

Mountain Drongo 3618, 3, 4, 0, 2. Varirata NP and Veimaui.	<i>Chaetorhynchus papuensis</i>
Black-backed Butcherbird 3625, 6, 1, 0, 1. Motupore Island.	<i>Cracticus mentalis</i>
White-eared Catbird 3629, 7(8), 2, 0, 2. Varirata NP and Brown River.	<i>Ailuroedus buccoides</i>
Macgregor's Bowerbird 3633, 6(7), 2, 0, 1. Myola. Two females.	<i>Amblyornis macgregoriae</i>
Crested Bird of Paradise 3642, 5, 1, 0, 1. Lake Omha. One male.	<i>Cnemophilus macgregorii</i>
Macgregor's Bird of Paradise 3643, 8, 1, 0, 1. Lake Omha.	<i>Macgregoria pulchra</i>
King Bird of Paradise 3668, 5, 1, 0, 1. Brown River. One female.	<i>Cicinnurus regius</i>

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LOWLAND BIRDS OF THE VANIMO REGION, WEST SEPIK PROVINCE

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Vanimo lies in the north west of Papua New Guinea in the West Sepik Province. It is primarily a region of virgin lowland rainforest that has a rich avifauna, but is also rarely visited by ornithologists.

Hans Beste and I visited this area for five days in October 1987. Observations were made between Wutung, close to the Irian Jaya border, and the logging areas 26 km east of Vanimo, with several mornings being spent on the road going inland towards Bewani.

The annotated list that follows is only intended as an indication of the area's birdlife. It is no doubt incomplete, as our observations were mostly from roadsides, and our stay was short.

Highlights included sightings of the rarely seen Northern Cassowary, Forest Bittern, Gurney's Eagle, and Broad-billed Fairy-Wren.

Annotated List

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| Northern Cassowary | <i>Casuaris unappendiculatus</i> |
| 5 Oct, an adult male flushed from dense vegetation at alarmingly close range, 7 km from the coast along the Bewani rd. Droppings in this area were numerous, indicating that this species is more common than our single sighting suggests. | |
| Forest Bittern | <i>Zonerodius heliosylus</i> |
| 6 Oct, one flushed from a creek in selectively logged lowland forest 26 km east of Vanimo. Although only seen briefly the barring on the breast, underwing, and tail was clearly seen as it flew 100 m before landing out of sight. It was noted to be a large, heavily built bird with dangling yellow legs and feet. Further attempts at flushing it failed. | |
| Brahminy Kite | <i>Haliastur indus</i> |
| 5 Oct, two adults seen between Vanimo and Wutung. One juvenile along the Bewani rd at c. 200 m. | |
| Grey-headed Goshawk | <i>Accipiter poliocephalus</i> |
| 5 Oct, two along the Bewani rd, one perched in a coconut palm close to the coast, the other flying across the road at about 150 m. | |
| Gurney's Eagle | <i>Aquila gurneyi</i> |
| 5 Oct, one soaring near Musu, 10 km west of Vanimo. Watched for about five minutes as it soared just above the canopy. Noted to have very broad wings, a small head, a short rounded tail, wing tips heavily fingered and darker than the rest of the underwing. Wings held flat. | |
| Brown-collared Brush-Turkey | <i>Talegalla jobiensis</i> |
| Commonly heard throughout the region at dawn and dusk, or when raining. A shy bird difficult to observe well. | |
| Lesser Golden Plover | <i>Pluvialis dominica</i> |
| 5 - 6 Oct, odd birds seen along the beaches and at Wutung; 7 Oct, 350 on Vanimo airfield was the highest count, but abundant on the airfield throughout our stay. | |

Mongolian Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
Commonly seen on the airstrip and beaches around Vanimo throughout our stay. We estimate up to 150 individuals being present.	
Large Sand-Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>
2 Oct, one adult bird in winter plumage seen on the Vanimo airstrip.	
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
2 Oct, ten on the Vanimo airstrip; 7 Oct, two or three in partial alternate plumage, on the beach at Vanimo.	
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Up to 70 on Vanimo airstrip at any time. Also common on the beaches.	
Wandering Tattler	<i>Tringa incana</i>
5 Oct, six along the rocky shoreline between Vanimo and Wutung. Other tattlers were seen but not specifically identified.	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>
Abundant throughout the area. Seen daily on the airstrip, beaches, gardens, rocky shoreline, rivers, roads, even on the roofs of houses.	
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Tringaterek</i>
6 Oct, three on the beach at Vanimo.	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>
Common on the airstrip. I estimate over 50 to be present at any time.	
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Macropygia amboinensis</i>
5 Oct, two seen briefly near Musu, 10 km west of Vanimo.	
Great Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Reinwardtoena reinwardtii</i>
7 Oct, excellent views of one flying across the road, 7 km from the coast along the Bewani rd at about 200 m.	
Victoria Crowned Pigeon	<i>Goura victoria</i>
Although not seen by us, it is clearly a common resident away from human habitation. Many of the resident locals have seen and caught them even in recent times.	
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus magnificus</i>
Regularly seen in small numbers along the Bewani rd and in the logging area to the east of Vanimo.	
Pink-spotted Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus perlatus</i>
3 - 4 Oct, a party of about 20 in a large roadside fig tree, about 5 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.	
Superb Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus superbus</i>
4 Oct, an adult at a tiny stick nest, c. 3 m in a palm tree, 7 km from the coast, along the Bewani rd.	
Beautiful Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus pulchellus</i>
6 Oct, one in an area of selectively logged forest 25 km east of Vanimo, high in a fruiting tree.	
Orange-bellied Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus iozonus</i>
Commonly seen throughout the area, sometimes in large numbers in fruiting fig trees. 7 Oct, also seen in the township of Vanimo.	
Pinon Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula pinon</i>
5 Oct, one, 7 km from the coast, along the Bewani rd perched high in a dead tree.	
Zoe Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula zoeae</i>
4 Oct, ix along the Bewani rd, all in flight.	
Brown Lory	<i>Chalcopsitta duivenbodei</i>
2 Oct, a pair flying over Vanimo airstrip; 6 Oct, four in a flowering tree close to the coast on the Bewani rd.	

Rainbow Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus haematodus</i>
5 Oct, common in more open areas along the coast between Vanimo and Wutung. Seemed to favour coconut palms more than other species.	
Western Black-capped Lory	<i>Lorius lory</i>
7 Oct, only two, in a flowering tree 4 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.	
Palm Cockatoo	<i>Probosciger aterrimus</i>
6 Oct, three in the logging area 25 km east of Vanimo. 7 Oct, one flying across the Bewani rd, c. 6 km from the coast.	
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua galerita</i>
5 Oct, three near Musu flying over the canopy; 6 Oct, 6 at c. 200 m on the Bewani rd and commonly seen throughout the logging areas east of Vanimo.	
Double-eyed Fig-Parrot	<i>Cyclopsitta diophthalma</i>
3 Oct, one seen by Hans Beste near the coast, along the Bewani rd.	
Edwards' Fig-Parrot	<i>Psittaculirostris edwardsii</i>
3 - 6 Oct, regularly seen in small numbers feeding high in the canopy at c. 200 m, 7 km from the coast along the Bewani rd. This species seemed more willing to show itself than other fig-parrots.	
Red-cheeked Parrot	<i>Geoffroyus geoffroyi</i>
Commonly seen throughout the area, although it did seem particularly abundant in the logging areas east of Vanimo.	
Eclectus Parrot	<i>Eclectus roratus</i>
Seen daily, in small numbers, throughout the area. Males were seen more frequently than females.	
Papuan King-Parrot	<i>Alisterus chloropterus</i>
3 Oct, two flying below the canopy along the Bewani rd at c. 150 m, 5 km from the coast.	
Channel-billed Cuckoo	<i>Scythrops novaehollandiae</i>
7 Oct, one on the coast near Vanimo perched in a dead tree.	
Greater Black Coucal	<i>Centropus menbeki</i>
7 Oct, two in roadside grasses, next to dense forest, after heavy overnight rain, 2 km from Vanimo and near Wutung.	
Lesser Black Coucal	<i>Centropus bernsteini</i>
6 - 7 Oct, five, all in roadside vegetation, four along the Bewani rd and one near Musu. As with other coucals they seem to like exposing themselves to dry after heavy rains.	
Moustached Tree-Swift	<i>Hemiprocne mystacea</i>
Seen daily in small numbers, regularly perched on exposed dead branches.	
Uniform Swiftlet	<i>Collocalia vanikorensis</i>
Common throughout the region especially near water and open grasslands.	
Hook-billed Kingfisher	<i>Melidora macrorrhina</i>
Heard daily at dawn and dusk in the township of Vanimo, although frustratingly it was never seen.	
Rufous-bellied Kookaburra	<i>Dacelo gaudichaud</i>
Common throughout the area, seen daily in small numbers, heard everywhere.	
Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon sancta</i>
7 Oct, a few birds seen close to coconut groves, near the coast west of Vanimo.	
Yellow-billed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon torotoro</i>
7 Oct, at least two heard along the Bewani rd, close to the coast.	
Blyth's Hornbill	<i>Rhyticeros plicatus</i>
Common throughout the area. 5 - 7 Oct, seven in large fruiting trees along the Bewani rd; 5 Oct, common at Wutung; 6 Oct, common in the logging areas east of Vanimo. Noisy and conspicuous.	
Hooded Pitta	<i>Pitta sordida</i>
7 Oct, several heard calling from the forest interior, at dawn, along the Bewani rd.	

- Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*
3 - 7 Oct, common at Vanimo airstrip and over water.
- Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
6 - 7 Oct, two in winter plumage; one 14 km inland on the Bewani rd and one seen briefly feeding on the roadside in the logging area 25 km east of Vanimo. [There are very few lowland records of this species in PNG, ed].
- Boyer's Cuckoo-Shrike *Coracina boyeri*
6 Oct, one pair seen high in the canopy of a fig tree, 4 km along the Bewani rd.
- Black-browed Triller *Lalage atrovirens*
5 & 7 Oct, two males feeding on berries between 4 - 5 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Blue Jewel-Babbler *Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*
3 Oct, one seen by Hans Beste, close to the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Rufous Babbler *Pomatostomus isidorei*
7 Oct, a party of five birds seen foraging low down in forest, 7 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Broad-billed Fairy-Wren *Malurus gravi*
7 Oct, one pair in dense rainforest foraging low down between ferns and vines, 7 km from the coast on the Bewani rd. Shy and difficult to observe at close range.
- Rusty Mouse-Warbler *Crateroscelis murina*
3 - 7 Oct, several heard in roadside vegetation along the Bewani rd.
- Sooty Thicket-Fantail *Rhipidura threnothorax*
7 Oct, one pair seen on a heavily forested ridge along the Bewani rd, c. 8 km from the coast. They responded well to imitations of their call and seemed to prefer dark dense vegetation of the forest interior.
- White-bellied Thicket-Fantail *Rhipidura leucothorax*
Two seen and many heard at a number of locations between Wutung and Vanimo. Noted to be restricted to dense roadside vegetation, venturing into the forest interior only along creek beds. Often difficult to observe well.
- Chestnut-bellied Fantail *Rhipidura hyperthra*
5 Oct, two feeding high in the roadside canopy, near Musu, 10 km west of Vanimo.
- Rufous Monarch *Monarcha rubiensis*
7 Oct, one distant, unconfirmed sighting of a bird considered to be this species, c. 4 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Golden Monarch *Monarcha chrysomela*
6 Oct, one adult male feeding high in a flowering tree, close to the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Frilled Monarch *Arses telescopthalmus*
6 - 7 Oct, common throughout the area, with many sightings from Wutung in the west to the logging areas east of Vanimo.
- Shining Flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*
6 Oct, only one male seen, feeding on insects in roadside vegetation, 2 km west of Vanimo.
- Yellow-breasted Boatbill *Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*
6 - 7 Oct, two pairs seen feeding on insects in the upper mid-stage of the canopy, along the Bewani rd, 3 km from the coast.
- Black-sided Robin *Poecilodryas hypoleuca*
7 Oct, commonly heard, although only one seen, 5 km from the coast along the Bewani rd. Preferred dense vegetation near water. Often difficult to observe well. Responds well to whistled imitations of its call.

- Northern Scrub-Robin *Drymodes superciliaris*
7 Oct, one lured in by imitations of its call, high on a forested ridge, c. 9 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Grey Whistler *Pachycephala simplex*
5 Oct, two along the forested road between Musu and Wutung.
- Variable Pitohui *Pitohui kirhocephalus*
5 Oct, five along the coast road between Vanimo and Wutung.
- Rusty Pitohui *Pitohui ferrugineus*
3 - 7 Oct, parties of these birds were common high in the canopy along the Bewani rd. Very wary and difficult to observe well. Call was loud, strong and musical with up to six calling at once.
- Crested Pitohui *Pitohui cristatus*
6 Oct, one heard giving its diagnostic continuous series of calls, high on a ridge, c. 8 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Black Berrypecker *Melanocharis nigra*
5 Oct, near Musu; 6 Oct, in the logging area east of Vanimo.
- Papuan Flowerpecker *Dicaeum pectorale*
3 - 7 Oct, common throughout the area. Most often observed in the canopy, although one was seen collecting nesting material close to the ground near Vanimo.
- Black Sunbird *Nectarinia sericea*
5 Oct, one male at Wutung attending a small flowering tree.
- Yellow-bellied Longbill *Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*
4 Oct, one on the roadside c. 4 km from the coast on the Bewani rd.
- Dwarf Honeyeater *Oedistoma iliophus*
Four feeding on flowers attached low down on tree trunks of the forest interior, 4 - 5 km from the coast on the Bewani rd. Often seen hovering.
- Puff-backed Meliphaga *Meliphaga aruensis*
6 Oct, only one confidently identified as this species, 4 km inland along the Bewani rd. Identification was based on the size and shape of the ear patch and the rictal streak. The ear patch being puffed out, rectangular and bright lemon-yellow. The rictal streak extended continuously from the bill to the ear patch and was also lemon-yellow.
- Yellow-gaped Meliphaga *Meliphaga flavirictus*
6 Oct, four along the lower parts of the Bewani rd were considered to be this species. Fed in the mid-stage of the canopy on flowering trees. Identification, again, was based on the size and shape of the ear patch and rictal streak. The ear patch was small, rounded and dull yellow. The rictal streak was prominent, bright orange-yellow, quite broad and extended to just beyond and below the eye.
- Meyer's Friarbird *Philemon meyeri*
6 Oct, one pair located in fairly open habitat c. 2 km west of Vanimo.
- Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides*
3 - 7 Oct, common throughout the coastal areas surrounding Vanimo.
- Streak-headed Mannikin *Lonchura tristissima*
5 Oct, two seen on the roadside c. 7 km from the coast along the Bewani rd; 6 Oct, three pairs seen about to roost in tall roadside grasses c. 20 km east of Vanimo.
- Singing Starling *Aplonis cantoroides*
Regularly encountered around Vanimo and in the adjacent coconut plantations. Sightings mainly involved pairs.
- Golden Myna *Mino anais*
5 Oct, only one pair seen, 3 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.

- Yellow-faced Myna** *Mino dumontii*
5 -6 Oct, four to six along the Bewani rd 3- 5 km from the coast.
- Brown Oriole** *Oriolus szalayi*
6 Oct, one singing high on an exposed branch 4 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- White-breasted Wood-Swallow** *Artamus leucorhynchus*
Regularly seen, solitarily or in pairs, in disturbed habitats, including Vanimo township, the airstrip, coconut plantations and the logging areas c. 20 km east of Vanimo.
- Hooded Butcherbird** *Cracticus cassicus*
5 - 6 Oct, two pairs seen and more heard along the Bewani rd between 2 - 6 km from the coast.
- White-eared Catbird** *Ailuroedus buccoides*
6 Oct, two high on a ridge along the Bewani rd, c. 7 km from the coast. A shy species, difficult to observe well, keeping high in the canopy.
- Jobi Manucode** *Manucodia jobiensis*
6 Oct, three located, all in fairly open areas between 2 - 6 km west of Vanimo. Identification was based on small size, short bill and somewhat duller plumage than Crinkle-collared Manucode *Manucodia chalybata* to which it seemed most similar.
- Magnificent Riflebird** *Ptiloris magnificus*
6 Oct, one female c. 4 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Twelve-wired Bird of Paradise** *Seleucidis melanoleuca*
Two males seen; 5 Oct, one by Hans Beste near Musu, west of Vanimo; 6 Oct, one near the logging areas c. 25 km east of Vanimo. Both were flying across the road at canopy level.
- Pale-billed Sicklebill** *Epimachus bruijnii*
Unfortunately, we did not locate this species during our stay. Efforts were concentrated in lowland forests below 200 m, between Wutung and the logging areas east of Vanimo. Pictures were regularly shown to the locals without success. Perhaps we should have been looking further inland or at higher altitude.
- King Bird of Paradise** *Cicinnurus regius*
6 Oct, one female was seen, c. 5 km from the coast along the Bewani rd, although many males were heard.
- Lesser Bird of Paradise** *Paradisaea minor*
5 Oct, one female located near Wutung; 6 Oct, Common only around the logging areas east of Vanimo; 7 Oct, One male and two females seen between 4 - 7 km from the coast along the Bewani rd.
- Grey Crow** *Corvus tristis*
5 Oct, two flying across the road near Musu, west of Vanimo.
- Torresian Crow** *Corvus orru*
7 Oct, two flying over Vanimo airstrip.

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