

WEST PAPUA

Unknown New Guinea

Friday 30th July – Saturday 28th August 2010 (30 days)

Leader: Guy Dutson

Group Size Limit: 7

Part I: Biak, Numfor & The Snow Mountains

Friday 30th July – Tuesday 17th August (19 days)

Part II: Batanta, Salawati & The Arfak Mountains

Saturday 14th August – Saturday 28th August (15 days)



Macgregor's Bird of Paradise (Nik Borrow)

When, in the mid 19th century, Alfred Russel Wallace first approached the shores of western New Guinea he wrote that he could barely contain his excitement knowing that "those dark forests produced the most extraordinary and the most beautiful of the feathered inhabitants of the earth".

First sighted by the Portuguese in 1526, this huge island, second only in size to Greenland, exhibits incredible ecological diversity. In just 60 miles the land rises from the steamy mangroves and peat-swamp forests of the coast through impenetrable rain- and moss-forests up to the open alpine grasslands and jagged snow-capped summits of the Jayawijaya (or Snow) Mountains, the highest peaks between the Himalayas and the Andes.

The very varied local ecology and the isolating effect of the rugged terrain has resulted in a cultural

and linguistic diversity unparalleled on earth. Here 0.1% of the world's population speak 15% of the known languages. Early Dutch colonial influence barely extended beyond the immediate vicinity of the coast, vast areas remaining *terra incognita* until the mid 20th century. Most of the tribes, particularly those in the highlands, were first contacted by outsiders as recently as in the 1930s or even later, and some are still unknown to westerners. Despite the efforts of missionaries and 'Indonesianization' programmes, many tribes are much as they were before outside influences arrived. Stories of tribal warfare and even cannibalism are still frequent in some places, although fortunately not in the areas we will visit!

Diversity and timelessness are as characteristic of the fauna and flora as of the

people. West Papua (formerly known as Irian Jaya) is still covered by the some of the largest tracts of undisturbed forest on earth, second only to Amazonia. Very few birdwatchers have as yet visited West Papua, before mass tourism, logging and mining have had a serious impact on the environment. Whether sampling the birds of New Guinea for the first time or returning for those exotic and rarely seen endemics, West Papua provides the adventurous birder with some of the most exciting birding and travel experiences the modern world can offer.

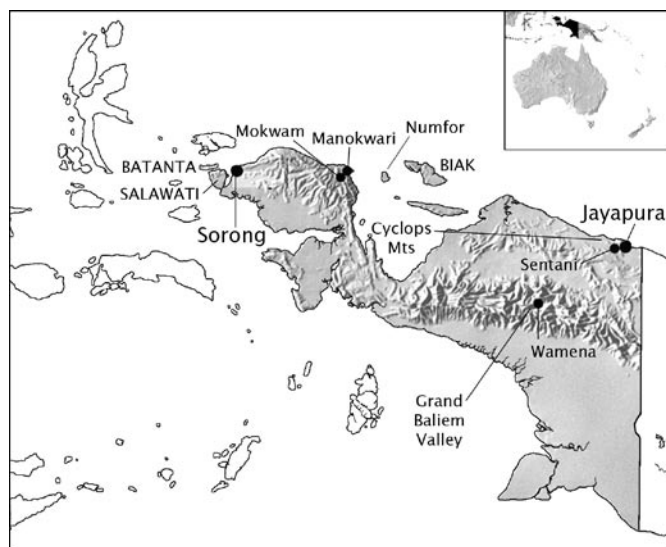
It is most important, however, to realize that a visit to this very remote region is much more arduous than a normal birding tour, with some quite strenuous hiking and also very primitive living conditions for more than half the tour. Tourism is still very much in its infancy in West Papua. Although reasonably comfortable hotels exist in all the main centres, once we are away from such places our accommodation will be in native villages or in small tents or simple 'bush shelters' deep in the forest and well away from habitation. West Papua's very rugged terrain makes road building extremely difficult and they usually stop not far from each town.

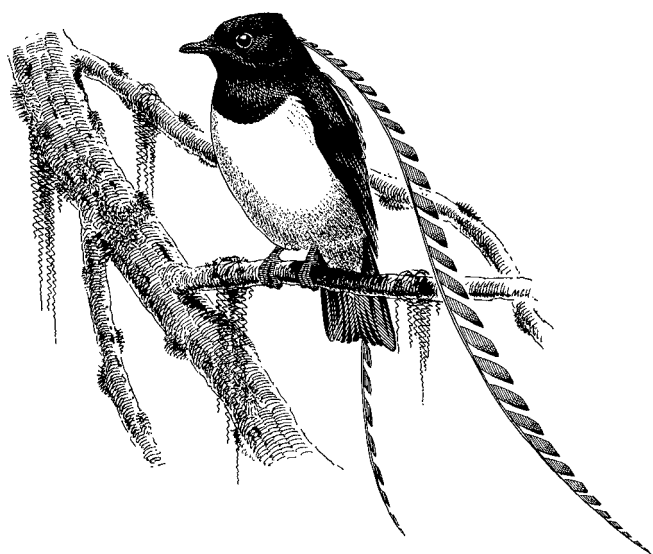
The tour can either be taken as a whole or as either

of two parts (Biak, Numfor & The Snow Mountains or Batanta, Salawati & The Arfak Mountains).

Our adventure starts on the isolated island of Biak in Geelvink Bay, where the old Dutch colonial capital, Bosnik, was located. Much of the original forest which once covered this limestone island has been logged, but almost all of the nine endemic species can still be found in disturbed forest, including Biak Red Lory, Geelvink Pygmy-Parrot, Biak Coucal, Biak Scops Owl, the beautiful Biak Paradise Kingfisher, Biak Black Flycatcher and Long-tailed Starling. From here we will travel to the island of Numfor where we should find the fabulous Numfor Paradise Kingfisher.

We then continue to the central highlands of West Papua where we explore the Grand Baliem Valley with its stunning scenery and variety of habitats ranging from primary forest to alpine grasslands. Here, within sight of the 4700m Peak Trikora, part of the Snow Mountains range, we will search for Macgregor's Bird of Paradise, one of the strangest and most astonishing members of its family (or perhaps, according to recent studies, an aberrant honeyeater). Many more montane specialities can be seen here, most notably Snow Mountain Quail, Alpine





King of Saxony Bird-of-Paradise (Michael Hodgson)

Pipit, Lorentz's Whistler, Short-bearded Melidectes, Orange-cheeked Honeyeater, Western Alpine Mannikin and the aptly-named Splendid *Astrapia*. There is even a chance for the rare Archbold's Bowerbird.

Next we explore the lowland rainforest at the base of the Cyclops Mountains where we will look for extraordinary species like Pale-billed Sicklebill, Twelve-wired, King and Lesser Bird of Paradise, the rarely seen Blue-black Kingfisher, Salvadori's Fig-Parrot and Rufous-collared Monarch.

The second part of the tour starts at Sorong, at the western tip of the oddly shaped Vogelkop (Bird's Head) Peninsula, from where we will take a boat across to the Raja Empat Islands to search for the endemic Wilson's and Red Birds of Paradise at their display grounds in Batanta's pristine forests. We will also visit Salawati where, with luck, we will see a Western Crowned Pigeon flush noisily up into the trees.

After this we will travel to the small town of Manokwari from where we will travel by a fairly recently constructed road up to the

village of Mokwam amongst the spectacular ridges and deep valleys of the Arfak Mountains in search of their three endemic birds of paradise: Western Parotia, Arfak *Astrapia* and Long-tailed *Paradigalla* (only rediscovered in 1989). Here we may well also see Buff-tailed and Black Sicklebills, Magnificent Bird of Paradise, Flame and Vogelkop Bowerbirds, and much more besides.

Birdquest pioneered birding tours to West Papua (then known as Irian Jaya) as far back as 1992.

Itinerary

Day 1 Evening flight from London bound for Jakarta.

Day 2 Evening arrival at Jakarta where we connect with an onward flight to Biak.

Day 3 Morning arrival on Biak, an island in Geelvink Bay, for a two nights stay. Later we will commence our exploration of the island.

Day 4 Palm-fringed white sand beaches, ultramarine seas and coral 'sea gardens' are the best known attractions of Biak and its sister island

of Supiori, but these idyllic, rarely-visited islands also hold several endemic bird species, either restricted to these two islands or widely distributed amongst the islands of Geelvink Bay. We will drive to an area of selectively logged forest where we shall hope to find the island's specialities. The Biak Paradise Kingfisher is certainly the finest of Biak's endemics and is still common, even in secondary habitat. Like most forest kingfishers this species spends much time perched still in one place but it gives itself away by constantly flicking its white tail streamers in time with its continuous calling. Also common and vocal are Yellow-bibbed and Claret-breasted Fruit-Doves, and Spice Imperial Pigeon. Flying rapidly overhead in pairs or small flocks, brilliant scarlet, endemic Biak Red Lories search out flowering trees. Endemic Biak Coucals can be found skulking clumsily in dense secondary scrub, but can be hard to observe. The endemic Long-tailed Starling is still common, but seeing the shy endemic Biak Megapode requires a bit of luck. The endemic Biak White-eye travels in small flocks, while the endemic Biak Gerygone favours a quiet life in the mid canopy. Many of Biak's birds join mixed feeding flocks which might include the diminutive endemic Geelvink Pygmy-Parrot, the local race of the Cicadabird, Golden Monarch (an orange race) and the endemic Biak Black Flycatcher. Other species we should see include Crested Hawk, Brahminy Kite, Variable Goshawk, Great and Slender-billed Cuckoo-Doves, Emerald Ground-Dove, Superb Fruit-Dove, Rainbow Lorikeet, Eclectus Parrot, Uniform Swiftlet, Sacred Kingfisher, the secretive Hooded Pitta, the vociferous Black-browed Triller, the introduced Sooty-headed Bulbul, Willie Wagtail, Black and Yellow-bellied Sunbirds, Dusky Myzomela and Hooded Butcherbird. Occasionally the rare

Gurney's Eagle can be seen gliding over the forest. In the evening we will go out spotlighting in search of the endemic, but usually hard to see, Biak Scops Owl.

Day 5 After some final birding on Biak we will travel to the island of Numfor for an overnight stay.

Day 6 We will spend the morning exploring different habitats on Numfor before returning to Biak for an overnight stay. Numfor is situated to the southwest of Biak in Geelvink Bay and our main reason for visiting this lovely island is the occurrence of the fabulous endemic Numfor Paradise Kingfisher. This bright dark blue kingfisher with its gleaming white tail and bright yellow feet is quite common in all the habitats, so it should not take us too long to find and admire this magnificent endemic. Several other Geelvink Bay endemics, which we may well already have seen on Biak, occur on Numfor.

Day 7 This morning we will take a flight to Jayapura in eastern West Papua. The city's airport is at Sentani, where we will stay overnight. Later today we will explore the nearby grasslands and the northern shore of picturesque Lake Sentani. Although the Cyclops Mountains which tower above the lake are still covered in primary forest, the foothills are now completely denuded with just a scattering of trees amongst the grassland. Birds we may well encounter in the area include Great Egret, Eastern Cattle Egret (split from Western), Striated Heron, Whistling Kite, Collared Sparrowhawk, the crepuscular Spotted Whistling Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Brown and King Quails, Buff-banded Rail, the secretive Rufous-tailed Bush-hen, Dusky Moorhen, Comb-crested Jacana, Orange-fronted and Orange-bellied Fruit-Doves, the prehistoric-looking Channel-billed Cuckoo,



Brown Sicklebill (Nik Borrow)

Pheasant Coucal, Large-tailed Nightjar, Blue-tailed and Rainbow Bee-eaters, Dollarbird, Pacific Swallow, Tree Martin, White-bellied Cuckoo-Shrike, Pied Chat, Papuan Grassbird, Golden-headed Cisticola, White-shouldered Fairy-Wren, Scrub White-eared and Mimic Meliphagas, New Guinea Friarbird, Grand, Hooded and Chestnut-breasted Mannikins, White-breasted Wood-Swallow, Fawn-breasted Bowerbird, Glossy-mantled Manucode (our first bird of paradise!) and Torresian Crow. We can also admire a huge roost of Great Flying Foxes.

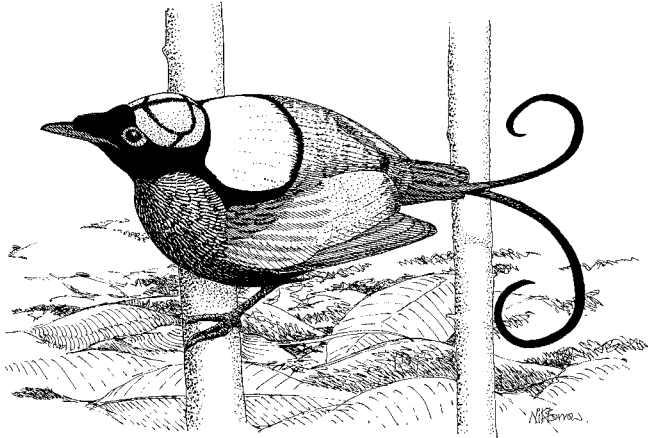
Day 8 In the morning we will fly southwards to Wamena, a small town situated at 1600m in the Grand Baliem Valley. From here we will drive up

through the fabulous forests covering the slopes of New Guinea's central cordillera to the grasslands surrounding Lake Habbema. We shall be spending a total of five nights camping as we walk along well-used but sometimes muddy trails through this splendid area.

Days 9-12 The discovery of the fabulous 15 kilometres wide by 60 kilometres long Grand Baliem Valley by Richard Archbold in 1938 was one of the last great surprises of the 'age of exploration'. In the midst of what was assumed to be endless uninhabitable, jungle-covered mountains he discovered the most densely populated and agriculturally rich highland valley in New Guinea. The stone-age inhabitants he found there, the Dani, have become famous for their neat villages set in green fields, their hospitality, their cannibalism and their fierce and glorious warfare. Apart from the last two traits, they have changed little in the last 50 years. The Dani people and their neighbours, the Yali, do not wear the splendid bird of paradise plumes that can be seen in some parts of Papua New Guinea, but are 'phallocrypts' or penis-sheath wearers. Although western clothes are becoming more popular, many people still wear nothing but the traditional penis gourd or grass skirt, even around the market in Wamena on a freezing cold morning. Most still live in their small villages of circular thatched huts within a fenced compound and tend fields of sweet potatoes. During our time in the area we shall hope to see many of the birds Archbold first found here. We will spend three nights at the edge of a plateau in sight of the craggy, frozen summits of the Jayawijaya Mountains, part of West Papua's evocative Snow Mountains range. Here at dawn the prize of this high alpine plateau, the stunning Macgregor's Bird of Paradise, descends from the surrounding

pine-scattered hills to feed along the edge of the montane forest. They are shy birds, but draw attention to themselves when they fly because of the loud swishing of their brilliant golden primaries. (Recent research has suggested that this splendid species may in fact be an aberrant honeyeater rather than a bird of paradise.) The flowering alpine shrubbery in this area also harbours Sooty and Short-bearded Melidectes, both of which can be very confiding. Out on the open alpine grasslands, small parties of Western Alpine Mannikins feed among the tree-ferns and we may also chance upon the rather Red Grouse-like Snow Mountain Quail. Island Thrushes actively forage along the edge of the grasslands, while endemic Orange-cheeked Honeyeaters favour shrubby patches. Lorentz's Whistlers are readily located among the pines by their full, fluty song. Crossing the boggy grasslands, we will flush Alpine Pipits, while a nearby lake usually holds several pairs of Salvadori's Teal as well as Little Pied Cormorant and Common (or Eurasian) Coot. Other birds in this area include Papuan Harrier, Australian Kestrel, Spotless Crane, Black-throated Honeyeater (with its bubbling song), Common Smoky Honeyeater, Mountain Firetail and Great Woodswallow. At dusk we will hope to witness the display flight of the secretive New Guinea Woodcock. We will also explore the moss-festooned cloud forest where from darker recesses White-winged Robins sing their descending trill and red-eyed Lesser Melampittas keep themselves well hidden in the undergrowth. Easier to see on the forest floor is the Mountain Mouse-Warbler whose pleasant song is frequently heard at this altitude. Perhaps the rarest bird of this damp, moss-hung forest is Archbold's Bowerbird, which builds its large untidy bower of dead ferns up near the timber line. If we are

fortunate enough to find an active bower we may be lucky enough to see this retiring bird. Other species occurring at this altitude include Painted Tiger-Parrot, Large and Papuan Scrub-Wrens, Mountain Robin, Lesser Ground-Robin, Fan-tailed Berrypecker and Mountain Peltops. The next two nights will be spent in the lower montane forest. Here in the late afternoon and early morning Splendid Astrapias can easily be located by their strange 'plik...plik-plik' call and King of Saxony Birds of Paradise sometimes sing their spluttering, insect-like song from high bare branches. At regular intervals the thrumming 'tat-tat-tat' call of the male Brown Sicklebill echoes through the forest. Fruiting trees hold Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove and the shy and quiet Brehm's and Modest Tiger-Parrots. The mixed species flocks here often include Dimorphic, Black and Friendly Fantails, Rufous-naped Whistler, Papuan Treecreeper, Black Sittella and the remarkable Crested Berrypecker. We should also see Black-mantled Goshawk, White-breasted Fruit-Dove, Papuan Mountain Pigeon, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Rufous-throated Bronze-Cuckoo, Hooded and Black-bellied Cuckoo-Shrikes, Buff-faced Scrub-Wren, New Guinea Thornbill, Grey Gerygone, Canary Flycatcher, Black-breasted Boatbill, Black-throated and Blue-grey Robins, Regent Whistler, Papuan Sittella (split from Varied), Grey-streaked and Marbled Honeyeaters, and Blue-faced Parrotfinch. Further along the trail, flowering trees attract colourful flocks of Plum-faced, Papuan and Orange-billed Lorikeets and the noisy and ubiquitous Belford's Melidectes. At night the haunting cries of the Greater Sooty Owl may frighten our porters and with a bit of luck we should be able to spotlight this fabulous nightbird. At around 2200m we leave the montane forest behind and enter a cultivated



Wilson's Bird of Paradise (Nik Borrow)

valley, where we should see a number of open country species, including Brown Falcon, Mountain Swiftlet, Brown-breasted Gerygone, Island Leaf-Warbler, Common Golden Whistler (of the endemic race *balim*), Red-capped Flowerpecker, Western Mountain White-eye, Red-collared Myzomela, Ornate Melidectes, the very localized Black-breasted Mannikin and the striking Superb Bird of Paradise.

Day 13 After some final birding in the montane forests, we will drive back to Wamena for an overnight stay and the enticing prospect of a real bed and a shower.

Day 14 This morning we fly back to Jayapura airport and drive to an area of lowland alluvial rainforest at the base of the Cyclops Mountains, where we will camp for three nights. The rest of the day will be spent exploring this exciting and bird-rich area.

Day 15-16 There are now very few places in the world where flat alluvial rainforest, so easily cleared for agriculture, still exists to the extent it does in West Papua. Here logging and hunting have yet to have a significant impact, much pristine habitat remains and some excellent birds can be seen. At dawn the uncommon Pale-billed

Sicklebill is sometimes to be seen perched high on dead snags, whilst fruiting trees attract Wompoo, Pink-spotted and Beautiful Fruit-Doves, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot and sometimes the little known Salvadori's Fig-Parrot. Twelve-wired Birds of Paradise frequent the swamp forest and we will definitely be hoping to witness the display of this unreal-looking bird. Loud raucous calls should lure us to a display tree of the incredible King Bird of Paradise. This red and white jewel favours vine-covered forest giants and we should see a male showing off his blue legs and green tail discs. Overhead, noisy parties of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Brown and Western Black-capped Lorries and the huge and magnificent Palm Cockatoo fly past in search of fruiting or flowering trees. Elegant Moustached Tree-swifts sweep across the clearings and bullet-like Papuan Spine-tailed Swifts speed along the tracks. Feeding flocks may contain Rufous-collared and Spot-winged Monarchs, and Lowland Peltops. Gaudy Yellow-faced and Golden Mynas favour the higher canopy and along the road Oriental Hobby can be seen hunting. Blyth's Hornbills are common and flocks of Streak-headed Mannikins feed along the verges, whilst inside the forest tiny Buff-faced Pygmy-

Parrots can be found foraging nuthatch-like on the trunks of large forest trees. The forest often resounds to the loud calls of Rufous-bellied Kookaburras and we may well encounter a noisy gang of the little known Brown-headed Crow. Where uprooted trees have created clear pools, the tiny jewel-like Dwarf Kingfisher hunts small fish and glissading calls will betray the presence of the glorious Blue-black Kingfisher. Other species we hope to see here include Rufous Night-Heron, Black Bittern, Long-tailed Buzzard, Grey-headed Goshawk, Stephan's Ground-Dove, Coronated Fruit-Dove, Pinon and Zoe Imperial Pigeons, Red-flanked Lorikeet, Red-cheeked Parrot, Brush Cuckoo, Shining and Gould's Bronze-Cuckoos, White-crowned and Dwarf Koels, Lesser Black and Greater Black Coucals, Papuan Nightjar, Glossy Swiftlet, the crepuscular Hook-billed Kingfisher, Boyer's, Black and Grey-headed Cuckoo-Shrikes, the handsome Golden Cuckoo-Shrike, Rufous Babbler, Emperor Fairy-wren, Rusty Mouse-warbler, Yellow-bellied and Large-billed Gerygones, Sooty and White-bellied Thicket-Fantails, Northern Fantail, Shining Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Black-sided Robin, Little Shrike-Thrush, Variable and Rusty Pitohuis, Long-billed, Plain and Streak-headed Honeyeaters, Meyer's Friarbird, Metallic and Singing Starlings, Brown Oriole, Spangled Drongo, Black Butcherbird, the unobtrusive Jobi Manucode, Lesser Bird of Paradise and Grey Crow. We will hear the harsh calls of Brown-collared Brush-turkeys and see their large mounds, but observing this devilishly shy bird requires lots of luck. A short drive away in the foothills there is a good chance of seeing Vulturine Parrots flying overhead. At night we will go out to look for mysterious Marbled and Papuan Frogmouths. If we are particularly lucky we will observe a Shovel-billed

Kingfisher, a Blue Jewel-babbler or a White-eared Catbird.

Day 17 After some final birding in these rich and hot lowland rainforests we will return to Sentani for an overnight stay.

Those taking Part I of the tour depart by air from Jayapura bound for Jakarta on the morning of Day 18, arriving at London on the morning of Day 19. Those joining Part II of the tour depart from London on the evening of Day 16, arriving at Jakarta on the evening of Day 17, connecting with an onward flight to Sorong early on Day 18.

Day 18 This morning we will catch a flight to the bustling town of Sorong at the western tip of the Vogelkop Peninsula. Upon arrival we will transfer to the harbour, from where we shall travel by our chartered boat to Batanta for a three nights stay, looking out for Lesser Frigatebird, the elegant Black-naped Tern, Crested Tern and other seabirds during the journey. A brief stop at an islet should yield Great-billed Parrot, White-bellied Sea-Eagle and Beach Kingfisher. Our destination is the village of Wai Lebet, situated on a palm-fringed beach on the south coast of Batanta. Our accommodation here is in a simple but delightfully situated hut at the edge of a clearing and cooled by the sea breeze.

Days 19-20 The islands of Batanta and Salawati to the west of Sorong are seldom visited. Still forest-covered and very sparsely populated, these islands hold several species rare or absent on the mainland. In the lowland forest just behind our accommodation, Red Birds of Paradise, endemic to the islands of Batanta and Waigeo, can be watched displaying in some of the taller forest trees. Pheasant Pigeons are fairly common and their mournful call is often heard, but seeing



Western Crowned Pigeons (Michael Hodgson)

this retiring if magnificent species requires some luck. Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeons can be found in fruiting trees and the tiny Yellow-capped Pygmy-Parrot might be seen hanging from the trunk of a forest giant. Along the trail to the flank of Gunung Batanta, one of the most frequent songs to be heard is the repeated descending trill of the Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo. Our primary goal here is to find the brilliantly plumaged Wilson's Bird of Paradise, without a doubt one of the most beautiful birds on the planet. In the early morning one or two males and several females gather at display grounds; usually an area cleared of all leaf litter under a tangle of vines, where the male calls vigorously and displays to the females as they arrive. Hides have been built overlooking these dance courts, so we should be able to watch these stunning birds at our leisure. Other birds we may well see here include Little Eagle, Black Lory, Common Paradise Kingfisher, Blue-breasted Pitta, Pale-billed Scrub-Wren, Green-backed Gerygone, Frilled Monarch, Grey Whistler, Yellow-bellied Longbill, Puff-backed Meliphaga, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater and Torresian Crow. Along the shoreline, Great-billed Heron, Eastern Reef Egret, White-headed

Shelduck and Osprey can all be found.

On our second full day we will make a boat trip to nearby Salawati, where we will wade ashore to search the forest at the base of the mountains. With a modicum of luck we will hear the low thrumming call of Western Crowned Pigeons and then track one or more down. These huge creatures usually flush up with explosive wing beats and find a perch from which to nervously watch their pursuers. Deeper in the forest we will hear the braying calls of the shy and rarely seen Red-billed Brush-turkey.

Day 21 After a final morning on Batanta we will return by boat to Sorong for an overnight stay.

Day 22 A short morning flight will take us to Manokwari on the western shore of Geelvink Bay, from where we will drive inland to the village of Mokwam, situated at 1600m in the Arfak Mountains. We will spend three nights at a house at the base of a forested valley, but we will also camp for three nights higher up in the mountains. In the afternoon we will start our exploration of this remote area.

Days 23-27 In these seldom-

visited mountains we shall hope to find many montane species, including some of New Guinea's least known birds. On the high ridges the shy and scarce Buff-tailed Sicklebill utters its Whimbrel-like song and Arfak *Astrapias* can be found foraging along the moss-bedecked branches. Even less well known is the Long-tailed Paradigalla, which has only been seen by very few birders since it was first described. Whilst uncommon and wary, it draws attention to itself by its powerful monotone whistle and can sometimes be seen feeding in Pandanus and other fruiting trees. Females and immature males of the endemic Western Parotia are fairly common but to see an adult male it is usually necessary to locate a display ground by following up their harsh calls. Hides have been built at a couple of these dance courts and one of the highlights of the tour will be observing the incredible display of this exquisite species. To watch the dazzling 'ballerina dance' of this fabulous species at very close range is totally out of this world and has been described as one of the climaxes of a birding career. Another characteristic species of the area is the Vogelkop Bowerbird, which not only builds a magnificent bower decorated with colourful flowers, fruits and mushrooms, but can imitate the songs of nearly all other species. In the mid-montane forest the feeding flocks hold Dwarf, Sclater's and Vogelkop Whistlers. Magnificent Birds of Paradise occasionally join these flocks, but more usually call from close to their display grounds. A hide has been built overlooking the dance court of this lovely species, so we should be able to admire a male in full swing. Shy Spotted Catbirds attract attention by their mewling calls from the canopy. Sometimes our man on the spot knows of a day roost of a magical-looking Feline or a cute Mountain Owlet-Nightjar. Attractive

Spotted Jewel-babblers are fairly regular in these moss-festooned forests and with a modicum of luck we will observe this wonderful but shy species in all its glory. Other species we may see here include White-throated Pigeon, Bronze Ground-Dove, Rufescent Imperial Pigeon, Josephine's and Yellow-billed Lorikeets, Blue-collared Parrot, White-eared Bronze Cuckoo, Grey-green Scrub-wren, Garnet, Green-backed and White-rumped Robins, Hooded Pitohui, Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, Black-fronted White-eye, Dwarf and Rufous-sided Honeyeaters, and Mountain Meliphaga. After climbing well into the mountains we shall come to a clearing on the steep slopes of Gunung Nadim. From here, at dawn, before the clouds come in, the view down to the lowlands is magnificent. The forest here holds feeding flocks which include Black Monarch, Vogelkop Scrub-wren, Black Pitohui and Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot. Eventually we shall reach the summit ridge, where Black Sicklebills sing from favourite perches. Along the ridge, Orange-crowned Fairy-wren and Smoky and Ashy Robins are to be seen, while attractive Tit Berrypeckers can be found in fruiting bushes. Flowering trees attract Western Smoky Honeyeaters, and Cinnamon-browed and Vogelkop Melidectes. At night we will search for the delightful Papuan Boobook. If we are particularly lucky we will chance upon a rare marvel like New Guinea Harpy Eagle or White-striped Forest-Rail. Mammals are scarce here, but we stand a fair chance of encountering the adorable Red-bellied Marsupial Shrew.

Day 28 After a last day in the Arfak Mountains we return to Manokwari for a major clean up and an overnight stay.

Day 29 Today we will return to Jakarta in time for an evening flight bound for London.

Day 30 Morning arrival at London.

Accommodation & Road

Transport: The hotels are mostly of normal Birdquest standard. In Sentani the hotel is fairly simple. On Numfor we stay one night in a very simple guesthouse with two or more people per room and basic washing and toilet facilities. On trek in the Wamena region for five nights and in the Cyclops lowland rainforest for three nights we will camp in small tents (for twin or single occupancy), with 'bush' washing and toilet facilities. On Batanta for three nights and at Mokwam in the Arfak Mountains for four or five nights we will sleep in simple buildings (with one or two rooms) with primitive washing and toilet facilities. For three nights in the Arfak Mountains we will sleep under primitive 'bush shelters'. Participants will need to bring

their own sleeping bags and 'thermarest' type camping mattresses. Road transport is by small coach or minibus. Roads are rather poor and few and far between, but then we do not have to travel long distances on them.

Walking etc: The walking effort is mostly moderate (easy in only a few areas). During Part I we will have to hike for several days along a moderate to fairly strenuous forest trail in the Wamena area. Access to the Arfak Mountains (in Part II) used to involve very strenuous trekking, but conditions have now been greatly alleviated by the construction of a road up to the village of Mokwam. Even so, hiking the trails in this area will still be strenuous at times as they are steep in parts. For the Arfak in particular, you need to be fit and agile, with a good sense of balance. The combination of strenuous walking effort at

times and some quite primitive accommodations makes this one of our most demanding tours.

Climate: Unpredictable and dependent on local topography but at this season it should be mostly dry and often sunny. It is generally hot and humid in the lowlands and foothills. At high altitudes daytime temperatures are pleasant but it can get cold at night or when it rains.

Bird Photography: Opportunities are worthwhile.

Tour Price: Both parts: £6660, €7859, \$10989 London/London (or £5690, €6714, \$9389 Jakarta/Jakarta). Part I only: £4470, €5275, \$7376 London/London (or £3500, €4130, \$5775 Jakarta/Jakarta). Part II: £3590, €4236, \$5924 London/London (or £2620, €3092,

\$4323 Jakarta/Jakarta). Please note that the London/London prices include the July/August peak season airfare. Price includes all transportation (including all flights), all accommodations, all meals, bottled water, some drinks, all excursions, all entrance fees, all tips for local drivers/guides and for accommodations/restaurants, leader services.

Single Room Supplement: Both parts: £144, €170, \$238 (Biak, Wamena, Sentani, Sorong and Manokwari only). Part I only: £108, €127, \$178 (Biak, Wamena and Sentani only). Part II only: £36, €42, \$59 (Sorong and Manokwari only).

Deposit: Both parts: £670, €791, \$1106. Part I only: £450, €531, \$743. Part II only: £360, €425, \$594. If booking more than 12 months before departure, the initial deposit is only £150, €177, \$248.