

Report of a Trip to

# Luzon, Philippines

The Quest for the Whiskered Pitta  
from 5<sup>th</sup> April to 14<sup>th</sup> April 2013

Participants:

Arjan Brenkman & Jan van der Laan

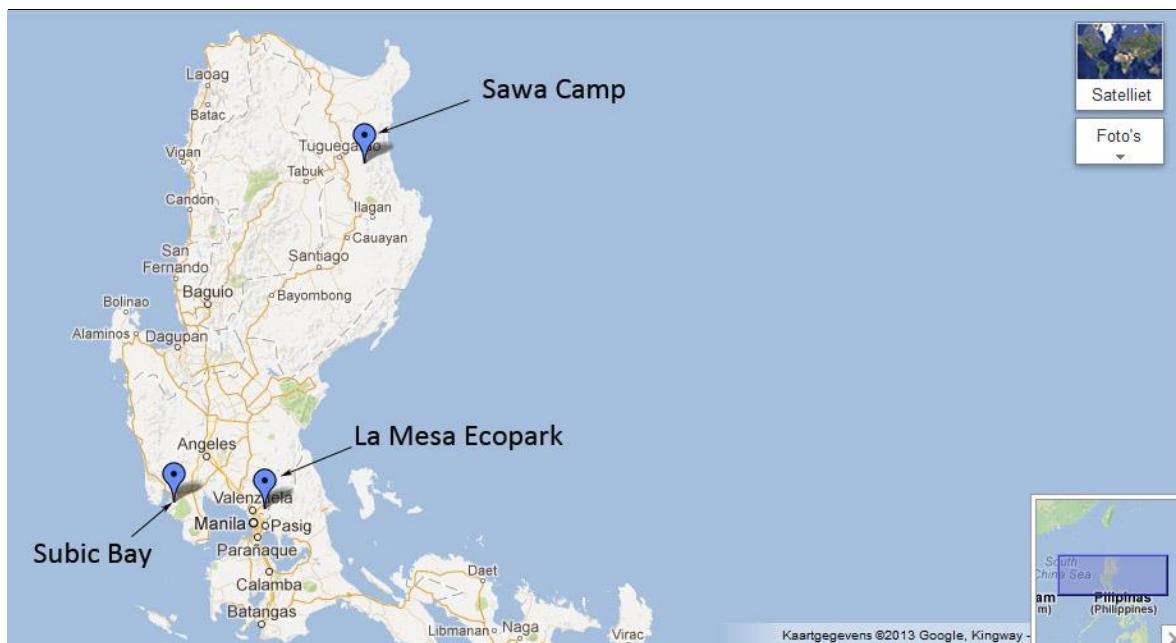


Ashy Thrush – *Geokichla cinerea*, 14 April 2013, La Mesa Ecopark, Manila, Philippines; © Jan van der Laan.



## Introduction

After our success in Thailand in 2012, we decided to do another trip together. As we both visited the Philippines (Jan in 2000, Arjan in 2006), but without Whiskered Pitta, we decided to go after this pitta. Moreover both of us had never visited Subic Bay, so this could be a perfect short trip. Arjan is a friend of Rob Hutchinson (of [www.BirdTourAsia.com](http://www.BirdTourAsia.com)) and Rob offered to take us to Subic Bay and some spots in and around Manila.



## Itinerary

- 5 April** Departure at 20:45 hours with flight KL 807 with KLM from **Amsterdam** to Manila with a short stop at **Taipei**, Taiwan. During our stop at Taipei we saw a pair of Amur White Wagtails.
- 6 April** Arrival at **Manila** at 18:15 hours. We took a taxi to the Sulo Riviera Hotel in **Quezon City** for two nights. A nice hotel, recommended by Rob Hutchinson.
- 7 April** We were picked at 3:00 am by Rob and Irene for a full day birding at **Subic Bay**. At first we tried to see the Chocolate Boobook, but in vain. We heard Philippine Scops Owl and Luzon Hawk-Owl and saw Great Eared Nightjar. After sunrise we focused on species like Sooty Woodpecker, Green Racket-tail, Trilling tailorbird, Luzon Hawk-Eagle and White-fronted Tit. Other species we saw where Chinese Sparrow-Hawk, Asia Koel, Blue-naped Parrot, White-lored Oriole, Philippine Serpent-Eagle, Philippine Pygmy Woodpecker, Kamchatka Leaf Warbler, Japanese Leaf Warbler (both splits from Arctic Warbler), Spotted Wood-Kingfisher, Brown-breasted Kingfisher, Red Junglefowl, Rufous-crowned Bee-eater, Oriental Dollarbird, Whiskered Treeswift, Brahminy Kite, Blue Rock-Thrush, Crested Myna, a distant Roseate (or Black-naped?) Tern, Philippine Falconet, Rufous Coucal, Philippine Green-Pigeon, Luzon Flameback, Guiabero, Colasisi, Barred Rail, Plain Bush-Hen, Emerald Dove, Green Imperial Pigeon, Luzon Hornbill, Scale-feathered & Rough-crested Malkoha, Philippine Hawk-Cuckoo, White-breasted Treeswallow, Amethyst Brown-Dove, Blackish Cuckoo-Shrike. Most effort was put into finding White-fronted Tit, which we found already in the morning, but without good views. However just before sunset, we managed to find an individual showing very well. At around 21:00 we arrived at the hotel in **Manila** again, had dinner and went to sleep.

**8 April** In the morning we visited a city park in **Manila** where a Philippine Scops Owl was present for a while. We saw an adult plus two juveniles. After this sighting we took a taxi to **Terminal 3** for our flight of 11:25 to **Tuguegarao** (Cebu Pacific 5J 5504). At the airport of **Tuguegarao** we met Aquilino Escobar and his crew. With their jeepney we drove to Aquilino's house in **Baliwag**, where our luggage plus food for 5 nights was divided between three porters. Arjan's beauty case weighted exactly 20 kilograms and the porters begged if the content could be divided among two bags, but Arjan insisted the beauty case would brought up to the mountain in one piece and with complete content. We departed at 15:30 hours and we reached **Camp 1** at 18:30 hours. During the walk we saw Black-shouldered Kite, Island Collared Dove, Red Turtle Dove, Spotted Imperial Pigeon, Pied Bushchat, Striated Grassbird, Philippine Drongo-Cuckoo, Pied Triller, Brown and Long-tailed Shrike, Large-billed Crow, Black-chinned Fruit Dove, Grey Wagtail and Philippine Duck.

**9 April** In the early morning we had good looks of Luzon Hawk-Owl and Philippine Nightjar and at night we heard a distant Philippine Eagle-Owl. We started walking at 6:40 hours for **Camp 2**. At first we encountered more Spotted Imperial Pigeons, Streak-headed Rhabdornis, Sierra Madre Crow (heard-only), Furtive Flycatcher (in bamboo along the river; a new bird for Arjan), Rufous Coucal, Elegant tit, Amethyst Brown-Dove (seen!), Blue-headed Fantail, Luzon Shama, Pygmy and Ameline Swiftlet, Philippine Bulbul, Emerald Dove and White-eared Dove. After crossing the river we had lunch in the small village of **Sawa**. After Sawa the climb got steeper and for Jan the trails were too overgrown and at one moment he had a bamboo stick pointing in his eye, which caused him losing one of his contact lenses. Happily Aquilino found it back. During the final ascent we saw a pair of Golden-crowned Babblers. At 15:00 hours all had reached the **Camp 2** and after unpacking things, we did a short walk above the camp. We heard a calling Flame-breasted Fruit-Dove and found the remains of a shot one, although a pair of Philippine Trogons and Luzon Hornbill offered some compensation. After dinner and some washing, we went to sleep just after dark. At night we heard Luzon Hawk-Owl and Great Eared Nightjar.



**10 April** We woke up at 5:00 hours and tried to see the Blue-breasted Flycatcher immediately. We had good looks of this bird and after a quick breakfast we started to explore the higher elevations of **Camp Sawa**. We quickly found out birds were very scarce and difficult to see and most

recordings were heard-onlies. However we managed to see Cream-bellied Fruit-Dove, Luzon Hornbill, Citrine Canary-Flycatcher, Philippine Fairy-Bluebird, Rusty-breasted Cuckoo, Philippine Hawk-Cuckoo, Elegant Tit, Blue-headed Fantail, Philippine Coucal, Philippine Cuckoo-Dove, Spotted Wood Kingfisher, Colasisi, Guiabero, Grey-rumped Swiftlet, Pygmy Swiftlet and Ameline Swiftlet. Frustrating were the heard-onlies of Flame-breasted Fruit-Dove, Luzon Bleeding-Heart, Whiskered Pitta (two), Rusty-faced Wren-Babbler, Rufous Hornbill and Philippine Serpent-Eagle. Jan could sent his sister Marianne a SMS for her birthday, during the times we came into reach of the telecom antenna in the valley and Arjan received a lot of SMS's from his work. After dinner we took an early rest.

**11 April** Pouring rain woke us up. After the rain stopped at around 8:00 hours we started birding above the camp. Just above **Camp 2** we heard several Cream-bellied Fruit-Doves, the same Flame-breasted Fruit-Dove, Luzon Bleeding-Heart and a Sierra Madre Ground Warbler (aka Rusty-faced Babbler). Again we heard the Pitta of the day before, but after a few 100 meters we heard another one on the left side of the trail. This birds seemed too far away, so we decided to go to the **third stream** crossing. There we finally had a small feeding flock, which produced Luzon Striped Babbler, Yellowish White-eye, Citrine Canary-Flycatcher, Blue-headed Fantail, Elegant Tit, Sulphur-billed Nuthatch, Lemon-throated Leaf-Warbler, Buzzing Flowerpecker and also (not in the feeding flock) several Rufous Hornbills. Moreover, we had a long duel again with the same Whiskered Pitta as the day before. After an hour the bird suddenly flew over our heads while jumping off a cliff, but Jan didn't see it. We tried some territories higher up, but the most exciting moment concerned Jan collapsing through a bamboo bridge happily without injury. On our way back, we tried the second Pitta territory and the bird answered. We dueled with the bird quite some time in some sort of arena and suddenly we heard him behind us. We walked back to the trail, but Jan was convinced the bird was still in the arena. Then Arjan saw the bird close-by and after some nerve-wrecking seconds, Jan connected too with the bird. And what a bird it was! The bird seemed bigger than expected and the word that came into mind was 'well trained'. The bird showed it's back as well, showing its green-blue back and golden-brown hind crown. Then it disappeared. What a relief, it was 17:00 hours, so one hour daylight left! We made our traditional Mexican Wave (we first did that after seeing Eared Pitta in Khao Yai) on the trail and the last part of the walk back to the camp was easy, since we were walking on air. After dinner and washing (with 4 leeches on Jan's back and chest) we went to sleep.

**12 April** We rose early (Jan was awake at 3:45), packed our gear and after some birding just above camp in a final attempt to see Sierra Madre Ground Warbler (aka Rusty-faced Babbler), we slowly walked down to **Sawa village**. Arjan encountered a crake on the trail, but could not identify it. During the descent we heard Sierra Madre Crows and after some effort Arjan saw two birds flying away. Suddenly at the same place we heard a Luzon Bleeding-Heart and we decided not to let this one go. We hid ourselves in the bamboo and after playing the sound for a while, the bird suddenly was seen walking towards us in a very narrow corridor. And what a beautiful bird it was! Beautiful blue grey on the upperparts, strong legs and the orange-red 'wound' on its breast were seen very well. Very happy we knew this was the second best bird of our short trip! Other birds seen during the descent were Black and Cinnamon Bittern (seen by Arjan and Aquilino at the river just below Sawa village), Philippine Honey-Buzzard, Oriental Honey-Buzzard, Luzon Shama, White-lored Oriole, Eyebrowed Thrush. Around 15:00 hours we reached **Camp 1**, where we relaxed and observed the birds around camp. We saw Arctic Warbler, Yellowish White-eye, Barred Rail, Lesser Coucal, Philippine Falconet, Striated Grassbird, Long-tailed Shrike and Lemon-throated Leaf-Warbler. After dinner we went to bed, again early.

**13 April** We started walking in light rain at 6:30 from **Camp 1** to Aquilino's house in **Baliwag**. During the descent it started to rain mildly, but we still could do some birding on our way down. We saw

Spotted Imperial Pigeons, Spotted Dove, Brown-headed Thrush, Oriental Pipit, Grey Wagtail, Philippine Tailorbird, Striated Grassbird and three groups of Chestnut-cheeked Starlings. At 9:40 we reached Aquilino's house, where we had a refreshing coke and cleaned our pants and shoes. Our shoes had become very heavy with sticky clay, so the final hour walking was a real challenge! The whole crew brought us back to the airport of **Tuguegarao**, where we arrived at 11:30. We said goodbye and farewell and checked in quickly. The plane departed on time at 12:55 hours and arrived on time in **Manila** at 13:55 hours. At the airport we took a burger at Burger King (tasted very well after days with oatmeal!) and took a taxi to the hotel. At the hotel we finally could clean ourselves, washed our clothes and drank some beer! In the late afternoon Rob and Irene took us to the **Angono Petroglyphs**, just south of Manila to look for a family of Philippine Eagle-Owls. Unfortunately we did not find it, but had very good looks of Philippine Scops-Owl and Chirruping (Savanna) Nightjar. At 21:45 Rob and Irene dropped us at the hotel, where we had dinner and celebrated the Whiskered Pitta again with a beer.

**14 April** After breakfast at 6:00 we were picked up by Irene and Rob for a morning visit to **La Mesa Ecopark** in the northeastern part of **Manila**. This place proved to be a very birdy place and although very crowded, the birds don't seem to bother and are plentiful everywhere. The bird of the park is of course the Ashy Thrush and we had stunning looks of one bird and saw fleeting glimpses of at least three other birds. Another specialty was Philippine Pitta (formerly known as Red-bellied Pitta), with one bird showing very well. Other birds we observed were Indigo-banded Kingfisher, White-breasted Crake, Philippine Magpie-Robin, Mangrove Blue Flycatcher, Lowland White-eye, Japanese & Kamchatka Leaf Warbler, Red-keeled Flowerpecker, Emerald Dove (on nest), Hooded Pitta, Brown Shrike, Grey-backed Tailorbird, Pied Fantail, Colasisi, Yellow-vented and Philippine Bulbul. Rob and Irene brought us back to the hotel, we said goodbye, checked out and had a long lunch. At 15:00 hours we were brought to the airport where an enormous mass of people was blocking the entrance. With the help of a policeman we were sneaked through another entrance and after a moderate wait we could check in, left our luggage and at 19:45 our plane to **Amsterdam** departed, with a short stop at **Taipei**, Taiwan (our next destination?).

**15 April** After a long flight we arrived at 6:15 hours at **Amsterdam**. Arjan was picked up by Jantine, and Jan took the train to **Alkmaar**, where Marieke picked him up.

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## Species Accounts

Order and nomenclature follows IOC Bird List version 14.1 (January 2024). Where names differed from the usual fieldguides, the alternative name is given. Rusty-faced Wren-Babbler is changed to Sierra Madre Ground Warbler and is considered to be a warbler now. Birds restricted to the Philippines are in capitals. For a full overview of all Philippine endemics according to the IOC, see Jan's report from [2000](#).

## Recommended Literature

For the Philippines there is actually one appropriate guide, *A Guide to the Birds of the Philippines* by Kennedy, Gonzales, Dickinson, Miranda and Fisher (Oxford 2000).

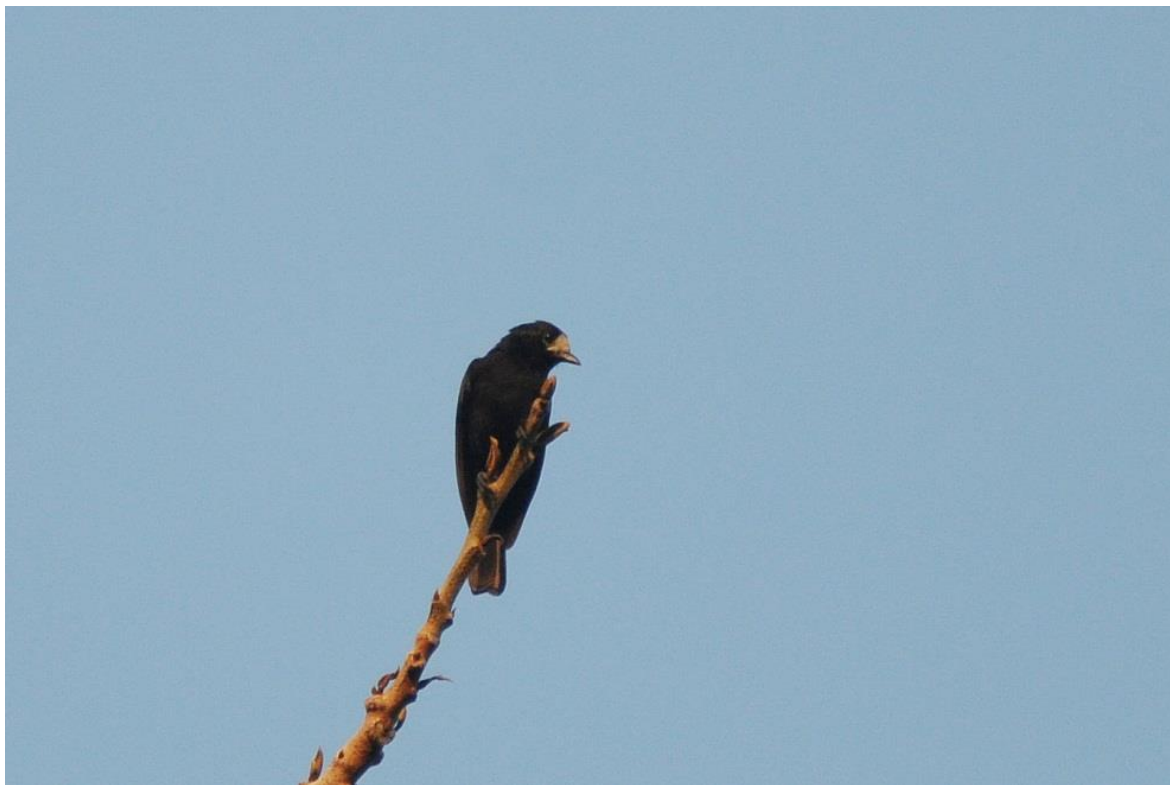
Several trip reports can be found at [www.cloudbirders.com](http://www.cloudbirders.com) and [www.birdtours.co.uk](http://www.birdtours.co.uk).

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Rob Hutchinson and Irene Dy for guiding and transporting us to Subic Bay, the Scops-Owl, the Philippine Eagle-owl (though absent) and La Mesa Eco Park and giving us useful information on Camp Sawa, Aquilino Escobar and his family for taking care of us in the mountains (and for carrying Jan's daypack when he was not able to at certain moments and for finding his contact lens back), the Camp Sawa crew for carrying our things and taking care of logistics and food, Mark Villa for organizing the trip to Sawa, Jobs for showing us the roosting Philippine Scops-Owls, Sjoerd Radstaak for information and finally our dear wives Marieke and Jantine for taking care of the home front and letting us make this great trip!

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[Arjan Brenkman](#), Culemborg April 2013, [Jan van der Laan](#), Alkmaar April 2013, August 2019 (update to 9.2), July 2021 (update to 11.2), January 2022 (update to 12.1), July 2023 (update to 13.2), November 2023 (update to 14.1), March 2024 (update to 14.2).



White-fronted Tit at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; © Jan van der Laan.

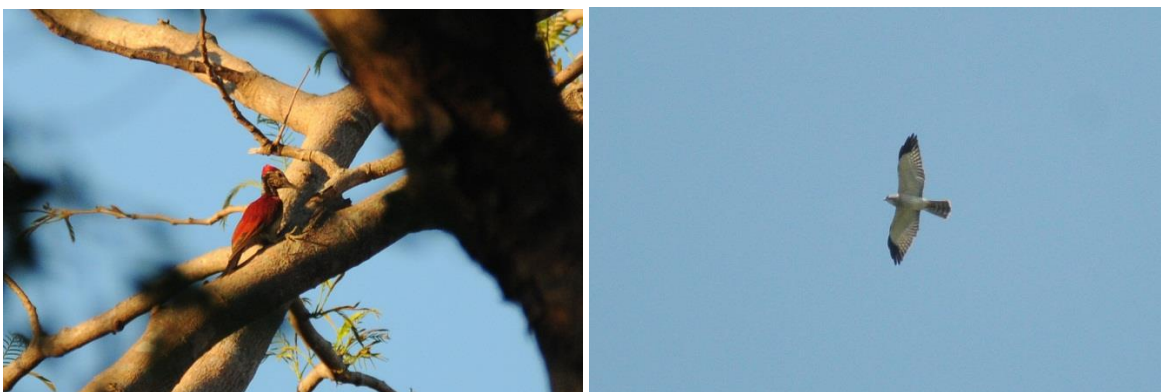


Spotted Imperial Pigeon on our way to camp 2 on 9 April 2013; this part of Luzon is probably the best location in the Philippine to see this enigmatic and declining pigeon; © Jan van der Laan.

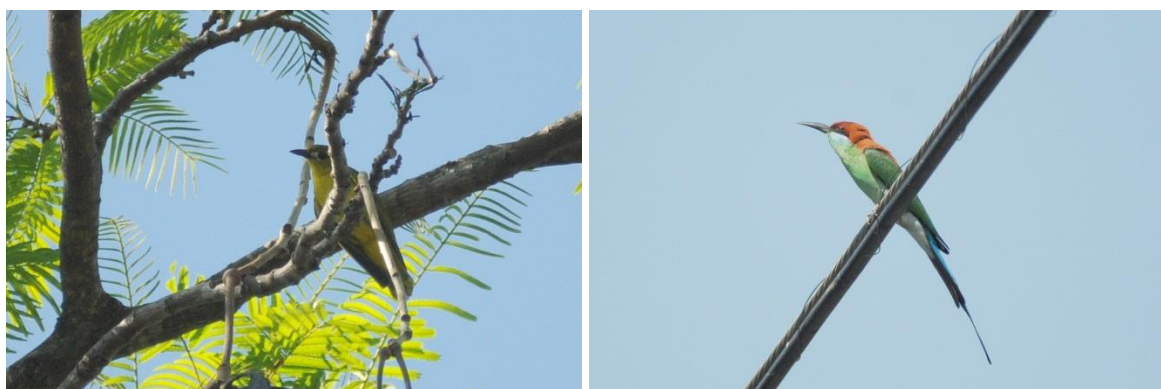




Left: Sooty Woodpeckers at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; right: Green Racket-tail at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013, showing its rackets; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Luzon Flameback at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; right: migrating Chinese Sparrow-Hawk at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: White-lored Oriole at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; right: Rufous-crowned or 'American' Bee-eater at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Philippine Collared Dove (left bird, the bird on the right is a Spotted Dove); right: Black-winged Kite, both during the walk to camp 1 on 9 April 2013; © Jan van der Laan.



Blue-naped Parrot at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; still a healthy population in Subic bay; © Jan van der Laan.



Philippine Serpent-Eagle at Subic Bay on 7 April 2013; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Oriental Honey-Buzzard (not a Philippine Hawk-Eagle), Sawa village on 12 April; right: Stripe-headed Rhabdornis just below Sawa Village on 9 April; © Jan van der Laan.



Philippine or Red-bellied Pitta in La Mesa Ecopark. [Irestedt et al 2013](#) split the Red-bellied Pitta complex into 17 species. Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). 2016. IOC World Bird List (v6.3) split the complex into 10 species; as the Pitta from Talaud, Indonesia is regarded as a subspecies of Philippine Pitta, this is not a Philippine endemic; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Philippine Magpie-Robin in La Mesa Ecopark. Right: Mangrove Blue Flycatcher, a possible future split, also seen in La Mesa Ecopark; © Jan van der Laan.



001. **PHILIPPINE DUCK** - *Anas luzonica*  
 07-04 c 20 Subic Bay.  
 08-04 2 (flushed from a stream) between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
002. **Red Junglefowl** – *Gallus gallus*  
 07-04 9 (4 seen, others heard) Subic Bay.  
 09-04 c 5 (heard only) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 c 3 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-05 c 5 (heard only and 2 live males held by a poacher) Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 5 (heard only) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
003. **Great Eared Nightjar** - *Lyncornis macrotis macrotis*  
 07-04 2-3 Subic Bay.  
 09-04 1 (seen) Camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 1 calling above our tents, camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 1-2 calling above our tents, camp 1, Camp Sawa; also on 13-04.
004. **PHILIPPINE NIGHTJAR** - *Caprimulgus manillensis*  
 09-04 1 (seen very well) Camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 1 calling near our tents, camp 1, Camp Sawa.
005. **CHIRRUPING NIGHTJAR** - *Caprimulgus griseatus*  
 13-04 2 (seen well) Angono Petroglyphs, south of Manila.  
 Split from Savanna Nightjar *C. affinus*, following [Sangster, Cancino & Hutchinson \(2021\)](#).
006. **Whiskered Treeswift** - *Hemiprocne comate major*  
 07-04 c 10 Subic Bay.
007. **GREY-RUMPED SWIFLET** - *Collocalia marginata marginata*  
 07-04 c 100 Subic Bay. Split from Glossy Swiftlet following [Rheindt et al, 2017](#).
008. **RIDGETOP SWIFLET** - *Collocalia isonota isonota*  
 10-04 2 (above camp 2, Camp Sawa. Also split from Glossy Swiftlet.
009. **PYGMY SWIFLET** - *Collocalia troglodytes*  
 08-04 1 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 09-04 c 10 between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 c 5 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 10 between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
010. **AMELINE SWIFLET** - *Aerodramus amelis amelis*  
 07-04 2-3 Subic Bay.  
 08-04 c 10 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 09-04 c 10 between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 3 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 10 between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 c 10 between camp 1 and Baliwag.

011. **Purple Needletail** - *Hirundapus celebensis*  
12-04                    3    at the river crossing, near Sawa village.
012. **House Swift** – *Apus nipalensis nipalensis*  
08-04                    4    Quezon City, Manila.
013. **RUFOUS COUCAL** - *Centropus unirufus*  
07-04                    c 10    (3 seen well) Subic Bay.  
09-04                    2    (1 seen) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.
014. **PHILIPPINE COUCAL** - *Centropus viridis viridis*  
07-04                    3-4    Subic Bay.  
09-04                    c 20    (1 seen, rest heard only) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
10-04                    1    (seen) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
12-04                    c 10    (heard only) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
13-04                    c 5    (heard only) between camp 1, Camp Sawa and Baliwag.
015. **Lesser Coucal** - *Centropus bengalensis philippinensis*  
12-04                    1    (seen well), camp 1, Camp Sawa.
016. **ROUGH-CRESTED MALKOHA** - *Dasylophus superciliosus superciliosus*  
07-04                    3-4    Subic Bay.  
10-04                    1    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
017. **SCALE-FEATHERED MALKOHA** - *Dasylophus cumingi*  
07-04                    1    Subic Bay.  
09-04                    1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
10-04                    2    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
018. **Asian Koel** - *Eudynamys scolopaceus mindanensis*  
07-04                    c 10    Subic Bay.
019. **Rusty-breasted Cuckoo** - *Cacomantis sepulcralis sepulcralis*  
10-04                    1    (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
020. **PHILIPPINE DRONGO-CUCKOO** - *Surniculus velutinus chalybaeus*  
08-04                    1    (heard only) between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
021. **PHILIPPINE HAWK-CUCKOO** - *Hierococcyx pectoralis*  
07-04                    2    (heard only) Subic Bay.  
09-04                    2    (heard only) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
10-04                    3    (1 seen flying by) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
11-04                    c 5    (1 seen flying by) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
12-04                    1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.
022. **PHILIPPINE COLLARED DOVE** - *Streptopelia dusumieri*  
08-04                    3    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
This species is getting rarer, probably due to competition with Spotted Doves.

023. **Red Turtle Dove** - *Streptopelia tranquebarica tranquebarica*  
 08-04 c 10 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 c 5 between camp 1 and Baliwag.
024. **Spotted Dove** - *Spilopelia chinensis tigrina*  
 08-04 6 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 c 5 between Baliwag and Tuguegarao. This species is introduced.
025. **PHILIPPINE CUCKOO-DOVE** - *Macropygia tenuirostris tenuirostris*  
 10-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 5 between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
026. **Common Emerald Dove** - *Chalcophaps indica indica*  
 07-04 6 Subic Bay.  
 09-04 1 between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 14-04 1 (on a nest) La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
027. **Zebra Dove** - *Geopelia striata*  
 08-04 c 6 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa. This species is introduced.
028. **LUZON BLEEDING-HEART** - *Gallinolumba luzonica griseolateralis*  
 10-04 2 (1 heard only before the first stream, 1 flushed by Arjan at the third stream) above Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 1 (heard only above the 3<sup>rd</sup> stream) Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 1 (seen very well) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
029. **WHITE-EARED BROWN DOVE** - *Phapitreron leucotis leucotis*  
 07-04 3 Subic Bay.  
 09-04 1 between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 3 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
030. **AMETHYST BROWN DOVE** - *Phapitreron amethystinus amethystinus*  
 07-04 2 (flight views only) Subic Bay.  
 09-04 1 (seen) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 c 5 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
031. **PHILIPPINE GREEN PIGEON** - *Treron axillaris axillaris*  
 07-04 c 50 Subic Bay.
032. **FLAME-BREASTED FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus marchei*  
 Between 9 April and 12 April one bird was calling every day in the high trees at the first stream crossing above camp 2, Camp Sawa; also there we found the remains of a shot bird. Despite our brave efforts, we could not get it into view.
033. **CREAM-BELLIED FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus merrilli faustinoi*  
 10-04 4 (1 seen well) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 c 5 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 2 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.

034. **YELLOW-BREASTED FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus occipitalis occipitalis*  
 07-04                    3    (heard only) Subic Bay.  
 10-04                    2    (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
035. **Black-chinned Fruit Dove** - *Ptilinopus leclancheri leclancheri*  
 08-04                    2    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
036. **SPOTTED IMPERIAL PIGEON** - *Ducula carola carola*  
 08-04                    1    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 09-04                    12   (7 plus 2 plus 3 birds) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04                    3    between camp 1, Camp Sawa and Baliwag.
037. **Green Imperial Pigeon** - *Ducula aenea nuchalis*  
 07-04                    c 10   Subic Bay.
038. **Barred Rail** - *Gallirallus torquatus torquatus*  
 07-04                    c 10   (heard only) Subic Bay.  
 12-04                    1    (seen) Camp 1, Camp Sawa.
039. **White-breasted Waterhen** - *Amaurornis phoenicurus phoenicurus*  
 14-04                    1    La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
040. **PLAIN BUSH-HEN** - *Amaurornis olivacea*  
 07-04                    c 30   (heard only, ridiculous bird) Subic Bay.
041. **Roseate Tern** - *Sterna dougallii*  
 07-04                    2    Subic Bay.  
 Two very white terns flying in the harbor were most probably this species or Black-naped Terns.
042. **Whiskered Tern** - *Chlidonias hybridus*  
 08-04                    c 5    seen from one of the highways in central Manila.
043. **Cinnamon Bittern** - *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*  
 12-04                    1    in the stream just before camp 1, Camp Sawa.
044. **Black Bittern** - *Ixobrychus flavicollis flavicollis*  
 12-04                    1    in the large stream below Sawa Village.
045. **Eastern Cattle Egret** - *Bubulcus coromandus*  
 06-04                    c 10   seen from the plane just before Taipei International Airport, Taiwan.  
 08-04                    c 5    between Tuguegarao and Baliwag.  
 13-04                    c 10   between Baliwag and Tuguegarao.
046. **Great Egret** - *Ardea alba modesta*  
 13-04                    1    between Baliwag and Tuguegarao.
047. **Black-winged Kite** - *Elanus caeruleus hypoleucos*  
 08-04                    1    just east of Baliwag during the ascent to camp 1, Camp Sawa.



048. **Crested Honey Buzzard** - *Pernis ptilorhynchus philippensis*  
 09-04 1 between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 1 between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
049. **PHILIPPINE HONEY BUZZARD** - *Pernis steerei winkleri*  
 12-04 1 Sawa Village.
050. **PHILIPPINE SERPENT EAGLE** - *Spilornis holospilus*  
 07-04 3 Subic Bay.  
 08-04 1 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 09-04 3 between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 3 (heard only) Above Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 5 (1 seen) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
051. **Chinese Sparrowhawk** - *Accipiter soloensis*  
 07-04 2 Subic Bay.
052. **Brahminy Kite** - *Haliastur indus intermedius*  
 07-04 5 Subic Bay.
053. **Eastern Grass Owl** - *Tyto longimembris amauronota*  
 08-04 1 (seen by Arjan only during landing) Tuegagarao Airport.
054. **LUZON HAWK-OWL** - *Ninox philippensis philippensis*  
 07-04 1 (heard only) Subic Bay.  
 08-04 1 (heard only calling at night) Camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 09-04 2 (1 seen well) Camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 1 calling above our tents, camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 1 calling near our tents, camp 1, Camp Sawa.
055. **PHILIPPINE SCOPS OWL** - *Otus megalotis*  
 07-04 1 (heard only) Subic Bay.  
 08-04 3 (1 adult 2 juveniles seen well) Quezon City, Manila.  
 09-04 1 (juvenile in bamboo scrub) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 2 (seen well) Angono Petroglyphs, south of Manila.
056. **PHILIPPINE EAGLE-OWL** - *Bubo philippensis*  
 08-04 1 (heard only calling at night) Camp 1, Camp Sawa; also on 9-04.
057. **PHILIPPINE TROGON** - *Harpactes ardens herberti*  
 09-04 2 (pair just before the first stream) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 1 (between the first and second stream) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
058. **RUFIOUS HORNBILL** - *Buceros hydrocorax hydrocorax*  
 09-04 1 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 8 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 3 (seen!) above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).

059. **LUZON HORNBILL** - *Penelopides manillae manillae*  
 07-04 3 (1 seen) Subic Bay.  
 09-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04 3 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa (after the third stream crossing).
060. **Oriental Dollarbird** - *Eurystomus orientalis orientalis*  
 07-04 1 Subic Bay.
061. **SPOTTED WOOD KINGFISHER** - *Actenoides lindsayi lindsayi*  
 07-04 6-8 (mostly heard, some fleeting glimpses) Subic Bay.  
 10-04 1 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 1 above camp 2 (at the second stream), Camp Sawa.
062. **BROWN-BREASTED KINGFISHER** - *Halcyon gularis*  
 07-04 3 Subic Bay.  
 12-04 2 between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
063. **INDIGO-BANDED KINGFISHER** - *Ceyx cyanopectus cyanopectus*  
 14-04 1 (calling and flying around), La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
064. **Blue-tailed Bee-eater** - *Merops philippinus philippinus*  
 08-04 4 (2x 2 birds) between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
065. **RUFOUS-CROWNED BEE-EATER** - *Merops americanus*  
 07-04 c 50 (spread over two colonies) Subic Bay.  
 08-04 2 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 4 between camp 1, Camp Sawa and Baliwag.  
 When officially split, we would like to suggest the name American Bee-eater.
066. **Coppersmith Barbet** - *Megalaima haemacephala haemacephala*  
 Seen or heard daily, with daily totals up to c 15 birds. Most common at Subic Bay, but also present at Camp Sawa or in La Mesa Ecopark.
067. **PHILIPPINE PYGMY WOODPECKER** - *Dendrocopos maculatus validirostris*  
 07-04 c 20 Subic Bay.  
 14-04 c 5 La Mesa Ecopark, Manila
068. **White-bellied Woodpecker** - *Dryocopus javensis confuses*  
 07-04 4 Subic Bay.
069. **LUZON FLAMEBACK** - *Chrysocolaptes haematribon*  
 07-04 1 Subic Bay.
070. **NORTHERN SOOTY WOODPECKER** - *Mulleripicus funebris*  
 07-04 8-10 Subic Bay.  
 11-04 2 camp 2, Camp Sawa.

071. **PHILIPPINE FALCONET** - *Microhierax erythrogenys erythrogenys*  
 07-04 c 10 Subic Bay.  
 11-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa (before the third stream crossing).
072. **MONTANE RACKET-TAIL** - *Prioniturus montanus*  
 11-04 1 (heard only at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stream) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
073. **GREEN RACKET-TAIL** - *Prioniturus luconensis*  
 07-04 c 10 Subic Bay.
074. **Blue-naped Parrot** - *Tanygnathus lucionensis lucionensis*  
 07-04 c 10 Subic Bay.
075. **GUAIBERO** - *Bolbopsittacus lunulatus lunulatus*  
 07-04 c 20 Subic Bay.  
 10-04 c 5 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
076. **PHILIPPINE HANGING PARROT** - *Loriculus philippensis philippensis*  
 07-04 c 20 Subic Bay.  
 10-04 5 above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 1 just below camp 2, Camp Sawa.
077. **WHISKERED PITTA** - *Erythropitta kochi*  
 10-04 2 (heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 3 (2 seen, 1 heard only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 The first bird only called, a pitta-like “*krwaak*”, uttered four times in a row. The second was heard only on the 10<sup>th</sup> and seen only by Arjan and Aquilino on the 11<sup>th</sup> flying off a rock face at the third stream crossing. The third was seen after a hard battle and was seen circling us at 16:50, the last hour of daylight. Seen brilliantly while hopping and also showing its back. Highlight of the whole trip!
078. **Philippine Pitta** - *Erythropitta erythrogaster erythrogaster*  
 14-04 1 (seen well), La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
079. **Hooded Pitta** - *Pitta sordida sordida*  
 14-04 3 (1 seen well), La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
080. **Golden-bellied Gerygone** - *Gerygone sulphurea simplex*  
 08-04 1 Quezon City, Manila.
081. **White-breasted Woodswallow** - *Artamus leucorhynchus leucorhynchus*  
 07-04 c 20 Subic Bay.
082. **Ashy Minivet** - *Pericrocotus divaricatus*  
 07-04 1 Subic Bay.
083. **Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike** - *Coracina striata striata*  
 07-04 c 50 Subic Bay.  
 12-04 4 between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.

084. **BLACKISH CUCKOOSHRIKE** - *Edolisoma coerulescens coerulescens*  
07-04                    c 10    Subic Bay.
085. **Pied Triller** - *Lalage nigra nigra*  
08-04                    4    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
086. **YELLOW-BELLIED WHISTLER** - *Pachycephala philippinensis philippinensis*  
09-04                    1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
11-04                    3    above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).
087. **Brown Shrike** - *Lanius cristatus lucionensis*  
07-04                    4    Subic Bay.  
08-04                    3    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
09-04                    2    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
12-04                    c 5    between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
13-04                    3    between camp 1, Camp Sawa and Baliwag.  
14-04                    3    La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
088. **Long-tailed Shrike** - *Lanius schach nasutus*  
08-04                    5    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
12-04                    1    camp 1, Camp Sawa.
089. **WHITE-LORED ORIOLE** - *Oriolus albiloris*  
07-04                    9    (3 seen) Subic Bay.  
11-04                    c 5    (1 seen) just below camp 2, Camp Sawa.
090. **Black-naped Oriole** - *Oriolus chinensis chinensis*  
07-04                    c 25    Subic Bay.  
11-04                    2    camp 1, Camp Sawa.
091. **BALICASSIAO** - *Dicrurus balicassius balicassius*  
07-04                    c 20    Subic Bay.
092. **BLUE-HEADED FANTAIL** - *Rhipidura cyaniceps cyaniceps*  
Between 9 April and 12 April seen daily in the forest, with daily totals up to 8 birds. Sometimes the only bird present in the silent parts of the forest, together with Philippine Bulbul.
093. **PHILIPPINE PIED FANTAIL** - *Rhipidura nigritorquis*  
08-04                    1    Quezon City, Manila.  
14-04                    1    La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
094. **Black-naped Monarch** - *Hypothymis azurea azurea*  
09-04                    1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
10-04                    1    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
12-04                    2    (pair) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
095. **SIERRA MADRE CROW** - *Corvus sierramadrensis*  
09-04                    2    (heard only) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.

- 12-04                            2    (seen by Arjan only) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
This species is split from Slender-billed Crow *C. enca* in IOC version 14.2.
096. **Large-billed Crow** - *Corvus macrorhynchos philippinus*  
07-04                            c 30    Subic Bay.  
08-04                            4    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
097. **Citrine Canary-flycatcher** - *Culicicapa helianthea zimmeri*  
10-04                            3    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
11-04                            1    above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).
098. **ELEGANT TIT** - *Periparus elegans elegans*  
09-04                            3    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
10-04                            2    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
11-04                            6    above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).
099. **WHITE-FRONTED TIT** - *Sittiparus semilarvatus semilarvatus*  
07-04                            3    Subic Bay.  
In the morning we encountered two birds by call, but had only fleeting views. The last hour before sunset we found a bird calling, while we were driving past. This bird gave stunning views.
100. **Oriental Skylark** - *Alauda gulgula wolfei*  
06-04                            4    seen while taxiing on Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Manila.
101. **PHILIPPINE BULBUL** - *Hypsipetes philippinus philippinus*  
One of the most common birds, with daily total up to 20-30 birds.
102. **Yellow-vented Bulbul** - *Pycnonotus goiavier goiavier*  
07-04                            3    Subic Bay.  
08-04                            c 5    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
14-04                            c 15    La Mesa Ecopark
103. **Barn Swallow** - *Hirundo rustica gutturalis*  
06-04                            c 5    Taipei International Airport, Taiwan.
104. **Pacific Swallow** - *Hirundo tahitica javanica*  
06-04                            2    Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Manila.  
07-04                            1    Subic Bay.  
09-04                            1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.
105. **Striated Swallow** - *Cecropis striolata striolata*  
14-04                            3    La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
106. **LEMON-THROATED LEAF WARBLER** - *Phylloscopus cebuensis luzonensis*  
10-04                            1    above Camp Sawa.  
10-04                            1    above camp 2 (at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stream) Camp Sawa.  
12-04                            1    camp 1, Camp Sawa

107. **Japanese Leaf Warbler** - *Phylloscopus xanthodryas*  
 07-04 1 (calling) Subic Bay.  
 14-04 1 (calling and in song) La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
108. **Kamchatka Leaf Warbler** - *Phylloscopus examinandus*  
 07-04 1 (calling) Subic Bay.  
 14-04 1 (calling) La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
109. **Arctic Warbler** - *Phylloscopus borealis borealis*  
 12-04 1 Camp 1, Camp Sawa. Identified by its call.
110. **SIERRA MADRE GROUND WARBLER** - *Robsonius thompsoni*  
 10-04 1 (heard-only) above camp 2 (between the second and third stream crossing), Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 2 (heard-only) above camp 2, Camp Sawa (just above camp 2, before the first stream crossing). Frustratingly close, but no glimpse!
111. **Tawny Grassbird** - *Cincloramphus timoriensis tweeddalei*  
 12-04 1 (probably more) camp 1, Camp Sawa
112. **Striated Grassbird** - *Megalurus palustris forbesi*  
 08-04 6 between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 5 camp 1, Camp Sawa  
 13-04 c 10 between camp 1 and Baliwag.
113. **TRILLING TAILORBIRD** - *Orthotomus chloronotus*  
 07-04 c 8 (1 seen well, others heard in song) Subic Bay.  
 11-04 c 5 (heard singing) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04 c 5 (heard singing) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04 3 (heard singing) between camp 1, Camp Sawa and Baliwag.
114. **GREY-BACKED TAILORBIRD** - *Orthotomus derbianus derbianus*  
 14-04 3-5 La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
115. **GOLDEN-CROWNED BABBLER** - *Sterrhoptilus dennistouni*  
 09-04 2 just before camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04 4 (2 adults, 2 recently fledged birds) above camp 2, Camp Sawa.
116. **LUZON STRIPED BABBLER** - *Zosterornis striatus*  
 11-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).
117. **YELLOWISH WHITE-EYE** - *Zosterops nigrorum innominatus*  
 11-04 1 above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).  
 12-04 1 Camp 1, Camp Sawa
118. **LOWLAND WHITE-EYE** - *Zosterops meyeri meyeri*  
 14-04 c 20 La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.

119. **PHILIPPINE FAIRY-BLUEBIRD** - *Irena cyanogastra cyanogastra*  
 09-04                    2    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 10-04                    c 10    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04                    c 15    above camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04                    c 15    between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa
120. **SULPHUR-BILLED NUTHATCH** - *Sitta oenochlamys isarog*  
 11-04                    3    above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).
121. **COLETO** - *Sarcops calvus calvus*  
 07-04                    c 25    Subic Bay.  
 09-04                    1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04                    c 5    between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
122. **Crested Myna** – *Acridotheres cristatellus*  
 07-04                    1    Subic Bay.  
 08-04                    1    during the ascent from Baliwag to camp 1.  
 09-04                    2    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.
123. **Chestnut-cheeked Starling** - *Agropsar philippensis*  
 08-04                    c 20    (in one group migrating north) between Baliwag and camp 1.  
 13-04                    c 50    (one group perched and seen quite well and two groups of c 20 birds flying around) between camp 1 and Baliwag.
124. **STRIPE-HEADED RHABDORNIS** - *Rhabdornis mystacalis mystacalis*  
 07-04                    c 10    Subic Bay.  
 09-04                    1    between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.
125. **ASHY THRUSH** - *Geokichla cinerea*  
 14-04                    4    (1 seen well), La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.  
 In the early days this was a very difficult bird. In this city park, the birds are not hunted.
126. **Eyebrowed Thrush** - *Turdus obscurus*  
 07-04                    2    Subic Bay.  
 12-04                    c 5    just above camp 1, Camp Sawa.
127. **Brown-headed Thrush** - *Turdus chrysolaus*  
 13-04                    1    during the descent from camp 1 to Baliwag.
128. **PHILIPPINE MAGPIE-ROBIN** - *Copsychus mindanensis*  
 14-04                    4    (2 seen well), La Mesa Ecopark, Manila.
129. **WHITE-BROWED SHAMA** - *Copsychus luzoniensis luzoniensis*  
 07-04                    2    (heard only of course) Subic Bay.  
 09-04                    c 5    (heard only) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 11-04                    c 5    (heard only) above camp 2, Sawa.  
 12-04                    c 5    (1 seen) between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.

130. **Grey-streaked Flycatcher** - *Muscicapa griseisticta*  
 07-04                    4    Subic Bay.  
 11-04                    1    above camp 2, Sawa.
131. **BLUE-BREASTED BLUE FLYCATCHER** - *Cyornis herioti herioti*  
 10-04                    1    (adult seen well) singing above our tents, camp 2, Camp Sawa.  
 12-04                    1    (heard-only) adult singing above our tents, camp 2, Camp Sawa.
132. **Mangrove Blue Flycatcher** - *Cyornis rufigastra blythi*  
 14-04                    4    (3 adults plus one recently fledged juvenile) La Mesa Ecopark.
133. **FURTIVE FLYCATCHER** - *Ficedula disposita*  
 09-04                    1-2    (1 seen well) in bamboo along river between camp 1 and camp 2.
134. **Blue Rock Thrush** - *Monticola solitarius philippensis*  
 07-04                    1    Subic Bay.
135. **Pied Bush Chat** - *Saxicola caprata caprata*  
 08-04                    2-3    during the ascent from Baliwag to camp 1.  
 13-04                    2    during the descent from camp 1 to Baliwag.
136. **RED-KEELED FLOWERPECKER** - *Dicaeum australe*  
 14-04                    3-4    La Mesa Ecopark.
137. **BUZZING FLOWERPECKER** - *Dicaeum hypoleucum cagayanense*  
 11-04                    1    above camp 2, Camp Sawa (at the third stream crossing).
138. **PYGMY FLOWERPECKER** - *Dicaeum pygmaeum salomonseni*  
 09-04                    1    (male) between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa
139. **GARDEN SUNBIRD** - *Cinnyris jugularis obscurior*  
 07-04                    1    Subic Bay.  
 08-04                    4    Quezon City, Manila.  
                               c 10    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
140. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** - *Passer montanus saturatus*  
 Common bird in towns, villages and along roadsides.
141. **Scaly-breasted Munia** - *Lonchura punctulata cabanisi*  
 13-04                    c 5    between Baliwag and Tuguegarao.
142. **White-bellied Munia** - *Lonchura leucogastra everetti*  
 07-04                    c 10    Subic Bay.
143. **Chestnut Munia** - *Lonchura atricapilla formosana*  
 08-04                    8    between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.  
 13-04                    c 20    between Baliwag and Tuguegarao.



**144. Grey Wagtail** - *Motacilla cinerea cinerea*

08-04	8	between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
09-04	c 10	between camp 1 and camp 2, Camp Sawa.
12-04	c 5	between camp 2 and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
13-04	2	between camp 1 and Baliwag.

**145. White Wagtail** - *Motacilla alba amurensis*

06-04	2	(ssp <i>amurensis</i> ) Taipei Airport, Taiwan.
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**146. Paddyfield Pipit** - *Anthus rufulus lugubris*

08-04	2	between Baliwag and camp 1, Camp Sawa.
13-04	2	between camp 1, Camp Sawa and Baliwag.

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Arjan and our porters and cook at camp 1. Right of Arjan his 20 kg beauty case; © Arjan Brenkman.



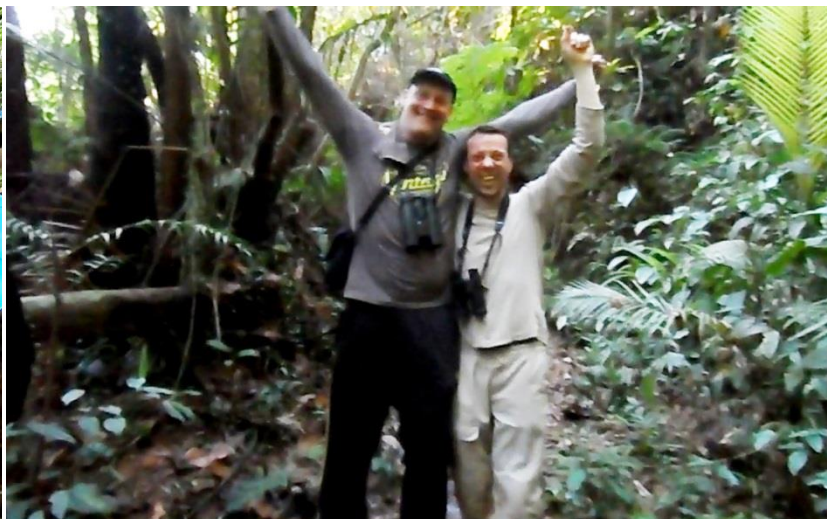
Victorious crew at the airport. I do not have the names of the three guys on the left, but they were great. Aquilino is standing between Jan and Arjan (time is set to GMT + 1); © Arjan Brenkman.



Left: during walk from Baliwag to camp 1; right: river crossing at Sawa village; © Arjan Brenkman.



Left: view from camp 2: beautiful primary forest; right: river crossing at Sawa Village; © Arjan Brenkman.



Left: camp 2, with our tents in front and the kitchen in the back; right: victory! the Whiskered Pitta is in the bag! © Arjan Brenkman.