



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

The Philippines

Highlights

6th to 15th June 2018 (10 days)

Trip Report



Palawan Peacock-Pheasant by Erik Forsyth

Tour Leaders: Mark Villa and Erik Forsyth

Trip Report compiled by Erik Forsyth

Tour Summary

After meeting up in Manila, we started our tour off with a short flight to Palawan Island, and drove to the nearby harbour to catch a catamaran over to Cowrie Island. The trip over was uneventful. Upon landing on this tropical island, we met up with a local guide who took us to a nearby tree to show us a roosting owl. We had come to see the Mantanani Scops Owl, a small island inhabitant, and here we were enjoying scope looks a mere three minutes after landing! After a quick lunch, we took a short walk around the island, picking up Collared Kingfisher, Pied Triller and Olive-backed Sunbird. With no time to waste, we headed back to the mainland and drove south through forested areas to the Zigzag Road, seeing eight Red-vented Cockatoos fly across the road en route. This was a good move, as soon we were enjoying Palawan Hornbill, Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike, Ashy Drongo, the huge Great Slaty Woodpecker, noisy Blue-naped Parrots, Spot-throated Woodpecker and Greater Coucal. After an action-packed afternoon, we retired tour hotel, stopping briefly for a Palawan Frogmouth that was frustratingly heard but not seen.



Hooded Pitta by Erik Forsyth

The following morning, we drove to a nearby forested area where we found several great birds, including close views of the tiny Palawan Flycatcher, Green Imperial Pigeon, Philippine Cuckoo-Dove, Hooded Pitta, Black-naped Oriole, White-vented Shama and, eventually, great looks at Melodious Babblers. From here we drove to Sabang, stopping at a tourist viewpoint where a calling Falcated Ground Babbler would not show. We did, however, see Olive-backed Sunbird, Black-naped Monarch



Flame-breasted Sunbird by Erik Forsyth

and, best of all, Palawan Flowerpecker. Further along the road, we stopped at Cockatoo Viewpoint in the late afternoon. Here we had excellent, albeit distant, views of four of the highly endangered Red-vented Cockatoos. Unfortunately, our night owling had to be cancelled due to strong winds and rain. *Little did we know about the wild weather that was soon to arrive.*

After a delayed start, due to safety concerns by the authorities, we were given the go-ahead to go. Arriving at the St Paul's Underground River National Park first, timing our arrival to precede the hordes of tourists, we had enough time to wander around in relative peace, searching for our

main targets. Foremost of these was, of course, the splendid male Palawan Peacock-Pheasant – which was heard calling and then quickly located in woodland alongside the trail. Cameras whirled and snapped as we tried to get good pictures. This stunning male was much appreciated even more, as his

iridescent plumage glowed in the early morning light. *The main target in the bag!* After hearing the mournful calls for most of the morning, we eventually found a pair of Philippine Megapode digging at a breeding mound, though they were still fairly shy and headed off into the forest when they realised we were watching them. Other great birds seen included a pair of Ashy-headed Babblers, which gave us the run-around before good looks were had, vocal White-vented Shama, which sang on open branches, a male Palawan Blue Flycatcher allowing good looks, some shy Blue Paradise Flycatchers, which were tricky to see, many good looks at Hooded Pittas, and a fabulous Ruddy Kingfisher! Several Long-tailed Macaques and Palawan Water Monitors were observed feeding in an area where rice had been placed for them.



Palawan Blue Flycatcher by Forrest Rowland

With the crowds arriving and birds in the bag, most of us journeyed into the caves that give this area its name, while a couple of us kept birding. We all saw the Germain's Swiftlets, which have a breeding colony at the cave entrance. In the afternoon, we ventured back to Cockatoo Viewpoint, again getting good views of about six birds. After dark, we quickly saw a Large-tailed Nightjar and a Palawan Frogmouth in flight after hearing it call nearby. The "snoring" call of the Palawan Scops Owl was heard, but we could not get down an inaccessible gully where it was calling from! So, with two out of three, we headed back to the hotel fairly satisfied.

The following morning we awoke to rain, and it continued on and off throughout the morning. Brief views were had of a flying Philippine Pitta, and Asian Fairy-bluebird, Palawan Tit and Fiery Minivets were enjoyed. A stop at a patch of mangroves gave us Copper-throated Sunbird and the huge Stork-billed Kingfisher. Our time had come to an end on Palawan, and later in the afternoon we were



Spotted Wood Kingfisher by Erik Forsyth

catching our flight to Manila and on to Mt Makiling. A short owling session after dinner was successful, with flight views of Luzon Hawk-Owl.

Early the following morning, we boarded our jeepney (a form of local transport only in the Philippines) and drove to a high elevation on Mt Makiling. Unfortunately, the rain and windy conditions that plagued our last 2 days on Palawan were here in force. We initially did well, with great views of the colourful Scale-feathered Malkoha. After enjoying long looks, the weather started to deteriorate (due to a low pressure hanging over the Philippines): it rained heavily and the wind picked up,

making birding impossible in the forest. We decided to head for the agricultural area nearby, hoping for some new birds! This was a great decision, and soon we were watching Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, Striated

Grassbirds, Stripe-headed Rhabdornis, Coppersmith Barbets, Striated Swallows, Lesser Coucal and Barred Rails. In the afternoon, we did well to find the scarce Indigo-banded Kingfisher and Lowland White-eye. The following morning, we headed up Mt Makiling again; and with the wind not so strong, we came up trumps with excellent looks at a stunning Spotted Wood Kingfisher, a male Philippine Trogon, a pair of Philippine Falconet, a pair of Luzon Flameback, Balicassiao and a huge Philippine Hawk-Eagle! After this heady success, we headed to the grasslands, finding Asian Palm Swift, Purple Needletail, Buff-banded and Barred Rails and brilliant looks at a Slaty-breasted Rail. *Wow!*

After a brilliant catch up on Mt Makiling, we then drove to our next destination on the Infanta Road. The drive was slow, as heavy rain arrived, and as we climbed in elevation heavy mist appeared. We arrived in the late afternoon, with heavy rain still falling. *It looked as if we had our work cut out for us over the next two days!* The following morning, we woke early with rain falling steadily, but it was a positive group that headed out onto the Infanta Road to bird. At about KM 93, we stopped and started birding, and it wasn't long before we found a flock with an assortment of birds. Here we enjoyed great looks at the tiny and cute Citrine Canary-Flycatcher, busy Sulphur-billed Nuthatches, Elegant Tits, Philippine Bulbul, hordes of Philippine Pygmy Woodpeckers and Yellowish White-eye. The rain persisted, and we hopped on and off the bus. Other notable sightings during the course of the day included Philippine Cuckoo-Dove, smart Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove, Emerald Dove, Pygmy Flowerpecker, a lone Rufous-crowned Bee-eater and fabulous views of Philippine Serpent Eagle.



Philippine Serpent Eagle by Erik Forsyth



The increasingly rare Philippine Fairy-bluebird by Erik Forsyth

On our last morning, we headed out onto the Infanta Road once again, first stopping for several White-throated Kingfishers, and fabulous close looks at the usually shy Plain Bush-hen – *possibly pushed out of the grass by the heavy rains!* Best of all was a small group of attractive Philippine Fairy-bluebirds – a scarce endemic, and becoming increasingly difficult to find throughout the Philippines.

After a successful morning, we packed up and headed to Subic Bay. By now, the rain was falling heavily, and we headed to Manila for a couple of birding stops. A brief stop at the university campus yielded close views of a roosting Philippine Scops Owl and a

Philippine Nightjar. An upbeat group then headed to Le Misa Eco-park, where after a search we came up trumps with the rare Ashy Thrush, and Lowland White-eyes. A Hooded Pitta was a bonus. It was getting late, so we headed to Subic Bay, seeing Black-crowned Night and Purple Herons and, best of all, a Cinnamon Bittern flying in flooded fields on the drive. The following morning, raining again, we headed to the woodlands of Subic Bay. With a bit of luck, we had a two-hour break in the rain, and this paid off. Soon we were enjoying fabulous looks at perched Green Racket-tails in the scope, as well as the strange pink-faced Coletto, and we enjoyed several fabulous looks at the dashing Rough-crested Malkohas. Also noted were Philippine Green Pigeons, Blackish and Bar-bellied Cuckooshrikes, flight looks at Rufous Coucals, Luzon Flameback, as well as the highly sought-after Sooty Woodpecker, the huge White-bellied Woodpecker, Brahminy Kite, Black-naped Oriole, Luzon Hornbill, noisy Blue-naped Parrots, Guaiabero and Balicassiao. For most, a huge surprise was a Philippine Duck flying over the forest. We almost gave up on the White-eared Brown Dove that we had heard calling at different sites when Jean asked what the bird was on a branch over the trail. *Bingo... White-eared Brown Dove at last!* Shortly after this success, the wind grew in strength, and we decided to leave the forest for safety reasons. Our afternoon birding was quiet apart from Philippine Tailorbird, and a night drive produced another Philippine Scops Owl.



Philippine Nightjar by Erik Forsyth

On our last morning, we drove back to Manila International Airport, where the tour would conclude. On the drive, we incredibly still managed a few new species for the tour, including 2-3 Philippine Swampheens in flooded rice-fields. *A great pullback, after we thought that we had lost this species because we could not drive to Candaba Marsh due to the road being under water.* We also recorded Wandering Whistling Duck, Yellow Bittern, a Watercock on a fence, Common Moorhen, and two Pheasant-tailed Jacana.

Despite eight out of ten days with rain, we still managed 184 species, of which 80 species were endemic; so, all in all, we were very pleased.

Annotated List of Bird Species recorded

Total species recorded: 184

78 Endemics.

Key to Abbreviations:

E: endemic species found only in the Philippines

NE: near-endemic species found in the Philippines and one or more nearby small islands

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). 2014. IOC World Bird List (v 4.2).

Ducks, Geese & Swans - Anatidae

Wandering Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna arcuata

This species was seen flying in flooded rice fields between Subic Bay and Manila.

Note: We observed the subspecies arcuata.

Philippine Duck (E)

Anas luzonica

A single bird was seen by a few of us, flying through the forest, at Subic Bay.

Megapodes - Megapodiidae

Philippine Megapode (Tabon Scrubfowl) (NE)

Megapodius cumingii

At least three birds were seen and several others heard calling in St Paul's Underground River National Park, Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies cumingii.

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies - Phasianidae

Red Junglefowl

Gallus gallus

A female bird was observed with chicks at Subic Bay.

Palawan Peacock-Pheasant (E) (EN)

Polyplectron napoleonis

We enjoyed great views of the stunning male at St Paul's Underground River National Park, Palawan.

A huge relief as the boat was cancelled either side of our visit due to rough seas.

Hérons & Bitterns - Ardeidae

Yellow Bittern

Ixobrychus sinensis

A single bird was seen in flight over flooded fields. Between Subic Bay and Manila.

Cinnamon Bittern

Ixobrychus cinnamomeus

This species was seen well in flight on Palawan and en route to Manila.

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

A few birds were seen in flooded reedbeds from Subic Bay to Manila.

Note: We observed the subspecies nycticorax.

Eastern Cattle Egret

Bubulcus coromandus

A cosmopolitan species, found in good numbers throughout the tour.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

A few birds were seen in flooded reedbeds from Subic Bay to Manila.

Note: We observed the subspecies manilensis.

Great Egret

Ardea modesta

We encountered individuals and small groups of this species, on the islands of Luzon and Palawan.

Intermediate Egret

Egretta intermedia

This species was also seen at numerous wetlands, throughout the tour

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Our initial sightings of this species were on Palawan with several other birds on Luzon.

Note: We observed the subspecies garzetta.

Pacific Reef Heron

Egretta sacra

We saw seven of these handsome egrets on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies sacra.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles - Accipitridae

Crested Serpent Eagle

Spilornis cheela

We enjoyed fabulous views of this species on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies palawanensis.

Philippine Serpent Eagle (E)*Spilornis holospilus*

We enjoyed good sightings on the Infanta Highway.

Philippine Hawk-Eagle*Nisaetus philippensis*

Good flight views at Mt Makiling and on the Infanta Road.

Crested Goshawk*Accipiter trivirgatus*

A singleton was seen briefly on Palawan by a few of us.

Besra*Accipiter virgatus*

A single bird was seen as perched at the top of Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies confusus on Luzon.

Brahminy Kite*Haliastur indus*

At least seven birds were seen leaving a roosting tree at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies intermedius.

Rails, Crakes & Coots - Rallidae

Barred Rail*Gallirallus torquatus*

We had excellent views of a pair at Mt Makiling with further sightings on the Infanta Road and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies torquatus.

Slaty-breasted Rail

We had great looks at a single bird in the paddocks at Mt Makiling.

Buff-banded Rail*Gallirallus philippensis*

We had great looks at a single bird in the paddocks at Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies philippensis.

Plain Bush-hen (E)*Amaurornis olivacea*

A single bird was seen crossing the trail at Mt Makiling but best of all were the numerous sightings on the Infanta Road.

White-breasted Waterhen*Amaurornis phoenicurus*

Seen on Palawan and Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies phoenicurus.

Watercock*Gallicrex cinerea*

Erik flushed two birds in rice fields on Palawan and two were seen near Subic Bay.

Philippine Swamphen*Porphyrio porphyrio*

Two birds were seen well from the bus while travelling from Subic Bay to Manila. This was a huge relief as we could not go to Candaba Marsh due to flooding.

Note: We observed the subspecies pulverulentus.

Common Moorhen*Gallinula chloropus*

Recorded in Manila and in fields on the drive from Subic Bay and Manila.

Jacanas - Jacanidae

Pheasant-tailed Jacana*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*

Two birds were seen at a wetland en route from Subic Bay to Manila.

Pigeons & Doves - Columbidae

Common (Rock) Pigeon*Columba livia*

This feral species was observed in most urban areas throughout the tour.

Red Turtle Dove*Streptopelia tranquebarica*

A singleton in flight at Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies humilis.

Spotted Dove*Streptopelia chinensis*

This widespread Asian species was found on Palawan at Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies tigrina.

Philippine Cuckoo-Dove (E)*Macropygia tenuirostris*

Great views on Palawan and at Mt Makiling.

Notes: We observed the subspecies tenuirostris. The history of splits from which this species came is a little complex. To simplify, it came from the same splitting line as Brown, Slender-billed and Ruddy Cuckoo-Doves, which at one point were all a part of Reddish Cuckoo-Dove.

Common Emerald Dove*Chalcophaps indica*

Seen on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies indica.

Zebra Dove*Geopelia striata*

Good views were had on Palawan and on Luzon.

White-eared Brown Dove (E)*Phapitreron leucotis*

We battled with this species but eventually saw it at Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies leucotis on Luzon.

Philippine Green Pigeon (E)*Treron axillaris*

Good scope looks daily at Subic Bay.

Notes: We observed the subspecies axillaris on Luzon. This species is sometimes lumped with Pompadour Green Pigeon, T. pompadora.

Thick-billed Green Pigeon*Treron curvirostra*

Good views on Palawan.

Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove (E)*Ptilinopus occipitalis*

Two birds were heard calling and then seen in flight on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies incognitus.

Black-chinned Fruit Dove (E)*Ptilinopus leclancheri*

Great looks on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies leclancheri.

Green Imperial Pigeon*Ducula aenea*

Commonly encountered on Palawan at Subic Bay, Luzon.

Note: We observed the subspecies palawanensis on Palawan and aenea elsewhere.

Cuckoos - Cuculidae**Rufous Coucal (E)***Centropus melanops*

This species is notoriously difficult to see well so we were grateful to get flight views on two occasions at Subic Bay.

Greater Coucal*Centropus sinensis*

Seen once and heard daily during our time on Palawan.

Note: We heard the subspecies bubutus.

Philippine Coucal (E)*Centropus viridis*

We had numerous sightings at in agricultural fields at Mt Makiling and Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies viridis.

Lesser Coucal*Centropus bengalensis*

A pair were seen well, in the agricultural fields at Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies philippinensis.

Chestnut-breasted Malkoha (E)*Phaenicophaeus curvirostris*

We enjoyed excellent looks at a pair on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies harringtoni.

Rough-crested (Red-crested) Malkoha (E)*Dasylophus superciliosus*

Fantastic looks at several birds at Subic Bay where we saw it daily.

Note: We observed the subspecies superciliosus.

Scale-feathered Malkoha (E)

Dasylophus cumingi

We had brilliant views of this truly spectacular bird on Mt. Makiling and on the Infanta Road – definitely one of the tour highlights.

Note: We observed the subspecies cagayanensis.

Asian Koel

Eudynamys scolopaceus

Good views of a calling male on Palawan and heard daily on Luzon.

Note: We observed the subspecies mindanensis.

Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo

Surniculus lugubris

This widespread Asian bird, here represented by subspecies *brachyurus*, was heard calling and seen on at the cockatoo viewpoint on Palawan.

Notes: We observed the subspecies brachyurus. This species underwent a name change from Asian Drongo-Cuckoo, following the splitting of the species.

Owls - Strigidae

Palawan Scops Owl (E) (H)

Otus fuliginosus

A very close calling bird on two occasions was not seen in the dense vegetation. Very Frustrating!

Philippine Scops Owl (E)

Otus megalotis

Great views on a day roost at the university grounds in Manila and on our night drive at Subic Bay.

Mantanani Scops Owl (NE)

Otus mantananensis

Fabulous daytime looks at a roosting bird on Cowrie Island was a trip highlight.

Spotted Wood Owl (E) (H)

Strix seloputo

Heard calling on Palawan but would not come closer.

Note: We observed the subspecies wiepkeni.

Luzon Hawk-Owl (E)

Ninox philippensis

Good flight views at this species at Mt Makiling and on the Infanta Road.

Notes: We observed the subspecies philippensis. This species was split from Philippine Hawk-Owl.

Frogmouths - Podargidae

Palawan Frogmouth (E)

Batrachostomus chaseni

We had reasonable flight views on Palawan.

Note: This species was split from Javan Frogmouth.

Nightjars - Caprimulgidae

Great Eared Nightjar (H)

Eurostopodus macrotis

This large nightjar was seen heard calling on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies macrotis.

Large-tailed Nightjar

Caprimulgus macrurus

Good views of a single bird on Palawan.

Philippine Nightjar (E)

Caprimulgus manillensis

Really good looks at a roosting bird at the university grounds in Manila and on the Infanta Road.

Treeswifts - Hemiprocnidae

Whiskered Treeswift

Hemiprocte comata

We enjoyed great scope views at this delightful species at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies major.

Swifts - Apodidae**Glossy Swiftlet***Collocalia esculenta*

Good numbers daily in the Philippines.

Note: We observed the subspecies marginata on Luzon and bagobo on other islands. Further taxonomic reviews have split this species into Grey-rumped and Ridgetop Swiftlets. Grey-rumped Swiftlet occur on the Visayan Islands and Central and Southern Luzon and the birds on Palawan are possibly this species but still under review. We observed this species on Mt Makiling, Subic Bay. Ridgetop Swiftlet occurs in Northern Luzon and Mindanao. More taxonomic work is required to find out their full distributions.

Pygmy Swiftlet (E)*Collocalia troglodytes*

Singletons on Palawan and excellent close looks at Mt Makiling, Infanta Road and Subic Bay.

Philippine Swiftlet (E)*Aerodramus mearnsi*

Brief but good looks at Mt Polis.

Ameline Swiftlet (E)*Aerodramus amelis*

Daily looks on Palawan, Mt Makiling, Infanta Road and Subic Bay, Luzon.

Note: We observed the subspecies palawanensis.

Germain's Swiftlet*Aerodramus germane*

Great looks at the colony at St Paul's Underground River NP.

Note: This species was split from Edible-nest Swiftlet.

Brown-backed Needletail*Hirundapus giganteus*

We enjoyed good looks at four of these large, speedy swifts on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies giganteus.

Purple Needletail*Hirundapus celebensis*

Fabulous acrobatic flight views of ten+ daily at the grasslands below Mt Makiling, with further views at 80+ at Subic Bay.

House Swift*Apus nipalensis*

Good looks at Mt Makiling where they were breeding under the bridge in town.

Trogon - Trogonidae**Philippine Trogon (E)***Harpactes ardens*

Great views of a male perched in the forest at Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies luzoniensis.

Rollers – Coraciidae**Oriental Dollarbird***Eurystomus orientalis*

We found this widespread and conspicuous species at Subic Bay.

Kingfishers - Alcedinidae**Spotted Wood Kingfisher (E)***Actenoides lindsayi*

Fabulous close looks at a stunning male on Mt Makiling! Also heard calling daily at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies lindsayi.

Stork-billed Kingfisher*Pelargopsis capensis*

This huge beast was seen very well on two days on Palawan.

Ruddy Kingfisher*Halcyon coromanda*

Fabulous looks at this stunner at St Paul's NP on Palawan.

White-throated Kingfisher*Halcyon smyrnensis*

Good numbers were seen on the Infanta Road and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies gularis.

Collared Kingfisher*Todirhamphus chloris*

This widespread species was found throughout Palawan and Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies collaris.

Oriental (Rufous-backed) Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx erithaca*

Singletons zoomed passed us in the ATV Track forest on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies motleyi.

Indigo-banded Kingfisher (E) *Alcedo cyanopectus*

A stunning male was found along a rocky stream at Mt Makiling!

Note: We observed the subspecies cyanopectus.

Bee-eaters - Meropidae

Rufous-crowned Bee-eater *Merops viridis*

We enjoyed great looks at a singleton along the Infanta Road. There were no birds at the colony at Subic Bay due to the heavy rain.

Note: We observed the endemic subspecies americanus.

Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*

This species was seen well in the grasslands below Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the endemic subspecies philippinus.

Hornbills - Bucerotidae

Rufous Hornbill (E) (H) *Buceros hydrocorax*

Frustratingly heard only on the Infanta Road.

Palawan Hornbill (E) *Anthracoceros marchei*

Great views daily on Palawan.

Luzon Hornbill (E) *Penelopides manillae*

Fabulous looks daily at up to four birds on Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: This species was split from Tarictic Hornbill.

Barbets - Capitonidae

Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala*

Great scope looks at two birds each at Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies haemacephala.

Woodpeckers - Picidae

Philippine Pygmy Woodpecker (E) *Dendrocopos maculatus*

We all had good looks at this species at Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies validirostris.

White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis*

Two sightings on Palawan and all of us had great views at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies confusus on Luzon.

Spot-throated Flameback (E) *Dinopium everetti*

We had great views during our time on Palawan.

Note: This species was split from Common Flameback.

Luzon Flameback (E) *Chrysocolaptes haematribon*

A striking species recorded at Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: This species was split from Greater Flameback.

Sooty Woodpecker (E) *Mulleripicus funebris*

These impressive endemic woodpeckers were seen on well in the forested areas near Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies funebris.

Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*

A vocal pair of these spectacular woodpeckers were seen near the Cockatoo viewpoint on Palawan.

Falcons - Falconidae

Philippine Falconet (E)

Microhierax erythrogenys

We enjoyed excellent scope looks at two birds on Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies erythrogenys on Luzon.

Cockatoos - Cacatuidae

Red-vented (Philippine) Cockatoo (E)

Cacatua haematuropygia

Great scope looks over three days – sadly, one of the most threatened species in the Philippines with most of the population surviving on a few offshore islands.

Parrots - Psittacidae

Blue-crowned Racket-tail (E)

Prioniturus platenae

A couple were seen briefly in flight on Palawan.

Green Racket-tail (E)

Prioniturus luconensis

We had fantastic scope views of this species at Subic Bay.

Blue-naped Parrot (NE)

Tanygnathus lucionensis

We had excellent views of this species on Palawan and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies lucionensis on Luzon and salvadorii on Palawan.

Guaibero (E)

Bolbopsittacus lunulatus

An attractive and distinctive parrot was seen feeding at close range at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies lunulatus on Luzon.

Philippine Hanging Parrot (Colasisi) (E)

Loriculus philippensis

We saw this small noisy parrot flying on several occasions on Mt Makiling, Infanta Road and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies philippensis on Luzon.

Pittas - Pittidae

Philippine Pitta

Pitta erythrogaster

After struggling to see a bird calling for 40 minutes, we had brief looks as a bird flew across a track and disappeared.

Note: We observed the subspecies erythrogaster.

Hooded Pitta

Pitta sordida

Stunning looks at up to four birds at St Paul's NP. Several other birds were heard calling in forest throughout the island.

Note: We observed the subspecies palawanensis on Palawan.

Australasian Warblers - Acanthizidae

Golden-bellied Gerygone

Gerygone sulphurea

We had good looks at a few birds at the university campus, Manila.

Note: We observed the subspecies simplex.

Woodswallow - Artamidae

White-breasted Woodswallow

Artamus leucorhynchus

A widespread species seen on six days of the tour.

Note: We observed the subspecies leucorhynchus.

Ioras - Aegithinidae**Common Iora***Aegithina tiphia*

Seen on the first two days of the tour on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies aequanimis.

Cuckooshrikes & Trillers - Campephagidae**Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike***Coracina striata*

We had excellent looks on Palawan and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies striata on Luzon.

Blackish Cuckooshrike (E)*Coracina coerulescens*

We had good perched and flight views at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies coerulescens.

Pied Triller*Lalage nigra*

Good views on Cowrie Island, Palawan and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies nigra.

Fiery Minivet*Pericrocotus igneus*

Good views on Palawan of this pretty species.

Whistlers - Pachycephalidae**Yellow-bellied Whistler (E)***Pachycephala philippensis*

We had great views of a single bird in a small flock on the Infanta Road.

Shrikes - Laniidae**Long-tailed Shrike***Lanius schach*

This attractive, widespread species was seen well on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies nasutus.

Orioles - Oriolidae**Dark-throated Oriole (E)***Oriolus xanthonotus*

Excellent looks on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies samarensis.

Black-naped Oriole*Oriolus chinensis*

First seen on Palawan but subsequently recorded at Mt Makiling and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies chinensis.

Drongos - Dicruridae**Ashy Drongo***Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Seen well daily on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies leucophaeus.

Balicassiao (E)*Dicrurus balicassius*

We had good views of birds at Mt. Makiling and at Subic Bay where their cat-like calls were heard daily.

Note: We observed the subspecies balicassius on Luzon.

Hair-crested Drongo (E)*Dicrurus bracteatus*

We had great looks daily on the island of Palawan.

Notes: We observed the subspecies palawanensis on Palawan. This species was split from Spangled Drongo.

Fantails - *Rhipidurae*

Blue-headed Fantail (E)*Rhipidura cyaniceps*

Very good looks daily on the Infanta Road.

Philippine Pied Fantail (E)*Rhipidura nigritorquis*

Recorded on Palawan and Infanta Road.

Note: This species was split from Pied Fantail.

Monarch Flycatchers - *Monarchidae*

Black-naped Monarch*Hypothymis azurea*

This widespread Asian species was seen on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies azurea.

Blue Paradise Flycatcher (E)*Terpsiphone cyanescens*

This magnificent Palawan endemic was seen on three days.

Crows - *Corvidae*

Slender-billed Crow (E)*Corvus enca*

Seen daily on the island of Palawan where we heard its frog-like call.

Note: We observed the subspecies pusillus.

Large-billed Crow*Corvus macrorhynchos*

First seen in the agricultural area at Mt Makiling with further views at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies philippinus.

Fairy Flycatchers - *Stenostiridae*

Citrine Canary-Flycatcher*Culicicapa helianthea*

Excellent looks daily on the Infanta Road.

Tits - *Paridae*

Elegant Tit (E)*Periparus elegans*

We enjoyed great looks at Mt Makiling, Infanta Road and Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies elegans on Luzon.

Palawan Tit (E)*Periparus amabilis*

We had good views on Palawan.

Bulbuls - *Pycnonotidae*

Black-headed Bulbul*Pycnonotus atriceps*

Seen daily on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies atriceps.

Yellow-wattled Bulbul (E)*Pycnonotus urostictus*

Heard only on Mt Makiling and seen on the Infanta Road.

Yellow-vented Bulbul*Pycnonotus goiavier*

A common bird of secondary scrub, seen regularly Mt Makiling, Infanta Road and Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies goiavier on Luzon.

Ashy-fronted Bulbul (E)*Pycnonotus cinereifrons*

Only recorded once on Palawan.

Note: This species was split from Olive-winged Bulbul.

Palawan Bulbul (E)*Alophoixus frater*

Fairly common and encountered almost every day while on Palawan.

Note: This species was split from Grey-cheeked Bulbul.

Sulphur-bellied Bulbul (E)*Iole palawanensis*

A rather inconspicuous bulbul but seen well on Palawan.

Philippine Bulbul (E)*Hypsipetes philippinus*

This common and vocal species was seen on six days of the tour.

Note: We observed the subspecies philippinus on Luzon.

Martins & Swallows - Hirundinidae**Barn Swallow***Hirundo rustica*

We saw a few of these winter migrants throughout the trip.

Pacific Swallow*Hirundo tahitica*

Recorded daily on Palawan and on Luzon.

Note: We observed the subspecies javanica.

Striated Swallow*Cecropis striolata*

We had great looks at this species in the agricultural areas of Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies striolata.

Leaf Warblers & Allies - Phylloscopidae**Lemon-throated Leaf Warbler (E)***Phylloscopus cebuensis*

We had great views of this little beauty on the Infanta Road.

Notes: We observed the subspecies benguetensis. This species was split from Mountain Leaf Warbler.

Grassbirds & Allies - Megaluridae**Tawny Grassbird***Megalurus timoriensis*

Good views of a responsive bird at Mt Makiling and on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies crex.

Striated Grassbird*Megalurus palustris*

A common and conspicuous grassland species seen in the grasslands below Mt Makiling and on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies forbesi.

Bicol Ground-warbler (H)*Robsonius sorsogonensis*

Heard singing on a vegetated slope on the Infanta Road. Unfortunately, the high winds made it too difficult to locate the calling bird!

Cisticolas & Allies - Cisticolidae**Zitting Cisticola***Cisticola juncidis*

Recorded in grasslands at Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies tinnabulans.

Golden-headed Cisticola*Cisticola exilis*

Great views of this stunner in the agricultural lands at Mt Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies semirufus.

Philippine Tailorbird (E)*Orthotomus chloronotus*

Seen eventually at Subic Bay.

Notes: We observed the subspecies frontalis.

Grey-backed Tailorbird (E)*Orthotomus derbianus*

Good looks on Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies derbianus.

Rufous-tailed Tailorbird*Orthotomus sericeus*

Seen daily on the island of Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies sericeus.

Babblers - Timaliidae

Pin-striped Tit-Babbler

Macronous gularis

Found almost daily on the island of Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies woodi.

Fulvettas, Ground Babblers - Pellorneidae

Falcated Wren-Babbler (E) (H)

Ptilochicla falcata

Frustratingly singing nearby but would not show!

Ashy-headed Babbler (E)

Malacocincla cinereiceps

An active pair were seen at St Paul's NP and ATV Track, Palawan.

Melodious Babbler (E)

Malacopteron palawanense

Great looks at three flighty, calling birds at the Irawan, Palawan.

White-eyes - Zosteropidae

Yellowish White-eye (E)

Zosterops nigrorum

Good views at the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies innominatus.

Lowland White-eye

Zosterops meyeri

Recorded at Mt Makiling, Infanta Road and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies whiteheadi.

Fairy-bluebirds - Irenidae

Asian Fairy-bluebird

Irena puella

This stunning bird was seen well on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies tweeddalei.

Philippine Fairy-bluebird

Irena cyanogastra

Fabulous views of the disappearing endemic on the Infanta Road.

Nuthatches - Sittidae

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch

Sitta frontalis

Recorded on our first afternoon on Palawan.

Sulphur-billed Nuthatch (E)

Sitta oenochlamys

We had multiple sightings on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies isarog.

Mynas, Starlings & Rhabdorni - Sturnidae

Asian Glossy Starling

Aplonis panayensis

A widespread Asian species was seen in small numbers, throughout.

Note: We observed the subspecies panayensis.

Coledo (NE)

Sarcops calvus

We enjoyed numerous sightings of this strange endemic at Subic.

Note: We observed the subspecies calvus on Luzon.

Common Hill Myna

Gracula religiosa

Small numbers on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies palawanensis.

Crested Myna

Acridotheres cristatellus

Commonly seen around Manila and at Subic Bay.

Note: We observed the subspecies cristatellus.

Stripe-headed Rhabdornis (E)

Rhabdornis mystacalis

We had good views at Mt. Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies mystacalis on Luzon.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers - Muscicapidae

White-browed Shama (E)

Copsychus luzoniensis

Unbelievably, one of these master songsters showed within seconds high up on Mt. Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies luzoniensis.

White-vented Shama (E)

Copsychus niger

Our first encounter with this fine Palawan endemic was near Sabang, where we enjoyed superb views.

Thereafter, we enjoyed several sightings at various sites on the island.

Palawan Blue Flycatcher (E)

Cyornis lemprieri

We enjoyed simply cracking views of this furtive species in St Paul's NP.

Palawan Flycatcher (E)

Ficedula platenae

Fabulous looks at four birds in song at the Irawan, Palawan.

Leafbirds - Chloropseidae

Yellow-throated Leafbird (E)

Chloropsis palawanensis

An attractive species was seen during our time on Palawan.

Flowerpeckers - Dicaeidae

Olive-backed Flowerpecker (E)

Prionochilus olivaceus

A single bird was seen on the Infanta Road.

Palawan Flowerpecker (E)

Prionochilus plateni

This fine Palawan endemic was seen in small numbers. A feeding bird at the Cockatoo viewpoint was watched at length.

Note: We observed the subspecies plateni.

Orange-bellied Flowerpecker

Dicaeum trigonostigma

A single bird was found at Mt. Makiling.

Note: We observed the subspecies cinereigulare.

Buzzing Flowerpecker

Dicaeum hypoleucum

Two birds were seen at Mt Makiling and on the Infanta Road.

Pygmy Flowerpecker (E)

Dicaeum pygmaeum

We had superb views of several birds on Palawan and on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies palawanorum.

Sunbirds - Nectariniidae

Brown-throated Sunbird

Anthreptes malacensis

We had several good sightings while on Palawan.

Notes: We observed the subspecies paraguayae. This species was split from Plain-throated Sunbird.

Purple-throated Sunbird

Leptocoma sperata

This flashy sunbird was seen very well on Palawan.

Note: We observed the subspecies trochilus.

Copper-throated Sunbird

Leptocoma calcostetha

We were successful in seeing several stunning males and females in mangroves near Sabang, Palawan.

Olive-backed Sunbird

Cinnyris jugularis

This widespread Asian species was found in good numbers on Palawan and Luzon. We observed the subspecies Aurora, which has a wide band of orange on the chest.

Note: We observed the subspecies aurora on Palawan.

Flaming Sunbird (E) *Aethopyga flagrans*

We had great views of two birds on the Infanta Road.

Note: We observed the subspecies flagrans.

Lovely Sunbird (E) *Aethopyga shelleyi*

Small numbers of these attractive birds were seen on Palawan.

Notes: We observed the subspecies bella. This species was split from Lovely Sunbird.

Pale Spiderhunter (E) *Arachnothera dilutior*

Brief views of two birds in forested patches on Palawan.

Note: This species was split from Little Spiderhunter.

Old World Sparrows - Ploceidae

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

This introduced species was common in all towns and cities.

Parrotfinches & Munias - Estrilidae

Scaly-breasted Munia (Nutmeg Mannakin) *Lonchura punctulata*

This widespread Asian species was seen on Palawan, Mt. Makiling and on the Infanta Road

Notes: We observed the subspecies cabanisi.

White-bellied Munia *Lonchura leucogastra*

We all had great views of a few on Palawan and at Mt. Makiling.

Notes: We observed the subspecies manuli.

Chestnut Munia *Lonchura malacca*

Good sightings in rice fields at Irawan, Palawan, and Mt Makiling.

Notes: We observed the subspecies jagori.

Pipits & Wagtails - Motacillidae

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*

Our first sighting was of two birds at Palawan airport with further sightings on the Infanta Road.

Notes: We observed the subspecies lugubris.

Annotated List of Mammal Species recorded

Large Flying Fox *Pteropus vampyrus*

We saw thousands of these impressive creatures at Subic Bay.

Golden-crowned Flying Fox *Acerodon jubatus*

A handful of individuals were seen together with the Large Flying Foxes, in Subic Bay.

Long-tailed Macaque *Macaca fascicularis*

Seen at very close range on Palawan.

Philippine Pygmy Squirrel *Exilisciurus concinnus*

Four were seen very well in Rajah Sikatuna NP on Bohol.

Northern Palawan Tree Squirrel *Sundasciurus juvencus*

Seen at both St Paul's Underground River NP, and again along the Iwahig Penal Colony trail on the island of Palawan.

Clouded Rat species?

Only seen by Jean at Mt Makiling.

Reptiles:

Tokay Gecko*Gekko gecko*

Although we never saw this species the strange call was heard daily in lowland areas.

Moreau's Tropical House Gecko*Hemidactylus mabouia*

Many were seen around our hotels throughout the tour.

Palawan Water Monitor,*Varanus palawanensis*

Close looks at several large beasts at St Pauls NP, Palawan.

Asian Box Turtle*Cuora*

Found on the Infanta Road.

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