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DORIA'S HAWK *MEGATRIORCHIS DORIAE* ON BATANTA ISLAND, IRIAN JAVA

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Doria's Hawk *Megatriorchis doriae* is a shy, uncommon and exceedingly little known forest raptor (Rand & Gilliard 1967, Brown & Amadon 1968) which until now was thought to be a monotypic species endemic to the New Guinea mainland in lowland and hill forest to 1000m. However, during September 1983 I observed this distinctive species in coastal forest on the north side of the island of Batanta, Irian Jaya. Batanta has been little studied ornithologically, and Diamond & Irwanto (1983) summarize what is known of its birds.

Batanta is a rugged island of over 400 sq. km., separated from the larger island of Salawati by a 5 km. strait. Salawati is only 1.5 km. from mainland New Guinea at the nearest point. This group of islands, which with Waigeo and some others form the Raja Empat Islands, is located to the north and west of the town of Sorong, at the western tip of Irian Jaya.

The bird that I observed was perched in a partially exposed tree in good light at the interface of secondary scrub and disturbed lowland forest. It was similar to other adult Doria's Hawks that I have observed elsewhere in New Guinea, the most noticeable feature being its long attractively banded tail and beautifully barred upperparts. Although similar in body length to the more common and widespread Longtailed Buzzard *Henicopemis longicauda*, which has previously been recorded on the island (Diamond & Irwanto, 1983), Doria's Hawk appears much lighter in build and distinctively longer-legged, not unlike closely allied *Accipiter* spp. Furthermore, whereas the Long-tailed Buzzard has three distinct tail bands, the tail of Doria's Hawk is much more finely barred with at least 10 bars. Diamond (*pers. comm.*) also points out that soft part colours and the ratio of wing to tail length are useful field characters. Unfortunately these features were not noted. Other diagnostic markings included a broad white superciliary and whitish underparts with a sparse but heavy streaking particularly on the breast and flanks.

The discovery of this species on Batanta Island not only extends its known distribution but is interesting in that it is the first record of this apparently sedentary species occurring on an offshore island. In view of its assumed sedentariness it is unlikely to be a recent colonist from mainland New Guinea. It is more probable that the Batanta population of Doria's Hawk is a relict from the Pleistocene era when the islands on the Sahul shelf including Batanta were joined with the mainland. If this is so, the occurrence of this species on other similar islands such as the intervening Salawati may be predicted.

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References.

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Address: 13, Elmscott Gardens, Winchmore Hill, London N21 2BP. **SHORT NOTE ON THE**