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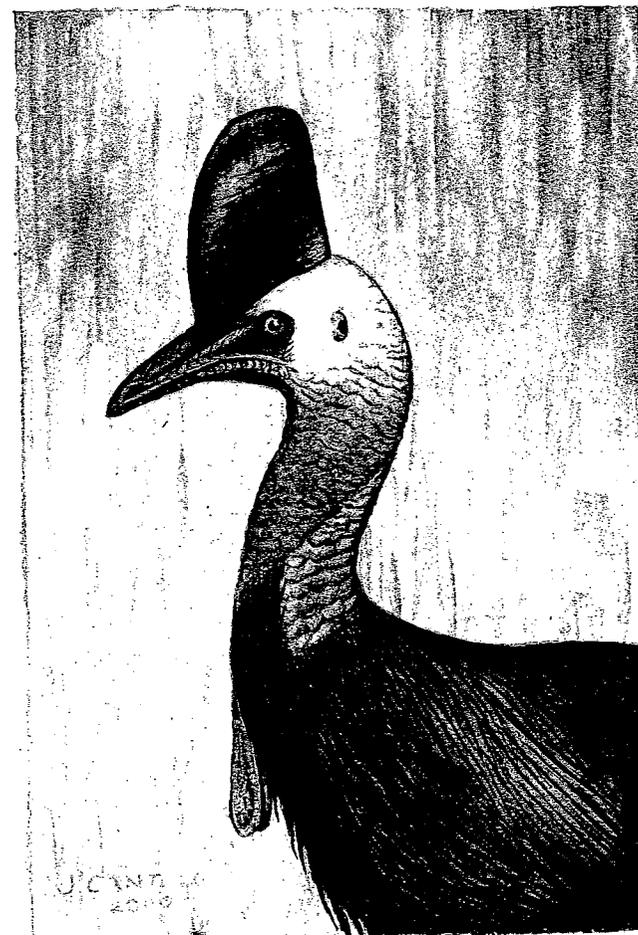
### Documentation of Rare Birds in PNG

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# MURUK



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THE JOURNAL OF THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA BIRD SOCIETY

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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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Cover: Southern Cassowary by John Cantelo

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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

**Brush Cuckoo** *Cacomantis variolosus*. Heard in the vicinity of Galuwala.

**Swiftlet** *Collocalia* sp. Solid grey swiftlets were flying in the company of Glossy Swiftlets over the grasslands above Galuwala, 600 to 1000 m.

**Glossy Swiftlet** *Collocalia esculenta*. With the above species.

**Rainbow Bee-eater** *Merops ornatus*. On 8 August, 4 were seen gliding up the valley below Galuwala; and on 9 August, individuals were gliding over the boulder-strewn grassland track leading upward from the village. The species has apparently not been recorded from Goodenough previously.

**Blyth's Hornbill** *Rhyticeros plicatus*. A pair of hornbills was seen over the trail above Galuwala.

**Island Thrush** *Turdus poliocephalus*. A large-headed forest ground bird of the correct size and shape for this species was described as rufous below with black scaling on the breast and head sooty. We believe it was an immature individual of this species.

**Northern Fantail** *Rhipidura rufiventris*. Common and confiding in the forest.

**Sclater's Whistler** *Pachycephala soror*. Seen in the forest.

**Grey Whistler** *Pachycephala simplex*. This plain bird with its distinctive whitish forehead and eye-stripe, and dark line through the eye was regularly seen in the forest.

**Little Shrike-thrush** *Colluricincla megarhynchus*. This species was very common in the forest, heard more often than seen.

**Black Sunbird** *Nectarinia aspasia*. Seen at Galuwala feeding in coconut blossoms.

**Dwarf Honeyeater** *Oedistoma iliolophus*. Frequently netted in the forest. Gleaning for insects, its movements were very rapid as it leaned far over a limb, searching the underside, and hopping up the vertical trunk of a small tree, feeding as it went.

**Red-collared Myzomela** *Myzomela rosenbergii*. This was a very common species of the forest and frequently netted. Five females and immature males were collected and the plumages will be reported elsewhere (LeCroy and Peckover, ms).

**Puff-backed Meliphaga** *Meliphaga aruensis*. This species was netted.

**Tawny-breasted Honeyeater** *Xanthotis flaviventer*. This was a common species of the forest.

**Spangled Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*. Commonly seen and heard in the forest.

**Hooded Butcherbird** *Cracticus cassicus*. Surprisingly difficult to see, but its loud ringing calls were a feature of the forest. Birds recorded duetting.

**Curl-crested Manucode** *Manucodia comrii*. Much time was spent observing this species, mostly as groups of individuals came throughout the day to feed in the forest tree with small yellow fruits. It was a very common bird, and its bubbling and echoing calls were a dominant feature of the forest sounds. Sometimes the birds were in pairs but usually were in flocks of 6 - 10 individuals, charging and chasing through the trees. This is in contrast to Bell's (1970) observations made in the latter part of October, when most of his records of this species were of pairs. Our observations of birds of this species carrying nesting material on 12 and 13 November 1978 on Normanby Island supports a breeding season later in the year.

Several different calls were noted. The common bubbling call that echoes throughout the forest seems to be a contact call, given as the small flocks move together through the forest, but sometimes with individuals widely separated. It is one of the first calls heard in the morning, just as the sky begins to show light, and it is one of the last calls heard in the evening, becoming fainter and fainter as the light fades.

Males of this species are larger and have more ornately crinkled plumage than females, and once a presumed male gave the bubbling call when directly overhead. His wings were held out from the body but were closed, and his breast swelled, inflating the coiled trachea just before the call began. The bubbling then occurred as the air was released.

A second common call we termed "clacking." This is a peculiar low sound heard only when a small flock was nearby and moving as a group and it may be a flock cohesion call. Several times we heard a long trill, more continuous and less "bubbling" than the common call.

The sitting posture of the species is peculiar. It sits like a chicken with its extravagant tail cocked up and constantly flicked. The body is held horizontal as it perches across the limb.

The birds were not engaged in courtship at the time of our visit, but two observations might be courtship-related. Once when a pair was feeding, the larger, presumed male, followed the other bird up a sloping limb and then perched on a small limb just above. It then leaned over until he was almost touching the other bird and twice gave a low version of the bubbling call, fanning the wings out and down as he did so and shaking them slightly. Then the pair flew away.

Another time when a flock of 6 were moving through the treetops, at least one was giving a low "clack." When it was seen to give this call, it had its wings out like a young bird begging and was vibrating them slightly, but it did not appear to be young.

In addition to the above observations on Goodenough, one of us (ML) has briefly visited Wagifa Island, off the south-eastern tip of Goodenough, 4 times in late January to early March, as a lecturer on AMNH Discovery Tours.

The following species were noted on Wagifa:

**Crested Tern** *Sterna bergii*

**Pied Imperial Pigeon** *Ducula bicolor*

**Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** *Cacatua triton*

**Eclectus Parrot** *Eclectus roratus*

**Channel-billed Cuckoo** *Scythrops novaehollandiae*. A tail feather of this species was worn in the hair of one of the dancers on the coast of Goodenough.

**Pheasant Coucal** *Centropus phasianinus*

**Uniform Swiftlet** *Collocalia vanikorensis*

**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*

#### Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Mal Smith, Pacific Helicopters for transporting us to and from Goodenough and Jan Barter, Melanesian Tours for the opportunity to visit Wagifa. Ann and Beresford Love, Port Moresby, provided friendship and assistance, for which we are most grateful.

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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. krefftii*-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.

#### Acknowledgments

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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.

**Brahminy Kite - *Haliastur indus***

One bird seen.

**Melanesian Scrubfowl - *Megapodius eremita***

Abundant in villages, scrub and forest.

**Pacific Golden Plover - *Pluvialis fulva***

One non-breeding bird in a fallow garden.

**Beach Stone-curlew - *Burhinus grallarius***

Three birds on a small beach close to the main village.

**Crested Tern - *Sterna bergii***

Group of about 20 roosting on a log on the reef.

**Common Tern - *Sterna hirundo***

Common offshore, often in large mixed groups.

**Brown Noddy - *Anous stolidus***

Common offshore, often in large mixed groups.

**Black Noddy - *Anous minutus***

Common offshore, often in large mixed groups.

**Greater Frigatebird - *Fregata minor***

A few birds (part of two mixed groups) heading towards New Hanover in the afternoon.

**Lesser Frigatebird - *Fregata ariel***

About 50 birds (part of two mixed groups) heading towards New Hanover in the afternoon.

**Yellow billed Fruit-Dove - *Ptilinopus solomonensis***

Regularly seen in villages, gardens, plantations and forest.

**Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove - *Macropygia mackinlayi***

Regularly seen in gardens and plantations on the main island.

**Stephan's Ground-Dove - *Chalcophaps stephani***

Conspicuous foraging in villages.

**Nicobar Pigeon - *Caloenas nicobarica***

Regularly seen foraging in villages on the main island, fed by villagers.

**Rainbow Lorikeet - *Trichoglossus haematodus***

Conspicuous and vocal, many roost on Beligila.

**Rainbow Bee-eater - *Merops ornatus***

Much smaller numbers than on New Hanover.

**Collared Kingfisher - *Halcyon chloris***

Only a handful of birds, much smaller density than on New Hanover.

**Beach Kingfisher - *Halcyon saurophaga***

Common in beach front trees and along the reef.

**Common Kingfisher - *Alcedo atthis***

Common in beach front trees.

**Willy Wagtail - *Rhipidura leucophrys***

Conspicuous along the beach and villages.

**Island Monarch - *Monarcha cinerascens***

Common in gardens and forest.

**Golden Whistler sp. (Common or Mangrove) - *Pachycephala pectoralis / melanura***

Common in villages, gardens and plantation on the main island.

**Bismarck Black Myzomela *Myzomela pammelaena***

Conspicuous in village, gardens and plantation.

**Metallic Starling *Aplonis metallica***

Conspicuous and vocal in village gardens and plantation.

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**New Hanover Bird Report, March-May 1999**

*By Adam and Matthew Leavesley*

We ventured to New Hanover at the beginning of March to undertake an archaeological exploration of the island and at the same time study the birdlife in the areas we visited. Prior e-mail enquiries amongst members of the PNGBS led to Birdlife International researcher Guy Dutton (*pers comm*) who posed a raft of questions which could contribute to conservation in the Bismarcks, an area regarded by Birdlife International as a "world hotspot of endemism".

First priority was to gather data on the threatened and near-threatened species present on the island and in the surrounding seas for inclusion in Birdlife International's Birds to Watch III. Information about population and population trends, ecology, threats, current conservation action and future action was required.

New Hanover has no terrestrial threatened bird species but Heinroth's Shearwater (*Puffinus heinrothi*) and Beck's Petrel (*Pterodroma becki*) are known from the surrounding seas. Neither of these threatened species was sighted.

Near threatened species were the Nicobar Pigeon, Finsch's Imperial-Pigeon, Black Imperial-Pigeon (*Ducula melanochroa*) and Bismarck Kingfisher. Coates does not list Finsch's or Black Imperial-Pigeons on New Hanover but Dutson had observed them in good numbers during a visit to New Hanover in 1997. He also requested similar information for the New Hanover sub-species *nigerrima* of Hunstein's Mannikin which was separated as a species, the New Hanover Mannikin (*L. nigerrima*) by Monroe and Sibley (1993), raising a question about the conservation status of both.

Dutson also noted a paucity of recent records for the King Quail (*Coturnix chinensis*), Red-backed Buttonquail (*Turnix maculosa*), Red-necked Crake (*Rallina rubra*) and Bare-eyed Rail (*Eulabeornis plumbeiventris*) and suggested that grasslands and montane areas in the interior warranted more investigation (none of these were sighted). He suggested some of the species recorded in New Ireland but not New Hanover could be present in these habitats and that some previously unrecorded supertramps could turn up in the Tigak islands (the islets between New Ireland and New Hanover).

The area observed whilst on New Hanover was dictated by archaeological rather than ornithological requirements. Most effort was concentrated on the south coast between Lavongai and Umbukul, with most time spent at Lavongai. Trips to the interior were via the Woi River, over the main divide to Neikonomon, Ingi and Noipuos and from Ingi to Umbukul along the logging road. We also went up the Saula Valley to the main divide, visited Puas and Renmalik by boat, visited Kung Island and several of the Tigak Islands, Nusandaul, Bangatang, Tungelo, Kiton and Wadei. Observations were made around Kavieng during breaks. A trip to Tingwon Island group was covered in a separate article (see this issue of *Muruk*).

Early encouragement came from an unexpected quarter when two Oriental Pratincoles were discovered on the tarmac outside the terminal of the Kavieng airport on 10 March. The birds were not feeding and only reluctantly moved when approached. They were in the same place the following morning.

The search for near-threatened species met with mixed results. Nicobar Pigeons appear to roost in at least two places on the south coast, two sightings totalling four birds were made in the interior forests north and south of the divide and a solitary bird was seen flying above the logged forest in the west. On the south coast the birds were observed most easily at dawn and dusk flying in groups of 2-3 over the sea between the south-east corner of New Hanover and nearby islands. They also roost in the mangroves around the lagoon next to Lavongai village, but these birds were very secretive.

Any analysis of the conservation status of this bird would best be carried out at the nearest breeding grounds on the Tingwon islands, (not listed in Coates) 35km south west of New Hanover. During the breeding season, November - February they are reportedly present in enormous numbers, and many are eaten by the Tingwon people.

The Tingwon Island group is only 1m above sea level so the entire breeding ground is threatened in the event of predicted sea-level rise.

Bismarck Kingfishers are locally common in the Woi River and some tributaries and were also seen in the Habiuk River near Nursery in an area that had been previously disturbed by logging. The birds have whitish breasts rather than the buff colour described in Coates. They were most often found in pairs perched close together over the water and usually returned to favourite spots when disturbed. There is plenty of suitable habitat on the north and eastern sides of the island for these birds, but a new logging contract covering a large part of this area may pose a threat.

Two pairs of birds matching Coates description of Finsch's Imperial-Pigeon were seen close to dusk on 6 May in prominent trees in gardens close to the house of Bigman Dallius (GR 854217). The site is in primary forest right next to the main divide, and is crossed by numerous fast-flowing streams. We did not see any of this species on the south or west sides of the island, but there is plenty of similar habitat north of the divide. This habitat may be threatened by the planned logging. The Black Imperial-Pigeon was not sighted.

Large groups of the New Hanover form of Hunstein's Mannikin are present in grass at Baungung, Lavongai and Puas, which are larger villages. These groups are easiest to find in the early morning. At Lavongai they are regularly seen in reeds beside the Saula river in the evening. Sightings of 2-3 birds were made near Lavongai, Umbukul, Ingi and inland from Paterina. These sightings were all made later in the day except at Ingi, which was early morning. Birds are also reported from Taskul (Eastwood *pers comm*, Dutson *pers comm*).

Baungung, Lavongai and Puas have large areas of grass maintained around the church/school complex for sports and recreation. The birds were seen on the margins of these areas in seeding grass. At Lavongai birds were also regularly seen in larger numbers in fallow garden areas close to the church and one pair in short kunai grass. At Umbukul, two birds were seen along the logging road in bushes and inland from Paterina in a small garden (220m asl, GR910095).

Observations of the biggest group of mannikins seen on New Hanover suggest that the birds congregate to feed in favoured habitat just after dawn and then spend the day in smaller groups. If this is true it maybe possible to get an accurate estimate by surveying the larger villages. Some villages with apparently suitable habitat had no birds present and little sign of feeding on the favoured types of grass.

Three species not listed by Coates as present on New Hanover were seen on the island.

A single Greenshank was seen flying out of the Ingi River close to Nursery on 8 May in the afternoon and again the following day standing on a small patch of sand behind a pebble bank in the river.

Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia mackinlayi* appears to have replaced the Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove *M. nigrirostris* on New Hanover. Coates lists *M. nigrirostris* for New Hanover but not *M. mackinlayi*. We observed numerous *M.*

*mackinlayi* birds but not one *M. nigrirostris* individual. (The two species are readily confused, but *M. mackinlayi* is a member of the guild of small island specialist birds, which would be unexpected on New Hanover – Editor.)

A juvenile Oriental Cuckoo was seen on 22 May next to the beach west of Metekavil on the south coast. The bird was perched in thick mid-canopy foliage but called constantly for 15 minutes and didn't stop. A recording was made. It was seen being harassed by a small bird about the size of a Red Myzomela but was not inclined to move more than a few metres. Oriental Cuckoos breed in Asia and winter in Australia, New Guinea and New Britain during the Austral summer. They have also been sighted on Manus. Presumably this bird was off course on its return to Asia.

Several other notable observations were made adding to information published in Coates.

Coates lists the White-breasted Fruit-Dove as a mountain species of southern New Ireland and New Hanover. One bird was observed close to sea level in gardens near Kavieng and several were seen close to the southern New Hanover coast, usually in primary forest.

Coates describes the Masked Booby as rare in PNG waters. A group of 15-20 adult and juvenile Masked Boobies was observed about 500m offshore from Umbukul on 18 May. Another similar sized group was observed from a boat during a passage between Tingwon and Umbukul about 2-3km offshore in the same area two days later.

Pied Cuckoo-doves were seen performing display flights above the forest canopy. The display involved diving from a high perch, then going straight up vertically, stalling, diving again and flying on. The performance was all executed in a straight line.

Grey Imperial Pigeons were seen using a flight-path along a ridge on the true right of the Saula River. At least 300 birds flew up the ridge in the morning turning left over the first big tributary and continuing towards the main divide. Flocks of up to 30 fly inland with birds splitting off, usually one, two or three at a time. In the evening the birds re-traced the path with the flocks numbering more than 20 as they reached the coast.

One roosting tree in logged over forest near Metemulai contained more than 350 Grey Imperial Pigeons, More than 100 Yellow-faced Mynas, more than 50 Eclectus Parrots and 8 Eastern Black-capped Lories. A neighbouring tree contained 12 Brahminy Kites. Observed 10 & 12 May

On two successive evenings (15-16 April) more than 35 Blyth's Hornbills were seen flying from the main divide area, high over Woi River to a roosting area in the Ungat Valley. The largest single group contained 19 birds and was seen on both evenings. On April 17, 18 birds were seen and lesser numbers on the following evenings.

Greater and Lesser Frigatebirds were present daily in large numbers off the south coast of New Hanover. The birds roost on Nusandaul island, close to Taskul and more

than 500 were recorded in a quick count from a passing banana boat, evening, 25 May. The island is mostly mangrove swamp and has little dry land.

Bismarck Black Myzomelas were common on four out of five Tigak islands visited and can be seen flying between them and New Hanover. Beach Kingfishers were far more common on the smaller Tigak islands than New Hanover. An Island Monarch, and two Striated Herons were seen on Nusandaul. Imperial pigeons were seen and heard on Nusandaul but no identification could be made.

Flocks of up to 50 Whimbrels were seen flying west along the south coast of New Hanover just after dawn 25 April. Another large flock was seen feeding on a mud flat that evening. First sighting of a Channel-billed Cuckoo - 24 March, Rainbow Bee-eater - 18 April, Dollarbird - 7 May, Shining Bronze- Cuckoo - 12 May.

A pair of Brahminy Kites at Lavongai village were observed at a height of 60m trying to catch swiftlets on the wing. One bird was observed snatching a young domestic chicken.

Cicadabirds were regularly seen from the coast up into the mountains. Habitats include mangroves, coconut plantations, fringes of primary forest and logged forest. Usually seen in pairs or threes, quite conspicuous, but not vocal. The female plumage was a chestnut brown rather than the dull example illustrated in Beehler (*which is of the mainland form, the whole Cicadabird complex being in drastic need of revision-Ed.*) A young male with a combination of brown and grey plumage was also seen.

#### Trip Bird List

##### **Streaked Shearwater - *Calonectris leucomelas***

2 solitary birds seen between New Hanover and Tingwon, 18 & 20 May (See previous Tingwon report).

##### **Flesh-footed Shearwater - *Puffinus carneipes***

A group of three were seen between New Hanover and Tingwon, 18 May (See previous Tingwon report).

##### **Greater Frigatebird - *Fregata minor***

Constant presence along the south coast of New Hanover, roosts on Nusandaul in the Tigak islands, combined frigate bird numbers more than 500.

##### **Lesser Frigatebird - *Fregata ariel***

Constant presence along the south coast of New Hanover, roosts on Nusandaul in the Tigak islands, combined frigate bird numbers more than 500

##### **Masked Booby - *Sula dactylatra***

10-15 Between New Hanover and Tingwon, 18 & 20 May (see Tingwon report).

##### **Eastern Reef-Egret - *Egretta sancta***

Common around the coast, including by villages and up the Woi River. Grey and white phases seen in both habitats. One pied bird seen.

**Striated Heron** - *Ardeola striata*

Seen in mangroves at Lavongai and in the Tigak islands.

**Rufous Night Heron** - *Nycticorax caledonicus*

Riverbanks and mangroves, especially in the northern swamps.

**Black Bittern** - *Ixobrychus flavicollis*

Riverbanks, wet gardens, sago swamps, common close to villages.

**Osprey** - *Pandion haliaetus*

Common around the coast. Observed 8km up the Woi River

**Crested Hawk** - *Aviceda subcristata*

Readily observed away from the coast.

**Brahminy Kite** - *Haliastur indus*

Around the coast, but also inland. 12 observed in one roost near Metemulai.

**White-bellied Sea-Eagle** - *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Seen around New Hanover, highest density in the north west between Wassanga and Mosuang.

**Grey Goshawk** - *Accipiter novaehollandiae*

Observed three times on a ridge on the true right of the Saula River, within 4 km of the coast.

**Pacific Black Duck** - *Anas superciliosa*

Regularly seen at the mouth of the Saula River.

**Melanesian Scrubfowl** - *Megapodius eremita*

Abundant in swampy areas, common in the interior but difficult to observe.

**Buff-banded Rail** - *Rallus philippensis*

Kavieng airport surrounds, not seen on New Hanover.

**Bush-hen** - *Amaurornis olivaceus*

One sighting in primary forest in the upper Woi River.

**Oriental Pratincole** - *Glareola maldivarum*

2 at Kavieng airport 10-11 March.

**Pacific Golden Plover** - *Pluvialis fulva*

More than 100 birds on Kavieng airfield, smaller numbers in school grounds, beaches, New Hanover.

**Mongolian Plover** - *Charadrius mongolus*

Kavieng airfield, one non-breeding bird on New Hanover south coast.

**Ruddy Turnstone** - *Arenaria interpres*

Seen in groups of 10-20 at Kavieng airport and harbour, Puas on New Hanover.

**Whimbrel** - *Numenius phaeopus*

Common in mangrove, grass and reef, Kavieng airport and New Hanover coastline.

**Grey-tailed Tattler** - *Tringa brevipes*

Common along the coastline including villages and rivers.

**Common Sandpiper** - *Tringa hypoleucos*

Common along the coastline including villages and rivers

**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** - *Calidris acuminata*

Kavieng airport.

**Red-necked Stint** - *Calidris ruficollis*

Beach, behind the reef in Kavieng harbour.

**Common Tern** - *Sterna hirundo*

Common in the Tigaks and offshore, in large mixed groups.

**Little Tern** - *Sterna albifrons*

One group of five seen in the Tigaks.

**Crested Tern** - *Sterna bergii*

Common along the coast, often in large mixed groups.

**Brown Noddy** - *Anous stolidus*

Common along the coast, often in large mixed groups.

**Black Noddy** - *Anous minutus*

Common along the coast, often in large mixed groups.

**Brown Cuckoo-Dove** - *Macropygia amboinensis*

Common around the coast of New Hanover in gardens and plantations.

**Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove** - *Macropygia mackinlayi*

Most often seen in the hills on Tingwon.

**Pied Cuckoo-Dove** - *Reinwardtoena browni*

Interior primary forests in the south and logged forest, gardens in the north.

**Stephan's Ground-Dove** - *Chalcophaps stephani*

Common in gardens and cocoa plantations around New Hanover.

**Nicobar Pigeon** - *Caloenas nicobarica*

Breeds on a nearby island group, regularly seen in small numbers at mangrove roosts and once in northern New Hanover swamp forest.

**White-breasted Fruit-Dove** - *Ptilinopus rivoli*

Common on New Hanover, prefers primary forest.

**Red-knobbed Fruit-Dove - *Ptilinopus insolitus***

Most common fruit-dove, often seen in large trees in beach villages, mangrove, hill forest.

**Red-knobbed Imperial Pigeon - *Ducula rubricera***

Most common pigeon on the coast and seen inland in the northern swamp forests)

**Grey Imperial Pigeon - *Ducula pistrinaria***

Most common pigeon inland. Large numbers in daily migrations from communal roosts.

**Rainbow Lorikeet - *Trichoglossus haematodus***

Common in the coastal far west of New Hanover, Kavieng and the Tigaks.

**Eastern Black-capped Lory - *Lorius hypoinochrous***

Small numbers in the west of New Hanover, usually seen in pairs.

**Red-flanked Lorikeet - *Charmosyna placensis***

Common in gardens and forest throughout the island.

**Green Pygmy-Parrot - *Micropsitta finschii***

Difficult to identify, one definite record only but this may not be an accurate reflection.

**Song Parrot - *Geoffroyus heteroclitus***

Most common inland, but also seen on the coast, vocal on the wing.

**Eclectus Parrot - *Eclectus roratus***

Common throughout New Hanover, especially around gardens.

**Bismarck Hanging-Parrot - *Loriculus tener***

Relatively common in gardens and coconut plantations around the coast.

**Oriental Cuckoo - *Cuculus saturatus***

New Hanover, one record, 22 May.

**Brush Cuckoo - *Cacomantis variolosus***

Seen and heard in gardens, plantations and villages around the New Hanover.

**Shining Bronze-Cuckoo - *Chrysococcyx lucidus***

Seen in gardens, secondary forests, first sighting: 12 May.

**Channel billed Cuckoo - *Scythrops novaehollandiae***

Three sightings, all on the wing, two involving crows, first sighting: 24 March.

**Bismarck Boobook - *Ninox solomonis***

Occasionally heard, one captive bird at Meteran.

**Moustached Tree-swift - *Hemiprocne mystacea***

Commonly seen in a range of habitats from the coast into the mountains, often in pairs.

**Uniform Swiftlet - *Collocalia vanikorensis***

Large numbers, especially in coastal gardens.

**Glossy Swiftlet - *Collocalia esculenta***

Large numbers especially in forest areas.

**White-rumped Swiftlet - *Collocalia spodiopygia***

One or two birds occasionally seen in large groups of other swifts

**Collared Kingfisher - *Halcyon chloris***

Common along the coast, less so in the interior. Very vocal in March.

**Beach Kingfisher - *Halcyon saurophaga***

Occasional sightings on New Hanover, common and conspicuous on Tigaks and around Kavieng.

**Common Kingfisher - *Alcedo atthis***

Common along the coastline and up rivers.

**Bismarck Kingfisher - *Ceyx websteri***

Common up the Woi River, also seen in the Habiuk.

**Rainbow Bee-eater - *Merops ornatus***

Common and conspicuous, sometimes in groups of 30 around the island.

**Dollarbird - *Eurystomus orientalis***

Several solitary birds seen in the west in logged forest and garden.

**Blyth's Hornbill - *Rhyticeros plicatus***

Hunted around the coast, but flocks of 25 seen in the Woi River.

**Blue-breasted Pitta - *Pitta erythrogaster***

One bird seen in primary forest in the Woi.

**White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike - *Coracina papuensis***

Common coastal bird, often in groups of 2 or 3.

**Cicadabird - *Coracina tenuirostris***

Regularly seen throughout the island in mangroves, plantations, primary forest edge and logged forest.

**Varied Triller - *Lalage leucomela***

Commonly seen and heard in gardens and plantations.

**Golden-headed Cisticola - *Cisticola exilis***

Seen in overgrown gardens, bushes, sugar cane and kunai grass in coastal areas.

**Northern Fantail** - *Rhipidura rufiventris*

Regularly seen in gardens, plantations, mangroves and primary forest.

**Willy Wagtail** - *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Constant presence in beach villages and in the lower reaches of rivers.

**Island Monarch** - *Monarcha cinerascens*

One sighting on New Hanover in bamboo, and the Tigaks islands.

**Golden Monarch** - *Monarcha chrysomela*

Commonly seen and heard esp. in swampy areas, gardens and plantations of New Hanover.

**Bismarck Pied Monarch** - *Monarcha verticalis*

Two sightings, both in the interior hills, bamboo and primary forest.

**Shining Flycatcher** - *Myiagra alecto*

Common on New Hanover in gardens, plantations and mangroves.

**Bismarck Flowerpecker** - *Dicaeum eximium*

Common in gardens, plantations and secondary forest on New Hanover.

**Black Sunbird** - *Nectarinia aspasia*

Common in gardens, plantations and secondary forest on New Hanover.

**Yellow-bellied Sunbird** - *Nectarinia jugularis*

Regularly seen in gardens, plantations and secondary forest on New Hanover.

**Black-headed White-eye** - *Zosterops hypoxantha*

Regularly seen in gardens, plantations and secondary forest on New Hanover.

**Red Myzomela** - *Myzomela cruentata*

Common in gardens, plantations and secondary forest on New Hanover.

**Bismarck Black Myzomela** - *Myzomela pammelaena*

Two sightings in western New Hanover, common in the Tigaks.

**Hunstein's Mannikin** [New Ireland subspecies] - *Lonchura hunsteini*

Abundant at Kavieng airport.

**Hunstein's Mannikin** [New Hanover subspecies] - *Lonchura hunsteini nigerrima*

Groups seen around large villages with big areas of grass. (Sometimes split as New Hanover Mannikin *Lonchura nigerrima*-Editor.)

**Singing Starling** - *Aplonis cantoroides*

Around human habitation, not as prevalent as the metallic starling.

**Metallic Starling** - *Aplonis metallica*

Very common, vocal and conspicuous around human habitation.

**Yellow-faced Myna** - *Mino dumontii*

Regularly seen and heard throughout the island in groups of 2-5. One roost had >100.

**Torresian Crow** - *Corvus orru*

Regularly seen and heard throughout the island.

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**Observations of the New Hanover sub-species of Hunstein's Mannikin**  
*Lonchura hunsteini nigerrima*

*By Adam and Matthew Leavesley*

Large flocks of this bird are present in grass at Baungung, Lavongai and Puas, which are larger villages of New Hanover. The flocks are biggest and easiest to see within an hour of dawn. At Lavongai they can also be seen regularly in the evening in reeds near the Saula River mouth. Sightings of 2-3 birds were made near Lavongai, Umbukul, Ingi and inland from Paterina. These sightings were all made later in the day except at Ingi which was early morning.

Baungung, Lavongai and Puas have large areas of grass maintained around the church/school complex for sports and recreation. The birds were seen on the margins of these areas in the longer grass. At Lavongai birds were also regularly seen in reasonable numbers in fallow garden areas close to the church and one pair in short kunai grass. At Umbukul, two birds were seen along the logging road in bushes and at higher altitude inland from Paterina in a garden.

Observations at Baungung 22 May 1999

First light 0600: The overgrown Baungung school football field looked like a good place to look for grassland birds, so I arrived at first light to check it out. No birds were immediately evident upon arrival but five minutes later at the other end of the field a group of three was spotted close to the surrounding bushes. These joined another group to give a total of 10. This group was very active, all taking small flights of less than a metre from the back of the group to join the main bunch. In this way the group moved across the field. Other birds joined the group until it reached 30-40 (most of the joining groups numbered 3-7) Just before 6-30am another large group joined the first one to give the maximum group size of 60-80. (The intense activity at this time made getting an exact count difficult).

Upon being flushed by me, other people or the sound of a loud unexpected bird call, the mannikins would take to the air. Usually they would fly into another part of the field, but sometimes they would take to nearby bushes, small trees and sugar cane. If

flushed by a person they would fly off one after the other as the person got too close. If scared by the sound of a bird call they would all take to the air at the same instant and fly around in a tight group. The birds call when they are on the wing. There is always a little bit of calling when the flock is feeding because there are always some birds adjusting position and calling while they do so.

Whenever the birds took to the air there would be some dispersal followed by a re-grouping. Half the birds might go into a hedge and the other half would fly to another patch of grass. A small number of birds appeared to use the opportunity to leave the group whenever the flock was flushed. Pairs especially would fly off together. Sometimes as many as 8 would do this. Over a period of 2-3 minutes most of the birds would recongregate on the grass. By 8am the group size had reduced to around 30-40 birds and by 9-30am it was 12. Following the early morning frenetic activity, the group was far more settled by 8-30am. Far less movement in general and the group was more spread out. The spread of the group increased when they were left undisturbed for longer periods. Landing after disturbance they would group more tightly. During the settled period calling was virtually nil.

Around 9-30am when the group in the field was 12 another large group was seen in the top of nearby guava trees. They did not pause for long though. The guava did not appear to have anything edible in it. Locals say the mannikins are often seen in kunai grass, but this was not backed up by my observations. (Kunai grass grows to 2.5m high in places where the soil has been heavily cropped. There is plenty of it on New Hanover around the major areas of human habitation.)

#### Juveniles

Between 30%-50% of the group was juvenile (ie black head, brown wings, lighter brown belly and paler rufous tail than the adults). There appeared little difference in behaviour between the adults and juveniles.

#### Food

The mannikins preferred food was arrowhead grass (This is my name only, I have got a photo and I am trying to get a proper name). Up to 70% of this grass had been cropped of its seed in areas that the birds have been feeding. The birds also eat the disc seed grass (my name only, I have a photo and am trying to get a proper name) as a second choice if they have been flushed from the arrowhead grass. They feed by landing on the stalks and bending them to the ground, but they can also grip the stalk if it does not bend, and feed hanging at crazy angles. Two birds were observed pecking the bare earth under a tree next to a patch of grass. No seeds could be seen on the ground. (Subsequent examination of the ground at the spot did not reveal any seeds or other possible food).

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## Notes on the behaviour of Curl-crested Manucode - *Manucodia comrui*

By Brad Schram

On 23 September 1999, I made a brief visit to Fergusson Island as part of a cruise made by the *M/V World Discoverer*. While on the island I found a small group of Curl-crested Manucodes in high, thick forest edging a clearing that behaved suspiciously like lekking birds. Frith and Beehler note that its nuptial display is unknown. Cam Kepler (an ornithologist from the *M/V World Discoverer*) came along and agreed that it looked lek-like. I realise manucodes are not meant to lek.

I was drawn to the site by the low burbling calls of the birds. Another manucode arrived from outside the grove, which now held 4-6 birds. The birds were from 6 to 30 feet apart as best I could determine. Exact numbers and interactions were difficult to determine due to the thick foliage and the fact I only had about 20 minutes with the birds.

Each bird (which could be seen clearly, whether on a horizontal branch or vertical clean vine - both close beneath the canopy but in clear view) would flutter forward as if to fall beak-first off the branch, but holding on with their feet. At the same moment the bird would half-raise its wings and flutter them about pitifully as if trying to figure out what they were for. It concurrently raised and spread its tail with the curled and frilly feathers on the outer edge. The effect was of this large bird seeming to be trying to regain its balance on its perch, tail cocked high, while warbling its resonant notes. It would stop and regain its balance for awhile, then pitch forward and repeat the performance. Between performances it would look about as if to judge its effect. The iridescence of the upper body and the curl-crest was quite obvious. Occasionally a bird would move to another perch beneath the canopy. The way they bounded from branch to branch (when they did) reminded me of the movement of Macgregor's Bird of Paradise in their morning perch trees. Rather like big glorious, agile crows bounding about from branch to branch.

I never saw two birds come into contact. The performance noted above continued as I left. I do not claim that it was a lek but the birds did behave rather like lekking birds. It was possibly some kind of group interaction at the edge of a territory and may have included grown young of resident parents. It may also have been the equivalent of a singles' bar where members of each sex size one another up and go through the early stages of courtship prior to mating. The incessant calling, peering about, displaying, and choosing obvious perches from which to display - with no tail-chases - appeared lek-like however.

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**Birds Recorded in the Kau Wildlife Area at Baitabag and the adjacent coastal strip, Madang Province, May - November 1996**

By *Brian S. Fletcher*

Introduction

The Kau Wildlife Area is a patch of primary and re-growth lowland rainforest that has been protected from any major interference by its traditional owners, the Didipa Clan of Baitabag Village, since the mid-sixties. In total it covers an area of approximately 500 hectares and represents one of the major patches of surviving lowland rainforest close to Madang. As the elders of the clan preserved the forest on their own initiative, most outsiders did not know of its existence until 1991. Thus, it was not visited by Bailey during his 1989 observations on the birds of lowland Madang Province (Bailey, 1992), and was not included in any of the earlier surveys carried out in the Madang area.

While carrying out ecological studies on insects in the Kau Reserve from mid-May to mid-October 1996, I also used my frequent visits to make observations on the avifauna. The forest there is relatively thick with few clear views of the canopy, so that most observations were made along the entrance track and the walking trails inside the forest.

The reserve is approximately 18 km from Madang Town and 4 ms from the Jais Aben Resort / Christensen Research Institute Grounds. When approaching from Madang along the main north coast road, the reserve can be reached by taking the road to the left about 100 metres before the sign-posted turn-off to JAR/CRI, which is on the right. As the reserve is privately owned, intending visitors should seek permission and the services of a guide from the Didipa Clan at Baitabag Village before entering the forest.

The bird names used here follow Beehler et al. (1986) except for Ochre-collared Monarch (*Arses insularis*) which is given specific rank (ref. Coates, 1990). I have attempted to give some indication of the status of the different species in the reserve by ranking them as common, fairly common, uncommon or rare, based on the frequency with which they were seen and/or heard during the period of observation. Common species were seen and/or heard on almost every visit and appeared to be distributed more or less throughout the reserve. Fairly common species were those that were encountered on most visits at a few locations (e.g. King Bird of Paradise) or more widely at less frequent intervals. Species were classed as uncommon if they were seen infrequently, and rare if they were only recorded on one occasion. As I was not familiar with the calls of some species (e.g. Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon, White-throated Pigeon, White-crowned Koel, Dwarf Koel) these and some others may have been under-recorded. Some species were noticeably less abundant in July and August when it was drier and there were fewer fruiting trees in the forest than at other times.

A feature of the lowland rainforest was the mixed-species feeding flocks of predominantly rufous-brown and black birds that were frequently encountered. These usually comprised an individual or pair of Spangled Drongos, plus Rufous Babbler, Rusty Pitohuis and Black Cuckoo-shrikes. Often the flocks also included Variable or

Hooded Pitohuis, a pair of Rufous Monarchs plus Hooded and other monarchs. Sometimes Glossy Mantled Manucodes and King Birds of Paradise and occasionally other species e.g. Yellow-faced Myna, Yellow-breasted Boatbill and Lemon-bellied Flycatcher or Grey Whistler also joined in these feeding flocks.

The only species I did encounter for which there are recent reliable records (there are a few others for which there are doubtful records), were Victoria Crowned Pigeon, Barred Owlet Nightjar and Rufous Night-Heron. A few species that were uncommon in the reserve were common in the more disturbed terrain nearby along the coastal strip (e.g. Emerald Dove, Grand Mannikin and Torresian Crow). In addition there are a number of species that occur along the adjacent coastal strip that were not recorded in the Kau reserve.

For completeness, at the end of the next section I have included a list of the species that I recorded either in the grounds of JAR/CRI (including birds seen from the foreshore) or in the disturbed area between the resort and the main north coast road but **not** in Kau Wildlife Area. Two sites in particular proved good for birding in this area, a track which crosses a small stream on the right, approximately 100 metres after the turn off to JAR/CRI, and a swampy area on the right about 300 metres before the entrance gate to the resort.

Annotated List of the Birds recorded in the Kau Wildlife Area, Baitabag.

1. **Northern Cassowary** (*Casuarus unappendiculatus*) Rare. Although no birds were actually sighted, fresh droppings of this species were observed along tracks in the reserve on 17 and 18 June.
2. **Brown-collared Brush-Turkey** (*Talegalla jobiensis*) Common. Calling birds were heard on most visits to the reserve but the birds are very wary and individuals were only sighted on 3 occasions. Two active nest mounds were also located.
3. **Common Scrubfowl** (*Megapodius freycinet*) Fairly common. Flushed from the side of tracks on a number of occasions, particularly near old gardens. Three active nest mounds were also located. (Presumably of the northern species *affinis*- Editor.)
4. **Forest Bittern** (*Zonerodius heliosylus*) Rare. A female of this little known species was caught by a villager's dog in the reserve along the Baitabag River on the 23 June and shown to me the following day. As it had a damaged wing it was taken back to CRI to recuperate but unfortunately died a few days later. While in captivity it laid an egg, indicating that it had been in breeding condition. The egg was pale blue in colour and almost spherical measuring 3.5 by 3.0 cm.
5. **Crested Hawk** (*Aviceda subcristata*) Uncommon. A flock of 4 individuals were seen foraging for food in the forest canopy on 23 August.
6. **Long-tailed Buzzard** (*Hemicopernis longicauda*) Uncommon. Single birds usually observed perched or flying through the canopy. A pair were observed soaring over the reserve on 16 June

7. **Black Kite** (*Milvus migrans*) Common, with up to six individuals observed flying over the reserve together at one time. An active nest was discovered in a large tree by the river on 11 July.
8. **Whistling Kite** (*Haliastur sphenurus*) Generally uncommon around Madang although one perched regularly in one of the trees occupied by the fruit bat colony in the centre of town. One seen flying over the reserve on the 18 August.
9. **Brahminy Kite** (*Haliastur indus*) Although common in the general area only observed flying over the reserve twice.
10. **Gurney's Eagle** (*Aquila gurneyi*) Rare. One seen soaring above the eastern edge of the reserve on 10 July.
11. **New Guinea Harpy Eagle** (*Harpyopsis novaeguineae*) Rare. Good views were obtained of an individual perched in the mid-canopy of a large tree within the reserve on 16 May
12. **Grey Goshawk** (*Accipiter novaehollandiae*) Uncommon. Individuals of the dark phase were seen on several occasions in trees on the edge of the reserve. A white phase individual (race *leucosomus*) was seen soaring above the reserve on 18 and 21 June.
13. **Grey-headed Goshawk** (*Accipiter poliocephalus*) Rare. One seen in the forest on 8 July
14. **Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*) Rare. The only sighting was on 18 June when an individual was observed having a minor aerial duel with the white phase Grey Goshawk.
15. **White-throated Pigeon** (*Columba vitiensis*) Rare. One observed perched in the upper canopy on 22 July. A rather more elegant pigeon than depicted in Bechler .
16. **Black-billed Cuckoo-Dove** (*Macropygia nigrirostris*) Uncommon. The only verified sightings were on the 27 June and 2 Sept., but some of the other cuckoo-doves seen in flight were probably this species.
17. **Brown Cuckoo-Dove** (*Macropygia amboinensis*) Uncommon. Apparently scarce and/ or wary as only sighted on a few occasions, usually in flight.
18. **Great Cuckoo-Dove** (*Reinwardtoena reinwardtii*) Uncommon. One observed perched high in a fig tree along with a large feeding flock of Orange-bellied Fruit-Doves on 8 June. A pair and a calling male were seen on 27 June. The call was a repeated *tig-whoop..tig-whoop..tig-whoop* at a rate of one per second.
19. **Stephan's Ground-Dove** (*Chalcophaps stephani*) Uncommon. Seen less frequently than the Emerald Ground-Dove, and usually when flushed from the ground beneath the forest understorey. Good perched views were obtained of both sexes.

20. **Emerald Ground-Dove** (*Chalcophaps indica*) Fairly common. Singles observed fairly frequently, either flying across tracks, particularly the entrance track, or in the forest.
21. **Cinnamon Ground-Dove** (*Gallicolumba rufigula*) Rare. Although I had earlier occasionally flushed birds that could have been this species, the only confirmed sighting was one seen at close range along the entrance track on the 14 Oct.
22. **Victoria Crowned Pigeon** (*Goura cristata*). Rare. I never saw this species in the reserve, although Ulai, a local elder who helped me with my field work, flushed one while walking in the forest on 1 Sept. Another villager later reported seeing two drinking at a pool in a dried up creek bed in the reserve early one morning the previous week.
23. **Orange-bellied Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus iozonus*) The commonest fruit-dove within the reserve and frequently seen in small groups, and occasionally large flocks, feeding in fruiting trees or perched on exposed branches.
24. **Superb Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus superbus*) Fairly common. Individuals or pairs seen in the lower-canopy fairly frequently and small numbers also observed occasionally feeding with other fruit-doves in fruiting fig trees.
25. **Beautiful Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus pulchellus*) Fairly common. Seen frequently, usually as single individuals perched in the lower-canopy, although sometimes seen feeding in company with other fruit-doves. Occupied nests, each with a single egg, were located on low branches above forest trails on 4 July and 2 Sept.
26. **Ornate Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus ornatus*) Uncommon. Small flocks of this species (6-8 individuals) was observed in the reserve on several occasions.
27. **Pink-spotted Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus perlatus*) Uncommon. A single record of two individuals observed feeding with other doves in a large fig tree on 14 May.
28. **Coroneted Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus coronulatus*) Fairly common. Single individuals or pairs were seen perched or feeding in the lower-canopy regularly, except during July and August when noticeably scarce.
29. **Wompoo Fruit-Dove** (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) Common. Individuals or pairs seen on most visits to the reserve. Occupied nests of this species, each with a single egg, were located on 5 June and 26 July.
30. **Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon** (*Ducula rufigaster*) Uncommon. One observed perched high in the forest canopy on 18 June and one seen in flight on 13 July.
31. **Pinon Imperial Pigeon** (*Ducula pinon*) Common. Small numbers were observed or heard calling on almost every visit to the reserve. Display flights were observed in June and July. Beside the usual call, a *zooca...zooca...zooca* and a grunt were also heard when birds were interacting.

32. **Zoe Imperial Pigeon** (*Ducula zoeae*) Common. This species was heard calling on most visits to the reserve but was seen less frequently than the previous species as it normally stays within the canopy.
33. **Papuan Mountain Pigeon** (*Gymnophaps albertisi*) Common. Flocks of up to twenty individuals were seen frequently circling over the reserve, and sometimes perched in the taller trees.
34. **Dusky Lory** (*Pseudeos fuscata*) Common. Flocks seen flying over the reserve most mornings with a few landing.
35. **Rainbow Lorikeet** (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) Uncommon. Flocks seen flying over the reserve on a few occasions.
36. **Black-capped Lory** (*Lorius lory*) Common. Pairs seen or heard on most visits but only present in the reserve in small numbers. A pair were seen inspecting a 'nesting' hole on 14 Oct.
37. **Palm Cockatoo** (*Probosciger aterrimus*) Rare. A single record on the 10 November.
38. **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** (*Cacatua galerita*) Fairly common. Present in the reserve in small numbers with eight individuals been the greatest number seen in a single flock.
39. **Buff-faced Pygmy Parrot** (*Micropsitta pusio*) Fairly common. Pairs or small groups seen or heard fairly frequently, particularly along the entrance track but also within the forest.
40. **Double-eyed Fig-Parrot** (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma*) Rare. The only sighting was of a pair perched in a tree along the entrance track on 8 July.
41. **Red-checked Parrot** (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*) Fairly common. Individuals heard fairly regularly flying over the reserve but only seen perched occasionally.
42. **Eclactus Parrot** (*Eclactus roratus*) Uncommon. Only recorded on a few occasions, almost always as single individuals flying overhead, although a flock of five were seen on 14 June.
43. **Papuan Hanging Parrot** (*Loriculus aurantiifrons*) Rare. A pair of this species was observed in a tree along the entrance track on 16 June.
44. **Brush Cuckoo** (*Cacomantis variolosus*) Fairly common. Heard frequently but only seen on a few occasions.
45. **Chestnut-breasted Cuckoo** (*Cacomantis castaneiventris*) Uncommon. Heard occasionally, and one seen on 20 July.
46. **White-crowned Koel** (*Caliechthrus leucolophus*) Rare. One seen in the canopy of a fruiting fig tree on 27 June.
47. **Dwarf Koel** (*Microdynamis parva*) Uncommon. A male was seen in a tree along the entrance track on 24 June, and a pair was seen feeding in a tree with small red berries in the same area on the 28 August.
48. **Channel-billed Cuckoo** (*Scythrops novaehollandiae*) Rare. One seen flying over the reserve on 12 July.
49. **Greater Black Coucal** (*Centropus menbeki*) Fairly common. Heard calling regularly, including duetting 'pairs' on several occasions. One was observed feeding on berries in a small tree along the entrance track on 20 June.
50. **Marbled Frogmouth** (*Podargus ocellatus*) Uncommon. Two separate individuals heard calling briefly on 12 July when I stayed in the forest till 10.30 p.m.
51. **Papuan Frogmouth** (*Podargus papuensis*) Fairly common. Heard calling during the day on several occasions. Good perched views were obtained of a pair that flushed from a tree within the forest on 18 June.
52. **Papuan Nightjar** (*Eurostopodus papuensis*) Fairly common. Sighted flying over the forest from the balcony of the village museum, or along the entrance track, on most occasions when I visited the area at dusk.
53. **Moustached Tree-Swift** (*Hemiprocne mystacea*) Uncommon. Seen occasionally in small groups flying above the forest ridges
54. **Uniform Swiftlet** (*Collocalia vanikorensis*) Common. Seen most evenings and sometimes during the day, particularly after rain, flying above the forest.
55. **[Three-toed Swiftlet (*Collocalia papuensis*)]** Uncommon? On a few occasions (14 May, 19 June and 14 Oct) I observed small groups of a swiftlet that was noticeably more robust and had a paler throat than Uniform Swiftlet flying along the forest ridges. Bailey (1992) also observed this swiftlet in the area and tentatively identified it as *C. papuensis*. Final confirmation of its identity would require birds in the hand.
56. **Glossy Swiftlet** (*Collocalia esculenta*) Fairly common. Observed less often than uniform swiftlet but still recorded fairly frequently.
57. **Pacific Swallow** (*Hirundo tahitica*) Uncommon. Small numbers were seen hawking along the ridges on a few occasions.
58. **Common Paradise-Kingfisher** (*Tanysiptera galatea*) Common. Several individuals were heard calling on almost every visit to the reserve, although sightings were much less frequent.
59. **Hook-billed Kingfisher** (*Melidora macrorrhina*) Fairly common. Although never sighted, the calls of this species were frequently heard when I visited the reserve at dusk.

60. **Rufous-bellied Kookaburra** (*Dacelo gaudichaud*) Common. Individuals or groups were heard calling and seen on almost every visit to the reserve.
61. **Forest Kingfisher** (*Halcyon macleayii*) Uncommon. A pair were seen perched in a dead tree on the edge of the forest on a few occasions.
62. **Yellow-billed Kingfisher** (*Halcyon torotoro*) Fairly common. Based on the number of individuals heard calling, less common than *T. galatea* (and also more difficult to see) but still recorded fairly frequently.
63. **Dwarf Kingfisher** (*Ceyx lepidus*) Uncommon. Perched individuals seen in the forest on 16 May, 15 July, 15 Aug, 28 August, 2 Sept and 14 Oct. and probable fly-bys on a few other occasions.
64. **Azure Kingfisher** (*Alcedo azurea*) Fairly common. Seen regularly when walking along the larger streams in the forest. One observed perched close to a nest burrow on 26 July.
65. **Common Kingfisher** (*Alcedo atthis*) Rare. Seen once along the Baitabag river on the 23 August.
66. **Rainbow Bee-eater** (*Merops ornatus*) Rare. One seen flying along the edge of the forest on 27 June.
67. **Dollarbird** (*Eurystomus orientalis*) Common. Observed on most visits till mid-October, either perched on exposed branches or flying over the forest.
68. **Blyth's Hornbill** (*Rhyticeros plicatus*) Uncommon. This species seems to visit the reserve irregularly, usually in pairs, although during August at least 4 individuals were present in the reserve for 2-3 weeks.
69. **Blue-breasted Pitta** (*Pitta erythrogaster*) Fairly common. This is another species that was heard calling regularly but rarely seen. The only sightings were of an individual flushed from the side of a track on 25 May and calling birds lured in by a taped play back of their call on 18 June and 8 July.
70. **White-bellied Cuckoo-Shrike** (*Coracina papuensis*) Fairly common. Usually seen in pairs, particularly along the entrance track.
71. **Cicadabird** (*Coracina tenuirostris*) Fairly common. Females were seen fairly regularly foraging in trees along the entrance track. Males, however, were only seen occasionally.
72. **Black Cuckoo-Shrike** (*Coracina melaena*) Fairly common. Both sexes were observed regularly in the mixed feeding flocks of brown and black birds that occurred in the forest. However, they were noticeably commoner in May and June than later.

73. **Black-browed Triller** (*Lalage atrovirens*) Common. A 'family' group of 3-4 individuals that frequented some trees along the entrance track were seen on almost every visit. Individuals were also heard or seen regularly in the upper canopy of the forest trees.
74. **Blue Jewel-Babbler** (*Ptilorrhoa caerulescens*) Uncommon. Another species that was heard more often than seen. The first 2 sighted were flushed from the bank of a small stream on 5 June, and individuals were seen on 4 subsequent occasions (25 June, 12 July, 15 Aug. and 28 Aug).
75. **Rufous Babbler** (*Pomatostomus isidorei*) Common. This species was encountered fairly frequently foraging in family groups either alone or in mixed feeding flocks. One nest/roost was located hanging from a palm tree.
76. **Yellow-bellied Gerygone** (*Gerygone chrysogaster*) Fairly common. Observed and/or heard singing fairly frequently in the mid to upper canopy of the forest.
77. **Fairy Gerygone** (*Gerygone palpebrosa*) Uncommon. Males accompanied by females were seen on 22 May, 14 June and 28 Aug. foraging in the canopy. Females were also seen on a few other occasions.
78. **Green-backed Gerygone** (*Gerygone chloronotus*) Uncommon. First heard and seen on 18 July. Individuals were also recorded on a few other occasions, with sightings on the 26 July and 28 August and 10 Nov.
79. **Sooty Thicket-Fantail** (*Rhipidura threnothorax*) Fairly common. The distinctive 3 syllable call was heard fairly frequently but the bird was not always easy to see. On 11 July, a pair was observed building a nest on the top of a large leaf about 0.5 m. from the ground, in a small gully near the Baitabag river. A further nest containing 2 recently hatched young was located on the leaf of a low palm in the same general area on 23 August.
80. **White-bellied Thicket-Fantail** (*Rhipidura leucothorax*) Fairly common. The distinctive call was heard fairly frequently and birds were observed on several occasions, usually near the forest edge, but sometimes along gullies in the forest.
81. **Rufous-backed Fantail** (*Rhipidura rufidorsa*) Fairly common. The call was heard on most visits to the reserve and individuals or pairs were observed regularly during July and August, but less frequently at other times.
82. **Northern Fantail** (*Rhipidura rufiventris*) Common. This species was the most frequently observed fantail, with sightings of one or more birds on most visits to the forest.
83. **Willie Wagtail** (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) Common. Encountered fairly frequently in the garden areas on the edge of the forest and along the entrance track
84. **Rufous Monarch** (*Monarcha rubiensis*) Fairly common. Although less common than the other monarchs, this species was regularly seen either singly or in pairs in mixed feeding flocks containing other rufous coloured birds. On 4 Sept. a pair

was observed putting the finishing touches to a nest in the top fork of a 3 metre sapling on the bank of a forest stream. (A significant observation as few nests are known-Editor)

85. **Black-faced Monarch** (*Monarcha melanopsis*) Rare. One immature individual (considered to be this species, rather than Island Monarch, because of size and plumage colour) was observed in a small fig tree on the edge of the forest on 18 June. A second individual with black face feathers partly grown was seen in a mixed feeding flock on the 23 Sept. These sightings represent a significant north-westward extension of its range as shown in Coates.
86. **Spot-winged Monarch** (*Monarcha guttula*) Common. The commonest of the monarchs with sightings, usually of pairs, in the sub-canopy or lower canopy of the forest, on almost every visit.
87. **Hooded Monarch** (*Monarcha manadensis*) Fairly common. Less common than the previous species but observed fairly frequently, often in mixed feeding flocks with babblers and pitohuis.
88. **Golden Monarch** (*Monarcha chrysomela*) Fairly common. Usually seen in pairs with the male often being quite vocal and attracting attention when foraging.
89. **Ochre-collared Monarch** (*Monarcha insularis*) Common. Usually observed in pairs, either foraging alone or in mixed feeding flocks. An occupied nest suspended from a vine about 5 metres from the ground, was seen on the 4 Sept.
90. **Satin Flycatcher** (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*) Uncommon. Female plumaged birds of this species were observed on a few occasions in trees along the forest edge in May and early June, but not subsequently.
91. **Yellow-breasted Boatbill** (*Machaerirhynchus flaviventer*) Uncommon. The first sighting was on 31 July and this was followed by 3 further sightings in other parts of the reserve during the following 2 weeks. Then not seen again until 14 Oct.
92. **Shining Flycatcher** (*Myiagra alecto*) Common. Frequently seen and heard along the forest edge and along streams deeper within the forest. One nest with a sitting female was found in a tree by a stream in the forest on 20 July.
93. **Lemon-bellied Flycatcher** (*Microeca flavigaster*) Fairly common. Usually observed foraging in the forest sub-canopy, often in the company of other small birds such as warblers and monarchs.
94. **Olive Flycatcher** (*Microeca flavovirescens*) Uncommon. A pair was observed foraging for insects from adjacent perches in the forest sub-canopy on 16 May, and individuals were also recorded on 23 May and 23 Sept.
95. **Grey Whistler** (*Pachycephala simplex*) Uncommon. However, possibly overlooked to some extent, particularly when not calling as they tend to be fairly

inactive when foraging in the canopy. First recorded on the 27 June and then on 19 and 26 July and 28 August.

96. **Little Shrike-Thrush** (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) Fairly common. Seen and heard regularly, sometimes in mixed feeding flocks.
97. **Variable Pitohui** (*Pitohui kirhocephalus*) Fairly common. Heard more frequently than seen but observed regularly, sometimes in mixed feeding flocks. Most individuals were of the grey-hooded race.
98. **Hooded Pitohui** (*Pitohui dichrous*) Uncommon. Small groups or individuals seen on a few occasions, sometimes foraging in mixed feeding flocks. A family group also frequented a patch of disturbed bush along the entrance road to JAR/CRI.
99. **Rusty Pitohui** (*Pitohui ferrugineus*) Fairly common. Seen regularly in mixed feeding flocks containing Spangled Drongos, Rufous Babblers and other brown birds.
100. **Black Berrypecker** (*Melanocharis nigra*) Fairly common. Observed frequently in the forest sub-canopy during May and June, but it then became rather scarce until late September.
101. **Papuan Flowerpecker** (*Dicaeum pectorale*) Fairly common. Observed frequently, either singly or in pairs, particularly in tall trees along the forest edge.
102. **Black Sunbird** (*Nectarinia aspasia*) Common. Frequently seen visiting flowering trees and shrubs along the forest edge. An active nest was located near the museum on 14 June.
103. **Yellow-bellied Sunbird** (*Nectarinia jugularis*) Uncommon. Observed occasionally visiting flowers along the forest edge.
104. **Long-billed Honeyeater** (*Melilestes megarhynchus*) Fairly common. Both adult and immature plumaged individuals were observed on numerous occasions, sometimes foraging in the lower canopy or in small trees along the forest edge.
105. **Yellow-bellied Longbill** (*Toxorhamphus novaeguineae*) Fairly common. Observed fairly frequently in the forest sub-canopy and the regrowth covering old gardens.
106. **Dwarf Honeyeater** (*Oedistoma iliolophus*) Uncommon. Good views of this species were only obtained on a few occasions but it was possibly overlooked to some extent because of its habits.
107. **Pygmy Honeyeater** (*Oedistoma pygmaeum*) Uncommon. The only definite sighting was along the entrance track on the 28 August, but this also is a species that can be easily overlooked.

108. **Green-backed Honeyeater** (*Glycichaera fallax*). Uncommon. Only recorded on 28 August and 3 Sept.
109. **Puff-backed Meliphaga** (*Meliphaga aruensis*) Common. A frequently observed inhabitant of the forest interior.
110. **Mimetic Meliphaga** (*Meliphaga analoga*) Fairly common. Usually in the garden trees along the forest edge but also observed occasionally in the forest.
111. **Tawny-breasted Honeyeater** (*Xanthotis flaviventer*) Fairly common. Seen frequently foraging in trees along the entrance track or in feeding flocks with other birds in the forest.
112. **Plain Honeyeater** (*Pycnopygius ixoides*) Uncommon. Two individuals, probably a pair, were observed in trees along the entrance track to the forest on several occasions.
113. **Streak-headed Honeyeater** (*Pycnopygius stictocephalus*) Fairly common.
114. **Meyer's Friarbird** (*Philemon meyeri*) Fairly common. Most frequently seen in trees along the forest edge and the entrance track.
115. **Helmeted Friarbird** (*Philemon buceroides*) Common. Very vocal and heard and seen on almost all visits to the reserve.
116. **Streak-headed Mannikin** (*Lonchura tristissima*) Uncommon. Seen occasionally in the small trees along the edge of the entrance track and once carrying nesting material near a stream in the forest on 2 Sept.
117. **Grand Mannikin** (*Lonchura grandis*) Uncommon. Seen occasionally along the entrance track. On 23 August, 2 were seen by the museum collecting nesting material.
118. **Singing Starling** (*Aplonis cantoroides*) Uncommon. Only seen occasionally in trees along the edge of the forest, although very common around JAR/CRI.
119. **Metallic Starling** (*Aplonis metallica*) Common. Frequently seen in large flocks feeding in trees along the edge of the forest.
120. **Yellow-faced Myna** (*Mino dumontii*) Common. Groups of 5-10 seen and heard on almost every visit to the reserve.
121. **Brown Oriole** (*Oriolus szalayi*) Common. Very vocal with several individuals seen or heard on almost all visits to the reserve.
122. **Spangled Drongo** (*Dicrurus hottentottus*) Common. Frequently encountered accompanying feeding flocks of black and brown birds through the forest.

123. **Hooded Butcherbird** (*Cracticus cassicus*) Fairly common. Surprisingly not seen until 21 June when one took up residence at the entrance to the reserve and stayed there right through the remainder of the observation period, calling daily.
124. **Lowland Peltops** (*Peltops blainvillii*) Fairly common. Individuals or pairs seen sitting in exposed trees along the entrance track on most visits to the reserve.
125. **Glossy-mantled Manucode** (*Manucodia atra*) Fairly common. During June a pair frequently fed low down on the small fruits of a tree growing along the forest edge adjacent to the entrance track. The male also often called while perched on an exposed branch of a tree on the opposite side of the track. Individuals were also seen sometimes in mixed feeding flocks.
126. **Jobi Manucode** (*Manucodia jobiensis*) Uncommon. Manucodes identified as this species because of their size and shape were seen occasionally in mixed feeding flocks in the forest canopy or sub-canopy. On 22 July one was observed calling from a dead tree (a higher pitched electronic sound than the previous species).
127. **King Bird of Paradise** (*Cicinnurus regius*) Fairly common. One or more male birds were heard calling from tall display trees on almost every visit to the forest between May and early August, although from then on until mid-October they were much less vocal. Both males and females were seen feeding on fruit in the sub-canopy on a number of occasions and females sometimes joined mixed feeding flocks. On one occasion an immature-plumaged male was seen calling low down in the canopy.
128. **Lesser Bird of Paradise** (*Paradisaea minor*) Fairly common. One or more males heard calling on most visits to the forest and displaying or feeding full plumaged males were observed on a number of occasions. Females, somewhat surprisingly, were seen less frequently.
129. **Grey Crow** (*Corvus tristis*) Fairly common. Flocks of up to ten individuals were seen flying around the reserve on a number of occasions but at other times they appeared to be absent.
130. **Torresian Crow** (*Corvus orru*) Uncommon. Although common along the coastal strip, individuals or small groups only occasionally visited the reserve.

**Additional species only recorded along the coastal strip adjacent to the Kau Wildlife Area**

131. **Lesser Frigate Bird** (*Fregata ariel*) Seen occasionally from the foreshore.
132. **Little Black Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) Small flocks often flew over the JAR/CRI grounds in the early morning or late afternoon.
133. **Little Pied Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*) Individuals occasionally visited the swamp.

134. **Intermediate Egret** (*Egretta intermedia*) Recorded once at the swamp.
135. **Eastern Reef Egret** (*Egretta sacra*) A pair of grey phase birds were seen flying along the JAR/CRI foreshore on 16 July.
136. **White-bellied Sea-Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) One seen soaring offshore on 24 August.
137. **Collared Sparrowhawk** (*Accipiter cirrhocephalus*) One seen along the entrance road on 21 June.
138. **Spotted Whistling Duck** (*Dendrocygna guttata*) Small numbers present at the swamp until it virtually dried up in July.
139. **Buff-banded Rail** (*Rallus philippensis*) One seen running across the entrance road near the junction with the main road on 28 Sept. Others were subsequently seen along the main north coast road.
140. **White-browed Crake** (*Porzana cinerea*) Present in small numbers at the swamp until it dried up in July.
141. **Bush-hen** (*Amaurornis olivaceus*) Seen occasionally and heard more frequently near the swamp and along the side track.
142. **Common Sandpiper** (*Tringa hypoleucos*) A pair took up residence along the JAR/CRI foreshore in July and frequently foraged on the lawn near the laboratory.
143. **Black Noddy** (*Anous minutus*) Occasionally seen from the foreshore, with a flock of 100+ feeding in the lagoon on 12 Oct.
144. **White-winged Black Tern** (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) Several, including a flock of 8, seen feeding close in to shore in early October.
145. **Common Tern** (*Sterna hirundo*) Occasionally seen in the lagoon near enough to the foreshore for a positive identification.
146. **Crested Tern** (*Sterna bergii*) Seen near to the foreshore quite frequently.
147. **Lesser Black Coucal** (*Centropus bernsteini*) Heard frequently and seen occasionally along the side-track.
148. **Common Kingfisher** (*Alcedo atthis*) At least 2 pairs frequented the JAR/CRI foreshore and one pair was observed digging a nest burrow on 6 July, which they subsequently occupied. However I am not sure if they raised offspring as I was away during the critical period.
149. **Little Kingfisher** (*Alcedo pusilla*) The sole record was of a bird which flew into a window at CRI on May 15, momentarily stunning itself

150. **Sacred Kingfisher** (*Halcyon sancta*) Common in the JAR/CRI grounds until late September. One pair that became vocal were still present in mid-November.
151. **Beach Kingfisher** (*Halcyon saurophaga*) Individuals or pairs visited the trees on the JAR/CRI foreshore at irregular intervals, usually only staying for a few hours but attracting attention by calling frequently.
152. **Golden-headed Cisticola** (*Cisticola exilis*) Heard and occasionally seen in long grass by the swamp.
153. **Island Monarch** (*Monarcha cinerascens*) One seen and heard calling in the trees where the side track crosses the stream on 11 July; an island species that is rarely recorded on shore.
154. **Grey Shrike Thrush** (*Colluricincla harmonica*) Fairly common and vocal in the JAR/CRI grounds.
155. **Brown-backed Honeyeater** (*Ramsayornis modestus*) Fairly common around the swamp. Active nests suspended over the water were found there on 26 May and 21 June.
156. **Varied Honeyeater** (*Lichenostomus versicolor*) Common in the JAR/CRI grounds.
157. **Chestnut-breasted Mannikin** (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) Frequently seen in small flocks in the gardens near the entrance to the JAR/CRI grounds.

#### Acknowledgments

This study was carried out while the author was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Christensen Research Institute with financial support provided by the Christensen Fund (Palo Alto, California). This paper is a contribution from the Christensen Research Institute, P.O. Box 305, Madang, Papua New Guinea.

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- Beehler B. M., T. K. Pratt and D. A. Zimmerman. (1986). *Birds of New Guinea*. Princeton University Press, Cambridge.
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(Received May 99)

**Whistling Kite (*Haliastur sphenurus*) kills and eats Green Pygmy Goose  
(*Nettapus pulchellus*)**

By Michael K. Tarburton

At 1045h on 30 July 1998, one of the resident Whistling Kites swooped across the campus of Pacific Adventist University and snatched an adult male Green Pygmy Goose from among a group of 43 such birds. These were in the company of Pacific Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*), Australasian Grebes (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*) and other waterbirds on Pond Two.

The kite tried to land in a small tree next to its favourite roost tree, but gave up and landed on the ground between the trees about 20 metres from the edge of the pond. The bird, which was very pale indicating it to be an older bird, proceeded to pluck the body feathers from the ventral surface and after five minutes had completed that task as well as pulling out all the rectrices. This allowed it to eat the flesh of the tail, but before starting it walked about a metre with one foot on the carcass and one on the ground, to a place free of feathers. As it started to tear pieces from the body adjacent to the tail it would pause to make weak calls to the other Whistling Kite that had arrived overhead. There often are two on or over the campus.

Once most of the abdominal walls were consumed, the ligaments holding one of the legs were severed by the bill, and the whole leg swallowed. Some of the intestines were eaten and more of the abdominal area. One of the wings were then plucked and a little of the muscle stripped from it. After 34 minutes a Torresian Crow (*Corvus orru*) made the first of three approaches to within a metre by foot. At the third the kite flew at the crow and successfully chased it away. It did not return immediately to the carcass but remained about four metres away. When it returned it took only two small pieces before flying into the large tree near to where the other kite had settled.

I made use of this situation to approach the carcass to see if I could learn anything other than what I was able to see through the spotting scope. Both kites flew as I approached. The carcass confirmed what I have already described and the only additional data gained was that the abdomen had been consumed up to but not including the gizzard. The neck had been plucked but the head remained untouched.

At 1139h the kite returned and carried the carcass to a large branch about eight metres up the larger tree. This branch was a favourite feeding post as attested to by the dark "run marks" draped below the kites feet.

Feeding was concentrated on the other leg with two attempts to sever the thigh ligaments. The kite was clearly not as sure footed as when on the ground and was unsuccessful in separating the leg. It then concentrated on the breast muscles. Here too it had difficulty and the goose fell from its grip. The kite responded by flying further up the tree to give two loud calls. Feeding ended an hour and 10 minutes after starting, and no further feeding was seen in the next hour.

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**Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* on New Britain**

By Roger Hicks

While waiting for an Air Niugini flight from Hoskins airport, West New Britain Province, on 27 September 1998, I passed the time by bird-watching around the airport terminal. Up to 20 Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*, one Large Sand-Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* and one Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* foraged or roosted on the short grass bordering the airports runway and taxi-way. Among these waders was a sandpiper, which at first I thought was a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*. Fortunately, it flew closer to the terminal so that I could observe it from a distance of about 30m, without the problems of heat haze, and could see that it was a Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*.

It was smaller than the Pacific Golden Plover; the Large Sand-Plover was too distant for direct comparison. It had a relatively short, straight, dark bill, yellowish at the base. There was no hint of rufous in its brownish crown. It had a pale supercilium. The streaked breast was a 'cold' brown with none of the buff or rufous tones of a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. The breast streaking was clearly demarcated from the white of the belly. Its legs were yellowish-green. In flight it showed a faint, pale wing bar while the rump had a dark central bar with white sides.

Pectoral Sandpiper is a regular but uncommon non-breeding visitor to PNG with the great majority of records (as for most migrant species visiting PNG) from the Port Moresby area (Coates 1985). The only records away from Port Moresby are from Higaturu, Northern Province and Bougainville, North Solomons Province (Coates 1985), which is more indicative of observer coverage than species occurrence. This is the first record of Pectoral Sandpiper for the island of New Britain and for the province of West New Britain.

Reference:

Coates, B.J. 1985. *Birds of Papua New Guinea*, Vol. 1. Dove Publications, Alderley.

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(Received June 99)

**Yellow-legged Pigeon (*Columba pallidiceps*) at Wild Dog, East New Britain**

By Phil Gregory

I was walking along the approach track to Wild Dog mining camp in the mountains inland from Rabaul, at an altitude of about 950m on 14 December 1995, when a large dark pigeon flew low across the track in front of me. I was surprised to note the head as being whitish, contrasting with the dark greyish-black body and seeming wrong for Black Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula melanochroa*). It was a species unfamiliar to me, but it was only upon returning home that I was able to consult Goodwin (1970) and identify the species as Yellow-legged Pigeon.

This is one of the most endangered birds of the region, with just a handful of sightings in recent times. Finch and McKean (1987) saw one near sea-level at Taron

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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(Received February 2000)

#### 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>

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>

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>

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 Sickbill	<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](mailto: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.

E-mail [aislesbs@anzaab.com.au](mailto:aislesbs@anzaab.com.au), Fax (61) 03 9529 1256.

# SICKLEBILL SAFARIS



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## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

*Muruk* welcomes contributions about birds of New Guinea and adjacent regions such as West Irian and the Solomons. It is of great help if submissions can be sent by disk in text or Microsoft Word format. Style conventions follow those of *Emu*, or see earlier issues of *Muruk*, please pay special attention to the citation of references and use of Latin names.

We use the English names as per Beehler et al (1986), the standard field guide for the region, or from Coates (1985 and 1990) for the Bismarck and Admiralty Islands regions. Please follow the taxonomic sequence as used in those works. We are at work on an up-dated taxonomic review in the light of recent advances and greater knowledge of the birds.

Place names should be able to be located on standard maps, the PNG 1:100,000 series, if not please give the nearest location that is shown. GPS readings are welcome, but related to the nearest marked location. Illustrations and maps are also welcome. The editors reserve the right to make any changes they see fit. Contributions are not normally returned for proof checking, but this can be arranged if required.

One simple convention we follow is the oft-confused use of hyphens in names. Where the species is a member of the family, we capitalise both names eg Ornate Fruit-Dove not Ornate Fruit-dove. Where it is not actually a member of the family we use lower case eg Black Cuckoo-shrike not Black Cuckoo-Shrike and Barred Owllet-nightjar instead of Barred Owllet-Nightjar.

There is no need to give a reference citation for Beehler et al (1986) or the two volumes of Coates (1985 and 1990), as these are the standard works for the region.