

# Papua (Indonesia)

## Trip Report from 1 – 27 September 2009

### Introduction

This report covers a trip to Papua (Indonesia) that took place in September 2009 and was arranged through *Birding Indonesia*. The participants of the trip were Christer Benktsson (author of this report), Maria Fahlén and Mehd Halaouate (tour leader).

Even though our birding was fairly relaxed and we furthermore experienced quite a few rainy days which significantly lowered the bird activity, we noted all in all 278 bird species on the trip, seventeen of which were Birds of Paradise (BOPs) and 26 of which were parrots. Birding highlights of the trip were thereby plentiful and included e.g. breathtaking observations of King-of-Saxony, Wilson's, King, Lesser, Red and Twelve-wired BOPs, Splendid and Arfak Astrapias, Vogelkop and MacGregor's Bowerbirds, Victoria Crowned Pigeon, Moluccan King-Parrot, a group of at least seventeen Pesquet's Parrots, Mountain and Feline Owlet-Nightjars as well as Papuan Frogmouths at rest, and much much more!



*King-of-Saxony Bird of Paradise*  
(Photo: ©Mehd Halaouate)

On top of the bird observations, the trip offered many other highlight moments such as the encounters with different wonderfully friendly tribes people as well as the sightings of amazing quantities and varieties of orchid species. The terrific primary forests of Papua that yet remain are per se an additional superb feature of any trip to the island.

### Travelling in Papua

To travel independently in Papua may comprise numerous difficulties, especially since the costs of travelling can be fairly high and communication can be hard as very few Papuan people speak English. Furthermore, you need to obtain and exhibit *Surat Jalan*, travelling permits, at local police offices (and sometimes elsewhere) in order to roam around freely.

Even though we ourselves usually prefer to travel independently, the thresholds and costs of attempting to voyage Papua on our own seemed a bit too high. We were thereby very lucky to find out that *Birding Indonesia*, a recently established tour operator offering low-cost arrangements of high quality, offered a Papuan itinerary for a very reasonable price. In fact, the price of the tour was surely much less than it would have been if we would have tried to arrange a similar itinerary on our own (although we most likely would not have succeeded in such an arrangement, given time constraints and language shortcomings).

## **Travelling with Birding Indonesia**

*Birding Indonesia* is operated by the couple Mehd and Lena Halaouate. Mehd is an excellent organizer and birdwatcher, mastering the Indonesian language and interacting outstandingly with the locals. He went with us all the time during the trip. Best of all, Mehd puts extraordinarily personal effort into trying to save the Papuan nature, which is the very reason why he and his wife have set up their company. They thereby share their knowledge and funds with the locals that they get in contact with, in order to give them incentives to conserve the forests and its wildlife. Because of Mehd's and Lena's idealistic motives put into practise – on top of their ever-friendly and very warm-hearted manners towards their customers as well as towards the local people – travelling with *Birding Indonesia* is very highly recommended to any potential Papua (or Indonesia) traveller.

Contact details for *Birding Indonesia* are found on the homepage: [www.birdingindonesia.com](http://www.birdingindonesia.com). As eco-tourism is certainly beneficial to the Papuan forests and its wildlife, we would urge anyone who wants to go there to try to make their plans put into practise.

## **Practicalities**

Papua is generally safe and friendly and the difficulties of travelling and birdwatching there (with exception for the organizing part) seem to have been somewhat exaggerated in numerous other trip reports that we have gone through. From our point of view, neither hiking nor climate should thereby be considered as harsh as sometimes reported. It should though be noted that rain in the highlands is very common (sometimes ubiquitous) and that the heat and humidity of the lowland forests can get rather severe at times.

Food is generally safe also for Western stomachs. As concerns diseases, Malaria is prevalent. Precautions should thereby be taken towards mosquitos (which are plentiful in some areas), and appropriate prophylaxis is furthermore crucial. Leeches are present in some areas but they are generally not as abundant as e.g. in the South-East Asian forests.

For any questions of our experiences that go beyond this report, please feel free to contact the report author at cbenktsson[“at”]yahoo.se.

## **Itinerary**

- 1 September: Flight from Denpasar (Bali) via Timika to Sentani.
- 2 September: Transport from Sentani to Nimbokrang. Afternoon walk in a nearby swamp forest.
- 3 September: Nimbokrang. Morning and afternoon excursions.
- 4 September: Nimbokrang area.
- 5 September: Morning spent in Nimbokrang area. Departure around noon by car to Tajah.
- 6 September: Tajah area.
- 7 September: Morning spent in Tajah area. Afternoon transport to Sentani.
- 8 September: Flight from Sentani to Wamena.
- 9 September: Baliem Valley hike, day 1 – Lake Habbema area.
- 10 September: Baliem Valley hike, day 2 – Lake Habbema area.
- 11 September: Baliem Valley hike, day 3 – Lake Habbema to Elegalik village.
- 12 September: Baliem Valley hike, day 4 – Elegalik village to Babililo village.
- 13 September: Baliem Valley hike, day 5 – Babililo village to Wamrek village.
- 14 September: Baliem Valley hike, day 6 – Wamrek village to Wamena.
- 15 September: Flight from Wamena to Sentani.
- 16 September: Flight from Sentani to Manokwari and further 4W transport to Mokwam village in the Arfak mountains.
- 17 September: Arfak mountains. Hike from Mokwam to Japanese Camp.
- 18 September: Arfak mountains. Hike from Japanese Camp to Garden House.
- 19 September: Arfak mountains. Garden House area.
- 20 September: Arfak mountains. Hike from Garden House area to Mokwam.

21 September: 4W transport from Mokwam to Manokwari.

22 September: Morning flight from Manokwari to Sorong. Afternoon at Pantai Kasuari (Cassowary Beach).

23 September: Morning boat trip to Batanta island.

24 September: Batanta island.

25 September: Boat trip from Batanta island to Sorong via Salawati and Senapang islands.

26 September: Sorong area. Morning spent near Gunung Mariet.

27 September: Flight from Sorong via Makasaar (Sulawesi) to Denpasar (Bali). End of trip.

## **Notes on the Localities**

### **Sentani**

Sentani is a rather bustling town 15 km to the southwest of the provincial capital Jayapura. The town in itself is rather uninspiring, and from a birdwatching perspective the outskirts of the town would be of greatest interest. It is however possible to easily view significant numbers of a few parrot species from the airfield's extensive open grass area at dusk and dawn, when the birds are on their way to or from their roosting or feeding localities.

In the grasslands surrounding the airfield (or in the same habitat on the town outskirts), a few species of *Munias* may also be recorded together with e.g. Crimson Finches and other lowland grass habitat birds. The dense and impenetrable hill forests to the North of the town, which have not yet been logged, would surely make for interesting excursions. However, such projects would require a lot of effort, skilled local staff and equipment, as there seems to be few accessible trails up the hills.

We stayed at the Ratna Manunggal Hotel, very close to the airport, which is said to be one of the better hotels in town. That said, one should not expect too much of the standard. A recommendable restaurant is Mickey's which is situated on the main road fairly close to the airport. Furthermore, a very recently opened shopping mall offers a few Western dishes, above all (pricey but very tasty) pizza.

### **Nimbokrang**

In Nimbokrang (which is in fact a village divided into two separate parts) we stayed with Jamil, an incredibly skillful and friendly birding guide, and his family. On the mornings and afternoons, we went on excursions, making for a siesta during the baking mid-day heat. The main excursion areas are: (1) the lowland swamp forests that surround the Nimbokrang village; (2) the selectively logged forests of Jalan Korea (which are in fact quite heavily logged close to the road); (3) forest areas near the road from Nimbokrang southwards (along the road that leads to Tajah).

All of the areas make for enjoyable and productive excursions even if the less logged forests naturally are much preferable. It is very depressing to see the extension of the logging around e.g. Jalan Korea. What further adds to a sad sentiment is the awareness that the logging companies seldom are Indonesian but rather e.g. Malaysian, Korean, Japanese or Chinese. However, for perhaps yet a few years and hopefully longer than so, intact primary forests are still to be found if one continues to walk for quite a long distance along and beyond the logging tracks of Jalan Korea.

Jamil cooperates with the warmhearted and very humorous villager Dance, who works like a walking GPS when in the forest. Both of them are truly amazing at finding the exceptional and wonderful birds of the areas. Furthermore, they together put a lot of effort into making thorough surveys in order to find localities and territories for the spectacular or rare birds of these forests.

On top of being a very friendly and highly hospitable family, Jamil's wife cooks very delicious (local) food, which makes for a very pleasant stay with them regardless of weather or luck with the birding.

## **Tajah**

The village of Tajah, situated a few hours drive southwards from Nimbokrang, is located on circa 300 metres above sea level. Parts of the forests in the village's vicinity are still not logged or only selectively logged, and because of this, good birds can be found. In fact, lowland forest birds of a wide range of species are very easy to see here compared with many other areas, despite that they are hunted to some extent. Birding is made mostly on foot along the roads (which operate very little traffic). Given that one birdwatches in this manner, the forest experience of this area is naturally not as immense as in other places. On the other hand, however, the bird observations are not merely plentiful but rather massive and continuous, and a great number of species may be seen very easily and comfortably. Perhaps particularly appealing, parrots and hornbills are perceptible in vast numbers.

We stayed with a very friendly family that Mehd has got to know. The father of the family used to be a hunter and thereby knows a good deal about good forest areas in the village surroundings. *Birding Indonesia* has contributed economically to the family so that they have been able to afford to build a separate room in which guests can sleep, a room which was very proper and clean, and thereby made for yet another nice stay on our itinerary.

## **Wamena**

The town Wamena is per se, like the most other Papuan towns that we visited, relatively uneventful. However, if one has time to spend there, the market is well worth a visit. It is to this market that tribes people from the nearby, and sometimes truly distant, villages come to do purchases and/or to sell goods, and everything from handicrafts and vegetables to live pigs is on sale. Some of the locals wear nothing but their traditional penis sheath. Even though people wearing such an outfit can be encountered more commonly outside the town itself, it is surely an exotic feature for an urban area to us westerners.

In Wamena we stayed comfortably at the Baliem Pilamo Hotel, which was very decent and had the much appreciated luxury of hot water. The restaurant at the hotel seemed as good as any other in town.

## **Baliem Valley**

If Wamena town is perhaps not overly inspiring per se, the surroundings of Wamena, i.e. the Baliem Valley, still holds vast tracts of beautiful and unlogged primary forests containing an adorable flora and fauna. Orchids and plants of numerous varieties and species are abundant and the numerous bird species relatively approachable, as the hunting pressure is less here than in many other localities.

It is possible to drive up from Wamena town to the Lake Habbema area, a drive which takes approximately 2.5 hours in a 4W Jeep on very rough roads (no other car than a 4W will make it). Many birder groups that come to the Baliem valley merely drive to and from the lake itself, which is surely a pity as they miss the fantastic forests (accessible only on foot) that stretch between the lake and Wamena. There are a few villages scattered on that stretch, that make for interesting encounters with the natives of various tribes. Furthermore, one is likely to bump into tribes people who are on their way to and from Wamena. For this reason, it is very recommendable to bring along extra food and a few gifts, in order to show your hospitality to the locals when they pass your camp sites.

The area around Lake Habbema (situated on 3,600 meters above sea level) is very open whereas the forests below are fairly dense. These forests are highly beautiful and bird encounters plentiful. Even though we had rain on (at least parts of) all our days in the valley, birds showed up and called for attention very regularly (sometimes continuously). The climate is fairly harsh on these altitudes, almost reaching zero degrees celsius at night, with a high level of humidity and commonly lots of rain and sometimes wind. Warm and waterproof clothing is thereby crucial. Some of the imposing locals, however, again wear nothing but their traditional penis sheaths even in these areas, regardless of the weather conditions.

Having spent two nights near the lake (one night's extension due to heavy rain), we continued downhill, first along the road from where we came, and later on forest trails. The temperature generally increases the further downhill one gets.

Being westerners and therefore looking (and sometimes behaving) fairly alien compared to the locals, one naturally receives lot of attention from the friendly villagers, when camping nearby their homes. In order to obtain some degree of privacy, we had brought our own tent, which is presumably a recommendable thing to do.

Even though the forests are generally of very high biodiversity and ecological quality, the fairly long trail stretch between Elegalik and Babililo villages could be highlighted and warmly recommended as an excellent area to spend a good deal of time birdwatching in. The closer one gets to Wamena, the higher the degree of human affect on the forests and the fauna. However, birds are commonly plentiful in the valley even near the town.

To plan for a five night/six day hike, a number of porters and a good cook are practically indispensable. We brought along nine porters and one chef, all of them excellently well arranged by the Wamena local Mickey (known as "Mickey Mouse"), who Mehd knows fairly well. Mickey and the chef Yance are both highly recommendable and trustworthy as for arranging any hiking tours in the area.

It should furthermore be noted that the areas most commonly visited by tourists to the Baliem Valley area lie in the opposite direction from where the hike described here stretches. The more touristy parts are said to be relatively poor from both a birding and a cultural experience tourism perspective (the latter since most of the villages are kept in their traditional way in a somewhat superficial manner, mainly for tourism purposes).

Last but not least, it is also good to note that almost all goods on sale in Wamena have to be flown into the town, which makes for a rather hefty margin on their sales price. In other words, it is recommendable to bring some of the supplies required for the hike from elsewhere when flying into Wamena.

### **Manokwari**

Manokwari is rather beautifully situated by the sea even though, as usual, the town may not be an attraction in itself. However, the supply of goods and food is very large by Papuan standards, with well equipped malls and shops in some areas.

We stayed at a nice hotel by the sea, called Mansinam Beach Hotel. During our stay, we mostly relaxed, went along the sea shore (from which a number of nice sea birds may be spotted), as well as enjoyed some fresh fish dishes at the hotel restaurant.

### **Arfak Mountains**

In the Arfaks, we stayed in Mokwam village, whose surrounding forests host a number of species that may be very hard to come across in other areas. We were guided by the very skilled local Seth Wonggor. Seth knows that his skills deserves a rather high price, and thereby a great deal of funding from birdwatchers clearly benefits the village. One would think that the contributions that go to the village and its church would imply that hunting and deforestation around the village would be reduced, and that particular care would be taken to preserve its flora and fauna. However, sadly on the contrary, hunting is widespread and the birds encountered around the village were far shyer than in the other areas visited during the trip. Furthermore forest clearings around the village steadily seemed on the increase.

As the very basics of eco-tourism – that tourism money should contribute to conserve precious habitats and species – to us did not seem to work as wished for here, the sentiment of staying in and around Mokwam village was clearly somewhat depressing even if fantastic birds were seen and

enjoyed. What perhaps added to that sentiment was that the villagers of Mokwam were not by far as welcoming as the locals of the other places that we visited on Papua.

In order to get to Mokwam village (which is situated at 1,400 meters above sea level), a 4W transport is necessary, as the rough road steadily climbs from sea level in Manokwari. The journey takes circa three hours. Seth has built hides by the display grounds of Western Parotia, Magnificent BOP, and Vogelkop Bowerbirds, and furthermore knows stake-outs for a large amount of other species.

We stayed firstly and lastly in the outdoor-style but perfectly adequate guesthouse built near the village and then trekked through the forest up to the Japanese Camp (2,100 meters above sea level). We stayed outdoors, in our sleeping bags on the bunk beds built there, and enjoyed the birds in the vicinity of the camp site early morning (e.g. Black Sicklebill and Arfak Astrapia). Later, we went downhill again and stayed for two nights at the Garden House (1,700 metres above sea level). Western Parotia and Vogelkop Bowerbird hides are in the vicinity of that area, and many other species are prevalent in the open grounds and closed primary and secondary forests there.

### **Sorong**

Sorong city is fairly modern and seems to be steadily growing economically as well as in its number of inhabitants, with newly built houses and even malls as one of its recent features. We stayed at the completely newly opened Mamberamo Hotel, which was highly recommendable. Price-wise, it was possible to bargain at the time of our stay, since construction work was still going on inside the hotel. It seems likely, however, that prices will rise fairly substantially in the future.

Sorong is the natural gateway to the West Papuan islands, and as the waters to those islands can be fairly windy and unpredictable, it may well be that one ends up a few days here. We went to Pantai Kasuari (Cassowary Beach) by taxi on one of the days. The beach is relatively decent although somewhat crowded on weekends or public holidays. In the Northeasternmost end of the beach, one can find good habitat for Beach Kingfisher and feeding waders, and it seemed to be a good lookout spot for pelagic birds too.

On another day, we initially intended to go to Makbon (which is supposedly a relatively decent park like area), but ended up in the vicinity of Gunung Mariet, some 20 km to the Southwest of Sorong. (The complete exchange of areas was due to that the taxi that we hopped on took us to the entirely wrong spot.) However, in a logged forest there a few good lowland birds could be found, and furthermore, the locals had interesting information to provide of good forest areas that were more distant from the road than we had time to reach on that particular day, but which would hold e.g. Western Crowned Pigeon.

### **Batanta, Salawati and Senapang Islands**

The waters between Batanta and Sorong may be somewhat unreliable and can rather rapidly change from calm to unexpectedly rough. It is therefore wise to have a day or two to spare on the itinerary in case the ride to or from Batanta would need to be postponed. The island is still covered to a great part of beautiful primary forest, even though the plantations around the villages seem to be steadily growing in extent. Birds on Batanta are plentiful and relatively approachable, with many species being more abundant here than on the mainland, e.g. a number of parrot and parakeet species, and fruit doves. Wilson's BOP seems to be relatively easily scoped, and the same goes for the Red BOP. The hike up to the display ground of Wilson's BOP is somewhat steep although we did not find it to be as tough as described in a few other trip reports. However, the trail was in rather good condition at the time of our visit (not particularly muddy), which naturally facilitated the climb.

The camp site on Batanta island is very nice, located just by the sea. It could be mentioned though that the roof of the house-like shelter built for visitors is leaking, so it may be wise to bring along a tent to ensure a good night's sleep. As long as one's sleep is not too deep, one should not miss the Papuan Frogmouth that is very active around the camp site at night. A couple of women from the nearby

village helped with cooking and washing of the dishes. It is of course recommendable to bring along all food and other supplies to the island.

On Salawati, which is just across the straight from Batanta (note that the waters in between the islands has very strong currents and can be rough at times, making the short trip rather difficult), we visited a lake near the sea shore to the South-East from the camp site on Batanta. The lake was very productive and the beach stretch in front of it near-perfect with beautiful coral reefs and lots of neon coloured aquatic fishes. (To bring along adequate snorkelling gear to the West Papuan islands is a must!)

Senapang is a relatively small island, located between Sorong and Batanta, that until very recently was uninhabited. The recent habitation has unfortunately made great damage to the island's forests as many plantations have been created on the island's interior. The island is though still very birdy and the beaches superb, which makes a stop there on the way to or from Batanta highly recommendable and very pleasant.

### **Bali / Nusa Penida**

Being merely the starting and ending point of our Papuan journey, Bali is partly out of scope for this report. However, as we had a day to spare before catching a flight back to home in Sweden, we went on a day trip to Nusa Penida to the East of Bali. A trip there is very recommendable, not least from a birding point of view, as three very attractive species can be found on the island: Bali Myna (*Leucopsar rothschildi*), White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*) and Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea* ssp. *parvula*).

Unfortunately, there are only three of the cockatoos left in the wild on the island, all of which are females. The splendid association "Friends of the National Parks Foundation" runs a Bali Myna project and furthermore puts effort into trying to acquire and release a male Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo to pair with the females. Whereas the cockatoo affair has not yet been solved (if any reader of this report has information of a caged male cockatoo of the *parvula* subspecies, please do contact the foundation right away!), the Myna project is doing very well and produces a steadily growing number of breeding pairs in the wild.

The foundation can help showing daytrippers around the island (advance bookings is recommended), and with their help we were lucky enough to see wild birds of all the three sought-after species. The foundation does seem to perform an excellent work, and contributions are very much encouraged. Splendid viewpoints/lookouts from high cliffs are plentiful on the East coast of the island. From these cliffs, not only the Tropicbirds can be spotted, but also huge and highly beautiful sting rays that forage in the crystal clear waters below.

### **Bird Observations**

#### **CASUARIIDAE**

[**Northern Cassowary** (*Casuarius unappendiculatus*) Footprints and droppings noted e.g. in Nimbokrang area and in the Arfak mountains.]

#### **ANATIDAE**

**Spotted Whistling-Duck** (*Dendrocygna guttata*) Numerous on a lake near the sea shore on Salawati.

**Radjah Shelduck** (*Tadorna radjah*) A single noted on a lake near the sea shore on Salawati.

**Salvadori's Teal** (*Salvadorina waigiuiensis*) At least ten on Lake Habbema (Baliem Valley) and a single noted in a river lower down on the Baliem hike.

#### **MEGAPODIIDAE**

**Wattled Brush-Turkey** (*Aepyodius arfakianus*) Heard only, near the Japanese Camp in the Arfak mountains.

**Red-billed Brush-Turkey** (*Talegalla cuvieri*) Heard only, near the Garden House in the Arfak mountains.

**Brown-collared Brush-Turkey** (*Talegalla jobiensis*) Heard on numerous occasions in the Nimbokrang area.

**Dusky Scrubfowl** (*Megapodius freycinet*) A single flushed among the plantations on Senapang island.

#### PHASIANIDAE

**Brown Quail** (*Coturnix ypsilophora*) A pair seen nearby Sentani and a single nearby Nimbokrang village.

**Snow Mountain Quail** (*Anurophasis monorhonyx*) A pair seen very well (just in front of the car) on the road to Lake Habbema.

#### PHALCROCORACIDAE

**Little Pied Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) Two seen on a lake near the sea shore on Salawati.

#### FREGATIDAE

**Great Frigatebird** (*Fregata minor*) At least one individual (seen from a close distance) observed during the boat ride to Batanta. On the same trip, quite a few frigatebirds were left unidentified.

**Lesser Frigatebird** (*Fregata ariel*) Numerous sightings from the boat during the ride to and from Batanta. Five also noted from Cassowary Beach (near Sorong).

#### ARDEIDAE

**Great-billed Heron** (*Ardea sumatrana*) One at Senapang island.

**Great Egret** (*Ardea alba*) Seen e.g. near Jalan Korea.

**Intermediate Egret** (*Egretta intermedia*) Noted e.g. near Sentani and near Jalan Korea.

**Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*) Seen e.g. in Manokwari and near Sorong.

**Pacific Reef-Heron** (*Egretta sacra*) Singles seen at Cassowary Beach (near Sorong) and at Senapang island.

**Rufous Night-Heron** (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) One seen by a lake near the sea shore on Salawati.

#### ACCIPITRIDAE

**Osprey** (*Pandion haliaetus*) One seen from the boat on the ride from Batanta to Sorong.

**Pacific Baza** (*Aviceda subcristata*) Singles noted near Nimbokrang and in the Tajah area. A pair also seen on Batanta.

**Brahminy Kite** (*Haliastur indus*) Fairly common, especially near towns or urban areas.

**White-bellied Sea-Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) Singles seen at Senapang island and outside Sorong.

**Eastern Marsh-Harrier** (*Circus spilonotus*) One subadult male seen near Lake Habbema.



**Black-mantled Goshawk** (*Accipiter melanochlamys*) Noted on two days in the Arfaks.

**Gray-headed Goshawk** (*Accipiter poliocephalus*) Noted in the Jalan Korea area.

#### **RALLIDAE**

**Buff-banded Rail** (*Gallirallus philippensis*) Heard on several occasions (its call is very characteristic) and seen a few times in various areas of suitable habitat. Fairly common.

**Eurasian Coot** (*Fulica atra*) Common on Lake Habbema.

#### **TRINGINAE**

**Terek Sandpiper** (*Xenus cinereus*) One seen well together with Gray-tailed Tattlers and Common Sandpipers on Cassowary Beach (near Sorong).

**Common Sandpiper** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) One at Cassowary Beach (near Sorong).

**Gray-tailed Tattler** (*Tringa brevipes*) About a dozen birds seen on rocky reefs at Cassowary Beach (near Sorong).

#### **GLAREOLIDAE**

**Oriental Pratincole** (*Glareola maldivarum*) A single bird observed on the fields of Timika's airport.

#### **LARIDAE**

**Little Tern** (*Sterna albifrons*) Noted near Senapang island on the boat ride from Batanta to Sorong.

**Whiskered Tern** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) Numerous outside Senapang island.

**Common Tern** (*Sterna hirundo*) Noted in a bay near the hotel in Manokwari.

**Great Crested Tern** (*Thalasseus bergii*) Noted on the boat ride to and from Batanta. Quite a few crested terns left unidentified.

#### **COLUMBIDAE**

**Metallic Pigeon** (*Columba vitiensis*) (Also called White-throated Imperial Pigeon.) Noted almost all days in the Arfaks. Mostly heard, seen occasionally.

**Slender-billed Cuckoo-Dove** (*Macropygia amboinensis*) Fairly common in the Tajah area. Also noted in the forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 6).

**Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove** (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) Numerous heard and seen in the forest near the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Great Cuckoo-Dove** (*Reinwardtoena reinwardtii*) Seen very well in Tajah and in a fruiting tree on the trek between Lake Habbema and Elegalik.

**Pheasant Pigeon** (*Otidiphaps nobilis*) A single bird was heard (flushed) close to the display ground of Wilson's BOP on Batanta.

**Victoria Crowned-Pigeon** (*Goura victoria*) One seen in the forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 6). All thanks to the magnificent skills of Dance (Jamil's companion) who located this shy pigeon by means of carefully scrutinizing a rather vast area.

**Wompoo Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) Heard calling in Nimbokrang, Jalan Korea and the Tajah area.

**Pink-spotted Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) Noted in a forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 6). Also present in the Tajah area.

**Orange-fronted Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*) A single of this beautiful species was seen very well on Senapang island.

**Beautiful Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus pulcheullus*) Seen on two days in Tajah.

**White-breasted Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) Noted (mostly heard and sometimes seen) almost every day in the Arfaks.

**Orange-bellied Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) Heard and seen on several occasions in the Nimbokrang area as well as in Tajah.

**Spice Imperial-Pigeon** (*Ducula myristicivora*) Singles seen on Senapang island. The bill-knob on the Western island birds (nominate race) is truly conspicuous.

**Purple-tailed Imperial-Pigeon** (*Ducula rufigaster*) Single birds seen well in Tajah.

**Rufescent Imperial-Pigeon** (*Ducula chalconota*) Seen and heard on a few occasions in the Arfaks.

**Pinon Imperial-Pigeon** (*Ducula pinon*) Fairly common in some areas, and noted in Nimbokrang, Tajah and on Batanta.

**Zoe Imperial-Pigeon** (*Ducula zoeae*) Noted several times in Nimbokrang and Tajah.

**Papuan Mountain-Pigeon** (*Gymnophaps albertisii*) Heard in Baliem Valley on the trek between Elegalik and Babililo. Also seen and heard a few times in the Arfaks.

## PSITTACIDAE

**Palm Cockatoo** (*Probosciger aterrimus*) Small groups and singles seen in Tajah. Luckily still quite common on Batanta. Truly magnificent cockatoo. Like many other Papuan parrots, the species is in decline due to the cage bird trade.

**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** (*Cacatua galerita*) Noted several times in the Nimbokrang area, in Tajah, around the Garden House in the Arfaks and on Batanta and Senapang islands.

**Brown Lory** (*Chalcopsitta duivenbodei*) Heard and seen many times in the Nimbokrang area and in Tajah. In Sentani, all in all 36 individuals were seen in scattered groups that flew eastwards over the airport field on a late afternoon.

**Dusky Lory** (*Pseudeos fuscata*) A pair was nicely seen in flight in the morning sun, Jalan Korea area.

**Rainbow Lorikeet** (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) Seen numerous times, however the species is shy and usually difficult to see well when perched. Noted all days in Nimbokrang area and in Tajah, as well as in Sentani (flying over the airfield) and on Batanta.

**Black-capped Lory** (*Lorius Lory*) Singles heard and seen in the Nimbokrang area, in Tajah (all days) and on Batanta. Unfortunately a very popular cage bird, and pet birds (almost exclusively taken from the wild) were seen in many places.

**Red-flanked Lorikeet** (*Charmosyna placentis*) Noted in Jalan Korea area and in Tajah on single occasions.

**Papuan Lorikeet** (*Charmosyna papou*) Noted practically every day on the Baliem Valley trek. Also seen a few times in the Arfaks. A very beautiful bird.

**Plum-faced Lorikeet** (*Oreopsittacus arfaki*) Noted every day on the Baliem Valley trek and every day in the Arfaks. Very quick in flight.

**Yellow-billed Lorikeet** (*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii*) Noted several times on the lower altitudes (last days) of the Baliem Valley trek. Also noted many times in the Arfaks, although very shy there due to the hunting.

**Orange-billed Lorikeet** (*Neopsittacus pullicauda*) Noted practically every day in both Baliem Valley and in the Arfaks.

**Pesquet's Parrot** (*Psittrichas fulgidus*) (Also called Vulturine Parrot.) Observed on two days in Tajah, on the second of which an amazing gathering of at least seventeen birds were seen! A very rare bird nowadays due to the uncontrolled bird cage trade.

**Yellow-capped Pygmy-Parrot** (*Micropsitta keiensis*) A handful different individuals, including a nesting pair, were seen in the Gunung Mariet area (outside Sorong).

**Buff-faced Pygmy-Parrot** (*Micropsitta pusio*) Fairly common around Nimbokrang, were Jamil every now and then even has a nesting pair in his garden! Also noted in Tajah.

**Red-breasted Pygmy-Parrot** (*Micropsitta bruijnii*) Heard and seen on a few occasions near the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Double-eyed Fig-Parrot** (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) Noted a few times at Jalan Korea, in Tajah and in the Gunung Mariet area (close to Sorong), where a bird in its nest hole was seen.

**Salvadori's Fig-Parrot** (*Psittaculirostris salvadorii*) A handful observations from Jalan Korea and Tajah.

**Painted Tiger-Parrot** (*Psittacella picta*) Seen on two days on the Baliem Valley trek, near Lake Habbema and Elegalik village.

**Brehm's Tiger-Parrot** (*Psittacella brehmii*) An intensely calling bird was heard in the forest between Japanese Camp and the Garden House (Arfak mountains).

**Modest Tiger-Parrot** (*Psittacella modesta*) Not uncommon in the Lake Habbema area of Baliem Valley. Also noted on two days in the Arfaks.

**Red-cheeked Parrot** (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) One of the most common parrots of the trip, noted in practically all lowland habitats visited. Very distinctive voice.

**Great-billed Parrot** (*Tanygnathus megalorhynchus*) At least one individual was seen and heard a few times on Senapang island.

**Eclectus Parrot** (*Eclectus roratus*) Noted in Nimbokrang area (although very shy here due to the hunting pressure), in Tajah, and on Batanta and Senapang (much more common and approachable in the latter three localities).

**Moluccan King-Parrot** (*Alisterus amboinensis*) One individual was seen very well as it perched near the trail to the display ground of Wilson's BOP on Batanta. A truly magnificent bird.

**Papuan King-Parrot** (*Alisterus chloropterus*) A pair seen in the forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 6), close to a displaying tree of King BOP. Additional observations and calls noted in Tajah.

**Papuan Hanging-Parrot** (*Loriculus aurantiifrons*) A single observation at Jalan Korea.

#### CUCULIDAE

**Brush Cuckoo** (*Cacomantis variolosus*) Heard and seen on many occasions in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang and Tajah but also noted e.g. on the lower elevations of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo** (*Cacomantis castaneiventris*) Noted on the four days of the highest elevations of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Fan-tailed Cuckoo** (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) Seen and heard once in Tajah and twice in the Arfaks.

**Rufous-throated Bronze-Cuckoo** (*Chrysococcyx ruficollis*) Seen very well near the trail from Lake Habbema to Elegalik village.

**White-eared Bronze-Cuckoo** (*Chrysococcyx meyeri*) Heard and seen a couple of times in the Arfaks, near the Garden House.

**Little Bronze-Cuckoo** (*Chrysococcyx minutillus*) A few individuals heard and seen at Jalan Korea.

**White-crowned Koel** (*Caliechthrus leucolophus*) Heard in the forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 8).

**Dwarf Koel** (*Microdynamis parva*) Heard in Tajah and on two days in the Arfaks.

**Asian Koel** (*Eudynamis scolopaceus*) Noted a few times in Tajah and once in the Arfaks.

**Channel-billed Cuckoo** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) A group of birds were heard calling at Jalan Korea.

**Greater Black Coucal** (*Centropus menbeki*) Noted several times in lowland habitat such as outside Sentani, in Nimbokrang and Tajah areas and at Gunung Mariet (outside Sorong).

**Lesser Black Coucal** (*Centropus bernsteini*) Noted in grassland habitat outside Sentani, at Tajah and on the lower elevations of Baliem Valley.

#### STRIGIDAE

[**Greater Sooty-owl** (*Tyto tenebricosa*) A nightly call heard near the Garden House in the Arfak mountains probably came from this species but was left unidentified.]

**Papuan Hawk-Owl** (*Uroglaux dimorpha*) (Also called Papuan Boobok.) Heard well most nights in the Arfak mountains where the species is quite common.

#### AEGOTHELIDAE

**Feline Owlet-Nightjar** (*Aegotheles insignis*) An individual of this species was perched at its day-roost site along a trail close to the Garden House in the Arfaks. In conformity with the other owlet-nightjar observation below, the bird was found by the guide Seth who seems to know several day roost spots.

**Mountain Owlet-Nightjar** (*Aegotheles albertisi*) One was seen perched along the trail to the Garden House from Mokwam village in the Arfak mountains.

## **PODARGIDAE**

**Papuan Frogmouth** (*Podargus papuensis*) A pair was seen very well hidden on their day roost perch high up in a palm tree in the the fantastic guide Jamil's garden, in Nimbokrang. Furthermore heard on several nights in the Arfaks as well as all nights on Batanta.

## **CAPRIMULGIDAE**

**Papuan Nightjar** (*Mearnsia novaeguineae*) Noted in the evening and early morning respectively on two days in the Nimbokrang area, when driving towards other sites nearby.

## **APODIDAE**

**Papuan Needletail** (*Mearnsia novaeguineae*) Seen at Jalan Korea and in Tajah.

**Glossy Swiftlet** (*Collocalia esculenta*) Noted practically every day in the lowland areas. Very common.

**Mountain Swiftlet** (*Aerodramus hirundinaceus*) Noted all days at the higher elevations of Baliem Valley and the Arfak mountains.

**Uniform Swiftlet** (*Aerodramus vanikorensis*) Noted on a lake near the sea shore on Salawati.

## **HEMIPROCNIIDAE**

**Moustached Treeswift** (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) Seen in the Nimbokrang area and in Tajah (where it was more common).

## **ALCEDINIDAE**

**Azure Kingfisher** (*Alcedo azurea*) Heard in Tajah and noted several times on Batanta (sightings there were however mostly brief).

**Rufous-bellied Kookaburra** (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) Heard and seen on many occasions in lowland habitat, i.e. Nimbokrang area, Tajah, around Sorong, Batanta and Senapang.

**Shovel-billed Kookaburra** (*Clytoceyx rex*) Heard and, thanks to the incredible skills of Jamil and his companion Dance, also seen very well in a swamp forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 8).

**Blue-black Kingfisher** (*Todiramphus nigrocyaneus*) Heard only, calling intensely in a swamp forest at Jalan Korea.

**Beach Kingfisher** (*Todiramphus saurophagus*) Seen at two localities: Cassowary Beach (outside Sorong) and on Senapang island.

**Sacred Kingfisher** (*Todiramphus sanctus*) Common around Nimbokrang, also noted at Cassowary Beach (outside Sorong) and on Senapang island.

**Hook-billed Kingfisher** (*Melidora macrorrhina*) Heard at Jalan Korea, in the swamp forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 6) (where it was very common), and in Tajah.

**Yellow-billed Kingfisher** (*Syma torotoro*) Noted on two successive days in Tajah.

**Mountain Kingfisher** (*Syma megarhyncha*) Noted between the villages Elegalik and Babililo on the Baliem Valley trek.

**Common Paradise-Kingfisher** (*Tanysiptera galatea*) Noted in Tajah (a few individuals), and especially on Batanta island (where many individuals called intensely).

## MEROPIDAE

**Rainbow Bee-eater** (*Merops ornatus*) Seen in Nimbokrang village and in Tajah.

## CORACIIDAE

**Dollarbird** (*Eurystomus orientalis*) A common bird of the lowlands, noted on all lowland localities.

## BUCEROTIDAE

**Blyth's Hornbill** (*Aceros plicatus*) Seen occasionally at the localities in the vicinity of Nimbokrang. More numerous in Tajah. Also fairly numerous on Batanta. A truly magnificent bird.

## PITTIDAE

**Hooded Pitta** (*Pitta sordida*) Heard in the forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 6), more numerous at Batanta (in the forest and among the plantations). Also noted in the Gunung Mariet area. A skulker.

## MELIPHAGIDAE

**Olive Straightbill** (*Timeliopsis fulvigula*) One seen in the Arfaks, at the display ground of Magnificent BOP, when waiting in the constructed hide for the BOP to show.

**Long-billed Honeyeater** (*Melilestes megarhynchus*) One seen in the forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 8).

**Red-headed Myzomela** (*Myzomela erythrocephala*) Singles observed near the Japanese Camp in the Arfaks.

**Red-collared Myzomela** (*Myzomela rosenbergii*) Very common in the Baliem Valley as well as in the Arfaks.

**Mountain Meliphaga** (*Meliphaga orientalis*) Seen on two successive days in between the Garden House and the Japanese Camp in the Arfak mountains.

**Puff-backed Honeyeater** (*Meliphaga aruensis*) Singles noted on Batanta.

**Mimic Honeyeater** (*Meliphaga analoga*) Very common around Nimbokrang and Tajah.

**Yellow-gaped Honeyeater** (*Meliphaga flavirictus*) Heard only in the swamp forest near the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 8).

**Obscure Honeyeater** (*Lichenostomus obscurus*) Noted on two days of the Baliem Valley hike (the species was thereby recorded on altitudes above those noted in fieldguides).

**Varied Honeyeater** (*Lichenostomus versicolor*) A few individuals noted on Senapang island.

**Orange-cheeked Honeyeater** (*Oreornis chrysogenys*) Very common in the Lake Habbema area.

**Plain Honeyeater** (*Pycnopygius ixoides*) Seen on three days in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang and Tajah.

**Streak-headed Honeyeater** (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) Seen in the forest near the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 8).

**Meyer's Friarbird** (*Philemon meyeri*) Regularly observed in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang and Tajah.

**Helmeted Friarbird** (*Philemon buceroides*) Noted regularly in the lowlands, especially near villages and habitation.

**Leaden Honeyeater** (*Ptiloprora plumbea*) Observed several times on two days of the Baliem Valley trek (the species was then recorded on altitudes above the 1900 m range noted in fieldguides).

**Rufous-sided Honeyeater** (*Ptiloprora erythropleura*) Regular observations on both the Baliem Valley trek and in the Arfaks, where it was very common.

**Black-backed Honeyeater** (*Ptiloprora perstriata*) (Also called Grey-streaked Honeyeater.) Observed in the beautiful moss forest between the villages Elegalik and Babililo on the Baliem Valley trek.

**Sooty Melidectes** (*Melidectes fuscus*) Noted in the Lake Habbema area.

**Short-bearded Melidectes** (*Melidectes nouhuysi*) Fairly common in the Lake Habbema area and the highest ranges of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Long-bearded Melidectes** (*Melidectes princeps*) As for its short-bearded cousin, common on the highest ranges of the Baliem Valley hike.

**Cinnamon-browed Melidectes** (*Melidectes ochromelas*) Heard on two days near the Japanese Camp and the Garden house in the Arfaks.

**Vogelkop Melidectes** (*Melidectes leucostephes*) Noted all days in the Arfaks, where it is very common.

**Belford's Melidectes** (*Melidectes belfordi*) One of the most commonly observed birds on the Baliem Valley trek.

**Yellow-browed Melidectes** (*Melidectes rufocrissalis*) A few observations of this species were made as we approached more civilised areas on the last day of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Ornate Melidectes** (*Melidectes torquatus*) As for the previous species, seen only on the last day of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Arfak Honeyeater** (*Melipotus gymnops*) (Also called Western Smoky Honeyeater.) Common in the Arfaks and regularly noted.

**Smoky Honeyeater** (*Melipotus fumigatus*) (Also called Common Smoky Honeyeater.) Seen regularly on the Baliem Valley trek.

#### **CAMPEPHAGIDAE**

**Boyer's Cuckoo-shrike** (*Coracina boyeri*) Observed at Jalan Korea, in the forest near the road to Tajah (km 4), and in the Tajah area.

**White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** (*Coracina papuensis*) Seen near Nimbokrang village and also on Batanta island, where it was fairly common.

**Hooded Cuckoo-shrike** (*Coracina longicauda*) Small groups seen in moss forest on two days of the highest elevations of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Cicadabird** (*Coracina tenuirostris*) Observed only once, in Tajah.

**New Guinea Cuckoo-shrike** (*Coracina melas*) (Also called Black Cuckoo-shrike.) Observed only in Tajah.

**Black-bellied Cuckoo-shrike** (*Coracina montana*) Seen regularly on the lower elevations of the Baliem Valley trek (i.e. between Elegalik village and Wamena).

**Golden Cuckoo-shrike** (*Campochaera sloetii*) Seen only once, in Tajah.

**Black-browed Triller** (*Lalage atrovirens*) Fairly common in the lowland forests near Nimbokrang and Tajah.

#### **CORVIDAE**

**Brown-headed Crow** (*Corvus fuscicapillus*) Heard only, in the logged forest of Jalan Korea.

**Gray Crow** (*Corvus tristis*) Seen in the forest near the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 8) and on Batanta island.

**Torresian Crow** (*Corvus orru*) Regular observations were made outside Sorong and on Batanta and Senapang islands.

#### **MYIAGRIDAE**

**Black Monarch** (*Monarcha axillaris*) Observed on two days near Mokwam village in the Arfaks.

**Spectacled Monarch** (*Monarcha trivirgatus*) Regularly observed on Batanta island.

**Hooded Monarch** (*Monarcha manadensis*) Singles observed in the Jalan Korea forest area.

**Golden Monarch** (*Monarcha chrysomela*) Regularly encountered in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang and Tajah, as well as on Senapang island.

**Friiled Monarch** (*Arses telescopthalmus*) Noted in a forest near Nimbokrang village as well as by its nest in the Jalan Korea area.

**Shining Flycatcher** (*Myiagra alecto*) Regularly observed in various habitats in both lowland and highland areas.

**Black-breasted Boatbill** (*Machaerirhynchus nigripectus*) Observed on two days of the Baliem Valley trek. Regular sightings were also made near the Garden House in the Arfaks, as well as on Batanta island.

**Yellow-breasted Boatbill** (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) Only heard once, in the alluvial forest near Nimbokrang village.

#### **ALAUDIDAE**

**Australasian Bushlark** (*Mifafra javanica*) Observed only once, on the fields by the picturesque Elegalik village on the Baliem Valley trek.

#### **HIRUNDINIDAE**

**Pacific Swallow** (*Hirundo tahitica*) Observed regularly in the lowlands, near habitation.

#### **SYLVIIDAE**

**Golden-headed Cisticola** (*Cisticola exilis*) Observed regularly on grass fields, e.g. near Nimbokrang village.



**Clamorous Reed-warbler** (*Acrocephalus stentoreus*) Singles noted on a lake near the sea shore on Salawati.

**Island Leaf-warbler** (*Phylloscopus poliocephalus*) Noted on two successive days on the Baliem Valley trek (near Babililo village), and regularly encountered in the Arfaks.

**Tawny Grassbird** (*Megalurus timoriensis*) Noted in a grass field as we approached Wamena on the Baliem Valley trek.

#### **TURDIDAE**

**Pied Bushchat** (*Saxicola caprata*) Regular in appropriate habitat in the Baliem Valley area.

**Blue Rock-thrush** (*Monticola solitarius*) One seen well among rocks and cliffs on Senapang island. Quite a surprise.

**Island Thrush** (*Turdus poliocephalus*) Common and regularly encountered in the Baliem Valley forests.

#### **RHIPIDURIDAE**

**Northern Fantail** (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) Encountered in Nimbokrang and Tajah lowland forests as well as on Batanta island (where it seemed to be quite common).

**Willie-wagtail** (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) A regular bird of various altitudes and habitats around Papua, noted on twelve days of the trip.

**Friendly fantail** (*Rhipidura albolimbata*) Regularly encountered in the Baliem Valley as well as in the Arfaks. Quite a common bird in suitable habitat.

**Chestnut-bellied Fantail** (*Rhipidura hyperythra*) Singles observed in Tajah only.

**White-bellied Thicket-Fantail** (*Rhipidura leucothorax*) Noted on three days in the Nimbokrang and Tajah lowland forests.

**Black Fantail** (*Rhipidura aira*) Seen twice in the Baliem Valley, also noted on three days in the Arfaks (on various elevations).

**Dimorphic Fantail** (*Rhipidura brachyrhyncha*) Observed regularly on various elevations in the Arfaks.

**Rufous Fantail** (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) Seen only once, between the Japanese Camp and the Garden House in the Arfaks.

#### **EOPSALTRIIDAE**

**Lesser Ground-Robin** (*Amalocichla incerta*) Noted on all days in the Arfaks. Also heard singing on two days of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Lemon-bellied Flycatcher** (*Microeca flavigaster*) Noted on four days in the lowland forests of the greater Nimbokrang area and in Tajah.

**Canary Flycatcher** (*Microeca papuana*) Observed near Elegalik village in Baliem Valley. Regular encounters in the Arfaks on four days.

**Garnet Robin** (*Eugeryone rubra*) Heard only, near the Japanese Camp in the Arfaks.

**Alpine Robin** (*Petroica bivittata*) (Also called Mountain Robin.) Regular encounters (on four successive days) on the higher elevations of the Baliem Valley.

**Black-sided Robin** (*Poecilodryas hypoleuca*) Heard in the forest near Nimbokrang as well as in the logged Jalan Korea forests.

**Black-throated Robin** (*Poecilodryas albonotata*) Observed in the beautiful forests between Elegalik and Babililo.

**White-winged Robin** (*Peneothello sigillatus*) Numerous observations of this charismatic bird on the higher elevations of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Smoky Robin** (*Peneothello cryptoleuca*) Heard on the trail from the Japanese Camp to the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Blue-gray Robin** (*Peneothello cyanus*) Noted between Elegalik and Babililo villages in the Baliem Valley as well as on three days in the Arfaks, where it was fairly common.

**Green-backed Robin** (*Pachycephalopsis hattamensis*) Regularly observed on different altitudes in the Arfaks.

#### **PACHYCEPHALIDAE**

**Mottled Whistler** (*Rhagologus leucostigma*) Heard only, by the trail between the Garden House and Mokwam village in the Arfaks.

**Dwarf Whistler** (*Pachycare flavogriseum*) One heard fairly close to the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Rufous-naped Whistler** (*Aleadryas rufinucha*) Common in the Arfaks. Also noted near Elegalik village in Baliem Valley.

**Vogelkop Whistler** (*Pachycephala meyeri*) Observed and heard on two days in the Arfaks, between the Japanese Camp and the Garden House.

**Gray-headed Whistler** (*Pachycephala griseiceps*) Noted on two days in Nimbokrang forests as well as in Tajah and on Senapang island.

**Sclater's Whistler** (*Pachycephala soror*) Seen on two days near the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Lorentz's Whistler** (*Pachycephala lorentzi*) Seen on four days, between Lake Habbema and Babililo village on the Arfak trek, where relatively common.

**Regent Whistler** (*Pachycephala schlegelii*) Observed or heard on three days in the Arfaks (various altitudes).

**Rufous Shrike-Thrush** (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) Noted in the forest near Nimbokrang as well as at the Jalan Korea site, in Tajah and near Mokwam village in the Arfaks.

**Hooded Pitohui** (*Pitohui dicrous*) Observed in Tajah and near Mokwam village in the Arfaks.

**White-bellied Pitohui** (*Pitohui incertus*) Noted in the forest close to the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 8) as well as in the Tajah area.

**Rusty Pitohui** (*Pitohui ferrugineus*) Heard only, in a forest close to the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 6).

**Variable Pitohui** (*Pitohui kirhocephalus*) Observed on two successive days in Tajah.

**Black Pitohui** (*Pitohui nigrescens*) Seen on two days near the Garden House in the Arfaks.

#### ZOSTEROPIDAE

**Black-fronted White-eye** (*Zosterops minor*) Regularly encountered in the Baliem Valley (on four days of the highest altitudes) as well as in the Arfaks (also on four days; various altitudes).

**Capped White-eye** (*Zosterops fuscicapilla*) (Also called Western Mountain White-eye.) Regularly observed in the Arfaks, stretching to higher altitudes than its black-fronted cousin.

**New Guinea White-eye** (*Zosterops novaeguineae*) Noted as fairly common in the Arfaks.

#### POMATOSTOMATIDAE

**New Guinea Babbler** (*Pomatostomus isidorei*) Regularly encountered in the forest near Nimbokrang (where a nest was also seen), at Jalan Korea and in Tajah.

#### ORTHONYCHIDAE

**Spotted Jewel-babbler** (*Ptilorrhoa leucosticta*) Only seen once but heard on three days in the Arfaks, between the Japanese Camp and the Garden House.

**Blue Jewel-babbler** (*Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*) Heard only, in the swamp forest near Nimbokrang village.

**Lesser Melampitta** (*Melampitta lugubris*) Heard only, on two days in the Arfaks (different altitudes).

#### MALURIDAE

**Orange-crowned Fairywren** (*Clytomyias insignis*) Observed skulking near the trail between Elegalik and Babililo on the Baliem Valley trek.

**White-shouldered Fairywren** (*Malurus alboscapulatus*) Common in suitable habitat at various altitudes. Noted e.g. near Nimbokrang, on the Baliem Valley trek and in the Arfaks.

**Emperor Fairywren** (*Malurus cyanocephalus*) Seen twice in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang: near the village itself and at a forest site near the road to Tajah (km 6).

#### ACANTHIZIDAE

**Rusty Mouse-warbler** (*Crateroscelis murina*) Heard in the forest near the road to Tajah (km 4), and more regularly encountered in the Arfaks, where noted on four days.

**Mountain Mouse-warbler** (*Crateroscelis robusta*) Observed once between Elegalik and Babililo villages on the Baliem Valley trek. Also noted near the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Perplexing Scrubwren** (*Sericornis virgatus*) Observed on two days by the Garden House in the Arfaks. (The taxonomy concerning the scrubwrens in the Vogelkop mountains seems a bit complex, as many species are considered to occur there even though some of those are often lumped together.)

**Vogelkop Scrubwren** (*Sericornis rufescens*) Common in the Arfak mountains, many observations.

**Papuan Scrubwren** (*Sericornis papuensis*) Common on the higher altitudes of the Baliem Valley, and noted on four days.

**Papuan Thornbill** (*Acanthiza murina*) At least one seen very well in a tree by the road to Lake Habbema.

**Green-backed Gerygone** (*Gerygone chloronota*) At least one seen on Batanta island.

**Large-billed Gerygone** (*Gerygone magnirostris*) Seen at Jalan Korea and in a forest close to the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 4).

**Brown-breasted Gerygone** (*Gerygone ruficollis*) Observed on three successive days in the Arfaks (in the Japanese Camp and the Garden House areas).

#### NEOSITTIDAE

**Black Sittella** (*Neositta miranda*) Seen on the three days of highest elevations on the Baliem Valley trek.

**Varied Sittella** (*Neositta chrysoptera*) Noted on two days in the Arfaks, close to the Japanese Camp.

#### CLIMACTERIDAE

**Papuan Treecreeper** (*Cormobates placens*) Observed near the road to Lake Habbema on the Baliem Valley trek, as well as on three days in the Arfaks.

#### NECTARINIIDAE

**Black Sunbird** (*Leptocoma sericea*) Seen on many occasions in the lowland forests and villages of Nimbokrang and Tajah.

**Olive-backed Sunbird** (*Cinnyris jugularis*) Numerous and noted in many places, e.g. the greater Nimbokrang area, Tajah, Sentani and Batanta island.

#### DICAEIDAE

**Fan-tailed Berrypecker** (*Melanocharis versteri*) Seen near Babililo village on the Baliem Valley trek and between the Japanese Camp and the Garden House in the Arfaks.

**Spotted Berrypecker** (*Melanocharis crassirostris*) One observed near Babililo village, Baliem Valley.

**Tit Berrypecker** (*Oreocharis arfaki*) Seen on three days in the Arfaks, where it seemed fairly common.

**Crested Berrypecker** (*Paramythia montium*) Regularly encountered on the highest elevations of the Baliem Valley trek.

**Olive-crowned Flowerpecker** (*Dicaeum pectorale*) (Sometimes treated together with its red-capped cousin as "Papuan Flowerpecker".) Noted as common on Batanta and Senapang islands.

**Red-capped Flowerpecker** (*Dicaeum geelvinkianum*) (C.f. previous species.) Regularly observed in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang and Tajah. The flowerpecker observations from the Arfaks were probably of this species.

**Yellow-bellied Longbill** (*Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*) Observed well in the Gunung Mariet area (outside Sorong).

**Slaty-chinned Longbill** (*Toxorhamphus poliopterus*) One or two seen well close to Wamrek village in the Baliem Valley.

#### ORIOOLIDAE

**Brown Oriole** (*Oriolus szalayi*) Observed on two days in Tajah.

#### DICRURIDAE

**Spangled Drongo** (*Dicrurus bracteatus*) Regularly encountered in the lowland forests of the greater Nimbokrang area and Tajah. Also seen on Batanta island.

#### ARTAMIDAE

**Great Woodswallow** (*Artamus maximus*) Singles or small groups were observed on three days (various altitudes) of the Baliem Valley trek.

**White-breasted Woodswallow** (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) Seen on Senapang island only, where it was relatively common.

#### CRACTICIDAE

**Mountain Peltops** (*Peltops montanus*) A pair was seen near Mokwam village in the Arfaks.

**Lowland Peltops** (*Peltops blainvillii*) A pair was briefly seen at Jalan Korea. Much more common at Tajah, where numerous observations were made.

**Hooded Butcherbird** (*Cracticus cassicus*) Regularly observed on Batanta island, where a pair nested near the camp site by the sea.

**Black Butcherbird** (*Cracticus quoyi*) Noted in the forest near Nimbokrang and at Jalan Korea (where it was seen nesting) as well as in Tajah.

#### PARADISAEIDAE

**Glossy-mantled Manucode** (*Manucodia ater*) Observed at Jalan Korea, in the forest near the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 8), and in Tajah.

**Long-tailed Paradigalla** (*Paradigalla carunculata*) A single bird was seen by a trail from the Garden House to Mokwam village in the Arfaks. It was first flushed from a tree top and later found in another tree from where it soon took off, obviously shy due to the hunting in the area.

**Arfak Astrapia** (*Astrapia nigra*) One male was seen feeding and displaying among fruiting trees fairly near the Japanese Camp in the Arfaks.

**Splendid Astrapia** (*Astrapia splendidissima*) At least five birds (including two adult males) were noted between the Lake Habbema and Elegalik village on the Baliem Valley trek. Furthermore noted between Elegalik and Wamrek.

**Western Parotia** (*Parotia sefilata*) Three females were seen near the trail on the way to the Japanese Camp in the Arfaks. We furthermore spent time on three occasions waiting for the adult male next to a display ground (in a hide constructed by the local bird guide Seth Wonggor). However the adult male failed to show although subadult males and females entered the display ground. This was indicative that the adult male of the area had disappeared. The hunting in the area may unfortunately be to blame.

**King-of-Saxony Bird-of-paradise** (*Pteridophora alberti*) One stunning adult male in wild display was seen in beautiful, orchid-rich and moss-clad forest in the middle of the Baliem Valley trek. The encounter was one of the absolute highlights of the trip. An additional five males were heard only on the same hike.

**Magnificent Riflebird** (*Ptiloris magnificus*) Heard only in a forest near the road from to Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 6). When Jamil (the bird guide) imitated the bird's call, it came in very close but was still invisible in the dense foliage. A shy species.

**Superb Bird-of-paradise** (*Lophorina superba*) Fairly common on lower elevations of the Baliem Valley, with numerous birds heard and a handful seen (mostly merely glimpsed).

**Black Sicklebill** (*Epimachus fastuosus*) Two fantastic observations of males near the Japanese Camp in the Arfaks. One male was displaying at first daylight near the camp. Later, possibly another bird came in to a fruiting tree at a different site. The distinctive call was heard on two other days (various sites) in the Arfaks.

**Brown Sicklebill** (*Epimachus meyeri*) Heard only on two successive days on the hike between Lake Habbema and Babililo in Baliem Valley. Very distinctive call.

**Pale-billed Sicklebill** (*Epimachus bruijnii*) Heard at Jalan Korea and observed very well in Tajah, where a handful birds were calling.

**Magnificent Bird-of-paradise** (*Cicinnurus magnificus*) A female was seen from a hide next to a display ground near Mokwam village. Later, an adult male was seen for a long time just by its display ground from another hide at a different site (more far from the village).

**Wilson's Bird-of-paradise** (*Cicinnurus respublica*) An unbelievably beautiful male gave us a fantastic show at its display ground on Batanta island. Another two or three males were heard calling on the way to and from this particular site.

**King Bird-of-paradise** (*Cicinnurus regius*) Heard in the forest near Nimbokrang village and a young male was seen at Jalan Korea. Later, in a forest by the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 4), a beautiful adult male was seen in its display tree. Furthermore heard on two successive days in Tajah.

**Twelve-wired Bird-of-paradise** (*Seleucidis melanoleucus*) Heard in the forest near Nimbokrang village. An adult male was seen at Jalan Korea (and many more birds were heard calling there). Adult males and females were also observed foraging in Tajah.

**Lesser Bird-of-paradise** (*Paradisaea minor*) Observed near or in display trees in the forest near Nimbokrang village, and in the forest near the road to Tajah (km 6). Singles were also seen in the Tajah area.

**Red Bird-of-paradise** (*Paradisaea rubra*) Observed in a display tree not far from the camp site on Batanta island. The birds were not so active at this time of the year. Singles were however calling and displaying lightly.

#### **PTILONORHYNCHIDAE**

**Spotted Catbird** (*Ailuroedus melanotis*) Noted between Elegalik and Babililo villages on the Baliem Valley trek. Also heard on three days in the Arfak forests. Very distinctive, cat-like (“miaowing”) call.

**Vogelkop Bowerbird** (*Amblyornis inornata*) Noted on four days in the Arfaks, where it is fairly common. Around half a dozen of the species' amazingly constructed and decorated bowers were seen on top of the bird observations.

**Macgregor's Bowerbird** (*Amblyornis macgregoriae*) A male was seen very well in a bird party in moss forest just next to the road that leads to Lake Habbema, on the Baliem Valley trek.

#### **STURNIDAE**

**Metallic Starling** (*Aplonis metallica*) Noted in forests on the road to Tajah from Nimbokrang (km 8 and km 4 respectively), where also a large colony was established in a tree giant.

**Singing Starling** (*Aplonis cantoroides*) A handful birds were seen in Sorong city.

**Yellow-faced Myna** (*Mino dumontii*) Observed numerous times in the lowland forests of Nimbokrang, the forests on the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 4 + 6 + 8), in Tajah, and on Batanta and Senapang islands.

**Golden Myna** (*Mino anais*) Seen in a forest near the road from Nimbokrang to Tajah (km 8). A few birds also seen in Tajah.

#### **MOTACILLIDAE**

**Gray Wagtail** (*Motacilla cinerea*) Seen near streams on three occasions; once in Baliem Valley (near Babililo village) and twice in the Arfaks.

**Alpine Pipit** (*Anthus gutturalis*) Common in the Lake Habbema area, Baliem Valley.

#### **PASSERINAE**

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow** (*Passer montanus*) Fairly common in appropriate habitat; seen in cities and near habitation on nine days of the trip.

#### **ESTRILDIDAE**

**Mountain Firetail** (*Oreostruthus fuliginosus*) Seen regularly in the Lake Habbema area.

**Crimson Finch** (*Neochmia phaeton*) Two adult males were seen in grass habitat, on the outskirts of Sentani. Another four young birds were later found in grass habitat on the Sentani airfield.

**Blue-faced Parrotfinch** (*Erythrura trichroa*) Regular observations in the Arfaks, especially among the grass and crops near the Garden House.

**Streak-headed Munia** (*Lonchura tristissima*) Small groups of birds were encountered in the Tajah area. A pair was also seen on Senapang island.

**Chestnut-breasted Munia** (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) A pair of birds were flushed in grass habitat on the outskirts of Sentani.

**Black-breasted Munia** (*Lonchura teerinki*) Noted on the three last days of the Baliem Valley trek, i.e. between Elegalik village and the Wamena outskirts.

**Snow Mountain Munia** (*Lonchura montana*) (Also called Western Alpine Munia.) Regular encounters in the Lake Habbema area and between Elegalik and Babililo villages.

### **A Small Selection of Bird Photos from the Trip**

All photos ©Mehd Halaouate



*Orange-fronted Fruit-dove*



*Pesquet's Parrot*



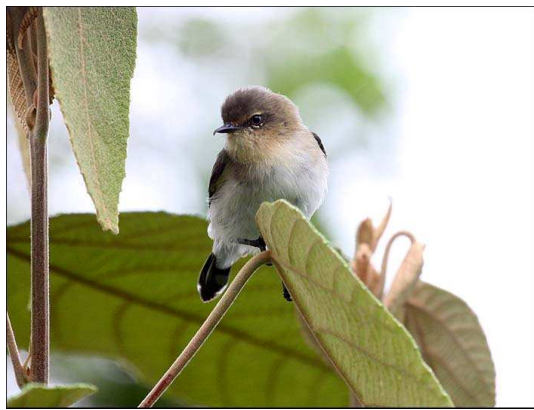
*Plum-faced Lorikeet*



*Buff-faced Pygmy-parrot*



*Black-breasted Boatbill*



*Brown-breasted Gerygone*



*Crested Berrypecker*



*Snow Mountain Munia*