

REDISCOVERY

Black-chinned Monarch *Monarcha boanensis* still survives on its tiny island home

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Endemic to Boano, a small 149 km² island close to the north-west coast of Seram in eastern Indonesia, the Critically Endangered Black-chinned Monarch *Monarcha boanensis* was not recorded for more than 73 years after first being collected on 13 May 1918 by a Dutch geological expedition to Seram led by Captain F.J.P. Sachse, partly because it was 21 years before it was actually described by van Bemmelen. On their third expedition to try to rediscover the species C.W. Moeliker and C.J. Heij located a family of three birds in October 1991 and collected the juvenile. During a follow-up survey in late 1994 they located several more individuals in the forested limestone valleys but since then the species has not been seen again (Moeliker & Heij 1995, 1996).

After using Google Earth to study the topography of Boano and confirm that there are roads on Seram leading to the coast opposite the island, Mikael Bauer and I decided to go and confirm that all was still well with this neglected species. Travelling in remote Indonesia is always filled with excitement and humorous events, and this expedition was no different, meeting plenty of very friendly, but bemused locals en route. Access to Boano is relatively straightforward with plenty of boats available for hire to reach Boano village. A 16 km trek took us across the island and

into the limestone forest where we soon located the first of the 12 individuals we saw. We had repeated views of several birds, took photographs, confirming its distinctiveness from the other 'pied' monarchs of the region, and obtained sound recordings—we estimated about 20 more were heard.

For full information on how to reach Boano, see the Burung Nusantara website <http://burung-nusantara.org> where full details on how to get to Boano and how to see the monarchs is available.

Acknowledgements

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References

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Plates 1 & 2. Black-chinned Monarch *Monarcha boanensis*, Boano island, Seram, Indonesia, 10 January 2011.



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