

SHORT NOTES

Altitude Range Extension for the Crested Bird of Paradise *Cnemophilus macgregorii*. Niklas Wahlberg. On 12 August 1990, Jeff Cheminck, Jim Melli and I were bird watching on the driveway to Ambua Lodge, near Tari (Southern Highlands Province). A medium-sized bird flew over our heads and landed in some bushes. We watched it for about one minute as it perched at eye-level, c. 4 m from us. I identified it as a female Loria's Bird of Paradise *Cnemophilus loriae*, but as I had only seen a male previously I examined it carefully and made the following notes without referring to Beehler (1986. The Birds of New Guinea): - Golden-green breast, browner wings and tail, bump of feathers on bill, pale iris, buff half eye-ring. When I consulted Beehler *et al.* (1986) I found that the bird looked exactly like the illustration of female Crested Bird of Paradise *C. macgregorii*. I did see a female Loria's Bird of Paradise a few days later and it appeared to be darker. As far as I am aware this is the first sighting of Crested Bird of Paradise in the grounds of Ambua Lodge. Brian Finch (pers. comm.) saw a female Crested Bird of Paradise visiting an unidentified fruiting tree in the grounds of Ambua Lodge in early October 1990. Ambua Lodge, at 2000 m, lies c. 100 - 200 m below the published altitude range for this species of 2400-3500 m (Beehler *et al.* 1986) or 2300 - 3650 m (Coates, B.J. 1990. The Birds of Papua New Guinea. Vol. 2). Address: Jaaskentie 7B, 02140 Espoo 14, Finland.

Gurney's Eagle *Aquila gurneyi* at Lae's City Centre. Geoff Smith. At 14:00 on 31 August 1989, while driving along Lae's Huon Road near the junction with Seventh Street in the town centre, I noticed a huge raptor, which I identified as Gurney's Eagle *Aquila gurneyi*. Its huge size contrasted with that of some flying foxes amongst which it was soaring lazily, with the occasional half-hearted attempt to attack them. The tail was rounded, and the wings were long and broad with prominent "fingers", held flat apart from the tips, which were splayed upwards. The wing tips and tail feathers were unusually mobile while making small flight adjustments - the outer tail feathers appeared to be able to move through 90 degrees. The colour was dark brown, but there were patches of mottling under the wings, which suggested that the bird may have been sub-adult. Soon it was joined by two Black Kites *Milvus migrans*, which it dwarfed with its massive shape. The Black Kites began mobbing the eagle, which flew off inland after a series of attacks. Address: Language Dept, UNITECH, Private Mail Bag, Lae, Morobe.

Extension to the range of the Lesser Black Coucal, *Centropus bernsteini*. Len P. Tolhurst. The range of the Lesser Black Coucal tends to extend further east along the north coast of New Guinea than the south. Beehler *et al.* (1986. The Birds of New Guinea) give its range as "Generally western and central NG, east in the North to Lae and Bulolo, in South to Fly R.; ..." It could be that this species is extending its range on the south coast as it is now known to be not only east of the Fly River, but also east of the Turama river. Both these

rivers present quite a barrier as the Fly is about 78 km, and the Turama some 16 km wide at their mouths. On 9 August 1989 I saw a Lesser Black Coucal near the airstrip at Kikori, Gulf Province. It was identified by size, plumage characteristics and its call. The call of the Lesser Black Coucal is shorter than that of the Pheasant Coucal *C. phasianus*, with which I am familiar, and descends the scale only. The call of the Pheasant Coucal rises and falls in pitch, and may consist of as many as 50 notes, though my experience would indicate that 20 or so is more common. This species has also been seen at Kikori by Ian Burrows, and in view of the sparsity of observers in Gulf Province may occur more widely on the south coast. Address: c/o Pacific Adventist College, Private Mail Bag, Boroko, NCD.

Yellow Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis* bathing in dew. Roger K. Hicks. At 06:30 on 21 September 1990 in a garden in Port Moresby, a female Yellow-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia jugularis* was observed bathing in the dew that had collected along the outer edge of a banana leaf. When first seen she was perched on the rib in the centre of the leaf. After a short while she slid, with wings spread but drooping at the tips, towards the edge of the leaf. The posture of the sunbird was similar to that adopted by some birds, e.g., Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* when anting. When the sunbird reached the dew at the edge of the leaf, she tried to maintain her position by scrabbling with her feet and flapping with her wings. This also splashed the drops of water, but was only successful for a few seconds. She then dropped off the banana leaf and flew to another where she landed for a brief preen of her body and wing feathers. The whole process was repeated three times before she flew off. By 07:20 all the dew had evaporated. Address: 7 Newtown, Codicote, Herts., U.K.

Extension of Altitude Range for the Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*. Martin Hale. On 6 and 9 September 1990 a single Dollarbird was observed at Tari Gap (SHP). On 6 September it was noted c. 1 - 2 km below the tree line on the Tari side of the Gap at c. 2600 m. It was observed both perched and flying from a distance of c. 50 m through binoculars and telescope. Later the same day, a Dollarbird, possibly the same individual, was noted 1 km above the Bailey bridge at c. 2400 m. This is the first record of the Dollarbird for the Tari Gap area. The normal upper altitude range for the Dollarbird is given as 1500 m (Beehler *et al.* 1986, Birds of New Guinea) and 1700 m (Coates 1985, The Birds of Papua New Guinea) although two birds were found dead at 4500 m on the Carstensz Massif, Irian Jaya. They had presumably died whilst migrating across the mountain range (Schodde *et al.* 1975, Emu 75: 65-72.). Address: House 310, Marina Cove, Sai Kung, Hong Kong.