

**Submission for Corn Crake on Cocos Keeling Island 7<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Submitted by Geoff Christie**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Geof Christie and Richard Baxter were walking the back track to Trannies beach in the early morning when I saw a bird slowly skulking away into the bushes. I managed 5 photos before the bird disappeared. I was thinking Buff-banded Rail until we looked at the photos, now we are thinking female Watercock, but what was the red on the rump? By now Richard was frothing as he had not seen the bird. I suggested we go back the 200 meters to the car to put mossi repellent on so as to stake out the location. At the car Richard confirmed the photos were of a Corn Crake, now Richard's frothing was close to manic.



As we got back to the track I managed to hold Richard back so as to use our bins and there it was, walking down the track towards us. Richard was off, sneaking down the right hand side like a large wild cat carefully placing every step. I followed. Half way down the track the bird skulked off into the bushes. So I crossed to the left hand side of the track and hid behind a coconut tree while Richard moved in for the killer photo. The bird came out again and started feeding but Richard could not see it so I tried to whistle him but no whistle came out in my excitement, just a silent PHEW Phew!! So I started doing a penguin dance flapping my hands by my hips so the bird could not see me behind my coconut tree. Richard was on his PHONE



Finally Richard looked up and saw me still doing the penguin dance, it's right in front of you!!! he then took 100 photos.



Corn Crake Cocos Keeling Islands. Found on the Northern tip of West Island. Presumed to of just landed and was hungry and tired after migrating from western China. Just before this sighting there had been a huge Typhoon across Northern Philippines and through South East Asia