

WESTERN PACIFIC ODYSSEY

30 March – 27 April 2010

SYSTEMATIC LIST

The taxonomy and English names used in this checklist generally follow *The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World* by James Clements with revisions made where an alternative name/taxonomy is considered more appropriate.

This systematic list was compiled by Chris Collins (based on the figures agreed at the nightly logs) and includes all species recorded between departing Tauranga on 30 March and arriving in Yokohama on 27 April.

Accurately counting seabirds at sea is extremely difficult (eg as one can never be sure which birds are following or revisiting the ship), so the system outlined below was adopted with this also used for the more numerous land birds:

1-10 = actual number seen

11-100 = A

101-1,000 = B

1,001-10,000 = C

10,001-100,000 = D

Non-native introductions are shown in brackets.

BIRDS

Antipodean Albatross *Diomedea antipodensis*

A single individual showing the key characteristics of this species was seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March.

Gibson's Albatross *Diomedea gibsoni*

At least ten were seen in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) with a further four individuals noted the following day. A number of other Wandering Albatrosses were also seen during the first three sea days of the voyage, however, these were too distant to assign to species although in all probability most would have been Gibson's Albatrosses.

Northern Royal Albatross *Diomedea sanfordi*

A single individual in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March was the first WPO record of this species.

Short-tailed Albatross *Phoebastria albatrus*

Ten of these extremely rare albatrosses were seen over three dates (25-27 April). The first was just north of the Bonin Islands and the following day, an adult was found sitting on the sea as the ship passed to the east of Torishima Island. The Captain made a hard 180° turn to starboard and everyone enjoyed great looks as we passed within 50m of this bird. Over the rest of the day another four individuals were found, however, one of the biggest surprises of the voyage were the four birds which were seen as we cruised north from Miyake-jima towards Yokohama on the morning of 27 April.

Laysan Albatross *Phoebastria immutabilis*

This species can be tricky along the WPO route, however, a total of five individuals were seen with two coming close to the ship during a late afternoon chumming session north of the Bonin Islands on 25 April. Two days later, three were recorded north of Miyake-jima and at one point it was possible to see all three species of North Pacific albatross simultaneously – a WPO first !!

Black-footed Albatross *Phoebastria nigripes*

The first sightings of this species were on 25 April with eleven individuals logged during a late afternoon chumming session east of the Bonin Islands. The following day a low A was recorded as the ship passed Torishima with six noted on 27 April as the ship cruised passed Miyake-jima and on to Yokohama.

Campbell Albatross *Thalassarche impavida*

Five were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March with a further individual the following day. The characteristic honey-coloured eyes of this species were well seen on some of the closer birds.

White-capped Albatross *Thalassarche steadi*

A single bird was seen shortly after leaving Tauranga on 30 March, with two seen the following day in the Hauraki Gulf.

Buller's Albatross *Thalassarche bulleri*

At least three individuals were seen in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March).

Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus*

A new species for the WPO with at least two birds in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March.

Northern Giant Petrel *Macronectes halli*

Another species not previously recorded on a WPO expedition with two seen in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March).

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Yet another new species for the WPO with a lone individual seen north of Torishima on 26 April.

Beck's Petrel *Pseudobulweria becki*

One of the major specialities of the voyage, with at least six individuals of this extremely poorly known species seen off New Ireland on 15 April.

At one stage, a Beck's Petrel was seen flying in close association with a Wedge-tailed Shearwater and a Tahiti Petrel and it was possible to appreciate that the Beck's was significantly smaller than the Tahiti (also having a different jizz) and was closer in size to the shearwater.

Tahiti Petrel *Pseudobulweria rostrata*

This species was seen on a regular basis from 2-10 April inclusive (close to Norfolk Island – Rennell Island) with the highest counts being the days after leaving both Norfolk Island and New Caledonia when A was logged on both occasions. Smaller numbers (an average of three birds per day) were recorded on the other days.

The only other sightings of this species were around Bougainville and New Ireland (14 and 15 April) when two birds were seen on both days.

Grey-faced Petrel *Pterodroma gouldi*

Good numbers were seen on the two sea days between the Hauraki Gulf and Norfolk Island with B logged on both 1 and 2 April. Smaller numbers were seen shortly after leaving Tauranga (30 March), in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) and after departing Norfolk Island (3 April).

Kermadec Petrel *Pterodroma neglecta*

A total of thirteen birds were seen with nine on the two sea days after leaving the Hauraki Gulf (1-2 April) and a further three individuals on the day north of Norfolk Island (4 April). The final sighting was three weeks later (25 April) when a single bird was seen near the Bonin Islands.

White-necked Petrel *Pterodroma cervicalis*

Seen on a daily basis from the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) until we reached New Caledonia (5 April). The highest counts were on 1 and 2 April (the two sea days between the Hauraki Gulf and Norfolk Island) when A was logged on both days. The final sighting was of a lone individual as the ship approached New Caledonia on 5 April.

Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii*

Only seen in small numbers with two individuals in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) and a further five sighted two days later on day 2 to Norfolk Island (2 April).

Gould's Petrel *Pterodroma leucoptera*

Seen daily between 4-7 April (day 1 to New Caledonia – day 1 to Rennell) with the highest counts being around the southern end of New Caledonia (5-6 April) when B was logged.

Collared Petrel *Pterodroma brevipes*

The first sighting on WPO 2010 was near a seamount which lies within Australian waters north of Norfolk Island where a "classic" dark morph bird was seen and photographed on 4 April. At the time, it was believed this might be the first photographed record of a dark bird within Australian territorial waters, however, a record from 2007 has apparently recently been submitted to the Birds Australia Records Committee.

Five dark and intermediate plumage birds were then seen on 7 April (day 1 to Rennell Island), however, subsequent analysis of photos confirmed that a number of pale phase birds were also encountered during this period.

It is worth noting that separating pale phase Collared Petrels from Gould's Petrels is trickier than is suggested in some of the literature and is best done from photos.

Bonin Petrel *Pterodroma hypoleuca*

The most northerly of the *Pterodromas* which are regularly seen on the WPO with the first sightings being two days south of the Bonin Islands (23 April) when four were logged. Six individuals were seen the following day, however, the largest numbers were in the vicinity of the Bonin Islands with B recorded on 25 April. The final sightings were the following day when two birds were noted.

Black-winged Petrel *Pterodroma nigripennis*

Encountered on a daily basis from the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) until the day we arrived at New Caledonia (5 April) with A logged on all dates except 31 March and 5 April when only individual birds were seen.

Fairy Prion *Pachyptila turtur*

A low A was logged in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March with a single bird then seen the following day.

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulweria*

A total of nine birds were seen across six widely spaced dates with the first being a couple hours after leaving Honiara on Guadalcanal (12 April). Six individuals were then seen between 16-18 April (days south of Chuuk and morning at sea prior to reach this archipelago), with the final sightings being single birds on both of the two sea days south of the Bonin Islands (23 and 24 April).

(Parkinson's) Black Petrel *Procellaria parkinsoni*

A high A was recorded in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) with seven birds noted over the subsequent two days.

Streaked Shearwater *Calonectris leucomelas*

The first sightings of this species were off New Ireland on 15 April where A was logged. Only one bird (20 April: day 1 to Japan) was then seen before reaching the Bonin Islands where five were seen on 25 April. On the subsequent two days, this species was common with A on 26 April (at sea passed Torishima) and B on 27 April (at sea passed Miyake-jima).

Flesh-footed Shearwater *Puffinus carneipes*

This species was seen on seven dates, although the sightings were widely spread across the voyage. Reasonable numbers (A) were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March, with six seen the previous evening shortly after leaving Tauranga and a lone individual on 2 April (day 2 to Norfolk Island). The only other sightings were during the latter stages of the expedition with daily sightings between 24-27 April inclusive (day south of the Bonin Islands – Yokohama) although the maximum day count was only four birds.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus pacificus*

This species was the most frequently encountered on the voyage with sightings on 21 dates. The first records were a couple of days north of the Hauraki Gulf (2 April: A) and birds were then recorded on a daily basis until we reached Chuuk (18 April) with A or B recorded on the majority of dates. There was then a period of four days when the only sightings were seven individuals on 20 April (day 1 to Japan) but birds were then seen again from 23-25 April inclusive (the two days south of the Bonin Islands and around these islands).

During the first half of the trip, dark phase birds predominated, however, once we crossed the Equator almost all the birds were pale.

Buller's Shearwater *Puffinus bulleri*

Only seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 1 April when a low B was recorded and the previous evening after leaving Tauranga where A was logged.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Five individuals were recorded in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March with the only other definite sightings being on 22 April (day 3 to Japan) when 2 were noted and 27 April (Miyake-jima to Yokohama) where four were seen.

Short-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus tenuirostris*

This species was observed on thirteen dates with the majority of records falling into two discrete blocks. There were daily sightings from shortly before the ship arrived in New Caledonia (5 April) until the day before Rennell Island (9 April) and birds were then seen on six of the seven days between 21-27 April inclusive.

The highest counts were between Torishima and Yokohama with C (ie 1,000-10,000) encountered on 26 April (near Torishima) and D (ie 10,000+) the following day during the journey from Miyake-jima to Yokohama. On these latter days, many of the birds were migrating northwards in flocks which sometimes included several hundred individuals.

Fluttering Shearwater *Puffinus gavia*

Two birds were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March with A logged the previous evening shortly after leaving Tauranga.

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*

The only sightings were close to Norfolk Island, with six individuals in the late afternoon of 2 April as the ship approached the island and three the following afternoon as we sailed on for New Caledonia.

These birds are presumably of the race *assimilis* which breeds on Norfolk Island, however, it is interesting to note that according to Margaret Christian who wrote the field guide to the Birds of Norfolk Island, there are summer and winter breeding Little Shearwaters on the island which vary so markedly in size that they require different size leg rings !!

Atoll ("Tropical") Shearwater *Puffinus (bailloni) dichrous*

First encountered on the two sea days south of Rennell Island with nine individuals on 8 April and six the following day. There were then two further sightings whilst in Solomon waters with one near Makira Island on 11 April and a further bird off Kolombangara on 13 April. Birds were then seen again close to the reef entrance at Chuuk (18 April: 6; 19 April: 19) with the only other sightings being whilst passing the North Mariana Islands on 24 April where a low A was recorded.

Although the Audubon's/Little/Tropical Shearwater complex has recently been split by several authorities, it seems unlikely that the situation has been fully resolved with the name 'Atoll shearwater' used to describe the birds seen on this voyage, ie to differentiate them from those in the Indian Ocean. Even this is probably a simplification of the situation, however, as there do seem to be visual differences between some of the populations seen on the expedition.

Heinroth's Shearwater *Puffinus heinrothi*

An extremely poorly known species and one of the star seabirds of the WPO with ten seen a few miles offshore from Kolombangara on the morning of 13 April. Unlike all previous expeditions, none were seen off Bougainville or New Ireland despite the route being very similar to prior years.

Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

This species was seen irregularly throughout the voyage with a total of 23 birds noted across twelve dates. The first sightings was two birds in the Hauraki Gulf (31 March) with the final record being a lone individual a day south of the Bonin Islands (24 April). The typical number seen on any one day was one or two birds although eight were seen the day after leaving New Caledonia (7 April).

New Zealand Storm-petrel *Oceanites maorianus*

Five individuals of this recently rediscovered species were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March.

"New Caledonian Storm-petrel"

Following the sighting of a bird resembling New Zealand Storm-petrel approximately 20 miles off the coast of New Caledonia on WPO 2008, a similar looking bird was seen in the same area on 5 April 2010. When a short article about the 2008 sighting was published in the British magazine *Birding World* (by Steve Howell and Chris Collins) reference was made to the fact that some observers felt the bird was too large for New Zealand Storm-petrel. The 2010 sighting reconfirmed this view, as the bird was seen flying in close proximity with a Wilson's Storm-petrel and appeared to "dwarf" it (ie it appeared to have a significantly longer wingspan and body length).

Although freshly fledged storm-petrels can have a greater bulk than adults, this would not explain what was seen in the field by 30+ observers or the underwing pattern which seemed too dark for New Zealand Storm-petrel.

At the time of writing (3 May), the identity of this bird remains unresolved and whilst some have suggested the bird is a juvenile New Zealand Storm-petrel (which would itself be a highly significant record), there are a number of compelling reasons for believing this suggestion is not correct.

White-faced Storm-petrel *Pelagodroma marina*

Two birds were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March.

White-bellied Storm-petrel *Fregatta grallaria*

A single individual was well seen on 3 April as we cruised north from Norfolk Island (3 April). It is interesting to note that this species was not recorded on the first two WPO expeditions but 2010 was the second year in succession that it has been seen.

Polynesian Storm-petrel *Nesofregatta fuliginosa*

A single individual on 8 April (day 2 to Rennell) was the only sighting of the expedition.

Band-rumped Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma castro*

A single bird seen north of Torishima Island (26 April) was a new bird for the WPO.

Leach's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

This species was seen on a daily basis between 22-26 April (2 sea days south of Bonin Islands – Torishima) with a total of twelve birds seen with the highest daily count being three individuals. The only other sighting was a day south of Chuuk (17 April).

Tristram's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma tristrami*

The first sighting of this species was a day south of the Bonin Islands (24 April) when a single bird was logged. The following day a low B was recorded (ie 100+ individuals) as the ship cruised past the Bonin Islands but only three birds were seen on the following sea day (ie passing Torishima on 26 April). Huge numbers were, however, seen during a two hour period north of Miyake-jima (27 April) with the count being estimated at a high C (ie c10,000 individuals).

Matsudaira's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma matsudairae*

This species was seen in much lower numbers than Tristram's Storm-petrel with records on five dates (21-25 April inclusive). The highest counts (a low A) were on 24 and 25 April (around the Bonin Islands and the sea day south of there) with the numbers seen on the previous three days all being in single figures.

Common Diving-petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix*

Four birds were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March with five noted the previous evening as the ship departed from Tauranga.

Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda*

The first sighting was a day north of the Hauraki Gulf (1 April: 1), with birds then seen on the subsequent three dates including a high A (ie approximately 100 individuals) around Norfolk Island.

It was then more than two weeks until the next record, a single individual on 21 April (2 days north of Chuuk) with the only other birds (three individuals) being offshore from the North Mariana Islands on 23 and 24 April.

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus*

A total of thirty one birds were seen across eleven widely spaced dates however, there were only two days when more than three birds were noted, with the highest counts being eight birds on 8 April (day 2 to Rennell Island) and four individuals around Chuuk on 19 April. The first sighting was on 4 April (day 1 to New Caledonia) with the final bird being on 23 April (day 4 to Japan).

Australian Gannet *Morus serrator*

Only seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 31 March where B was logged and shortly after departing Tauranga (30 March) when three were observed.

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*

This species was recorded on seven widely spread dates during the voyage with the largest numbers (A) being close to Norfolk Island (2-4 April). Small numbers were then seen during the journey from New Caledonia to Rennell with the final sighting being off the North Mariana Islands on 23 April (2 sea days south of the Bonin Islands).

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*

Seen on eleven dates between 7-25 April (day 1 north of New Caledonia – Bonin Islands) although on most dates only a single figure count was recorded. The highest numbers were close to Rennell on 10 April when A was logged.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*

This species was first encountered on the first sea day after leaving Noumea, New Caledonia (when nine birds were logged) and was then seen on fourteen subsequent dates with the final birds (seven individuals) being near the Bonin Islands on 25 April. The highest count was close to Rennell on 10 April when A was logged, with all other day counts being in single figures.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

As the ship approached Yokohama (27 April) a number of cormorants were seen with at least six being positively identified as Great Cormorants.

Japanese Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capillatus*

At least nine birds were seen as the ship approached Yokohama on 27 April.

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*

A small colony was seen as the ship pulled away from Tauranga (30 March) with two seen the following day on the Maori Rocks in the Hauraki Gulf.

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*

This species was seen on three widely spread dates during the first half of the expedition. A single individual was seen shortly after leaving the wharf at Tauranga (30 March), three were then seen on New Caledonia (6 April), with the final record being on the river at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (12 April) where this species is seemingly only a vagrant.

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*

Although many of the more distant frigatebirds seen during the voyage were not identified to species, there were confirmed sightings of Great Frigatebird on five dates with the first records (two birds) over Norfolk Island on 3 April and the final individual being off New Ireland on 15 April. The highest concentrations were around Rennell Island where A was logged on 10 April.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*

All sightings of this species were during the middle third of the trip with the first confirmed sighting being a single bird on the sea day south of Rennell Island. Over the next week, Lesser Frigatebirds were seen on five days (ie through the Solomon Islands to a day north of New Ireland) with the highest count being around Rennell Island on 10 April when A was logged.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Three birds were seen as the ship approached cruised into the Yokohama/Tokyo Bay on 27 April.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

The only sighting of the expedition was a lone bird shortly after the ship left the wharf at Tauranga on 30 March.

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*

Only recorded on Norfolk Island where three were seen on 3 April.

Pacific Reef Heron *Egretta sacra*

Seen on five dates with one bird on New Caledonia (6 April), two on Makira on 11 April and then single birds on Kolombangara (13 April) and on both days on Chuuk (18 and 19 April).

Rufous Night-Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*

This species was only recorded on Chuuk with four seen from the ship in the early evening of 18 April as we awaited clearance from Immigration and Customs.

Yellow Bittern *Ixobrychus sinensis*

A single individual was recorded on Tol South (19 April).

Australian Ibis *Threskiornis molucca*

This species was only recorded on Rennell with A logged on 10 April.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*

Two were seen on Kolombangara on 13 April with single bird then noted on Chuuk on 19 April.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

This species was seen on three of the islands visited in the Solomons with two on Rennell (10 April), six on Makira (11 April) and five on Kolombangara (13 April). The only other records were three birds on New Caledonia on 6 April.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*

Three birds were noted at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April, with at least six then seen the following day during the shore excursion on Kolombangara.

Black(-eared) Kite *Milvus migrans*

The only sightings on the voyage were of three birds as the ship cruised through the Yokohama/Tokyo Bay on 27 April.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

This species was only seen during the shore excursion to Riviere Bleue on New Caledonia with five logged on 6 April.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur Indus*

This species was seen on all of the four landings in the Solomons with a total of thirteen individuals logged. Single individuals were also seen on both days on New Caledonia (5-6 April).

Solomon Islands Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus sanfordi*

This spectacular Solomon Islands endemic was seen on three of the landings in the Solomons with a single individual on Makira (11 April), three the following day at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal with the final sightings being two birds during the shore excursion on Kolombangara (13 April).

Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*

The only record was of a single bird on Norfolk Island on 3 April.

Variable Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster*

Two were seen on Guadalcanal on 12 April with a single bird the following day on Kolombangara.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*

Four on Rennell on 10 April.

Pied Goshawk *Accipiter albogularis*

The only sightings were on Makira on 11 April where two were seen.

New Caledonia Goshawk *Accipiter haplochrous*

A single individual of this New Caledonian endemic was well seen a short distance from the entrance to Riviere Bleue (6 April).

Australian Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*

A total of four individuals were seen during the shore excursion on Norfolk Island (3 April).

[**California Quail** *Callipepla californica*]

A common introduction on Norfolk Island where A was logged on 3 April.

[**Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus*]

Another well established introduced species on Norfolk Island with A recorded (3 April).

Roviana Rail *Gallirallus rovianae*

This species which was only described in the early 1990s proved to be trickier than usual with the only sighting being a lone individual which was seen by some of the group during the shore excursion on Kolombangara on 13 April.

Purple Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*

Two individuals were seen on Norfolk Island (3 April) with the only other sightings being on Kolombangara where three were recorded on 13 April.

Kagu *Rhynochetos jubatus*

One of the key 'landbirds' of the voyage with at least five of these extraordinary birds seen at Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 6 April.

South Island Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus finschi*

A large flock of over 100 birds (B) was seen on the wharf at Tauranga on 30 March.

Variable Oystercatcher *Haematopus unicolor*

Approximately seventy individuals were seen on the wharf as the ship sailed from Tauranga on 30 March.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

The only sighting of the voyage was a single bird on Chuuk on 19 April.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Seen on four widely spaced dates with a lone bird on Norfolk Island (3 April), three on New Caledonia (6 April), the same number on Chuuk (18 April) and a final bird at sea north of Torishima (26 April).

Bristle-thighed Curlew *Numenius tahitiensis*

One of the most extraordinary at sea records on any of the four WPO expeditions was a single Bristled-thighed Curlew which was seen well and photographed as it flew passed the ship on the morning of 18 April. The bird circled the vessel for several minutes and then continued north. At the time, the ship was approximately fifty miles south of Chuuk with the position being 06 26N 152 14E.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A single bird was seen on Chuuk on 19 April.

Wandering Tattler *Heterosceles incanus*

Four on Norfolk Island on 3 April with single birds then seen on both days on Chuuk (18-19 April).

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Seen on the same islands as the previous species, with eight on Norfolk Island and two on the first day on Chuuk (18 April) and four the following day.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Approximately fifty birds were seen off New Ireland whilst chumming for Beck's Petrel on 15 April with the only other sightings being on the sea day near Torishima where a low A was logged.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Only seen at the very end of the voyage, with two birds on the sea day off Torishima (26 April) and three the following day between Miyake-jima and Yokohama.

South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki*

Three of these long distant migrants were seen during the latter stages of the voyage with the first individual a day south of the Bonin Islands (24 April). Single birds were then seen on 26 and 27 April (Torishima and Miyake-jima to Yokohama).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

The most frequently encountered Skua species with a total of twenty eight birds seen across fifteen dates. The first individual was on the first sea day after leaving New Caledonia (7 April) and the last a few hours before arriving at Yokohama. The highest count was a day south of Rennell (9 April) when five were logged, however, on the majority of other dates when this species was recorded, only one or two individuals were seen.

During the latter stages of the expedition, 'Poms' were seen "knocking down" both a Bonin Petrel and a Streaked Shearwater, presumably to feed on the birds themselves rather than making them regurgitate what they had eaten.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

This species was only encountered during the second half of the voyage with a total of four birds seen. The first sighting was a day south of Chuuk with the other three individuals between 23-27 April (2 days south of the Bonin Island – Yokohama).

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

A total of thirteen Long-tailed Skuas were recorded across eight dates. Only one individual was seen during the first half of the expedition (2 April: a day south of Norfolk Island) with the final sightings (two birds) being between Miyake-jima and Yokohama on 27 April.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

The only records of the species were as the ship left the wharf at Tauranga on 30 March.

Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*

Five individuals were seen as the ship passed Miyake-jima and headed for Yokohama on 27 April.

Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*

This species was reasonably numerous (A) around the harbour in Noumea, New Caledonia on both 5 and 6 April.

Red-billed Gull *Larus scopulinus*

This New Zealand endemic was seen as the ship departed Tauranga on 30 March (where A was logged), with B recorded the following day in the Hauraki Gulf.

Vega Gull *Larus vegae*

This species was reasonably numerous as the ship cruised through the Yokohama/Tokyo Bay on 27 April with A logged.

Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus*

Only seen at the very end of the expedition with three birds seen in the Yokohama/Tokyo Bay on 27 April.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

Two individuals were recorded shortly after the ship left Tauranga on 30 March.

Great Crested Tern *Sterna bergi*

This species was seen close to the majority of islands between New Caledonia and Chuuk with a total of thirty seven individuals logged across nine dates.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*

The first sighting of this species was on Rennell (10 April) where five were recorded, with three off Kolombangara on 13 April. The only others were around Chuuk where a low A was logged on 18 April and three were seen the following day.

White-fronted Tern *Sterna striata*

Five birds were seen as the ship left Tauranga on 30 March.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

This species was only recorded on two days, with three off New Ireland on 15 April and a single bird shortly before reaching Yokohama on 27 April.

Fairy Tern *Sterna nereis*

The only sighting was a single individual close to Noumea, New Caledonia on 5 April.

Grey-backed Tern *Sterna lunata*

This species rarely approaches ships and the only confirmed sightings were five off Kolombangara on 13 April, with a further three individuals off Bougainville the following day.

Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*

This species was encountered far less frequently than Sooty Tern with sightings on only four dates. The highest count was as the ship cruised to Kolombangara on the morning of 13 April when a low A was logged with two seen the previous day off Guadalcanal. The only other sightings were on day 2 to Rennell (8 April: 2) and off New Ireland (15 April: 2).

Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata*

One of the most frequently encountered seabirds on the voyage with sightings on twenty dates. This species was recorded on a more-or-less daily basis from a day south of Norfolk Island (2 April: 1) until the Bonin Islands (25 April: 1) with either A or B recorded on twelve days and single figure counts on the other dates.

Black Noddy *Anous minutes*

This Noddy was encountered on an irregular basis from a day south of Norfolk Island (2 April) until two days south of the Bonin Islands with sightings on eleven widely scattered dates. The highest counts were around Norfolk Island and Chuuk (islands where this species breeds) with B logged at both locations (3 and 19 April).

Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus*

This species was first seen around Norfolk Island on 3 April and last recorded off the Bonin Islands on 25 April. Sightings were spread across fourteen dates with the highest number around Chuuk where B was logged on 19 April.

Grey Ternlet *Procelsterna albivitta*

This species breeds in the Hauraki Gulf and on islets just offshore from Norfolk Island and was seen on a daily basis between these two locations (31 March-3 April). The highest count was around the Maori Rocks in the Hauraki Gulf where A was logged, with a total of fourteen birds seen over the subsequent three days.

White Tern *Gygis alba*

Sightings of this species were divided into two discrete blocks with birds seen around Norfolk Island and the days either side of visiting that island (2-4 April) and then on a daily basis from 18-24 April (Chuuk – day south of the Bonin Islands). The highest counts were at Norfolk Island and on Chuuk with B logged at both locations.

Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus*

A new bird for the WPO with at least twenty seen in the Yokohama/Tokyo Bay on the morning of 27 April.

Japanese Murrelet *Synthliboramphus wumizusume*

Another of the major seabird specialities of the voyage and the WPO ended on a high with at least seventy five of these threatened alcids seen as the ship passed west of Miyake-jima on the morning of 27 April.

Rhinoceros Auklet *Cerorhinca monocerata*

Another new species for the WPO with twenty four logged in the Yokohama/Tokyo Bay (27 April). This species was the final highlight of a spectacular morning which included three species of alcids, all three North Pacific Albatrosses and thousands of Tristram's Storm-petrels.

Metallic Pigeon *Columba vitiensis*

A low A was logged during the excursion to Mount Koghi, New Caledonia on the afternoon of 5 April.

[Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*]

This Asian introduction was seen on New Caledonia on both days with a low A recorded on 5 April.

Mackinlay's Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia mackinlayi*

This species was uncharacteristically inconspicuous compared with previous visits to the Solomons and was only seen on Rennell (10 April: 6) and at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (12 April: 2).

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

Three birds were seen in the Botanical Gardens on Norfolk Island on 3 April with the only other sighting being a single bird at Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 6 April.

Stephan's Dove *Chalcophaps stephani*

A new species for the WPO list with a single bird seen at Mount Austin (12 April).

Caroline Islands Ground-dove *Gallicolumba kubaryi*

This species is endemic to the Caroline Islands and was seen on the excursion to Tol South and by those who explored Japanese Gun on Chuuk (4 April) with a total of four individuals recorded.

Bronze Ground-dove *Gallicolumba beccarii*

A single bird was seen on the excursion to Mount Austin on 12 April.

Superb Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus superbus*

Two birds were seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (12 April) with a single individual recorded the following day on Kolombangara.

Crimson-crowned Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus porphyraceus*

Reasonably numerous on Chuuk with A logged on 4 April and a few seen from the ship as we awaited clearance on the late afternoon of the previous day.

Silver-capped Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus richardsii*

This species is endemic to Rennell and a few nearby islets, however, it is fairly common with A recorded on 10 April.

Claret-breasted Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus viridis*

Another range-restricted fruit-dove which was seen on Guadalcanal (7 birds) on 12 April and Kolombangara (2 birds) on 13 April.

Cloven-feathered Dove *Drepanoptila holosericea*

This New Caledonian endemic can be tricky to find, however, two were seen on the afternoon excursion to Mount Koghi on 5 April, with two others seen the following day at Riviere Bleue National Park.

Pacific Imperial-pigeon *Ducula pacifica*

This species was only seen on Rennell (10 April) with a low A logged.

Red-knobbed Imperial-pigeon *Ducula rubricera*

This impressive looking pigeon was seen on Makira, Guadalcanal and Kolombangara (11-13 April) with two birds on each of the first two islands and a low A logged on Kolombangara.

Chestnut-bellied Imperial-pigeon *Ducula brenchleyi*

This poorly-known species is endemic to just three islands in the Solomons (plus a few islets) with three birds seen during the shore excursion on Makira on 11 April.

New Caledonian Imperial-pigeon *Ducula goliath*

A single individual was well seen at Riviere Bleue on 6 April.

Ducorps' Cockatoo *Cacatua ducorpsii*

This species was seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April where a low A was logged, with a single bird recorded the following day on Kolombangara.

Cardinal Lory *Chalcopsitta cardinalis*

This brilliantly coloured parrot was seen on Guadalcanal (12 April: 3) and Kolombangara (13 April: A).

Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*

This species was common in downtown Noumea, New Caledonia (6 April) and was also seen on Makira and Guadalcanal (A on all dates).

Yellow-bibbed Lory *Lorius chlorocercus*

A Solomon Islands endemic which was seen on both Rennell and Guadalcanal (10 and 12 April) with A logged at Mount Austin and just a single bird on Rennell.

Duchess Lorikeet *Charmosyna margarethae*

Two of these parrots were seen on Kolombangara on 13 April.

Finsch's Pygmy-parrot *Micropsitta finschii*

Although this species is reasonably numerous in the Solomons, its tiny size can make it difficult to spot, however, it was seen on three of the islands we visited in the archipelago with the highest count being on Rennell where a low A was recorded (10 April).

Horned Parakeet *Eunymphicus cornutus*

This New Caledonia endemic can be tricky to find at Riviere Bleue, however, three birds were seen during the excursion there on 6 April. Three individuals were also seen at Mount Koghi the previous afternoon.

New Caledonian Parakeet *Cyanoramphus saissetti*

Another species which is not found on every WPO but four were well seen during the visit to Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 6 April.

Norfolk Island Parakeet *Cyanoramphus cookii*

Three individuals were seen during the visit to the Botanical Gardens on Norfolk Island (3 April).

[Crimson Rosella *Platycercus elegans*]

A reasonably common introduced species on Norfolk Island with a low A logged on 3 April.

Singing Parrot *Geoffroyus heteroclitus*

Seen in small numbers (1-4 birds) on Rennell, Guadalcanal and Kolombangara (10, 12, 13 April).

Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*

Another stunningly beautiful bird which was recorded on Makira, Guadalcanal and Kolombangara (11- 13 April) with the highest count being on Kolombangara where a low A was logged.

Shining Bronze-cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*

A single bird was seen on Rennell on 10 April was the only record for the expedition.

Buff-headed Coucal *Centropus milo*

This raucous Coucal, which is endemic to the Solomon Islands, makes an almost mammalian-like call and was seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April with three logged during the morning excursion. The following afternoon six were seen on Kolombangara.

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*

This species was seen in reasonable numbers on the two days ashore on New Caledonia (5-6 April) and then on all the islands visited in the Solomons with A generally logged.

White-rumped Swiftlet *Aerodramus spodiopygius*

Reasonably numerous on Kolombangara (13 April) with A recorded.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis*

Seen on all the islands visited in the Solomon with the highest count being on Rennell where A was logged.

Caroline Islands Swiftlet *Aerodramus inquietus*

This extremely common swiftlet is endemic to the Caroline Islands and was seen on Chuuk on both 18 and 19 April.

Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea*

This spectacular bird was seen on Rennell (10 April: 2), Guadalcanal (12 April: 2) and Kolombangara (13 April: 4).

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two birds of the race *salomonensis* were seen on Kolombangara on 13 April with a single sighting the previous day on Guadalcanal. These birds differ markedly from the birds in Europe having blue ear-coverts and richer purple-blue upperparts.

Ultramarine Kingfisher *Todirhamphus leucopygius*

Undoubtedly the best views of any WPO expedition with the entire group getting excellent looks at a pair of this tricky Solomon Islands endemic at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April.

Collared Kingfisher *Todirhamphus chloris*

Seen on all islands visited in the Solomons: Rennell (10 April: 3), Makira (11 April: 2), Guadalcanal (12 April: 1) and Kolombangara (13 April: 3).

Beach Kingfisher *Todirhamphus saurophaga*

A single bird was seen on Makira on 11 April.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todirhamphus sanctus*

A low A was logged during the shore excursion on Norfolk Island (3 April) with a total of three birds also seen on New Caledonia (5-6 April). The only other sighting was on Rennell where two were recorded on 10 April.

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

Only seen in the Solomons with two on Makira (11 April) and three at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal (12 April).

Blyth's Hornbill *Aceros plicatus*

At least six of these spectacular birds were seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April although getting good views was often quite challenging given the tight forest canopy. A further two individuals were then seen the following day on Kolombangara.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*

Seen on four dates with a single bird on New Caledonia (6 April) and then on Makira (11 April: A) and Guadalcanal (12 April: 2). The final sightings were on Chuuk on 18 April where two were recorded on 18 April.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*

A single bird was seen at sea south of Norfolk Island on the afternoon of 2 April with A logged ashore on the island the following day.

Melanesian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina caledonica*

Two individuals were seen at Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 6 April with a single bird the previous afternoon during the excursion to Mount Koghi. The only other sighting was of a lone bird on Kolombangara (13 April).

Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina lineate*

This cuckoo-shrike was the most frequently encountered during our shore excursions in the Solomon Islands and was seen on all the islands which were visited. A was logged on Rennell and Kolombangara (10 and 13 April), with 3 birds seen on Makira (11 April) and two on Guadalcanal (12 April).

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*

As with the above species, this cuckoo-shrike was only seen in the Solomons with six birds at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April and eight logged the following day on Kolombangara.

New Caledonian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina analis*

This New Caledonian endemic was seen at Riviere Bleue on 6 April with three birds found.

Cicadabird *Coracina tenuirostris*

Only recorded on Guadalcanal (12 April) where two individuals were seen at Mount Austin.

Solomon Islands Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina holopolia*

As its name suggests, this species is endemic to the Solomon Islands, however, it was only seen during the shore excursion to Mount Austin on Guadalcanal (12 April) where three birds were found.

Long-tailed Triller *Lalage leucopyga*

Three individuals were seen at Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 6 April with a single bird also logged on Makira (11 April).

[Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*]

Two individuals of this Asian introduction were seen around Noumea, New Caledonia on 5 April.

[Blackbird *Turdus merula*]

A reasonably common introduced species on Norfolk Island where A was logged on 3 April.

Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus*

The only island on the WPO itinerary where this highly variable species can be found is Rennell where the birds resemble 'mini Blackbirds'. During our shore excursion on 10 April, at least two individuals were seen along the forest road north of the landing site.

[Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*]

This species was introduced onto Norfolk Island and two were seen there during the shore excursion on 3 April.

Caroline Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus syrinx*

This species is endemic to the Caroline Islands and was seen in reasonable numbers on both Weno and Tol South, Chuuk on 19 April.

Willie-wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Seen on both Makira (11 April: 6) and Kolombangara (13 April: 2).

White-winged Fantail *Rhipidura cockerelli*

A Solomon Islands endemic which was recorded at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April where three birds were seen.

Rennell Fantail *Rhipidura rennelliana*

Endemic to Rennell, this species was seen well with a low A logged during the shore excursion on 10 April.

Grey Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa*

This species was seen on Norfolk Island (3 April: A) and on both days ashore on New Caledonia (Mount Koghi: 4; Riviere Bleue: 6).

Streaked Fantail *Rhipidura spilodera*

This New Caledonian endemic was seen at both Mount Koghi (5 April: 2) and Riviere Bleue (6 April: A).

Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons*

This species was only found on Makira where three were seen on 11 April.

Southern Shrikebill *Clytorhynchus pachycephaloides*

Two individuals of this regional endemic (which is only found on New Caledonia and Vanuatu) were seen at Mount Koghi on 5 April, with a similar number seen the following day at Riviere Bleue National Park.

Rennell Shrikebill *Clytorhynchus hamlini*

This Rennell endemic is common (low A) and was seen well during our shore excursion on 10 April.

Chuuk Monarch *Metabolus rugensis*

Two males and one female of this highly range-restricted and endangered species were seen on Tol South, Chuuk on 18 April.

Chestnut-bellied Monarch *Monarcha castaneiventris*

A Solomon Islands endemic which was seen on both Makira (11 April: 8) and at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (12 April: 2).

White-capped Monarch *Monarcha richardsii*

This monarch is only found in the New Georgia group of islands (including Kolombangara) and four individuals were seen on 13 April during our afternoon shore excursion.

Oceanic Flycatcher *Myiagra oceanica*

This Micronesian endemic is relatively common on Chuuk and A was logged on Weno and Tol South on 19 April.

Steel-blue Flycatcher *Myiagra ferrocyanea*

This Solomon Islands endemic was seen on Guadalcanal (12 April: 3) and on Kolombangara (13 April: 4).

Ochre-headed (Makira) Flycatcher *Myiagra cervinicauda*

This species is endemic to Makira and four individuals were seen during the shore excursion on 11 April.

Melanesian (New Caledonian) Flycatcher *Myiagra caledonica*

This species was seen at both Mount Koghi (5 April: 1) and Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia (6 April: 2). It is also found on Rennell and during the shore excursion there, a single bird was seen on 10 April.

Pacific Robin *Petroica multicolor*

Five of these brightly coloured birds were seen on Norfolk Island on 3 April.

Yellow-bellied Robin *Eopsaltria flaviventris*

This New Caledonian endemic was recorded at both Mount Koghi (5 April: 1) and Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia (6 April: 6).

Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis*

At least six individuals of the highly distinctive (and very drab) subspecies of this bird were seen in the Botanical Gardens on Norfolk Island on 3 April. The only other island where this species was seen during the voyage was Makira (11 April: 2) where the males are more typical having a vivid black and yellow plumage.

New Caledonian Whistler *Pachycephala caledonica*

This endemic is generally found in more forested areas than the next species (ie Rufous Whistler) and a low A was logged following the visit to Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 6 April. Two birds were also seen the previous day at Mount Koghi.

Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*

The only records were during the shore excursion to Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia where two individuals were seen on 6 April.

Norfolk Gerygone *Gerygone modesta*

This endemic is reasonably common in the Botanical Gardens on Norfolk Island with a low A logged on 3 April.

Fan-tailed Gerygone *Gerygone flavolateralis*

Seen in reasonable numbers on both days on New Caledonia with five at Mount Koghi on the afternoon of 5 April and a low A during the excursion to Riviere Bleue the following day.

Rennell (Fan-tailed) Gerygone *Gerygone (flavolateralis) citrina*

A reasonably numerous bird on Rennell with A logged during the shore excursion on 10 April.

Although this bird is generally lumped with the Gerygones on New Caledonia (and not treated as a sixth Rennell endemic), visually it is quite different, eg pale eyes and a mainly yellow breast compared with the birds on New Caledonia which have dark eyes and less yellow on the underparts. During playback experiments on Rennell in 2008, it was also noted that the Rennell birds did not respond to recordings from New Caledonia providing further evidence that this population should potentially be considered as a separate species.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis*

Only seen in the Solomon Islands with six at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April and a similar number on Kolombangara the following day.

Midget Flowerpecker *Dicaeum aeneum*

This Solomon Islands endemic is not uncommon at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal and A was recorded on 12 April, although its tiny size meant getting good views was often challenging.

Mottled Flowerpecker *Dicaeum tristrami*

Only a single individual of this Makira Island endemic was seen on the shore excursion on 11 April.

Caroline Islands White-eye *Zosterops semperi*

This Micronesian endemic is reasonably numerous on Chuuk and A was logged on 19 April.

Rennell White-eye *Zosterops rennellianus*

Endemic to Rennell and not uncommon with A seen on 10 April.

Solomon Islands White-eye *Zosterops rendovae*

This slightly confusingly named White-eye is only found on the New Georgia group of islands (including Kolombangara) within the Solomon archipelago. During our shore excursion, it was less numerous than some of the other White-eye species on the voyage with only a single bird seen (13 April).

Green-backed White-eye *Zosterops xanathochrous*

This New Caledonian endemic is reasonably common and A was logged on both days ashore (5-6 April).

Slender-billed White-eye *Zosterops tenuirostris*

This Norfolk Island endemic was well seen in the Botanical Gardens with a low A logged on 3 April.

Silver-eye *Zosterops lateralis*

This species was only seen on Norfolk Island (3 April: 4) and at Mount Koghi, New Caledonia (5 April: 2).

Faichuuk (Great Truk) White-eye *Rukia ruki*

This species is only found on a few of the islands within the Chuuk lagoon and is treated as critically endangered by Birdlife International. After a long zodiac ride and a tough climb, one bird was seen well on Tol South on 19 April.

Bare-eyed White-eye *Woodfordia superciliosa*

This species is probably the commonest of the single-island endemics on Rennell and good numbers (A) were seen during the shore excursion on 10 April.

Dark-brown Honeyeater *Lichmera incana*

This species was seen in good numbers at Mount Koghi (A) on 5 April, with a further four individuals seen the following day at Riviere Bleue.

New Caledonia Myzomela *Myzomela caledonica*

The first of six species of Myzomela recorded on the voyage with six seen at Mount Koghi (5 April) and four at Riviere Bleue.

Micronesian Myzomela *Myzomela rubratra*

This species is common on Chuuk and A was logged on 19 April with a few birds also seen from the ship in the late afternoon of 18 April as we awaited clearance.

Cardinal Myzomela *Myzomela cardinalis*

This species was seen on both Rennell, where eight were recorded (10 April), and Makira where two individuals were noted (11 April).

Yellow-vented Myzomela *Myzomela eichhorni*

A relatively scarce Solomon Island endemic with four birds seen on Kolombangara on 13 April.

Black-headed Myzomela *Myzomela melanocephala*

Endemic to some of the islands in the Central Solomons, two individuals were seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 12 April.

Sooty Myzomela *Myzomela tristrami*

Restricted to Makira and a few nearby islands, this species was reasonably numerous (A) during our shore landing on 11 April.

New Caledonian Friarbird *Philemon diemenensis*

This endemic was seen on both excursions on New Caledonia (5-6 April) with three at Mount Koghi and a low A logged the following day at Riviere Bleue.

San Cristobal Melidectes *Melidectes sclateri*

This bizarre-looking honeyeater is restricted to Makira with five recorded during the shore excursion on 11 April.

Crow Honeyeater *Gymnomyza aubryana*

This species is usually one of the toughest New Caledonian endemics to find at Riviere Bleue, however, we were extremely fortunate to find a flowering tree with three birds seen well by the entire group.

Barred Honeyeater *Phylidonyris undulata*

This endemic is not uncommon in suitable habitat on New Caledonia with six at Mount Koghi (5 April) and a low A the following day at Riviere Bleue.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

This species is generally only encountered in more 'open country' habitats on New Caledonia, with single birds seen on both days ashore (5-6 April).

New Caledonia Crow *Corvus moneduloides*

This New Caledonian endemic is one of the few birds known to use tools (sticks in the case of this species). It can be difficult to locate at Riviere Bleue, however, two were found shortly after arriving at the forest at Riviere Bleue on 6 April.

White-billed (Guadalcanal) Crow *Corvus woodfordi*

This is another corvid which can be extremely elusive and we were extremely fortunate to find three birds at Mount Austin on 12 April.

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*

Seen on both Guadalcanal (12 April: 5) and Kolombangara (13 April: A).

Singing Starling *Aplonis cantoroides*

This species was only recorded on Kolombangara (13 April) with A logged.

Rennell Starling *Aplonis insularis*

This Rennell endemic seems to be somewhat nomadic as the numbers seen vary from year to year. Four birds were, however, found during the shore excursion on 10 April.

Brown-winged Starling *Aplonis grandis*

This Solomon Islands endemic species is reasonably reliable at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal with a low A logged on 12 April. Despite its name, the diagnostic pale brown primaries can, on occasions, be moderately difficult to see when birds are perched.

San Cristobal Starling *Aplonis dichroa*

This Makira Island endemic proved to be moderately tough to find with only three birds seen during the shore excursion on 11 April.

Striated Starling *Aplonis striata*

A New Caledonian endemic which was only seen at Mount Koghi with nine individuals recorded.

Micronesian Starling *Aplonis opaca*

A common bird on Chuuk with A recorded on 4 April with a further four individuals seen from the ship the previous afternoon as we waited for the ship to be cleared into Micronesia.

Yellow-faced Myna *Mino dumontii*

This distinctive Myna was seen in reasonable numbers (A) at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (12 April) with a further four birds recorded the following day on Kolombangara.

[Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*]

This Asian introduction was reasonably numerous on New Caledonia (5-6 April) and was also seen in Honiara, Guadalcanal (12 April) where six individuals were recorded.

[European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*]

This introduced species is common on Norfolk Island (3 April: A) with two birds also seen on New Caledonia on 5 April.

[House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*]

Another introduction which was seen on both Norfolk Island and New Caledonia.

[Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*]

This species was recorded in small numbers on both days on Chuuk (18-19 April) where it is believed to be a recent, and presumably ship-assisted, arrival.

Blue-faced Parrotfinch *Erythrura trichroa*

This species was seen on both Weno and Tol South Islands, Chuuk with a total of seven birds recorded on 19 April.

Red-throated Parrotfinch *Erythrura psittacea*

This New Caledonia endemic was recorded at both Mount Koghi (5 April: 8) and Riviere Bleue (6 April: 4).

CETACEANS

Sperm Whale *Physter macrocephalus*

This was by far the most frequently recorded cetacean on the voyage with at least thirty three animals encountered across seven widely spread dates. The highest count was off Bougainville (14 April) where at least twelve were seen.

Sei Whale *Balaenoptera borealis*

At least one animal which was believed to be this species was seen near Torishima on 26 April.

Short-finned Pilot Whale *Globicephala macrorhynchus*

Seen on three days with the first animals on the sea day south of Norfolk Island (2 April). It was then another ten days before this species was next seen with A recorded off the north coast of Guadalcanal on the afternoon of 12 April. The final sighting was off New Ireland on 15 April where three animals were seen.

False Killer Whale *Pseudorca crassidens*

This species was recorded for definite on four dates although a number of unidentified pods of 'Blackfish' which were likely to have been this species were also seen. The first sightings were on the sea day north of the Hauraki Gulf (1 April) when A was logged, with the remaining sightings being between 12-15 April (Guadalcanal – New Ireland) where a total of fourteen animals were recorded.

Risso's Dolphin *Grampus griseus*

The only sighting of the voyage was a pod which was thought to number between 8-10 animals on the sea day off Torishima (26 April).

Cuvier's Beaked Whale *Ziphuis cavirostris*

A single individual was seen a day south of New Caledonia (4 April) with a further two animals recorded the following morning.

Longman's Beaked Whale *Indopacetus pacificus*

Approximately eight of these rarely seen beaked whales were seen about 20 nautical miles off southern New Caledonia on the morning of 5 April.

Hubb's Beaked Whale

A small pod of approximately six of these extremely poorly known whales were seen in the late afternoon of 26 April (after passing Torishima that morning). This species was the undoubted cetacean highlight of the voyage, although the record was only confirmed from photos (as the animals were somewhat distant) with the white on the heads and beaks visible in a number of pictures which were taken.

Pygmy Sperm Whale *Kogia breviceps*

Although *Kogias* have been observed on most WPO voyages, this species seems to be the rarer one. A single individual was, however, seen and photographed in flat seas off Bougainville on 14 April.

Dwarf Sperm Whale *Kogia breviceps*

Three animals were seen off New Ireland on 15 April with the only other sighting being a lone individual off New Caledonia on the morning of 5 April.

Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

A small pod of this widespread species was seen just inside the Chuuk lagoon reef on both 18 and 19 April.

Spinner Dolphin *Stenella longirostris*

The most frequently encountered dolphin with animals seen on five dates. The highest counts were off Guadalcanal (12 April) and a day south of Chuuk (17 April) with a high A recorded on both days.

Striped Dolphin *Stenella coeruleoalba*

The only sighting was north of Torishima (26 April) where A was logged.

Pantropical Spotted Dolphin *Stenella attenuate*

A pod thought to number a dozen or so animals was seen north-east of the Bonin Islands on 25 April.

Compiled by Chris Collins
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