



West New Britain  
09 - 21 july 2022  
12 - 19 october 2023



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East New Britain  
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# INTRODUCTION

As Thierry is writing a book on « old world » thrushes, we travel through Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania to get observations, informations and eventually pictures of these birds.

Now easy species are almost done. It remains tricky species, so success of our journeys is lower. In this part of the world, we already tried and failed with Bougainville Thrush, and we wanted to try its very related species in New Britain, a big island of Bismarck archipelago, east of mainland Papua New Guinea. So we organised an independent trip in New Britain for 12 days in July 2022 for this quest. As we failed to find the thrush, we tried another time in October 2023. This second trip was organised by Ornithology in the Nakanai mountains, a mountain range where researchers saw the Thrush during their stay some years ago, but never visited by birdwatchers apart from Birdquest 15 days before.

New Britain holds nice birds with high level of endemism : 30 species of birds, but birding is not always easy, and some species are nearly impossible to see. Our target birds were first the thrush and second all New Britain or Bismarck endemic birds.

In this trip report we add our observations in one short day birding East New Britain in 2019, when we have done a stop in our journey from Kavieng (New Ireland) to Bougainville. We didn't have enough time to explore around Wild Dog Mine.

Unfortunately New Britain has big drawbacks : it is far from everywhere except Australia ; it is not supposed to be a safe country (security is a problem) ; and it remains an expensive destination. But I hope this travel report will help independent birders to choose this destination because there is still a lot to be discovered.

# LOGISTIC

## FLIGHTS

Coming from Europe is a long journey of more than 2 days. First trip we took 5 planes in 45h, and we don't count this time in our real bird-watching trip.

To get to Port Moresby there are 2 options : through Singapore or Hong Kong by Air Niugini, or through Australia by Qantas. Severity of Australian customs was a prohibitive perspective with all our camping gear, so we choose Air Niugini, also less expensive and shorter in time. From Port Moresby, Air Niugini provides some flights towards Hoskins in West New Britain, or Rabaul in East New Britain. But while the international flights are regularly on time, on the contrary the domestic flights of Air Niugini can have big delays or be cancelled. In October 2023, we lose one day of birding because the flight Port Moresby – Hoskins was cancelled and we had to wait the day after, so we lose one day of birding. Normally it is best to arrive in Port Moresby one day before the domestic flight because of VERY variable schedule !! If all is on

time it is the opportunity to visit Varirata NP (one hour drive from Port Moresby). But as always be careful due to problems of security...



## VISAS

e-visas are provided by Immigration & Citizens Authority of Papua New Guinea ([evisa.ica.gov.pg](http://evisa.ica.gov.pg)). Don't think like me that because it is e-visa it will be delivered in 3 days. To make them you must have all informations (plane reservation, hotel, ...), so don't do it last minute because it takes more than 2 weeks. We printed them and they were claimed and stamped at our arrival.

## COVID MEASURES

This can change in future months. To travel in July 2022 you had to be fully vaccinated. No test was claimed before our departure. But we had a surprise when we arrived at Port Moresby airport to be submitted to a Covid test on nasal swab. Fortunately it's fairly quick (35min between formalities and the 10-12 min to get the result) but it could have cost us our connection flight to Hoskins. We had to run to the domestic terminal and pass with priority without queuing to get our flight, despite of 2h50 lap from our landing.

In October 2023, our vaccination certificates were not checked by the authorities and there was no more test on arrival.

## ACCOMODATIONS

In Kimbe there are several hotels (for example, Genesis hotel along the main road) but the town is known to be highly insecure, so we preferred to stay in big ones used to welcome foreigners as Liamo Reef

Resort and Walindi Plantation Resort. You can book them easily from home by internet. They have their own security wardens by night and day.

**Walindi Plantation Resort** is the most well-known place to welcome birdwatchers led groups, and it has its own bird guides. It is really a nice place to stay, the garden is beautiful, with big trees and lush vegetation. It's a coastal oasis in lowland oil palm plantations.



Photo from <https://walindiresort.com/accommodation>

WiFi is only available at the reception and the electricity is cut for the night (except an electrical outlet which works all night to charge the batteries). The price is only full board.

In 2023, his manager Cheyne has done a huge work to prepare and organise the adventure in the Nakanai mountains : finding the good local team to cut a trail up to 1600 m, obtaining agreement of landowners, and to make 2 helicopter pads and 2 comfortable camps.

[www.walindiresort.com](http://www.walindiresort.com) tel : +675 7373 4199

**Liamo Reef resort**, stucked on coast in W-Kimbe town, is a little bit more affordable because the full board is not compulsory. Room and meals are separate, so it is a little bit easier for a flexible organization if you are independent birders. For example we used to order pizzas at the hotel restaurant in the evening that we kept for the next lunch when we were birding in the nature. We didn't have to come back to the hotel for the lunch. We also got custom-made packed breakfasts.



Every evening we asked for a takeaway breakfast and a pizza for the lunch of the next day because we started by night

In Liamore Reef Resort, you have air con, electricity supply 24h/24, free WiFi in the rooms, diner time more wide, vicinity of supermarket and fuel station if needed. And the staff is very adaptable for our special requests like finding the good persons to organise a trek to mount Ottu, finding a rental car even when all the car rental offices didn't have any car left, ...

His manager, Sugu Muthukrishnan +675 7396 6461, is listening and found solutions to all our needs. [www.liamoreefresort.com](http://www.liamoreefresort.com) Tel +675 7391 1918 email : [operations@liamoreefresort.com](mailto:operations@liamoreefresort.com)

### **Camping**

We also camped 4 nights in our own tent under the roof of the transmission station on the top of Mt Ottu in July 2022 and 4 nights in 2 camps in Nakanai range in October 2023.



Camp 2, 1000 m asl, in the Nakanai range



In 2022 we were ready to camp in central hills but we were invited by the habitant to sleep in his house



Our tent (yellow-green) under the roof on the top of mount Ottu

## CAR

Hiring a car in Kimbe from Europe was impossible, no contact for Budget (used in 2013 by Petri Hottola, the independent finish birder), nor Hertz although it still exist in Kimbe. Thanks to Liamo staff, we met Mavis, a delicious lady from Hertz, to rent a 4WD car (no saloon cars on the roads mined by potholes in West New Britain ; and for bird-watching, you need a 4WD as you have to drive on rough plantation roads).

Car rental in New Britain is expensive : min PGK 300 /day + 1,15/km drive. This limited our desire to go far...

For our first days, as all rental cars were used because of the elections, Liamo's manager, Sugu, provided us a brand new pick-up for K 770/day all included (we think it was one of his own cars). From Hertz we rented 4WD for 5 days & about 350 km : PGK3090 / €879.

## PEOPLE & SECURITY

PNG is sadly known to be an insecure country with Port Moresby one of the most dangerous capitals in the world. By memory Security services are the second industry of the country ! And one of the first employers ! Several vehicles are equipped with shield-grids to protect their windows and windscreens. Shooting windscreens seems to be frequent. Most of male people have slings for hunting, and unfortunately some malefactors have also guns and make hold-ups on the road. It was highly not recommended to drive at night especially in west Kimbe town. Unfortunately to reach most of lowland birdwatching sites like Garu Reserve and other Kulu River areas, the main road (called highway) passes through this area when you live in Kimbe centre. Now GPS trackers are put inside cars to find them if stolen. One of our car had a SOS button in case of danger or of distant breakdown.

In 2022, we were independent birders, what is not impossible but quite rare. We were stopped sometimes in NBPOL plantation by security responsible, and by the manager, and we had discussions with some employees and they all told us about the danger even inside the plantation. Even the responsible of Hertz car rental told us that when she finishes her work in the evening she goes straight home and never stay in Kimbe town. For example, she had to take back our car from Walindi Plantation Resort the last day evening, she told us that she will come one day later to be in the morning. It was impossible for her to imagine passing through Kimbe west by night !

However all the people we met were really kind and helped us, they always well welcomed us. We were accompanied by local people to travel to Mt Ottu and in central hills. Everyone say « good morning », and people are smiley. It's important to understand that you are well welcomed by local people. Danger comes only from a very very small fringe of the population. But these kind of people can be ultra-violent and can sometime kill you without reason !



Friendship is not a myth, Bawai gives us a lot of pineapple at the end of our trek to mount Ottu

Also, in Melanesia it's compulsory to obtain the agreement of the community or landowners to travel in their land. Your local contacts make the discussion to introduce you. And it's rare to walk alone, every time someone will come with you. On the upper slopes of Mount Ottu we were the curiosity for villagers. And sometimes it is not only one person but a group... Not easy to see shy birds ! (by this way we missed the observation of Bismarck Kingfisher)

It's very important to say that in the countryside (plantation, hills, mountain) we never felt afraid or scared. You can watch birds peacefully. But it is also important to know what you can do and what you can't. It's compulsory to avoid towns and never be alone. You must not drive by night especially in town areas. In Kavieng (East New Britain) it was the same rule. I would lie if I would say that we never came back to the hotel by night... But try to avoid it.



## LANGUAGE

People speak tok pisin, an english pidgin, but also english as PNG belongs to Commonwealth. So it's fairly easy to communicate with every one even in fairly remote places of West New Britain.

## CONTACTS

SUGU Muthukrishnan : manager of Liamo Reef Resort (Kimbe) - our first and our main contact before departure in 2022 tel +675 7396 6461

ALEX : driver of Liamo Reef Resort. He is from the community of Mount Ottu and helped us to phone to the local guides 7931 2458

JONATHAN Kutne : main local guide / porter during our trek to Mount Ottu – he kindly cared for us  
IMSEN Kutne is Jonathan's brother 7187 7165

HILARY Takai : second local guide / porter during our trek to Mount Ottu and he has got a land in the hills south of Mount Ottu 7319 9338

MAVIS : manager of Hertz rent a car in Kimbe 7105 7895

CHEYNE Benjamin : manager of Walindi Plantation Resort +675 7373 4199

JOSEPH : main birdwacher guide of Walindi Plantation Resort

DAVID : birdwacher guide of Walindi Plantation Resort

TERENCE : birdwatcher guide of Walindi Plantation Resort (the Golden Masked Owl roosting place is in the land around his parent's house)

CHRIS : local guide for Gabuna Volcano, he lives in the little settlement at the start of the hike

JOSHUA BERKMARK : our great leader of Ornis (birding travel agency) +61 459 823 534



Jonathan and his brother Imsen are on the very left of the photo and then Hilary is between Jonathan and me. Joshua the man on the foreground is the « warden » of mount Ottu, he started by telling us that it was forbidden for foreigners to climb this mountain!?! I suppose he wanted some money, I let the guides solve the problem

## WEATHER & HEALTH

It was reasonably hot and humid. We had sunny weather during most of our birding days. We sweat a lot especially when climbing. Early July is supposed to be the dry season in the north (but in the south it's the wet season).

In the mountain above 1000m asl, it was cooler, so good temperatures for European people. We had one day with heavy rain and wind on the top of mount Ottu and sometime some mist.

In 2023, the trip in Nakanāi range was in October. It is the transition from dry season to wet season. In the mountain it was sunny every morning until afternoon, then it was raining, and the evening and night was clear. A typical equatorial weather.

We drank water from urban net supply of Kimbe, we put in Katadyn Micropur tablets. We collected some rain in the mountain (by the roof) or running water by streams (what a better taste !). In 2023, we mainly drink bottled water but we had our filter bottle.

We ate at the restaurants and also fruits as pineapple and papaya given by local people. No digestive problems.

Mosquitoes were only in some lowland forest understorey. We were bitten by fleas in the local's house in the Central Hills. So kept scratching last days of the trip... We saw only 2 leeches after rain in Mt

Ottu and one in the Nakanai. In the lower camp in the Nakanai, there were a lot of mosquitoes in my hide (and I forgot the repellent !).

## COSTS

PNG money is Kina. Current value was 1 kina = 0,28 US\$ in 2019

Change is always highly charged. As we do not have time to do change at the airport, I went to the ATM in Kimbe. The fees are 15 kinas every 1000 kinas (rate of 3,55-3,65K/1€).

We paid by credit card ; with bank fees, 1€ resulted as 3,45-4PGK.

- **Visas** 2022 : 49,36 €/ person
  
- **Planes** 2022 : - Paris-Dubai-Singapore-Port Moresby : 5073€ for 2  
- Port Moresby – Hoskins : 448€ for 2  
2023 : - Brest-Paris-Hong Kong-Port Moresby : 4175.84€ for 2 (luggages non included)  
luggages 170€ Brest-Port Moresby + terrible extra payment asked by Air Niugini in Hong-Kong for Hong Kong to Port Moresby 7920HgK€=954.41€ = total 5300,25€ for 2
  
- **Hotels** 2022 : - Walindi resort full board : 230€/night (for 2)  
- Liamo resort night and breakfast : 164€/night (for 2) + dinner 30-55€ (for 2)
  
- **Food** 2022 - for example a big pizza for 2 at Liamo Resort : 16€  
- meals at 35 to 85 K (10 to 25€)
  
- **Transports**
  - Airport transfer  
Hoskins - Liamo 38€ for 2  
Walindi - Hoskins US\$ 60/p +10% tax = 135€ for 2
  
  - Car rental  
4WD (Toyota 10 seats) 551€ for 5 days  
4WD (toyota HILUX) 327€ for 3 days
  
- **Guides/bird tours/tips**
  - trek to Mt Ottu we paid 1 000 PGK / 350€ and gave 300 PGK/ 82€ for tips
  
  - At Walindi for Golden masked owl watching US\$ 60/person + 10% tax  
1 day trek to Mt Gabuna US\$ 75/person + 10% tax
  
  - Ornis expedition Oct2023 8781€ for 2 (flight Port Moresby-Hoskins included)

**Total cost for all the 2019 trip (for 2) : 8920€ and 13 days on the field**

**Total cost for all the 2023 trip (for 2) : 14 970€ and 7 days on the field**

# BIRDWATCHING

## ITINERARY 2022

DATE	PLACE	NIGHT
7th of JULY	transport	plane
8th of JULY	transport	plane
9th of JULY	9:45am land at Hoskins airport Liamo Reef hotel garden	Liamo Reef Hotel
10th of JULY	GARU forest reserve all day	Liamo Reef Hotel
11th of JULY	GARU forest reserve morning Trek organisation afternoon	Liamo Reef Hotel
12th of JULY	MOUNT OTTU	Camping top of Mount Ottu
13th of JULY	MOUNT OTTU	Camping top of Mount Ottu
14th of JULY	MOUNT OTTU	Camping top of Mount Ottu
15th of JULY	MOUNT OTTU	Camping top of Mount Ottu
16th of JULY	MOUNT OTTU	Liamo Reef Hotel
17th of JULY	DAVIALU BRIDGE Forest south of Davialu Bridge	Liamo Reef Hotel
18th of JULY	Central hills south of lake Lalili	Local people house
19th of JULY	Central hills south of lake Lalili River DAVIALU BRIDGE evening	Liamo Reef Hotel
20th of JULY	KULU RIVER morning MASKED OWL site afternoon	Walindi Plantation Resort
21th of JULY	MOUNT GABUNA	Walindi Plantation Resort
22th of JULY	transport	plane
23th of JULY	transport	at home

## ITINERARY 2023

DATE	PLACE	NIGHT
10th of OCTOBER	transport	plane
11th of OCTOBER	transport	plane
12th of OCTOBER	waiting for a next plane ...	Gateway hotel / Port Moresby
13th of OCTOBER	short transit, few hours at Garu	Walindi Plantation Resort
14th of OCTOBER	Transfer by van then helico	Camp site 1 at 1600 m
15th of OCTOBER	around camp1 1600m asl	Camp site 1 at 1600 m
16th of OCTOBER	down to camp2 1015m asl	Camp site 2 at 1000 m
17th of OCTOBER	around camp2	Camp site 2 at 1000 m
18th of OCTOBER	trek back to pick up point, transfer to Walindi	Walindi Plantation Resort
19th of OCTOBER	Walindi - Hoskins, flight Port Moresby Afternoon : Birding Adventist university	Gateway hotel / Port Moresby
20th of OCTOBER	Varirata NP short walk in the morning	Plane back to France
21st of OCTOBER	Planes Hong Kong – Paris - Brest	

## BIRDING SITES

We didn't bird many places, here are those we visited in New Britain.

### HOTELS GARDENS

I mention hotels gardens as birdwatching sites in this trip report because in a country deemed to be not safe, birding the garden is important in the spare time, as you can't do a little walk easily by yourself anywhere you want. For me the garden is always an important point when I'm choosing an hotel even when it's not the most important criteria. Usually the birds encountered are very common, but sometimes not so. As there is always some spare time in a trip, if the garden is good, this time is not lost for birding.

The garden of **Walindi Plantation Resort** is forested with very big trees. From the road it appears like an incredible wooded green oasis on seaside, resistant to the surge of oil palm plantations. It's bigger and more beautiful than the small garden of **Liamo Reef resort**. In Walindi the birds are not shy compared to those in the forest. The best birds of Walindi garden used to be Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot and New Britain Boobook. But the last one is now difficult to see because it doesn't come anymore to tape, and now doesn't roost in the garden (but in the vicinity, like in the village where some wardens live across the road), and in 2022 the guides didn't know its fixed day roosting place. But nearby in a small plantation was a day roost of Golden Masked Owl (at the same place in oct 2023 than in July 2022).

**Liamo Reef Resort** is located also on seaside, but in the vicinity of hot west districts of Kimbe so you can't safely walk outside. Its garden is small but holds varied trees. The best place there is behind the employee's houses, on the east side, where there is a small river. Here we had good views of Ashy Myzomela, Shining Flycatcher, Common Kingfisher, Pied Coucal, Red-flanked Lorikeet, Black Bittern and Yellowish Imperial Pigeon.

### GARU FOREST RESERVE

In the large oil palm plantations of lowlands, there is a buffer zone where original forest is not cut around the Kulu river. Garu forest reserve is a part of this remnant lowland (25 to 80 m asl) forest, at the foot of northern peninsula northwest of Kimbe. Garu is a village on west coast at the base of the peninsula, but we didn't reach it. There is one main road inside the reserve (leading to Garu village) and birding is done along this road. There are very few paths inside the forest, so birding the understorey is quite impossible. The access is via NBPOL Numundo oil palm plantation. You are free to drive on the plantation roads. See MAPS and GPS POINT for more details. Petri Hottola in his trip report talk about access fees. It's possible but nobody asked us and there is nowhere to pay ! If someone ask you such fees, tell him that you have paid at your hotel. In this forest you can see nearly all the lowland species.

We saw there our first **Violaceous Coucal**, our first **Knob-billed Fruit-dove**. We attracted by tape a pair of **Black-capped Paradise-Kingfisher**. We saw a **Black Honey-buzzard** high in the sky.



In Garu birding is done from the « road » but there are very few cars

## DAVIALU BRIDGE

This bridge spans Kulu river in the south part of Numundo plantation. I was not enthusiastic to visit this place and it finally was very birdy ! I think it is the place where I took the most pictures. For us it was far better in the early morning than in the afternoon (Petri Hottola said it was better on evening).

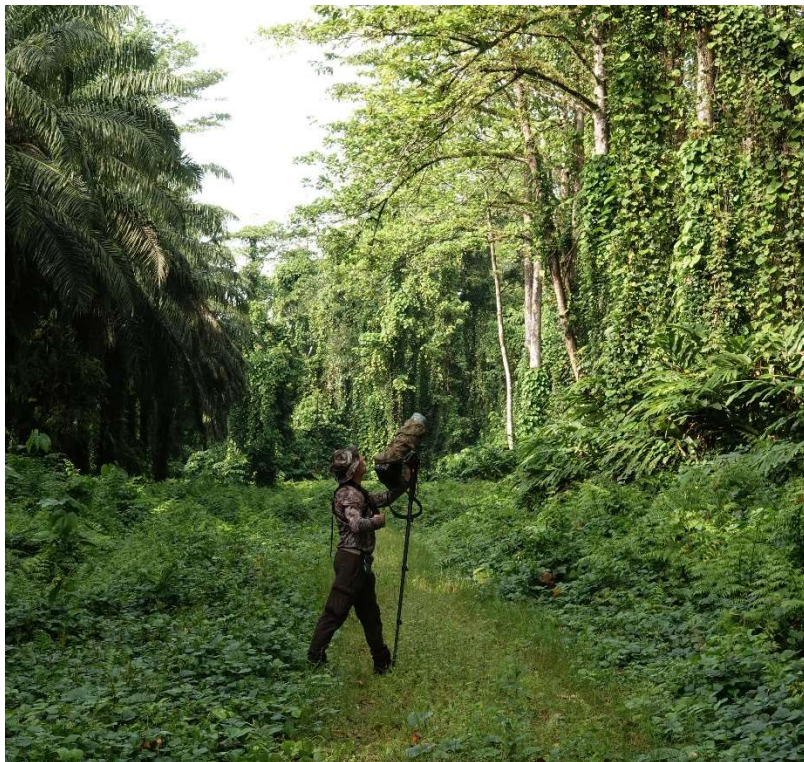
There you watch birds crossing the river from one side to the other, those roosting on tree tops as pigeons, or feeding in riparian trees. Even for ground birds it was good : **New Britain Pitta** was calling on both side of the bridge and we managed very good views on the north side. We heard some **Bushens** and flushed a **Pink-legged Rail**.



Davialu bridge on the background and our 7 seats 4x4 on the foreground !

## LOWLAND FOREST EAST OF DAVIALU COMPOUND

South of Davialu bridge, you enter a new grid of another plantation. On the east part of this grid remain small patches of forest along Kulu River. Unlike Garu, here the forest is on a flat ground and you can enter inside to bird the understorey. It was for us a good place to walk quietly along forest edge with several access in understorey and to the river. We heard again New Britain Pitta calling even in hot mid-day, we saw more than 50 species in this area (with Davialu Bridge). We had good views of **Melanesian Megapode**, **Velvet Flycatcher**, **Knob-billed Fruit-Dove**, and **Little Blue Kingfisher** on the river (the only place where we saw it). We hoped to see there the *Microeca* but we failed.



The edge between the oil palm plantation and little patch of forest

## LOWER KULU RIVER « rail bend »

Another access to the river is on the far west of Numundo Plantation grid. Here you have a large view on the bend of the river. Like in Davialu bridge you see birds crossing the river. But you can walk more easily along the stretch of forest which follows the river. It is the place to see **Nicobar Pigeon** on the main land and not on islets. When the weather is dry, **Pink-legged Rail** come to bath in the river around 6:00 pm. You could have here some distant view of this bird difficult to see. If it is wet, the bird bath in the forest ponds. We tried it but failed in 2019 but succeed in 2023 (not exactly the same place but very close). Remember that if you stay until 6 :15 pm you will reach your hotel by night...



Lower Kulu river on the edge of the palm oil plantation

## NUMUNDO BEEF GRASSLAND

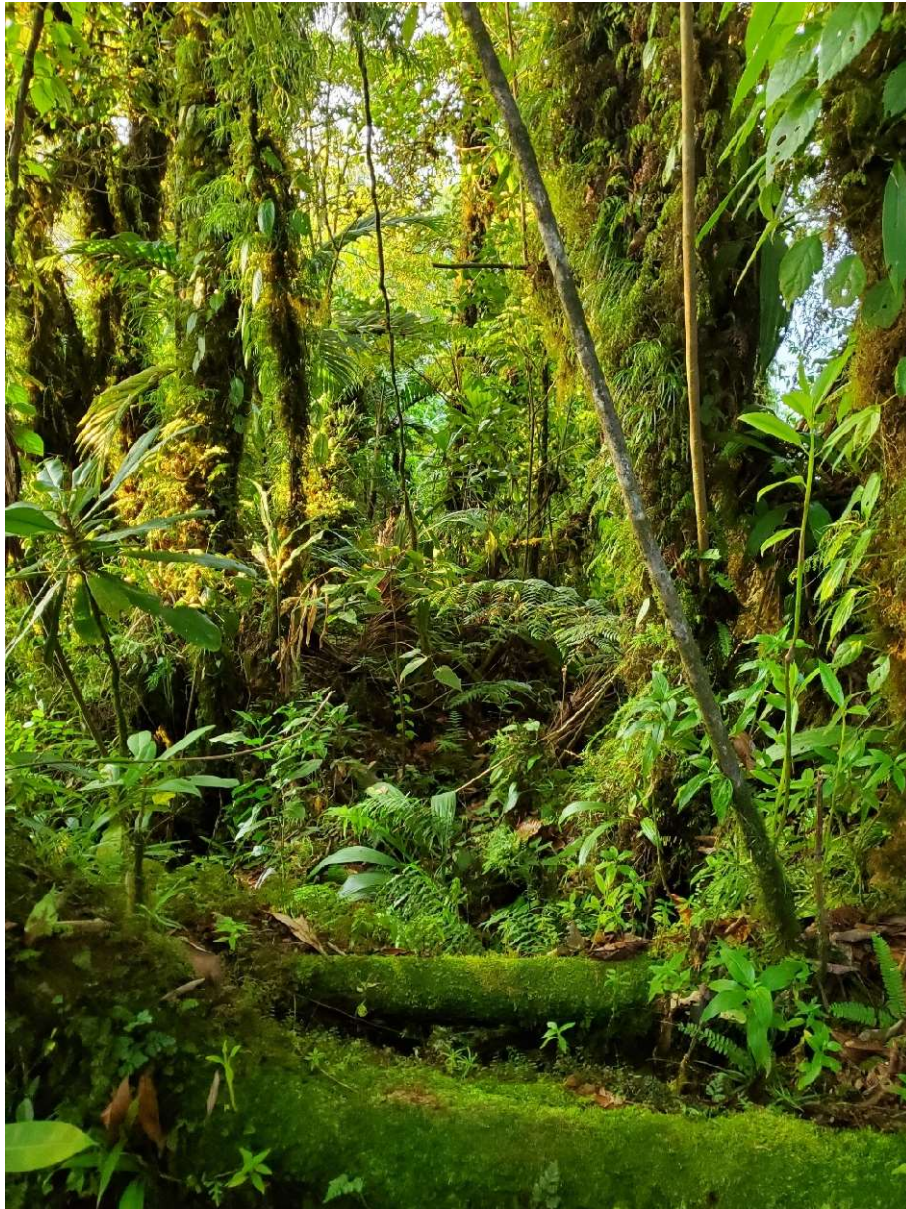
It is a grassy and wet area grazed by cattle, where you can watch easily **Buff-bellied Mannikin**, **Australian Reed-warbler**, **Papuan Grassbird**, **Buff-banded Rail** and sometime **White-browed Crake**, **Pale-vented Bush-hen**, **Asian Blue Quail** (we didn't see the last two). It's along the highway about 3 km North of Numundo plantation entrance. We didn't feel at ease here, alone, parked with our camera and our binoculars, close to the highway and not so far from bad parts of Kimbe, but expected birds were there.

## MOUNT OTTU



Mount Ottu from Hoskins airport





Forest on the top of mount Ottu

We choose this place to reach quickly 1000m asl and montane forest and especially because Guy Dutson saw there the **New Britain Thrush**. There is one path climbing on a ridge, so theoretically we passed through the thrush place... Mt Ottu is the highest mount around Kimbe and not so far from this town. There is a village at its foot reachable by car. This trek is not too difficult to organize. The mountains in central New Britain are highest, but they are far more difficult to reach (and bigger to explore). The first part of the trek is easy, but after some kilometres the trail gets really steep. At 650m asl there is a hut (built by Joshua, a local hunter) nearby a stream, it can be a basecamp. We thought it was too low compared to montane forest area (>950m asl). Around 900m asl there is a « flat area », and around 1000m asl it starts to be steep again. The last 100m are really very steep. On the top there are two small grassy areas with a pair of telecom antennas, and the small house of the warden on the first clearing. We put our tent under the roof of this shelter protected from the wind by corrugated sheet walls. The roof collects rainwater in big cans, so it's easier to provide here than going down in the next deep gully. The place, 1270m

asl, can be very windy. Forest between the small clearings is mossy and very nice. There is a deep gully with a spring 50m below, where locals take water when it's dry.



It's not a bad idea to make the camp at this first hut (650 m asl)

Birding at mount Ottu is very slow. Sometime we didn't see any bird during one or two hours ! Birding is more auditory than visual. You walk on a ridge with most of time step slopes right and left and high and close canopy above your head. We are used to tropical birding and know that some forests are relatively poor in birds, and it was the case of Mt Ottu.

The aim of birding there was to try to see mountain species and especially the thrush. It was a bit disappointing because the first species seen were common lowland species ! All these effort for that ...

We had hoped to see the New Britain Honeyeater in epiphytes, but we failed too. In 2019, we wonder if it was present on Mt Ottu, a small isolated forest summit. Now that we are back from Nakanai Range, where I thought that the Honeyeater would be a common species and it wasn't, I can state that this bird is so difficult that we could have missed it in Mount Ottu.



The first section is step then after a flat area, you will enter the mossy forest

The New Britain Thicketbird lives only above 1500 m asl, so we knew that it was not a target in Mount Ottu.

We still have seen some mountain species as **New Britain Fantail**, **Bismarck Whistler**, **Island Leaf Warbler**, **Red Myzomela**, **Black-bellied Myzomela**, **Black Honey Buzzard** even if the two last can be seen in lowlands to (we saw them at Garu forest).

For the thrush, we thought that the best habitat is between 950 and 1050m asl in the real montane forest, where some less steep slopes can be watched. But perhaps the bird inhabits too the flat area at 900m asl, as it has been recorded at 600m asl at Talasea in a similar sub-montane forest. One can put his tent there even if the guide/porters prefer to stay in the small house below or on the top with a roof and walls, and a water source nearby.



The section just below the top is really very step and slippery after rain

### **CENTRAL HILLS south of Lake Lalili**

First I discovered on Google map, south of lake Lalili, a logging road leading to 1100m asl by 50 km stretch inland. I thought it was a good opportunity to visit again the montane area without doing a trek. Secondly I ask some kind locals to obtain local community agreement and go with me.

But on the spot, as my locals said, this old logging road is no longer used and now is not practicable. However my locals had a plan : another old logging road, located 9 km before, is still used and leads to one of them family house. We drove this 10km into the hills. At this place, the forest is cut for gardening. Local people lead you in small tracks through forest or through remnant patches of forest and clearings. We searched birds by day and by night. The main target was **New Britain Bronzewing** because it lives in the forest around but it is a very difficult species to find. A boy from the area had hurt one with a stone and kept it in a cage (it must be uncommon unless he would have eaten it) but when our guide comes to his house he learn that the bird has died. May be a good way to find this species is to search for it at night. We

walked in a small creek for 2,5 km with torches to look for sleeping birds. We found **Eastern Bronze Ground Dove**, **Black-tailed Monarch**, **Velvet Flycatcher** and **Melanesian Scrubfowl** but no Bronzewing. Our morning birding was fairly good between the remnant patches of forest.



We follow a track on the ridge of the hills, this track is used by the new farmers  
A strip of forest has been cutted between the ridge

## « UNAME » RIVER

When we decided to go birding the central hills we didn't know that the Bismarck Kingfisher was now a tricky species to find. We used to stop on every bridge and watch carefully every river we cross with no luck. Finally coming back the hills we decided to stop at a very suitable river. It was not a big one but not a creek. It looked very promising (forest river ; very clear water and many suitable fishes). Our guide discussed with some local peoples (remember, you must have the agreement of the local community !) and we started following up the river with 2 local guides. 30 minutes later we were more than 10 people following the river ! The river was really perfect for the kingfisher. We started on the banks (sometime on the right side sometime on the left) but as the water was not deep and as the track was sometime far from the river we asked to continue walking in the river bed. One guide provided me a pair of flip flops, helpful for our weak european feet hurt by the stones in the water. We walked 2,5 km and finally heard one **Bismarck Kingfisher** but we were too numerous to be discreet. At this moment I hope that Walindi bird guides knew a good place, but they didn't ! Terence told us that he haven't seen this bird for 20 years !



We started to follow the river with 3 guides but we finished far more numerous !

## GABUNA VOLCANO

At the end of our trip, we stay 2 nights in Walindi Plantation Resort to concentrate on the targets we missed with real birdwatcher guides. I was quite desperate because my list of lacks was far too long for me ! But when I listed the species quite all where impossible to see or with a big chance... As I was speaking about the thrush and White-backed Wood Swallow, Joseph (the main birding guide of the resort) told me to go on the top of Gabuna where the 2 species were present. So we decided to do this hike. We started at 4 am and walked by night 2/3 the way. We didn't stop when **New Britain Boobook** or **White-mantled Kingfisher** were calling in the end of night because our targets were expected on the top. To be honest I didn't have much hope of seeing the thrush, but I had only one day left and it was my last possibility... When I discussed with David our guide, I quickly understood that the only observation of the thrush was extraordinary (a bird perched for several minutes on a bare rock inside the volcano caldera !! probably partially asphyxiated by sulphur gases) and 20 years ago. Ok it must live some birds in the forest around but at this altitude there must be few. I searched in the understorey but of course no bird. For the Wood Swallow it was the same, the bird had been seen but very few time. Joseph is very friendly and a good seller for his bird tours but a little bit crafty.

To reach the start of the hike, we took a little road in the field only 200 m north from Walindi Plantation Resort entrance. We drove until a small settlement. Then it starts for a long but easy walk. It is absolutely not steep but very long. It starts in the fields (cocoa) and then we enter the forest. Before the top you start to hear a loud noise, it is the water and sulphur vapours that come out of the volcano. The ground is rocky without vegetation in the caldera but surrounded by forest.

If you don't go in high mountain, the forest below the crater it is a place to see **Bismarck Whistler**. **Superb Fruit Dove** and **Song Parrot** are possible (we do not concentrate on these species as we already know them).



Vegetation on the border of the caldera and the forest on the background

## NAKANAI RANGE

The trip in 2023 was a very short trip for us only focused on Nakanai Range. This mountain area had never been visited by birders until this year. A first group visited the place 2 weeks earlier. Cheyne and his Walindi's team laid out a trail up to 1600 m asl and opened 3 helipads and 2 campsites, the first at 1600 m<sup>asl</sup> and the second at 1000 m<sup>asl</sup>. Without this huge organisation / logistic, visiting the Nakanai is nearly impossible. At the last moment Josh told us that we will be dropped at the first camp by helicopter. It was a great idea. Without this decision all the journey would have been only a long walk without time for birding. Unfortunately we missed most of the target birds and especially the thrush. We only stay one day and a half around each camp and it was far too short. We should have stay between 2 and 3 days in each place and I think a third camp around 500 m asl should have been a good option for the Bronzewing and some other species. But this kind of long trek are not realistic for a birding agency.



gullied karst relief of Nakanai range forest



On the top (1600 m) the forest was surprising tall. The tallest trees reach 45-50 m ! Incredible at this altitude. There the ground is very irregular and very cluttered with branches, trunks, moss and roots which form several levels with numerous cavities. All that doesn't make birding easy. The undergrowth is dense



With Josh we decided to separate to maximise the chance to find difficult species. Josh was with the group and I was with Marianne. We spent all the time searching for the thrush without success. We found **Rusty Thicketbird** but the observations were always very short. They didn't allow us enough good view to be sure that it wasn't New Britain Thicketbird, but they were not in substantial patches of bamboos.



bamboo at 1400m asl

The bamboo zone is between 1350 m and 1500 m with different kinds of bamboos

The rest of the group had a bad observation of **New Britain Goshawk**. We found several **Olive-backed Oriole** who are not supposed to be in New Britain and especially in the mountains. All is incredible about this observation (the species, the place, the number of birds,...). Our searches by the thermal scopes at night were not a success, we only found one species, Bismarck Whistler ! Josh finally succeeded to find a **New Britain Honeyeater** when we started our way down to the second camp. I thought it would have been far more common at this altitude.

At 1000 m, we collected informations from local people. One knew the thrush and he showed us the place where he saw the bird the previous day. I made a hide, and spent 8 hours waiting for the bird, but no observation. We tried by night with thermal scopes. It was clearly different compare to our session on the top. We found more than 20 birds from nearly 10 species but not any thrush. The forest here is very different.



Forest around camp 2, 1000m asl with clear undergrowth

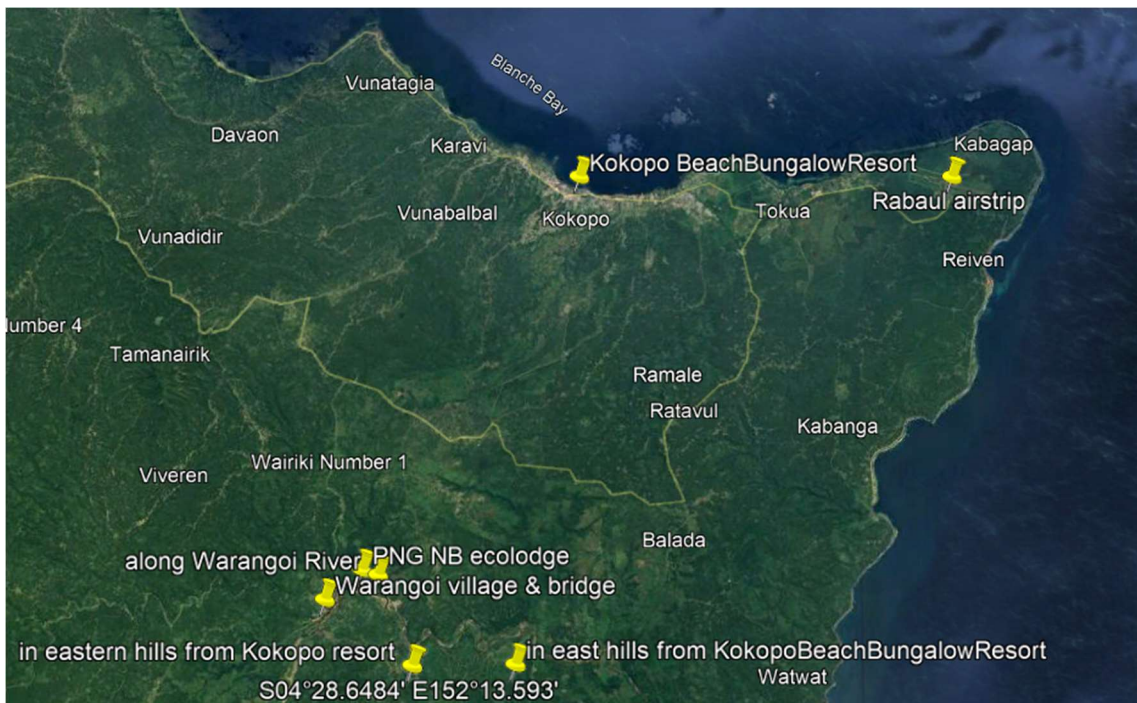
The canopy is not so high (25 m). The undergrowth is quite clear, the ground is flat and covered by dead leaves. At this elevation we had good observation of **Rusty Thicketbird** either by day and by night. For lowland species like New Britain Bronzewing, we should have done another camp around 500 m asl in a preserved forest. Because hunting is widespread in New Britain. Apart from the Honeyeater, we have to admit that the trek in the Nakanai was not a success... Nearly all the species found can be found in the lowland.

### **KOKOPO AREA, East New-Britain, short stopover in Jul2019**

In 2019, we were not supposed to stop in East New Britain, but we had to change our plan at the last minute. Our plane from Kavieng (New Ireland) landed at Kokopo airport early in the morning and our next flight was in the afternoon. We decided with Marianne to find a possibility to do some birdwatching this day in order not to lose all our time. At the airport we asked people to know who could help us to organise a birding tour. They advised us to reach **Kokopo beach bungalow Resort**. despite our poor look in this luxury hotel, the staff succeeded in a very short time to find a driver with a 4WD car to bring us in the foothills around Kokopo / Rabaul.



We didn't have time to go in the mountain but we reached 140m asl in the hills. I didn't expect to find any good bird in a such a little time and yet we found a species that we didn't find in West New Britain : **Hooded Mannikin**. We had good view of **Pied Cuckoo-dove** quietly perched, a species that only Marianne will see in West New Britain. Finally at the end of this short day we had quite a good list of birds. We also saw a smashed New Britain Rail on a gravel road.



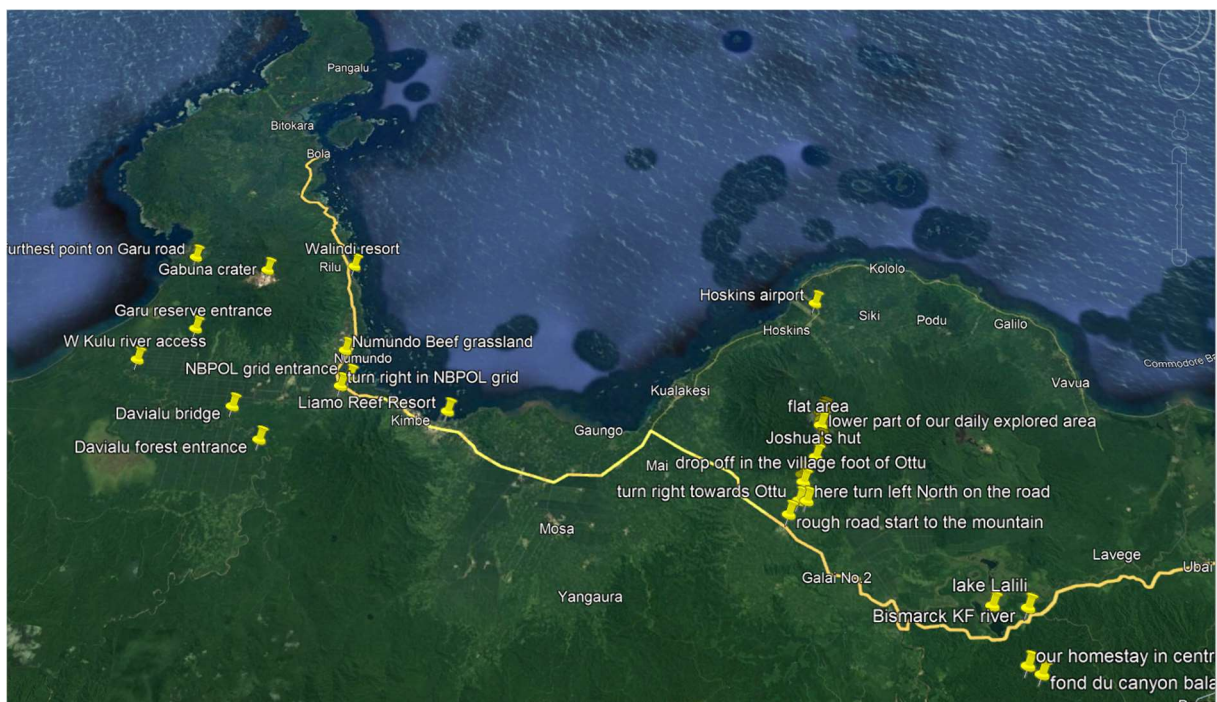
The places we visited in East New Britain

# MAPS

## GENERAL MAPS

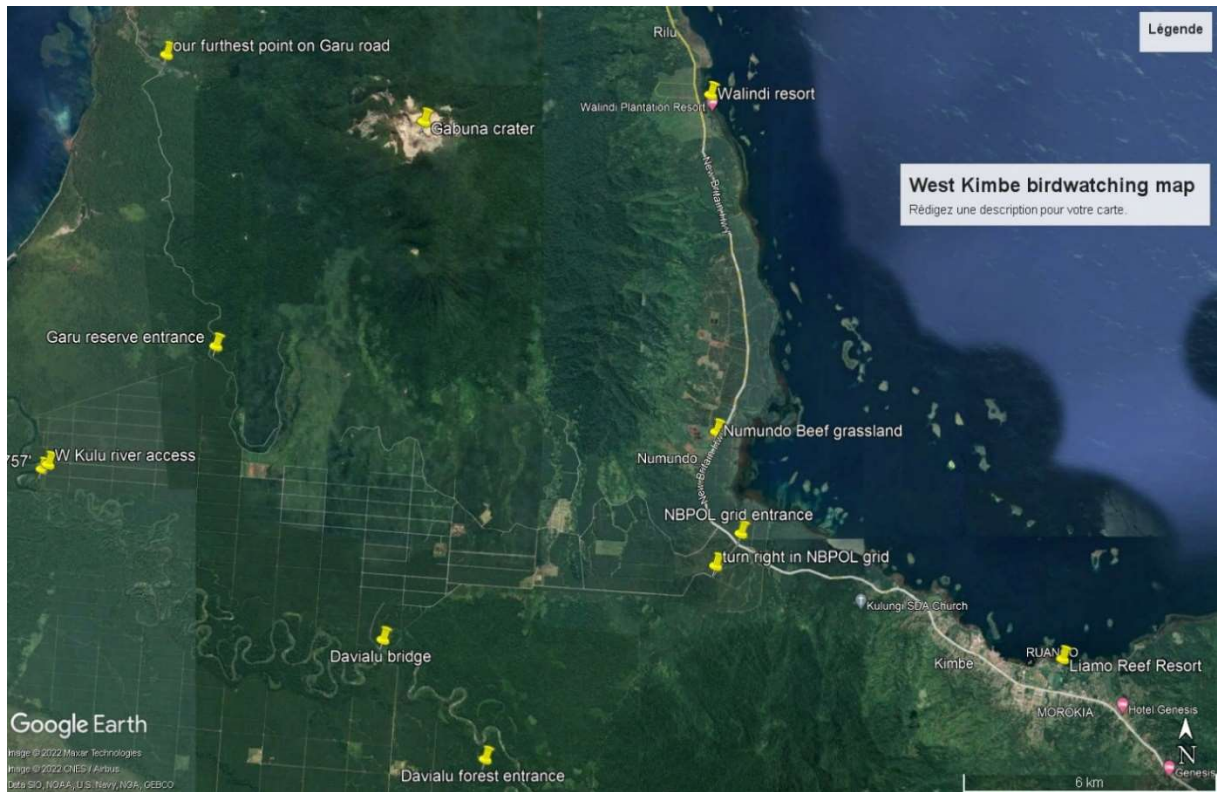


The West New Britain sites are quite central in this Bismarck archipelago island



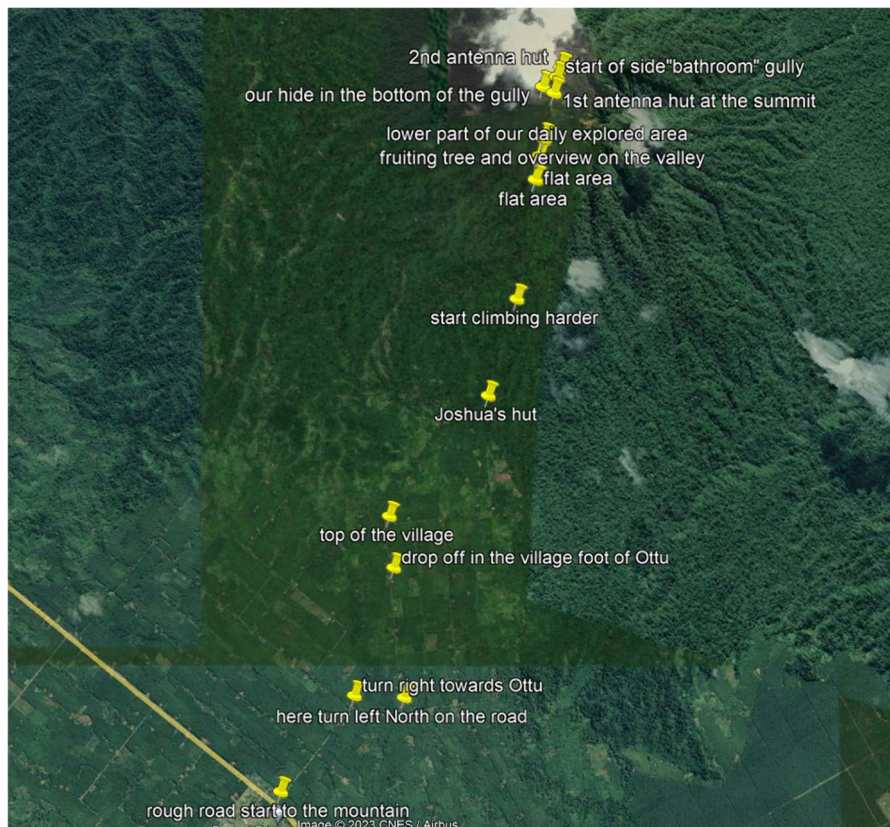
General map of the sites visited in 2022

## MAP OF NBPOL GRID & GARU RESERVE

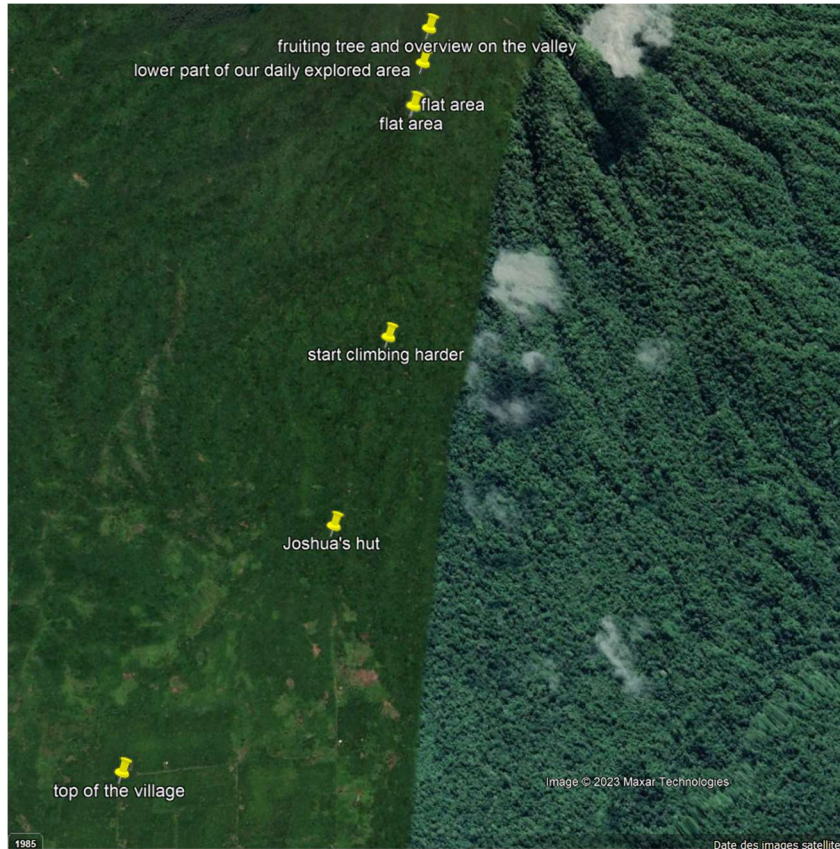


## MAPS OF MOUNT OTTU

### 1. THE TREK FROM THE ROAD TO THE TOP



## 2. LOWER PART : FROM THE VILLAGE TO THE FLAT AREA AROUND 900M ASL

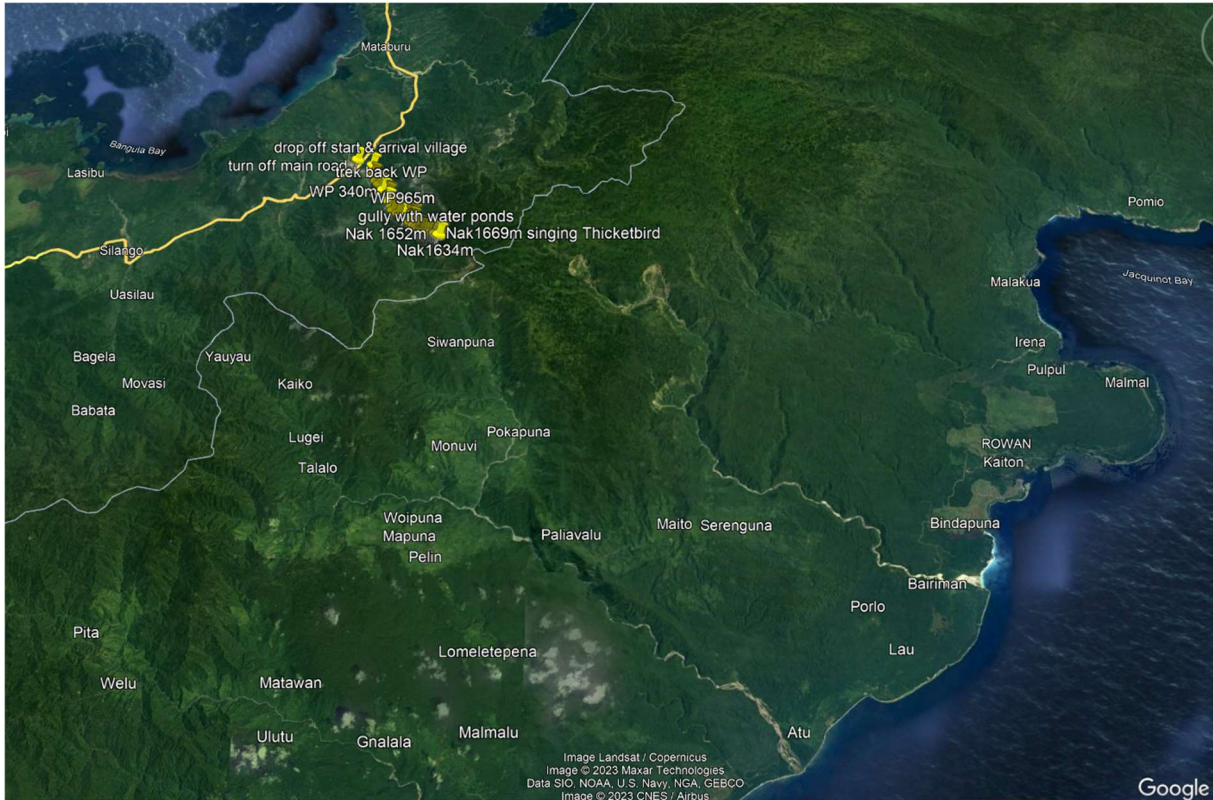


## 3. UPPER PART : FROM THE FLAT AREA TO THE TOP



# NAKANAI TREK

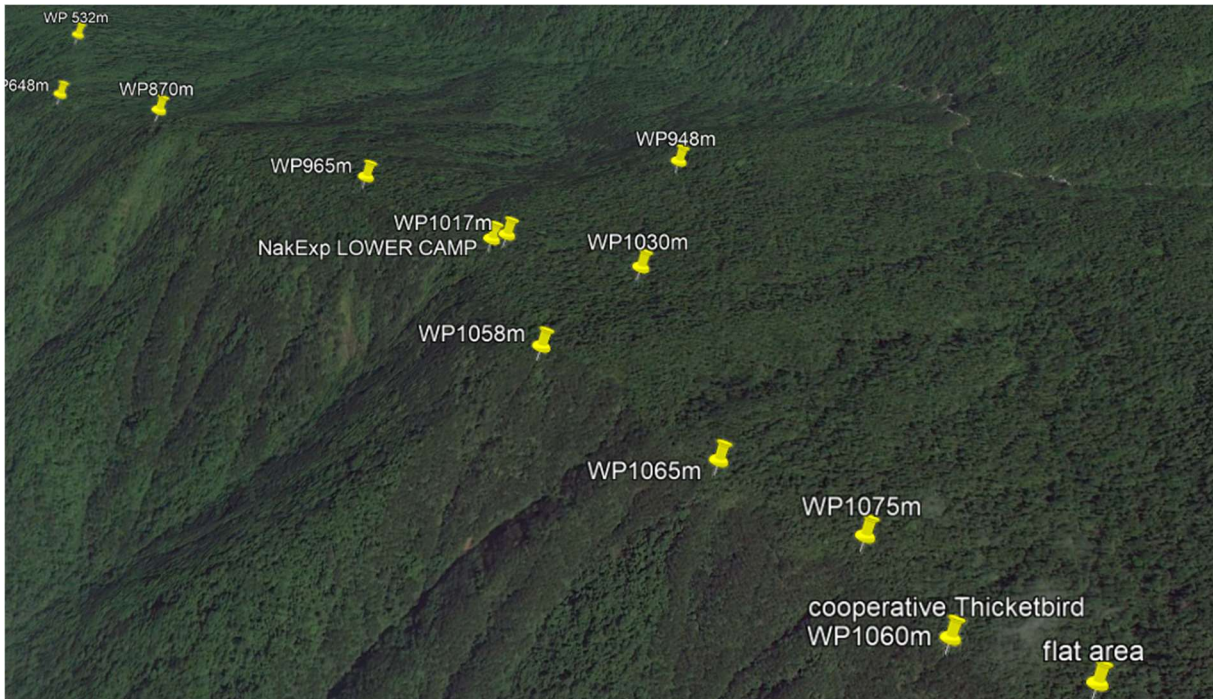
## 1. NAKANAI TREK : SATELLITE VIEW



## 2. NAKANAI TREK : GENERAL VIEW



### 3. NAKANAI TREK : AROUND LOWER CAMP (2)

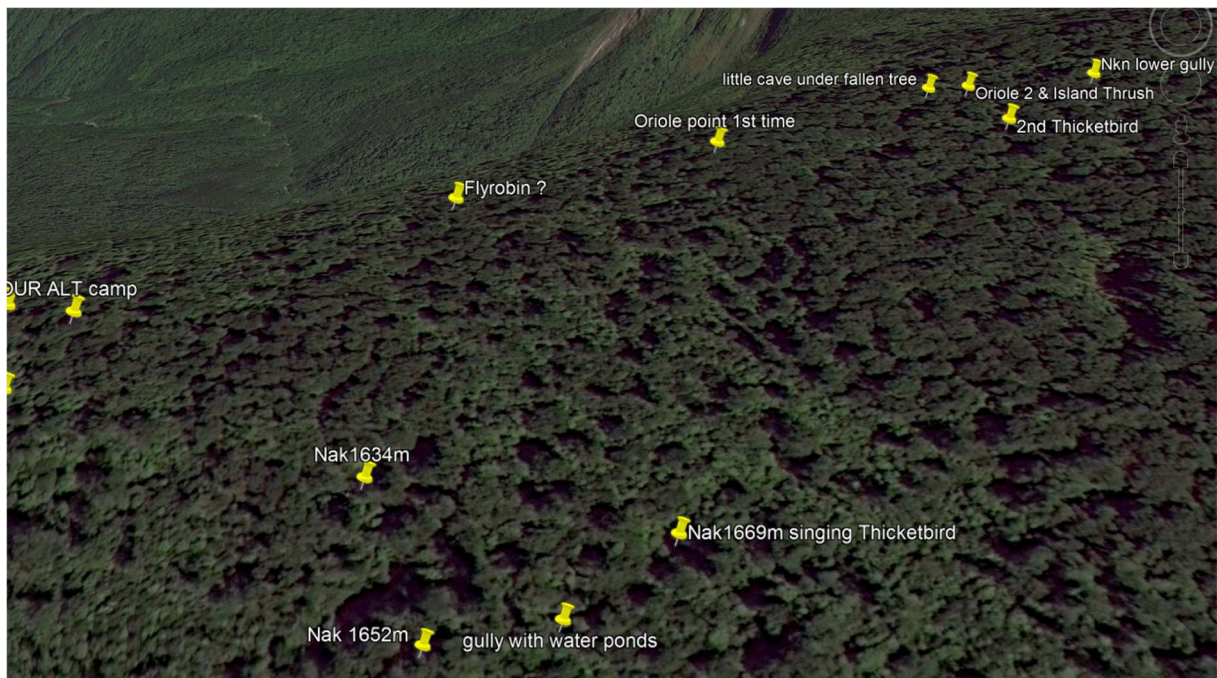


### 4. NAKANAI TREK : FROM LOWER TO UPPER CAMP

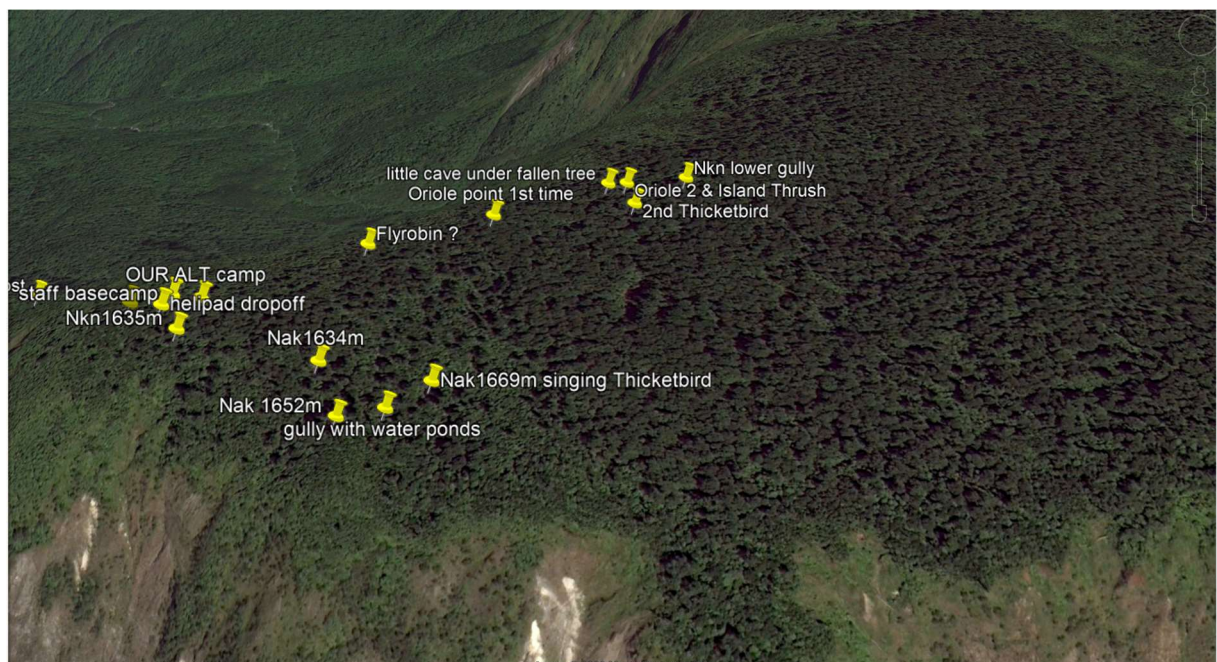




## 5. NAKANAI TREK : UPPER PARTS ABOVE THE CAMP 1



## 6. NAKANAI TREK : GENERAL VIEW OF THE UPPER PLATEAU



## GPS POINTS

We apologise because we do not write the GPS point the same way in the different trips...

### NORTHERN PLACES

S5° 26.147' E150° 05.079'

Walindi Plantation Resort

### MOUNT GABUNA Trek

S5° 25.854' E150° 04.446'

S5° 25.899' E150° 03.947'

S5° 26.148' E150° 03.759'

S5° 26.265' E150° 03.727'

S5° 26.449' E150° 03.622'

S5° 26.471' E150° 03.601'

S5° 26.523' E150° 03.565'

S5° 26.533' E150° 03.551'

S5° 26.649' E150° 03.416'

S5° 26.785' E150° 03.196'

S5° 26.933' E150° 03.166'

S5° 26.954' E150° 03.129'

S5° 26.916' E150° 03.052'

S5° 26.763' E150° 02.806'

S5° 26.704' E150° 02.682'

S5° 26.667' E150° 02.588'

S5° 26.719' E150° 02.519'

S5° 26.768' E150° 02.445'

S5° 26.841' E150° 02.382'

S5° 26.865' E150° 02.310'

S5° 26.914' E150° 02.284'

S5° 26.972' E150° 02.224'

S5° 27.017' E150° 02.134'

S5° 26.960' E150° 02.078'

S5° 26.914' E150° 02.044'

S5° 26.852' E150° 01.971'

S5° 26.846' E150° 01.951'

S5° 26.795' E150° 01.914'

S5° 26.837' E150° 01.872'

S5° 26.857' E150° 01.806'

in the crater

### Grid from main road to DAVIALU BRIDGE

S5° 31' 36.96'' E150° 05' 35.70''

SWest turn to the grid : NBPOL grid entrance

S5° 32' 00.64'' E150° 05' 16.50''

right turn

S5° 32' 14.05'' E150° 04' 53.71''

next right turn

S5° 32' 06.62'' E150° 03' 00.60''

Haella nursery turn right to stay on main track

but straight is also possible to S5° 32' 04.37'' E150° 01' 55.32''

S5° 31' 45.53'' E150° 03' 02.29''

turn left

S5° 31' 41.40" E150° 01' 57.32"  
S5° 31' 59.78" E150° 01' 23.40"  
S5° 32' 20.75" E150° 01' 21.80"

turn left for south branch and join S5° 32' 04.69" E150° 01' 55.30"  
turn left/South to Davialu  
embranchment to Davialu

## DAVIALU AREA

S5° 32' 54.88" E150° 01' 04.38"  
S5° 34' 24.34" E150° 01' 12.08"  
S5° 34' 29.22" E150° 02' 12.84"  
S5° 34' 22.44" E150° 02' 21.96"

Davialu bridge on Kulu river  
left turn to Davialu compound  
our parking area and then walking  
forest entrance

S5° 34' 21.44" E150° 02' 21.37"  
S5° 34' 20.52" E150° 02' 20.76"  
S5° 34' 19.02" E150° 02' 21.54"  
S5° 34' 17.82" E150° 02' 21.24"  
S5° 34' 16.67" E150° 02' 21.29"

path

1st access to Kulu river (dead arm)

S5° 34' 19.30" E150° 02' 26.72"  
S5° 34' 16.92" E150° 02' 25.96"

right turn, plantation on right, straight locals go fishing  
2<sup>nd</sup> access to Kulu river (dead arm)

S5° 34' 21.72" E150° 02' 28.92"  
S5° 35' 58.22" E150° 02' 16.92"

we didn't go further, palm on the right, 2ndary forest on the left  
stretch with patches of forest with fish ponds

## SOUTHERN WAY OF THE GRID, TO WEST ACCESS TO KULU RIVER

S5° 31' 36.96" E150° 05' 35.70"  
S5° 31' 49.67" E149° 59' 14.07"  
S5° 32' 04.69" E150° 01' 55.30"  
S5° 30' 46.66" E149° 59' 18.81"  
S5° 30' 44.20" E149° 58' 46.37"  
S5° 30' 33.76" E149° 56' 48.91"  
S5° 30' 29.00" E149° 57' 42.66"  
S5° 30' 46.28" E149° 56' 50.10"  
S5° 30' 48.68" E149° 56' 46.08"  
S5° 30' 50.80" E149° 56' 49.79"  
S5° 30' 04.07" E149° 56' 53.52"

NBPOL grid entrance GE  
turn right/north if coming by south way  
point on S way  
crossroad between southern and northern ways of the grid  
turn right  
turn left  
right/north or left/south turn (straight is a wet road)  
parking place  
inside forest (a rail place)  
view on Kulu river, Nicobar place  
northern access but not so close to Kulu river

## NORTHERN WAY, TO GARU FOREST

S5° 30' 33.76" E149° 58' 46.91"  
S5° 30' 12.86" E149° 58' 48.85"  
S5° 29' 19.30" E149° 58' 57.08"  
Good points on Garu road :  
S5° 28' 50.22" E149° 59' 01.60"  
S5° 28' 01.90" E149° 58' 25.90"  
  
S5° 27' 21.80" E149° 58' 23.40"  
S5° 26' 36.80" E149° 58' 15.60"  
S5° 28' 50.20" E149° 59' 01.60"

North to Garu forest  
turn left for main track (straight is possible & nice but rough track)  
entrance of Garu reserve  
  
bridge over hot river  
small clearing east of the road, short access to forest understorey  
and to hot river left bank  
  
waterhole  
waterhole

S5° 26' 21.50" E149° 58' 14.70"  
S5° 25' 59.80" E149° 58' 01.70"  
S5° 25' 45.10" E149° 58' 19.90"

our further north point towards Garu, we didn't drive more, degraded environment (but good views on perched pigeons / fruit doves)

## KIMBE

S5° 32' 14.06" E150° 07'45.21"  
S5° 33' 04.92" E150° 09'38.95"  
S5° 33.385' E150° 09.603'  
S5° 33' 29.79" E150° 17' 51.56"

west limit of Kimbe  
Liamo Reef Resort in W Kimbe  
main road in front of Liamo embranchment  
main embranchment between north coastal road & M2 towards Lavage village

## TO MOUNT OTTU

S5° 37.517' E150° 22.840'  
S5° 37.142' E150° 23.154'  
S5° 36.970' E150° 23.558'  
S5° 35.901' E150° 23.483'

on main road, school place of community of Mt Ottu  
on perpendicular road  
turn left / North  
end of drivable track, start of our trek, 165 m asl

## MOUNT OTTU : track leading to summit

S5° 35.843' E150° 23.810'  
S5° 35.775' E150° 23.877'  
S5° 35.784' E150° 24.100'  
S5° 35.625' E150° 24.100'  
S5° 35.418' E150° 24.144'  
S5° 35.190' E150° 24.071'  
S5° 35.071' E150° 24.107'  
S5° 34.887' E150° 24.158'  
S5° 34.725' E150° 24.200'  
S5° 34.636' E150° 24.232'  
S5° 34.454' E150° 24.280'  
S5° 34.072' E150° 24.313'  
S5° 33.990' E150° 24.319'  
S5° 33.855' E150° 24.343'  
S5° 33.768' E150° 24.366'  
S5° 33.711' E150° 24.366'

Joshua's hut 337m asl

start of climbing harder  
469m  
578m

our lower camera trap place / 1010m  
a good fruiting tree at 1085m

## MOUNT OTTU : 1<sup>st</sup> stretch of forest on the top ridge

S5° 33.519' E150° 24.431'  
S5° 33.502' E150° 24.431'

start  
end 1270m

## MOUNT OTTU : 2<sup>nd</sup> stretch of forest on the top ridge

S5° 33.477' E150° 24.432'  
S5° 33.410' E150° 24.449'  
S5° 33.395' E150° 24.451'

1263m  
1265m  
2<sup>nd</sup> antenna hut

S5° 33.385' E150° 24.445' way go down but no real trail

S5° 33.448' E150° 24.427' start of « bathroom gully » on the top ridge

S5° 33.449' E150° 24.420' first hide uphill

S5° 33.501' E150° 24.348' our hide in the bottom of gully

## IN CENTRAL HILLS SOUTH OF LAKE LALILI

S5° 40.908' E150° 26.649' bridge on Kapiura river

## NAMELESS RIVER : our riverbank & riverbed walk

S5° 41.056' E150° 31.223' start of our walk near a bridge on a small suitable river

S5° 41.879' E150° 31.210' end of our walk, Bismarck Kingfisher gone too far

## CENTRAL HILLS : Old logging road

S5° 40.818' E150° 31.948' start of 1st logging road now unpassable by car

S5° 41.056' E150° 31.223' start of main road of our motorable track

S5° 41.666' E150° 30.430' way towards West on old log tracks

S5° 41.643' E150° 29.801'

S5° 41.380' E150° 29.065'

S5° 41.310' E150° 28.396'

S5° 41.311' E150° 27.663'

S5° 40.952' E150° 27.165' bend towards East

S5° 41.371' E150° 26.945' waypoints on the old log track

S5° 42.074' E150° 27.939'

S5° 42.107' E150° 28.335'

S5° 42.103' E150° 28.623'

S5° 42.238' E150° 28.897'

S5° 42.564' E150° 29.556'

S5° 42.893' E150° 30.132'

S5° 43.137' E150° 30.812' our basecamp homestay

S5° 43.157' E150° 30.600' our 2<sup>nd</sup> walk : trail in remnant patches of forest

S5° 43.476' E150° 30.167' end of our trail in the edge of freshly cleared and forest

S5° 42.888' E150° 30.860' our 3rd way birding from the homestay 19/07/22

S5° 42.470' E150° 30.814'

## NAKANAI TREK October 2023

S05° 29' 30,45" E151° 01' 23,80" drop off village, start & arrival of trek, helipad near the river

S05° 33' 10,21" E151° 04' 16,33" upper camp = camp 1 at 1635m

S05° 33' 07,68" E151° 04' 22,22" our highest place visited

S05° 33' 06,85" E151° 04' 22,67"	Oriole place
S05° 33' 05,51" E151° 04' 27,12"	Oriole place too
S05° 33' 03,47" E151° 04' 34,50"	a good gully
S05° 33' 05,11" E151° 04' 32,83"	another gully in high parts

S05° 33' 03,50" E151° 04' 00,13"	waypoint 1417m
S05° 33' 02,30" E151° 03' 54,99"	waypoint 1356m
S05° 33' 00,84" E151° 03' 51,03"	waypoint 1310m
S05° 32' 59,05" E151° 03' 46,74"	waypoint 1230m
S05° 32' 57,15" E151° 03' 44,32"	waypoint 1170m
S05° 32' 55,19" E151° 03' 42,43"	waypoint 1130m
S05° 32' 43,09" E151° 03' 30,70"	waypoint 1075m
S05° 32' 29,52" E151° 03' 13,02"	waypoint 1058m

S05° 32' 19,28" E151° 03' 08,50"	lower camp = camp 2
----------------------------------	---------------------

Lower camp area :

S05° 32' 20,40"	E151° 03' 17,49"
S05° 32' 21,47"	E151° 03' 17,43"
S05° 32' 18,81"	E151° 03' 13,15"
S05° 32' 18,90"	E151° 03' 10,95"
S05° 32' 19,07"	E151° 03' 09,39"

Way down back to the village :

S05° 32'09,37"	E151°03' 18,59"
S05° 32'12,01"	E151°02'59,09"
S05° 32'00,86"	E151°02'41,87"
S05° 31'58,54"	E151°02'39,28"
S05° 31'52,83"	E151°02'33,30"
S05° 31'48,94"	E151°02'28,03"
S05° 31'41,69"	E151°02'26,00"
S05° 31'35,79"	E151°02'23,77"
S05° 31'12,92"	E151°02'09,95"
S05° 30'54,70"	E151°02'08,69"

river crossing :

S05°30'30,60"	E151°01'47,32"
S05°30'26,71"	E151°01'44,73"
S05°30'18,46"	E151°01'37,42"
S05°30'00,55"	E151°01'31,05"
S05°29'59,19"	E151°01'28,78"

## REFERENCES

### BOOKS

- **Birds of New Guinea** by Phil Gregory, Lynx ediciones, may 2017
- **Birds of Melanesia** by Guy Dutton, Helm Field Guides, 2011
- **Lynx's Illustrated checklist of the birds of the world**, by del Hoyo & Collar

### TRAVEL REPORTS

- All the reports published in Cloudbirders.com
- Especially : BIRDING THE BISMARCKS SOLO: WEST NEW BRITAIN by Petri Hottola

### BIRDS SOUNDS

from **Xenocanto**

Substitutes for New Britain Bronzewing : New Guinea Bronzewing  
Golden Masked Owl : Australian / Taliabu / Minahassa Masked Owl  
Bismarck Kingfisher : Azure Kingfisher  
Bismarck Hanging Parrot : Orange-fronted Hanging Parrot

NO sound registered for New Britain Thrush, New Britain Honeyeater

## BIRD LIST

The birds highlighted in blue have been observed, the others are the species that can be seen.

**Dwarf Cassowary** *Casuarius bennetti bennetti* ssp for New Guinea uplands & New Britain  
We saw one skeleton with skull in Central Hills and fresh footprints on a riverbank

**1. MELANESIAN MEGAPODE** *Megapodius eremita* Bismarck to Solomons

Frequent species, vocal and quite easy to see : heard and seen at Garu Forest, Davialu Forest, Davialu Bridge, Kulu River, Mt Gabuna

**2. ASIAN BLUE QUAIL** *Synoicus chinensis lepidus* ssp Bismarck Archipelago

Usually seen at Numundo Beef grassland – we missed it in West New Britain  
but we saw 2 birds in East New Britain, Kokopo area 26/07/2019

## DUCKS

### 3. PACIFIC BLACK DUCK *Anas superciliosa*

Seen every day in small streams of oil palm plantation grid, on Kulu river too ; in East New Britain in Kokopo area 26/07/2019

## PIGEONS & DOVES

**Metallic Pigeon** *Columbia vitiensis halmaheira* ssp Banggai to Solomons  
in New Britain, rare in mountains we probably heard at Mt Ottu summit

**Yellow-legged Pigeon** *Columba pallidiceps monotypic*  
now a rare bird in all area New Britain (where only 1 data)

### 4. SLENDER-BILLED CUCKOO-DOVE *Macropygia amboiensis carteretia* ENDEMIC ssp of Bismarcks

Commonly heard and seen : Mt Ottu, Davialu Bridge, Kulu River, Central Hills, Mt Gabuna (jul2022)  
Start of Nakanai trek & camp 1 & 2 (oct2023)





**5. BLACK-BILLED/BAR-TAILED CUCKOO-DOVE** *Macropygia nigrirostris* monotypic New Guinea ENDemic

Heard & seen in Central Hills

**6. PIED CUCKOO-DOVE** *Reinwardtoena browni* Monotypic END to Bismarcks & Admiralties

Rare in New Britain but frequently heard, Kulu River, Mt Gabuna, seen only once in flight in Central Hills  
a good view in Eastern New Britain with a picture 26/07/2019 Kokopo area  
heard 2 birds below camp 2 (550 m asl) Nakanai range



Very bad picture but the Pied Cuckoo-dove is really difficult to see

**New Britain Bronzewing** *Hemicophaps foersteri* Monotypic New Britain ENDemic  
rare resident of lowland forest

In Central Hills We missed from few days a caged bird from hunting activities of locals ;  
unusual bird so let alive

**White-breasted Ground-dove** *Alopecoenas jobiensis jobiensis* ssp Bismarcks  
uncommon  
rare even for local hunters

**7. EASTERN BRONZE GROUND-DOVE** *Alopecoenas johanna johanna* ssp of New Britain & New Ireland

One bird seen by night roosting above a river bed, then shot (but missed !) by our locals in Central Hills



**8. NICOBAR PIGEON** *Caloenas nicobarica nicobarica* ssp Andaman to Solomons

More than 40 birds, a morning at lower Kulu River ; they seemed to come from the close palm plantation and perched in riparian trees



**9. STEPHAN'S EMERALD DOVE** *Chalcophaps stephani stephani* ssp Papua to d'Entrecasteaux

Very common in oil palm plantations everywhere, in the vicinity of Kulu River ; in Central Hills too ; in plantations at Mt Gabuna foot

**10. RED-KNOBBED IMPERIAL-PIGEON** *Ducula rubricera rubricera* ssp Bismarcks

The commonest imperial pigeon everywhere but less in numbers compare to Solomon mountains

Easy to see

Davialu bridge & forest, Kulu River ; tame in Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna ; Mt Ottu lower altitudes ; Central Hills (building nest)

**11. FINSCH'S IMPERIAL-PIGEON** *Ducula finschii* monotypic Bismarcks ENDEMIC

Said common but we contacted few and it required to try hard to manage to see some birds

We succeed only twice : at Garu Forest reserve low part and in Central Hills

More heard, but not often, by lonely bird (known to occur at low density) like at Mt Gabuna, in Central Hills ; heard at Mt Ottu

1 bird, Start of the trek, Nakanai Range

**Island Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula pistrinaria vanwickii* ssp New Britain & New Ireland  
Overlooked from Walindi ?

**12. BISMARCK/BLACK IMPERIAL PIGEON** *Ducula melanochroa* Monotypic ENDEMIC of Bismarcks

Uncommon

Short views in flight at Davialu Bridge 1 bird, Kulu River 1 bird, 2 in Central hills and 2 birds near the upper camp in Nakanai



**13. YELLOWISH IMPERIAL-PIGEON** *Ducula subflavescens* Monotypic ENDEMIC of Bismarcks

The second commonest imperial-pigeon after red-knobbed,  
Well seen in Liamo Reef Resort garden, in Walindi Resort garden, Davialu forest, Kulu River, Central hills,  
Mt Gabuna ; heard but just seen once at Mt Ottu  
Hoskin's airport (oct2023)  
Seen below camp 2 Nakanai range  
We also saw a very clear Imperial-Pigeon flying on seaside : a Torresian ? *D.spilorrhoea*



**14. EASTERN SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE** *Ptilinopus superbus* Monotypic New Guinea to Bougainville

In West New Britain we only heard at Mt Gabuna  
In East New Britain we saw and took pictures in Kokopo area 29/07/2019



**15. WHITE-BIBBED FRUIT-DOVE** *Ptilinopus rivoli rivoli* ssp of Bismarcks

Seen at Mt Gabuna and Mt Ottu

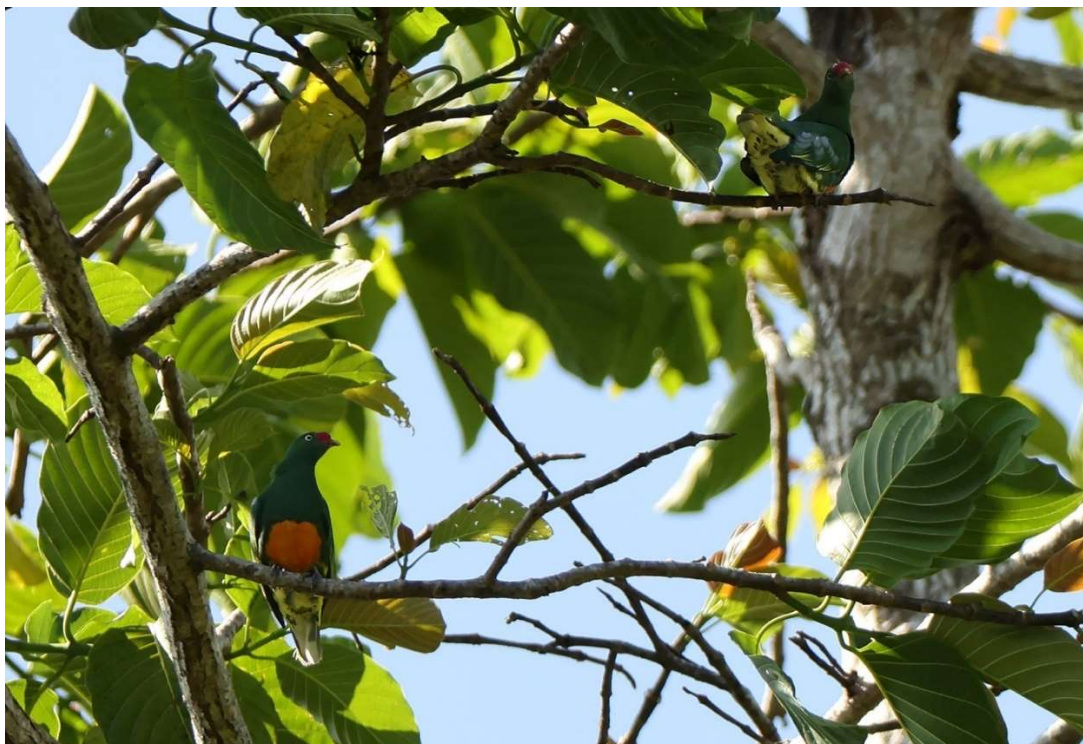
Heard in the Nakanai camp 1 and seen by night around camp 2



**16. KNOB-BILLED FRUIT-DOVE** *Ptilinopus insolitus insolitus* ssp Bismarcks

seen at Davialu bridge, Kulu River ; Garu forest near Garu ; Central Hills (building nest)

Below camp 2 Nakanai Range



**Papuan Mountain Pigeon** *Gymnophaps albertisii* ENDEmic of Papua and Bismarcks  
Scarce on New Britain, we missed this species even in the mountain

## NIGHTJARS

**Large-tailed Nightjar** *Caprimulgus macrurus schlegeli* ssp shared with main Papua  
Is said to occur also in Bismarcks from sea-level to 2000m asl

## SWIFTS

### 17. MOUSTACHED TREESWIFT *Hemiprocne mystacea aeroplanes* ssp Bismarcks

Bismarck birds with less white on vent  
Fairly common on our West New Britain tour ; close views in Central Hills, in Walindi garden  
East New Britain, Kokopo area 26/07/2019 4 birds

### 18. GLOSSY SWIFTLET *Collocalia esculenta tametamele* ssp of New Britain, Buka & Bougainville

The smallest with its 9cm length  
in East New Britain in Kokopo area Jul2019  
Seen in West New Britain : in Central Hills  
Near camp1 Nakanai Range

### 19. UNIFORM SWIFTLET *Aerodramus vanikorensis pallens* ssp New Britain New Ireland and satellite islands

the biggest here 13cm  
Davalu bridge, Kulu river at the « rail » bend, Central Hills, Mt Gabuna  
also seen in East New Britain Kokopo area 26/07/2019

### 20. WHITE-RUMPED SWIFTLET *Aerodramus spodiopygius noonadanae* ssp END of Bismarcks

Davalu bridge ; foothill of Nakanai Range

## CUCKOOS

### 21. PIED COUCAL *Centropus ateralbus* Monotypic ENDEmic of New Britain & New Ireland

More easy to see than Violaceous Coucal ; seen several times  
Liamo Reef Resort garden, Walindi garden, Garu forest, Davalu forest ; Central Hills

Several family groups in Garu Oil Palm plantation obviously climbing on palms ; near Kulu river  
Voice : chatters a characteristic rattling



**22. VIOLACEOUS COUCAL** *Centropus violaceus* Monotypic ENDemic of Bismarcks

Often heard we had to try hard to see some birds and succeeded at Garu Reserve and  
Heard several times : Davialu forest ; Kulu river ; at Mt Ottu, in Central Hills, Mt Gabuna  
Start of the trek and between camp 1 & 2 Nakanai Range  
Characteristic woo-woo-up like a loud bubbling water



**23. EASTERN KOEL** *Eudynamis orientalis salvadori* ssp for Bismarcks

Heard several times : Davialu bridge and seen once at low Kulu River

**Channel-billed Cuckoo** *Scythrops novaehollandiae schoddei* END ssp on Bismarcks  
resident but missed in East & West New Britain

**24. SHINING BRONZE-CUCKOO** *Chalcites lucidus lucidus* ssp New-Zealand to Bougainville

Heard several times : Garu Forest, Davialu bridge, Central Hills, Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna ; and seen several times too at Davialu bridge ; Kulu river ; seen on Mt Ottu

**25. BRUSH CUCKOO** *Cacomantis variolosus macrocercus* ssp New Britain & New Ireland

Heard several times in Central Hills & Mt Gabuna

Seen at Davialu bridge in 2022 & at Walindi resort, start of Nakanai Trek & camp 1 oct2023

Heard even in East New Britain Kokopo area 26/07/2019

**LONG-TAILED CUCKOO** *Urodynamis taitensis*

Heard at Mt Gabuna 21/07/2022

## RAILS

**26. PINK-LEGGED/NEW BRITAIN RAIL** *Hypotaenidia insignis* Monotypic ENDEmic of New Britain

We saw one crushed on the road in East New Britain in Kokopo area 26/07/2019

In West New Britain, we attracted one very close by tape of Woodford's call in Garu Forest but never see; Marianne saw one at Davialu bridge (2022)

One in the evening at Kulu river (2023), it goes out the forest around 5 pm to walk on the bank of the river





**27. BUFF-BANDED RAIL** *Hypotaenidia philippensis lesoueffi* ssp Bismarcks

Beware of its dark look when seen quickly at dawn or sunset : black upperparts, it could make you think of a Pink-legged

Fairly common bird in oil palm plantations where seen everyday : along grassy roadside after rain in 2023

Also at Numundo Beef Grassland crossing the agricultural road

Hoskin's airport airstrip

**PALE-VENTED BUSH-HEN** *Amaurornis moluccana nigrifrons* ssp Bismarcks & Solomons

Heard at low Kulu River

usually seen in Numundo Beef Grassland or Davialu bridge, but we miss it

**28. WHITE-BROWED CRAKE** *Amaurornis cinerea* monotypic

Seen 1 bird in the small creek from main road bridge at Numundo Beef Grassland (19/07/2022)

**29. PURPLE SWAMPHEN** *Porphyrio porphyrio samoensis* ssp Bismarcks & Bougainville

Seen twice in Liamo Reef Resort rear garden tall grass near vegetal dump

## WADERS

**30. COMMON SANDPIPER** *Actitis hypoleucos*

One on the shore of Walindi garden (oct 2023)

One on river rocks in the foothills of Nakanai range

**31. GREY-TAILED TATTLER** *Tringa brevipes*

4 on the shore of Walindi garden (oct 2023)

**32. LESSER SAND PLOVER** *Charadrius mongolus*

On the shore of Walindi garden (oct 2023) ; it should be Siberian Sand Plover

**33. PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis fulva*

On the airstrip of Hoskins airport (oct 2023)

## GULLS & TERNS

**34. WHITE-WINGED TERN** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Above Warangoi river in Kokopo area, East New Britain (July 2019)

**HERONS & CORMORANTS**

**35. BLACK BITTERN** *Ixobrychus flavicollis australis*

migrant and resident, very common in oil palm plantations like Haella, Garu, Davialu... also Davialu bridge, Kulu river bend, Liamo Reef Resort ;

Even in East New Britain Kokopo area 26/07/2019 3 birds in a short time



**36. NANKEEN NIGHT-HERON** *Nycticorax caledonicus mandibularis* ssp Bismarcks & Solomons

The other winner of oil palm spread : seen everyday in oil palm plantations of Haella, Numundo, Garu, Davialu, ... ; also at Liamo Reef Resort ; Kulu river bend

**37. STRIATED HERON** *Butorides striata solomonensis* ssp shared with Solomons

Seen once at Walindi Plantation Resort

**38. EASTERN GREAT EGRET** *Ardea modesta* monotypic

23 in Numundo Beef Grasslands (17 & 18/07/2022)

**39. PACIFIC REEF EGRET** *Egretta sacra sacra*

Seen in Walindi area coast  
And in the foothill of Nakanai

**40. EASTERN CATTLE EGRET** *Bulbucus coromandus* Monotypic

Along the road to Central Hills (oct2023)

**41. LITTLE PIED CORMORANT** *Microcarbo melanoleucos melanoleucos*

Seen on Kulu River at Davialu Bridge and on access from Davialu plantation (Jul2022)

## OWLS

**42. GOLDEN MASKED-OWL** *Tyto aurantia* Monotypic ENDEMIC to New Britain

forest species

Seen, Terence had one roosting in his family plantation at 1km from the hotel (thanks to Walindi bird guides) in 2022 and again in 2023

Due to unsecurity at night, we didn't dare to look for in plantations...

**43. NEW BRITAIN BOOBOOK** *Ninox odiosa* Monotypic ENDEMIC to New Britain

We saw 2 birds flying at the end of the night in verge of Haella oil palm plantation our first day, a bit lost in the grid to access to Garu

We heard several birds : in the Central Hills during our night walk in a river bed, 3 different birds when climbing to Gabuna in primary forest, in Walindi garden. We missed the day roost found by his sons in Michael (night warden)'s village plantation in front of Walindi Resort.

None cared about the tape even in the Nakanai Range where it was calling every night

During both trips we didn't find any responsive owl...

## RAPTORS

**44. EASTERN OSPREY** *Pandion cristatus* Monotypic from Borneo to Australian coast

2 juveniles Walindi resort (oct2023)

**45. BLACK HONEY-BUZZARD** *Henicopernis infuscatus* Monotypic ENDEMIC to New Britain

Seen in flight at Garu Reserve (high in the sky)

And daily at Mt Ottu (very close view)

**46. PACIFIC BAZA** *Aviceda subcristata bismarckii* ssp of Bismarcks

Seen several times in July 2022 : Davialu bridge ; Central Hills ; Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna



**47. VARIABLE GOSHAWK** *Accipiter hiogaster dampierri* ssp to New Britain & Umboi

Seen several times nearly every day in 2022, variable in colors... Davialu forest ; Garu ; Walindi garden ; Kulu river bend

**48. NEW BRITAIN GOSHAWK** *Accipiter princeps* Monotypic ENDEmic to New Britain

Mountain species, seen in 2023 at the view point above camp 2 around 1100 m  
The rest of the group saw one at 1600 m in the Nakanai Range

**Slaty-backed Goshawk** *Accipiter luteoschistaceus* Monotypic ENDEmic to New Britain & Umboi  
A lowland bird from the sea to 700 m asl  
No contact even in hills where we birded a lot of forest edge...

**New Britain Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter brachyurus* Monotypic ENDEmic to New Britain  
From 250 m to 900 m, rarely seen even in scientific expeditions

**Meyer's Goshawk** *Accipiter meyerianus* Monotypic  
large distribution area from Indonesia

**49. WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE** *Haliaeetus leucogaster* Monotypic large distribution

1 immature in central hills 18/07/2022  
Perhaps another bird above Numundo Beef Grassland

**50. BRAHMINY KITE** *Haliastur indus girrenera* ssp to Bismarcks & New Guinea

A common species seen everywhere

Liamo Reef Resort ; was on nest at Walindi Garden ; we saw 2 juveniles with 2 adults above Numundo Beef Grassland ; Davialu bridge ; Kulu river ; several birds above Mt Gabuna ; in the Nakanai in East New Britain too : Kokopo area 26/07/2019

## HORNBILLS

### 51. PAPUAN HORNBILL *Rhyticeros plicatus* Monotypic PNG ENDEMIC

Common and easy to see even in oil palm areas ! really obvious

Garu forest ; Davialu bridge & forest ; Kulu river with young ; central hills ; Walindi Garden ; Mt Gabuna ; Nakanai foothills



## BEE-EATERS & ROLLERS

### 52. RAINBOW BEE-EATER *Merops ornatus* Australian winter visitor

seen in July 2022 at Davialu bridge, in Davialu forest, at low Kulu River, in Central Hills

### 53. ORIENTAL DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis* Australian winter visitor

Fairly common, seen for example in Walindi garden, Oil Plantations ; between camp 1 & 2 Nakanai range,

## KINGFISHERS

### 54. NEW BRITAIN DWARF-KINGFISHER *Ceyx sacerdotis* Monotypic New Britain ENDEMIC

As we managed to see and take pictures of this species at Garu Reserve, we didn't try again elsewhere but we heard near every day in the forest : Davialu forest where also seen ; in primary forest hiking to Gabuna volcano, ... Central Hills

Common in the night walk at the second camp (1000 m) Nakanai range, 4 different birds seen  
And seen at 1350 m asl



### 55. LITTLE BLUE KINGFISHER *Ceyx pusillus masauji* ssp New Hanover, New Ireland, New Britain, Umboi...

Seen once in July 2022 on Kulu River (in reed-type dense aquatic vegetation) from an access in Davialu forest , silent and unobtrusive ...

### BISMARCK KINGFISHER *Ceyx websteri* Monotypic New Hanover, New Ireland, New Britain, Umboi

uncommon in slow-flowing rivers in lowland forests

we thought we heard one when searching for it, walking in a river bed (one of the rivers the road is crossing when going to the central hills). Too many local people gathered with us at this time and we failed to see the bird ; we heard it very close but behind a forested bend of the river Walindi's local birdwatchers say it's now difficult to see ; one must walk to a remote place far from human settlements.

We tried at the end of the trek back from Nakanai in Oct2023 : no contact even by local people

**56. COMMON KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis hispidoides* ssp coastal PNG including Bismarcks

A pair with a fledge behind Liamo Reef Resort garden ; Davialu bridge ; Kulu river  
Seen several times on large rivers like in central hills (18/07/2022) and oct2023 in Nakanai foothills

Even in East New Britain Kokopo area 26/07/2019

**Forest Kingfisher** *Todiramphus macleayii incinctus*  
Australian migrant rare in New Britain

**57. WHITE-MANTLED KINGFISHER** *Todiramphus albonotatus* Monotypic ENDEMIC to New Britain

Canopy species more heard than seen

Heard at Garu Forest, Davialu Forest ; Mount Ottu lower part ; at Mt Gabuna where we managed to see 2 birds



**58. MELANESIAN (COLLARED) KINGFISHER** *Todiramphus chloris tristrami* for New Britain

We took pictures of 2 birds at Mt Gabuna  
In East New Britain Kokopo area 26/07/2019  
Seen around camp 1 Nakanai Range

**59. SACRED KINGFISHER** *Todiramphus sanctus* common australian winter visitor, few over-summer too

Seen at Davialu bridge, Kulu river ; in Central Hills (18/07/2022)  
East New Britain too, Kokopo area 26/07/2019

**60. BLACK-HEADED PARADISE-KINGFISHER** *Tanysiptera nigriceps nigriceps* ENDEMIC to New Britain  
different ssp. in Umboi

We managed to see at Garu Forest ; we heard at Davialu bridge & forest ; in Kulu river bend ; Central Hills  
1 below camp 1 Nakanai Range



## FALCONS

**61. ORIENTAL HOBBY** *Falco severus papuanus*

Seen at Garu and in Central Hills, Jul2022





**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus ernesti*  
possible everywhere but not seen anywhere

## PARROTS

### **62. BLUE-EYED COCKATOO** *Cacatua ophtalmica* ENDEMIC to New Britain

Uncommon resident of lowlands & hills  
Garu forest ; Davialu bridge ; Central hills ; Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna ; Mt Ottu  
in East New Britain too, Kokopo area 26/07/2019  
camp 2 Nakanai Range in Oct2023



**63. RED-CHINNED LORIKEET** *Charmosyna rubrigularis* Monotypic

Central Hills (July2022), camp 1 & 2 Nakanai range (Oct2023) more heard than seen perched !

**64. RED-FLANKED LORIKEET** *Charmosyna placentis pallidior* ssp Bismarcks Buka & Bougainville

several times & places in July 2022 : Liamo Reef Resort garden ; Davialu bridge ; Kulu River ; Mt Gabuna ; Mt Ottu  
Foothills of Nakanai (Oct2023)

**65. PURPLE-BELLIED LORY** *Lorius hypoinochrous devittatus* ssp SE-PNG to Bismarcks

in East New Britain, too Kokopo area 26/07/2019

In July 2022 : Garu forest ; Davialu bridge ; Central Hills ; Mt Gabuna ; Walindi garden ; Mt Ottu  
Start of the trek Nakanai Range in Oct2023



**66. COCONUT LORIKEET** *Trichoglossus haematodus massena* ssp Bismarcks & Bougainville

July 2022 : Davialu bridge ; Kulu River ; Central Hills ; Mt Gabuna  
Oct2023 camp 1 & 2 in Nakanai range (displaying at 1600 m asl)

**Bismarck Hanging-parrot** *Loriculus tener* Monotypic ENDEMIC to Bismarcks  
Said « poorly known and seldom seen »...

**67. ECLECTUS PARROT** *Eclectus roratus solomonensis* ssp Bismarcks to Bougainville

Very common, a lot everywhere : Garu forest, Davialu bridge & forest ; Kulu River ; Liamo Reef Resort ; Central Hills ; Walindi Garden ; Mt Gabuna ; Mt Ottu ; Hoskins Airport  
in East New Britain in Kokopo area (July 2019)

**68. SONG PARROT** *Geoffroyus heteroclitus heteroclitus*

Central Hills & Mt Gabuna with some effort to see some of them ; only heard at Mt Ottu low & middle elevations

Heard and seen between camp 1 & 2 Nakanai Range

**69. BUFF-FACED PYGMY-PARROT** *Micropsitta pusio pusio* END to SE-New Guinea & Bismarcks

We had few success with this species, always seen fairly high on richly vegetalised trunks : correct views but no pictures – Garu forest ; in flight at Kulu River ; at 600m asl on Mt Ottu

Said easy to see in Walindi's garden, but we do not have real good views near the ground on trunks

**Red-breasted Pygmy-parrot** *Micropsitta bruijnii necopinata* ssp New Ireland & New Britain

A large range from Indonesia (Seram) to Solomons (Bougainville) through PNG central mountains where it's widespread and common, but less elsewhere

## PITTAS

**70. NEW BRITAIN PITTA** *Erythropitta gazellae* Monotypic ENDEMIC to New Britain

we had very good views in Jul2022 near Davialu Bridge ; some birds were singing all day long even in midday by hot sunshine in the woods near Davialu. Heard in Kulu river bend very close too

heard in Oct2023 twice near camp 2, Nakanai Range

## HONEYEATERS / FRIARBIRDS & MYZOMELAS

**71. NEW BRITAIN HONEYEATER** *Vocea whitemanensis* monotypic ENDEMIC to New Britain

Mountain species of central range ; we hoped to find it in the top of Mt Ottu at 1200m asl but we didn't find ; perhaps too isolated from the other ranges or overlooked (no special call available for this species)

Seen once below camp 1, Nakanai Range, Oct2023 thanks to repeated efforts of our guide Joshua

**72. ASHY MYZOMELA** *Myzomela cineracea*

Fairly common, in lowlands and also at higher elevations

seen in July2022 at Kulu river bend ; Mt Gabuna ; Liamo Reef Resort garden ; Walindi Resort ;

in Oct2023 in Nakanai range several times

**73. RED MYZOMELA** *Myzomela cruentata coccinea*

More in altitude : In the top of Mt Ottu in July 2022

Between camp 1 & 2 Nakanai range in Oct2023



**74. BLACK-BELLIED MYZOMELA** *Myzomela erythromelas* monotypic

seen at Mt Gabuna  
In camp 2 Nakanai range



**75. NEW BRITAIN FRIARBIRD** *Philemon cockerelli cockerelli* ssp of New Britain

Common endemic

Everywhere : at Kulu river bend ; a family group in Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna ; in Nakanai range

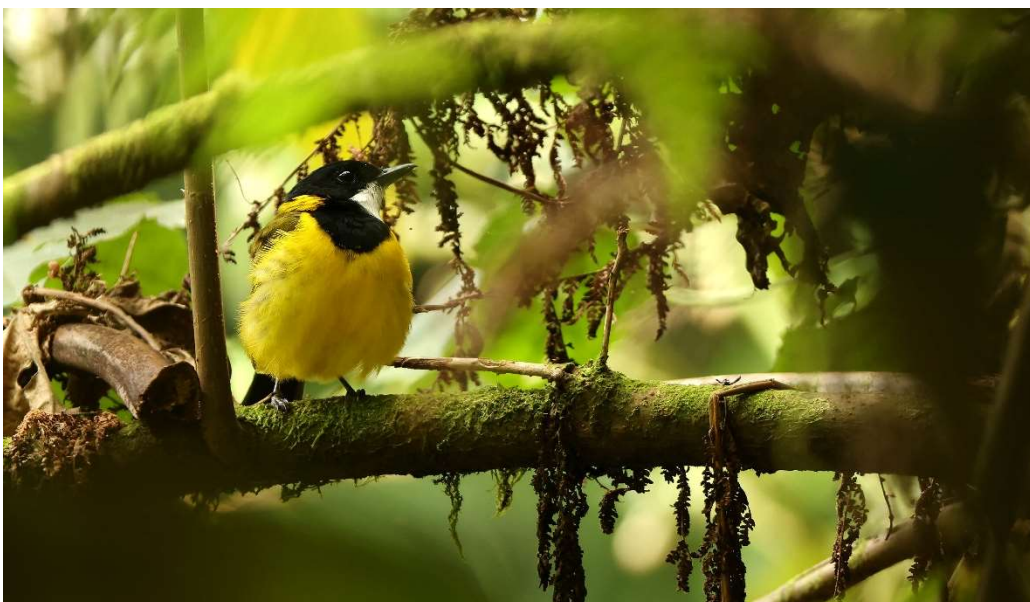


**WHISTLERS**

**76. BISMARCK WHISTLER** *Pachycephala erythrogaster* ENDEMIC to New Britain & New Ireland

Common on the top of Mt Ottu and in Nakanai range around camps 1 & 2

heard very close to our trail at Mt Gabuna but we didn't manage a good view as we had good pictures



## CUCKOOSHRIKES

### 77. BARRED CUCKOOSHRIKE *Coracina lineata sublineata*

Seen in Garu plantation in July2022

### 78. WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOOSHRIKE *Coracina papuensis*

seen in July 2022 at Kulu river ; mount Ottu ; Davialu Bridge

### 79. BLACK-FACED CUCKOOSHRIKE *Coracina novaehollandiae*

Seen in July2022 at the entrance of Numundo plantation, adult and immature

### 80. MELANESIAN CICADABIRD *Edolisoma renatum heinrothi*

a common bird heard almost everywhere, with its typical « guinea pig » call  
in July2022 seen at Davialu forest, Mt Gabuna, mount Ottu ; Central Hills  
in 2023 even at high elevations of Nakanai

### 81. VARIED TRILLER *Lalage leucomela*

seen at Kulu river ; Davialu Bridge ; in Walindi garden ; mount Ottu ; Central Hills in July 2022  
start of the trek Nakanai Range, Oct2023

## WOODSWALLOWS

**White-backed Woodswallow** *Artamus insignis* monotypic ENDEMIC of New Britain & New Ireland  
Expected in Central Hills, Mt Gabuna & Nakanai from view-points on valleys, but we failed,  
a frustrating dip for us

## FANTAILS

### 82. WILLIE WAGTAIL *Rhipidura leucophrys melaleuca* ssp Papua mainland, Bismarcks & Bougainville

Common, seen in the gardens, roadsides, plantations, and in some natural places as Kulu river

**83. NORTHERN FANTAIL** *Rhipidura isura finschii* ssp on New Britain & satellite islets

seen in Jul2022 at Mt Gabuna, Central Hills  
in Oct2023 between camp 1 & 2 and camp 2, Nakanai range



**84. BISMARCK FANTAIL** *Rhipidura dahli dahli* ssp of New Britain & Umboi / antoni on New Ireland

Mainly a montane species from 800 to 1800m asl  
We saw once on Mt Ottu around 900 m : one bird came very close but unfortunately we missed the picture !  
Common in the Nakanai range



## DRONGOS

**85. BISMARCK DRONGO** *Dicrurus (bracteus) laemostictus* monotypic ENDEMIC of New Ireland & New Britain

seen in 2022 at Kulu river, +2 birds at Mt Gabuna ; in 2023 several times in Nakanai range

## ORIOLES

**86. OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE** *Oriolus sagittatus*

The species is not supposed to be in New Britain. Only observed 1 time before. The species is known to do some migratory movements but not to reach New Britain. And this observation raises many questions. The species is known to be a lowland species and we observe it at 1600 m asl. If it is a vagrant bird we should have seen only one bird but we found between 2 and 4 birds ! And if they are vagrant birds from Australia, statistically they should be on the south side and not the north side of the Nakanai Range... All that makes me think that there were far more birds on the island and so are they really vagrant birds ?



## MONARCHS

**87. BLACK-TAILED MONARCH** *Symposiachrus verticalis verticalis*

heard at Mt Gabuna ; seen at Mount Ottu, Central Hills & Nakanai range





**Golden Monarch** *Carterornis carterornis chrysomela* ENDEMIC Papua mainland & New Ireland

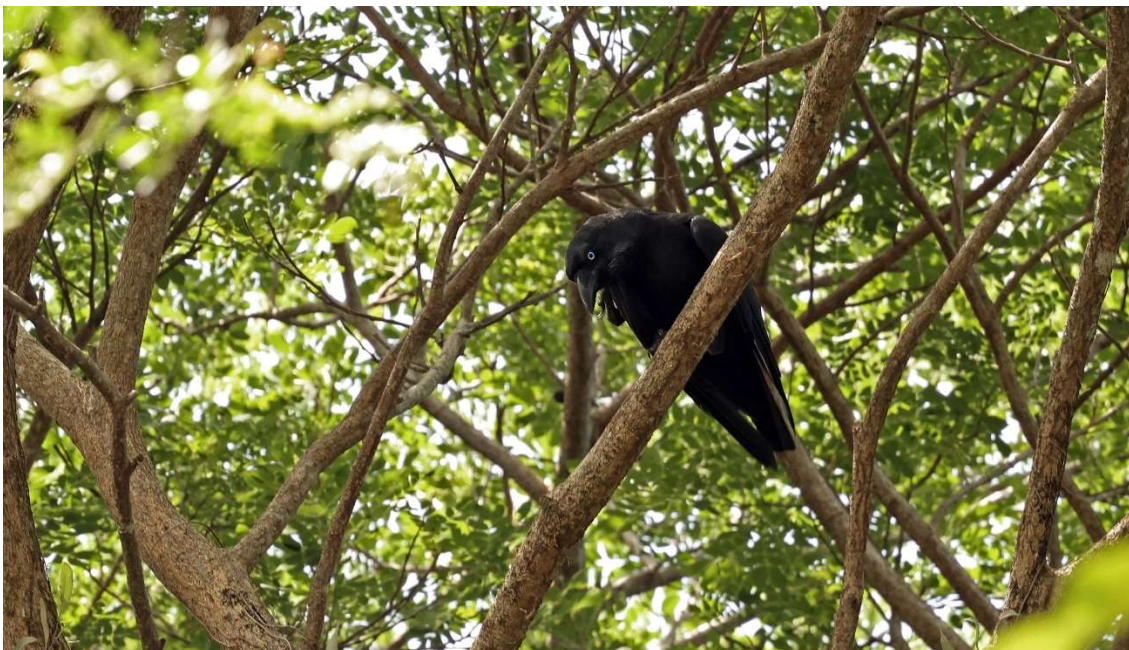
**Island Monarch** *Monarcha cinerea perpallida* islets around Papua, New Britain & New Ireland  
to see it you need to take a boat to an islet ; it's quite easy to organise from Walindi

## CROWS

**88. BISMARCK CROW** *Corvus insularis* monotypic ENDEMIC of New Britain, New Ireland

Seen at Kulu river ; Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna ; Hoskins airport

Start of the trek Nakanai Range



## ROBINS & FLYROBINS

### **Bismarck Flyrobin** *Microeca sp.*

We hoped near Kulu River, especially in the riparian forest east of Davialu but we failed  
One observation at 1600 m in the Nakanai range could have been this species but I have not seen enough the bird to be sure, it was rainy this day and day after...

**New Britain Flyrobin** *Monachella coultasi*  
only in east New Britain, along torrents

## CISTICOLAS

### **89. GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA** *Cisticola exilis polionatus*

East New Britain around Kokopo

## REED-WARBLERS

### **90. AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER** *Acrocephalus australis*

Seen at Numundo Beef Grassland

### **91. LOWLAND PAPUAN GRASSBIRD** *Megalurus macrurus interscapularis*

Seen at Numundo Beef Grassland



## SWALLOWS & MARTINS

### 92. PACIFIC SWALLOW *Hirundo tahitica*

At Kulu river

### 93. RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Cecropis daurica*

3 birds in Nakanai foothills

**Tree Martin** *Petrodelichon nigricans* a migrant missed even in October 2023

## LEAF-WARBLERS

### 94. ISLAND LEAF-WARBLER *Phylloscopus poliocephalus moorhousei*

Common above 1000 m

Seen on Mt Ottu & in Nakanai range (camp 1 & 2)

## WHITE-EYES

### 95. BISMARCK / BLACK-HEADED WHITE-EYE *Zosterops hypoxanthus hypoxanthus*

From sea level to 1800 m, but rare below 500 m

Seen on Mt Ottu & in Nakanai range (camp 1 & 2)



## THICKETBIRDS

### 96. RUSTY THICKETBIRD *Megalurus rubiginosus*

Present from lowland to 1600 m asl but more common in high altitude. We have seen the species on the top of Mount Ottu and in Nakanai range several times above 1000 m



Rusty Thicketbird immature bird roosting in an epiphytic nest in the night

### New Britain Thicketbird *Megalurus grosvenori*

Marianne came back (from camp 2) to search for it again in the bamboo around 1500m asl (just below the plateau). She just had a brief view of a thicketbird hopping in dense bamboos near the ground. The habitat is good, the altitude too but the view was too bad to put a name on the bird. We should have spent more time in these bamboos. There was no suitable habitat on the plateau. And we just pass through the good habitat too quickly when trekking down to camp 2, so we do not spend time to bird seriously this precise place.

## STARLINGS & MYNAS

### 97. LONG-TAILED MYNA *Mino kreffti*

seen at Kulu river ; Mt Gabuna & start of the trek Nakanai Range

### 98. METALLIC STARLING *Aplonis metallica*

seen at Kulu river, Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna (Jul22)

## THRUSHES

### **New Britain Thrush** *Zoothera talasae*

This bird was the aim of our expensive trips in New Britain

We searched for it in Mount Ottu, Central Hills & Nakanai range without success

Local people saw one near a stream, not far from lower camp in Nakanai range but despite to our efforts, even searching by night, we had no contact...

### **Island Thrush** *Turdus poliocephalus* ssp undescribed

Not found in Nakanai range, may be one bird flushed by the rest of the group, may be one bird far in the top of a tree during a rainy afternoon near camp 1 for us

## FLYCATCHERS

### **Satin Flycatcher** *Myiagra cyanoleuca*

rare to uncommon migrant from east Australia, wintering on east coast of New Guinea mainland & New Britain

### **99. COMMON SHINING FLYCATCHER** *Myiagra alecto chalybeacephala*

Fairly common, at Garu was coming when whistling it

Seen in Jul22 at Garu, Kulu river with fledges, Mt Gabuna

Seen in Oct23 in lower parts near the village, start of Nakanai trek

### **100. VELVET FLYCATCHER** *Myiagra echorni* Monotypic ENDemic



By night in Central hills, Jul2022

Camp 2, Nakanai range, Oct2023

## SUNBIRDS & FLOWERPECKERS

### 101. BLACK SUNBIRD *Leptocoma sericea*

in Walindi garden ; Mt Gabuna

### 102. OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD *Cynniris jugularis*

in Walindi garden, in Liamo resort

### 103. RED-BANDED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum eximium*

in Walindi garden ; at Mt Gabuna  
In East New Britain at Kokopo (Jul2019)

## FINCHES

### 104. EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

In Walindi garden, at Hoskins airport

### 105. HOODED MANNIKIN *Lonchura spectabilis*

Only seen in East New Britain in Kokopo area (July 2019)



**106. BUFF-BELLIED MANNIKIN** *Lonchura melaena melaena*

Seen in Numundo Oil Plantation & Numundo Beef grassland (Jul2022)  
around Hoskins airport's airstrip (oct 2023)



**Blue-faced Parrotfinch** *Erythrura trichroa sigillifera*  
Commonly seen on Mussau island but no sighting in New Britain

**MYSTERY BIRD**

One late afternoon, as we were watching birds on the top of mount Ottu (near the second transmitter pylon), 2 parrots flew west, at eye-level. They were middle size (smaller than Eclectus Parrot but stouter than Coconut Lorikeet). The parrots were bright green on the back, the wings and the upper breast. The lower belly was bright red. The beak was clear (not sure of the color). We opened the book and no bird matches with this description. Our first feeling : we have done a mistake and though we have seen some criterias that don't exist. But it is not possible. Marianne saw exactly what I saw. The conditions of the observation were absolutely perfect : we were on the top of the mountain and birds passed low so the observation was eyes level and it was around 5pm with a blue sky and a perfect sun on our back, so the light was perfect and the observation was done no longer than 25 m from us. So what bird was it ? I don't know but entire green parrot with a red lower belly exist on PNG mainland. Could it be one of them ? The question is open... What is certain is that there is a new species of parrot for New Britain but not necessarily a new species of bird.

## MISSED BIRDS

In our first trip in West New Britain, we stayed 12 days when common birdwatchers stay 4 or 5 days but we did not succeed to see most of the endemic species. In our second trip we only found 3 new endemic species (Pink-legged Rail ; New Britain Honeyeater & New Britain Goshawk) It was a great disappointment for us. Our short journey in East New Britain was not so bad for only one morning of birding.

Our big dips are :

<b>Dwarf Cassowary</b>	we just saw footprints and a skull in Central Hills
<b>Slaty-backed Goshawk</b>	rare endemic of open forests in lowlands from sea level to 700m, including degraded by logging or oil palm farming
<b>New Britain Sparrowhawk</b>	rare and difficult to see, in hill forests, forest edges, 250 to 900m asl
<b>Bismarck Kingfisher</b>	we probably flushed a bird, walking in the quiet-flowing river, far from the village, on a suitable river – he had a different call, a different attitude from other species
<b>New Britain Bronzewing</b>	one captive hunted bird died few days before our visit in Central Hills
<b>Bismarck Hanging Parrot</b>	a rare species, very rarely seen, no call to localise
<b>New Britain Thrush</b>	local have seen one bird not far from lower camp in Nakanai range
<b>Bismarck Flyrobin</b>	not sure, but probably seen one, end of a rainy afternoon, not far from upper camp in Nakanai range
<b>New Britain Thicketbird</b>	Marianne contacted one thicketbird near the ground in a good patch of thin bamboos around 1500m asl but not a sufficient view to know which species
<b>White-backed Wood Swallow</b>	a big dip not even a shadow in front of bare slopes of the mountain at Gabuna or in Nakanai range viewpoint above camp 2

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In this last part here are some photos of other wildlife. Unfortunately, in many case I don't know the name of these incredible species.

Unlike birds, we did not photograph all the species encountered. So this is just a selection of what we saw. While I mainly photograph birds, Marianne focuses on small animals.



## MAMMALS



Black-tailed Mosaic-tailed Rat in Kimbe



Chestnut Tree Mouse on top of Mount Ottu



Lesser Long-tongued Blossom Bat, Nakanai Range 1000 m asl (thanks Nils Bouillard for identification)



Black-bellied Blossom Bat, Kimbe (thanks Nils Bouillard for identification)

## REPTILES



Bismarck Ringed Python on the top of mount Ottu (thanks Joshua Berkman for identification)



Amethystine Python freshly dead on the road, east Kimbe (thanks Joshua Berkman for identification)





# AMPHIBIANS

here is a selection of the frogs encountered, unfortunately we do not know how to identify them...











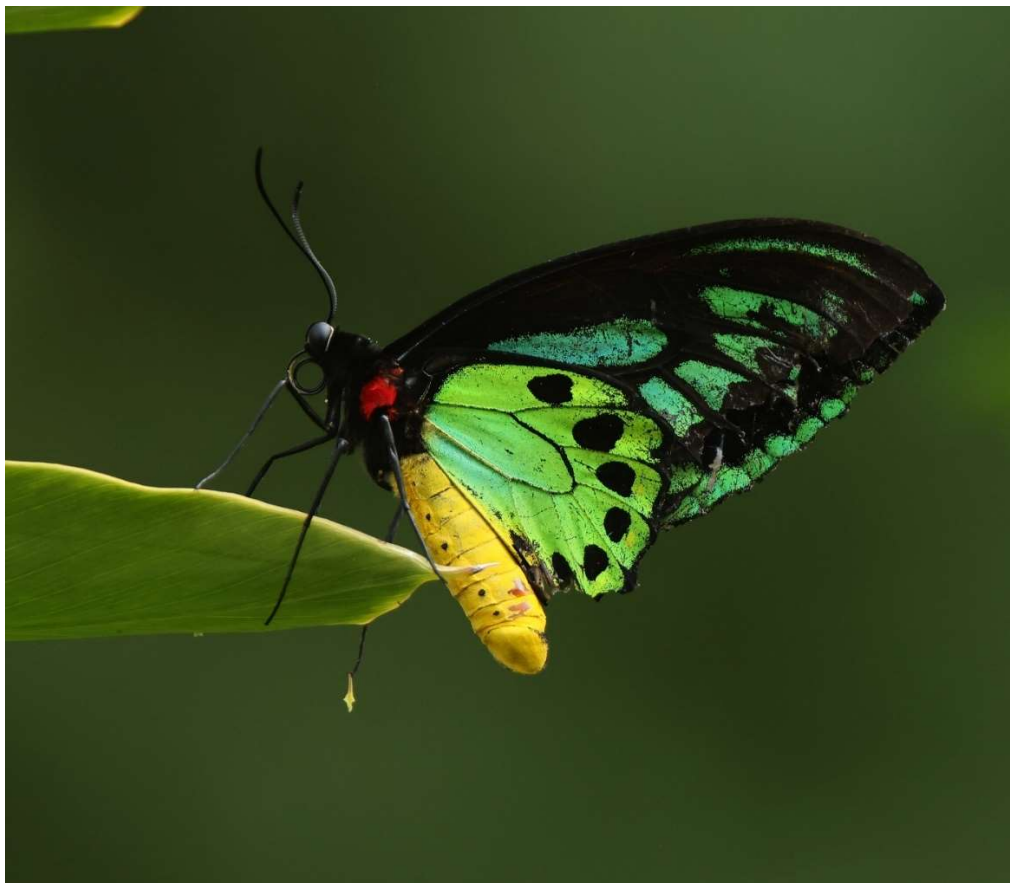


# INSECTS

Many insects/spiders encountered, but no identification too !







## SPIDERS



