

Recommended Sicklebill Safaris Tours . . .

TOUR 1 & 2 : PNG GREATEST HITS & PNG HIGHLIGHTS

This two week tour visits the PNG sites where you will get the most birds for your money. Starting in Port Moresby then visiting Kiunga in the Fly River lowlands, Tabubil in the Star Mountains foothills and Kumul Lodge in the central Highlands. If you want a good basic starter trip at a reasonable price then PNG Greatest Hits is the one for you; or if you would prefer some more comfortable lodges with additional great birds then PNG Highlights is the better option as it adds the chance to visit some other great locations as well.

TOUR 2: PNG IN STYLE

Offering you some of PNG's most iconic birds and an opportunity to visit all the most accessible PNG sites, using the comfortable and beautifully sited lodges at Karawari on the Sepik, Rondon Ridge near Mt Hagen, Ambua in the highlands and perhaps Lake Murray in the Trans-Fly lowlands. This tour can be customised for particular wants or to add island extensions.

TOUR 3: BIRDS AND CULTURE

A chance to learn about some of New Guinea's fascinating culture as well as see many of its spectacular Birds of Paradise and other special birds. While it largely visits the same destinations as the Greatest Hits tour it also incorporates a visit to one of the country's major cultural shows, usually the Mount Hagen Show. This is held in August and clans from all over PNG gather to sing, dance, act out short plays and display their finery; the feathered head-dresses are a sight to remember. A number of shorter Birds and Culture tours to specific areas such as New Britain at the time of the Mask Festival are also on offer.

TOUR 4: TASTE OF TOURS

We offer a number of short tours visiting specific areas and targeting particular birds, if you are short of time or for those on a strict budget. For example, Taste of #1 visits Port Moresby and Kumul Lodge, while the Taste of #4 visits the Kiunga area and Taste of #8 includes Manus and the surrounding Admiralty Islands. Most significant birding areas in PNG are now covered by a "Taste of..." tour.

TOUR 5: ENDEMIC FAMILIES

This tour targets the 7 endemic bird families of PNG (Satinbirds, Berrypeckers & Longbills, Painted Berrypeckers, Melampittas, Ploughbill, Berryhunter and Ifrit) visiting only Kumul Lodge and Rondon Ridge where members of all these families can be found. Many iconic birds of paradise will also be seen, as well as parrots, pigeons and kingfishers etc.

TOUR 6: THE ISLANDS

This tour visits the Bismarck and Admiralty islands off the PNG mainland. It involves various small boats and aeroplanes and visits some seldom seen areas. Many of the PNG islands have their own endemic species, with 60 on these islands plus another 9 on Bougainville which can be added if required, though not all will be accessible.

COMBINATION AND CUSTOMISED TOURS

We offer a number of "Combination Tour" packages such as *Birds and Diving*, *Birds and Surfing* or *Birds and Fishing*. We also offer more general tours suitable for families and those who prefer a more relaxed experience. Check out some of our family friendly packages such as those on Manus Island. Photographic tours can also be arranged. We can also develop customised itineraries for those with particular interests and requirements, and are happy to cater for those with just a passing interest in natural history through to the hardcore birder and those with varying levels of fitness.

Travel arrangements by



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Birding Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is situated in the south west Pacific and lies just to the north of Australia. It is the eastern half of the large island of New Guinea along with a number of offshore islands and archipelagoes off to the north and east of the country.

Although humans first arrived around 45,000 years ago and traders had been collecting Bird of Paradise plumes for centuries, little was known about the country until the 19th century when the northern portion was annexed by Germany and the south by Great Britain. This was transferred to the newly formed Commonwealth of Australia in 1905. It was known as a dangerous place, where headhunting and cannibalism survived well into the 20th century.

After the defeat of Germany in World War 1 all of PNG was administered by Australia under a UN mandate. In World War 2 PNG saw some of the conflict's most ferocious fighting.

PNG gained independence in 1975.

Birds of Paradise and more

Best known as the place to visit to see the exotic and colourful Birds of Paradise, PNG is a country of rugged mountain ranges, vast areas of rainforest lowland savannah grasslands, and huge winding rivers.

It is one of the world's most rural countries with only about 18% of the population living in urban areas. Most people are subsistence farmers relying on taro, sweet potato, yams and a variety of other local vegetables, Meat comes mainly from pigs or hunting local wildlife.

It also holds the record for the number of languages spoken, with over 850 local languages recorded, some spoken by only a handful of people living in isolated valleys. However the language of government is English and the lingua franca is

Tok Pisin, an interesting mix of local, German and English words.

New Guinea has an avifauna of 453 species of endemic birds and is must visit place for any serious birder.

About Sicklebill Safaris

With over 20 years of PNG experience Sicklebill Safaris is a specialist tour company with significant expertise in organising bird, wildlife and cultural tours for small groups and individuals. We are actively involved with landowner groups within PNG, working to encourage nature based tourism, particularly in remote areas, and to promote PNG as an attractive destination for birders. We have travelled throughout the country to assess the birding sites, accommodation and guides. We have developed a number of ready-made itineraries, which range from a series of "Taste of..." Tours, highlighting particular areas, to comprehensive itineraries visiting all the major birding sites, with possible extensions to the less commonly visited ones. We also cater for those not specifically bird orientated, to suit the more adventurous family or people with special interests. We are happy to customise itineraries either for travel with one of our experienced guides, or using local guides only.

About PNG Holidays

PNG Holidays is an Australian based business that has been specialising in the region since 2007. We work in partnership with Sicklebill Safaris for all their birdwatching tours. Our particular expertise is in independent and small group travel to the eco lodges, resorts and hotels throughout Papua New Guinea. We are also able to arrange surfing, World War 2 history tours, scuba diving, kayaking and cruising, as well as travel insurance, international and domestic flights and airport transfers throughout the country.

“Sicklebill Safaris offers small group bird, wildlife and cultural tours to numerous destinations either led by one of our experienced guides or using local guides only.”

