

Yellow-bellied Sunbird
Common.

Nectarinia jugularis

REFERENCES

- Cain, A.J. & I.C.J. Galbraith, 1956. Field notes on the birds of the Eastern Solomon Islands. *Ibis* 98:100-134, 262-295.
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SOME INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS FROM BOUGAINVILLE AND WEST NEW BRITAIN

NICK GARDNER

Heinroth's Shearwater

Puffinus heinrothi

At dawn on the 5th November 1986 I was travelling on the MU "Kazi" bound for Kieta. The boat had just made a brief stop at the wharf of Numa Numa oil palm estate, and whilst heading out to sea my attention was caught by a small flock of Heinroth's Shearwaters. At least ten birds had congregated a short distance offshore (c. 200 m) below the summit of Mt. Balbi, and remained here throughout the period of observation. All dark sooty-brown plumage, small size and pale underwing were the most distinctive features. The latter was especially noticeable. All birds kept low over the water, flapping wings then gliding.

Fearful Owl

Nesasio solomonensis

Birding had been rather unproductive on the morning of the 7th November in the Montane forest above Panguna Copper Mine. Persistent rain had continued throughout the night and for most of the morning. Towards 10.30 am the rain eased and watery sunlight penetrated the thick canopy of cloud. Whilst examining tall emergent trees for feeding flocks, I noted a large bird emerge from the top-most branches of a nearby tree and perch above me. The bird was identified as a medium sized owl and appeared to have responded to my "pishing" noises. It now sat staring at me, albeit at considerable height (c. 30 m). During the period of observation, c. 15 minutes, the owl looked as though it was drying itself and regularly stretched its neck and shuffled its body feathers. The following notes were taken: head tawny coloured, mottled dark; bill yellowish iris yellow-orange; pale "T" mark around eye; underparts

yellow-buff with two darker patches on either side of upper breast; paler buff margin on throat; rounded barrel wings observed as it flew.

White-throated Pigeon

Columba vitiensis

Between the 9th to 10th November 1986 I had been searching in vain for White-eyed Starling (*Aplonis brunneicapilla*) in lowland primary forest around Ori (Southern Bougainville). On both days single sightings of White-throated Pigeon (*Columba vitiensis*) had been recorded. On both occasions birds were in flight, where overall dark grey plumage and white patch on throat were diagnostic. This appears to be the first record of this species at sea-level in Bougainville, where it is reported to be an extremely scarce bird.

Finsch's Imperial Pigeon

Ducula finschii

On the 31st October 1986 I was birding the pristine hill forest around the small village of Sabal tepun (Midway between Kimbe and Biella) and I was fortunate enough to locate the beautiful Finsch's Imperial Pigeon. For much of the period of observation (about 20 minutes) the bird remained motionless in the low canopy of a tall tree. The following notes were taken: a neat medium sized *Ducula*, obviously smaller than Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon (*D. rubricera*) and without the robustness; head, neck and upper breast pearly grey with a pink suffusion on breast and sides of neck, whiter on crown and around eye; mantle bottle-green colour; belly rufous and clearly demarcated from grey breast; undertail coverts rufous; upper side of tail grey-black with obvious pale grey subterminal band; iris red, bill black, legs and feet coral red; in flight, fairly broad yellow-green tip to tail.