



**INDONESIA: THE LESSER SUNDA ISLANDS –
COMPREHENSIVE TOUR**

**ENDEMICS AND SPECIALS OF SUMBA, WEST TIMOR, ALOR, ROTE,
FLORES, AND KOMODO ISLANDS**

20 JUNE – 10 JULY 2023



Ornate Pitta, one of many exciting targets on this multi-island tour.

This small-group birding tour visits six endemic-filled islands in the Lesser Sunda region of Indonesia. The tour starts and ends in Denpasar, Bali which provides an international gateway into the country before our tour will get underway, as we bird our way around the islands of Sumba, Rote, West Timor, Alor, Flores, and Komodo on what is sure to be a fascinating adventure around this rarely visited region.

Our tour will focus on finding the island endemic birds, regional endemic birds, and many localized specials on offer here such as **Sumba Hornbill**, **Sumba Buttonquail**, **Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher**, **Little Sumba Hawk-Owl**, **Sumba Boobook**, **Rote Boobook**, **Rote Myzomela**, “Mt Mutis Parrotfinch” (a currently undescribed species), **Black-breasted (Timor) Myzomela**, **Timor Imperial Pigeon**, **Timor Friarbird**, **Timor Sparrow**, **Orange-sided Thrush**, **Black-banded Flycatcher**, **Alor Myzomela**, **Alor Boobook**, **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Flores Scops Owl**, **Wallace’s Scops Owl**, **Chestnut-capped Thrush**, **Chestnut-backed Thrush**, **Flores Crow**, **Flores Monarch**, **Elegant Pitta**, **Ornate Pitta** (split in 2021 from **Elegant Pitta**), **Glittering Kingfisher**, **Yellow-crested Cockatoo** (yellow-crested and citron-crested subspecies, considered separate species by some), **Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker**, and many more, including an exciting range of parrots, fruit doves, sunbirds, and raptors. **Komodo Dragons** are likely to be a non-avian highlight when we step into a Jurassic world on the island they share their name with.



Sumba Myzomela is one of several range-restricted myzomelas (tiny honeyeaters) that we can enjoy on the tour (photo Yovie Jehabut)

This tour can be combined with another of our Indonesian tours – **Sulawesi and Halmahera: Spectacular Endemic Birding**, during which we target a huge list of species, such as (Wallace’s) **Standardwing** and (Halmahera) **Paradise-crow** – both birds-of-paradise, along with

Ivory-breasted Pitta, Sulawesi Pitta, North Moluccan Pitta, Maleo, Hylocitrea (a monotypic family), **Green-backed Kingfisher, Blue-and-white Kingfisher, Sombre Kingfisher, Lilac Kingfisher, Geomalia, Malia, Purple-bearded Bee-eater, and Moluccan Owlet-nightjar** to name just a few, follow the link above to see the very exciting detailed itinerary.

Itinerary (21 days/20 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Denpasar (Bali)

A non-birding day. You will be met at Ngurah Ria International Airport, Denpasar (Bali), after your arrival in Indonesia and will be transferred to our nearby hotel, for the rest of the day at your leisure. We will meet for a group welcome dinner together in the evening.

If you would like to fit in a pre-tour extension looking for the likes of **Bali Myna, Javan Kingfisher, Javan Banded Pitta, Black-winged Starling, Cave Swiftlet, Green Junglefowl, Javan Plover, Java Sparrow, and Javan Owlet** please let us know and we would be delighted to arrange something for you.

Overnight: Denpasar, Bali

Day 2. Denpasar (Bali) to Waingapu (Sumba)

We will depart Denpasar in the morning and fly to Umu Mehang Kunda Airport in Waingapu, eastern Sumba where we will meet our excellent local guide who will remain with us for the duration of our time in the Lesser Sundas. We will transfer the short distance to our comfortable hotel with picturesque views and enjoy our lunch.

In the afternoon we will go birding near the Kambaniru River and the Yambu grasslands, here we will target our first of many high-quality birds such as the tough **Sumba Buttonquail**, along with **Oriental Dwarf (Rufous-backed) Kingfisher, Blood-breasted (Sumba) Flowerpecker, Thick-billed (Sunda) Flowerpecker, Apricot-breasted Sunbird, Five-colored Munia**, and plenty more.

Overnight: Waingapu, Sumba

Day 3. Waingapu to Tabundung (Sumba)

We will drive across to Tabundung district making some birding stops along the way throughout the morning. After lunch in Tabundung we will visit Billa Forest in Matalawa National Park where some exciting target birds will be possible, such as **Sumba Hornbill, Sumba Green Pigeon, Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher, Yellow-crested (Citron-crested) Cockatoo, Sumba Brown Flycatcher**, and plenty more.

We will have dinner in the national park office and then have a post-dinner owling session where we will target the endemic pair of **Little Sumba Hawk-Owl** and **Sumba Boobook**.

Overnight: Matalawa National Park, Sumba



*Little Sumba Hawk-Owl is one of two endemic Ninox owls we will be looking for in Billa Forest.
(photo Yovie Jehabut)*



*A medium-sized hornbill at 22 inches (55 centimeters), the endemic and uncommon **Sumba Hornbill** will be a major target during our time in the forests of Sumba. (photo Yovie Jehabut)*

Day 4. Billa to Waingapu (Sumba)

Depending on how the previous evening's owling session went we may or may not need an early start this morning to try see (or improve views of) either **Little Sumba Hawk-Owl** or **Sumba Boobook**.

We will intend to go to a different section of Billa Forest in the morning where we will search for more endemics and specials, such as **Sumba Myzomela**, **Blyth's (Nusa Tenggara) Paradise Flycatcher**, **Sumba Flycatcher**, **Rusty-breasted Whistler**, **Marigold Lorikeet**, **Eclectus Parrot**, **Red-naped Fruit Dove**, and others such as **Elegant Pitta**, **Chestnut-backed Thrush**, and **Russet-backed Jungle Flycatcher**.

After lunch we will drive back to Waingapu, making some roadside stops along the way for anything interesting we may spot.

Overnight: Waingapu, Sumba

Day 5. Praingkareha (Sumba)

The main focus of today will be finding the **Sumba Buttonquail**. This is one of the rarest and the toughest endemics on the island, so we will need to put in some effort to locate it. Other possibilities that are usually present in the buttonquail area include **Sumba Flycatcher**, **Great-billed Parrot**, **Red-cheeked Parrot**, **Spotted Kestrel**, **Indonesian Honeyeater**, **Zitting Cisticola**, **Striated Swallow**, **Five-colored Munia**, and **Pale-headed Munia**.

Overnight: Waingapu, Sumba

Day 6. Waingapu (Sumba) to Kupang (Timor) to Bolatena and Nembrala (Rote)

We will firstly take a morning flight from Waingapu, Sumba to Kupang, Timor before completing our journey with a short flight to Bandar Udara D. C. Saudale, Rote. Once we have cleared the airport, we will head straight to Bolatena in the north of this small island, where we will commence our birding with a search for **Rote Boobook**. We could bump into a range of interesting birds while looking for the owl, several of these are outlined below.

Overnight: Nembrala, Rote

Day 7. Rote Birding

We will have the full day on Rote. We will spend the morning birding back at Bolatena with the afternoon spent undertaking some more relaxed birding around our accommodation. At Bolatena we will again look for **Rote Boobook**, but we will also be looking out for other Rote endemics and specials in the afternoon and following morning, such as **Rote Myzomela**, **Rote Leaf Warbler**, **Timor Green Pigeon**, **Banded (Black-backed) Fruit Dove**, **Pink-headed Imperial Pigeon**, **Jonquil Parrot**, **Northern (Rote) Fantail**, **Black (Slaty) Cuckoo-Dove**, **Olive-brown (Timor) Oriole**, **Helmeted Friarbird**, **Orange-sided Thrush**, **Timor Blue Flycatcher**, **White-bellied (Timor) Bush Chat**, **Flame-breasted Sunbird**, and **Timor Stubtail**.

Overnight: Nembrala, Rote



Flame-breasted Sunbird is one gorgeous sunbird and we are sure to get plenty of good views of this striking species.

Day 8. Rote to Kupang (Timor) to Soé (Timor)

We will take a morning flight from Rote back to Kupang from where we will drive to Soé. The plan will be to stop and look for birds along the road at Fatuleu with targets including **Black-banded Flycatcher** and **Timor Blue Flycatcher**. Here we may also find **Timor Friarbird**, **Rose-crowned Fruit Dove**, **Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher**, and **Orange-sided Thrush**. In the afternoon we will visit Oehala waterfall which can sometimes produce **Black-breasted** (Timor) **Myzomela**, **Fawn-breasted Whistler**, and **Northern** (Timor) **Fantail**.

Overnight: Soé, Timor

Day 9. Gunung Mutis (Timor)

We will spend the full day birding Gunung Mutis home to some little-known and exciting birds, such as the currently undescribed “Mt Mutis Parrotfinch”, which we will hope to see. While here we will be looking for many target species, such as **Timor Imperial Pigeon**, **Black-breasted** (Timor) **Myzomela**, **Plain** (Timor) **Gerygone**, **Timor Leaf Warbler**, **Timor Blue Flycatcher**, **Blood-breasted** (Timor) **Flowerpecker**, **Banded** (Black-backed) **Fruit Dove**, **Chestnut-backed Thrush**, **Island Thrush**, **Pygmy Cupwing** (Wren-babbler), **Lesser Shortwing**, and **Sunda Thrush**.

Overnight: Soé, Timor

Day 10. Soé to Camplong to Bipolo to Kupang (Timor)

A morning visit to Camplong Nature Reserve is likely to offer some great birds, highlights here could include **Timor Friarbird**, **Orange-sided Thrush**, **Black-banded Flycatcher**, **Iris Lorikeet**, **Timor Blue Flycatcher**, **Rose-crowned Fruit Dove**, **Pacific Emerald Dove**, **Elegant Pitta**, **Streak-breasted Honeyeater**, **Indonesian Honeyeater**, **Flame-eared Honeyeater**, **Scaly-crowned (Sunda) Honeyeater**, **Arafura Fantail**, **Northern Fantail**, **Island Monarch**, **Ashy-bellied White-eye**, **Orange-sided Thrush**, **Blue-cheeked Flowerpecker**, **Buff-banded Thicketbird**, **Timor Stubtail**, **Thick-billed (Sunda) Flowerpecker**, **Spot-breasted Heleia (Timor White-eye)**, and **Timor Cuckoo-Dove**.

Our afternoon birding session will take in the well-known Bipolo Forest where we shall again seek out many of the species mentioned above. After our birding we will return to Kupang.

Overnight: Kupang, Timor



***Black-banded Flycatcher**, striking even by Ficedula standards and endemic to Timor. (photo Yovie Jehabut)*

Day 11. Kupang (Timor) to Alor (Alor)

We will make the most of a rare lie in before we take our late-morning flight to the small island of Alor. On clearing the airport we will make a stop at the Takpala traditional village to enjoy some hospitality and dancing prior to visiting the Hutan Nostalgia Nature Reserve for some birding. Here we hope to find **Olive-headed Lorikeet**, **Timor Cuckoo-Dove**, **Little (Eucalypt) Cuckoo-Dove**, and **Spotted Kestrel**. If time permits, we may make our first attempt to find **Alor Boobook** in the evening.

Overnight: Alor

Day 12. Alor Birding (Alor)

We will spend the full day birding at a range of sites around Alor where we will seek out **Alor Myzomela**, **Wallacean (Alor) Cuckooshrike**, **Flores Green Pigeon**, **Sunda Bush Warbler**, **Javan Bush Warbler**, **Lesser Shortwing**, **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Short-toed Snake Eagle**, **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Timor Stubtail**, **Thick-billed (Sunda) Flowerpecker**, **Blood-breasted (Timor) Flowerpecker**, **Common Hill Myna**, **Chestnut-backed Thrush**, and plenty more. In the evening we will search for **Alor Boobook**, **Eastern Barn Owl**, and **Mees's Nightjar**.

Overnight: Alor

Day 13. Alor to Kupang (Timor)

We will take a morning flight from Alor back to Kupang, Timor and will check into our hotel. Once the heat of the day has passed we will spend the late afternoon visiting some mangroves and farmland near the city where we will look for **Timor Sparrow**, **Zebra (Timor) Finch**, **Timor Friarbird**, and **Black Kite**, we may also find some resident, over-summering Palearctic, or over-wintering Australasian shorebirds.

Overnight: Kupang, Timor



Black-naped Oriole is currently a widespread species, however recent scientific studies are showing that several (maybe as many as six) species may in fact be involved in the complex. Those birds present in Flores could be split and become 'Nusa Tenggara Golden Oriole'.

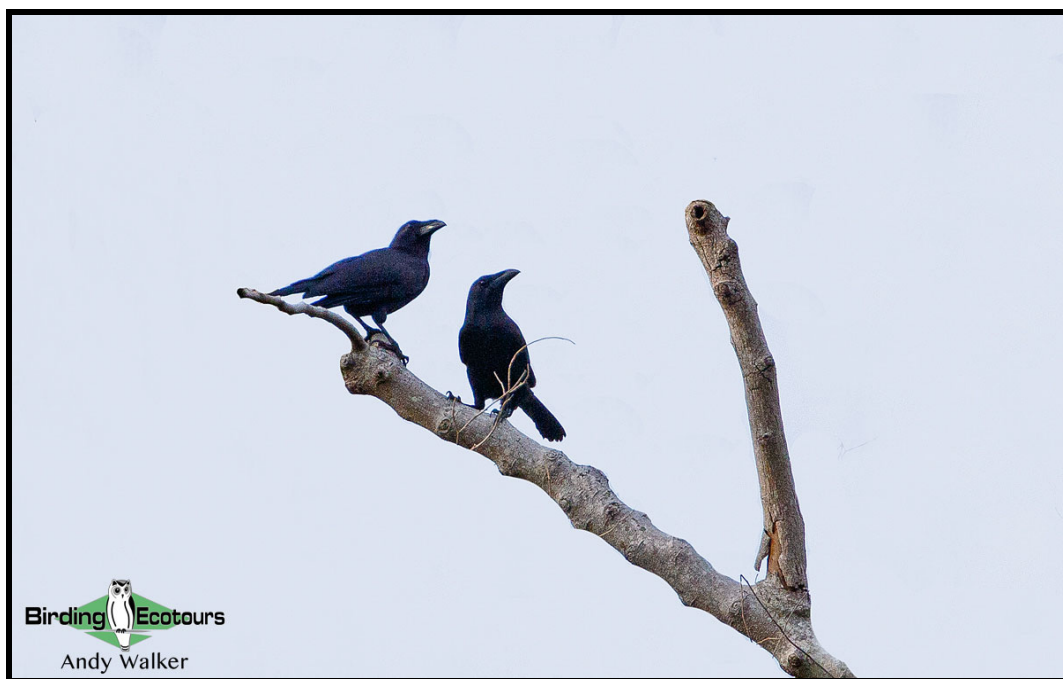
Day 14. Kupang (Timor) to Bajawa (Flores)

Leaving Timor for the final time we will take the short flight to Flores (Bajawa Airport) in Soá. If time permits, we will call into the nearby hot springs before having lunch in Bajawa. After lunch we will stop to visit Bena traditional village and we will follow this up with some birding around Inerie Volcano. Here our targets will include **Flores Green Pigeon**, **Black-naped** (Nusa Tenggara Golden) **Oriole**, **Scaly-crowned Honeyeater**, **Leaf** (Flores) **Lorikeet**, and **Chestnut-backed Thrush**.

Overnight: Bajawa, Flores

Day 15. Bajawa to Kisol to Ruteng (Flores)

An early start will see us heading to the famous site of Poco Ndeki (Kisol). The remnant lowland forest here holds the majority of the lowland endemics found on Flores. Our main targets here will include **Flores Green Pigeon** and **Flores Crow** but many other endemics and specials occur and could include **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Wallace's Scops Owl**, **Glittering Kingfisher**, **Chestnut-capped Thrush**, **Ornate Pitta**, **Yellow-ringed White-eye** (Wallace's Heleia), **Crested White-eye** (Heleia), **Thick-billed Heleia**, **Leaf** (Flores) **Lorikeet**, **Great-billed Parrot**, and **Russet-capped Tesia**.



*We will look for the shy and uncommon forest-dwelling **Flores Crow** while birding on the island.*

In the afternoon we will drive to Ruteng where in the evening we will take a night walk looking for the rare **Flores Scops Owl**.

Overnight: Ruteng, Flores



*We will hope for great views of the endemic **Flores Scops Owl**, a rare resident of montane forest.
(photo Yovie Jehabut)*

Day 16. Ruteng Nature Reserve and Golo Lusang (Flores)

We may make an early start (depending on the previous evening's owling session) and will look for **Flores Scops Owl** again, if needed, along with other targets such as **Wallace's Scops Owl**, **Bare-throated Whistler** (the song of this one will blow your mind!), **Russet-backed** (Flores) **Jungle Flycatcher**, **Crested White-eye** (Heleia), **Little** (Flores) **Minivet**, **Golden-rumped Flowerpecker**, **Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon**, **Pale-shouldered Cicadabird**, **Cream-browed White-eye** (Heleia), and **Chestnut-backed Thrush**.

After a lunch break, we will visit the forest at nearby Golo Lusang, here we will look for **Timor** (Flores) **Leaf Warbler**, **Cream-browed White-eye** (Heleia), **Wallace's Hanging Parrot**, **White-browed** (Flores) **Shortwing**, **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Bare-throated Whistler**, and **Leaf** (Flores) **Lorikeet**.

We will have time for some more owling in the evening if needed, maybe focusing on finding **Wallace's Scops Owl**.

Overnight: Ruteng, Flores

Day 17. Ruteng to Puarlolo (Flores)

We will leave Ruteng to the west and will reach Puarlolo where a trail through some secondary hill forest will present us with a great opportunity to find the rare, range-restricted endemic **Flores Monarch**. Here we can find plenty of other exciting species too, such as the gorgeous **Chestnut-capped Thrush**, **Flores Crow**, **Wallace's Hanging Parrot**, **Green Junglefowl**,

Black-naped Fruit Dove, Glittering Kingfisher, Red-cheeked Parrot, Ornate Pitta, Helmeted Friarbird, Rusty-breasted Whistler, Blyth's (Nusa Tenggara) Paradise Flycatcher, Russet-capped Tesia, Chestnut-backed Thrush, Rufous-chested Flycatcher, Golden-rumped Flowerpecker, and Thick-billed (Tenggara) Flowerpecker.



*We can find several cryptic *Geokichla* thrushes on this tour – this is **Chestnut-capped Thrush**.*

We will continue to Ndengo village for lunch and in the afternoon we will visit Cunca Rami waterfall. We will spend the late-afternoon birding around the grounds of our comfortable ecolodge where we could see **Wallacean Drongo, Ruddy (Parzudaki's) Cuckoo-Dove, Collared Kingfisher, Glittering Kingfisher, Tenggara Swiftlet, Oriental Dollarbird, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Black-naped Monarch, Blyth's (Nusa Tenggara) Paradise Flycatcher, and Black-fronted Flowerpecker.**

Overnight: Mbeliling, Flores

Day 18. Puarlolo to Labuan Bajo (Flores) to Komodo Island (Komodo)

We will spend the morning back at Puarlolo in the forest looking for some of the species mentioned above. Once we check out from our accommodation, we will wind our way down and off the mountain, to the town of Labuan Bajo. Here, we will go directly to the pier to meet our air-conditioned cabin boat to take us to Komodo National Park (maybe seeing **Lesser Frigatebird, Black-naped Tern, Beach Stone-curlew, or Great-billed Heron** along the way). In the afternoon we will stop at Pink Beach for some swimming and snorkeling. We will spend the night on the boat, near the pier of Komodo Island, ready for the following morning.

Overnight: Cabin boat, Komodo

Day 19. Komodo Island (Komodo) to Labuan Bajo (Flores)

The morning will be spent birding in Komodo National Park where we will look for the rare **Yellow-crested Cockatoo** (the yellow-crested subspecies rather than the citron-crested subspecies we will have looked for earlier on the tour on Sumba). There are other birds we will look for on Komodo Island, such as **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Variable** (Nusa Tenggara) **Goshawk**, **Orange-footed Scrubfowl**, **Green Junglefowl**, **Barred Dove**, and **Lemon-bellied White-eye**.



*The Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) **Yellow-crested Cockatoo** will be a big target bird on Komodo Island. (photo Yovie Jehabut)*

One of the main reasons for coming to Komodo Island however, is to see the impressive **Komodo Dragon**, a giant monitor lizard that can reach lengths of up to almost 10 feet (3 meters); pretty much the closest you can come to a dinosaur in this day and age!

We will have lunch back on the boat, likely stopping for some more swimming and snorkeling around Pink Beach. The reef life in this part of Indonesia is fascinating and well worth exploring.

Arriving back into Labuan Bajo in the late afternoon we will check into our hotel and rest up.

Overnight: Labuan Bajo

Day 20. Potawangka (Flores)

Our final birding session of the tour will take us to some forest not too far out of Labuan Bajo, here we will have further opportunities for species such as **Flores Monarch**, **Wallace's Hanging Parrot**, **Variable** (Nusa Tenggara) **Goshawk**, **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Glittering Kingfisher**, **Ornate**

Pitta, Wallacean Cuckooshrike, Black-naped Monarch, Rusty-breasted Whistler, Brown-throated Sunbird, and Yellow-ringed White-eye (Wallace's Heleia).

Afternoon birding will take us to some nearby rice paddies, seasonal wetlands, and shoreline where we will likely see some different birds such as **Sunda Teal, Wandering Whistling Duck, Javan Plover, Malaysian Plover, Beach Stone-curlew, Flame-breasted Sunbird, Black-fronted Flowerpecker, Black-faced Munia, White-shouldered Triller, Pied Bush Chat, Zebra (Timor) Finch, Stork-billed Kingfisher, and Cerulean Kingfisher.**

We will have a final group evening meal together and discuss the “bird of the trip”, not likely to be an easy task, given the number of exciting species we are likely to have found.

Overnight: Labuan Bajo



We are likely to see some pretty spectacular sunrises and sunsets on this tour, the sunsets off Labuan Bajo (above) can be particularly colorful.

Day 21. Labuan Bajo (Flores) to Denpasar (Bali) where the tour concludes

A non-birding day. After a leisurely breakfast at our hotel we will fly back to Denpasar where the tour will end in time for an evening departure out of Indonesia or your further travel (such as our **Sulawesi and Halmahera: Spectacular Endemic Birding** tour). Please do not book your onward flights until we have confirmed the internal flight times which may be subject to change!

Overnight: Not included

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: 21 days
Group Size: 4 - 8
Dates: 20 June - 10 July 2023
Start: Ngurah Rai International Airport, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
End: Ngurah Rai International Airport, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Prices: US\$8,625 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants, which includes the domestic flights (2023)
Single Supplements: US\$850 (2023)

Price includes:

All domestic flights (Bali-Sumba, Sumba-Timor-Rote, Rote-Timor, Timor-Alor, Alor-Timor, Timor-Flores, Flores-Bali)
All accommodation (double room)
Meals (from dinner on day 1 until breakfast on day 21) and snacks/fruit
Drinking water – please bring a refillable water bottle
Expert tour leader
Local bird and wildlife guide fees
Birdwatching site entrance fees and travel permits
Overnight AC cabin boat trip to Komodo Island
All ground transport with AC and tolls/taxes while on tour, including airport pick-up and drop-off

Price excludes:

Flights to/from Ngurah Rai International Airport, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Baggage for internal flights (estimated at between \$150-\$200 depending on weight of checked bags)
Expenditures due to flight cancellations/delays or other causes beyond our control (force majeure)
Visa fees if visa required
Departure tax
Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, snorkeling/diving trips, snorkeling/diving equipment hire, excess luggage charges for internal flights, etc.
Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing/monument excursions
Soft/alcoholic drinks

Personal travel insurance

Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))