

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)

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| 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> |

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| Red-tailed Tropicbird | <i>Phaethon rubricauda</i> |
| Great Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> |
| Pied Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax varius</i> |
| Pacific Heron | <i>Ardea pacifica</i> |
| * Javan Pond Heron | <i>Ardeola speciosa</i> (c) |
| Yellow Bittern | <i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i> (away from Bougainville) |
| Black-backed Little Bittern | <i>Ixobrychus minutus</i> |
| * Von Schrenk's Bittern | <i>Ixobrychus eurhythmos</i> (c) |
| * Yellow-billed Spoonbill | <i>Platalea flavipes</i> (c) |
| Imitator Sparrowhawk | <i>Accipiter imitator</i> |
| New Britain Grey-headed Goshawk | <i>Accipiter princeps</i> |
| New Britain Sparrowhawk | <i>Accipiter brachyura</i> |
| Slay-backed Goshawk | <i>Accipiter luteoschistaceus</i> |
| Chestnut-shouldered Goshawk | <i>Accipiter buergeri</i> |
| * Grey-faced Buzzard | <i>Butastur indicus</i> (c) |
| * Grey Falcon | <i>Falco hypoleucos</i> (c) |
| Plumed Whistling-Duck | <i>Dendrocygna eytoni</i> |
| Eurasian Wigeon | <i>Anas penelope</i> |
| * Tufted Duck | <i>Aythya fuligula</i> (c) |
| * Chestnut Teal | <i>Anas castanea</i> (c) |
| Northern Shoveler | <i>Anas clypeata</i> |
| Pintail | <i>Anas acuta</i> |
| Australian White-eyed Duck | <i>Aythya australis</i> |
| Australian Wood Duck | <i>Chenonetta jubata</i> |
| King Quail | <i>Coturnix chinensis</i> (Bismarcks only) |
| Red-backed Buttonquail | <i>Turnix maculosa</i> (Bismarcks only) |
| Pink-legged Rail | <i>Rallus insignis</i> |
| Lewin's Rail | <i>Rallus pectoralis</i> |
| Red-necked Rail | <i>Rallina iricolor</i> (New Ireland) |
| Mayr's Forest-Rail | <i>Rallina mayri</i> |
| Bare-eyed Rail | <i>Gymnocrex plumbeiventris</i> (New Ireland) |
| Woodford's Rail | <i>Nesoclopeus woodfordi</i> |
| New Guinea Flightless Rail | <i>Megacrex inepta</i> |
| Coot | <i>Fulica atra</i> |
| Pied Oystercatcher | <i>Haematopus longirostris</i> |
| * American Golden Plover | <i>Pluvialis dominica</i> (c) |
| * Ringed Plover | <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (c) |
| Red-kneed Dotterel | <i>Erythrogonys cinctus</i> |
| Common Redshank | <i>Tringa totanus</i> |
| * Green Sandpiper | <i>Tringa ochropus</i> (c) |
| * Pin-tailed Snipe | <i>Gallinago stenura</i> (c) |
| Asian Dowitcher | <i>Limnodromus semipalmatus</i> |
| Long-billed Dowitcher | <i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i> |
| Great Knot | <i>Calidris tenuirostris</i> |
| Red Knot | <i>Calidris canutus</i> |
| Pectoral Sandpiper | <i>Calidris melanotos</i> |
| Little Stint | <i>Calidris minuta</i> |
| Long-toed Stint | <i>Calidris subminuta</i> |
| Baird's Sandpiper | <i>Calidris bairdii</i> |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | <i>Calidris subruficollis</i> |

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| Broad-billed Sandpiper | <i>Limicola falcinellus</i> |
| Ruff | <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> |
| * Subantarctic Skua (Brown Skua) | <i>Catharacta lonnbergi</i> (c) |
| Long-tailed Skua | <i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i> |
| Silver Gull | <i>Larus novaehollandiae</i> |
| Black-headed Gull | <i>Larus ridibundus</i> |
| Black Tern | <i>Chlidonias niger</i> |
| Grey-backed Tern | <i>Sterna lunata</i> |
| Caspian Tern | <i>Sterna caspia</i> |
| Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove | <i>Ptilinopus regina</i> |
| Yellow-legged Pigeon | <i>Columba pallidiceps</i> |
| Pallid Cuckoo | <i>Cuculus pallidus</i> |
| Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo | <i>Chrysococcyx basalis</i> |
| Long-tailed Koel | <i>Eudynamis taitensis</i> |
| Golden Owl | <i>Tyto aurantia</i> |
| Manus Masked Owl | <i>Tyto manusi</i> |
| Masked Owl | <i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i> |
| Papuan Hawk Owl | <i>Uroglaux dimorpha</i> |
| Fearful Owl | <i>Nesasio solomonensis</i> |
| * Tawny Frogmouth | <i>Podargus strigoides</i> (c) |
| Wallace's Owlet-nightjar | <i>Aegotheles wallacii</i> |
| Archbold's Owlet-nightjar | <i>Aegotheles archboldi</i> |
| * Spotted Nightjar | <i>Eurostopodus argus</i> (c) |
| Mayr's Swiftlet (Whitehead's) | <i>Collocalia mayri</i> (whiteheadi) |
| Three-toed Swiftlet | <i>Collocalia papuensis</i> |
| Bismarck Kingfisher | <i>Ceyx websteri</i> |
| Blue-black Kingfisher | <i>Halcyon nigrocyanea</i> |
| Moustached Kingfisher | <i>Halcyon bougainvillei</i> |
| Noisy Pitta | <i>Pitta erythrogaster</i> (away from Trans-Fly) |
| Masked Pitta | <i>Pitta anerythra</i> |
| Sand Martin | <i>Riparia riparia</i> |
| Welcome Swallow | <i>Hirundo neoxena</i> |
| Red-rumped / Striated Swallow | <i>Hirundo daurica / striolata</i> |
| Fairy Martin | <i>Hirundo ariel</i> |
| Brown Shrike | <i>Lanius cristatus</i> |
| Russet-tailed (Scaly) Thrush | <i>Zoothera heinei</i> |
| Black-backed Ground-Thrush | <i>Zoothera talasea</i> |
| Island Thrush | <i>Turdus poliocephalus</i> (New Britain) |
| Siberian Rubythroat | <i>Erithacus calliope</i> |
| Blue Rock Thrush | <i>Monticola solitarius</i> |
| * Papuan Whipbird | <i>Andropobus viridis</i> (c) |
| Gray's Grasshopper Warbler | <i>Locustella fasciolata</i> |
| Eastern Great Reed Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus orientalis</i> |
| Arctic Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus borealis</i> |
| Grosvenor's Thicket-warbler | <i>Megalurulus grosvenori</i> |
| Bougainville Thicket-warbler | <i>Megalurulus llanae</i> |
| Bicoloured Mouse-warbler | <i>Crateroscelis nigrorufa</i> |
| Grey-streaked Flycatcher | <i>Muscicapa griseisticta</i> |
| Manus Rufous Fantail | <i>Rhipidura semirubra</i> (Away from Tong Is) |
| Rufous Monarch | <i>Monarcha rubiensis</i> |

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| Broad-billed Fairywren | <i>Malurus grayi</i> |
| Green-backed Robin | <i>Pachycephalopsis hattamensis</i> |
| Torrent Flycatcher | <i>Monachella muelleriana</i> (New Britain) |
| Sooty Whistler | <i>Pachycephala tenebrosa</i> |
| Tagula White-eye | <i>Zosterops meeki</i> |
| Tagula Meliphaga | <i>Meliphaga vicina</i> |
| * Rufous-sided Honeyeater | <i>Ptiloprora erythropleura</i> (c) |
| Mayr's Streaked Honeyeater | <i>Ptiloprora mayri</i> |
| New Ireland Friarbird | <i>Philemon eichorni</i> |
| * Short-bearded Melidectes | <i>Melidectes nouhuysi</i> (c) |
| Obscure Berrypecker | <i>Melanocharis arfakiana</i> (away from Tabubil) |
| Black-faced Woodswallow | <i>Artamus cinereus</i> |
| Black Mannikin | <i>Lonchura stygia</i> |
| Western Alpine Mannikin | <i>Lonchura montana</i> |
| White-eyed Starling | <i>Aplonis brunneocapillus</i> |
| Common Starling | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> |
| Common (Indian) Myna | <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> (away from Bougainville) |
| Olive-backed Oriole | <i>Oriolus sagittatus</i> |
| Tagula Butcherbird | <i>Cracticus louisianensis</i> |
| Fire-maned Bowerbird | <i>Sericulus bakeri</i> |
| Yellow-breasted Bird of Paradise | <i>Loboparadisaea sericea</i> |
| Pale-billed Sickiebill | <i>Epimachus bruijnii</i> |

PNG Bird Society Newsletters Now available on CD

I have recently scanned the newsletters of the Papua New Guinea Bird Society into Microsoft Word 97. This covers all newsletters, from the first (not surprisingly issue no. 1) which was issued in December 1965 to the last newsletter, issue no. 291, which was issued in December 1997. Included with the newsletters are at least 90% of all the illustrations and diagrams that were produced (the only exceptions have been certain illustrations which have been too faint to scan properly or which were repetitive and a few that were unrelated to PNG birds). A handful of articles, not relating to birds, have similarly not been reproduced. Some of the illustrations and diagrams have had to be retouched to improve reproduction.

In scanning the newsletters, I have tried to be faithful to the original style and appearance of the newsletters although for convenience I have adopted a standard font (Times New Roman) and have reproduced everything in A4 format (in contrast to the earlier newsletters which were on foolscap). This has meant, inevitably, that the pagination of the Word 97 version is not the same as the originals.

By and large, I have also tried to be faithful to the exact text of the originals but, with the benefit of modern technology (and spellcheckers), I have corrected minor typographical errors. I have also "corrected" the spelling of Latin and place names where these varied from current practice so as to allow for easier searches. I have not, however, corrected the English and Latin names of birds, even though many of these have since changed. This does mean that if someone wishes to search for all references to a particular species, they will have to use a variety of alternative names.

I have also prepared a list of contents covering all the newsletters (by reference to the issue number only, not the specific pages) and have drawn up an index (based on the list of contents).

A copy of all these files can be saved on to a CD for anyone who is interested. A floppy disc copy is not feasible as some of the files are too large. If you would like to receive a copy please send me A\$20 to cover the cost of a CD and airmail postage. My address is PO Box 484, Port Moresby. If you would like further information you can e-mail me on chbe@daltron.com.pg

Chris Eastwood

References

- Beehler, B. M. and Finch, B. W. (1985). *Species-Checklist of the Birds of Papua New Guinea*. Australian Ornithological Monographs Number 1, RAOU.
 Gregory P., 1995. Speculation: Additions to the Avifauna of PNG. *Muruk* 7: 3 123-126.

Potential additions to the list are Red-necked Avocet (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*), seen just over the West Irian border at Wasur (Neil Bostock *pers comm*), whilst Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) has been recorded nearby from Merauke.

PNGBS Newsletter

The Society is regrettably no longer able to publish a Newsletter, ending a tradition that began back in 1965, due to the lack of in-country observers. The final issue was Number 291.

Fortunately however, Meg Cameron, the editor of *Australian Birding Magazine*, is keen to have a Papua New Guinea link and publishes a useful round-up of PNG news in each issue. It also often has articles of interest about birding in Papua New Guinea. The magazine is published 4 times a year with subscriptions costing A\$30 within Australia, or US\$ 30 / GBP 15 if overseas airmail. They may be obtained from Andrew Isles Natural History Books, 113-115 Greville St, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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