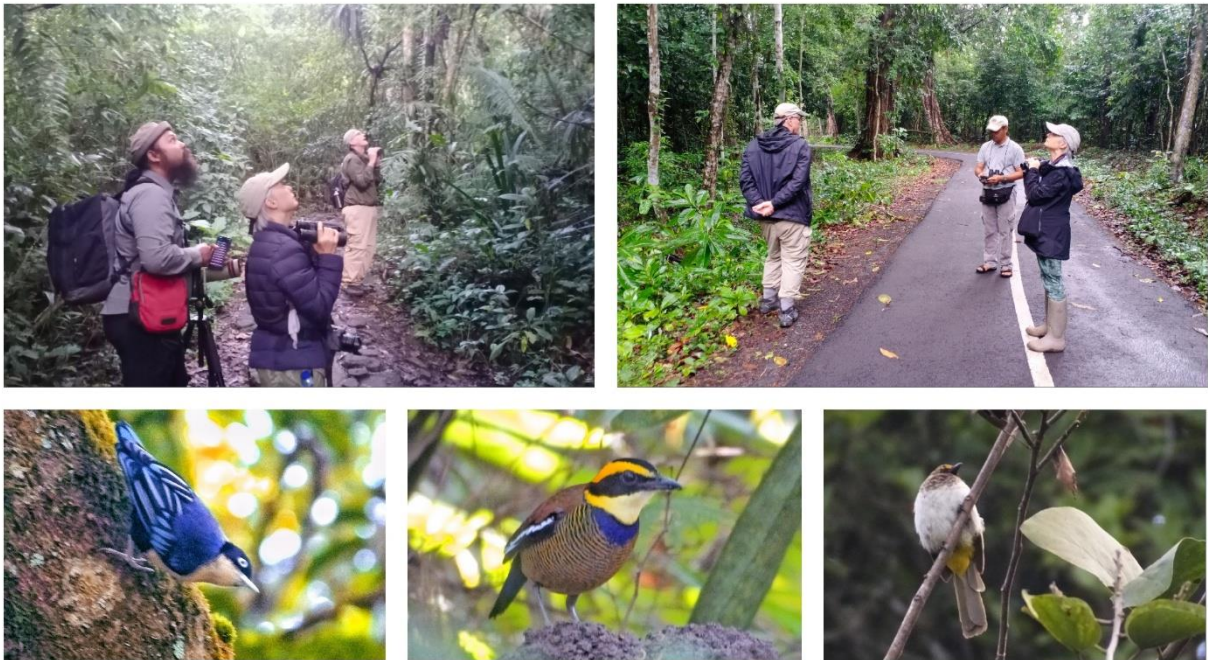


# Birding Trip in Bali and Java of Indonesia from 2 to 12 July 2023 with Scott and Kathy from the USA

A Trip Report by Charles Roring  
for Vacation Indonesia Tours (VIT Tours)



Bali is the most favorite tourist destination in Indonesia. For Birdwatchers, West Bali is the area for watching Bali Myna and Javan-banded Pitta. The nearby Java island is also home to various species of beautiful birds including Sunda Minivet, Javan Fulvetta, Javan Tesia, Blue Nuthatch, and a lot more.

Darwin Sumang, the founder and owner of Vacation Indonesia Tours (VIT Tours) contacted me to accompany Scott and Kathy to do a birdwatching tour from Bali to Java of Indonesia from 2 to 12 July 2023. I said yes to the offer and traveled by plane from my hometown in Manokwari to Denpasar Bali. After an overnight stay in Majesty Hotel of Kuta and a meeting with our local guide I Made Surya, the next morning we went to Ngurah Rai Airport of Bali. Our driver for this Bali trip was Nyoman Begeh. There, I waited for Scott and Kathy to arrive. They were two birdwatchers from the United States of America. It took around two and a half hours to see them. When they read the paging board that I held, they approached me and said, "Hello." I greeted them and introduced our team to them. We walked towards the parking lot and loaded their bags to the car. We did not go directly to Dream of Aventus where they would stay. Instead we went to Uluwatu to watch Sea Birds. As we entered the complex area of Uluwatu Temple, we walked towards the edge of the cliff to look for birds that fly in the air. As we raised our binoculars, we

saw Cave Swiftlet, Pacific Swift, Pacific Reef Heron. They were gliding fast along the edge of the cliff. At the back of us there were trees that gave shades to visitors. We saw Yellow-vented Bulbul, Olive-backed Tailorbird, Sooty-headed Bulbul, Zebra Dove and Spotted Dove. We waited for around two hours for White-tailed Tropicbird. Unfortunately, the bird did not show-up over the sea. So, we returned to our hotel in Kuta. Scott and Kathy stayed at two rooms in Dream of Aventus hotel. I, Made and Nyoman stayed at Kuta Majesty Hotel.







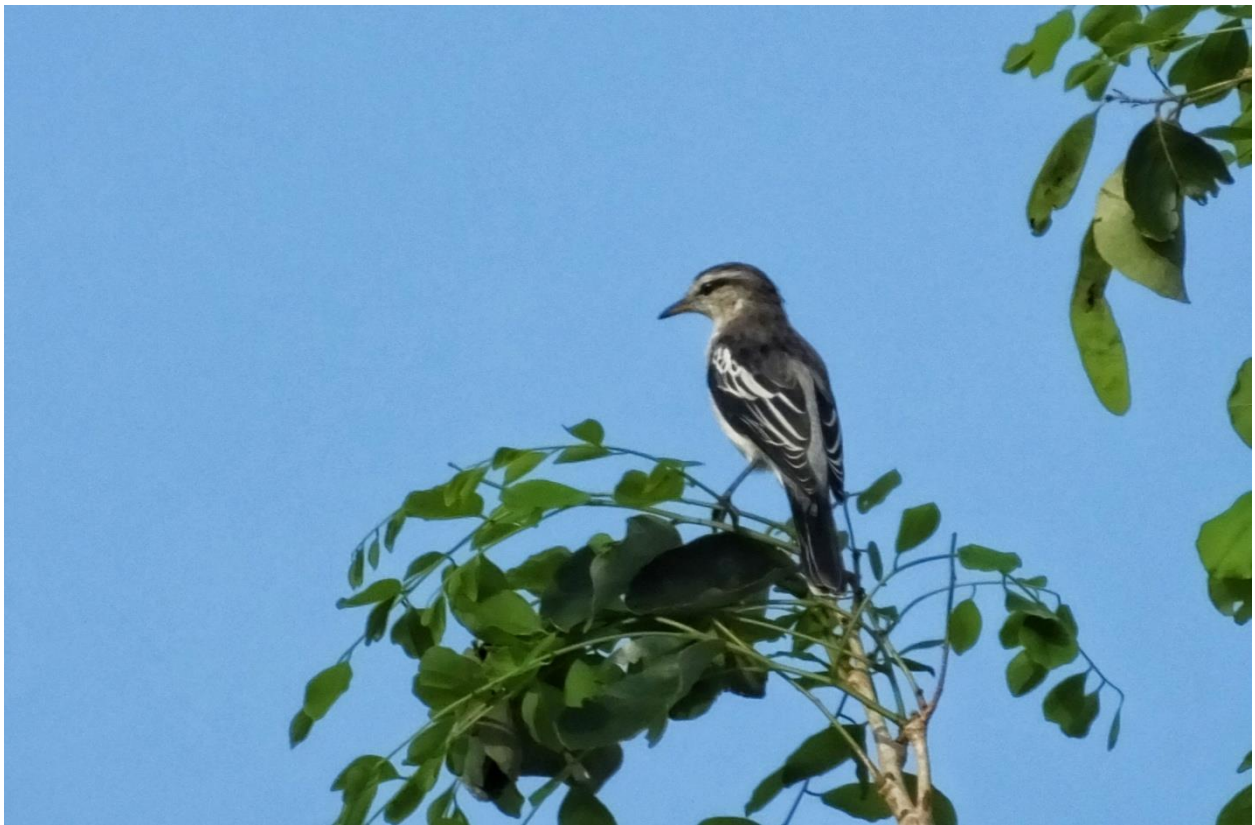


The next morning on 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2023, we continued our trip by car to West Bali region. We stopped at a roadside rice field to watch birds. We saw some interesting birds such as Pacific Swallow, White-breasted Waterhen, Zitting Cisticola, Cave Swiftlet, Slender-billed Crow, Javan Pond Heron, White-breasted Woodswallow, Scaly-breasted Munia, and Javan Kingfisher. After that we continued our trip. It took around 4 hours to reach West Bali. We arrived at Menjangan resto where we had lunch. While we were waiting for our delicious meals, we were able to watch more beautiful birds from the second floor of the resto including Olive-backed Tailorbird, Spotted Dove, Female Olive-backed Sunbird, Malaysian Pied Fantail, Sooty-headed Bulbul and Yellow-vented Bulbul. Scott and Kathy stayed at Addi Asri Beach Resort and Spa. Each had his and her own room. We started birding early in the morning at 4 July 2023. We watched birds in farmland area of West Bali. There, we saw such birds as: Laced Woodpecker, Grey-rumped Treeswift, Bali Myna, Plaintive Cuckoo, Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker, Coppersmith Barbet, Grey-cheeked Green Pigeon, Freckle-breasted Woodpecker, Little Barbet, Grey-cheeked Green Pigeon, Cave Swiftlet, Common Iora, Brown-throated Sunbird, Olive-backed Sunbird, Striated Grass Bird, Malaysian Pied Fantail, Javan-banded Pitta, White-shouldered Triller, Ashy Drongo, Sooty-headed Bulbul, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Asian Glossy Starling, Sunda-collared Dove, Scarlet-headed Sunbird.











At around 13:00, we had lunch. Because the weather was quite hot, we took a rest until around 15:00. We continued birding again at mangrove, pond and sea shore areas where we saw Javan Plover, Malaysian Plover, Javan Pond Heron, Small Blue Kingfisher, Collared Kingfisher, Sacred Kingfisher, Bar-winged Prinia, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Purple Heron, Little-pied Cormorant, Little Tern, Pied Stilt, White-headed Munia, Sunda Teal, Beach Thick Knee, Bar-winged Prinia, Striated Heron, Javan Kingfisher, Dollarbird.





At first, it was very hot to be at the beach, later it became cooler because the sun went down further to the horizon and the breeze entered the area.

On 5 July 2023, we woke up early again and had our breakfast at 05:30. We left our hotel for Made's home. It took around 30 minutes to reach it by car. After getting out of the car, we walked into a small forest at the back of Made's house. We sat on small wooden bench on the ground. Made put some worms on a fallen termite nest and moved away from it. We sat at a distance of around 5 meters from the worms. We had been waiting for 15 minutes when we saw the bird coming. Unfortunately it was there for only around 2 minutes. After that the bird left. We waited again for up to 1 hour. The bird came and ate the worms. We could take some pictures. We watched a lot of other birds as well. At Melaya's rice field, we saw Ruddy-breasted Crake, Long-tailed Shrike, Cattle Egret, Ducks, Zebra Dove (locally called Titiran), Little Tern, Striated Heron, Great-crested Tern, Striated Swallow. It was a nice trip.













We visited Made's backyard again to find Sunda Scops Owl. Unfortunately we could not find it. So, we continued our trip to lowland rainforest of Bali island behind Blimbing Sari village. There were Slender-billed Crow, Brush Cuckoo, Pied Triller (female), Banded Bay Cuckoo (heard), Greater Cuckoo (heard), Short-tailed Starling (heard), Changeable Hawk Eagle (dark morph), Yellow-vented Bulbul, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Asian Glossy Starling, Ashy Drongo, Plain

Flowerpecker, Square-tailed Drongo Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Barbet (heard), Black-naped Monarch. We also saw some monkeys - the Long-tailed Macaque eating fruit in a big tree. In the afternoon, we took a rest by sitting on big granite stones by a stream. The surrounding scenery was filled with fresh air from the green trees around us. We had lunch at around 13:00 and then returned to our hotels to take a short nap. At 15:00, we went birding again especially in the release center of Bali Myna. There we saw a lot of Bali Myna as well as other birds such as Chestnut-headed Bee Eater, Common Iora, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon.



We left our hotel on 6 July 2023 for Gilimanuk ferry crossing harbor. Along the way, we were able to see some birds such as Cave Swiftlet, Spotted Dove, White-breasted Woodswallow, and Grey-cheeked Green Pigeon. Arriving at the harbor, we saw a lot of Black-naped Tern flying over the sea. There were also Pacific Swallow. The crossing took most of our time. When we arrived at Santika hotel of Banyuwangi city, it was already dark. We could not do birding. So, after dinner, we took a rest.

Early in the morning on 7 July 2023, we left our hotel for Baluran National Park. Unfortunately, we were not so lucky. Our local guide suggested an alternative location which was Alas Purwo National Park. I immediately approve the suggestion and informed Darwin Sumang – the CEO of VIT Tours about change in itinerary. Our clients also agreed with the suggestion. We were able to reach Alas Purwo in around two and a half hours. We had to face heavy rain. Because we had not do any birding since we arrived in Java, we continued our trip according to the plan. Fortunately by the time we hopped onto the asphalt pavement inside the park, the rain had significantly reduced and later stopped. That day we were able to watch Large-billed Crow, Collared Kingfisher,





Oriental-pied Hornbill, Black-winged Flycatcher Shrike, Rufous-backed Dwarf Kingfisher, Javan Flameback, Black Thigh Falconet, Black-banded Barbet, and Ruby-throated Sunbird. We had lunch at an eating house inside the park. We continued our exploration of Alas Purwo especially in savannah area. There we saw Green Peafowl, Lesser Adjutant, Asian Wolly-necked Stork, Javan Kingfisher, Javan Myna. We also saw big mammals in Alas Purwo such as deer, water buffalo, ebony leaf monkey, long-tailed macaque, and banteng. At around 18:30 we drove back to Banyuwangi city and stayed at Santika hotel.



We did not want to get stuck in a traffic jam again. So, at 05:00 we decided to check out of Santika hotel and headed directly to ferry harbor. By the time we reached the harbor, the morning sunlight made the who sky bright. It was 8 July 2023. We drove into our ferry boat and off we wbt back to Bali again. In the air Great-crested Tern, Little Tern and Black-naped Tern were flying and gliding around. We had a short stop at a field near mangrove forest of West Bali, there we saw Green Jungle Fowl, Black Drongo, Zebra Dove, Javan Myna, Spotted Dove, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Long-tailed Shrike and Olive-backed Tailorbird. The Savannah Nightjar that we were looking for was not there anymore.

After watching birds for several days in lowland region of Bali and East Java, today we would go to Bedugul which as located in highland region of Bali. Our driver Pak Nyoman Begeh drove his car skillfully. We arrived in Bedugul approximately at 13:00. We had a quick lunch at Warung Makan Anda and then continued our birding activity along the slope road behind the restaurant. There, we saw Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, Little Cuckoo Dove, Grey-throated White Eye,





Blood-breasted Flowerpecker, Short-tailed Starling and Little-pied Flycatcher. We still continued our birding tour that day further to Bedugul Botanical Garden. In this beautiful park, we saw more birds including Flame-fronted Barbet, Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher, Sunda Warbler, Javan Whistling Thrush, Banded Fruit Dove, Lesser Cuckoo, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Cave Swiftlet, Black-naped Oriole, and Black-winged Flycatchershrike.

It was around 18:00 local time when we checked into Enjing Beji Hotel and Resort. Because there was still light in the sky, we continued birding along the edge of Lake Bratan. The surrounding temperature was very cool. There, we saw White-breasted Waterhen, Eurasian Moorhen, and Yellow Bittern. We only had very short rest after dinner that night.



The next very early morning, we checked out of the hotel and left for Ngurah Rai airport in Denpasar on 9 December 2023 at 02:00 a.m. We flew Jakarta – the capital of Indonesia. We had our breakfast at Sukarno Hatta Airport and then continued our trip to Cipanas. Our driver for the birding trip to West Java was Arief. He drove his car fast but carefully. We passed through Puncak and then checked into Grand Aston Hotel. There was still enough time to enjoy birding. We continued our trip and entered Cibodas Botanical Garden. There, we met Waskito who would accompany us to find birds in the forest. We saw Orange-spotted Bulbul, Pygmy Cupwing and Black-wing Flycatcher Shrike. We waited for Sunda Thrush but he did not want to come out of the bush behind the botanical garden. It was already dark when we returned to our hotel.

This morning July 10, 2023, we started early at 05:00. At the entrance of the National Park of Mount Gede, our guide, Waskito, called nocturnal bird Sunda Scops Owl but he did not show up. We continued hiking up the slopes and stopped several times to watch birds. Some that we saw include Mountain Tailorbird, Eye-browed Wren Babbler, Javan Fulvetta, Masked White Eye, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Sunda Blue Robin, Horsfield Babbler, Indigo Flycatcher, Trilling Shrike Babbler, Chestnut-tailed Fantail, Pied Shrike Babbler, Javan Whistling Thrush, Little-pied Flycatcher. We had a long stop at Blue Pond to look for Blue-eared Kingfisher. We were lucky, he was there. There was also Javan Kingfisher in a high branch of a tree across from the lake. We also had the opportunity to see Javan Hawk Eagle soaring high in the sky in a window by a cliff among



the tall green trees. Javan Tesia, Sunda Blue Robin. At a shelter before waterfall, where we had our late lunch, we saw a lot of Sunda Minivet in tall trees. As we reached the bridge towards waterfall, we stopped to call Javan Tesia. He responded the call and came out of the bush. We saw the bird in close distance. After watching the bird, we walked back to the entrance gate of the national park.





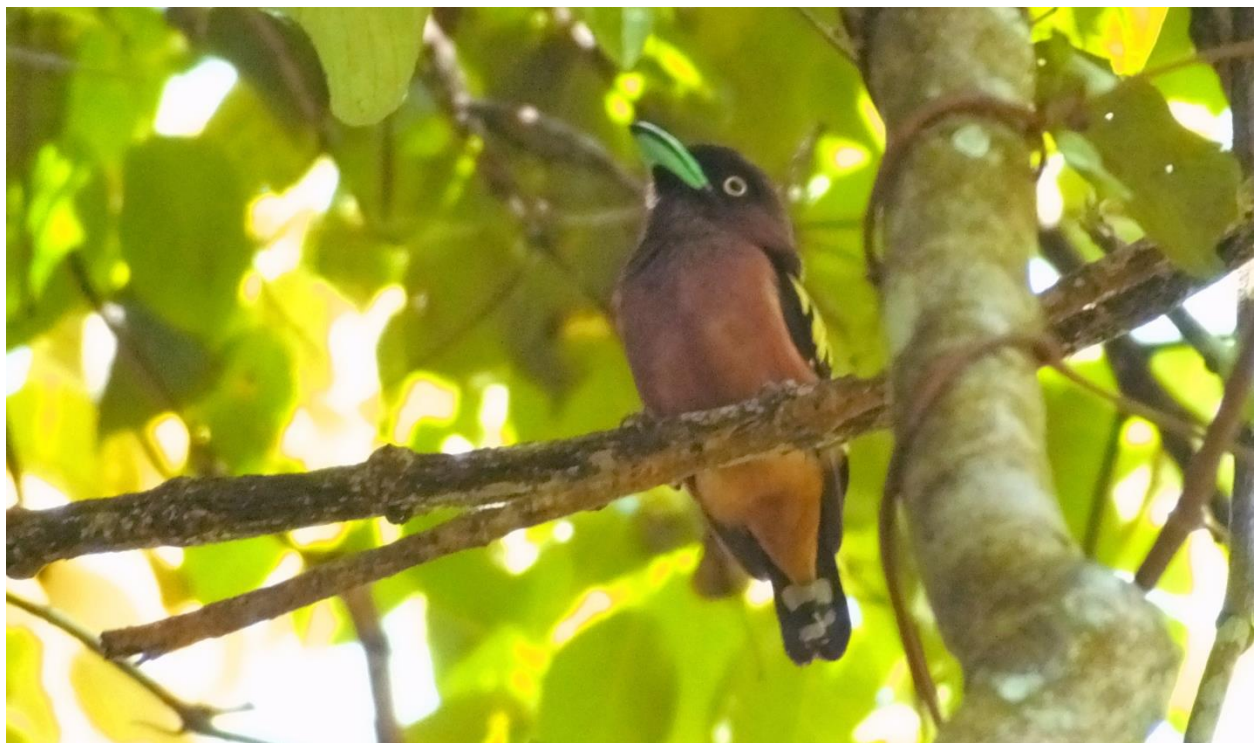
I took wooden sticks from the bush and broke their ends to certain lengths and gave them to Scott and Kathy. We walked slowly down the stone path. Some parts of the path were slippery. We had several stops at to take a break and watch birds. Most of them were the ones that we had seen earlier. Because we were very tired, after dinner, we took a good rest.





Early in the morning at 02:00 a.m. of July 11, 2023, we left for Kawah Putih (meaning White Crater) of West Java. It was a long car trip. I took the chance by sleeping at the back seat to save my energy. When we arrived at the parking lot, we immediately had our breakfast which we took from Grand Aston hotel. The calls of birds began to fill the surrounding atmosphere. We walked to the edge of the parking lot. Orange-spotted Bulbul, Sunda Bush Warbler, Tawny-breasted Parrotfinch, Javan Tesia and Crescent-chested Babbler were the early birds that we watched.

We chased the White-flanked Sunbird but it was quite difficult to take his picture. He sat among the twigs and leaves. As we walked higher along the road, we saw more birds including Trilling Shrike Babbler and Blue Nuthatch. There was a window between the trees above my head. When I looked through it, a bird of prey was soaring, I called Scott, Cathy and Waskito. I tried to take picture of the bird but it was moving so fast. Later, Scott identified it as Chinese Sparrowhawk. After lunch we spent the rest of the day by birding along the slope below the parking lot. Pygmy Bush Tit, Orange-spotted Bulbul, Little-pied Flycatcher, and Pied Shrike Babbler were added to my list of birds of Java that I saw. Scott and Kathy saw Javan Cochoa.









On July 12, 2023 was the last day of our birding tour across Bali and Java. We woke up early in the morning and went hiking up the slope of Mount Gede National Park. A little bit above the office buildings of the park, Waskito played the sounds of Javan Frogmouth. He came and landed on a hanging vine just above our heads. I and Scott saw the birds for only a few seconds. He flew away immediately. Unfortunately, Kathy did not see him. Leaves and twigs blocked her view. At the stream near the entrance gate of the park I saw Sunda Forktail. I called Scott and Kathy to come and had a look of the bird. They saw it. We entered the Cibodas Botanical Garden located below the Mount Gede National Park. We were looking for Sunda Thrush again. He did not want to show up. We saw other birds including Orange-spotted Bulbul, Black-winged Flycatcher Shrike, Javan Fulvetta. When we returned to the slope of Mount Gede, I took some good photos of Banded Broadbill. At around 11:20, we left Mount Gede for Jakarta. It was a great trip and we enjoyed watching a lot of birds of Bali and Java.