



A Tropical Birding custom tour

## INDONESIA: Sulawesi and Halmahera

29<sup>th</sup> August – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019



Indonesia can rightly lay claim to some of the finest looking thrushes on the planet, and we were chasing three endemic species on the island of Sulawesi; we found all three of them thankfully, and this was the pick of them, the beautiful **Red-backed Thrush** seen in the wonderful **Tangkoko** on the **Minahassa Peninsula**. (Sam Woods).

**Tour Leader: Sam Woods**

All the birds/animals photographed in this report are indicated in **red**; all were photographed on this specific tour.  
All photos by Sam Woods/Tropical Birding, using Olympus gear.



This tour was excellent for kingfisher aficionados (**16 different kingfishers** featured!) *Green-backed Kingfisher*, **Tangkoko**.

### INTRODUCTION:

The first two thirds of the tour were spent on the island of Sulawesi, a subregion of Indonesia that can boast some of the highest levels of endemism in Asia. This was illustrated well with our personal list of **80 endemic birds** species accumulated during this spell, including some of the most highly sought-after ones in Asia, like *Geomalia* (photo pages 3 and 5), *Hylocitrea* (a family endemic to the Sulawesi highlands), and a wonderful set of **kingfishers** including the slippery **Scaly-breasted Kingfisher**, which almost remained out of our grasp to near the very end (by which time, two different ones had been seen), *Green-backed* (photo above), **Black-headed Kingfishers**, *Sulawesi Dwarf* (photo page 19), and the well titled *Great-billed Kingfisher* (photo page 11). Other standouts included, the striking *Red-backed (Rusty-backed) Thrush* (above), the unique *Maleo* (photos pages 4 and 16), the beautiful *Purple-bearded Bee-eater*, (photo page 7), and a very unexpected extended performance from the rarely encountered *Sulawesi (Hawk) Cuckoo* (photo page 15). It would be remiss of me not to mention the handful of **mammals** seen too, for they were every bit as popular as some of these birds. The islands cannot lay claim to a large mammal list, but it can be justifiably argued that they do have a fascinating set; *Gurskey's (Spectral) Tarsier* (photo page 15) gripping the edge of a stranger fig tree, a *Sulawesi Bear-Cuscus* (photo page 10) glaring at us from just above eye level, an *Ornate Cuscus* (photo page 24) just before an *owlet-nightjar* (photo page 25) on Halmahera, and walking among one of the habituated troops of wild *Celebes Crested Macaques* (photo page 14) were all mammalian highlights.

Nightbirding is always a major feature of this tour, with so many endemic nocturnal species on offer. We were very fortunate to record every possible owl species on Sulawesi, (**7 owls seen, including 5 at Lore Lindu alone**). Among the night birds, were the rare *Minahassa Masked Owl* (photo page 11) at a daytime roost inside a large strangler fig in Tangkoko, which

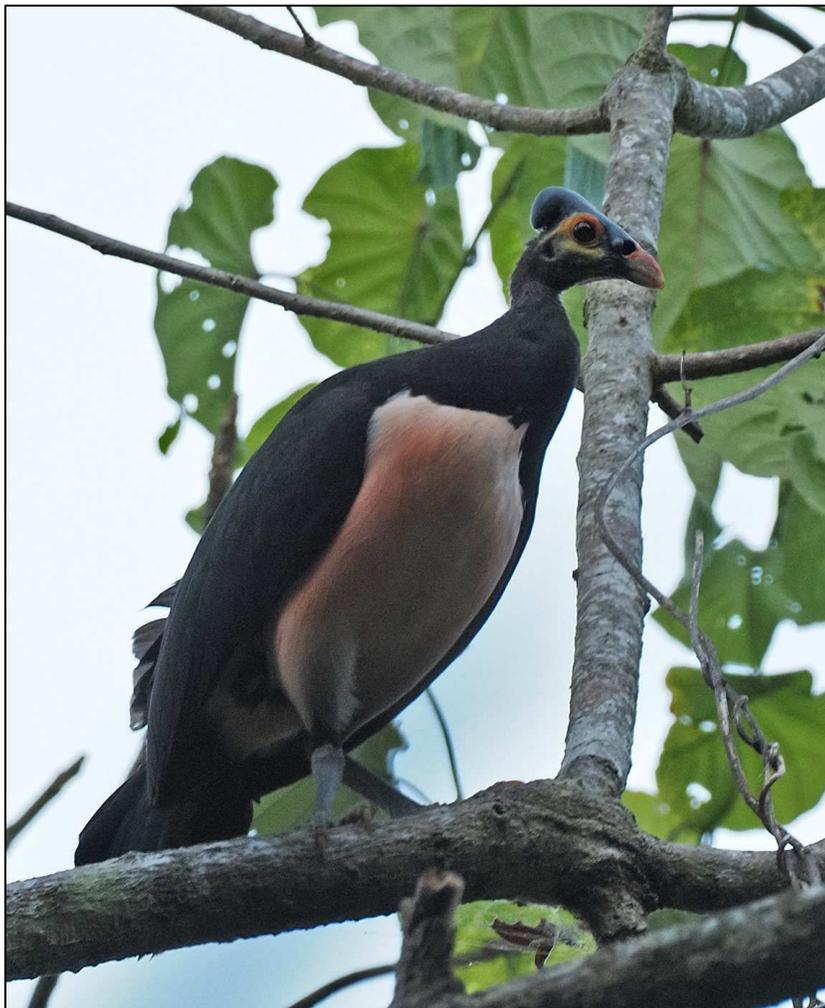
required us to enter inside the tree to see it; a pair of daytime **Satanic (Diabolical) Nightjars** (photo page 6) along the infamous Anaso Track were also crowd pleasers, as was the bizarre **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar** on Halmahera. The tour started in forested limestone hills of South Sulawesi, then switched to the endemic-rich highlands of Central Sulawesi, before continuing into the lowlands on the Minahassa Peninsula of North Sulawesi, then finishing our birding on the island of Halmahera, one of the fabled "Spice Islands", the origin of cloves. The latter section added yet more species, including more than **40 Moluccan specialties** among them, bringing the total to over **130 regional endemics**, and more than 100 lifers to all who came. 4 more kingfishers, and 4 more nightbirds were added on Halmahera too. **279 bird species were recorded.**



The significant avian development this year in **Sulawesi**, was a pair of positively tame **Geomalias** feeding around the popular campsite at **Lake Taming, Lore Lindu**. We encountered at least one during all three days there. (Sam Woods)

#### **TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR (SULAWESI and HALMAHERA):**

- 1 **Geomalia** Lore Lindu (Danau Taming), SULAWESI
- 2= **Red-backed (Rusty-backed) Thrush** Tangkoko, SULAWESI
- 2= **Maleo** Tambun, Dumoga-Bone SULAWESI
- 4 **Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise (Wallace's Standarwing)** Weda, HALMAHERA
- 5 **Minahassa Masked-Owl** (daytime) Tangkoko, SULAWESI



### TOUR SUMMARY: Sulawesi:

**Highlights on SULAWESI:** Maleo, Geomalia, Red-backed Thrush, Sulawesi (Hawk) Cuckoo, Minahassa Masked-Owl, Cinnabar Boobook (among 7 owls seen by all of the group), Green-backed, Black-headed, Lilac-cheeked, Scaly-breasted and Sulawesi Dwarf Kingfishers (among 11 kingfisher species seen on this island alone), Satanic (Diabolical) Nightjar, Knobbed Hornbill, Sulawesi (Sahul) Pitta, nesting Purple-bearded Bee-eaters, Matinan and Sulawesi Streaked (Brown) Flycatchers, Hylocitrea, perched views of Mountain (Indonesian) Serins. More than 80 endemic birds to the subregion of Sulawesi and satellites. Celebes Crested, Gorontalo, and Moor Macaques, Gurskey's (Spectral) Tarsier, and Sulawesi Bear-Cuscus.

### **Karaenta Forest and Makassar Fishponds, SULAWESI**

The tour started out within the limestone-covered hills, northeast of Sulawesi's largest city *Makassar*. Here, at *Karaenta Forest*, we had a very successful two visits, with the first quickly yielding a vociferous pair of **Piping Crows** fidgeting in the forest canopy,

a pair of **Sulawesi (Dwarf) Hornbills** perched closeby, and a **Sulawesi (Sahul) Pitta** foraging on the forest floor. A male **Spot-tailed Goshawk** was also part of a good tour opening, which came in and perched by the roadside. The local ranger quickly locked on to a **Black-headed (Green-backed) Kingfisher** at the second site of trying, where a female was seen. It took a little longer than usual, but one of the main target species, a South Sulawesi endemic, **Black-ringed White-eye**, turned up eventually, and several more then featured later. *Makassar Fishponds* later that afternoon was largely devoid of *shorebirds*, sadly, with water levels being higher than usual perhaps the reason, although we did find its star resident, with double figures of **Javan Plovers**, which were even observed mating at length in the Swarovski 'scope, and a large roving group of **Little Black Cormorants**. The same site also held a **White-browed Crake**, creeping out into the open for some time, and large numbers of **Pale-headed Munias** coming into roost. A second visit to *Karaenta* was needed in order to track down the recently described (2015) **Sulawesi Streaked (Brown) Flycatcher**, which was found in that forest late in the period, and then found again at a park just down the road again that morning, before we flew from *South to Central Sulawesi*, and the city of *Palu*. From there, we quickly drove on to *Wuasa*, just outside of *Lore Lindu National Park*, our first major destination of the tour. On arrival at our base for the next four nights, a *new* guesthouse in *Wuasa*, we chose birding before check in, following a long day of travel with few birds, and arrived just in time for dusk. Our local guide *Idris*, led us through a school, to some open country with scattered trees behind. First up, was a **Speckled Boobook**, which was seen only moments after darkness fell. Then it was the turn of **Sulawesi Masked-Owl**, which had been nothing short of bothersome to find on recent tours. However, this year was to be different, it came and circled over our heads twice and then two were seen perched together behind the school too; a great start to our time in *Lore Lindu*; two owls within ten minutes of each other!

## Lore Lindu (and the Sedoa Valley), SULAWESI

The first day in *Lore Lindu*, was a classic, with a veritable surge of endemic birds. Nail-biting news had reached us the night before that the very rarely seen, *Geomalia*, had been seen for three consecutive days around *Lake Taming*, an easily accessible and much lower site than they are normally found at. This enigmatic rarity caused all plans to be turned around, and therefore this was our natural *first* port of call. We breakfasted at the park entrance near the lake, but early forays revealed no signs of the *thrush*. However, we quickly picked up **Malia**, a series of **Superb and Red-eared Fruit-Doves** plundering a fruit-laden tree, and **Sulawesi Myzomela** all around breakfast time. While most contented themselves with a hot tea or coffee in the field, *Sam* went off in search of the **Geomalia (below)** again, being stunned to find it feeding right next to the concrete path close to the busy camp toilets! He turned in amazement and ran full pelt back to the group, quickly returning to the spot, where we were then all able to watch an individual **Geomalia** foraging at length, unconcerned by either us, or the considerable weekend crowd! We could not believe our luck; our time at *Lore Lindu* could not have started better. Two other notorious skulkers performed well at *Lore Lindu*; a male **Maroon-backed Whistler** gave an exemplary showing, being seen by all, and well too for everyone. This was also on a fantastic opening morning; by the end of the same day we had also put another elusive forest to the sword, a male **Great Shortwing (Heinrichia)** hopping out on to an open sandy trail, lingering in the open in the late afternoon for several minutes, once the forest was darker than daytime. One of *Lore Lindu*'s more abundant birds was the shockingly bright **Fiery-browed (Flame-browed) Mynas**, which would become pleasantly familiar to us all after our handful of days there.



Later that morning we dropped a little in altitude, and watched the sunny *Sedoa Valley* for a while, getting several **Sulawesi Honey-Buzzards** (a 2019 Clements split from *Barred Honey*), sailing across the valley low. We also searched the area heavily for **Sulawesi Cicadabird**, which proved unusually troublesome there this year, with none seen for a few days, before we saw two in quick succession, where we'd been searching late in our stay there! A **Sulawesi (Jungle) Blue Flycatcher** was more straightforward being encountered by the end of our first morning in the same valley. We also became familiar with the "road rails" of Sulawesi, the atypically easy *rallid*, **Barred Rail**, four of which were seen feeding on the main road, following a short shower, below the park. Among the considerably more common **Glossy Swiftlets** a few **Sulawesi Swiftlets** were noted in the park, and nearby too. The *Lake Taming* area also gave us repeated looks at **Yellow-and-green (Meyer's/Citrine) Lorikeets**, which were nesting in a large bromeliad; this species was later seen at another montane nesting site in *Gunung Ambang*.



A bird with two names: **Satanic or Diabolical Nightjar** was photographed along the infamous **Anaso Track (Sam Woods)**

Our day on the notorious *Anaso Track* could not have gone better either; the weather remained dry until a short section of the final return leg, and the birds behaved very well, getting us out of there much earlier than in previous years. The *Geomalia* at *Lake Taming* meant we did not need to try for that on the track as normal, but still had a *Hylocitrea* to see all the same, an endemic family. Our first birding on the track was a letdown however, with neither *Cinnabar Boobook* or *Scaly-breasted Kingfisher* showing any interest at all. The deadlock was short-lived though, as *Idris* spotted a *Sombre Pigeon* that had responded to tape, and remained there until we walked away; later that day a very well hidden nesting **Sombre Pigeon** was also seen higher up. A little further up from the *pigeon*, *James* walked us up to a pair of well-camouflaged **Satanic (Diabolical) Nightjars (above)** at one of their regular sleeping spots, which were photographed on the upward leg and downhill too, by which time their positioning had improved for photography.



*Sulawesi is overloaded with beautiful endemic species, like this spectacular **Purple-bearded Bee-eater**, seen at two sites in the highlands (**Sam Woods**).*

As we moved ever higher, the birding was extremely slow at times, with few birds heard or seen, typical for the site. However, a clearing was a good position for us to see some low-flying **Golden-mantled (Sulawesi) Raquetails** pass just over (stunted) tree height. We also went off trail for a singing **Sulawesi Thrush**, which was eventually tracked down in the canopy. However, one stop will be remembered more than any other. We came to a halt for our first calling pair of **White-eared Myzas**, (one of the higher elevation specialties we were seeking). As we were getting views of this just *off trail*, *Idris and Theo* noticed some **Indonesian (Mountain) Serins**, perched beside the trail, a rare observation as they are more typically seen as black bullets flying past at great height and speed. We raced back there, and after a nervous twenty minute wait, we were rewarded by views of both the female, looking like the picture in the field guide, and the shockingly bright male, which has yet to be illustrated sufficiently. We were on tenterhooks with flock activity at this elevation, and the real possibility of a *Hylocitrea* being amongst the attendees; and so it turned out. Right from where we saw the *serins*, we observed up to 4 different **Hylocitreas**, which yielded us to start walking down even before lunchtime. The descent was not to be sniffed at either. After taking a cooked lunch along the trail (conveniently brought to us), we steadily hiked back to a large landslide, a traditional site for the incredible **Purple-bearded Bee-eater** (above).

It showed up after about 30 minutes and at one point even came in to perch just above us. The rare **Sulawesi Ground-Dove** just down the trail surprised all, and was nowhere near as accommodating, giving *Sam* and *Hedda* good looks, but no one else before it crested a hill and evaporated.

Three further nights of *owling* were successful in the end; at least four **Eastern Grass-Owls** were seen quartering some rice fields one night, including one that overflowed peering right down at us before darkness was evident at all; a **Sulawesi Scops-Owl** on the way back involved walking through some junk in the back yard to come eye to eye with it; while, a pair of **Cinnabar Boobooks** took two nights of trying but performed well at 6:30pm on the second attempt, thanks to a new spot courtesy of local ranger *James*. Thus, *after four nights in the area, we left with 5 owls and 2 nightjars*, a more than decent return!

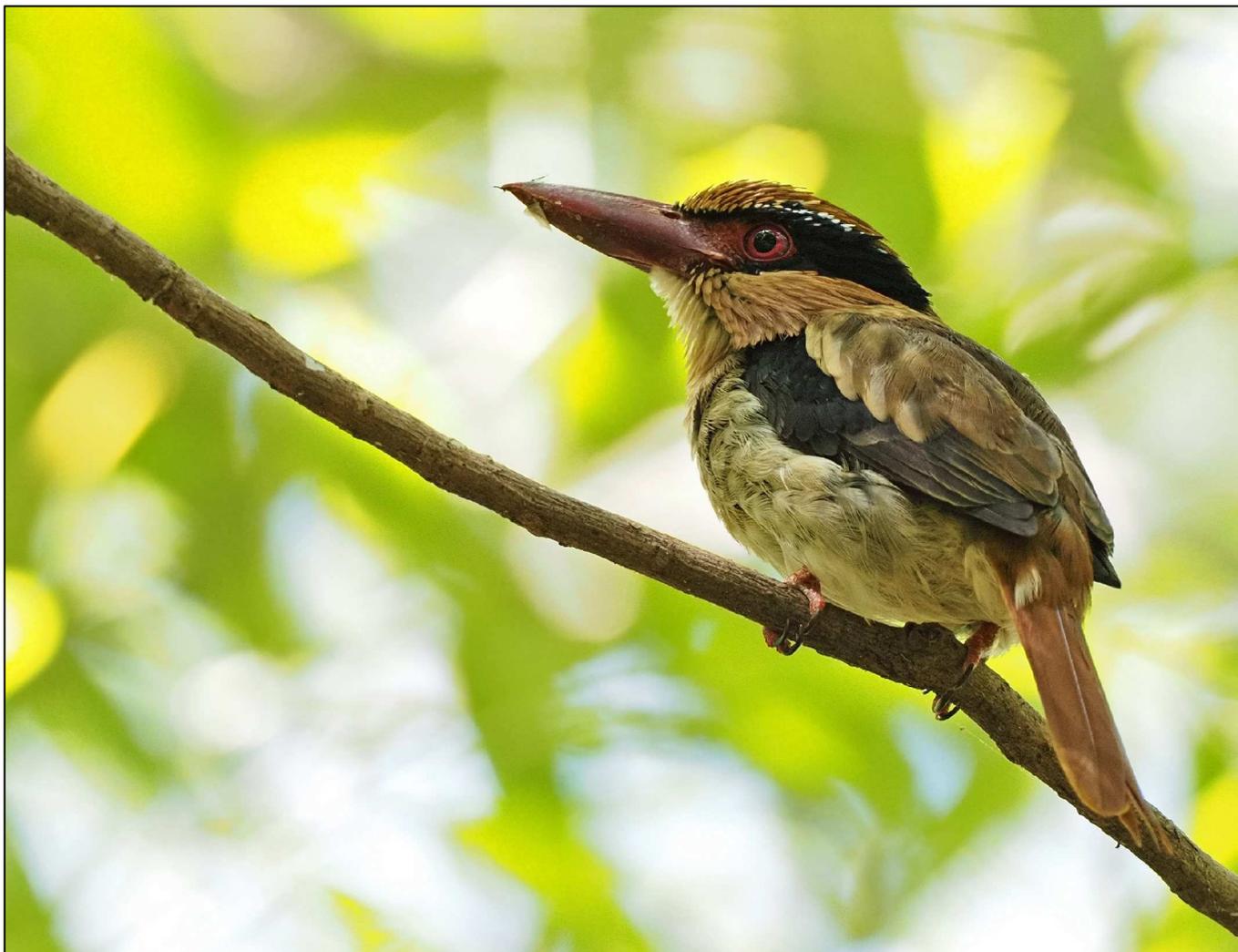
## Palu, SULAWESI

A short, and extremely hot, visit to some riverside scrublands south of the city produced at least one **Red-backed Buttonquail**, along with a **Barred Buttonquail**, a plethora of **Blue-tailed Bee-eaters**, and some very close daytime **Savanna Nightjars** (below)...



One of two nightjar species seen during the daytime in Central Sulawesi; this **Savanna Nightjar** was one of a dozen or so seen near **Palu**, while a pair of **Satanic Nightjars** were a highlight of our day on the **Anaso Track (Sam Woods)**.

## Tangkoko, SULAWESI



This *Lilac-cheeked Kingfisher* lived up to its billing at **Tangkoko**, even on an extraordinary morning that also included day-roosting *Minahassa Masked-Owl*, *Green-backed Kingfisher*, and a particularly popular sighting of the strange *bear-cuscus* (**Sam Woods**).

Our first day in *Tangkoko* simply must rank as one of the best *Sulawesi* can offer. This reserve is always special, and our first full day, centered around packing in as much in a small space as we could, is always a classic day on the tour, but this surpassed much that has gone before. It did not open auspiciously, however. Following a briefing from our local guide the evening before, it became clear that our best opportunity for the rare *Minahassa Masked-Owl*, would be provided by an early morning visit, which would then require an exceptionally early start, even for this focused tour. The thought of a 3am start was gingerly put to the group at that time, who did not blink an eyelid, instantly agreeing to take that chance. Following a three kilometer hike and a bout of playback though, all we had to show for our early start was some screeches from the owl in darkness, but no bird was seen. Dawn changed our spirits quickly though, and the morning was nothing short of spectacular. Early on, we walked right up to one of several *Green-backed Kingfishers* (photo page 12) seen in that period, which vied with *Lilac-cheeked (Sulawesi Lilac) Kingfisher* (above) for 'fisher of the day, on a day that ended up yielding **SEVEN KINGFISHER SPECIES!** Another early addition was a pair of striking *White-faced Cuckoo-Doves*, calling and excitedly flapping their wings as they did so.

While this tour does not offer the heady mammal heights of other birding destinations in Asia, (like *Borneo* for example), the handful it does have are very special indeed. Many in the group were equally as keen to connect with some of these, and by mid-morning we had witnessed a **Sulawesi Bear-Cuscus** (below) feeding low and open, much to everyone's delight.



As lunchtime approached we walked into one of the habituated local groups of **Celebes (Black) Crested Macaques** (photo page 14), one of a brace of animals (along with *tarsier*), which brings multi-faceted tourists from around the world to *Tangkoko*. However, (arguably) this all paled into comparison of the bird that resulted from a phone call from another of our guides, busy searching another, distant place in the reserve for this other rare quarry in particular. The walk to get there was draining, as the *Tangkoko* morning was as hot and humid as ever, and recent windy conditions had caused havoc with fallen trees in the area, meaning that we had to climb over a number of these to reach the spot. On arrival, *Julian* was waiting calmly and indicated that we should walk *inside* a hollowed-out, huge strangler fig tree to see the target bird. We took turns to do so, and stare up at a beautiful **Minahassa Masked-Owl** (photo next page) blinking down at us, as it roosted in the impressive latticework of the fig. After lunch and a welcome break in our air-con rooms back at the “resto”, we took off in search of *Ruddy Kingfisher* in mid-afternoon, failing in that attempt, which only showed up the smaller and less impressive **Blue-eared Kingfisher** instead, our fourth kingfisher of the day.

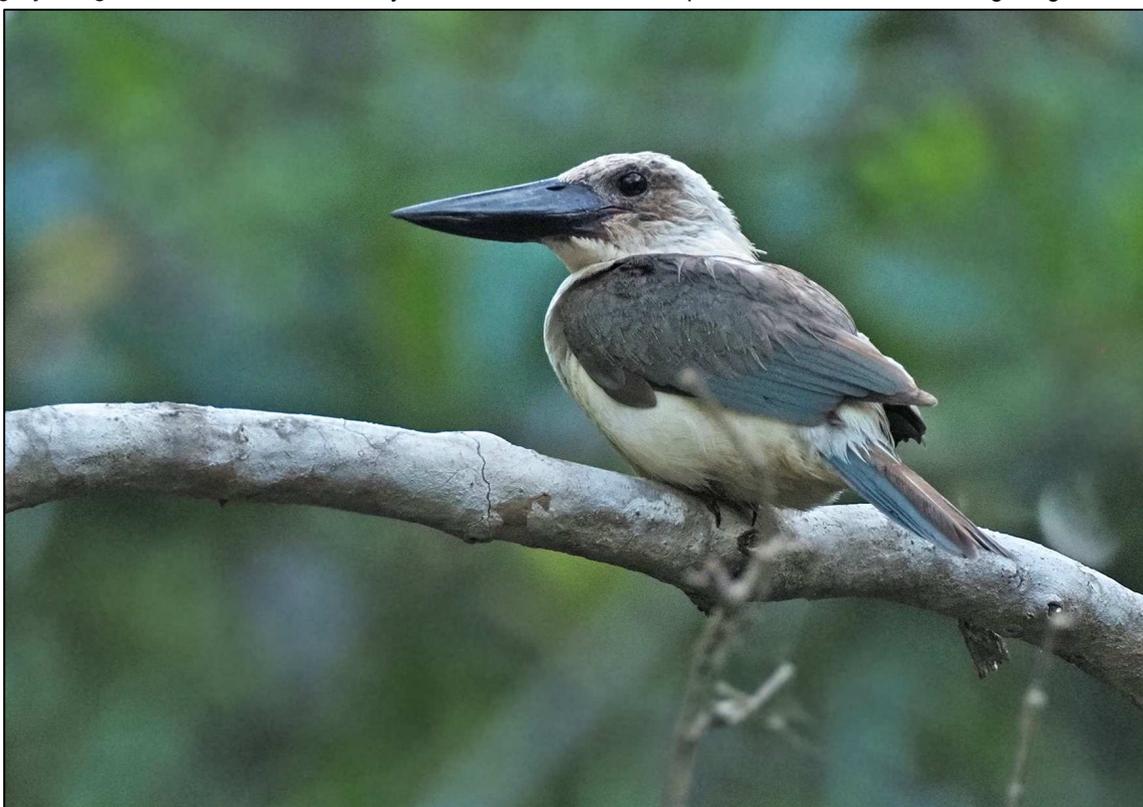


Then, we took two boats out to sea and into a mangrove-lined channel, where once we got inside, we quickly had repeated looks at our main target species, the impressively front-heavy, **Great-billed Kingfisher (below)**, a mangrove specialist. However, the other endemic in the area proved trickier, but eventually we got better looks at a pair of **White-rumped Cuckooshrikes**.

Our delay in getting the *cuckooshrike*, and other tidal circumstances, led us to leave later than planned, which meant our plans to try for the awkward **Sulawesi Nightjar** at dusk went awry; we simply could not make it there in time. We decided to give it a try anyway, and at the second place tried, we were shocked to get exceptional views of a bird that circles us several times at extremely close range, tracked in the flashlight the whole time. It was a fantastic end to a marvelous day that would remain one of the standout ones of the tour right up until the end. Our second, (and final), full day in *Tangkoko*, was (inevitably), less dramatic. By then, following our blistering opening stanza, our list of target species was rather skinny. We started out at a lookout, hoping for *pigeons and parrots*. We got these, but not all of the ones we sought. Main highlight was our first **Grey-headed Imperial-Pigeon**. Sandwiched between sessions at different forest lookouts, we set off inside the forest

in search of *Sulawesi Pygmy-Kingfisher*, which we narrowly missed. However, our spirits were raised with a sighting of one

of *Tangkoko's* famous mammal species, the **Gurskey's Spectral Tarsier (photo page 13)**, which looks like an invention from a *Star Wars* movie. *Theo* made sure one long sweaty walk was worth it, when he stumbled upon a **Red-backed (Rusty-backed) Thrush (photo page 12)**, which allowed close approach and was extremely popular! The last lookout involved observing many **Golden-mantled Raquet-tails**, and a pair of gaudy **Ornate Lorikeets**.

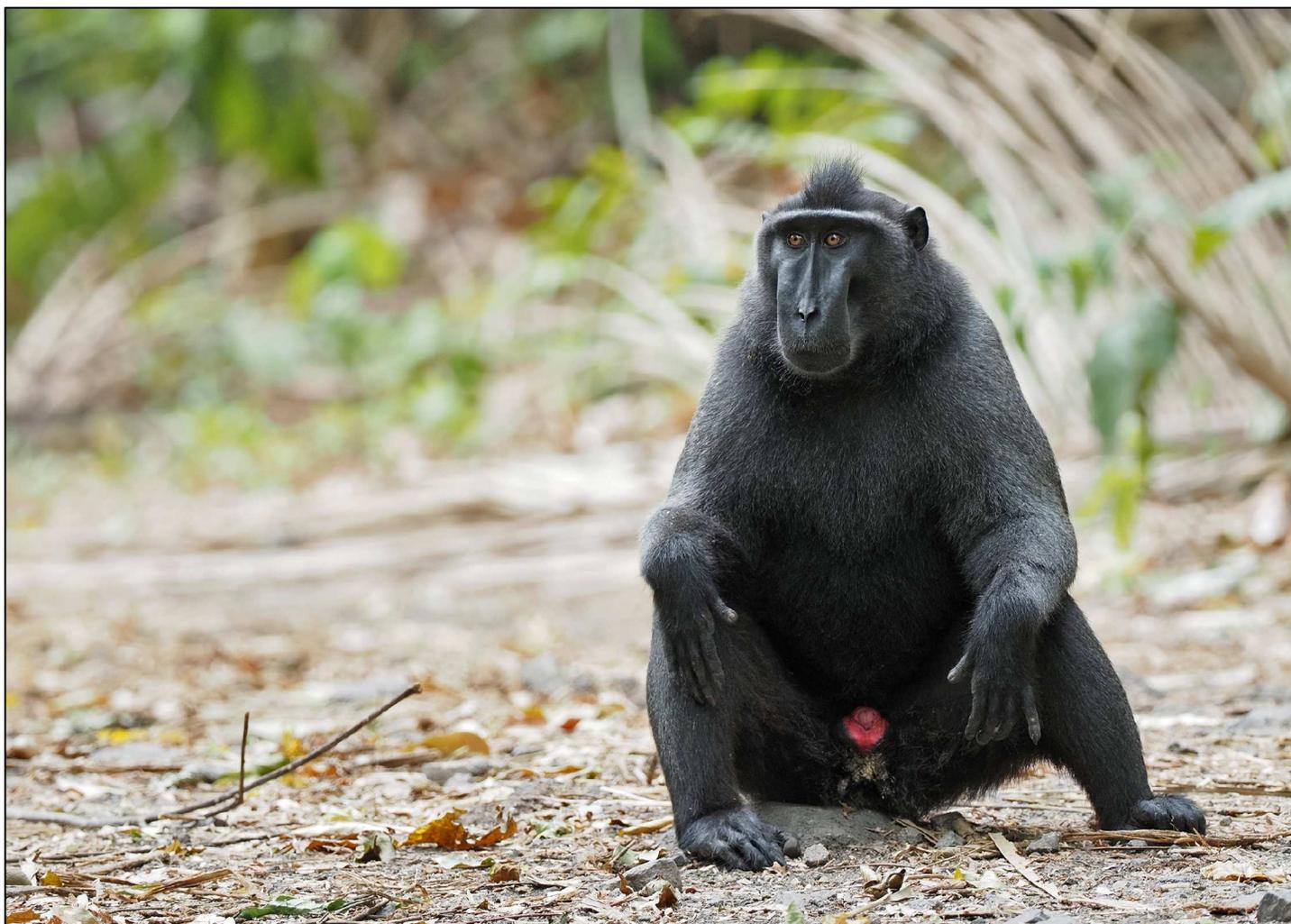






Even though we'd seen a **Sulawesi Scops-Owl** (photo left) before, we'd been consistently serenaded by one at night behind our cottage, and so ventured just behind to see if we could spot it, which we duly did and it made for great photo opps... Our final morning in the area was rather quiet, save for a popular pair of **Purple-winged (Sulawesi) Rollers** that brightened the morning and mood. Once again, *pygmy-kingfishers* eluded us...





## Dumoga-Bone, SULAWESI

Following a long and uneventful drive west along the *Minahassa Peninsula*, we were ready for two full days in the fractured park of *Dumoga-Bone* (now more clumsily known as *Bogani-Nani Wartabone NP*). With us all still smarting from the rather large miss of *Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher* in *Tangkoko*, we set off in pursuit of it again on the first morning in *Toraut*. It opened well, with a pair of **Isabelline (Sulawesi) Bush-hens** prowling under the bushes on the riverbank. A series of frustrating sightings of **Maroon-chinned (Oberholser's) Fruit-Dove** (photo page 13) culminated in a cooperative individual in the *Swarovski* for some time, thanks to the observational skills of the local guide, *Henrick*. We also, (finally), put a bit of a nemesis to bed; we had been haunted by the distinctive calls of **Pied Cuckooshrikes** for two consecutive days in *Tangkoko*, where the birds point blank refused to cooperate. However, *Hedda*, quickly located a striking male preening in the treetops, which we were able to enjoy at our leisure by way of the 'scope. We stalked the area for a while, got very hot and humid in the process, but found little more for our efforts; **Blue-backed (Azure-rumped) Parrots** and a further pair of **Gray-headed Imperial-Pigeons** were almost the only birds seen beside the large clearing behind this forest fragment in the park.

On readying to leave, the driver thought he should point out a large bird that he had been watching by the parking area, while we'd been traipsing through the rainforest. *Sam* looked up nonchalantly, only to get hot under the collar when he realized the driver's bird was none other than the very rarely seen **Sulawesi (Hawk) Cuckoo (below)**, which sat there for a further 30 minutes when we chose to leave with cameras full of images of the most surprising find of the entire tour.

After a break during the very hot middle of the day at a local guesthouse, with a good lunch spread, we set off for the area's most famous resident, the *Maleo*. Knowing the afternoons are arguably the best of times to try for it, we arrived around 3:30pm, and started circling the site looking for any large birds in the trees. The **Maleo (photo page 16)** come to lay eggs on many mornings at this time of year, and in preparing to do so, often arrive as pairs the evening before, and roost in trees close to the laying site. They are generally much easier to see in this situation, as they are very shy and hard to observe on the ground; something we were to learn first-hand after the local guide saw one in our presence that slipped out of sight rapidly. A later terrestrial view left not all with views either. However, finally, *Hedda*, produced what we'd all been yearning for, perched views of this rose-breasted megapode in the trees, where several decent views were had before we pushed back to the city of *Kotomobagu* for the night.



*Sulawesi (Hawk) Cuckoo* was one of the rarest birds encountered in **Sulawesi**, thanks to our driver ( ) for spotting this rarely seen/photographed specie in **Toraut!** (**Sam Woods**)

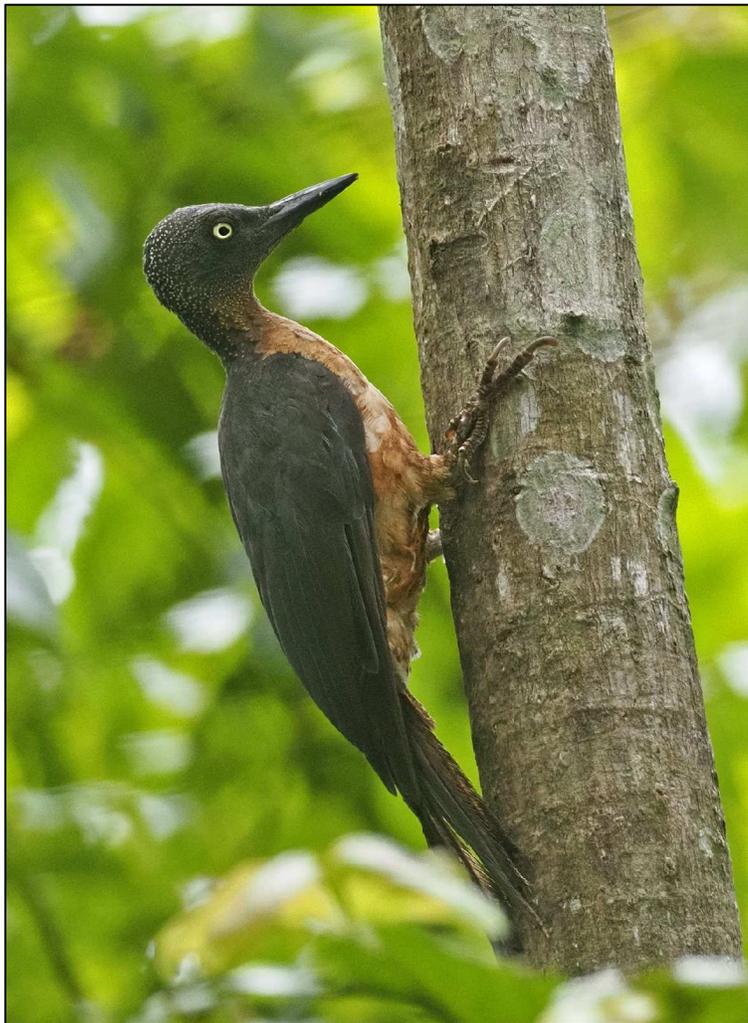


Another morning in the area produced a sitting **Sulawesi Goshawk** (photo page 17), several parties of **Sulawesi Mynas**, and a troop of treetop **Ivory-backed Woodswallows**, in addition to several good looks at some perched parrots, **Large (Sulawesi) Hanging-Parrots** to be precise. Upgrades of our earlier looks at **Sulawesi (White-rumped) Triller** were also appreciated within a section of the *Molibagu Road* that also held a male **Sulawesi Cicadabird**. We returned to *Kotomobagu* via way of a local wetland that held **Wandering Whistling-Ducks** and **White-browed Crake**, but little more.

## Gunung Ambang, SULAWESI

Our morning on *Gunung Ambang* was rather stunted; *this was a good thing*. As we'd seen both *Sulawesi Masked-Owl* and *Cinnabar Boobook* during the first stage of the trip in *Lore Lindu*, the usual absurdly early start was shelved, and we arrived on site at about 6:30am, and walked up the trail into the realm of the rare and local *Matinan Flycatcher*. However, before we tried for that dowdy endemic, we tried several spots for the **Scaly-breasted (Scaly) Kingfisher**, but had been told that no one had been seeing it on the mountain in this season. Therefore, you can imagine our surprise, when we struck gold at the second stakeout, where a bird responded quickly, with vocal indications of interest, and then a rush of wings alerted to one having come in overhead. It dropped back before we could locate it, but *Hedda* wasted no time in relocating the bird on a perch where it remained for a good few minutes.

We had tea and coffee in the forest nearby, where a **Matinan Flycatcher** was soon picked up shortly after, bringing our two targets with relative ease by 8am. Further encounters with the spectacular **Purple-bearded Bee-eater** were not to be scoffed at either, with two different nesting birds seen on the way down the mountain. **Ashy Woodpecker (below)** was also seen again on the mountain too. A quick stop on the way back, following a mandatory *Magnum* (ice cream) stop, was made at a small wetland, *Lake Linow*, where hundreds of **Sunda Teal** and **Wandering Whistling-Ducks** were observed, as well as a brief time with a **Buff-banded Rail**, and a longer spell with a pair of **White-browed Crakes**.



### Gunung Mahawu (Tomohon)/Tangkoko to Manado, SULAWESI

With our early success on some species to be targeted the next day, this custom group decided to split in two groups; one would stick to the original plan with our local guide, *Theo*, at his “patch”, *Gunung Mahawu*, with its promise of *Scaly-breasted Kingfisher*, perhaps another *Sulawesi Pitta*, and the distant possibility of the endemic *Rufous-throated Flycatcher*; others opted for a return to *Tangkoko* for the morning, in the hope of finding *Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher*, a species that we’d closely missed there earlier and had since evolved as the ultimate nemesis on *Sulawesi* for us! In the end, both groups met with success; *Theo*, *Alasdair* and *Hedda* were treated to a **Rufous-throated Flycatcher** and the second **Scaly-breasted Kingfisher** in as many days, while in *Tangkoko*, another wonderful time was had. We walked up to (and stayed with) a **Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher (photo page 18)** for around 20 minutes, then moved between some of *Tangkoko*’s most famous residents again, from joining the troop of local **Celebes Crested Macaques**, to observing a pair of **Gurskey’s Tarsiers** sleeping in the crack of a tree, to repeated looks at **Green-backed and Lilac-cheeked Kingfishers**, it was another classic morning, which only *Tangkoko* can provide.



*Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher* fast became the nemesis bird of the tour on Sulawesi, having missed it very narrowly at **Tangkoko** (our nearby local guide had it in his sights, but the bird disappeared before we could reach him). Searches at Toraut and Tambun, (where birds had been seen of late), also resulted in only frustration. In light of this, (and also having picked up the Scaly-breasted Kingfisher a day earlier than expected), some of us returned to **Tangkoko** for a third try, and it was a case of third time lucky, with this individual remaining frozen to its perch for 10 minutes or more (**Sam Woods**).

In the afternoon we retired to the most luxurious hotel of the tour in *Manado*, overlooking the *Celebes Sea*, and a volcanic island offshore, a welcome break before the tour was to increase pace again in the coming days with a stream of *Moluccan* endemics on offer... A short period of relaxed birding from their mangrove boardwalk brought us brilliant looks at a pair of active *White-rumped Cuckooshrikes* (photo page 19), while the mangroves provided perches for **Pied Imperial-Pigeons** and **Pink-necked (Green) Pigeons**. On the jetty a mixed flock of **Greater and Lesser Sandplovers** was noted, while offshore at least one **Bulwer's Petrel** was scoped by all present. A gorgeous sunset, framing the offshore volcano, provided the perfect close to our last day on *Sulawesi*.



*White-rumped Cuckooshrikes* were seen best at the most luxurious hotel of the tour, in **Manado** (Sam Woods).

#### TOUR SUMMARY: Halmahera

**Highlights on HALMAHERA:** Moluccan Scrubfowl, Invisible (Drummer) Rail, Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar, Halmahera (Moluccan) Boobook, Goliath Coucal, Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove, Gurney's Eagle, North Moluccan Dwarf-Kingfisher (among 5 more kingfishers added in Halmahera), Moluccan (Halmahera) Goshawk, Moluccan King-Parrot, Chattering Lory, Ivory-breasted and North Moluccan (Sahul) Pittas, Rufous (Gilolo) Fantail, Wallace's Standardwing (Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise), Halmahera Flowerpecker, Ornate Cuscus. *Moluccan specialties among species added on this leg of the tour.*

#### **Manado, SULAWESI to Galela, HALMAHERA**

Due to a new air route having opened recently, we were able to enjoy reduced car time on this "travel day". After a hearty buffet breakfast in the fanciest hotel of the tour in *Manado*, we flew direct from there to *Kao*, in the north of the island of *Halmahera*. From *Kao*, we drove further north in a small fleet of cars, making a few birding stops in likely habitat along the way. This part of the island has little large forest patches left, being dominated by coconut palms, but here and there, other trees pock the palm groves. In our first stop in such a place, we were quickly treated to our first island endemic, **Halmahera Golden Bulbul**, and then better still added a *twelfth* kingfisher to our list, with a very cooperative **Common Paradise-Kingfisher** (photo page 22).

Theo quickly latched on to the call of another Moluccan specialty from the same spot, **Blue-capped Fruit-Dove** (photo page 27), which was later located sitting quietly in a vine tangle. Stops for *Beach Kingfisher* were fruitless, however, save for our first, typically confiding, **Cream-throated (Halmahera) White-eye** (below) as compensation...

At night, we set off from our hotel in *Tobelo*, towards one of the most interesting outings of the tour, at a site called *Galela*. After meeting with *Gode* and his team, we set off through a palm plantation to a small channel where our boat was waiting by some mangroves. However, before we boarded our small vessel, we tracked down a pair of croaking **Moluccan Scops-Owls** (photo page 22) that was sitting in a coconut palm. This was not, however, the main objective of our visit. After a short boat ride, we arrived at a black volcanic sandy beach. This long strip of warm sands is vital for a small population of the endangered **Moluccan Scrubfowl** (photo page 21), which, (uniquely for the family), comes in at *nighttime* to lay its eggs in the sand. In recent years, sightings have been far from guaranteed, and many theories hold sway over the best state of the moon cycle on which to search for them. We had one night, and a full moon to try and see it regardless. We had little time to contemplate this in the end though, as *Gode* quickly located a pair of *scrubfowl* sitting on the sand within ten minutes of our beach landing, one of which remained for some time to approach and allow us to consider our good fortune. We rounded out our time on the beach with a close pass by from a **Large-tailed Nightjar**, before we boarded our boats and got back to the hotel at around 11pm, two hours earlier than on some recent tours!



A typically confiding *Cream-throated (Halmahera) White-eye* was one of the first Moluccan specialties seen on the island of **Halmahera (Sam Woods)**-*previous page*.

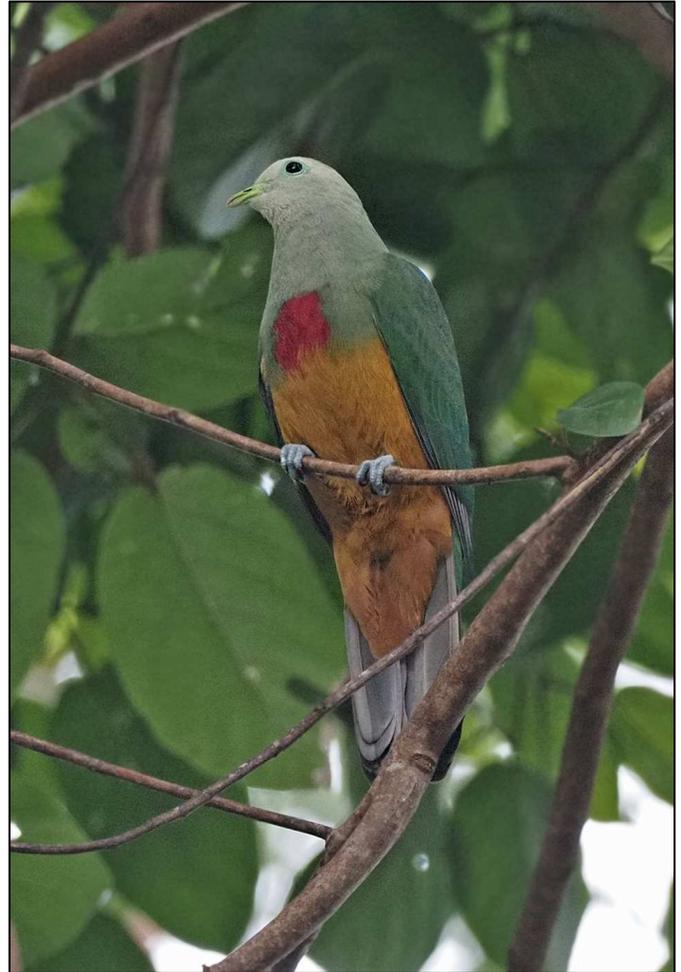


We were very fortunate to pick up this *Moluccan Scrubfowl* within minutes of our arrival on their night time, egg-laying beach on northern **Halmahera (Sam Woods)**.



## Tobelo to Weda Resort, HALMAHERA

Today was a long day of travel from *northern Halmahera*, to our comfortable dive resort sitting on the edge of *Weda Bay*. Much of the day was spent yearning for birds in the car, but a burst of birds was squeezed in at the end in a highland area. However, before reaching there, we did manage to track down a **Black-chinned (Moluccan) Whistler**, a pair of soaring **Variable (Varied) Goshawks**, and best of all a bleached **Beach Kingfisher** was found with the considerable aid of *Ruth*! The first sign of life in the highlands was a fly past from a **Gray-headed Fruit-Dove**, which then led us to several of these striking birds sitting in the treetops. Indeed, *pigeons and doves* were the theme of the afternoon, with **Spectacled (Moluccan) Imperial-Pigeon** featuring soon after this, and a **Cinnamon-bellied Pigeon** watched calling the *Swarovski* not long after that. Wedged in between the 'imperial-pigs' was a **Halmahera (Dusky-brown) Oriole** spotted by *Hedda*, which was then found to be sitting immediately alongside a **Moluccan Hanging-Parrot** once the scope was in action! To add to the pigeon flavor was a smashing **Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove (right)** watched at length by the roadside. Near the day's end we homed in our *14<sup>th</sup> kingfisher of the trip*, (having already now added 3 on Halmahera), with a trio of **Blue-and-white Kingfishers (below)** sitting on some roadside wires. After our first taste of the excellent cooking on offer at *Weda Resort*, we went out in search of *owlet-nightjar*, or any local *cuscuses*, undeterred by negative news on both of these from the lodge staff. However, we returned, with tails between legs, having seen precisely nothing!



### Weda, HALMAHERA

The first of three full days in the *Weda* area begun as they always do, with an early walk into the forest, as dawn arose around us. This meant we reached a designated point in the forest just as the first displays of male **Wallace's Standardwings** were getting under way. We watched in appropriate awe for some time, before setting about denting our considerable Moluccan "shopping" list...



Whilst we could still hear the raucous calls of those *birds-of-paradise*, we stumbled into an unusually cooperative **Dusky Scrubfowl** foraging long enough by the trail that we *all* got to see it up close. Then the duel was on, with a number of neighboring **Ivory-breasted Pittas**. Our first attempts were frustrating, then a good sighting of one perched up high in the rainforest trees led to most, (though not all), to see this stunning specialty. For the remainder who had not seen it, (or merely wanted more), we took an uphill walk, in pursuit of a still-calling individual, and finally it hopped around a tree, and landed on an open branch, where the electric blue wings, and crimson underbelly were both noted. Aside from this, the morning was, in all honesty, rather quiet by *Weda* standards. We just added **Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove**, **Common Cicadabird**, and a **Sombre Kingfisher** (*kingfisher NUMBER FIFTEEN!*), as the day heated up, but *Paradise-crows* and calling *Moluccan Goshawk* both frustrated us in equal measure.



After lunch and some downtime at the resort in the sweltering heat of the middle of the day, we set out again for another area of forest, being stymied at our first spot for **Moluccan Pitta**, with only an incredibly distant bird heard. Several **Blue-and-white Kingfishers** featured on some roadside wires on the short journey.

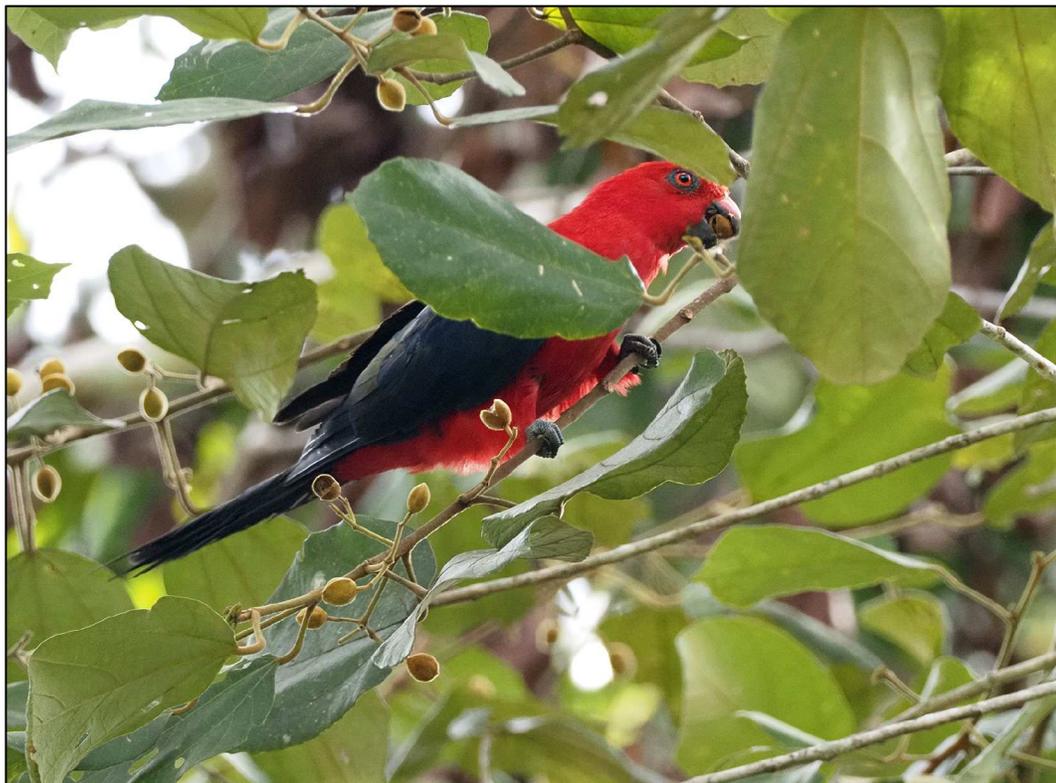
Our second try was not much better, but third time was lucky though with a bird creeping in to a spot and staying put there for some time, allowing even a scope to be trained on it. The *Moluccan Goshawk* nest in the same area was unfortunately no longer occupied, and in spite of one screaming its nearby presence, only the merest of glimpses were had as it left the tree. Better fortune was had with a **White-naped Monarch** at the same site, which allowed views by way of scope, as well as bins. On our way from there to a specific nightbird stakeout, we were brought to a halt by a calling pair of **White Cockatoos**, which our gifted local guide managed to find through a window in the canopy in front of us. The final area we visited near *Weda* was one for **Halmahera Boobook**, which responded quickly, by voicing its interest and flying across the road overhead. However, then it decided to remain in a hidden tree, just out of sight of us on the road. With more work than expected, a bit of off road work yielded the owl sitting in its difficult spot, but views were good once off of the road. One person missed out, and as our local guide was



trying to relocate the owl, spotted something equally as appealing, a wonderful, ruddy-colored **Ornate Cuscus** (photo page 24)! The day ended with something much requested by the group: **Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar** (above), a beautifully rich rufous version of which was seen, once again, with some off road work, to end a long, but very satisfying first day in *Weda*!

## Bukit Limber, HALMAHERA

Another early start (is there anything else on this tour?!) was required to take us the 90 minutes to the base of *Bukit Limber*, a forested hillside, which offered us much of our remaining target species at this point. We planned to have breakfast at a strategic location for a specialty of the Moluccan islands, but *Defi*, one of our resort guides had other ideas. Before breakfast, she located a small group of **Moluccan King-Parrots (below)** quietly feeding by the roadside where they remained for stellar



views of several bright vivid scarlet foraging birds. Another stop yielded a party of **Moustached Treeswifts** perched in some dead trees, while the unremarkable and well-named endemic **Drab Whistler** was logged in a canopy nearby. Not long after, we also had one of the other specialties of the mountain in our sites with the first of several **Island (North Moluccan/Halmahera) Leaf-Warblers** singing within sight of us. A good breakfast of traditional “nasi goreng” (fried rice) was taken in the field, before a slower spell yielded our first **(Halmahera) Paradise-Crows** pausing only briefly in an open tree,

and low flying **Pygmy Eagle** was encountered much earlier than expected. Moving up towards a lookout in the hope of *raptors*, aerial birds once more brought the vehicle to a halt, when a noisy **Chattering Lory** passed overhead and disappeared quickly from sight. We remained in the area for a little while, and were chuffed to bits when another pair of these handsome vermilion parrots came to a stop in a tree, where we could all scope one up for some time. Eventually, a spritely **Rufous (Gilolo) Fantail** was located moving within a slow moving feeding flock with more *leaf warblers* at the top end of the road (at an altitude of just over 990m). The same flatish stretch of road also brought us our first **Halmahera Cuckooshrike (Cicadbird)**, and another **Common (Wallacean) Cicadabird**. The lookout produced no *raptors* at all, but views of a scarred mountainside, where a newish mine has led to much recent development just off of the mountain reminded us of the many threats to the bird habitats in the region. However, the lookout did yield a perched **Violet-necked Lory** in such an awkward position, right over our heads, that only Sue could see it, before it departed shortly after. Everyone yearned for more from this beautiful parrot. The middle of the day lull can be particularly quiet on this mountain, with fewer birds than the lowland sites near the resort, and so we took our time with a lunch accompanied with excellent tempe, and a short snooze was taken in the car by some. Not long after we set about becoming active again, *Defi* hit the jackpot again by spotting a large bird gliding past us, which turned out to be another highly-requested species, **Gurney’s Eagle**, the largest of the local raptors. The next highlight of a slow walk downhill came from *Ruth*, who spotted the first of three different **Pacific Bazas** met with on the way down (a pair and spare). Our main focus however, was try and track down the hill’s smallest resident, **Halmahera Flowerpecker**, for which this offered our best chance at this uncommon species.

As we slowly drove downhill a couple of people picked up the call of a possible *flowerpecker*, and with a little playback, the identity was quickly confirmed, when a red-spotted male landed in full view in the treetops, allowing us to use the 'scope it. *Benbang*, our excellent main local guide, also put a certain nemesis to bed, with a crisp male **Moluccan Flycatcher (Monarch)**, a common endemic, which we had somehow contrived to miss until this point. Further down still, a noisy roadside **Moluccan King-Parrot** remained hidden for some time, before lazily crossing the road and landing in view just above, where it quietly set about gorging on a fruit laden tree alone. The final stop of the afternoon produced our first identifiable **Halmahera (Moluccan) Swiftlets** overhead; we got back to the resort just after 6pm after a long, sometimes slow, (but ultimately productive), day in the highlands of *Halmahera*.

## Weda, HALMAHERA

With just a handful of birds now remaining to be found, and many of these being, (naturally), largely the tougher species, additions of new birds were inevitably going to be lean on this day. We had tried to work in a distant site for *Invisible (Drummer) Rail* right up until the last minute, but news that the *rail* being had been missing from this unique feeding site for three consecutive days made us rethink this, what with a ten-hour round trip in the offing to try for it! Four out of six had been willing to spend ten



hours' drive time for the rare opportunity to see this species, but (understandably), when this news reached us, just before plans were sealed. Instead, we tried a local site for this notoriously difficult species, and, as expected, came up short, with some brief alarm notes from a rail heard only. However, our walk into this dry swamp area was rewarded with satisfying views of a **Great Cuckoo-Dove** in dipping display flight, and then perched. Having tried one rail spot, we swapped this one for another, and, encouragingly, *heard Invisible (Drummer) Rail* calling before we entered the forest. We knew, however, this was far from actually seeing them! We excitedly entered the forest and made our way to an area that the local guide had in mind, and following some nervous moments, a bird walked around us a few times, when (incredibly) all eight people present managed to see it (i.e. all of the tour participants)! In reality, this did not mean that all saw it well, but at least three of the group had seen it well, and understood firsthand comparisons to a forest-dwelling *oystercatcher*, what with its large dark body contrasting with sturdy bright orange bill and legs. The following new birds were rather overshadowed in the wake of the rail, with an **(Australian) Brush Cuckoo**, and a male **Moluccan Cuckooshrike** (photo next page) found nearby, as well as further **White-bellied Cuckooshrikes** too. An **(Eastern) Osprey** also overflew our next stop on the way to several sites to attempt to find the scarce **North Moluccan Dwarf-Kingfisher**.

On driving towards our last spot of the morning with this (*sixteenth*) kingfisher in mind, the driver/local guide, *Bembang* sighted one darting across the road in front of the vehicle, for which you had to be sharp to see; the rest of us mere mortals missed it!

However, we did not give up just then, we worked our way the short distance to a stream, a likely place the bird could be hanging out, and soon heard its soft, high-pitched calls. A little playback encouraged the bird to dart around us on several occasions, but always perching seemingly just out of view, except for the time it showed to *Sue* only. Finally, we were put out of misery, when it was found sitting quietly in the understory, where, this time, it remained long enough for us all to get repeated looks. A final try of the morning was made for *Moluccan Goshawk*, with a calling bird, again heard near an old nest of it, but, once again, the bird remained out of our sight the whole time.



The afternoon had us with a very limited bird set remaining, which was cue for some people to sit out the afternoon, after a lengthy tour, with many equally long days. Quite understandable at this stage. The start of our afternoon opened promisingly, with a pair of **Rufous-tailed (Pale-vented) Bush-hens** seen just behind our resort. The afternoon was desperately slow outside of this, with our searches for *Great-billed Parrot* and *Purple Dollarbird (Azure Roller)* resulting in a heard only of the former and none of the latter, with recent news stating they had not been seen at all by our local guide in months! It was unsurprising, therefore, that none were seen on the trip, arguably our biggest miss of what was otherwise a highly successful tour, with some big surprises and a handful of real rarities featuring. The only other notable avian item of the afternoon was a male **Shining Flycatcher (Monarch)**, a catch up bird for most. Our chosen second duel with *Ivory-breasted Pitta* however, ended in tears, and we were extremely thankful we had already seen one by then! We retired to the resort for a visible beer to celebrate the *Invisible (Drummer) Rail*, and to ready ourselves for one final push, before we would swap one Spice Island for another, *Ternate*, the following day

## Weda to Sofifi, HALMAHERA; to TERNATE

The action on this final day of the tour was expected to be limited, with few possible species left to find. However, it was far from dull, some returned to watch the most famous from *Alfred Russel Wallace's* "collection" of birds, with more views of up to three displaying male **Wallace's Standardwings (Standardwing Bird-of-Paradise)**; and while inside the forest, they also saw a **Moluccan (Halmahera) Goshawk**, and later a **Variable (Varied) Goshawk** in quick succession. The group who visited the standardwing lek again, also had the find of the morning, when they came out of the forest to find a **Great-billed Parrot** perched by the roadside. Ironically, those who did not go back to the display area were scouring the road for *parrots*, in particular, *Great-billed Parrot* and the hope of some perched **Violet-necked Lory**. We were frustrated by the absence of *Great-billed Parrot* calls or views, and by dozens of lory flying past, giving us only fleeting glimpses.



Some decent views of sitting **Eclectus Parrots** were, oddly, some of only a handful seen on this trip to *Halmahera*. However, finally, these vivid red bullets charged into a tree, where we were able to watch a pair of them in a much calmer state! On getting the news about the *goshawk/parrot* on reuniting as one group, we quickly picked up the call of a **Moluccan (Halmahera) Goshawk (left)**, which then flew into the tree overhead, where *Defi* was quick to locate it on a cryptic perch. Another also came in to the same tree and gave extended views for all this time. Great-billed Parrot remained elusive in the same area, and so we moved on to another area, where we all got upgraded views of White-streaked (Halmahera) Friarbird, had some low flybys of more **Violet-necked Lory**, before a **Great-billed**

**Parrot** came charging towards us, and passed overhead! Little else occurred later that morning, with a particularly hot day being evident, a last **Sombre Kingfisher (below)** was found sitting, and a hulking **Gurney's Eagle** gently drifted overhead, before we returned to *Weda Resort* happy with our final returns, and ready to pack up and leave for *Ternate*, following a final tasty offering at this excellent lodge. We traveled to *Ternate*, by way of an eventful drive then a short, private, speedboat ride. After this we were reunited with our excellent local guide for most of the tour, *Theo*, when we celebrated what a tour we had partaken in, and decided/fought over, the top five birds of the tour...



*Our last night in the Spice Islands, in a modern business hotel in Ternate, (the former administrative capital of North Maluku), gave us time to reflect on what had been an amazing tour, with well over 270 bird species recorded, and around 130 endemic birds among them.*

**BIRD & MAMMAL LISTS:****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 the major changes published by Cornell up until August 2019.*

*As there are many alternative names among authors for some species-subspecies now I have included these here too for clarity, with various taxonomic notes accompanying the species accounts where needed.*

**IOC** refers to the International Ornithological Congress checklist

**BIA** refers to the new *Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago field guide (2016)* by Eaton et al., which uses some markedly different names and taxonomy, and needs to be referred to here as this is the current standard field guide for the region.

**H** denotes a species that was HEARD, but not seen.

**GO** denotes a species that was seen by the GUIDE ONLY.

**ME** refers to all possible endemics to Moluccas (authors currently differ greatly on taxonomy).

**SE** refers to all possible endemics to Sulawesi subregion (authors currently differ on taxonomy).

**DUCKS, GEESE and WATERFOWL: ANATIDAE**

**Wandering Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata***: Seen near Kotomobagu, and also near Tomohon on Sulawesi.

**Sunda Teal *Anas gibberifrons***: Good numbers were seen at Lake Linow, near Tomohon, and also recorded at Makassar.

**MEGAPODES: MEGAPODIIDAE**

**Maleo *Macrocephalon maleo*** **SE**: Hedda spotted a pair of these amazing megapodes late in the afternoon, in the trees close to the laying site at Tambun.

**Moluccan Scrubfowl (Megapode) *Megapodius wallacei***: Four different birds were seen on the beach at night on Halmahera. One of a pair readying to dig in the black volcanic sand stood in full view for some time, all within twenty minutes or so of our arrival.

**Tabon (Philippine) Scrubfowl (Megapode) *Megapodius cumingii***: Some good views were had in Tangkoko this year.

**Dusky Scrubfowl (Megapode) *Megapodius freycinet***: A couple of close, seemingly un-shy birds were seen near the *Standardwings* in Weda, Halmahera.

**PHEASANTS, GROUSE & ALLIES: Phasianidae**

**Blue-breasted (King) Quail *Synoicus chinensis***: One was seen in flight near Wuasa in Central Sulawesi.

**Red Junglefowl *Gallus gallus* (H)**: One was heard at Karaenta Forest in South Sulawesi.

**GREBES: Podicipedidae**

**Little (Tricolored) Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis tricolor***: A pair was seen over several days on Lake Taming, Lore Lindu (Central Sulawesi). **Taxonomy**: Split by some (IOC), as **Tricolored Grebe**.

**PIGEONS & DOVES: COLUMBIDAE**

**Rock Pigeon (Domestic Pigeon) *Columba livia***: Scattered sightings around urban areas.

**Red Collared- (Turtle) Dove *Streptopelia tranquebarica***: A handful was seen in both Central and North Sulawesi.

**Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis***: Scattered sightings throughout Sulawesi.

**Sultan's (Sulawesi) Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia doreya albicapilla*** **SE**: Less than in some years, but recorded regularly in Sulawesi. **Taxonomy**: BIA split this endemic island form as **Sulawesi Cuckoo-Dove, *M. albicapilla***.

**Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia doreya albiceps***: A handful of this form/species was seen around Weda, Halmahera.

**Taxonomy**: This form retains this name in BIA, and is found into New Guinea, (but split from the form in Sulawesi).

**Great Cuckoo-Dove *Renwardtoena reinwardtii***: One was observed in display flight, then perched, near Bukit Kobe.

- White-faced Cuckoo-Dove (Sulawesi Black Pigeon) *Turacoena manadensis* SE:** Seen twice in Tangkoko.
- Asian (Common) Emerald Dove *Chalacophaps indica* (GO):** One zipped past a moving vehicle in front of Sam near Sofifi, Halmahera.
- Stephan's (Emerald) Dove *Chalacophaps stephani*:** One was seen in flight by a few in Tambun, Dumoga-Bone.
- Zebra Dove *Geopelia striata*:** Just a couple were seen in Sulawesi, including near Palu.
- Sulawesi Ground-Dove *Gallicolumba tristigmata* SE:** This rarely seen species was seen well by Hedda and Sam before it vanished, on the Anaso Track.
- Pink-necked (Green) Pigeon *Treron vernans*:** A few were seen by one of the boats in the mangroves at Tangkoko.
- Gray-cheeked (Green) Pigeon *Treron griseicauda*:** Noted at Karaenta, Tangkoko, and the Molibagu Road.
- Red-eared Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus fischeri* SE:** Recorded a handful of times around Lore Lindu.
- Maroon-chinned (Oberholser's) Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus epla* SE:** Several views were acquired at Toraut.
- Taxonomy:** Split by all authors, but sometimes named as **Oberholser's Fruit-Dove**.
- Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus bernsteinii* ME:** One of these gorgeous birds was seen in the Weda highlands.
- Superb Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus superbus temminckii*:** A fruiting tree at Lake Taming Lore Lindu drew several in regularly. **Taxonomy:** This near endemic has been split in HBW as **Western Superb Fruit-Dove *P. temminckii***.
- Blue-capped Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus monacha* ME:** One was seen on our northbound journey to Tobelo on Halmahera.
- Gray-headed Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus hyogastrus* ME:** Recorded multiple times around Weda
- Black-naped Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus melanospilus*:** A few were found in Karaenta and Tangkoko, Sulawesi.
- White-bellied Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula forsteni* SE:** This stunning pigeon was seen several times in Lore Lindu.
- Gray-headed Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula radiata* SE:** Sightings of two pairs in Tangkoko were the only ones.
- Green Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula aenea paulina*:** Seen regularly from the lookouts at Tangkoko.
- Taxonomy:** The distinctive endemic Sulawesi race, with its rich rufous collar, is touted (BIA) as a possible future split.
- Spectacled (Moluccan) Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula perspicillata* ME:** Two birds were scoped in the Weda highlands.
- Cinnamon-bellied Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula basilica* ME:** Two different birds were seen on the journey into Weda Resort; another was seen near there on our final morning birding of the tour.
- Pied Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula bicolor*:** Seen at Tangkoko, then from our hotel in Manado, and then on Halmahera too.
- Silver-tipped (White) Imperial-Pigeon *Ducula luctuosa* SE:** Good numbers were seen from a lookout at Tangkoko.
- Sombre Pigeon *Cryptophaps poecilorrhoea* SE:** Our day on the Anaso Track in Lore Lindu resulted in two sightings, a responsive bird that perched in view for some time, and a nesting bird too.

#### CUCKOOS: CUCULIDAE

- Bay Coucal *Centropus celebensis* SE:** Observed only twice, once in Tangkoko and again in Dumoga-Bone.
- Goliath Coucal *Centropus goliath* ME:** A group of six of these lumbering giants was seen near Weda; a few others were noted, including a buffy-colored juvenile.
- Lesser Coucal *Centropus otedbengalensis*:** One turned up briefly at Tangkoko.
- Yellow-billed (Sulawesi) Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus calyorrhynchus* SE:** Some large groups (10+) were seen in Tangkoko.
- Black-billed Koel *Eudynamis melanorhynchus* SE:** A male was found around Lake Taming, Lore Lindu.
- Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae* (H):** One was heard distantly in Tangkoko, North Sulawesi.
- Little (Gould's) Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx minutillus russatus*:** One in the Sedoa Valley, and another in Lore Lindu.
- (Australian) Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus infaustus*:** Seen twice close up on Halmahera.
- Taxonomy:** This is split off as **Australian Brush Cuckoo, *C. variolosus*** in BIA, with its range extending to Australia.
- Brush (Rusty-breasted) Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus virescens* SE:** Seen near Lake Taming in Lore Lindu.
- Taxonomy:** This is split off from Brush Cuckoo, as **Rusty-breasted Cuckoo *C. sepulcralis***, by IOC, and further split off as a Sulawesi endemic in BIA, as **Sulawesi Brush Cuckoo, *C. virescens***.
- Sulawesi (Hawk-) Cuckoo *Cuculus crassirostris* SE:** Our driver spotted an extremely confiding bird at Toraut; shocker!

#### NIGHTJARS & ALLIES: CAPRIMULGIDAE

- Diabolical (Satanic) Nightjar *Eurostopodus diabolicus* SE:** A daytime pair was photographed on the Anaso Track.
- Great Eared-Nightjar *Lyncornis macrotis*:** A few were seen briefly, near Wuasa (Lore Lindu), Sulawesi.
- Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*:** One was seen on our scrubfowl outing on Halmahera, and again in Weda.
- Sulawesi Nightjar *Caprimulgus celebensis* SE:** One was seen extremely close in flight several times in Tangkoko.
- Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*:** A number were seen in daylight near Palu, including one that sat in full view.

**OWLET-NIGHTJARS: AEGOTHELIDAE**

**Moluccan Owlet-Nightjar *Aegotheles crinifrons* ME:** A richly rufous individual was seen in the Weda area of Halmahera.

**SWIFTS: APODIDAE**

**Purple Needletail *Hirundapus celebensis*:** 2 were seen just before dusk at the grass-owl site near Wuasa.

**Glossy Swiftlet *Collocala esculenta*:** Regularly recorded throughout, on Sulawesi and Halmahera.

**Sulawesi Swiftlet *Aerodramus sororum* SE:** Regular sightings, at Lore Lindu, and also in North Sulawesi.

**Halmahera Swiftlet *Aerodramus infuscatus* ME:** A few were seen near the base of Bukit Limber, and many others were seen near Weda on our final morning.

**Taxonomy:** Sometimes lumped with the next species as **Moluccan Swiftlet, *A. infuscatus***.

**Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis*:** The dominant lowland swift at many sites.

**House Swift *Apus nipalensis*:** A handful was seen in Makassar in South Sulawesi.

**TREESWIFTS: HEMIPROCNIDAE**

**Gray-rumped Treeswift *Hemiprocne longipennis*:** Regularly seen both flying and perched at Lake Taming.

**Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea*:** Half a dozen individuals were seen perched, at Bukit Limber.

**RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS: RALLIDAE**

**Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*:** One was seen at Lake Linow (North Sulawesi).

**Barred Rail *Gallirallus torquatus*:** Excellent views of a quartet of these "road rails" near Lore Lindu, among other sightings.

**White-breasted Waterhen:** Recorded a couple of times on Sulawesi, including at Lake Linow in the north.

**Isabelline (Sulawesi) Bush-hen *Amaurornis isabellina* SE:** A vocal pair was seen early one morning in Toraut.

**Rufous-tailed (Pale-vented) Bush-hen *Amaurornis moluccana*:** Good views of a pair in the afternoon at Weda Resort.

**White-browed Crake *Porzana cinereal*:** Seen in Makassar, Kotomobagu, and at Lake Linow.

**Invisible (Drummer) Rail *Habroptila wallaci* ME:** Amazingly, everyone in the group got to see this avian wraith near Weda Resort. Three of these people also stated they had "good views", most unexpected indeed. Thanks to Bambang for pulling this out of the hat!

**Eurasian (Common) Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*:** Seen near Kotomobagu and Lake Linow, both North Sulawesi.

**Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*:** A few were recorded at Kotomobagu and also near Wuasa.

**STILTS & AVOCETS: RECURVIROSTRIDAE**

**Pied (White-headed) Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus*:** Recorded at Makassar and various rice paddies in the north.

**Taxonomy:** This species is sometimes lumped as **Black-winged Stilt, *H. himantopus***.

**PLOVERS & LAPWINGS: CHARADRIIDAE**

**Pacific Golden-Plover *Pluvialis fulva*:** A small cluster of them was seen in some rice paddies near Dumoga-Bone.

**Lesser Sand-Plover *Charadrius mongolus*:** A few were seen in a mixed sandplover flock behind the Grand Luley Resort.

**Taxonomy:** In the field guide this is split into two, as split as **Siberian and Tibetan Plovers**. Also known as **Mongolian Plover**; they are seemingly unidentifiable in non-breeding plumage from each other.

**Greater Sand-Plover *Charadrius leschenaultia*:** At least two were seen at our resort in Manado.

**Javan Plover *Charadrius javanicus*:** Some good views of about a dozen birds at Makassar Fishponds (South Sulawesi).

**SANDPIPERS & ALLIES: SCOLOPACIDAE**

**Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*:** Recorded on at least 8 days on Sulawesi and Halmahera.

**Gray-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes*** One showed up during the mangrove boat ride at Tangkoko, Sulawesi.

**Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*:** Encountered regularly in rice paddies in Sulawesi.

**Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*:** A few seen in flight at the Grand Luley Resort in Sulawesi; another on Halmahera.

**Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*:** A few were seen at Makassar Fishponds (South Sulawesi).

**Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*:** Six birds were found on a beach in northern Halmahera.

**BUTTONQUAIL: TURNICIDAE**

**Red-backed Buttonquail *Turnix maculosus*:** One bird was found near Palu, Central Sulawesi.

**Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator*:** One showed well at Bantimurung; another was seen in flight near Palu.

**GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS: LARIDAE**

**Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*:** Regularly seen at Makassar Fishponds (South Sulawesi)

**Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*:** One was seen at Makassar Fishponds.

**Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrid*:** A few were seen in Makassar (South Sulawesi).

**Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*:** Small numbers were seen offshore from Tangkoko.

Great Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii*: Sue saw one at Tangkoko.

#### SHEARWATERS and PETRELS: FRIGATIDAE

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii*: One was 'scoped by the entire group offshore from the Grand Luley Resort, Manado.

#### FRIGATEBIRDS: FRIGATIDAE

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*: Recorded on both Sulawesi (Makassar, Tangkoko) and Halmahera.

#### ANHINGAS: Anhingidae

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*: One was found beside the river at Toraut in North Sulawesi.

#### CORMORANTS & SHAGS: Phalacrocoracidae

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*: A large number were seen at Makassar Fishponds (90+).

#### HERONS, EGRETS & BITTERN: ARDEIDAE

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis* (GO): Sam saw one make a short open flight in Makassar Fishponds.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: Recorded at least five times on Sulawesi.

(Eastern) Great Egret *Ardea alba modesta*: Scattered sightings on Sulawesi.

Intermediate Egret *Mesophyx intermedia*: Seen around Makassar.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: Many were seen on a few days in Sulawesi.

Pacific Reef Heron (Reef-Egret) *Egretta sacra*: A dark morph bird was seen distantly on our mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko.

(Eastern) Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: Scattered sightings throughout.

**Taxonomy**: Split as *Eastern Cattle Egret* by IOC and others.

Javan Pond-Heron *Ardeola speciosa*: Encountered regularly on Sulawesi.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*: Recorded in Makassar and in the Tangkoko mangroves on Sulawesi.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: One was seen in flight at Makassar Fishponds.

#### IBISES AND SPOONBILLS: THRESKIORNITHIDAE

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*: Well over a hundred were seen in fields near Wuasa, while waiting for **grass-owls** there.

#### OSPREY: PANDIONIDAE

(Eastern) Osprey *Pandion haliaetus cristatus*: One flew over the car, near Weda on Halmahera.

**Taxonomy**: Sometimes (e.g. IOC), split off as **Eastern Osprey**, which includes these birds in eastern Indonesia to Australia.

#### HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES: ACCIPITRIDAE

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*: One was seen in over rice paddies North Sulawesi.

Sulawesi Honey-Buzzard *Pernis celebensis celebensis* **SE**: A few were seen around the Sedoa Valley.

**Taxonomy**: This was recently (2019) split off from *Barred Honey-Buzzard* on the Clements list, having already been split by others for some time (e.g. IOC, HBW, BIA).

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*: A pair and a single were seen in the afternoon on Bukit Limbe (Halmahera).

Sulawesi Serpent-Eagle *Spilornis rufipectus* **SE**: A single soaring bird at Karaenta remained the only sighting.

Sulawesi Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus lanceolatus* **SE**: Several views near Lore Lindu.

Pygmy Eagle *Hieraaetus weiskei*: One circled above a couple of times at Bukit Limber, Halmahera.

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malayensis*: A couple were encountered in the Lore Lindu area.

Gurney's Eagle *Aquila gurneyi*: Defi pointed out an adult of this large eagle at Bukit Limber; another was found on our final morning near Weda.

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*: One was seen briefly near Dumoga-Bone.

Sulawesi Goshawk *Accipiter griseiceps* **SE**: One was found perched early in the morning along the Molibagu Road.

Spot-tailed Goshawk (Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter trinotatus* **SE**: A male was seen on our first morning at Karaenta, and a female was also seen in Tangkoko.

Variable (Varied/Gray-throated) Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster griseogularis* **ME**: A soaring pair was seen near Sidangoli, and another couple were seen in the Weda area (both Halmahera).

**Taxonomy**:

Moluccan (Halmahera) Goshawk *Accipiter henicogrammus* **ME**: On the final morning we all got long looks at a pair sitting in the canopy near the **Standardwing** lek site at Weda.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*: A few were seen in North Sulawesi.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indicus*: Recorded regularly on Halmahera; also in Sulawesi.

**White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster***: Two were seen in the air together during our boat trip into the mangroves at Tangkoko.

**Gray-headed Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus ichthyetus* (GO)**: One was heard by most of the group, and glimpsed by Sam and Henrik at Toraut.

#### BARN-OWLS: TYTONIDAE

**Sulawesi Masked-Owl *Tyto rosenbergii* SE**: Two were seen near the town of Wuasa, near Lore Lindu.

**Minahassa Masked-Owl SE**: Thanks to Julian for spending some time searching local roost sites for this at Tangkoko, which led us to see a single bird roosting within a large strangler fig tree, which required us to enter the tree itself to actually see it!

**Australasian (Eastern) Grass-Owl *Tyto longimembris***: A minimum of four birds were seen near Wuasa.

#### OWLS: STRIGIDAE

**Moluccan Scops-Owl *Otus magicus***: A pair was seen at the **Moluccan Scrubfowl** site on Halmahera.

**Sulawesi Scops-Owl *Otus manadensis* SE**: One was seen near Wuasa, and another seen behind our Tangkoko hotel.

**Ochre-bellied Boobook *Ninox ochracea* SE**: The same pair of roosting birds was seen in Tangkoko on two occasions.

**Cinnabar Boobook *Ninox los* SE**: A pair was seen just after darkness at Lore Lindu.

**Halmahera (Moluccan) Boobook *Ninox hypogramma* ME**: This was our ninth (and final), owl of the tour, near Weda.

**Speckled Boobook *Ninox punctulata* SE**: 1 was seen in Wuasa on our first night, at the same location as a masked-owl.

#### HORNBILLS: BUCEROTIDAE

**Knobbed Hornbill *Aceros cassidix* SE**: Excellent views of a pair in the Sedoa Valley came first; others were seen in Tangkoko and Dumoga-Bone.

**Blyth's Hornbill *Aceros plicatus***: A few were seen on Halmahera.

**Sulawesi (Dwarf) Hornbill *Penelopides exarhatus* SE**: First seen at Karaenta, and then again at Tangkoko.

#### KINGFISHERS: ALDEDINIDAE

**Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis hispidoides***: Seen by some during the boat trip into the mangroves at Tangkoko, then all caught up with it on Halmahera. **Taxonomy**: BIA suggests a possible future split as **Hispid Kingfisher**.

**Blue-eared Kingfisher**: One was seen sitting beside a river in Tangkoko.

**Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher *Ceyx fallax* SE**: Long looks came to us, (eventually), at Tangkoko on a targeted return trip.

**North Moluccan (Variable) Dwarf-Kingfisher *Ceyx uropygialis* ME**: Tis striking small kingfisher was eventually located near Weda.

**Taxonomy**: In BIA guide this is lumped within the wider **Variable Dwarf-Kingfisher**, which was recently split into multiple species.

**Lilac-cheeked (Sulawesi Lilac) Kingfisher *Cittura cyanotis* SE**: Four birds were seen in Tangkoko, over two days there.

**Great-billed (Black-billed) Kingfisher *Pelargopsis melanoryncha* SE**: Good looks at a pair on a boat trip in Tangkoko.

**Blue-and-white Kingfisher *Todiramphus diops* ME**: Three were seen near the town of Weda on Halmahera.

**Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda***: Seen close up on the mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko.

**Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus***: Just the one was seen in Sulawesi, at Tangkoko; others on Halmahera.

**Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris***: Scattered sightings on Sulawesi.

**Sombre Kingfisher *Todiramphus funebris* ME**: Two sightings in the forests near Weda.

**Beach Kingfisher *Todiramphus saurophagus***: One was found by Ruth, near Sofifi on Halmahera.

**Green-backed (Blue-headed) Kingfisher *Actenoides monachus monachus* SE**: Excellent sightings in Tangkoko.

**Taxonomy**: This is known as **Blue-headed Kingfisher** in HBW, which splits this from **Black-headed Kingfisher**.

**Black-headed (Green-backed) Kingfisher *Actenoides monachus capucinus* SE**: 1 was located in Karaenta Forest on both of our visits there, different individuals.

**Taxonomy**: This southern form of **Green-backed Kingfisher** is split by others (i.e. HBW and BIA).

**Scaly-breasted (Scaly) Kingfisher *Actenoides princeps* SE**: 1 showed to all at Ambang; another was seen at Mahawu.

**Common Paradise-Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea***: One put in a virtuoso performance during our first birding on Halmahera.

#### BEE-EATERS: MEROPIDAE

**Purple-bearded Bee-eater *Meropogon forsteni* SE**: Excellent looks at nesting birds at Lore Lindu and Gunung Ambang.

**Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops phillipinus***: Many were seen at a site near Palu.

**ROLLERS: CORACIIDAE**

**Purple-winged (Sulawesi) Roller *Coracias temminckii* SE:** Three were seen at Tangkoko, and another pair at the base of Ambang.

**(Common/Oriental) Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*:** A dozen or so birds were seen on our unsuccessful attempts to find the much rarer Purple Dollarbird, on Halmahera.

**WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE**

**Sulawesi (Pygmy) Woodpecker *Dendrocopos temminckii* SE:** A few seen in Lore Lindu.

**Ashy Woodpecker *Mulleripicus fulvus* SE:** Some stellar looks at this large, striking species at Tangkoko.

**FALCONS & CARACARAS: FALCONIDAE**

**Spotted (Indonesian) Kestrel *Falco moluccensis macroalius*:** One was seen in North Sulawesi.

**Spotted (Indonesian) Kestrel *Falco moluccensis moluccensis*:** One was scoped up near Weda on Halmahera.

**COCKATOOS: CACATUIDAE**

**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*:** One was seen at Makassar Fishponds, an introduced species.

**White (Umbrella) Cockatoo *Cacatua alba* ME:** A pair was seen perched at a possible nest tree near Weda.

**OLD WORLD PARROTS: PSITTACULIDAE Psittaculidae**

**Moluccan King-Parrot *Alisterus amboinensis*:** Two sightings of foraging birds at Bukit Limber were top quality; one before breakfast and another in the middle of the afternoon.

**Golden-mantled (Sulawesi) Raquet-tail *Prioniturus platurus* SE:** Seen well in flight on the Anaso Track, and perched at Tangkoko.

**Yellow-breasted (Minahasa) Raquet-tail *Prioniturus flavicans* SE:** One was scoped at Tambun.

**Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*:** A few were seen shooting through the air near Weda.

**Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*:** A few were seen while on Halmahera.

**Azure-rumped (Blue-backed) Parrot *Tanygnathus sumatranus*:** A single perched bird was observed at Tangkoko.

**Great-billed Parrot *Tanygnathus megalorynchos*:** Featured on our final morning on Halmahera; some had a perched bird, while almost all others saw a low-flying birds go overhead.

**Red-flanked Lorikeet *Charmosyna placentis*:** The spectacular yellow cheeks were seen on some close perched birds near Sofifi on Halmahera.

**Chattering Lory *Lorius garrulous* ME:** A pair came in and landed by the road at Bukit Limber, where it allowed all popular 'scope views; others were seen in flight near Weda.

**Violet-necked Lory *Eos squamata*:** One was seen perched by Susan on Bukit Limber, our only sighting of the tour.

**Ornate Lorikeet *Trichoglossus ornatus* SE:** Seen twice in Tangkoko.

**Yellow-and-green (Meyer's/Citrine) Lorikeet *Trichoglossus flavoviridis* SE:** Regularly seen around Lake Tambing; another nesting pair gave excellent views at the base of Gunung Ambang.

**Violet-necked Lory *Eos squamata*:** A few groups were heard in flight, and then some great looks (perched) came on our final morning near Weda Resort.

**Sulawesi (Large) Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus stigmatus* SE:** Good numbers were seen at Tangkoko; others on the Molibagu Road

**Moluccan Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus amabilis* ME:** Whilst scoping a **Halmahera Oriole** in the Weda highlands, we found on of these diminutive, emerald green parrots perched alongside the oriole.

**Pygmy (Sulawesi Small) Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus exilis* SE:** Seen 3 times at Tangkoko and on the Molibagu Road, although all birds left their perches very quickly and so were not seen well by most, a major disappointment.

**PITTAS: PITTIDAE**

**Sulawesi (Sahul) Pitta *Erythropitta celebensis* SE:** We lucked in to one on our very first morning, at Karaenta.

**North Moluccan (Sultan's Sahul) Pitta *Erythropitta rufiventris* ME:** One was seen after it froze in one spot for some time, on a forest floor near Weda on Halmahera.

**Ivory-breasted Pitta *Pitta maxima* ME:** Everyone managed to see a bird perched in the canopy on our first morning at Weda.

**HONEYEATERS: MELIPHAGIDAE**

**Dark-eared (Lesser) Myza (Lesser Sulawesi Honeyeater) *Myza celebensis* SE:** Seen twice at Lore Lindu.

**White-eared (Greater) Myza (Greater Sulawesi Honeyeater) *Myza sarasinorum* SE:** A few along the Anaso Track.

**Dusky (Sultan's) Myzomela *Myzomela obscura simplex* ME:** One was found by Judith in the Weda highlands; another two were seen at Bukit Limber.

**Taxonomy:** Suggested as a future split in BIA that indicates the North Moluccan birds are distinct from the Australasian ones.

**Sulawesi Myzomela** *Myzomela chloroptera* **SE:** Recorded regularly at Lake Taming in Lore Lindu; also near Tomohon.  
**White-streaked (Halmahera) Friarbird** *Melitograis gilolensis* **ME:** Two sightings, with a good sighting on our final morning in Weda.

#### THORNBILLS & ALLIES: ACANTHIZIDAE

**Golden-bellied Gerygone** *Gerygone sulphurea flaveola*: Seen in South and Central Sulawesi several times.

**Taxonomy:** BIA suggests that there may be future scope for splitting of this endemic form in Sulawesi.

#### CUCKOOSHRIKES: CAMPEPHAGIDAE

**Pied Cuckooshrike** *Coracina bicolor* **SE:** A resting male was watched preening in the treetops, thanks to Hedda, in Toraut.

**Cerulean Cuckooshrike** *Coracina temminckii* **SE:** Seen most days in Lore Lindu, and then again at Gunung Ambang.

**White-bellied Cuckooshrike** *Coracina papuensis*: One was found near Weda, Halmahera.

**Taxonomy:** A multiple split up of this species has been suggested as possible by BIA, separating the one here from that found in Australia.

**Moluccan Cuckooshrike** *Coracina atriceps* **ME:** A single male was seen distantly, before a confiding pair were seen outside the restaurant at Weda Resort.

**White-rumped Cuckooshrike** *Coracina leucopygia* **SE:** A pair was seen in the mangroves in Tangkoko. Also seen at our Manado hotel.

**White-shouldered (Lesseur's) Triller** *Lalage sueurii*: Seen in South Sulawesi, and also near Palu in Central Sulawesi.

**White-rumped (Sulawesi) Triller** *Lalage leucopygialis* **SE:** A pair was seen at the Tangkoko, but a male showed better on the Molibagu Road.

**Halmahera (Cicadabird) Cuckooshrike** *Celebesia parvula* **ME:** At least one adult was seen on Bukit Limber.

**Pygmy Cuckooshrike (Mountain Cicadabird)** *Celebesia abbotti* **SE:** A couple were seen in mixed flocks in Lore Lindu.

**Sulawesi Cicadabird** *Edolisoma morio* **SE:** Noted in the Sedoa Valley, near Lore Lindu, and also along the Molibagu Road.

**Common (Wallacean) Cicadabird** *Edolisoma tenuirostre grayi* **ME:** A single was seen in the Weda area, and more were seen on our day at Bukit Limber (both Halmahera).

**Taxonomy:** This has been split off by different authors as either **Moluccan Cicadabird** or **Wallacean Cicadabird**.

#### WHISTLERS & ALLIES: PACHYCEPHALIDAE

**Maroon-backed Whistler** *Coracornis raveni* **SE:** A male showed extraordinarily well at Lore Lindu; seen by all!

**Black-chinned (Moluccan) Whistler** *Pachycephala mentalis* **ME:** A male was found on our journey to Weda.

**Taxonomy:** BIA suggests the current treatment at the species level is inappropriate, and that a seven-way split may be best in the future, with the race on Halmahera then becoming a North Moluccan endemic, "**Halmahera Whistler**".

**Sulphur-bellied (vented) Whistler** *Pachycephala sulfuriventer* **SE:** Common in the mountains of Sulawesi.

**Drab Whistler** *Pachycephala griseonata* **ME:** One was seen by chance in the Halmahera highlands at Bukit Limber.

#### OLD WORLD ORIOLES: ORIOLIDAE

**Halmahera (Dusky-brown) Oriole** *Oriolus phaeochromus* **ME:** Hedda got us all on to one, in the highlands near Weda.

**Black-naped Oriole** *Oriolus chinensis*: Our best views came of one foraging low by Lake Taming.

**Taxonomy:** BIA suggest a future split up of the Indonesian forms is likely, with the Sulawesi one possibly being a future endemic species.

#### WOODSWALLOWS, BELLMAGPIES, AND ALLIES: ARTAMIDAE

**Ivory-backed Woodswallow** *Artamus monachus* **SE:** At least seven birds were seen along the Molibagu Road.

**White-breasted Woodswallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus*: Recorded regularly on the tour.

#### FANTAILS: RHIPIDURIDAE

**Willie-wagtail (Fantail)** *Rhipidura leucophrys*: A regular roadside bird on Halmahera.

**Sulawesi (Rusty-bellied) Fantail** *Rhipidura teysmanni* **SE:** A regular flock member in Lore Lindu.

**Rufous (Gilolo) Fantail** *Rhipidura rufifrons torrida* **ME**: One was found at Bukit Limber, on Halmahera.

**Taxonomy:** This is split as **Gilolo Fantail**, a Halmahera endemic in BIA.

#### DRONGOS: DICRURIDAE

**Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus leucops* **SE:** Recorded on about 7 days of the tour in Sulawesi.

**Taxonomy:** Split under BIA, and named **White-eyed Spangled Drongo**.

**Sulawesi (Spangled) Drongo *Dicrurus montanus* SE:** Seen in the Sedoa Valley, Lore Lindu and Gunung Ambang.

**Taxonomy:** Renamed in the recent field guide as **Sulawesi Spangled Drongo**.

**(Halmahera) Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus bracteatus* ME:** Multiple birds were encountered on Halmahera.

**Taxonomy:** Split in BIA as **Halmahera Spangled Drongo**.

#### **BIRDS-OF-PARADISE: PARADISAEIDAE**

**(Halmahera) Paradise-crow *Lycorax pyrrhopterus pyrrhopterus* ME:** A pair was seen in an open tree, if only briefly, at Bukit Limber. **Taxonomy:** Split off from the one on Obi as **Halmahera Paradise-Crow** in BIA.

**Standardwing Bird-of-paradise (Wallace's Standardwing) *Semioptera wallacii* ME:** At least three males were in feverish display at the wonderful lek site of Weda Resort, as several females were around at the time too.

#### **MONARCH FLYCATCHERS: MONARCHIDAE**

**Pale-blue Monarch *Hypothymis puella* SE:** Only seen a few times on Sulawesi; our best looks coming at Dumoga-Bone.

**White-naped Monarch *Carterornis pileatus* ME:** Another attractive endemic found near Weda on Halmahera.

**Spectacled (Wallacean/Moluccan) Monarch *Symposiachrus trivirgatus bimaculatus* ME:** A single was found in the national park near Weda Resort.

**Taxonomy:** This is split under IOC as **Moluccan Monarch**, and under BIA as **Wallacean Monarch**

**Moluccan (Slaty) Flycatcher (Monarch) *Myiagra galeata* ME:** Inexplicably difficult this time on Halmahera, a male was tracked down late in the day by Benbang on Bukit Limber.

**Shining Flycatcher (Monarch) *Myiagra alecto alecto*:** Judith had a glossy male on the journey to Weda, and another male was seen in the Weda area a few days later.

**Taxonomy:** BIA suggest further splitting of this may end up with an endemic species in the region.

#### **CROWS, JAYS & MAGPIES: CORVIDAE**

**Slender-billed (Sulawesi) Crow *Corvus enca celebensis* SE:** Regularly recorded in Sulawesi.

**Taxonomy:** This is split off as the endemic **Sulawesi Crow** in the recent field guide.

**Piping Crow *Corvus typicus* SE:** Only seen in Karaenta, where noisy one was seen perched.

**Long-billed Crow *Corvus validus* ME:** A small group was seen in the Weda highlands.

#### **FAIRY-FLYCATCHERS: STENOSTIRIDAE**

**Citrine Canary-Flycatcher *Culicicapa helianthea*:** Regularly found in the mountains of Sulawesi.

#### **CISTICOLAS & ALLIES: CISTICOLIDAE**

**Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*:** Several were noted at the Makassar fishponds, and others heard near Wuasa.

**Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*:** A calling bird was seen by some in the Sedoa Valley.

#### **REED-WARBLERS & ALLIES: ACROCEPHALIDAE**

**Clamorous (Australasian) Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus celebensis*:** Seen a few times in Makassar.

#### **GRASSBIRDS & ALLIES: LOCUSTELLIDAE**

**Tawny Grassbird *Cincloramphus timoriensis* (H):** Heard calling at the **grass-owl** site near Wuasa in Central Sulawesi.

**Malia *Malia grata* SE:** Regularly encountered at Lore Lindu (**stresemani**); also seen at Gunung Ambang (**recondita**).

**Chestnut-backed (Sulawesi Grasshopper) Bush-Warbler *Locustella castanea castanea* SE:** After the usual failed attempts, we finally managed to lure one into the open, at Lore Lindu.

**Gray's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella fasciolata* (H):** A single bird was heard near Weda, but could not be found.

#### **SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE**

**Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*:** Recorded multiple times on Sulawesi.

**Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*:** Encountered almost every day on Sulawesi and Halmahera.

#### **BULBULS: PYCNONOTIDAE**

**Sooty-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus aurigaster*:** Regular records of this introduced species.

**Halmahera (Northern) Golden Bulbul *Alophoixus chloris* ME:** A handful were encountered on Halmahera.

#### **LEAF WARBLERS: PHYLLOSCOPIIDAE**

**Sulawesi Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus sarsinorum* SE:** A commonly encountered montane endemic.

**Island (North Moluccan) Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus maforensis henrietta* ME:** A few were encountered on Bukit Limber. **Taxonomy:** This is split off as **North Moluccan Leaf Warbler *Seicercus waterstradti*** in BIA, but suggested a further split to **Halmahera Leaf Warbler** may occur in the future. Note that they have also moved it into a different genus too.

**BUSH-WARBLER & ALLIES: CETTIIDAE**

**Mountain Tailorbird (Leaftoiler) *Phyllergates cucullatus*:** A few were seen in the mountains of Sulawesi.

**Taxonomy:** No longer considered a true tailorbird. The name of **Leaftoiler** has been adopted in BIA.

**WHITE-EYES, YUHINAS & ALLIES: ZOSTEROPIDAE**

**Streak-headed White-eye (Sulawesi Heleia) *Lophozosterops squamiceps* SE:** A small group on the Anaso Track.

**Mountain White-eye *Zosterops montanus*:** Regularly encountered in the mountains of Sulawesi.

**Lemon-bellied (Yellow-bellied) White-eye *Zosterops chloris*:** Seen in the Sedoa Valley several times.

**Black-ringed White-eye *Zosterops anomalus* SE:** Two small groups were encountered at Karaenta, near Makassar.

At one point one was sat immediately next to a **Sulawesi Brown (Streaked) Flycatcher**.

**Black-crowned (fronted) White-eye *Zosterops atrifrons*:** Recorded at several mountain sites on four days.

**Cream-throated (Halmahera) White-eye *Zosterops atriceps fuscifrons* ME:** An excellent close up before we arrived in Weda, on Halmahera; others were seen near there too. **Taxonomy:** Split by BIA as **Halmahera White-eye, *Z. fuscifrons***.

**GROUND BABBLERS & ALLIES: PELLORNEIDAE**

**Sulawesi Babbler *Pellorneum celebense* SE:** Recorded in Karaenta, Lore Lindu, Tangkoko, Ambang and Tomohon.

**STARLINGS: STURNIDAE**

**Fiery-browed (Flame-browed) Myna (Starling) *Enodes erythrophris* SE:** A wonderfully abundant, and exquisite, highland species encountered regularly at Lore Lindu.

**Finch-billed Myna (Grosbeak Myna) *Scissirostrum dubium* SE:** 100-150 birds were seen in a single tree at Tangkoko.

**Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*:** Encountered repeatedly on Halmahera.

**Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis*:** About twenty birds were encountered on the mangrove boat trip in Tangkoko.

**Short-tailed Starling *Aplonis minor*:** A few were seen near Sedoa, below Lore Lindu.

**Moluccan Starling *Aplonis mysolensis*:** A few were found near Sofifi on Halmahera; another was seen close to Weda.

**Sulawesi (Crested/Short-crested) Myna *Basilornis celebensis* SE:** Multiple, good observations on the Molibagu Road.

**White-necked Myna *Streptocitta albicollis* SE:** Two pairs were seen in North Sulawesi.

**Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus*:** A small group were seen near Makassar.

**THRUSHES & ALLIES: TURDIDAE**

**Sulawesi Thrush *Cataponera turdoides* SE:** A singing bird was tracked down, alongside the Anaso Track.

**Geomalia *Zoothera heinrichi* SE:** A most unexpected turn of events was that a bird had been seen regularly over the former three consecutive days before our arrival in Lore Lindu, around the Lake Taming campsite, lower than they ordinarily occur. We rushed there the next morning, turning up a single bird on the third survey, which hopped around the camp toilets, and seemed nonplussed by the busy weekend crowd, or us for that matter. This bird and at least one other, was seen on each of our three visits to the area, with long, close looks at this rarity being one of the undoubted highlights of the tour! **VOTED AS THE BEST BIRD OF THE ENTIRE TOUR.**

**Rusty-backed (Red-backed) Thrush *Geokichla erythronata* SE:** Unforgettable views of one found by Theo at Tangkoko.

**OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS: MUSCICAPIDAE**

**Sulawesi Brown (Streaked) Flycatcher *Muscicapa sodhii* SE:** This recently described species (2015), was eventually tracked down at two spots in and below Karaenta.

**Matinan (Warbling) Flycatcher *Cyornis sanfordi* SE:** A singing adult showed up during our breakfast on Gunung Ambang. **Taxonomy:** In the BIA guide it is placed in the genus *Eumyias*.

**Blue-fronted (Hoevell's Warbling) Flycatcher *Cyornis hoevelli* SE:** Encountered 2-3 times in Lore Lindu.

**Sulawesi (Jungle) Blue-Flycatcher *Cyornis omissus* SE:** One in the Sedoa Valley, near Lore Lindu; another on Ambang.

**Island Flycatcher (Verditer/Turquoise Warbling-Flycatcher) *Eumylas panayensis*:** Regularly seen in Lore Lindu.

**Great Shortwing (Heinrichia) *Heinrichia calligyna* SE:** Open looks were had of a male late in the day at Lore Lindu.

**Taxonomy:** BIA state this is not a real shortwing at all, renaming it **Heinrichia**, and suggest further splitting to come.

**Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*:** Seen a handful of times in Lore Lindu (Central Sulawesi).

**Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*:** A few were noted around Lake Taming.

**Rufous-throated Flycatcher *Ficedula rufigula* SE:** Hedda, Alasdair and Theo were very pleased to locate this very difficult species at Tomohon.

**Pied Bushchat *Saxicola caprata*:** A few were seen around the grass-owl site near Wuasa (Central Sulawesi).

**HYLOCITREA: HYLOCITREIDAE**

**Hylocitrea *Hylocitrea bonensis* SE:** A group of four were seen by lunchtime, on the Anaso Track.

**Taxonomy:** Formerly known as **Olive-flanked Whistler**, but now considered a monotypic endemic bird family.

**FLOWERPECKERS: DICAEDAE**

**Yellow-sided Flowerpecker *Dicaeum aureolimbatum* SE:** Noted at three lowland sites on Sulawesi.

**Crimson-crowned Flowerpecker *Dicaeum nehrkorni* SE:** One was in the Sedoa Valley, and another at Tomohon.

**Halmahera Flowerpecker *Dicaeum schistaceiceps* ME:** An adult perched up in the treetops during the afternoon at Bukit Limber.

**Gray-sided Flowerpecker *Dicaeum celebicum* SE:** Recorded on seven different days in Sulawesi.

**SUNBIRDS & SPIDERHUNTERS: NECTARINIIDAE**

**Plain-throated (Brown-throated) Sunbird *Anthreptes malacensis*:** A handful were seen North Sulawesi.

**Black Sunbird *Leptocoma sericea*:** Scattered sightings on both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

**Olive-backed (Sahul) Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis*:** Recorded on 5 days of the tour, on both Sulawesi and Halmahera.

**Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja beccarii*:** Recorded in Lore Lindu, and then again on the Molibagu Road.

**Taxonomy:** Due to distinct female plumage (seen in Lore Lindu) and other less striking plumage factors in the males, a suggested possible future endemic species in BIA.

**WEAVERS & ALLIES: PLOCEIDAE**

**Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar*:** A couple were found in the flock of Baya Weavers in Makassar.

**Baya Weaver *Ploceus philippinus*:** A large flock of these introduced birds were found at Makassar Fishponds.

**WAXBILLS & ALLIES: ESTRILDIDAE**

**Black-faced Munia *Lonchura molucca*:** Seen on at least three occasions in North Sulawesi, including at Lake Tondano.

**Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulate*:** A small group was seen at Lake Tondano, North Sulawesi.

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

**Pale-headed Munia *Lonchura pallida*:** Five birds were seen at Makassar fishponds.

**OLD WORLD SPARROWS: PASSERIDAE**

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*:** Recorded on almost all days of the tour, both in Sulawesi and Halmahera.

**Finches, Euphonias, and Allies: Fringillidae**

**Mountain (Indonesian) Serin *Chrysocorythus estherae renatae*:** Rare perched views (thanks to Theo and Idris) were had of a pair along the Anaso Track, including a shockingly bright male.

**MAMMALS****TARSIERS: TARSIIDAE**

**Gurskey's (Spectral) Tarsier *Tarsius spectrumgurskyae* SE:** Four were seen during the daytime on one day in Tangkoko.

**Taxonomy:** In 2017 a taxonomic revision led to this being split from its former position under **Spectral Tarsier**.

**OLD WORLD MONKEYS: CEROPITHECIDAE**

**Moor Macaque *Macaca maura* SE:** Good numbers of tame individuals (and babies) were seen at Karaenta Forest.

**Tonkean Macaque *Macaca tonkeana* SE (H):** Heard in the Sedoa Valley.

**Gorontalo Macaque SE:** At least two were seen along the Molibagu Road in North Sulawesi.

**Celebes (Sulawesi/Black) Crested Macaque *Macaca nigra* SE:** We walked among a troop on 3 days in Tangkoko.

**SQUIRRELS: SCIURIDAE**

**Whitish Dwarf Squirrel *Prosciurillus leucomus* SE:** Several were seen at Tangkoko, in Sulawesi.

**Celebes Dwarf Squirrel *Prosciurillus murinus* SE:**

**CUSCUSES, BRUSHTAIL POSSUMS & ALLIES: PHALANGERIDAE**

**Sulawesi Bear Cuscus *Ailurops ursinus* SE:** Three were seen on our first morning at Tangkoko.

**Ornate Cuscus:** Bengbam, our local guide at Weda Resort, found two in quick succession during our successful **owlet-nightjar** quest.

**OTHERS**

**Asian Water Monitor *Varanus salvator*:** One was seen at the Makassar fishponds.

**Asian House Gecko *Hemidactylus frenatus*:** Recorded regularly throughout the tour.