

Listening notes for 'The Last Wild Island - Tetepare'

<http://www.listeningearth.com/LE/p-136-the-last-wild-island-tetepare>

#### Track 1: Distant Reef at Night

Tetepare's barrier reef is half a kilometre out from the shore, creating a sheltered lagoon with sea grass beds and corals. The distant roar of surf can be heard to varying degrees from anywhere on the island. This recording was made in the early hours of the morning on a headland overlooking the sea.

Nocturnal insects sing, and you can very faintly hear sticky-toed frogs (0.35, 1.06, 1.53), known to locals as 'koni' frogs after their call.

#### Track 2: Into the Forest Before Dawn

A sacred kingfisher calls repeatedly in the dark (0.05, 0.11, 0.19, 0.27...), along with a Solomon Islands eyelash frog (eg; 2.40), so named for the little horns above its eyes. Melanesian scrubfowl (megapodes) often call throughout the day and night, but particularly in the early dawn (eg; 3.21, 3.33...). A rarely heard Solomon hawk owl calls distantly (5.26...) before a pair begin calling closer (7.01...)

White-capped Monarchs begin the tremulous notes of their early dawn song (5.34...). A more extended example of this ethereal singing is featured on our 'Monarchs of Tetepare' album. Eyelash frogs are heard again (6.36, 6.50)

A small group of koel cuckoos begin calling quite loudly (7.30 ...). I think this is the female call, as the male usually gives its diagnostic 'ko-el' call. A 'koni' frog calls a bit closer (10.02...)

#### Track 3: Daylight Comes to Tetepare

This track begins with the gentle dawn singing of Tetepare's endemic white-eyes (0.00...). They carry on, being a strong component of the dawn chorus. A first yellow-faced mynah awakes (0.05). Some subtle sounds: a pigeon also stirs with a bout of vigorous wing flapping (0.44, 1.09, 1.17...), and the high frequency 'ziz' of a small insectivorous bat in flight can be heard (0.50, 4.11). Rainbow lorikeets are also waking up (1.54...5.34).

The beginning of the cicada chorus (around 12.00....) signals the end of the dawn chorus. In our experience, the cicadas would usually sing continuously for around 15-20 minutes, before ebbing back, to continue singing in intermittent waves throughout the day. The birdsong would mostly cease during this dawn cicada song period, and resume after. For instance, a last utterance of white-eye song can be heard at 13.58. The white-capped monarchs have stopped singing by 12.40, and shortly after, their characteristic daytime (diurnal) songs can be heard (14.34, 14.47...)

#### Track 4: Tetepare's Primary Rainforest

We are now into the day, and the diversity of birdsong increases.

A Ducorp's cockatoo flies past, calling every now and then; it has quite a pleasant sound compared to other white cockatoo species. A small bird can be heard giving a high,

tinkling song (0.22-0.36), I am reasonably confident this is an olive-backed sunbird.

The yellow-face mynahs are now more active, and will continue their melodious whistling (0.39) and wheezy, raspy calls (0.47) throughout the day. They are joined by the ongoing vocalisations of white-capped monarchs. Short, descending 'chip's are from white-eyes (2.14... 2.24...).

A group of metallic starlings gradually gather, feeding in shrubs and lower canopy. They are very gregarious and stir each other to bursts of chattering (3.56...).

The sunbird is heard again (4.58). A purple swamphen clucks away for a few seconds (5.19...) before a more definitive call (5.28). Two pigeon species call simultaneously; two big island imperial pigeons (5.25, foreground huffing, and background low booming 'wooo'), and in the background, a higher dove call, which I think may be from a bronze ground-dove (also later at 5.46, 5.25-612, and a good sequence 7.33).

A steely-blue flycatcher calls regularly (5.52...), along with an aggregation of mynahs, metallic starlings and white-eyes (esp 8.17 - around 9.30). In the distance, another parrot gives two calls (9.54, 9.57), noticeably more higher pitched and tonal than the rainbow lorikeets. I reckon these may be from a tiny Finsch's pygmy-parrot.

A couple of characteristically white-eye 'whinnying' calls can be heard very softly (11.36 - 11.39). A Melanesian scrubfowl has been scratching away in the background quietly, and now gives a few calls (12.58, 13.07, 13.16...). In the middle of some metallic starlings, can be heard a piping song, slowly and slightly descending (14.07-14.18) - I have no idea what this unique call is. An island imperial pigeon can be heard again, this time uttering its lovely gruff barks (14.15..). The megapode now approaches, calling quite close by (14.40...).

The general feeding activity continues. In the midst of which, the rasping calls of a female white-capped monarch can be heard quietly (20.33). The accelerating 'woop's of a superb fruit-dove can be heard way off in the distance (22.10, 24.19, 30.45). A Ducorp's cockatoo flies past again (23.35 - 23.50), and also far away is heard the distinctive two-note call of a claret-breasted fruit-dove (25.45). A small bird (sunbird?) calls intermittently (26.55, 27.06, 27.30, 28.19, 28.44), and is probably also the owner of some short, high frequency 'chip's (29.03, 29.19. 29.25...). There is another unidentified call, a raspy and explosive 'sneeze' (30.48).

#### Track 5: Blythe's Hornbills and Buff-breasted Coucals

In the background, the extraordinary rasping calls of a buff-breasted coucal begin (0.02 - 0.22). This is a single bird, who follows his calling with a more coucal-like series of low frequency booms (0.28 - 1.01). A pair then begin what may be a territorial duel, but may equally be a somewhat gruff form of bonding duet (1.10 - 2.03).

A few distinctive wing flaps of a hornbill are heard (2.30). A singing parrot flies in, calling with a distinctively metallic voice (2.47), and once alighted, begins a sequence of tuneful notes more reminiscent of a rosella than a parrot (3.32-3.36). A koel cuckoo gives another call, now in broad daylight (4.00). By now, you should be well familiar with the various whistles and wheezy calls of yellow-faced mynahs, interspersed among the metallic starlings.

Another Ducorp's cockatoo flies past (7.06), and in the foreground a burst of chipping from an unidentified vocalist (7.07... sunbird again?). Another Blythe's hornbill flies in, this time giving voice as well (7.48...). Somewhat distantly, a series of gruff pigeon calls can be heard (8.21-8.46), which I would have overlooked as just an island imperial pigeon, but our local guide said were from a Nicobar pigeon, which would be exciting to have seen!

The buff-breasted coucal begins again, a little closer (8.47...) following on with a sequence of booming calls (9.16...). Meanwhile the steely-blue flycatcher returns (9.37).

The Blythe's hornbill takes wing, moving closer (10.40), before flying heavily in front of us to alight a little way off, still calling (11.09). Its partner who we heard originally, now glides in and aerobrakes noisily into a nearby tree (11.46), before flying off again to follow (12.38... 14.20...)

Megapodes, cicadas (which chorus sporadically throughout the day), mynahs, lorikeets and monarchs continue serenading as we conclude, with a last appearance from a flycatcher (15.58, 16.05)