

Acknowledgements

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TAXONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS OF THE WHITE-RUMPED KINGFISHER *Caridonax fulgidus*

By John L. McKean (Received 22 February 1988)

The taxonomic relationships of the White-rumped Kingfisher *Caridonax fulgidus* are not well established. Fry (1980), in his comprehensive review of the Alcedinidae, retained the species in *Halcyon* for convenience only, noting that its colour pattern is like the blue and white *Tanysiptera* species and distantly like *Actenoides bougainvillea*. Forshaw and Cooper (1983) likewise retained the species in *Halcyon*. Forshaw (*in litt.* 17 November 1987) suggests that a thorough investigation of a possible relationship between it and *H. coromanda* should be undertaken. Bruce, in White and Bruce (1986), considered that until more is known of this bird and its presumed relationships with *Tanysiptera* and *Actenoides*, it was best placed in the monotypic genus *Caridonax*. While I also think that this species is best retained in *Caridonax*, I consider that its affinities tie dose to *Dacelo*. My evidence is based on calls and calling posture as outlined below.

During August 1987, I found *C. fulgidus* common in forest to 1700 metres altitude on Flores, Indonesia. "It was particularly active at dusk and dawn when its white rump showed to advantage as it flew across forest clearings. In this respect it resembles *Tanysiptera sylvia* and *T. galeata*.

However, *C. fulgidus* lacks the trilling calls of *Tanysiptera* species. Its calls are remarkably similar to those of *Dacelo leachii*, *D. tyro* and *D. gaudichaud* in tone and delivery. Its main call is a rapid series of some 8 to 14 harsh notes 'kuff-kuff-kuff, delivered at about one per second. As with *Dacelo*, duetting is quite common. Another feature that it shares with *Dacelo* is its habit of cocking the tail when calling. The most striking feature that sets it apart from *Dacelo* would appear to be its bright red bin.

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OVERLOOKED EVIDENCE OF THE SHORT-TOED EAGLE *Circaetus gallicus* ON JAVA

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The Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* is widely distributed over Africa, Eurasia, India, and North China, with an isolated, resident population in the Lesser Sundas (King at a7 1975; White & Bruce 1986). Northern populations are migratory and birds have been reported, uncommonly, south to Malaya (Medway & Wet ls 1976). The species has been recorded from a number of localities in the area between both main regions of distribution: Sumatra (Van Marle & Voous 1988), Java