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Nick Dymond, Springfield, Scousburgh, Shetland, ZE2 9JE, U.K.

## Green-faced Parrotfinch *Erythrura viridifacies* in northern Luzon, Philippines

DESMOND ALLEN

Green-faced Parrotfinch *Erythrura viridifacies* is a little-known and apparently rare species endemic to the Philippines and currently considered 'Endangered'. A single bird was encountered near Dumalneg in northern Ilocos Norte Province, at c. 100 m altitude, on 9 February 1994. Dumalneg lies near the north coast of Luzon at the edge of a large area of logged and primary forest. The bird was first sighted at about noon, in full sunlight on a rock by a small streamlet, in a largely cleared valley with scattered trees and much climbing bamboo. It flushed into a patch of bushes enclosing a stream but I was able to approach to within about 3 m of it and saw that it was holding a bamboo seed of c. 3-4 mm diameter in its mouth. The seed seemed rather too big for the bird to deal with and it later dropped it but I suspect it was feeding on these seeds, which were common in the area. The bird appeared very similar to the portrait in Clement and Harris (1993) but the edges of the primaries appeared distinctly darker, forming a blackish panel and the eye was slightly larger. This bird was known by my guide as 'saamut', (which is also the local name for a kind of fruit) but he described it as rare.

There have been rather few records of this species (Dickinson *et al.* 1991, Poulsen 1995), the only previously published recent one(s) (Collar *et al.* 1994) having been that of the survey at Dalton Pass (Alonzo-Pasicolan 1992). Since then it has been netted three times at 650-700 m in the Pandan peninsula of Panay by the PESCP team in 1996 (de Soye *et al.* in prep.), and sighted once there this year at c. 30 m (E. Curio pers. comm.); one bird was also seen by a survey team in 1996 in Orani Municipality in the Bataan peninsula (NORDECO and DENR 1998). Climbing bamboo was abundant at both of these latter two sites, *Dinochloa* in Bataan, and possibly *Schizostachyum* in Panay. It may

be that the distribution of this species is principally determined by the distribution of such bamboo. Given the very quiet and usually shy behaviour of its congener Red-eared Parrotfinch *Erythrura coloria*, it is quite likely to be easily overlooked. A photograph of one of the Panay birds in de Soye (1997) is consistent with my observations of the plumage as given above.

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Desmond Allen, 1158 No Ga Ya Cho, Machida Shi, Tokyo 19500, Japan