

FIJI BUSH WARBLER

Scientific Name: *Cettia ruficapilla*

Fijian Name: Manu (Maya`, Tikivili, Biliwi`)

uniform red-chocolate eggs forming the normal clutch

Distribution:

The Fiji Bush Warbler can be found

on the four largest islands of the Fiji group - Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, Taveuni and Kadavu

Geographical Variation:

Each of the four islands maintain separate subspecies with fairly different plumages

C.r.badiceps from Viti Levu has more olive-brown upperparts, a rufous cap and a white eyebrow above a dark eye stripe. The underparts are pale grayish-buff with brownish flanks

C.r.ruficapilla from Kadavu has a more extensive rufous plumage, especially on the crown, and it lacks the pale eyebrow

the experienced ornithologists. However, the bush-warbler is one of the commonest of Fiji's small insectivorous species.

This only becomes apparent when one becomes familiar with the calls

In some localities, this bird is the subject of local superstition, and it's call may either be a good or bad omen, depending on the occasion, or in some instances, whether it is heard to the right or to the left of the path of the birder

Conservation Significance:

Endemic to Fiji

Source:

BirdLife International Fiji Programme
A Guide to the Birds of Fiji and Western Polynesia including American Samoa, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Wallis & Futuna written-by Dick Watling and illustrated by Chloe Talbot Kelly.
<http://www.unep.ch/islands/IIQ.htm#465>



Appearance:

12 cm long
General appearance is a small, delicate and rather drab bird with brown upperparts, pale grayish-buff underparts, a rufous cap and variable white eyebrow (depending on race)
Has a thin and pointed, horn-coloured bill
Exhibits a distinctive plumage differences between islands in the Fiji group

Voice:

Has an unmistakable voice, having one of the characteristic sounds of the Fijian bush
When fully delivered, the duet consists of a single unmodulated whistle followed by a loud warble of 2 – 5 phrases at a higher pitch delivered by 1 bird, then followed by a sharp *tsic-tslc* reply by the other mem-

or
the
pair
The
answer-
ing call is
often so
rapid and
consistent
that 1 bird is
thought to have
delivered both calls

Occasionally single birds deliver either part of the duet, randomly

Habitats:

May be encountered in thick undergrowth in mature forest, secondary bush, agricultural land and even in the middle of suburban Suva
Different from all other warblers, the largest and darkest form in Taveuni, is restricted to undisturbed forest and does not venture out into the abundant thick secondary, where it is otherwise found on any other island in its range
Fiji bush-warblers are entirely insectivorous, collecting small insects in thick vegetation
The large, rather crude nest is domed with the entrance hole above mid-height on one side, with 2

C.r.castaneoptera confined to Vanua Levu has a buff eyebrow and a browner plumage
The most distinctive race is the larger and very dark *C.r.funbris* from Taveuni, which also has a pale eyebrow

Remarks:

One is rarely able to get a good view of the Fiji bush-warbler, because it is a retiring species that remains in thick vegetation. It is frequently overlooked even by

