

EDITORIAL

Once again, the editors apologize for the long time lag between issues, but as noted in a previous editorial, publication will continue to be at irregular intervals. We will not sacrifice standards in order to meet unnecessary targets. Nevertheless, we hope to reduce the periods between issues.

Publication of *Birds to Watch*, reviewed in this "issue, has awoken us to the alarming fact that Indonesia has the longest list of threatened species in the World. This is not really surprising in view of the sheer size of our avifauna, and nearly half of those listed consist of Wallacean endemics whose current status is unknown. So few of the lesser islands have been visited by ornithologists in recent decades.

The Oriental Bird Club has appealed to the country representatives to identify opportunities for study in their respective regions. It is regretted that the Indonesian representatives have not done so. The reason is the sheer magnitude of the task. The entire Republic of Indonesia awaits ornithological field study. This can be seen as a major challenge, as it will not always be easy birdwatching. Travel to the remote regions can be a pleasure, but requires funds, time and patience. Few regions yet have adequate identification guides, and we do not even possess a definitive national bird list. The paper by Bowler & Taylor in this issue shows the difficulties that will be faced in the identification of several species because of poorly understood taxonomic relationships and the lack of field guides.

Birds to Watch should now be used as a baseline to identify those species that really are threatened (and those that may be omitted). While we may be optimistic and hope that a proportion of those listed will be found to be secure, or able to adapt to changing habitats, we can be equally certain that others are already threatened. To our knowledge, only two Indonesian endemics have become extinct. How many others may soon receive the same fate? Bowler & Taylor show that *Cacatua moluccensis* is already far down that road (along with the other endemic cockatoos). A definitive Bird Red Data Book is now an urgent priority for Indonesia.

In accordance with *Kukila's* concept and aims, It is hoped in our next issue to publish a "Sulawesi Bird Report" as a medium for the publication of recent data on distribution and status on that island. Other islands will follow in future issues, beginning with Sumatra. Although the editorial office is not yet computerized, increasing use is being made of such facilities (and authors who

wish to submit manuscripts on diskette are invited to contact the editors first), and it is intended that data from the reports of visiting ornithologists will be stored in this way, for inclusion when the next relevant area report is due.

D.A.H.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JAVA and BALI BIRDS - Request for information/assistance.

In connection with a Checklist of the Birds of Java and Bali, to be published as one of the British Ornithologists' Union's Checklist series, all those who have new or interesting observations from those islands (especially recent observations from little-known areas), are invited to send information to the compiler. Dr. J.H. Becking, 7 Ericalaan, 6703 EM Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Any information on the birds welcome, and all records will, of course, be fully acknowledged.

CORRECTION: All port G. & G.R. Milton. A note on the recent sighting of *Zosterops flava* Javan White-eye.

This paper in our last issue included a footnote to p.144 which omitted to mention that the note originated from the editors; the final text was not seen or approved by the authors. The editors wish to confirm the authors' opinion that hand descriptions would be adequate to confirm the presence of *Zosterops chloris*, without the necessity to collect specimens.

Field workers are reminded that the collection of specimens in Indonesia is illegal without the possession of a research permit from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), and that any such specimens collected remain the property of Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense.

The new FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF JAVA AND BALI by John MacKinnon was published by Gadjah Mada University Press, Jogjakarta, in late 1988. Details of overseas distributors and prices are not available at time of going to press. A review will appear in our next issue