

## BIRDS COLLECTED IN SOUTHERN SANDAUN PROVINCE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

by Peter Rowland

### Introduction

From 25 March to 15 May 1986 Dr. Tim Flannery, Australian Museum, Mammal Section, and Mr. Lester Seri, Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Wildlife, Papua New Guinea collected mammal specimens in several locations within southern Sandaun Province (formerly West Sepik Province), between 4°30'S and 5°15'S, and 141°06'E and 141°45'E (Fig. 1). This was part of an on going mammal survey conducted in the region between 1984 and 1987. During the course of the mammal collecting a number of bird specimens were opportunistically collected, some species from outside their known distributions. All of the specimens are now registered in the bird collection at the Australian Museum, Sydney.

### Climate and Topography

Rainfall data are limited and discontinuous for this area. It appears that Yapsiei may receive slightly higher rainfall than Telefomin. In the Telefomin area, September is the wettest month, while November and December are the driest, however, rain may fall at any time of the year (Gilliard and LeCroy, 1961). There is little to suggest seasonality, although there may be a mid-year peak at Yapsiei. The topography is mainly mountainous, varying between 100 and 4,015 m in altitude.

### Collecting Localities

#### Betavip Village

Situated in a broad area of riverflats near the junction of the Skonga and Usake Rivers, at an altitude of about 200 m. In undisturbed areas the alluvial flats support a climax Mixed Alluvial Forest, and there is climax forest on the floodplain margin and surrounding foothills.

#### Yominbip Village

Yominbip is situated on a steep ridge at 1,000 metres on the northern slopes of the Thurnwald Ranges. Climax Mixed Evergreen Forest is present close by. Miak, on the steep upper slopes of the Thurnwald Range (1,800-2,235 m), was also visited.

#### Munbil Settlement

Munbil is located at 900 m in the foothills of Star Mountains in climax Mixed Evergreen Forest on a large flat plateau between the Nong and Atem Rivers. The vegetation is far less mossy than at Yominbip and more typical of lowland forest.

#### Telefomin Valley

The Telefomin valley floor consists of a plateau lying between 1,400 and 1,500 m, with the Sepik River incising it to a depth of 400 m. In the centre of the valley is an anthropogenic grassland, while the small gullies support Secondary Mixed Evergreen Forest in various stages of disturbance.

#### Sol River Valley

The Sol River (local name Wara Sol) is a tributary that enters the Sepik east-south-east of Telefomin Station. The valley walls enclose a relatively flat-lying basin. The valley is clothed in climax Lower Montane Forest. The forest does not become very mossy until 2,600 to 2,800 m.

#### Yapsiei Station and the August/Sepik floodplain

Parts of the August River floodplain lie as low as 120 m, with the highest parts of the sampled region lying at about 240 m. This area is in variable states of disturbance from total forest destruction and maintenance of short, lawn-like grassland to forest that is being cut for building materials and firewood. Downstream from Yapsiei station is largely uninhabited and is only visited during occasional hunting trips. The station itself is located on the margin of the floodplain at 200 m.

Bell (1969), Gilliard and LeCroy (1961) and Murray (1988) are referenced throughout the following list. Both Bell and Murray worked on the south-eastern slopes of the Star Mountains and the south-western slopes of the Hindenburg Range (Fig. 1). Bell's work was confined to the drainage area of the Ok Tedi River between 110 and 1,600 m. Murray was based in Tabubil, situated at 600 m on a plateau in the Ok Tedi valley. Most of her observations were between 300 and 1,400 m, though several trips were made to nearby mountains. Gilliard and LeCroy were situated on the northern slopes of the Hindenburg Range and the eastern parts of the Victor Emanuel Mountains, with an altitude range of 1,050 and 2,500 m. This region overlaps with Flannery and Seri's collecting area in the Telefomin and Wara Sol areas.

Coates (1985, 1990), is used as a reference for previously known distributions for the bird species mentioned below. Species order follows Beehler & Finch (1985). The locality given here is for the nearest village or recognised landmark and, as such, the specimen may have been collected within a short distance of that point.

The Australian Museum registration number (e.g. O.59570) is included for each specimen.

### SPECIES LIST

#### RALLIDAE

##### *Rallus pectoralis* Lewin's Rail

Telefolip (1,500 m) 26 March (O.59570)

Six specimen collected by Gilliard & LeCroy at Telefomin (1,450 m) between 26 March and 25 April 1954; described as "abundant". Not recorded by Bell or Murray.

#### COLUMBIDAE

##### *Macropygia nigrirostris* Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove

Wara Sol (2,200 m) 29 March (O.59569) Betavip (250 m) 22 April (O.59508)

Yominbip (1,050 m) 15 May (O.59509, O.59510)

Recorded by Bell and by Murray.

##### *Reinwardtoena reinwardtii* Great Cuckoo-Dove

Wara Sol (2,600 m) 1 April (O.59542).

Recorded by Bell and by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Chalcophaps indica* Emerald Ground-Dove

Betavip (500 - 600 m) 23 April (O.59528)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray. Coates (1985) did not show this species occurring in the Betavip area, however, he included it in Additions and Corrections to Volume One (Coates 1990, p.567).

*Gallicolumba rufigula* Cinnamon Ground-Dove

Yominbip (950 m) 10 May (O.59520)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Gallicolumba beccarii* Bronze Ground-Dove

Wara Sol (2,600 m) 4 April (O.59568)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

PSITTACIDAE*Lorius lory* Western Black-capped Lory

Munbil (1,050 m) 7 April (O.59601) Betavip (c.200 m) 21 April (O.59600)

Recorded by Bell and by Murray.

*Charmosyna papou* Papuan Lorikeet

Wara Sol (2,200 m) 31 March (O.59603)

Wara Sol (2,200 - 2,300 m) 01 April (O.59602, O.59604)

Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

*Neopsittacus musschenbroekii* Yellow-billed Lorikeet

Wara Sol (2,200 m) 31 March (O.59607), 4 April (O.59606)

Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Probosciger aterrimus* Palm Cockatoo

Betavip(500 - 600 m) 24 April (O.59610)

Recorded by Bell and by Murray.

*Psittacella madaraszii* Madarasz's Tiger-Parrot

Wara Sol (2,600 m) 4 April (O.59605)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Alisterus chloropterus* Papuan King-Parrot

Wara Sol (2,300 m) 1 April (O.59608)

Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

PODARGIDAE*Podargus papuensis* Papuan Frogmouth

Yominbip (1,000 m) 12 May (O.59541)

Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy.

AEGOTHELIDAE*Aegothles insignis* Feline Owllet-nightjar

Wara Sol (2,500 m) 2 April (O.59593)

Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy .

CAPRIMULGIDAE*Caprimulgus macrurus* Large-tailed Nightjar

Telefolip (1,500 m) 26 March (O.59546)

Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

APODIDAE*Collocalia esculenta* Glossy Swiftlet

Wara Sol (2,500 m) 2 April (O.59572)

Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

ALCEDINIDAE*Tanysiptera sylvia* Australian Paradise-Kingfisher

Betavip (c.700 m) 22 April (O.59499, O.59500)

Not recorded by Bell or by Gilliard & LeCroy. Probable sighting reported to Murray, unconfirmed. Coates (1985) did not show this species occurring in the Betavip area, however, he included it in Additions and Corrections to Volume One (Coates 1990, p.567).

*Melidora macrorrhina* Hook-billed Kingfisher

Yominbip (1,100 m) 9 May (O.59496)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Dacelo gaudichaud* Rufous-bellied Kookaburra

Betavip (500 - 600 m) 24 April (O.59497) Yominbip (1,300 m) 12 May (O.59498)

Recorded by Bell and by Murray.

*Halcyon sancta* Sacred Kingfisher

Wara Sol (2,200 m) 29 March (O.59594)

Recorded by Bell and by Murray.

*Halcyon megarhyncha* Mountain Kingfisher

Wara Sol (2,200 m) 1 April (O.59595)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Ceyx lepidus* Dwarf Kingfisher

Yominbip (1,300 m) 12 May (O.59502)

Yominbip (950 m) 14 May (O.59503)

Betavip (250 m) 22 April (O.59504) Betavip (500 - 600 m) 23 April (O.59501)

Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Alcedo azurea* Azure Kingfisher  
Betavip (200 m) 25 April (O.59505)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

#### CORACIIDAE

*Eurystomus orientalis* Dollarbird  
Yapsiei Station (c.200 m) 28 April (O.59516)  
Recorded by Bell and by Murray.

#### CAMPEPHAGIDAE

*Coracina melaena* Black Cuckoo-shrike  
Betavip (500 - 600 m) 23 April (O.59522)      Betavip (200 m) 25 April (O.59523)  
Recorded by Murray.

*Lalage atrovirens* Black-browed Triller  
Betavip (500 - 600 m) 24 April (O.59518, O.59519)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray. A north slope species.

#### LANIIDAE

*Lanius schach* Long-tailed Shrike  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 2 April (O.59609)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy.

#### POMATOSTOMATIDAE

*Pomatostomus isidorei* Rufous Babbler  
Betavip (500 - 600 m) 23 April (O.59506, O.59507)  
Recorded by Bell. Coates (1990) suggested that this species only occurred up to 300 m, Bell recorded that calls were heard up to 400 m. Not known from the Ok Tedi area.

#### SYLVIIDAE

*Megalurus timoriensis* Tawny Grassbird  
Telefolip (1,500 m) 26 March (O.59492)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

#### MALURIDAE

*Malurus grayi* Broad-billed Fairy-wren  
Munbil (1,050 m) 5 April (O.59493)      Miak (1,600 m) 07 May (O.59494, O.59495)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.  
(Editor's note: It would be useful to know to which race this record refers, *grayi* or *campbelli*)

#### ACANTHIZIDAE

*Crateroscelis murina* Rusty Mouse-Warbler  
Yominbip (Altitude not recorded) 06 May (O.59534)  
Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

*Gerygone palpebrosa* Fairy Gerygone  
Munbil (1,050 m) 08 April (O.59529)  
Yominbip (1,000 m) 09 May (O.59530), 12 May (O.59531)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

*Gerygone magnirostris* Large-billed Gerygone  
Betavip (c.200 m) 20 April (O.59538), 21 April (O.59539)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

#### RHIPIDURIDAE

*Rhipidura maculipectes* Black Thicket-Fantail  
Wara Sol (2,600 m) 04 April (O.59585)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray. Coates (1990) did not show this species present in the Sol River area. This species had previously only been recorded in the lowlands.

*Rhipidura rufidorsa* Rufous-backed Fantail  
Munbil (1,050 m) 10 April (O.59583)  
Recorded by Murray. Coates (1990) recorded this species occurring up to 850 m, Murray recorded calling up to 700 m.

*Rhipidura atra* Black Fantail  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 30 March (O.59582)  
Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

*Rhipidura rufiventris* Northern Fantail  
Munbil(1,050 m) 08 April (O.59584)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy, and Murray.

#### MYIAGRIDAE

*Monarcha axillaris* Black Monarch  
Wara Sol (2,600 m) 04 April (O.59589)  
Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray. Coates (1990) gave the altitudinal limits of this species as 800 m (rarely 700 m) to 2350 m. Other sightings were Bell - 1600 m, Gilliard & LeCroy - 1450 m and by Murray - 700 m.

*Arses telescopthalmus* Frilled Monarch  
Munbil (1,050 m) 07 April (O.59587)  
Betavip (200 m) 25 April (O.59590)      Betavip (200 m) 26 April (O.59588)  
Recorded by Bell. Coates (1990) does not show this species as occurring in the Munbil and Betavip area.

#### EOPSALTRIIDAE

*Poecilodryas hypoleuca* Black-sided Robin  
Betavip (c.700 m) 22 April (O.59514)      Betavip (200 m) 25 April (O.59515)  
Recorded by Murray.

PACHYCEPHALIDAE

*Pachycare flavogrisea* Dwarf Whistler  
Yominbip (1,000 m) 12 May (O.59532)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Rhagologus leucostigma* Mottled Whistler  
Wara Sol (2,600 m) 4 April (O.59550)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Pachycephala rufinucha* Rufous-naped Whistler  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 4 April (O.59551)  
Recorded by Bell and Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Colluricincla megarhyncha* Little Shrike-thrush  
Yominbip (Altitude not recorded) 7 May (O.59552)  
Miak (1,600 m) 08 May (O.59553, O.59555)  
Recorded by Bell.

NEOSITTIDAE

*Daphoenositta chrysoptera* Varied Sittella  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 30 March (O.59586)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

DICAEIDAE

*Melanocharis nigra* Black Berrypecker  
Munbil (1,050 m) 7 April (O.59581)      Miak (1,600 m) 7 May (O.59580)  
Recorded by Bell. Coates (1990) gave the upper altitudinal limit of this species at 1450 m, Bell observed it at about 600 m.

*Melanocharis versteri* Fan-tailed Berrypecker  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 30 March (O.59596)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Melanocharis striativentris* Streaked Berrypecker  
Wara Sol (2,400 m) 29 March (O.59597)      Wara Sol (2,200 m) 31 March (O.59598)  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 2 April (O.59599)  
Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

NECTARINIIDAE

*Nectarinia aspasia* Black Sunbird  
Betavip (c.200 m) 20 April (O.59482)      Betavip(500 - 600 m) 24 April (O.59483)  
Recorded by Murray.

*Nectarinia jugularis* Yellow-bellied Sunbird  
Betavip (c.200 m) 20 April (O.59563)

Betavip (c.200 m) 21 April (O.59562)  
Recorded in Murray (1988).

MELIPHAGIDAE

*Melilestes megarhynchus* Long-billed Honeyeater  
Betavip (500 - 600 m) 23 April (O.59545)  
Telefolip(1,400 m) 26 March (O.59543, O.59544)  
Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

*Oedistoma iliolophus* Dwarf Honeyeater  
Telefolip (1,500 m) 25 March (O.59564)  
Telefolip (1,500 m) 26 March (O.59565, O.59566, O.59567)  
Recorded by Murray.

*Myzomela eques* Red-throated Myzomela  
Betavip (250 m) 22 April (O.59575)      Yominbip (1,000 m) 13 May (O.59574)  
Recorded by Murray.

*Meliphaga montana* Forest White-eared Meliphaga  
Telefolip (1,400 m) 26 March (O.59560)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Meliphaga aruensis* Puff-backed Meliphaga  
Munbil (1,050 m) 06 April (O.59466)      Betavip (c.700 m) 22 April (O.59464)  
Yominbip(1,000 m) 09 May (O.59469)  
Recorded by Bell and as a probable in Murray (1988).

*Meliphaga analoga* Mimic Meliphaga  
Munbil (1,050 m) 05 April (O.59465)      Betavip (c.200 m) 20 April (O.59463)  
Betavip(250 m) 22 April (O.59468)  
Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and as a probable in Murray (1988). Coates (1990) recorded these specimens from Betavip and Munbil, occurring from 200 - 900 m.

*Meliphaga flavirictus* Yellow-gaped Meliphaga  
Betavip (c.200 m) 21 April (O.59470)  
Recorded by Bell and as a probable in Murray (1988).

*Xanthotis flaviventer* Tawny-breasted Honeyeater  
Betavip (c.700 m) 22 April (O.59576)  
Betavip (500 - 600 m) 23 April (O.59577)  
Recorded by Murray.

*Ptiloprora perstriata* Grey-streaked Honeyeater  
Wara Sol (2,200 m) 29 March (O.59559, O.59561)  
Wara Sol (2,300 m) 30 March (O.59556)  
Recorded by Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

*Melidectes belfordi* Belford's Melidectes  
 Wara Sol (2,300 m) 30 March (O.59478)      Wara Sol (2,200 m) 31 March (O.59479)  
 Wara Sol (2,600 m) 1 April (O.59476, O.59477)  
 Recorded by Bell and by Gilliard & LeCroy.

#### ESTRILDIDAE

*Erythrura papuana* Papuan Parrot-Finch  
 Yominbip (1,000 m) 9 May (O.59537)      Telefölip (1,400 m) 26 March (O.59536)  
 Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

*Lonchura tristissima* Streak-headed Mannikin  
 Munbil (1,050 m) 8 April (O.59511)      Yominbip (1,000 m) 14 May (O.59512, O.59513)  
 Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray.

#### ARTAMIDAE

*Artamus maximus* Great Wood-swallow  
 Wara Sol (2,200 m) 31 March (O.59591, O.59592)  
 Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

#### CRACTICIDAE

*Peltops blainvillii* Lowland Peltops  
 Yominbip (1,000 m) 12 May (O.59517)  
 Not recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray. Coates (1990) gave the upper limit of this species as 730 m. (*Editor's note: An unusually high altitude record, always assuming it to be correctly identified.*)

#### PARADISAEIDAE

*Paradigalla brevicauda* Short-tailed Paradigalla  
 Wara Sol (2,300 m) 28 March (O.59547)  
 Recorded by Bell and by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Lophorina superba* Superb Bird of Paradise  
 Wara Sol (2,200 m) 2 April (O.59548), 3 April (O.59549)  
 Recorded by Bell and by Gilliard & LeCroy.

*Cicinnurus magnificus* Magnificent Bird of Paradise  
 Yominbip (Altitude not recorded) 6 May (O.59521)  
 Recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy and by Murray.

#### DISCUSSION

From the above species list there are 19 species that have not been recorded by Bell, Gilliard & LeCroy, or Murray and, as such, are either new records for Southern Sandaun Province, or have simply confirmed the expected occurrence of a species in the area. Many other species have previously been recorded merely a few times, some only once. In addition to this, there are four new

altitudinal records: (*Rufous Babbler, Black Thicket-fantail, Black Monarch and Black Berrypecker, and also the Lowland Peltops if confirmed as that species..Ed*)  
 This collection has produced invaluable information on the avifauna of a little researched region of Papua New Guinea. Future work will continue to expand our knowledge of this area.

#### Acknowledgements

Much of the geographical data and locality maps given in this paper have been reproduced from Flannery & Seri (1990) with the kind permission of Dr Tim Flannery. I would also like to thank Mr Walter Boles, Division of Vertebrate Zoology, Australian Museum, and Dr. Tim Flannery, Mammal Section, Australian Museum, for their kind help in the preparation of this paper.

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Fig. 1. The study area, Sandaun Province, with collecting localities marked (stars), as well as major topographical features. The dotted line marks the north-south divide.

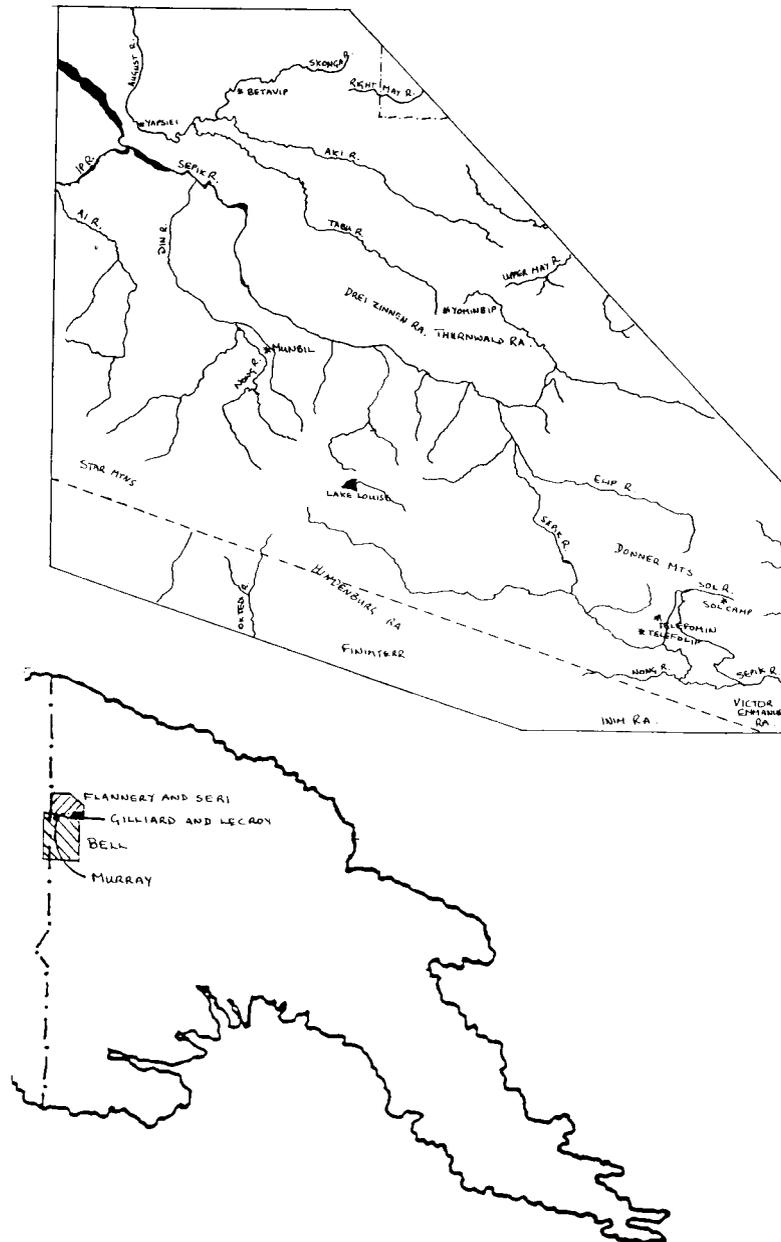


Fig. 2. Map showing Flannery and Seri's study area and other survey areas mentioned in text.

**NOTES ON THE DISPLAY BEHAVIOUR OF A FULLY -PLUMED MALE BLUE BIRD OF PARADISE *Paradisaea rudolphi***

by Richard Whiteside

Introduction

A number of visits were made between September and December 1994 to a 50m square patch of dense secondary growth on a north-facing slope which served as the display territory for a male Blue Bird of Paradise *Paradisaea rudolphi*.

Preliminary observations provided information on behaviour and the display sequence, choice of display sites, times of display and daily routine. I hope to follow up these observations over an extended period, and particularly to investigate possible interaction with the Magnificent Bird of Paradise *Cicinnurus magnificus*.

Discussion

The study site is near Kaindan village, at an altitude of approximately 1,700m, 4km south-east of Kompam District Headquarters in the Enga Province. The display territory is roughly central in a foraging area which encompasses some primary forest, dense scrub and secondary growth, a coffee garden, grassland and some agricultural land.

The male Blue Bird of Paradise typically gave advertising calls from tall trees (frequently *Casuarina*) above the display territory. At least two other birds could be heard advertising on nearby slopes, but their foraging areas probably did not overlap. Display took place low down in thick vegetation.

The daily sequence of behaviour was very variable. Typically, display followed a period when the bird advertised its presence by calling from the tall trees, but this was not always the case. The peak time for display was in the morning between 0630 and 0930, with a second period of display in the afternoon between 1530 and 1830. Between 0930 and the afternoon display, the bird was often in the vicinity of the display territory, where it sometimes engaged in short periods of display. Frequently these were not preceded by any advertising, and on some occasions the bird engaged directly into the "intense phase" of display associated with an electrical-like buzzing sound (Coates 1990).

The morning advertising period typically began at about 0640, though sometimes not until much later. It would sometimes last for more than two hours, though was frequently of much shorter duration. The bird tended to be active in the display territory before advertising, and would sometimes enter the display sequence without any significant advertising period.

The display sequence tended to be shortest after a long morning advertising period. On other mornings the bird would display several times from a number of sites within the general display territory. These sites were always low down, sometimes within a metre of the ground and surrounded by dense vegetation, making it difficult to observe the display.

Before commencing its display, the plumed male would arrive at a perch near the display perch and make short vocalizations. It would then flutter to the display perch and commence chattering