

PAPUA NEW GUINEA 2025

Papua New Guinea represents one of the biggest gaps in the mammal watching universe, despite having one of the most attractive and desirable mammals on Earth.

As far as we know, this is the first organized mammal watching tour to the country and the results were spectacular. This trip is part of a bigger project, trying to see all the tree kangaroos of the world.

The trip consisted in two parts: ten nights camping in different sections of the Owen Stanley Range, near the famous Kokoda track, and two nights in one of the popular birding lodges of the Central Highlands.

The first area delivered the following taxa:

1-Doria's Tree Kangaroo (*Dendrolagus dorianus*)- 3 different animals gave exceptional sightings.



2-Small Dorcopsis (*Dorcopsulum vanheurni*)- Several sightings although all of them brief

3-Silky Cuscus (*Phalanger sericeus*)- One sighting

4-Ground Cuscus (*Phalanger gymnotis*)- 5 sightings of both grey and brown morph.
Here showing darker tails than the animals in the Vogelkop
5-Mountain Cuscus (*Phalanger carmelitae*)- Exceptionally common



Eastern Common Cuscus (*Phalanger intercastellanus*)- One male gave good views
Painted Ringtail (*Pseudochirulus forbesi*)- Very common. What a beauty!
Plush-coated Ringtail (*Pseudochirops corinnae*)- This one initially caused some confusion. The animals are strikingly patterned, with a very characteristic flank (Photo 1). The illustrations in the different reference books make the identification of this taxa almost impossible and I have been talking with several authorities that are familiar with the taxa and they all confirm that they never seen such a patterned Plush-coated Ringtail





Long-fingered Triok (*Dactylopsila palpator*)- One extremely close encounter. Check out that finger and compare it to the ones found in the Vogelkop, for first time reported here: <https://www.mammalwatching.com/2023/07/22/west-papua-2023/>



Feather-tailed Possum (*Distoechurus pennatus*): 3 excellent sightings of this lovely species



Long-tailed Pygmy Possum (*Cercartetus caudatus*)- Apparently not rare here, few sightings. Great views! The animals here have ochre upperparts, very different to the ones in the Vogelkop.

New Guinea Glider (*Petaurus papuanus*)- two brief sightings

Narrow-striped Marsupial Shrew (*Phascosorex dorsalis*)- one single sighting, around 10:00, meanwhile birding.

New Guinea Jumping Mouse (*Lorentzimys nouhuysi*)- several great encounters. Apparently fairly common



De Vis's Woolly Rat (*Mallomys aoraensis*)- one single sighting but possible diggings were all over the place



Mountain Mosaic-tailed Rat (*Paramelomys rubex*)- One individual above 3000 meters elevation. Stunning



Eastern Rat (*Rattus mordax*)- Pretty common
Moss-forest Rat (*Stenomys Niobe*)- Fairly common



Black-tailed Giant Rat (*Uromys anak*)- Common, specially below 2000 meters elevation



Lamia (*Chiruromys lamia*)- great sightings of this arboreal rodents. Lovely creatures

Paramelomys sp- One individual detected near a mountain grassland.

Moluccan Naked-backed Fruit Bat (*Dobsonia moluccensis*)- scattered individuals foraging high up in trees

Mountain Tube-nosed Fruit Bat (*Nyctimene certans*)- One seen but several were heard calling

Rhinolophus sp- One found. Sadly, the bat flew off before see it well enough to make up my mind about the species. Other bats in flight, patrolling trails, were as well most likely *Rhinolophus*

Flores Tube-nosed Bat (*Murina florum*)- One individual, apparently a female with a small pup under the wing, was found night roosting.



Moss-forest Blossom Bat (*Syconycteris hobbit*)- One single sighting



Greater Papuan Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus collinus*)- 2 sightings in two consecutive nights, in a similar area so perhaps both involved the same individual. It was night roosting relatively close to the trail



The second part of the trip took us to the Kumul Lodge, where we spent two nights. We recorded the following mammals

Calaby's Pademelon (*Thylogale calabyi*)- very good views at daytime. Highlight of the visit

Mountain Cuscus- One very skittish animal

Masked Ringtail (*Pseudochirops larvatus*)- two individuals logged



Pygmy Ringtail(*Pseudochirops mayeri*)- two individuals logged. Fast, a bit too fast for me but Justin got some excellent videos that will be soon in his youtube channel
Coppery Ringtail (*Pseudochirops cupreus*)- 3 logged



New Guinea Glider (*Petaurus papuanus*)- 5 logged

Speckled Dasyure (*neophascogale lorentzi*)- 2 very cooperative animals



Black-tailed Giant Rat (*Uromys anak*)- 2 individuals

Moss-forest Rat (*Stenomys Niobe*)- at least one, probably two individuals

Nyctimene sp- heard only

We ended this very successful tour with a grand total of 31 species in 12 nights in the field.

In the bird side, we recorded 114 species. The nothing was simply fantastic, especially in the Owen Stanley Range and we also managed to find some nice amphibians and reptiles

If you want to see more photos, please visit my Inaturalist. The identifications are open for discussion, comments are always welcome and always happy to keep learning about all these extremely poorly-known creatures.

Now, Papua New Guinea is officially in the mammalwatching map. I hope this trip report encourage others to visit this amazing country and keep on with the mammals galore. There is so much to try, starting with all the tree kangaroos, following with the Eastern Long-beaked Equidna, all the marsupials, loads of cool rodents, some top bats like the critically endangered Bulmer's Fruit Bat and the thing just keeps going on and on.

I will be guiding tours in Papua New Guinea in May-June 2027 so if you have any interest, please contact me at: cnbocos@gmail.com