

Threatened Birds of Asia:

The BirdLife International Red Data Book

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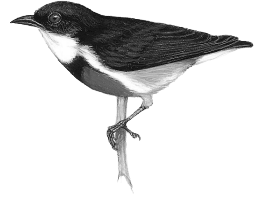
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VISAYAN FLOWERPECKER

Dicaeum haematostictum

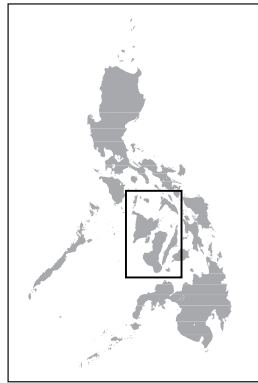
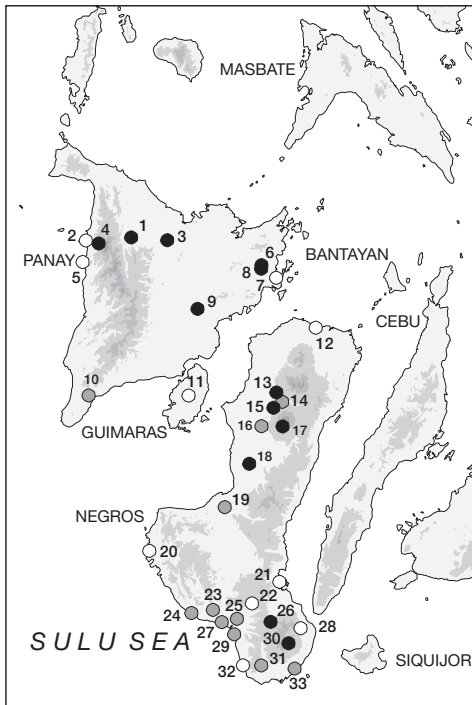


Critical —
 Endangered —
Vulnerable **A1c; A2c; B1+2a,b,c,d,e**

This species qualifies as Vulnerable because its small occupied range has become severely fragmented, and its population is believed to have declined rapidly, as a consequence of extensive clearance of lowland forest. It is predicted that continued habitat loss will cause future rapid declines in its population and range.

DISTRIBUTION The Visayan Flowerpecker (see Remarks 1) is endemic to the Philippines, where it occurs on three islands.

■ **PHILIPPINES** *Panay* **Belen Rosal**, Libacao, Aklan, 100 m, August 1991 (female in PNM); **Culasi**, May–June 1918 (McGregor 1921a); **Jamindan**, Simbucao, Aklan (see Remarks 2), March 1987 (female in PNM); **Alojipan** bordering the Magsaysay and Bacong rivers at 30–60 m, near Culasi, Antique province, August 1994 (G. C. L. Dutson and T. M. Brooks *in litt.* 1996); **Tibiao**, May–June 1918 (McGregor 1921a); **Sampunong Bolo National Park**, Juanaza and Aposaga, February 1992 (Evans *et al.* 1993a); **Concepcion**, January 1888 (three specimens in AMNH, BMNH); **Bairain**, Malayu-an, Ajoy, February 1992 (Evans *et al.* 1993a); **Bulabong Puti-an National Park**, Dingle and San Enrique, February 1992 (Evans *et al.* 1993a); **Pitogo**, San Joaquin, Iloilo, 50–100 m, May 1976 (two males in DMNH);



The distribution of Visayan Flowerpecker *Dicaeum haematostictum*: (1) Belen Rosal; (2) Culasi; (3) Jamindan; (4) Alojipan; (5) Tibiao; (6) Sampunong Bolo National Park; (7) Concepcion; (8) Bairain; (9) Bulabong Puti-an National Park; (10) Pitogo; (11) Guimaras; (12) Cadiz; (13) Patag; (14) Tabonan; (15) Mambucal; (16) Ara-al; (17) Mt Canlaon; (18) Guintubdan; (19) Pinagtubaan; (20) Sipalay; (21) Bais; (22) Amio; (23) Katumbahan; (24) Basay; (25) Hinubungan; (26) Lake Balinsasayao; (27) Naliong; (28) San Antonio; (29) Kawitan; (30) Mt Talinis; (31) Balanan; (32) Bonawon; (33) Zamboanguita.
 Historical (pre-1950) Fairly recent (1950–1979)
 Recent (1980–present)

Guimaras without locality, December 1874 or January 1875 (Sharpe 1877), December 1887, January 1888 (26 specimens in AMNH, BMNH, FMNH, IRSNB, MCML, MCZ, MNHN, RMNH, UMMZ, USNM);

Negros **Cadiz**, February–March 1909 (McGregor 1911; male in FMNH); **Patag**, 600 m, near Silay on Mt Mandalagan, August 1991 (Brooks *et al.* 1992); **Tabonan**, Pandanon, Murcia, May 1967 (female in UPLB); **Mambucal**, 400 m, July 1991 (Brooks *et al.* 1992), March 1994 (Davidson ms) and January 1997 (B. Gee *in litt.* 1997); **Ara-al**, La Carlota City, 1,200 m, November 1979 (male in DMNH); **Mt Canlaon**, March 1896 (Whitehead 1899b; six specimens in AMNH, BMNH), April–May 1953, one labelled from Pula (Ripley and Rabor 1956); female in YPM), March 1994 (Davidson ms); **Guintubdan**, 1,250 m, July–August 1991 (Brooks *et al.* 1992, also Evans *et al.* 1993a); **Pinagtubaan**, Oringao, Kabankalan, 330 m, March 1974 (five specimens in DMNH); **Sipalay**, April 1932 (two males in IRSNB); **Bais**, January 1891 (four specimens in CM, USNM); **Amio** at Pamo-at, Ugdangaun and Kaigangan, Santa Catalina, April and May 1948 (six specimens in FMNH); **Katumbahan**, June 1952 (female in UPD); **Basay**, Bayawan, Oriental, December 1959 (four males in AMNH); **Hinubungan**, Tolong, November and December 1948 (five specimens in FMNH, PNM, ZMH) or given as in the Santa Catalina area, December 1951 and December 1953 (11 specimens in AMNH, FMNH, MCZ, YPM); **Lake Balinsasayao**, 900 m, May 1949 (male in FMNH) and at 850 m, July–August 1991 (Brooks *et al.* 1992); **Naliong**, Tolong, 450 m, April 1950 (male in MCZ); **San Antonio**, February 1888 (three specimens in AMNH, BMNH); **Kawitan**, Santa Catalina, December 1955 (five specimens in YPM, ZMH); **Mt Talinis**, August 1954 (female in AMNH), 750 m, August and September 1955 (two specimens in DMNH), and at Camp Lookout, 550–600 m, July and November 1955 (12 specimens in AMNH, ANSP, DMNH, ZMH), sometimes qualified as Luzuriaga, August 1954 (male in AMNH), April, August and November 1955 (five specimens in DMNH), also at Casa Roro, c.700 m, 1997 (I. Mauro *per F. Verbelen in litt.* 1997), and at Valencia, August 1877 (Tweeddale 1878c), including Camp Lookout (presumably the same as the preceding), July–August and October–December 1955 (14 specimens in YPM), August 1959 (two males in FMNH), July 1966 (male in UMMZ), and 1991–1992 (Pa-alan 1993); **Balanan** (presumably at or near the lake of this name), Siaton, March 1957, March and November 1959 (three specimens in DMNH, PNM, ZMH); **Bonawon** (written “Boanon”), Siaton, sea-level, June 1947 (two males in FMNH); **Zamboanguita**, 150 m, February 1950 (female in MCZ). There is a single untraced locality on Negros: Kantulongao, Siaton, January 1957 (two males in FMNH).

POPULATION In the mid-1950s this flowerpecker was reported to be common on Negros up to 750 m and occasional up to 1,060 m, but the same authors also reported that the slopes at least of Canlaon had been “entirely cleared” up to 900 m (Ripley and Rabor 1956), which naturally makes an understanding of the species’s status at that time fairly difficult. In the period 1964–1967 125 birds were ringed in the Siaton area (McClure and Leelavit 1972). Surprisingly few were found anywhere on the island in 1991 (Brooks *et al.* 1992, also Evans *et al.* 1993a). According to Evans *et al.* (1993a), this paucity of records could be accounted for in part by the large number of flowerpeckers which went unidentified at each site (although all well-seen ones were identified). However, it is likely that the proportions of birds identified will still provide a fairly accurate picture of the relative abundance of flowerpeckers on Negros. Hence, the ratios of nine Bicoloured Flowerpeckers *D. bicolor* and 23 Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers *D. trigonostigma* to each *D. haematostictum* can be taken as an indication of the scarcity of the latter. Conversely, Evans *et al.* (1993a) recorded seven *D. haematostictum* for each Pygmy Flowerpecker *D. pygmaeum*, and no Striped Flowerpeckers *D. aeruginosum* were seen during their time on Negros. On Mt Talinis the species was abundant in secondary forest and an agriculturally prepared area, 1991–1992 (Pa-alan 1993). It is probably extinct on Guimaras, and its status on Panay is very uncertain; during a month-long expedition to

Mt Madja-as in April–May 1992, Kennedy and Ruedas (1992) did not encounter a single individual of the species.

ECOLOGY Habitat The Visayan Flowerpecker is found in gardens and other flowering or fruiting trees even close to human habitations, in coconut groves, in flowering and fruiting trees or shrubs in farms and clearings, in “parang” vegetation (a natural grassland ecotone with mixed shrubs and small trees), second-growth and original forests, both typical dipterocarp and mid-mountain forests, and anywhere in the foothills and hills where plants are flowering and fruiting (Sharpe 1877, F. S. Bourns and D. C. Worcester in McGregor 1909–1910, R. J. Timmins *in litt.* 1997). It ranges from the lowlands near the coast to the highlands at about 1,000 m elevation (Rabor 1977a). From the account of Evans *et al.* (1993a), birds were seen in forest at Guintubdan (1,250 m), in gardens at Mambucal resort (400 m), in scrub around Patag (600 m) and at Balinsasayao (850 m), the majority of records being in scrub. Birds at Bulabong Puti-an National Park on Panay were in degraded secondary forest (R. J. Timmins *in litt.* 1997).

Food Four out of seven birds collected in fruiting trees at Amio, Negros, 1948, were specified as being in *Ficus* (FMNH label data), three birds on Mt Talinis in November were “in a tall tree feeding on fruits” (AMNH, ANSP label data), and a male at Hinubungan, Negros, was “feeding on a cluster of fruits in a low tree at the forest edge” (MCZ label data). The species eats berries (squeezing out the contents and discarding the pericarp), blossoms, insects and spiders, and is found among flowers of tall trees deep in forests or in fruiting trees together with certain other species of flowerpecker (Evans *et al.* 1993a).

Breeding (In the following account all data refer to Negros.) Four December males (in AMNH) and two January males (in FMNH) had enlarged testes. Two March males (in DMNH) had moderately developed testes. A nest found in mid-March 1896 at the base of Mt Canlaon contained a single fresh egg and was suspended from the end of a branch some distance from the ground (Ogilvie Grant and Whitehead 1898, Whitehead 1899b). Two May males (in FMNH) were breeding. However, three nests found at Lake Balinsasayao during fieldwork conducted between January 1977 and July 1978 were in August and September (Alcala and Carumbana 1980), and juveniles were seen on three dates in August (Evans *et al.* 1993a). The nest has been recorded as being placed in a tree-fern at a height of 7–11 m, with a clutch-size of one (Alcala and Carumbana 1980; but see Remarks 3).

Migration This species is presumably sedentary.

THREATS This species has been strongly affected by the removal of forest and scrub within its altitudinal range (Collar *et al.* 1994), and the near-total clearance of forest on Guimaras can be blamed for its presumed extinction there (SSC 1988, Development Alternatives Inc. 1992).

MEASURES TAKEN Mt Canlaon receives formal protection as a CPPAP site (see Appendix and equivalent section under Visayan Wrinkled Hornbill *Aceros waldeni*). In addition, the species is found in the Mts Baloy/Madja-as range on Panay (covering the Mt Baloy and Mts Madja-as/Hantod-tubig “key sites” and forming part of the proposed Central Panay Mountains National Park) and the Mt Talinis/Twin Lakes area on Negros (covering the Eastern Cuernos de Negros and Lake Balinsasayao “key sites”), which are both proposed for receipt of FPE funding (see Appendix).

MEASURES PROPOSED Apart from the areas targeted for conservation above, the Visayan Flowerpecker is known from one additional “key site” (Mts Silay/Mandalagan on Negros, within the unprotected North Negros Forest Reserve; see Appendix) and, at least in part, this deserves formal designation under the NIPAS process. In 1980 it was proposed that the

remaining forested areas of southern Negros be closed to logging to protect the wildlife (and the Balinsasayao area declared a forest reserve and wildlife sanctuary), moves argued as necessary for the ecosystem to fulfil “other human needs such as recreation and scientific studies”, and indeed more ecological research in the area was then urged (Alcala and Carumbana 1980). Further surveys are required to identify suitable forests to conserve in southern Panay (Y. de Soye verbally 1996) and to determine whether the species is present on the north-west Panay peninsula.

REMARKS (1) This taxon has previously been considered the Western Visayan subspecies of Philippine Flowerpecker *Dicaeum australe haematostictum*. Salomonsen (1960), Sibley and Monroe (1990) and Dickinson *et al.* (1991) thus lumped the form, although the last suggested field studies to resolve its taxonomy, and the first acknowledged that it “differs strikingly” from the nominate. It should be noted that *D. retrocinctum* (until very recently believed endemic to Mindoro) appears to be a member of the *australe* superspecies and that *haematostictum* is an intermediate form between *retrocinctum* and *australe* (Brooks *et al.* 1992; also Evans *et al.* 1993a). Based on the judgement of these latter authors, the bird is elevated here to species status (distinct from *D. australe*). The reported discovery of *retrocinctum* on Panay and Negros (see relevant account) would tend to confirm this view. Nevertheless, there appears to have been no attempt to compare vocalisations (D. Allen verbally 1997) and this would repay further study. (2) According to maps, Jamindan is not in Aklan but in western Capiz. However, “Simbucao” could perhaps be Libacao. (3) Although Alcala and Carumbana (1980) gave the clutch-size as one, they indicated having observed three nests and reported on the fate of two eggs and four nestlings.