



TRIP REPORT

8th-14th May 2010

Your Guide : Phil Gregory, Jun MATSUI

TASTE OF NEW GUINEA TOUR 2

DAY 1 VARIRATA NP.

We spent the afternoon at Varirata NP. We saw **Raggiana BOP**, **Barred Owlet-nightjar**, **Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher** etc.

DAY 2 PAU / KIUNGA

Spent the morning at the PAU and saw **Papuan Frogmouth** and **Nankeen Night Heron** well. We flew over to Kiunga without major problems. Walking along the river we flushed **White-spotted Manikins**.

DAY 3 BOYS TOWN ROAD, KM15, KM17

Spent morning at Boys town road, where we saw many birds including **Blue Jewel-babbler**. We had marvellous looks at **Greater BOP** at Km17 in the afternoon.

DAY 4 FLY & ELEVALA RIVER

Another early start. We left port while the fireflies were still flashing. We managed to get **Twelve-wired BOP**. We saw quite a few good birds along the river including **Southern Crowned Pigeon** and **Common Paradise Kingfisher**. Coming back down the river we hit torrential rain, I'm glad we all survived.

DAY 5 KIUNGA TO TABUBIL

We had a chance to check the standard of PNG road construction with a major landslide needing clearance before we could go through. However, after we got to Tabubil, we still had time to see **Salvadori's Teal**!

DAY 6 DABLIN CREEK, OK MENGA

We tried to see **Carola's Parotia**. There was one female in the distance. However we had an unusually clear view of **Torrent Lark**. A strange looking **Forest Dragon** showed us another aspect of PNG's interesting fauna. We had a nice view of **Pesquet's Parrot** in the afternoon.

DAY 7 DABLIN CREEK

We went Dablin Creek again before the flight and happily managed to see a male **Carola's Parotia**.



Daniel in natural habitat



King BOP



"Not too bad"



Kwatu Lodge

Sicklebill Safaris

Taste of Papua New Guinea Part 2

August May 8-14th 2010

Tour Report

Leaders: Phil Gregory & Jun Matsui

Trip List

Bold type denotes a New Guinea endemic species.

* denotes a near endemic

NL means a non-leader bird.

H means species heard only.

Names and taxonomic order follow the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) Checklist 2010 v 2.3, available as a free Excel download from www.worldbirdnames.org.

MEGAPODIDAE Mound-builders

Black-billed Brush-turkey *Talegalla fuscirostris* (H)

Heard at Varirata and Kiunga, where it was calling as well. A couple of the huge leaf mound nests were seen.

ANATIDAE Ducks

Spotted Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna guttata*

None at the PAU, but luckily we saw them twice on the Fly River at Kiunga

Wandering Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata*

10 were at the PAU ponds.

Salvadori's Teal *Salvadorina waigiuenis*

Great looks at a single at Ok Menga eventually, it suddenly appeared on a boulder after a bit of a wait.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*

30 at the PAU were all we saw this trip.

PODICIPIDIDAE Grebe

Australasian Grebe *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

A couple were at the PAU.

THRESKIORNITHIDAE Ibis & Spoonbills

Straw-necked Ibis *Threskiornis spinicollis*

Four near the PAU were a useful trip tick.

ARDEIDAE Herons

Eastern Great Egret *Egretta (alba) modesta*

Two were at the PAU and up to 6 on the rivers above Kiunga.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*

Seen at the PAU.

Pied Heron *Egretta picata*

A few at the PAU ponds

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

A couple at the PAU.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus (ibis) coromanda*

About thirty birds were seen in the Port Moresby area.

PHALACROCORACIDAE Cormorants

Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos*

One at the PAU.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*

Up to 30 at the PAU.

ANHINGIDAE

Australian Darter *Anhinga (m.) novaehollandiae*

One was soaring over at Varirata, unexpected here!

ACCIPITRIDAE Hawks

Long-tailed Buzzard *Henicoperis longicauda*

We saw one flying across the Fly R at Kiunga, and one at Dablin

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*

A couple were seen along the Elevala River.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

Nice views at the PAU, nesting at this site.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Good views of this attractive bird.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*

One was seen at the PAU.

* Variable (Grey) Goshawk *Accipiter (novaehollandiae) hiogaster*

Two near Kiunga and a pair at Dablin. The form here has now been split from the Grey Goshawk since it differs so much from the Australian species.

RALLIDAE Crakes & Rails

Pale-vented Bush Hen *Amaurornis olivacea* H

Heard at Dablin Creek.

Purple Swamphen (Purple Gallinule) *Porphyrio porphyrio*

Lovely views of the black backed race *melanotus* at the PAU and Jackson's Airport, split by some.

Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*

Three were seen at the PAU.

TURNICIDAE Buttonquail

Red-backed Buttonquail *Turnix maculosus*

Two flushed by the airstrip at Kiunga, despite the destruction of most of the rank grassland, a pleasing trip addition.

CHARADRIIDAE Plovers

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*,

Good view at the PAU of this northern nominate race, which is an incipient species.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Two seen at Km 120 near Tabubil. The subspecies in New Guinea *dubius* has a very different call compared to Palearctic birds and could well be a split.

JACANIDAE Jacanas

Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea*

What a great little bird, well seen at the PAU.

COLUMBIDAE Pigeons & Doves

Slender-billed Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis*

Two at Kiunga. This is a split from the Brown Cuckoo-Dove of Australia.

* Bar-tailed (Black-billed) Cuckoo-Dove *M. nigrirostris*

Just a single flyby up at Dablin.

Southern Crowned Pigeon *Goura scheepmakeri*

We had some brilliant sightings of this fantastic bird, seeing 4 roosting on a branch, then 2 more up-river at Kiunga. In flight the crest can be depressed and appears as a swept back bushy curve, something I had never seen before. Pictures of the head of the extinct *Microgoura meeki* from the Solomons look like this, I would bet they had a big crest like their relatives.

Wompoo Fruit Dove (Pigeon) *Ptilinopus magnificus* H

Heard up at Varirata.

Pink-spotted Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus perlatus* H

Heard at Varirata and Kiunga this trip.

Ornate Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus ornatus*

Two small flocks shot by up at Dablin, a pity none was close by or landed.

Orange-fronted Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*

We had a nice view of one from the boat up along the Elevala.

Superb Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* (H)

Heard up at Varirata and at Kiunga.

Beautiful Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus pulchellus* H

Heard at Varirata and Kiunga.

Orange-bellied Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus iozonus*

One was seen from the boat up along the Elevala.

Pinon's Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula pinon*

Nice views of a flyover along the Elevala.

Collared Imperial Pigeon *D. mullerii*

Great looks along the Fly and Elevala Rivers with up to 40 birds.

Zoe's Imperial-Pigeon *D. zoeae*

A few around Kiunga gave nice looks.

* Papuan Mountain Pigeon *Gymnophaps albertisii*

A few at Kiunga and also at Ok Menga. It is poorly named, as it's quite widespread in lowlands and hills as well as the mountains.

CACATUIDAE Cockatoos

* Palm Cockatoo *Probosciger aterrimus*

Two along the Boystown Road, then 11 on one day up river at Kiunga, a fabulous bird.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

A few around Varirata and Kiunga. They sound quite different to Australian birds, with a blue periophthalmic ring.

PSITTACIDAE Parrots

Pesquet's (Vulturine) Parrot *Psitttrichas fulgidas*

A nice overhead sighting of 2 at Ok Menga late one afternoon, after two glimpsed the day before there. This is now a rare and hard to find species, shy and heavily hunted for its striking plumage.

* Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot *Micropsitta bruijnii*

Fantastic views of an immature male at Dablin in the last remnant of forest by the track, with pale cheek patches and a short pale supercilium, bluish forehead, yellowy tinge to cap, and greeny-yellow underparts.

Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot *Micropsitta keiensis*

Fly-bys at Kiunga as per usual.

Yellowish-streaked (Greater-streaked) Lory *Trichoglossus sintillata*

Small numbers (max. 12 in a day) around Kiunga, and some good views eventually.

* Coconut (Rainbow) Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*

Nice views at several sites, this form with the heavy black bars on the chest is split by the IOC as Coconut Lorikeet.

Dusky Lory *Pseudeos fuscata*

Just a couple flying over late pm at Ok Menga..

Western Black-capped Lory *Lorius lory*

Three at Varirata and small numbers of the race *somu* over in the west.

Red-flanked Lorikeet *Charmosyna placentis*

Seen at Kiunga, with up to 30 in a day, and 11 at Km 93.

Orange-breasted Fig-Parrot *Cyclopsitta guielmitertii*

Lovely views at Tabubil and Kiunga, usually in flocks of 4-6 birds.

* Double-eyed Fig-Parrot *C. diopthalma*

Seen in flight around Kiunga.

Large Fig-Parrot *Psittaculirostris desmarestii* H

Just heard up the Elevala River this trip.

* Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*

A few seen around Kiunga and Varirata.

Blue-collared Parrot *Geoffroyus simplex*

Heard and seen by a few of the group at Tabubil- sometimes this species is so high up it's invisible when calling from the clouds!

Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*

Seen nicely at Varirata and Kiunga, with about 60 on our Fly River trip, a high count here.

CUCULIDAE Cuckoos

Greater Black (Ivory-billed) Coucal *C. menbeki*

The sonorous booming was heard along the Elevala and we saw one briefly by the Twelve-wired BoP.

Pheasant Coucal *Centropus phasianinus* H

Heard at Varirata.

Lesser Black (Black-billed) Coucal *C. bernsteinii*

Heard at Kiunga and Dablin, and Ryan saw one at the latter site.

Eastern (Australian) Koel *Eudynamis (s.) cyanocephala* H

Heard along the Elevala. Clements and the IOC split the Australian and southern NG forms as Eastern (Australian) Koel.

White-eared Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx meyeri*

One taped in and seen well at Ok Menga, with another heard

Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae*

Three of this huge and spectacular bird were seen along the Fly R.

Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus*

Often heard, and singles seen at Kiunga and Dablin Creek.

* Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo *Cacomantis castaneiventris* H

Heard at Dablin, and Kiunga

White-crowned Koel *Cacomantis (Caliecthrus) leucolophus*

We had a nice look at one of this very elusive cuckoo at Varirata, and it was heard at Dablin Creek.

PODARGIDAE Frogmouths

* Papuan Frogmouth *Podargus papuensis*

Two up at Varirata, well camouflaged and easily overlooked.

CAPRIMULGIDAE Nightjars

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*

One was by Cloudlands Hotel at dusk.

AEGOTHELIDAE Owlet-nightjars

Barred Owlet-nightjar *Aegotheles bennetti*

The usual one near the lookout at Varirata, still present and not yet harassed away by tour groups!

HEMIPROCNIDAE Treeswifts

* Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea*

Good views of this spectacular bird upriver at Kiunga.

APODIDAE Swifts

Uniform Swiftlet *Collocalia vanikorensis*

Seen throughout the mainland lowlands.

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*

Common at Varirata and Tabubil, the white belly a good field character.

Papuan Needletail (Spinetail) *Mearnsia novaeguineae*

Just one at Km 9 at Kiunga, and for the first time I can recall none along the rivers, where they replace Glossy Swiftlets entirely.

CORACIIDAE Rollers

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

Good numbers, we had 20 per day up river at Kiunga.

ALCEDINIDAE Kingfishers

Hook-billed Kingfisher *Melidora macrorrhina* H

This is one of the great NG prizes, heard at Kiunga, Ok Menga and Dablin but not responsive

* Common Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea*

Not very vocal, we eventually got to see one very nicely, when we pulled into the bank near Kwatu.

Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera danae*

Great views of an adult at Varirata, a rare bird only found in SE PNG.

Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii*

An excellent bird, seen very nicely in the POM savannas.

Rufous-bellied Kookaburra *Dacelo gaudichaud*

Seen nicely at Kiunga and Tabubil.

Forest Kingfisher *Todiramphus macleayana*

One was seen again by the PAU entrance, not common here.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus*

Just a couple were seen at the PAU and a few at Kiunga.

* Yellow-billed Kingfisher *Syma torotoro* H

Very silent this trip, we heard it at Kiunga.

Azure Kingfisher *Ceyx azurea*

One along Ketu Creek on the Elevala and another seen earlier by some.

MEROPIDAE Bee-eaters

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*

A few around Kiunga and Varirata.

BUCEROTIDAE Hornbills

* Blyth's Hornbill *Rhyticeros plicatus*

Some nice sightings up river at Kiunga, with some 8 birds only, and 3 at Ok Menga.

PTILONORHYNCHIDAE Bowerbirds & Catbirds

Flame Bowerbird *Sericulus ardens*

One glimpsed from over the Elevala, sadly none seen along Boystown Road

* Fawn-breasted Bowerbird *Chlamydera cerviniventris*

Good views at the PAU, with a nice bower too. Another Cape York special otherwise.

MALURIDAE Fairywrens

White-shouldered Fairywren *Malurus alboscapulatus*

Colin saw this at Dablin, where it was calling.

Emperor Fairywren *M. cyanocephalus* H

Sadly only heard near Kiunga, a really beautiful species that is very skulking.

MELIPHAGIDAE Honeyeaters

* Tawny-breasted Honeyeater *Xanthotis flaviventer*

A few around Tabubil and Kiunga, otherwise only on Cape York.

Papuan Black Myzomela *Myzomela nigrita*

A male was seen at Km 93.

Obscure Honeyeater *Lichenostomus obscura* H

Heard at Kiunga and Km 93.

Scrub White-eared Meliphaga *M. albonotata*

A few around Kiunga and Tabubil, one of the few readily identifiable species in the group.

Elegant Honeyeater *M. (gracilis) cinereifrons*

This split from Graceful Honeyeater with the large yellow ear patch, which does not give the “plik” call of FNQ birds, was seen at Varirata.

White-throated Honeyeater *Melithreptus albogularis*

Well seen at Varirata.

Plain Honeyeater *Pycnopygius ixoides*

Two of this rather uncommon, nondescript and scarce species was seen well at Boystown Road, Kiunga.

Streak-headed Honeyeater *P. stictocephalus* H

Heard at Kiunga and Varirata only.

New Guinea Friarbird (Helmeted) *Philemon (novaeguineae) buceroides*

Common in the lowlands and hills. Now again lumped with Helmeted by Clements, but split by the IOC.

Long-billed Honeyeater *Melilestes megarhynchus*

A couple were seen at Dablin and Kiunga.

Rufous-banded Honeyeater *Conopophila albogularis*

A few were seen at the PAU and it now quite common at Kiunga where it was a new find just last year!

ACANTHIZIDAE Australasian Warblers

Rusty Mouse Warbler *Crateroscelis murina*

This elusive bird was heard and glimpsed at Varirata, and heard at Dablin Creek.

Yellow-bellied Gerygone *Gerygone chrysogaster*

Good views at Kiunga and heard at Varirata.

* **Green-backed Gerygone** *Gerygone chloronotus* H

Heard at Varirata, Dablin and Kwatu but always hard to get it into view.

* **Fairy Gerygone** *Gerygone palpebrosa*

A pair showed well at Varirata.

Large-billed Gerygone *Gerygone magnirostris* H

Heard at Ketu Creek.

POMATOSTOMATIDAE Australian Babblers

Rufous Babbler *Pomatostomus isidorei*

Glimpses of this strange rusty bird with the decurved yellow bill at Km 17, and near Kwatu.

MELANOCHARITIDAE Berrypeckers & Longbills

Obscure Berrypecker *Melanocharis arfakiana* H

Only heard at Dablin, still a virtually unknown bird known from only a handful of sites.

Black Berrypecker *Melanocharis nigra*

Good views of two males in the forest understorey up at Varirata.

Yellow-bellied Longbill *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae* H

Heard at Kwatu and Kiunga.

Dwarf Longbill (Honeyeater) *Oedistoma iliolophus*

One at Varirata and one at Dablin, glimpses only.

MACHEIRIRHYNCHIDAE Boatbills

Yellow-breasted Boatbill *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*

A male was seen nicely at Varirata.

CRACTICIDAE Butcherbirds & Peltops

Black Butcherbird *Cracticus quoyi*

Seen at Dablin and heard at Varirata.

* **Black-backed Butcherbird** *Cracticus mentalis*

Good views at the PAU. Another of the Cape York specials in Australia.

Hooded Butcherbird *Cracticus cassicus*

Good views at Varirata and one calling in flight at Dablin.

Lowland Peltops *Peltops blainvillii*

A couple of great looks at this strange and striking species up-river at Kiunga.

Mountain Peltops *Peltops montanus*

Great views at Dablin where they were very vocal.

ARTAMIDAE Woodswallows

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

A few around POM and Kiunga.

Great Woodswallow *Artamus maximus*

Seen at Tabubil. This is the largest of the family.

CAMPEPHAGIDAE Cuckooshrikes

Large-billed (Stout-billed) Cuckooshrike *Coracina caeruleogrisea*

Seen at Dablin by a few folks.

Boyer's Cuckooshrike *C. boyeri*

Good views at Varirata.

Black-shouldered (Cicadabird) Cuckooshrike (New Guinea C-s) *C. incerta* (*C. morio*) H

One heard at Dablin, this is an uncommon hill forest species.

Grey-headed Cuckooshrike *C. schisticeps*

A few at Kiunga and Tabubil, a female showed very well at Km 15 on Boystown Road.

Golden Cuckooshrike *Campochaera sloetii*

A silhouette only at Kwatu, then a fine pair at Dablin, a really lovely species.

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*

One was seen at Kwatu.

PACHYCEPHALIDAE Whistlers & allies

* Grey Whistler (Grey-headed) *Pachycephala (simplex) griseiceps*

Seen at Varirata, NG birds are often called Grey-headed Whistler. Clements splits it from the *simplex* taxon, which he calls Grey Whistler even though it's brown!

Black-headed Whistler *Pachycephala monacha*

Two were seen nicely at Dablin.

White-bellied Whistler *P. leucogastra*

One female along the approach to Varirata, always a good bird to get, especially now it is an endemic following the split of Wallacean Whistler from the Lesser Sundas. Note the NG Field Guide lists it as Rufous Whistler, but it is obviously distinct.

Little Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla megarhyncha* H

Heard at Varirata.

Grey Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla harmonica*

One on wires at the PAU, and heard at Varirata.

Variable Pitohui *Pitohui kirhocephalus*

Fair views of several brownish-headed birds at Ok Menga.

Hooded Pitohui *Pitohui dichrous*

Frequent at Varirata, where they showed nicely, also seen at Dablin.

White-bellied Pitohui *P. incertus*

A vocal flock at Kwatu, glimpsed by a couple, this is a restricted range species endemic to the Upper Fly. It is quite vocal and the loud musical call gives it away.

Rusty Pitohui *P. ferrugineus*

Seen by some at Kiunga and Varirata, where it was also heard.

Crested Pitohui *Pitohui cristatus* H

Heard at Dablin, but almost always impossible to see!

ORIOLIDAE Figbirds & Old World Orioles

Australasian Figbird *Sphecotheres vieilloti*

Several at the PAU, where the males of the SE PNG taxon *salvadorii* have a greyish chest and are much greener than the FNQ birds.

Brown Oriole *Oriolus szalayi*

Good views at the PAU, Tabubil and Varirata. It is an amazing mimic of a friarbird in appearance, or is it vice versa?

DICRURIDAE Drongos

Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus carbonarius*

A few at Varirata. PNG birds of the race *carbonarius* have different calls to those in Australia. Coates splits it in his photoguide as Papuan Drongo, not to be confused with Mountain Drongo (*Chaetorhynchus*)

RHIPIDURIDAE Fantails

Willie-wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Seen almost everywhere, from lowlands to hills.

White-bellied Thicket Fantail *Rhipidura leucothorax*

Heard at Dablin and Ok Menga, glimpsed at Kiunga. Always skulky but usually comes good!

Sooty Thicket Fantail *Rhipidura threnothorax*

This was calling and seen quite well along a trail at Boystown Road.

Black Fantail *Rhipidura atra*

The species was seen at Dablin with a pair in the last forest fragment.

Chestnut-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hyperythra*

Nice views at Varirata with a mixed feeding flock.

Rufous-backed Fantail *Rhipidura rufidorsa*

This showed well along the Boystown Road after a bit of chase through the forest.

MONARCHIDAE Monarchs

Mountain (Pygmy) Drongo *Chaetorhynchus papuensis*

This uncommon bird showed very well at Varirata along the Boundary Trail, with two singles seen on two days. Genetic work shows it to be most closely related to monarchs and not drongos at all.

Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula*

Seen near Varirata.

Shining Flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*

Seven were seen up along the Elevala, curiously enough all females.

Spot-winged Monarch *Monarcha guttula*

Excellent views at Varirata.

Golden Monarch *Monarcha chrysomela*

A lovely view of a male at Boystown Road, a gorgeous little bird.

Frilled Monarch *Arses telescopthalmus*

Great views of this curious endemic bird, even seeing the amazing ruff of a male at Varirata. The Frill-necked Monarch (*lorealis*) of Cape York is a recent split from Frilled, which is now a NG endemic.

Torrentlark *Grallina bruijni*

Four were together up at Dablin Creek, probably wondering where all the forest cover had gone, and Phil saw one at Ok Menga. It is highly specialized member of the monarch group,

adapted to fast-flowing streams. The Dablin birds had pale straw-yellow rumps and uppertail, not the usual white, I wonder if this is breeding related?

CORVIDAE Crows

Grey Crow *Corvus tristis*

Nice looks at this bizarre species around Kiunga and Kwatu.

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*

A few seen around POM.

PARADISAEIDAE Birds-of-Paradise

Glossy-mantled Manucode *Manucodia atra*

Quite common up-river at Kiunga.

Crinkle-collared Manucode *M. chalybata*

Two were at Km 15 along the Boystown Road, and 2 at Km 93 on the Tabubil Road, the blue iridescence on the mantle showing well.

* Trumpet Manucode *M. keraudrenii* H

Heard at Varirata (race *purpureoviolaceous?*), where the call is quite different to those of race *jamesi* heard at Km 17 and Boystown Road. Otherwise only on Cape York, Queensland.

Carola's Parotia *Parotia carolae*

Distant looks at a female plumaged bird at Dablin early one morning, and again next day with a mixed flock then coming in and confusing things!

* Magnificent Riflebird *Ptiloris magnificus* H

The loud wolf-whistle call is very distinctive, we heard just one of them along the Boystown Road, but they have regrettably got very hard to see of late.

Growling (Eastern) Riflebird *P. (m.) intercedens*

Ryan saw this at Varirata, with a female plumaged bird on our last trip. The growling call is very different to the Western and Cape York birds and I think they should be split from Magnificent Riflebird.

Magnificent Bird-of-Paradise *Cicinnurus magnificus* H

Distant males heard calling at Dablin, and sadly one dangling from a mirror in a pick-up truck there!

King Bird-of-Paradise *C. regius*

We had fine views of a male in his vine thicket tree canopy territory, with a female nearby earlier from the boat, a terrific bird.

Twelve-wired Bird-of-Paradise *Seleucidis melanoleuca*

A fine calling male along the Fly R., complete with tail wires, and a couple of female plumaged birds in flight.

Greater Bird-of-Paradise *P. apoda*

Marvellous looks at Km 17 where a 90% Greater male was displaying at the lek, along with Raggianas. Hybrid males have pinkish plumes with an orangey flash, and we saw up to 4 of these at the lek.

Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise *Paradisaea raggiana*

A brilliant perched male at Varirata was the first of many birds of paradise, and we had very nice views. Also seen at the lek at Km 17 and up-river. This species is a PNG endemic.

PETROICIDAE Australasian Robins (Flyrobins)

Black-sided Robin *Poecilodryas hypoleuca* (H)

Irritatingly elusive and unseen, though fairly vocal at Kiunga and upriver.

White-rumped Robin *P. bimaculatus*

One was seen well at Dablin Creek after braving a short but slippery descent!

Torrent Flyrobin (Flycatcher) *Monachella muelleriana*

Two were along the river by the Ok Menga intake and one at Bultem Gorge.

Lemon-bellied Flycatcher *Microeca flavigaster*

Two seen at Dablin Creek, and 2 near Varirata.

Northern Scrub Robin *Drymodes superciliaris* H

One was heard up at Varirata and another at Dablin Creek, always a mega-skulker.

PSOPHODIDAE Quail-thrushes & Jewel-babblers

Blue Jewel-babbler *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*

Heard and a brief flit across a track along Boystown Road just as I turned round to say “watch the track”, seeing blue and white is a pretty good for this species, a mega-skulker.

Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens* H

Heard at Varirata, a very shy and elusive species.

Painted Quail-Thrush *Cinclosoma ajax* H

Heard at Varirata, but stayed out of sight.

HIRUNDINIDAE Swallows

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*

The common NG swallow, seen at POM and Kiunga.

ZOSTEROPIDAE White-eyes

Black-fronted White-eye *Zosterops atrifrons*

Seen briefly at Ok Menga and vocal at Varirata, this is the common lowland and hill forest white-eye.

STURNIDAE Starlings & Mynas

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*

A few seen up river at Kiunga with a big nesting colony near Kwatu.

Yellow-eyed Starling *A. mystacea*

This rather rare restricted range bird was seen flying over calling along the Boystown Road.

Singing Starling *Aplonis cantoroides*

Good views at the PAU and Port Moresby.

Golden Myna *Mino anais*

Flight views of 2 of this lovely species up river at Kiunga.

Yellow-faced Myna *Mino dumontii*

Good views at the PAU, and at Kiunga; it has a curious frog-like call.

MUSCICAPIDAE Old World Chats & Flycatchers

Pied Chat (Pied Stonechat or Bushchat) *Saxicola caprata aethiops*

Seen briefly near Tabubil

DICAEIDAE Flowerpeckers

Red-capped Flowerpecker (Papuan Flowerpecker) *Dicaeum (pectorale) geelvinkianum*

Brief views at Varirata and Km 93

NECTARINIIDAE Sunbirds

Black Sunbird *Nectarinia aspasia*

Nice looks at Kiunga and Tabubil.

PASSERIDAE Sparrows

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

The sparrow only colonized PNG since 1986, mostly since 1992, and we duly logged it in POM. PNG has only three introduced species on the mainland (this, the newly arrived Eurasian Tree Sparrow and perhaps Feral Pigeon), plus Common Myna (which hopefully may now be extirpated) on Bougainville.

ESTRILDIDAE Finches

White-spotted Mannikin *L. leucosticta*

A scarce and restricted range western endemic that later Clements up-dates lump with Streak-headed Mannikin. We saw 6 down by the wharf and some saw 3 at Kiunga airstrip.

MAMMALS

Greater Flying-fox *Pteropus neohibernicus*

This large species was seen over the Fly River, with a big camp of about a 100 animals.

REPTILES

Forest green dragon sp.

One 10 cm skinny green lizard with a small bumpy head at Dablin, curiously emaciated looking.

BUTTERFLIES

Ulysses Swallowtail *Papilio ulysses*

The spectacular blue morpho-like swallowtail was common in lowland forests.

A bush full of synchronous fireflies pulsing away like Christmas lights pre-dawn along the Fly River is in the same area it has been for years.

Bird book References

Beehler, B., Pratt T. and Zimmerman, D. (1986). *Birds of New Guinea*. Princeton.

The standard field guide for New Guinea, now long out of date, expensive and hard to find, but still essential. A new edition is in the works, maybe for 2011.

Beehler, B. and Frith C. (1998). *Birds of Paradise*. Oxford University Press.

A very thorough monograph on the family, hard to read but the modern reference on the group.

Coates B. J. (1990). *Birds of Papua New Guinea Vol. 2*. Dove Publications, Alderley.

This volume covers the birds of paradise and has some wonderful photographs. A 20th century classic and now quite costly. Out of print.

Coates, B. J. and Peckover, W. (2001) *Photoguide to the Birds of New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago*. Dove Publications. Incomplete but very useful.

Cooper, W. T. and Forshaw, J. M. (1977). *The birds of paradise and bowerbirds*. Collins, Sydney.

A terrific work with best ever illustrations, large format in slipcase. Out of print but well worth tracking down.

Frith C. and Frith D. W. (2004) *Bowerbirds*. OUP Family series.

The standard reference, but taxonomically conservative and with rather disappointing illustrations.

Gregory, P. (2009). *Birds of New Guinea and Associated Islands*, 2nd edition. Sicklebill

Publications, Kuranda. The latest and only up-to-date New Guinea species list, in IOC format and with many splits.

Restall, R. (1996). *Munias and Mannikins*. Pica Press. Useful for the group. fairly good plates.

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