from Varirata to Karawari to Kiunga, their range of calls is surprisingly varied. Some good views both at rest and in flight.

ECLECTUS PARROT (*Eclectus roratus*) – The only numbers were from Karawari, it was very scarce at Kiunga this year.

PAPUAN KING-PARROT (*Alisterus chloropterus*) – Fly-bys at Varirata and Ambua. [E]

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

BRUSH CUCKOO (*Cacomantis variolosus*) – An adult seen well at Karawari, and a barred juv. along the Elevala.

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO (*Cacomantis flabelliformis excitus*) – Heard at Ambua but did not come close. Also heard at Kumul in the distance only.

RUFOUS-THROATED BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx ruficollis*) – Two seen on the same day, at Ambua Lodge and above the Bailey Bridge. [E]

WHITE-EARED BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx meyeri*) – Two over along the Ok Ma in the rain and fog. [E]

LITTLE BRONZE-CUCKOO (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) – Seen briefly at Karawari, it was singing very well there.

LONG-BILLED CUCKOO (*Rhamphomantis megarhynchus*) – Just one at Km 17, a brief appearance atop a palm. Still a mystery bird, the (presumed) host species is unknown. [E]

WHITE-CROWNED KOEL (*Cacomantis leucolophus*) – Heard at Varirata. [E]

DWARF KOEL (*Microdynamis parva*) – A great view of one adult by the river at Karawari, and heard at Varirata. [E]

ASIAN KOEL (*Eudynamis scolopaceus*) – A male at Karawari.

AUSTRALIAN KOEL (*Eudynamis cyanocephalus*) – Males and a dark capped female were seen at Kiunga along the river.

CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) – Two of this great prehistoric looking cuckoo at Karawari, where it was quite vocal pre-dawn too, and up to 9 along the Elevala with 3 next day near Kiunga.

GREATER BLACK COUCAL (*Centropus menbeki*) – Heard along the rivers at Karawari and Kiunga. [E*]

PHEASANT COUCAL (*Centropus phasianinus*) – Seen at Varirata and heard at Km 17.

LESSER BLACK COUCAL (*Centropus bernsteini*) – One was sunning at Karawari airstrip and some saw one at Kiunga. [E]

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

SOOTY OWL (GREATER) (*Tyto tenebricosa arfaki*) – This took ages to be persuaded to emerge from its roost hole, the new refined technique of scratching with a long pole is much better than bashing the trunk! This bird earns the landowners hundreds of kina per year! [E]

Strigidae (Owls)

JUNGLE HAWK-OWL (*Ninox theomacha*) – One of my pet hates is the confusing Clements name for the Papuan Boobook, a long -established and entirely appropriate name. Anyway, two were calling at Ambua and we tried twice, failing miserably both times though we were unlucky on that dawn effort. Happily one was much more co-operative at Km 17 and we got some fine views there. [E]

Aegothelidae (Owlet-Nightjars)

WALLACE'S OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles wallacii*) – What a treat to put this one on the list! I recalled Jimmy had told me he'd seen this at Km 17, so we decided to give it a go and amazingly enough got a strong response almost at once. Finding it in the thick foliage was another matter, but eventually we got a fuzzy blob sat back to us on a limb, and later a full view of it sat out on a curved branch. My first lifer on a Field Guides NG trip for many years!

MOUNTAIN OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles albertisi*) – Sadly the Feline turned into a Mountain, but still a great bird to get and its not many tours that see 3 species of owlet-nightjar. Thanks to Benson for the info. [E]

BARRED OWLET-NIGHTJAR (*Aegotheles bennettii*) – I was pleasantly surprised that the two old faithfuls from previous years were still on site at Varirata. The first showed about 12%, but the second was much better! [E]

Podargidae (Frogmouths)

MARbled FROGMOUTH (MARbled) (*Podargus ocellatus ocellatus*) – Heard at Karawari, and what a great call.

PAPUAN FROGMOUTH (*Podargus papuensis*) – A good trip for them, the local boys dipped but we found 3 at Varirata, much to their chagrin, then we had one at Km 17 flying right overhead, and finally 3 photogenic ones in a palm at the PAU. I am pretty sure the 2 at Wapanemanda are this species too, to be confirmed if I get photos.

Apodidae (Swifts)

PAPUAN NEEDLETAIL (*Mearnsia novaeguineae*) – Small numbers at Karawari and again at Kiunga, it seems to replace Glossy Swiftlets over the big river systems. [E]

GLOSSY SWIFTLET (*Collocalia esculenta*) – Quite common in the hills.

MOUNTAIN SWIFTLET (*Aerodramus hirundinaceus*) – Lots at Ambua and a few at Kumul. [E]

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

Hemiprocnidae (Treeswifts)

MOUSTACHED TREESWIFT (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) – Great looks at 5 at Varirata where it is scarce, and a few at Kiunga.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

AZURE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx azureus*) – Seen well along the Karawari and some saw along the Elevala.

LITTLE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx pusillus*) – A nice look at one in a small creek by our first walk at Karawari, always a tricky bird to see well.

VARIABLE KINGFISHER (*Ceyx lepidus*) – Leonard found us one sat high in a tree along the Treehouse Trail, they are kind of yellow-buff beneath and the tiny size makes finding them difficult.

- BLUE-WINGED KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo leachii*) – Great views of 2 males and a female carrying on at Varirata.
- RUFOUS-BELLIED KOOKABURRA** (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) – A fine male at Varirata, then seen again at Karawari and Km 17. [E]
- SHOVEL-BILLED KOOKABURRA** (*Clytoceyx rex*) – Two fresh nest diggings along the Ok Ma road were promising, but then the bridge was washed away! [E]
- FOREST KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus macleayi*) – Uncommon in PNG, we had one at the PAU on our last day.
- SACRED KINGFISHER** (*Todiramphus sanctus*) – Only small numbers this trip, widespread but not as common as they sometimes are. It's an Australian migrant here.
- HOOK-BILLED KINGFISHER** (*Melidora macrorrhina*) – Well, we almost saw one at the Elevala, it called really close but bolted when we got nearby. Heard at dawn and dusk here and at Karawari. [E*]
- YELLOW-BILLED KINGFISHER** (*Syma torotoro*) – Great views up at Varirata, they were really jazzed up this trip, and we also got one along Boystown Road.
- LITTLE PARADISE-KINGFISHER** (*Tanysiptera hydrocharis*) – This was amazing, it came right in to the tape and perched in full view, still a very little known and rare species endemic to the Fly drainage. [E]
- COMMON PARADISE-KINGFISHER** (*Tanysiptera galatea*) – Thankfully this was also quite well behaved after a slow start, and we had fine scope views along the Elevala. [E]
- BROWN-HEADED PARADISE-KINGFISHER** (*Tanysiptera danae*) – My aim these days is to get them without using tape, they sit quietly and can often be picked up by the bright red breast. Leonard got us 2 fine birds on day one at Varirata, and on the last morning we had another very nicely, calling from about 30' up in a tree and spotted by Julia as we were all looking too low down. It's endemic to SE PNG and this is the only place I have ever seen them. [E]

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

- BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER** (*Merops philippinus*) – Just a couple of singles along the Karawari.
- RAINBOW BEE-EATER** (*Merops ornatus*) – Small numbers at Varirata, Karawari and Kiunga,

Coraciidae (Rollers)

- DOLLARBIRD** (*Eurystomus orientalis*) – Common in the lowlands and hills but still a terrific bird.

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

- BLYTH'S HORNBILL** (*Aceros plicatus*) – Who can forget those whooshing wing beats? These immense creatures were seen really well at Karawari and along the Elevala.

Pittidae (Pittas)

- HOODED PITTA** (*Pitta sordida*) – Heard at Kiunga and Karawari, one even flew over the track but no-one got a proper look [*]
- RED-BELLIED PITTA** (*Pitta erythrogaster*) – Heard at the Km 17 lek. [*]

Ptilonorhynchidae (Bowerbirds)

- SPOTTED CATBIRD** (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) – Great calls in the forest at Km 17, but they are almost impossible to see in PNG. [*]
- ARCHBOLD'S BOWERBIRD** (*Archboldia papuensis*) – A fine female on the feeders at Kumul Lodge, it's rare high-altitude species and this is a great site for it. [E]
- MACGREGOR'S BOWERBIRD** (*Amblyornis macgregoriae*) – One came into the fruiting tree at Ambua, and we saw a fine maypole bower on the far side of the Gap. [E]
- FLAME BOWERBIRD** (*Sericulus aureus*) – This was lucky as a sunburst male flew over the Boystown Road several times, and sat atop a tall dead tree for scope views; a female was also seen in flight a couple of times. [E]
- YELLOW-BREASTED BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera lauterbachii*) – This high-altitude species is a Kumul area special, which we saw near its bower at the viewpoint. The bower was a nice double avenue structure but took quite a scramble to access. [E]
- FAWN-BREASTED BOWERBIRD** (*Chlamydera cerviniventris*) – Good views at the PAU with a fine single avenue bower as well.

Maluridae (Fairywrens)

- WHITE-SHOULDERED FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus alboscapulatus*) – One in a coffee bush by the Sooty Owl was a nice sight. [E]
- EMPEROR FAIRYWREN** (*Malurus cyanocephalus*) – A pair skulked away by the bowerbird mound at Kiunga, and

most folks got views of this spectacular sexually dimorphic species there. [E]

Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)

PLAIN HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius ixoides*) – One in the forest along the Boundary Track at Varirata was unexpected, it's a rare bird here. [E]

MARbled HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius cinereus*) – One at the Blue BoP site and one at the bowerbird lookout near Wapanemanda. Very uncommon. [E]

STREAK-HEADED HONEYEATER (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) – Some good views this trip, at Varirata, Karawari and then Kiunga, one of the "Friarbird mimics" along with Brown Oriole. [E]

MOUNTAIN MELIPHAGA (*Meliphaga orientalis*) – One up at Dablin Creek in the mist. [E]

SCRUB HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga albonotata*) – Seen briefly at Kiunga. [E]

PUFF-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga aruensis*) – One along Boystown Road seemed plausible for this species, but this genus is one of the hardest on the planet to identify to species, with taxonomy and field characters uncertain and voice poorly known. Most tour companies conveniently see one of each on their tours, and I fear we are going to do the same this trip! [E]

MIMIC HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga analoga*) – Birds at Karawari may well be this species. [E]

GRACEFUL HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga gracilis cinereifrons*) – Ah, now the Meliphagas at Varirata with the big pale ear spots are actually not Graceful but this recently split taxon Elegant Honeyeater *M. cinereifrons*, only the woefully outdated Clements hasn't picked up this yet. It's one of the few readily identified taxa in the genus too. [E]

YELLOW-GAPED HONEYEATER (*Meliphaga flavirictus*) – We got quite good looks at what is a plausible one of this rather rare species at Boystown Road, being pale below with a good gape line, mid-sized ear spot and pale legs. [E]

BLACK-THROATED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus subfrenatus*) – Nice looks up at Tari Gap. [E]

OBSCURE HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus obscurus*) – Heard at Boystown Road and Km 17 but elusive. [E*]

YELLOW-TINTED HONEYEATER (*Lichenostomus flavescens*) – Nice looks at the PAU and Tom saw it at the Hotel.

RUFOUS-BANDED HONEYEATER (*Conopophila albogularis*) – Seen well at Kiunga wharf, where it is a recent arrival, and then at the PAU.

MOUNTAIN MYZOMELA (*Myzomela adolphinae*) – Good looks at this tiny sprite up at Varirata. [E]

RED-COLLARED MYZOMELA (*Myzomela rosenbergii*) – Seen up at Tari Gap, the male is an eye-catching thing. [E]

SILVER-EARED HONEYEATER (*Lichmera alboauricularis*) – The last tick of the trip, seen well by PNG Art. [E]

WHITE-THROATED HONEYEATER (*Melithreptus albogularis*) – A few at the Varirata approach.

MEYER'S FRIARBIRD (*Philemon meyeri*) – Very good views at Karawari of this dark diminutive friarbird. Also seen at Boystown Road. [E]

HELMETED FRIARBIRD (*Philemon buceroides*) – Widespread in the lowlands, this is New Guinea Friarbird *P. novaeguinae*, quite distinct from Helmeted in calls and morphology. It always used to be split by the dreaded Clements, but it was then oddly demoted.

TAWNY-BREASTED HONEYEATER (*Xanthotis flaviventer*) – Good views of the dull poorly marked North coast race at Karawari, and the much smarter southern birds at Kiunga.

LONG-BILLED HONEYEATER (*Melilestes megarhynchus*) – One at Karawari showed nicely, the only one we saw. [E]

SMOKY HONEYEATER (*Melipotus fumigatus*) – The blushing honeyeater was seen well at Ambua and Kumul. [E]

BELFORD'S MELIDECTES (*Melidectes belfordi*) – Bel Mels are liked by clients, being big, noisy and obvious, the very reason tour leaders hate 'em! That said, great looks at Kumul on the feeders, where one kept beating up a hapless Ribbontail- see what I mean? [E]

YELLOW-BROWED MELIDECTES (*Melidectes rufocrissalis*) – Quite common at Ambua, just as noisy as its cousin. [E]

ORNATE MELIDECTES (*Melidectes torquatus*) – Brief looks at Kama BoP lek. [E]

RUFOUS-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora guisei*) – A couple showed well at Ambua and a few saw it at Pigites. [E]

BLACK-BACKED HONEYEATER (*Ptiloprora perstriata*) – The Grey-streaked Honeyeater was seen at Ambua then very well on orange blossoms at the Kumul feeders. [E]

Acanthizidae (Thornbills and Allies)

RUSTY MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis murina*) – Heard at Varirata, Tabubil and Kiunga but tough to see. [E*]

MOUNTAIN MOUSE-WARBLER (*Crateroscelis robusta*) – One at Makara Lodge at Ambua and then a couple of good sightings at Kumul. [E]

LARGE SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis nouhuysi*) – Seen at Ambua and Kumul. [E]

PAPUAN SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis papuensis*) – Good looks at Tari Gap and Kumul. [E]

PALE-BILLED SCRUBWREN (*Sericornis spilodera*) – This was seen at Dablin Creek and then at Varirata. The quiet "nee naw" call sounds like a distant ambulance! [E]

MOUNTAIN GERYGONE (*Gerygone cinerea*) – Lucky here as we got a group of 4 of this scarce species above the Bailey Bridge. [E]

GREEN-BACKED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chloronota*) – Quite good looks at 2 high in Casuarinas at Varirata, and heard at most lowland sites.

FAIRY GERYGONE (*Gerygone palpebrosa*) – A well-marked male at Varirata on the first morning.

YELLOW-BELLIED GERYGONE (*Gerygone chrysogaster*) – These were quite common in the lowland forests and members of all the bird flocks. [E]

LARGE-BILLED GERYGONE (*Gerygone magnirostris*) – Responsive birds at Karawari, it's a riverine species here..

BROWN-BREASTED GERYGONE (*Gerygone ruficollis*) – Seen at Ambua and Kumul, the smoky descending song is the best thing about it. [E]

Pomatostomidae (Pseudo-Babblers)

NEW GUINEA BABBLER (*Pomatostomus isidorei*) – Heard at Karawari and showed nicely at Kiunga where noisy groups were seen several times. We call it Rufous Babbler here. [E]

Cnemophilidae (Satinbirds)

LORIA'S SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus loriae*) – Good looks at males and females at Ambua, now promoted out of bop's and into a new endemic family. [E]

CRESTED SATINBIRD (*Cnemophilus macgregorii*) – A good trip for what can be a tricky species, we saw a female below Tari Gap, then a female came onto the feeders at Kumul, the first time I've seen one do this there. A fine orange and black male also showed twice, a real eyeful. Like Loria's, promoted out of Bop's into a new family. [E]

Melanocharitidae (Berrypeckers and Longbills)

OBSCURE BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis arfakiana*) – One up at Dablin Creek in trying conditions, calling close by and showing briefly. Also heard along the Ok Ma Road. Berrypeckers and longbills comprise an endemic family here. [E]

BLACK BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis nigra*) – Seen at Varirata and also at Kwatu. [E]

LEMON-BREASTED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis longicauda*) – It doesn't have a Lemon-breast, so why change from Mid-mountain Berrypecker? A brightly marked female showed very well by the wrecked container below Tari Gap. [E]

FAN-TAILED BERRYPECKER (*Melanocharis versteri*) – Quite good views above Ambua and at Kumul. [E]

YELLOW-BELLIED LONGBILL (*Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*) – Frustrating, they sang close by but just refused to show at both Karawari and Kiunga. [E*]

DWARF HONEYEATER (*Toxorhamphus iliolophus*) – One seen briefly at Varirata. Note it was moved out of Honeyeaters years ago but Clements is once again long outdated. [E]

PYGMY HONEYEATER (*Toxorhamphus pygmaeum*) – This was heard clicking away at the lek by Km 17 but stayed hidden. Same comments re Honeyeaters as above! [E*]

Paramythiidae (Tit Berrypecker, Crested Berrypecker)

TIT BERRYPECKER (*Oreocharis arfaki*) – Elusive at Ambua this time, but came good at Pigites where males and females showed nicely. An endemic family too. [E]

CRESTED BERRYPECKER (*Paramythia montium*) – Good views at Tari Gap, and again at Kumul. It's a member of an endemic family, along with Tit-Berrypecker. [E]

Psophodidae (Whipbirds and Wedgebills)

PAPUAN WHIPBIRD (*Androphobus viridis*) – Hmm, well I chose the wrong moment to go change my lens, as Joseph promptly found a female Papuan Whipbird hopping about on the verge, neatly disappearing just as I got back! This is a great mystery bird in PNG, almost unknown and rarely seen and readily confused with female berrypeckers! This area below the Gap has produced a number of sightings though, including the distinctive males. [E]

Cinclosomatidae (Quail-thrushes and Jewel-babblers)

PAINTED QUAIL-THRUSH (*Cinclosoma ajax*) – Heard at Varirata, one of the trio of major skulkers here that take much work to get. [E*]

SPOTTED JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa leucosticta*) – Another mega-skulker, we heard it at both Ambua and Pigites but could not get a response. [E*]

BLUE JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*) – These jewel-babblers always take a long time to get onto and the two attempts here at Kiunga both produced glimpses as the birds flew or dashed across the track. Pretty typical. [E]

CHESTNUT-BACKED JEWEL-BABBLER (*Ptilorrhoa castanonota*) – Another of the Varirata skulkers, and not tape responsive this trip. [E*]

Machaerirhynchidae (Boatbills)

BLACK-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus nigripectus*) – Great views of this striking species at Ambua, and heard at Kumul. [E]

YELLOW-BREASTED BOATBILL (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) – A female was seen well along the Boundary Track at Varirata.

Artamidae (Woodswallows)

GREAT WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus maximus*) – Great looks at Ambua, huddling in endearing fashion and taking moths that were thrown up for them. Also seen at Tabubil and unusually at Ok Menga at 460 m which is a somewhat low altitude for them. [E]

WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) – A few around Port Moresby.

Cracticidae (Bellmagpies and Allies)

MOUNTAIN PELTOPS (*Peltops montanus*) – Oddly we saw none at Ambua this time, for maybe the first time ever, but we did get 3 at Dablin. [E]

LOWLAND PELTOPS (*Peltops blainvillii*) – Great looks at Karawari and again at Kiunga. [E]

BLACK-BACKED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus mentalis*) – Fine views at the PAU and Varirata, it's otherwise a Cape York special.

HOODED BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus cassicus*) – A good singer, and seen well at Varirata and Kiunga. [E]

BLACK BUTCHERBIRD (*Cracticus quoyi*) – Seen well at Karawari and Ambua.

Campephagidae (Cuckoo-shrikes)

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) – Seen a couple of times near Varirata.

BARRED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina lineata*) – Good views of 2 at Varirata.

BOYER'S CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina boyeri*) – Small numbers in the hills and lowlands. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina papuensis papuensis*) – Common at Karawari and a few near Varirata.

PAPUAN CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina incerta*) – There was one at the Sooty Owl site, this is the Black-shouldered Cicadabird of the IOC and my checklist, Black-s Cuckooshrike in the NG field guide. Why Clements had to confuse it is baffling. [E]

GRAY-HEADED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina schisticeps*) – Amazingly we saw this in bad conditions up at Dablin, including the rusty color female. [E]

NEW GUINEA CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina melas*) – Clements strikes again- Papuan Black Cuckooshrike works well and there are at least 9 other cuckooshrikes in NG. We saw a female at Karawari and a pair at Varirata on the last day. [E]

BLACK-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Coracina montana*) – Very nice views of this striking species at both Ambua and Kumul. [E]

GOLDEN CUCKOO-SHRIKE (*Campochaera sloetii*) – We had brief views at Dablin, then got a cracking male at Boystown Road, a really stunning species that is more like a minivet than a cuckooshrike. [E]

VARIED TRILLER (*Lalage leucomela*) – Two fine males at Varirata and also seen at Dablin.

BLACK-BROWED TRILLER (*Lalage atrovirens*) – This north slope special showed off well at Karawari. [E]

Neosittidae (Sittellas)

VARIED SITTELLA (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) – Great looks at about 10 of them at Ambua Lodge, and split by many these days as Papuan Sittella, an endemic montane form. [E]

Pachycephalidae (Whistlers and Allies)

MOTTLED WHISTLER (*Rhagologus leucostigma*) – A few folks saw one at Ambua by the fruiting tree. [E]

DWARF WHISTLER (*Pachycare flavogriseum*) – This was heard at the Treehouse Trail but did not come in. It's now in Acanthizidae not Pachycephalidae. [E*]

RUFOUS-NAPED WHISTLER (*Aleadyras rufinucha*) – This odd bird showed very well at Ambua and Kumul. [E]

BROWN-BACKED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala modesta*) – Good looks at this PNG endemic at Ambua. [E]

GRAY-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala griseiceps*) – This was seen at Varirata and also at Ok Ma, where one sat for ages in the drizzle.

SCLATER'S WHISTLER (*Pachycephala soror*) – A male at Ambua. [E]

REGENT WHISTLER (*Pachycephala schlegelii*) – Seen at Ambua and Kumul but hard to get good looks at the striking male. [E]

BLACK-HEADED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala monacha*) – Seen in the Tari valley and then at Dablin. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED WHISTLER (*Pachycephala leucogastra*) – This led us a dance on the last day at Varirata and we only got brief views of it, though it was singing well. [E]

RUFOUS SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) – Seen at Varirata.

GRAY SHRIKE-THRUSH (*Colluricincla harmonica*) – Heard at Varirata approach road. [*]

HOODED PITOUI (*Pitohui dichrous*) – Good views of them at Varirata, this is the famous poison bird and it is now placed in Oriolidae! [E]

WHITE-BELLIED PITOUI (*Pitohui incertus*) – A vocal group came though near Kwatu, always tough to get onto them, it's a poorly known Fly River endemic. [E]

RUSTY PITOUI (*Pitohui ferrugineus*) – This was seen at Karawari and then at Varirata. [E]

VARIABLE PITOUI (*Pitohui kirhocephalus*) – Heard at Karawari and Kiunga, but kept out of sight. [E*]

BLACK PITOUI (*Pitohui nigrescens*) – Quite a good view of a female at the fruiting tree at Ambua, it's a bird we seldom see on the tour. [E]

WATTLED PLOUGHBILL (*Eulacestoma nigropectus*) – A close calling bird above the Bailey Bridge was elusive, but thankfully we got a fine male at Pigites for some. I wonder which family this really belongs in? [E]

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LONG-TAILED SHRIKE (*Lanius schach stresemanni*) – Seen well at Ambua and near Wapanemanda. This highland endemic race is a possible split.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

BROWN ORIOLE (*Oriolus szalayi*) – The friarbird mimic, quite common in the hills and lowlands and with a good voice. [E]

AUSTRALASIAN FIGBIRD (*Sphecotheres vieilloti*) – Another Port Moresby area savanna special the rather distinctive local race *salvadorii* (him again, the great unpacker!) having a grey throat and upper chest. Oddly, it's not listed in Clements.

Dicruridae (Drongos)

SPANGLED DRONGO (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) – Birds of the endemic race *carbonarius* up at Varirata could well be a split from migrants from Australia, which is what I think we saw at Kiunga. The voices are distinct and they have differences in bill and head plumage.

Rhipiduridae (Fantails)

NORTHERN FANTAIL (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) – Seen up at Dablin and at Karawari.

WILLIE-WAGTAIL (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) – Very widespread, from lowlands to mountains, we even had one at Max's orchid garden at about 2500m

FRIENDLY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura albolimbata*) – Good looks at Ambua and Kumul. [E]

CHESTNUT-BELLIED FANTAIL (*Rhipidura hyperythra*) – Seen nicely at Varirata where it a core member of species flocks. [E]

SOOTY THICKET-FANTAIL (*Rhipidura threnothorax*) – Calling noisily and glimpsed up the hill at Karawari, it circled right round us in a huge loop. [E]

WHITE-BELLIED THICKET-FANTAIL (*Rhipidura leucothorax leucothorax*) – This skulker behaved fairly well at two sites at Karawari, with one at Ymas lakes having a bathe late pm. [E]

- BLACK FANTAIL** (*Rhipidura atra*) – This was heard and some folks saw it at Dablin Creek in the mist. [E]
DIMORPHIC FANTAIL (*Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*) – One at the Pigites track was a nice find. [E]
RUFOUS-BACKED FANTAIL (*Rhipidura rufidorsa*) – The Karawari bird gave us a hard time, giving only glimpses, but one at the lek near Kiunga showed off well. [E]

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

- GOLDEN MONARCH** (*Carterornis chrysomela*) – We heard this at Karawari and Kiunga but could not get one until the last morning at the latter site when one showed briefly. [E]
BLACK MONARCH (*Symposiachrus axillaris*) – Heard almost daily at Ambua but no-one got a sighting. [E*]
SPOT-WINGED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus guttula*) – Seen quite well at Kiunga and Varirata on the last morning. [E]
HOODED MONARCH (*Symposiachrus manadensis*) – Heard at Karawari, then amazingly we got 2 along the Boystown Road at Kiunga as well as one up near Kwatu. [E]
FRILLED MONARCH (*Arses telescophthalmus*) – Nice looks at Varirata and then near Kiunga. [E]
RUFOUS-COLLARED MONARCH (*Arses insularis*) – Frustratingly, Ochre-collared Monarch was only heard at Karawari this trip. [E*]
TORRENT-LARK (*Grallina bruijni*) – Tom saw one fly by near the creek at Dablin. Ok Menga was too wet this year, with no boulders! [E]
LEADEN FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra rubecula*) – Heard at Varirata. [*]
SHINING FLYCATCHER (*Myiagra alecto*) – Seen along the Karawari and Fly Rivers.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

- GRAY CROW** (*Corvus tristis*) – Sparse, just a couple at Varirata and two sightings from Kiunga. [E]
TORRESIAN CROW (*Corvus orru orru*) – Quite common around Port Moresby out by the piggeries at 17-mile.

Paradisaeidae (Birds-of-paradise)

- GLOSSY-MANTLED MANUCODE** (*Manucodia ater*) – Just one seen at Karawari, then a few over the Elevala including one in its odd slow butterfly glide display. [E]
CRINKLE-COLLARED MANUCODE (*Manucodia chalybatus*) – One along Boystown Road was all we saw. [E]
TRUMPET MANUCODE (*Phonygammus keraudrenii*) – Vocal, but only heard around Kiunga, and NOT sounding like any trumpet! [*]
SHORT-TAILED PARADIGALLA (*Paradigalla brevicauda*) – Great views of one at Ambua, complete with yellow butterfly shape at the base of the bill. [E]
RIBBON-TAILED ASTRAPIA (*Astrapia mayeri*) – Great looks at some resplendent males above the Bailey Bridge, with a hybrid with Princess Stephanie's along the road below there one morning. Fine views of female/imms. at Kumul, with the shortest tailed adult male I've ever seen also, about half the normal length. [E]
PRINCESS STEPHANIE'S ASTRAPIA (*Astrapia stephaniae*) – Good looks at female plumaged birds at Ambua, and a couple of good males at the remains of their lek site, which is sadly now being logged. They resemble giant paradise-whydahs in flight! [E]
CAROLA'S PAROTIA (*Parotia carolae*) – A male and imm. bird were at the fruiting tree at Dablin, and we even got to see head wires during a lull in the poor weather conditions. [E]
LAWES'S PAROTIA (*Parotia lawesii*) – Fine views of females and imms. at the fruiting tree by Ambua Lodge, they have a singularly flat-headed shape. [E]
KING-OF-SAXONY BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Pteridophora alberti*) – A splendid singing male above the Bailey Bridge who performed beautifully, and multiple views of f/imm. birds both at Ambua and Pigites. [E]
MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD (*Ptiloris magnificus*) – Heard along Boystown Road, this species has become very hard to see these days. [*]
MAGNIFICENT RIFLEBIRD (*Ptiloris magnificus intercedens*) – The Growling Riflebird was heard at Varirata and Tom and few folks got onto a calling male along the Boundary Track on the last day. [E]
SUPERB BIRD-OF-PARADISE (*Lophorina superba*) – Good views of a couple of males below Ambua, what a weird shape this bird has, and nice female plumaged ones at the Lodge. A male was singing near Wapanemanda as well and showed nicely in the scope. [E]
BROWN SICKLEBILL (*Epimachus meyeri*) – A few females at Ambua, and likewise on the feeders at Kumul, where they toss fruit into the air and catch it before swallowing. [E]

- MAGNIFICENT BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Cicinnurus magnificus*) – Heard close by at Varirata, and a female plumaged bird was seen by some of us along the Ok Ma Road. [E]
- KING BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Cicinnurus regius*) – Great views of the fiery red and white male at his song tree near Kwatu, and a female along Boystown Road on the last day there. [E]
- TWELVE-WIRED BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Seleucidis melanoleucus*) – A super male was at a new site above Karawari, we had great views at first light up to about 0700 and even counted 11 (or was it 12?) tail wires. A female was seen later near Konmai as she flew over the river. [E]
- LESSER BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea minor*) – Bad advice from Kumul who told us not to worry about getting there really early.....as it was we caught the tail end of the show and had fair views of a couple of males and females as it got really hot. Lucky Max didn't drop the truck into the ditch on the way in or we'd have missed it altogether. [E]
- GREATER BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea apoda*) – Now this was a nice surprise, as we had the lek going full bore at Km 17 late one afternoon with at least 4 pretty good looking male Greater BoP's showing off, with a couple of hybrids hanging about and a Raggiana popping in and out. Last year this lek was mainly hybrids, so good to see it coming good again, and it was a terrific show, which was not repeated next day, maybe put off by a helicopter that went straight overhead? [E]
- RAGGIANA BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea raggiana*) – A great show with some 5 males at the lek at Varirata, the best performance I'd seen there in quite some while, no wonder we dallied a while! Also seen at Kiunga and up along the Elevala, mostly females. [E]
- BLUE BIRD-OF-PARADISE** (*Paradisaea rudolphi*) – A couple of great female-plumage birds at Ambua, one of which I think is a young male based on the calls. A male called and showed well from his song post near Benson's place too, despite on-going roadworks nearby. This is a quite rare and restricted range species endemic to a narrow and heavily-settled height band in PNG. [E]
- LESSER MELAMPITTA** (*Melampitta lugubris*) – Heard at Ambua, and finally we saw one along a track at Kumul late one afternoon. I am sure these are incorrectly placed in *Paradisaeidae*, *Incertae Sedis* is better till we know what they are. [E]
- GREATER MELAMPITTA** (*Melampitta gigantea*) – I got one to respond along the Ok Ma Road late one wet afternoon, it was good to even hear this rare mega-skulker of the karst formations. [E*]

Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)

- LESSER GROUND-ROBIN** (*Amalocichla incerta*) – Another mega-skulker, heard at Ambua and Kumul. [E*]
- TORRENT FLYCATCHER** (*Monachella muelleriana*) – Lovely views at Ok Menga, and the Sepik headwaters, also one up at Dablin Creek . [E]
- LEMON-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Microeca flavigaster*) – Seen at Varirata, and also the strange bright yellow birds at Dablin Creek that may be an undescribed taxon.
- CANARY FLYCATCHER** (*Microeca papuana*) – Seen quite well at Makara Bird Lodge near Ambua. [E]
- GARNET ROBIN** (*Eugeryone rubra*) – A fine female-plumaged bird was singing by the fruiting tree at Ambua, it's an odd arboreal robin that is more like a gerygone. [E]
- WHITE-FACED ROBIN** (*Tregellasia leucops*) – Great views of one along the Tree House Trail, it came quite close and we all admired the clown face and bright orange legs.
- BLACK-SIDED ROBIN** (*Poecilodryas hypoleuca*) – Heard at Karawari but kept well out of sight, then luckily a fairly obliging one along a short trail at Boystown Road, this can be a real devil to see well. [E]
- BLACK-THROATED ROBIN** (*Poecilodryas albonotata*) – Good views of 2 singing birds above the Bailey Bridge. [E]
- WHITE-WINGED ROBIN** (*Peneothello sigillata*) – Tame and confiding at Kumul, and also seen well by the wrecked container. [E]
- BLUE-GRAY ROBIN** (*Peneothello cyanus*) – A couple near Ambua, they have become shyer here in recent years. [E]
- ASHY ROBIN** (*Heteromyias albispecularis*) – Heard as usual at Ambua, this is a hard one to actually see. [E*]
- NORTHERN SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Drymodes superciliaris*) – The third of the trio of mega-skulkers at Varirata, we got one to circle right round us and I thought we had a fairly open slope, but it somehow managed to stay out of sight! [*]

Eupetidae (Rail-babbler and Ifrita)

- BLUE-CAPPED IFRITA** (*Ifrita kowaldi*) – A group favorite and we did well for this oddity, which creeps along branches and picks over lichens. No-one knows what family it is among, it has been placed in various groups and basically remains *Incertae Sedis*. It is also a poisonous bird a bit like pitohuis, certainly an important species to see on a New Guinea trip and we did nicely for them at both Ambua and Kumul. [E]

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PACIFIC SWALLOW (*Hirundo tahitica*) – Small numbers in the lowlands.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

ISLAND LEAF-WARBLER (*Phylloscopus poliocephalus*) – Seen quite well singing near Benson's place at Ambua.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus australis*) – There is a population in the dense kunai grass at 1570m near Wapanemanda, a high altitude for it. We could hear them as we did the Yellow-breasted Bowerbird bower trek. [*]

Megaluridae (Grassbirds and Allies)

TAWNY GRASSBIRD (*Megalurus timoriensis*) – Now split as Papuan Grassbird, much larger than Tawny, with montane habitat and different song. We had brief views near Ambua airstrip and heard them at the Kumul grasslands.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

PIED BUSHCHAT (*Saxicola caprata*) – Seen at Port Moresby, Ambua area and Kumul, a wide-ranging species in NG.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

ISLAND THRUSH (*Turdus poliocephalus*) – Great looks at Kumul and also up at the Tari Gap. Young birds sure look different to the adults.

Zosteropidae (White-eyes)

BLACK-FRONTED WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops minor*) – Vocal at Varirata and we did manage quite good views one afternoon. [E]

CAPPED WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops fuscicapilla*) – Seen in the Tari valley and also at Ok Menga at 460m, a very low altitude for them- there was a noisy flock of 20 foraging by the tunnel. [E]

Sturnidae (Starlings)

METALLIC STARLING (*Aplonis metallica*) – Common at Karawari and along the river at Kiunga, with a nest colony by the airstrip there.

SINGING STARLING (*Aplonis cantoroides*) – Just a couple of sightings, at Jackson's Airport and then 2 immatures at the PAU.

YELLOW-FACED MYNA (*Mino dumontii*) – Great croaking voice, we saw them at Karawari, Kiunga and Varirata, it's usually one of the first endemics we see. [E]

GOLDEN MYNA (*Mino anais*) – We saw two races, *orientalis* at Karawari, and *robertsoni* along the Elevala. Always in small numbers and generally sparse. [E]

Dicaeidae (Flowerpeckers)

RED-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER (*Dicaeum geelvinkianum*) – Some saw this tiny bird at Varirata, and then we had a good male at the bowerbird viewpoint at Wapanemanda.

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

BLACK SUNBIRD (*Leptocoma sericea*) – Very striking if seen well, we saw them at Karawari and Kiunga with both males and females showing nicely.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AUSTRALASIAN PIPIT (*Anthus novaeseelandiae exiguus*) – One at the airport at Mt Hagen was a good trip bird. It's an endemic highland race *exiguus* here and may well be a split at some point.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – A few around Port Moresby and Mt. Hagen, it has colonized since 1992. [I]

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – Another new colonist, this one since 2007, doubtless via container ships. We saw it at Jackson's Airport and then one at the PAU. [I]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

MOUNTAIN FIRETAIL (*Oreostruthus fuliginosus*) – Great views up at the Tari Gap, it's a striking and quite scarce finch of the montane zones. [E]

BLUE-FACED PARROTFINCH (*Erythrura trichroa*) – Most of the group saw one above the Bailey Bridge.

HOODED MUNIA (*Lonchura spectabilis*) – Nice views at Ambua and again near Wapanemanda. [E]

MAMMALS

SPECKLED DASYURE (*Neophascogale lorentzii*) – Tom got to see one above Ambua, we usually see this small diurnal carnivore at some point. [E]

GREATER FLYING FOX (*Pteropus neohibernicus*) – Just a few of this very large flying fox along the Fly River.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

REPTILES

New Guinea Freshwater Crocodile (*Crocodylus novaeguineae*) -- Becky spotted one about a metre long sat on a log along Kwatu Creek. It's a quite scarce endemic.

Tree snake sp. (*Dendrelaphis* sp.) -- One small dark one with a pale neck stripe was at Ok Menga and happily I managed to save it from some boys intent on smashing it, with a judicious flick of a stick into cover.

MAMMALS

Tom saw what sounds like the rare and Endangered Calaby's Pademelon (*Thylogale calabyi*) at Kumul Lodge on the final morning there.

BUTTERFLIES

Some nice butterflies were seen on the trip and we should have a photo archive that can hopefully lead to some identifications being made. The standard ref. is Parsons, M (1999) *The Butterflies of Papua New Guinea*, Academic Press. This has been remaindered and might be available at something way below the original very high price.

Species we did see included:

Ulysses Swallowtail

Pearl Owl

Graphium weiskei at Kumul

TRIP FAVORITES

Trip favorites were unusually hard to pick but the Raggiana and then Greater Bird-of-paradise lek displays were huge highlights, along with the Twelve-wired and King at their song posts, plus the amazing King-of-Saxony and those stunning Princess Stephanie's and Ribbon-tailed *Astrapias*. Southern Crowned-Pigeon is always a high, Phil has to have his first Field Guides New Guinea tour lifer for years--Wallace's Owlet-Nightjar--and of course the New Guinea (Harpy) Eagle was a great prize.

Totals for the tour: 320 bird taxa and 2 mammal taxa