



A **Tropical Birding** Custom tour

“Wallacea”: Sulawesi & Halmahera (Indonesia)

17th September – 8th October 2023



As usual, this tour featured a long list of *endemics*, with many outstanding species among them. Were it not for a totally unexpected good sighting of the rare **Blue-faced Rail** in *Sulawesi*, this species would surely have won the bird of the tour vote on that island: **Sulawesi Pitta**. The long and close views of this *pitta*, (within a few feet of us as we sat in a purpose built blind), made this a sighting for the ages (*Sam Woods*).

All photos by the guide Sam Woods

INTRODUCTION:

Revered Ornithologist **Alfred Russel Wallace** was so struck by the peculiarity of the birds of this region and wrote such famous prose about it, that these islands (which represent the transition zone between the distinctive avifaunas of Asia and Australasia), now bear his name. This part of the Indonesian archipelago is now widely referred to as “**Wallacea**”, in reference to him and his groundbreaking work in the islands. We visited three islands, starting with **Sulawesi**, before transiting through the volcanic island of **Ternate** to reach the island of **Halmahera**, where native plant species include nutmeg and mace, hence its lofty position as one of the world famous “spice islands”.

This trip stands out as it always provides a long list of lifebirds for newcomers to **Sulawesi** and the **Moluccas**. This was no different for one of the participants who racked up close to one hundred lifebirds on **Sulawesi**, with more than **80 island endemic species** among them, and then added **more than 50 more** during our shorter sojourn on the **Moluccan** island of **Halmahera**, which included more than 30 specialties to this island group. However, talking of “endemics” is only part of the story. Many among these are spectacular or enigmatic species that rank as some of the best in the region. On the **Sulawesi** leg alone, highlights included , a long list of **kingfishers** (i.e. **7 species in a single day at “Kingfisher Capital” of Tangkoko**), including **Sulawesi Dwarf**, **Green-backed** (photo page 14), **Great-billed**, **Scaly-breasted** (photo page 16), and **Sulawesi Lilac Kingfishers** (photo below).



The Australasian realm is the center of *kingfisher* diversity. We got **15 different kingfishers** on this tour of which 9 were endemic species, like this **Sulawesi Lilac Kingfisher** at **Tangkoko** that was one of 7 species of kingfisher seen on that day alone! (*Sam Woods*).

We also enjoyed lengthy, point-blank views of *Sulawesi Pitta* (photos page 1 and 17), plus the mysterious *Geomalia*, (photo page 6), the striking *Rusty-backed (Red-backed) Thrush* (photo page 12), the no less arresting *Knobbed Hornbill* and, and, as usual, a decent haul of nightbirds. This included daytime sightings of *Diabolical (Satanic) Nightjar*, *Ochre-bellied Boobook*, *Australasian Grass-Owl*, and *Sulawesi Scops-Owl*, and nighttime viewings of *Cinnabar Boobook* and *Sulawesi Nightjar*. Other standouts included the rose-tinted *Maleo* (photo page 13), a unique megapode restricted to *Sulawesi* at the same site, (and within the same hour), as stellar views of the very seldom seen *Blue-faced Rail*, which won the bird of the trip vote due to the shock nature of it! *Purple-bearded Bee-eater* (photo page 9) was a lot harder to find this year than previously, and therefore added to the allure of this pretty species once it was seen well at our final attempt. The mammal list is never long on this trip, though it is extremely interesting, with the gremlin-like *Gurskey's Spectral Tarsier* (photo page 11), long-faced *Celebes Crested Macaque* and bulky *Bear Cuscus* all featuring on one single morning at the fantastic *Tangkoko* reserve, which provided one of the best days on *Sulawesi*.



Three *pitta* species were seen very well on this tour, due to the recent establishment of forest feeding stations and blinds. This *Ivory-breasted Pitta* was one of two seen on *Halmahera*, and a *North Moluccan Pitta* was also seen on this same final birding morning, to add to the *Sulawesi Pitta* seen at extremely close quarters on *Sulawesi* (Sam Woods).

Moving on to *Halmahera*, an opening day on *Gunung Uni-Uni*, a low mountain near the bustling town of *Subaim* was sublime, with more than 25 new birds amassed in this stellar spell, which include two more kingfishers (*Sombre and Blue-and-white Kingfishers*), watched in between getting repeated views of a treetop *Ivory-breasted Pitta*, which was justifiably extremely highly rated.

Pigeons and parrots were prominent on this north **Moluccan** island, and some of these proved popular, like a hard-to-get **Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove** (photo page 21), which once revealed, remained in sight for as long as we wanted. **Chattering Lorries** headed up an all-star cast of parrots and getting good views of perched individuals of these plus **White (Umbrella) Cockatoo** were not to be scoffed at either. Indeed, the **Chattering Lory** population appeared in good shape in the area, thankfully with regular sightings of these popular cage birds at both of the premier sites we visited. The nightbirds were also cooperative on **Halmahera** too, with **Halmahera Boobook**, **Moluccan Scops-Owl** (photo page 22), and **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar** (photo page 20) all starring on the same, incredible opening birding day on the island. The tour ended with a marvelous final day on the Spice Islands, which opened with sleeping **Moluccan Dwarf-Kingfisher** and **Dusky Megapode**, continued with two dazzling pitta species seen for a long time and at close range at two forest feeding stations (**Ivory-breasted Pitta** – photo page 3 - and **North Moluccan Pitta** – photo page 21), and closed with us adding a **fifteenth** and final **kingfisher**, with a pair of **Beach Kingfishers** as one of the final birds of the tour.

Top Five Birds on Sulawesi:

- 1 **Blue-faced Rail** (Tambun, Dumoga-Bone NP)
- 2 **Sulawesi Pitta** (Gunung Mahawu)
- 3 **Purple-bearded Bee-eater** (Lore Lindu)
- 4 **Rusty-backed (Red-backed) Thrush** (Tangkoko)
- 5 **Knobbed Hornbill** (Tangkoko)

Some of the birds that did NOT make this list illustrate how epic the bird list on *Sulawesi*: **Maleo**, **Geomalia**, **Scaly-breasted**, **Green-backed** and **Sulawesi Dwarf Kingfishers**, **Purple-winged Roller**, and **Fiery-browed Myna**.

Top Five Birds on Halmahera:

- 1 **Ivory-breasted Pitta**
- 2 **Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove**
- 3 **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar**
- 4 **White (Umbrella) Cockatoo**
- 5= **Wallace's Standardwing/Gurney's Eagle/Chattering Lory**

TOUR SUMMARY:

Day 1 (of birding): 17th September 2023 – Makassar.

This private tour of two people, started with a lunchtime meeting at *Makassar* airport, in the most populous city on the island of Sulawesi. The island is made up of four gangly prongs, making it shaped rather like a starfish. We started our tour in the province of *South Sulawesi* on the southwestern “limb” of the starfish. With only an afternoon at our disposal on the first day, we focused close to the city, visiting a set of fishponds, which proved very productive. *Ben* and *Nick* came armed with a list of target bird species, and five were up for grabs on this first session, when we managed to find all of them with little fuss. Some of our first birds were shorebirds working the ponds, like **Common Redshank** and a much rated pair of **Long-tailed Stints**, the latter of which was new for *Nick*. However, not long after that we set eyes on our first major target with a small group of **Javan Plovers**. With these being our only shorebird targets, we focused our efforts on ponds close to the car, where reedbeds held **Clamorous Reed-Warblers**, and the surrounding scattered scrub held our first **Lemon-bellied White-eyes**, a second quickfire lifebird for *Ben*.

We scoured the reed-fringed ponds for bitterns, finding first a **Yellow Bittern**, though better still was the **Cinnamon Bittern** that *Nick* located, our third of four targets for the group. Not long after, another common *Sulawesi* bird, **Golden-bellied Gerygone**, fell to the sword, and *Ben* was up to four lifers already. The last one took a little more time, though as the sun's heat decreased as it crept towards the horizon in the late afternoon mixed flocks of *munias* dropped into the reeds to roost, holding dozens of **Pale-headed Munias** among them, to the delight of all, which provided our cue to head back to the hotel for dinner plans.



Karaenta Forest provided a blistering opening morning on *Sulawesi*, with **Black-headed (Green-backed) Kingfisher**, **Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher**, **Black-ringed White-eyes**, **Piping Crows** and these **Sulawesi Hornbills** all seen within the first few hours! (*Sam Woods*).

Day 2: 18th September 2023 – Karaenta Forest and Bantimuring National Park.

We started out this day as it carried on, with a characteristic early start (04:30am), as we headed into the limestone karst forests east of the city of *Makassar*. After meeting with the local guide we were walked into the nearby forest, where one of the first birds was a major win for us, a small party of **Piping Crows** emerging into the canopy of the tree for popular scope views of this strange-sounding corvid. After such a good first bird, the second was arguably better, when a **Black-headed Kingfisher** was spotted sitting quietly beside us! Soon after, following the sounds of a **Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher** led to that species also joining the small list of first birds seen of the morning! Visiting a new area beside a local village brought us a South Sulawesi specialty, **Black-ringed White-eye**, though our over confidence at this blistering start was soon checked when a visit to a new *Sulawesi Pitta* blind did not result in us seeing the bird. However, the 20 minute walk in was not in vain, as we saw a trio of **Sulawesi Hornbills** (photo above) during that time.

Extensive roadworks prevented us from birding some of the roadside forest we were keen to check, and so we headed down to *Bantirmurung* below there, where we could not locate the much-wanted *Sulawesi Streaked Flycatcher*, unfortunately, though **Black and Olive-backed Sunbirds** and the endemic **Yellow-sided Flowerpecker** were seen there, as was our first pair of **Pale-blue Monarchs**. Lunch was taken at the airport in *Makassar*, after which we flew to *Palu* in *Central Sulawesi*, and then swiftly took the long drive to the town of *Wuasa*, a town just outside of *Lore Lindu National Park*, where the next three full days were spent...

Day 3: 19th September 2023 – Lore Lindu National Park (Danau Taming).

The first day in *Lore Lindu* is always a dizzy affair for first time visitors, as a stream of island endemics fall quickly. This day was just such a day, *Ben* reveling in a long list of lifebirds by the day's end, which reached 30 personal new species, most of which were endemic to *Sulawesi*. As we drove towards the lake that forms the centrepiece of this section of *Lore Lindu*, a large shape on an exposed limb had us pulling the car over in order to ogle our first **White-bellied Imperial-Pigeon**, one of more than twenty species from that family amassed on the tour. While many of the first birds could be considered abundant species, one of them was very



much not. Having connected with our experienced local guide the evening before, *Idris*, he informed us that the enigmatic *Geomalina* was being seen regularly around *Danau (=lake) Taming*, and so we headed straight there with this major target firmly in our sights. A solid strategy was adopted whereby, the drivers circled the area with walkies as we checked another area.

The radio crackled to life, we rushed to the toilet block and there, just behind it, was a showy **Geomalina** (photo above) hopping from log to log. Seeing this bird with so little effort seemed somehow wrong, as it has traditionally required a hellish hike up to the upper reaches of the demanding *Anaso Track*, and so were mighty relieved to eliminate the stress of that so early on. Other birds that came thick and fast were more regular fare, although when “regular fare” includes birds like **Fiery-browed Myna**, these were very welcome indeed! Other highlights included **Citrine Canary-Flycatcher**, **Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove** (photo page 7), **Superb Fruit-Dove**, **Black-billed Koel**, **Cerulean Cuckooshrike**, **Gray-rumped Treeswift**, **Turquoise Flycatcher**, **Warbling and Black-crowned White-eyes**, **Sulawesi Leaf Warbler**, **Sulawesi Fantail**, **Sulawesi Drongo** and an impressive pair of **Ashy Woodpeckers** representing some of the furthest south and east this family reaches. Moving to a slightly different spot along the road, another mixed bird wave brought us **Streak-headed White-eye (Sulawesi Heleia)**, the diminutive **Pygmy Cuckooshrike (Cicadabird)**, and our first pair of **Blue-breasted Parrotfinches**. Some low feeding **Ivory-backed Woodswallows** also made repeated appearances there too. Another roadside stop produced a **Red-eared Fruit-Dove** expertly located by *Idris*. The action in these opening few hours at *Lore Lindu* had been morning short of frenetic, so it was no surprise when the activity died as mid-morning approached.

Our afternoon return to the park was dogged by some rainy and gloomy conditions, (during this, the dry season), although we did see a wonderful **Sulawesi (Jungle) Blue Flycatcher**, a pair of **Blue-fronted (Hoevell's Warbling) Flycatchers** get hold of a close male **Maroon-backed Whistler**, though only *Sam* saw the calling male **Great Shortwing**. Our first tries at seeing **Cinnabar Boobook** between rain showers only met with limited success, only flight views being obtained. We vowed to return to this species again!

The next day, the infamous *Anaso Track* beckoned, with its promise of a gruelling walk, but an endemic bird family on offer as well as roosting nightjars...

Day 4: 20th September 2023 – Lore Lindu National Park (Anaso Track & Danau Taming).

This day always looms large in the minds of guide and group alike. The *Anaso Track* is a steep rocky track that allows access to the higher elevation species not normally found at the lower altitudes of *Lake Taming*. Among the star species offered include *Hylocitrea* (an endemic, monotypic family), and *White-eared Myza*, although we already had the *Geomalia*, which was a help, as we did not need to look for that one. With *Geomalia* in the bag already We decided to look for two more big target species early in the morning, before attempting our assault of the *Anaso Track*. This did not work out so well, as we could not locate a singing *Sulawesi Thrush* or calling *Great Shortwing (Heinrichia)*. We decided to cut our losses and hit the track, where we worked our way uphill until we encountered a mixed flock that held a more cooperative pair of **Blue-faced Parrotfinches** than the day before, and the same flock also held a group of four **Hylocitreas** at a lower location than we were expecting for this species. Our next major stop up the track was to check the usual spot for *Purple-bearded Bee-eater*, although we were not surprised to not find it there following reports from the local guide that it has been AWOL from there since June. Therefore, the next significant find was a roosting **Diabolical (Satanic) Nightjar**



near the Helipad (another, more animated individual was seen later further up the track too). Nick decided to push up the track further to try and track down a **White-eared Myza**, which he has missed on his previous visit to the area. Pretty much as soon as we reached the lower altitudes where it occurs, we found a cooperative pair, which were our cue to turn around and head back down the trail. On the way back down we checked a small pond for **Small Sparrowhawk**, which responded lightning quick by flying in and perching above the water. We arrived back at the bottom for a late lunch and for some further birding time at lower elevations. We decided to take a rest back at our base in Wuasa, then headed out in the late afternoon for some nightbirds out of town.

For this, we visited an area of rice paddies, where an early rising **Australasian Grass-Owl** flew right past us with its long legs and giant feet trailing behind it. Three different individuals were seen quartering the area in the end. Other birds there included a small group of **Pacific Black Ducks** and **Purple Heron**. Darkness was approaching fast, and a few **Great (Sulawesi) Eared-Nightjars** emerged as it did so. We drove back towards *Wuasa*, stopping for other nightbirds during our return journey. A first stop produced sounds, though no good sights, of a calling **Speckled Boobook**. However, we did find it at our second stop, which proved to be the most popular owl of the day (a day when 3 owl species were seen). Close to our lodging we added a third and final owl, with a couple of **Sulawesi Masked-Owls** seen in flight.



Day 5: 21st September 2023 – Lore Lindu National Park (Danau Taming & Gunung Potong).

Having been messed around in our first **Cinnabar Boobook** attempt, we opted for an early morning start (04:30am), in order to look for the *boobook* one more time. We were rewarded for this by 'scope views as it called from the stunted canopy. On a roll now with nightbirds, having seen four species in less than 12 hours, we tried for a fifth at the same spot as the *boobook*, finding a

calling **Sulawesi Scops-Owl** with minimal fuss too. Buoyed with our success, we again tried for *Sulawesi Thrush* and the *Great Shortwing* again in the early morning, though were thwarted once again. However, later in the morning a flock came by with **Malias** in their midst and, finally, the **Sulawesi Thrush** that we were craving. A walk by the lake itself met with early success when a calling **Sulawesi Hawk-Eagle** was found sitting on a lofty perch. Our other time around the lake was less impressive save for our first **Sunda Teals** of the tour. With *Purple-bearded Bee-eater* now being one of our main gap birds from the area, we decided to visit another section of *Lore Lindu*, a 90-minute drive from our hotel, following an early lunch back in *Wuasa*. The bee-eater remained elusive, though an outstanding encounter with an adult **Spot-tailed Goshawk – photo above** - (which very nearly made the top five birds of the tour), made the trip very worthwhile.

Day 6: 22nd September 2023 – Lore Lindu National Park (Gunung Potong) & Olibagu River.

We had one final morning to seek any missing birds, and so decided to return to the *Gunung Potong* to have one final attempt at finding *Purple-bearded Bee-eater*. Before we got there a large shape perched in the trees proved to be the only **Sulawesi Serpent-Eagle** of the tour. Once there, we split into two groups, in order to spread our net wider, and this paid off when *Theo* located the first of several **Purple-bearded Bee-eaters** seen that morning (photo next page).



Purple-bearded Bee-eater was absent from its usual haunts near *Lake Taming*, prompting us to visit a new area of *Lore Lindu National Park*, where a pair of them were seen on our final morning, at our very last chance (*Sam Woods*).

On the way back to *Palu* for the night, we stopped off beside the *Olibagu River*, finding several new species, including **White-shouldered (Lesseure's) Triller**, and a great, open, long fly by from a **Red-backed Buttonquail**. Around a dozen **Savanna Nightjars** were also seen there too.

Days 7-10: 23rd – 26th September 2023 – Tangkoko & Manado.

On day 7 we flew back to *Makassar* from *Palu*, then north to *Manado*, before driving to *Tangkoko*, arriving for a late lunch there after a frustrating flight delay. The next three nights, and much of those three days, were spent in and around *Tangkoko*, one of the best reserves in *North Sulawesi*. Unlike *Lore Lindu*, *Tangkoko*, is a lowland site, with the areas we covered being close to sea level. Our first full day there there was a classic, and one of the best of the entire tour. While the numbers of birds did not match those of the first day in *Lore Lindu*, the quality of the birds was sky high. One of the first birds of the day was a roosting *Sulawesi Scops-Owl*, soon followed by our first **Purple-winged Rollers**, **White-rumped Cuckooshrike**, and a *White-faced Cuckoo-Dove*. Several pairs of confiding **Philippine Megapodes (Tabon Scrubfowl)** also showed along the entrance road. A brace of stunning kingfishers were then located, with a male **Sulawesi Lilac Kingfisher** (photos pages 2 & 10) and a female **Green-backed Kingfisher** (photo page 14) viewable from the same spot. A small flock also held a pair of endemics in the form of **Bay Coucal** and **Yellow-billed Malkoha**.

Walking deeper into the forest resulted in some stellar sightings, not least a very approachable **Rusty-backed (Red-backed) Thrush** (photo next page). Some time was spent overlooking a large cavity in a tall rainforest tree, where a male **Knobbed Hornbill** came in twice to feed its chick there. The long walk was also necessary to set eyes on a roosting **Ochre-bellied Boobook**. *Mammals* were also a feature that morning at *Tangkoko*, with **Celebes Crested Macaque**, **Sulawesi Bear Cuscus**, and **Gurskey's Spectral Tarsier** falling in that order.

In the afternoon, the *kingfishers* kept coming, with seven species seen through the day. The afternoon boat ride was made to pursue **Great-billed Kingfisher** in an area of mangroves, which took its merry time to show up, though was then seen well twice from the boat. **Common Kingfisher**, **Green-backed Kingfisher**, **Sacred Kingfisher**, **Collared Kingfisher**, and **Ruddy Kingfisher** all also featured during the same boat ride. Other highlights of the boat trip were **Kentish Plover**, **Pacific Reef-Heron**, **Striated Heron**, **White-bellied Sea-Eagle**, **Blue Rock-Thrush**, and **Pied Imperial-Pigeon**. With late afternoon upon us the day was still not yet done. A scrubby area held several noisy **Isabelline Bush-Hens**, a pair of which was only too happy to walk out into the open at the late hour. Finally, a **Sulawesi Nightjar** flew in after dark and landed within a few feet of us!

Inevitably, things were much slower in *Tangkoko* following that blistering start, although other highlights included a distant **Gray-headed Imperial-Pigeon**, the striking **White-necked Myna**, good looks of a male **Black-naped Fruit-Dove**, a single **Chinese Sparrowhawk**, several

Azure-rumped Parrots, a couple of **White-rumped (Sulawesi) Trillers**, and regular encounters with **Silver-tipped Imperial-Pigeons**, **Gray-rumped Treeswifts**, and the distinctive white-eyed, endemic form of **Hair-crested (White-eyed Spangled) Drongo**.





Our first full day in *Tangkoko* was a classic. We got SEVEN different species of *kingfisher* (including the endemic **Great-billed**, **Sulawesi Lilac** and **Green-backed Kingfishers**), and also saw some good mammals, with **Crested Black Macaque**, this **Gurskey's Spectral Tarsier** and **Sulawesi Bear Cuscus** all featuring, along with **Rusty-backed Thrush!** (*Sam Woods*)

The late addition there of a confiding **Maroon-chested Fruit-Dove** was a surprise as we normally do not expect to see this species until further west on the *Minahassa Peninsula*. A night in *Manado* had been added for some welcome downtime, and the resort there, overlooking the *Celebes Sea*, hosted sightings of **Zebra Dove**, **Buff-banded and Barred Rails**, **Gray-tailed Tattler**, **Lesser Sandplover**, **Asian Glossy Starling** and the endemic **White-rumped Cuckooshrike** (photo page 25).



This stunning **Rusty-backed (Red-backed) Thrush** was watched at close range foraging on the forest floor in *Tangkoko (Sam Woods)*.

Days 11-13: 27th – 29th September 2023 – Dumoga-Bone.

After *Tangkoko* and a night's rest in *Manado*, we worked our way west along the *Minahassa Peninsula* (the northernmost tentacle of the Sulawesi "starfish") to *Dumoga-Bone National Park*. We visited three different well separated sections of the park, *Tambun*, *Molibagu Road*, and *Toraut*. We started at *Tambun*, with a late afternoon visit on day 11, hoping we would connect with the area's most celebrated species, the endemic *Maleo*, an odd rose-breasted megapode. In spite of only two hours on site, we had a spectacular opening to our time there, with **Maleo** (photo next page), being one of the first birds seen on site, with another longer sighting coming later too. That would have been sufficient. However, a calling **Maroon-chinned Fruit-Dove** was also seen and was new for *Ben* who had not been present for the one in *Tangkoko* previously.



Then things went in a direction we did not expect. Bumping into another guide on site, he informed us that he had just seen the rare *Blue-faced Rail*, and we set off in pursuit. Remarkably, *Nick* found the **Blue-faced Rail**, which was seen at length, during which time it actually walked straight towards us along a trail! This was a real shock find and completely out of the blue as it were!



This female **Green-backed Kingfisher** was seen during a SEVEN-kingfisher day at *Tangkoko (Sam Woods)*.

A morning along the *Molibagu Road* was lively, with several **Sulawesi Hanging-Parrots** scoped, a very welcome **Sulawesi Goshawk** masterfully found by *Max*, both **Knobbed and Sulawesi Hornbills**, a single **Sulawesi Myna**, a gorgeous male **Crimson Sunbird** (photo page 15), a group of **Ivory-backed Woodswallows**, another displaying **White-faced Cuckoo-Dove** and **White-rumped (Sulawesi) Triller**. Visits to *Toraut* produced **Ornate Lorikeet**, multiple **Gray-cheeked Pigeons**, and a squadron of **Purple Needletails**, among others.



Day 14: 30th September 2023 – Gunung Ambang.

We visited *Gunung Ambang* for the chance at finding the rare and local *Matinan Flycatcher*. However, in spite of a concerted effort to track one down in their usual haunts none were heard or seen, which seems to have happened with multiple groups of late, leading to fears for its survival locally. However, we did have our best experiences with the odd **Malia** at the same site and added another **Cerulean Cuckooshrike**. By the end of the day we moved east along the *Minahassa Peninsula*, and checked into a rather pleasant hotel in *Tomohon*, close to *Gunung Mahawu*, our site for the next day.

Day 15: 1st October 2023 - Gunung Mahawu, Danau Linow & Manado.

Our final day in Sulawesi was a cracker, which opened with a superb pair of **Scaly-breasted Kingfishers** (photos next page), at the base of *Gunung Mahawu*, thanks to the services of expert local guide Adam. We then went to a simple forest blind, where, after a wait, a smashing **Sulawesi Pitta** posed out in front, coming within 10 feet of us in the blind. The final birds of note there included **Sulawesi Myzomelas** and some flyover **Sulawesi Honey-Buzzards**. After this bumper morning, and lunch in *Tomohon*, we made a short stop at *Lake Linow*, as *Nick* was lacking **Wandering Whistling Duck**, which we found in the end, while also adding new birds to the list like **Little Grebe**, **Dusky Moorhen** and **Australasian Swamphen**. We returned to *Manado* for a night before we set off for the Spice Islands the next day.



This pair of **Scaly-breasted Kingfishers** was our TENTH, (or eleventh depending on taxonomy), kingfisher of the tour on *Sulawesi* (Sam Woods).





This **Sulawesi Pitta** at *Gunung Mahawu* was one of 3 pitta species all seen at close range thanks to some new blinds.



Days 16-21 (2nd – 7th October): Halmahera

On day 16 we departed *Sulawesi* by way of a flight out of the *North Sulawesi* city of *Manado* to the volcanic island of *Ternate*, from where we took a speedboat to the town of *Sidangoli* on the west side of the tendrilled island of *Halmahera*. We were met by our experienced driver there and then drove the long journey to the town of *Subaim*, where we spent the next 5 nights.



Cream-throated (Halmahera) White-eye was one of the easiest Moluccan specialties, recorded multiple times (*Sam Woods*).

Gunung Uni-Uni (Buli Road)

During the final days on *Sulawesi*, (due to heady success at our earlier sites), we felt like the list was gradually grinding to a halt, as new birds were running out. However, once on the *Moluccas*, it felt like starting all over again, as the birdlife there is so different from that found on *Sulawesi*. We started by birding *Gunung Uni-Uni*, a low mountain of just over 800m/2620ft, to southeast of the town of *Subaim*. *Ben* was quickly reinvigorated after some slow final days on *Sulawesi*, with another sudden burst of lifers, on his first exploration of the *Moluccan Islands*. He tallied more than 25 new birds during the blistering first day alone, all in the vicinity of *Uni-Uni*.

We arrived just before dawn had risen, which allowed us to successfully go after our first nightbird target on the island, a **Halmahera Boobook** seen in the last death throes of night-time.

Amazingly, we tried for the other two remaining target nightbirds at the end of this same day, and managed to get them too, with first a cooperative, croaking, **Moluccan Scops-Owl** (photo page 22), and then a superb **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar** (photo page 20), following a pursuit within a forest patch close to town. All three target nightbirds on our first day was more than we could have hoped for!

Among the more than 25 lifers encountered during the first day blitz were a healthy number of *pigeons, doves and parrots*, (but no *woodpeckers*; the land of woodpeckers was now behind us to the west), all mainstays of the Australasian region we had now crossed into. These included **Spectacled (Moluccan) and Cinnamon-bellied Imperial-Pigeons**, plentiful **Gray-headed Fruit-Doves** (our driver was a master at locating this one!), our first **White (Umbrella) Cockatoo**, some extremely noisy groups of both **Chattering Lory** and **Red-cheeked Parrot**, an emerald male **Eclectus Parrot**, as well as some great looks at some perched **Moluccan Hanging-Parrots**, though sadly *upright*. Other highlights of this electric first day in the Spice Islands included **Moluccan Goshawk**, a brief though low pair of **Pygmy Eagles**, impressive **Blyth's Hornbills** (photo page 24), less impressive **Halmahera Swiftlets**, **Rufous-bellied Trillers**, **Halmahera Cuckooshrike**, **Halmahera Oriole**, (**Halmahera**) **Paradise-Crow**, regular **Long-billed Crows**, **Halmahera Golden Bulbul**, common **Cream-throated (Halmahera) White-eyes** (photo page 18), **Moluccan (Monarch) Flycatcher**, and a popular **White-naped Monarch**. On top of that we added yet more kingfishers, a group which were now comfortably in double figures for species on the trip, with two specialties, **Blue-and-white Kingfisher** and a **Sombre Kingfisher** that came late morning. However, the undoubted front page bird of the first day was a marvellous **Ivory-breasted Pitta**, seen at the first attempt, and it proved a particularly enjoyable sighting as it remained on the same branch for ages, even giving us time to take in a **Sombre Kingfisher** and then return to it again, as we scoped it at length (some 10 minutes or more). We did not have it all our own way though, other lifers taunted us from deeper in the forest, such as *Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove* and *Dusky Megapode*, the vocally distinctive North Moluccan form of *Island Leaf Warbler* (a split just waiting to happen), and even some distant *Wallace's Standardwing* (*Standardwing Bird-of-paradise*), reminded us there was still plenty on offer following our headlining Halmahera first day. *Uni-Uni* was not done with us though, and two return visits yielded a pair of **Moluccan King-Parrots**, **Island (North Moluccan) Leaf Warbler**, (**Moluccan**) **Spectacled Monarch**, (**Sultan's**) **Dusky Mzomela**, **Gray's Grasshopper Warbler**, and **White-streaked (Honeyeater) Friarbird**.

Foli

To the north of *Subaim*, lies *Foli*, a long-time favorite for birders visiting *Halmahera*. Its main attraction is the **Wallace's Standardwing** (**Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise**), and although it took us two visits to get it, we had long views of a male in various states of display there. *Foli* was actually good to us, providing excellent views of some other specialties we sought there, like **Common Paradise-Kingfisher**, a gorgeous male **Black-chinned Whistler**, and some stellar views of perched parrots, including both **Chattering Lory** and **Violet-necked Lory**.



Our first, full, day on *Halmahera* was nothing short of epic. We added nearly 30 new species to the checklist, including three new *nightbirds* (*Halmahera Boobook*, *Moluccan Scops-Owl*, and this *Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar*), as well as two new *kingfishers* and an incredible *Ivory-breasted Pitta*! (*Sam Woods*).



"Halmahera Thrillers": **Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove** from Foli & **North Moluccan Pitta** from Aketajawe-Lolobata NP (Sam Woods).



Gunung Roni

This small hill southwest of *Subaim* was visited for a few hours one afternoon, in the hope of finding *Azure Roller* (*Purple Dollarbird*), though unfortunately we could not find one anywhere. However, this short visit was very birdy and worthwhile. Before we had even reached there, we had arrived at landmark moment for the tour, as a massive raptor soaring had us out of the car in a jiffy to admire *Ben's* very first **Gurney's Eagle**, which represented his 6500th bird seen on planet Earth. A dramatic, scarce raptor was a good fit for a flagship sighting. Once at the hill, during our *roller* search we picked up other new birds, like **Blue-capped Fruit-Dove** and a mal **Halmahera Flowerpecker**, and while leaving there we finally located a hulking **Goliath Coucal** too. Other highlights there included **Variable Goshawk** and **Halmahera Cuckooshrike**, and of course, more **Gray-headed Fruit-Doves**, an ever-present on this island.



This tour is always a good tour for *nightbirds* and *owl lovers*, and this one was no exception.

On *Sulawesi* we had **4 species of nightjars** and **6 species of owl**, and then on *Halmahera* we added another **2 owls** and an **owlet-nightjar**. This **Moluccan Scops-Owl** was seen near *Subaim* on the same day we also saw **Halmahera Boobook** and **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar** (*Sam Woods*).

Aketajawe-Lolobata National Park

The final major site of the tour on *Halmahera* was *Aketajawe-Lolobata National Park*. We left absurdly early on this day in order to reach this site just before dawn in the hope of connecting with some regular roosting birds, before they flew the roost. A couple of these would be new for us, and so we spent the afternoon before resting so that we could leave super early to get there. We arrived just in time and found a **North Moluccan Dwarf Kingfisher** still perched in its regular spot, as the first rays of light penetrated the forest. Then just yards ahead, a **Dusky Megapode** looked down at us from his resting place. Two new birds in quick succession was a heady start.



Ivory-breasted Pitta was seen well on two occasions on *Halmahera* and was one of the best birds of the entire tour (*Sam Woods*)

Then we took a field breakfast and then returned to the forest, first for upgraded looks at the dazzling **Ivory-breasted Pitta** (photo above) that bounced into a forest feeding station as planned. The second feeding station produced another pitta with similar ease, although this time one we had not seen previously with a **North Moluccan Pitta** (photo page 21). Another **Moluccan Goshawk** was also sighted there before we set off for our boat to take us back to the island of Ternate for the tour's end. Our final stop on land was to check in on a spot for **Beach Kingfisher**, a pair of which eventually showed, one with a fish still clasped in its bill. The same spot also held **Drab Whistler**, and the only **Moluccan Starlings** and **Black-faced Munias** of the tour.

The final new birds were seen on the ferry journey back from Halmahera to the island of *Ternate*, where *Ben* spotted a **Bulwer's Petrel**, and two species of *frigatebirds* were seen once on *Ternate* to end the tour sightings in some style on an fantastic final day.



Blyth's Hornbills were conspicuous on *Halmahera*

PLEASE GO TO NEXT PAGES FOR TOUR CHECKLISTS



The endemic **White-rumped Cuckooshrike** from our hotel in *Manado (Sulawesi)*.

CHECKLISTS:

BIRDS

The taxonomy of the bird list follows **Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W.** *The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World*. Cornell, 2007. *This list is up to date with changes published by Cornell in **October 2023**.*

(H) - INDICATES A SPECIES THAT WAS HEARD ONLY.

(GO) – INDICATES A SPECIES RECORDED BY THE GUIDE ONLY.

(S) – INDICATES THE ISLAND OF SULAWESI.

(Ha) – INDICATES THE ISLAND OF HALMAHERA.

Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl: Anatidae

Wandering Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata*: A small group were seen at Lake Tinow (S).

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*: A single group was seen at grass owl site near Wuasa (S).

Sunda Teal *Anas gibberifrons*: Seen on Lake Taming, then hundreds were seen in Lake Tinow (S).

Megapodes: Megapodiidae

Maleo *Macrocephalon maleo* (SE): Remarkably easy on this tour. Our first stop, after an afternoon arrival, in Dumoga-Bone was at Tambun, where the first bird we looked at was a Maleo perched in the trees found by the local guide! Another was seen later on during a crazy afternoon where we also saw a **Blue-faced Rail** there! NOT voted in the top five birds of the trip, a travesty!

Philippine Megapode (Tabon Scrubfowl) *Megapodius cumingii*: Some good looks at foraging birds on the road into Tangkoko (S).

Dusky Megapode (Scrubfowl) *Megapodius freycinet quoyii*: *Saraji* showed us a regular roosting bird just before dawn at

Grebes: Podicipedidae

(Tricolored) Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis tricolor*: A few were seen in Lake Tinow in North Sulawesi.

Pigeons and Doves: Columbidae

Rock (Domestic) Pigeon *Columba livia*: Regularly encountered in urban parts of Sulawesi.

Red Collared-Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica*: 25 or more were seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

(Eastern) Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis tigrine*: Conspicuous around Makassar (S), though not seen after then.

Sultan's (Sulawesi) Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia doreya albicapilla* (SE): Regularly recorded on Sulawesi (8 days).

Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia doreya albiceps*: Seen a couple of times on Halmahera.

Great Cuckoo-Dove *Reinwardtoena reinwardtii* (H): Frustratingly only heard once, on Gunung Uni-Uni (Ha).

White-faced Cuckoo-Dove *Turacoena manadensis* (SE): Seen in display flight twice at Tangkoko. Also heard in Dumoga-Bone.

Asian Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica indica* (H): Heard in Foli in Halmahera.

Stephan's Dove *Chalcophaps stephani*: 2 brief sightings, near Palu and at Tangkoko (both S).

Zebra Dove *Geopelia striata*: Seen near Palu, and in Tangkoko and Manado (all S).

Pink-necked (Green) Pigeon *Treron vernans*: Seen in Makassar and Manado and in the mangroves at Tangkoko (all S).

Gray-cheeked (Green) Pigeon *Treron griseicauda*: 1 distant bird in Tangkoko, and double figures in flight at Toraut (S).

Red-eared Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus fischeri* (SE): 2 singles were seen well near Lake Taming.

Maroon-chinned (Oberholser's) Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus epius* (SE): 2 were seen, an unexpected 1 in Tangkoko and then in Tambun.

Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus bernsteinii* (ME): We had long duels unsuccessful with several uncooperative birds before we got cracking looks at Foli, after which it remained there for walk away views.

(Western) Superb Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus superbus temminckii*: Seen 2 or 3 times at Lake Taming; also heard at Gunung Ambang (S).

Blue-capped Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus monacha* (ME): Brief views at Gunung Uni-Uni, then seen better at Gunung Roni.

Gray-headed Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus hyogastrus* (ME): A common species on Halmahera, seen at least 10 times there.

Black-naped Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus melanospilus*: Several good looks in Tangkoko (S).

White-bellied Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula forsteni* (SE): This spectacular, large pigeon was seen well just once in Lore Lindu.

Gray-headed Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula radiata* (SE): Just the 1 distant bird from a lookout in Tangkoko on this tour.

Green (Paulina's) Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula aenea paulina*: Recorded on 5 days in Sulawesi (e.g. Tangkoko & Dumoga-Bone).

Spectacled (Moluccan) Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula perspicillata* (ME): Some good looks at Gunung Uni-Uni and Roni.

Cinnamon-bellied Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula basilica*: Recorded at Gunung Uni-Uni and in Foli (both Ha).

Pied Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula bicolor*: A few flocks were seen along the coast at Tangkoko and also seen in Halmahera.

Silver-tipped Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula luctuosa* (SE): Seen regularly in Tangkoko, then again in Toraut.

Cuckoos: Cuculidae

Bay Coucal *Centropus celebensis* (SE): Recorded on at least 8 days of the tour, sometimes in flocks with **Yellow-billed Malkoha**.

Goliath Coucal *Centropus goliath* (ME): This beast of a cuckoo was seen well at Gunung Roni; others heard at Foli and Uni-Uni.

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*: Recorded at least 5 times on both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

Yellow-billed (Sulawesi) Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus calyrorhynchus* (SE): A beautiful cuckoo seen at Lore Lindu, Tangkoko, Dumoga-Bone and Ambang.

Black-billed Koel *Eudynamis melanorhynchus* (SE): Heard half a dozen times or more, although only seen early on in Lore Lindu.

Little (Gould's) Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus*: Seen twice, near Palu and at Toraut (both S).

(Sulawesi) Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus virescens* (SE): Seen on the Anaso Track and at Gunung Ambang.

(Moluccan) Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus infaustus*: 1 was seen at Aketajawe-Lolobata NP on our final morning (Ha).

Moluccan Drongo-Cuckoo (Drongo Cuckoo) *Cacomantis variolosus infaustus* (H): Distantly heard once at Gunung Uni-Uni. A very typical experience with this tough species.

Nightjars and Allies: Caprimulgidae

Diabolical (Satanic) Nightjar *Eurostopodus diabolicus* (SE): *Idris* located 2 single roosting birds along the Anaso Track.

Great Eared-Nightjar *Lyncornis macrotis macropterus*: Several were seen near the **Australasian Grass-Owl** site near Wuasa (S). There are some schools of thought that this endemic subspecies deserves full endemic species status.

Sulawesi Nightjar *Caprimulgus celebensis* (SE): 1 flew in and landed right beside our feet in Tangkoko!

Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*: About a dozen birds were seen in daylight during our *buttonquail* quest near Palu (S).

Owlet-Nightjars: Aegothelidae

Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar *Aegotheles crinifrons* (ME): During an amazing first day's birding on Halmahera, we racked up all the three nightbird targets, with Halmahera Boobook in the morning at Gunung Uni-Uni and then this species and Moluccan Scops-Owl in the evening near the town of Subaim.

Swifts: Apodidae

Purple Needletail *Hirundapus celebensis*: A squadron of some 20 or so birds was seen twice at Toraut (S).

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*: Abundant throughout the tour on both islands; recorded on 13 days.

Sulawesi Swiftlet *Aerodramus sororum* (SE): Noted in the Wuasa area.

Halmahera Swiftlet *Aerodramus infuscatus* (ME): Seen once each at Gunung Uni-Uni and in Foli.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis*: Exceedingly common in many sites in Sulawesi, especially in the lowlands.

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*: Two sightings, around Makassar airport and on the boat trip in Tangkoko (both S).

Treeswifts: Hemiprocnidae

Gray-rumped Treeswift *Hemiproctus longipennis*: Recorded on at least 8 days in Sulawesi.

Moustached Treeswift *Hemiproctus mystacea*: Seen on 3 occasions in Halmahera (e.g. Gunung Uni-Uni).

Rails, Gallinules, and Coots: Rallidae

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*: Seen in Makassar, Tangkoko and Manado (all S).

Barred Rail *Gallirallus torquatus*: Seen 5 or 6 times in North Sulawesi.

Blue-faced Rail *Gymnocrex rosenbergii* (SE): The shock sighting of the entire tour. A bird had been reported recently at Tambun in Dumoga-Bone, although we did not hold much stock in that. However, as we walked around there, we bumped into another (non-birding) group that had seen the rail while we were there looking at **Maleo**. We hurried to the spot and were amazed to see it emerge into the open, and feed in front of us at length, even walking towards along the trail at one point. Not surprisingly, this bird featured in the TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR in Sulawesi, winning top spot!

Isabelline (Sulawesi) Bush-hen *Amaurornis isabellina* (SE): A boisterous pair was seen at dusk before we looked for **Sulawesi Nightjar** at Tangkoko.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*: Seen at Makassar Fishponds and Lake Linow (both S).

Pale-vented Bush-hen *Amaurornis moluccana* (H): Some distant birds calling from thick cover in Aketajawe-Lolobata NP was all we could muster.

Black-backed (Purple) Swampphen *Porphyrio indicus*: A handful were seen at Lake Linow in North Sulawesi.

Eurasian (Common) Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: Double figures were seen at Lake Linow in North Sulawesi along with the next species.

Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*: A couple were seen side-by-side with Eurasian Moorhens in Lake Linow (S).

Stilts and Avocets: Recurvirostridae

Pied Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus*: Seen in Makassar and also in some rice paddies in North Sulawesi.

Plovers and Lapwings: Charadriidae

Pacific Golden-Plover *Pluvialis fulva*: A small group were located at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Siberian/Tibetan Sand-Plover *Anarhynchus mongolus/atrifrons*: A few were seen fairly distantly at our Manado hotels. They could not be identified to species. PLEASE NOTE: Lesser Sand-Plover was recently (2023) split into two species (**Siberian Sand-Plover *Anarhynchus mongolus*** and **Tibetan Sand-Plover *Anarhynchus atrifrons***).

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*: 3 birds were seen on a sandy spit during our mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko (S).

Javan Plover *Charadrius javanicus*: 3 birds were located at Makassar Fishponds, our main target species there (S).

Sandpipers and Allies: Scolopacidae

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: Numerous in Makassar; also in the mangroves at Tangkoko and at Lake Linow (all S).

Gray-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes*: Seen in the mangroves at Tangkoko and also in Manado (S).

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* (H): Heard several times at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: Recorded on 3 days in Sulawesi.

Common Redshank *Tringa tetanus*: Double figures were noted at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*: Seen in Makassar and Manado (both S).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*: A singleton was found at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*: 3 birds were noted in Makassar (S).

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*: A few groups were seen in the strait

Buttonquail: Turnicidae

Red-backed Buttonquail *Turnix maculosus*: A specific target at the Olibagu River near Palu (S). Having sweated and toiled on one side of the river, without success, we crossed over and soon had a bird take off and take a long flight right in front of us, allowing binocular views in the process for all. A good sighting indeed.

Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator*: 1 wandered out on to the road in front of our vehicle near Wuasa (S).

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers: Laridae

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*: Regularly noted at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*: A few were seen at the fishponds in Makassar (S).

White-winged (Black) Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*: 3 birds were identified over paddies near Subaim in Halmahera.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*: Numerous at Makassar Fishponds and also seen at Lake Linow (S).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*: A handful were seen along the coast during the mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko (S).

Great (Greater) Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii*: 1 was seen during the Ternate-Halmahera ferry ride.

[Shearwaters and Petrels: Procellariidae](#)

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii*: Ben spotted one during the crossing from Halmahera to Ternate, the final new bird of the tour.

[Frigatebirds: Fregatidae](#)

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*: Seen around the docks in Ternate and Halmahera, and within the strait in between these islands.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*: A few were noted in Ternate.

[Anhingas: Anhingidae](#)

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*: Half a dozen birds were seen at Lake Linow in North Sulawesi.

[Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns: Ardeidae](#)

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*: A singleton was seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*: Nick found a very obliging bird at Makassar on our first afternoon (S).

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: Recorded at Makassar, Wuasa, Toraut, and Lake Linow on Sulawesi.

(Eastern) Great Egret *Ardea alba modesta*: Quite a few were seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Plumed (Intermediate) Egret *Ardea plumifera*: Seen at Makassar Fishponds and Lake Linow (S).

PLEASE NOTE: This was split from Intermediate Egret in the 2023 Clements updates.

Little (Black-footed) Egret *Egretta garzetta nigripes*: Abundant at Makassar Fishponds and Lake Tinow (S).

Pacific Reef-Heron (Reef-egret) *Egretta sacra*: 3 were seen along the rocky coastline during the mangrove boat trip at Tangkoko (S).

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: Recorded on 7 days in Sulawesi and on 2 days in Halmahera.

PLEASE NOTE: This was split from the western forms of Cattle Egret in the 2023 Clements updates.

Javan Pond-Heron *Ardeola speciosa*: Recorded on at least 5 days in Sulawesi, where most abundant at Makassar Fishponds.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*: A couple were seen in Makassar and also on the mangrove boat trip in Sulawesi (S).

Rufous (Nankeen) Night-Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*: Dozens were seen emerging from roost at Makassar Fishponds (S).

[Ibises and Spoonbills](#)

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*: About 20 birds were seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

[Hawks, Eagles, and Kites: Accipitridae](#)

Sulawesi Honey-buzzard (Honeybuzzard) *Pernis celebensis* (SE): 2 sightings in Lore Lindu, 3 low circling birds at Gunung Mahawu.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*: 1 was seen briefly at Gunung Uni-Uni (Ha).

Sulawesi Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis rufipectus* (SE): A solo sighting of a perched individual in open country on the way to Gunung Potong.

Sulawesi Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus lanceolatus* (SE): We enjoyed long scope views of a perched bird by Lake Taming. Also seen in Tangkoko.

Rufous-bellied Eagle *Lophotriorchis kienerii*: An immature was seen between Wuasa and Gunung Potong.

Pygmy Eagle *Hieraaetus weiskei*: A pair flew over at Gunung Uni-Uni (Ha).

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis*: A low gliding bird was seen on the journey between Lore Lindu and Palu (S).

Gurney's Eagle *Aquila gurneyi*: A landmark sighting on Halmahera, which represented Ben's 6500th bird species. Seen between Subaim and Gunung Roni.

Rufous-winged Buzzard *Butastur liventer*: A single individual was seen in open country near Wuasa (S).

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*: Only 1 was seen, a perched individual at the forest edge in Toraut, Dumoga-Bone (S).

Sulawesi Goshawk *Accipiter griseiceps* (SE): A masterful find by Max, early on along the Molibagu Road (Dumoga-Bone).

Chinese (Goshawk) Sparrowhawk *Accipiter soloensis*: A couple of flyovers in Sulawesi (Tangkoko, Mahawu).

Spot-tailed Goshawk (Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter trinotatus* (SE): A very obliging adult was seen at Gunung Potong in Lore Lindu.

Variable (Gray-throated) Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster griseogularis*: 4 sightings on Halmahera.

Moluccan (Halmahera) Goshawk *Accipiter henicogrammus* (ME): We had a good run on this species, seeing it 3 times on Halmahera.

Small Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nanus* (SE): We tried calling this species by a small pond along the Anaso Track and were stunned when it flew in within a few seconds and landed just above the water.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*: Only a handful of birds were seen at one site, Toraut in Dumoga-Bone (S).

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*: Recorded on 8 days of the tour in both Sulawesi and more often on Halmahera.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*: 2 birds were seen on the mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko (S).

[Barns-Owls: Tytonidae](#)

Sulawesi Masked-Owl *Tyto rosenbergii* (SE): 2 different birds were seen in low flight near our Wuasa guesthouse.

Australasian Grass-Owl *Tyto longimembris*: Excellent views of a close bird were had near Wuasa in full daylight. Three different birds were seen quartering the rice paddies there. This was the first of 3 owls seen that day, along with **Sulawesi Masked-Owl** and **Speckled Boobook**. What's more, the following pre-dawn session added **Cinnabar Boobook** and **Sulawesi Scops-Owl** to the list, meaning we had FIVE owl species in a 12 hour period! Sulawesi at its very best.

Owls: Strigidae

Moluccan Scops-Owl *Otus magicus*: Excellent views of a bird near the town of Subaim.

Sulawesi Scops-Owl *Tyto rosenbergii* (SE): Seen twice, just before dawn near Lake Taming, and then a roosting pair at Tangkoko.

Ochre-bellied Boobook *Ninox ochracea* (SE): A roosting bird at Tangkoko involved a scramble on a very steep slope in order to see it.

Cinnabar Boobook *Ninox ios* (SE): Initially tricky, following only flight views during our first, evening time, attempt at Lore Lindu, we returned to Lake Taming before dawn and were rewarded with much better, perched views in the scope.

Halmahera Boobook *Ninox hypogramma* (ME): We could not have been happier, seeing it on the first try, just before dawn during our opening session of birding on Halmahera at Gunung Uni-Uni. Amazingly, we saw all three of our Halmahera nightbird targets on the same day (that also included **Moluccan Scops-Owl** and **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar**).

Speckled Boobook *Ninox punctulata* (SE): 2 different birds were seen on a 3-owl species night birding session near Wuasa (these were sandwiched either side of **Australasian Grass-Owl** and **Sulawesi Masked-Owl**).

Hornbills: Bucerotidae

Knobbed Hornbill *Rhyticeros cassidix* (SE): This huge and spectacularly adorned hornbill was encountered on 4 occasions Tangkoko & Dumoga-Bone), with the best of them involving a male seen coming to a nesting cavity at the first site. As a result of this last sighting no doubt, the species was voted as one of the TOP FIVE BIRDS of the Sulawesi section of the tour.

Blyth's Hornbill *Rhyticeros plicatus*: A regularly encountered species on Halmahera, seen every day there.

Sulawesi Hornbill *Rhabdotorrhinus exarhatus* (SE): Seen very well on our first morning in Karaenta. Also seen in Dumoga-Bone.

Kingfishers: Alcedinidae

Common (Hispid) Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis hispidoides*: Seen on the mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko, during a seven kingfisher day!

Azure Kingfisher *Ceyx azureus* (GO): One was seen by the guides on our final day in Halmahera (at Aketajawe-Lolobata NP).

Moluccan (Variable/Halmahera) Dwarf-Kingfisher *Ceyx lepidus uropygialis* (ME): A sleeping bird was seen before dawn at Aketajawe-Lolobata NP.

Sulawesi Lilac Kingfisher *Cittura cyanotis* (SE): A single bird showed well in Tangkoko beside a **Green-backed Kingfisher!**

Great-billed (Black-billed) Kingfisher *Pelargopsis melanorhyncha* (SE): It took its merry time to show up, though was eventually seen well during our targeted boat trip for this species in Tangkoko.

Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda rufa*: Also seen on the mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko on our 7-kingfisher day there!

Blue-and-white Kingfisher *Todiramphus diops* (ME): Oddly, only two sightings on Halmahera (e.g. Gunung Uni-Uni).

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus*: Two singles were seen on Sulawesi, at Tangkoko and in Manado.

Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris*: Recorded on 10 days of the tour in Sulawesi, and once in Halmahera.

Sombre Kingfisher *Todiramphus funebris* (ME): Two sightings, at the base of Gunung Uni-Uni and at Foli.

Beach Kingfisher *Todiramphus saurophagus*: The fifteenth and final kingfisher of the tour on Halmahera, where a pair was seen.

Green-backed Kingfisher *Actenoides monachus monachus* (SE): Some great looks at at Tangkoko.

Green-backed (Black-headed) Kingfisher *Actenoides monachus capucinus* (SE): A male was one of the very first birds of the day at Karaenta.

Scaly-breasted (Scaly) Kingfisher *Actenoides princeps erythrorhamphus* (SE): A very cooperative pair was seen in Gunung Mahawu.

Common Paradise-Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea browning*: Eventually seen well at Foli (Ha).

PLEASE NOTE: There are calls by some to split this subspecies and make it an island endemic species.

Bee-eaters: Meropidae

Purple-bearded Bee-eater *Meropogon forsteni* (SE): Not at its usual haunts around Lake Taming and the Anaso Track, we needed to visit another area of Lore Lindu, twice, before we put this much wanted bird to bed, at the final opportunity! One of the TOP FIVE BIRDS for the Sulawesi leg of the tour.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*: A handful of these bee-eaters were seen at a site near Palu (S).

Rollers: Coraciidae

Purple-winged (Sulawesi) Roller (SE) *Coracias temminckii*: This handsome roller gave great views at Tangkoko.

(Common) Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*: Just the one sighting on Sulawesi, at Tangkoko.

Woodpeckers: Picidae

Sulawesi Pygmy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos temminckii* (SE): Recorded on at least 6 days on Sulawesi.

Ashy Woodpecker *Mulleripicus fulvus* (SE): This stout woodpecker was seen well at Lore Lindu, Tangkoko and Dumoga-Bone NP.

Falcons and Caracaras: Falconidae

Spotted (Indonesian) Kestrel *Falco moluccensis*: 1 was seen in the Sedoa Valley (S) and then again at Gunung Uni-Uni (Ha).

Oriental Hobby *Falco severus* (GO): Sam saw one of these falcons blast overhead at Gunung Uni-Uni (H).

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: 1 was seen on the journey between Manado and Kotomobagu (S).

Cockatoos: Cacatuidae

White (Umbrella) Cockatoo *Cacatua alba* (ME): We got some great looks of a bird at Gunung Uni-Uni, which elevated this species into the TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR for the Halmahera section.

Old World Parrots: Psittaculidae

Moluccan King-Parrot *Alisterus amboinensis* (ME): A pair was seen on one visit to Gunung Uni-Uni.

Golden-mantled (Sulawesi) Racquet-tail *Prioniturus platurus* (SE): Some good flight views were had in Lore Lindu and Tangkoko.

Yellow-breasted (Minahasa) Racquet-tail *Prioniturus flavicans* (SE) H: Very difficult this tour; calling birds could not be located at Tangkoko and Dumoga-Bone, in spite of much effort.

Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*: A handful of flights views were had on Halmahera (recorded on 3 days there).

Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*: A very noisy and conspicuous bird on Halmahera, seen multiple times each day there.

Great-billed Parrot *Tanygnathus megalorhynchus* (H): Heard distantly on 4 different days on Halmahera. Very frustrating!

Azure-rumped Parrot *Tanygnathus sumatranus*: A pair was seen well in Tangkoko, and others was seen in flight at Dumoga-Bone (S).

Red-flanked Lorikeet *Chamosyna placentis*: A few seen every day on Halmahera, with some good perched looks at Foli one day.

Chattering Lory *Lorius garrulus* (ME): Seen regularly on Halmahera with good flight and perched views at Uni-Uni and Foli.

Violet-necked Lory *Eos squamata*: Foli (H) provided us with some good perched looks at this stunner.

Ornate Lorikeet *Trichoglossus ornatus* (SE): Very tricky this tour, we eventually got a pair in the treetops at Toraut (Dumoga-Bone).

Yellow-cheeked (Meyer's) Lorikeet *Saudareos meyeri* (SE): Seen on a few of our visits to the Lake Taming area of Lore Lindu.

(Large/Great) Sulawesi Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus stigmatus* (SE): Some good views of perched birds at Tangkoko and Dumoga-Bone.

Moluccan Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus amabilis* (ME): Perched birds were seen at Gunung Uni-Uni and Gunung Roni on 2 days.

(Small Sulawesi) Pygmy Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus exilis* (SE): A perched bird was seen on our first morning, at Karaenta Forest.

Pittas: Pittidae

Sulawesi Pitta *Erythropitta celebensis* (SE): Following some very poor views at Toraut (Dumoga-Bone), we got a massive upgrade at the pitta blind on Gunung Mahawu, where after a nervy wait, two birds came in. One of them stayed (after harassing the other to leave), and it remained within two meters of us for 20 minutes or more. Incredible bird, at one point being less than a meter away.

One of the TOP FIVE BIRDS OF TOUR for the Sulawesi section.

North Moluccan Pitta *Erythropitta rufiventris* (ME): The development of “pitta blinds” on this tour made seeing all three species well very straightforward. This one featured on our final morning with Saroji in Aketajawe-Lolobata NP and made us wait no time at all!

Ivory-breasted Pitta *Pitta maxima* (ME): We had two excellent views of this truly mega bird, one of the best of all the pittas. The first came near the base of Gunung Uni-Uni, when a singing bird was ‘scoped for a long time as it called from high in the trees. The less traditional view came of one by another pitta blind in Aketajawe-Lolobata NP where two pittas were scored in two blinds on our final morning! This species was voted as the BIRD OF THE TOUR for the Halmahera section.

Honeyeaters: Meliphagidae

Dark-eared (Lesser) Myza *Myza celebensis* (SE): Oddly difficult, being seen just a couple of times briefly around Lake Taming.

White-eared (Greater) Myza *Myza sarasinorum* (SE): Unlike the previous species, much easier, being seen as soon as we reached the correct elevation on the Anaso Track (Lore Lindu), much to Nick’s delight!

Dusky (Sultan's) Myzomela (Honeyeater) *Myzomela obscura simplex* (ME): Seen twice at Gunung Uni-Uni (H).

Sulawesi Myzomela *Myzomela chloroptera* (SE): Following a brief sighting at Lore Lindu, we got much better looks at Gunung Mahawu.

White-streaked (Honeyeater) Friarbird (ME): Seen twice at Gunung Uni-Uni, then briefly again at

Thornbills and Allies: Acanthizidae

Golden-bellied Gerygone (Flyeater) *Gerygone sulphurea flaveola*: Common on Sulawesi, where recorded on 10 days.

Cuckooshrikes: Campephagidae

Pied Cuckooshrike *Coracina bicolor* (SE) H: The nemesis of the trip, only heard twice despite much effort (in Tangkoko & Dumoga-Bone).

Cerulean Cuckooshrike *Coracina temminckii* (SE): Some good looks in the highlands at Lore Lindu (4 times) and at Gunung Ambang.

White-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina papuensis melanolora*: A couple of sightings on Halmahera.

Moluccan Cuckooshrike *Coracina atriceps* (ME): Just one sighting, of a pair, at Foli.

White-rumped Cuckooshrike *Coracina atriceps* (SE): 1 was seen in the forest at Tangkoko and another pair was seen in Manado.

White-shouldered (Lesueur's) Triller *Lalage sueurii*: A few were seen during our successful buttonquail hunt near Palu (S).

White-rumped (Sulawesi) Triller *Lalage leucopygialis* (SE): Seen on 3 occasions, once in Tangkoko and then in Dumoga-Bone NP.

Rufous-bellied Triller *Lalage aurea* (ME): A pleasantly regular bird on Halmahera, seen on at least 3 days there.

Halmahera (Cicadabird) Cuckooshrike *Celebesia parvula* (ME): Recorded 4 times on Halmahera.

Pygmy Cuckooshrike (Cicadabird) *Celebesia abbotti* (SE): Not difficult on this tour, singles being seen on 3 days in Lore Lindu.

Sulawesi Cicadabird *Edolisoma morio* (SE): A female was seen in Lore Lindu, others were seen on 2 days in Dumoga-Bone.

Common Cicadabird *Edolisoma tenuirostre grayi*: Just a single sighting at Gunung Uni-Uni on Halmahera.

Whistlers and Allies: Pachycephalidae

Maroon-backed Whistler *Coracornis raveni* (SE): We got cracking views of a male near Lake Taming, Lore Lindu.

Black-chinned (Moluccan) Whistler *Pachycephala mentalis mentalis* (ME): We eventually got good looks of a male at Foli.

Sulphur-bellied Whistler *Pachycephala sulfuriventer* (SE): Very regular in Sulawesi's highland sites.

Drab Whistler *Pachycephala griseonota* (ME): Seen twice on Halmahera (at Foli and then the Beach Kingfisher site).

Old World Orioles: Old World Orioles

Halmahera Oriole *Oriolus phaeochromus* (ME): Only seen well a couple of times at Gunung Uni-Uni, Halmahera.

Black-naped (Sulawesi Golden) Oriole *Oriolus chinensis celebensis*: Regularly noted in Dumoga-Bone but also at Lake Taming (S).

Woodswallows, Bellmagpies, and Allies: Artamidae

Ivory-backed Woodswallow *Artamus monachus* (SE): Easy at Lore Lindu this year; also seen along the Molibagu Road.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*: Recorded 7 times on Sulawesi and once on Halmahera.

Fantails: Rhipiduridae

Willie-wagtail (Willie Fantail) *Rhipidura leucophrys melaleuca*: A regular roadside feature during our entire time on Halmahera.

Sulawesi Fantail *Rhipidura teysmanni* (SE): Regularly seen in Lore Lindu. Also recorded at Gunung Ambang.

Drongos: Dicruridae

Hair-crested (White-eyed Spangled) Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus leucops* (SE): Regular at lowland sites throughout (on 8 days).

Sulawesi (Spangled) Drongo *Dicrurus montanus* (SE): A regular feature at highland locations (e.g. Lore Lindu, Gunung Ambang).

(Halmahera) Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus atrocaeruleus* (ME): Seen each day on Halmahera.

Birds-of-paradise: Paradisaeidae

Halmahera Paradise-crow *Lycocorax pyrrhopterus* (ME): Recorded on 4 days in Halmahera.

Standardwing Bird-of-paradise (Wallace's Standardwing) *Semioptera wallacii* (ME): Proved more difficult than anticipated, although a male displayed for a long time above us on our second visit to Foli, phew!

Monarch Flycatchers: Monarchidae

Pale-blue Monarch *Hypothymis puella* (SE): Recorded on 6 days (e.g. Karaenta, Tangkoko, Dumoga-Bone).

White-naped Monarch *Carterornis pileatus* (ME): A single was seen near the top of Gunung Uni-Uni.

(Moluccan) Spectacled Monarch *Symposiachrus trivirgatus bimaculatus* (ME): Seen just once, at Gunung Uni-Uni.

Moluccan (Monarch) Flycatcher *Myiagra galeata* (ME): Seen and regularly heard at Gunung Uni-Uni.

Shining (Monarch) Flycatcher *Myiagra alecto alecto*: A pair was found at night while on the hunt for owlet-nightjar near Subaim (Ha).

Crows, Jays, and Magpies: Corvidae

Slender-billed (Sulawesi) Crow *Corvus enca celebensis* (SE): Regularly recorded, on at least 9 days).

Piping Crow *Corvus typicus* (SE): A group of 4 birds was seen at Karaenta (South Sulawesi).

Long-billed Crow *Corvus validus* (ME): A handful was seen each day on Halmahera.

Fairy Flycatchers: Stenostiridae

Citrine Canary-Flycatcher *Culicicapa helianthea*: A daily feature in Lore Lindu. Also at Ambang & Mahawu (all S).

Cisticolas and Allies: Cisticolidae

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*: Several were seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*: A few were seen in open country near Wuasa (S).

Reed-Warblers and Allies: Acrocephalidae

Clamorous (Australasian) Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus celebensis*: A handful were seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Grassbirds and Allies: Locustellidae

Malia *Malia grata* (SE): Seen just a few times at Lore Lindu, with much better views at Gunung Ambang.

Gray's Grasshopper-Warbler *Locustella fasciolata*: Seen well twice, at Foli and Gunung Uni-Uni (both H).

Sulawesi Bush Warbler (Sulawesi Grasshopper Warbler) *Locustella castanea* (SE): Seen well at Lake Taming (Lore Lindu).

Swallows: Hirundinidae

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Recorded on at least 5 days in Sulawesi.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*: Recorded on all but a few days, on both islands.

Bulbuls: Pycnonotidae

Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*: Commonly encountered on Sulawesi (13 days).

(Sunda) Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier*: A few were seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Halmahera Golden-Bulbul *Hypsipetes chloris* (ME): A few were seen on most days on Halmahera.

Leaf Warblers: Phylloscopidae

Sulawesi Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus nesophilus* (SE): Commonly encountered at all highland sites.

Island (North Moluccan) Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus maforensis henrietta* (ME): 2 were heard and 1 seen on Gunung Uni-Uni (Ha).

Bush-Warblers and Allies: Scotocercidae

Mountain (Leaftoiler) Tailorbird *Phyllergates cucullatus riedeli*: Recorded daily at Lore Lindu, also at Gunung Ambang.

White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies: Zosteropidae

Streak-headed White-eye (Sulawesi Heleia) *Lophozosterops squamiceps* (SE): Seen on 3 occasions in Lore Lindu.

Warbling White-eye *Zosterops japonicus montanus*: Recorded on 2 days in Lore Lindu (S).

Lemon-bellied White-eye *Zosterops chloris*: Recorded at 3 sites, Makassar Fishponds, Sedoa Valley and near Palu (S).

Black-ringed White-eye *Zosterops anomalus* (SE): A specialty of South Sulawesi, a pair was seen at Karaenta.

Black-crowned White-eye *Zosterops atrifrons*: Recorded on 5 days (at Lore Lindu, Molibagu, Gunung Mahawu).

Cream-throated (Halmahera) White-eye *Zosterops atriceps fuscifrons* (ME): Common on Halmahera, recorded daily.

Ground Babblers and allies: Pellorneidae

Sulawesi Babbler *Pellorneum celebensis* (SE): Recorded on 7 days; seen first in Lore Lindu.

Starlings: Sturnidae

Fiery-browed (Flame-browed) Myna (Starling) *Enodes erythrophris* (SE): A stunning highland bird, recorded daily in Lore Lindu.

Finch-billed Myna (Grosbeak Myna) *Scissirostrum dubium* (SE): Noisy flocks seen below Lore Lindu and at Tangkoko (5 tour days).

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*: Flocks were regularly encountered on Halmahera.

Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis*: Only recorded once, in mangroves behind a Manado resort (S).

Moluccan Starling *Aplonis mysolensis*: Seen once, at the Beach Kingfisher site, during our final birding in Halmahera.

Short-tailed Starling *Aplonis minor*: A single flock was seen near Wuasa, below Lore Lindu (S).

Sulawesi (Short-crested) Myna *Basilornis celebensis* (SE): Recorded twice, in the Sedoa Valley and on the Molibagu Road.

White-necked Myna *Streptocitta albicollis* (SE): Seen 3 times, in Tangkoko and along the Molibagu Road.

Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus*: This introduced species was conspicuous around the city of Makassar (S).

Thrushes and Allies: Turdidae

Rusty-backed (Red-backed) Thrush *Geokichla erythronota* (SE): A major target that we had cracking views of in Tangkoko (S).

Geomalia *Zoothera heinrichi* (SE): Remarkably straightforward this year. Following news of a regular bird around Lake Taming, we looked for this on our first morning at Lore Lindu (S) and got it within 15 minutes of arriving! Long may this continue!

Sulawesi Thrush *Cataponera turdoides* (SE): Very challenging this year, with just a sole sighting on our third day in Lore Lindu (S).

Old World Flycatchers: Muscipidae

Gray-streaked Flycatcher *Muscipapa griseisticta*: Recorded during 4 days in Halmahera.

Blue-fronted (Hoevell's Warbling-/Blue) Flycatcher *Cyornis hoevelli* (SE): Two pairs were seen in Lore Lindu (S).

Sulawesi (Jungle) Blue-Flycatcher *Cyornis omissus omissus* (SE): Seen in Lore Lindu; others heard on Gunung Mahawu (both S)

Turquoise (Warbling-) Flycatcher *Eumyias panayensis*: A daily feature in Lore Lindu (S).

Great Shortwing (Latimojong Heinrichia) *Heinrichia calligyna calligyna* (SE) GO: A major disappointment was not getting views of this in Lore Lindu, where it was heard several times.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*: Seen at the 3 mountain sites on Sulawesi.

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*: A few sightings in Lore Lindu (S).

Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata*: Regular in open, agricultural country near Lore Lindu (e.g. Grass Owl site).

Hylocitrea: Hylocitreidae

(Northern) Hylocitrea *Hylocitrea bonensis bonensis* (SE): A group of 4 birds were seen on the lower part of the Anaso Track (S).

Flowerpeckers: Dicaeidae

Yellow-sided Flowerpecker *Dicaeum aureolimbatum* (SE): A regular endemic, seen on at least 5 days on Sulawesi.

Crimson-crowned Flowerpecker *Dicaeum nehrkorni* (SE): More records than usual, with singles or pairs seen on 4 days on Sulawesi.

Halmahera Flowerpecker *Dicaeum schistaceiceps* (ME): Recorded at Gunung Roni and Gunung Uni-Uni (Ha).

Gray-sided Flowerpecker *Dicaeum celebicum* (SE): Recorded on 5 days on Sulawesi.

Sunbirds and Spiderhunters: Nectariniidae

Plain-throated (Brown-throated) Sunbird *Anthreptes malacensis*: Recorded 6 times on Sulawesi.

Black Sunbird *Leptocoma sericea*: Recorded on at least 10 days of the tour, in both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

Sahul Sunbird *Cinnyris frenatus*: Recorded on 8 days of the tour, in both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

Taxonomic Note: This was a 2023 split from Olive-backed Sunbird, this form occurs from Eastern Indonesia to Australia.

(Sulawesi) Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja beccarii*: Recorded at 3 sites on Sulawesi (Lore Lindu, Dumoga-Bone & Tomohon).

[Weavers: Ploceidae](#)

Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar*: A dozen or so birds came into roost at Makassar Fishponds (S).

[Waxbills and Allies: Estrildidae](#)

Black-faced Munia *Lonchura molucca*: A single group was seen near the end of the tour on Halmahera.

Scaly-breasted Munia (Nutmeg Mannikin) *Lonchura punctulate*: A few were seen in our resort garden in Tomohon (S).

Chestnut (Black-headed) Munia *Lonchura atricapilla*: Recorded on 7 days on Sulawesi.

Pale-headed Munia *Lonchura pallida* (SE): Dozens of birds came into roost at Makassar Fishponds (S).

Java Sparrow *Lonchura oryzivora*: A single group of these gorgeous birds (25+) was seen at Makassar Fishponds (S).

[Old World Sparrows: Passeridae](#)

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*: Recorded on all but a few days on both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

[Wagtails and Pipits: Motacillidae](#)

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*: Recorded twice, near Palu and at Danau Linow (both S).

Gray Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*: A couple of sightings on both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

[Finches, Euphonias & Allies: Fringillidae](#)

Mountain (Indonesian) Serin *Chrysocorythus estherae renatae* (H): Heard

MAMMALS

Gursky's Spectral Tarsier *Tarsius spectrumgurskyae*: A few of these extraordinary, gremlin-like creatures were seen at Tangkoko (S).

Moor Macaque *Macaca maura*: Some good looks of some very habituated individuals at Karaenta (S).

Tonkean Macaque *Macaca tonkeana* (H): Heard in Lore Lindu (S).

Gorontalo Macaque *Macaca nigrescens*: Some nice looks along the Molibagu Road (S).

Celebes (Sulawesi/Black) Crested Macaque *Macaca nigra*: We walked among these habituated “apes” at Tangkoko, as usual!

Whitish Dwarf Squirrel *Prosciurillus leucomus*: Recorded regularly in the Sulawesi lowlands.

Sulawesi Dwarf Squirrel *Prosciurillus murinus*: A couple were seen in the highlands at Lore Lindu and Ambang (S).

Sulawesi Bear Cuscus (Phalanger) *Ailurops ursinus*: 2 were found at Tangkoko (S).