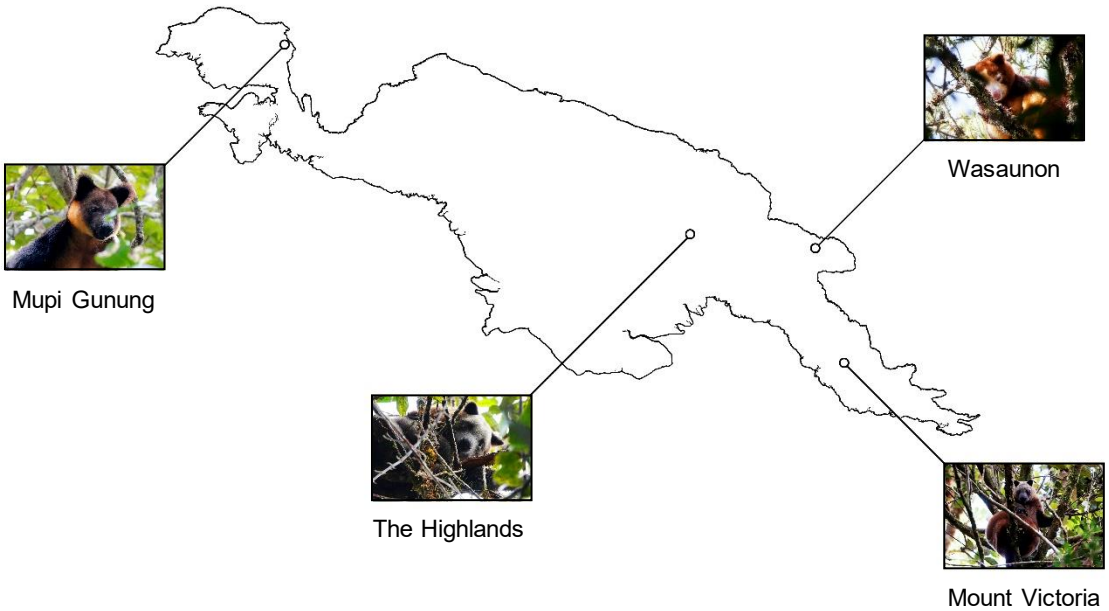
This report covers the various places I visited throughout New Guinea in 2025 and 2026. As you can probably see from the images above, tree-kangaroos were my main target, but I was also looking for echidnas, possums and other species of macropod. I wasn't really targeting bats or rodents and ended up seeing very few of these.

Click any of the locations on the map below if you want to go to a specific section of the report. Or if you're not interested in hearing me constantly complain about leeches, rain, or land disputes, you can just skip to the full mammal list here. I've also included some information I've gathered on where and how to see the remaining species of tree-kangaroo, along with a few other New Guinean mammals.



Arranging the Trip

Mupi Gunung is a village in the Arfak Mountains of West Papua. It is known as one of the best places to see tree-kangaroos in New Guinea. The trip was arranged through Hans Mandacan, who can be contacted via Facebook. It was relatively expensive compared to the places I travelled to in Papua New Guinea, which involved much more complicated logistics and ended up costing less per day. Still, it's a must-visit spot for anyone interested in New Guinean mammals. Most aspects of the tour were well organised and it was a relief not to encounter land disputes or blockades, which I've run into in other parts of New Guinea. In hindsight, it would have been worth discussing grocery shopping with Hans beforehand. We ended up with an overabundance of sweet food and drinks, and not enough bottled water. I could barely stomach the water they boiled, as it tasted incredibly foul. By the end of the trip, I was relying on Sprite and oranges for hydration.

Reaching Mupi Gunung involves a trek from sea level up to an elevation of just over 1,000 metres. The route starts with a fairly steep ascent before dropping down to a river and then finishes with a final climb up to the village. I'd say compared to some of the other treks I've done in New Guinea, Mupi Gunung is very straightforward.

Searching for Mammals at Mupi Gunung

The first evening at Mupi Gunung was wet, which made spotlighting difficult. We did manage to see a **striped possum** from the balcony, but a short hike through the forest after dinner didn't produce any other mammals. The following morning, the crew set out to look for tree-kangaroos. Within about 15 minutes, someone called out, and after a brief walk, we found Hans standing at the base of a tree, where an **ursine tree-kangaroo** was perched on the branches not far above the ground. Clearly hunting pressure here was low, as the animal was not at all concerned by our presence. It didn't take long before we heard another shout, so we left this tree-kangaroo alone and continued up the ridge.


Ursine tree-kangaroo

As we gained elevation, the terrain grew increasingly muddy and the leeches came out in full force. In previous experiences, I've found leech bites to be painless and to not cause any noticeable reaction, but these felt more like the sting of nettles as they attached to my skin. Even so, they were mild compared to the leeches I would later encounter on the Huon Peninsula in Papua New Guinea. Before we had even reached the next tree-kangaroo, another call rang out. With two locations to check, we were hopeful that at least one would be a grizzled tree-kangaroo, the other species in the area. As it turned out, both sightings were **ursine**: a lone individual at the first site and a pair at the second. Still, four tree-kangaroos in a single day was a strong start, and we had several more days ahead to look for the grizzled.

The rain didn't ease that evening, ruling out any spotlighting. Instead, I spent my time photographing the huge variety of moths attracted to the lights. We decided to get up before dawn and try searching for mammals then. We came across a few sleeping birds and a **northern common cuscus**, but otherwise there wasn't much around. Later that morning, everyone headed out once more in search of tree-kangaroos, this time agreeing only to alert us if a grizzled was found, as we'd already seen plenty of ursines the day before. The wait was slightly longer than the previous day, but eventually somebody called out. Again, we set off up the leech-infested slopes. The route was steep, forcing us to grip vines and tree roots for support as the muddy ground gave little traction beneath our feet. One final push up a near-vertical hillside and we arrived. There, through the thick canopy were a pair of **grizzled tree-kangaroos**.

Grizzled tree-kangaroos

After dark, we saw a **feather-tailed possum** from the balcony and a **reclusive ringtail** along the trails, plus a number of interesting frogs. The next morning, most of the crew rested, having already found both tree-kangaroo species on the previous days, while Hans went out searching for possums. I would have joined him, but didn't realise he had already left. Soon, he called out that he'd found something, so I set off toward his voice. By the time I arrived, the possum was gone. From the blurry photo on his phone, it looked like either a reclusive ringtail or a D'Albertis' ringtail, though I'm not entirely sure. Walking the trails at night, we saw a **northern common cuscus**, a **striped possum** and a **feather-tailed possum**, along with plenty of frogs and lizards.

Feather-tailed possum

We spent the following morning in a wattled brushturkey hide, though the bird failed to appear. I walked back to camp alone and ended up getting lost. I choose to blame the wild pigs for digging up the ground and making the trail hard to follow, rather than my own poor sense of direction. On our final evening of spotlighting, we saw a **New Guinean glider** and a **Vogelkop ringtail**. Clambering back down to camp, I managed to slip over and slam my arm against a tree root. Then a short time later, I did it again. I was beginning to really hate this mud. On the final morning at Mupi Gunung, I decided to race down the mountain, reaching the car well before everyone else. Not wanting the driver to have to make two trips to Manokwari, I headed out to the main road to hitchhike, but in the end, he dropped me off first and then went back for the others.

Overall, we did alright with the marsupials, though we missed a few species, like the ground cuscus and the D'Albertis' ringtail. We didn't make it high enough for the Stein's cuscus, which would have been good to see. Rodents and bats, on the other hand, were a bit of a failure. I wasn't specifically targeting them, but expected to identify at least a couple of species. A few were seen, but were always too quick to photograph. This would end up being a pattern with every place I'd visit in New Guinea: plenty of marsupials and not many rodents or bats. Still, I'd take that over the reverse.

Trekking through the jungles of Mupi Gunung

Arranging the Trip

Mount Victoria, at an elevation of just over 4,000 metres, is located in the Owen Stanley Range of Papua New Guinea. It's not often visited by westerners, so there's very little information about it. I spoke with a group of researchers who had been there to survey herpetofauna. They told me that Doria's tree-kangaroos were common, and they had also seen an eastern long-beaked echidna, which suggests that the area has strong potential for mammalwatching.

Mount Victoria can be accessed by a week-long trek or a 30-minute helicopter flight. No Roads Expeditions runs a tour that drops visitors into the grasslands at the base of the mountain, from where they attempt to reach the summit. The base rate includes four nights of camping, helicopter transfers to and from the grasslands, guides, food, and equipment. We didn't pay much extra for each additional day on the mountain, making it possible to stay considerably longer without adding much to the overall price.

Through the Mammalwatching website, I found a couple of others who were interested in joining me (Matt and Daniel). We ended up spending nine days on the mountain - six up in the grasslands and three trekking down to lower elevations. In hindsight, this probably wasn't enough to do the place justice, but we didn't have time to stay longer, and by the end of the trip much of our equipment was starting to fall apart. If you decide to go with No Roads Expeditions, it's worth asking them to supply more robust camping gear and to provide every local team member with waterproof clothing, as some of ours had none. It would also be wise to confirm that they have permission to operate in the area. We ended up being involved in land disputes, which I'll discuss later in the report.

Getting to Mount Victoria

Some of the No Roads crew met us at the airport in Port Moresby and led us to a nearby building to wait for the helicopter. Preparations took longer than expected, pushing our departure late into the morning. The pilot was concerned about the delay and warned that the build-up of clouds would make navigation more difficult. He was also uncertain about our destination, which necessitated a last-minute consultation with the No Roads crew to pin down the exact landing site.

The pilot trying to determine where exactly we were going

With everything supposedly sorted, we were off. The cultivated hills around Port Moresby quickly gave way to the forested slopes of the Owen Stanley Range. The mountains grew steadily more rugged as we pushed deeper into the interior. Partway through the flight, the pilot admitted he still wasn't exactly sure of our route and that I might need to help with navigation, a challenge made even harder by the thick clouds closing in over the ridges.

Flying into the clouds

After some careful maneuvering and my questionable directions, we made it through the worst of the weather. Once we cleared the final ridge, the view opened up to reveal the high-elevation grasslands of Mount Victoria. A plume of smoke marked the landing site, where the local crew stood waving us in. We touched down, unloaded the supplies, and watched the chopper climb away without us. As the sound of the rotors vanished, the cold stillness of the high country took over. The isolation was instant.

Flying over the high-elevation grasslands of Mount Victoria

The Grasslands of Mount Victoria

Cradled beneath the looming presence of Mount Victoria, the high-elevation grasslands lie within a natural basin enclosed by thick forest on all sides. The most striking feature is the abundance of tree-ferns, whose massive size gives the entire valley a distinctly prehistoric feel. After setting up camp, I went out to explore the surrounding area. One of the first things I noticed was how treacherous the ground was. Hidden beneath the grassy surface were countless sinkholes filled with water. One wrong step would leave your shoe completely drenched. Mist began to gather across the plain, prompting me to circle back through the woods. I soon found myself in an enchanted forest of ancient trees, a place that felt truly lost in time.

Outside the grasslands camp (2,800 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/BbHe6TUCmkME6tKk9

That evening, we headed into the forest behind the camp for a session of spotlighting. We armed all the locals with torches, hoping that with enough people, we might manage to spot an eastern long-beaked echidna. It turned out the locals were not used to navigating the forest at night and most sat in darkness, waiting for our return. The first mammal seen was a **coppery ringtail**, followed by a **mountain cuscus**. Beyond that, there were many sleeping birds, but no trace of the echidna.

Coppery ringtail

The next morning, our goal was to find a Doria's tree-kangaroo, which meant venturing back into the nearby forest. There was some concern over Matt's boots, which were already starting to fall apart, but we set out anyway, hoping they would last the nine days we were up here. We encountered many fantastic birds, but locating a tree-kangaroo proved far more challenging. At one point, a local called out that he had found one, but by the time we had arrived, it was gone. We then came across the nest of a New Guinea megapode, though it appeared to have been disturbed and its egg was missing. Since one of the conditions of the trip was that the locals refrain from hunting, this was worrying. Back at camp, Daniel questioned the crew and identified the individual responsible. He insisted the egg be returned; the crew complied, and the egg was placed back in the nest.

Later that day, we crossed the grasslands toward the forest on the far side. Navigating the sinkholes was easier said than done. Predictably, we failed and our shoes were waterlogged in no time. Nearing the forest edge, Elijah (the lead guide) noticed something moving through the bushes. It was a **Doria's tree-kangaroo** bounding away. Sadly, just as the others caught up to us, it had vanished into the nearby trees. The locals raced after it, but after some intense searching, failed to locate it. We continued into the forest and soon noticed something intriguing: the ground was riddled with echidna burrows. By then the light was fading and the locals were eager to head back to camp. We agreed, deciding to return there the following day.

Doria's tree-kangaroo

After dinner, we ventured out into the grasslands in search of nocturnal mammals. Elijah warned us not to stray too far from camp. He seemed concerned about the dingoes that roamed the area at night, claiming the animals were known to attack. We found **New Guinean gliders** along the forest edge and a number of interesting birds, but once again, the echidna remained elusive.

The next day, we trekked back to the forest on the far side, stopping to watch a flock of alpine munia along the way. We were equipped with torches, which would allow us to investigate the inside of the burrows. Daniel had brought some echidna feed, hoping to lure one out at nightfall. It was designed for short-beaked echidnas, but perhaps the long-beaked species would have an appetite for it as well. We peered into many burrows, all of them empty. Elijah pointed out that having dogs would make the search far easier, as they could sniff out any occupied burrows and alert us with a bark.

One of the many echidna burrows, location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/5gLuHbkADN4pHAXB7

The afternoon was slipping away, and we would soon have dinner waiting for us back at camp. We asked whether we could return here after dark. The locals hesitated, clearly wary of crossing the grasslands at night, but eventually agreed. Daniel chose to stay behind in the forest near the echidna burrows. We would meet him back there later that evening. Once we got to camp, the weather began to turn. The idea of crossing the grasslands in the dark suddenly seemed far less appealing. Most of the crew weren't keen to go, leaving just me and a local named Kevin to make the journey. I stepped out of camp and into grasslands. The rain had eased and for a moment the valley felt deceptively calm. *This will be easy*, I told myself. I couldn't have been more wrong.

Darkness falling over the grasslands

A light drizzle began to fall as we made our way back across the grasslands. It wasn't the rain that concerned us though. Our eyes were fixed on the darkness, watching for dingoes that might be moving just out of sight. When we made it to the forest edge, Daniel was nowhere to be found, so we pushed on into the bush. The forest was dense, limiting visibility to just a few metres on either side of the track. Eventually, we came across Daniel, who had been laying out echidna feed. He had nothing to report. The bush was so thick that the search felt futile; the chances of finding an echidna here were exceptionally small. The rain was picking up, so we began our descent back to the grasslands. Partway down, we noticed that something had taken a bite out of one of the piles of feed. We scanned the undergrowth, but saw nothing, so we continued on.

The full force of the weather hit us once we stepped out of the forest. The rain had intensified, and the wind was now driving it hard across the plains. Far off in the distance we could see a faint light. Matt had set it up to mark the way back to camp. As we set off across the swampy plains, we were bombarded by horizontal rain. This made it all the more difficult to keep an eye out for potential dingoes that were lurking in the darkness.

Trekking through the rain

Trudging through the knee-deep bog, a nagging feeling crept in that something wasn't right. The terrain looked unfamiliar. I lifted my head, searching for the glow of the camp light, but it was nowhere to be seen. Daniel used the last of his phone's battery to check the map. The verdict was not what I wanted to hear: we were going the wrong way. Worse still, we were miles from camp. We quickly changed course, though doing so meant pushing deeper into the marsh. The storm showed no signs of easing. If anything, the rain only grew heavier, hammering down as we struggled through the sodden ground. Then, from the shadows of the swamp, a dark figure emerged…

“Pademelon!”, Daniel yelled. A **Callaby’s pademelon** had appeared out of nowhere, but before I could even reach for my camera, it was gone. By now, my clothes were completely soaked through. I kept scanning the darkness, searching for any signs of the camp. Finally, off in the distance, a faint glow came into view. We had made it. While walking into camp certainly brought a sense of relief, I was still kicking myself for missing a shot of that pademelon.

The next day, after the rain subsided, we went birdwatching in the forest behind the camp. Many fantastic species were seen, including the orange-billed lorikeet and the eastern crested berrypecker. This forest was far more open and pleasant than the dense bush on the other side of the grasslands. It was a shame there was no evidence of echidnas here, as they would have been much easier to spot. Not to mention, we would avoid the risky nighttime crossing of the grasslands altogether. We spent the evening trying to find pademelons and echidnas out on the grasslands. However, we stayed close to camp, making the chance of success unlikely. Upon returning, I spotted a few more **New Guinean gliders** along the edge of the treeline.

Our aim the following day was to climb some of the way up Mount Victoria. The route began with a short walk across the grasslands before entering the forest. As we climbed higher, the trees gradually became more stunted. Just below the treeline we encountered a Macgregor's honeyeater, a bird that is not often seen on this side of New Guinea. Mammal scat occasionally appeared along the trail. The locals said it belonged to an animal with stripes, though I wasn’t sure what they were referring to. Eventually, we reached a peak at 3,800 metres, where we were rewarded with sweeping views over the grasslands below.

Macgregor's honeyeater

View over the grasslands (3,800 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/r3vSf8ow5j8Mohe4A

We spent the next day searching for echidnas, but failed once again. It felt increasingly unlikely we'd find one. To make matters worse, the evening was dominated by a persistent downpour. The rain must have been heavy, as by morning, a visit to the bush toilet revealed an overflowing pool of water, with hundreds of maggots wriggling at the surface. We decided it was time to leave this camp and trek down to the lowlands, where we would see a different set of species not found at this elevation. By now Matt's boots were in a state of disrepair, being held together by a layer of duct tape. Just before we set off, Daniel discovered that the New Guinea megapode egg had again been taken. He confronted the crew, but no one confessed.

Trekking to the Lowlands

After crossing the grasslands one last time, we made our way up and over the rim before descending toward our next site. It only took a couple of hours to reach camp, which was perched along a ridgeline immersed in cloud forest. From there, the crew set out in search of echidnas and tree-kangaroos. Not much time passed before we were alerted that something had been found. We scrambled down the side of the ridge before coming across a couple of the crew gathered at the base of a tree. Nestled in the branches sat a **Doria's tree-kangaroo** looking down at us with indifference.

Doria's tree-kangaroo

Our first campsite on the trek down (2,700 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/LSXFnmVRbZbF9Scm8

Heavy rain set in that evening. Before long, water was streaming across my tent floor, prompting me to poke holes in the fabric and drain it away. Needless to say, it wasn't the best night's sleep. The following morning, we made our way down the ridgeline. Along the path, a **Doria's tree-kangaroo** and its young climbed the tree right next to me. They didn't seem at all bothered by my presence and were close enough to touch. Just before reaching camp, we encountered another **Doria's tree-kangaroo**, this one with a joey tucked in its pouch.

The camp lay in a clearing surrounded by araucaria trees, offering open views across the valley. Having dropped almost 1,500 metres in elevation, the air felt noticeably more humid. Nearby, a fruiting fig tree attracted a variety of interesting birds, including the rarely seen streaked bowerbird. We headed out after dark, but the steep terrain made spotlighting a challenge. Still, we managed to see a few **painted ringtails** and a **chestnut tree mouse**.

Painted ringtail

Chestnut tree mouse

View from camp (1,300 m), located here: https://maps.app.goo.gl/rteAfLAaJeduFmxM6

On the final day of the trek, we descended to valley floor. We were now in lowland rainforest, which was very apparent, judging by how much I was sweating. The path followed the riverside, requiring several crossings along the way. Eventually, we reached the final camp of the trek, situated just below the village of Kaolagi. With the bottom half of Matt's boot now hanging on by a literal thread, it was an ideal place to end the trek.

That evening, villagers welcomed us with fresh fruit, which I eagerly devoured, having gone days without it. Nearby, a **lesser long-tongued fruit bat** was spotted in the trees. The next morning, we made our way up to the village where the helicopter was waiting. The locals and trekking crew all gathered and waved as we lifted off. The chopper soared back over the Owen Stanley Range, passed the cultivated lands around Port Moresby, and finally touched down at the airport. As I stepped onto the tarmac, I felt like I could finally relax; the journey was over. Or so I thought...

Lesser long tongued fruit bat

View from the Kaolagi Village (650 m), located here: https://maps.app.goo.gl/pd1Tv3teoDg8eeVaA

It wasn't just the No Roads crew waiting for us at the airport. A couple of policemen were there as well, along with several unhappy landowners. We soon found ourselves being escorted to the local police station for questioning. I had a flight in a few hours, so I was really hoping we wouldn't be there long. According to the landowners, they hadn't been informed about the trip to Mount Victoria, nor had they received any compensation for it. Their frustration seemed directed more at the tour agency than at us, though the details weren't entirely clear. I never really worked out who was in the right.

This all felt like a side issue compared to the larger problem at hand. The policemen didn't appear too bothered by the land disputes we had found ourselves in. Their real interest was why we had been on Mount Victoria in the first place. The No Roads crew had told them we were looking for animals, which to the officers sounded highly suspicious. They accused us of conducting scientific research without a permit, a crime carrying a maximum penalty of five years in prison. We tried to reassure them that we were simply tourists, but they didn't seem convinced. The No Roads crew weren't helping either, repeatedly insisting that the purpose of our visit was for "studies."

They asked about our professions. The fact that Daniel studies lizard brains might have sounded suspicious, but simply calling himself a "neuroscientist" seemed to satisfy them. Out of nowhere, their attitude shifted. They announced they were happy with our explanation and told us we were free to leave. We didn't waste a second. We got in a taxi and hurried to the airport, desperate to get out of there before they changed their minds. We arrived at check-in with plenty of time to spare. No Roads, however, didn't get off scot-free. In the end, they had to pay a fine. On the bright side, it was a bit more exciting than just waiting around at the airport for hours.

It had been an expedition of highs and lows. We encountered an abundance of fascinating animals but dipped on our number one target. Still, there were plenty of other places to spot an eastern long-beaked echidna, and Mount Victoria wasn't the only place I'd be looking.

Arranging the Trip

Wasaunon is a research site located within the YUS Conservation Area on the Huon Peninsula. It hosts an array of fantastic mammals, including the Matschie's tree-kangaroo and the eastern long-beaked echidna. Trying to arrange a visit proved to be very challenging. The site is managed by the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP), so I contacted several people associated with that organisation, but received few replies. Sometime later, I got talking to a man who had spent the last two decades exploring Papua New Guinea. He had visited the YUS Conservation Area a year earlier and told me the landowners were keen to have tourists. Through him, I was given the contact details for the Ogate family, and it was with their help that I managed to organise my visit.

Most of the logistics were handled by Dono Ogate, a community leader from Yawan Village. Wiring a few thousand dollars to his account ahead of time was a little nerve-wracking, but a quick Google search reassured me. He'd been employed by the TKCP and also received the 'Digicel Man of Honour' award for his community work. Once there, it was clear why. Dono and his family were incredibly welcoming, and the trip ran smoothly from start to finish. Everything was organised down to the smallest detail, which is a rare thing to find in Papua New Guinea.

However, in the interest of full transparency, I should state that Dono no longer works for the TKCP, and I did not receive permission from the Conservation Area Management Committee to enter Wasaunon. I only became aware of this after returning from the area. Prior to the trip, I assumed that Dono was working in conjunction with the TKCP to arrange my visit. Since retiring, Dono has not been adhering to the Conservation Area Management Plan and is currently involved in land disputes with other landowners.

He believes that tourism could be an important source of income for the people of the YUS Conservation Area. Other leaders have stated that their communities are not ready for tourism and are unhappy with Dono's actions. Until these disputes are resolved, the area remains unsafe for tourists. The TKCP has been working with the landowners on how to establish ecotourism and is aiming to do it properly, so that it is fair for all landowners and does not cause problems within the community. To enquire about visiting, you can find the contact details for the TKCP on their website. If you don't get a reply, try emailing Jon Hall. He knows Lisa Dabek (the director), and can check whether your messages are getting through: mammalwatching@gmail.com

Getting to Wasaunon

I was told I needed to first reach Yawan and from there I could hike up to Wasaunon. Yawan is not connected by road, so the only way to get there is either a treacherous trek over the Saruwaged Range or an incredibly expensive charter flight. Unlike my earlier expedition to Mount Victoria, I now had nobody else to share the costs of the flight with, so I asked whether I could walk. The response was mixed. One person told me the trek could be done within a few days, while another said it would be impossible for a white man. Apparently, no foreigners have walked this route before, as it's considered extremely difficult. Hearing this only made me more determined to try, so I insisted I'd be fine and, eventually, they agreed.

Getting to the start of the trek from Lae is an adventure in itself. The drive begins at sea level and slowly winds up a narrow track that clings to the mountainside, before reaching Bandong, a village nestled in the foothills of the Saruwaged Range, at an elevation of 1,300 metres.

Bandong Village (1,300 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/FtvqFvfrTJ46w9RZ9

I was met with curious looks as I walked through the village. Foreigners seemed to be quite a novelty here. Being only 11 am, I was keen to get moving up into the mountains. However, the villagers explained that it was already too late in the day. Leaving at this time would be dangerous, as I'd likely be exposed to the afternoon rains before reaching the next settlement. They spoke of locals who had died on this route, caught out in the storms and losing their way. I heeded their warnings and decided to spend the night in the village, before setting off at dawn. Word of my presence spread quickly, and that evening I found myself explaining my intentions to a crowd of at least 30 people.

The goal the following morning was to hike to Kisabin Village. At only 500 metres higher than Bandong, it didn't sound like there would be too much climbing. However, the route involved clambering up and down countless jungle-clad hillsides, losing almost every hard-earned metre of elevation on the descent before starting the whole process again on the next rise. There was little time for rest, as we needed to cover as much ground as possible while the weather was still clear. Upon reaching Kisabin, I was greeted with quite the welcoming ceremony and once again spoke of my journey to everyone present. According to the locals, I was the first white man to enter their village.

Kisabin Village (1,800 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/MBk7uXy3s6syhi9XA

The next day was more straightforward: one small hill to climb over, followed by a continuous ascent into the mountains. As we gained elevation, the jungle gave way to cloud forest. The air cooled noticeably and mist filled the canopy. By the time we were at 3,000 metres, the weather had taken a turn for the worse. Pushing on into the alpine zone would not have been safe, so we pitched camp where we were and settled in for the night. The climb continued at sunrise and within an hour, we had reached the alpine grasslands, with spectacular views in every direction. The descent into Yawan was less inspiring, a slow, muddy trudge down a leech-infested bog.

Taking shelter in the cloud forest (3,000 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/C3RUYEmvx4rZcQfH9

Looking down into the YUS Conservation Area (3,500 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/3BZkekWh9SGKGDxX6

Walking through the alpine grasslands (3,200 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/F5R3mkDppsxamHiZ9

Trudging through the leech-infested bog (2,300 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/y3cw5tqcTb5vLm6Z8

Yawan lies within a narrow valley, enclosed by steep slopes that rise sharply on all sides. An immense waterfall cascades from the cliffs above, dominating the mountain landscape. I spent a couple of days here resting up, taking in the surroundings and getting to know the locals before continuing on to Wasaunon.

Yawan Village (1,450 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/kAStuMC2mcuEFNfF7

The trek to Wasaunon began with a decent to the Uruwa River, followed by a steep climb up into the cloud forest. As we gained elevation, signs of echidnas became increasingly common, burrows and poke holes appeared frequently along the trail. At one point, a local casually mentioned he'd spotted one scurrying into the undergrowth just thirty minutes prior. I'm still unsure if he was telling the truth; no one else seemed particularly moved by the news, and certainly no one was willing to backtrack to investigate. We simply pressed on.

We were agonisingly close to camp when the skies finally opened up, drenching us to the bone in a torrential downpour. Had the rain held off just twenty minutes longer, we would have arrived perfectly dry. Yet the true ordeal of the trek wasn't the terrain or the weather, it was the leeches. There was no stopping them; everyone just accepted their presence. Annoyingly, my body chose this moment to develop an allergy to the bites, and over the following days my right foot swelled to the point where it could barely fit into my shoe.

Through the rain-soaked forest, the shelters of the camp came into view: weathered wooden buildings with sagging, leaky roofs. The place felt long forgotten, as if it hadn't seen visitors in years. Nearby, a small grassy clearing offered space for my tent, and I finally sank down to rest.

Wasaunon camp (3,000 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/eQwxB6PCHxtvYd2e9

Searching for Mammals in Wasaunon

Each day at Wasaunon followed much the same routine. In the morning, weather permitting, we would all head off into the forest to search for tree-kangaroos. The tracking crew would rest in the afternoon, while I went out on my own to see whatever I could find. I'd return for dinner, then set out again once darkness fell. The locals had no footwear, little warm clothing, and barely enough battery for their torches, so they weren't keen to venture out into the night. That was my mistake, I should have equipped everyone properly for spotlighting. Had I done so, my chances of finding an echidna would have increased dramatically. Instead, I spent every night searching alone.

The first night in the forest didn't yield much, just a few rodents, too quick for me to identify. I'm sure someone with more knowledge and better equipment would have an easier time with these small mammals, which were seen frequently in the canopy. I spotted many of what appeared to be **small dorcopsis** feeding in the grasslands nearby (at least that's what the locals said they were). These, I would come to realise, were very common in this grassy clearing, mostly at night, but occasionally during the day as well. They were seen at a distance, making photography and identification difficult. This of course wouldn't be a problem for someone equipped with a DSLR and a good torch.

We were all up early the next morning for the first round of tree-kangaroo searching. We followed the trail for a short distance before everyone split off in their own directions. It didn't take long before someone called out that they had spotted one. The problem was, they'd seen it hopping along the forest floor rather than up in the canopy. On the ground, these animals can vanish within seconds, but up in the trees there's a far better chance of a prolonged view. With the first day largely unsuccessful, everyone returned to camp.

That evening, I went out again in search of nocturnal mammals. I came across several **Raffray's bandicoots** diving into the bushes, but they were always too quick to photograph. More rodents were seen zipping through the trees, and I was able identify one this time – a **grey-bellied tree mouse** stood still long enough for me to get a quick video. Out at the grasslands, I tried to get a closer view of a **small dorcopsis**, but it got spooked as I approached and disappeared into the nearby trees.

The next morning, the swelling on my foot had worsened, turning every step into an ordeal. Because of this, the crew set out without me. They promised to shout out if they spotted anything, but that call never came, and once again, we came away empty-handed. To make matters worse, the weather became progressively more dreadful. I went out for a quick session of spotlighting, but the combination of rain and my swollen foot made it far from enjoyable. I managed to find a single **mountain cuscus** before retreating back to camp.

As if things couldn't get any more miserable, the rain grew heavier the next day and didn't let up until sunset. There was no chance of spotting a tree-kangaroo, as they would be taking shelter in the moss. Because of this, the entire day was spent lingering around camp, rather than out in the forest. It was our second-to-last day up at Wasaunon, making me increasingly nervous that we wouldn't find one. By dinner, the rain had cleared, so I decided to head out that evening. The swelling on my foot had finally gone down, making the hike much more bearable. I got good views of a **long-tailed pygmy possum** and had plenty of **small dorcopsis** sightings.

Long-tailed pygmy possum

I woke up on the last full day at Wasaunon to clear skies. It had to be today, tomorrow we'd be packing and leaving at the crack of dawn, with no time for searching. Everyone was eager and ready for one last push. It didn't take long, just 15 minutes into the hike, we heard some people call out: they had spotted a tree-kangaroo. We moved quickly towards the calls and there it was, a **Matschie's tree-kangaroo** basking in the sun high up in the canopy.

Matschie's tree-kangaroo

The view of the tree-kangaroo was partially obscured by the foliage of the tree in front. Foolishly, I asked the locals if they could climb up and trim back the leaves. Something was clearly lost in translation. Instead of pruning the tree, they used a long stick to spook the animal so that it dropped from the branches. A team waiting below grabbed it the moment it hit the ground. I told them to let it go, and they did so immediately.

The tree-kangaroo looked as though it could have been seriously injured falling from that height. I later learned that this is actually a common defence mechanism, and tree-kangaroos can survive such falls without harm. This is the method the locals use to capture them for the researchers. Even so, it is clearly very distressing for the animals, and future tourists should make it clear that the tree-kangaroos must not be disturbed in any way.

Not an hour later, the locals told me they had caught a wallaby. I went out to the grasslands to find one of the guys holding a juvenile **Brown's pademelon**. Unlike the tree-kangaroo, it looked relaxed. I took some photos and then it was released.

A local holding a Brown's pademelon

During my final spotlighting session, I saw a few **masked ringtails** and a single **mountain cuscus**. I also caught the eyeshine of a small mammal standing in the middle of the path. It moved differently from the bandicoots or rodents I had seen earlier. I didn't get a good look at it before it disappeared into the bushes. Perhaps it was a New Guinean quoll, but I'm not sure.

It took roughly six hours, moving at a fairly brisk pace, to make it back down to Yawan. Not too many hiccups along the way, aside from falling into a giant patch of stinging nettle. By the time I arrived, I was pretty tired and not exactly looking forward to the thought of crossing the Saruwaged Range again. However, luck was on my side, as the very next day I managed to hitch a ride on a plane that had come to transport coffee. Flying over the YUS Conservation Area was incredible; seeing that rugged, wild landscape from the air gave me a whole new appreciation for the miles I'd covered on foot.

I landed in a place called Aiyura, way out in the Eastern Highlands. This meant spending half the day in a PMV travelling down to Lae just in time to catch a flight back to Port Moresby that evening. I must have looked fairly tired as I stepped onto the plane, because the flight attendant took one look at me and said, “Busy week?”

Yeah, you could say that.

Flying over the YUS Conservation Area

Arranging the Trip

It took me so long to get started on this report that I somehow managed to return to Papua New Guinea in 2026 before finishing it. Because of this, I have also included a short section covering my 2026 visit to the highlands of Papua New Guinea. The first place I visited was Kumul Lodge, which is popular with birders and easy to arrange. Just contact Tanya at kumullodge@gmail.com and she can organise everything. The place can fill up during the high season (May to October), so it's worth booking well in advance if you're travelling then. I visited in March, right in the middle of the wet season, which meant I had the lodge to myself for most of my stay.

The other place I went to was Mount Sugarloaf, as I had heard it was supposed to be good for tree-kangaroos. This portion of the trip was organised by Max Mal, who lives next to Kumul Lodge and can be contacted on WhatsApp: +675 7175 3083. It's not exactly a tourist destination. In fact, I was one of the first foreigners to climb it. It's fairly cheap to visit (just a few hundred dollars), making it a good budget destination for someone wanting to see tree-kangaroos in New Guinea.

Kumul Lodge

Kumul Lodge is a fantastic destination for birds, with plenty of interesting species visible right from the balcony as they feed at the fruit tables below. Some of my favourites included the Brehm's tiger parrot, the Stella's lorikeet and the ribbon-tailed astrapia. It's certainly one of the more relaxing places to look for wildlife in New Guinea. Mammals are a bit more difficult, but I did manage to see a few. Just above the fruit table, I watched a **speckled dasyure** scurrying through the trees. The lawn out the back of the lodge grounds was good for the **Callaby's pademelon**. I had multiple sightings of this species and was able to get a few photos after failing to do so on Mount Victoria.

Callaby's Pademelon

Being the wet season, nights were largely dominated by heavy rainfall. The rain usually eased by around 4 am, which is when I aimed to head out spotlighting. I saw plenty of mammals through my thermal scope, but they were skittish and often disappeared into the trees as soon the light was on them. Bats were frequently seen flying, though I wasn't able to identify them. At one point, a bat swooped in and ate a bug that was buzzing around my face. On the second morning of searching, I spotted a **masked ringtail** along the driveway, a species I had previously seen at Wasaunon. The third and final evening was dry, allowing me to walk the trails behind the lodge, where I managed to find a **pygmy ringtail**, one of my main targets for the area.

Pygmy Ringtail

Mount Sugarloaf

Max and the driver met me at the lodge around 6 am for the trip to Mount Sugarloaf. The vehicle was a full-blown bus, which felt a bit excessive for just two passengers. It also made the crossing over Murmur Pass slightly more challenging, as the route was steep and full of potholes. Still, we made the journey in one piece, so I can't really complain. In standard PNG fashion, we ran into issues with the landowners upon arrival at the trailhead. After some back and forth, we eventually reached an agreement for them to accompany us up the mountain, and we were on our way.

The trek was fairly challenging – a bit like climbing Mupi Gunung, but with the added bonus of a five-hour slog across boggy grasslands, all in a single day. After multiple treks across New Guinea, I was now numb to these conditions and just accepted them as a fact of life. The landscape felt very familiar, dominated by tree ferns, which carried the same Jurassic atmosphere I had experienced on Mount Victoria.

Mount Sugarloaf Grasslands (3,300 m), location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/aDcogKr1cKE8ZWHc7

We reached the mountain hut just as the light was fading and the first drops of rain were starting to fall. The weather only worsened as the night progressed. This wouldn't have been an issue if not for the fact that one of the crew members was missing, prompting a couple of the guys who knew the surroundings to set out and look for him. The rest of us sat waiting and hoping that he was alright. The guys returned empty-handed, but with smiles on their faces. After exchanging a few words to the group in their native language, everyone began to clap. They had found the missing crew member, who was camping out in the bushes keeping watch on a tree-kangaroo resting high up in the canopy. The group decided that a couple of guys would head back to him with a tarp, stay overnight, and keep an eye on the tree-kangaroo, while I would visit the area the following morning.

After a night of virtually no sleep due to the chatty locals, I was eager to get going, so we packed up and set off towards the tree-kangaroo. It was only a 20-minute walk to the site. I stepped into a small patch of forest and looked up to see the **ifola tree-kangaroo** hiding away in the foliage. Some of the crew suggested climbing up and grabbing it, but after the incident at Wasaunon, I made it clear I didn't want to disturb it any more than we already had. I took a few photos, then we left it alone.

Ifola tree-kangaroo

We then made our way back across the grasslands and down the forested slopes towards the village. As we reached the cultivated area at the base of the mountain, the afternoon rains set in. I received a message from the driver showing water flowing over the road, preventing him from reaching us. It looked wadable, so once we arrived at the village, we found a local to drive us out to it. What awaited us was a raging river and a chunk of road that had broken away, leaving a steep drop where water was cascading over the edge. This was going to be fun…

Locals watching a stupid white guy crossing a raging river

I had quite the audience as I made my way across the river. The group of locals on the other side found it highly entertaining that a white guy had ended up in this situation and cheered me on throughout the entire crossing. In hindsight, focusing on my footing would have been wiser than trying to film my ordeal. One misstep would have sent me straight over the edge and down into the abyss. Yes, not my brightest moment. Here's a tip for anyone planning on travelling off the beaten track in New Guinea: visit during the dry season. Once I reached dry ground, I climbed into the vehicle and headed back over the pass towards Kumul Lodge, arriving well after dark, tired and soaking wet.

In the end, I only spent one night on Mount Sugarloaf, but it sounds like the mountain has a lot of potential. The locals told me that they see multiple species of macropod up there, along with eastern long-beaked echidnas and dwarf cassowaries. They're keen for more visitors and told me they'd build another mountain hut that's not as deep into the grasslands, so tourists don't have to trek so far. Max, who organised the trip, is a strong advocate for conservation and hopes that tourism will reduce hunting in the area. He even carried a rubbish bag and picked up all the litter left behind by hunters who had visited previously. If you're interested in seeing some New Guinean mammals on a relatively low budget, you can contact him on +675 7175 3083. But maybe visit in the dry season!

Mount Sugarloaf Grasslands

Mammals

1. Speckled Dasyure (*Neophascogale lorentzii*) – Spotted above the fruit table at Kumul Lodge in the **Highlands**.

2. Raffray's bandicoot (*Peroryctes raffrayana*) – This species was seen multiple times up at **Wasaunon**, but was too quick to photograph.

3. Doria's tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus dorianus*) – One seen running through the grasslands of **Mount Victoria** at 2,800 metres. Five seen on the trek down to the lowlands. This included one solitary adult, a mother and joey, and another mother with her joey still in the pouch. They seem reasonably common, as most of these sightings were incidental.

4. Grizzled tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus inustus*) – We saw two on the second day at **Mupi Gunung**.

5. Matschie's tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus matschiei*) – It took several days to finally track this species down, longer than I'd anticipated, as the first few days up at **Wasaunon** were cold and wet. In the rain these tree-kangaroos hide away in the moss.

6. Ursine tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus ursinus*) – Four were seen on the first full day at **Mupi Gunung** – one within 15 minutes of searching. We decided to stop looking for them after this, as we were satisfied with our sightings.

7. Ifola tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus notatus*) – Found by one of the trackers up on Mount Sugarloaf in the **Highlands** on the first evening. I went to see it the following morning.

8. Brown's pademelon (*Thylogale browni*) – The locals caught a juvenile Brown's pademelon in the grasslands of **Wasaunon**, then let it go after showing me. I didn't ask them to catch it, but it seemed unharmed.

9. Callaby's pademelon (*Thylogale calabyi*) – We saw this species up in the grasslands of **Mount Victoria**. Sadly, I didn't get a photo, as we were lost in a dingo-infested swamp, getting pounded by horizontal rain. It proved much easier to photograph at Kumul Lodge in the **Highlands**, where I saw it multiple times.

10. Grey dorcopsis (*Dorcopsis luctuosa*) – Very common on Loloata Island near Port Moresby, where it has been introduced.

11. Small dorcopsis (*Dorcopsulus vanheurni*) – The locals told me it was this species that was commonly encountered in the grasslands of **Wasaunon**. Feel free to correct me if this is wrong, as I never had any good views of it.

12. Feather-tailed possum (*Distoechurus pennatus*) – We saw this species at camp and in the forest around **Mupi Gunung**.

13. Striped possum (*Dactylopsila trivirgata*) – Seen a few times at **Mupi Gunung**.

14. New Guinea glider (*Petaurus papuanus*) – There were multiple sightings of this species at **Mupi Gunung**. It was also seen at the forest edge next to the grasslands of **Mount Victoria**.

15. Painted ringtail (*Pseudochirulus forbesi*) – A couple were seen close to the camp at 1,300 metres on **Mount Victoria**.

16. Masked ringtail (*Pseudochirulus larvatus*) – I saw this species several times at **Wasaunon**. I also spotted it at Kumul Lodge in the **Highlands** along the driveway just before dawn.

17. Pygmy ringtail (*Pseudochirulus mayeri*) – This possum was seen at Kumul Lodge in the **Highlands** while walking the trails at night.

18. Vogelkop ringtail (*Pseudochirulus schlegeli*) – Seen on the last night at **Mupi Gunung**.

19. Reclusive ringtail (*Pseudochirops coronatus*) – One sighting high up in a tree at **Mupi Gunung**.

20. Coppery ringtail (*Pseudochirops cupreus*) – We saw this species in the forest next to the **Mount Victoria** grasslands camp.

21. Long-tailed pygmy possum (*Cercartetus caudatus*) – Seen in the forest near to the grasslands at **Wasaunon**.

22. Mountain cuscus (*Phalanger carmelitae*) – There were sightings of this species in the forests of both **Mount Victoria** and **Wasaunon**.

23. Northern common cuscus (*Phalanger orientalis*) – Seen reasonably frequently at **Mupi Gunung**.

24. Mountain paramelomys (*Paramelomys rubex*) – Seen around the **Mount Victoria** grasslands camp.

25. Chestnut tree mouse (*Pogonomys macrourus*) – One sighting close to our **Mount Victoria** camp at 1,300 metres.

26. Grey-bellied tree mouse (*Pogonomys sylvestris*) – I found this species on the trail between the camp and the grasslands at **Wasaunon**.

27. Lesser long-tongued fruit bat (*Macroglossus minimus*) – Seen around camp at 650 metres on the last night of the **Mount Victoria** expedition.

Remaining tree-kangaroos and other interesting mammals

Goodfellow's tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus goodfellowi*) – The Bismarck Forest Corridor in Papua New Guinea is supposedly a hotspot for the Goodfellow's tree-kangaroo. I have talked to some locals around there who know where to find it. They run a guesthouse on the Jiwaka side of Mount Wilhelm and have banned hunting in the area. According to them, the best place to see the animal is around Yomi, located a little further down the valley from the guesthouse. The camera trap image below was taken in the area.

The price they quoted me was very reasonable, making it a good place to see mammals on a relatively low budget. It's possible to climb Mount Wilhelm from the guesthouse. The locals have put a lot of effort into making sure both the track and the camps are of high quality. They often see ifola tree-kangaroos up at Khu Poke Camp.

I've also heard it's possible to see the Goodfellow's tree-kangaroo in the forest along the Kokoda Track. I talked to someone who saw one while trekking. They told me it was yellow and brown, rather than dark brown like the Doria's tree-kangaroo. The locals say they see them up at Myola Lakes (2,000 metres elevation). This is quite surprising to me, as I thought the south-eastern subspecies (*D. g. goodfellowi*) was only supposed to occur up to an elevation of 800 metres in the Owen Stanley Range. However, this subspecies is still very poorly understood, so who knows?

Lowlands tree-kangaroo (***Dendrolagus spadix***) – This species inhabits lowland tropical rainforests of southern Papua New Guinea, particularly in areas dominated by limestone. I'm speaking with a man named Blake who is keen to organise an expedition to the Kagua-Erave District in the Southern Highlands, which is prime habitat for the lowlands tree-kangaroo. Blake has spent considerable time in the forests around Mount Bosavi, located relatively close to Kagua-Erave, and says he has seen lowlands tree-kangaroos there, although they are uncommon due to the proximity of human settlement. He believes the Kagua-Erave expedition will offer a better chance of encountering the species, as the area is more remote.

The trek begins with a climb into the crater of Mount Murray, which should provide good habitat for both Ifola tree-kangaroos and eastern long-beaked echidnas. Blake has seen these inside the crater of Mount Bosavi, an environment very similar to Mount Murray. From there, the route follows river systems down into the karst region, where the search for the lowlands tree-kangaroo will begin. The route that he has planned would take about a month to complete. I've mapped out a shorter route, though it's just one-way. We'd still have to find a way out.

Dingiso (*Dendrolagus mbaiso*) – The dingiso is found in the highlands of West Papua. It is likely most abundant in areas inhabited by the Moni people, as the species is sacred to them, which means it isn't hunted. I have been speaking with a local Moni man who lives in the village of Pogapa. It used to be possible to reach Pogapa onboard a Missionary Aviation Fellowship plane from Timika for a relatively low price. From the village, it is roughly a day's walk up to the dingiso habitat at Lake Wutidi, situated above 3,000 metres. The Moni man sounds keen for me to visit and to help me find a dingiso; however, the area has recently become very politically unstable and isn't safe to visit.

Seri's tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus stellarum*) – I haven't done much research on this species, but I believe it shares the same habitat as the dingiso. So, if you're already in dingiso territory, you might as well make the most of it and look for this species at the same time.

Wondiwoi tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus mayri*) – This species was thought to be extinct until 2018, when it was rediscovered by a tourist visiting the Wondiwoi Mountains, West Papua. Arranging a visit here is easy, just contact Eky Sawaki from Wondiwoi Tour and he will organise everything (+62 812 4893 1154). Finding the tree-kangaroo, however, is another matter entirely. The species is on the brink of extinction, if not already extinct. A film crew recently spent three weeks in the mountains searching for it but came back empty-handed.

Tenkile (*Dendrolagus scottae*) – A very difficult species to see, both from a logistical point of view and because the chances of actually encountering one in the wild are extremely low. The Tenkile Conservation Alliance (TCA) doesn't appear keen on allowing tourists into its prime habitat within the Torricelli Mountains of Papua New Guinea. The images they share of the species on their Facebook page are either captive individuals or from camera traps, suggesting that actual sightings in the wild are rare. I am in contact with someone who has connections with the TCA, and he says he can arrange a visit for me. However, a visit there could potentially involve me in disputes similar to what I experienced in the YUS Conservation Area, so I haven't looked into it much.

Golden-mantled tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus pulcherrimus*) – Occurs within the Torricelli Mountains, just like the tenkile, so the same challenges are likely to arise when trying to see one in the wild. It can also be found in the Foja Mountains of West Papua, which is much further from human habitation, so perhaps it would be easier to see there.

Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus lumholtzi*) – This species is easy to spot throughout the Atherton Tablelands in Australia. I've seen it at both Peterson Creek and outside the Nerada Tea Plantation, but there are plenty of other good spots as well. A few suggestions include the Curtain Fig Tree, Wongabel State Forest, Malanda Falls, or Possum Valley.

Bennett's tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus bennettianus*) – Also found in Australia, though more difficult to spot than the Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo. It used to be relatively easy to see this species at Shipton's Flat, near Cooktown with the help of Charlie and Lewis Roberts. However, the population there has crashed and may be locally extinct. The best place to see it now is the Daintree Rainforest. In 2025, I managed to find two along the Dubuji Boardwalk on the first morning of searching. A thermal drone survey conducted in 2024 suggests the species is reasonably common, but difficult to observe from the ground.

Eastern long-beaked echidna (*Zaglossus bartoni*) – I have tried twice to find this species and failed both times, although I have certainly seen signs of the echidna, so they are present in the areas I've been in. It appears that considerable time and a large team are needed for any real chance of success. The trackers at Wasaunon told me they would need at least two weeks to locate one, along with gumboots, warm clothing, and good torches for night searches.

Dogs are also likely to be useful, though they would need to be highly trained and/or fitted with muzzles to prevent harm to the echidna. Blake says the Kasua people have used dogs to locate echidnas on Mount Bosavi for him. The dogs there are trained not to attack wildlife, as the community has voluntarily implemented conservation measures to help preserve the environment.

However, the locals there are reportedly beginning to resume hunting, as they have seen few tangible benefits from their conservation efforts. Blake shared footage of an echidna being eaten by a local. He emphasised that funding is urgently needed to help protect the forests of Mount Bosavi and has started a conservation project there.

Echidnas are also present within the Kagua-Erave District, where Blake is planning his expedition. An Italian caving team has visited the area multiple times. During their 2024 expedition, the local crew managed to catch an eastern long-beaked echidna, which, unfortunately, they ate.

I've also heard that there are plans to establish an echidna conservation area at Crater Mountain, so that area is likely to have potential as well.

Black dorcopsis (*Dorcopsis atrata*) – This macropod is endemic to Goodenough Island in Papua New Guinea. Getting there requires chartering boat from Alotau through the pirate-infested waters of Milne Bay. Navigating the forests there is extremely difficult, as the locals are incredibly wary of foreigners. The trek to the dorcopsis habitat passes through multiple villages, and obtaining permission from each community is painstakingly slow, as they all require the same assurances of your intentions. What would normally be a trek of just a few days can stretch into weeks. Hunters who venture into the area typically return with only one to three animals, indicating that while the species is present, it is not abundant.

Woodlark cuscus (*Phalanger lullulae*) – Seeing this species is easy, reaching its habitat is another matter. Woodlark Island in Papua New Guinea does not have scheduled flights, so the only way to get there is by either chartering a plane or a boat. There are also infrequent shared boats on which you could potentially get a ride. However, like Goodenough Island, boats leave from Alotau and travel through Milne Bay, so again, you're going to have to take your chances with the pirates. There's one place to stay on the island: the Bay Breeze Bungalow. They'll be able to help with logistics and arranging guides. You can contact them on WhatsApp: +675 7922 7032

Manus Island spotted cuscus (*Spilocuscus kraemeri*) – Easy to see and easy to reach. Manus Island has direct flights from Port Moresby, which are relatively inexpensive. A local named Mark can help arrange a trip out to Mendelin Island where hunting of the cuscus has been banned. Here, the chances of encountering one are very high. They can also be spotted in the forests on the main island, although sightings are somewhat more challenging. Mark can be contacted here: +675 7277 7373