ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Indonesia

Small Group Tour

Sulawesi & Halmahera: Wallacean Endemics

1st August to 16th August 2022 (16 days)



Purple-bearded Bee-eater by David Hoddinott

Nestled in the tropical waters of Wallacea, the islands of Sulawesi and Halmahera are seldom-visited parts of the Indonesian archipelago; as varied in habitat as they are rich in special and endemic birds.

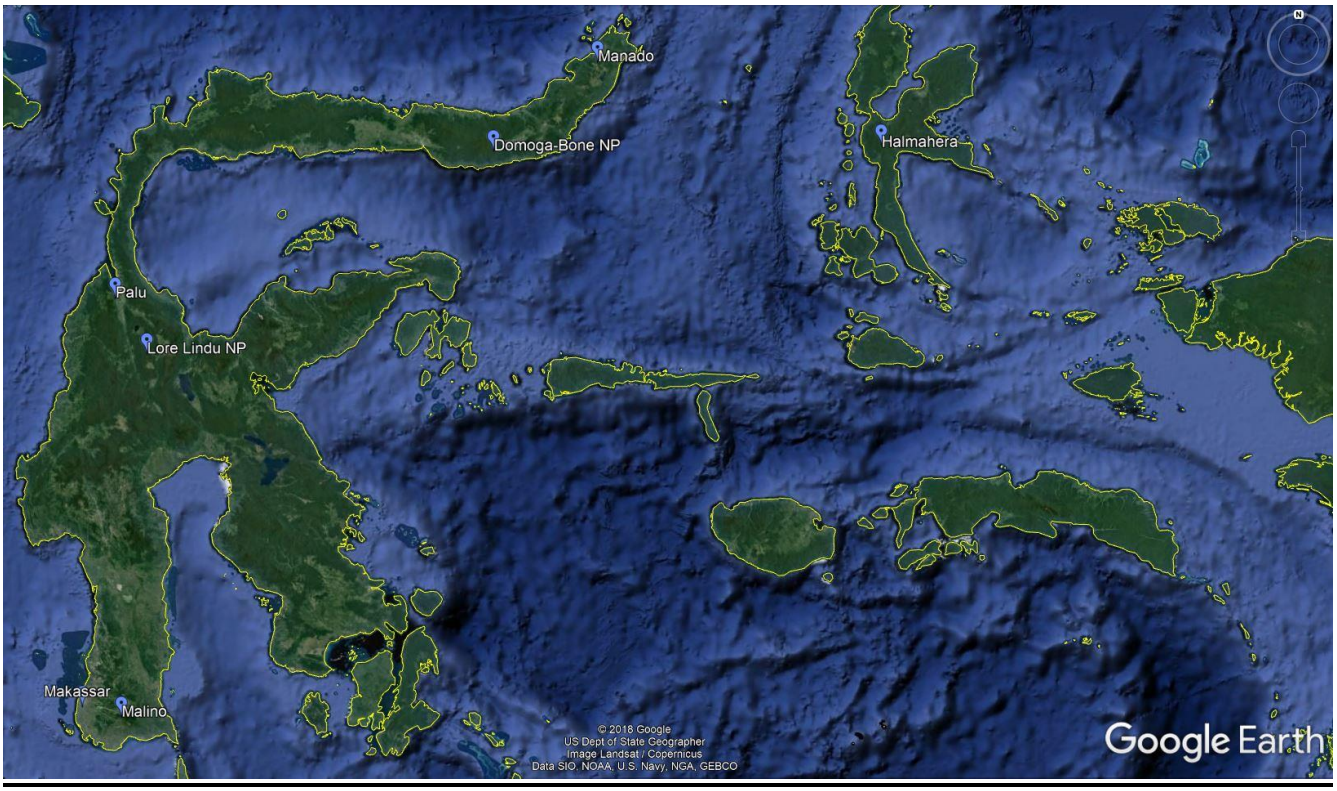
From the highland mountains and luxuriant lowland rainforest of Sulawesi to the Australasian influenced Halmahera in the Moluccan 'Spice Islands', our tour covers a comprehensive view of the available habitats, maximising our chance of finding the more than one hundred range-restricted bird species confined to this region. A colourful host of parrots, fruit doves, and an awesome assortment of endemic kingfishers are combined with such sought-after avian gems as Ivory-breasted Pitta, the incredible Maleo, unbelievable Purple-bearded Bee-eater, remarkable Knobbed Hornbill, Purple-winged Roller and an opportunity to watch an extraordinary bird-of-paradise, the Standardwing at its display site.

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

THE ITINERARY

Day 1	**Arrive in Makassar and transfer to Malino**
Day 2	**Malino area and return to Makassar**
Day 3	**Karaenta to Lore Lindu NP via Palu**
Days 4 & 5	**Lore Lindu National Park**
Day 6	**Morning in Lore Lindu National Park and return to Palu**
Day 7	**Fly to Manado and transfer to Dumoga-Bone National Park**
Days 8 & 9	**Dumoga-Bone National Park**
Day 10	**Morning at Gunung Ambang and continue to Tangkoko Nature Reserve**
Day 11	**Tangkoko Nature Reserve**
Day 12	**Manado to Buli via Ternate and transfer to Subaim**
Day 13	**Foli**
Day 14	**Gunung Uni-uni to Ternate**
Day 15	**Ternate to Manado, Gunung Mahawu**
Day 16	**Final departure**

TOUR ROUTE MAP…



THE TOUR IN DETAIL…

Day 1: Arrive in Makassar and transfer to Malino. After arriving in Makassar, we will transfer to the town of Malino, near to the Lompobattang massif for an overnight stay in a basic lodge. We can expect to see a number of common and widespread species en route.

Day 2: Malino and return to Makassar. Early this morning we ascend the narrow forest lanes to reach the productive higher altitude forests of Gunung Lompobattang. Our primary concern is directed at two species, both isolated endemics restricted to the Lompobattang massif; the Lompobattang Flycatcher, as well as southern sub-species of Sulawesi Leaf Warbler, which is liable to be split as Lompobattang Leaf Warbler. During our search for these two birds, we are sure to find a number of other Sulawesi specialties including Black-ringed White-eye, the southern sub-species of both Streak-headed White-eye and Hylocitrea, Sulawesi Serpent Eagle, Rusty-bellied Fantail, Snowy-browed Flycatcher, Dark-eared Myza, and Red-eared Fruit Dove.



Fiery-browed Starlings by Adam Riley

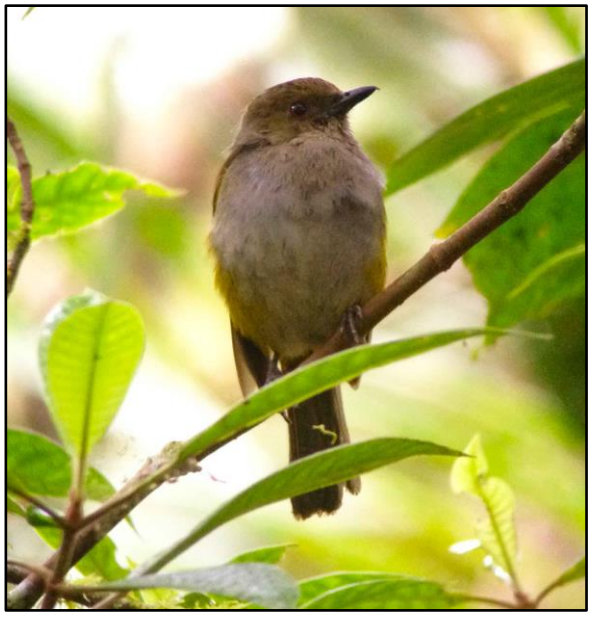
In the late afternoon we will head back to Makassar for the night, keeping an eye out for the rare Pale-bellied Myna en route.



Ivory-backed Woodswallows by David Erterius

Day 3: Karaenta to Lore Lindu National Park via Palu. This morning we will depart early for the limestone outcrop of Karaenta where remnant forest patches support the localized Black-ringed White-eye, a species restricted to southern Sulawesi. A host of other Sulawesi endemics occur here and we should begin our collection of these often colorful and sought-after birds, including our first opportunity for White-necked Myna, the wonderfully vocal black and white Piping Crow, Pale-blue (Black-naped) Monarch and Yellow-sided Flowerpecker. With careful scanning we should pick up Green and Silver-tipped Imperial Pigeons, the latter becoming increasingly difficult to locate. Noisy Hair-crested Drongos may reveal arboreal mixed feeding flocks, while in the undergrowth we should track down the endemic Sulawesi Babbler from its melodious song. We can also scan open branches for Grey-rumped Treeswift and the not-yet described Sulawesi Flycatcher, a bird that most closely resembles illustrations of the migratory Grey-streaked Flycatcher from elsewhere in Asia and will be placed in the Muscicapa genus. With luck we may even stumble upon a troop of Moor Macaques.

Depending on our flight time today, we may later explore more open areas near Makassar where inundated rice paddies can sometimes produce Cinnamon Bittern, Woolly-necked Stork, Sooty-headed Bulbul, Zitting Cisticola, White-breasted Woodswallow or even the poorly-known Pale-bellied Myna. From Makassar we will then take the short flight to Palu in central Sulawesi.



Hylocitrea by David Erterius

After arriving in Palu, we will begin our transfer to Lore Lindu National Park with birding stops en route. Our first stop will be at a rather unassuming tract of grassy scrubland, scattered with the odd shrub. While it may not look like much, this is one of the best areas in Sulawesi to find the rare and endemic Pale-bellied Myna! Aside from the myna, we may also find a number of other interesting species, including Savanna Nightjar on their day roosts, Barred Buttonquail, the localised Pale-headed Munia, Spotted Harrier, Blue-tailed Bee-eater and White-shouldered Triller.

As we move deeper into the mountains and closer to Lore Lindu National Park, the habitat changes from dry savanna and grassland to a mixture of virgin forest and exotic plantations. Stops along the way may provide Sulawesi Serpent Eagle soaring high over the forested

ridges, migrant Purple Needletails whizzing overhead, pairs of the stunning White-necked Myna and even the very scarce Crimson-crowned Flowerpecker.

Shortly before reaching the village of Wuasa, a final afternoon birding stop on a road cutting may yield a plethora of endemics, including Fiery-browed Starling, Ivory-backed Woodswallow, Golden-mantled Racket-tail or taxonomically confusing Malia. After what promises to be an explosive start to our tour of Sulawesi, we shall settle into our guesthouse, home for the next three nights.



Purple-winged Roller by David Hoddinott

Days 4 & 5: Lore Lindu National Park.
This superb reserve, the largest of the islands' national parks, supports most of Sulawesi's montane species and we can look forward to some really fabulous birding! Our accommodation at Wuasa is located in the mid-elevations where, although degraded by agriculture and logging, we have a better chance of finding the lovely Ivory-backed Woodswallow, White-bellied Imperial Pigeon with its unique booming call, Black-billed Koel, Sulawesi Myzomela, Lemon-bellied White-eye, Barred Buttonquail, Sulawesi Blue Flycatcher and the outrageous Sulawesi Myna. The furtive Rufous-throated Flycatcher sings from dense vegetation, often near watercourses, and we can also watch out for Great Hanging Parrot possibly visiting a fruiting tree, Sulawesi Cicadabird and the colourful Purple-winged Roller, plus chances for Speckled Boobook in the daytime.

Lore Lindu National Park is also the only accessible site for the rare and frustratingly difficult Hylocitrea. This is a highland speciality that is quiet and reclusive in the moss-laden montane forest. It is not a bird that can be coaxed into view, but rather needs to be found while it is relaxed or feeding; the problem, apart from being so scarce, is its lethargic habits. Nonetheless, we do stand a reasonably good chance of success.



Satanic Nightjar by Clayton Burne

At twilight one morning, we will start birding in the montane forest for the scarce Cinnabar Boobook; and although uncommon, one of the first songs at dawn might be the vocal but secretive Great Shortwing that lurks in the thick understory. Near Lake Tambing we will search for feeding flocks given away by the sharp calls of Malia, a unique species of bulbul that forages on the moss-covered branches along with attending species such as Pygmy and Cerulean Cuckooshrikes, Sulawesi Drongo, Sulphur-vented Whistler, Rusty-bellied Fantail, Mountain and Black-crowned White-eyes, Turquoise Flycatcher, Citrine Canary-flycatcher and Sulawesi Leaf Warbler. Further searching should produce loose groups of Streak-headed White-eye, the brightly coloured Blue-

fronted Blue Flycatcher singing from vine tangles, our first Fiery-browed Starlings, Sulawesi Myzomela and Dark-eared Myza.



Sulawesi Pitta by David Hoddinott

The extensive upper montane forest inside the reserve is mostly inaccessible due to the area's ruggedness, but the Anaso track climbs the slopes of Gunung Rorekatimbu, the highest peak in the park at just over 2,500 meters, allowing us to search for high montane specialities. Before dawn we will drive as far as possible up this bumpy track, likely finding Satanic Nightjar hawking insects along the way; although we have a fair chance of locating this richly patterned species later in the day at one of its roosting sites. Because of heavy rains in recent years, the bridge here has completely washed out so we will need to hike the remainder of the track to reach the highest elevations possible. Red-eared Fruit Dove and Grey-headed Imperial Pigeon sometimes sit out in the early morning, and our first Purple-bearded Bee-eater is likely to be found near its breeding areas along exposed earthen embankments. We will undoubtedly be constantly serenaded by the timid Chestnut-backed Bush Warbler, although it may take a few tries to be sure everyone sees this surprisingly attractive species. Other species to keep an eye out for here include White-eared Myza and the flighty Mountain Serin. It will take a bit of luck, but we will keep our eyes peeled to the trail for subtle movements in the hope of finding the bizarre Geomalia that can sometimes be found hopping along the path, a large disproportionate bird somewhat reminiscent of Madagascar's ground rollers!

Overhead in Lore Lindu National Park, we can watch for Citrine and Ornate Lorikeets, while noisy Golden-mantled Racket-tails shoot by overhead and, with time in this habitat, we have a good chance of finding this species perched on flowering trees. Vibrant Grosbeak Starlings can also be found nesting colonially in tower-block fashion in the trunks of dead trees. As the days warm up we can also watch for raptors such as Sulawesi Serpent Eagle, Barred Honey Buzzard and Sulawesi Hawk-Eagle soaring above the forest.

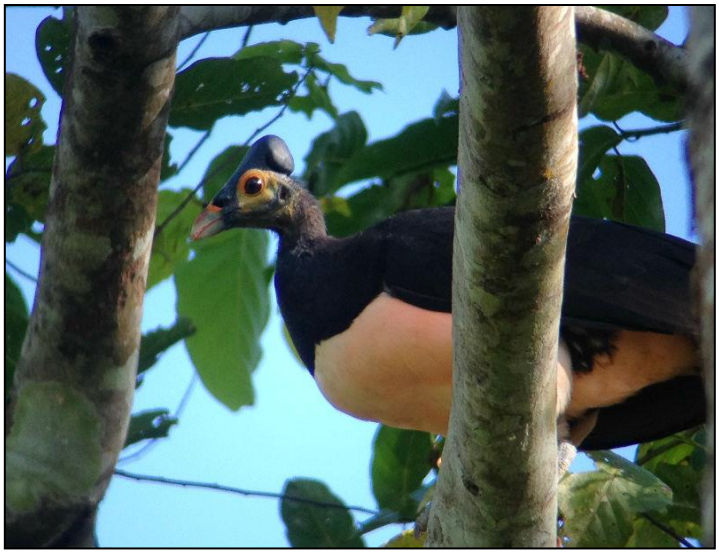


Knob-billed Hornbill by Adam Riley

Day 6: Morning in Lore Lindu National Park and return to Palu. This morning we will continue birding through Lore Lindu National Park.

A number of scarcer species are possible during our visit and we will make concerted efforts to catch up with the sluggish Hylocitrea, a species that has been elevated to monotypic family status. Fruiting trees sometimes produce views of the shy Sulawesi Thrush as well as the uncommon Crimson-crowned Flowerpecker, and we should be on the lookout for the gigantic Sombre Pigeon, Blue-faced and Tawny-

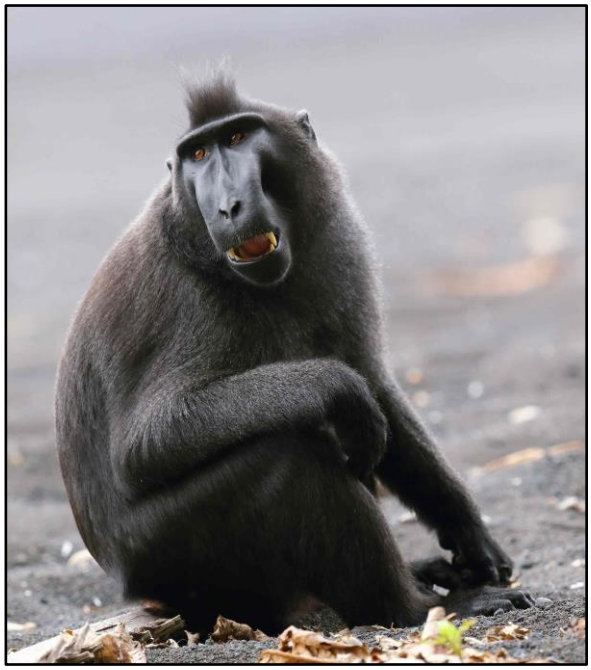
breasted Parrotfinches and the distinctive song of Maroon-backed Whistler. Sulawesi Cuckoo is also a poorly-known resident in this forest, but even rarer is the near-mythical Sulawesi Woodcock. In the afternoon, we will take the return journey to Palu, stopping en route to bird a few open country sites before checking into our comfortable hotel.



Maleo by David Erterius

Day 7: Fly to Manado and transfer to Dumoga-Bone National Park. Today we will fly to the city of Manado in northern Sulawesi and take the lengthy drive onwards to Dumoga-Bone National Park, stopping along the way if conditions look favourable for birding. If time allows upon our arrival, we can cross the stream behind our accommodation and enter the lowland forest adjacent the park where we have our first opportunity to find White-faced Dove, Yellow-breasted Racket-tail, Bay Coucal retiring in the thickets, scarce Sulawesi Hornbill and even Sulawesi Pitta, which is often quite vocally common in this area. Spotlighting at night can be very rewarding with Sulawesi Scops Owl, Great Eared Nightjar and Ochre-bellied Boobook all recorded in the vicinity.

Days 8 & 9: Dumoga-Bone National Park. We have two days to explore the primarily lowland forest of Dumoga-Bone, though there is also some montane forest on the slopes of the surrounding mountains that we will access as well. Human exploitation of the area's habitat, unfortunately, continues to create challenges here, but the forest still supports a wide variety of our target birds, including further chances for many of the lower elevation species that are now rare or absent from Lore Lindu National Park.

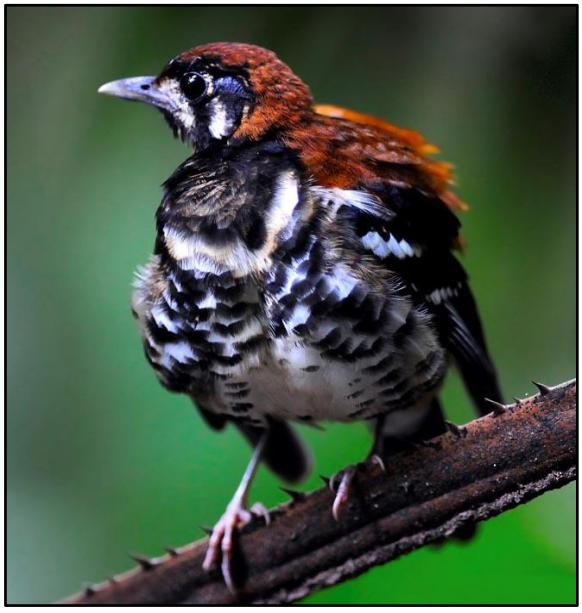


Celebes Crested Macaque by Adam Riley

One of our primary targets is the increasingly difficult Maleo, a surprisingly attractive megapode that, like its cousin, the Melanesian Megapode of the Bismarck Archipelago and Solomon Islands, digs a hole in the ground to lay its eggs so as to take advantage of the volcanic heat for brooding, rather than building the more traditional vegetation-covered mound.

A colonial nester, the Maleo's eggs are then often left unattended since the eggs are incubated by the natural warmth of the ground. Unfortunately, however, this fact is well known amongst the locals, so human collections continue to wreak havoc on the native population, which in turn makes the species increasingly difficult to find. Regardless, with patience here we stand a good chance of locating this unique and interesting bird.

During our time in the forest on the other side of the river at Toraut, we will be looking for the localised Pied Cuckooshrike, Yellow-breasted Racket-tail (that are often heard before seen), and the beautifully patterned Oberholser's Fruit Dove. Sulawesi is simply brilliant for kingfishers and two species we will be searching for here are the exquisite Lilac Kingfisher and tiny, jewel-like Sulawesi Dwarf Kingfisher that darts rapidly through the forest. Although mammals are not conspicuous in Dumoga-Bone, we should find several possible species of squirrels and perhaps a Bear Cuscus or Tonkean Macaque. With luck, we might even stumble upon the rarely-seen Sulawesi Ground Dove or encounter the elusive Red-backed Thrush foraging along the edge of the trail.



Red-backed Thrush by Rich Lindie

Day 10: Morning at Gunung Ambang and continue to Tangkoko Nature Reserve. We will set out very early this morning to the higher elevations of Gunung Ambang once again for some nocturnal birding in case there are species we may still need to catch up with. At dawn we will be listening for calls from the elusive Scaly-breasted Kingfisher that we hope to pinpoint, as well as the localised Matinan Blue Flycatcher only found in this region of Sulawesi. After some final highland birding, we will undertake the return drive to Manado and continue to Tangkoko Nature Reserve, where the coastal and lowland forest supports a good range of Wallacean birds.

Day 11: Tangkoko Nature Reserve. Sulawesi Nightjar can sometimes be found hawking insects over the forest here before dawn, and as the sun illuminates the forest, we will be watching for the secretive Green-backed Kingfisher that often reveals its presence by its distinctive whistled call.



Green-backed Kingfisher by Adam Riley

The outrageous Knobbed Hornbill seems to be especially common here, while Black-naped Fruit Dove, the unusual Blue-backed Parrot, Yellow-billed Malkoha, Pygmy Hanging Parrot and Sulawesi Pygmy Woodpecker are all possibilities; we'll also be seeking out views of White-rumped Cuckooshrike and the robust Ashy Woodpecker. Spending time in the various habitats throughout Sulawesi maximises our chances of coming across low-density *accipiters* such as Spot-tailed, Vinous-breasted and Dwarf Sparrowhawks.

Mammals are also a great feature of this reserve and we will almost certainly locate the wacky and endearing Sulawesi Crested Macaque, as we wait for the darling Spectral Tarsier to emerge from its fig tree roost in the early evening. We also have the opportunity to take a boat trip up Lembeh Strait to

maximise our chances of seeing the monstrous Great-billed Kingfisher in the mangrove forests, and potentially find Sulawesi Masked Owl on its cliff-side day roost.



Standardwing by Ignacio Yufera

Day 12: Manado to Buli via Ternate and transfer to Subaim. The largest island of the Moluccan Archipelago, Halmahera was once a vital part of the historical trade of cloves, nutmeg and mace that gave this region the nickname 'Spice Islands'. Today, expanding human populations and agricultural pressure for coconut and sago palm plantations have sadly destroyed much of the pristine rainforest that once cloaked the hillsides.

Departing in the morning, we will transfer to the airport in Manado to catch a flight to the island of Halmahera, landing at Ternate. The flight is rather spectacular since Ternate is located on an imposing cone-shaped volcanic island, rising over 1,700m above the surrounding sea.

After arriving in Ternate, we shall take a scheduled ferry to Sofifi before driving northwards to Subaim making several birding stops en route. At one of our stops, we'll search for Northern Golden Bulbul and the beautiful Common Paradise Kingfisher. Other possibilities include Cream-throated White-eye, Scarlet-breasted Fruit Dove and we may even be lucky to see the elusive Ivory-breasted Pitta. Continuing, we'll also keep a look out for Azure Dollarbird, an increasingly rare find in this area.



Moluccan Scops Owl by David Erterius

Day 13: Foli. Halmahera lies further to the east of Wallace's Line than Sulawesi, and consequently its avifauna contains a higher proportion of Australasian elements such as the sprightly Willie Wagtail, Shining Flycatcher and Spangled Drongo. Parrots occur in abundance, with possibilities including Violet-necked and Chattering Lory, Red-flanked Lorikeet, Red-cheeked, Eclectus and the extremely handsome Great-billed Parrots, and White Cockatoo, which still remains fairly common despite the ongoing forest clearance. Pigeons are in close competition and we will be searching for Scarlet-breasted, Blue-capped and Grey-headed Fruit Doves, Spectacled and Pied Imperial Pigeons, as well as very small chances of Great Cuckoo-Dove and Nicobar Pigeon.

Perhaps the most remarkable bird on Halmahera is the magnificent Standardwing, an exceptional bird-of-paradise that performs a whimsical canopy display in the

early morning. Setting out well before dawn, we will be in position under the display tree by first light and will likely hear the harsh calls of this species even before it becomes completely visible. As the light improves, the male's flamboyant white standards and metallic green epaulettes become brighter, and if a female arrives to check out the lek site we will be in for a real exhibition of spectacular leaps and wing folding!



Scarlet-breasted Fruit Dove by David Hoddinott

Another very exciting species we will be targeting in the surroundings is the sensational Ivory-breasted Pitta that is encountered in these forests. Its distinctive call will hopefully allow us to track down this most impressive species decorated with red, black, white and turquoise. Rustling in the undergrowth might reveal the presence of the scarce Dusky Megapode and, with luck, we may bump into the rare Moluccan Goshawk, Dusky Friarbird, or the almost unknown and aptly named Invisible Rail.

Day 14: Gunung Uni-uni to Ternate. The air whooshing through the mighty wings of Blyth's Hornbill will be a regular sound as we continue searching through the forest patches for Dusky-brown Oriole, Rufous-bellied Triller, Spectacled and White-naped Monarchs and the furtive Paradise-crow, which, despite its English name, is actually a bird-of-paradise! The booming sound of Goliath Coucal will eventually give away its presence, while we will also scan through the treetops for several cuckooshrike species, including Moluccan, White-bellied and the endemic Halmahera Cuckooshrikes. It will likely take some coaxing to produce the exquisite Common Paradise Kingfisher that tends to stay in thicker forested areas, and we will also be targeting the Variable Dwarf and Blue-and-white Kingfishers. Other possibilities during our time here include Northern Golden Bulbul, Variable Goshawk, the delightful Long-billed Crow, Moustached Treeswift, Moluccan Starling among the more numerous White-streaked Friarbird, Drab Whistler, Cream-throated White-eye, Halmahera Flowerpecker and Gurney's Eagle soaring overhead. If we are very fortunate, we may even see the scarce Moluccan King Parrot, which we have been fortunate to find on past tours.



Pale Blue Monarch by David Hoddinott

After lunch, we shall head back to Sofifi Harbour to board a ferry back to Ternate for the evening.

Day 15: Ternate to Manado, Gunung Mahawu. We have an early morning flight to Manado. On arrival, we shall head out to Gunung Mahawu for the remainder of the day. Our time here will be spent searching stake outs for the tricky Scaly-breasted Kingfisher while being entertained by Mountain and Black-fronted White-eye, perhaps some Barred Rails and the endemic Sulawesi Blue Flycatcher. We also have good chances of finding White-bellied Imperial Pigeon, Citrine Flycatcher, Rusty-backed Thrush, Sulawesi Myzomela, Isabelline Bush-hen, Sulawesi Pygmy Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Malkoha and the recently split Sultan's Cuckoo-dove. After an invigorating day, we shall head back to Manado for the night, passing through agricultural fields where the mega Blue-faced Rail has been spotted previously – while highly improbable, we shall keep our eyes peeled anyway.



Scaly-breasted Kingfisher by David Hoddinott

Day 16: Final departure. After breakfast, we shall head to Manado airport where the tour will conclude.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs and spaces available for this tour are displayed on our website. Please see under IMPORTANT NOTES below.

This includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 16;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- Ground transportation;
- Ferry transportation where necessary;
- Reserve entrance fees;
- Extra activities as mentioned in the itinerary; and
- All guiding services (including tips for local guides and services).

The tour fee does not include:

- Visa fees;
- **ANY** flights;
- Any beverages;
- Special gratuities;
- Telephone calls and
- Laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

a) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.

b) Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.

c) Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader/s at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If, therefore, you feel that he/they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them.

Special Notes:

- This tour involves some moderate walking with a couple strenuous hikes possible at Lore Lindu. You should be in good health and of reasonable fitness to undertake this tour. If you have any physical limitations or medical conditions of any sort, please do let the Rockjumper office know in advance.
- We will be birding in some remote areas well away from modern medical facilities.
- Many of the hotels are of reasonable standard during the tour, although in some areas where we will be staying the only accommodations available are basic guesthouses with no hot water and shared facilities.
- Transport is in comfortable vehicles, each person having a window seat, and 4x4 vehicles where required. The roads are mostly in fair condition, although we will encounter some curvy roadways with potholes, while in a few areas we have rougher unpaved roads to traverse. Due to the nature of the topography, there is the possibility of landslides interfering with our trip, though we have minimised this risk by undertaking the tour during the drier season.
- Most days in the lowlands will be hot, dry and sunny, but overcast conditions are fairly frequent and some rain, heavy at times, can be expected. In montane areas, it will range from very cool to warm. The humidity is often rather high.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include **ANY** airfares. The tour will depart from Sultan Hasanuddin International Airport, Makassar (IATA: UPG) by 11:00 on day 1, however, we highly recommend that you arrive in the day before the tour starts to ensure that no delays are incurred. The tour will conclude at Sam Ratulangi International Airport, Manado (IATA: MDC) after breakfast on day 16.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:

Jakarta or Bali are the main ports of entry for international flights into Indonesia. Connecting flights are easily arranged to Sultan Hasanuddin International Airport, Makassar (IATA: UPG) or Sam Ratulangi International Airport, Manado (IATA: MDC). **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**