

# Vanuatu's Key Biodiversity Areas: Gaua

## Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)

Sites qualify as global KBAs if they meet one or more of 11 criteria, clustered into five categories: threatened biodiversity; geographically restricted biodiversity; ecological integrity; biological processes; and, irreplaceability. The KBA criteria can be applied to species and ecosystems in terrestrial, inland water and marine environments, and must be confirmed by the KBA Secretariat. Vanuatu has 27 KBAs in total.

## Threatened Species

Vanuatu has a total of 138 species that have been identified as threatened or near threatened on the IUCN Red List. The Threatened Species Project has received funding from CEPF to work on 27 of the threatened species. Ten of these threatened species are found on Gaua's land or in its surrounding waters. They include:

### Endemic

- Vanuatu Flying Fox
- Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon
- Vanuatu Megapode

### Found only in Vanuatu and one other country

- Fijian Blossom Bat
- Palm Lorikeet
- Royal Parrotfinch

### Widely distributed

- Dugong
- Green Turtle
- Hawksbill Turtle
- Moluccan Ironwood

## Why is this Island Special?

In Vanuatu, CEPF has chosen six priority sites out of the 27 KBAs, including Gaua. Gaua is part of the Banks group and supports the largest freshwater system in Vanuatu and the Pacific known as Lake Letas. In addition to the threatened species found there, Gaua is also home to many other birds, plants, aquatic creatures and reptiles, some of which are endemic to the island (found nowhere else in the world).



Dubi Shapiro

Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon  
Source: Dubi Shapiro Photography



Gaua Island, Vanuatu. Source: Global Volcanism Program

