# Papua New Guinea

## New Britain Extension



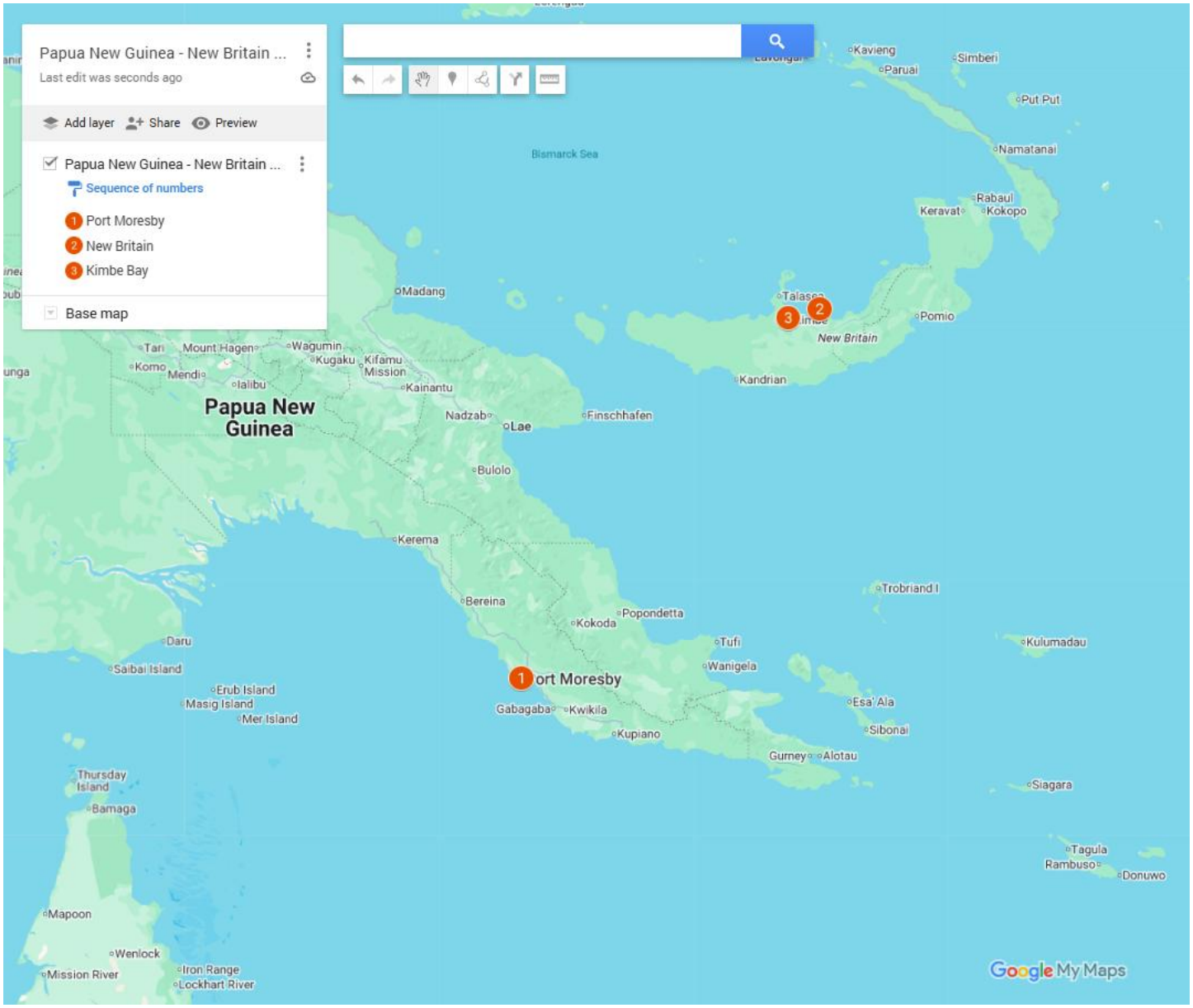
**Golden Masked Owl by Lev Frid**

*New Britain is the largest island in the Bismarck Archipelago and supports an exceptional variety of seldom seen and highly localised endemic birds. Situated between the Bismarck and Solomon Seas, this long, narrow and mountainous island stretches for more than 600km (375 miles) yet is only around 80km (50 miles) across at its widest point. Its volcanic origins are evident throughout, with the fertile but heavily exploited landscapes of the east contrasting sharply with the more remote and sparsely developed western half of the island, where outside influences only became significant during and after the Second World War.*

*For birders, New Britain remains one of the most exciting and comparatively little-explored islands in the region. Its extensive forests harbour a remarkable suite of special birds, headed by such highly prized species as Golden Masked Owl, Black Honey Buzzard, Blue-eyed Cockatoo, New Britain Boobook and New Britain Kingfisher, alongside numerous other Bismarck endemics and regional specialities. Our New Britain extension gives us the opportunity to search for these distinctive birds while enjoying superb birding amid rugged volcanic scenery and lush tropical forest, together with fabulous coastal landscapes, brilliant snorkelling and some of the best accommodation and food encountered during our time in Papua New Guinea.*

# *Itinerary & Map*

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| **Day 1** | **Port Moresby; flight to New Britain** |
| **Days 2 to 4** | **New Britain** |
| **Day 5** | **New Britain; flight to Port Moresby & depart** |



## *Birding sites in detail*



**Island Imperial Pigeon by Lev Frid**

**Kimbe Bay & surrounds.** We will spend our time birding several forest sites and reserves from our Kimbe Bay base. Many of New Britain's lowland endemics can be found at these sites along with more widespread but no less desirable and eye-catching species. The lodge gardens offer Sacred and Common Kingfishers, New Britain Friarbird, Shining Flycatcher, Black and Sahul Sunbirds and Variable Goshawk.

We will spend time in forested habitats searching for such specialities as Black Honey Buzzard, the scarce, White-mantled Kingfisher, spectacular Black-capped Paradise Kingfisher, tiny New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher, Melanesian Kingfisher, huge Violaceous and distinctive White-necked Coucals, Bismarck Monarch, active Ashy and Black-bellied Myzomelas, the attractive Red-banded Flowerpecker, Velvet Flycatcher, Long-tailed Myna, White-rumped Swiftlet and Bismarck Crow.

Other more widespread species we hope to encounter include Pacific Baza, Moustached Treeswift, Shining Bronze, Channel-billed and Sahul Brush Cuckoos, Rainbow Bee-eater, magnificent Blyth's Hornbill, White-bellied and Barred Cuckooshrikes, Northern Fantail and Varied Triller. We will be sure to spend some time searching for Melanesian Megapode at their breeding colonies amongst the volcanically heated soil in the forest at Garu Wildlife Management Area. Nicobar Pigeons can often be found feeding in forest patches and we hope to be able to visit a roosting site of New Britain Boobooks.

Columbids and Psittacids are well represented on the island and include the more widespread Bar-tailed and Amboyna Cuckoo-Doves, Stephan's Emerald Dove, Superb Fruit Dove, minuscule Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot, Papuan Eclectus and Red-flanked Lorikeet. Of the endemics, we will be looking for Red-knobbed, Black, Yellowish and Finsch's Imperial Pigeons, elusive Pied Cuckoo-Dove, Knob-billed Fruit Dove, Blue-eyed Cockatoo, gaudy Purple-bellied Lory, scarce Song Parrot, Red-chinned Lorikeet and Bismarck Hanging Parrot.



**New Britain Dwarf Kingfisher by Lev Frid**

Many rare and little-known species inhabit the lowland forests of New Britain and some particularly poorly known species that we have at least a chance of encountering are Pink-legged Rail, Bismarck Kingfisher, Bismarck Pitta and perhaps even Slaty-mantled Goshawk or New Britain Sparrowhawk. Of



**Black Honey Buzzard by Stephan Lorenz**

greatest interest is the chance to search for the extraordinary Golden Masked Owl. Until its rediscovery in the Kimbe area in 2015, this New Britain endemic had gone several decades without a confirmed sighting. A Rockjumper group subsequently became the first birding tour to see the species since the early 1980s. With considerably greater knowledge of its habits and whereabouts today, we now have a realistic chance of encountering this remarkable owl during our nocturnal explorations.

More open habitats are worth exploring as well and it is here that we will search for the endemic Buff-bellied Mannikin, along with Buff-banded Rail, King Quail, Australian Reed Warbler and the interesting local form of Papuan Grassbird.

**Kimbe Bay islets.** We will embark on a half day boat trip into Kimbe Bay, to visit some of the smaller islets in search of local specialities and species associated with these offshore islands. These include Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove, Island Imperial Pigeon, Beach Kingfisher, Island Monarch, Mangrove Golden Whistler, Sclater's Myzomela and the beautifully adorned Nicobar Pigeon, while White-bellied Sea Eagle and Osprey may be spotted soaring overhead.

During our journey to and from the islands, we may also encounter Lesser Frigatebird, Brown Booby, Black and Brown Noddy and a variety of terns, including Bridled, Greater Crested, Black-naped, Common and Roseate. Exposed mudflats near our accommodation could yield Eurasian Whimbrel, Grey-tailed Tattler, Greater Sand Plover or Pacific Reef Heron.



**Melanesian Megapode by Erik Forsyth**

After what promises to be a very productive and exciting morning's birding, we then have the added opportunity to don masks, snorkels and flippers and partake in some excellent snorkelling off Restorf Island. The crystal-clear ocean here is a deep turquoise blue and teems with the most elaborately coloured fish one could ever imagine. More than 900 species of reef fish and around 600 species of coral have been recorded from the waters of West New Britain, making this one of the most biologically diverse marine regions on Earth

## *Tour Grading & Key*

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| **Overall Ease** |  | Moderate. Suitable for all birding/wildlife interest levels and most participants with reasonable mobility. |
| **Birding Ease** |  | Moderate, several canopy species. Some difficult target species. |
| **Accommodation** |  | Comfortable lodge for the entire extension. |
| **Walking / Trails** |  | Mostly birding on roads through the rain forest. Some trails with uneven ground. Optional tough hike time permitting. |
| **Vehicles / Roads** |  | Driving distances are short but can be time consuming depending on weather conditions. The boat trip is within the relatively sheltered waters of Kimbe Bay and conditions are usually calm. |
| **Photography** |  | Reasonable, typical rain forest conditions of variable light & frequent rain. |
| **Annoyances** |  | Rain to be expected, some trails can get muddy. |

## *Financial Arrangements and Important Notes*

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 5;
- Bottled drinking water, tea and coffee at meals;
- All lodgings;
- All ground transportation during the tour;
- All reserve entrance fees;
- All guiding services;
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights (except as stated above);
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels);
- Optional excursions & activities;
- Telephone calls, 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.

**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 you feel that they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is 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. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as closely to the original program as possible.**

**IMPORTANT – Internal Flights in Papua New Guinea**

Internal air services in Papua New Guinea are highly unreliable. Flights may be delayed, rescheduled or cancelled outright, sometimes with little or no notice. Cancellations can result in delays of several days, and alternative scheduled flights may not be available.

Although uncommon, serious disruption may require substantial changes to the itinerary, additional accommodation or ground transport, rerouting, or the use of a privately chartered aircraft to continue the tour. Any additional costs arising from such disruption, including charter flights, accommodation, transport or other associated expenses, will be for the affected guests account and should be claimed from your travel insurers.

By booking a Papua New Guinea tour, guests should be aware and accept that significant aviation disruption is a genuine risk of travelling in the country. Rockjumper cannot guarantee the operation of scheduled internal flights or absorb additional costs arising from airline cancellations, or other circumstances beyond our control. Guests must ensure that their travel insurance provides adequate cover for these types of disruption and associated expenses.

## *Arrival and Departure Details*

The New Britain extension begins on Day 1 with the flight from Port Moresby to Hoskins and concludes on Day 5 upon our return to Port Moresby. **We strongly recommend that guests overnight in Port Moresby following the extension and do not book an international departure on the same day as the scheduled domestic flight from New Britain.**

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.

Port Moresby International Airport (IATA: POM) is the main port of entry for international flights into Papua New Guinea.

Rockjumper will book all domestic flights of this tour on your behalf.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

**DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.**