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| <p>28. Sooty Melidectes (<i>Melidectes fuscus</i>) seen on 3 days (1,2,4), up to 1 bird</p> <p>29. Common Smokey Honeyeater (<i>Melidectes fumigatus</i>) seen on 3 days (1), up to 2 birds</p> <p>30. Crested Bird of Paradise (<i>Cnemophilus loriae</i>) seen on 1 day (1), 5 birds</p> <p>31. Ribbon-tailed Astrapia (<i>Astrapia mayeri</i>) seen on 3 days (1), up to 3 birds</p> <p>32. Brown Sicklebill (<i>Epimachus fastuosus</i>) heard on 1 day from (1), 1 bird calling below (1)</p> |
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Eurasian Tree Sparrows (*Passer montanus*) in PNG

by Phil Gregory

Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*) is known from West Papua with records from Biak, and now seemingly newly but well-established in urban centres such as Sorong and Jayapura as well as some villages, but there have been no published Papua New Guinea records to date.

In April 2007 I was in Walindi on New Britain, and following a tip-off from a local about some sparrows in Kimbe town, I went to check the sparrows in the industrial area. I found some half dozen Eurasian Tree Sparrows flitting about by a paint warehouse, and carrying nest material. I returned in June 2007 and again saw the birds at this site, where they seem well-established.

In April 2009 I visited Ela Beach in Port Moresby and during a cursory glance at some sparrows on a fence by the container port we were amazed to see 4 Eurasian Tree Sparrows. The chestnut cap, white cheeks and black ear covert spot was diagnostic, the birds must hitch rides on the container ships, and being a common Asian urban bird it is not surprising that they have eventually found their way to PNG. As far as I am aware this is the first mainland PNG sighting, but I wonder how long they have been here?

Introduced species in New Guinea are remarkably few, with the two *Passer* species and some doubtfully established urban populations of Feral Pigeons (*Columba livia*). However racing or domestic pigeons are common as pets in PNG and I am not convinced that any of the sparse urban pigeons of Port Moresby, Madang or Mt. Hagen are genuinely established. Birds at Lorengau on Manus may however be really feral. The only other introduced species was Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) on Bougainville, where they seem to have now died out.

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