

From Gares Lookout, I headed back towards the picnic site. At one of the patches of rain forest, I heard more calling and picked up two Northern Scrub-Robins by the path and could hear a third bird calling inside the forest. While watching the scrub-robins, I heard yet more movement and realised I was looking at a juvenile Dwarf Cassowary half hidden behind a small bush. It stayed there for several minutes before emerging and looking me in the eye somewhat balefully. Again, I moved on.

At the picnic site, I joined the path that would take me along the stream back to Varirata Lookout. It was well past midday and there was by now virtually no activity at all. Surprisingly though, after 20 minutes or so I came across my first bird party of the day which contained the usual Spot-winged and Frilled Monarchs, Grey Whistlers and Yellow-bellied Gerygones amongst others. Once the bird party had passed by, all activity ceased.

As I drove out of Varirata I was joined for a few minutes by a Long-tailed Buzzard which was flying along the road. That was the end of an excellent day.

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SCALY THRUSH *ZOOTHERA DAUMA* AT VARIRATA NATIONAL PARK

RICHARD GREGORY-SMITH

On 21 May 1989, in Varirata National Park, Central in Varirata National Park, Central Province, I flushed a medium-sized brown bird from the path through deep rain forest on the circular trail between the Raggiana Bird of Paradise display tree and the entrance road.

I thought at first it might be a Quail-Thrush, but it froze some 20 m away and I was able to identify it as a Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma*. The bird was heavily spotted all over, dark brown on off-white, and the spots (scales) were more dense on the back than on and below the face. The legs were pale and pinkish, as was the bill.

I was using Minolta 8 x 40 binoculars. There are no previous records of this species in Varirata National Park and no records of migration to and from Australia. It seems it may be a scarce nomadic species in Papua New Guinea.

I had previously seen this species in Australia and Nepal.

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RECENT OBSERVATIONS APRIL - JUNE 1989

COMPILED BY ROGER K. HICKS

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

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Abbreviations: ad = adult; Cen = Central Province; EHP = Eastern Highlands Province; I = Island; imm = immature; juv = juvenile; L = Lake; Mor = Morobe Province; NP = National Park; NSP = North Solomons Province; Oro = Northern Province; PAC = Pacific Adventist College; R = River; rd = Road; SHP = Southern Highlands Province; SP = settling ponds; UPNG = University of PNG campus; y = young.

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| Dwarf Cassowary | <i>Casuarius bennetti</i> |
| 9 Apr, 1, Varirata NP (RGS); 24 Apr, 1 ad, Boundary trail, Varirata NP (IB); 29 Apr, 1 half-grown individual, Boundary trail, Varirata NP (IB); 14 May, 1 juv, Varirata NP (CE). | |
| Short-tailed Shearwater | <i>Puffinus tenuirostris</i> |
| 20 May, 1 pursued by an imm White-bellied Sea-Eagle off Idler's Bay (IB). | |
| Australasian Grebe | <i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i> |
| 6 May, pair nesting on pond in Varirata NP (RGS). | |
| Great Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> |
| 1 Apr, 5 May & 26 May, 1, Moitaka SP (IB, RGS & RH). | |
| Little Pied Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos</i> |
| 26 May, 25, Moitaka SP (RGS). | |
| Eastern Reef-Egret | <i>Egretta sacra</i> |
| 14 May, 3 white phase, Gaba Gaba (RGS). | |
| Black Bittern | <i>Ixobrychus flavicollis</i> |
| 13 Apr, 1 imm, Moitaka SP (IB); 5 May, 1 juv, Moitaka SP (RGS). | |
| Osprey | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> |
| 7 Apr, 1, Moitaka SP (IB); 5 May, 1, Moitaka SP (RGS); 28 Jun, 1, Moitaka SP (RH). | |
| Long-tailed Buzzard | <i>Henicopernis longicauda</i> |
| 4 May, 1, Baim-Huon, Mor (RGS); 21 Jun, Varirata NP (CE). | |
| Bat Hawk | <i>Macheiramphus alcinus</i> |
| 5 May, 1, Buhem R, Mor (RGS); 14 May, King Bird Tree (IB). | |
| Black Kite | <i>Milvus migrans</i> |
| 9 May, 100, Lae, Mor (RGS). | |
| White-bellied Sea-Eagle | <i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i> |
| 20 May, 1 imm, in pursuit of a Short-tailed Shearwater, Idler's Bay (IB); 26 May, 1, Local I (RGS); 10 Jun, 1 imm, Elavala R, Wes (RH <i>et al.</i>). | |
| Spotted Marsh Harrier | <i>Circus spilonotus</i> |
| 5 May, 1, Lae, Mor (RGS). | |
| Swamp Harrier | <i>Circus approximans</i> |
| 19 May, 1, Moitaka SP (RGS). | |