

Yellow-bellied Gerygone Seen and heard.	<i>Gerygone chrysogaster</i>
Sooty Thicket-Fantail Heard several times and one bird seen indistinctly.	<i>Rhipidura threnothorax</i>
Chestnut-bellied Fantail Good views were obtained of this basically hill forest species, which is common at Langia.	<i>Rhipidura hyperythra</i>
Spangled Drongo Seen and heard, but not common. The single bird seen was blue glossed, indicating the resident race	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>
Frilled Monarch Amongst other sightings, on 26 September a pair was seen building a nest about 15-20 m up. The nest was suspended from the lower crown of a large tree by two tendrils, one of either side of the cup. Both male and female brought material for the nest. When the observation finished the female had been sitting in the nest for some minutes.	<i>Arses telescopthalmus</i>
White-faced Robin The presence of this distinctive hill forest/lower montane species was completely unexpected. It was, however, seen on two occasions only, and in a restricted area.	<i>Tregellasis leucops</i>
Helmeted Friarbird Seen and heard, occasionally heard duetting.	<i>Philemon buceroides</i>
Tawny-breasted Honeyeater Seen and heard.	<i>Meliphaga flaviventer</i>
Puff-backed Honeyeater Seen and heard. The identification was based mainly on the relatively stout beak and the large yellow auricular, appearing rounded at the distal end.	<i>Meliphaga aruensis</i>
Mimic Honeyeater 16 or 17 cm, a shrill "tup"; yellow auricular; brown wings and back; apparently unmarked, grey underside; relatively long bill. This bird was bathing in a pool of water formed by a small hollow in a horizontal log at the forest edge.	<i>Meliphaga analoga</i>
Papuan Flowerpecker Seen and heard.	<i>Dicaeum pectorale</i>
Black Berrypecker Heard only.	<i>Melanocharis nigra</i>
Brown Oriole Heard only, but common.	<i>Oriolus szalayi</i>
Hooded Butcherbird Seen and heard.	<i>Cracticus cassicus</i>
Magnificent Riflebird Heard only, but common, the powerful, whistled calls of <i>P. m. magnificus</i> .	<i>Ptiloris magnificus</i>
Raggiana Bird of Paradise Seen and heard. Appeared to be pure <i>P. raggiana</i> .	<i>Paradisaea raggiana</i>
Grey Crow Seen and heard.	<i>Corvus tristis</i>

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## BIRDS OF SONOMA

DON HALLIDAY

A few years ago I wrote for the Newsletter an account of the birds sighted during a short stay at Kambubu High School, on the Gazelle Peninsula some two hours' drive from Rabaul. Recently my wife and I were able to spend about eleven weeks at Sonoma College, also situated near Rabaul, and this is an account of the birds we saw there. Many of the birds sighted there had already been seen at Kambubu. We were fortunate to be able to spend three days at Kambubu while we were at Sonoma.

Sonoma is situated on a plateau about 50 km from Rabaul. It is in plantation country, with groves of coconuts and cacao trees all around, interspersed with groves of natural or second growth bushland. Both the plantations and the bushland are inhabited by many species of birds. Following is a list of those that we saw.

### Frigatebirds

*Fregata* spp.

A few of these were seen during our visit to Kambubu. I am not sure whether they were of the greater or lesser kind.

### Brahminy Kite

*Haliastur indus*

Some were occasionally seen, and on one occasion four or five were seen at once.

### Common Scrub-Fowl

*Megapodius freycinet*

While travelling through forest land we saw a black bird disappearing into the bush at the side of the road. The local people who were with us told us that this was a scrubfowl. On another occasion they told us that a bird which we could hear calling from a nearby valley was also a scrubfowl.

### Orange-fronted Fruit-Dove

*Ptilinopus aurantiifrons*

One was sighted on one occasion, but they were often heard calling from nearby bushland.

### Emerald Ground-Dove

*Chalcophaps indica*

These were sighted on several occasions. We saw one on our visit to Kambubu, and on this occasion the bird flew in a large circle round us, beneath the level of the lower branches of the cacao grove where we were at the time. This was the best view we had ever had of a ground-dove, since they usually fly off in a straight line and quickly disappear. Perhaps there was a nest nearby. I noticed in Peckover & Filewood (1976) that this bird is on the mainland, and Stephan's Ground-Dove is the one found in the Bismarck Archipelago. That may have been what we saw.

- Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodes*  
The familiar screech was often heard as they fed among the upper branches of flower-producing trees.
- Eastern Black-capped Lory *Lorius hypoinochrous*  
We saw none of these at Sonoma, but they were very common in the crowns of the coconut palms in the plantation at Kambubu.
- Red-flanked Lorikeet *Charmosyna placensis*  
Like the Rainbow Lorikeets, these birds were often seen noisily feeding on pollen in the crowns of trees that were flowering at the time.
- Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*  
The familiar call of the males was often heard in the early morning as they flew around. I think of the buzz of a telephone when I hear them. On one occasion I saw a female, which has a call like a screech.
- Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus*  
The rising call of these birds was often heard from the nearby bush, and occasionally they could also be seen.
- Pied Coucal *Centropus ateralbus*  
These birds seem to be peculiar to the Bismarcks. They are fairly common. Unlike their cousins the Pheasant Coucals, they are rarely seen on the ground, but rather in the crowns of coconut palms, and sometimes out in plain view ~~standing~~ on the fronds.
- Large-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus macrurus*  
We did not manage to see one of these birds, but we heard them often enough at night time, with their peculiar chopping call.
- Moustached Tree-Swift *Hemiprocne mystacea*  
On a couple of occasions we saw one of these birds sitting on a bare limb waiting for a chance to catch insects. We also saw them in flight.
- Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*  
These birds were very common, flying round searching for insects.
- Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx lepidus*  
Only one of these birds was seen, perched on a small tree in a plantation.
- Forest Kingfisher *Halcyon macleayi*  
One of these was seen frequently in a place on the edge of the school gardens.
- Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta*  
These were very common.
- Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*  
Seen on a number of occasions, mainly in clearings near coconut trees.

- Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*  
Seen and heard on many occasions, mainly near african tulip trees.
- Cicadabird *Coracina tenuirostris*  
These were seen on several occasions in a grove of coconuts where the undergrowth had been cleared underneath.
- Great Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*  
One was seen only once in a patch of reeds at the edge of a dried pond.
- Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*  
These little birds were often seen and heard, perched on the tops of any handy vegetation such as a coconut palm or the top of a cassava plant.
- Northern Fantail *Rhipidura dahli*  
Occasionally seen in patches of bush.
- Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophris*  
Very common around the college buildings. One pair had a nest on top of a light pole overlooking the basketball court. I wondered why they seemed to be taking so long to hatch out a brood, until I was informed that some of the boys had somehow climbed up there and disposed of one clutch of eggs. The wagtails were frequently heard during the night, which could be very annoying if one was trying to catch a little extra sleep in the early morning.
- Shining Flycatcher *Myiagra alecto*  
These beautiful birds were seen on a number of occasions flitting silently around in the thicker patches of bush.
- Beautiful Flowerpecker *Dicaeum eximium*  
Only a brief view of one of the flowerpeckers one early morning. Identification uncertain.
- Black Sunbird *Nectarina sericea*  
Often seen foraging round the crowns of coconuts.
- Yellow-breasted Sunbird *Nectarina jugularis*  
A few were seen at a lower level than the black variety, mainly round the campus feeding from the flowers of flowering shrubs.
- New Britain Friarbird *Philemon cockerelli*  
These noisy birds were often seen in the tall trees round the campus. A nest was observed, but after a while it seemed to be deserted - possibly the nest had been raided by the crows.

- Hooded Mannikin *Lonchura spectabilis*  
 Small groups of these were seen on a couple of occasions near patches of cassava plants. Evidently it was the nest building season, as one was carrying nesting material.
- Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*  
 These were the most common birds of the area, and could often be heard and seen. We saw one large tree where they had a nesting colony.
- Yellow-faced Myna *Mino dumontii*  
 Only one pair was seen the whole time we were there. I thought they would have been more common.
- Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*  
 Seen fairly often.
- Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*  
 These were rather plentiful, and very noisy. Indeed they seemed to make more noise than any group of crows I have seen before, and it was different from the usual crow noises. They were fond of perching on the tops of the taller trees on the campus.

Peckover, W.S. & L.W.C. Filewood. 1976 **Birds of New Guinea and Tropical Australia**. A.H. & A.W. Reed

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**Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides* feeding on red ants.** Len Tolhurst. On 10 October 1990 at the Pacific Adventist College, NCD, I noticed Helmeted Friarbirds feeding on red ants. The red ants had formed several nests by pulling together leaves of a golden shower tree *Cassia fistula*. The friarbirds flew up to the nests and picked off ants while hovering for a second or so in mid-air, then returned to a branch where they perched and swallowed the ants they had observed. Address: Pacific Adventist College, Private Mail Bag, Boroko, N.C.D.

**Pheasant Coucal *Centropus phasianus* attacking birds caught in a mist net.** Roger K. Hicks and Robin Restall. On 17 July 1990 we visited the Pacific Adventist College (PAC), National Capital District, in the hope of catching some Mannikins *Lonchura* spp. We set a 20 m, 4 panel mist net at a site where mannikins had been observed feeding on the ground. We then left the net for an hour. On our return we had caught 12 birds (10 Grey-headed Mannikins *L. caniceps* and 2 Chestnut-breasted Mannikins *L. castaneothorax*). Two Pheasant Coucals had been attracted to the net, presumably by the flutterings of the trapped mannikins. One of the coucals was actually in the net but escaped as we approached. It had attacked and killed two juvenile Grey-headed Mannikins by pecking at the head and neck, but had not been able to get the mannikins out of the net. After extracting the birds we again left the net. RR returned after about half an hour. We had caught no more birds, but a Pheasant Coucal was sitting close by the net where it was apparently visible to the mannikins as these were now flying higher than they had earlier and so missed the net. Previously, RH had noted Pheasant Coucals sitting under mist nets set in his garden on Matirogo Point, Port Moresby, but no birds had been found dead in the nets. Address: (Hicks) 7 Newtown, Codicote, Herts, SG4 8UG, U.K.; (Restall) 31 South Bay Road, Hong Kong.

**Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* fishing?** Roger K. Hicks. Since January 1990 I have regularly recorded an adult and immature Brahminy Kite on my Town Bird Survey site at Matirogo Point, Port Moresby, National Capital District. Over this time the immature has been slowly obtaining its adult plumage and now only has some flecks of white in the rufous of the upper wing. North of Matirogo Point, a stream flows into a small, unnamed bay and at low tide flows across the exposed mudflats. At 11:05 on 17 September 1990, when the tide was half out, these two Brahminy Kites were seen bathing in the stream. They stood within two feet of each other, in water that was almost belly-deep. After about 5 minutes, the immature flew c.10 m to a rock, on which it perched. The adult remained in the water and began, apparently, to fish. It waded c.30 m through the shallows of the stream, stopping frequently. During the stops it occasionally stabbed at something on or in the water. It made a total of six stabs in seven minutes. Each stab seemed to be successful, although the distance from my vantage point to the bird, c.150 m, was too great for the prey to be discernible. The stabbing action it used for "fishing" was of too short a duration for the