

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to publish in this issue, the final one for Volume 7, a miscellany of material : A Check List for Mount Gahavisuka Provincial Part, a variety of observations from the Bismarcks and Manus, including nest data on the Black Imperial Pigeon, papers documenting birds from the little known middle Fly region, a travelogue from Myola, speculation on future additions to the PNG list, an undescribed plumage morph of Grey-headed Goshawk, nesting observations on the little known Grey Crow, a Bat Hawk sighting from Irian Jaya and a summary of significant observations in 1993 and 1994. We welcome this variety and are grateful to our sponsors, Ok Tedi Mining for their continued support in 1995. We hope to continue with three issues per year, but are dependent on contributions for the publishing schedule which is of necessity flexible.

Contributors of sightings have been very few in recent years, and we encourage both residents and visitors to submit their records.

We particularly welcome copies of tour group reports, as many interesting sightings lie hidden in these inaccessible databases and it is a courtesy to the host country to make copies available to the PNGBS. Such reports form part of our archives, and excerpts would be used only if such permission is given. Feedback to notes and papers is welcomed, if you know better please write and tell us, we will be happy to publish, a major aim being to stimulate study and increase the knowledge of New Guinea birds.

Editor : Phil Gregory.

Please continue to send submissions (preferably on disk in the specified format) to :

Editor, *Muruk*, PO Box 69, Tabubil, Western Province, PNG.

Phone (675) 589310 or fax (675) 589641

All contributions will be acknowledged.

Muruk is published by the Papua New Guinea Bird Society and is available as part of society membership. Back numbers are K4 each plus postage and packing. Volume one (1986) was reprinted in 1990 and is available for K8. Please note the revised 1995 membership rates.

Membership rates are : Local (within PNG): K12 individual K19 family K8 junior

Overseas K16 (A\$32) surface mail; K18 (A\$36) airmail to Australia, NZ and Singapore

Distant (all other countries) surface K19 (A\$38), K24 (\$A48) airmail

Cheques or drafts should be sent to : *Treasurer, PNGBS, PO BOX 1598, Boroko, PNG.*

If not paying in kina, please use pounds sterling, Australian or US dollars and add K2 equivalent for bank charges.

Cover : *Southern Cassowary head study by Jones Hiaso*

SPONSORED BY OK TEDI MINING LTD.

MT. GAHAVISUKA PROVINCIAL PARK: A Check List of Birds

by Tom Coles

Overview

Mt. Gahavisuka Provincial Park and Lipizauga Botanical Sanctuary is noted primarily for its unique orchard and rhododendron species. Species are on display in the Sehoka and Lipizauga Orchard Houses. The goals of the park focus around recreation, conservation, scientific research, education and tourism.

The park is located 11 km. from the centre of Goroka Town, Eastern Highlands Province. It can be reached by 4-wheel drive vehicle. After crossing over the bridge on the Mt. Hagen side of Goroka, turn off the Okuk Highway, onto the road on the right, opposite the Okiufa Community School (look for the park sign at the turn off). Transportation can be arranged by the Park Director (cost negotiable) or through the Bird of Paradise Hotel in Goroka at a fixed rate. Melanesian Tours has plans to build a bungalow type hotel off the road just below the park gate.

Entry into the park is free. There is a donation box at the information centre next to the car park. There is no fixed time for entering or leaving the park, although early arrivals may have to park their vehicle outside of the park gate if it is locked (only a short walk from the car park). The park land was leased from the people of nearby Nagamiza village in April 1983. There are plans for expanding the boundary of the park, currently covering 77.4 hectares (200 acres). Due to village involvement in managing the park, security is good. The park staff are friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.

Arrangements can be made to overnight at the park for individuals or small groups interested in night walks, exploring for nocturnal marsupials and birds. One medium sized marsupial species, which had just been decapitated by a Sooty Owl (*Tyto tenebricosa*), was found on the main track by the author and Park Director. Bring your own bedding, food, torch, rain gear and mosquito repellent if planning an overnight stay. Water is available at the park. Because forest wallabies are crepuscular (dawn and dusk) animals, the Common Mountain Forest Wallaby (*Dorcopsulus vanheurni*), can be seen at the 'Lake,' often on the little island in the centre (most frequently seen in the late afternoon if one is very quiet).

Check List

Of the 708 verified species of birds of New Guinea and its neighbor islands (Principe 1991), 138 are listed for the park of which 33 species are listed as questionable due to their habitat requirements and altitude distribution. The one exception is the Superb Bird of Paradise (*Lophorina superba*) which was seen by the author at its upper altitude limit of 2300 meters. Since birds do not read bird books, they are often able to adapt to different habitat. Expanded altitude distribution for different species continues to be noted in *Muruk* (Journal of the Papua New Guinea Bird Society). Of the 40 Birds of Paradise listed for the country, eleven (11) species are listed for the park (the presence of three species is questionable). This list will most likely undergo future revision. It has been compiled from observations made by the author, the park staff and other birders. Information was also compiled from the listed references. Notes concerning confirmation of the species listed as questionable or of species not listed should be passed on to the Park Director or the author.