

## Waigeo and Arfak

### Birding expedition

**18 days/17 nights**

**From € 2,590**

**Deposit: € 650**

**Single room supplement: € 70**

We begin our Papuan birding adventure with a relaxed afternoon's birding outside Sorong, on the westernmost tip of New Guinea's Bird's Head Peninsula. Next morning, we set off on a four days' pilgrimage to the avian delights of Waigeo Island in the fabled Raja Ampat archipelago off Sorong. On the return journey to Sorong, we shall spend ample time on a tiny atoll in Dampier Strait, in pursuit of regional small island specialists here. Then follows an entire day's birding our local patches around Sorong. Next we shift our attention to the Arfak Mountains near Manokwari, on the opposite side of the Bird's Head. Here we shall undertake an 11 days' return trek into the remote interior, covering all relevant elevations and habitats required to get up close and personal with potentially nine out of ten Vogelkop endemics. The ultimate Vogelkop birding trip!

#### When?

Possible year-round, but most certainly best between April and October.

#### Scheduled departures

Please enquire for details on our upcoming departures.

#### Physical toughness

Good physical fitness and agility are required for this tour which plies some challenging terrain.

#### Tour summary

Day 1 > Sorong lowlands.

Day 2-4 > Waigeo Island.

Day 5 > Dampier Strait atoll.

Day 6 > Sorong lowlands.

Day 7-17 > Arfak Mountains.

Day 18 > Manokwari.

#### Day-by-day itinerary

**Day 1 > Sorong lowlands** Midday arrival at Sorong's DEO Airport on domestic flight from Jakarta. After lunch in town, we shall drive out to a vantage point, primarily in order to come to grips with the restricted-range Black Lory. Other noteworthy species we may see here include Dusky Lory, Palm Cockatoo, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Papuan Needle-tail, Papuan Frogmouth, Orange-fronted and Orange-bellied Fruit Dove, Long-tailed Buzzard, Grey Crow, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Lowland Peltops, Golden Cuckoo-shrike, Golden and Yellow-faced Myna, Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, and Streak-headed Munia. Dinner and overnight in Sorong.

**Day 2 > Waigeo Island** After a hearty dawn breakfast in our Sorong hotel, we shall set out early morning on the three hours' speedboat ride to the mouth of the Orobiai River on Waigeo. Here, water birds as Radjah Shelduck, Little Pied Cormorant, Great-billed and Striated Heron, and Australian Ibis tend to occur year-round on tidal mudflats and in secondary mangroves, alongside a selection of migrant Palearctic waders in season, which usually includes a few Grey-tailed Tattler. Other birds we may encounter here include Little, Beach and Sacred Kingfisher, Large-billed Gerygone, and Torresian Crow. We shall then have the rest of the morning to slowly bird along the river toward our camp in riparian lowland forest at c. 50 m elevation. Blyth's Hornbills and colorful parrots, including Rainbow Lorikeet, Black-capped Lory, Palm and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Red-cheeked and Eclectus Parrot, fly overhead as we acquaint ourselves with the vocally or behaviorally conspicuous subset of the forest avifauna: Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Brush Cuckoo, Slender-billed and Great Cuckoo-Dove, Stephan's Dove, Wompoo, Superb and Beautiful Fruit-Dove, Purple-tailed and Pinyon Imperial-Pigeon, Mimic and Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, New Guinea Friarbird, Variable and Rusty Pitohui, Hooded and Black Butcherbird, Brown Oriole, Northern Fantail, Spangled Drongo, and Yellow-faced Myna. Following lunch at camp, we shall probably end up spending most of the afternoon at a popular display tree of the fabled Red Bird of Paradise, and take ample time to observe the up to eight plumed males that normally gather here,

interacting with soliciting females. After dinner back at camp, a nocturnal foray in the vicinity may produce Sooty Owl, Jungle Hawk-Owl, and Marbled Frogmouth. Overnight at camp.

**Day 3 > Waigeo Island** We shall enjoy our breakfast while listening to the developing dawn chorus, which here invariably includes Hook-billed Kingfisher, Rusty Mouse-warbler, Olive Flyrobin, Black-sided Robin, and Variable and Rusty Pitohui among others. We shall then proceed to an area where several display courts of the Wilson's Bird of Paradise are located, in the hope of witnessing the full array of amazing display postures of this nearly mythical bird at close range from the comfort of a well-appointed palm-frond hide. Following lunch, we shall bird all afternoon along the river where we may see Azure Kingfisher, Variable Dwarf Kingfisher, Yellow-capped Pygmy-Parrot, Great-billed Parrot, Moustached Treeswift, New Guinea Bronzewing, Pink-spotted, Claret-breasted, Orange-bellied and Dwarf Fruit-Dove, Red-necked Crake, Long-tailed Buzzard, Variable and Grey-headed Goshawk, Collared Sparrowhawk, Gurney's and Little Eagle, Red-throated Myzomela, Spotted, Brown-backed and Green-backed Honeyeater, Brown-headed Crow, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Red Bird of Paradise, Yellow-eyed and New Guinea Cuckoo-shrike, and Slender-billed Cicadabird. Incubation mounds of the Dusky Megapode are scattered everywhere throughout the flat bottom-valley lowland forests here, and it should not take long before we feast our eyes on a couple of Western Crowned-Pigeons as they break the relative silence with their clapping wing beats to alight in nearby tall forest trees. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 4 > Waigeo Island** Today we shall have a second observation session at one of the Wilson's Bird of Paradise courts. Other species often visiting the courts here include Cinnamon Ground-Dove, Pheasant Pigeon, Red-bellied Pitta, Rusty Mouse-warbler, and Pale-billed Scrubwren, and with all the luck in the world, we may even be treated to a wandering endemic Bruijn's Brush-turkey casually walking across. After lunch, there shall be another opportunity to monitor either Wilson's or Red Bird of Paradise or we could simply bird in the vicinity where we may be rewarded with sightings of Variable Dwarf Kingfisher, Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Hook-billed Kingfisher, Common Paradise-Kingfisher, Little Bronze-Cuckoo, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Moluccan King-Parrot, White-eared Catbird, Long-billed and Puff-backed Honeyeater, Fairy and Yellow-bellied Gerygone, Olive Flyrobin, Grey Whistler, Little Shrike-thrush, Brown-headed Crow, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Lowland Peltops, Sooty Thicket-Fantail, Spot-winged, Golden and Frilled Monarch, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, Black Berrypecker, and Green-crowned, Plumed and Pygmy Longbill. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 5 > Dampier Strait atoll** We shall slowly bird our way along the river toward its mouth and transfer to a tiny atoll in Dampier Strait. After lunch here, we shall have a relaxed afternoon's birding in search of regional small island specialists like the *prasinorrhous*-subspecies of White-bibbed Fruit-Dove, Olive Honeyeater, Island Whistler, Rufous Fantail, and Lemon-bellied White-eye. Other noteworthy resident species here include Dusky Megapode, Beach Kingfisher, Spice Imperial-Pigeon, Varied Honeyeater, and Metallic Starling. In addition, Violet-necked Lory, Great-billed Parrot, Bicolored Imperial-Pigeon, Great-billed Heron, Island Monarch, and Moluccan Starling have been recorded on occasion. We shall proceed to Sorong in the evening for dinner and a good night's rest.

**Day 6 > Sorong lowlands** After a hearty nocturnal breakfast in our Sorong hotel we shall set out on the two hours' drive by chartered 4WD-vehicle to our drop-off point in secondary alluvial lowland forest where we should arrive at dawn in order to witness the display of the adult male Twelve-wired Bird of Paradise. Having truly absorbed this, we shall bird the wider vicinity during the morning in search of a fine selection of other goodies that occur here such as Red-billed Talegalla, Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Hook-billed and Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Common and Red-breasted Paradise-Kingfisher, White-crowned and Dwarf Koel, Dusky and Black-capped Lory, Red-flanked Lorikeet, Yellow-capped Pygmy-Parrot, Double-eyed Fig-Parrot, Moluccan King-Parrot, Hooded and Red-bellied Pitta, White-eared Catbird, Meyer's Friarbird, Black-sided Robin, Glossy-mantled and Crinkle-collared Manucode, King and Magnificent Bird of Paradise, Boyer's, Grey-headed, New Guinea and Golden Cuckoo-shrike, White-bellied Thicket-Fantail, Golden Monarch, and Golden and Yellow-faced Myna. We shall enjoy a packed lunch on site and an ultimately richly rewarding afternoon together to track down some of the more elusive species mentioned above. Toward late afternoon we could spend some time again at the Twelve-wired Bird of Paradise display area. Dusk shall see us gathered at an open vantage point to witness evening flights of hornbills and especially parrots, which usually include the restricted-range Black Lory. Finally, an optional nocturnal foray could produce Papuan Frogmouth and Large-tailed Nightjar. Dinner and overnight in Sorong hotel.

**Day 7 > Arfak foothill forests** If need be, dawn shall see us gathered at a vantage point outside Sorong in pursuit of Black Lory. Otherwise, we shall enjoy a late breakfast and transfer to Sorong's DEO Airport for the mid-morning's flight to Manokwari. After a quick lunch in town, we shall set out on the two hours' drive by chartered vehicle to our drop-off point on the Oransbari Peninsula. From here, we shall require most of the afternoon to slowly bird toward a camp at 200 m elevation in primary foothill forest along a refreshing stream. All along the walk, wacky Blyth's Hornbills, colorful Dusky Lorries and Rainbow Lorikeets, majestic Palm and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, and noisy Red-cheeked and Eclectus Parrots fly overhead as we familiarize ourselves with the common or more conspicuous forest interior birds: Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo, Slender-billed and Great Cuckoo-Dove, Wompoo, Superb and Beautiful Fruit-Dove, Purple-tailed and Pinon Imperial-Pigeon, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, New Guinea

Friarbird, Little Shrike-thrush, Variable and Rusty Pitohui, Hooded and Black Butcherbird, Brown Oriole, Northern Fantail, Spangled Drongo, Spot-winged and Frilled Monarch, Yellow-faced Myna, Black Berrypecker, and Green-crowned Longbill. The final hours of light may still see us birding in the vicinity of camp, where we stand an excellent chance of seeing avian delights as Black-capped Lory, Double-eyed and Large Fig-Parrot, Western Crowned-Pigeon, Hook-billed Kingfisher, Common Paradise-Kingfisher, Moluccan King-Parrot, Wallace's Fairywren, and Magnificent, King and Lesser Bird of Paradise. If we are really lucky, we may also hear and see the sought-after Shovel-billed Kookaburra here toward dusk. A nocturnal foray after dinner could produce Sooty Owl, Jungle Hawk-Owl, Wallace's Owlet-Nightjar, and Marbled Frogmouth. Overnight at camp.

**Day 8 > Arfak foothill forests** We shall take our breakfast as the dawn chorus develops, and proceed to an area where several display courts of the Magnificent Bird of Paradise are located, in the hope of witnessing the full array of amazing display postures of this beautiful species at close range from a well-appointed palm-frond hide. Having truly absorbed this, we shall visit one of several known display trees of the King Bird of Paradise, and it should not take long before we come to grips with this little gem, in fact the smallest of all paradisaeids, which 19th century naturalist A. R. Wallace so amiably described as 'a wanton waste of extreme beauty'. The rest of the morning we shall bird in the wider vicinity of camp in search of Red-billed Talegalla, White-crowned and Dwarf Koel, Yellow-capped Pygmy-Parrot, New Guinea Bronzewing, Cinnamon Ground-Dove, Western Crowned-Pigeon, White-eared Catbird, Long-billed Honeyeater, Black-sided Robin, and Rufous Babbler. After lunch we shall spend most of the afternoon in a gulley where we could be rewarded with sightings of Variable Dwarf Kingfisher, Thick-billed Ground-Pigeon, Red-bellied Pitta, Rusty Mouse-warbler, Painted Quail-thrush, Blue Jewel-Babbler, Rufous-backed Fantail, and Sooty Thicket-Fantail. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 9 > Arfak foothill and hill forests** This morning we shall ascend along a ridge that supports a display tree of the Lesser Bird of Paradise where several fine adult males usually gather. We shall take ample time to observe the full array of displays and interactions at the lek. Besides, while sitting quietly in the forest here, there's always a chance of a Northern Cassowary, Red-billed Talegalla or Pheasant Pigeon casually walking by. Having truly absorbed what may well rank among Earth's greatest natural spectacles, we shall probably require the rest of the day to bird uphill toward a camp at 1,100 m elevation, enjoying a packed lunch en route. Mixed insectivore feeding flocks along the way usually include Pale-billed Scrubwren, Goldenface, Grey and Sclater's Whistler, Variable and Hooded Pitohui, Magnificent Bird of Paradise, Yellow-eyed and Grey-headed Cuckoo-shrike, Chestnut-bellied and Northern Fantail, Pygmy and Spangled Drongo, Black-winged, Spot-winged, Golden and Frilled Monarch, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Black-fronted White-eye, Black Berrypecker and Green-crowned Longbill. Everywhere in these hills resound the songs and calls of Red-billed Talegalla, Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, White-crowned and Dwarf Koel, Pheasant Pigeon, Green-backed Gerygone, Olive Flyrobin, Black-chinned Robin, Northern Scrub-Robin, Chestnut-backed Jewel-Babbler, Rusty Whistler, Little Shrike-thrush, Crested Pitohui, Crinkle-collared Manucode, and Magnificent Riflebird. After dinner at camp, a nocturnal stroll in the vicinity could produce Sooty Owl, the distinctive mid-montane *affinis*-subspecies of Barred Owlet-Nightjar, and Marbled Frogmouth. Overnight at camp.

**Day 10 > Arfak hill forests** We shall bird all day in the excellent ridgetop hill forest around camp. In good weather, New Guinea Eagle can often be heard here around the crack of dawn, and with luck we may be able to track down this awesome bird, calling persistently from the crown of an emergent forest tree down-slope. Several bowers of the gorgeous Masked Bowerbird are to be found here and we could monitor one of these from a well-appointed palm-frond hide early morning in order to get those much-wanted close-up views of this otherwise habitual canopy-dweller. And while sitting quietly in the forest here we may well attract skulking Red-billed Talegalla, Red-bellied Pitta, Rusty Mouse-warbler, White-rumped Robin, Northern Scrub-Robin, and Chestnut-backed Jewel-Babbler. Flowering trees around camp often attract colorful Fairy, Josephine's and Papuan Lorikeets, diminutive Red, Mountain and Black Myzomelas, and sometimes Vogelkop Melidectes. Additional species that we shall look out for here after lunch include Blue-collared and Pesquet's Parrot, Spotted Catbird, Hill-forest Honeyeater, White-faced Robin, Vogelkop Whistler, Black-billed Sicklebill, Mountain Peltops, Stout-billed Cuckoo-shrike, Black-shouldered Cicadabird, Black Monarch, Black Fantail, Capped White-eye, and Island Leaf-Warbler. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 11 > Arfak hill and montane forests** Today, we shall require most of the morning to bird uphill toward our final camp at 1,600 m elevation in stunning ridgetop cloud-forest. As we gradually shift to higher ground and enter montane forest we shall start hearing Fan-tailed Cuckoo, White-eared Bronze-Cuckoo, Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove, White-bibbed Fruit-Dove, Shining Imperial-Pigeon, Papuan Treecreeper, Vogelkop Bowerbird, Marbled, Rufous-sided and Western Smoky Honeyeater, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Perplexing, Vogelkop and Grey-green Scrubwren, Mountain and Brown-breasted Gerygone, Canary Flyrobin, Blue-grey and Green-backed Robin, Spotted Jewel-Babbler, Rufous-naped, Sclater's and Regent Whistler, Black Pitohui, Superb Bird of Paradise, and Friendly and Dimorphic Fantail. After lunch at camp, we shall monitor a nearby display court of the Western Parotia from a well-appointed palm-frond hide. The wacko ballet performance of the court-tending male of this species simply has to be witnessed to be believed, and invariably ranks as the highlight of a birding trip to the Arfaks. Dusk shall see us standing in a tree-fall gap in anticipation of roding New Guinea Woodcock, while Sooty Owl, Jungle Hawk Owl, and Large and Mountain Owlet-Nightjar all are possible here on a nocturnal excursion after dinner. Overnight at camp.

**Day 12 > Arfak montane forests** We shall have our hearty breakfast while enjoying the developing dawn

chorus, here including Vogelkop Scrubwren, Ashy Robin, and especially Regent Whistler, a powerful and varied songster. The first hour of light we shall bird around the tree-fall gaps near camp where we hope to attract the sought-after Long-tailed Paradigalla and where many species actively forage into the open. Here and in surrounding tracts of primary montane forest we may see Pygmy, Papuan, Whiskered and Yellow-billed Lorikeet, Red-breasted Pygmy-Parrot, Red-collared Myzomela, Vogelkop Melidectes, Mottled Whistler, Great Wood-swallow, Mountain Peltops, Black-breasted Boatbill, Capped White-eye, and Lemon-breasted, Fan-tailed and Tit Berrypecker. We could then spend some time at the Parotia display court again, which besides the not-to-be-missed display performances of the parotias themselves, also provides a reasonable chance of seeing otherwise highly retiring species as Wattled Brush-turkey, Bronze Ground-Dove, and White-striped Forest-Rail casually walking across the courts. After lunch at camp, we shall search for species likely to elude us for a while or for which better views may be desirable: Rufous-throated Bronze-Cuckoo, Modest Tiger-Parrot, Papuan Mountain Pigeon, White-striped Forest-Rail, Vogelkop Bowerbird, Lesser Ground-robin, Garnet, Black-throated and Ashy Robin, New Guinea Logrunner, Spotted Jewel-Babbler, Varied Sittella, Black Pitohui, Lesser Melampitta, Long-tailed Paradigalla, Black and Black-billed Sicklebill, Arfak Astrapia, and Black-bellied Cuckoo-shrike. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 13 > Arfak montane forests** Following a hearty pre-dawn breakfast we shall climb to a high point at 2,100 m, soliciting sightings of Dwarf Cassowary, Wattled Brush-turkey, Mountain Swiftlet, Cinnamon-browed Melidectes, Black-throated Honeyeater, Smoky Robin, Black and Black-billed Sicklebill, and Arfak Astrapia as we stroll through utterly stunning cloud-forests, swathed in mosses and epiphytes. Numerous so-called roofed maypole bowers of the Vogelkop Bowerbird — nothing less than the most complex and largest structures known in the avian world — are scattered throughout the forests here, and there will also be ample opportunity to get up close and personal with this highly entertaining species from a well-appointed palm-frond hide. Other goodies we may catch up with here include Brehm's Tiger-Parrot, Bronze Ground-Dove, Ornate Fruit-Dove, Black-mantled Goshawk, Orange-crowned Fairywren, Olive Straightbill, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Black-throated Robin, and Spotted Jewel-Babbler. We shall have snacks and lunch underway and likely return to camp in the evening only. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 14 > Arfak montane forests** We have an entire day to capitalize on some of the more elusive montane Arfak specialties already mentioned above, with lunch in between. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 15 > Arfak montane and hill forests** Following an early morning's birding, we shall require the rest of the morning to slowly bird down to the 1,100 m camp again. After lunch here we shall have an entire afternoon to track down some of the more elusive hill forest species already mentioned above. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 16 > Arfak hill and foothill forests** We shall enjoy an early morning's birding around the 1,100 m camp, and then require most of the day to slowly bird down to the 200 m camp again, enjoying a packed lunch en route. Dinner and overnight at camp.

**Day 17 > Arfak foothill forests** After a final morning's birding in foothill forests around the 200 m camp and lunch on site, we shall require most of the afternoon to slowly bird down to our pick-up point where vehicles await us to transport us to our Manokwari hotel in the evening for dinner and a longer than usual night's rest.

**Day 18 > Manokwari** We shall enjoy a late breakfast and transfer to Manokwari's Rendani Airport for the mid-morning's flight to Jakarta.

### What the tour fare includes

The individual expedition fare of € 2,590 covers all costs incurred between your arrival at Sorong on trip day 1 and departure from Manokwari on day 18, insofar in congruence with the tour itinerary detailed above and our published terms and conditions (see Related links).

### Related links

Browse our terms and conditions from the PE web site through the following link  
<http://www.PapuaExpeditions.com/conditions.html>

Download our terms and conditions in handy PDF-format from the PE web site through the following link  
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