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# Observations of Blue-faced honeyeater (*Entomyzon cyanotis*) in trade in Javan bird markets

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## INTRODUCTION

On the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016, during an ad hoc visit to the Pramuka Bird Market in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, a single Blue-faced honey-eater, *Entomyzon cyanotis* was observed for sale as a cage bird. The Pramuka Bird Market is the largest of its kind in Asia, and has been subject to numerous surveys, including a full inventory carried out in 2014 (Chng et al. 2015). To the knowledge of the authors, this is the first time Blue-faced honey-eater has been observed in trade in Jakarta - home to the largest bird markets in Asia - although not the first time the species has been observed in trade in Indonesia. During surveys carried out on 22-24<sup>th</sup> June 2015 by TRAFFIC in bird markets in eastern Java, four individuals were observed in Kupang, Surabaya, and one in Malang.

The single Blue-faced honey-eater observed in Pramuka Bird Market was of unknown gender (the species is not sexually dimorphic) and was considered to be of the race *griseigularis*, based on information from the bird dealer, who claimed it, and a further three pairs he said were kept out of sight in the market, were sourced from the island of Papua. Of the three subspecies currently recognised, two occur in and northern and eastern Australia, and *griseigularis* in Papua (Higgins et al. 2016). The dealer said the birds were priced at 5 million Indonesian Rupiah (USD 360) per pair.

Assessed as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (BirdLife, 2012), the Blue-faced honey-eater is considered to be widespread and not necessarily threatened and trade is not currently listed as a potential threat. Nevertheless, the species is protected by Indonesian law, and trade in it is therefore illegal.

While numbers of Blue-faced honey-eater currently in trade appear to be low, individuals and organisations

monitoring the trade should be vigilant, as shifts in demand and preferences are frequent in the bird trade. The species is easily recognisable by the bare patch of blue skin around the eyes, the black with white stripes around the nape and across the cheeks, the olive mantle, back and wings and white underparts. It is a relatively large honey-eater, ranging from 26-32cm that possesses a downward curving bill, rounded wings and a squarish medium-length tail (Higgins et al. 2016).

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