

First Record of Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* for Indonesia

NIGEL REDMAN

Moons Hill Cottage, Moons Hill, Ninfield, East Sussex TN33 9LH, UK

Email: nredman@acblack.com

Ringkasan. Pada tanggal 18 Agustus 1993 seekor *Calidris* kecil (kedidi) yang soliter ditemukan sedang berdiri lurus di pantai Pulau Jefman, dekat Sorong di Papua Barat (dulu disebut Irian Jaya). Kombinasi ukuran dan bentuk paruh secara keseluruhan dan sayap yang panjang serta tidak adanya warna putih pada tunggir menegaskan identifikasi burung ini sebagai kedidi jenis *Calidris bairdii*. Ini adalah laporan pertama mengenai spesies ini di Papua Barat bahkan di Indonesia.

On 18 August 1993 I was walking back along the beach towards the airport terminal on Jefman Island, near Sorong in West Papua (formerly Irian Jaya), when I stopped to look at some waders on the shoreline. There were three Pacific Golden Plovers *Pluvialis fulva*, three Whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus*, a Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* and a Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* – all species to be expected on passage, even on that relatively early date. Of more interest was a single Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*, a very familiar species to a British birder, but which I later found out to be only the second record for West Papua (Paul Andrew pers. comm.). The first had also been near Sorong, on 26 September 1983 (Andrew 1992), and there are also several previous records from the south coast of mainland Papua New Guinea, in the Fly River Delta and the Port Moresby area (Coates 1985; Beehler *et al.* 1986; Capt. D.M. Simpson, pers. comm. to B.J. Coates).

Nearby, my attention was drawn to a solitary small *Calidris* sandpiper with a horizontal stance that I could not immediately identify. It was smaller and slimmer than the Common Sandpiper or Greater Sand Plover nearby, though not as small as a stint (peep), and it had dark legs and a short, straight dark bill. Its plumage was rather grey-brown above with a finely streaked brownish breast-band, not sharply demarcated as in Pectoral Sandpiper *C. melanotos*. The rest of the underparts were pure white. I quickly ruled out various Old World species with which I am familiar and which might be expected to be present at this time. As I was checking its features, I noticed that the wingtips projected well beyond the tail, and I immediately began to consider a North American origin as a possibility. The combination of overall size and bill shape, together with the long wings, pointed to either Baird's or White-rumped Sandpipers.

Once I had noted all the relevant features and had satisfied myself that it had to be one of these two species, I walked a little closer. The bird flushed and flew

a short distance down the beach. The lack of a white rump confirmed the identification as Baird's Sandpiper. Appreciating the significance of the record, I left the beach and hurried to fetch the rest of my Birdquest group who had gone on ahead when I stopped to check the waders. By the time we returned, the waders were all still present, and once again we were able to approach surprisingly close and obtain excellent views. Mark Van Beirs, my co-leader, was quickly able to confirm the identification. The bird was clearly not a juvenile, lacking the scaly upperparts and buffy plumage of first-year birds – a first-year bird in August would have to be in juvenile plumage as Baird's Sandpiper moults on its wintering grounds. The overall coloration and presence of some worn retained primaries indicated a first-summer bird (i.e. in its second calendar year) but ageing is difficult after the juvenile moult.

Baird's Sandpiper breeds mainly in arctic North America (with small numbers in extreme NE Siberia), migrating to central and southern South America for the non-breeding season. Vagrancy is well documented in this species, with a wide scattering of records in the old world. There are at least five accepted records from Australia plus a number of unconfirmed reports, and a similar number of records from New Zealand (Higgins & Davies 1996). There is also a record of the species from Papua New Guinea in November 1985 (Finch 1986). This Sorong bird is the first record of this species for Papua and for Indonesia.

References

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