The Philippines

Endangered Endemics

11th March to 31st March 2023 (21 days)

Visayan Islands Extension

31st March to 7th April 2023 (8 days)



Coleto by Dubi Shapiro

Composed of 7,107 islands strewn across a vast stretch of tropical sea, the Philippines occupy the unenviable position of harbouring the most birds facing imminent extinction. Many of these critically endangered yet spectacular species survive only in increasingly shrinking remnants of habitat. During our tour, we can expect to encounter close to 150 endemic birds and many other spectacular migrants and residents. Our Endangered Endemics tour explores the Philippines' three largest islands. On Luzon, we visit sites for Stripe-headed Rhabdornis, Scale-feathered Malkoha, Coleto, the sensational Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove, secretive Whiskered Pitta and recently discovered Chocolate Boobook. Mindanao hosts the largest tracts of remaining lowland forest and here we search for the secretive Wattled Broadbill, Azure-breasted Pitta and beautiful Philippine Trogon. The forested slopes of Mount Kitanglad are the most reliable site for the magnificent Philippine (Monkey-eating) Eagle, this giant raptor is often rated as the world's single-most desirable bird! Here we will also search for another recently discovered bird, Bukidnon Woodcock, as well as Apo Myna and Giant Scops Owl. On Palawan, white sandy beaches, extensive coral reefs and an underground river make a spectacular backdrop for several

specials we are likely to find. Highlights include the mound-building Philippine Megapode, Philippine and Hooded Pittas, the incredibly beautiful Blue Paradise Flycatcher and glittering Palawan Peacock-Pheasant.

Our extension to the amazing Visayan Islands takes in the smaller islands of Cebu, Bohol and Negros where we target some highly sought-after birds, including Cebu Flowerpecker, Azure-breasted Pitta, Flame-templed Babbler and Visayan Broadbill. This extension also provides chances for the strange Philippine Tarsier and Philippine Colugo, while the Chocolate Hills scenery is simply spell-binding!

Itinerary & Map

Endangered Endemics

Day 1	**Arrival in Manila**
Day 2	**Manila to Banaue via La Mesa Park & Candaba Marsh**
Days 3 & 4	**Mount Polis**
Day 5	**Mount Polis to Subic Bay**
Day 6	**Subic Bay**
Day 7	**Subic Bay to Los Banos**
Day 8	**Mount Makiling**
Day 9	**Mount Makiling to Mount Kitinglad via Manila**
Days 10 & 11	**Mount Kitinglad**
Day 12	**Mount Kitinglad to Davao**
Day 13	**Davao to Bislig**
Days 14 to 16	**PICOP**
Day 17	**PICOP to Manila via ComVal**
Day 18	**Manila to Puerto Princesa**
Days 19 & 20	**Puerto Princesa & Sabang**
Day 21	**Puerto Princesa to Manila & final departure**

Visayan Islands Extension

Day 1	**Arrival in Manila, flight to Bacolad**
Day 2	**Mount Canlaon**
Day 3	**Gawahan to Dumaguete via Bacolad**
Day 4	**Twin Lakes**
Day 5	**Dumaguete to Bohol**
Day 6	**Rajah Sikatuna National Park**
Day 7	**Bohol to Cebu**
Day 8	**Tabunan to Manila & final departure**


Philippines
Candaba Marsh
Subic Bay
Infanta Rd
Manila
Mt. Makiling
Quezon
Bacolod
Mt. Canlaon
Cebu
St. Paul's NP
Puerto Princesa
Rajah Sikatuna NP
Dumaguete
Bislig
Mt. Kitinglad
Davao
US Dept of State Geographer
Image Landsat / Copernicus
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Google Earth

Birding sites in detail



Ashy Thrush by David Hoddinott

La Mesa. This small park near Manila has an area of forested trails where we will search for Ashy Thrush, Lowland White-eye and both Hooded and Philippine Pitta.

Candaba Marsh. We'll bird the inconspicuous Candaba Marsh for several waterbirds, that may include Philippine Duck, Philippine Swamphen, Barred and Buff-banded Rail, Plain Bush-hen, White-browed Crake, Watercock and up to three species of bittern, namely Yellow, Cinnamon and the scarce Black.

Mount Polis. We'll be birding early to find the rarely seen Luzon Scops Owl before dawn; though its soft call can be difficult to hear unless we are very close. We'll bird the tar road through stunted montane vegetation and dense secondary growth. The songs of Green-backed Whistler and cryptic Long-tailed Bush Warbler will likely alert us to the presence of these Luzon mountain endemics, and we'll be keeping a watchful eye for the scarce Mountain Shrike that sits up on exposed snags. We'll need to be quick, however, to see the rare Montane Racket-tail, which calls shrilly while flying high overhead, while roadside flowers could attract the glittering Luzon Sunbird and, with luck, perhaps a pair of localised Flame-crowned Flowerpecker.

Mixed flocks often contain the active Blue-headed Fantail and Chestnut-faced Babbler, and we will listen for the bubbling song of Citrine Canary-flycatcher that is sometimes in attendance, as well as the sparse population of White-cheeked Bullfinch. At midday, we will then drive further along the mountain road, where we can scan for the localised Luzon Water Redstart that is sometimes found perched on rocks between the swift river rapids.

From here we will also see the magnificent rice terraces of Banaue, extravagantly carved out of the mountains over two thousand years ago with only the aid of primitive hand tools. Unfortunately, some birds continue to become more difficult to find due to relentless habitat loss and trapping, and we should count ourselves very fortunate if we are able to catch a glimpse of the rare White-browed Jungle Flycatcher, Philippine Bush Warbler or the striking Flame-breasted Fruit Dove.

Infanta Road. This road is home to the highly sought-after Whiskered Pitta, a bird of forested hillslopes. If we are lucky, the birds may be calling, which would enhance our chances of seeing this rare bird. Mixed flocks here often contain the active Blue-headed Fantail, recently split Bicol Ground Warbler, Philippine Bulbul, Balicassiao, Coleto, Bar-bellied Cuckoo-shrike, Olive-backed Flowerpecker, Philippine Fairy Bluebird, Sulphur-billed Nuthatch, Elegant Tit and we will listen for the bubbling song of Citrine Canary-flycatcher that is sometimes in attendance.



Philippine Trogon by David Hoddinott



Whiskered Pitta by David Hoddinott

Many other highly sought-after species can be found here, including Barred Rail, Plain Bushhen, Rufous and Luzon Hornbills, attractive Flame-breasted, Yellow-breasted and Cream-bellied Fruit Doves, Philippine Cuckoo-Dove, Ameline Swiftlet, Scale-feathered Malkoha, Blue-throated Bee-eater, White-throated Kingfisher, the smart Blue-headed and Philippine Pied Fantail, Amethyst Brown Dove, Stripe-headed Rhabdornis, White-browed Shama, Lemon-throated Leaf Warbler, Philippine and Yellow-wattled Bulbul, Brown and Long-tailed Shrikes, Flaming and Luzon Sunbirds, while overhead we will watch for Philippine Hawk-Eagle, Philippine Serpent Eagle, Guaiabero, Purple Needletail and Blue-crowned Racket-tail.

Subic Bay. Subic Bay has tall tropical forests in which we'll search for several scarce Luzon endemics. At dawn, it is sometimes possible to see thousands of Philippine and Golden-crowned Flying Foxes returning to daytime roosts before we arrive at our birding site. Among other more widespread Philippine specialities, we will specifically be targeting the localised Green Racket-tail that often whizzes past through the canopy, the tangle-loving Rufous Coucal, Rough-crested Malkoha, Blackish Cuckooshrike, the scarce arboreal White-lored Oriole (rare) and the seldom-seen White-fronted Tit (rare). Although uncommon, Northern Sooty Woodpecker is regularly encountered at this site and we should be able to find this massive woodpecker as well as more widespread species, including Luzon Flameback, huge White-bellied Woodpecker, Whiskered Treeswift, Purple Needletail and perhaps Blue-naped Parrot. Night birding in this area may produce Chocolate and Luzon Boobooks and Philippine Scops Owl, although we would have to be extremely lucky to stumble across the rare Philippine Eagle-Owl.

Los Banos. Cultivated fields in the area host Barred Rail, Barred and the endemic Spotted Buttonquail, White-breasted Waterhen, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Hair-crested Drongo, Coppersmith Barbet, Philippine Pygmy Woodpecker, Striated Swallow, Glossy and Pygmy Swiftlet and Asian Palm Swift, Striated Grassbird, White-breasted Woodswallow, Scaly-breasted Munia, Zitting Cisticola and Paddyfield Pipit.

Mount Makiling. Mount Makiling harbours several of The Philippines' fantastic forest birds. Normally the initial sounds typical of the forest are the eloquent White-browed Shama and the haunting calls of one of the most stunning kingfishers in the world, Spotted Wood Kingfisher. Proceeding slowly and quietly, we should have great views of these charismatic species and if we are very fortunate, we might find the secretive Ashy Thrush feeding on the side of the road.



Philippine Eagle-Owl by David Hoddinott

The small network of steep dirt roads here follows the natural contours of the mountain ridges where the bordering forest, often dense in many places, supports a vast number of Philippine endemics. These include the shy White-eared Brown Dove, Philippine Pygmy Woodpecker, Coleto, Philippine



Hombron's Kingfisher by Erik Forsyth

Bulbul, Balicassiao, the stunning Elegant Tit, Sulphur-billed Nuthatch, skulky Grey-backed Tailorbird, Yellow-bellied Whistler and both Red-keeled and Striped Flowerpeckers. The strident calls of small flocks of tiny Guaiabero may alert us to look upwards, where we will also be keeping an eye out for whirling groups of Pygmy Swiftlets. As it warms up, we also hope to have our first encounter with the impressive and often vocal Philippine Serpent Eagle. The noisy song of Philippine Hawk-Cuckoo should eventually give away its location, while roadside flowers attract the endemic Flaming Sunbird. Mount Makiling is also one of the best sites for the outrageous Scale-feathered and Rough-crested Malkohas, which move mostly silently below the canopy in search of insects and caterpillars, and we will also keep an ear out for the mournful calls of the rare Luzon Bleeding-heart.

Mount Kitinglad. Local porters will meet us in Damitan, to assist and load our luggage onto packhorses for the ascent up the slopes of Mount Kitinglad. Our hike uphill through secondary cultivation and scrub takes us past long stretches of subsistence farming plots before finally arriving at our lodge. The ascent is not particularly difficult, and normally takes about two hours of steady walking at a manageable, unrushed pace.

The basic lodge here comprises a large open-air room upstairs where we sleep dormitory style on the wooden floor; all mattresses/bedding will be provided. There will also be large tents available outside for anyone who wishes for a little more privacy. All our food and drinks will be carted up the mountain by horse and our cooks will serve us excellent meals.

We'll start birding in the vicinity of the lodge, an area that has proved consistently productive. As the surrounding forest comes alive with evening sounds, we will listen carefully for the recently discovered Bukidnon Woodcock that can sometimes be glimpsed roding through the forest gaps. There are also many other nocturnal possibilities here, including the fantastic Philippine Frogmouth, Great Eared and Philippine Nightjars, the difficult Mindanao Scops Owl and a good chance at tracking down the incredible Giant Scops Owl.



Chocolate Boobook by David Hoddinott

We have plenty of time to explore the surrounding mountainsides and this is our best opportunity to find one of the greatest and most highly prized birds on earth – the iconic Philippine Eagle. This unique and spectacular eagle specialises in feeding primarily on the arboreal Philippine Colugo, often referred to as a 'flying lemur'. It is a raptor of extremely low density so to maximise our chances for observation, we will need to scan very carefully at specific vantage points, a sometimes, tedious waiting process that may require great patience.



Philippine Eagle by Forrest Rowland

During our investigations of the mountain, we utilise the many local trails in efforts to locate the more than two dozen montane endemics that occur on these slopes. As much of the area is secondary scrub under cultivation, the walking in these mountains is generally not too difficult, although on at least one of these days we will ascend from the camp at 1,350m to 1,800m in search of highland specialities such as Apo Sunbird, Mindanao White-eye (often associating with mixed flocks), and the beautiful Apo Myna.

Along the way, we will be stopping frequently in appropriate habitat in efforts to find the striking Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove, McGregor's Cuckooshrike, the uncommon Stripe-breasted Rhabdornis, Rufous-headed Tailorbird, charismatic Black-and-cinnamon Fantail that normally accompany loose bird parties, Grey-hooded Sunbird, Amethyst Brown Dove, Cinnamon Ibon and the uncommon Olive-capped Flowerpecker that moves around in altitude responding to fruiting vegetation.

Mindanao Racket-tail, often first heard screeching from afar, is still regularly seen flying overhead in the mornings and occasionally perched, and we will also keep our eyes skywards for the endemic Philippine Swiftlet. Other more difficult species we will be looking for on the mountain include the smart-looking Red-eared Parrotfinch that often disappears into dense vegetation without a trace, spectacular but thinly distributed Hombron's Kingfisher, the rare Slaty-backed (Goodfellow's) Jungle Flycatcher, and retiring Bagobo Babbler that skulks across the forest floor like a rodent.

PICOP. This is an extensive logging concession and although the forest is disappearing at an alarming rate, not only due to logging but also because of the enormous squatter population that burns the forest, it is surprisingly rich in birds and still holds some excellent species.



Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove by David Hoddinott

Arriving before dawn, we will listen for the haunting calls of Chocolate Boobook and try to track down an Everett's Scops Owl in the same area. Early morning is also a great time to scan for birds perching on top of snags over the forest, and here we have chances to find Blue-crowned Racket-tail, the uncommon Blue-backed Parrot and the rapidly declining Pink-bellied and Spotted Imperial Pigeons. Following up on the calls of Black-chinned Fruit Dove should eventually produce views of this attractive species, but it will likely require patient scanning through the forest interior to see the gorgeous Philippine Trogon, Philippine Leafbird, reticent Black-faced Coucal, Black-bibbed Cicadabird, Yellowish Bulbul, Philippine Oriole, the beautiful Rufous Paradise Flycatcher, Olive-backed Flowerpecker, Mindanao Blue Fantail, Naked-faced Spiderhunter and the dazzling Short-crested Monarch.



Lina's Sunbird by David Hoddinott

Searching for skulking birds in the undergrowth, we will ened a good does of luck to find Azure-breasted Pitta, but may far better in luring out Mindanao Pygmy and Rusty-crowned Babblers, Brown Tit-Babbler, Striated Wren-Babbler, the vocal Philippine Leaf Warbler, Rufous-fronted and striking Black-headed Tailorbirds, the shy Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher and with persistence, we might manage a view of the rare Little Slaty Flycatcher. Pinsker's Hawk-Eagle and sometimes a Philippine Honey Buzzard occasionally soars overhead on thermals, while Philippine Spine-tailed Swift and Purple Needletail are a more regular sight. It will likely take persistence to locate a Winchell's (Rufous-lored) Kingfisher in the dense forest mid-story; much easier will be scanning the small freshwater pools and forest streams for the outrageous Southern Silvery Kingfisher. Three endemic hornbills are also found in this forest concession: Writhed Hornbill, which is often first heard by the loud whooshing of its wings, large Rufous, and the smaller but no less spectacular Mindanao Hornbill.

Although mammals are few and far between during this tour, we should come across Philippine Pygmy Squirrel and Mindanao Tree Squirrel during our time at PICOP. One evening at dusk, if time and conditions allow, we will also visit the grassland surrounding the Bisling Airport, where previously we have observed Eastern Grass Owl hunting low over the tall reeds, Philippine Duck, Black and Yellow Bittern, Lesser Coucal, King Quail and White-browed Crake.

Davao. A nearby forested stream holds Cryptic Flycatcher and Southern Silvery Kingfisher. A pre-dawn walk near our lodge might produce Giant Scops Owl and Philippine Frogmouth, before we embark on a slow hike up a steep hill in search of the localised Whiskered Flowerpecker which have been found feeding regularly in this area. Other birds here may include Oriental Honey Buzzard, Brahminy Kite, Philippine Trogon and Philippine Spine-tailed Swift as well as Bicolored, Red-keeled and Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers.

ComVal. We'll spend a little time birding a site in the Compostela Valley. Our primary target here is Lina's Sunbird, but we may also get lucky and find Mindanao Brown Dove, Brown-breasted Kingfisher, Cinnamon Ibon or Bagobo Babbler.

St. Paul's National Park. Declared a World Heritage Site, the park is beautifully located between high limestone cliffs and white sandy beaches covered by a patch of dense pristine forest. Huge Asian Monitor Lizards, sometimes over six feet in length, scavenge across the trails, agile Long-tailed Macaques scamper playfully, and within the forest, Philippine Megapodes scratch leaf litter onto their gigantic mound nests. Scanning for shorebirds and egrets, might turn up the rare Chinese Egret.



Whiskered Flowerpecker by David Hoddinott

Ground-dwelling birds are particularly well represented within the reserve and besides



Hooded Pitta by Erik Forsyth

Philippine Megapode, we hope to see the secretive Philippine and Hooded Pittas, the latter of which is pleasantly common in the reserve. The striking Palawan Peacock-Pheasant, undoubtedly one of the most beautiful pheasants in the world, is present in the NP, but very difficult to see these days.

Another jewel of St. Paul's National Park is the famous Underground River that flows for miles until emptying into the sea. As an optional excursion, participants are welcome to board small canoes with battery-powered spotlights that enter from the turquoise lagoon into the dark depths of the cave. Believed to be one of the longest navigable underground rivers in the world, this is a magical experience, and we have the chance to observe an unbelievable selection of pristine cave formations.

Puerto Princesa. Oriental (Rufous-backed) Dwarf Kingfisher can often be heard dashing from one perch to the next as we search for the attractive Blue-headed Racket-tail, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Stork-billed and Ruddy Kingfishers, White-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Leafbird that might be found in a fruiting tree along with Sulphur-bellied Bulbul, White-vented Shama, Ashy-headed Babbler creeping through the undergrowth, Blue Paradise Flycatcher, Common Hill Myna and the beautifully coloured Palawan Flowerpecker.

Tall mangrove habitat in the area is likely to produce Copper-throated Sunbird whilst scenic forested stretches may reveal a variety of interesting species such as the endemic Palawan Hornbill, Lovely Sunbird and Palawan Tit, as well as a chance for the resident Oriental Hobby that has nested on nearby cliff ledges. With some luck we'll find a flock of Red-vented Cockatoo moving through. We will probably need to put in a good effort to find the tricky Palawan Flycatcher and secretive Falcated Wren-Babbler. We should have time to visit the nearby mangroves to look for wintering Chinese Egret if need be, whilst also picking up Striated Heron, Grey-tailed Tattler, Collared Kingfisher, Pied Triller and Olive-backed Sunbird.

We'll also target the localised Melodious Babbler and shy Palawan Flycatcher, both of which can be difficult in the dense tangled undergrowth of this tropical forest. The adjacent cultivated fields and flooded areas may also produce widespread but scarce species such as Watercock and Slaty-breasted Rail; while an organised walk through the grasslands also gives us the opportunity to try and flush out King Quail as well as Pintail and Swinhoe's Snipes.

Night birding in the area can be productive, and during at least one night here we will venture out in search of Palawan Frogmouth (split from Javan Frogmouth) and Palawan Scops Owl, which has an impossibly quiet call that we will need to listen for very carefully.



Palawan Peacock-Pheasant by Erik Forsyth



Flame-templed Babbler by David Hoddinott

Mount Canlaon. An early start will see us driving up the steep, bumpy slopes of Mount Canlaon. Although basketball is the official national sport of the Philippines, cockfighting would have to rank as the most popular rural pastime for men who can afford to raise them. As we ascend, we'll see fields of small wooden tents with roosters crowing atop almost every pinnacle!

The physical climb today is not too difficult; throughout the day we will ascend on foot through tropical forest from 400m up to 900m in elevation. Along the way, we will be listing for the harsh calls of the scarce White-winged Cuckooshrike as well as White-vented Whistler, the tough Visayan Hornbill, Black-belted (Visayan) Flowerpecker, the distinctive Visayan Fantail and Visayan Shama, both of which achieved full-species status recently. Another highlight today will be tracking down the incredibly patterned Flame-templed Babbler, a scarce species that usually gives away its presence by its melodious song given from dense tangles in the middle and lower story levels of the forest. Although extremely unlikely, we will also listen for the mournful calls of the critically endangered Negros Bleeding-heart that has all but been extirpated from the area by illegal trapping.

Gawahon. Another very early morning drive up and into the hills at Gawahon. Here we will take several trails and roadside birding searching for target species such as the scarce White-throated Jungle Flycatcher, White-browed Shortwing, Turquoise Flycatcher and Philippine Mountain Warbler, while streams in the area may hold the scarce Indigo-banded Kingfisher. This area will also give us a second chance for Flame-templed Babbler and White-winged Cuckooshrike if missed at Mount Canlaon.

Dumaguete area. The surrounding hills hold the endemic Negros Striped Babbler, a higher altitude species that very few birders have seen. Depending on the road condition, we should make it to within a few kilometres of the forest ridges, from where we will walk the remaining distance on foot, watching out for raptors and needletails over the degraded valley. In the forest proper, we have a very good chance at seeing our primary target, whilst a supporting cast consists of Yellow-faced Flameback, "Visayan" Balicassiao and White-winged Cuckooshrike.



Visayan Broadbill by David Hoddinott

Balinsasayao Twin Lakes. Walking long trails around the forested lake gives is chances for number of very exciting Visayan endemics that may include Crested Goshawk, Pink-bellied Imperial Pigeon, Blue-crowned Raquet-tails, Visayan Hornbills, White-eared Brown Dove, Yellow-faced Flameback, Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike, Philippine Needletail, Spotted Wood Kingfisher, Visayan Rhabdornis and Lemon-throated Leaf Warblers. "Visayan" Tailorbird and "Visayan Brown Dove" – future splits of Philippine Tailorbird and Amethyst Brown Dove respectively and



Philippine Frogmouth by David Hoddinott

both Maroon-naped Sunbird (recent split Flaming) and Magnificent Sunbird (split from Crimson). An evening of owling may produce Negros Scops Owl.

Bohol Island Ferry. During the ferry crossing, we will keep a lookout for Bulwers Petrel, Common, Black-naped and Aleutian Terns, which winters here in small numbers.

Rajah Sikatuna National Park. We will be birding along the narrow trails accessing a sizable tract of lush tropical forest. Although challenging to locate at other sites in the Philippines, the calls of Azure-breasted Pitta are fairly common here, and we have excellent chances of obtaining views of this colourful creature, as well as the uncommon Winchell's Kingfisher. In addition, we will be concentrating on locating the striking Yellow-breasted Tailorbird and Black-crowned Babbler, both of which hide in the dense undergrowth, and the terrestrial Striated Wren-Babbler. Samar Hornbills are normally seen here with some regularity, as well as Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher and Blue-crowned Racquet-tail - that screech noisily overhead. Two very difficult species that also inhabit this forest in inexplicably small numbers are the fantastic Visayan Broadbill and the very rare Mindanao Bleeding-heart, though we will require much luck in finding them!

Interestingly, there are a large number of frogs and lizards present in the reserve. These include the flying lizards of Asia (of the genus Draco), which have wing-like membranes connected to long expandable ribs on each side, enabling them to glide without ever coming to the ground.

Open patches surrounding the forest at dusk can be productive for Everett's Scops Owl and Philippine Frogmouth, as well as mammals that may include Philippine Tarsier, large numbers of Philippine Flying Fox and the incredible gliding Philippine Colugo - a large arboreal mammal that has generous amounts of skin membrane between its forelimbs and tail helping it to glide extreme distances from tree to tree, and one of only two representatives of a very bizarre mammal family.

Tabunan. This morning we will then hike up the degraded hillside at Tabunan to reach one of only a handful of dismally small scraps of forest remaining on the island. The first of our targets here to show itself is usually the endemic Black Shama, which more than makes up for its lack of colour with its incredible song. Less common is the handsome Streak-breasted Bulbul that inhabits the canopy and mid-story tangles, but with persistence, we should find a few birds.

We'll scan through the numerous Red-keeled Flowerpeckers for Cebu Flowerpecker, but with no recent sightings in the past decade – it is most likely extinct already. We are also likely encounter the bright Mangrove Blue Flycatcher, outrageous male Crimson Sunbird that frequent the same flowers as preferred by the flowerpeckers, and local races of



Azure-breasted Pitta by David Hoddinott

both Elegant Tit and White-vented Whistler. Night birding in the are might turn up the newly split Cebu Bobook.

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		This is an intense to demanding tour. You should have a VERY GOOD level of fitness and stamina and be in good health. Not suitable for dedicated or avid photographers; inexperienced birders; or anyone with mobility or health challenges.
Birding Ease		Bird density is low, mostly within the forest interior. Focused tour searching for difficult, endemic species. Requires much patience and persistence.
Accommodation		Reasonable to good, a few nights very basic at Mount Kitanglad with shared facilities and no hot water or electricity.
Walking / Trails		Mostly moderate, but some tough, longer hikes and climbs are necessary. Can be muddy and slippery after rain. Long days on our feet.
Vehicles / Roads		Travel by minibus and 4x4 where necessary. Road conditions are reasonable. Some very long drives.
Photography		Worthwhile at best, typical rain forest conditions of variable light and rain, many species are skittish and shy.
Annoyances		Malaria and other biting insects are present. Environment can be very hot & humid.

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 21 on the Endangered Endemics tour;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 8 on the Visayan Islands Extension;
- 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;
- Special gratuities;
- 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 due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes made 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 close to the original program as possible.**

- This tour DOES require a VERY GOOD level of fitness and stamina. Participants should also be in good general health. Much of the forest birding will be done on foot and may require walking or standing for several hours at a time.
- This Philippines tour is designed to be an intensive birding experience and we will attempt to get good views of as many bird species as possible.
- There are many early morning starts.
- Some days involve long drives.
- Due to the number of nightbirds, nocturnal birding is a must, but most sessions are optional.
- Lodgings are generally good; we will stay either in hotels or guesthouses. Be aware that at times we may experience maintenance problems in these facilities that are beyond our control. In the smaller towns, while we always opt for the best available accommodation, this is often basic and well below the standard of what you have come to expect from the developed world.
- We will spend most of this tour in remote locations well away from medical facilities.
- Most areas will be hot and humid. We will thus make good use of the early mornings and will have a lot of very early starts to avoid, as far as possible, birding in the middle of the day.
- In the rainforest areas the humidity will be high and potentially very uncomfortable.
- Access to some sites changes from year to year, and we may not be permitted to visit some locations.
- Much of our time is spent in vehicles, as we do have to cover long distances to reach the best birding areas. For the comfort of your fellow travellers, do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg (+-18lb) for hand luggage.
- Typhoon Rai, known in the Philippines as Super Typhoon Odette struck the country in December 2021 causing significant damage to the island of Palawan especially. Bird density and diversity have suffered greatly and is expected to take a number of years to return to former levels.

Arrival and Departure Details

Day 1 of the Endangered Endemics tour is set aside as an arrival day, you are thus free to arrive at any time. The tour will conclude in the mid-morning of day 21 at Manila International Airport.

The Visayan Islands Extension will depart in the late afternoon of day 1 from Manila International Airport and conclude here in the mid-afternoon of day 8.

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.

Manila International Airport (IATA: MNL) is the main port of entry and departure for international flights to The Philippines.

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. The following website provides detailed information about visa eligibility and assistance with online applications options where viable: Visa HQ for Travel

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