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## Halmahera

### April 14-19 2006

A flying visit to recce with the *Sicklebill Safaris* tour from West Papua, and taking in a day on Sulawesi at either end. Visa readily obtainable at the airport at Manado for US\$10 (for Brits and Australians, but advisable to check first).

#### Itinerary

##### April 12

Flight from Singapore to Manado arriving 1300 on the Silkair flight. Arranged a car to take us to Tangkoko for the rest of the day and next morning, staying overnight at Mama Roos.

##### April 13

Tangkoko NP morning, with a short boat trip to see what were reported to be Minahassa Masked Owls but which were actually Sulawesi Masked. Afternoon back to Manado and overnight in the Orion Hotel.

##### April 14

Taxi to airport for late morning flight to Ternate on Merpati, arriving 1300. Taxi to jetty and then fast boat to Sidangoli on Halmahera, staying at Handayani Losman close to jetty. Met up with Kris Tindige and the Sicklebill group. Late pm birding the Kali Batu Putih (KBP) Road, and owling again later.

##### April 15

Km 9 on the KBP Road, walking some 3 km along to a plantation area, and meeting up with local guide Anu (Demianus Bagali) en route. Pm out to coastal site but heavy rain washed us out. Owling again that night.

### April 16

Wallace's Standardwing lek at Dase Hill, 3 km walk from Anu's hut. PM birding along main Tobelo Road at Gunung Potong.

### April 17

Birding by Anu's hut, then drove to Daru and caught outrigger canoe at 1230 for wet transfer across bay to Foli. Birded the logging road at Km 3, the track on the right.

### April 18

Foli at Km 3 track early AM, then 1100 outrigger canoe back to Daru, an astonishingly wet crossing. Drove to Tobelo, about 2 hrs, then 45 min on to Galela for a night-time visit to the Moluccan Scrubfowl nesting beach. Left at 2130 and headed back to Sidangoli, arriving about 0215 at the Losman!

### April 19

Sidangoli-Ternate-Manado. 30 min speedboat ride for Rp 250,000. Got to Airport at 1000 for Merpati flight at 1230 to Manado.

Pm arranged car to take us to Gunung Ambang, driving out to Singsingon and staying the night at ranger Julius's house.

### April 20

Gunung Ambang Singsingon side AM, then back to Manado and overnight in the Orion Hotel.

### April 21

Flight from Manado to Singapore then SIN-BNE, arriving April 22 at 0530.

## Species List

Life birds in bold      \* denotes an Australasian tick

Red-throated Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

An adult in b.d. along the road near Gunung Potong, and a stripey juv. on a small woodland pond at Foli.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

One flying by at Foli.

Spotted Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna guttata*

Two on a roadside swamp near G. Potong on 16<sup>th</sup>, maybe the same as two that flew down the valley there later.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*

Two at the Foli track.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Quite common in the disturbed cut-over country, max. 4 and seen at most sites.

**Grey-throated Goshawk** *Accipiter griseogularis*

This endemic split from Variable Goshawk was seen on both days around KBP, with fine views at Gunung Potong on 16<sup>th</sup>. Anu was sure this bird was *A. erythraucen* the Red-necked Sparrowhawk, but it was quite large and despite a large rufous collar had the upperparts too pale a grey to fit this species. Legs yellow, eye yellow, cere greenish yellow, no tail bars, underparts entirely rufous sans barring and paler near belly. Call much as Variable Goshawk in PNG, a shrill kee kee kee series.

**Moluccan Goshawk** *Accipiter moluccanus*

One by the turn-off at Km 9 at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, seen in flight when the dark grey upperparts and rich rufous underparts were apparent. Then a fantastic perched view of one in forest at Km 3 at Foli next day, the underparts finely and closely barred dark rufous and upperparts very dark grey, yellow cere and legs and yellow eye.

**Gurney's Eagle** *Aquila gurneyi*

Two adults soaring over a ridge from the KBP road about 2 km along the turn-off. Trevor and Guy saw what sounds like an immature later that day.

**White-bellied Sea-Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Two singles along the KBP road.

\* **Spotted (Moluccan) Kestrel** *Falco moluccensis*

Three on 14<sup>th</sup> along KBP road, and two on 16<sup>th</sup> at Gunung Potong.

**Dusky Scrubfowl** *Megapodius freycinet*

Five birds seen along the track to Dase Hill, very dark with dark greyish legs, two nest mounds seen. The call is a very distinctive shrill series quite unlike Orange-footed or Melanesian Scrubfowl, often given at dawn and dusk. Heard at Foli.

**Moluccan Scrubfowl** *Eulipoa wallacei*

We then drove 3 hours to get to the Moluccan Scrubfowl beach, which was a good idea, but in the event a bit of an anticlimax. We paid the fee to the village headman and got permission, and then made yet another dug out trip, out into mangroves this time, with one of my guys baling furiously the while. We disembarked mid-river and waded ashore in the pitch dark, neatly arriving just as a thunder squall passed through. This was a black sand beach, with a bright moon rising and

smoking volcano backdrop, great if only we had not just had a fly-by! The beach was littered with diggings too, just not much activity this night when we were there. Sadly all we got was a brief fly-by of one bird, I wish we had arranged to go further into the beach but our guide assured us we would get them here. We got back about 2130 and then got driven back to Sidangoli, arriving at the losman at 0200 and having to pound on the door to get someone up!

Rufous-tailed (Common) Bush-hen *Amaurornis (olivaceus) moluccanus*

Heard daily, and fantastic views on 16<sup>th</sup> of one crossing the road after its mate had dashed across.

Greater Sand-Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* (H)

Heard at Galela from the outrigger canoe ride, roosting near the mangroves.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

One at Sidangoli and one at Foli.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

One at the beach at Foli.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

One on 17<sup>th</sup> on the first Foli crossing, seen through spray filled eyes, and about a dozen on the way back on 18<sup>th</sup>, some sat on the sea.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

At least one winter dress bird with a tern flock on 18<sup>th</sup> as we came back from Foli. Probably about ten in all.

Bridled Tern *S. anaethetus*

One on the crossing from Ternate on 14<sup>th</sup>, ten on the return from Foli, and 4 en route to Ternate on 19<sup>th</sup>. A single tern with entirely light grey upperparts was also seen, but the identity remains a mystery.

Slender-billed Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis*

One on 15<sup>th</sup> and two on 16<sup>th</sup> at KBP.

Great Cuckoo-Dove *Reinwardtoena reinwardtii* (H)

Heard along the KBP track on 14<sup>th</sup>, and I glimpsed what was probably one at Foli on 17<sup>th</sup>.

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

One on 16<sup>th</sup> and two on the 17<sup>th</sup> at KBP, and heard at Foli.

Nicobar Pigeon *Caloenas nicobarica*

The cause of much angst on 16<sup>th</sup> when a couple were flushed off the track from Dase, with only the front folks getting a brief look. Happily Trevor and I saw a super adult flush up from the Invisible Rail swamp at Foli on 17<sup>th</sup>, a nice year bird.

**Scarlet-breasted Fruit-Dove** *Ptilinopus bernsteini*

The call is a single quite deep coo, and Guy taped in a wonderful adult male in the forest at Dase on 16<sup>th</sup>. It reminded me of a small Wompoo, being quite long tailed and with yellowish edges to the flight feathers and a bright scarlet breast patch.

Superb Fruit-Dove *P. superbus* (H)

Heard at Dase.

**Blue-capped Fruit-Dove** *P. monacha*

A female plumaged bird was perched up with Grey-headed Fruit-Doves along the coast road on 15<sup>th</sup>, being much smaller and entirely green. We also saw a couple in flight at Foli, when the small size and short tail was obvious. They were calling quite well here but were hard to get to move in the thick scrub.

**Grey-headed Fruit-Dove** *P. hyogaster*

The common fruit-dove, often seen sat out in tall bare trees and coming into fruiting figs. Seen daily, max. 10 birds.

The pale wing patches are reminiscent of the Cloven-feathered Dove pattern.

**Spectacled (White-eyed) imperial-Pigeon** *Ducula perspicillata*

Uncommon, we saw two on 16<sup>th</sup> at G. Potong, four next day at Anu's place, and 4 at Foli. The call is a deep descending series.

**Cinnamon-bellied Imperial-Pigeon** *Ducula basilica*

Guy found us one feeding on palm fruits at Dase on 16<sup>th</sup>, with a single near Foli on 17<sup>th</sup> and four there on 18<sup>th</sup>. The call is a loud deep growl and the white head really shows up in flight.

**Pied Imperial-Pigeon** *D. (bicolor) spilorrhoea*

Small numbers of them seen, with 6 at KBP on 16<sup>th</sup> and four at Foli on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**(White-throated Pigeon** *Columba vitiensis*)

Guy saw a couple from the vehicle on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**White Cockatoo** *Cacatua alba*

These were fairly common, with 4 on two days, and a day total of 8 including the flock of 6 at Anu's place on 17<sup>th</sup>. Five were at Foli on 18<sup>th</sup>. Quite vocal, and shows pale yellow underwing coverts.

**Violet-necked Lory** *Eos squamata*

Basically a heard for me on 15<sup>th</sup>, they have one call a bit like Rainbow Lorikeet, then a distinctive shrill whistled short series. We saw 4 on both 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> quite nicely in flight, then had a great perched group of 4 at Foli Km 3 on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Chattering Lory** *Lorius garrulus*

We did well for this species which I thought might prove hard, with 2 perched on a palm frond on 14<sup>th</sup> at KBP, four in flight at Gunung Potong, and four at Foli Km 3 on both dates.

The call is very like Black-capped Lory, and they have a small yellowish patch on the scapulars which is not shown in the FG. The cere and bare eye skin was greenish.

**Red-flanked Lorikeet** *Charmosyna placentis*

A flock of a dozen at G. Potong on 16<sup>th</sup>, perched up well, then a dozen at Foli next day, with about 20 there on 18<sup>th</sup>. Dare I say a tart's tick for Trevor!

**Red-cheeked Parrot** *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*

Quite common, with 15 at G. Potong and 10 at Foli

**Eclectus Parrot** *Eclectus roratus*

Fairly common, with a few female birds in evidence too, we saw 14 along KBP Road on day one, then had a few daily.

**Great-billed Parrot** *Tanygnathus megalorhynchus*

This was one of the birds of the trip for me, just sensational. One flew in at Gunung Potong on 16<sup>th</sup> and perched up for ages, before flying closer and giving fantastic views. The huge red beak has a fetching dark border off-setting it, the eye is pale yellow and the plumage a startling positively South American macaw-like combination of colours. The tail is distinctively long and slightly tapered, whilst the yellow underwing coverts really stand out in flight. This was great catch-up bird for us as we tried to string one on an island off Sulawesi in 2000 till I realised the bill was the wrong colour.....

(Moluccan King Parrot *Alisterus amboinensis*)

Guy saw a couple in the forest along the hill track at Km 11 on 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Moluccan Hanging-Parrot** *Loriculus amabilis*

A fly-by of one calling and a couple of others heard on 15<sup>th</sup> at KBP, then great looks at one in a fig near Anu's place on 17<sup>th</sup>.

Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus*

Heard at KBP, and I saw and heard one at Foli on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Goliath Coucal** *Centropus goliath*

The first endemic of the day on 15<sup>th</sup>, emerging from a roost in a palm with a 3 or 4 birds. I did not think they looked unduly large, albeit long tailed, with a variable size white wing patch. Heard daily, but elusive.

\* Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis* (H)

Trevor saw one on 15<sup>th</sup> at KBP, which we only heard, but good enough for an Australasian tick.

(Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalis*)

I saw a small grey *Chrysococcyx* cuckoo fly up from by the road near Daru on 16<sup>th</sup>, presumably this species which is known as a vagrant here. My first thought was Peaceful Dove until I saw it better!

**Moluccan Scops Owl** *Otus magicus*

Common and vocal, we heard it the first night and spotlit 2 birds on the 15<sup>th</sup>, hearing it each on dawn foray and seeing two individuals again at km 3 at Foli. The call is usually given singly, but sometimes doubled or as a short series. My seventh scops owl of the year!

Moluccan Boobook *Ninox squamipila* (H)

This one caused great troubles, we tried repeatedly and made some 8 attempts without success, not even hearing it despite doing Ben King's site etc. As luck would have it, Trevor and Anu heard one after I had got on the ojek to go back to Foli at 2000 on 17<sup>th</sup>. We felt confident at 0500 next day, but no sound emanated from the wretched bird, though retrospectively I wish we had just stayed by that area till 0600 and peak calling time.

**Moluccan (Long-whiskered) Owlet-nightjar** *Aegotheles crinifrons*

One seen by some near Anu's place at dawn on 17<sup>th</sup>, which I dipped for a variety of circumstances. Happily for me that night at Foli we heard an owlet-nightjar screech and tracked it down for fantastic views, so Trevor survives. The bird is a big quite long tailed job with a dark centre blotch on the chest and pale sides, and reminds me most of Feline. I thought I had a great tape of the call, then found I had not plugged in the mike, it was just that sort of a day!

Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*

One male flying and calling at dusk at the head of the hill at KBP Km 11 on 14<sup>th</sup>. Also heard at Galela.

Lowland (Uniform) Swiftlet *Collocalia vanikorensis*

A few at KBP on the first 3 days, max. 10. One with Moluccan Swiftlets at G. Potong on 16<sup>th</sup>.

\* Moluccan Swiftlet *C. infuscata*

Five at G. Potong, with Uniform Swiftlet when the smaller size and stubbier shape was apparent, plumage primarily milky brown and lacking a grey or whitish rump like the north Sulawesi birds.

Glossy Swiftlet. *C. esculenta*

A few birds daily, looking rather greyish on the belly rather than white but still royal blue above.

White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudacutus*

A very distant flock of about 10 birds seen from the main Tobelo Road near G. Potong on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Clearly needletails, and presumably this species, which is seemingly a vagrant here.

Moustached Tree-swift *Hemiprocne mystacea*

Fantastic views of 3 of this great bird along the KBP track on 15<sup>th</sup>, 8 at Potong on 16<sup>th</sup>, one at Foli and a hawking flock of 20+ at Galela at dusk on 18<sup>th</sup>.



Common Paradise-Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea*

One seen and 3 heard at Dase on 16<sup>th</sup>, and heard at Foli.

**Blue and White (Moluccan) Kingfisher** *Halcyon diops*

A pair seen at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, 3 next day, and heard at Foli. The male is very like a small Forest Kingfisher, down to the white neck collar and wing spot, but the female has a broad breast band and the call is a quite different.

**Sombre Kingfisher** *Halcyon funebris*

Anu pointed out one calling at Dase, and Ron did an amazing piece of spotting shortly after to find it perched quite high in the sub-canopy of a large forest tree. We heard the harsh chatter of another on the way out too. A lucky find as this can be a tough one.

Variable (Dwarf) Kingfisher *Ceyx lepidus* (H)

One was heard in the forest on the walk out from Dase on 16<sup>th</sup>.

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*

A few small parties seen daily.

**Purple Dollarbird (Azure Roller)** *Eurystomus azureus*

My main reason for wanting to go to Foli was to try for this rare species, which seems to have gone from all the former accessible sites around KBP.

No luck the first PM, but next morning I heard the rattly call of a dollarbird, and rushed up to the hilltop to check, finding a Purple Dollarbird perched up on some dead snags some way away, invisible from where we had been standing! Had it not called we might well have dipped. It's a huge great big-headed and big-shouldered purple thing like a dollarbird on steroids, and has a bright chrome yellow bill. This was my last roller too, a great bird.

Blyth's (Papuan) Hornbill *Aceros plicatus*

Surprisingly widespread given the levels of forest damage, with day counts of 10, 10, 15, 6 and 6.

**Ivory-breasted Pitta** *Pitta maxima*

Surprisingly widespread, we heard the double whistle daily and had a very nice view of one at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, and good flight views of one I whistled in at the hillside track around Km 11 the same day. A big, striking pitta, one of the easier ones to see.

Red-bellied Pitta *P. erythrogaster*

A fine view of one along the Km 3 track on Foli on 18<sup>th</sup>, giving a strange strangulated version of the usual mournful call. The head was very brown, yet another race for the collection, this one being *rufiventris*. We heard a couple of birds along here.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Small numbers daily.

Pacific Swallow *H. tahitica*

Ten around Sidangoli and a few at Galela.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A couple of singles along the KBP track on 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *M. tschutschensis*

We saw about 10 at Foli, resembling the taxon formerly known as *simillima* but now subsumed in *taivana*. Greyish head, small white supercilium of varying length, yellow chin and throat.

**Moluccan Cuckoo-shrike** *Coracina atriceps*

Very scarce, we saw two at Foli on 17<sup>th</sup> and one on 18<sup>th</sup> only. There was also a large cuckoo-shrike that really looked like an imm. Black-faced, but identity uncertain.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *C. papuensis*

Three single birds, at KBP and twice at Foli only. Call much as usual.

**Halmahera Cuckoo-shrike** *C. parvula*

Three at KBP near the plantation on 15<sup>th</sup>, then two at Foli on both days. The call is a distinctive loud rattling series, and the underwing coverts seem whitish in flight. Reminded me of a slightly longer billed Boyer's, though the female lacks the pale lores of that species.

Common Cicadabird *C. tenuirostris*

A male and female were at the plantation at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, the female a heavily barred brownish job with a strong pale supercilium, and the male with the black dots on the greater coverts.

**Rufous-bellied Triller** *Lalage aurea*

Quite common but local, we saw 6 at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup> and a similar number at Foli, plus singles at G. Potong.



**Golden Bulbul** *Alophoixus affinis*

The most easterly and the only Australasian native bulbul was quite common in dense shrubbery. We saw about 15 at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup> and small numbers daily thereafter.

**Willie-wagtail** *Rhipidura leucophrys*

This classic Aussie bird was seen at Ternate airport, then just a handful on Halmahera with singles most days.

**Grey-streaked Flycatcher** *Muscicapa griseisticta*

We saw four singles of this migrant, two at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup> and two at Foli on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**White-naped Monarch** *Monarcha pileatus*

A great bird, but like the congeneric White-eared at home, could be quite hard to find. The double whistled chippy cheu call is useful in locating it, as is a single rising note. We saw one beautifully by the plantation at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, and I heard a couple of others near Anu's place.

**Spectacled Monarch** *M. trivirgatus*

The local race *bimaculatus* is uncommon in forest, and has very white underparts. We saw some 8 birds along the Dase Hill walk, most in a small mixed flock near the base of the hill. There were two near Anu's place next day.

**Moluccan (Slaty) Flycatcher** *Myiagra galatea*

I was surprised as to how similar this was to Restless Flycatcher, even the grating call was similar as were some of the single whistles. We saw a male on the small rootlet nest at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, and another male at Dase on 16<sup>th</sup>, with one heard at Foli on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Shining Flycatcher** *M. alecto*

Birds here are meant to be of the nominate race, and look and sound very much as usual. I saw a couple of males along the KBP road.

**Golden Whistler** *Pachycephala pectoralis mentalis*

Heard along the KBP road in regrowth, and nice views of a male at Dase on 16<sup>th</sup>, having just a small black spot rather than a black pectoral band below the white throat.

**Drab Whistler** *P. griseonota*

Two birds seen in the plantation at KBP, and one near Anu's place. The song is a sweet typical whistler-like series, and the birds were reminiscent of Grey Whistler without an eye-stripe and with a dingy breast.

\* **Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus borealis*

A single in the plantation at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup> was a nice Australasian tick.

**Black Sunbird** *Nectarinia aspasia*

Quite common, seen daily in small numbers.

**Yellow-bellied Sunbird** *N. jugularis*

Ditto.

**Flame-breasted Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum erythrothorax*

One female at the plantation at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, and two males at Dase next day. An uncommon and unobtrusive endemic.

**Cream-throated White-eye** *Zosterops atriceps*

A distinctive species with a small white eye-ring and blackish frons, very vocal but not easy to see well. I saw 6 along the KBP track, and heard it daily thereafter.

**White-streaked Friarbird** *Melitograis gilolensis*

Uncommon, we saw one distantly at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, then had fine views of 3 at Anu's place on 17<sup>th</sup>, with a single at Foli next day. Sadly neither sight nor sound of Dusky Friarbird.

*Myzomela* sp.

A very puzzling small *Myzomela* was feeding high in an acacia type along the Km 3 track at Foli. The underparts were entirely pale, with a hint of reddish on the chin, and the upperparts seemed olive brown. The only one here should be the potentially splittable *simplex* taxon of Dusky, but the Wallacea FG does not show Dusky M. looking like this here.

**Dusky-brown (Halmahera) Oriole** *Oriolus phaeochromus*

The much vaunted friarbird mimic looked like a pretty typical oriole to me, the Brown Oriole/Helmeted Friarbird/Streak-headed Honeyeater group in PNG seemed far more striking mimics. A bird at KBP plantation on 15<sup>th</sup> had a pale milky brown tail with pale outers, pale milky tea biscuit-brown secondaries and resembled a diminutive Paradise Crow! The call is a melodic di or tri-syllabic series. Another all dark brown bird was seen at Foli. We did hear what sounded like a Helmeted Friarbird on the first morning at KBP, identity unknown

**Spangled Drongo** *Dicrurus bracteatus*

Quite common and very vocal. They sure don't sound like Australian birds and seem to have a very large and varied vocabulary.

**Paradise-crow** *Lycocorax pyrrhopterus*

Amazing, the call is a loud single or double barking note and they were pretty thin on the ground. We saw two at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup>, a fine view. They have small head bumps like Crinkle-collared Manucodes, and heavy dagger like dark bills, with a trace of a greyish eye-stripe at some angles. We also saw another at Foli and heard them at several sites, but overall a very scarce species.

**Wallace's Standardwing** *Semioptera wallacei*

Brilliant, far better than anticipated, the two or three lekking males gave a great show with pennants aloft and loud King Bird of Paradise-like calls. The elongated breast shield would show either blue or green depending on the light, and the legs were a rich, vivid orange with greyish claws. We only got them at Anu's lek at Dase Hill, and heard them in the valley bottom along the km 3 track at Foli; they do not seem to like disturbed forest much.

**Long-billed Crow** *Corvus validis*

Four on the first afternoon, the bill is amazingly long and slightly decurved, with a blackish face, quite a neat bird for a corvid. We saw a couple near G. Potong and a two at Foli, by no means common.

**Metallic Starling** *Aplonis metallica*

Quite common, seen daily with up to 30 at Foli.

**Moluccan Starling** *A. mysolensis*

Not that easy to tell from Metallics, though the deeper call is a help and the shorter tail and different head colour help. First seen at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup> with at least 10 birds, then a few at G. Potong and Foli.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Just a few at Sidangoli and Daru, it does not seem very common here.

\* Black-faced Mannikin (Munia) *Lonchura molucca*  
10 at KBP on 15<sup>th</sup> and a few at Foli.

### Miscellaneous

#### **Masked Flying-fox** *Pteropus personatus*

This great little flying-fox has blonde fur and a striking black and white face, they were feeding in a bush at KBP on 16<sup>th</sup> and must be among the most striking of the family.

#### Golden Frogs

Very vocal and noisy, there were dozens of these striking small frogs in a couple of ponds under low bushes along the KBP road.

#### Water Monitor

One at a creek along the KBP road had a distinct dorsal ridge, otherwise a bit like Merten's water monitor, all greyish.

#### Green Lizard

One striking bright 30cm green one with long toes in ferns at KBP.

#### Blue-banded bee

One at KBP.

Bronze and gold fly one photographed at Dase.

#### Mole cricket

One at Sidangoli.

#### Pearl Owl Butterfly

One at Dase

Green, black and bright yellow Birdwing  
Widespread

PG Kuranda 04/06

[www.sicklebillsafaris.com](http://www.sicklebillsafaris.com)

[www.cassowary-house.com.au](http://www.cassowary-house.com.au)

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### **Sulawesi Stopover April 12-13 and 19/20**

\* Denotes a regional endemic, Latin name given.

**Bold type denotes a lifer**

We had the late afternoon and a morning at Tangkoko (a 2 hour drive from Manado) on April 12 and 13<sup>th</sup>. Hired a car for US\$75 at the airport, using Percy as the intermediary and Ferdi as the driver, replaced by Eko when his car broke down! We stayed at Mama Roos and used Jemmie as our guide, who proved very useful. We used Eko again on April 19 and drove some 4 hrs to Singsingon, where we had a part of the morning with Julius as our guide at Gunung Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>. We drove back to Manado that afternoon and made some stops in the Poopo area paddyfields en route. The Orion Hotel in Manado was a good base, with air-con and hot water for Rp. 100,00 a night.

We saw about 46 of the endemics in this brief foray, and scored 3 lifers plus Java Sparrow! I would do the other side of Gunung Ambang next time.

Purple Heron 1 on 20<sup>th</sup>

Little Egret 4 on 20<sup>th</sup>

Reef Heron 1 dark phase Tangkoko 13<sup>th</sup>.

Cattle Egret Commonly seen, over 100 on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Javan Pond Heron 1 adult on 19<sup>th</sup> and 10 on 20<sup>th</sup> in the paddies.



Brahminy Kite One on 13<sup>th</sup>

Black Kite One at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Sulawesi Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis rufipectus*)

One heard at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup> and one seen at Gunung Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Spot-tailed Goshawk (*Accipiter trinotatus*)

A stunning view of an adult in the forest at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Sulawesi Hawk Eagle (*Spizaetus lanceolatus*)

One soaring over the forest at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Spotted Kestrel (*Falco moluccensis*)

One in the paddies on 20<sup>th</sup>.



Buff-banded Rail One at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Barred Rail One at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

\* Isabelline Bush-hen (*Amaurornis isabellinus*)

One perched on a low wall by the road into Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>, the first endemic of the visit and a great view. Heard at G. Ambang.

Wood Sandpiper One in the paddies on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Common Sandpiper One in the paddies on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Spotted Dove Two in the paddies on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Slender-billed Cuckoo-Dove One at Tangkoko.

Emerald Dove One seen and some heard at Tangkoko.

Stephan's Dove Two at Tangkoko on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Grey-cheeked Green-Pigeon (*Treron griseicauda*)

Ten at Tangkoko on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Black-naped Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus melanospila*)

Great views of four birds at Tangkoko on 20<sup>th</sup>, two pairs.

\* White-bellied Imperial-Pigeon (*Ducula forsteni*)

Two en route into Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>.

\* Green Imperial-Pigeon (*Ducula aenea*)

Ten on 12<sup>th</sup> and 7 on 13<sup>th</sup> at or near Tangkoko. This is the distinctive race with the reddish nape patch.

\* Silver-tipped (White) Imperial-Pigeon (*Ducula luctuosa*)

One on 12<sup>th</sup> and 18 in a fruiting fig on 13<sup>th</sup> en route to and from Tangkoko.

- \* Ornate Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus ornatus*)  
Four at Tangkoko feeding in a flowering tree on 13<sup>th</sup>.
- \* Yellow-breasted Racquet-tail (*Prioniturus flavicans*)  
Two near Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>, and two flying by calling on 13<sup>th</sup>.
- \* Blue-backed Parrot (*Tanygnathus sumatranus*)  
One glimpsed at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.
- \* Small Sulawesi Hanging-Parrot (*Loriculus exilis*)  
Ten seen en route to Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup> and one on 13<sup>th</sup>, good perched views.
- \* Rusty-breasted Cuckoo (H) (*Cacomantis sepulcralis*)  
Heard at both Tangkoko and Gunung Ambang.
- \* Black-billed Koel (*Eudynamis melanorhyncha*)  
A male en route into Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup> and heard at both sites. Some calls were recognisably of the “ko-el” type, but others were very distinctive.
- \* Fiery-billed Malkoha (*Phaenicophaeus calyborhynchus*)  
Two en route to Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup> and 5 on 13<sup>th</sup>, great looks.
- \* Bay Coucal (*Centropus celebensis*)  
Four on 12<sup>th</sup> and one on 13<sup>th</sup> at or near Tangkoko.
- \* Sulawesi Masked Owl (*Tyto rosenbergi*)  
Two in a sea cave on the cliff near Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>, which our guide shows to lots of groups as Minahassa Masked Owls. Despite the rusty colouration on one bird, they were way too big for that species



\* Sulawesi Scops Owl (*Otus manadensis*)

Jemie called in one along the approach road to the park on 12<sup>th</sup> for a fine view.

Great-eared Nightjar One hawking over a hillside at dusk near Singingon on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Uniform Swiftlet A few at Tangkoko.

Moluccan Swiftlet Ten near Manado on 19<sup>th</sup>, with prominent whitish-grey rumps patches.

Glossy Swiftlet Common at Tangkoko, four at G. Ambang.

Asian Palm-Swift Two near Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>.

\* Green-backed Kingfisher (*Actenoides monachus*)

Nice views of two separate birds in Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>, seen as we walked in the woodland. The second had a very smart blue head and small whitish chin patch.

\* Lilac-cheeked Kingfisher (*Cittura cyanotis*)

One seen nicely calling in the forest at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Collared Kingfisher Two at Tangkoko and again at G. Ambang. The birds here seem quite small and have very white underparts with dull green blue upperparts. They seemed quite wrong for Sacred.

Common Kingfisher One at Tangkoko along the beach.

\* Purple-winged Roller (*Eurystomus azurea*)

Nice views of one in the forest at Tangkoko, calling well and a much better look than in 2000.



\* Knobbed Hornbill (*Rhyticeros cassidix*)

Five near Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup> and ten on 13<sup>th</sup>, a spectacular species.

\* Ashy Woodpecker (*Mulleripicus fulvus*)

One seen nicely in the forest at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Pacific Swallow A few near Manado and Tangkoko.

Yellow Wagtail One *simillima* type at Manado airport on 12<sup>th</sup>, and about 30 in the paddies on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Pechora Pipit** (*Anthus gustavi*)

One was walking about on the leaf litter under the trees by the park gate on 13<sup>th</sup>, a long over due lifer for PG.

\* **Pied Cuckoo-shrike** (*Coracina bicolor*)

Jemie heard one calling in the forest at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>, and we managed to get onto a male high in the canopy, a species that we missed in 2000. Now classified as NT.

\* White-rumped Cuckoo-shrike (*C. leucopygia*)  
Two by the park entrance on 13<sup>th</sup>.

\* Sulawesi Cicadabird (*C. morio*)  
Singles seen on both days near Tangkoko.

\* Sulawesi Triller (*Lalage leucopygialis*)  
Three en route to the park on 12<sup>th</sup>.

Hair-crested Drongo Noisy and conspicuous, we saw 3 on 12<sup>th</sup>  
and 6 on 13<sup>th</sup>.

\* Sulawesi Drongo (*Dicrurus montanus*)  
One at Gunung Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Black-naped Oriole A single on 12<sup>th</sup> and 4 on 13<sup>th</sup> at Tangkoko.

\* Slender-billed Crow (*Corvus enca*)  
Two by the road near Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>, strikingly short  
tailed and two at G. Ambang.

\* Sulawesi Babbler (*Trichastoma celebense*)  
Seen nicely at both Tangkoko and Gunung Ambang, a  
good singer.

\* **Red-backed Thrush** (*Zoothera erythronota*)  
Jemie showed us a nest in cleft where a branch had  
broken off near the park entrance, the nest itself a typical  
thrush cup of twiggy rootlets decorated with moss and  
dead leaves which hung down as sort of skirt. Careful  
searching the undergrowth revealed a fine Red-backed  
Thrush feeding quietly in the leaf litter, a very handsome  
endemic.

\* Chestnut-backed Bush-warbler (*Bradypterus castaneus*)

This was common at G. Ambang, we saw at least 3 birds well, skulking in the undergrowth but coming in to pishing.

Mountain Tailorbird

One at G. Ambang.

\* Sulawesi Leaf Warbler (*Phylloscopus sarasinorum*)

Two at G. Ambang.

Golden-headed Cisticola Three in the fields at G. Ambang.

Island Verditer Flycatcher One at G. Ambang.

Little Pied Flycatcher One female at G. Ambang.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher A male seen well at G. Ambang.

Grey-streaked Flycatcher One near at Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup> and two on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Black-naped Monarch Two at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

\* Rusty-bellied Fantail (*Rhipidura teysmanni*)

Six at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>, often with mixed flocks.

\* Citrine Flycatcher (*Culicicapa helianthea*)

One at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* Yellow-vented Whistler (*Pachycephala sulfuriventer*)

Four at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

White-breasted Wood-swallow Singles at Tangkoko and two at G. Ambang.

Asian Glossy Starling 3 on 19<sup>th</sup> and 4 on 20<sup>th</sup> near Manado.

- \* Sulawesi Crested Myna (*Basilornis celebensis*)  
Two near Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>.
- \* Grosbeak Starling (*Scissirostrum dubium*)  
A great dead tree tower block full of noisy starlings on 12<sup>th</sup>, with about 120 birds in the vicinity, and some 40 at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.
- \* Lesser Sulawesi Honeyeater (*Myza celebensis*)  
One at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup> showed really well low down in the forest.

Brown-throated Sunbird One on 12<sup>th</sup> near Tangkoko.

Black Sunbird Two males on 13<sup>th</sup> at Tangkoko.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird A male at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

- \* Yellow-sided Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum aureolimbatum*)  
One near Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>.

- \* Grey-sided Flowerpecker (*D. celebicum*)  
A male near Tangkoko on 12<sup>th</sup>.

- \* Mountain White-eye (*Zosterops montanus*)  
Two at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

- \* Black-fronted White-eye (*Z. atrifrons*)  
Two at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

- \* Streak-headed Dark-eye (*Lophozosterops squamiceps*)  
We saw a couple of what I suppose to be this species at G. Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow  
Widespread around Manado.

Scaly-breasted Mannikin (*Munia*)

Six at Tangkoko and 10 at the paddies.

Chestnut Mannikin (*Munia*) Three at Manado airport on 12<sup>th</sup>,  
and 5 at Posko paddies on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Java Sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*)

This is essentially a tick for both Trevor and I, as we had a flock of at least 150 in the paddies at Posko on 20<sup>th</sup>, somewhat unexpected. I had seen one in Hong-Kong in 1977 before..... They would appear to be well-established in parts of Sulawesi, presumably introduced.

### Miscellaneous

Celebes black macaque Great looks at troop of at least 15 at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Sulawesi Tree Squirrel One at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup> and one at Gunung Ambang on 20<sup>th</sup>.

Brown rat One in Manado on 20<sup>th</sup>.

(Reticulated) Python One on the trail at Tangkoko at night on 12<sup>th</sup>, causing Jemie to give a giant backwards leap when he almost stepped on it.

Monitor Lizard one on the track at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>, about 60 cm long.

Skink sp. One photographed at Tangkoko on 13<sup>th</sup>.

PG Kuranda April 06

[www.cassowary-house.com.au](http://www.cassowary-house.com.au)

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