

FEEDING OBSERVATIONS OF SHORT-TAILED PARADIGALLA

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Between 9 and 12 October 1987 Short-tailed Paradigalla *Paradigalla brevicauda* were regularly recorded in the grounds of Ambua Lodge, Tari, Southern Highlands Province, at c. 2200 m. Most observations were of two birds, presumed to be an adult and a juvenile. The adult had creamy-yellow forehead wattles and pale blue gape wattles as depicted by Beehler *et al.* (1986). The juvenile lacked blue gape wattles but its forehead wattles were as large as those of the adult. It was seen to solicit food, in the form of whole fruit, from the adult on three occasions. Each time the juvenile adopted a begging posture with its head held low, neck stretched towards the adult and wings held slightly away from the body and quivering. On this occasion we could discern no calls associated with the begging.

The adult was observed feeding on the fruit from two *Planchonella* (Sapotaceae) trees on three occasions. The fleshy berries of these trees were c. 10 mm in diameter and grew singly on short stalks among the leaves. They usually contained two smooth elongated seeds. The adult moved through the trees taking only ripe black fruit, leaving hard, green, unripe fruit. The whole fruit was ingested. The juvenile was present each time, but it was not seen to take any fruit other than those offered to it by the adult.

At 15:30 on 9 October the juvenile was seen feeding on its own, in a non-fruiting tree. It probed holes in the branches using its relatively long decurved bill and took at least one grub. It then pulled dead leaves from the branches, worried at the leaves and seemed to pull further grubs from them (the dead leaves were too high for us to examine them other than through binoculars). When the adult, carrying a *Planchonella* fruit, landed near the juvenile it stopped its own search for food and begged for the fruit, which it received.

At 06:30 on 12 October the adult and juvenile were seen in a species of *Sericolea*, possibly *S. pullei* (Laut.) Schltr. (Elaeocarpaceae). This tree was c. 6 m high and stood in the Lodge grounds on the edge of moss forest. The adult was feeding on the small (2 x 1 mm) red fruits which are produced singly on short (1.5 cm), thin peduncles amongst the leaves. The juvenile followed the adult through the tree but did not attempt to feed and did not beg to be fed.

At 17:00 on 9 November, also in the grounds of Ambua Lodge, two birds (assumed to be the same ones seen in October), were observed feeding on the berries of a *Perrotetia alpestris* (Bl.) Loes ssp *moluccana* (Bl.) Hou (Celastraceae) tree. This tree was c. 20 m high. The fruits were very small (c. 1 mm x 0.5 mm), and were black when ripe. Fruits were borne singly on short green stems, several of which grew alternately from a more major stem. Although the juvenile was feeding itself it still followed the adult and was seen to beg for food. A begging call, an often repeated, faint, high-pitched squeak was heard.

Voucher specimens at UPNG are: *Planchonella*, Hicks & Hicks #5; *Sericolea*, #6; *Perrotetia*, #7. We would like to thank Paul Katik, Lawong Balun, and Helen Fortune Hopkins for identifying the food plants

Beehler, B.M., T.K. Pratt & D.A. Zimmerman. 1986. *Birds of New Guinea*. Princeton University Press.

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FEEDING OBSERVATIONS AT A FRUITING *PIPTURUS*

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On 30 August 1987 a fruiting *Pipturus argenteus* Willd. (Urticaceae), which was attracting several species of birds was watched for approximately one hour from 09:00. The tree was c. 10 m tall and stood in a small clearing beside a dry stream bed in the Veimaui logging area, c. 70 km north-west of Port Moresby at c. 200 m.

The birds were feeding on small, green, spherical, cone-like structures, 2 - 3 mm in diameter, which are the immature compound fruits. These compound fruits are borne at intervals, on thin, angled (zig-zag) stems, produced in the leaf axils. The fruits were hard and dry. The mature fruit of *P. argenteus* is a white fleshy false berry, but none were seen on this tree.

Eight species were observed feeding in the tree. Two pairs of Orange-breasted Fig-Parrot *Cyclopsitta guilielmierti* were present for the whole time. They fed actively, climbing from branch to branch throughout the tree. Females of three species of birds of paradise, Magnificent Bird of Paradise *Cicinnurus magnificus*, King Bird of Paradise *C. regius*, and Raggiana Bird of Paradise *Paradisaea raggiana*, visited the tree for short periods, each feeding in only one part of the tree before moving on. A male Brown Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis* landed on a low branch of the tree. It took a single fruit before attempting to climb to a smaller branch which could not bear its weight. It fell out of the tree and flew into the surrounding forest. A pair of Plain Honeyeaters *Pycnopygius ixoides*, and a pair of Tawny-breasted Honeyeaters *Xanthotis flaviventer* made repeated visits, feeding throughout the crown. All these birds appeared to ingest the fruit whole. Two Grey Whistlers *Pachycephala simplex* also visited the tree but did not feed on the fruit, instead they gleaned items from the leaves. No inter-specific aggression was noted, although at times there were eight individuals of four species in the tree.

Voucher specimen at UPNG for *P. argenteus* is Hicks & Hicks #2. I would like to thank Paul Katik for identifying the food plant.

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FEEDING OBSERVATIONS OF FEMALE CRESTED BIRD OF PARADISE

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At 07:45 on 10 October 1987, a female Crested Bird of Paradise *Cnemophilus macgregoriae* was observed feeding in a shrub on the edge of the grasslands of Tari Gap, Southern Highlands Province, at c. 2780 m. The shrub *Symplocos cochinchinensis* (Loureiro) S. Moore (Symplocaceae), was typical of the area, standing c. 4 m high and having dense foliage. The bird moved about the outer twigs of the shrub selecting small (4 x 3 mm) green berries, apparently at random. The berries were hard with very little flesh covering the woody seed and were borne on short spikes amongst the leaves.

Voucher specimen for *S. cochinchinensis* is Hicks & Hicks #4. I would like to thank Paul Katik for identifying the food plant.

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