Indonesia

Remote West Papua Islands Cruise I

22nd October to 4th November 2023 (14 days)

Buru Island Extension I

4th November to 9th November 2023 (6 days)



Wilson's Bird-of-paradise by Glen Valentine

Our fabulous and exhilarating Remote West Papuan Island cruise sets out to explore a myriad of isolated islands in this exceptionally beautiful part of Indonesia. We start off with some initial birding in the forests close to Sorong, West Papua, before heading off to Waigeo (one of the famous islands in the Raja Ampat group) and then the very rarely explored island of Kofiau, where will seek out some of our planet's rarest and least-known species. These include such extraordinary gems as Wilson's Bird-of-paradise (regarded by many as the most spectacular bird on earth!), Red and King Birds-of-paradise, Kofiau and Red-breasted Paradise Kingfishers, the stunning and rarely seen Blue-black Kingfisher and Kofiau Monarch. Thereafter we cross Lydekker's Line and head into the North Moluccas. Here we explore little-birded waters in addition to visiting the endemic-rich island of Obi for such delicacies as Carunculated Fruit Dove and Moluccan (Obi) Woodcock. Thereafter we continue south towards the Central Moluccan islands of Seram and Boano before ending in Ambon in search of an array

of incredibly exciting endemics such as Salmon-crested Cockatoo, Lazuli Kingfisher, Purple-naped Lory, Seram Boobook, Long-crested Myna and Boano Monarch, to mention but a handful.

Our Buru Extension explores a beautifully forested island hosting up to 24 avian endemics including the little known Madanga!!! Other quality species include Buru Green Pigeon, Buru Mountain Pigeon, superb Buru Racket-tail, Moluccan King Parrot, Moluccan Masked Owl, Buru Thrush, Buru Monarch, Buru Cuckooshrike, Buru Honeyeater and Tawny-backed Fantail among many others, and if we are very lucky, we may even find a supreme rarity such as the reputedly nocturnal Black-lored Parrot!

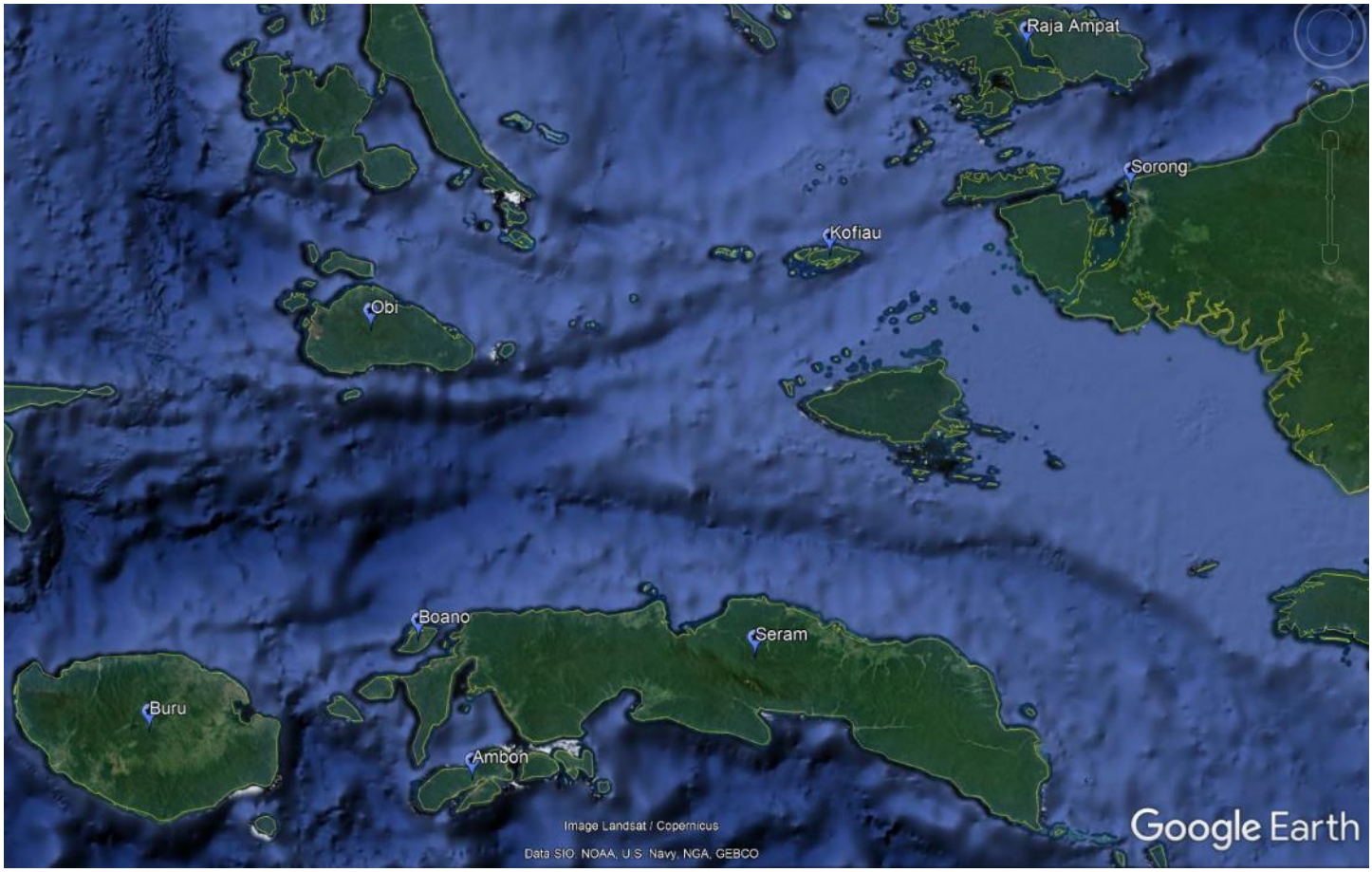
Itinerary & Map

RWPI Cruise

Day 1	**Arrival in Sorong**
Day 2	**Vogelkop (Bird's Head) & Sorong Mangroves**
Day 3	**Vogelkop, board vessel, sail to Waigeo**
Days 4 & 5	**Waigeo & surrounding Raja Ampat Islands**
Day 6	**Raja Ampat Islands to Kofiau Island**
Day 7	**Kofiau Island to Obi Island**
Day 8	**Obi Island**
Day 9	**Obi Island to Seram Island**
Days 10 to 12	**Seram Island**
Day 13	**Boano Island**
Day 14	**Ambon Island & final departure**

Buru Island Extension

Day 1	**Arrival in Ambon & Haruku Island**
Day 2	**Ambon, flight to Buru Island**
Days 3 & 4	**Buru Island**
Day 5	**Buru Island, flight to Ambon**
Day 6	**Ambon Island & final departure**



Birding sites in detail

Vogelkop (Bird's Head). Located on the extreme western tip of New Guinea, Vogelkop offers encounters with several exciting New Guinea species. We'll bird along a gravel road in the forested hills about a forty-minute drive from our hotel in Sorong. The birding here can be excellent, even in the quieter afternoons we can expect to see noteworthy species such as Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, Black-browed Triller, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Pinon's and Zoe's Imperial Pigeons, Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove (recently split from the widespread Brown Cuckoo-Dove), Orange-bellied Fruit Dove, Brush Cuckoo, Uniform and Glossy Swiftlets, Red-cheeked Parrot, the tiny Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, Green-backed Gerygone, Grey-headed Cuckooshrike, brilliant Golden and



King Bird-of-paradise by Lev Frid



Blue-black Kingfisher by Lev Frid

Frilled Monarchs, Black and Olive-backed Sunbirds, Metallic Starling, Yellow-faced Myna and the migratory Grey-streaked Flycatcher.

Early mornings present us with options for several more species, that may include Pacific Baza, Grey-headed Goshawk, a wonderful range of fruit doves including Wompoo, Superb, Pink-spotted, Beautiful and Dwarf Fruit Doves, as well as Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon, Blyth's Hornbill, Palm and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, the rare and localized Black Lory (virtually endemic to Vogelkop), the radiant Papuan Eclectus, Red-flanked Lorikeet, Black-capped Lory, Double-eyed Fig Parrot, Papuan Spine-tailed Swift, Grey Crow, Brown Oriole and the sneaky Rusty Mouse-warbler.

There are also several other great birds about including a wide range of honeyeaters such as the attractive Spotted, Green-backed, Plain, and outrageous Long-billed Honeyeaters, as well as several confusing *meliphaga* honeyeaters like Mimic, Puff-backed and Scrub Honeyeaters. We also hope to find the wonderfully vocal Hooded and Black Butcherbirds, Golden and Boyer's Cuckooshrikes, the low-density Dwarf Koel, Shining Flycatcher (Monarch), Northern Fantail, Glossy-mantled Manucode (bird-of-paradise indeed!) and the extremely scarce Streak-headed Mannikin. If we are extremely fortunate, we may even encounter the very rare and declining Pesquet's (New Guinea Vulturine) Parrot squawking by overhead in the early morning.

Exploration of quieter roads through this forest may also turn up noisy flocks of Papuan Babbler, Black Cicadabird, the recently split Southern Variable Pitohui, Ruby-throated and Dusky Myzomela, Large Fig Parrot, Wallace's Fairywren, Magnificent Riflebird (more likely heard than seen), Lowland Peltops, Golden Myna, Pacific Koel, the impressive Channel-billed Cuckoo, the furtive, Black-billed Coucal, Papuan Mountain Pigeon, and Magnificent Bird-of-paradise.

For the adventurous, we may head along an indistinct trail and try our luck at a number of rare, tricky and mouth-watering forest interior species that could include the seldom seen Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher, as well as Spot-winged Monarch (a valuable comparison for later when we hopefully see the Kofiau Monarch), Rufous-backed Fantail, Papuan Dwarf Kingfisher, the incredible King Bird-of-paradise, the secretive Black-sided Robin and Papuan Pitta (recently split from Red-bellied/Blue-breasted Pitta).



Black-browed Triller by Glen Valentine



Red-breasted Paradise Kingfisher by Lev Frid

If we are extremely fortunate, we may even encounter one or two of the area's much rarer species such as the Yellow-gaped Honeyeater, Blue-black Kingfisher, Tawny Straightbill, unobtrusive Coroneted Fruit Dove, Lesser Bird-of-paradise and the almost-impossible-to-see Red-billed Brushturkey.

Sorong Mangroves. Our recent surveys have shown that a few very special birds have been found to occur here including the rarely encountered Blue-black Kingfisher and Barred Rail while we also stand reasonable chances at finding gems such as Little Kingfisher, Collared Imperial Pigeon, Orange-breasted Fig Parrot (could possibly be split off as Blue-fronted Fig Parrot in future), Buff-banded Rail, Osprey, the sumptuous Emperor Fairywren, Black Butcherbird, New Guinea Friarbird, Orange-fronted Fruit Dove, Brown-backed Honeyeater, Little Bronze Cuckoo and Large-billed Gerygone.

Raja Ampat Islands. On our first morning here, we will make an early start with a pre-dawn landing on the south coast of Waigeo. Awaiting vehicles will then drive us inland along a wonderfully forested track to a series of hides/blinds especially erected to permit us to observe one of the most beautiful birds on Earth – displaying Wilson's Bird-of-paradise! No longer do we have to climb a brutally steep hill for three hours to sit and hope that this remarkable bird attends just one display lek located on a steep hillside as was the case in the past (neighbouring Batanta Island). We will permit ourselves plenty of time to relax and really enjoy this fabulous bird, and for the photographers amongst us, this will be the opportunity of a lifetime! To sit in the hides watching these gorgeous birds, while Blyth's Hornbills and Sulphur-crested and Palm Cockatoos call overhead along with a supporting cast of imperial pigeons, Common Paradise Kingfishers and Hooded Butcherbirds all vocalizing, duetting and displaying in the surrounding forest, is a fabulously evocative experience and certainly one of the major highlights of this entire tour. Once we are fully satiated with the Wilson's Bird-of-paradise, we will spend the rest of the morning birding



Red Bird-of-paradise by Glen Valentine



Western Crowned Pigeon by Lev Frid

along a lovely, forested road with little or no traffic to disturb us. Here we will be targeting the scarce and strangely range-restricted and patchily distributed Brown-headed Crow, as well as the vociferous and common Raja Ampat Pitohui (a recent split from Variable Pitohui). As the day heats up and bird activity diminishes, we will retreat to the coolness and comfort of our ship, affording us an opportunity to rest, relax, clean up and reflect on what should have been a very special morning indeed!

For the remainder of our time in the Raja Ampats we have seemingly endless options thanks to the flexibility of our vessel, enabling us to explore a range of small, offshore islands and habitats, as well as other parts of the extensive Waigeo Island.

Our second morning will also be spent on Waigeo with a pre-dawn owling option where we stand a good chance of seeing Papuan Boobook and Marbled Frogmouth and with a hefty dose of luck, the rare and elusive Wallace's Owlet-nightjar. At dawn we will likely visit a display tree for the spectacular Red Bird-of-paradise. We will position ourselves on the wooden benches that have been perfectly built near the base of this tree and patiently wait for our quarry to perform. We are hoping to obtain amazing views and photographs of these stunning birds as they call and display in the branches above us. Other quality species that we might encounter this morning after we are completely satisfied with our Red Bird-of-paradise experience include Papuan Dwarf and Hook-billed Kingfishers, Black Berrypecker, Golden Monarch, Pale-billed Scrub Wren, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Pygmy Longbill, Olive Flyrobin, Moustached Treeswift, Great Cuckoo-Dove, Palm Cockatoo, Black-sided Robin and even an outside chance for very rare and seldom-seen species like Western Crowned Pigeon, White-eared Catbird and New Guinea Bronzewing.



Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher by Glen Valentine

An afternoon will be spent sailing through some scenically spectacular habitat where Limestone Karst formations rise out of the water creating a myriad of small islands that make for worthwhile exploration. Visually this is a wonderful way to spend the afternoon and we will also have excellent chances at finding a few noteworthy birds such as Spice Imperial Pigeon, Violet-necked Lory (possibly split in future as Scaled Lory), Beach Kingfisher, Pacific Reef Heron, and White-bellied Sea Eagle with the impressive but scarce Great-billed Heron



Violet-necked (Scaled) Lory by Glen Valentine

even being possible. Nicobar Pigeon is also known to occasionally inhabit these small islands, but we would need to be rather fortunate to find this species. As the day draws to a close one of the outstanding highlights will be watching over 300 Great-billed Parrots coming into roost at one of these idyllic offshore islands.

On another afternoon we will move over to the small island of Kri, which is well known in diving circles as a spectacular underwater site. We will have an opportunity to enjoy some memorable snorkelling in this area before heading onto the island itself for its avian specialty, the Dusky Megapode. This species can be difficult to connect with in other parts of its range as they are generally rather shy, however at Kri they are somewhat used to the presence of people making them a bit easier to observe. During our afternoon stroll through the dive resort grounds we may also find the localized Waigeo Cuscus, as well as Glossy-mantled Manucode, Hooded Butcherbird and Variable Goshawk.

Agusta & Merpati Islands. We have the unique opportunity to explore the wonderful and idyllic islands of Agusta and neighbouring Merpati. We have special permission to land on, and walk around the small island of Agusta where a number of 'supertramp' species can be found such as Violet-necked (Scaled) Lory, Olive and Varied Honeyeaters, Arafura Fantail (recently split from Rufous Fantail), Moluccan Starling, Lemon-bellied White-eye and the most special species of all, the incredibly localized and little-known Island Whistler, before departing in the early afternoon for Kofiau.

During our cruise from Waigeo, we will be sailing through waters that are rarely if ever visited by birders, which makes these crossings extremely exciting indeed. Some of the seabirds we will be looking out for include Bulwer's Petrel, Streaked and Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, Great and Lesser Frigatebirds, Brown Booby, and a great variety of terns including Black-naped, Bridled and Sooty Terns and Black and Brown Noddies. We should also encounter large numbers of Red-necked Phalarope wintering on these seas. In previous year's visits we have had some exciting surprises, including



Melon-headed Whale by Lev Frid



Raja Ampat Scenery (Kari Raja Islands) by Glen Valentine

Christmas Frigatebird, Abbott's Booby, and Indonesia's first Beck's Petrel. While we don't expect to see any of these species, who knows what we could find!

Cetaceans are even less known, and we will attempt to find and identify as many of these magnificent mammals as possible in what is a virtually unknown region for this group. The most common species seem to be Indo-pacific Bottlenose, Spinner and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins and Short-finned Pilot Whales while we have also recorded Sperm Whale, Dwarf Sperm Whale, Fraser's and Rough-toothed Dolphins, Melon-headed Whale, False Killer Whale and even the recently described Omura's Whale. We would be extremely fortunate to see any of these species but will certainly be on the lookout!

Kofiau. This tiny island is located almost half-way between the Raja Ampats and the southern tip of Halmahera. This island has been virtually unexplored by birders over the last century, other than recent visits by Rockjumper during our West Papuan Island Cruises. The island hosts two known endemics: the spectacular Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher and the black-and-white Kofiau Monarch, as well as several other exciting species and subspecies and will make for an exhilarating birding experience.



Carunculated Fruit Dove by Glen Valentine

David Bishop, together with Jared Diamond were the first field biologists to explore this island back in the mid 1980's and their work has been published in a scientific journal. Our recent trips have also been able to find the



Blue-and-white Kingfisher by Glen Valentine

two fabulous endemics – Kofiau Paradise Kingfisher and Kofiau Monarch, so our chances of seeing these two incredibly range-restricted birds are excellent.

In addition to these specialties, we will also search for a good variety of other quality species that include Spotted Kestrel, Spectacled Imperial Pigeon, Variable Goshawk, the gorgeous Claret-breasted Fruit Dove, the island form of White-bibbed Fruit Dove (recently split by some authorities as Moluccan or Small Island Fruit Dove), the gaudy Violet-necked (Scaled) Lory, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, the migrant Channel-billed Cuckoo, Sacred Kingfisher, Oriental Dollarbird, Hooded Pitta, White-bellied Cuckooshrike, New Guinea Friarbird, Common Cicadabird, Black-browed Triller, Large-billed Gerygone, Northern Fantail, Spangled Drongo (possibly Kofiau Spangled Drongo in future), Great-billed and Moluccan Eclectus, the miniscule Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot, Black and Olive-backed (Sahul if split) Sunbirds, possibly Black-faced Munia, Little Bronze Cuckoo and Torresian Crow. On our 2017 trip we were delighted to find three almost unknown raptor species for Kofiau and these were Pygmy Eagle, Grey-faced Buzzard and Chinese Sparrowhawk, which again emphasizes the lack of ornithological surveying in this remote corner of the globe and highlights the potential for further exciting discoveries.

Obi Island. Aside from early collectors and a team of students who spent several weeks on the island, very few birding groups have ever visited the island of Obi until 2016 when our first tour took place.

Having travelled westwards and crossed Lydekker's Line, we are now fully within the realm of Wallacea. Located in the very centre of the Moluccas, Obi hosts two very special and poorly known endemics: the peculiar Carunculated Fruit Dove, and very recently rediscovered Moluccan (Obi) Woodcock. We will attempt to seek out both species in addition to a suite of other specials such as Blue-and-white Kingfisher, Moluccan Cuckoo (recently split from Brush Cuckoo), the rare and declining Chattering Lory, Red-flanked Lorikeet, Scarlet-breasted, Superb and Black-naped Fruit Doves, Cinnamon-bellied and Spectacled Imperial Pigeons, Oriental Hobby, Spotted (Indonesian) Kestrel, North Moluccan Pitta (recently split from Red-bellied/Blue-breasted Pitta), the rare and shy Moluccan Dwarf Kingfisher (recently split from Variable Dwarf Kingfisher), the endemic *rubrotincta* race of Dusky Myzomela, Black-chinned (split from Golden) and Cinnamon-bellied (Obi) Whistlers, the handsome Rufous-bellied Triller, the peculiar Paradise-crow (another odd



Violet Crow by Lev Frid



Salmon-crested Cockatoo by Lev Frid

bird of paradise that is split by some authorities as an Obi endemic), Moluccan Monarch, Moluccan Flycatcher, Hair-crested (Obi Spangled if split) Drongo, Northern Golden Bulbul (sometimes split from the Halmahera version as an Obi endemic), Northern Fantail (possibly split in future as Obi Northern Fantail), (Obi) Spangled Drongo and Halmahera Flowerpecker.

We will also have one evening to spend a bit of time trying to find Barking Owl, Moluccan Scops Owl, and Large-tailed Nightjar.

Seram Island. Anchoring and landing at Sawai, we will explore the rather large, mountainous island of Seram, in addition to an offshore island or two that we will visit using small boats.

Much of the area we will be birding during our time on Seram is within the important conservation area of Manusela National Park, which encompasses Seram's highest mountain Gunung Binaia at 3 057m. We'll be birding along an impressive road that crosses the island from north to south and ascends to about 1 250m in elevation, thereby permitting us a chance for a very large percentage of Seram's endemic birds, including some of its very poorly known high elevation specialties.

Some of Seram's most desirable endemics include the likes of the spectacular and severely threatened Salmon-crested Cockatoo, the strikingly unique Long-crested Myna, Violet Crow, and Lazuli Kingfisher. All these species are best searched for in the lowland forests closer to Sawai and we stand a very good chance of seeing all of them during our time on the island. Other Seram specialties that we will be on the lookout for in the lowland forest zone but are not restricted to this elevation include the stunning Red Lory, Seram Swiftlet, Moluccan Cuckooshrike, Pale Cicadabird, Seram Golden Bulbul, (Seram) Spangled Drongo, Grey-collared Oriole, Seram Imperial Pigeon, Seram Friarbird, Moluccan Flycatcher and Ashy Flowerpecker. In the lower elevation forest, we may also encounter more widespread but nonetheless interesting species such as Pacific Baza, Common Emerald Dove, Claret-breasted Fruit Dove, Great-billed, Moluccan Eclectus and Red-cheeked Parrots, Coconut Lorikeet, Metallic and Moluccan Starlings and Spectacled Monarch.



Cinnamon-breasted (Obi) Whistler by Glen Valentine

Most of our time on Seram will be spent in the mountains where the bulk of the island's difficult and least known species occur. Many



Seram Boobook by Glen Valentine

of them are easier at higher elevations above 1 500m, however with no access to this elevation we will need to keep a careful lookout for species such as Blue-eared Lory, Seram Honeyeater and Grey-hooded White-eye at the highest pass along the Trans Seram Highway. Many other quality species also occur here and we have high hopes of finding the rare and endemic Purple-naped Lory – unfortunately a highly prized species for the cage bird trade, which has been extensively trapped here for many years - Drab and Wakolo (Seram) Myzomela, the extremely scarce Rufous-necked Sparrowhawk, Seram Mountain Pigeon, Moluccan King Parrot, Moluccan Cuckoo, Island Leaf Warbler (possibly split as Seram Leaf Warbler in future), the very secretive and elusive Chestnut-backed Bush Warbler (the race on Seram could be split off as Seram Grasshopper Warbler), the seldom-seen Moluccan Dwarf Kingfisher (recently split from Variable Dwarf Kingfisher), Streak-breasted Fantail, the scarce and unobtrusive Cinnamon-chested Flycatcher, Drab and Yellow-throated Whistlers, Turquoise Flycatcher, uncommon Rufescent Dark-eye and Seram White-eye. We would need an extraordinary dose of fortune though to see all the above-mentioned species as there are several rare and elusive Seram mountain denizens mentioned in that list, but we'll certainly try our best to find as many of them as possible. We will also require a similar amount of luck to come across the near-mythical Seram Thrush, which is a high-altitude species about which very little is known.

Nocturnal species that will be on our radar include the endemic Seram Boobook the rare and little-known Moluccan Masked Owl (the race on Seram might be a unique endemic to the island) and Moluccan Scops Owl. We are also likely to encounter the introduced Northern Common Cuscus during our nighttime forays.

During our time at Seram we will also use our boat's tender to visit a tern roost on an exposed sandbar. As many as ten different species of tern have been recorded in this bay and it is the only known wintering site in Indonesia of the critically endangered Chinese Crested Tern. We would need to have a huge amount of luck to see this much wanted bird, as only



Chinese Crested Tern by Lev Frid



Long-crested Myna by Glen Valentine

a single individual has ever been seen here and its presence seems to be intermittent. We will give it our best shot!

Boana Island. Once ashore, we'll begin our search for the little-known Black-chinned (Boano) Monarch. We have the entire day in which to seek out this endemic species, which has only recently been rediscovered. Other species such as Island Monarch and Northern Fantail (here a possible future split as Seram Fantail) can also be found, along with the migratory and rather skulking Gray's Grasshopper Warbler.

Ambon Island. We expect to have ample time to bird a remnant patch of forest to search for the endemic Ambon White-eye, in addition to further chances for species such as Claret-breasted Fruit Dove, Moluccan Flycatcher, Spectacled Monarch, Northern (Seram) Fantail, Island Monarch and Ashy Flowerpecker.

Buru Island. Buru is an oval-shaped, non-volcanic island that encompasses some 8 500 km^2. This island is the third largest of the Maluku Islands after Halmahera and Seram. Once a political prison island, Buru has until recently been very difficult to visit, especially for a birder wandering around with binoculars! Happily, all that has changed, and Buru is now a fabulous destination for the adventurous world-birder. Much of eastern Buru is relatively flat and, unfortunately, as is so often the case in the tropical lowlands, much of this area has been cleared and converted into farmland. We will therefore concentrate our attentions on the central and mountainous western half of the island where large expanses of relatively pristine montane forest remain.



Buru Thrush by Lev Frid

Our birding on Buru will focus on both the lowland and highland forest areas and each of these core areas support a different suite of specialties. In the lowlands near the town of Bara, we will visit a remnant area of lowland forest where we will target such gems as the pretty Buru Monarch, Buru Golden Bulbul, Spangled Drongo, Black-faced Friarbird, Black-eared Oriole, South Moluccan Pitta, the scarce and shy Buru Dwarf Kingfisher (recently split from the once widespread Variable Dwarf Kingfisher) and Flame-breasted Flowerpecker. This is also one of the only known accessible areas on the island for the rare Buru Green Pigeon, which usually requires much patience, careful scanning, and a fair dose of luck to find.



Claret-breasted Fruit Dove by Glen Valentine

Here we may also find Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove, Variable Goshawk, Eastern Osprey, Black Eagle, Superb and Claret-breasted Fruit Doves, Spectacled Imperial Pigeon, Dusky Megapode (occasionally split off as Forsten's Megapode), Coconut Lorikeet, Red-cheeked Parrot, Moluccan Cuckoo, Pacific Koel, Lesser Coucal, Seram Swiftlet, Moustached Treeswift, Pale Cicadabird (a Moluccan endemic), Moluccan Flycatcher, Northern Fantail (a potential split as Buru Fantail), Black Sunbird, the regionally unique sub-species of Olive-backed (Sahul) Sunbird which is occasionally split as Black-breasted or Clamentia's Sunbird, and Black-faced Munia. Palearctic migrants are few and far between at this time of the year, but we could still turn up something interesting such as a Chinese Sparrowhawk.

With the aid of four-wheel-drive vehicles and some rather early starts, we will venture along a well-made but now disused logging track into some fine upland forest that may take us to elevations of 1 400m or higher. Here,

amidst some truly lovely forest, we will search for some of the least known birds in all of Wallacea: These include Buru Mountain Pigeon, Buru Racket-tail, South Moluccan Pitta, Wakolo Myzomela (the sub-species on Buru likely to be split as Buru Myzomela), the scarce and nomadic Buru Honeyeater, White-naped Monarch, the low-density Buru Cuckooshrike, Buru and Mountain White-eyes, the dapper Tawny-backed Fantail, shy and elusive Buru Thrush, scarce Buru Dwarf Kingfisher, Island Leaf Warbler (likely to be split as Buru Leaf Warbler), Streak-breasted Jungle (Warbling) Flycatcher, unobtrusive and scarce Cinnamon-chested Flycatcher, Chestnut-backed Bush Warbler (probably a good split as Buru Grasshopper Warbler), Yellow-throated (split from Australian Golden) and Drab Whistlers and Flame-breasted Flowerpecker. During nocturnal forays we will attempt to find two rare and little-known owls – Moluccan Masked Owl and the deep-forest dwelling Buru Boobook (a very recent split of Hantu Boobook that otherwise only occurs on the neighbouring island of Seram), while other possibilities include the lovely Moluccan Scops Owl and Large-tailed Nightjar.



Buru Flowerpecker by Lev Frid

Buru is also known for its rarities that include the almost unknown Blue-fronted Lorikeet (seen for the first time in many years in 2014) and the mythical Black-lored Parrot (only recently observed in the wild for the first time, it is thought to be largely nocturnal). We will also make a big effort to find the Madanga – initially thought to be a white-eye of sorts but now included with the pipits and wagtails. This species is certainly different and may well even warrant unique family status! The Madanga was virtually unknown as a living bird until the first birding groups found it in 2016. The species has still been seen by fewer than 40 people on the planet but will be one of our primary targets.



Buru Golden Bulbul by Glen Valentine

More widespread species that we may encounter include Pacific Baza, Black Eagle, Variable Goshawk, Metallic (White-throated) Pigeon, Great Cuckoo-Dove, Common Emerald Dove, Superb, White-bibbed (Moluccan/Small Island) and Claret-breasted Fruit Doves, Little Bronze Cuckoo, the Austral-migrant Channel-billed Cuckoo, Oriental Dollarbird, Common Paradise Kingfisher, Spotted Kestrel, Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot, Red Lory, Eclectus, Red-cheeked and Great-billed Parrots, Moluccan King Parrot, Collared Kingfisher, Torresian Crow and Moluccan Starling.

Near to Namlea we'll make a stop at a small lake adjacent to the airport, which could produce new trip species such as Australasian Darter, Tricolored and occasionally



Moluccan Megapode by Lev Frid

Australasian Grebes, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorants, Purple Heron and Golden-headed Cisticola – with its unusual local vocabulary.

Haruku Island. From Ambon, we'll embark on a very exciting boat trip to the nearby, offshore island of Haruku where we will spend the late afternoon and early evening waiting patiently for the rare and extremely localised Moluccan Scrubfowl (Megapode) to reveal itself. After what will hopefully be a successful and thrilling outing, we will return by boat to Ambon.



Madanga by Jenny Bowman

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Undemanding. Suitable for all birding / wildlife interest levels.
Birding Ease		Moderate. Most species provide good visuals in open conditions but get trickier within forested environments. Some species are low density or require dedicated/repeated effort to find.
Accommodation		Comfortable to very comfortable.
Walking / Trails		Light-to-moderate walking & hiking. One arduous, but optional hike on Buru Island.
Vehicles / Roads		Mostly short drives, but some rough tracks that are only accessed by 4x4 vehicles.
Photography		Ranges from good to very good, depending on habitat. Some dedicated hides.
Annoyances		Humidity levels are often rather high.

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 14 on the RWPI Cruise;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 6 of the Buru Island Extension;
- Bottled or purified drinking water;
- All lodgings aboard our liveaboard vessel (11 nights) and in Sorong (2 nights);
- All lodgings on the Buru Island Extension;
- Ground transportation at various island stops during the tour;
- Internal flights on the Buru Island Extension (return from Ambon to Buru Island, does not include baggage)*;
- All reserve entrance fees and landing permits;
- Local landowner fees;
- West Papua police travel permits;
- All guiding services;
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights *(except those specifically noted above);
- Checked baggage costs on all internal flights;
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels);
- Camera fees;
- Optional excursions;
- 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.**
- **The cruise costs are subject to major foreign exchange fluctuations and unforeseen increases in tour related costs (especially the price of fuel) and may have to be adjusted as a result. You will be notified by email if fuel surcharges, or other price adjustments need to be implemented. Furthermore, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances, but please be aware that we will attempt to stick as close to the original program as possible.**
- **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 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 close to the original program as possible.**

- Our time off the ship includes boat cruises and light-to-moderate walking and hiking in refuges and preserves. Physical demands will be easy to moderate, but please bear in mind that our land excursions may involve a moderate amount of walking and standing. We emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands that exceed their capabilities. All walking will be done at a slow pace. 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.
- Your trip to Indonesia will be a moderately paced, but full travel experience in which birding activities are combined with relaxing cruise time. This trip offers considerable exposure to a seldom-visited part of the world, but with a clear emphasis on observing as many of the region's endemic and special birds as possible, as well as enjoying the scenic wonders of the islands we'll be visiting.
- Most days in the lowlands will be hot, dry, and sunny, but overcast conditions are frequent and some rain, heavy at times, can be expected in the afternoons. In montane areas it will range from very cool to warm. Humidity levels in the lowlands are often rather high.
- There will be limited opportunities for swimming and snorkelling at select sites along the cruise route. Our vessel is fully equipped with fins, masks, and snorkels free of charge. Participants who prefer to bring their own equipment are welcome to do so but should be aware of the weight this adds to their luggage.
- With early starts, some long days in the field are to be expected.
- The Madanga hike is an intense, difficult hike that involves a steep gradient, gaining roughly 250 meters in elevation. This hike is completely optional.

Arrival and Departure Details

The Remote West Papua Island Cruise will depart from Sorong Airport (IATA: SOQ), West Papua on day 1. The cruise will conclude at Pattimura Airport (IATA: AMQ), Ambon on day 14.

[1]Guests not continuing with the Buru Extension will transfer back to the liveaboard to freshen up before making their way to the airport for their onward flights home.

[2]Guests continuing with the Buru Extension will continue birding for the remainder of the morning before returning to the liveaboard to enjoy lunch and freshen up on board before transferring to the airport for a flight to Buru.

The Buru Island Extension departs from Pattimura Airport (IATA: AMQ), Ambon on day 1 with an afternoon flight to Buru Island. The tour will conclude here after breakfast on day 6.

It is not always possible to fly to or from Buru Island. If flights logistics preclude this option, we will instead use an overnight ferry.

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.

Sorong is most easily reached via Makassar (IATA: UPG), but flights, but alternates are also available via Ambon (IATA: AMQ) and Jakarta (IATA: CGK).

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.