

West Papua photo jaunt Photographic expedition

October 23 > November 6, 2017 (15 days/14 nights)

This expedition covers the two paramount localities for photographing birds-of-paradise and other charismatic birdlife in West Papua and has been conceived with the skilled and patient wildlife photographer in mind. We begin our West Papuan photo adventure with two relaxed introductory excursions outside the town of Sorong, situated on the westernmost tip of New Guinea's Bird's Head or Vogelkop Peninsula. Next morning, we set off on a six days' pilgrimage to the avian delights of Waigeo Island in the fabled Raja Ampat archipelago off Sorong. Finally, we shift our attention to the Arfak Mountains near Manokwari, on the opposite side of the Bird's Head, where we shall be based for six nights in pursuit of some of the most photogenic Vogelkop specialties.

Tour summary

Day 1 > Sorong and Sorong lowlands.

Day 2 > Sorong and Waigeo Island.

Day 3-6 > Waigeo Island.

Day 7 > Waigeo Island and Sorong.

Day 8 > Sorong, Manokwari and Arfak montane forests.

Day 9-13 > Arfak montane forests.

Day 14 > Arfak montane forests and Manokwari.

Day 15 > Manokwari.

Tour description

Day 1 [Monday, October 23, 2017] > Sorong and Sorong lowlands Morning arrival at Sorong's DEO Airport on overnight domestic flight from Jakarta or alternative gateway. We shall soon drive out by chartered vehicle for 30 minutes along a road winding into the surrounding foothills. Here we shall spend the rest of the morning in selectively logged rainforest along the road, making short incursions into the forest as necessary. Noteworthy species that may be photographed here include Long-tailed Honey Buzzard, Orange-bellied Fruit Dove, Pinon's and Zoe's Imperial Pigeon, Brush Cuckoo, Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Blyth's Hornbill, Palm and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Black-capped Lory, Red-cheeked and Eclectus Parrot, Double-eyed Fig Parrot, Emperor Fairywren, New Guinea Friarbird, Lowland Peltops, Hooded Butcherbird, Boyer's Cuckooshrike, Grey-headed Cicadabird, Black-browed Triller, Brown Oriole, Spangled Drongo, Northern Fantail, Frilled Monarch, Shining Flycatcher, Grey Crow, Metallic Starling, Yellow-faced Myna, and Olive-crowned Flowerpecker. Following lunch in town, we have an entire afternoon to continue our efforts at photographing some of the more elusive species already mentioned above. Dinner and overnight in Sorong hotel.

Day 2 [Tuesday, October 24, 2017] > Sorong and Waigeo Island After a hearty dawn breakfast in our Sorong hotel, we shall set out on the three hours' chartered speedboat ride across Dampier Strait to Waigeo. We shall enjoy a packed lunch at the mouth of the Orobiai River on Waigeo where water birds as Raja Shelduck, Australian White Ibis, Striated and Great-billed Heron, Pacific Reef Heron, and Little Pied Cormorant occur year-round alongside a selection of migrant Palearctic waders, usually including a few Grey-tailed Tattler. Other birds we may photograph here include Beach and Sacred Kingfisher, Willie Wagtail, Shining Flycatcher, and Torresian Crow. We shall then require about an hour to slowly walk along the river toward our camp in riparian lowland forest at c. 50 m elevation. Birds we may photograph along the walk and in the vicinity of camp after lunch include Slender-billed and Great Cuckoo-Dove, Stephan's Emerald Dove, Wompoo, Superb and Beautiful Fruit Dove, Purple-tailed and Pinon's Imperial Pigeon, Brush Cuckoo, Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, Yellow-billed Kingfisher, Blyth's Hornbill, Palm and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Coconut Lorikeet, Black-capped Lory, Eclectus Parrot, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, New Guinea Friarbird, Mimic Honeyeater, Hooded Butcherbird, Brown Oriole, Spangled Drongo, Northern Fantail, and Yellow-faced Myna. After dinner at camp we shall attempt to spot-light and photograph Papuan Boobook, Marbled Frogmouth, and Large-tailed Nightjar. Overnight at camp.

Day 3-6 [Wednesday, October 25 > Saturday, October 28, 2017] > Waigeo Island We have four full days to indulge in photography of Waigeo's two near-endemic birds-of-paradise: the canopy-displaying Red Bird-of-paradise and the Wilson's Bird-of-paradise at one of its meticulously cleared ground-courts. Other birds often in evidence at the courts of the latter species and regularly photographed from the hides 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 Brushturkey casually walking across. Other noteworthy species we may see and photograph in the wider vicinity of the display areas include Dusky Megapode, Long-tailed Honey Buzzard, Pygmy and Gurney's Eagle, Variable and Grey-headed Goshawk, Collared Sparrowhawk, Red-necked Crake, New Guinea Bronzewing, Western Crowned Pigeon, Pink-spotted, Claret-breasted, Orange-bellied and Dwarf Fruit Dove, Little Bronze Cuckoo, Moustached Treeswift, Hook-billed Kingfisher, Common Paradise Kingfisher, Variable Dwarf Kingfisher, Azure Kingfisher, Yellow-capped Pygmy Parrot, Moluccan King Parrot, White-eared Catbird, Ruby-throated Myzomela, Green-backed, Spotted, Long-billed, Brown-backed and Puff-backed Honeyeater, Yellow-bellied, Green-backed and Fairy Gerygone, Black Berrypecker, Dwarf, Pygmy and Yellow-bellied Longbill, Yellow-breasted Boatbill, Lowland Peltops, Black Butcherbird, Barred Cuckooshrike, Common and Black Cicadabird, Grey Whistler, Little Shrikethrush, Raja Ampat Pitohui, Sooty Thicket Fantail, Spot-winged, Golden and Frilled Monarch, Brown-headed Crow, Glossy-mantled Manucode, Black-sided Robin, Olive Flyrobin, and Olive-crowned Flowerpecker. Lunch served at camp or packed lunch brought to your hide. Dinner and overnight at camp.

Day 7 [Sunday, October 29, 2017] > Waigeo Island and Sorong Following a final morning of photographic indulgence and an earlier than usual lunch at camp, we shall make our way along the river toward its mouth and transfer back to Sorong for dinner and a good night's rest. Overnight in Sorong hotel where there will be electricity to allow for recharging of batteries.

Day 8 [Monday, October 30, 2017] > Sorong, Manokwari and Arfak montane forests We shall enjoy breakfast in our Sorong hotel and transfer to Sorong's DEO Airport for the first morning flight to Manokwari. We shall soon set out on the two hours' drive by chartered 4WD-vehicle to a community-owned guest house located at 1,600 m elevation in the Mount Indon area of the Arfak Mountains. Here we shall start our photographic exploration of these fabled mountains after a packed lunch with a gentle introduction to the most photogenic species of the garden clearings and roadside tree-gaps: Slender-billed Cuckoo-Dove, White-bibbed Fruit Dove, Rufous-throated and White-eared Bronze Cuckoo, Chestnut-breasted and Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Plum-faced and Yellow-billed Lorikeet, Red-collared Myzomela, Rufous-sided and Arfak Honeyeater, Vogelkop and Ornate Melidectes, Brown-breasted and Mountain Gerygone, Black-breasted Boatbill, Sclater's Whistler, Black and Friendly Fantail, Western Parotia, Blue-grey Robin, Canary Flyrobin, Capped White-eye, and Olive-crowned Flowerpecker. On a nocturnal excursion after dinner we shall attempt to spot-light and photograph Greater Sooty Owl, Papuan Boobook, and Feline and Mountain Owllet-nightjar. Overnight in community guest house.

Day 9-13 [Tuesday, October 31 > Saturday, November 4, 2017] > Arfak montane forests We have five full days to indulge in photographing three amazing terrestrially displaying birds from well-appointed palm-frond hides: the Vogelkop Bowerbird with its awe-inspiring so-called 'roofed may-pole' bower, the Western Parotia with its mind-boggling ballerina-display, and the Magnificent Bird-of-paradise with its amazing array of display postures and high-intensity male-female interactions. These palm-frond hides also open up an intimate window of observation into the secretive lives of New Guinea's many habitual under-storey- and ground-dwellers. Birds often in evidence around the display areas and regularly photographed from the hides include Wattled Brushturkey, White-striped Forest Rail, Cinnamon and Bronze Ground Dove, Spotted Catbird, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Spotted and Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler, Ashy and Green-backed Robin, and Lesser Ground Robin. Lunch served at community guest house or packed lunch brought to your hide. Dinner and overnight in community guest house.

Day 14 [Sunday, November 5, 2017] > Arfak montane forests and Manokwari We have a final day to photograph some of the most charismatic Arfak specialties already mentioned above, and we shall drive back to Manokwari in the late afternoon for dinner and a longer than usual night's rest in our Manokwari hotel.

Day 15 [Monday, October 6, 2017] > Manokwari We shall enjoy breakfast in our Manokwari hotel and transfer to Manokwari's Rendani Airport for the first morning flight to Jakarta or alternative destination.

Related links

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