

**SHINING BRONZE CUCKOO AND CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO:  
FIRST RECORDS FOR TIMOR**

. By

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(Received 14 February 1994)

'Whilst censusing birds near Baumata swimming pool, *ca.* 20 km south-east of Kupang, West Timor, on 5 July 1993, I heard calls of a cuckoo, which I recognized instantly as those of the Shining Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*. The calls were reminiscent of a dog-whistle, each call consisting of about four notes, each note well-spaced, and with a strong, rising inflection. Another call heard, also known- to me, was a single downward-inflected note (but short, unlike Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo *C. basalis*). After a few imitations of its call, the bird approached to within 6 m, and I observed it for ten minutes, during which time I viewed it from all angles. The crown was brown with a rufous tinge, the rest of the upperparts shining bronze-green. The white underparts were entirely barred blackish, including the face and ear coverts, though the vent had a buff wash (and few bars). The under surface of the tail was also black-and-white barred, with no rufous visible. The habitat at Baumata consisted of scrubby secondary growth (mostly less than 4 m in height) dominated by *Tecumalinda* sp with some *Cassia siamea* and *Alstonia villosa*.

*C. lucidus* is known from all of the major Lesser Sunda islands (Nusa Tenggara) to the west of Timor (Lombok, Sumbawa, Flores, Sumba), as well as Wetar (50 km to the north of Timor), and the small island of Roti only 13 km south-west of Timor (White & Bruce 1986). Its presence on Timor is thus to be expected, but there appear to be no previously published records, and the status of the species remains to be determined. Given that all records for the species in Nusa Tenggara (including those reported in this note), and New Guinea, are from April to October (White & Bruce 1986, Beehler 1986), *C. lucidus* would appear to be an austral winter migrant to the region from Australia. Specimens from Pulau Dao, a satellite island of Roti, and Sumba, were collected in early April and late May respectively (Mees 1975, Mayr 1944). As the species is entirely absent from north-west Australia (Blakers *et al.* 1984), its migration route to Indonesia is probably via New Guinea.

On 9 January 1989 at Camplong, about 40 km east of Kupang, I heard the distinctive, raucous calls of a Channel-billed Cuckoo *Scythrops novaehollandiae*. Seconds later I saw two large grey birds flying low over the canopy, displaying the long body and tail with nearly straight wings, in the Southern Cross flight silhouette so characteristic of this species. The habitat at this site is mainly semi-deciduous vine forest, with many large fig trees *Ficus* spp. The fruits of the latter are a favourite food item of this species (Blakers *et al.* 1984; pers. obs.). The Channel-billed Cuckoo is known from Australia, New

Guinea, and eastern Indonesia, including Sulawesi and Maluku. Within Nusa Tenggara, it has been recorded on Sumba, Flores, Babar and Tanimbar, islands to them north-west and north-east of Timor, respectively (White & Bruce 1986, Holmes *in litt.*). This appears to be the first published record of the species from Timor.

Further confirmation of the Channel-billed Cuckoo at Camplong is provided by Alan McBryde who recorded the species there on 12 January 1993.

### References

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## MIGRATION OF SWIFTS IN THE GENUS *APUS* THROUGH NUSA TENGGARA

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(Received 18 May 1994)

Very few records are given in White & Bruce (1986) of the Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus* in Wallacea, and even fewer of the Little Swift *A. affinis*. For *pacificus*, there was sufficient evidence to indicate that this species at least passes through Wallacea regularly en route to Australia, but there was only one record known from Nusatenggara (from Flores). A number of observers have reported the species subsequently, from Flores (Verhoeve, in prep.), Timor (Andrew 1986), and Sumba (Manchester Polytechnic, in litt., and Holmes pers. obs.). In Flores, Verhoeve found it to be present from mid-August to mid-April, common from September to November and often in large flocks.