

Varied Triller *Lalage leucomela*. Seen on the immediately adjacent coast of Goodenough.

Flycatcher *Myiagra* sp. A female of this genus was seen on 8 March 1986. Vibrates tail. (Presumably either Satin *M. cyanoleuca* or Leaden Flycatcher *M. rubecula* -Editor.)

Black Sunbird *Nectarinia aspasia*

Helmeted Friarbird *Philemon buceroides*

Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica*. At approximately 6 pm on 1 March 1991, hundreds of Metallic Starlings were seen flying from Goodenough to Wagifa to roost. They flew high across the water and then swooped down almost vertically into the trees. The same phenomenon was seen on Fergusson Island, where large numbers of starlings flew to a small offshore island to roost.

Curl-crested Manucode *Manucodia comrii*

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*

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Authors' Addresses:

Mary LeCroy, Dept. Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St., New York, NY 10024, USA;

Bill Peckover, 14 Balanda St., Jindalee, Queensland 4074, Australia.

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Birds seen in the Bismarck and Admiralty Islands from 22 Oct - 7 Nov 1996

By Brian S. Fletcher

Introduction

The Bismarck and Admiralty Islands lie off the north coast of New Guinea and between them have over 50 species of endemic birds. During a 16 day trip there in Oct/Nov. 1996 the principal places I visited were Ulatawa Plantation near Kokopo and Wild Dog Mining Camp in the Gazelle Peninsula on East New Britain; the Kavieng area of New Ireland; and Manus and Tong Islands in the Admiralty Group. I also kept a look out for birds during brief transit stops at Hoskins in New Britain on route to Kokopo, and Lihir Island, off the east coast of New Ireland, on route to Kavieng.

New Britain

I flew from Madang to Tokua Airport, East New Britain, via Hoskins on the 22 Oct. My trip got off to a good start with a flock of 30 + Buff-bellied Mannikins sitting on the fence surrounding the fuel storage area during the stopover at Hoskins Airport.

After reaching Tokua, I took a PMV into Kokopo and then transferred to another PMV that was going to Gelagela which dropped me off at Ulatawa Plantation, the home of Max Henderson, Director of the Pacific Heritage Foundation. I stayed there for the next 2 days and did some birding within the different habitats present on the plantation, particularly the garden area around the guest house and a small remnant patch of forest to the right near the entrance gate.

On 24 Oct., after getting permission from David Lindley, the Managing Director of Gold Mines of Niugini, who has an office in Kokopo, I hired a local with a utility and drove up to Wild Dog Mining Camp. The camp is situated in the Gazelle Peninsula, approximately 45 km west of Kokopo, at an altitude of 950 metres. En route we had a 45 minutes wait at the locked entrance gate, which is situated at the start of the forested area at an altitude of approximately 300 metres, 8 km before the camp. This gave me the first opportunity to see some of the endemic birds of the area including, Red-knobbed Fruit-dove, Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon, the only Pied Cuckoo-Dove I saw on the trip, and Blue-eyed Cockatoo.

During my stay at Wild Dog Mining Camp I explored the various trails that ran through the surrounding forest; the most productive being:

- a) The main entrance road back towards Kokopo.
- b) A track that ascended to slightly higher altitude diagonally to the left behind the living quarters.
- c) A track that ran down through good forest to the left from the entrance road, starting at the top of the first ridge back towards Kokopo.

At the time of my visit, conditions for bird watching were excellent as showers were restricted to the early afternoons and evenings and many trees were flowering or fruiting. Two large fruiting fig trees at the eastern edge of the camp grounds attracted a wide range of frugivorous birds and the flowering trees in the surrounding forest

were alive with lorikeets and honeyeaters. I spent the final evening before flying on to New Ireland in Kokopo, where I explored the golf course and adjacent foreshore.

Annotated List of Birds seen in New Britain (22 Oct-31 Oct 1996)

Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*) Two seen flying close to the shore at Kokopo on 30 Oct.

New Britain Buzzard (*Henicopernis infuscata*) Sightings of what was probably the same individual were made about 4 km back along the entrance road on 26, 27 & 28 Oct.. On the first day the bird flew low over-head carrying something in its claws and calling. The call sounded quite similar to that of Collared Kingfisher but was repeated 8-10 times. What was probably a different individual was seen hunting within the canopy of the forest along the track at the rear of the camp on 29 Oct.

Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*) A pair was resident at Ulatawa Plantation and 2 were also observed flying high above the entrance road to the mining camp.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) An immature was seen flying across the valley near the entrance gate to Wild Dog on 24 Oct.

Oriental Hobby (*Falco severus*) A pair was resident at the camp and another pair was seen along the entrance road. One morning 3 were observed together in a wild aerial pursuit rather reminiscent of a World War 11 dog-fight between fighter planes.

New Britain Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter brachyurus*) A bird identified as a sub-adult of this species on the basis of size and plumage as described in Coates (1985) was seen along the side track on the 30 Oct. It was first observed as it flew to a perch in the mid-canopy of the forest about 40 metres from where I was standing. While I was watching it through my binoculars it flew towards me, uttering a low mewing call several times as it did so. It passed so close above my head that I thought it was going to attack me and I involuntarily ducked. By the time I turned around it was perched facing me on a low branch 25 metres away and about 4 metres from the ground, where it remained for several minutes. It was fairly small (around 28-30 cm) and had a rather flat square head. Its head and upper parts were a medium grey colour and the upper breast was cinnamon coloured. This colouration extended as a collar on each side of the lower neck and when it turned its head sideways appeared to extend across the nape. There was a fairly distinct demarcation between the cinnamon colouration of the upper breast and the lower breast and belly which were greyish white. The lower breast had some small dark grey spots down the centre line. The underside of the tail, which was also greyish white, had faint traces of barring down the mid-line. The eyes appeared totally black and the bill was black with bright yellow ceres. The legs were a darker orange-yellow colour.

(This appears to be a rather rare species of the hill and montane forests, and Brian gives a very convincing report here, from one of the few known sites for the species. It is readily confused with Variable Goshawk, which has a bewildering variety of plumages on the Bismarcks. The rufous collar would be an excellent field character, as described by Brian. Editor)

New Britain Grey-headed Goshawk (*Accipiter princeps*) A bird considered to be this species was seen earlier the same morning (30 Oct) near where I saw the previous species. While watching a group of Red-chinned Lorikeets feeding in a flowering tree, the goshawk landed in the tree causing the lorikeets to decamp en masse. The plumage of this bird looked very similar to the Grey-headed Goshawk of the mainland, being medium grey on the back, nape and head and whitish on the breast and belly. The only markings visible on the underparts were 3 or 4 very short dark bars extending just beyond the line of the wings on each flank. The cere was orange and the legs yellow orange, but the eye colour could not be determined as the side of the face was obscured.

(Another rare hill forest endemic, from a known locality- Editor)

Slaty-backed Goshawk (*Accipiter luteoschistaceus*) A bird fitting the description of Slaty-backed Goshawk (Coates 1985) was observed on 26 Oct along the entrance road about 3 km from the camp, at an altitude of approx. 750 metres. It flew across the track and perched in a tree about 30 metres away where it proceeded to preen itself. The upper parts and the undersurface of the tail were a dark slaty-grey colour and there was no indication of a collar across the nape. The underparts were a pale salmon-rufous colour. The eyes were very dark with possibly a reddish tinge and the cere and legs were a reddish orange colour.

(Bismarck accipiters are very poorly known and a source of much confusion. The form of Variable Goshawk here often has a morph with pale salmony pink underparts, and the above description accords well with that species rather than the Slaty-backed Goshawk. White or whitish underparts would be more in keeping - Editor.)

Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*) Several at Tokua Airport on my arrival and departure dates, and two feeding on the lawn at Ulatawa Plantation homestead on 23 Oct.

Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) Common at Tokua airport on both my arrival and departure dates.

Brown Cuckoo-Dove (*Macropygia amboinensis*) Common and fairly confiding around the mining camp.

Pied Cuckoo-Dove (*Reinwardtoena browni*) One seen perched in a low tree near the entrance gate to Wild Dog on 24 Oct.

Bronze Ground Dove (*Gallicolumba beccarii*) One was seen along the trail behind the camp on 27 Oct and another was seen on 30 Oct when sitting on its nest along the trail to the left before the camp. The nest, which contained a single white egg, was located approx 0.5 m. from the ground, on a horizontal frond of a wild ginger plant.

Stephan's Ground-Dove (*Chalcophaps stephani*) 2 individuals flushed from the side of the track behind the camp on 26 & 27 Oct.

Red-knobbed Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus insolitus*) Common at the two fruiting fig trees at the camp and in trees along the entrance road to Wild Dog.

Superb Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus superbus*) Small numbers in the fruiting fig trees and other fruiting trees along the entrance track at Wild Dog

White-breasted Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) Small numbers in the large fruiting fig trees at the camp and in other fruiting trees along the entrance track at Wild Dog.

Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula rubricera*) Fairly common in tall trees along the entrance track at Wild Dog, but none were observed to visit the fruiting fig trees near the camp.

Finsch's Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula finschii*) Two seen and several others heard calling along the entrance track at Wild Dog. The call was a drawn out repeated *wo-o-o-orm*. None were seen at the fruiting fig trees near the camp.

Black Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula melanochroa*) Fairly common visitors to the fruiting fig trees at the camp, particularly in the late afternoon when 8-10 were often present together.

Red-flanked Lorikeet (*Charmosyna placensis*) Common at Ulatawa Plantation. A small flock was also observed at Wild Dog in a flowering tree at approx. 800 metres on the track down to the site of the processing plant. Several times, individuals of this species were observed to dominate Red-chinned Lorikeets that were also feeding in the same tree.

Red-chinned Lorikeet (*Charmosyna rubrigularis*) Very common, sometimes in flocks of several hundred individuals, at Wild Dog, where they were feeding in the flowering trees.

Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) Present in small flocks at Wild Dog.

Eastern Black-capped Lory (*Lorius hypoinochrous*) Fairly common at Wild Dog.

Blue-eyed Cockatoo (*Cacatua ophthalmica*) Fairly common at Wild Dog, particularly below the altitude of the camp.

Eclectus Parrot (*Eclectus roratus*) Fairly common at Ulatawa Plantation and also at Wild Dog. This was another species that was commoner below the altitude of the camp.

Song Parrot (*Geoffroyus heteroclitus*) Fairly common around the camp, mainly in pairs.

Bronze Cuckoo Sp. *Chrysococcyx* sp. What appeared to be an immature bronze cuckoo (species uncertain) was being fed by a Yellow-bellied Sunbird in a garden in Kokopo on 30 Nov. (Shining Bronze-Cuckoo *C. lucidus* is the one known here - Editor.)

Brush Cuckoo (*Cacomantis variolosus*) Heard frequently and seen occasionally along the entrance track at Wild Dog.

Channel-billed Cuckoo (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) 2 seen along the entrance track at Wild Dog.

White-necked Coucal (*Centropus ateralbus*) Common both in the secondary forest at Ulatawa Plantation and around Wild Dog.

Violaceous Coucal (*Centropus violaceus*) A group of 3 were seen perched and sunning themselves in a tree along the entrance track at Wild Dog while a pair of White-necked Coucal foraged in the same tree. Heard calling frequently in the forest along the entrance track.

New Britain Boobook (*Ninox odiosa*) A pair that were being mobbed by a group of small birds were located in a small tree with thick foliage along the track behind the main camp on 29 Oct. One flew out and perched in a nearby *Casuarina* where its white throat could be seen distinctly.

Boobook sp. A semi-tame sub-adult of either New Britain or Bismarck Boobook (*Ninox solomonis*) regularly visited the verandah of the main house at Ulatawa Plantation, either early morning or evening, to feed on bits of meat put out by the owner. The bird had barring across its breast and belly and a yellow iris which is typical of adult Bismarck Boobooks (in adult New Britain Boobooks the iris is orange yellow and the lower chest is spotted). However, it was rather small and may have been a New Britain Boobook in immature plumage. (New Britain Boobook *Ninox odiosa* is the likely candidate as the larger Bismarck Boobook is a New Ireland endemic - Editor)

Large-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus macrurus*) Heard nightly and spot-lit on several occasions close to the living quarters at Wild Dog Mining Camp.

Glossy Swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta*) Seen in small numbers at Wild Dog.

Uniform Swiftlet (*Collocalia vanikorensis*) Fairly common at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog.

Moustached Tree-Swift (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) Several seen at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog.

White-mantled Kingfisher (*Halcyon albonotata*) A pair was seen on several occasions along the entrance road to Wild Dog. On one occasion one of them appeared to enter a tree termite nest although this could not be verified as the tree was surrounded by dense vegetation and the point of entry obscured from the road. On several occasions they successfully chased off individuals of the Collared Kingfisher (see next entry) that approached the tree, suggesting that they were defending a territory.

Collared Kingfisher (*Halcyon chloris*) Pairs of *H. c. tristrami*, the New Britain race of Collared Kingfisher which has a pale rufous-pink wash on the lower breast and belly, were seen at Ulatawa Plantation and at 750 metres along the entrance track at Wild Dog.

Blyth's Hornbill (*Rhyticeros plicatus*) Common around Wild Dog with a maximum of 12 seen together in the fruiting fig trees near the camp.

Blue-breasted Pitta (*Pitta erythrogaster*) Heard frequently and seen on one occasion in the forest near Wild Dog Mining Camp.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina papuensis*) Fairly common at Wild Dog.

Cicadabird (*Coracina tenuirostris*) Fairly common at Wild Dog and often seen visiting the fruiting fig trees near camp.

Yellow-eyed Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina lineata*) Fairly common at Wild Dog and often seen in small groups visiting the fruiting fig trees near camp

Varied Triller (*Lalage leucomela*) Common at Wild Dog

Rufous-faced Thicket Warbler (*Megalurulus rubiginosa*) This species was located by its alarm call which is a drawn out *trrrrr*, usually repeated twice, and sometimes copied by an accompanying bird. Alarm calls were heard on several occasions and one individual was seen fairly well along the track behind the camp as it hopped up on a log and then flew across the track to another patch of undergrowth on the other side. The flight was slow and heavy, somewhat reminiscent of a Tawny Grassbird.

Golden-headed Cisticola (*Cisticola exilis*) Seen in low vegetation near the golf course at Kokopo.

Bismarck Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura dahli*) Rather shy and retiring, but seen most days in the forest understorey near the camp at Wild Dog.

Northern Fantail (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) Fairly common in roadside vegetation at Wild Dog.

Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) Common at Ulatawa Plantation and seen occasionally along the entrance track at Wild Dog.

Bismarck Pied Monarch (*Monarcha verticalis*) Seen on most days, usually in pairs, in the mid canopy of the forest along the tracks around the camp at Wild Dog.

Shining Flycatcher (*Myiagra alecto*) Common at Ulatawa Plantation, including a pair with nest, but not recorded at Wild Dog

Lesser Shining Flycatcher (*Myiagra hebetior*) Fairly common at Wild Dog. Males were frequently seen flying across the tracks but the females were rather shy and elusive and it was 2 days before I got really good views of one.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) Fairly common at Wild Dog, particularly in the small casuarinas along the track behind the camp. A number of immatures were present and these were reddish brown above and a reddish buff below, although some, presumably more mature, had the breast and belly bright

female has a greenish brown back, dark grey tail and completely yellow underparts except for a greyish-white throat.

Bismarck Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum eximium*) Fairly common at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird (*Nectarinia gularis*) Fairly common at Ulatawa Plantation and in Kokopo.

Black Sunbird (*Nectarinia aspasia*) Common at Wild Dog.

Black-headed White-eye (*Zosterops hypoxantha*) Fairly common at Wild Dog.

New Britain Red-headed Honeyeater (*Myzomela erythromelas*) Very common at Wild Dog with large numbers present at some white flowering trees.

Red Honeyeater (*Myzomela cruentata*) A fairly common visitor to flowering trees at Wild Dog.

Ashy Honeyeater (*Myzomela cineracea*) Individuals identical to the photograph identified as this species in Clay (1994), were observed on several occasions at Wild Dog but were not as common as the previous 2 species. The main features of the individuals seen at Wild Dog were as follows: Bill long (almost 1.5 times head width), black and decurved; head brownish with orange on the gape and a blackish area around the eye; upperparts and wings brownish with greenish yellow edges to the flight feathers; throat and upper breast pale grey and belly pale greyish brown.

Honeyeater sp. In the patch of secondary forest at Ulatawa Plantation and at flowering trees at Wild Dog I several times saw a rather nondescript blackish grey honeyeater that I could not identify. It appeared to be larger and have a shorter bill than the previous species. It also lacked any trace of orange around the gape or greenish-yellowish edging to the flight feathers. The head was greyish-black, the back and wings were dark grey and the underparts a slightly paler grey. The bill and legs were blackish.

New Britain Friarbird (*Philemon cockerelli*) Common and vocal at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog.

Buff-bellied Mannikin (*Lonchura melaena*) A flock of 30+ was present at Hoskins airport during my stopover there on 22 Oct.

Hooded Mannikin (*Lonchura spectabilis*) A few were seen at Hoskins airport and others were seen in gardens and wasteland at Kokopo on 30 Oct.

Metallic Starling (*Aplonis metallica*) Common at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog.

Yellow-faced Myna (*Mino dumontii*) Common at Wild Dog. This New Britain race is considered by some authorities to be a distinct species. (Long-tailed Myna *M. kreffti*-Editor)

Spangled Drongo (*Dicrurus hottentotus*) Fairly common at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog.

White-backed Woodswallow (*Artamus insignis*) Pairs or singles seen on most days at Wild Dog, usually along the entrance track but once flying over the camp. Their call, was a repeated *peep...peep...peep*.

Torresian Crow (*Corvus orru*) Common at both Ulatawa Plantation and Wild Dog. It has been suggested that this race is actually attributable to the island form of the Bougainville Crow, *C. meeki* (Finch and McKean, 1987). Certainly it had a distinctive call. (An allospecies of Torresian Crow (*Corvus orru*) is more likely, the Bismarck Crow, *Corvus (o.) insularis* -Editor.)

New Ireland (31 Oct - 3 Nov)

I flew from Tokua, New Britain to Kavieng, New Ireland on 31 Oct. On route the plane stopped briefly at Namatanai and Lihir Island. At Lihir Island several individuals of an unidentified species of swiftlet which appeared larger and darker brown than Uniform Swiftlet were seen hawking low over the airfield.

Due to time restrictions, on New Ireland I only visited the lowland areas within easy reach of Kavieng. Sites visited in and around town included the golf course, the open area at the end of the airstrip, the town foreshore and a small patch of secondary forest along a track to the right, 4 km south of town that proved to be a good for Paradise Drongo. On 1-2 Nov, I hired a car and drove down the coastal road stopping at intervals, particularly where there were streams or inlets, to look for Bismarck Kingfisher and other species. Approx. 65 km south of Kavieng I spent some time on 2 Nov. in a patch of lowland rainforest at the end of a road that led to a new subdivision at the base of a low range.

Annotated list of birds seen on New Ireland

Great Frigatebird (*Fregata minor*) A male seen circling close to the shore along the east coast road on 1 Nov.

Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*) Several seen close to shore along the east coast road.

Buff-banded Rail (*Rallus philippensis*) One seen on 2 Nov. at the edge of the long grass on the open ground at the end of the airstrip.

Reef Heron (*Egretta sacra*) Several grey-phase individuals along the foreshore near town.

Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*) Fairly common

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) 3 individuals seen along the eastern coast road on 1 or 2 Nov.

Crested Tern (*Sterna bergii*) Several perched on the reef flats near town.

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) Several on the reef flats near town

Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*) Common on the reef flats and country club golf course.

Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) Common on the reef flats and the country club golf course.

Mongolian (Lesser Sand) Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) Two present on 3 Nov. on the reef flats near town.

Grey-tailed Tattler (*Tringa brevipes*) Several seen on the reef flats near town on 3 Nov.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*) Several present on the country club golf course.

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*) One seen keeping in company with 3 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers on the country club golf course on 31 Oct. The distinct demarcation between the streaked upper breast and white lower breast and belly, lack of rufous on upper breast, shorter supercilium, slightly longer bill and slightly more upright stance as compared with Sharp-tailed Sandpiper were all noted. This is possibly the first record of this species for New Ireland.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) Several seen along the reef flats around town and down the east coast road.

Brown Cuckoo-dove (*Macropygia amboinensis*) Fairly common in forested areas.

Black-billed Cuckoo-dove (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) Only one positively identified, in the secondary forest near town on 1 Nov.

Stephan's Ground-Dove (*Chalcophaps stephani*) Common and fairly tame in the secondary forest near town.

Red-knobbed Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus insolitus*) Fairly common in forested areas.

White-breasted Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus rivoli*) 2 seen in the patch of rainforest on 2 Nov.

Red-knobbed Imperial pigeon (*Ducula rubricera*) Seen in small numbers in patches of secondary forest along the east coast.

Red-flanked Lorikeet (*Charmosyna placensis*) Common in flowering trees even in the centre of Kavieng.

Eastern Black-capped Lory (*Lorius hypoinochrous*) Seen in small numbers in forested areas.

Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) Fairly common around town in flowering trees.

Song Parrot (*Geoffroyus heteroclitus*) Fairly common, with pairs seen in roadside trees in the centre of Kavieng on several occasions. (This seems to be a very odd location, maybe escapes?-Editor)

Eclectus Parrot (*Eclectus roratus*) Fairly common in both disturbed and forested habitats.

White-necked Coucal (*Centropus ateralbus*) Seen frequently in regrowth and forested areas.

Uniform Swiftlet (*Collocalia vanikorensis*) Fairly common.

Glossy Swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta*) Fairly common, with no white-rumped individuals apparent.

Moustached Tree-Swift (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) Present in small numbers in disturbed and forested areas.

Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) Seen along the reef flat near town and also along some of the estuaries down the east coast.

Collared Kingfisher (*Halcyon chloris*) Seen commonly along the coastal road and in Kavieng. The race here was fairly typical, with all white underparts and a broad white collar. It could be confused with White-mantled Kingfisher at a distance.

Beach Kingfisher (*Halcyon saurophaga*) Three individuals seen along the east coast on 1 and 2 Nov.

Blue-breasted Pitta (*Pitta erythrogaster*) Heard calling in the patch of regrowth forest near Kavieng on 1 Nov.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina papuensis*) Fairly common even in Kavieng.

Varied Triller (*Lalage leucomela*) Fairly common on the edge of forest patches.

Clamorous Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus stentoreus*) Several seen in the patches of reeds on the open ground at the end of the airport on 1 Nov.

Golden-headed Cisticola (*Cisticola exilis*) Several in the patches of reeds at the end of the airport on 1 Nov.

Northern Fantail (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) Fairly common in the forested areas.

Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) Common in open areas.

Golden Monarch (*Monarcha chrysomela*) A pair seen in the patch of lowland rainforest 60 km south of Kavieng on 2 Nov.

Shining Flycatcher (*Myiagra alecto*) Fairly common in the mangroves and patches of forest down the east coast.

Bismarck Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum eximium*) Common in the forested and re-growth areas.

Black Sunbird (*Nectarinia aspasia*) Common.

Black-headed White-eye (*Zosterops hypoxantha*) Fairly common in forested and rear-growth areas.

Red Honeyeater (*Myzomela cruenta*) 2 seen in the patch of re-growth forest near Kavieng on 1 Nov.

Hunstein's Mannikin (*Lonchura hunsteini*) Present every morning with the next species in mixed feeding flocks, the largest 300+, in the open area at the end of the airport. Small numbers, some collecting nesting material, were also present on the country club golf course on 31 Oct.

New Ireland (Forbes') Mannikin (*Lonchura forbesi*) Present in mixed flocks with Hunstein's Mannikin in the open area at the end of airport.

Singing Starling (*Aplonis cantoroides*) Common

Metallic Starling (*Aplonis metallica*) Fairly common

Yellow-faced Myna (*Mino dumontii*) Fairly common in patches of forest and re-growth. As indicated earlier this is considered to be a separate species by some authorities.

New Ireland (Paradise) Drongo (*Dicrurus megarhynchus*) Fairly common in the secondary forest 4 km south of Kavieng where it was first seen on 31 Oct. Also seen in the patch of rain forest further south on 2 Nov.

Torresian Crow (*Corvus orru*) Fairly common.

Manus and Tong Island (3 Nov - 7 Nov)

I arrived in Manus on 3 Nov and arranged for Aaron Joseph who lives in Rossun Village to act as a guide during my stay. I stayed at the Lorengau Resort Hotel in the main town of Lorengau and birded along the main road that runs towards Rossun and along the forest trails around the waterfall. On the 5 Nov I hired a boat from the hotel and made the 2 hour trip to Tong Island, departing Lorengau at 7.30 am and returning at 2.00 pm. That evening was spent spotlighting along the road between Lorengau and Rossun Village, where I stayed the night. Early next morning we walked from Rossun down to the river and took a small outrigger canoe downstream to where the river opened into a wide mangrove fringed lagoon.

Annotated list of birds seen on Manus and Tong Island

Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata aerialis*) Several seen close in to shore near the hotel on Manus.

Reef Heron (*Egretta sacra*) (3 forms) Both grey and white forms were seen on the reef flats near the town. An individual of the intermediate form (with dark grey and white mottling on the back, lower breast and belly and a blackish stripe down each wing) flew alongside the boat as we departed from the lagoon on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Rufous Night-Heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) Two individuals seen in the mangroves by the lagoon on Manus on 6 Nov.

Striated Heron (*Ardeola striata*) One individual seen flying along the edge of the lagoon on Manus on 6 Nov.

Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*) Fairly common

Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) One dark phase individual was seen from the boat on the way back from Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Crested Tern (*Sterna bergii*) Common along the shore on Manus.

Lesser Crested Tern (*Sterna bengalensis*) Several seen on the way to Tong Island on 5 Nov. (A noteworthy record as this species has not previously been recorded here-Editor.)

White-capped Noddy (*Anous minutus*) Fairly common on the way to Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Common Noddy (*Anous stolidus*) Several seen on the way to Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Black-naped Tern (*Sterna sumatrana*) Several seen on the way to Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Variable Goshawk (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) On two occasions at Rossun village I saw an Accipiter which was presumably the Admiralty Island race of Variable Goshawk (*A. n. manusi*), the only *Accipiter* species reported from Manus in Coates (1990). It was medium size with a pale grey head that appeared to have a slightly buffish pink tinge, a medium grey back and darker slaty-grey flight feathers. The underside was a pale rufous-pink colour, which extended around the side of the neck. The iris appeared black and the eyes had rather a staring appearance. The bill was black with a deep yellow cere and the legs were orange-yellow. The end of its tail appeared to be slightly forked as occurs in Collared Sparrowhawk (*A. cirrocephalus*).

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) Several seen at the airport prior to my departure on 7 Nov.

Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*) Several seen along the foreshore near the hotel.

Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) Common at the airport and along the foreshore near the hotel.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*) Several were feeding on open grassy areas near the airport on 7 Nov.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) Two seen in the mangroves around the lagoon on Manus on 6 Nov.

Brown Cuckoo-dove (*Macropygia amboinensis*) Fairly common in the forested areas around the waterfall.

Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove (*Macropygia mackinlayi*) One perched individual seen well on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Stephan's Ground-Dove (*Chalcophaps stephani*) Two seen near the waterfall on 4 Nov.

Claret-breasted Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus viridis*) Pairs seen on several occasions either along the road to Rossun or the waterfall track.

Superb Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus superbus*) Two seen along the river near Rossun Village on 6 Nov.

Yellow-bibbed Fruit-Dove (*Ptilinopus solomonensis*) A pair seen feeding in a low tree on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Grey Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula pistrinaria*) Common on Tong Island on 5 Nov. A few also seen flying over the waterfall track on Manus in the late afternoon on 4 Nov.

Eastern Black-capped Lory (*Lorius hypoinochrous*) Pairs seen flying over the waterfall track on 4 and 7 Nov.

Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) Fairly common around Rossun and the waterfall.

Meek's Pygmy Parrot (*Micropsitta meeki*) Fly-overs seen fairly frequently along the waterfall track and the Rossun Road and occasionally in Lorengau. One pair was seen at the entrance hole to what was presumably a nest in a tree termite mound on the trunk of a small tree about 3 metres from the ground, along the track above the waterfall. Pairs were also seen feeding on the trunks of a forest tree and a coconut palm along the river on 6 Nov.

Eclectus Parrot (*Eclectus roratus*) A few individuals seen flying over the track near the waterfall.

White-rumped Swiftlet (*Collocalia spodiopygia*) Fairly common along the waterfall track and some other areas.

Glossy Swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta*) The white-rumped form was fairly common along the waterfall track.

Swiftlet (*Collocalia* sp.) A number of large sooty brown swiftlets with greyish whitish rumps suffused with brown were observed along the waterfall track on 4 and 7 Nov. Hicks (1992) observed similar swiftlets on Manus and suggested that they might be the little known *leletensis* race of **Whitehead's Swiftlet** (*C. whiteheadi*) that had been recorded from New Ireland. More recently (Chantler & Dreissens, 1995), this taxon has been separated as a race of **Mayr's Swiftlet** (*C. orientalis*). I am not sure which species the specimens I saw on Manus belonged to, but they differed from those seen on Lihir Island by having a whitish rump. In this respect they more closely fitted the description of *C. o. leletensis*, although the bluish gloss back colouring reported for that race was not evident. (Much confusion exists with swiftlets on Manus, and again as with Hicks (1992) the observer does not record the local form of Uniform Swiftlet *C. vanikorensis*- Editor.)

Moustached Tree-Swift (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) Small numbers seen along the road to Rossun.

Brush Cuckoo (*Cacomantis variolosus*) Several seen on Manus, including a juvenile that was being fed by a Yellow-bellied Sunbird.

Oriental Cuckoo (*Cuculus saturatus*) One seen well on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Manus Boobook (*Ninox meeki*) Two spot-lighted on the evening of the 5 Nov; one in a tree near the church at Rossun Village and one about a kilometre back along the road towards town. Several others were heard calling around Rossun Village and along the road into town during my stay.

Dwarf Kingfisher (*Alcedo lepida*) One individual of the distinctive red-billed Manus race (*A. l. sacerdotis*) was seen along the river above the waterfall on 7 Nov.

Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) Several, including a displaying pair seen in the mangroves around the lagoon on 6 Nov.

Beach Kingfisher (*Halcyon saurophaga*) One seen on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Superb Pitta (*Pitta superba*) Excellent views of a calling bird were obtained in the forest near the start of the waterfall track on 4 Nov. and another was heard in the same location on the 7 Nov.

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina papuensis*) Fairly common in roadside trees.

Cicadabird (*Coracina tenuirostris*) One seen near Rossun village. This appeared to be more rufous in colour and smaller than females of the mainland race.

Manus Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura semirubra*) Fairly common and confiding on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Northern Fantail (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) Seen occasionally near the waterfall.

Island Monarch (*Monarcha cinerascens*) Two seen on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Admiralty Pied Monarch (*Monarcha infelix*) Seen on several occasions, almost always in pairs, around the waterfall (4 Nov), along the road to Rossun (7 Nov) and the walk down to the river (6 Nov). The song had a high pitched almost ethereal quality.

Shining Flycatcher (*Myiagra alecto*) Seen near the waterfall and in the mangroves along the edge of the lagoon.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*) Seen several times in the forest above the waterfall and along the Rossun road.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird (*Nectarinia jugularis*) Fairly common.

Bismarck Black Myzomela (*Myzomela pammelaena*) Very common on Tong Island on 5 Nov.

Black-headed White-eye (*Zosterops hypoxantha*) Fairly common near the waterfall on 4 and 7 Nov. The individuals on Manus appeared to have a narrower eye-ring than the Bismarck form.

Manus Friarbird (*Philemon albitorques*) Common and vocal in all areas visited. A nest in a breadfruit tree at Rossun village was basket shaped and located in an outer fork of a branch 5 metres from the ground.

Singing Starling (*Aplonis cantoroides*) Common.

Metallic Starling (*Aplonis metallica*) Common.

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Author's Address: 11 Boronia Avenue, Woy Woy, NSW 2256, Australia.
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Birds reported on Tingwon Island, New Ireland 18-20 May 1999

By Adam & Matthew Leavesley

The Tingwon Island group consists of three islands, Tingwon, Kolenusa and Beligila, surrounded by a large reef about 35 km south west of New Hanover. Tingwon is the main island and the only one with permanent inhabitants and gardens. Part of the interior land area is mangrove swamp. The other two islands are smaller and entirely sandy. Total land area is no more than 6 square km and nowhere does the height above sea level exceed 1m.

The quickest way to reach Tingwon is to charter a banana boat from Kavieng, the journey will take 4-5 hours one way and will cost close to K200. If you're not in a rush and also visiting New Hanover, it is best to go via Umbukul. Seats to Umbukul are K5-K10 (3-4 hours), and there is plenty of guesthouse accommodation. From Umbukul it may be possible to get a seat in the Tingwon community boat. Phone Tingwon and speak to the ward member to check. A charter boat from Umbukul to Tingwon costs K100 (1-2 hours). Benzene supplies on Tingwon can run out. If this happens arrange a charter from Umbukul to pick you up. We had accommodation arranged but the ward member also invited us to stay with him.

We visited Tingwon from 18-20 May, outside Nicobar Pigeon breeding time, after any northern waders should have left but Austral migrants should have arrived. The timing was not planned with birding in mind. We were taking a break from our four month archaeological exploration of New Hanover.

The main attraction was to see the Nicobar Pigeon breeding habitat and any birds still around. Breeding takes place between November and February. The Nicobar Pigeon is listed as "near threatened" by Birdlife International. People from Tingwon say the birds are very abundant during breeding and lots are eaten at this time. We also hoped to see the Beach Stone-curlew and sea birds on the passage to and from New Hanover.

Most of the birds on the island are relatively tame and easy to see. Nicobar Pigeon (in small numbers), Stephan's Ground-Dove and the Melanesian Scrubfowl forage through the main village during the day. The villagers feed the Nicobar Pigeons. Bismarck Black Myzomela, Rainbow Lorikeets, Golden Whistlers (We're not sure which species) and Yellow-bibbed Fruit-Doves can be seen in the villages, and Island Monarch in the nearby gardens. Beach Kingfishers are vocal and easy to see along the beachfront trees.

A real treat on Tingwon are the big birds of prey. Close to the main village are Osprey and White-bellied Sea-Eagle nests and there is at least one other Osprey nest nearby. A juvenile sea-eagle was seen. Hunting birds especially Osprey, are a constant presence over the reef.

The main Nicobar Pigeon breeding site is reportedly on Beligila Island, the furthest from the main island. The pigeons were harder to find there, than on the main island. There was also less diversity on the two smaller islands possibly because there was no gardening and no mangroves. Scrubfowl were abundant and Rainbow Lorikeets, possibly as many as 100 used Beligila to roost after feeding on Tingwon during the day.

Early morning exploration of Tingwon revealed a number of shyer species including a Black Bittern, Buff-banded Rail and several Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove. Around mid-morning three Beach Stone-curlews were seen on a small beach on a vegetated rock, facing the main village. They were very touchy, flying off as soon as I stepped on the island even though they were 50m away.

The passages between New Hanover and Tingwon was notable for the presence of two solitary Streaked Shearwaters, a group of three Flesh-footed Shearwaters heading north and a group of 15-20 Masked Boobies about half of which were juvenile. Common Terns, and both Black and Brown Noddies were common in mixed groups close to Tingwon and New Hanover.

Trip Bird List

Streaked Shearwater - *Calonectris leucomelas*

2 solitary birds seen between New Hanover and Tingwon (see next trip report).

Flesh-footed Shearwater - *Puffinus carneipes*

A group of three seen between New Hanover and Tingwon (see next trip report).

Masked Booby - *Sula dactylatra*

Between New Hanover and Tingwon (see next trip report).

Eastern Reef Egret - *Egretta sancta*

Several scattered about the reef.

Black Bittern - *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

One bird seen in forest on the main island.

Buff-banded Rail - *Rallus philippensis*

Two birds seen near the old airstrip.

Osprey - *Pandion haliaetus*

Conspicuous and vocal at nest and over the reef.

White-bellied Sea-Eagle - *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Conspicuous and vocal at nest and over the reef, one juvenile seen.