

Chapter 3

Preliminary Baseline Survey of the Avifauna of the Nakorotubu Range, Ra and Tailevu Provinces, Fiji.

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SUMMARY

This report is a preliminary baseline survey of the avifauna of the Nakorotubu Range, Ra-Tailevu Provinces, Viti Levu. The report provides observations and comments on the avifauna observed in the study area.

A total of 38 bird species were recorded in the surveys, fifteen of which were endemic species, four introduced and the remainder native species.

Three globally threatened species for Fiji were recorded – Pink-billed Parrotfinch (Viti Levu endemic), Black-faced Shrikebill and the Friendly Ground-Dove. For birds, the Nakorotubu Range has the same conservation significance as other large forest blocks on Viti Levu.

INTRODUCTION

The Nakorotubu Range is an important forest refuge for Fiji's native flora and fauna covering the whole mountain range that runs along the eastern side of Viti Levu from the Tailevu province in the south up to the province of Ra in the north. It connects to the lowland tropical rainforests of southern and central Viti Levu and also to the dry forests of northern Viti Levu like the Nakauvadra Range. Little bird work has been done in the whole area except a survey that was conducted by Dr Dick Watling around Soa village. The main objectives of this survey were to do a checklist of the bird species of Nakorotubu, look at their abundance and also the presence of Fiji's threatened birds in the area.

Conservation Significance

In the annotated accounts and discussion of the observations, prominence is given to the Conservation Significance of the species concerned. Conservation Significance is based on the following:

- Endemicity – Single Island, National, Regional or Regional Near-endemic for those birds whose distribution is primarily within the region but which extends to a few islands or an island group outside the region.
- Global Threat Status - according to the '2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species'. The threatened species categories now used in Red Data Books and Red Lists have been in place, with some modification, for over 30 years. Since their introduction these categories have become widely recognised internationally, and the Red List categories provide an easily and widely understood method for highlighting those species under higher extinction risk, so as to focus attention on the need for or efficacy of existing conservation measures. A simplified description of the categories applicable for this guide are as follows (refer <http://www.redlist.org> for a full description and the annually updated status):
 - CRITICALLY ENDANGERED - when a species is facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future;
 - ENDANGERED – when a species is not Critically Endangered but is facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future;
 - VULNERABLE – a species is Vulnerable when it is not Critically Endangered or Endangered but is facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future;