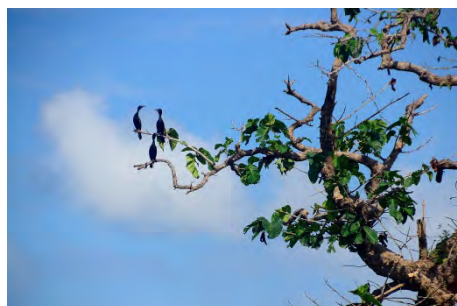


Day 5, Thursday Oct 16

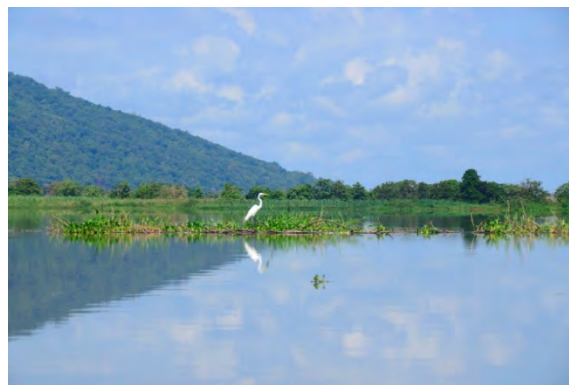
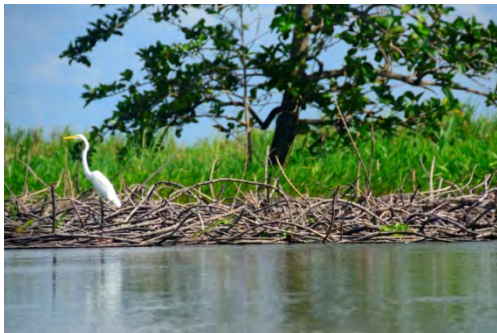
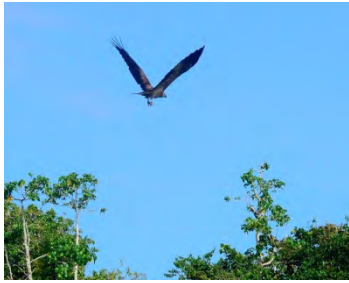
The morning started with a beautiful sunrise and breakfast on the ship. We got back into our lawn chairs on the canoe and headed down the river. This time, in addition to umbrellas, they gave us straw fans to help keep cool. Today's plan was to visit two villages along the Chambri Lakes and Blackwater Lakes area. These are a series of swamps and canals that are filled by the flooding of the Sepik River. The villages along these shores see few tourists and were once headhunters, but no more.



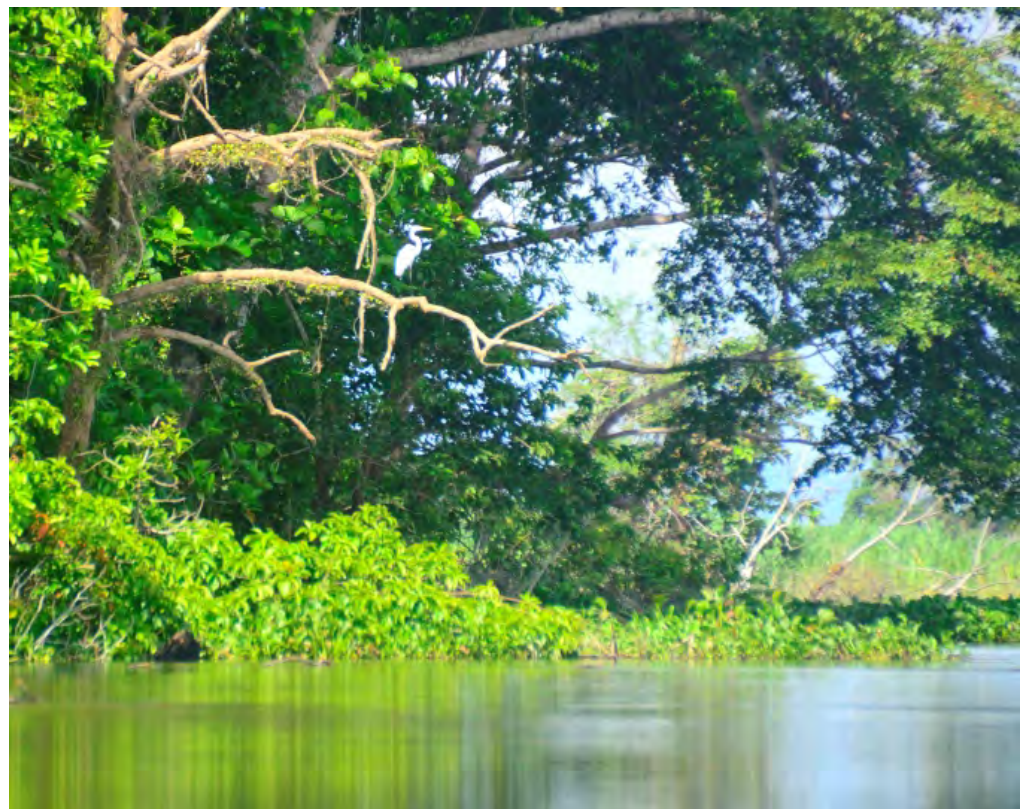
We were again treated to the site of the egrets flying and landing, men and women fishing from their canoes, or cleaning their fish on their canoes, and all sorts of other birds such as kites, gliding overhead. The water again was so still and the sun was low on the horizon, just beginning to rise, and the clouds and sugarcane reflected in the water just like a mirror. And there were birds everywhere. The Chambri Lakes are a fantastic wildlife reserve (a real birders paradise). Although we were gliding quietly, it still disturbed the birds and each time as we passed, the birds would soar into the sky. The birds were in all shapes and sizes, black, brown, royal blue and red, with many white long-necked herons (egrets), cormorants, terns, and other brightly coloured tiny birds. We passed one tree that was covered in white – like cotton balls. Those were the terns and as we glided by they all scattered into the sky covering the sky with the fluttering white wings. The same happened with a tree covered in black with cormorants.





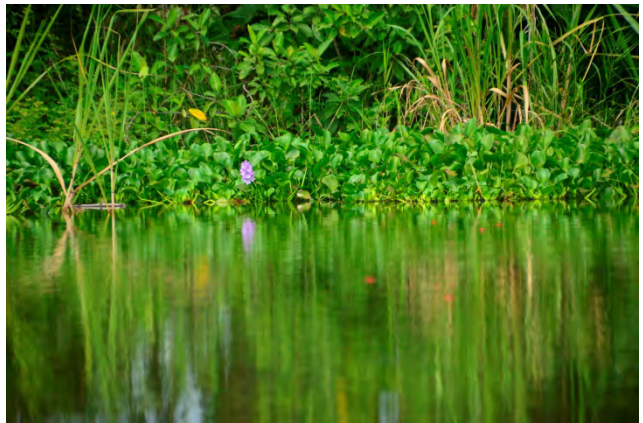
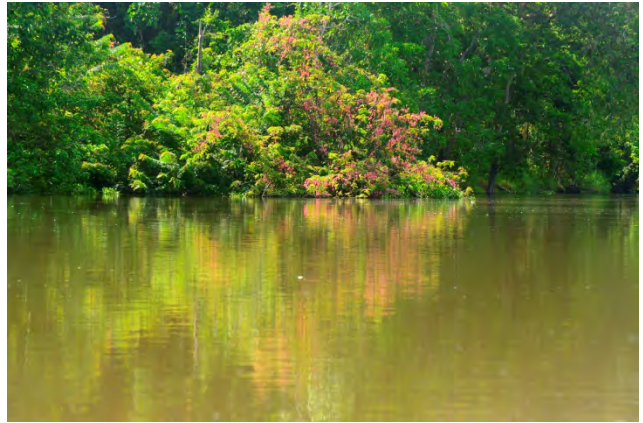


Can you find the egret on the branch?





The fishermen/women were also gliding along the shore with their canoes and their brightly colored tops reflecting in the water, along with the clouds and the trees, And waving and waving at us. It was magnificent. And quiet. And peaceful. It felt like we were in a Monet painting. I could get used to this mode of travel.







And along the shore we again saw the bottles identifying where the fishing nets were with a fish caught in one. We could see the tail. . In this part of the country, the Sepik, there is no farming as the river often floods. The Sepik shore is supported by huge areas of swamp and wild sugarcane. There are no stones or rocks close to the bank. When rocks appear that are carried in by the river, the villagers think they are sacred and put them in the spirit houses. So as we drifted along, we could see the sugar cane, often with lines on it showing where the water level was.

