

THE LESSER SUNDAS

5 – 24 SEPTEMBER 2006

TOUR REPORT

LEADER: MARK VAN BEIRS and CRAIG ROBSON

This was our second tour to the little known Lesser Sundas, which are situated in the far southeastern corner of the “emerald belt”, the huge Indonesian archipelago. We visited the islands of Sumba, Timor, Flores and Komodo, which together hold most of the endemics and specialities of Nusa Tenggara. BirdLife International defines these three islands as Endemic Bird Areas 162, 163 and 164 and on our very successful tour we recorded 248 species including an amazing 62 that are endemic to the Lesser Sundas. The colourful Elegant Pitta and the amazingly performing Bare-throated Whistler were the Birds of the Trip. Families that were particularly well represented were the pigeons (20 species) and the white-eyes (8 species). Memorable species included Bulwer’s Petrel, White-tailed Tropicbird, Green Junglefowl, Sumba Buttonquail, Oriental Plover, Great Knot, Metallic Pigeon, Red-naped Fruit-Dove, Olive-headed Lorikeet, Yellow-crested Cockatoo, Wallace’s Scops-Owl, Sumba Boobook, Southern Boobook, White-rumped and Cinnamon-banded Kingfishers, Sumba Hornbill, Flores Crow, Chestnut-backed and Orange-sided Thrushes, White-bellied Chat, Timor Stubtail, Black-banded Flycatcher, Flores Monarch, Timor Sparrow and of course the very impressive Komodo Dragon.

After more or less long transcontinental flights our international group convened on the lovely and lively island of Bali. On this extremely atmospheric isle with its multitudes of temples we did a bout of introductory birding at some mudflats where goodies included lots of Javan Pond Herons (in different plumages), Sunda Teal, the localized Javan Plover, Pacific Golden Plover, Far Eastern Curlew, Grey-tailed Tattler, Savanna Nightjar, lots of Small Blue Kingfishers and some smart Scarlet-headed Flowerpeckers. The tour had started off well.

We then took a flight to Waingapu, the capital of the dry island of Sumba. From the plane we obtained nice views over the impressive volcanoes of Lombok and Sumbawa. Upon arrival we transferred to our rather noisy hotel, which was obviously built by an architect with high aspirations when one looked at the bizarre architecture and the gigantic staircase. In the afternoon we explored some grassland habitat not too far from town, where we soon flushed several Sumba Buttonquails. After some strategic positioning we eventually all obtained excellent views of this endemic. Once again we enjoyed spectacular scope views of a posing bird on the deck, showing off its white iris,

large bill, bright red chest and black and white barring on the sides of the neck. These great studies were much appreciated by everyone and some great digi photos were taken. In the grasslands and adjoining mangroves we also observed Brown Quail, Barred Dove, Spotted Kestrel, White-shouldered Triller and some vociferous Brown Honeyeaters.

A very early start had to get us to a splendid tract of lowland forest by dawn, but sadly, our man on the spot could not relocate the right track, so we lost some precious time. We did flush several Savanna Nightjars from the road. Eventually we found the right forest block and spent an enjoyable time along the forest edge where we found Short-toed Eagle, Sumba Lorikeet (split from Rainbow Lorikeet), a single Citron-crested Cockatoo (split from Yellow-crested Cockatoo), Great-billed and Red-cheeked Parrots, Rusty-breasted Cuckoo, the marvellous Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher, Wallacean Cuckoo-Shrike, Lesser Wallacean Drongo, Grey Tit, Yellow-spectacled White-eye and some Five-coloured Munias. In the forest things got quiet very quickly but we still located Arafura Fantail and Golden Whistler. In the afternoon we birded a different area of really nice primary forest where Black Kite, Pale-shouldered Cicadabird, Sumba Brown Flycatcher, Apricot-breasted Sunbird and Blood-breasted Flowerpecker performed. Later we visited a mosaic of clearings and small forest copses where at dusk several Sunda Nightjars showed well and a singing Sumba Boobook obliged with perfect scope views. The enigmatic, only recently described Sumba Hawk Owl also showed quite well after some subtle coaxing.

The whole of the following day was spent in our favourite forest on Sumba. In this fairly large, well-protected area of mixed humid monsoon forest and dryer hilly woodland quiet stalking, patient waiting, listening and scanning resulted in some really good birds like Sumba Green Pigeon, Black-naped Fruit Dove, Edible-nest Swiftlet, more Cinnamon-banded Kingfishers (real gems), some cracking Chestnut-backed Thrushes in a fruiting tree, Sumba Flycatcher, Asian Paradise Flycatcher (two white males with very long tail streamers), Spectacled Monarch, Ashy-bellied White-eye and some Black-faced Munias. But best of all was the splendid flock of 25 Sumba Hornbills heading for their roost in late afternoon. Glorious moments ensued as we were watching the antics of these rare endemics!!

On our last morning on Sumba we visited an isolated forested valley where in a couple of hours we noted Green Junglefowl, Sumba Jungle-Flycatcher and some unobtrusive Sumba Red-headed Honeyeaters. The Elegant Pitta that Craig so expertly herded in front of the group really made our day. What a magnificent creature!

We then said goodbye to Sumba and flew to Kupang, the capital of Timor. We relaxed a bit after a hearty lunch and later checked out the muddy waterfront where Lesser Frigatebird, Little Pied Cormorant, lots of Grey-tailed Tattlers and Whiskered, Common, Little and Greater Crested Terns showed. Next dawn found us at the fabled lowland forest of Bipolo, which for the first couple of hours was extremely birdy and productive. Endemics and near-endemics kept appearing in front of our binoculars and scopes, including Black-backed Fruit-Dove, Pink-headed Imperial Pigeon, Olive-shouldered Parrot, Greater Wallacean Drongo, Olive-brown Oriole, Timor Figbird, Plain Fairy-Warbler, Timor Leaf Warbler, the gorgeous Timor Blue Flycatcher, Fawn-breasted Whistler, Timor Friarbird, Streak-breasted and Black-chested Honeyeaters, Flame-breasted Sunbird and Red-chested Flowerpecker. We also observed several more widespread species like Pacific Baza, Oriental Honey-Buzzard, Brown Goshawk, Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove, Rainbow Bee-eater, Northern Fantail, Broad-billed Flycatcher and White-breasted Wood-Swallow. We spent some time at a waterhole watching birds coming in to drink like Black-faced and Scaly-breasted Munias. A sleepy Common Kingfisher was also present here. In the afternoon we visited some shrimp ponds and adjoining fallow rice fields where White-faced Heron, Royal Spoonbill, Black-shouldered Kite, Australian Hobby, Black-faced

Wood-Swallow, Long-tailed Shrike, Red Avadavat and hundreds of Five-coloured Munias obliged. The muddy edges held a good selection of waders including White-headed Stilt, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Long-toed Stint and Red-capped Plover. At dusk a very cooperative Southern Boobook offered magnificent views.

The beautiful lowland forest of Camplong is situated at the base of an escarpment and is characterised by its many forest giants and its big clumps of dense bamboo. We observed many birds we already knew from Bipolo, but added Gould's Bronze-Cuckoo and Yellow-eared Honeyeater to the tally. This splendid site holds lots of skulkers and getting fair views of these was our main target here. By the end of the day most of us were happy with the performances of the gorgeous Orange-sided Thrush, White-bellied Bushchat, the sneaky Timor Stubtail, Sunda Bush-Warbler and the secretive Buff-banded Thicket-Warbler.

Another visit to the monsoon forest of Bipolo started with good views of Pink-headed Imperial Pigeon, Marigold Lorikeet (split from Rainbow Lorikeet) and a male Australian Koel. We then explored some fallow rice paddies and nearby scrubby growth where Red-backed Buttonquail and a variety of Munias obliged. Best of all was the party of c30 Timor Sparrows that allowed terrific scope studies. Heaven! We also kept watch at a flowering Erythrina tree, where a variety of honeyeaters and a Greater Wallacean Drongo showed. After lunch we drove up into the hills to the small town of Soe, our base for tackling the forested slopes of Mount Mutis.

We reached the middle altitudes of Timor's highest mountain by dawn. The open, very Australian-like Eucalypt forest was cool at first and held good numbers of Olive-headed Lorikeets, but it would take us until late afternoon before we would find one of these endemics perched. A Timor Imperial Pigeon granted brief views, but luckily the Metallic Pigeons were more cooperative. Everywhere Island Thrushes were hopping about and later we walked slowly along a wide track through nice montane evergreen forest festooned with mosses. Chestnut-backed Thrush, Snowy-browed and Little Pied Flycatchers, Yellow-eared Honeyeater and many Mountain White-eyes were noted here and a cute Pygmy Wren-Babbler stole the show. The strong winds obviously held many species in cover.

Next morning, we explored a patch of almost untouched hill forest perched on a nearby escarpment. Repeated good looks at devious Spot-breasted Dark-eyes were much appreciated and Heidi found us a lovely Southern Boobook on its day roost. Whilst wandering through the forest five members of the group touched a really nasty nettle. Its pain lasted for several days and whilst writing this report I can still feel the sore spots - an extremely painful and very unpleasant experience. In the afternoon we returned to Kupang and on the drive eagle-eyed Craig picked up a splendid group of 43 Oriental Plovers in some dry ricefields. What a great sight they were. Our last hours on Timor were spent quietly hunting down the secretive and endemic Black-banded Flycatcher in the dense thickets of Camplong forest. Eventually, with lots of patience and a bit of stubbornness, everyone managed satisfying looks at this little beauty, before we flew to the town of Ende on the island of Flores.

Before tackling the long drive west to Borong we had a good lunch in the company of the only resident birdwatcher on the island. We admired the beautiful scenery with smoking volcanoes and did a bit of introductory birding on a partly forested hill where we glimpsed our first endemic Yellow-browed Dark-eye. We arrived rather late at our guesthouse in Borong, ready for the serious birding at Kisol next morning. The lowland rain forest here was rather quiet and it took a bit of unusual effort to get to grips with the endemic White-rumped Kingfisher. Eventually we all had good scope views of this striking species. A pair of Variable Goshawks displayed, several Elegant Pittas called, a couple of Flores Crows emitted their gurgling calls, a tiny Russet-capped Tesia played hide and seek and Black-

naped Monarch, Black-fronted Flowerpecker and Thick-billed Dark-eyes appeared on the list. One lucky soul observed a Flores Hawk-Eagle.

Next morning, in the montane forest and scrub of Rana Mese, we were listening to the ebullient song of the extraordinary Bare-throated Whistler. The views of this performing master songster were out of this world. The forest also yielded Ruddy Cuckoo-Dove, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Brown-capped Fantail, Scaly-crowned Honeyeater, Oriental White-eye, Yellow-browed and Crested Dark-eyes and Flores Leaf Warbler. A lovely lake held lots of Pacific Black Duck and a few Little Grebes. Later we drove to Ruteng where we enjoyed an excellent lunch and in the afternoon we visited the lower slopes of the active Pocoranaka volcano, where Rufous-bellied Eagle and Flores Jungle Flycatcher were seen. An evening owling session produced audio encounters with at least three Flores Scops Owls and four Wallace's Scops Owls, but none of them could be enticed into view.

A morning was spent at our Wallace's Hanging Parrot stake out, but no joy there either, although we did pick up several new species for the trip including a splendid pair of Bonelli's Eagles, a Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon, Flores Lorikeet, Little Minivet and Golden-rumped Flowerpecker. A White-rumped Kingfisher showed exceptionally well, as did Crested and Thick-billed Dark-eyes. We were then ready for some really serious owling, which soon produced eye-ball-to-eye-ball views of a magnificent Wallace's Scops Owl in its bamboo habitat. What a jaw-dropper!! We also heard the recently rediscovered Flores Scops Owl nearby and although the bird was singing just a few metres from us, we could not see it in the dense shrubby growth. A real pity.

Next morning, the beautiful forested valley of Golo Lusang was vibrating with the cheerful songs of Bare-throated Whistlers. Each bird obviously had a very different repertoire and this made for a rather exceptional dawn chorus. We also noted Barred Cuckoo-Dove, Sunda Cuckoo, Little Minivet, Mountain Tailorbird and Yellow-breasted Warbler here, while a flowering tree was alive with feeding, endemic Scaly-crowned Honeyeaters. Later we drove west towards the small coastal town of Labuan Bajo, but not before admiring several little-known Flores Monarchs and a male Rufous-chested Flycatcher in a nice patch of hill forest. We found a trio of Woolly-necked Storks feeding in emerald green ricefields and upon arrival at Labuan Bajo we transferred to our boat for the nocturnal sail to the island of Komodo. Pacific Reef Egret and a couple of White-bellied Sea-Eagles provided some entertainment.

At dawn we were anchoring in a secluded bay overlooking the barren grassy hills and palm-dotted valleys of the famous island of Komodo. Immediately after landing we already spotted a huge Dragon walking majestically along the beach, regularly flitting out its bifurcated tongue. It was really enormous and impressive and it was pretty obvious who the masters of Komodo were. We listened to the introductory talk by the ranger and soon watched several more big monsters with heavy shoulders and sharp claws. On our walk through the nearby monsoon forest we also observed a young Dragon hiding in a tree to keep away from its cannibalistic elders. We also encountered lots of Yellow-crested Cockatoos (a heart-warming experience!!), Orange-footed Scrubfowl, lots of Green Junglefowl and some Striated Swallows. We bumped into several herds of Timor Deer and watched a gorgeous Tokeh admiring the world from its hole in a tree. We then sailed back to Labuan Bajo across a calm flat sea and found 11 Bulwer's Petrels, Great-billed Heron, a flock of Red-necked Phalaropes, Black-naped, Bridled and Lesser Crested Terns, a pod of Indo-Pacific Bottle-nosed Dolphins and a Green Turtle. Our visit to Komodo was definitely one of the highlights of this tour!! Very, very early next morning we gave the nightbirds of Flores another try, but sadly nothing called or moved. After sunrise we found a flowering tree alive with four species of White-eye and had more good views of Little Minivet and Flores Crows.

We then left Nusa Tenggara and flew to the fleshpots of Bali, where after three weeks of rice we all enjoyed some delicious junk food. On our last morning in Indonesia we revisited the nearby mudflats where a Great Knot and several Terek Sandpipers were observed and where we were able to compare Eurasian and Far Eastern Curlews. A nearby scrubby area held Pink-necked Green Pigeon, Bar-winged and Plain Prinias, White-headed Munia and Streaked Weaver and the tour really ended with the exquisite observation of a displaying pair of White-tailed Tropicbirds.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Subspecies names are given where known and/or appropriate, either in a comment or in parentheses.

PROCELLARIIDAE

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii*: 11 birds showed very well on our return from Komodo Island to Labuan Bajo (Flores). There are rather few observations for the Lesser Sundas, but that is probably because so few birdwatchers have done trips at sea here. The bird is named after Reverend James Bulwer (1794-1879), Scottish naturalist and collector and chaplain at Madeira in 1828.

PODICIPEDIDAE

Red-throated Little Grebe (Little Grebe, Dabchick) *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: We saw this well-known species on Flores (*tricolor*).

PHAETONTIDAE

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaeton lepturus*: Excellent views of a pair circling off the southern coast of Bali. One of the birds had a lovely golden wash over its plumage!

FREGATIDAE

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*: Several observations. Frigatebirds have the lowest wing-loading (low weight in contrast to large wing area) of all birds, enabling them to be amongst the most nimble of fliers.

PHALACROCORACIDAE

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*: Regular sightings of this distinctive species.

SULIDAE

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*: A single showed briefly off the southern coast of Bali.

ARDEIDAE

Great-billed Heron *Ardea sumatrana*: Several observations of this impressive heron on the beaches of the islands and islets off western Flores.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*: Good views of several of the race *manilensis* on Bali, Sumba and Flores.

Great Egret (Great White Egret) *Egretta alba*: Regular sightings of this widespread species (*modesta*).

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*: No fewer than 20 in rice paddies along the northern coast of Timor. Probably mainly a non-breeding visitor from Australia.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*: Regular observations of this widespread bird.

Pacific Reef-Egret *Egretta sacra*: A few along the coast of western Flores and on Komodo (nominate). Both pale and dark morphs were seen.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*: Regular observations of this well-known species. The eastern form is now usually split off as a separate species.

Javan Pond-Heron *Ardeola speciosa*: Regular observations of birds in lovely breeding attire (nominate).

Little Heron (Striated Heron, Green-backed Heron) *Butorides striatus*: A few sightings of the race *javanicus*.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: Several were noted in southern Bali.

CICONIIDAE

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus*: Three were seen in rice paddies east of Labuan Bajo on Flores (*neglectus*).

THRESKIORNITHIDAE

Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia*: We observed two in flight along the northern coast of Timor. A predominantly Australian species.

ACCIPITRIDAE

Pacific Baza (Crested Hawk) *Aviceda subcristata*: A single bird showed particularly well at Bipolo on Timor (*timorlaoensis*).

Oriental Honey-Buzzard (Crested Honey-Buzzard) *Pernis ptilorhyncus*: Two gave excellent views at Bipolo on Timor (subspecies?). These were most probably resident birds, although little is known about the real status of this species in the Lesser Sundas.

Black-winged Kite (Black-shouldered Kite) *Elanus caeruleus*: A couple of observations in open habitat in northern Timor (*hypoleucos*).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*: Regular observations on Sumba and Timor (*affinis*).

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*: A few sightings on all the visited islands (*intermedius*).

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*: Several excellent encounters on our sea trips off western Flores. Always impressive.

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*: Five observations of the nominate race on Sumba, Timor and Flores.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*: Two observations of the race *tjendanae* on Sumba and a single of the race *hellmayri* on Timor.

Variable Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster*: A pair of these lovely birds of prey showed well in a patch of lowland forest on Flores (*sylvestris*). The form in Australia and Tasmania is now usually considered as a separate species: Grey Goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae*.

Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus*: Great views of a pair at close range in western Flores (*renschii*). Always impressive.

Rufous-bellied Eagle *Hieraaetus kienerii*: Two birds of the race *formosus* showed off their amazing flying abilities near Ruteng (Flores).

Flores Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus floris* (NL): Ron saw one flying over a nearby mountain in western Flores. This is a recent split from Changeable Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus cirrhatus*. It is restricted to the islands of Flores, Sumbawa, Komodo and Paloe.

FALCONIDAE

Spotted Kestrel (Moluccan Kestrel) *Falco moluccensis*: 13 observations of this widespread little raptor (*microbalia*).

Australian Hobby (Little Falcon) *Falco longipennis*: Three observations of this dashing falcon on Timor (*hanieli*).

ANATIDAE

Lesser Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna javanica*: c20 showed well at a lake in western Flores.

Sunda Teal *Anas gibberifrons*: Regular observations.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*: The race *rogersi* was common on Rana Mese lake near Ruteng (Flores).

MEGAPODIIDAE

Orange-footed Scrubfowl *Megapodius reinwardt*: Fantastic close up views of several birds on Komodo Island. A couple were active at their breeding mound and showed off what they could do with their large feet (nominate). We also glimpsed one on Sumba.

PHASIANIDAE

Brown Quail *Coturnix ypsilophora*: Regular sightings of the race *pallidior* in the Sumba grasslands and two observations of the race *raaltenii* on Timor.

Green Junglefowl *Gallus varius*: Seen and heard on Sumba and Flores, but best behaved on Komodo, where lots of attractive birds really showed off at minimal distance. An Indonesian endemic.

TURNICIDAE

Red-backed Buttonquail *Turnix maculosa*: Several excellent observations in rice paddies in northern Timor (nominate).

Sumba Buttonquail *Turnix everetti*: After some frustrating views of flushed birds, we managed to obtain unbelievable point blank scope views of this little known Sumba endemic in the grasslands near Waingapu. The bird stayed put for c15min and we had incredible views of all the feather details. Simply out of this world!!! We flushed at least 10 birds on our walks. The total population is estimated at 2500-10.000 birds, but is probably higher, as this species occurs in all the natural grasslands of the island of Sumba. Its voice is still undescribed!!! It is considered as **Endangered** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna. The scientific epithet refers to Alfred Hart Everett (1848 – 1898), English administrator and collector in the East Indies.

RALLIDAE

White-browed Crane *Poliolimnas cinerea*: A couple of observations of the nominate race.

White-breasted Waterhen *Amaurornis phoenicurus*: Four sightings of this well-known species.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: A couple of observations on Flores (*orientalis*).

RECURVIROSTRIDAE

White-headed Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus*: Several of these distinctive waders on mudflats in northern Timor and on Bali.

CHARADRIIDAE

Grey Plover (Black-bellied Plover) *Pluvialis squatarola*: Just a few on Bali.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*: Regular encounters. Some of the birds were still in lovely breeding attire.

Javan Plover *Charadrius javanicus*: Good views of several on the Bali mudflats.

Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus*: Scope views of four birds on mudflats in northern Timor. A visitor from Australia.

Lesser Sand-Plover (Mongolian Plover) *Charadrius mongolus*: A couple were observed on the mudflats on Bali (nominate).

Greater Sand-Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii*: Fairly common on the Bali mudflats.

Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus*: Splendid views of a group of no fewer than 43 birds in dry rice paddies near Kupang (Timor). These beautiful birds breed in northern China and Mongolia, where on our splendid tour we observe these waders in spectacular display over the semi desert. They winter in northern Australia.

SCOLOPACIDAE

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*: Quite common on Bali and at Kupang in Timor (*variegatus*).

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*: Common on the Bali mudflats.

Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*: A maximum of six of these magnificent waders on the Bali mudflats, where we could compare them directly with Eurasian Curlews. We also saw two in northern Timor. This species is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna. In this case *madagascariensis* is an erroneous toponym, and *macassarensis* was doubtless intended (after the port of Makassar = Ujung Pandang, on Sulawesi).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*: A single bird was observed on Bali (*melanuroides*).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*: Three were noted on Bali.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*: c50 were noted on the mudflats at Benoa on Bali (*eurhinus*).

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*: We found two on a shrimp pond in northern Timor.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*: Sightings on Timor, Flores and Bali.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*: Small numbers were noted on Timor and Flores.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*: Good views of very active birds on the Bali mudflats.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*: Many sightings.

Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes*: Quite common on the Bali and Kupang (Timor) mudflats.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*: Just a single bird on the Benoa mudflats on Bali.

Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*: Good flight views of a single bird at Benoa (Bali). Well found, Andrew.

Rufous-necked Stint (Red-necked Stint) *Calidris ruficollis*: c12 at the shrimp ponds on northern Timor.

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta*: Six showed well at the northern Timor shrimp ponds.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*: Good views of three at the northern Timor shrimp ponds.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*: A few observations on Bali and Timor.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*: c20 at sea east of Komodo and a single along the southern coast of Bali.

LARIDAE

STERNINAE

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*: Singles at Kupang (Timor) and Benoa (Bali). Whiskered Terns in Wallacea are migrants from their breeding grounds in northern Asia (usually between September and May) or from their breeding areas in southern Australia (usually May to December).

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*: Many were noted at Benoa (Bali).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*: Two were seen along the beach at Kupang (Timor).

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*: Excellent views of several of these distinctive terns on our sea crossing from Komodo to Labuan Bajo (Flores).

Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*: A couple of birds were observed on the sea crossing between Komodo and Labuan Bajo (Flores).

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*: Several observations on Bali, Timor and Flores.

Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii*: The most common bird at sea between Komodo and Labuan Bajo (Flores) and also quite a few off Kupang (Timor).

Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis*: One or two were noted amongst a flock of Greater Crested Terns near Komodo.

COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon (Rock Dove, Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia*

Metallic Pigeon *Columba metallica*: We saw several in flight in our favourite forest on Sumba and saw six more in the eucalyptus forests covering the slopes of Mount Mutis in Timor. We obtained scope views of a perched individual at the latter spot. This distinctive form used to be lumped in White-throated Pigeon *Columba vitiensis*.

Island Collared Dove (Island Turtle-Dove) *Streptopelia bitorquata*: Singles were noted on Bali.

Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*: Regular throughout our itinerary (*tigrina*).

Barred Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia unchall*: Good views of several at Golo Lusang near Ruteng (Flores).

Ruddy Cuckoo-Dove (Indonesian Cuckoo-Dove) *Macropygia emiliana*: Scope views of a single bird at Rana Mese (Flores).

Little Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia ruficeps*: A single bird was seen in a splendid tract of forest on Sumba (*orientalis*).

Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*: Regular observations on Sumba, Flores and Komodo.

Green-winged Pigeon *Chalcophaps timorensis*: Many sightings in the Timor forests. This form used to be lumped in Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*.

Barred Dove (Timor Zebra Dove) *Geopelia maugei*: Regular sightings on all the visited islands and especially common on Komodo. It is endemic to the southeastern Moluccas and the Lesser Sundas.

Pink-necked Green Pigeon *Treron vernans*: We found several of these widespread birds in the mangroves of southern Bali.

Sumba Green Pigeon *Treron teysmannii*: A couple were scoped in a patch of forest on Sumba, where we noted several more in flight. This species is endemic to Sumba and is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna.

Black-backed Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus cinctus*: Repeated magnificent scope views of this very attractive creature. We saw the nominate race in the Bipolo and Camplong forests in Timor and the race *albocinctus* in the hill forests of western Flores. A truly gorgeous dove.

Red-naped Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus dohertyi*: Excellent scope observation of this highly handsome Sumba endemic. The population is estimated at a maximum of 9100 birds and the species is considered as **Vulnerable** in "Threatened Birds of the World". It is named after US collector William Doherty (1857-1901).

Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus regina*: Regular observations in the Timor forests (*flavicollis*). Cracking scope views!! This beauty was the favourite bird for Ann and Andrew.

Black-naped Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus melanospila*: Several behaved very well in the Sumba, Flores and Komodo lowland forests (*melanauchen*).

Green Imperial Pigeon *Ducula aenea*: Regular observations of this widespread species in the Sumba, Flores and Komodo forests (*polia*).

Pink-headed Imperial Pigeon *Ducula rosacea*: Great scope studies of birds perched in the canopy of a forest giant at Bipolo (Timor) and several others in flight nearby. This Wallacean endemic is mainly an island species. It is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon *Ducula lacernulata*: Nice scope studies in the Flores highlands (*sasakensis*). An Indonesian endemic which is restricted to the western Lesser Sundas, Java and Bali.

Timor Imperial Pigeon *Ducula cineracea*: A single bird was seen on Mount Mutis (Timor). This species is endemic to Timor and Wetar and is considered as **Endangered** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna.

PSITTACIDAE

- Sumba Lorikeet *Trichoglossus fortis*: Small numbers were seen on Sumba. This is a recent split in the Rainbow Lorikeet complex.
- Marigold Lorikeet *Trichoglossus capistratus*: Just one observation of a couple at Bipolo on Timor. This is a recent split in the Rainbow Lorikeet complex.
- Flores Lorikeet *Trichoglossus weberi*: Several observations in the Flores forests. This is another recent split in the Rainbow Lorikeet complex.
- Olive-headed Lorikeet *Trichoglossus euteles*: No fewer than 130 were noted in flight over the slopes of Mount Mutis (Timor). Eventually we managed to obtain scope views of a perched bird. This species is endemic to the central Lesser Sundas.
- Yellow-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea*: Repeated point blank scope studies on Komodo where we saw at least 20 birds (*parvula*). This spectacular species is an Indonesian and East Timor endemic, restricted to Sulawesi and the Lesser Sundas. It has declined dramatically over much of its range in the past twenty years and the total population is now estimated at less than 5000 birds. It is considered as **Critical** in "Threatened Birds of the World". Probably the most threatened species of the Lesser Sundas!! Heidi's and Craig's favourite bird of the trip.
- Citron-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua citrinocristata*: A single bird was seen in flight in the forests of southern Sumba. This species used to be lumped in Yellow-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea*, but it has a very distinctive orangey crest and orangey cheeks.
- Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*: Easily the most common psittacid of the tour with observations on Sumba and Flores (*floresianus*) and on Timor (nominate).
- Great-billed Parrot *Tanygnathus megalorhynchos*: Good views of a single bird in flight in the forests of Sumba (*sumbensis*). Another species that has declined over much of its range.
- Olive-shouldered Parrot *Aprosmictus jonquillaceus*: Just a few in the Bipolo and Mount Mutis forests on Timor (nominate). It has obviously declined dramatically lately, as I found it to be fairly common on my previous visits in the nineties. A rather scary and very sad development!!!! It is endemic to the islands of Timor, Roti and Wetar and is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".
- Wallace's Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus flosculus* (NL): A single bird was seen by Bob in a forest patch in west Flores. This species is considered as **Endangered** in "Threatened Birds of the World" and its population is probably only a few thousand birds.

CUCULIDAE

- Sunda Cuckoo *Cuculus lepidus*: Often heard in the hill forests of Flores and eventually seen well near Ruteng. A recent split from Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus saturatus*.
- Plaintive Cuckoo *Cacomantis merulinus* (H): A single bird was heard on Bali.
- Rusty-breasted Cuckoo (Indonesian Cuckoo) *Cacomantis sepulcralis*: The melancholic voice was commonly heard on Sumba and on Flores (nominate). Scope views.
- Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* (H): Regular audio encounters in the Timor forests (subspecies?).
- Gould's Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx russatus*: Seen and heard in the lowland forests of Timor (nominate).
- Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea* (H): We heard this well-known species on Komodo.
- Australian Koel *Eudynamys cyanocephala*: Good views of a male at Bipolo (Timor). A really distinctive voice.

CENTROPODIDAE

Lesser Coucal *Centropus bengalensis*: This widespread species was noted on Sumba, Timor and Flores.

TYTONIDAE

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*: One was noted during a nocturnal drive on Flores.

STRIGIDAE

Flores Scops-Owl *Otus alfredi* (H): We heard several, often at very close range, in the hill forests of west Flores, but we never managed to see it, although we sure tried. This species was originally only known from three specimens (Mount Repok, 1896) until it was rediscovered near Ruteng in 1995 and seen again in 1997. Its voice is now known and there have been several recent observations. It is considered as **Endangered** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

Wallace's Scops-Owl *Otus silvicola*: Fantastic close up views of this secretive species near Ruteng (Flores), where its gruff calls could be heard all over the place. This cutie is endemic to Sumbawa and Flores. One of the highlights of the tour. The bird is of course named after Alfred Russell Wallace (1823-1913), the famous British zoologist and the father of zoogeography. He was also a collector in Brazil and the East Indies and author of "Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection" (1870) and Island Life (1880). The Malay Archipelago (1869), his well-written narrative of his truly amazing travels through the remote islands of Indonesia is a must for everyone who is interested in the natural history of this region.

Sumba Boobook *Ninox rudolfi*: Scope views of a perched bird in a patch of forest in central Sumba. This Sumba endemic is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

Sumba Hawk-Owl (Little Sumba Owl) *Ninox sumbaensis*: Fair views of several calling birds in the Lewa area. This Sumba endemic is a species with a chequered history, as it was first recorded in 1991, when it was thought to be a member of the genus *Otus*. It was only formally described in 2002. Coates & Bishop mention this species under Scops-Owl *Otus sp?* on p361. Interestingly "Owls, A Guide to the Owls of the World", by König, Weick & Becking hint that this species probably belongs with Flores Scops-Owl (p220-221).

Southern Boobook (Boobook Owl) *Ninox boobook*: Superb views of this mainly Australian species in the forest at Bipolo (Timor). Coates & Bishop give the scientific name as *Ninox novaeseelandiae*, but as the Australian, New Guinea, Kai and Timor populations have been split off, this name is now used for the Morepork of New Zealand and neighbouring islands. The form on Timor will eventually be split off too as a separate species. Keep tuned.

CAPRIMULGIDAE

Sunda Nightjar (Mees's Nightjar) *Caprimulgus meesi*: Good views of several birds along a forest edge on Sumba. This is a representative of the Large-tailed Nightjar complex, found only on Flores and Sumba. Previously unrecognized as a separate taxon due to its lack of morphological distinctness, Sangster and Rozendaal (2004) described this new species on the basis of its vocalizations, which differ significantly from those of the Large-tailed Nightjar races resident on other islands in the Lesser Sundas. The species is named after Gerlof Mees, former curator of the Natural History Museum in Leiden (the Netherlands).

Savanna Nightjar *Caprimulgus affinis*: Regular observations on tracks and roads on Sumba.

APODIDAE

- Edible-nest Swiftlet *Collocalia fuciphaga*: The nominate race was recorded throughout our itinerary.
Glossy Swiftlet (White-bellied Swiftlet) *Collocalia esculenta*: Quite common throughout. We saw the race *sumbawae* on Sumba and Flores and the race *neglecta* on Timor.
Linchi Swiftlet (Cave Swiftlet) *Collocalia linchi*: Regular observations on Bali (*dedii*).
Fork-tailed Swift (Pacific Swift) *Apus pacificus*: A few observations in the Timor lowlands.
House Swift *Apus nipalensis*: A few sightings of this widespread species.

HALCYONIDAE

- White-rumped Kingfisher *Caridonax fulgidus*: Terrific scope studies of this snazzy and glorious species in the forests of Flores. It is restricted to Flores, Sumbawa, Lombok and Besar. The genus *Caridonax* is one of the few endemic genera of Nusa Tenggara (the Lesser Sundas). One of the most appealing birds of the trip.
Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris*: Regular observations of the nominate race.
Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta*: A few sightings of this visitor from Australia (nominate).
Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher *Halcyon australasia*: Repeated smashing scope studies of this beauty in the forests of Sumba and Timor (nominate). A Lesser Sundas endemic, whose distinctive trills were a feature of the dawn chorus of the lowland forests in Timor. This highly attractive species is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

ALCEDINIDAE

- Small Blue Kingfisher *Alcedo coerulescens*: Good looks at several in the mangroves of Bali. An Indonesian endemic.
Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*: Prolonged scope studies of a sleepy bird at Bipolo on Timor (*floresiana*).

MEROPIDAE

- Blue-tailed Bee-eater *Merops philippinus*: Regular sightings of this handsome species.
Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*: This visitor from Australia was commonly encountered. Many great looks.

CORACIIDAE

- Common Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*: A single bird was found perched along a forest edge in central Sumba.

BUCEROTIDAE

- Sumba Hornbill *Rhyticeros everetti*: Good scope views of at least 25 individuals of this Sumba endemic in a forest patch on Sumba. The population is now thought to number less than 4000 birds and is declining. It is considered as **Vulnerable** in BirdLife International's "Threatened Birds of the World".

PICIDAE

- Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker (Brown-capped Woodpecker) *Dendrocopos moluccensis*: Regular sightings of this small woodpecker in the forests of Flores, Komodo and Bali (*grandis*). The only woodpecker in the Lesser Sundas

PITTIDAE

Elegant Pitta *Pitta elegans*: Splendid views of this highly wanted species in lowland forest on Sumba (*maria*). We also saw and heard this Indonesian endemic on Flores (*concinna*). The 32 species of Pittas are some of the most spectacular and most desired birds on our planet. Filip Verbelen, a Belgian birdwatcher, has recently managed to complete the family - he saw all the species - and is most probably still the only person in the world who has managed this difficult task!!! Ian's and Geoffrey's favourite bird of the trip and one of the ornithological highlights of the tour.

ALAUDIDAE

Australasian Bushlark *Mirafra javanica*: Regular observations in the grassland areas of Sumba (*parva*).

HIRUNDINIDAE

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: A couple flew over the Bipolo rice paddies.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*: Regular sightings of the race *javanica*.

Striated Swallow *Hirundo striata*: The nominate race showed well on several occasions.

Tree Martin *Hirundo nigricans*: Regular observations on Timor, where it probably also breeds (*timoriensis*). We also noted it on Flores.

MOTACILLIDAE

Paddyfield Pipit (Oriental Pipit) *Anthus rufulus*: Regular observations on Sumba and Flores (*albidus*) and on Timor (*medius*).

CAMPEPHAGIDAE

Wallacean Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina personata*: A few observations of this Indonesian and East Timor endemic. We saw the race *sumbensis* on Sumba, the race *personata* on Timor and the race *floris* on Flores.

Pale-shouldered Cicadabird (Sumba Cicadabird) *Coracina dohertyi*: We saw several in the Sumba forests. This species is endemic to Sumba, Sumbawa and Flores.

White-shouldered Triller *Lalage sueurii*: Regular observations on Sumba and Timor. It is restricted to Indonesia and East Timor.

Little Minivet (Flores Minivet) *Pericrocotus lansbergei*: Several nice looks at this elegant Flores and Sumbawa endemic in the highland forests of western Flores.

PYCNONOTIDAE

Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goaivier*: We observed this widespread species commonly on Bali, during our transits there (*analis*).

DICRURIDAE

Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus*: A single bird was noted on Bali.

Lesser Wallacean Drongo *Dicrurus bimaensis*: Regular encounters on Sumba (*sumbae*) and on Flores and Komodo (*nominate*). Easily seen in flowering Erythrina trees. A recent split from following species.

Greater Wallacean Drongo *Dicrurus densus*: Small numbers were noted on Timor. Quite a bill!!!

ORIOLIDAE

Olive-brown Oriole (Timor Oriole) *Oriolus melanotis*: After regular audio encounters we managed to scope a distinctive red-billed male in the Bipolo forest on Timor (nominate). One of the most fascinating features of orioles in Wallacea is their remarkable visual mimicry of friarbirds. This was first described by Wallace. Read more on this amazing subject on p411 in Coates & Bishop.

Black-naped Oriole *Oriolus chinensis*: This widespread and well known species was commonly seen and heard on Flores (*broderipii*).

Timor Figbird *Sphecotheres viridis*: Quite common in the lowland forests of Timor, where mainly found in fruiting trees. Endemic to Timor, Roti and Semau.

CORVIDAE

Slender-billed Crow *Corvus enca*: A few showed on Bali (nominate).

Flores Crow *Corvus florensis*: Good looks at several of these forest-inhabiting crows in western Flores. What a splendid voice!! This species is endemic to Flores and is considered as **Endangered** in BirdLife International's "Threatened Birds of the World". The population is less than 2500 birds and declining.

Large-billed Crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*: Regular encounters with this widespread species on all the visited islands (nominate).

PARIDAE

Grey Tit *Parus cinereus*: Regular observations on Sumba and Flores. Here at the extreme eastern edge of its area of distribution. A recent split in the Great Tit *Parus major* complex.

TIMALIIDAE

Pygmy Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla*: Heard and seen in the highland forest on Mount Mutis on Timor (*timorensis*) and also recorded near Ruteng on Flores (*everetti*).

TURDIDAE

White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana* (H): We heard this retiring species near Ruteng on Flores. This isolated population is represented here by the race *floris*.

Chestnut-capped Thrush *Zoothera interpres* (H): A few audio encounters on Flores.

Chestnut-backed Thrush *Zoothera dohertyi*: Terrific scope views of this highly attractive species in the forests of central Sumba. We observed this magnificent Lesser Sundas endemic also on Timor and on Flores. The 33 species of *Zoothera* thrushes, living and hiding in Asian and African forests are amongst the most appealing and popular targets for birdwatchers. This species is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna.

Orange-sided Thrush (Orange-banded Thrush) *Zoothera peronii*: Repeated magnificent views of another splendidly striking *Zoothera* in the Camplong forest on Timor (nominate). It is restricted to the islands of Timor, Wetar, Babar, Romang and Damar. The Orange-sided Thrush is, without any doubt, one of the easier to observe members of its genus. This species is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

Sunda Thrush *Zoothera andromedae*: One was glimpsed crossing the road near Ruteng (Flores).

Island Thrush *Turdus poliocephalus*: Fairly common and cooperative on the higher slopes of Mount Mutis on Timor (*schegeлии*). There are no fewer than 50 races known for this widespread species.

Pied Chat *Saxicola caprata*: Another widespread species that we encountered on Sumba (*francki*), Timor (*pyrrhonota*) and Flores (*fruticola*).

White-bellied Chat (White-bellied Bushchat) *Saxicola gutturalis*: Several excellent scope studies of this canopy-inhabitant in the lowland forests of Timor (nominate). It is endemic to Timor, Roti and Semau and it is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

PARDALOTIDAE

Flyeater (Golden-bellied Flyeater) *Gerygone sulphurea*: Regular on Bali and western Flores (nominate). A highly distinctive song.

Plain Fairy Warbler (Plain Gerygone) *Gerygone inornata*: This endemic of Timor, Roti, Wetar and Sawu proved to be quite common in the forests of Timor. A highly distinctive and frequently heard song.

SYLVIIDAE

Russet-capped Tesia (Russet-capped Stubtail) *Tesia everetti*: Good views for most of this endearing little mite in the Flores forests (nominate). We heard this endemic of Sumbawa and Flores regularly in all the visited forests and patches of secondary scrub of Flores.

Timor Stubtail *Urosphena subulata*: Several excellent encounters with this diminutive cutie in the lowland forests of Timor (nominate). Its very high-pitched, almost inaudible voice and secretive behaviour make it difficult to locate and observe. It is restricted to Timor, Wetar and Babar. A lovely species!!!

Sunda Bush-Warbler (Indonesian Bush-Warbler) *Cettia vulcania*: Several encounters in the Timor forests (*everetti*).

Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus*: A few of the race *everetti* were recorded in the highland forests of Flores.

Timor Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus presbytes*: Regular observations on Timor. It is endemic to this island.

Flores Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus floris*: Regular sightings in the highland forests of Flores. A recent split from previous species.

Yellow-breasted Warbler *Seicercus montis*: A single showed well in the forest of Golo Lusang on Flores (*floris*). A widespread species.

Tawny Grassbird *Megalurus timoriensis*: Good views of a skulking bird in a patch of forest on Sumba (*inquirendus*).

Buff-banded Thicket-Warbler (Buff-banded Bushbird) *Buettikoferella bivittata*: This Timor endemic was not very cooperative, as it was not responsive at all during our visit. But, most people eventually managed to get good views of this long-tailed skulker and we all heard its distinctive song. The genus *Buettikoferella* is one of the few endemic genera of Nusa Tenggara (the Lesser Sundas). It is named after Johann Büttikofer (1850-1927), a Swiss botanist and zoologist.

CISTICOLIDAE

Plain Prinia *Prinia inornata*: A single bird was seen on Bali.

Bar-winged Prinia *Prinia familiaris*: A few were noted in shrubby habitat on Bali. This species is endemic to Sumatra, Java and Bali.

Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed Warbler) *Cisticola juncidis*: Regular encounters with this well-known species (*fuscicapillus*).

Golden-headed Cisticola (Bright-capped Cisticola) *Cisticola exilis*: Several showed well in dry rice paddies on Timor (*lineocapilla*).

MUSCICAPIDAE

Flores Jungle-Flycatcher (Flores Russet-backed Jungle-Flycatcher) *Rhinomyias oscillans*: We saw this species very well near Ruteng on Flores (nominate). It is endemic to Sumbawa and Flores.

Sumba Jungle-Flycatcher (Sumba Russet-backed Jungle-Flycatcher) *Rhinomyias stresemanni*: A couple were seen in forest undergrowth on Sumba. A recent split from previous species.

Sumba Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa segregata*: Several good looks at this unobtrusive Sumba endemic. Coates & Bishop still consider this form as part of Asian Brown Flycatcher *M. dauurica*. This species is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna.

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*: Several encounters in the highlands of Timor (*clarae*).

Rufous-chested Flycatcher *Ficedula dumetoria*: A male showed well in a patch of hill forest on Flores (nominate).

Sumba Flycatcher *Ficedula harterti*: This Sumba endemic showed a couple of times in a nice patch of forest in central Sumba.

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*: Fairly common on Timor and Flores.

Black-banded Flycatcher *Ficedula timorensis*: We had to work quite hard to get to grips with this secretive and very smart Timor endemic, and in the end most of us got good looks at it in the Camplong forest. It is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World".

Timor Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis hyacinthinus*: Regular encounters with this attractive species, which is restricted to the islands of Roti, Semau, Wetar and Timor (nominate). A real cracker of a bird.

MONARCHIDAE

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*: Several sightings of this widespread species in the Flores forests (*prophata*).

Asian Paradise-Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*: Regularly recorded on Sumba (*sumbaensis*) and on Flores (*floris*). The splendid males are always a delight to observe.

Flores Monarch *Monarcha sacerdotum*: Great close up views of this little-known and stunning species in the forests of western Flores. It is endemic to the western half of Flores and was discovered only in 1971, and hence formally described in 1973. It then disappeared for many years until fairly sizeable populations were found in the nineties. The Flores Monarch is considered as **Endangered** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna.

Spectacled Monarch *Monarcha trivirgatus*: A few observations on Sumba (nominate).

Broad-billed Flycatcher (Broad-billed Monarch) *Myiagra ruficollis*: Scope views of this distinctive species in the Bipolo forest on Timor (nominate). Its broad bill was clearly noticeable.

RHIPIDURIDAE

Pied Fantail *Rhipidura javanica* (H): We heard it in the Bali mangroves on our first afternoon (nominate).

Northern Fantail *Rhipidura rufiventris*: Regular encounters with this inquisitive bird in the Timor forests (nominate). It does not adapt the characteristic fanned tail posture of most fantails.

Brown-capped Fantail *Rhipidura diluta*: Several great encounters with this Sumbawa, Flores and Lomblen endemic in the highlands of Flores (nominate).

Arafura Fantail *Rhipidura dryas*: This recent split from Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons* showed well on Sumba (*sumbensis*) and on Timor and Flores (*semicollaris*). Its distribution includes the Lesser Sundas, the Tanimbar Islands, the Kai Islands, the Aru Islands, the western Papuan Islands, southwestern New Guinea (Mimika river) and northern Australia.

PETROICIDAE

Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis*: Several were recorded on Sumba (*connectens*). A well-known and widespread Asian species.

PACHYCEPHALIDAE

Fawn-breasted Whistler *Pachycephala orpheus*: Regular good looks at this unobtrusive species in the Timor lowland forests. Its song is much more distinctive than its plumage. Endemic to Timor, Wetar, Jaco and Semau.

Common Golden Whistler (Golden Whistler) *Pachycephala pectoralis*: We recorded this widespread and illustrious bird on Sumba (*fulviventris*), Timor (*calliope*), Flores and Komodo (*fulvotincta*). An amazing 64 subspecies have been described.

Bare-throated Whistler *Pachycephala nudigula*: Voted as one of the Birds of the Trip, not only because of its magnificent and extremely varied song, but also because of the prolonged splendid scope studies, whilst it was showing off its talents. We recorded it regularly in the Flores highlands, where it is represented by the nominate race. The Bare-throated Whistler is endemic to Sumbawa and Flores. The favourite bird for Ron, Bob and Avril.

ARTAMIDAE

White-breasted Wood-Swallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*: A few on Timor and on Flores (*albiventer*).

Black-faced Wood-Swallow *Artamus cinereus*: Nice views of several of this mainly Australian species on Timor (*perspicillatus*).

LANIIDAE

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach*: Four observations on Timor (*bentet*) and a single on Bali.

STURNIDAE

Short-tailed Starling *Aplonis minor*: Regularly recorded on Sumba, Timor and Flores.

Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus*: Regular sightings on Bali. Coates & Bishop include it confusingly in White-vented Myna *Acridotheres cinereus*.

MELIPHAGIDAE

Timor Friarbird (Plain Friarbird) *Philemon inornatus*: Regular observations of this fairly inconspicuous Timor endemic.

Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides*: Common, vociferous and pugnacious. Recorded on Sumba, Flores and Komodo (*neglectus*) and on Timor (nominate). Also occurs in New Guinea and northern Australia.

Streak-breasted Honeyeater (Streak-breasted Meliphaga) *Meliphaga reticulata*: Quite common in the Timor forests and endemic to the islands of Timor and Semau. In New Guinea the genus *Meliphaga* is a real nightmare and several species are very difficult to tell apart.

Scaly-crowned Honeyeater *Lichmera lombokia*: Excellent scope views of this unobtrusive species in a flowering tree in the Flores highlands. It is endemic to Lombok, Sumbawa and Flores.

Indonesian Honeyeater *Lichmera limbata*: Several observations of this noisy species on Sumba and on Timor. It used to be lumped in Brown Honeyeater *L. indistincta* of Australia and New Guinea.

Yellow-eared Honeyeater *Lichmera flavicans*: Several brief views at Bipolo were followed by excellent sightings in the eucalyptus forests cloaking the flanks of Mount Mutis (Timor). A Timor endemic.

Sumba Red-headed Honeyeater (Sumba Myzomela) *Myzomela dammermani*: A single brilliant observation of this bright red and black Sumba endemic in a secluded valley on Sumba. Eye-catching.

Black-chested Honeyeater (Black-chested Myzomela, Red-rumped Honeyeater) *Myzomela vulnerata*: Regular observations of this lovely Timor endemic.

NECTARINIIDAE

Brown-throated Sunbird *Nectarinia malacensis*: A few observations on Sumba (*rubrigena*) and on Flores (*convergens*). Widespread in southeast Asia.

Olive-backed Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis*: A few were seen on Bali and Flores (*ornata*). Another widespread species.

Apricot-breasted Sunbird *Nectarinia buettikoferi*: This delightful Sumba endemic posed several times for us along forest edges. Following an in depth review of the sunbird family, it has now been put in the genus *Cinnirys*.

Flame-breasted Sunbird *Nectarinia solaris*: Many splendid views of this fetching Lesser Sundas endemic on Timor and Flores (nominate).

DICAEIDAE

Golden-rumped Flowerpecker *Dicaeum annae*: Several first-rate encounters in flowering bushes on Flores. Not easy to see the golden rump!!! It is endemic to Sumbawa and Flores.

Thick-billed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum agile*: Regularly seen wagging its tail in lowland forest on Sumba (*tinctum*) and Timor (*obsoletum*).

Black-fronted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum igniferum*: This Lesser Sundas endemic was regularly observed on Flores and Komodo.

Red-chested Flowerpecker *Dicaeum mauei*: Commonly observed in the Timor forests (nominate). Endemic to the Lesser Sundas and a few islands south of Sulawesi.

Blood-breasted Flowerpecker *Dicaeum sanguinolentum*: Fairly common on Sumba (*wilhelminae*). Restricted to Java, Bali and the Lesser Sundas.

Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum trochileum*: Several excellent encounters on Bali. An Indonesian endemic.

ZOSTEROPIDAE

Oriental White-eye *Zosterops palpebrosus*: Regular encounters on Flores (*unicus*).

Mountain White-eye *Zosterops montanus*: Very common in the Timor and Flores highland forests (nominate).

Yellow-spectacled White-eye *Zosterops wallacei*: Fairly common in the Sumba and Flores forests. This distinctive orange-fronted cutie is endemic to the western Lesser Sundas.

Ashy-bellied White-eye *Zosterops citrinellus*: Fairly common on Sumba and Timor (nominate).

Yellow-browed Dark-eye (White-browed White-eye) *Lophozosterops superciliaris*: Several lovely observations in the highlands of Flores (nominate). This species is endemic to Sumbawa and Flores.

Crested Dark-eye (Dark-crowned White-eye) *Lophozosterops dohertyi*: Many excellent sightings of this handsome bird in the highland forests of Flores (*subcristatus*). It is endemic to Sumbawa, Satonda and Flores. Another species that is much more attractive than shown in Coates & Bishop.

Spot-breasted Dark-eye (Timor White-eye) *Heleia muelleri*: Several showed badly in the Camplong forest, but luckily most of us got much better views in a patch of secondary growth near Soe. This canopy inhabitant is a Timor endemic. *Heleia* is one of the few genera that is endemic to Nusa Tenggara (the Lesser Sundas). This species is considered as **Near-Threatened** in "Threatened Birds of the World", BirdLife International's splendid book on the sad state of affair of 10% of the world's avifauna.

Thick-billed Dark-eye (Flores White-eye) *Heleia crassirostris*: Several smashing observations of this different-looking and secretive species in the forests of Flores. It is endemic to Sumbawa and Flores.

PASSERIDAE

Tree Sparrow (Eurasian Tree Sparrow) *Passer montanus*: Fairly common throughout (*malaccensis*).

PLOCEIDAE

Streaked Weaver *Ploceus manyar*: Good views of several in non-breeding plumage on Bali.

ESTRILDIDAE

Red Avadavat *Amandava amandava*: A few showed well on Timor (*flavidiventris*). The Wallacean populations are probably derived from early introductions.

Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata*: Regular observations on Sumba, Timor and Komodo (nominate).

Black-faced Munia *Lonchura molucca*: Regular on Sumba, Timor, Flores and Komodo. An Indonesian and East Timor endemic, which is mostly restricted to Wallacea.

Scaly-breasted Munia (Nutmeg Mannikin) *Lonchura punctulata*: This widespread and well-known species was seen on Sumba (*sumbae*) and Timor (*blasii*).

Five-coloured Munia *Lonchura quincolor*: Fabulous views of several on Sumba. Especially common on Timor, where we encountered a splendid flock of several hundred birds in dry rice paddies. A Lesser Sundas endemic.

Pale-headed Munia *Lonchura pallida*: A few showed well on Timor. It is endemic to Sulawesi and the Lesser Sundas.

White-headed Munia *Lonchura maja*: We saw a few on Bali during one of our transit stops.

Timor Sparrow *Padda fuscata*: Fantastic views of this little-known species along a forest edge in Timor. Terrific scope studies!! There were at least 30 birds about. This attractive species is endemic to Timor, Roti and Semau and is considered as **Vulnerable** in BirdLife International's "Threatened Birds of the World".

MAMMALS

Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*: A single on Bali.

Long-tailed Macaque (Crab-eating Macaque) *Macaca fascicularis*: Common and sometimes quite aggressive.

Indo-Pacific Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops aduncus*: We encountered several pods.

Timor Deer (Rusa Deer) *Cervus timorensis*: Many sightings on Komodo.

REPTILES

Komodo Dragon *Varanus komodoensis*: One of the highlights of the tour was our visit to Komodo, where we watched the antics of five of these prehistoric-looking and frightfully impressive beasts. We could get very close to them and they were really out of this world when they yawned and showed off their enormous pink mouth. Nightmare stuff!!! We also saw a young animal, that was keeping away from the adults in a tree.

Tokeh *Gekko gecko*: Scope views of one hiding in a tree hole on Komodo. A very distinctive nocturnal sound.

Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*: One was seen off Komodo.