

Vatulele Island (Sep. 7 – Sep. 17, 2002) (30 species seen)

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- Great Frigatebird (Both *Fregata* species common overhead, and roosting at dusk with red-footed boobies near “The Grotto,” just west of Long Beach. Great frigatebird seen every day between lighthouse point and Bird Island: certainly not rare here at these dates)
- Lesser Frigatebird
- White-tailed Tropicbird (Roosting, and presumably nesting, both at lighthouse cliffs, and at bases of trees at “The Grotto”)
- Red-footed Booby (Nesting at the Grotto)
- Brown Booby (Presumably nesting on Bird Island: Several juveniles seen on island, but never in flight)
- Eastern Reef-heron
- Pacific Black Duck (Fly-overs only, on 3 separate dates)
- Junglefowl (common around resort, and into jungle around lighthouse trail)
- Swamp Harrier (Only seen in flight over booby colonies on Bird Island and the Grotto)
- Pacific Golden-plover (Very common at airstrip; not seen elsewhere)
- Wandering Tattler
- White Tern (flocks of 3 and 5 birds seen on 2 different days, flying over main resort beach)
- Black Noddy (only seen roosting at Bird and Nuki Nuki Island)
- Brown Noddy (nesting in cliffs under “The Point” deluxe accommodation)
- Great Crested Tern (uncommon at Vatulele, with single birds seen sporadically)
- Black-naped Tern (common at Nuki Nuki and Bird Islands: possible breeder?)
- White-throated Pigeon (one seen on path to “The Caves”)
- Pacific Pigeon (very common)
- Crimson-crowned Fruit-dove (very common)
- Many-colored Fruit-dove (common, but less conspicuous than crimson-crowned)
- Collared Lory (common near resort grounds, especially at Main Bure)
- Collared Kingfisher (each individual seen had entirely buff/ochre eyestripe: *vitiensis* or *eximia* subspecies?)
- White-rumped Swiftlet (abundant; nests at “The Caves”)
- Pacific Swallow (common)
- Vanikoro Flycatcher (common)
- Slaty Flycatcher (very common in jungle west of resort: Lighthouse and Cave trails)
- Polynesian Starling (small numbers in forest clearings, and at beach/forest edge)
- Wattled Honeyeater (abundant)
- Spotted Dove (common only around resort)
- Jungle Myna (common only at the Grotto, and at villages and airstrip, where abundant)

Not Seen in 10 days (but listed as present on Vatulele by *Watling*):

Banded Rail

Common Myna (not seen anywhere; maybe, at least temporarily, extirpated)

Lesser Shrikebill

Silvereye (never seen or heard, despite frequent “pishing”)

Masked Booby (listed as breeding on Vatulele, while brown booby is not listed as such; maybe a mix-up between which of the 2 species breeds on Vatulele?)

Dick Watling - Comments:

- Observations of Great Frigatebird - interesting and significant.
- Masked Booby is recorded breeding on the cliffs at the south end, back in the 70s, I have not been down there to check them out.
- Absence of observation of Banded Rail - strange and a bit disturbing - too many cats around the resort ??
- Common Mynahs were observed by New Zealand group in 1972 but only Jungle Mynahs by me (2 trips in the 90s).
- Silvereye - the Whitney Expedition took specimens in 1924 but it has not been seen by me or the New Zealanders in 1972. So it looks as though it may be extirpated.
- Lesser Shrikebill - bit of a problem here - not recorded by any of us - so how has it got onto the list. Mistake perhaps - I will have to check through in case I am forgetting some other list. So thanks indeed - feedback like this is very useful.