

## INDONESIAN EXPLORER on board HERITAGE ADVENTURER

7 - 24 October 2023



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Day 1

Saturday, 7 October

Bali, Indonesia

There was an excited feeling in the air we gathered at the Hyatt Regency in Sanur Bali, the initial meeting point for the start of Heritage Expeditions Indonesian Explorer voyage. Guests and the expedition team began to mingle, as introductions were shared over a welcome dinner.

We eagerly relaxed in this serene accommodation, anticipation and excitement levels high ahead of our upcoming adventure.

## Day 2

Sunday, 8 October

Bali

The early morning saw us departing our tropical oasis, the Hyatt Regency in Sanur Bali, after breakfast to commence our first exploration day. Once on board our comfortable touring buses we were bound to explore the sights of Bali and beyond. Our first visit was Lantangidung Village, a Balinese living compound surrounded by rice fields. Here we were able to experience an authentic Balinese way of life, each family showcasing a unique artisan skill from silver making, carving, painting, and cooking. We continued onto Batuan Temple, which was one of the most beautiful within Tri Kahyangan Village.

Donning our colourful sarongs, we strolled past stone guardians, thatched shrines, and exquisite gardens. Gathering at Royal Pita Maha Hotel Ubud, we welcomed a refreshing drink and ample buffet lunch on the scenic terrace overlooking lush forests and river rapids below. The afternoon trip was a visit to a batik workshop where we immersed ourselves in the time-treasured tradition of batik. We listened to explanations on the process of making batik and saw demonstrations of hand-drawn batik (Canting) and stamp batik with the opportunity to purchase some of these exquisite cloths. Some of us took away a sample of hand-drawn batik on our hats and clothing from the resident artists.

It was then time to head to *Heritage Adventurer*. We were welcomed on board and settled into our accommodations before completing the mandatory safety drill, ending with a voyage overview and introduction to the expedition team.



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### Day 3

Monday, 9 October

Sumbawa Island and Satonda Island

After a calm night and a glorious sunrise, we arrived to anchor off the north coast of Sumbawa. After a short shuttle ashore in Zodiacs we were off in a flotilla of minibuses to sample the charms of the Pamulang Village. The houses were beautiful simple timber structures, elevated above ground to permit water movement in monsoon season and provide natural air conditioning. Moringa trees were common at the front door of houses and our guide described how all parts of the tree are used to treat various illnesses - such a versatile and quite beautiful tree! Surprisingly many houses had birds in cages, for song competitions of the nicest and sweetest voices, and bonsai of Coconut Trees and Frangipani. While bonsai is practised throughout Asia and Japan, every country has distinct differences. We were amazed to see tiny, dwarfed Coconut Palms and Squat Frangipani covered in sweetly scented flowers.



The variety and uses of the spices native to Indonesia is astounding! In addition to the culinary uses, learning about the medicinal preparations was fascinating. We watched Turmeric root and Tamarind, other spices and rice be ground and prepared to enjoy as tasty tonics for Arthritis and anti-inflammation properties. We met many of the local people, some of whom invited us into their houses. A highlight was meeting one of the residents who was 100 years old and her daughter who was 70. Both looked much younger than their age!

A short journey down the hill from Pamulang, and we were treated to the spectacle of Buffalo racing. Participants perched on an A-frame structure behind two joined Buffalos as they raced down a water-flooded rice paddy field while trying to steer them over a stick placed in the mud. Traditionally this event was a celebration at the end of harvest, local entertainment and a fun way of tilling the muddy floor of the paddy. We watched the local pros do their thing before our own Thijs and Gavin joined this exhilarating spectacle.

After this exciting event, we arrived at the ancient palace of the Sumbawan king, which is one of the largest wooden structures in the world. The enduring smoothness of the 400-year-old teak and the ingenious architectural engineering defied the ages. By lunch we were back in the air-conditioned coolness of *Heritage Adventurer* and ready for our snorkel briefing, before arriving at the volcanic remnant island of Satonda Island. Once ashore, some of us enjoyed a brisk climb along the crater rim while others enjoyed the peace of the crater lake and the excellent snorkelling on the reef. By 1730 the sun was setting blood red into the horizon as we returned to the ship and enjoyed the Captain's welcome cocktails and sumptuous dinner.



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Day 4

Tuesday, 10 October

Komodo Island

Sunrise greeted us as we came to anchor off Komodo Island with dry parched hills and a backdrop of a spectacular skyline of cones and ridges. After a hearty breakfast, we were ashore by 0800 and onto the beach splitting up into our groups for long or short walks.

With some of the lowest rainfall in Indonesia, the forest was tinder dry at the end of a very long dry season. Before long we had spotted a Timor Deer (Javan Rusa) and a Wild Boar, the favourite prey of Komodo Dragons. There are around 1,500 Komodo Dragons on the island and we saw our first ones within 10 minutes. The smaller juveniles were careful to stay out of the range of the larger 2.5 metre-plus adults, as cannibalism is rife with this species. All our groups were accompanied by a ranger with a stick who ensured that we and the dragons never came too close to each other. Most of the dragons were used to humans and barely rose from their slumber as they warmed up in the early morning heat.

Up in the trees, Flores Drongos were common throughout our walk and a pair of Yellow Crested Cockatoos entertained us by popping in and out of holes in an old Palm Tree. The birders spotted several regional endemics such as the Orange-footed Scrubfowl, Tenggara Whistler, Flores White-eye, Flame-breasted Sunbird and Green Tree Snails. The longer walk took the group up a small hill to a spectacular viewpoint, looking over the rolling forested hills to the bay where we had arrived, and beyond to the eroded volcanic landscapes of nearby islands.

The next stop was at our headquarters at the beach where we were greeted by a cooling wind and some fresh drinking coconuts from the market. We then returned to *Heritage Adventurer* while we had lunch and our Captain repositioned the vessel closer to our snorkelling destination for the afternoon, Pink Beach.

By 1300 we had the picturesque Pink Beach to ourselves and geared up for some cooling water time. The pink tinge to the beach is caused by the shells of tiny marine creatures called Foraminifera. With its gently sloping sand, it was an excellent base to explore the shallow waters, full of soft and hard coral and tropical fish, including Sergeant-majors, Butterflyfish and Clownfish. A couple of Sea Turtles were spotted as well as a brief glimpse of a Manta Ray on the outer reef.



By 1630 we were all back aboard and cleaned up ready for a great lecture on the Komodo Dragons by Rod before another excellent dinner.



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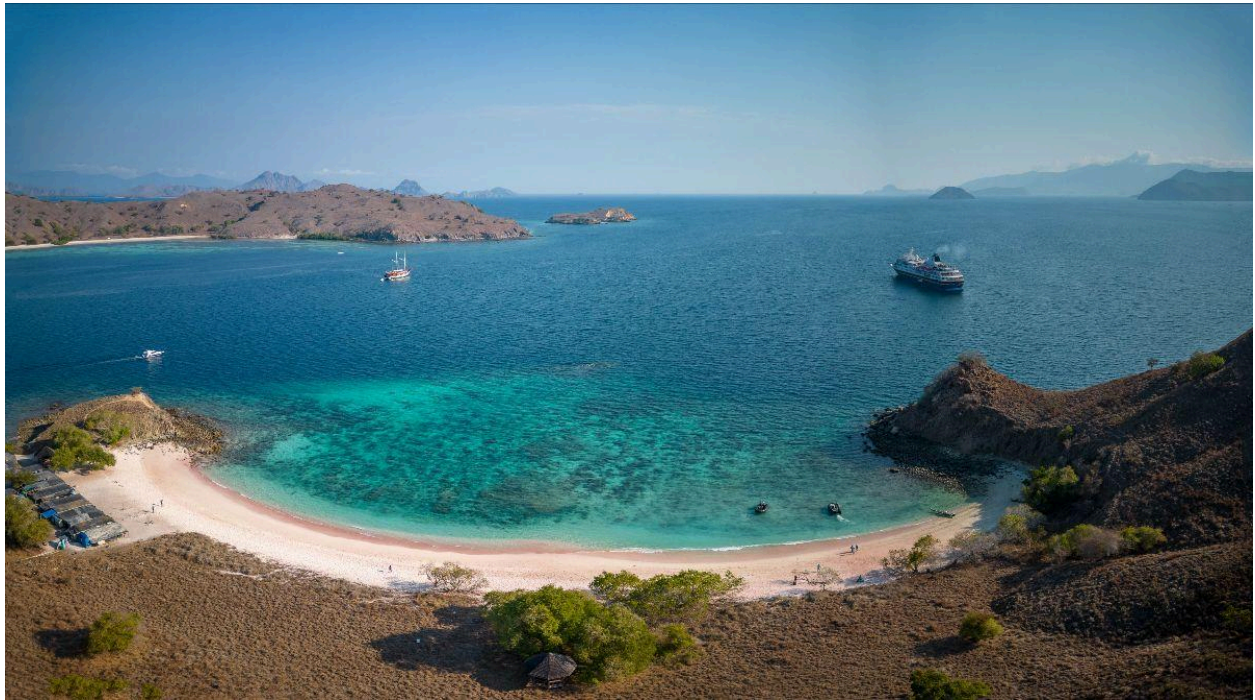


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Day 5

Wednesday 11 October

Kodia Island

Sunrise found *Heritage Adventurer* steaming along the northern coast of Flores. By 0900 we were anchored off the small island village of Koja Doi, adjacent to the main island of Kodia. We were greeted by a guard of honour at the wharf with much excitement due to a ship never having visited. The local school children were resplendent in their crisp white shirts and escorted us to the local hall where they treated us to a special performance they had been practising for weeks before our arrival. Their vibrant dances and traditional music painted a vivid picture of the island's cultural and natural tapestry.

There were plenty of warm smiles and we witnessed the amazing architecture that kept the 700 residents only just above sea level. Some guests walked the 74 steps to the top of the hill that contained a Hollywood-style sign that proudly stated the name of the village. Others walked the 800-metre causeway which was constructed by hand and opened in 1978, so that the local children could walk to school on main Kodia Island. We were given an excellent tour of the school before we headed back to the ship to get our snorkel gear.

Courtney and Abraham had set up a nice snorkel site near a reef pass, where we were able to escape the heat and sample the wonders of the reef. By 1200 we were back on board and setting sail for Wakatobi Island.

The afternoon was given over to rest and some intriguing lectures by Thomas and Tim on Wakatobi National Park and the famous Wallace Line which divides the biology between Asia and Australasia.



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Day 6

Thursday, 12 October

Wakatobi and Hoga Island

This morning we approached the Wakatobi Islands at the far south-eastern corner of Sulawesi, renowned for their rich marine life, and anchored just off Hoga Island, our destination for today.

Once ashore most of us chose to explore on land before immersing ourselves in the underwater life. The birders and naturalist groups wandered through the forest of Kaledupa Island using the paths established for an international research facility, Operation Wallacea. After a hiatus during the COVID pandemic, some of the buildings were back in commission. However, the local dive resort was falling into ruin. The island was made of uplifted coral, and deep holes had been eroded in its surface making us glad for the constructed paths. Land Crabs scuttled away and down their burrows as we approached. In the trees, we saw an Elegant Pitta, Island Monarch, Black-naped Fruit Dove, Sahul Sunbird and Sulawesi Crow.

Another group headed over to the village of Sampela, home to the Bajo people who were once nomadic sea dwellers and now settled on the island by the Indonesian Government. We were privileged to get a glimpse of their stilt houses built over the sea with connecting walkways made from salvaged wood. As we strolled through the village, we met welcoming residents and enthusiastic children. Their smiles were infectious, and their eagerness to share their way of life was heart-warming. It was clear that the sea was at the heart of their daily existence - shells were tossed into the waters below creating unique middens beneath houses, and seaweed was laid out to dry in the sun. Canoes with outboard motors were neatly stored, ready to whisk them away to the open waters for fishing, both for sustenance and trade.

With our land-based activities concluded it was off to explore the rich underwater world on the Kaledupa Island Reef. Meadows of seagrass grew in the shallows, with large Chocolate Chip Sea Stars resting in sandy patches between the grass. Beyond lay the reef, with a spectacular display of hard and soft corals and a steep drop-off into deep water. A Banded Sea Krait, a highly venomous sea snake harmless to people due to it being unable to open its mouth wide enough to bite, was spotted and photographed hunting among the coral. Fish of all shapes, sizes and colours darted along the reef, while waving Anemones, Giant Clams, and Christmas Tree Worms added extra flavour to this coral wonderland.

Back to the comforts of *Heritage Adventurer* for lunch, we then spent the afternoon relaxing while navigating the Banda Sea and were treated to fascinating presentations on The Allure of Birds by Frank and Lifestyles of the Fish and Famous from Courtney.



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Day 7  
Friday, 13 October  
Buru Island

Today's visit to Buru Island was only the third time an expedition ship has visited the remote village of Pasir Putih, so a special day for both us and the people of this island. As soon as *Heritage Adventurer* arrived offshore, we were greeted by a spectacular sunrise behind the mountainous peaks of the island.

A short Zodiac cruise of the inner lagoon revealed large freshwater springs erupting from the limestone cliffs, and luxuriant mangrove forest which fringed a much greener island than we had experienced so far on our expedition.

Approaching the Village of Pasir Putih we were greeted by a spectacular display of chaotic coastal architecture. After a short climb up the ladder and onto the concrete village square, we were given a formal welcome and performance followed by a tour of this fascinating village. Many of us experienced a celebrity-level of paparazzi with photos at every turn!



Then it was time for sampling traditional fare, dancing and learning everything about island life and culture with newfound friends.

While all this cultural activity was taking place in the village, our group of birders and naturalists headed straight for the forest to uncover the hidden treasures of this unique island, a biological crossroads between Australia and Asia. Here we discovered a treasure trove of endemic plants, birds, and animals. Many species are found only on this island, making it a natural wonder. We were rewarded with sightings of Buru Golden-Bulbuls, Buru Friarbirds and Buru Flowerpeckers.

By 1030 we were in the Zodiacs and heading back to our home away from home to prepare for our snorkel excursion on the outer reef where we observed spectacular displays of hard and soft corals, Sea Turtles and Sea Snakes. By 1230 we were back aboard *Heritage Adventurer* and setting course for Seram Island. After lunch and a much-deserved rest, we enjoyed a taste of The Pacific War for Beginners with Bruce, which gave us a great insight into the context of this world-changing event. As well as Conservation in the Land of Four Kings with Abraham (Abam) which outlined the innovative conservation initiatives in the extensive marine protected areas of Indonesia.



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Day 8

Saturday, 14 October

Seram Island

Dawn found *Heritage Adventurer* steaming into a landscape of vertical peaks with lush green jungle dropping into azure waters. This was the inaugural visit to Seram Island for Heritage Expeditions, and we were soon ashore and into a fleet of flatbed vans which whisked us up to the Manusela National Park.

A quick stop on a side road gave us our first taste of this biologically diverse rainforest. Once we reached the Trans-Seram Highway, the birding group headed up to an accessible part of the Manusela National Park at 800 metres above sea level, while the remaining guests enjoyed nature walks near the park's lower ranger station. Some of us were fortunate enough to encounter exotic animals such as a Common Spotted Cuscus, and a Boa Constrictor. Meanwhile, the birders enjoyed sighting Moluccan birds, Red Lory, Seram Leaf Warbler, Streak-breasted Fantail, Blyth's Hornbill, as well as an incredible diversity of wonderful butterflies.

After another short truck journey, we visited the small village of Rumah Olatto to view some of the spices these islands are famous for. After a Zodiac ride back to our air-conditioned vessel, a great lunch and a short rest the Captain managed to reposition the ship off a small resort where we enjoyed a snorkel and beach swim on a recovering reef system.

With everyone back aboard by 1630 we were able to get underway while enjoying a fascinating lecture from Suzanne on the Sultans of Spice.





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Day 9  
Sunday, 15 October  
Misool Island

Sunrise saw *Heritage Adventurer* weaving a course among the myriad of islands that dot the south eastern coast of Misool. Part of the Sultanate of Tidore during the Spice Wars, Misool is the second-largest island in the stunning archipelago of Raja Ampat. By 0730 we had everyone in Zodiacs for a cruise among the iconic karst landscape labyrinth of islets formed from uplifted and undercut coral limestone.

After navigating a couple of tight passages we were rewarded with ancient Sumalelen rock art depicting the vessels and lives of this early sea culture. An ochre hand stencil was also spotted high up on a cliff face that may have once been a dwelling cave. This artwork was between 3,000 to 5,000 years old and had a haunting link to the distant past.

There seemed to be an endless parade of spectacular limestone forms with lush Pandanus and Betel Palm vegetation hanging onto near-vertical landforms. Our birders managed to spot some Great-billed Heron, White-bellied Sea Eagle and Spice Imperial-pigeon. Returning to the ship we were treated to a spectacular boil-up of tuna feeding on baitfish with the attendant company of Terns and Frigatebirds.

We finished the day with a hike up the 236 steps of Harfat Jaya Peak, or Dapunlol as the locals call it, where we were treated to a stunning 180-degree views over a myriad of islands scattered throughout the azure blue water.





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Day 10  
Monday 16 October  
Wayag Island

Another stunning tropical morning greeted us. At around 0530 we crossed the Equator into the Northern Hemisphere and were greeted by the stunning outline of Wayag Island which is the jewel in the crown of the Raja Ampat Regency of West Papua. At the heart of the island was a calm lagoon, surrounded by spectacularly carved limestone karst pinnacles, all covered in tangled, tropical forest. During the morning we explored the twists and turns of this dramatic landscape in Zodiacs, each turn revealing more jaw-dropping scenery. The underwater wildlife did not disappoint either with glimpses of a Manta Ray and Black-tip Reef Sharks. Above the water we observed Moluccan Starlings and Beach Kingfisher.

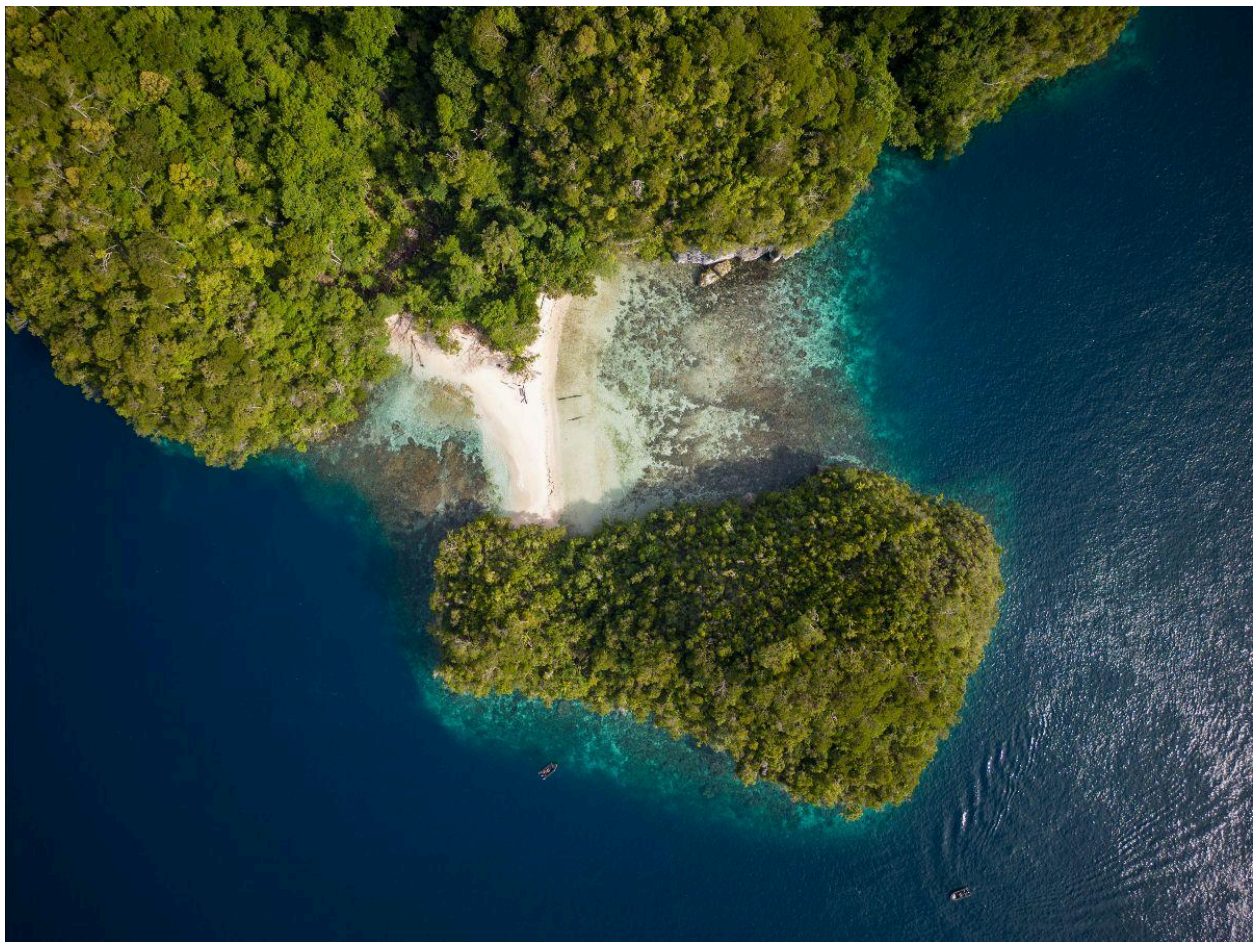
The Zodiacs found a white sand beach under the gaze of Mount Pindito and some adventurers climbed to the peak. Despite the tough climb, it was well worth the effort for the truly stupendous view from the top with azure waters, white sandy beaches and spectacular towering pinnacles all around. Back on the soft sandy beach on which we'd



landed, we all enjoyed a snorkel among some of the limestone islands, swimming over a vast forest of delicate Staghorn Coral and a colony of Giant Clams.

Back aboard we steamed south back towards the Equator and were treated to a visit by King Neptune and his mermaid assistants. We welcomed all the Polliwogs (sailors who had not crossed the Equator) to the Pool Deck. A slap with a wet fish and a plunge into the pool welcomed them into his watery realm. They emerged from the pool fully fledged Shellbacks (a veteran sailor who has crossed the Equator).

By 1530 we had relocated *Heritage Adventurer* to Alyui Bay on the eastern end of Waigeo Island and began our afternoon snorkelling session. There was a consensus that this was some of the best snorkelling so far, with abundant reef and fish life along the steep drop-off near the undercut limestone of the bay. With the light fading we returned to ship for a BBQ dinner and a well-earned rest.



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Day 11

Tuesday 17 October

Waisai, Waigeo Island

Today's start was an early one, with Zodiacs departing in the dark at 0430 for the jetty at Waisai on Waigeo Island. We were planning get into position to view Birds-of-Paradise just as the sun was rising and the birds were displaying at their most intense.

A short ride in a fleet of taxis took us to the edge of the forest to meet our local guides, who escorted us through the darkness along narrow and sometimes steep forest paths. We divided into two groups, one aiming for a Red Bird-of-Paradise hide, the other aiming for a Wilson's Bird-of-Paradise display ground. The latter was a longer and more arduous trek.

During the walk, light levels rose and as the night receded. Slowly the calls of frogs were replaced by an atmospheric dawn chorus of forest birds. Finally, the Wilson's group arrived at the hide and found a male calling loudly, high in the trees. Eventually, he flew down to the ground, providing excellent opportunities to photograph this little

jewel of the forest. What a fabulous range of behaviour we'd witnessed from this beautiful Bird-of-Paradise.

Meanwhile, the group at the Red Bird-of-Paradise lek had watched more than five males displaying in the treetops, calling loudly and shaking their colourful plumage, as they sought to outdo each other in competition for the attention of females. But none appeared. However, for us, it was a successful morning all around!

The walk back through the forest in the light seemed far shorter than the journey in and we were welcomed back with tea and freshly prepared banana fritters. The birders continued spotting along the road edge with views of Western Crowned Pigeon, Blyth's Hornbill, Eclectus Parrot and Palm Cockatoo.

Guests opting for a sleep-in enjoyed a leisurely breakfast and snorkel excursion to the underwater wonderland and coral gardens of Pulau Friwin. After a well-deserved afternoon nap, we were treated to afternoon tea and great lectures on The Secrets of Photography by Steve and Dispersal of Species by Rod.







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Day 12

Wednesday 18 October

Manokwari and Arfak Mountains

*Heritage Adventurer* entered Manokwari Harbour just before dawn. For those off to the Arfak Mountains it was a short Zodiac cruise to port, where a fleet of Hilux 4WDs whisked us up into the mountains in search of Birds-of-Paradise and Bower Birds. At about 1500 metres the air was fresher than at the coast and the forest was distinctly different, with a relatively open understory and pleasant, though steep walking.

Arriving as it was getting light, we met our local Papuan guides and split into smaller groups before heading out to various blinds in the beautiful primary forests just a stones-throw from the road. As we quietly made our way to the blinds we were treated to a wonderful dawn chorus of birds, insects and tree frogs, quite different from that heard on Waigeo Island the previous day. In the isolated Arfak Mountains, we expected to see a completely different subset of Birds-of-Paradise to those seen in the Raja Ampat islands, and we certainly weren't disappointed. Between us we saw six different

species including the secretive Western Parotia, Superb and Magnificent Birds-of-Paradise, and the rarely observed Black-billed Sicklebill. Other birds hanging around near the blinds included the lovely but unobtrusive Green-backed Robin. While overhead Grey Crows, Black-bellied Cicadabirds, and Pesquet's Parrots added to the constant but delightful cacophony of sounds.

The rest of us embarked on a city tour by bus. A short journey took us to Table Mountain Forest above the city of Manokwari. It protects a significant water catchment and research area and is considered the lungs of the city. Within its protection are historical cave sites utilised by the Japanese during WWII. Here we were treated to some prime rainforest with easy strolling and visited the site of the Japanese memorial to their war fallen.

Back in the city we took in the sights and smells of Sanggeng Market and enjoyed the bustling labyrinth of stalls and shops selling everything imaginable. By 1300 we were all back on *Heritage Adventurer* and enjoyed lectures from Frank and Bruce on the Recovery of Tropical Rainforest and The Missing in Action of WWII.

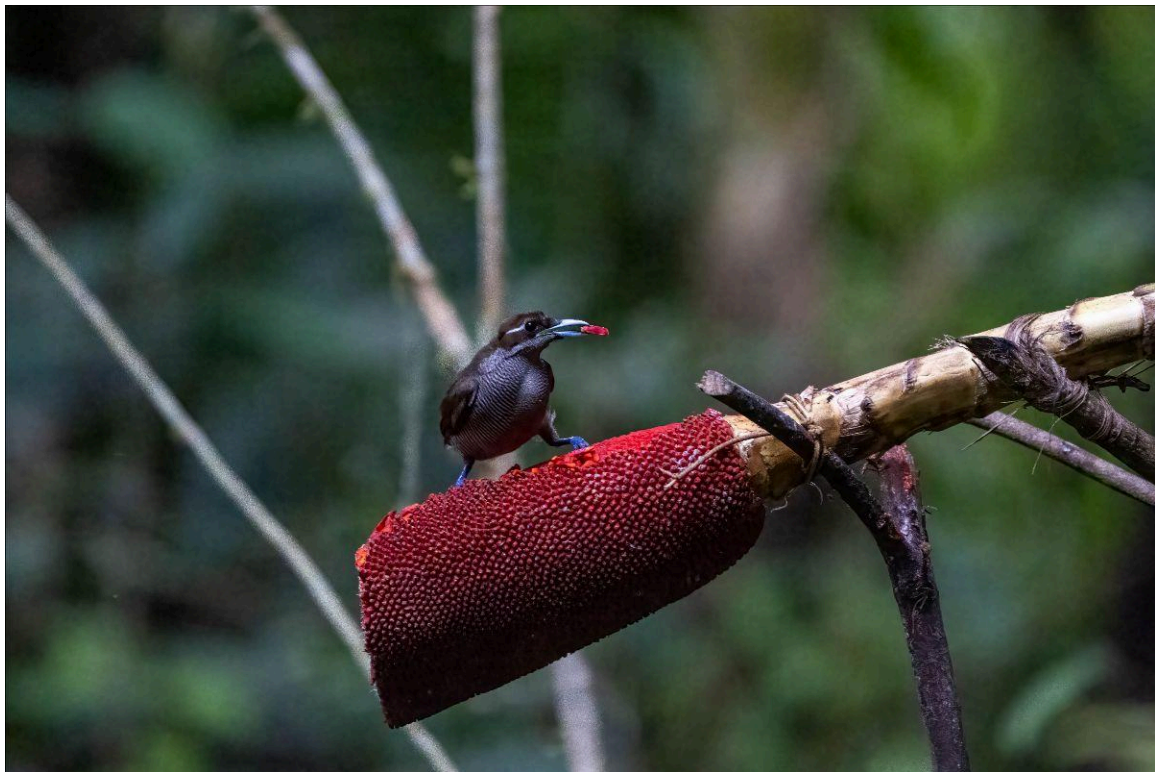






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Day 13  
Thursday 19 October  
Cenderawasih Bay

What a day! Whale Sharks in the early morning, a vibrant coral reef before lunch, and song and dance in a coastal village in the afternoon.

We set off at 0730 in Zodiacs with great anticipation, aiming for a fishing Bagan in Cenderawasih Bay to which Whale Sharks are attracted by left-over fish. We were not disappointed! We took it in turns to swim with up to a group of five or more Whale Sharks, with some hanging vertically in the water and sucking in small fish being fed by the fishermen above. The Whale Sharks ignored our presence completely, so we were all able to take great photos.

The group seemed to take it in turns to come and feed, providing a truly memorable wildlife encounter. Above us, dozens of Greater and Lesser Frigatebirds dived to the water surface with precision aerial agility, to pick up scraps of fish. What an incredible experience we had!

After a short coffee break back on board, we visited the beautiful soft sandy beach at Kali Lemon, a rustic local homestay backed by hills clothed in lush tropical rainforest. Overhead flew several noisy Blyth's Hornbills. In the shallows, a meadow of seagrass waved in the gentle current. It was inhabited by long Sea Cucumbers, trawling the detritus on the bottom for food with feathery tentacles. A little further out we found a collection of massive Giant Clams, all brightly patterned, wedged into the coral rock. Finally, after a few minutes of swimming, we found ourselves floating over a reef with a fabulous diversity of colourful hard corals and many small fish. It was a snorkeller's delight!

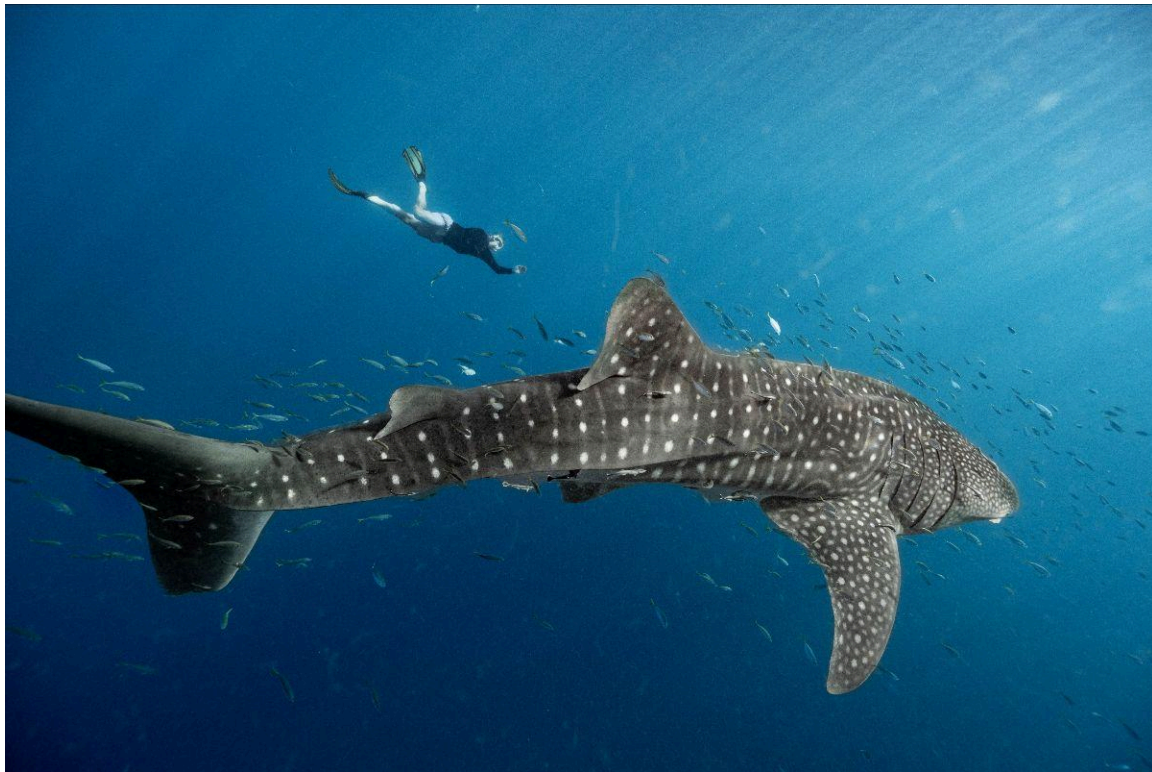
After lunch, we visited the small community of Kwatisore, on the shore of Cenderawasih Bay. Here a local band of guitars and drums with accompanying singers greeted our Zodiacs. We were treated to a dance by village youngsters which represented the flamboyant displays of Birds-of-Paradise and we had time to explore the village, while the band continued to play and some of us joined in the dancing.

Finally, after a lot of laughter and smiles, we waved the villagers goodbye and headed back to *Heritage Adventurer* for our evening recap of the day's activities and dinner. What an action-packed day it had been!





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Day 14

Friday 20 October

Biak Island

The birders were first away this morning, in search of the many Biak Island endemics. For the rest of us, it was a trip to see the Japanese Cave, where thousands of Japanese soldiers held out against American troops in WWII until the cave complex was bombed killing all inside.

Today the site contains a small museum, with weapons, clothing and other artefacts recovered from the cave, as well as a collection of skulls and bones of some of the victims which has been locked and destined for repatriation to Japan. We entered the cave itself through a huge hole in the rock, surrounded by tangled jungle. Inside the cavern is huge and gloomy, with large roots from the trees above penetrating the darkness. Nothing remains of its military past, but it was not hard to imagine the desperate situation of the soldiers inside, almost 70 years ago.

After the cave, we visited the fish and vegetable market in town where there was a wide selection of fresh fish of all sizes, including many Tuna. The vegetable stalls were a riot of colour, from the large variety of healthy fresh produce on offer. Both the vegetables and the fish were stacked in very neat piles, creating a geometric pattern on the stalls, clearly designed to attract the attention of potential buyers.

Our birders managed to see Biak White-eye, Biak Long-tailed Starling, Biak Red-capped Flowerpecker and the Claret-breasted Fruit Dove. We all returned to the ship for a coffee and a brief snack, while *Heritage Adventurer* re-positioned to the Rusbasbedas Islands for a late morning snorkel. Off a soft sand beach backed by coconut palms, the water fell away steeply into the depths, shading abruptly from the turquoise shallows into a deep blue. Along this reef edge we saw large shoals of fish patrolling back and forth, including small parties of Moorish Idols, in their smart stripes of yellow, white and black. The hotel staff had relocated the pool bar to the beach and we enjoyed a drink, swim or short walk around the island to cap off yet another action-packed day.



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Day 15  
Friday 21 October  
Liki Island

After a more restful wakeup call than previous mornings, we anchored off the shining waters of Liki Island, part of the Koemamba Islands, in formerly Dutch New Guinea.

It was a full turnout of 400 villagers from 68 families along with officials from West Papua. The head of the village greeted us as we stepped on shore and pressed some of the sand across our forehead to ground us to the new place. Once in the village, we all sat under an ancient tree covered with beautiful Epiphytic Plants. The villagers had made us hats from young coconut leaves and flowers, and we were soon all more beautiful versions of ourselves. After the welcome speeches by the visiting Minister of Tourism of the local regency and head guide, we enjoyed viewing artwork from a local school and the basketry of the local women. Some sago palm, betel nut and fried fish were on offer and many of us indulged in these new delights.

A tropical downpour during our village tour meant many of us found shelter in local houses and verandas, which was a great way to meet the locals and see how they lived. Some even walked into a dance music party! On the forest walk we came across two Cuscus that had recently been captured and were told that after three weeks of hand-feeding, they would be tame enough to be let out of their cage and become pets for the village. Our birders managed to see Torresian Imperial Pigeons, Varied Honeyeaters and Singing Starlings.

By 1030 most of us returned to the ship to kit up for the last snorkel of the expedition. Courtney had found a small cove which offered a slow drift snorkel to the waiting ladder boats. The current provided an array of fish life over the mixed coral and limestone sea floor. We spotted Sea Cucumbers, Anemones, Feather Duster Worms, Angelfish, Wrasse and the endangered Blue Coral. By 1230 we were back aboard *Heritage Adventurer* and enjoying another superb lunch before an afternoon of lectures from Rod on wildlife photography and Fiona on her sculpting practice.



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Day 16

Friday 22 October

Jayapura and Lake Sentani

Dawn found us entering the port of Jayapura, the capital of Papua. With high-rise buildings set against the green hills, this felt like a city. A short Zodiac ride took us to a fleet of waiting coaches and, with a police escort to clear the traffic for us, we set off on the half-hour journey to Lake Sentani.

Our first stop was Museum Loka Budaya which contained a fascinating collection of cultural artefacts from the Papuan region. The masks, shields and weapons showed an incredible diversity of form and style. Our guides explained the fascinating range of Papuan artefacts, in particular the Asmat carvings, sailing vessel models, and large ornamented shields. We had the opportunity to buy beautiful hand-carved sculptures and locally-made jewellery and art from the museum shop.

A short bus ride brought us to the sparkling waters of Lake Sentani, located amongst the verdant hills of the Cyclops Mountains Strict Nature Reserve. We were welcomed to this island village by a group of local children performing their canoe dance, followed by the adults in a modern canoe greeting us from the water. As we stepped onto the boardwalk, we were shown the local freshwater fish and spotted the rare endemic Red Rainbowfish (*Glossolepis incises*) swimming around the oxygen weed and a pretend one being fished from a canoe for our enjoyment.

A marching band heralded our entrance to the village, where locals had their wares for sale and put on demonstrations of carving and sago production for us. There were beautiful bark paintings featuring traditional motifs of fish, lizards or Birds-of-Paradise and many finely polished stone axes used as 'bride price'.

By 1300 we were back on board enjoying the comforts Heritage Adventurer having cleared out of Indonesia bound for Vanimo in Papua New Guinea, just across the border which is marked with a lighthouse on the coast. The afternoon was filled with lectures from Frank on the Birds and Culture of New Guinea and from Bruce on The Role of Papua New Guinea and Guadalcanal in the Pacific War. We then departed for tomorrow's destination, the Sepik River.





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Day 17

Saturday 23 October

Sepik River, Papua New Guinea

As we sailed along the northern coast of Papua New Guinea towards the Sepik River, we had a panel discussion on wild places and their conservation by Tim Flannery, Rod Morris and Lou Sanson followed by Aaron who gave us a presentation on Heritage Expeditions - The Story So Far.

Shortly before lunch volcanic islands, with the appropriate names of Blup Blup and Bam, came into view before we then turned into the mouth of the Sepik River. At 1,126 kilometres long and covering an area of 7.7 million hectares, the Sepik is one of the world's great rivers. However, at its entrance there is a shallow bar no more than 5 metres deep, too shallow for *Heritage Adventurer*, so our exploration of the river would be by Zodiac.

Our first visit was to the village of Kopar, which coincided with a spectacular thunderstorm that had everyone seeking shelter under the stilt houses. We enjoyed colourful performances from the community, including the spectacular Dragon Dance, accompanied by chanting and Kundu drumming. The dragon itself had a long sinuous body, supported by a dozen or so people, with a large bright red head surrounded by a vast feathery headdress. There was also a comedic play acted out, the exact story details of which were tricky for us to follow, but which the assembled villagers found immensely funny.

A large market of handicrafts had been assembled which included masks, carved paddles, penis gourds and Bilum bags. Our group took to this shopping opportunity with gusto, eventually exhausting the bank of local Kina currency that the expedition team had available. So, with large numbers of purchases in hand, we set off in the Zodiacs for a cruise up the river. The banks were lined with sago palms, from which the people of the Sepik extract starch as their staple food. A Sea Eagle was spotted, Brahminy, Whistling and Black Kites wheeled overhead and Great Egrets perched on riverside branches.

As we returned to the ship, we could see the huge pyramidal shape of Manam Volcano in the distance, with smoke billowing from its crater. This area has many active volcanoes and is subject to frequent earthquakes. During our last evening on board, we enjoyed farewell cocktails with the captain and expedition team. After dinner the expedition recap included a slideshow of our whole journey, bringing back many happy

memories of our exploration through the fascinating islands of Indonesia to Papua New Guinea.



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Day 18  
Sunday 24 October  
Madang/Port Moresby

Under the cover of darkness, *Heritage Adventurer* entered the Port of Madang for our final stop on this great adventure. After the last great breakfast and heartfelt farewells, we were transported to the nearby Madang Airport for our charter flight to Port Moresby and our next adventures.



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## Species List

8 October

Benoa Harbour, Bali

Pacific Reef Egret

Little Egret

Purple Heron

Sunda Teal

Crested Tern

Little Tern

Whiskered Tern

Sanderling

Redshank

Whimbrel

? Honeyeater heard

Pacific Swallow

Linchi Swiftlet

Edible Nest Swiftlet

9 October

Sumbawa main town

Ww Triller 2 Lesueur's Triller

Tree Sparrow 20

[Tailorbird heard]

Sooty-headed Bulbul

Pacific Swallow

Linchi Swiftlet

Edible Nest Swiftlet

Black-naped Monarch

Blue-tailed Bee Eater

Black-winged Kite

Satoda Island

Pacific Swallow

Daurian Swallow

Linchi Swiftlet

Edible Nest Swiftlet

Collared Kingfisher

Eastern Spotted Dove

Barred Dove



Green Imperial Pigeon 10-15  
Black-fronted Flowerpecker  
Black-naped Monarch  
Flores Drongo 1  
Orange-footed Scrubfowl 2  
Sooty-headed Bulbul  
Wallace's Heleia  
Tricoloured Grebe  
Black Flying Fox

10 October  
Komodo Island  
Pacific Swallow  
Daurian Swallow  
Edible Nest Swiftlet  
Collared Kingfisher hd  
Eastern Spotted Dove  
\*Sunda Collared Dove  
Barred Dove  
Black-naped Monarch 5  
\*Flores Drongo common  
Orange-footed Scrubfowl 6  
\*Green Junglefowl 6  
Large-billed Crow 6  
\*Flame-breasted Sunbird sev  
Ornate Sunbird sev  
\*Flores White-eye 2  
\*Tenggara Whistler  
\*Tenggara Friarbird  
\*Yellow-crested Cockatoo 10  
\*Lesueur's Triller  
Chinese Goshawk 1  
Brahmany Kite 2  
White-bellied Sea Eagle 1  
Osprey 1  
Javan Plover 2 (lan)  
[Tenggara Swiftlet]  
Blue-tailed Bee Eater  
Komodo Dragon  
Palm Civet

Pig  
Rusa Deer  
Long-tailed Macaques  
Yellow tree snail  
Draco Lizard

Pink Beach  
White-bellied Sea Eagle  
Brahimy kite

At Sea  
Bulwer's Petrel 5-7

11 October  
Kodia Island  
Collared Kingfisher  
Flores White-eye  
Lemon-bellied White-eye  
Ornate Sunbird  
Tenggara Oriole  
White-breasted Woodswallow  
Black-naped Fruit-Dove  
Striated Heron  
Edible-nest Swiftlet  
Barred Dove  
Sunda Collared Dove  
Pacific Swallow  
Rainbow Bee-eater

12 October  
Hoga/Wakatobi  
Island Monarch  
Sahul Sunbird  
Eastern Spotted Dove  
Barred Dove  
Black-naped Fruit-Dove  
Black-naped Oriole (Sulawesi Oriole)  
Sacred Kingfisher  
Sulawesi Crow  
Barred Rail



Grey-sided Flowerpecker  
White-eyed Drongo  
Elegant Pitta 2  
Common Dollarbird  
Common Sandpiper  
Red-footed Booby - village and leaving  
Pacific Reef Egret  
Osprey  
Redshank  
Little Black Cormorant  
Little Pied Cormorant  
Moluccan Monitor Lizard Varanua 'malaccensis'

13 October  
Buru  
Asian Emerald Dove  
Superb Fruit-Dove  
Claret-breasted Fruit-Dove  
Red Lory  
Red-cheeked Parrot  
Great-billed Parrot  
Moluccan (Brush) Cuckoo  
Leaser Coucal heard only  
Buru Drongo  
Buru Oriole heard only  
Buru Friarbird  
Buru Golden Bulbul  
Buru Flowerpecker  
Metallic Starling  
Grey-streaked Flycatcher  
Mollucan Monarch  
White-naped Monarch  
Willie Wagtail  
Glossy Swiftlet  
Black Sunbird  
Sahul (Clementia's) Sunbird

Pacific Reef Egret 8  
Great Frigatebird  
White-bellied Sea Eagle

Brahminy Kite  
Common Kingfisher  
Brown Booby  
White-winged Tern

14 October  
Trans Seram Highway  
Black Bittern  
Eclectus Parrot (heard)  
Red-cheeked Parrot  
Red Lory  
Coconut Lorikeet  
Seram Oriole  
Seram Friarbird  
Seram Leaf Warbler  
Streak-breasted Fantail  
Brahmany Kite  
Black Eagle  
Seram Swiftlet  
Pied Imperial Pigeon  
Amboina Cuckoo-Dove  
Moluccan Scrub Cuckoo (h)  
Blyth's Hornbill  
Sahul (Clementia's) Sunbird  
Moluccan Whistler (h)  
Grey Wagtail

Snorkelling/Beach  
Common Sandpiper  
Willie Wagtail  
Brahmany Kite  
Pied Imperial Pigeon  
Seram Imperial Pigeon  
Pacific Swallow  
Glossy Swiftlet  
Whiskered Tern  
White-winged Tern

15 October  
Misool, Raja Ampat



Great-billed Heron  
Pacific Reef Egret (or Heron)  
Striated Heron  
Great Frigatebird  
Lesser Frigatebird  
White-winged (Black) Tern  
Whiskered Tern  
Black-naped Tern  
Little Tern  
Crested Tern  
?Roseate Tern  
White-bellied Sea Eagle  
Osprey  
Brahminy Kite  
Spice Imperial Pigeon  
Fruit-Dove sp heard  
Singing Starling  
Glossy Swiftlet  
Torresian Crow  
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo  
Blyth's Hornbill  
Black Sunbird  
Olive-crowned Flowerpecker  
Sacred Kingfisher

16 October  
Wayag  
Striated Heron  
Brahminy Kite  
White-bellied Sea Eagle  
Beach Kingfisher  
Glossy Swiftlet  
Pacific (White-rumped) Swift  
Willie Wagtail  
Dwarf Fruit-Dove  
Moluccan Starling  
Sahul Sunbird (frenatus)  
Black Sunbird  
Common Shining Flycatcher (Monarch)  
Great-billed Parrot

Rainbow Bee-eater (h)  
Lesser Frigatebird

17 October

Waigeo

Western Crowned-pigeon

Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon

Moustached Treeswift

Glossy Swiftlet

Uniform Swiftlet

Pacific Baza

Brahminy Kite

Yellow-billed Kingfisher

Common Paradise-kingfisher (heard)

Rufous-bellied Kingfisher

Sacred Kingfisher

Palm Cockatoo

Eclectus Parrot

New Guinea Friarbird

Blyth's Hornbill

Rusty Mouse-warbler (heard)

Yellow-bellied Gerygone (heard)

White-breasted Woodswallow

Lowland Peltops

Hooded Butcherbird (heard)

Willie Wagtail

Common Shining Flycatcher (Monarch)

Brown-headed Crow

Red Bird-of-paradise

Wilson's BOP

Black-sided Robin (heard)

Singing Starling

Olive-crowned Flowerpecker

Grey Wagtail

18 October

Arfak Mountains

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

Eclectus (heard only?)

Pesquet's (Vulturine) Parrot



Black-capped Lory (heard only?)  
Blyth's Hornbill  
Pacific (Eastern) Koel (heard only?)  
Mountain Mouse-warbler (heard only?)  
Vogelkop Bowerbird  
Vogelkop Scrubwren  
Black-bellied Cuckooshrike  
(heard only?)  
Vogelkop Whistler (heard only?)  
Fantail Monarch  
Black Fantail (females all rufous)  
Grey Crow  
Crinkle-collared Manucode  
Western Parotia  
Black-billed Sicklebill  
Superb BOP  
Magnificent BOP  
Lesser BOP  
Green-backed Robin  
White-faced Robin  
Black-eared Catbird

19 October  
Cenderawasi Marine Park  
Lesser Frigatebird  
Common Tern  
Whale Sharks

20 October  
Biak  
Geelvink Fruit-Dove (heard only)  
Claret-breasted Fruit-Dove  
Eclectus Parrot  
Biak Lorikeet  
Biak Coucal (heard only)  
Papuan Brush Cuckoo (heard only)  
Glossy Swiftlet  
Uniform Swiftlet  
Biak Hooded Pitta  
Emperor Fairy-wren

Black Sunbird  
Sahul Sunbird  
Red-capped Flowerpecker  
Hooded Butcherbird  
Biak Triller (heard only)  
Biak Black Flycatcher (Monarch)  
Biak White-eye  
Papuan Spangled Drongo  
Metallic Starling (red eye)  
Long-tailed Starling (dark eye)

20 October  
Rusbasbedas Island  
Torresian Imperial Pigeon (distant, opp Island)  
Beach Kingfisher

21 October  
Liki Island and approach  
Lesser Frigatebird  
Great Frigatebird  
Brown Booby

21 October  
Liki Island  
Dollarbird  
Varied Honeyeater  
Torresian Imperial Pigeon  
Singing Starling (juv greyish above)  
Metallic Starling (longer tail than Singing)  
Sahul Sunbird  
Sacred Kingfisher  
Common Sandpiper  
Common Shining Flycatcher (heard only)  
Uniform Swiftlet  
Glossy Swiftlet

21 October  
Liki Island onwards  
Brown Booby  
Red-footed Booby



Lesser Frigatebird

22 October

Jayapura

Pacific Emerald Dove

23 October

Sepik River

White-bellied Sea Eagle

Whistling Kite

Orange-bellied Fruit-Dove

Collared Imperial Pigeon

Eclectus Parrot

Red-cheeked Parrot

New Guinea Friarbird

Eastern Great Egret

Whiskered Tern