

*C. placentis.*

Rufous Owl

*Ninox rufa*

At Varirata a pair was heard duetting in forest near the raggiana lek. At first, a single bird gave pairs of *mumph* notes, followed by a series of pairs of these notes. A bird with a higher pitched voice then joined in, producing an antiphonal duet that eventually had the high-pitched bird giving a quavering and then twittering response in high excitement. One of the birds was spot-lighted on a high open branch of a *Casuarina*.

Tit Berrypecker

*Oreocharis arfaki*

At Lake Omha a pair was netted on 11 August. This is 600 m higher than the species' regular upper altitudinal limit.

Leadon Honeyeater

*Ptiloprora plumbea*

Suria. Common in the forest interior, in the lower and middle levels of the forest. The birds foraged for arthropods among twigs and petioles, and also visited understory flowers.

Streaked Bowerbird

*Amblyornis subalaris*

Suria. Bowers were well-decorated and tended by males at this time. A male in attendance at one bower gave a variety of weird calls, including: (1) sound of leaves rustling, (2) growls and cussing sounds, (3) the trill call of the Magnificent Bird of Paradise, (4) sound of ripping cloth, and (5) the sharp call of the Papuan King-Parrot.

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## DISPLAY OF LORIA'S BIRD OF PARADISE

JENNY H. HICKS AND ROGER K. HICKS

At 10:15 on 11 October 1987 a displaying male Loria's Bird of Paradise *Cnemophilus loriae* was observed briefly in the grounds of Ambua Lodge, Tari, Southern Highlands Province, at c. 2200 m. Our attention was drawn to the displaying bird by a regular clicking noise. We could not at the time decide whether the click was a call or a bill snapping [it was probably the latter since, a male bird in the hand which was recently (13 June 1988) mist-netted at Myola (Oro Province) clicked its bill softly while puffing out its white cheek pouches]. The male bird hung upside down, about 6 m off the ground but below the canopy. He quivered with his wings half open. This display was observed for less than 10 seconds, after which the bird flew off to feed. Although this observation is of such short duration we present it here because, as far as we know, the display of Loria's Bird of Paradise is undescribed.

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## GRAY'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER AT MOITAKA

IAN BURROWS<sup>1</sup> AND ROGER K. HICKS<sup>2</sup>

Whilst mist-netting birds in a reed bed at Moitaka Settling Ponds (National Capital District) on 16 October 1986, an adult Gray's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella fasciolata* was trapped. The following in-hand description and biometrics were taken:

A large greyish-brown warbler with sloping forehead, long bill and graduated tail which gave the bird an elongated appearance. **Bare parts:** Legs bluish-grey, soles yellowish-brown; upper mandible horn, lower mandible pink; rictal bristles black; iris olive-green. **Plumage:** Crown, mantle and scapulars cold olive-brown; upperwing coverts slightly more rufous; secondaries and primaries similar; wing linings light-buff; rump olive; uppertail coverts warm brown; tail brown with a rufous tinge; supercilium short, buffish, ending just behind eye; ear patch olive-green; chin white; upper breast creamy-white, streaked faintly with dark brown; sides of breast and thighs ginger extending to light ginger undertail coverts; belly white. The bird was in adult plumage which was generally abraded and without moult.

Biometric data:

Band number:	02357302		
Weight:	23.8 g	Tarsus:	27 mm
Tail:	62 mm	Culmen:	18 mm
Wing:	83 mm	Exposed culmen:	14 mm

Note: wing is the maximum flattened chord; exposed culmen is from bill tip to basal feathers; culmen is from bill tip to union with skull.

Primary number	Wing formula*	Primary number	Wing formula*
1	-10	6	-8
2	-1	7	-11
3	longest, emarginated	8	-14
4	-1	9	-17
5	-4	10	-18

\* (difference in length from longest primary in mm)

Wing length of this bird is the same as the maximum wing length found among 35 individuals examined by Williamson (1960).

Gray's Grasshopper Warbler breeds in Eastern Siberia and migrates through Japan and coastal China to its winter quarters in the Philippines, Sulawesi, Moluccas and

New Guinea. There are thirteen records of the species from Irian Jaya and five from Papua New Guinea: Moitaka (Finch 1982), Vanimo and Kiunga (Finch 1985), Lamkamin (Diamond 1986), and Tari (Finch *et al.* 1987). This sighting was at a typical date, most others in the region falling between 4 October and 9 March.

- Diamond, J.M. 1986. First record of the Large Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella fasciolata* from islands east of New Guinea. *Emu* 86: 249.
- Finch, B.W. 1982. Gray's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella fasciolata* at Moitaka S.F. PNGBS Newsletter 197/198: 40.
- Finch, B.W. 1985. New Guinea bird notes. *Cosmic Flashes* 2: 12-13.
- Finch, B.W. 1987. *The Birds of Ambua and Tari District - A Trans Niugini Guide to the Birds in the Vicinity of Ambua Lodge*. 2nd Ed. Ambua Lodge, Mt Hagen.
- Williamson, K. 1960. Moulting as a study in field taxonomy. *Bird Migration* 1: 171-175.

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### RANGE EXTENSION FOR RED-HEADED MYZOMELA *ERYTHROCEPHALA*

LEN P. TOLHURST

According to Beehler *et al.* (1986) the range of the Red-headed Myzomela is "...from coastal Trans-Fly eastwards to Port Moresby; Aru Is. Also Australia and some Indonesian Islands".

On 1 April 1988 at approximately 16:00 I was looking for birds in mangroves near the village of Domara, a little to the east of Cape Rodney, some 170 km south-east of Port Moresby. I saw a female Red-headed Myzomela at a range of about 15 m. It flew in the tree crowns for a few minutes before flying out of sight. A few seconds later the male bird appeared, giving me excellent views, before he also flew away. The area was semi-cleared, giving very good viewing conditions, and the lighting was excellent. Since both male and female were seen it is possible that breeding may occur in the area.

These sightings would seem to extend the known range of this species by at least 150 km to the south-east of Port Moresby. It would be of interest to know if the bird is represented continuously between Cape Rodney and Port Moresby, and whether it extends further east towards Milne Bay. Other records from the east of Port Moresby should be sent to the PNGBS.

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

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### WHITE-THROATED NIGHTJAR *EUROSTOPODUS* *MYSTACALIS* FIRST RECORD FOR THE PORT MORESBY AREA

ROGER K. HICKS

On 11 August 1987 several members of the PNGBS were looking for night-birds on the Pacific Adventist College campus, c. 10 km east of Port Moresby at c. 70 m. At 21:30 a large nightjar was seen perched on a bare branch. It was observed for about 15 minutes with the aid of a powerful spotlight from a distance of about 30 m. During this time it made three flights, returning to the same perch each time. It was larger than either of a pair of Large-tailed Nightjars *Capromulgus macrurus* which were seen at the same time. It showed no white markings either in the wing or on the underside of the tail. The undertail coverts and underside of the tail were quite strongly barred. A bird matching this description was seen in the same place on 3 September 1987. After consulting various reference books (Beehler *et al.* 1986; Coates 1985; Slater *et al.* 1986) this bird was identified as a White-throated Nightjar *Eurostopodus mysticalis*. It was seen by nine observers, none of whom had had any previous experience of this species.

Six species of nightjar have been recorded in New Guinea and its satellite islands (Beehler *et al.* 1986). Of these, five were rejected for the following reasons. (1) The Large-tailed Nightjar is the common nightjar of the savanna around Port Moresby. In flight it shows distinct white markings in the wing and on the underside of the tail. (2) Two species, Jungle Nightjar *C. indicus* and Spotted Nightjar *E. argus* have yet to be recorded in PNG, although both are migrants, and could occur. Both show distinct white wing patches and the male Spotted Nightjar has white in the tail. (3) The two all-dark nightjars, both endemic to New Guinea, can be rejected by size and habitat. The Mountain Nightjar *E. archboldi* frequents montane rain forest and has not been recorded below 2000 m (Coates 1985). The Papuan Nightjar *E. papuensis* is found almost exclusively in lowland rain forest. Both are similar in size to the Large-tailed Nightjar.

A race of the White-throated Nightjar *E. m. mysticalis* is a migrant to PNG from its breeding grounds in eastern Australia. It has been recorded infrequently with sightings from Western Province through the highlands to the north coast, but this is the first sighting for south-east New Guinea. There has been one previous 'possible' record for the Port Moresby area when a nightjar showing small white wing patches and lacking white in the tail was flushed from the road near Brown River in August 1986 (Field Guides Inc, 1988). I suspect this species has been overlooked in the past and is not just a vagrant to the Port Moresby area.