



BIRDING TOUR NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI, AND SAMOA

8 - 26 SEPTEMBER 2020



Kagu is one of the key species we search for on this trip

Our Birding Tour New Caledonia, Fiji, and Samoa starts in Nouméa, New Caledonia, and concludes in Apia, Samoa. The tour duration is 19 days. Please note that the tour dates are merely indicative because the local flight schedules are only released at quite a late stage, and this often changes the itinerary a little.

Tour Summary

New Caledonia (6 days)

New Caledonia is an ancient archipelago of Gondwanan origin. Most of the islands are covered in tropical evergreen forest in the higher elevations, while savanna and maquis dominate the lower elevations. Most famous for being the home of the unique **Kagu**, they host a total of 20 island endemics as well as about a dozen additional Melanesian endemics. The strict island endemics include **White-bellied Goshawk, Kagu, Cloven-feathered Dove, Goliath Imperial Pigeon, Horned Parakeet, New Caledonian Parakeet, New Caledonian Myzomela, Barred Honeyeater, Crow Honeyeater, New Caledonian Friarbird, New Caledonian Whistler, New Caledonian Crow, Yellow-bellied Flyrobin, New Caledonian Thicketbird, Large Lifou White-eye, Small Lifou White-eye, Green-backed White-eye, Striated Starling, and Red-throated Parrotfinch.**

We will spend time in the following areas: Parc provincial de la Rivière Bleue, Mont Koghi, and the Farino area. The main targets will be the endemic birds found on Grande Terre (the main, largest island). The prime target will be finding and photographing the star bird of New Caledonia, the endemic and charismatic **Kagu**. Most other endemics found on Grande Terre should also be encountered during the time we have in New Caledonia.

Fiji (10 days)

Fiji is an archipelago of beautiful tropical islands, scattered across the southwestern Pacific, with numerous endemics. There is high diversity of pigeons and doves, especially fruit doves, monarch flycatchers, and parrots. By visiting three islands (Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, and Kadavu) we can observe up to 24 of the 28 extant endemics available in the islands, along with numerous Polynesian regional endemics. The Fijian endemics include **Fiji Goshawk, Orange Fruit Dove, Golden Fruit Dove, Whistling Fruit Dove, Barking Imperial Pigeon, Crimson Shining Parrot, Maroon Shining Parrot, Masked Shining Parrot, Collared Lory, Fiji Wattled Honeyeater, Kikau, Yellow-billed Honeyeater, Giant Honeyeater, Kadavu Honeyeater, Fiji Woodswallow, Natewa Silktail, Kadavu Fantail, Slaty Monarch, Azure-crested Flycatcher, Fiji Bush Warbler, Long-legged Thicketbird, Fiji White-eye, Fiji Parrotfinch, and Pink-billed Parrotfinch.**

Samoa (3 days)

Samoa (formerly Western Samoa) is a nation of laid-back, tropical islands to the east of Fiji, with its own smattering of endemics and specialties, which include **Flat-billed Kingfisher, Mao, Samoan Triller, Samoan Whistler, Samoan Fantail, Samoan Flycatcher, Samoan Starling, and Red-headed Parrotfinch.** The near-endemic **Blue-crowned Lorikeet**, of a genus endemic to Polynesia, also occurs here. We will spend our time on the island of Upolu, focusing on these birds.

Itinerary (19 days/18 nights)

Day 1. Birding Parc provincial de la Rivière Bleue

Our tour will start in Nouméa, New Caledonia, at 8:00 a.m. We will spend a full day birding at Parc provincial de la Rivière Bleue, located in the southern part of the island of Grand Terre, in search of endemic birds, including New Caledonia's star endemic, the flightless and extremely rare **Kagu**. Other birds we will search for include **New Caledonian Parakeet**, **New Caledonian Myzomela**, **Barred Honeyeater**, **New Caledonian Friarbird**, **Green-backed White-eye**, **Fan-tailed Gerygone**, **Metallic Pigeon**, **Goliath Imperial Pigeon**, **Sacred Kingfisher**, **South Melanesian Cuckooshrike**, **Crow Honeyeater**, **New Caledonian Cuckooshrike**, **Horned Parakeet**, **Southern Shrikebill**, **Yellow-bellied Flyrobin**, **Red-throated Parrotfinch**, **White-bellied Goshawk**, **Cloven-feathered Dove**, and **New Caledonian Crow**.

Overnight: Nouméa

Day 2. Birding Mont Koghi

Today we will have a full day birding Mont Koghi and the surrounding area for a range of endemic birds, including **New Caledonian Thicketbird** and **White-bellied Goshawk**.

Overnight: Nouméa

Days 3 – 4. Birding Parc provincial de la Rivière Bleue

We will have two more full days birding the Parc provincial de la Rivière Bleue area, focusing on getting good views and photographs of **Kagu** and the other endemic birds found in this beautiful reserve, including many of those species already mentioned for day 1 above.

Overnight: Nouméa

Day 5. Birding the Farino area

We will spend the day birding the Farino area. Our main targets here include **New Caledonian Thicketbird**, **Cloven-feathered Dove**, **New Caledonian Crow**, and **Horned Parakeet**, among many others such as **New Caledonian Whistler** and **Striated Starling**.

Overnight: Sarraméa

Day 6. Birding the Farino area, flight to Viti Levu, Fiji

In the early morning we will still be birding the Farino area, looking for any endemics that might still be missing. Then we will travel back to Nouméa before flying from there to Nadi International Airport on Viti Levu, Fiji, and from there to Suva, the capital of Fiji, also on Viti Levu.

Overnight: Suva

Days 7 – 8. Birding the Suva area

Two full days will allow us to thoroughly explore the Suva area, where we will look for Fijian specialties such as **Fiji** and **Pink-billed Parrotfinches**, **Barking Imperial Pigeon**, **Collared Lory**, **Sulphur-breasted Myzomela**, **Polynesian Wattled Honeyeater**, **Giant Honeyeater**, **Black-throated Shrikebill**, **Vanikoro Flycatcher**, **Fiji Bush Warbler**, **Fiji White-eye**, **Fiji Goshawk**, **Golden Fruit Dove**, **Polynesian Triller**, **Slaty Monarch**, **Pacific Robin**, **Polynesian**

Starling, Long-legged Thicketbird, Metallic Pigeon, Island Thrush, Masked Shining Parrot, Azure-crested Flycatcher, and Fiji Whistler.

Overnight: Suva

Day 9. Flight to and birding Vanua Levu

In the morning we'll fly from Suva to Savusavu on Vanua Levu, Fiji. In the afternoon we'll be birding around the Daku Resort area.

Overnight: Daku Resort

Days 10 – 11. Birding Vanua Levu

For two days we will be birding around Vanua Levu at the Silktail stakeout and around the Daku Resort area. We will spend time looking for more of the Fijian specialties listed above, but we'll also search for the little-known, endemic **Natewa Silktail**, along with **Orange Fruit Dove**, **Maroon Shining Parrot**, **Fiji Shrikebill**, and **Island Thrush** (different subspecies from those on other islands we've visited so far).

Overnight: Daku Resort

Day 12. Birding Vanua Levu

Today we will be birding around the small towns of Oneva and Naqere before our late-afternoon flight from Savusavu back to Suva. This is a day spent looking for some more Fijian endemics, but we also will have a chance for a few waterbirds.

Overnight: Suva

Day 13. Flight to Kadavu, transfer to our lodge

We'll take a morning flight from Suva to Kadavu, followed by transfer to our accommodations. We will take a boat to our secluded lodge, where we will spend three nights.

Overnight: Papageno Resort

Days 14 – 15. Birding Kadavu

For two days we will be birding around Kadavu island from our resort. We will spend a couple of days in a peaceful paradise, seeking out more Fijian specialties, some of which are only found on Kadavu. We'll search for **Kadavu Honeyeater**, **Kadavu Fantail**, **Whistling Fruit Dove**, **Many-colored Fruit Dove**, **Polynesian Starling**, **Collard Lory**, **Crimson Shining Parrot**, **Fiji Whistler**, **Fiji Goshawk**, and **Fiji Shrikebill**.

Overnight: Papageno Resort

Day 16. Birding Kadavu, flight to Nadi

We'll have a final morning birding on Kadavu before transferring, first by boat and then by plane, to Nadi.

Overnight: Nadi

Day 17. Flight to Samoa, afternoon birding the Apia area

We will take an early morning flight from Nadi International Airport, Fiji, to Apia, the capital of Samoa on the island of Upolu. Here we will have an afternoon of birding near Apia, targeting **Flat-billed Kingfisher**, **Samoa Starling**, **Samoa Whistler**, and **Samoa Fantail**. Our eyes will also look to the skies for **White-tailed Tropicbird**, **Brown Noddy**, and **White Tern**.

Overnight: Apia

Day 18. Birding on Upolu

All day we'll be birding for lowland and highland endemics on Upolu. We'll spend the whole day, and most of the next one, searching for birds such as **Crimson-crowned Fruit Dove**, **Cardinal Myzomela**, **Polynesian Wattled Honeyeater**, **Buff-banded Rail**, **Blue-crowned Lorikeet**, **Mao** (a friarbird-like honeyeater), **Red-headed Parrotfinch**, **Pacific Imperial Pigeon**, **Metallic Pigeon**, **Many-colored Fruit Dove**, **Samoa Triller**, and **Samoa Flycatcher**, and we look for (or dream of) the mythical **Tooth-billed Pigeon**.

Overnight: Apia

Day 19. Birding on Upolu

This is the final day of the tour. We will be birding all day on Upolu, chasing many of the birds listed above as well as any others we may still want to have a final look at.

Overnight: Apia (not included in tour price) or international flight

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.

Duration:	19 days
Limit:	4 - 8
Date:	8 - 26 September 2020
Start:	Nouméa, New Caledonia
End:	Apia, Samoa
Price:	6-8 participants – US\$8,524 per person sharing 4-5 participants – US\$9,853 per person sharing
Single Supplement:	US\$3,176

Price includes:

Expert professional guiding fees

Meals

Accommodation (except on the night before the tour starts in Nouméa, New Caledonia, and on the night the tour concludes in Apia, Samoa)

Entrance fees

All land-based and boat-based transport while on tour

Tolls

Price excludes:

International flights to Nouméa, New Caledonia, for the start of the tour

International flights from Apia, Samoa, at the end of the tour

Seven flights during the tour (Nouméa to Nadi, Nadi to Suva, Suva to Savusavu, Savusavu to Suva, Suva to Kadavu, Kadavu to Nadi, Nadi to Apia) – allow between US\$1,700-US\$2,000 per

person

Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts

Alcoholic drinks

Personal insurance

Gratuities