

# Mussau Is. (St Matthias) Bird Checklist

## St Matthias Group, P.N.G.

01 26 25s 149 36 52e

Compiled by M.K. Tarburton, Pacific Adventist University, PNG.

[swiftlet@optusnet.com.au](mailto:swiftlet@optusnet.com.au)

[To communicate please re-type above address into your e-mail program]

#	Common Name	Scientific Name	Ecol. Status	Abundance	References
1.	Black-footed Albatross	<i>Phoebastria nigripes</i>	Vag?	Imm obs 5 Aug 1985, 138 nm NNE of Mussau.	33.
2.	Bulwer's Petrel	<i>Bulweria bulwerii</i>	?	1 obs. 3 Jul 1997.	13,27,
3.	Streaked Shearwater	<i>Calonectris leucomelas</i>	Sum mig	1 rec, 800 obs 102 km to NW, 13.1.1986, 500 obs 152 km NNE 2 Feb 1986,	16,33,
4.	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	<i>Ardenna pacificus</i>	Res	5,000 obs 144 km NNW of Mussau 6 May 1988, 1 pale morph 374 & 270 km NNE 4.8.1985, the latter with 3 dark morphs,	33,
5.	Christmas Shearwater	<i>Puffinus nativitatus</i>	Vag	1 obs 155 nm NNE 4.8.1985.	33,
6.	Leach's Storm-Petrel	<i>Hydrobates leucorhoa</i>	Win mig?	1 caught 74 km SW Mussau 5.5.1988, 2 obs 35 nm WNW 6.5.1988 c lge flock of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters,	33,
7.	Matsudaira's Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma matsudairae</i>	Win Vis?	2 obs 33 nm NE 1.8.1985, 4 obs 30 nm NE 4.8.1985,	33,
8.	Lesser Frigatebird	<i>Fregata ariel</i>	Res	Roost on islet close to S coast Apr 1975,	4,
9.	Eastern Reef Egret	<i>Egretta sacra</i>	Res	1 spec. AMNH. 8 grey 2 white 29.2000, 1 M(W) coll 1923,	1,11,20,30,
10.	Eastern Great Egret	<i>Ardea modesta</i>	Res	1 obs Oct 2013,	36,
11.	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>	Res	Uncommon, 1 obs Jul 1997.	13,
12.	Black Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus flavicollis australis</i>	Res Bre	P, 1 obs 2013	1,35,
13.	Eastern Osprey	<i>Pandion cristatus melvillensis</i>	Res bre	P, C particularly on freshwater lakes.	1,4,
14.	Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliaeetus indus girrenera</i>	Res bre	P, 1 seen 28 & 29.6.2000. 2 obs 2013,	1,20,35,
15.	White-bellied Sea-eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	Res bre	P, 1 seen 29.6.2000	1,20,
16.	Variable Goshawk	<i>Accipiter hiogaster matthiae</i>	Res bre	P, 1 seen 29.6.2000, 2coll 1923, 2 obs 2013,	1,20,30,35,
17.	Oriental Hobby	<i>Falco severus</i>	Sum mig	1 seen 29.6.2000.	20,
18.	Red-necked Rail	<i>Rallina tricolor laeta</i>	Res bre	1 Coll AMNH, F coll Tring Mus 1923,	1,9,30,
19.	White-browed Crake	<i>Poliolimnas cinereus meeki</i>	Res bre	P, 2M AMNH darker below than other ssp, 3 coll Jun 1923,	1,9,30,
20.	Melanesian Scrub Fowl	<i>Megapodius eremita</i>	Res bre	P, 2 obs 2013,	1,21,35,
21.	Beach Thick-knee	<i>Esacus magnirostris</i>	Res bre	P, 1 coll 1908,	1,30,
22.	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	Sum Mig	1 spec Jul, F coll 14 Jul 1923 Tring Mus, now in AMNH.	8,30,32,
23.	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Sum Mig	8 at Like 28.6.2000	20,
24.	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Sum mig	M & 3F coll Jul 1923 AMNH, 2? Coll 27 Jul 1923 Tring Mus,	9,30,
25.	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Sum mig	1 obs Oct 2013,	36,
26.	Wandering Tattler	<i>Tringa incana</i>	Sum Mig	13 seen 28.6.2000 ID by call.	20,
27.	Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Tringa brevipes</i>	Sum Mig	1 obs Jan 2013,	35,
28.	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	Sum Mig	P,	8,
29.	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	Sum Mig	Rec of 16,	2,17,
30.	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Sum Mig	Off coast	16,

31.	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Sum mig	2 Alaskan birds radio-tracked nearby Nov & Dec 06,	28,
32.	Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Spr/Aut mig/vag?	1 imm obs 95 nm NNW 6.5.1988,	34.
33.	Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	Res	1 seen 30.6.2000, 1 obs Oct 2014,	20,36,
34.	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	Res	1 obs Oct 2014,	36,
35.	Brown Noddy	<i>Anous stolidus</i>	Res bre	Common	4,
36.	Black Noddy	<i>Anous minutus</i>	Res bre	Thousands nesting.	4,
37.	Mackinlay's Cuckoo-Dove	<i>Macropygia mackinlayi krakari</i>	Res bre	offshore Isls, on Mus Common 11 seen 29.6.2000, 6M2F coll 1923,	1,3,19,20,30,
38.	Bronze (Beccari's) Ground-Dove	<i>Gallicolumba beccarii johannae</i>	Res bre	P, 5 coll 1923,	1,19,30,
39.	Stephan's Dove [Emerald Dove	<i>Chalcophaps stephani stephani</i> <i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	Res bre	MC, 6M2F coll 1923, 8 obs 2013, incorrectly recorded Oct 2013,	1,3,19,30,35, 36,]
40.	Nicobar Pigeon	<i>Caloenas nicobarica</i>	Res bre	P, 4 Ad coll Tring Mus 1923,	1,30,
41.	Red-knobbed Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus insolitus inferior</i>	Res bre	Present, 9Ad 1 juv coll 1923,	3,18,30,
42.	Yellow-bibbed Fruit-Dove	<i>Ptilinopus solomonensis</i>	Res bre	S. Mussau Isles. C, 6 seen 28.6.2000, 2M 3F 1 Juv coll 1923, 20 obs 2013, 10 obs Oct 2013,	3,4,10,20,30,35, 36,
43.	Island Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula pistrinaria</i>	Res bre	MC. 53 flying to one evening roost 29.6.2000, 8Ad 1 imm Coll 1923, Jun & Jul 1923, 6 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,20,30,36,
44.	Pacific Imperial Pigeon	<i>Ducula pacifica</i>	Res	5 obs 2013,	35,
45.	Coconut Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus haematodus flavicans</i>	Res bre	P, 2 coll 1923, 2 obs Oct 2013,	1,30,36,
46.	Meek's Pygmy Parrot	<i>Micropsitta meeki proxima</i>	End Bism	P, 10 ad coll 1923 Tring Mus, Desc of type ssp 1923, 6 obs Jan 2013, 4 obs Oct 2013,	1,30,31,35,36,
47.	Channel-billed Cuckoo	<i>Scythrops novaehollandiae</i>	Win Mig	P,	1,4,
48.	Long-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Urodynamis taitensis</i>	Mig or Vag?	1 Obs Oct 2015.	37,
48.	Moustached Tree-swift	<i>Hemiprocne mystacea</i>	Res bre	1 seen 29.6.2000, 1 in Mus Coll, F coll 1923 Tring Mus,	1,20,29,30,
49.	White-rumped Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus spodiopygius eichhorni</i>	Res bre	2 nesting caves, Long Is. Common VC. 400 seen 28.6.2000. 7 skins AMNH, 1 in BM, 4 in ND, 9 coll incl ssp Type 1923, 25 obs 2013, 20 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,4,20,29, 30,35,36,
50.	Uniform Swiftlet	<i>Aerodramus vanikornesis lihirensis/coultasi</i>	Res bre	C, spec. AMNH 3 seen 28.6.2000, 1M AMNH, 11 skins ND, M coll 1923,	1,3,4,12,20,29, 30,
51.	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Res bre	MC along creeks and coast, 8 coll 1923,	1,4,30,
52.	Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Todirhamphus s. sanctus</i>	Res bre	Present Confined to mangroves on this island, 2F coll 23 Jun 1923,	1,3,4,30,
53.	Collared Kingfisher	<i>Todirhamphus chloris matthiae</i>	Res bre	Mus & Eloaua Isl. C. 14 seen 28.6.2000 all over island, C 5M 5F coll 1923 Tring Mus, Coll 1901 & 1923 Tring Mus. 1 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,6,20,30,31, 36,
54.	Beach Kingfisher	<i>Todirhamphus saurophaga</i>	Res bre	P. In trees that overhang beach or water. 1 seen 28.6.2000. 1 obs Oct 2013,	1,4,14,20,36,
55.	Micronesian Kingfisher	<i>Todirhamphus cinnamominus</i>	Vag	Takes the niche of <i>sancta</i> on open spaces	4,
56.	Rainbow Bee-eater	<i>Merops ornatus</i>	Win mig	Loana Isl. 2 seen 29.6.2000, F coll 20 Jul 1923 some moult,	3,4,20,30,
57.	Dollarbird	<i>Eurystomus orientalis</i>	Res bre	P, F Juv coll Jul 1923,	1,30,32,
58.	Blyth's Hornbill	<i>Aceros plicatus</i>	Vag	Claimed to be vagrant	13,
59.	Slender-billed Cicadabird	<i>Coracina tenuirostris matthiae</i>	Res bre	C. UC in forest, gardens, savanna & mangroves. 1 pr 29.6.2000 1 coll 1923, 2 obs Oct 2013,	1,15,20,22,30, 36,
60.	Matthias Fantail	<i>Rhipidura matthiae</i>	End Mussau	MC, 6 seen 28.6.2000, 7 coll 1923, Coll by Heinroth 1901, 2 obs 2013,	1,3,6,15,20,30, 31,35,
61.	Willie Wagtail	<i>Rhipidura leucophrys melaleuca</i>	Res bre	Loana Is+1 sm Sth Is. 1 seen 29.6.2000, 1 obs 2013,	4,15,20,23,36,

62.	Northern Fantail	<i>Rhipidura rufiventris mussai</i>	Res bre	Inhabits all forests and their edges 3M 4F Coll. 7 coll 1923, Descr of type, 4M4F AMNH,	1,15,22,30,31,32,
63.	White-breasted Monarch	<i>Monarcha menckei</i>	End Mussau	MC. 6 seen 29.6.2000, 4M1F5imm coll 1923, coll 1901, 10 obs 2013, 4 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,15,20,22,30,31,35,36,
64.	Island Monarch	<i>Monarcha cinerascens perpallidus</i>	Res bre	C.+ P @ Eloaua MC-VC Inhabits littoral forest, scrub and gardens. 4 seen 28.6.2000. 7M3F Coll. 7M1F coll 1923 Tring, 7M4F AMNH, 12 obs 2013, 3 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,4,8,20,22,30,32,35,36,
65.	Dull Flycatcher	<i>Myiagra h. hebetior</i>	End Bism	MC. LMC<1300m in forests & regrowth, 6M2F2juv coll 1923, 7M3F AMNH, 4 obs Oct 2013,	1,4,6,15,24,30,32,36,
66.	Mussau Triller	<i>Lalage conjuncta</i>	End Mussau	MC in rainforests, Claimed as new species 2007, LC >100m M coll 1923 Tring Mus, Descr of type,	1,5,15,22,26,30,31,
67.	Russet-tailed Thrush (Scaly)	<i>Zoothera heinei eichhorni</i>	Res bre	Peckover found it in overgrown gardens near 0m, 11 coll 1923, Descr of ssp type, 8 obs Jan 2013 incl 1 fledgling	1,15,30,31,35,
68.	Island Thrush	<i>Turdus poliocephalus heinrothi</i>	Res bre	LMC-C in Mtn Forests and Mtn scrub, 1 coll 1923, Descr type	1,15,30,31,
69.	Island Leaf-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus poliocephalus matthiae</i>	Res bre	MC-C in forests large & small, & their edges <650m. 2M coll 1923 Tring Mus, Descr of type, 2 obs Oct 2013,	1,15,25,30,31,36,
70.	Bismarck Whistler	<i>Pachycephala citreogaster</i>	Res bre	In forest & regrowth, 5M 3F coll 1923, Descr of ssp type, 4 obs 2013,	1,15,30,31,35,
71.	Yellow-bellied Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia jugularis</i>	Res bre	MC-C outside forests. 1 pr seen 29.6.2000, 4M4F coll 1923, 2 obs Oct 2013,	1,15,20,30,36,
72.	Ebony Myzomela	<i>Myzomela pammelaena</i>	End sm Isles Bis	Arch C, VC, MC-A. 50 seen 29.6.2000, 7 coll Tring 1923, 20 obs 2013, 10 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,4,15,20,30,35,36,
73.	Blue-faced Parrot-Finch	<i>Erythrura trichroa eichhorni</i>	Res bre	C. even feeding on lawns. Not secretive. 2 seen up close, 8 coll Tring Mus 1923, 8 obs Jan 2013, 2 obs Oct 2013, 22,30,35,36,	1,2,3,6,15,20,
74.	Metallic Starling	<i>Aplornis metallica</i>	Res bre	C. MC-VC 300 seen 29.6.2000, 8 coll 1923 AMNH, 40 obs 2013, 10 obs Oct 2013,	1,3,15,20,30,32,35,36,
75.	Singing Starling	<i>Aplornis cantoroides</i>	Res bre	P. LC. 4 seen 29.6.2000, 20 obs Oct 2013,	1,4,14,15,20,36

## KEY

### Ecological status

**End** = Endemic to Island unless otherwise stated, **Res bre** = Resident breeder, **Res** = resident ie breeding not proven or not likely. For sea birds it means they have or should be found in that area: note other refs. **Vag** = Vagrant, **Res/mig** = Part of population migratory, **Sum mig** = Summer migrant, **Win mig** = Winter migrant, **Spr/Aut mig** = Passage migrant in Spring and Autumn, **Intro** = Introduced.

### Abundance

**R** = rare, **S** = scarce, **UC** = uncommon, **MC** = moderately common, **LC** = locally common, **C** = common, **VC** = very common, **A** = abundant **P** = present.

**Colour coding** applies only to one species on a particular list. eg. An abundance comment in red for the Brown Booby refers to the Ref # in Red for that species only.

**Alternate Island Names & alternate common Bird Names are recorded in two separate spreadsheet files.**

## REFERENCES

1. Mayr, E. & J. Diamond. 2001. **The Birds of Northern Melanesia**. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
2. Mayr, E. 1931. Birds collected during the Whitney South Sea Expedition The Parrot Finches (Genus *Erythrura*). *Am. Mus. Novit.* 489: 1-10.
3. Eastwood, C. 1996. Kavieng, Djaul Island & Mussau Island, New Ireland – A trip report. *Muruk* 8(1): 28-32.
4. Silva, K. 1975. Observations from Manus, Tong, Mussau, Emirau, Loana & Tench Islands. *PNG bird Society Newsletter* 112: 4-7.
5. Mayr, E. & Ripley. 1941. Birds collected during the Whitney South Sea Expedition *Am. Mus. Novit.* 1116.
6. Finch, B.W. 1985. Noteworthy observations in Papua New Guinea and Solomons. *PNG bird Society Newsletter* 215: 7-15.

7. Silva, K. 1973. Observations: Tench Island, Matthias Group, New Ireland Province. *PNG bird Society Newsletter* 89: 1-2.
8. Stickney, E. H. 1943. Birds collected during the Whitney South Sea Expedition. 53. Northern Shore birds in the Pacific. *Am. Mus. Novit.* 1248: 1-9.
9. Mayr, E. 1949. Notes on the birds of Northern Melanesia. 2. *Amer. Mus. Novitates* 1417: 1-38.
10. Mayr, E. 1931. Birds Collected during the Whitney South Sea Expedition. 17. The birds of Malaita Island (British Solomon Islands). *Am. Mus. Novit.* 504: 1-26.
11. Mayr, E. & D. Amadon. 1941. Birds collected during the Whitney South Sea Expedition. XLVI. Geographical variation in *Demigretta sacra* (Gmelin). *Am. Mus. Novit.* 1144: 1-11.
12. Mayr, E. 1937. Birds collected during the Whitney South Sea Expedition. 33. Notes on New Guinea Birds 1. *Am. Mus. Novit.* 915: 1-19.
13. Dutton, G. 2001. New distributional ranges for Melanesian birds. *Emu* 101: 237-248.
14. Silva, K. 1973. Observations. *PNG bird Society Newsletter* 90, 1-3.
15. Coates, B.J. 1990. **The Birds of Papua New Guinea Vol. 2. Passerines.** Dove Pub. Aldersley, Qld.
16. Coates, B.J. 1985. **The Birds of Papua New Guinea Vol. 1. Non-Passerines.** Dove Pub. Aldersley, Qld.
17. Bull, P. C. 1948. Field notes on waders in the south-west Pacific with special reference to the Russell Islands. *Emu* 47: 165-178.
18. Gould, J. & A. Rutgers. 1970. **Birds of New Guinea.** Methuen. London.
19. Rand, A.L., & E.T Gilliard. 1967. **Handbook of New Guinea Birds.** Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London.
20. Tarburton, M.K. 2000. Field Records Data Base: Unpublished.
21. Hoyo, J del., A. Elliott & J Sargatal. 1994. **Handbook of the Birds of the World Vol. 2.** Lynx Edicions / Birdlife International.
22. Mayr, E. 1955. Notes on the birds of Northern Melanesia. 3. Passeres. *Amer. Mus. Novitates* 1707: 1-46.
23. Boles, W.E. 2006. Fantails. In Hoyo, J. A. Elliott, & D Christie. 2006. **Handbook of the Birds of the World Vol 11.** Lynx Edicions. Barcelona.
24. Coates, B.J., G.C.L. Dutton, & C.E. Filardi. 2006. Monarch-Flycatchers. In Hoyo, J. A. Elliott, & D Christie. 2006. **Handbook of the Birds of the World Vol 11.** Lynx Edicions. Barcelona.
25. Bairlein, F. 2006. Old World Warblers. In Hoyo, J. A. Elliott, & D Christie. 2006. **Handbook of the Birds of the World Vol 11.** Lynx Edicions. Barcelona.
26. Gregory, P. 2007. Notes on the Mussau (St Matthias) Triller (*Lalage conjunctiva*). *Muruk* 8(3), 145.
27. Dutton, G. 2007. Bulwer's Petrel (*Bulweria bulwerii*) New to Papua New Guinea and Melanesia. *Muruk* 8(3), 139-140.
28. Troy, D. 2008. Tracking Records of Troy Ecological Research Associates, Anchorage, Alaska.
29. Salomonsen, F. 1983. Revision of the Melanesian Swiftlets (*Apodes, Aves*) & their Conspecific Forms in the Indo-Australian and Polynesian Region. Noona Dan Papers No. 141.
30. Hartert, E. 1924b. The birds of St Matthias Island. *Novitates Zoologicae* **31**, 261-275.
31. Rothschild, W. & Hartert, E. 1923. [a collection from St Matthias Island]. *Bull. Brit. Ornithol. Club* **44**, 50-53.
32. AMNH, <http://entheros.amnh.org/db/emuwebamnh/pages/amnh/ornithology/Query.php> Downloaded 14.4.2010.
33. Cheshire, N. 2010. Procellariiformes observed around Papua New Guinea including the Bismarck Archipelago from 1985 to 2007. *South Australian Ornithologist* 36, 9-24.
34. Cheshire, N. 2011. Observations of Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*, South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* and other skuas in Papua New Guinea waters. *Muruk* 10(1), 57-60.
35. Freeman, Benjamin & Alexandra. 7.1.2013. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S13872732> accessed 16.6.2015.
36. Gemmill, D. 2014.10.13. 8 obs <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S20700124> accessed 8.7.2015,
37. Cuthbert, R. 2015. Birds of Mussau Island. In Whitmore N. (editor) 2015. A rapid biodiversity survey of Papua New Guinea's Manus and Mussau Islands. Wildlife Conservation Society P.N.G. program. Goroka, PNG. <https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/43384/6/43384%20Whitmore%20et%20al%202015.pdf> accessed 1.4.2019.