Endemic Birds of Palau



Melimdelebteb or Che[illegible]rech (Palau Fantail)

Palau is most famous for its underwater life, but the forest in Palau and its animals are also very special. There are at least nine species of birds that are ENDEMIC to Palau, meaning they live in Palau and nowhere else in the world.

All of Palau's endemic bird species are forest birds that need the forests of Babeldaob, Peleliu, Angaur, and the Rock Islands to survive. These birds are important to Palau because they help to spread the seeds of many fruit trees in the forest and are an important part of Palau's BIODIVERSITY. Biodiversity is the measure of all of the species in Palau, and places with high biodiversity are usually special, healthy ecosystems.

Birds living on small islands like Palau are vulnerable to extinction because they have nowhere else to go if their habitats are destroyed or degraded. We can protect these birds by protecting them from hunting or from capture, and by preserving Palau's forests, which are important for their habitat.

A Belau a kmal merael a chisel ra debel. Engdi cheremelel ma charm el ngara chelsel a dirrek el kmal meklou a ultutelel. Ngar ngii a kesengil eng kltiu el bedengel a suebek el charm el di chermel Belau (ENDEMIC), ngdiak ra kuk bebil ra beluu ra beluulechad.

A suebk el charm el di chermel Belau, a ouspech a ikal meklou el cheremelel a Babeldoab, ma Beliliou, ma chelebacheb. A ikal charm a meklou a ultutelel ra Belau e leng olngeseu er kid el omriid a iuesel a bek el bedengel el dellomel, ma klou a belkul el kirel a beluu el betok a bedengel a charm ma dellomel a ngar ngii (BIODIVERSITY). A betok el bedengel a charm ma dellomel el dmak a olchotel a ungil a klengar el ngara basio (ecosystems).

A suebek el charm el kiei ra mekekerei el iuns, el ua Belau, a beot el mo nguemed er tial beluulechad leng diak a ngodech el bol kiei er ngii a lsekum a ikel le kiei er ngii a metemall. Ngsebeched el sobechakl a ikal suebek el charm a bo domekerreu a dongeluolou a le kiei er ngii.

Palau Conservation Society • PO Box 1811 ◇ Koror, PW, 96940 • Ph: (680) 488.3993 ◇ Fx: (680) 488.3990



The Biib (Palau Fruit Dove) is a beautiful dove with green feathers and a purple cap. Legend says that the biib is related to giant clams, and when the tide is low and people are collecting clams, it calls loudly to mourn its lost relatives. It can be heard "cooing" throughout the day and night.

The Wuul or Chesisebarsech (Palau Bush Warbler) lives in dense vegetation near the ground in all forests except mangroves. It is shy and very difficult to see. It has a loud and beautiful call, sounding like a long whistle following by a tumbling warble of short whistles, and often sings continuously for long periods.





The Charmelachull (Palau Flycatcher) is found in all forest types but prefers mangroves. It eats insects and is often seen hopping around branches looking for prey. The male is blue-grey on its upper feathers while the female is brown. Its Palauan name can be translated as "animal of the rain" which describes the bird's habit of singing in the rain.

The brown Tutau (Palau Morningbird) is known because of its loud singing early in the morning. It lives in al types of forest except mangroves between Babeldaob and Peleliu.





The Charmbedel ra Yaoldaob (Giant White-Eye) lives only on Peleliu and the Rock Island of Ngeruktabl. They are noisy and curious birds that often gather to scold an observer. The Charmbedel ra Yaoldaob is not the same as the Charmbedel ra Babeldoab (Caroline Islands White-Eye), a small yellow bird that lives throughout Palau.

The Omekrengukl or Doldol (Palau Ground Dove) lives in thick forests between Babeldaob and Angaur, although it is very rare on Babeldaob and more common on the Rock Islands. It is the rarest of all the endemic birds, and may be a globally threatened species. This small dove looks for seeds on the forest floor.





The Chesuch (Palau Owl) is the only resident owl in Palau. This very small owl is active at night and stays in dark forests during the day. It has a call that is similar to the call of the Biib.

The Melimdelebteb or Chesisirech (Palau Fantail) is common in the forests between Babeldaob and Peleliu. When threatened it fans out its tail and wags it from side to side. This curious bird has a song that is a jumble of chirps and squeaks.





The Chetitalial (Dusky White-Eye) is a dull grey bird, smaller than any other Palauan species. It lives in noisy flocks that move through the forest feeding on seeds and small fruits. It occurs from Babeldoab to Peleliu.

Scientists are very interested in Palau's birds, and continue to do research on potential endemic species. Scientists believe that three species of birds in Palau may be different enough from their neighbors in different islands that they qualify as endemic species. These three species of birds are the Chesisekiaid (Palau Swiftlet); Cherosech, Ongelimadech, or "Tengadidik el bekerekard a btelul" (Micronesian Kingfisher); and the Kiuidukall (Palau Cicadabird).

Endemic birds are only a few of Palau's many resident birds. A 1991 survey identified a total of 141 birds in Palau, ranging from endemic birds to resident (birds that stay here all year round, but are also found in other locations), migrant birds (birds that live and breed elsewhere, but stop in Palau while they migrate north and south),vagrant birds (birds that get lost and end up in Palau on their way to someplace else), and even introduced birds (birds that were brought to Palau by man).



Belochel
(Micronesian Pigeon)
RESIDENT found in
other Micronesian
Islands as well as Palau



Sechou
(Egret Species)
Common MIGRANTS
that stop in Palau but live
and breed elsewhere



Kanaria
(Chestnut Mannikin)
INTRODUCED birds
brought by the Japanese that
are not native to Palau

Drawings by Takesi Suzuki from the "Field Guide to Birds of Palau" by John Engbring