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DATA EXCHANGE

COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS OF THE GRACEFUL AND YELLOW-SPOTTED HONEYEATERS

The data presented here is for the Wet Tropics subspecies of the Graceful Honeyeater *Meliphaga gracilis imiatrix* and the Yellow-spotted Honeyeater *Meliphaga notata mixta*. These species are separable in the field by their different calls. In addition *M. gracilis imiatrix* is smaller and appears to be more nervous; also its wing flicks are more noticeable than for *M. notata mixta*. This size difference is not always obvious in the low light of the rainforest habitat they both occupy.

The data presented here for the Graceful Honeyeater *Meliphaga gracilis imiatrix* and the Yellow-spotted Honeyeater *Meliphaga notata mixta* complements previous data presented by Hardy and van Gessel (1994). This previous data was collected on the almost identical subspecies, *M. gracilis*

gracilis and *M. notata notata* which occur on Cape York Peninsula.

A total of 39 Graceful Honeyeaters and 57 Yellow-spotted Honeyeaters were captured, using mist nets, in Cairns, Queensland over a 4½ year period. The site was in a suburban garden adjacent to a disturbed rainforest area of the Mt Whitfield Range.

The adult birds in breeding condition were positively sexed by cloacal examination and their morphometrics are as shown in the tables. The previous finding, by Hardy and van Gessel (1994) that weight is a reliable measurement for separating the two species is confirmed. The Graceful Honeyeaters' weight ranged from 13 to 19 grams (n = 33) and the Yellow-spotted Honeyeaters 23 to 30 grams (n = 53).

Considerably more samples were analysed than those shown by Hardy and van Gessel; however, their data included wing span and bill width which were not recorded by us.

This data, along with Hardy and van Gessel's, should be a useful guide in future studies of these poorly known tropical species.

Graceful Honeyeater

	Sex	n	Range	Mean	SD
Weight (g)	M	10	14-17	15.60	1.56
	F	20	12.5-17	14.35	1.35
Head/Bill (mm)	M	10	38.1-43.4	39.84	4.65
	F	20	36.5-40.6	38.48	3.09
Wing length (mm)	M	10	70-86	74.40	0.52
	F	18	61-75	73.56	0.91
Tarsus (mm)	M	10	20.5-22.4	21.21	2.40
	F	20	19.5-23.4	20.90	2.92
Tail length (mm)	M	9	58-65	61.56	2.40
	F	18	55-65	59.06	2.92

Yellow-spotted Honeyeater

	Sex	n	Range	Mean	SD
Weight (g)	M	9	24-29.5	27.00	1.70
	F	23	23.5-30	25.86	1.85
Head/Bill (mm)	M	9	40.6-46.9	43.91	1.94
	F	23	38.5-46.6	42.68	2.21
Wing length (mm)	M	9	75-85	81.00	4.18
	F	23	74-87	79.74	4.13
Tarsus (mm)	M	9	23.4-25.8	24.52	0.73
	F	23	23-24.9	23.99	0.63
Tail length (mm)	M	9	60-73	69.56	4.03
	F	22	61-74	67.14	3.88

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DATA EXCHANGE

BLUE-FACED PARROT-FINCH

Erythrura trichroa sigillifera

The Blue-faced Parrot-Finch *Erythrura trichroa sigillifera* occurs in and along edges of closed forest-rainforest within Australia. Its distribution range extends to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Pacific islands and a restricted range in Australia. It is seen mainly in the rainforest areas between Cooktown and the Atherton Tableland. J. Young (pers. comm.) reported recent breeding records from Wallaman Falls near Ingham and from Iron Range, Cape York Peninsula. The Blue-faced Parrot-Finch has been classed as rare by Garnett (1992).

The study site on Mt Lewis, at an altitude of 850 m, is a cleared area within rainforest, alongside an old logging track, that has native grasses present at the edge. The birds at the banding site have usually been observed mixed with small parties of Red-browed Finches *Neochimbia temporalis*. They have also been observed further into the rainforest without the presence of any other finches by A. Hertög and F. van Gessel (pers. comm.).

A total of 38 birds have been captured, using mist nets, over a three year period with two birds being re-trapped two years after first banding. The birds are present at the site for approximately five months of the year, December-April. However, one bird was caught in November and there has been a subsequent sighting of three adults and a juvenile bird in October. Their seasonal movements are poorly known but one record of a banded bird observed at a lower altitude out of this period would suggest that there is altitudinal migration.

The small sample of data presented here shows no significant differences in measurements to determine sexual dimorphism; however, on average males tend to have slightly longer tails. Plumage coloration would appear to be one reliable method to determine the sex, male birds having brighter blue facial markings and the rump a brighter red; by comparison the female plumage is a lot duller.

	Sex	n	Range	Mean	SD
Weight(g)	M	22	12-14	14.05	1.36
	F	13	13-16	14.81	0.99
Head/Bill (mm)	M	22	26.6-28.5	27.64	0.56
	F	13	26.6-28.5	27.59	0.46
Wing length (mm)	M	22	58-63	60.68	1.55
	F	13	59-65	61.08	1.75
Tarsus (mm)	M	21	15.1-17.8	15.96	0.67
	F	13	16.3-18.1	16.95	0.71
Tail (mm)	M	22	40-57	48.86	3.96
	F	13	40-51	45.85	3.65

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