

= Negros fruit dove =

The Negros fruit dove (*Ptilinopus arcanus*) is a species of bird in the pigeon and dove family , Columbidae . It is endemic to the island of Negros in the Philippines . This fruit dove is known from a single female specimen collected from the slopes of Mount Kanlaon in the northern part of the island . While it was found at a high elevation , it is suspected that the species originally lived in the lowland dipterocarp forests and was driven to higher elevations by habitat destruction . While some have suggested that the specimen is either a runt or a hybrid instead of a valid species , this is not widely accepted . The female Negros fruit dove was a small fruit dove with vivid dark green plumage and an ashy @-@ grey forehead . It had a distinctive ring of bare yellow skin around its eye , and yellow fringes to some of its feathers gave it the appearance of having a yellow wingbar when perched . The throat was white , while the undertail and vent were yellow .

The original specimen was shot along with a bird suspected to be its mate from a fruiting tree . Nothing else is known about its behavior . The species has not been definitively reported since its original discovery in 1953 , and as several searches of Mount Kanlaon and the surrounding forests have not discovered any sign of the bird , many believe that it may be extinct . However , a local hunter from southern Negros claimed to have shot it the nineties , and the discovery of many species formerly thought endemic to Negros on the nearby island of Panay have given some hope that the species may persist . As such , it is currently listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN . Any surviving population would be very small , likely numbering fewer than 50 individuals , and would be threatened by habitat destruction and hunting .

= = Taxonomy = =

The Negros fruit dove was described in 1955 as *Ptilinopus arcanus* by Sidney Dillon Ripley and Dioscoro Rabor on the basis of a single female specimen collected by Rabor on May 1 , 1953 . This specimen , collected near Pula on the slopes of Mount Kanlaon in the Philippines , was shot along with a second bird , presumed to be its mate , which was lost in the undergrowth . The holotype is preserved as a skin by Yale University 's Peabody Museum of Natural History . The generic name *Ptilinopus* comes from the Ancient Greek words *ptilon* " feather , " and *pous* , " foot . " The specific name *arcanus* comes from the Latin word *arc?nus* " secret . "

Some authors have suggested that the specimen was either a runt of either the yellow @-@ breasted fruit dove or a Treron pigeon , or a hybrid instead of a unique species ; however , these views are generally considered invalid due in part to the distinctiveness of the specimen , particularly in the bare skin around the eye , and no proper evidence has suggested that the Negros fruit dove is an invalid species . It is uncertain where the dove should be placed within the genus *Ptilinopus* as the male 's plumage , a key feature used in organizing the *Ptilinopus* doves , is unknown . It has been suggested that the Negros fruit dove is either most closely related to the black @-@ naped fruit dove or represents an early colonization of the Philippines by the genus that has left no surviving close relatives . It has no known subspecies and is also known as Ripley 's fruit dove .

= = Description = =

The Negros fruit dove is a small , short @-@ tailed fruit dove . Only the appearance of the adult female is known as the presumed male specimen was lost in the undergrowth . The female is a vivid dark green overall with an ash @-@ grey forehead above an extensive ring of bare yellow skin that surrounds the eye . The greater coverts and tertial feathers have broad yellow fringes that create a narrow , if conspicuous , wingbar when the wing is folded . The throat is white while the vent and undertail coverts are yellow . The bill was black and the feet were a dull purplish @-@ red . The fruit dove is 16 @.@ 5 cm (6 @.@ 5 in) long .

= = Distribution and habitat = =

The Negros fruit dove is believed to be endemic to the island of Negros in the central part of the Philippines . However , some hope exists that the bird may persist undetected on a nearby island . The only known birds were collected from a forest at the edge of a clearing on Mount Kanlaon at an elevation of about 1 @, @ 100 m (3 @, @ 600 ft) . The forest was noted as being " halfway between the genuine lowland dipterocarp forest type ... and the real mid @-@ mountain forest type . " It is suspected that the species preferred habitat at a lower altitude , and that the collected pair may have been driven to higher elevations by deforestation in the lowlands .

= = Ecology and behavior = =

The sole sighting of the Negros fruit dove involved a pair of birds seen eating at a fruiting tree . No other information is known about its behavior .

= = Status = =

The species has not been recorded since the original pair of Negros fruit doves were shot in May 1953 at Mt Kanlaon . However , a local hunter in southern Negros claimed to have shot it in the nineties , which has given hope that the species may still exist , and as such the IUCN lists the Negros fruit dove as Critically Endangered , as any surviving population is likely to number fewer than 50 birds . If the species still exists , it is likely that habitat destruction for agriculture , timber , and charcoal @-@ burning and hunting , a common problem for all other pigeons on Negros , are major threats .

As numerous collectors had visited Negros prior to 1953 and did not record the species , it is likely that it was already very rare by the time of its discovery . It is suspected that the Negros fruit dove was originally a lowland species , but the destruction of forests in northern Negros forced the dove from its ideal habitat and led to its probable extinction . Today , no forest exists in northern Negros at an elevation lower than 750 m (2 @, @ 460 ft) , and several searches in the 1990s of Mount Kanlaon and the surrounding area failed to discover any sign of the species ' continued existence . Ornithological fieldwork has discovered that the nearby island of Panay is home to some species previously thought to be endemic to Negros , including the Negros bleeding @-@ heart . This discovery and the presence of unexplored lowland forests on Panay give hope that the Negros fruit dove may still exist in low numbers on a nearby island . Other than the depiction of the bird on a Philippine environmental education poster in the 1990s , no conservation measures have been enacted to protect any surviving population .