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New and Noteworthy Bird Records for Micronesia, 1986–2003

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This paper documents noteworthy records of 73 bird species for Micronesia from 1986–2003. We describe six new records for the region, three each for the Mariana and Marshall Islands, two for the Carolines, and 25 new island records. Additional reports are included for species that are either rare or poorly documented for particular islands. Of the 61 species that are not resident in Micronesia, 52 are probably Palearctic in their origin, three are from elsewhere in Oceania, two each are Oriental and Nearctic, and one each is Australasian and Antarctic.

The following observers participated in sighting, recording, or evaluating the records: C. F. Aguon (CA), G. Allport (GA), P. Aguon (PA), G. M. Beauprez (GB), J. Benevente (JB), R. E. Beck, Jr. (RB), A. Brown-Watson (AB-W), C. Campion (CC), J. de Cruz (JC), R. Cruz (RC), V.A. Camacho (VC), G. Dutson (GD), R. E. David (RD), J. Engbring (JE), G. Fugate (GF), J. Flores (JF), R. Frew (RF), G. Grimm (GG), J. Gourley (JG), K. L. Garrett (KG), P. O. Glass (PG), J. E. Hunter (JH), L. Henderson (LH), N. B. Hawley (NH), R. Harper (RH), N. C. Johnson (NJ), A. K. Kepler (AK), A. Keith (AKi), C. C. Kessler (CK), C. B. Kepler (CKp), G. Stuart Keith (SK), T. Lloyd (TL), J. M. Morton (JM), L. Mathews (LM), C. Naugle (CN), J. Omar (JO), K. D. Orcutt (KO), H. D. Pratt (DP), I. Price (IP), M. W. Ritter (MR), C. Spiegel (CS), D. W. Stinson (DS), J. Salas (JS), M. Swift (MS), T. Sutterfield (TS), E. M. Taisacan (ET), G. Talbot (GT), Daniel S. Vice (DV), Diane Vice (DiV), D. Wooster (DW), D. Watson (DaW), Doug Weidemann (DgW), Don Weidemann (DnW), G. J. Wiles (GW), G. Witteman (GWt), W. Weare (WW), and Y. Yalap (YY).

Providence Petrel *(Pterodroma solandri)*. Single petrels of this species were observed at 3º14'N, 131º21'E and 3º13'N, 131º19'E near Tobi in Palau's Southwest Islands on 3 June 1992 (AK; Kepler 1993). Both sightings, possibly of the same individual, occurred at distances of 100–150 m under good light conditions. The birds appeared large and generally dark in coloration, but displayed slightly paler bellies and conspicuous white flashes at the bases of the underwing primaries. No white was visible on the upperwings. This wing pattern distinguished the birds from dark-morph Kermadec *(P. neglecta)* and Herald *(P. arminjoniana)* Petrels, both of which also migrate into the west-central Pacific from breeding grounds south of the equator (Harrison 1985, Carboneras 1992). The bright wing flashes and paler belly also distinguished the birds from Great-winged Petrels *(P. macroptera)*, a species restricted to cooler regions of the southern oceans except for a few vagrants that reach the North Pacific. Our observations represent the first records of *P. solandri* in Micronesia.

Bulwer's Petrel *(Bulweria bulwerii)*. AK observed six Bulwer's Petrels among Palau's Southwest Islands from 2-18 June 1992 at the following locations: one bird offshore at Tobi Island, one at 4º30'N, 132º22'E, one at 3º13'N, 131º19'E, one at 3º6'N, 131º14'E, and two at 6ºN, 133º10'E (Kepler 1993). Many were viewed well, which aided identification. They were fairly small with long pointed tails and dark brown overall except for paler diagonal bands across the upper wing coverts. The birds flew low over the water and displayed the distinctive

erratic flight pattern of this species, less fluttery than that of storm-petrels. This petrel has been previously recorded from the Marianas and Yap eastward to the Marshalls (Bruyns 1964, Amerson 1969, Glass et al. 1990, Kepler et al. 1992), but is new for Palau.

Buller's Shearwater *(Puffinus bulleri)*. Garrett & Schreiber (1988) reported the only records of this species for Micronesia, which involved nine sightings of one to six birds at Bikini and Kwajalein Atolls, Marshall Islands, on 27-29 May 1986. Their account did not list descriptive remarks, so we provide them here. Many of the birds were seen well by KG, who noted their *Puffinus*-like shape and the languid flight pattern typical of *P. bulleri*. Other characters noted on each included gray upperparts boldly marked by a dark M-shaped pattern, clean white plumage below, a dark crown, and a longish tail. Buller's Shearwaters nest off northern New Zealand and migrate to the northern and eastern regions of the Pacific (Harrison 1985, Carboneras 1992).

Red-tailed Tropicbird *(Phaethon rubricauda)*. During interviews with islanders on Tobi and Sonsorol in Palau's Southwest Islands in June 1992, AK was informed that small numbers of this species nested on both islands. Residents stated that tropicbirds with red tail feathers used several enormous banyan *(Ficus prolixa)* trees on Tobi and many of the large *Calophyllum inophyllum* trees on Sonsorol as breeding sites. White-tailed Tropicbirds *(P. lepturus)* also nested in the same trees, which apparently offered some protection from chronic hunting due to their tall heights and the many crevices among their branches. AK was unable to confirm nesting through her own observations. *Phaethon rubricauda* occurs widely in Micronesia, with breeding known in the Marianas, Pohnpei, the Marshalls, and Wake (Pyle & Engbring 1985, de Korte & Meltofte 1997). However, in Palau, the species is scarce and nesting is previously undocumented (Engbring 1988).

Masked Booby *(Sula dactylatra)*. Two pairs of Masked Boobies were seen on Gaferut Island, Yap, on 14 September 1999 (CKp). One of the pairs was accompanied by a flying juvenile, whereas the second had a downy chick estimated to be about two months old. Another juvenile, this one about 100 days of age, was found in a nest of coral rubble during a second trip to the island on 28 May 2002 (CKp). The adults were recognized by their large size, black tail and facial mask, yellowish bill coloration, and their diagnostic call notes, whereas the juvenile in 2002 had a distinctively shaped bill. These are the first sightings of *S. dactylatra* in Yap state. This species has been widely recorded elsewhere in Micronesia (Pyle & Engbring 1985, Reichel 1991, Wiles et al. 2000).

Brown Booby *(Sula leucogaster)*. Brown Boobies breed widely throughout Micronesia (Pyle & Engbring 1985), but the only previous nesting record for Yap state is from West Fayu Atoll in the early 1900s and was presented without details (Nelson 1978). Therefore, the discovery of a dense nesting colony of this species at Gaferut Island on 28 May 2002 (CKp) is noteworthy both for its occurrence and large size. About 1,000 chicks were found in nests on the ground throughout the island, with another 200 juveniles seen in flight.

Red-footed Booby *(Sula sula)*. This species occurs across much of Micronesia (Pyle & Engbring 1985), but is surprisingly poorly documented for Yap state, with a report from Gaferut Island in 1954 (Niering 1961) the only record known to us. Here, we provide additional documentation for this location and note the species' occurrence at a second site in Yap.

On 14 September 1999, CKp observed about 200 adult Red-footed Boobies and several flying juveniles during a brief stop at Gaferut. At least 50 of the adults sat tightly on nests, indicating the presence of eggs or young chicks. No older chicks were sighted, which suggested that the population was early in its breeding cycle. All nests occurred in *Tournefortia trees*. During a second short visit on 28 May 2002, CKp recorded about 300 adult and flying juvenile Red-footed Boobies. He also viewed up to 50 older chicks, which were late in the downy stage or had their remiges showing, but did not see any incubating adults. Nesting was restricted to the east side of the island on this trip.

Large numbers of Red-footed Boobies were observed at Sorenlung Islet, Ulithi Atoll, on 13-14 March 1986 (JE, GW). Up to 100 boobies were seen in flight at any one time, with at least several hundred birds probably roosting on the island. Fourteen nests were discovered, including several in tall *Pisonia grandis* trees. Most adults were white morph individuals, but much of the population consisted of brownish immatures with dark tails.

Little Black Cormorant *(Phalacrocorax sulcirostris)*. An all-black cormorant was seen in flight over a pond on Pulo Anna in Palau's Southwest Islands on 13 June 1992 (AK; Kepler 1993). It was viewed at close range for about eight minutes. Subsequent review of regional field guides confirmed it to be *P. sulcirostris*. The bird was relatively small for a cormorant, with a medium-length black bill, an entirely black face, and black legs. These characters distinguished it from a Little Cormorant *(P. niger)*, which occurs in tropical Asia eastward to Java and is largely black, but has a smaller brownish bill and a whitish chin in non-breeding plumage. Little Black Cormorants have an Australasian distribution that extends to the northern coast of New Guinea and into much of Indonesia (Beehler et al. 1986, Orta 1992), and are an abundant visitor to New Guinea (Beehler et al. 1986). This species is previously unrecorded in Micronesia.

Gray Heron *(Ardea cinerea)*. A Gray Heron was observed on the mud flats at Wanyan, Yap, on 7 November 2001 (GD). Although distant, it was seen to be a large and heavy-bodied heron, with grayish plumage and a dark cap contrasting with a pale neck. An absence of chestnut on the thighs and wings distinguished it from a Great Blue Heron *(A. herodias)*. Single Gray Herons were recorded at several locations with ponds on Saipan in 2002, including a golf course at Laolao Bay on 20 March (VC), another golf course in Talufofo on 5 June (CK), where it was photographed (Fig. 1a), and at Hakmang Peninsula on 11 June (VC). Another was observed and photographed (Fig. 1b) at a temporarily flooded field in Mangilao, Guam, on 22 and 25 December 2002 (TL). Gray Herons are rare visitors to western Micronesia, with single prior reports from Yap, Guam, and probably Palau (Stinson et al. 1997a, Wiles et al. 1993, 2000).

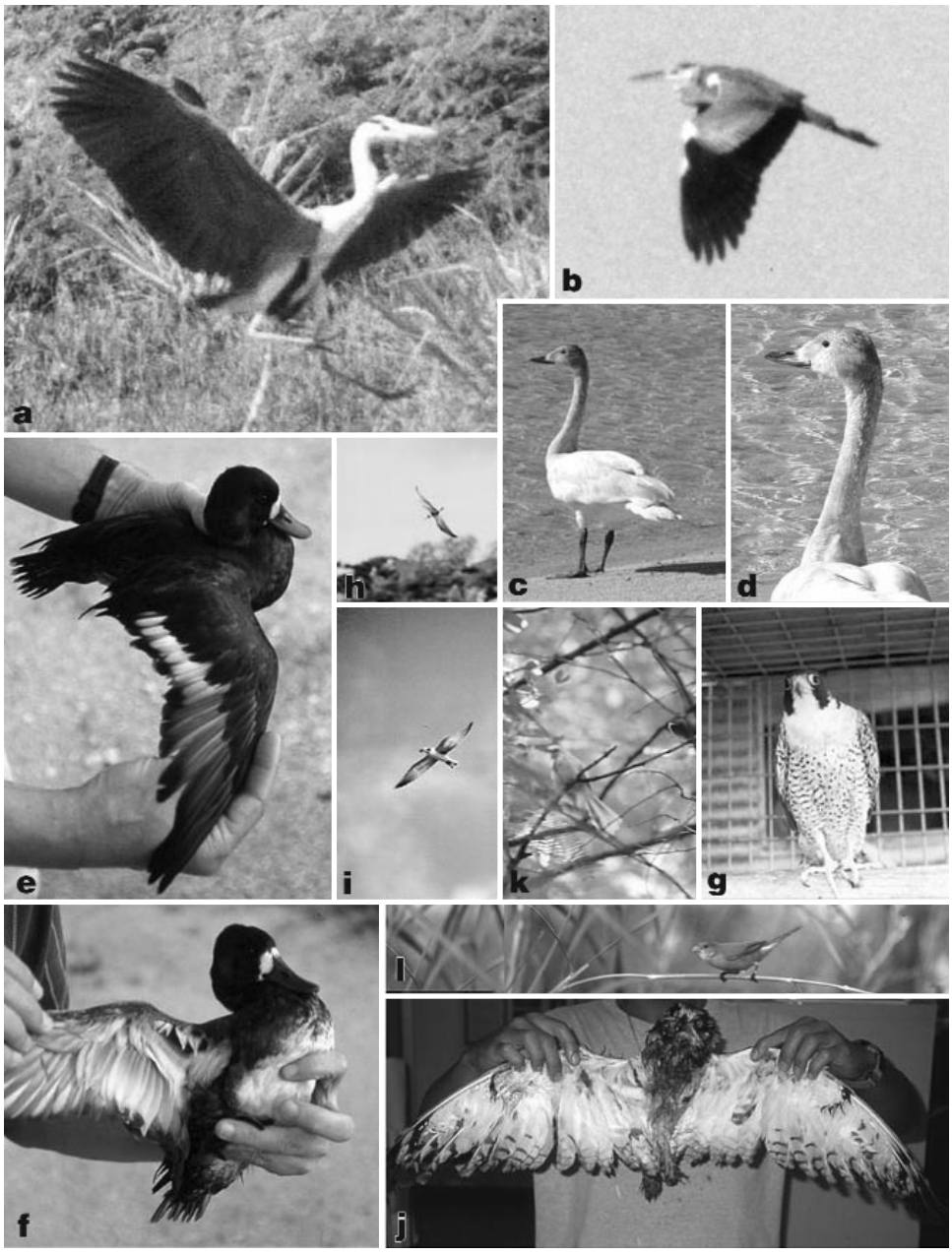

Figure 1. (a) Gray Heron on Saipan. Photo by Curt C. Kessler. (b) Gray Heron on Guam. Photo by Tony Lloyd. (c, d) Tundra Swan on Guam. Photos by Curt C. Kessler. (e, f) Unidentified scaup on Guam. Photos by Gary J. Wiles. (g) Peregrine Falcon on Palau. Photo by Yalap P. Yalap. (h, i) White-winged Tern on Tinian. Photos by Tim Sutterfield. (j) Short-eared Owl on Rota. Photo by Nathan C. Johnson. (k) Albino Rufous Fantail on Saipan in 1996. Photo by Curt C. Kessler. (l) Orange-cheeked Waxbill on Saipan. Photo by Nathan C. Johnson.

A previous photograph of a bird on Saipan in 1982-1983 (Glass et al. 1990) was not published.

Great Egret *(Ardea alba)*. One individual was sighted at the mangrove pond southeast of the Rois ra Sang ridgeline in northern Peleliu, Palau, on 1 March 2000 (GW). Its large body size and wingspan, long and noticeably kinked neck, and long heavy yellow bill separated the bird from other egret species. It was much larger than any of the 20 Little Pied Cormorants *(P. melanoleucos)* roosting in nearby trees. Great Egrets have been recorded in small numbers elsewhere in western Micronesia during the past 20 years (Glass et al. 1990, Wiles et al. 1993, 2000, Stinson et al. 1995, 1997a), but this is the first report for Palau.

Intermediate Egret *(Egretta intermedia)*. At least 13 Intermediate Egrets were present at the airport on Weno, Chuuk, on 3 November 2001 (GD) and again on 11–13 February 2003 (GF, AKi, SK, DP, IP). They were distinguished from other egret species by their black legs and feet, moderately long and stout yellow bills, smoothly curving unkinked necks, and lack of the puffier throats that characterize Cattle Egrets *(Bubulcus ibis)*. The birds were slightly larger than a white morph Pacific Reef-Egret *(E. sacra)* that was also present and were stockier and shorter-necked than Great Egrets. The only previous records of *E. intermedia* from Chuuk are those by Owen (1977) and Pyle & Engbring (1987), but our recent sightings indicate that the species is probably a regular nonbreeding visitor to this island group.

Little Egret *(Egretta garzetta)*. One bird was sighted at a small pond near the old airport in Ruul district, Yap, on 5 November 2001 (GD). It was fishing, often foot-paddling, and had a black bill, greenish lores, yellow ocular skin, and black legs with pale yellow soles. Pratt & Bruner (1981) and Wiles et al. (2000) reported the only previous records for this island group.

Pond-heron (*Ardeola* sp.). A pond-heron in winter plumage was seen at Lake Hagoi, Tinian, on 28 February 2002 (TS). The bird was viewed only in flight while being chased by two White Terns *(Gygis alba)*. It showed a heron-like profile, with an S-shaped curve in the neck and its feet extended beyond the tail, and was similar in size to a Cattle Egret. It passed directly over the observer, who clearly noted its white wings and dark brown striping on the breast. These traits are inadequate to identify the bird to species. This is the first record of a pond-heron for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and third for Micronesia. Both earlier sightings were from Guam, one of which was a Chinese Pond-Heron *(A. bacchus)* in breeding plumage (Wiles et al. 1993, 2000).

Black-crowned Night-Heron *(Nycticorax nycticorax)*. An adult was observed among 70-80 Rufous Night-Herons *(N. caledonicus)* and 70-80 Cattle Egrets at the municipal dump in Koror, Palau, on 26 February 2000 (GW). Two adults were present at the same locality on 23-25 February 2003 (AKi, DP, IP). A black crown and back, and a gray tail and wings were clearly visible on the birds. An individual collected in 1945 is the only other published record for Palau (Marshall 1949).

Tundra Swan *(Cygnus columbianus)*. On 12 January 2003, CK discovered an immature Tundra Swan standing along the shore at Asgadao Bay, Merizo, Guam. It was viewed closely for 15 minutes and photographed (Figs. 1c, d). When first sighted, the swan was resting with its head and neck down and its eyes partially closed. It became alert at the observer's approach, then walked and swam away when approached to within 10 m. It made no attempt to fly, but appeared to be in good condition. The swan showed white plumage on the main body, a pale gray neck and head, and black legs and feet. Several bill and facial characters identified the bird as belonging to the subspecies *C. c. bewickii* rather than as a Whooper *(C. cygnus)* or Trumpeter Swan *(C. buccinator)*. These included a noticeable downward curve to the shape of the upper mandible, a large squarish flesh colored patch on the bill extending from near the eye to near the proximal edge of the nostril, and black on the remainder of the bill (Fig. 1d). A small area of buff-tinged feathering was present between the eye and the fleshy bill patch. Also diagnostic was the shape of the bill against the cheek, with the bill edge extending diagonally partway down the cheek, then dropping vertically near the gape.

Follow-up investigation with several owners of exotic birds in the area revealed that none had possessed or lost a captive swan. Additionally, the swan was not banded, nor did its feet appear scarred or have abnormal nails as occurs in some penned birds. We therefore conclude that the bird was wild. This is the second Micronesian record of a Tundra Swan. The first, also *C. c. bewickii*, was an individual collected on Rota in 1989 (Stinson et al. 1991). Single records from the Iwo Islands and Midway are the only other reports from the tropical Pacific (Pratt et al. 1987, Brazil 1991).

Eurasian Wigeon *(Anas penelope)*. Four birds were viewed at a small pond near the former airport in Ruul, Yap, on 5 November 2001 (GD). They showed plain rufous-brown heads and were larger than four accompanying Green-winged Teal *(A. crecca)*. One individual in flight was identified as a first-year male by the small white patch on its upperwing. Our sighting appears to be the first documented record for Yap since perhaps the 1920s (Hachisuka et al. 1932).

Mallard *(Anas platyrhynchos)*. A flock of 11 Mallards was sighted in a large concrete-lined basin with shallow water on Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, on 6 December 1999 (DV, GW, RB, CA). Two males in breeding plumage were present, with each having a green head, white neck ring, brown breast, gray flanks and wings, black vent, and yellow bill. The remaining birds were females, showing rich brown mottled plumage, a dark eyeline, and varying amounts of orange in the bill. When flushed, blue speculums bordered in white and white underwing coverts were visible on all birds. The mallards were larger than two Eurasian Wigeons and a Northern Pintail *(Anas acuta)* accompanying the flock. Six individuals stayed at the basin until 8 December. Five to six birds were found at an artificial pond at the Guam International Airport on 27 and 29 December, and one bird remained at this site until 15 January 2000.

On Saipan, two drake Mallards accompanied by four females were noted at the water catchment basin of the Saipan International Airport on 18 January 2001

(VC) and an additional female was sighted at a large abandoned water tank in Puerto Rico on six occasions from 23 November 2001 to 26 January 2002 (NJ, VC, CK, GB, JC). A male was seen at the north end of Lake Hagoi, Tinian, on 25 January 2001 (TS). The drakes on Saipan and Tinian displayed the same characteristics as the males seen on Guam, while the females showed blue speculums. On 5 January 2002, a female Mallard was identified at the wastewater treatment ponds at the Rota Resort and Country Club, Rota (NJ, GB). Observers noticed its mottled brown plumage, dark eye-stripe, contrasting orange-and-black bill, and blue speculum fringed in white. These sightings represent first island records for Guam, Rota, and Tinian, and perhaps the second and third records for Saipan. Only a handful of substantiated reports exist for Micronesia, all from the Mariana Islands (Glass et al. 1990, Stinson et al. 1995, 1997a).

Northern Pintail *(Anas acuta)*. NJ noted a drake in breeding plumage at the Price Costco wetland in San Jose, Saipan, on 30 June-1 July 2002. A female was seen in flight over the Tarague cliffline in northern Guam in late July 1999 (DV). There appears to be just one other record of this species for the region during June to August (Stinson et al. 1997a). Occurrence is typically between September and April (Amerson 1969, Stinson et al. 1997a, many other citations).

Garganey *(Anas querquedula)*. A male in breeding plumage was observed at the wastewater treatment ponds at the Rota Resort and Country Club, Rota, on 14 September 2000 and in a golf course pond at the resort on 5 October 2000 (NJ). The duck allowed close viewing on both occasions. Plumage features included a dark brown head with a prominent white facial stripe that curved downward near the nape, brown mottling on the breast, and paler brown mottling on the undertail coverts. This species is a rare migrant to the southern Marianas (Engbring & Owen 1981, Clapp & Schipper 1990, Reichel & Glass 1991, Stinson et al. 1997a), but has not been previously recorded on Rota.

Green-winged Teal *(Anas crecca)*. Four of these ducks were seen perched, swimming, and in flight together at a small pond located between the old and new airports in Ruul, Yap, on 3 November 2001 (GD). They were noticeably smaller than four Eurasian Wigeons also present and showed the mottled brown plumage with a paler belly typical of non-breeding individuals. They also had a plain head pattern with a faint eyestripe and supercilium, and a dark green speculum bordered broadly with white along the leading edge and narrowly along the trailing edge. The observer did not determine the subspecies of the birds, but they were most likely *A. c. crecca* based on geographic location. Green-winged Teal are regularly recorded in Palau and the Marianas (Engbring 1988, Stinson et al. 1997a), but are a new record for Yap.

Lesser Scaup *(Aythya affinis)*. A mixed flock of 12 scaup, with six males and six females, was observed on a pond at the Kingfisher Golf Course in the Talufofo region of Saipan on 18 January 2000 (JC). Ten birds were identified as Lesser Scaup, based on the diagnostic peak in the feathering on the back of their heads, which was clearly seen. No peak was present on two individuals considered to be Greater Scaup *(Aythya marila)*. All females had a distinctive large white patch

encircling the bill, which extended to the forehead, lower lores, and chin. Three Lesser Scaup were identified at the same location on 3 March 2000 (VC). A bird observed at Lake Susupi on 18 January 2001 (VC) had many of the features noted above, as well as an extremely small black nail on the bill. All female Lesser Scaup were discriminated from Tufted Ducks *(A. fuligula)* by the presence of a distinct peak in the crown set well back on the head, an absence of any noticeable feather tuft on the rear of the head, and the sizable well-demarcated patch of white at the base of the bill. Male Lesser Scaup had similarly shaped head profiles and fine scalloping on their grayish backs, in contrast to male Tufted Ducks.

On Rota, a probable female Lesser Scaup was observed with four Northern Pintails at the sewage treatment ponds of the Rota Resort and Country Club on 12 November 2000 (GD, GA). Initial identification as a scaup was based on the broad white blaze at the base of the bill, dark warm brown plumage, and yellow eye. Continued viewing showed the species' diagnostic head shape, which featured a high crown peaking well behind the eye and an angular bump on the rear-crown. The bill was uniform gray except for a black nail. However, the bird also showed slightly paler flanks and white undertail coverts, which are features more commonly displayed by Tufted Ducks, so the record could not be confirmed.

Our Saipan sightings are the first records of *A. affinis* from Micronesia. This species is a vagrant to eastern Asia, with just a few reports from Japan (Brazil 1991) and possibly China (MacKinnon & Phillipps 2000).

Greater Scaup *(Aythya marila)*. Single male Greater Scaup were recorded at the wastewater treatment ponds at the Rota Resort and Country Club, Rota, on 30 December 1999 (NJ) and 9 December 2000 (NJ). On both occasions, the observer noted the obvious rounded head without any slight peak in the feathering of the crown, which distinguishes the species from Lesser Scaup. Both individuals showed glossy dark green heads when seen in good light and light-colored flanks.

On Saipan, a male and female Greater Scaup were sighted on Lake Susupi on 24 and 29 November 1999 (VC, JC). The large white patch at the base of the female's bill and rounded head shape with no observable peak were well viewed. Additional Saipan records include two birds swimming with 10 Lesser Scaup at a pond at the Kingfisher Golf Course in Talufofo on 18 January 2000 (see previous species account), single birds at Lake Susupi on 30 December 1990 (GW, DS) and 14 December 2000 (JC), a group of eight birds at Lake Susupi on 30 December 2000 (NJ, GB), and three pairs at the Kingfisher Golf Course on 17 January 2002 (JC). Two of the males seen in January 2002 displayed a dark green gloss on the head when in full light. These observations increase considerably the number of sightings of this duck for the Marianas. The only previous Micronesian records were three reports from Saipan (Stinson et al. 1997a).

A female scaup was captured by an island resident and brought to the Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources on Guam in November 1995. Details of its capture were not obtained, nor were we able to view its head shape in an undisturbed condition, which normally allows identification of wild birds. We sent photographs of the duck (Figs. 1e, f) to six regional experts on North

American waterfowl and queried them on the identity of the bird. All were in agreement that it was not a Tufted Duck, based on the extensive white on the cheek, the absence of a feather tuft on the rear of the head, the presence of fine gray vermiculations on the scapulars and small sections of the back (Beaman & Madge 1998), and the slightly paler brown patch on the side of the face. Beyond this, the group was evenly divided on species identity, with half leaning toward Greater Scaup and half toward Lesser Scaup. Features such as head shape and size, bill and body size, and amount of white on the cheek were variously attributed to both species. Two traits, the dark eye and blackish rather than gray bill, indicated that the bird was an immature. Although identity could not be established, this nevertheless represents the first record of a scaup for Guam.

Common Pochard *(Aythya ferina)*. As many as two males and two females resided at Lake Susupi, Saipan, from 18 December 1999 to 9 February 2000 (JC, GW, NJ). An additional male in bright breeding plumage was observed at close range at the Saipan airport water catchment on 4 April 2001 (VC). Drakes displayed a combination of characters, including a reddish head and upper neck, a silvery back and flanks, a sloping forehead, and a blue-gray band near the tip of the bill. Common Pochards are a rare migrant to Micronesia, with the only records being from Saipan and Guam (Stinson et al. 1997a).

Osprey *(Pandion haliaetus)*. An Osprey was seen searching for fish at the wastewater treatment ponds at the Rota Resort and Country Club, Rota, on 1 December 1999 (PG, ET). Another sighting occurred two days later, when it was observed soaring southward across the Sabana and flying out to sea (PG, ET). Identification was based on the presence of a dark eyeline, white underparts, dark wrist patch on the underwing, and bent-wing flight posture. This species is new for Rota.

Two other sightings of possibly the same individual seen on Rota were made several hours apart at different locations in southern Guam on 2 January 2000 (GW, RB, DV, DgW, DnW). The first occurred at a set of aquaculture ponds near the Talofofo River mouth. The bird flew repeatedly around the ponds during a 20-minute observation period. Its distinctive head markings and dark brown upper wings were noted. The second sighting was 7 km away at Fena Reservoir, where the bird soared over the observers, allowing its underwing pattern to be closely viewed. These observations are the first for Guam since 1986 (Wiles et al. 1987).

Another Osprey, recognized by its angular wings, white underparts, and dark upperparts, was seen well in flight over southern Peleliu, Palau, on 22 December 2002 (GT, CC). Other regional records come from Saipan, Pagan, Yap, Palau, and Pingelap Atoll (Baker 1951, Wiles et al. 1987, 2000, Wiles & Conry 1990, Stinson et al. 1991, Buden 1995).

Black Kite *(Milvus migrans)*. Sightings of this species have become increasingly frequent in the Marianas since first documented in the 1980s (Stinson et al. 1991, Kessler 1999, Wiles et al. 2000). We report three additional records here. A Black Kite was seen twice near Broadway Avenue and 86th Street on Tinian on 28 September and 27 December 2000 by TS, who noted its all dark plumage,

slightly forked tail, and large size. In December, the bird was being mobbed in flight by White Terns. Repeated sightings of a kite were made at a number of locations on Guam from 1 December 2001 to early March 2002 (DV, DiV, GG). Sites included Mt. Barrigada, Andersen Air Force Base, Talofofo, and Mangilao, where it was seen picking at a chicken carcass along a road. The same characters noted above, plus a somewhat paler head, were observed on this individual. On 7 May 2002, a Black Kite was shot and collected (USNM 601887) in the large central crater on Anatahan (JO). This individual was an immature female of the subspecies *M. m. lineatus* (R.C. Banks, pers. comm.). It had heavy fat and was in light molt on the body near the tail.

Gray-faced Buzzard *(Butastur indicus)*. A lone hawk flew above GD along the ridge of Ngerekebesang Island, Palau, on 8 November 2001. It was identified as *B. indicus* based on its shape and flight behavior. It was medium-sized, being slightly smaller and slimmer than a Common Buzzard *(Buteo buteo)* or Oriental Honey-Buzzard *(Pernis ptilorhynchus),* and had long rather narrow wings and a long tail. Its flight alternated between a few supple easy wing beats and glides, and it projected a finer and more elongate silhouette than most raptors, showing rather pointed wings without any projecting primary tips. Little of the bird's plumage was seen, but the observer did note pale rufous-brown coloration with a distinct dark mesial throat stripe, broken bars on the flanks, and several narrow bars along the underside of the remiges. These characters, plus its flight action, adequately distinguished the bird from a honey-buzzard and hawks of the genera *Buteo* and *Circus*. Our record of *B. indicus* is the first for Palau and third for Micronesia (Wiles et al. 2000, Clements 2003). This species is a common migrant through eastern Asia and winters in southeastern Asia, Indonesia, and the Philippines (Kennedy et al. 2000, Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001).

Eurasian Kestrel *(Falco tinnunculus)*. A male was observed at the Guam International Airport on at least six occasions from 15 December 2000 to 8 January 2001 (DV, JB, JF, PA). It was viewed once for about 15 minutes while perched inside an airport hanger. Characteristics included a rusty back, gray head, an absence of bold facial markings, and tan underparts marked with darker spots running down the breast and belly. In flight, black speckling on the back and upper wing coverts distinguished the bird from a Lesser Kestrel *(F. naumanni)*. It was seen feeding on Eurasian Tree-Sparrows *(Passer montanus)* and chasing other birds (Vice & Vice 2004). The only other Micronesian records of Eurasian Kestrels are from Guam and Saipan (Glass et al. 1990, Stinson et al. 1997a, Wiles et al. 2000).

Peregrine Falcon *(Falco peregrinus)*. A single individual was seen flying fairly high over the Guam International Airport on 13 January 2000 (GW). A broad dark line was visible down the front of the face, along with fine barring on the underwings and pointed wings. The bird was about 50% larger in size than two White Terns following close behind it. Another Peregrine Falcon was observed repeatedly and photographed at the same location from 4–23 March 2001 (DV, RB, JB, PA) (Vice & Vice 2004). Aside from an unconfirmed report on

Andersen Air Force Base in 1986, these are the first observations for Guam since 1945 (Baker 1951, Stophlet 1946).

A Peregrine Falcon was captured on top of the north cable tower of the new bridge spanning the channel between Koror and Airai, Palau, in September 2001 (YY). It was feeding on a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *(Cacatua galerita)* at the time and was later photographed (Fig. 1g). Prior to its capture, sightings of a similar raptor were made in southern Airai near the bridge for up to several weeks (LM). This is the first published account of *F. peregrinus* from Palau since the species was originally reported (Finsch 1875). A few other Micronesian records exist for Rota, Saipan, and Yap (Baker 1951, Wiles et al. 1993, 2000).

Common Moorhen *(Gallinula chloropus)*. GD observed a moorhen at a small pond near the old airport and heard another calling from a reedbed adjacent the new airport in Ruul, Yap, on 5 November 2001. These records document the continued presence of this recently established population (Wiles et al. 2000).

Eurasian Coot *(Fulica atra)*. One individual was viewed as it swam across a pond and foraged on the shore at Manengon Hills, Yona, Guam, on 5 and 17 January 2003 (TL, WW). It was entirely blackish in plumage and possessed a distinctive white bill and facial shield. A record from Guam in 1896 (Hartert 1898, Baker 1951) and single sightings from Saipan and Tinian (Stinson et al. 1995, 1997a) are the only other published reports for Micronesia.

Black-bellied Plover *(Pluvialis squatarola)*. One bird was seen in flight at a mangrove-fringed tidal inlet a few kilometers west of Colonia, Pohnpei, on 27 October 2001 (GD). It was heavy bodied for a shorebird, with grayish plumage on the upperparts and black axillaries. The only prior records of this species for Pohnpei come from Pingelap and Oruluk Atolls (Buden 1995, 1999a).

Greater Sand Plover *(Charadrius leschenaultii)*. Five individuals were recorded at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Course ponds near Koblerville, Saipan, on 2 March 2000 (VC), followed by an additional sighting of possibly the same birds nearby at the island's airport water catchment basin on 19 April 2000 (VC). The plovers were in breeding plumage with light colored legs and a rusty breast band that did not extend down the sides to the flanks. Bill characteristics were not noted. Mongolian Plovers *(C. mongolus)* were noted at other sites on the same days and appeared smaller with darker legs by comparison. Greater Sand Plovers are a rare and nearly annual migrant to the Marianas (Stinson et al. 1997b), but relatively few published records exist (King 1962, Williams & Grout 1985, Glass et al. 1990).

Little Ringed Plover *(Charadrius dubius)*. JC saw single birds on Saipan at the Puerto Rico mudflats on 19 January 2000 and along the shore at Unai Tanapag on 5 May 2000. Separation from other small plovers was based on the presence of a white collar, complete breast bar, and flesh colored legs, plus the absence of a wing stripe and white eyebrow. An additional individual was seen foraging at the first location on 30 December 2000 (NJ). It also had a white collar and complete brown breast band, as well as a faint eye ring. The lack of a white wing stripe was confirmed when the bird spread its wings. *Charadrius dubius* is a rare

migrant to the Marianas, with all previous records restricted to Guam (Stinson et al. 1997b, Wiles et al. 2000).

Black-winged Stilt *(Himantopus himantopus)*. A stilt was seen at Lake Hagoi, Tinian, on 4 April 2001 (TS), with its long pink legs, dark brown back, and white underparts being noted. One to seven stilts were recorded at the water catchment ponds of the Saipan airport from 9 September to 8 November 2000 (JC), one bird was present there on 25 February 2001 (VC), and four sightings of one or two individuals occurred at various other locations on the island between 22 September and 25 November 2001 (NJ, CK, JG). Additionally, three juveniles with brown mantles and wings and dull pinkish legs were noted at a small pond in northern Peleliu, Palau, on 23 December 2002 (GT, CC). This species is a rare but increasingly frequent migrant to western Micronesia (Engbring 1988, Stinson et al. 1997b, Wiles et al. 1987, 2000, Clements 2003). Our records are the first for Tinian and second for Palau.

Marsh Sandpiper *(Tringa stagnatilis)*. One bird was viewed on a muddy shore in mangroves near Colonia, Yap, on 5 November 2001 (GD). It was a slim medium-sized shorebird, with grayish upperparts, a very thin medium-length bill, and long pale yellowish legs. There is one earlier record from Yap (Pyle & Engbring 1987).

Common Redshank *(Tringa totanus)*. Three birds were seen in a roadside opening in mangrove forest in northeastern Peleliu, Palau, on 28 February and 1 March 2000 (GW). Red legs, a white rump, and broad white trailing edges of the wings were noted on each. Although *T. totanus* is reportedly an uncommon migrant in Palau (Owen 1977, Engbring 1988), the only published records appear to be those of Owen (1977) from the mid-1970s.

Green Sandpiper *(Tringa ochropus)*. We report three sightings of Green Sandpipers from Saipan, including one bird at a small wetland on Hakmang Peninsula on 2 January 1993 (GW, DS), another at a mitigation pond at Hakmang on 5 October 2000 (JC), and five birds at the airport water catchment on 8 November 2000 (JC). All associated with Wood Sandpipers *(T. glareola)*, but were recognized by their plainer dark backs without obvious spotting, gray-green legs, and more darkly streaked breasts and forenecks. A sighting of this species on Saipan in 1989 is the only other record for the Marianas (Stinson et al. 1991).

Gray-tailed Tattler *(Heteroscelus brevipes)*. A bird with a blue leg-flag on its left tibia was viewed at an aquaculture pond at Agfayan Bay, Inarajan, Guam, on 18 September 1999 (RB, GWt). It was tagged at Furen Lake near Nemuro City in eastern Hokkaido, Japan, by T. Matsuo. This is the second sighting on Guam of a Gray-tailed Tattler marked at this site (Wiles 1998).

Terek Sandpiper *(Xenus cinereus)*. Two birds were seen at the Puerto Rico mudflats, Saipan, on 19 April 2000 (VC) and at the Saipan airport water catchment on 4 April 2001 (VC). The upcurved bill, which was yellow at the base and dark on the outer half, and yellow legs were diagnostic. This species is a rare passage migrant through the Marianas, with nearly all records occurring in autumn (Owen 1977, Pyle & Engbring 1985, Stinson et al. 1997b).

Little Curlew *(Numenius minutus)*. GD observed a Little Curlew at close range at the airport on Weno, Chuuk, on 3 November 2001. The bird's most distinctive feature was its head pattern, which included pale unmarked lores extending as a supercilium onto the rear ear coverts, a broad dark eyestripe behind the eye, and broad dark lateral crown stripes joining on the nape. The bill was shorter, less curved, and finer than in a Whimbrel *(N. phaeopus)*, and was dull pink at the base of the lower mandible. Body size was similar to that of a Pacific Golden-Plover *(Pluvialis fulva)*. In flight, the lower back and rump were uniform with the upperparts, with no white markings evident. *Numenius minutus* is extremely rare at all Micronesian locations except Palau (Pyle & Engbring 1985, Engbring 1988, Stinson et al. 1997b). This is the first record for Chuuk.

Bristle-thighed Curlew *(Numenius tahitiensis)*. This species is a rare migrant to the Marianas, with only a few documented records (Hachisuka et al. 1932, King 1987, Glass et al. 1990, Stinson et al. 1991). Here, we report three additional sightings. An individual seen at the Puerto Rico mudflats, Saipan, on 29 November 1999 (JC) was viewed closely enough to distinguish the protruding feather shafts on the thighs. It also showed an overall cinnamon coloration, including the rump, and wore an aluminum leg band. Two individuals foraging in a grassy field at the Saipan airport on 18 December 1999 (GW, NJ, WW) were originally mistaken for Whimbrels, but one gave a distinctive upslurred *chu-lew* call, catching the observers' attention. The birds were seen well on the ground and in flight. Both were richer brown in coloration than *N. phaeopus*, with one having a buff-tinged lower neck and upper breast, while the other showed a distinctive buffy spot on its flank. A pale brownish central crown stripe and extensive flesh coloration on the base of the bills were also viewed. In flight, the pale upper tail coverts were demarcated from the brown lower backs and were distinctly cross-barred.

Another Bristle-thighed Curlew was sighted along the exposed outer reef margin between Facpi Point and Nimitz Beach, Agat, Guam, on 9 March 1997 (GW). The bird appeared similar in size to *N. phaeopus*, but upon flushing, it showed a brown unmarked rump and gave several loud musical *chu-lee* calls that were distinctive from those of *N. phaeopus.*

We also note here the existence of a previously unreported specimen of *N. tahitiensis* from Guam, which is held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California (MVZ 95095). It was collected by J. T. Marshall, Jr. at an unspecified location on 6 June 1945 as it "flew over slough at river mouth … possibly one more seen that day compared to total of about a dozen" Whimbrels (Marshall, unpubl. field notes). He probably found the curlew along the island's southeast coast, based on written remarks about other shorebirds seen that day (C. Cicero, pers. comm.). This is the only Bristle-thighed Curlew specimen known from Guam and was apparently overlooked by Baker (1951).

Far Eastern Curlew *(Numenius madagascariensis)*. This species is distinguished from other curlews by a combination of long bill, large body size, lack of pronounced head stripes, brown underparts, and dark rump without a white blaze. It is rare in the Marianas with only a few sightings reported in recent decades

(Stinson et al. 1997b, Wiles et al. 2000). On 19 April 2000, one bird was located feeding on the Puerto Rico mudflats, Saipan (VC). Two Far Eastern Curlews were also observed at the airport on Weno, Chuuk, on 12 February 2003 (GF, AKi, SK, DP, IP), which is just the second sighting for Chuuk (Pyle and Engbring 1987).

Eurasian Curlew *(Numenius arquata)*. A single Eurasian Curlew was seen foraging in the yard of a home in Duge, Rota, on 14 December 2000 (JC). It was identified by its very long decurved bill, large body size, lack of dark stripes on the head, and white underparts. Bill length and body size were larger than for a Whimbrel. An additional Eurasian Curlew was seen on several occasions along the shoreline and standing on a partially submerged barge at Unai Tanapag, Saipan, from 29 November to 29 December 1999 (JC, GW). In flight, the diagnostic white back, rump, and underparts were conspicuous. The bird had a huge decurved bill and was much taller than several nearby Whimbrels. A few previous sightings of *N. arquata* from Saipan and Guam (Engbring & Owen 1981, Stinson et al. 1991, Wiles et al. 1993, 2000) represent the only other records for Micronesia.

Great Knot *(Calidris tenuirostris)*. A Great Knot in non-breeding plumage was seen with other shorebirds at the Guam International Airport on 9 November 2000 (GD, GA, RB). It resembled a Red Knot *(C. canutus)*, but was larger with a longer heavier bill that was slightly drooped at the tip. Plumage traits suggested the bird was an immature, with feathering on the mantle, scapulars, and wing coverts showing blackish centers and clean cold grayish fringing. The upper breast feathers had dark central markings, but were not spotted, making a fairly clear pectoral band. The lower breast and belly were white. In flight, the bird showed a dark mid-line through the white rump, but was otherwise quite plain without significant wing stripes. Stinson et al. (1991) and Wiles et al. (1993, 2000) reviewed the few previous records of this species from the Marianas.

Red Knot *(Calidris canutus)*. One bird was viewed at a drained aquaculture pond at Agfayan Bay, Inarajan, Guam, from 16-19 September 1999 (RB, GW, KO, GWt). The knot was molting from breeding to wintering plumage and retained a fair amount of reddish feathering on the belly and lower breast, with a little red extending to the vent. Some dark streaking was also visible on the upper breast. The back and wings showed an even mix of dark feathers and pale gray ones with black shafts and buff edging. Fine pale gray streaking and a whitish eye-line marked the head, while the bill was fairly stout and equal in length to the head. The legs were dark yellow. The bird was about the same size, but taller, than a Gray-tailed Tattler feeding nearby. The only two previous records in Micronesia are from Guam and Palau (Owen 1977, Wiles et al. 2000).

Long-toed Stint *(Calidris subminuta)*. Two birds were sighted at close range in a small roadside pool on the west side of Yap on 26 December 2002 (GT, CC). They had yellowish legs, brown-gray mantles with pale edging on the feathers, and were noticeably smaller than several Wood Sandpipers also present. Their size and lack of a cap distinguished them from Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. The stints also displayed the elongated neck stretch that is characteristic of *C. subminuta*. However, none of these characters are considered adequate to separate the birds

from Least Sandpipers *(C. minutilla)*, which regularly reach Hawaii (Pratt et al. 1987). Long-toed Stints are a rare to uncommon migrant to western Micronesia (Engbring 1988, Stinson et al. 1997b), with only one earlier record for Yap (Pyle & Engbring 1987).

Pectoral Sandpiper *(Calidris melanotos)*. On Rota, a Pectoral Sandpiper was observed along the edge of a wastewater treatment pond at the Rota Resort and Country Club on 16 December 1999 (NJ), and two others were found in a mowed field at the island's airport on 14 September 2000 (NJ). On both occasions, the observer noted the obvious dull yellow legs and sharp demarcation between the brown breast and white belly. On 12 December 2001, two Pectoral Sandpipers were seen standing along the rocky coastline near Puntan I Maddok, Saipan (NJ). Both exhibited the same features noted above and crown coloration was brown rather than rufous, as in a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *(C. acuminata)*. Pectoral Sandpipers are rare migrants to the Marianas (Stinson et al. 1997b), with most sightings coming from Guam (G. Wiles, pers. obs.). Our observations are the first for Rota.

Ruff *(Philomachus pugnax)*. GD saw a Ruff with other shorebirds in a muddy drainage channel along the airfield on Weno, Chuuk, on 3 November 2001. Diagnostic features were its medium length and slightly decurved black bill; prominent scalloped pale fringes across its mantle, scapulars, and wing coverts; medium length dull green legs; and rather long neck. The bird was probably a male, because it was slightly larger than several nearby Pacific Golden-Plovers. Three Ruffs in apparent first basic plumage were found in the same locality on 12 February 2003 (GF, AKi, SK, DP, IP), an unusually late date for Micronesia (see below). This species has been reported only once previously from Chuuk (Pyle & Engbring 1987).

Four to seven Ruffs resided at an artificial pond and a set of concrete pads amidst a large mowed field at the Guam International Airport from 27 September 1999 to 14 February 2000 (GW, DV, RB, TL). This observation represents the largest number of Ruffs ever recorded for the island. Most previous sightings in the Marianas have involved only one or a few individuals from late August to November (Stinson et al. 1997b, G. Wiles, unpubl. data). Our sightings also confirm that the species may occasionally overwinter in Micronesia.

Long-billed Dowitcher *(Limnodromus scolopaceus)*. A juvenile Long-billed Dowitcher was viewed at close range in a water buffalo wallow on the U.S. Ordnance Annex in southern Guam on 22 November 1999 (GW). Narrow rufous edging on the dark feathers of the back, scapulars, and lesser wing coverts and a lack of any markings on the interior of these feathers distinguished the bird from a Short-billed Dowitcher *(L. griseus)* (Paulson 1993, Zimmer 2000). Gray feathers with black shafts in the median and greater coverts and a mostly black posterior half of the tail with thin white cross-barring were also noted. The bird fed with a rapid up-and-down probing style that is characteristic of this genus.

Another dowitcher was seen at a small marsh near the Guam International Airport on 8 November 2000 (GD, GA). It foraged in a small area of open water

at dusk and also displayed a rapid probing motion. Poor light conditions prevented positive identification, but the pattern of the tertials appeared to be plain with fine white fringes, suggesting *L. scolopaceus*. The bird did not vocalize. Other features were a long straight bill that was 1.5–2 times the total head length and a prominent white supercilium from the bill-base to behind the eye. In flight, a white central back, pale rump and upper tail, and a diffuse white trailing edge on the wings were recognized.

We also report an additional record of *L. scolopaceus* for Saipan, where a pair of birds was found at the airport water catchment on 14 December 2001 (VC) and an adjacent field on 29 December 2001 (NJ, GB). One bird gave a single sharp *kik* call while in flight, which differs from the call of a Short-billed Dowitcher. Although still rare, sightings of Long-billed Dowitchers have become nearly annual in the southern Marianas since the first record in 1991 (Wiles et al. 1993, 2000). There is only one earlier report for Guam (Wiles et al. 2000).

Oriental Pratincole *(Glareola maldivarum)*. This species is a rare but regular migrant to the main islands of Yap (Wiles et al. 2000), but is unreported from the atolls to the east. Here, we note two sightings from Ulithi Atoll, where single birds were seen on the islets of Falalop on 10 March 1986 (JE, GW) and Fossarai on 11 March 1986 (GW).

Skua sp. *(Stercorarius* sp.). Single sightings of unidentified skuas were made near Tobi (3º14'N, 131º21'E) on 3 June 1992 and near Fana and Sonsorol between about 15–18 June 1992 in the Southwest Islands of Palau (AK; Kepler 1993). Each of the birds was too distant to permit identification, but all showed the bulky body and heavy direct flight typical of skuas rather than jaegers. White flashes at the base of the primaries were also visible. The birds were most likely South Polar Skuas *(S. maccormicki)*, the only species of skua known to range into the tropical and northern Pacific Ocean (Harrison 1985, Furness 1996). Several sightings of this species near Kosrae and Pohnpei are the only other skua records for Micronesia (Kepler et al. 1992).

Pomarine Jaeger *(Stercorarius pomarinus)*. We report two records of *S. pomarinus*, the first confirmed for Micronesia. On 29 May 1986, a sub-adult was sighted about 5 km northwest of Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands (KG). It was very thick-necked in appearance and had a gold wash on the neck, a short dark crown, a complete scaly breast-band, and large white flashes on the shafts of the outer primaries. Tail streamers were absent. This bird was originally reported by Garrett & Schreiber (1988), but details on location and identification were not provided. There are two previous records of jaegers from the Marshalls, but neither individual was identified. One was seen at Taka Atoll in October 1964 (Amerson 1969) and the other at Ujelang Atoll in September 1975 (Anderson 1981).

An additional Pomarine Jaeger was observed from the ferry traveling from Saipan to Tinian in the Marianas on 15 November 2000 (GD, GA). Although passengers were not permitted outside, viewing was adequate to allow identification of all seabirds seen, including many White Terns and Brown Noddies *(Anous stolidus)*. The jaeger was sighted flying low over the ocean, initially parallel to the

ferry. Its plumage, structure, and flight were clearly that of a jaeger. It was dark brown with obvious white markings at the base of the primaries and an ill-defined whitish belly, which indicated that it was an adult or subadult in non-breeding plumage. Neither tail streamers or a strong contrast in head and neck coloration were discerned. The bird was identified as *S. pomarinus* by its thickset structure and relatively slow deliberate flight. Both observers had extensive experience with all three jaeger species in temperate and tropical seas.

Black-headed Gull *(Larus ridibundus)*. A Black-headed Gull was viewed in flight at Mochong Beach, Rota, on 30 December 1999 (NJ, MS, RH). It was in non-breeding plumage, having a white head with black ear coverts, black tips on the outer primaries, and bright red-orange legs. *Larus ridibundus* is a rare winter visitor recorded annually in the Mariana Islands (Stinson et al. 1997a), but this represents the first record from Rota. Seven Black-headed Gulls seen at East Hagatña Bay, Guam, from 11–25 January 2003 (TL) is the largest flock size recorded to date in the Marianas (Stinson et al. 1997a).

Black-naped Tern *(Sterna sumatrana)*. A Black-naped Tern inhabited Sasa Bay, Apra Harbor, Guam, from 13–27 February 2000 (GW, RB, DV). Observers had good views of the bird when it perched and noted a full unmarked white cap, narrow black eyeline, black nape, and black bill. The wings were light gray. No black was seen on either surface of the wings during flight or while perched. Two Common Terns *(S. hirundo)* were also present in the area and were slightly larger in size. On 4 February 2003, five Black-naped Terns were observed perched on rocks and steel debris near the southwest shore of Cocos Island, Guam (CA). They featured thin black eyelines and broader black napes, entirely white crowns and foreheads, faintly gray wings and backs, and black bills and legs. They resembled White Terns in size and had deeply forked tails.

Another Black-naped Tern with similar traits was seen at Lake Susupi, Saipan, on 2 March 2000 (VC). Three additional birds were observed in flight at this site on 30 December 2000 (NJ, GB). Each bird had a distinct white cap and black line leading from behind the eye to a completely black nape, and a deeply forked tail distinguishing them from White-winged *(Chlidonias leucopterus)* and Whiskered *(C. hybridus)* Terns. The absence of black in the wings was not confirmed.

These represent the first positive records of Black-naped Terns in the Marianas since 1973 and 1974 (Drahos 1977), although there were several unconfirmed sightings from Guam and Rota during the 1980s (Maben 1980; G. Wiles, pers. obs.). Dixon & Starrett's (1952) sightings for Rota and Pagan are best considered hypothetical because of a lack of descriptive notes (Reichel & Glass 1991).

Little Tern *(Sterna albifrons)*. Two individuals were seen perched on a buoy and in flight about 1 km from shore near the lagoon edge off northeastern Gagil Tamil, Yap, on 26 December 2002 (GT, CC). They were distinguished from Black-naped Terns by their small size, fast wing beats, moderately forked tail, and grayer upperparts. *Sterna albifrons* is a rare to uncommon visitor to Micronesia

(Pratt et al. 1987, Engbring 1988, Stinson et al. 1997a), with a sighting from Ulithi being the only other record for Yap state (Wiles et al. 1987).

White-winged Tern *(Chlidonias leucopterus)*. An adult in breeding plumage was observed in flight near the airport on Majuro Atoll, Marshall Islands, on 13 May 1986 (KG). It was easily separable from all other tern species by its completely black head, breast, belly, back, and underwing linings, which contrasted with the white upperwing coverts, undertail coverts, and tail.

A first-winter White-winged Tern was seen dip-feeding and perched on wires at a small pond near the old airport in Ruul, Yap, on 5 November 2001 (GD). Distinctive features included a black ear covert patch that extended beneath the eye and joined on the nape, pale gray upperparts with indistinct dark scalloping, a faint dark bar on the leading lesser coverts, a less distinct dark trailing edge to the secondaries, and darker fringes on the outer primaries. The tail was paler gray and notched. The bird was occasionally seen with a Whiskered Tern *(C. hybridus)*, which displayed a slightly larger body and stouter bill.

TS photographed a White-winged Tern at Lake Hagoi, Tinian, on 1 November 2001 (Figs. 1h, i), thus providing improved documentation for this island. Previously, only a single sight record existed (Glass et al. 1990).

This species is a rare to uncommon visitor to western Micronesia, with reports obtained nearly annually (Engbring 1988, Wiles & Worthington 1996, Stinson et al. 1997a), but our records are the first for the Marshalls and Yap. Most reports from the region occur between August and March, thus the Marshalls sighting is also noteworthy for its late spring date.

Whiskered Tern *(Chlidonias hybrida)*. An adult Whiskered Tern was seen dip-feeding at two small ponds located between the old and new airports in Ruul, Yap, on 5 November 2001 (GD). The bird was in winter plumage and displayed an ear covert flare, a faint gray wash over the entire crown, blackish hindnape, uniform plain gray upperparts, darker fringes on the outer primaries, and a slightly paler gray forked tail. It was observed several times with a White-winged Tern, which permitted comparison with that species (see previous account). Prior records of *C. hybridus* for Yap were in 1976 (Clapp & Laybourne 1983), 1988, and 1993 (Wiles et al. 2000), indicating that it may be a semi-regular visitor to this island group.

White-throated Ground-Dove *(Gallicolumba xanthonura)*. NJ observed a group of 15 White-throated Ground-Doves (12 males, 3 females) foraging on the ground in dense forest comprised mainly of *Aglaia mariannensis* and *Terminalia catappa* on Guguan, Mariana Islands, on 6 June 2000. The birds occupied an area measuring about 20 x 30 m in size. No interactions between individuals were noted. Each male had a distinctive dirty gray tinge to the breast, possibly indicating that they were juveniles. *Gallicolumba xanthonura* is generally solitary or found in pairs (Fisher 1950, Engbring et al. 1986, 1990). Our sighting appears to be the largest feeding aggregation ever reported for the species.

Cuckoo sp. *(Cuculus* sp.). RD observed a grayish cuckoo fly over him and land in a shrub in Ameliik state on Babeldaob, Palau, on 28 September 1999.

He then viewed the bird for several minutes at a distance of 10 m. It showed the typical flight profile and behavior of *Cuculus*, with a distinctive cruciform shape, level unhurried flight, and shallow wing beats that did not extend above the body. When perched, the bird was seen to be a gray morph adult, with a noticeable yellow orbital ring, deep yellow-orange eyes, and bright yellow legs and feet. The blue-gray coloration of the dorsal surfaces and head extended down the neck to a terminal line across the breast. The absence of a buffy tinge on the upper breast indicated the bird was a male (Beaman & Madge 1998). Close dark gray-black barring marked the white lower breast and belly, while fainter gray barring was present on the white vent. The tail and primaries were blackish gray, with light spotting on the tail. The cuckoo looked rather limp and drooped its wings as it perched, with its tail cocked upward at a rather awkward angle. No vocalizations were heard. These characters did not allow positive identification, but the lack of a buffy wash on the vent and belly, the droop-winged "wet looking" perching behavior, and the upwardly cocked tail suggest that the bird was more likely a Common Cuckoo *(C. canorus)* than an Oriental Cuckoo *(C. saturatus)* (Beaman & Madge 1998, Mullarney et al. 1999, Robson 2000). Oriental Cuckoos are an uncommon annual visitor to Palau (Engbring 1988), whereas there is apparently just one published record of *C. canorus* for the island group dating from the mid-1800s (Hartlaub & Finsch 1872, Baker 1951).

Short-Eared Owl *(Asio flammeus)*. An owl was seen perched on fence posts in the village of Sinapalu, Rota, by a resident in December 2000. It was found dead shortly after and was turned over to ET, NJ, and VC, who identified the carcass as that of a Short-eared Owl based on the presence of short ear-tufts and uneven brown streaking on a cream-colored breast (Fig. 1j). Coloration of the head, back, and wings was mostly dark brown with buffy mottling. The bird also had yellow irises and a black bill. Total length and exposed culmen length measured 35 cm and 17 mm, respectively. A second Short-eared Owl was seen at the Saipan airport from 20-24 February 2003 (JC, JS), but was probably present for a much longer period before and after these observations, based on the reports of airport staff. The bird was closely viewed several times, allowing the short ear-tufts and many of the other traits noted above to be seen. This species is a rare migrant to the Marianas, with several earlier records for Rota and Saipan (Stinson et al. 1997a).

Fork-tailed Swift *(Apus pacificus)*. We report some additional observations of this species from the Marianas, where only a handful of prior records exist (Stinson et al. 1997a, Wiles et al. 2000). Two sightings were made at Ritidian Point in northern Guam, with one involving a single swift flying above the upper cliff on 11 October 1995 (JM) and the second involving three birds foraging over the fields at the headquarters of the Guam National Wildlife Refuge on 4–5 November 1997 (MR, CN). Three additional individuals were seen along the upper cliffline at Tagua Point, Guam, on 13 November 1999 (GW). One swift occurred at Pona Point, Rota, on 15 November 1999 (DiV, RC,

LH) and another was sighted at Mt. Takpochao, Saipan, on 8 October 2003 (NH). All birds were recognized by their distinct white rumps, dark bodies, forked tails, and large size.

Dollarbird *(Eurystomus orientalis)*. Single Dollarbirds were observed at Tobi on 4 and 9 June 1992 and Sonsorol on 15–16 June 1992 in Palau's Southwest Islands (AK; Kepler 1993). The bird on Tobi occurred in good quality mixed native forest at the northwest corner of the island. It perched in fairly dense foliage with its head slightly upturned in the typical posture of eurystomids and made short foraging flights 8-13 m high. This individual was collected and deposited at the B. P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii (BPBM 178864). Dollarbirds are rare but perhaps regular visitors to Palau (Baker 1951, Engbring 1983, Pratt et al. 1987).

Brown Shrike *(Lanius cristatus)*. JH observed a single probable Brown Shrike perched on an electrical powerline in southern Peleliu, Palau, on 19 April 2003. The bird was briefly seen at a distance of about 12 m before it flew off and could be viewed with binoculars. Body shape, both while perched and in flight, was typical of shrikes. The bird was also characterized by brownish upperparts and a dark facial mask. The observer did not note the presence of a long black tail, as in a Long-tailed Shrike *(L. schach)*, and was unable to determine if barring occurred on the back or underparts. Several Brown Shrikes seen at Tobi in the Southwest Islands of Palau in the late 1970s (Engbring and Owen 1981) appear to be the only previous shrike records for Micronesia.

White-breasted Woodswallow *(Artamus leucorynchus)*. Woodswallows are rare in Palau, with a population of perhaps fewer than 100 birds (Engbring 1992), and were long thought to be confined to Babeldaob (Pratt et al. 1980, Engbring 1992). A bird perched atop a television antenna on a building roof was recorded along the Malakal-Koror causeway at the northwest tip of Ngermalk island, Palau, on 4 March 2000 (GW). It periodically foraged with several Barn Swallows over nearby limestone forest. An additional record from the causeway by R.P. Owen in the 1970s or earlier has been reported to us (J. Engbring, pers. comm.). One or a few woodswallows were also observed at Long Lake in the Rock Islands south of Koror in November 2001 (DaW, AB-W) and on 21 February 2003 (GF, AKi, DP, IP).

Rufous Fantail *(Rhipidura rufifrons)*. An albino Rufous Fantail was seen in tangantangan *(Leucaena leucocephala)* forest at Marpi, Saipan, on four occasions from 12–19 February 2002 (NJ, JG), once on 5 April 2002 (VC), and once on 3 June 2002 (NJ). The bird was observed closely with binoculars, allowing its physical traits to be viewed in detail. These included entirely white plumage, a peach-colored bill and legs, and black eyes. The bird exhibited typical fantail behavior, including quick movements through the forest understory and repeated tail fanning, but did not vocalize. On one occasion, a fantail with normal plumage chased the albino bird through the understory. Albinism in *R. rufifrons* has been observed once before on Saipan, with an albino individual seen at As Perdido in May 1996 (CK, VC) (Fig. 1k).

Barn Swallow *(Hirundo rustica)*. During bird surveys on Agrihan, Mariana Islands, two Barn Swallows were sighted on multiple occasions as they flew over the village at the southern end of the island on 10-12 August 2000 (JC, NJ). They were identified by their fairly deeply forked tails, dark iridescent blue backs, and chestnut throats. This species is an uncommon migrant in the Marianas (Stinson et al. 1997a), but has not been previously recorded at Agrihan.

We also report several Barn Swallow records from the Marianas that appear to represent the earliest southward migration dates for this species in Micronesia (Baker 1951, Stinson et al. 1997a, many other reports). These included five immatures foraging over Lake Hagoi, Tinian, on 24 July 2002 (TS), two birds near Tanapag, Saipan, on 24 July 2002 (JC), and one adult at Garapan, Saipan, on 26 July 2002 (NJ). The sightings occurred during a week-long period of blustery weather and westerly winds associated with a large monsoon system passing through the archipelago.

Gray Wagtail *(Motacilla cinerea)*. Seven sightings of one and two Gray Wagtails were made along the edge of a small newly created mitigation pond in Lower Base, Tanapag, Saipan, from 27 October 2001 to 26 January 2002 (NJ, VC, NH, JC). The birds were viewed at distances as close as 25 m, which allowed multiple diagnostic characters to be seen. The presence of a slate gray mantle and head, a bright yellow rump and vent, a noticeably long tail, and a white V-shaped edge on the secondaries of standing birds distinguished them from Yellow Wagtails *(M. flava)*. Other plumage features included a creamy white throat, breast, and belly; a white eyeline; and dark gray flight feathers and tail. The birds gave quick *ti-ti* flight calls, which also separated them from *M. flava*. Records of Gray Wagtails are extremely scarce for Micronesia, with the only other records being single reports from Palau, Guam, and Sapwuahfik Atoll near Pohnpei (Engbring & Owen 1981, Maben & Wiles 1981, Buden 1999b).

White Wagtail *(Motacilla alba)*. A White Wagtail was present at the Koror municipal dump in Palau on 19 and 21 February 2003 (DP). It was in basic plumage, with no noticeable black in the head feathering, a weak postocular line, dark primaries and secondaries, black tail with white outer feathers, and secondary coverts pale with darker centers fading to white edges. The breast showed a squarish oval patch of black that differed from the pattern shown in most field guides in that it did not form a crescent extending upwards at the sides of the neck. Except for that feature, the bird closely resembled the illustration of an immature female shown in Sibley & Howell (1998). It was seen perched on the roofs of buildings as well as on the ground, and gave a sharp two-note call in flight that somewhat resembled the calls of Barn Swallows foraging nearby. A 1975 report from the same locality (Owen 1977, Pyle & Engbring 1985) is the only previous one for Palau.

Black-backed Wagtail *(Motacilla lugens)*. One individual was viewed in flight at a condominium complex in Harmon, Dededo, Guam, on 8 November 2001 (DV). The observer noted largely white wings that contrasted against a black back and scapulars, a dark tail with white outer feathers, and a strong undulating

flight pattern. The bird landed in a tree and was seen tail bobbing, but other plumage traits were not discernable. The only other certain record of a Black-backed Wagtail in Micronesia is from Saipan (Stinson et al. 1995).

An unidentified wagtail of this species or *M. alba* was noted feeding with shorebirds along the high tide line at Dungcas Beach, Tumuning, Guam, on 4 January 1992 (GW, KO, RF). A number of features were recorded on the bird, but none proved diagnostic upon later review (see Howell 1990). These included a white forehead, a whitish chin, a black crown and nape, a yellowish tinge to an otherwise white face, and a black eyeline. Other characters were a gray back and scapulars, a large white patch on the wing coverts and secondaries, an extensive black bib, a white belly and flanks, and a black tail with white outer edges. Wing coloration in flight was not noted. The wagtail was aggressive toward the other birds and frequently chased Gray-tailed Tattlers, Red-necked Stints *(Calidris ruficollis)*, and Sanderlings *(C. alba)* up to 50 m over the bay. Another individual that could not be distinguished from a White Wagtail was seen on Guam in 1984 (Wiles et al. 1987).

Gray-streaked Flycatcher *(Muscicapa griseisticta)*. One bird was seen at a roadside dump along the dirt road east of Bloody Nose Ridge 3 km south of Kloulklubed village in central Peleliu, Palau, on 29 February and 1 March 2000 (GW). It showed the diagnostic dark streaking on the breast extending to the flanks, a white eye-ring and whitish lores, a black malar line, and a single faint wing bar. This species is an uncommon migrant to Palau (Engbring 1988), but only a few published records exist for the island group, as summarized in Wiles et al. (2000).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *(Passer montanus)*. A pair of tree sparrows was seen twice near the main government building at the north end of Kloulklubed village on Peleliu, Palau, on 29 February 2000 (GW). They were first noted in association with a flock of 18 Chestnut Munias *(Lonchura malacca)*, but were perched alone on a power pole later in the day. Each bird had a brown cap and black auricular patch. An additional sighting of five individuals was made near the village on 23 December 2002 (GT, CC). Tree sparrows were not seen elsewhere in Palau by the observers. This species has been introduced to Yap, the southern Marianas, and the Marshalls (Pyle & Engbring 1985), but these are the first records for Palau. It would be desirable to eradicate these birds before a population is established and spreads to other islands in Palau.

Orange-cheeked Waxbill *(Estrilda melpoda)*. We report a large number of sightings of this species in the wild on Saipan from June 2001 to September 2002. Waxbills were first discovered at the Price-Costco wetland complex in San Jose, where a flock of about 25 birds was found on 28 June (GB, CS). Between 20 July 2001 and 24 September 2002, an additional 80 observations were made of flocks containing 1–30 birds at Tanapag, Lower Base, Hakmang, Dandan, Fina Sisu, San Jose, and Koblerville (NJ, JC, JG, CK, GB, CS, DW). Most sightings occurred in grassy habitats with *Panicum maximum* and *Pennisetum*, or in *Phragmites* wetlands. About 10 birds were collected and examined in the hand.

All had red bills, gray underparts and heads, and dark brown wings, backs, and tails (Fig. 1l). Considerable individual variation was noted in the coloration of cheek patches (from pale orange to bright orange) and rumps (from rust to bright red). Juveniles with black bills and light orange cheek patches comprised about 20% of the population in 2002. This indicates that breeding is well established even though nests have not yet been observed. Orange-cheeked Waxbills are native to western and central Africa and are a popular cage-bird. They are not known to be sold by pet stores on Saipan, so we assume they were deliberately released or escaped from the home of a private breeder. Control efforts have been initiated by the government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in conjunction with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This species has been established in Hawaii since the 1960s, but occurs nowhere else in Oceania (Lever 1987, Pratt et al. 1987).

Blue-faced Parrotfinch *(Erythrura trichroa)*. Single parrotfinches were observed at two locations on Peleliu, Palau, on 29 February and 1 March 2000 (GW). One was seen in scrubby forest along the roadside leading up the hill to the military memorial at Rois Kar. The second was found along a narrow dirt road about 2 km southwest of Kloulklubed village and was also in scrubby vegetation. Both showed the characteristic green, red, and blue plumage of this species. Parrotfinches have previously been reported from Babeldaob to Mecherchar (Baker 1951, Pratt et al. 1980, 1987, Engbring 1988, 1992), but these appear to be the first sightings for Peleliu and represent the southernmost records for Palau. Coultas (1931) was told by island residents that this species was present on Peleliu, but he was unable to confirm their reports.

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