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NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF NEW IRELAND

DICK JONES AND PETER LAMBLEY

We visited New Ireland on a collecting trip for reptiles and arthropods from 20th November to the 3rd December 1986. While we were there we made casual observations on the birds seen.

Localities visited were as follows:

1. Lelet Plateau. An area of limestone at an altitude of about 1000 m. Much of this area is either cultivated or covered with secondary growth, however areas of primary forest remain especially on the hills surrounding the plateau.
2. The coast road north of Namatanai to the Lelet turn off. This road runs close to the east coast mostly through coconut plantations and some secondary forest. The coastline is fringed by long sandy beaches interrupted by occasional low rocky headlands and river mouths. This is generally not a good coast for waders though small numbers occur especially where rivers enter the sea. The limited areas of lowland forest were not investigated in any detail.
3. Hurris. This was the best locality for waders that we saw; on the seaward side of a sandy beach is an extensive area of coral rubble which is exposed at low tide. South of Hurris there is no fringing reef and there is a strong surf on to these beaches.
4. Logging area near Hurris. This is a heavily logged area now starting to regenerate, some areas of primary forest remain at an estimated altitude of 500 m.
5. Logging area near Pulpulu. A recently built road penetrates hill forest up to about 1000 m. At present this forest is still largely undisturbed, (though probably not for much longer) and is the best access that we found to the Hans Meyer range.
6. Manga Mission south to Cape Mimias. The road runs through plantations and lowland rainforest.

Systematic list.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*
Off the coast north of Namatanai.

Eastern Reef-Egret *Egretta sacra*
Hurris, Cape Mimias and Namatanai.

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| Mangrove Heron Hurris. | <i>Ardeola striata</i> |
| Black Bittern Road north of Namatanai in creek. | <i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i> |
| Osprey One seen over the sea north of Namatanai. | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> |
| Crested Hawk Frequent in the lowlands but seen up to 800 m. | <i>Aviceda subcristata</i> |
| Brahminy Kite Frequent in the lowlands but seen up to 1000 m. | <i>Haliastur indus</i> |
| Variable Goshawk Seen up to 1000 m on the Lelet Plateau. | <i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i> |
| White-bellied Sea-Eagle One over the forest at Pulpulu logging area. | <i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i> |
| Grey Plover One at Hurris. | <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> |
| Eastern Golden Plover Flock on Namatanai airstrip. | <i>Pluvialis dominica</i> |
| Greater Sand-Plover Two at Namatanai airstrip also at Hurris. | <i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i> |
| Mongolian Plover Namatanai airstrip. | <i>Charadrius mongolius</i> |
| Ruddy Turnstone Hurris. | <i>Arenaria interpres</i> |
| Red-necked Stint Two on Namatanai airstrip. | <i>Calidris ruficollis</i> |
| Sharp-tailed Sandpiper One on Namatanai airfield. | <i>Calidris acuminata</i> |
| Whimbrel Frequent, sometimes observed on the coast road. | <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> |
| Grey-tailed Tattler Hurris. | <i>Tringa brevipes</i> |
| Common Sandpiper Frequent, small numbers along the shore but also often on the coast road. | <i>Tringa hypoleucos</i> |
| Bar-tailed Godwit On the coast at Hurris. | <i>Limosa lapponica</i> |

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| Beach Stone Curlew Two at Hurris. | <i>Esacus magnirostris</i> |
| Crested Tern Namatanai. | <i>Sterna bergii</i> |
| Lesser Crested Tern Hurris. | <i>Sterna bengalensis</i> |
| Common Noddy Several flocks seen off shore north of Namatanai. | <i>Anous stolidus</i> |
| Red-knobbed Fruit Dove One on the coast road north of Namatanai in secondary forest. | <i>Ptilinopus insolitus</i> |
| White-breasted Fruit Dove Lelet Plateau in secondary forest, Hurris logging area and Pulpulu logging area. | <i>Ptilinopus rivoli</i> |
| Red-knobbed Fruit-Pigeon Several small flocks in the logging area at Hurris and Pulpulu above 500 m. | <i>Ducula rubricera</i> |
| Black Imperial Pigeon In the logging area near Hurris and at the Pulpulu logging site. | <i>Ducula melanochroa</i> |
| Brown Cuckoo-Dove Common at Lelet and at the Pulpulu logging site. | <i>Macropygia amboinensis</i> |
| Stephan's Ground-Dove One on the coast road north of Namatanai. | <i>Chalcophaps stephani</i> |
| Red-chinned Lorikeet Lelet Plateau in secondary growth. | <i>Charmosyna rubrigularis</i> |
| Rainbow Lorikeet Fairly frequent in the lowlands and the hills. | <i>Trichoglossus haematodes</i> |
| Eclectus Parrot Frequent especially in the lowlands, but up to 1000 m at Pulpulu. | <i>Eclectus roratus</i> |
| Red-flanked Lorikeet Common in the lowlands. | <i>Charmosyna placentis</i> |
| Oriental Cuckoo Hurris in disturbed forest at 500 m. | <i>Cuculus saturatus</i> |
| White-necked Coucal Most frequently seen in the lowlands, but one seen on the Lelet Plateau. In primary and secondary forest at Hurris, near Cape Mimias and coastal forest near the Lelet turn. | <i>Centropus ateralbus</i> |

New Ireland Boobook *Ninox solomensis*
 Heard at Hurris and seen near Pakinsela on the west coast due south of Namatanai.

Moustached Tree-Swift *Hemiprocne mystacea*
 Occasional, Lelet Plateau below 500 m.

Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*
 Not uncommon especially at middle and higher altitudes. Some nesting in small cave south of Namatanai on the coast.

Uniform Swiftlet *Collocalia vanikorensis*
 Frequent.

White-rumped Swiftlet *Collocalia spodiopygia*
 Lelet, in small flocks.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
 Cape Mimias and north of Namatanai both on rivers near the sea.

Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris*
 At Namatanai, also one at Lelet which was seen catching a large centipede in garden.

White-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon saurophaga*
 One on the coast at Hurris.

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*
 Pulpulu logging area in primary forest at c. 1000 m altitude.

Blyth's Hornbill *Rhyticeros plicatus*
 Abundant from sea level to c. 1000 m, in primary and secondary forest. A roost of c. 20 birds at Pulpulu.

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*
 Frequent especially near villages.

Cicadabird *Coracina tenuirostris*
 One on Lelet Plateau.

White-bellied Cuckoo-Shrike *Coracina tenuirostris*
 Lelet Plateau.

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*
 Common on the Lelet Plateau, also at the Pulpulu logging area.

Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*
 Common on the Lelet Plateau.

Island Leaf-Warbler *Phylloscopus trivirgatus*
 Hurris in primary forest at 500 m.

Northern Fantail *Rhipidura rufiventris*
 In secondary and primary forest on the Lelet Plateau and the Pulpulu logging areas.

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*
 Common in the lowlands.

Golden Monarch *Monarcha chrysomela*
 At Hurris and Pulpulu often quite low in bushes below the canopy.

Shining flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*
 Frequent.

Bismark's Flowerpecker *Dicaeum eximium*
 Two seen on the Lelet plateau.

Black Sunbird *Nectarinia aspasia*
 Frequent.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis*
 Less frequent than black sunbird.

Black-headed White-eye *Zosterops hypoxantha*
 We presume this species. It was quite common on the Lelet plateau in small flocks in the secondary bush, also in forest at the Hurris and Pulpulu logging areas.

Red Myzomela *Myzomela cruentata*
 Lelet plateau and small flock on flowering tree at Hurris logging area.

Buff-breasted Mannikin *Lonchura forbesi*
 Frequent on the Lelet plateau and also around Hurris in grassland and at Manga airstrip.

White-backed Wood-swallow *Artamus insignis*
 Small flocks at Lelet.

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*
 Frequent.

Long-tailed Myna *Mino kreffii*
 Very common in the lowlands and up to 1000 m.

Paradise Drongo *Dicrurus megarhynchus*
 We only saw this bird at altitudes below c.200 m where it was quite frequent in both primary and secondary forest. Four were seen on the coast between Hurris and Manga mobbing a hornbill.

Island Crow *Corvus insularis*
 Seen in the lowlands