



VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ITINERARY

## INDONESIA HIGHLIGHTS: SULAWESI, JAVA & KOMODO

AUGUST 1-17, 2026

### BALI EXTENSION

AUGUST 16-23, 2026

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A Komodo Dragon actively hunting on Komodo Island

*Indonesia is one of the great birding and wildlife destinations in the world. A nation of thousands of islands, small and large, covering a vast area of tropical territory between Southeast Asia and Papua New Guinea. This remarkable country is home to more than 1,500 species of birds. With so many islands, it is a difficult place to extensively bird, but if you would like to visit once and take in the highlights, this is the tour for you. We have selected this itinerary for the comfortable hotels, well protected forest areas and good infrastructure. We will hope to get up close to the incredible Komodo Dragon and take in a fabulous cross-section of Indonesian birds and animals.*

**Alfred Russel Wallace (one of the 19<sup>th</sup> century's most remarkable intellectuals) spent eight years exploring Indonesia collecting more than 100,000 specimens including an amazing series of birds. He realized quickly that the deep passage of water, the Sunda Strait separating Bali from Lombok, had two very different populations of wildlife on either side. On**



**Java and Bali there were hornbills, woodpeckers, primates, rhinoceros and great cats. On Lombok and beyond to the east there were cockatoos, lorikeets, Eucalyptus trees and marsupials. Wallace's insights into island-specific zoogeography—and his subsequent discussions with Charles Darwin—played a key role in prompting Darwin to write *On the Origin of Species*. The term Wallace's Line was coined to indicate an imaginary boundary in the Indonesian archipelago that separates the distinct flora and fauna of Asia from that of Australasia. On this tour we will visit national parks on both sides of Wallace's Line to gain firsthand experience of the great differences in wildlife as experienced by Wallace.**

**We will start by visiting the northern peninsula of the extraordinary star-shaped island of Sulawesi. Here in hill forests and lowland forests, we can search for a trove of wildlife. We have a good chance of seeing a variety of mammals, including the goggle-eyed Spectral Tarsier, the bizarre Bear Cuscus and fabulous Black Crested Macaques. Kingfishers, hornbills, parrots, pigeons, cuckoos and strange starlings lead the charge in an impressively rich birding region.**

**From Sulawesi we will travel to the south-eastern tip of Sumatra, a giant island of great wildlife diversity. Sumatra, one of the Greater Sunda Islands, has a wildlife representation like South-East Asia. Here forests resound to the calls of gibbons while partridges, hornbills, trogons and babblers hide in rainforests. We will spend two days in the well protected forests of the Way Kambas National Park that offer tremendously rich wildlife viewing. From Sumatra we will next visit Java and make a two-night stay in the well-protected lowland forest of Carita, one of the few sites in Java that represent this most endangered habitat.**

**From Java we will fly across to Flores and cross Wallace's Line yet again. Exploring mountain and lowland forest, we can search for such gems as Bare-throated Whistler, White-rumped Kingfisher and Elegant Pitta to mention a few. As a finale to the main tour, we will spend a day exploring Komodo Island. Here we can spend the coolest part of the day enjoying an encounter with the remarkable Komodo Dragon, easily the world's largest lizard. There are plenty of interesting birds to attract us here as well, including the rare Yellow-crested Cockatoo. We will fly onward to Bali where the main tour concludes, or you may continue on a post-tour excursion to explore the delights of Bali.**



**August 1-2, Days 1-2: International flights to Manado.** Participants should plan to arrive in Manado, Indonesia (airport code MDC) on or before August 3. Please keep in mind that travel to Indonesia from the USA requires crossing the International Dateline, which means the loss of one day in transit. Upon request, the VENT office will be happy to assist with early arrival hotel and airport transfer arrangements.

NIGHTS: In transit aboard aircraft

**August 3, Day 3: Arrive Manado, transfer to Tomohon in the highlands of northern Sulawesi.** Upon arrival in Manado this morning, you will be provided with a transfer to our beautiful hotel, which has some forest behind it and is an easy place to relax. Furthermore, it provides an excellent location to visit hill forests nearby that are home to some exceptionally dazzling birds.

NIGHT: Villa Emitta, Tomohon

**August 4, Day 4: Tomohon. Located at the base of Mount Mahawu,** Tomohon is pleasantly refreshing in climate. We will have a full day to explore the forests, and we will hope to see Isabelline Bush-hen, Superb Fruit-Dove, Sultan's Cuckoo-Dove, Yellow-billed Malkoha, Sulawesi Woodpecker, Gray-rumped Treeswift, Sulphur-bellied Whistler, Hair-crested Drongo, Pale-blue Monarch, Slender-billed Crow, Citrine Canary-Flycatcher, Turquoise Flycatcher, Sulawesi Blue Flycatcher, Sulawesi Babbler, Mountain Tailorbird, Black-crowned and Warbling White-eye, Crimson-crowned, Yellow-sided and Grey-sided Flowerpeckers and Black-faced Munia. With luck and persistence, we may find the elusive Scaly-breasted Kingfisher. Night excursions have produced quality sightings of Great Eared-Nightjar, Sulawesi Scops-Owl and Speckled Boobook.

NIGHT: Villa Emitta, Tomohon





**The beautiful Lilac-cheeked Kingfisher**

**August 5-6, Days 5-6: Early morning drive to Tangkoko National Park.** The fabulous Tangkoko National Park, an extensive tract of lowland forest on the tip of the Minahassa Peninsula offers some of the best birding and wildlife experiences in Sulawesi. We will have two days to take in all this park has to offer. We have an excellent chance to see the endangered Crested Black Macaque, the diminutive, nocturnal Gursky's Spectral Tarsier and the bizarre Bear Cuscus, the world's largest marsupial phalanger. Birding is fantastic with nearly 50 regional endemics present. They include Philippine Megapode, Sulawesi Hawk-Eagle, Spot-tailed Goshawk, White-faced Cuckoo-dove, Silver-tipped Imperial-Pigeon, Golden-mantled and Yellow-breasted Racquet-tails, Azure-rumped Parrot, Sulawesi and Pygmy Hanging-Parrots, Black-billed Koel, Bay Coucal, Sulawesi Scops-Owl, Ochre-bellied Boobook, Sulawesi Nightjar, Purple-winged Roller, Sulawesi Dwarf-Kingfisher, Sulawesi Lilac Kingfisher, Great-billed Kingfisher, Green-backed

Kingfisher, Sulawesi and the mighty Knobbed Hornbill, Ashy Woodpecker, Sulawesi Pitta, White-rumped Cuckoo-shrike, White-rumped Triller, Finch-billed Myna, Sulawesi Crested Myna and Rusty-backed Thrush to mention some. Our accommodations for the next two nights are basic but clean, air-conditioned and well-located in close proximity to the park.

NIGHTS: Tangkoko Lodge, Tangkoko

**August 7, Day 7: Morning Flight to Lampung via Jakarta; Afternoon Drive to Way Kambas.** This morning we will fly from Manado to Jakarta and then take a short hop flight to Lampung, the bustling major town in far south-eastern Sumatra. After lunch we will transfer to Way Kambas National Park, a fabulously rich rainforest located in the lowlands. If time permits, we will take a visit through the national park to get amongst the wildlife as soon as possible. Primates include the incredible Siamang, Agile Gibbon and both Sumatran Surili and Silver Langur. Charismatic megafauna is present, but rarely seen including Asian Elephant, Malayan Tapir and Sumatran Tiger!

NIGHT: Way Kambas Eco-Resort

**August 8-9, Days 8-9: Way Kambas National Park.** The rainforests of Way Kambas National Park offer the best birding in south-eastern Sumatra with a park list of over 300 species. It is classic Sundaic birding. Amongst species we hope to see are Malayan Crested Fireback, Crested Partridge, Lesser Adjutant, Bat Hawk, Gray-headed Fish-Eagle, Cinnamon-headed Green Pigeon, Black-bellied and Chestnut-breasted malkohas, Scarlet-rumped Trogon, Bushy-crested Hornbill, Red-crowned Barbet, Rufous, Buff-necked, Banded and Crimson-winged woodpeckers, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Red-bearded Bee-eater, Blue-rumped Parrot, Black-thighed Falconet, Black-and-red and Banded broadbills, Malayan Banded-Pitta, Western Hooded Pitta, Malaysian Blue Flycatcher, Green Iora, Fiery Minivet, a great variety of bulbuls and babblers, including the endemic Sumatran Babbler, the disappearing Common Hill Myna and Chestnut-naped

Forktail. Way Kambas is justifiably famous for its nocturnal birds, and we intend to give a good search effort for Large and Sunda frogmouths, the rare Bonaparte's Nightjar and hopefully some of the striking owls that make these forests home. More common are Savanna, Malaysian Eared and Large-tailed nightjars. If there is recent news of any sightings of the rare White-winged Duck, we may follow these up at dusk on the edge of the park where ricefields attract Cinnamon Bittern and a variety of munias and open country birds.

NIGHTS: Way Kambas Eco-Resort

**August 10, Day 10: Morning Flight to Jakarta; Afternoon Carita.** We will take a morning flight to Jakarta. If we arrive early enough, we will schedule a boat trip into Jakarta Bay to look for Milky Stork and Christmas Island Frigatebirds. After lunch we will make the drive to the relatively quiet coastal town of Carita, located on the west coast of Java. The drive will hopefully take about three hours. Carita has really benefitted from increased community protection in recent years and has become the go-to site for many endangered lowland forest birds.

NIGHT: Carita Hotel

**August 11, Day 11: Carita.** We will spend our morning and afternoon sessions trying to get good views of a number of difficult birds. These include Javan Frogmouth, Brown Boobook, Spotted Wood-Owl, Banded Kingfisher, Black-banded and Yellow-eared barbets, Javan Banded-Pitta, Javan Black-capped, Temminck's and Horsfield's babblers, Gray-cheeked Tit-Babbler, Streaky-breasted Spiderhunter and hopefully the glowing Javan Sunbird. More widely distributed birds include Black-naped Fruit-Dove, Asian Koel, Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo, Barred Buttonquail, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Freckle-breasted Woodpecker, Common Flameback, Small Minivet, Cream-vented bulbuls and the endemic Olive-backed Tailorbird.

NIGHT: Carita Hotel

**August 12, Day 12: Morning Flight to Labuan Bajo.** This morning we will fly from Jakarta to the beautiful island of Flores arriving in the coastal town of Labuan Bajo. Once again, we will have crossed Wallace's Line. In the afternoon we will explore coastal open country and ricefields. Here we will look for such species as Sunda Teal, Spotted Kestrel, Barred Dove, Blue-tailed and Rainbow Bee-eater, Yellow-spectacled Heleia, Flame-breasted Sunbird, Black-faced Munia and Zebra Finch. If time permits, we will make a stop for birding the hill forest at Puarlolo.

This small patch of lovely forest lies alongside the main east-west road around 35 km east of Labuan Bajo and is home to the scarce Flores Monarch, the beautiful White-rumped Kingfisher and with luck, at flowering trees, we may pick up the endemic Wallace's Hanging-Parrot, which gets its name from its unique habit of sleeping upside down from a perch, perhaps an adaptation to avoid predation by snakes!

Be mindful of two beautiful forest thrushes, the Chestnut-capped and regional endemic Chestnut-backed that we may encounter.



**The striking White-rumped Kingfisher, one of the special birds on Flores**

This site might also provide us with an opportunity to see the elusive Ornate Pitta, Flores Crow and Rufous-chested Flycatcher. If we can find some fruiting figs, we might pick up Flores Green-Pigeon.

NIGHT: Bintang Flores Hotel, Labuan Bajo

**August 13-14, Days 13-14: Drive to Ruteng.** We will make the drive to Ruteng, located at 3600 feet above sea-level. It can get chilly here in the evening so bring a sweater and some warm clothes. It will probably feel quite delightful after our time on the coast. We will have two full days of birding in the mountain forests at various altitudes around Ruteng. It will pay to be up early to listen to the ethereal dawn chorus of the Bare-throated Whistler. There will be plenty of birds to search for including Bonelli's Eagle, Flores Hawk-Eagle, Dark-backed Imperial-Pigeon, Black-backed Fruit-Dove, Ruddy Cuckoo-Dove, Wallace's and Flores Scops-owls, Rusty-breasted and Sunda Cuckoos, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Leaf Lorikeet, Flores Minivet, Brown-capped Fantail, Flores Jungle Flycatcher, Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Warbler, Flores Leaf-Warbler, Pygmy Cupwing, Flores Shortwing, Eyebrowed, Dark-crowned and Flores heleias, Rusty-capped Tesia, Black-fronted and Golden-rumped Flowerpecker, Sunda Honeyeater plus Five-coloured and Pale-headed munias.

NIGHTS: Spring Hill Hotel, Ruteng

**August 15, Day 15: Return to Labuan Bajo.** Today we will retrace our steps back to Labuan Bajo taking time to search lowland forest patches for any species we might not have caught up with.

NIGHT: Bintang Flores Hotel, Labuan Bajo

**August 16, Day 16: Day trip to Komodo Island.** We'll have an early start this morning as it takes about one hour by speedboat to reach the remote island of Komodo. On the way we may see Bulwer's Petrel or the occasional tropical tern like Bridled and Black-naped. This well-protected national park is home to the famous Komodo Dragon, a giant monitor lizard that can reach three metres (ten feet) in total length and weigh up to 190 pounds. Interestingly the theory that Komodo Dragons evolved to feed on pygmy elephants that co-existed with pygmy humans in Flores seems to have come unstuck due to excellent fossil evidence of Komodo Dragons in Australia. Both pygmy elephants and humans disappeared with time but the dragons were able to survive on a couple of remote islands feeding now mostly on wild pigs and the native deer, the Rusa. We will be chaperoned by a ranger who will be armed with a forked pole to keep any overly inquisitive dragons at bay! Please note that although we have a very good chance to see the Komodo Dragon, sightings are not guaranteed as, like all wild animals, they can give us the run around. Komodo also offers good birding, being most famous for the Yellow-crested Cockatoo, a critically endangered species. We may also encounter Orange-footed Megapode, Green Junglefowl, Great-billed Heron, Pacific Reef-Heron, Sunda Collared-Dove, Barred Dove, Green and Pied Imperial-Pigeon, Helmeted Friarbird, Black-naped Oriole, Wallacean Drongo, Lemon-bellied White-eye and with luck perhaps a day roosting Moluccan Scops-owl.

NIGHT: Bintang Flores Hotel, Labuan Bajo

**August 17, Day 17: Morning Flight to Denpasar; Continue to Bali Extension or Departure for Home.** This morning we will take a flight to Denpasar (airport code DPS) where the main tour concludes. For participants departing today, please do not schedule your flight from Denpasar prior to 12:00 p.m.

Those continuing on the Bali Extension will be met at the airport in Denpasar by our ground agents for the start of the Bali Extension.



## BALI EXTENSION

### AUGUST 16-23, 2026



The beautiful Javan Banded Pitta is a bird we hope to see on Bali

*The magical Hindu island of Bali, famous as a beach tourism hotspot, has a lot to offer the birder and naturalist. Situated at the eastern end of the Greater Sundas, Bali provides superb birding and wildlife viewing. The island's most iconic bird, the beautiful and very rare Bali Myna, will be top of the list during our Bali birding extension. Other special birds include the endangered Black-winged Myna, Beach Thick-knee, the dazzling Small Blue Kingfisher, Green Junglefowl, Javan Plover, Java Sparrow and the spectacular Javan Banded-Pitta! Our trip also ventures into the highlands where specialties*

*include Crescent-chested Babbler, Javan Whistling Thrush, Yellow-throated Hanging Parrot, the delightful Sunda Warbler, Javan Flowerpecker and Javan Heleia. If all our target birds fall into place, we can go birding in eastern Java to the remote national park of Gunung Ijen. Ijen offers a number of montane forest birds endemic to Java. Bali makes for a splendid five-day birding adventure, offering sensational scenery as well as fascinating art and culture.*

**August 16, Day 1: Arrive Denpasar.** For those participants who are not participants on the Indonesia Highlights tour, you should plan to arrive in Denpasar (airport code DPS) on or before August 16. Upon arrival, you will be met at the airport and transferred to our hotel.

NIGHT: Ramayana Hotel, Kuta, Denpasar

#### **August 17, Day 2: Denpasar to Bedugul.**

This morning, we will embark on our journey eastwards and wind our way up into the Central Highlands past abundant Hindu temples and acres of green rice paddies. We will keep a lookout for birds along the way,



including the stunning and near-endemic Javan Kingfisher and more widespread species like Long-tailed Shrike, Paddyfield Pipit, Golden-headed and Zitting cisticolas. Expanses of tall, seeding grass in and

adjacent to the rice paddies could yield Javan, Scaly-breasted and White-headed Munias whilst Greater and Lesser Coucals, Striated Grassbird, Cinnamon Bittern and Javan Pond Heron also occupy the secondary growth adjacent to rice fields. Our accommodation at Bedugul is nestled inside the crater of an extinct volcano at an altitude of 1,140m (3,700 ft) overlooking Lake Buyan and surrounded by lush, green, montane forests. We will spend the afternoon and the following day searching this cool and lovely area for exciting new species that could include the regional endemic Flame-fronted Barbet, Sunda Cuckoo, Black-naped Oriole, Little Pied Flycatcher, Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher, Javan Flowerpecker, Sunda Warbler and, along forested streams, the boldly-patterned White-crowned Forktail. We will also keep a lookout for the scarce Javan Hawk-Eagle as well as Black and Crested Serpent-Eagle which can sometimes be seen patrolling the forests.

NIGHT: Bali Handara Golf Club Hotel, Bedugul

**August 18, Day 3: Bedugul.** This morning we will continue our exploration in the hill forests in the Bedugul area, where we will spend the morning birding along forested roads and trails and marveling at the stunning Bali Botanical Gardens. The dense forest undergrowth here supports Sunda Bush Warbler and the shy and skulking Lesser Shortwing. We will also search the area for Horsfield's and regional endemic Crescent-chested Babblers as well as the attractive Javan Scimitar Babbler. Mixed-species flocks could well produce small songbirds such as Mountain Tailorbird, Mountain Leaf Warblers and Warbling White-eyes and Javan Heleia. With some luck we may also manage to obtain views of the uncommon and secretive Javan Whistling Thrush. Even more luck is required for the retiring Sunda Thrush. The forest edge often produces considerable bird activity including Short-tailed Starling, Gray-cheeked Green Pigeon, Dark-backed Imperial Pigeon, Tenggara Whistler, the rather scarce and near-endemic Yellow-throated Hanging Parrot, Brown-cheeked Bulbul, localized Brown Honeyeater and a chance for Javan Owlet.

NIGHT: Bali Handara Golf Club Hotel, Bedugul

**August 19, Day 4: Bedugul to Bali Barat National Park.** After breakfast and some last-minute birding of the highlands for anything we may be missing, we will drive west to the splendid Bali Barat National Park. This reserve remains one of the last refuges for the critically endangered and striking Bali Myna. We will explore dry monsoon forests as well as patches of more humid lowland monsoon rainforest, mangrove, salt pans and savanna areas during our time here at the western end of Bali. Here we are close to the island of Java, separated by a narrow two-mile strait.

NIGHT: Mimpi Resort Menjangan, Bali Barat

**August 20-21, Days 5-6: Bali Barat National Park and Surrounds.** Our main target over the next two days will be the Bali Myna. Not only is it one of the most eye-catching of the entire world's starlings, pure white with a shaggy crest and blue eye ring, it is on the brink of extinction. This is due to relentless trapping of the species for the cage-bird trade. There are currently believed to be fewer than 150 birds left in the wild! We do, however, have an excellent chance of seeing this, Bali's only endemic species, during our time in the park.

There are plenty of interesting birds to search for here like the rare regional endemic Black-winged Myna, Pink-necked Green Pigeon, Zebra Dove, stunning Black-naped Monarch, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Plaintive Cuckoo, Freckle-breasted Woodpecker, Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike, White-shouldered Triller, flocks of Small Minivet, Lineated and Coppersmith Barbet, Oriental Dollarbird, Common Iora, Mangrove Whistler, Ashy and Hair-crested Drongo, Racket-tailed Treepie, Cinereous Tit, Oriental Magpie-Robin, Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker, Olive-backed Tailorbird, Lemon-bellied White-eye, and Ornate



Sunbird. Green Junglefowl is another species that occurs in good numbers. Blue-tailed and the stunning Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters can be found hawking insects from exposed perches. White-breasted Woodswallow, Grey-rumped Treeswift and both Linchi and White-nest Swiftlet forage overhead. Raptors here are well represented. On previous visits we have recorded Brahminy Kite, White-bellied Sea Eagle and the tiny Black-thighed Falconet. Another specialty is the splendid Javan Banded-Pitta, and we stand a good chance of tracking down this beauty.

An early morning excursion into the more humid monsoon forests brings us into the habitat of another suite of birds. Here we may find the scarce Fulvous-chested Jungle-flycatcher, the elusive Black-banded Barbet, Black-naped Fruit Dove and the cheerful Crescent-chested Babbler. A high-pitched squeak may alert us to the presence of another rainforest specialty, the tiny Rufous-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher. We will seek out noisy Oriental Pied Hornbills. Other birds we will look for include Orange-breasted Pigeon, Laced Woodpecker, Savanna and Large-tailed Nightjar, Javan Cuckoo-shrike, Malaysian Pied-Fantail, Scarlet Minivet, Bar-winged Prinia, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Sooty-headed and the now very scarce Ruby-throated Bulbul plus the Javan Myna.

The nearby coastline may yield quite a few additional birds including the scarce Beach Thick-knee, Lesser Adjutant and Great-billed Heron as well as Black-naped, Greater and Lesser Crested and Little Terns. A visit to a nearby salt works will produce a variety of wetland species including our best chances of Sunda Teal, close encounters with Javan Plover, the rare Malaysian Plover and White-headed Stilt. East Asian shorebirds will be arriving, and we have recorded Siberian Sand-Plover, Terek Sandpiper, Long-toed and Red-necked stint amongst other species.

Mammals we may encounter include the Long-tailed Macaques, many of which live around temples where they are held sacred. They can also be seen foraging on the tidal flats where they have earned themselves their alternative name of Crab-eating Macaque. Much scarcer are Ebony Leaf-Monkeys. This species is endemic to east Java and Bali. Troops of these black primates can be found in Bali Barat National Park and, if we are fortunate, we will also observe their bright chestnut youngsters. Javan Rusa Deer are quite common, and we should also see numerous Black-banded Squirrels. Also present are the huge Black Giant Squirrel, Barking Deer and Wild Boar.

If we have early success with all of our main targets in Bali, it is possible to spend a day birding in Gunung Ijen National Park in eastern Java. This park offers several potentially new birds for us. On our last tour amongst the new birds, we sighted were Red Junglefowl, Grey-breasted Partridge, Pink-headed Fruit-Dove, Sunda Cuckooshrike, Pied Shrike-Babbler, White-bellied Fantail, White-bibbed Babbler, Blue Nuthatch and Pale Blue Flycatcher.

NIGHTS: Mimpri Resort Menjangan, Bali Barat

**August 22, Day 7: Bali Barat-South Coast Bali.** After a final morning in Bali Barat, we will retrace our journey back to Denpasar in readiness for our onward flights tomorrow. During our farewell dinner, we will have much to recollect about our extraordinary journey exploring the wildlife and culture of Indonesia.

NIGHT: Ramayana Resort & Spa, Kuta, Denpasar

**August 23, Day 8: Departure for Home.** Participants are free to depart Denpasar (airport code DPS) at any time today.

## **Essential Tour Information**

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour will be limited to 8 participants. However, VENT reserves the right to increase the tour limit by one participant in order to accommodate a couple when only one space is available.

**TOUR LEADER:** This tour is led by **Dion Hobcroft**, assisted with a local leader.



**Dion Hobcroft** has been working for VENT since 2001. He has led many tours (more than 200) to Australia, New Guinea, New Zealand, Bhutan, Indonesia, India, China, Southwest Pacific, Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Malawi, Myanmar, Japan, Russia, Alaska, Tanzania, Uganda, Madagascar, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and the Antarctic. In 2007, 2013–2019, and 2021–2022 alone, Dion showed more than 2,000 species of birds to VENT clients. His informative, relaxed, and educational nature, combined with sharp eyes and ears, has established Dion as a favorite of many tour participants. His fieldwork for over 40 years on birds and other terrestrial vertebrates has allowed him to amass an extraordinary knowledge of the biodiversity in the Asia-Pacific region. Born in Tasmania and based in Sydney, Dion has traveled widely throughout Australasia, listing over 1,200 species, placing him in the top echelons of the region's birders.

He is very tuned-in to the songs of bird species in the Asia-Pacific region and specializes in rare and elusive species. He is delighted to show these skulking rarities to his travel companions. Dion has published several papers on field ornithology, served on national and state rare bird committees, managed *Birdline NSW*, run introduction to ornithology courses for Sydney University, and, before he traveled so continuously, was a popular speaker with various natural history societies. Dion has worked for many research and government agencies ranging from the Antarctic Division, Department of Environment NSW, Agriculture Protection WA, Taronga Zoo, Australian Museum, and the Queensland Department of Primary Industry. Dion lives in Sydney with his wife, Lise, and two grown-up children, Grace (age 24) and Daniel (age 19).

### **TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION**

**TOUR FEE:** The fee for Indonesia Highlights: Sulawesi, Java, & Komodo is **\$11,895** per person in double occupancy from Manado (tour ends in Denpasar). This includes all meals from dinner on Day 3 through breakfast on Day 17, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, internal flights (in economy class), and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour (if any) are included. The fee also excludes alcoholic beverages, laundry, personal expenses, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the "TIPPING" sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of \$800 will be added to your tour fee.

**TOUR FEE - Extension:** The fee for Indonesia Highlights: Bali Extension is **\$6,765** per person in double occupancy from Denpasar. This includes all meals from lunch on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 8, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services

provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour (if any) are included. The fee also excludes alcoholic beverages, laundry, personal expenses, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of \$650 will be added to your tour fee for the Bali Extension.

**Those combining the tours will receive a discount of \$500 per person, deducted from the main tour.**

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** To register for the tours, please contact the VENT office. The initial deposit for each tour is **\$1,000** per person. A second deposit for the main tour of **\$3,000** is due 210 days prior to departure (January 3, 2025). We accept MasterCard and Visa. If you choose not to register online, you may pay your deposit by credit card, check, money order, or bank transfer. If not paying online, or by card, your tour space will be held for 10 days pending receipt of your deposit.

**PAYMENTS:** All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days (March 3, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

**EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS:** Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

**EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES:** In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

**FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES:** In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

**TIPPING:** An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

**CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:**

**CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT** **On either tour:** Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 210 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 209 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. **For participants’ protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

<u>If participant cancels:</u>	<u>Participant’s refund will be:</u>
210 days or more before departure date	Your deposit(s) minus \$500*
209 to 151 days before departure date	No refund of the deposits, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
150 days or less before departure date	No refund available

\*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

**CANCELLATION BY VENT:** If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour



itinerary.

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.**

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

**MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT:** This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may **NOT** be available. **For this reason, travel insurance which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™ program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through Medjet and its MedjetAssist plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

**SUGGESTED OPTIONS:** To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet and its MedjetAssist® plan**. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

### **About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan**

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.\*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

\*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The "pay as you go" approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount

paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

### **About Medjet’s MedjetAssist Plan**

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company’s primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

### **GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

**AIR TRAVEL:** Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.\* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

\*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler’s consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

**BAGGAGE** The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your airline to find out specific weight restrictions. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government’s attempts to improve

airport security we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>.

We request you limit your baggage to one large duffel (or soft sided suitcase) and one carry-on bag. On the internal flights in Indonesia, a weight limit of 44 pounds (20kgs) is sometimes enforced. As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, essential toiletries, medications, important travel

documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on. When travelling, it is suggested that you wear clothing and a pair of shoes suitable for birding in case your baggage is delayed.

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

**PASSPORTS:** A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure is required for United States citizens, with at least two blank pages for entry stamps.

**VISAS:** A “Visa-On-Arrival” can be obtained directly when you land at the airport in Manado or Denpasar. This tourist visa costs US \$35 for a 30-day visa and is processed at the point of entry. Go to the U.S Department of State, Bureau of Consumer Affairs for the most updated information (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>). Non-U.S. citizens should check with the appropriate consulates or embassies. Also there is now a need to fill in an online customs declaration. Please check the link with the US State department.

## WHAT TO BRING

**CLOTHING:** As this trip combines birding in the field with leisure, you will want to pack a mix of clothing that prepares you for both activities. Dress will be casual, and it is a good idea to wear dark, muted colors while in the field as this helps to prevent spooking shy forest birds and mammals, so please avoid light or bright colors. Laundry service is possible in most locations where we spend two nights.

### The following items are recommended:

- *Field Clothing:* Lightweight, dull-colored field clothing is recommended throughout the trip. This includes several pairs of pants and cool, comfortable long-sleeved shirts for protection from the sun and possibly mosquitoes. Outdoor stores such as Cabela’s and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of lightweight, yet durable materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular.
- *Hat:* A dull-colored hat for protection from the sun is essential.
- *Pants and Shorts:* Many people prefer lightweight pants made of cotton or other material, but denim is certainly acceptable. A pair or two of shorts will be desirable when resting in the middle of the day.
- *Shirts:* Several t-shirts (long and short-sleeved) in addition to other comfortable styles suitable for warm weather.
- *Socks:* Long socks are useful so that you can tuck in your pants and further avoid biting insects.
- *Swim Suit:* A swim suit is useful as some hotels have a swimming pool.
- *Sweaters and Coats:* Warm weather will be the rule on this trip, but a sweater, light coat

or jacket will come in handy in highland locations like Tomohon (Sulawesi), Ruteng (Flores) and Bedugul (Bali) some mornings and evenings.

- *Raingear*: Raingear is always essential in the Indonesian tropics, with an umbrella and/or light weight poncho being very useful.
- *Footwear*: As we will be out in the field for much of the time in the mornings and afternoons, it is very important that you are equipped with suitable protection and support for your feet and ankles. Light-weight boots, of gore-tex or similar material that come up to the ankle and have a good lug-sole are ideal. Many people are apprehensive that these will be too heavy; this is not true. The protection, grip, and day-long comfort such boots afford is superior to sneakers and training shoes. You may also prefer sandals and/or tennis shoes for time in between birding and the evenings.

**EQUIPMENT:** One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip to Indonesia:

- *Backpack* – Good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment. A waterproof backpack or a supply of plastic bags inside will help prevent passports and electrical items getting wet if it rains heavily.
- *Notebooks and pens*
- *Travel alarm clock or mobile phone alarm clock (essential)*
- *Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection.*
- *Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions* – Essential items for any trip to the Tropics, and especially this trip where UV radiation can cause sunburn remarkably quickly
- *Personal toiletries* – Including spare glasses or contact lenses
- *Umbrella* – A small, collapsible type is easy to carry and useful both against rain and sun
- *Cameras, lenses, film, memory cards, and extra batteries* – UV and polarizing filters are recommended
- *Plastic bags* – Plastic bags are very useful to protect equipment from rain and dust
- *Collapsible walking stick* – A highly recommended item for those who need assistance with balance on trails
- *Tissue packs include handy wipes plus hand sanitizer*
- *Water bottle*
- *Flashlight or headlamp* – We may be out at night on a few occasions, and furthermore, a small flashlight or headlamp may be handy for moving around your room at night.

**Binoculars** – We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

**Spotting Scopes** – Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.



## **DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS**

**CLIMATE:** We should expect a range of temperature and weather conditions over the course of the trip, with considerable variety possible from one day to the next. Generally, it will be deliciously cool in the morning hours, but becoming warm to hot during the afternoon. However, the Lesser Sundas tend to be dry rather than humid. Temperatures will range from the 70s to the low 90s. As Indonesia is a tropical location, rain is an ever-present possibility. Precipitation usually occurs in the form of heavy but short-lived showers. At night and in the early morning it will be cooler in the hill forests and mountains of Sulawesi, Flores and Bali. We recommend bringing a sweater, and other warm clothes for these destinations.

**CONDITIONS:** This is not a strenuous trip but conditions can be hot and humid and we will be on foot for extended times. You do need to be moderately fit and have reasonable mobility to get the most out of this tour. Walking conditions on land are generally not difficult, yet it is important to pay close attention to footing and terrain. We will visit several large forest reserves where we will stick to established roads and trails but may go off trail if local guides have found rare or interesting birds or have bird-viewing hides set up. There will be few really rigorous walks or uphill jaunts, however, it is always possible we may encounter mud, slippery surfaces, and stony ground. Rain may make walking more slippery and hazardous. We will be on our feet for most of the time we are birding in the mornings and afternoons, for this reason it is **MOST IMPORTANT** that you provide suitable protection and support for your feet and ankles (read more on footwear below). A collapsible portable seat and a walking stick can be very useful. Both can be left in the vehicles so they are always accessible when you are birding. We will also have night time viewing operations for owls, nightjars and frogmouths so a flashlight or head torch is necessary so you can watch your footing. Any difficult off trail walks and night walks are optional and it is typically easy to opt out and wait back at the vehicle or with local guides (who are excellent) till we rejoin up.

Birding in Indonesia is challenging as bird hunting and trapping is an ongoing conservation problem. Most birds are shy and averse to close approach. Most birding is done in rainforest with tall trees and limited light. If bird photography is your major drive you may need to temper your expectations. You will get best results with long lens photography and high shutter speeds. That being said we typically see hundreds of bird species and there are good to excellent photographic opportunities particularly at bird hides. The trip reports give a very accurate idea of what we will encounter. Inside the bird hides you may need to sit still and quietly for extended times and viewing is only through a narrow portal which can make it frustrating. Typically, though patience and quiet are rewarded with stellar views of sometimes mythical birds. When playing for secretive birds it is important for everyone to place themselves four people on either side of leader, keep still and keep quiet and keep focused! We try our very best to show you the birds and other wildlife.

**CURRENCY:** The official currency of Indonesia is the Indonesian Rupiah (IDR). **Please ensure your US notes are in good condition (unmarked, folded or damaged in anyway) otherwise the trading agency may sometimes refuse to accept them.**

You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting “XE-The World’s Favorite Currency Site” at: <http://www.xe.com/>. While U.S. Dollars MIGHT be accepted in large cities and shops, it is always convenient to have a supply of both U.S. Dollars and Indonesian Rupiah (IDR) for such items as taxi rides, gifts, laundry, meals and refreshments on your own, and any personal items. Small denominations of cash are always best as it is easier for individuals and businesses to provide change. Should you extend your vacation in Indonesia beyond what is offered in the program, you should strongly consider obtaining local

currency. ATM machines can be found in large cities, such as Jakarta, but only sparingly in some towns. American Express, Visa and MasterCard credit cards are accepted in hotels and better restaurants in the major cities but may not be accepted in smaller restaurants and shops. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

**ELECTRICITY:** Electricity while at hotels in Indonesia is 220V (50/60 hertz), with the recessed outlets of the three-pin, rectangular blade British type G. To use American standard 110V equipment with the flat-pronged plugs, a converter as well as an adapter plug will be required. **The electricity supply at Tangkoko Lodge is unstable, and power may be unavailable for air conditioning in the rooms during the afternoon break time.**

**LANGUAGE:** There are about 300 distinct native ethnicities in Indonesia and 742 different languages and dialects. The official language of Indonesia is Bahasa, which is a form of Malay.

**INTERNET:** Wifi is available at each hotel on the tour however the connection may be unstable at Ruteng, in Flores and Tangkoko.

**TIME:** With its diffuse geographic layout, Indonesia sprawls across three different time zones. At the time of this tour, the part of Indonesia where we will spend the majority of our time is 12 hours ahead of Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Jakarta is 11 hours ahead of EDT.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

**HEALTH** At the time of publication, no vaccinations are required for entry into Indonesia. VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

Temperatures in Indonesia are warm throughout the year. You should be prepared to spend several hours outdoors in temperatures that may reach into the 90s, with high humidity. Participants should be active and in a good state of health in order to participate fully during this tour. A serious health emergency in Indonesia may result in an air evacuation.

Most excursions involve a fair amount of standing and quite a bit of walking, occasionally over rough or wet ground and sometimes uphill. Mobility is essential.

The sun's ultraviolet rays may be dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes). Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect

yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We also strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

Although we expect mild sea conditions on the boat ride between Labuan Bajo and Komodo, passengers should be prepared for the possibility of challenging seas. We recommend that you consult your physician on any appropriate motion medication.

**COVID-19:** We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19.

**PERSONAL SECURITY:** During the tour, it is always a good idea to lock your bags when possible, and leave your valuables in the hotel safe or carry them on your person.

**FOOD AND WATER:** All raw food consumed away from major hotels is subject to contamination. Particularly in areas where hygiene and sanitation are inadequate, travelers should avoid salads, uncooked vegetables, and unpasteurized milk and milk products such as cheese, and eat only food that has been cooked and is still hot or fruit that has been peeled by the traveler personally. Cooked food that has been allowed to stand for several hours at ambient temperature can provide a fertile medium for bacterial growth, so if you sample local delicacies from a street vendor, be sure that the food is cooked in front of you. Drink only bottled or boiled water and canned or bottled beverages. Avoid drinks with ice. If a can or bottle has been in ice, be sure to dry it off before drinking directly from the container.

**INSECTS:** Biting insects such as mosquitoes and sand-flies can occasionally, but rarely on this tour, be a problem. Leeches are possible in Way Kambas but elsewhere are rare to non-existent. Insect problems are best dealt with by wearing long-sleeved shirts of sufficient thickness and density of weave that the “bugs” cannot bite through, long trousers tucked into long socks, and liberal coatings of Cutters or OFF. We recommend the pump-style containers.

There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin. Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- **DEET** (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- **Picaridin:** A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- **Herbal insect repellents:** Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- **Permanone® (Permethrin)** is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of

clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

- **Insect Shield® apparel:** Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks. [Which Insect Repellent is Right for You?](#)

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

## **SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION**

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) which has a wide selection; [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com) and [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com) which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

The most important field guides for this trip are:

**Eaton, James A. et al. *Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago*. Lynx Edicions 2021 (latest edition).** Finally, the long-awaited complete field guide to the birds of the Greater Sundas and Wallacea—well illustrated with concise text and updated taxonomy. Definitely the book for this tour. Please note this book has split many species, illustrated several wholly new species and rebranded many birds with new names to better reflect their relationships.

**MacKinnon, John and Phillipps, Karen. *A Field Guide to the Birds of Borneo, Sumatra, Java and Bali*. Oxford University Press 1994.** Very useful in Sumatra, Java and Bali with some limited carry over to Sulawesi and Flores, but now very much out of date.

### ***Other Field Guides:***

Caulfield, C. *In the Rainforest—Report from a Strange, Beautiful, Imperiled World*. University of Chicago Press, 1986 (reprint).

Das, Indraneil. *A Field Guide to the Reptiles of South-East Asia: Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore, Sumatra, Borneo, Java, Bali*. New Holland. 2010. An absolutely superb field guide covering all of the reptiles found in the areas above many of which are found in the area visited.

Daws, Gavan and Marty Fujita. *Archipelago: The Islands of Indonesia from the Nineteenth-Century Discoveries of Alfred Russell Wallace to the Fate of Forests and Reefs in the Twenty-First Century*.



California University Press, 1999. A simply stunning coffee table book. Will make you want to go everywhere in Indonesia!

Diamond, J. M. *Guns, Germs and Steel*. 1997 W. W. Norton & Company, New York. This is the famous Pulitzer prize-winning book that should be compulsory reading for every man, woman and child on our planet.

Lonely Planet Travel Guides: *Indonesia* by B Delahunty, P Greenway, J Lyon, C Taylor, P Turner and D Willett. Lonely Planet, Edition 8, 2007.

McNeely, Jeffrey A. and Paul Spencer Sochaczewski. *Soul of the Tiger: Searching for Nature's Answers in Exotic Southeast Asia*. University of Hawaii Press, 1995.

Strange, Morten. *A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Indonesia*. Princeton University Press, 2003. There is some excellent contemporary literature about Indonesia, including its natural history and its wildlife. The following is a small selection of titles that may be of interest.

Turner, Peter. Lonely Planet Travel Guides: *Indonesia's Eastern Islands*. Lonely Planet Publications, 1998.

Richards, P.W. *The Tropical Rain Forest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Wallace, A.R. *The Malay Archipelago*. Revised edition. New York: Dover Publications, 1962. This is still the best book written on the natural history of this region and a fascinating account of Wallace's explorations.

White, C.M.N. and M.D. Bruce. *The Birds of Wallacea*. An Annotated Checklist. British Ornithologists Union, 1986.

Whitmore, T.C. *Tropical Rain Forests of the Far East*. London: Oxford University Press, 1984. Whitmore, T.C.

Palms of Malaya. 2nd edition. Kuala Lumpur: O.U.P., 1977.

## **TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc.**, a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on November 20, 2025 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

View the complete [Terms and Conditions](#) on our website.

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