

# Threatened Birds of Asia:

## The BirdLife International Red Data Book

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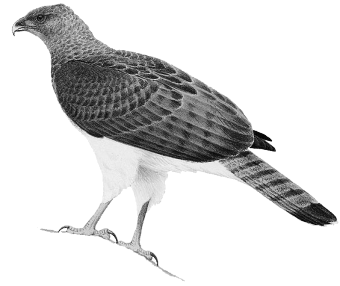
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## NEW GUINEA HARPY EAGLE

### *Harpyopsis novaeguineae*

Critical  —  
Endangered  —  
Vulnerable  C1; C2b



*This huge eagle is classified as Vulnerable on the basis of an estimated small population which may be declining through hunting and habitat loss. However, very little is known about its population size or trends and it may prove to be safe in the vast uninhabited forests of New Guinea.*

**DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION** The New Guinea Harpy Eagle is widely distributed on New Guinea (**Indonesia** and **Papua New Guinea**), occurring at very low population densities (Coates 1985, J. Diamond *in litt.* 1987). There are no indications of territory or total population size, but it is significantly less common or extirpated in most densely inhabited regions (Beehler 1985, Coates 1985). There were only three records in four years from the heavily hunted Ok Tedi area Gregory (1995a), but it is relatively common in the Kikori basin where hunting pressure is low (K. D. Bishop *in litt.* (1999).

**ECOLOGY** It is commonest in undisturbed forest but has been recorded from forest clearings and gallery forest from sea-level to 3,700 m (Coates 1985, Beehler *et al.* 1986, I. Burrows *in litt.* 1999). It feeds mostly on mammals, especially native marsupials and rats, but also pigs and dogs, and sometimes birds and snakes (Coates 1985, Beehler *et al.* 1986, 1992). Only one active nest has been examined containing a single chick, and it is possible that this species breeds less than annually (Coates 1985).

**THREATS** It is hunted in much of New Guinea, especially the highlands, for its tail and flight feathers which are used in ceremonial head-dresses, and most hunting pressure is close to densely inhabited areas (most people live in mid-montane altitudes); guns are becoming increasingly available in Papua New Guinea, locally increasing hunting pressure (Coates 1985), and logging roads also open up previously inaccessible areas to hunting (I. Burrows *in litt.* 1994). It may also suffer from competition with human hunters for large mammalian prey (A. Mack *in litt.* 1999).

**MEASURES TAKEN** It occurs in several protected areas, such as the Crater Mountain Wildlife Management Area (K. M. Kisokau *in litt.* 1994). It is fully protected by law in Papua New Guinea, but these laws are rarely enforced.

**MEASURES PROPOSED** • Determine territory size and relate to prey abundance. • Locate nests to research basic breeding biology. • Research basic ecology of prey species. • Monitor numbers in study sites such as Kikori Integrated Conservation and Development Project area. • Investigate hunting levels and possible regulation through discussions with local hunters. • Discourage the use of feathers in head-dresses or find alternatives. • Enforce protection in uninhabited reserve areas. • Utilise as a flagship species in ecotourism initiatives.