

FOREST & BIRD TOURS

SUPPORTING CONSERVATION

DEPARTING OCTOBER 2023- APRIL 2024

Our ever-changing our ever-changing corner of the world is full of natural spectacles to be enjoyed, challenged, or held in awe. Travel off the beaten track, in small groups, and experience some less visited, but still spectacular treasures. Join us to explore the region's natural heritage and feel good knowing your tour's profits will be supporting Forest & Bird's conservation work!

It was a truly remarkable experience and we are very grateful for it. Thank you Mark and Forest & Bird!

Inge Bremer and Rolf Mueller-Glodde
Footsteps through Conservation Battlegrounds tour October 2020



YOUR GUIDE

Naturalist and Forest & Bird President Mark Hanger has been leading small-group nature tours throughout New Zealand and Australia for more than 30 years. He has put together this incredible fundraising journey for our supporters. Travel is by comfortable small coach equipped with an excellent nature reference library. Accommodation is in pleasant hotels and lodges with private facilities. A flexible tour itinerary offers multiple start and finish points and different journey lengths. All tour profits go to Forest & Bird's conservation work.



New Caledonia –The Tropical Jewel of Gondwana

Departs Nouméa, 31st October 2023





New Caledonia has all the features you might expect from tropical islands – white sands, blue lagoons, and graceful palms – and is also home to some amazing plants and wildlife, and challenging conservation issues. There are abundant conifers belonging to the ancient plant family [Araucariaceae](#), including the Column pines, or *Araucaria columnaris*, which grow in the coral-derived soils along the coast.

New Caledonia is considered one of the world's most botanically-important, and critically endangered hotspots. Unlike many of the Pacific Islands, New Caledonia is an ancient fragment of Gondwana. It is the second most important biodiversity hot spot on the planet : 76% of its flora is endemic. The factors contributing to such a rich variety of plant life include the diversity of climate, elevation, and a prevalence of soils rich in heavy metals.



Oct 31 Arrive Nouméa.

Transfer to Nouméa accommodation. Stay near the southern beaches at Hotel Novvata two nights.

Nov 01 Tjibaou Kanak Cultural Centre, Mount Koghi Forests.

This morning we drive onto Mt Koghi for our first walk through the lush mesic rain forests that clothe much of inland New Caledonia. Good opportunities here to view several endemic bird species as well. This afternoon we have an introduction to the indigenous peoples of New Caledonia at the remarkable Tjibaou Cultural centre. The Kanak Path, meandering along the mangroves, surrounds the Tjiboua Kanak Cultural Centre and links it to Téa Kanaké, the founding hero. It guides the visitors in the discovery of numerous plant species and plants, carrying meanings and functions in Melanesian culture. Late afternoon return to Nouméa.



Nov 02 Parc Forestier Zoological and Forest Park, Cycas Coastal Forest.

Just a few minutes from the city centre at Montravel, in the heights of Nouméa, this is a great spot for easy walking to gain a first insight into the natural values of New Caledonia, with beautiful views over the lagoon and along the southern coast of the Mainland. The zoological park is home to many endemic birds, including New Caledonia's national bird, the kagu (cagou) for which this is a key breeding centre. Early afternoon drive north from the city towards Bourail. Enjoy a gentle walk through the coastal Cycas forest before continuing through to Kone. Arrive Hotel Le Nea, Kone for one night

Nov 03 Coeur de Voh.

Walk up to the lookout overlooking the remarkable mangrove forest and the southern coast of Le Grande Terre with views of the Couer de Voh. Maquis vegetation dominates this and many other areas in inland New Caledonia. Alternatively you may take a 4WD excursion up to the viewpoint (approx. \$NZ120.00 per person.). Stay Malabou Beach Resort two nights.



Nov 04 Tiebaghi Massif.

Day excursion to Tiebaghi Maquis Minier. Situated high on the ultramafic rocks of Tiebaghi massif are the remains of the world's largest chromium mine. Now the site of a significant revegetation the environs are home to many endemic plants. Today we visit the mine area, learn of the re-vegetation efforts, and discover the flora of the peaks as we travel up to the mine, then on the mined areas themselves. Afternoon return to Malabou Beach.

Nov 05 Northern Grand Terre.

Natural features abound in this region that is startlingly different to the south. Rock forms such as the Lindéralique Rocks, and Pule Couveuse will feature. Hienghène has a striking lagoon surrounded by 120m-high (400ft) black cliffs. The region is dotted with churches and Melanesian villages, forests, coconut palms and beautiful beaches. Stay Hienghène two nights.

Nov 06 Ilot de Hienga. Morning water taxi out to this botanical and marine sanctuary. Enjoy a guided walk through the islet's lush forest, then a guided snorkelling trip to discover the underwater 'forests' that make this part of the lagoon so special. Afternoon to relax by the water.



Nov 07 Le Minier landscapes of the Northeast coast

Nickel, chromium, cobalt, iron and gold mining have left their indelible mark on the New Caledonian landscape. The harsh mineral rich environment is challenging for plant life. Today as we travel across the island through this unique landscape discover some of the special plants that have evolved to live in this inhospitable environment. Mid afternoon arrive at Bourail. Stay Hotel Le Poe two nights.

Nov 08 Dry Eastern Forests of Poe

Half day walk through a rare extensive remnant of dry forest. In the afternoon discover the magnificent 'column pines' of the Baie de Tortues. Option of a glass bottom boat tour onto the reef.

Nov 09 Parc des Grandes Fougères

Adding to New Caledonia's primeval appearance are some truly giant tree ferns. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the forests adjacent to Farino. There is a wide diversity of walks in this delightful national park located on the southern hills. Return to Nouméa for two nights.

Nov 10 Day to relax in Nouméa



Nov 11 Cap N'Dua.

This morning travel south through the hills of the Sud with numerous opportunities to study the everchanging botany en route. A short drive beyond Baie de Prony has us arrive at Cap N'Dua. This reserve is a magical place for nature lovers. Located at the tip of the Great South region, natural steep cliffs and bays make for a stunning landscape. Pitcher plants abound along the track up to the lighthouse overlooking the entrance to Port Prony. Following short walks here we continue on a twisting road in the deep south to our lodge in Port Boise. Stay Kanua Tera Lodge two nights.

Nov 12 Riviere Bleu Provincial Park— Blue River Provincial Park.

In the far south this beautiful park is a bushwalker's paradise, extending over 9000 hectares of wild country rich in native plants and animals, and good walking tracks. The park's giant Kaori stand 40m high and are almost a 1000 years old, and you'll also likely get to admire New Caledonia's rare national bird, the kagu (cagou), in the wild. A bus runs us through the heart of the park enabling us to hop on and off to wander through the varied forests in the valley. Return to Kanu Tera.



Nov 13 La Chute de la Madeleine – Madeleine Provincial Botanical Reserve .

In the heart of the Plaine des Lacs, a signposted botanical path enables us to discover the scrub flora of the New Caledonian past at the impressive Madeleine Falls, the scenic highlight of the reserve. It contains 168 plant species. The reserve's flora is especially remarkable due to the presence, along the river, of 7 primitive conifers, vestiges of a bygone era. Final night in Nouméa.

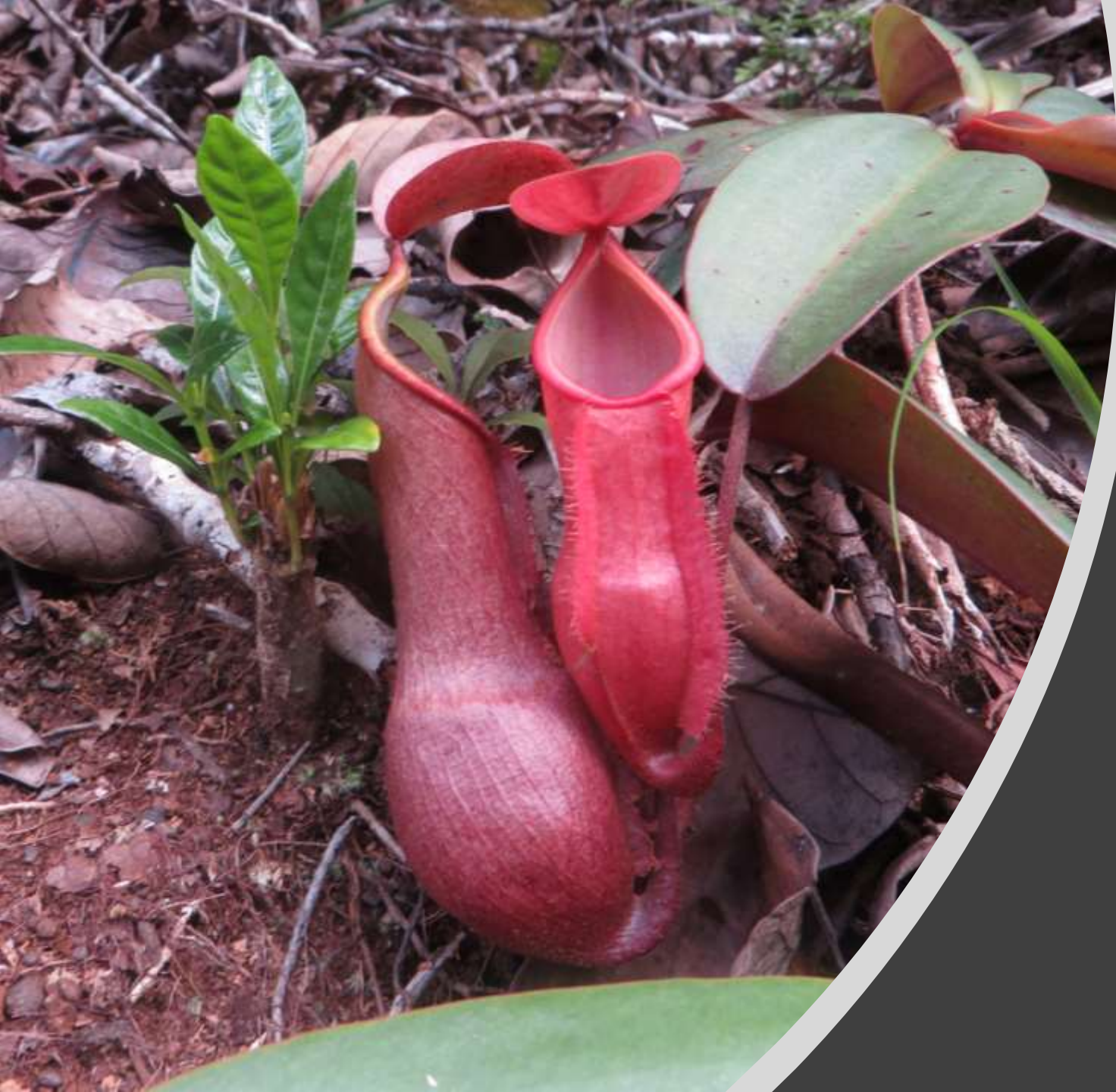
Nov 14 Depart for NZ.

Iles des Pins Extension

Nov 14 **Iles des Pins** Fly to Iles des Pins. Stay Oure Tera Hotel.

Nov 15 **Iles des Pins** This exceedingly beautiful island has many white sand beaches, turquoise lagoons, lush rainforests, pines, orchids and ferns not to mention archaeological remains. You may just relax in this tropical hideaway or you may opt to cruise on the stunning Baie d'Oro then walk through the rain forest from the head of the Baie.

Nov 16 Return to Nouméa and trip completion



New Caledonia

Departs: October 31 2023, Nouméa, Nouvelle Calédonie

Price: These prices are GST inclusive and are per person twinshare

\$NZ6395.00 core trip

\$NZ1295.00 for Iles des Pins extension

Includes

Services of tour naturalist, Mark Hanger.

All tour travel departing and terminating in Nouméa.

All meals except lunch and dinner on free day in Nouméa

All accommodation, twin share with private facilities in hotels

Information booklet with background ecological information and species lists.

Flights to/from Iles du Pins (for extension)

All national park permit and admission fees.

Contribution to the conservation efforts of Forest & Bird

For Single Room add \$NZ1295.00 per person.

For Single room on extension add \$NZ340.00 per person

For additional nights in Nouméa add \$NZ190.00 room only.

To book, complete booking form along with a deposit of \$NZ900.00 .