

the canopy. Chris went in search of the ground robins and dipped, but did see a male Crested Bird of Paradise, some consolation! Mike and Peter returned having not quite made it to the top of Mt. Kenevi but they did see Mountain Robin, a species that eluded the rest of us. We spent the evening chatting around the camp-fire while watching UFOs glide across the milky way. By the time we turned in there was a hard covering of ice on the tents.

After an early morning birding session around the camp that produced nothing new, we packed and headed back to Myola. Walking up had been hard work but going down was painful and although I was rewarded with a good look at a male Garnet Robin, shining in the sun, I was very pleased to wander into Myola at 16:00. A restful evening in the Myola guest house, with dinner cooked for us, was a nice way to round off the weekend.

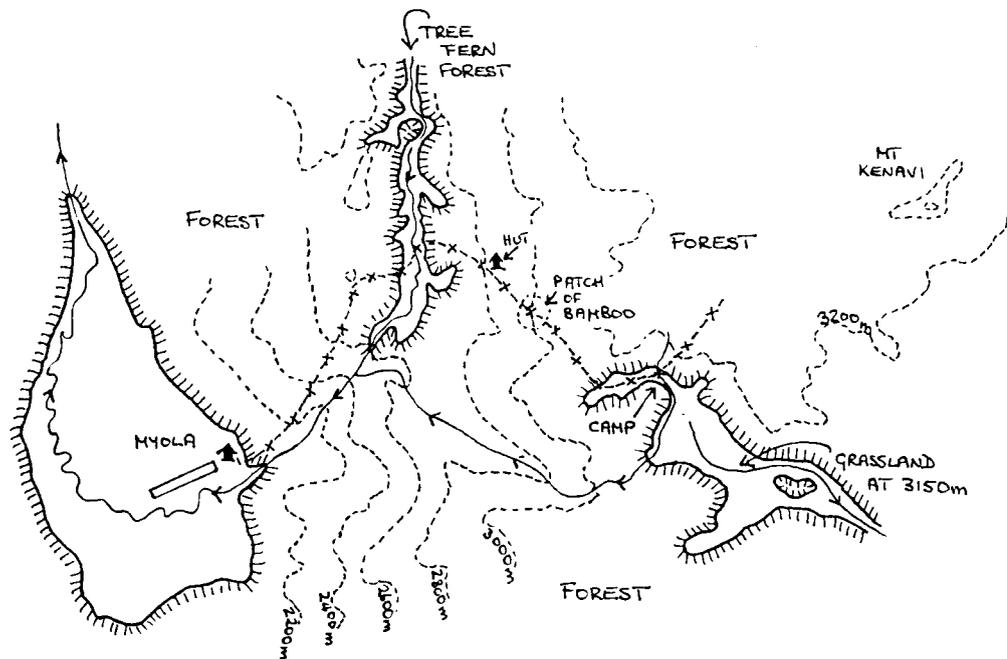
As always our thanks to Talair, Pacific Expeditions and especially the people of Myola. Thanks also to Mike for organising the venture. I enjoyed it and despite the distance walked, the lack of oxygen, the intense midday sun and freezing conditions at night; I think everyone else did too. Isn't that right, Chris? Bill?

People List: Bill Cooper, Chris Eastwood, Roger Hicks, Mike & Helen Hopkins, Peter Lambley and Burk Sharpless.

### Species List

Brown Goshawk, Rufous Woodcock, White-breasted Fruit-Dove, Papuan Mountain Pigeon, Goldie's Lorikeet, Little Red Lorikeet, Papuan Lorikeet, Yellow-billed Lorikeet, Plum-faced Lorikeet, Orange-billed Lorikeet, Brehm's Tiger-Parrot, Painted Tiger-Parrot, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Rufous-throated Bronze-Cuckoo, Mountain Swiftlet, Glossy Swiftlet, Alpine Pipit, Greater Ground Robin, Island Thrush, Spotted Jewel-Babbler, Lesser Melampitta, Blue-capped Ifrita, Tawny Grassbird, Mountain Mouse-Warbler, Large Scrub-Wren, Buff-faced Scrub-wren, Papuan Scrub-Wren, New Guinea Thornbill, Dimorphic Fantail, Black Fantail, Friendly Fantail, Black-breasted Boatbill, Canary Flycatcher, Garnet Robin, Mountain Robin, White-winged Robin, Regent Whistler, Rufous-naped Whistler, Papuan Treecreeper, Black Sitella, Mid-mountain Berrypecker, Tit Berrypecker, Crested Berrypecker, Red-collared Myzomela, Black-throated Honeyeater, Rufous-backed Honeyeater, Sooty Melidectes, Belford's Melidectes, Common Smoky Honeyeater, Mountain Firetail, Eastern Alpine Manikin, Macgregor's Bowerbird, Crested Bird of Paradise, Brown Sicklebill, Stephanie's Astrapia.

Address: c/o N.C.C., P.O. Wards Strip, Waigani, P.N.G.



## MYOLA IN DECEMBER

ROGER K. HICKS

The heat and humidity of pre-wet season Port Moresby was gladly swapped for the cooler, fresher air of Myola at 2080 m in the Owen Stanley Mountains. We landed at Myola shortly after 07:00 on Friday 4 December 1987. The birding began almost immediately with small parties of Goldie's Lorikeets flying overhead as they left their roost in the crowns of nearby *Pandanus* trees. Glossy Swiftlets and Tawny Grassbirds were soon added to the list, all these birds being new for Phil who had recently arrived from England for a bird-watching holiday.

Following the welcoming breakfast, the bird-watchers and the bush-walkers went their separate ways. The walkers stretched their legs in the direction of the crashed WW2 aircraft while the birders set the mist nets in the forest to the east of the village, using the same sites as in September 1987 (see *Muruk* 3:1). The first birds, a pair of Orange-crowned Fairy-Wrens, were in the net before we had even finished putting it up. Once up, the nets were left for a while and we bird-watched in the moss forest, seeing female Stephanie's *Astrapia* feeding in the canopy and a Papuan Treecreeper spiralling up tree trunks. We had caught several birds when we made

our first round of the nets including three Olive Straightbills, two of which we had ringed the previous September, and a Tawny Grassbird.

Shortly after lunch it began raining and we were treated to heavy showers throughout the afternoon. This was the pattern throughout our stay with clear mornings and wet afternoons. This reduced our bird-watching and bird-catching time. The mist nets were furled during the heaviest rain and checked often while there were only light showers. Despite the rain we managed to see some good birds. Phil caught up with the elusive Spotted Jewel-Babbler, often heard but seldom seen, while Barry and Lynda glimpsed a Lesser Ground-Robin.

On Saturday the bush-walkers made a bog-stomp towards the Kokoda trail as low cloud had deterred them from trying to reach the tree fern forest. This was a wise choice because the rain came early. En route Peter saw a Lesser Melampitta hopping along the trail. The birders stayed around the village seeing Ashy Robin, Regent Whistler and Grey Wagtail and catching Large Scrub-Wren and Rufous-backed Honeyeater. A male Mottled Whistler, not previously recorded from Myola, was also caught.

On Sunday the bush-walkers, accompanied by Phil, but not by Peter, set off early in the hope of reaching the tree fern valley before the rain started. This they managed, even seeing Papuan Lorikeet and Painted Tiger-Parrot on the way, but they were soaked by the time they returned to the village. Meanwhile, the nets were going up and down regularly between the showers and catching few birds. The star of the weekend was the very last bird caught, a male Garnet Robin.

Once again we would like to thank the villagers of Myola for their hospitality, Pacific Expeditions through whom we organised the weekend, and Talair.

People list: bird-watchers: Roger & Jenny Hicks (+1/2), Barry & Lynda Hopkins, and Phil Whittington; Bush-walkers: Veronique Badoux, Dave Briggs, Peter & Andrea Storer.

#### Bird list: r = ringed, h = heard only

New Guinea Harpy-Eagle (h), King Quail, Forbes' Forest-Rail, Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove, White-breasted Fruit-Dove, Goldie's Lorikeet, Painted Tiger-Parrot, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Sooty Owl (h), Mountain Swiftlet, Glossy Swiftlet, Pacific Swallow, Pied Chat, Lesser Ground-Robin, Island Thrush, Spotted Jewel-Babbler, Blue-capped Ifrita, Orange-crowned Fairy-Wren (r), Tawny Grassbird (r), Mountain Mouse-Warbler, Large Scrub-Wren (r), Buff-faced Scrub-Wren, Papuan Scrub-Wren (r), New Guinea Thornbill, Brown-breasted Gerygone, Dimorphic Fantail, Black Fantail (r), Friendly Fantail, Black Monarch (h), Black-breasted Boatbill, Canary Flycatcher, Garnet Robin (r), Ashy Robin (r), Mottled Whistler (r), Regent Whistler (r), Rufous-naped Whistler (r), Papuan Treecreeper, Fan-tailed Berrypecker (r), Olive Straightbill (r), Rufous-backed Honeyeater (r), Belford's Melidectes, Common Smoky Honeyeater (r), Grey-headed Mannikin, Loria's Bird of Paradise, Stephanie's Astrapia.

Address: clo N.C.C., P.O. Wards Strip, Waigani, P.N.G.

## RECENT OBSERVATIONS JULY TO SEPTEMBER 1987

COMPILED BY ROGER K. HICKS.

All observations refer to the Port Moresby area unless the site name is followed by an abbreviated province name.

Contributors: Ian Burrows (IB); Bill Cooper (BC); Chris Eastwood (CE); Richard Gregory-Smith (RGS); Roger Hicks (RH); Helen Hopkins (HFH); Mike Hopkins (MH); Peter Lambley (PL); Joan Oliver (JO); Richard Schodde (RS); Niklas Wahlberg (NW).

Abbreviations: ad = adult; bp = breeding plumage; Cen = Central Province; EHP = Eastern Highlands Province; ENB = East New Britain Province; i = Island or Isle; imm = immature; juv = juvenile; Mad = Madang Province; Mor = Morobe Province; Mt = Mount; NIP = New Ireland Province; NP = National Park; PAC = Pacific Adventist College, 14-Mile, Port Moresby; R = river; SP = settling ponds; Wes = Western Province; WHP = Western Highlands Province.

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|--|---------------------------------|
| Lesser Frigatebird   | <i>Fregata ariel</i>            |
| 16 Aug, 27 over Hisiu beach (RH); 1 Sep, 1 male, over Paga Hill, the first seen over Port Moresby for several months (RH). |                                 |
| Great Cormorant  | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>      |
| 24 Jul, 1, Moitaka SP (RH & RGS).  |                                 |
| Pied Cormorant   | <i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>     |
| 26 Jul, FIRST RECORD FOR PNG, 1, Moitaka SP (RS <i>et al.</i> ); still present 28 Jul (IB & RGS).                          |                                 |
| Darter   | <i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>     |
| 18 Sep, 1, Moitaka SP (RGS).   |                                 |
| Red-footed Booby   | <i>Sula sula</i>                |
| 12 Sep, 4, Yule I, Cen (RGS).  |                                 |
| Brown Booby  | <i>Sula leucogaster</i>         |
| 12 Sep, 1, Gaire No. 2, Cen (RH).  |                                 |
| Cattle Egret   | <i>Egretta ibis</i>             |
| 16 Aug, 24, Kanosia Lagoon (RH).   |                                 |
| White-faced Heron  | <i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>  |
| 12 Jul, 1, Moitaka SP (RGS); 1 Aug, 1, Laloki gallery forest (RGS).  |                                 |
| Eastern Reef-Egret   | <i>Egretta sacra</i>            |
| 16 Aug, 3 dark phase birds, Hisiu beach (RH).  |                                 |
| Striated Heron   | <i>Ardeola striata</i>          |
| 5 Jul, 1, Idlers Bay (RGS).  |                                 |
| Black Bittern  | <i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i>   |
| Regularly recorded at the Oxbow: 4 Jul, 12 Jul & 19 Sep, (RH).   |                                 |
| Glossy Ibis  | <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>     |
| 16 Aug, c. 30 Hisiu Lagoon (RH); 6 Sep, 3, Lake Iaraguma (RH).   |                                 |
| Sacred Ibis  | <i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i> |
| 12 Jul, 5, Lower Vanapa (HFH & MH); 6 Sep, 12, Lake Iaraguma (RH).   |                                 |
| Osprey   | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>        |
| 13 Sep, 1, Yule I, Cen (RGS).  |                                 |
| Crested Hawk   | <i>Aviceda subcristata</i>      |
| 25 Aug, 2, Kuriva R (RGS).   |                                 |