

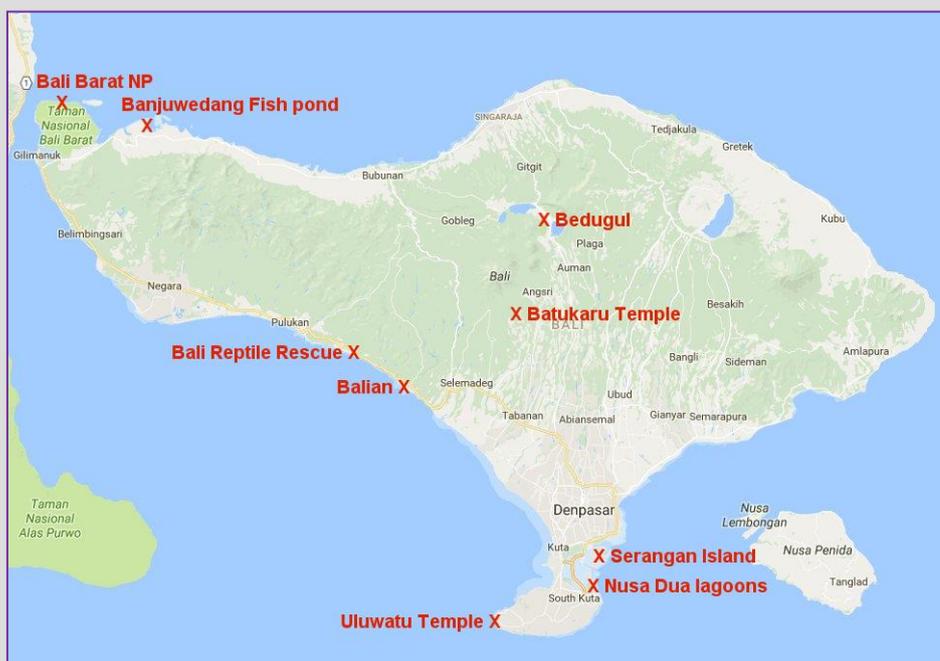
Bali



Indonesia



30th March to 6th April, 2017



Thursday, 30 th March	Denpasar to Balian Snake Hunt	18:00 – 20:30
Friday, 31 st March	Snake Hunt	9:00 – 15:30
Saturday, 1 st April	Balian to Bali Barat Bali Barat National Park	7:00 – 14:00 14:00 – 17:30
Sunday, 2 nd April	Bali Barat National Park	6:30 – 17:00
Monday, 3 rd April	Banjuwedang Fish ponds and salt pans Bali Barat National Park Temple near Gilimanuk Krait hunt	6:30 – 11:00 13:30 – 15:30 16:00 – 17:30 18:00 – 19:30
Tuesday, 4 th April	Bali Barat National Park Bedugul inc Botanical Garden	6:30 – 9:00 11:00 – 18:30
Wednesday, 5 th April	Bedugul Golf Course Bedugul Botanical Garden Batukaru Temple	6:30 – 8:30 9:30 – 12:00 15:00 – 17:30
Thursday, 6 th April	Uluwatu Cliffs Nusa Dua Lagoon Serangan Island	7:30 – 9:40 10:00 – 12:00 13:50 – 14:45

BALI, INDONESIA

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Introduction



During the birding trips we've had over the years, we realised that whenever we came across snakes, there was an extra excitement which was palpable. So when we were looking at a destination for this year, it seemed logical to extend this and make some sort of snake hunting activity part of the focus of the trip. When trawling through the information on this out there, little springs out as a worthwhile venture. However, Bali seems to have more than its fair share of snakes, and also a company which can organise snake hunts with a fair degree of success in finding different species. They also have the two particular ones we were after – King Cobra for Jim after decades of longing to see one, and one of the Green Pit Vipers for me after gazing longingly at the entrancing image on the cover of Mark O'Shea's volume on venomous snakes. Granted many destinations offered a greater variety and/or number of species of birds, but the offerings on Bali, and the fact that we always favour quality of birds rather than quantity, helped break the deal. There is even a critically endangered island endemic to be had in the form of Bali Starling.

For some trips we take on the driving and locating of birds ourselves, but were glad when we chose the services of Hery instead (see below). Many of the birds would have been difficult to find and pick out when present, although again we often forgo a full list in favour of the fun of finding our own birds. Even more obvious was that not only were the locations difficult to find, but, to put it bluntly, Bali driving is maniacal. The main rule of

the road seems to be that there are no rules, and the proliferation of swarms of scooters flying everywhere would make driving when not used to it here hazardous. That being said, the roads are generally in good condition, especially the coastal routes, with predictably unpredictable potholes etc thrown in elsewhere.

While Bali is usually seen as a sun, sea and sand destination, travelling around the island uncovered much more with regards to natural environment than I had expected. Granted the coastal routes tend to be very busy (an understatement) and subsequently lengthen journey times substantially. However, my view of the island before travelling round of being overpopulated and denuded outside of Bali Barat National Park were short of the mark, since there seemed to be quite a lot of forested areas remaining, particularly in the central mountains. We left Hery to decide where we should go during the short time with him. Bali Barat was an obvious one, since it is the key birding location. To vary the habitat and species, a visit to the mountains offers altitudinal variations, and birding around Denpasar on the last day not only offers yet more different birds, but is also conveniently near to the airport.

Bali Reptile Rescue (<http://breptile-rescue.blogspot.co.uk>)



Searching on the internet for locations worldwide where King Cobra can be seen in natural habitat threw up this organisation. It appears that Bali as a location is ideal due to a very high concentration of the species within a reasonably small (island) area. However, as with many other places globally, there is a general belief that the only good snake is a dead one, and that mammals are best kept in small cages and/or forced to entertain. Bali Reptile Rescue was set up to redress this, by alternately saving the animals

from these fates and re-releasing elsewhere. This Bird and Animal sanctuary focuses primarily on larger snakes, since local land and house owners are wont to kill on sight. They have now learned that there is another option, and often opt to call the sanctuary instead. It is now headed by Shinta, who came over from Indonesian Borneo 10 years ago, where she had grown up with a knowledge and respect for wildlife. She has a team of 6, and they get some money from the government, while offering a free snake removal service to the local population. Two types of snake hunting trip can be paid for by visitors – an evening walk which starts at first dark and can go on until around midnight, and a daytime one which basically follows the team as they react to phone calls from the locals. Both are recommended, since a different selection of species seems to be found on each one. Rule of thumb from Shinta is that she should see at least 3 species of snake in the first hour of the evening walk, with a good possibility of larger snakes on the daytime trip (we saw 4 and 3 respectively). For even greater dedication, she can run 3 day trips where she might locate around 20 species. The email address to contact is balireptilerescue@yahoo.com.

Guided birding

As with many trips abroad, there is always the vexed question of whether to employ some sort of guide to both show the main bird sites and also organise internal arrangements, or do it yourself. We had read many good reports about Hery Kusumanegara, who appears to be first choice to lead for the larger tour companies who include Bali on their itinerary, as well as individuals who also want sound guiding on the island. His main day job is as head ranger for Bali Barat National Park, where he has worked for the last 15 years. This has given him vast experience in the birds and other nature of the island, which shows when you are birding with him. He has collected a group of 4 or so others with expertise in finding and identifying birds. Fellows such as Boning, who was with us during the week, were originally poachers, but now turned to

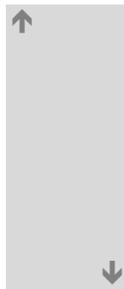
the fairer side of conversation and guiding. Not only did they know their sites and birds, but they had a very keen eye in spotting. Hery also organised all internal arrangements, such as accommodation, pickup at the hotel we stayed at for the snake hunting (airport pickup and drop off also, of course), all food, and transport (including dedicated driver). All of the crew also enjoyed a good laugh, while being stimulated by deeper questioning and conversation about identification of questionable birds. If you have booked hoping to have Hery as the main guide, but he is required to be working in his day job, don't be disappointed if you have someone like Boning instead. He led us one day when Hery was at a wedding, and was equally as good at finding and identifying the birds. To contact Hery, his email address is email: hery_kn@yahoo.co.id.



Accommodation

Bintang Balian

Based in the village of Balian, this was booked by Shinta from Bali Reticule Rescue, and was used as a base for the nearby snake hunting. It is a homestay which seems to have 5 rooms joining on to an eating area, with basic yet comfortable beds and facilities. The room only had one power socket and poor lighting, yet decent WiFi was available in the eating area. It is set in a small village as part of a road lined with a few shops and housing, with the road terminating at a small touristy river outlet into the sea, with sludgy black "sand" and a couple of snack bars for the visitors. Food choice was limited on an evening but still tasty enough, and the banana pancakes for breakfast were worth trying. Main downside was the tied up Macaque which was tethered by a short rope on to a small sleeping cage.



Local Menangan, Bali Barat

NOT to be confused with THE Menangan Hotel, which is one of the nicer ones in the area, our little home stay was far from this epitome of beach holiday bliss. Located along a short rough track, there are only two guest rooms and a small makeshift reception to the property. However, the room was clean and more than adequate for a couple of birders staying 3 nights. There were even 4 electricity sockets, air conditioning and decent WiFi provided for the room. The bathroom had a roof half open to the elements, and a bamboo shower head that delivered hot and cold water (I strongly recommend the cold only after a day's birding – far from icy and very refreshing). Food could be pleasantly eaten on the front patio, but was limited for choice and usually took a while to come. They also provided breakfast at a time to suit or as a breakfast box to go.

Strawberry Hill Hotel, Benugul



This was our one night base for a stay in the mountains. We didn't really see a great deal of it since we arrived after dark. It was certainly the nicest of the hotels we had stayed in so far, despite being in what sounded like a busier area than previously (so probably not too much doorstep birding). The rooms are all in individual units, and well-appointed and spacious inside. They even had hot running water in the shower – a first here! There was also a restaurant attached with what seemed a good choice (in relative terms!). As with the other places, WiFi seems to be becoming a standard offering, which as usual

was useful for looking up questionable identification on the internet.

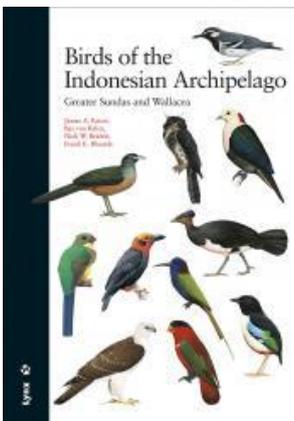
Harris Hotel, Denpasar

This was a purely functional stay, since it is located only 10 minutes or so from the airport. This meant a convenient location to leave from after a last morning's birding. Usual rate is IR600000 (around £40 at the time of writing), and is certainly a bigger concern than the other hotels used during our visit – which doesn't necessarily mean preferable since all were more than adequate and appropriate for their locations. The amount of light in the rooms was a contrast also, but the inclusion of WiFi again not so. There is a small restaurant attached with a limited menu of decent food, and breakfast served from 6.30. Don't expect to wander around outside and see birds, since the location is in a busy area. With many flights early evening, the offer of keeping your room until 6pm for half room rate (around £20) can prove useful.

Tips

- Electrical plugs are similar to the European 2 pin type
- Biting insects were present, but in low numbers, and with negligible threat of malaria. Most protection was needed in the evening snake hunt, when many night flying insects were troublesome
- First light is around 6.30, and last light around 7pm
- Rain protection is useful – there is every likelihood it will pour down at some time
- While the guides have their own torches, bringing a decent one, especially for the evening snake hunting, is useful
- Bring your own soap and toilet tissue as backup – they are not always provided
- Temperatures were as high as 30°C during the day (although it felt hotter at a couple of exposed sites) to what some may seem as cool morning and evening in the mountains

References



There were two main field guides that were used. We had a 10 year old copy of *Birds of Borneo, Java, Sumatra, and Bali* by John MacKinnon and Karen Phillipps, which was adequate, although some of the names of the birds had changed (I use the IOC world list as the standard), and distribution is difficult to gauge without maps and is sometimes out of date. Hery used the recently published *Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago* by James Eaton. While this is an excellent and not too cheap tome, with good maps and adequate descriptions, the main word of caution is that the book is extremely liberal in his splitting of species, and many of the birds do not conform to IOC standards.

DIARY

Day 1

(Thursday, 30th March)

The prime reason for selecting Bali over other more juicy birding destinations was the lure of “hunting” for a selection of the snakes on offer on this small island. Unlike Borneo, which also has a good selection, Bali is a vastly smaller island and so offers a greater concentration making sightings more likely. Add to that the existence of Bali Reptile Rescue, who not only conserve snakes (King Cobra in particular) but also offer tours to look for wild snakes. We were originally going to use their services for a couple of days at the end of the trip, but this clashed with a local festival, so we plumped for the first two instead. Shinta, the organiser for the group, met us at the airport arrivals, and had also booked us into the Bintang Balian for 2 nights as a base for the snake hunts. The interest in watching wild snakes overtook the need to look for birds today – they would have their spot in the limelight later in the week – although of course we did take any resultant opportunity to find a few species. Most of the journey from the airport to Balian was in traffic-heavy roads mainly lining built up streets, leaving little opportunity for birding from the car. A late lunch stop at a small open ended cafe was conveniently next to an open field, and from here we saw Zitting Cisticola and a handful of Scaly-breasted Manakins. Swiftlets overhead were mainly Cave.

The hotel was in Balian, and while waiting the hour or so for the “snake team” to arrive we tried to mop up a few of the commoner garden species. In amongst Yellow-vented Bulbul and now common Linchi Swiftlets, a few White-breasted Woodswallows were overhead, with Plain Flowerpeckers in the garden. The Linchi Swiftlets were found to host at least one Edible Nest congener, with small groups of Fork-tailed Swifts in the distance.



By 6.30pm, Shinta and the driver were joined by two more staff from the company, one impressively wielding a hooked snake handling tool – the excitement began. We drove for just over 20 minutes from the hotel and parked amongst some tree lined fields. The trees were the target. It was now dark, and 6 shifty looking figures made their slow way along one of the metalled tracks, combing through the lower vegetation as we progressed. These guys had a good mix of experience and sharp eyesight, since they made finding the quarry look easy. Painted Bronzeback Tree Snakes were common, being found regularly along the walk. Shinta had inadvisably boasted that more or less any day

they would pick out at least 3 different species in an hour, and that is exactly what they did, following up with Rat Snake and Dog-faced Cat Snake. Elated with our findings, we drove a few hundred metres further along the track, and crossed a small stream on foot in the forest. The guides proved to be unerringly sharp in their quest, since one found two separate Lesser Sunda White-lipped Pit Vipers in branches over the stream. Despite how I might have felt about the potential of looking for King Cobra the next day, I have to admit that the Pit Vipers were top of my wanted list, and they didn't let me down. Just as we were trying to finally drag ourselves away, the rain started in earnest, and we happily decided to call it a night, with satisfying views of the band of reptiles we had encountered.

Day 2

(Friday 31st March)

After the excellent snakes found on the evening hunt last night, today was the day for some daylight hunting, and the prospect of some much larger species. The start was a more than comfortable 9am departure from the hotel, after one of the most unbroken rests for some time (and a delicious banana pancake for breakfast). First stop of the morning had to be the Bali Reptile Rescue centre itself, mainly because it is the morning meeting point for the team, but also to show us what the organisation does. A small collection of cages containing a mix of snakes and mammals occupy a smallish area within a housing district. Captive animals are never an easy sight for me, but they are there because otherwise the local people would have either killed them (usually snakes) or kept them badly (usually mammals). The aim is always to release back in the wild where possible, although a certain amount are needed at any one time to show the government, who do give some funding, that the work of offering free snake retrieval continues. The brief for our snake hunt seemed quite simply to be to follow the team as they did their usual day's work. The routine is for someone to phone in reporting a snake on their property, and rather than the usual battering to death which would otherwise have occurred, for the snake to be captured and released elsewhere. Shinta and the team seem to have an excellent relationship with the local people, making this a viable venture, so much so that a lot of the calls come in from the immediate locality.

Our first call was from only 5 minutes' drive away – a landowner in the forest adjacent to the village had seen what he thought was a python. This surprised me a little – the locals are scared of these as well as the more dangerous venomous cobras, and not just because of the potential of losing livestock. We walked a little way up a small metalled track which was set up quite a steep gradient, and then peeled off into the banana / forest vegetation. It only took a short while before one of the team had something. He was pointing into a small hole in a rotting tree lying on the ground, where the vermiculations of a large snake could be seen. With a bit of brute effort and a lot of skilled experience two of the team had extracted a medium sized Reticulated Python. Oddly, it only seemed to have one eye, but apparently not too much of a hindrance to existence. The python was placed on a tree for a while before being bagged for transport elsewhere.



Great start. With this brilliant snake literally in the bag, we drove a short way back down the track, since another landowner had reported what he thought was a cobra. The two main snake hunters in the team were off in a shot from their scooter as we parked up, and we followed minutes later with another member of the crew. We walked about 50 metres to a lean to when we heard the magic word being shouted – “King!”. More than enough for us to change direction and quicken the pace. Seconds later we could see the team with a medium sized King Cobra between them, facing them down in the way cobras do. While not one of the larger King Cobras, it was still an impressive sight, and arguably the main target (if we had one) for the trip. The experience over the next half an hour watching a wild King Cobra did nothing to remove it from this lofty position. Catching this specimen was a much trickier affair than the python however. The technique seemed to revolve around grasping from behind the head with a thickly gloved hand. Many attempts were close but bailed out before it was safely bagged. Another King Cobra saved from a battering by a grateful landowner!

The best time to see King Cobras in this way according to Shinta is around midday, when they have been hunting and settled down somewhat. Our cobra had obeyed this rule, which then left us at our own lunch hiatus. We settled down in a restaurant next to the waves before returning to the rescue shelter. No sooner had we arrived than another call came through, this time for a Spitting Cobra. Unbelievably, the stars seemed to be aligning just nicely. This was only a couple of streets away, and the optimism was high when we got out of the car. The call had been made with the Spitting Cobra present.



After sticking some (protective) sunglasses in the bag, we walked up a lane to find the scooter of the team in a yard. The family from the house were watching the pair examining a very small woodpile. And yes, the cobra was there. The eyes were glazed over, pre-empting skin shedding, which may have explained the docile nature it had. No eye threatening venom slung in our direction today, but great views of another iconic cobra. It was mid-afternoon by then, and the team was dispersing, so we were taken back to the hotel concluding two excellent snake hunting/watching sessions. Now the birding could begin!

Day 3

(Saturday 1st April)

Journey from Bintang Balian to Bali Barat National Park

With the majority of the snake hunting completed (there’s always room for some optimism in the form of more chance encounters while out birding), we were picked up by Hery Kusumanegoro, his team colleague Boning (I kid you not!), and (very safe) driver Marcos at 6am. The bags just about fit into the smallish hatchback, and we then expected a bit of a drive to the first birding spots. It was a bit of a surprise then when we drove down the road for 5 minutes or so and pulled into the same temple car park (site of the “secret” bat cave) as on the first day - Pura Luhur



Srijong temple. Thoughts of reminding Hery of this were quickly put to the back of the mind when no sooner had we exited the car than he picked up the first of 4 Java Sparrows. It seems that they are relatively easy to see at Bali Barat in the breeding season, but now was not that time, and this small refuge is one of the better sites out of season. Once common, they have been poached for cage birds, and are now a difficult bird to see. This even rang true this morning. The group of 4 favoured a large tree next to the car park and temple, but had a habit of hiding in the upper branches to the rear. Pinning them down took some time and patience, but despite the copious Yellow-vented Bulbuls trying to distract us from our task, we managed to prise views of the birds in the gaps. A lot easier were the Common Ioras and Olive-backed Tailorbird (Hery called this as Javan Tailorbird but the two seem to be the same species but with different names). A Common Flameback had been calling occasionally but was only picked up in the distance later. We did venture the few metres beyond the line of trees to overlook the small cove where the Java Sparrows breed and managed to see one or two flying in and then disappear into the vegetation.



Next stop wasn't really a stop as such, but Hery had tipped Boning off to look out for Javan Kingfisher as we passed the numerous rice paddies alongside the road. How he spotted it remains a mystery, but he glimpsed what turned out to be a stunning bird as we passed a small gap looking over some paddies. A narrow muddy track alongside and into the rice paddy enabled us to get reasonably close to the perched bird – much larger and as impressive as we had hoped for. We also asked for some close up views of the much more numerous Javan Pond Herons, new birds to us and a smart member of the small heron family. Easily done, the brief stop also turned up a Long-tailed Shrike.



Just before lunch, and a few miles down the road, we were on a promise for Blue-eared Kingfisher. We drove down a narrow road through the forest to park next to a small bridge over a narrow stream cum river, which was bordered by irregular thick vegetation. It took a short time, and an intervening Freckle-breasted Woodpecker during our wait, but the female appeared at first in the centre of an overhanging bush, and then out in the open near to the bridge, to give mouth-watering views of the bird. She stayed for some time, but the male which appeared a short time later was

spotted a little further downstream before flying into the banana plantation. When we looked at the images later in the day, confusion arose over the specific identification of the female bird. Common Kingfisher (subspecies *floriana*) also occurs on the island, and shows the rufous ear coverts with some blue feathers of the bird seen. Local Blue-eared are of the nominate *meninting* subspecies, showing full blue ear coverts. We had to go with the evidence in front of us and call the female as Common Kingfisher and the male as Blue-eared (a textbook bird for this species!)

Lunch provided an excellent and spicy example of Indonesian cuisine – and another Javan Kingfisher seen from the table – before continuing on our way towards Bali Barat. Just before reaching there, we drove slowly over a larger bridge than earlier to try to spot a perched Javan Kingfisher. None was there, but we did manage to drink in a male Grey-rumped Treeswift, as well as a pair of Eastern Red-rumped Swallows over the bridge.

Bali Barat National Park

The last few hours of our first fully birding day on the island were spent in the western part of the national park, which is an area of rainforest and open land partly bounded by hills. The omens were good when we turned off on to a rough track which wound the half mile or so to our walking point, and a stunning Barred Buttonquail popped up next to the car and swiftly disappeared out of sight. We then parked up the car and covered what must have only been around a quarter of a mile of the track, which was bounded immediately by fairly open land and then denser forest on the slopes. Birding was generous here, with good species dropping in or popping up regularly over time. The two likely Barbets here both gave themselves up, but one not without a fight. The stunning red faced Bali race of Coppersmith Barbet was calling and quite easy to pick out on bare



branches.

Yellow-eared Barbets were also vocal but much more difficult to pin down in their favoured leaved tree canopies, until one eventually called in the open above us. Linchi Swiftlets, the southern version of Glossy Swiftlets, were easily the most common birds in the air, with the now ubiquitous Yellow-vented Bulbuls always to and fro, but a light phase Changeable Hawk-Eagle which soared over the ridges to perch on a distant bare tree at the hill top stood out. A perched Black-thighed Falconet was more difficult due to size and distance. More Freckle-breasted Woodpeckers were seen in the area, as well as a nearby Collared Kingfisher. We made a small foray a little further along the track to a waterfall, where a Sunda Brush Cuckoo was seen on and off, a second Barred Buttonquail flew into the vegetation (a third crossed the track on the way out), and a stunning male Black-naped Fruit Dove was perched. A couple of birds which were seen briefly by us and named by Hery were Emerald Dove, Crested Serpent Eagle, Ruddy Cuckoo-Dove, and Red-breasted Parakeet.

Day 4*(Sunday 2nd April)***Bali Barat National Park**

With 2 full days in the park, the objective from Hery (who just happened to have a wedding to attend today so left the donkey work to Boning) was to focus on some of the topmost specialities straight off, so that they could be revisited the next day should they have been missed through bad weather or bad birding (we would take full responsibility for the latter!). A 6am pickup at the homestay meant that the packed breakfast option was taken, resulting in us scoffing omelette and fried bananas in the back of the car as we were chauffeured to the first location. Despite the threat of rain in the forecast, we exited the car in fine weather on one of the rough tracks to the centre of the park. The rain thankfully stayed away again throughout the day, only starting mid evening. It didn't take long before a mainly white starling flew over and mercifully landed in the open on a high tree. Black-winged Starling – one of only two we would see, but welcome considering its rarity and limited range. Coppersmith Barbets, Common Ioras, Black-winged Flycatcher Shrikes, Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters, and a nesting Long-tailed Shrike provided enjoyable padding while we waited and searched for the supposed star of the show. Bali Starlings are still critically endangered and endemic to Bali, but seeing as there were once only single figure numbers left in the wild some years ago, the sight of our first on the top of another tree, and without leg irons, was apt, since there is a theory only these can be counted as truly wild. There is a certain sense in this, since any released birds would bear rings, and be first generation from captive. So it was that the subsequent few birds seen after this in this particular location all had rings.

We then branched off to enter a weaker, yet muddier track, where we came upon our second Black-winged Starling, and the sound of our first Green Junglefowl. We actually saw the first birds not long after – a pair in the denser part of the forest. This turned out to be not far from the Manangan Hotel, a much swisher affair altogether than our much more primitive Local Manangan homestay. However, I can't say I was in the least bit envious of the early risers (it was all of 9am by the time we arrived here), planning which sun lounger to nab for the day, while we were successfully tracking down a Bar-winged Prinia only metres from reception. Scarlet-headed Flowerpeckers were also here, and were seen feeding a pair of hungry orange mouthed youths in a nest directly over our heads.



We dragged ourselves away from this veritable Utopia to be driven out of the centre of the park, along the main roads, and thence to the location for Javan Banded Pitta. This was to be the birding highlight so far (no offence Bali Starling, but Pittas are a special

type of bird family!), as much for the anticipation as the actual experience. We parked up next to a mud track, walked through a short stretch of the forest, skirted some green open land for a hundred metres, then dived back into the forest again. Only a short walk here found a hide constructed of dried palm strands, which overlooked a short and thick log which was filled with food. Unlike the comfort of home hides which have seating and hinged shutters for viewing, a couple of plastic steppers were brought along to sit on, and the woven raffia had to be parted for viewing and cameras. All part of the experience of course. It took no time for a Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher to appear and gratefully tuck into the larder, and no time again for the Pittas to enter the scene. The pair were occasionally together, and made an entrance within the hour and a half we were there about four times. While under the shade of the trees, there was still enough light for exceptional views and also for photography.



Lunch was spent next to one of the beaches. When we sat down in one of the small restaurants, we were pretty well excited to see a Bali Starling fly over. Little did we know (thanks for not telling us beforehand, Boning) that this was the location of the Bali Starling release site. A cage full of young birds was only about 30 metres from where we were sat, hidden by a building. We thusly had lunch with the constant toing and froing of the wild/released birds over the open area. So, following lunch, we went around to the Myna area, and picked up a few unringed birds for our troubles – these likely to be individuals which have been raised in nest boxes within the vicinity. Also nesting here were a pair of Scarlet Minivets, showing well while visiting what looked like the nesting tree.

Gilimanuk



The last main site of the day to be visited was Gilimanuk. This is apparently the home town of both Hery and Boning, but even more significantly, has an area of mangroves bounded by sea and open manicured grass which plays host to Savanna Nightjars. It looks an unlikely place for this, being disturbed by a few motor bikes and kite flying kids, but the exposed mud and occasional low bush seem like a magnet to the Nightjars. They are apparently also usually very approachable, but today seemed to prefer to fly up from their "hiding places". Quite often one would be spotted, but another unseen one in front

would spook the rest. Good views of some were had however. The open grassy areas also played host to a few pairs of Trillers. Originally identified as White-shouldered, the white edges to the tertials and wide supercilium questioned them as Pied. However, it is likely that they were all White-shouldered, given the lack of scalloping on the breasts of the females. A kingfisher also had us guessing. It looked to have all the hallmarks for Collared, with no hint of buff on the breast, but buff colouration above the lores notched up our first Sacred Kingfisher. Island Dove and a scattering of Zebra Doves were less controversial, but again the former was new to us so did contain its own bit of excitement.

Day 5

(Monday 3rd April)

Banjuwedang Fish ponds and saltpans near Bali Barat

This morning's birding was a totally different experience to that so far on the island. We drove only a short way from the hotel to the local fish ponds, and had a superb full morning covering most of the area. They are situated just to the East of Bali Barat, and adjoin both a narrow strip of mangroves and the sea. From the latter, the coast and volcanoes of Java can be seen in the not too distant view. From the entrance to the fish ponds, a track follows a channel forming a border to a narrow strip of ponds, then turns to the right, passing a couple of open ponds first, and then some larger fishponds. A track immediately to the left after the entrance has some very productive salt pans to the right initially – these were covered later in the morning. So, back to the track straight on to the entrance, and barely the first open pans on the left were reached, when Hery excitedly called out Javan Plover. This is very much like a slightly darker version of Kentish Plover, and so probably a little more tricky in winter when the latter also pays a visit. The channel to the right hosted the first of many Cerulean Kingfishers, a gem of a bird, especially when the light hits it. The corner here had another Triller. There had been some discussion the day before around the identity of the birds on the open grass, with a consensus being that they were White-shouldered Trillers. This one however, was a brownish female, pointing squarely to White-shouldered Triller. Around the corner then to a couple of very productive small pans, the latter of which had some vegetation on its boundaries. The more open pans hosted a couple of Little Terns, with what initially proved to be a tricky Gull-billed Tern in non-breeding plumage. Waders were the order of the day on the last smaller pool, headed by White-headed Stilts, but with lesser numbers of Grey-tailed Tattlers, and a few Common & Green Sandpipers, and what turned out to be a single Long-toed Stint after some discussion.



The track was followed around towards the beach, a narrow sliver of sand and shells which leads to a small mangrove, and we left the car to walk there. The pans just in from the beach held many Little Egrets, with this particular subspecies having fully black legs. A juvenile White-bellied Sea Eagle landed in the distance before becoming airborne again shortly after. Groups of Scaly-breasted Munias hosted a few smart White-headed Munias in their ranks. There were a couple of specialities we were looking for along the beach, one of which was Malaysian Plover. A Javan Plover initially was a false start, but a short way after, just after a non-breeding Grey Plover, and the quarry was located. The single female seen at first turned out to be with a male, both looking daintier than Javan & Kentish Plovers, with a good smattering of cinnamon around the head and neck. The

mangroves were reached, followed by a couple of open pools, which held another pair of Cerulean Kingfishers, and another Grey-tailed Tattler. A couple of Great Crested Terns flew in off the sea and over our heads. On the way back, Hery successfully lured in a couple of Golden-bellied Gerygones, and a roosting Savanna Nightjar was found in the sand – a bit of a regular this one by all accounts!



The next job in hand was to explore the other side of the area, and after passing a couple of Zitting Cisticolas, a perched Little Heron, and more Cerulean Kingfishers, we entered the track which was to the left after the entrance to the site. The track here was a lot dicier than earlier, with some small but tricky mud patches. We drove a short way along, but decided to abandon the idea of using the car as a hide all the way to the next beach and mangroves, and walk this instead. This turned out to be a great idea, since we probably notched up a few extra birds by doing this. It was obvious that Pied Stilts, Little Egrets, and a variety of waders were the main components of the bird population here, but the much more open and expansive saltpans always seemed to have something of interest as we walked along the central track. A group of 4 non-breeding (unfortunately) Red-necked Stints were the first offering, but after a group of the difficult to see Sunda Teal which decided to take flight after a short while, there was the excitement of a couple of Beach Stone Curlews flying over towards the mangroves – another of the hoped for specialities here. After this sighting, we quickened the pace a little to see if we could relocate them. Temperature and brightness seemed to soar when we hit the light-coloured sand of the ribbon of beach, but some strange calling by Hery hit pay dirt, with the pair of singularly stunning birds wandering out of their mangrove hideout to see what was calling to them. They didn't seem to welcome too close an approach, so we kept our distance and made do with watching from there. We completed this section of the site by taking a different track to meet the car on a less hazardous surface, passing single Terek Sandpiper and Spotted Redshank on the way.

Bali Barat and Gilimanuk

After lunch at the same restaurant as yesterday, and another quick gander at the supplied Bali Starlings, we headed to Hery's office within the national park itself, and near to one of the entrances. Next job was to look for one of the small groups of Javan Lutung (Ebony Leaf Monkey), which in Bali are only found within the Bali Barat vicinity. The metalled track almost immediately passed the large enclosure that is the main captive breeding and pre-release pen for the Bali Starling, and is quite a large affair, holding nearly 200 birds. We then entered the forest, and soon came across a small group of the aforementioned monkeys. They seemed to prefer to be secretive, and despite being quite noisy when moving through the canopy, were proving difficult to get views of. We tried this for some time, with marginally good looks at the group, before continuing on and exiting at what was almost a savannah type of area backed by the hills. A nice area, yet only adding Black Drongo and Crested Serpent Eagle to the list. After a short information break with Hery telling us how in the last 5 years he and his team have got the locals onside in their now pro-Myna and general conservation views, we took a small interlude by walking through the wet forest for 150 metres to look for



Sunda Teal at an enclosed pond. Birds were there but flying around and difficult to see due to tree cover.

Late afternoon stop was at a shrine site near to Gilimanuk. This had some open grassed habitat bounded by trees. Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker (seen) and Green Pigeon (one briefly flying through) were among the targets, but stars of the show turned out to be a small group of Javan Lutung. They broke all their own rules by feeding out in the open within sight of our lookout place, entertaining for some time before

seemingly starting to snooze. From the same lookout point, we spotted a pair of Small Minivets and an Ashy Drongo. A short walk through the trees to the next open area found Sunda Collared Dove, Coppersmith Barbet, Javan Myna, Ornate Sunbird, and a trio of Freckle-breasted Woodpeckers.

We had been looking forward to some more snake hunting, this time with Hery, who was confident that he could find us Banded Krait. This was going to be an evening's venture, walking along the forest bounded banks of a small river. We parked the car near to the bridge over the river, waiting for darkness to fall, when the rain started to hammer against the car. Okay, hammer is a slight overstatement, but plenty of water was falling, and only really slowed somewhat as we decided to leave for our quest. Then it started again, and didn't really stop for the rest of the evening. Suffice to say that we didn't see any snakes, but we still strangely enjoyed the potential of the outing. And that is despite being wet through after the hour trudging through muddy tracks, many partially enclosed by vines and creepers. Hery was disappointed that this was his first failure in finding Kraits, but it was still an experience for us!

Day 6

(Tuesday 4th April)



Bali Barat National Park

This was the day we left Bali Barat area to move on to the more mountainous habitat at Bedugul, situated towards the centre of the island. Before we left, Hery wanted another chance at good views and images of Green Junglefowl, so we left the hotel at 6.30 once more, to head towards the tracks in the park around the Hotel Menangan, the site of our first Bali Starling, and where we had also seen some Junglefowl within the forest. The tactic was to drive slowly along the tracks, scanning each side from the car, with particular

focus on open feeding areas. We did this for some time without luck, until a male was spotted further ahead feeding at the track side. We watched for some time before it edged into the forest, then called in to the Menangan Hotel to see if Hery could locate Collared Scops Owl. No luck, but a small group of Javan Rusa Deer were near to reception, with some Plantain Squirrels overhead, and Common Iora in the bushes.

Bedugul

There then followed a 2 hour drive along part of the North coast, and then South-east to the Bedugul area in the mountains. We seemed to climb quite an altitude on some steep inclines, passing through many small villages surrounded by increasingly impressive verdant forest in the hills. Downside was that the low cloud cover looked like it might

also offer the threat of rain, and as we reached the first brief stop overlooking two of the three lakes, it did indeed begin to rain. We descended again somewhat to reach a small



town, where we took a right turn to park and walk to the marshy shores of one of the lakes.

Striated Grassbird was a main quarry here, and was heard and then found within seconds of leaving the car. It should more correctly be known as Unstriated Grassbird in Bali due to its plain chest. Another key bird here is Swinhoe's Snipe, and 3 separate birds were flushed, showing the plain back and wings with no white trailing edge to the wings. This small area lakeshore marsh would warrant more time, but after quickly scooping up Yellow Bittern and Whiskered Tern, the heavens opened so we retreated for a more than decent buffet lunch in town.

Main birding area here is the botanical gardens, which is set over quite a large area with open expanses of grass and circulating roads. As would be predicted, it is very well kept and manicured, with the range of trees and shrubs offering a variety of options for the birds. Main challenge for the afternoon was keeping dry, since the rain fell on and off during the proceedings. Twice we had to abandon birding to shelter in a couple of the handily provided covered shrines. Not



sure if that was their purpose, but thanks anyway! Before the first of the downpours, we were entertained by a very active Brown Honeyeater, which was determined to outsing the playback on a speaker, repeatedly coming back to the bush overhead for a burst of song. The first of the rain breaks was shortly after, but we dodged it again by claiming Short-tailed Starling and Javan Heleia before the heavens really opened. The upside was that from our makeshift shelter, we spotted a Horsfield's (Javan) Treeshrew nearby. Back in the semi-dry, and one or two species came fairly quickly, with Javan Flowerpecker and Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon perched at the top of trees, and Black-naped Orioles flying through. A short drive was then made to a damper coniferous patch, which then led up a few steps to a shrine. We had been keeping an eye out for Whistling Thrush, so when a tape was played at the top of the steps, I thought the mutter of "whistler" from Boning was referring to the same species. Imagine my surprise when we pinned down a stunning, un-thrush-like Golden Whistler – pleasant mistake to have made. The small stunning bird theme then continued with a pair of very active Sunda Warblers from the same spot, as was a Flame-fronted Barbet high above us. We then tried for the real Sunda Whistling Thrush as the light began to fade, made do with one calling and a welcome Snowy-browed Flycatcher instead.

Day 7*(Wednesday 5th April)***Handara Golf Course, Bedugul**

The now routine 6.30 pickup from the hotel preceded a short drive to the local golf course, or, more accurately, a metalled track at its borders which was bounded on the North edge by slopes and both by forest. The hotel wasn't able to provide breakfast early enough, so this was a 2 hour saunter before returning, eating, and checking out. Plan for the site was to walk a couple of hundred metres along here while checking the trees on both sides. Yellow-throated Hanging Parrot is the speciality according to Hery, and this one of the best places to have a



chance of seeing them perched, since most other records are for birds in flight. We had to wait a little for the stars of the show to put in an appearance, although a few Warbling White-eyes early on were more than an adequate interlude. A single Mountain Leaf Warbler was far too brief, although not that brief that the triple crown stripe was missed, and a Greater Racquet-tailed Drongo flew through. The Hanging Parrots were first picked up on their squeaky weak call, and then pinned down with some difficulty in the canopy tops directly above us. The problem was partly their size and colour, mimicking the leaves they fed around, and the strong backlight. Plodding on, we tried to locate a Crescent-chested Babbler, but despite the bird calling from within the thick cover only metres from us, it proved elusive. On the other hand, a White-bellied Sea Eagle soaring over was difficult to miss. Before departing for sustenance, we also logged a pair of Scarlet Minivets, Flame-fronted Barbet, and small numbers of Javan Heleias.

Bedugul Botanical Gardens

After breakfast, we returned to the Botanical Garden in Bedugul, but visited a different part of the site. We spent the rest of the morning in one of the small cuts into the forested hill that had suffered from the effects of the landslide a couple of months ago. The evidence was stark, from crossing a makeshift bridge over a gouged out water course which still held the remnants of the broken concrete bridge, to the excavators parked to remove the excess mud which still lined the ground. At the end of this very small cut, steps led to some Hindu buildings, which were in full use today thanks to the Bali ceremony of Galungan, resulting in a constant stream of worshippers passing by to get to the temple and forest above to pay their respects. The main quarry here is an errant Javan Hawk Eagle, the only known location on the island for this vagrant, and Banded Fruit Dove. The latter flew over only once, not giving enough up for proper identification. We almost got excited about the former, with 2 large birds of prey over the slopes. The first was against bad light, and may have been a Crested Serpent Eagle. The second was soaring away from us, so all we saw was the dark of the back. Perhaps of most esoteric interest were the few Cuckoo Doves seen close to throughout our visit. They were initially called as Ruddy, and all but the first one undoubtedly were. This beast threw the spanner in the works. It had supposedly responded to a tape of Ruddy Cuckoo Dove, but the cinnamon



breast and distinct rufous crown demarcated from plainer mantle were more indicators of Little. Another difficult bird was a singing Javan Whistling Thrush. It responded to a tape of its call, but refused to offer more than a couple of brief flight views inside the forest.

Butukaru Temple

A drive of 2 hours or so found the temple at Butukaru. We couldn't have picked a worse day for this! The same festival of Galungan affected here even more, since today was the specific day of the 3 day event when temples were visited, and this was one of the biggest. There was already a closed road in place diverting us away from the direct route up, and when we did arrive, the car park was heaving with people. We all took the precarious lift on a motor scooter up the pull of the hill, to be deposited at the temple site which was packed with worshippers. If that wasn't enough, we all had to don a traditional sarong as a sign of respect. Surely with all the people and the racket of music there was no chance of any birds? Wrong assumption! We walked the short distance to a small lake with an impressive decorative island in the centre, to discover a Stork-billed Kingfisher flying from one side to the other. This is an uncommon bird on Bali, so much so that it was lifer for Boning. A disappointment was the lack of White-crowned Forktail which apparently is usually easy to see and accustomed to people. However, after a singing Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher, the first of three birds was found on the edge of the lake, only a stone's throw away from the epicentre of the music. After a further two male Forktails were found on the other side of the lake, a Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon was perched in a distant bare tree, and a couple of Brown-cheeked Bulbuls were feeding in fruits. We spent some time before departing for Denpasar looking for Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers but only had fleeting glimpses.



Day 8

(Thursday 6th April)

Uluwatu Cliffs

First order of the last day was to drive half an hour or so to Uluwatu Temple, which covers quite a large area, some of which bounds some fairly high and vertical cliff faces. When we arrived, we were more or less the first visitors to arrive, which was refreshing early on, but over the time we were there more and more day-trippers poured in, with selfie-sticks aplenty (do any of them actually manage to get an image with the vestige of a scene peeking out from behind a grinning mush?). Hery had mentioned in passing that it would get hot and necessitate plenty of sun screen. This was no idle threat! Sweat dripped off us straight away and it was baking by the time we left which was still quite early morning. To compound this, we were required to wear a respectful sarong yet again, which was far from comfortable or cool. We made our way



from the car park, past some impressive temple artefacts, and found ourselves at the boundary wall overlooking the cliffs and sea far below. It only took minutes to pin down our main quarry here – White-tailed Tropicbird. At least 2 birds kept appearing from around the cliff corner to fly out to sea and back again. Views were distant due to the height but still satisfying. Most of our sightings were during the first half hour. We did stay peering down for over two hours, but only added a couple of Javan Mynas, Little Herons, and a Collared Kingfisher.

Nusa Dua Lagoon



So to this lagoon, and as with some other sites we visited, wasn't quite what I was expecting (which was a natural lagoon with some vegetation cover). The fact was that they are man-made regularly shaped and worked large ponds, separated by dividing banks. There is some woodland along one edge, and sparse trees throughout the lagoons. When we were there, there was also a lot of noisy heavy work going on near to the reception. That being said, there is a handful of good birds here which can be seen fairly easily. Vying for

the role of stars of the show are the busy and beautiful Cerulean Kingfishers. It was difficult to know exactly how many there were, since they seemed to be constantly flying to and fro, either chasing after each other or fishing. Scarlet-headed Flowerpeckers gave them a run for their money for top spot, and were equally as active in a fruiting tree. Good news was that there seemed to be more of the stunning males than females. A couple of Brown-throated Sunbirds were also with them. Around the water were a good mix of herons and cormorants. The latter were a mix of Black-crowned Night, Purple & Little Herons, as well as Great Egret. The latter, Little Pied & Little Cormorants, used the taller bare trees as perches.

Serangan Island

After a lunch out of the morning sun, we headed over the seemingly never ending bridges that formed a sort of marine bypass to the airport area, to cross a small bridge to this island. It consists of a lot of reclaimed land, and is particularly good for close Beach Stone Curlew. However, time was pressing in as we found the small savannah type of area where they apparently favour, which also overlooked an inlet that held a variety of waders and some terns. Despite assurances that this was an easy bird, they didn't seem to have read the script. Hery and Boning put some effort into trying to find them, but no luck. We did add one or two decent birds during the search, including Blue-tailed Bee-eater, White-shouldered Triller, Long-tailed Shrike, and Sooty Bulbul. As the time for departure for the airport approached, we realised that Hery, Boning, and Marcus the driver had all separated, so we located Boning and quietly mentioned it might be time to collect up the group and go. He was just about to when he heard the call of the birds, and just in the nick of time, we gorged on a stunning quartet of Beach Stone Curlews. Couldn't have been timed better and provided an ideal end to the trip.



SPECIES SEEN

Sunda Teal

Anas gibberifrons

This was a much larger duck than we had expected - perhaps it's the vision "Teal" conjures up. It is also apparently fairly difficult to find outside of a couple of locations. The fish ponds near to Bali Barat where we saw them first is one of the more reliable sites (Banjuwedang Fish Ponds 10, 3; Nusa Dua lagoons 2)



Green Junglefowl

Gallus varius

Bali Barat is the best place to see these, and the hoarse croak of a call is often heard before, or even instead of, seeing the birds. A little bit time should be given to stumble across them in the forest. Using the car as a hide and slowly driving the forest tracks probably increases the chances of seeing them (Bali Barat National Park - pair; 2 single males; then 3 on the last morning)

White-tailed Tropicbird

Phaethon lepturus

This is a speciality of the sea cliffs near to Denpasar. The birds breed on the cliffs at the base far below the watch points from the temple above. Some time may be needed to see them, and they seem to fly out from the cliffs a little way out to return to the cliffs again. Our experience was of quite distant but satisfying views (Uluwatu Temple and cliffs - 2)



Yellow Bittern

Ixobrychus sinensis

Only one seen, perched for a short time before the rains came at the lake near Bedugul

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

Nusa Dua lagoons - 3



Little Heron

Butorides atricapilla

2 at Banjuwedang Fish Ponds; Uluwatu Temple and cliffs - 2; Nusa Dua lagoons 2

Javan Pond Heron

Ardeola speciosa

1 flying on way to Daytime Snake Hunt; 1 over Bintang Balian; 3 separate birds Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; ~12 Banded Pitta site, Bali Barat; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~15; Bedugul 3; Couple in rice fields on journey to Batukaru Temple; Nusa Dua lagoons - 2; Serangan Island - 2



Eastern Cattle Egret

Bubulcus coromandus

Few seen Denpasar, and few over Bintang Balian; ~4 with cattle on way to Daytime Snake Hunt; Field with ~60 Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~40; Rice terrace near to Batukaru Temple - 7; Serangan Island ~30

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

1 over Bintang Balian; 1 over Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; Nusa Dua lagoons - 1



Great Egret

Ardea alba

Nusa Dua lagoons - 3; Serangan Island - 1

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~10



Brown Booby

Sula leucogaster

One seen from the restaurant next to the Bali Starling release site at Bali Barat

Little Pied Cormorant

Microcarbo melanoleucos

Nusa Dua lagoons ~12; Serangan Island 10+



Little Cormorant

Microcarbo niger

Nusa Dua lagoons - 5

Crested Serpent Eagle

Spilornis cheela

Only one definite bird identified, perched near to the savannah of Bali Barat

Changeable Hawk-Eagle

Nisaetus cirrhatus

1 light face bird landed on an exposed tree branch, although this was at some distance up the slopes from Bali Barat. It had originally been spotted flying in

White-bellied Sea Eagle

Haliaeetus leucogaster

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds -c1 juv; Bedugul Golf Course 1 over



White-breasted Waterhen

Amaurornis phoenicurus

1 juvenile Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; 1 Bali Barat National Park; Bedugul - 2

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Bedugul - 2

Barred Buttonquail

Turnix suscitator

This was an excellent introduction to Bali Barat and a real surprise. Normally a secretive species, we chanced upon one briefly in the open on our first visit to the reserve. Even more surprising were two more, one flushed in the reserve, and the other crossing the track in front of us near to the first one when leaving the park later on

Beach Stone-curlew

Esacus magnirostris

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 2; Serangan Island - 4



Pied Stilt

Himantopus leucocephalus

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 50+

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

A winter plumaged bird was on the beach at the fish ponds near to Bali Barat



Javan Plover

Charadrius javanicus

This species is not only similar to Kentish Plover, but was at one time part of the same species before being split. The two are very hard to tell apart, but thankfully Kentish left by this time of year helping sort out the conundrum. They were only seen at the fish ponds near to Bali Barat, with 2 straight away on the salt pans, and another pair on the beach

Malaysian Plover

Charadrius peronei

This is much easier species to separate from Javan & Kentish Plovers, being much daintier, very pale, and with more rufous on the face and neck. We found a pair on the beach at the fish ponds near to Bali Barat



Swinhoe's Snipe

Gallinago megala

In a way, finding a snipe is often a curse here, since the 3 possibles - Pintail, Swinhoe's & Common, are difficult to tell apart. The 4 flushed birds at the lake near Bedugul had no white trailing wing edge, ruling out common, and the mountain habitat pointed to this species

Bar-tailed Godwit

Limosa lapponica

Serangan Island - 2

Eurasian Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 1; Serangan Island - 100+

Far Eastern Curlew

Numenius madagascariensis

Serangan Island - 1

Spotted Redshank

Tringa erythropus

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 1

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~8



Grey-tailed Tattler

Tringa brevipes

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 20+

Terek Sandpiper

Xenus cinereus

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 1

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

6 Gilimanuk; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 8; Nusa Dua lagoons 4

Ruddy Turnstone

Arenaria interpres

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~15

Red-necked Stint

Calidris ruficollis

The 9 or so birds at the fish ponds near to Bali Barat were all in non breeding plumage



Long-toed Stint

Calidris subminuta

Some time was taken to positively identify this bird which was on the small pool with other waders at the fish ponds near to Bali Barat

Gull-billed Tern

Gelochelidon nilotica

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds – 1; Nusa Dua lagoons - 1

Greater Crested Tern

Thalasseus bergii

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds – 2; Serangan Island - 40+

Little Tern

Sternula albifrons

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds 2



Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybrid

Bedugul 2

Sunda Collared Dove

Streptopelia bitorquata

2 Gilimanuk; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 1



Spotted Dove

Spilopelia chinensis

A common bird throughout, apart from in the mountains where it was scarce (Common Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park & Bali Barat National Park; Quite common Bali Barat National Park; Nusa Dua lagoons – 2)

Ruddy Cuckoo-Dove

Macropygia emiliana

After one was seen and called by Hery as this species on the first day in Bali Barat, 2 were seen for some time in the botanical gardens at Bedugul



Little Cuckoo-Dove

Macropygia ruficeps

Some time was taken over this bird. It was the first of 3 Cuckoo-Doves seen at the botanical gardens in Bedugul. Initially thought to be a Ruddy Cuckoo Dove, the cinnamon colour to the breast and demarcation between the rufous cap and plainer mantle were useful identification features



Zebra Dove

Geopelia striata

3 Gilimanuk

Pink-necked Green Pigeon

Treron vernans

1 female early morning Bali Barat; 2 Roadside Stop near Bali Barat National Park

Grey-cheeked Green Pigeon

Treron griseicauda

A lorry stop near to Bali Barat, with all the accompanying noise from drivers chatting and fixing engines, seemed an unlikely spot for this Indonesian speciality. However, at least 15 birds were either feeding, courting or preening around the fruiting trees. A pair were also seen at Batucan Temple, and 3-4 at Bedugul botanical garden



Male



Female

Black-naped Fruit Dove

Ptilinopus melanospilus

A superbly marked and dapper bird was seen towards early evening on the first visit to Bali Barat



Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon

Ducula lacernulata

One of many Indonesian endemics, this species is very similar to Green Imperial Pigeon found elsewhere, but with a dark brown back. Only two definite birds were seen, one perched at the top of a tree in Budungul botanical garden, the other in a bare tree in the distance at Batukaru Temple

Greater Coucal

Centropus sinensis

1 Bali Barat National Park

Sunda Brush Cuckoo

Cacomantis sepulcralis

This species tends to be generally quite secretive, but did respond to taped call on the first afternoon visit to Bali Barat. It did eventually perch briefly at the top of a tree after some flight views

Savanna Nightjar

Caprimulgus affinis

The small mangrove swamp at Gilimanuk seemed an unlikely spot for these roosting birds, but at least 15 were present. Usually quite approachable, they were jumpy today for some reason. We also found 2 separate birds at opposite ends of the mangroves at the fish ponds near to Bali Barat



Grey-rumped Treeswift

Hemiprocne longipennis

One bird was perched on a bare tree in Bali Barat with another in flight while driving from the same spot a little while later

Linchi Swiftlet

Collocalia linchi

These are a very common sight throughout the island, including in the mountains

Edible-nest Swiftlet

Aerodramus fuciphagus

At least 1 Bintang Balian

Fork-tailed Swift

Apus pacificus

~30 over Bintang Balian; 1 Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; 1 Bali Barat National Park

Javan Kingfisher

Halcyon cyanoventris

These are much larger than expected, and the speciality of the island. Most reliable place to spot one is probably by scanning the rice paddies along the coastal road from Balian westwards (1 Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park and 1 at restaurant at lunch Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; Bedugul - 1; 1 near Batukaru Temple



Collared Kingfisher

Todiramphus chloris

1 outside of Bintang Balian; 1,2 Bali Barat National Park; 1 Banded Pitta site; 1 at roadside stop Bali Barat National Park; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 4; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 1; Uluwatu Temple and cliffs - 2, Nusa Dua lagoons - 1; Serangan Island - 1

Sacred Kingfisher

Todiramphus sanctus

The one bird that we saw at the mangroves of Gilimanuk was more difficult to separate from Collared Kingfisher than we had expected. The underparts seemed more or less white as with Collared, but the only truly distinctive feature were the cinnamon lores. Some of the Collared Kingfishers we saw also had a hint of colour here so care needed to be taken with each bird



Cerulean Kingfisher

Alcedo coerulescens

These birds are very active and a pristine light turquoise blue. They were amongst the earliest birds seen in the channels of the fish ponds near Bali Barat, where they were also seen on the pools on the beach side. At Nusa Dua lagoon, at least 4 birds were present, constantly either feeding or chasing each other

Blue-eared Kingfisher

Alcedo meninting

Two birds were seen from a bridge over a large stream on the journey from Balian to Bali Barat. The male was only seen for a short time, and had the classic blue of the head and ear coverts of this species, although the all black bill might have been expected to also have red at the base. The female, who was seen a lot more closely, and for longer, presented a bit of a challenge. The ear coverts of female Blue-eared meninting on Bali should be all blue, but this bird had rufous with some blue, consistent with the Bali race of Common, *florianus*



Blue-eared Kingfisher



Female Common Kingfisher

Blue-tailed Bee-eater

Merops philippinus

Only one seen at Serangan Island

Chestnut-headed Bee-eater

Merops leschenaultia

4 Bali Barat National Park



Flame-fronted Barbet

Psilopogon armillaris

Bedugul Botanical Gardens – 3; Bedugul Golf Course 1

Yellow-eared Barbet

Psilopogon australis

Despite calling loudly and often being in a tree overhead, these birds proved very tricky to pin down due to the camouflaged green blending with the leaves. 2 birds eventually gave good views after some patient searching



Coppersmith Barbet

Psilopogon haemacephalus

The local form is strikingly different from the birds seen elsewhere at places of such as India, where there is a mix of red and yellow on the face. Bali birds have red face in black and red throat which is a striking combination (At least 2+2 Bali Barat National Park; 4 roadside stop Bali Barat National Park; Temple near to Gilimanuk – 5

Freckle-breasted Woodpecker

Dendrocopos analis

1 Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; at least 2 Bali Barat National Park; Temple near to Gilimanuk – 3



Common Flameback

Dinopium javanense

1 early morning Pura Luhur Srijong temple near Balian

Black-thighed Falconet

Microhierax fringillarius

1 perched then flew Bali Barat National Park

Yellow-throated Hanging Parrot *Loriculus pusillus*

These minute parrotlets are apparently hard to find perched, with one of the best places in Bali being the golf course at Bedugul, where we saw them. Even then, they have a habit of hugging the top branches, blending in with the surrounding similarly coloured leaves (Bedugul Golf Course 8, Bedugul 1 over)

Javan Banded Pitta *Hydrornis guajanus*

One of the most stunning birds seen on the trip, this species is in a high concentration in Bali Barat National Park. They still often need some work to see, but Hery knows of a hide that has been set up where they are fairly well guaranteed. A small amount of food is placed on a log in front of the hide (which I'm sure has also been "placed" there) and a couple of whistles brings the birds in – a pair when we were there



Male



Female

Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta*

This rather smart and vocal bird was attracted out of its preferred higher branches by tape, and performed well, trying its hardest to worry what was the speaker in the botanical gardens at Bedugul



Golden-bellied Gerygone *Gerygone sulphurea*

Banjuwedang Fish Ponds – 3; Nusa Dua lagoons 1

Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus hirundinaceus*

Pair Bali Barat National Park



White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

At least 5+3 over Bintang Balian; Couple in Bali Barat National Park; 1 Gilimanuk; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 4

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*

2 at Pura Luhur Srijong temple near Balian; 2+1+1 Bali Barat National Park



White-shouldered Triller

Lalage sueurii

In addition to the female White-shouldered Triller female we saw at the fish ponds, 3 pairs of Trillers at mangroves near Gilimanuk provoked a lot of discussion. The problem was the colour of the females, which lacked any brown, and the tertials on the males, which had a lot less white than would have been expected. However, female Pied Trillers should show some scalloping on the chest, and the supercilium of males perhaps even more pronounced, so these birds may all have been White-shouldered (3 pairs Gilimanuk; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 1 female; Serangan Island - 1)



Small Minivet

Pericrocotus cinnamomeus

Temple near to Gilimanuk - Pair

Scarlet Minivet

Pericrocotus speciosus

The form on Bali is orange in the male, as opposed to red in other localities (Pair Bali Starling breeding site, Bali Barat; Bedugul Golf Course - Pair)



Male



Female

Australian Golden Whistler

Pachycephala pectoralis

This was a bit of a nice surprise - a stunning little bird that eventually showed well at one of the small the shrines within the botanical gardens at Bedugul. The bright orange belly and white throat stood out against the darker shadows of the forest



↑



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Long-tailed Shrike

Lanius schach

1 at rice paddy Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; 1 Bali Barat National Park; 1 Gilimanuk; Serangan Island - 1

Black-naped Oriole

Oriolus chinensis

Bedugul Botanical Gardens - 2

Sunda Pied Fantail

Rhipidura javanica

1 in a town on the journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; 1 Bali Starling breeding site, Bali Barat; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 1; Serangan Island - 1



Black Drongo

Dicrurus macrocercus

1+1 Bali Barat National Park flying overhead

Ashy Drongo

Dicrurus leucophaeus

Temple near to Gilimanuk – 1; Bedugul Golf Course – 3; Bedugul Botanical gardens - 3

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus paradiseus

Bedugul Golf Course 1

Cinereous Tit

Parus cinereus

Bedugul Golf Course - 1

Sooty-headed Bulbul

Pycnonotus aurigaster

2 Bintang Balian; 1 Bali Barat National Park; 5 Gilimanuk; Serangan Island - 1



Yellow-vented Bulbul

Pycnonotus goiavier

Abundant in most localities apart from in the mountains

Brown-cheeked Bulbul

Alophoixus bres

Batukaru Temple - 2



Pacific Swallow

Hirundo tahitica

2 Bintang Balian; Batukaru Temple – 12; Quite common Nusa Dua lagoons

Eastern Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica

2 Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park

Mountain Leaf Warbler

Phylloscopus trivirgatus

Bedugul Golf Course - 1

Sunda Warbler

Seicercus grammiceps

Bedugul Botanical Gardens - 2

Striated Grassbird

Megalurus palustris

Lake at Bedugul - 3



Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

2 at lunch stop Denpasar; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds - 3

Bar-winged Prinia

Prinia familiaris

1 Menangan Hotel, Bali Barat

Olive-backed (Javan) Tailorbird

Orthotomus sepium

1 at Pura Luhur Srijong temple near Balian; 2 Menangan Hotel, Bali Barat

Javan Heleia

Heleia javanica

There was some confusion over the naming of this species since Hery stuck by the James Eaton classification, which named it as Heleia, but we worked out it was actually sometimes known as Mees's White-eye (a misnomer since the eye is actually dark!) – (Bedugul Botanical Gardens - 6+; Bedugul Golf Course ~10; Batukaru Temple - 2)

Warbling White-eye

Zosterops japonicus

Bedugul Golf Course ~6

Asian Glossy Starling

Aplonis panayensis

Pair Bali Barat National Park

Short-tailed Starling

Aplonis minor

Another tricky species. They can be easily confused with Asian Glossy Starling, especially in the wet as when we saw the first group in the botanical gardens at Bedugul, masking the different coloured glossy head of the two species. We resorted to tail length proportions to help sort out the identification (Bedugul ~25, ~60, ~10; Bedugul Golf Course ~15)



Javan Myna

Acridotheres javanicus

Occasional overhead in small groups Bintang Balian; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 1; Uluwatu Temple and cliffs - 2

Black-winged Starling

Acridotheres melanopterus

One of the two must see starlings of Bali Barat, we managed to see two separate individuals in one morning. The first was one of the first birds of the day. Both were perched at the tops of trees



Bali Starling

Leucopsar rothschildi

At one time, there were only 3 surviving wild birds, but careful management and releasing captive bred birds has put numbers well into three figures. For purists, the best birds to see are those without rings, as our first in the forest was. It is much easier to spot the birds around the release site just outside of Bali Barat, where a number of birds are unshackled (5 Bali Barat National Park; at least 10 Bali Starling breeding site, Bali Barat)

Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher *Cyornis olivaceus*

The first of our two birds was an irregular visitor to the food stump at the Banded Pitta site in Bali Barat. The second was singing for a short while in the trees at Butukari Temple



White-crowned Forktail

Enicurus leschenaultia

These birds are normally easy to see around the channels of the small lake at Batukaru Temple, but the place was teeming festive worshippers when we arrived. We were in luck, due to 3 birds - 2 males and a female - overcoming the commotion to show well around the lake



Javan Whistling Thrush

Myophonus glaucinus

These birds can be seen regularly at the botanical gardens in Bedugul, but sometimes need a bit of work. We set up a tape which one of the birds responded to with song, although both time also only gave flight views

Snowy-browed Flycatcher

Ficedula hyperythra

Bedugul Botanical Gardens - 1

Little Pied Flycatcher

Ficedula westermanni

Bedugul Botanical Gardens - 1

Pied Bush Chat

Saxicola caprata

1 on journey from Batukaru Temple to Denpasar

Plain Flowerpecker

Dicaeum minullum

At least 2 Bintang Balian

Javan Flowerpecker

Dicaeum sanguinolentum

Bedugul Botanical Gardens – pair; Bedugul Golf Course - Pair



Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker

Dicaeum trochileum

Pair with nest containing 2 chicks at Menangan Hotel, Bali Barat; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 2; Nusa Dua lagoons - 4+ males, 2+ females



Male



Female

Brown-throated Sunbird

Anthreptes malacensis

1 male Bintang Balian; 1 Pura Luhur Srijong temple near Balian; Nusa Dua lagoons - pair

Ornate Sunbird

Cinnyris ornatus

1 at Bat site near Denpasar; Pair Bintang Balian; 2 pairs Daytime Snake Hunt; Pair temple Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 2; Batukaru Temple Pair



Eurasian Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

Common Bintang Balian; Quite common Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park and Bali Barat National Park

Streaked Weaver

Ploceus manyar

Small colony in a town Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park



Javan Munia

Lonchura leucogastroides

1 temple Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; 1 weaver site on journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park; 4 at Harris Hotel, Denpasar

Scaly-breasted Munia

Lonchura punctulata

Quite common Denpasar and Bintang Balian; Small flock lunch Daytime Snake Hunt; Common Journey from Balian to Bali Barat National Park and Bali Barat National Park; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~30



White-headed Munia

Lonchura maja

3 Bintang Balian; 1 Daytime Snake Hunt; 1 Bali Barat National Park; Banjuwedang Fish Ponds ~6

Java Sparrow

Lonchura oryzivora

This bird is now very scarce across its range, and even then can be hard to locate. July is probably one of the best times to see them, but we managed at one of the favoured locations for our time of year, Pura Luhur Srijong temple near Balian, where we saw 4 birds with difficulty. They tended to fly into one of the tall trees, blending in with the canopy



TOTAL SPECIES = 122

MAMMALS

Horsfield's (Javan) Treeshrew

Tupaia javanica

Bedugul Botanical Garden - 1

Lesser Dawn Bat

Eonycteris spelaeon

Colony Pura Luhur Srijong temple cave near Balian



Crab-eating Macaque

Macaca fascicularis

These were common throughout the Bali Barat area, both in the forest as well along main roads. They were a bit of a nuisance at Uluwatu Temple, where they often try to steal from and threaten the visitors

Javan Lutung (East Javan Langur)

Trachypithecus auratus

Of the two monkeys on the island, this is the more difficult to see. It is only seen in the Bali Barat area, where the adults are black and the youngsters creamy buff. We tried to track down one of the groups in the forest, and were partially successful in finding them, but having poor views. A much better time was had in a small temple pull off near to Gilimanuk. A group appeared at the top of viewable trees only a short way from us, and were out in the open for much of the time (Bali Barat National Park ~15; Temple near to Gilimanuk - 12)



Black Giant Squirrel

Ratufa bicolor

1 Bali Barat National Park

Plantain Squirrel

Callosciurus notatus

Bali Barat National Park - 3



Javan Rusa Deer

Rusa timorensis renschi

4 Bali Barat National Park; Bedugul ~10

SNAKES

Reticulated Python

Malayopython reticulatus

One found in a dead log on the daytime snake hunt



Dog-toothed Cat Snake

Boiga cynodon

A pair were high up on palm fronds during the night time snake hunt

Oriental Ratsnake

Ptyas mucosa

2 separate individuals were found during the night time snake hunt



Painted Bronzeback

Dendralaphis pictus

This was far and away the most common species seen during the night time snake hunt, with around 20 seen. They tended to be in trees above the small flowing streams along the sides of the track

Indonesian Cobra

Naja sputatrix

Also known as Spitting Cobra, this individual was curled up inside a wood pile during the daytime snake hunt. It seemed to be starting to shed its skin and was quite docile, not showing a sign of spitting, or even of any aggression at all



King Cobra

Ophiophagus hannah

One of the big prizes during the snake hints, this was seen on the daytime one. While a relatively small specimen at around 3 metres, it was still impressive, with audible growling as we watched it weigh us up

Lesser Sunda White-lipped Pit Viper *Trimeresurus albolabris insularis*

A stunning snake, 2 separate individuals were found curled up in branches over a river on the night time snake hunt

