
A RECORD OF BLAMHEADED GULL IN BALI

by

E.T. Myers

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A single Black headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* in winter plumage was observed on 17 August 1994 at Benoa port, Bali, together with roosting Crested Terns *Stema bergii*. The bird was seen at a distance of 30-50 feet, and observed through 8x32 binoculars and 20x60 telescope. It was seen again at the same site on the following day.

Description: Bill bright red with sooty black tip (about a third of length of bill). Head white with blackish smudgy marks around eyes and on the ear coverts, giving a dirty appearance to the head; brownish white eye ring. Under parts white. Upper parts pale grey. Wing tips black, not showing white tips or spots. Legs: bright red, rather long, the bird standing head and shoulders above the roosting tern.

The observer has thirty years experience with this species, and is also familiar with Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus* (ca. fifty occasions), Franklin's Gull *L. pipixcan* (twice), Bonaparte's Gull *L. philadelphia* (once), Little Gull *L. minutus* (many thousands) and, more importantly, Brown headed Gull *L. brunnicephalus* (over a thousand occasions~

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RECORD OF HARDHEAD (WHITE EYED DUCK) FROM LOMBOK

by

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On 23 December 1998, while relaxing on the beach at Gili Air, a small island off the northwest coast of Lombok, I noticed a group of four large ducks heading east at sea at a distance. These birds were in silhouette, but the flight was noted as somewhat direct with rapid, stiff wingbeats. Less than a minute later, these were followed by three more birds, again moving east.

Later that day, while walking round the east of the island, I came across a group of three ducks resting on the beach at 30m distance, which rapidly took flight. Though not carrying binoculars, the following features were still obvious: a very stocky, predominantly dark brown duck (almost black at a distance), though in flight showed a small amount of white on the upperwing and substantially more 'below', though the presence of a white belly was not noted as the birds were flying away from me. I immediately thought these to be Hardhead *Aythya australis*, a species I had seen in North west Australia in October 1998.

Though resting on land may be somewhat atypical behaviour in *Aythya*, all other features were consistent with this species. The obvious white on the upperwing serves to rule out Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa* and general structure size and dark appearance rules out Sunda Teal *A. gibberifrons*, with both of which I am familiar.

Hardhead is an irruptive migrant, breeding in southern Australia (August–December) and dispersing to northern Australia after heavy rains (Marchant & Higgins 1990). Vagrants have reached New Zealand, New Guinea and Indonesia (Marchant & Higgins 1990). In Indonesia, there is a successful breeding record from the Yang Plateau in East Java in May–June 1937 (Kooiman 1941), but there are no recent records from Java. There are two records from Wallacea (Coates & Bishop 1997), a male collected at Lake Lindu in Central Sulawesi 26 March 1917 (Riley 1924) and a male present on Flores from January to November 1990 (Verhoye & Holmes 1999). Thus this record represents only a third record for Wallacea (and is also a somewhat unusual date).

References

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MATSUDAIRA'S STORM PETREL SECOND RECORD FOR THE LOMBOK STRAIT

by

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Whilst travelling from Lombok to Bali in the late afternoon of 12 September 1999, four medium-sized petrels were seen. Firstly, a single Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* passed close to the boat, followed shortly after by two more birds together further west. All these birds showed the typical long-winged, pointed tail appearance of this species, with an obvious pale covert bar on the upperwing, but showing no pale primary bases. Further west again, a single similar petrel passed the boat some 30–40 m distant. As this bird banked towards the low sun, obvious white patches were seen on the upperwing at the base of the primaries. The tail shape of this bird was not noted, though the white primary bases are diagnostic of Matsudaira's Storm Petrel *Oceanodroma matsudairae*. The flight pattern of this bird and the earlier Bulwer's Petrels was considered quite similar, though the Matsudaira's tended to bank more, without the upward loops of the Bulwer's Petrels.

Matsudaira's Storm Petrel breeds south of Japan, migrating through Indonesia to the Indian Ocean. Described by Coates and Bishop (1997) as a regular migrant through Wallacea, there are only two previous confirmed records from the Greater Sundas: a single bird in the Sunda Strait in 1994 (Bas van Balen *in litt*), and a single bird in the Lombok Strait on 31 May 1988 (Johnstone *et al.* 1993). Conversely, Bulwer's Petrel is considered regular in the Greater Sundas (MacKinnon and Phillipps 1993) though rarely recorded in Wallacea (Coates and Bishop 1997).