

Facts About The Fiji Petrel

Other Name: MacGillivray's Petrel

Scientific Name: Pseudobulweria macgillivrayi

Fijian Name: Kacau ni Gau (recently adopted name)

Appearance:

- 28 cm long
- Small, black-brown bird with a short neck & stout black bill
- Has a chunky appearance
- Mostly black feet with a pale blue patch on the centre of each web

Habitat:

- Presumed to nest in burrows on ridges at the height of the interior forests
- Disperses into pelagic waters far from the island

Distribution: Found only on Gau Island

Gau Island:

- Fifth largest island in the Fiji group
- One of the islands in the Lomaiviti Group
- ABOUT 140 square kilometers in area
- Is mountainous and heavily forested
- Has a wet tropical climate
- Major human activities include logging, subsistence agriculture
- Other species of conservation interest is the Fiji Ground Frog
- Has the largest known population of Collared Petrels
- A mongoose-free island

Similar Species:

- Size and colour of the Fiji Petrel may easily be confused with noddys, but petrels have a different bill shape and do not have the characteristic flight of the Noddy
- Also easily confused with the Bulwer's Petrel, however the Fiji Petrel is slightly larger & heavier bird with a stouter bill and no buff wing bars. It lacks the longish, pointed, sometimes wedge-

shaped bill.

Remarks:

- Fiji has 27 endemic birds, of which the Fiji Petrel is the only sea bird
- 1st fledging was collected in October, 1855 by a Medical Officer on a Royal Navy ship
- Specimens are being stored in the British Museum of Natural History in London and the Fiji Museum here in Suva
- In April 1984, an adult was caught near the summit of Gau and then released
- Ever since 1985, there have been a further six records of birds, which have landed on roofs in Gau. All six have been presumed juvenile

Conservation Status:
Critically endangered (IUCN Global Status)

Conservation Measures:

- Research is needed to urgently locate petrel nesting grounds
- Actions to ensure prevention of colonization of mongoose from nearby Viti Levu and Vanua Levu
- Preventive measures to controlling various invasive alien predators
- BirdLife Fiji has identified Gau Island as an Important Bird Area since it is the only known breeding site of the Fiji Petrel
- BirdLife, along with the National Trust of Fiji have conducted workshops in Gau for the conservation of the Fiji Petrel
- BirdLife Fiji will continue to work with communities in Gau for the protection of this bird, and possibly

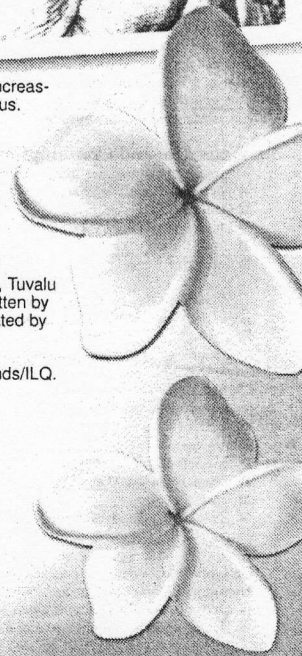


increasing its conservation status.

Source:

- BirdLife International Fiji Programme
- A Guide to the Birds of Fiji and Western Polynesia including American Samoa, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Wallis & Futuna written by Dick Watling and illustrated by Chloe Talbot Kelly.

<http://www.unep.ch/islands/ILQ.htm#465>



Long-legged Thicketbird

Trichocichla rufa



2006 IUCN Red List Category (as evaluated by BirdLife International - the official Red List Authority for birds for IUCN):
Endangered

Justification This species was recently rediscovered and has been listed as Endangered because it is estimated to have a

very small population. It does not appear to be in decline, and further surveys may show it to be commoner and hence warrant downlisting to a lower category of threat.

Family/Sub-family Sylviidae

Species name author Reichenow, 1890

Taxonomic source(s) Sibley and Monroe (1990, 1993)

Identification 17 cm. A long-tailed secretive ground-warbler of hill

for-

est. Upperparts rather warm brown with a distinct long fine silvery supercilium. White throat contrast with buffy-rufous breast-sides and flanks, fading into an off-white belly. Fairly long bluish legs, and medium-short black bill. **Similar spp.** Similar to Fiji Bush-Warbler but is larger with a longer tail, more contrasting supercilium and throat, but lacks a rufous cap, and has different behaviour. **Voice** Repeated short phrases of loud melodic notes; variable and can be similar to Fiji Bush-Warbler *Cettia ruficapilla*. Distinctive bubbling alarm call.

Population estimate - 50-249

Population trend - stable

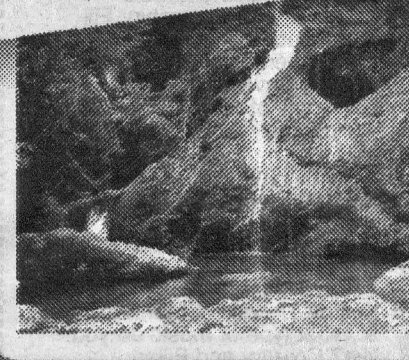
Range estimate (breeding/resident) - 1,100 km²

Country endemic? - Yes

Range & population *Trichocichla rufa* is endemic to Viti Levu and Vanua Levu on Fiji, where it is known historically from four old specimens and a handful of unconfirmed sightings on Viti Levu, and one specimen in 1974 from

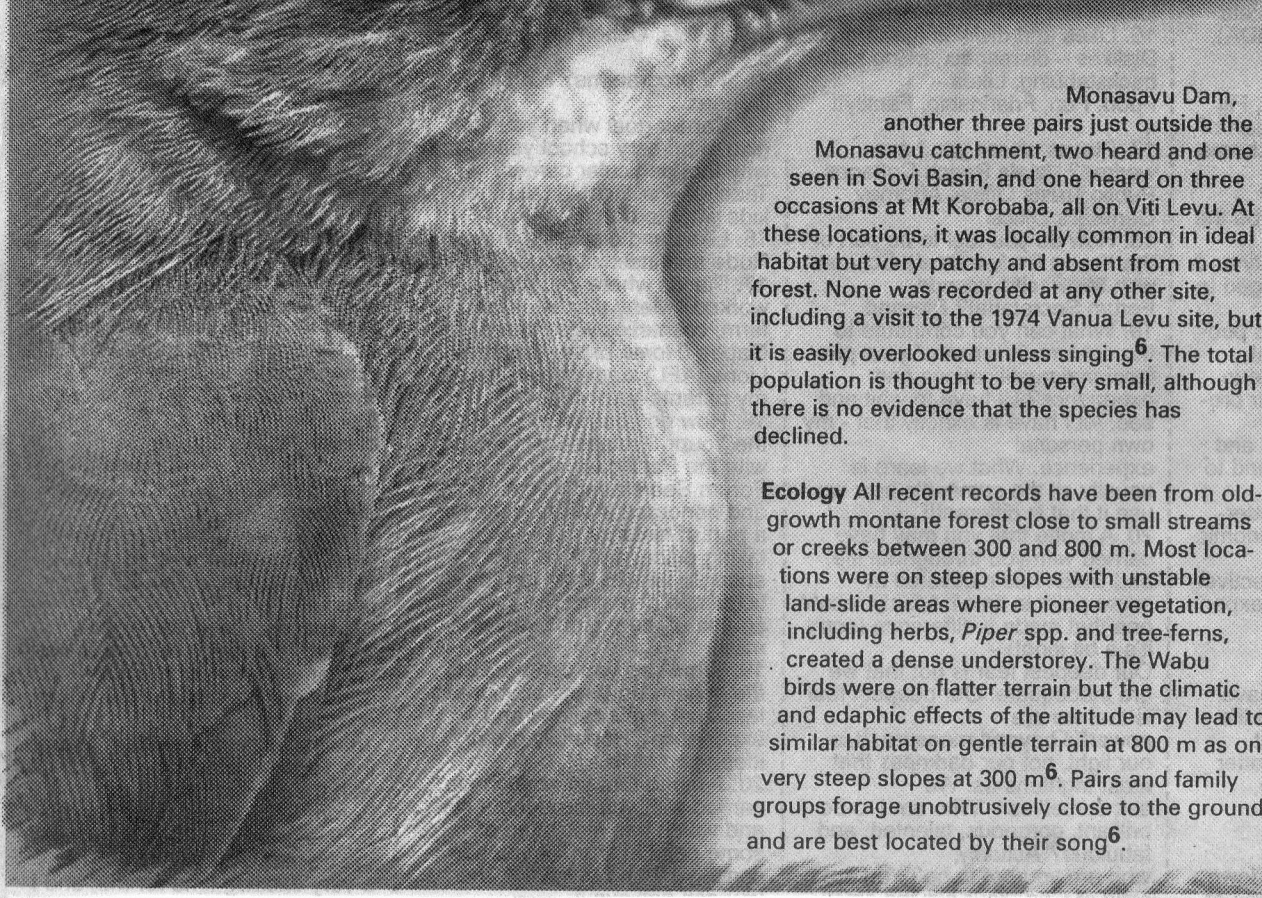
Vanua

Levu². In surveys in 2002-2005, 12 pairs were found in Wabu Forest Reserve, three birds near



Threats As a ground bird it may be suspected to be of higher risk from predation by introduced mongoose *Herpestes auro-uncatus* and black rats *Rattus rattus* on both islands, but birds were found breeding successfully in Wabu alongside these predators. Montane forest is being logged in some areas which leads to increased numbers of these invasive alien species but probably does not affect the vegetational suitability of the habitat⁶.

Conservation measures underway It is protected by Fijian law. The largest known population occurs in



Monasavu Dam, another three pairs just outside the Monasavu catchment, two heard and one seen in Sovi Basin, and one heard on three occasions at Mt Korobaba, all on Viti Levu. At these locations, it was locally common in ideal habitat but very patchy and absent from most forest. None was recorded at any other site, including a visit to the 1974 Vanua Levu site, but it is easily overlooked unless singing⁶. The total population is thought to be very small, although there is no evidence that the species has declined.

Ecology All recent records have been from old-growth montane forest close to small streams or creeks between 300 and 800 m. Most locations were on steep slopes with unstable land-slide areas where pioneer vegetation, including herbs, *Piper* spp. and tree-ferns, created a dense understorey. The Wabu birds were on flatter terrain but the climatic and edaphic effects of the altitude may lead to similar habitat on gentle terrain at 800 m as on very steep slopes at 300 m⁶. Pairs and family groups forage unobtrusively close to the ground and are best located by their song⁶.

conservation measures underway it is protected by Fijian law. The largest known population occurs in the Wabu Forest Reserve⁶.

Conservation measures proposed Continue surveys at likely sites, especially on Vanua Levu. Investigate breeding success at Wabu and a more disturbed area such as the Monasavu roadside to identify any threats and necessary conservation actions. Most important is active long-term conservation of the key sites, notably Wabu Forest Reserve, the Rairaimatuku Highlands and Sovi Basin⁶.

References 1. D. T. Holyoak *in litt.* (1996). 2. Kinsky (1975). 3. Pratt *et al.* (1987). 4. Watling (1982). 5. D. Watling verbally (2000). 6. BirdLife International (2006). 7. G. Dutson *in litt.* (2006).

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Source: www.birdlife.org

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Red-throated Lorikeet - BirdLife Species Factsheet



**CR Red-throated Lorikeet
*Charmosyna amabilis***

2006 IUCN Red List Category (as evaluated by BirdLife International - the official Red List Authority for birds for IUCN): **Critically Endangered**

Justification This species qualifies as Critically Endangered because it has a tiny population which is presumably continuing to decline as a result of predation from introduced rats and loss of habitat.

Family/Sub-family Psittacidae

Species name author (Ramsay, 1875)

Taxonomic source(s) Sibley and Monroe (1990, 1993)

Identification 18 cm. Green lorikeet with fluttering flight. Entirely green but for red cheeks, throat and thighs. Red throat bordered with yellow. Mustard-yellow undertail and tail tips. Sexes similar, immature birds duller. **Similar spp.** Easily confused with Collared Lory *Phigys solitarius* which is considerably larger and has black cap and red on the back. **Voice** High-pitched squeaks uttered whilst feeding or in flight. **Hints** Search any flowering tree in remote forest areas, such as Mt Tomaniivi on Viti Levu.



1970s. During 49 days in the field no birds were seen or calls heard⁸. There are unconfirmed records from the 1980s and 1990s from lowland areas of Ovalau, upland Tavenui and from the Natewa peninsula on Vanua Levu⁶. However, a second series of surveys in 2003 also failed to find any birds, suggesting marked declines have occurred⁹. Given the failure of further surveys to detect this species, it appears to be extremely rare, and its total population may number less than 50 birds¹¹.

Ecology It is found in mature forests and may be reliant on old-growth forest above 500 m⁸. However, its altitudinal restriction on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu is probably artificial, reflecting the absence of 'good' forest, except at higher elevations^{7,8}. On Ovalau, it has been observed in mangroves³. It is usually found in small flocks high in the canopy feeding on nectar and pollen from flowering trees, and is probably nomadic in search of flowering trees^{2,5}. Its breeding ecology is unknown⁵.

cleared in much of Fiji. However, the rarity and assumed decline of this species is probably largely the result of predation by introduced mammals, especially black rat *Rattus rattus*, as is the case with the closely-related New Caledonian Lorikeet *C. diadema* which could be extinct owing to predation by rats. Ongoing increases in logging and the road network, especially around the high-altitude areas of Monasavu and Serua in Viti Levu, are likely to be increasing rat density^{6,11}.

Conservation measures underway CITES

Appendix II. It is protected under Fijian law. On Viti Levu, it occurs within the Tomaniivi Nature Reserve, but this is not large enough to maintain a resident population and, although the establishment of the proposed Wabu extension would make a reserve of appropriate size, it would not provide any better protection against rats if the reserve remains unmanaged⁷. On Taveuni, the combination of the Ravilevu Nature Reserve and the Bourma National Heritage Park provides an area of adequate size for its conservation but the lorikeet remains very rare⁷.

Conservation measures proposed On Viti Levu, repeat forest surveys around Tomaniivi and assess threats^{4,11}. Develop local expertise in survey methodology to enable monitoring⁴. Identify further suitable areas for the conservation of this species⁴. Survey other islands, notably montane Taveuni¹¹. Conduct surveys between the peak vunga and drala flowering season, between August and October^{8,11}.

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Source: www.birdlife.org



Population estimate
<50

Population trend
decreasing

Range estimate (breeding/resident)
16,600 km²

Country endemic?
Yes



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Pink-billed Parrotfinch

Erythrura kleinschmidti

Status – Vulnerable



Justification This species qualifies has been downlisted to Vulnerable as recent surn that it has a larger population than previously estimated. Nevertheless, the population is still small, declining owing to habitat loss, and restricted to a single subpopulation on the island of Viti Levu.

Family/Sub-family Estrildidae

Species name author (Finsch, 1878)

Taxonomic source(s) Sibley and Monroe (1990, 1993)

Identification 11 cm. Robust, greenish finch with outsized bill. Olive-green with black face, bluish crown and nape and red rump. Conspicuously large, glossy-pink bill. Immature birds similar but duller, having orange-horn bill with black tip. **Similar spp.** Fiji Parrotfinch *E. pealii* is smaller and brighter green with much smaller, dark bill (though immatures have horn-coloured bill). **Voice** Little known other than a high-pitched *chee-chee* and a clicking sound. **Hints** Search any undisturbed mature forest in central and east Viti Levu, such as Joske's Thumb near Suva.

Population estimate
2,500-9,999

Population trend
decreasing

Range estimate (breeding/resident)
6,300 km²

Country endemic?

Yes
Range & population *Erythrura kleinschmidti* is endemic to Viti Levu, Fiji, where it has always been considered rare². All records are from the wetter centre and east of Viti Levu^{1,6,7}, where recent surveys suggest that the species is widespread at low densities⁸. A provisional population density of 2.8 birds/km² was recently estimated. The species was recorded at 60% (8/13) of recent survey sites on Viti Levu but these sites were pre-selected to have the densest old-growth forest. A

provisional populatoin size of 2,500-10,000 birds has been esitimated^{8,9}.

Ecology It is mainly found in mature, wet forest up to 1,000 m, although there are records from secondary scrub and plantations. It has even been recorded breeding at the edge of secondary forest, but is nevertheless regarded as dependent on mature forest⁶. It feeds at mid-height along tree-trunks and branches, usually alone or in pairs but also joining mixed-species flocks, feeding primarily on insects, but also flower buds and fruit^{3,5}. Juveniles have been observed in August-September and January-February². It may be nomadic, as other parrotfinches, but repeated observation in the same spots suggests that it could be sedentary.

Threats On Viti Levu, only c.50% of the island remains forested⁶ and there is ongoing, small-scale logging and clearance for agriculture. The most reliable site, Joske's Thumb, was logged in the early 1980s with a dramatic decline in the number of sightings⁷.

Conservation measures underway It is protected under Fijian law. It has been recorded in the protected watershed forest near Suva.

Conservation measures proposed Conduct forest surveys and threat assessment⁴, resurveying all known sites. Develop local expertise in survey methodology⁴. Identify suitable areas for conservation⁴, and ensure preservation of the watershed forest near Suva.

References 1. N. Bostock *in litt.* (2000). 2. Clunie (1984). 3. Pratt *et al.* (1987). 4. SPREP (2000). 5. Watling (1982). 6. Watling (2000). 7. D. Watling *in litt.* (2000). 8. D. Liley *in litt.* (2005). 9. G. Dutton *in litt.* (2005).

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Source: www.birdlife.org

