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FIRST RECORD OF CINNAMON BITTERN FOR TIMOR

by

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The Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* is widespread through eastern Asia from India and China south to Indonesia, but is not known from Australia or New Guinea. It is a common resident of freshwater swamps and rice paddies throughout the Greater Sundas, including Bali (Holmes & Nash 1989; Mason & Jarvis 1989; MacKinnon & Phillipps 1993). In Wallacea, it is common in Sulawesi (Watling 1983; Baltzer 1990), and there are four records from Flores (Verhoeve & Holmes, in prep.) and two from Sumba (Bishop 1992, M. Linsley *in litt.* To D. Holmes), White & Bruce (1986) suggest that Sulawesi and Lombok appear to mark the SE limit of range, and that some records for Wallacea may refer to winter visitors from the north (presumably China), although Verheijen (1964) tentatively recorded breeding on Flores in April.

On 9 December 1995, while birdwatching in rice paddies 16 km east of Kupang, West Timor, we saw a small bittern fly towards and past us, circle and fly past again. During this period we had excellent views of this bird, which had uniform bright cinnamon-chestnut upperparts, including wing-quills, and paler underparts with a noticeable black stripe or stripes on the foreneck. Both of us have had previous experience of this species, RJM in Malaysia and KU in southern Japan. Neither of us were in any doubt as to the identity of the bird as a male Cinnamon Bittern.

This record constitutes the first documented record of the species for Timor, extending the known range eastwards slightly from Flores and Sumba. The only other small bittern known from the island is the Yellow Bittern *I. sinensis* (White & Bruce 1986). As our bird was present during the northern winter, it is likely that it was a vagrant beyond its normal wintering range. However, we recommend observers visiting the island to pay more attention to birds of the wetlands, in order to confirm the status of this and other heron species.

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STATUS OF THE SALMON-CRESTED COCKATOO AND RED LORY ON AMBON ISLAND, MALUKU

by

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The Salmon-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua moluccensis* is endemic to the islands of Seram, Ambon, Haruku and Saparua (White & Bruce 1986) and listed as vulnerable in Collar *et al.* (1994). The Red Lory *Eos bornea* is endemic to these same islands together with Buru and the Kai islands, and several small islands between Seram and Kai (White & Bruce 1986). The population of the lory on Ambon, Haruku and Saparua, nominate *bornea*, is considered to be a separate sub-species from *E. b. rolhschildi* of Seram by Stresemann (1912) and Arndt (1990), on account of its larger size, however Forshaw (1989) and White & Bruce (1986) question the validity of this taxon.

The status of the Salmon-crested Cockatoo on Ambon has always been uncertain, Stresemann (in White & Bruce 1986) states that the species does not occur on Ambon. However, van Bemmelen (1948) included Ambon in the species' range, with a footnote that it is introduced there. Forshaw (1989) and Smiet (1985) follow the view that it was introduced. The latter author did not record the species during nearly two years residence on the island (1980-81), but reports information that it had been common up to ten years previously. Arndt (1990) considers the nominate sub-species of the Red Lory to be extinct. We confirm that wild populations of both species still occur on Ambon and that the lory still occurs on Haruku.

The authors visited forested hills behind Hila on the north coast of the Hitu peninsula on Ambon