

Threatened Birds of Asia:

The BirdLife International Red Data Book

Editors

N. J. COLLAR (Editor-in-chief),
A. V. ANDREEV, S. CHAN, M. J. CROSBY, S. SUBRAMANYA and J. A. TOBIAS

Maps by

RUDYANTO and M. J. CROSBY

Principal compilers and data contributors

■ **BANGLADESH** P. Thompson ■ **BHUTAN** R. Pradhan; C. Inskipp, T. Inskipp ■ **CAMBODIA** Sun Huan; C. M. Poole ■ **CHINA** ■ **MAINLAND CHINA** Zheng Guangmei; Ding Changqing, Gao Wei, Gao Yuren, Li Fulai, Liu Naifa, Ma Zhijun, the late Tan Yaokuang, Wang Qishan, Xu Weishu, Yang Lan, Yu Zhiwei, Zhang Zhengwang. ■ **HONG KONG** Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (BirdLife Affiliate); H. F. Cheung; F. N. Y. Lock, C. K. W. Ma, Y. T. Yu. ■ **TAIWAN** Wild Bird Federation of Taiwan (BirdLife Partner); L. Liu Severinghaus; Chang Chin-lung, Chiang Ming-liang, Fang Woei-horng, Ho Yi-hsian, Hwang Kwang-yin, Lin Wei-yuan, Lin Wen-horn, Lo Hung-ren, Sha Chian-chung, Yau Cheng-teh. ■ **INDIA** Bombay Natural History Society (BirdLife Partner Designate) and Sálím Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History; L. Vijayan and V. S. Vijayan; S. Balachandran, R. Bhargava, P. C. Bhattacharjee, S. Bhupathy, A. Chaudhury, P. Gole, S. A. Hussain, R. Kaul, U. Lachungpa, R. Naroji, S. Pandey, A. Pittie, V. Prakash, A. Rahmani, P. Saikia, R. Sankaran, P. Singh, R. Sugathan, Zafar-ul Islam ■ **INDONESIA** BirdLife International Indonesia Country Programme; Ria Saryanthi; D. Agista, S. van Balen, Y. Cahyadin, R. F. A. Grimmett, F. R. Lambert, M. Poulsen, Rudyanto, I. Setiawan, C. Trainor ■ **JAPAN** Wild Bird Society of Japan (BirdLife Partner); Y. Fujimaki; Y. Kanai, H. Morioka, K. Ono, H. Uchida, M. Ueta, N. Yanagisawa ■ **KOREA** ■ **NORTH KOREA** Pak U-il; Chong Jong-ryol, Rim Chuyon. ■ **SOUTH KOREA** Lee Woo-shin; Han Sang-hoon, Kim Jin-han, Lee Ki-sup, Park Jin-young ■ **LAOS** K. Khounbolin; W. J. Duckworth ■ **MALAYSIA** Malaysian Nature Society (BirdLife Partner); K. Kumar; G. Noramly, M. J. Kohler ■ **MONGOLIA** D. Batdelger; A. Bräunlich, N. Tseveenmyadag ■ **MYANMAR** Khin Ma Ma Thwin ■ **NEPAL** Bird Conservation Nepal (BirdLife Affiliate); H. S. Baral; C. Inskipp, T. P. Inskipp ■ **PAKISTAN** Ornithological Society of Pakistan (BirdLife Affiliate) ■ **PHILIPPINES** Haribon Foundation for Conservation of Natural Resources (BirdLife Partner); N. A. D. Mallari, B. R. Tabaranza, Jr. ■ **RUSSIA** Russian Bird Conservation Union (BirdLife Partner Designate); A. V. Andreev; A. G. Degtyarev, V. G. Degtyarev, V. A. Dugintsov, N. N. Gerasimov, Yu. N. Gerasimov, N. I. Germogenov, O. A. Goroshko, A. V. Kondrat'ev, Yu. V. Labutin, N. M. Litvinenko, Yu. N. Nazarov, V. A. Nechaev, V. I. Perfil'ev, R. V. Ryabtsev, Yu. V. Shibaev, S. G. Surmach, E. E. Tkachenko, O. P. Val'chuk, B. A. Voronov. ■ **SINGAPORE** The Nature Society (Singapore) (BirdLife Partner); Lim Kim Seng ■ **SRI LANKA** Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka (BirdLife Affiliate); S. Kotagama; S. Aryaprema, S. Corea, J. P. G. Jones, U. Fernando, R. Perera, M. Siriwardhane, K. Weerakoon ■ **THAILAND** Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BirdLife Partner); U. Treesucon; R. Jugmongkol, V. Kongthong, P. Poonswad, P. D. Round, S. Supparatvirkorn ■ **VIETNAM** BirdLife International Vietnam Country Programme; Nguyen Cu; J. C. Eames, A. W. Tordoff, Le Trong Trai, Nguyen Duc Tu.

With contributions from: S. H. M. Butchart, D. S. Butler (maps), P. Davidson, J. C. Lowen, G. C. L. Dutson, N. B. Peet, T. Vetta (maps), J. M. Villasper (maps), M. G. Wilson

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Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge, CB3 0NA, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1223 277318 Fax: +44 1223 277200 Email: birdlife@birdlife.org.uk

Internet: www.birdlife.net

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SANGIHE HANGING-PARROT

Loriculus catamene

Critical —

Endangered B1+2b,c,d,e; C1; C2b

Vulnerable —



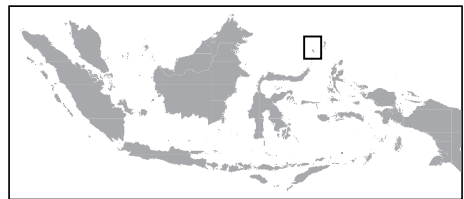
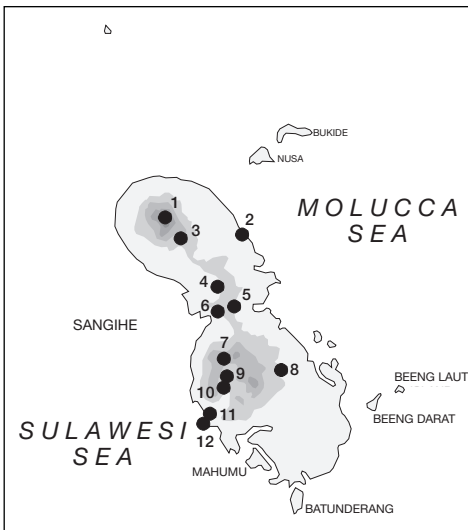
This parrot qualifies as Endangered because its very small range and population are declining as a result of extensive habitat loss and fragmentation. Although it tolerates secondary habitats, it may require the presence of associated intact forest.

DISTRIBUTION The Sangihe hanging-parrot (see Remarks 1) is endemic to the island of Sangihe north of Sulawesi, Indonesia. Gunung Sahendaruman is the single most important site for the species (Riley *et al.* 1997, J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999). Records are from:

■ **INDONESIA** *Sangihe Gunung Awu* including Talawid Atas, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b; see Remarks 2); **Tabukanlama**, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b); **Kedang**, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b); **Tahuna**, May 1986 (Bishop 1992b), 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b); **Gunung**, 1999 (J. Riley, J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999); south of **Manganitu**, Gunung Sahendaruman range, May 1985 (two females in RMNH); **Kentuhang**, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b); **Malamenggu**, 1999 (J. Riley, J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999); **Lilipang**, 1999 (at least 20 birds) (J. Riley, J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999); **Ulung Peliang**, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b); **Gunung Sahendaruman** at Gunung Sahengbalira, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b); **Tamakao**, 1996 and 1997 (Riley 1997a,b).

The species can, however, be expected anywhere on the island, so the above list conveys a rather mistaken impression of patchy distribution (J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999).

POPULATION The species was not particularly plentiful in 1886–1887 (Platen 1887, Blasius 1888, Meyer and Wigglesworth 1898). In 1985 it was found to be rather common at forest edge and in coconut groves (F. G. Rozendaal *per* T. P. Inskipp *in litt.* 1987, hence also Collar



The distribution of Sangihe Hanging-parrot

Loriculus catamene: (1) Gunung Awu; (2) Tabukanlama; (3) Kedang; (4) Tahuna; (5) Gunung; (6) Manganitu; (7) Kentuhang; (8) Malamenggu; (9) Lilipang; (10) Ulung Peliang; (11) Gunung Sahendaruman; (12) Tamako.

● Recent (1980–present)

and Andrew 1988). However, only a single observation, involving a pair (or at least two pairs: Bishop 1992a) was made in 1986 (Whitten *et al.* 1987a; see Remarks 3), and no trace of this bird, considered as a consequence “extremely threatened”, could be found in around 1990, despite much time apparently (see account of Red-and-blue Lory *Eos histrio*) being spent in cultivated areas (Taylor 1991b, 1992). It is judged generally uncommon and rare (Coates and Bishop 1997). A total of 54 birds were seen in 17 sightings in five weeks of fieldwork, 1995 (Riley 1997b), and birds were seen daily in small numbers on the slopes of Gunung Awu and Gunung Sahengbalira during 1996 (F. R. Lambert *in litt.* 1999). Village elders interviewed in 1999 judged that a decline in numbers had occurred in some areas since around 1980 (see Threats). Review of various data gathered in the late 1990s tends to suggest that the population is c.270 (range 130–560) at Gunung Sahendaruman, but further work is needed before these figures are finalised (J. Riley *in litt.* 2000).

ECOLOGY Habitat The Sangihe Hanging-parrot has adapted well to man-modified habitats, occupying a wide niche ranging from primary forest to coconut monocultures, and from sea-level to 950 m (Riley 1997a, 1998b). It was collected in a coconut plantation in the 1880s (Platen 1887) and observed in coconut groves in the mid-1980s, and seemed likely to be able to survive in highly modified habitat (F. G. Rozendaal in Collar and Andrew 1988, Collar *et al.* 1994). However, it is unclear (but unlikely) that it can persist in areas where *all* natural forest has been lost (see Threats), and B. F. King verbally (1998) expressed the view that it may not prosper at higher elevations. In 1995 it was most commonly observed in areas of mixed plantation and remnant forest patch vegetation, from near sea-level to c.900 m (Riley 1997b, 1998b). A group of 17 was observed apparently leaving a roost in mixed plantation/forest in September, and a loose group of 19 passed overhead at Talawid in December, but most sightings were of groups of 1–4 birds (Riley 1997a,b, 1998b).

Food Coconut nectar appears to be the most important food source, but birds were also seen feeding on nectar of langsat *Lansium domesticum* and on fruits in a large *Ficus* (Riley 1997a,b), also small fruits of “palenti” (possibly Euphorbiaceae) (J. Riley *in litt.* 1999). Possible or actual feeding on invertebrates has recently been witnessed, birds appearing to pick at the bark of kapok *Ceiba pentandra*, twice seen excavating the rotten wood of tree stumps, and a single bird watched feeding on the ant chamber of an epiphytic orchid (J. Riley *in litt.* 1999).

Breeding The season appears extended, or else there are two periods (on the following evidence these would be December–February and April–June). Juvenile birds have been collected in January, February and July (Blasius 1888, Meyer and Wigglesworth 1898; see Remarks 4). A pair were seen feeding a juvenile in February (J. Riley *in litt.* 1999). A female collected in May possessed a large brood-patch and was attending a nest in 6–7 m high dead trunk of a tree-fern at the edge of primary forest (RMNH label data); this was evidently the nest with two eggs reported in Riley (1997a, 1998b).

THREATS Until it can be shown conclusively that no ecological constraint, currently masked by its use of gardens and plantations, operates on this species (Riley 1997a,b), it must continue to give cause for concern. The only known nest (see above) was associated with primary forest and, while little can be drawn from this, it is by no means impossible that forest is a “source” habitat for breeding birds, while coconut plantations are a “sink” for them (as is the case with the Seychelles Kestrel *Falco araea*, which occurs at equal densities in both habitats, but which is critically dependent on original forest: see Collar and Stuart 1985). Thus the still precarious state of primary forest on Sangihe (see Threats under Sangihe Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla sanghirensis*) must be a cause of concern for even this ostensibly secure parrot. Loss of large trees is one of two factors blamed by village elders for a post-1980 decline in numbers, and it is certainly the case that this is an alarming continuing problem in need of urgent attention (J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999). In addition, the effects of insecticides

(widely used on coconut trees), hunting (a minor pressure at present) and disease (an ever-present possibility, with at least five species of non-native parrot observed on Sangihe in the period 1995–1997) are further reasons for concern over the species's status (Riley 1997a, 1998b).

No trapping pressure exists on this species (which is considered stupid—for not talking—and vicious), but birds are sometimes shot with catapults and air rifles, and village elders believe this is a second factor responsible for a post-1980 decline (J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999).

The Sangihe Hanging-parrot is one of (now) seven threatened members of the suite of (now) 10 bird species that are entirely restricted to the “Sangihe and Talaud Endemic Bird Area” (see Remarks 6 under Caerulean Paradise-flycatcher *Eutrichomyias rowleyi*), threats and conservation measures in which are profiled by Sujatnika *et al.* (1995) and Stattersfield *et al.* (1998).

MEASURES TAKEN The species was protected under Indonesian law in 1999 (M. Indrawan *in litt.* 1999). Some information on recent activities is given in the equivalent section under Caerulean Paradise-flycatcher.

MEASURES PROPOSED Some information on the need for conservation at Gunung Sahendaruman is given in the equivalent section under Caerulean Paradise-flycatcher. A detailed ecological study of this parrot is needed, but meanwhile local people could be encouraged not to clear remnant forest patches and trees adjacent to or in plantations. In addition, a programme of planting appropriate trees at strategic sites across Sangihe is called for (J. C. Wardill *in litt.* 1999).

REMARKS (1) This species has been treated as a subspecies of Moluccan Hanging-parrot *Loriculus amabilis* but is sufficiently distinct to be treated as a separate species (White and Bruce 1986). (2) Riley (1997b) cited a record by Bishop (1992a) of two birds on Gunung Awu in 1986, but this is not in Bishop (1992a). (3) The discrepancy over the number of birds seen in 1986 is unimportant. However, one of the observers in Whitten *et al.* (1987a), K. D. Bishop, is reported in Forshaw (1989) as failing entirely to find the species in 1986 and hence fearing its extinction, a mistake attributable to confusion of information with that supplied for Red-and-blue Lory *Eos histrio*, which was the species Bishop missed and which he consequently feared extinct (see Bishop 1992b). (4) Given that the collection from which these juveniles came was undertaken in “summer” 1886 and December 1886 to February 1887, these dates cannot be taken to reflect breeding seasonality.