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**NEW AND WTERESTING WORDS FROM WEST SUMBAWA**

by

**Mark Grantham**

(Final draft received 7 March 2000)

In September 1999, the author visited several sites in West Sumbawa, notably the area around Taliwang (9 Selgember) and the southern slope of Gunung Olet Sangeges, from Semongkat to above Batu Dulang (10-11 September). The following observations are all from this period, and include six new records for Sumbawa (*cf.* Coates & Bishop 1997).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Seldom recorded in Wallacea, three birds were seen in coastal mangroves south of Taliwang. These birds associated with Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* in a possible mixed breeding colony.

[Ed: Collin Trainor (in litt. to editor, 8 July 2000) has added the following further records of this species during 2000: one at Lake Taliwang on 19 May, one on fishponds c. 10 km west of Empang on 7 May, and one at the freshwater swamp 10 km north of Plampang on 7 July.]

**[Bittern sp.** *Lxobrychus* sp.]

A single bird was seen at dusk at Lake Taliwang, flying across the lake and into thick vegetation on a small island, some 40m distant. This bird, though seen in failing flight, showed a distinct pale patch on the forewing, contrasting noticeably with a darker mantle and flight feathers. The only *Lxobrychus* bittern in the region to show this distinctive plumage pattern is Schrenck's Bittern *Lxobrychus eurhythmus*, previously unrecorded from the Lesser Sundas. The Yellow Bittern *I. sinensis* has a similar wing pattern but would show a pale mantle. The only confirmed Wallacean records of Schrenck's Bittern are from Sulawesi, from early September to April.

**Cinnamon Bittern** *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*

As this is considered an uncommon species in Nusatenggara (see White & Bruce 1986, Coates & Bishop 1997), it is significant to report that large numbers were seen at Lake Taliwang, especially at dusk.

**Changeable Hawk eagle** *Spizaetus cirrhatus*

A single bird seen at c. 1,400m above Batu Dulang is a notable altitudinal extension above the 1,000m quoted in Coates & Bishop (1997).

**Wandering Whistling duck** *Dendrocygna arcuata*

Two birds resting on a lily covered area of Lake Taliwang represent the first record for Sumbawa. Though not seen in flight, the small white plumes on the sides and flanks were obvious.

**Ruddy breasted Crake** *Porzana fusca*

From a single vantage point overlooking Lake Taliwang, at least three different individuals were seen feeding along the edge of the lake and a small island. All were seen in an area of around one hectare, and in considering the size of Lake Taliwang, this species is presumed to be rather numerous. It has not previously been recorded in Sumbawa.

**Comb crested Jacana** *Irediparra gallinacea*

Presumably common on Lake Taliwang, with at least 5-10 individuals seen on a single hectare of lily covered water.

**Gull billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

A single adult in non breeding plumage over Lake Taliwang is the first documented record for Sumbawa.

**Blue tailed Bee eater** *Merops philippinus*

Regularly recorded in all lowland areas, often in large numbers. The abundance of this species may suggest local breeding, but this was not proven.

**Yellow vented Bulbul** *Pycnonotus goiavier*

A single bird singing in thick, dry scrub near lake Taliwang was seen briefly, and constitutes the first record for Sumbawa, previously only recorded in Wallacea from Lombok. This bird could have been an escaped cage bird, though the practice of keeping cage birds appears to be uncommon in Sumbawa (pers. obs.)

**Javan Munia** *Lonchura leucogastrides*

Of a flock of around 150 munias observed in a rice field and dry grass areas around Taliwang, 90% of birds were Pale headed Munia *Lonchura pallida*, with the remaining 10% being Javan Munia. Though Black faced Munia *Lonchura maluca propinqua* of Sumbawa, Flores and Sumba may not show obvious underpart barring, thus appearing similar to Javan Munia (Clements *et al* 1993), these birds all

lacked the pale rump of this species. Several juveniles were also present indicating possible local breeding. Additionally, of a loose flock of 40 birds seen in dry grassland along the north coast near Utan, 75% of birds were Black faced Munia with 25% being Javan Munia and a single Pale headed Munia. Again this flock contained several juvenile birds. These would appear to be the first records of Javan Munia from Surnbawa, previously only recorded as far east as Lombok. The presence of this species and possible competition with other endemic Munias is perhaps worthy of further study.

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## TWENTIETH CENTURY RECORDS OF THE ROSE CROWNED FRUIT DOVE ON FLORES.

by

**Dwi Lesmana, Raf Drijvers & Colin Trainor**

(Final draft received 18 February 2000)

The Row crowned Fruit dove *Ptilinopus regina* is a widespread resident throughout coastal areas of northern and eastern Australia (Higgins & Davies 1996) and there is one confirmed record from Dari Island, southern Papua New Guinea (Coates 1985). This species is also widespread in the southern Moluccas and Nusa Tenggara particularly on small islands, and is locally common in lowland forest, woodland and scrub (Coates & Bishop 1997). The only Flores record, however, appears to be that of Everett in Hartert (1897) although Schmutz (1977) reported several additional records. These were at Nisar (250 m on January 9, 1977, 8°47' S, 119°58' E), above Nunang at 1000 m (8°46' S, 120°03' E), and Golo Lusang (1600 m on May 1, 1976, 8°35' S, 120°30' E). Given the preference of the Rose crowned Fruit dove for lowland habitat, the latter two records seem unlikely.

Since 1986 numerous birders and two extended University expeditions have carried out relatively comprehensive bird surveys, especially in the wetter and more heavily forested west of Mares (e.g. Gibbs 1990, Verbelen 1993, Butchart *et al.* 1993, Pilgrim *et al.* 1997, Verhoeve and Holmes 1999). Row crowned Fruit dove was not recorded by these observers.

In 1998 a Birdlife/PKA/WWF tow collected biological and natural resource use data at 17 forest areas (patches) on Flores to review the protected area network. Forest areas surveyed were representative of the remaining environmental variation, with sampling from sea level to 2100 m, on available lithologies with natural habitat (alluvium almost entirely converted to agriculture), from the