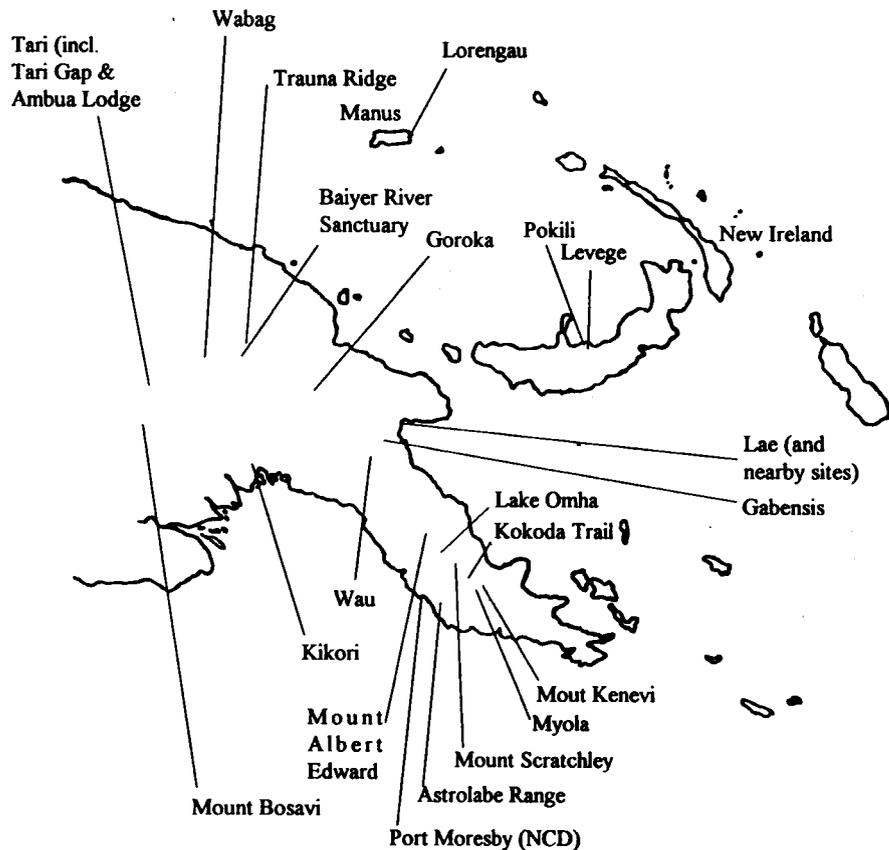


Raggiana Bird of Paradise

*Paradisaea raggiana*

A new lek located on the Gawam Rd, just before the new bridge about 10 km past the Sankwep R has been a great success with visitors. Several groups of non-birders have been treated to early morning displays which has aroused an interest in birds among some (GS).



Book Review

Coates, Brian J., (1990), *The Birds of New Guinea. Volume II.* Dove Publications (P.O. Box 59, Alderley, Queensland 4051, Australia. Available from the PNGBS at 110 Kina. (Volume one is still available, priced at 85 Kina)

Brian Coates should be greatly congratulated on producing an absolutely magnificent second volume of his *Birds of Papua New Guinea*. This book is beautifully produced, and is generally of much better quality than volume I. One reason for the better quality is that he has used pictures from a wider variety of sources (twenty-one acknowledged instead of seven in volume I), including many very fine portraits by specialist photographers Clifford and Dawn Frith, and Bill Peckover. This has also resulted in a better photographic coverage so that only a few species are not illustrated with colour photographs, most of these are island endemics. Many of the pictures are simply stunning, and the reproduction is excellent. To say that it is a bargain at 110 Kina is perhaps an overstatement, but it will certainly be avidly devoured by most birders with an interest in Papua New Guinea. Other aspects of the production are also an improvement over the first volume, and the whole has a more professional feeling. I have found no glaring errors of fact, or typographical misplacement, and the author has done a thorough checking of volume one picking up various minor errors. Apart from the main text there are some useful appendices giving notes on the birds which occur only in the Irianese half of the island, and those from the Solomon Islands. Altogether a very remarkable achievement.

As in volume I some of the birds are listed with different names from those which are become most widely used (i.e. those in Beehler et al, *The Birds of New Guinea*. Some of these are a little confusing (e.g. Goldenface for Dwarf Honeyeater, Black-cheeked Robin for Ashy Robin, Sharpe's Cicadabird for Black-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike, etc) but alternative names are always listed. Certain changes in the ordering of the birds have been made to fit in with DNA hybridization evidence, which is in some eyes distinctly equivocal (Blue-capped Irit and Papuan Whipbird with the Jewel-Babblers, Longbills with the Berrypeckers, Melampittas with the Birds of Paradise, etc.). There are also some splittings and lumpings which twitchers will want to take note of. Splittings include the Brown-capped Jewel-Babbler, split from the Blue Jewel-Babbler, the Ochre-collared Monarch split from the Frilled Monarch, and the Graceful Meliphaga is also split into two species. Lumpings include the various island thicket-warblers into the Melanesian Thicket-Warbler, Beccari's and Perplexing Scrub-Wren, and the Streak-headed and White-spotted Mannikins.

Altogether this book represents a very important contribution to the knowledge of Papua New Guinea's birds, and it will be a very long time before the breadth of information and excellence of photographic material are bettered.

Mike Hopkins.