Philippines: Palawan Endemics

January 11th – 18th, 2026

Lovely Sunbird by Luis Gonzalez

After Indonesia, the Philippines has the highest level of bird endemism on earth, with nearly 300 species found exclusively on these islands that continue to be destroyed more and more each day. The island of Palawan alone, is home to 27 endemics found only on that island, on top of many other Philippines and restricted specialties only shared with Borneo and/or Sulawesi, Indonesia. While this was not originally a birding trip, a chance to visit the Philippines involves getting in a little bit of birding to ensure that some of these birds went into my life list. Thankfully, the main goal of the trip, my girlfriend, was more than willing to share one of our outings to the world-famous Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park with a day of birding, along with another full day and a morning to it. Needless to say, I was incredibly thankful for her giving heart that allowed me to do this, and even her going out of the way to find a hotel that had some forest and beach around the property that helped me pad out the list.

The trip itself was incredibly successful, managing to encounter 118 species, of these 2 were heard only, but 25 of the endemics were seen, with the only misses being the montane specialty Palawan Striped-Babbler, and sadly the Palawan Peacock-Pheasant whose hide was empty due to the presence of a troupe of (Philippine) Long-tailed Macaques, but you can't get them all. As usual with my trips abroad, I counted on the expert help of a local guide John Stephen (Step) Tuboc and driver Marlon, they are an incredible team that

managed to arrange everything for me, including visits to the Irawan Eco Park and Birdwing hide, and the Mantanani Scops-Owl boat ride. I can confidently say that without their help, half of the endemics would not be in my life list.

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Spotted Wood-Owl by Luis Gonzalez

Detailed Itinerary

January 9-11 (Flight to Palawan, Philippines)

Preparing for 30+ hours of travel time is never easy, and while I don't have a single complaint on the on-board service of Philippine Airlines, the headaches their booking system gave me deserve mention as it is not the airline to use if you have short layovers, are used to having the tickets on your phone or simply wish to pick your seats on the plane! Thankfully, nothing crazy happened to me on the way to Manila, and outside of some minor issues with how my carry-on became a checked bag when switching airlines, I arrived to my destination on time and with plenty of waiting for my girlfriend to arrive through her flight. While waiting, a noticed a few species around the airport, **Eastern Cattle-Egret**, **White-breasted Woodswallow**, and my first lifer of the trip in the shape of **Gray-rumped Swiftlet**. No proper birding was done today but having arrived to our lodging for the upcoming week, Summer Days Cafe, we were too busy trying to eat something, showering and greeting a wonderfully firm bed with a nice A/C, the perfect way to begin a jetlagged vacation!

Chinese Egret by Luis Gonzalez

January 12 (Relaxing at the hotel and exploring Puerto Princesa)

Early wake up time courtesy of the ever-present jetlag had us taking an early morning walk to the beach and back before breakfast. The tides in the area are a bit extreme and much more consistent than in other parts of the world, so every morning, we were seeing an incredible lowtide that left the area open for shorebirds and waders as far as the eye can see, but by 11AM, the same spot would be nearly 2 meters underwater. During our time, I was slowly getting used to what was around and outside of dozens of **Great**, **Little** and **Medium Egret** on the horizon, a cooperative **Chinese Egret** provided some amazing excitement in the early morning light. This species is a regular winter resident in the Philippines, but actually finding one can be difficult in Palawan due to the lack of access to mudflats with mangrove cover. Other species we noted this morning included 2 pairs of **Collared Kingfisher**, a wintering **Gray-streaked Flycatcher**, flocks of **Asian Glossy Starling** and our first **Palawan Sunbird** of the trip. After a breakfast, whose best point was the coffee, I kept watch around the garden grounds of the property, which helped me get my first **Pale Spiderhunter** of the trip, along with nesting pairs of **Zebra Dove** and **White-bellied Munia**, and a calling **Pygmy Flowerpecker**. Overall, great start to a region where I had little to no experience with the native species.

Pale Spiderhunter and White-bellied Munia by Luis Gonzalez

Our plans for the rest of the day had us taking a tricycle to the Palawan Heritage Center, the Cathedral and ending at the Baywalk Park, birds were few and far between as we enjoyed the more historical side of the island, but the empty Baywalk reminded us that we had to come in the late afternoon/evening to enjoy all the food stands that make the area popular, but adding **Black-headed Gull** and **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** to the

list was a pleasant bonus. A stop on a mall on the way back had us browsing for a bit, buying some essentials (water and snacks), and lunch at a Jollibee's.

The final bit of birding was around the hotel, as intel from Step mentioned that a loose flock of Philippine Cockatoo were roosting around the hotel area. Sadly these raucous parrots were not seen, however, the wait provided some variety with my first decent views of *Northern Palawan Tree Squirrel*, while they disturbed the local bird species, highlights included **Greater Coucal**, **Ashy-fronted Bulbul**, **Pied Triller**, **Ashy (Sooty)** and **Palawan Drongo** in the bushes, while skies were covered with mixed Swiftlet flocks that included **White-nest (Germain's)** and **Ameline Swiftlet**, and a loud group of **Palawan Crow** provided the compensation for the cockatoo. Sleep came early, as the 4AM pickup time by Step for our first day of birding was coming tomorrow.

Palawan Crow and Palawan Flowerpecker by Luis Gonzalez

January 13 (Sabang and Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park)

At a prompt 4AM pickup time we meet with Step and his go-to driver, Marlon, inside the comfortable Toyota we begin a drive to the Buenavista View Deck, but not before stopping to get some bags of freshly made pandesal and sharing a breakdown of some of my non-endemic targets in case we run into them. Around 5AM, we arrived at the viewpoint and promptly began going on a downhill trail in hopes of finding a **Palawan Scops-Owl**, which is considered one of the toughest endemics of the island. Luck was on our side, as within 10 minutes we had one respond to us! This back and forth continued for a bit, but eventually we got identifiable views of this adorable owl, while our thermals picked up a heat signature that would become a vocal, but

impossible to see, **Philippine Pitta** when the sun came out, other skulker of our owling session was a **Palawan Frogmouth**, that although we could easily hear, it's location further downhill made it unlikely to be seen, especially since cloud-less sky with a beautiful moon makes it really tough to spot nocturnal species.

Palawan Scops-Owl by Floris Huisman

When the sun came out, we went back to the viewing deck, where the morning chorus provided a great variety of lifers while we tried to have a sip of coffee. One of the first birds we heard was a **Great Slaty Woodpecker**, but seeing how the bird was flying over a mile away from us, it would not stick around, soon other calls we would hear, but not see, included **Black-chinned Fruit-Dove**, **Rufous-tailed Tailorbird** and **Pin-striped (Palawan) Tit-Babbler**. At this point, the potential of a birder seemed to appear in my girlfriend, since she could not tell what species we looked at, but knew how to spot them and when something was different, in her attempts to locate birds new species came forward like **Yellow-throated Leafbird**, **Purple-throated Sunbird** and **Chestnut-breasted Malkoha**. Other noteworthy species that we encountered during our hour here included **Pygmy Swiftlet**, **Fiery Minivet**, **Black-headed Bulbul**, **Palawan Flowerpecker** and the first pair of **Blue-naped Parrot** of our trip.

As Step noticed some oddly early travelers for the Underground River, we decided to speed up our visit there, and this turned out to be for the best, as there was a cruise ship's worth of participants coming, and they were set to close off any other visitors waiting while those explored the cave. The boat ride there was relaxed and the only bird of note was a pair of **Pacific Reef-Heron** (both light and dark morph), once on the island, we were greeted by some bold *(Philippine) Long-tailed Macaque* and an even bolder *Palawan Monitor*, the latter was only seen here during our time in Palawan. The underground river itself is an unforgettable experience, but not a place to explore if claustrophobia, nyctophobia or chiroptophobia are in your plate as the caves are barely

large enough for some rafts to pass through most parts, dark outside of the boatman's lamp and filled to the brim with bat colonies, we could only identify one of the reported species here, *Diadem Roundleaf Bat*, but it was mainly due to call recordings, there's not enough light for proper photography in this site. Once out, we were greeted by Step and he happily told us that a day-roosting pair of **Palawan Scops-Owl** was in the usual site in case we wanted to see it, thankfully the walk wasn't long, though crossing a bridge made out of branches in sandals left something to be desired. We encountered the cute pair, and I got some shots, before we headed back to the beach to return to Sabang. By this point, we only noticed a **Common Kingfisher** and a **Peregrine Falcon**, which briefly made me wonder if I was in the Philippines or somewhere in Europe, but we arrived back on the mainland around 10, with enough time for us to buy some snacks and leave before the big crowds arrived.

Leaf-throated Leafbird by Luis Gonzalez

Hitting a forested trail in the Sabang area when the day began getting hot was not in anyone's priority, but with what limited time I had to get the endemics, this would do. In little under an hour, we encountered a flyover **Gray-faced Buzzard**, an incredibly cooperative male **Lovely Sunbird**, a skulkish **Ventriloquial Oriole**, a pair of showy **Yellow-throated Leafbird**, and a vocal **Western (Philippine) Hooded Pitta**. Our lunch break in the Cacaoyan Restaurant was just what we needed, as an open buffet for 200PHP per person is a steal, and the grounds of the hotel can be really birdy in the right hours. However, we began birding at the peak of dead-o-clock, so instead of finding nice flocks of birds, we settled with brief, but IDable views of **Pin-striped (Palawan) Tit-Babbler**, along the best possible views of **Palawan Tit** and a female **Palawan Flowerpecker**. As we headed back out, we noticed a **(Northern) Oriental Honey-Buzzard** in the distance that provided identifiable scope views on one stop, while the second gave us a pair of **Oriental Hobby**, at this point the

beginner birder decided that she'd prefer to take a break in the car, so we indulged her while Step and I continued birding on foot.

Philippine Hooded Pitta and Palawan Sunbird by Luis Gonzalez

Our stop around the highway through Cabayugan was the definition of slow start as we couldn't hear or see anything outside of a briefly cooperative **Rufous-tailed Tailorbird**, by this point, even Step was confused and disappointed but all doubt cleared when we had a **Crested Goshawk** perched less than 20ft from us scanning the area! After a few shots and a laugh, we decided to continue downhill as no bird would be crazy enough to come out while this guy was hanging around. This decision paid well as we soon had a flyover pair of **Red-headed Flameback**, followed by a **Spot-throated Flameback** that did stick around, other birds we noted in the area were many of the same we had so far, with **Gray-throated** and **Sulphur-bellied Bulbul** being the only additions to the list. Back on the view deck, we had a short coffee break, with only a **Pygmy Swiftlet** giving better views than in the morning being the highlight.

The next stop were the mangroves of Buenavista, a site that could potentially pay big as Stork-billed Kingfisher, Mangrove (Philippine) Blue Flycatcher, and Copper-throated Sunbird can readily be seen. Of these, only the **Copper-throated Sunbird** cooperated, but we also managed great views of a new family for me in the shape of **Common Iora**, and we also completed the potential Sunbird list when a male **Brown-throated Sunbird** sang in the mangroves. A special mention goes to *Banded Archerfish* and *Barred Mudskipper*, two incredibly cool fish species that I had only seen on videos until that point in my life. The final stop of the day promised one key target and potentially a few bonuses, the bonuses arrived first as we added **White-breasted Waterhen**, **Lesser Coucal** and **Eastern Yellow Wagtail** to the list, but the bonus highlight was a male **Blue**

Paradise-Flycatcher that zipped around while we waited for a beautiful pair of **Spotted Wood-Owl** to come out for the night! For the next 40 minutes, we stayed in the company of these birds as they went about calling, preening and overall, just being a reminder why owls are great, even the beginner birder got up and ready to see them which delighted her as before this trip, she had never seen owls or even used a pair of binoculars. We were dropped off at the hotel around 6PM and were reminded that pickup time tomorrow was 3:30AM, as we had a long drive south for a very special set of species.

Palawan Tit by Luis Gonzalez

January 14 (Narra, Napsan and Puerto Princesa)

The 3:30AM pickup was on point and after buying 2 bags of pandesal, we were on our way to Zigzag Road in hopes of getting eyes on a Palawan Frogmouth. On the drive there, we smelled the traces of a Palawan Stink-badger, but in Steps own words, chances that the culprit is around were nearly 0, so on we went. During this session, the moon continued shining brightly, which made is difficult for the two **Palawan Frogmouth** that we heard to come out to the playback, but the thermal/spotlight combo was nice to find some roosting species like **Pale Spiderhunter**, **Lovely Sunbird** and **Sulphur-bellied Bulbul** before heading out to Narra for sunrise.

While napping on the drive, we arrived to the backroads and farming areas leading Panacan Pier, this habitat provided a new set of species we hadn't seen yet for the trip, like **Red** and **Philippine Collared-Dove**, **Purple Heron** and **Paddyfield Pipit**, along with a surprise flyover Philippine Duck. However, the real target of the morning were the loose flocks of **Philippine Cockatoo** that roost in the nearby Rasa Island, but return daily to the mainland to find food. After a few brief sightings and jumpscares, I managed to photograph 2 of the 16 Cockatoos seen that morning as we caught them returning back to the island, which made the drive worth it. After our time here, we made a second run of the rice fields, in hopes of refinding the Duck, but only thing we got to show for it were loose flocks of **Chestnut** and **Scaly-breasted Munia** before going for coffee and heading back north.

Philippine Cockatoo and Palawan Fairy-bluebird by Luis Gonzalez

On the drive, Step double-checked my targets list and made the last-minute decision of skipping Zigzag Road and going to the newly established Napsan Road, which seemed to hold our best chances for the missing endemics on the list. This got us arriving to Napsan around 9:30AM, which meant we missed peak morning hours, but in its place, the lighting conditions and weather were perfect to photograph our remaining targets. The first species that welcomed us as we scanned and failed to find Blue-headed Racquet-tail was **Common Hill Myna**, this road turned out to be an amazing site for them and we would encounter small flocks throughout our time here. As the day was heating up, we encountered some flyover raptors in the forms of **Changeable Hawk-Eagle** and **Crested Serpent-Eagle**, but soon our attention turned to the trees by the road as a beautiful male **Palawan Fairy-bluebird** came close for incredible views! As we scanned for mixed flocks, a casual comment about how difficult Palawan Hornbill seems to be manifested a male in the canopy of a tree close to the road. By this point we had spent over an hour on the road and the morning felt successful,

despite of the construction being done about half a mile away from us, we made a stop at a vantage point in hopes of finding Black-chinned Fruit-Dove or the undescribed form of Palawan Cuckoo-Dove, but sadly neither species was in the area. In its place, we had Marlon bringing the scope out of the car and casually pointing to a fruiting tree that was filled with birds! During the next half hour, we had 2 **Palawan Fairy-bluebird**, 2 **Yellow-throated Leafbird**, 4 **Palawan Hornbill** and 6 **Common Hill Myna** coming to this one tree, the day seemed like it reached a new high point.

Palawan Hornbill by Luis Gonzalez

The joy continued as Step had heard a pair of Falcated Wren-Babbler calling downhill, we moved to a better site and with a bit of playback heard one respond in the distance, but no further replies. The silence and lack of a decent vantage point kept us on the edge for about 10 minutes and as Step was ready to call it, the Wren-Babbler began blasting its song right in front of us, leaving Step and I giving our best impression of a surprised owl with our eyes wide open and mouths agape. Eventually, this surprise turned into a worry for Step as there was no good viewing point for the bird, but I quickly said, "no need, I see it", and sure enough, the **Falcated Wren-Babbler** came out in the gap of the understory and began singing to its heart's content right in front of us! I had no words to describe the joy as we spent 5-10 minutes enjoying this skulkish mega, but Step had one word in mind: "SHIT!", this got me laughing but he then proceeded to explain that this is a bird that it needs 30 minutes to an hour of preparation for only a few seconds of viewing, the fact that we got one after 10 minutes of trying and us just standing there like dummies is unheard of. By this point, we went downhill and had lunch in a nice little restaurant across from the Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center.

Falcated Wren-Babbler and Philippine Pitta by Luis Gonzalez

With the Wildlife Rescue being our next stop, and being a bit ahead of schedule, Step took his time to show me some of the Saltwater Crocodiles kept in the center due to their troublesome encounters with humans, the first one left the biggest impression as we walked over a metal bridge and below it was a monstrous male that easily reached 20ft long, my fight or flight instinct was screaming at me to get the hell out of there, but I still made sure to look at it along with a specimen of Philippine Crocodile that looked tiny by comparison. Eventually, we turned back to birding, and after confirming that no Malayan Night-Heron was roosting by the canal, we moved into the forest where a surprise pair of **Palawan Hornbill** were seen, but the mixed flocks of the area revealed a lot of the usual, but provided views of a female **Blue Paradise-Flycatcher** and a wintering **Arctic Warbler**. As we finished the loop back to the car, we had a brief encounter with an **Ashy-headed Babbler**, and a second look at the canal provided a **Gray Wagtail** for the list.

Little after 2:00PM, we arrived at the Irawan Eco Park, a very popular destination for birding in Palawan, as it was one of the first places where hides were made to bring birders and photographers close to some of the more difficult species of the island. On the walk in we got the best views of **Dollarbird**, **Chestnut-breasted Malkoha** and **Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo** of the trip, but little of note until we reached the first hide, once here, a gigantic **Stork-billed Kingfisher** was posing for photos and not 10 seconds after I saw it, the bird disappeared downstream and its spot was taken by a **Blue-eared Kingfisher**. These widespread species were an amazing start to the site, and soon I was greeting by a male Palawan Blue Flycatcher before the groundskeeper called us to go to the second hide where the "premium birds" tend to hang around. Not one minute into this forest and we had a male **Palawan Flycatcher** and a **Western (Philippine) Hooded**

Pitta fighting for the grubs the groundskeeper was throwing around. The next hour was spent trying to get better views of these species, along with **White-vented Shama**, **Gray-throated Bulbul** and the surprise appearances of a **Philippine Pitta** and a **Rufous-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher**! The lighting conditions made it really difficult to photograph most of the time, thankfully, the birds kept coming around and eventually I managed decent shots for all the key targets of the hide. The walk back to the car was uneventful, with the exception that we manage to coax one of the **Palawan Babbler** we had heard on the way in out of hiding, and helping us get the last endemic possible in the park.

Blue-eared Kingfisher and Blue-naped Parrot by Luis Gonzalez

By 5:00PM, we were waiting for our boat to find the Mantanani Scops-Owl on the offshore Cana Island, but the early arrival meant that we had some time to waste, which we made good use as we added **Golden-bellied Gerygone** to the list and I managed to get decent photos of **Blue-naped Parrot** and **Pygmy Flowerpecker**. Eventually, the boat arrived, we greeted the captain, who is also the man in charge of the Birdwing hide where I was going to be in a few days, once on the island, the quest is straightforward, we walked in to the more forested area in the back, played the call once, and boom, we got a **Mantanani Scops-Owl**. Back on the mainland, we stopped in a park next to the city hall and quickly had a **Large-tailed Nightjar** roosting despite the crowds and large music playing, the bird didn't seem too disturbed, but unfortunately, our final target would mind all the commotion. The green sites within Puerto Princesa are becoming few and far in-between, and the final place that Step had for us to find the **Palawan Frogmouth** showed that nothing beats unnecessary development and human encroachment, the unusually busy road made it impossible for the calling Frogmouth to come out and a newly erected fence made it clear that we weren't welcomed in the

forest, after 30 minutes of trying and hoping that the traffic would stop, we had nothing to show for it, except a *Tokay Gecko*, Step recommended that I try for it in Napsan on Friday when I go to the Birdwing hide. We called it a night after what was an incredibly successful day, that left me with only 3 possible endemics left on the list, this shows how much experience and knowledge Step had in the area and getting you the right contacts to visit some of these sites, but also the driving and spotting capabilities of Marlon, without them, I'd likely be back home with less than 15 Palawan endemics on my life list.

Mantanani Scops-Owl by Luis Gonzalez

January 15 (Relaxing around Summer Days Cafe)

With no planned birding today, I decided to "sleep in" until 6AM and after doing a quick pandesal and coffee run, we went to the mudflats close to the hotel in hopes of finding something worthwhile. This decision paid off, as soon we were making our way through the flats and identifying dozens of wintering shorebirds and waders. The big stand-outs included 3 **Chinese Egret**, among the flocks of **Great**, **Medium** and **Little Egret**, but on the shorebird side, the trip birds came in quickly as dozens of **Pacific Golden-Plover** and **Gray-tailed Tattler** hid individuals of less bold species like **Greater** and **Siberian Sand-Plover**, **Common Greenshank** and a single **Curlew Sandpiper**. Back at the beach, we noted a single **Copper-throated Sunbird** and had our fun watching a flock of **Blue-naped Parrot** foraging over our heads. The rest of the day was mainly relaxing and trying out restaurants around Puerto Princesa.

Palawan Frogmouth by Luis Gonzalez

January 16 (Napsan and Birdwing Hide)

Last morning of proper birding had me greeting the driver that Step arranged to take me to the Birdwing hide and arriving a bit earlier to do some extra owling. In-route, I was informed that Step had a different birder to show around today, their first spot was Napsan Road for the Palawan Frogmouth, and he asked the driver to follow their vehicle so that he could help me get the bird. As was the trend, we spent about 30 minutes listening and searching, but this time, persistence paid off and we had a **Palawan Frogmouth** cooperating for photos above our heads! Finally getting to see this Muppet of a bird gave Step and I a big relief, and soon we said goodbye as they went to try for the Palawan Scops-Owl and I took a power nap in the car until sunrise.

Around 6:00AM, I heard a car go by ours and it was Step with no luck on the Scops-Owl, but since they had 3 days' worth of birding, spending some time around the Birdwing property was the best course of action for both him and me. Sure enough, in the first 10 minutes, I was adding species I had missed in the prior days like **Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike**, **Velvet-fronted Nuthatch** and **Asian (Northern) Brown Flycatcher**. The excitement quickly escalated as a pair of **Great Slaty Woodpecker** landed in the snags in front of us, while a **Red-headed Flameback** flew over, a **White-bellied Woodpecker** waited for its turn on the snag, and pair of **Spot-throated Flameback** bickered around us, getting all 4 Palawan Woodpeckers in quick succession! The final highlight before being guide to the hide were the vocal flocks of **Blue-headed Racquet-tail**, first seen perched and then in flight, these adorable parrots were a reminder that time of day is everything, as we had failed to hear even one two days ago, but today I was seeing over 20 in the trees.

Blue-headed Racquet-tail and Red-headed Flameback by Luis Gonzalez

By 7:00AM, I was being read the rules of the hide, which were common sense, but an important reminder to some passionate birders (ie: no playback from within the hide and no smoking allowed). The trail to the hide was muddy and a bit slippery, but a short walk overall, once in the hide, the owner threw crushed corn and decided to go back up, while the hide guide and I waited. In the next hour, I would be overwhelmed by the sheer number of *Northern Palawan Tree Squirrel* and **Asian Emerald Dove** that would come to eat the crushed corn, a pair of *Palawan Treeshrew* would also be in attendance but they would rarely join the eating party. Eventually the wait turned into two hours, the hide guide instructed me to be extra quiet and to avoid movement since he heard the Peacock-Pheasant, however, the only sound I heard were the snapping of branches by a troupe of macaques. At this point, I should have realized that this was a failed endeavor and the look of worry and frustration on the guide told the whole story. For the following two hours, it became a horrible game of keep the monkeys away and we were losing. This isn't to say that the hide was empty, far from it, new species would appear and provide some of the most mouth-watering photo ops of my life, I had enough shots of **Sulphur-bellied Bulbul**, **Ashy-headed Babbler**, **Palawan Blue Flycatcher** and **White-vented Shama** to fill a gallery, but the main star, and the reason why this hide is a steep $100USD per person was not going to come out with those macaques around.

Ashy-headed Babbler and Palawan Treeshrew by Luis Gonzalez

For the curious, the Palawan Peacock-Pheasant is bar-none, the toughest endemic of the island, pre-Covid there was an individual that was habituated to people in the Subterranean River, but since it passed away, the species has become dubious (tour companies counting recently individuals from the Wildlife Rescue) or just impossible attempts in the forest to hopefully flush a bird on the difficult trails. The Birdwing hide was established in the last year or so, and the success rate for the species was above 70%, with some days having multiple individuals of different ages coming in, unfortunately, the main thing that keeps these birds away is the presence of macaques and as luck would have it, a fruiting tree right behind the hide was paradise for these difficult monkeys. After 4 hours, I decided to call it quits, since I had to go back to my girlfriend, and even though the guide said that the Peacock-Pheasant can come in as late as 3:00PM, I was not in the mood to do that, and I couldn't update anyone about my delay. On my way back, I wrote comments of my experience, which confirmed that the last sighting was of a male on Monday of that week, but the consolation prize was having an adult male **Red-headed Flameback** land in front of me and forage for the next few minutes, while I took some shots, I noticed a lizard next to it, which turned to be a *Palawan Gliding Dragon*, a cool pair of endemics to finish my quest in Palawan.

January 17 (Baker’s Hill and Baywalk)

No further birding was planned for the last two days, just some touristy activities to the Baker's Hill in the morning, however, when you get a partner that might secretly be enjoying your favorite hobby, you will not say no to the opportunity, we spent a couple of hours enjoying baked goods and walking, while my girlfriend point

at different birds and asked to see them in the bins or how to tell them apart. Most of the species were repeats, but she caught sight of a quarter of **Pink-necked Green-Pigeon**, which were a nice addition to the list, and it gave enough "oohs and ahs" for her to ask for a pair of binoculars for her birthday, so I guess that's a big win?

In the late afternoon, we decided to check out the Baywalk when it was actually active and the sheer number of stands selling various foods was enough of a highlight to celebrate our last night here, but as dusk arrived, we started noticing some weird birds above us, these "birds" soon came in dozens and with a quick scan were able to confirm these were actually *Large Flying-Foxes*! An incredible mammal to see and final highlight of the day.

White-vented Shama and Palawan Blue Flycatcher by Luis Gonzalez

January 18-19 (Summer Days Cafe and departure)

Our final morning walk had us exploring the beach yet again, but this time, it was full of folks helping on a clean-up that was ending soon after we arrived around 6:00AM. Most of the birds we encountered were ones we were familiar with by this point, but scanning the horizon yielded a new lifer in the shape of a Curlew, but was it Eurasian or Far Eastern? After confirming if she preferred to stay by the beach or go out, I began walking out until I got some confirmation shots that I was indeed looking at a **Far Eastern Curlew**, what a bird to finish the trip on! After I got some shots that I was happy with, we continued walking through the forested area, which gave me photo-ops for **Greater Coucal**, **Philippine Pied-Fantail** and **Palawan Sunbird**, while my girlfriend, who began keeping a bird list, added **Pied Triller** and **Golden-bellied Gerygone** to hers.

Eventually we had to say goodbye, as her flight left earlier than mine, and she had thankfully landed safely by the time I got to the airport. The flights were without issues on the way back, but the needless amount of jumping through hoops on both the Manila and Los Angeles airport gave me headaches and a bit of anxiety as the small flight delays and changes made every second wasted in baggage claim and/or airport security feel like a new hellish punishment. However, I managed to catch all my flights on time and arrived back home with no issues or hiccups on morning of January 19, ready to clock in for work, whether I was ready for it or not.

Birds of the Trip

1. Palawan Frogmouth
2. Lovely Sunbird
3. Falcated Wren-Babbler
4. Spotted Wood-Owl
5. Palawan Fairy-bluebird
6. Mantanani Scops-Owl
7. Philippine Cockatoo
8. Palawan Tit
9. Red-headed Flameback
10. Far Eastern Curlew

Far Eastern Curlew by Luis Gonzalez

Checklists

Bird List:

***HO = Heard Only, PA = Palawan Endemic, PH = Philippines Endemic*

	Common Name	**Scientific Name**	**Location**
1	Philippine Duck **[PH]**	*Anas luzonica*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan
2	Rock Pigeon	*Columba livia*	Widespread
3	Philippine Collared-Dove **[PH]**	*Streptopelia dusumieri*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan
4	Red Collared-Dove	*Streptopelia tranquebarica*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan
5	Spotted Dove	*Spilopelia chinensis*	Widespread
6	Asian Emerald Dove	*Chalcophaps indica*	Widespread
7	Zebra Dove	*Geopelia striata*	Widespread
8	Pink-necked Green-Pigeon	*Treron vernans*	Baker's Hill
9	Black-chinned Fruit-Dove **[HO]**	*Ramphiculus leclancheri*	Buenavista View Deck and Sabang, Puerto Princesa
10	Green Imperial-Pigeon	*Ducula aenea*	Subterranean River National Park
11	Greater Coucal	*Centropus sinensis*	Widespread
12	Lesser Coucal	*Centropus bengalensis*	Widespread
13	Chestnut-breasted Malkoha	*Phaenicophaeus curvirostris*	Widespread
14	Plaintive Cuckoo **[HO]**	*Cacomantis merulinus*	Tapul – Bahile Road

15	Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo	*Surniculus lugubris*	Widespread
16	Large-tailed Nightjar	*Caprimulgus macrurus*	Puerto Princesa City Hall and Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
17	Palawan Frogmouth **[PA]**	*Batrachostomus chaseni*	Napsan (Road)
18	Pygmy Swiftlet **[PH]**	*Collocalia troglodytes*	Buenavista View Deck
19	Gray-rumped Swiftlet **[PH]**	*Collocalia marginata*	Widespread
20	Ameline Swiftlet **[PH]**	*Aerodramus amelis*	Widespread
21	White-nest (Germain's) Swiftlet	*Aerodramus fuciphagus*	Widespread
22	Eurasian Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan
23	White-breasted Waterhen	*Amaurornis phoenicurus*	Tapul - Bahile Road
24	Pacific Golden-Plover	*Pluvialis fulva*	Summer Days Cafe
25	Siberian Sand-Plover	*Anarhynchus mongolus*	Summer Days Cafe
26	Greater Sand-Plover	*Anarhynchus leschenaultii*	Summer Days Cafe
27	Far Eastern Curlew	*Numenius madagascariensis*	Summer Days Cafe
28	Common Sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*	Summer Days Cafe
29	Gray-tailed Tattler	*Tringa brevipes*	Summer Days Cafe
30	Wood Sandpiper	*Tringa glareola*	Summer Days Cafe
31	Common Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*	Summer Days Cafe
32	Curlew Sandpiper	*Calidris ferruginea*	Summer Days Cafe
33	Black-headed Gull	*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*	Widespread
34	Whiskered Tern	*Chlidonias hybrida*	Widespread
35	Pacific Reef-Heron	*Egretta sacra*	Widespread
36	Chinese Egret	*Egretta eulophotes*	Summer Days Cafe
37	Little Egret	*Egretta garzetta*	Widespread
38	Eastern Cattle-Egret	*Ardea coromanda*	Widespread
39	Great Egret	*Ardea alba*	Widespread
40	Medium Egret	*Ardea intermedia*	Widespread
41	Purple Heron	*Ardea purpurea*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan
42	Oriental Honey-buzzard	*Pernis ptilorhynchus*	Cacaoyan Restaurant
43	Crested Serpent-Eagle	*Spilornis cheela*	Napsan (Road)
44	Changeable Hawk-Eagle	*Nisaetus cirrhatus*	Napsan (Road)
45	Crested Goshawk	*Lophospiza trivirgata*	Widespread
46	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	*Icthyophaga leucogaster*	Baywalk Park
47	Gray-faced Buzzard	*Butastur indicus*	Sabang, Puerto Princesa
48	Palawan Scops-Owl **[PA]**	*Otus fuliginosus*	Buenavista View Deck and Subterranean River National Park
49	Mantanani Scops-Owl	*Otus mantananensis*	Cana Island
50	Spotted Wood-Owl	*Strix seloputo*	Tapul - Bahile Road
51	Palawan Hornbill **[PA]**	*Anthracoceros marchei*	Napsan (Road)
52	Common Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*	Subterranean River National Park

53	Blue-eared Kingfisher	*Alcedo meninting*	Irawan Eco Park
54	Rufous-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher	*Ceyx rufidorsa*	Irawan Eco Park
55	Stork-billed Kingfisher	*Pelargopsis capensis*	Irawan Eco Park
56	Collared Kingfisher	*Todiramphus chloris*	Summer Days Cafe
57	Dollarbird	*Eurystomus orientalis*	Summer Days Cafe
58	Red-headed Flameback **[PA]**	*Chrysocolaptes erythrocephalus*	Brgy. Cabayugan and Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
59	Spot-throated Flameback **[PA]**	*Dinopium everetti*	Brgy. Cabayugan and Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
60	Great Slaty Woodpecker	*Mulleripicus pulverulentus*	Buenavista View Deck
61	White-bellied Woodpecker	*Dryocopus javensis*	Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
62	Oriental Hobby	*Falco severus*	Forest Corridor trail, Sabang
63	Peregrine Falcon	*Falco peregrinus*	Subterranean River National Park
64	Philippine Cockatoo **[PH]**	*Cacatua haematuropygia*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan
65	Blue-headed Racquet-tail **[PA]**	*Prioniturus platenae*	Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
66	Blue-naped Parrot **[PH]**	*Tanygnathus lucionensis*	Widespread
67	Philippine Pitta **[PH]**	*Erythropitta erythrogaster*	Irawan Eco Park, Puerto Princesa
68	Western Hooded Pitta (Philippine) **[PH]**	*Pitta sordida sordida/palawanensis*	Irawan Eco Park and Sabang, Puerto Princesa
69	Golden-bellied Gerygone	*Gerygone sulphurea*	Cana Island and Summer Days Cafe
70	Fiery Minivet	*Pericrocotus igneus*	Buenavista View Deck, Puerto Princesa
71	Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike	*Coracina striata*	Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
72	Pied Triller	*Lalage nigra*	Summer Days Cafe
73	Ventriloquial Oriole	*Oriolus consobrinus*	Sabang, Puerto Princesa
74	White-breasted Woodswallow	*Artamus leucorynchus*	Widespread
75	Common Iora	*Aegithina tiphia*	Widespread
76	Philippine Pied-Fantail	*Rhipidura nigritorquis*	Cana Island and Summer Days Cafe
77	Ashy (Sooty) Drongo	*Dicrurus leucophaeus*	Widespread
78	Palawan Drongo **[PA]**	*Dicrurus palawanensis*	Widespread
79	Blue Paradise-Flycatcher **[PA]**	*Terpsiphone cyanescens*	Tapul - Bahile Road and Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center
80	Palawan Crow **[PA]**	*Corvus pusillus*	Widespread
81	Palawan Tit **[PA]**	*Periparus amabilis*	Cacaoyan Restaurant
82	Rufous-tailed Tailorbird	*Orthotomus sericeus*	Widespread
83	Pacific Swallow	*Hirundo javanica*	Summer Days Cafe

84	Barn Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*	Widespread
85	Gray-throated Bulbul **[PA]**	*Alophoixus frater*	Widespread
86	Sulphur-bellied Bulbul **[PA]**	*Iole palawanensis*	Widespread
87	Black-headed Bulbul	*Microtarsus melanocephalos*	Widespread
88	Ashy-fronted Bulbul **[PA]**	*Pycnonotus cinereifrons*	Widespread
89	Arctic Warbler	*Phylloscopus borealis*	Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center
90	Pin-striped Tit-Babbler (Palawan) **[PA]**	*Mixornis gularis woodi*	Widespread
91	Palawan Babbler **[PA]**	*Malacopteron palawanense*	Irawan Eco Park
92	Ashy-headed Babbler **[PA]**	*Pellorneum cinereiceps*	Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center
93	Falcated Wren-Babbler **[PA]**	*Ptilocichla falcata*	Napsan (Road)
94	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	*Sitta frontalis*	Napsan (Road)
95	Asian Glossy Starling	*Aplonis panayensis*	Widespread
96	Common Hill Myna	*Gracula religiosa*	Napsan (Road)
97	Gray-streaked Flycatcher	*Muscicapa griseisticta*	Widespread
98	Asian Brown Flycatcher	*Muscicapa dauurica*	Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
99	White-vented Shama **[PA]**	*Copsychus niger*	Irawan Eco Park
100	Palawan Blue Flycatcher **[PA]**	*Cyornis lemprieri*	Irawan Eco Park and Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
101	Palawan Flycatcher **[PA]**	*Ficedula platenae*	Irawan Eco Park
102	Palawan Flowerpecker **[PA]**	*Prionochilus plateni*	Widespread
103	Pygmy Flowerpecker **[PH]**	*Dicaeum pygmaeum*	Widespread
104	Brown-throated Sunbird	*Anthreptes malacensis*	Buenavista View Deck
105	Purple-throated Sunbird **[PH]**	*Leptocoma sperata*	Buenavista View Deck
106	Copper-throated Sunbird	*Leptocoma calcostetha*	Viewpoint, Buenavista
107	Palawan Sunbird **[PA]**	*Cinnyris aurora*	Widespread
108	Lovely Sunbird **[PA]**	*Aethopyga shelleyi*	Sabang, Puerto Princesa
109	Pale Spiderhunter **[PA]**	*Arachnothera dilutior*	Widespread
110	Palawan Fairy-bluebird **[PA]**	*Irena tweeddalii*	Napsan (Road)
111	Yellow-throated Leafbird **[PA]**	*Chloropsis palawanensis*	Widespread
112	Scaly-breasted Munia	*Lonchura punctulata*	Widespread
113	White-bellied Munia	*Lonchura leucogastra*	Summer Days Cafe
114	Chestnut Munia	*Lonchura atricapilla*	Widespread
115	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus*	Widespread
116	Gray Wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*	Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center
117	Eastern Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla tschutschensis*	Tapul - Bahile Road
118	Paddyfield Pipit	*Anthus rufulus*	Panacan Pier, Bgy. Panacan

Chestnut-breasted Malkoha by Luis Gonzalez

Mammal List:

***HO = Heard Only, PA = Palawan Endemic, PH = Philippines Endemic*

	Common Name	**Scientific Name**	**Location**
1	Northern Palawan Tree Squirrel **[PA]**	*Sundasciurus juvencus*	Widespread
2	Palawan Treeshrew **[PA]**	*Tupaia palawanensis*	Napsan (Birdwing Hide)
3	Diadem Roundleaf Bat	*Hipposideros diadema*	Subterranean River National Park
4	Large Flying-Fox	*Pteropus vampyrus*	Baywalk Park
5	Philippine Long-tailed Macaque **[PH]**	*Macaca fascicularis philippensis*	Widespread

Reptile List:

***HO = Heard Only, PA = Palawan Endemic, PH = Philippines Endemic*

	Common Name	**Scientific Name**	**Location**
1	Palawan Monitor **[PA]**	*Varanus palawanensis*	Subterranean River National Park

2	Green Crested Lizard	*Bronchocela cristatella*	Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center
3	Asian House Gecko	*Hemidactylus frenatus*	Widespread
4	Flat-tailed House Gecko	*Hemidactylus platyurus*	Widespread
5	Tokay Gecko	*Gekko gecko*	Widespread
6	Philippine Tree Skink **[PH]**	*Lamprolepis smaragdina philippinica*	Cacaoyan Restaurant
7	Palawan Gliding Dragon **[PA]**	*Draco palawanensis*	Napsan (Birdwing Hide)

Palawan Monitor by Luis Gonzalez