

BIRD OBSERVATIONS ON PULAU LAUT, SOUTH KALIMANTAN

by
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The island of Pulau Laut lies just off the south east coast of Borneo, and is separated from the mainland by a shallow sea channel about 2 km wide. The island is approximately 95 km long, and 40 km wide at its widest; the highest hill peak is 725 m. It is part of the province of Kalimantan Selatan, and the main town, Kotabaru, is the administrative centre of the Kabupaten (regency).

Although so large, and relatively easy to reach, bird observations from Pulau Laut do not seem to have been published, except for a few skins collected by Grabowsky (Blasius 1883). *Macronus gularis pontius* (Oberholser) 1922 is the only endemic subspecies described from Pulau Laut. The author visited Pulau Laut from 12 to 14 October and part of 17 October 1996 (the intervening time from 14 to 16 October was spent at sea), and was able to list 76 definite and 4 possible species.

Being so large, Pulau Laut has a great variety of habitats. Mixed dipterocarp forest is mainly confined to the northern and central hills, occupying perhaps a quarter of the land area, and that

remaining on the lower slopes has been logged at moderate intensities. Small pine plantations have been planted extensively. On both the east and west coasts are mangroves, some of them with protected status.

There is a topographic and possibly a climatic boundary about two thirds of the way south down the island, south of which is flatter land with few significant hills. In this southern part are some fragments of peat swamp forest, which were not investigated. Where the vegetation has been cleared, the replacing *Imperata* grassland here is rich in *Borassodendron* palms.

Of the sites listed, the main town Kotabaru is close to the northern tip of Pulau Laut. Stagen is a small village backed by pine plantations and lowland forest about 15 km to the south, and the island's airport with grassland is on the west coast close by. Tanjung Serdang is a village and ferry terminal on the centre of the west coast, and Lontar is a fishing village on the south west coast about 7 km from the southern tip of Pulau Laut.

The list is far from complete, including perhaps only a quarter of the birds that might be found on such a large and varied island. Few of the observations are unexpected, those of some interest include the Blue Rock thrush, and migrating Japanese Sparrowhawk. Nevertheless, this is a start at a formal listing for a place for which there is a surprising gap in ornithological knowledge. Nomenclature follows Andrew (1992). All dates refer to October 1996.

Fregata ariel Lesser Frigatebird. Two separately at sea near Lontar and Tanjung Kunyit (14 Oct).

Egretta intermedia Intermediate Egret. In swamp with a buffalo, south of Tanjung Serdang (14 Oct).

? *Bubulcus ibis* Cattle Egret. Several large flocks of egrets flying over Kotabaru harbour in poor light on the evening of 12 Oct were thought to include at least some of this species, others could not be identified at all.

Ardeola speciosa Javan Pond heron. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct); remnants of breeding plumage on breast and mantle.

Butorides striatus Striated Heron. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).

Haliastur indus Brahminy Kite. Mangroves, west coast (12 Oct); Pertamina terminal (12 Oct); prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).

Haliaeetus leucogaster White bellied Sea eagle. Kotabaru harbour (12 Oct); over G. Sebatung (12 Oct); prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct); Lontar (14 Oct).

Accipiter gularis Japanese Sparrowhawk. One at sea, south of Tanjung Kunyit on the southern point of Pulau Laut (14 Oct), flying south west. [Other individuals were observed over Marabatun island and between Matasirih and Kalambu islands, to the south, on 15 and 16 Oct, indicating a raptor migration route through these islands]

? *Dendrocygna* sp. Whistling duck. Villagers at Lontar described treeducks that visit swamps in the south during the period of the west monsoon. The common species occurring in mainland Kalimantan Selatan, for example at Negara, is *D. arcuata* (see van Balen, this issue).

Amauromis phoenicurus White breasted Waterhen. In disused prawn ponds at Loiitar (17 Oct).

- Pluvialis fulva* Pacific Golden Plover. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).
Charadrius leschenaulti Greater Sand plover. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).
Numenius phaeopus Whimbrel. Flights to roost including at least 60 individuals, across Kotabaru harbour (12-13 Oct).
Tringa totanus Common Redshank. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).
Tringa stagnatilis Marsh Sandpiper, Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).
Tringa nebulaha Common Greenshank. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).
Xenus cinereus Terek Sandpiper. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct).
Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper. Puddles on bare earth at Stagen airport (13 Oct).
Gelochelidon nilotica Gull billed Tern. Kotabaru harbour (12 Oct).
Sterna dougalii Rosette Tern. One near Tanjung Kunyit (14 Oct). Identified by all dark bill, pale legs, long tail streamers with no black on outer webs, pale wing tips, on upper wing black edge to outer primary but no dark on inner wing, forehead and mid crown white, breaking up into black hind crown and nape.
Sterna bergii Great Crested Tern. Several on fishing stakes, Lontar (14 Oct).
Treron vernans Pink necked Pigeon. Mangroves, west coast (13 Oct).
Chalcophaps indica Emerald Dove. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Columba livia Feral Pigeon. Kotabaru area, apparently feral (12 Oct).
Cacomantis merulinus Plaintive Cuckoo. Trees in open country, Stagen airport (13 Oct).
Sturniculus lugubris Drongo Cuckoo. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Rhopodytes sumatranus Chestnut bellied Malkoha. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Rhinortha chlorophaea Raffles's Malkoha. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Centropus sinensis Greater Coucal. *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct).
Centropus bengalensis Lesser Coucal. In secondary growth, old cultivation at Stagen (13 Oct).
[Aerodramus fuciphagus Edible nest Swiftlet. Pale rumped swiftlets flying near forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct), believed to be this species].
[Aerodramus maximus Black nest Swiftlet. Kotabaru harbour (13 Oct); Lontar (14 Oct), slightly larger than previous, rump concolorous with back, believed to be this species].
Rhaphidura leucopygialis Silver rumped Swift. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Apus affinis Little Swift. Kotabaru (12 Oct); *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct).
Apus pacificus Fork tailed Swift. Up to 20 in small groups, south of Tanjung Serdang (17 Oct).
Cypsiurus balasiensis Asian Palm swift. Outskirts of Kotabaru (13 Oct).
Hemiprocne longipennis Grey rumped Tree swift. Mangroves, west coast (12 Oct).
Halcyon chloris Collared Kingfisher. Prawn ponds north of Stagen (13 Oct); mangroves, west coast (13 Oct).
Halcyon sancta Sacred Kingfisher. One in abandoned rice field south of Tanjung Serdang (14 Oct).
Merops viridis Blue throated Bee eater. South of Tanjung Serdang (17 Oct).
Rhyticeros undulatus Wreathed Hornbill. Several flocks in lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Buceros rhinoceros Rhinoceros Hornbill. More than one pair in lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Megalaima rafflesi Red crowned Barbet Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).

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- Megalaima australis* Blue eared Barbet. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Sasia abnormis Rufous Piculet. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos Black and red Broadbill. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Eurylaimus ochromalus Black and yellow Broadbill. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Hirundo rustica. Barn Swallow. Mangroves throughout the west coast (12–14 Oct).
Hirundo tahitica Pacific Swallow. Mangroves, west coast (12 Oct); *Pine/Acacia* plantations Stagen (12 Oct); Lontar (14 Oct).
Anthus novaeseelandiae Richard's Pipit. Grassland at Stagen airport (13 Oct): a slim, lightly marked bird presumably of migrant race.
Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail. Grassland at Stagen airport (13 Oct).
Pericrocotus flammeus Scarlet Minivet. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Hemipus hiruninidinceus Black winged Hemipus. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Pycnonotus atriceps Black headed Bulbul. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Pycnonotus goiavier Yellow vented Bulbul. *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct).
Pycnonotus plumosus Olive winged Bulbul. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Pycnonotus simplex Cream vented Bulbul. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Pycnonotus brunneus Red eyed Bulbul. Lowland forest and forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Pycnonotus erythrophthalmos Spectacled Bulbul. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Irena puella Asian Fairy Bluebird. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Lanius cristatus Brown Shrike. *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct).
Copsychus saularis Oriental Magpie robin. Secondary growth south of Tanjung Serdang (14 Oct).
Copsychus malabaricus White rumped Shama. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Enicurus ruficapillus Chestnut naped Forktail. Lowland forest at small stream, Stagen (13 Oct).
Monticola solitarius Blue Rock thrush. One at Kotabaru harbour, on roof of jetty (12 Oct), showing chestnut vent and under tail coverts; head and neck scaly grey, the rest of the upperparts and underparts were slate blue. This is the first formal record for Kalimantan (*cf.* Smythies 1981).
Macronous gularis Striped Tit babbler. *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct).
Yuhina zantholeuca White bellied Yuhina. Lowland forest and forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Prinia flaviventris Yellow bellied Prinia. Grassland at Stagen airport (13 Oct).
Orthotomus atrogularis Dark necked Tailorbird. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).
Orthotomus ruficeps Ashy Tailorbird. *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct); coastal scrub and scattered trees, Lontar (17 Oct). ?
Dicaeum concolor Plain Flowerpecker. A dull coloured individual seen in lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct), was possibly this species.
Aethopyga siparaja Crimson Sunbird. *Pine/Acacia* plantations, Stagen (12 Oct); coastal scrub and scattered trees, Lontar (17 Oct).
Arachnothera longirostra Little Spiderhunter. Lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct).
Zosterops flavas Javan White eye. Forest edge near coast, Stagen (13 Oct); coastal scrub and scattered

trees, Lontar (17 Oct). Group of 5 observed, pure yellow underparts without grey on flanks or under tail coverts, rather pale crown, pale lores, and rather pale olive back and wings.

Lonchura fuscans Dusky Munia. Outskirts of Kotabaru (13 Oct).

Lonchura malacca Chestnut Munia. Grassland at Stagen airport (13 Oct).

Passer montanus Tree sparrow. Abundant at Kotabaru (12 Oct; 13 Oct); a few at Lontar (14 Oct).

Aplonis panayensis Asian Glossy Starling. Mangroves, west coast (13 Oct).

Gracula religiosa Hill Myna. Forest edge, Stagen (13 Oct).

Dicrurus sp. Drongo sp. A drongo calling in lowland forest, Stagen (13 Oct), was not Greater Racket tailed Drongo *D. paradiseus*, and was thought to be either *D. annectans* or fl. *hottentotus*.

References

Andrew, P. 1992. The birds of Indonesia A Checklist (Peters' Sequence). Kukila Checklist No. 1. Indonesian Ornithological Society, Jakarta. Blasius, W 1883.

Vögel von Borneo, in Südost en der Insel. *Verfwidelingen Zoollwt. Gesellsch. men*, 3 92.

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