

## Sedentary Status of Some New Guinea Jungle Birds

Winston Filewood (1971) has shown in his recent paper that some New Guinea jungle birds may be very sedentary. The following observations further substantiate his findings and indicate that there are strong grounds for believing that their longevity may be greater than the prevalence of predators would seem to permit.

The first observation is from Mount Albert Edward, about 60 miles north-west of Port Moresby, Papua, where, in September 1967, I collected for the Papua New Guinea Museum at Avios, a pack-horse station situated in the middle of moss forest on the Murray Pass. Those birds not needed for the collection were banded and released, 16 in all comprising four species. On 11/12 November 1969 Dr J. R. Diamond, of the University of California also collected there and, during an overnight stay, netted four of my birds. These were three Red-backed Honeyeaters *Ptiloprora guisei* (nine banded previously), one Fan-tailed Berrypecker *Melanocharis versteri* (two banded previously) and one Papuan Scrub-Wren *Sericornis papuensis* (two banded previously). To obtain five retraps from 16 banded birds in one evening and morning almost two years later is a high recovery indeed and doubtless others would have been netted had Dr Diamond stayed longer. The particular locality is likely to be visited again by ornithologists so there may be further recoveries.

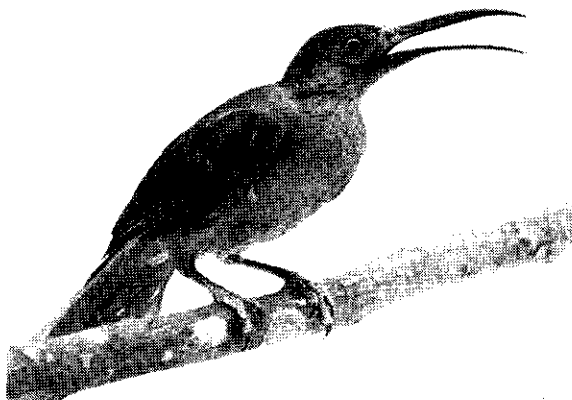
The second observation is from the Western District of Papua. In May 1970, the Secretary of the Bird-banding Scheme received a band from Mr Tom Hoey of the Asian-Pacific Christian Mission at Nomad River. The band was from a Long-billed Honeyeater *Melilestes megahynchus* I banded in May 1967. Subsequent correspondence with Mr Hoey established that the bird was caught almost exactly where it had been netted originally. In fact the net used was the one stolen by Biami tribesmen and later recovered by the police. The bird was caught and eaten by a young Biami. (In 1967 they were eating people!).

These observations indicate a need for recording precise details of net locations which could be made available to others visiting a banding area. A particularly fruitful field of study could be the delineation of territory by netting, as it appears that many jungle passerines may be confined to small and well-defined territories. Thus the degree of sedentariness and length of life of these jungle species could be determined.

### Reference

Filewood, L. W. (1971). 'A New Guinea Jungle Banding Station'. *Aust. Bird Bander*, 9:3-7.

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• Long-billed Honeyeater.

Photo: W. S. Peckover