Exploring Bali, The Spice Islands, & Raja Ampat
An Earlham College Alumni Adventure in Indonesia - With Bill Buskirk
October, 2017
Exploring Bali, The Spice Islands, & Raja Ampat
An Earlham College Alumni Adventure with Bill Buskirk

17 Days / 16 Nights in Indonesia
Group Size: 12 + Group Leaders (Bill Buskirk & Marianne Cope)
$7,850 per person/sharing
Single Supplement: Only one special berth available

Begins: Denpasar, Bali (Oct 15) / Ends: Denpasar, Bali (Oct 31) -- 2017

HIGHLIGHTS:
Hiking through UNESCO World Heritage listed rice fields of Jatiluwih, Bali
Hands on Balinese Cooking Class
Exploring Balinese temples & shrines / Learning about Balinese spirituality
Visiting artisan workshops and markets in Ubud
11 nights cruising on a traditional Indonesian pinisi
Penemu Island’s “Hidden Bay”
The unique karst formations of Boano Island
Swimming/ floating through Tomolo’s famous grottos
The prehistoric petroglyph cave art of Raja Ampat
Sea Kayaking and paddle boarding from the Katharina
Hiking and birding in Seram’s Manusela National Park
Visiting remote villages only very lightly touched by the outside world
Learning about the life and work of Alfred Russel Wallace, and following in his footsteps
Daily opportunities to snorkel in some of the most marine wildlife rich waters in the world
The pristine coral reefs of Raja Ampat
Amazing sunsets and spectacular landscapes
Observing both Red and Wilson’s Birds-of-Paradise in the wild

TO REGISTER:
Chris Kean (EC ’85) at Solaris Expeditions
Chris Kean: ckean@solarisexpeditions.com
Questions: Call Chris Kean – 973.200.6796 / 800.330.6070
OVERVIEW

In October 2017 - Join Bill Buskirk & Marianne Cope on a journey of exploration to Bali and the remote islands of Eastern Indonesia. We are hugely excited about this trip, surely to be one of the richest and most rewarding travel experiences Bill has led – a great opportunity for adventurous travelers looking to expand their travel horizons, broaden their understanding of a fascinating part of the world, and experience a vast, pristine, marine wilderness area still only lightly touched by tourism.

The journey starts and ends in fabled Bali, an exceptionally beautiful land, rich in history, culture and diverse spiritual traditions. We will have days to explore the area around Ubud in the central highlands, combing favorite activities such as birding, trekking, and photography with visits to ancient sites, artisan workshops, and an inspirational, innovative, eco-friendly school.

The heart of our adventure are the days we’ll spend on the Pinisi, Katharina, sailing from the white-sand dotted islands of the Moluccan and Banda Seas to the astonishing region of Raja Ampat, which has arguably the greatest marine biodiversity in the world. Here in a region that has been called the Galapagos of South East Asia, we will stop at scarcely populated and seldom visited islands, learn about local cultures and traditions, snorkel over pristine reefs and through stalactite encrusted grottos, and hike into primeval forest in search of birds of paradise. Along the way, we will enjoy our wonderful boat, its friendly crew, and the unique fellowship that forms during a great sea voyage.

Travel Dates: Sun, Oct 15 – Fri, Oct 31 (17 days/16 nights in Indonesia)

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<td>Disembark at Ambon – Fly to Bali</td>
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Sun, Oct 15: Welcome to Bali

Bali is the westernmost of the Lesser Sunda Islands and the smallest province of Indonesia. It is by far the most visited of Indonesia's islands, and the only Hindu society in the whole of Southeast Asia. Known as the ‘Island of the Gods’ and the ‘Land of a Thousand Temples,” it is picturesque to the point of resembling a painted backdrop for the scene of a movie. Its diversity ranges from sophisticated hotels, gourmet restaurants, thriving nightlife and endless shopping, to a blissful paradise of sandy beaches, hand-carved rice terraces, fast flowing rivers, towering volcanoes and ancient rainforests. This natural splendor is combined with an exotic history, a flavorsome cuisine, and a rich spiritual culture defined by palaces, temples, flower-scented festivals and exquisite arts.

Upon arrival at Denpasar Airport, we transfer to our hotel not far from Denpasar for our first night in Indonesia. A Welcome Dinner is included.

Overnight: The Open Hotel (or similar)
Room: Standard
Included: Dinner

Mon, Oct 16: On to Sulawesi

This morning we depart for Denpasar Airport, where we fly north to the island of Sulawesi.

Our destination is the city of Makassar, a busy modern port today, and in the past the traditional gateway to Eastern Indonesia. Located on the deep sea Straits of Makassar, the city has a colorful history. It was a vital hub for the hugely profitable trade between the Spice Islands and India, Europe, and China, and an important administrative and economic center for the Dutch East Indies.

Upon landing at Makassar Airport, we’ll proceed to our hotel for check-in, and a break for lunch.

Later we meet up for a tour of the city’s historic district, which features fine examples of Dutch colonial architecture, including the 17th century, Fort Rotterdam, which we will have a chance to visit.

Overnight: Aston Makassar (or similar)
Room: Standard
Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Tue, Oct 17 – Thu, Oct 26: Sailing to Ambon aboard the Katharina

Oct 17 - In the morning we fly from Makassar, across the Banda Sea to the city of Sorong on Indonesian Papua.

After landing on Ambon we head directly to the harbor to board the Katharina. Once settled into our cabins, we meet our cruise director who will brief us about life on board and preview our itinerary.

Ready to start our adventure, the Katharina weighs anchor, and sails into the waters of Raja Ampat. Raja Ampat lies in the Coral Triangle, which stretches from The Philippines to Timor to Papua New Guinea, known as the most biodiverse marine habitat on earth. There are many species here you won't find anywhere else. It has three-quarters of the world’s coral varieties, ten times that of the Caribbean. The waters of Raja Ampat
are so clear and the marine life so abundant that it’s like swimming in a tropical aquarium. With its sublime scenery of steep, jungle-covered islands, white-sand beaches, hidden lagoons, eerie caves, unusual mushroom-shaped islets and luminous turquoise waters, Raja Ampat is easily one of the most beautiful island chains in the world.

Beyond the bay of Sorong, we’ll find a place to stop for a refreshing swim. Later, we dine alfresco on the main deck while getting to know the captain and crew and watching the sun set on our first day at sea.

**Oct 18** - Today we will rise at 4.30am, off Sawinggarai village on the island of Gam. The dinghy will carry us across to the village in the dark, and a local guide will take us on a 20-minute-walk into the forest on a pre-dawn quest to spot the remarkable red bird of paradise, one of the species that Alfred Russel Wallace was keenest to collect. We hope that the efforts of our early start will pay off, enabling us to catch a rare and privileged sight of the bird’s elaborate courtship dance as the day breaks over the forest canopy. Back in the village, there will be time to meet with the community and perhaps visit the school. We will be back on the boat by mid-morning and if time permits we’ll travel over to Pef Island to snorkel and motor around the convoluted coast while learning the myth about the prehistoric hand print still visible high on a limestone cliff. In the afternoon we’ll head towards Sorong and should have time for a snorkel before dinner.

**Oct 19** - This morning we wake up on the north coast of the jungle-clad island of Batanta. Batanta offers us a chance to stretch our legs on a trek into the island’s interior. We will anchor at the foot of Arefi Village, nestled on the north coast of the island, where we will find local guides to escort us through the mangrove waters to the start point of our hike. A short walk along the riverbed brings us to the first of two jungle waterfalls complete with a refreshing pool for cooling off. The fit and adventurous may choose to continue the uphill climb along the rocks to where a second, larger cascade awaits. After leaving the wilderness behind us, we will find a nearby spot to swim and snorkel. The island boasts some exciting birdlife, too – we will be on the lookout for, Beach Kingfisher, Palm and Sulphur-Crested Cockatoos, Northern Cassowary, and both Red and Wilson’s Birds-of-Paradise.
Oct 20 - Today the Katharina will make its way through the Dampier Strait, home of some of South East Asia’s premier reefs. With a bit of luck, we hope to snorkel with some of the larger marine life attracted to the strait’s nutrient-rich currents. We will end our day just off Arborek Island, where we can easily circumnavigate the island by foot and get a sense of the local Asai culture, which is still kept alive by the villagers living on this tiny isolated island. Arborek is also home to a manta conservation project where volunteers will happily show us around and explain their efforts and programs in more detail.

Oct 21 - In the morning, the Katharina will be moored in front of the island of Penemu. The heart of the island is home to the spectacular ‘Hidden Bay.’ We will take a short hike here to experience one of the most famous views that Raja Ampat has to offer. The rest of the day we will spend exploring, kayaking, paddle boarding and snorkeling in the surrounding areas.

Oct 22 - We awake to see the sunrise over this picturesque chain of islands, and then visit a cavernous grotto adorned with spectacular stalactites. The more adventurous can swim or paddle through the dark waters to reach the other islands that make up the Misool Archipelago. The landscape is typical of ‘karst dissolution,’ of a great number of tiny islets whose bases over time have been eroded by the relentless motion of the tides. We will spend the day making the most of everything that this fascinating area has to offer by marveling at both the marine wonderland under the water and the magnificent landscape above the surface. We can test out our paddling skills in the sea kayaks, watch for birds perched on the rocks, or just sit back and take in the glorious scenery.

Oct 23 - In the morning we find ourselves anchored in Tomolol Bay off Misool Island. A swim through Tomolol’s mysterious dome-topped cave is undoubtedly one of Raja Ampat’s most memorable activities. After an early breakfast, our tenders will take us into the heart of the bay to see this partially submerged cave where it is possible to swim, snorkel or simply float while gazing up at the cavernous grotto adorned with astonishing stalactites. The more adventurous can swim or paddle through the dark waters to the other mouth of the cave. After returning to the ship, we will use our tenders to explore more of this impressive maze of karst islands, both above and below the surface. Highlights of the afternoon include the mysterious skull cairns we’ll find in sea-cave cemeteries, and prehistoric ‘pictograph’ cave paintings, estimated to be anything from 3,000 to 5,000 years old and depicting various human figures and huge human palms, fish, flowers and plants, tools and vessels.

Oct 24 - During the night we cross the Ceram Sea into the waters of the Maluku Islands. The Maluku Islands, the storied Spice Islands which have sent precious cargos of cloves, nutmeg, mace, and pepper to far corners of the globe, since antiquity. Consisting of over 1,000 islands, The Malukus are sprawled across a vast expanse of ocean, sitting astride one of the world’s most volatile volcanic belts. Maluku is blessed with incredible coral reefs, idyllic, tropical beaches and rugged, forest-coated volcanic mountains. It’s a lightly visited corner of Indonesia which presents great cultural diversity and incredibly rich marine flora and fauna. The islands sit on the Halmahera Plate with deep channels separating many of the islands, resulting in a high rate of avian, floral, and mammalian endemism within the island chain. Beneath the waves, the marine life is as rich and diverse as any place on earth. Of the waters of the Malukus, Alfred Russel Wallace wrote that they contained, "a continuous series of corals, sponges, actiniae, and other marine productions, of magnificent dimensions, varied forms, and brilliant colors."
(Oct 24 cont’d) Today we explore the island of Seram (Ceram). Seram is a remote place of hilly jungle, which has long been revered as the holder of the local beliefs and culture of the Lease Islands. Outsiders rarely visit Seram, but on Katharina we’ll be able to access to this fascinating and mysterious island. We anchor off the village of Sawai, an oasis in itself, but also a perfect land base for us to make the most of Seram’s stunning northern coast and Manusela National Park, which includes within its boundaries coastal forest, swamp forest, lowland and montane rainforest ecosystems. It’s an important area of bird endemism. Standouts include the Lazuli Kingfisher, the Moluccan King Parrot, Seram and Salomon-Crested Cockatoos, Red and Purple-Naped Lories, and the Seram Masked-Owl, to name just a few.

Oct 25 - Today we will wake up just off Boano Island, which is famous for its towering cliffs, karst formations, and white-sand beaches. We’ll use the tenders to explore this beautiful coastline. During lunch, Katharina moves to a nearby string of uninhabited islands for some spectacular snorkeling.

Oct 26 - This morning will be spent on the island of Manipa, said to have magical powers because the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Japanese never set foot on it despite occupying the surrounding islands. The village that we will explore is simple but bright with tropical blooms, while the surrounding gardens, groves, and forests yield produce such as cashew nuts and the sago palm. We will visit a local distillery famous for its ‘kayu putih’ oil – a remedy for aches and pains, colds, and upset stomachs, that no Indonesian household is without. The oil is distilled from vats full of the crushed leaves of melaleuca trees.

Fri, Oct 27: Disembarkation at Ambon & Return to Bali

In the morning, we will find ourselves at anchor in the harbor of Ambon. After a final, hearty breakfast on board, we say goodbye to the Katharina and her crew. The tenders will then take us ashore for our transfer to the airport for our return flight to Denpasar, Bali.

Upon arrival in Denpasar, we drive north transfer to the famous town of Ubud in the central foothills of the Gianyar Regency. The scenic transfer north from the airport should take about two hours.

With a history dating back well over a thousand years, Ubud is the spiritual and cultural heart of Bali, renowned for its temples, artisan markets, and stunning location among terraced rice fields and lush forest. Ubud serves as an ideal home base over the next four nights, as we make wildlife, history and cultural excursions around the island.

Overnight: Almah Indah (or similar)
Room: Standard
Included: Airport Transfer

Sat, Oct 28: Birding around Ubud and an Intro to Balinese Cuisine

We begin the day with a walk with one of Bali’s premier specialist birding guides. The area around Ubud offers up some of the island’s greatest biodiversity, with more than 100 species recorded in the near vicinity of town. Highlights and likely birds for us to spot include the Java Kingfisher, Bar-winged Prinia, Black-winged Starling, Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker, and the Java Sparrow. Non-birders will have great scenery to enjoy, as well as a bounty of butterflies, magnificent trees, wildflowers, and ancient temples and monuments dotted over the landscape.
Lunch will be served at local restaurant, followed by some down time back at our hotel.

In the late afternoon, we meet for a fun and informative Balinese cooking class. After a review of traditional ingredients key to Bali’s unique flavors, and traditional cooking utensils and techniques, the group gets hands on, in the kitchen, with chef’s guidance. The objective is to create a multi-course Balinese meal, which we will then enjoy together, in a lovely setting.

**Overnight: Almah Indah (or similar)**
**Room:** Standard
**Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Cooking class/Dinner

### Sun, Oct 29: Ancient Rice Terraces & Holy Places

We set out before dawn this morning to catch the sunrise at the UNESCO World Heritage listed rice fields of Jatiluwih, located in the highlands to the west of Ubud. This vast network of rice fields and ancient irrigation canals are quite arguably the finest examples of age-old terraced farming in all of Indonesia. The setting, starting at the base of Mount Batukaru and stretching towards the not so distant coast, is remote, rural Bali at its very best.

After taking in the remarkable Jatiluwih landscapes, we’ll stop for breakfast at a local restaurant with views over the paddies.

Next, we visit the 11th century Gunung Kawi temple, set in a gorge overlooking equally ancient terraced fields. The hike down (nearly 300 steps) is rewarded by views of 10 candis, elaborate shrines carved into the sheer cliff face as memorials to an ancient Balinese royal family. As we wander among the temples, fountains, shrines, and streams of Gunung Kwai, our local guide will show us how to make offerings the traditional way.

After a break for lunch, we’ll take a hike through more idyllic countryside as we visit the 14th century friezes of Yeh Pulu and the temples of Goa Gajah, with its famous, elaborately carved Elephant Cave. Along the way, we’ll see small farms and villages, dense patches of forest, ancient bathing pools, and the omnipresent rice paddies – rich habitat for birdlife.

**Overnight: Almah Indah (or similar)**
**Room:** Standard
**Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### Mon, Oct 30: The Green School Bali & Ubud Artisans

In the morning we visit the innovative and inspirational Green School, near Ubud. We’ll join a guided walk around Green School’s truly unique environment where students immerse in hands-on, nature-based learning experience. Next, we take a tour of the school’s bamboo factory where the architecture of the Green School campus was designed and constructed. The tour continues to Green Village, where we’ll experience a community of one-of-a-kind bespoke bamboo homes, pointing the way towards sustainable building (and living) techniques ideally suited to Bali’s lush environment.

After a break for lunch, we spend the afternoon visiting various artisan workshops, a natural thing to do in Ubud, as it is a world renowned center for fine traditional and contemporary crafts, including silver work, wood carving, pottery, and weaving.
Overnight: Almah Indah (or similar)
Room: Standard
Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Tue, Oct 31: Homeward Bound**

At times to be coordinated with the departure of your flights for home, transfers from the hotel to Denpasar International Airport are included today, as is a final breakfast at the hotel.

End of Services
Much of our journey draws inspiration from the travels of Alfred Russel Wallace the 19th century “biogeographer” who, along with Charles Darwin conceived of and described the process of evolution through natural selection. Wallace spent many years exploring the islands of South East Asia (to him, “The Malay Archipelago”), collecting specimens and pondering on the extraordinary diversity of life he found there. These islands, for Wallace, were the creative and inspirational muse that Darwin found on the other side of the world in the Galapagos. He collected more than 125,000 specimens during his travels here and described more than 1,000 species new to science. Wallace’s observations of the marked zoological differences across a narrow strait in the archipelago led to his proposing the faunal boundary line, now known as the Wallace Line, which separates the ecozones of Asia and Australia. West of the line are found organisms related to Asiatic species; to the east, a mixture of species of Asian and Australian origin is present. While he was exploring the archipelago, a large swath of it now known as Wallacea, he refined his thoughts about evolution and had his famous insights on natural selection. In 1858 he sent an article outlining his theory to Darwin; it was published, along with a description of Darwin’s own theory, in the same year.

For this cruise, we will visit some of the key areas that fascinated Wallace so much, in particular Seram and the islands of Raja Ampat. Aboard Katharina we will sail the waters that Wallace traversed (time and again, in many cases) and make landings on the same islands he did, observing, in situ, the flora and fauna he spent years collecting and classifying, including the spectacular Red Bird of Paradise.

“If we look at a globe or a map of the Eastern hemisphere, we shall perceive between Asia and Australia a number of large and small islands, forming a connected group distinct from those great masses of land, and having little connection with either of them. Situated upon the Equator, and bathed by the tepid water of the great tropical oceans, this region enjoys a climate more uniformly hot and moist than almost any other part of the globe, and teems with natural productions which are elsewhere unknown. The richest of fruits and the most precious of spices are here indigenous.”

Alfred Russel Wallace – The Malay Archipelago (1869)
The Katharina is a traditional Indonesian *pinisi*, built in 1995 in Kalimantan using only the very best grades of ironwood. Originally conceived for commercial sailing carrying freight, her fine lines caught the attention of the current owners, and she was purchased and fitted out as a cruising vessel. In January 2014, the Katharina was the subject of a major interior refit. Working with the unique heritage this vessel represents, her transformation is a conservation exercise back to authenticity, using only the best traditional materials, shaped by highly skilled Indonesian craftsmen. Yet, what goes on behind the scenes is the use of the most up-to-date technology and she is now equipped with a super yacht grade AC station and systems have been optimized to the latest safety standards.

Not only is the Katharina very elegant on the water, she is also fast becoming a classic yacht, as very few of these original designs remain. Katharina’s overall length is 40 meters, providing comfortable accommodation for up to 14 guests in six cabins located below decks. All cabins offer creature comforts and necessary amenities including double beds or twins, private en-suite bathrooms, natural light, safety boxes, individually controlled air-conditioning and storage space including a safe.

Led by her hugely experience captain, the Katharina is catered to by an all-Indonesian crew of 12, with each member dedicated to making our stay aboard truly memorable.

**Safety First:** Katharina is fitted with all internationally required safety and communication equipment such as SSB and VHF radios, life jackets, life rafts, and satellite telephone. Apart from that we carry an extensive first aid kit, defibrillator (AED) and emergency oxygen supply. Fire extinguishers, fire pumps, are also found throughout the ship.

Experienced navigators consider it an axiom that the seaworthiness of a vessel depends on the seaworthiness of the crew. Our ship has a well-seasoned, all-licensed Indonesian crew of twelve, and each one of them goes through multiple first aid trainings per year, and fire and emergency evacuation drills are done on a regular basis according to international Marine Safety Codes.

**Additional Features:**

- Spacious twin of double bedded cabins
- Each cabin has en-suite toilet and shower
- Each cabin has individually controlled air conditioning
- Towels and beach towels provided and regularly changed
- Each cabin has a mini safe for valuables and travel documents
- Free tea, soft drinks, juices, coffee and mineral water
- Excellent food and snacks (vegetarian and special menus on request)
- Fine selection of wines, beer and spirits *for sale*
- Professional cruise directors
- Outdoor sleeping facilities
- Complimentary snorkeling equipment and two sea canoes
- Television, DVD and music center in lounge
- Dining in spacious air conditioned lounge
- Teak wooden furniture in lounge, cabins and on deck
- Spacious sun and semi-covered decks

**Included in the Cruise Price:** Six hours of cruising a day, full board with professional tour leaders and crew, all food and beverage (except alcohol), park fees, water sports and all taxes and service charges except tips for the crew.
### Package Details

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<td>$5,100 Per person/sharing (Smaller 7th Cabin)*</td>
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<td>$6,200 Single Occupancy (Smaller 7th Cabin only)*</td>
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*See below (at the end of the “Additional Notes” section) for details

- Non-Refundable Deposit: 25% of Trip Price
- Final Balance: Due 90 Days Prior to Date of Arrival in Bali

### Cancellation Terms & Conditions:

- Itinerary Start Date: **Oct 15, 2017**
- Final Balance is due 90 days prior to date of arrival: **Mon, Jul 17 2017**
- Trip Deposit: Non Refundable (if we cannot find someone to take your place)
- Full Payment for Trip: Non-Refundable from Jul 17 2017
  - No refunds can be given for unused scheduled services once your journey has begun
  - All payments to be made to Solaris Expeditions.
  - Prices quoted are based on cash payment
  - Notice of cancellation needs to be received in writing, by Solaris Expeditions (email is fine)

### Your package includes:

- Airport transfers (arriving in Bali/Departing Bali)
- All activities listed in the itinerary (visits and excursions)
- A private vehicle with an English-speaking driver-guide for Bali and Sulawesi touring
- Accommodation in hotels listed (or equivalent) double occupancy (Single if booking 7th Cabin as single)
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary, snorkelling, sea kayaking, and paddle boarding from Katharina.
- All listed excursions
- All taxes, park and port fees

### Your package excludes:

- International Flights, Domestic Flights (Denpasar – Makassar, Makassar - Sorong, Ambon – Denpasar)
- All personal purchases (curios, premium brand liquors, telephone calls, Wi-Fi access, etc.)
- Gratuities
- Optional extra activities (SCUBA diving, etc.)
- Any meals, and activities not detailed in the itinerary above, pre and post itinerary expenses
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Visa fees if applicable (Currently U.S. Passport holders receive free visa on arrival for stays less than 30 days)

### IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Luggage is limited to 20kgs per person in a soft duffle bag (not wheeled).
This journey contains extensive time spent at sea, where stormy weather is a possibility
You will be travelling in active Malaria areas. Anti-malarial medication is highly recommended
You will be visiting wilderness areas full of potentially dangerous wildlife
Most of the time aboard Katharina you will have limited or no access to Internet and phone service

**Comprehensive Travel Insurance is Mandatory for this trip** (Must include trip interruption, trip delay, and trip cancellation)
Bill Buskirk – Group Leader

For those of you who don’t know him, our cheerful, humble, and always good-natured Group Leader is Bill Buskirk. Bill is a graduate of Earlham College (Class of 1966), where he majored in biology. After completing his doctorate at UC Davis, and a year of fieldwork in Namibia and Botswana, he joined the Earlham faculty as a professor of biology in the Fall of 1974 and taught there for more than 30 years, as a beloved professor and mentor of generations of EC undergrads.

Birds are a core passion of his, but Bill prefers to think of himself as a naturalist with far ranging interests in natural history and the natural sciences. His field research has included studies of fall bird migration arriving from off the Gulf of Mexico onto the Yucatan Peninsula, of ecology and behavior of mixed-species foraging flocks in the highlands of Costa Rica and Panama, and of the ecology and behavior of Chacma baboons, gemsbok (oryx) antelope, and dune beetles in Namibia and Botswana.

Bill is also an incredibly accomplished traveler and group leader – as a professor at Earlham he led or co-led three semester-long, interdisciplinary student programs to Kenya and several to the American Southwest. Bill has also taken several shorter student groups to Central and South America, and most recently to New Zealand. His travel experiences with Earlham students are some of his fondest memories of this time at Earlham.

Bill has really hit his stride, as a creator and leader of amazing travel experiences, with a series of very well received trips he’s led for Earlham Alumni over the past several years. These unique alumni adventures, designed and run in collaboration with Chris Kean (EC ’85) of Solaris Expeditions, have included journeys to; Namibia, Antarctica, Botswana, Zambia & Malawi, Argentina, The Norwegian Arctic, Burma, Cuba, and South Africa and reflect Bill’s passion for deeply immersive experiences, pristine wilderness areas, biodiversity, and emerging, off the trodden path travel destinations. Bill’s greatest talent is fostering a wonderful sense of community during his tours, and creating collaborative learning experiences that really harken back to the days of undergraduate life at Earlham. Great culinary experiences, distinctive accommodation, and surprising cultural elements also feature heavily in Bill’s adventures.

Bill with Earlham Alumni Group in Burma (2014)


**Additional Notes**

**Why a trip to Indonesia?**

We have always felt strongly drawn to off-the-beaten path, emerging destinations. Hence our trips to Cuba, Myanmar, Colombia, Madagascar, Zambia and Malawi, and the Norwegian Arctic. While Bali is not an emerging or “off the beaten path” place, The Maluku Islands and Raja Ampat very much are destinations, way off the beaten path, and only just now starting to pop up on travelers’ radars. This region of Indonesia is sparsely populated and very lightly traveled, yet the rewards of traveling there, we feel, are exceptional. We feel this will be one of the most exciting, rewarding, and interesting trips we have ever done. We love to push ourselves to see and experience new things, new cultures, and explore “exotic” corners of the globe that are markedly different realities to our own. We feel Indonesia fits all of these criteria, ideally, and it’s a country that is very much “open for business” and very welcoming to foreign visitors.

**Are the parts of Indonesia where we will be going safe?**

Bali has suffered a couple of well publicized terrorist incidents in the past. The Malukus and Raja Ampat have seen periods of sectarian tensions. Papua, where we disembark Katharina and proceed directly to the airport, has simmering separatist aspirations. So, yes, like so many other places in the world, there are issues that pop up in this part of Indonesia, but, overall, calm and stability have been the norms here for more than a decade. The Indonesian government has no restrictions on travel to any of the places where we will be traveling – the areas are considered safe and open for international tourism. The United States Department also is currently not singling out Indonesia as a place where American travelers need to be especially concerned about their safety. Our colleagues in Indonesia, with who the group will be traveling, have been operating in the areas we will be exploring for more than a decade, without incident.

In light of all of the above, we feel very comfortable offering this opportunity to you. We’d ask everyone to keep an open mind about Indonesia – and keep isolated incidents of violence in their proper context. As always we will not be taking you into any area with serious security issues, on the contrary, most of the trip will be spent in wonderfully remote, pristine wilderness areas.

**What’s the best way to get to Indonesia?**

This, of course, will depend on where you are flying from. The journey begins and ends in Denpasar, on the island of Bali. Denpasar is an easy airport to get to, via Asian hub cities such as Singapore, Hong Kong, or Taipei. This opens up the possibility of doing some interesting stop overs either on the front or back end of the trip.

**Visa Requirements**

Please ensure that all necessary travel documents are valid and in your possession at time of arrival in Indonesia. Passports are required for all participants and MUST be valid for at least SIX MONTHS before your date of return by Indonesian law. Most foreign nationals (including U.S. and Canadian citizens) can obtain 30-day tourist visa on arrival (currently $35 fee). You can also request a Visa Exemption for stays less than 30 days if you enter and exit via Jakarta or Bali (no charge). We recommend that all group members double-check on the requirements six weeks before intended time of arrival. Group members assume full responsibility for checking and verifying any and all passport, visa, vaccination, or other entry requirements. We will provide information or advice on general matters such as climate, clothing, baggage, and special equipment in good faith as a courtesy to you, however, please fully assure that you are properly prepared.

Please note that U.S. citizens who have limited passports (passports issued with less than 10-year validity for adults, or less than five years for minors) must obtain a visa prior to entering Indonesia and are not eligible for Visa Exemption or Visa-On-Arrival.
Exploring Bali, The Spice Islands & Raja Ampat – With Bill Buskirk

Please consult [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for more information.

**What health considerations do we need to be aware of?**

For information on health considerations for this trip, please refer to the U.S. Center Disease Control’s webpage on travel to Indonesia: [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/indonesia](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/indonesia)

We urge all travelers to consult their travel health care professional about what medications will work best for you, for this trip, given your individual health profile.

Dealing with seasickness will be one of the major considerations group members will have. We will be providing some detailed suggestions about how best to cope with this in the pre-departure information.

**Can you accommodate special diets?**

Yes, food allergies, vegetarian, and vegan diets should not be a problem.

We are happy to advise local suppliers in Indonesia about your dietary requirements, per what you advise us, however, Solaris Expeditions cannot be held responsible should an error occur with your food, while traveling.

**How large a group will you have?**

We are limited to 14 people maximum – Including group leaders Bill Buskirk and Marianne Cope.

**Will there be free time to explore on our own?**

Not too much. We have a very structured, engaging, and active program lined up. Best time to “do your own thing”, would be when we are in Bali, at the front end of the trip. If you want to opt out of any of the scheduled activities to explore on your own, that would be fine. On board Katharina, if you should feel like staying on board and not participating on shore excursions, or snorkeling/swimming, boat excursions that’s fine, too.

**How strenuous will the activities be?**

We will be doing some hiking on this trip, often in dense tropical forest, over uneven terrain. Not particular difficult if you are in good shape, challenging at times if you are not. You will feel the heat and humidity.

A major focus of the trip will be exploring marine habitats. Swimming and snorkeling will be activities on most days of the trip. Our aquatic activities are well supported by the tender boat, but a comfort in the water and a decent open water swimming competency are required. We will not undertake swimming and snorkeling if conditions are not calm and suitable for a broad level of swimming abilities. Pervious snorkeling experience not required.

A Note on Swimming: Snorkeling equipment is supplied. We suggest that everyone swim with flippers. If you have doubts about your swimming ability, a supplemental swim vest is also a good bit of kit to bring along with you.

**Is this trip suitable for my children?**

By all means, if your children are adults, and would feel comfortable in a group where most fellow group members will be above the age of 60.

**I have mobility issues/serious medical conditions – can you still accommodate me on this trip?**

As much as we would like to, for this trip, because of the challenges of travel at sea, we will not be able to make special accommodations for folks who are unable to fully participate in each day’s scheduled events. A decent level of physical fitness is required, fully mobility is required, and we will sometimes be in very remote parts of the country, where
infrastructure is very basic. Furthermore, group members should be able to get up and down gangways, get on and off skiffs, and have a good level of comfort in the water, as swimming and snorkeling are daily activities during the sailing part of the trip.

PLEASE ADVISE US – Should you have any health concerns that might impact your ability to participate in this trip. The trip contains a fair amount of walking/hiking, often in hilly terrain, through rainforest, and with some sustained uphills. Not excessively difficult, but you do need to be up for the challenge. If you have any doubts, please consult with your doctor about whether this trip poses any risks to you. We reserve the right to say “Sorry, but no, for this trip”, should we see any obvious red flags that suggest the trip is just not right for you, given your medical profile. Folks with complex mental and or physical health issues should consider how suitable an intense, very social group travel experience, in a challenging Third World environment is for them, before applying for the trip.

Note: Solaris cannot be held responsible should you discover, after the trip has started, that the trip is too strenuous for you, not to your liking, or you are uncomfortable with living on a boat. If you decide to leave the trip, all travel expenses related to your early departure will be on your account.

What should I pack, and what do I need to do to prepare for the trip?

We will be providing comprehensive pre-departure information that will address logistical issues like what to wear, what else to bring, what kind of bag to use, luggage weight restrictions, local electrical current, and how much additional money you should bring for tips, meals, etc.

We will also supply a list of recommended reading for the trip.

What will the weather be like?

April to October is the ‘Dry Season’ when the weather is considered at its best, and seas are relatively calm. Temperatures in Bali and in our sailing area varies little (80° to 92° Fahrenheit year-round) with mostly blue skies and light winds. Being located just south of the equator, the parts of Indonesia where we will be visiting have high humidity, which translates to perspiration for most folks, even when not exerting yourself.

Is this the right trip for me?

Yes, if you have a passion for natural history, wildlife, the natural sciences, and the Great Outdoors. Yes, if you enjoy exploring lightly visited corners of the world, where tourism infrastructure is not nearly as advanced as other parts of the world. Yes, if you are an open-minded, flexible and adaptable traveler, who can go with the flow and be a good team player when the going gets tough, as sometimes it does. Yes, if you enjoy a shared learning experience, and enjoy making new friends, or reconnecting, perhaps, with old classmates. Yes, if you want to have a tremendous amount of fun, and see truly beautiful and amazing things that you will never forget.

This would likely not be such a good trip for you if you have little or no interest in Natural History, wildlife, and lots of group together time. Travelers also need to be aware that, most of the trip will be spent living on a sailboat. A flexible and adaptable spirit is a must.

Please Note: This is NOT a birding trip. Of course, when traveling with Bill, birding always figures as a highlight, but there are many other elements of the trip, including cultural activities, and time learning about the rich marine life we will find along the way.

For the Record: While Chris knows Bali from visits there during his 12 years living in East Asia, neither Bill nor Chris have sailed on the Katharina before, nor have they sailed in the waters of the Maluku and Raja Ampat islands. Solaris has been working with the team that own and operates Katharina for more than a year and
find them to be thoroughly professional in all regards. Theirs is one of the very best eco-cruise companies in South East Asia. Our connection with them came through a very trusted colleague in the travel industry, with the highest of recommendations. It’s also worth mentioning their membership in a couple of gold standard travel trade associations including the Adventure Travel Trade Association and Pacific Asia Travel Association, and their extensive work with Flora and Fauna International. We feel very comfortable with our selection of this boat, captain and crew, for our cruise in Indonesia.

**REDUCED PRICE SMALLER CABIN:**

*Pictured on the left - Detail of 7th Cabin*

This smaller cabin is at the end of the main corridor and comes with a private en-suite bathroom with shower, and air conditioning.

Traditionally this is the guide’s cabin, but for this voyage we will be offering it at a reduced date to any single traveler or pair of travelers who might be keen to save some money on the overall trip price, and happy enough with simpler accommodations.

The cabin, of course will come with beds fully made, towels, toiletries, just like

It’s important to note, too – that the berths are slightly narrower than standard single berths, and the headspace on the upper berth is slightly less than a standard upper birth.