PAPUA NEW GUINEA

*Birding In Paradise*

June 25 – July 14, 2017

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Join our quest through the highland forests of Mt Hagen and Tari and in the lowland tropics at Lake Murray, on New Britain Island and around Port Moresby for a fascinating diversity of habitats and birds. The most notable birds being Birds-of-paradise - colorful and elaborately plumaged birds with intricately preformed mating dances. The highland people of Papua New Guinea are equally amazing. They traditionally live in harmony with nature and dance in performances called sing-sings inspired by birds-of-paradise. The woods, grasslands, mangroves and reefs of New Britain Island are another whole world of birds and wonderful snorkeling in the brilliant corals. We’ll enjoy the best available lodging throughout, the best available in wildlife areas. We’ll encounter many of Papua New Guinea’s splendid species, which occur nowhere else on the planet.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Fly between each region to have more field time and no long drives between lodges.
- Attend a sing-sing performance while at each of the highland regions in Mt Hagen and Tari.
- Be in the field at dawn when the birds are most active to enjoy PNG’s endemic species at their best.
- Immerse in New Guinea ecology, the “Amazon and Andes of the Pacific”, with both tropical lowlands and a high central cordillera stretching down the entire length of the island.

LEADERS: Gail, Doug Cheeseman, and Barry Davies, assisted by resident guides.
DAYS: 20.

GROUP SIZE: 8.

COST: $12,290 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See the Cost section on page 5.

TRANSPORTATION: Six internal flights (2 by special charters with Trans Nuigini Tours and 4 with Air Nuiguni), short transfers by bus to airports and for birding or cultural visits, and small boats at Lake Murray and Walindi.

ACCOMMODATIONS: All five lodges with private baths and very tasty meals provide high quality lodging.

CONDITIONS: This is a non-smoking tour for people who are very interested in spending the maximum time in the field. See the complete Conditions section page 7.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>Meals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jun 25–26</td>
<td>Travel days to Port Moresby, PNG.</td>
<td>Rondon Ridge, Mt Hagen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 27</td>
<td>Arrive in Port Moresby to connect with an afternoon Air Nuigini flight to Mt Hagen.</td>
<td>Rondon Ridge, Mt Hagen</td>
<td>B, L, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 28–29</td>
<td>Our first birds-of-paradise and a sing-sing while enjoying full days in the PNG highlands.</td>
<td>Rondon Ridge, Mt Hagen</td>
<td>B, L, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 30–Jul 2</td>
<td>Charter flight to Lake Murray. Enchanting forest and lake walks during the day and enjoying the lodge in the evening.</td>
<td>Lake Murray Lodge, Lake Murray</td>
<td>B, L, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 3–6</td>
<td>Charter flight to the PNG Highlands at Tari. Walk trails, attend a Huli sing-sing performance and just enjoy this fabulous location.</td>
<td>Ambua Lodge, Tari Gap</td>
<td>B, L, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 7–10</td>
<td>Fly via Port Moresby to Hoskins, New Britain Island with full days birding a variety of habitats, plus snorkeling and enjoying the culture.</td>
<td>Walindi Plantation Resort, New Britain Island</td>
<td>B, L, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 11–12</td>
<td>Fly back to Port Moresby for birding excursions, including a trip to Varirata National Park.</td>
<td>Airways Hotel, Port Moresby</td>
<td>B, L, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 13</td>
<td>Flights homeward from Port Moresby Jackson’s International Airport.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 14</td>
<td>Arrive home.</td>
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LEADERS

Gail and Doug Cheeseman
Doug and Gail find leading safaris to be a fresh way of blending a desire to observe nature with a wish to inspire travelers towards the values of conservation and education. Doug turned on biology majors with zoology and ecology at De Anza College in Cupertino, California, during his long career. Gail is also a naturalist, plus a meticulous coordinator of
trip logistics. Their first trip to Papua New Guinea was back in 1985 when Ambua Lodge at Tari Gap had just the foundations of the cabins constructed and stayed in tents.

Barry Davies
Barry is friendly, humorous, helpful and great at spotting birds. With a passion for wildlife, he did his university degree in ecology. Barry has always been sought after for his guiding excellence from many years in Queensland and the last 10 years throughout Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Sabah in Borneo. He seeks the best conditions for you to photograph wildlife in action. In PNG, he has developed close relationships with local communities and resident guides at lodges in key birding areas.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Jun 25–26 ~ Flights to Port Moresby
If coming from the USA and other countries that cross the International Date Line, depart by June 25. Brisbane, Australia, is the main gateway to PNG.

Jun 27 ~ Arrive in Port Moresby and connect to Mt Hagen
Arrive at Jackson's International in Port Moresby by midday. A Trans Niugini Tours staff member will be there to meet our flight, then accompany us to check in for the flight to Mt Hagen. We’ll be on the Mt Hagen flight that departs traditionally at 3 pm from Port Moresby. On arrival in Mount Hagen, drive up a picturesque road with mist filled views of the Wahgi Valley to Rondon Ridge Lodge.

Jun 28–29 ~ Birds-of-paradise at Rondon Ridge
Our very experienced resident guide, Joseph Ando, will know exactly where to lead us this morning at dawn fairly close to the lodge to find Macgregor’s Bowerbird, the Brown Sicklebill, Stephanie’s Astrapia and the Superb Bird of Paradise. Birds will already be tuned up for the dawn chorus and soon begin doing their shimmering displays waving their tails and flapping their wing on high branches above us. This is an unforgettable scene just to watch in awe and not even try to photograph. Further afield in the mossy cloud forest are the Black Sicklebill, King of Saxony Bird of Paradise and the Short tailed Paradigalla that Joseph will want to show us for some more unforgettable birding moments. The main forest trail is well maintained, with display trees, and includes stairs, wooden bridges, and some handrails for about 2 miles up from the lodge with approximately a 1,000-foot elevation gain.

Joseph created the excellent trail layout at Rondon Ridge and an extensive orchid garden on the lodge grounds as well, gathering some of PNG’s 3000 species of orchid in the wild to thrive in the lodge orchid garden. Rondon Ridge at 4100 feet is at the perfect elevation for them to grow and bloom. Another attraction here if your energy levels remain high is night spotting for possums, as these marsupials are actively feeding after dark. An additional very special attraction is a sing-sing performance that we will be privileged to attend during our full two days here.

Jun 30–Jul 2 ~ Lowland diversity at Lake Murray Lodge
Fly by 9-seater charter from Mount Hagen to Lake Murray over the Great Papuan Plateau and across Southern Highlands Province into Western Province, where the largest lake in PNG is located. Lake Murray is approximately 650 square kilometers in the dry season and increases in size dramatically during the wet season monsoons of December through March. It is surrounded by almost one million hectares of ancient forest that still survives thanks to a true conservation story from over 20 years ago. Back then about 100,000 hectares had been degraded by a logging company. In 2003 a Greenpeace Australia Pacific Global Rescue
Station was established with 40 volunteers from 25 countries who worked with the local Kuni, Begwa and Pari tribes to force out the logging company by identifying and marking land ownership. The boundary marking was the precursor to a community based forestry project. Ecotimber is shipped to Australia and sold with Forestry Stewardship Council certification. About 5000 people live in houses on stilts scattered in villages both on tiny islands and coastal areas.

We'll meet our resident guide, Dennis Katako, who has assisted with adding new species to the impressive bird list of 154 and will be eager to show us a whole new realm of New Guinea birds here in the lowlands. He will know the closest tree to watch the beautiful Raggiana Bird-of-paradise displaying to each other. Magnificent Riflebird, another bird-of-paradise, thrives in the Lake Murray lowland forests. There is a chance to see the little King Bird-of-paradise, which is so brilliantly red, it knocks your socks off. More than half of New Guinea’s birds reside in the Western Province. Despite being in this very remote province, Lake Murray Lodge that is located on an island spit is not rustic. Solar power provides 24-hour electricity and a large garden provides fresh produce.

**Jul 3–6 ~ Walk trails, attend a sing-sing and enjoy fabulous Tari**

The basin at Tari and surrounding rugged mountain slopes are the home of the Huli clans. Before landing we will fly over their clusters of homesteads that look rather untouched by the outside world. Possibly we might even see from the air looking down on Tari Valley the remains of great trenches that were up to 5 m deep crisscrossing the basin floor. Dug with digging sticks, these trenches were interconnected and used in tribal warfare to mark clan land boundaries and to control their very valued pigs, the source of their protein, from wandering away. This area was so unknown that the Ribbon-tailed Bird-of-paradise was only discovered by museums in 1939 and the Tari area itself was not explored until 1936. However nearby Mendi Valley was on the old trade route from the Gulf of Papua into the PNG Highlands. Salt, kina shells and body oil all passed along this route. Arrive at Ambua Lodge for lunch and a stimulating afternoon in the surrounding forest with our resident naturalist, Joseph Tano, who is an expert on the birds and botany of Tari.

At daybreak each day will be the most exciting time. We will be immersed in birdcalls atop the trail behind the lodge, where Stephanie’s Astrapia, Ribbon-tailed and King of Saxony males will be flaunting their goods in hopes for some females to show up. With thirteen species of birds of paradise, Ambua Lodge beside Tari Gap is a true mecca. Many high mountain species live in these primary forests. Archibold’s Bowerbird, and Papuan Lorie, in addition to the many BoPs, are spectacular high moss forest species here. Also close to the lodge, non-paradise birds are plentiful, such as the Buff-Banded Rail, Orange-crowned Fairy-wren, Friendly Fantail, and Willie Wagtail, a favorite also in Australia. The Ambua Lodge area is perfect for numerous orchids and other flowers that compete with the birds for color. Further afield from the lodge, walk a trail through a deep gorge with high waterfalls plunging through the multiple canopies into rocky pools below. While at Ambua Lodge attend a sing-sing to get a sense of the cultural diversity of the two highland regions visited. Some men of the Huli clan still wear the traditional human-hair wigs shaped like a toreador’s hat and decorated with feathers.

**Jul 7–10 ~ Fly to New Britain Island for birds and corals in paradise**

Transfer by vehicle from Ambua Lodge to Tari Airport for the morning flight to Port Moresby. Barry Davies will be our main guide on New Britain Island before he takes over leadership of our second PNG trip that is back to back with this trip. Upon arrival at Jackson’s Airport in Port Moresby, meet Barry and a Trans Niugini staff member who will assist with our onward flight to Hoskins, located on the west coast of New Britain looking out to the Bismarck Sea. On arrival, transfer to the Waldini Plantation Resort. The short distance from the airport to the lodge on Kimbe Bay takes about one hour. Most of the guests at the lodge are there for diving and snorkeling, but people come also to see the special birds in the area. There are some even on the lodge grounds, including lorikeets, sunbirds, and kingfishers.
New Britain Island, long, narrow and mountainous, the largest of the New Guinea offshore islands, stretches between the Bismarck and Solomon seas. We’ll visit some of the forests, such as the Garu Forest Reserve and Kilu Ridge. We go to a special location to seek the endangered Melanesian Scrubflowl in the magapode family. Megapodes build mounds instead of nests, so they do not use their body to incubate. The male regulates the temperature and entices females to lay in his mound.

Take a boat trip out in Kimbe Bay to find island endemics on some of the very small islets. Some of the islet habitats of Kimbe Bay protect endemic species only found in the Bismarck Archipelago, including the New Britain Boobook, Bismarck Kingfisher and Bismarck Crow. During the boat trip frigatebirds, noddys, and several species of terns will be flying about and on the mudflats plovers and other shorebirds will be feeding. This will also be one of the excellent places to snorkel, especially off Restorf Island, where the shallow coral reefs and fish are brilliant with the sun on them.

**Jul 11–12 ~ Fly to Port Moresby for birding and Varirata National Park**

The flight to Port Moresby is normally early, so we should have part of the morning free once we check in at our wonderful hotel very close to the airport. We’ll bid farewell to Barry who will fly to Mt Hagen on our second PNG trip and we’ll meet Leonard Ipai who is a resident PNG bird guide and very highly recommended. After lunch today, head out to explore more of the PNG lowlands. Much of the New Guinea lowland wildlife is also found in Australia. But there are close to 570 endemic birds in New Guinea and over 530 endemics in Australia. Remarkably fewer than 200 species are shared despite close geographical relationships. We will have already found lots of Papuan endemics during our time in PNG and many that are shared with Australia we will see too. Much logging around Port Moresby has destroyed extensive habitat, but there are well-protected wetlands and forests not far from our hotel. Both lowland rainforest and woodlands dominated by eucalypts survive with remarkable species diversity. Wetlands, including ponds, mangroves and other coastal waters, provide habitat for water birds.

A popular destination for birding is the extensive Pacific Adventist University campus that is about 20 miles from Port Moresby. This is the place to see Papuan Frogmouths and many, many other species, thanks to the protection received from the volunteer organization of students and staff who maintain the gardens, native woodlands and the large ponds on the property as a bird sanctuary.

We’ll depart very early for Varirata National Park, situated in the foothills above the city. We’ll walk the trails in both the dry eucalypt forests and rainforest habitats. New Guinea has 24 species just of kingfishers, including several paradise-kingfishers with long tail plumes, including the Brown-headed Paradise-Kingfisher. A site for dancing male Raggiana Bird-of-paradise displaying their long orange plumes is another of the highlights that we visit today.

**Jul 13 ~ Morning transfer to the Jackson’s Airport**

Transfer on July 13 from the hotel to the airport for flights homeward.

**Jul 14 ~ Arrive home**

**COSTS (all costs are in US dollars)**

**Cost**
We reserve the right to charge for cost increases that occur between when we set tour prices and the date of travel, for example, changes due to the cost of lodging and transportation. If you are a single traveler and
you desire, we will find a roommate for you. If we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement fee on land-based tours.

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Trip Cost, double occupancy</td>
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<td>Single Supplement</td>
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**Payment Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Amount per Person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deposit</td>
<td>Due now to reserve your space</td>
<td>$500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>August 15, 2016</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>January 16, 2017</td>
<td>Remaining Balance</td>
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Payments will be due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space. For reservations made after a due date, all past payments will be due with registration. By sending your initial deposit, you agree to accept our payment schedule and cancellation policy as a contract. If payments are still outstanding two weeks after the due date, your space may be forfeited.

**Cancellations**

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of $150 per person, which can be applied toward another tour if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip’s departure date. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

**Included**

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Lodging for the nights of June 27 through July 12.
- Meals from dinner on June 27 through breakfast on July 13.
- Airport transfers as specified in detailed itinerary.
- Trip Materials - information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

**Not Included**

- All airfare, airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Airfare is approximately $2,000 from the USA to Port Moresby, PNG, depending on origin, plus approximately $2,000 for six internal flights (estimated October 2016).
- Passport and visa fees.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfer and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities: tipping is, of course, discretionary, however we suggest budgeting about $15 to $20 per participant per day for June 27 to July 13 with our guides (about $255 to $340 total per participant).
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance.
- Trip cancellation insurance. For more details please check our trip insurance website. [http://cheesemans.com/insurance.html](http://cheesemans.com/insurance.html)
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, and items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation/Release Form.
SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation/Release Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant mailed to us.

Cheesemans’ Ecology Safaris  
Email: info@cheesemans.com  
Website: www.cheesemans.com  
Skype: cheesemansecologysafaris  
Phone: (800) 527-5330 or (408) 741-5330  
Fax: (408) 741-0358

OTHER DETAILS

Climate
PNG’s climate is tropical with coastal areas averaging in the low 90s, but mountain areas average lower temperatures, especially in the higher mountain regions. Prepare for both cold weather in the PNG highlands and hot weather in the lowlands. Relative humidity is quite high in the humid rainforests and can be up to 90%. Expect some rain in both highlands and lowlands. Mosquitoes do well in the lowland rainforests, so expect them in those habitats.

Fitness Level
This trip requires good fitness to walk the uphill forest trails in the highlands, for example, where the trail ascends 1,000 feet in elevation for two miles. The trails are reasonably well maintained, so it is not difficult terrain unless it is wet and muddy, which is often the condition of the trails. There is a choice to sit out certain walks and enjoy the lodge grounds more fully. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Flight Information
Airfare, including internal flights, is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive by noon on June 27 in Port Moresby. Depart Port Moresby as early as the morning of July 13. There are four internal flights for you to book along with your international travel: Port Moresby to Mt. Hagen, Tari to Port Moresby, and round-trip Port Moresby to Hoskins. The cost for these flights is approximately $1,050 (estimated October 2016), and the dates and flight numbers will be provided in your Trip Materials.

Flights we book for you: Two internal charter flights on a small 9-seater airplane through Trans Nuigini Tours. Friday, June 30, 2017 from Mt Hagen to Lake Murray and Monday, July 3, 2017 from Lake Murray to Tari The cost of these two charters ($941) will be added to the final trip balance.

Conditions
• Non-smoking policy: We have a strict non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted at any time or any place during our tours.
• **Maximum time in the field:** We try to spend as much time in the field as possible, sometimes resulting in long days but giving you a more in-depth experience.

• **Itinerary route:** The itinerary route, stops and plans are subject to change by unforeseen circumstances beyond our control, such as weather or road conditions.

• **Medical conditions and travel risks:** Travel to remote places is exciting, but it is important to understand and accept the risks, both medical and logistical. Minor medical problems can usually be treated, but due to the fact that we often travel to locations far from medical facilities, there can be no expectation for immediate medical treatment or evacuation, even in cases of trauma. Anyone with health problems needing close medical supervision should not consider going on this trip. Bring enough medication for the duration of the trip for any chronic medical needs, since pharmacies are usually not available. When you send your tour deposit and signed reservation form, you certify to us that you do not knowingly have any physical or other conditions that would create a risk for yourself or for other trip participants.

**Conservation**

Cheesemans’ Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions to which we travel and we have supported many conservation efforts over the years. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife. We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Valdivian Coastal Reserve, a Nature Conservancy project ([http://bit.ly/valdivia_tnc](http://bit.ly/valdivia_tnc)).

**FAQS**

**Is this trip only for bird watchers?**

The Cheesemans’ Birding Experience is designed for relaxed, yet keen birders, who want time to savor bird behaviors and the whole setting, including other wildlife and nature. Our itineraries are more flexible, have a slower pace, and maximum time in the field in contrast to a birding trip with the goal of seeing as many species as possible. There are close to 570 endemic birds in PNG, including 38 species of Birds-of-paradise and 24 kingfishers making it the cradle of evolution for both birds-of-paradise and paradise-kingfishers.

**Will we attend the Sing Sing Festival?**

We do not go during the Goroka Festival in September because the greatly increased crowds negatively impact our birding and wildlife viewing. Plus the weather is best June – August. We will have the opportunity to watch Sing Sing performances by two tribes among fewer crowds.

**Why are there so many flights for this safari?**

We want to get you to many different ecosystems within PNG, and if we had to drive to each location, we would lose out on valuable time spent in the field.