

in southern New Ireland in April 1984, and there have been a few records in the 1990's from the hill forests near Hauta on Makira, Solomon Islands. Subsequent to this sighting at Wild Dog, another Yellow-legged Pigeon was seen by Hank Kaestner in 1997 in hill forest inland from Rabaul, which suggest the continued presence of a small population in this region. I am not aware of any other recent records.

Several of the recent sightings have been of birds seen flying low down, which suggests the birds may be feeding on the ground. Birders in the Bismarcks should keep an eye out for this species as so little is known about it and it may be being overlooked.

References

Finch B. W. and McKean J. L. 1987. Some Notes on the Birds of the Bismarcks. *Muruk* 2:1, 3-28.
Goodwin, D 1970. *Pigeons and Doves of the World*. British Museum (Natural History).

Golden Monarch (*Monarcha chrysomela*) at Wild Dog, East New Britain

By Phil Gregory

During my visit to Wild Dog mining camp on 15 December 1995, I was watching a feeding flock of Golden Whistlers (*Pachycephala pectoralis*), Spangled Drongos (*Dicrurus hottentus*) and Bismarck Pied Monarchs (*Monarcha verticalis*), when I had good views of a female or immature plumaged Golden Monarch (*Monarcha chrysomela*). The small size, bright yellow underparts and the obvious pale mark below and in front of the eye were distinctive. The bird was on the edge of the forest at an altitude of about 900m.

The species is common on New Ireland and some of its satellite islands, but is previously unrecorded from New Britain. Perhaps there is a very localised population in the hill forest near Rabaul, or it was simply a wanderer? I publish the record to encourage others to look out for the species here.

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Documentation of Rare Birds in PNG

The PNG Bird Society recently decided that it would be desirable to formalize the process by which new species or major rarities are included in the avifauna of PNG. This has in the past been largely an *ad hoc* process, but it is desirable to bring it into line with many other countries, which have set up a small committee to vet records and establish a procedure for formal acceptance. This also facilitates the establishing of an archive of documentation, without which we run the risk of losing records or having a very random process of acceptance. We have followed the established rarity form template used by the Birds Australia Rarities Committee, whom we thank for permission to adapt the form now available.

We aim to be as transparent as possible with the process, it should be a simple matter to write up the sighting and let the committee vote on acceptance or otherwise.

We are happy to give reasons for acceptance or non-acceptance to the persons involved, and to publish details of additions to the avifauna, of which there is now something of a backlog.

The following have kindly agreed to form the initial committee, but expressions of interest from suitable persons who wish to be involved are also of interest.

K. David Bishop: One of the top PNG bird experts, a professional tour leader with vast experience there and with great knowledge of the avifauna.

Ian Burrows: Former professor of Biology at UPNG, with much experience of the country and its birds.

Brian Coates: Another of the top PNG bird experts, Brian is the author of the classic 2 volume standard avifauna *The Birds of PNG*.

Chris Eastwood: Experienced birder and longtime PNG resident, author of numerous notes and papers about his bird trips there.

Phil Gregory: Editor of *Muruk* and professional bird trip leader with much PNG experience, longtime resident of Tabubil in Western Province. Interim Secretary of PNGBS Rare Birds Committee, from whom rarity forms are available.

Please forward all correspondence and records to:

Secretary, PNGBS Rarities Committee, P. O. Box 387, Kuranda, Queensland 4872.

E-mail : sicklebill@internetnorth.com.au

Provisional list of requested species for which the committee would like to receive details:

- Any species not yet formally accepted onto the PNG list (see Beehler 1985 and Coates 1986 and 1990)
- Any species with less than 5 recorded occurrences, or which is not recorded annually in PNG territory or territorial waters.
- Rarely reported and very little known resident species.

Rare Species already recorded, or claimed * and pending possible acceptance (c)

Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>
* Kermadec Petrel	<i>Pterodroma neglecta</i> (c)
Beck's Petrel	<i>Pterodroma becki</i>
Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>
Bulwer's Petrel	<i>Bulweria bulwerii</i>
Flesh-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus carneipes</i>
* Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i> (c)
Short-tailed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus tenuirostris</i>
* Hutton's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus huttoni</i> (c)
Heinroth's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus heinrothi</i>
* Audubon's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus l'herminieri</i> (c)
* Christmas Shearwater	<i>Puffinus nativitatis</i> (c)
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>
White-bellied Storm-Petrel	<i>Fregetta grallaria</i>