

Report of a birding trip to

Varirata NP

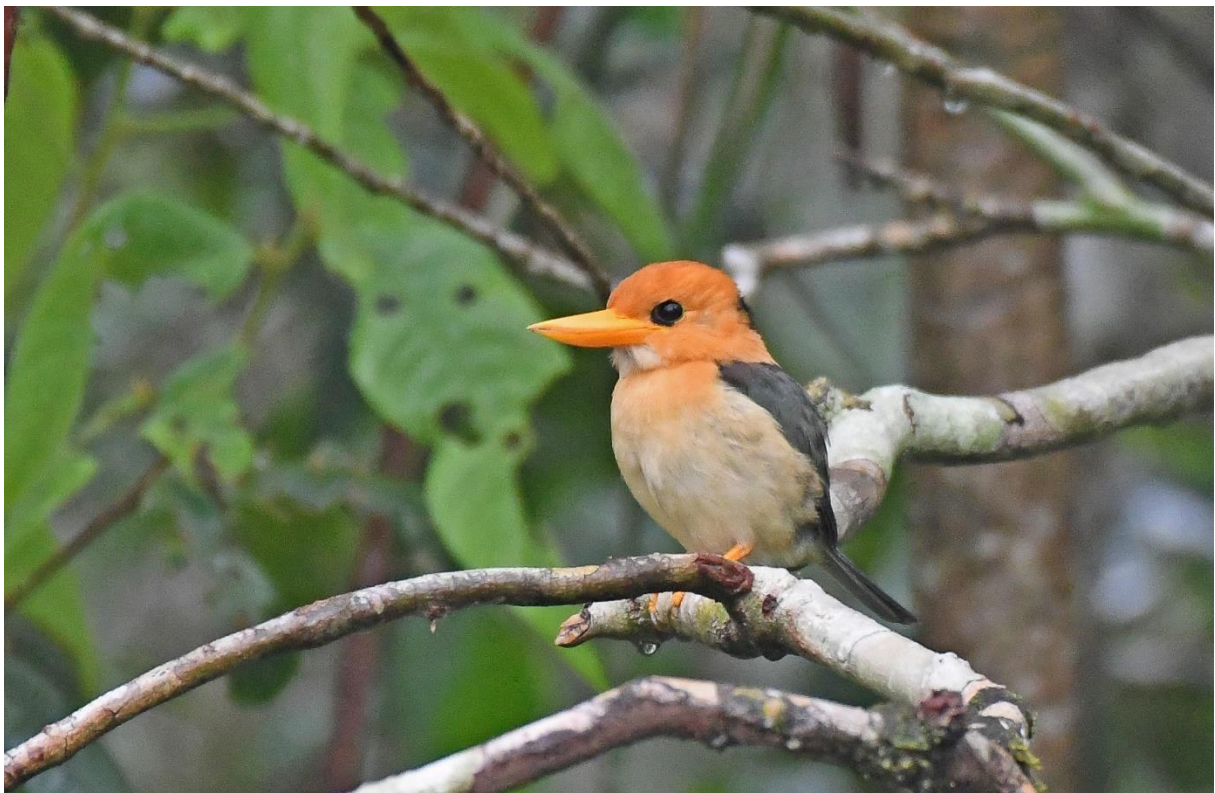
Papua New Guinea

From 28 April – 29 April and 4 May 2019

Participants:

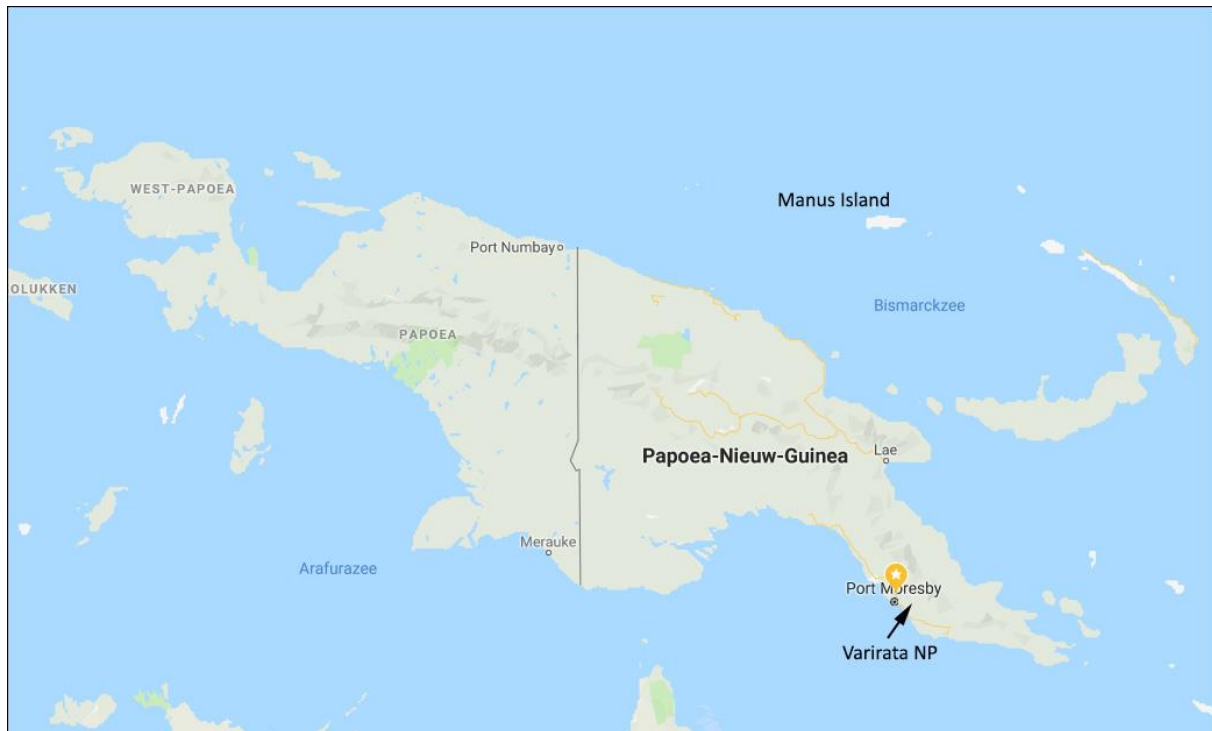
Arjan Brenkman

Jan van der Laan



Yellow-billed Kingfisher, 4 May 2019, Varirata NP, PNG; © Jan van der Laan.

Maps



Map 1: Papua New Guinea



Map 2: Varirata NP (handout map); the Koiari Treehouse Trail starts at Picnic Site 2 and is mentioned here as the Gare's Lookout Track.



Introduction

Our main quarry was to see Superb Pitta on Manus Island, Bismarck Archipelago. Our schema had room for birding around Port Moresby and Varirata NP in particular. For this we contacted [Daniel Wakra](#), a very experienced Papuan birder. Arjan Dwarshuis and Vincent van der Spek had used his services in 2016 during Arjan's Big Year and recommended his services. First we had a day in **Hong Kong** ([report can be found here](#)), then we would bird two days in **Varirata National Park**, four days on **Manus** ([report can be found here](#)), an afternoon in **Varirata NP** again and on our way back we would have a stop-over in **Manila**, Philippines.

Itinerary

28 April We arrived at 7:20 hours at Jackson Airport, **Port Moresby**. There we were picked up by Daniel Wakra. First we tried to get money from the ATM's on the airport, but they were not able to process any cards. Daniel brought us to the **Holiday Inn** where we could get money from the ATM. Next we tried to get to our hotel (Manolo BNB) we booked on booking.com. Daniel was suspicious about this and said he never heard of it and it was in an area not known for its safety, especially at night. When we got to the address we were not able to find it, so we concluded it was a charade. Quickly we drove back to the Holiday Inn and we could book a room for the coming two nights and for 4 May when we would return from Manus Island. And after buying some food and drinks at a supermarket, we drove to **Varirata NP**. First we birded the savanna part just before the entrance where we had our first taste of the Papuan avifauna, with Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise quickly found, plus Hooded Pitohui, butcherbirds, honeyeaters, and several species of parrots and pigeons. We continued to the **picnic area** where best birds were Dwarf Koel, Growling Riflebird, Pygmy Longbill, Streak-headed Honeyeater, Grey Crow, Zoe's Imperial Pigeon, Wompoo Fruit Dove, Orange-bellied and Dwarf Fruit Dove, Buff-faced Pygmy Parrots and Boyer's Cuckooshrike. On our way back we had good views of a pair of Papuan Frogmouths, Brush Cuckoo, Sacred and Forest Kingfishers. Near the **Pacific Adventist University** we saw several Pacific Black Ducks and three Raja Shelducks in a rice field. Dinner in the **Holiday Inn** and finally we could sleep in a proper bed, after two nights sleep in a plane.

29 April Although we ordered breakfast, nothing was delivered, but when leaving somebody was able to prepare a breakfast box for us, so around 5:30 we were on our way to **Varirata NP** again. One of the first birds we encountered in the savanna area was a Bat Hawk, a rare bird in New Guinea. At the park entrance no one was around, so with the use of the horn of the car, somebody was able to open the gate for us. First birds along the entrance road to the **Lookout** were Red-cheeked Parrots, Red-flanked Lorikeets, Papuan Scrub-Robin, White-crowned Cuckoo, Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon, Stout-billed Cuckoo-shrike and Rusty Pitohui. At the Lookout we tried to see Yellow-billed Kingfisher, but only fleeting views of two birds. We entered the so-called **Lookout Trail** and quickly heard a Painted Quail-thrush. It was difficult to get it into view, but I saw through a peep hole wing coverts of a female. Then a Papuan Eagle started to call, but this massive raptor stayed out of view unfortunately. We continued birding and Arjan and Daniel had a fleeting view of a Painted Quail-thrush. Other birds were Pacific Baza, Little Shrike-thrush, Black Berryeater, Barred Owllet-Nightjar and Trumpet Manicodes. Back at the **Lookout** we saw a Long-tailed Honey Buzzard and two Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. The hottest part of the day was spent at the picnic area where we found Plain Honeyeater, Tawny-breasted Honeyeater, Streak-headed Honeyeater, Rusty Mouse-warbler, Boyer's Cuckooshrike plus the usual parrots and pigeons. We started to bird along the **Koiari Treehouse Trail**. First bird we encountered was a Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher, followed by Pale-billed Scrubwren, Spot-winged and Frilled Monarchs, Puff-backed Honeyeater, Yellow-bellied and Fairy Gerygone, a pair of Black Berryeaters, another



Painted Quail-thrush and Chestnut-bellied Fantail. We had a harsh duel with a Black-billed Brushturkey, but only Arjan had a good view. Next we went to a short trail behind the **camping area**, supposed to be good for Papuan Pitta, but these were not responsive this time of year. Here we only heard White-faced Robin and Rusty Mouse-Warbler. When leaving the park we did one more try for the Yellow-billed Kingfisher and at last one bird came in and showed itself very well. We drove back to Port Moresby we saw another Forest Kingfisher, a pair of Brush Cuckoos and more Rainbow Bee-eaters. A final attempt was made for White-bellied Whistler in the **savanna area**, but nothing turned up. So we returned to our hotel in **Port Moresby**, said goodbye to Daniel, had dinner, checked in for our flight to Manus and went to sleep.

30 April Flight to Manus. For details, see [our report on Manus and Tong Island](#).

1-3 May Manus island.

4 May Flight from Manus to Jackson Airport, **Port Moresby**, where we arrived ahead of schedule at 12:00 hours. Daniel appeared after a 20 minutes wait (we were too early) and we immediately drove to **Varirata NP**. Arjan and Daniel saw a Fawn-breasted Bowerbird crossing the road, but I was in the backseat and missed it. On arrival in the savanna area we found a flock of Mannikins, which consisted of Grey-headed and Chestnut-breasted. Also we heard no less than four Brown Quails calling, but we could not get it into view. Also well seen was a group of Yellowish-streaked Lorys. Unfortunately it started to rain, but we continued to the **Lookout Trail**. Best bird there was a female Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, but bird activity along the trail was slow. At the **picnic area** we had the usual pigeons and cuckooshrikes, but the best bird was a Piping Bellbird that even showed itself. Also a Papuan Scrub Robin was calling, but it did not come into view. Around 17:00 hours we drove back to Port Moresby. A Fawn-breasted Bowerbird again crossed the road and gladly I saw it now, but not the Glossy-mantled Manucode that chased it away... This stop however, produced a family group of White-shouldered Fairywrens. Eventually we reached the hotel in **Port Moresby**. We said goodbye to Daniel. We had dinner with a couple of SP beers, checked in for the flight for next day and went to sleep.

5 May We had a quick breakfast at 6:00 hours. At 6:30 the shuttle bus brought us to International terminal of **Jackson Airport**. The flight PR016 departed on time at 8:15 hours to **Manilla**. Around 12:00 we reached Manilla. There we had made a lunch appointment Rob Hutchinson. We had some trouble to pass customs, as it was probably the first time ever that passengers with an 8 hour stopover had the silly idea to spent this time in downtown Manilla. But once past customs a taxi was quickly found and 30 minutes later we were in the **Henry Hotel** enjoying lunch with Rob and his girlfriend. After a nice lunch and nice conversation (about birds mainly), Rob said he knew a good place for Philippine Swamphen (new for both of us), so we decided to check the big **Laguna de Bay** on the eastern part of Manilla. At the borders of the lake we found White-winged Tern, Whiskered Tern, Yellow and Black Bittern, Oriental Reed Warbler and finally several Philippine Swamphens. Rob brought us back to **Terminal 3** and after saying goodbye, we checked in for our CX902 flight to Hong Kong. Terminal 3 has many gates, but no seating capacity. The flight departed with an hour delay, but we arrived at 23:00 hours, just in time in **Hong Kong** for our connecting flight to Amsterdam.

6 May Departure on time at 0:15 hours with Cathay Pacific CX271. We slept the whole leg and we were too tired to watch any movies. Arrival at 6:00 at **Schiphol**, our still very inefficient airport: only two passport gates were open, but all 10 gates with automatic passport scanning were closed in the first place. But suddenly these opened too and we quickly could leave Schiphol Airport without the usual luggage hassle. So finally, Arjan took the train the **Culemborg** and I took the train to **Alkmaar**. Next year Uganda, Myanmar or the Solomons?



Suggested Reading

In Varirata NP we used the *Birds of New Guinea: Second Edition* by TK Pratt and BM Beecher (2014). This field guide is excellent and gave us not any identification issues. It is quite heavy to carry in a day pack.

We used several trip reports, but found the [Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby area & the Central Highlands](#) (March 2016) by Arjan Dwarshuis and Vincent van der Spek the most useful.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following persons: Vincent van der Spek and Arjan Dwarshuis for the latest gen, Daniel Wakra for guiding and keeping us out of trouble in Port Moresby and Rob Hutchinson for providing us a nice stop-over in Manilla. And last but not least again our [dear Wags](#) for taking care of the Homefront!

The Species Accounts

Scientific names and family order of the IOC www.worldbirdnames.org, version 11.1 is followed. Endemic species or specialties for the region are in capitals. All photographs are in *chronological* order.

Alkmaar and Culemborg, May 2019

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Left: Hooded Pitohui; right: Yellow-faced Myna, 28 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: male Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise; right: Amboyna Cuckoo-dove, 28 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Red-capped Flowerpecker, 28 April 2019, savanna area of Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan; right: Dwarf Koel, 28 April 2019, picnic area of Varirata NP; © Arjan Brenkman.



Left: Growling Riflebird; right: Black-shouldered Cicadabird, 28 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Brush Cuckoo; right: White-throated Honeyeater, 28 April 2019, savanna area of Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



A pair of Papuan Frogmouths, 28 April 2019, entrance road to Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Hooded Butcherbird (note the black throat), 28 April 2019, savanna area of Varirata NP; right: Rajah Shelduck and Pacific Black Duck, 28 April 2019, near the Pacific Adventist University; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Bat Hawk (rare in PNG!); right: Sacred Kingfisher, 29 April 2019, savanna area of Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Stout-billed Cuckooshrike; right: White-crowned Cuckoo (inset shows whitish crown and [zygodactyl toe arrangement](#)); 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon; right: Pacific Baza, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



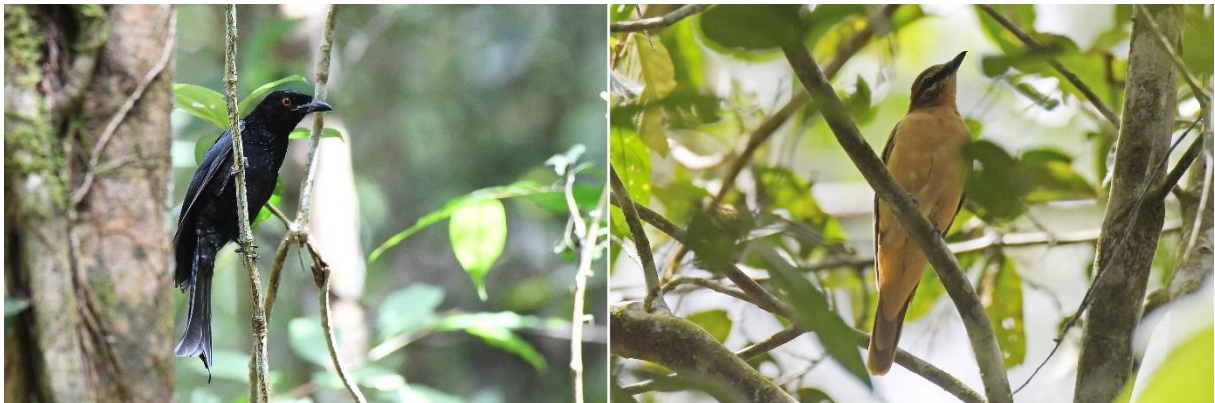
Left: Rusty Pitohui (leader of flocks); right: Black Berrypecker, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Barred Owlet-nightjar, nearly every tree hole has one; right: Long-tailed Honey Buzzard, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Immature Brown-headed Paradise Kingfisher, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Spangled Drongo; right: female Black Cicadabird; 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Monarchs are kings! Left: Spot-winged Monarch; right: Frilled Monarch, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



The rarely photographed Pale-billed Scrubwren, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Rufous-bellied Fantail; right: Pink-spotted Imperial Pigeon, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Blue-winged Kookaburra; right: Yellow-billed Kingfisher, 29 April 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Rainbow Bee-eater; right: Forest Kingfisher, 29 April 2019, savanna area of Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Chestnut-rumped Mannikin; right: Grey-headed Mannikin, 4 May 2019, Sogeri road, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Yellowish-streaked Lory; right: Pheasant Coucal, 4 May 2019, savanna area of Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Zoe's Imperial Pigeon; right: Boyer's Cuckooshrike, 4 May 2019, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Female Rufous-bellied Kookaburra, 4 May, Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Great Cuckoo-dove, 4 May 2019, access road to Varirata NP; © Jan van der Laan.



Left: Azure Kingfisher; right: White-shouldered Fairywren, 4 May 2019, road Varirata - Port Moresby; © Jan van der Laan.



001. **Raja Shelduck** - *Radjah radjah*
 28-04 3 rice fields near the Pacific Adventist University (PAU).

002. **Pacific Black Duck** - *Anas superciliosa*
 28-04 c 20 rice fields near the Pacific Adventist University (PAU).

003. **BLACK-BILLED BRUSHTURKEY** - *Talegalla fuscirostris*
 28-04 2 (one seen, one heard) Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
 Arjan was able to see the bird, showing its obvious yellow legs.

004. **Brown Quail** - *Synoices ypsilophora*
 04-05 4 (heard only) [savanna grasslands](#), Varirata NP.

005. **Papuan Frogmouth** - *Podargus papuensis*
 28-04 2 (roosting, seen well) along the main road back from Varirata NP.

006. **BARRED OWLET-NIGHTJAR** - *Aegotheles bennettii*
 29-04 1 (roosting) main entrance of Varirata NP.
 1 (roosting) picnic area of Varirata NP.
 1 (roosting) Lookout Trail, Varirata NP.

007. **Glossy Swiftlet** - *Collocalia esculenta*
 Small numbers were seen daily at the savanna area of Varirata NP.

008. **Uniform Swiftlet** - *Aerodramus vanikorensis*
 04-05 c 10 at the airport of Lae, while we were in transit at Lae.

009. **Pheasant Coucal** - *Centropus phasianinus*
 Commonly heard and several seen in the savanna or Varirata NP.

010. **DWARF KOEL** - *Microdynamis parva*
 28-04 1 (male, seen well) picnic area of Varirata NP. Also heard on 29-04 and 4-05.

011. **WHITE-CROWNED CUCKOO** - *Cacomantis leucolophus*
 29-04 1 (seen well) along the main road to the lookout, Varirata NP.

012. **Brush Cuckoo** - *Cacomantis variolosus*
 28-04 2 (seen well) savanna area along the main road back from Varirata NP.

013. **Amboyna Cuckoo-Dove** - *Macropygia amboinensis*
 28-04 c 5 in a fruiting tree along the access road, Varirata NP.

014. **BAR-TAILED CUCKOO-DOVE** - *Macropygia nigrirostris*
 29-04 1 (calling) Lookout Trail, Varirata NP. Formerly known as Black-billed CD.



015. **Great Cuckoo-Dove** - *Reinwardtoena reinwardti*
Singles seen on 28 and 29 April. During the last afternoon on 4 May, two were seen very well sitting out or eating berries after rain.
016. **Stephan's Emerald Dove** - *Chalcophaps stephani*
04-05 1 (calling) Lookout Trail, Varirata NP.
017. **Peaceful Dove** - *Geopelia placida*
Fairly common roadside bird just out of Port Moresby.
018. **Bar-shouldered Dove** - *Geopelia humeralis*
04-05 2 on wires near the PAU turnoff.
019. **Wompoo Fruit Dove** - *Ptilinopus magnificus*
28-04 2 (twice a single bird in a bird flock) picnic area, Varirata NP.
020. **PINK-SPOTTED FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus perlatus*
28-04 3 savanna along the access road of Varirata NP.
 2 in a fruiting tree at the picnic area of Varirata NP.
29-04 2 (same as 28-04?) in a fruiting tree at the picnic area of Varirata NP.
04-05 2-3 in a fruiting tree at the picnic area of Varirata NP.
021. **BEAUTIFUL FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus pulchellus*
29-04 1 (flushed) around the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
022. **ORANGE-BELLIED FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus iozonus*
28-04 3 (with Wompoo and Pink-spotted Fruit Doves) picnic area of Varirata NP.
023. **DWARF FRUIT DOVE** - *Ptilinopus nainus*
28-04 1 (heard only) along the access road, Varirata NP.
 1 (flying by at close range) picnic area, Varirata NP.
024. **PURPLE-TAILED IMPERIAL PIGEON** - *Ducula rufigaster*
29-04 2 (seen well) along the main road to the Lookout trail, Varirata NP.
025. **ZOE'S IMPERIAL PIGEON** – *Ducula zoeae*
28-04 2-3 picnic area, Varirata NP
04-05 2 (seen well) [picnic area](#), Varirata NP
026. **Torresian Imperial Pigeon** – *Ducula spilorrhoa*
28-04 3 (2 near the airport, 1 at the Holiday Inn) Port Moresby.
027. **Masked Lapwing** - *Vanellus miles*
Several in rice fields along the road between Port Moresby and Varirata NP. On 30 April, on seen on the runway of Jackson Airport, Port Moresby. On 4 May, 4 were seen on Lae Airport.



028. **Straw-necked Ibis** - *Threskiornis spinicollis*
 28-04 3 PAU turnoff (in company of a escaped magpie Goose) also there on 4 May.
029. **Eastern Cattle Egret** - *Bubulcus coromandus*
 Common in rice fields at Lae airport, also several along the Port Moresby - Varirata Road.
030. **Pacific Baza** - *Aviceda subcristata*
 29-04 2 (pair) [Lookout Trail](#), Varirata NP.
031. **LONG-TAILED HONEY BUZZARD** - *Henicopernis longicauda*
 29-04 1 in the savanna area along the access road, Varirata NP.
 1 at the Lookout, Varirata NP.
 The second bird had company of another raptor, most probably a Whistling Kite.
032. **Bat Hawk** - *Macheiramphus alcinus*
 29-04 1 in the savanna area along the access road of Varirata NP.
 Quite unexpected, just about the first bird we bumped into at Varirata NP. Apparently a very rare bird.
033. **PAPUAN EAGLE** - *Harpyopsis novaeguineae*
 29-04 1 (calling for a long time) Lookout Trail a few meters in from the lookout. A
 heard only unfortunately, but probably our best/worst heard only ever.
034. **Gurney's Eagle** - *Aquila gurneyi*
 28-04 1 savanna along the access road of Varirata NP.
035. **Black Kite** - *Milvus migrans*
 04-05 48 [Lae Airport](#), while in transit from Manus to Port Moresby.
036. **Brahminy Kite** - *Haliastur indus*
 A few in the savanna area on all days (28-29 April and 4 May), including an active nest.
037. **Blyth's Hornbill** - *Rhyticeros plicatus*
 28 April 2 picnic area, Varirata NP.
038. **Oriental Dollarbird** - *Eurystomus orientalis*
 Fairly common at the savanna area of Varirata NP.
039. **BROWN-HEADED PARADISE KINGFISHER** - *Tanysiptera danae*
 29-04 1 (seen well) at [the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail](#), Varirata NP.
040. **Blue-winged Kookaburra** - *Dacelo leachii*
 Singles daily along the access road to Varirata NP.
041. **RUFIOUS-BELLIED KOOKABURRA** - *Dacelo gaudichaud*
 04-05 1 (female) Lookout Trail, Varirata NP.



042. **Forest Kingfisher** - *Todiramphus macleayii*
 29-04 2 (twice one bird) [along the access road](#) to/from Varirata NP.
043. **Sacred Kingfisher** - *Todiramphus sanctus*
 The same bird seen twice at the access road and another one in the lowlands just out of Port Moresby.
044. **YELLOW-BILLED KINGFISHER** - *Syma torotoro*
 Common by voice with sometimes three birds calling to each other. Seen twice at the start the Lookout Trail on 28 April, another one at the picnic area on 29 April and on 4 May one close to the entrance.
045. **Azure Kingfisher** - *Ceyx azureus*
 29-04 1 in a rocky stream parallel to the access road of Varirata NP.
 04-05 1 (other bird) in a rocky stream parallel to the access road of Varirata NP.
046. **Rainbow Bee-eater** - *Merops ornatus*
 Fairly common at the savanna area, seen on all three days.
047. **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** - *Cacatua galerita*
 29-04 2 (flying by) at the Lookout, Varirata NP.
048. **BUFF-FACED PYGMY PARROT** - *Micropsitta pusio*
 28-04 1-2 (heard only in a bird flock) start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
049. **Eclectus Parrot** - *Eclectus roratus*
 04-05 1 (heard only) savanna area along the access road, Varirata NP.
050. **Red-cheeked Parrot** - *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*
 29-04 5 (1 male, 4 females or immatures) along the access road, Varirata NP.
051. **Red-flanked Lorikeet** - *Hypocharmosyna placentis*
 29-04 6 along the access road, Varirata NP.
052. **BLACK-CAPPED LORY** - *Lorius lory*
 Seen daily, mostly along the access road but also one in forest. A stunning parrot.
053. **YELLOWISH-STREAKED LORY** - *Chalcopsitta scintillata*
 04-05 6 (5 adults, 1 juvenile) along the access road, Varirata NP.
054. **Coconut Lorikeet** - *Trichoglossus haematodus*
 Seen daily on 28 and 29 April and 4 May. There really is nothing coconuts about them, but nevertheless they are pleasantly common Rainbow Lorikeet lookalikes along the access road.
055. **Fawn-breasted Bowerbird** - *Chlamydera cerviniventris*
 04-05 2 near the PAU turnoff between Varirata NP and Port Moresby.
056. **WHITE-SHOULDERED FAIRYWREN** - *Malurus alboscapulatus*
 04-05 3 (2 males, 1 female) along the road between Varirata NP and Port Moresby.



057. **PLAIN HONEYEATER** - *Pycnopygius ixoides*
 29-04 1 picnic area of Varirata NP.
058. **STREAK-HEADED HONEYEATER** - *Pycnopygius stictocephalus*
 28-04 1-2 (heard only) along the access road, Varirata NP.
 2 (seen well) picnic area of Varirata NP.
059. **NEW GUINEA FRIARBIRD** - *Philemon novaeguineae*
 Common and seen daily along the access road. In [HBW](#) still lumped with Helmeted Friarbird *P buceroides*.
060. **Tawny-breasted Honeyeater** - *Xanthotis flaviventer*
 29-04 1 picnic area of Varirata NP.
061. **White-throated Honeyeater** - *Melithreptus albobularis*
 Fairly common, seen daily in the savanna area of Varirata NP.
062. **PUFF-BACKED HONEYEATER** - *Meliphaga aruensis*
 29-04 2 (in a bird flock) at the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
063. **Mimic Honeyeater** - *Microptilotus analogus*
 Ones or twos seen daily in Varirata NP.
064. **RUSTY MOUSE-WARBLER** - *Origma murina*
 29-04 1 (heard only, not responsive) picnic area, Varirata NP
 1 near the campground, Varirata NP.
 Formerly placed under the scientific name *Crateroscelis murina*.
065. **PALE-BILLED SCRUBWREN** - *Aethomyias spilodera*
 29-04 2 (in a bird flock) at [the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail](#), Varirata NP.
066. **YELLOW-BELLIED GERYGONE** - *Gerygone chrysogaster*
 29-04 2 (in a bird flock) at the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
067. **Green-backed Gerygone** - *Gerygone chloronota*
 28-04 1 (heard singing) main road towards Lookout Trail, Varirata NP.
068. **Fairy Gerygone** - *Gerygone palpebrosa*
 29-04 1 (in a bird flock) at the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
069. **BLACK BERRYPECKER** - *Melanocharis nigra*
 29-04 2 (pair) Lookout Trail, Varirata NP
 2 (also a pair) at the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
070. **PYGMY LONGBILL** - *Oedistoma pygmaeum*
 28-04 1 (Arjan only; perched in the top of a tree) picnic area, Varirata NP.

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098. **Trumpet Manucode** - *Phonygammus keraudrenii*
 29-04 2 [Lookout Trail](#), Varirata NP.
099. **GROWLING RIFLEBIRD** - *Ptiloris intercedens*
 Common in Varirata NP by voice and several females/immature males were seen daily associated with flocks, but a nice full adult male calling the first afternoon on 28 April from the top of a casuarina tree at the picnic area was a clear highlight.
100. **RAGGIANA BIRD-OF-PARADISE** - *Paradisaea raggiana*
 Common in Varirata NP, almost in all bird waves. Four active males at their favourite display trees along the main road towards the lookout in late afternoon of 28 April were a brilliant spectacle. National bird of PNG.
101. **White-faced Robin** - *Tregellasia leucops*
 29-04 1 (heard only) near the campsite of Varirata NP.
102. **Lemon-bellied Flyrobin** - *Microeca flavigaster*
 A pair seen twice in the savanna area on 28 and 29 April.
103. **PAPUAN SCRUB ROBIN** - *Drymodes beccarii*
 29-04 2 (heard only) [entrance](#) of Varirata NP
 1 (heard only) between entrance and Lookout, Varirata NP.
 04-05 1 (heard only) at the start of the Koiari Treehouse Trail, Varirata NP.
 Frustratingly, completely non-responsive and heard only.
104. **Pacific Swallow** - *Hirundo tahitica*
 A pair seen daily at the junction of the Sogeri road and the Varirata NP access road.
105. **BLACK-FRONTED WHITE-EYE** - *Zosterops minor*
 28-04 c 5 (heard only by Arjan and Daniel) picnic area of Varirata NP.
106. **Singing Starling** - *Aplonis cantoroides*
 28-04 4 in a palm tree close to the Holiday Inn, Port Moresby.
107. **YELLOW-FACED MYNA** - *Mino dumontii*
 Fairly common along the savanna access road or Varirata NP, seen on all dates.
108. **RED-CAPPED FLOWERPECKER** - *Dicaeum geelvinkianum*
 28-04 2 (both males) in the savanna part of Varirata NP.
 04-05 2 (pair) in the [savanna part](#) of Varirata NP.
109. **House Sparrow** - *Passer domesticus*
 04-05 1 Domestic Airport, Port Moresby.
110. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** - *Passer montanus*
 04-05 c 5 Domestic Airport, Port Moresby.



111. **GREY-HEADED MANNIKIN** - *Lonchura caniceps*

04-05 6 (in tall grass) [start of the Sogeri road](#) turnoff to Varirata NP.
A mix of both yellow and orange-tailed birds.

112. **Chestnut-breasted Mannikin** - *Lonchura castaneothorax ramsayi*

04-05 2 (in tall grass with *L. caniceps*) [start of the Sogeri road](#) turnoff to Varirata NP.
This is the attractive *ramsayi* race with flame orange rump and yellow tail.



Mammals in Varirata NP.

Macleay's Forest Wallaby - *Dorcopsulus macleayi*

29-04: one hopping past us along the Lookout Trail while waiting for painted Quail-Thrushes. This is the mammal the Papuan Eagle is looking for.

Snakes in Varirata NP.

Papuan Black Snake - *Pseudechis papuanus*

29-04: a snake at the picnic area was according to Daniel Vakra this species.

Butterflies in Varirata NP.

New Guinea Birdwing - *Ornithoptera priamus*

28-04: a pair of this very large butterfly was seen near the picnic area.



Unknown blue in the savanna area of Varirata NP on 28 April 2019; © Jan van der Laan.



Savanna area of Varirata NP, 28 April 2019; © Jan van der Laan.



Jackson International Airport, seen from the Lookout of Varirata NP, 29 April 2019; © Jan van der Laan.



Central Mountain Range, seen from the Lookout of Varirata NP, 29 April 2019; © Jan van der Laan.



Rainforest in Varirata NP, 4 May 2019; © Jan van der Laan.