

bird to have been drinking. After seven minutes wading the adult Brahminy Kite flew and landed near the immature. The immature took off immediately, circled the bay and was then joined by the adult. Rand & Gilliard (1967, *The Handbook of New Guinea Birds*) recorded one Brahminy Kite that had eaten many small fish, but considered they may have been carrion. Coates (1985, *The Birds of Papua New Guinea. Vol 1.*) reports that Brahminy Kites are expert at snatching fish from just below the surface, but there are no PNG records of Brahminy Kites fishing in the manner described above. *Address: 7 Newtown, Codicote, Herts SG4 8UG, U.K.*

**Birds feeding on Hawk Moths.** Roger K Hicks. Throughout the period just before the onset of the wet season large numbers of Hawk Moths (and other insects) are attracted to the security lights around my house on Matorogo Point, Port Moresby, National Capital District. During the day these Hawk Moths "roost" in nearby trees, usually under a leaf, or in the shaded nooks on the outside of the house. In the third week of December 1990, when conditions were hot, humid and calm, numerous Hawk Moths of two species were noted around the house. This abundance of prey was exploited by several species of birds. A family of Torresian Crows *Corvus orru*, two adults and two fledged young, visited the roof of the house each morning between 05:30 and 07:30. The young were readily identified by their dark eyes and pinkish gape. I assume all the birds were feeding on insects that had been attracted by the security lights but the prey was only identified on three occasions. Each of these times a young bird was noted holding a Hawk Moth in its bill. The young bird transferred the Hawk Moth from its bill to its feet where it was held against the bird's perch while the Hawk Moth's wings were stripped and discarded before the body was eaten. On one occasion the Hawk Moth escaped while the young Torresian Crow was transferring it from bill to foot. Two Pheasant Coucals *Centropus phasianus*, not usually recorded in the garden, were observed in trees near the house where the Hawk Moths "roosted", but I could not confirm they were feeding on the moths. They were noted on the ground beneath the security lights where they fed on Hawk Moths that had come to grief during the night. Up to four White-breasted Wood-Swallows *Artamus leucorhynchus* snatched moths from trees near the house. The wood-swallows picked the moths, and other insects, from the foliage with their feet as they flew past. Their prey was then manipulated and passed from feet to bill while in flight. Some of the moths taken in this way may have been Hawk Moths, but I cannot be certain and most seemed too small. A dragon *Lophognathus temporalis* was also noted feeding on damaged Hawk Moths on the ground. *Address: 7 Newtown, Codicote, Herts, SG4 8UG, U.K.*

## RECENT OBSERVATIONS JULY - SEPTEMBER 1990

COMPILED BY ROGER 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; bp = breeding plumage; Cen = Central Province; CGO = Central Government Offices; EHP = Eastern Highlands Province; ESP = East Sepik Province; Fm = Farm; I = Island; imm = immature; juv = juvenile; L = Lake; Mad = Madang Province; 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; Wes = Western Province; WHP = Western Highlands Province.

Dwarf Cassowary	<i>Casuarus bennetti</i>
28 Sep, 1 ad and a third-grown young, Varirata Lookout trail, Varirata NP (RH).	
Australasian Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i>
28 Sep, 2 full-grown imm, PAC (RH).	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
1 Jul, 2 in bp, Alexishafen ponds, Mad (RH).	
Great Frigatebird	<i>Fregata minor</i>
9 Sep, 1 male & 1 female, with Lesser Frigatebirds, flying south over Papa (RH).	
Lesser Frigatebird	<i>Fregata ariel</i>
9 Aug, 3, Loloata I (EK); 9 Sep, c. 15, flying south over Papa (RH).	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
16-19 Aug, 1, Bensbach, Wes, (FGI).	
Great-billed Heron	<i>Ardea sumatrana</i>
16-19 Aug, 1-2, Bensbach, Wes (FGI).	
Cattle Egret	<i>Egretta ibis</i>
2 Jul, c. 20, Madang airport, Mad (RH); 9 Sep, c. 100, with cattle, Fairfax grasslands (RH).	
White-faced Heron	<i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>
17 Sep, 1, Rouna No. 3 Power Station, the only record of the year so far (RH).	
Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
28 Sep, 1, Ilimo Fm (RH).	
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
10 Aug, 1, Mount Hagen airfield, WHP (FGI).	
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
31 Jul, 1, Ilimo Fm (NW).	
Spotted Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus spilonotus</i>
11 Aug, 1, Tari Gap, SHP (EK).	