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Further additions to the avifauna of Zambia

by R. J. Dowsett, D. R. Aspinwall & P. M. Leonard

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Dowsett (1997a) documented the species added to the Zambian list since the publication of Benson *et al.* (1971). This latter has remained the standard work on the birds of Zambia, but will in time be completely up-dated by the publication of an annotated atlas (Dowsett, Aspinwall & Dowsett-Lemaire in prep.). It is appropriate to detail those species found for the first time in the country since 1978. No fewer than 7 species were added during 1979 alone, and there have been an additional 17 since. These bring to 743 the number of species for which occurrence in Zambia is confirmed.

RJD and the late DRA examined the published and unpublished evidence for all claimed additions to the Zambian list up to November 1995, the time of DRA's tragic disappearance. In the case of species with which we were not very familiar we sought the advice of external referees. We have considered all rarity records that have appeared in the monthly *Newsletter* of the Zambian Ornithological Society and elsewhere, and believe that only the species mentioned below have been proven sufficiently to warrant acceptance. For most species there is evidence in the form of a specimen, photograph or tape-recording (specimens being housed in the national collection of the Livingstone Museum). In the case of species whose occurrence is based only on sight records, the Zambian Ornithological Society's policy is that those reported by just a single observer (however competent) should be placed in square brackets pending a further, confirmed record. Co-ordinates are given for localities not listed in the gazetteer of Benson *et al.* (1971).

CAPE SHOVELER *Anas smithii*

This species was mentioned in square brackets by Benson *et al.* (1971), on the basis of a single-observer sighting by RJD of a male at Lochinvar on 10 and 15 September 1969. Its occurrence as an occasional non-breeding visitor to southern Zambia, perhaps in years of drought in southern Africa, has been confirmed by a further 4 records. These are from Livingstone, Lochinvar (twice) and Lusaka: up to 3 birds have been seen, and photographed (DRA *et al.*), between 29 August and 20 April, though with none in December or January. One at Lusaka stayed from 29 August to 18 November 1982, and (perhaps the same bird) re-appeared 23 February–1 March 1983.

[FOREST BUZZARD *Buteo oreophilus*

One, hunting low, flew over the border road on the Nyika Plateau and continued down a wooded valley into Zambia on 21 December 1989 (R. D. Medland). There are multiple-observer sightings (and tape-recordings) from the eastern (Malawi) side of the Nyika, but it can be no more than a vagrant to the more isolated forests of the western side: RJD and F. Dowsett-Lemaire (who first discovered the species on the Nyika) never saw it on the Zambian side during nearly three years of resident ornithological studies 1979–81.]

GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE *Aquila clanga*

An adult, on which a satellite transmitter was placed in Poland, was tracked to the South Luangwa National Park, spending some three months in Zambia, from c. 17 December 1996 to 11 March 1997 (Meyburg *et al.* 1997; B.-U. Meyburg *in litt.*). This bird returned to Europe the following breeding season, and its identity was then confirmed by several ornithologists. It was again tracked to the Luangwa Valley in 1997–98 (Meyburg *et al.* 1998, who present a photo of this individual). Hitherto the winter range of *A. clanga* was not known to be to the south of Uganda and Kenya: it has apparently been overlooked by observers in Zambia.

SOOTY FALCON *Falco concolor*

The first accepted record was of one seen at Kitwe on 10 March 1978, where a later individual was photographed (Penry 1979a, 1979b). To date there have been c. 20 acceptable sightings (several observers), from the Kasaba Bay and Mwinilunga south to Homani in Chama district (11°14'S, 33°11'E) and Choma. Extreme dates are 4 November to 28 April, although there is one record of a possible (where field notes do not exclude the possibility of Eleonora's Falcon *F. eleonorae*) as early as 2 October. Most are apparently on passage November and December.

[GREY KESTREL *Falco ardosiaceus*

Since first being reported by Jones (1974), there have been sightings claimed by a number of observers at Kasaba Bay and elsewhere in Sumbu National Park on Lake Tanganyika. Up to three birds have been reported at different times throughout the year, and it has been

suggested that it probably breeds there. Regrettably, none of these records is supported by photographs or an adequate description. We know of at least three sightings claimed elsewhere in northern Zambia, but do not believe that any has satisfactorily ruled out the possibility of *Falco concolor* or other similar species. Nevertheless, the occurrence of Grey Kestrel in southern Zaire (Louette 1989), and a vagrant specimen from northern Malawi (Nhlane 1993), suggest strongly that it does occur at times in northern Zambia.]

[WHITE-WINGED FLUFFTAIL *Sarothrura ayresi*

One female was reportedly seen by W. F. Bruce-Miller at Greystones, near Kitwe, on 13 February 1981. This record may well be correct (the movements of this species being not at all understood), but the possibility of some other species, perhaps partially albinistic, is not completely ruled out. An earlier sighting was reported by Brooke (1964), of one seen briefly and independently by two observers, on 5 November 1962, 17 miles west of Chingola, on the road to Solwezi. This was not accepted by Benson *et al.* (1971), and the record was later withdrawn by one of the observers.]

[LITTLE CRAKE *Porzana parva*

Taylor (1980c) reports a male well seen at Itawa swamp, Ndola, on three occasions 1–13 March 1980. While this record, by far the most southerly in Africa, is probably correct, being a single observer sighting it is placed in square brackets.]

KORI BUSTARD *Ardeotis kori*

On 5 and 22 August 1997 one was well seen in the Sindabezi area, west of Livingstone, by R. Stjernstedt. Near Kazungula a single bird was seen to fly across the Zambezi River from Zimbabwe, on 24 April 1998 (K. Hustler, F. Ambrose *et al.*, *in litt.*). It was watched for 3 minutes, and eventually landed within Zambia. Known already as an occasional wanderer to the Victoria Falls area, and regular near Kazungula, these are the first reliable reports from the Zambian side of the Zambezi.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

There have been seven records, of one or two birds, at Luanshya, Chisamba and Kafue, east to near Chipata, since the first on 10 November 1979 (Taylor 1980a). The species has subsequently been photographed. Extreme dates are 27 September and 20 February. Zambia is at the southern limit of this Palaearctic migrant's winter range.

CHESTNUT-BANDED PLOVER *Charadrius pallidus*

There are two acceptable sight records, of one at Victoria Falls, 14 October 1979 (Pollard 1980) and one at Luanshya on 23 August and 13 September 1980 (Taylor 1982). A further report of a "possible" at Lusaka in 1979 was a misidentified White-fronted Plover *C. marginatus*.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

A bird reported from the Busanga plain in Kafue National Park on 24 October 1964 (Brooke 1966: 67, 86) was seen by both H. A. and P. L. Britton (*in litt.*). A good description was published, and we accept the record (it was placed in square brackets by Benson *et al.* 1971). One other record has been claimed: one heard at Lochinvar by P. B. Taylor on 28 September 1975. We feel that the possibility of confusion with the voice of other waders was not excluded, and so regard this second record as unconfirmed.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS *Tringa flavipes*

An individual of this Nearctic vagrant was seen by several people and photographed at Kafubu dam, near Ndola (13°03'S, 28°35'E), 21 January–18 February 1979 (Taylor 1980d). One photographed at Lochinvar, 23 & 24 June 1990, is considered to be a Greenshank *T. nebularia*.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER *Tringa solitaria*

One was present at Lilayi lodge near Lusaka (15°33'S, 28°20'E) from 23 January to 27 February 1994 (Aspinwall *et al.* 1995). It was seen by several people, photographed and tape-recorded. This is the only acceptable record of this Nearctic vagrant from mainland Africa.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

An example of this coastal migrant was watched at Luanshya 7–9 December 1985 (R. J. Casalis de Pury, P. A. Gregory *et al.*), and the identity confirmed by photographs.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*

This species has been reported in Zambia on seven occasions: single birds have been seen at Ndola, Luanshya, Chisamba, Lusaka, Kafue and Lochinvar, since first found by C. Carter and P. B. Taylor (Taylor 1980d). Photographs are available. Four records fall between 12 November and 24 December, with one 4–5 February and two in April, the latest 21 April. There are now a good number of African records, but it is not clear if they are of Nearctic or Palaearctic origin.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*

A single bird was seen and photographed at Itawa swamp, Ndola, 29 September–1 October 1985 (C. Carter, D. Shepherd *et al.*).

FRANKLIN'S GULL *Larus pipixcan*

An adult of this Nearctic species, in non-breeding dress, was well seen at Lochinvar 25 January 1997 (PML *et al.*). There have been a number of records in southern Africa in recent years (e.g. Hockey *et al.* 1996).

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

At Luanshya one (in non-breeding plumage) was present 5–7 October 1979, seen by several observers, and its identity confirmed from photographs (Taylor 1980b).

BURCHELL'S SANDGROUSE *Pterocles burchelli*

The first fully acceptable record of this southern arid species was of a group of three (and others) well seen on a dry plain near Imusho, 18 September 1996 (PML, C. Beel). Two singles had earlier been reported on the Zambia-Angola-Namibia border, also in the Imusho area, Sesheke district, on 12 August 1994 (DRA). Just extra-limitally, six were in *Terminalia* on the Zambezi floodplain 20 km east of Sesheke (in Namibia) 26 October 1994 (DRA). It is not known if the species occurs regularly in that area, or if it is a vagrant in certain years only. This border zone was out of bounds for many years, and there is no resident observer.

[SPECKLED PIGEON *Columba guinea*

Local reports and even place names suggest that this species may have occurred in the past at certain localities along the Zambezi escarpment (W. F. Bruce-Miller pers. comm.). This requires investigation; there are no confirmed or documented sightings to date and there are no such records from the Zimbabwe side (Irwin 1981).]

BARRED LONG-TAILED CUCKOO *Cercococcyx montanus*

On 23 February 1983 R. Stjernstedt and S. Silow heard one in thickets in the low-lying Gwembe valley, at Mutulanganga bridge (15°14'S, 28°44'E) (Stjernstedt 1984). On later visits it was tape-recorded, seen by a number of observers and a specimen collected. It has since been found at this locality on several visits, but not annually (in 8 of the 14 years since 1983). It does seem to be regular enough at this locality to rule out the suggestion that it is a vagrant, its occurrence possibly as a result of recent drought in southern Africa (T. O. Osborne in the *Z.O.S. Newsletter* 1983, 13: 56). Only 2 or 3 calling birds occur at Mutulanganga, and the cuckoo is not always easy to locate, sometimes calling at night. In addition, this cuckoo may be imitated by the local Red-capped Robins *Cossypha natalensis* (DRA), and so care needs to be taken with vocal records. Extreme dates overall are 23 November and 26 February.

Although not yet found at other suitable localities in the Gwembe and middle Zambezi valleys, there are now two acceptable records from the Luangwa valley. At Chibembe (12°47'S, 32°04'E) one was seen by three observers 13–17 March 1989 (R. Macdougall *et al.*), while at Muchenja, near Nsefu (c. 12°56'S, 31°56'E), one was heard on 29 October 1991 (R. Stjernstedt). These may perhaps be passage birds, as the species seems to be a rains visitor to this part of Africa, and RJD, R. Stjernstedt and others who have lived in the Luangwa valley have no other records.

[WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATER *Merops albicollis*

Clancey (1962) reported a specimen (housed in the National Museum, Nairobi, Kenya) labelled "Kafui 15 July 1934". This record was not accepted by Benson *et al.* (1971) owing to the lack of any background information for this specimen, and the (then) unlikelihood of the species occurring well south of the equator. There have in recent years been acceptable sight records from even further south, in South

Africa (Hockey 1992), and so the possibility of the Kafue specimen being correct must be acknowledged. But this record cannot itself be accepted without question, as we still know nothing of who collected it and exactly where. There was no-one active in ornithology in 1934 in what was then Northern Rhodesia, and it is impossible to guess who might have obtained this bird.

More recently, it was suggested that one occurred in the Luangwa Valley in 1994, but no satisfactory details have been received.]

SOUTH AFRICAN CLIFF SWALLOW *Hirundo spilodera*

Five sight records have been claimed, and the latest was seen by two independent observers: Chitunta plain, one 13 November 1978 (Dowsett 1979b); Kamukawu lake (11°42'S, 24°35'E) c. 8 on 7 August 1981 (Bowen 1983); Mulondo plain (not traced, but in square 1423D), Kaoma district one 24 October 1982 (DRA); Itawa, Ndola one immature 25 April 1987 (C. Carter); one near Tsidongo, Senanga district (c. 16°40'S, 22°20'E) on 19 September 1996 (PML, C. Beel). The species occurs on passage between southern Africa and non-breeding quarters near the equator.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Aspinwall (1981) reported one seen at Chinkuli, near Lusaka (15°18'S, 28°23'E) on 1 May 1979. Subsequently there have been four further acceptable sightings, some by several observers, between 22 November and 9 December. While three are from streams in the north of the country (at Mwekera falls, the Kafubu stream and Shiwa Ngandu), there was a second report from near Lusaka (on 9 December). This species has been reported increasingly in recent years in southern Africa, normally in highlands in the eastern half, and it may be that most Zambian records are of passage birds. One on the unusual date of 17 August 1986, at Kafue, is considered unproven.

RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*

There have been four recent reports of one or two birds at localities on the Copperbelt, since the first on 18 March 1979 (Taylor 1979). In 1980, 1983 and 1986 up to two were seen by several observers independently. Extreme dates are 19 November and 18 March.

WHITE-WINGED WARBLER *Bradypterus carpalis*

The least expected discovery in Zambia in recent years has been that of *Bradypterus carpalis* at the mouth of the Luapula on Lake Mweru (the channel to Chisenga Island) on 30 December 1996 (PML, C. Beel). They were discovered through PML recognizing the voice as being notably faster than that of the Little Rush Warbler *B. baboecala*. The observers consider the species rather common. *B. baboecala* was seen at the same place. Three specimens were collected on 2 January 1998 in papyrus swamp near Chabilikila Primary School (9°32'S, 28°42'E). The voice of the two is usually similar in timbre and pitch, but differs in details of structure. However, it seems that in most areas of sympatry (i.e. Rwanda, Kenya etc.) *B. baboecala* produce a very

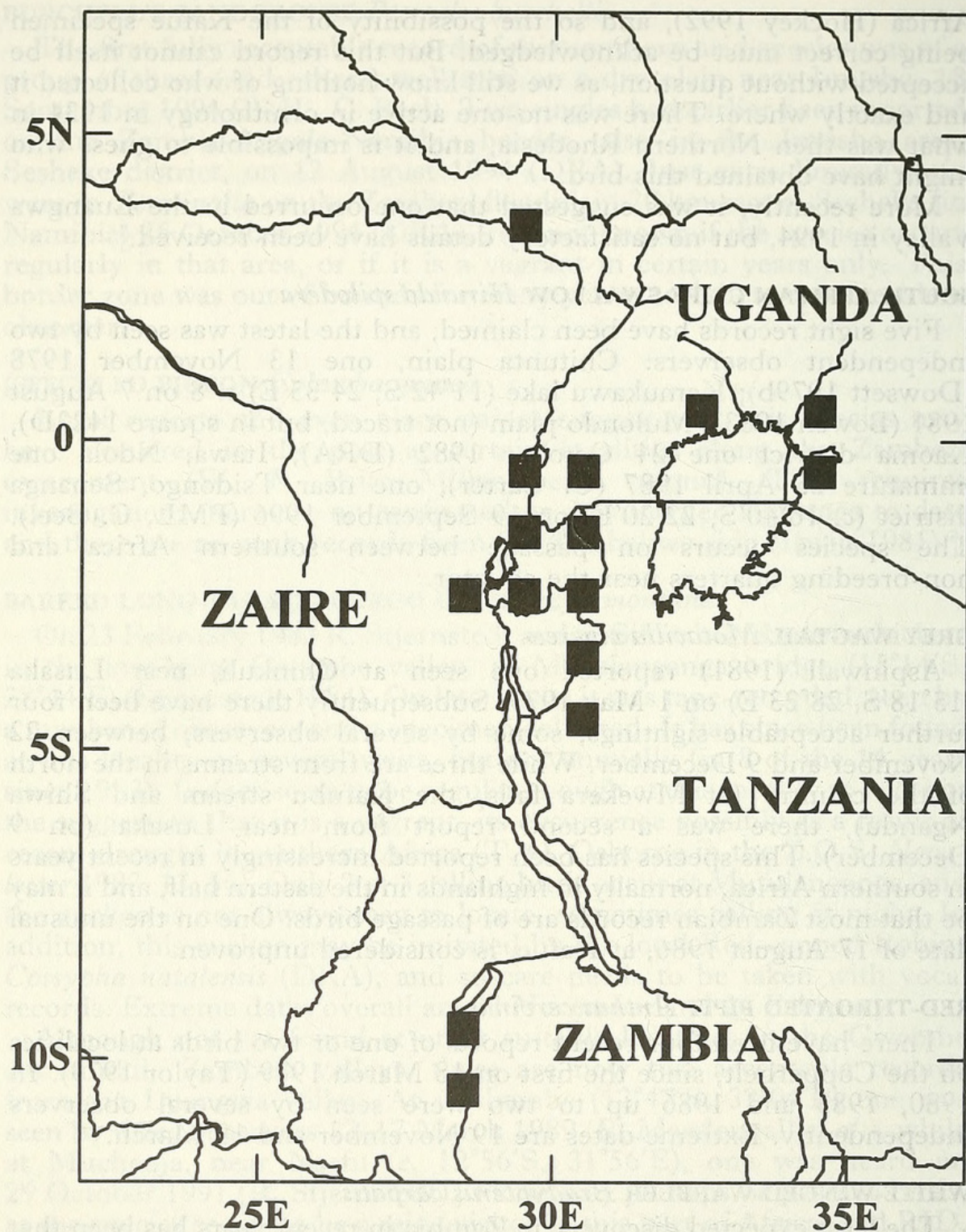


Figure 1. Known distribution of White-winged Warbler *Bradypterus carpalis*, plotted by degree square (using the computer programme DMAP).

high-pitched version of the usual crescendo (F. Dowsett-Lemaire pers. comm.). The relationship between *B. carpalis* and *B. baboecala* in the Mweru area remains to be investigated.

This undoubtedly vulnerable species, almost confined to papyrus swamps, was hitherto known no nearer than the area centred on Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda (Collar & Stuart 1985), some 600 km to

the north (Fig. 1). Another papyrus endemic, the Yellow Swamp Warbler *Chloropeta gracilirostris*, was already known from the Lake Mweru area.

[RED-TAILED SHRIKE *Lanius isabellinus*

A shrike with the characters of the race *phoenicuroides* was seen near Kitwe on 12 November 1974 (Penry 1975), and one or two others have been reported on four occasions elsewhere near the Copperbelt at Musofu (13°31'S, 29°03'E) (C. Carter), in western Zambia, 5 km south of Sianda (15°35'S, 23°18'E) (Rev. W. Dunlop), and twice on the Nyika Plateau (F. Dowsett-Lemaire, R. D. Medland). It may be regular in the last area, whence there are at least two multiple-observer records from the Malawi side (RJD *et al.*). Nevertheless, confirmation of these single-observer records is desirable. Extreme dates of the Zambian sightings are 12 November–2 December and 29 March–17 April.]

SCALY-FEATHERED FINCH *Sporopipes squamifrons*

This species was discovered in 1994 by DRA and A. Muchindu at Kazwili village (c. 17°29'S, 24°52'E), along the Livingstone-Sesheke road: groups of 20 and 6 on 9 August, 3 on 10th, 6 on 15th. In 1995 they were found at a second site: at least 4 at Limpumpu school, Loanja river near the Simungoma-Mulobezi road (17°14'S, 24°39'E) on 30 July (DRA). A specimen was collected. This area has been fairly well explored ornithologically, and it seems likely this finch is no more than an erratic dry season visitor.

LAKE TANGANYIKA WEAVER *Ploceus reichardi*

This species was found by PML on the Saisi river, near Kaka, in Mbala district, 8 January 1996 (08°57'S, 31°44'E). The bird was numerous, some 200–300. PML and C. Beel were able to mist-net 15 in the evening of 10 January, retaining three (including an adult male) as specimens. This is evidently the only representative of the *P. velatus* complex in this part of Zambia. It is called Lake Lufira Weaver by Dowsett & Forbes-Watson (1993) who tentatively lump it with the unique *P. ruweti*—but it is better known as the Lake Tanganyika Weaver.

OLIVE-HEADED WEAVER *Ploceus olivaceiceps*

This miombo woodland endemic occurs marginally in eastern Zambia, along the border with Malawi. Aspinwall (1979) discovered it on 21 February 1979, in the Chimaliro National Forest (12°22'S, 33°32'E), where PML and P. Bourdin refound it in September 1995. Subsequently it has been noted south to the headwaters of the Chiwalu river near Misale farm, Chadiza District (14°02'S, 33°03'E). It is rare in the last area, but found regularly at some other sites, as always in *Usnea*-clad miombo trees.

GREEN INDIGOBIRD *Vidua codringtoni*

Since the discovery of this species by Payne *et al.* (1992), observers familiar with the song of its host the Red-throated Twinspot *Hypargos*

niveoguttatus, notably DRA and R. Stjernstedt, have paid attention to determining the Green Indigobird's distribution and status in Zambia. Most observations have been from the area of Kasisi mission near Lusaka (15°16'S, 28°28'E), but it is confirmed from several other places from the Luangwa valley (Nsefu, Mfuwe) south to the Lusaka-Chilanga area and Lochinvar. R. B. Payne believes this new form can be confidently related to the taxon *codringtoni*, formerly attached to *V. funerea*. This being so, the type locality is Muliro, near Old Petauke. The occurrence of this species in Zambia was noted by Dowsett (1993), but inadvertently omitted by Dowsett & Forbes-Watson (1993).

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Review of the montane bird species from Mindanao, Philippines: Part 1—Black-and-cinnamon Fantail, *Rhipidura nigrocinnamomea*

by Kelley R. Reis & Robert S. Kennedy

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Most of the Philippine archipelago's avifauna is a "fringing archipelago" type, the result of colonization and evolution of endemic forms in island isolation (Rand 1970). The study of these endemics is important because forests on these islands are being cleared at an alarming rate (Dickinson *et al.* 1991). To assess the effects of deforestation on the Philippine avifauna, the Philippine Biodiversity Inventory (PBI) began in 1989 as a joint survey between the National Museum of the Philippines and the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. From 1993 to 1995, PBI teams conducted altitudinal surveys in Mindanao on Parker Volcano and Mts. Apo, Busa, Kitanglad, Pasian, and Puting-Bato (see Fig. 1). As a result of these surveys, many new distributional records were obtained and many new taxa were



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