

CUCKOOS - AN IDENTIFICATION COMPARISON TABLE
(Adults Birds Only)

The emphasis of this table is to narrow the range of possible alternatives.- then refer to the Field Guides for confirmation - - which then sometimes offer a range of opinions

4/11/2004

Mor	P&K	S&D	SSS	Name	Size	Key Markings	Behaviour / Habitat	Call																		
192	296	154	182	Little Bronze-Cuckoo	14-15 cm	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Cap & upperparts</td> <td>Even bright green</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Face</td> <td>Pizzey - Dark barring (also forehead) is WRONG</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Opinions differ</i></td> <td>Morc, S&D - Paler like Shining</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eye ring</td> <td>(M) Red, (F) Pale creamy green</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Iris</td> <td>(M) Red, (F) Brownish</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eyebrow</td> <td>White</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eyestripe</td> <td>None</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chestbars</td> <td>Complete but scalloped</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tail -underside</td> <td>Rufous centre feathers only - & can be hidden</td> </tr> </table>	Cap & upperparts	Even bright green	Face	Pizzey - Dark barring (also forehead) is WRONG	<i>Opinions differ</i>	Morc, S&D - Paler like Shining	Eye ring	(M) Red, (F) Pale creamy green	Iris	(M) Red, (F) Brownish	Eyebrow	White	Eyestripe	None	Chestbars	Complete but scalloped	Tail -underside	Rufous centre feathers only - & can be hidden	Coastal Qld, N.T. & Kimberleys Forests, Mangroves	Soft, quick call of 4-5 notes, descending, repeated. No other call recorded. (Except a call similar to the Fantail trill but not sure how to describe that)
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192	294	152	180	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	25-27 cm	Upperparts	Mid slaty grey	Elevates tail on alighting Adopts a upright posture with tail downwards. Sits still for long periods, calling from high vantage points.	Very sad downwards trill, often repeated 2-3 times, often at night. Also a double note ' pew wee ' repeated.
					Eye Ring	Yellow			
					Underparts	Pale buff to warm cinnamon buff			
					Shoulder	Small white tip			
					Tail	Longer than Brush Cuckoo From top - Conspicuous white notches along edges Underneath - Boldly barred			
190	292	152	180	Oriental Cuckoo	28-33 cm	Upperparts	Grey (<i>at times a slight iridescence</i>)	Uncommon to rare. Generally solitary. Shy and elusive. Swift & undulating flight, like a small falcon. Breeds Mongolia, China, Japan.	Sad trill on three notes rising in volume as repeated. Also harsh ' gak,gak,gak ' like Dollarbird Not often heard in Australia
					Throat	Grey			
					Underparts	Heavily barred			
					Feet	Yellow			
					Wings	Long & pointed - falcon like			
					Tail	White tips to underside.			
					Rufous morph Fem. only	Upperparts - barred chestnut & black Underparts - barred black			
190	292	152	180	Pallid Cuckoo	28-34 cm	Upperparts	(M) Grey, (F) Browner with pale speckling	Open country Tail sometimes raised on alighting. Sits still for long periods. Feeds on ground and foliage.	After a stuttering start, moves up the scale for 8 or 9 notes. Also several short, harsh ' bssshht ' calls.
					Eyestripe	Dark marking thru eye.			
					Eye-ring	Yellow			
					Nape	White spot			
					Wings	Long & pointed - falcon like			
					Tail	Long, white tips & bars			
					Rufous morph Fem. only	Upperparts - mottled dark brown Breast - rufous barred			
194	298	154	184	Common Koel	40-46 cm	Male	Glossy black with red eye.	A summer visitor from the N Male frequently chased by other birds. Female keeps itself hidden.	Well known ' cowel ' call, also ' quodde, quodde, quodde ' When chased by other birds, a very high pitched ' kik, kik, kik '.
					Female	Dark brown above with white spots Pale underparts with fine stripes and Also red eye			
194	298	154	184	Channel-billed Cuckoo	58-65 cm	Body	Grey	A summer visitor from the north Flies high like a "flying cross"	Very loud, hoarse ' squaaark, squaaark ', descends into staccato 'laugh'. Often call through the night !
					Bill	Massive			
					Eye Ring	Red			
194	298	154	184	Pheasant Coucal	60-75 cm	Eye	Red	Spends most time on the ground. Very clumsy flight. Makes its own nest.	Loud, far carrying ' coop, coop, coop ' like water bubbling out of bottle. Also harsh scolding mew like cat with sore throat.
					Tail	Very long			
						(M) Head & underparts - Black (F) Body streaked Cinnamon			

Ref's	1974 1980 1990 1999 2000	Bird in the Hand, Disney (Ed.) Bird Banders of Aust, pages 53-64 Distinguishing Bronze-cuckoos in the field, Grahame Chapman, Atlas News Letter No.14, June, page 2 The Bronze-Cuckoos, Fred T Smith, The Bird Observer, No.700, August, page 75 Hanzab Vol 4 Cuckoos, Cowbirds and Other Cheats, N.B.Davies, Poyser, ISBN 0-85661-135-2
Note	Little Bronze-Cuckoo & Gould's Bronze-Cuckoo species relationship still under review	
Also	Long-tailed Cuckoo inhabits Australian Island Territories: see P&K page 292, SSS page 184, S&D pages 333,335,	
Hepatic:	Brown coloured morph found in some cuckoos e.g. Oriental	
Cuckoos parasitize other birds nests. Examples are - Little Bronze Cuckoo: Geryones, Shining Bronze-Cuckoo: Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Brown Thornbill, Horsefield's Bronze-Cuckoo: fairy-wrens, Black-eared Cuckoo: Speckled Warbler, Redthroat, Brush Cuckoo: in Nth Aust - Honeyeaters with enclosed Nests, in Sth Aust - Fantails & Robins, Fan-tail Cuckoo: White-browed Scrubwren, Brown & Inland Thornbills, Origma, Pallid Cuckoo: Honeyeaters with open cup nests, Common Koel: Magpie-lark, Figbird, Friarbirds, Channel-bill Cuckoo: Crows, Currawongs, Magpies.		
This table based on another compiled by Murray and Julie-Anne Coward for the September 2004 issue of the NSW Bird Atlassers Newsletter. Content was expanded for inclusion on the Birds Queensland Webpage http://birdsqueensland.org.au by Bob Forsyth, Mount Isa after considerable input from Merrian Keurschner and Danny Rogers Any omissions or errors are by Bob Forsyth, PO Box 933, Mount Isa, 4825, who would appreciate any advice how to improve this table Bob Forsyth encourages visitors to Queensland to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service , PO Box 744, Mount Isa, Qld, 4825.		
For some other Bird ID Comparison Tables refer to Birds Queensland Web Page http://birdsqueensland.org.au/		

