
ORIENTAL BIRD CLUB

BULLETIN
NO. 11
MAY 1953



The Oriental Bird Club aims to:

- * encourage an interest in the birds of the Oriental region and their conservation.
- * liaise with and promote the work of existing regional societies.
- * collate and publish material on Oriental birds.

Two bulletins and a journal, *Forktail*, are published annually.

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Mike Crosby, Jonathan Eames (Art Editor), Richard Grimmett, Tim Inskipp, Adrian Long (Editor), Michael Rank, Nigel Redman, Craig Robson and Helen Taylor.

Membership of OBC

Membership of the Club is open to all and costs £12 per annum (£8 reduced rate for nationals living in Oriental countries), and £20 for corporate members (organisations, libraries and universities). Special arrangements for payment in USA, Thailand and India. To join or for further details please contact the Membership Secretary, OBC, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2LD, UK.

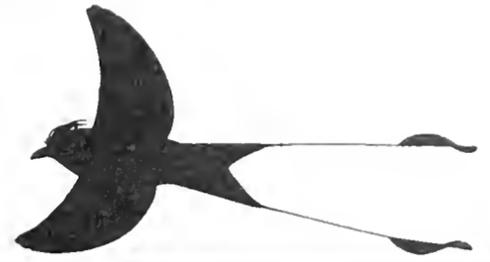
Cover illustration: Firethroat *Luscinia brunnea* by Per Alström. OBC is most grateful to Per for the use of this stunning painting.

**Corporate Sponsors of OBC -
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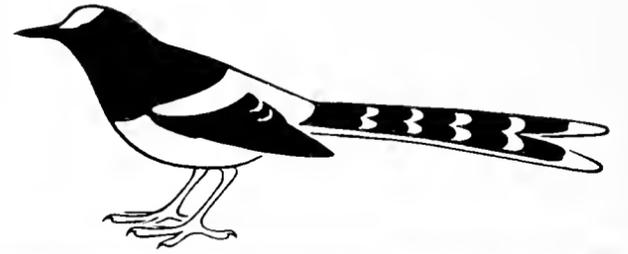


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Club News



OBC Manchester Meeting

Please contact Dick Filby on (+44) (0)603-767757 for more information on OBC meetings, particularly if you would like to have a sales stand at the meeting.

Manchester on Saturday 12 June. The meeting will be held again at Gatley United Reform Church Hall and will begin at 12.00 pm. The main talks will be by Martin Jones on Sumba, and by Ian Merrill and Graham Finch on northern India; another talk has yet to be arranged.

More Corporate Sponsors

From the seven full pages of advertisements from Corporate Sponsors in this issue, members will be aware of the continued success of our Corporate Sponsorship Scheme. Since the last bulletin well-known names to the birding world such as *Wildwings Travel*, *Cygnus Wildlife Holidays*, *Sunbird* and *Birdquest* have become Corporate Sponsors. All of these organisations have decided to support OBC Conservation Fund by making a donation of at least £500 (US \$750) to a specific project (see *Conservation Fund* for further details).

The enthusiastic support of all our Corporate Sponsors is most inspiring and their donations to the Conservation Fund are having a significant impact on our ability to provide funding for conservation projects in the region. The Corporate Sponsorship Scheme is truly a partnership and we are continuously seeking ways to improve the benefits available to Corporate Sponsors. As an example we are now featuring for the first time the names of Corporate Sponsors on the first page of the bulletin.

For further information on the Corporate Sponsorship Scheme, please contact Nick Gardner (OBC Promotions Officer).

Another successful Grand Prize Draw

The staging of the Grand Prize Draw at the AGM on 12th December 1992 provided much excitement with a number of members in the audience receiving prizes. The much coveted Leica 10x42 binoculars went to Ms Bishop, while the second

prize of a £250 (US \$375) travel voucher from Wildwings Travel was won by Mr A. P. Josephs. The Grand Prize Raffle raised £2,965 (US \$4,450) for the Conservation Fund and we are most grateful to all of you who purchased raffle tickets or helped to sell them. *British Birds* and *Birdwatch* are to be especially thanked for circulating the raffle tickets as is Howard Joliffe who sold the largest number of them.

Finally the popularity of the Grand Prize Draw is largely due to the generous donations made by *Leica Camera Ltd.*; *Wildwings Travel*; *Bird and Wildlife Bookshop*; *Birdwatch Magazine*; *British Birds* and *WildSounds* and we sincerely hope these organisations will continue to support this important fundraising event.

Membership drive in the U.K. - free 1992 bulletin!

Over the years we have been impressed by the strong loyalty and enthusiasm given to OBC by our members. Indeed most of the growth in membership has come from personal recommendations by OBC members. In order to build on this strength, we are circulating to U.K. members a membership form with this bulletin. Each new OBC member recruited before the end of October 1993 through this special promotion will be entitled to a FREE 1992 BULLETIN.

We have restricted this special promotion to U.K. members as inclusion of the OBC membership form with the bulletin will not increase postage costs. If successful we are planning to extend this special promotion to other regions of the world. However, if non-U.K. members know of friends who wish to take advantage of the offer of a free 1992 bulletin, then please write to Nick Gardner.

If each U.K. member were to recruit one new OBC member then we would have 400 new members - an increase of 40% on the total membership!

Show your support for OBC by recruiting a new member today.

Update on OBC - In Focus partnership

Apart from the nationwide field events in the U.K., *In Focus* have recently opened a fourth shop (see full page advert for more information). Members purchasing optical equipment from the field events or shops are reminded that any purchase made at list price will result in a contribution equal to 10% of that price being made by In Focus to the Conservation Fund. Therefore the purchase of a pair of Leica Trinovid 10x42 binoculars would lead to a donation of over £60 (US \$90) to OBC!

Already we are starting to see some of the benefits of this important partnership, **BUT** OBC will benefit **only** if members identify themselves to In Focus staff. **Remember: your support for this scheme will cost you nothing, but will have a significant impact on OBC's ability to fund conservation projects in the Oriental Region.** We would be most grateful if members could write to Nick Gardner with details of any purchase of optical equipment from In Focus.

Bird and Wildlife Bookshop service raises over £750 for OBC.

Thanks to the generosity of Bird and Wildlife Bookshop and the loyalty of our members over £750 (US \$1,125) was raised in 1992 for the OBC Conservation Fund. Sales in January-March 1993 have already provided £116 (US \$175) in donations and with the continuing support of our members we hope to be able to exceed the 1992 figure. With Bird and Wildlife Bookshop opening more and more branches in the U.K. (currently London, Rutland Water, Titchwell and Denby Dale), it is particularly important that OBC members identify themselves.

Apart from knowing that you are helping vital conservation work in the Orient, U.K. members purchasing books from Bird and Wildlife Bookshop can benefit from a POST FREE mail order service.

OBC AGM

The Club's 8th AGM was held in London on 12 December and was attended by over 150 members. The formal programme began with a fascinating overview of the BirdLife International biodiversity project given by Jonathan Eames. With the help of some excellent slides Jonathan outlined the development of the project and some of the significant results it has achieved, highlighting

areas of conservation priority within the Oriental Region. Peter Garson followed with a lively and enthusiastic account of the establishment of the Great Himalayan National Park in Himachal Pradesh, India and outlined the achievements of the third expedition to the park. Avifaunal surveys carried out included comparisons with earlier expeditions and assessment of the impact of increased human settlement in the region. After the formal business of the AGM, which included a report on the Club's activities during the year, David Tipling treated us to a splendid account of the spring migration at Beidaihe, China, illustrated with some beautiful slides of many Asian species. Beidaihe is rapidly gaining popularity as a premier migration site and seems destined to become the Eilat of the east. The meeting closed with the announcement of the winner of the 1992 Forktail-Leica Award and the draw of the 1992 Grand Prize Draw. Sadly, Ms Bishop the winner of the Leica binoculars was unable to be present to collect the first prize as she lives in Papua New Guinea! As usual the meeting continued informally in a local hostelry and at an Indian restaurant.

OBC Administration

Members are reminded that all OBC officers serve entirely on an unpaid, voluntary basis. Whilst those responsible for the administration of the Club do their utmost to perform their duties as efficiently as possible, some delays in replying to correspondence are sometimes inevitable, particularly when Club officers are away.

We also wish to point out that the Club's official address is a forwarding address which is used as a convenient, permanent location that will not change every time the officers change or move house. OBC has **no** staff at The Lodge in Sandy, and all mail is kindly forwarded by the RSPB to the appropriate OBC officers. Clearly, this system does add a few days to the time that letters take to reach the Club, but we believe that the stability of a permanent address outweighs the disadvantages, and indeed the Club has used this address from the beginning.

If you do unfortunately experience any unacceptable problems or wish to offer any constructive criticism concerning the administration of the Club we will be delighted to hear from you. Please address your communications to the Secretary.

The Honorary Membership Scheme

One of the lesser known activities of the Club is the Honorary Membership Scheme. The purpose of this is to enable people who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to pay the OBC subscription. In the past this has been supported by grants from the Loke Wan Tho foundation and WWF (Hong Kong). Sadly this funding has expired despite increasing requests to participate in the scheme. The Club is now looking to alternative sources to continue supporting this important scheme, and funds are being raised in two ways. Firstly a new **CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP SCHEME** has been launched. Membership costs £36 (US \$65) with each Corporate Member **funding three Honorary Members in the Orient.**

Already, a number of organisations have joined the new Corporate Membership Scheme. These include: *Birdwatch magazine, Birdline Southwest, Rare Bird News, Bird Net Ltd, Wildwings, Cygnus Wildlife Holidays, Birdquest Ltd, The Travel Trading Company, Footprint Adventures, Murphy's Wildlife, Tom Gullick, Wildsounds, Dutch Birding Travel-reports Service, Birding North-east, Birding World, Subbuteo Natural History Books, Limosa Holidays, Naturetrek* and *Birdline East Anglia*. The commendable action of these organisations is most appreciated and we hope that many more companies will join them in 1993.

Secondly, it is hoped to encourage more of our ordinary members to join the **SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP SCHEME**. Under this scheme members pay £20 which covers the cost of their membership and that of one Honorary Member. This could either be a person that you nominate, perhaps someone you met during a trip, or it could go to fund one of the many requests that the Club receives. This scheme has been running for a number of years and currently provides funding for 35 Honorary Members. It is hoped that with the assistance of the membership the Club can substantially increase the number of Honorary Members within the Orient. For OBC, promoting greater access to the Club's activities is of critical importance. Accordingly it is hoped that the combination of the Corporate and Supporting Membership Schemes will allow many more oriental birdwatchers to receive the benefits.

Please contact the Membership Secretary or Promotions Officer if you wish to become a Corporate or Supporting Member, or you know of a birder in the Oriental Region who has difficulty in

paying a subscription to the Club and would like to become an Honorary Member.

Reduced Rate Subscription

The category of reduced rate membership was established for nationals resident in the Oriental region, many of whom find it difficult to pay the full ordinary subscription. As it costs more to send publications overseas, reduced rate members are clearly being subsidised by the ordinary members. Expatriates resident in the region are of course expected to become ordinary members. The distinction between the two categories is usually obvious, but in some cases (such as residents of Hong Kong) the situation is less clear. We wish to stress that 'expatriate' residents of Hong Kong and other long-term expatriate residents are expected to pay the full ordinary rate of £12 (which we believe still represents excellent value for money - barely covering the cost of producing and mailing out two bulletins and *Forktail*). The Club intends to continue to offer a reduced rate for nationals resident in the Orient, but we hope that this reduction will be claimed **ONLY** by those who genuinely cannot afford the full rate.

1992 sees OBC Membership continue to increase

Membership of OBC continues to increase at a healthy rate. The total at the end of 1992 was 918, compared to 868 at the end of 1991. The 1992 total included 29 Complementary, 40 Honorary and 15 Exchange Members. A total of 120 people joined the Club during the year and only 70 who were members during 1991 did not renew for 1992, a smaller fall-out rate than is normally the case.

There have already been 100 new members during 1993, so this could be the year when membership passes the 1,000 mark.

Sales News

OBC is pleased to announce a new sweatshirt for 1993. The new four-colour design features a Crested Kingfisher *Megaceryle lugubris*, White-capped Water-Redstart *Chaimariornis leucocephalus* and Black-backed Forktail *Enicurus immaculatus* set against a fast-flowing mountain stream. This design, entitled *River Birds*, is available only in generously-cut medium, large and extra-large grey sweatshirts, priced at £16 for surface mail, or £18 airmail. The Club is grateful to the Bird and Wildlife Bookshop for sponsoring the initial costs of the sweatshirt.

The artist of *River Birds*, Martin Woodcock, has



Figure 1. Club T-Shirts for 1993

kindly made the mounted design available for auction. Accordingly, postal bids are now welcome from members and should be sent, by August 31, to Graeme Green, Sales, at the Club's address. The monies raised from the successful bid will go to the Club's Conservation Fund. The new sweatshirt and the T-shirts can all be ordered using the form at the back of the Bulletin.

As part of the Club's link with the Bird and Wildlife Bookshop, Andrew Johnson is offering members £5 off the list price for the **hardback** edition of the forthcoming Field Guide to the Birds of Borneo, Sumatra, Java and Bali to be published by Oxford University Press this summer.

Members' purchases of sales items from the Club and from those organisations financially supporting the Club's aims and objectives are increasingly important, and all members are cordially thanked for their support. However, please play your part by identifying yourself as a Club member when ordering or purchasing items from these organisations when not using the order form

Thanks to BirdLife International

Once again OBC would like to thank BirdLife International for the use of their facilities in the production of this bulletin.

Bulletin 17

The Editorial Committee would like to extend their gratitude to Nick and Daryl Gardner, Melanie Heath, Rob Innes and Frank Lambert who all helped in sub-editing this bulletin.



BirdLife[®]
INTERNATIONAL

From 3 March, the **International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP)** - while retaining its current legal name - is operating under the new name of **BirdLife International**.

For more information about BirdLife International, please write to: BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge, CB3 0N, U.K.



Conservation Fund

Compiled by OBC Conservation Officer, Carol Inskipp

A record total of more than £6,000 (US \$9,000) was donated in grants for conservation work in the Orient in 1992, and already a number have been awarded this year. The generous support and sponsorship of many individuals and organisations has made this possible. Once again OBC is grateful to the continuing support of *Leica Camera* who donated £500 (US \$750) towards the *Forktail Leica Award*. The OBC's small grants are funded by the Grand Raffle, profits from Club sales and, for the first time in 1992, from donations made by corporate sponsors, which enabled OBC to increase significantly the number of small grants awarded.

Fourth *Forktail Leica Award* winner announced

Deddy Juhaeni was announced as the winner of the fourth *Forktail Leica Award* at the Club's AGM in December. Last year Deddy carried out an initial study of the threatened and little-known Sumba Hornbill *Aceros everetti* with an OBC Survey Grant (see *Conservation Fund in action*). The £1,000 (US \$1,500) *Forktail Leica Award* will enable Deddy to gather information on the species's feeding requirements, nesting preferences, breeding behaviour and daily activity patterns. The study will last six months and will make recommendations for the conservation of the species.

Applications welcomed for Fifth *Forktail Leica award*

Applications are welcomed from nationals in the Orient for the fifth *Forktail Leica Award*, worth £1,000 (US \$1,500). An information leaflet describing the award is enclosed with this bulletin. The closing date for applications is 1 October 1993. To apply for the award or to discuss the proposed study please write to the Club's Conservation Officer, Carol Inskipp.

Small Grants

The Club is pleased to announce the following grants for conservation work, all of which have once again been given to Asian nationals. Applications for small grants are welcomed at any time of the year, but please do apply a few months in advance of your study, as decisions are made at OBC Council meetings which are held quarterly. Application details are given in the information leaflet enclosed with this bulletin. To apply for a grant or to discuss the planned work please contact Carol Inskipp.

Range, territory and roosting behaviour of Green Peafowl, Java, Indonesia

WILDWINGS donated £500 (US \$750) to help Mohamad Indrawan in his studies of the threatened Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* in Java, the behaviour of which is little known in the wild. The study will complement the work of Andi Prima Setiadi and Iwan Setiawan who carried out an OBC-funded study of the ecology and conservation of the species on Mount Ringgit on Java (see *Conservation Fund in Action*).

The project will investigate home range and territory size of the species; the significance of the adult males' call as they go to roost at

dusk, and especially whether these calls have territorial implications; estimate the total number of birds in Baluran; and train local wardens in the call-count method so that the population of the species can be monitored in the future.

SUNBIRD have donated £500 (US \$750) to Rajendra Suwal for his study of the ecology and conservation of the Sarus Crane *Grus antigone* and other birds characteristic of the lowlands of Nepal. The work is being carried out at Lumbini, Buddha's birthplace, where several pairs of cranes have bred in recent years but have often failed due to human disturbance and the lack of suitable wetland habitat. The Lumbini Development Project has acquired 4 km² of land, relocated villages and is developing a visitor centre, museum and monasteries. The project is encouraging the return of the natural plant communities in an attempt to create habitat for the resident birds. Rajendra is collecting information between September 1992 and December 1993 on the habitat requirements of the cranes and other bird species, which will form the basis of the future management plan for the area. A preliminary report on Rajendra's study is detailed in *Conservation Fund in Action*.

Sarus Crane Ecology and Bird Conservation at Lumbini, Nepal

Survey of White-browed Bushchat, north-west India

White-browed Bushchat *Saxicola macrorhyncha* by Carl D'Silva



CYGNUS Wildlife Holidays donated £500 (US \$750) to fund entirely a survey of White-browed Bushchat *Saxicola macrorhyncha* being initiated by Asad Rahmani and Carl D'Silva. This species is endemic to arid and remote areas of northern India and Pakistan and is observed rarely, although this could be due to the species being confused with other chats and wheatears. The first part of the project will involve surveys in areas where the species has been recorded recently, as healthy populations are needed to carry out ecological studies. Asad and Carl began a detailed survey of the species in February and March 1993 and we received news in late February that four birds had been found in the first 10 days of fieldwork.

Conservation ecology of Great Hornbill, Western Ghats, India



ORNITHOLIDAYS donated £500 (US \$750) to assist Ragupathy Kannan in his study of the conservation and ecology of the Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* in the Western Ghats, India. Little is known about this spectacular frugivorous species of the evergreen and semi-deciduous forests, but it is thought that forest destruction and persecution by local tribal people has resulted in a marked reduction in population size in this part of its range. The current distribution and abundance of the species within the study area, and its dietary requirements, foraging patterns, seasonal abundance together with that of other avian frugivores in relation to resource availability, and foraging habitat is being studied. Frugivory studies are important because the majority of plants in tropical forests depend upon animals to disperse their seeds, and in turn many animals are dependent on the fruits for food.

Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* by Dave Farrow

**Wetar expedition 1993,
Indonesia**

An award will partly fund four Indonesian ornithologists to survey the birds on the island of Wetar, north-east of Timor in Indonesia, which was last surveyed by ornithologists in 1919 (although visited briefly by Frank Lambert and David Bishop in 1990). There are three species confined to the island, namely Black-chested Honeyeater *Lichmera notabilis*, Wetar Figbird *Sphecothere hypoleucus*, and Crimsom-hooded Myzomela *Myzomela kuehni*, with an additional five species endemic to Wetar and Timor. The team aims to study the status, distribution and density of the Wetar avifauna, especially the endemic birds, and will assess the current status and threats to the forest. The survey will take place in October, also enabling the team to monitor the southward migration of shorebirds, of which little is known for this part of the East Asian-West Pacific flyway.

**Avifaunal survey of forest
reserves in Mahadayi valley,
Western Ghats, India**

A grant of £300 (US \$450) will fully fund Dr J. C. Uttangi's survey of forest reserves of the Mahadayi valley in the Western Ghats, India. A hydroelectric project plans to construct a dam creating a reservoir that will engulf all the forests in the valley. No systematic study has been made of the avifauna of the moist deciduous and evergreen forests of the valley, which hold species such as White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis*, Malabar Trogon *Harpactes fasciatus*, Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis*, Malabar Hornbill *Anthracoceros coronatus*, Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia*, and Wynaad Laughing-thrush *Garrulax delesserti*. Dr Uttangi will survey the birds in relation to their habitats and also map their distribution in the valley. It is hoped that the data collected will justify the cancellation of the hydroelectric project and lead to the creation of a wildlife sanctuary in the valley.

**Provision of fieldwork
equipment for Environmental
Camps for Conservation
Awareness, Nepal**

OBC provided fieldwork equipment for the Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA) in 1991 and we are pleased to continue our support this year. Equipment to the value of £175 (US \$265) has already been delivered to Nepal. ECCA is a non-governmental organisation which runs five-day camps for Nepalese school children and teachers. Their aims are to generate a sense of conservation awareness amongst school children, to provide new insights into environmental protection, to give children the opportunity to study the environment and people's dependence on it, and also to encourage ongoing efforts to protect the environment. ECCA is only in its seventh year of work, but already has held camps in five protected areas involving children from 19 districts of Nepal.

**Educational materials for the
Bihang Institute for
Ornithology and Mass
Education, Bhubaneswar,
Orissa, India**

Environmental educational books and other educational materials worth £100 (US \$150) have been donated to the Bihang Institute for Ornithology and Mass Education (BIOME) in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India. BIOME run field ornithological classes for zoology students and school children, and train wildlife tourist guides.

CONSERVATION FUND IN ACTION

Forktail Leica Award Winner 1991

The primary objective of the survey was to assess the diversity of tree, bird and primate species in Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh in the eastern Himalayas of India. The £1,000 (US\$ 1,500) Forktail Leica Award funded equipment needed to carry out the bird survey. A total of 292 bird species was recorded, the highlights being five species of pheasants, including Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii*, eastward range extensions of Himalayan Monal *Lophophorus impejanus* and Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*, and first records for Arunachal Pradesh of Green Cochoa *Cochoa viridis*, Black-faced Warbler *Abroscopus schisticeps*, Broad-billed Warbler *Tickellia hodgsoni*, Firethroat *Luscinia pectardens* and Rusty-bellied Shortwing *Brachypteryx hyperythra*.

The foothills adjacent to the wildlife reserve are under intense pressure from both legal and illegal logging of hardwood and softwood species - which is the mainstay of the local economy. In order to ensure conservation of the biodiversity in Mehao and in Arunachal Pradesh, the following measures should be undertaken urgently: ban or substantially reduce logging and encourage alternative sustainable sources of income, such as horticulture, agroforestry, and sustainable harvesting of forest produce, including medicinal plants. Efforts should be increased to compile inventories of the state's biodiversity and document the native peoples' knowledge of forest products, especially medicines.

Madhusudan Katti

Ecology and conservation of Green Peafowl on Mount Ringgit, Pasir Putih, Java, Indonesia

A study of the ecology and conservation of Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* on Mount Ringgit (1,250 m) and the surrounding area in East Java, Indonesia was carried out between December 1991 and January 1993. The Green Peafowl was found almost throughout the Mount Ringgit area but the population was estimated to number only about 43 birds comprising eight peacocks (adult males), 27 peahens (adult females and sub-adult males) and eight chicks.

The vegetation on Mount Ringgit comprises primary mixed and teak forests, currently estimated at 13,750 ha. Formerly, the major threat to the Green Peafowl was destruction of these forests for farming and plantations, but now hunting is the principal cause of the species's decline. This is a result of Pasir Putih, the nearby town, becoming a tourist resort where local people sell stuffed animals, including the peafowl. The town is thought to be one of the largest trading centres for the peafowl in Java.

The trade involves catchers, receivers and buyers. The catchers live in the Mount Ringgit area and their motive for capturing Green Peafowl is daily subsistence. The birds are usually caught using mist nets and snares, and it was estimated that formerly each catcher trapped 60 birds in three years, in addition to countless numbers of eggs and chick. The catchers also make use of the peacock's train feathers and sell them to receivers for Rp30-70 (US \$0.015-0.05). The receiver sells the Green Peafowl to the buyer for up to twice the original price and the price of one feather can

even reach Rp1,000 (US \$0.5). The receiver also obtains peafowl from other places, usually from the east near Baluran National Park.

Conservation of the Green Peafowl must involve the participation of the local people. We interviewed members of the local community, listened to their opinions and invited their participation. During the breeding season they participated in our efforts to find display sites, nests and eggs. The people gradually became friendlier and started to appreciate the conservation efforts. The catchers said that they would not trap peafowl any more and would be prepared to take care of them in their area. Thus, in the future it may be possible to obtain data about the distribution and population size of the species from the local people around Mount Ringgit.

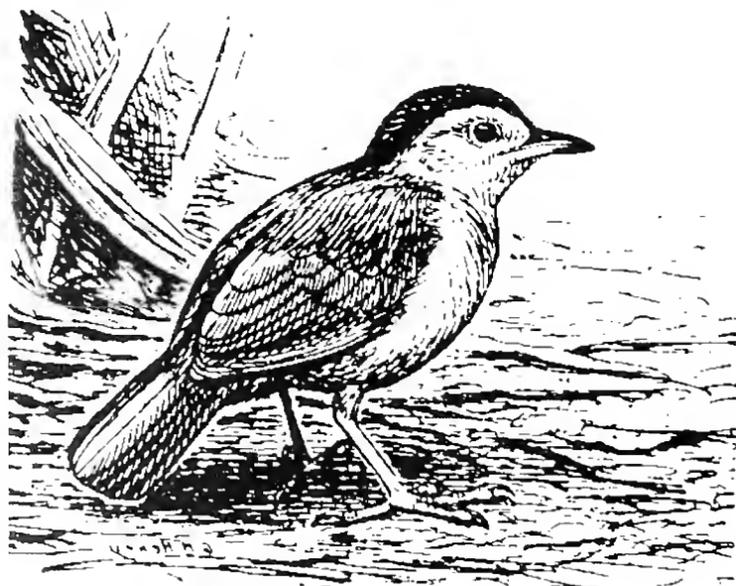
Andi Prima Setiadi and Iwan Setiawan

**Avifaunal survey of the
University Catchment Forest,
Hantana, Sri Lanka**

More than 60 bird species were recorded between October 1992 and February 1993 at the University Catchment Forest area at Hantana. Amongst these species were seven species endemic to Sri Lanka, of which evidence of breeding was recorded for Ceylon Wood Pigeon *Columba torringtoni* and Layard's Parakeet *Psittacula calthropae*. The other endemics found in the area are Ceylon Junglefowl *Gallus lafayetii*, Ceylon Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus beryllinus*, Yellow-fronted Barbet *Megalaima flavifrons*, Brown-capped Babbler *Pellorneum fuscicapillum* and Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Eumyias sordida*. A number of migrants to Sri Lanka were also recorded, namely Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*, Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa latirostris*, Large-billed Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris*, Yellowish-breasted Warbler *P. nitidus*, Indian Blue Robin *Luscinia brunnea*, and Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indica*.

The results of the avifaunal survey will be published as a checklist annotated with information on habitat and abundance. All three major habitat types in the study area (*Pinus* plantation, semi-natural forest, and grassland) are being surveyed using point counts and line transects. Any signs of breeding are recorded and notes are also kept of species abundance.

Upali Ekanayake



Brown-capped Babbler Pellorneum fuscicapillum

Ecology of Forest Birds on Sumba, Indonesia 1992

An expedition from Manchester Metropolitan University spent three months carrying out ecological research on the Indonesian island of Sumba (Nusa Tenggara Province) from June to September 1992. This was a follow-up to a visit in 1989 and involved faculty members and students from Indonesian universities and staff of the Department of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHPA). The main aim of the expedition was to gather more information on the ecology and population densities of Sumba's seven endemic birds and some of its other threatened species.

An OBC Survey Grant supported Deddy Juhaeni to carry out research on the Sumba Hornbill *Aceros everetti*. Deddy collected information on ranging behaviour, diet and feeding behaviour and population densities in different habitats, and he will continue the work on the species this year (see *Fourth Forktail Leica Award winner announced*).

The project was a great success and comprehensive data were obtained from six of the island's most important forest patches. One of these areas, Manupeu, supported high densities of the endangered Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacutua sulphurea citrinocristata* and the Sumba Hornbill and conservation of this site is of critical importance. Observations were also made of the little-known Sumba Buttonquail *Turnix everetti* and the Sumba Boobook *Ninox rudolfi* (see *From the field*).

The expedition received a B.P. Conservation Award and the work was carried out in close collaboration with BirdLife International who have included Sumba in their field conservation programme and they are using the expedition's findings to help produce a forest conservation strategy for the island. With the cooperation of PHPA they will present proposals to the regional government for the designation and management of protected areas on Sumba.

Martin Jones

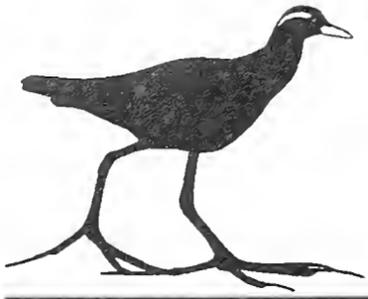
Sarus Crane Ecology and Bird Conservation at Lumbini, Nepal

Breeding of the Sarus Crane *Grus antigone* at Lumbini in the west-central lowlands of Nepal was monitored in September and October 1992. A total of nine pairs was recorded including a pair with a chick. Six of the pairs were in rice fields, two pairs in natural wetlands and a single pair in grassland. The average area covered by the nest was 1.65 m² and the choice of nesting material depended on where the nest was built: nests in rice fields made of rice plants, those in grasslands mainly *Imperata* and those in the wetlands *Eleocharis*, *Ipomaea* and wild rice plants. On average there was one egg per nest, but the egg loss was 40% and alarmingly this was mainly due to local people stealing them.

Rajendra Suwal



Sarus Crane Grus antigone by Dave Farrow



Around the Orient

World Bank pulls out of dam project

The massive dam and irrigation scheme planned for the Narmada River in central India (see OBC. *Bull* 16), which will destroy massive areas of undisturbed dry forest, received a major setback in April when Indian officials told the World Bank that they did not need a promised \$170 m loan for the project. The reason given was that the bank was trampling on India's 'self-respect' by imposing too many conditions. However, India's refusal was seen as a face-saver, since the World Bank was planning to back out of the scheme following the results of an independent review highlighting the major environmental impacts of the project and opposition to it from national and international environmental groups, and from several donor countries.

To date engineers have built only part of the main Sardar Sarovar dam and have dug 135 km of canals. In spite of the financial backing being withdrawn by the World Bank it seems that the Indian Government plans to continue the work. However, the \$2.7 bn required to complete the project will be difficult to find from other countries especially as Japan voted last October against continued funding. It looks increasingly likely that India will have to pay for the dam itself.

In addition to the environmental disaster the dam will cause, ecologists are now worried that shortages in money will mean that funds allotted for the rehabilitation and resettlement of the tribes, who will be forced to move in their thousands as a consequence of the project, will be allocated instead to finance the engineering work.

Source: The Independent 1 April 1993.

Siberian Crane reintroduction attempt unsuccessful

The two Siberian Cranes, captive bred in the USA and released in the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary in Rajasthan, have unfortunately failed to join the five cranes that were wintering in the park this year. It was hoped that these two birds would fly with the wild cranes back to their Siberian breeding grounds at the end of the winter, bolstering the

western population which has declined drastically over recent years (Figure 1).

On their long migration from Siberia to India the cranes are exposed to many dangers and the decline has been attributed to several factors including low reproduction rates and breeding problems in Siberia, and hunting over Pakistan and Afghanistan. The long migration route is learned by Siberian cranes from older birds and therefore if the flock is lost so will the migration tradition, and it will then be too late to introduce cranes back to either the wintering or breeding grounds.

Based on The Times of India, New Delhi, 2 Feb. 1993.

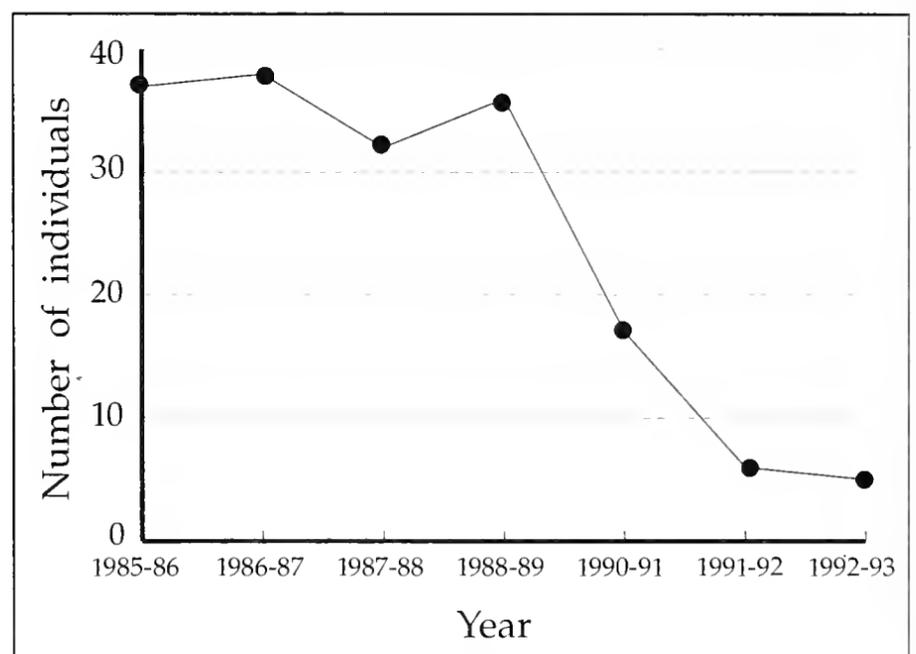


Figure 1: The decline of the Siberian Cranes wintering at Bharatpur

Laos expedition finds Giant Ibis

From November 1992 to March 1993, an expedition team from Cambridge, U.K. surveyed birds and mammals in the Xe Pian Proposed Protected Area (PPA) in southern Laos. The PPA lies on the Cambodia border and is one of several large areas being considered for protection by the Government of Laos. The project was carried out in cooperation with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation, from which two staff members joined the U.K. contingent for the fieldwork.

The Xe Pian PPA covers c.200,000 ha consisting mainly of primary semi-evergreen forest below 400 m, but reaching 840 m along a chain of hills in the

west of the area. The northern edge is bounded by a mosaic of woodland and wetlands, both seasonal and permanent. Two adjacent areas, the Xe Kong Plains to the east and Dong Kalo to the south-west, have been proposed as extensions to the main PPA. These comprise extensive woodland around riverine systems, and were both covered by the survey.

GIANT IBIS !!!

0945 am
Samphang 8225
large bird land
in river just up
downstream from
camp.



We go over to see it or it lifts off. An Ibis! - and
absolutely MASSIVE - size of a Woolly Necked Stork.
All blackish, with head & neck paler grey.
Iris light glinting on its feathers & reflecting
the shininess of some of them. Bill long
& greyish? - but certainly dark.



After c. 10-15s, it
came back! & flew right
over us. Additional features
seen were long dark pink/maroon
legs. It pos. had pale fleck markings
underneath but very dark.

1 Horn Tailed Macaque seen

Sketches by Richard Thewlis of one of the Giant Ibis
Pseudibis gigantea recently seen in Laos

At least 314 bird species were recorded during the fieldwork. Of greatest conservation interest were the large waterbirds found in the PPA 'extension' areas and the northern wetlands. Two Giant Ibis *Pseudibis gigantea* were seen along rivers, one in each 'extension'. This species is extinct in neighbouring Thailand and had not been recorded in the wild for many years. One White-shouldered Ibis *P. davisoni* was seen on two of the small seasonal pools scattered throughout the dry woodland on the Xe Kong Plains. A party of three Sarus Cranes *Grus antigone* and several Lesser Adjutants *Leptoptilos javanicus* and Woolly-necked Storks *Ciconia*

episcopus were also found on these pools. Both storks were also seen regularly at Dong Kalo and over the northern wetlands. Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* was heard once on the Xe Kong Plains but was reported to be fairly common at Dong Kalo by local people, although apparently absent from the main forest block. Flocks of up to 60 vultures (White-rumped *Gyps bengalensis*, Long-billed *G. indicus* and Red-headed *Sarcogyps calvus*) and both Lesser *Ichthyophaga humilis* and Grey-headed Fish-Eagle *I. ichthyaetus* were also recorded from the Xe Kong Plains.

The semi-evergreen forest held a full complement of lowland forest birds including apparently healthy populations of several globally threatened species or Indochinese endemics. Red-collared Woodpecker *Picus rabieri*, Bar-bellied Pitta *Pitta pitta ellioti* and Blue-rumped Pitta *P. pitta soror* were common, as were Short-tailed Magpie *Cissa thalassina* and Grey-faced Tit-babbler *Macronous kelleyi*, both 'near-threatened'. Siamese Fireback *Lophura diardi* was fairly common there and Grey Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* was heard frequently in the hills along the western edge of the PPA. One White-winged Duck *Cairina scutulata* was seen briefly flying up one of the larger rivers.

A good diversity of mammals was recorded. The semi-evergreen forest held a high density of gibbons *Hylobates* sp. and Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus* was seen once. Local people reported the presence of the critically threatened Kouprey *Bos sauveli*, a small number are said to be resident at Dong Kalo. Unfortunately, security problems prevented a proper search to confirm this.

Most of the habitats visited were in good condition with little evidence of large-scale logging or forest clearance. Hunting is apparently the most significant threat to wildlife in the area especially for the larger mammals and birds. Shooting, snaring and liming were all noted at significant levels. One of the highest conservation management priorities will be to safeguard the woodland pools and rivers of the 'extension' areas for large waterbirds, and salt-lick areas within the forest for the large mammals.

The current population pressure on the area is low, with only three small villages inside the main forest PPA. The Government of Laos has a clear opportunity to establish Xe Pian PPA and its extension areas as a large, effective and internationally important protected area.

Contributed by Guy Anderson

Saunders' Gull - heading for extinction?

There are increasing worries that reclamation along coastal China is destroying the breeding sites of the endangered Saunders' Gull *Larus saundersi*, and could be pushing the species towards extinction. There are only three breeding areas known for the species, all along the east and south-east coasts of China: Shuangtaizi River Nature Reserve in Liaoning Province; Yancheng Nature Reserve in Jiangsu Province, and near the mouth of the Yellow River in Shandong province, which consists of only two small colonies.

Along the Chinese coastline lie vast areas of mudflats that can be more than 5 km wide, which are created by the deposition of silt brought by large rivers and are continually increasing in size through this dynamic process. The tidal inundation ceases to reach the upper areas of the mudflats as they increase in size and these areas then dry out to form salt marshes. Saunders' Gull breeds in the earlier successional stages of the salt marsh where there is a reasonable cover of low vegetation.

The species's breeding grounds are under immense pressure as land is being reclaimed for shrimp ponds, rice fields, and freshwater reservoirs. At Shuangtaizi Reserve, the species is under great threat, with land being reclaimed at such a rate that in 1992 the breeding success was almost zero. Saunders' Gull may continue to breed for a short time after reclamation but suitable breeding areas disappear as tall dense vegetation soon invades. Breeding success at all three sites is also affected by egg collecting and human disturbance, caused by thousands of people collecting crabs and digging up worms on the mudflats.

WWF Hong Kong is currently undertaking stop-gap measures at Shuangtaizi in an attempt to create breeding habitat for the species at the reserve as it will be some time before suitable salt marsh develops on the shore side of the sea wall. This winter invasive vegetation behind the sea wall was cleared to provide suitable breeding habitat for the species. In the medium term an island in a reservoir is being constructed adjacent to a large Saunders' Gull colony in the hope that this will provide a relatively safe breeding area for the species.

Decisions to reclaim parts of Shuangtaizi Reserve were taken at the highest governmental level and it will require a major effort to reverse their decision. Therefore we must do all we can to help save the Saunders' Gull breeding grounds. Concerned OBC members should write directly to the

Nature Reserve Management Office, Ministry of Forestry, Hepingli, Beijing 100714, China, expressing **politely** your concern and that of the international community. Draw attention to the rarity of Saunders' Gull, request that it be listed as a Category One protected species and ask the Ministry to ensure proper management of the reserves where it breeds. Please remember that international pressure can have an effect in China and we have a responsibility to do all we can to save this species from extinction.

Contributed by Geoff Carey.

Rediscovery of the Cebu Flowerpecker *Dicaeum quadricolor* confirmed

The island of Cebu in the central Philippines is considered an Endemic Bird Area by BirdLife International, with two species and twelve subspecies endemic to the island. Deforestation on Cebu early this century was particularly severe such that Rabor in 1959 surmised that the Cebu Flowerpecker *Dicaeum quadricolor* and eight subspecies endemic to Cebu had become extinct.

At a small fragment of primary forest in the Central Cebu National Park, Rob Timmins and Perla Magsalay observed birds which appeared to be Cebu Flowerpeckers, although the upper parts were not seen clearly (see *OBC Bull.* 15). The similar Bicoloured Flowerpecker *D. bicolor* has not been recorded from Cebu but is very similar with the species being separable with confidence only by the scarlet back of the male Cebu Flowerpecker.

On 27 December 1992, Guy Dutson, Tim Fisher and staff from the Philippine Wetland and Wildlife Conservation Foundation Inc. (PWWCFI) visited the same area of forest and saw one group of three Cebu Flowerpeckers comprising a male, female and juvenile. The birds were seen from all angles as close as 5 m away from the observers. The forest, which is already extremely small (about 4km long and less than 200 m wide) had been further degraded since February 1992. The population of the Cebu Flowerpecker must be very small and the species on the brink of extinction.

Contributed by Guy Dutson.

Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) held for the Galliformes

The Captive Breeding Specialist Group of IUCN's Species Survival Commission (SSC) has run more than 15 Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) workshops over the last few years, usually in collaboration with one or more of

the IUCN/SSC Taxon Specialist Groups. The aims of these meetings are first to review what is currently known about the status and threats to all taxa (species or sub-species) of animals or plants in a particular taxonomic group. As a result of this review process, each taxa is assigned a threat category, representing the risk of its future extinction. Finally specific conservation measures are recommended, wherever necessary.

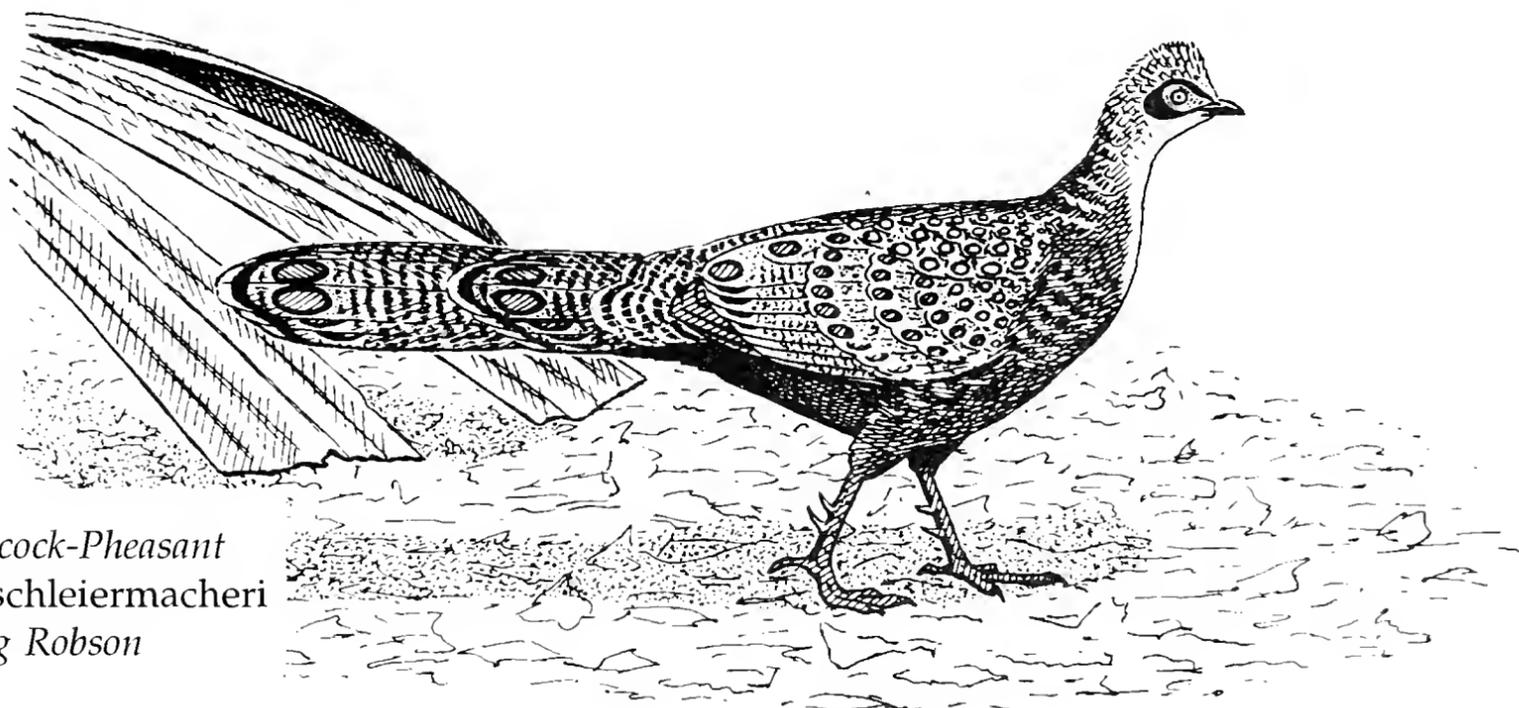
CAMP workshops on bird groups have recently included those on penguins, parrots and waterfowl. A workshop for most of the Galliformes was held at Antwerp Zoo in Belgium during 1 - 3 February 1993, with the CBSG, BirdLife International and the World Pheasant Association International (WPA) being the main participating organisations. The Galliformes groups are now covered by three Specialist Groups which operate under the supervision of WPA. These are Pheasants; Partridges, Quails, Francolins and Guineafowl; and Megapodes.

The meeting drew attention to the perilous status of a number of oriental galliformes such as

the three endemic Vietnamese *Lophura* pheasants (Imperial *L. imperialis*, Edwards's *L. edwardsi* and Vietnamese *L. hatinhensis*). A number of other taxa emerged as being in need of urgent conservation action, including *Arborophila charltonii atjenensis*, which is endemic to Sumatra and was estimated to have a world population of between only 10 to 100 birds. The Bornean Peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron schleiermachersi*, a species which was not in the checklist of globally threatened birds (*Birds to Watch*), was considered to be declining and with a population range of 100 to 1,000 individuals.

As part of the CAMP process a Population Viability Analysis (PVA) was held for the Edwards's Pheasant. This species may now be extinct in the wild but a large population exists in captivity. Lack of data on the breeding ecology of the species hindered the computer modelling process but it engendered a lively discussion amongst conservationists and aviculturalists on the merits of captive breeding for reintroduction!

Contributed by Jonathan Eames



Bornean Peacock-Pheasant
Polyplectron schleiermachersi
by Craig Robson

Update on Khao Sam Roi Yot

According to a statement on 10 November 1992 by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr Suthep Theuaksuban, the boundary of Khao Sam Roi Yot National Park must be marked clearly to avoid further encroachment onto the reserve. The minister believes politicians or influential people to be involved in the encroachment. Forestry

Department Deputy Director-General Bannalert Tachataku said the conflict was a perennial problem, and appealed for a team to investigate the encroachment which should be set up by the Prime Minister's office and include members from all authorities concerned. He added that legal action must be taken against those found encroaching into the reserve by senior

authorities rather than junior-ranking officials.

The Bangkok Bird Club is sure that the letters of condemnation from conservation bodies and individuals played a major role in the government's action; and the club wishes to express its thanks to all those who supported the cause.

Source: Bangkok Bird Club Bulletin No. 1 1993.

Nong Han Kumphawapi gazetted

On 22 August 1991 Nong Han Kumphawapi wetland in Thailand was gazetted as a non-hunting area within the protected areas network. The site encompasses the entire water body, but none of the wetland's margins receive protection, as is unfortunately the case with so many of the country's wetlands. *Source: Bangkok Bird Club Bulletin No. 1 1993.*

Cambodian logging ban widely ignored

A United Nations backed ban on logging in Cambodia is being frequently violated according to a report released in February by UN peacekeepers. Thailand and Japan are accepting most of the timber, but Viet Nam and Laos are also involved. The report states that since the beginning of the ban on 1 January 1993 through to 5 February the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) monitored 46 violations, involving at least 48,049 m³ of timber.

Cambodia's Supreme National Council imposed the ban on logging exports with backing from the United Nations Security Council as part of sanctions against Khmer Rouge guerillas, who are refusing to accept the UN sponsored peace plan for the country.

The Security Council directed peacekeeping forces to "take appropriate measures to secure the ban's implementation" but the Cambodian Government was responsible for most of the violations. However UNTAC currently does not staff checkpoints along the border with Thailand in the PDK (Khmer Rouge) controlled zone, so

unreported violations are almost certainly going on.

Since the ban has clearly not worked, with both guerillas and the government ignoring and circumventing it, UNTAC decided in March that a 30% ban on timber exports would replace the complete ban.

Based on REUTER reports

Eco tourism development at Kuala Gula

Kuala Gula in the Matang mangrove forests of peninsular Malaysia has been proposed by the head office of the State National Parks and Wildlife Service as a bird sanctuary. This would cover 10,711 ha of tidal mudflats and mangrove forests and would be promoted as an eco-tourism project. Their working paper outlining this plan is currently being studied by the State Economic Planning Unit. If approved, the project would spend M\$ 8 million on building bird observation towers, board walks, recreational, angling and boating facilities and other public amenities.

The mangrove forests at Kuala Gula provide stop-over sites for more than half a million birds migrating from Siberia to Australia. Importantly, the area is the last breeding refuge in peninsular Malaysia for the globally threatened Milky Stork *Mycteria cinerea*, and a wintering site for Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes*. Other species for which Kuala Gula is notable for include the Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*, and a breeding colony of over 30,000 Black-crowned Night-Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax*.

Threats of sanctions over rhino trade against China, Taiwan and South Korea

The 29th meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Washington DC in March named China, Taiwan, South Korea and Yemen as underground trading nations in rhino horn. A resolution was adopted urging the 118 CITES members to enforce a trade embargo against those countries unless they announce convincing measures to stop the rhino horn trade by September.

Earlier in the year South Korea announced that it intended to join CITES in June and a Korean delegation at the conference insisted that the country no longer deals in rhino horn, which was apparently corroborated by a recent inspection team. However, WWF officials have warned South Korea about the importation of tiger bones, which is also a violation of CITES. It seems that South Korea still want to join CITES but it will now be later than June.

Contributed by Michael Rank, based on BBC monitoring reports.

Pheasant reserves established in China

The Wulu Shan Reserve in south-western Shanxi covering 14,400 ha has been established for the Brown-eared Pheasant *Crossoptilon mantchuricum*, the Xinhua news agency reported in March. Several years ago a national nature reserve was set up at Panguangou in central Shanxi to protect the same species, and last year Tuoda Reserve was established in

Weining county in the south-western province of Guizhou to protect Reeve's Pheasant *Syrnaticus reevesii*.

Contributed by Michael Rank.

Mitsubishi's trade in tropical timber

Mitsubishi's logging and timber trading activities are having devastating effects on forests and forest people worldwide. Apparently Mitsubishi, together with its affiliated company Meiwa Trading, imported 1,253,752 m³ of tropical timber in 1990, making it Japan's second largest trader in tropical timbers. If timber import figures include imports in other countries by Mitsubishi-owned companies and timber exports to other countries besides Japan, Mitsubishi is the number one trader of tropical timber in the world.

Mitsubishi is trading widely in Asia: it is the number one exporter of plywood from Indonesia to Japan; it is behind extensive logging in Sarawak which is opposed by all native groups; and in the Philippines it has invested in the Agusan Wood Ind. which produces plywood.

The Rainforest Action Network is currently campaigning to draw attention to the damage Mitsubishi is causing. The campaign aims to increase consumer awareness and so decrease the sales of Mitsubishi products. For further information contact the Rainforest Action Network at: 450 Sansome, Suite 700, San Francisco, CA 94111, U.S.A. - phone (415) 398-4404.

Registration of protected species in Indonesia

More than 30,000 living and 51,757 stuffed and preserved

protected animals have been registered with the Ministry of Forestry following a 1991 decree stipulating that all protected animals had to be registered (see *OBC Bull.* 16). The birds registered include birds of paradise (296 alive and 29,286 stuffed) and Bali Myna *Leucopsar rothschildi* (367 alive and 3 stuffed).

Source: *Jakarta Post*, 4 Feb 1993

Endemic birds of Tanimbar alive and well

Tanimbar is one of the least known islands of Indonesia, and had received only one visit by an ornithologist since 1924 until OBC members Paul Jepson, Alan Lewis and Neil Bostock met on the island in November 1992. During a few days of birding all the island's eight endemic bird species were found without undue difficulty. Of the two thrushes considered threatened, Fawn-breasted Thrush *Zoothera machiki* was quite common in roadside scrub but Slaty-backed Thrush *Z. schistacea* was confined to forest. Following this initial visit the ICBP Indonesia Programme commenced three months of survey work on the island in March.

Source: *ICBP Indonesia Programme*

Citron-crested Cockatoo confiscated on Sumba

In September PHPA confiscated an illegal consignment of 26 Citron-crested Cockatoos *Cacatua sulphurea citrinocristata* at Waingapu airport on Sumba. The ICBP Indonesia Programme in conjunction with Papageien are assisting PHPA to return the birds to the wild. All of them have had

their primaries cut and an aviary has been constructed to house them until they grow new feathers. It is planned that the birds will be used to restock a forest area in east Sumba where the species has been virtually exterminated by trapping.

Source: *ICBP Indonesia Programme*

Bali Myna breeding news

During February, 18 Bali Mynas *Leucopsar rothschildi* fledged from nine nests in the Bali Barat National Park, which is an increase of two nests compared to last year's total. It is hoped that with this year's extended rainy season that some of them may raise second broods.

Source: *World Birdwatch/ICBP Indonesia Programme*

White-winged Duck in Sumatra

Last autumn the Biological Student Association of Padjadjaran University in Bandung (HIMBRIO) mounted its third White-winged Duck expedition in three years. This time they teamed up with the Bristol 'Spirit of Sumatra' expedition to explore unsurveyed areas in Sumatra. Encouragingly, four new sites supporting 15 birds were found.

Source: *HIMBRIO*

More Black-Necked Cranes found in South-west China

Han Liansheng of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Kunming has reported details of two wintering populations of the Black-necked Crane *Grus nigricollis*, both at about 2,700 m, in Huize county, Yunnan Province, southwest China. He

visited the area in December 1991 and counted 167 Black-necked and 67 Common Cranes *Grus grus* at Changhaizi reservoir and a further 120 Black-necked and over 400 Common Cranes at Daqiao reservoir, also in Huize county.

Both sites have been declared Black-necked Crane reserves and local officials have given this their full support. In particular, the 10,000 lead and zinc miners in the area have been told that they will lose their annual bonuses if they are caught poaching. The Black-necked Crane population crashed in the 1960s and 1970s but has increased markedly through stringent conservation measures. Han estimates that the current populations for Huize are 450 Black-necked Crane and 800 Common Crane.

Han also visited Dashanbao, about 200 km to the north, where about 400 Black-necked Cranes were discovered in December 1988 at an elevation of 3,000 m (see *OBC Bull.* 12). He found that the cranes were not especially wary of humans, indicating that they are not

Table 1. Summary of some population estimates of Black-necked Crane from China. Data compiled by Michael Rank from various Chinese and western sources

Province	County/Site	Pop. estimate	Date
WINTER			
Yunnan	Huize	450	Dec 1991
	Dashanboa	500	Dec 1991
	NE Yunnan inc. Dashanbao	700	
	Zhongdian - Napa Hai	120	c. 1987
	Ninglang - Lugu Hu	30-54	1983-84
Guizhou	Cao Hai	305	Spring 1984
	Cao Hai	175	Jan-Feb 1990
Tibet	Various sites	c. 600	Jan 1990
SUMMER			
Sichuan	Zoige [Ruergai]	500-700	May-June 1991
	n. Hongyuan	50-100	May-June 1991
	Maqu - Bai He River	50-100	May-June 1991
	s. Hongyuan	a few	May-June 1991
Qinghai	Longbaotan	19	1986
	Longbaotan	60	Summer 1991

easily disturbed in spite of local people being extremely poor, and sometimes offered large rewards for shooting the birds. Han and his colleagues counted 146 Black-necked Cranes in a single flock and put the total Dashanbao population at about 500. Quoting the International

Crane Foundation (ICF) and several additional Chinese studies (Table 1), he judges the total world population of Black-necked Crane to be about 4,025. Contributed by Michael Rank based on *Da Ziran [Nature]* 1992.4



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Heronries in the Delhi region of India

In this article the author documents the current status and conservation problems of four heronries in the Delhi region.

India's capital is surprisingly rich ornithologically and notable for, among other species, the number of pelicans and cormorants (*peliconiformes*) Herons, egrets, storks, ibises and spoonbills (*ciconiiformes*) to be found there. In Delhi itself and in the area within a 50 km radius of the city, no less than 36 breeding species are represented, but as throughout all their ranges there is considerable concern over population decreases.

Wetland loss, pollution, urbanisation and intensification of agriculture have combined to cause a decline in waterbird numbers in the Delhi area. These wetland birds are generally at the top of the aquatic food chains and are therefore particularly vulnerable to pesticide residues in the environment. They are also sensitive to disturbance during the breeding season at the 'heronries' or mixed breeding colonies.

Although no comprehensive study has been undertaken on the status of heronries in the Delhi region, Ganguli¹ recorded two at Roshanara Gardens and Delhi Zoo. We noted two more in the Rohtak and Sonipat Districts of Haryana state during field surveys in 1989-1992. Interestingly, all four heronries are located in the immediate vicinity of the Western Yamuna Canal or River Yamuna (Figure 1). This article discusses the current status of these heronries and the conservation problems associated with them.

Delhi Zoo

This beautiful park is spread over 87 ha on the western bank of the River Yamuna. The extensive network of ponds and canals provide refuge to wintering waterfowl and serve as an excellent breeding ground for colonial waterbirds⁵. Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala*, Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*, Little Cormorant *P. niger*, Indian Pond-Heron *Ardeola grayii*, Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, Intermediate Egret *Mesophoyx intermedia* and Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* have been regularly nesting there since 1960 on mesquite trees *Prosopis juliflora* on islands in the zoo ponds.

During our study period the numbers of Painted Storks were particularly impressive with 325 to 550 congregating at the beginning of their nesting season in September.

Wild Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* have been observed on several occasions within the zoo premises. Some pinioned females, which are kept as zoo exhibits in the ponds, bred with the males from the wild representing the first breeding record of the species for the Delhi region. The females built their nests on the ground (T. Naina, pers. comm.).

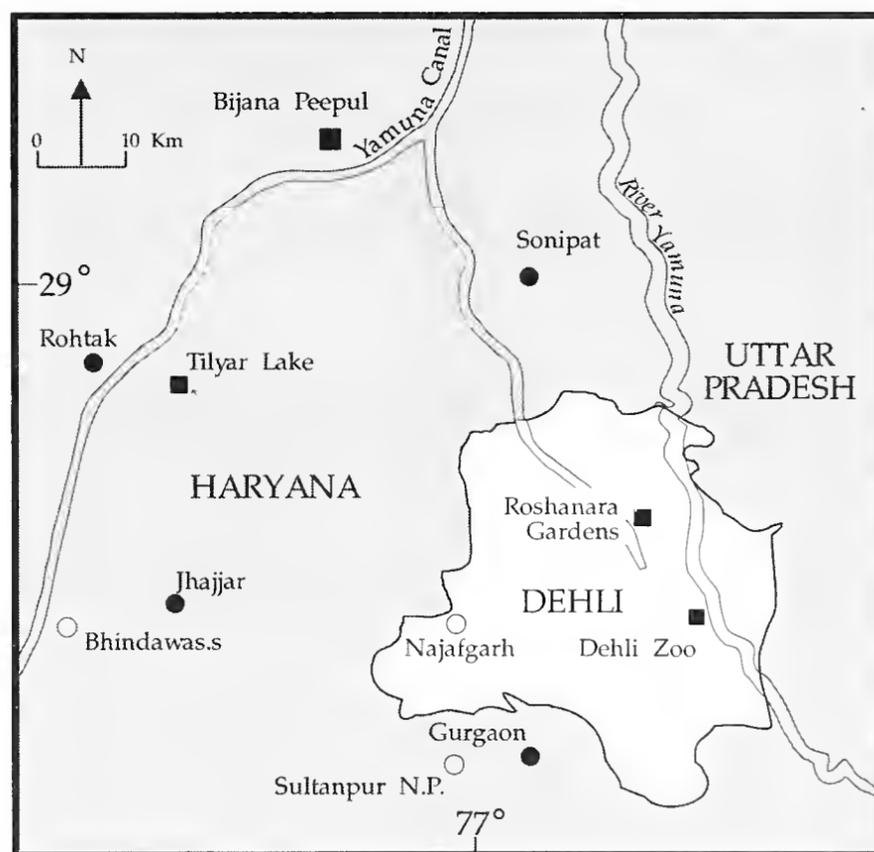


Figure 1. The location of heronries in and around Delhi, India.

Tilyar Lake

This is a popular tourist spot about 50 km from Delhi in the Rohtak District of Haryana. The large artificial lake is located approximately 1 km to the east of the Western Yamuna Canal. It has three islands planted with various ornamental trees and for several years colonial waterbirds have been nesting there. Breeding birds sighted during visits in August-September 1992 were White Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* (at least 23 nests), Indian Cormorant (12 nests), Intermediate Egret (5 nests), Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster* (3 nests),

Little Egret, Indian Pond-Heron and Black-crowned Night-Heron. There does not appear to be any immediate threat to the nesting birds, but visiting tourists use paddle boats in the lake and may sometimes go very close to the nests.



Cattle Egret Bubulcus ibis

Bijana Peepul

This important, hitherto unknown, heronry was discovered during our recent field survey in Sonipat district⁶. The heronry is in an enormous Peepul tree *Ficus religiosa*, near the Western Yamuna Canal and Bijana village which is about 17 km from Sonipat. We saw about 100 Painted Storks nesting on the crown of this tree during our visits in 1992. Some Indian Cormorants, Little Egret and White Ibis were also seen, but were not nesting.

The Peepul tree is privately-owned and Painted Storks and reportedly other waterbird species have been nesting there for around fifty years.

Roshanara Gardens

These historic gardens are located in Delhi, near the Delhi sub-branch of the Western Yamuna Canal, and were noted as a significant breeding site for Little Cormorant, Oriental Darter, Cattle Egret, Intermediate Egret, Little Egret and Black-crowned Night-Heron¹. These birds nested on some old trees on a large circular island in the middle of the lake, the last report of breeding waterbirds being in 1982. I found the lake dried up and the trees devoid of any nests on my visits in 1992, but a surprisingly large number of bat roosts were seen on the trees.

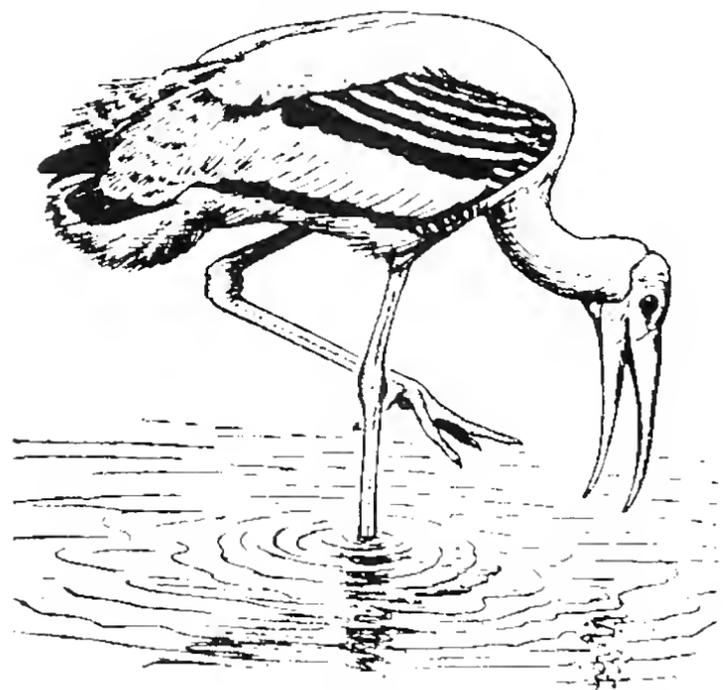
The future for Delhi's waterbird colonies

Of the four heronries, Delhi Zoo is the largest and

ornithologically most diverse, but although it is protected the nesting birds are not immune to disturbance from the high number of visitors passing through the zoo. For instance, the Painted Storks did not breed successfully in 1989 and it is suspected that this was due to human disturbance⁴.

For species such as Painted Stork and White Ibis the feeding grounds lie outside the zoo premises in wetlands associated with the river Yamuna. This river is polluted by sewage and domestic and industrial discharge. Feeding areas are being lost due to increasing encroachment upon the river banks by the burgeoning human population. While environmental bodies in Delhi need to campaign for a relatively cleaner river, the zoo authorities must regularly monitor the heronry population in the zoo.

The heronries at Tilyar Lake appear to be safe for the time being. Likewise, the Peepul tree is a well protected tree in India due to its considerable religious importance and so the Bijana Peepul heronry should be safe. But very often in India when socio-economic issues are involved, conservation takes a back seat and the axe is not spared. For instance, in the famous Kokre Bellur Pelican colony in Karnataka, a large tree which was the traditional nesting site for Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis* was cut down in 1985 following a dispute over ownership³. Therefore, it would be wise on the part of the local authorities to take steps to safeguard the Tilyar Lake heronry. This could be carried out by the Sonipat District wildlife department taking over the tree and giving it 'protected' status.



Painted Stork Mycteria leucocephala

The decline of the Roshanara Garden heronry is unfortunate, but it may be possible to revive this historical breeding ground by ensuring regular flooding of the lake and experimenting with 'decoys' to induce the colonial waterbirds to nest. However, monitoring the heronries that are currently active, and ensuring that feeding grounds for the waterbirds are maintained in the region are more important conservation measures.

This work is a first step towards compiling a full picture of heronries in the Delhi region. Quite possibly there are more heronries in this area, which were not covered in this initial study, and a more detailed survey is underway. Meanwhile, it is hoped that this work will stimulate action among ornithologists and conservationists and encourage those who have additional information to send it to the author.

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Sound recording of Oriental birds

Recording bird vocalisations in tropical regions is increasing in popularity as equipment becomes more portable and affordable to the amateur birder. In this article Richard Ranft gives advice on the equipment to buy and shows the important contribution that amateur birders can make to increasing our knowledge of bird vocalizations through depositing recordings in sound libraries. An appendix is given on Oriental birds for which, as far as is known, no recordings exist.

The importance of tape recordings of bird vocalisations is increasingly being recognised by ornithologists. Firstly, recordings are invaluable in field work, both to locate birds by their voices and then to identify them. Indeed, they are now an important tool on many field surveys⁶. Secondly, the songs and some calls of birds give important clues to their relationships to other closely related species, and therefore are important in taxonomic studies. A recent example is the discovery of a new species of wren-babbler in Nepal by its voice⁵. Thirdly, study of bird sounds is an important branch in ethology, for example in studies of song learning. Bird vocalisations can easily be recorded for later analysis in an objective way that makes them invaluable for such scientific studies. Lastly, recordings of high quality may be used in soundtracks for natural history films and in audio publications. On a recently-released album 'Lifesong' which promotes the work of BirdLife International, the voices of birds are used as a plea for their own conservation.

Making your own recordings

Making good recordings requires the use of high-quality equipment, a little practice and a lot of patience. All too often, birders are using the cheapest available cassette recorders and do not use enough tape. The results are badly distorted recordings that are frequently too brief to be of use. Most recordists now use portable cassette recorders as these are convenient and lightweight. Unfortunately, nearly all the models available incorporate an automatic circuit that controls the strength of the signal that is recorded onto the tape, and because they are designed to work with music and human speech they do not satisfactorily record bird sounds. So the recorders to look for should have manual recording level controls, which if used with care will result in far better quality recordings. Such a facility is available only on the most expensive cassette recorders, such as the

Marantz CP430 and Sony WMD6C 'Professional' Walkman, which cost over £250 (US \$375). If you are not able to obtain the best recorders, then while cheaper Walkman-style recorders will give only low quality recordings, a recording of an unusual call or of a rare bird made on inferior quality equipment is better than none.



Oriental Magpie-Robin Copsychus albospectularis.
The beautiful song of this species is a common sound throughout much of southern and South-East Asia.

The choice of microphone is important. Never use the built-in microphones fitted on some of the cheaper cassette recorders - all your recordings will have the sound of the tape recorder motor and the microphones are simply not directional enough. A separate microphone with a suitable lead is necessary but an ordinary microphone alone will not pick up the signal of sufficient strength from a bird unless it is a few metres from the microphone. To record birds at a distance, the choice is between a parabolic reflector with a conventional mike held at its focal point or a highly-directional 'gun' microphone. The reflector makes a distant bird sound as if it was recorded close up. An excellent fibreglass reflector costing only £40 (US \$60) is available in the U.K. and together with a good-



Figure 1. Sound recording using professional equipment. Fortunately, not all sound recording equipment is this cumbersome! (Photo: Tim Smith/Guzelian)

quality dynamic or electret microphone will produce excellent results. The main disadvantage is that this sort of parabola is rather cumbersome to use in the field. Models are available that are lighter in weight and can be folded up, but they are expensive.

Gun microphones are not as directional as a parabola and do not give such a strong signal but are popular with recordists travelling in the tropics because they are more compact. The cheapest is made by Audio-Technica (model AT9300) and costs around £75 (US \$112), but is rather hissy. Better quality gun mikes by Sennheiser sell for around £250 (US \$375).

With gun mikes, it is essential that a shock-mount with handle attached is used to support the mike and insulate it from handling noise. A wind-cover is also necessary in open habitats but not usually in forests. The use of headphones allows you to aim your microphone better but some recordists find them inconvenient. A popular combination of recording equipment is the Sony Professional Walkman with a Sennheiser ME80, costing in total around £500 (US \$750).

Once you have obtained the necessary equipment and are ready to start recording it is important to consider that, while the aim of your recording

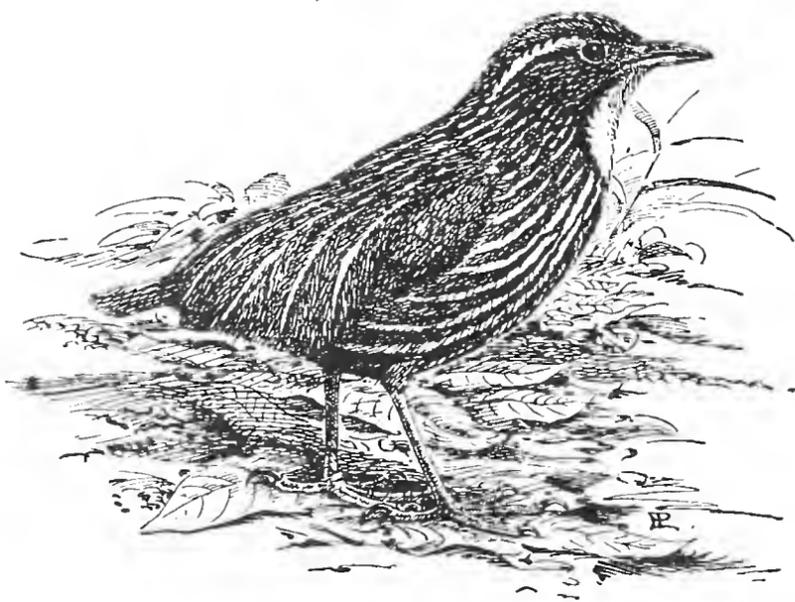
might be for your own personal use, if they are of sufficient quality and properly documented, others may benefit from them. So at the end of each recording you should announce on to the tape the name of the bird recorded (or a description if not identified at the time), the time of day, any behavioural observations and the locality. Labelling of recordings in this way, along with other data (equipment used, dates, etc) is essential and it is recommended that your tapes, or copies of them, are deposited in a sound archive committed to their long-term preservation. The two largest bioacoustic archives, the Library of Natural Sounds at Cornell University in the USA, and the British Library of Wildlife Sounds at the National Sound Archive in London, welcome offers of new material.

The British Library of Wildlife Sounds (BLOWS)

BLOWS has one of the most comprehensive collections of bird sounds in the world. About 6,000 species, two-thirds of the world's avifauna, are represented. The Oriental Region is well covered, particularly India and peninsular Malaysia. There are also collections from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, Taiwan, the Philippines, Borneo, Sumatra, Java and several of the other Indonesian islands. The collection includes both unpublished

recordings and published records and cassettes (for the latter, lists have been published by Boswall^{1,2}).

Any of the recordings in BLOWS may be listened to by appointment at the National Sound Archive. Copies of recordings may be supplied to order on cassette for private use. Copies may also be supplied on other formats, including DAT and custom-made CDs, although these are currently rather expensive. A ready-made compilation of Oriental bird sounds published by BLOWS is the Field Guide to South-East Asian Bird Songs' (two cassettes, 138 species, available direct from BLOWS), but advice can be given on other publications that are available which may be useful to OBC members. As published recordings are copied in large numbers, they are of cheaper quality than custom-made cassettes direct from a sound archive.



Streaked Wren-Babbler *Ptilocichla mindanensis*.
Apparently, no recordings exist for this species
endemic to the Philippine islands of Samar, Leyte,
Bohol, Mindanao and Basilan.

BLOWS also has an information service on any aspects of wildlife sounds, including recording equipment, techniques and the availability of recordings worldwide. Indeed, BLOWS can give information on sources of 1,300 extra species that are not held in its collections using its computer-based world listing.

Contributions to the collections are always welcome. The value of an organisation like BLOWS is that many small collections privately held by nu-

merous recordists are pooled together to form a comprehensive collection, invaluable for comparative studies. Recordings of even the commonest species in the Oriental Region are often just as useful as recordings of unusual calls or of rare species. A large number of samples of a widely-distributed species can, for example, be used to study geographical variation over its range. So please keep in mind that it is not just the rare and endemic bird recordings that are useful.

There are, nevertheless, areas from which BLOWS has barely any material and where there is a particular need, including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Pakistan, Burma, Viet Nam and Laos, Cambodia and parts of the Philippines, as well as many of the rarely visited Indonesian islands in the Moluccas and Lesser Sundas. A list in the appendix shows species that, according to data held in BLOWS, have never been taped.

Contributors to BLOWS are entitled to keep the copyright of their recordings and to stipulate the use to be made of them. Recordings are not used for any commercial projects without first seeking the contributor's permission. Contributors may also be entitled to copies of recordings from BLOWS in exchange for their own. Please enquire at BLOWS for further details.

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Appendix: Provisional list of unrecorded oriental birds

A list of unrecorded birds of South-East Asia was published by Couzens *et al.*⁴, and many of the gaps have been filled since then. This list covers the whole Oriental Region and is based on catalogues stored in BLOWS of other archives and private collections.

Of a total of about 1,800 species worldwide for which, to my knowledge, there are no recordings, 469 species (210 non-passerines and 259 passerines) occur in the Oriental Region.

Not surprisingly, many of these are rare: in fact, 238 species (50%) are listed as threatened by Collar and Andrew³. Others are highly localised or not very vocal, but I hope that OBC members will let me know about recordings of some of the species on the list.

MOLUCCAN SCRUBFOWL	<i>Megapodius wallacei</i>	WALLACE'S HANGING-PARROT	<i>L. flosculus</i>
TIBETAN SNOWCOCK	<i>Tetraogallus tibetanus</i>	INTERMEDIATE PARAKEET	<i>Psittacula intermedia</i>
CHESTNUT-THROATED PARTRIDGE	<i>Tetraophasis obscurus</i>	NICOBAR PARAKEET	<i>P. caniceps</i>
BUFF-THROATED PARTRIDGE	<i>T. szechenyii</i>	WATERFALL SWIFT	<i>Hydrochous gigas</i>
ROCK BUSH-QUAIL	<i>Perdica argooudah</i>	PYGMY SWIFTLET	<i>Collocalia troglodytes</i>
MANIPUR BUSH-QUAIL	<i>P. manipurensis</i>	INDIAN SWIFTLET	<i>C. uuicolor</i>
WHITE-CHEEKED PARTRIDGE	<i>Arborophila atrogularis</i>	WHITEHEAD'S SWIFTLET	<i>C. whiteheadi</i>
CHESTNUT-BREASTED PARTRIDGE	<i>A. mandellii</i>	PHILIPPINE NEEDLETAIL	<i>Mearnsia picina</i>
SICHUAN PARTRIDGE	<i>A. rufipectus</i>	WHITE-RUMPED SPINETAIL	<i>Zoonavena sylvatica</i>
WHITE-NECKLACED PARTRIDGE	<i>A. gingica</i>	SILVER-RUMPED SPINETAIL	<i>Rhaphidura leucopygialis</i>
ORANGE-NECKED PARTRIDGE	<i>A. davidi</i>	BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>
CHESTNUT-HEADED PARTRIDGE	<i>A. cambodiana</i>	PURPLE NEEDLETAIL	<i>H. celebensis</i>
HAINAN PARTRIDGE	<i>A. ardens</i>	DARK-RUMPED SWIFT	<i>Apus acuticauda</i>
SCALY-BREASTED PARTRIDGE	<i>A. chloropus</i>	MINAHASSA MASKED-OWL	<i>Tyto inexpectata</i>
ANNAM PARTRIDGE	<i>A. merlini</i>	TALIABU MASKED-OWL	<i>T. nigrobrunnea</i>
MOUNTAIN BAMBOO-PARTRIDGE	<i>Bambusicola fytclui</i>	ANDAMAN SCOPS-OWL	<i>Otus balli</i>
PAINTED SPURFOWL	<i>Galloperdix lunulata</i>	RAJAH SCOPS-OWL	<i>O. brookii</i>
BLYTH'S TRAGOPAN	<i>Tragopan blythii</i>	TAWNY FISH-OWL	<i>Ketupa flavipes</i>
SCLATER'S MONAL	<i>Lophophorus sclateri</i>	FOREST OWLET	<i>Athene blewitti</i>
CHINESE MONAL	<i>L. lluytsii</i>	ANDAMAN HAWK-OWL	<i>Ninox affinis</i>
IMPERIAL PHEASANT	<i>Lophura imperialis</i>	PHILIPPINE HAWK-OWL	<i>N. philippensis</i>
EDWARDS'S PHEASANT	<i>L. edwardsi</i>	DULIT FROGMOUTH	<i>Batrachostomus harterti</i>
SALVADORI'S PHEASANT	<i>L. inornata</i>	SHORT-TAILED FROGMOUTH	<i>B. poliophilus</i>
CRESTLESS FIREBACK	<i>L. erythrophthalma</i>	SATANIC EARED-NIGHTJAR	<i>Eurostopodus diabolicus</i>
ELLIOT'S PHEASANT	<i>Syrnaticus ellioti</i>	BONAPARTE'S NIGHTJAR	<i>Caprimulgus concretus</i>
HUME'S PHEASANT	<i>S. humiae</i>	SNOW PIGEON	<i>Columba leucouota</i>
SCALY-SIDED MERGANSER	<i>Mergus squamatus</i>	SPECKLED WOOD-PIGEON	<i>C. hodgsonii</i>
SPOTTED BUTTONQUAIL	<i>Turnix ocellata</i>	PALE-CAPPED PIGEON	<i>C. punicea</i>
WORCESTER'S BUTTONQUAIL	<i>T. worcesteri</i>	SILVERY WOOD-PIGEON	<i>C. argentina</i>
WHITE-BROWED PICULET	<i>Sasia ochracea</i>	ANDAMAN WOOD-PIGEON	<i>C. palunboides</i>
BROWN-FRONTED WOODPECKER	<i>Deudrocopos auriceps</i>	METALLIC PIGEON	<i>C. vitiensis</i>
SIND WOODPECKER	<i>D. assimilis</i>	ANDAMAN CUCKOO-DOVE	<i>Macropygia rufipeunis</i>
BLACK-HEADED WOODPECKER	<i>Picus erythropygius</i>	DUSKY CUCKOO-DOVE	<i>M. magna</i>
NARCONDAM HORNBILL	<i>Aceros narcondami</i>	SLATY CUCKOO-DOVE	<i>Turacoena modesta</i>
SUMBA HORNBILL	<i>A. everetti</i>	MINDORO BLEEDING-HEART	<i>Gallicolumba plateuae</i>
WARD'S TROGON	<i>Harpactes wardi</i>	NEGROS BLEEDING-HEART	<i>G. keayi</i>
BLYTH'S KINGFISHER	<i>Alcedo hercules</i>	MINDANAO BLEEDING-HEART	<i>G. criniger</i>
DWARF RIVER KINGFISHER	<i>A. cyanopecta</i>	SULU BLEEDING-HEART	<i>G. menagei</i>
SILVERY KINGFISHER	<i>A. argentata</i>	SULAWESI GROUND-DOVE	<i>G. tristigmata</i>
SMALL BLUE KINGFISHER	<i>A. coeruleus</i>	WETAR GROUND-DOVE	<i>G. hoedtii</i>
VARIABLE KINGFISHER	<i>Ceyx lepidus</i>	CINNAMON-HEADED GREEN-PIGEON	<i>Treron fulvicollis</i>
PHILIPPINE KINGFISHER	<i>C. melanurus</i>	FLORES GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. floris</i>
JAVAN KINGFISHER	<i>Halcyon cyanoventris</i>	SUMBA GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. teysmannii</i>
RUFIOUS-LORED KINGFISHER	<i>Todirhamphus winchelli</i>	TIMOR GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. psittacea</i>
BLUE-AND-WHITE KINGFISHER	<i>T. diops</i>	PIN-TAILED GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. apicauda</i>
LAZULI KINGFISHER	<i>T. lazuli</i>	SUMATRAN GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. oxyura</i>
SOMBRE KINGFISHER	<i>T. funebris</i>	YELLOW-VENTED GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. seimundi</i>
CINNAMON-BACKED KINGFISHER	<i>T. australasia</i>	WEDGE-TAILED GREEN-PIGEON	<i>T. sphenura</i>
SCALY KINGFISHER	<i>Actenoides princeps</i>	BLACK-BACKED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>Ptilinopus ciuctus</i>
MOLUCCAN CUCKOO	<i>Cacomantis heinrichi</i>	RED-NAPED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. dolertyi</i>
PIED BRONZE-CUCKOO	<i>Chrysococcyx crassirostris</i>	JAMBU FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. jambu</i>
ASIAN EMERALD CUCKOO	<i>C. maculatus</i>	SCARLET-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. bernsteini</i>
CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA	<i>Phaenicophaeus sumatranus</i>	BLUE-CAPPED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. mouacha</i>
SIRKEER MALKOHA	<i>P. leschenaultii</i>	CLARET-BREASTED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. viridis</i>
SUNDA GROUND-CUCKOO	<i>Carpococcyx radiceus</i>	GREY-HEADED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. hyogastra</i>
BLACK-HOODED COUCAL	<i>Centropus steerii</i>	CARUNCULATED FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. granulifrons</i>
SUNDA COUCAL	<i>C. nigrorufus</i>	NEGROS FRUIT-DOVE	<i>P. arcanus</i>
RED-AND-BLUE LORY	<i>Eos histrio</i>	MINDORO IMPERIAL PIGEON	<i>Ducula mindorensis</i>
BLUE-EARED LORY	<i>E. semilarvata</i>	GREY-HEADED IMPERIAL PIGEON	<i>D. radiata</i>
OLIVE-HEADED LORIKEET	<i>Trichoglossus euteles</i>	SPOTTED IMPERIAL PIGEON	<i>D. carola</i>
IRIS LORIKEET	<i>Psittuteles iris</i>	PINK-HEADED IMPERIAL PIGEON	<i>D. rosacea</i>
PURPLE-NAPED LORY	<i>Lorius domicella</i>	TIMOR IMPERIAL PIGEON	<i>D. cineracea</i>
BLUE-FRONTED LORIKEET	<i>Charmosyna toxopei</i>	PIED IMPERIAL PIGEON	<i>D. bicolor</i>
RED-FLANKED LORIKEET	<i>C. placentis</i>	SOMBRE PIGEON	<i>Cryptophaps poecilorrhoa</i>
GUALABERO	<i>Bolbopsittacus lunulatus</i>	BARE-EYED MOUNTAIN-PIGEON	<i>Gymnophaps albertisii</i>
YELLOWISH-BREASTED RACQUET-TAIL	<i>Prioniturus flavicans</i>	LONG-TAILED MOUNTAIN-PIGEON	<i>G. mada</i>
BLACK-LORED PARROT	<i>Taenygnathus gramineus</i>	INDIAN BUSTARD	<i>Ardeotis nigriceps</i>
MOLUCCAN KING-PARROT	<i>Alisterus amboiuensis</i>	HOUBARA BUSTARD	<i>Chlamydotis undulata</i>
RED-BILLED HANGING-PARROT	<i>Loriculus exilis</i>	BENGAL FLORICAN	<i>Eupodotis bengalensis</i>
YELLOW-THROATED HANGING-PARROT	<i>L. pusillus</i>	LESSER FLORICAN	<i>E. indica</i>

MASKED FINFOOT	<i>Heliopais personata</i>	ISABELA ORIOLE	<i>O. isabellae</i>
ANDAMAN CRAKE	<i>Rallina canningi</i>	BLACK ORIOLE	<i>O. hosii</i>
SLATY-BREASTED RAIL	<i>Gallirallus striatus</i>	BURU CUCKOO-SHRIKE	<i>Coracina fortis</i>
BALD-FACED RAIL	<i>Gymnocrex rosenbergii</i>	HALMAHERA CUCKOO-SHRIKE	<i>C. parvula</i>
BARE-EYED RAIL	<i>G. plumbeiventris</i>	SUMBA CICADABIRD	<i>C. dohertyi</i>
BROWN CRAKE	<i>Amaurornis akool</i>	MCGREGOR'S CUCKOO-SHRIKE	<i>C. mcgregori</i>
INVISIBLE RAIL	<i>Habroptila wallacii</i>	WHITE-WINGED CUCKOO-SHRIKE	<i>C. ostenta</i>
PURPLE SWAMPHEN	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	RUFIOUS-BELLIED TRILLER	<i>Lalage aurea</i>
SULAWESI WOODCOCK	<i>Scolopax celebensis</i>	FLORES MINIVET	<i>Pericrocotus lansbergei</i>
MOLUCCAN WOODCOCK	<i>S. rochussenii</i>	TAWNY-BACKED FANTAIL	<i>Rhipidura superflua</i>
SOLITARY SNIPE	<i>Gallinago solitaria</i>	STREAKY-BREASTED FANTAIL	<i>R. dedemi</i>
MALAYSIAN PLOVER	<i>Charadrius peronii</i>	SHORT-CRESTED MONARCH	<i>Hypothymis helenae</i>
JERDON'S COURSER	<i>Rhinoptilus bitorquatus</i>	CELESTIAL MONARCH	<i>H. coelestis</i>
INDIAN COURSER	<i>Cursorius coromandelicus</i>	CERULEAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER	<i>Eutrichomyias rowleyi</i>
SMALL PRATINCOLE	<i>Glareola lactea</i>	BLACK-BIBBED MONARCH	<i>Monarcha mundus</i>
INDIAN SKIMMER	<i>Rynchops albicollis</i>	WHITE-TAILED MONARCH	<i>M. leucurus</i>
SAUNDERS'S GULL	<i>Larus saundersi</i>	SHINY WHISTLING-THRUSH	<i>Myiophonus melanurus</i>
LONG-BILLED VULTURE	<i>Gyps indicus</i>	SLATY-BACKED THRUSH	<i>Zoothera schistacea</i>
HIMALAYAN GRIFFON	<i>G. himalayensis</i>	MOLUCCAN THRUSH	<i>Z. dumasi</i>
RED-HEADED VULTURE	<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>	ASHY THRUSH	<i>Z. cinerea</i>
ANDAMAN SERPENT EAGLE	<i>Spilornis elgini</i>	ORANGE-BANDED THRUSH	<i>Z. peronii</i>
SPOTTED HARRIER	<i>Circus assimilis</i>	EVERETT'S THRUSH	<i>Z. everetti</i>
SULAWESI GOSHAWK	<i>Accipiter griseiceps</i>	SPOT-WINGED THRUSH	<i>Z. spiloptera</i>
NICOBAR SPARROWHAWK	<i>A. butleri</i>	SUNDA THRUSH	<i>Z. andromedae</i>
CHINESE GOSHAWK	<i>A. soloensis</i>	LONG-TAILED THRUSH	<i>Z. dixonii</i>
GREY GOSHAWK	<i>A. novaehollandiae</i>	SULAWESI THRUSH	<i>Cataponera turdoides</i>
MOLUCCAN GOSHAWK	<i>A. henicogrammus</i>	GREY-SIDED THRUSH	<i>Turdus feae</i>
RUFIOUS-NECKED SPARROWHAWK	<i>A. erythrauchen</i>	RUSTY-BELLIED SHORTWING	<i>Brachypteryx hyperythra</i>
MEYER'S GOSHAWK	<i>A. meyerianus</i>	WHITE-BELLIED SHORTWING	<i>B. major</i>
RUFIOUS-WINGED BUZZARD	<i>Butastur liventer</i>	STREAKY-BREASTED	<i>Rhinomyias addita</i>
GURNEY'S EAGLE	<i>Aquila gurneyi</i>	JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER	
WHITE-RUMPED FALCON	<i>Polihierax insignis</i>	RUSSET-BACKED	<i>R. oscillans</i>
COLLARED FALCONET	<i>Microhierax caerulescens</i>	JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER	
WHITE-FRONTED FALCONET	<i>M. latifrons</i>	BROWN-CHESTED	<i>R. brunneata</i>
PIED FALCONET	<i>M. melanoleucus</i>	JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER	
LAGGAR FALCON	<i>Falco jugger</i>	EYEBROWED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER	<i>R. gularis</i>
ABBOTT'S BOOBY	<i>Papasula abbotti</i>	SUMBA FLYCATCHER	<i>Muscicapa segregata</i>
LITTLE CORMORANT	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	BROWN-BREASTED FLYCATCHER	<i>M. muttui</i>
RED-FACED CORMORANT	<i>P. urile</i>	SLATY-BACKED FLYCATCHER	<i>Ficedula hodgsonii</i>
CHINESE EGRET	<i>Egretta eulophotes</i>	RUFIOUS-THROATED FLYCATCHER	<i>F. rufigula</i>
WHITE-BELLIED HERON	<i>Ardea insignis</i>	CINNAMON-CHESTED FLYCATCHER	<i>F. buruensis</i>
GREAT-BILLED HERON	<i>A. sumatrana</i>	DAMAR FLYCATCHER	<i>F. henrici</i>
CHINESE POND-HERON	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>	SUMBA FLYCATCHER	<i>F. harterti</i>
JAVAN POND-HERON	<i>A. speciosa</i>	LOMPOBATTANG FLYCATCHER	<i>F. bonthaina</i>
WHITE-EARED NIGHT-HERON	<i>Gorsachius magnificus</i>	FUJIAN NILTAVA	<i>Niltava davidi</i>
SCHRENCK'S BITTERN	<i>Ixobrychus eurhythmus</i>	MATINAN FLYCATCHER	<i>Cyornis sanfordi</i>
BLACK BITTERN	<i>I. flavicollis</i>	TIMOR BLUE-FLYCATCHER	<i>C. hyacinthinus</i>
GIANT IBIS	<i>Pseudibis gigantea</i>	RUECK'S BLUE-FLYCATCHER	<i>C. ruckii</i>
BLACK-FACED SPOONBILL	<i>Platalea minor</i>	BLUE-BREASTED FLYCATCHER	<i>C. herioti</i>
MILKY STORK	<i>Mycteria cinerea</i>	BLACK-THROATED BLUE ROBIN	<i>Luscinia obscura</i>
GREATER ADJUTANT	<i>Leptoptilos dubius</i>	FIRETHROAT	<i>L. pectardens</i>
BLUE-RUMPED PITTA	<i>Pitta soror</i>	RUFIOUS-BREASTED BUSH-ROBIN	<i>Tarsiger hyperythrus</i>
SCHNEIDER'S PITTA	<i>P. schneideri</i>	HODGSON'S REDSTART	<i>Phoenicurus hodgsoni</i>
BAR-BELLIED PITTA	<i>P. elliotii</i>	WHITE-THROATED REDSTART	<i>P. schisticeps</i>
WHISKERED PITTA	<i>P. kochi</i>	LUZON WATER-REDSTART	<i>Rhyacornis bicolor</i>
WATTLED BROADBILL	<i>Eurylaimus steerii</i>	GRANDALA	<i>Grandala coelicolor</i>
HOSE'S BROADBILL	<i>Calyptomena hosii</i>	SUNDA FORKTAIL	<i>Enicurus velatus</i>
DRAB MYZOMELA	<i>Myzomela blasii</i>	PURPLE COCHOA	<i>Cochoa purpurea</i>
CRIMSON-HOODED MYZOMELA	<i>M. kuehni</i>	WHITE-BROWED BUSHCHAT	<i>Saxicola macrorhyncha</i>
RED-RUMPED MYZOMELA	<i>M. vulnerata</i>	WHITE-TAILED STONECHAT	<i>S. leucura</i>
OLIVE HONEYEATER	<i>Lichmera argentauris</i>	JERDON'S BUSHCHAT	<i>S. jerdoni</i>
BURU HONEYEATER	<i>L. deningeri</i>	WHITE-BELLIED BUSHCHAT	<i>S. gutturalis</i>
SERAM HONEYEATER	<i>L. monticola</i>	HOODED WHEATEAR	<i>Oenanthe monacha</i>
YELLOW-EARED HONEYEATER	<i>L. flavicans</i>	INDIAN CHAT	<i>Cercomela fusca</i>
BLACK-CHESTED HONEYEATER	<i>L. notabilis</i>	WHITE-HEADED STARLING	<i>Sturnus erythropygus</i>
STREAKY-BREASTED HONEYEATER	<i>Meliphaga reticulata</i>	BANK MYNA	<i>Acridotheres ginginianus</i>
DUSKY FRIARBIRD	<i>Philemon fuscicapillus</i>	WHITE-VENTED MYNA	<i>A. grandis</i>
BLUE-MASKED LEAFBIRD	<i>Chloropsis venusta</i>	GOLDEN-CRESTED MYNA	<i>Ampeliceps coronatus</i>
WHITE-WINGED MAGPIE	<i>Urocissa whiteheadi</i>	LONG-CRESTED MYNA	<i>Basilornis corythaix</i>
COLLARED TREEPIE	<i>Dendrocitta frontalis</i>	WHITE-BROWED NUTHATCH	<i>Sitta victoriae</i>
ANDAMAN TREEPIE	<i>D. bayleyi</i>	YUNNAN NUTHATCH	<i>S. yunnanensis</i>
HOODED TREEPIE	<i>Crypsirina cucullata</i>	BEAUTIFUL NUTHATCH	<i>S. formosa</i>
RATCHET-TAILED TREEPIE	<i>Temnurus temnurus</i>	RUSTY-BREASTED TIT	<i>Parus davidi</i>
LONG-BILLED CROW	<i>Corvus validus</i>	YELLOW-BELLIED TIT	<i>P. venustulus</i>
COLLARED CROW	<i>C. torquatus</i>	WHITE-FRONTED TIT	<i>P. semilarvatus</i>
BLACK-EARED ORIOLE	<i>Oriolus bouroensis</i>	WHITE-EYED RIVER-MARTIN	<i>Pseudochelidon sirintarae</i>

STREAK-THROATED SWALLOW	<i>Hirundo fluvicola</i>	SOOTY BABBLER	<i>S. herberti</i>
CREAM-STRIPED BULBUL	<i>Pycnonotus leucogrammicus</i>	SNOWY-THROATED BABBLER	<i>S. oglei</i>
SPOT-NECKED BULBUL	<i>P. tympanistrigus</i>	TAWNY-BELLIED BABBLER	<i>Dumetia hyperythra</i>
BROWN-BREASTED BULBUL	<i>P. xanthorrhous</i>	GREY-FACED TIT-BABBLER	<i>Macronous kelleyi</i>
BLUE-WATTLED BULBUL	<i>P. nieuwenhuisii</i>	MINIATURE TIT-BABBLER	<i>Micromacronus leytensis</i>
STREAK-EARED BULBUL	<i>P. blanfordi</i>	WHITE-THROATED BABBLER	<i>Turdoides gularis</i>
HOOK-BILLED BULBUL	<i>Setornis criniger</i>	SLENDER-BILLED BABBLER	<i>T. longirostris</i>
SULPHUR-BELLIED BULBUL	<i>Ixos palawanensis</i>	CHINESE BABAX	<i>Babax lanceolatus</i>
STREAK-BREASTED BULBUL	<i>I. siquijorensis</i>	GIANT BABAX	<i>B. waddelli</i>
NICOBAR BULBUL	<i>Hypsipetes nicobariensis</i>	GREEN SHRIKE-BABBLER	<i>Pteruthius xanthochlorus</i>
RUFIOUS-VENTED PRINIA	<i>Prinia burnesii</i>	STREAK-THROATED BARWING	<i>Actinodura waldeni</i>
ENGGANO WHITE-EYE	<i>Zosterops salvadorii</i>	STREAKED BARWING	<i>A. souliei</i>
YELLOWISH WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. nigrorum</i>	GOLDEN-FRONTED FULVETTA	<i>Alcippe variegaticeps</i>
JAVAN WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. flavus</i>	SPECTACLED FULVETTA	<i>A. ruficapilla</i>
PEARL-BELLIED WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. grayi</i>	RUFIOUS-THROATED FULVETTA	<i>A. rufogularis</i>
GOLDEN-BELLIED WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. uropygialis</i>	GREY-CROWNED CROCIAS	<i>Crocius langbianis</i>
PALE-BELLIED WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. consobrinorum</i>	GREY SIBIA	<i>Heterophasia gracilis</i>
LEMON-THROATED WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. anomalus</i>	BEAUTIFUL SIBIA	<i>H. pulchella</i>
AMBON YELLOW WHITE-EYE	<i>Z. kuehni</i>	WHITE-COLLARED YUHINA	<i>Yuhina diademata</i>
BICOLORED WHITE-EYE	<i>Tephrozosterops stalkerii</i>	BLACK-CHINNED YUHINA	<i>Y. nigrimenta</i>
RUFIOUS-THROATED WHITE-EYE	<i>Madanga ruficollis</i>	BROWN PARROTBILL	<i>Paradoxornis unicolor</i>
STREAKY-HEADED WHITE-EYE	<i>Lophozosterops squamiceps</i>	BLACK-BREASTED PARROTBILL	<i>P. flavirostris</i>
GREY-HOODED WHITE-EYE	<i>L. pinaiae</i>	SPOT-BREASTED PARROTBILL	<i>P. guttaticollis</i>
CRESTED WHITE-EYE	<i>L. doherityi</i>	BROWN-WINGED PARROTBILL	<i>P. brunneus</i>
PYGMY WHITE-EYE	<i>Oculocincta squamifrons</i>	ASHY-THROATED PARROTBILL	<i>P. alphonsianus</i>
THICK-BILLED WHITE-EYE	<i>Heleia crassirostris</i>	GREY-HOODED PARROTBILL	<i>P. zappeyi</i>
SPOT-BREASTED WHITE-EYE	<i>H. muelleri</i>	SHORT-TAILED PARROTBILL	<i>P. davidianus</i>
TIMOR STUBTAIL	<i>Urosphena subulata</i>	BLACK-BROWED PARROTBILL	<i>P. atosuperciliaris</i>
LONG-BILLED BUSH-WARBLER	<i>Bradypterus major</i>	RUFIOUS-HEADED PARROTBILL	<i>P. ruficeps</i>
BROWN BUSH-WARBLER	<i>B. luteoventris</i>	STRIPE-BREASTED RHABDORNIS	<i>Rhabdornis inornatus</i>
PLESKE'S WARBLER	<i>Locustella pleskei</i>	YELLOW-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER	<i>Prionochilus maculatus</i>
STREAKED REED-WARBLER	<i>Acrocephalus sorghophilus</i>	CRIMSON-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER	<i>P. percussus</i>
BLUNT-WINGED WARBLER	<i>A. concinens</i>	YELLOW-RUMPED FLOWERPECKER	<i>P. xanthopygius</i>
YELLOW-BREASTED TAILORBIRD	<i>Orthotomus samarensis</i>	GOLDEN-RUMPED FLOWERPECKER	<i>Dicaeum ammae</i>
CRESTED TIT-WARBLER	<i>Leptopoeile elegans</i>	BROWN-BACKED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. everetti</i>
SMOKY WARBLER	<i>Phylloscopus fulgiventis</i>	YELLOW-BELLIED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. melanoxanthum</i>
BROOKS'S LEAF-WARBLER	<i>P. subviridis</i>	WHITE-THROATED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. vincens</i>
GREY-CHEEKED WARBLER	<i>Seicercus poliogenys</i>	BICOLORED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. bicolor</i>
BLACK-FACED WARBLER	<i>Abroscopus schisticeps</i>	CEBU FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. quadricolor</i>
BRISTLED GRASSBIRD	<i>Chaetornis striatus</i>	SCARLET-COLLARED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. retrocinctum</i>
RUFIOUS-RUMPED GRASSBIRD	<i>Graminicola bengalensis</i>	CRIMSON-CROWNED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. nehrkorni</i>
GREY LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>Garrulax maesi</i>	FLAME-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. erythrothorax</i>
CHESTNUT-BACKED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. nuchalis</i>	ASHY FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. vulneratum</i>
WHITE-CHEEKED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. vassali</i>	RED-CHESTED FLOWERPECKER	<i>D. maugaei</i>
YELLOW-THROATED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. galbanus</i>	PLAIN SUNBIRD	<i>Anthreptes simplex</i>
WYNAAD LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. delesserti</i>	APRICOT-BREASTED SUNBIRD	<i>Nectarinia buettikoferi</i>
MOUSTACHED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. cineraceus</i>	FLAME-BREASTED SUNBIRD	<i>N. solaris</i>
WHITE-SPECKLED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. bieti</i>	APO SUNBIRD	<i>Aethopyga boltoni</i>
GIANT LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. maximus</i>	FLAMING SUNBIRD	<i>A. flagrans</i>
STRIPED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. virgatus</i>	ELEGANT SUNBIRD	<i>A. duyvenbodei</i>
BROWN-CAPPED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. austeni</i>	GOULD'S SUNBIRD	<i>A. gouldiae</i>
RED-WINGED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. formosus</i>	THICK-BILLED SPIDERHUNTER	<i>Arachnothera crassirostris</i>
RED-TAILED LAUGHINGTHRUSH	<i>G. milnei</i>	BORNEAN SPIDERHUNTER	<i>A. everetti</i>
OMEI SHAN LIOCICHLA	<i>Liocichla omeiensis</i>	NILGIRI PIPIIT	<i>Anthus nilghiriensis</i>
BAGOBO BABBLER	<i>Trichastoma woodi</i>	ASIAN GOLDEN WEAVER	<i>Ploceus benghalensis</i>
VANDERBILT'S BABBLER	<i>Malacocincla vanderbilti</i>	BLACK-BREASTED WEAVER	<i>P. hypoxanthus</i>
BLACK-BROWED BABBLER	<i>M. perspicillata</i>	YELLOW WEAVER	<i>P. megarhynchus</i>
MARSH BABBLER	<i>Pellorneum palustre</i>	GREEN AVADAVAT	<i>Amandava formosa</i>
STRIATED GROUND-BABBLER	<i>Ptilocichla mindanensis</i>	PIN-TAILED PARROTFINCH	<i>Erythrura prasina</i>
RABOR'S WREN-BABBLER	<i>Napothera rabori</i>	GREEN-FACED PARROTFINCH	<i>E. viridifacies</i>
RUFIOUS-THROATED WREN-BABBLER	<i>Spelaornis caudatus</i>	TRICOLORED PARROTFINCH	<i>E. tricolor</i>
RUSTY-THROATED WREN-BABBLER	<i>S. badeigularis</i>	RED-EARED PARROTFINCH	<i>E. coloria</i>
BAR-WINGED WREN-BABBLER	<i>S. troglodytoides</i>	FIVE-COLORED MUNIA	<i>Lonchura quanticolor</i>
SPOTTED WREN-BABBLER	<i>S. formosus</i>	WHITE-HEADED MUNIA	<i>L. maja</i>
LONG-TAILED WREN-BABBLER	<i>S. chocolatinus</i>	PALE-HEADED MUNIA	<i>L. pallida</i>
TAWNY-BREASTED WREN-BABBLER	<i>S. longicaudatus</i>	TIMOR SPARROW	<i>Padda fuscata</i>
WEDGE-BILLED WREN-BABBLER	<i>Sphenocichla humei</i>	BLACK-HEADED GREENFINCH	<i>Carduelis ambigua</i>
DEIGNAN'S BABBLER	<i>Stachyris rodolpheii</i>	BLACK-HEADED MOUNTAIN-FINCH	<i>Leucosticte brandti</i>
FLAME-TEMPLED BABBLER	<i>S. speciosa</i>	SPECTACLED FINCH	<i>Callacanthus burtoni</i>
LUZON STRIPED-BABBLER	<i>S. striata</i>	CRIMSON ROSEFINCH	<i>Carpodacus rubescens</i>
NEGROS STRIPED-BABBLER	<i>S. nigrorum</i>	PINK-BROWED ROSEFINCH	<i>C. rodochrous</i>
PALAWAN STRIPED-BABBLER	<i>S. hypogrammica</i>	CRIMSON-BROWED FINCH	<i>Pinicola subhimachalus</i>
WHITE-BREASTED BABBLER	<i>S. grammiceps</i>	GOLD-NAPED FINCH	<i>Pyrrhoptes epauletta</i>

Little-known bird

White-browed Bushchat



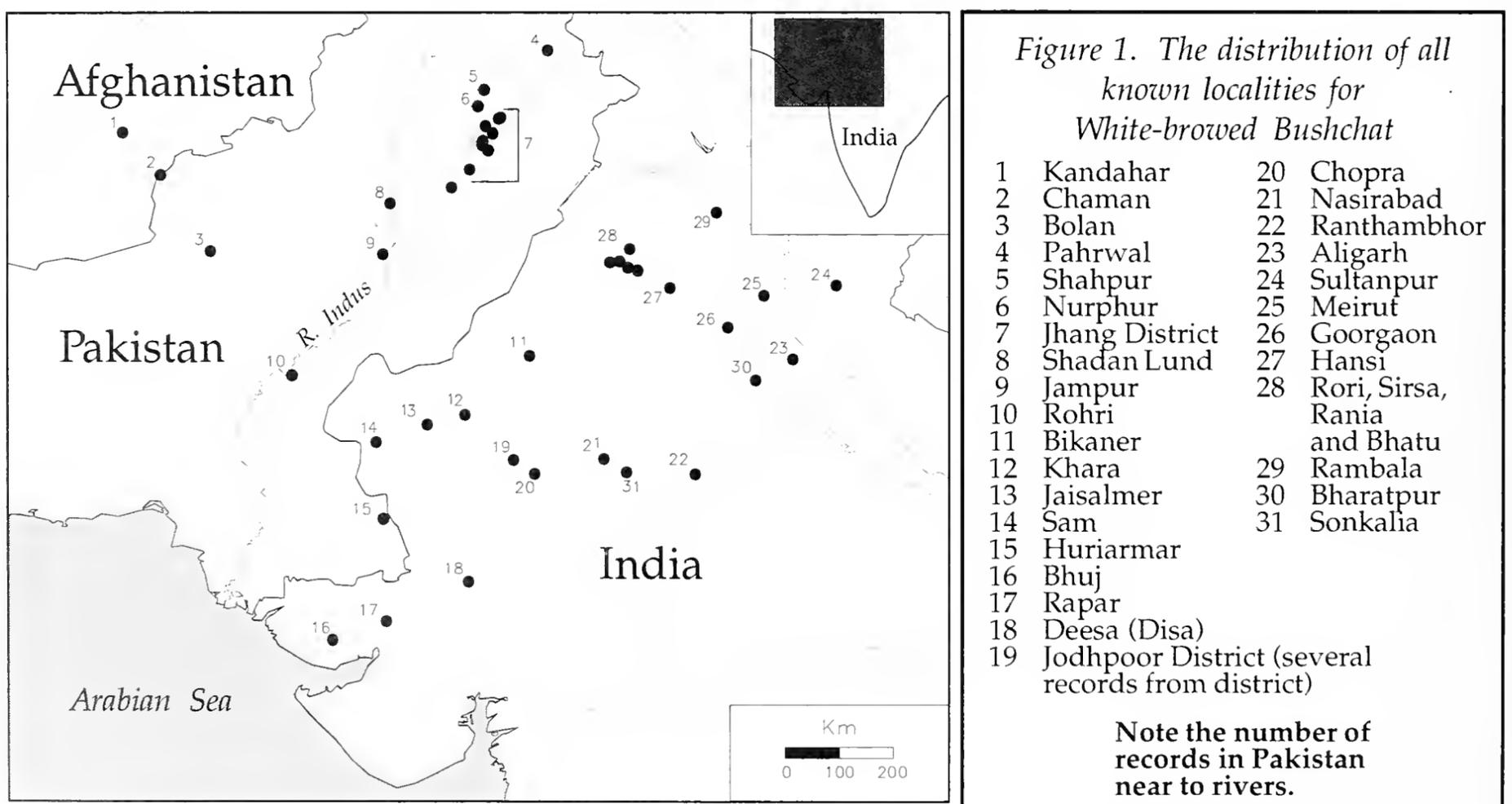
White-browed Bushchat has been observed rarely in recent times away from a few sites in Rajasthan, India although formerly the species was recorded as far west as southern Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this article the author, who was recently awarded a £500 OBC grant donated by Cygnus Wildlife Holidays to carry out a preliminary survey of the species in Rajasthan and Gujarat, details the scant information existing on the bushchat and speculates on the reasons for its apparent rarity.

In India, most endemic birds are found either in the forested Western Ghats or on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. In contrast, semi-arid and arid areas of the subcontinent tend to show low levels of endemism. For instance, there are only four bird species which have localized distributions in the arid and semi-arid parts of the Indian subcontinent: Indian Bustard *Choriotis nigriceps*, White-naped Tit *Parus nuchalis*, Sind Sparrow *Passer pyrrhonotus* and White-browed Bushchat *Saxicola macrorhyncha*.

The last-named bird is also called Stoliczka's Whinchat, after Ferdinand Stoliczka, who first described it in 1872 from Kutch, from specimens collected in January at Rapar(17-numbers in brackets refer to dots on Figure 1), and in February at

Bhuj(16)¹⁰. Since then it has been recorded from semi-arid and arid areas in Pakistan, mainly east of the Indus, and in India from Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat² (Figure 1). The westernmost records for the species are from Kandahar(1) and Dubrai in southern Afghanistan, where Swinhoe collected one male and one female, on 19 and 24 April 1881 respectively¹¹.

About 1920, Whistler¹⁴ saw and collected specimens in several places in Jhang District(7), Pakistan, but T. J. Roberts⁸ never saw the species there in the course of many subsequent visits. Hume⁶ reported it to be 'extremely abundant in the thin, stunted scrub jungle' in sandy semi-desert around Jodhpur(19), and he collected a series of over 30





1.

Plate 1 and 2. White-browed Bushchat *Saxicola macrorhyncha*, both taken near Jaisalmer on the track to Desert National Park (Photos: P. Morris)

specimens in late January and early February [now in BM(NH)]. Hume was told by local people that the species was resident around Jodhpur, but Whistler did not find any during his survey of Jodhpur State¹⁵.

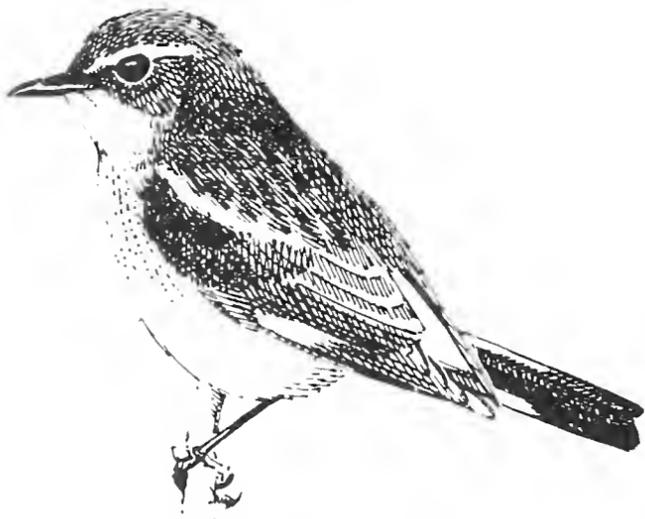
Despite many visits to Rajasthan and Gujarat during the last 10 years, I have not seen any White-browed Bushchats (but see *Conservation Fund in Action*). The main reason for the apparent disappearance of the species throughout much of its former range could be loss of suitable habitat: improved irrigation facilities have converted vast tracts of semi-arid scrub land into cropland in Aligarh(23) District and it is likely that this has also happened in Pakistan.

However, the reasons for the rarity of the White-browed Bushchat are obscure. The species has been found recently in Kutch, especially in the Banni grasslands and scrubland where Asad Akhtar and Jugal Kishore Tiwari, two biologists from the Bombay Natural History Society, worked for two years (1990-1991). Cultivation has not spread into the Banni District and extensive areas of suitable scrubland still exist. Mr Himmatsinhji (pers. comm. 1992), a very experienced Kutch ornithologist, has never seen this species during 50 years of active bird-watching. Dharmakumarsinhji³ wrote that it was 'rarely met with except in the drier portions of Saurashtra'. Unfortunately, he does not mention where the species was seen, nor whether he saw it.



2.

Most recent records have come from Rajasthan, in particular Desert National Park near Jaisalmer (13; Plate 1 and 2) where it has been reported between January and March almost annually in the last decade (e.g. R. Grimmett 1982, B. King 1984, S. Madge 1985 and 1987, S. Buckton and P. Morris 1990, all *in litt.* to Nigel Redman). A male and several juveniles were seen on 2 August 1978 near Khara village (12), between Phalodi and Pokhran in western Rajasthan¹. The species has also been seen in January and February at Sonkalia (31) near Ajmer (S. Madge 1988 *in litt.* to NR, P. Alström 1993 *in litt.* to NR), and also at Ranthambhor (22) (N. Lindsey *in litt.* to NR, A. Prieme et al. 1992 *in litt.* to NR). The most easterly recent record is of a single bird at Koladahar (30) near Bharatpur on 24 February 1988 (D. Holman *in litt.* to NR). The paucity of recent records would indicate that the species is now extremely scarce and localised, and apparently only reaches the eastern parts of its range in certain years.



White-browed Bushchat *Saxicola macrorhyncha* by Carl D'Silva

The White-browed Bushchat is similar to other *Saxicola* species found in the desert region. The adult male is similar in general appearance to the Whinchat *S. rubetra*, whilst juvenile males are rather like the females and immature males of the White-tailed Stonechat *S. leucura*, another chat of the Indus and Gangetic river systems. The tail pattern of the adult male when in flight is similar to that of some wheatears commonly found in the same habitat. In habits and habitats the White-browed Bushchat is most like the Siberian Stonechat *S. maura*, the male of which differs in having a black chin, black tail and no supercilium (Plates 1 and 2).

As the White-browed Bushchat has probably been confused with other chats, and it lives in remote areas rarely visited by ornithologists, it is possible that it is more common in Rajasthan than is

appreciated. Little is known about its ecology and behaviour. It is a desert-loving chat, affecting wide, waterless areas with *Capparis*, *Calotropis* and other shrubs, and generally it is found alone or in pairs, at times fairly tame, but at other times it is very shy. It perches on exposed tops of bushes like other members of the genus, descending to the ground to pick up food items. It is presumably insectivorous. Hume⁶ recorded its call as 'a little sharp chip chip note' heard now and then. When alarmed, it has a habit of diving to the bottom of a bush. Nothing is known of its breeding habits.

Acknowledgements

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Observations of Wood Snipe *Gallinago nemoricola* in Nepal

The authors made the exciting discovery of displaying Wood Snipe *Gallinago nemoricola* whilst walking along one of the well-known treks in the Nepal Himalayas. In this article they detail their observations and place them in context of the existing published information on this enigmatic and elusive species.

During the afternoon of May 26 1990, we were descending from the Laurebina Pass towards Gopte, at 28°04'N 85°26'E on the Gosainkund Trek, north of Kathmandu, Nepal. At an altitude of c. 4,300 m, a bird was heard calling from the ground. The call immediately struck us as being unfamiliar as we had recorded only a handful of species in this barren, boulder-strewn area. On investigation, the call was found to be coming from a snipe *Gallinago* sp. sitting motionless amongst the ground vegetation of mainly dwarf *Rhododendron* spp. which were no more than 30 cm tall. A second individual was found in close proximity, and they allowed us to approach to within about six metres. Over the next hour or so both birds were watched at close range on the ground, and were seen in flight when flushed, one of which was seen several times in apparent display flight. Viewing conditions were excellent, allowing PAJM to obtain a series of colour transparencies (plates 1 to 3). Three different vocalisations were noted and examples of each were recorded by STB on a portable cassette recorder.

Description

The birds gave the immediate impression of being large, bulky and very boldly marked snipes. The head pattern was typically snipe-like, consisting of a narrow blackish eye-stripe in front of the eye, which broadened and became pale centred behind the eye; a broad pale buff supercilium which narrowed behind the eye; and narrow dark sub-coronal stripes extending from the bill to the nape and enclosing a narrow pale crown stripe. The cheeks were pale with a bold dark bar across them. The nape and neck were streaked blackish on buff, the mantle and scapulars were very dark brown with striking, broad, golden-buff fringes forming two sets of distinct parallel stripes. The wing coverts and flight feathers were dark with grey-buff fringes and bars giving a mealy effect. The rump was streaked and the tail showed a broad

sub-terminal orange bar bordered with black, and a white tip. The breast was distinctly suffused with warm buff and dark streaking, and this graded to barring on the lower breast, belly and flanks, with the centre of the belly being the only area unbarred. The bill was relatively short, heavy and deep-based, the basal half being flesh-pink and the distal half blackish. The legs were dull greyish-green, and the eye dark.

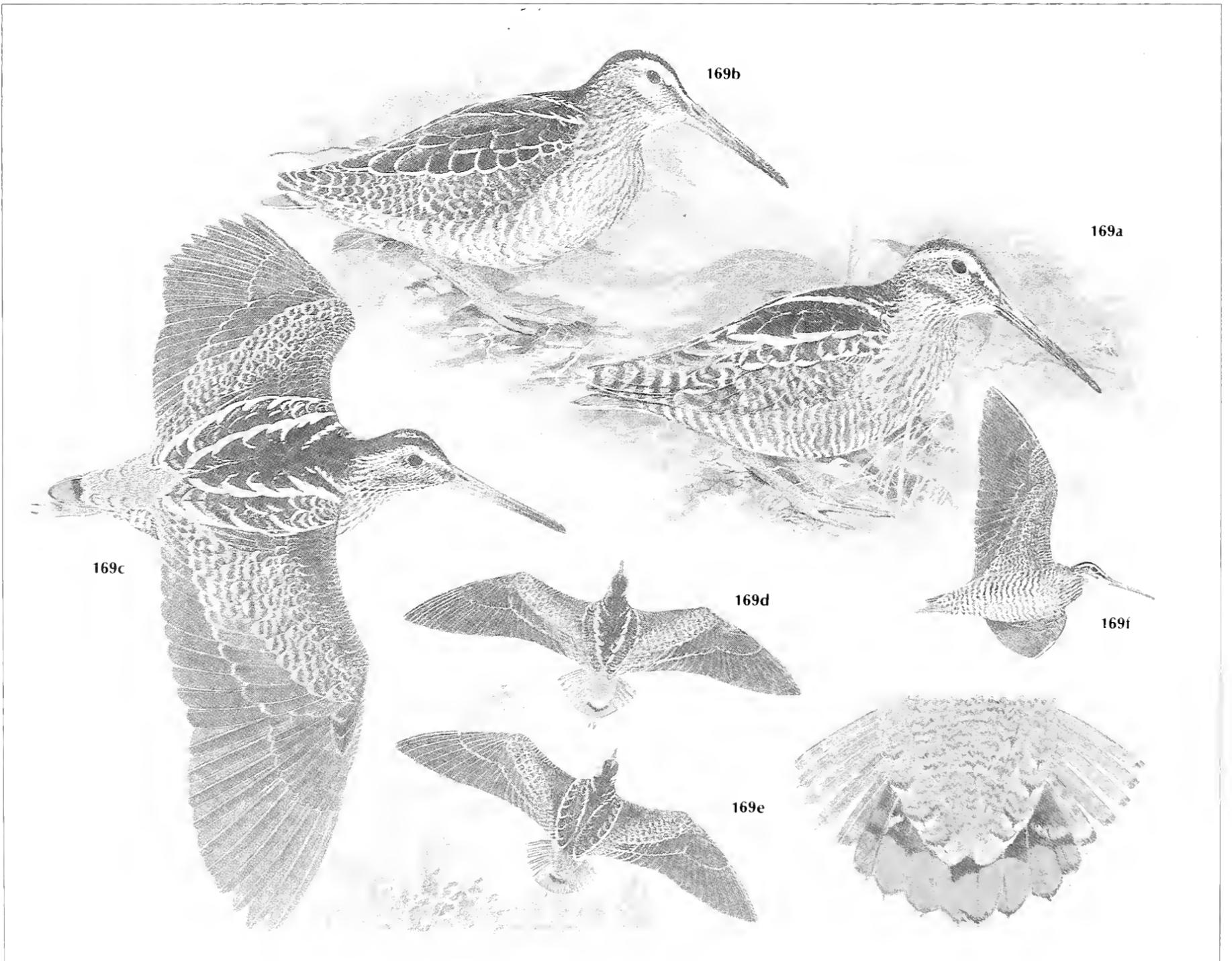
The flight was heavy and direct, and the birds lacked any white trailing edge to the wings.

Identification

Six species of snipe have been recorded in Nepal: Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*, with which we are both familiar, could immediately be eliminated on size and by the fact that the birds showed a pale crown stripe; Solitary Snipe *G. solitaria*, with which we are also familiar, is a large, high altitude species usually showing yellow legs and generally appearing much greyer with extensive rufous centres to the scapulars, and having a longer and slightly upturned bill (plates 4 and 5); Common Snipe *G. gallinago*, Pintail Snipe *G. stenura* and Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala* form a closely related trio of species which are hard to separate in the field. We are familiar with the former two species, and did not consider our unidentified snipes to be of this group as the upperparts seemed much too boldly marked compared to the more complex patterns of Common, Pintail and Swinhoe's Snipes, and the bill appeared too deep-based for these species. The possibility of them being Wood Snipes *G. nemoricola* was considered, but we thought it unlikely as all the information we had with us indicated that this species is confined to wooded habitats. Most references also indicated that Wood Snipe is similar to a woodcock *Scolopax* sp. in jizz, a similarity which these did not appear to show. In addition, recent records from Nepal were apparently only from the Arun Valley, in the extreme east of the country. Thus, we left Nepal



1



6

Plates 1-3. Wood Snipe *Gallinago nemoricola* photographed on the Gosainkund Trek, north of Kathmandu, Nepal, May 1990. **Plates 4 and 5.** Solitary Snipe *G. solitaria* taken in Nepal in 1990 (Photos: P. Morris).

Plate 6. lower third of plate 66 from *Shorebirds: an identification guide to the waders of the world*, by Hayman, Marchant and Prater and published by Croom Helm. Key: 169 a, adult perched; 169b, juvenile; 169c adult in flight; 169d, adult in flight; 169e, juvenile in flight; 169f, flight view from below.



2



4



5

without identifying the birds to species. On returning to the UK two weeks later we consulted Hayman *et al.*⁵ which led us to believe that our

birds were Wood Snipes; and this was confirmed by comparing our transparencies with skins held in the Natural History Museum, Tring.

Vocalisations

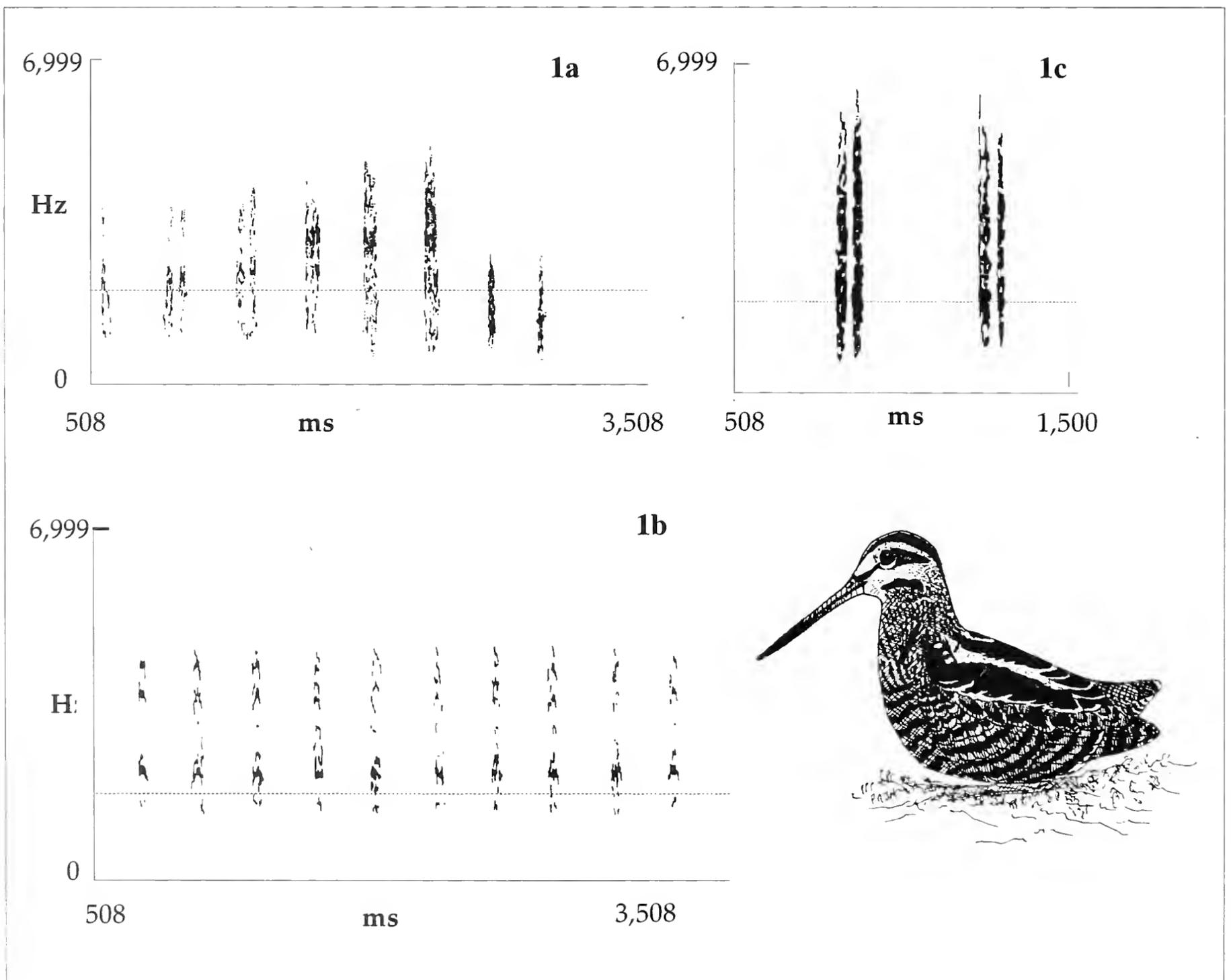
Hayman *et al.*⁵ describe the call of Wood Snipe as, "when flushed, a low, croaking 'chock-chock' ", while Fleming *et al.*⁴ describe it as "a low 'tok-tok' when taking wing". This appears to be the only type of call described in the literature. However, the birds we observed were heard giving three different vocalisations.

a) From the ground a long series of nasal notes, 'check-check-check-check-check...', approximately four notes per second, in a series lasting 20 seconds or more (Figure 1a).

b) An apparent display flight was observed on several occasions, when one of the birds would fly in a wide circle, c. 10m above the ground, calling. This call was again nasal: 'che-dep, che-dep, che-dep, ip-ip-ip, ock, ock' (Figure 1b).

c) When flushed a double note was uttered about once per second: 'che-dep, che-dep...', similar to the first part of the song (Figure 1c).

Comparisons with tape recordings of Wood Snipes displaying at Wolong, China, in May 1989 made by Per Alström are very similar to our recordings.



Discussion

Wood Snipe was first described in 1836 from a specimen taken in Nepal by B. Hodgson and it was believed to be not uncommon in the Kathmandu Valley, but had become rare by 1877 and was last recorded there in 1950⁶. Most of the other records have been from eastern Nepal the most recent being in 1989, when one was seen at Jolbari on January 19⁶. The most westerly record in Nepal appears to be at Pipar, near Pokhara, where two were seen displaying on May 11-16 1985⁶. The only confirmed breeding record for Nepal appears to be from the upper Arun Valley, where, according to Fleming *et al.*⁴, a nesting pair was found "at the tree line" in summer 1973, although specimens containing eggs were collected by Hodgson in the Kathmandu Valley⁶.

Wood Snipes appear to be altitudinal migrants, descending from their breeding grounds in the Himalayas to winter in the foothills. Collar and Andrew³ give the breeding range as Kulu (Himachal Pradesh), east through Nepal and Bhutan to Arunachal Pradesh in north-east India, and there are also several recent records from south-west China. Part of the population appears to migrate some distance as there are records from most hill ranges in India, as well as extralimital records from Thailand, Singapore and Sri Lanka^{5,7}. Inskipp and Inskipp⁶ describe the preferred habitat of Wood Snipe as swampy woodland, while Hayman *et al.*⁵ state that the species is believed to breed only in wooded habitats from 1,200-4,000 m, but Meyer de Schauensee⁸ describes the preferred breeding habitat in China as marshy grassland and mountain swamps up to 5,000m. This is supported by observations of birds displaying in alpine meadows with scattered bushes and a few streams at c. 3,000 m (just above the tree-line) in Wolong, China, in May 1989 (P. Alström *in litt.* July 1992). Another recent record involves one on a forest stream in temperate evergreen forest, at 2,800m in Bhutan in March 1986², but the date of this record probably indicates a wintering or migrant individual.

The behaviour of the birds we observed suggests that they were holding territory, and given that the latest date from the Kathmandu Valley (which is presumably a wintering area) is May 11⁵ it seems likely that they were prospective breeders. This suggests that not only may Wood Snipes be observed well away from any trees, but that the pre-

ferred breeding habitat in Nepal is open areas with no more than scattered bushes and a few streams. Furthermore, the individuals we observed did not appear to be closely associated with any swampy areas.

The wide scatter of recent records of Wood Snipes possibly indicates that it is sparsely distributed throughout its range. However, few birdwatchers visit suitable breeding areas in Nepal away from the regular trekking routes, and at the right time of year in late May or June, and this is the same in other parts of the species's breeding range such as in Bhutan and China.

Another factor is that the species is elusive, it being normally difficult to see on the breeding grounds, displaying usually only at pre-dawn and at dusk. The paucity of recent winter records also indicates that it is unobtrusive on the wintering grounds. Indeed, the lack of recent records led Collar and Andrew³ to list the species as threatened. If the habitat in which recent breeding season records have been made is typical, it seems likely that the loss of wooded habitats in the wintering grounds has been an important factor in the species' decline.

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Recent sightings of the Ceylon Frogmouth in India

The author has been fortunate enough to see the Ceylon Frogmouth during his studies in the Western Ghats. In this article he details these sightings together with what surely must be the most stunning photograph to have so far appeared in the bulletin

Frogmouths are characterized by having a bill which is broad, flat, and triangular. They feed on insects at night and spend the day perched across a bare branch, huddled and motionless, simulating a broken stump or merging perfectly amongst the dead leaves of the undergrowth.

The bizarre appearance and often apparent rarity of many frogmouth species make them very popular with birdwatchers in the Orient. The Ceylon Frogmouth *Batrachostomus moniliger* is no exception being little-known and seldom seen in its restricted-range of the hill forests of south-western India and Sri Lanka¹ (see Figure 1).

This genus is also represented in India by another species, Hodgson's Frogmouth *B. hodgsoni*, which is confined to the eastern Himalayas. The widely discontinuous Indo-Malayan distribution of the genus lends support to the hypothesis³ that the hills of southwest India (the Western Ghats), where the Ceylon Frogmouth occurs, were once part of a chain contiguous with the Himalayas, but now isolated from them by the lowering of the intervening hill ranges.

In the late seventies, concerned by the heavy felling of wet forests in the Western Ghats and by the scarcity of sightings of the Ceylon Frogmouth, the late Dr Salim Ali initiated a survey of the bird in South India. Under his guidance, biologist R. Sugathan spent 6 months searching the forests in the state of Kerala for the bird and took extensive habitat notes wherever he found them. The results of his survey were of relief to conservationists², as he encountered 34 birds in his survey, and reported that although uncommon, the species is not endangered. Sugathan concluded that the favoured habitat for the species is bamboo and cane forest along with an undergrowth of *Solanum* spp. and *Strobilanthus* spp.

During fieldwork over the past 15 months near Top Slip, in the Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sancturay in the Anaimalai hill range in the south-western Ghats, I saw at least seven Ceylon Frogmouths. The first

sighting was of a pair roosting at head height in the understorey of shady rainforest. It was, as is often the case with these birds, a chance encounter. The birds remained at their perch as I photographed them from as close as 1 m away.

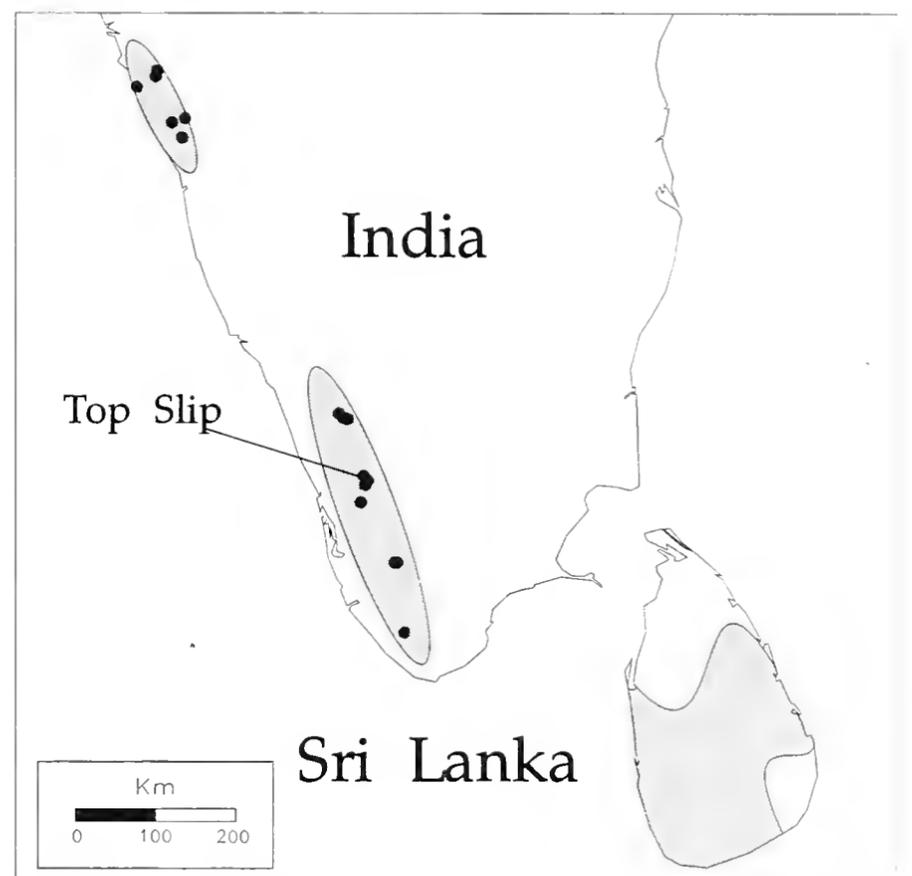


Figure 1. The distribution of the Ceylon Frogmouth *Batrachostomus moniliger*.

Since this initial sighting the pair has remained in the same general area. My second encounter, also of a pair, occurred in an entirely different habitat - dense bamboo jungle - adding support to Sugathan's finding that their habitat preference is variable.

The birds get disturbed from their daytime roost only when stumbled upon in the undergrowth. When approached too close they open their mouth wide revealing the extraordinarily large gape and small grey flap of a tongue - evidently a threat gesture! The large gape looks ideal for hawking insects in mid-air but, paradoxically, the birds take most of their prey from the ground or from a branch.

When a pair is roosting they sit huddled together, invariably facing away from each other. I surmise

that the birds roost in pairs in the non-breeding season and singly during the nesting period. The young bird either roosts with its parents, perched in between them, or by itself some distance away.

Anyone in search of the Ceylon Frogmouth, may follow these hints while in appropriate habitat: Walk through the vegetation in small scattered groups and hope to flush one. The birds fly just a few feet when flushed. Sugathan threw stones into bamboo clumps and this was apparently successful at disturbing roosting birds. However, this could clearly be destructive to the habitat and in elephant country it may be risky to comb bamboo jungle - I would recommend taking an experienced tribal guide with you in these areas.

Several aspects of the Ceylon Frogmouth remain a puzzle. Its breeding biology is little-known, its

exact distribution a mystery and even its call notes uncertain. With the continuing destruction of forests in South India, these enigmatic, sedentary birds face an equally uncertain future.

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Birdwatching areas

Kaeng Krachan National Park, Thailand.



Despite being the largest national park in Thailand, Kaeng Krachan is rarely on the itinerary of visiting birders. It is a beautiful, virtually undisturbed area of mainly evergreen forest and is one of the most interesting and least explored parks in the country.

Kaeng Krachan is the largest national park in Thailand with an area of 3,083 km² and an altitudinal range from 100 m to 1,513m. It was gazetted as a national park in 1981¹ following a visit to the area by King Bhumipol Adulyadej, who recognised the importance of the forests for protecting the watershed. Most of the park comprises evergreen forest from the foothills to 1,000m, but there are also small areas of hill evergreen and mixed deciduous forest.

The park came to the attention of ornithologists in 1990, when a group of Thai birders from the Bangkok Bird Club made the extraordinary discovery of Ratchet-tailed Treepie *Temnurus temnurus* there. This species was previously thought to occur only on Hainan Island in China, in Viet Nam and east-central Laos. The park contains a remarkably mixed avifauna with elements from the Sundaic, Indo-Chinese and Indo-Himalayan regions. Over 310 species have now been recorded and include such surprises as Yellow-vented Green-Pigeon *Treron seimundi*, Golden-throated Barbet

Megalaima franklinii, Moustached Barbet *M. incognita*, Speckled Piculet *Picumnus innominatus*, Olive-backed Woodpecker *Dinopium rafflesii*, Grey-faced Woodpecker *Picus canus*, Black-and-buff Woodpecker *Meiglyptes jugularis*, Rusty-naped Pitta *Pitta oatesi*, Eared Pitta *P. phayrei*, Lesser Cuckoo-Shrike *Coracina fimbriata*, Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris*, Silver Oriole *Oriolus mellianus*, Grey Treepie *Dendrocitta formosae*, Coral-billed Scimitar-Babbler *Pomatorhinus ferruginosus*, Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush *Garrulax erythrocephalus*, Black-eared Shrike-Babbler *Pteruthius melanotis*, White-browed Shrike-Babbler *P. flaviscapis*, Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera*, White-hooded Babbler *Gampsorhynchus rufulus*, Black-throated Parrotbill *Paradoxornis nipalensis*, Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti*, Mountain Tailorbird *Orthotomus cuculatus*, Green Cochoa *Cochoa viridis*, White-tailed Blue-Flycatcher *Cyornis concretus*, Maroon-breasted Philentoma *Philentoma velatum* and Black-throated Sunbird *Aethopyga saturata*. A

study of the distribution maps in Lekagul and Round² shows just how much has been learned from the visits of a few birders in the last two years.



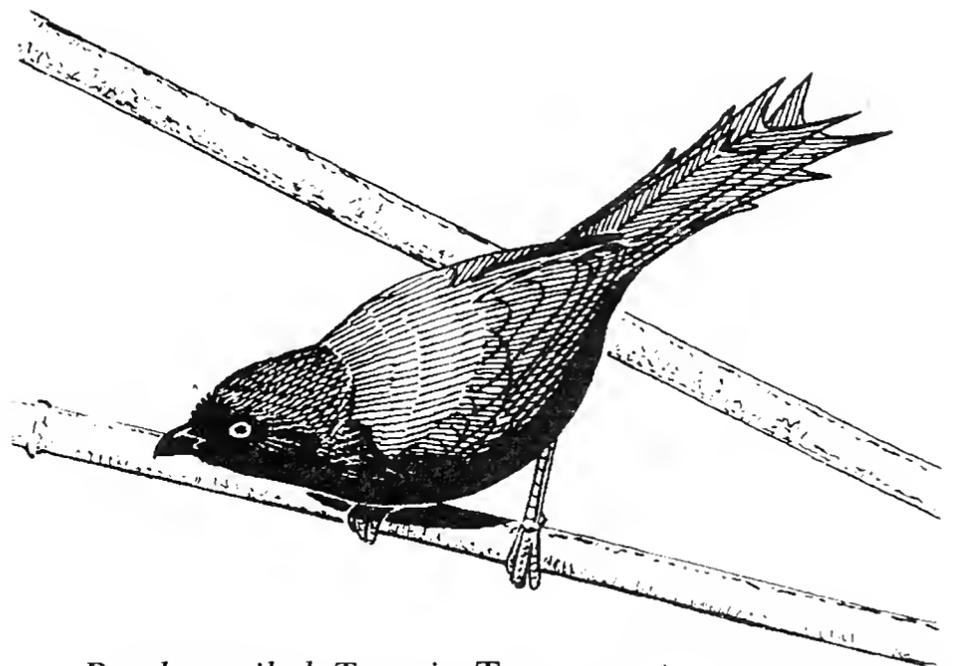
Figure 1. The location of Kaeng Krachan in Thailand.

A number of species-pairs occur sympatrically within the park, such as: Collared Falconet *Microhierax caerulescens* and Black-thighed Falconet *M. fringillarius*, Red-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis amictus* and Blue-bearded Bee-eater *N. athertoni*, Wreathed Hornbill *Aceros undulatus* and Plain-pouched Hornbill *A. subruficollis*, Laced Woodpecker *Picus vittatus* and Streak-breasted Woodpecker *P. viridanus*, Crested Treeswift *Hemiprocne coronata* and Grey-rumped Treeswift *H. longipennis*, Puff-throated Bulbul *Alophoixus pallidus* and Ochraceous Bulbul *A. ochraceus*, and Olive Bulbul *Iole virescens* and Buff-vented Bulbul *I. acaea*.

Mammals are well represented in the park and large numbers of Dusky Leaf Monkey *Semnopithecus obscurus* and White-handed Gibbons *Hylobates lar* can be seen daily. Asiatic Elephants *Elephas maximus* are frequent though they are rarely seen in daylight. Over 40 species have been recorded including Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus*, Sun Bear *U. malayanus*, Clouded Leopard *Pardofelis nebulosa*, Leopard *Panthera pardus*, Tiger *P. tigris*, Malayan Tapir *Tapirus indicus*, Lesser Malay Mouse Deer *Tragulus javanicus*, the endangered Fea's Barking Deer *Muntiacus feae*, Sambar *Cervus unicolor*, Banteng *Bos javanicus* and Gaur *B. gaurus*. There is even the possibility that a few

Sumatran Rhinoceros *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* may survive there.

Access to the park is from Highway 4, turning off on the 3175 at Tha Yung, about 20km south of Petchaburi. From the turn off, which is signposted in English, it is about 30 km to the park headquarters. At Kaeng Krachan village, just below the massive dam, there is a left turn, sign-posted by a green sign in Thai which leads to the park headquarters. Accommodation can be found at the headquarters, where a number of bungalows are available for rent. These cost from 200 baht (£4) a night upwards, depending upon the number of beds occupied. Bedding, but not mosquito nets are provided. Camping facilities are also available at the headquarters and there are some tents available for hire. There is a small restaurant near the visitor centre which provides food and drink.



Ratchet-tailed Treepie *Temnurus temnurus*
by Craig Robson

The visitor centre is often unmanned and you might have to wait several hours to arrange accommodation and permits. The staff are helpful to all visitors. It is advisable to arrive at the visitor centre between 09h00 and 16h00 in order to find staff to make arrangements for you. There is a birders' log-book at the visitor centre and birders are encouraged to record unusual sightings. The centre also has some displays and a map of the park. In January 1993, no trail maps were available though apparently they do exist.

It is essential to obtain a permit from the visitor centre at the headquarters for each visit to the park, at a cost of 20 baht per person. The permit must be shown at the entrance to the park which has a locked barrier across the road. The park entrance

is 20 km from the park headquarters at Khao Phanoen Tung, so it is also essential to have your own transport. Hire cars and motorbikes are available in the resorts of Hua Hin and probably in Cha Am. It is possible to hire one of the park vehicles costing several hundred baht per journey but this is almost as expensive as hiring personal transport and gives you less flexibility. It might be possible to join up with trekkers or other visitors and share transport costs but as visitors are comparatively few this would not be a reliable means of gaining access.



Black-eared Shrike-Babbler Pteruthius melanotis by Craig Robson

Once through the barrier there is a good road, suitable for saloon cars, which gives access to 36km of pristine forest. A number of trails lead off this road which enable treks of 1-14 days to be undertaken. If one is going to undertake a prolonged hike, involving overnight camping, it is necessary to be accompanied by a guide and this costs from 100 baht per guide per day, depending upon the length of the trek and number of nights spent camping. Food must be provided for the guide(s) as well as for oneself and this can be obtained at the restaurant at the park headquarters. Clean water is available from a number of streams within the forest.

The best birding is undoubtedly from the main road and there are several particularly good sections which are worth concentrating on. The views from the road are very spectacular, especially towards the end of the road, where a magnificent panorama of unbroken forested hills ex-

tends far into Myanmar (Burma). Confusingly the kilometre markers do not start at the entrance barrier, which is at km 1, and many have the numbers worn off or are hidden by vegetation. The furthest marker is at km 36, and near there the road is blocked by a landslide, but you can walk over this and continue for a further 200 m to the end of the road, where the trail to Tho Thip Waterfall starts.

Below I highlight some of the best birding spots along the road, but it should be noted that the current state of knowledge is insufficient to be specific about localities for many of the more interesting species. The following should be taken only as a rough guide.

1. Headquarters area.

The headquarters is situated on a small finger-like extension of the park boundary alongside the 45km² Kaeng Krachan Reservoir, which was created by a dam on the Petchaburi River. The habitat here is mainly degraded mixed deciduous lowland forest and not particularly rich in birdlife. Around the bungalows Shikra *Accipiter badius*, Forest Wagtail *Dendronanthus indicus*, Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*, Plain-throated Sunbird *Anthreptes malacensis* and Ruby-cheeked Sunbird *A. singalensis* can be found. At night Large-tailed Nightjars *Caprimulgus macrurus* are plentiful and remarkably tame. Collared Scops-Owl *Otus lempiji* can be found there and a Barred Eagle-Owl *Bubo sumatranus* was reported recently from the hillside behind the bungalows. The shores of the huge reservoir hold the usual variety of herons, egrets and waders, but Cotton Pygmy-goose *Nettapus coromandelianus* also occurs along with large numbers of Little Grebes *Tachybaptus ruficollis*.

2. Khao Phanoen Tung road.

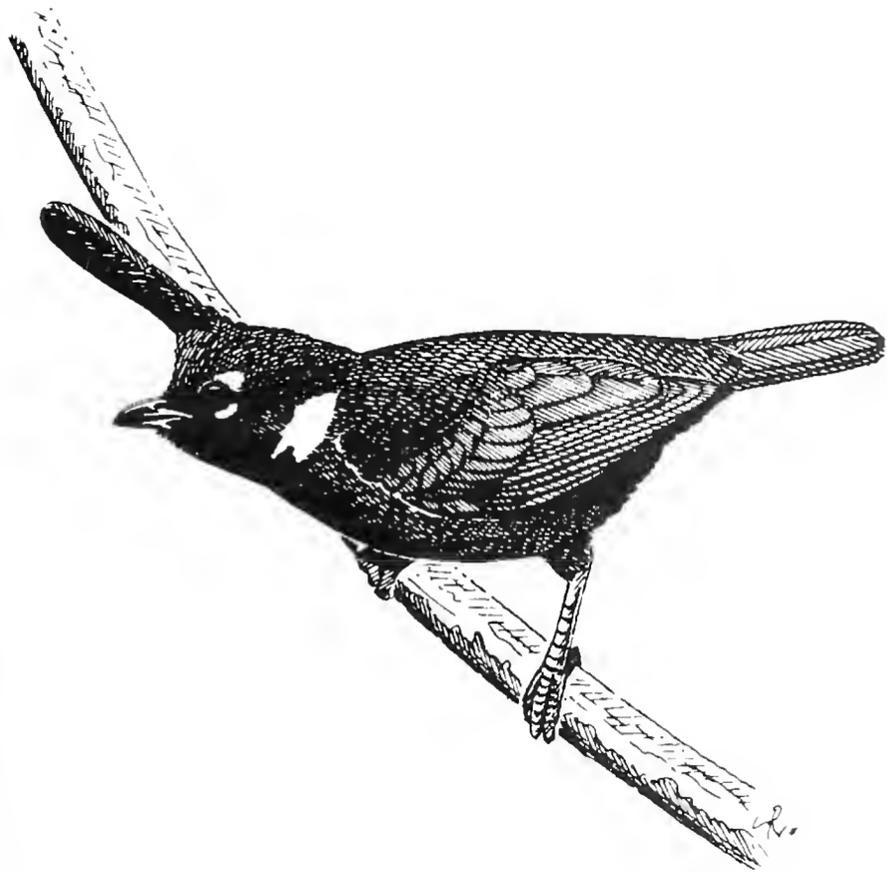
This 36 km stretch of road offers the easiest birding in the park, and the habitat is excellent along almost its entire length. However, certain stretches are better as they are less steep or offer good viewpoints over the canopy.

Km 8. A number of swampy pools alongside the road in this area provide suitable habitat for some of the last remaining Woolly-necked Storks *Ciconia episcopus* in Thailand and there are many dead trees which are worth checking for raptors.

Km 15-18. The road is virtually flat with gently sloping hills on either side. There are also some

small streams which cross the road. Many birds can be seen along the road and by making short excursions into the forest, along elephant trails or in openings. One should be aware that there are Elephants, Tigers and Leopards in the area and that it is not advisable to stray too far from the road without a guide, especially if you are on your own. Along this stretch Kalij Pheasant *Lophura leucomelanos*, Grey Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron bicalcaratum* (abundant throughout much of the Park), Scaly-breasted Partridge *Arborophila chloropus*, Chestnut-winged Cuckoo *Clamator coromandus*, Brown Fish-Owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*, Brown Hornbill *Anorrhinus tickelli*, Blue Pitta *Pitta cyanea*, Silver Oriole and Crested Jay *Platylophus galericulatus* have been observed.

Km 24-25. A number of unmarked Elephant trails lead off into the forest in this area. Following these can be excellent for seeing pheasants and other forest-floor dwellers but great care should be taken as it is quite easy to get confused and lost because the trails merge and cross each other.



Crested Jay *Platylophus galericulatus*
by Craig Robson

Km 27-28. This is another exciting section, providing views over the canopy and there are some fruiting trees near the km 28 marker. A trail leads off from this point to Phanern Thung Moun-

tain, the highest point in the Park. The trek to the summit takes about 6 hours, the trail initially passing through forest with thick bamboo understorey in which it is difficult to birdwatch. Just below the start of the trail is a roadside pool where birds and mammals may come to drink. In this area Bar-backed Partridge *Arborophila brunneopectus*, Yellow-vented Green-Pigeon, Plain-pouched and Wreathed Hornbills, Olive-backed Woodpecker, Bay Woodpecker *Blythipicus pyrrhotis* and Ratchet-tailed Treepie have all been seen.

Km 32. An area with fruiting trees and low bamboo thickets which hold Ratchet-tailed Treepie, Grey Treepie, White-hooded Babbler and Silver Oriole.

Km 36. This area offers spectacular views over the forest and is a good viewpoint for hornbills flying over. The trail to Tho Thip Waterfall leads down from the end of the tarmac road. This trail is very steep in places and therefore quite difficult to birdwatch along. The waterfalls can be reached in about two and a half hours and there are several trails leading off into excellent forest from the falls. Some of these are loop trails which take two or three days to complete; a guide is recommended, to avoid getting lost in the network of Elephant trails. On the trail to the falls Ferruginous Wood-Partridge *Caolperdix oculatea*, Crested Jay, White-hooded Babbler and Maroon-breasted Philetoma *Philetoma velatum* have been seen.

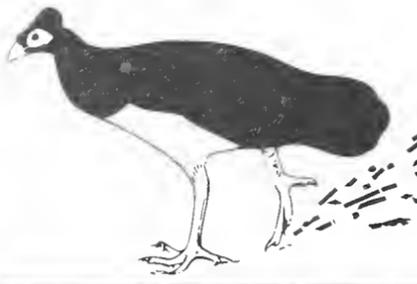
Much of the Park is virtually unexplored and may well hold some more surprises as unexpected as Ratchet-tailed Treepie. Visiting birders should bear in mind that, given the extraordinarily diverse avifauna already confirmed from the Park, almost *anything* could be found there. All records of unusual species and particularly new records for the Park should be sent to Philip D. Round at the Centre For Wildlife Research, Department of Biology, Mahidol University, Faculty of Science, Rama 6 Road, Bangkok 10400.

Good Luck!

References

1. Gray, D., Pipirell, C. and Graham, M. (1991) *National Parks of Thailand*. Bangkok: Communications Resources (Thailand) Ltd.
2. Lekagul B., and Round, P. D. (1991) *A guide to the birds of Thailand*. Bangkok: Saha Bhaet Co., Ltd.

Iain Robertson, 1 Central Avenue, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 2PZ, U.K.



Recently published

The birds of Pakistan: Vol. 2, Passeriformes by T. J. Roberts. Oxford University Press, 1991. 617pp. £40 (hb).

This long-awaited second volume completes the *Handbook to the Birds of Pakistan*. Straddling the border of both the Oriental and Palaearctic regions the country has a fascinating avifauna about which information has, until now, been difficult to find. However, the discovery of a population of what is now estimated as 500 Western Tragopans *Tragopan melanocephalus* in the Palas Valley in 1989 shows that there is still much to learn about the country's birds.

This volume, concentrating on the passerines, is crammed with data on identification, behaviour, vocalisations and distribution, with plates illustrated by the author for all species. It is not a dry collection of facts, but a personal work reflecting the author as well as the birds.

The text begins with, where appropriate, a discussion on the taxonomy, which mainly follows either Voous and Ali and Ripley. In some cases the author takes a quite conservative view without any justification or discussion. For instance, given the number of recent authors that have split Richard's *Anthus richardi* and Paddyfield Pipit *A. rufulus* I find it surprising that there is no discussion on his lumping of them. However, the author provides information for other species that give clear evidence for certain taxonomic problems. For instance, the observation that Green Warbler *Phylloscopus nitidus* shows two clear wing bars lends support for those who would relump the *trochiloides* superspecies. The author provides his reasons for not including certain species in the Pakistan list, which are often lengthy and full of fascinating detail: for example Trotter's Redwing *Turdus iliacus* records for Kohat were rejected as he apparently misidentified Bimaculated Lark *Melanocorypha bimaculata*!

Plumage details are described in some detail for most species. The descriptions tend to concentrate on in-hand characters, and it is possible to separate even some of the most similar species' pairs on the data provided. This is a substantial improvement

compared to other material available for the sub-continent. The separation of the *Calandrella* larks is covered especially well, but does require some knowledge of the identification characters.

There are extensive sections on distribution, habits, breeding biology and vocalisations for each species. These have been researched comprehensively, but at times I found the text gave too much information in the context of the subcontinent that is probably not really necessary for a book on the birds of Pakistan. For example, of the six records of Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* two refer to central India. This can make extracting information specific to Pakistan quite time-consuming.

This is a fascinating and highly individual account that has much in common with many of the older works on the ornithology of the region. This individuality is unfortunately lost from many modern works. The two volumes represent the great efforts of one man and provide a wonderful testament to his deep knowledge of the country's avifauna gained from nearly 40 years of research. It is a remarkable achievement.

Nigel Lindsey

The birds of Periyar: an aid to birdwatching in the Periyar Sanctuary by A. Robertson and M. C. A. Jackson. Tourism and Wildlife Society of India, 1992. Available from A. Robertson, 2 St George's Terrace, Blockley, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos GL56 9BN, U.K. 108pp. £6.95 (pb).

The Western Ghats in southern India is a major area of endemism within the Oriental region. It also contains a series of excellent sanctuaries that cover the range of habitats within the area. Since Salim Ali's *Birds of Kerala* there has been little easily accessible data on the distribution of birds within the Western Ghats, but this volume goes some way to redress this situation. Drawing on the authors extensive experience of the sanctuary, the book summarises all the known bird records. It also provides very useful information on the logistics of visiting this convenient and enjoyable reserve.

The format is fairly standard for checklists with a text describing the records and a series of codes summarising this information. The double box

space is described as indicating species endemic to the Western Ghats, but as the authors indicate some of these are also found in Sri Lanka (The authors insist on calling it Ceylon - a name dropped on independence). This I found easy to use and particularly helpful as it lists the species that can be seen within the areas that tourists can visit. It also includes five species that the authors consider potentials for the reserve but others could be added, such as Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma*.

There is information on the identification of similar species and I feel that here an opportunity has been missed. India is not at the moment well served by field guides, particularly ones that provide information on the separation of 'difficult' groups. Identification data on the separation for many of these species is available and concise summaries would have substantially improved this volume. The material on the separation of the snipes for example is no real improvement on the pictorial guide, but they **can** be separated in the field. It would be feasible to confuse Clamorous Acrocephalus *Acrocephalus stentoreus* and Blyth's Reed-Warbler *A. dumatorum* based on the information contained in this volume.

Despite these limitations I would strongly advise anyone visiting the area to buy this book as it will provide invaluable information on the birds that you are likely to see in one of India's most delightful reserves.

Nigel Lindsey

Vanishing Birds of Singapore by Lim Kim Seng, with photos by Morten Strange and vignettes by Kelvin Lim. Published by The Nature Society (Singapore). Available from the Nature Society c/o Department of Botany, National University of Singapore, Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 0511. (pb).

Singapore Airlines flight SQ321 - Heathrow, London to Changi, Singapore. 'Under Siege' starring Tommy Lee Jones finishes and is quickly followed by a natural history film, 'The Wildlife of Singapore' where wildlife, people and the city live in harmony, with beautiful forests and coral reefs. Movies over, I pulled out my inflight reading, and a very different picture emerged, one of death and destruction that seemed to have more in common with 'Under Siege' than 'The Wildlife of Singapore'.

In setting out their plight 'Vanishing Birds of Singapore' at times reads more like their epitaph, and the Appendices a roll call to those that have gone before: 74 species lost since Singapore's founding in 1819. Among them, Striped Wren-Babbler *Kenopia striata*, 1842; Great Argus *Argusianus argus*,

1895; Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros*, 1898; Oriental Bay-Owl *Phodilus badius*, 1928. And since 1940, this has continued at a rate of three species every four years; gone are eight woodpeckers, three broadbills, and two trogons to name but a few.

The reason is clear. Over the same time period, forest cover in Singapore shrunk from almost 100% to only 75 ha of primary forest and 1,500 ha of secondary forest. Fortunately both areas are now protected and at least 123 of the 141 remaining resident species are present in existing protected areas. However, the remaining forest is just too small to support a complex rainforest avifauna.

One hope is that as the secondary forest matures its potential for supporting a greater species diversity will increase. To this end, the book proposes reintroduction for at least ten species, as diverse as Grey-headed Fish-Eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*, White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis* and Moustached Babbler *Malacopteron magnirostre*, following the successful reintroduction of Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis* to the city parks.

But is it really worth all the time, money and effort that reintroduction entails? Most of Singapore's resident species are not regional conservation priorities, with large healthy populations across the Straits in Malaysia. Why not let them R.I.P, and focus conservation effort towards Singapore's migratory species? Before the demise of the Serangoon estuary to development, Singapore was one of the best places in the region to look for many of the rarer migratory waterbirds. How about Singapore's vanishing migratory birds for the next book?

Unfortunately many foreign birders never stop to bird in Singapore. It's just a stopover on the way to Indonesia, Australia, or the forests of Malaysia just over the causeway. On this journey I was no different. Having landed in Changi and waiting for the inevitable onward flight, I decided to see what the airport book shop had to offer on the fauna of Singapore. Amongst the shelves stacked with numerous copies of 'The One Minute Manager' and all those books charting the economic development of South-East Asia, I found the natural history section. There were no copies of the 'Vanishing Birds of Singapore'.

A great shame, as it is an excellent, professionally produced book that deserves to be read by any birder visiting Singapore if only in those few hours between flights. Maybe next time it'll make you want to stop longer. As many as ten species previously thought lost to the island have been found again in the

last ten years. So even in a place as well known as Singapore, there are still discoveries to be made.

Colin Poole

In Harmony with nature edited by Yap Son Kheong & Lee Su Win, 1992. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Conservation of Tropical Diversity*, 12-16 June 1990, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 656 pages, Published by the Malayan Nature Society, ISBN 983 9681 02 8

This mammoth work is the result of a conference organised by the Malayan Nature Society to commemorate its Golden Jubilee in 1990. The proceedings have been divided into nine sections, each dealing with differing aspects of tropical biodiversity conservation, thus: 1, Current international issues and approaches to conservation; 2, Management of tropical rainforest; 3, Biodiversity of the tropical rainforest; 4, National Parks and biological resources; 5, Wildlife management; 6, Terrestrial, marine and aquatic resources; 7, Conservation and development; 8, Agriculture and land use; 9, Influence of human and social development on conservation.

The volume illustrates the wide variety of biological research currently being undertaken by Asian conservationists, with interesting insights from other parts of the world too. Many of the papers are well worth reading for anyone interested in Asian conservation (see *The MNS blueprint for conservation* pp438-452), particularly issues concerning tropical forests in Malaysia (see *Forestry & sustainable land use* pp175-186). Other contributions are refreshingly frank with regard to future conservation hopes (*Policy & reality* pp253-257) whilst some seemed out of place in a volume of this kind (*The African elephant tragedy* pp420-437).

The production quality of the volume is on the whole good, although several of the illustrations are poorly reproduced, but the soft cover and (hopefully) recycled paper used should keep the cost low enough for most to afford. Support the unsurpassed efforts of the Malayan Nature Society, the oldest conservation NGO in Malaysia and send for a copy.

John Howes

Hong Kong bird report 1991. *Hong Kong Bird Watching Society*, 1992. 204 pp. £5 (sb).

Hong Kong is an exceptionally good place for birdwatching, and probably has a higher density of resident and visiting birders than anywhere else in the Oriental Region. Its position on the coast of southern China makes it a natural stopover for many of the hordes of birds which migrate between North-East and South-East Asia. The records

summarised in the Hong Kong Bird Reports over the years represent one of the best records of bird migration through this poorly-known flyway.

The 1991 Report includes a systematic list which summarises records of the 324 species recorded during the year, a record total which reflects the high level of field activity and the growing number of experienced observers. No less than 11 new birds for the Hong Kong list were recorded during the year, and another on 1 January 1992. The accounts of these records, a record of Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* from 1989 and a paper on the identification and status of Russet Bush Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmi*, include much useful detail on the identification of some poorly documented species and several are illustrated with colour photographs. There is also an excellent, if slightly daunting, 45 page paper by Peter Kennerley and Paul Leader on the identification, status and distribution of small *Acrocephalus* warblers in eastern China, which includes many colour photographs and plates. These papers will be an essential addition to the libraries of anyone interested in the identification of Asian birds.

Michael Crosby

Bali bird walks by Victor Mason. *Insight Guides*. £7.95. (sb.)

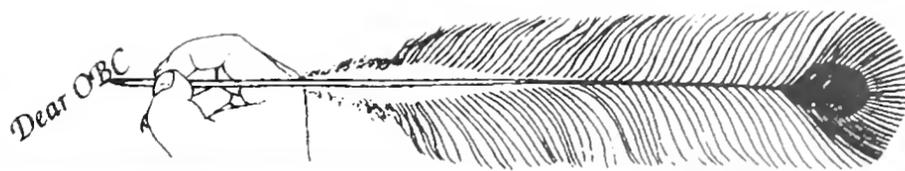
Victor Mason's newest creation from Bali is said to be a guide for both the amateur and hard core birder, but in fact is a brilliant guide to the countryside within an 8 km radius of Victor's house in Ubud, Bali. It will be disappointing for those who expected an ornithological addition to his *Birds of Bali*. But this was clearly not the purpose of the book, as birds are merely atmospheric accessories and thus those twitchers, tickers and other hard core birders in search of as many birds as possible in the shortest time should consult Victor's other book the *Birds of Bali*.

However, the book offers a wide choice of walks, around the tourist areas of Bali, and newcomers to Indonesia will find the book helpful in getting around in the rural areas and becoming acquainted with Bali's more common birds. Perhaps couples, where ornithological interests are somewhat unequally shared, may find most pleasure in this attractive little guide.

Bas van Balen

This book is already out of print in U.K., but maybe still available in Indonesia or South-East Asia. *Ed.*

To the editor



An unidentified shortwing in Nepal

On 20 May 1986, while birdwatching with D. M. Thorns at about 1900 m, just north of Syabru in the Langtang valley, Nepal (28°09'N 85°24'E), I located an unfamiliar shortwing *Brachypteryx*. The bird was initially seen perched on a small log only 1 m from the edge of the main trail, and remained there for about 5 minutes, seemingly unalarmed by our presence. This allowed the following description to be taken:

Similar in size and shape to White-browed Shortwing *B. montana*. Upperparts a dull grey-brown with an overall bluish tinge; ear-coverts slightly greyer; a faint pale stripe from the base of the upper mandible to the eye; the flight feathers and tail were plain olive-brown with brighter rufous-brown edgings to the primaries, but lacking the bluish-grey cast of, and thus contrasting with, the rest of the upperparts. Chin and upper throat white; upper breast washed a strong peachy-rust colour, fading on the lower breast, and with indistinct smudges on the dull off-white belly; flanks washed brownish-grey; under tail-coverts off-white. Eye dark, with no eyering; bill dark, strong and long-looking; legs fleshy pink.

Eventually it hopped onto the ground and started foraging, hopping across the trail and down the slope, energetically flicking leaves over with its bill. Its short tail was continually moved up and down and simultaneously fanned, in the manner of Plumbeous Water-Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus*. The habitat was mature temperate deciduous forest, with a heavy understorey of bamboo and some shrubs.

The bird did not resemble any description available to us of White-browed Shortwing, a species with which we were familiar, nor of Lesser Shortwing *B. leucophrys*, which also occurs in Nepal^{1, 3}. A subsequent check of the literature, and an examination of skins at the British Museum (Natural History), satisfied me that the bird was not one of these two species. The skins of various adult and immature *Luscinia* and *Tarsiger* species were also examined and eliminated, as they were all unlike this bird.

I also examined the possibility of it being a Rusty-bellied Shortwing *B. hyperythra*. Unfortunately, all of the published descriptions, and the skins held at the BMNH, the Hancock Museum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (*per* C. C. Brewer), and the American Museum of Natural History (*per* B. King), relate to adult males or females², and do not match the plumage of the bird seen near Syabru. However, if the Rusty-bellied Shortwing takes more than one year to attain full breeding plumage, as is the case with at least some Lesser and White-browed Shortwings¹, it is possible that this bird was an immature male Rusty-bellied Shortwing. The adult male has brilliant deep blue upperparts and bright chestnut underparts, but the description given above could relate to an intermediate, undescribed plumage. If so, this example would be well to the west of the known range of the species, in Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam and the extreme west of Yunnan, China².

I would like to thank Graham Cowles and Peter Colston for arranging access to the collection of the British Museum (Natural History) at Tring, and to D. M. Thorns for help and comments on the original draft of this note.

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1. Ali, S. and Ripley, S. D. (1983) *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan*. Compact edition. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
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3. Inskipp, C. and Inskipp, T. (1985) *A guide to the birds of Nepal*. London: Croom Helm.

P. J. Heath, 73 Cozens Road, Norwich, NR1 1JP, U.K.

Blue-fronted Robin

I very much enjoyed Nigel Redman's informative article on Blue-fronted Robin *Cinclidium frontale* in the last OBC Bulletin³. A subsequent note indicated that his record of this species was only the 12th record this century⁴. However, in November 1991 a male was observed singing from a roadside bush on two consecutive days (23rd and 24th) not far below the road summit outside Lhaba (= Lava)

by an independent party comprising myself, Keith and Sheila Allison, and Jo Haxby. On neither day did the bird allow an approach closer than about 60m and flew from the top of the bush on which it was in full song, across the road and into dense vegetation in a gully. Thus, the bird was not retiring in the sense of skulking deep in vegetation, but was clearly shy and would not tolerate close approach. As Redman indicates in his article, we found that the best field marks for separating this species from White-tailed Robin *Cinclidium leucurum*, seen earlier in the trip, were the absence of white in the tail in flight and the greyish white belly and vent when perched. Furthermore, as with Redman's bird, our individual was also seen to slowly fan its tail while singing.

Some months after returning to the UK, I came across an unpublished trip report² and was interested to see that from the map drawn of the Lhaba area that our observation was in the same place as their April 1990 record of the species - clearly a favoured area for the species to hold territory. The species is believed to inhabit heavy forest¹: Redman makes reference to the idea that it 'appears to favour dark, densely vegetated gullies in primary

montane forest' and was surprised to find a bird on the edge of a village garden. While our bird retreated to a densely vegetated gully on both occasions, and was in the mountains, no stretch of the imagination could be used to term it primary forest since the area had been cleared some time ago and only scattered scrub and trees were present.

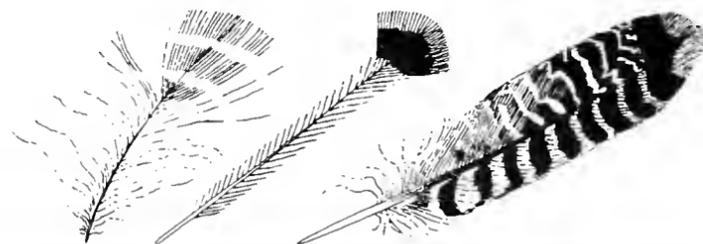
This would appear to be the first winter record in the last 50 years and perhaps provides an indication that the species may not undertake altitudinal migration but remain on the breeding grounds throughout the year, here at about 2,300m. Furthermore, since the bird was singing from a prominent vantage point on both days, it may be that they defend their territories throughout the year.

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2. Buckton, S. and Morris, P. (1990) India and Nepal. Dec.1989-June 1990. Unpublished.
3. Redman, N. (1993) Little-known bird: Blue-fronted Robin. *Oriental Bird Club Bull.* 16: 33-35.
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Phillip Edwards, The Old School, Carlton, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 9JY, UK.

Stray feathers



Proposed new regional handbook

Asia is the home of many of the world's most beautiful and rare birds. No well-illustrated comprehensive book is currently available to serve as a reference and to show their beauty and diversity. The Trust for Oriental Ornithology is pleased to announce that plans are well advanced to finance the publication of the Trust's proposed Handbook of Birds of the Oriental Region. The Trust hopes to be able to tackle this together with Oxford University Press.

An international team of artists and scientists is being formed to produce this definitive handbook with all 2,630 or so species illustrated in full colour in 10 volumes of 600 pages each.

Ornithologists with an amateur or professional interest in the birds of the region who wish to be considered as potential contributors should contact either the Hon. Secretary or Dr Rene Dekker,

Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum, PO Box 9517, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.

More general information, including the precise geographical area being covered, may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Edward C. Dickinson, Trust for Oriental Ornithology, Norman Chapel, Aston Magna, Moreton in Marsh, Glos. GL56 9QN, U.K. (U.K. Registered Charity No. 1014427)

Information on Bornean birds wanted

A checklist of the birds of Borneo (BOU series) is in a fairly advanced state of preparation. Any distributional or breeding data, either unpublished, or published in less obvious journals, would be most welcome, and if used would be fully acknowledged. Please contact the author, Clive F. Mann, at 123 Hartswood Road, London W12 9NG, U.K.

VIREO seeks Asian bird slides

Visual Resources for Ornithology (VIREO), the world's largest collection of bird photographs, and part of The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, is looking for good photographs of Asian birds. The collection currently contains 75,000 photographs in its working collection representing over 5,200 species, yet many species from Asia are still missing. VIREO's contributors include photographers from around the world.

VIREO's photographs are widely used in publications, educational lectures, and electronic publishing. Photographers receive a 50% royalty on projects in the commercial realm. VIREO is always in search of new photographs and photographers. Its strongest Asian collections are from India (large species), Philippines (forest birds), Borneo (forest birds), and Malaysia. Many species are missing from these areas and other areas such as the Himalayas are very sparsely represented.

Almost any good photograph of an Asian bird would be of interest, but a few of the most sought after include: Spotted Greenshank, any of the Philippine creepers (*Rhabdornis*), a tailorbird at the nest, endemics from areas not mentioned above including endemic Indian songbirds, and all rare and endangered species. Photographers who would like to contribute should send a description of what they have to: Doug Wechsler, Director, VIREO, The Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Ben Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA. Phone: (215) 299-1069. Fax: (215) 299-1182.

Finding Ceylon Spurfowl

Amongst Sri Lanka's 23 endemic birds, Ceylon Spurfowl *Galloperdix bicalcarata* is arguably the most difficult to find. Its resounding call can sometimes be heard in the morning at Sinharaja and Kitulgata, although birders will struggle to get good views as the birds quickly disappear into the dense cover. However, in September 1992 Stephen Duffield located a good site for Ceylon Spurfowl about 10 minutes walk from Kudawa Base Camp. At the end of December 1992, I saw at least five birds which were calling throughout the morning from the various patches of remnant forest. The nature of the habitat means that it is relatively easy to see calling birds. The map below gives more precise details on the location of this site which also supports Spot-winged Thrush *Zoothera spiloptera*.

Contributed by Nick Gardner

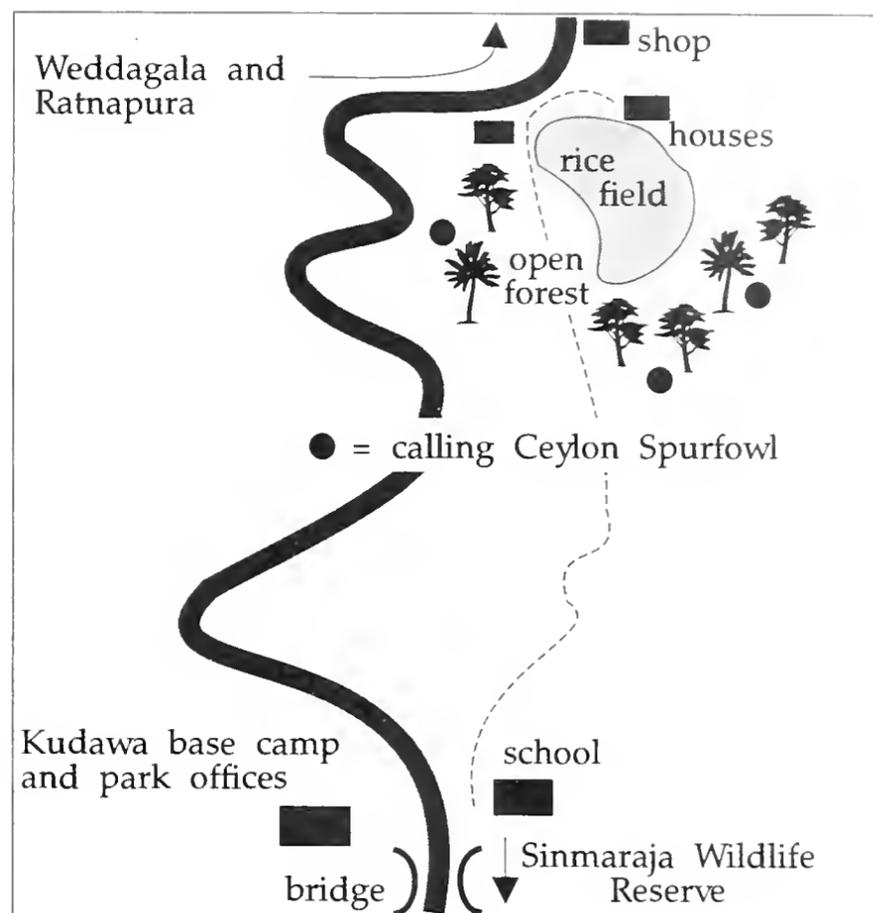


Figure 1. Sketch map of Ceylon Spurfowl *Galloperdix bicalcarata* area.

CD recordings made to order

THE LIBRARY OF NATURAL SOUNDS (LNS) has recently acquired a Sonic Solutions digital sound editing system and compact disc recorder. Researchers may now obtain recordings from LNS in compact disc format. Through the use of a portable CD player and custom CD, up to 99 individual tracks are instantly accessible in the field for playback or reference. This technology has important implications for sound repertoire studies, re-establishment of former colonial nesting sites, survey and censusing work, as well as many other types of investigations. For further information contact Greg Budney, Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Wood Road, Ithaca, NY, USA.

FLAG WATCH 1993

The wader leg-flagging programme in Australasia has continued during the last year with a further 10,000 birds being marked. An important extension to the programme during the year was the commencement of marking in north-western Australia, where some 4,500 waders were flagged yellow. Thus, birds are now being flagged orange, white, green and yellow.

With the increasing numbers of flagged birds, the incidence of sightings has accelerated; these

coming recently from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Brunei, Indonesia and New Zealand, as well as interesting records from within Australia. The most dramatic sighting was of three Bar-tailed Godwits in the same roosting flock at the Ariake Sea, Kyushu, Japan, in April 1992. These birds had white, green and orange flags, indicating that they had originated from New Zealand, Queensland and Victoria, respectively.

Allowing for a conservative annual survival rate of 75%, it is estimated that there are currently approximately 14,500 Australasian leg-flagged birds in the flyway. The most common flagged species include: Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*, Great Knot *C. tenuirostris*, Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*, Grey-tailed Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes*, Red Knot *C. canutus*, Sanderling *C. alba*, Mongolian Plover *C. mongolus*, Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*, Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*, Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea*, Mongolian Plover *Charadrius mongolus*, Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*, Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata*, Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Large Sand Plover *C. leschenaultii*, Eastern Curlew *N. madagascariensis* and Japanese Snipe *Gallinago hardwickii*. Small numbers of Grey Plover *P. squatarola* have also been flagged.

Would birders watch for leg-flagged birds, particularly during the migration periods in April to May and July to September and also in the breeding season?

Reports of sightings should include species name, place (including latitude and longitude), date and also approximate numbers and species of waders present. The information should be sent to the following address: Australian Bird Banding Scheme, GPO Box 8, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia. Tel: +61 01 250 0321. Fax: +61 06 250 0399.

Join the world's biggest birdwatch!

On the weekend of the 9 and 10th October 1993, BirdLife International aims to involve 1 million people around the world in a giant birdwatch - Birdwatch '93. We hope that many organisations throughout the world will join us in making Birdwatch '93 a major success for conservation awareness and education.

We would like to invite you to take part. You can use this event to raise money, help your organisation recruit new members, gain publicity or

just to have fun! You will join many organisations who have already signed up and aim to make Birdwatch '93 a success.

If you are interested in finding out more about Birdwatch '93 and what will be involved, please contact Birdwatch '93, BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge, CB3 0NA.

Kutilang Indonesian Birdwatching Club

The main aim of the club is to protect birds and their habitat through research and education, and as their leaflet says, 'let the birds sing in this world... forever'.

If you would like to know more about the club's activities in Indonesia please contact Agus Prijono, Secretary, Kutilang IBC, JL Kaliurang km 6, Gg Pandega, Rini 217, Yogyakarta, 55287, Indonesia.

Partners wanted!

Ken Mitchell is looking for some travelling companions on a trip to the Philippines for a duration of 21-25 days, between November 1993 and January 1994. Contact Ken at 31, Langdon Road, East Ham, London E6 2QB.

Bihang Institute for Ornithology and Mass Education

BIOME is a voluntary organisation with the broad objectives of: research on conservation and biodiversity; mass education and interpretation; ecologically sound wildlife tourism and recreation; and consultancy. The organisation carries out a wide range of activities and if you would like to know more about their activities please contact: Dr U. N. Dev, B-6/11, Unit-9, Bhubaneswar-751 007, India. Phone: 0674-51414. Fax: 0674-52889.

Information on oriental bullfinches wanted

A study is being conducted on the taxonomy and distribution of bullfinches in Asia, and any information should be sent to: G. Marcozzi, Via Del Rosario 16, 34074, Monfalcone, (G. O. Italy).

Help needed to catalogue India's heronries

Dr S. Subramanya is compiling a catalogue of current and historical heronries of India and would be grateful for any information. Every contribution will be acknowledged and each contributor will receive a copy of the catalogue, once published. For more information, or to send details on heronries, please write to: Dr S. Subramanya, HPHT Scheme, 'J' Block, GKVK, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, 560 065, India.

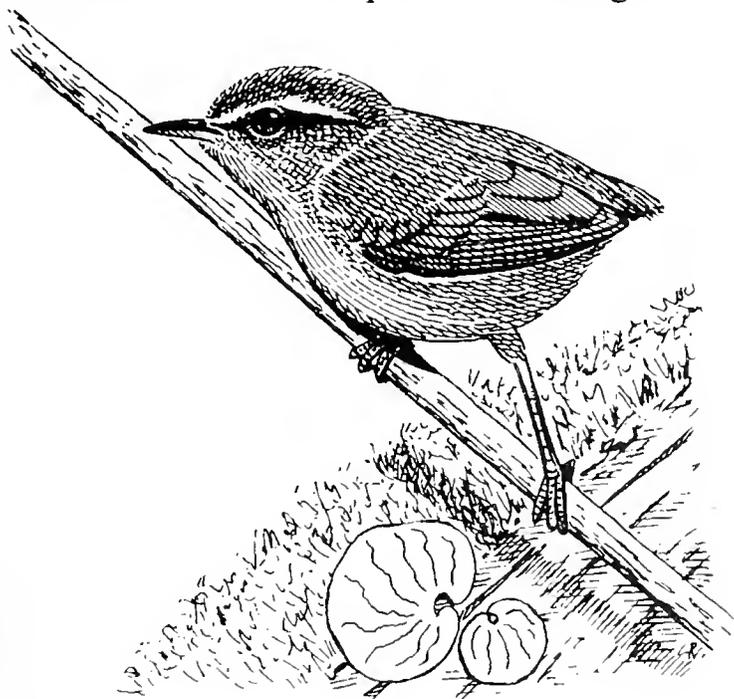


From the field

These are largely unconfirmed records covering the period from late August 1992 to late February 1993. We urge that, if they have not already done so, contributors provide full details to the relevant national organisations in due course.

BANGLADESH

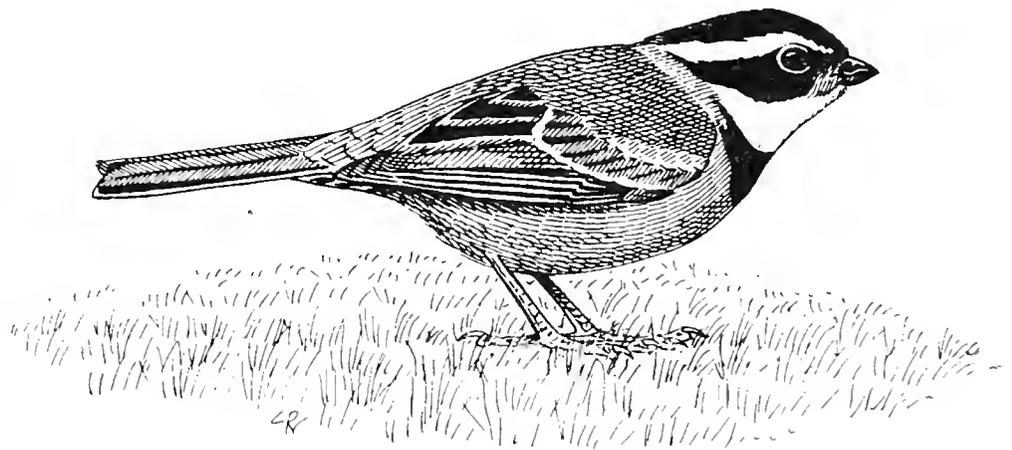
Two interesting first records for the country were received: a flock of 50-100 Asian House-Martins *Delichon dasypus* east of Sylhet on 25 January (PT), and a Slaty-bellied Tesia *Tesia olivea* at Madupkhando Waterfall on 24 December (DJ, JO, SO). A Tawny Fish-Owl *Ketupa flavipes* at Modhupur Forest, north-central Bangladesh, in November (JO, SO) and two Slaty-backed Forktails *Enicurus schistaceus* at Madupkhando Waterfall on 24 December (DJ, JO, SO) were both second records for Bangladesh. Surveys at Tengua Haor, north-east Bangladesh, on 27 January (PT) resulted in some record counts of waterbirds for the area, with 39 Falcated Ducks *Anas falcata*, 875 Red-crested Pochards *Netta rufina* and over 12,000 Common Coots *Fulica atra*, as well as the second record for Bangladesh of Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*. A wintering Wood Snipe *Gallinago nemoricola* was found in West Bhanugach Reserve Forest on 22 December (DJ), and an Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* by the Brahmaputra River at Bahadurabad, north-central Bangladesh on 5 December (DJ, NB, RH, AW) both represent the first recent records for the species in Bangladesh.



Slaty-bellied Tesia *Tesia olivea*
by Craig Robson

CHINA

A pioneering tour to Qinghai and Xizang Provinces (Tibet) produced some interesting records (PK-Birdquest). The localised Tibetan Babax *Babax koslowi* was seen in the Kanda Shan area, Nangqian, Qinghai on 7 October (three birds), 10 October (one bird), and eight were found in the Beizha Forest Reserve, Nangqian on 8 October. Even more interesting were three Tibetan Buntings *Emberiza koslowi* near Beizha, Nangqian on 9 October, the first record of the species for almost seven years.



Tibetan Buntings *Emberiza koslowi*
by Craig Robson

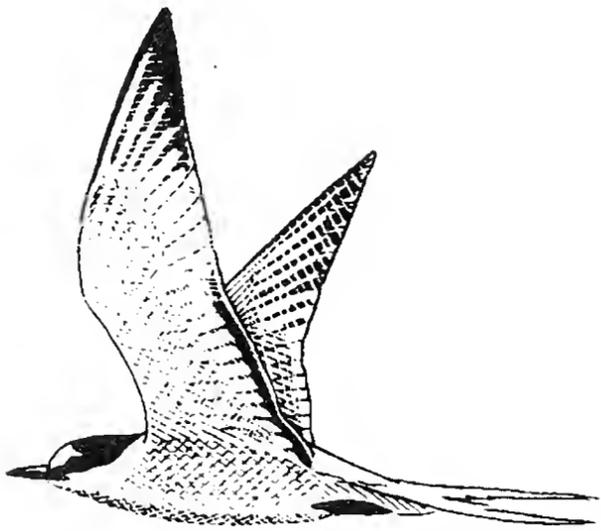
Other interesting observations included a Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* and a female Rufous-backed Redstart *Phoenicurus erythronota* in Golmud city park, Qinghai on 16 October, House Sparrows *Passer domesticus* at Golmud on 16 October (one), at Chaka salt works, west of Qinghai Hu, Qinghai on 17 October (one) and at Tashyi Do monastery, Nam Tso, Qinghai on 19 October (six), and a Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* in Golmud city park on 16 October.

At Beidaihe, Hebei, some interesting autumn records were submitted by GK, included a Latham's Snipe *Gallinago hardwickii* on 19 October; a first year Little Gull *Larus minutus* for about a month up to 8 October; record numbers of Amur Falcons *Falco amurensis*, including over 300 in 2

hours and a day total of 400 on 9 October. Large numbers of Eurasian Jays *Garrulus glandarius* passed through during September and October.

HONG KONG

The most exciting recent record from the region was undoubtedly the off-shore occurrence of large numbers of Aleutian Terns *Sterna aleutica* south of Hong Kong Island, with 190 being recorded during a boat trip on 22 August (MH, PK, PL, ML *et al.*) and c. 80 were still present on 17 September (PK, PL, VP). This is the first record from Hong Kong and China of a species which is rarely recorded away from its breeding grounds.



Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*
by Craig Robson

A flock of 14 swans *Cygnus* sp., thought to be Tundra Swan *C. columbianus*, a species not previously recorded from Hong Kong, was seen from the boardwalk hide at Mai Po, on 16 November (SC, WY). Other new species for Hong Kong, pending official acceptance, were four Red Phalaropes *Phalaropus fulicaria* in Mirs Bay on 20 February (DD, PL *et al.*), a Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* at Mai Po on 22 November (MC *et al.*) and later at Tsim Bei Tsui, where it remained into February, a male Blue-throated Flycatcher *Cyornis rubeculoides* of the subspecies *C. r. glaucicomans* (sometimes considered a separate species, Chinese Blue-Flycatcher) at Ho Chung wood from 24 January to 5 February (MH, JH *et al.*), a male Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher *Ficedula strophinata* at Tai Po Kau on 23 January (FW), a male White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx montana* at Sha Lo Tung on 13 February (JH), a Middendorff's Warbler

Locustella ochotensis at Mai Po on 26-27 February (PL *et al.*) and two Chestnut-tailed Starlings *Sturnus malabaricus* at Tsim Bei Tsui from 22 January into February (IT *et al.*). A Russet Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus seebohmi* was trapped and ringed at Ho Chung on 6 November (PL, MH, VP) and another two trapped at Sha To Lung on 29 November (PL, PK, MC), finally proving that the species occurs in Hong Kong and indicating that a bird trapped at Sha To Lung the previous January was, in fact, a Brown Bush-Warbler *B. luteoventris*; which would also be a first for Hong Kong if accepted. A probable immature Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps* was found at Ho Chung on 17 October (MH) and would be the first for Hong Kong, if accepted. Two more Black-/Red-headed Buntings *E. melanocephala/bruniceps* were at the same locality on 19 October (MH) and another was seen at Mount Austin on 23 October (MT). A White-tailed Robin *Cinclidium leucurum*, possibly an escape, was seen at Tai Po Kau on 26 January (NG); there is one previous record of a definite escape trapped in 1990. Second records for Hong Kong were a first-winter Relict Gull *Larus relictus* seen from the boardwalk at Mai Po on 21 November (PK, ML *et al.*) and again at Tsim Bei Tsui on 28-29 November (MC), where it remained until the end of February, and a female Ochre-rumped Bunting *Emberiza yessoensis* trapped and ringed at the landfill site near Mai Po on 21 November (PL). An adult Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*, seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 27-28 February (PK *et al.*), and a Rufous-faced Warbler *Abroscopus albogularis*, the first for 29 years, at Ho Chung from 10-25 January (JH *et al.*), were both third records for Hong Kong. Single Pale-footed Bush-Warblers *Cettia pallidipes* found at Kadoorie ARC (AG, PL) and Mount Nicholson (CV) on 18 October, represented the third and fourth records for Hong Kong, while a Eurasian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* trapped at Mai Po on 6 February (PL, DM *et al.*) and a Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii* trapped at the same locality on 8 October (AG) were both the fourth records for Hong Kong. An immature Lesser Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna javanica* found on fish ponds near Mai Po on 12 September (DD *et al.*) was the first record for 21 years. A Spoonbill Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* at Mai Po from 14 November (RL *et al.*) was a rare autumn record which stayed to winter, being recorded up to at least 15 January. A total of c. 50 Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* in Mirs Bay on 20 February (DD, PL, ML *et al.*) represented the first winter record, while Yellow Buntings *Emberiza sulphurata* at Ho Chung on 29 October

and 14 November (JH) were the first autumn records. A record total for Hong Kong of 73 Black-faced Spoonbills *Platalea minor* were counted at Mai Po on 10 January (PL, ML), the previous highest count being 57 on the same date in 1992. Finally, 14 Oriental Storks *Ciconia boyciana* were seen at Mai Po on 13 November (GC) and a maximum of 16 were recorded at Tsim Bei Tsui on 5 February (RL).

INDIA

A pair of Black-necked Cranes *Grus nigricollis* was found at Bhutanghat, north West Bengal, near the Bhutan border on 29 December (MR-Xinhua), at an altitude of only 550 m. A second winter Mew Gull *Larus canus* on the Ganges at Gajroula, between Delhi and Moradabad on 5 March (PH) was probably the second record for India, following a record of a first winter bird at Okhla, Delhi on 19 January 1992 (PA). An adult winter Little Gull *Larus minutus* was present at Okhla on 31 December (PH). A Merlin *Falco columbarius*, showing characteristics of the subspecies *F. c. pallidus*, was observed at Sultanpur Jheel, near Delhi on 27 January (PH) and was still there on 6 February (HJ). Unusual records at Bharatpur this winter included a female Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea* on 27-29 November (CR *et al.*-Birdquest) and a Scaly Thrush *Zoothera dauma* on 2 January (MCo).

INDONESIA

Bali

Three jaegers *Stercorarius* sp. seen in the Bali Strait on 30 January included one bird tentatively identified as a Pomarine Jaeger *S. pomarinus* (per SvB).

Java

A male Yellow-rumped Flycatcher *Ficedula zanthopygia* at Trawas, Mojokerto, east Java on 25 December was noteworthy and two Forest Wagtails *Dendronanthus indicus* there on 23 December were the first for east Java (SvB).

Sulawesi

A flock of c.20 Common Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* near the river mouth at Manado harbour on 7 February (SvB, LP), appear to be the first for Sulawesi and for Wallacea.

Sumatra

Up to two new species for the island were recorded during the Spirit of Sumatra Expedition 1992, undertaken from September to November in Riau and Jambi Provinces (JB, NB *et al.*): three

Northern Pintails *Anas acuta* in the Kuala Cinaku transmigration area on 19 November; and a probable Middendorff's Warbler *Locustella ochotensis* which was trapped and photographed at Gudang, S. Serkap on 6 October would be the first for Indonesia, if accepted. Also of note was a pair of Hook-billed Bulbuls *Setornis criniger* trapped at D. Belat on 6 September.

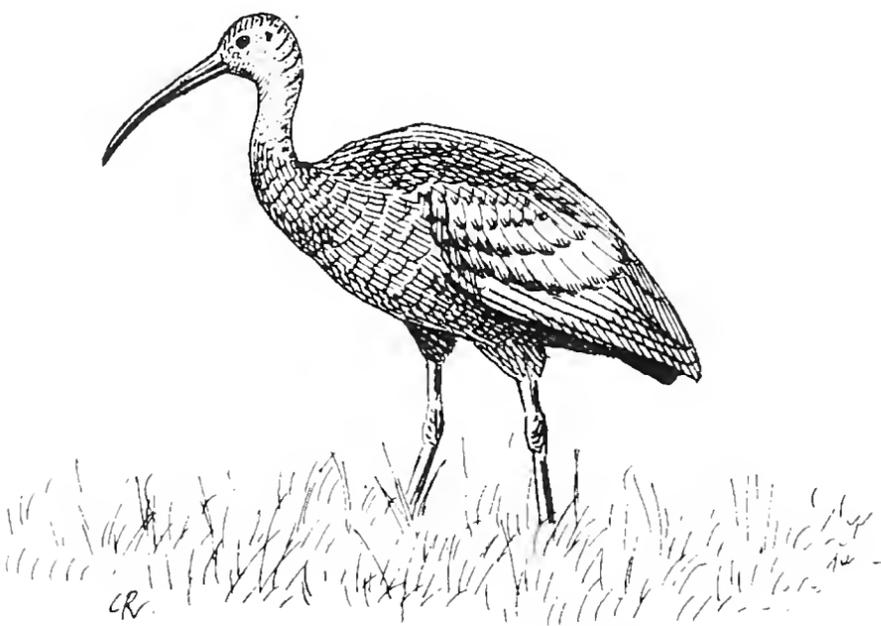
Sumba

The Manchester Metropolitan University Expedition carried out fieldwork on the island from July to October (MJ, ML *et al.*). Eight species were recorded that appear to be new for Sumba, the most noteworthy being Nicobar Pigeon *Caloenas nicobarica* which was found at two sites in southern central Sumba; three were seen about 4 km from the coast at c.120 m elevation, in mostly deciduous primary forest on 18 August, and repeated observations were made of up to 13 birds in evergreen forest at another site c.6 km from the coast at c. 200 m elevation in late August. The other seven new records were: an Eastern Grass-Owl *Tyto longimembris* near Waingapu, east Sumba on 24 August, a single Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* at Waingapu on 14 September, followed by another two there at the end of October, an Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* at the same locality on 22 and 24 October, an immature Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus* at Perocodi, west Sumba on 1 September, 31 White-winged Terns *Chlidonias leucopterus* at Waingapu on 22-23 October, decreasing to 15 on 30 October, two Brown Noddies *Anous stolidus* off Perocodi on 1 September and up to three Brown Boobies *Sula leucogaster* in the straits between Pulau Salura and the southern mainland on 26-27 October. A Sumba Buttonquail *Turnix everetti* was caught and measured and at least another ten counted during a one hour search near Waingapu on 24 August, and another bird was seen in southern central Sumba in late August. Over 50 Oriental Plovers were found at an unspecified locality together with three Little Curlews *Numenius minutus*, another first for the island, on 7 November (per SvB).

LAOS

Survey work carried out in the Xe Piane proposed protected area, Champassak Province, South Laos since November has produced some heart-warming discoveries (GA, BS, KC, WD, MD, TE, EN, SS, RT, RTi, RW). The star bird so far was a Giant Ibis *Pseudibis gigantea* which flew in and landed by a

survey-camp bathing pool in early February, and another has been sighted since; the first definite records from anywhere for c.30 years. Two groups of Black-and-red Broadbills *Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus* provided the first record for Laos of this riverine species, which is considered threatened in Viet Nam and Thailand. Also recorded were Alexandrine Parakeets *Psittacula eupatria*, a Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*, up to 15 White-rumped Vultures *Gyps bengalensis* daily, up to three Long-billed Vultures *G. indicus* daily, up to two Red-headed Vultures *Sarcogyps calvus* daily, small numbers of Woolly-necked Storks *Ciconia episcopus*, one to three Lesser Adjutants *Leptoptilos javanicus* and large numbers of Bar-bellied Pittas *Pitta elliotii* (see *Around the Orient*).



Giant Ibis *Pseudibis gigantea*
by Craig Robson

NEPAL

A Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* of the subspecies *A. f. rossicus*, the second Nepalese record, was found with a flock of Bar-headed Geese *A. indicus* in Chitwan National Park on 9 February (HY). Two Common Shelducks *Tadorna tadorna* were seen at Sauraha, Chitwan National Park on 22 November (PH) and there were three Water Rails *Rallus aquaticus* at Kosi Barrage on 6 February (TG). Also of interest were two Rusty-fronted Barwings *Actinodura egertoni* near the foot of Phulchowki, Kathmandu Valley on 13 November (PH).

PHILIPPINES

Cebu

On Cebu, three Cebu Flowerpeckers *Dicaeum quadricolor* (male, female and juvenile) were seen well in the last remaining patch of primary forest (see *Around the Orient*). Also recorded at the same

locality were seven Purple Needletails *Hirundapus celebensis*, representing a new species for the island (GD *et al.*).

Mindoro

Three probable Small Buttonquails *Turnix sylvatica*, not previously recorded from Mindoro, were seen in grassland near Iglit-Baco National Park. There were several sightings of Mindoro Hornbills *Penelopides mindorensis* with 12 in a fruiting tree, as well as several pairs in the forest at Sablayan, Mindoro, and another two in the western part of Iglit-Baco National Park. Other sightings at Sablayan were of two Black-hooded Coucals *Centropus steerii* and two Mindoro Bleeding-hearts *Gallicolumba platenae*; this is the most important site for both species. Three individuals of an unidentified scops-owl *Otus* sp. discovered during the 1991 expedition at Malpalon, Mindoro, were found calling at Sablayan and responded to playback of their calls; details will be published in due course. A roost of at least 465 Pechora Pipits *Anthus gustavi* in Iglit-Baco National Park on 18 December was a remarkably high total (all GD).

Luzon

Also seen during the period was an Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus* at Angat Dam, Luzon on 9 February (TF-Birdquest); the first Philippine record away from the Palawan island group.

Mindanao

An unidentified woodcock *Scolopax* sp. was flushed at c.1600 m elevation on Mount Katanglad, Mindanao on 18 February and others were observed 'roding' at 1,250 m and 1,600 m elevation on 19 and 20 February (SH, TF-Birdquest). No woodcock species is currently known to breed in the Philippines, and Eurasian Woodcock *S. rusticola* is only a rare winter visitor to Luzon. The call was tape-recorded and investigations will continue to ascertain whether the birds are an undescribed species or possibly Rufous Woodcock *S. saturata* or the little-known Sulawesi Woodcock *S. celebensis*.

SRI LANKA

Four new species for the island were recorded during the period: A Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus* and two Sooty Gulls *Larus hemprichii* at the Chilaw sand-spit on 10 January (RD, LP), Black Terns *Chlidonias niger* at Negombo Lagoon (one) on 1 November (RD, LP *et al.*) and Alangkuda,

Kalpitiya Peninsula (three) on 9 January (RD, LP *et al.*) and a European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* in Yala National Park on 11 February (PD). In addition, three or four Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* at the Bundala Sanctuary on 15 February (PD) appear to represent another new record for the island. Also noteworthy were two Ringed Plovers *Charadrius hiaticula* on the Bundala salt pans, on 13 February (PD). A sighting of nine Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* on the Hambantota salt pans on 12 February (PD) probably represents the largest number ever recorded from the island.

THAILAND

A male Japanese Thrush *Turdus cardis* present in the km 38 area on Doi Inthanon, Chiang Mai from 3-6 February (ND, GF, MK) was the first record for Thailand. A male Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* was reported from Kasetsart University Campus, Kamphaengsaen on 17 January, where three were recorded the previous winter. A male Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata* found at Suan Vanida, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai on 21 January (PK *et al.*), was joined by two females in mid-February (many observers); there are now three records, all from the northern part of the country. 10-12 Yellow-vented Green-Pigeons *Treron seimundi* in Khao Soi Dao National Park, on 24-25 February (JD) were the first recorded from the south-eastern part of the country. Rarities during the period included seven Northern Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* by the Mekong River at Chiang Saen, Chiang Rai in late December (EM, SG *et al.*), a first-winter Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei* at Bang Poo, Samut Prakan in January (KK), which was still present on 9 February (Wings) and a male Golden Bush-Robin *Tarsiger chrysaeus*, the first for almost ten years, on Doi Suthep, Chiang Mai on 16 December (RS). A flock of 40 Blue-rumped Parrots *Psittinus cyanurus* and a Barred Eagle-Owl *Bubo sumatranus* were reported from Kaeng Krachan National Park, Phetchaburi on 15 November (PC, SP) and a male Olive-backed Woodpecker *Dinopium rafflesii* was seen there on 15 January (IR, JV, JW); all three records being northern range extensions for these species in Thailand. A male Slaty-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula hodgsonii*, also at Kaeng Krachan, on 1 January (SM, PS, SV *et al.*), was well to the south of its previously recorded range in Thailand. A report of 25 Painted Storks *Mycteria leucocephala* flying over Bung Kroeng Kavia Non-Hunting Area, Kanchanaburi on 20

December (PC), was followed by three there on 12 January (IR, JV, JW) and another three were reported from Wat Kusarot, Ayutthaya along with 72 Black-headed Ibises *Threskiornis melanocephalus*, on 1 January (SP). The spread of House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* still continues, with a report of 30 birds and many nests in Wang Muang District, Saraburi on 25 October (NP) and three birds at Rongkwang, Phrae on 5 December (SV).

VIET NAM

At the Tram Chim Reserve, Dong Thap a Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius* was found feeding along a stream on 30 December (GM) and a female Comb Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* was present in front of the Brehm Centre on the mornings of 30-31 December (GM); these are welcome recent records of two species which are critically threatened in South-East Asia. In Da Lat, Lam Dong a bird dealer was found with one stuffed and one live Mountain Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nipalensis* and claimed to have more at home (GM). There are very few Vietnamese records of this species, but these observations suggest that it may occur more regularly than previously thought.

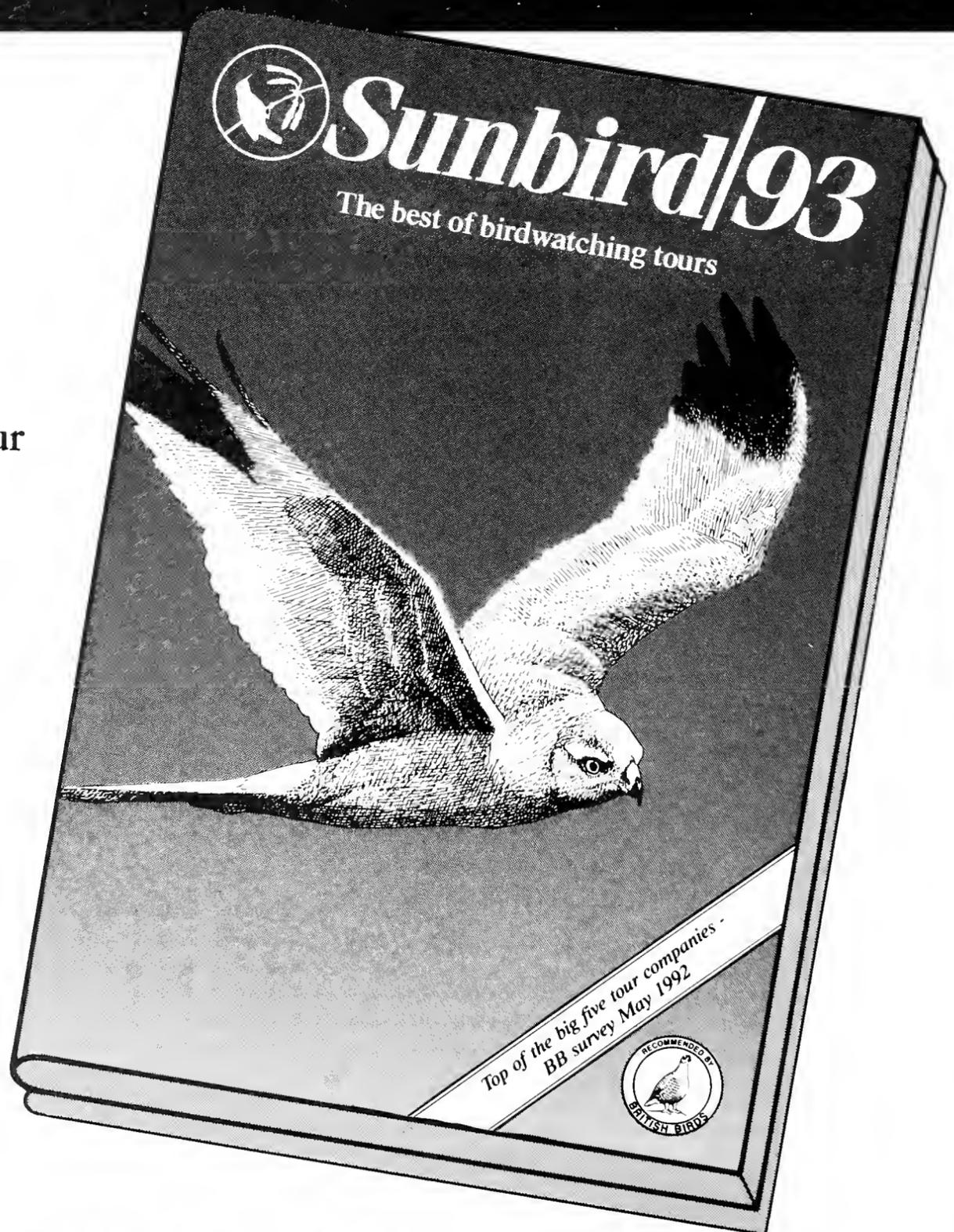
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Sunbird 

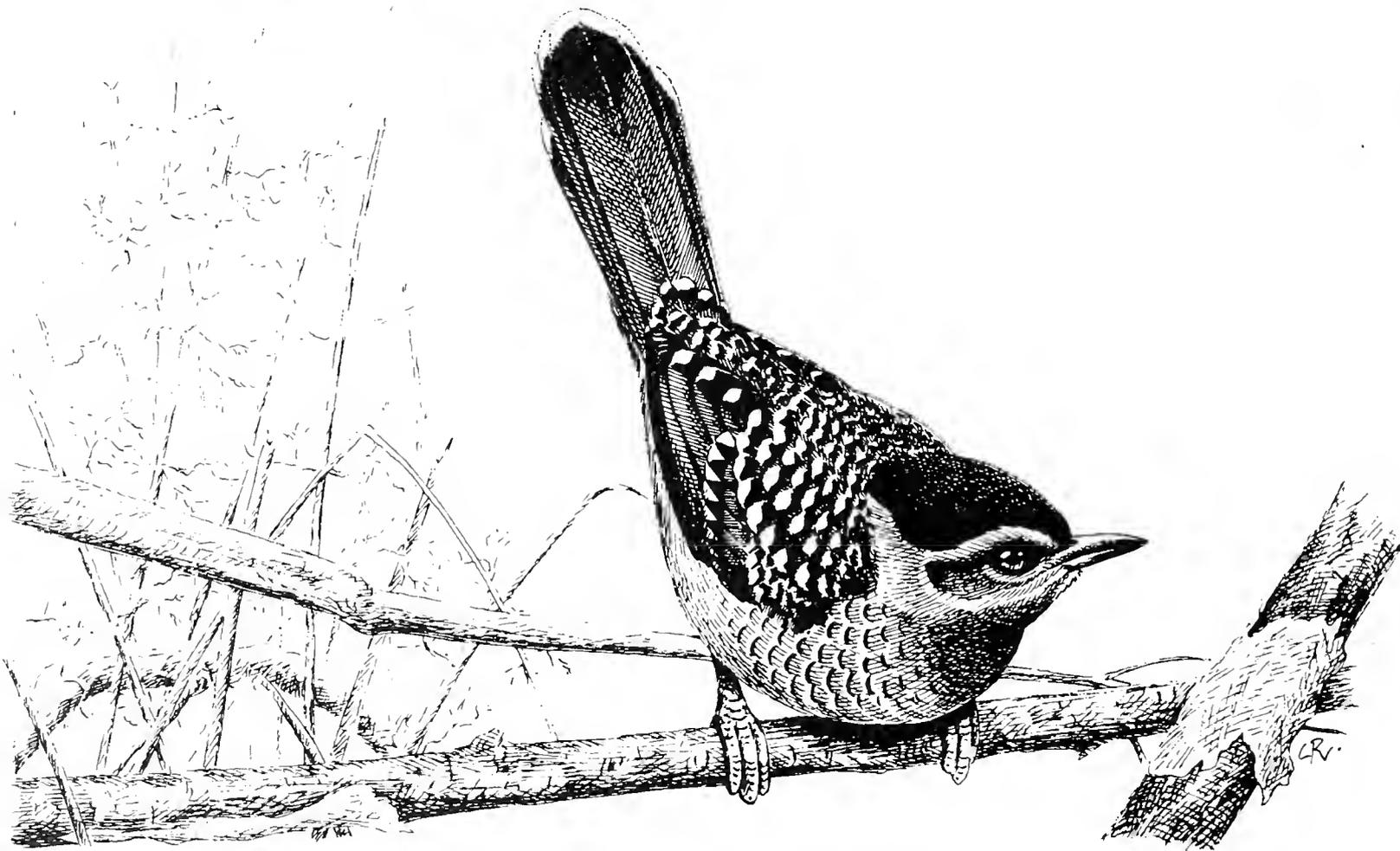
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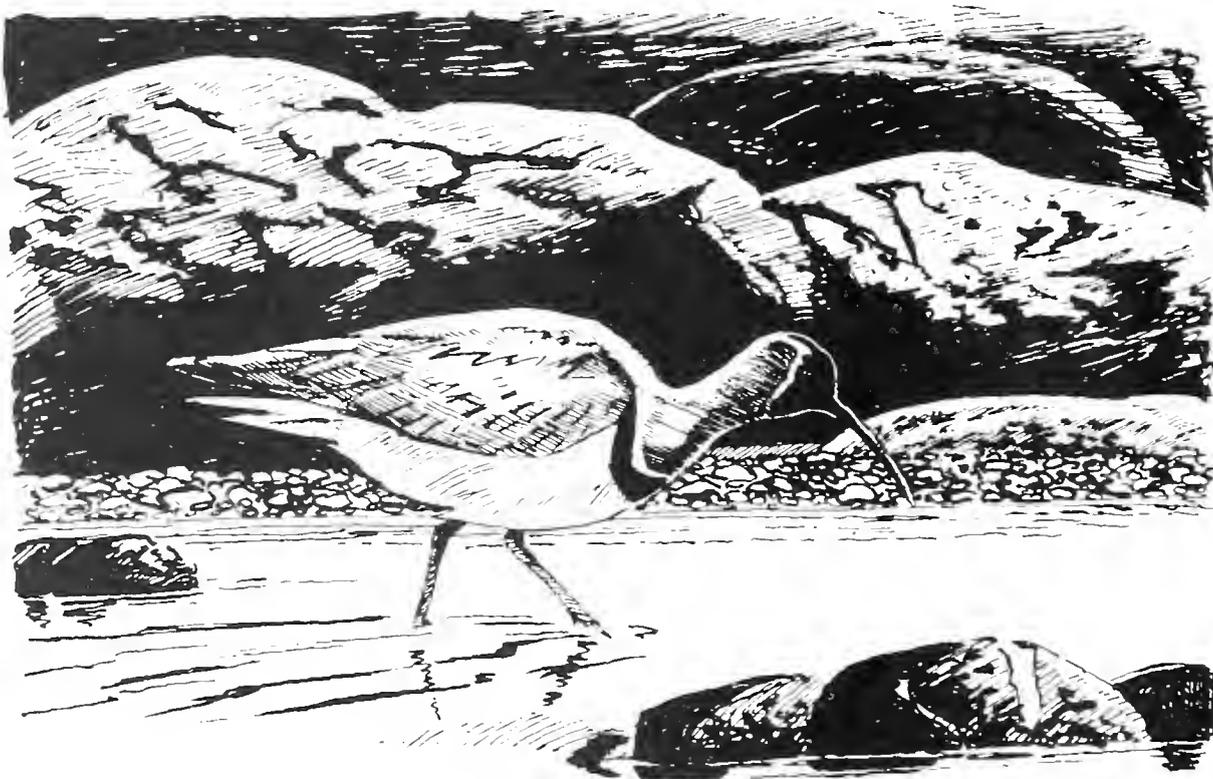
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THE BULLETIN OF THE ORIENTAL BIRD CLUB provides a forum for news, notices, recent publications, expedition results, reviews and preliminary or interim publication of studies on Oriental birds by contributors from all parts of the world. Publication of interim results in the OBC Bulletin does not preclude publication of final results as journal papers either by the OBC or elsewhere. Contributions are considered by the Editor and an Editorial Committee with contributions accepted subject to editing and refereeing where appropriate. Copies of new journals, books or reports for mention or reviewing are always welcomed. Contributions or enquiries should be sent to the Bulletin Editor, Oriental Bird Club, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, UK.

Guidelines for contributors

Whilst the Editor is always pleased to discuss possible contributions with potential authors, and to advise on preparation, it would be helpful if the following guidelines could be adhered to:

1. **Articles** These should be written clearly, preferably typed, on one side of the page, with all lines double-spaced, leaving wide margins, and should be no longer than 2,000 words. Scientific names should appear at the first mention of each species or, if all species appear in a table, they may be given there instead. Scientific names should, where possible, C. G. Sibley and B. L. Monroe (1990) *Distribution and taxonomy of birds of the world*.

Any tables to accompany articles should be prepared on separate pieces of paper, and be thoroughly checked. Titles of tables should be self-explanatory. Diagrams should be clearly drawn, in ink, ideally 15cm wide and 11cm high. References should be cited in alphabetical order at the end of the paper in the same style used in this Bulletin.

It would be helpful if two copies of each contribution could be submitted.

2. **From the field** These should follow the format in the current edition of the OBC Bulletin, and be sent to OBC, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, UK.

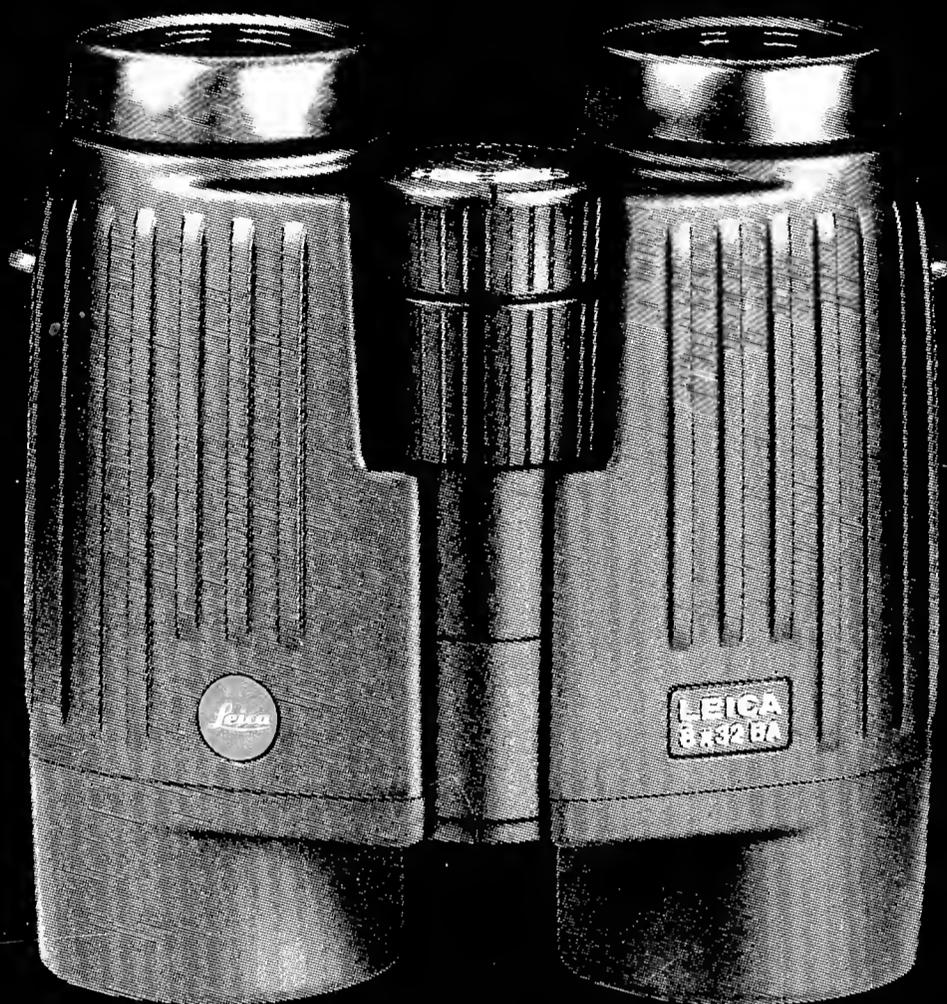
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Although every effort is made to retain all articles in their submitted form, the Editorial Committee reserves the right to make changes that it deems necessary, and, in a minimum of cases, without prior reference to the author. It is assumed that all contributors submitting material understand and accept these conditions.

For **Around the Orient, Recently published, Stray feathers**, the deadline for submission of material is 1 March (May Bulletin) and 1 September (November Bulletin). The deadlines do not apply to main articles which will be published as soon as possible after acceptance by the Editorial Committee.

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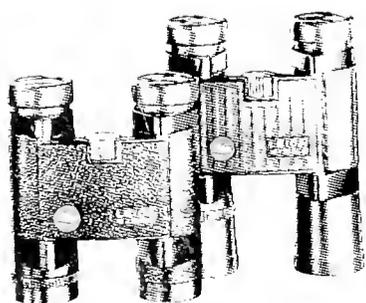


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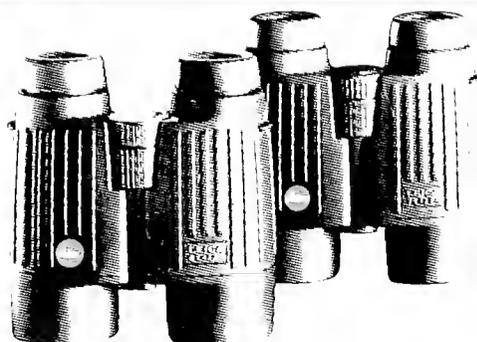
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