

Amazing Arfak Birding expedition

9 days/8 nights

Please enquire for an up-to-date quote

This West Papuan birding expedition focuses exclusively on the isolated and rugged Arfak Mountains in the eastern sector of New Guinea's Bird's Head or Vogelkop Peninsula, near the provincial capital Manokwari. On the first leg of our birding adventure we basically follow in the footsteps of the great Italian naturalists D'Albertis and Beccari, who once collected in the Hattam-country only a few kilometers away from our base in the Arfak Mountains on the mid-slopes of majestic Mount Indon, towering 2,425 m above the Prafi Valley. Nearly a century and a half elapsed since the intrepid D'Albertis was the first westerner to penetrate any distance into the mountains of New Guinea exactly here in 1872, but birding these magnificent woods, swathed in clouds during parts of most days, remains an irresistible adventure. A privileged opportunity also, to be taken in tow by the Hattam, across their ancestral lands, and marvel at endemic birdlife that few outsiders have ventured to come and see before. The second leg of our expedition takes us to the Anggi Giji basin, situated at 1,860 m elevation in the Sougb-country of the southern Arfak Mountains, primarily in search of its endemic Grey-banded Munia. But the visually stunning Anggi Giji basin is also an excellent place to come to grips with more widely ranging wet grassland specialists like Lewin's Rail and Spotless Crake. And stands of swampy *Pandanus*-dominated forest at the base of the surrounding slopes support the nearly mythical Shovel-billed Kookaburra, with a good selection of the montane Arfak avifauna waiting to be explored uphill.

When?

Possible year-round, but most certainly best from June to November.

Scheduled departures

Please enquire for details on our upcoming departures.

Physical effort

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

Tour summary

Day 1 > Manokwari and Arfak montane forests.
 Day 2-5 > Arfak montane forests.
 Day 6 > Arfak montane forests and Anggi Giji basin.
 Day 7 > Anggi Giji basin.
 Day 8 > Anggi Giji basin and Manokwari.
 Day 9 > Manokwari.

Tour description

Day 1 > > Manokwari and Arfak montane forests Morning arrival at Manokwari's Rendani Airport on overnight domestic flight from Jakarta or alternative gateway. We shall soon set out on the two hours' drive by chartered 4WD-vehicle to a community-owned guest house located at c. 1,600 m elevation in the Mount Indon area of the Arfak Mountains. Here we shall start our exploration of these fabled mountains after a packed lunch with a gentle introduction to the commoner or more conspicuous species of the garden clearings and roadside tree-gaps: Variable Goshawk, Sultan's and Bar-tailed Cuckoo-Dove, Mountain Fruit Dove, Papuan Mountain Pigeon, White-eared Bronze Cuckoo, Chestnut-breasted and Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Plum-faced and Yellow-billed Lorikeet, Red-collared Myzomela, Rufous-sided and Western Smoky Honeyeater, Vogelkop and Ornate Melidectes, Vogelkop Scrubwren, Brown-breasted Gerygone, Grey Thornbill, Mid-mountain Berrypecker, Black-breasted Boatbill, Sclater's Whistler, Black and Friendly Fantail, Western Parotia, Blue-grey Robin, Canary Flyrobin, Island Leaf Warbler, Capped and New Guinea White-eye, Olive-crowned Flowerpecker, and Streak-headed Munia. Other goodies we may come to grips with here include Long-tailed Honey Buzzard, Metallic Pigeon, Pesquet's Parrot, Pygmy, Fairy and Josephine's Lorikeet, Blue-collared Parrot, Spotted Berrypecker, Long-tailed Paradigalla, Superb Bird-of-paradise, and both Blue-faced and Papuan Parrotfinch. A nocturnal

excursion after dinner could produce Greater Sooty Owl, Papuan Boobook, and Feline and Mountain Owllet-nightjar. Overnight in community guest house.

Day 2 > Arfak montane forests After a pre-dawn breakfast, we shall monitor nearby display courts of the Western Parotia from well-appointed palm-frond hides. 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. Besides the not-to-be-missed display performances of the parotias, the hides potentially also offer an intimate window of observation into the secretive lives of habitual ground-dwellers as Wattled Brushturkey, White-striped Forest Rail, Cinnamon and Bronze Ground Dove, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Spotted Jewel-babbler, Ashy and Green-backed Robin, and Lesser Ground Robin. Following lunch back at the guest house, there shall be further opportunities to spend potentially rewarding time with the parotias, or to get up close and personal with the highly entertaining Vogelkop Bowerbird from one of the palm-frond hides set up in front of its formidable so-called roofed maypole bowers in the area. The last hours of light shall see us birding around the garden clearings. Dinner and overnight in community guest house.

Day 3 > Arfak montane forests Following a hearty nocturnal breakfast, we shall proceed pre-dawn to an area of secondary forest where numerous display courts of the Magnificent Bird-of-paradise are to be found. Here we stand an excellent chance of witnessing the full array of display postures of this beautiful species at close range from well-appointed palm-frond hides. Other birds often in evidence around the courts here include Cinnamon Ground Dove, Arfak Catbird, Rusty Mouse-warbler, Pale-billed Scrubwren, Green-backed Robin, and Trumpet Manucode. In adjacent tracts of primary forest we may see White-striped Forest Rail, Wallace's Fairywren, Red, Papuan Black and Mountain Myzomela, Marbled, Long-billed and Mountain Honeyeater, Goldenface, Perplexing and Grey-green Scrubwren, Fairy Gerygone, Dwarf and Yellow-bellied Longbill, Chestnut-backed Jewel-babbler, Mountain Peltops, Vogelkop and Sclater's Whistler, Little Shrikethrush, Hooded Pitohui, Drongo Fantail, Black, Black-winged and Frilled Monarch, White-rumped and White-faced Robin, Yellow-legged Flyrobin, Papuan Scrub Robin, and Black-crowned White-eye. After a packed lunch on site, there shall be further opportunities to spend potentially rewarding time with the Magnificent Bird-of-paradise, or we could continue our search of the vicinity for some of its more elusive species already mentioned above. Dinner and overnight in community guest house.

Day 4 > Arfak montane forests After a pre-dawn breakfast, we shall bird all day along a loop ascending to a high point at c. 2,000 m elevation in search of three potentially highly elusive species of bird-of-paradise present here: Arfak Astrapia and Black and Black-billed Sicklebill. Most of the trail follows gently-sloping ridgetop cloud-forest but we shall also be traversing some challenging and steep terrain. Other goodies we may come across along the loop include Wattled Brushturkey, New Guinea Eagle, Ornate Fruit Dove, Rufescent Imperial Pigeon, Rufous-throated Bronze Cuckoo, Red-breasted Pygmy Parrot, Papuan Lorikeet, Brehm's and Modest Tiger Parrot, Vogelkop Bowerbird, Papuan Treecreeper, Orange-crowned Fairywren, Olive Straightbill, Black-throated Honeyeater, Cinnamon-browed Melidectes, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Papuan Logrunner, Fan-tailed and Tit Berrypecker, Spotted Jewel-babbler, Mottled Berryhunter, Black-bellied Cicadabird, Papuan Sittella, Rufous-naped Whistler, Black Pitohui, Regent Whistler, Dimorphic Fantail, Lesser Melampitta, Ashy, Black-throated, Smoky and Garnet Robin, and Lesser Ground Robin. We shall enjoy a packed lunch in a natural forest clearing in which Archbold's Nightjar has been found to nest, and where Black-mantled and Meyer's Goshawk, Collared Sparrowhawk, Mountain Swiftlet, and Great Woodswallow may be seen flying overhead. Dinner and overnight in community guest house.

Day 5 > Arfak montane forests We have an entire day to capitalize on some of the most elusive montane Arfak specialties already mentioned above. Breakfast, lunch, dinner and overnight in community guest house.

Day 6 > Arfak montane forests and Anggi Giji basin Following breakfast and a final morning's birding in the Mount Indon area of the Arfak Mountains, we shall set out on the three hours' drive by chartered 4WD-vehicle to our host village near the shores of Lake Anggi Giji, enjoying a packed lunch en route. Along the seasonally fluctuating lake edge, Pacific Black Duck, Tricolored Grebe, Rufous Night Heron, Great and Intermediate Egret, Little Pied and Little Black Cormorant, and Common Coot can be numerous, and it shall not take long before we spot our first Grey-banded Munias, which in season can congregate in flocks of more than 150 individuals. But observing the two secretive rails may require considerable effort and is influenced also by water levels in the basin. Come evening and we shall take up position at locally exposed muddy stretches at the interface between grassland and reedbeds bordering the lake's edge. Here both Lewin's Rail and Spotless Crake ordinarily come out to feed at dusk, and we may hear both species vocalizing in season. Other birds we may see here include Yellow and Black Bittern, White-shouldered Fairywren, Australian Reed Warbler, and Papuan Grassbird. Dinner and overnight in village residence.

Day 7 > Anggi Giji basin After a hearty nocturnal breakfast, a pre-dawn foray could produce Papuan Boobook, Feline and Mountain Owllet-nightjar, and Large-tailed Nightjar. Around the crack of dawn we hope to find the nearly mythical Shovel-billed Kookaburra as it starts calling from the surrounding forested hill slopes. Other noteworthy forest birds that we may encounter here include New Guinea Woodcock, New Guinea Eagle, Vogelkop Bowerbird, Rufous-sided and Western Smoky Honeyeater, Vogelkop Melidectes, Mountain Mouse-warbler, Vogelkop Scrubwren, Fan-tailed Berrypecker, Papuan Sittella, Black Sicklebill, Ashy Robin, and Lesser Ground Robin. Following a packed lunch on site, we shall continue our search for some of these most elusive

species throughout the afternoon, with a potential resit for the Shovel-billed Kookaburra around dusk. Dinner and overnight in village residence.

Day 8 > Anggi Giji basin and Manokwari After breakfast and a final morning's birding in the Anggi Giji basin, we shall enjoy an early lunch at our village abode and drive back to Manokwari. Dinner and overnight in Manokwari hotel.

Day 9 > 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>