



Western Pacific Odyssey

20 March – 17 April 2023



Short-tailed Albatross off Torishima Island April 2023 © Chris Collins

SYSTEMATIC LIST

The taxonomy and English names used in this checklist generally follows the recommendations of the *International Ornithologists' Union's World Bird List* with revisions made where an alternative name/taxonomy is considered more appropriate.

This systematic list was compiled by Chris Collins (based on the figures agreed at the nightly logs) and includes all species recorded between departing Auckland, New Zealand and the evening before arriving at Yokohama, Japan.

Accurately counting seabirds at sea is extremely difficult (eg as one can never be sure which birds are following or revisiting the ship), so the system outlined below was adopted, with this also used for the more numerous land birds:

1-10 = actual number seen

11-100 = A

101-1,000 = B

1,001-10,000 = C

10,001-100,000 = D

Non-native introductions are shown in brackets.

BIRDS

Paradise Shelduck *Tadorna variiegata*

Four birds on Urupukapuka Island in the Bay of Islands (22 March).

Brown Teal *Anas chlorotis*

Five birds were recorded on Great Barrier Island (21 March) with two the following day at Urupukapuka Island in the Bay of Islands (22 March).

Melanesian Scrubfowl *Megapodius eremita*

This species was seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April: 4) and Tetepare (2 April: 3).

[**California Quail** *Callipepla californica*]

A handful of individuals of this introduced species were seen on Norfolk Island on 24 March.

[**Red Junglefowl** *Gallus gallus*]

This introduced species is well established on Norfolk Island with A logged (24 March).

It is worth noting that although the Australians apparently regard these birds as 'tickable' as Red Junglefowls, many birds seem to be closer to feral chickens.....

Little Penguin *Eudyptula minor*

A lone bird on 22 March in the Bay of Islands was the sole record.

Wilson’s Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

This species was observed on four dates during the voyage with a total of four birds seen on three dates between 21-25 March (Hauraki Gulf – sea day north of Norfolk Island). A lone individual seemingly migrating north was then observed on 5 April in the waters between Bougainville and New Ireland.

White-bellied Storm-petrel *Fregetta grallaria*

A singleton on 25 March on the sea day between Norfolk Island and New Caledonia was the sole record.

New Zealand Storm-petrel *Fregetta maoriana*

Oiling in the outer Hauraki Gulf for this species (21 March) proved highly successful with at least eleven birds visiting our slick.

Polynesian Storm-petrel *Nesofregetta fuliginosa*

Three were found on 28 March (first sea day north of New Caledonia) with another logged the following day.

Laysan Albatross *Phoebastria immutabilis*

This is always the trickiest of the three North Pacific albatross species on the WPO but lone birds were found on 14 April (sea day south of Torishima) and then a couple of days later in the Izu Islands.

Black-footed Albatross *Phoebastria nigripes*

The most frequently encountered North Pacific albatross species with daily sightings between Chichijima and the evening before the ship arrived in Yokohama (13-16 April). The highest count was on 15 April when the ship was off Torishima and low hundreds were logged.

Short-tailed Albatross *Phoebastria albatrus*

This was the only the second time since 2009 that the ship was authorised to get close to Torishima (15 April) and the experience was spectacular with dozens of birds around the ship and distant views of two of the colonies on the island where several hundred individuals were present.

Birds were also seen on the days either side of the Torishima circumnavigation with five on 14 April and A logged on 16 April.

Gibson’s Albatross *Diomedea (antipodensis) gibsoni*

A single bird was seen on 23 March on the sea day between New Zealand and Norfolk Island.

White-capped Albatross *Thalassarche steadi*

Two birds were logged on 21 March in the Hauraki Gulf with four the following afternoon whilst travelling north from the Bay of Islands.

“Solomon Band-rumped Storm-petrel” *Oceanodroma sp.*

A total of six birds which closely resemble Band-rumped Storm-petrel were seen between 28-30 March (sea days between New Caledonia and Solomon Islands).

This is at least the seventh time that similar looking birds have been recorded in this general area on

WPO expeditions (ie off the New Caledonian coastline or in the Solomon Sea). Given Band-rumped Storm-petrel is only known to breed in three parts of the Northern Pacific and according to Onley and Scofield (*Albatrosses, Petrels and Shearwaters of the World*) is unknown in the south-west Pacific, it seems highly likely that there is an unknown breeding population somewhere in the general area of New Caledonia or the southern Solomon Islands.

As Band-rumped Storm-petrel has now been split into several species in the Atlantic, if the same happens to the birds in the Pacific, it seems not inconceivable that the birds being seen on the WPO are an undescribed taxon.....

Leach's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

A total of six individuals of this widespread storm-petrel were seen between 7-14 April (second sea day north of New Ireland to sea day south of Torishima).

Tristram's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma tristrami*

Picking this species out from the more numerous Matsudaira's Storm-petrel is not always easy but small numbers were identified on a daily basis between 12-16 April.

Matsudaira's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma matsudairae*

This North Pacific species was recorded on a daily basis from when the ship passed the North Mariana Islands (11 April) until Torishima (15 April) with A logged on four dates and a low B on 12 April.

Fairy Prion *Pachyptila turtur*

Two birds in the Hauraki Gulf on 21 March with one the following day after leaving the Bay of Islands.

Grey-faced Petrel *Pterodroma gouldi*

This species was seen on a daily basis from 21-23 March (Hauraki Gulf - sea day to Norfolk Island).

Providence Petrel *Pterodroma solandri*

This species is not recorded annually on the WPO, however, good numbers were found in 2023 with birds logged on five dates between departing Norfolk Island (24 March) and arriving at Nendo (30 March).

Kermadec Petrel *Pterodroma neglecta*

Seen on five widely spaced dates with the first being a lone bird in the outer Hauraki Gulf (21 March). A low A was then logged on the sea day between New Zealand and Norfolk Island (23 March) with a single individual the following day. The final records were a single individual offshore from the North Mariana Islands (11 April) and two the following day.

White-necked Petrel *Pterodroma cervicalis*

First seen in the outer Hauraki Gulf where two individuals were recorded (21 March). This species was then seen on a daily basis between the sea day from New Zealand to Norfolk Island (23 March) and arriving in New Caledonia (26 March). A was recorded on 23 March with low single figure counts on each of the subsequent three days.

Black-winged Petrel *Pterodroma nigripennis*

Encountered on all sea days from departing the Bay Islands (22 March) until arriving in New Caledonia (26 March).

The highest count was around Norfolk Island (24 March) where this species breeds with B logged.

Bonin Petrel *Pterodroma hypoleuca*

The only *Pterodroma* which is regularly encountered during the latter stages of the WPO with daily sightings from the North Mariana Islands (11 April) until Torishima (15 April with A logged on the majority of dates).

Gould's ("White-winged") Petrel *Pterodroma leucoptera*

Seen in unexpectedly low numbers with birds only noted on 25 and 26 March (sea day between Norfolk Island and New Caledonia and off the coast of New Caledonia). A very low A was logged on 25 March (ie a very low double figure count) with somewhat higher numbers the following day.

Magnificent Petrel *Pterodroma (brevipes) magnificens*

A number of individuals of what was considered to be this relatively recently described (sub)species (ie rather than 'normal' Collared Petrels) were seen on the two sea days between New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands (28-29 March).

Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii*

This species has generally finished breeding by the time the WPO starts with a low A in the Hauraki Gulf (21 March) and then four birds across the next two days.

'Lava Petrel' Unknown Petrel sp.

At least two of these mysterious birds were seen and photographed with the first sighting not far from Espirito Santo, Vanuatu on 5 April. A second bird was then found eight days later in the waters between Bougainville and New Ireland.

This is the second occasion that this petrel has been seen on the WPO after at least three were recorded on the sea day south of Makira in 2019. What is considered to be the same species was also observed in the remote eastern Solomon Islands on a Heritage Expeditions trip in 2014.

Although the plumage is close to a dark Kermadec Petrel, there are some subtle plumage differences, and the bird is structurally different. Indeed, some of the observers in 2023 experienced the same confusion as in 2019 when in the moments after the bird was spotted they were unsure if they were looking at a petrel or a skua !!

Tahiti Petrel *Pseudobulweria rostrata*

This species was seen on seven sea days between 24 March-6 April (Norfolk Island – sea day north of New Ireland) with a low A logged on the day between Norfolk Island and New Caledonia and single figure counts on all other occasions.

Beck's Petrel *Pseudobulweria becki*

One of the major specialities of the voyage, with at least eight of this extremely poorly known (and seemingly highly localised) species being recorded off New Ireland on 5 April. A seemingly sick bird was found on 8 April whilst transiting close to some atolls due west of Chuuk (8 April) and this was

considered to be a Beck's Petrel.

Black Petrel *Procellaria parkinsoni*

Seen in the Hauraki Gulf (21 March: low A) with similar numbers for the following two days.

Streaked Shearwater *Calonectris leucomelas*

This species was first recorded in the waters between Bougainville and New Ireland (5 April: A). There were then no further records until 11 April (passing North Mariana Islands) where two individuals were noted.

It was then recorded on a daily basis on the last three days of the trip with very large numbers (D) around the Izu Islands on the final day of the expedition.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna pacificus*

This was the most frequently encountered species on the voyage with sightings on almost every day of the expedition from 23 March (sea day south of Norfolk Island) onwards.

The highest counts were on the sea days between Norfolk Island and leaving New Caledonia when C was logged on a daily basis (ie upwards of 1,000 birds).

On the majority of other dates, A (11 days) or B (5 days) was recorded.

Buller's Shearwater *Ardenna bulleri*

Only seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 22 March where a low B was recorded (ie several hundred individuals) and the following day when one individual was noted.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna griseus*

Lone birds on 23 March and 5 April were the only sightings.

Short-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna tenuirostris*

The first sightings of birds moving north was on 30 March not far from Nendo in the Solomon Islands when a low A was logged. Two lone birds were then recorded on 5 and 9 April but there were then daily sightings between 13-16 April with the highest count (B) on 14 April on the sea day south of Torishima.

On many previous WPOs, this species has been seen in large numbers prior to arriving at New Caledonia, however, 2023 followed a similar pattern to 2019 when none were seen there.

Flesh-footed Shearwater *Ardenna carneipes*

A low A was logged after leaving the Bay of Islands (22 March). There were then no further sightings until 5 April (waters between Bougainville and New Ireland) when two individuals were recorded. A total of seven birds were then seen across five dates between 8 April and the end of the voyage.

Bryan's Shearwater *Puffinus bryani*

This recently described and critically endangered shearwater is currently only known to nest on the small island of Hagashi-jima off the eastern coast of Chichi-jima, although it is presumed to have a somewhat larger breeding range than this.

It was one of our major targets in the Bonin Islands with a lone bird seen by some of the group on the evening of 13 April as the ship cruised past Hagashi-jima.

Fluttering Shearwater *Puffinus gavia*

A low A was logged in the Hauraki Gulf (21 March) and the following afternoon after leaving the Bay of Islands.

Melanesian (“Tropical”) Shearwater *Puffinus (bailloni) gunax*

This ‘species’ was recorded on four of the subsequent five days after leaving New Caledonia with single figure counts on three dates and A logged on 28 March (sea day north of New Caledonia).

Although the Audubon’s/Little/Tropical Shearwater complex has recently been split by most authorities, it seems clear that the situation has not been fully resolved, as there are plumage differences between birds, winter and summer breeders on the same island etc. On 28 March 2023, for example, some birds were seen to have white ‘saddlebags’ whilst other individuals did not, with some having pale vents whilst others were dark.....

The name ‘Melanesian Shearwater’ was proposed by Howell and Zufelt (*Oceanic Seabirds of the World*) and they suggest this name for the birds breeding in Vanuatu and elsewhere in Melanesia.

Micronesia (“Tropical”) Shearwater *Puffinus (bailloni) dichrous*

Howell and Zufelt suggest this ‘species’ occurs locally in the West Pacific from Micronesia to the Phoenix Islands and possibly into the Solomons. Three birds seen on 8 April close to atolls east of Chuuk were presumed to be this species.

Bannerman’s Shearwater *Puffinus bannermani*

Good numbers were recorded off the eastern side of Chichi-jima on the evening of 13 April (with A logged) when we were looking for Bryan’s Shearwater. Five birds were also seen the previous day.

Heinroth’s Shearwater *Puffinus heinrothi*

Seen in small numbers on three consecutive dates (3-5 April) with the first individual seen not far from Kolombangara during the late afternoon of 3 April. Eight were then logged the following day in the same general area with the highest count being a low A off New Ireland (5 April).

Although the nesting colonies remain to be discovered, it is widely assumed that at least a percentage of the population breed on Kolombangara, although with the WPO also consistently recording this species off New Ireland, it seems reasonable to assume that others probably nest there too.

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*

Only recorded on two dates with lone birds on both 23 and 24 March.

The bird on 24 March was presumably of the race *assimilis* which breeds on Norfolk Island. It is interesting to note that according to Margaret Christian who wrote the field guide to the birds of the island, that there are summer and winter breeding populations which vary so markedly in size that they require different size leg rings !!

Common Diving-petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix*

A was recorded in the Hauraki Gulf on 21 March with smaller numbers the following day after departing the Bay of Islands. The final sighting was subsequent day (ie the sea day between New Zealand and Norfolk Island) when a lone bird was sighted.

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii*

Seen on a daily basis from 7-11 April (two days north of New Ireland – atolls west of Chuuk) with single figure counts on four dates and a low A on 8 April.

Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda*

The first sightings were around Norfolk Island (24 March: very low B, ie 100+ individuals). Two birds were then seen the following day with a lone bird on 28 March (sea day north of New Caledonia). It was then almost two weeks before the next sightings with a total of six individuals logged between 9-12 April.

White-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon lepturus*

This species was seen on thirteen dates. The majority of these were found during the second half of the expedition (eighteen birds between 5-12 April) although there were also sightings on five dates in the first half of the trip.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

A lone bird flew around the ship on the morning of 16 April in the Izu Islands.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*

The only sightings of this widespread species were in the Solomon Islands with one individual on Makira (31 March) and two at Tetepare/Rendova a couple of days later.

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*

The sole record was a fine summer plumage adult which flew around the ship and briefly landed on the morning of 15 April when the ship was a little to the south of Torishima.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

A lone bird was seen distantly from the ship as we cruised offshore from Torishima (15 April).

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*

Small numbers were seen on Great Barrier Island (21 March: 2), Urupukapuka Island (22 March: 1), Norfolk Island (24 March: 4) and New Caledonia (27 March: 3).

Pacific Reef Heron ("Eastern Reef-egret") *Egretta sacra*

Seen on New Caledonia and on four days in the Solomons (Nendo, Makira, Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombagara) with a total of twelve birds noted.

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*

Although many of the more distant frigatebirds seen during the voyage were not identified to species, there were confirmed sightings of Great Frigatebird on seven dates between 24 March-8 April.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*

This species was seen on seven dates between 28 March-7 April with A logged on three days and single figure counts on all other occasions.

Australian Gannet *Morus serrator*

Good numbers were seen in the Hauraki Gulf on 21 March with a low B logged with smaller numbers the following afternoon as the ship sailed northwards from the Bay of Islands.

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*

Recorded on seven dates during the voyage with the largest numbers (B) being close to Norfolk Island (24 March).

It is worth noting that the birds which breed on Norfolk Island (and on the Kermadec and Lord Howe Islands) are 'Tasman Boobies' which may eventually be treated as a full species given there are structural and plumage differences from other populations. These birds also have dark eyes unlike those seen later in the voyage which had yellow eyes.

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*

Seen on sixteen dates between 26 March-16 April (New Caledonia-Izu Islands) with A logged on seven dates and single figure counts on all other occasions.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*

This species was encountered on a more or less daily basis between our arrival in the Solomon Islands (Nendo on 30 March) and the last day before Yokohama (16 April) with only three dates during that period when it was not recorded.

Most day counts were in single figures or a low A was logged.

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*

A lone bird was observed at Great Barrier Island (21 March), with three the following day at Urupukapuka Island. Eight individuals were then recorded on the trip to Riviere Bleue on New Caledonia (27 March).

Australian Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*

Two individuals were found around Great Barrier Island (21 March) with a low A logged the following day at Urupukapuka Island.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax suicirostris*

A lone bird on Urupukapuka Island on 22 March.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Six birds were logged on New Caledonia on 27 March.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

This species was seen in small numbers on six dates with the first being four birds as the ship approached the wharf at Noumea (26 March). Seven birds were then recorded the following day with one or two birds noted on four dates whilst the ship was in the Solomon Islands.

Pacific Baza *Aviceda subcristata*

A total of seven birds were seen in the Solomon Islands with three logged on both Makira (31 March) and Kolombangara (4 April) with a lone bird at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April).

Variable Goshawk *Accipiter hiogaster*

Single birds were seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April) and on Kolombangara (4 April).

Pied Goshawk *Accipiter albogularis*

This species is endemic to the Solomon Islands with two birds found at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April).

New Caledonia (“White-bellied”) Goshawk *Accipiter haplochrous*

This tricky New Caledonian endemic was seen during the excursion to Mount Koghi (26 March) with three individuals recorded.

Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*

Two on Great Barrier Island (21 March).

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

This species was only seen on New Caledonia with three individuals recorded on the shore excursion to Riviere Bleue (27 March).

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Found on three days in the Solomons (Makira, Guadalcanal and Kolombangara) with three individuals noted on each occasion.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

One of the big surprises of the expedition were sightings on both Makira and Kolombangara of this species as it has not been previously recorded on the WPO; indeed, it is not generally considered to regularly occur east of the Bismarck so two records outside the normal range was certainly very unexpected.

Sanford’s (“Solomon Islands”) Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus sanfordi*

This impressive Solomon Islands endemic was seen on five days in the Solomons with a total of ten individuals being recorded.

Eastern Buzzard *Buteo japonicas*

A lone bird was seen from the ship soaring over Torishima (15 April).

Kagu *Rhynochetos jubatus*

This species is always one of the major landbird highlights of the expedition with at least eight birds at Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia on 27 March.

Woodford’s Rail *Nesoclopeus woodfordi*

This extremely elusive endemic was seen briefly by a handful of people on the excursion to Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April).

Weka *Gallirallus australis*

A lone bird was found on Urupukapuka Island (22 March).

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*

There were several sightings of this species on Urupukapuka Island in the Bay of Islands on 22 March.

Roviana Rail *Gallirallus rovianae*

This species was heard whilst returning to the wharf from Imbu Rano Lodge, Kolombangara on 3 April. The following day, several individuals were heard at Hambare, Kolombangara with a fortunate few also seeing it.

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus*

Several birds were noted on Urupukapuka Island in the Bay of Islands (22 March) with three more on Norfolk Island (24 March). The final sightings were on 2 April at Tetepare/Rendova.

Variable Oystercatcher *Haematopus unicolor*

This species was seen on Great Barrier (21 March) and Urupukapuka Island in the Bay of Islands (22 March) with a total of eight individuals logged.

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*

Another species which was only seen on Great Barrier (21 March: 3) and at Urupukapuka Island (22 March: 4).

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

Two birds were seen at Star Harbour on Makira Island (31 March).

New Zealand Plover *Charadrius obscurus*

A reasonable number of this New Zealand endemic species were seen on Urupukapuka Island with a low A logged on 22 March.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

A lone bird was recorded on Makira Island (31 March).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A single bird was found on Makira (31 March).

Wandering Tattler *Tringa incana*

A lone bird on 4 April was the sole sighting.

Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus*

This species was first observed near Norfolk Island (24 March) when two individuals were logged. It was then found on thirteen subsequent dates with the highest count being C which was recorded in the waters offshore between Kolombangara and Ranongga (4 April).

Black Noddy *Anous minutus*

Like the previous species, Black Noddies were first encountered at Norfolk Island (24 March) where C was recorded. Birds were then seen on eleven dates between New Caledonia and the North Mariana Islands.

Grey Ternlet *Anous albivitta*

This species was seen in reasonable numbers around Norfolk Island (24 March) when A was logged, with smaller numbers in the Hauraki Gulf (21 March) and the sea day between Norfolk Island and New Caledonia.

White Tern *Gygis alba*

Records of this species divided into three distinct blocks with good numbers around Norfolk Island and then a few more the day to the north (24-25 March), single figure counts on 30-31 March (off Nendo and Makira) and then daily sightings between 5-13 April (Bougainville to Chichi-jima) with the highest number (a low B) east of the southern North Mariana Islands.

Silver Gull *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*

This species was reasonably numerous (B and C) on both days in New Zealand waters (21 and 22 March). A lone bird was recorded at Norfolk Island (24 March) with A then logged on the two dates at New Caledonia (26-27 March).

It is worth noting that until relatively recently the birds in New Zealand were regarded as an endemic species, Red-billed Gull, but both the Birdlife International Illustrated Checklist and the *International Ornithologists' Union's World Bird List* now lumps these birds with the more widespread Silver Gull.

Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*

A low A was logged as the ship cruised through the Izu Islands (16 April).

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicus*

Recorded on the first three days of the expedition (whilst in New Zealand waters) with the highest count being around the Bay of Islands on 22 March when A was logged.

Caspian Tern *Hydroporgne caspia*

A lone bird in the Bay of Islands (22 March) was the sole record.

Great Crested Tern *Sterna bergi*

This species was seen on a daily basis around New Caledonia (26-27 March) and in the Solomon Islands (31 March-4 April) with A logged on most dates.

Grey-backed ("Spectacled") Tern *Sterna lunata*

This species rarely approaches ships and it is invariably a tricky species on the WPO. Lone birds were seen on 30 March (Nendo) and 1 April (Guadalcanal) with two birds then logged on both 10 and 11 April as the ship cruised passed the North Mariana Islands.

Bridled Tern *Onychoprion anaethetus*

This tropical tern was encountered on nine dates between Espirito Santo, Vanuatu (29 March) and the sea day south of Chichi-jima (11 April) with A logged on six occasions.

Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscata*

This widespread species was first recorded off Norfolk Island (24 March) when a lone bird was seen. It was then seen on a reasonably regular basis (14 dates) with the last sighting being south of Chichi-jima (13 April).

The highest count was in the waters between Bougainville and New Ireland (5 April) where several hundred (B) were logged.

White-fronted Tern *Sterna striata*

The only sightings were around Great Barrier Island and in Bay of Islands (21-22 March) with A logged on both dates.

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*

This species was only seen close to New Caledonia with A logged on 26 March and four the following day.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

It was an exceptionally good year for this species with sightings on fifteen dates between the sea day north of New Caledonia (28 March) and the Izu Islands (16 April).

Although on the majority of days, a low single figure count was recorded, on four dates a low A was logged.

The vast majority of the birds which were seen well had 'tail spoons' and were heading in a northerly direction, presumably migrating towards their Arctic breeding grounds.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Like the previous species, this skua was only recorded in very small numbers on a regular basis throughout the trip with one or two individuals logged on eight dates between the Bay of Islands and Izu Islands.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Another skua species which was seen in small numbers on a regular basis throughout the voyage with records on sixteen dates. On most occasions, the day count was in low single figures but a low A was recorded on both 23 March (ie the sea day north of the Bay of Islands) and between Bougainville and New Ireland (5 April).

Japanese Murrelet *Synthliboramphus wumizusume*

The last major seabird target of the expedition and seen very well (A logged) whilst sheltering from some extremely strong winds off the eastern side of Niijima in the northern Izu Islands (16 April).

Metallic Pigeon *Columba vitiensis*

Four individuals were seen on the excursion to Mount Koghi (26 March) with a singleton the following day on the trip to Riviere Bleue.

[Spotted Dove *Streptopelia chinensis*]

This Asian introduction was seen on New Caledonia, with A recorded on both 26 and 27 March.

Mackinlay's Cuckoo-dove *Macropygia mackinlayi*

This species is reasonably widespread in the Solomon Islands and was seen on Nendo, Makira, Guadalcanal and Kolombangara. The highest count was on Nendo where the species was common and over 100 individuals were seen.

Pacific Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps longirostris*

Seen on Norfolk Island (24 March) with two individuals logged.

Stephan's Dove *Chalcophaps stephani*

Two were seen on our day at Tetepare/Rendova (2 April) with a lone bird on Kolombangara on 4 April. The species was also heard at Imbu Rano Lodge on 3 April.

Superb Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus superbus*

A single bird at Imbu Rano Lodge on Kolombangara on 3 April.

Red-bellied Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus greyi*

This handsome species was seen well on Nendo (30 March) with a low A logged.

Yellow-bibbed Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus solomonensis*

Two birds were found on Makira (31 March).

Claret-breasted Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus viridis*

Another range-restricted fruit-dove which was seen on Guadalcanal (1 April: 4), Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: low A) and Kolombangara (4 April: 3).

Cloven-feathered Dove *Drepanoptila holosericea*

This New Caledonian endemic is never easy to find so we were extremely fortunate to see birds at Mount Koghi (26 March: 1) and Riviere Bleue (27 March: 2) with one individual showing exceptionally well at Riviere Bleue.

Pacific Imperial-pigeon *Ducula pacifica*

Seen in reasonable numbers on Nendo (30 March) with a low A logged.

Red-knobbed Imperial-pigeon *Ducula rubricera*

This impressive looking pigeon was seen on all the islands visited in the Solomons from Makira onwards with the highest count being A on Kolombangara on 3 April.

Island Imperial-pigeon *Ducula pistrinaria*

This nomadic species was seen in small to moderate numbers (ie single figures to A) on four days in the Solomon Islands with the exception of Nendo (30 March) and Kolombangara/Ranongga (4 April).

Chestnut-bellied Imperial-pigeon *Ducula brenchleyi*

A somewhat range restricted Solomons endemic which was recorded on both Makira (31 March: low A) and Guadalcanal (1 April: 1). The bird seen at Mount Austin was the first time this species had been seen there on a WPO visit.

New Caledonian Imperial-pigeon *Ducula goliath*

Compared with some previous WPO visits to New Caledonia, this species was seen in good numbers with four individuals at Mount Koghi on 26 March and a similar number at Riviere Bleue the following day.

New Zealand Pigeon *Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*

A low A was logged at Great Barrier Island (21 March).

Pale Mountain Pigeon *Gymnophaps solomonensis*

Reasonable numbers (low A) of these appropriately named pigeons were seen from the viewpoint at Imbu Rano Lodge on Kolombangara (3 April).

Buff-headed Coucal *Centropus milo*

This raucous Coucal, which is endemic to the Solomon Islands, makes an almost mammalian-like call and was found at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April) with a very low A logged during our morning excursion. The following day, two were observed on Tetepare, with the final sightings being one on Kolombangara on 3 April and two there the following day.

Pacific Koel *Eudynamys orientalis*

A lone bird was seen on Makira (31 March) with birds also heard on Guadalcanal, Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombangara.

Shining Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*

The first sighting was two birds at Mount Koghi (26 March) with the same number then logged on 2 April at Tetepare/Rendova (2 April). The final sighting was a lone bird on Kolombangara on 4 April.

Oriental Cuckoo *Cuculus optatus*

This species has only been seen occasionally on previous WPO expeditions with a single bird found at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April).

Moustached Treeswift *Hemiprocne mystacea*

This impressive bird was seen on Guadalcanal, Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombangara with a total of eighteen individuals recorded.

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*

Seen on all islands visited in the Solomons with A logged on all dates.

Satin Swiftlet *Collocalia uropygialis*

Seen in reasonable numbers during our two days ashore on New Caledonia (26-27 March) with A logged on both dates.

White-rumped Swiftlet *Aerodramus spodiopygius*

Recorded on New Caledonia (26 March), Nendo (30 March) and Makira (31 March) with A logged on all three occasions.

Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis*

Seen on Nendo (30 March), Makira and Guadalcanal.

Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

Noted on four days during our landings in the Solomon Islands with the highest count being on Makira

and Guadalcanal where three individuals were logged on both dates (31 March and 1 April).

Ultramarine Kingfisher *Todirhamphus leucopygius*

Two presumed pairs of this much desired Solomon Islands endemic were seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 1 April.

Melanesian Kingfisher *Todirhamphus tristrami*

Two birds were found on Tetepare (2 April) with the same number a couple of days later on Kolombangara.

Pacific Kingfisher *Todirhamphus sacer*

Another 'new species' following the recent splitting of Collared Kingfisher into multiple species, with two individuals on Nendo (30 March) and a low A the following day on Makira.

Beach Kingfisher *Todirhamphus saurophagus*

This species was first on Tetepare (30 March: 2) with the same number logged a couple of days later on Kolombangara.

Sacred Kingfisher *Todirhamphus sanctus*

The most frequently encountered kingfisher of the expedition with sightings in New Zealand (21-22 March: 2 and 3), Norfolk Island (24 March: 5), New Caledonia (26 and 27 March: 1) and on Tetepare/Rendova in the Solomons (2 April: 1).

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

First recorded on our day at Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: 1) with two then seen on the mangrove zodiac cruise near Hambare, Kolombangara (4 April).

Blyth's Hornbill *Rhyticeros plicatus*

Seen on a daily basis on the last four days of landings in the Solomon Islands with a low A logged on three dates.

Australian Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*

One bird was seen during the shore excursion on Norfolk Island (24 March).

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

One was seen from the ship whilst close inshore to Niijima in the Izu Islands (16 April).

New Zealand Kaka *Nestor meridionalis*

Two on Great Barrier Island (21 March).

Solomons ("Ducorps") Cockatoo *Cacatua ducorpsii*

This species was first found at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 1 April where a low A was logged. More individuals were then seen on the subsequent three days (ie Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombangara).

Finsch's Pygmy-parrot *Micropsitta finschii*

Although this species is reasonably numerous in the Solomons, its tiny size can make it difficult to spot. It was recorded on three dates with the highest number being seen at Imbu Rano Lodge on Kolombangara (3 April) where a low A was logged on 3 April.

Papuan Eclectus *Eclectus polychloros*

This colourful parrot was recorded on four days whilst travelling through the Solomon Islands with the highest count being a low A on Makira.

Song ("Singing") Parrot *Geoffroyus heteroclitus*

Seen on Guadalcanal, Tetepare and Kolombangara (1-3 April) with a total of nine birds recorded. Also known as the Singing Parrot, it is difficult to understand how this species got either of these names, given its calls are generally as raucous and untuneful as most other parrots.

[**Crimson Rosella** *Platycercus elegans*]

This introduced species is reasonably common on Norfolk Island and at least five individuals were logged there on 24 March.

[**Eastern Rosella** *Platycercus eximius*]

About half a dozen individuals of this introduced parrot were seen on Urupukapuka Island (22 March).

Horned Parakeet *Eunymphicus cornutus*

Three individuals of this often tricky New Caledonian endemic were seen at Mount Koghi (26 March) with at least seven the following day at Riviere Bleue.

New Caledonian Parakeet *Cyanoramphus saissetti*

Another species which is not seen on every WPO visit to New Caledonia with one at Mount Koghi (26 March) and a further five the following day at Riviere Bleue.

It is worth noting that in the Birdlife Illustrated Checklist, this species (plus Norfolk Island Parakeet) has been lumped with Red-crowned Parakeet of New Zealand, although this proposal has not been accepted by other 'authorities' such as the IOC.

Norfolk Island Parakeet *Cyanoramphus cookii*

The number of parakeets found on Norfolk Island varies markedly from year to year due to the availability of their favoured food and on this visit the birds were somewhat tricky to find although at least six individuals were seen during the shore excursion on 24 March.

Red-crowned Parakeet *Cyanoramphus novaeseelandiae*

The last of the three lookalike parakeets seen on the voyage with three on Urupukapuka Island on 22 March.

Meek's Lorikeet *Charmosyna meeki*

This small parrot is often tricky to find on Kolombangara but some of the group were fortunate to see it at Imbu Rano Lodge on Kolombangara (3 April) with two more noted the following day at Hambare.

Palm Lorikeet *Vini palmarum*

Seen on Nendo (30 March) with a low A logged.

Duchess Lorikeet *Charmosyna margarethae*

One of the best-looking parrots of the trip and as with Meek's Lorikeet, it can be tricky to find. Several small groups were seen whilst exploring at Hambare, Kolombangara (very low A logged) on 4 April with six individuals also noted the previous day at Imbu Rano Lodge.

Yellow-bibbed Lory *Lorius chlorocercus*

A Solomon Islands endemic which was seen in small numbers (single figure counts) on Makira (31 March) and at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal (1 April).

Cardinal Lory *Pseudeos cardinalis*

This brilliantly coloured parrot was seen on Guadalcanal, Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombangara with A logged on each occasion.

Coconut Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*

This species was first recorded on both days in New Caledonia and was also seen on all islands in the Solomons.

Previously lumped with the Rainbow Lorikeet of Australia, the birds on New Caledonia and in the Solomons are now widely regarded to be a different species.

Tui *Prosthemadera novaeseelandie*

Seen on both Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands (21-22 March) with a low A logged on both dates.

New Caledonia Myzomela *Myzomela caledonica*

The first of five species of Myzomela recorded on the voyage with a low A logged at Mount Koghi on 26 March and similar numbers the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Cardinal Myzomela *Myzomela cardinalis*

Reasonably numerous on Nendo and Makira with A logged on both dates (30-31 March).

Crimson-rumped (Yellow-vented) Myzomela *Myzomela eichhorni*

A relatively scarce and range-restricted Solomon endemic, with a total of eleven birds logged across the three days on Tetepare/Rendova (2 April) and Kolombangara (3-4 April).

Black-headed Myzomela *Myzomela melanocephala*

Endemic to some of the islands in the Central Solomons, with a very low A recorded at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal on 1 April.

Sooty Myzomela *Myzomela tristrami*

Seen in reasonable numbers on Makira (31 March) with A logged.

Grey-eared ("Dark-brown") Honeyeater *Lichmera incana*

This species is more readily found in scrubby and urban habitats than in the forest at Riviere Bleue or

Mount Koghi but five individuals were found on both days we were ashore on New Caledonia (26-27 March).

New Caledonian Friarbird *Philemon diemenensis*

This endemic was well seen on the excursion to Mount Koghi on New Caledonia (26 March: 5) with three further individuals the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Makira Honeyeater ("San Cristobal Melidectes") *Meliarchus sclateri*

This impressive honeyeater, which is endemic to Makira and a few offshore islets, was found in reasonable numbers during our landing at Star Harbour (31 March: 8).

Crow Honeyeater *Gymnomyza aubryana*

This is generally the trickiest endemic at Riviere Bleue and is only found on about 50% or so of our visits to New Caledonia and then not necessarily seen by everyone in the group. On this year's visit (27 March), however, we were fortunate to find five different individuals.

This species is currently classified as critically endangered by Birdlife International.

Barred Honeyeater *Glycifohia undulata*

Seen in reasonable numbers at Mount Koghi (26 March: low A) with five birds the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Grey Gerygone *Gerygone igata*

A reasonably common bird on both Great Barrier and Urupukapuka Islands with A logged on both dates (21-22 March).

Norfolk Island Gerygone *Gerygone modesta*

This Norfolk Island endemic is reasonably numerous and A was recorded on 24 March.

Fan-tailed Gerygone *Gerygone flavolateralis*

Modest numbers were seen on New Caledonia during the excursions to Mount Koghi and Riviere Bleue with a total of thirteen birds noted.

North Island Saddleback *Philesturnus rufusater*

Seen in reasonable numbers on Urupukapuka Island (22 March) with a low A recorded.

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

This species is generally only encountered in 'open country' habitats on New Caledonia with three birds seen during the trip to Mount Koghi (26 March) and four the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Southern Melanesian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina caledonica*

Another species which can be tricky on New Caledonia but we were fortunate to find at least nine individuals on our two excursions with eight at Mount Koghi on 26 March and one the following day at Riviere Bleue.

It is worth noting that until relatively recently the birds on New Caledonia were lumped with those in the Solomon Islands, however, these have now been split into two separate species by most

'authorities'.

Northern Melanesian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina welchmani*

A total of three birds were found on Kolombangara (3-4 April).

Barred ("Yellow-eyed") Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina lineata*

This cuckoo-shrike was seen in modest numbers on Guadalcanal, Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombangara (1-4 April) with a very low A recorded on the first three dates and a lone bird on the final day.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*

Three birds were logged at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April), with a low A the following day on Tetepare/Rendova and a total of ten on Kolombangara (3-4 April).

New Caledonian Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina analis*

This New Caledonian endemic is generally only seen in small numbers at Riviere Bleue and 2023 followed this pattern with three individuals being recorded on 27 March.

Grey-capped Cicadabird *Coracina remota*

A lone bird was found on Tetepare/Rendova (2 April) with five individuals then seen during our time on Kolombangara (3-4 April).

Solomon Islands Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina holopolia*

On WPO expeditions, this species is usually the least frequently encountered of the cuckoo-shrikes which occur in the Solomons and 2023 was no exception with one bird at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April) and two at Imbu Rano Lodge, Kolombangara (3 April) being the only sightings.

Long-tailed Triller *Lalage leucopyga*

Two individuals were seen at Mount Koghi, New Caledonia on 26 March, with a lone bird the following day at Riviere Bleue. The highest count, however, was in the Solomons where five birds were logged on Makira (31 March).

Polynesian Triller *Lalage maculosa*

Five were found on Nendo on 30 March.

Whitehead *Mohoua albicilla*

This species was reasonably numerous on Urupukapuka Island (22 March) with a low A logged.

Norfolk Island ("Golden") Whistler *Pachycephala (pectoralis) xanthoprocta*

A low A was logged on Norfolk Island on 24 March.

Although currently included within the Golden Whistler complex, the unique (and extremely drab) plumage of this endemic form certainly warrants further study and it is surely only a matter of time before it is given specific status.

Oriole Whistler *Pachycephala orioloides*

This vocal songster was heard at Mount Austin (1 April) and five were seen on Kolombangara (3 April).

Temotu Whistler *Pachycephala vanikorensis*

Seen in decent numbers on Nendo with a low A logged (30 March).

New Caledonian Whistler *Pachycephala caledonica*

This species is generally found in more forested habitats than the next species (ie Rufous Whistler) with six seen at Mount Koghi (26 March) and four the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*

Two birds were seen during the shore excursion to Mount Koghi, New Caledonia (26 March) with a similar number noted the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Willie-wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Seen on four dates during our time in the Solomons although on two occasions, the day count was in single figures with a low A logged on other dates.

Cockerell's ("White-winged") Fantail *Rhipidura cockerelli*

This fantail generally seems to be less numerous than some other species in the same family but we had good success in 2023 with birds recorded on a daily basis from 1-4 April. The highest count (and best views) was at Imbu Rano Lodge, Kolombangara where a very low A was logged on 3 April.

Grey Fantail *Rhipidura albiscapa*

This reasonably widespread fantail was recorded on Norfolk Island (24 March: low A) and New Caledonia (26-27 March).

New Zealand Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa*

Fairly common on both Great Barrier and Urukupukapuka Islands (21-22 March) with a low A logged on both dates.

Streaked Fantail *Rhipidura verreauxi*

This localised fantail was found at both Mount Koghi (26 March: 4) and Riviere Bleue (27 March: 6). In the Birdlife Illustrated Checklist, the populations on New Caledonia and Vanuatu have been split into two species and if this approach is followed, then the birds seen at Riviere Bleue become another New Caledonian endemic. This approach has, however, not been adopted on the www.birdsoftheworld.org website which follows the Birdlife taxonomy

Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons*

Reasonable numbers of this highly variable fantail were seen on 30 March on Nendo (where there is an endemic subspecies) with a very low A logged. A total of three birds were also seen during our two days ashore on Kolombangara (3-4 April).

The differences between the various 'subspecies' of this 'species' are striking and further taxonomic work on the subspecies/species boundaries in this fantail is surely needed given how much variety there is in plumage.

Southern Shrikebill *Clytorhynchus pachycephaloides*

This species seems to have become somewhat trickier to find at Riviere Bleue in recent years but three birds were seen there on 27 March with two also found the previous day at Mount Koghi.

Solomons (“Black and white”) Monarch *Symposiachrus barbatus*

This Solomons endemic is often tricky at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal but we had good success with three birds found on 1 April.

Kolombangara Monarch *Symposiachrus browni*

Despite its name, this species is found on a few islands other than Kolombangara and it was seen on Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: 4) and Kolombangara (3 April: very low A).

Some of the birds at Imbu Rano Lodge, Kolombangara showed very well and the views and number of individuals seen were amongst the best of any WPO expedition.

Chestnut-bellied Monarch *Monarcha castaneiventris*

Somewhat unexpectedly, this Solomon Islands endemic was only seen on Guadalcanal with three birds logged at Mount Austin on 1 April.

Makira (Chestnut-bellied) Monarch *Monarcha (castaneiventris) megarhynchus*

Two birds were seen at Star Harbour, Makira on 31 March.

Although the birds on Makira look reasonably similar to those on Guadalcanal, the second volume of the Illustrated Checklist produced by Birdlife International and Lynx Editions split them, however, this decision has been reversed on the www.birdsoftheworld.org website (which adopts the Birdlife taxonomy) although the taxonomy is described as “messy”.

White-capped Monarch *Monarcha richardsii*

This monarch is only found in the New Georgia group of islands (within the Solomons) and was seen during our shore excursions on Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: low A) and Kolombangara (3 April: low A and 4 April: 2).

Steel-blue Flycatcher *Myiagra ferrocyanea*

Another Solomon Islands endemic which was seen on Guadalcanal (1 April: 6), Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: 2) and Kolombangara (3 April: 5 and 4 April: 2).

Melanesian (“New Caledonian”) Flycatcher *Myiagra caledonica*

This species was seen at both Mount Koghi and Riviere Bleue, New Caledonia with a total of eight individuals logged across the two days.

New Caledonian Crow *Corvus moneduloides*

This species is invariably easier to find at Mount Koghi than Riviere Bleue and 2023 proved to be no exception with eight logged on 26 March and only one bird the following day.

This species is regarded as one of the most intelligent bird species in the world and individuals are regularly recorded using sticks as tools to help them procure food.

White-billed ("Guadalcanal") Crow *Corvus woodfordi*

This corvid can be extremely elusive at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal and on some visits is not recorded but three individuals were seen on 1 April.

Yellow-bellied Robin *Eopsaltria flaviventris*

Four individuals of this New Caledonian endemic were logged at Mount Koghi on 26 March but more were found the following day at Riviere Bleue where it is invariably commoner with a low A recorded.

Norfolk Robin *Petroica multicolor*

This handsome species was seen in decent numbers during the excursion on Norfolk Island with a low A logged (24 March).

The taxonomy of this bird has changed twice in recent years, as it was originally considered a subspecies of the Scarlet Robin of mainland Australia. Subsequently, it was included within Pacific Robin, however, the birds on Norfolk Island have now been given specific status and it is thus a single island endemic.

Tomtit *Petroica macrocephala*

This species was reasonably numerous on Urupukapuka Island with at least eight individuals seen (22 March).

North Island Robin *Petroica longipes*

Two birds were found on Urupukapuka Island (22 March).

[Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer*]

This Asian introduction was seen in small numbers around Noumea, New Caledonia on both 26 and 27 March.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A lone migrant was seen flying around the ship on 16 April.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*

Seen on all the islands visited in the Solomons with A logged on most dates.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*

Seen in modest numbers on our two days of landings in New Zealand (21-22 March) and also on Norfolk Island (24 March).

New Caledonian Grassbird *Megalurulus mariei*

Although this endemic is regarded as 'locally common' it is notoriously difficult to see well, however, many of the group had some fantastic views at Mount Koghi (26 March).

Sanford's White-eye *Zosterops lacertosa*

This species is endemic to Nendo and was seen well during our excursion (30 March) with a low A logged.

The taxonomic treatment of this bird has varied somewhat in recent years and initially it was in its

own genus *Sanfordia* before being moved to *Woodfordia* with the Bare-eyed White-eye of Rennell Island. Recently, however, it has been moved to *Zosterops* which seems somewhat surprising given how different it appears from other *Zosterops* white-eyes.

Santa Cruz White-eye *Zosterops santaecrucis*

As with the above species, this bird is endemic to Nendo and good numbers were seen during our shore excursion (30 March: A).

Ranongga White-eye *Zosterops splendidus*

Following the need to change the itinerary, we made an impromptu visit to Ranongga Island where two of the endemic white-eyes were seen (4 April).

Solomon Islands White-eye *Zosterops kulambangrae*

This slightly confusingly named white-eye is only found in the New Georgia group of islands (including Kolombangara) within the Solomons archipelago. During our shore excursions on Kolombangara, a low A was logged on 3 April with five seen the following day.

Dark-eyed White-eye *Zosterops tetiparius*

Good numbers of this very local endemic were seen during our landings on Tetepare and Rendova (3 April) with a low A logged.

It is worth noting that even though Tetepare and Rendova are less than 3kms apart, different subspecies occur on the two islands.

Green-backed White-eye *Zosterops xanthochrous*

This New Caledonian endemic is reasonably common and a low A was recorded on both excursions on the island (26-27 March).

Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis*

Found in reasonable numbers on our two days of excursions in New Zealand (21-22 March) and on Norfolk Island (24 March) with A recorded on each occasion.

Slender-billed White-eye *Zosterops tenuirostris*

This Norfolk Island endemic was well seen with A logged on 24 March.

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*

Seen on almost all islands we visited in the Solomons with A logged on most occasions.

Singing Starling *Aplonis cantoroides*

Another starling which was recorded in the Solomon Islands with A found on Makira (31 March) and five birds a couple of days later on Tetepare/Rendova.

Brown-winged Starling *Aplonis grandis*

This Solomon Islands endemic was found on Guadalcanal, Tetepare/Rendova and Kolombangara with the highest count being at Mount Austin, where A was logged.

Despite its name, the diagnostic pale brown primaries can, on occasions, be moderately difficult to

see when birds are perched.

Makira Starling *Aplonis dichroa*

Two individuals were seen during our landing at Star Harbour on Makira (31 March).

Rusty-winged Starling *Aplonis zelandica*

Two were found on Nendo on 30 March.

Striated Starling *Aplonis striata*

Reasonable numbers of this New Caledonian endemic were logged at Mount Koghi (26 March: A) with two birds the following day at Riviere Bleue.

Long-tailed Myna *Mino kreffti*

This myna was seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April: low A), Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: low A) and on both our days on Kolombangara (3 April: 6 and 4 April: low A).

[**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*]

This Asian introduction was reasonably numerous at Urupukapuka Island (22 March), on New Caledonia (26-27 March) and in Honiara, Guadalcanal (1 April) with A recorded on all four dates.

[**Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*]

This introduced species is common on Norfolk Island with A logged during the shore excursion (24 March) with smaller numbers also seen on Urupukapuka Island (22 March).

Eyebrowed Thrush *Turdus obscurus*

A migrant bird briefly landed on the ship on 16 April.

[**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*]

An introduced species in both New Zealand and on Norfolk Island with a total of three birds seen.

[**Song Thrush** *Turdus philmelos*]

Like Blackbird, this species was introduced in both New Zealand and Norfolk Island with one seen on Urupukapuka Island (22 March). Song Thrushes were also heard but not seen on Norfolk Island.

Midget Flowerpecker *Dicaeum aeneum*

This Solomon Islands endemic is not uncommon at Mount Austin on Guadalcanal but its small size can make getting good views somewhat challenging. Nevertheless, we had some decent looks with a low A being logged (1 April).

Mottled Flowerpecker *Dicaeum tristrami*

This localised Solomons endemic was seen during our shore excursion on Makira where a low A was recorded (31 March).

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis*

Seen at Mount Austin, Guadalcanal (1 April: 2) and on Tetepare/Rendova (2 April: low A) and

Kolombangara (3 April: low A).

[House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*]

Another introduction which was seen in New Zealand (22 March: low A), on Norfolk Island (24 March: low A) and on New Caledonia (26-27 March: 4).

Red-throated Parrotfinch *Erythrura psittacea*

As usual, this New Caledonian endemic was only seen in small numbers with four at Mount Koghi (26 March) and a lone bird the following day at Riviere Bleue.

CETACEANS

Sperm Whale *Physeter macrocephalus*

Two Sperm Whales were seen: one on 29 March as the ship passed Espirito Santo with another on the approach to Chichi-jima (13 April).

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*

Seen in reasonable numbers on 13 and 15 April (Chichi-jima and Torishima) with at least one animal seen making multiple breaches offshore from Torishima.

Eden's Whale *Balaenoptera edeni*

Two whales seen on 5 April were thought likely to be this poorly known tropical species which is now split by some authorities from Bryde's Whale.

Short-finned Pilot Whale *Globicephala macrorhynchus*

Pods were seen on two widely spaced dates during the expedition with the first being not far from the Nendo (30 March: A) with at least three animals then seen on the sea day between Chichi-jima and Torishima (14 April).

Pygmy Killer Whale *Feresa attenuata*

A small pod (c.4 animals) was spotted on 8 April when the ship was three days north of New Ireland with others also probably recorded on 29 March.

False Killer Whale *Pseudorca crassidens*

A pod containing at least four individuals was seen on 12 April (sea day south of Chichi-jima).

Risso's Dolphin *Grampus griseus*

A lone animal on 13 April was the sole sighting.

Deraniyagala's Beaked Whale *Mesoplodon hotaula*

Two beaked whales which were seen not far from Nendo (30 March) were thought to probably be this extremely poorly known species.

There are very few at sea sightings of Deraniyagala's Beaked Whale which was first described in the early 1960s by Dr Deraniyagala based on a specimen which washed up on Sri Lanka. Subsequently, this animal was considered to be a Ginkgo-toothed Beaked Whale but within the last ten years, it has been realised that the original proposal was correct and Deraniyagala's Beaked Whale is now an accepted, albeit almost unknown, species.

Beaked Whale sp.

Beaked whales were recorded on six dates during the trip which could not be definitively identified to species level, however, in all probability at least some of these were likely to have been Blainville's Beaked Whales.

Pygmy Sperm Whale *Kogia breviceps*

Two individuals were recorded on 31 March (waters off Makira).

Other unidentified kogias were also seen on a couple of dates which could have been either this species or Dwarf Sperm Whale.

Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

Three animals were seen on 22 March (Bay of Islands) with two more a couple of days later near Norfolk Island.

Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops aduncus*

Seen off Kolombangara (3 April) and between Bougainville and New Ireland (5 April) with a low A logged on both dates.

Short-beaked Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*

At least three individuals were logged on 22 March (Urupukapuka and the Bay of Islands).

Spinner Dolphin *Stenella longirostris*

This is often amongst the most frequently encountered dolphin species on the WPO and it was seen on four occasions with daily sightings between 5-7 April (New Ireland and northwards) and then again on 14 April (seaday between Chichi-jima and Torishima) when a low B was logged.

Pantropical Spotted Dolphin *Stenella attenuate*

A pod of this widespread tropical dolphin was seen three days north of New Ireland when the ship was more or less due west of Chuuk and passing the atolls of Pulusak and Puluwat.

Fraser's Dolphin *Lagenodelphis hosei*

This species is not encountered every year but a pod was seen not far from Espirito Santo, Vanuatu (29 March).

OTHER MAMMALS

Solomon Islands Flying Fox *Pteropus rayneri*

Flying foxes were seen on Guadalcanal (1 April: 1) and Kolombangara (3 April:1 and 4 April: B) which were considered to be this species.

It is worth noting, however, that the taxonomy and ranges of some of the flying foxes in the Solomon Islands is still not fully understood with the New Georgia Monkey-faced Bat known to also occur on Kolombangara and Tetepare.

Ornate Flying Fox *Pteropus ornatus*

Several flying foxes were seen from the ship after we left the wharf in Noumea (27 March).

Temotu Flying Fox *Pteropus nitendiensis*

This species is endemic to Nendo and a few nearby islands and is treated as endangered by IUCN. At least four individuals were seen there on 30 March.