

THE CORELLAS

GENUS: *Cacatua*

SUBGENUS: *Licmetis*

Continued from the April edition

#3 THE RED-VENTED CORELLA



The Red-vented Corella, *Cacatua haematuropygia*, also known as the Red-vented Cockatoo and the Philippine Cockatoo, is an endemic Philippine cockatoo roughly the size and shape of the Tanimbar, or Goffins Corella, *Cacatua goffiniana*. It is easily distinguished by the red feathers around the vent.

The body plumage is all white, red undertail coverts tipped white, yellowish under-tail and pale yellow underwings. They are 310mm (12¼") in length and have a 218mm (8½") wingspan. The Red-vented Corella makes a characteristic bleating call, as well as the screeching and whistling noises common to most cockatoos. However, it is quieter than many other cockatoos.

Red-vented Corellas formerly inhabited all the larger and many smaller islands of the Philippines, excluding northern and central Luzon. In the early 1990s the total wild population was estimated to be 1000-4000, however, by 2008 this was reduced to probably less than 1000. Remnant populations exist on the islands of Palawan, Tawitawi, Mindanao and Masbate; with the species stronghold being the Palawan Faunal Region where the Katala Foundation has run the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Programme since 1998. There are around 180 found in wilderness conservation in Narra, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.



This Corella is critically endangered. Contributing factors are loss of coastal habitat and persecution as an agricultural pest. A captive population is breeding at *Birds International* near Manila.

The Red-vented Corella is a social species which roosts, feeds, and flies in noisy groups. However, during the breeding season, from March to July, the flock separates into individual pairs while nesting. Various seeds are the staple of their diet, and, to a lesser extent, fruits, flowers, buds and nectar are taken. They are very adaptable and even forages on crops, particularly half-ripe rice, and corn. This has caused them to be regarded as an agricultural pest, with the result that they were shot and poisoned in large numbers.

R.V.C. with help from Wikipedia
Series to be continued