

According to Holmes & Burton (1987), the White-shouldered Ibis has been seen probably four times only in the period 1974-1984, from the eastern and southern parts of Kalimantan. One of these records was from the Mahakam River further downstream, on 21 July 1984. A local inhabitant informed us that he had seen an ibis nearby at Ujoh Bilang in July 1983, and that it feeds on fruit.

## Reference

Holmes, D.A. & K. Burton. 1987. Recent notes on the avifauna of Kalimantan. *Kukila* 3 (1-2): 5.

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## NOTE ON THE STATUS OF THE WHITE-SHOULDERED IBIS IN KALIMANTAN

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## Ringkasan

Dipertelakan selucuh catatan tentang keberadaan burung langka *Pseudibis davisoni* di Kalimantan, dan dibuat rekomendasi penting untuk penelitian lanjutan terhadap jenis ini.

The publication of a record of White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* by Petersen (see above) provides an opportunity to give a more complete summary of the status of this species than was provided by Holmes & Burton (1987) or Silvius & Verheugt (1989), and to draw attention to its plight. With its main population in the Indo-Chinese region (where its population is also believed to be endangered), the geographical isolate in Borneo is one of Indonesia's most enigmatic species. Its status is at least as worrying as that of the Storm's Stork *Ciconia stormi* or the White-winged Wood Duck *Cairina scutulata*, but the remarkable lack of early records suggests that it may have always been

Every known record is located on the map in Figure 1 except for the single record from outside Indonesian Borneo, near Kuching in 1946 (Smythies 1981). Localities are lettered in chronological sequence as follows:-

- A. 1836. Barito (Dusun) River, location approx. (Smythies 1981).
- B. 1909. Purukcahu, Barito (Smythies 1981).
- C. 1912. Long Iram, Mahakam (Smythies 1981).
- D. 1942. Pangkalanbuun, Waringin River? (Smythies 1981).
- E. 1973. Long Iram, Mahakam (K.V. Thompson, Smythies 1981).
- F. 1974. Binuang, near R. Negara (author, Holmes & Burton 1987).
- G. 1979. Upper Barito (J.T. Marshall, Smythies 1981).
- H. 1983. Long Iram (P.R. Morgan, Silvius & Verheugt, 1989).
- I. 1984. Tributary of R. Seruyan (author, Holmes & Burton 1987).
- J. 1984. Muara Pahu (author, Holmes & Burton 1987).
- K. 1988. Mahakam Lakes (AWB officer, Silvius & Verheugt 1989).
- L. 1990. Mahakam River (Petersen 1991).

Thus half of the Kalimantan records derive from the middle reaches of the Mahakam River, which clearly provides the best opportunities for studying the bird. The Barito drainage has provided four records, the latest in 1979, and it is dis-appointing that the Ulu Barito team, who travelled the length of the Barito River in 1989, and who were based near the mouth of the Murung River, failed to record the species (see Wilkinson *et al*, this issue). The 1974 record in the Negara drainage by the author (who cannot claim positive identification for any of his ibis records in Kalimantan) was of a single bird in flight across open dryland, which may have been a vagrant or a relict of a local population now extinct, as the Asian Wetlands Bureau who studied the Lower Barito - Negara wetlands in 1989 failed to record it (W. Giesen, pers.com.).

It is useful to list negative records. Asian Wetlands Bureau found none in the Kapuas Lakes (W. Giesen, pers.com.), Eve & Guigue (1989) did not record it in the Mahakam delta, and Nash & Nash (1988) did not record it in Tanjung Puling National Park. K. Burton never saw the bird during nearly two years residence at Palangkaraya in the mid-1980s, and the author has travelled up the Ketungau and Pawan rivers in West Kalimantan, around Pangkalanbuun and up sections of the Seruyan and Sampit Rivers in Central Kalimantan, and from Samarinda up the Telen River to Muara Wahau in East Kalimantan, without encountering it,

Although the Pangkalanbuun record is nearly fifty years old, this record, together with the 1984 record from the Seruyan tributary, may be significant. (The latter record consisted of a single bird seen a few kilometres apart along a very minor river, on two consecutive days, and may have represented one or two birds). While ornithologists who wish to study the species will inevitably be drawn towards the Mahakam (whose lake region awaits study), serious consideration should also be given to traversing the middle and upper reaches of the rivers of Central Kalimantan (especially perhaps the Waringin, Seruyan, Mendawai, Kahayan and Kapuas). Such surveys would provide useful ornithological data in general, and of the Storm's Stork and White-shouldered Ibis in particular. The Lower Seruyan also has a substantial lake that has never been studied (Danau Sembuluh or Belajau, ca. 8000 ha, at 112°20'E, 2°45'S).

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With so little known about the preferred habitat and ecology of the White-shouldered Ibis (see, for example, the reference in Petersen to the birds feeding on fruit), and with increasing rates of environmental degradation in the areas from which it has been reported, further studies and surveys are now urgently required.

### References

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