

## EDITORIAL

It is nice to have *Muruk* back in existence after a rather long time in limbo since **Volume 8 Number 1** back in October 1996. We apologise for the delay. The hiatus was caused by various financial complications related to the PNG drought situation in 1996-97, but we are very pleased that **Ok Tedi Mining Ltd.** has again come to our rescue with further sponsorship.

This issue is largely based on papers and notes from the Bismarcks, Manus and Goodenough Island, and it is a real pleasure to have a contribution from those pioneers of ornithology in PNG, Mary LeCroy and Bill Peckover. Brian Fletcher's paper on Kau Wildlife Reserve near Madang is also of note and fills a gap in a poorly known area. We also announce the formation of a committee to act as custodians of the PNG list, formalising acceptance procedures and maintaining an archive which may be of use to future students of birds in PNG. The interim list of requested species is included in this issue.

Acknowledgments are due to Chris Eastwood for proof reading, and to both him and Sue Gregory for encouragement. Also to K. David Bishop for help with the rarity lists.

We welcome notes and papers for future issues of *Muruk*, please send to:

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## Birds observed on Goodenough and Wagifa Islands, Milne Bay Province

By Mary LeCroy and William S. Peckover

We spent the period 8-14 August 1988 on Goodenough Island, D'Entrecasteaux Islands, Milne Bay Province, in the vicinity of Galuwala Village, at 620 m, and in *Castanopsis* oak forest at 1030-1075 m. Most of the area around Galuwala is anthropogenic grassland, strewn with large blocks of volcanic rock, presumably from a long-inactive volcano. The track to the forest is through this grassland and is very steep. The forest is relatively clear of undergrowth but shows signs of human disturbance; however, birds seem to be common. There were daily periods of rain during our visit. Each evening, and often during the day, mists swirled down from the summit of the mountain to shroud the forest; not surprisingly, moss extends down to the beginning of the forest at about 1000 m. There is an excellent description of this forest in Mayr and Van Deusen (1956:4). The summit of the mountain on which we camped is several hundred metres higher and is isolated by a wall of solid cliffs.

Flocks of small insectivores were a feature of the forest. The following species were noted in these flocks: *Pachycephala soror*, *Pachycephala simplex*, *Rhipidura rufiventris*, *Oedistoma iliolophus*, *Xanthotis flaviventer*, and *Dicrurus hottentotus*.

There have been a number of reports on the avifauna of Goodenough, summarized most recently by Bell (1970), who gives a total list of the species reported from the island up until that time. Since then, we have found the article by Menzies (1976) to be relevant. Menzies saw a long-tailed black bird that he was unable to identify, keeping alive the reports of such a bird first recorded by Brass (1956:144) on the Fourth Archbold Expedition. We did not encounter this mystery bird, but we observed the following species, two of which are new records for the island.

**Australian Pelican** *Pelecanus conspicillatus*. Two individuals were seen on 9 August, flying over grassland near Galuwala. This is a first record of the species for Goodenough. 1988 was a year in which pelicans were reported from many unusual places, and obviously this sighting was another instance where a build-up in numbers in Australia caused an exodus into the surrounding Pacific areas.

**Brahminy Kite** *Haliastur indus*. Seen over grassland near Galuwala.

**White-breasted Fruit-Dove** *Ptilinopus rivoli*. This beautiful fruit-dove was seen in the forest, and appeared particularly fond of the small yellow fruits on a forest tree.

**Claret-breasted Fruit-Dove** *Ptilinopus viridis*. This species also fed on the yellow fruits.

**Eastern Black-capped Lory** *Lorius hypoinochrous*. A noisy inhabitant of the forest above Galuwala. Very common.

**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** *Cacatua galerita*. Common in all areas we visited. Fed on the yellow fruits.

**Eclectus Parrot** *Eclectus roratus*. Commonly seen from Galuwala, flying over the grassland