
AUSTRALIAN AVOCET IN IRIAN JAYA

by

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On the afternoon of 16 September 1992, at Wasur National Park, Irian Jaya, Alan Lewis and myself were scanning through a mixed wader flock roosting on the beach when we cam across a summer plumaged Red necked Avocet *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*. The following is a brief description: head and neck chestnut, bill black and slightly upturned, white orbital around the eye, body white with black wing coverts and wing tips, two black stripes down the centre of the back, legs pale bluish slate, tail white. It was observed at the roost for approximately one hour.

Wasur lies on the south coast of the island of New Guinea, close to the border with Papua New Guinea. This appears to be the first record for both Indonesia and New Guinea (cf. Andrew 1992; Coates & Bishop 1997).

Other species in the roost included one Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, 250 Black tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*, 5 Bar tailed Godwit *L. lapponica*, > 100 Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*, 1 Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*, 10 Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*, 1 Red Knot *C. canutus*, Rufous necked Stints *C. ruficollis*, Sharp tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata*, 2 Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea*, and >20 White headed Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus*.

[This would also appear to be the first record for Asian Dowitcher from Irian Jaya, although this species has been recorded from Papua New Guinea, with two records quoted by Beehler *et al.* (1986), ed.].

References

- Andrew, P. 1992. *The birds of Indonesia. A checklist (Peters' sequence)*. Jakarta: Indonesian Ornithological Society.
- Beehler, B.M., T.K. Pratt & D.A. Zimmerman. 1986. *Birds of New Guinea*. Princeton University Press.
- Coates, B. J. and Bishop, K. D. 1997. *A Guide to the Birds of Wallacea Sulawesi, The Moluccas and Lesser Sunda Islands, Indonesia*. Alderley: Dove Publications.