

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis* M

22 Mar + 21 Apr 91, singles, Tabubil

Pied Chat *Saxicola caprata* E

21 Mar 91, 1 female, Tabubil airstrip, seemingly a recent colonist of the area.

New Guinea Thornbill *Acanthiza murina*

Quite common around Dokfuma meadow at 3200m in the Star Mts NW of Tabubil, 16.11.91. Gave a noisy, high-pitched, sibilant twittering call, and a 'chwee shtup shtup' buzzy high-pitched song from mid-stratum.

Mountain Róbin *Petroica bivittata* E

2 birds at 3200m Dokfuma meadow, Star Mts 17.11.91 High pitched 'see see see see' call. A considerable range extension, filling an apparent gap between the Snow Mts and central highlands populations (Gregory and Johnston 1993)

Torrent Flycatcher *Monachella muelleriana* B

30 Jan 91, 3 ad + 1 brown-capped juv, Tabubil

Lorentz's Whistler *Pachycephala lorentzi* R

2 birds on 16.11.91 at 3200m, in Dokfuma meadow, Star Mts, one of which was in an undescribed imm plumage (Gregory and Johnston 1993). 3 adults there on 17.11.91.

Sooty Melidectes *Melidectes fuscus* R

2 birds at Dokfuma meadow Star Mts 18.11.91.

Short-bearded Melidectes *Melidectes nouhuysi* E

Not uncommon along forest margins, low down in fringing vegetation at 3200m, Dokfuma meadow, Star Mts 17-19.11.91. The first records for PNG, extending the population east from the Snow Mts. (Gregory and Johnston 1993). The beard was longer than that illustrated in Beehler et al, but not as long as with *M.princeps*. Small golden yellow patch behind eye, paler mottling on belly and under tail, tail often flicked up at 45. Call a metallic 'pwik' and a thin 'weetweet' flight note.

Black Sittella *Daphoenositta miranda*

2 Apr 91, 4, Ambua Lodge, Tari, SHP. 15 Dokfuma meadow Star Mts 3200m 17.11.91

Torrent-Lark *Grallina bruijni*

5 Apr 91, 1 pr, nr Ambua Lodge, Tari, SHP

Mountain Firetail *Oreostruthus fuliginosus*

A female at 3200m Dokfuma meadow Star Mts 16.11.91

Western Alpine Mannikin *Lonchura montana* R/E

8 adults on 16.11.91 at 3200m Dokfuma meadow, Star Mts, and two later sightings of 2 adults on 17/18.11.91. Often seemed to be associated with the Alpine Pipit *Anthus gutturalis*. Call a monotonous 'tyu' series. The only site known in PNG for this species, a range extension from the Snow Mts population, this site was discovered by the mammalogist Tim Flannery in 1987.

Archbold's Bowerbird *Archboldia papuensis* R

2-4 Apr 91, 1 male and up to 2 female plumaged birds, Ambua Lodge, Tari, SHP (PG)

Macgregor's Bird-of-Paradise *Macgregoria pulchra* R

At least 3 birds Dokfuma meadow, 3200m Star Mts 17-19.11.91. Whitish legs and a strange 'nyeh nyeh nyeh' call. Seen eating small green berries from low bushes (Gregory and Johnston 1993).

Black Sicklebill *Epimachus fastuosus* R

4 Apr 91, 1 male, Ambua Lodge, Tari, SHP, gave explosive "whit-whit-whit" calls in a triple series, not double as per textbooks. Also a strange, deep bubbling call. Picked at dead branches like a Wood-hoopoe (*Phoeniculus sp*) PG.

References

Gregory Phil 1993 An unidentified berrypecker *Melanocharis sp.* from the Ok Tedi area *Muruk* Vol 6:1
Gregory P. A. and Johnston G.J. 1993 Birds of the Cold Tropics *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists Club* Vol 113 No 3.

OBSERVATIONS OF SOME BIRDS OF COASTAL AND LOWLAND WESTERN PROVINCE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

Keith Bellchambers, Elizabeth Adams and Scott Edwards.

INTRODUCTION

From 25 May-7 June, 1990, the authors travelled through parts of coastal and lowland Western Province. The primary objective of this visit was to collect non-destructive samples from Grey-crowned Babbler for biochemical analysis. In the course of this work many other species of birds were noted and are documented here.

THE STUDY SITES

Our observations were made in three main locations; the town of Daru, a Forestry Management Service (FMS) timber lease on the Oriomo River and around the settlement of Morehead (Figure 2).

Daru Is 25-27 May, 31 May.

Habitats include township, gardens, old gardens dominated by kunai grass, small patches of forest, mangroves and tidal mudflats.

Oriomo River: 27-30 May.

Along the lower reaches of the river tall mangroves overhung the water but further upstream the rainforest occurred right to the water's edge with patches of *Nipa* palm. Trees to 30 metres with little light penetration to the forest floor. Away from the river the vegetation varied according to soil type. The major vegetation type was dense primary lowland forest with trees to 30 metres and little understorey. This was found on heavy clay soils.

Small areas of low (10-12m) vegetation were found on deep, waterlogged areas of white sand. Paperbarks were common and small sedges in understorey.

Morehead: 1-7 June

Several vegetation types found in the area dependent on soil type. The major type was a mix of *Myrtaceous* species found on ironstone gravel. Trees to 20m with an open canopy, therefore an understorey of shrubs and grass. A secondary type being low (10-12m) Paperbark woodland on waterlogged sands. Sedges and carnivorous plants in understorey.

METHODS

Observations were generally made while walking through the forest from one Grey-crowned Babbler territory to the next. Records were also kept of species seen when travelling on rivers and when working around camp.

Identifications were made with the naked eye or with the aid of binoculars.

ANNOTATED SPECIES LIST

Southern Cassowary *Casuarius casuarius*

One bird shot by hunters just south of Morehead. Cooked and eaten at a party that evening.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*

Single birds seen on several occasions in several different habitats around Morehead. Birds were flushed from Paperbark swamp away from the river and also from deep, still water areas which resulted from river flooding.

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleuca*

Several small flocks seen flying along Morehead River. Largest flock seen consisting of 20 birds, one of which appeared to be carrying nesting material.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

A few birds feeding on the mown grass areas of the Daru airport along with some Intermediate Egrets. Two birds perched on a dead branch overhanging the Oriomo River several kilometres upstream of its mouth.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*

This species was observed in a number of locations. It was observed feeding on the mown grass areas of the Daru airport, feeding on the mudflats at the mouth of the Oriomo River, perched on an overhanging branch upstream on the Oriomo River near the FMS site, and at Morehead was found feeding along the banks of the Morehead River and the deep, still water areas behind the river.

Rufous Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*

A group of three birds observed roosting in a *Nipa* palm overhanging the water on the Oriomo River. Also observed on three occasions around Morehead. On each occasion the birds were flushed from their roosts in Paperbark swamp areas.

Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*

A single bird flying over Morehead.

Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*

A single bird flying overhead near Morehead.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

A single bird perched in a dead tree overhanging the river near Morehead.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*

This species was encountered throughout. It was observed scavenging along Daru beach, around the FMS campsite, along the Oriomo River, in open patches in the forest and along the Morehead River near Morehead.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Observed flying along tidal mudflats at Daru. Also common along Oriomo River. Found singly or in pairs, usually perched in tree overhanging the water.

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*

An adult bird soaring high above the forest canopy south of Morehead. An immature bird perched in a tall dead tree near the Morehead airstrip.

Common Scrubfowl *Megapodius freycinet*

Shown a bird by a local hunter who had taken it with bow and arrow on the FMS lease. Belonging to *reinwardt* race

Brolga *Grus rubicunda*

A single bird wandering through Morehead town. The bird may have been a pet or semi-domesticated.

Australian Pratincole *Stiltia isabella*

Common on the mown grass areas of Daru and Morehead airstrips.

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*

Common on the mown grass areas of Daru and Morehead airstrips. Also found in other short grass areas around Morehead town.

Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*

A single bird feeding on tidal mudflats at Daru.

Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*

Several birds feeding and resting around Daru harbour. (Coates 1990 lists just 3 records for PNG, 2 of these from Daru-Ed.)

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Several birds quartering the shallow water of Daru harbour. Also over the deeper water between Daru and the mainland.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

A group of 10-15 birds quartering the shallow waters of Daru harbour or roosting on rocks around the harbour.

Brown Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis*

Common around the FMS campsite where it fed in the low shrubs growing in disturbed sites. Less common around Morehead where it was occasionally encountered in the open forest.

Stephan's Ground-Dove *Chalcophaps stephani*

Observed on only one occasion in the rainforest on the FMS lease.

Peaceful Dove *Geopelia striata*

Commonly heard calling from disturbed areas around FMS camp. Also observed around Morehead.

Bar-shouldered Dove *Geopelia humeralis*

Common in the open forest and disturbed areas around Morehead including a group of 16 roosting on a power line in town.

Wompoo Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus magnificus*

Heard calling occasionally from thick rainforest on FMS lease.

Ornate Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus ornatus*

A common bird of the rainforest canopy on the FMS lease.

Orange-Bellied Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus iozonus*

Found in small flocks in rainforest on FMS lease.

Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon *Ducularufigaster*

Observed on one occasion near FMS camp in an area of disturbed vegetation. Also noted on one occasion near Morehead in the forest canopy.

Zoe Imperial Pigeon *Ducula zoeae*

Common canopy species in rainforest on FMS lease.

Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haemotodus*

A very common species throughout the region, occurring in small flocks of 2-8 birds. Appeared more numerous in the open forests around Morehead than the rainforests of the Oriomo River.

Palm Cockatoo *Probosciger aterrimus*

A single bird flying over open forest near Morehead.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

A common bird throughout the Morehead area, being found in singles, pairs and one flock of 10 birds. Mostly feeding in canopy of forest species or flying high overhead.

Little Corella *Cacatua pastinator*

Several seen in trees in Daru. Also noted flying over canopy upstream on the Oriomo River.

Orange-breasted Fig-Parrot *Cyclopsitta gulielmiterti*

Common in canopy of rainforest of FMS lease being found in small, active flocks.

Red-cheeked Parrot *Geoffroyus geoffroyi*

Common along edge of rainforest and in open areas on FMS lease.

Eclectus Parrot *Eclectus roratus*

Widespread throughout the area being found in most habitat types on the FMS lease and Morehead. Individuals and pairs noted.

Red-winged Parrot *Aprosmictus erythropterus*

Common in Morehead area feeding in the canopy and occasionally closer to the ground. Usually in small flocks of up to 12 birds.

Common Koel *Eudynamis scolopacea*

Single birds seen on several occasions in the Morehead area.

Pheasant Coucal *Centropus phasianus*

Observed on several occasions in the Morehead area in open areas of the forest with some understorey.

Moustached Tree-swift *Hemiprocne mystacea*

A flock of 6-10 birds that were often observed over the clearing associated with the FMS camp.

Common Paradise-Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea*

Heard calling in an area of secondary regrowth on the banks of the Oriomo River upstream of the FMS site. Also identified by local people as this species from pictures in field guide.

Spangled Kookaburra *Dacelo tyro*

Observed and heard in the Morehead area.

Blue-winged Kookaburra *Dacelo leachii*

Several birds were found around the FMS lease in open patches of the forest. It was more evident in the Morehead area in the open forest found there.

Blue-black Kingfisher *Halcyon nigrocyanea*

One individual observed near Morehead perched on a dead branch above deep, still water resulting from Morehead River flooding its banks. (Presumably *H.n. stictolaema* of the Fly River--Ed.)

Forest Kingfisher *Halcyon macleayi*

Found only on the FMS lease on the edge of open areas such as around the campsite and along logging roads.

Rainbow Bee-Eater *Merops ornatus*

Occurring in Daru and over open area of FMS camp and along logging roads.

Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

One observations of a bird on the Oriomo River perched on a branch overhanging the water. Birds observed in the Morehead area on several occasions, mainly in previously cleared areas.

Blyth's Hornbill *Rhyticerosplicatus*

One pair observed flying overhead on Oriomo River.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis*

Observed in several different habitats around the FMS lease and Morehead. Found around the clearing of the FMS camp as well as in the nearby forest. At Morehead found in woodland as well as in old garden areas.

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*

Observed on only a few occasions in the Morehead district. Only found in the flooded woodlands immediately behind the river.

Boyer's Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina boyeri*

A single observation from forest on FMS lease.

Cicadabird *Coracina tenuirostris*

A single observation from forest edge on FMS lease.

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*

Observed on the FMS lease on forest edge and in small disturbed sites within forest.

Grey-crowned Babbler *Pomatostomus temporalis*

Type specimen of this species recorded at Oriomo River, however, we made no observations of it in the areas we checked. It was a moderately common species in the woodlands around Morehead and was also found in the Paperbark swamps. Group size ranged from 2-7, with the most common size being 3.

Golden-headed Cisticola *Cisticola exilis*

Observed at Morehead in the long kunai grass around the edge of the airstrip and in old gardens.

White-shouldered Fairy-Wren *Malurus alboscapulatus*

Observed on the FMS lease and in Morehead area. On the FMS lease was only found on the edge of forest where the kunai grass and understorey shrubs occurred. At Morehead found in thick kunai grass and understorey shrubs in disturbed areas but was also observed in the woodland areas with understorey.

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Only observed in Morehead township where it was relatively common.

Golden Monarch *Monarcha chrysomela*

A single observation of a pair of birds in tree canopy overhanging Oriomo River.

Restless Flycatcher *Myiagra inquieta*

In open woodlands around Morehead.

Grey Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla harmonica*

Common in the Morehead area in woodland. Also found in disturbed areas on the FMS lease.

Rusty Pitohui *Pitohui ferrugineus*

Common on FMS lease especially on forest edge.

Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*

A number of observations made of this species foraging in the canopy of trees in the open woodland around Morehead. (*The first records for Papua New Guinea -Ed*)

Black Sunbird *Nectarinia aspasia*

A single observation of a male feeding on the leaves and flowers of a coconut tree on the FMS lease.

Dusky Myzomela *Myzomela obscura*

Foraging in canopy of trees in woodland around Morehead.

Mimic Meliphaga *Meliphaga analoga*

Common in forest on FMS lease feeding on blossoms and leaf gleaning. Also observed in Morehead area foraging through canopy of woodland.

Tawny-breasted Honeyeater *Xanthotis flaviventer*

A single observation in forest of FMS lease.

Blue-faced Honeyeater *Entomyzon cyanotis*

Very common in and around Morehead.

Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides*

Common on Daru island. Also found on FMS lease in forest edges and less commonly around Morehead where it was a canopy species.

Noisy Friarbird *Philemon corniculatus*

A very common species in the Morehead area where it was found in all habitats.

Yellow-Faced Myna *Mino dumontii*

Common around FMS camp and in nearby forest. Less common in the woodlands around Morehead.

Olive-backed Oriole *Oriolus sagittatus*

A single observation of a bird taking insects from Paperbark flowers in a small boggy area near Morehead.

Yellow Oriole *Oriolus flavocinctus*

Common in forest in FMS lease. No observations from Morehead area.

Spangled Drongo *Dicrurus hottentottus*

Common throughout, more numerous in the woodlands around Morehead.

White-breasted Wood-swallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

Common overhead at Morehead and in open areas nearby.

Hooded Butcherbird *Cracticus cassicus*

Common in woodlands around Morehead. A single observation of 2 birds perched on a tall dead snag at forest edge on FMS lease.

Black-backed Butcherbird *Cracticus mentalis*

Several observations in the woodlands around Morehead.

Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen*

In the Morehead area in open grassy areas around town or in the woodland area.

Spotted Catbird *Ailuroedus melanotis*

Observed in forest on FMS lease.

Fawn-breasted Bowerbird *Chlamydera cerviniventris*

Observed in disturbed areas of FMS lease where tall grass and weedy shrubs were dominant. Also recorded around Morehead in the woodland habitat.

Raggiana Bird of Paradise *Paradisaea raggiana*

Female plumaged birds were quite common in forest on FMS lease, males heard much more than sighted.

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*

Observed at Daru, on FMS lease and around camp and in and around the Morehead area.

DISCUSSION

The Trans-Fly region is unique in Papua New Guinea containing many flora and fauna species in common with Australia. As such it has special biological importance to the country and deserves special conservation attention.

From our experience, the region is under some pressure with resource development taking place, such as timber extraction on the Oriomo River and oil exploration around Morehead.

We hope that any resource development will not be detrimental to the local flora and fauna and is carried out with due regard to environmental considerations.

One species of significance that we noted was the Mistletoebird. According to Beehler et al (1986) this species is only known from the Aru Islands. We have experience of this species in Australia and are confident of our identification. The species was observed foraging in the foliage of woodland trees around Morehead. (*This constitutes the first record of the species for Papua New Guinea. Further work in the area in similar habitat is likely to show the species is regular in this region, in common with a number of other species of primarily Australian distribution that extend into the Trans-Fly savanna biotope- Ed.*)

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Alex and Helen Vakenro and family took extremely good care of us on the several occasions we passed through Daru.

The people of Morehead provided accommodation, field assistance and excellent company during our stay in their area.

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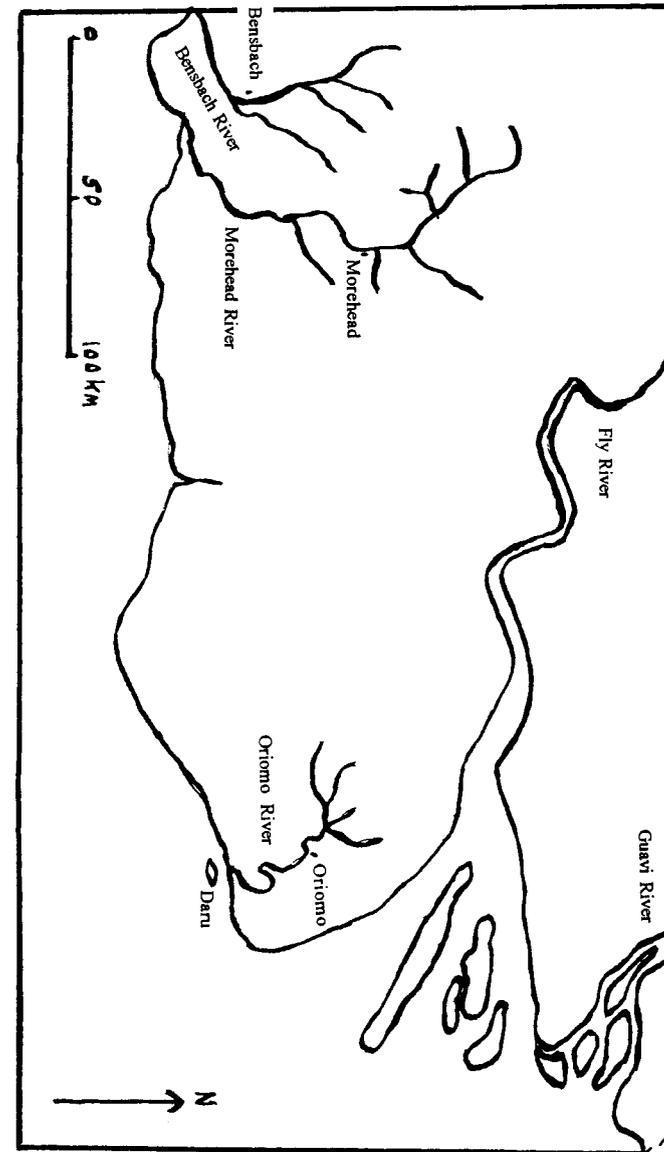


Figure 2
Sketch-map of southern portion of Western Province showing location of places visited and mentioned in the text

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BIRDS SIGHTED IN THE GUAVI-WAWOI LOGGING AREA, WESTERN PROVINCE FROM 25TH NOVEMBER TO 9TH DECEMBER 1993

- (i) Jones Hiaso, John B Sengo, Markson K Yarao
(ii) Christopher Unkau

The list of birds provided in this paper was done as part of an on-going faunal survey by the Department of Environment and Conservation in the Upper Ramu logging area. Currently the area is being logged by Rimbunan Hijau.

Observations started on the first day at Kamusi Base camp (KB) which is situated along the Western side of Guavi River, approximately 7° 30' S, 143° E. Most of the observations were made at camp site 1 (CS1) from 17th November to 2nd December. Additional sightings were made at camp site 2 (CS2), from 40 - 75 metres above sea level. No previous observations from the area have been done, primarily due to the difficulty of access to the area. Recently Burrows (1993) reported observations from the Turama River area in the Gulf Province. The Turama River is the next biggest river east of the Guavi River, and both Burrows (1993) and this report gives some indication of the richness of the bird fauna of these areas.

The listing and naming of birds follow Beehler et al (1986). First sightings only are recorded.

Bird List

Species Name	Date First Sighted	Observations
Southern Cassowary <i>Casuaris casuaris</i>	30th Nov	There were many fresh footprints, but only two adults and two young birds were seen at CS1.
Black-billed Brush-turkey <i>Tallegalla fuscirostris</i>	28th Nov	A mound and four individual seen at CS1. Also calls were heard both during the day, at dusk and pre-dawn.

Darter *Anhinga melanogaster* 4th Nov An individual was seen in the Guavi River at CS1.

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae* 4th Dec An individual was disturbed and it flew to a tree when we arrived at CS2.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* 25th Nov Two birds were seen foraging at Kamusi Airstrip.

Grey-headed Goshawk *Accipiter poliocephalus* 30th Nov Two were perched close to the road at CS1.

Crested Hawk *Aviceda subcristata* 25th Nov One bird was perched close to the road from Kamusi Base Camp to the various logging plots.

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* 4th Dec One bird flew over CS2.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* 4th Nov Seen in the afternoon at CS2 just after a light drizzle of rain.

Southern Crowned Pigeon *Goura scheepmakeri* 28th Nov A group of five were seen in the forest interior. Four more sightings were made of small groups on the 30th, 1st and 5th.

Great Cuckoo-Dove *Reinwardtoena reinwardtii* 5th Dec Four sightings were made at CS2. Two flew across the road and on the 6th about 7:00 am two birds were seen feeding along the road side.

Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia migrirostris* 25th Nov One bird was seen perched in a dry tree at Kamusi Base Camp.

Brown Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia amboinensis* 29th Nov A calling individual was located just before there was a heavy rain.

Beautiful Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus pulchellus* 2nd Nov At least three were seen feeding on an epiphytic fig at CS1 with Coronetted and Superb Fruit Doves. A calling individual was located at CS2 on the 6th of December.

Ornate Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus ornatus* 4th Dec A pair was chased off from a fig tree by three Blyth's Hornbills.

Woompoo Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus magnificus* 29th Nov After hearing calls only, a pair was seen feeding on the 29th November.

Coronetted Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus coronulatus* 2nd Dec At least four individuals were seen feeding in an epiphytic fig with Beautiful Fruit Doves.

Superb Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus superbus* 2nd Dec Two birds were seen feeding in an epiphytic fig with Beautiful and Coronetted Fruit-Doves.

Pied Imperial Pigeon *Ducula bicolor* 28th Nov At least five feeding in a large tree. At least one