

ritory and perhaps farther afield. The taking of terrestrial insects flushed out by rain and of flying ants are both examples of the exploitation of abundant sources of food.

I acknowledge the help of Mr W. J. M. Vestjens

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20 September 1976.

OBSERVATIONS ON BIRDS ON NDENDI ISLAND, SANTA CRUZ GROUP

During the Whitney expedition in the 1930s a survey of the avifauna of the Santa Cruz group of islands was made and this information is readily available in Mayr (1945). Since then, there do not appear to have been any further publications on birds in this group of islands.

The group is politically part of the eastern Solomon Islands and is situated approximately 400 kilometres east of Makira (San Cristobal) and 240 kilometres north of the Torres Islands in the northern New Hebrides. The main island, Ndendi, is situated approximately 11° S and 166° E. This group of islands has the impoverished fauna expected on remote oceanic islands and a high proportion of endemic species and subspecies.

In the course of an epidemiological study in the northern New Hebrides and eastern Solomons I spent from 30 October to 6 November 1975 on Ndendi and was able to make some observations of birds. In view of the lack of recent information about this group two records appear to be worth noting and a third is surprising. These observations were made during a study supported by the Medical Research Council of New Zealand, whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

Ardea novaehollandiae White-faced heron

I saw a single bird on the air-strip at the northern end of Graciosa Bay on Ndendi on 5 November. The bird was present there throughout the afternoon. Dr Ed Fellowes told me that a heron of a species he did not know, but thought was probably *A. novaehollandiae*, had been resident in the same area when he was on the island six weeks previously. This was probably the same bird, which had been resident for some time.

The only ardeid normally resident in the group is the Eastern Reef Egret *Egretta sacra*, which is very common and predominantly in the dark phase. It would not be possible to confuse the two species and I have never seen *E. sacra* on an open grassed area similar to the strip where this bird was found. My field notes on its appearance were: 'Large grey heron, white face and front of neck, plumes on back of head and neck grey, black bill, legs lemon

for identifying stomach contents; of Mr S. A. Parker and Ms J. R. Harrington, who made useful comments on an early draft; and Mr N. F. Crawford who did the typing.

yellow. Length say about 25 inches [625 mm]'. Because I have known the bird for many years and handled a considerable number during field work in the Murray Valley in late November 1975 and January 1976, I have no doubt of the correctness of this identification.

Mayr (1945) records the species from New Caledonia and Condon (1975) from south-eastern New Guinea, but neither does so from the Solomons or New Hebrides. Medway and Marshall (1975) and Diamond and Marshall (1976) do not record it from the New Hebrides. There have been several papers on birds of the western Solomon Islands by C. G. Sibley and others but none of these records *A. novaehollandiae*.

Presumably this bird was a vagrant of a species that is increasing its range, and, certainly in New Zealand, increasing in numbers. However, it is surprising to find it 2,900 kilometres outside its previously recorded range.

Tyto alba Barn owl

This species has not previously been recorded from Ndendi. It is present in the New Hebrides, the Solomon Islands and the Santa Cruz group (Vanikoro). It is more surprising that it has not been previously recorded than that it has now been found on Ndendi. This was a single specimen seen near the head (southern end) of Graciosa Bay. According to Mayr (op. cit.) the subspecies on Vanikoro is the same as that in the New Hebrides (*interposita*) and different from that in the Solomons as far east as Santa Ana.

Porphyrio porphyrio Purple Swampphen

At least one bird of this species was resident close to the Government rest-house at the northern end of Graciosa Bay. This had been seen by Dr Fellowes and was seen every day during the week we were on the island by Dr F. J. Austin and me. I had previously seen at least one when I visited the island in January 1972. This species is now probably established on Ndendi although I do not know of any observation of its breeding there. In the Santa Cruz group it has previously been recorded from Tinakula, Utupua and Vanikoro Islands.

REFERENCES

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- DIAMOND, J. M., and A. G. MARSHALL. 1976. Origin of the New Hebridean avifauna. *Emu* 76: 187-200.
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29 November 1976.

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE ANNOUNCEMENT

A.N.(S) 101

The required six months' notice is given of the possible use of plenary powers by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in connection with the following names listed by case number: (see *Bull. Zool. Nom.* 33 (3 & 4) 31 March 1977).

Z.N.(S.) 2117 *Cotyle* Boie, 1826 (Aves, HIRUNDINIDAE): request for suppression.

Comments should be sent in duplicate (if possible within six months of the date of publication of this notice), citing case number to:

R. V. Melville, The Secretary, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, c/o British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, LONDON, SW7 5BD, England.

Those received early enough will be published in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*.

ITZN 59

The following Opinions have been published recently by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

Opinion No.	Subject	Bull. zool. Nom.
1068	LEPTOSOMATIDAE in Aves and Nematoda: resolution of homonymy arising from similarity in the names of the type genera.	33 (3, 4): 159
1069	Request to use plenary powers to suppress all uses of family-group name THRAUPIDAE (Aves) before its use by Wetmore and Miller, 1926 refused: correction of entry for Name No. 428 THRAUPIDAE in Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology.	33 (3, 4): 162
1070	<i>Archaeopteryx lithographica</i> von Meyer, 1861 (Aves) under plenary powers given precedence over <i>Pterodactylus crassipes</i> von Meyer, 1857.	33 (3, 4): 165

The Commission cannot supply separates of Opinions.