

Species	Altitude	1	2	3
Stephanie's Astrapia	<i>Astrapia stephaniae</i> 1280/1500-2800/3500	*	*	*
Superb Bird of Paradise	<i>Lophorina superba</i> 1000/1650-1900/2300	*		
Lawes' Parotia	<i>Parotia lawesii</i> 500/1200-1900/2300	?		
King of Saxony BOP	<i>Pteridophora alberti</i> 1400/1800-2500/2850	*	?	?

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BIRDS OF WILD DOG, EAST NEW BRITAIN

by Chris Eastwood

Will Glynn, Mark Walker & I visited the mining camp of Wild Dog over the Easter weekend of 1995. We arrived at midday on the 14th of April and left on the morning of the 17th. Wild Dog is situated almost exactly in the centre of the Gazelle peninsula approximately 2 hours drive south west of Kokopo, which itself is just south of Rabaul. The camp is at an altitude of approximately 950 metres asl and currently consists primarily of just one building. The mine is not yet at the development stage and the surrounding bush is largely untouched apart from a number of vehicular tracks and a few small areas where some exploration activity has occurred.

We stayed at the camp courtesy of David Lindley, of Gold Mines of Niugini Holdings Pty Limited. If anybody is interested in visiting the area they should contact David on 96 4827 (tel/fax) or write to him at Box 808, Rabaul.

Species List

Underlining denotes a species endemic to the Bismarck (and Admiralty) or Solomon Islands.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*)

A single bird flying over the camp (approximately 50 kilometres from the sea) on two different days (one an immature?).

Oriental Hobby (*Falco severus*)

A pair was resident at the camp.

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

One bird perched by the track as we returned to Kokopo.

Brown Cuckoo-Dove (*Macropygia amboinensis*)

Single birds seen on most days.

Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove (*Macropygia nigrirostris*)

Only one bird positively identified.

White-breasted Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus rivoli*)

A pair were seen in some casuarina saplings.

Red-knobbed Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus insolitus*)

Fairly common and small numbers were seen every day.

Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula rubricera*)

The second most common pigeon or dove and small numbers were seen every day; particularly vocal.

Finsch's Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula finschii*)

Two birds were seen perched by the side of the road - very dumpy looking pigeons appearing large eyed.

Black Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula melanochroa*)

Single birds occasionally flying over; one perched bird by the camp on our last morning.

Pied Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula bicolor*)

The commonest pigeon or dove - several birds had a pale cream wash and a green bill.

Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*)

Small numbers seen on two days.

Eastern Black-capped Lory (*Lorius hypoinochrous*)

A few pairs seen flying past.

Red-chinned Lorikeet (*Charmosyna rubrigularis*)

Small flocks of presumably this species were seen in flight on two days.

Blue-eyed Cockatoo (*Cacatua ophthalmica*)

Mainly single birds seen, although on one day a flock of at least 10 birds were in the valley below the camp.

Song Parrot (*Geoffroyus heteroclitus*)

Only single birds seen, although a small flock was also heard on one day.

Eclectus Parrot (*Eclectus roratus*)

Just one bird seen flying over.

Violaceous Coucal (*Centropus violaceus*)

Single birds were seen almost every day along the track, though they were more often heard than seen.

White-necked Coucal (*Centropus ateralbus*)

Only one bird seen.

Glossy Swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta*)

Small numbers.

Moustached Tree-swift (*Hemiprocne mystacea*)

A pair was resident near the camp.

White-mantled Kingfisher (*Halcyon albonotata*)

One bird seen well on one day - we had heard a kingfisher calling in the evening but were unable to track it down; we returned to the site the next morning and eventually found it; it would perch for long periods of time, calling almost continuously. A bird was seen again in the afternoon. Another bird was also heard in a different area.

Rainbow Bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*)

Small numbers on two days.

Blyth's Hornbill (*Rhyticeros plicatus*)

A pair was resident near the camp and were often seen flying past.

Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina lineata*)

Seen on one day.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina papuensis*)

Fairly common.

Cicadabird (*Coracina temirostris*)

The commonest cuckoo-shrike and seen every day.

Varied Triller (*Lalage leucomela*)

Common.

Bismarck Pied Monarch (*Monarcha verticalis*)

Seen several times on two days in different areas.

Bismarck Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura dahlia*)

Only one bird seen on our first afternoon, although it was occasionally heard calling particularly in the bush behind the camp.

Northern Fantail (*Rhipidura rufiventris*)

Fairly common.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*)

Seen on two days.

Bismarck Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum eximium*)

Quite common but more often heard than seen.

Black Sunbird (*Nectarinia aspasia*)

Small numbers present.

Black-headed White-eye (*Zosterops hypoxantha*)

Fairly common (usually in small parties).

Ashy Myzomela (*Myzomela cineracea*)

Small numbers.

Red Myzomela (*Myzomela cruentata*)

Present on most days near one particular flowering tree.

New Britain Red-headed Myzomela (*Myzomela erythromelas*)

Present on most days near one particular flowering tree.

New Britain Friarbird (*Philemon cockerelli*)

Small numbers; one bird was building a nest in a tree by the camp.

Metallic Starling (*Aplonis metallica*)

Small numbers.

Yellow-faced Myna (*Mino dumontii*)

Small numbers but fairly vocal (the call being quite unlike that of the mainland birds).

Spangled Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentottus*)

Small numbers.

Torresian Crow (*Corvus orru*)

Small numbers.

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MEMORABLE MYOLA October 1995

by Phil Gregory

The party arrived at 0700 on Sunday October 8th, and departed at 1000 on Tuesday October 10th. The PNGBS used to visit this site regularly but have not done so for a few years. Myola village lies on the lower slopes of the Owen Stanley Range at 2080m and consists of about 15 huts, with a basic camp staff of Mark, his wife and a boy; It is beautifully sited in a grass and swampland basin set about by forested hills rising up to 2800m +, just a 25 minute flight from Port Moresby. The next village is about 4 hours walk away. MBA cancelled the charter flight set for Saturday but we got away at first light on Sunday, only to find Myola had been dry all week and we could have got in. I suspect the pilots had a golf game scheduled...

Cloud and rain by mid-afternoon Sunday after a wonderful sunny morning. Rain overnight Sunday and at dawn, but cleared away to a high overcast on Monday with rain again by late pm. Tuesday dawn was clear, but clouding up by the time we left.

Participants: Chris Eastwood, Phil Gregory, Arlene Johnson, Ian Richardson, Yasuhisa Tanaka, Mark Walker, and bush-walkers Richard and Emma. Camp cook Mark from Myola. MBA Islander coming in and a Twin Otter going out.

Sunday was really a recce of the village area and adjacent trails, with next day focusing on the key sites, which for me were mostly the trail to the west. Tuesday again saw me along there, with a detour around the airstrip and gardens before catching the flight.

Birding was splendid, with Monday 9th one of the best birding days I've had in PNG:

Composite List

New Guinea Harpy-Eagle 1 heard 8.10. calling from slopes west of the village.

King Quail 1 pair 9.10. 1 male 10.10.

Forbes' Forest-Rail 3 on 9.10. (1 male, 1 female)

Spotless Crane 1+ late pm on 8.10 and heard on the other two dates.

Lewin Rail 1 on 8.10. Dashed over the track, slightly larger than Spotless, not black, reddish crown and nape. Also flushed by IR on 9.10.

Rufous Woodcock 1 9.10 (PG)

Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove 1 on 8.10. 2 on 9.10. 3 on 10.10. and heard

Great Cuckoo-Dove heard

White-breasted Fruit-Dove 1 male on 8.10 and heard.

Papuan Mountain Pigeon 12 on 8.10 and 2 on 10.10. and heard

Bronze Ground -Dove 1 9.10 CE

Goldie's Lorikeet daily, max. 50 on 10.10. Flight call like a higher pitched version of Dusky Lory. Whiskered Lorikeet CE

Brehm's Tiger-Parrot 1 9.10.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo frequent by camp, max. 4 birds, and also heard in the forest. MW saw a juv.

Papuan Boobook 1 calling briefly on 8.10.

* Mountain Nightjar 1 flying over by village along forest edge at dusk on both 8 & 9.10. Identified as this species by habitat and altitude. Gave a quiet guttural flight note. Flying in quite heavy rain on 9.10.

Mountain Swiftlet max. 15

Glossy Swiftlet max. 6. Both *Collocalia* species were even flying amongst trees along forest margins.