



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

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

22 JUNE – 12 JULY 2024

21 JUNE – 11 JULY 2025



Elegant 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**, **Least Boobook**, **Sumba Boobook**, **Sumba Eclectus**, **Orange-crested Cockatoo**, **Elegant Pitta**, **Red-naped Fruit Dove**, **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 Shortwing**, **Flores Crow**, **Flores Monarch**, **Ornate Pitta**, **Glittering Kingfisher**, **Yellow-crested Cockatoo**, **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 are reminiscent of sunbirds) that we can enjoy on the tour.

This tour can be combined with our **Bali and East Java birding tour** or our **Sulawesi and Halmahera birding tour**. Both of these birdwatching tours connect with an outrageous suite of endemic and regional specials and provides for an incredible Indonesian birding experience.

Itinerary (21 days/20 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Denpasar (Bali)

A non-birding arrival day. You will be met at the airport and transferred to our nearby beachside hotel for the rest of the day at leisure, with a group welcome dinner in the evening.

Overnight: Mercure Bali Sanur Resort, Sanur, Bali

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

We will depart Denpasar in the morning and fly to Waikabubak Airport in Tambolaka, western Sumba where we will meet our excellent local guide who will remain with us for the duration of our time in the Lesser Sundas. After clearing the airport, we will transfer to our city hotel for a couple of nights' stay. We will spend the afternoon birding at Manurara till the evening and will look for **Little Cuckoo-Dove**, **Sumba Green Pigeon**, **Black-naped Fruit Dove**, **Tenggara Paradise Flycatcher**, **Arafura Fantail**, **Five-colored Munia**, and **Sumba Boobook**.

Overnight: Manandang Hotel, Waikabubak Sumba



The localized and well-camouflaged Sumba Green Pigeon is a target on the island.

Day 3. Birding Tanadaru (Sumba)

We will leave our accommodation early and drive east. We will spend the morning birding at Tanadaru looking for more endemics and specials, such as **Sumba Myzomela**, **Tenggara Paradise Flycatcher**, **Sumba Brown Flycatcher**, **Rusty-breasted Whistler**, **Marigold**

Lorikeet, Sumba Eclectus, Red-naped Fruit Dove, and others such as Elegant Pitta, Chestnut-backed Thrush, and Sumba Jungle Flycatcher.



Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher will be a target while we are birding on Sumba.



We will look for the endemic Sumba Boobook at night while on the island.

We will have lunch in a local restaurant in Langgaliru and will then continue birding near Tanadaru, where we might find **Red-naped Fruit Dove**, **Elegant Pitta**, or **Sumba Myzomela**. At night we will go out to try and find the endemic owl duo of **Least Boobook** and **Sumba Boobook**.

Overnight: Manandang Hotel, Waikabubak Sumba



Sumba Hornbill will be a major target during our time in the forests on the island.

Day 4. Waikabubak to Tanadaru and on to Waingapu (Sumba)

We will head back to the Tanadaru area for the morning and will also bird around Langgaliru and Lewa, before driving across the island to Waingapu. During our birding we will look for **Apricot-breasted Sunbird**, **Sumba Flycatcher**, **Red-naped Fruit Dove**, **Cinnamon-banded Kingfisher**, **Orange-crested Cockatoo** (recently split from Yellow-crested Cockatoo), **Elegant Pitta**, **Wallacean** (Sumba Spangled) **Drongo**, and plenty more.

Overnight: Padadita Hotel, Sumba

Day 5. Birding at Laipori and Mengitimbi Lake

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, **Javan Plover**, **Spotted Kestrel**, **Brown** (Indonesian) **Honeyeater**, **Zitting Cisticola**, **Striated Swallow**, **Five-colored Munia**, and **Pale-headed Munia**.

Overnight: Padadita Hotel, Sumba



*The attractive (and recently split from Yellow-crested Cockatoo) Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) Sumba endemic, **Orange-crested Cockatoo** will be a target while on the island.*

Day 6. Waingapu (Sumba) to Kupang (Timor) to Onotali (Rote)

Essentially a travel day as we 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 Airport, Rote. Once we have cleared the airport, we will check into our nearby basic hotel in the small town of Onotali. Depending on flight schedules, there may be time for some birding in Kupang, Timor (though we will be back here in a few days), or near our accommodation in Sumba or in Rote either side of our flights. We should look out for **Australian Pratincoles** on the airport runways here too!

Overnight: Hotel Ricky, Onotali, Rote

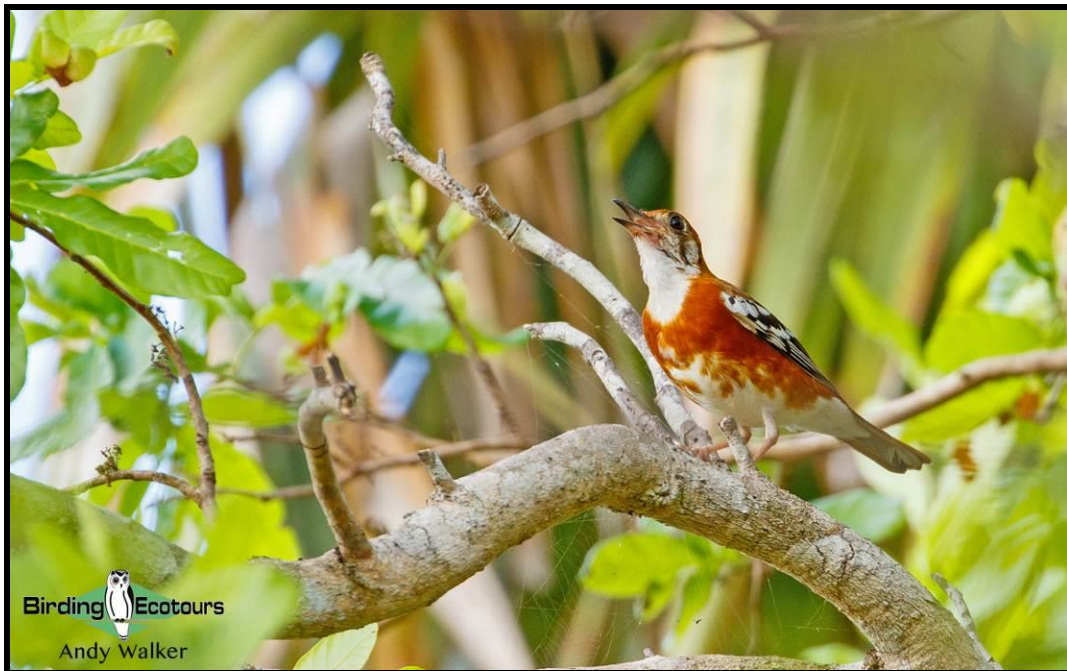
Day 7. Rote birding (Rote)

We will have the full day birding on Rote. We will spend the morning birding at Baudale and Peto Lake, dropping back into town for lunch, before driving across to Bolatena for an afternoon and evening birding session. During the course of the day we will be looking for Rote endemics and specials 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 (Tenggara) Friarbird**, **Orange-sided Thrush**, **Timor Blue Flycatcher**, **White-bellied (Timor) Bush Chat**, **Flame-breasted Sunbird**, and **Timor Stubtail**. In the evening we will look for the endemic **Rote Boobook**, along with the undescribed “**Timor Nightjar**” that can be found on the island.

Overnight: Hotel Ricky, Onotali, Rote



*We will look for the island-endemic **Rote Boobook** while birding the island.*



*The striking **Orange-sided Thrush** can be found in Rote and Timor.*

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: Hotel Bahagia 2, Soé, Timor

Day 9. Birding Gunung Mutis (Timor) – in search of the undescribed parrotfinch!

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

Overnight: Hotel Bahagia 2, Soé, Timor



*The currently undescribed “**Mount Mutis Parrotfinch**” is a tough target that we will look for on the mountain of the same name, where many other Timor endemics can also be found.*

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 from here could include **Timor Friarbird**, **Orange-sided Thrush**, **Black-banded Flycatcher**, **Iris**

Lorikeet, Timor Blue Flycatcher, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, Pacific Emerald Dove, Streak-breasted Honeyeater, Brown (Indonesian) Honeyeater, Flame-eared Honeyeater, Scaly-crowned (Sunda) Honeyeater, Arafura Fantail, Northern (Timor) Fantail, 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. Open areas along the edge of the forest may hold the declining **Timor Sparrow** in among flocks of more widespread munias, as well as shorebirds like **Australian Pratincole**. After our birding we will continue our journey to Kupang for the night.

Overnight: Aston Hotel, Kupang, Timor



Black-banded Flycatcher, striking even by Ficedula standards and endemic to Timor.

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

We will take our morning flight to the small island of Alor before we spend our day exploring this rarely visited island. 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 the endemic **Alor Boobook** in the evening.

Overnight: Hotel Simfony, 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**, **Aberrant (Sunda) Bush Warbler**, **Javan (Timor) Bush Warbler**, **Lesser Shortwing**, **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Short-toed Snake Eagle**, **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Timor Stubtail**, **Thick-billed (Tenggara) Flowerpecker**, **Blood-breasted (Timor) Flowerpecker**, **Tenggara 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: Hotel Simfony, Alor



*Seen by relatively few world birders, **Alor Myzomela** will be a target on this trip.*

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 Bipolo Forest, where we will look for **Timor Sparrow**, **Sunda Zebra Finch**, **Timor Friarbird**, and **Black Kite**, we may also find some resident, over-summering Palearctic, or over-wintering Australasian shorebirds, or **Timor Boobook** at dusk.

Overnight: Aston Hotel, Kupang, Timor

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: Sanian Hotel, 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**. 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**, a tough but exciting bird.

Overnight: Ara Garden, Ruteng, Flores



*We will be keeping our eyes to the sky for the Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, an impressive and huge raptor.*

Day 16. Birding 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 the difficult **Wallace's**

Scops Owl, Bare-throated Whistler (the song of this one will blow your mind!), **Flores Shortwing, Flores Jungle Flycatcher, Crested White-eye (Heleia), Little (Flores) Minivet, Golden-rumped Flowerpecker, Pale-shouldered Cicadabird, and Chestnut-backed Thrush.**



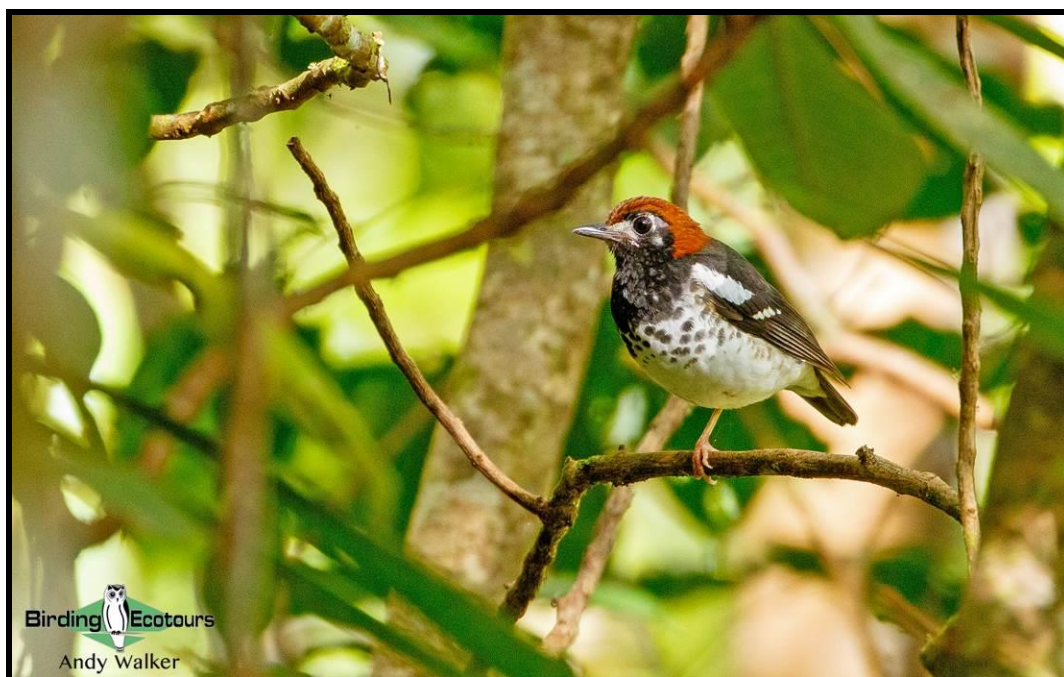
Bare-throated Whistler is one incredible songster.



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

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**, **Chestnut-backed Thrush**, **Flores Crow**, **Wallace's Hanging Parrot**, **Green Junglefowl**, **Black-naped Fruit Dove**, **Glittering Kingfisher**, **Red-cheeked Parrot**, **Ornate Pitta**, **Helmeted (Tenggara) Friarbird**, **Rusty-breasted Whistler**, **Tenggara Paradise Flycatcher**, **Russet-capped Tesia**, **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 may visit Cunca Rami waterfall, if time allows. 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**, **Tenggara Paradise Flycatcher**, and **Black-fronted Flowerpecker**.

Overnight: Mbeliling Ecolodge, Mbeliling, Flores

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

We will spend the early morning back in the forest at Puarlolo, 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 (having lunch on the way), maybe seeing **Lesser Frigatebird**, **Bridled Tern**, **Black-naped Tern**, **White-bellied Sea Eagle**, **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



*We will look for the extremely localized **Flores Monarch** at Puarlolo.*

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

The morning will be spent birding in Komodo National Park, this protected island is a haven for wildlife and a joy to visit in a country so plagued by habitat destruction, illegal hunting, and bird trapping practices. Walking around the island we will see a range of birds all over the place. Our main avian target will be the rare **Yellow-crested Cockatoo**. Komodo Island now represents the best place in the world to see this Critically Endangered (BirdLife International) species.

There are other birds we will look for on Komodo Island too, such as **Flores Hawk-Eagle**, **Variable** (Nusa Tenggara) **Goshawk**, **Orange-footed Scrubfowl**, **Green Junglefowl**, **Green Imperial Pigeon**, **Pied Imperial Pigeon**, **Sunda Collared Dove**, **Barred Dove**, **Black-naped** (Nusa Tenggara Golden) **Oriole**, **Wallacean** (Flores) **Cuckooshrike**, **Wallacean** (Flores Spangled) **Drongo**, **Striated Swallow**, **Helmeted** (Tenggara) **Friarbird**, and **Lemon-bellied White-eye**. One of the main reasons for coming to Komodo Island, however, is to look for 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!



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



*Finding **Komodo Dragon** is not always as easy as you might expect for something of its size. We will be searching for this species with the help of national park rangers during our morning on Komodo Island and will likely see some great birds in the process too.*

We will sail away from Komodo Island and have lunch on the boat. We will then likely stop for some more swimming and snorkeling around Pink Beach or another reef site nearby. The reef life in this part of Indonesia is fascinating and we really recommend exploring it on this tour. In the late afternoon we will arrive at our comfortable beachside hotel in Labuan Bajo.

Overnight: Purisari Beach Hotel, Labuan Bajo

Day 20. Birding Potawangka and birding Labuan Bajo (Flores)

Our final morning 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** (Flores) **Cuckooshrike**, **Black-naped Monarch**, **Rusty-breasted Whistler**, and **Yellow-ringed White-eye** (Wallace's Heleia).

Afternoon birding will take us to some nearby rice paddies, seasonal wetlands, and shrimp ponds, where we will likely see some different birds, such as **Sunda Teal**, **Wandering Whistling Duck**, **Javan Plover**, **Malaysian Plover**, **Beach Stone-curlew**, **Buff-banded Rail**, **White-browed Crake**, **Australasian Swamphen**, **White-shouldered Triller**, **Pied Bush Chat**, **Flame-breasted Sunbird**, **Black-fronted Flowerpecker**, **Black-faced Munia**, **Sunda Zebra Finch**, **Stork-billed Kingfisher**, **Collared Kingfisher**, **Sacred 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: Purisari Beach Hotel, Labuan Bajo

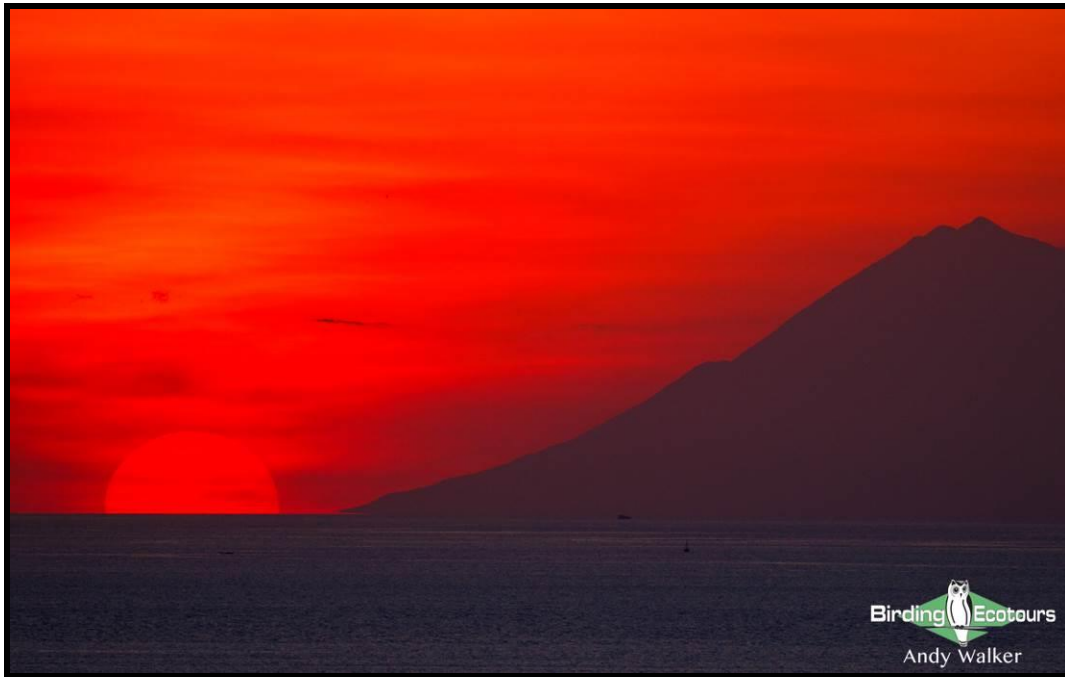


*Plenty of beautiful kingfishers can be found on this Lesser Sunda birding tour, and **Cerulean Kingfisher** is one of those.*

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

A non-birding day. After a leisurely breakfast at our comfortable beachside hotel, we will take a late morning flight back to Denpasar in Bali, where the tour will end with your international departure. *Please do not book your international flight prior to us confirming the time of the domestic flight between Labuan Bajo and Denpasar.*

Overnight: Not included



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

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. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different international guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling.

Duration: 21 days
Group Size: 4 - 8
Dates: 22 June - 12 July 2024
21 June - 11 July 2025

Start: Ngurah Rai International Airport, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
End: Ngurah Rai International Airport, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Prices: US\$10,754 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants, which includes the domestic flights (2024)
US\$11,830 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants, which includes the domestic flights (2025)
Single Supplements: US\$1,085 (2024)
US\$1,194 (2025)

Price includes:

All domestic flights (Bali-Sumba, Sumba-Timor-Rote, Rote-Timor, Timor-Alor, Alor-Timor, Timor-Flores, Flores-Bali) excluding baggage (see below)
All accommodation (based on two sharing)
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, including the Komodo National Park entrance fee (which was increased hugely by the Indonesian government in 2022)
Overnight air-conditioned cabin boat trip to Komodo Island
All ground transport with air-conditioning 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 around \$250 per person depending on weight of checked bags, on average 20 kg bag)
Expenditures due to flight cancellations/delays or other causes beyond our control (force majeure)
Visa fees if visa required
Departure tax if required
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](#))